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### OLD BARN NEAR PLAINFIELD

About a mile and a half out of Plainfield, there is an old , red barn. This barn originally was a house and that it was converted into a barn years ago. This barn is painted red and at one time had a door with intricate glass windows and two windows in the left side. Also, two gray buildings stand close to the barn, one originally used as a barn, and the other only an outbuilding. In 1985 George Shurtz owned the building along St. Rt. 93. Shurtz was born and grew up in the building.

BLACKSMITH SHOP NEWCOMERTOWN



ERN CARR'S BLACKSMITH SHOP - BETWEEN 230 + 238 W. CANAL ST. EARLY 1900.



BEHIND TEMPERANCE TAVERN 221W. CANAL ST.

136 S. BRIDGE ST.  
CARRIAGE AND STABLE



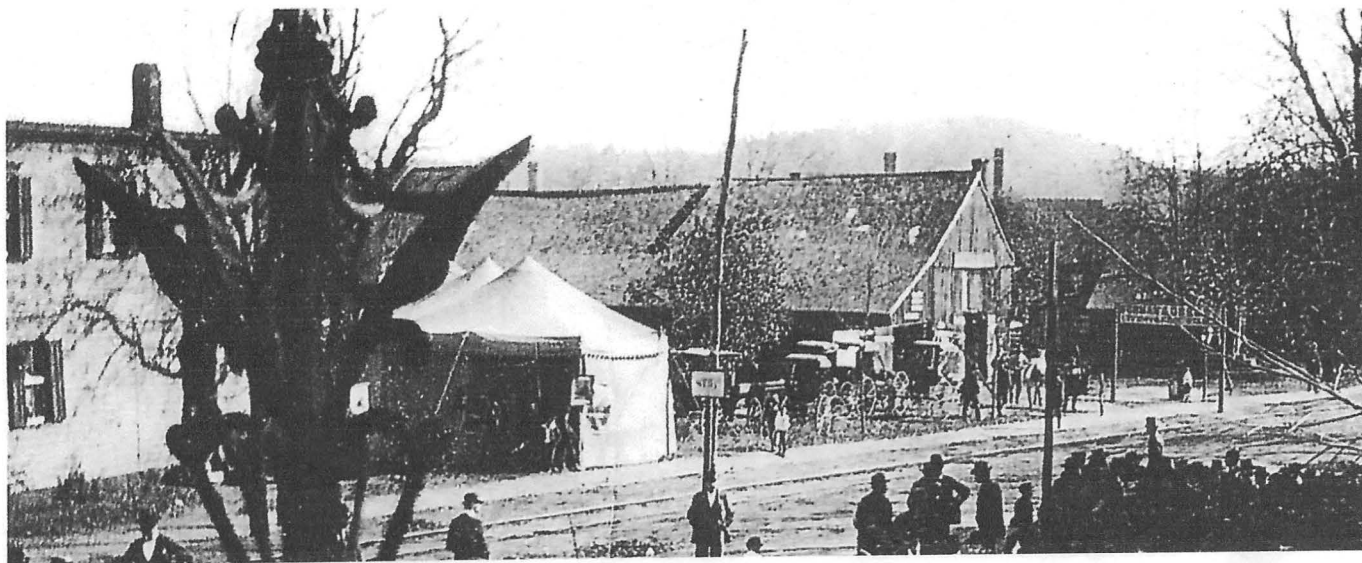


GLOBE HOTEL

<sup>LIVERY</sup>  
JIM SONDLES  
FLEMING BARN  
LIVERY STABLE

NORMAN + DORSEY  
LIVERY STABLE  
N. E. CORNER OF  
BRIDGE ST. + MINDEN CT.

4



BRIDGE ST.

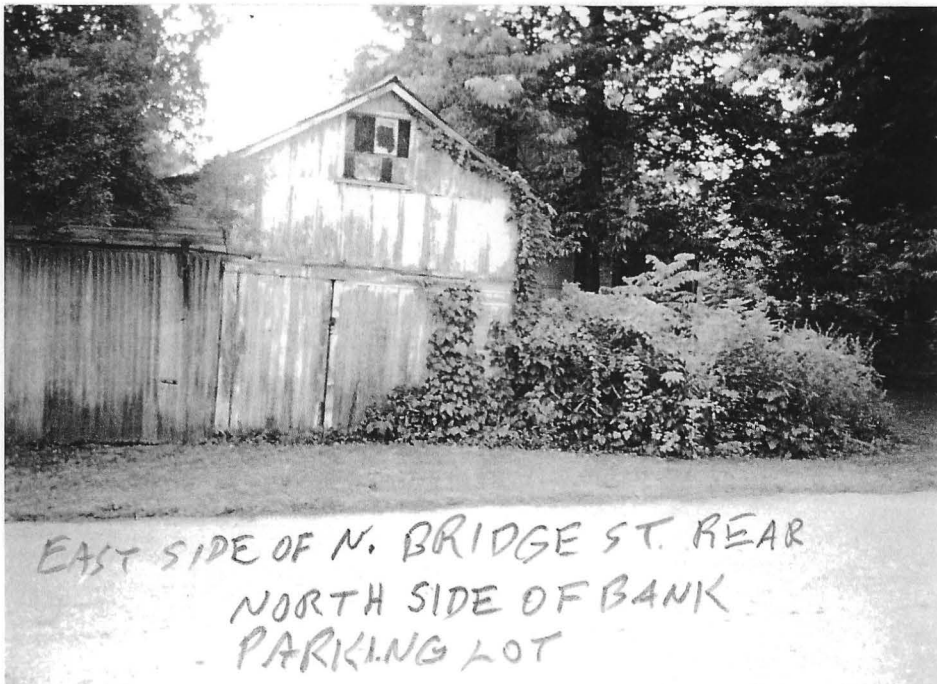


Ike Norris' Blacksmith Shop that once was situated on Main St. in Newcomerstown where Watts' True Value Hardware now has a parking is shown above.

BARN

223 N. BRIDGE  
REAR

BARN CORNER TO CORNER  
229 N. BRIDGE ST.  
REAR



EAST SIDE OF N. BRIDGE ST. REAR  
NORTH SIDE OF BANK  
PARKING LOT

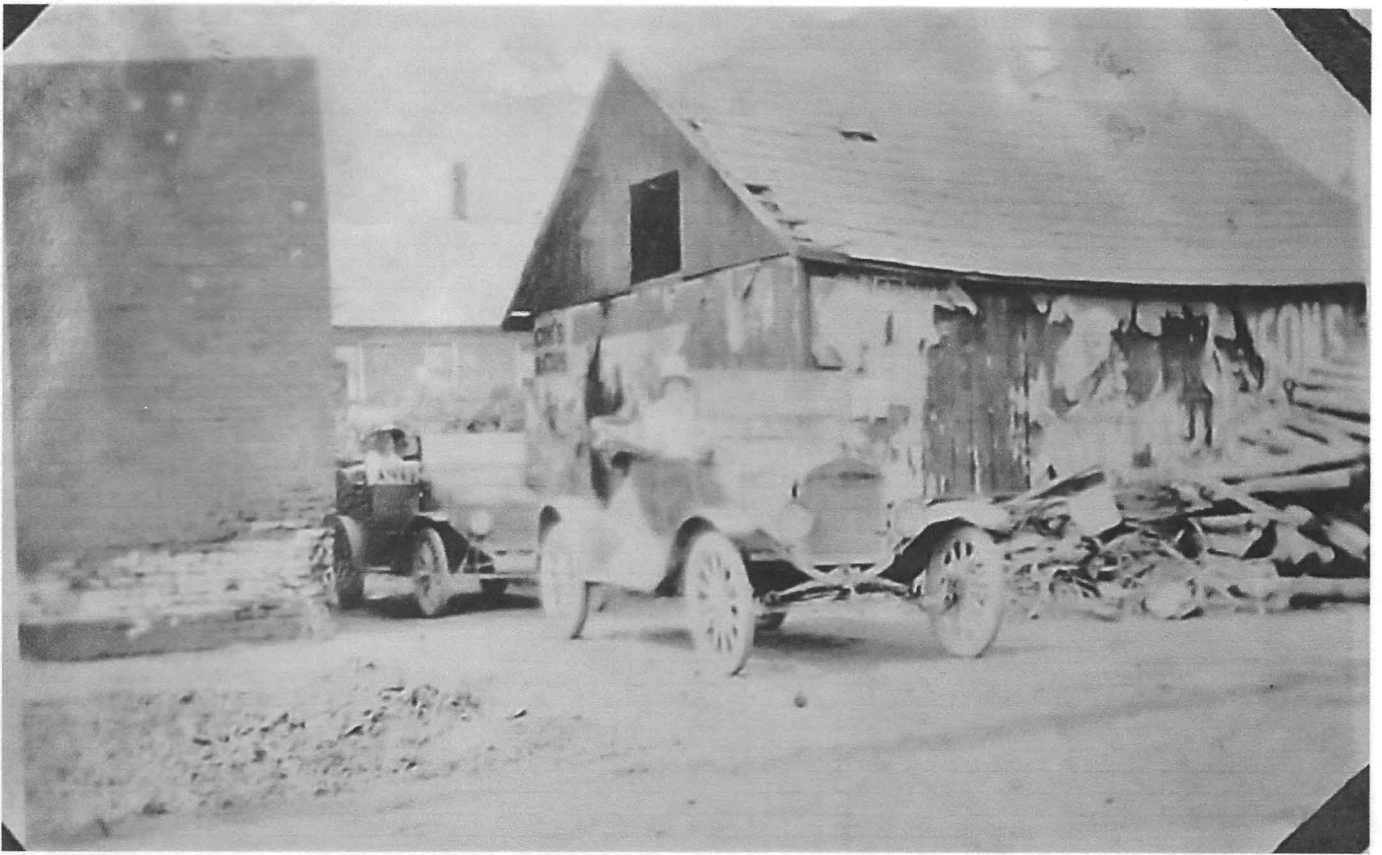




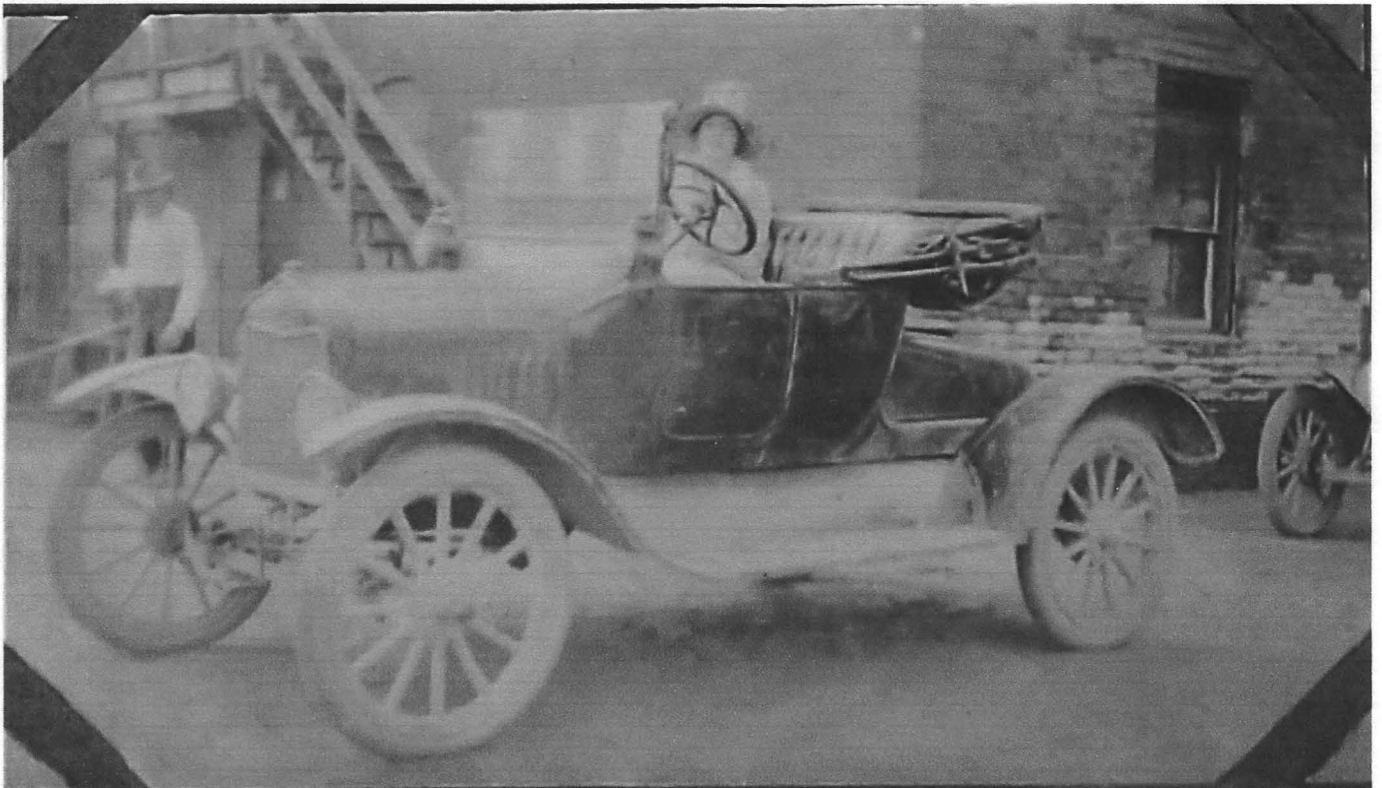


126 W. NEIGHBOR ST.





UNKNOWN

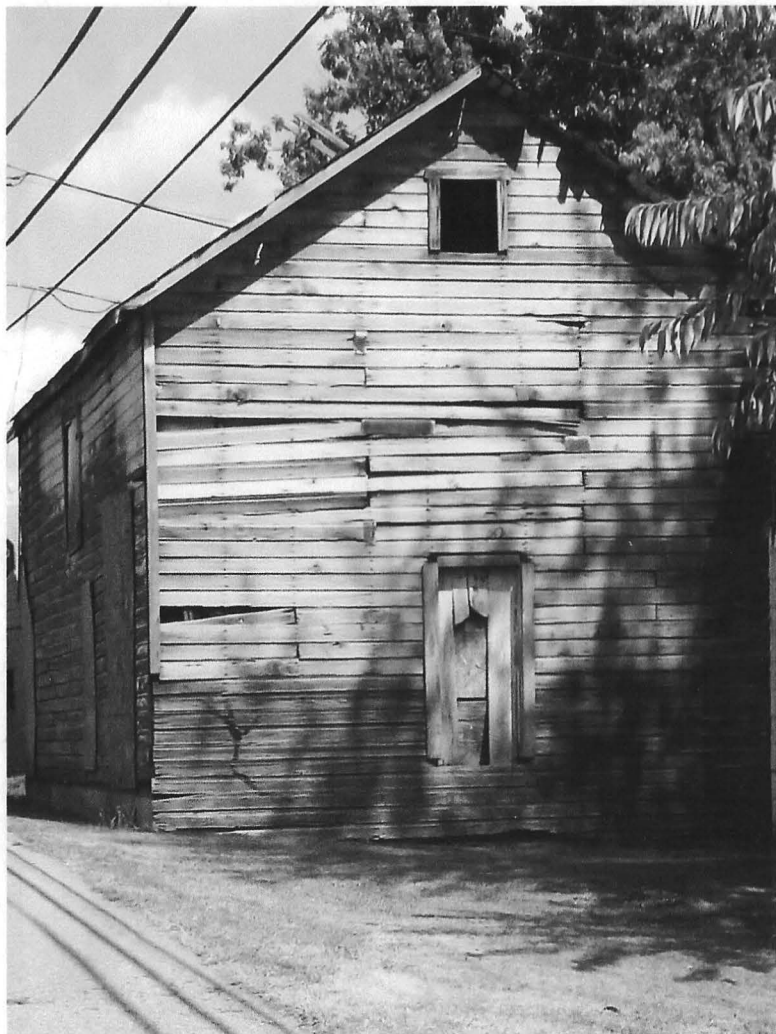


440 S.  
OXFORD  
AVE.



167 E. CHURCH ST.



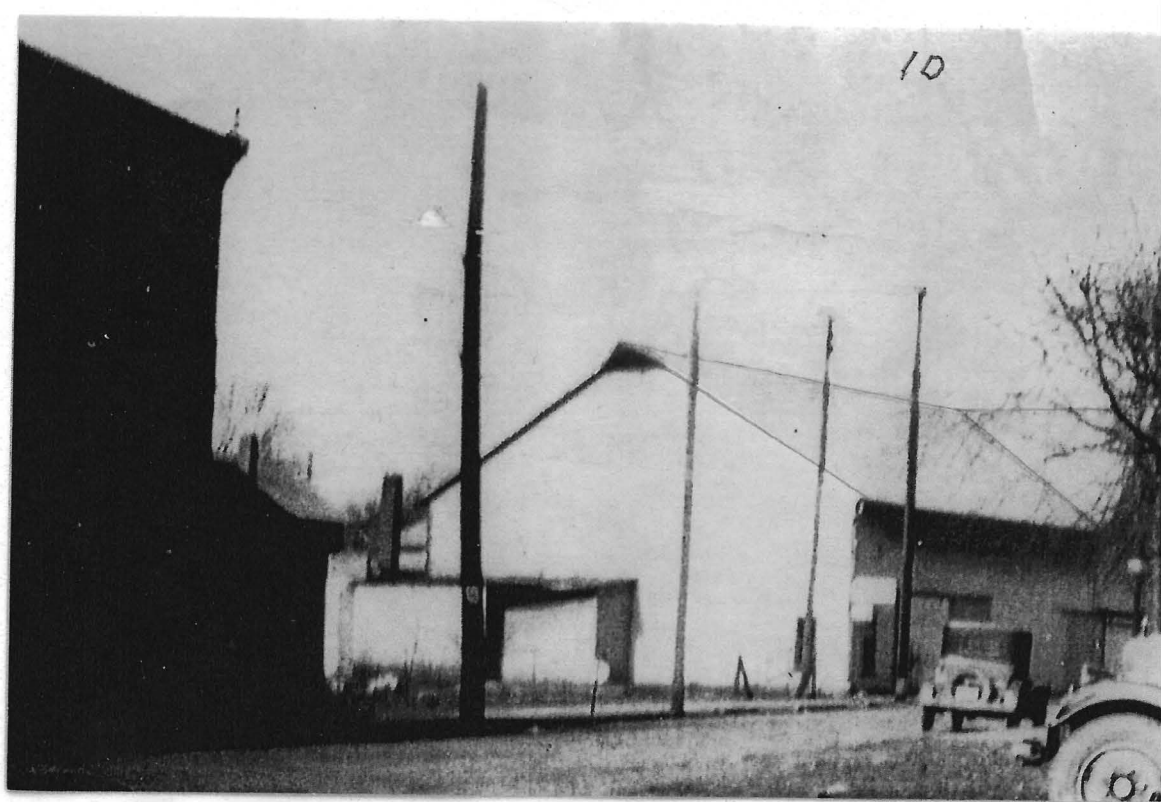


204 W. CHURCH ST.



426 PEARL





N. BRIDGE ST

CLAYTON NORMAN





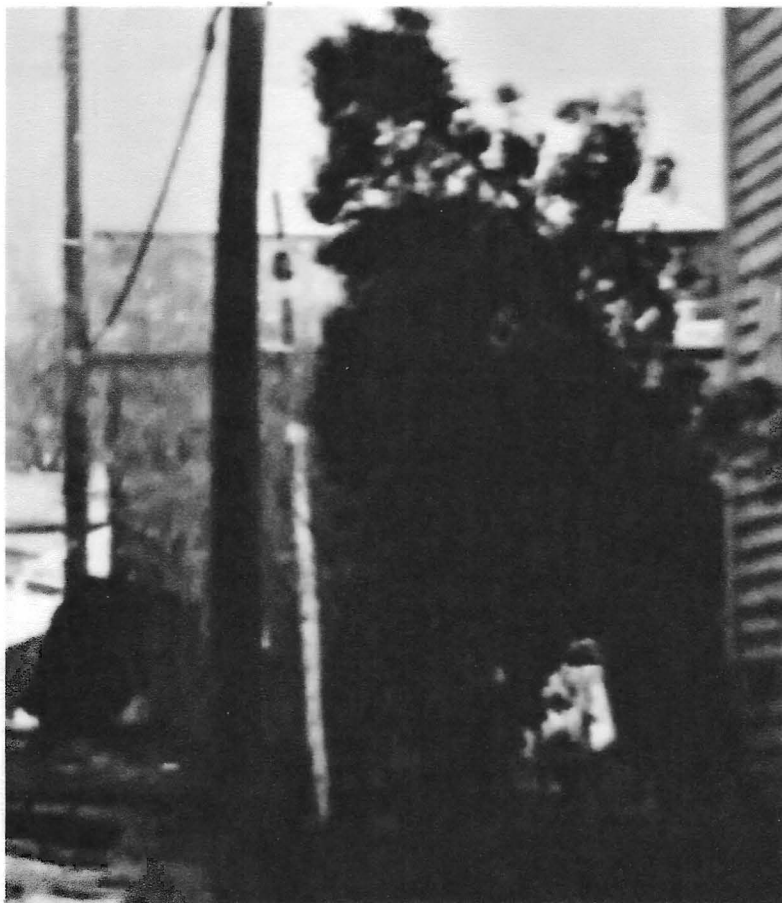
355 EAST CANAL ST. REAR

35 381 E.  
E. CANAL  
ST.  
REAR





782 E. STATE ST.



LIVERY STABLE  
1901

BARN 1907

FIRE DEPT.  
1915

AUTO GARAGE  
1924

124 W. MAIN ST. REAR



CANAL ST. BRIDGE OVER BUCKHORN CREEK



PILLING ST. BRIDGE

PILLING ST.  
BRIDGE OVER  
CREEK



New comerstown, ohio



1950's

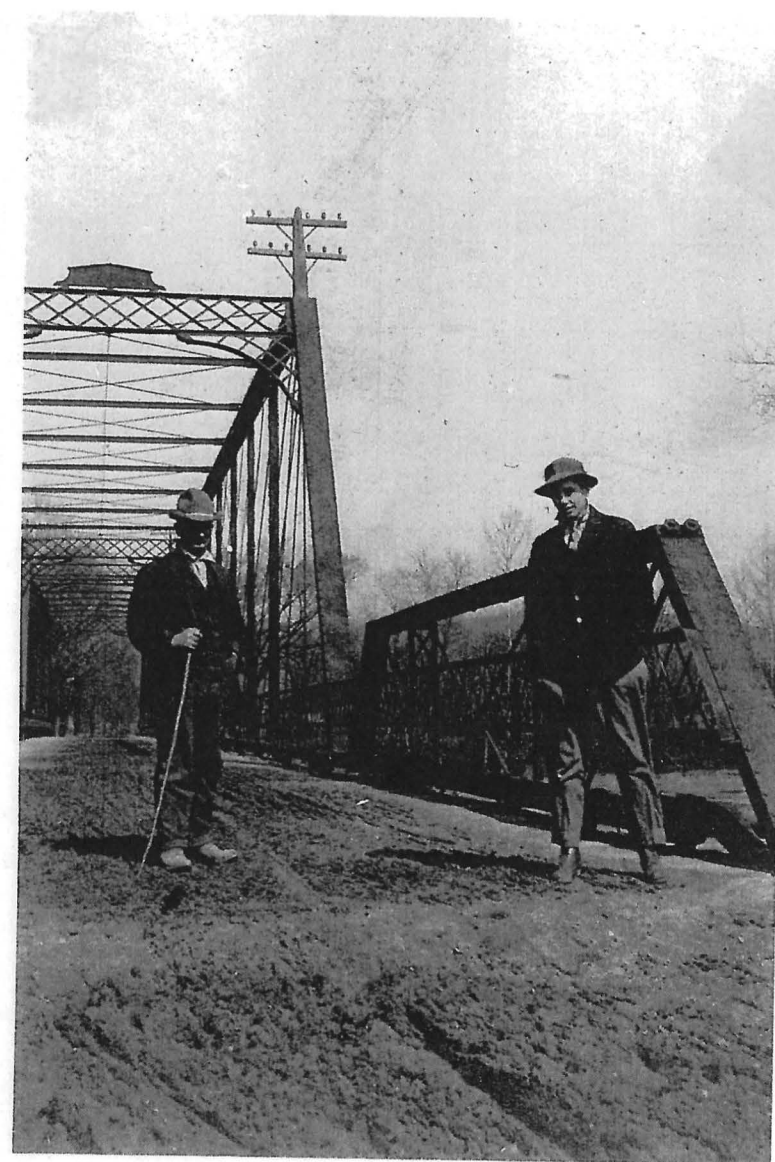
Nugen Bridge E. state st. - Pilling st.



Photo courtesy of Laurie (Callentine) Sullivan, The Woodlands, Texas  
This group of Newcomerstown youths appear to be having a grand old time skating on the Tuscarawas River in this circa 1910 photo. The old Nugen Bridge, demolished in the early 1960s, is seen in the background. The current Route 258 bridge, built in 1960 is located just east of where the old bridge was located.



Photo courtesy William Casteel, West Lafayette  
Enjoying the good old summer time! Pictured here are a group of Newcomerstown area residents canoeing on the Tuscarawas River. They are seen near the old River Street bridge which was demolished in 1968 to make way for the current structure. In the very distance the old C&M railroad trestle can barely be seen.



Nugen Bridge, Pilling &  
E. State Street  
Tuscarawas River  
View looking north.



Newcomerstown Ohio from South Hill  
RIVER ST. BRIDGE

RIVER ST. BRIDGE 1908



969 Birdseye view of Newcomerstown O





Photo courtesy of William Casteel

View (looking south) of the River Street bridge with the central span missing following its collapse into the flooded Tuscarawas River. A workman was killed at this site several days later during repair of the bridge. The bridge was later demolished in 1968 to make way for the bridge that is presently there.

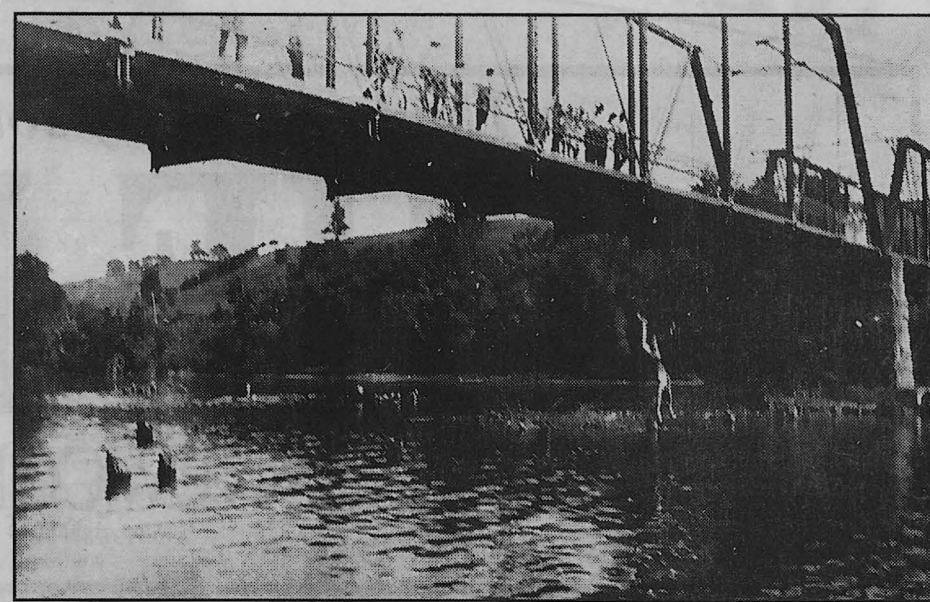


Photo courtesy of William Van Sickle, Newcomerstown

Before Cy Young Pool's existence, youth (and some adults at times, too!) used to swim in the Tuscarawas River, the Clow Hole, or the old gravel pit that was once located in the west end of Newcomerstown. Pictured here are a group of youths using the old River Street Bridge as a diving spot, enjoying a cool dip in the Tuscarawas. The photo was taken circa 1920.

# PILLING ST. BRIDGE OVER RAILROAD



1928

This photo was taken the day Brode changed from horses to horsepower.



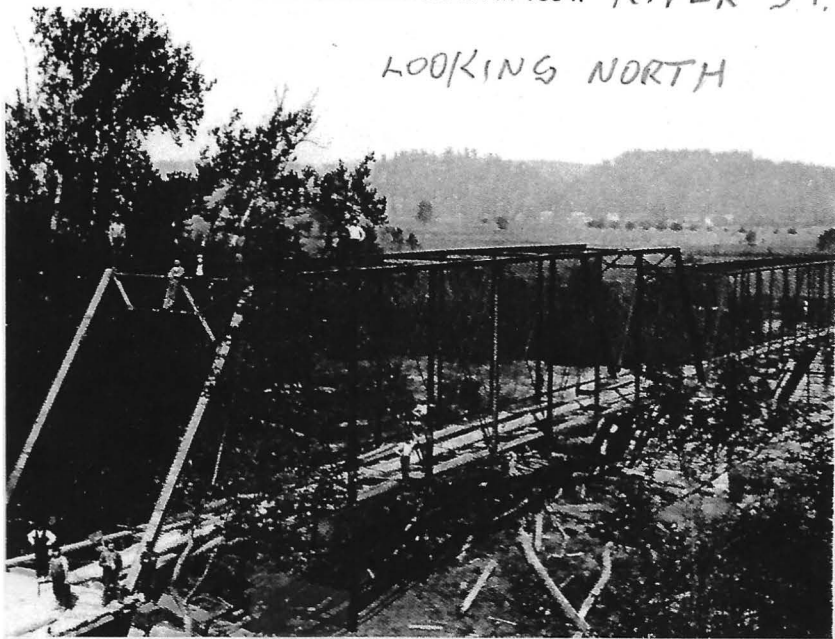
1894 THE SAME BRIDGE TWICE 1968

Brode built this 4-span steel truss bridge across the Tuscarawas River at Newcomerstown in 1894.

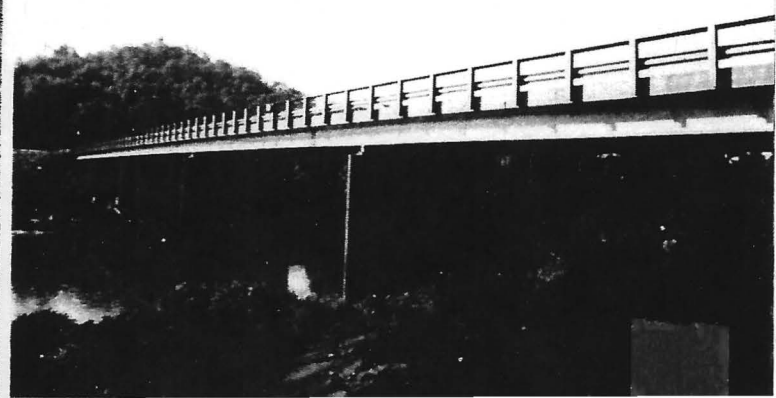
RIVER ST.

Seventy-four years later, in 1968, the company built this modern concrete replacement in the same spot.

LOOKING NORTH



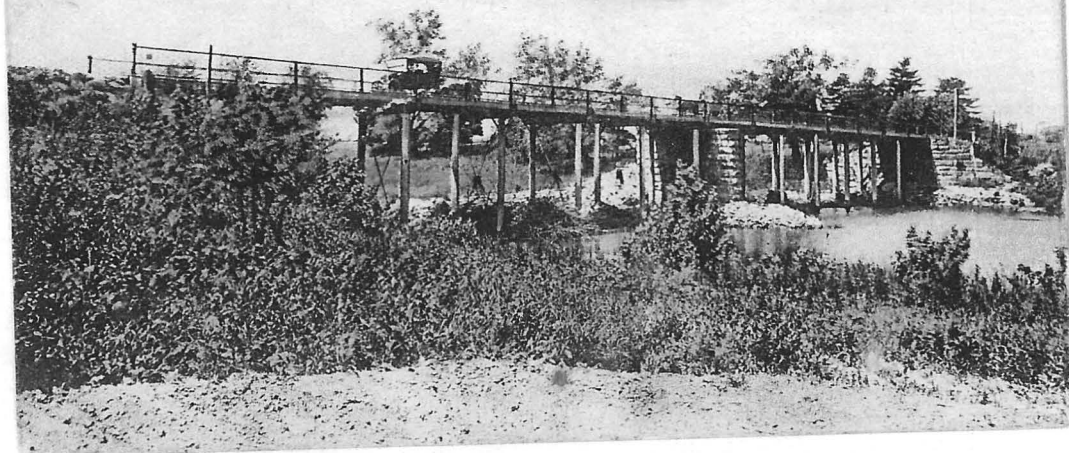
LOOKING SOUTH



1915

Cement Bridge near Newcomerstown, Ohio.

19



1911

Tuscarawas River Bridge and River Street leading into Newcomerstown, Ohio.



## Covered Bridge Book Is Now on Sale Here

Terry Ellis Miller, Dover, has written a book entitled "The Covered Bridges of Tuscarawas County," and it is now on sale at Phillips' Sundries in Newcomerstown.

Within the book Miller explains why bridges were covered and where they were located within the village of Newcomerstown. He points out early settlers discovered the bridges would last six times longer if they were protected from the weather by a roof.

He mentions how bridges were always built of wood prior

to 1878, and of iron after that. Much of his information is gleaned from county commissioner's journals.

Miller's book not only tells of the local bridges, but also describes many of the historical sites of the surrounding communities.

He says in his book Newcomerstown was known as Neighbortown until 1827. Some bridges built around this vicinity were one at Pillings Sawmill (Nugen's Ford) in 1846, and one across the canal (going through the center of town) in 1846.

JULY  
1975



*Newcomerstown, Ohio*

RT. 16

BETWEEN  
NEW NEWCOMERSTOWN  
AND  
SHADY BEND

WEST OF NEWCOMERSTOWN

Tuscarawas County  
Helped Build the Bridge

Old Time Document Showing That Tuscarawas County  
Helped Build the old Covered Bridge West Of  
Newcomerstown

Through the kindness of R.F. Dent of this city, the INDEX is enabled to present below an old document in which many people in this and Coshocton County will feel special interest. The agreement which was signed by two of the then commissioners of Coshocton Co., and a like number from Tuscarawas County, was lodged in the hands of the late George H. Dent, and the amount stipulated were to be paid by Tuscarawas County, when Mr. Dent was a referee should declare that the terms of the agreement had been faithfully carried out.

Mr. Dent died 40 years ago, and all the parties named in the document went to their long home years ago. Jacob Houk whose signature appears on behalf of Tuscarawas County was the father of the present commissioner Houk, and served as commissioner at the time Contract was drawn in 1853. Following is the document in detail:

THE CONTRACT

James Houk, John Shank and Robert Seaman as commissioners of Tuscarawas county hereby agree with Henry Smerer, Owen Evans and Abraham Sshaffer commissioners of Coshocton County as follows:----

The party of the first part hereby agree with Henry Smerer, Owen Evans and Aabraham Shaffer commissioners of Coshocton County as follows---

The party of the first part hereby agree with the party of the second part that as soon as the abutements and pier for a bridge at Miskinin's ford is finished in accordance with an article of agreement entered this day by the party of the second with I.T. Arnold and Henry Moats for the building of said pier and abutments to draw an order on the treasury for the sum of twelve hundred and fourteen dollars, as soon as the double track bridge is finished and completed upon said aabutments and pier according to a contract about to be entered into the building thereof by the commissioners of Coshocton County with I.G. Hagerty of Nashport, Muskingham County and the same is passable with teams, to draw an order on the treasure of Tuscarawas County, payable to G.I. Hagerty dir the sum of -----and deliver the same to the party of the second part hereby agrees \_\_\_\_\_ and completion of the bridge in a reasonable time.

James Houk ) Commissioner  
John Shank ) Tuscarawas Co.  
Owen Evans ) Commissioners  
Abram Shaffer ) Coshocton Co.

The Newcomerstown News Index  
Wednesday May 24, 1905



# HERE'S BRIDGE TO BE REPLACED

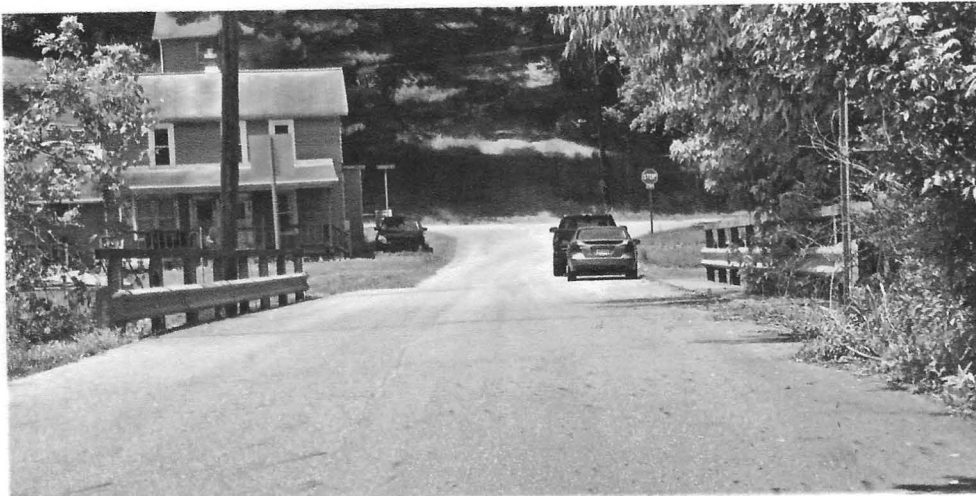
Aug 14-1934

22

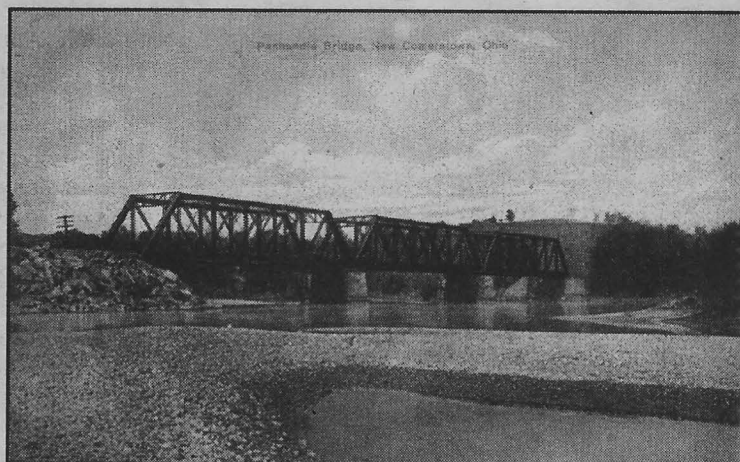


Dangerous driving conditions over the Newcomerstown bridge on the Coshocton-Newcomerstown road will be eliminated when a new \$71,329 structure replaces the one shown here. Contracts for the construction of a new bridge will be awarded late this month.

The 516-foot structure is one of the longest bridges on U. S. Route 36 and because of its narrowness has been extremely dangerous. A Greyhound bus, nine feet wide, is shown driving off the west end of the bridge, which is only 16 feet in width.



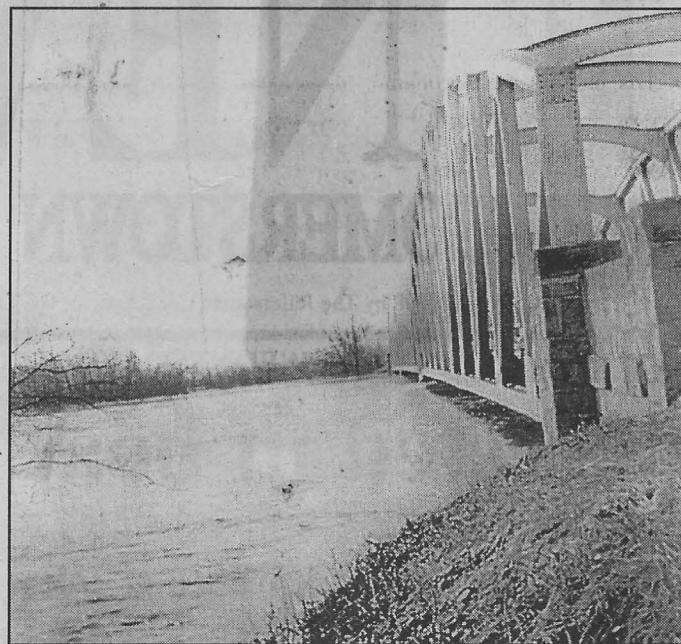
NEIGHBOR ST.  
BRIDGE  
OVER  
BUCKHORN CREEK



The old Panhandle Railroad bridge that still spans the Tuscarawas River west of town is pictured above in this old picture postcard provided by Bill Casteel, West Lafayette. Park Hill is visible in the background.



The old bridge that spanned the Tuscarawas River at Newcomerstown, connecting to old Rt. 21 (now St. Rt. 258), is shown in this file photo dated Jan. 23, 1937.



Village residents can probably relate to this picture of the old west State St. bridge pictured in 1935 when the Tuscarawas River was near flood stages. The three span bridge had fallen into disrepair by the late 1970s and was finally demolished in 1980-81 to make way for the current bridge. (Photo courtesy of William Casteel, West Lafayette)



1946 WEST OF NEWCOMERSTOWN  
BUILT 1935 DEMOLISHED IN 1981

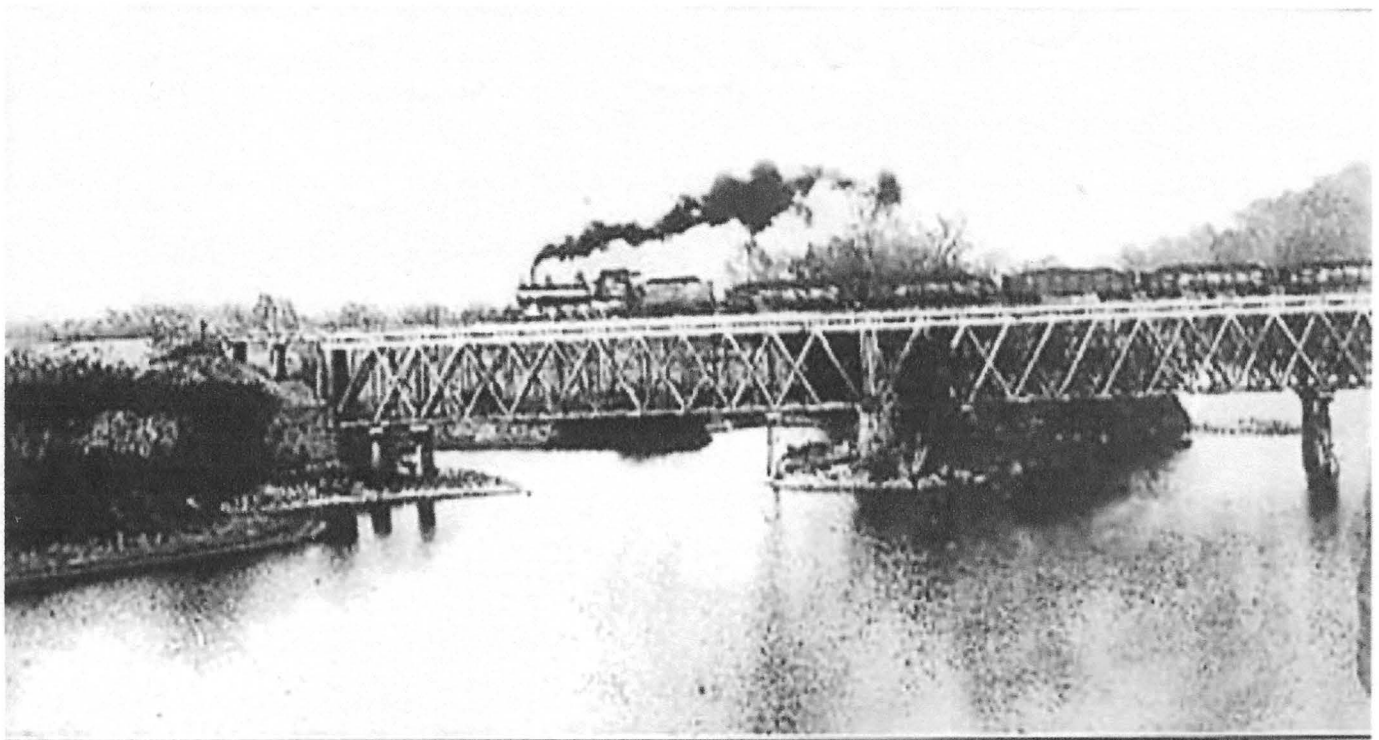


Panhandle Bridge, New Comerstown, Ohio

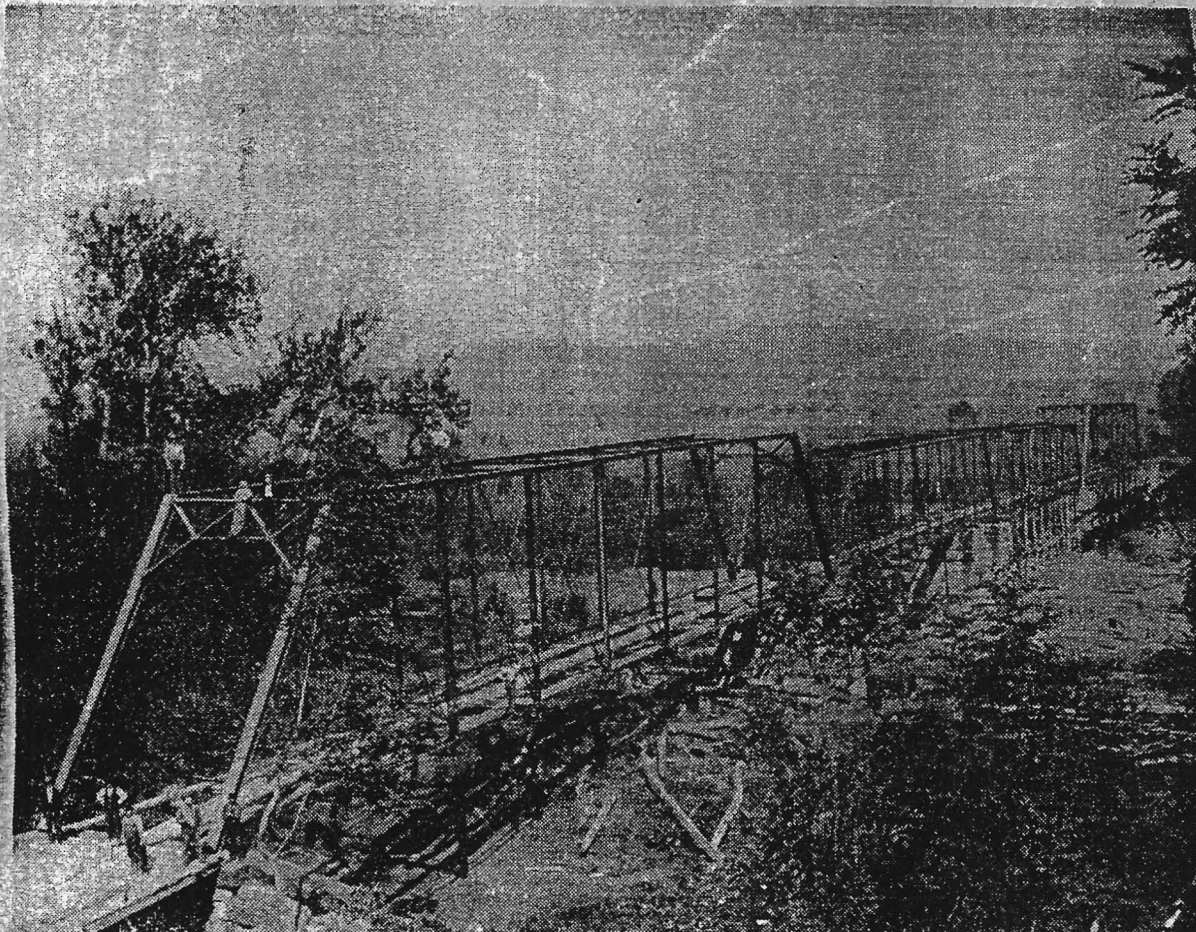
1911

REPLACED IN 1926





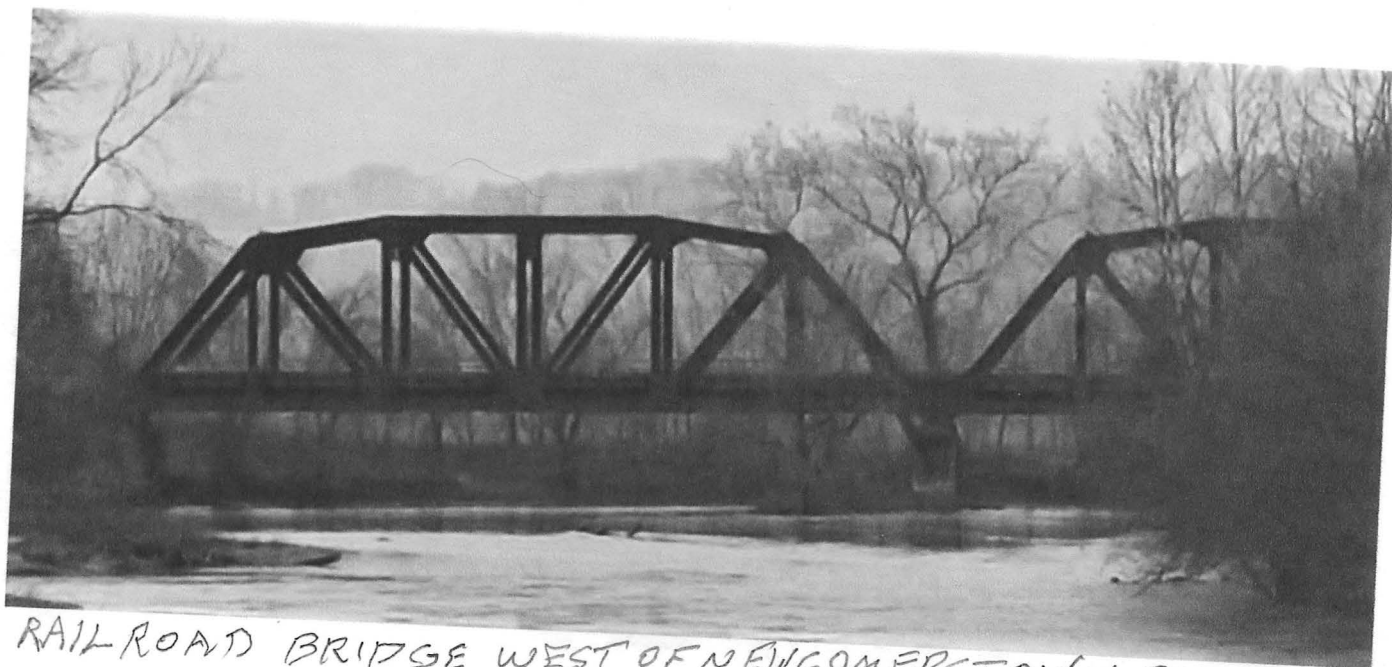
C & M BRIDGE



RIVER ST.  
ST.  
BRIDGE  
BUILT  
BY BRODE  
W.M.  
BRIDE

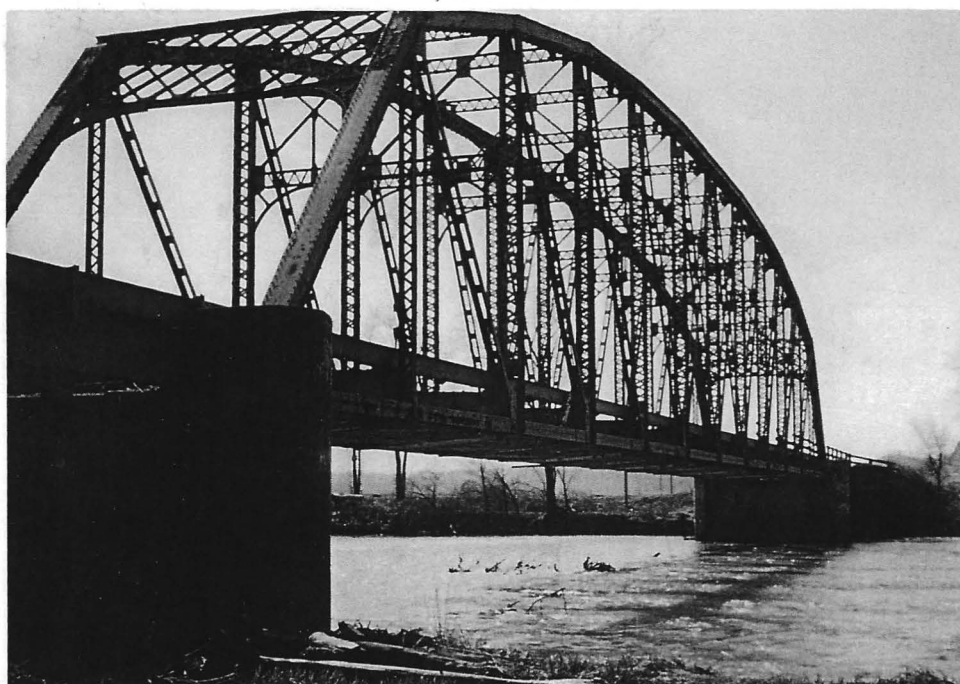


W. 2ND STREET RIVER BRIDGE  
COSHOCTON, OHIO

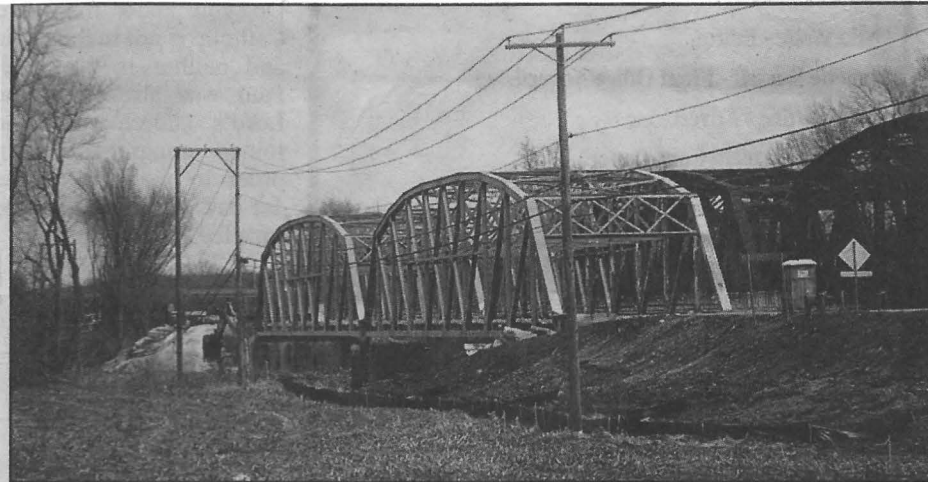


RAILROAD BRIDGE WEST OF NEWCOMERSTOWN-BUILT 1926

ORANGE BRIDGE







William Casteel/Newcomerstown News

The State Route 36 bridge (pictured on left) has been a landmark to the Port Washington-Gnadenhutzen communities since it was constructed in 1949.



The old River Bridge at Gnadenhutzen appears on this postcard, postmarked Oct. 24, 1911, by the Gnadenhutzen Post Office and a one-cent stamp still affixed to it. The postcard is one of several featuring scenes of the local area and sent to The News courtesy of Dale Thompson, Iowa Park, Texas.

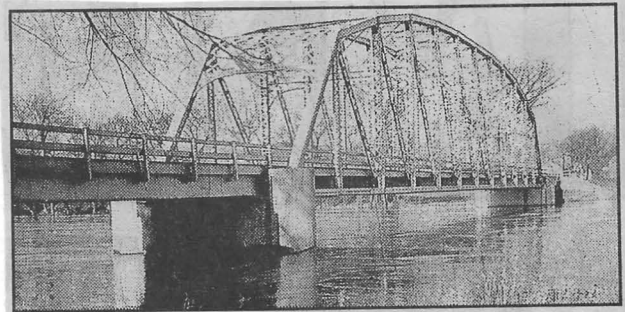
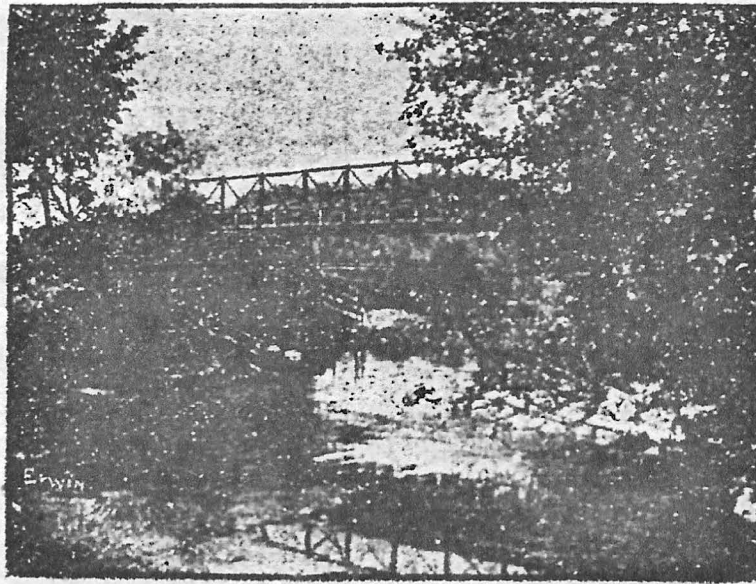


Photo courtesy of Chris Hall, Marysville

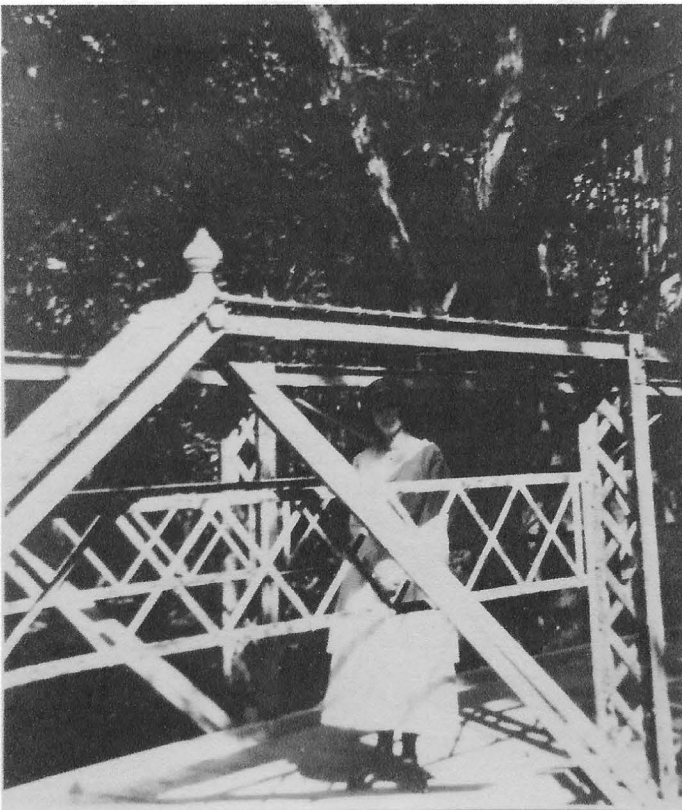
This view of the State Route 751 bridge at Orange is believed to have been taken by the late Bob Hall. The photo is circa 1950. The bridge was demolished and replaced with a newer structure 20-plus years ago following deterioration of the old truss-style bridge.



### AN INTERESTING SPOT.

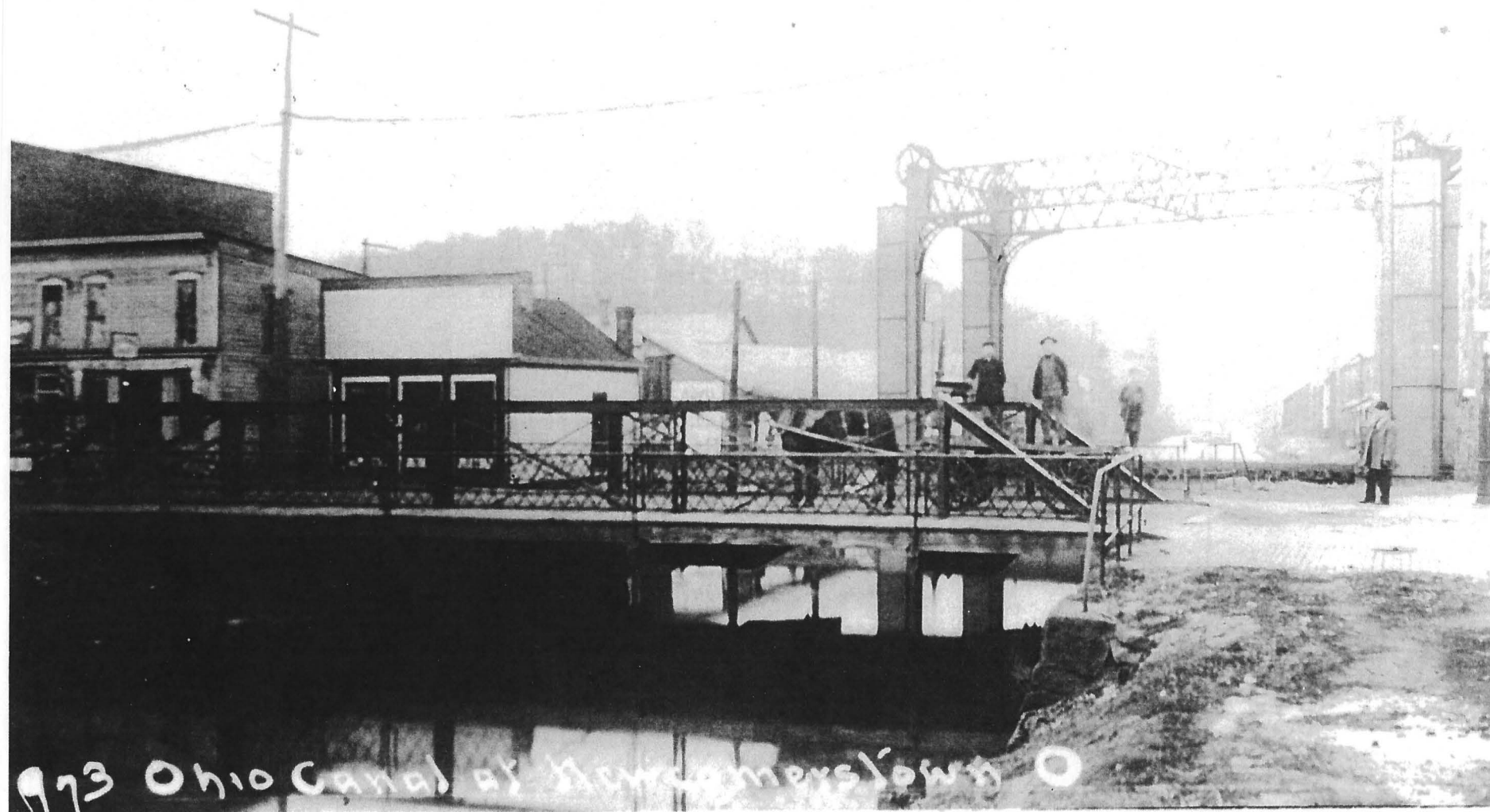
We present our readers this week a photo-engraving of a well known land mark which has disappeared before the march of progress. This is a good picture of the North Cross Street Bridge, which was this summer replaced by a fine new structure. It is a place which holds pleasant memories for many people and as the bridge has now disappeared this picture should—and probably will—be kept as a remembrance of the place.

2-22-1899



CROSS ST. BRIDGE





IRON BRIDGE ST. IRON BRIDGE OVER CANAL



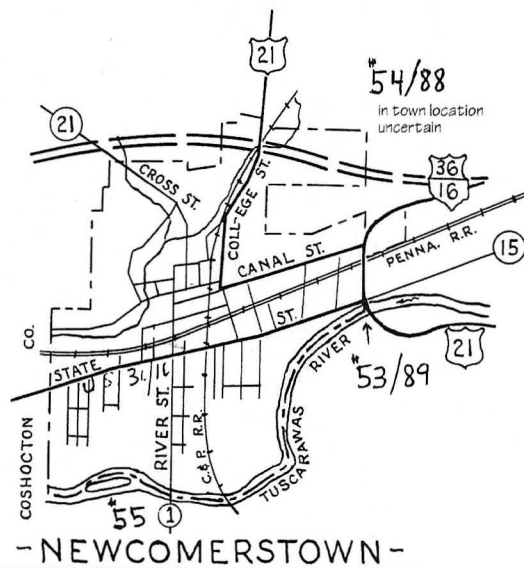
C+M RAILROAD BRIDGE OVER CANAL



C+M. R.R. Bridge Newcomerstown OHIO

tal massacre there in 1782. Until 1855 the river remained unbridged. In that year G. J. and J. B. Hagerty of Licking County built a three-span covered bridge on the Buckingham plan for \$3716.40. (#50) From the journals -- "Bridge to be built in a Good and Substantial manner, well covered, and with stone abutments." Another \$545 was necessary to finish the bridge in 1856, but it is not known who built the foundations. In the following years the county made numerous repairs to the heavily traveled bridge. In March, 1875, all was swept away in a flood.

Prior to 1830 the only village in Salem Twp. was Salesberry, a tiny settlement along the Tuscarawas River. Though the canal had been built earlier, the town continued to be known as Salesberry until 1832 when it was changed to Port Washington. One month later the Ohio Legislature incorporated the Port Washington Bridge Company. (#49) John Knight, president, was assisted by six board members. Shares of stock sold for \$50 each. As it was a privately owned project, its owners collected tolls set by the state until 1838 when the county bought the crossing for \$400. Throughout the 1850's and 60's great amounts of money were necessary to keep the bridge passable. Paul Wetherby of Port Washington received over \$1000 during only four years for repairs. In 1867-68 John Roenbaugh re-roofed the bridge. Repairs to the foundations totaled over \$2000 in 1869. An order to replank the south track in 1871 reveals that it was a double-lane structure. On July 6, 1875, the commissioners examined the bridge. Agreeing that it was rotten and quite unsafe, they ordered a new iron bridge built. During August the county dismantled the weakened structure.



Newcomerstown, built on the site of an old Indian settlement and known as Neighbortown until 1827, required two Tuscarawas River crossings. The county's first attempt to build a bridge came in 1846 when \$400 was allowed to the treasurer of the building committee for a bridge at Pillings Sawmill, known later as Nugen's Ford where old U.S. 21 crossed. Because the citizens did not meet the county specifications, the order was revoked

in 1848. In 1854 a new committee was created, headed by Robert Nugen (d. 1872) who hired Jacob Smith to build two stone abutments and a pier for \$3481.75. After the foundations were ready in early 1855 the county contracted with Nugen to build a Buckingham bridge at \$12.00 per foot. (#53) Specific though it is, some of the older folks doubt that Nugen, a businessman, could have designed and built the bridge. Lacking any other names, as all funds were paid directly to him, we must list Nugen as the builder. Besides, the 1884 county history reports that he was a contractor on the canal and built the state dam at Trenton. Leaders in those days were often skilled in construction as well as politics and business, e.g. Christian Deardorf. The bridge Nugen built was 270' long in two spans and must have cost more than the \$2127.75 listed.

In 1873 the north span either failed or was destroyed. Rather than replace the entire bridge, the commissioners voted to move the 90' Buckingham span over Ltl. Stillwater just north of Dennison (#65) to Newcomerstown. (#89) It was moved by J.H. Banks for \$975. As indicated before, he must have lengthened the span to the required 135'. In 1880 the entire bridge was re-roofed and re-sided by James Wilcoxon at a cost of \$1265.68. True to style, the elements would not leave well enough alone, for a windstorm, possibly a tornado, removed the roof and set it down on an island below town in 1883. Times were bad financially. In order to build a new span the county levied a special tax.

At the south edge of Newcomerstown where present Co. 1 crosses the river, travellers used Mulvane's Ford until 1848. In that year the county made David Mulvane, Nicholas Neighbor Jr., and L. C. Davis, all of Newcomerstown, responsible for erecting a three-span bridge here. (#55) The county assisted with \$500. Lasting 25 years, it was replaced with an iron bridge in 1873 after 106 residents petitioned for its removal. The north span at Nugen's Ford had been destroyed late in 1872, and it seems quite possible that the Mulvane's bridge also sustained heavy damage at that time.

In 1856 and again in 1866 the commissioners of Tuscarawas County assisted the commissioners of Coshockton County in building two bridges across the county line. The earlier bridge, a two-span, two-lane bridge, was over the river about 2 miles west of Newcomerstown on U.S. 36. In 1866 the river cut a new channel and necessitated a new bridge nearby. In both cases the county bore at least half the cost. While true that Tuscarawas County was technically not responsible for building these bridges, they no doubt helped stimulate commerce between the two counties.



## Chapter VIII

### THE OHIO AND ERIE CANAL BRIDGES

Carrying passengers and freight from Cleveland to Portsmouth, the Ohio and Erie Canal followed the Tuscarawas River through the county. In Newcomerstown it left the river valley and passed through the business district. On June 4, 1851, the commissioners appointed three Newcomerstown businessmen, George H. Dent, Morris Critter, and Lorenzo C. Davis as a committee to erect a bridge over the canal. (#54) The bridge was to be "double track, sides encased with wood, and painted; to be on stone abutments." For this project the county allowed \$300. On March 3, 1852, the above three gentlemen wrote a letter to the commissioners resigning their post. By some lucky chance the letter survived as a bookmark in one of the journals until I found it in 1962. The letter is quoted in full here.

To the Commissioners of Tuscarawas County, Ohio we hereby tender to your honors our resignation of the trust you so generously confided to us at a former session of your honours of letting [sic] out and superintending the building of a bridge across the canal at this place for the following reasons: -- we cannot put the building of stone abutments under contract of such permanency and workmanship as we would be willing to accept as a good job.

2. After putting forth our best efforts and using all the economy we can, we have ascertained that the appropriation of \$300 made by your honors is not sufficient to build such a bridge as the location and business of the place and the interests of the community demands and requires -- and that in order to build a good bridge of double track with stone abutments permanent and durable would require in addition to the appropriation already made the further sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

3. That politically we always have been and practically we still are opposed to the "individual liability system."

We would therefore with this our resignation deferentially suggest to your honors the necessity of such further appropriation as will speedily insure the completion of said bridge. G. H. Dent, L. C. Davis, and M. Critter.

Although the journals record no other appropriations, the bridge was completed. The vagueness of the orders conceals the exact location of the structure. In 1872 the "Upper Canal bridge" was replaced and in 1876 the "Lower Bridge." In any case, iron replaced the covered bridge by 1876. In order to permit boats to travel beneath the old bridge, the abutments and approaches must have been high indeed. The new iron bridges were often at canal level and built to swing over the land when the boats passed.

Another canal bridge stood in Newcomerstown which was completely missed by the journals. (#88) Fortunately between the newspapers and the auditor's Order Book the information survived. On May 11, 1860, the Ohio Democrat advertised for bids. The span was to be double track, 50' long, 20' wide, and 12' high on either the Buckingham plan or the plan of the canal bridge at Lockport. William McCollam and Company, builder of one span of the New Cumberland bridge the same year (#35), completed the bridge for \$466.00. The builder of the masonry is unknown. As in the case of the other Newcomerstown canal bridge, the exact date of removal cannot be determined, but is presumed to have been in the 1870's.

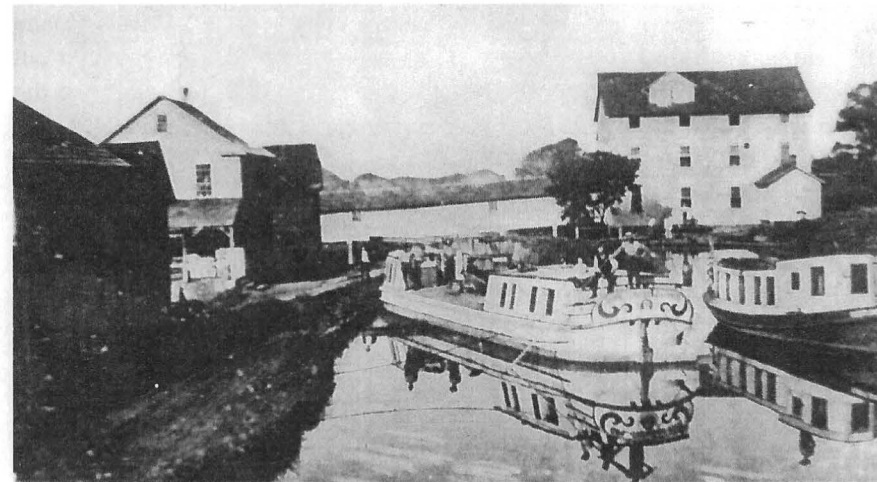


Photo #20. The canal overshoot at Lock Seventeen in 1900.  
Wilson's Mill is on the right.

There used to be a "bridge" over the canal at Lock Seventeen near Gnadenhutten, unlisted for reasons to be shown. Old pictures showing a bridge and mill at Seventeen also reveal glass windows in the bridge. Maps of the area fail to reveal a road over the canal at this point. The reason became obvious when I visited the mill, now known as Wilson's Roller Mill, and discovered that the "bridge" was really an "overshoot," an extension of the building to facilitate loading canal boats. Until its removal in 1949 the structure served also as a passageway over the canal bed to the railroad.

Above Trenton where the river makes a sharp bend, the state built a dam in the 1820's to supply water to the canal. A feeder ditch ran south along the river, past Trenton, and into the canal below town. At Jacob Blickensderfer's residence above Trenton a lane crossed the feeder and dead-ended at the river. Blickensderfer, it is said, had talked the county into continuing the road across the river and up the bluff, but no one could figure out how to do it because the

### Canal in Newcomerstown

In 1825 by an act of the Ohio Legislature, the Ohio Canal came into being. This canal played a prominent role in the history of Newcomerstown for 81 years.

The canal was built in 1827 and the locks were about a mile apart. Over the canal in Newcomerstown there were several bridges which swung on pivots and were operated manually, one at Bridge Street, one at River Street and the railroad bridge crossing the Cleveland and Marietta tracks on Canal Street.

John Garfield, the father of President Garfield, was one of the construction superintendents of one of the locks and young Garfield often played along the banks of the canal.

Many local citizens worked on the canal as masons, millwrights, carpenters, boatmen, dock loaders and lock handlers.

The long, heavy boats hauled grain of all kinds from this vicinity to the storage bins in New Philadelphia and Dover. They also hauled coal, lumber and ores. There were specially adapted boats called packets which were used for carrying passengers.

The canal served as a center of life for the young people of the community too. There was fishing, canoeing and Sunday School picnic excursions to Port Washington and Orange in the summer and ice skating in the winter.

The population expansion due to the canal led to the springing up of sawmills, grainmills, potteries and a woolen mill. The schools became overcrowded and in 1849 a regular school system was passed by a 1 vote plurality and in 1856 the Union School was built on College Street. Churches sprang up too and in 1830 the first church, the Methodist Episcopal, was organized, in 1832 the Lutheran Church, to which the Neighbor's belonged, was established and in 1843 the Methodist Protestant Church (the College Street Methodist) was established.

The canal hit its peak in the 1860's but with the railroads expanding their lines and service and having faster freighting, the canal began to decline and although it was not officially discontinued until 1908, it then had been out of use for many years.

Water from the canal was used to power the flour and feed mills at the west end of town. One mill was on the north side of the canal at the west end of Main St. It was on the west side of Buckhorn Creek. The site where it was is now on the east side of Buckhorn Creek as the creek route was changed in 1939. The second mill was on the south side of the canal. There were three locks near Newcomerstown, one about a mile east of town, lock 20, one was by the mill on the west end of Main St. that was on the north side of the canal, lock 21. The third one was about a mile further west, lock 22.

By 1860 the traffic of the canal was at its height. In operation two mules were hitched tandem to two ropes and walked along the tow path on the south side of the canal between fifty to sixty feet ahead of the boat. The boats were about fifteen feet wide and about four times that long. The boats were unable to pass in most places except at locks and basins.

## Canal history

# More about a 'big ditch'

BY GORDON DeMARCO

For the period of 1827-40, the Ohio Canal had a monopolistic position resulting in the growth and economic development of our state. It allowed farmers the opportunity to export their products to markets for cash and resulted in opening up a great part of our state to immigrants from the east. The federal government was selling land in Ohio for \$1.25 an acre. The canal permitted settlers to take advantage of this bonanza and at the same time assure them outlet to markets on Lake Erie and the Ohio River. In fact, the population of the state increased by 70,000 in the 1820's.

The canal opened in 1827, and as one moved north toward Cleveland the price of wheat became more expensive. This was the result of grain being made available to markets in Erie and Buffalo. By 1833, wheat was worth 56-cents a bushel in Newark, but was selling at 75-cents per bushel in Akron and Massillon. The growth of shipments was spectacular. Cleveland was receiving 300,000 bushels of wheat in 1832, but eight years later this had jumped to 2,000,000. Wheat, corn, coal, pork barrel and salt were the major commodities transported on the canal. I understand that export of whisky was important, but I have no figures on this.

Most of the traffic on the canal was north to Cleveland. Here goods were transported to Erie and Buffalo and then by canal and river to New York City. Some of the canals that were in operation in Pennsylvania used "dollies" to carry canal boats over hills and cuts in the mountains by winching them on rails over high points. In fact, some canal boats were built in sections for ease of handling over this type terrain.

In 1836, the Muskingum Improvement was authorized. This provided the construction of the Black Water Canal from Dresden to Zanesville — a distance of 17 miles. When this section was completed, one could travel by canal boat from Newcomerstown to Zanesville, transfer to a steamboat and continue down the Muskingum River to Marietta. If you wished, another transfer could be made for the packet to Pittsburgh. At many places the railroad crossed the canal and this was to be a more common sight as years went by. In fact, the old C & M Railroad constructed a bridge across the canal on Bridge Street across from where the old Ritz Theatre used to play to Hopalong Cassidy and Janet Gaynor films.

Another canal constructed was the Walhonding Canal. It was supposed to run from Roscoe to Mt. Vernon, but it never got that far. It did get up to Killbuck. Today, one can view the triple locks at Roscoe. They are located near the gatekeepers' house (painted yellow) just west of the northern end of White Woman Street.

An interesting sidelight to the transportation on the canals was that the canals provided a source of water power to operate mills. Water flow rate from the canals was more reliable than natural streams. In fact, the canal water from the Ohio Canal in 1839 provided power for approximately 80 factories. This also contributed to the rise of industry in Ohio.

Prior to 1837, travelers had to ride on "mixed" boats — boats that carried commodities as well as passengers. In 1837, a packet line was opened on the Ohio Canal. The packet boats often traveled as much as 70 miles in a day. Roads were quite bad at this time, hence, travelers welcomed a ride in a boat. It was hard to beat the fares which were three-cents a mile and included meals.

Some packets provided sleeping accommodations, and some provided bed bugs at no extra charge. Some packets accommodated up to 60 passengers and had parlors that converted into dormitories at night. It was not uncommon for passengers to take a break by walking alongside the boat and to purchase fruits from farmers along the way. Passenger traffic reached its peak in 1843 when more than 20,000 passengers arrived by packet at Portsmouth. But by the late 1850's, the railroads of Ohio were transporting more than 2,000,000 passengers. The end of the canals and their way of life had reached its high water mark. The end was inevitable.

By 1845, Ohio had more than 800 miles of canals. One could not only ride from Cleveland to Portsmouth, but you could ride from Cincinnati to Toledo as well. Canals were tunneled through hills and an aqueduct carried a canal over the Mad River.

When the Ohio Canal opened in 1827, there were no railroads in Ohio. Tuscarawas County had between 10,000 and 15,000 residents. In fact, next year is the local Presbyterian churches' 150th anniversary in this area. One of their early ministers in New Philadelphia preached at a farm a few miles from our county seat during this period and found his way by following blaze marks on trees. Railroad construction did not begin until 1835, and by 1836 only 15 miles had been completed. After that, the rise and construction of railroads rose precipitously. But this is a story that will be saved for another time.



# 'State House' and Other Items

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

Dan McConnell tells of the big barn which stood at the corner of College and Canal Sts. and was commonly called the "State House" by many persons of Newcomerstown.

It was the headquarters for the canal's maintenance boat which operated out of Newcomerstown, contained a stable for horses and ample space for storing supplies and other equipment needed in the upkeep of the canal.

Lem Wilson was the main-

tenance foreman and also captain of this particular state boat which tied-up here for the winter. This boat carried a governor's name, possibly Gov. Foster.

Between summer work trips and at other times the maintenance employees were kept busy in building spare lock gates, so that one or more would always be ready to replace a worn-out or damaged one upon the old watercourse.

This work was done usually on a lot just east of the "State House". And the lumber used was green white oak planks which were hauled by horse and wagon from a sawmill near Birmingham.

When repairs were to be made on any of the locks in the neighborhood and it was necessary to empty the canal of its water to a next numbered lock, many local persons would wade knee-deep in the mire of the channel's bottom and pick up their choice of the fishes floundering there.

McConnell also recalls once when a peddler's boat came along with an unusual load of dishwares of various qualities and shapes. Today a prized piece of the "Chinaware" from that boat's cargo has a prominent place on an open shelf in his home.

When springtime came and the ice disappeared from the canal, homemade sailboats were built by imaginative youths of the

neighborhood. And they fashioned the sails from any old bed linen or similar cotton material which they could grab from their home.

In a way each sail's particular pattern was a good indication of the identity of the

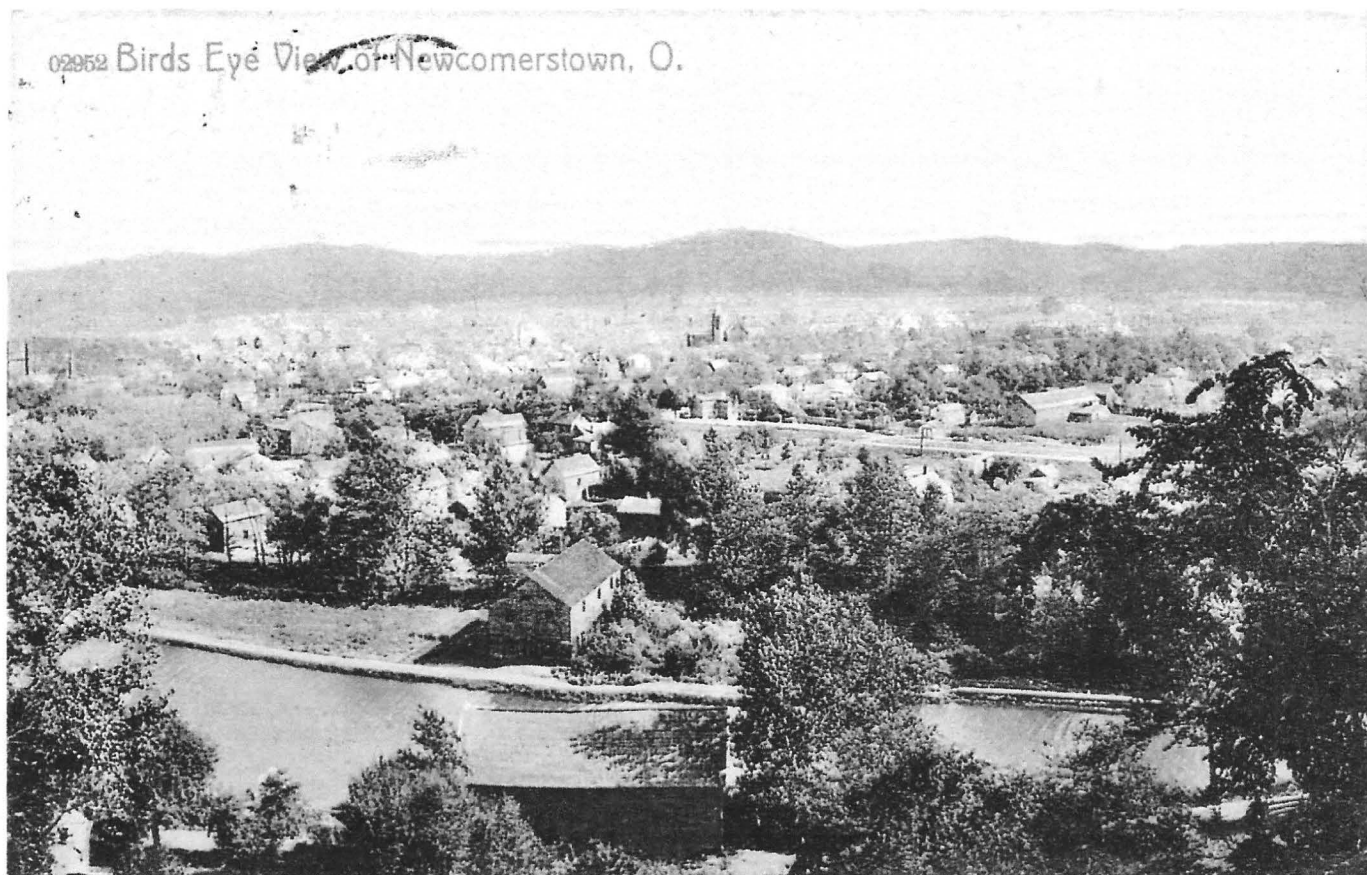
boy who managed the boat.

Boys often followed the canal boats through Newcomerstown and gave much assistance to each vessel's onward move, by helping to clear the canal of its bridges and in positioning lock gates for a safe transit thereat.

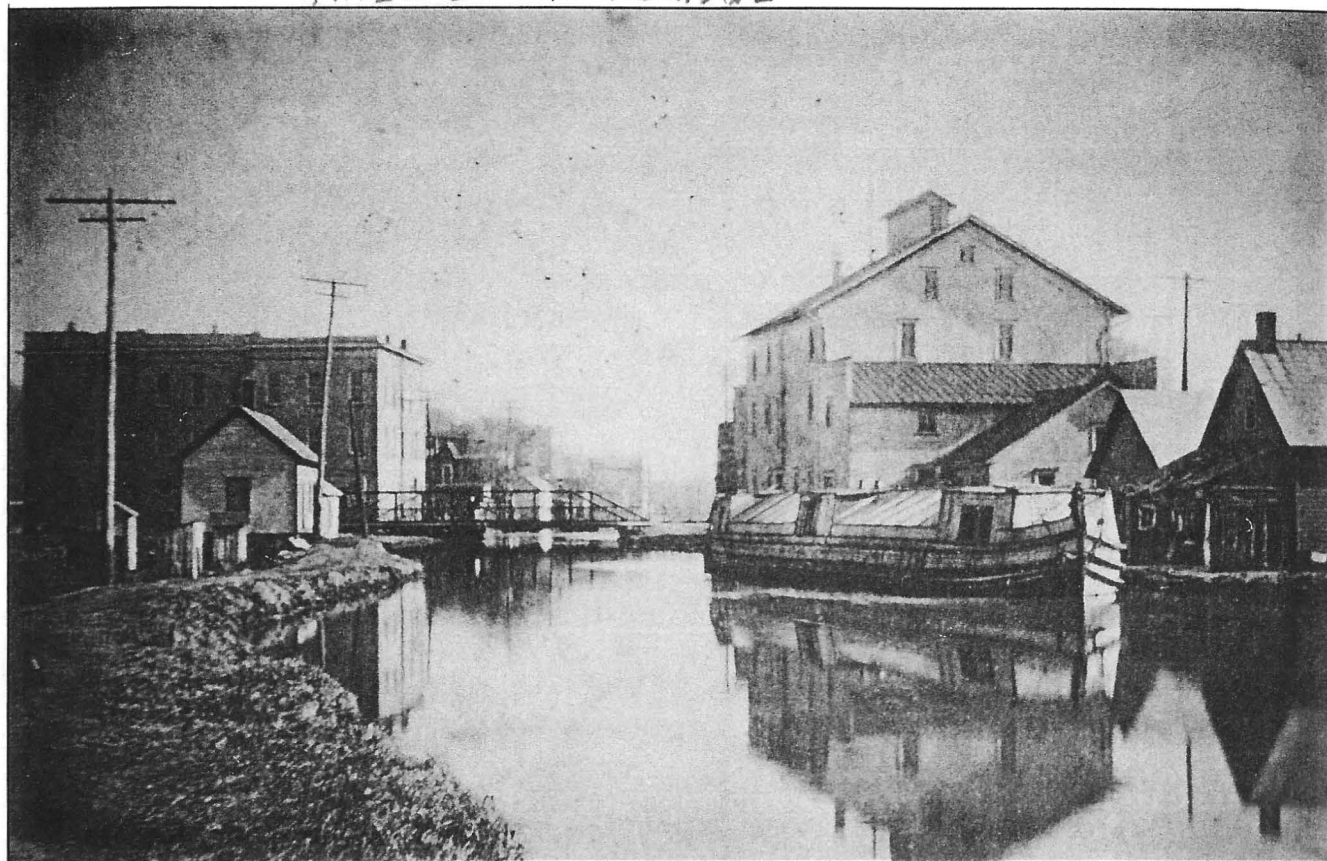


1908

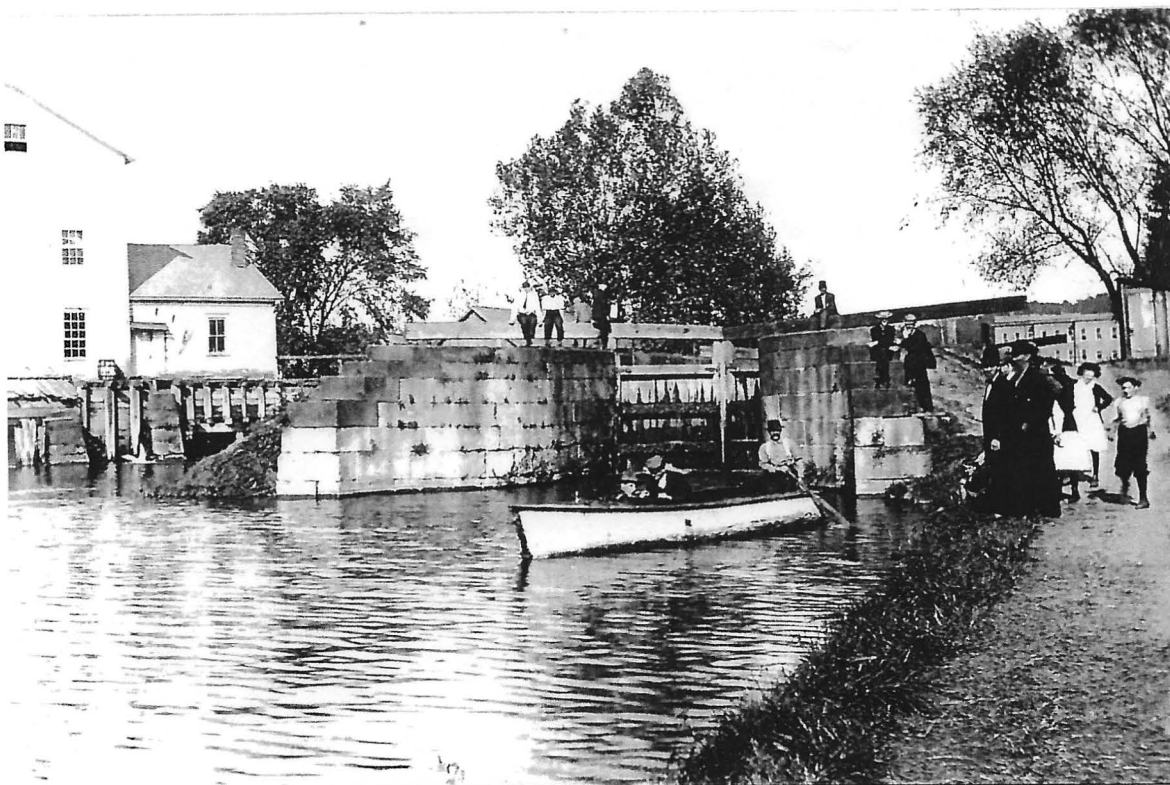
02952 Birds Eye View of Newcomerstown, O.



## RIVER ST. IRON BRIDGE



Canal at Bridge Street near Miskimen General Store in Background. RIVER ST.



LOCK 2!

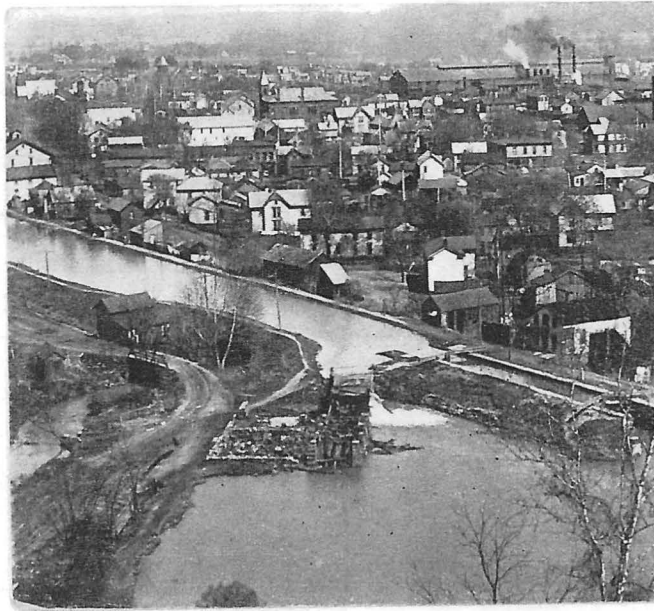




**OPENING OF LOCKS** — Part of the boatman's job was running ahead to open the locks which raised and lowered the boats on their journey up and down the waterway.



1906



40  
Looking toward Pipe Works  
from hill west of town,  
Newcomerstown, O. Nov 9-06  
You will see by  
this that I am in  
Newcomerstown, I am  
going to Cambridge  
O. this P.M. I will  
write you from  
Cambridge I don't  
know what place  
I will go to from  
Cambridge  
Pa. Pa.

GEO. A. BEERS & CO., DRUGGISTS.

FLOUR MILL  
WARNER  
CIDER  
MILL

1910



- MULVANE - FREE - PARK -  
- NEWCOMERSTOWN - O. -

319 + 327 W.  
MAIN ST.

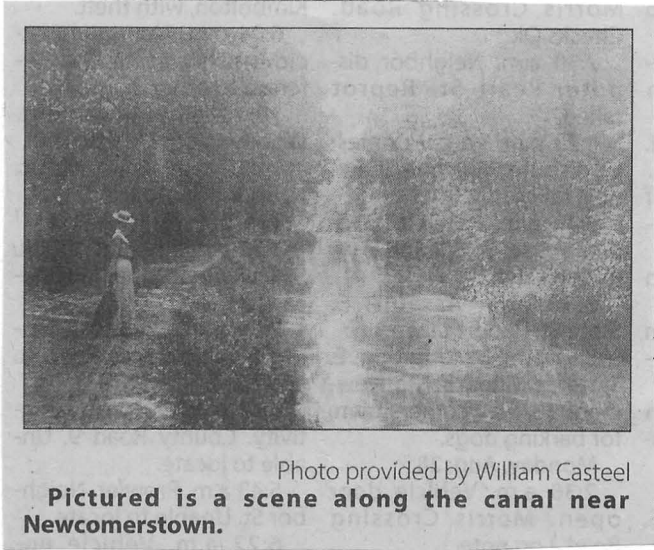


Photo provided by William Casteel  
Pictured is a scene along the canal near  
Newcomerstown.



LOCK 21

37

LO 42

MULVANE PARK PARK



View of Lock 21 from the water



Band stand where  
played with the Harmon Band  
Not town



43



Verl H. in swimming

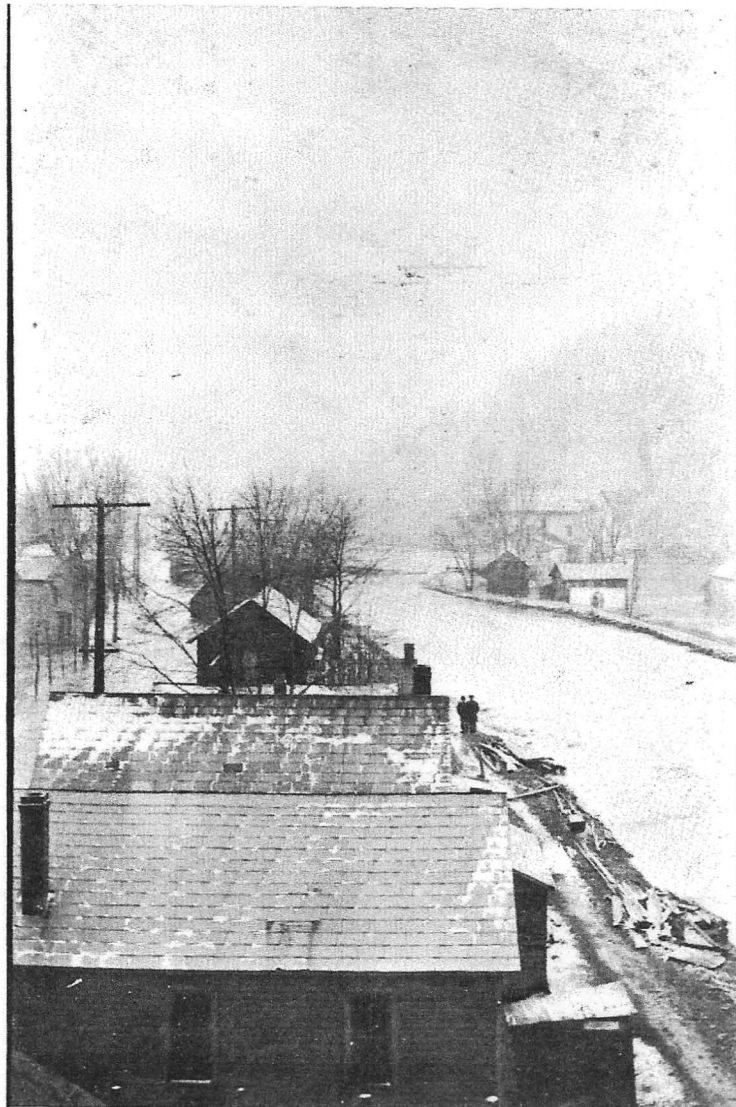




Ice on Street and  
field from the Canal



The Ohio Erie Canal  
looking West in  
Newcomerstown



45

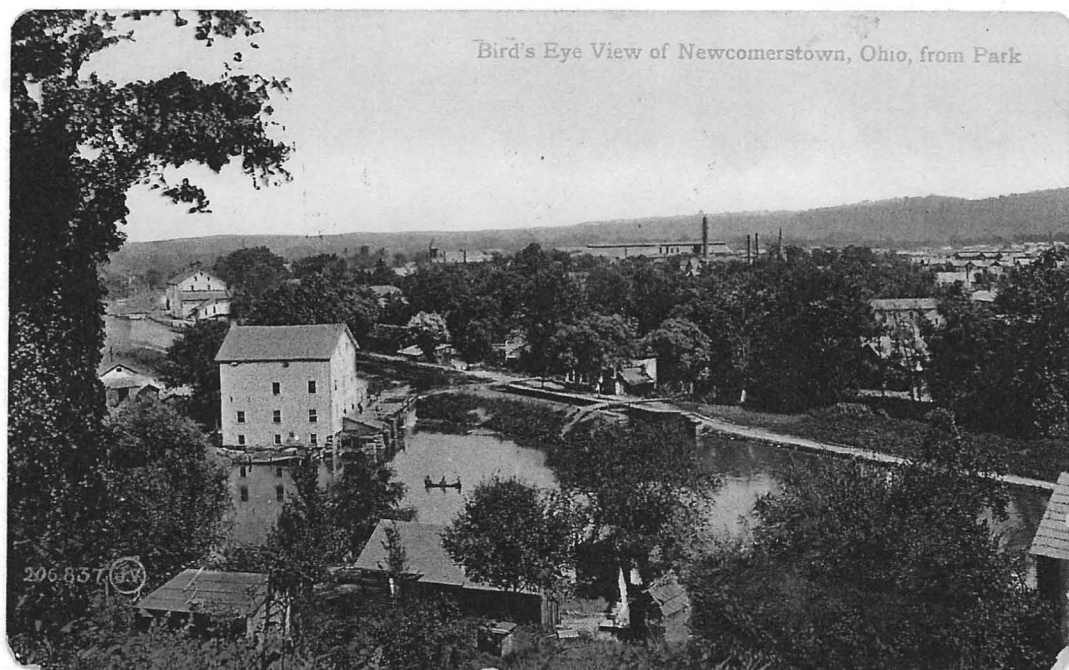
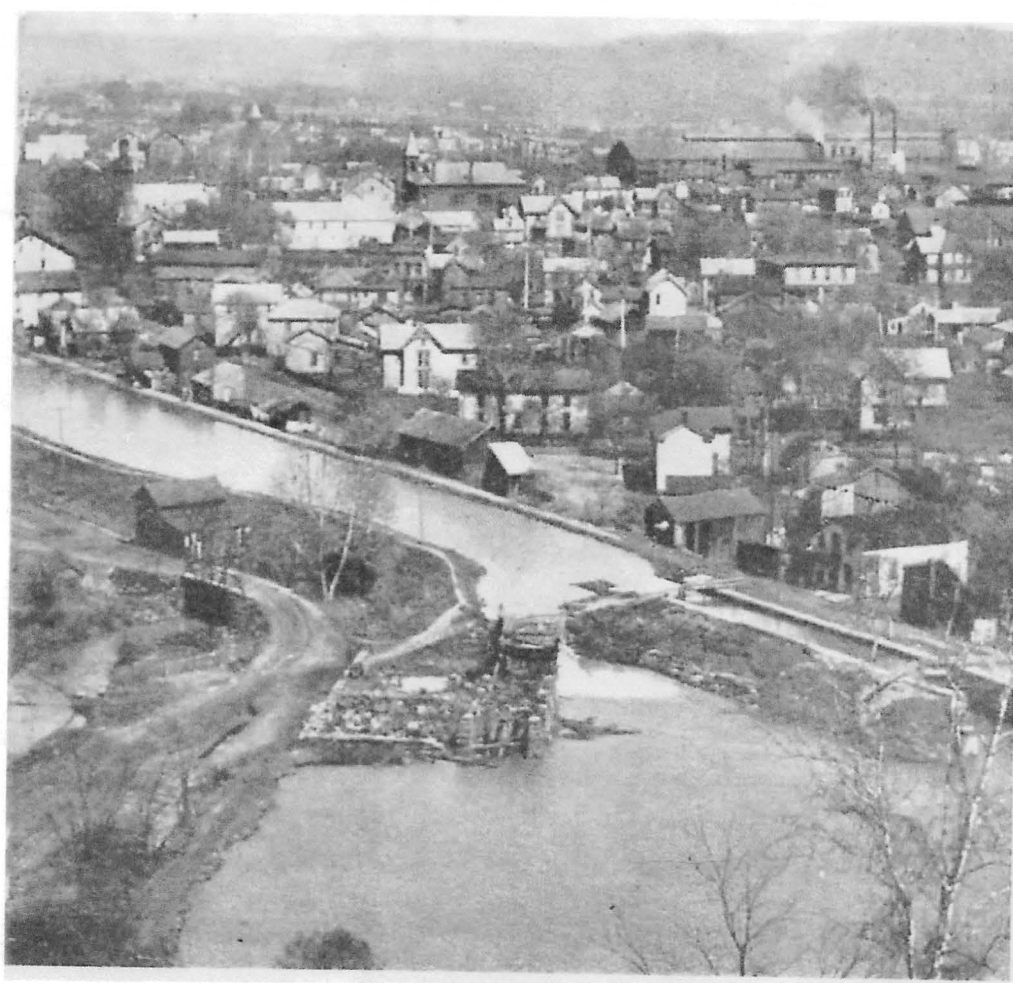
48



319<sup>T</sup> WOMAN



TURN BASIN IN OHIO CANAL NEAR EVANSBURG, WHERE THE  
BAREFOOT GARFIELD DROVE THE TOW PATH

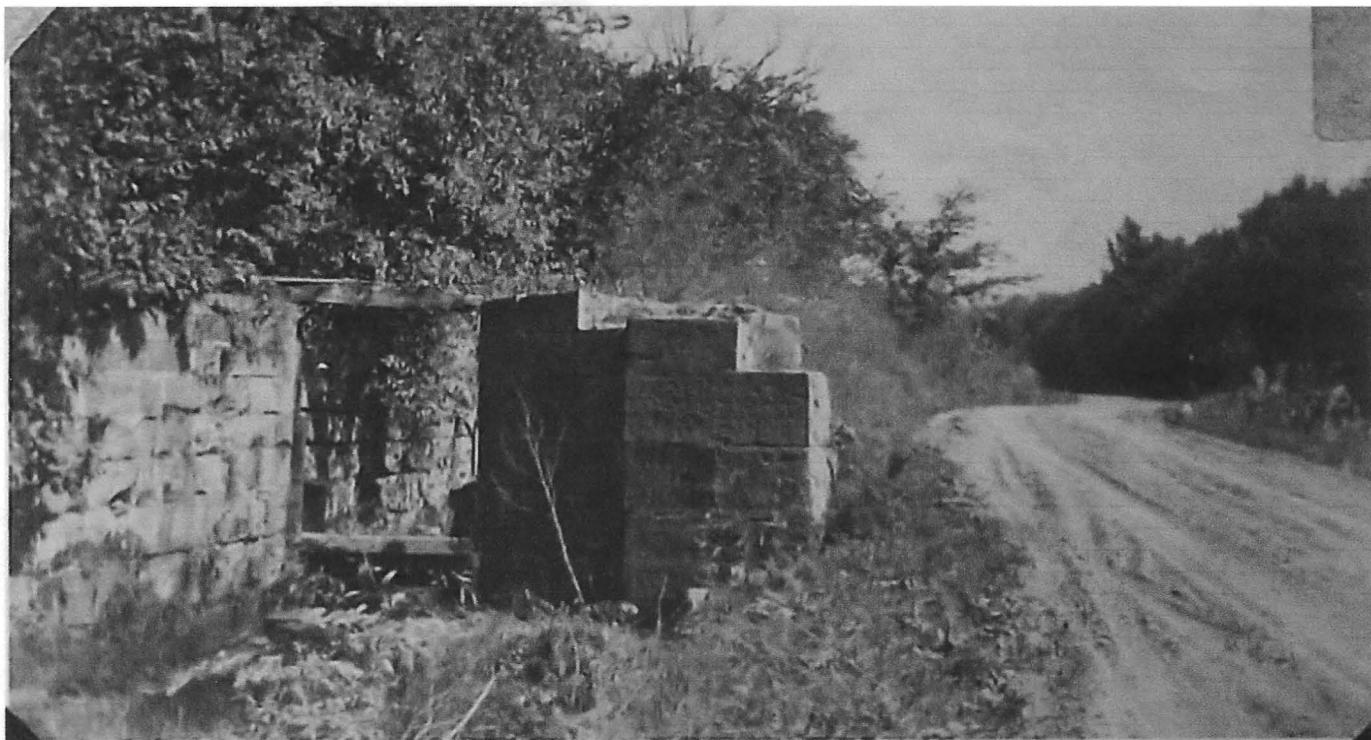




1912

47

Birds Eye View of Newcomerstown, Ohio.



*Patersons Lock*



# Canal Once Provided Ice Supply For Newcomerstown Residents

Patterson's ice house was long a familiar landmark here to boatmen on the old Ohio canal near the turn of the last century.

The 40-by-60-foot, barnlike building stood near the old canal wasteway, which was about 100 yards west of the canal lock at the west end of Canal st. For years it was used for the storage of ice, cut from the canal during the winter months for use during the summer. It was abandoned shortly after 1900 and finally disappeared entirely one day when a group of boys, who were playing in it, accidentally set it afire.

A smaller structure, used for the same purpose and owned by G. L. Patterson, was situated east of the lock at the west end of Canal st. It was torn down later.

Employed at the time as an ice plant's special policeman, recalls that the men used a saw with extra long teeth. The cakes of ice were towed to the ice house chutes, down which they were slid into

the ice room. Here they were packed in sawdust and stored until summer.

Bert also served as wagon man, driving the ice wagon about the streets and selling chunks to residents. Today's iceman has a relatively easy job, according to Mr. Sells, who explained that the canal ice could not be "chipped" to split it but had to be sawed into smaller pieces.

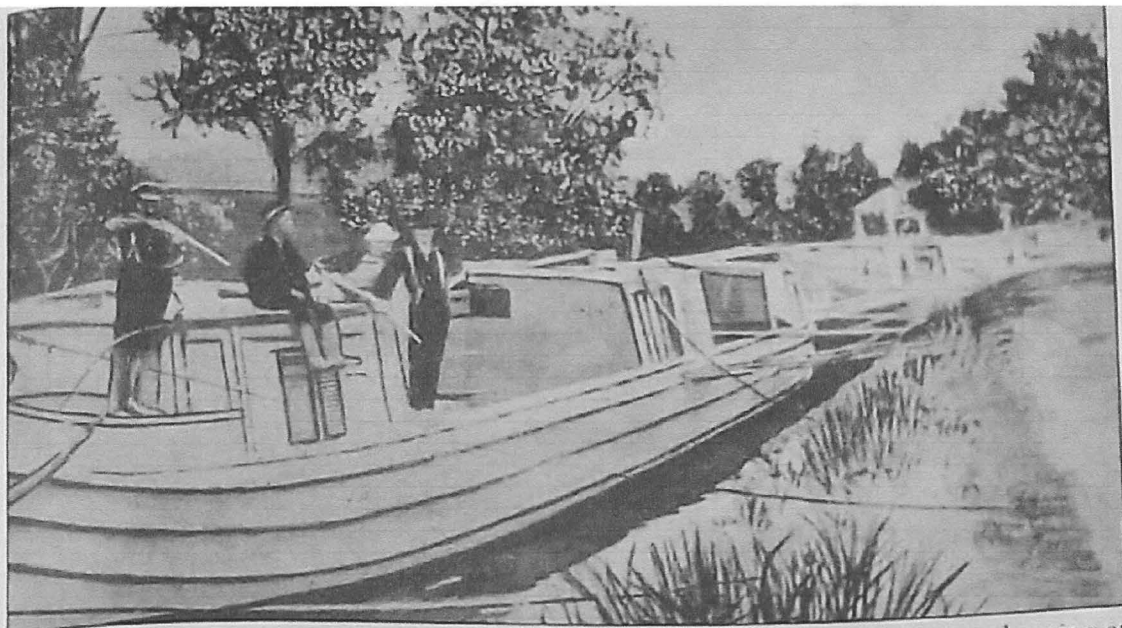
The proprietors of the 13 village saloons and of a number of meat markets were customers of Mr. Patterson's ice houses. They were favored with a special commercial rate of 20 cents per hundred pounds. The house rate was 35 cents per hundred.

Dual walls were built and sawdust packed in between in constructing the ice houses. A two-foot space was left between the outside wall and the ice. More sawdust was packed in this opening. The insulation proved sufficient to protect the ice against dis-

solution during the hot summer months.

A small charge was made by the state for cutting the ice from the canal. At times, especially after a long freezing spell, the ice would be frozen to a thickness of 14 to 18 inches.

The introduction of mechanically-produced ice did not immediately sound the ice house's death knell. Several times the mechanical equipment broke down, throwing in the trade to Mr. Patterson, who once again harnessed the team to the old ice wagon and traversed the village streets selling his "nature-produced" ice.



OHIO ERIE CANAL AT BOLIVAR. Workers on a packet spend some free moments shooting at muskrats along the banks of the canal. Muskrats and other varmints created a legitimate problem for the canal in that they dug holes which caused fresh outs in the canal. These fresh outs would drain the water from the canal into the river, basin, or fields adjoining the canal.

Canal Ice House



Ice on the Canal in  
Newcomerstown



Bridge at Goodrich Street



THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 30, 1939.

## Workmen Demolish Old Lock, One Of Last Landmarks of Ohio Canal

A gang of WPA workmen, assisted by a steam derrick, this week tore down one of the town's few remaining landmarks of the Ohio canal—the lock at West Canal st.—while J. F. Lyons, a former canal boatman, who lives near by, watched.

The lock was demolished to obtain stone for abutments under the proposed Buckhorn creek bridge and to make way for the extension of Canal st. The new street will be laid out over the top of the canal culvert and the lock site.

The task of tearing the 1,000-pound stones from their foundations required several days. Every day, Mr. Lyons stood near by, watching the destruction of the familiar lock with obvious regret.

The lock served as one of several hundred canal "stairways" and was built by hand in 1827. Workmen received 33 cents a day for the task and in addition were given three "jiggers" of whiskey, Mr. Lyons said.

Mr. Lyons guided his canal boats thru the Newcomerstown lock

many times while hauling merchandise and grain years ago. Once he recalled, his craft settled down on top of a buggy as the water level dropped, causing several moment's consternation. The carriage had been placed in the water of the lock by Halloween pranksters the night before.

The veteran canal man built and installed new gates at the Newcomerstown lock in 1898.

"It sure was a job drilling into the heavy beams at the bottom of the lock," he recalled. "I wish these workmen had uncovered those beams," he added. "They were cut out of good trees, some of them walnut."

Initials of hundreds of townspeople, many long dead, were plainly legible on the coping stones and Mr Lyons pointed out the marks of several who were friends of his during canal days.



# OLD CANAL BOAT DAYS MOURNED BY J. F. LYONS ONE OF EARLY WORKERS

"They never should have let the canal go," said Joseph Frank Lyons, West Canal st., as he delved deep into memory to cull recollections of Ohio canal days in Newcomerstown.

The 75-year-old mill worker and former boat captain on the canal related scores of interesting facts about the town's "big artery" during an interview at his home one evening this week.

"There were some people back in 1911 and '12 who saw the benefit this town derived from the old

Mr. Lyons was, of the many who recall canal days, privileged to speak on the subject. He grew up near, and on, the narrow, man-made stream that split Newcomerstown in half geographically.

## Father Was Boatman

His father, William, was a canal boatman before him. Frank's brother, John Lyons, also worked and operated boats. The pull of the rudder bar was familiar to Frank's hands at an early age and the tug of the mules on the tow ropes was often controlled by him.

"I started in on the boats at the age of 19," Mr. Lyons recalled. "I stayed with the work until the canal was closed in 1912 and '13. Often we made long trips, carrying all kinds of freight and grain."

"What was considered a long trip?" he echoed. "Some few days we made 45 miles, some times we carried 2,000 bushels of wheat and of course didn't make such good time."

## Works on 3 Boats

Frank worked on three boats, the Akron, Fairfield and Storm. The Akron was a full-deck boat and the Fairfield and Storm were hatch-deck crafts. Each was, roughly, 15 feet wide and 60 feet long. It was a close squeeze in some of the locks. The Lyons family made canal boating a 12-months job. Thruout suitable weather freight was hauled daily as far west as Millersport, near Buckeye lake, and to Cleveland, north. When ice sealed the narrow channel in winter, the boat was moored in town and became a snug home when winter's cold blasts swept the Tuscarawas valley.

It was to such a home that Frank brot his wife and it served as a home for the third generation as the family grew. Incidents common in those days of canal travel are many and would, no doubt fill a book. Recollections of long hauls of valuable merchandise to Cleveland; a trip that took four and one-half days; of the soft slap of water against the keel as the boat slid along the canal on moonlight nights; of damaging blows received by the keel when the boat struck unseen obstacles, remain vivid in the catman's memory today.

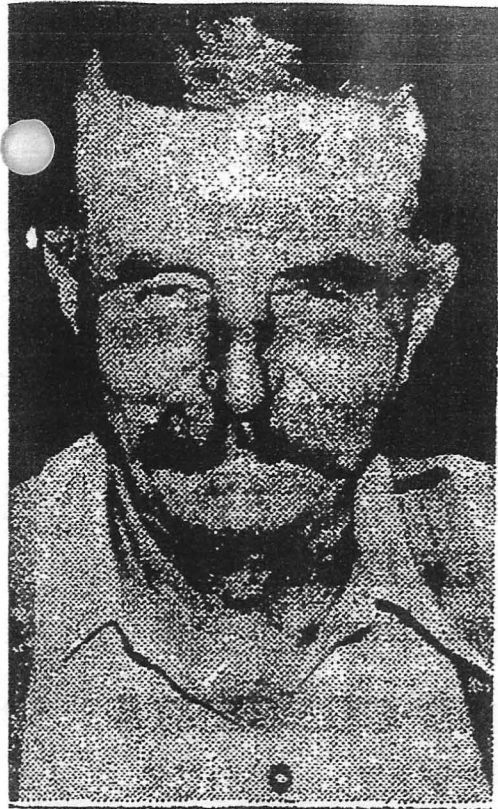
## Used as Pleasure Craft

Frank's boats were often rented by groups for picnics and other gay occasions. Few were in a hurry to get places and the fun was found in making the trip, he recalled.

Bowing finally to adverse criticism and the growing importance of the railroad nearby, the canal was abandoned in 1912. Mr. Lyons delivered his last load of freight in November of 1912 from Bolivar to Dover. His boat remained moored near River st. for years, a common sight to residents here. "Squatters" claimed canal ground and farmed and built homes on it. The stone locks stand today as the monuments of an era of canal traffic. Gates at the locks have fallen in decay and practically all trace of the channel has vanished in Newcomerstown.

Within a few weeks, the canal lock west of West Canal st. will be covered when the proposed Canal st. extension project is started.

For those who doubt the loss suffered by Newcomerstown with the decay of the canal, Mr. Lyons has many records to prove his contention. "They never should have let the canal go."



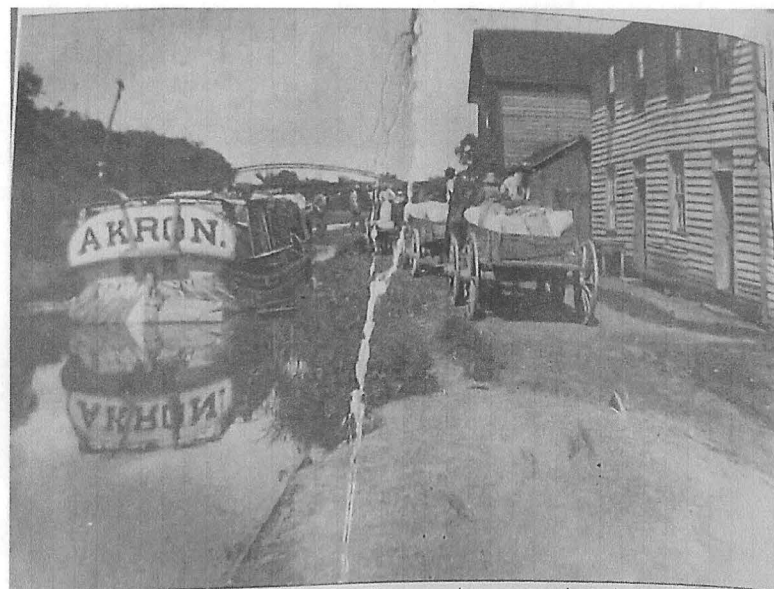
J. F. Lyons, 75, at his home on West Canal st.

canal," the aged man said, "but I was opposed to its continuance because I claimed it was of no further use."

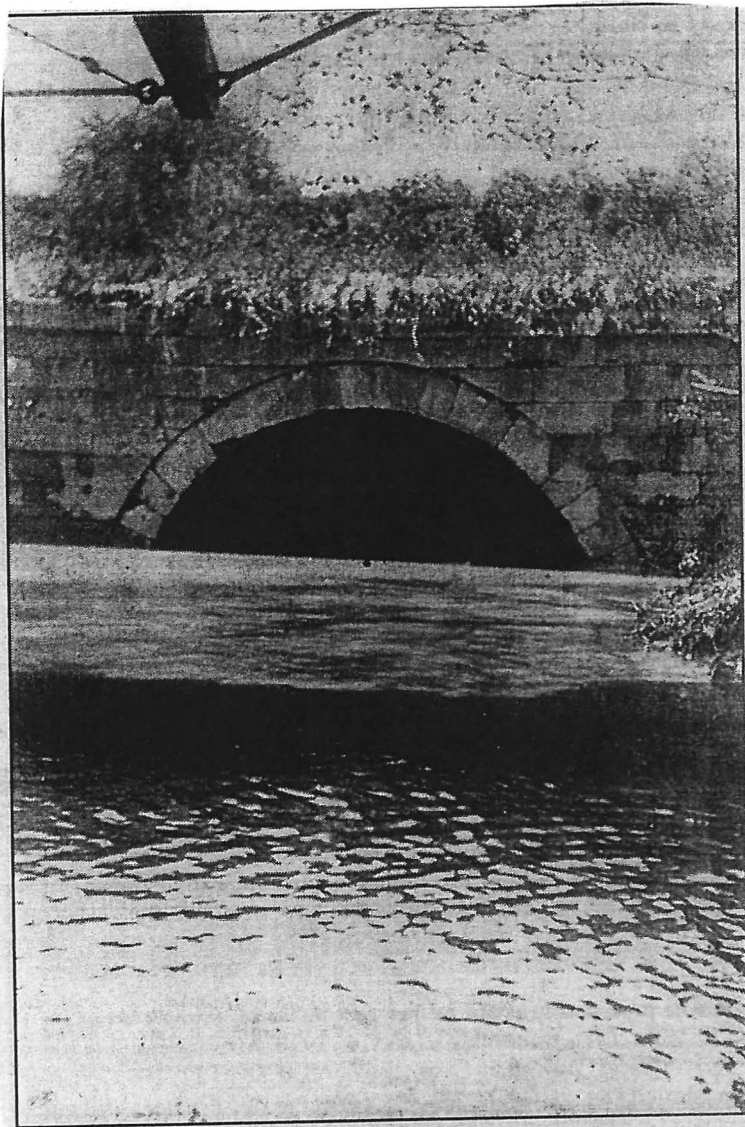


FRANK  
LYONS  
Owner of three  
canal boats





WAITING TO LOAD AT LOCK SEVENTEEN. This extraordinary picture shows the local farmers waiting to load their cash crop onto a canal boat at Lock Seventeen. The area around this lock had beautiful level fields most suitable for raising corn, wheat, and other cash crops that could be easily shipped on the canal to the larger cities to the north and south. Lock Seventeen was so named because it was the seventeenth lock south of Akron. There are still structures today at Lock Seventeen that remind us of the heyday of this "Silver Ribbon" through Tuscarawas County. Just north of Lock Seventeen, the families and businessmen earned their living by transporting coal from the small family "groundhog holes" and from the larger mines of Wainwright and Goshen. The villages and cities of Tuscarawas County grew and prospered because of the Ohio Erie Canal.



**OLD NEWCOMERSTOWN AQUEDUCT**

## Your Museum

### MARIAN MARDIS

Your Historical Society

Back in the early days of our village when people on Main Street and the vicinity kept cows and chickens, even pigs in their back yards and dogs ran loose; when Main Street was just a dusty path, people would drive their cows to Warner's field to graze for the day.

Buckhorn Creek ran from Cross Street across Warner's field and through an aquaduct UNDER the canal to the other side to the Tuscarawas River.

The creek bed is still discernable there. It was built in the 1827-32 era of the building of the canal.

The canal already in decline, was destroyed by the 1913 flood that covered the state. People began buying or leasing the canal land, filling in the old canal and building homes. In 1927 my father-in-law, Philip Mardis, leased for 99 years that property where the old Wiandt Mill (later the ~~Bar~~ mill) stood next to the aquaduct and on part of his lease.

Another flood in 1935 inundated the lower floors of the house and caused considerable damage. They were rescued and spent the night at the Eureka store until the water receded.

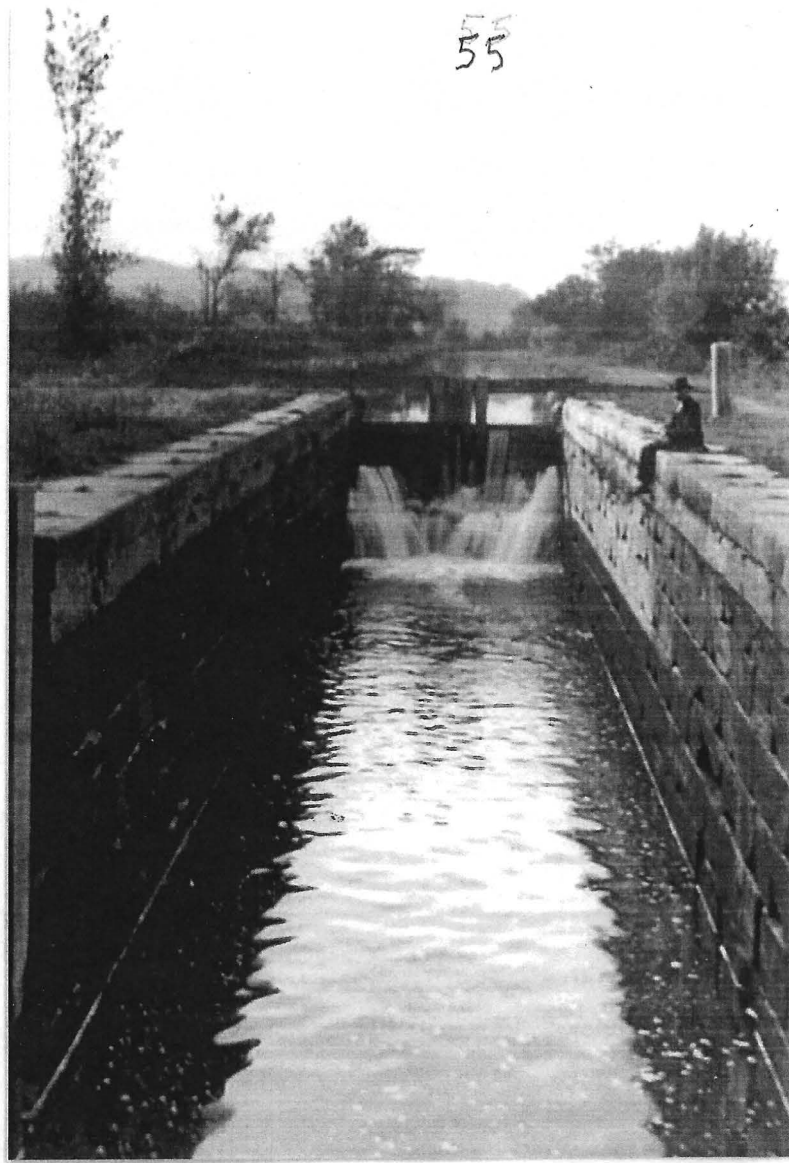
It was in 1939 that the county commissioners decided to change the course of Buckhorn Creek to its present location, building a bridge across the creek and established "the towpath road." It is called the Old Canal Road today.

Evenso the creek overflowed again in 1949 and although the water reached the back door it did not invade the house.

Each time I have looked at those stones I marveled that they had been there 173 years.

It with the trees was dug up and cut down. All they could see was a dollar sign on them.

All we have now is a picture and the memory of the fiasco of Warner's field.





# Canal Notes

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

Our search for additional information concerning the name of a lock on the Ohio and Erie Canal, which disappeared to make way for the Route 36-16 bypass at Newcomerstown, eventually brought us to the home of Myrtle R. Reidenbach and her brother in Port Washington.

She had no answer to our question. However we were happy to learn she possessed pictorial evidence of the old canal. One of the pictures was an original she had painted from an old photograph taken years ago by a member of the family.

Her painting was that of the boat "Watson" which plied the canal. And it like many others of the waterway measured approximately 15 feet wide and 60 feet long.

John Lewis was its captain at the tiller. He had an unusual nickname, "Bill an' Nye" of unknown significance. John lived in Port Washington and with the abandonment of the canal became an employee of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Myrtle has been a resident of Port Washington all of her life, living close to the canal. The Ohio and Erie channel had been dug at the rear of her residence.

She remembers when Browning's Mill at the east of the village was destroyed by fire more than 70 years ago. And of her being warned on various occasions to stay away from the forebay near the water wheel, because that was a dangerous place to be.

Other memories include bountiful seasons of the bygone when many wagon loads of threshed grain would be brought by horses and their owners from the Stone Creek vicinity, to be loaded into freighter boats for the slow journey to buyers at distant ports.

## NEWCOMERSTOWN NEWS

APR. 27, 1977. Published Each Wednesday  
140 West Main Street, Newcomerstown, Ohio 43832  
Established September 15, 1898

J. K. WOLFROM—EDITOR

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# Registers List Area "Canawlers"

NCT News  
6 Sep 1978

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

The Museum of Roscoe Village has a toll collector's "Register of Canal Boats" from 1839 to 1855. And the archives of The Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland contain another, "Register of Canal Boats, No. 3" from 1848 to 1883.

These "Registers" show a number of canal boat owners in this area and their listing follows in this order: (1) Boat's name and "homeport". (2) Owner's name and place of residence. (3) Date of registration.

The following boats were registered by the toll collector at Akron.

"Samuel Campbell". Newcomerstown. Frederick Roenbaugh and R.H. Nugent. Newcomerstown. April 15, 1849.

"Aristocrat". Newcomerstown. Wilson Miller. Newcomerstown. May 1, 1850.

"G.P. Smith". Newcomerstown. Phillip Roenbaugh. Newcomerstown. March 28, 1851.

"R.H. Nugent". Newcomerstown. George Rencher and R.H. Nugent. Newcomerstown. Aug. 7, 1858.

"Gen. Sigel". Akron. R. Roenbaugh. Newcomerstown. July 10,

1862.

The following registered by the toll collector at Roscoe.

"Oceanica". Newcomerstown. G. Still and George Bradford. Newcomerstown. March 28, 1852.

The following by toll collector at Cleveland.

"Fashion". Newcomerstown. Guthrie. Newcomerstown. April 15, 1852.

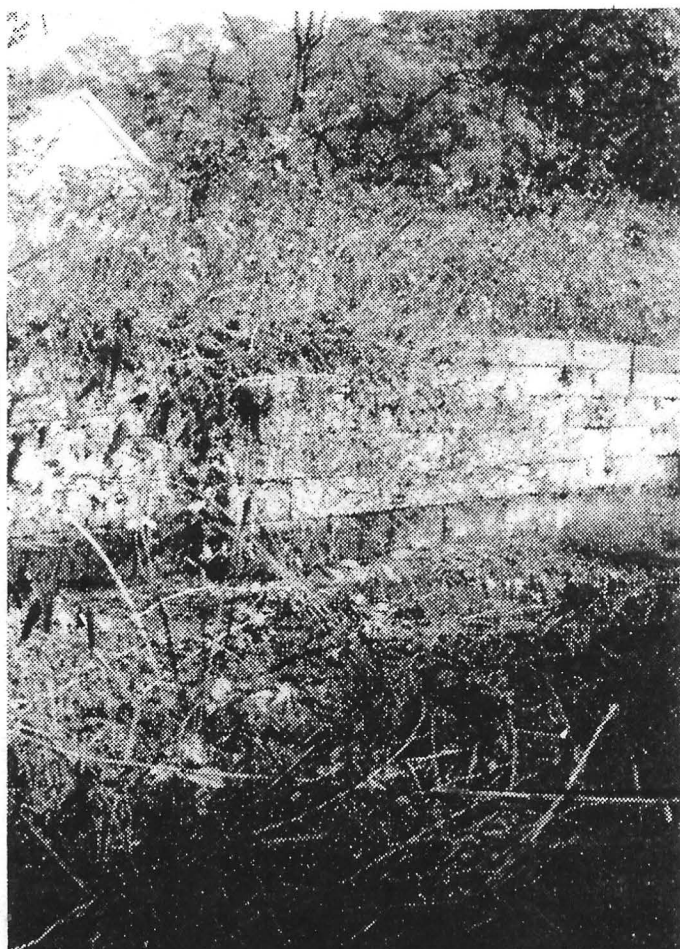
"R.H. Nugent". Newcomerstown. Adam Miller, Newcomerstown. Nov. 26, 1862.

In nearby Orange, Johnston and Richmond owned the "R.H. Nugent" of Orange, which was registered by the toll collector at Akron July 5, 1848. Also J.R. Emerson and Joshua Norman owned the "Orange" of Orange, which likewise was registered by the toll collector at Akron Aug. 19, 1848.

The G.P. Smith, formerly B. Urich; the first mentioned R.H. Nugent, formerly George F. McCarey; Gen. Sigel, formerly R.H. Nugent; Oceanica, formerly Old Whitey; Fashion, formerly Queen City; the second mentioned R.H. Nugent, formerly Machanic, and Orange, formerly Benjamin.



**NOW A JUNK YARD** — The old canal bed has become the recipient of junk such as the discarded furniture in the above photo taken west of Newcomerstown.



**A reminder** — Stonework still remains of a canal chamber along the canal road west of Newcomerstown.

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

A dear lady, the late Mrs. Odessa Croy Norman who was born in 1884 at Wild Turkey Lock, a stop on the old Ohio and Erie Canal near West Lafayette, was rather influential in our giving some neighborhood thoughts to this old waterway.

We have followed what remains of its channel in the vicinity and note at a number of places its bed has become the recipient of various junk. In today's term it might be called a sort of landfill operation without modern care.

Groundbreaking for the Ohio and Erie Canal was celebrated at Licking Summit, near Newark, on July 4, 1825. And at its peak, about 1850, its towpaths were quite busy with the hoof beats of horses or mules tugging the towlines in traditional tandem fashion, to impel the boats at a speed of about three to four miles an hour.

Three types of vessels were conspicuous upon the old canal — freighters, line boats and passenger packets. An excursion party on one of these crafts to Blair's Mill and beyond was a summer's event enjoyed by folks of the immediate neighborhood. Winter, too, shared its pleasures when the Canal

Superintendent would give permission and provide for skating parties on the turnaround basins of the dug waterway.

Abram Garfield, a well-known builder of stone walls in the locks, and at needed places along the historic canal, is thought to have had a hand in the completion of the chamber's stonework which we have pictured situated along the canal road west of Newcomerstown. Locks between Newcomerstown and Orange in descending order included the Sudam, the Mackey and the Felver.

In the year 1907, there were some signs of the revival of the old canal in the vicinity. But it could not compete favorably with the newer modes of transportation following 1910, and eventually its end came silently and peacefully.

A picture post card, cancelled 1910, shows a good view of the canal eastward through Newcomerstown; the River Street iron bridge spanning the waterway and a couple of line boats tied up close to the north side of the present Eureka Hardware building.

This footnote from the local paper of 30 years ago. "Ex-canal boat captain, J. Frank Lyons, 78, died at home on Canal St."

## Reflections: The Old Picturesque Canal

# The 'Old Canal', A Bit of History

By Ellis H. Shimp

The big flood of 1913 was a disastrous blow to the old Ohio and Erie Canal in the vicinity of Newcomerstown. Its hand-dug channel was filled with silt in many places due to the heavy and extensive downpour, and the resulting washouts in its banks here and there fixed the fate of the watercourse that particular year.

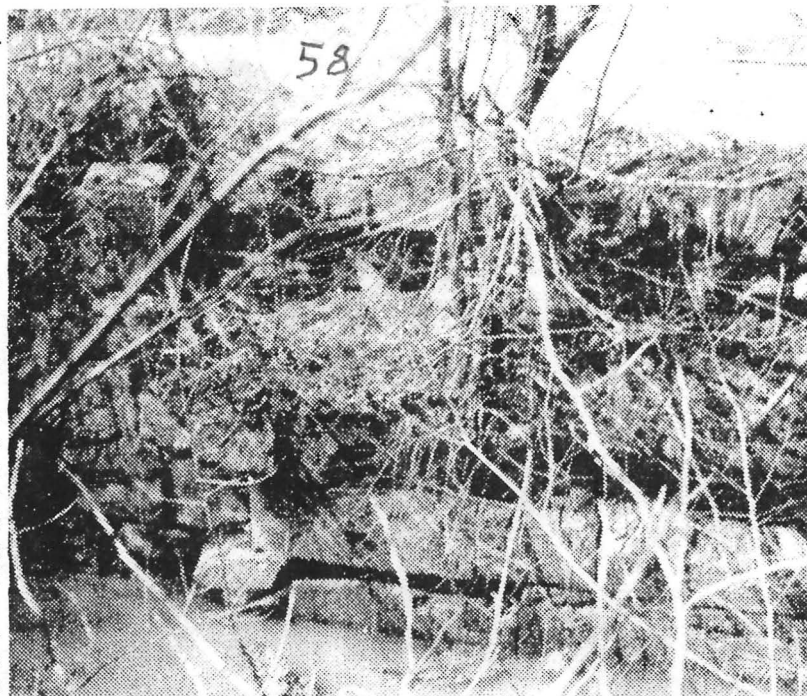
Knowledgeable persons say the last boat to arrive with a payload in Newcomerstown before the canal's abandonment was one captained by Frank Lyons. This vessel carried a cargo of salt, which was frequently the commodity on the boats, and its mule power was directed by Dave Wigfield.

During the summers of 1907-1908, a state boat was operated northwards out of Newcomerstown by Lem Wilson and his wife. She did the housekeeping on the craft which had sleeping quarters in one end and kitchen in the other. On

these seasonal trips to upper ports the mid-section of the vessel occasionally contained a cargo of lumber, wheat or coal. Capt. Wilson died at his home in Otsego in 1923.

Locks east from Newcomerstown in consecutive order were: The Garfield, also called the Dougherty, not far distance from the turn-around basin which was along East Canal Street; The Hill, much of its stonework remains today; Bremer (presumably correct name) near the present location of Wickes Lumber and then Lock Seventeen (Wilson roller Mill).

This brief sketch is the outcome of a pleasant afternoon visit on Rural Route 1 with Floyd A. "Boat" Rogers and his brother-in-law. These kindly gentlemen had memorable associations with the old canal in their young days. Rogers relates when a child how he often helped to load supplies upon the canal boats, from his father's store.



**OLD STONEWORK** — The old stonework remaining of the Hill Lock between and Port Washington is pictured here as it appears in this photo taken on March 1973.



**THE OLD SIGN** — The old sign of the Wilson Roller Mill, once operated by waterpower, is shown here propped up near Seventeen, Ohio in September of 1973.



# Here and There Along Canal

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

By the year 1906 the three to six foot deep old Ohio and Erie Canal was becoming weary and showing its age, although there were some signs of new activity in the neighboring vicinities

along its way.

The repair of the lock at the south of Tuscarawas village was one of the major items completed that year. But this was not done without much criticism, and protests were

heard concerning the excessive cost of same. True to prediction, a waste of money it turned out to be.

In 1907, a new swing bridge was constructed across the 40 foot wide channel near Orange, not far from the aqueduct over Evan's Run.

In Newcomerstown, three structures spanned the declining waterway. One on River St., one on Bridge St., and the railroad bridge which was a lift type.

Those carrying the streets were the turn kind, and their movement was effected by men-power using a long pole, a sort of walking beam with a center attachment which contained a square hole.

Another reminder of the canal era, the present storied building standing near Seventeen, shows little evidence that it was once a waterpowered mill and of service to the sundry boats which plied the long water-course. (309 miles)

This footnote from the "news" of more than 60 years ago:

"Albert Wohlwend of Gnadenhutten succeeds M.A. Anderson as miller at the Blair Mill".

However his position did not last long, the mill was destroyed by fire in 1914.

We have been told this old flour mill was also known by a previous name, perhaps Emerson.



DATE — By looking closely one can see the repair date, 1906, on the inside wall of the lock along St. Rt. 416 south of Tuscarawas village. Trees, saplings and a tangled growth of plant life have their sanctuary in the old chamber.

1975



# The Grand Canal

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

Records detailing the opening of the Newcomerstown section of the Ohio and Erie Canal are barely to be found.

However the Ohio Historical Society in its "Canals of Ohio, 1825-1913" says, "In 1829, the 109 miles from Cleveland to Dresden were finished". (This, of course, would include the Newcomerstown section).

Other sources of information found concerning the canal's early days are quoted herewith.

July 15, 1830 — "The Herald" Cleveland, editorial "Ohio Canal — The Newark Gazette states that boats have arrived there from the Lake with Merchandize — the boat Union of Dover, returned to this village (Cleveland) yesterday from Newark a distance of 160 miles."

The Canal Commissioners in their "Report to General Assembly dated Columbus January 11, 1831" documents the arrival of the Union of Dover at Newark "on the 10th day of July last" (1830).

Towpaths, Vol. XII, No. 1, 1974 "Travel on the Canal" by L.W. Richardson — "In 1832 Alexander Phillip Maximillian, Prince of Wied in Rhenish Prussia, arrived in Boston. For the next two years he was to tour the United States, spending most of that time in the far west. (and published) 'Travels in the Interior of North America'.

"(extract from Vol. 24 'Early Western Travels', Arthur H. Clark Co. Cleveland, 1906).

"Returning east in June of 1834, the party traveled up the Ohio River to Portsmouth, thence north to Cleveland on the canal "During the night we passed the little villages of Webb-sport and Roscoe; and at daybreak came to Evansburg and then to New-comersTown, (sic) a village which has now only seven or eight houses. The country around is pleasant and diverse."

The forementioned items came to the attention of the writer through the courtesy of Edith McNally, Editor, Towpaths, Canal Society of Ohio.

Bea (Beatrice Neighbor) Kiser in her writings (c.1961) at the Newcomerstown Public Library, on the local opening of the Ohio and Erie Canal says,

"At first it was called the 'Grand Canal' and the first boat to pass over it was the Union of Dover. Its passage was attended by a huge crowd who cheered it all along the route".

NCT News 8 Sep 1976

## The O and E Canal

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

Although the Ohio and Erie Canal ditch had been dug with a depth ranging from three to six feet in the vicinity about, one of its shallow spots was in Newcomerstown at the end then of the present Goodrich St.

This particular place was one of the many "livestock" crossings the entire length of the canal. Here cattle, horses, asses, mules and their kind had no difficulty in wading the water's width of approximately 40 feet. And often too during the summer months their owners or keepers splashed their way across the old ditch, going after or searching for the best. ~~Best~~

The canal brought diversion and work to the Newcomerstown folk in a variety of ways: To the many anglers who caught bullheads, carp, sunfish and snapping turtles in the smooth waterway. To the sawyers and carpenters whose skills and acuteness turned wood from harvested tree trunks into finished lock gates for the chambers which were of necessity to the on-coming boats.

After its abandonment by the state, one of the last uses to which the old canal was put, was as the locale for wooden tub races during the town's well-planned summer street fairs. In those gleeful and soggy events, youngsters vied for prizes offered by a number of persons, by floating and paddling down the deteriorating waterway in their mothers' washtubs.

In retrospect, old timers living today say during their youth the Ohio and Erie Canal was truly a sight to behold and without a doubt served its purpose well.

DETERIORATING

69

# The Monroe Traveled Canal From One End to the Other

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

Presumably few persons are living who can say their place of birth was in a cargo boat upon the old Ohio and Erie Canal. Yet a Jacops' baby was born in such surroundings without any of the qualified assistance which is deemed so important today.

The Monroe, a cargo boat owned by Samuel Jacops, which plied the canal from Cleveland to Portsmouth and was a capacity of 60 to 70 tons of coal, was nearing the town of Goshen on a hot July day 70 years ago when the birth took place. The bouncing arrival? He presently lives in Concord, California.

The Monroe's hull was divided into four parts. A stable for the horses or mules when the vessel was tied up in port; the cargo section and crew or passenger quarters in the front and rear ends.

One cargo in particular which is remembered well by older members of the family, was the boat full of wooden flour barrels which were delivered from the Akron vicinity to a buyer at Gnadenhutten.

In 1898 when the Ohio coal mines were idled by a wide-spread strike, Samuel filled his boat to capacity with undesirable slack from some of the local mines and transported it to the Akron area where it was sold without any discussion about the price to an "out-of-fuel" mill.

During the fall months Jacops would load the Monroe with

quality screened coal. And as he traveled the canal he bartered with the farmers along the way, trading them fuel for dressed hogs, beef quarters, potatoes, fruit and other eatables for the family's winter use.

There also was a benefit in living on a canal boat during the

gardening season when fresh produce was plentiful along the waterway. Late sweet corn to early green onions and all the vegetables which come in between, could be had generally for the asking as the slow moving horse-powered vessel plied the "Irish-dug" ditch.

# Hauling Jobs Associated With the Old Erie Canal

By ELLIS H. SHIMP

Erwin C. Johns has many memories of the Ohio and Erie Canal. His recounting of them is an interesting part of local history.

He tells of the time when his father, "Lan" Leander Johns, was hired by three saloon keepers and four or five other men of Newcomerstown to transport themselves and their unlawful size seine by horse drawn vehicle to the Glasgow Basin, which lay to the north of Hill Lock No. 19.

The roundtrip was to be made under the cover of darkness. And its course followed local roads and upon some stretches of the old tow path.

"Lan's" passengers' aim was the taking of as many fish as possible from the old canal basin, without being caught in the act by any law man. They did a good job of seining and were returned to Newcomerstown with an abundance of fish before dawn came.

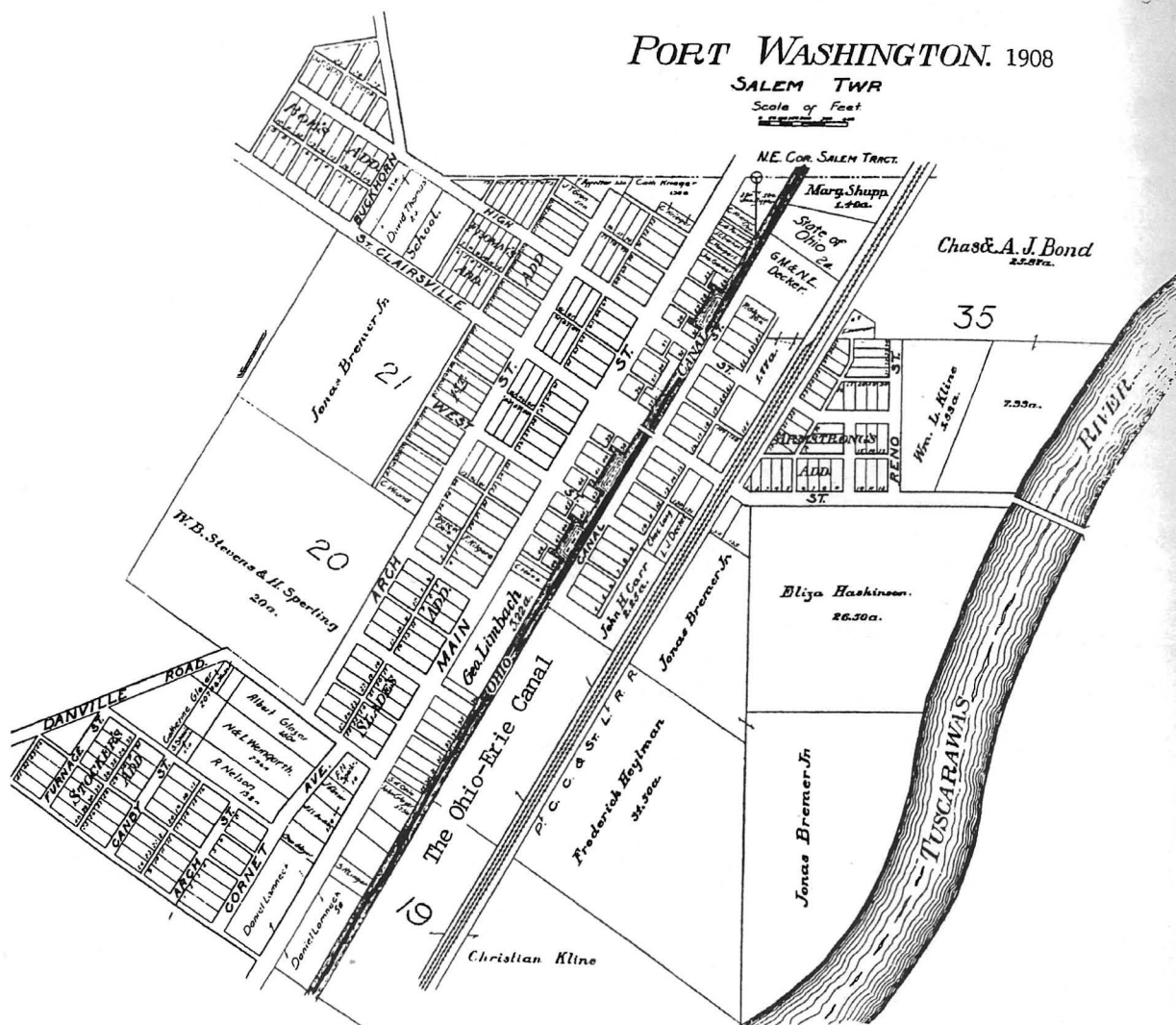
One very late fall wheat buyer, W. Miskimen, whose place of business was in the present Eureka Hardware building, hired Leander to haul his (Miskimen's) crop of corn from a field nearby and load it into the cargo space of a boat tied-up by his store.

This job was barely finished when winter weather with all of its elements set-in. The canal froze over and the freighter had to be moored for the season ahead.

Miskimen then hired "Lan" again and had him remove the corn crop from the canal boat, haul it to the railroad spur track at the Newcomerstown Produce place and load same in a freight car which had been set there.

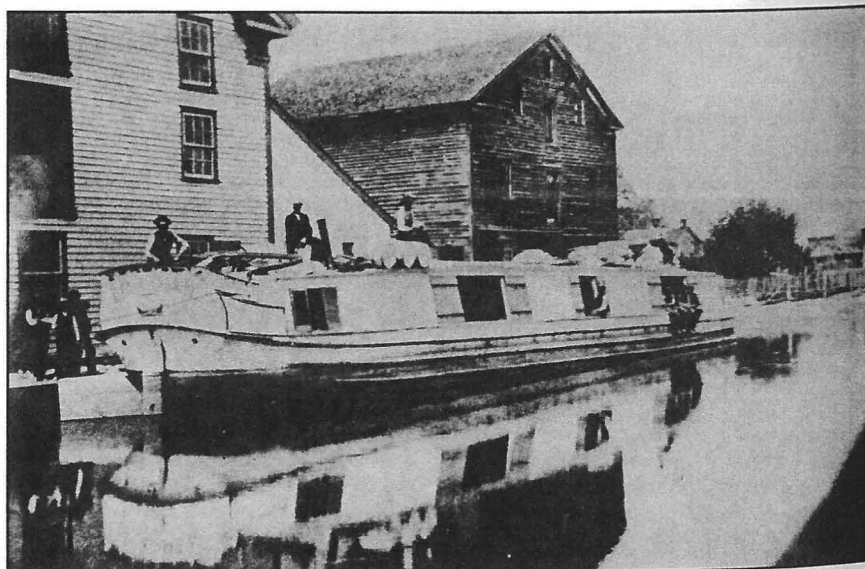
Footnote: Canal boats

were sometimes loaded at the Glasgow Basin with iron products from the Glasgow Blast Furnaces (1872-1880). It has been said hereabouts, "The iron produced by these furnaces was the best in Ohio".



### Port Washington and The Old Port Washington Road Out of Millersburg

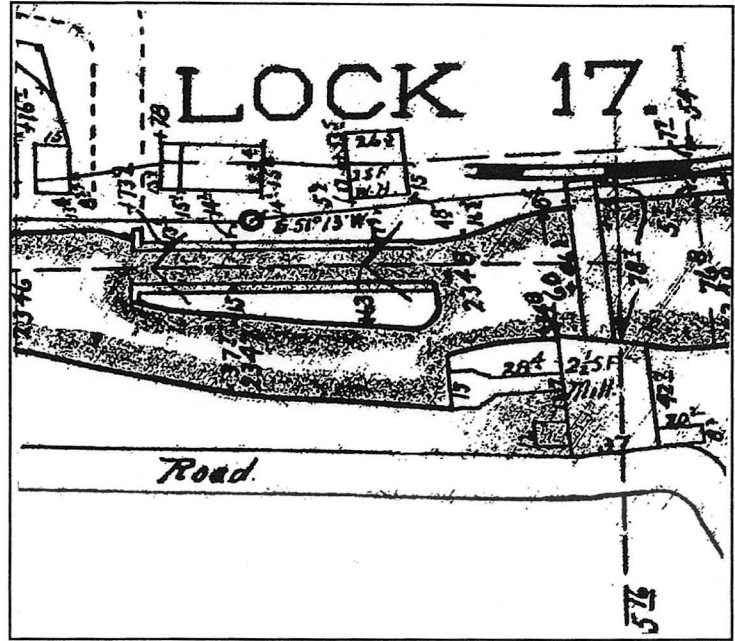
Like a giant magnet, the construction of the Ohio & Erie Canal drew inward toward the canal all of Tuscarawas County's enthusiastic industrial, commercial and agriculture entrepreneurs. The small village of Port Washington and the road from Millersburg in Holmes County, is a splendid example of this development. The Road ran out of Millersburg over the hills into Port Washington, a distance of approximately thirty miles. It would be the first state road in Ohio meeting with recent legislation set up specifically for the development of interior roads of the State. Surveyed in 1832, construction began shortly thereafter. With the completion of the road, the farm products of this predominately agricultural community began to flow toward the canal and Port Washington. Buildings began to spring up along the canal and the village flourished.



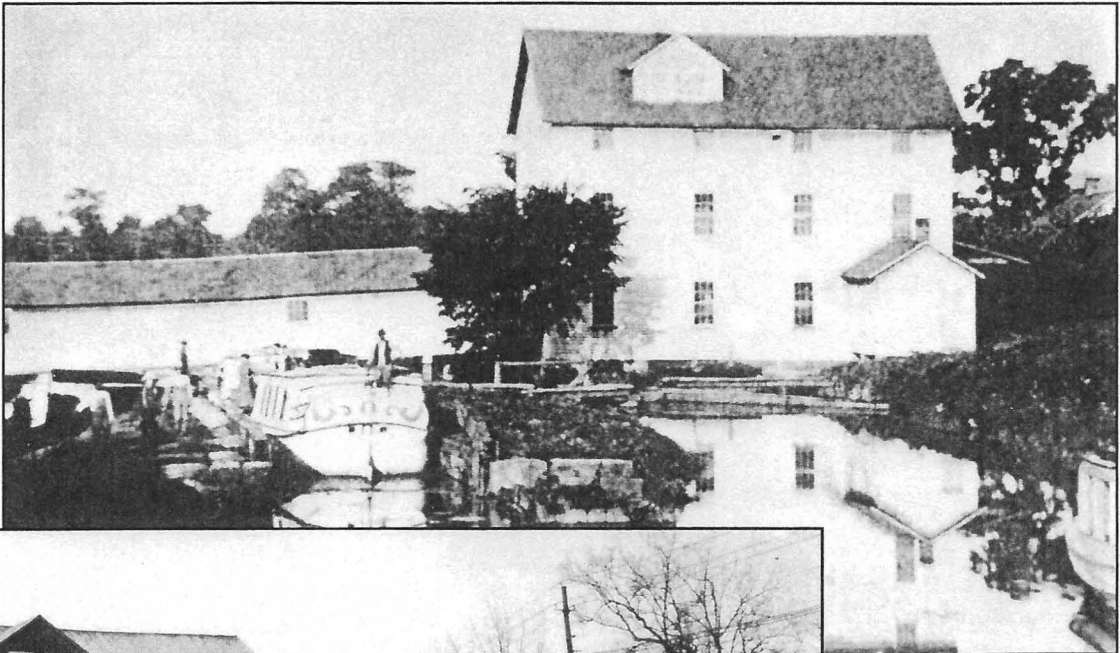


## Lock 17

Even before the canal began full operation in 1832, the local entrepreneurs recognized the value of this coming "Silver Ribbon." With very few exceptions, feed and flour mills began to be raised along its route, especially near the locks. The pictures on the following page shows the mill and other buildings at Lock 17. Unfortunately, today there is virtually nothing left of the old scenes from our past. The lock lays under Route 36 and most of the buildings have vanished. The mill has been stabilized and restored. The contract to build this section of the canal including the lock was given to George F.A. Atherton. On July 24, 1829 he was paid \$10,150.00 for his efforts. The lift at Lock 17 was 10 feet and the distance between Lock 17 and 18 was 17,000 feet or 3.2 miles.



**THEN**

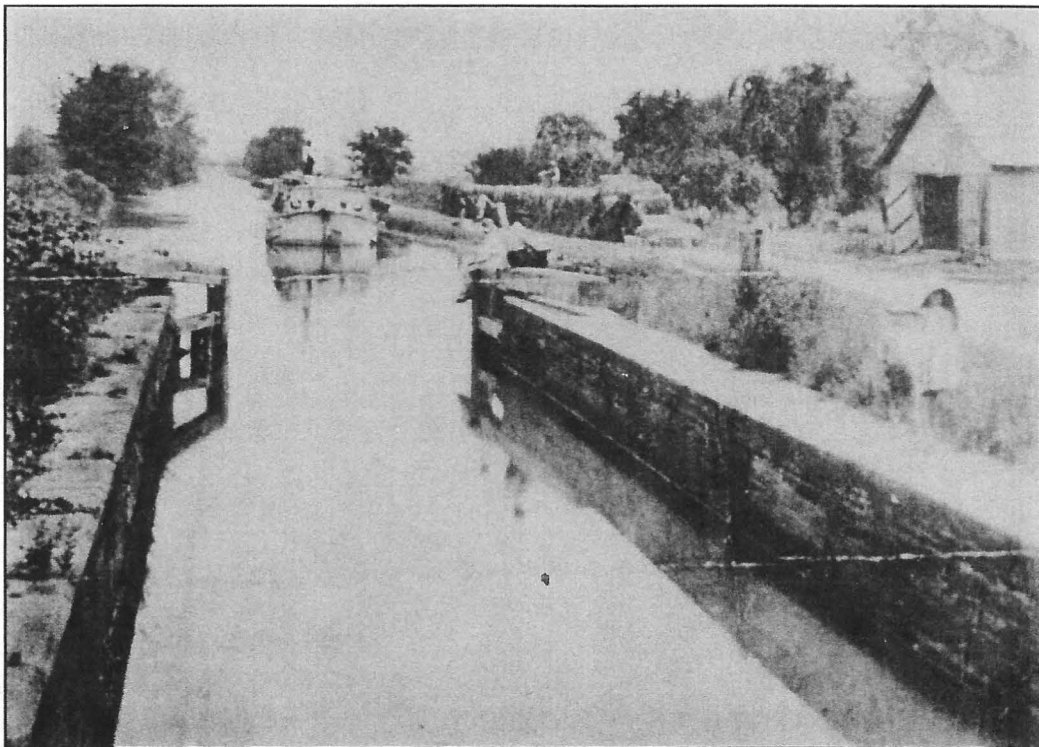
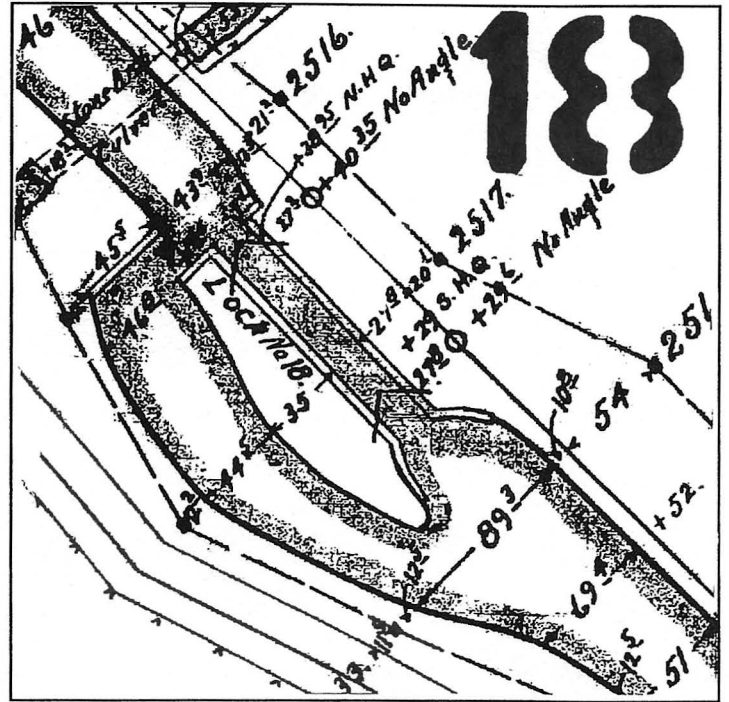


**NOW**



## Lock 18

The beautiful pastoral scene shows a canal boat just approaching the entrance to Lock 18. Look closely on the right side of the picture and you see the driver guiding the mules pulling the boat, and the children waiting expectantly for the boat to enter the lock. In his report to the Canal Commissioners on December 12, 1912, the Superintendent of the Canal stated that "Lock 18, near Port Washington, had entirely fallen in and would have to be rebuilt before the canal could open in the spring." Little did he know what would happen on March 26th to the 29th, 1913 when the entire system would be effectually destroyed by the 1913 flood. William B. Lawrence built the lock and he was paid \$7,156.53 for his labor. We are continuing to travel along State Route 36. The distance from Lock 18 to 19 was 14,800 feet or 2.8 miles. The lift at Lock 18 was 7 feet. Nothing remains of this lock and it is difficult to determine its exact location.



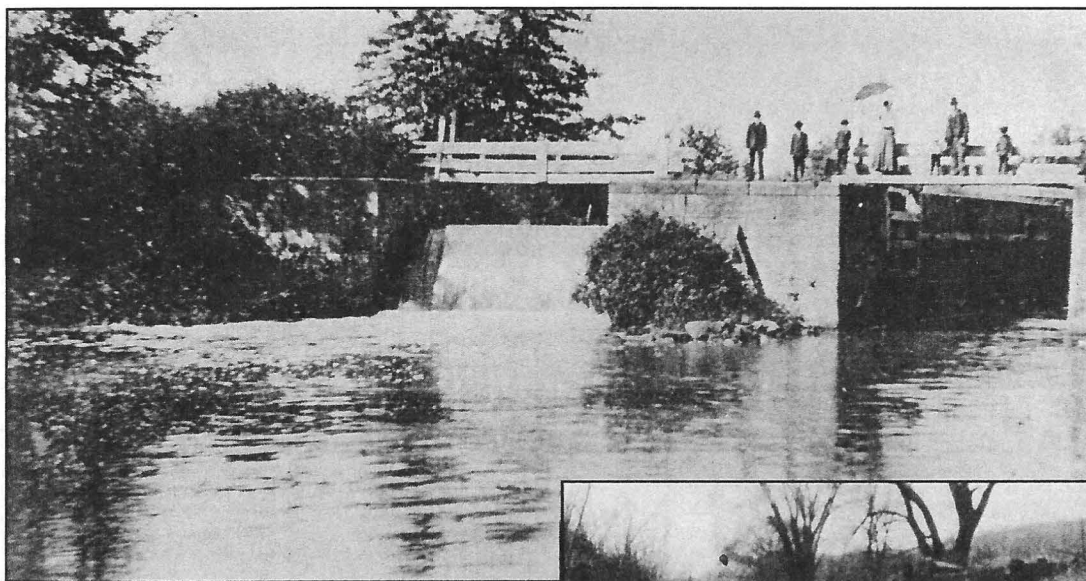
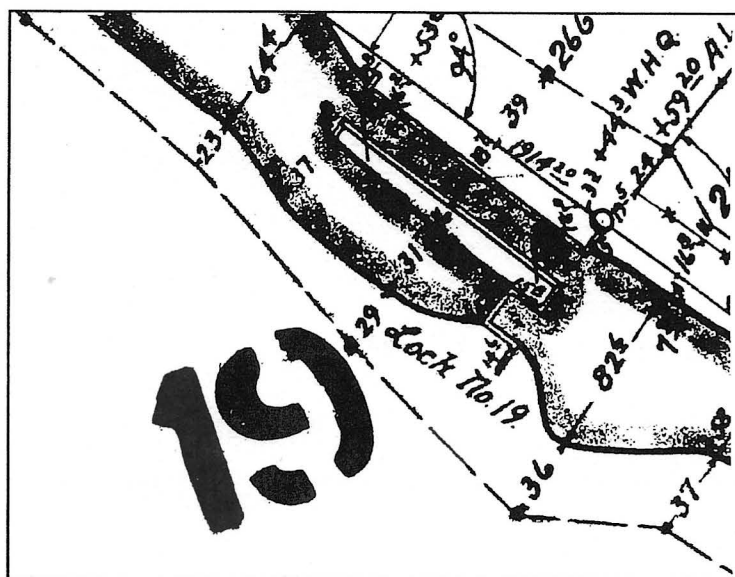
THEN

## Lock 19

This is the last lock in Salem Township, it was better known as Hill's Lock, and lay 2.8 miles below Lock 18. Little remains of the original structure, located today on State Route 36. Approximately one-half mile below the lock was the large Glasgow Basin and just west of the basin was the small community by the same name. (See the Salem Township Map)

During the summer of 1870; a Scottish capitalist who lived in Glasgow, Scotland was hunting on the site and discovered a large vein of coal and a quantity of iron ore. Excitement reigned; and he returned to Scotland and convinced some of his friends to develop the site.

By August 1874 they had built a large, expensive, double brick, iron furnace. The water to operate the furnace was drawn from the canal. The whole project costing several hundred thousand dollars collapsed after several years of poor management and innumerable manufacturing problems. At the height of this activity, over 200 people lived in Glasgow, but today it is but a shadow of its former fame. The contract to build Lock 19 was awarded to Christopher Nismanger. He was paid \$6,367.79. The distance to Lock 20 was 13,900 feet or 5.4 miles. The lift at Lock 19 was 10 feet.



**THEN**

**NOW**



77  
66

[illegible]

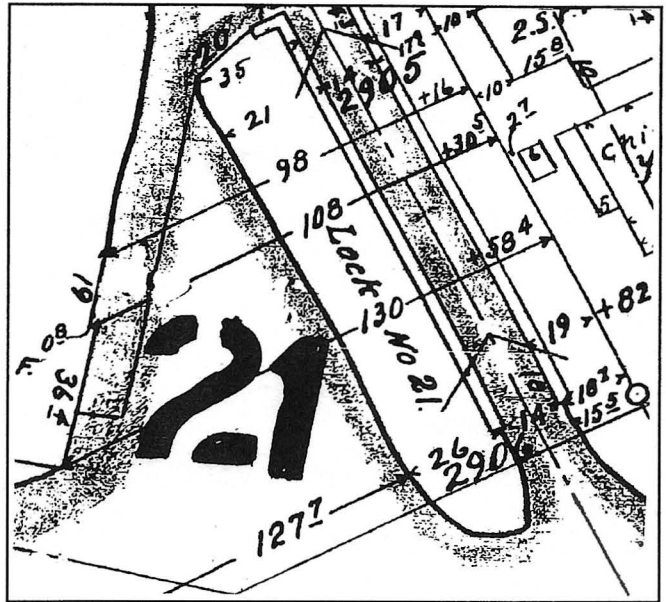
LOCK 21

A black and white photograph of a rural property. On the right is a dark, two-story building with two windows. In the center is a large evergreen tree. To the left of the tree is a pile of rocks or debris. The foreground is a grassy field.



## Newcomerstown and Lock 21

Newcomerstown and the Ohio & Erie Canal have historical links unique in the early nineteenth century history of Tuscarawas County. It is the only community of any size where the canal ran directly through the center of the village. Many vestiges of the canal can still be found here. The present Canal Street runs parallel and south of the canal through the entire village. Visiting today's Eureka Hardware Store, which lay near to Lock 21, is like going back 171 years in time. (See pictures on the following page.) Adjacent to and just before you enter Lock 21 was a large basin for winter boat storage and commerce. The old Wiandt Mill was located on this basin. It burned in 1872 and was replaced by another mill operated by Mr. Emerson and his son. The present residence near the intersection of Canal and Goodrich Streets is built on the old Lock 21 foundation. Lock 21 had a lift of 7 feet, and it was built by John Loughry and James Dean at a cost of \$7,457.33. On the western edge of Newcomerstown the canal leaves Tuscarawas County.



**THEN**



**NOW**

Map of the Ohio Canal

From Sta. 3410+75<sup>th</sup> to Sta. 3504,

*Tuscarawas and Coshocton Counties,*

O H I O.

Scale 100 Feet to an inch.



# Tuscarawas County.

We, the undersigned, members of the General Convention of the State of Ohio, do hereby certify that this Map was made under our instructions and in conformity to our instructions, and whereby approve the same.

Witness our hands, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1896.

*A. M. Hoff*

*Chas. M. Chas. M.*

*General Convention*

I hereby approve of this Map.

Columbus, Ohio, August 11<sup>th</sup> 1896.

*Chief Engineer Public Works.*

3400  
3400  
(2)

## Geological Section.

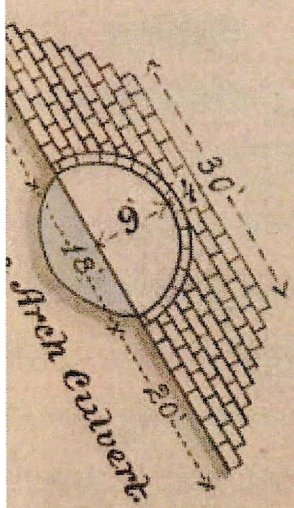
- Fine sandstone.
- Coarse sandstone.
- White sandstone.
- Shale & sandstone.
- Sandstone.
- Boundary line.
- Stone.
- Shale.

Note—Vertical sections not drawn to scale.

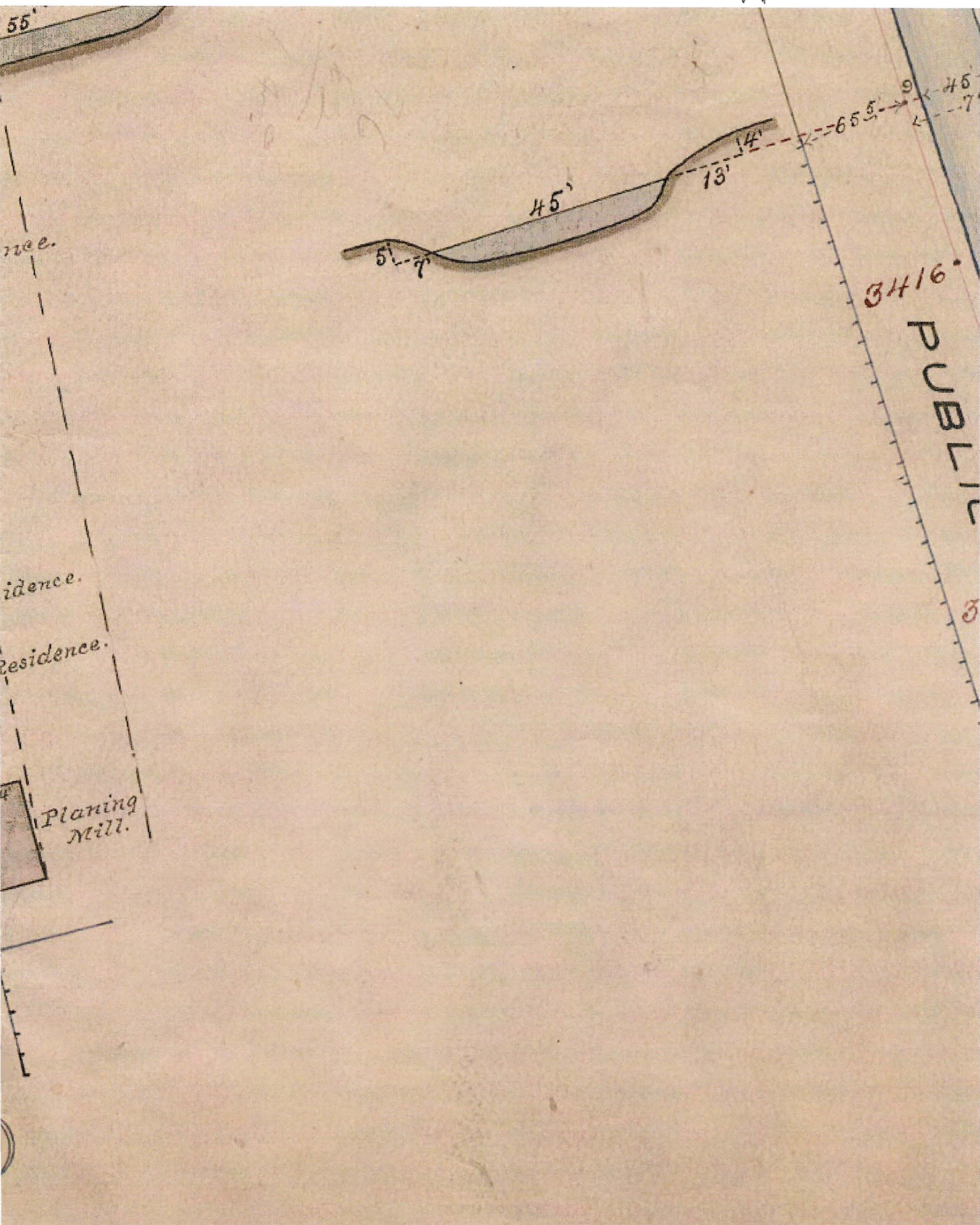
W. C. Rogers, Surveyor.  
A. H. Sawyer, District Engineer.  
E. B. Hooten, District Engineer.



*James Koogle*





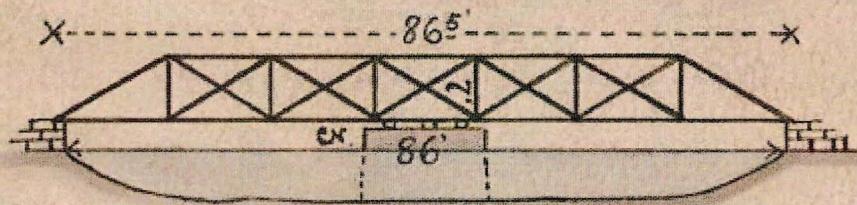




12/11

S. J. Douglas

Bridge



County Bridge.

CLEVELAND

AND

3446  
+7490

R.R. 40  
36

667  
Residence  
+5

Store Room

John Kooze  
Jim Storker

3444  
Residence  
+473

Blksmith Shop.

Carriage Shop.

3442

Tool House.  
+17

W. 255.08 44.88

See Reed H.G.

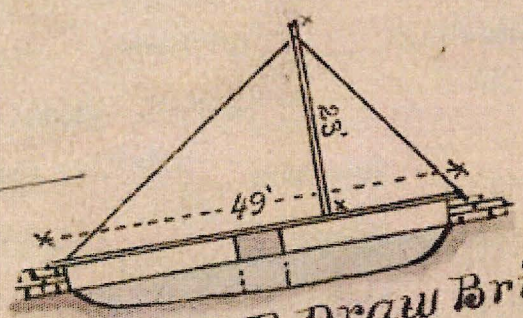
5.81.00

165  
173.00  
396  
64  
00

L. Warner

Stool yard





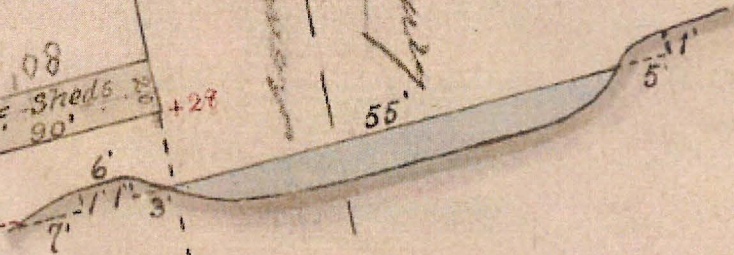
C. & M. R.R. Draw Bridge.

Corporation Line.

69-18'  
3420.

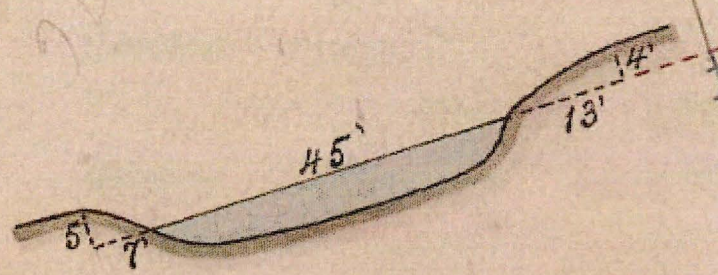
TTA  
05  
108  
F. Sheds 90'

D BASIN.



Residence.

Residence.



34



72nd St

74

A.L. 14207



70th St

Canal

Mrs Sarah Sultzor

C. J. Duggles

Canal

Street

3454

51' 24' 8"

94'

42'

Store Room

15 F.

Blk Smith Shop

52'

3452

68'

56'

71'

50' 50' W. S.

3450

50'

49'

665'

Residence

15 F.

Residence

15 F.

Residence

15 F.

3448

49'

60'

50'

98'

WAREHOUSE

OLD

13

14

15

Store Room

176

Water in Canal equal to depth lane

17

18

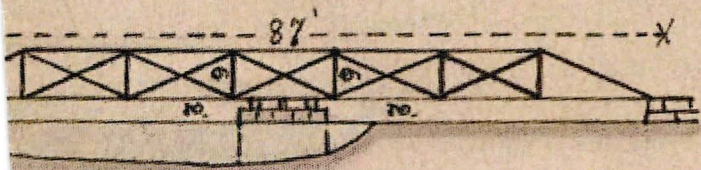
19

2

129



County Bridge.



3428

75

Mrs. Mark Hartshorn  
O A Vogrinity

Cross St

3426

STREET

Vacant lot  
O A Vogrinity  
Frederick Hartshorn  
S E Douglas  
Mrs M Weir

54'

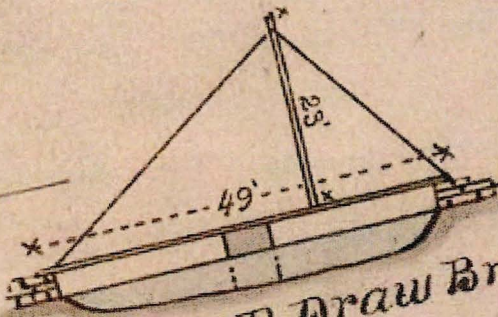
21 4'

10'

3424

585

M. Jungling & Sons  
John L. Hilgus  
Mrs Ellen Borders  
J L Mulvane



M R R Draw Bridge.

3



3460



Office  
+40  
9' 15'

3458

Residence



+78

A.L. 52 24'

3456 10' W.



+50

A.L. 14 07'

River St.

3454



Store Room  
+8

18' F. 20'  
24' 24' 24'

+53 Blk Smith Shop

3452

87' 25'

13 65'

14

14

76

49'

49'

114

891

159

915

100

52'

68'



3434

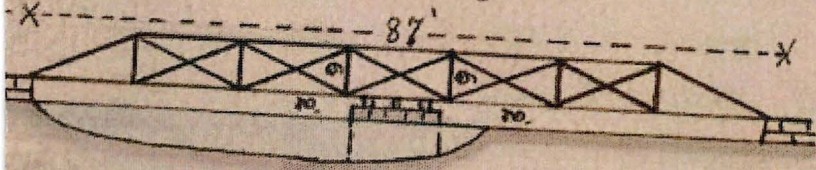
A.R. 302' 8"  
+53-

3432

3430

342

County Bridge.



farm

Mrs. Martha Hartshorn  
Oa. Co. Ga.

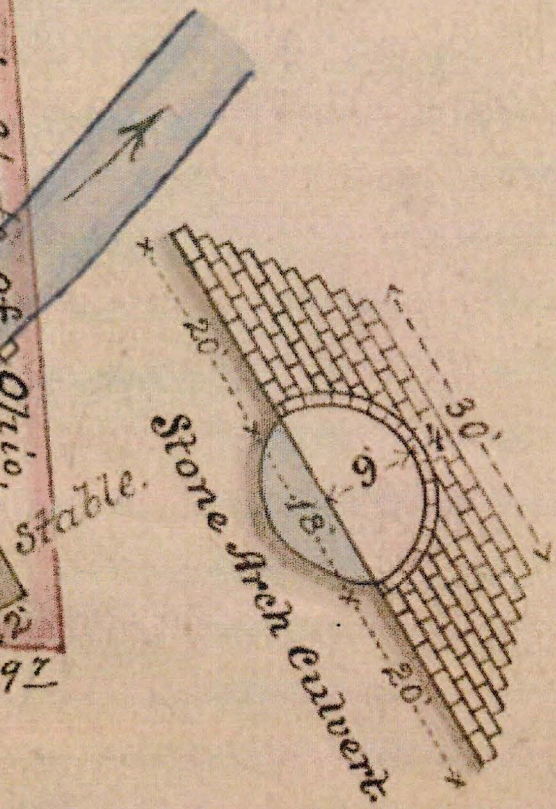
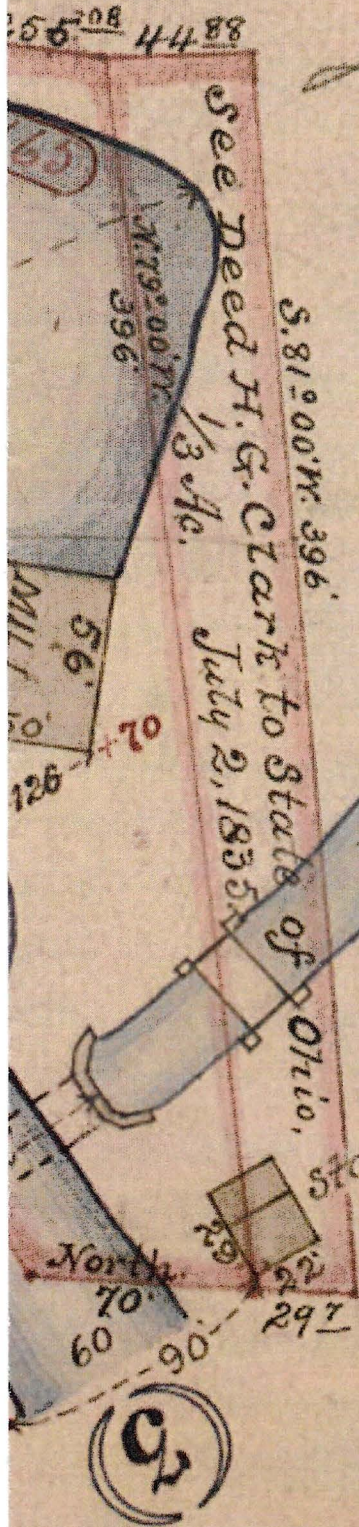
34  
50  
54  
Room.







*E. H. Warner*





Locally, Tuscarawas County had two persons perish, one in Newcomerstown, and the other near Uhrichsville. Coshocton County lost four residents in an area known as Clowville located south of Coshocton.

Newcomerstown experienced significant damage to the south and west sides of town where there was reportedly depths of nearly sixteen to eighteen feet of water in some areas. The middle span of the River Street bridge collapsed into the river and a worker was killed several days later during the repair of the bridge.

The C&M railroad trestle (located east of the River Street bridge) was significantly damaged and required extensive repairs. Both the C&M and the Pennsylvania railroad tracks were damaged, and virtually stopped all railway activity until repairs could be completed.

This created inconvenience as the railroad was the main source for travel, and the mode of delivery for supplies, and the U.S. mail.

The following personal diary entries are from 12-year old Frederic Zimmer, who resided at the northwest corner of Pilling and State streets (the Zimmer home no longer exists and the former property is now part of Riverside Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center's parking lot) at the time of the flood.

Zimmer's sister, the late Lois (Zimmer) Craig provided the diary entries.

Monday, March 24, 1913:

Rained all day yesterday, Easter Sunday, and again today. We went to see the Swiss Bell Ringers at the Opera House (now the site of the Newcomerstown Municipal building on Church Street) in the evening. The gutters, sidewalks and streets are turning into a sea of mud. The river has started to rise.

Tuesday, March 25, 1913:

Rained again today. River is still rising. Tonight it lacked a foot of filling the top of the arch way of the culvert (nearby his home, on State Street).

Wednesday, March 26, 1913:

The river was one foot deep over the road at the culvert this morning. It has rained almost all Day. Papa came to get us after school ended this afternoon. Frederic was in the sixth grade, Lois in the third grade, and David in the first grade. All attended the East School on College Street. A younger sister, Marian, was not yet born. In the morning, the river raised three inches an hour. This increased until when at noon it raised a foot an hour. The levee below Port Washington and Stark Patent have broken. At 3 o'clock, I walked to town for a lantern globe. The water from the river is now coming down Chestnut Street and pouring into the canal. I had to wade in, but got back home alright. We drove the cattle to the hill over by the sand bank, and carried the pigs and a calf into the barn. We carried out the fruit, sausage, lard and other things stored in the cellar. By this time, we could scarcely get to the corn crib. Water was now rising three inches an hour. At 8 o'clock it was washing over the bridge abutment (the East State Street bridge was formerly located just west of the current State Route 258 bridge). Our neighbors, the Smiths, who live in the old Nugen home (now the site of the David Barber Civic Center) have moved to their upstairs.

Thursday, March 27, 1913:

This morning at 4 o'clock, the river stopped rising, having reached five to six inches over the bridge coping. Our cellar is full. The water is from hill to hill. The water floated whole tie piles from the railroad down the river. Smiths have been getting coal, milk and bread from us by boat. Papa, Walters Sperling, the Smith's grandson, and I went to town along the hills.



## Flood of 1913 Page 2

We got one film at Eagon's Drug Store (was located on Main Street next door to The Newcomerstown News building). We went back up on the hill (near Park Hill) and took pictures. The whole town was flooded. The river has fallen six or seven inches. I went to Walter Sperling's house and we helped rescue chickens.

Friday, March 28, 1913:

The river is down now, so we can get to the barn without boots. Miss Sadie Cockran, my sixth grade teacher, and two of the high school, Miss Price and Mr. Dye came over and they, Papa, Mama, David and I walked up the railroad to the Glasgow curve (east of the current Interstate 77 interchange). The track was washed out and the rails with ties barely hanging to them. We met a motor boat up there with the civil engineer, Lyle Scott and another from Uhrichsville. They were checking the damage, being sent there by the railroad (officials). We came back home, had dinner, then walked to town, and to the lower west end of town, it was awful (condition).

Saturday, March 29, 1913:

The Smith's chimney fell in the dinning room and smashed a hole in the floor. We saw the first of the culvert come back into sight (water was receding considerably by now). The ballast trains are working on the railroad (repairing the tracks).

Sunday, March 30, 1913:

The water is down now so people can drive. Mama and Ma Moore (his maternal grandmother) worked in the cellar this morning, cleaning it up. Papa and I made a new horse stable approach. Smiths and Sperlings were here for dinner. There was no Sunday school in town today.

Monday, March 31, 1913:

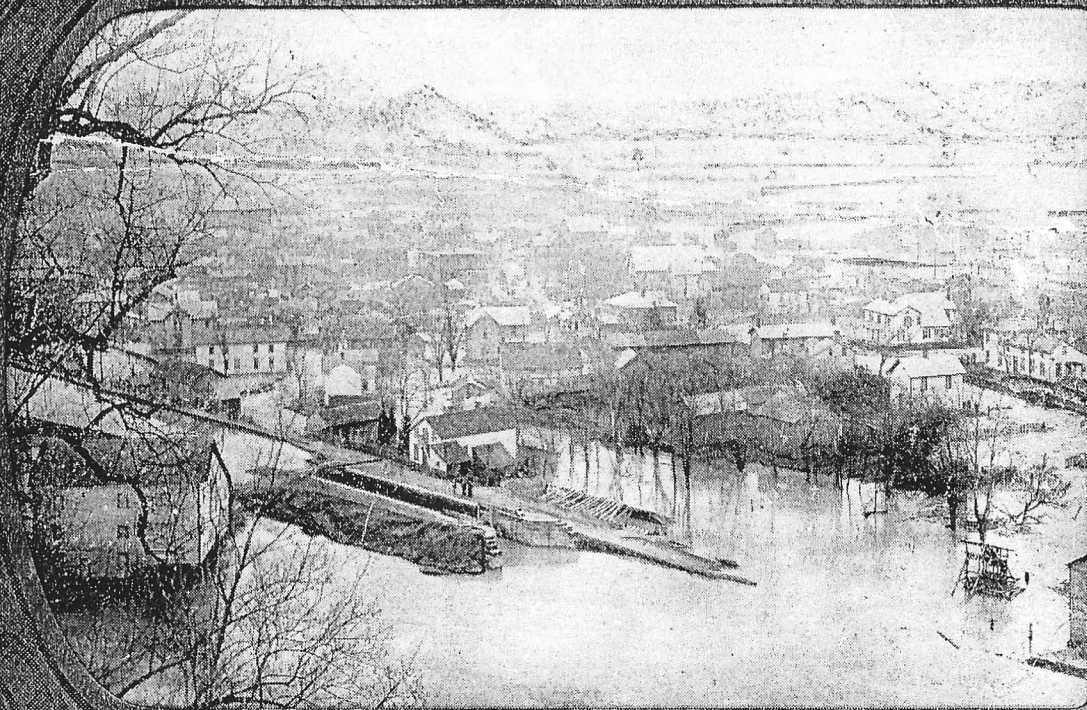
David and I went to town for a sack of lime and saw the Dennison work train. Mr. West came to drain the wheat field. Uncle Alvin and his crew walked along the hills from Trinway and got home at Dennison at 7 o'clock tonight.

Tuesday, April 1, 1913:

We got our first newspaper (The Plain Dealer) since the flood started. The people are out all over town trying to identify their out buildings (out houses).

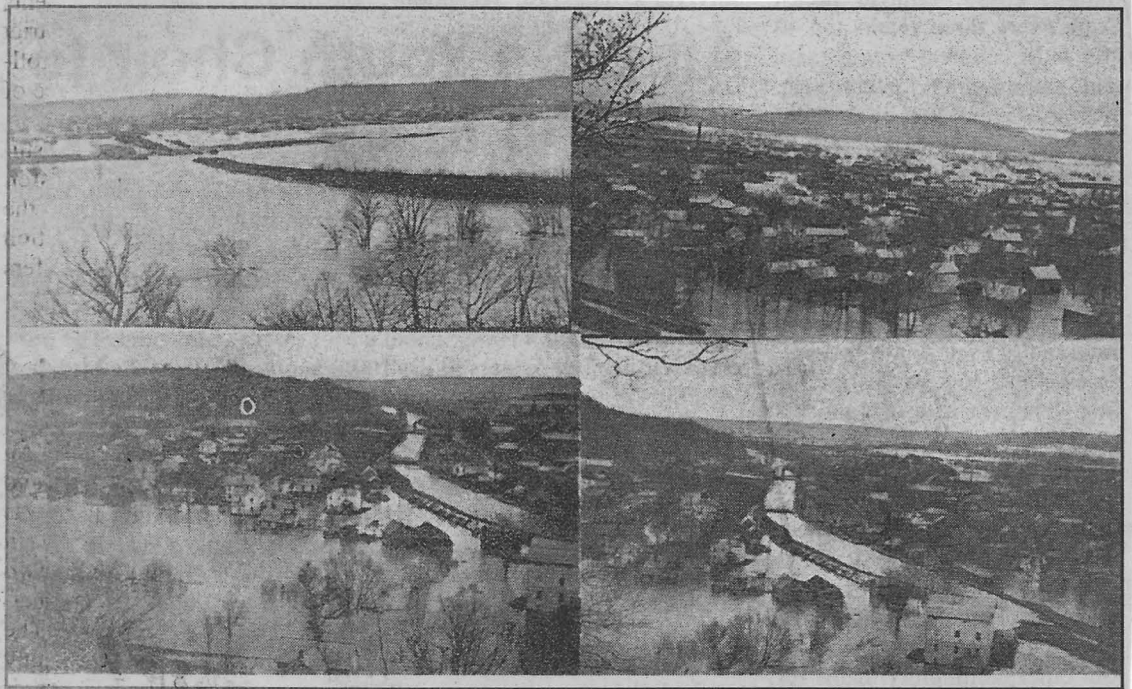
FLOOD 1898

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FLOOD  
1898





This vintage postcard shows scenes of the massive amount of water that covered Newcomerstown in the aftermath of the March 13, 1913, flood.

1913 FLOOD CANAL ST.



BEST

IN CENTER OF PICTURE SECOND PATTERSON ICE HOUSE  
IN CENTER OF PICTURE SECOND PATTERSON ICE HOUSE ABOUT



Photo courtesy of Dale Thompson, Texas

Flooded intersection near the town square at Main and Cross streets, looking southeast. The building to the right is now part of the Feed Barn. The building to the left no longer exists, and another building is now located there (formerly M&K Market, NAPA, and a fitness gym have been housed there). The small building just beside the larger one was also demolished in later years. The taller buildings beyond that remain yet today, though the facades have been changed over the years.



Photo courtesy of William Casteel, West Lafayette

Two unidentified men and a child are seen rowing a boat towards flooded State Street towards S. College Street. The area where the boat is sitting would now be the present site of Baker's IGA.





Rosemary Guy submitted this photo of the flood waters standing on the west end of Main St. Mrs. Guy's home at 344 W. Main St. is pictured to the left.



Main St., Newcomerstown, is pictured here with flood waters covering the street. Whether the waters were rising or receding is not clear.



Photo courtesy of William Casteel  
The Maplewood School (also known as the west School) is seen surrounded by the flood waters. The school building was torn down in 1955, and the area is now the location for Medi-Wise Pharmacy, the Newcomerstown Middle School and other establishments are now located in the foreground of this photo.



Photo courtesy of William Casteel  
Though Newcomerstown was paralyzed by the flood, citizens were able to get around in boats, canoes for awhile. These three men are not identified. The area seen is near the State and Mulvane Street intersection, looking southeast. The area where the men/canoe are located would be where Baker's IGA is now located.



Main St., Newcomerstown, is pictured here with flood waters covering the street. Whether the waters were rising or receding is not clear.





Photo courtesy of William Casteel

Workmen repairing the C&M railroad tracks near the Rex File Plant (later known as Heller Tool Company and Simonds), south of town. These tracks extended south across the river via the old railroad trestle that was demolished in the 1980s. The trestle had been significantly damaged and required repair following the flood.

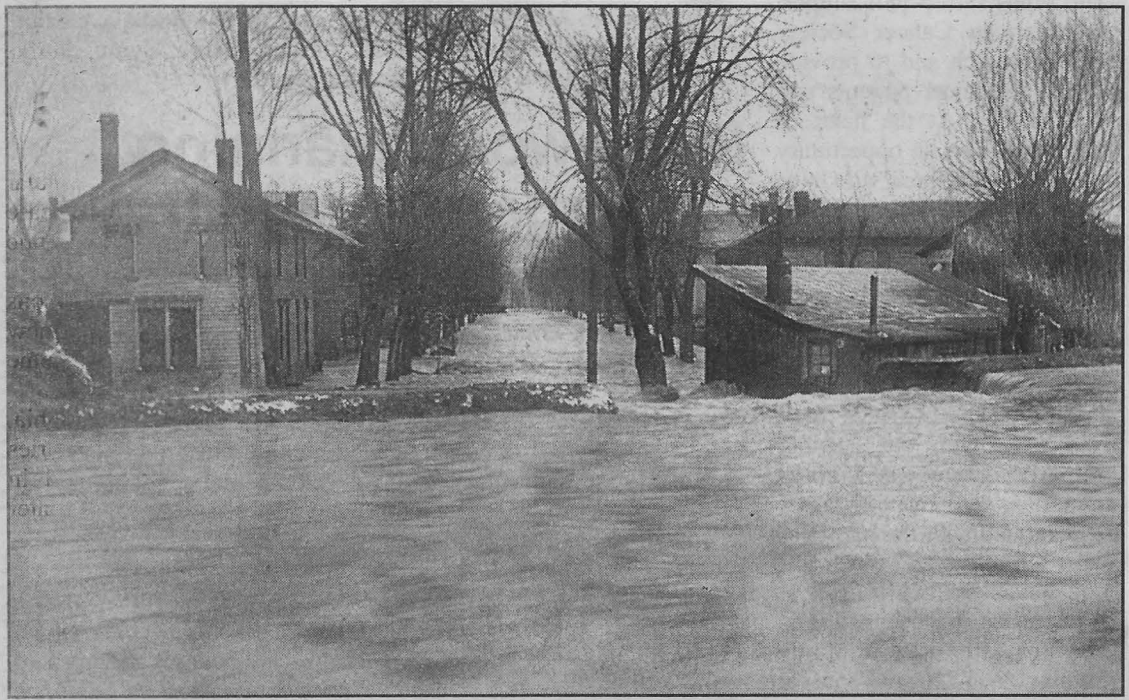


The 1913 flood did considerable damage locally. This old photo shows the extensive destruction the flood waters caused the C & M Railroad tracks. (Photo submitted by Dale Thompson, Texas)



Photo courtesy of William Casteel

The west State Street bridge is seen surrounded by deep water. The area reportedly had depths of nearly twenty feet in some sections. The east end approach is seen in this view. The approach was completely washed away and had to be reconstructed.

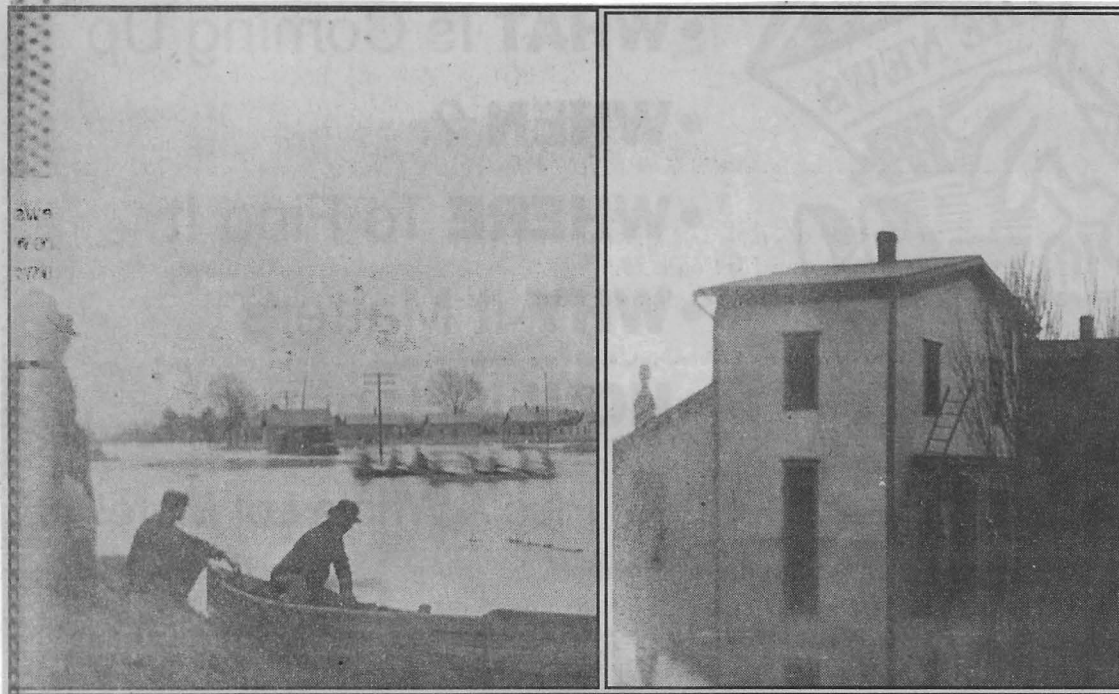


Looking eastward on W. Church St., the flood's devastation is evident at the corner of W. Church and Goodrich where the streets were washed out, leaving a muddy, rutty ravine. To the left is the former Phillip VanSickle property, and in the background, the current home of Dan and Linda Styer is pictured.



Some of the property damages caused by the flood can be seen in this picture postcard





These two photos of the 1913 flood were submitted by Leroy Tilman, Newcomerstown. The one photo shows two men with a boat, probably the only transportation around town at the time of the flood. The other photo provides a grim reminder of how the flood waters surrounded the homes of residents all over the area.



Local resident, Janis Regula pointed out to The News staff last week that incorrect information was published under the above photo in the March 12 edition's collection of photos from the 1913 flood. We appreciate her calling this to our attention. The photo is a flood scene at the intersection of W. Church and Goodrich streets and shows how the street was washed out, leaving a muddy, rutty ravine. In the background is the current home of Dan and Linda Styer, and formerly the home of Mrs. Regula and her family.



Photo courtesy of William Casteel, West Lafayette  
The town square at Port Washington is submerged following the 1913 flood; this view is looking north. The flood virtually stopped all railway activity between Newcomerstown and Port Washington until the railroad was repaired. The use of boats was a very popular mode of travel for several weeks afterward.

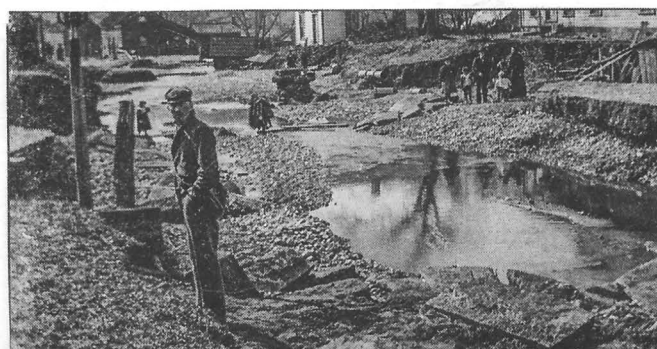


Photo courtesy of Dale Thompson, former resident of Newcomerstown, now residing in Texas  
It will be a 100 years ago this month that the flood of 1913 took many lives and caused millions of dollars of damage throughout central and southern Ohio. This photo, taken in Newcomerstown on Bridge Street, looking south on the C&M railroad towards State Street, shows some of the aftermath. The area on the right, beyond where the group of people are seen standing is now the current site of the Newcomerstown Senior Center.





*A river rages down a Newcomerstown street.*



*A 10-foot channel where once Newcomerstown had a street; note sewer pipes now above ground.*



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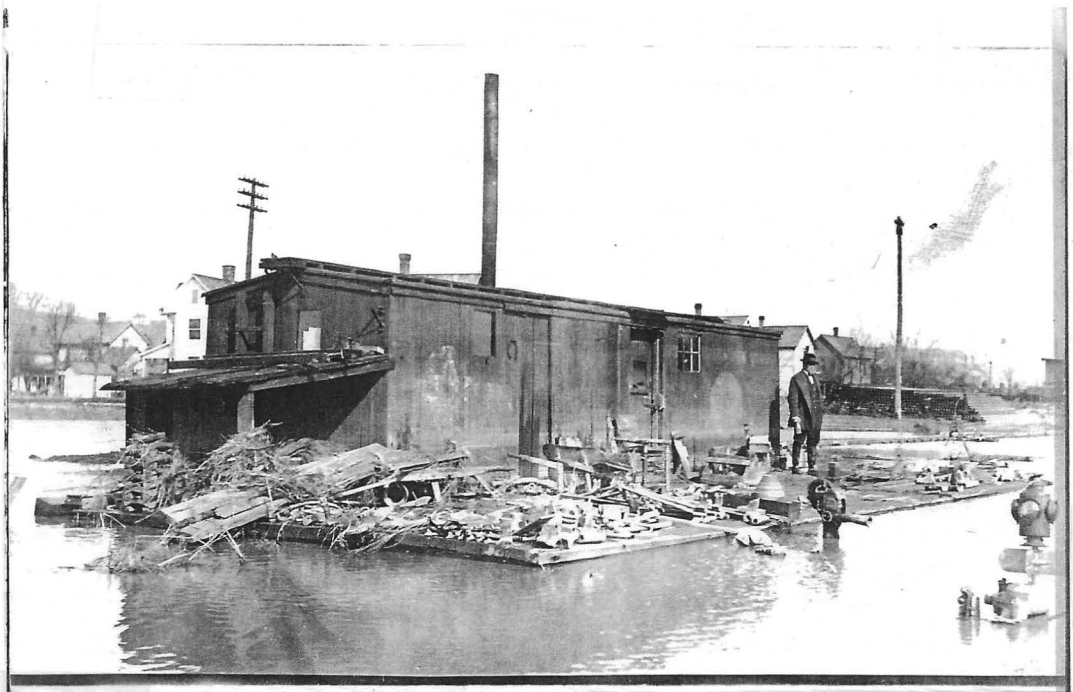
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# Newcomerstown's soggy past

Area has had several significant experiences throughout years

By **WILLIAM CASTEEL**  
Correspondent

The months of March and April typically bring wind and rain, but Mother Nature doesn't always seem to know when enough is enough.

Over the years Newcomerstown has experienced her share of devastating wind storms, and torrential floods. Historically speaking, the 1913 flood, and the 1955 tornado both are vividly recollected in the local history archives, and appear to be the most devastating events that occurred in Newcomerstown. Many may not know that Newcomerstown also had experienced significant floods in 1898, August of 1935, and July of 1969.

The 1935 flood was reportedly the result of a break in the C&M railroad embankment in the north side of town which unleashed the rain-swollen Buckhorn Creek which had been over flowing from several days of intense rain. According to news reports the rain began at 8 p.m. on August 6, 1935 and by morning nine inches had fallen. It was an Ohio record rain fall at that time.

The Cross Street bridge

was submerged under two feet of water and debris floated in the Buckhorn. The town was completely isolated for more than several days, highways inaccessible. Water reached nearly five feet in some local residents' homes that were situated in more elevated areas.

Local firemen, and other volunteers worked through the night, wading in dark, murky, neck-deep water in some of the lower surrounding areas that were closer to the Buckhorn Creek, and the Tuscarawas River. Many stranded residents required assistance to evacuate to higher ground, the firemen employing the use of canoes, small boats, and skiffs to ferry those in peril to safety.

The July 1969 flood was also very significant with substantial amounts of water submerging lower lying areas. Flooding was again the result of non-stop rain that summer.

The flooding also affected Coshocton, Dover, New Philadelphia, Cambridge crippling travel between Newcomerstown, and the outlying areas due to roadways being submerged for more than several days.



**This is the corner of Canal and College streets in Newcomerstown in August, 1935 flood. Pictured is the College Street Methodist Church. There is a car wash now located at this site.**

While both of these floods created substantial interruption in the daily routine, neither one can compare to the 1913 flood. Newcomerstown suffered significant damage to structures including the C&M Railroad trestle, and the River Street bridge, both on the south part of town.

The middle section of the River Street bridge later collapsed into the Tuscarawas River while workmen were attempting to

repair damage to the structure. The collapse led to on fatality.

In Coshocton there were multiple fatalities in the section of town known as Clowville (in the southwest section of town).

In the years that followed these past floods, there have been occasional episodes where the river levels are higher and have managed to spill over. The construction, and improvement of local area dams



Photos courtesy of William Casteel

**The East State Street bridge that carried State Route 21 from Pilling Street is seen in this photo taken in August 1935. The Tuscarawas River is noted at an extremely high level following several days of heavy down pour.**



**From a hilltop, this is a scene from the 1913 flood in Newcomerstown.**

such as the Dover Dam, and the Mohawk Dam in Coshocton County have facilitated better control of the water levels in the midst of excessive rain fall.

More information regarding the August 1935 and July 1969 floods can be viewed at the Newcomerstown Public Library local history department.

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