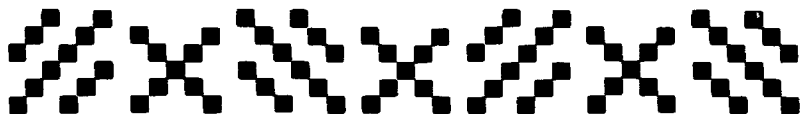


## Erasmus Gest's Recollections of Life in the Middle West in the 1830s

*Edited by Charles R. Schultz\**



Internal improvements—turnpikes, canals, and railroads—preoccupied government and business in many areas of the United States during the 1820s and 1830s. Nowhere was the activity greater than in the Middle West. As early as 1822 James Brown Ray, a lawyer and member of the Indiana senate from Brookville, suggested that a canal be built along the Whitewater River in southeastern Indiana. Four years later the Indiana legislature granted a charter to the Whitewater Canal Company. It was not until early June, 1834, however, that a survey of the route was made over the seventy-six miles from Nettle Creek in Wayne County to Lawrenceburg on the Ohio River. In spite of the fact that there was a fall of 491 feet in the seventy-six miles and the canal would require fifty-six locks, seven dams, and twelve aqueducts, construction soon began on the project, the estimated cost of which was over one million dollars. Optimistic predictions of annual profits had a bearing on the decision to proceed. The canal company was constantly in financial trouble because the sharp fall created a rapid flow of water which regularly caused extensive damages. In 1864-1865 the canal was sold and a railroad was constructed along the tow-path. Portions of the Whitewater Canal continued to serve as a source of power for mills and for the generation of hydroelectric power for nearly a century.<sup>1</sup>

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\* Charles R. Schultz is university archivist at Texas A&M University, College Station. Appreciation is here expressed to the Ohio Historical Society for permission to publish Gest's recollections and some of his illustrations relating to the Whitewater Canal, and to the Cincinnati Historical Society for permission to publish the photograph of Gest.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Fatout, *Indiana Canals* (West Lafayette, 1972), 27, 33, 59, 62, 149-56; Fred W. Eley, "The White Water Canal," *Indiana History Bulletin*, XVII (February, 1940), 69-75; Chelsea A. Lawlis, "Changes in the Whitewater Valley, 1840-1850," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLIV (March, 1948), 70-82; James M. Miller, "The Whitewater Canal," *ibid.*, III (September, 1907), 108-15.

In the 1830s persons in Ohio, especially merchants of Cincinnati who desired the trade of southeastern Indiana, pushed for a canal westward from Cincinnati into Indiana to intersect the Whitewater Canal between the Whitewater River and Lawrenceburg on the Ohio River. In 1837 the Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal Company was formed by merchants in the Queen City who immediately sought state aid for the project. They succeeded in obtaining a stock subscription of \$150,000 from the state and one of \$400,000 from the city of Cincinnati. The Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal was completed in 1843, although there was an interruption of activities for some time early in 1839 because of the bleak economic situation throughout the area.<sup>2</sup>

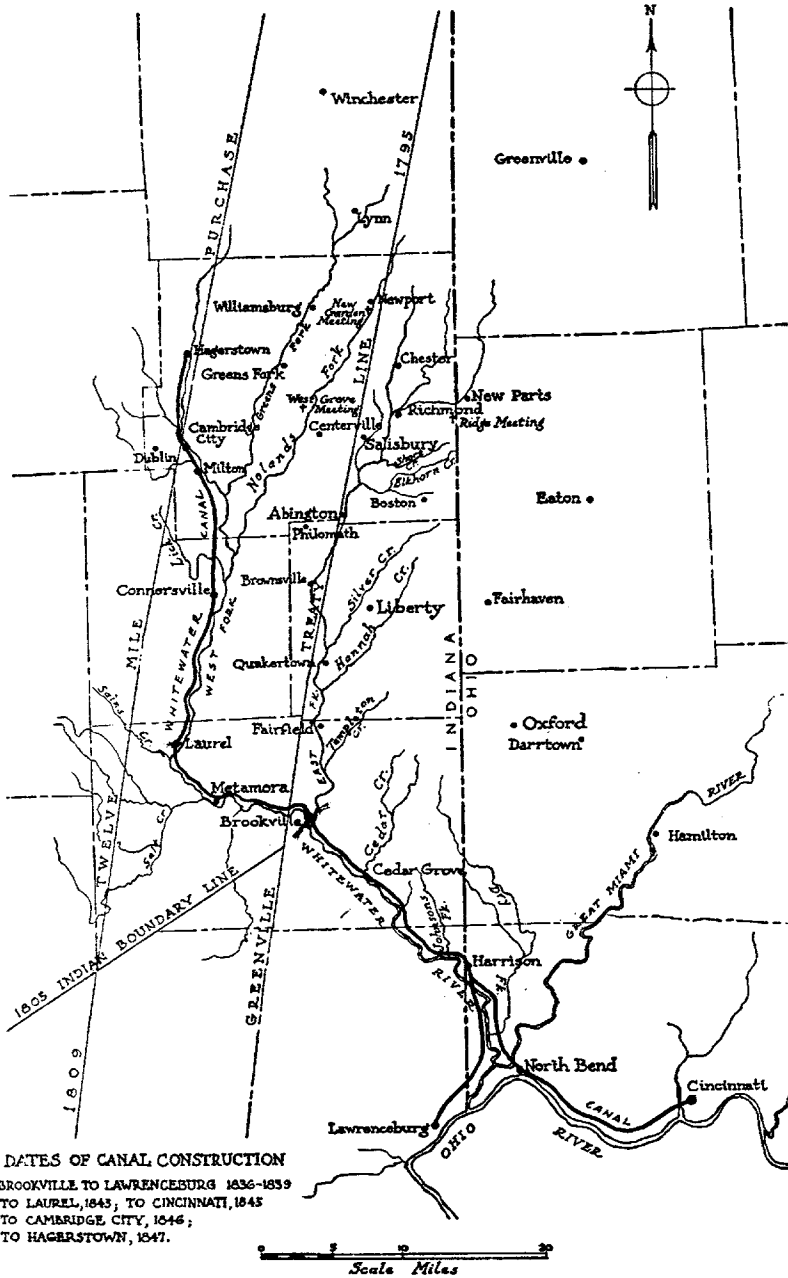
One of the men who worked on the Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal was Erasmus Gest. Son of Joseph and Rebekah Gest, he was born in Cincinnati on April 12, 1820. At the age of fourteen he left his Quaker home, family, and friends in Cincinnati to advance his education. He first attended a manual training school in Dayton and then went to a high school in Springfield. On his seventeenth birthday he began his first job, that of a rod man on a surveying crew for the Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal. He was promoted to assistant surveyor early in 1839 but was soon released when economic conditions forced suspension of the project. In November, 1839, Gest was appointed an engineer in the Pennsylvania canal system, and he remained there until April, 1841, when he returned to Cincinnati to assist his father, who was the city surveyor. Three years later he was elected to succeed his father. He remained in this post until the fall of 1847, when he began a lengthy, somewhat stormy, and frequently controversial association with railroads in the Middle West and West.

Gest's first position with a railroad was that of an engineer for the Little Miami Railroad Company, where he remained three years. During the next six years he worked for several railroad companies, including the Ohio & Mississippi, Cincinnati & St. Louis, Dayton & Cincinnati Short Line, Four Mile Valley, Cincinnati, Lebanon & Xenia, Cincinnati & Cleveland Short Line, and Cincinnati & Fort Wayne. In addition, he served several other firms attempting to com-

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<sup>2</sup> Harry N. Scheiber, *Ohio Canal Era: A Case Study in Government and the Economy, 1820-1861* (Athens, Ohio, 1969), 105, 107, 131.

# WHITEWATER VALLEY



## WHITEWATER CANAL

Reproduced from Bernhard Knollenberg, *Pioneer Sketches of the Upper Whitewater Valley, Quaker Stronghold of the West* (Indiana Historical Society Publications, Vol. XV, No. 1; Indianapolis, 1945), frontispiece.

plete a transcontinental railroad. These firms appear to have been paper companies whose only hope for success lay in securing federal land grants.<sup>3</sup>

In 1856 Gest was elected president and superintendent of the Cincinnati, Wilmington & Zanesville Railroad. He devoted more time and energy to this firm than to any other company with which he was ever associated. His first stay lasted until 1858. He returned to the company in 1864 and remained until the end of 1869.<sup>4</sup> During the interval he toured Europe, served as an officer in the Civil War, and worked for several railroads in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

After leaving the Cincinnati, Wilmington & Zanesville Railroad, Gest acquired an interest in street railroads in Cincinnati. For a period of years he owned Route 9 and later attempted to buy Route 13. He appears to have retired during the late 1870s or early 1880s but returned to active participation in railroad activities in 1887, when he was named general manager of the Nevada-California-Oregon Railway at Reno, Nevada. He retired permanently in 1900 and returned to Cincinnati.<sup>5</sup> He died February 7, 1908, on a farm outside Covington, Kentucky.<sup>6</sup>

During the early 1880s, Erasmus Gest assembled his important papers into twelve or thirteen bound volumes, which were acquired by the Ohio Historical Society in 1961.<sup>7</sup> In several of the volumes he penned reminiscences on subjects inadequately documented in his surviving papers. Among these writings is Gest's recollections about the conditions

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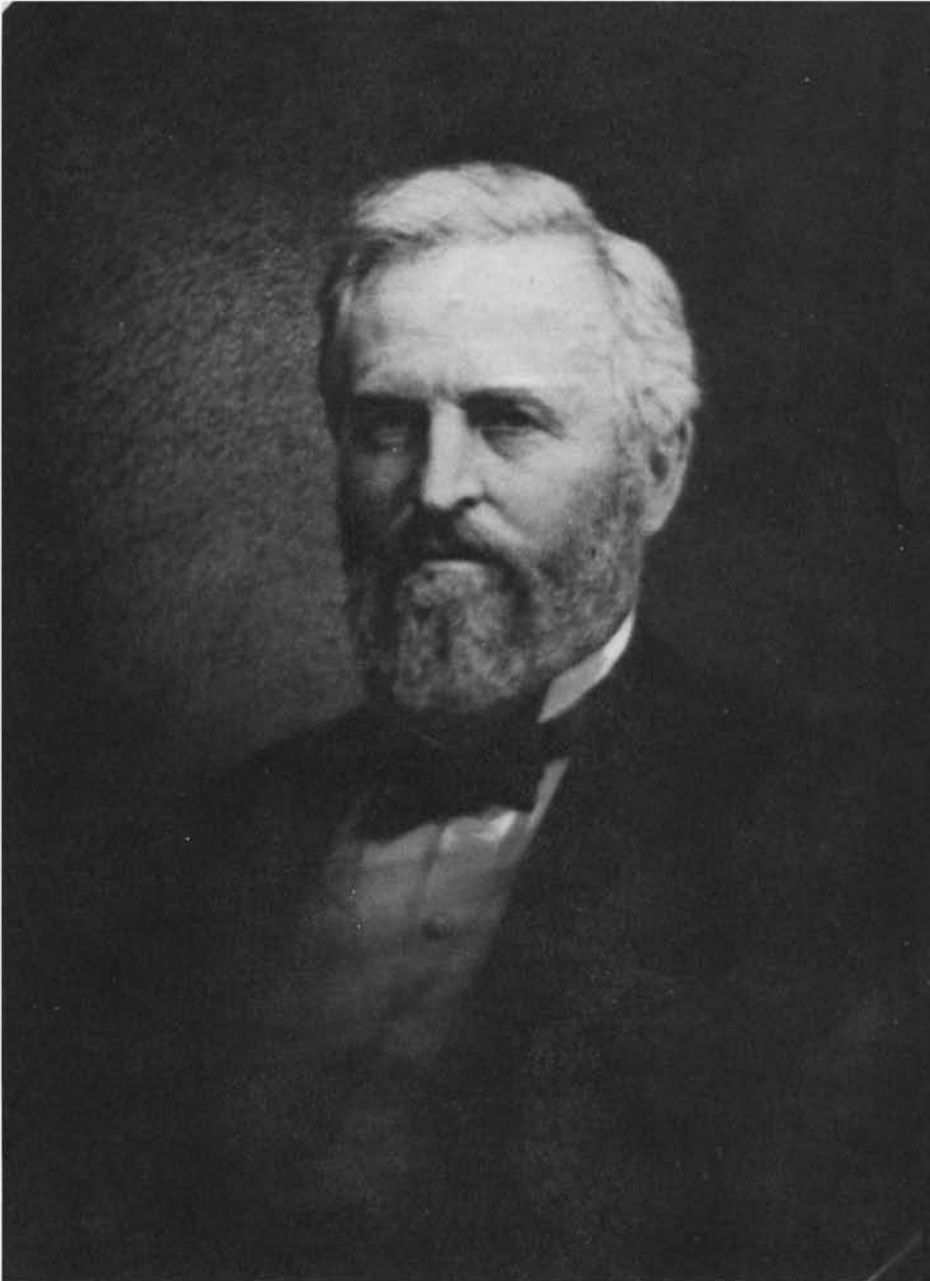
<sup>3</sup> This brief summary of Gest's early career is drawn largely from the biographical sketch in Charles R. Schultz, *Inventory of the Erasmus Gest Papers* (Inventory and Calendar Series, No. 4; Columbus, 1962). That sketch is based upon a thorough examination of the papers.

<sup>4</sup> Gest's career with the Cincinnati, Wilmington & Zanesville Railroad is discussed in Charles R. Schultz, "Erasmus Gest and the Cincinnati, Wilmington & Zanesville Railroad," forthcoming, *Railroad History*.

<sup>5</sup> *Biographical Directory of the Railroad Officials of America* (Chicago, 1896), 177; David F. Myrick, *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California* (2 vols., Berkeley, Calif., 1961-1962), I, 352-54.

<sup>6</sup> Gest's obituary appeared in the Cincinnati *Commercial Tribune*, February 8, 1908.

<sup>7</sup> The volumes are numbered 1-11 and 13. Volume 13 was probably numbered incorrectly, since all volumes follow chronologically without any break. A few items have been removed from some of the volumes, however, so it is remotely possible that an entire volume was destroyed or lost at some time between 1883 and 1961.



ERASMUS GEST

Courtesy Cincinnati Historical Society, Cincinnati.

under which he worked and lived in the late 1830s as a member of a surveying crew for the Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal.

### Eramus Gest's Recollections<sup>8</sup>

*How we lived in the Hoosier State.* In fact, how a great many people west of the Alleghenies, in the great Ohio Basin, lived in those days.

On the 12th day of April 1837 (my 17th Birth day) I left Cincinnati, and reached Harrison about noon, reported at once, to Col [Simpson] Torbert<sup>9</sup> the Chief Engineer of the White water Canal, where also was the principal office of the Line. Mr Martin Coryell the principal *asst* to whom I was detailed being absent. The Col set me to work copying some paper. In a short time I had it done. [He] gave me more work, in half an hour [I] reported it done [and he] gave me a plan of Culvert to copy, which I completed about 3 o'clock, and showed him and asking him for more to do, he looked up at me and remarked "H...L I cant keep you busy", you will have to wait until day after to morrow for Mr Coryells return; in mean time amuse myself the best I could.

*Harrison* the blessed town of not many houses, mainly made up of one street running *due* North and South, or as nearly so (as total absence of all instruments for determining a meridian line) excepting as could be done with an old surveyors compass, would permit in the hands of an ignorant man, who knew nothing of the theory of surveying, much less of astronomy. Down the center of this street, ran the boundry line between the *great Infant* states, Ohio and Indiana, and as in those days, like in moderan days, people were jealous of state rights; the local jealousy of the denizens in each side of this great street ([Avenue?]) with the states line its center, could only be appeased by having a "Hotel" on each side. The one on the Ohio side, kept by one D Garrard with

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<sup>8</sup> The editor has attempted to reproduce these recollections as closely as possible to the original manuscript. Some punctuation has been added for clarity. Vagaries in spelling and capitalization have been retained. Words or phrases underscored by Gest for emphasis have been changed to italics.

<sup>9</sup> See below for Gest's section entitled "Of the Canal Officials," in which he identified twelve individuals with whom he worked.

a Grey-Mare trancelucent-nosed-wife, was in an aristocratic frame building, *painted* white, with the other advantage of being on the corner of the great road from Cincinnati. While that on the Indiana side, was a derelk [derelict?] two story Log with out buildings, kept by a Blunt, out spoken Hoosier, 6 feet 2 high, with an honest old time industrious wife, nearly as tall, embelished with three strapin Daughters grown, down to sweet 15, each bearing the name "Tebbs"—The Father "Colonel Tebbs."

It was in the D Garrard Hotel, where the general office was, and consequently in that Hostelry I domiciled and for my *first* weeks bed & board paid \$3—honest money. The wages of the differet grades of service, in the Engineer department, was fixed by Law, that for my service being 1.25 dollars per day, Sunday & tother six all counting (\$8.75 per week) with out any extras or allowances whatever. The bigger Bugs got higher pay, but not enough difference, to compensate for the increased laziness, negligence, and dignity. As we had to be absent much of the time our Board had to be regulated on some other basis, than week unit, by the meals. This compelled an accurate account to be kept, so that it could be safely sworne to—as in some cases lodging became an element in the computations, and simplicity of accounts a virtue, hyroglyphics were resorted to.<sup>10</sup> As any fellow could make a mark and members of the party rumaged their fellow colaborers pockets, the intelligent hyroglyph was dispensed with, and common place figures substituted. This last known cut out the bed record, which was not a very great loss as it prevented remembrance of where we slept, which in many places was not a luxury, the rule being where the bed was clean, there certainly [were] Fleas; where dirty, there [were] Bed bugs, full grown, not only to be seen in the morning, but felt all night. Henceforth 21 meals meant a week, beds thrown out, or ought to have been—other specimens.<sup>11</sup> After the first weeks extortions \$3—for Board, my engineer companions advised rebellion. The result for ever after the price \$2—for 21 meals, dirt included. For a while (until novelty wore away from a Boy of 17 for the first time among strangers earning his living)

<sup>10</sup> A graph and a line of explanation have been deleted here.

<sup>11</sup> A graph has been deleted here.

the eating seemed [so] good at the Aristocratic Hotel—that I soon found my way towards midnight, frequently to the Pantry to steal Pies or other goodies. This however did not last long as I found the cat sound asleep curled around on the top of a big warm Apple Pie, then I remembered that the cat had allways been on hand at the Pantry—thus ended the Pie business.

In those days white Sugar was a luxury—never seen except at weddings and on extra occasions. We only had a dirty brown Shugar often made dirtier by admixture with sand to add to the profits of the seller. There was allways at the bottom of ones Coffee cup a thick black sediment composed of too many things to enumerate. It was too much for me and invariably I left enough coffee at the bottom to not see the grounds. After a few weeks the Old Grey Mare thought she was so well acquainted that she could boss me in addition to her Husband and lectured me at first about not drinking my coffee all up, as it would save her another cup. Her lecture however did not receive the consideration that the grounds did, and she positively refused to give me more than one cup of Coffee for Breakfast, and I being a good Quaker rebelled, paid my bill, transferred my quarters to Major Tebbs and rested for the first time permanently under the protecting arm of Indiana.

Few persons of to day have the remotest idea of how nine tenths of the early settlers lived in Ohio & Indiana. Whole Families often with a Son in Law or Daughter in law and they with a child or two lived in a Log Cabin with only one room, in which was done the cooking washing eating Sleeping &c &c. This room was also often quite small and at night the beds would, when the Family was large and [had] several adults cover at least three fourths of the Floor, leaving but a small space in front of the fire. The Fire place however was not stunted often covering the whole end of the Cabin from 6 to 8 feet long, 4 feet deep, 6 feet high, in fact I have seen them so long that with only a small fire in ordinary weather one could sett in the corners of them. In our Engineering explorations we were compelled to stop over night at Cabins; and as there were thirteen of us, all young men, it often became a matter of interest to know how we would be disposed of—especially when there was no loft and a large Family. As a rule these cabins were better supplied



with Blankets Quilts &c than any thing else. The food consisted mainly of Salt Pork (fried for Breakfast, Boiled for Dinner Fried for Supper) with chicken jointed and fried, or stewed with Dumpling, Potatoes, and Pickled Pork as variety. The Slateterly Families had a way of Frying over again (adding new pices) the pork from the previous meal, ad infinitum, the result a dish the most unsavory and disagreeable, too much so for imagination. *Now*, comes to the novice, the crucial period, when for the first time he is brought up at a Cabin with a single room and large Family (another cabin not within five miles) maybe raining or turning cold, with feet wet, already dark, had nothing to eat since six oclock (maybe five), in the morning. The cabin already occupied with three or four men as many grown women, and young girl or two just the right age to be interesting, and a lot of juveniles from thence all the way down to the breast. Then for the first time he wishes he had never seen the country, and if he new where to run to he would[,] he certainly would not loose a moment, but be back to his mothers arms, never to leave them again before the night had past, fortunately to him however such refuge is beyond hope, he settles down with his twelve other comrades and for the time is an Arab—he however is not left to himself, is constantly in the way especially of the women getting supper which occupies an hour or more, as they were caught unprepared, not expecting company. To him the minutes are hours, he never was so hungry—bime [by and] by, the grease in the Frying pan begins to splatter, the odor soon fills the room. The women running back and forth, fooling away their time trying to sett the table and make it enticcing, gets almost frantic by another five minutes gone out, coming back maybe with some preserves, or pickles, or some sweet cake—wishes they were all in h....l, [as he has] had plenty of such things before at home or at his sweet harts—he wants the stuff that makes the room smells so. Ten minutes more the table is sett, he then for the *first time* notices there are only ten tin plates at the table, things look ominous; however on[e] thought consoles with the idea, politeness will allow the strangers to eat first. The hostess announces the table ready—it being his first experience under extremes, remembers his mothers lesson teaching politeness, not to be forward &c &c; his Brother Engineers, having been there before, having been

there before [*sic*], dont stop to remember home rules, the ten seats are at once occupied and the novice is relegated to wait patiently with the two axemen (the laborers of the party) their turn. However in due time after full reflection and further snuffing of the fragrent atmosphere his turn comes and for ten minutes, he has forgot home, hunger rain, the girl of seventeen including the world. Finally he rises from the table, having been oblivious to the hairs, Roaches, and other foreignners, to an orthodox table. In five minutes more wants to go to sleep, in five more is asleep sitting or becoming [excited?]. Bime by the table is cleared and and [*sic*] all the women sett to work, pulling out trundel beds from the two main big beds, then taking off beding in surplus and from some corner in a little while, he sees the beds all ready, such as they are, next he wonders how he is going to undress before all those women, when suddenly he is aroused by the head of the Family starting for the door followed by all the other men including those of his party, who he instinctively follows, and for ten minutes, if raining especially, he has his own time with the rest in the dark. Then the doors open all to go in, not a woman to be seen, nor a light except thrown out by the Fire—then by doing as the others do, he will soon find a place to lie, maybe on a blanket on the Floor with another to cover him. May think it hard, but in five minutes he will be sounder a sleep than he ever was at home and so oversleep himself that, his comrades will have to wake him up—when he will find, Breakfast allmost ready, the women out of the house. In a few minutes more the table set, hunger satisfied and he feels as good as he ever felt in his life, and with some jokes cracked at his expense during the day, goes through his work as well as ever.

I doubt whether a young person raised in a city with snap and energy can pass a years time with so much genuine satisfaction as he can with an Exploring party of Engineers in a new country. A party in my time consisted of 13. The eldest the two assistants probably not over 30 years of age. The head may be more advanced, but so far as my experience went, liked a good time, a Whisky Punch, a pretty country lass, a good joke, even at their own expense, as the younger members. They would not let on often, look grave, &c &c, but shure as opportunity offered, they never failed to be about on Sundays or other times when we were having a

good time. A locating party have a hard a hard [*sic*] time, in one way, they are out from day light to dark in winter and at least 12 hours in summer—they have to wade creeks, and swamps, and over rivers the best they can; It is impossible to have changes of clothing; often wet to their knees all day, and if raining all over. In a wooded country like we had in eastern Indiana in 1837-8 with houses few and miles between, the exposure to wet and miasmi constant. As a rule we had much less sickness than one would suppose. I have often thought was it not for well raised boys it would be almost impossible to get Engineering explorations done. Money would hardly hire the service. It was only in Boys of good raising with snap and determination that would stand it. I have often seen other kind of boys & men run away in a few hours or a few days. In June 1838 Mr S Holeman the Principal Engineer & sucesor of Mr Tolbert Decd [deceased] promoted me and put me in charge of an exploring party to make preliminary surveys and locate the extention of the White Water Canal from Brookville to Hagerstown some 44 miles. We were until in August. The country was wet and we were scarcely a day in the field with out wet feet and legs. We got through however, and fortunately I went home, the very next day found me with high Fever, rapidly grew worse, for a while considered dangerous, but recovered. Dr John Warder was my Physician (Old School) gave me 20 grains of Calomel at a dose. Salivated me bad. Also bled me; This bleeding is what I think saved me, at the time I was perfectly conscious but in a *state, not pleasant*, the instant the blood began to flow, relief came and felt like another person and rapidly recovered. In 19 days was pronounced well. I then went on a visit through Maysville, Paris, Lexington, Frankfur[t] & Louisville Kentucky, returned to Harrison and resumed duties September 23rd 1838.

We Engineers were favorites with the People wherever we went, especially with the Girls, our personal appearance having been raised in the city, appeared to take with them—this effect was heightened with our *White Shirts* and clothing not ragid; and as bashful as we were, we were so far ahead in gallantry of their Country Brothers, that we had things our way, pretty much. Again we patronised Singing Schools, and sleighing expiditions in the winter not having much else to do. Could any time when there was snow get up

parties to go off after night, to some hotel five or ten miles away—where there was an extra large room—and have a good time between the lively girls allways ready for fun Hot Whisky Punches and generous suppers. All Country Hotels at that time worthy of the name had an extra large room, usulay used as a Dining room which would be cleared and made ready for Dancing on a few minutes notice. Between the Saturday night Singing Schools during the winter months and the sleighing parties, the oportunity was offered for the young men and Girls to get together, make new acquaintances, and do their Courting (in Country parlance Sparking).

Coryell, my superior (having been raised in Bucks County Pennsylvania, originally settled by the Dutch, Americanised now understand Sparking, more especially bundeling), was an adept in the Singing School-Sleighing party business coupled with good cheer and allways on hand for such enterprises, it became my bounden duty to see him better and being a better Horseman than he, to me fell the duty of providing the vehicular part, and between us good Care was taken to have more Girls than seat room, and when things did not work Right or laged in life and a good snow drift handy, I was at hand to rilieve the Driver, at same time took good care to spill the load at proper place. Then between the re-loading and the accident? matters worked more satisfactory to all parties in interest. We also had Fox hunts—on one occasion running the Fox over ten miles, and with an occasional circus, wedding and Tea fights [?] and B[oy]s had good time—another Source of getting through an evening was in a visit from an Engineer stationed elsewhere on the canal when [with] a ½ Bushel of Apples or a Lot of Hickery nuts with mulled Cider or Whisky Punch the time would pass lively. If our wages was small our wants were not out of proportion and amply within our Purse. We even supported the luxury of a Horse to ride. Even I had to own a Sulkey if the reader knows what such a vehicle is.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Of the Canal Officials*

Jessee L Williams, Chief Engineer of the State of Indiana. Had charge of all the Public Works in the State 1837 & 8. He was previously an Engineer on the Miami Canal when

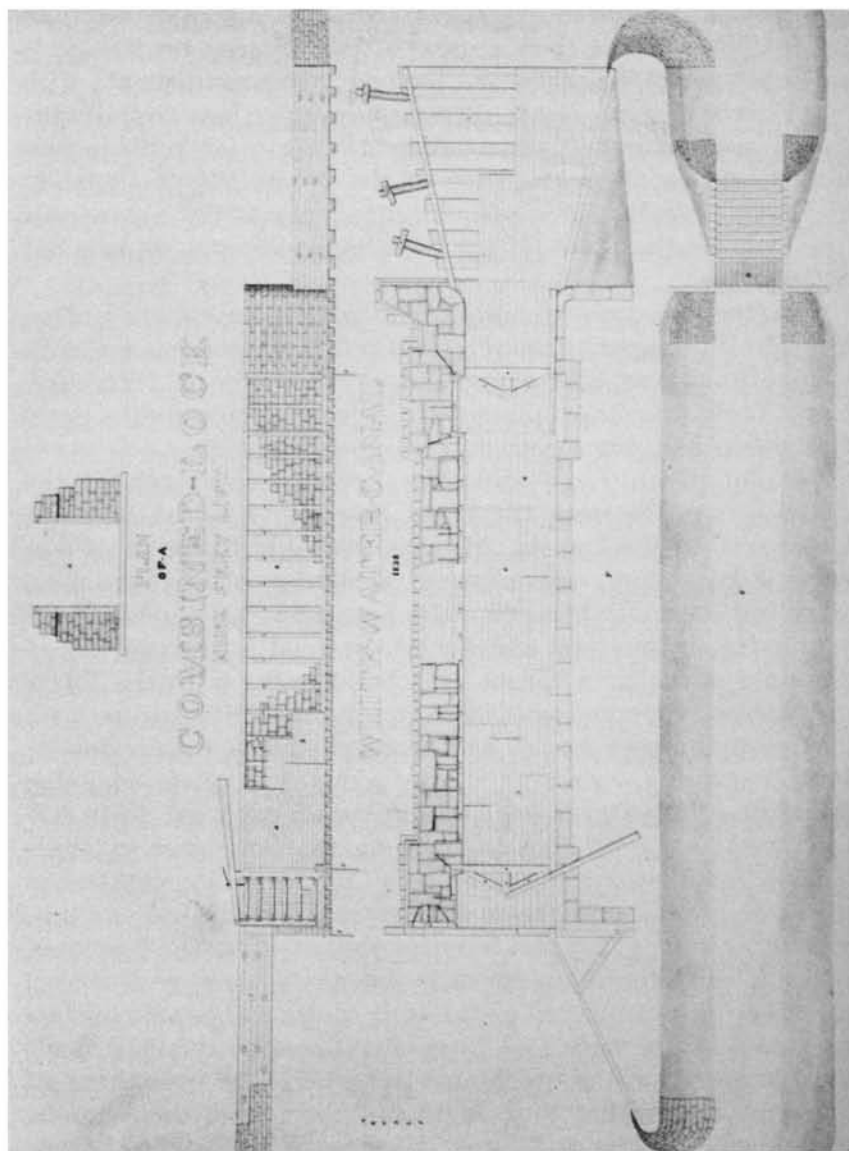
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<sup>12</sup> Several lines and an illustration have been deleted here.

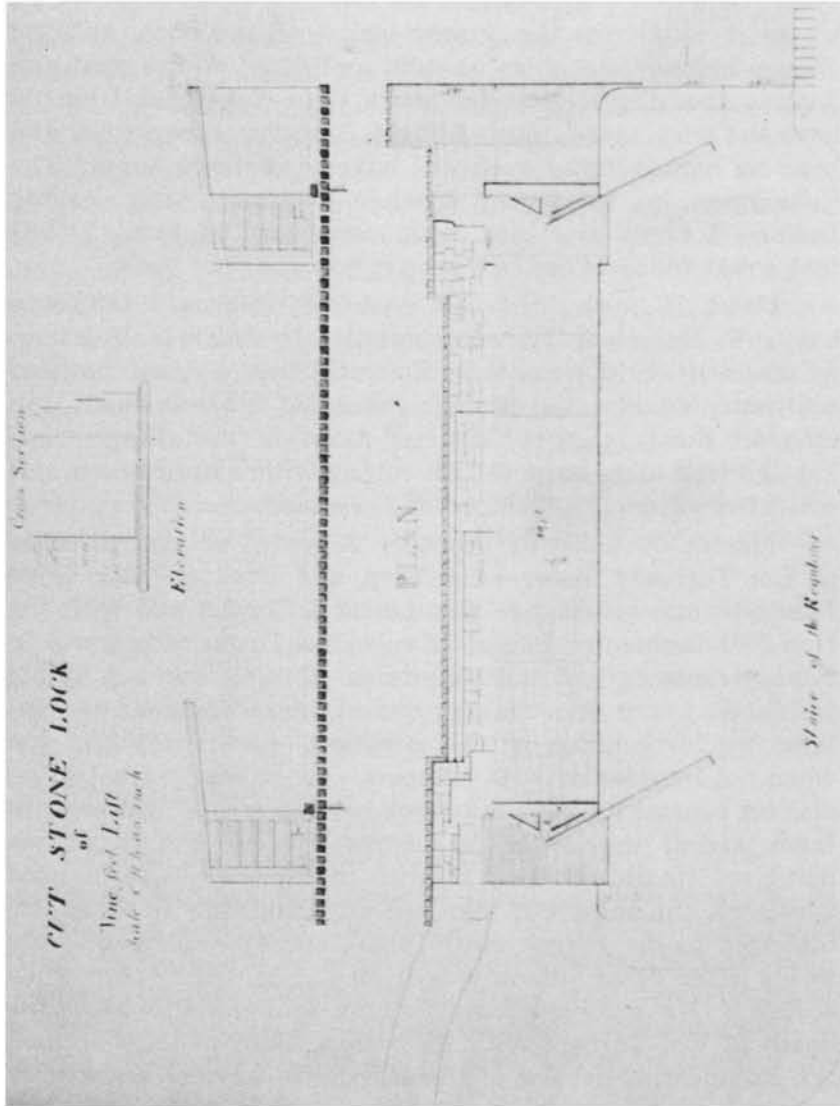
building out of Cincinnati. It was under his directions the Wabash Canal was built, and for some years after he continued in charge of it as manager. He ultimately became a Director in the Pittsburg, F Wayne & Chicago Rail way and I think continues in that relation although quite aged. (He is still alive 1883) He while at Cincinnati, became intimate with my Father Joseph Gest. It was through that acquaintance that I secured my employment by the State of Indiana and located at the General Office of the White Water Canal at Harrison. Mr Williams official engagements did not permit him to leave the State Office at Indianapolis and we saw but little of him.

After I became connected with Steam Rail ways I often met Mr Williams and scarcely a year has passed since the Ft Wayne Road was built that I did not meet him at Pittsburg, New York, or other place. He allways showed his early friendship and our meetings continued pleasant.

Colnl. Elish Long—was the Acting Commisson of the State—the go between the Chief Engineer and the Resident Engineers on the Canals. He was probably 55 years of age when I knew him, was pleasant company, plain, put on no airs, but quiet in manner. He new how to appreciate us young fry, in our ups and downs, in good humor or bad. I certainly never shall forget a night he spent with the Party in what we supposed was in a nice White frame house with its Green shutters &c—it had been selected specially for its seductive looks, supposing it was something better than the ordinary—things past well enough until we went to bed if thirteen tired chaps like us lying on the floor with a single blanket for Feathers under us (the Colonel in the only bed in the room in one corner) for Pillows each his coat rolled up in a ball. Not more than ten minutes elapsed after the light was put out, than the more sensitive began to show restiveness, a while after commenced exchanging views and become unanimous that there were Bed Bugs about, some said they smelt them, others that they felt some thing crawling over them all the time, others that they could feel them with their hands. By mid night every body was wider awake than ever before in their lives. As for myself being the hot head of the crowd and not given to withholding truthful deserving opinions, had by my oaths attracted Col Longs especial attintion, and he came over to where I was and insisted on exchanging places,



GEST'S DRAWING OF A WHITEWATER CANAL LOCK



GEST'S DRAWING OF A WHITEWATER CANAL LOCK

Courtesy Ohio Historical Society, Columbus.

which we did as he thought I would not swear so bad, but good lord—the Bugs were so thick in the bed that they over ran me at once and it [was] impossible to put my hand any where either on my body, or the bed but what it rested on bugs. It was from the Frying pan into the Fire, and the change by the Colonel, as he said, as I could do the most and loudest swearing, it was not more than right that I should have the most cause. Such a night. I never experienced and hope no human being ever will have to undergo again. The Coln never let me forget it when we met. After leaving Indiana I never saw him again nor heard of him. I [he] took great fancy to me and gave me a very rare book.

*Colnl. [Simpson] Torbert* died 20th February 1838 was buried at Harrison. He was succeeded by *Solomon Holeman*, as Resident Engineer—this Holeman was a good natured soul not probably over 35 but looked 55. He was small thin man all skin and bone, suffered terribly with Dispepsia—kept himself alive he said with rubbing with a hard brush. He was afterwards [a] member of Congress.

*Martin Coryell* was probably 25 years of age. Brother of Col Torberts Sister—was born and lived at New Hope Pennsylvania, his Father was Lewis S Coryell and with the Hon S D Ingham of Bucks Co ruled the Democratic party in Pennsylvania east of the Mountains. Coryell was a jolly old fashioned young man making quaint, quick remarks, in contrast or furtherance of Conversation—ever ready for fun when not interfering with business—great hand with Ladies, visiting constantly, especially took hand in all jolification with them, and if they failed to suggest, he had the faculty of doing so. He did not seem to hitch to any one but had a good time with one and all, if they had any good time in them. He managed to not marry until [blank space] and by referenc to his letter dated [blank space] 18..... it will be seen when & how.<sup>13</sup> He returned from Indiana some months after the death of Col Torbert with his sister. Subsequently entered the Engineering service of Pennsylvania—several years after engaged elsewhere—took up his residence permanently at Wilkes barre—for a number of years passed, [he] has been attending the Annual Meetings of the Society of Civil Engineers. Has several times within last ten years called at

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<sup>13</sup> No letter relating to Coryell's marriage was located in Gest's papers.



Cincinnati having preserved his friendly feelings for my parents and Sister and myself. Still alive 188[3].

*Clement Dare*—was originally a journeyman coach maker, self made and self educated. He studied Engineer while a journeyman—got his first practical service on White Water Canal, [he] had the charge of the Laurenceburg end. He became quite expert as a mathematician in its exact form, and fond of discovering mathematical formulas to shorten or make exact calculations of irregular figures. He was terribly slow—utterly impossible for him to approximate at any thing, must be exact, would spend any amount of time and undergo great personal discomfort to get things right, when there was no necessity for exactness. This extreme care almost destroyed [h]is practical value as an Engineer. In fact he was out of place except when mathematical exactness, Instrumented accuracy and closest personal attention were necessary. The result was his life was frittered away on things not requiring his skill. His integrity was equal to his accuracy. He accumulated sufficient to purchase a good Farm near Oxford Ohio, to which he retired and lived to be quite an old man.

*T S R Noel*—Had been raised a journeyman printer—took to engineering probably at 35—really knew nothing about it and too lazy to learn—he soon after disappeared, at least I never heard of him.

*Myron S Webb*, had some abilities, but lazy and vain, weakness for a Lady but either afraid or did not know how to go about her—disappeared.

*Thomas Wardell*—Dont know what became of him.

*John Farquer*—a [illegible] could come at a fellow, as meekly and obsequiously as any one. He knew enough about Engineering to know he could succeed better in Politics. Subsequently became Member of Congress—but never heard of his setting that august body beside itself. His autograph is on the *other side* of this *page*. Dead but not Congress unfortunately.

*Granville S Williams*—Nephew of Jessie L Williams, subsequently turned attention to Commercial matters, became partner in the house of Spragu & Whiteman (Whole sale Grocery) Died in prime of life—rather fond of generous living—never married.

*Wm B Young*—well bred and well meaning young man, generous companionable &c. It was not his fault that he did not succeed—it was not in him, although he tried and desired to be a success. He was one of those creatures of which there are a great many. For some natural deficiency not discoverable, and for no want of effort application desire &c &c, some how remain as they are. He finally disappeared from my knowledge.

Of the others—I have never heard since.