

The 1800s

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the farmington *enterprise & observer*

Weekend of September 23, 1972

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

15¢ a Copy

Farmington Was Prosperous Until City Slickers Came

The Farmington area's early history was a rural one, destined to be so by the farming influence of the Quakers.

The first portion cleared in Farmington was 160 acres bounded by Farmington Township Hall on the northwest, Powers Rd. on the west, 11 Mile on the north, Orchard Lake on the east, and a southerly border just below 10 Mile.

The original village was located north of Grand River, approximately between Gill Rd. extended and the Farmington City Park on Shiawassee.

THE FARMERS divided up the vacant land surrounding the village, and laid out large tracts of land to till and feed cattle and other livestock.

As other settlers arrived, other churches were founded. The first Presbyterian Church was started in 1826 in the home of Amos Mead and Seth Warner was a charter member. The church was built on the southeast corner of Halsted and 11 Mile in 1833.

Samuel Mead was instrumental in organizing a Baptist Church in 1826. The Baptist built a church in 1835 at the corner of 12 Mile and Halsted, the site of the present West Farmington Cemetery.

The Methodists organized in 1827 and built their first church that year at the corner of Shiawassee and Warner, a site which contains the residence of Margaret Miller, woman's editor of Observer Newspapers.

The Universalist Church was built in 1853 on the old Warner St., near the present Farmington Junior High.

THE SEED for organized government was provided by the meetings of the Quakers when business could be discussed on a monthly basis.

But, in May of 1827, a township form of government had already been organized. The first slate of township officers were: Amos Mead, supervisor; Robert Wixom, clerk; William Yerkes, Phillip Marlatt, and Samuel Mead, assessors; and Warham Lee, John Gould, and John Power, highway commissioners.

After the Civil War, the village of Farmington was organized. It included a territory of one square mile extending from the intersection of Grand River and Farmington Rds. The first village council session was held May 9, 1897. The village became the City of Farmington in 1926.

IN THE EARLY DAYS there were lumber and grain mills in Farmington and cheese factories to make use of the surplus milk.

An apple and small-fruit orchard belt once existed in the northern and western portions of Farmington Township. A number of farmers raised vegetables to truck to the Eastern Market in Detroit to sell.

IN 1870, according to the Ninth U.S. Census, Farmington has 16,514 acres of farmland, 796 unimproved acres, and 5,813 acres of woodland.

The value of the farms totaled \$1.4 million, farm machinery was valued at \$43,900, and wages totaled \$36,720. There were 642 horses, 1,117 cows, 22 oxen, 5,378 sheep, 1,060 pigs for a total livestock value of \$186,880.

That year, Farmington farmers harvested 1,442 bushels of spring wheat, 42,201 bushels of winter wheat, 38,175 bushels of Indian corn, 39,127 bushels of oats, 36,780 bushels of potatoes, produced 75,775 pounds of butter, and had an orchard produce worth \$16,880.

Prosperous farmers in Farmington in 1890 included: Nelson Coleman, 190 acres; Horace Green, 290 acres; Addis Green, 120 acres; H.V. Nichols, 120 acres; C.J. Sprague, 160 acres; William Sprague, 97 acres; and Joseph L. Lamb, 53 acres.

THE FARMING era came to an end after World War II. Land had become too valuable in Farmington, and taxes too high. The large farms were sold to developers who subdivided the

tracts into smaller parcels to build homes.

These subdivisions were occupied by Detroiters, for the most part, who had fled the big city for a "rural setting."

These subdivisions thrived through the 1950's until the mid sixties when multiple developments first began to appear, the largest being the Independence Green complex at Halsted and Grand River.

The subdivision dwellers sounded the alarm in the late sixties and early seventies and warned that apartments would ruin the fine "rural atmosphere" enjoyed by subdivision dwellers in such fine places as Chatham Hills, Canterbury Commons, Westwood Commons, Independence Commons, Quaker Valley, and the Franklins.

The pressures of land developers in the 1970s is the same vice which gripped the farmers earlier and forced them to sell the family homestead when the city slickers began the 'westward ho' movement.

Farmington has changed from its Quaker days, and from its farming era. It is changing now because the community is still alive. There may be controversy, but the plant is sending forth new shoots, and is still growing.

Farmington Observer

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Monday, July 13, 1987

Farmington, Michigan

68 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

On the road to freedom

the route, the tracks, the conductors and the stations on the Underground Railroad

Jean M. Fox is member of the Farmington Hills Historical Commission and the author of several local history books.

By Jean M. Fox
special writer

THAT LEGENDARY route, the Underground Railroad, ran through Farmington for two decades before the Civil War. Now – 147 years later – bits and pieces of research on this once-illegal activity affirm that residents of this area did indeed assist slaves on their path to freedom in Canada.

Many routes to freedom led north across the Ohio River through Indiana and Ohio. One of the most heavily travelled “roads” was through southern Michigan. Here slaves fleeing from Missouri up through Illinois were assisted, as well as those from Kentucky and Virginia.

The “road” led through Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, Marshall, Jackson, Ann Arbor and small towns in between. A branch came through Farmington, and passed fugitives on to Franklin, Pontiac and Rochester toward Lake St.

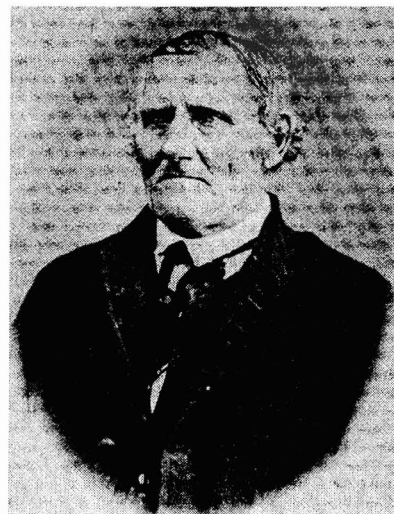
Clair and Port Huron; or led them in a roundabout path to Detroit’s wharfs where boats took them across the river.

Several historical plaques in downtown Detroit mark sites connected with the famous line, whose terminus was the eastern bank of the river.

Rev. John Monteith, one of the founders of the University of Michigan in 1817, later ran an Underground Railroad station at Elyria, Ohio.

FARMINGTON’S P. D. Warner, builder of the Governor’s Mansion here in 1869, when in the Michigan Legislature in 1850, advocated freedom for colored people (as well as introducing a prohibition amendment). His views were distinctly in the minority, for in November, 1850 Michigan voters turned down an equal suffrage amendment, 32,026 to 12,840.

Chief “stockholders” in the Underground Railroad were Quakers, members of Protestant churches and freed Negroes. “Dividends” were those of the spirit, of having helped a fellow man.



Nathan Power, for a long while Farmington's only school teacher, was a conductor on the Underground Railway and president of Oakland County Slavery Society.

“Farmington was one of the prominent stations on the Underground Railroad,” said Nathan Power, reminiscing in 1873, a year before he died. He should know. “Uncle” Nathan had been Farmington’s school teacher, and had been the local “conductor” of the Underground Railroad. “A Strong antislavery sentiment prevailed here,” Power said.

“Uncle” Nathan lived in the old Quaker Meeting House, on Gill south of Grand River, which he had remodeled into a home. Today the logs and clapboards of this early structure are incorporated under the modern facades of Oak Hill Nursing Home.

Power was president of the Oakland County Anti-Slavery Society. At the 1836 meeting in

Ann Arbor which formed the Michigan Anti-Slavery Society, Power was elected vice-president. It was he who made the motion to "secure a press" in order to popularize abolitionist sentiment. From this came the Michigan Freeman, Signal of Liberty – published by the Michigan Liberty Press, an arm of the state organization. It's slogan (echoing Thomas Jefferson) was "Eternal Enmity to All Kinds of Oppression."

QUAKERS WERE prominent in the Underground Railroad, and Farmington was a community founded by Quakers. (This area is even denominated "Quakertown" on the earliest Michigan maps.) Not only were the Powers town founders and Quakers, many of them allied with the freedom movement.

Abram Power, a brother, was involved in the movement. The Lapham family at Lapham's Corners (Eight Mile and Farmington Road) harbored fugitives. The Thayers farm and the Chauncey Green farmhouse on Nine Mile near Drake were other points of succor.

Amy Lapham (daughter of Abram) married Ira Power; their home on Eight Mile in Livonia near Meadowbrook was perhaps a station. A second cousin, Jane Lapham, married George Wilber; from a farm in Livonia they moved to Grand River in Farmington. This home reputedly assisted fleeing blacks.

Abram Moore of Farmington married Hannah Roberts, father [sic] (daughter) of William Roberts and brother of Elisha Roberts. Elisha married Cynthia Lapham of Lapham's Corners. Ethan Lapham's daughter married Joseph Walton whose sister Marie married Robert Glazier of Ann Arbor. Glazier was "conductor" of an Ann Arbor station who forwarded fugitives to Nathan Power in Farmington. John Thayer who lived Drake and Nine Mile was a "conductor." All of these inter-

relationships were among Quakers who were strongly anti-slavery, and who did their small bit to foster freedom.

FARMINGTONIANS were well-instructed. Sojourner Truth spoke here, coming from her home in Battle Creek, often accompanied by escaped slaves who had been mistreated. People came from throughout Oakland County to hear this famed black woman recount stories of cruelty and drama.

Another Early Farmington Quaker, Dr. Ezekiel Webb, who was the area's first physician, had a daughter Emmeline who married into the Power family. Dr. Webb moved to the Raisin Valley and became active in the Anti-Slavery movement in Monroe.

How many escaping slaves went through Farmington to freedom? Illegal activities leave few records; the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 set a fine of \$1,000 for harboring run-away blacks in a day when a good eight-room home could be had for \$300, so data and records are few.

The Farmington Enterprise

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1921

5 Cents Single Copy \$1.50 A YEAR

Glimpse Of Farmington Village in Late Fifties

Early Days Not Without Their Tragedies

The early days in Farmington were not without the usual number of accidents and tragedies. One of the first accidents occurred on the hill by the former M. E. church. A man and woman in a buggy were going down the hill when the harness gave way in some manner, the horse became unmanageable, and the woman was thrown out and killed. And later two boys, Bill Andrews and Ira Scudder going home from Sunday School went swimming in the lower pond, got beyond their depth but were seen by Sam Hiles from the old house which stood just where the house of C. H. Ely now stands, and he gave the alarm. The boys were taken from the water, both apparently dead. They were rolled upon a barrel, a method in use to get the water out of their lungs. The Scudder boy was revived but the Andrews boy died.

In the early days of Farmington a man well and favorably known, who kept a general store in the building afterwards occupied by James I. Mead, became despondent and one morning disappeared. In a day or two search was begun. Finally his body with throat cut, was found under the hill near the edge of the pond, just a little west of Mr. Talbot's Green House. Nelson Wells is buried in the Quaker Cemetery.

George C. Collins, probably the only man living, has a pleasant recollection of Nelson Wells, who

used to carry him to his store and give him candy. Thadeous Andrews, a skillful mechanic, while working on the mill built at the foot of the hill, fell when the scaffolding gave way, from the third story. Thad struck on his hands and both wrists were broken. He recovered, and lived and worked at his trade for years afterward.

West on Shiawassee is the house built and occupied for many years by Dr. A. P. Hudson, now known as the Green House dwelling, its exteriorly the same as when built, probably eighty years ago. The first house beyond, west, is now just as when first built. In my first recollection on it was occupied by a tailor by name of Robinson, who afterwards moved to Lansing. No one living knows who built the house.

A few rods west of Mr. Talbot's dwelling on the north side of the street a half-acre was donated and a Presbyterian church was built, and used as such, and was the popular house of worship for many years. It was small but attractive and comfortable. It was perhaps 25x50 feet, with one center aisle leading from the south entrance to the pulpit at the north end. No steeple graced the roof, and the inside was finished with cherry. The pews all had doors to close when the renters had entered, giving the family the exclusive right to worship in that particular pew.

About seventy-five years ago the barn standing just about on the land on which M.B. Pierce's house now stands, was burned. It was filled with hay and the crop of wheat was that day, threshed and put in the bins of the barn. The barn and crops were a total loss. The barn was then the property of William L. Power. A man by name

of Stanton, who had a grievance against Power, was traced from the barn across the country to what has been known as the Gates farm. Probably there was other evidence for he was convicted and served a term in prison at Jackson.

The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXVII No.

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1923

5 Cents Single Copy \$1.50 A YEAR

FARMINGTON'S OLD STAGE LINES

Came With the Advent of Planked Roads and Disappeared With First Railroad

The planking of Grand River road in 1852 made possible the operation of stage coaches between Detroit and Lansing. The travel required two four-horse stage coaches daily with frequent extras as far as Farmington and often the extras were obliged to continue as far as Brighton or Howell. They ran daily, each carrying 24 passengers and most of the time every seat was taken. It was not an unusual thing to see eight or nine passengers riding on the top, so great was the travel at that date. The coaches were roomy and comfortable with good springs and when the road was in condition it was not an unpleasant way to travel if the passenger was not too eager to reach his destination. The mail was carried this way and the arrival of the coach carrying passengers and the mails were daily events of no little importance to the citizens along the way. Many of the drivers were well known to the patrons of the line. One of the most famous was John Blessed an expert with the lines and whip, and capable at all times of using and driving vicious horses which were ready to balk or run away at the first opportunity. On one occasion with another driver the horses became unmanageable and succeeded in getting away running up Main street with great speed. At the risk of his life a young man seeing the

peril of the people in the stage, rushed out and after incurring great danger in grabbing one of the frightened animals by the bits, succeeded in stopping the run-aways. The man who performed this feat, J. J. Webster, is still with us and a resident of Farmington. The fare from Farmington to Detroit was \$1.00. Some difference between that time and this. Now we have hourly service that is comfortable and safe and costing less than one-third of what it did in the stage coach days.

Claridge's hotel in Clarenceville now known as the old Botsford hotel, was one of the places on the line where the horses were changed and fresh ones took the places of those that had been driven from Detroit. One night in 1857 or 1858 the barn caught fire and 10 or twelve horses were burned to death. The coaches were owned by Hibbard and Bunell of Detroit, although at other times the former had other partners. The stage lines flourished until the opening of the Detroit, Lansing and Northern Railroad, now known as the Grand Rapids division of the Pere Marquette. After which they declined, first reducing their equipment to a single daily stage and then disappearing entirely.

N.H.POWER

The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXVIII No. 15.

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1924.

5 Cents Single Copy \$1.50 A YEAR

LOCAL HISTORY OF EARLY DAYS Animals Running at Large, Were Troublesome Problem For Councilmen

The village of Farmington was incorporated in the winter of 1866-67. Its original corporate limits were one mile square, being the west half of Sec. 27 and the east half of Sec. 28. The first charter election was held May 6, 1867, and the result was as follows:

P. Dean Warner – President
John Fairfield – Recorder
Justus B. Webster – Trustee
Anson Cloyes – Trustee
George Matthews – Trustee

Mr. Fairfield was a lawyer with an office on Main street.

Mr. J. B. Webster was a harness maker and for years occupied the building now owned by the Nelson sisters and used by them in their business. Its former location was on Division street south of Grand River avenue. Mr. Webster had many friends who were attracted to him by his genial disposition and winning personality. He was a well known man about town and prominent in its daily life. He died in October 1891.

Anson Cloyes at one time was part owner of the hotel afterwards known as the Owen House. He left town many years ago for the far west.

George Matthews resided in the house now occupied by John Mahanay and was superintendent of the Detroit and Howell Plank Road Company. His death occurred in Detroit years ago.

P. Dean Warner was too well known to need extended notice here. Always active in the public

welfare it was through his efforts that the village was incorporated. It was eminently fit and proper that he should be chosen its first president.

At the first session of the council held May 9, 1867 Mortimer Serviss was appointed marshal. Mr. Webster voted against him. Henry Riley was appointed pound master. All yeas. At this session a petition was received from Gardurous Webster, Horace Vaughan and others asking for the construction of a plank sidewalk on the south side of Grand River avenue. Also one from O. P. Hazard, Thomas Francis and others asking that one built on the north side of Grand River avenue.

At the regular session of the council held May 22, 1867 the bond of Harrison Philbrick as treasurer was approved and Warren Serviss was appointed street commissioner. At this time Farmington in common with most country villages, permitted the running at large of animals in the streets. The residents of the town protected their lawns and gardens by the erection of substantial fences and gates. Many families kept a cow that furnished milk and butter in quantities sufficient for their needs. The family bovine was a time honored institution not to be interfered with or unduly restrained. Bossy roamed at will in streets, lanes, and alleys and at frequent intervals made raids on unprotected gardens, vineyards, etc. These visits, usually nocturnal in character and destructive, and were not productive of harmony, peace and good will among the exasperated citizens who viewed with anger and dismay the havoc caused by the unrestrained liberty accorded to the animal who could

complacently chew her cud as she calmly views the desolation caused by her rash and ill-timed activity. Neither could a weary mortal hope to attain that peaceful slumber that his soul craved and his body demanded if the village cows were allowed to locate their evening camp in close proximity to his chamber window and at frequent intervals rend the air, and make the night hideous with that discordant instrument now happily obsolete, the old-fashioned cowbell. Hence it was that the first ordinance passed by the council was one that established a pound where stray animals could be confined until claimed by the owner, and prohibiting them from running at large upon the streets. But public sentiment would not sustain this decisive action and it was provided "That cows giving milk are exempt from that prohibition from the hours of 6 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock in the afternoon during the months of May, June, July, August, September, October and November of each year." Land was bought of Ira Tollman for a pound or enclosure to place animals like hogs, sheep, ducks, geese and goats found upon the streets.

This pound was located in the alley back of the Ford garage. Regulations were adopted stating the length of time an animal could be held. If not claimed within that time it was to be sold. The pound master was a busy man. Not infrequently he was in trouble with the owner of animals that he had impounded. Suits were brought by families and others who felt themselves aggrieved. The council sustained him and defended his action in the courts when necessary. It seems strange to us

citizens of our present day civilization that a reform like this would have such bitter opposition, but the records of the old councils teem with discussion over this matter. N.H.P.

Farmington Enterprise

FORTIETH YEAR--No. 25.

FARMINGTON, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 1928

Ten Pages

See a Copy: \$1.50 a Year

ELECTIONS WERE THRILLING IN THE 'GOOD OLD DAYS'

—
Votes Bought And Sold Freely
Years Ago, N. H. Power
Relates
—

Those who are dismayed at present election frauds need not think they are without precedent. In what some believe were "the good old days," votes were bought and sold, and cheaply too, as is shown by N. H. Power, in this week's installment of his review of Farmington history.

To add to the general feeling of dismay, a huge comet made its appearance in the Heavens. It had a long fiery tail. The movement of the Celestial Visitor was not understood by the people of the frontier settlement and some of them were ready to believe that the hard winter and the Comet together foretold the destruction of the world.

In the state of New York a man by the name of Miller claimed to have had a vision which he saw the Comet strike the earth at terrific speed, causing the destruction of both by the intense heat that was generated. A society was formed called "Millerites" which increased rapidly in membership. One of its advocates appeared here with scrolls and charts from which he preached. Night after night he talked to all who came in a building that stood near the present residence of Eugene Grace on Farmington Road.

Some believed and a few gave away their earthly belongings and procured robes for their departure

from earth which was scheduled to take place in April. But the April night came and went with nothing unusual happening and the Millerites faded away.

In 1827 the township was organized and an election was held the latter part of May. Amos Mead was chosen supervisor and Robert Wixom, clerk.

Many prominent citizens of the town have held the office of supervisor during the 100 years of its existence. Some of them have gone and left not a trace behind. For instance, Samuel T. Bryan was elected for five years, 1854 to 1859. I am unable to get any facts concerning him or his family. Ben Grace, Democrat, was elected for seven years, 1876 to 1883, in the fact of a Republican majority of at least 100. C. D. Owen defeated him by a 9 majority in 1883.

One supervisor, Albert A. Murry died after holding the office less than a year. He was the hardware merchant of the town and was universally beloved and respected. In the election of 1889 Chas. Button, Republican, received 184 votes and Wallace Hatton claimed 181. At the next election Hatton held his 181 votes while Button received only 180 and was defeated.

It was the days before the Australian Ballot Party spirit, especially in National elections was intense. Voters of today have no conception of the feeling that often existed. Friends of long standing often became bitter enemies during the heat of a campaign. Neighbors refused to speak to each other. The fitness of a man seeking office was forgotten and the only thing was his party affiliations. "Is he on my ticket?" was the only question considered. It was the common

practice to personally urge and solicit the voters to vote the party ticket. This was done in the building where the election was held and at other places. The law did not make the practice illegal.

All ballots were in the hands of the party workers who gave them to the voters and urged them to vote a straight ticket. There were voters whose politics were not well known and when they approached the polls to vote they not infrequently found themselves the object of much advice and solicitation in regard to their vote. The claims of the party candidates were urged upon them with great persistence. Quarrels between the party workers were not uncommon. Loud and angry words were used and fist fights narrowly averted.

Farmington Observer

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Monday, October 31, 1988

Farmington, Michigan

52 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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Enterprise captured the life and times

By Lee Peel
Local historian

THE YOUNG man who began Farmington's first newspaper has been dead since 1905.

Two lifelong residents of Farmington of my acquaintance who, as teenagers, heard their first music recordings in Gov. Warner's home on Grand River across the street from them, died last summer.

The oldest graduate of Farmington High School, Harriet Smith, Class of 1907, is 99 at this writing and confined to a nursing home in Northville. She was born the year the Farmington Enterprise published its first issue.

Thus, we cannot know firsthand what life was like in the 1880s or '90s in Farmington, Mich., but we can glean from records--public and otherwise--considerable information about the life and times of Farmingtonians.

We can assume and surmise and conclude. Much of history is thus written.

In the 1880s, there were no cars or buses or planes; no phones or television; no radios or computers; no electricity; no running water to kitchens or baths. In fact, there were no baths; there were out-houses. Water ran in the creeks, and in the River Rouge.

It was indeed a different world. How awful! Not really. When you have not had and do not know it, you do not feel deprived.

A HUNDRED years ago Farmington had many things. Farmington had horses and wagons and buggies. The mile roads, made of the stuff known as dirt, were in

place; so also the main north-south routes, albeit some with slightly different names than now. Eight thousand buggies or wagons or lone rangers did not each day traverse the Grand River Plank Road, as wheels today pound the pavement on Farmington's main thoroughfare.

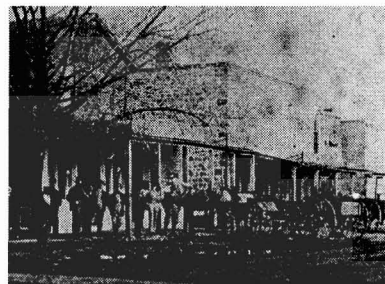
Farmingtonians, a hundred years ago, had kerosene for lights; bells for warnings and ringings and callings, for horsemen, schoolmasters, and housewives, in that order; they had patent medicines for ills and the ill-tempered; booze and churches for spirit, each of a different variety, to be sure; and water for necessity.

There was land, lots of land, to buy or build on. Once owned or rented, families cultivated their land, grew crops to eat or sell or give away. The land sustained Farmington. It fed the horses and cows and poultry; it fed the hungry mouths of the 2,500 or so folk who lived in the village and township.

In this time were the beginnings of the apple orchards for which Farmington gradually earned a measure of fame throughout the area, a fame that would last another half century. As the orchards blossomed, so also blossomed other aspects of the community.

Though the 1872 fire destroyed much of the north side of downtown Farmington, including some, but not all, public records belonging to the township, its ashes brought forth new buildings for those businesses lost to the fire, or entirely new ones.

IN 1876, the Town Hall, which still stands as a landmark today at



the corner of Farmington Road and Grand River, was built by the Township and the Masonic Lodge. It was an unusual union, one that would last longer than any real marriage ever does--over ninety years.

The new Town Hall provided a center of attraction, but, more importantly, a meeting place for the developing community. There were plays, musicals, pep rallies, athletic events, political and patriotic speeches, bond rallies in times of war, literary and philosophical and religious lectures. Almost anything imaginable had outlet in the old Town Hall; it was the social fulcrum of the time.

The activities in, or centered around, the Town Hall were legion for the next seventy-five years. World War II signaled more than the second great war to make the world safe for democracy. When the War came, it signaled finis to America's greatest depression. During World War II, women moved out of the hot kitchens and on to the assembly lines. What had been America's insipient love affair with the auto became now, as soon as cars rolled once more from the auto plants, a grand passion, and the increased use of the auto gradually diminished the importance of the Town Hall as a gath-

ering place. The Town Hall days of yesteryear began slowly to fade.

Yet, not entirely. Even today, the Town Hall (now the Masonic Lodge and the oldest continually used Lodge building in the state) and the property immediately adjacent thereto is a hub-bub of activity during Founders' Festival days, when craftpersons and vendors of all sorts sell their wares.

As in its earlier days, the people of Farmington in the period of the '80s and '90s wanted and encouraged education and the building of schools. The youngsters who went to the one-roomers had their class and public recitations, "graduations," picnics, and special programs on various holidays.

IN 1888, the Farmington Union High School was built, though a 1926 Enterprise account by Nathan Power states that he Power went to a high school in Farmington in 1852. Disputed also is the very first high school graduating class, but in 1989, Farmington High will celebrate its centennial graduating class. Principal Gerald Potter is already making special plans.

Schools and education occupy as much of the energy, thinking, planning, and money of its citizens today as they did with the citizens of the community in 1880. The evidence is as clear and resounding in those times as now.

One hundred years ago on Sept. 19, 1888, Farmington's favorite son married his girl, Martha (Mattie) Davis. It would be six years more (1894) before Fred Warner would be elected, first a state senator, and six more after that (1900) before he would move on to the secretary of state's office. And then followed in 1904, again in 1906, and in 1908, his election as governor of the State of Michigan.

For a very small town--we really were that--and one of literally hundreds in the state, to have one of its citizens elected to the highest office was a singular event and a

singular honor. Farmington had come of age. Warner was not just a force in his hometown but now a force in the whole state.

As in any age, the '80s and the '90s were the best of times and the worst. The impatient young, of course, decried them; the old sighed, accepted, and went on about their business. There is some truth and some error in both views.

But a community, whatever its mix of young and old, of impatient or satisfied, of rich or poor or in between, lives beyond the years of the oldest members, and each segment of its citizenry forms the subtle fabric into which we are all woven.

The Farmington Enterprise

1888

Official Publication for Farmington City and Township

1963

75th ANNIVERSARY

SEVENTY-SIXTH YEAR—No. 7

TWENTY-EIGHT PAGES

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1963

Looking Back Through The Files Since Enterprise Began in 1888

When E. R. Bloomer published the first edition of the Farmington Enterprise on November 2, 1888, all kinds of farm tools were in stock at Hatton's Hardware. You could get fancy goods and notions at Miss H. A. Nelson's shop. The veterinary surgeon, N. W. Hopkins was available at the Owen House on Saturdays for all who wished to consult him. The Central Barber Shop of S. J. Harwood offered artistic hair cuts and a fine line of cigars.

You could go to James L. Hogle, registered druggist, for everything from medicines to glass, and putty. Plans were also in the making to have a telephone installed in the Town Hall at Novi. Copies of the Enterprise sold for two cents and you could get a year's subscription for one dollar.

(1898)

WHEN THE FARMINGTON Enterprise was observing its tenth anniversary in 1898, the most prominent industry in the community was the thriving cheese factory, one of three in the area operated by the Hon. Fred M. Warner of Farmington, Senator for Michigan's 12th District. A new enterprise opened in 1898 which was the Farmington Exchange Bank, Farmington's first banking house.

The Farmington Roller Mills were turning out fifty barrels of flour a day in their third year of operation. Farmington's Owen House, boasted the finest inland Hotel in the State, had been in operation for nearly a quarter of a century. The Farmington Bakery and T. H. McGee's Drug Store were other thriving businesses.

(1908)

TRANSPORTATION service was one of the industry's which picked up considerably in the year 1908. Citizens could ride the DUR from the Farmington Junction to Detroit, Pontiac or Northville on trolleys scheduled every hour from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. Travelers could stop over at the Owen House for \$1.50 a day. Otis Lumber and Coal Yard was the Headquarters for hard and soft coal, lumber, shingles, cement, lime and roofing paper. Fred M. Warner of Farmington was the Governor of Michigan, serving his third term. Subscriptions to the Enterprise were still just one dollar a year. The Fred L. Cook and Company Store handled a large assortment of flannelettes and other dry goods.

(1918)

THE YEAR 1918 in Farmington: The community was saddened by the loss of two of its young men who were killed in action while

with the American troops in France. Bertrand Groves and Lemuel Walker were the Farmington boys who laid down their lives for their country during WWI. It was in their memory that the American Legion Post in Farmington was named, Groves-Walker Post 346. The Farmington Theater, Eisenlord and Card, proprietors, were showing the flicker, "Daughter of the West," starring Baby Marie Osborne on Saturday, December 15, 1918. Admission was 10 and 15 cents.

(1928)

THE YEAR 1928 was "a year of beginnings" in Farmington as local merchants held their first "Better Business Day" on April 7, the first Safety Patrol was organized in Farmington Schools, a street widening program was approved for Grand River, and several new businesses were opened locally including the George K. Checketts automobile agency and a new inn at Farmington Junction opened by S. A. Engel. Farmington High School athletic teams won basketball, baseball and golf titles. 'The widow of Farmington's last Civil War veteran, Mrs. W. H. H. Smith,' died on May 23. And you could get a one-pound can of Maxwell House Coffee for just 45 cents at the A & P Store.

(1938)

THE YEAR THE Farmington Enterprise celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, 1938, residents in the

community went to the polls in a special school election and approved by a vote of 166 to 8 the levying of a maximum of three per cent on property to retire a \$45,000 bond issue which in conjunction with a PWA grant of \$36,818 financed the construction of a new gymnasium and school auditorium. The new building allowed the old Thomas Street high school gym to be partitioned off to provide more classrooms. The high school football team got nipped by Keego Harbor in the league title game, 6-0. And you could buy two pounds of cream cottage cheese at the Farmington Dairy for just 15 cents.

(1948)

THE YEAR 1948 in Farmington ushered in carrier delivery service for the first time in the local Post office. James Nourjian was elected Commander of the Groves-Walker Post. Adult Education classes were approved by the School Board. Fire caused \$10,000 worth of damage to Westwin Kennels. Voters approved annexation of Floral Park Subdivision. Twenty-two football players were awarded FHS letters. Falcons trounced Wayne 38 to 28 in basketball opener. And you could get grade A eggs for 69 cents a dozen at Conroy's Market.

(1953)

TEN YEARS AGO in Farmington the Enterprise headlines told of the completion of the new Farmington Senior High School which was opened to students in September. Prominent news also included the special election on the no-hunting ban proposal which voters in the Township overwhelmingly approved. A new parking lot was acquired by the City through the purchase of land south of Grand River and east of Farmington Road. The Falcon gridders turned in a dismal season, 0-6-1. And a gal could get 51 gauge, 15 denier nylons for just 57

cents a pair at Dancer's Department Store.

(1958)

INCORPORATION attempts highlighted the activities in Farmington during the year 1958. Areas hoping to become incorporated as villages or cities to prevent their being annexed by the City of Farmington stimulated a heated campaign which ended with the proposals going down to defeat in the fall general election. The Farmington High School football team closed out their 1958 grid campaign with a perfect record and several players attained All-State honors. A man could get five pounds of Sunflower seeds from Dan Lowe's Hardware in Downtown Farmington for just 45 cents.

The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXVIII. No. 2.

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1923.

5 Cents Single Copy \$1.50 A YEAR

MAIL SERVICE NEARLY 100 YEARS

List of Postmasters Since 1826 With Short Biography of Several

The department is the one great branch of the government service that enters into the daily life of most of our people. We read about the army, the navy and other great departments of the government service but the post office department is the one we use right at our homes and the one of most interest to the average citizen. Through the kindness and courtesy of First Ass't Postmaster General John H. Bartlett of Wash., D.C., I am able to give the names of the men who have served as postmasters at Farmington since the office was created. The dates of their appointments are as follows:

Ezekiel Webb, Jan. 7, 1826
Amos Mead, May 22, 1830
John Thomas, May 28, 1836
Lorenzo P. Kneeland, Aug. 23, 1838
Elihu Ward, July 13, 1841
P. Dean Warner, Feb. 19, 1846
Mark Arnold, April 11, 1849
Warren P. Selby, April 27, 1853
Edmund S. McLain, May 4, 1858
Alex Watkins, Nov. 4, 1859
John W. Collins, Mar. 29, 1861
George W. Drake, Oct. 3, 1866
Thomas Francis, Aug. 5, 1867
John W. Collins, Nov. 8, 1869
C. Wesley Horton, Mar. 20, 1873
John W. Collins, June 21, 1873
Eli Woodman, July 17, 1885
M. Byron Pierce, Feb. 26, 1889
Edward C. Grace, May 22, 1893
M. Byron Pierce, May 4, 1897
Thomas H. McGee, Nov. 29, 1913

Dr. Webb the first postmaster, also the first physician in the town,

had his office in a log cabin on the corner now occupied by the residence of George Gildemeister. Frequently he delivered the mails to the patrons of the office while making his professional calls. Amos Mead, his successor, held the office for six years. The location of the office I am unable to ascertain. It was probably on Shiawassee street. At this time the mail came once a week from Detroit by horseback. The postage was 25 cents.

John Thomas succeeded Mead and had the office in his store near where the Baptist church now stands. He owned and occupied the farm that is owned at the present time, by C. F. Hatton. He was a prominent citizen. The man who succeeded him, Lorenzo P. Kneeland, held the office a little over two years. I am unable to secure any information concerning him.

Elihu Ward was appointed July 13, 1841. He had the office in the house now occupied by William Shears and wife. Mr. Collins tells me that he remembers going there after the mail in his boyhood days.

P. Dean Warner was the next man to get the appointment. This was given him Feb. 19, 1846. In the April following he was elected town clerk. This was the commencement of a long term of service to the town in various offices, all of which he filled with credit and honor to himself and benefit to the people whom he served. In his early life he was a democrat but joined the republicans soon after the formation of that party. In 1867 his party gave him the nomination for the legislature. He was elected and received the high honor of being chosen speaker when the house convened in its annual session, January 1869.

The Whigs elected General Tyler president in 1848, consequently a Whig must have the Farmington postoffice, and Mark Arnold was given the plum April 11, 1849. He was a lawyer, the first one in the town if my information is correct. His office was in a large weather-beaten frame building that stood where the house of Mr. Clare now stands on Shiawassee street. He was well versed in the law, was what is known as a good trial lawyer and was uniformly successful in his court practice. Legal papers that he drew were concise and accurate. In his youthful days he gave promise of a successful career in his profession but he lacked ambition and this coupled with some moral weakness cost him the respect of his fellow citizens. He left Farmington many years ago, and has long since joined the great majority. N.H.P.

The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXVIII. No. 3

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1923.

5 Cents Single Copy \$1.50 A YEAR

P.O. HISTORY DOWN TO DATE

John W. Collins, Civil War Veteran,
Held Record for Length
of Service

Warren P. Selby who, on the 27th day of April 1853, succeeded Mark Arnold as postmaster had the office in his jewelry store on Grand River avenue. He built and lived in the house now owned and occupied by John Ingersoll on Rogers street. He was a successful business man and well known to the townspeople. I am unable to secure any facts in regard to the man who succeeded him, E. S. McLain, who held the office until Nov. 4, 1859 when Alex Watkins was appointed. He conducted the office in his drug store which stood on Shiawassee street near the site now occupied by Talbot's greenhouse. His wife was Edna Arnold, daughter of Mark Arnold, a former incumbent of the office.

Abraham Lincoln became president March 4, 1861 and on the 29th of that month he appointed John W. Collins to the office. He filled the place under three presidents and held the record for length of time in the position. George W. Drake or Major Drake, who was a soldier in the Civil war was made postmaster Oct. 3, 1860. His term of office was a short one, less than a year. Why so I am unable to say. Perhaps he did not satisfy Andrew Johnson who was president at that time. August 5, 1867 Thomas Francis was named to succeed Drake. He kept the

office in his grocery store which is now the meat market of Herman Schroeder. He held the position a little over two years and gave way Nov. 8, 1869 to Collins, who began his second term on that date. Wesley Horton was the successor of Collins March 20, 1873. He conducted the office in his store which was located in the building now used by Pagel's restaurant. Four months afterward having sold his store to A. L. Power he resigned the office and Collins took hold for the third time June 21, 1873. Mr. Collins was a stalwart republican which fact he was not ashamed of. His party was in power at Washington and he continued in office until July 17, 1885 when he was succeeded by Dr. Woodman, a democrat of the old school. The doctor was a well known citizen with many friends. He established the office in his drug store which stood on the lot now occupied by the Peoples State bank. T. H. McGee, our present postmaster, was his assistant. Ben Harrison was elected president in Nov. '88 and took office in March '89. A short time prior to this the office had become vacant by the resignation of Dr. Woodman and M. Byron Pierce was named for the place Feb. 26, 1889. Grover Cleveland twice president of the United States, began, his second term March 4, 1893 and on May 22 of the same year appointed Edward C. Grace to succeed Mr. Pierce. The new appointee was a successful business man of the town in good standing and a resident since his boyhood days. His office was in the store now occupied by Fred Pauline. He held office a few days less than four years and was succeeded by the

former postmaster M. B. Pierce May 4, 1897. Mr. Pierce came near breaking the record of Mr. Collins for length of service. He held the place until Nov. 29, 1913. His two terms of office combined make a period of 20 years, 9 months and 21 days. He was an efficient officer and popular with the patrons of the office.

The successor of Mr. Pierce was Mr. T. H. McGee, our present well known and competent postmaster who was appointed Nov. 29, 1913, ten years ago Thanksgiving day of this year. N.H.P.

The Farmington Enterprise

Farmer's Command to Tear Down House Saved Village in Fire of '72

Conflagrations and floods have long been classed as the two most destructive agencies in our civilization. From the latter our city happily has never suffered. But from the former we have not always been exempt.

The summer of 1872 will long be remembered as one of excessive drought. Because of this condition, buildings had become as dry as tinder. About 2 a.m. on the morning of October 9, 1872, fire broke out in the dry goods store of O. B. Smith

It was long before the days of a fire department. The water supply what little there was, came from two wells, one in the street in front of the shop now occupied by Ben Myers and the other on the Owen Hotel property. A bucket-brigade was formed, but while it proved effective in saving the hotel, it could do little in preventing the destruction of the business part of the village.

Roofs were set on fire by hot cinders and at one time it looked as if the whole town was doomed to destruction. Among the buildings destroyed was Dr. Woodman's drug store, the store of W.B. Selby, and O. B. Smith, the dry goods store of Porter Shepard and the Masonic Lodge—with all of its records and furniture. One very unfortunate feature was the destruction of the Township clerk's office, with all of the early history of the town and the official records of his office.

Buildings near the burning area were covered with wet blankets and robes. These were dried quickly by the heat from the fire, and had to be wetted down time and again. The roof of the Owen House was among those protected in this way.

On some of the ground now occupied by the Boston Shoe Repairing Shop and back from the street stood the dwelling house of Thad Kent. It was directly in the path of the on-coming flames. Aroused by the light of the conflagration Chauncy W. Green, well-known farmer, who owned and occupied the farm where Elmer Empson now lives, mounted one of his horses and rode into town with great speed. He sensed the situation at once.

Born to command, with a voice that could be heard above the roar and din he shouted, "Why men, don't you see what you've got to do? You've got to tear that house down—take the fuel away from the fire."

Then he began to give intelligent direction to the work of the frenzied fire fighters.

Stout ropes were procured and attached to the timbers of the Kent house. Men and women, too, seized the ropes and with all the strength they possessed tugged and pulled at the resisting building, until it came tumbling down, and the greater part of it was hauled out of the path of the fire. Foiled by this act and cheated of its prize, the fire subsided.

I was 12 years old and this event made a vivid impression upon my mind. I recall one or two incidents clearly.

About 10 a.m. of the day succeeding the fire and while some of the citizens were mournfully viewing the work of the fire-fiend, a travelling salesman, well known to the merchants drove into town. A successful salesman, he was also a Republican in politics and one of the stalwart aggressive type. In state elections of the day before, his party had carried the day everywhere. Approaching the group of citizens and speaking to them in impressive tones he said, "Gentlemen, we have lost the city, but saved the Country." The men to whom he spoke had lost nearly all the worldly goods that they possessed, but they could not help smiling at this remark.

One other incident I recall. Two men, residents of the town and not losers by the fire, renewed an old quarrel and came to blows. Norman Lee, a highly esteemed citizen of the village, made haste to separate them and while doing so rebuked them in words that they never forgot, shaming and denouncing "men that were willing to quarrel and fight at such a time," and in the face of the greatest calamity that the town had ever experienced. Norman Lee was the great uncle of Henry Lee, the hardware merchant and at the time I write of, resided in the house now occupied by Spencer Heeney. —N. H. Power

Farmington rebuilt from ashes

On Oct. 9, 1872, fire destroyed much of downtown Farmington. City records were lost, but life was spared.

**BY DAVID LITOGOT
SPECIAL WRITER**

Urban fires have always been tragic disasters.

The San Francisco Fire of 1906, which destroyed three fourths of the city and took 700 lives, was caused by the Great Earthquake.

The Chicago Fire of 1871 destroyed \$200 million worth of buildings and left 100,000 people homeless.

Even the Detroit Fire of 1805, ignited by hot ashes from a workman's pipe hitting dry hay, left the city in ashes.

Farmington, too, had a great fire. The summer of 1872 was a dry one. Most of the buildings in downtown Farmington were made of wood and built close together.

About 2 a.m. on Oct. 9, fire broke out in the dry goods store of O.B. Smith on the north side of Grand River. Cowley's Inn is located there today. The fire spread eastward and destroyed a millinery shop, a jewelry store, a shoe shop and two dry goods markets.

Since there was no fire department, a bucket brigade was formed using two nearby wells as sources. The effort saved only the Farmington Hotel, later called Owen House. The site is a parking lot today.

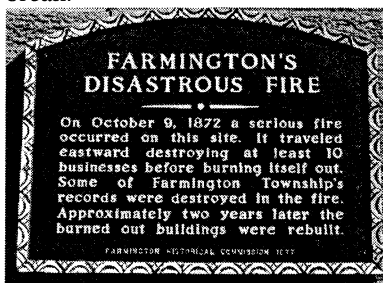
The Masonic Temple, housed in the second story of Smith's store, was destroyed along with all of the

township clerk's records and thus a large part of the early history of our town.

According to the 1928 anniversary issue of the Farmington Enterprise, "buildings near the burning area were covered with wet robes and blankets. These dried quickly by the heat from the fire and had to be wetted down time and again."

The fate of the downtown area looked bad until a local farmer came to the rescue. Chauncey W. Green lived nearby and was awakened by the fire. He dashed to town on his horse and quickly sized up the situation.

"Born to command, with a voice that could be heard above the roar and din," he ordered the house belonging to Thad Kent to be torn down. Giving instructions, Green had ropes found and men and women pulled down that stubborn house. The lumber was pulled away and the fire stopped at the break.



The next day, a travelling salesman rode into town. An aggressive Republican still joyous over his party's success in the recent elections, he told the citizenry, "Gentlemen, we have lost a city, but saved the country."

This was humorous even to those men and women who had lost so much in the disaster.

From the ashes, Farmington rebuilt. A new building housing both the Masonic Temple and City Hall was constructed – a building that still graces Farmington's downtown.

The rubble was replaced with newer businesses and the north side of Grand River today makes up a vital part of the central business district.

Another fire in 1909 burned its way north from Grand River along Farmington Road and stopped just short of the Baptist Church. Along the way, it destroyed a number of barns and houses, including that of the local undertaker, Sergius Lyon. The fire started in a barn by children playing with firecrackers.

The first high school in town was named the Union School. It sat approximately where the retirement high rise sits today near the Farmington Training Center. It was built in 1888 and burned in 1918. The early morning January fire destroyed a good portion of the building before an alarm was turned in. The 15 tons of coal in the basement probably made firefighting rather difficult.

A newer school building next door was spared. The 115 students in the lower grades were given a few weeks vacation before classroom space could be found. Later that year a new school was built.

The First Methodist Church at one time sat on a hill on Shiawassee Street. It burned to the ground in 1920, thanks in part to a twisted hose and low water pressure. The Methodists rebuilt on Grand River.

There have been many fires since. Fortunately today, we have dependable firefighting service, fire hydrants, and an alert citizenry.

David Litogot is a history teacher at Woodale Elementary School in Farmington Hills.

The Farmington Enterprise

FORTY-SECOND YEAR—No. 26

THE FARMINGTON ENTERPRISE, FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, MAY 1, 1930

6c A Copy, \$1.50 A Year

Influence of Mesmerism, Work Of Early 'Dentists' In Farmington

Interesting anecdotes of early days in Farmington, including a number of stories known to few residents of the town, and not previously published, are included in "Some Facts Concerning Farmington City," read before the Farmington Exchange Club by Nathan H. Power Wednesday noon. It is as follows:

The land on which our city is located was surveyed by the U. S. Government probably as early as 1815. Section lines had been run and markers placed so that the first settlers that came in 1824 were able to locate their claims by section number. A dense and magnificent growth of trees covered the land. They were of many varieties and some of them were centuries old, fine specimens of the Creator's handiwork.

Why was this particular spot chosen for the pioneer settlement? There was more than one reason probably. First, the soil was dark and rich and was suitable for farming purposes. There was also the creek near at hand and a much larger stream than it is at the present time. Also the Indian trail which was the direct route to Detroit and over which the Indians headed by their Chief Okemos went to get their bounty from the Government. Shiawassee street and the Old Farmington road follow this trail.

"Howl of Wolf"

One of the very first acts of a pioneer after his arrival upon his claim was to build a log cabin to live in. It usually had only one room. Many had no windows.

Some only dirt floors. The better ones had floors of bass wood logs split through the center. Most of the fireplaces were made of sticks gathered from the woods. A lamp was made by placing some grease and a cloth wick in an open saucer, and lighting it. After this came the tallow candle. Table and benches were made by split logs supported by posts driven into the ground. Their slumber on rudely constructed beds was at times disturbed by the howl of the wolf or the screech of the wild cat. Friction matches were unknown and if the fire went out someone had to go to a neighbor's house after coals.

There were no roads for a time and visits were made on foot. Settlers frequently passed a period of sickness and might die and be buried before friends at a distance were told of their condition. What a change these early settlers of our city saw when they left the old established civilization of New York State with all of its comforts and came to the forests of Michigan, with its wild animals, its Indian trails, its privations and hardships. Notwithstanding these hard conditions, most of them were happy and contented. They worked hard, slept well and enjoyed good health.

In the latter part of the year 1826 Arthur Power had his saw mill completed. It stood nearly back of where the Baptist church is located. It was operated by water power, and speedily for that time, at least, cut into lumber the logs drawn to it. With lumber cheap and plenty, business places began to be erected and frame buildings took the place of log cabins. Among the

very early stores was one conducted by James Mead. He was a good businessman and well liked. One night his store was entered and goods were stolen. The thief left no clue to his identity, and the officers were unable to locate him.

"A Strange Power"

At that time a strange power called mesmerism had made its appearance, and was much talked about. It is better known at the present time by the name hypnotism. There was a man in town who, under its influence, developed a power of solving mysteries. Mead, the owner of the store, knew this and sought his aid. After he went into this hypnotic state Mead asked him if he could tell him who it was that robbed his store. He said he could not describe the man but he could see some of the goods that were stolen and that they were hidden in a large hollow tree that stood on the farm now owned by Mr. Webber of Detroit. Search was made and the goods were found in the place he described. I have this story from sources I think that are reliable.

About 1840 Mead sold his store, went to Lansing and became proprietor of one of the largest stores in the capitol city.

Among the early stores in the little village was that of Mr. Wells who committed suicide in 1836 on the banks of the creek, nearly back of the Fred Staman house. He cut his throat with a razor. I think he was the only business man in Farmington that ever went out that way.

About 1829 Arthur Power built a grist mill at the foot of the McGee Hill. Part of the dam and some of the foundation timbers can still be seen. In the early years of the settlement it was necessary to go to Birmingham for flour. Near where stood the mill Mathew Tays

built a distillery. He made whiskey principally from corn. It sold for about 50 cents a gallon. People went there and got their jugs filled. Many people used it. There were no restrictions and no tax. Then as now there was some drunkenness.

One day in the late fall he sold a man a jug of whiskey. The weather was cold. The man drank too much of it, laid down on the ground where he was found nearly frozen. He died shortly after. Some time after this the distillery went out of business. About ten or twelve years after the first settlement the street we call Shiawassee began to have the appearance of a small village. The road was good in the summer.

\$1.25 An Acre

People built any type of a building they wished to. There were no restrictions. Most of the land was sold for \$1.25 an acre. Most of the families had a cow, some of them two. They ran wild through the woods. Many of them kept hogs which they fattened, in a pen on the back end of their lot. It might be close to the spring or well where the family got drinking water but nothing was thought of it. At times the hog pen might smell to Heaven but the neighbors were accustomed to it. Perhaps some of the typhoid fever that at times was epidemic might be based on this condition.

Marked advancement has been made by the medical profession in the treatment of this disease. In the early days of Michigan it claimed its victims by the score. Then the patient was allowed no water to assuage his thirst, but little restriction was placed on his diet. Modern medicine has just reversed this practice and deaths from this disease are not many.

The physicians who ministered to the wants of the people of Farmington in the early days of its history were heroic men. Bold, fearless. They went at any time of night or day, often on horseback over roads that were impossible to

travel in any other way. Sometimes where there was only blazed trees or an Indian trail. Previous to 1846 surgical operations were performed without the use of anesthetics. Ether was used that year for the first time. A broken arm or leg had to be set or a bad flesh wound sewed together with the patient entirely conscious. They were present at the birth, often signed the will and frequently sat at the death bed of some poor soul.

"He Saved Others"

Among the doctors who were successful and popular in the pioneer days were Dr. Wixom, Dr. Hudson, and Dr. Steinhoff. The latter's home was the place now owned by Spencer Heeney. He was noted for his kindness and his skill, was held in high esteem by the entire community. His untimely death by accident was deplored by all. Without a family, a bachelor, and no near relatives, his friends laid him away in Oakwood Cemetery and over his resting place erected a marble shaft which bears these lines. "He saved others but himself he could not save."

Shortly after Grand River avenue was laid out, built and used for traffic, a disease that baffled the physicians, swept over the town which had grown to considerable size. There had been a number of deaths and some of the citizens were in a state of panic about it.

Where the Methodist Church building now stands, on this corner there had resided for a number of years a wagonmaker by the name of Jacob Drake. His shop faced Grand River as did the small frame house which he and his wife occupied. He was a disciple of Tom Paine, read his books, never was seen in church, was a short thick set man with a belief and philosophy that scouted the teachings of the Bible in regard to future rewards and punishment.

Feared He 'Had It'

As the disease that I have mentioned became more prevalent

and fatal, Drake seemed much disturbed and fearful. He talked with his friends and inquired about the symptoms that foretold the onslaught of the malady. One day he came from his shop and informed his wife in despairing words that he was sick—very sick, with the awful complaint and to call the doctor at once.

The doctor came, looked at the patient's tongue, counted his pulse, spoke encouraging, left medicine and departed. He told Mrs. Drake to keep him in bed and said he did not have the dread disease. Drake was not satisfied and as the day progressed insisted that he was much worse and was probably not long for this world, and told his wife to call a minister without delay. This she did and the preacher knowing Drake and his beliefs was surprised to get the call. But he read the Bible and prayed with the sick man. The prayer was tender and fervent and in it he said "We bow in humble submission to Thy will, O Lord, but we ask that if it is not too much to ask that thou will restore this man to health and to his family."

"Dwell on That"

As the minister said this Drake spoke up from where he lay and said, "Brother, dear brother, dwell on that point," do dwell on that point. Drake did not have the disease, was up in a few days but it was some time before he heard the last of this incident.

The village was many years old before there was a graduate dentist with an office in town. Loat Smith, who came about 1870, was the first that I can remember. And I think the first one who cleaned teeth and filled the cavities. He was noted for his wit, liked a good horse and had a passion for amateur theatricals. He organized a company and they presented several plays using the church for the purpose. "Ten Nights In A Bar Room" was their first undertaking. The writer of these lines, then a boy, was there.

Since that time it has been his privilege to see some of the men and women who have become world famous because of their wonderful delineation of life and character upon the stage. But at no time or no place has he derived more satisfaction than at that amateur performance, crude though it was, where he caught his first glimpse of the mimic world. Truly, it has been said that "All the world is a stage and men and women were merely players."

Part of the work of a doctor in pioneer days was to fill teeth and they usually carried a set of old-fashioned turnkeys with them. This instrument never failed to induce an aching molar to leave its firmly imbedded place in your jaw and come out into the open. It might and sometimes did bring a piece of the jaw with it but the victim then, as now, was ready to pay the price if he could rid himself of the toothache. One of the first school-masters in the town would and did pull teeth when the occasion demanded.

One day a man came to his home with a raging toothache and asked to have it extracted. He sat upon the ground and leaned his head back against a stump and pointing to the offending tooth as best he could calmly awaited action on the part of the amateur dentist. Soon a tooth was yanked out which on examination proved to be entirely sound and not the one wanted. Again the instrument was used and this time the tooth that ached was pulled. The patient much relieved thanked the operator and went away smiling and satisfied. He did not even tell the operator to charge it.

The Farmington Enterprise

FORTY-SECOND YEAR—No. 27

THE FARMINGTON ENTERPRISE, FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN THURSDAY, MAY 3, 1930

5c A COPY; \$1.50 A Year

Capture of Gang of Counterfeiters *An Exciting Episode Here Long Ago*

Following is the concluding portion of the historical article read last week by Nathan H. Power before the Farmington Exchange Club, the first part having been printed in last week's Enterprise:

* * *

(By N. H. Power)

When the first settlers came, game was abundant. Bears, deer, wolves, squirrels were numerous. Quail, partridge and wild turkeys were plentiful. One day in the fall an uncle of mine, while riding horseback on the Ten-Mile road, opposite the property now known as the Farmington Woods subdivision, told me that he saw a flock of wild turkeys at least 50 in number cross the road just a few rods ahead of him.

Near what is now known as the Orchard Lake road, a farmer began to lose his pigs and other small stock, which he rightly guessed was the work of wolves. He bought a large steel trap, set it and baited it with meat. In a little over a year he caught seven wolves in it. One so large and strong that he was able to pull out of the ground the stake to which the trap was fastened and dragged trap and stake nearly half a mile where they became stuck between two trees and where the wolf was found and killed.

Wolf Chases Wooer

This story I am going to relate was told me many years ago. I am not sure that it is entirely true yet it was told me with great detail and could have easily occurred. The son of the man who caught the wolves had become very much attached to the charming daughter of a neighbor. Their homes were

about a mile apart. He was an ardent lover and saw her often. One evening after the day's work was over and he had eaten his supper he started to call upon her.

Usually he took a short cut across the fields and woods, but it was a dark rainy night in November, and he chose to go the long way around the road. He was a stalwart young man, confident and fearless usually. With the exception of a pocket knife he was unarmed.

He started on his journey at a brisk pace, fearing nothing, happy in the thought that he would soon meet the one who was all in all to him. It was a lonely road then as it is now. Less than half way to the home of his intended he was startled by a strange noise, as if some creature was in pain. He had seen some young horses in the field and thought first that one of them was making the noise. There was a high rail fence between him and whatever it was, and on the other side of this fence the animal seemed to be going in the same direction he was going. Soon the animal whined like a dog in distress, and he knew it was not a colt. Suddenly a shaggy, huge form leaped to the top of the fence and lunged in the road a few feet behind him.

He opened his knife, walked faster and finally ran. He thought he could hear the brute coming behind him. He lost no time but did a marathon that would have been a credit to a professional. Nearly breathless and well nigh exhausted, he finally got to the girl's house

and after a while was able to tell his story.

It Was A Bear

He thought it wise to postpone his return home until the next morning and on his way met a man whom he knew well. He carried a powerful rifle. And on the young man telling him his experience of the night before, informed him that it was a large bear that he had seen and also that he had been wounded the night before by the hunter who had followed the animal until darkness prevented further pursuit. He had also said that a wounded bear is a dangerous foe and he was lucky to escape an attack. That same day the bear was followed to a swamp where he had taken refuge and killed. He was full grown and very large.

Sometimes, and especially within the last few months, business has been none too good and in the common parlance of the street we have had what we call hard times. It is a condition that the pioneers faced most of the time. For years the nearest banks were located in Detroit. Finally a law was passed to make banks more numerous and which would also enable the people to transact business more easily. The law's intent was good but it was loosely drawn and easily abused. Very soon after, the law went into effect, many banks were organized in Michigan.

"Wild Cat Banks"

These banks were allowed to issue paper money on insufficient security. Much of this money went into circulation and when the day came for the redemption of these notes there were no funds and they were valueless. These institutions finally became known all over the country as Wild Cat banks, and the

money Wild Cat money. They failed rapidly. A bill whose face value was \$100 today might not be worth 10 cents tomorrow and the holder of the paper would be compelled to stand the loss. We have had some very costly lessons in finance but they have been highly beneficial and we have profited to such an extent that our money, gold, silver, or paper is worth at all times and places its face value.

One of the episodes long remembered in this vicinity was the operation and capture of a gang of counterfeiters, two of whom at least resided in Farmington on Shiawassee avenue. In those days the money was called bogus money and they made nothing but 50 cent pieces which they made at night in a building that was used as a blacksmith shop in the day time. It stood on Grand River on a four corners a mile or two this side of New Hudson. To old settlers in that vicinity the place is still known as Bogus Corners.

There were six or eight men engaged in the making of the stuff. One of whom was an expert workman. He it was that made the dies from tin and lead. Enough pure silver was used to make the coins jingle and when the metal, tin lead and silver was very hot it was poured into the mold stamped with the die and he told me that they foolishly let a minister into their organization who demanded \$50 to pay a debt he owed. This they refused at first but being persistent he got the money, paid his debt, but the fact that it was all in 50 cent pieces led to their detection. I have always doubted this part of his story but it may be true.

Raided At Night

However, one night the United States marshal with his forces of men, some of whom were from Farmington, raided the place. Some of the culprits escaped for the time, but they were all finally captured and punished. The man I was acquainted with got two years in prison. After he served his time he

became a farmer and lived a useful life.

They made his wife a prisoner and charged her with being an accessory to the fact. After her arrest she was placed in a building that stood about where the house of the late George Clare is located on Shiawassee avenue. She was well-known about town and her arrest caused no little excitement.

One "Treatment" Enough

A number of people went to the house where she was detained to get a glimpse of her. Her room was on the lower floor of the house and it was only partially completed. There were cracks in the siding where people on the outside could peek through and see the prisoner. She was ready for them. By some means she had procured a quantity of red pepper and when some over-curious person stuck his face close to a crack in order to see the prisoner she would blow some of this fiery stuff from the hollow of her hand into his eyes. A victim of this treatment did not go back for a second dose.

After a little she was released and was never brought to trial. She was a woman of great energy of rugged health and lived to be nearly 90 years old.

The building in which this episode occurred was owned by Mark Abbott a man who occupied a prominent place in the early history of this village. Law was his profession. He had a large practice, was known as a good trial lawyer and was uniformly successful in his court practice. Legal papers that he drew were concise and accurate. He was made postmaster in 1849 and held the office for four years.

In his youthful days he gave promise of a successful career in his profession. But he lacked ambition and this coupled with some moral weakness cost him the confidence and respect of his fellow citizens. He left Farmington many years ago, went to another part of the state where he died a pitiful death among strangers.

"The Institute"

Near where the woman was imprisoned stood the Oakland County Institute, a private school taught by Miss Wheelock. At times she had as high as 100 pupils and they ranged from a boy like myself, learning the alphabet to older pupils about to graduate in higher mathematics, grammar, U.S. history, etc.

She was a teacher of high ideals. The Bible was read every morning at the opening of school, followed by a fervent prayer and woe to the lad who failed to keep his head lowered during its utterance. If he did not, he might find himself kneeling on the platform by the side of the teacher at the next morning's devotions. To her the Bible was the inspired word of God. She had implicit faith in the Great Teacher and was loyal and faithful disciple to the end.

The school was highly successful for a number of years. It long since ceased to exist, most of her pupils have followed her to the silent land, but as long as they lived the influence of her life and teaching remained with them.

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