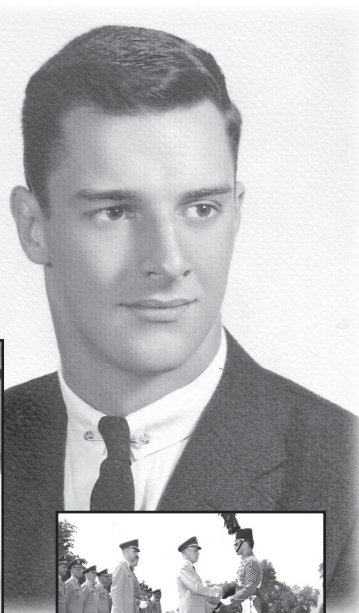
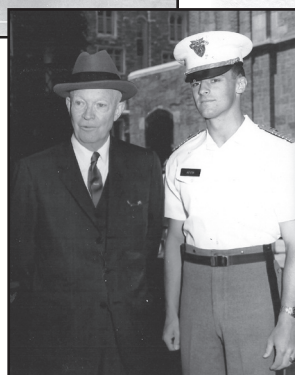


Ypsilanti GLEANINGS

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



SUMMER 2012



Clockwise from top right: Bob Arvin in 1961, receiving the U.S. Army Award, with President Eisenhower, with Vice President Humphrey, Purple Heart and Silver Star awards, leading the President Johnson inaugural parade

Bob Arvin – An Ypsilanti Hero

By Bill Nickels

Our country was in the middle of World War II when Carl Arvin served his country as a Military Police officer. Carl and his wife Dorothy's first child, Carl Robert "Bob" Arvin was born in 1943 while he served. Carl and Dorothy would have to live their lives to learn the complete role the military would play in their lives.

The family moved to Ypsilanti and lived at 907 Pleasant Drive for most of Bob's youth. Being across the street from Recreation Park, Bob's youth fit the ideal 1950s stereotype. He was a prize-winning paper boy for the *Ann Arbor News* while he attended St. John's Elementary School. Joining Troop 240 of the Boy Scouts of America at St. John's Catholic Church, Bob became an Eagle Scout and counseled younger scouts at the Bruin Lake Boy Scout Camp.

A neighborhood girl, Merry Lynn Montonye, frequently saw Bob at Recreation Park. According to Merry Lynn, they never became friends because he was "playing with sticks and doing boy stuff."

When it came time to attend high school in 1957, Bob choose not to attend a smaller private school and moved to Ypsilanti High School where he hoped his talents could be better exhibited. The fit turned out to be perfect for him.

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From the President's Desk

By Alvin E. Rudisill

We appreciate the financial support we continue to receive from the many members and friends of the Ypsilanti Historical Society. Our current effort is to raise \$125,000 to pay off the balance owed the City of Ypsilanti for the property at 220 North Huron Street. Since December of 2011 we have raised \$56,000 of that amount. The original purchase price was \$250,000 back in 2006 with \$125,000 paid down with the balance due in 10 years without any accrual of interest.

The Captain Robert Arvin Display has been moved into the YHS Museum and was dedicated during our quarterly meeting on May 6th. The lead article in this issue tells the story of this American hero from Ypsilanti who excelled in everything he did. Thanks to Bill Nickels for his power *PointProgram* about Captain Arvin at the quarterly meeting and to Charles Kettles for planning and carrying out the display dedication.

By the time you receive this issue of the GLEANINGS, our annual yard sale on June 2nd will be over. We have been collecting items for the yard sale for the past year and stored them for the event in the Starkweather House on Huron River Drive. Thanks to Bill and Karen Nickels for hosting the event and to all the volunteers who spent time marking the items, setting up the displays and working during the actual yard sale.

One of our ongoing efforts is to expand and digitize the master database for the Fletcher-White Archives and to upload the latest version to the Internet on a regular basis. You can check out the latest version by going to the YHS web site and clicking on "Archives Database" on the left column of the home page. That action will bring up a set of instructions on how to open the database and search it. Once the database has been opened, you can use "control-F" to bring up a search box on your browser (location on the page depends on the browser being used) where you can type in the names of people, places or things and then search the entire database to see if we have that name in our collections. Clicking on "Next" will enable you to move through all the entries in the database for your search name.

Our next quarterly meeting will be held on Sunday, September 9, 2012, from 2 to 4 p.m. We will have a brief business meeting followed by a program. Members will be notified of program details by email or postcard. If you are not currently on our email *listserv*, please call the Museum at 734-482-4990 and have your name added. We are using the *listserv* only for program notifications. Your email address will not be shared with others. Also, please check the *Event Schedule* on our web site for upcoming special programs and displays.

We are always looking for volunteers as docents for the Museum or research assistants for the Archives. Both the Museum and Archives are open from 2 to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. If you are available during that time and are interested in helping us preserve the historical information and artifacts of the area, or in educating the general public about our history, please give me a call at 734-476-6658.

Ypsilanti Historical Society

220 North Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

<http://ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org/>



Museum:
734-484-0080

Archives:
734-217-8236
[Archives Database](#)

Online

Welcome!

The Ypsilanti Historical Society, which is presented by the Fletcher-White Archives at the Ypsilanti Historical Society, is open to everyone, including non-city residents.

For information about upcoming Society events, visit us online at:
www.ypsilantihistoricalsociety.org

Bob Arvin

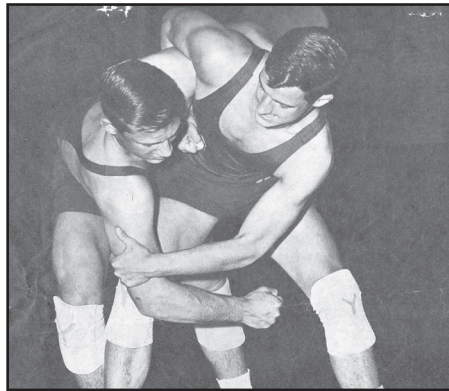
[continued from page one]



Seventh-grader, Bob Arvin raises his hand

Bob excelled in both team and individual sports. He played varsity football for four years and was the team's starting quarterback. He wrestled for four years. During his senior year he was the 154-lb State Champion and co-captain when Ypsi High won the State Championship. Wrestling teammate Tino Lambros remembers "the long, cold, and dark school bus trips to Lansing, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, and other places. "Bob would curl up in those 'wonderful' bus seats, pull out a small flashlight and a book and study."

Among his circle of friends at Ypsi High was that neighborhood girl, Merry Lynn

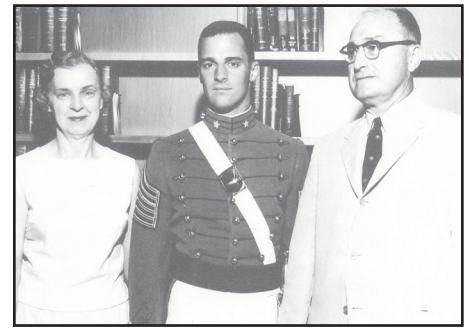


Ypsilanti High wrestling champ

Montonye, who now was captain of the cheerleaders. They dated sporadically, even when the year-older Merry Lynn went off to Duke University.

His club activities included four years on the Debate Team and four years with the Forensics Team where "keys" were earned by representing Ypsi High in inter-scholastic debates or in District speech contests. Two years with the Thespians led to the lead in the school's senior play. He also spent two years with the school newspaper and his senior year with the yearbook staff.

Leadership skills were developed by being a Home Room Officer in the ninth grade, Class Officer in the tenth grade, Student Council President in the elev-



Cadet Arvin with his parents

enth grade, and Class President in the twelfth grade. Leadership was broadened by participation in Boys' State, County Government Day, and the Model United Nations. His high school record was topped by being the Valedictorian for his class and membership in the National Honor Society.

In 1989, classmate Dr. Frank Sayre said "Greatness was in his life. If anyone was destined for major accomplishments, for a national presence, it was Bob Arvin."

West Point

Upon graduation from Ypsi High, Bob received an honor scholarship from Harvard and scholarships from six other schools. Bob's mom said, "A Yale scholarship didn't turn Bob's head, he was West Point bound." He became a plebe at the U. S. Military Academy at West Point in July of 1961. The following summer, at Camp Buckner, New York, he distinguished himself by winning both the Triathlon (swimming, cross country and rifle) and "Recondo" competitions. The latter was a hand-to-hand combat pit fight where he was the last man standing among more than 700 classmates.

Bob was also a star athlete at West Point, lettering in wrestling during all three of his varsity years. During his senior year, he was elected captain. His coach was instrumental in conceiving the Arvin Wrestling Award which is given annually to "the graduating member of the wrestling team who best exemplifies the qualities of Carl Robert Arvin in the area of leadership, scholarship, and commitment to Army wrestling."

As in high school, Bob was active in other areas of student [continued overleaf]

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**July 4 Independence Day
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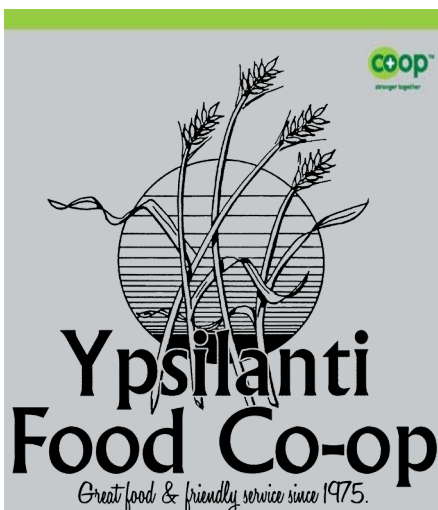
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**August 17, 18, 19
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**2 p.m. September 9
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Bob Arvin

[continued from page 3]

life. He was a leader in the Student Conference on US Affairs (SCUSA) at West Point. SCUSA was a four-day conference where students discussed issues facing our country. His editing interest continued as co-editor of the HOITZER student publication. His devotion to his Catholic faith continued as a member of the Catholic Chapel Choir and a Catholic Chapel acolyte. Both were some of his most cherished times.

After Merry Lynn graduated from Duke, her first teaching job was in White Plains, New York, a short drive from West Point. It was said their relationship ran hot and cold during this time.

It was the responsibility of General Davison, Commandant of Cadets, to select the First Captain and Brigade Commander of the Corps of Cadets during their senior year. He remembered, "It was my privilege as Commandant to select Bob to be First Captain. I admired him greatly; he was a concerned, compassionate leader who held the complete respect of his fellow cadets." As First Captain, Bob hosted Dwight Eisenhower for his Fiftieth Reunion of the Class of 1915 and broke ground for a new campus building with Eisenhower. He later led the Corps of Cadets in President Johnson's inaugural parade in Washington D.C.

Bob graduated 44th out of a class of 596 in 1961. He received the Pershing Writing Award where graduates are asked to reflect on their four years at West Point and express what West Point meant to them. As the cadet who best exemplifies the traditions of the United States Military Academy and the United States Army, he also received the Association of the United States Army Award. For exhibiting military efficiency, he won the Avarian Award. He was truly honored as a student at West Point. He received further distinction as a finalist for a Rhodes scholarship.

United States Army

After graduation as a 2nd Lieutenant, Bob went to Fort Benning, Georgia in August of 1965 for specialized training. He completed both Ranger and Airborne



*Bob & Merry Lynn,
married at Ypsilanti's St. John's church,
30 July 1966*

Jumpmaster schools. He selected the famed 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina as his first assignment. The selection of the 82nd Airborne was indicative of his desire to serve up front with the action.

While in Ranger School, Bob's West Point friend Mike Moseley invited Bob and his girlfriend Merry Lynn Montonye to a beach house in Delaware. While driving together, Bob asked Merry Lynn to marry him. They married in Ypsilanti at St. John's Catholic Church on July 30, 1966. They had nine months together before Bob's assignment to Vietnam in early 1967 as an advisor in the Military Assistance Command Vietnam

Vietnam

Captain Bob Arvin reported to his advisory detachment, the 7th Vietnamese Airborne Battalion, in May 1967. His West Point classmate Chuck Hemingway was also with the 7th Battalion and was killed in June 1967. Bob was assigned to take his place.

The 7th Battalion was assigned to protect the vital Hue Phu Bai Air Base near the town of Hue (the air base is now Hue International Airport). Hue was in the center of a cluster of towns that included Khe Sanh and Da Nang just south of the DMZ that separated North Vietnam from South Viet Nam.

While serving as advisor to the 7th Battalion, the US Army later officially recognized his value: "Captain Arvin was noted for the inspiration he provided the Vietnamese soldiers and was instrumental in assisting them in successfully accomplishing their missions."

The pace and intensity of the war picked up in the summer of 1967. According to the US Army, on 5 September 1967 "the battalion was deployed in a three-pronged assault on suspected enemy positions. As the unit approached the objective area, the entire left flank came under intense mortar and small arms fire from Viet Cong bunker and trench complexes located on the rice paddy perimeters. An element on the left flank was overwhelmed by the fierce fire and withdrew, leaving Captain Arvin, his counterpart, and two radio operators alone. Undaunted by the perilous circumstances, Captain Arvin led the group forward to engage the enemy. In doing so, one of the radio operators was wounded. Although wounded, himself, Captain Arvin, with complete disregard for his personal safety, moved through enemy fire to the man and dragged him to a relatively protected location. Returning to the group, he began directing repeated armed helicopter gunship strikes as all elements of the battalion now engaged the enemy. Then, heedless of the increasing volume of enemy fire, Captain Arvin established a landing zone and supervised the evacuation of the wounded. Refusing evacuation himself, he returned to the front to continue to advise and assist in the conduct of the battle. As a direct result of Captain Arvin's indomitable fighting spirit, positive leadership, and calm courage throughout the hours-long battle, the insurgents were forced from their positions and the 7th Battalion was able to secure the objective. Captain Arvin's conspicuous gallantry in action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflected great credit upon himself and the military service."

Following a brief hospitalization, Bob returned to his battalion which was preparing to clear enemy forces from the air base. On 8 October 1967, "Bob's unit was completing a sweep of a suspected enemy base when an entrenched regiment was

engaged." Again, according to the US Army, "Captain Arvin was accompanying the battalion in a sweep of suspected enemy positions when the unit came under intense hostile mortar and automatic weapons fire. As the volume of enemy fire increased, Captain Arvin called for helicopter gunships to support the attacking Airborne soldiers. Realizing that the battalion was facing a determined enemy, Captain Arvin left his relatively safe position and raced through fireswept fields to a forward position where he expertly began directing the gunships on target. With enemy activity temporarily suppressed, the battalion continued to move forward until it was resubjected to punishing mortar and small arms fire. Once again Captain Arvin valiantly and in full view of enemy gunners, moved through the fire to a forward vantage point. There, as fighting raged about him, he directed extremely accurate, close range gunship passes onto enemy positions. As a direct result of Captain Arvin's unrelenting attention to duty, resolute courage, and superb direction of ground forces and supporting air-craft, a strong and determined enemy was forced to flee in defeat. Captain Arvin's conspicuous gallantry in action was in keeping with the time-honored traditions of the United States Army and reflected great credit upon himself and the military service."

In moving forward with his Vietnamese counterpart, Bob was mortally wounded by small arms fire and died on the field of battle. By the request of General William Westmoreland, Bob was days away from being transferred to Saigon as one of his staff.

Epilogue

Arvin's body was returned to Ypsilanti to lie in state in St. John's Church, the first layman to do so there and, two days later, a Catholic funeral mass was conducted. His school and Boy Scout life began in the same church that saw the end of his life.

Arvin was buried at West Point on 17 Oc-



Dedication of the West Point gymnasium to C. Robert Arvin

tober 1967 with military honors. Mourners included wife Merry Lynn, parents, brother David, Ypsilanti and West Point classmates, West Point wrestling team, 82nd Airborne members, and the Academy Superintendent.

For his engagement with the enemy on 5 September, Bob was posthumously promoted to Captain and awarded a Silver Star for gallantry in action and a Purple Heart for his wounds. For the engage-

ment on 8 October, he was awarded a second Silver Star Oak Leaf Cluster for gallantry and a Purple Heart as a result of being mortally wounded.

"He was one of the most outstanding young men I have had the privilege of knowing. The Army has lost one of its future leaders."

-General William Westmoreland

Our Vietnam

veterans were not welcomed home like veterans of earlier wars but, on 25 February 1989, West Point did their part to keep their memories alive: the cadet gym was officially dedicated and renamed the Arvin Gymnasium in honor of Bob. West Point follows criteria requiring athletic facilities to be named after graduates who distinguished themselves in a sport related to the facility and had fallen in battle while in the prime of life. Graduates back to the founding of the Academy in 1802 were eligible.

A \$97 million 495,000-square-foot addition to the 1910 cadet gymnasium was completed in 2005.

The complex was rededicated on 9 September 2005 as the Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center. The ceremony was part of the [continued overleaf]

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Bob Arvin

[continued from page 5]

40th Reunion of West Point's Class of 1965. That class lost twenty-five members in Viet Nam—more than any other class. Like Eisenhower, Sherman, Lee, MacArthur, Pershing, and Grant, the name Arvin on a West Point building honors a military hero from the academy.

Frankenmuth resident Stan Bozich saw the need to tell the story of Michigan's military heroes in 1987 with the construction of the Michigan Military Museum in his home town. Identifying Arvin as one of Michigan's heroes, he asked the family for some of Bob's military possessions for an Arvin display and they gladly agreed.

Arvin is memorialized locally as well. On 15 June 2002, the Ypsilanti Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2408 dedicated their post to Bob. It is now and will forever be called the "C. Robert Arvin VFW Post 2408." In order to personalize Bob's memory, the VFW asked the Michigan Military Museum for display items to duplicate their display. With agreement from the family, display items were shared and the display was duplicated.

VFW Post 2408 created the "Captain C. Robert Arvin Educational Fund" to honor Bob's legacy. By 2004, golf outings raised enough money to annually award \$1000 scholarships to six-to-twelve local high school graduates. To date, over \$80,000 have been awarded! In 2008, the Fund was redesignated as the "Captain C. Robert Arvin Foundation" and is now a Michigan nonprofit corporation. The purpose remains the same.

Ypsilanti High School initiated an "Athletic Hall of Fame" in 2004. Bob Arvin was quickly added to the "Hall" on 30 September 2005. He is immortalized in the school that provided the environment for him to grow into the leader he would become.

During the winter of 2012, David Arvin and Merry Lynn thought about increasing the visibility of Bob's display housed inside VFW Post 2408. Discussing the issue with Stan Bozich from the Michigan Military Museum, Pete Raymond Commander of VFW Post 2408, and



*Ypsilanti Historical Museum intern
Lauren Carpenter helps arrange the
C. Robert Arvin Memorial*

Charles Kettles, they decided to ask if the Ypsilanti Historical Museum would accept the display. The Museum gladly accepted. More will now see Bob's heroic story.

Why should we keep Bob's heroic story alive? He became a leader by preparing himself both physically and mentally, making the right choices in life, and making sure the people he associated with were people he could trust. As a result, others accepted him as a leader. That is an important story for all people to learn and know. That story cannot be learned by becoming his friend, but it can be virtually learned through West Point, the Michigan Military Museum, and here in Ypsilanti.

Few are honored nationally, in their state, and locally. Even fewer who lived a brief life of 24 years earn the recognition. We are proud that one such person was an Ypsilantian.

Thanks to David Arvin, Merry Lynn Brondos, Charles Kettles, Jay Baxter, and Tino Lambros for providing pictures, memories, and to references from:

*West Point Assembly, September 1983.
West Point Assembly, July 1989.
The Ann Arbor News, July 8, 1989.
The Ann Arbor News, May 27, 2002.
Speech to Captain C. Robert Arvin
Foundation, June 27, 2008.*

[Bill Nickels is a member of the Ypsilanti Historical Society, a constant volunteer, and a regular contributor to GLEANINGS.]

The Days before Godfroy

By James Mann

Just about every history of Ypsilanti and Washtenaw County states that the first permanent building in the region was Gabriel Godfroy's fur trading post at present day Ypsilanti. These histories further state that the post was established in 1809. These histories are in error. The fact is, a trading post was founded at Ypsilanti long before 1809, and was here as early as 1790.

A trading post at present day Ypsilanti would, in the 1700s, make perfect sense. This was where the Sauk Trail crossed the Huron River and intersected the Potawatowmie Trail. Native-Americans had come to this site for generations to trade and conduct ceremonies. This site was a neutral zone for the tribes, a safe place to conduct their business. For this reason, the French fur traders would have seen the site as the logical place for a trading post.

"The first reference to the Ypsilanti location is a report of the route from Detroit to western Michigan and the Mississippi River by way of the Sauk Trail written in c1772 by an English officer," wrote Karl Williams in *Gabriel Godfroy Wasn't the First*, which appeared in the Summer 2008 GLEANINGS. Mr. Williams also notes: "In the report it is stated that 40 miles west of Detroit was the Huron River, Indian name Nandewine Sippy, at which six large cabins of 'Puttawateamees' were located. The river is described as being about fifty feet wide and the water generally from one and a half to two feet deep, 'the road being very bad in this place.'"

A French fur trading post was established at present day Ypsilanti by 1790, when Hugh Heward tried to find a water route across Lower Michi-

gan by way of the Huron and Grand Rivers. In his journal, Heward wrote he arrived at Sanscrainte's village on April 1. He noted the post "seems to furnish good small peltries." He failed to find the right stream, and returned to Sanscrainte's village on April 15, and "by the assistance

of Mr. Godfroy, who seemed very obliging, engaged an Indian with two horses." According to a number of sources, Jean Baptiste Sanscrainte had traveled from Quebec to this area in 1765 when he was 11 years old.

Some time during the 1790s—certainly before July 1, 1796—Gabriel Godfroy acquired the site from Sanscrainte. This was the date the United States assumed jurisdiction over this section of the Old Northwest. Before that date, what is now the State of Michigan, was under the control of the British.

Then why do all the histories of Ypsilanti and Washtenaw County state that Godfroy founded his trading post in 1809? The answer to this is: because this was the date, 1809, when the United States Government, granted land claims to Godfroy and his partners.

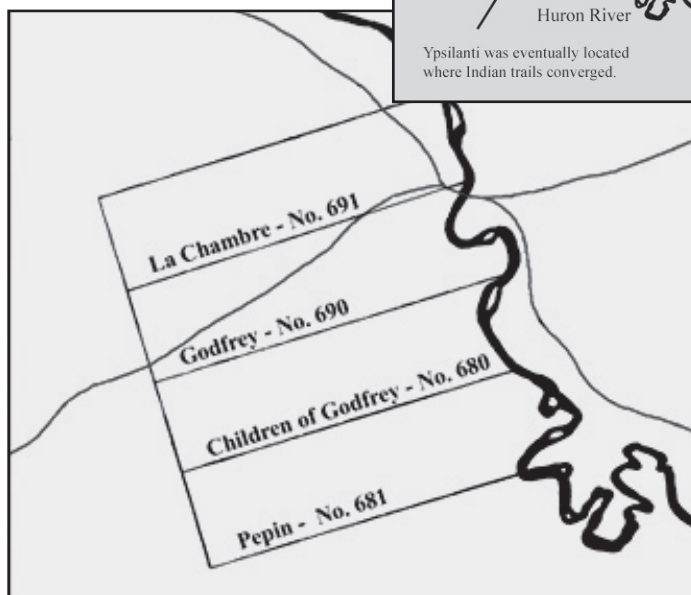
"Gabriel Godfroy and his associates, Francis Pepin and Louis LaChambre, registered their claims with the American Government in

1808, following the Act of Congress on March 3, 1807, by which all titles to land acquired under the previous French or British rule, prior to July 1, 1796, would be honored if filed with the government and duly authenticated," wrote Sister Marie Hayda in her dissertation *The Urban*



Don't believe everything you read.
Those signs should really say
"Established 1790"

Right: Godfroy established his trading post where the Sauk Trail crossed the Huron River and intersected the Potawatowmie Trail in the 1790s



The French Claims of Ypsilanti Township were based on "possession, occupancy and improvements" made prior to 1796

Dimension and the Midwestern Frontier, A Study of Democracy at Ypsilanti, Michigan: 1825-1858. A copy of this dissertation is in the YHS Archives.

"The famous 'French Claims' of Ypsilanti Township were based on 'possession, occupancy and improvements' prior to 1796."

Godfroy filed a claim for a tract of land on with the Land Office at Detroit for his children on December 31, 1808. This for "a tract of land, situated on River Huron, of Lake Erie; containing ten acres in front by sixty in depth, bounded in front by lands of Francois Pepin, and below by unconceded lands. I claim by virtue of possession, occupancy, and improvements made thereon."

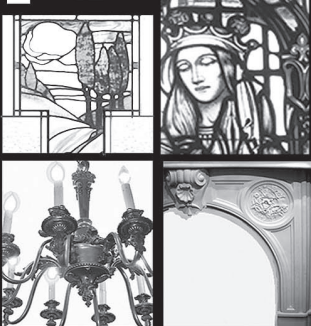
The board met to [continued overleaf]

...why do all the histories of Ypsilanti and Washtenaw County state that Godfroy founded his trading post in 1809?

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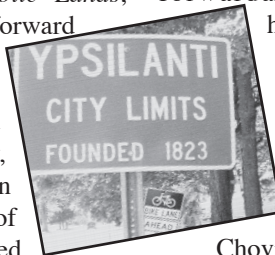
[continued from p. 7]

consider the claim on Saturday, February 17 1810. "Whereupon," records *The American State Papers, Public Lands*, "Francis Regis was brought forward as a witness in behalf of the claimants, who, being duly sworn, deposed and said, that previous to the 1st of July, 1796, Gabriel Godfroy was in possession and occupancy of the premises, and had caused part of the said premises to be cultivated every year to this day; that a large orchard is planted thereon, and about ten arpens (formerly a measure of land in France) are under cultivation."

In April of that year the commission considered the claims of Godfroy and Louis LaChambre. This time a Charles Chovin came forward as a witness to state each claim was in the possession and occupancy of Godfroy or LaChambre. For the claim of Godfroy, Chovin swore, "that he has always kept a tenant on the same, and has caused part of this tract to be cultivated every year. A house is erected on the

premises, an orchard planted, and about fifteen arpens under cultivation."

Then the commission considered the claim of LaChambre, and again Chovin came forward as a witness to state LaChambre had possession and occupancy of the claim. "Several buildings are erected on the premises, and part of the premises have been cultivated every year. About six or seven arpens are under cultivation," added Chovin.



In each case the board decided the claimants were entitled to the property. The board ruled in each claim: "Thereupon it doth appear to the commissioners that the claimant is entitled to the above described tract of land, and that he have a certificate thereof, which certificate shall be (land claim number); and that he cause the same to be surveyed, and a plot of the survey, with the quantity of land there in contained, to be returned to the register of the land office at Detroit."

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

We remember Hometown parades

Ypsilantians love a parade and we have lots of them in our town. Most of Ypsilanti's parades have hundreds of folks marching and thousands more on the sidelines watching and waving. Some newer and shorter parades encourage the folks on the sidewalk to get up and walk in the street with them. Like Garrison Keillor's fictitious "Lake Wobegon," sometimes we have to participate in the parade and then get a place on the sidewalk and watch the rest of the parade go by. It's a continuous process and one that is enjoyed by all.

Ypsilanti's notable parades include homecomings for all the schools and colleges in the area, the solemn Memorial Day example—which is not a parade at all, but a procession, the oldest Independence Day Parade in the state, and the 35-year-old Heritage Parade that celebrate's our community's proud history.

Other parades that pop up intermittently have included a Santa Claus Parade, St. Patrick's Day Parade, and countless line-ups of vintage vehicles. This July will see the famed Great Race vintage vehicles finish their route around the Great Lakes as they stop here for lunch on the way to the finish line at Dearborn's Henry Ford.



In 1937, the American Legion sponsored the Fourth of July Parade on Michigan Ave.
[Fletcher-White Archives]



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Walter B. Hewitt: a Success Story Worthy of Dickens

By Janice Anschuetz

Good historical research and writing do not die; they just “fade away.” They may in fact stay hidden in an Ypsilanti Historical Museum archives file until they are rediscovered, read, and republished more than a century later. Such is the case with a fascinating obituary that pays tribute to the life of Walter B. Hewitt, one of Ypsilanti’s most important business, political and cultural pioneers.

Published anonymously in the *Ypsilanti Commercial* of September 10, 1886, the obituary recounts Hewitt’s life as if he were a character in a novel by Charles Dickens – an immensely popular author at the time of Hewitt’s death. Like David Copperfield, Hewitt rose from poverty and misfortune to riches and glory by remaining true to the virtues of honesty, integrity and hard work.

What follows is the story of the life of Walter Hewitt, exactly as it appeared 126 years ago as an obituary in the *Ypsilanti Commercial*. It has been transcribed in its entirety from a hand-written version.

“Walter B. Hewitt died in this city Saturday, September 4, 1886. The subject of this sketch was born at Stillwater, Saratoga County, New York, February 4, 1800. His father’s name was Elisa, who emigrated from Connecticut to New York.

The ancestors of Mr. Hewitt came from England and participated in the early struggles of this country. Mr. Hewitt was named after his grandfather, Walter, who was actively engaged in the Revolutionary War, and during the hours of destitution, when Washington’s soldiers were leaving those bloody tracks in the snow, he braved the dangers of Indian and British warfare and carried to the starving army many a load of provisions. His grandfather, Edmund Johnson, was also distinguished for his love of liberty, his powerful strength, and great daring. He was a captain in the Revolutionary War and so agile was he that he could easily leap over a yoke of oxen.

Cynthia Johnson Hewitt (his mother) was left a widow when he was but two years old. The farm was sold and sometime afterward she married George Ardres Downing, a skilled mechanic.

Mr. Hewitt’s early life was spent as were the lives of boys of those early days. He began school at seven, and his extreme bashfulness made it a great event in his life. He attended the village school, taught by a Mr. Brush, and his instruction included a little geography and sums in “Pike’s” arithmetic. At this time most problems were solved in pounds, shillings, and pence, and in this study he became proficient. In the school of his early days, blackboards and globes were unknown. The maps in geography were regarded as useless and the instruction was of the most arbitrary character. Although punishment by force was common, he escaped that disgrace.

His winter days were spent in school. During the summer he helped make quilts or assisted in the general housework. Judged by our standard, the conveniences of his early days were few. There were no shoe or tailor shops, but itinerant shoemakers would spend a day or a week at the various houses supplying the needs of the inhabitants. To him, his first pair of shoes formed a great event in his history (and a real pair of shoes did not come till he was twelve years old) and so careful was he of them that when he came to a dusty place in the road he would take them off and wrap them in his handkerchief.

His mother was a woman of great mental power, and as he was then much in her society, she made a powerful impression on his life. She filled his young heart with stories of Revolutionary days, and while he turned the (spinning) wheel, she inculcated those principles of integrity for which his life has always been distinguished. His mother was a woman of



Walter Hewitt & Polina Childs Hewitt

firm religious conviction, and though she lived many miles from the Baptist Church, when Sabbath came she would gather her children together and struggle through the almost impassable woods to the place of worship. The intellectual stimulus which he got from his mother showed itself in his desire for study and improvement. So when his next teacher came, a man by the name of Grosvender, he was a boy active in body and mind. To swim a mile was almost a daily occurrence, and one day he challenged his teacher to a foot race. This was unfortunate, for during the struggle he fell and injured his knee. For months he was confined to his bed, but his energy conquered. He arose finally and determined he would have an education – and for a year he walked two miles to school daily, dragging his useless limb after him. Although it took him two hours to hobble over as many miles, his time in school was well spent. It was a proud moment for him when the teacher gave public testimony to

his superiority as a scholar. At this time too, he was a fine penman, and copies from his hand were sought after by the scholars.

**Like David Copperfield,
Hewitt rose from
poverty and misfortune
to riches and glory...**

When Deacon Munger came from an adjoining district for a teacher, Mr. Grosvender recommended the boy with the best principles, and with the best record as a scholar. He successfully fulfilled the duties of a teacher for several terms, and received \$12 a month and ‘board around.’ He had a month of advanced scholars, who were nearly his equal in arithmetic, but they never knew it, for many a fortnight found him by the fireplace pouring over his books by the pitch pine light. The knowledge which he thus obtained was lasting, much of it being as vivid as ever seventy years afterward.

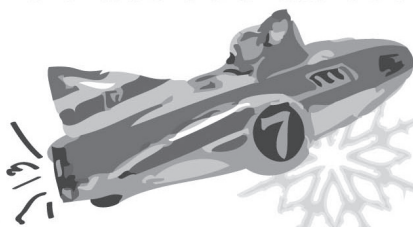
[continued overleaf]

Walter B. Hewitt
[continued from p. 9]

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A Christmas trading card with the inscription:
"Presented by Hewitt & Champion, Fine Boots and Shoes, Ypsilanti, Mich."

After finishing his school, he went to work in a brickyard and then learned the tanner and currier's trade of his brother, Edmund J. Hewitt.

In 1825, he married Polina Childs, and then came to his ears stories of the West, an almost unknown land. He resolved to leave the conservative East and face the pioneer struggles of the West. In those needy times he found a strong helpmate in his wife. She had been a school teacher at fourteen, receiving six shillings a week, and for a number of years had charge of a large family of younger children. These struggles had brought out her mental and moral powers. She cheerfully faced many hardships, and when in the solitude of Michigan forests, financial loss, and disease threatened destruction, her spirit rose triumphant and dispelled the fear of



An Easter trading card: "Presented by Hewitt & Champion, manufacturers and dealers in Boots, Shoes and Rubbers, fine work a specialty, Ypsilanti, Mich. (Patent applied for)"

failure. Of her, he always loved to speak, and during his last days, when the subject of his early trials was mentioned, and she was referred to as being of undaunted spirit, he said with all the vigor he could use, 'Yes, to her I owe all that I am.'

The Erie Canal caused a stream of immigration to flow to Michigan and in 1826 he joined the westward pushing emigrants and landed at Detroit when it had a population of but little more than 2000. At this time the people were mainly gathered on Woodward and Jefferson Avenues. The French largely predominated and obtained most of the land in the vicinity of the river. St. Ann's and a Presbyterian Church were the only ones built. Gristmills were run by

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oxen and the town had the appearance of a frontier post. He held dear recollections of Larned Cole, A. C. McGraw, Frazer and of Father Richard and the first printing press.

After landing, he obtained an Indian guide and started through the pathless forests to find land upon which to build a house. He finally located at Walled Lake and here underwent all of the privations of pioneer life. For weeks every one of the party was prostrate from fever. There were none to tend the sick, none to provide food, and it was here that he shed the first tears of despair. He crawled from the house, that was filled with the sick and sat down upon a log, almost wished that death would bring them relief, and it was here that Polina Hewitt showed the strength of her character. Half dead herself she encouraged him until the fever abated its fires. Foreseeing that a life here would be intolerable he disposed of what little land he had and returned to Detroit.

Here he went into business, but a good opening presented itself at Ypsilanti, and in 1831, he came to the city that has since been his home. He rented a building on Main St. and soon had a prosperous shoe shop in operation. He, unaided, did the cutting for twenty two men while his wife did all the stitching for the shop besides doing her household duties and boarding twelve men. Such work naturally brought success. He bought farming lands and building lots and soon erected a **store on the corner of Congress and Washington Streets.** Naturally a man of integrity and business ability would be called upon by his fellows to transact their business and so we find him filling various offices of public trust. He was one of the trustees under the first village ordinance, was town clerk before the village was incorporated, was treasurer in 1839 and president in 1840 and in 1842 was elected to the State Legislature. He was not a public speaker and did not seek political honors. He sought results rather than theory.

He was very active in Masonic works and was the first secretary of the Lodge of Freemasons. His relations with his fellow men were peculiarly happy. During his last hours, he recalled with pleasure that as far as he knew, he had never wronged a person willfully. He was one of the very

few who, amid a variety of business transactions, was never the party to a lawsuit.

With regard to his religious views, he was always reserved. He never scoffed. He never condemned. A conversation with him but a few weeks before his death showed that he stood as high on the mountain that gives the glimpse of immortality as is given most of us to stand. Conscious of his own impending death, he was calm and hopeful of the future, no doubts followed to darken his declining moments. He had been a kind father, a tender husband. He had honored his fellow men and had received their esteem. He had nothing to regret, all to hope for, and, as he looked back over the past, he could say in the language of him who sat at his post in the Legislative hall, 'This is the last of earth. I am content.' Reverend T. W. MacLean conducted the funeral exercises Tuesday from the late home."

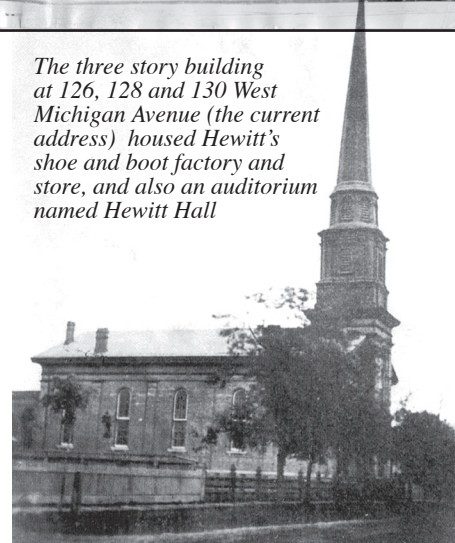
Founder of Walled Lake and Ypsilanti Pioneer

Although this is a wonderfully written life story, pieces are missing that made me want to find out more about Hewitt and his life and legacy, misfortune and triumph. Several books, including the *History of Oakland County* by Samuel Durant, published in 1877, and *History of Oakland County Michigan...*, written by Thaddeus D. Seeley in 1912, credit Walter Hewitt with being the founder of the community of Walled Lake. Though trained as a teacher, tanner, and shoe and boot maker, at the age of 25, in June, 1825, Hewitt built a log cabin in the wilderness surrounding what came to be called Walled Lake, and attempted to establish a farm in the swamps. However, after several years without much success, he moved with his young family to Detroit, where, it seems, he worked as a shoemaker. There his wife presented him with a son, Edmund, who was born November 14, 1829.

Hewitt worked four years in Detroit in the boot and shoe trade. Then, according to



The three story building at 126, 128 and 130 West Michigan Avenue (the current address) housed Hewitt's shoe and boot factory and store, and also an auditorium named Hewitt Hall



Hewitt played an instrumental role in 1856 in the planning and building of the First Presbyterian Church on Washington Street

his biography in the *History of Washtenaw County* (published in 1881), he and his young family decided to seek their fortune in the growing village of Ypsilanti, to which they moved in 1831. Traveling from Detroit to Ypsilanti in those days was an adventure in itself. In *The History of Ypsilanti*, written by Harvey Colburn in 1923, the author gives us a sense of what was involved: "The road was almost impassable to an ox team and it sometimes took three days to make the thirty-mile trip. For years after its opening, the Detroit road ran through seas of mud and over miles of jolting corduroy; no teamster thought of leaving home without an axe and log chain to cut poles to pry his wagon out of the mud. For a time the road was so impassable that travelers had to come from Detroit by way of Plymouth and Dixboro."

Unfazed by such challenges, however, Walter, his wife Polina, and their young son Edmund completed [continued overleaf]

Walter B. Hewitt

[continued from p.11]

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the trek to Ypsilanti, where Walter again took up the business of tanning and making shoes and boots.

A Political Pioneer and Champion of Law and Order

In the *History of Washtenaw County, Michigan* we read: "As early as 1829 the township of Ypsilanti was organized, under authority of a Legislative enactment approved Oct. 1, 1829. Three years later the villagers of Ypsilanti assembled within the shop of John Bryan, to carry out the provisions of another Legislative enactment, which provided for the organization of their village. This meeting was held Sept. 3, 1832, and resulted in the return of John Gilbert as Village President; E. M. Skinner, Village Recorder; Ario Pardee, Village Treasurer; and Abel Millington, Mark Norris, Thomas R. Brown, James Vanderbilt, Walter B. Hewitt, Village Trustees."

The Trustees' job was to decide what improvements were needed in the village, such as new roads and operating statutes, and then to make sure these were implemented by committees they appointed. After serving as a village Trustee, Hewitt played an expanding and important role in establishing Ypsilanti. He was made town treasurer in 1839 and elected president of Ypsilanti in 1840. In 1842 he was elected to the State Legislature.

Hewitt's service to the community went far beyond politics, however. In the early 19th century, Ypsilanti, like America's Wild West, seemed to attract a criminal element, and Hewitt and other law-abiding citizens sought to make their village safe for women, children, and families. *The History of Washtenaw County* tells us that "During the year 1838 many malcontents paid visits to the settlement, committed many robberies and depredations, and created a panic of no usual character. To remedy such an evil, the citizens assembled at the house of Abiel Hawkins, considered well a proposition to organize a committee of defense, and at a second meeting held at Mr. Hawkins's house, Dec. 15, 1838, decided to form a society known as The Ypsilanti Vigilance Committee."

Hewitt was an active member of the Vigilance Committee. In *Past and Present of Washtenaw County*, written by Samuel W. Beak in 1906, we learn more about

the committee's efforts to restore law and order in Ypsilanti: "The meetings of this society were of the most secret character and their methods of work were carefully guarded. But they showed results, for before the end of the year 1839, one hundred and twelve men had been convicted, \$10,000 worth of stolen property had been recovered, and a number of bad characters had been driven out of the community."

During this decade the Hewitt family grew rapidly. Edmund was born on November 17, 1832, and was followed by a sister, May. On February 23, 1834, Lois joined the family. Charles was born on October 3, 1836, and Walter Jr., the youngest, on September 29, 1839. Still another child died in infancy.

Hewitt supported his family by tanning leather and making shoes and boots. His business was first located on Congress Street (Michigan Avenue), but, according to reports, was destroyed by a major fire in downtown Ypsilanti in 1851. Polina (sometimes spelled Pauline or Paulina) not only helped her husband by sewing shoes all day, but also ran a boarding house with as many as 12 boarders. The boarding house may possibly have been the Hewitt residence at 201 Pearl Street, in the area of present-day Washington and Pearl Streets.

As the family accumulated money, Hewitt was able to purchase a farm in the area that now bears the family name - Hewitt Road. We read in the *History of Washtenaw County* that "In 1850 he bought a farm near Ypsilanti which has occupied a share of his attention since. He lost about \$4,000 in 1851 by a fire consuming his building and stock which were only partially insured." That same year, during the great fire that destroyed most of downtown Ypsilanti, his business was also burned down. In the city directory for 1873-74, Walter's occupation is listed as "farmer."

A Contributor to Culture and Community

Not to be discouraged by his misfortunes, Hewitt continued to work the farm and built an even grander business and store at the northeast corner of Congress and Washington Street. The address is now 126, 128 and 130 West Michigan Avenue. This was a three-story building that housed not only his shoe and boot factory

and store, but an auditorium named Hewitt Hall, which provided a venue for local talent and added much vitality to the growing community. This was the place where Ypsilanti's Frederic Pease staged concerts and operas, and introduced his operetta "Enoch Arden," and where plays such as Uncle Tom's Cabin brought the audience to tears. It was the place, too, where Ypsilanti men were recruited for the Civil War and where, at the end of the war, the entire community celebrated with speeches, flag waving, and poetry.

Among the performers who entertained Ypsilanti at Hewitt Hall were Tom Thumb and his wife, and the poet Will Carleton. Frederick Douglas spoke there three times, in 1866, 1867, and 1888. People came from far away to attend various events, and were able to stay overnight down the street at the Hawkins House Hotel. In 1893, after the building of the Ypsilanti Opera House, Hewitt Hall was rented by the Ypsilanti Light Guard. In 1914, it became a roller rink, which was much damaged by a fire that year. By 1937, both Hewitt Hall and the entire third floor of the commercial building were razed, possibly due to deterioration.

Perhaps the exposure to musicians and performers at Hewitt Hall were the basis for the love of music and talent pursued throughout his life by Hewitt's son, Walter, Jr. The latter became a published composer, a celebrated organist, and a professor of music at the Normal College.

Walter B. Hewitt's efforts to uplift the community with entertainment and enlightenment at Hewitt Hall were not his only contributions to Ypsilanti culture. Playing an instrumental role, he joined with others in his church congregation in 1856 to build the beautiful First Presbyterian Church on Washington Street. According to Samuel W. Beck, author of *Past and Present of Washtenaw County, Michigan*, the building committee of which Hewitt was a part was responsible not only for helping to plan the building with the architect George S. Green, but for raising the entire cost of \$16,000 and making sure the new building met all specified standards.

By the time the church was built, Hewitt and his family were living just a few blocks away from both the church and his booming store and factory, at 442 North Huron Street. There, the hard-working, good-spirited Polina Childs Hewitt, who



Walter & Polina's son Edmund with his granddaughter Gladys taken in 1912

was the sixth child of Mark Anthony and Hannah Childs, died on February 1, 1873, at the age of 71. Walter lived on as a widower for 13 years and died in his home in 1886.

Here this narrative comes full circle, back to Walter B. Hewitt's obituary. Perhaps, as you drive down Hewitt Road, you can now better appreciate how much all of us owe to the brave young men, such as Walter Bernard Hewitt, who, with fortitude, courage and faith, helped not only to build Ypsilanti, but to give it shape as a vital community.

(Janice Anschuetz is a local historian who is a regular contributor to the GLEANINGS.)

Ypsi History - It's a test By Peter B. Fletcher

Match the names of the 1930's downtown Ypsilanti businesses with the descriptions:

Business Name:

- _____ 1. Grinnells
- _____ 2. Richardsons
- _____ 3. Wuerth
- _____ 4. Mack & Mack
- _____ 5. Avon
- _____ 6. Willoughbys
- _____ 7. Mellencamps
- _____ 8. Jenks
- _____ 9. Gaudys
- _____ 10. Shaefers
- _____ 11. Landy
- _____ 12. Lambs
- _____ 13. Dixie
- _____ 14. Cartys
- _____ 15. Martha
- _____ 16. Moore
- _____ 17. Cunningham
- _____ 18. Wiedman
- _____ 19. McLellan
- _____ 20. Dawsons
- _____ 21. Green
- _____ 22. Moray

Business Description:

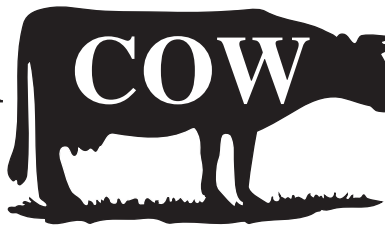
- A. Men's clothing store on north side of 100 Block of W. Michigan
- B. Furniture store at N.W. corner of Michigan & Huron
- C. Ford dealer on 200 block of Pearl Street
- D. Music store on north side of 200 block of W. Michigan
- E. Jewelry store at 200 block of W. Michigan
- F. Hardware store on 200 block of W. Michigan
- G. Clothing store on 100 block of W. Michigan
- H. Dime store on N. Washington Street
- I. Music store at N. Washington & Pearl
- J. Grocery store at S.W. corner of Michigan & Huron
- K. Pharmacy on north side of 200 block of W. Michigan
- L. Furniture store on south side of 200 block of W. Michigan
- M. Jewelry store at 200 block of W. Michigan
- N. Restaurant on south side of 200 block of W. Michigan
- O. Chocolate shop on W. Michigan & second store on N. Washington
- P. Movie theater at 100 block of N. Washington
- Q. Drug store on N.E. Corner of W. Michigan & N. Washington
- R. Shoe store on south side of 100 block of W. Michigan
- S. Movie theatre on north side of 200 block of W. Michigan
- T. Furniture store on N. Washington, also funeral home on S. Washington
- U. Jewelry store/watch shop repair-south side of 100 block of W. Michigan
- V. Hardware stores, one on W. Michigan & one on N. Huron



**See page 24
for the answers**

[Peter Fletcher is the President of the Ypsilanti Credit Bureau, the former Highway Commissioner for the State of Michigan, and a regular contributor to the GLEANINGS.]

A COW for the ages



By Laura Bien
(This story first appeared in
the Ann Arbor Chronicle.)

Ypsilanti has never lacked for beauties, as any conductor on the one-time Packard Road interurban could have told you. Hordes of U-M boys crowded the streetcars on weekends en route to their belles at Ypsilanti's teacher training school (EMU). On the way, the young men unknowingly passed the home, at Packard and Golfside, of another belle more famous than any Normal girl. She was quiet and stocky, yet viewed as beautiful. She had numerous relatives at the insane asylum at Pontiac, which in her case was regarded as a prestigious lineage. Thousands statewide knew her name. Many owned her children. *Pontiac De Nijlander* was the state's epitome of cow excellence in an era characterized, in the agricultural sphere, by what could be called Michigan's turn-of-the-century "Holstein fever."

A typical big-bodied black-and-white-splotted Holstein, *Pontiac De Nijlander* lived at Ypsiland. The 180-acre farm extended from Packard to Ellsworth, bordered on its east side by Golfside Road and owned by brothers Norris and Herbert Cole. Norris eventually bought his brother's share and became sole proprietor of the farm, whose principal business was breeding top-quality Holstein bulls and cows.

Of Dutch origin, the breed had established its supremacy at an 1887 "battle of the breeds" in New York's Madison Square Garden. Four hundred cows from the four top dairy breeds - Guernsey, Jersey, Ayrshire, and Holstein - competed to see which breed was the best producer of milk and butter. The Jersey Cattle Club was confident that their breed would win the butter contest. They commissioned an elegant silver cup for the winner, engraved with the image of a stately Jersey cow. In a surprise upset, the cup was won by *Clothilde*, a now-legendary Holstein. Today the Jersey cup resides in the Holstein Association USA headquarters in Brattleboro, Vermont.

"Previous to this public test and victory," wrote Frederick Houghton in a 1911 edition of the *Holstein-Friesian Register*, "whenever the Holsteins were spoken of as butter cows a sarcastic smile would illuminate the faces of the breeders of what had been termed the butter breeds. Not so now." The large, high-yielding breed spread to Michigan and breeders' clubs formed on the county, regional, and state level. Prior to purebred breeds' arrival in the state, most farms had a few head of "grade," or ordinary, non-purebred cattle. High yields convinced many to switch to purebred, registered Holsteins.

Michigan breeders sought cows from the most prestigious Holstein family lines, such as the *Clothilde* line, that began with the silver-cup-winning cow, which had been imported from the Netherlands in 1880. The *Aaggie* line originated from a Dutch cow imported in 1879. The *De Kol* line began with another Dutch cow imported in 1885. Other famous lines included the *Glista*, *Johanna*, *Korndyke*, *Netherland*, *Pauline Paul*, *Pietertje*, and *Segis* lines.

A cow's or bull's name generally reflected (and still reflects, with modern breeders) her or his birth-farm and maternal and paternal lineage. One bull named *Ypsiland Korndyke DeKol Pietertje* born at Ypsiland around 1907 and later sold to a Howell dairyman likely had the blood of the *Korndyke*, *DeKol*, and *Pietertje* lines.

Somewhat arcane, the art of cattle nomenclature occasionally stumped even cattlemen, as illustrated in a vignette from the May 15, 1915 edition of *Brownell's Dairy Farmer* magazine, formerly *The Michigan Dairy Farmer*: "A group of the 'old guard,' at the recent Howell sale, were discussing the names of various Holstein sires, among which was that of the sire owned by a prominent Livingston County breeder. The last word of the name of this sire is 'Mobel.'"



The ASYLUM HERD

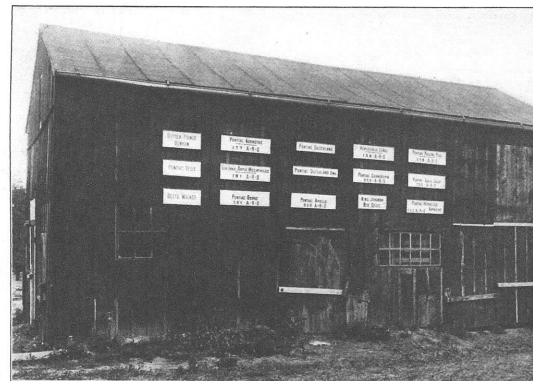
"Where the Champions Come From"

FORMER HERD SIRES:

Hengerveld DeKol 23102
Pontiac Korndyke 25982
Pontiac Burke 33979
Sir Inka Artis Mechthilde 22584
Butter Prince Durham 22615
Pontiac Pauline Paul 24851
Pontiac Sadie Julip 36323
Pontiac Cornucopia 38977
Pontiac Dutchland 54950

PRESENT HERD SIRES:

Pontiac Apollo 38547 (Son of Hengerveld DeKol)
Pontiac Hesselte Korndyke 31438 (Son of Korndyke)
Pontiac Dutchland 2nd 83745 (Grandson of Johanna Lad and Creamelle Vale)
Beets Walker 109385 (Son of Adm. Pietertje)
King Johanna Rue Segis 83785 (Grandson of Segis and Grace Fayne 2nd's Homes)



Historic barn which held Pontiac Korndyke and Hengerveld DeKol as herd sires from 1897 to 1905
Owned by Pontiac State Hospital

OUR HERD CONSISTS AT THIS TIME OF:

7 Daughters of Pontiac Korndyke
12 Daughters of Hengerveld DeKol
16 Daughters of Pontiac Burke
6 Daughters of Pontiac Cornucopia
27 Daughters of Pontiac Apollo

26 Daughters of Pontiac Hesselte
14 Daughters of Pontiac Dutchland
15 Daughters of Pontiac Dutchland
7 Daughters of King Johanna Rue
5 Daughters of Beets Walker



Pontiac Apollo
Son of Hengerveld DeKol

Pontiac State Hospital

.....Formerly.....
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Pontiac - Michigan

We raised and developed Pontiac Korndyke and Hengerveld DeKol.
We bred Pontiac Clothilde DeKol 2nd, also King of the Pontiacs.



Pontiac Hesselte
Son of Pontiac Korndyke



A photo from the 1914 Holstein-Friesian Register highlights the business end of the famed 35-pound [producing] Ypsilanti cow, Pontiac De Nijlander

All doubt as to the origin of this word was set aside by H. W. Norton, Jr. 'The word *'Mobel,'*' he said, 'is spelled in that manner because it is the masculine of *'Mabel.'*' 'Well, I never knew that before,' said a young breeder, as the veterans made frantic efforts to keep their faces straight."

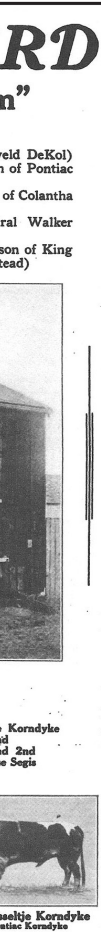
Michigan had its own prominent Holstein lines developed within the state. One of the best was the Pontiac line, bred at the Pontiac State Hospital, formerly called the Eastern Michigan Asylum for the Insane. At the time, many Michigan state and county institutions owned registered Holstein herds. The milk was welcome and breeding programs were profitable: the Pontiac asylum's initial purchase of cattle worth \$1,500 increased in value to \$60,000 eighteen years later (about \$1.5 million today). Branch County's Coldwater State Public School for Needy and Dependent Children had a herd that included the registered bull *Commodore Pietertje De Kol Aakrum*. The herd provided all the daily milk needed for the staff and 270 or so children. Wayne

County's poorhouse and asylum, Eloise, developed a purebred herd of 107 animals. The Traverse City State Hospital's cow *Traverse Colantha Walker* broke milk producing records in her lifetime. The Michigan Farm Colony for Epileptics in Tuscola County, the Michigan Home and Training School in Lapeer County, the state reform school in Ionia County, and the Michigan School for the Deaf in Flint all maintained good-quality Holstein herds.

Cows and bulls from the Pontiac line were sold at high prices to breeders around the state. One purchased by the Cole brothers in Ypsilanti, *The Pontiacs King*, became one of several sires of Ypsiland's herd. Investing in good-quality animals paid off; by 1915, Ypsiland had bred and sold 36 bulls to cattlemen in Bay City, Lansing, Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, Howell, and other Michigan locations. Ypsiland owner Norris Cole had stature in the local Holstein community. When the Washtenaw Holstein Association formed in December of 1915, he was elected to an office, as noted in an account of the group's inaugural meeting in the January 1, 1916 edition of *Brownell's Dairy Farmer*: "The election of officers was next to order. Harvey S. Day (Veteran Willis breeder) was urged to become president but firmly refused. William B. Hatch was proposed, (but refused). Norris A. Cole was also nominated. He attempted to decline, but the breeders were becoming tired of this custom and Mr. Cole was forced to take the office . . . Harvey S. Day was nominated and elected vice president before he could rise to his feet to decline."

Part of Norris' local eminence at the meeting was due to one of his cows who had recently smashed a state record for butter production. Born on March 10, 1908 at the Pontiac asylum and purchased by the Cole brothers a year later, *Pontiac De Nijlander* was the daughter of *Pontiac Apollo* and the granddaughter of the legendary bull *Hengerveld De Kol*.

A standard test of the day was the "7-day test," during which week a given cow's output was measured. *Pontiac De Nijlander* outstripped all other Michigan cows by producing 35.43 pounds of butter, a number that [continued overleaf]



Ypsiland Herd Home of Pontiac DeNijlander

AT 3 1/2 YEARS.		4 1/2 YEARS.		5 1/2 YEARS.	
Butter, 7 days.....	30.10	Butter	32.72	Butter	35.43
Milk, 7 days.....	588.6	Milk	613.3	Milk	750.20
Butter, 30 days.....	123.88	Butter, 30 days.....	135.31	Butter, 30 days.....	144.60
Milk, 30 days.....	2522.2	Milk, 30 days.....	2632.01	Milk, 30 days.....	3090.06

No other cow of any breed, at three and four years or at three, four and five years, has ever produced more than 30 pounds butter each in 7 days or more than 123 pounds butter each in 30 days. No other cow has ever made three 30-day records of more than 123 pounds of butter each. The only cow, of any age, that has ever made more than 30 pounds in 7 days or more than 123 pounds in 30 days and in each of the two following years increased all her records. Pontiac DeNijlander, the world's greatest dairy cow, is owned, was developed and has made all her records at Ypsiland Farms. She is a grand-daughter of Hengerveld DeKol and Pontiac Pauline Paul. We own her yearling daughter and young son, both sired by Ypsiland Sir Korndyke DeKol. Pontiac DeNijlander is now with calf by The Pontiac King.



Sires of Ypsiland Herd

YPSILAND SIR KORNDYKE DEKOL—His daughters, as two-year-olds, are averaging over 20 pounds each and over 4% fat, thus surpassing those of any other sire.

THE PONTIACS KING—Son of King of the Pontiacs, grandson of both Pontiac Korndyke and Hengerveld DeKol, the world's three greatest sires. His is the breeding that everybody who knows of Holsteins knows is the most popular, commands the highest price, is the best. His first calves are splendid individuals, with a wonderful uniformity of conformation.

YPSILAND KING SEGIS PIETERTJE—One of the best bred and greatest individual sons of KING SEGIS. His first daughters show exceptional promise and will be tested this coming season.

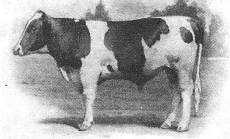
YPSILAND KING DE NIJLANDER—The young son of Ypsiland Sir Korndyke DeKol and Pontiac DeNijlander. He is a very large and most perfect individual. His breeding speaks for itself. He goes into service next fall.

Females of Ypsiland Herd

The tested two-year-olds average over 19 pounds; the three-year-olds and older average over 24 lbs. All A. R. O. records made at Ypsiland Farms the present home of the state champions for milk and butter in the three, four and five-year-old classes for 7 days and in the three, four, five and mature age classes for 30 days over all breeds. Ypsiland Herd leads all others of the state in the national Holstein-Friesian Association prize lists.

The herd contains daughters or granddaughters of King of the Pontiacs, Pontiac Korndyke, Hengerveld DeKol, DeKol 2d's Butter Boy 3d, Pietertje Hengerveld's Count DeKol and King Segis—strains the best known and known as the best, because their combinations have produced the majority of the world's milk and butter champions.

Is it not good business judgment to procure your next herd sire from Ypsiland Farms where are bred the best and where records are made that increase the value of your sire and herd many times the purchase price?



THE PONTIACS KING at one year of age.

COLE BROS., COMPANY,
Ypsilanti,
Mich.

Ypsiland Farms

EDER M.
NORCROSS,
Herdsman

A full-page ad [left] for the Pontiac State Hospital herd shows a barn decorated with the nameplates of past champion cattle. At lower left is Pontiac Nijlander's father, Pontiac Apollo. (1 August 1914, Michigan Dairy Farmer.)

Above: Ypsiland Farms proudly declared itself as "home of Pontiac De Nijlander" in this wordy 1914 ad from the Michigan Dairy Farmer.

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Cow [continued from page 15]



Norris immediately featured in his ongoing *Brownell's Dairy Farmer* advertisements for Ypsilanti. Until that point, a 30-pound cow had been considered exceptional.

Other breeders took note and were quick to point out their own cattle's relationship to *Pontiac De Nijlander* in their advertisements in 1914 editions of *Brownell's Dairy Farmer*. Bay City breeder W. A. Wilder extolled his heifers who were bred to a bull whose aunt was *Pontiac De Nijlander*. Redford breeder Martin McLaulin pointed out that his cow *Pontiac Hazel* was an aunt of *Pontiac De Nijlander*. Flint breeder J. E. Burroughs said that the famed Ypsilanti cow was the mother of his herd's sire. Perry breeder C. R. Wilkinson stated that his bull had *Pontiac De Nijlander* as a grandmother. Azalia breeder Fred Bachman said that the mother of his prize bull was a "3/4 sister to the great cow, *Pontiac De Nijlander*."

Pontiac De Nijlander's achievements were eclipsed over time as dairy cattle breeding continued to improve. During the Depression, individual cows were

producing an annual average of 4,379 pounds of milk, a figure that climbed to 5,512 by 1955, 8,080 by 1965, 10,360 by 1975, and 18,204 by the year 2000. One recent champion, Wisconsin's *Ever Green View My 1326 ET*, produced 72,120 pounds of milk in a year, or 23 gallons per day, aided by bovine growth hormone.

Over time the profile of dairy farms changed as well. In 1940, the nation's 4.6 million dairy farms (farms that just happened to have a cow or two were included) had an average herd size of 5 cows. By 1970, the nation's 647,860 dairy farms each held roughly 19 cows. By 1990, 192,000 farms each held an average of 55 cows, climbing to 88 in 2000. Today at large dairies, the number is often several hundred head of cow. Holsteins are by far the dominant breed in modern American dairy farming, with Michigan the nation's eighth largest dairy producer.

A subdivision now occupies the site where *Pontiac De Nijlander* once nibbled grass alongside Golfside Road. Though she is long gone, her DNA lives on in modern Holsteins, and the "Pontiac" line name still occasionally surfaces in the names of prize-winning Holsteins. From asylum to accolades, one Ypsilanti cow broke the records of her day and won fame for Washtenaw County.

(Laura Bien is the author of "Hidden History of Ypsilanti" and "Tales from the Ypsilanti Archives." ypsidxit@gmail.com.)

Editor's Note: We were on the train, traveling across the Ontario countryside. My father and I were accompanying my grandmother home after a visit to Michigan. There were cows grazing in the fields. I asked my grandmother what kind of cows my grandfather had raised. Were they black and white ones?

"Oh dear, no!" my normally mild mannered Granny exclaimed. Clearly Grandpa Porter would not have gone within 20 yards of a Holstein. His dairy herds were Guernsey, like Elsie the Cow. My grandfather was a college-trained dairyman (Guelph) who managed herds for large dairy farm owners. The herdsman was responsible for maintaining the purity of the breed among other things. His last dairy farm was Brookwater Farm in Webster Township.

Every year my grandmother faithfully attended the Canadian Exhibition on Toronto's lake-shore. She headed for the Dairy Pavilion. One year I went with her. We made our way to the major attraction, a very large sculpture made of butter. To Granny, it was a thing of beauty. To me, while interesting, it was also a little strange.

I have my own form of loyalty to the breed. Whenever possible my choice of milk is from Guernsey Farms.

-Peg Porter, Gleanings Assistant Editor



Warren Lewis and his famed Auction Sales Pavilion

By James Mann

Warren Lewis started out his career as a circus barker. According to an article in the February 5, 1941 issue of a local paper, "Mr. Lewis' father, W. H. Lewis, operated a chain of hotels including the famous Follett House and the Oliver House at the Depot. There the circus and show people stopped and early in life Mr. Lewis mingled with them. He joined the John Robinson Railroad Show from Cincinnati when they stopped in Ypsilanti. The shows unloaded and loaded at the Deubel Mills and from his window, Mr. Lewis, then past 15, watched and made up his mind to join them. Mr. and Mrs. Gill Robinson, part owners of the circus, stayed at the Follett House and after Warren was discovered with the show, Mrs. Robinson looked after him in a motherly way. Mrs. Robinson was the daughter of "Wild Bill" Hickok, of Western fame." Lewis had become disabled at age 11 when he lost his left hand above the wrist.

According to other sources Lewis not only traveled with circuses all over the United States but also spent considerable time in Europe with the Barnum and Bailey Circus. According to an article in the October 30, 1954 Ypsilanti Press, "His happiest days were those with the Barnum circus where, as chief barker, he roared atop the leading wagon in the old time parade and warned, "Watch your horses, the elephants are coming." Lewis married one of the "best bareback riders of her day" and together they owned "Hamptons Great Empire and Warren Lewis's Two Ring Circus." The show consisted of two railroad cars when they started out but in 1917 when he sold the show it consisted of 22 railroad cars.

Today Warren Lewis is best remembered as the manager of the Lewis Horse Exchange, a gambling den he operated in Depot Town during the early years of the 20th Century. Gamblers rode the Interurban from Detroit during the racing season



Warren Lewis enjoyed the attention he received because of his jaunty attire and the fact that he usually carried a cane

to place their bets on the races. This activity received a great deal of attention at the time, until it was closed by order of the governor in 1911.

Yet during his lifetime Lewis was best known for his skills as an auctioneer. He may have been the first to sell an automobile at auction. It was said, if there was anything he had not auctioned a new addition of the dictionary would have to be issued to include it. Lewis resided at the house at 204 North Street, and owned a large tract of land around the house. This property was bounded by North Street, the Michigan Central Railroad sidetrack on Lincoln Ave. and Babbitt Street. On this property Lewis announced he was planning to build an auction sales pavilion. "The sales pavilion will be built adjoining the Michigan Central sidetrack which passed over Mr. Lewis' property. This insures the best of shipping facilities for those who will send stock here to dispose of at auction and to buyers who may wish to ship out their purchase," reported *The Ypsilanti Daily Press* of Saturday, March 21, 1908.



Warren Lewis, Auctioneer

Enjoying things in the open on his Large Home Grounds in front of his Auction Studios with the

AUCTION SALES PAVILION in the rear overlooking Michigan avenue, with M. C. R. siding attached.

Hi-Society Auction Lawn on one side and Live Stock Sales Yards on the other side, covering the block of property bounded by North and Lincoln Aves. and Babbitt Street, in the heart of the City of Ypsilanti, where all conveniences are for teaching the Art of Auctioneering, Salesmanship, also conducting auction sales for others. Ypsilanti is the Hub city of the big Detroit easy money zone, surrounded by a million and a half people

The Warren Lewis Auction Sales Pavilion was located at 204 North Street where he owned a large tract of land around the house

"The pavilion will be built with glass sides and wholly enclosed," continued the account. "The seats will be amphitheater style with a ring as in a circus where the stock will be in plain view of everyone when it is under the hammer. There will be an auctioneer's stand and cashier's desk. The sales will be conducted summer and winter and in order to make it thoroughly comfortable in cold weather, the pavilion will be equipped with a steam heating plant. There won't be anything small or cheap about the whole affair. It is designed to be one of the auction centers of the country and a leading attraction of the city."

The pavilion was principally designed for the sale of horses and cattle. "I propose to pull off some of the big farm auction sales there too," said Lewis. "It will be central and farmers can bring in everything they have to offer."

The auction sales pavilion must have been a success, as Lewis added a second pavilion some twelve years later. "The new pavilion has a Michigan (Central Railroad) siding and loading shoot and about 8,900 feet of [continued overleaf]

Warren Lewis

[continued from p. 17]



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floor space and will accommodate 20 automobiles or vehicles, large consignments of house furnishings, general merchandise, and will be an excellent place for

holding stock sales," reported The Ypsilanti Record of Thursday, April 22, 1920. "It faces the D. U. R. tracks (Interurban) on Michigan Avenue and will also serve the farmers who wish to dispose of their farm products of live stock, or farm machinery which they wish to bring for private or public sale, with little or no expense to them, in fact, they can advertise and conduct their own sale."

Lewis was known throughout the United States and Europe for his auctioneering skills. M. Cummings, editor of a big auction journal in Chicago published the following comments: "America has had many really great auctioneers who have made fame and fortune usually specializing in some particular line of sales. Warren Lewis is the greatest all around auctioneer on earth. The reason for this is he can become an expert on any kind of a sale, selling on a few minutes' notice. Our files in this office show that he specialized with the top liners for several years

before he stepped out in the champion class of all around auctioneers and is now in a class by himself. Besides conducting large sales Warren Lewis is an instructor in the art of auctioneering at his large home auction studio in the college city of Ypsilanti, Michigan. The writer is thinking that if anyone can give fundamental principles and teach auctioneering in all its branches Warren Lewis is the man."

Lewis sold the auction grounds to the Ward Company of Jackson on Friday, May 28, 1937. The new owners planned to remodel the buildings and set up a buying and shipping business.

"The grounds have been a landmark for many years," noted The Ypsilanti Daily Press of Friday, May 28, 1937, "and many deals, starting with horses in former days and progressing to automobiles in recent times have been transacted."

Today there is nothing of the auction pavilion to be seen. All that remains is the house where Lewis once lived.

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



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House plans and interior designs have evolved and *devolved* over the years



HOUSE TOUR: It's a Personal Thing

Back door traffic was my family's style *By Tom Dodd*

When Mom and Dad retired to Ypsilanti from their retirement in Stinking Desert, Arizona, I took them on a tour of the Historical Society's Museum in the Asa Dow house. Mom was intrigued by the former maid's room then given over to a display of toys and doll houses. Dad hung out by the back entrance, looking uncomfortable. Mom grew up in a mining town in Michigan's Upper Peninsula where her father was a not-very-successful barber/gambler. Her mother was the "wash girl" for the owners of the meat packing plant in Hancock. My Mennonite Dad grew up in Michigan's Thumb area, working on other people's farms. In high school, he drove Stanley Steamers for the Oscar Mueller family, owners of the Mueller Brass Company in Port Huron. Clearly, when it came to mansions, we were the help; we came in the back door.

We noticed that, when High Scope bought Ypsi's biggest house, the Hutchinson mansion, they must have known our style and place in society; they planted grass over the front driveway and turned the original front entry into office space. Today, everybody comes in the back door. We can identify with that.

On family vacations, we toured other big houses and came back with a variety of awe-struck responses:

- **Rochester's Meadow Brook Hall** - still middle-class, but bigger; we could imagine Mrs. Dodge washing her face at the bathroom sink.
- **Cornelius Vanderbilt's Breakers in Newport, RI** - we laughed at its ostentation and knew we would never have been invited in if we had not bought a ticket.
- **Vanderbilt son's Biltmore Estate in Ashville, NC** - largest house in America, fun to explore; all the doors looked like front doors.
- **UM football Stadium** - This "Big House" was not very homey.

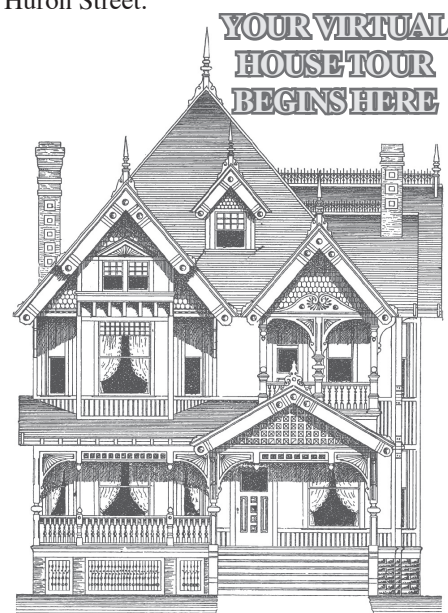
From cabin to castle, houses differ in how they will meet the needs (or wants) of their occupants. When Sidetrack's John Macmillan crawled under the Freighthouse ramp to plug in last year's community Christmas tree, he pulled a "log" out of his way and was surprised to find it was a leg with a human attached. "Hey!" said the leg's owner. "I live here." Point of view is everything.

Most of us need a bed, a refrigerator, and a toilet and everything else is extra. When we tour house museums, we enjoy seeing how others have chosen to live and what they have added to basic living spaces. We easily project ourselves onto their stage,

whether we are touring the Palace of Versailles or a deer-hunting camp.

The Ypsilanti Historical Society's Asa Dow house, along with many of the grand houses on North Huron Street, gives rise to our basic instinct of nest-building. These may not be the kind of houses we grew up in, but we can imagine ourselves in another time by simply moving from room to room and putting ourselves in the place as a resident.

Room uses have changed over time, but the human condition remains much the same. We eat, sit, sleep, talk, and live large or small depending on the space available. For this verbal tour, we enter a 19th century house similar to the house museum we know so well on North Huron Street.



We approach via a stone sidewalk and up real stone steps to the house:

- **Front porch:** When front porches devolved into backyard patios, we said goodbye to our neighbors and seldom saw them again. No porch swing, no hanging plants, no friendly waves. No more dry newspapers, either. Oh well, there aren't any newspapers anyway.
- **Front door:** The first opportunity to make a good impression, the front door often shows exotic woods and elaborate carvings designed to impress.
- **Vestibule:** An entry or storm porch. Wet boots are deposited here. Some hosts may even ask us to *[continued overleaf]*

Around the House

[continued from page 19]

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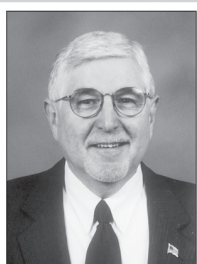
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leave our shoes as well, so we do not track in dirt from the street. Street dirt has changed over the years; today it's mostly petroleum products and nobody seems to mind it any more.

• **Front hall:** "Hall" was once the name for a large eating place (see Harry Potter scenes from University of Oxford), now it's a corridor connecting other rooms. Frank Lloyd Wright derided corridors for wasting space. New Orleans' narrow "shotgun houses" eliminated halls, connecting rooms one-after-the-other in a row. Not much privacy, but no halls.

• **Reception:** A space for meeting and greeting - and for bidding your leave. Door-knob-hangers could stand and say "goodbye" for as long as they wished, but they couldn't sit down. There's just a center table with a tray where a caller could leave a calling card. This was also a good place to sort the day's mail.

• **Front room:** Parlor (from the French: *parler*, to speak. A place to sit and talk). A good place for entertaining dignitaries and serving tea, but beer? Never!

Double parlor:

Front/back, east/west, etc. The front parlor was often open only for special occasions like weddings and funerals. Some had a special door made just for the entry and exit of a casket. Queen Ann houses grew with the advent of central heating. Pocket doors opened rooms to adjacent parlors creating a unique traffic flow. Kids and dogs could run around in great circles on rainy days. The parlor devolved into the Living Room, when it was the only sitting room in the house. Modern ranch houses put the front room in the back and changed its name to Family Room, a place where the television set ruled.

Recreation rooms had knotty pine paneling, deer heads on the walls, pictures of dogs playing poker. Rumpus Rooms were a place where family members could go

to push, shove, argue, and throw things about. Library, study, den, and home office spaces often had bookshelves, smoking stands, and maybe even a telephone.

The Billiards Room,

with its center table, liquor cabinet, and smoking paraphernalia, devolved into the Man Cave, now found in the basement or garage, where one retires to watch sporting events on television, pile up magazines, and leave empty containers about without the ministrations of women. *

• **Dining room:** A big space with a big table. A good window view was not important, since the best view was toward the food and each other. Without dining rooms, some families seem to have forgotten how to sit down and eat together. A butler's serving pantry connects with the kitchen. When Pamela Churchill Hayward Harriman showed *This Old House's* Bob Villa through Averell Harriman's linen-fold oak-paneled dining room, she gestured toward a hidden door to her butler's pantry. "The food comes through there," she noted, confessing that she had never seen the kitchen in her own house.

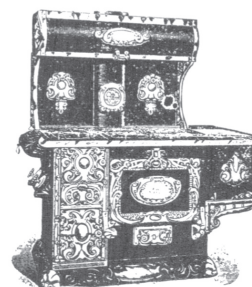
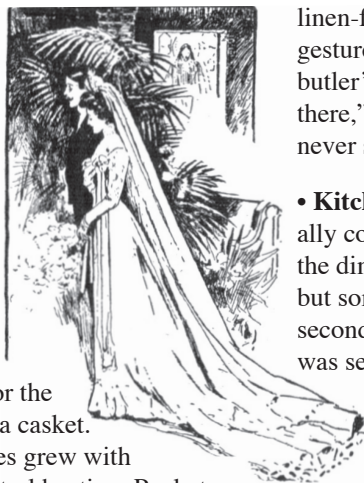
• **Kitchen:** Usually connected to the dining room, but sometimes a second kitchen was several feet removed from the house.

Summer kitchens took the noise and odors of food preparation farther from the dining room when all the windows were open and the curtains waved. Air-conditioning changed all

* **Smoking paraphernalia?** In earlier times, some family members made it a practice to spend much of the day setting fire to tightly-wrapped leaves and papers hanging from their lips. This resulted in many of their houses being burned to the ground and not included in today's tour.



A Scratch 'n' Sniff smoking jacket



A fully-engaged cook stove could heat most of the house

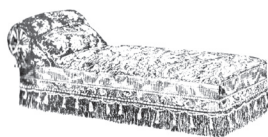


The "good china" was used only for very special occasions and was put on display in a big glass case between events.

that. Danger from fire from the cook-stoves was also a factor. There were rooms or alcoves for food storage, preparation, cooking, and serving. Woodstove, water heater, pie safe, chopping block, baking cabinet, and other separate pieces of kitchen furniture were arranged around the perimeter of the room. Storage was provided by a dish safe, silver tableware storage, and dry pantry. Every time a member of the house staff was dismissed, someone had to count the silverware here. The scullery was a dish- and pot-washing place. Scullery maids washed, but also built the fires in the kitchen stove and in fireplaces throughout the house. In the UK, a "char woman" not only built the fires (char-coal), but did most of the cleaning. The extra cleaning duties helped get her charcoal-stained hands clean. The scullery evolved into the laundry room. In modern times, these spaces are often installed near the bedrooms, since that's where most of the personal- and bed-clothing laundry items originate, in hopes that family members might each attend to their own char-work as needed.

• **Up-stairs:** Ladders to an overhead loft morphed from ships' ladders or companionways, bringing the invention of "family" with separate places to sleep. Before birth control, there was the "family bed." Stairs, a shortened version of "staircase" were steps fashioned by a case-goods carpenter who usually made household cabinets and coffins. Earliest stair-ways were enclosed between walls but, as their designs became more elaborate, were eventually featured in the front hall as if to say, "Look, we have an up-stairs in our house!" The popular TV series, *Upstairs, Downstairs*, took full advantage of this architectural detail to artfully delineate between the owners and their staff. The staff were relegated to a back staircase.

• **Bed Chambers:** Before we called them bedrooms, sleeping spaces were called chambers. But they were not for napping. Lying on your bed during the day was a portent of ill health and impending death. A day bed or *chaise longue* was provided for day-time use. A boudoir, a sitting room, was often placed between Missus and Mister's chambers, sometimes similar to a Morning Room where the Missus read, wrote letters, and met with her cook to plan meals and events. Dressing Rooms abounded with wardrobes, armoires, dressers, a jewelry safe, and a slipper chair where one could sit and pull on shoes without the hindrance of arms on its side. Wall hooks displayed clothing, chairs, and anything else not wanted on the floor, making dusting easier.



Chaise Longue: French for "long chair" but most Americans spell it "l-o-u-n-g-e"



Raised on a cast-iron frame, fewer critters entered the bed

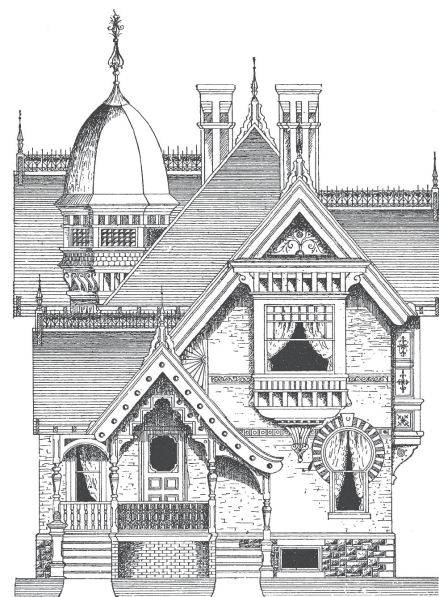
Clothes presses were early closets that crammed clothing together, clean or not; they were not ironing boards. Closets came later as reach-in or walk-in, for storing clothing out of sight. Whispering Rooms were tiny vestibules creating air-locks between the corridor and chamber. House staff could enter a whispering room to listen for when it would be appropriate to enter a chamber. They could tap lightly, but listening and waiting were preferred.

• **Bathing facilities:**

A toilet-set, made up of pitchers and bowls, a soap dish, a shaving dish, a toothbrush holder, mug and chamber pot, was arranged on a washstand in the bed-chamber. Today's antique dealers thrill at finding a still-complete set. Even with the advent of running water in the house, the lavatory/wash stand/sink stayed in the bed-chamber awaiting a change in attitudes about moving the toilet into the house. A water closet was an enclosed space off the main hallway for a modern indoor toilet. It's still called "la W.C." in France.



An incomplete set



• **Bath room:** A tub and/or shower for washing the entire body, sometimes compartmented with the toilet. For at least one hundred years, builders have been putting all these appliances together in one room, but many 1980s designs went back to similar compartmentalization. More elaborate toilet facilities followed: Powder rooms, guest baths, Jack-and-Jills, master bathrooms, mud rooms, and other plumbing spin-offs were adapted from early mansions for installation in the most humble subdivision abode.

• **Sewing rooms:**

Rooms where ladies or their maids repaired to darn socks, knit scarves, and maybe even iron. Sociological note: The "lady" lived in this house; the "woman" worked there.



A treadle-style sewing machine was a prized possession

• **Boxing rooms:** Rooms for storage of luggage, shipping trunks, and broken furniture awaiting repair. Badly behaved children were often assigned to this space where they could begin snooping for hidden surprise gift items.

• **Attic access:** Watch for one door that doesn't go into a room at all; it's the door to the attic stairway, a mysterious and wonderful place to be explored for spooky stories and even more fun than horror movies. (See James Thurber's short story, *The Night the Bed Fell*.) Every town had at least one house with a top-floor ballroom [continued overleaf]

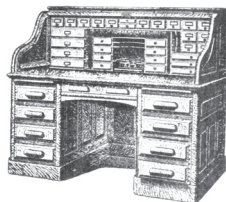
Around the House

[continued from p.21]



where important family events took place. Without a useable attic, one wonders where they put all their junk.

• **Back rooms:** A back stairway, back bedrooms for “the help”, and a whole room to expand the kitchen junk drawers found in smaller houses. Some grand mansions and New York apartments of the early 19th century had narrow hallways connecting back rooms to the front door so the help would not be seen until they showed guests into the reception rooms.



Wireless & completely self-contained

• **Conservatory:**

A sun room or greenhouse was a sweet-smelling room on the south side of the house with direct run-off drains to the

raw ground below the basement. There was also a roof hatch to let in more sunlight and rain. The closest many of us came to this room was while playing “Clue” when we accused Miss Scarlet of murdering Colonel Mustard with a candlestick in the conservatory.

• **Home again:** When we return to the Asa Dow house, we marvel at the good taste of the Great American Middle Class. Upper and lower classes too often are characterized by undisciplined excess, whether it be window displays of colored water in empty whiskey bottles or mutated espaliered trees in not-too-secret gardens.

(Tom Dodd is a retired teacher, editor and author, a regular contributor to the GLEANINGS, and does the design and layout for this publication. He has moved from living in the former Masonic Temple ballroom to a tiny condominium.)



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A house is not necessarily a home

A dwelling that serves as living quarters (*He had to get out of the house*)

Members of a business organization (*She worked for the house of Dior*)

The audience gathered together in a theatre (*The house applauded*)

An official assembly w/ legislative powers (*A bicameral legislature has two houses*)

Play in which children take roles of parents (*The kids were playing house*)

Management of a casino (*The house gets a percentage of every bet*)

Where you live at a particular time (*Deliver this to my home*)

Housing that someone is living in (*Collecting food for the homeless*)

The country, state or city where you live (*Ypsilanti is my home*)

A rubber slab where the batter stands (*The runner failed to touch home*)

The place where you are stationed (*Home base*)

An environment offering affection and security (... where the heart is, there's no place like it)

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Docent: A person who acts as a guide, typically on a voluntary basis, in a museum, art gallery, or zoo (pick one). In certain universities and colleges, a member of the teaching staff immediately below professional rank. (That's not us.)

ORIGIN:

Late 19th cent.: via German from Latin *docent*- 'teaching' from *docere* 'teach'

Ypsilanti's “Hardware Man”

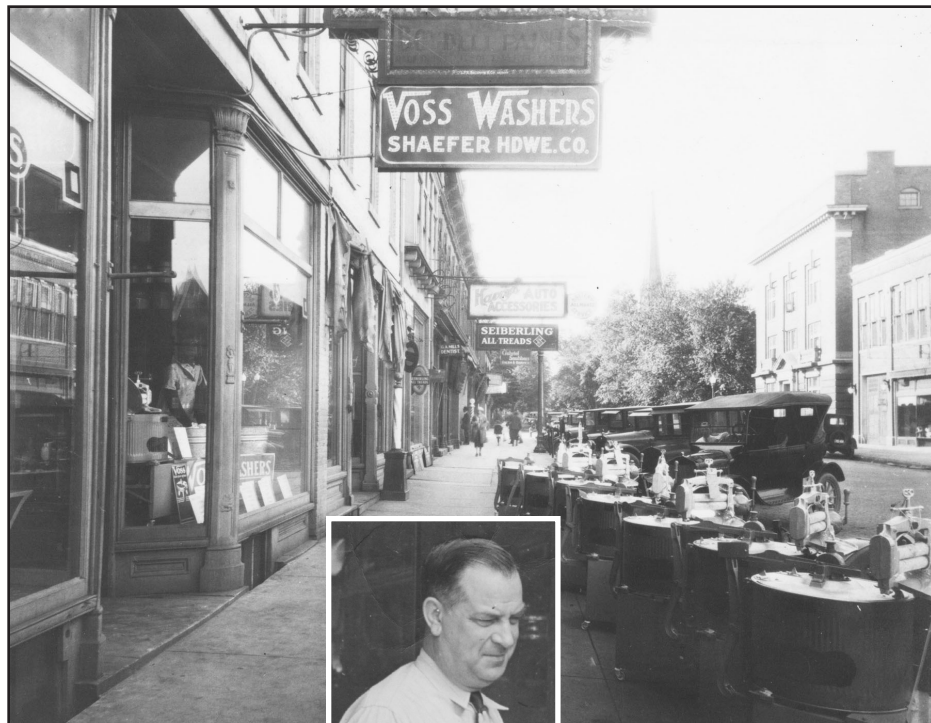
By Marilyn Furtney Miller

My father, Carl Furtney, was born near London, Ontario in 1901. Even as a little boy living on a farm, he always knew he wanted to work in a hardware store. He remembers his family going into town on Saturday nights (the big “night out” for farmers) and that is where he discovered the hardware store. Dad told me he hated living on a farm and, as a young boy, was frightened to go out to get the cows in the early morning for milking. The cows were in the woods and he would send his collie dog into the woods to bring the cows out because he wasn’t about to enter those dark shadows!

So, at 15 years old, he packed his few belongings and took off for Toronto where his elder brother lived. He got a job in a hardware store there and worked in the Toronto area for the next 12 years. In 1928, Dad was offered a job in the hardware department at J. L. Hudson Company in Detroit, Michigan. It was a great opportunity with a little more money so he “crossed over the bridge” and started a new job in a new country. That is where and how he met his future wife, Vera. They married in 1930.

Keeping his job at Hudson’s was difficult because of the “Great Depression.” He needed a dime each day to ride the bus into the city and at times he worried about where he would get the dime. Men were without jobs and a person had to work hard to keep their employment. Dad managed to do that for the next five years while adding two young children to his life, my brother Bud and myself. He also became a naturalized citizen of the United States.

In 1935, a paint vendor told my Dad there was an opening for a hardware store manager in Ypsilanti. He encouraged Dad to apply for the position. My parents



Shaefer Hardware in circa 1929 during a sidewalk sale of Voss Washers



Mr. Carl Furtney during the time he worked in the Shaefer Hardware on Huron Street in Ypsilanti

were reluctant to leave my Mother’s extended family in the Detroit area and the friends they had there. Dad interviewed for the job and Harry Shaefer, owner of the store, offered him the job beginning immediately. Mom and Dad made the big decision to leave a secure job at Hudson’s and move to the “end of the world” to the small town of Ypsilanti where they had no family or friends. It was the best decision my parents ever made! They purchased a home on Oak Street near Prospect Park and joined Emmanuel Lutheran Church. My parents were friendly and fun and they made many friends quickly.

My dad was made to be a hardware store manager. He loved the long narrow store on North Huron Street. He took pride displaying shovels, rakes, hoes and all kinds of farm equipment along with general tools and paint and drawers that held nuts, screws, and bolts that he sold by the pound. After he became acquainted and comfortable with the business and the town and people, he expanded the store with sporting equipment such as baseballs, bats, gloves and mitts, bowling balls, golf clubs and golf bags. Dad’s

store sponsored a softball team and a bowling team. He enjoyed being a spectator at most of the games. He became a Schwinn bicycle distributor.

After Pearl Harbor when war was declared, Henry Ford developed the Willow Run Bomber Plant to make bombers for the war effort. You wouldn’t think that would make any difference to a little hardware store, but did it ever. Ypsilanti was invaded with people looking for jobs (many were women) who arrived to work making airplanes in the new bomber plant. Dad’s hardware store added new merchandise to accommodate all these arrivals by featuring coffee pots, hot plates, radios, dishes, and pots and pans, things needed in rented rooms or small apartments.

The North Huron Street building was torn down to make way for more parking space in the parking lot that adjoined the hardware store and my father retired from his long career as a hardware store manager. My Mother and Father moved to Lakeland, Florida where they lived twenty plus years enjoying the weather and making new friends and loving their Florida life style. *[continued overleaf]*

**Ypsilanti's
"Hardware Man"**
[continued from page 7]

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Above: Shaefer Hardware on North Huron Street circa 1909 showing the many storage drawers for hardware and the showcases used to display stock.

Right: Carl and Vera Furtney after Carl retired from the business



They returned to Ypsilanti each summer to be with family and old friends and spend time at their cottage at Portage Lake in Pinckney, Michigan.

hind his wife, Vera (deceased 1996), three children, Bud (deceased 2010), Marilyn, and Jerry (deceased 2010), grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was loved and respected and is greatly missed.

In 1990 my father was 89 years old when he died suddenly of a brain aneurism. He is buried in Highland Cemetery. He left be-

(Marilyn Furtney Miller now lives in Apopka, Florida. She grew up in Ypsilanti and is a member of the Ypsilanti Historical Society.)

Answers to Ypsi History – It's a Test *(for the test on page 13)*

1 – D	6 – R	11 – B	16 – T	21 – M
2 – K	7 – A	12 – J	17 – Q	22 – E
3 – S	8 – U	13 – G	18 – C	
4 – L	9 – O	14 – I	19 – H	
5 – N	10 – V	15 – P	20 – F	

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Discovering Adan Freeman – Family Patriarch

Written and Researched by Margaret M. Freeman

An article was published in the Summer 2011 edition of Ypsilanti GLEANINGS titled “Civil War-Comrades in Arms.” One of the featured soldiers was Levi S. Freeman. His father was Adan Freeman, a pioneer farmer in Ypsilanti Township. Inadvertently, Adan’s name was changed a few times, by the editor, in that article to Adam Freeman. I have been asked to submit proof that the spelling of the name was truly Adan.

Historically, my research had shown that his name could be found in various places as Adan, Adam, Aden or Adin Freeman. This article may serve a dual purpose as many of you may have researched your family trees and also found family names spelled in various ways. Follow along on our journey to discover Adan Freeman. Within his life history, you may discover clues to sources that will help you trace your own ancestors. It should be noted that Adan was also the great grandfather of my husband, Frank H. Freeman.

Typically, when one begins a search for family roots, you begin with yourself and your own resources.

So, we began our search for our ancestor, Adan (sometimes called Adam) at our home. My husband had stored inherited family heirlooms in our attic. In a large metal “tea box” were many old photos and some photo albums. The oldest albums dated from about 1862-1900. We had tintype photos that preceded those dates. Some pictures were identified and some not. On the second page of the oldest small album was a picture labeled Adam Freeman, father of Francis. We had some old letters, historical books and a couple of journals. We also had Francis J. Freeman’s (Adan’s son) muzzle-loaded rifle, Colt pistol and a curly maple bed. In Ypsilanti, we had living older relatives who shared their Freeman family stories, pictures and memorabilia. They led us to other family members and descendants. We were all enriched with knowledge and the joy of reconnecting with family.

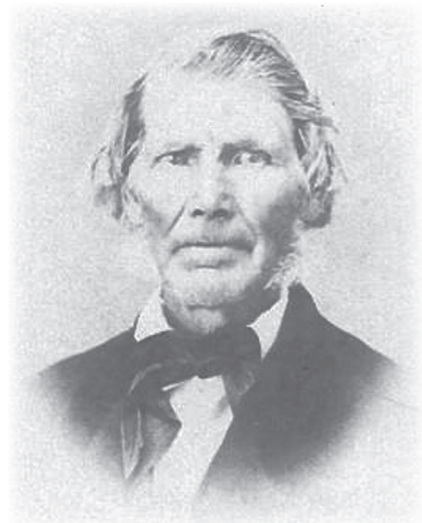
We expanded our research beyond home and family. Washtenaw County was abundant in resources. We joined the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County (GSWC) and the Ypsilanti Historical Society (YHS). We found records in libraries at Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, including the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan where we first viewed the 1850 every person census of the Adam Freeman family. We discovered that local library computers subscribed to the genealogy sites of ancestry.com and heritagequest.org. Eventually, we purchased our own computer for research where many free resources, such as familysearch.org and seekingmichigan.org further enhanced our records.

The GSWC library held the Adan Freeman Bible Record along with a wealth of other family bible records. Herein we found the names and dates of birth and death of Adan, his two wives and children. Members of this society provided sources of a sibling of Adan and also led us to Robert R. Freeman, the author of Freeman Families of New England in the 17th and 18th Centuries. For many years now, Robert R. Freeman and I have worked together on our Freeman family line.

“...his name could be found in various places as Adan, Adam, Aden or Adin”

War of 1812 military indexes on ancestry.com recorded his name as both Adan and Adam. But original military records purchased from the National Archives (NARA) revealed the name to be spelled Adan Freeman. Included was a pension document that had been printed at the office of the *Sentinel-Ypsilanti* that actually displayed the original signature of Adan Freeman. It is best to find original documents where possible, thus avoiding handwriting interpretations of others. Do send for military pension records as they usually contain a wealth of original information about the veteran and his family.

Ancestry.com provided 1830-1860 population census records that recorded



Adan Freeman at age 74 (1790-1867). Adan was the father of 13 children with the last 7 born after 1831 in Ypsilanti Township

Mr. Freeman’s name as Adam. A non-population agriculture census spelled it as Adan. Original land and tax records of Adan and Arial (brother) Freeman were found in Ontario County, New York from 1815-1819. A land record was found online at ancestry.com that showed proof of purchase from the government of a land patent by Adan Freeman, dated February 1832, in Ypsilanti Town, section 14. Additionally, found at the Washtenaw County Register of Deeds, Ann Arbor were records of purchase of land by Adin and Adan Freeman, in 1847 from William Gibbs and in 1860 from Owin (sic) and Geo. Smith. This land on section 14 added more acreage to Adan’s farm in Ypsilanti Town.

Found at the Ypsilanti library on film was the *Ypsilanti Commercial* newspaper which published the obituary of Adam Freeman who died: 1867 April 18th, aged 77 yrs. His tombstone in Highland Cemetery reads, Adan Freeman, died Apr. 18, 1867. The *Ypsilanti Commercial* obituary of Almira Freeman stated: died April 7th 1882. Her tombstone in Highland Cemetery read, Almira, wife of Adam Freeman. Buried on the same family plot was Minerva C. Joslin, Dau. of Adan and A. Freeman.

Portrait and Biographical Album books document the lives of prominent individuals of the county. [continued overleaf]

Discovering Adan Freeman

[continued from p. 25]

From Michigan, in 1891, the Washtenaw County Album book recorded the life of Francis J. Freeman, son of Adan Freeman. In 1884, the Gratiot County Book recorded the life of Nicholas Joslin and his wife, Minerva, daughter of Adan Freeman. The book, *History of Washtenaw County* by Chapman in 1881, recorded him as Adam Freeman. All three books can now be accessed on Google Book Search.

Death records of people who died in Michigan between 1897 and 1920 can be searched on-line at seekingmichigan.org. Found there were Fredrick, Minerva, Walter, Levi, and Lucinda all children whose death certificates stated that their father was Adan Freeman. The children, Francis J., Martin and Charles R. Freeman's deaths preceded that time frame.

Continuing our Freeman family research, we sought to discover the parents of Adan. We found that there was a probable link between my husband's great grandfather, Adan Freeman and Roger Freeman, a descendant of the immigrant, Edmund Freeman of New England, who arrived in America in 1635. My husband, Frank joined the on-line Freeman DNA Project hosted by Hope Freeman Carnicle. In 2006, DNA evidence from my husband proved to be an exact match with that of a known descendant of Edmund Freeman. This result established genetic proof of the correct New England Freeman family line.

We then attempted to find more information regarding Adan's parents. In 2007, the papers of Rev. Milton Wright, a United Brethren Church Bishop and the father of the Wright brothers of airplane fame, were found indexed on-line at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Copies of these same original papers were found by me at The Henry Ford, Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn. Rev. Milton Wright, an avid genealogist, was a descendant of the immigrant, Edmund Freeman. Rev. Wright had made contact with Rev. John Freeman, a fellow United Brethren minister, who was a son of Adan's brother, Richard of Ohio. Both attended Freeman family



Almira Mason Dexter Freeman at age 67 (1797-1882). Almira was the mother of 6 Dexter children and 8 Freeman children

reunions in Ohio in 1906 and 1907. For these reunions, Milton Wright wrote the full genealogy of our Freeman family from Edmund Freeman through Roger Freeman. Rev. Wright wrote by hand the names of Roger's children: 1. Adan, born about 1793; 2. Arile (Arial); 3. Richard, b. in 1802; 4. Alvey (Alvah); 5. John, who died young; 6. Selden; 7. Cindarella; 8. Daughter, name not given (Lucinda). These papers provide the best evidence of the family and descendants of Roger Freeman, the father of our ancestor, Adan Freeman.

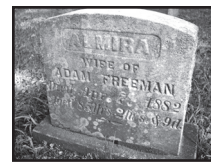
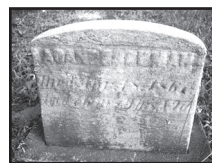
In 2008, the 120-page biographical book of Adan Freeman's brother, *Memoirs of Rev. John Freeman*, became available on Google Book Search. Published in 1835, this source identified his father, Roger Freeman, his mother and step-mother, along with a description of their family life from 1800 to 1833.

The above records present a pattern. In some instances, especially in census records when the informant was likely Adan's wife, Almira, the name spelled as Adam appeared. Census information was generally given by the person of authority at home when the census taker arrived. This would most likely be the homemaker. The farmer would probably be working the fields, animals or be in the barnyard. Also, for various reasons, misspellings in census records are often found. Almira's tombstone was the only one on the family plot that displayed her husband's name as Adam. The family bible record was titled, Adan Freeman

Bible Record. Most official land and military records, plus all original death certificates of Mr. Freeman's children, document the spelling of his name as Adan. The most Rev. Milton Wright spelled the name Adan Freeman.

After several years of research, we concluded that although Adan Freeman's name was sometimes misprinted as Adam, Adin or Aden Freeman, the true spelling, according to our family research records, was Adan Freeman, son of Roger Freeman, direct line descendant of the immigrant, Edmund Freeman of Sandwich, Massachusetts. Adan Freeman, pioneer farmer of Ypsilanti Township, was the first generation of our Freeman family in Michigan. Honoring the Freeman Family Patriarch, descendants bearing the name Adan exist in each generation through to the present time.

This type of research to discover one's family history is referred to as Genealogy. *Who do You Think You Are?* and *Finding Your Roots* are popular television series programs that explore and research the family lineage of famous people. Genealogy is now considered to be the second largest hobby in the United States. I hope that our amateur pursuits will serve to provide potential sources for the research of your ancestors and will inspire many of you to search, reconnect with family, and to share the joy of your heritage as we have.



Adan Freeman's gravestone (left) and Almira Freeman's (right) in Highland Cemetery

NOTATION: More detailed information on this article can be found in the Ypsilanti Historical Society archives. This article has been about a name, not the life story of the man. By referring to and studying the sources included, it is possible to discover, reconstruct and envision the personal life story of Adan Freeman.

[Margaret M. Freeman is a family historian who belongs to the Ypsilanti Historical Society and enjoys researching and sharing information about our ancestors.]

CHAUTAUQUA an attempt to put the "heritage" back into our festival

By Tom Dodd

Supporters from all over the Ypsilanti community have come together to bring more history and historical events back into our annual Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. The popular, and mostly free event, has "grown like Topsy" over the past 35 years with decreasing emphasis on our heritage.

("Topsy" was a character in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe. When asked whether she knew who made her [whether she had heard of God], she replied "I expect I grow'd" [grew]. When we say something "just grew, like Topsy" we indicate something that has gradually become very large.)



Ypsi's local festival grew from a 1970s gas-saving vacation concept to a regional event that outdrew the Michigan State Fair. In its phenomenal growth, carnival-like attractions overshadowed the event's historical themes.

In an effort to return to the Festival's origin, a committee has planned a two-day Chautauqua-like event at the Riverside Arts Center. In nineteenth century tradition, *Chautauqua at the Riverside* will feature lectures, performances, panel discussions, exhibits, and educational entertainments on many facets of Ypsilanti's history.

• War of 1812 Bicentennial - "Ypsilanti's Role in the Surrender of Detroit to the British" by author Anthony J. Yanik

- Civil War Sesquicentennial - Jeff O'Den on how the Underground Railroad continued here during the Civil War
- *Michigan History* magazine editor, Patricia Majher moderates a panel of history writers
- "The Story of Willow Run: How Detroit Saved the World" - a 1944 Ford Motor Company film
- "We Hear America Singing" - The Ypsilanti Community Choir encourages us to sing along with them
- "Songs That Made a Nation" - The American Civil War: 1861-1865", the Dordworth Saxhorn Band re-creates the band that dominated the New York music scene from 1836 to 1891 in concerts, at balls, social events, political rallies, and many U.S. presidential inaugurations
- Mayor Schreiber moderates a panel of Ypsilanti's Historical Society, Heritage Foundation, Historic District Commission, and EMU's historic preservation program

[Tom Dodd is a member of the Festival's history committee and promoter of the Chautauqua program.]

Museum Advisory Board Report

By Kathryn Howard, Chair

After a beautiful spring, all Board members are back and fulfilling their responsibilities. We are back to normal. Our Museum being a "House", it's like doing your home "Spring Cleaning," with each member having their sub-committee members helping them and reporting back.

The **Art Exhibit** was a great success; not as many artists, but a wonderful display of very talented work. We also have some

of Fofie Pappas' beautiful **wood carvings** in our showcase. Our display of Diane Schick's collection of **thimbles** is very popular and will be here all summer.

The **manikins** have been re-dressed and "new gowns" were found in our closets and are truly lovely. These gowns are summer fashions, some with hem-stitching of superior quality. Fofie, Nancy and Laura are very fashion-minded with their choice of garments and accessories.

In early spring I received a call from Valencia, California from an individual whose ancestors lived here. Her name is Jennifer Brickner. She had what we call a "**sewing carousel**" that belonged in her family. It is hand-carved and on the carousel is carved "Philinda Walker Babbitt 1834." What a find! Also, "Ypsilanti" is carved underneath the bottom. In later years, her grandfather worked at the Henry Ford Museum and lived in Dearborn. Even though it's small in size, we feel it is quite an artifact for us. It is on display in the case in the Kitchen with some of Diane's thimbles. George Ridenour is researching for more history on the family.

The **Civil War Exhibit** is still in place and the **Lost Ypsilanti Exhibit** will be up for the summer featuring towns and settlements that were here and now are gone.

We are getting ready for **Ypsilanti Heritage Festival** on August 17, 18, 19 and plan to have exhibitions and demonstrations out in the yard with an exhibit on the War of 1812.

The **Quilt Exhibit** will be here September 23-October 7. Rita has already made the quilt that will be given away.

Have a great summer and come see all the new displays.

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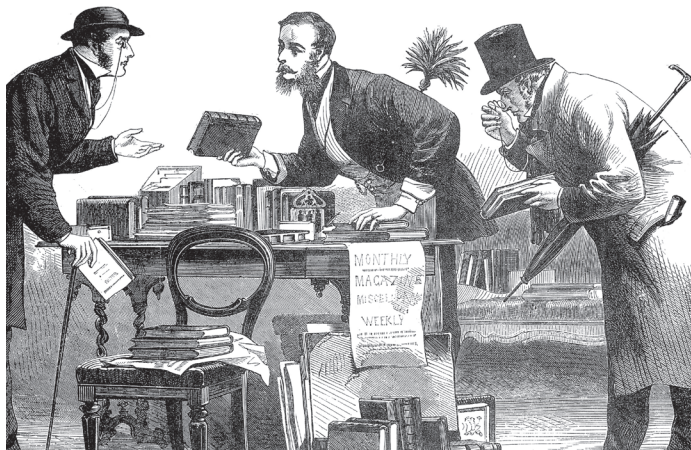
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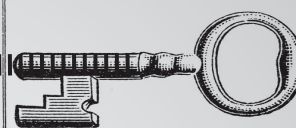
-By Gerry Pety

You may have heard that we are now soliciting funds in the YHS Archives to dig a sub-level below the present Archive as we are quickly running out of storage space! We easily can use another 9,000 square feet to house all of the treasures we now house for the Ypsilanti community. So if you have about \$250,000 just lying around, bring it on down to the Archives - our April fools joke this year!

Seriously, this summer we will be busy with collection organization. As part of this, Al Rudisill has been digging around and finding long-lost documents. One such fantastic find of late was an indenture for the James Aray farm between the two Aray brothers going back to 1843. (The Aray family was famous for their work with the "Underground Railroad".) It is an 'Indenture' or land contract between James and Asher for the sale of his farm. Along with this is an actual promissory note for the \$300 deficiency which is very rare in itself as most were destroyed when they were redeemed by the promissory note's maker. Seems that Asher was about \$300 short of cash for what he needed to pay James, so he included a promissory note as part of the transaction with the notation that it was to be paid ONLY in United States money. Times being what they were in the 1830s and '40s with 'wildcat' banks and devalued foreign money, James was smart to make sure this clause was in both the Indenture and the promissory note. The farm still exists and is on Textile and Campbell Roads, just across from the



Harwood Cemetery in Pittsfield Township and is only about four miles away from here and just off Michigan Avenue, on the way to Saline. It is on a dirt road and the place is so peaceful and really quite a place to visit. The documents are with the Aray Family File in our Family History Collection.



Another enhancement to our collections is additions to our Ypsilanti City Directories. City directories are

extremely valuable to researchers of our area as they encompass not only city residents, but also the townships in the Polk editions. They are the most valuable single research tool we have as they include people, businesses, government info, and much more. If you have any of these old editions, please donate them. We have some gaps in our coverage and the more directories we have the more focused and magnified the history of this region is. This upgrade was made possible by the Archives at Eastern Michigan University who have contributed their local history collections to us. Eastern Students who study area history now only have to come down to the YHS Archives as everything is right here. Thank you, EMU!

We expect the summer to be as hot and humid as last year, so come down to the Archives where it is always cool in more ways than one!