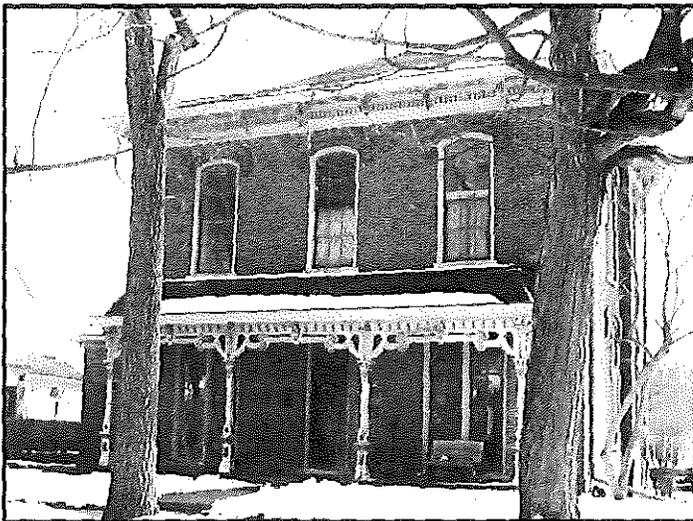


Health Services (NCHS) to provide a "challenge grant" of one half with the caveat that we raise the first half. When we finally solicited more than \$50,000 from donors we were fortunate to land another \$40,000 from Wabash Heritage Corridor grant money last winter. Right now we are going through a lot of that money in short order and it looks like the budget will suffice.

The contractor for bridge erection is John Camden from Camden Construction Company near Warsaw, Indiana. He and his crew will be here for another week. Ross Brown local blacksmith is also heavily involved. He has done most of the blacksmithing repairs that our M-W-F crew couldn't perform. And he has been working with us since we first unloaded iron from the 5 semi trailers that arrived from Putnam County.

The concrete work for the abutments is being done by Tim Stahl from Kokomo. He and his uncle Bud and Dave Schlick from Logansport will later provide the crane service to set the bridge. Likely the placement will be in mid September and then the decking perhaps completed by mid October in time for the Bicentennial History Train



### THE WASON HOME: TOLEDO IN DELPHI

By Mark Smith

Immediately adjacent to the home of the Lyon family on Front Street we encounter that of both the Eldridge and Wason families in Delphi, Indiana. Although the home was constructed in 1885, long past the usefulness of the local canal, the home has ties through the Wason families to that grand era in the Delphi area.

According to an internet source, (on-line *White County History*, by Thomas Hammele,) James P. Wason was born September twenty-sixth in Toledo, Ohio where he

attended the common schools through grade 8. He was the son of Robert A. and Gertrude Wason (nee Freleigh). He came to Delphi with his parents and graduated from the Delphi High School in May 1885, studied law for a short time with the firm of Applegate and Pollard and then entered the store of Bolles and Wason in 1887, where he was employed until the fall of 1894. He then went to Ann Arbor and entered the law department of the University of Michigan. After graduating from there with the degree of LLB in June 1896, and was an attorney in the firm name of Cartwright and Wason until his elevation to the bench. He was attorney for the board of commissioners of Carroll County in 1903-1904. (He) was elected judge of the Thirty-ninth elected to the Judicial Circuit, composed of Carroll and White Counties, in November, 1906 by a majority of forty-one and was re-elected in 1912 by a majority of 1,315. He was a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church and also a member of Mt. Olive Lodge, F. and A.M., Delphi Chapter, R.A.M., No. 21, Monticello Council, No. 70, R and S.M., Delphi Commandery, K.T., No 40, Delphi Lodge, K of P., No. 86, Delphi Company URK of P., No. 86 and Tippecanoe Tribe, I.O.R.M. No 505. In politics he was a Democrat.

His obituary from the *Delphi Journal*, dated February 22, 1951 states: "Ashes of Former Judge Brought Here/ Ashes of Judge James P. Wason were brought to Delphi Wednesday for burial in the Masonic Cemetery. Mr. Wason, Judge of the Carroll-White circuit court for 12 years, passed away at his home in Indianapolis on October twenty-fifth, 1950, and the ashes were held at Indianapolis until his son, John could come home from Europe for a memorial service here. His widow, Susan Edson Wason, and members of the family met friends at the Delphi library at 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon, after which the ashes were taken to the cemetery where graveside rites were conducted by Rev. Reese B. Thornton, pastor of St. John's Episcopal church in Lafayette."

Another one of the family to make his home on Front Street was William B. Wason, whose wife was Clelia Newcomer of Tipton. His passing took place in June of 1951 at the Arzula Flora nursing home at Flora, Indiana at 2. a.m. Saturday. His son George was a citizen of Flora, Indiana. His birth occurred at Toledo, Ohio April twelfth, 1863. He was a member of the Oracle Club. He was also a son of Robert A. and Gertrude Freleigh Paddock Wason. He assisted his father in the store.

William Wason's offspring included two sons and a daughter; Robert N. Wason, Indianapolis; George M. Wason, Flora, and Mrs. Charles Bowen, Champaign, Illinois. His brother was Robert A. Wason, and his sister-in-law was Mrs. James Paddock Wason. He also left six grandchildren.

The Wason family was known for owning a piece of prosperous real estate on the northwest quadrant of the square which had originally been owned by Attorney M.A. Ryan, but which was sold to W.B. Wason for the grand sum of \$18,500.

Another more famous Wason sibling was Robert Alexander, who wrote novels with western themes such as *Happy Hawkins*, *Friar Tuck*, and a book about the contemporary robber barons, *The Knight Errant*. He was an anomaly of sorts in the Wason family in that he adopted socialist tendencies in spite of his service in the military.

The names of Wason and Bolles were closely allied to the Canal Era. According to a front page article in the *Delphi Journal* dated February twenty-fifth, 1937—"W.B. Wason Store Established ion 1836 Going Out of Business.--After 40 years of successful merchandising, W. B. Wason and Co have decided to close out their stock and discontinue business. Mr. Wason when interviewed as to his reason for retiring stated "Since I was 12 years old I have been working at one job or another and have been here 40 years. After 62 years on the job I really believe one is entitled to a rest. That is the reason we are going to close out. We have a stock of \$10,000 or more and have not bought any trash for our sale. All our merchandise is on sale at prices far below what it would cost to replace it. We expect to close out the entire stock in as short time as possible and at great savings to our customers. The store was established by William Bolles in 1836. Later Mr. Wason's father became a partner of Bolles. It has had the reputation since its establishment for its reliability. The fixtures and shelving along with the entire stock of merchandise will be sold at this closing out sale. Read the Journal for ads concerning the sale which starts Saturday February twenty-seventh at 9 o'clock A.M."

I, Mark Smith, find it very fascinating that the afterglow of the Wabash and Erie Canal was evident nearly a century after its appearance on the Delphi scene.

### FOUND ON E-BAY

Neil Sowards, CSI member from Fort Wayne, Indiana, recently found a terrific, long and detailed pioneer stampless folded letter written in 1839 from Fall Township in Muskingum County, Ohio on e-Bay. It was postmarked in Zanesville, Ohio with a red Zanesville circular date stamp with an 18¾ cents manuscript rate mark. As you will see it contains an excellent report of steamboat travel on canals and the Great Lakes as well a describing early teaching duties and politics.

The seller on e-Bay, cmvolz, researched the author and receiver of the letter and found the following:

The letter was written by 26-year-old John Hoopes (1813-1892), the son of Caleb Hoopes (1783-About 1839) and Lydia Ottey (1785-1838) of Chester County, Pennsylvania. John's mother, Lydia, was the sister of Ann Ottey (1783-1857) who married Joseph Coggins (1788-About 1839). Ann and Joseph are mentioned in this letter, confirming the family relationship. John married Abigail Ann Milhouse (1820-18xx) in October 1840. In later years, John served as the Clerk of the Common Pleas (1864 to 1867) in Muskingum County.

The letter is addressed to Levis James of West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania. He appears in the 1830 and 1840 U. S. Census records in that location.

Fall Township, Muskingum County, Ohio  
June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1839

Esteemed Friend,

I would have written to you before this time had it not been that I have deferred it still hoping to get some tid-ing of Francis Counsellor of whom I know you would be pleased to hear. I have not saw nor heard tell of him since I came into the state. I have not yet been in Pickaway County, but it is probable he is there. I have written to Wellington & others requesting them to inform me whether he has again returned to Pennsylvania and as soon as I receive intelligence I shall endeavor to find him out if he is yet in these parts. Upon receipt of this, I wish you to write, and if he has returned, inform he thereof.

Father and I have both been blessed with good health since we left home & had a pleasant passage and good accommodations. I will give you a detail of our route. We left Philadelphia on the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May in the Steamboat *New Philadelphia* for New York. From thence to Albany, Schenectady, Utica, Auburn, Canandaigua, Rochester, Lockport, and from thence to Niagara Falls, which we viewed under rather unfavorable circumstances owing to the inclemency of the weather. From Lockport we went to Buffalo, Cleveland, and down the Canal [Ohio & Erie] from thence to Massillon. From Massillon we went to Joseph Ingram's, formerly of Chester County and brother to Alban Ingram, who now resides in Delaware County.

We arrived at Ingram's on the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup> of May where we stayed till the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> when we proceeded on foot to Petersburg, but stopped by the way to see John Millhiser<sup>1</sup> who was brought up with William Bishop of Edgemont, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. From Petersburg we took a stage to Beaver In Pennsylvania where we stayed over night and next morning took passage in a steamboat and went down the Ohio River to Steuben-