

Munroe family makes trek from New York to DeWitt

Family eventually settles in Eagle

By KEN COIN

In the spring of 1836, Jesse and Harriett (Parker) Munroe, along with Harriett's brother, Hiram Parker, took a rather unusual trip which would later have a great impact on the history of this region.

The Munroe's left their five daughters and two sons at their farm on the Batavia Road east of Buffalo, N.Y. and took a horseback ride of dynamic proportions. In search of a new home they rode west through Ohio and on into Indiana. Not finding anything to their mutual liking they continued on into Illinois and further yet into Wisconsin; still nothing. They purposely avoided the Michigan territory. They had seen enough "Michiganders" who had returned to New York, "their sallow complexion and tales...of shaking with fever and ague."

The travelers decided to conclude their wandering with "look through Michigan, the one state they had no idea of settling in when they left home... Much to their surprise, they found the state satisfactory." They continued north to

the Grand River Valley and there the Munroes and Hiram Parker each found what they had been looking for; the Munroe's in Clinton county and Parker in Ingham.

Jesse was "captivated at first sight" with the magnificent forests, reasoning that "land which supported such growth of trees would raise anything (he) planted. There were the black walnut, butternut, hickory, black cherry, bird's eye maple, curled maple, sugar maple, silver-leaf maple, beech, basswood, sycamore, ironwood, white, black and bur oaks - many being three and four feet in diameter."

Returning to New York and disposing of their farm there, Jesse and Harriett Munroe prepared their family for the tedious journey to their new home in the Michigan Territory. Two hired men were sent overland to drive the stock through Ohio and up to Detroit while the family with one additional hired man traveled "up the lake", from Buffalo to Detroit aboard the little steamer "Robert Fulton".

"Detroit was very disappointing to the older members of the family a very uninteresting town... The buildings were low and very unpretentious, right down in the mud, a small old French town." The lake group and the overland

group met there and proceeded on through the frontier.

"The first day out of Detroit (they) went only 10 miles. The road was simply terrible. There were places where there were half a dozen tracks where different travelers had endeavored to get around the deep mud holes, but each one seemed equally bad. The wagon wheels would sink below the hubs."

By early October the Munroe party reached the Scott settlement at DeWitt. The Scott's "were prepared to take care of travelers, having a double log house provided with appetizing food." The log hotel mentioned here was located in the middle of the block bounded by Main, Scott, Bridge and Washington streets.

Harriett Munroe and her five daughters stayed on at Scott's for the next three weeks while Jesse and the men went on into Eagle to construct the family's log house. The size of the Munroe cabin was so unusually large for its wilderness setting that a curious neighbor, who followed the sound of the construction through the dense forest, asked upon discovering it, "Are you intending to keep hotel?"

At the end of October, Jesse returned to Scott's to collect his family and take them to their new home in

Eagle township. "The rains had raised the Looking Glass River so that it could not be forded, we were all taken across the river in an Indian canoe. A pole was used instead of a paddle."

And so, the five Munroe girls, ages 3 to 16 years, left DeWitt, for the time being. But they'd be back. In the meantime they were off on an adventure in their new home where "each one found something interesting" and each left their mark on the history of mid Michigan.

Note - the quotations used in this piece are all those of the Munroe women, several of whom later wrote of their pioneer experiences. In the next

installment I'll expand on who these Munroe girls became and why they had so much to say about the history of this area.

Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian. His column appears every other week in this newspaper.

Webber

Coin continues story of DeWitt's Munroe sisters

By KEN COIN

In the last installment, its autumn of 1836 and the Munroe sisters, their brothers and parents are leaving Scott's hotel at DeWitt and being ferried across the Looking Glass River by Indian canoe in the last stretch of their journey to their new home in Eagle township.

Marion, the eldest sister, became a teacher for the neighborhood school. She was also recruited by her uncle, Hiram Parker to teach near Mason at a settlement called Jefferson City.

Her travels between Eagle and Mason took her on a route along the Grand River, including the site where Lansing would later be established. A favorite resting spot for her was the high bluff on the north bank of the Grand and she often rested her horse there dreaming of someday having a lovely home high above the river.

She married a Mason merchant, James Turner in 1843. The couple lived at Mason until 1847 when the state capital was moved from Detroit to Lansing. They then moved to the new town of Lansing and built a small house (pictured here) on a site purchased several years earlier. Marion had planted trees on the site anticipating her eventual residence. It was, after all, only a few hundred yards south of the high bluff that she dreamed of years earlier.

James Turner prospered as a merchant and land agent in Lansing and outlying communities. He became actively involved

in many business enterprises including plank roads and railroads. In time, the Turner's purchased Marion's bluff to the northwest of their home and later built an impressive brick home which still stands as the nucleus of the Turner-Dodge mansion in North Lansing.

James Turner died in 1869 at the young age of 49. Marion continued to live in their home on the bluff for nearly 50 more years; saw its transformation into the mansion we see today and died in 1912.

Betsey, also an early school teacher in Clinton and Ingham Counties, was the first Munroe girl to be recruited to teach at the Jefferson City settlement.

In 1840, while teaching at the Waterloo settlement (Wacousta), she married a local miller, Parker Webber. They moved to DeWitt in 1848 and purchased the Stowell home at the northeast corner of Main and Franklin and converted it into a "Temperance Tavern". Selling the tavern in

1850 they purchased the DeWitt Grist Mill on Prairie Creek and also the former New Albany Store (110 E. Webb Dr.) which was converted into their family home. Parker Webber became DeWitt's miller, a position he kept about twenty years until his death.

Although she retained ownership of the DeWitt mill (even after it burned in 1902), Betsey moved about 1880 to Lansing where she remained until her death in 1912.

Harriett was also a teacher in Clinton and Ingham counties. In 1849 she married John W. Longyear, an attorney who had come to Mason from New York in 1844 and had resettled in

Lansing when it became the capital.

Longyear was one of Lansing's earliest and most successful lawyers. He was elected to Congress in 1862 and reelected in 1864. Following an appointment to the U. S. District Court in 1870, the Longyears moved to

Detroit but following Judge Longyear's untimely death in 1875, Harriett returned to Lansing where she died in 1917.

Adelia married Daniel L. Case, an attorney and merchant who had established himself at Lansing in 1847. Case became involved in politics by

being elected to the State House of Representatives in 1850. In 1858 he was elected to his first term as Michigan's Auditor General.

Throughout the Civil War he was actively engaged in enlisting troops in the Lansing area. It is

See Munroe, page 32

Webber



Constructed at Mason, but shipped to North Lansing where it was assembled, the first home of James and Marion (Monroe) Turner, located near the corner of Turner and Clinton streets, is said to have been the first frame house in Lansing. Ca. 1910, Emery Hamilton, photographer.

Monroe

Continued from page 9

also noteworthy that Case along with two of his fellow brothers-in-law, James Turner and John Longyear were the founders of the Michigan Female Institute (also known as Miss Roger's Institute), a woman's college located where the School for the Blind now stands.

Unlike her other sisters, Adelia died relatively young in 1887 at the age of 55. Her husband died in 1896.

Eliza, the youngest went to Lansing about 1847 to live with her older sister Marion. She later married Dr. Charles Turner, a younger of Marion's husband.

Dr. Turner had established his first practice in

DeWitt in 1848. He also dabbled in politics, being elected Clinton County Sheriff in 1850. He married Eliza Munroe in 1855 after his return from a three year excursion to Panama and the California gold fields where, it was said, he made a sizeable fortune.

Dr. Turner was involved in several different business enterprises in Lansing (often in connection with other family members). In 1876, in partnership with his nephew Amos Turner, they constructed the "Union Block"

a series of five brick stores still standing in the 1200 block of Turner Street in N. Lansing.

About 1880 the Turners came to DeWitt where Dr. Turner resumed his medical practice.

In 1887 he retired and they returned to Lansing. Dr. Turner died there in 1901 and Eliza, the last surviving Munroe girl, died in 1919.

Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's leading historian. His column appears twice monthly in the DeWitt-Bath Review.

Webber

**HENRY GIBBS' LIFE ENDED PEACE-
FULLY LAST EVENING**

**He Had Been a Resident of Lansing
for Fifty Years—Helped Build
Many Prominent Buildings in the
City—His Death Was Unexpected.**

At 9:30 o'clock last evening, Henry Gibbs, one of the oldest and most highly respected pioneers of the city, died at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Winans, 145 Larch street north. Although Mr. Gibbs was 82 years old, he was enjoying exceptionally good health and his life went out without the slightest suffering. He had had a severe cold and remained in bed for the past week, but less than five minutes before he died was talking as happily as ever in his life. He was a remarkably interesting and bright old man, having retained his mental faculties until the end. He came to this city in 1847 when the capitol was moved from Detroit and his memory never failed him in relating the early history and growth of the city. He was a kind hearted, loyal friend and many times when questioned upon religious views he would reply, "My religion is to do unto others as others do unto you."

Mr. Gibbs was elected a member of the school board from the fifth ward in 1874, which office he held until 1885. In this office he made many warm friends among the children of the fifth ward, especially, to whom he was always known as "Uncle Gibbs." Henry Gibbs was born in Stabbs, Vermont, April 18, 1816, and when 15 years old moved with his parents to Monroe county, New York, where he worked with his father as a carpenter. After living in that state seven years he moved to Eagle, Michigan, and settled upon 160 acres of wild lands. The following year, 1839, he built the first frame schoolhouse in Clinton county. In 1841 he was married to Miss Angeline Niles, who died in 1843. The following year he married Miss Samantha Webber, who died in February, 1895. He was the father of two children, both of whom died several years ago. He came to Lansing in 1847 and began work upon the old capitol building in August, under Henry Jipson. He bought the property and erected the house on Washington avenue south, where L. S. Hudson now resides. In 1854 he moved to Watertown, where he held offices as justice of the peace and supervisor and returned to Lansing in 1873. He was a contractor most of his life and was connected with building the Downey House, state office block, Plymouth Congregational, St. Paul's, Episcopal and Park Street Baptist churches, the middle building of the school for the blind, and the old postoffice building. He also superintended the building of Central school building and in 1888 the woodwork in Larch street school.

He is survived by one sister, Mrs. Moxley Baldwin of Onondaga.

During the last year he has spent much of his time writing and among the manuscripts which were found was an account of his life and a history of the city of Lansing, which he desired to be published May 13, the 50th anniversary of the staking out of the capitol. A letter was left for Mrs. Winans, who had cared for him since Mrs. Gibbs' death. He also left instructions in regard to the arrangements for his funeral. He desired it to be in charge of D. W. & Mayton Buck and to have the services conducted by Rev. Charles Legal and Rev. E. B. Allen. He asked that either the Universalist or Pilgrim Congregational church should furnish music and that Messrs. John Robson, E. H. Whitney, N. B. Jones, William Elliot and James Gilbert act as pall bearers.

The funeral services will be held at 2 o'clock this afternoon.

Webber

(Lansing)
State Republican
Mar. 16, 1897
P-1

MRS. WEBBER DIED THIS MORNING

AGED RESIDENT CAME TO MICHIGAN 74 YEARS AGO—BORN IN NEW YORK.

REMARKABLE FAMILY

Two Sisters and Two Brothers Are Now Living—Mrs. Marion Turner, a Sister, Passed Away Few Weeks Ago.

The third member of a remarkable family died within less than five weeks, when Mrs. Betsey Monroe Webber, one of Lansing's oldest and well known citizens, passed away at her home at 216 West Madison st. at 9 o'clock Thursday morning at the age of 88 years. Only two weeks ago Mrs. Marion M. Turner, a sister of Mrs. Webber, died at the age of 93 years. Late in June a brother, Josiah Turner died at the age of 90 years. Of the family of nine children four are still living, these being Mrs. John M. Longyear, aged 81 years; Mrs. Eliza Turner, aged 86 years, and William Monroe, aged 78 years, of this city, and Horace Monroe of California, who has passed the 76-year mark.

Born in New York State.

Mrs. Webber was born in the little town of Amhurst, Erie county, New York, in 1821. At the age of 18 she came to Michigan with the Monroe family and settled in the village of Eagle, Clinton county. Since that date Mrs. Webber was a resident of this section of Michigan. She lived in the city of Lansing for more than 30 years and previously resided in Dewitt for a number of years.

Betsey Monroe was married in the year of 1846 to Parker Webber in Wacousta, Clinton county, Michigan. Like her sister, Mrs. Turner, the deceased was a very active woman and was closely connected with church, philanthropic and social work. She was a life member of the Presbyterian board of missions and was an active member of the W. C. T. U.

Family Among Pioneers of County.

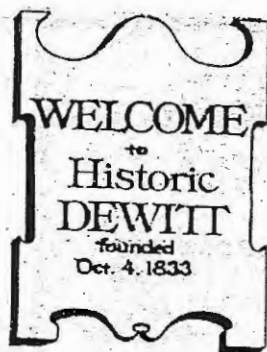
Mrs. Webber was a member of a family which was numbered among Michigan's early pioneers. The family came to this vicinity when the country was a wilderness, when there were no roads through the great forests and when the Indians roamed through the woods. The children of this great family grew up with Clinton and Ingham counties and gave their best to these counties. Mrs. Webber was no exception to the rule and entered into the various kinds of social work with heart and soul. She leaves many dear friends and acquaintances who mourn the loss of another of the state's pioneers.

Webber

State Journal

Aug. 1, 1912

p. 7



Webber

DATELINE: DeWitt

February 2, 1987

Stories/Photos by Kitty Marriott
Phone 669-3385

HISTORICAL MUSEUM DISPLAYS DEWITT TEMPERANCE BANNER

by Kenneth Coin

A new exhibit, I Am For Michigan, opened Monday, January 26 at the Michigan Historical Museum, 208 N. Capitol, Lansing. This exhibit, part of Michigan's 150th birthday celebration, covers the state's early years of settlement, 1820-1850.

Of special interest to DeWitt residents is an antique "Temperance Banner" included in the display of early Michigan artifacts. The banner, which dates from the late 1840's, is of light blue silk and has a handpainted central motif which reads: "DeWitt Union Daughters of Temperance, No. 18-Virtue, Love, Temperance". According to exhibit coordinator Barbara K. Hamblett, the Michigan Historical Museum, which has owned the banner for about one hundred years, recently spent a great deal of time and money into having the fragile artifact restored for display.

After the decision was made to include the banner in this special sesquicentennial exhibit, Hamblett set out to learn more of the banner's history and that of the group for which it was made. No specific reference to the temperance group could be located in the standard history books of Clinton county nor have any of the group's own records seemed to have survived to the present, but a local historian was able to supply Hamblett with two excerpts from the correspondences of the Cook family, early settlers of the DeWitt area. The excerpts which follow have been reproduced and are now included in the display.

FROM JOSEPH W. COOK TO HIS BROTHER
GEORGE H. COOK OF HEMLOCK LAKE, N.Y.:

"DeWitt, Jan. 27, 1850

.....there is such a Division of the Sons, Daughters and Cadetts here in DeWitt and such a time has never been known before since the flight of Mohamet or the Sacking of Prague."

GEORGE REPLIED:

"Hemlock Lake, N.Y., Feb. 17, 1850

There is no Division of Sons or Daughters of Temperance here nor Cadetts but there is a uniformed Miliary Company here that drills one night every.....



The banner, which was probably originally carried at political rallies and 4th of July parades, was donated to the state in the 1880's by former DeWitt pioneer Betsey Webber, whose connection with the DeWitt Union Daughters of Temperance remains unknown. She and her husband Parker Webber, who had come from Cazenovia, N.Y. to Clinton county, Michigan in 1839 as the miller for the Waterloo Joint-Stock Co. at Wacousta, came to DeWitt about 1848 and purchased the tavern [later called the "Boston House"] located at the northeast corner of Franklin and Main streets. Most DeWitt residents will remember this old inn as the former offices of Dr. Frederick C. Smith which was torn down in 1975.

The Webber's tavern is thought to have been a "temperance house", as it is not listed among the liquor licenses granted by DeWitt township during that early period. This long standing belief may now be supported by the association of this anti-liquor banner with the Webber family. By 1850 the Webbers had sold their tavern to William Hewitt and purchased the DeWitt gristmill and the New Albany store from the George T. Clark estate. This mill was located on the current Orla McGuire property at the corner of Locust and Dill. The New Albany store, currently the home of Lynne Edine at 110 E. Webb, was converted by the Webbers into their own residence which they inhabited for nearly three decades:

Wellington

The Twenty-Third Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures
He leadeth me beside the still waters
He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the
paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil
for thou art with me: thy rod and
thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the
presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow
me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever

In Memory of
Leonard B. Wellington

Date of Birth

June 18, 1904

Date of Death

March 27, 1966

Services

VINCENT - RUMMELL
FUNERAL HOME

Tuesday, March 29, 1966
2:00 p.m.

Clergyman

Rev. W. Ernest Combella
DeWitt Methodist Church

Interment

DeWitt Cemetery

Honorary Bearers

Harry Bollinger	Robert Vaughn
Dewey Jacoboni	Raymond Davis

Bearers

Robert Balderson	Robert Harmon
Kenneth DeVoe	Cecil Morrow
Russell Nelson	J. J. Richards



WELLMAN, LOIS L.

2700 Burcham Dr.

East Lansing

Mrs. Wellman, age 75, died Jan. 15, 1980. She was a life long resident of Lansing. She was a very active member of People's Church. She was a very active volunteer at St. Lawrence Hospital Mental Health Center, Operation Stork; East Lansing Older People's Program; Meals on Wheels through E.W. Sparrow Hospital and National Health Convalescent Center. She was Executive Secretary for the Michigan Parole Board for 44 years, retiring in 1973. Surviving are: 2 sisters, Mrs. Chester (Ferrol) Worthington of Rock Hill, S.C., and Mrs. Rhuel (Jane) Culver of Lansing and many nieces and nephews. Religious services will be conducted at 1 p.m. Sat., in the Estes-Leadley Greater Lansing Chapel, with Rev. Dr. Julius Fischbach, Associate Pastor of People's Church officiating. Interment in Mt. Hope Cemetery. Contributions may be made to the Michigan Heart Assoc., or to the American Cancer Society. Pallbearers will be, Donald Thurston, Leonard McConnell, Gordon Fuller, Dean Sweet, Robert Scott, Howard Grossman.

LOIS L. WELLMAN

June 30, 1904

January 15, 1980

Services at

The Colonial Chapel
Estes-Leadley Funeral Home

Saturday, January 19, 1980 — 1:00 P. M.

Clergyman

Rev. Dr. Julius Fischbach

Carol L. Broughton, Organist

Interment

MT. HOPE CEMETERY

Donald Thurston
Gordon Fuller
Robert Scott
Leonard McConnell
Dean Sweet
Howard Grossman
— Bearers

The Twenty-Third Psalm

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the
paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil:

For thou art with me: thy rod and
thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the
presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil:

my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow
me all the days of my life:

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever

LOCAL HISTORY
COLLECTION
BOX FILE

Webb

Wellman

DeWitt Church Scene Of Weber-Vincent Vows

Weber



MR. AND MRS. EUGENE C. VINCENT

The first snow of the season accentuated the double ring ceremony that united Cynthia M. Weber and Eugene C. Vincent Friday afternoon, Nov. 4, at the Community church in DeWitt. Rev. LaVerne Bretz officiated.

The bride was given in marriage by Robert Olds, of Lansing, and is the daughter of Mrs. William H. Ray, of Englewood, Calif., and F. S. Weber, of near DeWitt. The bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome B. Vincent, of DeWitt.

Attending the bride was Mrs. Phillip Vincent, as matron of honor. Phillip B. Vincent, brother of the bridegroom, served as groomsmen, and Louis Lankford and Donald Seyfried were ushers.

Mrs. Henry A. Richards was organist and Dr. Manning Bross, of St. Johns, accompanied by Mrs. Bross, was the vocalist. Musical selections were "Through the Years," the Greig composition, "Ich Leibe Dich," and "The Lord's Prayer."

The bride's gown was of white satin fashioned with a long fitted bodice and mandarin collar complimented with seed pearls. The full flowing skirt extended into a train and her fingertip length veil was held by a satin headdress. She carried a cascade bouquet of white and pink roses with streamers of tiny chrysanthemums.

The matron of honor wore a royal blue velvet gown with draped skirt and trimmed with white fur. Her headpiece was matching. She carried a cascade bouquet of white and pink carnations.

Assisting at the reception held in the basement of the church following the ceremony were Mrs. Robert Olds, Mrs. Weston Knaup, Mrs. Donald Pope, Mrs. Donald Rice, Mrs. Ronald Heibeck, Miss Dorothy Hill, and Miss Joanne Pike.

The newlyweds are honeymooning at "Vincehaven" on Glen Lake for two months, after which they will return to their studies at Michigan State College.

features

Celebrating 150 years

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 (progenator 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. Gunderman.

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. VanScoy (VanScoy 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 VanScoy 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.

Sarah's fate remains unclear. In 1860, she is listed on the federal census as living in the household of Lyman and Betsey Warren, and in June of that year she was received back into the church where she remained on the membership rolls as late as 1870.

Shortly after the death of his mother in 1854,

Simeon purchased his parent's old homestead in DeWitt Township. In the late 1850's, he bought a saw mill in DeWitt which he then operated until the outbreak of the Civil War.

In 1861, he enlisted in the regiment known as the "Lancers" and served until his discharge.

Simeon was married a second time, June 2, 1864, at Linden, Mich., to Hannah (Hyatt) Hewitt, the widow of the eldest brother William. He moved to Maple Rapids where he opened a furniture store in 1869. To this business he added an undertaking establishment, both of which he continued to the time of his death. He sustained a substantial loss from the devastating Maple Rapids fire of 1885, but through persistence, was able to eventually rebuild his business.

Soon after his removal to Maple Rapids he joined the Methodist Episcopal church and was on the building committee for the structure built in 1868. Besides a strong devotion to his church, he held memberships in the Maple Rapids Masonic Lodge, Order of the Eastern Star, Grand Army of the Republic, and was a charter member of the Ancient Order of United Workmen.

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-great-granddaughter of William and Hannah Hewitt) for submitting much of this genealogical information to the Clinton County Historical Society Archives.

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 Coin. 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 merchantile 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 Naracon), 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.

Wells

Welton

OBITUARY

Mary Adell Palmer was born in Palmyra, N. Y., in the year 1848, when 7 years of ago she removed with her parents to Michigan, near St. Johns, Clinton County, where she resided until the year 1871, when she was married to Alfred Welton, of Riley. Two children were born to them, Fred Welton, of Crystal, Michigan and Willie Welton, of Carson City. She has resided near Crystal for several years until the last six weeks of her life which was spent at the home of her youngest son, Willie, where she passed away June 3, at the age of 57 years, 9 months. She has been a great sufferer for a year and one-half from dropsy. All was done that loving hands could do for her comfort. In the year 1896 she was united with the U. B. church of which she has been a faithful member. She is survived by a sorrowing husband two sons, two sisters and two brothers, Nelson and Frances Palmer, of St. Johns, Mrs. John Huggett, of Alma, and Mrs. George Yallup, of St. Johns, besides other relatives and a host of sympathizing friends. The funeral services were held at the Spencer church at Crystal at 11 o'clock June 5, and the remains were laid to rest in the Spencer cemetery.

Mr. and Mrs. Rush Parker
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Lori Michelle

to

Mr. Robert Welton
on Saturday, the sixth of October
Nineteen hundred and seventy-nine
at six-thirty in the evening
DeWitt Community Church
505 Webb Road
DeWitt, Michigan

Reception at eight o'clock
Lansing Civic Center
Terrace Room

Welton

Miss Westmoreland Is Married On April 13th¹⁹⁴⁵

Miss Bonnie Dawn Westmoreland, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Westmoreland of this city, became the bride of Alfred A. Wickerham, AMM 2-c, son of Mr. and Mrs. Adam Wickerham of Lansing, on Friday afternoon, April 13. Rev. Earl P. Collins officiated in the double ring ceremony at his home in Grand Rapids at 3 o'clock.

The bride was attractively attired in a street-length propeller blue dress with navy accessories. Her corsage was red roses and sweet peas and she wore a strand of pearls, a gift of the groom.

Mr. and Mrs. Van Harper of Grand Rapids, sister and brother-

in-law of the groom, were the only attendants. After the ceremony a wedding dinner was held at the Morton Hotel in Grand Rapids.

Mrs. Wickerham was graduated from the Rodney B. Wilson high school with the class of 1942 and has been employed at Montague & Son for the past two years.

Alfred enlisted in the Navy in February, 1942, and just returned after 20 months in the South Pacific. He will report to Chicago, Ill., on May 6 for four months advanced training in aviation engines.

The newlyweds left for a short trip through central Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

what do folks think a son
the war at home now it is all peace
down hear a grate moving think that
the country will get home by the
a of goby I hope we will
Well Mother I gess that you all
thought that I was gone up for
not writing I have not had the
chance but just twice in 40
days peek sent a letter to come
of you by a friend and I did not
have the chance I wanted to write as
bad and you wanted to hear from
me

Well Mother if you ever saw such
a looking lot of women in your
life as we are you would hate
the side of vulgars we are dirty
and ragged and loney ~~and~~
no dogs but if we lay in camp
a few days we will kill some of
ones like ~~oh~~ Mother if I could
have other had the chance to see
some red jacketed home I got one
it would be worth 10⁰⁰ if it
was home but they will not let

me send it home we was ordered
to burn all the red clothing
it took to load but I cant
get it home no way it is a gray
with a red collar and red cuffs
and gold labels buttons it was
an officers I got an old watch
I gess that it is not good
for much but I have seen
opened ten dollars for it

Well Mother I think that when
I get my pay I shall have some
money I have got six months pay
due me now but they will not
pay us yet until things is
settled a little
Well I will close and I will
write to morrow good by

and write soon
this is red paper

John Wetherell
written home at close of war



Wheat

DEWITT ARTIST—Joe Wheat, self-taught DeWitt artist, is shown with two of his most recent paintings, a water color of U.S. Sen. Robert Kennedy and an oil of the late President Kennedy. (State Journal Photo)

Self-Made Artist Prefers Portraits

By FAYE HANSON
State Journal Special Writer

DEWITT — Joe Wheat, who feels his talent with the brush is God-given, is fast becoming recognized as a portrait artist.

But to use this ability, Wheat, 39, has had to overcome a constant series of obstacles. Despite the barriers, he has spent all his free time at his easel and his latest efforts are an oil painting of the late President Kennedy and a water color of Sen. Robert Kennedy.

LACKED TIME, MONEY

Wheat has always been interested in art, but as a child

never had the time nor money to pursue his interest. Born in Gleason, Tenn., he was one of the younger members in a family of nine children. His father died when he was eight and Wheat went to work in the fields, picking cotton and digging potatoes to help his mother make a living. He worked behind a soda counter to put himself through high school and then spent two years in the Army as a military policeman.

Whenever he had a chance, Wheat picked up his brush and painted, teaching himself as he worked. His only training was a commercial art course in 1954. He said his talent is God-given and he will use it to the best of his ability.

ILLNESS HIT HIM

Then in 1959-60 trouble hit again and he spent 11 months in bed because of rheumatic fever. While convalescing he spent many hours painting.

Wheat does some scenes and murals, but he prefers portraits. Other well known persons he has painted are former Gov. G. Mennen Williams and the Rev. William Koenigsknecht of St. Therese Church. Wheat also did a full length painting of St. Therese for the Women's Guild of the church.

Married and the father of five children, Wheat lives at 605 Birchwood St., DeWitt. During the week he is a painter for a local sign company.

Whitaker

Obituary.

Albert Whitaker was born in Plymouth, Wayne Co., Mich., August 18, 1842. At the age of 10 years he accompanied his parents to Riley township, Clinton county. He was married to Miss Alida VanFleet, November 1st, 1871.

He is the last of a family of nine children. He is survived by his widow, one daughter, Mrs. Bert Brinkerhoff, of Dewitt and two grandchildren.

He had held various town offices and was held in high esteem wherever known. He was a charter member of the I. O. O. F., a member of the F. and A. M., and of the D. of R. and a member of the Clinton county pioneer society. After many months of poor health he quietly and peacefully passed away on the farm where he had resided over sixty years, Wednesday, June 16, 1915. The funeral was held at the late home, Friday. The attendance was large. The casket was covered and surrounded with beautiful flowers. Rev. F. E. Aldinger of Lansing officiated. Interment was made in Dewitt cemetery.

Those from away who attended the funeral were Mrs. Grant of Lansing, Mr. and Mrs. August Kantz, Mrs. Dora Knapp of Lansing, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Vought of Alma; O. P. DeWitt and Mrs. Ada Pincomb of St. Johns.

The really good self-made man knows he's got a lot of work still to do, no matter how complete the job looks to others.

White

ST. JOHNS GIRL WINS CONTEST

Miss Nina White Takes First
Place in Oratory at Sub-
District Event Here
C. R. 4-24-1927

Miss Nina White, St. Johns high school senior and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver K. White of De Witt, won first place in oratory at the sub-district contest held at the Rodney B. Wilson school Thursday night under the auspices of the Michigan High School Oratorical association.

With her oration, "Lincoln and the Constitution," Miss White defeated contestants from nine other schools, Alma, Ithaca, St. Louis, Elsie, Owosso, Durand, Byron, Breckenridge and Laingsburg. Second place went to Erma Skinner of Byron, the subject of whose oration was "Peace through Education."

First place in declamation went to Lois Rensberry of Breckenridge — "A Vision of War," and second place was won by Arla Eyer of Ithaca — "A Message to Garcia."

The judges were: On thought and composition—L. W. Stewart, Ionia, Prof. H. A. Miller, Mt. Pleasant and Prof. E. S. Thefford, Mt. Pleasant. On delivery—Prof. Ira Beddow, Mt. Pleasant, Miss Lucille Higgins, Ionia and M. A. Leach, Lansing.

Miss White will represent St. Johns in the district contest to be held at St. Johns May 6.

White

APRIL 3, 1924

**Funeral Services
For South Olive
Resident Sunday**

South Olive—George White who has been a great sufferer with heart and liver trouble for the past two months, died at his home here Thursday afternoon, March 27. Mr. White has lived around here most of his life and had many friends in this vicinity. The funeral was held at Dewitt Sunday.

LOCAL HISTORY
COLLECTION
BOX FILE

The Lord is my shepherd:

I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the
paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life: and I
will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

IN MEMORY OF
ROBERT A. WHITE

DATE OF BIRTH
October 25, 1911
East Lansing, Michigan

DATE OF DEATH
May 24, 1978
Lansing, Michigan

SERVICES
DeWitt Community Church
Friday, May 26, 1978
1:00 P.M.

OFFICIATING
Rev. LaVern Bretz
Rev. Murl Eastman

INTERMENT
Dewitt Cemetery
DeWitt, Michigan

BEARERS

Gerald Nichols
Jerry White
Robert Bouts

Kenneth White
Michael White
Lyle Nichols

Age 66, passed away May 24, 1978. He lived all of his life in the DeWitt area. He was a retired carpenter, member of the DeWitt Community Church, member of the DeWitt Masonic Lodge No. 272, also was past master. Survived by his wife Dorothy; 4 daughters, Mrs. Richard (Roberta) Morill of East Lansing, Mrs. Robert (Marjorie) Schaar of Westphalia, Mrs. Donald (Ruth) Peterson of DeWitt, Mrs. Edward (Janis) DeGee of DeWitt; 3 sisters, Mrs. Arnold (Nina) Adams of Summer, Mich., Mrs. Hugh (Ruth) Bouts of DeWitt, and Mrs. Raymond (Kathryn) Coin of Sheridan; 3 brothers, Stewart White of White Cloud, Francis of Los Angeles, and Allen James White of DeWitt. 1 brother Thomas preceded him in death. 11 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. Funeral services will be at 1 p.m. Fri. at the DeWitt Community Church with Rev. Murl Eastman and Rev. LaVern Bretz officiating. Masonic services will be at 7:30 p.m. Thurs. at the funeral home. Visitation will be at the DeWitt Area Chapel until 11 a.m. Fri.

WHITE, ROBERT A.
2181 W. Cutler Rd.
DeWitt

White

Whittaker

MRS. MARIA A. WHITTAKER.—Died at her home in South Riley, January 11, 1895, Mrs. Maria A. Whittaker, aged 74 years, 10 months and 22 days. Maria A. Mitchell was born in Orleans county, N. Y., February 18, 1820. At the age of 11 years she accompanied her parents to Farmington, Oakland county, Mich. After residing there a few years she moved to Northville, Mich., where she was married to Asa Whittaker, January 3, 1837. In 1855 she accompanied her husband to Riley, Clinton county, Mich. They built a house and settled in their new home. Only four acres were chopped where they settled. They were true pioneers and saw well the trials of the early settlers. But one by one the old pioneers are passing away. Nine children were born to them, but only one is left. Twelve years ago, Mr. Whittaker passed away. Mrs. Whittaker has lived alone nearly all the time since her husband's death, but near her son so he could see to all her wants and needs, which he has been very faithful in doing. While quite young she accepted Christ as her guide and united with the Methodist church, of which she has always

Wickerham

Mr. and Mrs. Alfred A. Wickerham
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Susan Marie

to

Mr. Bruce Lynn Blizzard
on Friday, the twenty-third of August
Nineteen hundred and sixty-eight
at seven o'clock in the evening
First Congregational Church
St. Johns, Michigan

Reception following
Bingham Grange Hall
corner of Taft Road & US-27

Wickerham

1945

1970

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Blizzard

Mr. Roger Wickerham

request the pleasure of your company

at a reception in honour of the

Twenty-fifth Anniversary

of their parents

Mr. and Mrs. Alford A. Wickerham

Sunday, the twelfth of April

Nineteen hundred and seventy

two to five o'clock

Smith Hall

St. Johns, Michigan

No gifts

Silver
Wedding Anniversary

Boone and Alford

1945 - April 13 - 1970

April 13, 1945 - April 13, 1995

Bonnie Dawn Westmoreland, daughter of William and Mabel Westmoreland of St. Johns was united in marriage to Alferd Alton Wickerham, son of Adam and Katie Wickerham of Riley Township on Friday, April 13, 1945.

They were married in Grand Rapids at 3 p.m. by Reverend Earl F. Collins of the Congregational Church. Reverend Collins was the minister of the Congregational Church in St. Johns where Bonnie first became a church member. Their attendants were Van and Kay Harper, sister and brother-in-law of the groom. Al was on leave from the U. S. Navy.

They have lived most of their life in Riley Township. Al retired from the U. S. Postal Service in De Witt and Bonnie retired as Register of Deeds of Clinton County.

The couples children are Susan Blizzard and Roger and Barbara Wickerham. They also have six grandchildren - Michael Blizzard, Gregory Blizzard, Lisa Blizzard, Amanda Nichole Wickerham, Roxanne Ramirez and Gustav Ramirez.

Re-Affirmation of Vows - April 22, 1995

Redeemer United Methodist Church, 3 p.m.
Reverend Rodney J. Kalajainen

Organist Chrisann Lowe

Guest Book Amanda Wickerham
..... Roxanne Ramirez

Lighting of the Candles Michael Blizzard
..... Gregory Blizzard

Ushers Michael Blizzard
..... Gregory Blizzard
..... Gustav Ramirez

Attendants Susan Blizzard
..... Roger Wickerham

Introduction of Family Bonnie Wickerham

Redeemer Bell Choir

Soloist Lisa Blizzard
"You Are The Wind Beneath My Wings"

Re-Affirmation of Vows

Dinner in the Social Hall

Serving of the Cake Barbara Wickerham
Assisted by Susan Blizzard

..... Lisa Blizzard
..... Amanda Wickerham
..... Roxanne Ramirez

Anniversaries



The Wickerhams

Alfred and Bonnie Wickerham of DeWitt will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with a re-affirmation of their vows and dinner at 3 p.m. Saturday at Redeemer United Methodist Church, 13980 Schavey Road, DeWitt.

He retired in 1985 and is former superintendent of postal operations, DeWitt Post Office. She retired in 1990 and is a former register of deeds, Clinton County.

The couple, married April 13, 1945, in Grand Rapids, have two children and six grandchildren.

Wickerham

Wickerham

Sunday, April 13, 1945



MR. AND MRS. AL WICKERHAM

Couple honored on anniversary

Mr and Mrs Al Wickerham were honored guests at an open house held in Smith Hall Sunday, April 12 in celebration of their 25th wedding anniversary.

The event was hosted by the couple's children, Mr and Mrs Bruce Blizzard and Roger Wickerham. Those serving were Mrs Bernice Wohlfert, Mrs Betty Wright, Mrs Doris Secord, Mrs Marilyn Cohn, Penny Cohn, Rose and Marie Miller, Kathy Secord and Janice Secord.

Guests were from Lansing, DeWitt, Fowlerville, Mason, Kalamazoo, Laingsburg, Shepherd, Big Rapids, Saginaw and St. Johns.

The couple was married at the Congregational Parsonage in Grand Rapids on April 13, 1945 by the Rev Earl F. Collins. Mr and Mrs Van Harper, sister and brother-in-law of Mr Wickerham attended the couple. They spent their honeymoon in Chicago where the groom was stationed in the Navy.

Wickerham

Miss Westmoreland Is Married On April 13th ¹⁹⁴⁵

Miss Bonnie Dawn Westmoreland, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Westmoreland of this city, became the bride of Alfred A. Wickerham, AMM 2-c, son of Mr. and Mrs. Adam Wickerham of Lansing, on Friday afternoon, April 13. Rev. Earl F. Collins officiated in the double ring ceremony at his home in Grand Rapids at 3 o'clock.

The bride was attractively attired in a street-length propeller blue dress with navy accessories. Her corsage was red roses and sweet peas and she wore a strand of pearls, a gift of the groom.

Mr. and Mrs. V. J. Harper of Grand Rapids, sister and brother-

in-law of the groom, were the only attendants. After the ceremony a wedding dinner was held at the Morton Hotel in Grand Rapids.

Mrs. Wickerham was graduated from the Rodney B. Wilson high school with the class of 1942 and has been employed at Montague & Son for the past two years.

Alfred enlisted in the Navy in February, 1942, and just returned after 25 months in the South Pacific. He will report to Chicago, Ill., on May 6 for four months advanced training in aviation engineer.

The newlyweds left for a short trip through central Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

Register of deeds loved her job

By ERIK LARSON
Lansing State Journal

Clinton County's new register of deeds, Carol Wooley, admits she is following a tough act in replacing Bonnie Wickerham, who retired Sept. 1 after serving since 1976.

"Bonnie was an excellent boss," said Wooley, who is still adjusting to her new desk and office. "She was very organized, which is important for this position, and she always treated her employees well."

Wooley was appointed by a three-member committee consisting of the county's probate judge, prosecutor and clerk to complete the final two years of Wickerham's four-year term.

A Clinton County native, Wickerham, 65, came to the register of deeds office as a clerk in 1969 after working 21 years as a bookkeeper for a local farm equipment dealer. Six months later she was named deputy register of deeds by then-register Willard Krebel.

When Krebel retired, Wickerham was appointed to complete his term. Her easy smile and confident nature convinced the county's voters to re-elect her to the position four more times.

While serving as register, Wickerham used her talent for organization and her passion for detail to keep the county's land records safe and in order.

Her enthusiasm and sense of responsibility for her old job come through when she describes how twice a year she used to take microfiche copies of the county's land records to Grand Rapids. Her reason was to place the back-up records in the safety of a climate-controlled room 83 feet below ground in an old gypsum mine.

In speaking about her work philosophy, Wickerham said, "You've got to go the extra mile if you're going to do the service that the public elects you to do. I don't know how much of a politician I was, but I loved my job."

The register of deeds is responsible for recording all information about county land deeds, titles to personal and real property, plats



Lansing State Journal/ROD SANFORD
Retired Clinton County Register of Deeds Bonnie Wickerham (left) and current register Carol Wooley are surrounded by records dating to 1837 in the vault in their St. Johns office.

and other information. This recorded information serves as a permanent record for homeowners and businesses. Banks, title companies and credit agencies regularly make use of this information, as well as people researching their family histories.

"I loved the challenge," Wickerham said. "Everything had to be perfect because it was part of the permanent record."

Clinton County Treasurer Pat Purtil, who worked with Wickerham on the county plat board, said she took care of those who submitted records to the county as well as of the records themselves.

"If someone came into the office without any knowledge of the

process, Bonnie would go out of her way to help resolve their problem," Purtil said. "She gave all the same courtesy."

Though she will miss working with Wickerham, Purtil said, she is also looking forward to working with Wooley.

"Carol worked closely with Bonnie," Purtil said. "She is very capable."

Meanwhile, the former register of deeds plans to say no to all proposals and projects for the next six months. She wants to spend the extra time with her husband, Al, two children and six grandchildren.

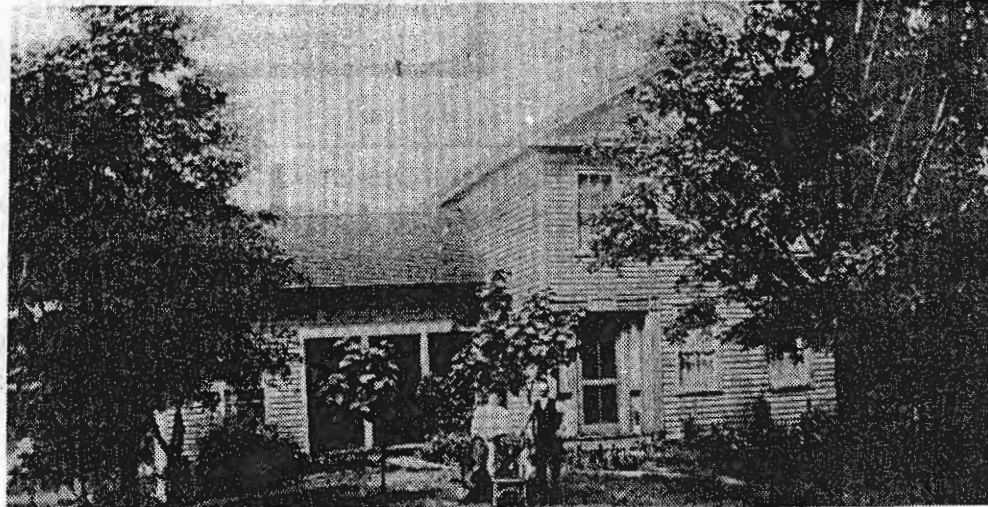
Saying no won't be easy for a woman who has been deeply involved in her community through-

out her life. She has served as president of the Michigan Register of Deeds Association, as charter member of the now defunct St. Johns Business & Professional Women, chairwoman of the Clinton County Plat Board and treasurer of the Clinton County Legal Secretaries Association.

Wickerham doesn't see retirement as a loss, but rather as a change.

"My mother used to say that life is like a book," Wickerham said. "I've put an end to my work chapter and am opening up a new one. Life is just what you make it. You can be grumpy or you can be happy. I like happy."

Mar. 8 '93



Wilcox

DEWITT REMEMBERED — The Foreman-Emery House, one of early DeWitt's first and finest homes, it burned in the late 1920's. William and Alma (Foreman) Emery pictured. Ca. 1915. C. Jutting photographer. Photo courtesy Bob Wilcox.

'New Albany' was the money pit of 19th century DeWitt

By KEN COIN

In DeWitt's earliest days most everything of any consequence was located south of the river in a village called "New Albany". I've been fascinated by the history of this town since I first heard about it in grade school. It is bothersome when writing about early DeWitt to continually have to give an explanation everytime I use the term "New Albany", yet I don't think it's fair to just say "DeWitt" because for over a decade the area we now know of as simply DeWitt on the south side of the river, was its own entity, with its own identity and a history which, for that first 10 years of this area, far outshined anything that was happening on the north at Capt. Scott's settlement.

The house pictured above represents the very best of what made New Albany stand apart from DeWitt — money (or at least the presumption of it). Unfortunately, it is one of the few structures which stood in New Albany that I know next to nothing about until the 1870's. But its history goes back much further than that.

Unlike Scott's settlement to the north, New Albany was based on New York money; money which didn't really exist but in the 1830's that didn't seem a problem. The village of New Albany was owned by George T. Clark of Rochester and lots in his "paper village" were bought and sold sight unseen by other New York speculators. This particular lot was at the corner of Rochester St. and a short jog on the Pontiac-Grand River Road. We would know it today as the corner of Webb and Bridge streets and if we were standing on that corner now, we would be looking west at the home of Dan and Marlene Matson.

This lot was one of the few in New Albany which was developed by a residential structure and based solely on the style of the building as compared to other area buildings, this house would have been built about 1840. My personal guesses as to who may have built this imposing home at that early date include: one of the Turner brothers (George Clark's agents here at New Albany), Dr. Seth Marvin or Dr. Levi

Jennison. The architectural detail surrounding the front door is very similar to that on the Klaver home across the street.

Now, to the family who for so long made it their home — Samuel Foreman was among the very earliest settlers of this area, coming here with his wife, Catherine Roberts, in 1836. They settled temporarily on a homestead south of DeWitt but soon moved to Watertown township. Their daughter Alma (pictured), in 1865, married a returning Civil War soldier, William Emery (pictured) and they too established a farm in Watertown.

William Emery was born in 1843 in Albion. Just when he came to DeWitt or who his parents were, I don't know, but I suspect that his family's farm was where I now live, east of DeWitt.

In 1872, Samuel and Catherine Foreman sold their farm and moved to this rambling old New Albany house in DeWitt. It was their "retirement" home. Their children continued farming in Watertown for some time but eventually William and Alma Emery came to DeWitt too and moved into the old house to look after Alma's father. Catherine Foreman died in 1882 and Samuel followed in 1898.

Some people may still remember this old house as the home of William and Alma Emery. They continued to live here until William's death in 1917 and Alma, (sort of on and off) until her death in 1921. Their children included: Earl, Park and Clifton Emery and a daughter, Maud. Maud married Charles Wilcox of Olive township, a son of James and Harriet Wilcox.

As to the descendants of Maud and Charles Wilcox, well, that would fill the rest of this newspaper. Suffice to say that thirty years ago, before the influx, if every one in DeWitt had to form a line and count off "One, Two, One, Two..." all the "Ones" could easily have been Wilcox's.

(A thank you to Doris Wilcox for her information about the picture and about the Foreman's and Emery's.)

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

Wilcox

Lifestyle



Jeanne and Bob Wilcox

The Wilcoxes

Celebrate 50th anniversary

Bob and Jeanne (Wing) Wilcox of DeWitt celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house Sunday, Oct. 4 from 1 to 5 p.m. at the DeWitt Memorial Building, 206 W. Washington, DeWitt.

The couple was married Oct. 10, 1942 in DeWitt. They have three children, Gary (Eddy) Wilcox of Grand Ledge, Barbara (Harold) Deines Greenville, and Ron (Dawn) Wilcox of DeWitt. They have 13 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Wilcox

Married at the home of the bride's
parents in DeWitt Wednesday, Nov.
26, at 8 o'clock p. m. Rev. C. T. Fish-
er officiating. Miss Letah Wilcox, of
DeWitt and Glenn Miller of Riley.
The bride was tastefully attired in
blue silk. The groom wore the con-
ventional black. After the ceremony
a luncheon was served. The happy
couple are visiting friends in Lan-
sing and Grand Ledge. Mr. and Mrs.
Miller will make their future home
on a farm in Riley. They have the
best wishes of all their friends for
their future happiness.

C. C. R.
April 24, 1924

Obituary

Harriet Rebecca, youngest of a family of 11 children of Benjamin and Betsy Hilliker was born in Jaaper, Stuben county, N. Y., May 10, 1833. When she was three years old, her parents moved to Michigan, settling on a farm in Farmington, Oakland county, where she grew to young womanhood. October 28, 1852 she was united in marriage at Redford, Wayne county to James Wilcox of Farmington, Mich. Soon after their marriage they left for Clinton county where they settled on a farm in Olive township where she resided until 1910. To this union five children were born, two sons and three daughters, two daughters, Lucy and Gertrude, died in their young girlhood. After a brief illness her husband died May 24, 1866, leaving her with her little family of small children to battle life's problems alone, consequently she was versed in all the hardships and adversities of pioneer life. After 33 years of widowhood she was again united in marriage to Jacob S. Rodgers of Alma October 2, 1899. Mr. Rodgers passed away February, 1902. Mrs. Rodgers sold her farm and with her youngest son, Charles bought a home in Dewitt village on Mill street, east, in 1910, where she has since resided with the exception of a year living elsewhere she had been a continuous resident of Clinton county for 72 years. Mrs. Rodgers was a practical nurse and went far and near to minister to the sick, a vocation she followed for many years. About ten years ago she lost her eyesight, which was a great affliction to her, but through it all she was tenderly cared for by her son's wife, Mrs. Charles Wilcox. She had been in ill health for several years from hardening of the arteries, but her last illness was only of two weeks duration. She passed away Monday morning, April 14, within four weeks of being 91 years of age. She is survived by her sons, Oscar, of Farmington, Charles of this place and one daughter, Mrs. Bertha Wixon of Merle Beach, ten grandchildren, ten great grandchildren, several nephews and nieces, besides many friends. Among her nephews and nieces in this place are Omar and Jerome Dills, and Mrs. Ella Brinkerhoff. Mrs. Rodgers was an ardent believer in the Universalist faith, being a member of the Universalist society at Dewitt and also a member of the Clinton County Pioneer society. Thus a good woman has passed on who was known to all as "Aunt Beck" and who will be remembered for her kindness to others and devotion to her home and family. Her funeral was held Friday morning with short services at the home of her son, where she resided and funeral at the Baptist church. Rev. George Ashworth of the First Universalist church of Lansing officiated. Mr. and Mrs. Marc Cutler sang several duets, the numbers being Mrs. Rogers own selection. Mrs. Merle Kraas presiding at the piano. The bearers were her nephews, Omar and Jerome Dills and grandnephews, Bert Taylor and Allen Stampfle, the undertaker, her grand nephew, W. D. Brinkerhoff of Lansing. The many beautiful floral tributes showed the esteem she was held in by her friends. Interment was made in Dewitt cemetery. The friends from away who attended the funeral were Omar Wilcox and children and son, Forest, and daughter, Mrs. Hazel DeGrow of Farmington, Mrs. Frank Green, Carl Wilcox of Northville, Mrs. Zoe Wheeler of Flint, Mrs. Belle Hard- enburgh of Highland Park and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hilliker and daughter of Farmington.

Card of Thanks

We wish to thank those who assisted us at our mother's death, the singers, especially the business men of this place and other friends for the floral emblems.—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wilcox, Mr. Oscar Wilcox, Mrs. Bertha Wixon.

Wilcox

Wilcox

Obituaries from the Scrapbook of C. Harry Moon

Now owned by Eleanor Moon McKinney (1984)

CHARLES T. WILCOX 87, Lifelong resident of Clinton County died in the Clinton Memorial Hospital at St. Johns, Sunday, after a brief illness. Funeral services will be held Wednesday p.m. from the Vincent Funeral Home with Rev. LaVern Bretz officiating. Burial in the DeWitt Cemetery.

Survivors are the widow, Maude; 5 daughters, Mrs. Leah Green of Plymouth, Mrs. Zoe Wheeler of Honor, Mrs. Hazel Hicks of Northville, Mrs. Erin Van Sickle of Fowlerville and Mrs. Helen Pasten of Northville; 2 sons, Clinton of DeWitt and Carl of Williamston; 20 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; and 3 great-great-grandchildren.

Pallbearers will be Clifton Wilcox Jr., Robert Wilcox, Dale Wilcox, Charles Wilcox, Bruce Wilcox, and Jack Wilcox.

Wilkes

October 21, 1937

RILEY PIONEER DIES OCT. 18TH

Funeral Services To Be Held
Today At St. Johns for
Mrs. George Wilkes

Mrs. Cora E. Wilkes, 78, a former resident of this locality, died at her home in Charleston township, Kalamazoo county, Monday at 7:40 a. m., after an illness of several months.

Cora E. Rathbun, the daughter of E. Louisa Hall Rathbun and Daniel B. Rathbun, was born in Norwalk, Ohio, July 17, 1859. At the age of nine she moved to Michigan with her parents and established a home

in Riley township, on the east 50 acres of the present Arthur Chant farm.

Here she attended school in the Jason school and later in the Plowman school, both of which were log school houses.

In 1884 she was united in marriage to Geo. W. Wilkes. To this union was born a son, Searle A., and a daughter, Louisa E.

In 1899 the family moved to Battle Creek where they resided until 1923, when they returned to Riley township, purchasing the farm just west of the present Lee Bissell farm. And in 1935 they moved to the new residence in Kalamazoo county.

Funeral services will be held at the Osgood funeral home at 2 p. m. this (Thursday) afternoon and interment made in Mt. Rest cemetery. Services will be conducted by the Rev. Clarence Burrows of the Independent Spiritualist church of Grand Rapids.

Surviving are the husband, son and two grandchildren, Donna Wilson and Wayne Foster of Battle Creek, and two brothers, Don Rathbun of this city, Roy Rathbun of Riley township, and one nephew, Stanley Rathbun of Bengal township.