

History marks proud heritage for Farmington

Whether a person lives, works or shops in Farmington, it takes little time before realizing that this is an area proud of its history.

Numerous historical landmarks have been preserved and the area's history has been well documented.

Farmington was founded 155 years ago by five members of the Society of Friends (Quakers), who journeyed here in the middle of winter from Farmington, New York.

It was probably the lure of inexpensive land (\$1.25 an acre) and the chance to build a legacy for his large family that brought Arthur Power, his sons John and Jared, and David Smith and Daniel Rush to this area in 1824.

History buffs are fortunate in having many good accounts of Farmington's genesis, including the Oakland County history published in 1970, a history by local teacher Lee Peel and the diary of Arthur Power's son, Nathan, who joined his father here in 1826 at the age of 25.

These documents give a remarkably clear account of Farmington's beginnings 150 years ago.

By 1820, the government had made large tracts of land available to settlers. In 1823 Arthur Power came to the Farmington area and made arrangements to purchase large parcels of land in the area been Nine Mile and Eleven Mile, along Power Road.

Power returned to New York and made arrangements for the trip west.

He, his two sons and two hired men, Smith and Rush, left New York about Feb.

1, 1824 and arrived in Windsor on Feb. 15. Their mode of travel was apparently a sleigh drawn by a pair of horses.

After a stop in Detroit for supplies, they traveled along Saginaw Road to Royal Oak and then to the small settlements then called Jenks, Sly, Durkee and Baker.

Just before sunset, the five arrived at their destination. They staked their spot by cutting down a giant oak in the clearing which is now Eleven Mile and Power.

The date was March 8, 1824.

The settlers built a log cabin and began clearing land, including a plot for Nathan Power, who had remained in New York with the rest of the family.

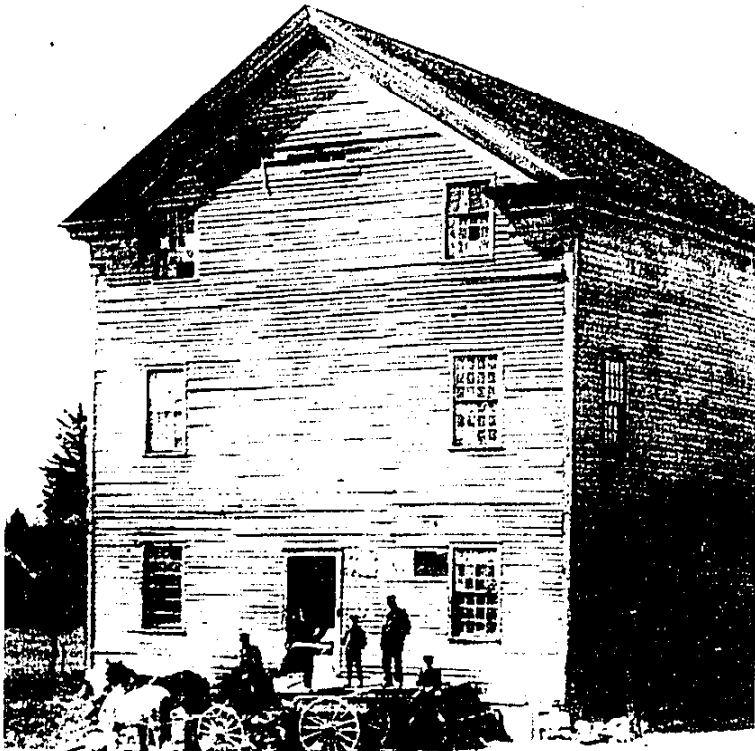
Arthur Power and many other early Quaker settlers are buried in the old Quaker cemetery on Gill Road, just south of Grand River.

The two hired men went different ways. Rush had an attack of homesickness and left a few weeks after he arrived. However, David Smith completed a year's service to Power, bought some land and was still alive in 1877 when the Oakland County history book was first issued.

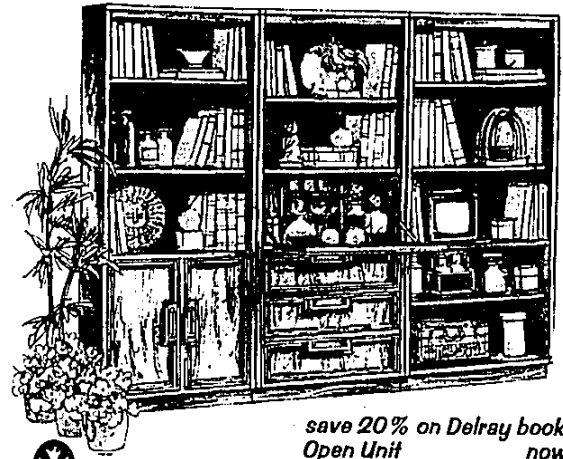
Power Road remains as a reminder of Farmington's founders, as does Power Junior High, named in honor of the area's first teacher, Nathan.

Among present descendants of Arthur Power are Eugene Power, former University of Michigan regent, and his son Philip Power, board chairman (on leave of

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The Power Mill was an example of early industry in Farmington. This picture, taken before 1900, displays the business which was located near the bridge on Power, north of Grand River.



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