

## Celebrating 150 years

# Clinton County Sesquicentennial

## Hewitts play role in DeWitt, Maple Rapids

*Editor's Note: The following history of the Hewitt family of Clinton County was written by Clinton County Historical Society member Ken Cohn. Due to the length of the article, it has been divided into two parts. Part one this week deals with the family founders, Isaac and Phebe Hewitt, with histories of their children, William, Lyman, Deborah, and Fanny. Part two, in next week's CCN, chronicles the histories of the Hewitt's remaining children, Eliza, Abraham, Edmund, Simeon, and Luther.*

Researching family and local history often reveals many interesting and unexpected ties between families and communities. DeWitt and Maple Rapids share many such ties, most of which can be traced to the very beginnings of the village of Maple Rapids in the early 1850's — to the Hewitt family whose roots go back even further into the earliest years of Clinton County.

In 1835, the large family of Isaac and Phebe Hewitt came west out of Steuben County, New York. After coming "up the lake" to Detroit, they continued on foot and by ox team, inland to Oakland County.

Here the women remained while the men went further into the wilderness in search of favorable lands on which to settle. Along the Pontiac-Grand River Trail, they came through the small settlement of Capt. David Scott on the Looking Glass River in DeWitt. Apparently impressed with the lands about the settlement, Isaac purchased nearby land in section 17 and his eldest son, William, purchased 40 acres of government land in section eight.

During the winter of 1835-36, the Hewitt men began clearing their lands and building cabins. They soon returned to Oakland County and brought the waiting women and children to join them in DeWitt.

Isaac and Phebe Hewitt are known to have had nine children who grew to maturity. Of these, all were born in Prattsburg, Steuben County, New York, and all came with the parents to Clinton County during that winter. At the time of the move,

William, the eldest, was a married man of 23 years, while Luther, the youngest, was a mere lad of only about two years.

Isaac was one of the founders of the DeWitt Baptist Church which was organized in 1840. He died in DeWitt on March 28, 1846, and is believed to have been buried in DeWitt cemetery as was his widow when she died on Oct. 20, 1854.

The following are individual accounts of each of the nine children.

William A. Hewitt was born on Nov. 26, 1811, and was married in 1830 to Hannah Hyatt, a native of Orange County, New York, born on March 15, 1813.

From his initial purchase of 40 acres of government land, William would eventually become one of the most prosperous men of the county. Aside from his farming, he was among the first four justices of the peace for DeWitt Township, being elected to the office in the first township election in 1837. He retained the office for several decades, both in DeWitt and later at Maple Rapids. He also studied law under pioneer attorney Joab Baker.

In 1850, William purchased the "Boston House," a small hotel on the northeast corner of Main and Franklin Streets in DeWitt. This Greek revival style structure had been built in 1843 as the private residence of Judge Hiram Stowell (the county's first judge of probate), and following the Judge's death, had been converted into a hotel by Parker Webber, the former miller for the Waterloo Joint Stock Co., at Wacousta.

William did a good business with his hotel and other business interests, especially catering to the professional trade who required lodging during the peak seasons when DeWitt swelled with people attending county court or other county business.

But William apparently had his sights set higher. He located an area in Essex Township which he felt offered great advantages for a town. He purchased the land from Solomon Moss, and on Feb. 20, 1852, after selling his interests in DeWitt, he moved his family to the site on the Maple River at the rapids.

He and his four sons began at once to construct a

saw mill and pull a dam across the river. For their first home, they moved a log cabin from Judge Pettit's farm to a location near the dam site.

Soon after, William opened a mercantile store at the site and began finalizing his plans for the future village. After platting the site, he began construction of a hotel and in 1854, he succeeded Edward Perrin as postmaster.

There were many people who undoubtedly contributed to the founding and initial growth of Maple Rapids, but the village owes its founding to the vision and industry of William Hewitt.

William and Hannah had five children: Joseph (married Sarah A. Hubbell and had three children), Zachariah (married America Hoyt and had two children), Fannie (married Martin V. Brown), Isaac (married Helen C. Lansing and had two children), and Rufus Henry (married Jennie Smith and had two children).

William died at a young age on Feb. 12, 1863. Hannah remained at Maple Rapids and on June 2, 1864, was married to William's younger brother, Simeon Hewitt. She died on Nov. 2, 1898, and was buried beside William in the Sowle cemetery.

Lyman J. Hewitt was born about 1815, and was married on Feb. 4, 1841, to Harriet Woodruff. She was born about 1820, and is believed to have been a sister to Riley J. and Addison A. Woodruff, early cabinet makers and later merchants of St. Johns and DeWitt respectively.

Lyman owned an 80-acre tract of land in section 31 of DeWitt Township as early as 1839, but was himself a carpenter by trade. The earliest mention of his occupation comes from the DeWitt Township minute books of 1842, where it is recorded that he was hired to build a public animal pound in the village for the containment of stray livestock. Upon inspection, it was noted to be "completed as specified with good padlock and hasp."

By 1850, Lyman had moved his family to DeWitt village where he opened a carpenter's shop on the south side of the river. Here the record of Lyman vanishes. He died during the latter half of the 1850's, for by 1860, Harriet was married to Daniel

Moore of that village.

Lyman and Harriet had only one known child, Milo H. Hewitt who served in Company A of the 23rd Michigan Infantry during the Civil War, and later moved to eastern Michigan.

Deborah Hewitt was born about 1818, and on Jan. 1, 1839, was married to John C. Warren. For a time they lived in the DeWitt area, but no confirmed records past 1840 have been located regarding them.

The federal census of 1850 lists a Deborah "Warner," age 33 with an eight-year-old boy, Hiram, living with Abel Hewitt in DeWitt, but the same census also lists a Deborah "Warren," age 34, living with Geo. O. and Eliza (Hewitt) Wells at DeWitt.

Fanny Hewitt was born on July 14, 1820. She, along with her father, was a founder of the DeWitt Baptist Church in 1840. She was the first new member accepted into the church following its formal organization.

On Feb. 21, 1841, she was married to William Rouse at DeWitt, where they continued to reside. They became the parents of a large family of at least eight children. All of these became orphaned following the untimely deaths of their parents: Fanny on Nov. 20, 1859, and William on April 12, 1860.

These orphaned children were looked after by Fanny's sister, Eliza, who moved into the Rouse household with her own children. Some of the orphans were known to have been sent at times to Maple Rapids to stay with family members there.

The known Rouse children include: Eliza Jane (married a Naragon), William Henry (married Helen Dunham), Caroline, Helen and Ellen (twins), Albert, Hattie (married G.W. Randell), and Mary Jane.

*Note: A special thanks to Virginia J. Watter son of Carland, Calif., (a great-great-granddaughter of William and Hannah Hewitt) for submitting much of this genealogical information to the Clinton County Historical Society Archives.*

# features

*Celebrating 150 years*

Clinton County News 224-236

## Clinton County Sesquicentennial *Part two of the Hewitt family saga*

*Editor's Note: The following history of the Hewitt family of Clinton County was written by Clinton County Historical Society member Ken Coin. Due to the length of the article, it has been divided into two parts. Part one, published in the Clinton County News on April 11, dealt with the family founders, Isaac and Phebe Hewitt, and histories of their children, William, Lyman, Deborah, and Fanny. Part two, in this week's CCN, chronicles the histories of the Hewitt's remaining children, Eliza, Abraham, Edmund, Simeon, and Luther.*

**Eliza Hewitt** was born in Aug., 1824. Her first marriage was to George O. Wells of DeWitt on Dec. 16, 1841.

DeWitt in the 1840's became somewhat renowned for its large concentration of shoemakers and George Wells was among the earliest. The location of his shop(s) has not been pinpointed but early letters from the period mention him as working for a time with master bootmaker Andrew J. Bement (progenitor of the St. Johns Bements) at his shop on East Main Street, and also for Nelson Alport in "the hole," a large factory which operated out of the cellar of the Clinton House hotel.

George and Eliza were also the county jailers for a time, living at the county jailhouse on East Washington Street. This was probably more of a job for Eliza than for George. During these early years the main function of a jailor was to feed and possibly launder for the prisoners whose cells were located in the basement of the jailhouse.

George died at age 38, on March 6, 1855, and Eliza remained in DeWitt several years, eventually

moving into the household of her late sister, Fanny Rouse.

In the early 1860's Eliza moved her family to Maple Rapids and was married there on Nov. 24, 1864, to David Goss. She resided in Maple Rapids for many years, eventually owning the home of her younger brother, Simeon, following his death. She died at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Eugene Brya in Olive Township.

Eliza is recorded as having eight children, but many of these died young and only two survived her at the time of her death on July 27, 1906. She was also the last surviving child of Isaac and Phebe Hewitt.

**Abraham ("Abel") Hewitt** was born about 1826 and was married in DeWitt on Jan. 1, 1849, to Jane E. Gundersman.

His death in the early 1850's cuts short his pioneer history in the county.

Jane, in 1854, married widower Jonathan Pearsall, an organizer and early driving force of the DeWitt Baptist Church. The Pearsall homestead included a large tract of land south of DeWitt along the east side of "Turner's Road."

After Jonathan's death in 1868, Jane remained in the DeWitt area, and, although no record of her death has been located, she remained an active member of the Baptist church until the 1870's.

Abel and Jane had two sons, Edward and George, both of whom remained in the DeWitt area.

**Edmund Hewitt** was born Dec. 15, 1828, and was married in DeWitt on Dec. 17, 1852, to Julia Bissell.

Just prior to his marriage, Edmund lived with the family of Rowland S. VanScy (VanScy would later

become a wealthy land owner in Essex Township). Rowland's wife was the former Ruth Bissell (his second wife was her sister), and it is believed that there was probably a connection between the wives of VanScy and Julia Bissell Hewitt.

Julia died shortly after their marriage and on Aug. 12, 1860, Edmund married Mary A. Collins (a daughter of James and Margaret Collins?).

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Edmund enlisted in Co. E, 3rd Michigan Cavalry, and saw action throughout the war until his discharge in 1866.

Afterwards, he returned to his farm at DeWitt and remained on section 17, the remainder of his life. Edmund died on Aug. 21, 1905, and Mary, surviving him for several years, died Dec. 2, (1920?), at Rochester, Mich., where she had lived for several years.

Only two children survived Edmund and Mary, John, and Margaret (Mrs. Charles Griffey).

**Simeon Hewitt** was born in June of 1831, and was married on April 10, 1855, to Sarah J. Warren at DeWitt. She is thought to have been a daughter of Lyman and Betsey Warren (Lyman was an early master carpenter at DeWitt).

Both Simeon and Sarah joined the DeWitt Baptist Church shortly before their marriage. They remained active members only a short time and were "erased" from the membership rolls in 1858.

Simeon died at his home in Maple Rapids, April 10, 1902.

**Luther Hewitt**, the youngest child of Isaac and Phebe Hewitt, died at the young age of 22 years, on May 28, 1855, and was buried beside his parents in the DeWitt cemetery.

*Note: A special thanks to Virginia J. Watterson of Carland, Calif., (a great-granddaughter of William and Hannah Hewitt) for submitting much of this genealogical information to the Clinton County Historical Society Archives.*

Shortly after the death of his mother in 1854,

Cole

December 17, 1936.

## Mrs. Jennie Cole Dies at Petoskey; Buried in Dewitt

**Dewitt**—Jennie V., youngest of two daughters of Dey and Mary Jane VanFleet, was born in Riley township Sept. 2, 1873. Her education was received in Olive and Dewitt schools. October 22, 1899, at a double marriage service held in Lansing, she became the bride of Charles Cole of Dewitt, and Ida Beadle of Riley became the bride of Major Lewis of Bingham.

Mr. and Mrs. Cole settled in Dewitt for several years, Mr. Cole being engaged in the mercantile business. Later they moved to Lansing, St. Johns, Mt. Pleasant, Leving, and Petoskey, where they had since resided. Mr. Cole passed away in April, 1936. Mrs. Cole, who had been blind for a number of years, had been tenderly cared for by Lucile Wyman, who has been with Mr. and Mrs. Cole for the past 12 years. Tuesday, Nov. 17, Mrs. Cole suffered a stroke from which she never regained consciousness, and died Wednesday night, Nov. 18, 1936, aged 63 years. Mrs. Cole's only sister, Eva Cole, passed on several years ago. The latter's husband, Edward Cole, was a brother of her husband.

Mrs. Cole is survived by a nephew, Asahel M. Cole of Cranston, R. I., and an aunt, Miss Regina VanFleet of Dewitt, and other relatives and many friends. Her funeral was held from the Dewitt Community church, Sunday, Nov. 22, at 2 o'clock. Rev. G. S. Northrup of St. Johns, officiated. Mrs. Cole was laid at rest in Dewitt cemetery beside her husband, by her former schoolmates and friends, Bert Brinkerhoff, Albert Naracon, Mark and Frank Norris, and George and Albert Mann. The many and beautiful floral emblems testified to the high esteem in which she was held in her late home, Petoskey, and this vicinity. The undertaker, Mr. Peters, of Petoskey, was assisted here by Undertaker W. D. Brinkerhoff of Lansing. Relatives and friends were present from Cranston, R. I., Grand Rapids, Grand Ledge, Clare, Lansing, Petoskey, St. Johns, Portland, Riley, Olive and Dewitt.

# LANSING PILOT DIES IN CRASH

Cole

D. C. Cole, United Airlines

Flyer, One of Two Killed  
In Dayton, O., Accident

Dyle C. Cole, Lansing resident and former Michigan State college student, who had been a co-pilot with United Airlines for two years, was killed in the crash of a U. A. L. plane ferrying freight from Chicago to the army's Patterson field at Dayton, O., early Wednesday morning, it was disclosed in an International News Service bulletin received here. While few details were given in the dispatch, it was learned that the Lansing boy and Garton K. Wagar of New Rochelle, N. Y., chief pilot, were killed when the plane struck a tree-top, pitched earthward and burned a mile north of Patterson field.

United Airlines officials reported the plane was under contract to the army and was making a regularly scheduled trip.

#### Plan Investigation

Army and U. A. L. officials will make a formal investigation, the report stated. The accident occurred about 2 o'clock Wednesday morning and the victims were identified by Major Lawver, Patterson field operations officer.

Cole, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen H. Cole, of Meridian Center, formerly lived with his parents at 620 Deerfield avenue, Lansing. A graduate of Michigan State college, he was an enrollee with the first civilian pilot training program class sponsored by the college early in 1940.

An "honor" student, under the tutelage of Harvey M. Hughes at Capital City airport, he went on from primary training to secondary training at the Land O' Lakes Flying school in Pontiac in mid-1940. Owing to his exceptionally fine record, he was selected to take a co-pilots' training course with the Boeing School of Aeronautics at Tracy, Cal.

#### Was Frequent Visitor Here

After several months there, he took a four-weeks' course of instruction on multi-engined craft at Oakland, Cal., graduating to United Airlines' service late in 1940.

Cole was subsequently placed on the Chicago-Cheyenne run of U. A. L., as a co-pilot. He had been a frequent visitor here at intervals since then.



Cole

Chas. Cole, Former  
Dewitt Man, Dies  
— 1936

East Dewitt—Word has been received in Dewitt that Charles Cole, formerly a resident of Dewitt, but lately of Petoskey, passed away suddenly while at his work as road commissioner. The funeral will be held Friday at the Methodist church at 10:30. Rev. Northrup of St. Johns will officiate.

Cole

Married in Lansing, Oct. 26th, 1889, Charba Cole of Riley and Jennie Vandleet of Olive; also at the same time and place, Major Lewis of Bingham and Ida Bendel of Riley. The happy couples returned to the residence of Dey Vandleet about five o'clock P. M. where they were met by about thirty five relatives of Mr. and Mrs. C. Cole and tables loaded with the choicest kinds of entrees in great abundance, to which all were invited to partake and did so in a manner highly complimentary to the eatables judging by the amount of empty plates soon to be found. Mr. and Mrs. Cole were the recipients of the following articles: Mr. and Mrs. Dey Vandleet, set silver knives and forks; Eva Vandleet, table cloth, fruit dish and pair towels; Mr. and Mrs. Knight Vandleet, pair towels; Mr. and Mrs. A. Whitaker, pair cotton flannel sheets; Mr. and Mrs. Varney Pearce large parlor lamp; Brooch Altie Pearce, glass butter dish; Josie Pearce, glass pickle dish; Varney Pearce Jr., gold band dishes; Mrs. S. A. Pearce, gold band bread plate. The relatives of Mr. Cole did not understand there were to be presents brought or there would have been more but probably there will be more and will come just as acceptable. About 9 o'clock Capt. Myers marched up with his Co. of 40 volunteers (none had to be drafted but went freely) well armed with three guns and two milk pails and one cow bell. They played a few tunes and gave three rousing cheers for the blushing brides, then departed for their homes feeling much better I presume for their fun.

E.L. Cole

LOCAL HISTORY  
COLLECTION  
OX FILE

Cole

# WILL E. COLE

## SEVICES HELD

Well Known Dewitt Man Was  
Clinton County Resident  
For 61 Years

**Dewitt**—Will E. Cole, one of a family of three children of Charles E. and Lydia J. Cole, was born in Ellsworth, Litchfield county, Connecticut, June 21, 1863, and passed from this life at his home on West Washington street in Dewitt Sunday morning, May 24, 1931, aged 67 years, 11 months and 3 days.

At the age of five years his parents moved from Connecticut to Neggannu in the upper peninsula, residing there one year, they moved to Riley township in Clinton county, where he resided with his parents until July 4, 1884, when he was united in marriage with Miss Eva L. Robison.

He purchased a farm on section 14, Riley township where he was one of the successful farmers of his respective community. During his residence there he was entrusted with various township offices. At one time he conducted a successful mercantile business in partnership with his brother, the late Charles Cole at Oral, Michigan. While residing at Oral he was appointed postmaster of Oral which office he conducted for some time.

In 1914 he sold his farm, moving to Dewitt where he erected the present home. Mr. Cole was a man who always looked upon the bright side of all things in life. His ability to make friends and retain them, to have faith in all mankind, to live in peace and harmony with his neighbors. The love and happiness that have always been manifest in his home are the splendid lessons that have always been exemplified throughout his life. He leaves to mourn his passing his beloved wife who has cared for him so tenderly throughout his long illness. One brother, Frank Cole of Shepherd, two nephews, Glenn Cole of Olive township, and Clifford Cole of Dewitt, with other distant relatives besides a large circle of friends. His funeral was held from his late home Wednesday afternoon which was largely attended. Rev. G. S. Northrup of St. Johns, officiated. Mrs. Grace McCormack Coon of St. Johns played several organ numbers.

The burial was made in Dewitt cemetery in charge of Undertaker W. D. Brinkerhoff of Lansing. His pall bearers were Willis McLouth, Homer Brazee, Charles Lorenz, Elmer Lankton, Ernest Scott and Frank Eldridge. Relatives were from Columbus, Ohio, Lansing, St. Johns, Shepherd, and Holt. The many beautiful floral tributes manifested the high esteem in which he was held by the friends and associates.

Conrike

Funeral Cards from the Scrapbook of C. Harry Moon  
Now owned by Eleanor Moon McKinney (1984)

Leah Payne Conrike- Sept. 15, 1873 - Aug. 12, 1956

Colonial Chapel- Estes Leadley Funeral Home  
Wed. Aug. 15, 1956, 11:00 a.m.  
Rev. C. Harry Moon Mt. Rest Cemetery  
Pallbearers: Bruce Bailey, Richard Payne, Farley  
Bouts, Charles Anderson, Robert Payne, Edward Reynolds.



**House divided** - The home at 510 W. Main in DeWitt (left) was formed by combining two wings that were removed from the home at 506 W. Main (right). Photo by Jennifer Vincent.

## DeWitt house was home for lawyer DeWitt C. Chapin in mid-1800's

By KEN COIN

Among the earliest lawyers to make their appearance in the frontier settlement of DeWitt was a father and son team, Theodore and DeWitt C. Chapin. They came from Lockport, N.Y. in 1839 and established a successful practice here in the village. The location of their office or residence from this early period had not been found.

DeWitt Chapin was elected county clerk in 1842, a position he held for two years. Soon afterwards, he and his father moved to Ionia and later still to Allegan when the elder Chapin died. About 1853, DeWitt C. Chapin returned to DeWitt with his young family and reestablished his successful practice here. It was recorded that although he was not a "profound lawyer", he was "an excellent pleader before a jury". In 1856 he was again elected county clerk, a position he held until 1862.

Upon his return to DeWitt in the early 1850s, Chapin purchased some acreage on the west side of town, just outside the platted village, on the north side of Main Street. Here, around 1854, he built a large home in keeping with his professional status. The main two-story por-

tion of the house (currently 506 W. Main) was flanked on both the east and west sides with one-story wings (currently the house at 510 W. Main). These wings were somewhat set back from the main structure to allow for porches which faced the street.

Many structures by this date were being constructed with "balloon framing" but Chapin's home was built in the older post and beam method. The entire building was finished in the then popular Greek Revival styling. The main portion of the house undoubtedly had a large formal entrance set to the side and facing the street. Behind this would have been an entrance and stair hall.

Although situated outside of the village itself, this home was never part of a farm. It sat on three acres of land which would have contained a garden plot, fruit trees, stable, chicken coupe and other outbuildings necessary for an efficient home.

In the mid-1860s the Chapin family left DeWitt again and moved to Gratiot County where DeWitt set up another law practice and again entered local politics. He died there in 1874.

By 1860 the Chapin home had been purchased by George W. Cook, a

retired farmer. Little is known of Cook besides the fact that he lived in this house for 25 years with at least three different wives: Loretta, Clarissa and Electa. Born in Massachusetts in 1803, he died at this home in 1885.

At the turn of the century the house was purchased by Homer and Carrie Brazee. Brazee, in partnership with Willis McLouth, was both a miller at the DeWitt mill on Prairie Creek and a general merchant for a number of years at the northeast corner of Bridge and Main.

During their ownership the Brazees, who had no children, extensively altered the old home by removing the wings, raising the house onto a modern basement and adding a two-story addition to the west side. The two detached wings were moved to a lot west of the house and joined together to form the long, narrow, one-story house at 510 W. Main.

*Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.*

Cook

## Addison Cook

Among the great chain of events that occurred during Michigan's quest for statehood, perhaps none stands out more prominent than the now infamous "Toledo War". This incident has, over the past one hundred and fifty years, been a subject of great controversy among historians just as it was a tremendous controversial issue in the 1830's.

Setting aside the issue of the "war" and all debate that has proceeded it, DeWitt is proud to hold among its roster of prominent early pioneers, a veteran of that struggle, Addison U. Cook.

Addison was born in Bennington Co., Vermont in 1817, a son of Elisha Cook, Jr. Addison's paternal grandfather, Elisha Cook, Sr., descended from a proud old New England family which dated its American beginnings to the 1640's in the colony of Massachusetts, and his paternal grandmother, Abigail (Williams) Cook, was a direct descendant of the venerable Roger Williams, founder of Providence, Rhode Island.

As a child, Addison was brought by his father to the territory of Michigan where they settled in Salem township, Washtenaw county. They remained there for several years, living among numerous other branches of the large Cook family. It was from Salem that Addison answered the call to arms for the conflict that would later be known as the "Toledo War".

The war itself has become a source of amusement by later historians; somewhat of a joke. Perhaps it was viewed as such at the time by men like Addison Cook; merely a lark mixed with a bit of adventure. Whatever his opinion at the time, Cook, then only 18 years of age, took the situation serious enough to receive the rank of Lieutenant by the young Stevens T. Mason, then governor of the territory.

Following the war, in 1839, Addison migrated further into the interior of Michigan, to the wilderness of Clinton county. It is not recorded if anyone in his immediate family accompanied him but it is known that many members of his extended family

Cook

(aunts, uncles, and a host of cousins) also settled in the DeWitt area during this period.

In 1842, Addison married a local DeWitt girl, Antoinette Alexander and soon after, settled down into a rural life on their 80 acre farm in section 31 of Olive township. This union was blessed with two children, Eddie and Ada.

Antoinette Cook died rather young on November 5, 1857, at the age of 32 years. Faced the burden of being a single parent, Addison continued to farm in the DeWitt area amid the security of friends and family, all of which kindly referred to him as "Uncle Addison". He died at Lansing on August 6, 1897, at the home of his daughter Ada (Mrs. Edward H. Bedell). Family sources state that he was buried in the DeWitt cemetery beside his long departed wife, although, if true, the grave of this rare veteran of an important Michigan event, remains unmarked and forgotten.

Ken Cook

June 1986

Cook

OBITUARY - ADDISON U. COOK

From the "STATE REPUBLICAN" (Lansing, Michigan)  
Edition of Saturday, August 7, 1897 page 5 col 2

FOUND DEAD IN BED

Addison U. Cook succumbed to heart disease yesterday afternoon. At six o'clock yesterday afternoon Addison U. Cook was found dead in his bed by his daughter, Mrs. E. H. Bedell, Turner Street, at whose home he resided. Mr. Cook was 80 years old and was accustomed to taking a nap after dinner. Mrs. Bedell went down town about the time for him to awaken and upon returning he was not around, but she supposed he had gone into the yard or to make a call upon friends. When he did not appear at 6 o'clock, she went to his room and found him dead. Dr. Thoms was summoned but found that life had been extinct for several hours and death was undoubtably caused by heart failure. Mr. Cook was born June 12, 1817, in Vermont and came to Michigan in 1834, settleing in Salem. Five years later, he removed to Clinton County, where he lived until coming to this city nearly two years ago. He is survived by his daughter, Mrs. Bedell, and a son, Edward Cook of Bath. The funeral services will be held at the home in this city at 1:30 o'clock tomorrow afternoon and at DeWitt at 3 o'clock.

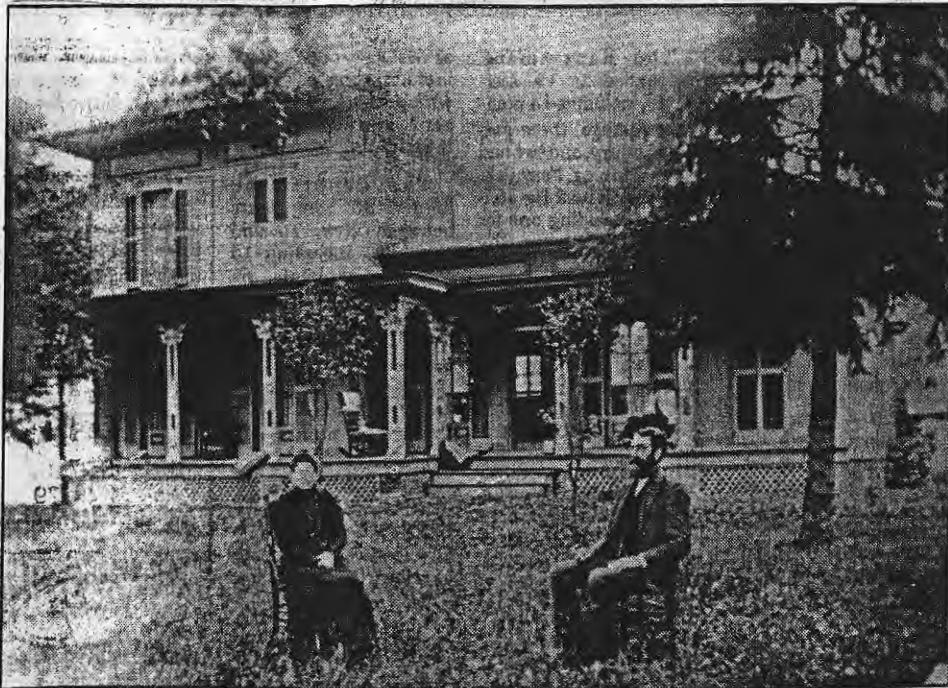
From the "STATE REPUBLICAN" (Lansing, Michigan)  
Edition of Monday, August 9, 1897 page 4 col 1

CITY NEWS BRIEFLY TOLD

Brief funeral services for Addison U. Cook were held at 1:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon at the home of his daughter, Mrs. E. H. Bedell, Turner Street, and were conducted by Rev. Andrew Zimmerman. At 3 o'clock services were held at DeWitt, where the remains were interred.

## DeWitt remembered:

8-DeWitt-Bath Review/November 30, 1992



MR. AND MRS. DAVID SCOTT PIKE ("Scott and Ola") awkwardly pose for a photo in front of their Chadwick Road farm in Riley (now the Zichke Farm). H. Bradley, travelling photographer. Photo courtesy of Gerald Pike.

## *Coin gives mind-bending example of DeWitt's intricate family ties*

Last week I mentioned the intricate network of families ties in old DeWitt... Well, a while back, Freddie (Tingay) Ford wrote me a note asking for some information on how her ancestors were related to DeWitt pioneers. So, until I have a chance to help her out, the following scenario will illustrate what I meant when I said, "Every time someone tried to put it down on paper a blood vessel in their brain would burst."

Pay attention now, cause I'm only going to go through this mind-bender once. Then I'm going to have to take a nap.

The story starts in the late 1700's in Londonderry, Vt. in the household of Elisha and Abigail Cook who had recently moved there from Providence, R.I. Abigail was a Williams and a direct descendant of Roger Williams, the Separatist whom Gov. Winthrop's Pilgrims kicked out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the founder of Providence.

Among Elisha and Abigail's twelve children were four who connect to current DeWitt: Safety, Joseph, Edward and Nancy Alta.

Safety, the oldest of the twelve, married James Cochran. She died in New York state but her husband and children soon moved to Michigan and settled at Eaton Rapids. Her son married a Naracong (a sister to the Naracongs and Knapps of DeWitt) and two of her grandchildren married one another. Their descendants, the Tingays, later moved to DeWitt.

Joseph and his family moved to DeWitt about 1840 and, settled northwest of town. His daughter Abigail adopted her cousins orphan, David Scott Pike. David married Viola Cook, Abigail's brother Amori's daughter (they were second cousins) and his grandmother was Nancy Alta (mentioned further down). Now, Viola had a sister (Ida) whose daughter Edna married Viola and David's nephew George Pike (they too were second cousins by way of their mutual great-grandparents, Atwell and Lovina Simmons, as well as third cousins on the other side of the house by way of their mutual great-grandparents — Elisha and Abigail Cook. Joseph's son Amori (already mentioned) married Amina Simmons (they weren't related that we know of but, the both were related to the Naracongs). Descendants in DeWitt from this branch include: Gerald Pike, Wally Cutler, Martha Reed and Bonnie Ward.

Who's got a headache? Raise your hand.

Edward settled in southern Michigan but his wife was connected to DeWitt because she was an Utley. Their son Addison (a veteran of the Toledo War) came to DeWitt and married an Antoinette Alexander from north of town and they settled here. Their descendants apparently had a dispensation to marry outside of the family; their daughter Ada married Edward Bedell and some descendants might still be located in Bath or Lansing.

Nothing exciting there—but get out the aspirin for this last one.

Nancy Alta married Mark W. Pike (raised by the same Utley family that Edward Cook married into) and they followed the Utleys from Vermont to DeWitt in the 1840's. Their daughter Alta married David Scott, Jr., a son of DeWitt's founder, and the Scott's son married a Moon (but that's another story). Another of Nancy Alta's sons, James, died young leaving several orphans who were farmed-out to friends and family. One of his orphans was David Scott Pike (see up above). Another was Millard Fillmore Pike who was raised by his father's cousin, Amori Cook. Millard later married Amori's wife's niece, Ella Simmons. Ella's mother was her father's school teacher (now there's a new twist). Millard and Ella's son George married Edna Randall, Amori and Amina's granddaughter. Amina's parents (Ella's grandparents) were Atwell and Lovina (Knapp) Simmons (Riley township's first settlers). Lovina's brother Samuel married one of the Naracong sisters and her uncle, Ebenezer Knapp left a widow who later married Lovina's husband's (Atwell's) father, Ephriam Simmons. And, Atwell's sister Lillis married her own step-brother (Lovina's cousin), Henry Knapp.

Thank you Freddie for that thought provoking question (a SASE will get you a diagram of the whole mess).

COOK

Cook

# Letters bring back the reality of Civil War

By KEN COIN

5-31-75

For the purposes of understanding what the men and women of DeWitt faced during the war the collection of Cook family letters are outstanding. The principles in these correspondence are Abigail (Cook) Freeman and her husband Phineas (a Corporal in Co. B, 3rd Mich. Cav.), her younger brother William H.H. Cook (a private in the same outfit) and their older brother George Cook, who served as a musician in a New York regiment. Added to this are cameo appearances by many other DeWitt soldiers and, of course, the family members here in DeWitt. Luckily for all of us, most of the originals of these 100 or so letters were turned over to the State Archives many years ago by the Cutler family and are available for researchers.

As a fitting Memorial Day tribute, the following lines are taken from these letters addressing the death of William "Henry" Cook in New Madrid, MO., to family here in DeWitt:

March 28, 1862.

I wrote a few lines to you on the 24th starting to tell you of the death of brother Henry, which was hard news for me to write. It seems as though it could not be so, but, O how I miss him. But we must submit to it. Our loss is his gain. He was buried by the side of four others from our regiment on the farm of Acker. I would of sent him home if I could but I had no money...

We were both taken sick at the same time but Henry had no appetite. He could not eat scarcely anything. I did not think he was dangerously sick until the night before he died.

....About one hour before he died I asked him if he knew me. He said yes. I asked him who it was. He said "Phineas" but he was so low...he wanted I should sit down by the side of him.

(Phineas R. Freeman)

From DeWitt the news was sent to older brother George whose outfit was then stationed at Alexandria, VA.

April 15, 1862

O, brother the sad intelligence that it conveyed to me, the death of our loved brother Henry. Our youngest brother, I can hardly realize that he is gone, poor boy. He was found a lonely grave far from his home but he was passed through the dark valley of death to which we are all hastening. I am glad that Phineas was with him for I know that he would do everything for him that could be done.

(George H. Cook)

I have long had a fascination with Civil War era letters; the personal observation exchanged between soldier (and women like DeWitt's Abbie Freeman who went off to war with her husband) and those left at the forefront. Few of the letters I've read deal much with actual battles, which is just as well. Terms like brigade, column and out-flank tend to turn my mind to tapioca.

It's the feelings expressed of what was happening that interest me. I want to know what they were experiencing and how they managed to cope. I want to know what they thought they were a part of — what did they think this war was all about and what were they willing to do to meet those objectives.

Recently, Eleanor McKinney shared with me two letters written by her great-grandfather during the war. Shubael Vincent was a hospital steward in Co. G, 23rd Mich. Infantry. Just prior to enlisting he moved from Riley Township to DeWitt where he bought a home for his family on North Franklin street. His wife Jane would wait out the war from this home with their children. To break up the loneliness she took comfort with her next-door neighbor,

Mrs. George Anderson, whose husband too had gone off to war in Co. C of the same regiment.

Shubael had been a farmer and cooper (barrel and bucket maker) by trade and a minister by desire. He was licensed by the Methodist Episcopal Church to preach in 1858 and was renewed just prior to his entering the war. The following are excerpts from his letters home:

Camp Saganaw Sep 10th /62  
Dear Wif

We have all arrived at camp saf and sound and was welcomed by all in the hospital. All the boys of DeWitt are doing (well) I believe I do not design to wright much of a lett this time from the fact I cannot give you my noos. Keep good hart. Do not mourn or feel bad on account of me. I was glad to get home agen I assure you. Do not think that I am loosing my attachment to my own family, it is just as strong as ever. Yes stronger for it is this that impells me on for all that is don four our country is being don for our families. Hence it is for you and I wish you wood look at it in this, and if you should look at it in this lite you can but feel right. O if I could persuade you to think that it was right that I was hear and that it was rong even to wish me home I should feel happy. Tell Mrs. Anderson that her man is coming home as soon as he can. If any do inquire about any of the boys tell them the boys are well. Be submissive, trust the Lord and he will direct your steps. Ade me by your prayers also and so I shall remain yours forever.

Shubael Vincent

Bowling Green Ky Jan 7th /63

I feel as though if permitted to return home in safety I shal be more than compensated for all my sufferings in the army. I know it is but a debt I owe my country and I mean to do all my duty faithfully. I have much to do and as a general thing I have abundant strength to do it. I enlisted to work with all the power I had and am going to do it wile I have strength. We still have a great deal of sickness in the camp. Enysipelas prevails to a considerable extent and is quite fatal. Many have died of it already. You asked me whether the men in the hospital

were left to die without being converted. I answer that many of them die as they live; no hope in Christ but while I was reading you letters last night and before I got through a messenger came to me requesting me to come immediately to hospital No. 2 to see a man under deep concern of mind. I went and talked and prayed with him and left him hoping in God. Others say they mean to stop swearing so you see the Spirit is at work amongst our soldiers. Our captain told me that there had bin several conversions and many more were inquiring the way to Zion.

The Companies are diuided into squads and in some of those squads they have morning and evening devotion. In fact there has bin a great reform in our camp for which I am truly thankful. John Ammerman has also met with a change. Please inform his Mother the first opportunity. My chance for doing much good to the souls of men is limited.

You wanted to know about the burying of the dead. Every man dying at the hospital is put in a coffin and buried, generally in the cloths in which he dyes.

Shubael continued ministering to the health and soul of the wounded soldiers at Bowling Green for nearly a full year after this last letter. Then, the sickness that surrounded him overtook him. He died and was buried there in a military cemetery in, like he said, "the clothes in which he dyes." Like so many DeWitt area men, there is no monument to him in the DeWitt cemetery.

If his widow Jane sought in her next-door neighbor, Mrs. Anderson had little to give. Her husband George was in a rebel prison camp called, ironically, "Andersonville". He died of starvation two days after Christmas in 1864. In later years, when the war had become but a bad memory for most of the participants, the DeWitt survivors named their veterans' post in Anderson's memory.

As to Jane Vincent's loss, the government set an amount. She would receive a widow's pension of \$12 per month until her death in 1908.

Ken Coin is a resident of DeWitt and the area's primary historian.

Cook

6-DeWitt-Bath Review/April 5, 1993



THE RETIREMENT HOME OF DEWITT'S HUSBAND AND WIFE CIVIL WAR VETERANS — Phineas and Abigail (Cook) Freeman. The house, looking much the same, still stands at the southeast corner of Maple and Capitol in Lansing. After their return to DeWitt from the war, the Freemans' took over a portion of the Cook homestead on Chadwick road. In the 1880's they "downsized" and retired to this smaller house in Lansing and sold their farm to their foster son David Scott Pike and his wife (their niece) Viola (Cook) Pike. The Freemans also had a winter home in Orange Heights, Florida. Pictured here, (l. to r.) "Ola" Pike, "Abby" Freeman, Phineas Freeman and "Scott" Pike. Ca. 1890. John Black, Photographer. Photo courtesy of Bonnie (Cutler) Ward.

## Coin shares letter from wife who saw Civil War firsthand

By KEN COIN

In the earliest years of the Civil War many DeWitt men, upon enlisting in the army, were sent to Camp Anderson in Grand Rapids for basic training. When the time came for the third Michigan Cavalry to be sent south for active duty they were transported by train to New Madrid, Missouri. Railroading in Michigan at this time being still in its infancy, to go southwest meant first having to go east to Owosso then south, then west.

On board the troop train that cold November day was Phineas Freeman and his young brother-in-law William Henry Harrison Cook. Knowing their boys were to be coming through St. Johns the Cook family went to the St. Johns depot to say their quick farewells and cheer them on. But Abigail Cook, recently Mrs. Phineas Freeman, and young Henry's older sister, had more elaborate plans. She brought with her a small carpetbag stuffed with essentials and just as the train began pulling away from the platform she pulled the bag out from beneath the seat of the buckboard and made a mad dash for the train and her beloved husband.

As her family stood there, their mouths agape, she waived them farewell and blew kisses as the train picked up speed. They did not hear from her until the following letter arrived at the DeWitt post office:

Camp Benton, Dec. 5, 1861  
Dear Father, Brother and Sister,

I rather think you would like to hear from one that is in the land of cotton. I am writing on a camp kettle, my desk is the camp chest.

We arrived in camp Sunday morning and it is the first chance I have had to write and it is after nine.

We left St. Johns Thursday night, Saturday night in St. Louis. Quite a distance from home. Had a very good journey. Citizens all through treated the soldiers first rate. At Owosso they had a supper of crackers and cheese — coffee and bier at 11 p.m. in Detroit — breakfast at Adrian. At White Pigeon we saw a hundred soldiers. At Elkhart the ladies treated with all they could; wished and cheered for the Union to a man.

It does not seem as if I was seven hundred miles from home in the land of Secesh. Their regiments left camp yesterday and there are twenty thousand here now, it is a grand sight to see them out on dress parade.

I enjoy myself first rate so far but wouldn't be a soldier. There are two ladies in (the) company besides myself, one of them is first rate.

Father, I hope this will find you well. I would like to see you but I am a great ways from home. But you will think of me and not blame me for going with Phineas will you? For he is near and dear to me. Write to me Father, won't you? .....I must bid good night and go to my bunk and rest my weary self and may God bless you all with health and prosperity.

AMF

Several of Abby's letters from the war still survive and they offer a good commentary of the events and a rare perspective from a woman's point of view. Her husband being an officer, she was allowed to remain with his regiment for quite some time. But, when the third Michigan Cavalry was ordered to the deep south she was not allowed to accompany them and sadly returned to DeWitt.

Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.

Cook  
Freeman

**MRS. P. R. FREEMAN**

**AN EARLY RESIDENT OF CLINTON  
COUNTY DIED IN FLORIDA.**

The late Mrs. P. R. Freeman, whose maiden name was Miss Abigail M. Cook, was born in Richmonid township, Livingston county, N. Y., May 28, 1827.

In the year 1841 she came with her parents to Riley township, Clinton county. They located on a part of the farm now owned by her foster son, D. S. Pike and A. B. Cook her brother, the only survivor of a family of nine brothers and sisters.

In March 1845, she was married to Phineas R. Freeman. They lived to celebrate their golden wedding which took place at Orange, Florida, where they have owned a home since 1887 and have passed the winters there since 1855 returning to their Michigan home summers.

At the beginning of the Civil war her husband enlisted in the 3rd Michigan Cavalry. As the regiment passed through St. Johns from Grand Rapids enroute to St. Louis, Mo., she surprised her husband by entering the car and going on to St. Louis with him and acted as army cook during the winter. But as the troops moved farther south she was not allowed to accompany them and returned to her home in Michigan.

She was a worthy member of Charles T. Foster, W. R. C., also a charter member of Olive grange No. 4587. Her husband passed away November 23, 1898, at their summer home in Lansing. She departed this life December 26, at Orange Heights, Florida, after an illness of five days.

Her funeral was held at the home of D. S. Pike Sunday afternoon, January 2, Rev. H. B. Bard of Lansing officiating. The burial was in DeWitt cemetery beside her husband. She was a strong believer in universal salvation. She believed that in God's own good time the whole world would be in unison and that love would preside through all and over all.

DeWitt remembered:

# They sure don't write obits like they used to in 1910

By KEN COIN

This past winter Arleta Cutler moved back to Scott street after a rural hiatus of, what Arleta? Forty years? In the course of her packing and unpacking she sorted through some scrapbooks and such and passed some clippings my way pertaining to her late husband's ancestors.

I'm printing this obituary in its entirety as a lost art form which has gone the same route as story telling and letter writing.

*Editors note: The following obituary appears here as it appeared in the original publication.*

"Oldest Pioneer of Riley is Dead."

Mrs. Amori B. Cook Answers Summons Friday Night, At Age of 74 Years.

Had Lived in Same House Since 1953.

Came with Parents to Clinton County When That Section Was Unbroken Wilderness.

DeWitt, July 23, (1910) — The oldest pioneer of Riley Township, Mrs. Amori B. Cook, who had lived practically her entire 74 years in that place, died at her home at 11 o'clock Friday evening. Since her marriage in 1853, Mrs. Cook had lived continuously in the house to which she had been brought as a bride, and previous to that time had resided with her parents but a short distance away. No one was better known throughout Clinton County. For many years she had borne the distinction of having been the longest resident of Riley Township, and her death will be marked with real regret on the part of both the older and the younger population of the county.

Comparitively sudden was her death. On Monday last the deceased was stricken with paralysis. On Wednesday she became unconscious, and from then on slept her life away.

Amina Simmons was born in Salem, Mich., July 3, 1836. In November of the same year she came with her parents (Atwell and Lovina Simmons) to Riley Township, then unbroken wilderness, where her father gradually cleared the land and built his home. She was married to Amori B. Cook in September, 1853, who still survives her.

Besides her husband, the deceased is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Jerome



Amori B. and Amina (Simmons) Cook, ca. 1865  
Photo courtesy of Gerald Pike.

Dills, of DeWitt, Mrs. D.S. Pike, of DeWitt, and Mrs. Ida Randall, residing at home, and by two granddaughters, Mrs. Marcus Cutler, of Lansing, and Mrs. George Pike, of Olive. Four great-grandchildren also survive her. Mrs. Cook is the last of her father's family.

During her long life Mrs. Cook was very active. She was a charter member of South Riley grange, and was a member of Clinton County Pioneer Society. She was not a church member, but a Universalist in faith.

Funeral arrangements are not yet completed. The services will be held at the family home Monday afternoon and interment will be at DeWitt Cemetery.

Thank you Arleta, for making these available. These obituaries, along with several hundred of others, are on file at the Faye Hanson Public Library — all arranged alphabetically in book form for your necrological pleasure.

Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.

# PIONEER OF RILEY SLEPT INTO DEATH

Cook

MRS. AMINA COOK DIED AT HER  
HOME FRIDAY NIGHT.

Was Distinguished as Living in Riley  
Longer Than Any Other Person—  
Resided on Farm Since '53.

Mrs. Amina Cook, wife of Amori B. Cook, died at her home in Riley township Friday night, July 22d, 1910.

Mrs. Cook was stricken with paralysis Monday, June 17th, 1910. After dinner Monday she lay down to rest. Paralysis came while she was sleeping. She awoke enough to know her people and Wednesday morning seemed quite improved but before noon the second call came. She seemed to sleep until Friday night at 11 o'clock she peacefully passed to the better land.

Miss Amina Simmons was born in Salem, Washtenaw county, Mich., July 3d, 1836. The following November she accompanied her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Atwell Simmons, to Riley township. This was the first family to settle in Riley, then an unbroken wilderness.

The hardships and privations which these early pioneers underwent can not be told. Only those who went through the same thrilling experiences can realize.

In a short time after Mr. Simmons moved his family to Riley, Amori B. Cook accompanied by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cook, came from Livingston county, N. Y., and settled on a farm adjoining Mr. Simmons'.

September 20th, 1853, the subject of our sketch was united in marriage to A. B. Cook. They went to keeping house on the farm where they have since resided. Although her first home was built of logs rough and simple she was to all appearance as happy as the bride of today with her elegant home.

Four daughters were born to them. One passed away in infancy. The surviving daughters are Mrs. Jerome Dills, Mrs. D. S. Pike of DeWitt, Mrs. Ida Randall who resided with her parents, two granddaughters, Mrs. George Pike of Olive, Mrs. Marc Cutlar of Lansing. Four great-grandchildren besides the daughters and husband are left to mourn the loss of a loving and devoted wife, mother and friend. She is the last of her father's family.

At the time of her death she had the distinction of having lived longer in Riley than any other person. Not the oldest person, but the oldest continuous resident.

What marvelous changes she had seen. Their first wheat was cut with a sickle threshed out by oxen treading out the kernels. She had seen the ox cart give way to the steam and electric car, automobiles, etc. She had lived a long and useful life, loved and respected by all who knew her.

She was quiet and unassuming. With her, once a friend, always a friend.

She was a charter member of South Riley Grange, a member of the Clinton County Pioneer Society. Although a member of no church her faith was strong in universal salvation. She believed that some where, some how and some time the whole human family would be restored to perfect holiness and happiness.

We weep and sympathize with these mourning friends but we can not comfort them. Our words are as vanity. But there is One who knoweth all things and doeth all things well and can heal the broken hearts. We hope they will look above the clouds where the sun is shining and look forward to the glorious reunion of loved ones where no tears and heart aches ever come.

The funeral was held at her late home Monday afternoon, Rev. Mrs. O. J. C. Woodman of Paw Paw officiating. The attendance was very large. The casket was covered with beautiful flowers.

The choir sang the following selections: "Thy Will Be Done," "We Shall Meet Them Bye and Bye," "Asleep In Jesus." Choir: Mrs. Willis McLouth, Mrs. Carl VanFleet; organist Mrs. Will Krass. Pall bearers:

Look

# OLDEST PIONEER OF RILEY IS DEAD

MRS. AMORI B. COOK ANSWERS  
SUMMONS FRIDAY NIGHT, AT  
AGE OF 74 YEARS.

HAD LIVED IN SAME HOUSE SINCE 1853

Came With Parents to Clinton County  
When That Section Was Un-  
broken Wilderness.

Special to The Journal.

Dewitt, July 25. The oldest pioneer of Riley township, Mrs. Amori B. Cook, who had lived practically her entire 74 years in that place, died at her home at 11 o'clock Friday evening. Since her marriage in 1853, Mrs. Cook had lived continuously in the house to which she had been brought as a bride, and previous to that time she had resided with her parents but a short distance away. No one was better known throughout Clinton county. For many years she had borne the distinction of having been the longest resident of Riley township, and her death will be marked with real regret on the part of both the older and the younger population of the county.

Comparatively sudden was her death. On Monday last the deceased was stricken with paralysis. On Wednesday she became unconscious, and from then on slept her life away.

Amina Simmons was born in Salem, Mich., July 3, 1836. In November of the same year she came with her parents to Riley township, then unbroken wilderness, where her father gradually cleared the land and built his home. She was married to Amori B. Cook in September, 1853, who still survives her.

Besides her husband, the deceased is survived by three daughters—Mrs. Jerome Dills, of Dewitt; Mrs. D. S. Pike, of Dewitt, and Mrs. Ida Randall, residing at home, and by two granddaughters, Mrs. Marcus Cutler, of Lansing, and Mrs. George Pike, of Olive. Four great grandchildren also survive her. Mrs. Cook is the last of her father's family.

During her long life Mrs. Cook was very active. She was a charter member of South Riley grange, and a member of Clinton County Pioneer society. She was not a church member, but a Universalist in faith.

Funeral arrangements are not yet completed. The services will be held at the family home Monday afternoon and interment will be at Dewitt cemetery.

Look

## IN RILEY 74 YEARS

Oldest Continuous Resident of Riley Has Passed Away

Mrs. Amori B. Cook Dead

Her Parents Were First Settlers in the Township,  
Coming in November, 1836.

Miss Amina Simmons was born in Salem, Washtenaw Co., Michigan, July 3rd, 1836. In November the same year she came to Riley township with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Atwell Simmons.

This was the first family to settle in Riley township, then an unbroken wilderness. The hardships and privations which these early pioneers underwent cannot be told. Only those who went through the same thrilling experience can realize.

In a short time after Mr. Simmons' family came to Riley, Amori B. Cook, accompanied by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cook, came from Livingston, N. Y., and purchased a tract of land adjoining Mr. Simmon's farm.

September 20th, 1853 the subject of our sketch was united in marriage to Amori B. Cook and went to keeping house on the farm where she has ever since resided. Although her first home was built of logs, rough and simple, she was to all appearance, as happy as the bride of today with her beautiful home, modern and supplied with all conveniences.

Four daughters were born to them, one passed away in infancy, three daughters beside her husband, survive her. The daughters are Mrs. Jerome Dills, Mrs. D. S. Pike, of DeWitt, Mrs. Ida Randall, who resides with her parents. Two granddaughters, Mrs. Geo. Pike, of Olive and Mrs. Marc Cutler, of Lansing, and four great grandchildren also survive her. She is the last of her father's family.

At the time of her death, which occurred Friday night at 11 p.m., July 22, 1910, she had the distinction of being the oldest continuous resident in Riley township. Not the oldest person in the town, but had lived there more years.

What marvelous changes she had witnessed. Their first grain was cut by hand with a cycle. The oxen threshed it by treading out the kernels. She had seen the ox cart give place to the steam and electric car, automobile, etc.

She had lived a long, useful life, loved and respected by all who knew her. She was of a quiet, unassuming disposition, with her, once a friend, always a friend. She was devoted to her family and will be greatly missed by them as well as by all who knew her.

She was a charter member of South Riley Grange, a member of the Clinton County Pioneer Society. Although a member of no church, her faith was strong in the Universal Salvation and that some time, some how and some where, the whole human family would be united in perfect holiness and happiness.

Monday afternoon, July 18th, she lay down to rest. While asleep that dread enemy, papalysis, came. She was helpless, but knew her friends, until Wednesday morning the second call came. From then on she seemed to be in a heavy sleep until 11 o'clock Friday night she peacefully passed away to a better and higher life.

-Poem-

The funeral was held at the late home Monday afternoon, Rev. Mrs. O. J. C. Woodman, of Paw Paw, officiating. The attendance was very large. The casket was covered with beautiful flowers.

The choir sang the following selections: "Thy Will be Done", "We Shall Meet Them Bye and Bye," "Asleep in Jesus."

Choir; Mrs. Willis McLouth, Mrs. Carl VanFleet, organist, Mrs. Will Krass.

Pall bearers: W. S. Dills, E. N. Cutler, A. Whitaker, Charles Rockwell, Edgar Hyde, Mark Hill.

The interment was in DeWitt cemetery.

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We extend our thanks to those who kindly assisted and sympathized with us during the sickness and death of our loved one. Also for flowers and music.

(Signed) A. B. Cook, children and grandchildren.

Cook

## Gets Surprise On 72nd Birthday

(By Abbie E. Dills)

**Dewitt**—Saturday, March 31 Mrs. Ida O. Cook Randell of South Riley was given a complete surprise by her sister, Mrs. Estelle Dills, and her daughter, Mrs. Edna Pike of Olive, spending the afternoon with her in honor of her 72nd birthday. A supper was served by her daughters, Mrs. Maude Cutler and Mrs. Edna Pike. She was presented with a birthday cake decorated with 72 candles, by her daughter, Mrs. Pike. Mrs. Randell was born on this farm in South Riley in 1858 and it has been her home continuously for 72 years. Ever since she was 15 years old she has been in poor health and for the past winter has been unable to leave her home. She received many post cards and an interesting letter from an old school mate of her girlhood, recalling many incidents of their school days. Her guests departed, wishing her many returns of her birthday.

Cook

## DEATH CLAIMS PIONEER WOMAN

**Mrs. Will Randall, Aged 72,  
Was Lifelong Clinton Resi-  
dent; Funeral Friday**

(By Mrs. Agnes Steinhardt)  
East Dewitt — Ida Ophelia Cook, daughter of Amori B. and Amima Simmons Cook, was born in Riley township, Clinton county, March 31, 1856. She was united in marriage to Will Randall Oct. 23, 1880. Two daughters were born to this union, Edna A. and Maude D.

Mrs. Randall had been in poor health since she was 15 years of age but was always cheerful, patiently bearing whatever trials life held in store for her. She had always lived upon the farm where she was born until the death of her mother, Mrs. Cook, in 1910, since when she had divided her time between her daughters, Mrs. Edna Pike of Olive, and Mrs. Maude Cutler who resides upon the old homestead and with whom Mrs. Randall was living during her last long illness. Both daughters tenderly cared for their mother until death ended her sufferings Tuesday, Aug. 14, 1928, at the age of 72 years, 4 months and 14 days.

Besides the daughters, one sister, Mrs. Estella Dills of Dewitt, six grandsons, Glenwood, Loyde, and Gerald Pike, Donovan, Vernon and Neil Cutler, and many other relatives and friends will miss the cheerful smile and loving companionship of the one who has joined the loved ones gone before where sorrow and suffering is unknown.

"Weep not that her toils are over;  
Weep not that her race is run;  
God grant we may rest as calmly  
When our work, like hers, is done.  
'Til then, we leave in gladness,

Her spirit to Him to keep;  
And rejoice in the sweet assurance  
He giveth His loved ones, sleep."

Funeral services were held at the home Friday afternoon with Rev. Cleaver of St. Johns officiating. Mrs. Grace Coon sang "Lead Kindly Light" and "My Jesus as Thou Will." Kenneth Cutler and five grandsons of the deceased acted as pallbearers. One grandson, Loyde Pike, who is in the U. S. navy, now stationed at the navy yards in Washington, was unable to be present. The floral tributes were numerous and beautiful. She was laid to rest in Dewitt cemetery.

Cook

From Olive Correspondent:

Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Cook, of Riley, were reminded last Sunday that 50 years had passed since they were wed, by several of their near relatives appearing at their home and spending the day with them. A bountiful dinner was served. An interesting program was given, in which appeared an original poem by Mrs. Estella Dills. All report an enjoyable time and wish Mr. and Mrs. Cook may live to see many more anniversaries. Geo. Simmons is the only witness living who attended this wedding. Mr. Cook has one sister living, Mrs. P. R. Freeman, of Orange Heights, Florida, who was also present.

Just fifty years ago today  
The time not long I hear them say  
That Amor B. Cook took for his bride  
Amina L. Simmons, who sits by his side.  
Fifty years ago. Fifty years ago.

With a resolute will and light of heart  
Each one resolved to do his or her part  
To build for themselves in the forest a home,  
Where wild beasts and the red man did roam.  
Fifty years ago. Fifty years ago.

They made a little clearing, built a log  
And lived as easily as a little mouse  
In their snug little quarters on the land  
Not far from the place where their house  
now stands. Fifty years ago. Fifty years ago.

They have lived to see many a change,  
They then cooked over the fire place. They  
now use a range.  
These green stumps and tall majestic trees  
Stand all around them nodding in the breeze.  
Fifty years ago. Fifty years ago.

Not many years of time as it passes  
Were they left alone e'er three little lasses  
Came to gladden their home on earth  
And fill it with shouts of laughter and  
mirth.  
Since fifty years ago. Fifty years ago.

When the three to womanhood had grown,  
A bright little cherub came to the home.  
She is now waiting on the other shore,  
With outstretched arms to welcome them  
over.  
Since fifty years ago, fifty years ago.

Then two granddaughters to them were  
given  
Which gave to their declining years a taste  
of Heaven;  
And now for the first time to increase their  
joy.  
Has been added to the circle a nice baby  
boy.  
Since fifty years ago, fifty years ago.

But through all the changes that have  
passed and all that will come,  
They fondly cling to their pioneer  
home;  
She is their joy, and their pride, and no  
other place below,  
Can warm their hearts as she has done,  
Since fifty years ago.  
Fifty years ago, fifty years ago.

Written by their loving daughter,  
ESTELLA.

Page

Cook

## Dewitt Village

### Obituary

Amori B. Cook, one of Clinton county's oldest pioneers, was born in Livonia township, Livingston county, N. Y., October 11, 1831. At the age of 10 years he accompanied his father's family to Michigan and settled on a farm in Riley, Clinton county. This farm at that time was an unbroken wilderness, trees having to be felled in order to clear a place for the house to be built. Mr. Cook has been a continuous resident on that farm until his death which occurred Saturday, Feb. 8, 1919, from infirmities incident to old age.

He was united in marriage to Miss Anne Simmons, also a pioneer of Riley, September 20, 1853. Four daughters were born to Mr. and Mrs. Cook. One daughter died in infancy. Mrs. Cook passed away eight years ago, last July. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Estella Dills of Dewitt, and Mrs. Ida Randall of Riley. Mrs. Viola Pike passed away five years ago next May. He is also survived by two granddaughters, Mrs. Marc Cuthar of Riley and Mrs. Edna Pike of Olive and six great grandchildren. Since the death of his wife he has been kindly cared for by his granddaughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Marc Cuthar, who have lived in his house. Mr. Cook well knew the hardships and privations as well as many pleasant things connected with a pioneer life. He was a member of Clinton county pioneer society and charter member of South Riley Grange and attended as long as he was able.

He was one of 10 children and is the last one of the family to go. Mr. Cook was of a jovial nature and enjoyed a joke until after the death of his wife; after that he seemed to lose all interest in life. His funeral was held at his late home, Pioneer Farm, as it is called, Tuesday, Rev. F. C. Aldinger of Lansing officiating. Interment in Dewitt cemetery.

The floral offerings were numerous and beautiful.

### Card of Thanks

We wish to thank all for their kindness and sympathy shown us in our recent bereavement.—Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills, Mrs. Ida Randall, Mr. and Mrs. Marc Cuthar, and Mrs. Edna Pike.

Cook

## DE WITT

### Obituary.

Viola H. Cook was born in Riley, Clinton county, Mich., April 23, 1858.

She was united in marriage to D. S. Pike also of Riley, May 11th, 1878.

They began to keep house in Riley and lived there several years. They then went to Lansing and stayed one year. Six years ago they purchased a home in DeWitt village and have lived there ever since. Mrs. Pike was the third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Cook of Riley. Mrs. Cook, her mother, passed away nearly four years ago.

Mrs. Pike is survived by her husband her aged father, two sisters, Mrs. Jerome Dills, of DeWitt and Mrs. Ida Randall of Riley; two nieces, Mrs. Geo Pige of Olive and Mrs. Marc Cutler of Riley besides a large circle of other relatives and friends.

She was always ready to help in sickness and where help was needed. She was loved and respected by all. None knew her but to love her. It is not the tear at the moment, shed when the cold turf has just been laid over her that can tell how beloved is the spirit that fled or how deep in our hearts we deplore her, 'tis the tear through many long days wept through a life by her alas all shaded, 'tis the sad remembrance fondly kept when all other griefs have faded.

She was a member of no church but she believed in the universal salvation of all. That somewhere and some time the whole human family would be united in perfect holiness and happiness. She was a member of the D. of R., Clinton County Pomona Grange, Clinton County Pioneer Society, also of South Riley Grange. She and Mr. Pike were the last surviving charter members. She expressed herself many times as not afraid to die, but she wanted to live for her husband's sake, as she knew how lonely and desolate the world would be to him without her. While our hearts beat in sympathy with the bereaved friends, we would bid them weep not as one without hope. Think of the joyous meeting with those gone on before. Mrs. Pike has been in poor health many months. Everything that loving hearts and willing hands could do was done but the destroying hand of death could not be stayed. She quietly and peacefully passed away Friday night May 29, 1914.

The funeral was held at her late home Monday afternoon, Rev. F. C. Alldinger of Lansing officiating. Interment in DeWitt cemetery. The D. of R. attended the funeral in a body. The floral offerings were numerous and beautiful. Friends from away were Wm. Pipe of Newaygo, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Millan, Mrs. Almeda Brock and daughter of Lansing.

### Card of Thanks.

I wish to thank all for the kindness and sympathy shown me in my great sorrow, also for the beautiful flowers.

D. S. PIKE.

Cook

## Two Families Hold Gathering Sunday

(By Mrs. Frank Steinhardt)

**East Dewitt**—A pleasant gathering of the Pike and Cook families was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steinhardt of East Dewitt Sunday.

Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Wm. J. Pike, son Walter Pike and Mrs. Louise Pike of Newaygo, D. S. Pike and Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills of Dewitt, Mrs. Edna Pike and sons Glenwood, Loyde and Gerald and M. F. Pike of Olive, Mrs. Marc, Culter and son Neil and Mrs. Ida Randall of Riley. Eight of the relatives were past seventy years old.

Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Pike, Walter Pike and Mrs. Louise Pike of Newaygo were entertained at the Steinhardt home over the week end. Monday Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Pike, Mrs. Louise Pike, Walter Pike and Miss Marie Ferlong of Newaygo, M. F. Pike and Mrs. Agnes Steinhardt of East Dewitt and D. S. Pike of Dewitt took dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills at their home in Dewitt.

# Clinton County Sesquicentennial

## Atwell Simmons first settler in Riley Township

*Editor's Note: In celebration of the sesquicentennial of Clinton County, the Clinton County News in cooperation with the Clinton County Historical Society and Clinton County Archives will present weekly features about individuals and happenings in Clinton County from years ago.*

*Following is this week's feature, written by Ken Coin, about Atwell and Lovina (Knapp) Simmons.*

By KEN COIN

The first settlement in what would become Riley Township began in the summer of 1836 when Atwell Simmons made a trip from his home in Salem, Washtenaw County to the Scott settlement on the Looking Glass River.

He made the trip with the intentions of surveying the surrounding country side in hopes of locating some favorable governmental land.

His wife had given him explicit instructions that any land he considered for a new home should contain a good sugarbush and be in close proximity to a lake, a throw back to her girlhood days spent near Honeoye Lake in Ontario County, New York.

**ATWELL WAS** impressed with the land near the "Scotts." The parcels he noted and eventually purchased from the government land office at Kalamazoo on July 30, 1836, lay in Riley and Olive townships.

He was also able to oblige his wife's requirements as Muskrat Lake was but a short distance off and the sugarbush which was on the tract would later gain a reputation as one of the best in southern Clinton County.

Atwell Simmons was born in Bristol, Ontario County, New York on Sept. 26, 1806, the son of Ephriam and Lydia (Bowen) Simmons.

His entire youth was spent in that region and in November of 1830 he was married to Lovina Knapp.

She was born on May 22, 1805, at Nassau, Rensselaer County, New York, the daughter of Samuel and Polly (Hines) Knapp. As a young girl, her parents had moved to Ontario where the remainder of her youth was spent.

**IN 1832**, Atwell and Lovina moved to Michigan territory, settling in Salem Township. Here, two children were born to them, George Riley and Amina Louisia.

In November of 1836, after proper preparations, the Simmons family set out in a wagon, drawn by oxen, with one cow tied to the rear of the wagon box. Regarding their early life in Riley Township, the following was written early in this century by their great-granddaughter, Agnes (Pike) Steinhardt.



THIS PHOTOGRAPH of the descendants of Atwell and Lovina (Knapp) Simmons was taken in Riley Township in 1900. Standing (left to right): Jerome Dills, Estella (Cook) Dills, George R. Simmons, Elizabeth (Tucker) Simmons, Edna (Randall) Pike, Agnes (Pike) Steinhardt, unknown, unknown, Marc. D.L.

Photograph courtesy Faye Hansen Public Library  
Cutler, Maud (Randall) Cutler. Seated (left to right): Amori B. Cook, David Scott Pike, Viola (Cook) Pike, Ella (Simmons) Pike, Ida (Cook) Randall, Amina (Simmons) Cook, unknown, Millard Filmore Pike.

COOK

"The roads were in a terrible condition and the oxen were often mired. After a six day journey they arrived in DeWitt. Leaving his family with William Webb and his wife who lived about a mile west of the Scott settlement, Atwell went on to cut a road through the forest and to build a log cabin for a home.

**THIS CABIN** was 14 by 16 feet, built without boards or nails. Logs were fastened together with wooden pins. A shake roof was bound on with poles. A puncheon floor of split logs with a space in front of a large fireplace, filled with clay for a hearth and with a quilt hung in place for a door, Atwell brought his family home.

The time required to build this crude cabin was less than two weeks. Later, a door was made of the dry goods box in which their goods were packed while moving.

Here, in an unbroken wilderness, with many wild animals about and only Indians for callers, Atwell began clearing the land. Water was obtained from a spring a short distance west of the cabin.

One day the little boy, George, was sent to the spring with a small pail for water. He soon ran back to the cabin exclaiming, 'I found a little doggie but it ran away and wouldn't play with me.'

**THE PARENTS** soon learned that it was a wolf instead of a dog.

With no fences, the cattle often strayed some

distance from the cabin. One night, Lovina went in search of the cow and became lost in the woods. She found a tree which had fallen and become lodged in another. Climbing this tree she waited the coming of day break. Towards morning she was startled by the sound of a gun. Fearing Indians, she remained quiet until the lights came near. Then, she was overjoyed to find that her husband and another pioneer were searching for her."

Atwell held many positions in local affairs, especially the schools of which he was a generous benefactor. Lovina is credited with giving Riley Township its name. She used the same as a middle name for her son, George Riley Simmons.

Atwell died in Riley Township on Oct. 27, 1881, and Lovina remained there until the time of her death on April 30, 1891.

**GEORGE R. SIMMONS** who had come to Clinton County with his parents at the age of four, married his former school teacher, Elizabeth Tucker on Dec. 21, 1853.

She had come to the area in 1850 with her parents, Hiram and Lucy (Smith) Tucker. Following their marriage, George and Elizabeth took over part of his parents' homestead, the portion which lay in Olive Township and remained there first in a small abandoned log cabin and later in a fine frame house until

1882 when they retired to DeWitt.

They had two children who lived to maturity, Hiram Atwell Simmons and Ella (Mrs. Millard Filmore Pike).

Amina Louisa Simmons, a mere infant of four months when her parents brought her to Clinton County, married a young man from an adjoining homestead, Amori B. Cook on Sept. 20, 1853.

He had come with his parents, Joseph and Charlotte (Herrick) Cook to Riley in 1840.

His father had, however, made an earlier appearance in 1838 at which time he purchased the land and built a log house. Following their marriage, Amori and Amina occupied a log cabin on the Cook homestead.

Their homes improved with time and they remained on this homestead until their deaths. They had three daughters who grew to adulthood, E. Estella (Mrs. Jerome Dills), Ida O. (Mrs. William Randall), and Viola H. (Mrs. David Scott Pike).

Atwell and Lovina (Knapp) Simmons were both members of a large complex family network which extended back to Puritan New England (perhaps earlier).

**INTERMARRIAGE WITHIN** the extended family, typical of many early American families, was commonplace: Atwell's father wed, for a second mar-

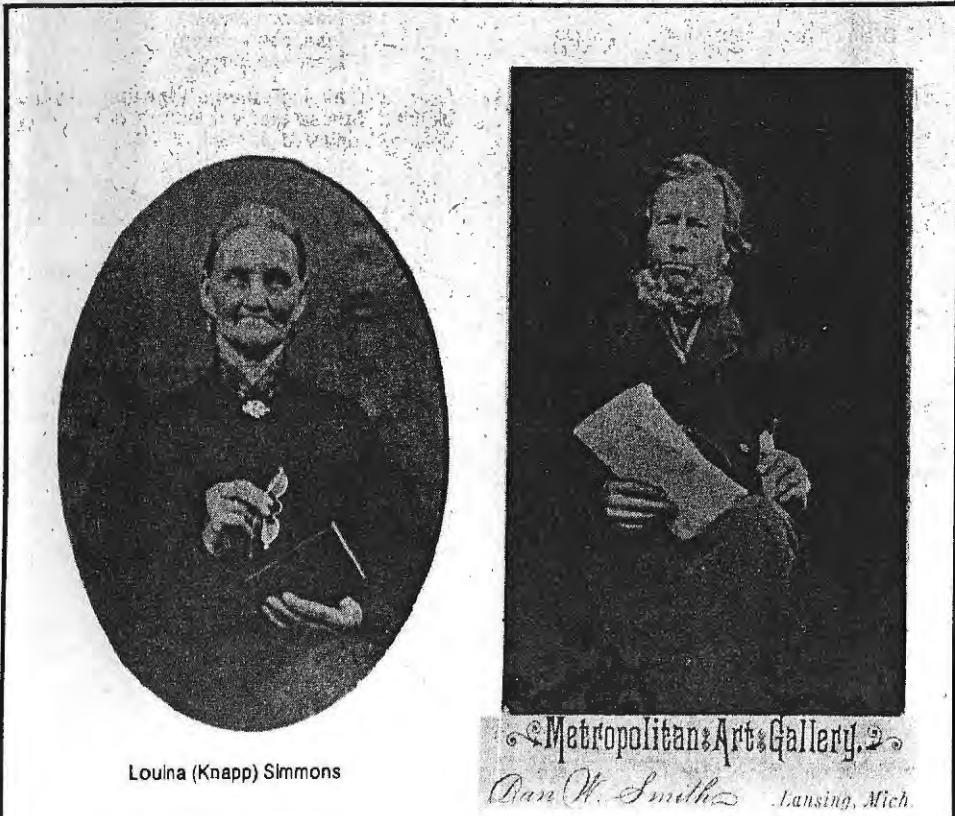
riage, Lovina's aunt and Lovina's cousin married Atwell's sister.

The practice perpetuated onto Atwell and Lovina's descendants as their grandson, Hiram Simmons, married Atwell's brother's step-daughter, Carrie Swift; their granddaughter, Viola Cook married her own second cousin (and a foster son of her father's sister) David Scott Pike, also a granddaughter of Atwell and Lovina and the practice, perhaps, concluded in the Dec. 13, 1905, marriage of the Simmons' great-grandson, George S. Pike, to another great-grandchild, Edna Randall.

Now, while all of this may sound like a genealogist's nightmare, it is presented here as an example of normal family ties in 19th century Clinton County.

Equally, it is an important concept to remember when researching any aspect of early Clinton County history. The main reason, however, is that people came to this county or relocated within it because of family connections, often hidden by the passing of generations.

Atwell and Lovina Simmons were also important pioneers within their own extended family as the first to come to Clinton County. Many other close and distant branches of the Simmons and Knapp families would follow their lead.



Lovina (Knapp) Simmons

Cook

## DEATH CLAIMS AGED PIONEER

Sept. 16, 1939

Mrs. Jerome B. Dills, 85, Was  
Lifelong Resident of  
This County

Mrs. Jerome B. Dills, 85, of Dewitt, prominent grange member and life-long resident of Clinton county died Saturday, Sept. 16, after a long illness. Funeral services were held Tuesday at Dewitt.

Emeline Estella, eldest daughter of Amori and Amina Cook, and granddaughter of Atwell and Lovina Simmons, Riley's first pioneers, was born in Riley township, Clinton county, Aug. 6, 1854. She received her education in the Simmons school in Dewitt, then began teaching at the age of 15.

February 22, 1876, she was united in marriage to Jerome H. Dills, who passed on Nov. 17, 1938.

For many years Mr. and Mrs. Dills lived in Riley and in Olive townships and in Dewitt, occupying their late home since 1907.

Mrs. Dills joined South Riley grange as a charter member, June 11, 1874, transferring to Dewitt grange in 1882, and she had been a continuous and faithful member of the order for 65 years. She was also a member of Pomona, the state and the national granges and as long as health and strength permitted, she was an enthusiastic worker in the order which she loved so much.

Many times she acted as installing officer in subordinate, county and state granges, using the very impressive ceremony, composed in verse, which she committed to memory, many years ago. Such notables as the late George B. Horton and Mary Mayo were installed as state master and chaplin, respectively, by Mrs. Dills.

Possessed of a congenial and friendly spirit, she will be greatly missed by her many friends. During the last long illness of her husband,

she constantly attended him until her strength failed.

Since January, she had been confined to her bed, patiently awaiting the call which came Saturday evening, Sept. 16.

The funeral was held at the Community church in Dewitt Tuesday afternoon, with Rev. Toy officiating. Dewitt grange and Pomona members attended in a body.

Mrs. Leon Blizzard and Mrs. Glen Curren sang with Mrs. Donald Reed as pianist.

The pall bearers were four grand nephews, Donovan, Vernon and Neil Cutler and Gerald Pike.

A niece, Mrs. Maud Cutler, and other relatives survive.

Interment was in Dewitt cemetery beside her husband who preceded her by less than a year.

## Sickness Kept This Pioneer Woman Away From St. Johns Old Home Week; Parents Were the First Settlers in Riley Township

The following letter written to J. W. Fitzgerald by Mrs. Jerome Dills tells of some interesting facts about the early history of her family and the township of Riley:

Mr. J. W. Fitzgerald,  
St. Johns, Mich.

Dear Sir:

I regret very much that sickness prevented our meeting with the pioneers on Wednesday of Home Coming week.

I was born in Riley township, August 6th, 1854, on the farm now owned by M. D. Cutler. My grandparents on my mother's side, Mr. and Mrs. Atwell and Lovina Simmons were the first settlers of the township. Arriving in the month of October, 1836, with the oxen and wagon, two children, the youngest three months old (my mother) a few household goods in a dry goods box, with the cow tied behind the wagon. (St. Johns at that time was nothing but a howling wilderness.) grandmother gave

the township its name of Riley. My grandparents on my father's side, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph and Charlotte Cook, were also among Riley's first pioneers and located just west of the Simmons homestead in the spring of 1841. Their oldest daughter was the first white marriage in the township (Charlotte Cook Newman.) Grandfather was a shoemaker by trade and made boots and shoes for the whole community for several years. Thus I have the honor of being a descendant of Riley's first pioneers and a teacher in the rural schools of Riley and Olive townships from the spring of 1874 until the fall of 1875, have always been a resident of the county.

My husband, Jerome Dills, has been a resident of the county 74 years and is nearly 76 years old.

Respectfully,  
Mrs. Jerome Dills,  
(Nee Estella Cook)  
Dewitt, Mich.

will celebrate their wedding  
Anniversary on February 22nd

Cook



Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills

Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills, prominent and highly respected Dewitt couple, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Saturday, Feb. 22. At the last meeting of Dewitt grange the following account of their lives, written by Agnes Pike Steinhardt, was read:

Emeline Estella, eldest daughter of Amos and Amina Cook, and granddaughter of Atwell and Lovina Simmons—Riley's first pioneers—was born Aug. 6, 1854, on one of the pioneer farms in section 25 in Riley township, Clinton county. It is now the home of her niece, Mrs. M. D. Cutler.

She attended the Simmons school and also a select school in Dewitt, taught by Mrs. Caroline Benten, then began teaching when 15 years of age. She taught at Olive Center, the VanDyke, now known as the Plowman district, the Simmons and the Kincaid schools.

Jerome Hazzard Dills was born in Oakland county, about 16 miles from Detroit, Oct. 21, 1850. In the spring of 1852, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Dills, came to Dewitt township and located on a large farm one mile north of Dewitt village, where he grew to manhood. On the evening of Feb. 22, 1876, at the home in Riley, in the presence of many invited guests, Estella Cook and Jerome Dills were united in marriage by Rev. Swift, then pastor of the Dewitt M. E. church. They were attended by Viola Cook, sister of the bride, and David Scott Pike.

Of the large number of guests present on that occasion, only four are living today. They are Maria Maher, now Mrs. Burd; Lydia Brinkerhoff, later Mrs. Pennell; Scott Pike and Will Brinkerhoff, then a lad of four years. The wedding trip took them to Salem, Washtenaw county, where lived many relatives at that time. I am told the winter of '76 was mild and the roads were either very rough or very muddy.

There were no paved or improved roads at that time and a two seated open carriage, drawn by two horses, was their means of travel.

They did not drive fifty miles an hour but usually reached their destination.

When the bride to be, with her parents, went to Lansing to select

the wedding gown, the roads were so bad, they were compelled to stay over night and return home the following day. Mr. and Mrs. Dills lived with her parents for a few years, then moved to Dewitt village.

In 1888, they purchased a farm in Olive, just south of the Brown school house.

Here they lived for sixteen years, making many improvements on both farm and buildings.

In 1905, they sold this place to Charles Cole and in 1907 they again came to Dewitt village and erected the beautiful home where they have since resided. Mrs. Dills joined South Riley grange as a charter member in June, 1874. Mr. Dills joined Dewitt grange in April, 1882. Both have held nearly all the offices in the grange to which they were eligible. Each one has occupied the master's chair several years. Both have also held many offices in the county grange and Sister Dills has acted as installing officer in subordinate, county and state granges many times, using the very impressive ceremony, composed in verse, which she committed to memory, many years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Dills are Universalists in belief and followers of the golden rule. As long as health permitted, they were active in many civic movements which had as their object the upbuilding and betterment of manhood and womanhood and they have ~~always~~ been ready to lend a helping hand whenever and wherever needed.

A celebration of their golden wedding anniversary was held at their home ten years ago. It is not often that a couple are permitted to celebrate their sixtieth anniversary and we are glad that Brother and Sister Dills, whom we all hold in such high esteem, have been spared to observe this occasion.

We are glad, too, that they have remained true to the grange since they first joined the order, so many years ago. Although they are not able to meet with us often, we know their hearts are with us and the many evidences of their good works and the noble influences of the past, make us feel that they are with us when ever we meet.

Among my earliest recollections of the grange is the dignified and impressive manner in which both Brother and Sister Dills filled all stations assigned them.

Mr. and Mrs. Dills are well known and have a large circle of friends who will join with us in extending to them our heartfelt congratulations.

'Tis sixty years since vows declared  
Whether fair or stormy weather,  
Sixty years since they agreed

To walk life's road together.

Stalwart youth of twenty-five

Fair maid of twenty-one

And to him she is as fair

As when life had just begun.

Distinguished are they, this Sister

and Brother

Whom, to honor, we may

# MARRIED FIFTY YEARS FEB. 22

Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills Of  
Dewitt Observe Anniversary  
With Mock Wedding

Comparatively few married couples are spared to share the joys and sorrows of wedded life together for 50 years, but Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills of Dewitt were granted this pleasure, when Monday, February 22, 1926, marked their 50th wedding anniversary. With 50 relatives and nearby neighbors they celebrated their golden wedding that evening.

Golden weddings in themselves are unusual and this one was especially so as five of the guests present attended their wedding 50 years ago, when Miss E. Estella Cook, eldest daughter of Emory and Almina Cook, became the bride of Jerome H. Dills of Olive, at her parental home in Riley township, Clinton county, Feb. 22, 1876. They were attended by her sister, Viola and husband, Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Pike and the marriage vows were read by Rev. A. J. Swift, pastor of the M. E. church of Dewitt.

The guests present who witnessed the ceremony 50 years ago were D. S. Pike, best man, Mrs. Ida Cook Randell, sister of the bride, Omar H. Dills, brother of the groom, W. D. Brinkerhoff, nephew of the groom and Mrs. Marie Maher Hurd.

A mock wedding was staged at 8 o'clock in the evening when to the strains of a wedding march played by Miss Alice Padgett, Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Dills, attended by Mr. and Mrs. Omar Dills and accompanied by Marc D. Cutler who acted as the clergyman, took their places before the lay window where the marriage vows were read. The bridal party were attired in costumes of 50 and 70 years ago, the bridegroom wearing the same suit he wore at his wedding 50 years ago. The bride, gowned in a wedding dress of long ago and a long wedding veil looked very trim. The bride and her matron of honor carried bouquets of yellow jonquils. Mr. Cutler in his silk tie steel-bowed spectacles and clergyman's long coat made a very dignified appearance.

After congratulations were offered a lap supper was served. During the repast a beautiful bride's cake was placed before the bride to cut and serve her guests. This cake, which was put up in pyramid shape and decorated with small flags, was the counterpart of the bride's cake served at the wedding 50 years ago.

The evening was spent in playing games, music, etc. Before the guests adjourned to return to their homes an old time dance was indulged in for a short time which brought forth much laughter.

Mr. Dills said the winter they were married was an open one and the roads very bad. Their wedding trip was taken to Salem, Mich., where they visited relatives.

The bride at the close of the wedding ceremony read a poem which was very apt for this occasion entitled "Getting Along." In behalf of the guests Mr. Cutler in his very pleasing manner presented Mr. and Mrs. Dills with a beautiful electric floor lamp.

Jerome H. Dills, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Dills was born in a log cabin in the township of Farmington, Oakland county, Oct. 21, 1850. When he was 1½ years old his parents moved to Olive township in April 24, 1852.

E. Estella Cook, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Emory Cook was born August 6, 1854 in a log house in Riley township, Clinton county, on the farm now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Marc Cutler. Mr. and Mrs. Dills with the exception of Mr. Dills early life have always been spent in Riley and Olive, and Dewitt has been his post office for 73 years.

In the year 1885, they retired from farm life and have since resided in Dewitt village. In 1907 Mr. Dills built a modern home at the corner of Jefferson and Scott streets where they now reside.

Mr. and Mrs. Dills have always been very active in grange work

witt grange in the early 80's. Mrs. Dills has held all the offices in the Dewitt grange except overseer, steward and treasurer and both have held many offices in Clinton County Pomona grange. Mr. Dills is at present treasurer of the Dewitt grange, an office he has held for years. Mrs. Dills has been and still fills the office of installing officer of the various granges. The installation service which she has in

Cook

## MAPLE RAPIDS

Harriet Blizzard, the daughter of Oliver and Mary Blizzard, was born in England, Feb. 24, 1847, and died June 20, 1913. At the age of four years she came with her parents to Ohio where they resided five years, afterwards moving to Olive, Clinton county, and later to Maple Rapids where Mrs. Cook resided 49 years. In 1865 she was married to Thomas Cook, who passed away 42 years ago. She leaves to mourn their loss one son, Charles, and the following brothers and sisters—Mrs. Kate Miller and Oliver Blizzard of Maple Rapids; Enos Blizzard of St. Johns; Mrs. Amelia Dunting of Gladwin county; Mrs. Clara Payne of Middleton; Thos. Blizzard of Detroit and Charles of Sickels.

St. Johns News 6-26-1913

COON

## *A. L. Woodbury Weds Prominent St. Johns Musician in Sunday Ceremony*

A quiet wedding was solemnized at 3 o'clock Sunday afternoon, May 2 at St. John's Episcopal church, when Mrs. Grace M. Coon, prominent musician, became the bride of A. L. Woodbury. The ceremony was performed in the presence of the immediate families by Rev. Rollin J. Fairbanks before the altar beautifully decorated with Easter lilies.

The bride was attired in a navy blue lace afternoon frock with matching straw hat. This was complemented by a corsage of pink rosebuds and lilies of the valley.

After the ceremony a delightful luncheon was served the wedding party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Woodbury.

Mrs. Woodbury has been an instructor of piano in this city, for several years, and organist at the St. John's Episcopal church for the last five years. She also directs the junior choir. Last fall she joined the faculty of the Art Studios of Music and Drama, located in the Wilson building in Lansing. Mr. Woodbury is a well and favorably known florist in St. Johns, where he has been in business with his brother, Lee A. Woodbury, for many years. They will reside at the country residence of the groom after May 15.



MRS. A. L. WOODBURY