ANNEXATION

Future New Albany historians will speak of 1956 as one of the important years in local history . . . the year when the population was increased to some 40 thousand by pushing the city boundaries outward to add a broad belt of territory encircling the whole city. That is the way a city grows – the way New Albany has grown since the first big annexation move in 1853 . . . 103 years ago.

The 1850s in New Albany were the fastest growing years in the city's history, until the present decade with its mushroom expansion which has dotted Crestview . . . the Charlestown Road area . . . Green Valley Road . . . and many other areas of the city with new homes, businesses and industries. Those earlier years were the great, prosperous years of steamboat building – years when the city's limits were enlarged again and again until the New Albany of Civil War days had almost the same boundaries as the city did until the recent annexation move.

One little known fact is that Silver Hills and the area below Falling Run Creek were made part of the city in 1853. That was the year of the big annexation – an annexation surprisingly like the recent one. That move 103 years ago swept into the corporate limits a broad belt completely encompassing the city . . . a belt beginning in Lower Albany, swinging around through Silver Hills, then through the area of Cherry and Ealy Streets, on through Fairview Cemetery and winding up at the river a little east of Vincennes Street.

Before this ambitious expansion, the city boundaries had followed Falling Run Creek on the West, approximately along Culbertson Avenue on the north,

down East Seventh to Market, and along Market to Vincennes and the river. The annexation of 1853 was quickly followed by three more during the next year. These three moves added to the city that whole area between East Eleventh and Silver north of Market Street out to Charlestown Road and on beyond to the Monon tracks, to include what was then called North Albany. Most of this land had been owned by John Conner who had died in 1852. His heirs set about subdividing it and selling lots. Cottages and pretentious homes soon began extending east on Oak, Ekin and Culbertson as the city's population climbed to the 12-thousand mark in 1860.

The Civil War brought a halt to further expansion of the city boundaries, except a move out State Street in 1867 to Green Valley Road, and then in the 1870s a curious thing happened. Though the population continued to increase – it reached 18-thousand by 1880 – the area of the city actually became smaller. This occurred in 1876 when the city council approved an ordinance removing Silver Hills and Lower Albany from the City. Silver Hills residents in 1853 had not been pleased when the area was annexed and they had kept up a barrage of complaints. So it was that 23 years later they were cut loose. Then in 1873 the DePauw American Plate Glass Works, probably the biggest industrial plant in the city, was de-annexed although it was well within the city. The council's reasoning was that the factory grounds along the river from East Sixth to East Tenth were suburban and not laid out in lots.

The 1880s and '90s brought no significant changes in the city limits, but in 1911 the boundary was extended on the east to Silver Creek to take in Glenwood Park and the little village of Silver Grove.

This is the way a city grows and it is the way New Albany is growing now. Greater population and greater area mean better city services for all New Albany residents – better schools . . . better fire and police protection . . . better streets . . . a new sewage system . . . greater opportunities for future progress

and prosperity. Expanding city boundaries are a sign of a city on the march. So it has been during New Albany's past. A prosperous city and expanding boundaries go hand in hand, and 1956 will be marked as the year of a great expansion – the sign of a healthy future for New Albany.

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