

Businesses

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The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXVII. No. 52

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9 1923.

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GLANCE AT EARLY BUSINESS HISTORY

The First General Store Here was
Established in 1830 by
Stephen Page

To be successful in business has been the ambition of a great many men. Farmington like other towns in its class has seen various business enterprises launched at different times in its history. While the town has not produced a John Wanamaker or a Marshall Field and has not been without its failures some of its business men have been at least fairly successful.

The first general store at Farmington village was conducted by Stephen Page in a building that stood on the north side of the street and west of the present location of the Baptist church. This was about the year 1830. Another store was opened soon after near Page's by Henry Miller. Just how profitable these stores were to their proprietors is not known. Among the other early stores in the village were those of Mr. Wells who committed suicide in 1836 on the banks of the creek, nearly north of the residence now occupied by John Power. He is buried in the Quaker cemetery. George W. Collins and James I. Mead were early storekeepers. The former moved from his farm southwest of town and succeeded Dr. Webb as postmaster, when the latter removed from the village. He opened his store in a small red building at the corner west of the tavern. This little building occupied the ground, or nearly so, of the present home of Mrs. McGee. About 1840 James I. Mead

removed to Lansing where he became a very successful merchant and died at an advanced age.

John Thomas and Daniel S. Lee were also early merchants of Farmington. With the construction of the Grand River plank road in 1851 the business portion of the village moved on to that street. In 1850 the old tavern was destroyed by fire and its proprietor, Horace Swan, built the hotel known to later generations as the Owen House, which was to serve the public for nearly 70 years. Some of the buildings on Shiawassee street were moved to the new business center. Among these was the one destroyed by fire on the morning of January 20, 1922. At least 75 years old this structure had seen many changes and had had many tenants who had used it for various purpose. In this store P. Dean Warner began his long business career. Myron Botsford was his partner at one time. James H. Murray bought the business from Mr. Warner. A saloon was the next occupant of the place. In '61 and '62 it was used as a recruiting station by Wesley Green. In the early '70s Dr. Moore used it as a drug store and after a year or two sold the business to Dr. Woodman. The drug store gave way to a furniture store owned by the Kynast brothers. After their failure Edwards and Perry conducted the same kind of business in the old store. Matt Edwards is still living in California. He is a veteran of the Civil war.

Among the last to occupy the building were N. J. Eisenlord with a picture show and Mark B. Owen with an Auto Shop. The building now occupied by the A. & P. store stood for years on the ground now traversed by the D.U.R. as it leaves Grand River avenue to go to North-

ville. John Collins was the founder and proprietor of a grocery business that has continued in this building for a long term of years.

George W. Collins, father of John, settled in Farmington in May 1824. His mother was the first white woman in the town. Born a short distance east of the house now owned and occupied by Tom Irving he had the distinction of being the first white child born in the town. In the years that he was in business he made a record for honesty and integrity that was unassailable. He was honored by the citizens of the town with office time and again and was postmaster for a longer term of years than any other individual. He died August 19, 1913, aged 89 years.

The Farmington Forum

April 11, 1974

Village of North Farmington- B. 1830, But Faded into History

By Ruth Moehlman

As the settlers came to Farmington in the 1830s and carved farms of the dense Michigan forests, various villages were established to offer services to the farmers.

On the north edge of Farmington township at Farmington road and 14 Mile road, a small village was established. It extended south to 13 Mile road. By 1850, it contained stores, blacksmiths, a school, a post office, a cemetery and a church. A cheese factory operated nearby on Drake road a quarter of a mile south of 14 Mile road.

The area grew up because it was on the route from Pontiac to Farmington. Once one reached Farmington after 1837 it was possible to take the old plank road on what is now Grand River south to Detroit, Michigan's largest city, or to Lansing, the state capitol. In the early days Orchard Lake road, a county road, ran from Pontiac to 14 Mile road and then meandered down to 12 Mile, where it disappeared.

* * *

ABOUT 1850, the traveler could follow Orchard Lake road from Pontiac to 14 Mile road and then go west on 14 Mile to Farmington road and follow it south into Farmington Village.

Orchard Lake road did not become a through road until 1924. By 1900, there was a street car operated by the Detroit Street Railways that ran from the Junction at Grand River down what is now

Orchard lake road to Pontiac, but there was no through roadway.

Thus the 14 Mile and Farmington road intersection became an important location.

* * *

ON FEBRUARY 11, 1847, it was important enough for a post office to be established. Chauncey D. Wolcott became the first postmaster of the North Farmington post office. Wolcott's lands were located north 13 Mile road and east of Farmington road. He may have operated some sort of store at the 13 Mile and Farmington corners, for that area was known at one time as Wolcott Corners. A great-grandson later operated a store at Fourteen Mile and Farmington roads.

The next appointee as postmaster was Nathaniel Thompson. The Thompson farm was on 13 Mile road between Farmington road and Drake road. When Thompson died in 1865, the post office was moved to 14 Mile and Farmington road by Postmaster Thomas Morston.

Then John H. Button was postmaster. The Button farm is on Twelve Mile west of Farmington road. Button was succeeded by Thomas C. Armstrong who moved the post office across the road into West Bloomfield.

* * *

ON OCTOBER 1, 1896, Rural Free Delivery was established. Many of the small post offices throughout the country were closed, including the North Farmington Post Office, on September 15, 1902.

The North Farmington area was still a very active village even though the post office closed. Around the turn of the century a milk depot was established on the Dickie farm in West Bloomfield, on the northeast corner of Farmington road and 14 Mile.

The North Farmington Cemetery is a landmark of the little North Farmington community. Among the postmasters were two of the men who had been active in establishing the North Farmington Cemetery.

IT WAS ORGANIZED in 1837, the year Michigan became a state, by Chauncey D. Wolcott, John Button and Orange Culver. The Wolcott and Culver farms were next to the cemetery, Wolcott donated the land and it was called the Wolcott Cemetery by some. It is still in operation today on Farmington road between 13 and Fourteen Mile roads.

At one time, a Baptist Church was located on the cemetery grounds.



THE NICHOLS SCHOOL at Thirteen Mile road and Farmington road was where youngsters from North Farmington went to school. The school was also used as a social center for the neighborhood.

The Nichols school, which acquired its name because it was located on the Nichols farm land, was attended by children in the North Farmington area. The school served as a community center as well, for some of the functions of the neighborhood were held in the school.

The Farmington Forum, 04-11-1974

An attraction near the school was the large elm tree growing right in the center of the intersection of 13 Mile and Farmington roads.

The Nichols school is still in its original location and hopefully there will be an effort made to preserve and restore it.

THE RURAL SCHOOLS from about 1830 when the first Farmington school was established contained all eighth grades and the teachers had to make up their own course of study. Often the woman teacher taught when it was farming season and a man who could better deal with the difficult older boys would teach during the winter season.

Only an eighth grade education and a county exam qualified a teacher around the turn of the century.

The Farmington schools were run by the Township Board until 1944, when the district was consolidated. The five individual districts and three fractional districts were locally supported. Youngsters going to high school had to pay tuition. Part of the tuition was supplied by their local elementary district.

* * *

THE BUSINESS district at the corner of 14 Mile road and Farmington roads extending south was a relatively busy area around 1900. The area's agriculture specialized in milk production and apple orchards.

Because the Dickie milk receiving station was located at the 14 Mile and Farmington road intersection, the area continued as a little trade center.

About the time the milk receiving station became established, the Spring Brook cheese factory, which had been operated on Drake road, stopped doing business. Only the pipes from the brook and the foundation remain today.

THE CREAMERY was operated by John Dickie and later his sons, Allen and Ed. Ed Dickie drove the milk truck which took the milk into the Detroit City Creamery. Stewart Coe, who was born in 1912 in the drygoods store that his father operated, can remember two horses pulling Ed Dickie's truck out of the mud during certain seasons so that he could deliver the milk to Detroit.

In the house in which Stewart Coe was born, Albert Coe and his wife operated a store in the front of the house. Because the area around Farmington was still rich with game, Bert Coe also hunted and trapped. He caught mink, skunk and coons. Some of the mink and skunk oil was rendered down and sold for medicinal purposes.

South of the Coe Store lived Tom Tracy, who operated a thrashing machine for the farmers. He also did well drilling and was a blacksmith.

* * *

FRED AND BERT Simpson were carpenters. Bert was doing building as early as 1897. Bert operated a lumberyard and ran a saw mill on Orchard Lake road where the K-Mart store is now.

Some of the wood that Simpson cut in the Rolling Oaks area was sold to General Motors and used in the cars they built. He operated his saw mill until 1925.

* * *

HOMER (SHORTY) Wolcott and his wife, Carrie, operated the general store on the southeast corner of the intersection. Homer was a great-grandson of the first postmaster of North Farmington.

Floyd Cairns, Farmington Hills city clerk, remembers shopping for his mother at the Wolcott store. Over the store was a mini-pool hall where as a youngster, Cairns wasn't allowed to go.

Attorney Howard Bond remembers driving a team of horses to get them shod at Carry Coe's black-

smith shop, which was south of the general store. Carry Coe's house is all that remains of the little business section, A cement block machine shop stands where his blacksmith shop once was. Carry Coe operated a tool and die shop there as late as 1960.

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75th ANNIVERSARY

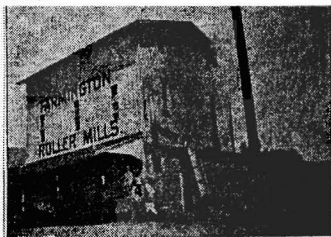
SEVENTY-SIXTH YEAR—No. 7

TWENTY-EIGHT PAGES

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1963

Farmington Roller Mills Big Business Here 75 Yrs. Ago

One of the thriving business establishments of Farmington around the time that The Farmington Enterprise was still in its infancy was the Farmington Rolling Mills Company. The building from which the business operated was located on State Street just west of Farmington Road.



FARMINGTON ROLLER MILLS
The mill was built by Louis Gildemeister. A General Village mill, with \$1000 invested by the citizens.
The building located Liberty Street, just off Farmington Road, Farmington, Michigan.

The business was still in operation and in the same family until only a few short years back. The building still stood until about a year ago but in its last years served as a base of operations for the City of Farmington Department of Public Works until the DPW moved into its new building on Nine Mile Road.

ACCORDING to an account in the 10th anniversary edition of the Farmington Enterprise, the opening of the business by Louis Gildemeister was made possible in part through the raising of \$1,000 by citizens and business people of the area to help get the plant in operation.

Edgar R. Bloomer, the founder of the Enterprise, in his story in the 10th anniversary edition termed it a very worthy investment. No one industry brings so much trade to Farmington as the roller mill, it was related in the 1898 story.

By 1898 the mill was running steady and some of the time night and day with a capacity of 50 barrels of flour in a 24-hour period.

Reminiscing on Farmington of 50 years ago in a series of articles published in the Enterprise in 1960, local historian Harley Walters who is manager of the Detroit Edison office here, had some interesting comments on the mill to make.

IT WAS A very busy place and especially on Saturdays when the farmers' wagons would be lined up for some distance waiting to be unloaded, he commented.

Walters recalled that a popular pastime for the children used to be to hang around the mill until a farmers' bobsleigh came in and then hook a ride in the back of out into the country a ways.

The flour which was manufactured in the Farmington mill in late 1890's and early 1900's was sold in all the adjacent communi-

ties and villages and had an especially large trade in Northville.

It was recalled by Walters that Leo and Ed, sons of Louis Gildemeister, worked in the mill with their father and that George used to deliver at least one wagon load of flour to Northville every week.

The Farmington Enterprise

FORTY-FIRST YEAR—No. 3.

THREE SECTIONS

FARMINGTON, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, NOV. 22, 1928

28 PAGES

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No "Boom" Days Then, But Business Thrived Here 34 Years Ago

It was long before the days of super-highways and motor-cars, of subdivisions and "frontage" frenzy—yet Farmington business-men prospered. The survey of the town's business, printed below, is from the Enterprise issue of October 19, 1894. (Courtesy of Mr. Fred L. Cook).

The Prettiest Village in Michigan

A Short Review of the Business Men Who Have Made It So

Farmington, the prettiest village of Michigan is situated on the Detroit & Howell Plank Road, 15 miles from Detroit, and in the best section of farming lands in the county of Oakland. The nearest railroad station is Novi, five miles distant, on the F. & P. M. Ry. But few railroad towns enjoy better mail facilities than Farmington, we having two incoming and outgoing mails a day. The town supports three churches, Methodist, Baptist and Universalist, and a graded school, second to none in the county outside of Pontiac. The town has made material advancement the past two years, as seen in the erections of new and handsome residences and rebuilding of old ones into modern homes. The recent advancement is largely due to the fact that the business interests of the town, with few exceptions, is maintained by young men, full of enterprise and push, as will be noticed in the following resume of the wide-awake business men.

Fred M. Warner

First among the names of the business men who have done so much for our village, stands that of Fred M. Warner. Although having been in business for himself only about eight years, he has in that time done more toward the material advancement of the place than any other person. He is now the success-

ful proprietor of one of the most complete hardware stores in Oakland county, carrying as he does, a large stock of heavy and shelf hardware, stoves, ranges, etc. Buying in large lots and for cash, he can offer every advantage to his customers. Mr. Warner is also the manager of the Farmington and Franklin cheese factories, the products of which are known all over the state, having secured the highest premiums ever given at the international Exposition held at Detroit. In connection with his other business he owns and operates a large cold storage building, and ships annually many thousand dozen of eggs and tons of butter. As a citizen he is highly respected and his many friends are proud to call the attention of strangers to his remarkable success in business.

Wilber, Cook & Co.

This is a large and magnificently stocked mercantile establishment, doing an extensive trade and conducted in a capable and enterprising manner. The establishment is one of the pioneer mercantile houses of Farmington, founded many years ago. The present partnership was formed last August, since which time the store has not lost if it has not gained in public favor. The firm is composed of C. W. Wilber and Fred L. Cook, young men well and favorably known to the public, and Fred M. Warner. The cash principle of which the business is now conducted, has proved very satisfactory to the firm and beneficial to the public. In the first place the store is noted for carrying a superior

stock and it affords to the people the lowest prices and thus draws trade from all the surrounding country. An immense stock is carried, consisting of dry goods, groceries, clothings, hats, caps, boots and shoes, furnishings, etc., and in connection with Fred M. Warner's cold storage, do a large business in farm produce.

James L. Hogle

In our review of the business establishments of the town we wish to make a prominent mention of this popular drug store. The proprietor, Mr. James L. Hogle, may well be congratulated upon the deserved success with which he has met, and the popularity of his business. He is one of the most successful druggists of the county, and his success is due to his own enterprise and ability. He is a competent and experienced chemist and druggist, and his well appointed and attractive store is filled with a superior stock of pure drugs, druggist's sundries, the leading patent medicines, paints, oils, stationery and fancy goods, cigars and tobacco. Mr. Hogle's agreeable manner and upright principles of doing business makes it a pleasure to deal at his store.

L. W. Sowle

It is now about two years ago since Mr. L. W. Sowle, the subject of our sketch, came to Farmington and bought out the stock of J. W. Collins. The business is one which has been before the public for many years, and under Mr. Sowle's management it has gone ahead, increasing the trade and growing in public favor with the people. Mr.

Sowle is a careful and capable buyer and purchases from the best markets and the public find every advantage in dealing at his store, which is always splendidly stocked with a well selected line of dry goods, groceries, fine shoes and an excellent line of crockery, glassware, lamps, etc. A special feature of this store is the five and ten cent bargain counters.

Henry W. Lee

Our town can justly boast of having one of the best harness manufacturing establishments in the county and should occupy a prominent place in our review. The proprietor, Mr. H. W. Lee, commenced the harness making business here some three years ago. He has met with satisfactory success and has built up an esteemed patronage, and acquired the confidence of the public. He is a competent workman and anything which leaves his hands may be relied upon. He manufactures all kinds of harness, both light and heavy, single and double, carries a full line of blankets and robes, and everything usually found in a first class harness shop.

James W. Hatten

An establishment which does a very large annual volume of business is that carried on by James W. Hatten, a reliable business man and proprietor of the large farm and implement warehouse on Main street. A large stock of the best makes of buggies, carriages, wagons, and all kinds of agricultural implements are kept on hand. Mr. Hatten commenced business about five years ago and has been phenomenally successful. The people of the surrounding county have great confidence in him and his trade reaches into all the adjoining towns. In connection with his other business he carries on a wagon and blacksmith shop, giving special attention to repairing.

M. B. Pierce

Mr. Pierce, our ex-postmaster, is one of Farmington's prosperous

citizens. He has been a resident here since childhood and a gentleman having a wide acquaintance. In our write up, we would call attention to his tonsorial parlor, where he has a large patronage with the local and traveling public, commercial men visiting Farmington, and others. He always endeavors to oblige and treat his customers with the utmost courtesy, while all are amply pleased with the faultless work done. He is highly esteemed by all who know him.

Henry Schroeder

Our town possesses the advantage of a first class meat market, of which the experienced gentleman named above is the proprietor. It is now about a year ago since Mr. Schroeder established himself here, buying out the "Palace Market" of B. S. Owen. He has met with merited success and has built up a good trade. Mr. Schroeder is a good judge of stock and knows how to conduct a strictly A-1 market. The public find here the choicest meats and vegetables of all kinds in season. Fair and upright dealings with all is gaining for him a reputation second to none.

Thos. L. Irving

Among our blacksmiths we call the attention of the public to that popular gentleman, Thos. L. Irving. Since coming here about a year ago he has done exceedingly well, has built up a splendid trade and acquired great popularity with the people. He is a number one workman, especially as a horse-shoer. He does all kinds of blacksmithing, machine repairing and iron work in the best possible manner.

H. W. Habermehl

We wish to add a few words in our review in reference to the custom boot and shoe business of Mr. H. H. Habermehl. This gentleman located here about three years ago, and by strict attention to business has earned a large custom. We say to our readers that if you appreciate durable, comfortable and

well made footwear call on Mr. Habermehl. He is one of the best workmen, and gives special attention to repairing and his prices are reasonable.

Miss Marie Gill

It is congratulatory to the ladies of Farmington and vicinity to be able to note the existence in our town of such an excellent millinery and dress making establishment as we herein describe. Miss Gill is the successor to the stock of Mrs. Mrs. C. Murray, which she purchased about a year ago, and she has already increased the trade thus secured. She is a natural milliner, a fine dress maker, and the ladies find superior advantages in dealing here. For this season's trade she has on hand one of the finest stocks of fashionable millinery ever shown in town.

C. W. Chamberlin

We now come to the popular business of C. W. Chamberlin, one of our energetic business young men, who commenced his present trade in Farmington some three years ago. He is now conducting a first class cigar store and tonsorial parlor. He keeps the best brands of cigars and tobaccos, etc. He is a competent artist, courteous and obliging. In connection with his other business he gives special attention to watch and clock repairing. His success is well deserved.

William Kennedy

This gentleman is the veteran blacksmith of the town, having been in business in Farmington nearly 30 years. He is still at the old stand and doing a good trade. Mr. Kennedy has few superiors as a workman, and especially as a horse shoer and his reputation in this specialty has gone far and wide. He does every description of general blacksmithing and at prices to suit the demands of the times.

E. C. Grace

Prominent among the businessmen of Farmington stands that energetic young man, E. C. Grace,

and special attention is directed to his large and flourishing trade. Mr. Grace's business career in Farmington is a notable example of what energy and ability rightly directed will accomplish. He started in business here a number of years ago in a comparatively small way, and his business has grown to large proportions. His store is indeed a credit to the town, being stocked with the best lines of foreign and domestic dry goods, hats, caps, boots, shoes, gents furnishing goods, groceries, etc. Mr. Grace is also the efficient postmaster, conducting the affairs of the office in a manner highly satisfactory to the public. It can be truly said that he is held in the highest regard by the people.

The Owen House

There is nothing of greater importance to a town than good hotel accommodations. In this respect our town is exceedingly fortunate, having the advantages of the first class public hostelry named above, which is one of the most popular and best conducted hotels in this state. The Owen House was re-built and for the past 20 years conducted by L. D. Owen. A few months ago his son, B. S. Owen, assumed the management. He is one of the popular young men of the town and is making a success of the house. It is finely furnished, heated by steam, sets an excellent table and the bar is stocked with the choicest brands of liquors and cigars, and the hotel is enjoying a large patronage.

P. Dean Warner

No adequate review of Farmington and its business interest could be given without reference being made to the above gentleman, who has been closely connected with the welfare of the town for nearly half a century, and who is well known as one of the affluent and influential citizens of the county. Mr. Warner has for a number of years supplies the merchants and other businessmen with the advantages of good banking facilities. His is one

of the most substantial private banking establishments in the state. All kinds of banking business is transacted, buying and selling exchange, collecting, remitting, etc. Mr. Warner is a notary public and has had a large experience in conveyancing, etc.

The Farmington

ENTERPRISE & OBSERVER

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YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

34 pages, 4 sections

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Philip H. Power, Publisher

The 1890's When Cheesemakers Could Be Kingmakers

BY
EMORY DANIELS

One of the most prominent industries in this locality in 1898 were three thriving cheese factories located in Farmington, Franklin and Novi.

Conducting this enterprise of yesterday was one of Farmington's most prominent citizens, Fred M. Warner who in 1898 was a State Senator and later was to become governor.

The factories were started by Warner in 1890. In its first year, the Farmington factory produced 40 tons of cheese. Eight years later the output climbed to 85 tons.

The Novi factory began in 1894 with an output of 44 tons of cheese and eight years later produced 100 tons. Franklin, which started in 1895, produced 24 tons the first year and 43 tons eight years later.

DURING ITS first eight years, the Farmington factory consumed 7,000 tons of milk which represents a volume sufficient to fill 917 railroad cars with a capacity of 24,000 pounds each. Broken down, this volume provided an aggregate of 51,000 boxes of cheese.

During the early years, the three firms combined paid an average of \$10,666 a year to area farmers for milk. Labor cost averaged \$2,500 a year.

"Warner's Oakland County Cheese" was sold to about 300 retail grocers throughout the state.

An article in the Nov. 4, 1898 edition of The Farmington Enterprise provides the following editorial comment on the local cheese business:

"These factories have proved a great boon to the farming community, providing a constant market for an unlimited quantity of milk. They also give regular employment to a number of men and add to the business of the place not only in their trade with the state and county at large, but in bringing what is of more direct benefit to our people, a constant stream of the best class of customers to the shops and stores of our mechanics and merchants."

"Such apparent advantages have had the effect upon outside observers with the quite natural result that the successful proprietor has been offered special inducements to start similar factories in other places, a design which, by the way, if it contemplates the removal of the popular and level-headed Senator from our midst, would be promptly voted down by the entire populace of this vicinity - we cannot spare him.

The article also commented on Warner's political success.

"In 1894 he received the nomination for State Senator of the 12th district, Oakland democratic, but he entered the campaign with a determination to succeed, and when the votes were counted in November it was found he had

his ticket in every one of the 46 precincts except three."

Yesterday in Farmington was a period when the owner of a chain of cheese factories was elected state senator, disappointed by losing the nomination for secretary of state but later was to become the state's youngest secretary of state in 1890 and later the first governor elected to three successive terms.

The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXV No. 12/6

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1921.

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\$1,000,000 Gravel Pit Discovered in Farmington

John W. Lathrup Farm Soon to be Scene of Great Activity

BIG FORCE OF MEN TO BE EMPLOYED

After purchasing a large tract of land west of the village John W. Lathrup noticed that about forty acres, a great part of which was covered by apple trees, had a peculiar formation. On closer observation he noticed that in places some of the trees were poorly nourished. These two facts led Mr. Lathrup to make tests and each successive test showed a large vein of gravel close to the surface of the ground. Other tests on a ridge which runs parallel to the gravel ridge showed great quantities of sand of various grades. Some of this sand is as fine as the finest of ocean sand. Much of the gravel is clean or cleaner than washed gravel.

Experts were sent for and the County Engineer made gravel tests which he analyzed as sixty to ninety per cent. For many years this property has been farmed by its various owners who were unaware that great wealth lay below the soil.

Steam shovels are to be installed and plans are being made for the marketing of the gravel and sand.

The operation of this work will call for many men and Farmington is looking forward to the new enterprise which will be her largest employer of labor.

Gravel deposits once looked upon as a formation which spoiled farm land, is today one of the most necessary materials used in road building construction work. Mr.

Lathrup has the capital to fully develop this new Farmington industry.

He said to the reporter, "I want you to see this gravel deposit with your own eyes."

We went through the orchard and looked at the various test holes, each of which showed plainly the fine gravel deposit. This gravel extends to the road in front of the Lathrup home.

Mr. Lathrup is now putting considerable time and thought on the development of this huge pit. Friday and Saturday he is going to Lansing to confer with State authorities and he is leaving no stone unturned to get an organization together for the purpose of placing his gravel on the market.

This discovery will mean a great deal to this community for two reasons; in the first place, more man power will be brought into the community; in the second place building materials for roads and buildings will be close at hand in almost inexhaustible quantities.

Many road building units in the different states haul gravel fifteen or twenty miles for road construction, and the quality of the material cannot in any way compare with the Lathrup gravel.

Some states which have no gravel deposits use oyster shells and chats from mines for road surfacing purposes.

Most road building units find it necessary to have gravel shipped in

by train which makes the cost from one dollar and a half a yard up. Gravel in a few years will be held at a premium and with this great supply at her doors Farmington will be counted as one of the largest gravel centers in Michigan.

The May 6, 1921 Farmington Enterprise had this follow-up story. . . .

**BIG GRAVEL PIT IS
BEING DEVELOPED BY
J. W. Lathrup**

**New Machinery is Being Installed
And Big Force of Men Hired**

GRAVEL DELIVERED DAILY

Farmington can now boast of a new industry which is developing into a sizable proposition. Tractors and a loading machine have been installed. The loading equipment deposits the gravel into the bed of the trucks by means of scoops attached to an endless belt which carries the gravel to a height which will reach the top of the highest motor truck, depositing the material into a chute which allows the gravel to flow into the truck bed by means of gravity.

Gravel is one of the basic materials of construction work and with the rapidly increasing population of Detroit, building will be carried on for many years to come in order to take care of the economic demands of the people. Gravel near the work will be in great demand, and from indications, this pit has gravel deposits in great quantity.

The Farmington Enterprise

VOL. XXXVI, No. 18.

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 1922.

5 Cents Single Copy. \$1.50 A YEAR.

NEW BANK OPENING SATURDAY, MAR. 18

One of the Appointed Bank- ing Houses of the Country Opens its Doors

We, that is the citizens of this village, and the community surrounding, are certainly proud and justly so, of the new bank building which is to be the home of the Farmington State Savings bank from Saturday, March 18, on which day the magnificent structure will have an opportunity to see one of the most modern propositions in the way of bank equipment. There is not another bank equipment like it east of the Mississippi River; there are some in Texas and on the west coast. And at that there is not another equipment like it in the whole United States except in cities where it takes six figures to designate their population. On the whole there is not another village the size of Farmington which can boast of a banking house that will even compare with the outer construction, to say nothing of the interior.

The Farmington State Savings bank is not a new institution in fact it might properly be termed a "pioneer," for it was really instituted or had its inception in the year 1885. Mr. P. D. Warner, father of our townsman, ex-Gov. F. M. Warner, was at that time in the mercantile business and as a matter of convenience to the people of the community, he started a sort of bank of exchange. In a short time the business of banking increased to such an extent that he was

obliged to devote all of his time to it, and his son looked after the mercantile business.

In 1895 the business had increased to such an extent and the deposits were becoming so heavy Mr. Warner, the elder, decided that it was necessary in the interests of the community to enlarge the institution and increase its financial backing.

In this year the Farmington Exchange Bank was organized by the following named gentleman:

O. M. Whipple, Novi
Dr. Samuel Holcomb, Southfield
C. J. Sprague, Farmington
F. M. Warner, Farmington
M. B. Pierce, Farmington
C. W. Wilber, Farmington
P. D. Warner, Farmington

In 1910 the bank was reorganized as a state bank under the title of the Farmington State Savings bank with a capital of \$25,000.00. It has continued to grow until now the latest statement of its condition made to the state, at the close of business, Dec. 31, 1921, showed the assets to be nearly a million dollars. This is quite an increase from the time when it was organized as a state bank in 1910 the assets were about \$150,000.

The bank building proper is constructed in a most substantial manner, the exterior being of Bedford stone and granite base coupled with re-enforced concrete and tile, making the same fireproof. The inside is beautifully finished with a high ceiling with beam effect and plenty of light. The flooring of the

lobby is of marble. The vault is large and is equipped with the very latest in the way of a door and locking system. In the vault there is plenty of room for the handling of the bank business and a huge battery of the latest in safety deposit boxes are arranged on the side. We might add that the vault door is of the latest design and not usually found in banks outside of the larger cities. Its weight is over 10,000 pounds.

The interior or office equipment is of Missouri marble and Kansas walnut. The latter was purchased originally by the government to be manufactured into gun stocks and was purchased in the log by the manufacturers of the equipment, from the government.

When you visit the bank Saturday be sure and notice the beautiful walnut entering into the construction of the equipment. It is undoubtedly the finest specimen of walnut ever shown.

The bank and the business block in connection were built by the Farmington Improvement Association, the members of which are also stockholders in the bank. These buildings are built of cement, tile and brick and there are eight business places on the ground floor and one in the basement, with residence flats over the stores. In addition, the Owens Hotel, one of the old landmarks of the village which occupied the present site of the bank, was moved back and converted into a modern apartment house. It was thoroughly overhauled and rebuilt and veneered with brick so that it is an imposing structure of itself.

All of the store buildings, flats and the hotel are occupied at the

present time. A little later five more business places will be constructed by the association on Grand River Avenue which will add much to the appearance of the village.

The Farmington State Savings bank has occupied the old building for a period of 24 years.

The officers of the bank are: Fred M. Warner, President; M. B. Pierce, Vice-President; Edgar S. Pierce, Cashier and Roland O. Soldan, Assistant Cashier.

The following is the board of directors; Fred M. Warner, W. B. Pierce, H. N. McCracken, Charles R. Talbot, Clinton McGee, E. F. Holcomb, G. Gale Collins, Howard M. Warner, Edgar S. Pierce, Harley D. Warner, Isaac Bond and H. A. Schroeder.

The Farmington Enterprise

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BUSINESS PLACES IN THE NEW BANK BLOCK

N. J. Eisenlord and Son

This firm is located in the new bank block and has a complete electric shop. Here you will find the latest in fixtures, etc. They carry everything for radio systems.

Salow & Ludeman

Are also in the bank building—in the same room on Division St. as Eisenlord & Son. They carry everything in plumbing supplies, kitchen sinks and cistern pumps at right prices. They also install heating plants.

Lewis Jones & Co.

This store in the new bank building is known as the Peoples' Dry Goods store and is fast gaining favor with the ladies of this community. Everything in the stock is brand new and the latest and what's as much of interest to the purchasing public the prices are astonishingly low. Quality and service is the motto of this store.

The Auto Shop

Mark Owen, proprietor of this popular place announces his removal to larger quarters--the old bank building. At this shop you can not only get the real battery service but you are able to buy auto accessories at low prices. Remember the new location--old bank building.

The Farmington Bakery

Everybody likes good things to eat; sometimes one tires of home baking and then the bake shop man is thought of. T. H. Carson in the bank block, has a real sanitary and up-to-the-minute bake shop. And say, those cakes, pies, etc., that he turns out are the talk of the ladies. Try his bread, too.

Central Pharmacy

This beautiful place of business is located in the bank building. Here you will find everything to be found in any store of its kind in the city. H. B. Birdsall, is in charge and will be pleased to be of service to you. Pure drugs and correct filling of prescriptions; ice cream and fountain drinks.

New Restaurant

Something to eat, and that something properly prepared and served is what one has a right to expect while trudging along life's highway. The new restaurant in the basement of the bank block under the Central Pharmacy is going to be something right up to the minute, so the manager, Mr. Matthewson assures us. Mahogany fixtures, new white table linen, cut glass and Rogers silverware, individual electric lights. Later a contest will be instituted and let the public decide on a name for the place.

David Bissett - -M. B. Pierce

These two gentlemen hold forth in cozy quarters in the bank block. The former says clothes make the man, and he makes the clothes; yes, he does cleaning and repairing, too.

Mr. Pierce insists that a man looks right and feels right when he has a clean shave and a proper hair cut, and he is just the man to do this. We agree with both that any man will look better after patronizing this dual shop.

E. U. Farmer

Farmer's Fruit and Vegetable store is one of the popular trading places in Farmington and is located in the bank block. In addition to the fine line of fresh fruits and vegetables he has recently put in a line of the better grades of candy. Remember, the place, the man and call and see for yourself.

Edison Company

Light, that's a necessity. Electricity is not only a light producer but is applicable to many and varied wants of business and Industry as well as for conveniences and labor saving in the home. The Edison Company of Detroit, occupies one of the rooms in the bank block. Call and consult them regarding anything in the line of electric service.

Steffens, The Cash Market

Here is another tenant in the block and if you wish to see a thoroughly up-to-date and sanitary market, call on him. Everything in the way of fresh and cured meats, fish and poultry are handled and displayed in a manner to make them tempting to the purchaser.

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FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1963

Bell Telephone Co., Enterprise Grow Up in Farmington Together

The history of the telephone in Farmington closely parallels that of the Farmington Enterprise and dates back to before the turn-of-the-century when Alexander Graham Bell's invention was still in swaddling clothes.

Michigan's first telephone exchange was only ten years old when the Farmington Enterprise was founded in 1888, and telephone service in Oakland County was provided by the Telephone and Telegraph Construction Company.

According to yellowed records, telephone numbers in those early days were assigned according to the date the order was received. Among those who had numbers between 1 and 10 was the Enterprise.

Service as provided over the telephone instruments of those days was a far cry from today's modern method of doing business and was dependent in part upon the subscriber's patience and lung power.

THE SOUND of wind and branches brushing across the lines was more distinct at times than the conversation being carried on. Combined with static and other outside noises, making a telephone call was considered quite a feat.

Much of the history of telephone service in this county is interwoven with the appearances of many small independent telephone companies which set up telephone exchanges and-or operated toll lines.

One of the early companies here was the Peoples Telephone Company. By 1907, when it was sold to the Inter-State Long Distance Telephone Company, it had a number of installations in Oakland County.

When in 1960, the Enterprise ran the series, "Life in Farmington 50 Years Ago," one article referred to the telephone service of 1908.

"The tin shop and telephone office of Mike and Matilda Doherty was where the Homestead House (now Art Van's Furniture) is located. About 50 phones were connected, and night service consisted of having someone sleep in the phone office."

The Inter-State Company continued to improve and expand its facilities in Oakland County until it was sold to the Michigan State Telephone Company in 1912.

GROWTH OF telephone service was slow but steady over the years, with the number of phones reaching the 500 mark in 1936.

How quickly service developed in this community since then is evident by the growth that took place before another quarter-century passed.

In 1933, Michigan Bell completed construction of a new central office and replaced Farmington's old "crank-type" telephones with manual service for 700 customers.

Each year for the next three years facilities were expanded and by the

middle of 1941, the number of telephones had doubled to 1,400.

Following World War II, Michigan Bell poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into its Farmington exchange to keep up with the expanding community. By 1952, 4,600 subscribers were making 18,000 local calls a day.

Dial telephone service was inaugurated in this community in 1955 at a cost of more than a million dollars. When Michigan Bell opened its newest central office, Farmington's 6,500 telephones were connected to the latest type of equipment which permitted users to dial direct to some 14 million telephones throughout the country.

WITH GROWTH continuing at an unprecedented rate, Michigan Bell had to expand its local facilities three times in as many years to keep up with new home and business construction.

To date, since the 1955 dial cut-over, the company has spent some \$4.2 million here for expansion and improvement of its service.

The number of telephones has quadrupled in the past ten years until today there are more than 20,600 total telephones in service in the Farmington exchange. Included in this figure are 12,100 main residence phones.

Hills airfield took off in heyday

In the late 1930s, two Canadian Fighter planes made emergency landings at this Hills' airport.

BY DAVID LITOGOT
SPECIAL WRITER

Some people find it hard to believe that Orchard Lake Road between Twelve and Fourteen Mile roads was once a two lane gravel roadway with homes lining its route.

Some would find it impossible that there was once an airport next to the road. The airfield, called Kris Port, was basically a large open field with a row of hangers and dozens of small private airplanes. It sat behind the present day collision shop on the west side of Orchard Lake, just south of Thirteen Mile.

According to local historian Ruth Moehlman, Kris Port was a planned development of Chris Kristiansen, who bought the land from Isaac Bond in the 1930s. Kristiansen established the 140 acre airport in 1936 and planned to surround it with light industry. This idea would spur an economy based on both handy air freight service and storage of airplanes owned by local residents.

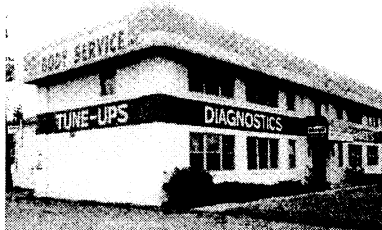
At that time in Michigan history, the possibility of privately owned aircraft was a novel approach to the idea of commuting to work, even endorsed for a time by auto magnate Henry Ford. Kris Port survived and prospered.

The airfield itself had two runways, running northwest-southeast and northeast-southwest. They were grass strips 200 feet wide and 2,000 to 2,700 feet long. The airport was also the site of Kristiansen Aircraft Sales, feature-

ing Cessna and Ercoupe, a much publicized, spin-off plane.

According to the late Floyd Cairns (former Farmington Hills city clerk), the airport was busy and once was the site of an emergency landing by two Royal Canadian fighter planes in the late 1930s. He explained that they had to land during a storm but before leaving, the Canadian pilots displayed their planes to the public. A Royal Canadian DC-3 arrived to deliver fuel to the stranded fighters and ended up giving away some gasoline so that it could take off on the airfield's short runway. Even with its lightened load, the cargo plane barely missed the house that sat at the end of the runway.

Two airplane crashes were noted in the Farmington Enterprise newspaper during the late 1940s. Both planes took off from Kris Port and crashed in nearby fields. In 1949, a flying instructor took aerial photographs of the Farmington area. These were displayed in town for weeks afterward.



The auto shop near Thirteen Mile and Orchard Lake roads, where Kris Port Airport operated decades ago.

The large building now occupied by a collision shop is sometimes mistaken for an old terminal building. People look at the glass enclosed shed on the roof and think that it was a control tower. According to long-time resident Mark Farrell, "The building was a

tool and die place and the thing on the roof was a look-out station after the war."

The local chapter of the Ground Observer Corps built the observation shelter in the 1950s. The Corps was established to sight enemy aircraft during those nervous post war years. The shelter was manned 24 hours a day by local volunteers. There were never any enemy aircraft sighted but the Farmington Enterprise noted in separate stories in 1952 and 1953 two observers sighted flying saucers in the night sky.

The governor of Michigan used the airport for his trips to the Detroit area. Probably to avoid the traffic of Detroit City and shorten the distance from Wayne County, Major G. Mennen Williams used Kris Port for his official landings.

According to Mark Farrell, "The Michigan State Police brought Soapy (Williams) in their gold and blue Navion."

The 74 year old Farrell remembers taking flying lessons at the airfield and claims that one can still see remnants of the original hangers by examining the small strip mall next to the collision shop.

Al Loeffler, owner of a stoneworks on Northwestern Highway, took flying lessons at the airfield. He reflected back to the 1950s when Chuck Spicer owned the Kris Port operation.

"The land became valuable," he said "And the airport was old. Spicer and his partner moved to the National Airport in Garden City."

Farmington had small private airfields before and during the age of Kris Port. A bi-plane, according to Farrell, used to land in a wheat field next to Northwestern Highway in the late 1930s and take people on rides. Those plane rides,

the dirt road, the homes next to the road, and Kris Port are all gone. What was once a cow pasture and potato farm became a local airfield. That airfield then became a subdivision. That is indeed the history of Farmington.

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