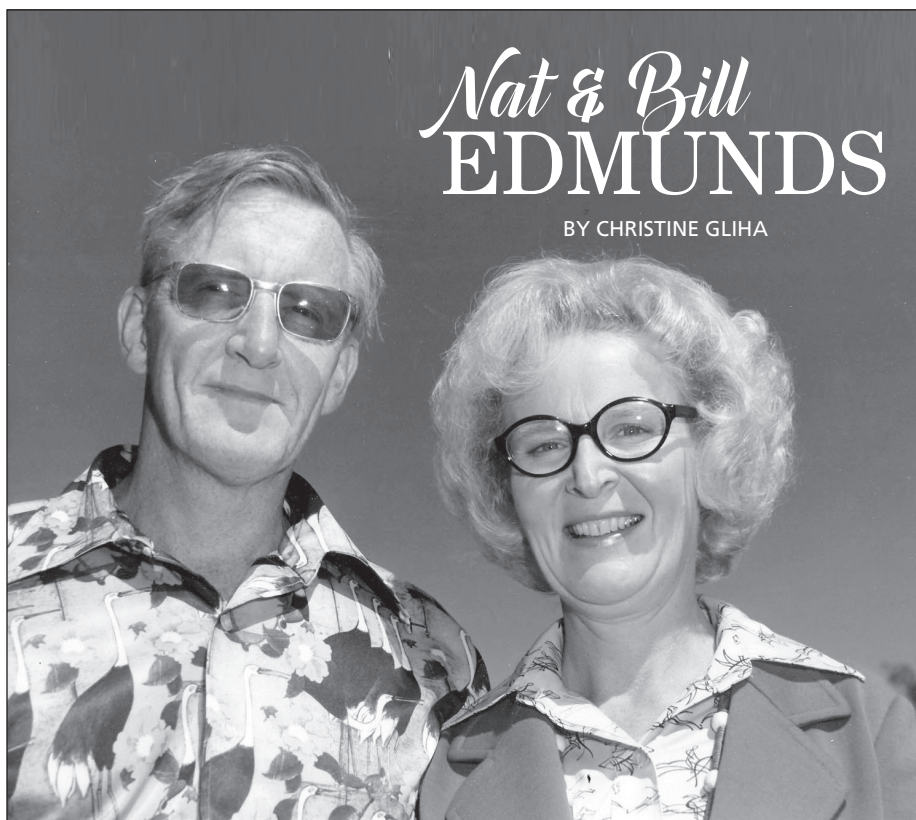


Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

Official publication of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, featuring articles and reminiscences of the people and places in the Ypsilanti area



SPRING 2018



Nat and Bill Edmunds, c1975.

In 1956, shortly after buying their first home, my grandparents received a letter of congratulations from Ypsilanti Mayor D.T. Quirk: "We hope you will join with us in our efforts to make Ypsilanti a happy, prosperous place for all who make their home here." Nathalie 'Nat' & Bill 'Doc' Edmunds spent the rest of their lives in that very home and over the next sixty years, fully embraced Quirk's welcoming invitation to champion Ypsilanti.

Nat and Bill met seated next to each other during a history class in college. Weaving their appreciation for history into every facet of their lives, their vision for a better future for the community around them started with the choice to settle in Ypsilanti, the place that Nat's family had called home for five generations. They saw

Nat & Bill EDMUNDS

BY CHRISTINE GLIHA

*Life is now
and what is yet to come!
Not...what might have been.
The past is the past!
Tho part of what we were
we are.*

*Future is the soul of life
Hope---it's breath.*

*From the poem Soliloquy
written by Bill Edmunds in 2000.*

now prized (but at the time blighted) historic buildings as giant antiques - important to preserve so future generations of Ypsilantians would have tangible historical roots to grasp and

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From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

BY BILL NICKELS

It is funny how things work out. Not knowing President Al Rudisill planned major surgery, I recently resigned from a major responsibility that consumed a significant amount of time. With new available time, I was able to become a candidate and get elected as Ypsilanti Historical Society's (YHS) new president.

During Al's presidential leadership, both the museum and archives have undergone a major transformation. He created a museum office and organized the almost fifty years of accumulated YHS written documents. The museum building was owned by the financially strapped City of Ypsilanti that could not afford to maintain the building. With Al's leadership and major financial support from the membership, YHS bought the building and carriage house. The carriage house was transformed into two money generating apartments. Then YHS

entered into a mutually beneficial agreement with EMU that provides two historic preservation interns who separately staff the museum and archives.

Also, with the support of our members, the pot holed parking lot was paved with concrete, storm windows were added, and the heating/air conditioning systems were updated. The museum attic was not usable. After removing animal droppings, painting the floor, and insulating the roof, the attic now is a functional storage space for museum artifacts. Al changed what was a copy machine Gleanings publication to an award winning quarterly publication. I was happy to learn that he will continue making sure the Gleanings is filled with interesting local history articles every three months! When Al assumed the presidency of YHS, Mary Ann Starkweather's Tiffany window



Charles Kettles with the framed photograph of Major Byron Cutcheon, Medal of Honor winner during the Civil War.

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leaned against a wall in an upstairs room with lead joints collapsing from the weight of the heavy stained glass panels. It now stands restored proudly backlit and is a center piece in the museum. As Al's successor, I am in awe of what he accomplished during his 13 years!!!!

Our recent Ypsilanti Medal of Honor recipient Charles Kettles added to the museum's local military history exhibit by creating a display for Ypsilanti's Civil War Medal of Honor recipient, Major Byron Cutcheon. Charles took it upon himself to have Cutcheon's picture enlarged and framed with a newly issued Medal of Honor. This new Cutcheon display is now the centerpiece of the museum's refreshed Civil War exhibit honoring several local veterans.

For many years, Jerry Jennings has assumed the responsibility for maintaining both the museum and the carriage house rentals. YHS board member Virginia Davis-Brown introduced Jerry to Norman McFall during the Holiday Open House last December. Norman has building maintenance experience, is recently retired, and is enthusiastic about helping relieve Jerry of some of the work load. He is the answer to what Jerry has recently been trying to find. Welcome Norman!

As a community, we are fortunate to have volunteers who selflessly work to make Ypsilanti a better place. In 1970, Nathalie Edmunds and Jane Bird Schmeideke together decided to implement new State of Michigan legislation allowing communities to form historic districts. Finding a way through early difficulties, historic preservation is now part of the spirit of our community. Now, forty-eight years later, both Jane and Nathalie (posthumously) will receive the Starkweather Award for their efforts. The award is annually presented by the Women and Gender Studies Program at Eastern Michigan University. The ceremony is Wednesday, April 11th, 4 to 6 PM, in the Student Center. RSVP by calling the museum at 483-4990.



Nat as a child, taken on the 200 block of Oakwood Street.

even explore. Their view was that to build a strong social fabric in a town, history must be accessible for all.

When buildings are erected, torn down, and rebuilt only a generation later, what is there for people to see and feel connected to? While some might think of preserving history as an effort to cling to the past, it is apparent now more than ever that remembering where we came from in these rapidly changing times is crucial in order to have any good sense



Nat at the 1984 Heritage Festival in Riverside Park.

of identity. Many people now agree that much of the charm of Ypsilanti is it's Historic District and the community that has developed in the unique spaces it provides.

Ypsilanti is the place it is today much in part due to Nat and Bill's diligence, and I am the person I am today because of the time I was lucky to have spent with them. In December 2017, Nat passed away peacefully in her beloved home. My Grandfather preceded her in death by 13 years. In life, he taught me patience and stressed the importance of critical thinking. A strong female leader, Nat taught me networking skills and to never be ashamed to ask a lot of questions. When she first served on Ypsilanti's City Council in 1970, it was an unpaid position and all of her fellow councilpersons were men. In every charge, she led by bringing others together, delegating the right person for a task and pointing them towards the tools needed to fly! On many occasions she collaborated with a former opponent to successfully advance her present endeavor. Nat never gave up on her vision and dedicatedly followed through on her many to-do lists. She lived by the rule that on time was late and ten minutes early was on time. Nat and Bill were early to many things, including the opinion that Ypsi is a place worth choosing to invest your life in. Today's blossoming Ypsilanti is fortunate they showed up when they did.

(Christine Gliha is Nat and Bill's granddaughter and proud seventh generation resident of Ypsilanti.)

Note: For information about all the contributions made by Nat and Bill Edmunds to the City of Ypsilanti attend one or both of the following programs: "Tribute to Nathalie (Nat) and Dr. William (Bill Edmunds)" Sunday, May 6, 2:00 pm – Ladies Literary Club, 218 North Washington, Ypsilanti: or "The Starkweather Award Presentation – Jane Bird Schmeideke and Nathalie Edmunds" Wednesday, April 11, 4:00 pm – Eastern Michigan University Student Center.



50th Wedding Anniversary photo of Louis Z. and Rosine Foerster along with members of their family.

For the love of Beer

BY JANICE ANSCHUETZ

One thing that hasn't changed in Ypsilanti in over 100 years is that its citizens love good beer, and no one attending the annual Michigan Beer Fest in Riverside Park would argue differently! In the last issue of the Gleanings, I wrote about Jacob Grobe who was the first brewer in Ypsilanti and now I want to tell you about his rival, Louis Z. Foerster, whose beer was known for its excellence throughout the state. I hope that you like this story about the man, the history of his brewery, his family, his beautiful home, and even how he made his popular brew which he advertised as being "Bottled for Family Use."

Our story begins with his father, also named Louis Foerster, who was born in 1803 in Baden, Germany. We read about him in the book *Portrait and Biographical Album of Ingham and Livingston Counties Michigan*, written in 1891 by Chapman Brothers in Chicago. Louis had two brothers who were drafted by the German army, fought in the Napoleonic Wars, and were killed in the war with their bodies left to rot on the battlefield in Russia. Perhaps this helped him decide that he no longer wanted to live in Germany where he could be drafted into the army at any moment, especially considered his training as a gunsmith. After his marriage to Mary Ziegler, they crossed the Atlantic to seek a better life and ended up in a bark shanty, five miles from any neighbor in the Canadian wilderness near Heidelberg, Waterloo County, Canada. He eventually established a farm, raised ten children and built a better house!

The Foerster children were educated in the local rural district school and then went on to learn trades. Their son Adam was apprenticed at a Brewery in Preston, Ontario, for two years and then found a job as a brewery salesman around 1866 in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he married the daughter of a German immigrant, Catherine Spaeth, from Butler County, Ohio, in 1868. His brother, Louis Z. Foerster learned the carpentry

trade, according to Samuel W. Bankes in his book *Past and Present of Washtenaw County*, published in 1906. Before leaving Canada, Louis Z. was married to Augusta Leffner in 1860 and they had one child, Jacob. After her death, he married Rosine Schmidt and they were blessed with six children: Lois K., Anna, Albert C., Lillian, Leopold and Clara. In 1870, the brothers came to the up-and-coming town of Ypsilanti, Michigan, and purchased a small frame brewery which was located on Grove Street where it joins with Prospect (then called Cemetery Street). Washtenaw County land records show that this brewery was begun by two men by the name of Taulkirth and Trockenberg who invested several thousand dollars in it. The brewery was known as Grove Brewery and Bottling Works with an annual production of about 50 barrels.

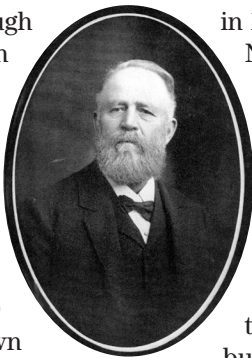
The brothers Adam and Louis Z. Foerster changed the name of the business to Adam Foerster & Brothers and increased production. The Ypsilanti Commercial stated in an article published in 1874 that the brewery's "large cellars are well stocked with beer which is manufactured here from the best of material and after the most approved manner." As to the "materials," we know from a receipt found in our home (which was built and originally owned by Frederick Swaine who also owned a malt house on our property at the NE corner of Forest and River) that the brothers purchased their malt from nearby Swaine Malt House and pure water was hauled in from Louis' own farm well on

Tyler Road to manufacture his beer until a city water system was formed in the 1880s. From Bankes' book, we read that L.Z. Foerster was a hardworking and honest man. "The business policy which he has followed has been most commendable. He is methodical and thorough, requiring that the strictest honesty prevail in his establishment and thus he has won the respect of his business associates and all with whom he has had dealings."



The Foerster Brewing Company became the Ypsilanti Brewing Company in 1935-36.

Perhaps there was not enough money in the small brewery in Ypsilanti to support two families. By 1876 Adam moved to Ligonier, Indiana, to operate a brewery there for a year and then moved to Lansing, Michigan, where he not only built a large brewery but eventually purchased a 120 acre farm which was known for its fine stock and exceptional horses.



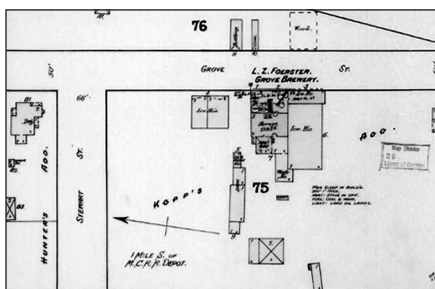
L. Z. Foerster

Louis Z. became sole owner for two years until he took a German-trained brewer named Herman Hardinghaus as partner and the name of the business was again changed to L.Z. Foerster & Co. The business thrived with this new partnership. Sales during this decade increased to an estimated 5,000 barrels by 1881 and the company quickly outgrew the frame building.

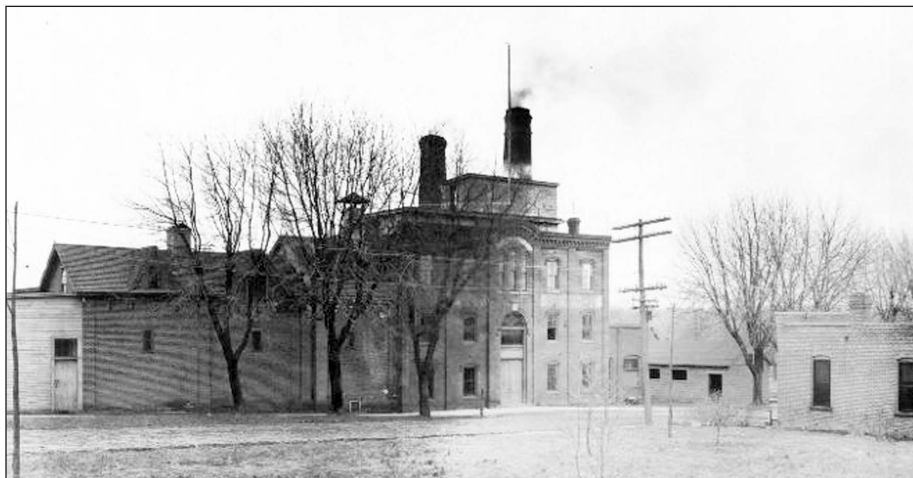
in 1884 when he took over the Northern Brewery in Ann Arbor.

After the departure of his business partner, L.Z. made several significant changes. In 1887, he built a modern three story brick brewery around the original wood-frame building which was located at 414 South Grove Street. The completed brewery measured 115 by 78 feet with two other structures. He built a barn capable of housing his three delivery wagons and six horses on the property and a bottling works across the street. All of this was completed by 1890 when he incorporated the business and three of his sons (Louis K., Jacob and Albert) joined the firm. Despite his obvious success as a brewer, this ambitious businessman decided to go to Chicago in 1892 at the age of 56 to expand and improve his knowledge of brewing. He attended the American Brewing Academy and studied physics, math, chemistry, bacteriology and biology while graduating with a Masters in the Art of Brewing.

By this time, his Pilsner, "Gold Band Export" and porter were manufactured and shipped to "all parts of Michigan", according to Beake's History of Washtenaw County. He also



The L. Z. Foerster Grove Brewery from an 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.



The L. Z. Foerster Brewing Company lasted as a family concern until 1914 when it was sold to the Hoch Brewing Company.

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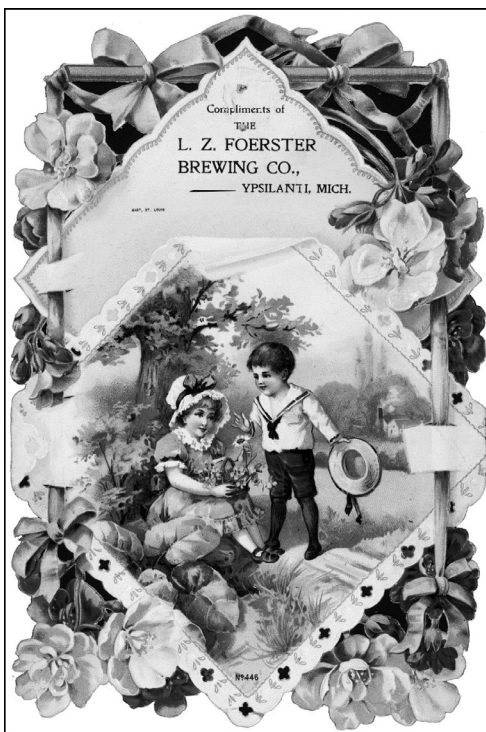


brewed bock beer and a Bavarian lager. Most of his customers were in Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Saline and Manchester, though it was said that his popular beer could be bought in other parts of the state as well.

L.Z. was noted for making a Bavarian type of beer manufactured by using malt (which is barley sprouts), water and white corn flakes. This mixture was boiled and the sugar was then removed. Later, hops would be added about every 45 minutes until there was about one half pound for each barrel. The brewer would boil the batch until the hops sank and then the liquid would be cooled down and put into a fermenting cellar. It would take about 12 hours to cook, and then the concoction would ferment for about 10 days. Foerster's bock beer contained roasted barley and would be dark in color while the Bavarian beer would be light amber in color.

With the success of the Grove Street brewery, L.Z. and his wife were able to purchase the nearby eleven-room home at 428 South Grove from the Fletcher family in 1885. This three story brick structure was considered a show place in Ypsilanti. It was noted for oak and birds eye maple paneling and beautiful gardens. (author's note: The house was torn down in 1962 to make way for a Texaco gas station which has since been torn down. It was located where the historic marker for Woodruff's Grove is located having been moved there when the expressway was built.) L.Z. and his wife also owned two farms: one of 12 acres and another of approximately 100 acres.

Thanks to a twelve-year-old child employee of the brew



A "Compliments Card" from the Foerster Brewing Company.

ery named Michael J. Sullivan, we can view a picture of the brewery workers from the photograph he saved, taken in 1912 outside of the main building. All are holding tankards which the boy would fill from the bucket he was holding whenever they wanted more beer. Drinking beer while working was one of the perks of the profession and not outlawed until after Prohibition when allotted times to drink beer were written into union contracts for brewery workers.

The L. Z. Foerster Brewing Company lasted as a family concern until 1914 when it was sold to the Hoch Brewing Company. Prohibition kept the building vacant until it became the Liberty Brewing Company from 1933-1934 and then it became the Ypsilanti Brewing Company for another year, and from 1935-1941 it became the Christ Vogt Ypsilanti Brewing Company. Finally, from 1941-43 it was the Dawes Brewing Company. The brew-

ery shut its doors for good in 1943 and much of its equipment was sold to the larger Altes Brewing Company in Detroit. The refrigeration equipment remained and allowed a new purpose for the large structure as it was turned into a refrigerated locker plant. In its last incarnation, it became an upholstery plant with some space for apartments and it was eventually torn down.

L.Z. lived until 1921 and died at the ripe old age of 85. In his biography by Bankes he is described as a gentleman who gave "his time and attention to his business affairs and in the control of his brewing industry he has won gratifying success as the years have gone by. The study of biography yields in point of interest and profit to no other, and in the

record of the life of the gentleman whose name heads this sketch, there is much to learn and much that may prove of value in indicating to others the plans and methods which he has followed



L. Z. FOERSTER

BREWING CO.

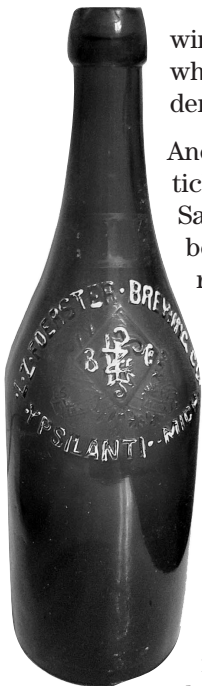
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Ad for the L. Z. Foerster Brewing Company.



win the brilliant success which has crowned undertakings."

And yes, I can add this article to my River Street Saga – the series I have been writing about the remarkable people and places on my beloved River Street. Louis Z. Foerster made his final life's journey down River Street to Highland Cemetery where he rests forever in Section 52, Lot 2, Grave 3. I enjoyed "meeting him" and learning his life story and I

Foerster Brewing Company beer bottle.

hope that you have too. When you attend the annual Michigan Beer Festival at Riverside Park or visit Ypsilanti's ABC Brewery, look north to the high hill of Highland Cemetery and raise a stein to the man who made beer brewing a family affair in Ypsilanti with beer "bottled for family use."



Employees of the Foerster Brewing Company.



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What would frankfurters and sauerkraut be without the accompaniment of generous draughts of genuine beer? Real German flavor actually lost. Console yourselves if you fancy that sort of luncheon by having on hand a case or two of Foerster's beer, which aids appetite, increases digestion. Case of 12 bottles delivered to any local address for \$1. Phone 139.

FOERSTER BR'Y CO.

Foerster ad promoting beer with frankfurters and sauerkraut.

(Jan Anschuetz is a local historian and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

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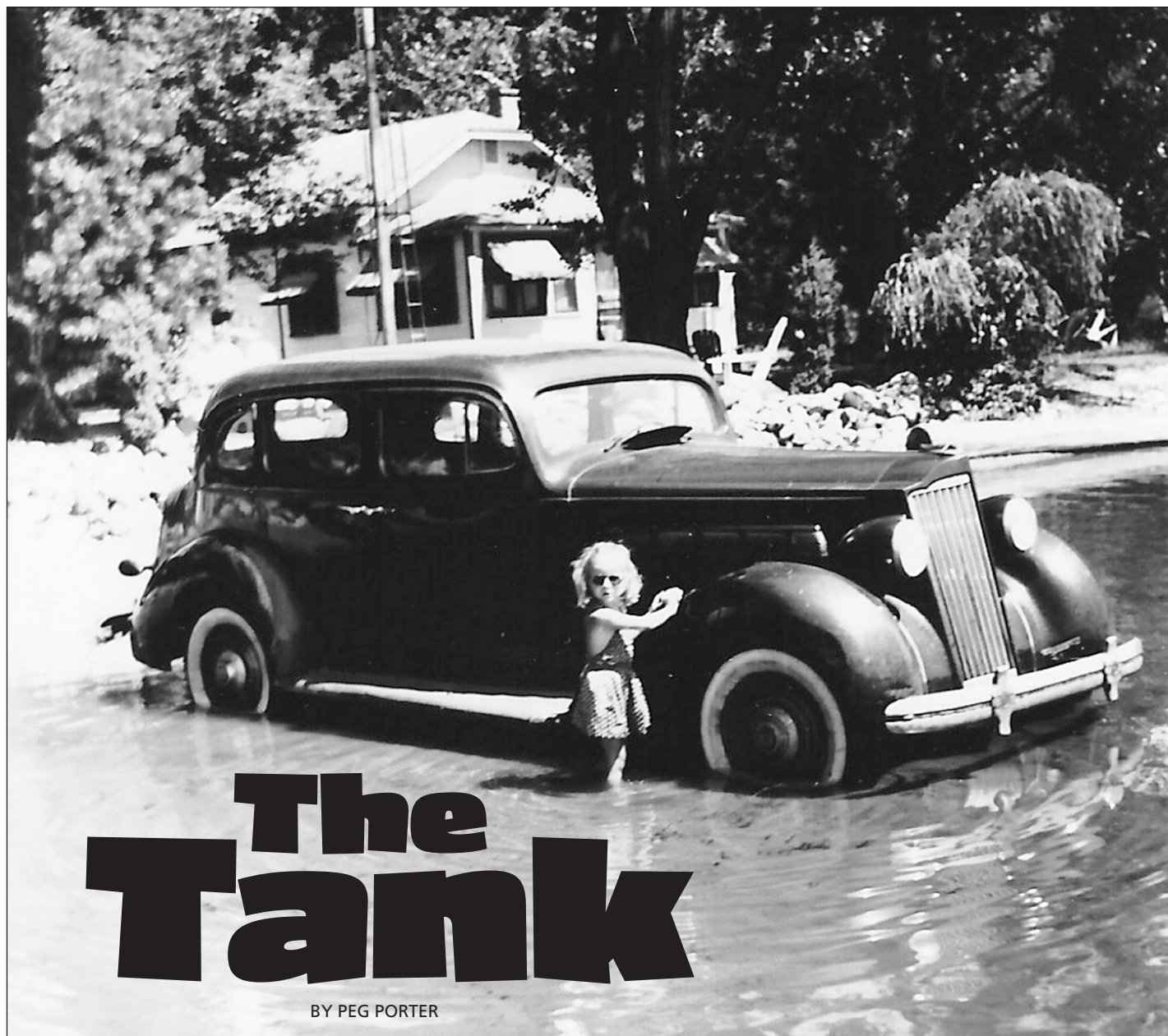
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Peg Porter by her parents 1937 Packard automobile.

My parent's first family car was a prewar, used Packard. I was reminded of this hulk of a car when reading the latest issue of the local Automotive History Museum newsletter. One of the winners in last fall's Orphan Car Show was a 1939 Packard touring car. Our vehicle was nothing like that beauty.

Dad had driven a convertible during his bachelor days. After marrying, a sedan seemed more appropriate and safer. Plus he had to find a car his petite new wife could drive. The driver's seat had to be high enough so she could see out and still reach the pedals. The Packard fit the bill. Of course a new car was out of the question. Ypsilanti was a smaller town in the late 1930's. Since Dad had delivered groceries for Lamb's throughout his teenage years and on into his twenties, it seemed like he knew everyone in town.

The likelihood that he would have known Packard owners was very good. With this in mind, I am sure the car was purchased locally.

The Packard, like many pre-war sedans, had a lot of head room. So much, in fact, that if you were under three feet tall you could stand on the back seat without your head touching the ceiling. That was the preferred traveling position for many children. It wasn't safe but you could see out. Most adults discouraged this practice. From the front seat came the order, "Sit down on the seat," followed by an even louder, "I said sit down." With some grumbling the order was followed, at least temporarily.

When the United States entered World War II in December of 1941, automobile manufacturing came to a virtual halt. The materials used at the time to build cars was needed to build

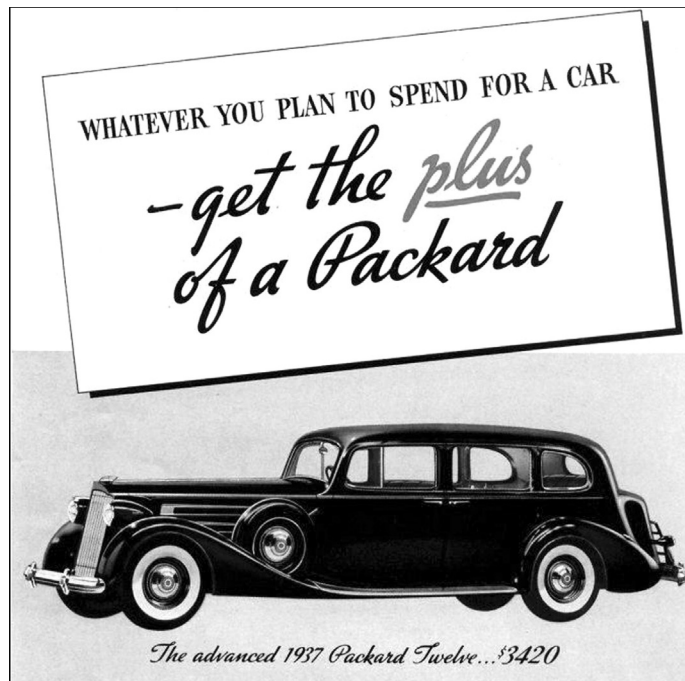
the machines of war. Plants that had produced automobiles now made planes, tanks, jeeps and parts for these and more. During the war years everyone was driving an older vehicle, if they were fortunate to have one. Also, gas rationing cut down on the number of miles driven. So we felt lucky to have our old Packard.

One day when I was about six, my mother and I went "to the show." I am not sure how widespread this expression was or is. It seems to have been replaced by "going to the movies." Of course if you are in New York you "catch a show" but that is a different thing altogether. But this show was a matinee at the Martha Washington. What we saw I no longer remember. It might have been a Disney film or it could just as easily been a musical. That is not what made this particular outing memorable.

Mother parked the car on the west side of Washington Street, about a half block north of the theater. After the show was over I was hoping for ice cream but I knew better than to suggest it as I would surely have been reminded that it "would spoil my dinner."

We walked out of the theater, across Pearl Street and up Washington. When we came to the spot where the Packard had been, it wasn't there. We both stared at the empty space in disbelief. Then she said, "I have to call your father."

I tried to be helpful and said: "You could go into one of the stores and ask if you could use their phone." Carty's Music was on the corner of Pearl and Washington and on the other side of Pearl, next to the theater, stood a children's shop. Mother hesitated. She did not like to impose on people she did not know. However, she must have followed my



Advertisement for a 1937 Packard Twelve.

embankment and remained right side up at the bottom. The thieves had fled, likely more banged up than the car which had a few dents. I remember my Dad laughing and saying the Packard was like a tank.

What puzzled me though were the comments about the car thieves. It was said they probably were "Mexicans" headed back to Mexico. I had enough sense of geography to know that Mexico was a long way from Michigan. And what were these "Mexicans" doing in Ypsilanti?

The Packard continued to provide transportation although it was replaced with another vehicle. I think it was a Dodge, likely purchased from Joe Thompson and Spen Davis, but I have no memories of it. No stories, no adventures. Just a reliable family car.

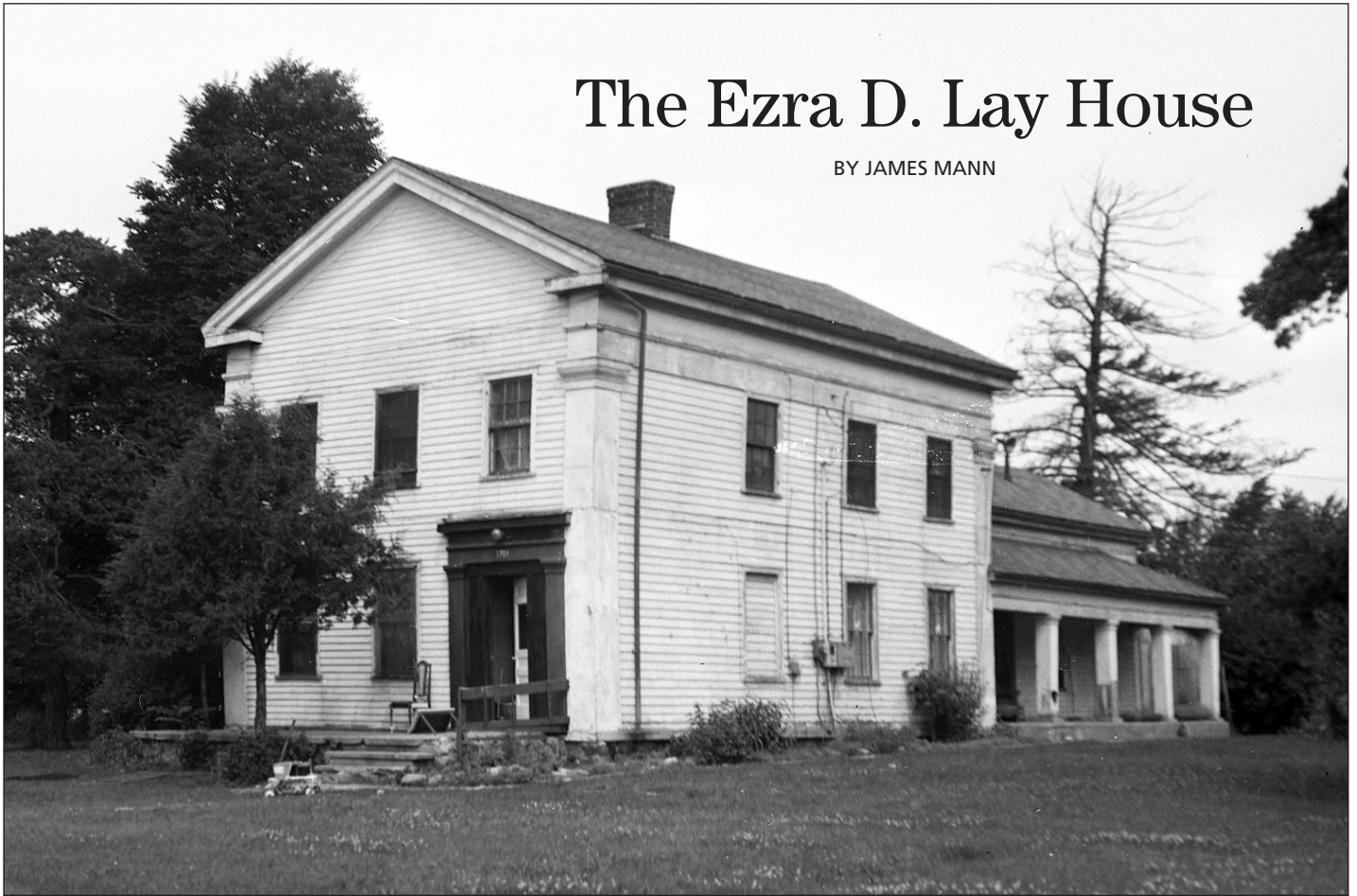
(Peg Porter is Assistant Editor of the Gleanings and a regular contributor of articles.)



Peg Porter by Spen Davis' Crosley car.

The Ezra D. Lay House

BY JAMES MANN



The Ezra D. Lay house that was originally located at 1701 East Michigan Avenue.

Once there was a grand house at 1701 East Michigan Avenue, impressive long after its days of glory. Emil Lorch, head of the College of Architecture at the University of Michigan said this building should be preserved to the integrity of its Greek Revival architecture. Ezra D. Lay built this house in the early 1830's.

Ezra D. Lay was born on December 6, 1807 in the Township of Saybrook, Connecticut, the son of Aaron and Sarah Lay. The family moved from Connecticut in 1812, and settled in western New York, northwest of Rochester. Ezra attended school in the district of Monroe, County, New York, and in a select school for two years. His father died in 1856, and his mother passed away in 1861. When Ezra was old enough, he took charge of a small farm while employed in the business of coopering, the making of flour barrels for the local mills. This was his occupation for four years.

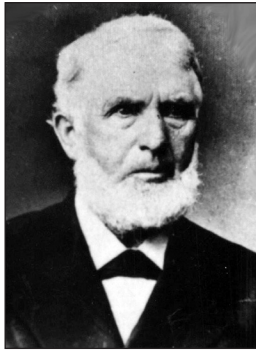
He moved in 1833, with his younger brother Zina to the Michigan Territory, purchasing a farm just east of Ypsilanti. The two had with them twenty-five thousand cultivated trees, mostly of one season growth. Here they started what is most likely the first nursery in Michigan. "They consisted," wrote Ezra years later in a letter to the State Pomological Society, "of one hundred and thirty varieties of apples, seventy-five varieties of pears, forty of peaches, three of apricots, three of nectarines, twenty of cherries,

twenty of plums, three of quinces, fifteen of strawberries, forty of grapes, native and foreign, together with currents [sic], gooseberries, raspberries, etc., also a large assortment of ornamental shrubs, evergreens, roses, peonies, herbaceous, perennial flowering plants, etc." Ezra noted in his letter that the apricots and nectarines were "too tender for cultivation in this climate." This was also true of some varieties of pears and apples.

"In the autumn of 1834," continued Ezra, "we erected a small greenhouse and filled it with plants. I think this was the first greenhouse built in Michigan. In the autumn of 1836 we erected a larger greenhouse and filled it with a chosen collection of tropical plants. This establishment includes all kinds of trees and plants." This included a great variety of fruit trees, including 162 varieties of apples, 180 kinds of pears, 43 kinds of peaches, 33 kinds of cherries, 30 kinds of plums and 6 of quinces.

On December 4, 1834, Ezra married Melinda Kinne, the daughter of the Rev. Joshua Kinne, a Baptist minister. The couple had three children, a daughter, Melissa, who married Dr. William Pattison, the second, a son, William, and the third, a son they named Ezra Jr. William grew up to be a farmer. Ezra Jr. had a classical education from the University of Michigan and studied law at Rochester, New York. Ezra Jr. died of tuberculosis in the spring of 1869.

The family built a house in the Greek revival style on the Chicago Road, at what is now 1701 East Michigan Avenue, in about

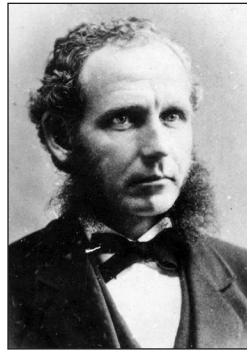


Ezra D. Lay moved to the Michigan Territory in 1833.

1833. The house is 26 feet wide and 67 feet long. The front section of the house is two stories high. The house has 16 rooms and had four fireplaces. The walls were lined with brick for insulation. There was a full basement under the main portion of the house made of stone. In the kitchen was a large sink with a pitcher pump. In the kitchen were flour bins large enough to hold five or six barrels. There is speculation that the house may have been a tavern or inn in the early pioneer days. This is likely true, as the house stood on the Chicago Road, the main route to the west. Travelers on the road would have to stop as night fell, and it became too dark to continue. Because of the darkness, travelers had to find shelter where they were. In truth, every house along the Chicago Road was a tavern or inn.

As noted in Chapman's History of Washtenaw: "For the first few years of residence in Michigan, the roads a part of the way from Ypsilanti to Detroit were almost impossible. Two and a half days have been spent in making that journey with a team, and only half a common wagonload at that. The wolves used to howl around the plains the first few years, and one night attacked a calf on what is now part of the Lay farm and left the calf without a tail."

In 1835 Ezra was elected Ypsilanti Township Supervisor, an office he held for the next seven years. During the years of the Civil War, he was known as a strong Union man, and an abolitionist. After the war, in 1874, he



William Lay, son of Ezra Lay, lived on the Lay Farm most of his life.

of years.

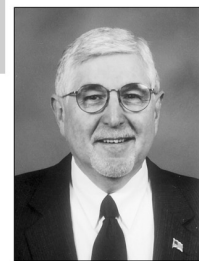
The farm had, by the 1880's, increased to 200 acres, had three orchards and three sets of barns. The main barn was to the east of the house, with an attached carriage house. This was large enough for three carriages to be parked side by side. A carriage could be driven in the door, the horses hooked to the carriage, then the carriage driven out a second door in the rear. To the northwest of the house was a second barn, and to the west of the house was a third. At the rear of the house was the smokehouse. Trains of the Michigan Central Railroad stopped at the farm, to load flowers from the greenhouse.

Ezra D. Lay died April 28, 1890. His wife Melinda died March 10, 1892. At about this time the farm became the property of their son William. He had lived on the farm most of his life, until he married Mary Scotney in about 1903. The couple lived on the Scotney homestead in Superior Township. The couple had no children. He owned the Lay farm, until his death on January 9, 1906.

After the passing of William, the farm became the property of Charles Vapor, a Detroit attorney and part owner of a produce concern and an importer of vegetables and other foodstuff. By this time, the house had become rundown and was in need of work. In about 1916 Vapor restored the house and added some

was elected to the Michigan State legislature for a two-year term. Ezra was a member of the Presbyterian Church at Ypsilanti, where he was an elder for a number

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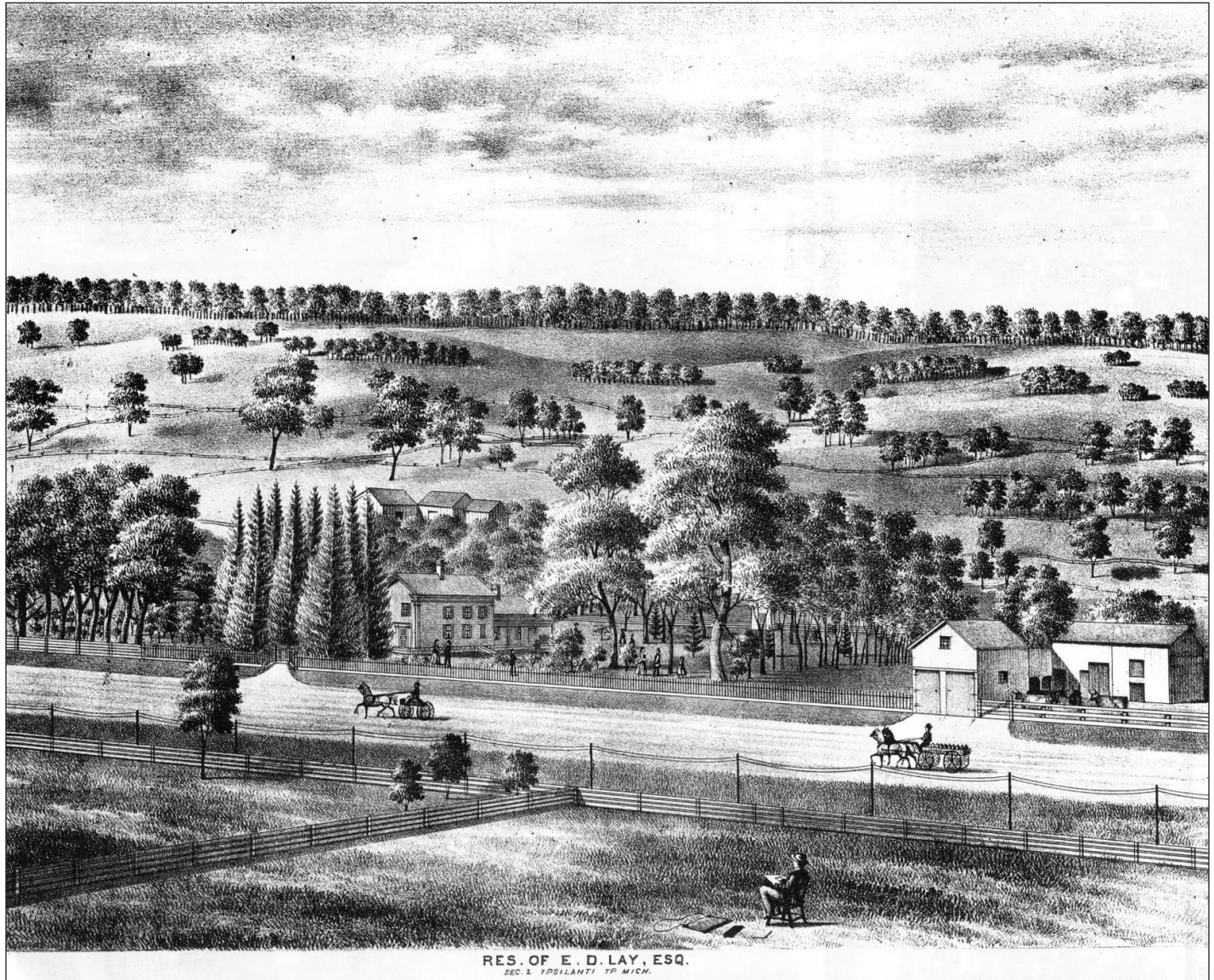
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A sketch of the Ezra D. Lay farm in the County Atlas of 1873.

improvements. He had the house painted white and installed oak floors. The four fireplaces were covered over during the work. During the work a false floor was uncovered. This led to speculation that the house may have been a stop on the Underground Railroad.

When Mr. Vapor and his wife owned the house, it had five main bedrooms, with a master bedroom, a dressing room and three sleeping rooms for servants. In addition to this, there was a maid's room and bath in the downstairs of the house. The house now had a large kitchen, a drawing room, dining room, and library, with a breakfast room downstairs. There was a laundry room and two additional bathrooms. The couple used the house as a summer residence, spending the winters in their home on West Brand Boulevard. The two entertained guests every night they were in residence

at the house. Dinner was served on china with crystal and sterling silverware on fine linen. There was a wine cellar in the house, where Mr. Vapor made his nightly selections. Because of his interest in a produce concern, the couple was able to treat their guests to out of season fruits. Watermelons, delivered before becoming locally available, were placed on the west lawn for ripening. Bunches of bananas were hung in the basement to ripen as well.

When Charles Vapor and his wife left the house in not known, but the years after they owned it were not kind to the place. According to local legend it was "a house of ill repute," early in the 20th Century, and is said to have been a blind pig during prohibition. Because of the housing crisis during the Second World War, the house was divided into several low-cost apartments.

The site became the property of Clyde Budd and Donald H. Porter in the 1960's. They purchased the house because of the value of its Michigan Avenue frontage. For them, keeping the house was not economically feasible. Still, the two recognized the architectural and historic value of the house. They were anxious to see the house preserved.

Then on April 13, 1965, the Township of Ypsilanti condemned the house as a health, safety and fire hazard, and gave notice that it should be demolished within 120 days. Budd and Porter announced they would work with anyone who would move the house for its restoration and preservation.

At the last minute Mr. and Mrs. Charles V. Hagler purchased the house for one dollar. Before the house could be moved to a new site, it first had to be cleared of the junk that had accumulated over the years. This included truckloads of trash, countless layers of linoleum, and what Mrs. Hagler called "some unbelievable plumbing fixtures," as well as broken furniture and abandoned appliances. The house was made ready and the move began at 10:00 am of February 6, 1966. The house, which was 68 feet long, was moved in two sections. The front part of the house was the first to make the move.

"The magnitude of the venture became apparent as the house was moved northward along Lamay Avenue and swung past Edmonson School, went across lots in old Willow Village along Clark Rd., up Midway around Stamford and MacArthur, past Woolman Oval up Harris Rd. to Geddes, and west on it to Prospect where the entourage turned north to Ford Rd. and east on Ford to Berry Road where the trip was finished at about 4:30," reported The Ypsilanti Press of Wednesday, February 9, 1966. "The section follows in late afternoon."

"Most of the trip was at about 2 to 3 miles per hour with frequent stops for overhead lines," the account continued. "The Detroit Edison Company, had two crews, one in front and one behind. The front crew lifted or dropped lines in advance of the house and the followers made repairs." Michigan Bell Telephone Co. had crews following a similar procedure. Road signs, mailboxes and other obstructions had to be removed, and then replaced along the way. The work of moving the house required some 40 people to make it possible.

The Haglers guessed restoration would take about five years, and they were right. "The interior and exterior of the house were restored simultaneously," recalled Mrs. Hagler, "thus providing work for our crew during all kinds of weather. Few structural changes were made from the original plan - one window was converted to a doorway to enable us to add an entrance to a new breezeway and garage that were designed to be compatible with the architecture of the house."

"Wherever possible," she continued, "we tried to use period materials. For example, we acquired two 1830's mantles from Pennsylvania and Ohio: used a newel post and stair rail from the Rawsonville Tavern and flooring replacements from the 1840 Midway Tavern."

Some changes were made in the house, such as adding a workable kitchen, as well as central heating, air conditioning, indoor plumbing as well as a telephone and television. This was to be a house, not a museum. As the house was restored, some surprises were found, such as a door in the dining room with the woodwork intact and a fireplace without a mantel. On the second floor they placed a master bedroom, a sitting room and a guest bedroom. In the guest bedroom they left the beams exposed, to show the original pegged and mortise and tendon construction.

The Haglers noted that for such a project to be successful, "it requires a deep interest and commitment of both parties." The house was saved not just for themselves, but also for future generations. The Haglers have passed on, and now others enjoy the house they saved.

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor of articles for the Gleanings.)



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Jim & Betty CAMPBELL

BY JAMES MANN

A city, such as Ypsilanti, is more than streets, buildings and houses; it is the people who live there. In truth, a city is a community, where those who live and work in the buildings and houses interact and form the sense of place. The spirit of a community, whether it is friendly or hostile, pleasant or angry, is the creation of the people. Two people who had an influence on the spirit of Ypsilanti were Jim and Betty Campbell.

James Alton Campbell was born on September 26, 1921 at Cross Village. During the Second World War he served for four years in the U. S. Navy as a pharmacist's mate in the South Pacific. After the war he graduated from Western Michigan University's watchmaker school and became a licensed Horologist, watchmaker, and moved to Ypsilanti in 1946. That year local jeweler Cyrus C. Jenks employed him. In 1948 he became a partner and was sole proprietor by 1960.

"I was evaluated at Purdue University as good with my hands," explained Jim. "I like electronic gadgets of any

kind: watches, clocks, CB radios. I just step in and read the instructions." Over the years he would repair chains on watch bracelets and stems, many times for free. Then there were the customers who came to him to adjust their watches when it lost a minute or two over a month. Jim told The Ypsilanti Press of October 14, 1988, "they're not going anywhere, but they don't want to be late for dinner."

The account noted that the more recent quartz watches provided him with a lot of business. Chain store employees would try to repair the watches, and break the coil in the process. Then the owner of the watch would go to Jim to fix it. "Most watches today are designed for fashion," he said. Jim moved the jewelry store from 103 West Michigan Avenue to 107 West Michigan Avenue in 1955. He purchased the building in 1978 and completely remodeled it. The work included a second-floor home for himself and his wife Betty. The two were married on August 4, 1974.

Betty Russell Campbell was born February 28, 1932 at Beyer Hospital. She graduated from Ypsilanti High School in

1948. Then in 1949 she was employed at the Earl Freeman Agency. This merged with Bower and Son in 1954, and in time became Freeman Bunting Insurance. She and her coworker Carol Warner purchased the agency in 1985. "Mr. Bunting spent much of his time in Arizona," recalled Betty, "so Carol and I handled the business. When he made plans to sell, we expressed an interest in buying. He asked, 'Do you think you two ladies can handle it?' We knew we could and we did just fine."

Jim retired from the jewelry business after 42 years, and closed his store in 1988. He then became a partner in his wife's insurance business. Then the two moved the business into the store. "She kicked me out of my jewelry business and said she wanted to move the agency in," joked Jim with a straight face. "Then she made me a partner but I charged her rent for the building." Betty added, "That's a little bit slanted."

Over the years the two saw the downtown of Ypsilanti change from a thriving center of the city, to a victim of the shopping malls. Businesses that were thriving in the 1950's have long since closed. Still, Jim and Betty remained in the downtown, not only working, but also living there. "We never let ourselves get that low," said Jim. "We love this community. The people are great and have been more than kind."

The two were among the biggest boosters of the city, active in many organizations, events and activities. The two were founders of the Central Business Community, and supporters of the Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra, the Community Choir and the Community Band. They assisted the Ypsilanti Area Street Rods, Ypsi Pride Day and were members of the Friends of

the Freighthouse, as well as the Depot Town Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Antique Fire and Automotive Heritage Museums, the Ypsilanti Historical Society and the Heritage Foundation. Jim was appointed by the city council a Commissioner to the Downtown Development Authority from

its inception and was a member of the Police and Fire Pension Board for 17 years.

The two were also active members of the First United Baptist Church. At the church, Jim was a member of the finance board for several years and held other positions as well, including Master of Ceremonies at award and retirement dinners. Betty sang in the choir for many years.

"Jim," as noted in his obituary, "was an all-round individual who cared about people: anonymously giving of his time and money when needed. He was always willing to go 'the extra mile' to help a friend and to help 'his town' improve it's business and image." The two retired in 2005 after a combined 115 years of experience working in the downtown of Ypsilanti. Still, they continued their involvement in many community activities. "We'll still be around," said Jim, "we're just giving our schedules a little bit of a break." They also continued their ownership of the building housing the agency, while still living on the second floor.

Betty passed away on Friday, September 24, 2010 at the age of 78. Jim joined her on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at the age of 94. The story of Jim and Betty Campbell has ended, but those who knew them remember and continue to miss them.

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings

The two were among the biggest boosters of the city, active in many organizations, events and activities.



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Fletcher White Archives: Finds and Acquisitions

BY GERRY PETY

The First National Bank building on Michigan Avenue as it was enlarged in 1912.

Every once in a while serendipity steps in, and a confluence of related events takes place that just screams to be looked at in detail. Just such an event took place last year during the Fletcher-White Archives 10th anniversary at the YHS Museum.

It was July, 2007, at that time that Al Rudisill and I packed away a large number of company, and bank ledgers which were both very heavy and cumbersome. They were never really examined and catalogued due to time constraints of the move. It was a big job, and well, some day we would get around to it. Fast forward to 2017 the year our new volunteer, Max Harrison and I would finally catalogue these very large tomes that Al and I hurriedly dumped in cartons in our storage area during the 2007 move. This would bring to my attention a relatively new concept under which the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration would bring to fruition, the new's concept of a bank bail in! Was Ypsilanti to experience a 'bail-in' of a bank for the very first time in American banking history? Well, we were all about to find out.

I have had economic history courses at college and nowhere did the concept of bank 'bail-ins' get discussed in association with bank failures/insolvency. Bail-outs yes, but no 'bail-ins'. Every one has heard of government bail outs for companies, banks and any other organization that required infusions of cash and credit to keep them solvent. Certainly, during the Great Recession of 2007 and 2008 the US government was bailing out every other company it seems. But what I am going to tell you about is the first time I had ever heard of a bail-in, and in 1933! Since 2008 we all have heard about the international banking crisis' involving insolvent and bankrupt banks in far away countries such as

Cyprus, Hungary, Poland, Greece and several other international instances up to the present time. BUT Ypsilanti in 1933, seventy five years ago! Yep! A Bail in occurs when a bank becomes insolvent and the cash deposits of its depositors are greater than the bank's total liquid assets, or even all of a bank's assets. This so called new idea of a bail in occurred right here in Ypsilanti at the 1st National Bank of Ypsilanti in March of 1933. This was no small insignificant bank either, but one of the bedrock banks in Ypsilanti along with the Ypsilanti Savings Bank, which was to become the largest bank in the city during the upcoming war.

The 1st National Bank of Ypsilanti was one of the original Charter Banks under the reorganization of the banking system, under the National Banking Act of 1863/64, during the administration of Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. It was a National Bank giving it the power to issue currency with its name on the front of the note backed up by excess reserves of cash it had deposited with the US Treasury in Washington DC. It was also a powerful bank and it could transact business directly with the United States government and any of its departments and subsidiaries. It would eventually become a member of the Federal Reserve at its inception in 1913. It was during this original chartering to be a true National Bank that it was assigned the charter number #155 in 1863. (A YHS member, Mr. Davis was to collect this special hometown currency his entire life as it even today commands a premium in numismatic circles).

With the coming of the Great Depression starting in 1929 things here in the United States began to go backwards quickly and domestic banks began to fail at an alarming rate; taking with it much, if not all of the depositor's mon

A close call at the Union Guardian Trust Company in Detroit, of such a failure, precipitated a series of 'bank runs' on this bank's dwindling cash on hand. These bank runs, whereby depositors demanded their money be returned, put



The First National Bank building of Ypsilanti that was built in 1905.

a real crush on the money supply of these banks causing systemic failures and insolvency in an otherwise sound banking system. On February 14th, 1933 Governor William Comstock, of the state of Michigan, closed, without much notice, all of the banks doing business within the state. What a shock, no check clearing, loans, or anything was allowed to transact within any bank in toto! It was evident to all that this was no ordinary Valentines Day but the first banking holiday in Michigan had begun. AND it was to last for 9 agonizing days before re-opening on February 23rd to the relief of all. Times were dire and they were to get much worse! On the Inauguration Day of Franklin D. Roosevelt, March 4th, 1933 the new president ordered the close of all the banks again, but this time it was nationally from coast to coast. This second closure of the 1st National Bank of Ypsilanti was not going to open on time and depositors would now be involved with new concept in banking—a bank bail in! People were shocked as the largest bank in the city was closed and not to reopen not three days or several weeks but not until March 23rd, 1933.

What we found in one of these stored ledgers were the terms as printed on the handouts given to the depositors when the 1st National Bank of Ypsilanti changed its name to The National Bank of Ypsilanti. The other item involved with this matter was actually something just donated a week or so later to the Archives. It was an original 1st National Bank Pass Book (acct #

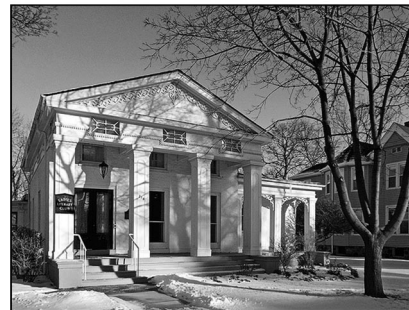
1603), from this exact period of time period, once owned by a depositor, now deceased, whose relative gave us this original 'ending day' bank passbook. And that this was the last official transaction of pass book

of the 1st National Bank of Ypsilanti and its depositor. What a coincidence!

Upon surrender of this 'passbook' you would be given a new bank book with the bank's new name. The old bank book would be given back to you with an entry written in red ink and no entries allowed after it, as the remaining totals of cash in your account would be entered in a brand-new bank pass book with your present balance which was frozen. The only real difference was that the new total was frozen – you could not take it out of the bank – it was your share of ownership in the new National Bank of Ypsilanti until you were bought out by the bank itself or another investor of the National Bank.

Along with this new passbook issued by the National Bank of Ypsilanti was a handout given to each depositor upon coming to the bank, now the new National Bank of Ypsilanti, stating the terms of withdrawal of funds and penciled in date 'July/33' by some unknown person. The ledger of 1st National Bank of Ypsilanti had given up its secret and a First National Bank of Ypsilanti handout hidden for 84 years, stashed in the ledger, as new as the day it was printed in 1933; and a rare passbook of Mr. Albert Staebler, who had come to the bank to collect some of his savings available only on that specific day.

According to this handout, he would be allowed to receive 5% of his money that day, 30% more on September 1st, and accordingly it may take up to



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4 1/2 years to receive the rest. During this period, he would receive no interest payments but instead 'dividends' based solely on the banks profit and loss performance. So Mr. Staebler was able to retrieve \$16.40 of his original balance of \$328.00 that day and on September 1st another \$93.48 (actually the bank was closed until October 17th, 1933 when he could withdraw this September money of \$93.48), with a remaining balance of \$218.12. Considering that March 1933 was the absolute worst or lowest part of the Great Depression, this was very serious business! That \$218.12 represented, in 2017 dollars the purchasing power of \$4,267.60 according to the information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' website—data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl. This was no chump change back then or now! The reality of this ownership share in the National Bank of Ypsilanti was that it could go on for another 4 1/2 years, more or less according to the handout which must have been a real shock to Mr. Staebler, who had held this account at FNBY since 1909. Some money is better than no money.

So Mr. Staebler finally did receive his money and dividends, a little later than planned as the bank took a little longer to get out from under this 'bail-in' arrangement but then it was much better than the nearly 33% of the total non-Federal Reserve Banks in the nation that went totally under with no recovery or with a partial payout, whatsoever. Remember, there was no Federal Deposit Insurance back then, it did not come into existence until 1934! So if a bank became insolvent, it was as if Jesse James had robbed your local bank - you lost your money!

A remnant of this period was the issuance of a special type of currency of this time, which actually was seen and handled by the public even through the 1960's. It involved a special currency or notes, \$5 through \$100 bills with very large brown seals on the left hand side of the note (not to be confused with the WWII Hawaiian notes which

Questions and Answers Regarding the Opening of a New National Bank in Ypsilanti

The following questions and answers were discussed Monday evening at the first group meeting of depositors of the First National Bank. They contain information essential to a clear understanding of just how the new bank will be set up and what the benefits will be to the depositors of the old bank as well as to the community. Any other questions not included in this list which may be in the mind of a depositor will gladly be answered by any member of the committee or by the conservator of the bank.

Question—How did the new bank organization activities start?

Answer—The United States Government from the time that the First National Bank was closed, has been in touch with the depositors of the old bank. The only plan to meet our purpose was to have a new bank. The Board of Commerce finally took the responsibility of setting together a group of our civic-spirited citizens with a view to getting their opinions on starting a new bank. These people immediately released their services to proceed at once with the organization work, and as a result, an organization committee consisting of R. H. Hagg, Chairman; W. H. Hagg, Secretary; R. J. Hagg, Treasurer; R. J. Hagg, George Hagg, Alvin Hagg, and Paul Hagg, was created.

Q. What is the present condition of the First National Bank as revealed by the examination made in April?

A. 15 per cent of the assets were liquid acceptable to a new bank; 25 per cent were assets not liquid enough to be immediately converted into cash; the remainder 60 per cent was classified by the bank examiners as doubtful or lost but from which a portion, depending more or less upon future business conditions, will eventually be recovered. This condition of assets was confirmed by the U. S. Department of the Interior, Division of the Bank June 17, 1933.

Q. How can the new bank aid in liquidating the closed bank's assets?

A. If the old bank went through regular receivership, the process of liquidation would naturally be long and slow as is proven by all the banks which have been in process during this depression period. If the assets of the old bank can be sold or liquidated through a new bank there will be less delay, more substantial dividends (including an immediate 25 per cent release of deposits) and in general the interests of the old bank will be better protected. The release of the 25 per cent of assets will be made immediately to the depositors of the old bank in Ypsilanti to the extent that collections on the remaining assets will be expeditious.

Q. How much of a dividend will be paid to depositors on the opening of a new bank?

A. United States banking officials have definitely approved of the plan to start a new bank on the opening of the bank which will be in addition to the 25 per cent already paid.

Q. Will this money be available immediately?

A. This money will be paid within

ten days after the new bank opens its doors.

Q. When will the new bank open?

A. According to last estimate of your committee September 1, 1933. We can make no guarantee in this respect, but only go by experience of other communities where banks have been reorganized.

Q. How and when will the depositors of the old bank receive the remaining 45 per cent of their deposits?

A. Portions of this will be paid to them in dividends by a receiver who will be placed in charge of the assets not taken over by the new bank and will be returned as rapidly as possible. The average time required for liquidation of National Banks has been about four and one-half years, but on a rising market such as we are experiencing at the present time, liquidation may go forward much more rapidly.

Q. What percentage of his deposit in the old bank can the depositor eventually expect to get back?

A. It is impossible to predict definitely but the average that has been saved for depositors through receivership in the history of National Banks has been 47 per cent. In our case the amount has good possibilities of being substantially greater.

Q. Will there be an assessment against the stockholders of the old bank?

A. That is a matter to be handled by the United States Banking Department after the assets of the old bank, not convertible to the new, are turned over to a receiver for final liquidation.

Q. Where is the 50 per cent which depositors will get on the opening of the new bank to come from?

A. The bulk of it will come through the release of the acceptable liquid assets of the old bank by the new bank with the addition of money that the R. F. C. will loan on the remaining assets.

Q. Confident the depositors receive a 25 per cent immediate dividend without starting a new bank?

A. Yes. The R. F. C. will loan money on the opening of a new bank. Furthermore it is the new bank that takes over the assets of the old bank which otherwise would have to be sold on the open market as the opportunities came.

Q. Who is to run the new bank?

A. The question cannot be definitely answered now but a board of directors will be selected from the stockholders subject to the approval of the Federal Reserve officials.

Q. Can the depositors expect two banks?

A. If not, the government would not add in setting up a new bank. After money comes out of hiding and a deposit guarantee issue is affected there is no doubt but that two institutions can be adequately supported.

Q. What will be the capital structure of the new bank?

A. \$100,000 in stock, \$100,000 in surplus and \$100,000 undivided profits. The assets of the new bank are set up as a margin of safety.

Q. Who can subscribe the stock?

A. Anyone who has the cash to loan or any depositor willing to loan the amount of the stock, 50 per cent will receive in cash upon the opening of the new bank.

Q. Will the R. F. C. take stock?

A. The R. F. C. will subscribe to 25 per cent of the stock if it need be to liquidate the assets of the old bank in order to raise the entire amount locally to avoid paying 5 per cent interest on the R. F. C. on its stock. Should we fail to raise the entire capital locally the R. F. C. will be assured.

Q. Must the depositor take stock?

A. No one can force him to, but if he desires the new bank to open he is bound in self-interest to take his share of stock.

A. No. The depositor is doubly helped on the stock he receives.

Q. Will the preferred stock in the hands of the government carry voting rights?

A. Yes.

Q. How long will the government hold the stock?

A. As long as necessary. The R. F. C. will not sell as long as any local citizens and all share of preference stock must be sold with the approval of the directors of the new bank.

Q. Who is paying the organization expenses?

A. Aside from printing and postage the expense is being borne by the individual members of the committee. It is shorter only fair that the individual members in the future, and volunteers, make his subscription to the stock.

They were to only be in circulation for a short time or until the repayment and redemption of US government bonds held by the individual Federal Reserve Banks in each Federal Reserve district. With the coming of World War II they became part of the normal money supply used on a daily basis by American citizens until they were retired from circulation and replaced with regular currency. Unlike our 'fiat' currency today the seal color on paper money designated which asset class backed up that specific note. Brown seal notes were the bottom of the proverbial asset barrel but better than today's money!

In the Archives we will have a display concerning all of this along with the original handout, ledger, and the Mr. Staebler passbook from this period. The size of the handout is larger than can be accommodated and a bank passbook is not much for reading unless you like the Banking History of the US. Maybe even a Brown Seal note will be on display too. The Great Depression was serious to the lives and welfare of everyone at the time. For further reading check into Eric Selzer who did two successive "Gleanings" interviews, with our own Virginia Davis Brown as to life during this devastating period in American history.

(Note: Mike Maloney, on (www.youtube.com), has videos which deal with all of these financial issues using innovative videos, animations and graphics to explain the intricacies. These are extremely well done and entertaining even to neophytes in the areas of economics and banking. He has had over six million views so far. I only wish I had had these during the time I was in school, it would have made economics a lot easier to understand by tenfold! The title of this is "The Hidden Life of Money" by Mike Maloney.)

(Gerry Pety is the Director of the YHS Archives and supervises the work of all the volunteers that contribute their valuable time to the preservation of Ypsilanti history.)



A typical 1933 emergency US Federal Reserve note which provided needed funds to help banks in need of cash to resume operations.

Museum Advisory Board Report

BY NANCY WHEELER, CHAIR

The Museum is welcoming Spring with bright new displays.

The small kitchen has new paint, wallpaper, window valances and a new refrigerator. This restoration came from a 2017 action by the Board of Trustees and was coordinated by Virginia Davis- Brown and Karen Nickels.

The Library cases hold souvenir silver spoons from Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti High School and Michigan State Normal College (EMU). The post cards, some of which are leather, show cancelled one cent stamps. These are on loan from Earnest Griffin, a collector of Ypsilanti memorabilia.

The delightful spring dishes on exhibit in the kitchen are on loan

from Nancy Taylor. They are Dedham Pottery from Massachusetts.

The upstairs hall case holds 23 of our fans, circa 1869 to 1910. Included is an 1870 autographed fan made of balsam wood.

Betty's Room (Toy Room) holds a Tea Party given by the children mannequins for the dolls to practice their 1900 manners. Games and toys are waiting for after the lessons. Be sure to check out this charming display! The tea sets are from our collections and on loan from Karen Nickels and Nancy Wheeler.

Welcome to new Docent, Jack Collins! We are especially happy to have some more young people join us.



One of the tables at the Tea Party in the Toy Room.



Tea sets for the Toy Room Tea Party are from our collections and on loan from Karen Nickels and Nancy Wheeler.

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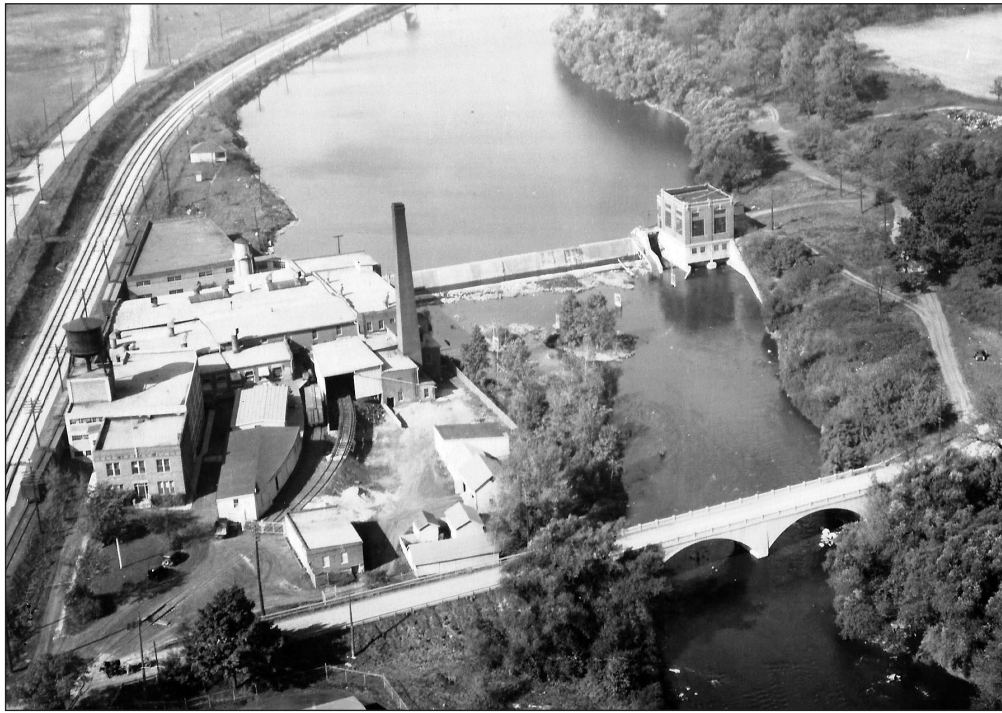
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The flooding problems in Ypsilanti in 1918 were significantly increased when the dam at the Peninsular Paper Company was washed away.

The Great Flood of 1918

BY JAMES MANN

Every year as the winter snow melts and the spring rains fall, the level of the Huron River rises. In most years the water remains within the banks of the river. Some years, the waters overflow the banks and spill over into low-lying spaces. These spaces are usually empty of houses and building as a precaution against floods. Sometimes, however, as in March of 1918, these precautions were not enough.

Lightning pierced the sky over Ypsilanti on the night of March 13, 1918, as a severe storm passed over the city. This was followed by heavy rains. The Huron River was still high from the melting of the winter snow. The rain swelled the water of the river until it passed its capacity to hold it.

At about 4:00 am in the morning of March 14, 1918, the dam at Superior, just north of Superior Road and Huron River Drive, gave way sending a wall of water three or four feet high down the river. Water has weight and moving water has force. This force washed out the Peninsular Paper mill-dam, where Peninsular Place Apartments are now. The flow of water carried away the bridge that stood near the mill.

"The bridge disappeared entirely and while it is probably lodged across the river bed it will not be visible till the water has receded considerably. Parts of it could be seen during the morning at various places along the river," noted The Daily Ypsilanti Press of Thursday, March 14, 1918. The waters continued on, inundating and flooding a wide area before it. The raging waters uprooted trees and carried off

fences all along the banks of the river.

At about the same time, Ypsilanti Chief of Police Cain was awakened, and told to warn those living in the low lands to seek places of safety at once. This was done and all but two families on Water Street sought shelter. The two families that had stayed were removed later in the day by boat.

"Flooding the low land south of the paper mill, the water surged on toward Cross Street Bridge, but no damage resulted there although the abutments were given a trying test. The rest of the Oak Knitting Company dam (formerly the Underwear Factory) went out, however," reported the account. The bridge at Forest Avenue settled in the center for about 18 inches. Traffic across it was stopped.

The high embankment along the river at Frog Island was yet to be set in place, so the land was only then a few feet above the normal level of the river. Because of the high water, Frog Island was completely flooded.

Edward Dolson had his automobile repair shop at Two Water Street, near the bridge at Michigan Avenue. Here water flowed over the roadway for a time, undermining the brick walls of the garage causing the building to collapse. A crowd of curious onlookers watched from the upper end of Michigan Avenue Bridge and up the street, as the walls caved in and the roof sank into the ruins. Cars stored in the building were removed before the walls fell in.

"Across the street the Schrader garage was inundated. Wa-



View of the washed out Peninsular Paper Company dam during the 1918 flood.

ter rose so high as to run into the windows. All cars on storage or repair, as well as office equipment, etc., were taken to safety save one car on repair," noted The Ypsilanti Record.

"Frank Gilbert, operating the John Gault milk wagon, attempted to drive along Race Street at an early hour and was caught by the wall of water. His wagon was washed from the roadway. He succeeded on loosening the team of mules from his wagon and the wagon and mules were carried up among the houses, but Mr. Gilbert was carried downstream and finally escaped near the Casler residence. For a time

it was feared he had been drowned," reported The Ypsilanti Record of Thursday, March 14, 1918.

Further south at Race Street the river left its banks and flowed with a strong current west of the Casler gardens, at 22 Race Street, then turning south. The fields of the Casler gardens still had piles of ice cakes from the previous flood. The water extended for blocks in every direction.

"Spring Street west of the creamery was under water for about a block to the depth of a man's knees. One venturesome man in rubber boots worked his way across, but very slowly on



Flooding on Water Street near the Michigan Avenue Bridge during the 1918 flood.



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Flooding at the Michigan Avenue Bridge during the 1918 flood.

account of the suction of the mud beneath his feet. The city well (where Water Works Park is now) was surrounded by water to a depth of several feet - it is fortunate for the city that the stiff blue clay prevents seepage into the well," noted The Daily Ypsilanti Press.

As swiftly as the waters rose, just as quickly the waters fell. The level of the water fell by two feet in one hour. As the waters passed, teachers from the local schools accompanied the children to the sights. The teachers were most likely as curious to see the sights as were the children.

As soon as the waters cleared work on repairs began. Bridges were repaired or replaced, buildings restored or rebuilt and homes once again made habitable. Then at noon of Monday, March 16, 1918, the pavement at the west end of Michigan Avenue Bridge dropped 10 feet. At the time there were cars parked along the street, and one car pitched forward and a second slid backward as the pavement gave

way. The cars were in transit from the Dodge factory in Detroit to owners in Missouri. No one was hurt, as the drivers were at lunch at the time. It was not until 8:00 pm that evening that the two cars were recovered from the hole.

The size of the hole had increased from about 10 feet to about 20 feet by Monday, March 18, 1918, and was continuing to grow. Tons of stones and dirt were dropped into the hole, but without apparent effect.

"It now appears as though the water went under this wall and gradually formed a vacuum into which earth was forced from under the pavement along the west of the bridge. Sandbags are being dropped there to furnish a temporary filling and when the seat of the trouble is located attention will be given to filling the holes and replacing pavement," reported The Daily Ypsilanti Press of Monday, March 18, 1918

An expert diver was brought in from Detroit to examine the damage. The diver reported that the dirt filling had

been washed away for a depth of nine feet, this left the bridge resting at this corner almost entirely on the piling.

A second diver was soon sent for and confirmed the opinion of the first, that there was enough support to hold up the bridge while a secure foundation was put in place.

"A large force of men are at work filling the hole at the north side of the bridge with sandbags and stone to turn the current at this point, so as to not interfere with the divers while at work under the bridge. The river has scooped the dirt out at this point to a depth of 24 feet," reported The Ypsilanti Record of Thursday, March 28, 1918.

Work to repair the damage of the flood was finished by the end of May of 1918. Michigan Avenue was reopened to traffic and all trace of the flood has long since disappeared.

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)



The Classical Revival architectural style of the Masonic Temple as it was constructed in 1909.

Riverside Arts Center – Masonic Temple

BY JAMES MANN

At the turn of the 20th century the community of Ypsilanti needed a place where medium sized theatricals and other social events could be held. This need was most felt by societies connected with local churches and the Normal College. At the same time, the Freemasons of Ypsilanti were in need of new quarters. "The present quarters," reported The Ypsilanti Daily Press of January 6, 1906, "are old unmodern and constantly in need of repair, causing considerable unnecessary expense. What the lodge wants is a modern, up-to-date hall with a club room and dining room in connection, where everything will be pleasant, convenient and handy." The solution to both needs, was in one building.

In May of 1907, the Masons chose the Chidester lot on North Huron Street, across from Pearl Street, as the site for their new temple. "The location," reported The Ypsilanti Daily Press of May 20, 1907, "for a building such as the Masons contemplate erecting is one of the finest in the city. It covers

66 feet across the front and is very deep, extending back to the flats." The Masons paid \$6,000 for the lot.

The plans for the classical revival styled temple were the work of Osgood & Osgood of Grand Rapids, and were modeled after the temple in Charlotte. The building is 55 by 124 feet, four stories high, and made of pressed brick and trimmed with stone. The plans were for a temple far larger than the current needs of the Masons required, as the building was intended for use by the general public as well. Forty thousand bricks were used in the building of partitions in the basement.

The rooms in the basement included a reception room, 14 feet six inches by 30 feet six inches, and a coat room 18 feet nine inches by 19 feet three inches. The main feature of the basement was the dining room, 30 feet six inches by 78 feet six inches, and able to accommodate 400 hungry persons. Behind the dining room was the kitchen, 18 feet five inches by 21 feet six inches, and fitted out "with all the modern appointments."

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Another feature of the basement was the bowling alley, 19 feet three inches wide and the regulation length of some 62 feet. The rest of the basement was taken up by the boiler room and the coal room.

"Upon entering the new temple," reported The Ypsilanti Daily Press of January 26, 1910, "a visitor is most favorably impressed with the great width of the main lobby. To the right is the parlor of the Ladies of the Eastern Star. To the left is the parlor for the general comfort of guests." This room opened to the main feature of the first floor, the auditorium. The auditorium was 51 feet by 79

feet, with a seating capacity of 750 persons. The auditorium was two stories high, with a balcony on three sides at the second floor level. On the forth wall was the stage 24 feet eight inches by 15 feet, with a 20 foot opening at the front. The stage had files for scenery, "making it adapted to amateur theatricals."

"A spacious stairway led from the first floor to the second, where the adjoining club and billiard room looked out on North Huron Street. Here the men were able to smoke and read and enjoy themselves to their hearts content." Most of the second floor was taken up by the balcony of the auditorium, with its 21 foot high ceiling. At the rear of the

building were two dressing rooms, each 12 by 18 feet, at the back of the stage.

The third floor served as the quarters for the Masonic orders. At the front were two rooms, a parlor 15 by 30 feet, and an adjoining Red Cross room 19 by 32 feet. These were for the Commandery, and were most often used as a double parlor. "Spacious windows let in the light and these rooms will undoubtedly be the most appreciated of any in the building."

Most of the third floor was taken up by the mammoth lodge room in the center of the building 37 and three fourth feet by 55 feet, and two stories high. There

Recent Museum & Archive Acquisitions

The museum and archives receive donated items on a regular basis to add to our collections. It is through these donations that we have a furnished museum and an archive full of research material. We will be including recent acquisitions in the upcoming editions of the *Gleanings*. Thank you to all of our generous donors! Here are the new items in our collections.

Number	Item	Description
HS-2018-646	Beard Trimmer	Boker Tree Brand Shavette beard trimmer.
HS-2018-647	Matchbook	Advertisement for Suburban Volkswagon, Inc. of Ypsilanti.
HS-2018-648	Military Uniform	WW I uniform including hat, leggings, socks, jacket and summer pants.
HS-2018-649.1	Doll	<i>East End Avenue(Green)</i> Effanbee Doll "Little Old New York Collection," 1987.
HS-2018-649.2	Doll	<i>Duffy Square</i> Effanbee doll from the "Little Old New York Collection," 1986.
HS-2018-650.1	Jug	One-gallon brown and beige crockery jug.
HS-2018-650.2	Jug	Three-gallon grey crockery jug with blue botanical design.
HS-2018-650.3	Basket	Tall woven basket.
HS-2018-651	Flour Sack	Ypsilanti Farm Bureau 100-pound flour sack.
HSA-2018-01	Ypsilanti Souvenir	Book picturing Ypsilanti buildings many of the Michigan State Normal College.
HSA-2018-02	Newspapers	Several publications like the Stars & Stripes, ranging in dates from 1980 to 1783.
HSA-2018-03	Book	"Home of the Brave"; cataloging the WWII stories of Silvers Maples residents.
HSA-2018-04	Photographs	Collection of photos from the 50th reunion for the Roosevelt High Class of 1964.
HSA-2018-05	News Clippings	Relating to the longtime Woodruff Elementary principal Floyd L. Smith.
HSA-2018-06	Lesson Plans	Lesson plans developed form the Ypsilanti Community History Project.
HSA-2018-07	Maps	Topographic maps from the City of Ypsilanti features of the Ypsilanti landscape.
HSA-2018-08	Collection	Collection for Rodes Walters and 18 years spent at the Ford Rawsonville Plant.
HSA-2018-09	Photographs	Pictures of the Gault Farm accompanied by various style milk caps.
HSA-2018-10	Photograph	A photo of Will Albin taken by Waterman Photography of Ypsilanti, Michigan.
HSA-2018-11	Postcards	Many from 1907-1909 of locations like the Huron River and Downtown Ypsilanti.
HSA-2018-12	Postcard	A hand drawn postcard of Prospect Park from 1940 showing a small pond.
HSA-2018-13	Pamphlets	Heritages Festival pamphlets outlining events for the 2006 & 2009 festivals.
HSA-2018-14	Booklets	Many varying in topics of war in relation to aspects of Michigan Life.
HSA-2018-15	Plaque	Recognition of James F. Warner for outstanding community support.

was a gallery at the fourth floor level, seven feet wide against three walls. The lodge room had a seating capacity of 380 persons. "A row of chairs can be placed around the floor of the lodge, increasing the seating capacity for special occasions." Passageways ran under the gallery, but were walled off from the lodge room. The walls of the room were painted blue, and the woodwork had the dark rich brown of polished oak. Light was provided by a large electrical dome in the ceiling. On the fourth wall, the West wall, was

the stage where masonic rites were performed. It was here the members were initiated into the degrees of Freemasonry. The background of the stage was painted in tints and shades of blue. "The blue carpet covering the floor of itself cost \$500."

Surrounding the lodge room were a number of smaller rooms, including rooms for preparations for the rites, the regalia closets, where the ceremonial robes were kept, and the robing apartments. Some of these rooms



Laying the Corner Stone for the Masonic Temple in 1909.

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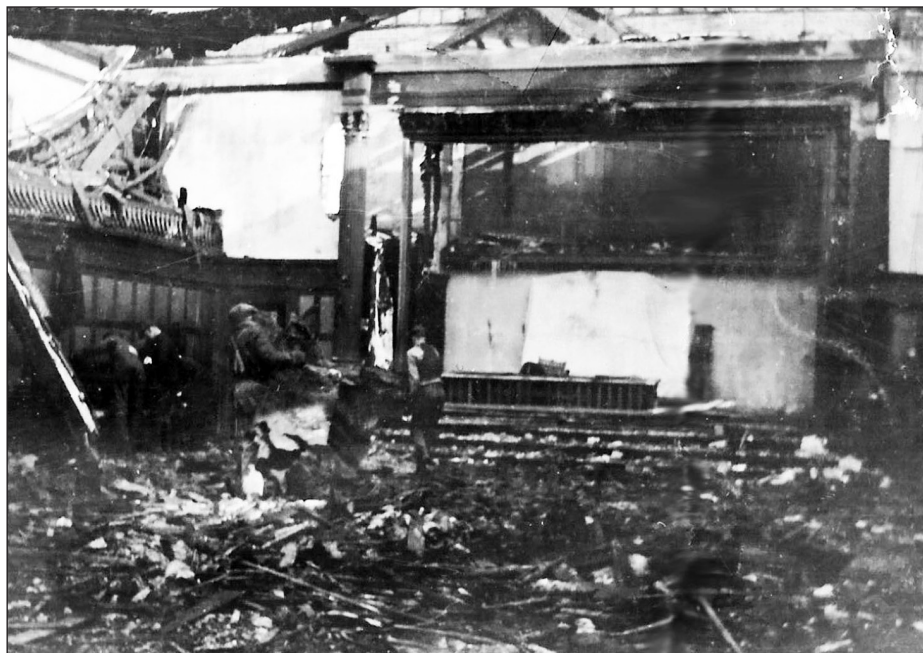
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Masonic Temple fire in 1924 showing the Lodge Room on the third floor. Note that the roof is gone.

could be used for a variety of purposes. Most of the fourth floor was taken up by the gallery of the lodge room. Also on the fourth floor was the armory, a room 31 square feet.

"Hard oak is being used throughout the building in the finishing and the decorations will be carried out to suit the architectural designs." The cost of the building was about \$60,000. Work for the excavation and foundations of the temple began during the first week of November 1908. The work had progressed far enough for the laying of the cornerstone at 3:30 pm of Thursday, July 22, 1909, "with all the accompanying ritual of the Masonic orders."

"This affair," reported The Ypsilanti Daily Press of July 20, 1909, "is undoubtedly one of the most important Masonic happenings of Washtenaw county as the local temple is the first to be erected for the sole purpose of having the Masons."

The same report listed the items to be enclosed in the cornerstone: "By-laws of the lodge, chapter and council. Articles of Incorporation. Copy of Ypsilanti Masonic association publication. Copy of The Ypsilanti

Daily Press, July 20. Confederate \$100 bill. Fractional currency, 25 cents. Official Masonic penny. List of Supervisors. Professor Cleary's name as president of Cleary College. President Jones' name as president of the Michigan Normal College. List of School Board and Trustees. Architects, Osgood & Osgood. Contractors, Cole Bros.. Superintendent, J. H. Woodman." Included in the cornerstone, were lists of members of the Masonic organizations.

Exactly how the architects, contractors and superintendent were included in the cornerstone is unclear. Presumably, it could have been accomplished by careful folding. Still, it must be very crowded in there. On the cornerstone are two dates, A. L. 5909, and A. D. 1909. The year 1909, is, of course the year the building was constructed. The A. L. 5909 refers to a time when it was believed the Earth was created four thousand years before the birth of Christ; the years were numbered from that time, called the year of light.

The temple was formally dedicated, with elaborate Masonic ceremony, on the afternoon of May 6, 1910.

The ceremony was carried out in the third floor lodge room, "with an audience of Masons and interested friends." The temple soon proved successful in serving the needs of the Masons, and of the community. The building soon became a social center of Ypsilanti, with the dining room used for banquets, and the auditorium for theatrical and musical performances. Civic and church groups frequently used the parlors for meetings.

Over the years the temple has undergone numerous modifications and changes. Twice, the temple has been damaged by fire. A fire of undetermined origin started in the basement of the temple, under a stairway, on the afternoon of Saturday, November 29, 1924. Flames were seen bursting through the roof, just before 6:00 pm. Firefighters put the fire out, after four hours. The roof was lost, and the upper floors were "a mass of charcoal and debris." The dining room had been damaged by water, and had lost much of its plaster. The loss was estimated at \$100,000. The building was repaired and rededicated, in June of 1925.

A second fire in 1970 gutted the upper floors, resulting in the loss of the lodge room and the balcony to the auditorium. After seventy-five years of occupancy, the Masons left the temple in 1987, to move into new quarters in the township. The temple was sold to Materials Unlimited, who used the building for storage.

The Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority purchased the building for \$290,000 in June of 1994, and began converting it into the Riverside Arts Center. Once again, the auditorium is used

for theatricals, presentations and other programs. The basement is now an art gallery.

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives, and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)

I'm Going to Break the Law

BY JACK MINZEY

I perceive myself as a law-abiding citizen. I always pay my income tax. I stop at stop signs, obey the speed laws, and not only don't litter, but I pick up litter dropped by others. I don't even tear the tags off pillows or mattresses. In general, I do what I am told and follow the rules as they are given to me. However, I have encountered an implied law (a rule of punctuation) which has annoyed me for most of my life and one which I am henceforth refusing to follow.

The rule I refer to is "thou shalt not end a sentence with a preposition." This rule makes no sense to me. I have always tried to follow the rules of grammar; punctuate compound sentences, do not have run on sentences, have agreement between subjects and verbs, and the myriad of other rules handed down from generation to generation and taught to us by our English teachers. I even accept "i before e except after c", even though it makes little sense to me. In fact, I have succumbed to my computer which expects me to use "which" instead of "that."

But the rule to which I refer has been the most perplexing and has bothered me for a long time. We have tolerated many language violations in our common practices. We let people go unchallenged in their pronouncement of words like "garnishee," "tomato" and "aunt." We let people use words like "agendas" or "liberry," or "alum-

ni" to refer to female graduates. We have even legitimized the word "proven" which fifty years ago was not an accepted word. Yet when you end a sentence with a preposition, even an elementary student might point out your error.

I have written scores of articles, many papers, a dissertation, four books and parts of eleven other books. I usually count on my being correct in language usage by what sounds proper to me. In the case of the preposition, I cannot do this. The following sentences sound fine to me.

I hope he comes in.

Who is it from?

Who was he with?

I didn't know whom to give it to.

These appear to be acceptable sentences to me, and yet, they violate the rules established by our grammatical experts. As a result, I have spent hours trying to reword such sentences, and the final result is usually one that does not sound as appropriate to me as it did before.

Why do we have this rule and what is its history? I have been unable to find the answer to this question, so I submit a story which I have heard as a possible explanation. Centuries ago, in Elizabethan times when the rules of language were being fermented, a king overheard a young swain saying to his

virgin daughter, "It is you I would like to make out with." The king was incensed and ordered the young man put to death. But he had to have a legal reason for such action, so he accused the young man of using a sentence ending with a proposition. The king's word then became law, and this law was historically carried on by the bards who told the story in verse and song. Unfortunately, as time went on, the bards unintentionally substituted the word "preposition" for "proposition", and thus, a grammatical rule was born. And because this rule is so easy to remember, such violations have now become worse than leaving a participle dangling.

The world is faced with many enormous and critical problems today; war, famine, sickness, economic failure, environmental change, etc. Yet in this time of so many needed solutions, the language police are still lurking around, hoping to catch us in the improper placement of a preposition. Therefore, let me announce that I am personally voiding this rule. You may pillar, skewer, hang or incarcerate me, but I am going to write what sounds correct to me and let the prepositions fall where they may. It is now a rule which I will no longer be concerned with.

(Jack Minzey is a retired Professor and Department Head from Eastern Michigan University and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)



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Pig Tail Alley and a Mysterious Cave

BY DAVE NOVAK

Growing up in the South Prospect neighborhood on the east side of Ypsilanti, school kids went to and from Woodruff School on Michigan Avenue by travelling a path down the hill from South Prospect to South Grove. Because the path curved around, we called it "Pig Tail Alley." Next to the path on the side of the hill was a cave-like hole in the ground that was noticed but not paid much attention to.

In 1923, Harvey Colburn wrote on page 85 in his Story of Ypsilanti, "In 1835, ...Isaac Kimball and Harry Gilbert were hauling earth from the edge of the bluff not far from the site of the present Beyer Hospital, for the filling of a lot nearby. Unexpectedly the spades of the diggers struck a buried timber. The uncovering and removal of one of these planks revealed a dark hole beneath. They



Dave Novak digging where a cave-like hole existed.



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Artifacts discovered in the hole just up the hill from the houses on South Grove Street.

found...a well-built subterranean room, ten feet square and eight feet high. Further exploration of the hidden room revealed a furnace and half a metal shell containing grease in which a wick was floating. No resident, even of the earliest comers, had known of the cave's existence.... This being the case, it was reasoned that the cave must be referred to the Godfroy period (Godfroy operated a trading post around 1805). Perhaps in the days of the old trading post, a gang of counterfeiters had made the place their rendezvous and burrowed out a workshop in the bluff-side."

Learning about Colburn's theory, I often wondered about the cave-like hole I remembered from being a kid. While drinking beer at the Side Track, I mentioned the hole and Col-

burn's theory to a friend. We decided Pig Tail Alley deserved a visit to see what we could find. Last fall, armed with a shovel, we started the trek up the hill behind the muffler shop at the corner of East Michigan and South Grove. Pig Tail Alley was overgrown but discernable through an open path of trees. About half way up the hill, we turned off the path about twenty feet and I struck my shovel into the ground. It hit something hard and different from earth right away. Digging to each side of my first strike unearthed a bag of muddy artifacts.

We took the bag home and washed our treasures. We identified a 1948 Michigan license plate, an old 4 Roses whiskey bottle, and an assortment of old bottles and broken pottery. The dig was about 100 yards up the hill from the houses on South Grove just below Michigan Avenue. We obviously found a dump site. Why did the people who dumped here choose this spot so far from the nearest house? Did they choose it because a cave-like hole in the ground preexisted? A curiosity from a childhood memory led to an excursion that generated more questions. Maybe if we dig further we will find a treasure from the counterfeiters theorized by Colburn. The new questions deserve a return visit this summer.

(Dave is a long time YHS member and contributor to the Archives.)

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ROBBERY at the Staib Saloon

BY JAMES MANN

Sometime during the night of Monday, October 9, 1916, someone entered the Bismarck saloon, also known as the Staib saloon as Fred Staib owned it, sometime after closing. Whoever it was entered by way of a rear window. They left with \$172.50 and with some cigars with a value of about \$25. "The safe in the saloon was left unlocked. The thieves thus gained easy access, taking a small hatchet and breaking the cash box inside. The cash register was taken and relieved of what cash it contained. The cigar case was visited and the intruders helped themselves. Drinks were partaken of and glasses left on the bar, indicating more than one man was served," reported The Ypsilanti Record of Thursday, October 12, 1916. "Officers are following up on some clues and scouring the city and vicinity for suspects," noted The Daily Ypsilanti Press of Tuesday, October 10, 1916.

The methods of investigation used by police in those days were limited, as they lacked fingerprints and other forms of securing physical evidence. One tool the police did have was asking questions. One question the police most likely asked was if anyone had recently left the employment of the Staib saloon? To this, the most likely answer was, Tony Coviac, who had recently been employed there as a porter. The accounts of the case do not give a reason for his leaving the employment of the Staib saloon.

Coviac had spent the night at the old city lockup with a companion, as it was the practice to allow men with no place to stay to spend the night there. Coviac and his companion may have left the lockup in a hurry, or were rushed out, as they left a few things behind. After the men had left the lock up, some 15 cigars believed to have come from the Staib saloon were found there. Police soon found Coviac and took him into custody. "Coviac has not yet been examined," noted The Daily Ypsilanti Press, "but is locked up awaiting that ceremony, which cannot occur until he has sobered

up considerably. He was too much under the influence when found to give a coherent account of himself."

After Coviac was taken into custody, a quantity of cash was found on his person, which included a relic half-dollar. Fred Staib identified this as one of two he had in the cash box. Coviac said a man in Detroit, for whom he had formally been employed, gave this to him. Police questioned the man in Detroit, who told police none of the coins of that kind were missing, and he had never given such a coin to Coviac. "Justice Stadtmiller remanded Coviac to the county jail for a hearing when arraigned, and fixed his bonds at \$3,000. He was unable to furnish bonds," noted The Ypsilanti Record. C o v i a c stood trial and was sentenced to 2 to 24 years at Jackson prison. He continued to maintain his innocence.

On Friday, December 15, 1916 a prisoner at the county jail informed Sheriff Lindenschmitt that another prisoner called "Big Slim" knew where the money from the Staib saloon robbery was hidden. Lindenschmitt questioned "Big Slim" until he admitted he knew where the money was hidden. He even drew a diagram to show where the money was located. The plan, according to "Big Slim" was for him to recover the money and keep half for himself, and send the other half to Coviac at

Jackson prison. "Big Slim" was to be released from the county jail the day after Coviac was to be sent to the prison at Jackson.

"For convenience the sheriff took "Slim" with him and they went over the ground in this city. Their route led to a stone pile at the west end of the Cross street bridge, and the tin box, a foot long and eight inches wide, which Coviac had taken from the Bismarck safe, was dug up. Its contents were still intact," reported The Ypsilanti Record of Thursday, December 21, 1916. They recovered the tin box containing the cash, as well as three quarts of whisky, some cigars and a handkerchief. "Mr. Staib was informed of the recovery in a very unique manner Friday," noted the account. "Sheriff Lindenschmitt, after recovering the money, bought four chickens at an Ypsilanti market, had them cooked in a local restaurant, and with several others present invited Mr. Staib down to dine with them. He got out of bed, dressed and came downtown. Finally cigars, which he thought he recognized, were passed, but to crown the feast Mr. Staib was passed the tin box and told to put his ashes in it."

(James Mann is a local historian, a volunteer in the YHS Archives and a regular contributor to the Gleanings.)



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