

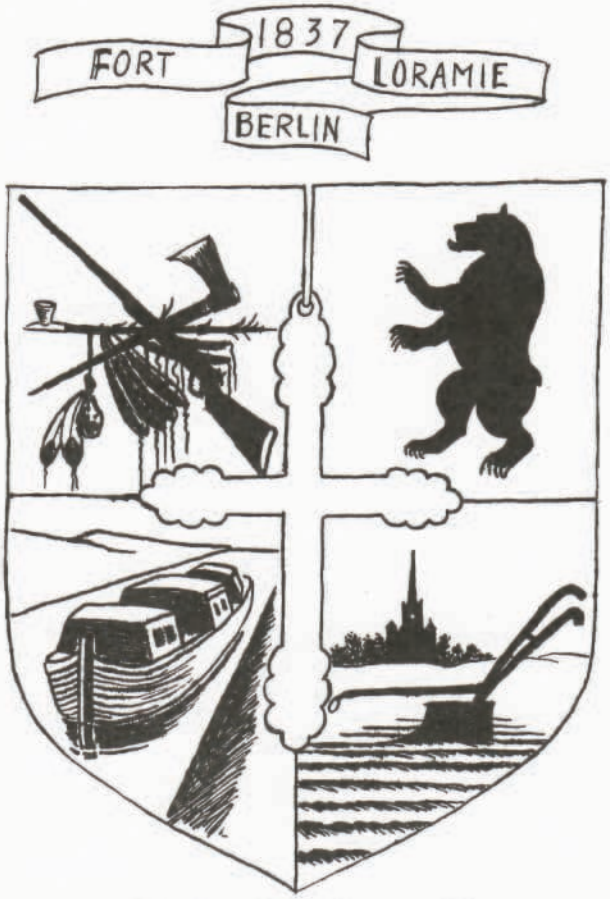

Early History of

# Ft. Loramie

Sesquicentennial ✥ 1837-1987

✥

FORT LORAMIE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION




Early History of

# Ft. Loramie

Sesquicentennial ✣ 1837-1987

✣

FORT LORAMIE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 16, 1987

To the Citizens of Fort Loramie, Ohio:

I am pleased to send warm greetings for the 150th anniversary of Fort Loramie.

Each city and town of our great country is unique, but all are bound together in the love of these United States. We are fortunate to live in a nation of strong and proud communities where everyone has a chance for success and the blessings of liberty and freedom can be enjoyed by all, regardless of background.

As you commemorate this anniversary, you have a splendid opportunity to renew your commitment to preserve the spirit which has forged America into a land of wonder. I am proud to join you in making such a commitment on this historic occasion for the people of Fort Loramie.

With hearty congratulations and best wishes for continued milestones,

Ronald Reagan

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THE OHIO SENATE

# A Resolution

BY

MR. CUPP

*Honoring the Village of Fort Loramie on the occasion of its Sesquicentennial.*

WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the 117th General Assembly of Ohio are pleased to extend special recognition to the Village of Fort Loramie on the memorable occasion of the One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of its founding; and

WHEREAS, Since its establishment on July 7, 1837, Fort Loramie has experienced significant growth and prosperity and has become a successful agricultural community. Located in western Ohio, Fort Loramie has remained a small village with all of a small village's advantages, while enjoying the benefits of its proximity to larger cities. Over the years, Fort Loramie became known for its residents' friendliness and willingness to work hard--exemplary qualities which are still manifested by the village's citizens today; and

WHEREAS, America is only as strong as her individual communities--communities made up of citizens who are not afraid of change, but who welcome it and who temper new ideas with wisdom gained from past experience to achieve true progress and development. The optimism and spirit of cooperation found among Fort Loramie's residents have not only helped the village to gain a well-deserved reputation as a friendly, pleasant, and productive place in which to live and work, but have also ensured the continued success and prosperity of this outstanding community; and

WHEREAS, For one hundred fifty years, the Village of Fort Loramie has enjoyed the benefits of a generous and civic-minded population. When the area's original settlers established businesses and raised families, they also established a tradition of hard work and cooperation, and those who today make Fort Loramie their home uphold these exemplary values and take great pride in their community. On the occasion of Fort Loramie's Sesquicentennial, its citizens can reflect on the village's rich heritage and look forward to a prosperous future; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Senate of the 117th General Assembly of Ohio, in adopting this Resolution, congratulate the Village of Fort Loramie on its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary and pay tribute to the citizens who have made their community great; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit duly authenticated copies of this Resolution to the Village of Fort Loramie and to the Sidney Daily News.

I, Martha L. Butler, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of Senate Resolution No. 500, adopted by the Ohio Senate, June 25, 1987.

Martha L. Butler

Martha L. Butler, Clerk of the Senate

Paul E. Gillmor

Senator Paul E. Gillmor
President of the Ohio Senate

Robert R. Cupp

Senator Robert R. Cupp

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# THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF

REPRESENTATIVE JAMES D. DAVIS
HOUSE DISTRICT #81

On behalf of the members of the House of Representatives of the 117th General Assembly of Ohio, we are pleased to recognize the

VILLAGE OF FORT LORAMIE

on the memorable and auspicious occasion of its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary.

Over the years, Fort Loramie has enjoyed growth in population and business prosperity, both of which can be directly attributed to the people who have made this village their home. The commitment, initiative, and willingness of its citizens to work together for a better community have helped it to achieve the strength and unity it enjoys today.

Villages such as Fort Loramie have helped Ohio earn a reputation as a state whose citizens are responsible, concerned, and involved, and who work continually for community improvement. Fort Loramie has a long and proud history as a community, and, on this anniversary, it is deserving of special recognition.

Thus, it is with great pleasure that we salute Fort Loramie on its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary and extend best wishes for the future.

Vern Riffe

VERN RIFFE
SPEAKER OF THE OHIO
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

James D. Davis

James D. Davis

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# The Village of Fort Loramie

Fort Loramie, Ohio 45845

July 8, 1987

TO THE VILLAGE OF FORT LORAMIE, OHIO:

As the Mayor of Fort Loramie, in this year 1987, our Sesquicentennial, it gives me the utmost pride and greatest pleasure to congratulate the residents of the Village of Fort Loramie and the residents of the surrounding area. May this 150 year birthday serve as a reminder of the past, the Village of Berlin, and our German heritage.

As we progress toward the turn of the century, I see the pride and dedication that the people have in themselves, in their historical background and heritage, and most of all, the pride in their children. To the ones who chose to stay in the area, and to the ones who have moved to other areas, this pride has been instilled by the people, church, schools, and parents; and this pride will always be remembered: We are from the greatest place on earth!

With this pride and dedication in our historical heritage of the Village and surrounding area, the Village will prosper and grow.

May the Village have many, many more birthdays as memorable as this, our Sesquicentennial.

Doyle K. Iiams

Mayor, Doyle K. Iiams

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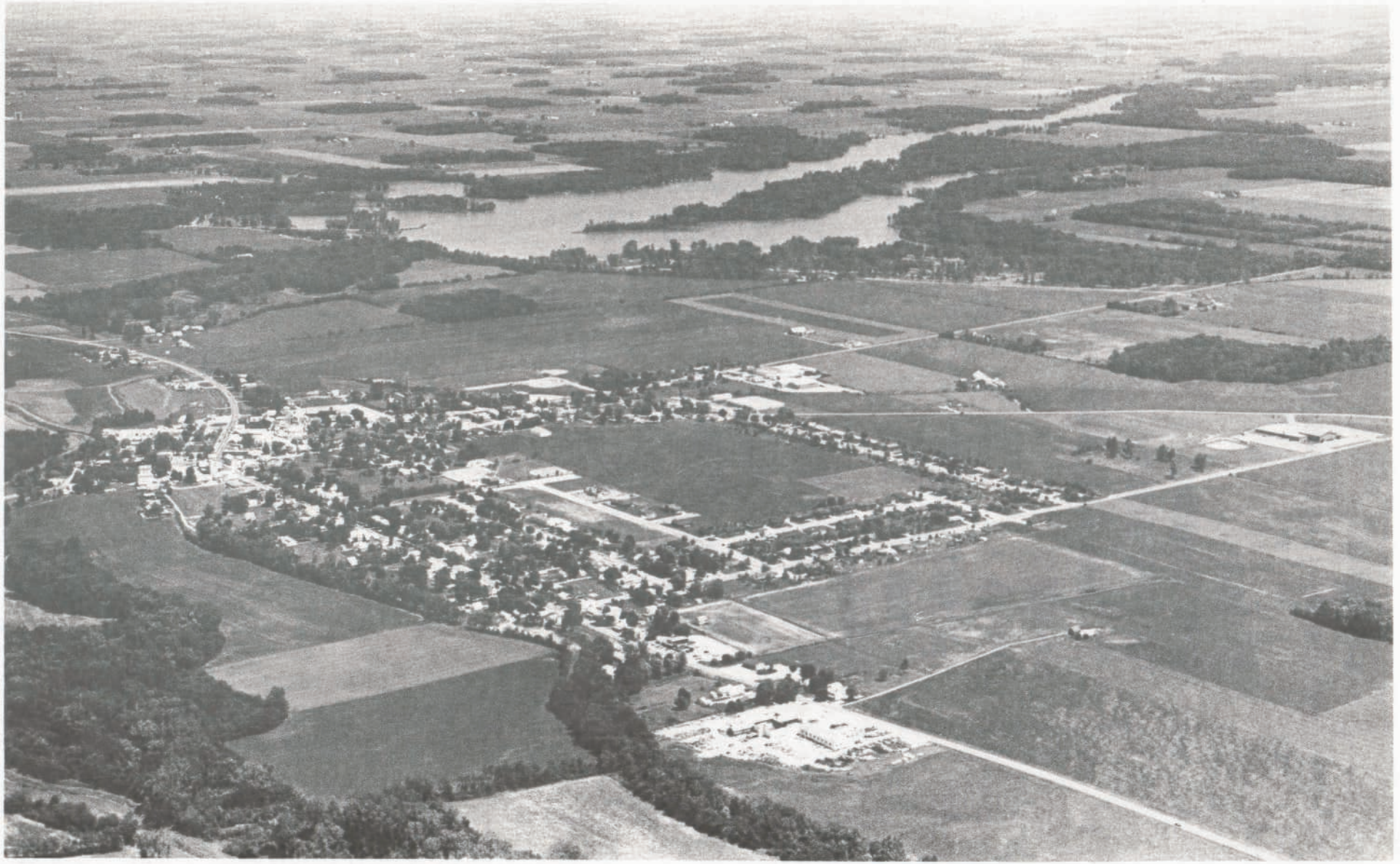
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# Foreword



Over a year ago a meeting called by the Ft. Loramie Historical Assn. was held. A Sesquicentennial Committee was selected and the foundation for this book was adopted. The book was to be written by native born, or interested people most versed and qualified for their subjects. All organizations and businesses were invited to write their own histories. The organization and printing of this book was left to us, the co-editors. This was to be a real labor of love, as no one was to receive any compensation, and no charge was to be made for any article printed.

With few exceptions the community responded. Research started, typewriters, pens, and pencils began to work, old photographs came out of drawers, and now we are able to present to you the Sesquicentennial Book, your 150th birthday present as written and illustrated by your own. All of us tried to do our best. Of course there may be errors: "To err is human and to forgive is divine". There were many disappointments. Some businesses and organizations chose not to write their histories, but this was counterbalanced by those who did. We especially thank Elizabeth Seiters and William Albers, who from their vantage point of 90 years, could identify old pictures and events. Carl Walker and Ferd Freytag translated German writings. Joe Turner did much leg work. For all of these, and to people who gave us old photos and wrote our articles, we give rousing "THANKS!" We feel we have put together a book that will be a delight to you. Congratulations to you on your birthday, and may the years ahead continue to make Ft. Loramie progress and prosper.

*Evelyn Busse and Clarence Raterman*

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# FT. LORAMIE TOWN FLAG




Anne Busse holds the town flag with the crest displayed upon it. It features the most important history of the area. Top left shows a hatchet and musket. the weapons important to Indians and whites. The peace pipe signifies end of hostilities and formation of Greenville Treaty Line which crosses through Ft. Loramie. The right corner incorporates the Berlin Bear. This is insignia of Berlin, Germany. but was chosen to honor the early settlers who came from New Berlin, Ohio. The lower left corner shows a canal boat. For several years. Ft. Loramie was a canal town. The canal was a life saver for all at that time. Loramie had a means to ship produce to market. and in this way benefitted from the extra revenue. The right lower corner shows a plow and the earth ready for planting. Farming was the main livelihood of settlers and is still of great importance to the area. Centered on the crest is the cross, the sign of the settlers great love of God and devotion to Him, over all. The background of the crest alternates golden yellow and red, outlined in black. Anne. along with Karen Anthony and Richard Brautigam, served as a committee and designed the crest for the Village Councils' final approval.

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## SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

*By Jean Wendeln*



On January 20th, 1986, an organizational meeting was held to discuss the 1987 sesquicentennial year. This was organized by the historical assn. and chaired by Clarence Raterman. Representatives of 23 organizations were present and it was unanimous that a parade and big celebration would tie in with the 4th of July festivities. The next largest event would be tied in with the German Heritage days in August. The Historical Assn. will hold a contest for the school students and award cash prizes for the best essays on the history and descendents of Fort Loramie. Each organization is asked to write a history of their particular organization and the Historical Assn. will compile a history of Ft. Loramie and have the book published. A crest for the town also will be designed and also a town flag. During this meeting a volunteer committee was chosen to decide on other events to commemorate this year. Serving on this committee will be George Martin, Ken Soward, Mary Ellen Bertke, Denny Cordonnier and Jean Wendeln. After this meeting, the committee met and decided all other events would be low keyed for the enjoyment of local residents. This committee met at least once a month and came up with a lot of ideas. We thought a big birthday party, old time picnic would be nice and have the people bring food, have a big cake, have games, contests and music for all ages. Our next idea was to bring back movies on the canal banks that used to be a part of Ft. Loramie. We then decided on an event to be held each month. After firming all this up we held another meeting with the organization representatives on May 5, 1986, and got their approval on our schedule of events.

We asked residents to loan us old pictures of the community which we would reproduce and return the originals to them. We would have display boards made and present a pictorial display of Ft. Loramie then and now. Bob Bertke reproduced the pictures we were able to obtain and donated his time and efforts for this. The next thing we worked on was to decide on commemoratives of this occasion, that we could sell to help with all the expenses we would incur. We received donations from many of the organizations and businessmen but we would need more help.

The Historical Assn. and Dick Brautigam of the Art Dept. at the school designed the crest of Ft. Loramie that we would use on these commemoratives. We then set out to design our town flag. After we had this designed we knew it would be a rather large expense for us to undertake so enlisted the Kiwanis of Ft. Loramie to take this over after we had the town officials approval. We met with several representatives from specialty companies and decided on the commemoratives. We decided on a plate, Xmas ornament, playing cards, can holders with and without a liner that acts as an insulated container, tee shirts and smaller items such as tab openers, balloons and Indian headbands. We also had bumper stickers which we asked the businessmen to buy and give away.

Then 1987 was upon us and our year started. We opened the year with a Mass at St. Michael's Catholic Church on Jan. 11, 1987. A special banner for this was made and the mass and the singing was in a sesquicentennial theme. The offertory was carried by a local 4 generation family who lived in Fort Loramie all their lives. This consisted of Esther Gaier, her son Ralph Gaier, his daughter Evonne Poeppelman and her son. After Mass a reception was held in St. Michael's hall by the St. Ann Rosary and Alter Society Society and we had some of our pictures displayed.

On February 22 the second event was held at the American Legion Hall and we presented a very interesting talk by Randy Buchman on the history of the Indians of our area and also showed a film of Williamsburg depicting our early ancestry. Our third event was held April 5th when the high school and junior high band and chorus presented a sesquicentennial concert. They put on an excellent show in music of our heritage. A reception followed this with the Band Mothers providing cookies, punch and coffee. Commemoratives were offered and display of pictures was enjoyed. The fourth event was held April 26, 1987, in conjunction with Arbor Day. A gathering was held on the old canal bank that is now our park for a ceremonious planting of a white oak tree. Preceding this the American Legion and the Auxiliary

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color guards raised the American flag and the sesquicentennial flag donated to the town by our committee accompanied by the Star Spangled Banner played by the Fort Loramie High School Band.

After the tree planting which was blessed by Father Bensman and a talk given by Mayor Doyle Iiams, the band played America the Beautiful. The Committee passed out white oak seedlings to be taken by everyone to their homes to plant.

Our fifth event held on May 24th, 1987, was Memorial Day celebration. The committee and others joined the American Legion for their Memorial day services and after Mass while the legion was putting flags on our Veterans graves, the committee put flowers on the graves of our ancestors with a special arrangement for Father Bigot's grave in Old St. Michael's cemetery. After this we went by wagon pulled by mules belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Francis DeLoye to the very 1st cemeteries. Furrow, located on the Ferd Fleckenstein farm and Pioneer on State Route 66. After decorating these graves and special prayers we returned by the mules and wagon to a reception by the Historical Assn. members.

The sixth event was held on June 18, 1987, and we invited everyone to enjoy "a movie on the Canal Bank". We set this up in the park and had a Pathe filmstrip on daredevils, a Woody Woodpecker Cartoon and the movie "Pollyanna" for the enjoyment of the people attending. Everyone brought their own chairs, popcorn, etc.

The seventh event was the 4th of July celebration. The committee built a float for the parade sponsored by the Historical Assn. We set up a display of pictures of the old days and some of how they look today. Also had a display made by our elementary students of articles depicting the history of Fort Loramie then, now and the future. Three businesses set up a display showing their products. We had our commemoratives on sale and were kept busy. On the 5th of July our committee had special events as they did at gatherings in the old days. We featured a spelling bee, cyphering, bubble gum blowing, sack races, pie eating, skillet throw, hog calling, watermelon eating, costume and beard growing contest, hot dog eating, water balloon toss, fireman relay and straw pile hunt. Trophies and prizes were given for these events.

The next item on the agenda was the family picnic birthday party. We decided to forego this due to poor attendance at the events and the fact that the gym committee would like to incorporate this idea as part of the German Heritage day celebration. So our next event will be to set up our display and offer our commemoratives at German Heritage Days on August 14 and 15.

On Sept. 19th we will have a stand at the Lake Festival and have our display shown. In Oct. our event will be the elementary band and chorus entertaining with a special program honoring the sesquicentennial year. We will have a reception and display here also

Then on Nov. 21 we are going to host a Gala Costume Ball with everyone to attend dressed in costumes of the 1880's. We will feature The Donn Smith orchestra playing the old time music. This will be held at Benders Park. Then to close our Sesquicentennial year on December 29th, the actual day of the signing making this town official, we will present a living Nativity scene, bury a time capsule with many interesting facts in it and a carol sing. Hot chocolate and snacks will be served.

The committee wishes to thank everyone who assisted us in any way including the spouses, Monica Soward, Nancy Martin and Bob Bertke. Although we spent many hours and a lot of work to honor our town we enjoyed recognizing our 150th birthday.

## HISTORICAL ESSAY CONTEST

As an encouragement to the youth to learn more of the area, the Ft. Loramie Historical Association sponsored a contest at the Ft. Loramie Schools. Three prizes, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, of $150.00, 75.00 and 25.00, were offered to each of four different grade groups. Stipulations were that the essay must pertain to some phase of Ft. Loramie history.

The winners were: In one to third grades: 1st, Karen Fullenkamp on the "Short, One Room School". 2nd: "The Canal" by Stacie Bender; 3rd: Jessica Meinerding with her essay on "Transportation." Grades 4 to 6 winners were: Julie Timmerman on "The Canal"; Jennifer Timmerman, second with "St. Michaels Church", and Jenny Henke was third with "The Canal and the 1913 Flood." Grades 9 through 12 had one winning entry: Angie Holthaus received first with "Growth of Ft. Loramie."

The essay contest was sponsored as a feature of Ft. Loramie's Sesquicentennial Year and many entries in addition to winners were very well written and deserving of honorable mention.

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Winners in Sesquicentennial Essay Contest sponsored by Ft. Loramie Historical Association. Cash winners also received plaques. Left to right: Karen Fullenkamp, Stacie Bender, Jessica Meinerding, Julie Timmerman, Jennifer Timmerman, Jenny Henke, and Angie Holthaus. 2nd row: Evelyn Busse, Secretary of Society and Clarence Raterman, Judge, who made presentations.




RES. OF JOSEPH RIEGER, MAIN ST. BERLIN, SHELBY CO. OHIO.

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# In The Beginning

For the younger generation, let me introduce myself. I was born in Ft. Loramie in 1908 in the present home of Leo Schulze. My parent's names were John and Kathryn. My great grandfather, Johann H. came to Ft. Loramie in 1834 and built a two story log cabin where the Albert Romie apartments now stand. My maternal great grandparents, the Bernard Pillies built the building now occupied by Bernard Aselage. At one time all the land east of Louis St., bordered by all of Greenback Rd. to 705 and Greenville Treaty line to the north belonged to my family. I moved to McCartyville in 1933. In 1972, I became an historical writer for the Sidney Daily News, and wrote for them until finishing my assignments in the Bicentennial Issue.

This history is not a history dealing with Indians, the fort, the generals who have passed this way. Some of that has been beaten to death. This is a fresh approach gleaned from basic research found in the attics of the Court House, Ft. Loramie Township House and Town Building, conversations with older people, old newspapers, and over sixty biographries of Ft. Loramie citizens. I am thankful to Wm. Ross, Jr., for articles from old Ft. Loramie papers. The Sidney and Minster libraries were of great help. Besides the books mentioned in the text itself, I have derived information from the following: OUTLINES OF HISTORY by Robinson and Brasted, RISE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION by Beard, GERMANS IN AMERICA by Kuntz, STORIES OF ANCIENT TIMES by McClure, Schenk and Wright, (Columbia Viking Press), LIFE'S GERMANY by Ency, BRITANICA by Ency, OUTLINES OF KNOWLEDGE by Richards, OHIO by Collins and STORY OF AMERICA by Laidlaw. in America by KUNTZ-Stories of Ancient Times by McCLURE, SCHENK and WRIGHT-Columbia Viking Press, ENCY-Life's Germany-ENCY Britanica-Outlines of Knowledge by RICHARDS-COLLINS' Ohio-and LIADLAW'S Story of America.

I have gone back in time so that you can be with your ancesters when they worshipped mythical gods and objects. You are with them when they packed the old trunk, now in your attic, to prepare to leave their homeland. Through contemporaries you are there as they cross the ocean, land in America, travel to Mclean Twp., and establish their homes. The history covers all aspects of life in McLean Twp. Berlin, and early Ft. Loramie.

*Clarence Raterman*

## OUR ANCESTORS BEGINNINGS

Unlike the United States, a nation made, and still being made for the past 300 years by emigrants from all over the world; our German ancestors much like the Indians who occupied this region, developed through the tribal system.

Beginning with the extended family home, and living with related families in a village or villages constituted a clan. Neighboring clans, that cooperated, formed a tribe. A group of villages of the tribe formed a "pagus" or what the English called the "Hundred." Each village managed its own affairs and had its own headman. In time of war, which was a frequent affair, each Hundred sent its quota of a hundred fighting men. Each Hundred had its head man, and the tribe selected a warlord from among the headmen. The same process was repeated on a larger scale when tribes combined for battle. But the tendency was, for the Warlord to retain his position of power, when the fighting was over, and to become permanent, and finally hereditary. Thus the feudal system developed with its nobles and kings.

From language and other indications, the Germans are supposed to have migrated from Upper Asia passing by the Caucasus and north of the Caspian Sea. If this migration ever occured, it is not mentioned in any of the national legends, and the German people consider themselves, as did the Romans, the earliest inhabitants.

Some Germans cultivated the land, but most of the tribes were nomadic and roamed their primeval forests along with elks, bears, wolves, boars, wildcats, deer, and dominated by the aurochs, an extinct shaggy long-horned ox, thought to be an ancestor of modern domestic cattle. When a tribe settled down, it was usually to breed cattle. War and the hunt was the occupation of the men, and the non warriors (women, children, and handicapped males) did everything else. The ancient Germans were described as tall handsome fair, with blue eyes and blonde or red hair, which was often rendered with a soap used as dye. Both men and women were described as almost equal in size and strength and wearing long hair. The warriors wore helmets with the horns of the aurochs, and the other cattle adorning them, and never shaved.

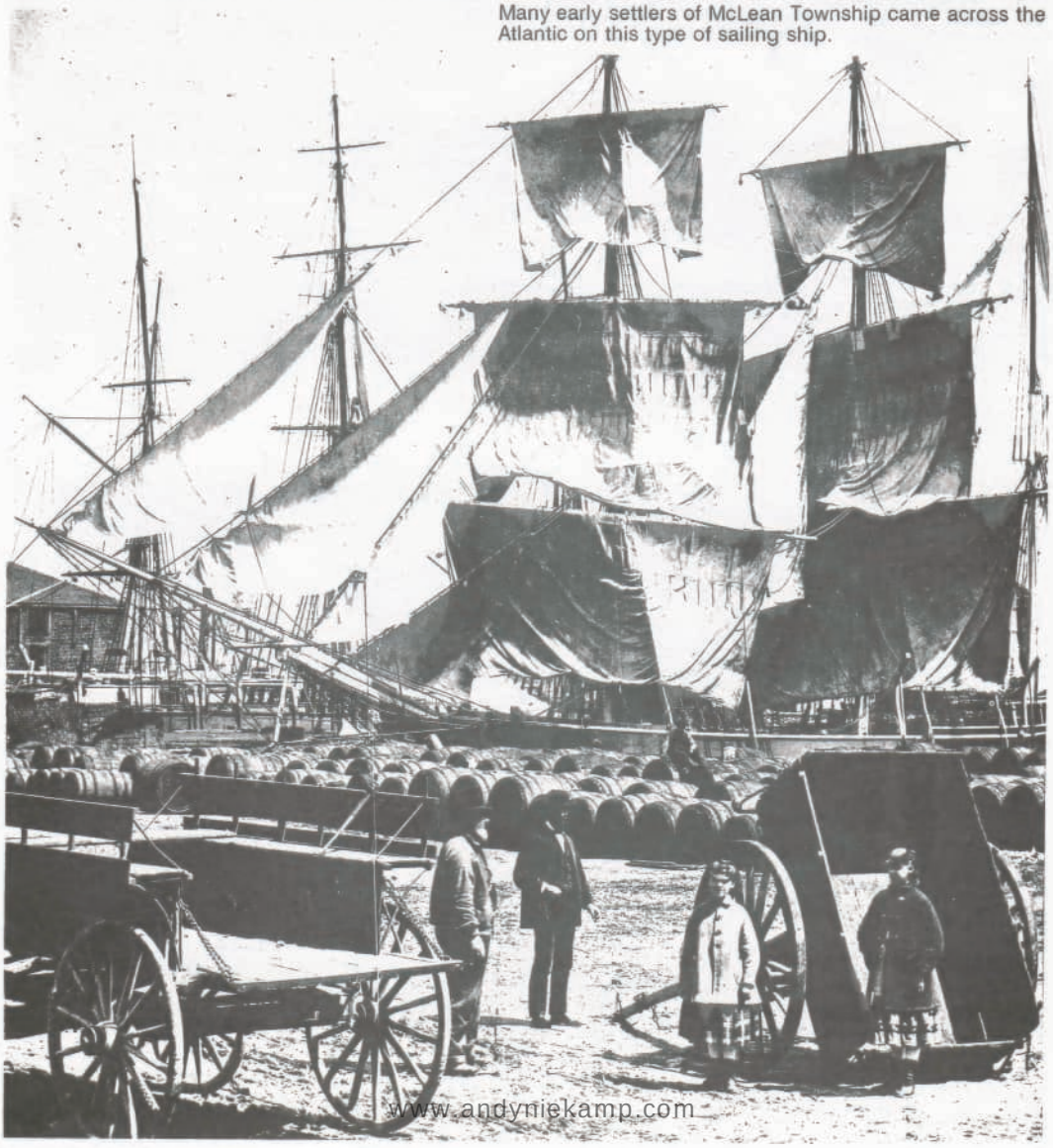
Ancient Germans worshipped Woden, father of the Gods; Thor, the God of Thunder; Frier, the wife of

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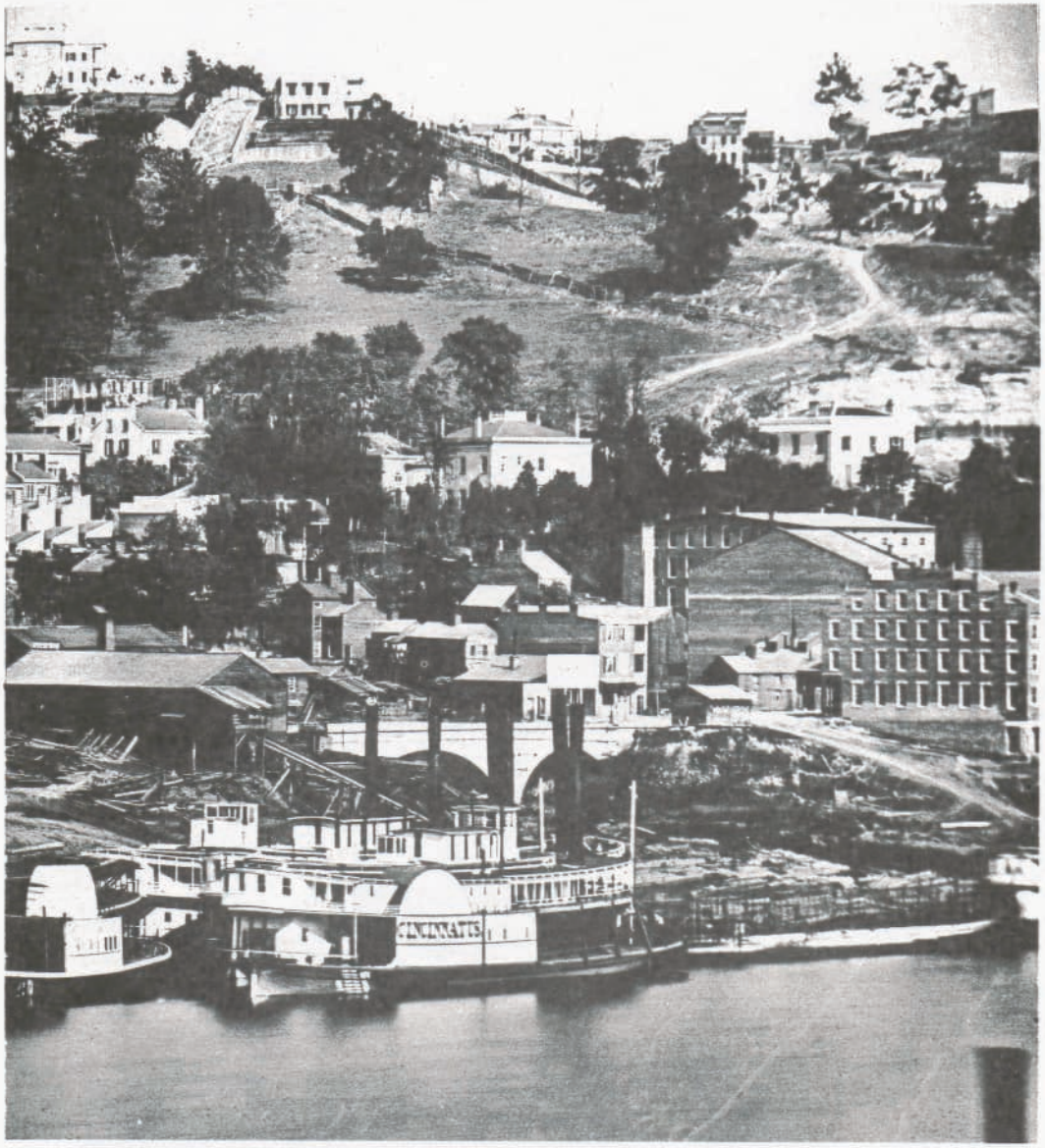


A painting of early Saxons. The Germans who came to America were descendents of the Saxons.

Many early settlers of McLean Township came across the Atlantic on this type of sailing ship.



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Many of the early immigrants arrived in Cincinnati on this early riverboat.



A painting called "Trail of Tears" shows Indians leaving land given up in treaties with early settlers.

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Woden; and other deities; besides the sun, moon, and the stars and natural objects such as trees and rocks. Each tribe had its secondary deity or deities. Worship was conducted in the open air on mountains, in forest, caves, and near rocks. A father was the priest for his family. The medicine men were the priests of the tribes, and with their religious rites, they told the will of the gods in regard to public undertakings, which means they dictated their will, or the will of the chief to the people. Sometimes sacrifices were made, such as booty taken in war and prisoners taken in battle. Germans also were known as great drinkers of mead, and heavy gamblers, who sometimes gambled away their wives and children, as well as themselves into slavery. Everyone admired them for their honesty, as they never welshed on a bet. Slain warriors went to Valhala where they would live eternally with Woden, head of all the Gods. If they had imperfections, the ovens of Valhala would make them worthy.

While Fr. Bigot claims families from all the states in West Germany, Prussia, France, and Ireland, along with Luxemburg, as settling the Loramie community; most of our ancestors came from Oldenburg, Westphalia, and Hanover. These German states are north of the Mittelland Canal, east of the Rhine, west of the Elbe, south of Denmark and east of the Netherlands. They are situated on the western part of a great alluvial plain 550 miles long and 200 miles wide. It has many marshes, interlaced with drainage ditches, flat, and does not possess the best of soil. These states have always lacked natural frontiers. The flatness of the surface and the situation of these states in the heartland of Europe makes them the path of every invasion. In the 9th century A.D. less than 50 miles from Damme, in Munsterland, the Roman legions under Varus were defeated by Arminius (Hermann) and his Chiuci tribes, combined with our ancestors the Saxons, at Teutoburg Forest, at Detmold. Never again did the Romans try to penetrate Germany east of the Rhineland. A monument has been erected at Detmold to commemorate this event.

Our barbaric ancestors hired themselves as soldiers in the Roman Legions, and when Rome began to collapse, the Germanic tribes poured into the void and created the Dark Ages. During this period, the Germanic tribes of the Anglos and Saxons invaded England and laid the groundwork for the House of Windsor, which rules England today. It also produced George III, the English King during the Revolution, and his use of Hessian (German) troops during that war. St. Augustine, a Monk, brought Christianity to the Saxons around 600 A.D. at the insistence of Pope Gregory the Great. However this event took place among the Saxons of England and not of Germany. Later, after 30 years of repeated campaigns, with each campaign followed by some submission to Christianity, and baptism by force, Saxony was converted, in 800 A.D.

In 962, a Saxon king became the ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, thus involving our forefathers in all the wars of the papacy. One of the worst defeats suffered during this period was by the hands of the royal house of Hohenstaufen, representing the German Empire, against Hanover and Bavaria. Up to the 16th century German history was one of warring groups. In 1517 came Martin Luther and for a long time it looked like our homeland would be put into the Protestant North stretching from the Baltic to the River Main at Frankfort. The ruler of each German state determined the religion of his people. But the Catholic Reformation swept over Bavaria to the lowlands of Munsterland. In 1618 the Thirty Years War, or War of the Roses broke out. Our homeland became a battleground. The Danes, supporting Protestantism, invaded south as far as Brunswick. The Raterman family has records that show that their buildings were destroyed twice during this period. The population of Germany shrank from 21 to 13 million and some Germans were reduced to cannabalism. In 1714 Hanover became part of England. At the end of the war in 1648, and the resulting Treaty of Westphalia, over 300 German States were formed to rule the area. This resulted in bishoprics, duchies, and other divisions changing the area. Thousands of villages had been destroyed, and our people victimized by the atrocities committed by invading soldiers, from various nations. Our forefathers remained exhausted until the end of the 18th century. During this period most of our homeland belonged to the bishoprics of Osnabrook and Munster. In 1806 and 1807 when Napoleon gained his power, the Rhine Confederation was formed by 16 German states, all pledged to Napoleon. Both Oldenburg and Hanover were under Napoleon. The family of Diedrich Thaman of Maria Stein has a medal for meritorious service to Napoleon. He came from Neuenkirchen, in Oldenburg.

At the Treaty of Tilsit in 1806, the Kingdom of Westphalia was formed and put under the control of Napolean's brother, Jerome Bonaparte. This included large chunks of Oldenburg and Hanover. After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, and the subsequent Treaty of Vienna, in 1815, Hanover reverted to British rule, with a constitution more liberal than that enjoyed by other German states. A loose German confederation was formed, with some parts of Oldenburg coming under the rule of Prussia. With the ascension of Queen Victoria to the British throne in 1837, Salic Law (only male rulers) seperated Hanover from England and the new ruler promptly did away with the liberal constitution, leading to the intellectuals' revolt of 1848. Following this war came

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the formation of the German Empire under Prussia, the rule of Bismark and the Franco-Prussian wars. All of these events led to massive German emigration to the United States.

## WHY THEY CAME

Very few Germans came to the United States before the year 1831. The American Revolution discouraged emigrants in the latter part of the 1700's. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, with their demand for soldiers and skilled labor, kept people from leaving during the early part of the 1800's. A brief period of prosperity occured following the wars. Only 968 Germans left in 1820, from all of Germany. Between 1821 and 1830 the number was 6,761. Beginning in 1832 over 1000 came. In 1834, 17,000 left their homeland. In 1837, over 24,000 people entered the United States from Germany. During the entire decade of 1830-1840 a total of 152,454 Germans came to the U.S., mostly to Ohio, which state was the frontier during those years.

The events in Europe and the U.S. causing our ancestors to leave Germany and come to Ohio were the following; Our forefathers had always depended on working in the peat bogs of Poland and Holland, and their women to make linen for sale at home. The peace treaty ending the Napoleonic Wars had united Holland and Belgium. In 1830 Belgium revolted against Holland. Prussia moved an army to the border of Holland, scarcely 40 miles from our ancestors homes. France and England also became involved and it was not until 1839 that this was settled. In November of 1830 Poland revolted against Russia. In this war Poland was crushed and ceased to exist, being incorporated into Russia. Thousands of Poles were sent to Siberia and to the Caucasus, and a flood of Polish refugees streamed into foreign lands.

Although England took a major part in the Napoleonic Wars it's homeland was not invaded. For over 20 years, while Germany was being crisscrossed and occupied by invading armies, England was able to develop the Industrial Revolution and its consequent cheap cotton goods, and the German women could not compete with their linen. With no work in the peat bogs and no market for linen goods, combined with an exploding population, limited in their movement, and a law restricting the inheritance of land to the oldest child, the picture was bleak for Germany. The rest of Europe looked no better. There was war in Spain, Italy, and Portugal, internal problems in France, continued competition between Prussia and Austria for control of the German Confederation, illegal occupations of Luxumberg, strife between France and Prussia over occupation of Alsace Lorraine, and unrest all over Europe over the rights of the common people. With all of these wars and rumors of wars, added to unemployment, along with an easing of restrictions on movement of the farming class, the time had come to seek greener pastures. During the wars, Oldenburg and Hanover had been occupied by French, Italian, and Danish troops. These troops had requisitioned the farmers crops and animals, besides teaching our homelanders new habits, and a new knowledge of available products.

By this time education had progressed to the point in Germany that most people could read and write, and Germans were able to read the advertisements that Ohio and other states of the Northwest put into German newspapers telling them about the marvels of Ohio and the other states. The Northwest Ordinance had been passed and was the law in Ohio. Among other things it guaranteed freedom of religion, provision for trial by jury, the right of habeus corpus and especially inviting, a law that provided that estates should be divided among the children of deceased persons in equal parts, after saving the rights of widows.

The influence of Francis Stallo upon the early history of Ft. Loramie should not be overlooked. In 1831, with a printshop at his disposal in Cincinnati, Stallo flooded our part of Germany with leaflets extolling Ohio and its opportunities. He thus became a sort of Pied Piper from Damme. Among the people who bought lots in early Minster were the Boergers, Surmans, Heckmans, Quatmans, Albers, Frillings, and Wilkins. These names later became Ft. Loramie names. No doubt Stallo's efforts were due to an inward desire to help his former neighbors, but later, a large number of these promoters had a profit motive: to get rich on the ignorance of the immigrants when they arrived at the ports of entry, or selling land at falsely advertised settlements on the frontier. Letters could also have been written by early Germans in this area such as: Weisbrodt, who lived east of Ft. Loramie, and the Prengers, Schmitmeyers and Watercutters east of Minster, who were here in 1830.

In the early 800's, Charlemagne, flush with booty from his conquered provinces turned the taxes over to the churches. After the Protestant Reformation this tax was either paid to the Lutheran or Catholic church. In tax records obtained from the Bishop of Osnabrook by the late Ben Raterman of Sidney, the homestead of the Raterman family near Alfhausen, in Northern Hanover, comprising 22.23 acres, paid in 1723 the following taxes to the church at Bresenbrook: Smoke or hearth tax 2 thaler - Estate tax 15 groschen, 9 pfennig monthly tax 2 thaler, 19 groshen, 5 pfennig Rent - 14 bushels of grain and 28 sheaves (grain included rye, oats, and barley). There was also a special tax for the pastor, sexton, and un-

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cloistered monks, payable in money, grain and bread. Four days of service was also required. These records, which ran from 1402 to 1803 show additional taxes levied: Head tax on each person in the household - Servant tax - and inheritance tax. If a pauper or severely handicapped person occupied a building, no tax was collected. These taxes were oppressive at that time.

As good as can be found, the thaler or toler was worth 72 cents, the reichsthaler approximately a dollar. The grochen was a silver coin which severely fluctuated in value, but was generally valued around 1/3 the value of a thaler, the pfennig 1/100 of a thaler.Walter Havighurst in his "Wilderness for Sale" quotes interviews with immigrants in Bremen as to why they were leaving Germany. A common answer was "Kein Konig dort" no king there. Also the word "acres". They had been told that one day's labor would buy an acre of ground. That peaches and apples were rotting on the ground, of grain ungleaned in the field, of roast beef and pastry like the feast of Christmas every day.

Havighurst quotes a young Scottish immigrant, who probably sums up the feelings of all the farmers of that time: "There (in Scotland) a farmer pays from seven to twenty-eight dollars an acre for the use of the farm . . . If he improves the farm, the improvements are for another, not for him: and at the end of the lease, if another is willing to give one shilling more than him, or if the proprietor has a favorite, or wishes to turn two or more farms into one, or has taken offense at his politics, religion or anything else, regarding him or his family, he will not get renewal of his lease. Many a family I have known that was ruined that way. Nor is there any remedy: the lands are nearly all entailed on the great families, and the lords of the soil are lords of the laws; they can bind the poor farmers in all cases whatsoever." Substitute, Germany, thaler, and the church and you have German immigrants of the 1830's.

The same Scottish immigrant continued "Compare this with the situation of an American farmer. He cultivates his own soil, or if he has none, he can procure it for several hundred dollars. If he has no money, he can get credit and all that is necessary to redeem his credit is to put forth his hand and be industrious. He can stand erect in the middle of his farm and say, this ground is mine; from the highest hill to the lowest depths. I can claim all that I can get possession of within these bonds, fowls of the air, fish of the waters, and all that pass through the same. And having a full share of consequence in the political scale, his equal rights are granted to him. None dare encroach upon his. He can sit under his own vine and under his own tree, and none to make him afraid." Dr. Paul Braegelman, a doctor in economics from Vechta, in present day Germany, stated in an address to the Ft. Loramie Historical Assn., that in the early 1830s the Huerleute (Hireling people) had increased to such an extent that barns, sheds, and every available shelter was occupied by them. The Huerleute was the lowest class in Germany at that time, and included farmers with less than four cows and 10-1/2 acres of land. This class of people, including most of our ancestors, had nothing to look for in Germany, and everything to gain in America.

In the 1830's and early 40's the urge to escape from grinding poverty, tyranical laws, heavy taxation, and depression, filled the west bound ships. In the later 40's, middle class Germany, which wanted political power, revolted and lost their battle, filling more ships to U.S. shores. In the latter part of the century more thousands came to escape military service during the Franco-Prussian wars.

Scouts had returned, the Promised Land had been located, land could be had for a pittance: in time it was given away. Trees could be felled, cabins could be built, schools and churches would arise and every one was equal. Places like Damme in Germany tried to stop the outgo, by creating public jobs, but for our ancestors, all lights were green.

This same scene was going on in other parts of northern Europe, especially Ireland, and produced fear in America culminating in the Know Nothing crusade of 1850 against foreign and Catholic people. Later on the shift in immigration from northern and western Europe, to southern and eastern Europe led the Boston poet, Thomas Aldrich, to write his

**"Unguarded Gates"**

Wide open and unguarded stand our gates,
And through them presses a wild motley throng-
Men from the Volga and the Tartar steppes,
Featureless figures of the Hooang Ho . . .
Those bringing with them unknown gods and rites,
Those tiger passions here to stretch their claws.
In streets and valley what strange tongues are loud,
Accents of menace alien to our air,
Voices that once the Tower of Babel knew!

## HOW THEY CAME

**My Native Land**

*By Hugh Peters*

Farewell my native land, farewell!
That wave has hid thee now

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My heart is bowed as with a spell
This rending pang! would I could tell
What ailes my throbbing brow!
One look upon that fading streak
Which bounds your eastern sky:
One tear to cool my burning cheek;
And then a word I cannot speak
"My Native Land - Good Bye."

Immigration more than doubled during the decade of 1840 to 1850; from 152,454 in the 1830's to 434,626 in the 40's. Between 1820 and 1900 about five million Germans came to America. During this period, out of each hundred immigrants, 15 were English; 35 German; 33 Irish, and 17 other nationalities.

Our German ancestors raised the money for the trip in various ways. The Huerleute, who had worked for others, according to Dr. Braegelman, had credit unions which had the savings of the workers. This was now returned to them. The Sherman family, according to their history, sold all their real and personal property. The Raterman family raised their money by the father selling the right to the inheritance of the farm to his mother and step father. Paupers could be helped by money raised by public subscription.

The average price of passage mentioned in 62 autobiographies of Loramie people seems to be about 22 to 30 reichsthaler. This would be from $22.00 to $30.00. The variance would be caused by size of family, as all of the earlier settlers had food included with the price.

Charles Dickens, made this same trip in 1842 when immigration from Germany had doubled, and in his "American Notes" mentions that some of these immigrants had sold their clothes to raise passage money and were dressed in rags. Others depended upon the charity of their fellow passengers for food. He stated that too many of them are put on board one ship; and that their accommodations were demoralizing; that no medical attendants were on these ships, although sickness and death on voyages were common, and that those people who brought their own provisions instead of paying for the ship food, were never inspected by ship's officers as to whether they had brought a reasonable amount. He concludes by saying, "Above all, it is the duty of any government, be it monarchy or republic to interpose and put an end to the system by which a firm of traders in emigrants purchase of the owners the whole 'tween-decks of a ship and send on board as many wretched people as they can lay hold of, on any terms they can get, without any reference to the conveniences of the steerage, the number of berths, the slightest separation of the sexes, or anything but their own profit. Nor is this the worst of this vicious system; for certain crimping agents of these houses, who have a percentage on all the passengers they inveigle are constantly traveling about those districts where poverty and discontent are rife and tempting the credulous into more misery, by holding out monstrous inducements to emigration which can never be realized."

Death on the sea was common. The biography of Herman Kloecker, an 1842 immigrant mentions that two children had died on the sea. The mother of Paul Lauterbur a teacher in the Ft. Loramie Schools in the 1890's had her father die at sea and as a 12 year old girl made her way alone from New York to New Riegal, Ohio to an uncle's family. This also happened in 1842.

Sailing ships at that time took 30 to 100 days to sail across the Atlantic. Ohio had steamships on the Ohio River by 1811. In 1819 the Savannah, built in the U.S., part sail and part steam, crossed the Atlantic. In 1838 two British ships operated with steam only. By the 1840's fleets of steamboats crossed the Atlantic, cutting passage to an average of two weeks and thus encouraging more immigration.

The sailing ships used by the early forefathers depended upon the wind belts. In order to go West, the ship must get to the easterly wind belt, somewhere near the Azores, by Spain. Here the west bound winds would propel the ship to all eastern ports of the United States and those along the Gulf of Mexico. The English Channel also presented difficulties. Sometimes a vessel would have to go around Scotland to get to the Azores. The enemies to navigation were headwinds, storms at sea, and periods when there was no wind.

After collecting the belongings to go with them to America, the emigrants usually hired a large teamster's wagon to take them to Bremen. Here the people with their possessions boarded a smaller vessel to take them down the river Weser to Bremen Haven, where they boarded the sea going sailship. Nearly all the early emigrants took a family trunk (which now reposes in many attics) that contained the bedware, clothing, linens and other personal belongings. In the early 1830's food was always supplied by the ship, and the description of crowded conditions by Dickens did not apply until after 1837.

These early ships had berths, one above the other below decks, with a long table for eating purposes down the middle. There was a ladies' compartment of berths and gentlemens'. Curtains were used to open or close spaces. Chamber pots were used and emptied into the ocean. After 1837 straw covered the

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whole steerage area, bedrolls or material from the trunks were used to sleep on the straw; there was very little privacy and meals could be bought before hand, or could be brought on board by individual families.Cows were taken on board to supply the milk. Ice houses on board the ship were filled with fresh provisions such as butchers meat and garden produce, suckling pigs, calves heads, beef, veal and pork and lots of poultry according to Dickens. Water was taken on board in casks. Then with the anchor cast away, the canvas fluttered from the masts, and spreading its white wings, it soared away on its free and solitary course. For pastime there were the dolphins and porpoises, the doves, passing sails, perhaps some music from violins and accordians, sitting around the dining table and making new acquaintances, and talk.

In a calm, the sails would hang useless in the air and for days sometimes very little progress would be made and the crew usually amused itself by fishing. In a head wind Dickens said "Imagine a human face upon the vessel's prow, with fifteen thousand Samsons in one, bent upon driving her back, and hitting her exactly between the eyes whenever she attempts to advance one inch. Imagine the ship herself with every pulse and artery of the huge body swollen and bursting under this maltreatment sworn to go on or die. Imagine the wind howling, the sea roaring, the rain beating; all in furious array against her. Picture the sky both dark and wild, and the clouds in fearful sympathy with the waves, making another ocean in the air. Add to all this clattering on deck and down below; the tread of hurried feet; the loud hoarse shouts of the seamen; the gurgling in and out of the water through the scuppers; with every now and then the striking of heavy sea upon the planks above, with the deep dead sound of thunder heard within a vault; and there is the headwind we experienced that January Morning".

A storm at sea is described: "To say that the ship is flung down on her side in the waves, with the masts dipping into them, and that springing up again, she rolls over on the other side until another heavy sea strikes her with the noise of a hundred great guns, and hurls her back that she stops, and staggers and shivers, as though stunned and then, with a violent throbbing at her heart, darts onward like a monster goaded into madness, to be beaten down and battered and crushed, and leaped on by the angry seas that thunder, lightening, hail and rain, and winds are all in fierce contention for mastery that every plank has its groan, every nail its shriek and every drop of water in the great ocean its howling voice is nothing. Words cannot express it. Thoughts cannot convey it. Only a dream can call it up with all its fury, rage, and passion." These were the experiences of our ancesters crossing the ocean. Others had no problems at all.

Most of our settlers made their way to the port of Baltimore. Port cities later, had a bad reputation because some people tried to bilk the immigrants out of their money by taking them to dives where their lack of knowledge of English resulted in many of the immigrants losing their money.

Since America was advertising for immigrants in the 1830's, there was no Ellis Island type of examination as there was in the latter part of the century, and coming in caused no difficulty for most of the immigrants. Their belongings were unloaded from the ship and taken to a Warehouse. Their ships and their names were registered at the Immigration Office.

Usually their stay in Baltimore was short. Large freight wagons drawn by six horses could be hired to transport the belongings to Wheeling three hundred miles away. People who could not walk, rode on the wagon, but most of the immigrants walked. Upon arriving at Wheeling the next step was to board a steamboat. In "River to the West." Havighurst states that the first steamboat on the Ohio was the New Orleans, in 1811. By 1815 travel to New Orleans and back was started. By 1823 there were 262 steamboats operating on the Ohio with a speed of 10 to 12 miles per hour. Even in 1850 Ohio River steamboats carried 3,000,000 passengers. The urge for more speed, caused by the Post Office Dept. demand for speed to hurry the delivery of mail, caused a reckless firing of the boilers and in 1848 alone 511 people died from steamboat explosions. Havighurst counted 25 wrecked steamers from Cairo, Illinois, to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1837. The great uncle of Clara Brucken and Irene Vogelsang (Jacob Edwards) was killed in the steamboat Sultana, after he was released from Andersonville prison after the Civil War. Andersonville was a prison where the Confederates kept Union prisoners in Georgia.

Havighurst stated the price of the trip to Cincinnati was $1.00 for deck passengers, who were crowded among livestock and cargo on the lower deck, cooking their porridge on boiler flues and drinking river water. They slept on bales and boxes. They could ride for nothing if they helped load the ships with wood for the boilers at designated points.

Dickens, in "American Notes" states that he had a cabin in the stern of the ship because, "We had been a great many times, very gravely been told, to keep as far aft as possible, because the steamboats generally blew up forward." In the biography by Henry Sherman Sr. this trip is described as "leaving Wheeling at 11 o'clock in the morning and arriving in Cincinnati at midnight." Dickens in 1842 took 3 days. Mail packets had no stops and speed was important.

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Cargo steamers took on and delivered cargo and passengers where ever requested.

Dickens describes a river steamer. "These steamers have no mast, cordage, tackle, rigging or other such boatlike gear. Except that they are in the water, and display a couple of paddle boxes, they might be intended to perform some unknown service, high and dry, on some mountain top. There is no visible deck; nothing but a long black roof covered with burned out feathery sparks; above which tower two iron chimneys, and a hoarse escape valve, and a glass storage house. Then in order as the eye descends toward the water, are the sides, and doors, and windows of the staterooms, jumbled as oddly together as though they formed a small street, built by the varying tastes of a dozen men; the whole is supported on beams and pillars resting on a dirty barge, but a few inches above the water's edge. In the narrow space between this upper structure and the barge's deck are furnace fires and machinery, open to every wind that blows, and every storm of rain that drives along its path."

"Passing one of these boats at night, seeing the great body of fire, exposed as described above, that rages and roars beneath the frail pile of painted wood; the machinery, not warded off or guarded in any way, but doing its work in the midst of a crowd of idlers, emigrants, and children who throng the lower deck; one feels directly that the wonder is, not that there should be so many fatal accidents, but that any journey should be safely made."

Dickens describes the washing and cleaning up as follows: "There was a tin ladle chained to the deck, with which every gentleman, who thought it was necessary to cleanse himself (many were superior to this weakness) fished the dirty water out of the river, and poured it into a tin basin, secured in like manner. There was also a jacktowel, and hanging up before a little looking glass in the bar, in the immediate vicinity of the bread, cheese and biscuits, was a public comb and hair brush."

The destination of the German emigrants was either Cincinnati or St. Louis, although Dickens describes an emigrant family that the steamer stopped in mid stream to land at an isolated settlement between Wheeling and Cincinnati "Five men, as many women and a little girl. All their worldly goods are a bag, a large trunk, and one old, high backed, rush bottomed chair. They are rowed ashore in a boat while the steamer waits, the water being shallow. They are landed at the foot of a high bank, on the summit of which are a few log cabins, attainable only by a long winding path."

In "History Of The Ratermann Family" by Rev. Albin Ratermann he states that the family came by stagecoach from Baltimore. As the National Rd. was completed to Columbus in 1833, and present day Rt. 51 goes from Columbus to Cincinnati by way of Lebanon this would have been possible for this 1834 Ft. Loramie resident. Dickens in 1842 described this road #51 as being macadamized and the speed attainable of six miles per hour. The carriages held from 7 to 9 people with possessions strapped on top.

Many people of French origin landed at New Orleans, because of its French connections, came up the Mississippi to the Ohio and Cincinnati. Other early settlers as the Nicks and Lauterburs, landed in New York, took the Erie Barge Canal to Lake Erie, then to Sandusky and other ports on Lake Erie. After the completion of the Miami & Erie Canal it was possible to come to Ft. Loramie from Toledo by canal.



Painting on ceiling of palace in Wurzburg depicting life in America in 1753. Courtesy-Carl Wacker.

## FROM CINCY TO MCLEAN

"GERMANS IN AMERICA" by Virginia Kunz depicts the feelings of Americans about the Germans after the American Revolution.

She states "They are persevering, industrious people, They cultivate the earth with care, their fields have an air of neatness about them, rarely to be discovered in America. The most respectable among them go on, adding dollar to dollar, and pack them up securely in an iron chest. They are used to the habit of hiding their hard earnings. They knew not what to do with their earnings after they got it. The utmost endeavors are used to get the money, and then to keep it secret that they have got it. The men in their leisure hours smoke, drink whiskey and water and ride on fat horses. The women raw boned, brown skinned and barelegged have neither grace or beauty. They share with their husbands the labors of the field and tend about their house as menial servants."

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Cincinnati, whose first mayor was a German, was 1/3 German populated in 1877. Henry Howe in "Historical Collections of Ohio", first published in 1847, described the Cincinnati German as frugal, thrifty, loving flowers, music and family, with an outstanding ambition to own his own home. Men were described as regaling themselves with their everlasting pipes, and grandfathers acting as nurses for their grandchildren. He stated that the Germans were predominately working class, clannish, German speaking, with no desire to Americanize, but with children that took special pride in being thought American, and ashamed if caught speaking German by their American friends. One source ofirritation to the orthodox Christians of Cincinnati, was the German attitude towards Sunday. They went to church, but the rest of the day was for pleasure.

Dr. Braegelman, in his talk stated that when teaching English to his German students at Vechta, he starts with a Cincinnati phone book because of its many German names similar to Vechta. Many McLean Twp. names have a counterpart in Cincinnati. During the height of the German emigration, skilled workers stayed in Cincinnati, while the farmers came to the frontier.

Many later McLean Twp. residents used Cincinnati as a base for making money to later locate in McLean. Some of these were Henry Wendeln, Henry Menke and John Willman. Bernard Ernst left his wife in Cincinnati while he came to McLean, cleared some land, and built a log cabin before getting his wife. Joseph Kaiser left his family in Cincinnati, to work for pay, to help him to secure his McLean Twp. land. Early pioneers like the Shermans, used canal boats to Dayton, and then the army road to McLean. Others like the Raterman family bought a wagon and a team of oxen in Cincinnati. They followed the old army road to McLean, used the oxen to clear the land, and lived in the covered wagon, while they built a log cabin. Christ Boerger did the same thing using horses. After arriving in McLean, Christ walked to Chillicothe land office to buy his land.

Dickens describes the canal boat in Pennsylvania as a little barge with a house on it. His boat carried 30 passengers with sleeping quarters for the ladies being separated from the men by a red curtain. Rows of tables extended down both sides of the cabin, while above suspended, were three rows of hanging bunks with a sheet and blanket on each. Beds were distributed by drawing lots each evening. During the daytime the bunks were taken down and the tables used to serve meals. Luggage was heaped together in the middle of the deck under a tarpaulin cover. Water to drink was obtained from casks and the washing of oneself the same as on the river boat. Three horses were used and were changed at stations. Ohio canal boats are in another article.

The road from Cincinnati to Dayton was dusty in the summer and rutted in the spring, but had very few low spots. The canal had opened to Dayton in 1829 so our forefathers could come to Dayton either way. By 1837, the canal had progressed to Piqua. By 1845 the route was open to Toledo. Until 1845, early settlers walked or drove horses or oxen on the old army road. (present day Rt. 66). This road went through swampy areas and brush was thrown on the roadway and logs were laid on top of these. The corduroy road was completed by filling the space between the logs with mud, dirt and sand.

Outside of the Black Swamp area in northeastern Ohio, the till plains of west central Ohio were the last areas of Ohio to be settled. Although the glaciated soil was very rich, it bred countless swarms of mosquitoes, black flies, turtles, snakes, and frogs. Ages ago artic ice covered this region. When it retreated, it melted leaving vast areas under water. McLean Twp. was atop the Loramie Summit, the highest point between Toledo and Cincinnati but unfortunately on a plain that had very little slope. For centuries the virgin forests, and additional rainfall had been storing humus that sometimes blocked the water from draining away in the rivers. Blocked from the rivers, it created swamps because it had nowhere else to go. The Loramie River then, was much larger than it is today because of the amount of water that still found its way into the river. Ben Raterman, grandson of J.B.H. Raterman, an early settler in this area describes a virgin forest once located on what is now the Tom Raterman farm east of Ft. Loramie. The following account was taken from the "History of the Raterman Family" by Albin and Ben Raterman.

"At the time of 1876, when my memory began to function, about 30 acres of virgin woodland remained on our farm. This was not an isolated woods. Except on the south it was surrounded by woodland. To the north it extended a full mile beyond, and several miles to the northeast, all making a continuous forest.

There was always a clearing on the farms, which means that a portion of the woods was intended to be cleared next for cultivation. The clearing provided wood for fuel, lumber, and fence rails; staves, heading bolts, and saw logs were sold. My father had, however, set aside 10 to 12 acres of the woods as a permanent woodland. No cutting had ever been done in the permanent woods. It remained as nature had made it."

Among the large trees in that 10 or 12 acres, white oaks were the most conspicuous due to their size and number. Many were from three to three and a half feet in diameter and rose upward 20, 30, or even 40 feet to the first lateral branch. Other trees were elm, ash. hickory, beech, and other varieties. Young

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trees also abounded, of all sizes from beginners to saplings of considerable size. They were tall compared with the diameter of their trunks. Lateral branches were few on these young trees. They strove upward to gain a place in the forest.

When trees were in full leaf one need not penetrate far into the woods to be swallowed up by the forest. No sky was visible in any direction except overhead through the tree tops. Here one could easily lose his direction and become lost in the woods. Due to the density of the trees no grass grew in the woods. Instead of grass, five or six inches of leaves carpeted the ground, leaves that fell last year and the year before last and the year before that. In truth one can say with Longfellow: "That is the forest primeval."

Making explorations in this woods as a boy, are cherished memories. Here lived the squirrel and flying squirrel, the raccoon, the fox, mink and weasel. The owl, the hawk, the crow, and many varieties of small birds resided here. Here too, during the heat of the day, came the cattle to find relief from pestering flies and heat. Today that woods exists in memory only. Not so much as a tree stump remains of that once magnificent forest. Instead one sees wheat fields and corn fields and meadows. These are useful, indeed, and have beauty too, but one sees the whole at a glance. The beauty of graceful and stately trees and the many variations and surprises which meet a person strolling through the woods are absent in field and meadow.

At times in winter when the wind was high and thermometers low, when working in an open field was forbidding, we could go to the woods and work in comfort. The winds might rage through the treetops violently swaying the naked branches, but down below the air stirred but gently, and working conditions were congenial."

Havighurst, in "Wilderness for Sale" states that walnut, hickory, cherry, white ash, and sugar maple indicated good earth. Swamp or pin oak warned the settler of swamp land, while locust and sycamore denoted poor soil. Tracts with pine trees were avoided because the pine resisted rotting.

Leonard Hill in his "John Johnston and the Indians" states that early pioneers using the army road from Dayton north through Piqua could stay in, and be fed at the Garrards, Blues and Felix near Troy and at John Johnstons at Piqua. Considering that Sutton lists 56 settlers in Loramie Twp. and 22 settlers in Cynthian Twp. in 1824, our ancestors should have been well cared for. In 1819 the inn keepers were joined by James Furrow at old Ft. Loramie. Since Furrow also had the post office and store he should have served our ancestors of the 1830's well.

Johnston had a log cabin, two stories high measuring 26 ft. by 36 ft. He states that "Sometimes at night the floor would be covered by blankets, cloaks, buffalo robes and such articles as travelers usually carry with them for the purpose of camping out. No one ever looked for a bed in those times. It was not unusual for twenty or thirty persons to lodge with us for the night." They would also be fed if they so desired. Of course the host could charge for the shelter and food, but no one in pioneer days was turned away from these services.

In 1830 Howe lists Cincinnati as having a population of 25,000. Dayton had 5,000 and Piqua 150. Minster and New Bremen were started in 1833. St. Marys and Wapakoneta, small villages, lay to the north and north east of McLean Twp. Greenville was to the west, and Sidney and Hardin, small hamlets, to the southeast. Grist mills were at Piqua and near St. Marys. A rutted and sometimes corduroy road from Piqua traveled through McLean (Rt. 66) to St. Marys and thence to Ft. Wayne. Endless swamp-filled dark forests with nothing but deer trails to guide one lay on the sides. Wolves howled in the woods and the swamps were filled with croaking frogs and slithering reptiles.



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# The Early Pioneers

## EARLY RECORDS ABOUT MANY SUBJECTS

McLean Twp. and Berlin as Father Bigot said had many sections of Europe represented, much more than Minster. While people from Oldenburg were in the majority at Minster and Berlin, many people from Hanover settled in McLean. Also represented in McLean were Luxemburgers such as the Nicks, Lauterburs, Humers, and Schiltz. From Alsace Lorraine came the Caritys, and Wagners. The Irish were represented by the Farleys, Hickeys, Quinlins, Walkups, Dundons, Halpins, Varnos and Costolos. From Holland came the Powells and Wises. The parents of Nick and Paul Lauterbur, also of Mrs. John Raterman and Mrs. Emil Siegel, travelled to California before settling east of Ft. Loramie. Nick and Paul Lauterbur later tried to go to Kansas but came home after discovering an emigrant wagon with the people scalped. Henry Raterman tried his luck in Wisconsin, before coming back and settling east of Ft. Loramie. Joe Hilgefort born in Maria Stein, lived in Iowa before settling in McLean. The Inmans came from S. Carolina and the Inderreidens from Kentucky. The Borchers, Arkenburgs, and Arlings had farms near Minster before settling here. The Edwards, Beavers and Roops were descendents of Revolutionary War Veterans and would have had their origin in the east. Schiltz and Pilliod came from New Berlin in northern Ohio. Christian Kirsh, the first town marshal of Ft. Loramie came from Hessia, in Germany, worked as a carpenter in Miami County before coming here. Joe Rieger was a shoemaker in New York City, Dayton and Greenville. Bernard Aselage, Sr., John Fisher, J. Smith, and Henry Sherman served in the German Army. The Menkes came from Cincinnati in 1861. John B. Rottinghouse, who is quoted as calling McLean Twp. a frog pond in 1832, settled on the reservoir land along with Joe and Henry Hoelsher. When the reservoir was being filled Joe Hoelscher had to be rescued from his cabin by boats because he did not leave in time. Joe also describes his mother wearing home spun garments, which were dyed, and sloshing in the swamp water with bare feet. Spring wagons were used to take people to church through the forests. John Short describes going to a subscription school in Berlin. This was probably the old Parochial school which was run as a subscription school. He said he obtained a practical knowledge of reading, writing and numbers. He said most of his time was spent in clearing the land, draining and tilling it. Joe Brandewie mentions how difficult it was for a German to learn to spell in English. He was a waterboy on the canal and describes his home as being five miles from the nearest neighbor. Wm. Borchers was an agent for the Wells Fargo Express. Isaac Powell helped earn his money to buy land by furnishing accommodations for fishermen at the Loramie Reservoir such as boats and tackle. He was a stone cutter by trade. John Barhorst came in 1846 from Oldenburg and started a creamery in Loramie, dealing in 5000 lbs. of butter a week. He also had Poland China registered hogs, which he sold at $25.00 apiece. He taught German at Lebanon, and was an early school examiner. W. H. Ernst was an early school teacher, who attended St. Marys Institute in Dayton. Mike Schiltz was a canal boat captain and cabinet maker and carpenter for twenty years.

Many early settlers such as the Wilkens, Dieters, Borchers, and Shermans found patches of cleared land. These had been cleared by squatters, who had no claim on the land and merely moved away when they tired of it. Vacations were also taken. Henry Eilerman in 1904 hitched up his wagon and traveled to the St. Louis World Fair, camping by the roadside. The trip took 7 days. In 1908 he went to California and in 1912 to Florida.

The preceding events were found in a study of biographies found in Suttons "History of Shelby Co", Howes "History of Ohio", "Memoirs of the Miami Valley", and Hitchcock's "History of Shelby County". The early settlers of McLean Twp., which became a township in 1833, probably had contact with Indians. The Treaty of Greenville had been signed in 1795 ending the Indian Wars. The War of 1812 had been fought ending problems with the British and their Indian friends. The Shawnees had left Wapakoneta in 1832 in a body, with the Senecas, but the Wyandots did not leave Ohio until July 1843. Fr. Bigot in his book, "Annals of St. Michael's Parish" tells of John H. Raterman having Wyandot servants. J. H. Raterman came to McLean Twp. in 1834. Raterman tradition states that Indians came back to their original hunting grounds during Indian summer, for quite a few years after J. H. settled here, and that he often saw their camp fires in the forest. These visits probably ended with the Wyandots departure in 1843.

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Baker, in his "Cabin in the Clearing" states that the early settler usually girdled the trees and planted before he built his cabin. Many of them used their ax blades to till the soil between the trees. He describes the circumference of one sycamore to be 41 feet. The building of the cabins around Ft. Loramie is described by Fr. Bigot in his book, "Annals of St. Michael's Parish". If there were no neighbors to help, it took a long time to build a cabin. In the meantime, some of our settlers like the Shermans rented buildings that were not being used in Minster; or buildings of the early American-English settlers in the vicinity. Depending on the season, they lived in covered wagons, or lean-to's built with forked sticks and a frame work covered with bark and brush. A blanket served as a door. Provisions could be had at the store run by Furrow at old Ft. Loramie, as well as lodging if needed. Later James Pilliod ran a store north of the junction of 705 and Mile Creek Rd. Provisions could also be bought from the wagon trains travelling from Cincinnati and Dayton to Ft. Wayne, using the old army road. With the coming of the first lanes through the forests, peddlers and then huckster wagons supplied their wants. The Sherman biography describes how meat could be bought from professional hunters. The German guns brought from the old country would not bring down the deer and elk, as would the American rifle; this combined with the fear of getting lost in the dense forests led many of the early settlers to depend on the early English-American hunters, such as James Flinn.

Although there were springs in the area, such as at old Ft. Loramie, most families had to dig their own wells varying in depth from 16 feet to 30. In the wait, they drank from the swamp. This water at first was fit to drink, but with the coming of more and more Germans, and the using of the forests and swamps for outdoor privies, led to severe typhoid fever epidemic during July, August and September, in 1840.

The outdoor ovens were made of clay. The hogs and cattle were usually bought from the English-Americans, and roamed the forests. Chickens were kept in cages to protect them from the fox. Wild turkey, deer and elk were plentiful. Wolves were considered dangerous and travelled in packs. With the formation of McLean Twp. in 1833, a wolf scalp brought $4.50 as a bounty and the wolf danger was gradually eliminated.

Necessary tools to build the cabins and furnishings were: the broad ax to cut the timber, the adz to trim and smooth the logs, the auger to drill the holes, the mallet to pound the wooden pegs into the auger holes, and the frow to make the shingles for the roof. Ready cash could be gotten by selling staves and hoop poles to the wagon trains that came through the area, on what is now Route 66.

By 1749 a band of English traders had already settled at Pickawillany near Lockington. Pierre Loramie came to establish his store near Ft. Loramie in 1769. Whether Loramie was a priest or common trader is debatable. The priest side of the story is adequately defended by Fr. Bigot in his book. The latest findings, by Charles F. Pepple can be found in an accompanying article.

Going through the old tax records in the attic of the Shelby Co. Courthouse I found the following tax payers in 1834, a year after McLean Twp. was founded: Ayers, Bromlage, Beusher, Mendenhall, Myers, Prillman, Wm. and Christian, Pearson, Passage, Philips, Edwards, Griffis, Hubbel, Rohenkohl, Furrow, Borgman, Baker, Deboy, Grosman, Sommer, Saurman John and Joseph, Graves, House, Lattimore, Lupecas, Loine and Line. The spellings are as they appear in the books. Just as Irish priests had trouble with German names at baptism, and vice versa, the English county officials could have misinterpreted these names. Bromlage could be Bramlage; Beuscher (Buschur), Borgman (Bergman) Deboy (Leloy) and Saurman (Surmann). In 1834 McLean Twp. had 160 acres of cleared land with a value of $170. 32 horses with a value of $1,280, 78 cows with a value of 624.00, Value of articles subject to taxation - $2,169. This amount was given a taxation of Canal Tax $4.33, County and School Tax $15.18. Total amount of taxes $19.52. In 1835 total value subject to taxation had dropped to $1,902, horses and cows had decreased and the total taxes were $18.17. Henry Sherman in his family history, mentions about these early taxes. He also states that land bought at $1.25 an acre was not taxed for the first five years. The depreciation of tax value may be due in 1835 to the same reasons that produced the starving time in Minster, with consequent help from the Quakers. Since the tax list of 1834 only includes those early pioneers, who bought their land from the American farmers, or had livestock, or purchased their Congress lands for more than $1.25 an acre, the list cannot be used as an exact indicator of the first settlers.

One of the earliest recorded marriages involving Berlin vicinity people was that of Maria Catherina Ratermann, of Alfhousen and Johann Friederich Sommer of Kappeln. It occurred in the Minster church on October 24, 1837, according to the Hoying's "Pilgrims All". Maria was the 22 year old sister of J. H. Ratermann and Johann came over with Stallo to Minster as a single person. Since the Ratermans walked to the church in Minster beginning in 1834 and Johann lived along the road, you can see how Maria persuaded Johann to exchange the bridle path for the bridal aisle.

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In the account book of my grandfather and father dating from the middle 1850s, to the late 1880s, I found the following interesting items: A receipt for the paying of taxes on June 20, 1879. For 150 acres of land valued at $2,620, a half year tax was charged of $20.82, plus .46 for a dog tax and $6.76 for personal property valued at $850. Total of $28.04 or $56.08 a year.

In 1881 my grandfather died. His widow paid the following bills: Appraisal $3.00, Probate $9.72, Coffin $25.00, digging a grave $1.75, Tombstone $37.00. At the sale of personal property following the funeral the following prices were received: Bay horse $50.00, two horse wagon $15.00, Spring wagon $18.00, two sets of harness $25.00, six head of hogs $30.00, drill $35.00, reaper $15.00, Hay rake $13.00, spotted cow $20.00, brown and white cow $15.00 each, heifer $25.00, calves $90.00, chickens $3.00, geese $2.00, six acres of wheat $48.00. These and other items brought my grandmother $494.00.

Another section of this account book had some do-it-yourself directions and home remedies: Tempering a drill; heat to a cherry red and then drive into a piece of lead. Coppering solution; dissolve an ounce of sulphate of copper or blue vitriol in about four ounces of water. Pour into this a teaspoonful of nitric acid, place this mixture upon the place to be coppered. Then allow to touch the brass.

For Hog Cholera: gather equal amounts of blackberry, sassafras, and wild horse radish roots. Pour into this mixture one pint of linseed oil, one peck of potatoes, one hand full of garlic, one half pack of charcoal, one spoonful of sulfur, one spoonful of tallow, and one spoonful of lard. Stir mixture until slightly damp.

Small doses of arsenic given to horses make their coat bright and sleek. Belladonna gives a spirited glare to a horse's dead eye. To hide the age of the horse pull out the white hairs. To make a horse follow you give him an apple on which you have rubbed a little castor oil.

For Croup: make a lard and salt paste. Add a sprinkling of mustard or yellow snuff. Apply to throat and chest. For a severe cold: a teacupful of strained honey, one half teacupful of olive oil and the juice of one lemon. Cook together and take one teaspoonful every two hours.

## EARLY PIONEERS

One of the early American land holders in this area was Daniel Flinn. He was the son of James Flinn, who was a follower of the army, a pioneer, Indian hunter, and an officer of the spies during the war of 1812. After the American Revolution he settled at Upper Piqua in the old fort, that once stood there, and where the Johnston farm now is. He operated an inn and sold food and shelter to travelers. Even though he could have filed a claim to his land, he never did so. In Leonard Hill's "John Johnston and the Indians" Johnston is quoted in a letter written in October of 1838: "At the conclusion of the war of 1812, Flinn settled at Ft. Loramie, where he died several years later. "Since there was no Ft. Loramie in 1838 except the fort, that would have placed James Flinn here in 1813 or 1814. Apparently he did the same as he did in Piqua. He did not file claim to the land until 1822. Two copies of deeds for two half quarter sections of land from the U. S. Government to James Flinn, were recently found by Ferd Fleckenstein, the present owner. They were given to Flinn in the administration of James Monroe. Shelby Co. was founded in 1819. In the first book of recordings found in the recorder's office, I found this item: "Will of James Flinn" Dated April 24, 1823. He gave "two half quarter sections, where on we now live. All the horned cattle, horses, hogs and sheep to my beloved wife Mary Flinn." He also left three quarter sections, and other land in Illinois to Daniel C. James, and George H. Flinn, who were his sons. The will was witnessed by William Gibson and Alexander Miller.

In 1824 Mary Flinn, his widow, is listed by Suttons under Cynthian Twp., since McLean Twp. was not yet created. She at that time owned 4 horses and one cow in addition to her land. James Flinn was entitled to quite a few acres of land because of his participation in the Revolutionary (100 acres) and Indian wars (400 acres), so the likelihood is that his land holdings did not cost him any cash.

In 1819 James Furrow purchased the old fort from the government and operated a store, inn, and post office. Probably Flinn at that time moved out of the old fort and built a cabin, or lived in one of the seven cabins associated with the old fort. Mary Flinn remarried a short time after her husband's death. In 1833 and 1834 according to "Pilgrims All" by the Hoyings, Daniel Flinn sold 546 acres in Section 10 and 11 in McLean Twp. to James G. Furrow, the son of the James Furrow, who purchased the old fort. Although Mr. Fleckenstein states that he has been told there were two other wooden markers on the old Furrow cemetery plot on his farm, there is no definite grave site for either James Flinn or James Furrow. Until the actual grave sites are found we will have to conclude that they are buried in the old Pioneer cemetery, north of present day Ft. Loramie, where there were many more burials than markers, that could be found. According to Mr. Fleckenstein, this cemetery was ruined by the 1913 flood and afterwards by the pasturing of cattle on the plot.

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Alexander Miller is listed as having land north of the old canal feeder in 1846. Since he witnessed the will of James Flinn in 1823, he would have to be considered an old pioneer.

## MORE EARLY PIONEERS

Hezekia Hubble, is listed in Sutons as having a deed to his land before Shelby County was formed. He also collected a wolf bounty in 1819. In 1834 voters in McLean Twp. met at his home to vote for township officers. His land was east of the canal, near the present Fleckenstein farm. He was the second husband of Mary Flinn. In searching through records I found that he was township clerk in Turtle Creek Twp. in 1821. He settled in McLean Twp. sometime after that date. Christian Prillman came here in 1833. James Pilliod came in 1836, the Mendenhalls came into this territory in 1822, although not in McLean. The Haus brothers were here in 1824.

English names such as Dan, Wickman, Waller, Woodruff, Day, Wakeman, Wright, Varuke, Passage, Johnston, Rolves, and Williams are listed in the recorders office as selling to German sounding names. The historian, Howe, accuses our forefathers of a concerted effort to buy out the English to make McLean Twp. into a little Germany. They did buy land from many of the English settlers, but not for the reason given by Howe. The government and canal lands became exhausted and only English land was left. Our pioneer forefathers were not well educated, and knew only German. It was natural for them to want to settle, where their customs, and language was understood. The first generation of Germans died, speaking only pigeon English. The second generation, according to Fr. Bigot, spoke fluent German and English. The third generation also spoke two languages. With the coming of World War I, German was discontinued in the schools and used in many homes to keep the kids from knowing what the parents were talking about. As a fourth generation German American, I can truthfully say that never in my lifetime did I ever hear anyone of the older generations, ever express any desire to go back to Germany or wish for any thing that they had there. The west side of Ft. Loramie, and Minster, kept the German language through the fourth generation. We Ft. Loramie boys and girls found this out when we attended high school, in Minster during the early nineteen twenties. You can imagine our surprise, when our Minster classmates spoke in German for the same reason our parents did when we were much smaller.

The name of Weisbrodt, or Whitebread, supposedly the first German in the area, is not listed in the recorder's office. If he came in 1830 his name should have appeared on the tax register of 1835. It does not appear. On the tax map of 1846, of McLean Twp. his name is shown where the former Adam Daniel farm was located. He, like James Flinn, were probably squatters for a number of years.

The recorder's office shows the name of Fred Watercutter as a resident in 1830. Other early German names were Bramlage, Hoying, Busher and Bergman.

James Pilliod accumulated 400 acres in McLean Twp., and a total of several thousand acres in Shelby, Auglaize and Mercer Counties. William Sherman and J. H. Rottinghouse accumulated much land.

To buy their land the early settlers often combined in purchasing the land. J. H. Raterman and Philip Kneufner did this. Bernard Brandewis and three sons bought 160 acres. Richard Short and six sons bought 80 acres. Many worked for a while before buying: Henry Gudenkauf was a blacksmith. Bernard Aselage and John Grisez were carpenters. Joe Hilgefort a painter, and saloon keeper. John Holthous a tile maker. Joe Dress worked in Kansas as a farm hand for two years before purchasing his land in Ohio. Others rented land before purchasing.

## BUYING LAND

From data taken from "A Short History of Land Grants" by James Rhodes the Land Act of 1785 provided that the western lands were to be divided into townships six miles square and containing 640 acres. These sections were the smallest amount that could be purchased. Each acre cost one dollar. Very few settlers had $640 and so squatters became more prevalent than settlers. In 1820 the land act was changed. The cost of the land was changed to $1.25 an acre, but each section of land in the township was divided into four equal parts called the northeast quarter, southeast quarter, and so on. These quarters were further divided by a north and south line into an east and west half quarter section, containing 80 acres each. Outside of Section 16, reserved for educational purposes, lands could now be purchased in sections, fractions of sections such as halves, quarters, or half quarters. The school lands of Section 16 were under the control of trustees appointed by the county and they could sell or lease this school land for 99 years. The proceeds were to go for educational needs of the township.

The first of these Congress Lands, as they were called, were available in Shelby Co. in 1798, and included all lands west and north of the Great Miami River and south of the Greenville Treaty Line. In 1802 all the land in Shelby Co. east of the Great Miami and south of Greenville Treaty Line could be purchased. In 1819 the land north of the Greenville

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Treaty Line was for sale. The six miles square reservation given to the Indians by a former treaty, which included old Ft. Loramie and parts of new Ft. Loramie was given back to the United States and included in this sale. The State of Ohio was divided into districts, and Shelby Co. was part of the Chillicothe district. These districts in turn had land offices near the salable land. "Pilgrims All" by Louis, Rita and David Hoying states "The Piqua Land Office, or more precisely, the Piqua District Office of the Northwest Ohio Land Office was moved from Piqua to St. Marys, Ohio, February 23, 1833. On April 11, 1833, the office was moved to Wapakoneta. Later moves were to Lima, Bucyrus, and Upper Sandusky in that order." Of course, as Chris Boerger found, you could also go to Chillicothe.

In 1828 the Ohio Canal Lands were given to Ohio to aid in the construction of the canals. This grant was for 1,230,521 plus 95/100 acres lying near or by the canals of Ohio. Their sale was to conform to the Land Act of 1820. By the 1830's many early landholders were ready to sell their lands to the German settlers.

**EARLY BERLIN**

The Greenville Treaty Line ending the Indian Wars, and opening the Ft. Loramie area to settlement was established in 1795 by General Wayne. This line became the southern boundary of old Berlin, as it was called. From the east it came into Berlin, on what is now the Swanders-Loramie Rd. to the junction of present day Middle and Elm Streets, thence southwest to Main Street at the old Willman Store building. From here westward it followed present day 705 to the junction of the Loramie and Mile Creek, forming a jog in the line. From this junction the Treaty Line continues on 705 past the Walkup cemetery and school on its way to Ft. Recovery. Old Ft. Loramie and Loramie's Store were at one time marked as being on this line. This error was later corrected.

When the canal reached Piqua in 1837, and its continued northern course certain, an influx of German workers was expected. To capitalize on the sale of lots to these future customers, and to provide a marketing center for the surrounding farmers, the town of Berlin was formed. Fr. Bigot gives James Pilliod and Chas. Schilz, who came from New Berlin, in Stark Co., the credit for naming the town. William Prillman was a business man, and no doubt, the name Berlin was selected because of its impact on incoming northern Germans. After all, Berlin, was competing for sale of lots with Muenster and New Bremen.

In the tax records of 1837 I found in the attic of the Shelby Co. Courthouse, appears the name of William Prillman, with four parcels of land for taxation. The parcels were for 71, 76, 62 and 110 acres with a corresponding valuation of $89., $95., $69. and $50. (No explanation for the $50.) On the 71 acre parcel there was a notation "Deduct 64- 1/2 acres for the town of Berlin. "Courthouse records show that Berlin was surveyed December 2, 1837, by Jonathan Counts, for William Prillman, proprietor. The accompanying map of Berlin shows an original 43 inlots and 15 outlots, all located with the Greenville Treaty Line to the south and the Loramie Creek to the west. The Pioneer Cemetery consisting of .51 acres was Outlot #1 and marked the northern boundary. All lots were to be four by eight rods, except fractional lots. The canal was staked, but not dug. Main Street was to be eleven rods wide on the east side of the canal, and follow the old army road. High, Water, and Walnut streets on the west side of the canal, and Elm Street on the east side were four rods wide. Alleys were one rod wide. This survey was brought to the recorders office, by Prillman, on December 5th, and recorded on December 29, 1937, by Hugh Thompson, the Judge of the Common Pleas Court. Although the post office was not changed to Berlin, the name appears both on the Recorders and Treasury offices at Sidney, and appears as a separate taxing district.

The first lots sold are recorded on February 10, 1838 to Lucas Myers. They were In-lots 14-19 and Out-lot 10. Most of the lots were bought for speculation and not for building sites. James Pilliod, who made a fortune in the East used his cash to buy lots 1, 4, 15, 16, 18, 20, 39, 41 and 42. He then immediately sold six of these lots to other people. After researching old records, both in the Recorders Office and taxation records found in the Court House Attic, the following are the original buyers of the first lots sold in Berlin. If two names appear on the list; the first is the original buyer and the second name the person to whom it was immediately turned over. The second name paid the tax that appears on Berlin's first tax list.

Inlots - 1 James Pilliod, 2 Ishmael Lattimore, 3 J. H. Weighmnan, 4 J. Pilliod (David Short), 5 J. Pilliod (Isaac Short), 6 J. Siell (Ignatz Schell), 7 Agnes Berkus, 8 Laurie Berkus, 9 Wm. Prillman, 10 L. Myers (Fred Rottinghous) 11 Fred Rottinghous, 12 J. H. Weighman, 13 J. H. Weighman, 14 Lucas Myers, 15 J. Pilliod (Wm. Riley), 16 J. Pilliod (Jonas Jones), 17 J. Mohr (Fred Mesman) 18 James Pilliod, 19 Lucus Myers, 20 Adam Dope, 21 Christian Hoffman, 22 B. Mendenhall & J. House, 23 Francis Bartels, 24 F. Booing-F. Mesman, 25 B. Mendenhall, 26 J. H. Gosman, 27 J. H. Gosman, 28 Francis Bartels, 29 Francis Bartels, 30 Francis Bartels, 31 Francis Bartels, 32 WM Prillman, 33 John Eich, 34 Christian Hoffman, 35 Valentine Barnhart, 36 Ruhtire (Hy. Franke), 37 J.

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Mendenhall, 38 Wm. Ayers, 39 J. Pilliod, 40 I. Mendenhall, 41 J. Pilliod, 42 J. Pilliod (Wm. Riley), 43 Ron Francis.

Outlots - 1 Pioneer Cemetery, 2 Cline & F. Long, 3 Cline & F. Long, 4 Cline & F. Long, 5 Cline & F. Long, 6 B. Feltman, 7 J. H. Gosman, 8 Francis Bartels, 9 B. Mendenhall & House, 10 Lucus Myers, 11 Wm. Prillman, 12 Wm. Prillman S. Part and J. H. Weighman N. Part, 13 R. Mendenhall, 14 J Siell (W. Prillman), 15 Ishmael Lattimore.

This list is further changed with notations on the register: Lot 23 Transfer to J. Ligman & E. Albers; Lots 28, 29 and 31 to Charles Schlitz; Lots 2 and 3 to J. Pilliod; Outlot 8 to Ligman & Albers; Lot 24 to F. Booing; Outlot 7 to Pilliod to J. Mendenhall; Outlet 12 N. Part to Roman Catholic Church.

The name Francis Bartels would seem to be a Minster priest, who the Hoyings in "Pilgrims All" describe as being at Minster from September 21, 1836, until late 1838 and died in New Orleans on August 25, 1839.

In early 1839 a list of delinquent taxes appeared. On Dec. 30, 1839 the following lots were sold at public auction by Wm Murphy, Co. Auditor, to pay for delinquent taxes, Lots # 7, 8, 30, 35, 24, 32 and Outlots # 11, 12 and 32. Saved from the sale because of previous sales were lots 23, 20, 17, 99, 14, 15, 42, and Outlots 8 and 14. William Prillman had sold his farms and departed these parts leaving his three lots to be sold for delinquent taxes. I found no mention of his brother Christian Prillman in any of the records of Berlin. Since Fr. Bigot states that Christian Prillman owned land on the east side of the Loramie Creek and north of the Indian Treaty Line he probably owned the J. Ronnebaum farm, directly north of old Berlin. He is buried in the old Pioneer Cemetery and in the Adams and Mosely "Memorial Records of Shelby Co." his tombstone reads died Dec. 21, 1840 in the 68th year of his age.

Through the courtesy of Rita Hoying of Minster we have the 1846 list of owners of lots in Berlin, eight years after the first list of names. James Pilliod, who in 1838 had four unsold lots, now owns 12 lots and two outlots. Richard, is the only Mendenhall brother remaining of the four, who bought the early lots. The name of Prillman, is gone from the list, and 38 lots have changed hands.

The 1846 List: Lot 1 James Pilliod, 2 James Pilliod, 3 James Pilliod, 4 James Pilliod, 5 Isaac Short, 6 Ignacious Schell, 7 Herman Dressman, 8 Herman Dressman, 9 James Pilliod, 10 Herman Dressman, 11 Herman Dressman, 12 Herman Dressman, 13 Nicolas Langley, 14 Lucus Myers, 15 James Pilliod, 16 James Pilliod, 17 James Pilliod, 18 James Pilliod, 19 Wm. Bodkin, 20 Wm. Bodkin, 21 Fidel Kolsner, 22 Nicholas Bernard, 23 C. H. Dickman, 24 Henry Franke, 25 Isaac Mann, 26 J. H. Gosman, 27 J. H. Gosman, 28 John Chaney, 29 Charles Schlitz, 30 Christian Henry Heirs, 31 Kunnagrunde Lump, 32 Bernard Meyer, 33 Wm. Edwards, 34 Peter Hummer, 35 Peter Hummer, 36 Henry Franke, 37 David Short, 38 Bernard Meyer, 39 James Pilliod, 40 Charles Pearson, 41 James Pilliod, 42 James Pilliod, 43 Ron Francis.

Outlots # 1 Pioneer Cemetery, 2 Francis Long, 3 Francis Long, 4 Francis Long, 5 Francis Long, 6 James Pilliod, 7 James Pilliod, 8 C. H. Dickman, 9 Nicholas Bernard, 10 Lucus Myers, 11 Lucus Myers, 12 J. H. Raterman-S. Part, 13 Richard Mendenhall, 14 Ignatious Schell, 15 Ismael Lattimore.

Frank Willman told me that lots in old Berlin brought $300.00. In Sidney at the founding of the city, the first lot was sold for $70.00. This was in 1820. A few years later, and before the founding of Berlin, regular lots in Sidney were bringing $100.00 and better located lots $125.00, according to Sutton. McLean Twp. taxes at the time of the founding of Berlin were divided as follows: State 1-1/2 mills; Canal 1/2 mill; County 6 mills; School 1 mill; Twp. 0; Total 9 mills. The total tax paid by the James Flinn Heirs in 1834 on 160 acres of ground was $15.30 with $3.40 going to the State and Canal and $11.90 for County and School on the land valued at $170.00. Other tax records show that McLean Twp. in 1838, which would include the first tax paid by Berlin owners, totaled $4,723 with $1,144 going to the state and canal; $2,860 for County and School and $7.19 for Road Tax. Since in 1835 the total taxes paid were $18.17 the big addition of taxes would have come from an increase of rates, more land becoming taxable, more settlers and the town of Berlin.

When Berlin was laid out in 1837, James Pilliod owned all the land east of the Miami Canal, and west of a line straight south from the present Leo Drees residence to the Greenback Rd. It was bounded to the north by the Greenville Treaty Line. East of the Pilliod Line was the farm of J. H. Raterman bordered by the Treaty Line to the north, by the Greenback Rd. to the south, and east by the quarter section line approximately straight south to 705. This line would have started somewhere near the eastern end of the ball diamond. Philipp Kneufner owned the land east of Ratermans, which also ended on the present 705.

The next addition to Berlin Village was the South Addition which began at the junction of Main St. and the present day Park St. It included its own numbering system and included all the land from the Miami Canal to S. Main St. from near the present bank, on the west side only, and then on both sides to South Lane Street.

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The Pilliod Second Addition began at South Lane St. and resumed the first numbering system, by starting at lot 44 and ending with 78 at Greenback Rd. or Center Street as it was then called. The third Pilliod Addition included lots 79 to 85 which included Willman's store east to Raterman's land. The last of the Pilliod's Additions included the old hotel land, and lots 85 to 98. The first Raterman Addition included lots 98 to 115. This addition started at Church St. and included all the lots between Elm and Farmers Pike to the east stopping at the Quarter Section Line. The second Raterman Addition included lots 115 and 116 which lay west of his home which was located at 40 E. Park St. He had donated to the Berlin School District two acres of the land west of these lots. The school board chose to build on the also donated Bernard Pille property so the J. H. Raterman land was sold by the school board to Joseph Sextro. The last Raterman addition was lots 117 to 121 and lay along the west side of the Farmers Pike. When J. H. Raterman died in 1873, this farm passed on to Joseph Raterman. He in turn to J. H. Rottinghaus-to Joe Gaier-to Albert Romie, who opened the farm to lots to the Greenback Road.

In the biography of Anthony Raterman he states that his grandfather, J. H. Raterman told his father, Ferdinand, that when he came to McLean Twp. in 1834, there was only one cabin in the original Berlin. Since Wm. Prillman owned all land west of the Miami Canal, and Christian Prillman did not appear as a seller in county records, the residence of Wm. Prillman, referred to in the History of Ft. Loramie, by Henry B. Sherman, as being on the ground, the Stephen Kirner residence now stands, was probably the one referred to by J. H. The first brick house, a small one-story residence, was built by Dr. Ayers, the first resident physician, on this same ground. Later on Bernard Meyer had his store at the same location. Ishmael Lattimore erected the first building, after the town had been laid out near, or on the ground of the late Aloys Ernst property. Dr. W. H. Hopkins or Hamer, early Ft. Loramie doctors, probably erected the building to the west of Lattimores. At one time when Ft. Loramie had its quota filled, as to the number of saloons it could have, the town council and McLean trustees cooperated to remove the building from Ft. Loramie and into the township, where the quota was not filled. The new saloon keeper was Henry (Boy) Brucken. Vol. VII of the Archeological and Historical Society of Ohio gives this further information, "Joseph Mendenhall, who was afterwards a county commissioner, kept a tavern in a log house, where the John Gaier's bakery stands. The old log house was torn down in 1892 to make rooom for Gaier's new home. The first frame house in Berlin, was built as an addition to this tavern, by Mr. Mendenhall." For further information about the early businesses in Berlin read the accompanying story by Henry B. Sherman Sr., who came here in 1835. A portrait of the life in old Berlin is ably portrayed by Frank Willman in another story contained in this book.

## EARLY FARMS

Originally the first land office for the Miami Valley was in Hamilton Co. in Cincinnati. Later it was moved to Dayton in Montgomery County. In 1807 it was moved to Troy. Later this office was at Piqua. Today the original records are at Troy. Shelby Co. was detached from Miami Co. in 1819, and given the care of parts of Auglaize and Allen Co. Since most of our ancestors were not here until the 1830's, most of their deeds are in the Recorders office in Sidney. If not, Troy should provide the rest. In 1830 the population of Shelby Co. was 3,671. In 1840 it was 12,153. By 1880 it was 24,407. McLean Twp. in 1870 had 1,309. In 1880 it was 1,545. Berlin in 1880 had a population of 388. The number of Germans in Shelby Co. was listed at 1,272. (Statistics from Sutton's History of Shelby Co.)

Since 1833 marked the beginning of McLean Twp. you will find other records of McLean in Cynthian and Loramie Twp. since both of these at one time included McLean.

In the period between 1830 and extending into the 1870's the order of the day was girdle the tree, let it die and topple down. If it did not topple, cut it down and dig out the stumps, My mother described how this was done. Her brothers dug around the stumps. They then got into the hole and shoved while she and her sisters guided the oxen which had a rope they were pulling attached to the stump. Large families were a prized possession as they were all put to work with hoes, mattocks and scythes. When more land was cleared, corn, oats, rye, barley, flax, tobacco, winter wheat, or buckwheat was planted. As the clearing grew larger the mattocks were put aside and a plow was purchased. This was then drawn by the oxen or horses of the owner. A garden was planted which produced potatoes, pumpkins, pole beans, peas, onions, cabbage and turnips. Root cellars kept vegetables during the winter. Milk cows, oxen, calves, hogs, chickens, ducks, and geese were usually found after a decade or two on most farms. The animals which were first left to roam the woods were fenced in with rail fences. Extra buildings were reared for other farm purposes. Soon peddlers sold the farmers fruit trees, and orchards were developed. With the orchards came the beehives to produce a source of sugar, and vinegar from the apple cider, soap was also made.

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## DISEASE

Death was common in early childhood. Dr. Ayers was the first doctor in the area. He rode horseback on the trails to visit the sick. His income for 1839 was listed by Sutton to be $480.00. Diseases treated were croup, ague, dysentry, jaundice, small pox, diptheria, typhoid, cholera, scrofula, rickets, scurvy, dropsy, apoplexy and gall disease. Cancer and consumption at that time were practically unknown.

Goosegrease, herbs and roots were used as treatments as well as bleedings. Sulphur was burned on stoves to kill germs, and asafetida bags circled necks to keep away epidemic diseases. German settlers, such as Bernard Pille, who donated the ground the Ft. Loramie Elementary school stands on, walked to Piqua every day to work on the canal and then home again. In the meantime his wife did the farm work. The pioneer woman did not thrive too well. The constant work, and child bearing took its toll. In a study of 62 biographies of early pioneers of the Ft. Loramie community I found that there were 19 widowers. Seventeen of these remarried and two died single. This is an average of 30%. Several married three times.

While all of the older doctors of the 1800's received their training by apprenticeship, Dr. Lester Pepper who practiced in Ft. Loramie in the early 1900's was a graduate of Conover High School, who began his study of medicine under the apprenticeship of Dr. Parent, of Lockington and then graduuated from a four year course given at Starlin Medical College in Columbus, Joseph Quatman Sr. was the first veterinarian, but leaves no indication of his education. Nicholas Raterman, 1910 to 1938, another Ft. Loramie veterinarian, was a graduate of the University of Cincinnati.

## POSTAGE

A book on early postoffices found in the Sidney Library lists the date of April 12th, 1838, as the date Furrow was given the postmastership at old Ft. Loramie. Letters usually were one sheet of paper folded. Two sheets were charged double postage. Since the receiver paid the postage, the postage was marked on the outside of the letter and was collected by the postman. Charges were: .06-1/4 cents for 50 miles or less; .12-1/2 for 50 to 150 miles; .18-3/4 for up to 300 miles and .25 cents for any part of the United States. No rates were given to foreign countries.

## DITCHES

In the 1860's according to record books of McLean Twp. the ground was sufficiently clear to dig the ditches that would drain the swamps.

Among the early ditches mentioned were the Raterman, Brucken, Sherman, Vondrelle, and Daniel. The Vondrelle Ditch was 18 inches wide at the bottom with a 45 degree slope; the Brucken 2-1/2 ft. bottom and 45 degree slope; the Sherman ditch 4 ft. wide. On November 1, 1869 ditches were made uniform at 4 ft. wide at the bottom and each side having an angle of 29-1/2 degrees. The Raterman ditch was the one that used to flow through what is now Ft. Loramie ball diamond and north of the old school. The old ditch provided we students of the early 1900's a lot of pleasure. We vied with one another in jumping the ditch, using it as a boundary line for opposing snow ball fights, and in the spring serving as a source of clay to put on willow sticks to see who could throw the clay the farthest. It also acted as a neutral zone, when playing tag. When being pursued, you could jump the ditch and escape the tag. There were many ditches in McLean Twp., all of them wending their way to the Loramie Reservoir or Loramie or One mile creeks.

## TILES

Along with the ditches came the tiles that would drain the stump infested swampy land. The poisonous swamp water bred countless mosquitoes, and created a serious typhoid fever and malaria environment. It kept the farmer from using the rich soil underneath. McLean Twp., had the clay, and soon had the tile mills to make the tiles. Among the early tile makers were: Waglers' brick and tile and Adam Daniel. Three predecessors at Gregor Fleckenstein location: Klinehens and Vocke; J. H. Holthous, Lehman and Moller; Ferdinand Raterman, three and a half miles east of Berlin. The latter mill went into business in the late 1850's and continued in operation until 1893 when it was sold to an Indiana man, by the then owner, John B. Raterman. The owner had the sale recorded and the mortgage papers signed, in the presence of the Justice of Peace. As a result we have in the McLean Twp. record book the following description: One tile mill. Manufactured by the New Bremen Machine Drain Tile Co. Tile dies: #2 1/2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-12 inch. One Richmond 10 H.P. portable engine and belting. One circle cross cut saw and mandrel with table. 500 drying shells. One brick dry, and table. Two cut off tables for tile. Two trucks. Sold for $318.00.

In the early 1900's, I as a small lad, remember in times of high water the ditches running out of Ft. Loramie, were covered with green slime from flood waters flowing through privies. With modern sanitation, this last source of contamination of water was conquered and the area and the health of the community vastly improved. Many of the ditches were closed in, with the advent of large tiles and the area took on the present day look.

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### SAWMILLS

Until 1841 the homes of the pioneers were made of logs. That year marked the coming of the canal boat, which could transport the wood to make frame houses. This was also the year that Isaac Mann started the first sawmill about, or on the spot, where the Loramie Banking Co. now stands. He also build a large warehouse just north of Ernst Filling Station along the canal. This frame warehouse was soon purchased by John Willman and Gast.

The Steuve sawmill at Minster was started the next year in 1842. According to early editions of the Minster Post, Conrad Brucken, and later Tony Brucken operated a sawmill at the bulkhead of the Loramie Reservoir, as well as a saloon. They cut virgin timber within a 2-1/2 mile radius and supplied the ice houses with sawdust. In 1878 a cord of wood could be bought for $2.70. Eighteen hickory butts were listed at $4.60. August Wise, Sr. in 1881, started a sawmill north of Ft. Loramie. In 1892 he relocated the mill to where the bank now stands. August Wise Jr. during World War I made bending plank for rims, for the St.Marys Wheel & Spoke Co. This concern made artillery wheels for the United States government. As a boy, I remember the delivery of the cord wood and butts, every fall for our winter heating and cooking. It meant carrying the wood into the wood shed, splitting the butts, and later filling the wood box by the stove. With the coming of coal by railroad, and the advent of gas, this era ended.

### GRAIN MILLS

Since the first milling company did not come to Berlin before 1858, when it was built by Bernard Meyer and the Reddy brothers, the early settlers had nearly a quarter of a century to transport their grain to other markets. The wagon trains that travelled in groups of five or six wagons so that they could help each other go through the swamps, would buy the grain, but if they wanted it milled into flour they could take it to Piqua, which had a grist mill around the turn of the century. There were no roads to Sidney, which Sutton said had their first mill in 1853. The Quakers had built a grist mill for the Shawnee Indians around 1812 between St. Marys and Wapakoneta, so this also would have been available. Horses and wagons could be used, but the same trouble with swamps that the teamsters had would have been encountered. The common method when your family needed flour was to take a sack of grain, take off a day, and walk to Piqua or St. Marys following the old army road. When you returned you were carrying a sack of flour.

### ROADS

The growing demand for markets for farm products and for convenience led to an explosion of road building in the 1880's. During this decade the Niederkorn Pike, Borchers, Sextro, Eilerman, Bender, Bruns, Turtle Creek-McLean, Holthouse, Hilgefort, Schulze, Van Buren-McLean, Liesner, and Roman roads were built according to township records.

The first step was to file a petition to be taken to the township trustees. The Broering road carried the claim that it was necessary for the convenience of themselves, neighbors, and travelling public. The trustees would summon all those interested or affected by the road to a meeting. In this instance the road was defeated by a vote of 11 yesses and 23 no votes. In case of an assent vote the trustees would arrange to have the route of the road surveyed. The roads were either 33 or 40 feet in width. The cost of these roads were figured at $4,000 a mile. The county paid 50% of the cost; the township 25% and the petitioners 25%. The surveying was done by the county surveyor, 2 chain carriers and four disinterested viewers. This could vary however as township record books show in one case; Head axman or blazer - Kirner, Rodman-Kirsh, County Engineer-William Sherman, Chain man- Philip Raterman, Viewers-Kneufner and Pille. For the job they were paid: Kirner and Kirsh $1.00 each; Sherman $13.00; Kneufner $8.15; Pille $9.75, and Raterman $13.05. W. J. Sherman was county engineer from 1853 to 1865, and Philip Raterman from 1883 to 1889. Both of these men were active in laying out lots in old Berlin. In building these roads compensation for the land was figured, fence was removed, or included in the compensation for the owner to remove. This led to many lawsuits against owners who had not removed their fence. Other suits were brought because of intersecting land claims. When the trees had been cleared, and the fences removed, gravel was put on, or it was left a mud road. Each township paid half the cost of the Turtle Creek- McLean road. The Van Buren-McLean road was paid for by the mile according to the need of each township. The last step was to figure the gross amount plus the accrued interest and have the township clerk advertise for bids.

### THE CANAL

The Miami and Erie Canal reached Ft. Loramie in 1841. It ended the wagon trains and changed Shelby County from an all English county to a 50% German-French county. It caused wheat to go from 25 cents to $1.00 a bushel; corn from 12-1/2 cents to 35 cents a bushel; oats from 14 cents to 32 cents a bushel; pork from 6 cents to 20 cents a pound; eggs from 6 cents to 15 cents a dozen; potatoes from 18-3/4 cents to 40 cents a bushel, and butter from 6 cents to 25 cents a pound.

In 1845 the canal reached Lake Erie. Up until 1877, the canal made money, with the peak year being 1851 when 400 canal boats were using the canal,

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with three going through Berlin each day. The cargo boats carried merchandise and the packet boats carried people and mail. In 1875 a packet boat carried mail from Sidney to Minster. A boat was pulled by one to four mules according to how much speed was needed. The 1913 flood caused the aqueduct carrying the canal over the Loramie Creek to collapse. This added to the previous collapse of the Lockington aqueduct finished the canal's usefulness. By this time the railroad had reached Shelby County and one freight car could carry as much as a canal boat.

In 1927 two dams were constructed; one north and one south of Ft. Loramie. Wagler's flowing well furnished the water to fill the canal. Everyone held their breath in 1928, when a legislative proposal was made to use the old canal for a super highway. In 1945, the Ohio Department of Public Works offered to give Ft. Loramie the sum of $13,000 to fill the canal. The offer was accepted. To gain more information about the canal read the accompanying articles by Frank Willman, and the other article about the canal.

## CINCINNATI INFLUENCE

Berlin was booming and a Cincinnati family was quick to do something about it. The Terhalle-Ronnebaum family sent John Willman to establish a store and trade groceries for raw materials. At that time cash was almost non-existent and everything was done on the barter system. The present-day Ed Poeppelman farm was purchased by Ronnebaum to be used to raise products to be sent to Cincinnnati. The warehouse just north of town was purchased to be a packing place for pork. Later Ignatz Thedieck was sent to Berlin, to train for his later role in Sidney. During his stay here he shipped thousands of pounds of pork, clover seed, flour, lard and kerosene to his father who ran a store in Alfhausen, Germany.

The first official records of Berlin that would have been written in McLean Township records are missing, as well as the first fifty years of the town of Ft. Loramie. The only officers mentioned can be found in Suttons for the year 1850. Elected for that year were trustees, Henry Wehrman, Joseph Sherman, Philip Hoffman, Clerk, Henry Sherman, Treasurer, H. H. Dressman.

## POLITICS

Our ancestors had no political leanings in Germany as they had no political rights. When they came to McLean they took to politics as a duck takes to water. No doubt that the preference for the Democratic party came because of the Presidents who were at that position when our ancestors came. Jackson, who was president from 1829 to 1837 was a Democrat as well as his successor, Van Buren. Both men believed and supported cheap land for the western states, such as Ohio. Between the earliest elections participated in by our forefathers to 1928, the highest number of Republican votes cast was 28 compared to over 200 votes for Democrats for president. That, with beer or liquor, controlled the results. In the first election to decide whether a township should be dry or wet in 1851, the vote in McLean was wet-119 dry-5. When Al Smith, a Democrat and a wet suffered defeat in Shelby County, my father who was Judge of Elections, when informed of the results, told me that the 1928 elections would be the last time that Ft. Loramie would be safely Democratic. In the early days saloon keepers had a tremendous power in politics, and were usually political bosses in their area, who could deliver the Democratic votes. Their activities gave McLean Township early rewards in county and state offices such as County Surveyor-W. J. Sherman and Philip Raterman; Recorder-James Wells; Sheriff-Joseph Raterman; Commissioners- Joseph Mendenhall, Isaac Short, H. H. Dressman, John Walkup, B. J. Wuebker, State Senator Rankin Walkup and John L. Winner. Elections were exciting in my youth. There was no radio or television. The candidates came to Bruckens Hall or the canal bank and attracted crowds. The big political parades had lighted pine knots and decorated house windows with coal oil lights. There was ringing of fire bells, as well as church bells, bands, and the raising of the flagpoles with the winning candidates on top. Fourth of July always brought the political candidates or some prominent officeholder, who blasted away for hours about patriotism, God, and country. Then, after it was all over, I got to spend the $1.00 always given to me by my father on the Fourth, at the celebration.

## SALOONS

In looking through early news events I found this amusing account of early attempts to close the Ft. Loramie saloons on Sunday because of a state law. The Berlin correspondent reported in the Democrat that on the first Sunday of the law, one saloon had closed and two had not. On the second Sunday he reported that the saloon keepers had locked the front door, but were letting people in the saloon by way of the back door. The third week brought a reply from Mrs. Vondrelle to the effect that who she left in the back door was her business and none of the correspondent's. She could entertain her guests any way she wanted as the back door was her private home. No other writings appear about this affair.

The Vondrelle Hotel was built in 1869 and had a beer garden to the east. It was a popular spot and often the Berlin band conducted a wedding party

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from the church to the hotel for the wedding celebration. In 1878 John French leased the hotel. Later it became Eilermans and in 1890 Henry Tecklenberg took charge. Later it was Benders, then Segers and probably had other owners not mentioned.

## EARLY CARE OF STREETS

Frank Willman tells what a delight it was to go through the dust on the streets of Berlin with his bare feet. It may have been a delight for Frank, but it soon became a nuisance for grownups during the summer dry spells. During the late 80's a tank sprinkler was purchased and the streets were sprinkled with water from the canal. In 1886, two road scrapers were purchased from the P. B. Smith and Company of Sidney for ninety dollars, to be used on the roads and streets of McLean Township, which included Berlin. In early days the trustees required two days of free labor from each of its citizens. In the 1909 record, a payment is made to Jerry Chambers for $1.50 for a day's work, and Bill Daniel was allowed $3.00 for his work and team of horses. In the nineteen twenties 35 cents an hour seemed to be the average amount paid to Ft. Loramie street workers. In 1872 a township law was passed that the owner of any hog rooting up the road would be made to pay the damages. Later laws stated that hogs running loose must have a ring in their nose. In 1925 a law was made by the town council limiting the speed of cars to 15 mph in the business district and 25 mph elsewhere.

Gravel from Arkenberg's gravel pit to fix the streets of Ft. Loramie is a frequent expense on the town's books. Then came the street oiling. One item in the 20's shows a purchase of 6,500 gallons of oil from Western Ohio Oil Company of Greenville at 10- 1/2 cents a gallon. This method of keeping down the dust was very effective, but was the dread of every housewife in Ft. Loramie, as the oil soiled the rugs and carpets and was brought in by the feet of the occupants. In 1929 the streets were macadamized. The work was paid for by the lot owners abutting the street according to their frontage. Bruckens for instance, with a frontage of 44 feet, paid a total of $24.64 in two installments. Early snow removal from streets and sidewalks was taken care of by August Wise. It was a sight to see a horse come down the sidewalks with a vee-shaped board snowplow. In 1945 council authorized the use of salt. The maintenance of streets in Ft. Loramie is now a much larger job since Eastview Drive started the building boom of new streets in 1952.

The big flood of 1913 is described in another article. This flood ended any hope of the revival of the canal.

## ACCIDENTS

The coming of belted machinery run by steam engines brought a new turn to the type of accidents reported in the early press. Early accidents were caused by falls, getting kicked by horses, gored by bulls, upsetting of spring wagons and surreys, and run away horses. Living as I did, just down Elm Street from the watering tank and hitching bars, ar the old township house, I saw many run away horses heading down the street. Sitting on the front porch was very popular in that day, and it was common to see my father and other men leave their porches, go out on the streets, and at a timed moment, reach out and grab the horses bridle and stop the horse. Often times the buggy had a frightened female on the seat, who was waiting for her husband to come out of Brucken's saloon. Saw mills, with their long belts, were especially dangerous. Wise's sawmill had many accidents. In 1888 a long belt caught 22 year old Hy. Hilgefort's clothing and hurled him against the shaft killing him instantly. Another accident involving belts, in 1899, was reported when a thrashing machine belt broke, striking the sheave table, which in turn struck a worker dislocating his hip and cutting a deep gash in his face. In the same year a new industry, involving belts was started, when Peter Kessler bought a cider press capable of making 50 to 75 bbls. of cider a day.

## FLAX

John Short, an early inhabitant of McLean Twp., tells in his biography about his mother raising flax and combining it with wool to make linsey-woolsey for clothing. In the early days flax was only planted on new land. This was necessary because of plant wilt, which caused severe losses when replanted on the same ground. As in the old country, the plants were first beaten on a solid floor and seeds removed. They were then rotted or retted by soaking them in water from ten to twenty days. They were then dried and beaten on a solid floor and seeds removed. They were then dried and beaten with paddles to separate the fibers. The fibers were then bundled for spinning. In 1881, O. Mathers of Sidney, started a flax mill in Sidney and Newport which made green tow, which was the name for the separated fiber. Piqua at that time had one of the largest flax seed mills in the world. The raising of flax stopped when the ground was cleared in the early 1900s. and housewives were able to get a plentiful supply of cheap goods from surrounding stores and peddlers. Unlike in Germany, when linen was beaten out by cheap cotton goods, I imagine a sigh of relief was heard over the whole new frontier.

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## TOBACCO

Another crop which mostly disappeared around Ft. Loramie in the early 1900's was tobacco. Cigarettes caused the demise of tobacco. The cigs required a finer sweeter tobacco than had been raised. I remember many of the old Germans, when they retired to town, always had a few rows of tobacco planted in the garden. They would cure it in their smoke house and use it in their corn cob pipes.

## COURT CASES

W. C. Ayers was elected in 1837 as the first Justice of the Peace in McLean Twp. J. B. Rottinghouse held the office for 18 years. All J. P.'s were called squires. Early McLean constables were: D. K. Brown, Mike Schiltz, J. B. Tangeman, Albert Hasebrock and John Henke. McLean J. P.'s handled all cased in Berlin, McLean Twp., Newport, and some from Houston. Cases involving over $500, serious cases such as murder, etc. were tried in Sidney. The jury panel of six were subpoened by the township constable and were paid 75 cents a day. The constable was paid 45 cents and 2-1/2 cents per mile for delivering the subpoenas.

Witnesses received 25 cents. These items, as well as the following cases, were found in old McLean Township J.P. records for 1870's. In 1878 there were 50 court cases; in 1879, 20 cases. In 1877 the J.P. was D.K. Brown; in 1878, Joseph P. Raterman. In 1876 it was J. H. Rottinghouse.

Suit by Hy. Sherman to have ths Sherman School Bd. pay him for teaching for 10 days at 2.75 a day.

Suit for damages due to flooding, for the defendants failure to open a dammed up ditch.

Suit against the milling company to pay for notes for unpaid grain. German American Bank of Sidney against settlers who had not paid their interest or principal.

Farmers suing other farmers for animals running loose and damaging their fields.

Bernard Meyer trying to recover grocery bills.

Bills against Bernard Meyer by his wholesalers.

G. H. Borchers vs "Canal Boat" Hunter: 1 hr. 45 min. of labor $3.94. 70 bd. feet of lumber $1.40. 10 lbs. of nails 40 cents. .5 lb. oakum (used for sealing seams of a boat) 75 cents. Pitch 75 cents. Dockage $2.50. Total $9.74. Bill was not paid. Ordered sold for $22.00. No one wanted it, and it was sold to the highest bidder which was $16.50.

Three mules that pulled the boat and were held for security, were sold and brought $26.40.

Suit by farmhand to get his $20.00 promised for 4 months work.

Suit by G. H. Borchers Boat Yard in 1878 against the canal boat "Carolina." The total bill was $18.64. Twelve dollars had been paid. The rest not paid. Boat was ordered sold to Borchers for $12.00. A further suit was brought against the Carolina by Ellen Maswell, a cook on the boat. She sued for $52.00 to pay for 26 weeks of work at $2.00 per week.

Suit by the township against an individual for not performing two days of road work - fined $3.00 plus $3.45 costs.

Bills of doctor;sworn to have been paid.

For $5.00 taken out of pocket by person in a saloon.

Home purchased was not sound as claimed. Buyer was awarded costs plus $20.00

Suit by drug company to recover cost of drugs sold to Dr. Hamer for ague medicine.

There were many cases of concealed weapons and discharging of fire arms, and public fights. For the first offense they usually were not fined. For a second offense they received a fine of $1.00 and $3.50 costs.

Willman's black watchdog killed. Asked for $55.00. Settled for $12.75.

Fishing with nets. Animals out of season. No fines at first. Later heavy.

Suit against young men disturbing worship at United Brethern Church in Newport.

A $2.00 fine given for using indecent language before ladies.

Suit for $300.00 to recover $300 promised by three McLean Twp. residents for use of building in New Bremen, to promote a Catholic Church.

Suit by State of Ohio against farmer for allowing cattle to run on public highway. (Had been warned.)

Five dollars damage awarded to farmer because of disappointment and expense incurred because thresher did not thresh his grain as promised.

Suit over ownership of Brass Tenor Horn played by member of Berlin Brass Band.

Wife abuse. A lot of these cases seemed to arise from the custom of saloon keepers allowing the ladies or other relatives of a man who drank too much to put the drunkards name on a list that kept the saloon keepers from selling liquor to the banned. One banned gentleman found his name on the list, and retaliated by rolling his wife in a carpet and leaving her there.

Paupers were very well treated. Just as in present day Medicaid, the pauper could not possess anything. (One case in court required a supposed pauper to pay back $500 of unreported assets.)If an

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investigator or sometimes three, found the person needed support, he or she was given medical services, groceries, a nurse, and boarding if needed. Hy. Lehmkuhl, in 1894, was given $15.00 for making a pauper's coffin. The pauper also was allowed rig hire. A township pauper doctor was appointed each year and an investigator kept on the case until its end.

John Toller furnished board for $2.00 per week. Joseph Neiderkorn seemed to be the person who administered most of the estates. In one estate he mentions 70 pounds of cloverseed at 17-1/2 cents a pound.

In other early business, the German-American bank of Sidney seemed to do a lot of business in the Berlin area. For those who wished to borrow locally, before the formation of the Loramie Bank, the men you went to were J. B. or J. H. Rottinghouse and John French. Interest charged was 6%.

Midwives charged $5.60 for birth services and care. Three mules could be pastured for $6.50 a month. Horse and buggy hire cost $2.00 a day. Dr. Hamer is recorded as charging $4.35 for two visits and medicine. Dr. Schmieder seemed to be the most popular druggist. He lived in Minster. Joseph Quartman sharpened a plow for 15 cents and shoed horses for 20 cents a shoe. Room and board could be had for $47.80 a month at Tecklenberg's Hotel. A threshing bill was $5.00. Farmers received $1.00 for a 200 lb. hog and $3.00 for eight geese.

## FIRES

In the late spring of 1883, a new mill operated by Gudenkauf and Raterman, opened in Berlin. It was located at the spot where Albert and Alice Romie have their present home. This gave Berlin the distinction of having two fine mills producing flour. The other being the Loramie Milling Co. The new mill had the finest of machinery and had the equipment to grind very fine flour. It had customers, according to the Sidney Democrat, that came from as far as Jay County, Indiana. In December of the same year, Berlin had its first large fire. An arsonist, according to Frank Willman, set the mill on fire in the middle of the night. The fire system at that time was based on the idea that all fires would occur near the canal where water was plentiful. The rest of the town was protected by wooden buckets hung on the buildings, and dug wells. The result was a disaster as the mill and home burned to the ground. As a result of this fire, Fr. Bigot led an effort to organize a fire company.

The first fire engine was purchased in 1884. A system of cisterns under the streets and filled from tiles leading to neighboring downspouts furnished the water. On the top of the cisterns were heavy steel lids which were opened if needed for a fire. Fire hoses on reels to reach other cisterns were purchased. A separate building to the rear of the present township house was built, and a tower erected to house the fire bells. Another fire bell was erected to the east of the intersection of Middle Street and the Farmers Pike. When these bells were rung volunteer firemen ran to the fire company building at the township house. A double rope was pulled from the pumper and everyone pulled the pumper engine to the fire. Here the hose was put into the cistern. The pumper was operated by a system which involved pushing down on a long rod on one side of the pumper. When it went up, the other side went down with the help of another group of volunteers. When the fire company had practice sessions, we kids were allowed to participate. It was a lot of fun to hang onto the pumping rods while they went up and down. The firebells had other uses. Three taps of the township house bell signified a fire department meeting. Four taps called the council for a council meeting. This system, together with the sawmill whistle every morning, at starting time, gave us an alarm clock and announcement system. In 1889 an announcement was made that for the convenience of its patrons, the post office would be open on Sunday between the time of ringing of the first and third bell for high mass, and for one-half hour after that service. All bells were well made use of.

Two other disastrous fires occured in Ft. Loramie in the early 1900's. The Willman fire, which occured in October, 1912, and the Tecklenberg Livery Barn which occured later. All of the buildings were burned beyond repair. At the time of the Willman fire, two teams of horses pulled the Minster fire engine to the fire in 30 minutes.




Fire. August 9. 1912 at Willman's Store and Home.

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## GOVERNMENT

Dressman's store, (Historical Museum) was the first meeting place for early McLean Twp. Trustees. In 1886, after the school for Berlin had been abandoned, the trustees purchased the brick building that once stood where the fire department now stands. The price paid was $680.00. In 1891, the township machinery storage building was erected east of the fire department's storage and bell tower. A total of $219.50 was paid to Christ Kirsch for its erection. The township house immediately became the voting place for the village and 1898 was the first for a presidential election.

## FIRST TOWN OFFICERS

On March 4, 1889, John D. Inderrieden and 55 Berlin residents, petitioned for the town to become incorporated under the name of Loramies. On May 7, 1889, the town was incorporated and on Monday, July 29th, the same year the first election for town officers was held. It resulted as follows: Mayor, Albert Hasebrook; Clerk, Leander Notheis; Marshal, Christian Kirsch; Street Commissioner, Joseph Niederkorn; Councilmen, Stephen Kirner, Thomas Walkup, Joseph Rieger, John Willman, J. D. Inderrieden, Jacob Ullimann; Treasurer, Henry Tecklenburg.

In the same year, Loramies council asked and received permission to use the township house for their meeting place. A Jail was built in the building. Up to this time prisoners were taken to Sidney. Tramps could apply at the marshal's home and they would receive free lodging for the evening. It was the duty of the marshal to prepare meals for regular prisoners. In 1890, the marshal requested extra payment for this service. Since the fire department also used the building for its meetings, the trustees asked them to pay for the wood that was burned in the township house. Since the fire department consisted of volunteers the request was refused. In 1892, Jerry Chambers used the building for prayer meetings, and sham elections were introduced so that the voters knew how to mark the ballots. In 1894, a law was passed regulating partition fences. They were required to be four boards high with posts 7 feet apart and in the ground at lease 2 feet 3 inches. This law was needed because of so many boundary disputes.

In 1895, Barney Gerling was paid $1.25 a day to install curb stone at the township house. In 1896, the trustees offered the following bounty fees: Sparrows - 20 cents a dozen with a $50.00 limit; Owls - 25 cents with a limit of $25.00; Crows - 10 cents with a limit of $25.00.

## FIRST INSURANCE COMPANY

In 1897, the first fire insurance was taken out by the trustees. The township house was insured for $400; the tool shed for $200; personal property for $400. The contract was given to the Minster Mutual Fire Insurance Co. through its agent, John B. Raterman. This agency formed in 1885, was joined in 1927 by Clarence Raterman and continued in business until 1984. Other oldtime agents were W. J. Borchers and Joe Willman who sold their agencies to the Ratermans. Jacob Ullimann who lived next door to the township house was given $5.00 per year for janitorial service and soon also received money from the Loramie Board of Education for acting as librarian for the school's library housed in the township house. The council continued to meet in this building until they purchased their present location on South Main Street.

## TRANSPORTATION

In 1880, the Neiderkorn hack line was operated by Bill Neiderkorn between Berlin and Sidney. Fr. Bigot described a trip to Sidney on the hack, surrounded by freight items. This hack operated until 1904, with occasional driving by Joe Sextro and with packets also carrying passengers on the canal. Ft. Loramie was well taken care of transportation wise. This changed after the canal ceased operation in the early 1900's. Route 66 was unimproved and cars and trucks still not in the picture. Railroad transportation was available in Minster. Ft. Loramie needed some means to bring in coal and freight and to export farm products. Frank Willman, William Sherman and John D. Inderrieden saw the need and began soliciting business houses for funds to start a railroad line to obtain the needed service. On November 14, 1910, hundreds of people gathered in Ft. Loramie to see the first interurban car come into town. On June 16, 1911, the first Board of Directors was chosen. It consisted of William Sherman, John Raterman, Joe Willman, and Barney Wuebker. On August 10, 1914, a total of $60,000 worth of bonds were offered for sale at $100 a share. They were signed by John B. Raterman as President and William Sherman as Secretary.

The service was widely used up to the 1920's, when cars were becoming more common. In 1922, when I was in the 8th grade at Ft. Loramie school, J. D. Inderrieden announced a prize of $10.00 to be paid to the school child who would suggest and tell why their choice of a name for an International truck to be run on the railroad tracks to Minster should be chosen. The winning name was New Era. This substitute for the trolley car, which had been discontinued was never referred to as New Era, but quickly became the Toonerville Trolley, named after a comic

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strip. For four years I rode the Toonerville to Minster High School for $1.00 a week. Ft. Loramie did not have a High school at that time. Martin Romie was the driver. The Toonerville was kept on a spur of the railroad that went to the end of Water street. Here a wooden "turn around" permitted the truck to be turned. Another turnaround was built at the junction of Rt. 119 and Main Street in Minster. A bucket of ashes was always kept in the trolley during winter to put on the track if it was icy.



THE TOONERVILLE TROLLEY - An International Truck that transported passengers to Minster. Courtesy E. Seiters.

On the 17th day of August, 1926, the Ft. Loramie and Minster Railway was sold by Frank Willman as President and August Wise as Secretary, to the Western Ohio Railway headed by William Sherman. The old railway had ended at the Sherman Elevator, (Holthaus). The new railroad ended at the south corporation line at Greenback road and to any other streets in Ft. Loramie, as long as the charge by the railroad was limited to 5 cents per trip and the railroad maintained a regular route. The extra tracks were never built. Freight cars continued to come into Ft. Loramie from St. Marys, where a spur connected the regular steam locomotive line with the electric-powered one. In 1933, the tracks were removed. With the opening of the newly paved Route 66 trucks, that could go anywhere, took over the transporation burden.

## PROHIBITION

In 1919, when Prohibition stopped the sale of beer in Ft. Loramie, the saloons went out of business selling the alcoholic beverages and were limited to near beer, something that looked like, but did not possess the kick of the real lager. The result was predictable. Every other home became a saloon furnishing its inhabitants wine (dandelion, wheat, grape, wild cherry, etc.). The big saurkraut crocks became brewing vats for the production of homebrew. The wine and brew crocks occupied a place where it was warm, usually near the stove that heated the house. Cappers were used to cap the beer that went into any bottle that was handy. One could be awakened in the middle of the night by the popping of the caps from the bottles with too much action. When the brew was ready, or the wine had reached maturity, the neighbors would gather to test the brew.

Soon the bootleggers began to sell beer. It was possible to obtain a large bottle of homebrew for a quarter. The homes of some of the beer sellers became taverns, furnishing not only the brew, but pretzles, cheese and other food capable of drawing people to the establishment. This practice was not limited to the Ft. Loramie area. While attending Miami University summer school, during the twenties, the students would go to a tent set up near Hamilton to obtain the same service as furnished at home.

While the homebrew makers were hardly ever disturbed, the makers of whiskey were prosecuted. The Feds (Government men) had many raids in Ft. Loramie. Fortunes were made by the whiskey makers. A complete whiskey operation would have a head man, a still maker, an ager, a runner, and a place to sell the product. A person in Sidney was also essential to warn the makers that the Feds were coming. The sheriff's office was closely watched by these reporters, as the Feds usually stopped there first. A telephone call did the rest. When the makers had been warned, the whiskey was hidden. If the supply was low, the beverage was flushed down a toilet and the bottles washed. Large supplies were put in cars near business houses and left to convey the impression that the owners were doing business in the office or stores. Open fields were used as storage places, and even Ft. Loramie undertaker's hearse was used. One of the most clever ruses was the hiding of the liquor in buried boxes, with removable sod, under four swings. When the Feds were coming, all the neighborhood kids were invited to use the swings.

Some people liked Kentucky whiskey the best because of its makers'long experience in brewing. To buy whiskey there, you walked to a designated area and left your money on a stump. You then retreated from the area until you heard a whistle. If the price was right you had your whiskey. If not, you had further directions.

## UTILITIES

In the early 1910's everybody in Ft. Loramie had coal oil lighting. We did our homework under, or by a coal oil light. Many house fires were started by a coal oil light sitting in the middle of the table. A small child

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would pull the tablecloth, upset the lamp, and start something afire. In 1886, Berlin was first lit by coal oil lights. Near dusk the lamp lighter, Jacob Uhlmann or sometimes Henry Lehmkuhl, could be seen coming down the street with a hook ladder, a coal oil can, sooty rags, and a scissor to trim the wicks. I would watch him place the hook ladder between two brackets supporting the lamp, wipe the soot off the glass, trim the wick if necessary, and fill the bottom of the light from his can. Then he would be off to his next light. My teacher, at the time, Minne Raterman, told us that her mother (Sophia) used to sit and watch the rich people light their coal oil lights when she was a young girl in Berlin. Since the first oil well for commercial purposes was shot by Drake in 1859, the price of coal oil, which comes from petroleum, was very expensive in the 60's. In the record book of McLean Twp. for 1878, there is an expense item for 25 cents used to buy candles from Menke's store; most probably used to light their meeting place. Entertainment at night was featured by Japanese lanterns with candles inside. In an empty lot east of William Quinlin's home, I remember one fundraising event lit by the lanterns featuring: shadow shows, fortune telling, shell games, fish ponds, cake walks, card games and other events, along with the Ft. Loramie band. Gas lights powered by carbide gas, gave a very bright light for gatherings in the last half of the 1880's. Carbide also furnished a very good substitute for fireworks on the Fourth of July. We would take a can with a tight fitting lid, puncture it in back with a nail, put carbide in the can, put water on the carbide, tighten the lid, put the can on its side, put our foot on the can, and apply a lighted match to the hole in the back. The result was a very noisy one when the lid came off.

On October 27, 1914, a contract was completed. It read as follows: The Sherman Grain Co. of Ft. Loramie will supply electric lighting to light its streets, avenues and public places and to private consumers for ten years from November 15, 1914 to November 15, 1924; 24 (80) candlepower Mazda lights; 6 (125) candlepower lights to burn all night for the sum of $800 per year to be paid in quarterly installments with 24-hour service. The 30 street lighting fixtures to be supplied with reflectors made of heavy porcelain enameled steel. The contract was signed by William Sherman, Mayor and Joe Notheis, Clerk. Thus electricity came to Ft. Loramie.

On October 13, 1925, Ordinances 167, 168 and 169 were passed. The Ohio Fuel Gas Company was granted the right to lay natural gas lines into Ft. Loramie. The charges to be levied were: For the first two years, $1.00 for the first 500 cu. ft. or less; 60 cents for each 1,000 cu. ft. over 500; 5 cents per 1,000 cu. ft. if not paid on time. During the next three years; $1.00 for first 500 cu. ft. or less; 75 cents for each 1,000 cu. ft. thereafter; 5 cents per 1,000 cu. ft. if not paid on time. Ordinance 169 provided for the building of two lighted traffic posts at Elm and Main and at Farmer's Pike and Main Street.

In 1925, at the conclusion of the Sherman contract, Ohio Electric Power Company was given the contract for furnishing electricity. In 1929, the Ft. Loramie council set the rates to be charged. They were: 4 rooms - 20 k.w. at 10 cents per k.w.; next 20 k.w., 7cents per k.w.; 3 cents for each k.w. after 40 k.w.; minimnum $1.00. For each additional room add 5 k.w. Thus, 5 rooms, 25 k.w. at 10 cents; second 25 at 7 cents et al. In 1840, the contract was given to Marian Reserve Power. In 1931, the gas contract was given to Dayton Power and Light and they succeeded in also getting the electric contract later. The first present day traffic light was at the intersection of Farmer's Pike and Main Street in July of 1929.

**TELEPHONE**

The Ohio Telephone Company had the first franchise to operate in Ft. Loramie. Two of the "hello girls" I remember were Anna Ernst and Hilda Surmann. The telephone office was in the back of Quinlin's Drugstore. The telephones of that day were hung on the wall and were the party line variety. You were given a ring number, such as a long ring followed by short rings. If your number was two longs and three shorts that is when you answered. Any party on your line could pick up the receiver and listen in. It did have its advantages. You could call the operator and have her be your reporting service for anyone that called while you were away. If the fire engine went somewhere, a quick call to the operator would get you the location of the fire and then a conversation with all the people who were listening on the party line.

**DUMPS**

Up until 1927, everyone in Ft. Loramie disposed of their own junk and garbage. A public dump was rented from Hy. Barhorst in a location close to Ft. Loramie Creek, east of town. In 1932, the dump was rented from Paul Boerger near Arling's gravel pit for $10.00 a year. There was a stipulation that the dump could not be used if the ground was so soft as to produce rutting. May 24 and 25 were the designated cleanup days to make Ft. Loramie beautiful. The dump was very busy on those days if the weather cooperated.

**WATER**

Early Ft. Loramie had no public water supply. Dug wells to a depth of 30 feet were dug, if necessary, to hit a water vein. The average was around 20 feet. It was no surprise to occasionally get a frog or other

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water denizen when pumping water. Rain barrels were common to get soft water and cisterns served a double purpose in being a cooler for butter and other perishable products. They were hung in the cisterns, in molasses buckets, by a rope. When Ft. Loramie was formed, wells were drilled to furnish the residents and horses water. In 1890, John Gaier was granted $5.00 a year to maintain a pump for the general use, as well as, a water tank for horses. There was another pump to the north of Borchers store; another by the fire house (then the township house). This one had not only a pump but also a watering tank and hitching racks where we skinned the cat. Another was at the present elementary school building and at other parts of the town. In the late 1910's a party could also get water from the neighbors as more wells were drilled. In 1939 the present water tower and system were built for $10,000 and government help.

## OIL

In 1887, the first attempt to find oil or gas, in the Ft. Loramie area took place. The Sidney Oil Company drilled a well to the depth of 1,260 feet and abandoned the well. In 1897, with Frank Willman, as Secretary and John Barhorst as President, the Loramie Oil and Fuel Company was formed. It offered for sale $10,000 worth of capital bonds. There is no record of what happened. On August 21, 1926, the Loramie Oil and Gas Company struck oil sand at 1,255 feet on the Anthony Raterman farm east of Ft. Loramie. They drilled 40 feet more into the oil sand and used 120 quarts of nitro-glycerin to shoot the well. The well produced 300 barrels of oil a month, for a number of years. Oil at that time brought from $1.50 to $2,00 a barrel. A barrel of oil has 42 gallons. That same well today produces about 200 barrels a year at a price of $9.00 a barrel, compared to $38.00 a barrel six years ago. At the height of the boom in 1926, and 1927, about 25 wells came into production around Ft. Loramie. About ten of these are still producing about 200 barrels a year. The average well in 1926 and 1927 produced 200 barrels a month. Today the pipes in the wells are rusting. The treatment of the wells, with possible reshooting, is very expensive and the price of oil today (1987) would not warrant the cost. In 1931, the Eilerman Bros. of Newport drilled their first well on the Borchers farm near Newport. They were successful and at one time Newport was heated with gas from their wells.

## EPIDEMICS

There have been four major epidemics that have hit the Ft. Loramie area. The typhoid fever has already been referred to. The second epidemic to hit was the cholera of the summer of 1848. McLean Twp. had 55 deaths. Since Berlin had no church at that time, many of the 55 were buried at Minster in a mass grave. When I was a kid, the old timers claimed that the middle of the Loramie cemetery, behind the church, contains many unmarked graves due to the cholera. The third disease to hit was diphtheria. In the early 1910's this disease caused many of the infants tombstones in the old cemetery to be erected. During the World War I years, the flu epidemic occurred. It produced many deaths in our army training camps, including Grover Cox of Ft. Loramie. The Loramie area was severely hit. Some of the oldtime doctors that coped with these epidemics were: Doctors Ayers, Hamer, Hipp, Inman, Costelo, Pepper, Hopkins and Walkup. Dr. F. Raterman also had his share of the flu cases. There were no hospitals in our area at that time. If local doctors in the late teens and early 20's needed help, they usually sent their patients to the Noble Bros. in St. Marys. Local doctors usually charged from 50 cents to $1.00 for the visit and medicine.




A streetcar crossing the Loramie Creek north of Ft. Loramie.

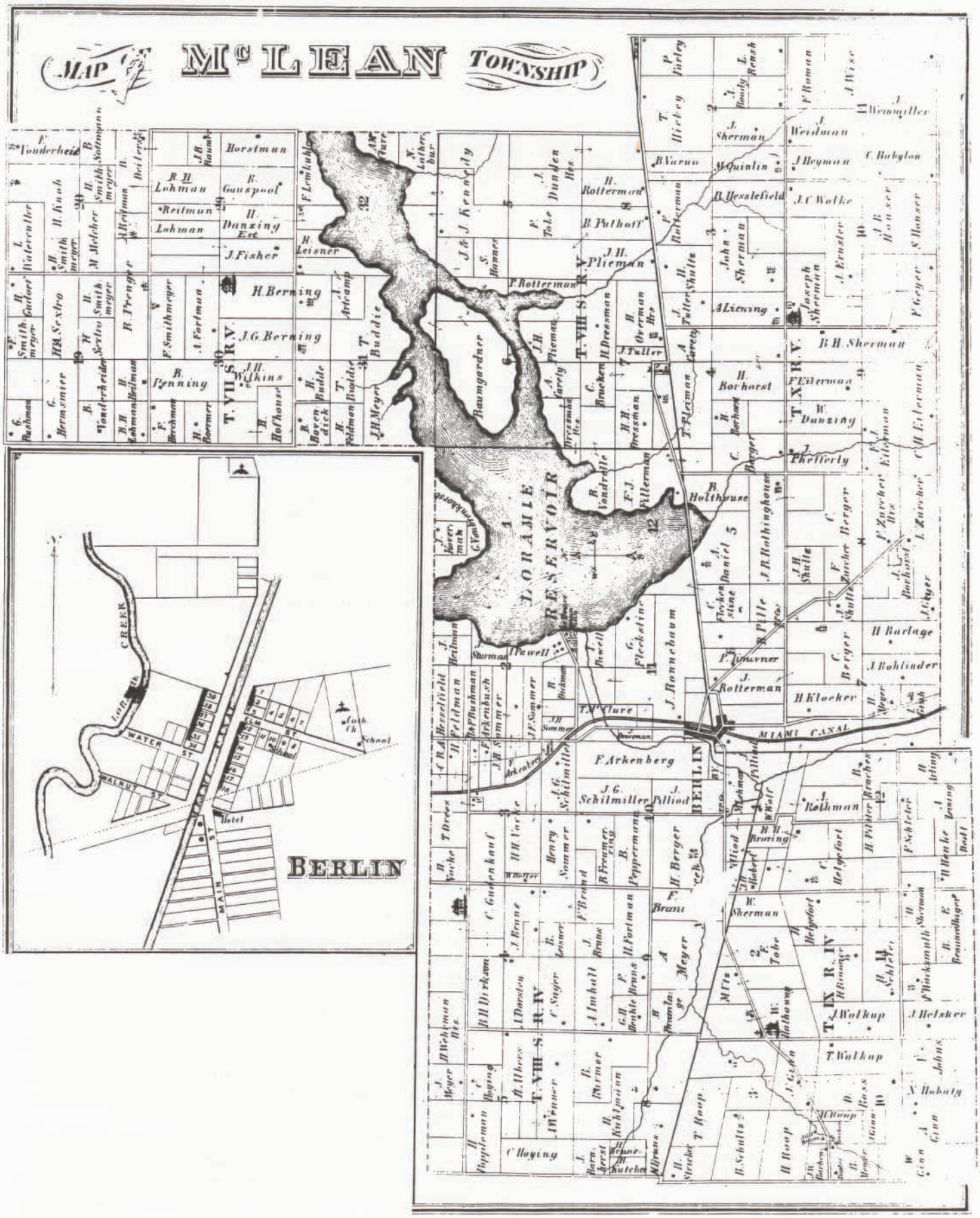
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# Plat of the Town of Berlin

Plat and Field Notes of the Town of Berlin, situated in McLean Township, Shelby County, Ohio, surveyed December 2d Anno Domini 1837 by Jonathan Counts, Surveyor of Shelby County.




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# The Canal-Flood-WWI

## THE CANAL EXERPTS

*By Clarence Raterman for Sidney Daily News, 1976.*

For the western part of the county, the canal meant settlement, boom, and a chance to exist until the land was cleared. Lockington became an important place due to its locks and source of water power. New Bern flourished, Dawson had a large grain elevator and sawmill, Newport was a larger town than it is today.

As for Fort Loramie, Skinner in "Historic Fort Loramie" states, "The canal passed through the center of Fort Loramie and because of it, the town grew in importance and wealth. The canal, in many ways made Fort Loramie because most of its citizens came to the area to work either on the canal itself or on the reservoir adjacent to the town. Most of those who arrived were Germans.

They came up from Cincinnati and in many cases were direct from Germany. Cincinnati was a clearing house for canal workers. If they were Germans, the workers were told of the German communities at Berlin (Fort Loramie), and Minster to the north. If the worker was French, he was directed to the French communities of Versailles. French Town and Russia not far distant to the west. If the worker was Irish, he settled at St. Patrick, which is just east of Fort Loramie. In all cases, the workers usually were Catholic, and these various communities grew up to be almost solidly Catholic ".

### Bought 40 Acres

In a 1939 article under "Wheat and Chaff", the Sidney Daily News quotes an early German immigrant to the Fort Loramie area, Bernard Pille, as saying that he worked on the canal until he had paid for the first 40 acres of land. He had cleared three acres and built a cabin. His wife raised everything they needed on this small plot while he worked.

An Irishman, Henry Fealy, told how his father, in the days of the canal, made $700 one year by hauling hoop poles, bark, and bolts of trees to Minster. His wife made $100 making soap. Without this source of extra income, life would have been much harder for these sturdy pioneers.

The Ohio Canal system began as a a dream by George Washington; a suggestion of Thomas Jefferson; a pro-position by Ohio Gov. Ethan Brown and the reality, because of the work of Commissioner Alfred Kelley who surveyed the routes in 1822. He was most instrumental in securing additional financing and saving the state's credit during the critical depression years.

The War of 1812 had brought a great expansion in the industrial and commercial life of the country. Demands for local products increased, the population was swelling, and foreign countries, as today, were clamoring for American farm and factory products. Interior Ohio was isolated. Transport by river was unsatisfactory due to the large number of dams to operate mills, that had been built along the streams, as well as the uncertainty of rainfall.

Frequently whole boatloads of merchandise were either lost in the rapids or stranded for months due to lack of water. Haulage by wagon was prohibitive in cost.

Finally in 1822, over much sectional opposition, a canal set was passed in the General Assembly by friends of the canals and the public schools, who traded votes. An engineer was appointed to make surveys, and a seven-man canal commission was appointed. Railroads were considered to be an untried theory, whereas, New York's successful Erie Canal had proved the efficacy of that mode of transportation.

### AUTHORIZED CANAL

In 1825 the state legislature authorized the building of the Miami Canal from Dayton to Cincinnati and the Ohio Canal from Cleveland to Portsmouth. The canals were to be paid for by a grant of 1,230,521 acres of U.S. goverment lands to be sold to the highest bidders, bonds issued by the State of Ohio, new taxes, and tolls derived from use of the canal. What originally started as an estimate of $6,000,000 wound up as a total cost of $16,000,000, bringing the state to the verge of bankruptcy and numerous stoppages of work during the depression of 1837.

The Miami-Erie Canal was 248 miles in length. It had 19 aqueducts, and 106 locks. Three large reservoirs were built to feed the waterway during the low water season. They were the St. Marys (Grand), In-

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dian Lake, and Shelby County's Lake Loramie. The total cost was $6,726.000.

The canal took 20 years to build. It was built in three sections; the Cincinnati to Dayton and was finished in 1829; the Miami Extension Canal from Dayton to Defiance by 1845, while the Wabash and Erie from Defiance and Toledo had already been completed in 1842. According to "Historic Ft. Loramie", the state showed a profit for the first 35 years, but ended with a deficit of $11,798,326.77.

He continued "What the state lost in revenue, it gained in towns, population and industrial development." Above all, interior Ohio was now provided many markets via the Ohio River to New Orleans or north to Lake Erie and thence to the Atlantic Coast and foreign nations.

According to the "Minster Centennial" booklet, published in 1932, the first packet boat came to Piqua from Dayton on July 4, 1837, with General Harrison, coming the second day of a three-day celebration. By 1838, the canal had been completed three miles north of Piqua. In 1843 the first boat reached Minster amid the pealing of church bells.

Henry B. Sherman Sr., who had talked to many of the old pioneers of Ft. Loramie, is quoted in the sesquicentennial issue of the Sidney Daily News, published in 1953, as saying that the first boat to arrive at Berlin (Ft. Loramie) was a state boat. "It stuck in the mud south of town and was visited by the whole population and its arrival was hailed with great joy".

The next to come was a packet boat. It was called the "Belvediere" and was commanded by Captain Wilder. Cordwood was shipped south and grain north from Berlin.

It took 20 days for merchandise to travel from New York to Dayton at an average cost of $17 a ton. The late J. D. Inderrieden of Ft. Loramie, who often traveled to Cincinnati on business, said it took two days and three nights to get to Cincinnati from Ft. Loramie by canal boat. He would allow one week to 10 days for the entire trip.

## CANAL DIMENSIONS

The minimum canal dimensions were 40 feet wide at the surface, 26 feet wide at the bottom, and four feet deep. Banks were to be two to five feet above the waterline with the towpath at least 10 feet wide and the berm bank five feet wide. These measurements were generally exceeded, with the canal through Shelby County averaging five feet in depth and 45 feet or over in width.

The land marked for the canal bed through Shelby County was still a forest and marshland. Where Lake Loramie now lies, a meandering creek flowed through a gigantic lowland which bred mosquitoes that spread the dreaded malarial fever, called ague, that plagued early settlers. The canal was to be built with the ax, shovel, pick and wheelbarrow. It meant working in the hot sun, knee and hip deep in water infested with snakes and mosquitoes, and having the shakes (ague) for an average sum of 30 cents for a day that began at sunrise and ended at sunset.

The work was let to general contractors for long sections of the canal. These in turn subcontracted sections of one to five miles. Some of the local contractors were: J. W. Schworer and B. Ortman of Minster, who each contracted a mile in 1842; J. W. Aiken of Houston, who contracted for one mile and then helped another contractor finish his section, and Henry Meyer of near Minster, who subcontracted for a large section between Minster and Delphos.

Many of the contractors found it difficult to obtain workmen, and as the "Minster Centennial" observes, "As whiskey was believed to neutralize the effects of the fever, the subcontractors were compelled to supply it to their hands in jiggers (two ounces). The contractor who could offer the most "jiggers", running as high as 16 a day, secured the most workmen".

Many of these workers were local farmers and recent immigrants from Ireland and Germany; but with the completion of the Erie Canal in New York, large numbers of experienced rough and tough Irish, German, and English immigrants were brought to Shelby County to work on the canal. They established canal camps.

## WIFE WAS COOK

Richard Thaman, who lived south of McCartyville, in an article in the Sidney Daily News of December 20, 1940, told stories from his grandfather, Henry Meyer, a subcontractor on the canal between Minster and Delphos. He said canal contractors boarded their crews and the contractor's wife went along as cook. Mr. Thaman's mother was born in a camp along the canal. Meyer's men were mostly farmers from Minster, St. Patricks, New Bremen and other places north.

Every two weeks he went to Piqua in a two-wheel cart to get a supply of groceries, and the woods were full of snakes and wolves. Cows were taken to the camp to provide milk for the workers, and on one occasion Mr. Meyer, while looking for some stray cattle, met a pack of wolves. He scrambled up a tree, where he sat until the men found him the next morning.

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The wage paid to his men was $1.25 a day and he is quoted as saying, "I never asked any man to do something I could not do. My work was the measure of what I expected from my men. When I rested, they rested".

In an article by John Borchers of Ft. Loramie, in the Daily News of December 6, 1940, he tells how small logs were taken to the boatyard north of Ft. Loramie, by sled or mud boat, and big timbers on large two-wheel outfits seven to eight feet high, fastened to the axle. Planks two inches thick, two feet wide 278 inches long were used to make boats.

He described rafts of wood four logs wide and half mile long, held together by boards nailed crosswise, that would be towed by mules to New Bremen where they would eventually go to Hoge's Lumber Yard.

In the Sidney Daily News of May 10, 1940, Peter Kiefer, a longtime worker on a state maintenance boat, was interviewed. The boats repaired breaks and cut the thick grass that grew in the canal bed. This Ft. Loramie native told how the canal superintendents and captains of the boat changed every time a new political party came into office. The workers, however, were not affected by the elections.

Kiefer maintained that during time the state leased the canals to private operators, who collected the tolls for themselves, repair work was neglected. When the state again took charge, the damage was so extensive that the state was never able to catch up.

In the same article Henry Arling of St. Patrick told about ice houses along the canal. Every little pond along the canal bed became a place to work during the winter. Two foot square blocks of ice, averaging 10 inches thick, would be cut and stored in sawdust until the following spring, when the ice boats would arrive from the south; principally from Cincinnati, which ran a boat once a week throughout the spring and summer.

Barney Arling, Henry's father, would wear burlap sacks over his legs, along with a canvas apron. By the end of the day the clothes would be so wet that they "would stand by themselves". When one ice house would be filled the ice would be hauled by mud boat to another for storage.

## BOATS STOPPED

Arling was quoted as saying "The ice boats were the first to stop running. Then farmers quit cutting the wood, with which for years past they had filled the canal banks during the winter for factories at Piqua, Troy and Tipp City. Finally the stone boats quit, because of the coming of concrete. Nothing was left except local trade with small cargo for short distances, pleasure boats, and the trinket and novelty boats whose peddlers sold their merchandise door to door."

In 1910, according to Kiefer, a boat crashed through the aqueduct at Lockington. The damage was repaired by the state. In 1911 or 1912 a boat loaded with stone, commanded by Catpain Harry Newton, went through the same place. The state refused to repair the break. The next year, 1913, the great flood did so much damage to the system that it was beyond repair.

Frank Fleckenstein, who lives just east of Ft. Loramie was born near the Borchers Boat Yard and the Loramie Aqueduct north of Ft. Loramie during the canal days.

According to local records, this boatyard, one of the busiest on the canal, repaired an average of 40 boats and built five or six new boats each year. Fleckenstein described how canal boats would be run into the dry docks and placed on trestles large enough to walk or lay under.

After repairs had been made, he said, water would enter the dock and the boats would float out. He remembers the many workbenches in the boatworks and the brick steam box that steamed the timber so it could be bent into the round beams necessary for boat construction. Timber would be taken from Brucken's sawmill, planed by hand, and fitted together by wooden plugs the size of the boat being limited by the locks it went through.

Grain boats would be completely enclosed. During the winter many canal boats would tie up at the wharves and wage a constant battle with the ice to keep it from squeezing and damaging the boats. Many of these boats were family-operated and the children would go to school in Ft. Loramie.

According to Fleckenstein, the last boat built was a flatboat that was later used as a bridge to get across Arling's gravel pit. He told how boats were equipped with bumpers on the west side that were used to bump swinging bridges to one side.

He explained how two paths were arranged: the one to the west used by the mules, a smaller one to the east used by an inspector who carried straw in sacks. Whenever he found a break in the bank, he gathered some nearby horse manure and tamped it into the hole, along with straw, to repair the break.

## CATTLE-SEALED BED

He also said that when the canal was made, cattle were driven back and forth until they had sealed the bed of the stream. He recalled how steam power was used by local sawmills to get logs out of the water, and how cordwood (5 by 4 by 8) was traded with Piqua for burnt stone, which when mixed with air and lime became plaster to be used in building homes.

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Frank Willman, 103, a native of Ft. Loramie, refers to the canal as the "Zwanzig Zwei", or the German name for the 22-mile strip between the Locks at New Bremen and Lockington. He recounted that the lumber was shipped from Toledo and that steamboats were tried but abandoned because of damage done to the berm. He said mules were used instead of horses because they were not as fast and were more steady. The season for boats was April to November.

His father, a storekeeper, usually had 15 canal boats come each spring to pick up spokes, hubs, handle timber, bending timber, saw logs, and hoop poles accumulated by barter with customers at the store.

Two or three boats passed through Ft. Loramie each day. Most of these boats were cargo boats, but others were packets carrying 40 to 50 passengers. Wheelbarrows and skids were used to unload the boats. Three or four mules would pull the boat, and a like number would be resting on the boat.

On a family boat, the living quarters would be on one end, the mules and cargo in the center, while sleeping quarters would occupy the remaining space. During the winter, farmers would bring hogs, butchered at home, to packing plants along the canal where hams and other meat would be salted. Hams were packed in barrels, but sidemeat was packed like cordwood on the decks of the canal boats that would come in the spring to take the meat to Cincinnati.

The "Minster Centennial" states, "The trip fare in 1858 from Minster to Cincinnati was $1.50. When the trip became monotonous for those on board, and if the weather was favorable, a plank would be laid from the side of the boat to the shore, and those that felt the need of exercise could walk alongside. Drivers and horses were usually changed whenever that boat passed through a lock, or at least every six miles."

One of the old canal boats, that once plied the waters of the canal can still be seen at Garbry's Museum, near the JVS near Piqua.

## THREE AQUEDUCTS

Shelby County had three aqueducts--two at Lockington and one north of Ft. Loramie. At Lockington one aqueduct carried the canal over the Loramie Creek; the other carried the Piqua Hydraulic over the same waters. At Loramie the canal was carried across the Loramie Creek. The aqueducts reached from bank to bank of the creek, were 15 to 20 feet wide and five or six feet deep. They resembled large wooden troughs and had a platform on one side for the mules to walk.

At New Bern and at Basinburg, south of Ft. Loramie, were large ponds used as turn tables for boats during the canal season, and icemaking during the winter.

The last boat to use the canal is reputed to be a gravel boat that hauled gravel from the Snip gravel pit about two miles south of Newport to Ft. Loramie. Its last trip was made in 1912. Captain William Combs, born in Newport is given the honor of being the last canal boat captain to use the canal.

Ruth Emmons of Cisco Road says the last canal boat to come to Sidney was in 1904 or 1905. It was a stone boat bringing stone for building foundations.

After the coming of the railroads to Sidney in the early 1850's, the canal lost its importance to that city. Port Jefferson began its decline, but in the western part of the county the canal remained important into the 1900's. A January 16, 1880 article, in the Shelby County Democrat, tells of a proposal to abandon the canal with Sidney not caring but the western part of the county protesting.

After the boats ceased to run, the canal became a haven for pleasure seekers. During the summer, boats like the "Lenita" in Sidney, carrying 14 passengers, could be hired for a cruise. Swimming, fishing and ice hockey were the favorite sports. Many parts of the canal are now public thoroughfares or public parks. Other sections still lay abandoned and weed-filled. Lake Loramie, with its boating, and swimming beach is the greatest present reminder of the glories of an era long past.



The Champ Statler is parked by Gaier's Bakery. To the north of Barney Meyers old store is an old tinsmith shop.

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Another view of old canal boat at Ft. Loramie.




Skating on Miami-Erie Canal. 1942. Courtesy Paul Gaier.




The aqueduct that carried the canal over the Loramie Creek. The towpath for the horses or mules is shown on the left, and the old bridge carrying traffic over the creek. Courtesy Rita Hoying.




M.&E. Canal with West Main Street to right and wharf stacked with wood products on middle left. Courtesy Rita Hoying.



Miami-Erie Canal looking northeast. Note Ft. Loramie Milling Co. in foreground. Also partial view of Vogelsangs Cafe.



West Main Street. Ft. Loramie. Ohio. Courtesy Elizabeth Seiters.

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## THE FLOOD OF 1913

Over on the Loramie, people were also having their problems. Marie Quinlin, longtime Fort Loramie teacher, reminisces; "I remember sitting by the window reading. It was something uncanny about the way the rain kept coming down. There was water all around the house."

The writer, who lived next door to her at the time, recalls a boat being tied to the porch steps in front of our home and seeing much activity on the high porch of the Quinlin home, some involving attempts to save the Loramie Reservoir from breaking out of its banks.

Marie Quinlin's Uncle, Frank Willman, recalls that he was so busy in his store selling boots and rubbers that he didn't get around to see all the sights. He does recall, however, that the lake was always a big bone of contention between farmers and townspeople.

The farmers around the lake had to do a lot of ditching and they blamed it on the lake. He recalls how he and Bill Sherman (owner of an elevator) saved the lake from being drained and made into farmland."Lost lots of farmers' trade too," he declares.

He has pictures showing the south side of Elm Street under water to the middle of the road, due to backing up of Rhyber Ditch. The school ground was also flooded, due to Aselage Ditch. The church parking lot was full and the area north of Elm Street flooded due to backing up of the Loramie River. At the old swinging bridge on Elm and Maine, the water was even with the north end of the Kirner home. The canal and the Loramie Creek was one body as far as one could see north.

Mrs. Mary Fortkamp of Minster, who lived at the time on Friemering Road, a mile south of Minster, recalls, "The water was at the edge of our garden. You could take a boat and row all the way to Fort Loramie, two miles away." She has a photograph that backs up her story, showing the farm, with the Loramie church steeple far across the water.

Frank Fleckenstein, who lives near the lake took an active part in the events."Easter was early", he stated. "It started to rain on Good Friday. It was raining so hard that Mother and my sister decided not to walk to church. Dad and I went. It also rained some on Saturday, but on Easter Sunday it really rained and it kept right on."

Julie Pauwell was caretaker of the lake and he asked me to help reinforce the south side of the lake because the water was beginning to lap over into our field. We got burlap bags and filled them with dirt. We laid a wall about a hundred feet long and 18 inches high. I remember the water near the Wasteway was the same height in the creek as in the main reservoir.

Some time on Tuesday morning (March 25, due to the pressure of water from the north) some of the dirt filled bags washed out and sent water south and northwest. There was 18 inches of water over the Swanders Pike near Bill Daniels. Dick Pleiman, who lived near the reservoir said the reservoir was rising at a rate of an inch an hour.

"About 50 men sandbagged the area around the Cluck's Nest feeder and the main bulkhead near Pauwells. The main reservoir didn't go out-just the south end. If the main part would have gone out, the destruction west and south would have been terrible. As it was, it made the canal and creek one body of water and pushed the water west and north towards Minster.

"As soon as we could get to it, we cut down two big trees about 18 inches thick and 30 feet long. We dragged them down to the break and put pilings on both sides to hold dirt. I really don't believe the people south of us suffered too much from the break.(A book published at the time blames the break in the Loramie Reservoir as one of the principle causes of Dayton's disaster.)

"The water could not flow too fast because it had to push through the valleys near the Newport hills. I think the water merely widened the flood waters here," said Fleckenstein.

He remembers that the Sunday following the flood he and a group of young men took Barney Danzig's furniture wagon and traveled to Piqua over Route 66, dodging washouts all the way."When we got there, there were houses piled up all along the river and they were still taking out bodies. When the people saw "Fort Loramie" painted on the furniture wagon, they came over and gave us hell for letting the dam up at Loramie go out."

Reminiscing further, he said, "You know that the wasteway was 18 inches higher at that time than now. They cut the 18 inches off to give the farmers up around McCartyville a little relief from flooding. At the time of the flood the creek banks and surroundings were kept clean. There wasn't too much wood or leaves. Now there is a lot more wood and leaves because people don't burn wood any more."

According to Fleckenstein, the aqueduct over the Loramie Creek was severely damaged at the time and the big timbers banged against the Loramie River bridge, breaking it in half. "And there," added Frank, "went a good swimming hole. It was about four feet deep, free of mud and you could duck down when any one went by on the road."

Ferd Arkenberg, who lived near the aqueduct at the time remembers the big oak beams, 30 feet by

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12 inches square, "We later fished them out from the creek and hauled them up to use at our gravel pit," he said.

He recalls a summer kitchen built on the banks of the farm home near the river. A cellar was under the kitchen, dug into the banks. When the water came up, the kegs in the cellar were banging against the kitchen floor. He remembers the anxiety of his mother, who wanted to vacate the home when the water began to rise. With pride he recalls a motor-boat they had.

"We bought a 12 horsepower two-cycle engine from some place in Wisconsin. We had a 16-inch propeller and had the holes bored in it at the Minster Machine shop. We could buy gasoline for 10 cents a gallon. We had a 16-foot boat that was guaranteed 'to hold a horse', completely fastened together with screws. We furnished milk to Herman Gaier's store in Fort Loramie. We brought it in each day in two big milk cans and ladled it out to his customers."

When the flood came, we used the boat to deliver the milk, right over the fences, posts and everything for several days. It must have been about 25 feet deep in the river channel. We used the boat to go over to Henry Sommers north of us. Henry was waving to us. A big sow was floating down the water on a rail fence. We went over and chased the sow off the raft. She swam over to the Sommer place.

Another day we went to Gregor Fleckensteins, west of Fort Loramie. He couldn't get out of his land to go to Loramie. His tile mill was under water. All of the drying boards had floated down the creek and we had to get his chickens out of the coop before they all drowned.

Harley Cox, who lived near the old creamery, had to leave his house. It was pretty well under water. We wanted to take the motor boat to Piqua but never got the time.

Arthur Short lived near the corner of Routes 47 and 66 in Newport at the time of the flood. He recalls seeing Leighty Lake going out, scattering big timbers 60 feet long and 14 inches by six inches wide.

According to him, the water occupied an area starting at his present home on Ohio 66 and extended to John Broerman's near Ohio 47. On Route 47 the water occupied an area 400 feet east of the Loramie Creek bridge to about 100 feet from the present crossroads of Rtes. 47 and 66.

Dr. Strosnider, who occupied the home near the former meat market, William Marshall, a blacksmith, who lived south of the Strosniders, and a man by the name of Wagner who lived south of Short's present home, were forced to vacate their homes. He recalls a Mrs. Swigert being brought out in a row boat. "Most of us", according to Short, "moved everything up to the second floor because we were afraid the Loramie Reservoir was going to break."

William Ginther was working on the railroad at Houston in 1913. He recalls that there was no water in Houston. "Six of us walked down the tracks to see the water in the river, about half a mile away. On the way I noticed several places where the water seemed to be bubbling up from the tracks. There were a lot of flooded lowlands around Houston. Water crossed over the Keer Road, where it leaves Houston for Dawson. Nine Mile Creek had flooded over the lower part of the present school grounds and there probably was water across 66 near the Nine Mile bridge. As far as I remember the Big Four wasn't hampered with its trains.

"For a while after the flood the bridges were declared unsafe until they could be inspected. I never knew we were isolated. I suspect it was according to where you were going. In those days there didn't seem to be any reason to go anywhere. You had to either walk, use a bicycle, or maybe once a year get out the old bobsled, bundle up, and take a trip to Sidney with the horses showing you the way," he stated.

Shelby County was lucky. Sidney had 7,000 people at that time. Six percent of the city was flooded, no lives were lost, three residences were destroyed, 230 people were in the flooded area with 25 homeless and 125 needing aid.

Property damage was assessed at $35,000. Shelby County highways and bridges suffered a loss of $120,000.

Piqua, on the other hand, was 50 percent flooded, forty-four lives were lost, 2,000 residences flooded, 100 destroyed and more than 2,000 homeless, with six feet of water in some parts of the business district.

Troy was 75 percent flooded, 1,000 homes were under water, 50 homes destroyed and 16 lives lost with a $360,000 property loss. Miami county's bridge and highway loss was $550,000. Dayton became a river two miles wide, causing property loss of over $75,000,000 and suffering a loss of more than 150 people with 22,500 needing aid.

By the end of April plans in Dayton were already under way to prevent another such catastrophe.

On May 20 the first flood prevention meeting in Shelby Co., was held in Sidney. The Miami Conservancy District was formed.

Dr. Arthur Morgan, later engineer for T.V.A. projects, was placed in charge. The big dam at Lockington, together with four others was built to protect cities south of Sidney.

Shelby County was in an uproar because of displaced farmers and rumors that the big dam would back up water from Lockington to Fort Loramie.

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Elm St. 1913 flood - Porch on Quinlin (Mescher) residence used to pack sand bags to reinforce reservoir gate at the Cluck's Nest. Note walkway built from Raterman (Schulze) residence to center of road. Courtesy Mary E. Holtvogt.




Looking north on Minster-Loramie Rd. 1913.



The 1913 flood. From Friemering Rd. to Ft. Loramie church (arrow) nothing but water. Courtesy of Rita Hoying.



Broken Aqueduct. 1913 flood.



Railroad trestle at aqueduct. 1913 flood. Courtesy Rita Hoying.



Wreckage on Walnut St. 1913 flood.

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## WORLD WAR I

World War I caused many mixed feelings in the community. Due to the courtesy of William Ross, Jr. of Sidney, we have an accompanying article written by Hugo J. Anthony in the Ft. Loramie Progress on May 20, 1915, describing the feelings of German-Americans about the coming war. Another article by Mr. Anthony deals with the feelings of non-German-Americans after the war started in 1917. Mr. Anthony, the editor, was superintendent of Minster and then the Sidney Schools. The third article deals with the burning of German textbooks in Sidney.

### THE GERMAN AMERICAN VOICE - PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO GERMANY

By Hugo J. Anthony

Few documents have ever been framed with greater significance and skill then the President's message to Germany. Much depends on this message and much upon the answer Germany will make. The message is free from haughtiness or menace, but definite and clear. Firm but not offensive, it leaves an honorable opening. And with solemn silence await Germany's reply. What will it be?

The situation is a new one, entirely new, and erroneous ideas are easily formed. But one thing remains not to be disputed. The Lusitania disaster is a deplorable fact. The destruction of American life, property and right cannot be tolerated by the American people.

In the event of an American-German armed conflict, we Americans of German origin will taste the bitter pangs and pains of duty and of consideration deeper and keener than all others. With heart sufferings we must now contemplate over this situation and no fair-minded person will censure us for this. The two countries nearest and dearest to us! On the one side--the country of our choice and adoption which has given us contentment of heart--on the other, the country of our birth and cradle which



WORLD WAR I VETERANS Partial listing: Bottom row, left to right: 1. Bernard Wilkens; 2. Herman Freytag; 3. Robert Schulze; 4. Louis Schulz; 5. Frank Gerling; 6. Unknown; 7. Albert Naber; 8. Unknown; 9. Andrew Bollheimer; 10. Ferry Geise; 11. Julius Bergman; 12. Robert Brown. Second row, sitting: 1. John Barlage; 2. Herman Winner; 3. Albert Barhorst; 4. Unknown; 5. Albert Arkenberg; 6. Joseph Duwel; 7. Ferd Arkenberg; 8. William Albers; 9. Frank Barlage; 10. Unknown; 11. Unknown; 12. Henry Seiters. Third row, standing: 1. Unknown; 2. Frank Schroeder; 3. Anton Fortman; 4. Joseph Barhorst; 5. and 6. Unknown; 7. Herbert Arkenberg; 8. Henry Poeppelman; 9. Fred Bertke; 10. Edmund Quinlin; 11. Lawrence Steinke; 12. Unknown; 13. Clem Ruhenkamp; 14. Sylvan Griner. Back row: 1. Leo Wolfe; 2. Unknown; 3. Carl Kirsch; 4. Louis Hoying; 5, 6. 7. Unknown; 8. Anton Seger; 9. Unknown; 10. Matt Zimmerman; 11, and 12. Unknown. In addition to above, those attending 1919 Homecoming included: Clem Albers, Adolph Barhorst, William Baxter, Christ Beaver, Ed Brandewie, Herman Brucken, George Cardo. Henry Cardo. Arthur Chambers. Earl Chambers. Henry Dieters. William Eilerman. Charles Ellis, Wilbur Ellis, Clem Ernst, Edward Ernst. Ed Garman. Fred Henke. George Huntsinger. Alva Kiefer, Arthur Kiefer, Harry Kiefer, Milton Kiefer. Wesley Kiefer, Joseph Kneufner. Louis Koverman. Edward Naber. William Otting, Julius Quatman, John Quinlin. Aloysius Schmidt, Henry Sturwold. Frank Varno, George Victor. Frank Vondrelle. Grover Cox and Louis Daniel were listed as casualties of World War 1. Picture courtesy Rita Hoying.

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protected the life of our infancy and early development. There can be but one ardent hope in this dark hour of suspense that the German government while fully preserving its dignity and rights may yet find an answer that will spare us the worst. As to the final issue there is but one result. There is but one flag under which the German-American has fought. There can be but one flag under which he will ever fight and that is the Stars and Stripes. But may Providence avert such a possibility.

Germany cemented to this nation by so many bonds of blood, friendship, culture and industry will not fail to take proper notice of this message although pressed by all its present necessities of war. There can be no argument as to the proper protection of American life, property and right by our Federal Government. All fair-minded American citizens no matter of what previous foreign allegiance will readily concede that any conflicting nations can not and must not endanger neutral interests. Germany up to this time has maintained the right to her undersea warfare in retaliation and in defense for what is termed England's attempt to starve the German people by her system of blockade and claim that England has rejected the American note protesting the rights of neutral commerce and for seeking to protect her war supplies by placing on the decks of her own ammunition-laden vessels the human cargo of a neutral nation. The blame of our present situation, trying as it is, must be shared alike by Germany and Great Britain. Redress for American rights and its guarantee must be given. But what constitutes both in the present situation neither nation can tell us for reasons obvious.

A court of arbitration would be the best solution and let us hope that Germany sees this, for the message is such that the case is left open by the President, not exhausted, nor the channels cut off. The moderation of the President's language stands approved by the entire American people and let us hope that Germany is able to understand fully his good intention for peace and good will.

Lord Ceresford has charged Germany with a deliberate planning to draw the United States into the fight. Let us hope that this will be proven now as utterly unfounded. But in asking the Union to be impartial, neutral, let us not forget that also we, the German element of this same Union must be impartial, neutral, to our very thoughts no matter what our feelings may be. We must be in accord with the President in his severe duty to maintain the rights of the United States and its citizens to insure our liberty and the exercise and enjoyment thereof.

The situation is indeed novel and perplexing, both in the interpretation of international law and in regard to the utilities of modern warfare, but it remains to be proven what a nation's rights are. The tempest for the hour has passed and a calmness has superceded. Indignation over sending hundreds of unwarring men and woman and children to a watery grave, nationality no matter, ran justly so high that in many instances reason gave way for a time to passion. Many unpleasant thoughts may have been entertained and many unkind words spoken in the heat of the moment; they should be forgiven and forgotten. The nation should congratulate itself to have at this critical time a man of mental strength and firmness in the presidential office. The honor and dignity of the entire American people are safe in his hands. As a man of peace he will not rush us into a war, heaven forbid such a calamity. And ex-President Taft, though of different political creed, has shown himself the splendid typical American gentleman by rising above the war cry by sending to President Wilson a message of confidence and trust, a document of justice and sincerity, the sentiment of the entire undivided American people. But if the most cruel situation that could befall an American citizen of German extraction should face us, a war between our two nearest and dearest countries, there is but one alternative, to fight under the flag of our choice and volition, the Star and Stripes. No matter how certain individuals and certain papers may view the situation there is but one consideration, we are Americans. Americans by choice and adoption. Germany exists for us with fond recollections of bygone days and wishes of welfare for what benefits received. But let us hope for a better dawn, an honorable understanding on both sides, a closer union of the different nationalities in our Union, a worldwide peace, and a friendship and prosperity of the nations of the globe.

## FROM THE FORT LORAMIE PROGRESS

**Thursday April 26, 1917**

An unkind or vicious rumor never loses force as it gains circulation. Unfortunately some people who may not maliciously manfacture a report nevertheless quickly seize upon an idle rumor and pass it on with embellishment.

This is seen day after day in ordinary times but since the international situation has become so acute it seems that some have taken pains or pleasure in circulating most absurd reports concerning residents of this community.

It is not denied that the sympathy of a portion of Shelby County's population from the beginning of the war has been extended to the German arms. This was to have been expected and should not be criticized for many of our people are former residents of Germany while others have friends or relatives who have either been killed or wounded or who

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are still fighting in the German army. While the conflict was waged between the Kaiser's forces on the one hand and Great Britain on the other, it was natural and right for these people to speak and hope for victory for the Fatherland. The situation however, is today very different. It is no longer Germany against England but Germany against the United States. That puts a different aspect to the matter. While the hearts of former German citizens are torn by the loss and suffering of their loved ones abroad these people, at least the very great majority of them, are loyal American citizens. They came to this country because they preferred it to the Fatherland and they established their homes and raised their families here. The United States is their home and their ties are here though memory and natural sympathy takes them back to the soil of Europe. President Wilson in his great message to the congress clearly stated that the United States is nothing but friendship for the German people but is determined to oppose the cruel ruthless submarine warfare of the German government. There is a great difference between the German government as now constituted and the German people.

Too many of our citizens have jumped to the conclusion that because one was born in Germany he is an enemy of the United States and acting upon that belief have not hesitated to start ugly reports or circulate rumors originating elsewhere. Some bitterly cruel statements have been put in circulation. Many of these reports we happen to know are untrue and we have good reason to believe that nearly, if not all, are unfounded.

The fair thing to do is to refuse to believe a rumor. Investigate such reports as you may hear but do not repeat them except to proper authorities unless you know what you are talking about.

Stop a moment and you will quickly realize that a rumor started at the present time may result disastrously to those to whom it is directed. A thoughtless word spoken now may spell ruin. If it should develop that there are any disloyal citizens in our community the fact will be disclosed quickly, but in the meantime let us not make the innocent suffer. Let's be fair and square at the same time we are loyal.

## THE BURNING OF GERMAN TEXTBOOKS

For years I have heard the story that all the German textbooks were gathered at the Ft. Loramie school and burned during World War I. I never doubted the story. Now, I can say it never happened in Ft. Loramie. My German textbooks are safe in my attic and so are those of all other Loramie people of that time. Many people have heard the story, but no one actually attended the burning. The older people say, "If it happened we would have known about it". However, in Sidney, it did occur. The following account was taken from the Sidney Daily News of April 29, 1918. Courtesy of Wm. Ross, Jr.

## GERMAN TEXTBOOKS TO BE BURNED

The Sidney High School is to be rid of its German textbooks, following the action of the Board of Education to stop the teaching of German and to substitute the French language in the schools. After several conferences it was decided to have a patriotic demonstration of the High School students, on the public square Tuesday night, at eight o'clock, at which time the books will be burned.

Sunday morning about thirty students gathered all the German textbooks they could find. These books and an effigy of the Kaiser will be consigned to the flames.

The program which has so far been arranged, the approval of the Mayor, Chief of Police, and Superintendent of the schools, having been secured, will be a parade of the student body and teachers about the city, and to march to the northwest corner of the square, where the books will be burned.

About three hundred text books have been secured, and each student, of which there have been about thirty-six, in the Junior and Senior classes, will deposit his own books upon the blaze.

Patriotic songs will be sung and addresses will be made, and the demonstration will be orderly in every way.



Ft. Loramie Red Cross. World War I - Seated L to R, Mrs. Bill (Mary) Quinlin. Mrs. Barney (Mary) Krampe, Gertrude Boerger. Standing L to R, Mrs. Frank Raber, Mrs. Ben Vogelsang. Mrs. Bill Borchers, Mrs. Chris Kersch, Mrs. Tom Kemper. Mrs. John Walkup, Mrs. Boy Brucken, Mrs. Matt Brucken. Mrs. John Boerger, Mrs. Nick Raterman and Mrs. Ferd Farno.

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# Churches

## HISTORY OF ST, MICHAEL PARISH, FT. LORAMIE

*By Paul Amann*

### I Years Prior to 1834

Long-forgotten records of French military expeditions into the Ohio and Miami Valleys, but recently unearthed, indicate that in 1749, the French made camp along what is now known as the Loramie Creek near the Ferd Fleckenstein farm. There between September 13, and 21, 1749, Father Joseph Peter Donnecamps offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as part of his duties as Chaplain of the expedition. According to the Rev. Raymond Kammerer, Pastor of the Church of Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus, Covington, Ohio, St. Michael's parish could conceivably be the scene of the first Mass said in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

Much controversy surrounds Pierre Loramie; but this much is certain, Pierre Loramie did live and work among the Indians on the Pickawillany River (now the Loramie Creek) seventeen miles north of where the Pickawillany flows into the Great Miami. We also know that he did establish a store there in 1769, which was destroyed by George Rogers Clark in 1782, and that General Anthony Wayne built Ft. Loramie on the same spot in 1793.

Pierre Loramie has been called many things; the French priest, missionary, tradesman, French Jesuit, French Canadian trader, French Jesuit Father--all titles that could apply considering the vagaries of history and the nature of the time. The Treaty of Paris that followed the ending of the French and Indian War (1753 - 1763) guaranteed that the settlers in the lands ceded to the British, most of them French Catholics, be free to practice their religion. Archbishop of Quebec Briand was given ecclesiastical jurisdiction as at that time there was no Bishop in what was then the Northwest Territory and now the United States. In 1769, then, according to a Church History by J. G. Shea, the Vicar of Vincennes, Gibault, and the Rev. Meurin, S. J. of Kaskaskia in the Mississippi Valley petitioned the Archbishop of Quebec to send some priests to help safeguard the privileges guaranteed Catholics by the Treaty of Paris. One of these is alleged to have been the Jesuit, Peter Loramie, who came to Ohio by way of Vincennes to minister to the Wyandotte and the Shawnee. The entire nature of Peter Loramie's activities are clouded by the fact that in 1773, Pope Clement XIV suppressed the Jesuits from any priestly activity in the Northwest Territory. As a result, Peter Loramie could not publicly exercise a Catholic ceremony. However it is believed he functioned as a missionary among the Indians in the Loramie area for about thirteen Years.

### II YEARS 1834 - 1838

During the years 1834-1838, St. Michael's was the second filial parish of St. Augustine's, Minster. As such it was served by several different priests; Rev. F. Brand, the Rev. Junker, the Rev. Abel and finally by the Rev. Herzog, who arrived in 1838.

Also in 1838, Father Louis Navarron became the Cincinnati Archdiocesan delegate in what are now Darke, Shelby, Auglaize, Mercer and Allen counties. His major function was to create a parish attitude throughout the five counties. In the forest between Russia and Versailles, he built a cabin of two rooms - one a church and the other living quarters. He called his church St. Valbert's and from there he visited, periodically, the Catholic communities springing up throughout the five counties, including Berlin (now Ft. Loramie) where he stayed with James Pilliod and where he celebrated Mass.

### III YEARS 1839 - 1903

Father Herzog, CPPS as indicated earlier arrived at Minster and St. Augustine's in 1838 where he also served the filial parishes of which St. Michael's was one. He said Mass, administered the Sacraments of Baptism, Confession, Matrimony and Extreme Unction. By 1849, St. Michael's had grown to about one hundred, mostly German families, due in large measure, to the building of the Miami-Erie Canal (1835-1839) and the ultimate migration of people from Cincinnati and other communities along the Ohio River that followed.

That year saw the foundation being laid for a new church thirty feet wide by sixty feet long (what is now the present chapel). The church, however, was not completed until 1851 because of an outbreak of the cholera, twenty-eight persons fell victims in two months. Father Herzog also opened the cemetery behind the church in 1848. At that time plots were sold

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chronologically except in cases where a husband or wife preceeded the other in death. Only then could two plots be purchased at one time.

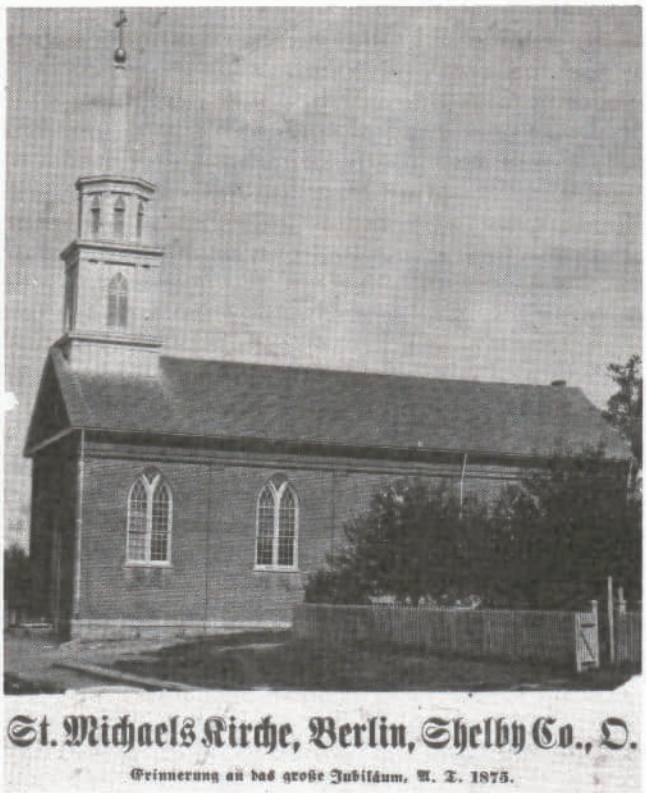
Shortly thereafter, Archbishop Purcell sent the first resident pastor, Rev. Augustin Berger to St. Michael's. There is no record of where Father Berger stayed until a Priest's house was built. Perhaps, like all early commuting priests, he stayed with various parishioners. At any rate, ground was soon broken and according to the records, a seven room house was built at a cost of between $1,300 and $1,500. Father Berger remained until 1857 when he suddenly departed, telling no one of his reason for leaving or where he was going.

Soon thereafter, the Rev. Heinrich Muckerheide came to St. Michael's. Little is known of his administration other than that while here, he ministered to the people of Rhine. He remained until 1864 when he retired to Wisconsin to live with his brother.

Father Anton Meyer succeeded Father Muckerheide in 1864. During his pastorate, the brick church completed in 1851 was lengthened by twenty feet to the east and a high altar was added. What we now know as old St. Michael's Hall was also built during Father Meyer's tenure. He had hoped to eventually establish a pariochial school. By 1874, however, Father Meyer was ailing and asked to be relieved of his duties as pastor of St. Michael's. For a short time the parish was without a priest and pastor, but on January 20, 1874, Rev. William Bigot arrived from Paris to take over the reins of the parish.

While in Cincinnati, receiving instructions about his duties and getting directions to Berlin, Ohio, Rev. Bigot was issued a challenge by the Most Reverend Archbishop John J. Purcell, "In Berlin you will find work enough to do; a large parish, and there you must build a church". Unknowingly in 1876, the parishioners took the first step toward making a new and larger church a reality - they had purchased bells weighing 700, 1,200, and 1,600 pounds. But upon installation, finding them inadequate, Father Bigot purchased a 3,800 pound bell that proved to be too large for the old bell tower. What to do with the bell spurred speculation on the possibility of building a new church with a tower large enough to house the new bell.

By 1879, the idea of building a new church met with great favor, so it was decided to build a church, the cost of which was not to exceed $30,000. This cost, however, was not to include the donated labor of the parishioners. That same year a collection raised $16,000 which when added to the $4,000 already held by the church, provided a realistic sum to begin preliminary planning. The Messrs. Cudell & Richardson, Cleveland architects, were hired to draw up plans. In August of 1879, the building site was




St. Michael's Church. Berlin. Shelby County, Ohio. Jubliee 1875. Picture of old St. Michael's Church. This building is now used for chapel on northwest corner of newer structure.

prepared and by October the foundation had been completed. On October 11, the cornerstone was laid by Archbishop Purcell. Work continued for the next two years with little interruption except when weather conditions made working outside impossible.

The early months of 1881 saw an additional $10,000 raised for church construction and quite a number of additional smaller sums for the beautification and function of the interior. By October of that year, work on the 170 by 64 foot structure had been completed and entirely paid for. It was estimated that the total cost including cash and donated labor exceeded $40,000. At that time the parish consisted of about two hundred families. Eighty-five lived within the village, sixty east of the village, and fifty-five to the west.

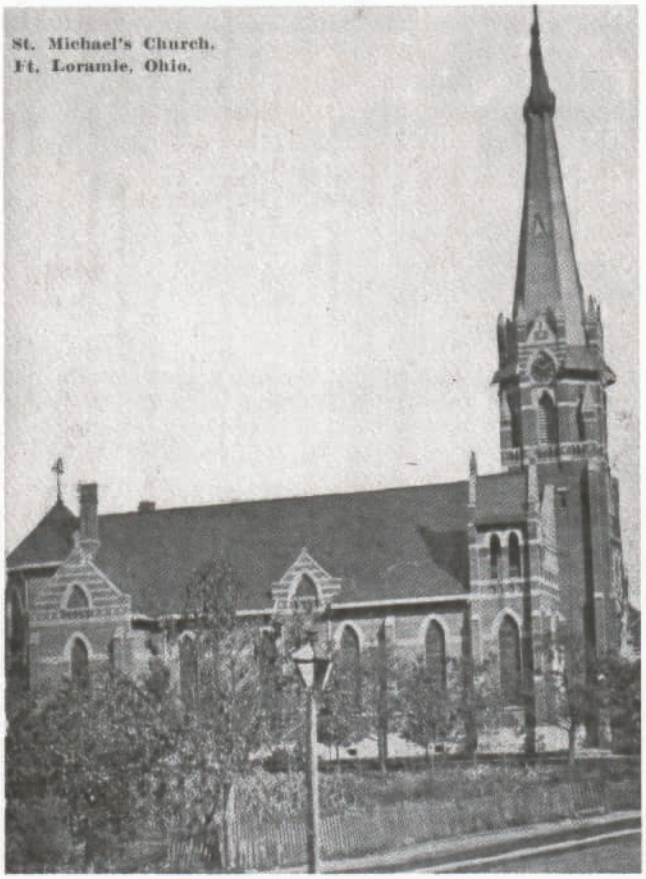
Although Archbishop Purcell had promised to return for the consecration of St. Michael's at the laying of the cornerstone, a chronic illness prevented his traveling long distances. Bishop Elder was dispatched in his place. He arrived in Berlin in a horse drawn carriage escorted by forty parishioners on horseback. As they moved through the village, the bells in the two hundred foot tower joyously proclaimed the Bishop's arrival to the 4,000 who lined the streets. On Sunday, October 2, 1881, just seven years after Archbishop Purcell's challenge to

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Rev. Bigot and ultimately to the people of Berlin, St. Michael's had become a reality.

The Church remained about the same until 1891, when Father Bigot added the statues of St. Michael, St. Martin and St. Maurice to the facade in the front of the building at a total cost of about $1,500. Although the original plans for the priest's house built in 1852 called for seven rooms, the upper portion of the building was never completed, so in 1897 the present parsonage replaced the old unfinished one at a cost of $10,000.

Father Bigot served St. Michael's almost thirty years, retiring because of ill health on June 14, 1903.




**IV 1903 - PRESENT**

In 1922, St. Michael's Congregation purchased what we now refer to as St. Michael's new cemetery from Cornealus and Christian Wagler. The land situated south of Ft. Loramie between Route 66 and the Miami Erie Canal and south of Schlater Road had previously contained a brick kiln and storage yard. Interment began in the new cemetery with the burial of Catherine Knuefner, age 73 on March 10, 1927. However interment also continued in the old cemetery behind the Church until April 29, 1982, when Frances Rethman was buried there at the age of 94.

It is also interesting to note that plots in the new cemetery sold originally for $7.50.

In 1921, the organ installed by Father Bigot was renovated and enlarged. Originally the air that activated the bellows and pipes was supplied by hand pumps at the console. Father Moeller had an electric pump added that supplied the air to activate the organ, thereby eliminating the laborious task of hand pumping.

Father Moeller's pastorate continued until his death in 1952. He is interred in St. Michael's new cemetery.

The Rev. Paul Rattermann arrived in 1952. He was first appointed administrator to aid the now ailing Monsignor Moeller with parish affairs. Later, upon Monsignor Moeller's death he was appointed pastor.

In 1954, during his tenure, St. Michael's Church was renovated and redecorated. The basement under the nave was enlarged and steel beams and iron posts were installed to shore up the sagging floor. In 1959, what we now call the Chapel was thoroughly reconditioned on the outside. The mortar was sandblasted and repointed and the entire building received an application of silicone waterproofing. Again in 1959, Father Rattermann purchased the property adjoining the west boundary of St. Michael's parish, known then as the Utz house.

Father Rattermann left St. Michael's in 1960 and was replaced by Monsignor Clarence Leibold.

In 1960, the Supreme Court, in a landmark decision involving Fort Recovery Public School determined that religion could no longer be taught in such a school. As a result of this Supreme Court decision, Monsignor Leibold initiated in 1962, Saturday morning religion classes for elementary students. In later years class times were altered to meet varying conditions. In 1963, the CCD program for high school students was also initiated. The first classes were held on Monday evenings at the Ft. Loramie High School.

In 1961, Monsignor Leibold purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Edward Poeppelman a strip of land that provided an outlet from the parking lot to Route 66, thereby easing traffic congestion on Elm Street. In 1964, the steeple clocks and bells were electrified, eliminating the difficult job of manually ringing the bells, a job performed so long by so many faithful bell-ringers.

In 1965 two liturgical changes mandated by Vatican II were introduced at St. Michael's. The Latin Mass was replaced by the English version, and a temporary altar was placed in the sanctuary so the priest could say Mass facing the congregation.

Monsignor Leibold remained until 1966, when he was replaced by the Rev. John C. Brucker.

Upon his retirement from the military service, Colonel Brucker was appointed pastor of St.

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Michael's. Liturgical changes continued during his tenure, the most memorable of which was the introduction of the congregational singing of contemporary songs written in English.

In November of 1966, Father Brucker purchased outlot 14 and part of outlot 15 from the John Albers Lumber Company so that a catechetical center for religious instruction could be built. What eventually emerged was a multi-purpose building that could be used not only for religious instruction, but also for meetings, receptions, etc. St. Michael's Parish Hall was dedicated on December 14, 1969, by the Most Reverend Archbishop Karl J. Alter.

Also during Rev. Brucker's tenure, the Archdiocesan Synod of 1971 mandated the Parish Council to help formulate parish policy. Such a body was first formed at St. Michael's at that time. Father Brucker was succeeded by Rev. A. Edwin Francis in 1971.

Father Francis opened the Chapel for weekday Mass during the summer, but Mass there during the winter was impossible because of the lack of a central heating system. Father Francis also initiated the Parish Hall Board to coordinate activities held in St. Michael's Hall. Father Francis remained only until 1973 when he was replaced by Rev. Joseph Bruening.

Father Bruening negotiated "released time" for elementary students, grades one through six, in 1975. This agreement allowed these elementary students to attend Mass and religious instruction once each week. Upper grades, however, continued their religious instruction during the evening. In order to celebrate daily Mass in the Chapel throughout the year, the Chapel was insulated, painted, carpeted and refurnished and a separate heating system installed. Liturgical changes mandated by Vatican II continued to be implemented throughout his tenure as evidenced by the appointment of the Worship, Education and Finance Commissions. In 1973, Frank Turner was appointed permanent choir director. Father Bruening left St. Michael's in 1980 to be replaced by Rev. Gerald E. Bensman.

During the early months of 1981, Father Bensman secured released time for grades seven and eight CCD classes. These classes were scheduled during student study halls one day each week. St. Patrick students were also included in the released-time classes. To provide space for grades 7 and 8, the two-car garage at the north end of Old St. Michael's Hall was converted into a CCD office for our two Directors of Religious Education, who at that time were Mary Lou Bornhorst and Eileen Borchers. The long narrow room in Old St. Michael's Hall, which had formerly served as a CCD office, was converted into



Centennial Celebration of St. Michael's Church. Fr. Gerald Bensman, Archbishop Pilarcyck, Urb Barhorst, driver.

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the classroom where released-time classes for grades 7 and 8 would be held. The remainder of the Hall, that is, the entire original brick structure which had been used by Ft. Loramie School as a band room for a number of years again became available for parish use with the opening in 1980 of the Ft. Loramie High School. So from 1980 until 1986, it served as a center where Ft. Loramie youth could socialize on weekday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

The summer of 1981 saw some major repair work done on St. Michael's Church. A new roof was put on the East Chapel of the church, the church steeple was repaired and painted, the steeple cross, which towers 185 feet above the ground, was dismantled, stripped and goldleafed and insulation was added to the side bays of the church.

Meanwhile, preparations were being made for the 100th anniversary of St. Michael's Church. Although St. Michael's was dedicated in October, 1881, the parish centennial celebration took place on November 8, 1981. Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin, Archbishop of Cincinnati (who later became Cardinal-Archbishop of Chicago) came to Ft. Loramie to preside over the festivities, which included a Mass celebrated with a large part of the entire congregation followed by a dinner in St. Michael's Hall. Archbishop Bernardin, accompanied by the pastor, rode into town in the same horse-drawn carriage which was used by Archbishop John B. Purcell when he came to lay the cornerstone of the church in 1879. The carriage had to be trucked in from Cincinnati; it was later drawn to the ceremony by the award-winning horses owned by the Urban Barhorst family. In 1982, ceiling fans were installed in church to force heat down in the winter, and to provide better circulation of air in the summer. Also, the stairwells at the back of the church were enclosed to control drafts which raced up the stairs to the choir loft when the church doors were opened. Single-acting doors were installed at the interior of the vestibule for the same purpose.

Later that year, at the request of Father Dennis Jaspers, Pastor of St. Patrick Parish, 9th grade students from St. Patrick began to participate in the Confirmation program at St. Michael's.

On January 2, 1983, St. Michael choir had its first annual Christmas Concert under the direction of Frank Turner, Music Director with Mrs. Victoria Albers providing organ accompaniment.

In early spring of 1983, the seven statues on the facade of the church were returned to their locations. Earlier that winter the statues had been taken down and transported to the bodyshop of the Gaier Chrysler- Plymouth dealership, where Bill Gaier carefully stripped off many layers of paint and rust. After necessary repairs had been made, the statues were painted by Leroy Gaier with a type of aircraft paint that should last for several decades. During Lent of 1983, St. Michael's Parish had its first Lenten Lecture Series. Well-known speakers of western Ohio were invited to address parishioners on the Wednesdays of Lent. The program was well received, and has become an annual event.

In April of 1983, because of the reluctance of parishioners to have their names listed as candidates for parish council, a new method of selecting nominees was initiated. Outgoing members are expected to identify nominees. Also, any parishioners may submit nominations. During a Sunday Mass in May, all nominations are placed in a box. After prayer, the needed number of names are selected.

In the spring of 1984, under the direction of Catherine (Katie) Barhorst, a special committee of parishioners was set up to visit shut-ins of the parish. The group is known as the Visitation of the Sick Committee. About the same time, the St. Michael's Social Ministry Commission was organized to perceive community needs for social action, and to develop strategies and programs to involve the community in effectively meeting such needs. Mrs. Virginia Hoehne was elected the first Chairperson of this commission.

During the winter of 1983, one of the 100-year-old pine trees west of the church blew down, narrowly missing one of the stained glass windows. Upon closer investigation, it was discovered that the trunk of the tree was almost totally rotten from the inside. The U.S. Forestry Service analyzed the remaining trees and informed the parish that two other trees were in imminent danger of falling. Supsequently, it was decided to cut down the three remaining trees, and during Holy Week of 1984 a row of 4 foot black pine trees was planted along the west side of the church and cemetery.

During the summer of 1984, a decision was made to recruit adults to serve for funeral Masses. Adult servers would not only add dignity to these somber and solemn services, but their presence would also eliminate the need for seventh graders for such services. The adult servers are supervised by Don Wehrman and have been well received.

During the spring and summer of 1984, the sophomores, juniors and seniors were informally polled regarding the time when religion classes should be held. Because of other commitments, Wednesday nights had proven to be an inconvenient time for them. Their response was discussed at meetings of the St. Michael's Religious Education Commission, and eventually a decision was made to hold religion classes for sophomores, juniors and seniors on Sunday mornings. The program has met with increasing success, so much so, that religion classes for freshmen are also now held on Sunday mornings. At the

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present time, 2 hour classes are held for six weeks in the fall and six weeks in the winter. It was at this time, too, that sophomores, juniors and seniors from St. Patrick Parish began their advanced religious instruction at St. Michael's.

At its April 1984 meeting, Parish Council decided to have the church organ totally rebuilt. The contract was given to the Muller Organ Company of Toledo. The organ was totally dismantled, and all parts transported to Toledo. The organ pipes, most of which date to the late 1800's were reshaped where necessary, retuned and refinished. Some additional pipes were added bringing the present number of pipes to 1,161. All leathers for the bellows and at the base of the pipes were replaced. The most notable change was that the pneumatic action of the organ was electrified. Up to this time, there were 153 lead pipes running from the keyboard of the console to the base of the organ pipes. When a key of the keyboard was pressed, air moved through the lead pipes, activating stoppers at the base of the sound pipes, which in turn allowed air to pass through the sound pipes causing them to resound. Over the years, the 153 lead pipes connecting the console to the organ pipes had crystalized, causing air to escape. Because of the prohibitive cost of replacing the lead pipes, they were gradually unhooked when they could not be replaced. As a result, it gradually became increasingly difficult to play the organ.

The action of the organ is now electrified, which means that 153 wires now run from the keyboard of the console to the organ chamber. When a key is pressed, the resulting electric current activates a magnet which opens the stoppers at the base of the sound pipes, which in turn permits forced air to cause the pipes to resound.

Electrifying the organ was a great improvement for another reason as well, electrification made it possible to move the console further from the organ chamber. Large conduits were run under the floor for the 153 electric wires to pass through. The Console is now situated in the front corner of the choir loft, making it possible for the organist to have a better view of the choir director in the choir loft, of the priest at the altar, and of the cantor in the front of the church. Rebuilding the organ was a six-month process and an expensive one as well. Together with remodeling work necessary in the choir loft, the project cost approximately $58,000. The results, however, have shown that the project was well worth the time and cost expended. The replacement value of St. Michael's organ is in excess of $200,000.

One of the sequels to the restoration of the organ was the purchase of hymnals. After a lengthy study made by the Worship Commission, St. Michael's purchased the "Glory and Praise" hymnal containing many contemporary songs, which make a nice contrast to the more traditional songs contained in the parish missalettes. A few months later, hymnal racks were installed in the pews.

In 1986, St. Michael Parishioners began participation in a three-year spiritual renewal process known as RENEW. In addition to the first season, during which the ten committees received their training and made necessary plans, there are to be five other seasons, each lasting six weeks; one in the fall and winter of two successive years. The successive themes of the five seasons of RENEW are: 1) The Lord's Call; 2) Our Response to the Lord; 3) Empowerment by the Spirit; 4) Discipleship; and 5) Evangelization.

Also in 1986 and in the early months of 1987, discussion continued concerning the renovation of St. Michael's Church which was last painted 33 years ago in 1954. Final decisions have not yet been made. Certain adaptations are necessary in the sanctuary area of the church, so that liturgical changes mandated by the Second Vatican Council 25 years ago may be fully implemented at St. Michael's. Since the altar of sacrifice and the pulpit are to be the central focal points of the church, and the center of liturgical action, present plans call for the altar of sacrifice to be moved closer to the people. Lighting will be upgraded. Present candlepower in the church is 4, whereas, 20 candlepower is recommended. Carpeting will be placed in part or in all of the church and a new pulpit and altar of sacrifice will be constructed, matching the other woodwork in the church. The ceiling and walls will be repainted. Some other matters are still being discussed by the Building and Grounds Commission, before their final recommendations are brought to the Parish Development Committee. The designer selected to prepare the rendering and to oversee the renovation is the well-known designer from Milwaukee, Witold J. Liskowiak, who has renovated 330 churches and four cathedrals in 9 states.



Present-Day St. Michael's Hall

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During the summer of 1986, St. Michael's parish decided to make better use of the unimproved portions of Old St. Michael's Hall. The CCD office at the north end of Old St. Michael's Hall (formerly a two-car garage) remained as is. Also, no changes were made in the long narrow classroom adjacent to the CCD office. The original part of Old St. Michael's Hall, however, was totally remodeled during the summer. A new heating system was installed, ceilings were lowered, new interior walls were constructed, and a new lighting system installed. Old St. Michael's Hall (affectionately known as St. Mike's Place) now has 6 classrooms, one of which also serves as an assembly room. The building serves many purposes, including the setting for information classes for prospective converts and meeting rooms for interested parishioners. Most of St. Michael's religious education program is now conducted in St. Mike's Place.

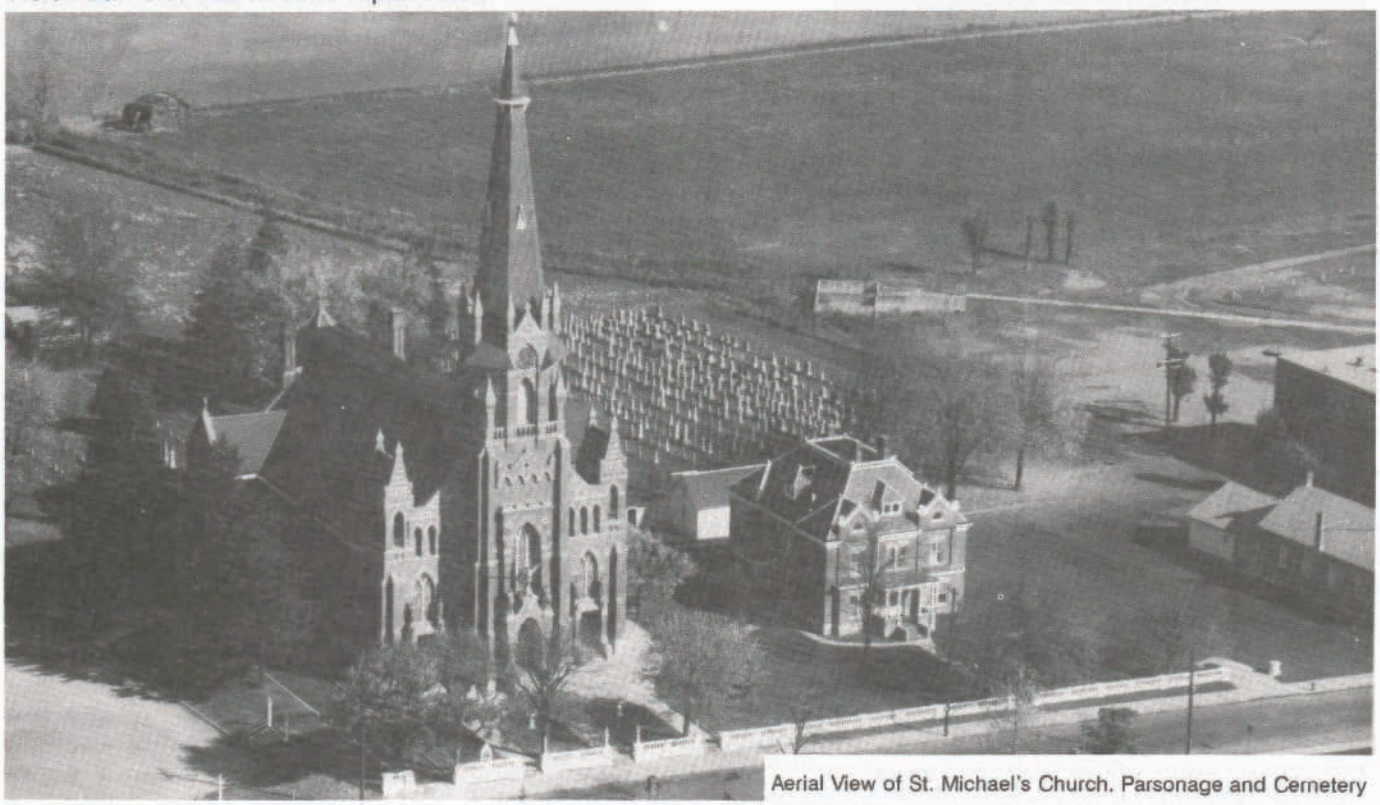
After many years of discussion, a decision was finally made in 1986 to correct drainage problems under the steps and sidewalks on the west side of church, and to build an enclosure or vestibule at the west door to control the strong drafts which entered the church when the door was open.

On June 1, 1986, Mrs. Victoria Albers, who first began to play the organ at St. Michael's in 1928, informed the pastor that she wished to retire. In late July, after a number of applicants were interviewed, Helen Barhorst was hired to replace her.

St. Michael Parish will mark the 150th anniversary of its founding in July, 1988. Initial plans for festivities to celebrate the occasion have begun, but further planning is necessary. While no timetable has been set for the renovation of St. Michael's church, now that the process has begun, some parishioners are expressing the hope that the renovation of the church will be completed before the summer of 1988 so that the new altar can be dedicated as part of our sesquicentennial celebration.



Interior of St. Michael's Church



Aerial View of St. Michael's Church, Parsonage and Cemetery

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## EARLY CHURCH MEMBERS

Carl Walker has recently translated a German written series of papers found in the rectory. They were written by Fr. Bigot, who complains about the lack of any records concerning parish decisions, contributions of members, receipts and disbursements for the 1848 church. He promises that from 1876 on, all records will be kept. He then tells how he interviewed people when he came. He made a family book, wherein are recorded over 200 families with about 1000 souls. He gives credit to Rev. Meyer for enlarging the church by one-third, and building the parish school house. (Old St. Michael's Hall) He then talks about collecting $700 in delinquent school fees from the parishioners, to pay the debt on the school house built in 1867. He then lists the pioneer parishioners who met in 1838 to found the first church in Ft. Loramie. He adds a note: The families indicated with a * have either moved away or have died out. He made this list in 1876, and of course many more have now moved or died out. The spelling is as Fr. Bigot made it.

1. Heinrich Frank *
2. Ignatz Schell *
3. Joh. Heinr. Ratermann
4. Lucas Meier
5. Ignaz Marz
6. Philip Knufner
7. Friderich Meisterman *
8. Herm. Friderich Kloene
9. Herm. Heir. Broering
10. Jam. M. Pilliod *
11. Heinrich Muller *
12. Amand Schuler
13. Zacharias Schuler
14. Heinrich Weisbrod *
15. Joh. Heinr. Wieman
16. Wendelin Schenk *
17. Patrik Hart *
18. Patrick Kannans *
19. Charles Schilz
20. Johann Then *
21. Valentin Bernard *
22. Jos. Anton August
23. Joh. Wilhelm Schurmann
24. Georg Muller *
25. Franz Sales Meyer *
26. Heinrich Schulze
27. Joseph Kirner
28. Barthelomaeus Schebel *
29. Christian Hoffman *
30. Johann Ruttges *
31. Christoph Boerger
32. Georg Marz
33. Michael MecKladen *
34. Joseph Hummer *
35. Anton August
36. Georg Lump
37. Michael Lehman
38. Ignatz Surcher
39. Ludwig Hotzen *
40. Nicolous Langly *
41. Adam Schanding *
42. Georg Heinr. Eilerman
43. Friderich Henke
44. Heinrich Schluter
45. Bernard Meyer
46. Philipp Duttenhoefer *
47. Domimi Hummer
48. Michael Lulle Lawler
49. Fidelis Kistner *
50. Herman Heinrich Dressman
51. John Thomas Costolo
52. Bernard Pille
53. Henry Eilerman
54. Joseph Schurman
55. B. Henry Schurman
56. Joseph Hoelscher

## CEMETERIES

Through the courtesy of Barbara Adams and Gene Mozley of Sidney, who have written "Memorial Records of Shelby County, Ohio 1819-1975 I have the following accounts of local graveyards:

According to these records the Pioneer Cemetery just north of Ft. Loramie had its first burial in 1836 with the interment of Daniel Houser. The last burial according to the records was Edward Robbins in 1966. Brown, Beach, Maze, McClure, Mendenhall, Edwards, Prillman, Mann, and Hasebrook are other names recorded here.

The Furrow Cemetery had its first burial in 1842, when James G. Furrow died. Two other Furrows are also buried, and a Samuel Hawkey in 1851. This cemetery like the Pioneer Cemetery could have had other burials.

The Walkup Cemetery is a little over two miles west of Ft. Loramie on Rt. 705. It has eighteen members of the Walkup family buried there. This German Reformed Cemetery had its first burial in 1846 at the time of the interment of Nathan Grosvenor. Other names are: Kemper, Flinn, Betts, Ginn, Hathaway, Roop, American, Kleinfelder, Meister, Schneider, Ream, Sweigert, Knostman, Brown, Bliss, Edwards, Stutzenburg, Beckwith, and Bodkin. The following notes by Paul Sherman as written in the book state that this cemetery was once known as the Roop Cemetery. Tobias Roop represents the early settlement of western McLean Twp. He was a Republican (a rarity at that time), and weighed 400 pounds He lived in the cellar of his home. He is reported to have eaten as high as three chickens at one sitting. At his death in 1879, a special coffin was made and the side of the house had to be removed to facilitate removal. Also buried here is Capt. Milton Kemper, who died from gangrene resulting from a bullet wound sustained in a conflict with robbers near Ft. Loramie. He was village marshall at the time. He died in 1869 at the age of 37.

Old St. Michael, the Catholic Cemetery in the rear of the church seems to have had its first burial in August 1846, when Mary Ann Humer was laid to rest at age 43. She was the wife of Peter Humer.

Since English settlers, such as the Furrows had private graveyards, it is possible that there are other private graves not listed in the other four. Louis Hoying in "Pilgrims All" states "A cemetery was located in Section 8, McLean Twp., Shelby Co. This cemetery contained about thirty graves. A field stone with the inscription, "H. W. Steele - 1848" marked one of the burial sites. Oral history indicates that some of the graves were the last resting place of area squatters. Whether or not this cemetery was the pioneer cemetery mentioned by Fr. Bigot, is open to question. A small negro cemetery was located in Section 4, McLean Twp. Oral history by Charles Seger, who attained the age of 91, in 1981, tells about this burial place. As a small child Seger passed this cemetery daily, on his way to and from the Dircksen School.

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## EMANUEL REFORMED CHURCH

*By Ferd E. Freytag*

The Emanuel (God With Us) Church was erected in 1902. It was the only non-Catholic place of worship to be built in Ft. Loramie. By 1950 this church ceased operations and was sold to Robert Barhorst Sr. and moved from its location at 68 S. Main St. to its present location at 9911 St. Rt. 66, where it was converted into a residence and later sold to Raymond Drees.

This frame church was approximately twenty four feet wide by forty feet in length. The bell tower in front had two steps around a platform leading to the entrance through a small vestibule to the door of the main church. A center aisle, with wood caned chairs on either side led to the Sanctuary up two steps on a platform with a lecturn and pulpit.

A large elliptical arch over the Sanctuary was inscribed with the words: "BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HEAR THE WORD OF GOD AND KEEP IT".On the left side of the Sanctuary was the organ and choir space. The organ, an upright style, was played by Susan Wagler. It required to be pumped by foot pedals. The sound was controlled either loud or soft, by paddles at knee height with the sides of the legs. The organ had a bracket on each side at head height for lighting purposes. The keyboard was covered with a slide top. A music rack dropped down, when the slide top was lowered.



Loramie Emanuel Reformed Church. Built 1902.

Services were held on Sunday afternoons at 2:00 p.m. The supply pastor was the Rev. Alfred Grether from the New Bremen Zion Reformed Church. His transportation was horse and buggy until the street car service came in 1910. Sunday School Services were held every Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m., under the general direction of the Supt. of the Sunday School, Christopher Wagler. The choir space was reserved for the childrens' class. Mrs. Cox taught the women, to the right of the Sanctuary. On one side of the rear of the church English classes were taught to the men by Mr. Wagler, while on the other side German classes were taught by my father, Karl Freytag.

Christmas was a special occasion. A large pine tree touching the ceiling, was placed to the right of the sanctuary. It was lit with candles, and decorations of tinsel, braids, and all sorts of ornaments adorned the tree, which was tipped with a large star. On Christmas Eve services were held, with the children, each taking part by reciting a verse or story about the birth of Jesus. The Freytag children gave their parts in German. After the service each child was given a box of candy. Many families about Ft. Loramie came for these services.

Earlier the Freytag family attended the Lutheran church at Woodland (Willowdell), with transportation on foot (six miles). Later they attended St. Pauls Evangelical and Zion Reformed churches at New Bremen. Transportation there, was by way of street car or auto.



The former Evangelical Reformed Church converted to a residence.

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# Schools

## FT. LORAMIE SCHOOLS HISTORY

*By Ferd Fleckenstein*

The first public school was located just north of Fort Loramie. Then a large one-room brick school was erected on the site where the present fire department and township house (built in 1942) is located. This one-room building was used until more room was needed, resulting in renting the old St. Michael's Hall for $100 a year.

In 1883 plans were made for the building of a new four room schoolhouse. Two sites were proposed for this building. A two-acre tract was donated by Clarence Raterman's great grandfather as a school site, located in the area of the present home of Albert and Alice Romie at 42 E. Park Street.

Also considered was the Pille property located east of old St. Michael's Hall. After much discussion, the Pille site was selected. Bids were advertised three different times before bids submitted were low enough that the school district was financially able to award the contracts (except the heating system). Following are the amounts of some of the bids:$675.00 Building Stone, $429.12 Bricks (made at Wagler's Brickyard, Ft. Loramie), $2,782.00 Carpenter work and material, $69.40 Excavating and drainage, $687.00 Slating and tin work, $418.00 Plastering, $150.00 Fees for supervising the building construction, $100.00 Architect's fees, $3.35 ea. Double seat school desks and .33 per sq. ft. Blackboards. (Teacher's salaries were $45.00 per month one hundred years ago.)

The Raterman school lot was sold to the highest bidder in September 1885. The one-room school house was sold at public auction on May 22, 1886 for $680.00 to the McLean Township Trustees.

The 1885 classrooms were first heated by a large wood-burning stove in each room. Bids were always taken for furnishing beech firewood. The first furnace was installed in 1903. The heating system was improved in 1913 with large cast iron radiators which are still being used today in the 1885 section of the elementary building.

The elementary school bell and tower was erected in 1913. These were removed several years ago and are now on display at the Fort Loramie "Wilderness Trail" Museum.



Early Picture (1885) of Berlin Public School. First addition was built in 1935.

Due to transportation problems for the Fort Loramie students attending Minster High School, the school board decided to start a high school at Fort Loramie. The first charter for freshmen and sophomore classes was granted by the State for the 1928-30 school years. A second charter was granted for the 1930-31 school year for junior students. A four-year high school charter was issued beginning with the 1931-32 school year. The first graduating class had twelve students.

In 1935-36 a new addition was erected, including the first gym- auditorium and modern restrooms. At this time there were six one-room school districts still operating in the area. Most of these high school students were sent to the new high school on a tuition basis.

In 1939 vocational agriculture facilities were added to the school building. The present elementary cafeteria was built in 1954 along with six additional classrooms. In 1964 a new Home Economics and Industrial Arts Department and six additional classrooms were added to the east side of the school building.

In 1977 the Fort Loramie boys basketball team won it's first Class A State Championship. Following this, public support for the building of a new gymnasium led to the creation of a non-profit organization, G.Y.M., Inc. School officials, acting on this impetus, sought State permission and passed a $1.4

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million bond issue to build a new high school. G.Y.M., Inc. purchased the 23 acre site at the intersection of SR 705 and Greenback Road, and provided a great deal of labor in site preparation and in painting the building. The new high school was open for classes in the Fall of 1980.

Throughout the years, the citizens of Fort Loramie have shown great concern for the education of their children. This is evident in the well maintained school facilities and in the support given to the overall school program.



A Class Picture around 1904: Incomplete listing:
1st row, left to right: Bill Albers, Elizabeth Brucken, Frances Willman, Ann Raterman, Pauline Anthony, unknown, Denie Wendeln, Rose Bollheimer, Augusta Fleckenstein, Ed Spoltman, Mose Flinn, Elmer Vogelsang, unknown. 2nd row: Lena Hilgefort. Edmund Quinlin, unknown, Fred Schlater, Henry Arling. Julie Quatman, Pauline Fleckenstein. 3rd row: Theresa Holthaus, Edith Naber, Ethel Speckman, Ann Naber, Rose Mougey, Denie Surman, Carrie Arling, Jack Walkup, unknown. 4th row: -- Rutschilling. Henry Holthaus, Joe Knuefner. Julie Arkenberg, Raymond Quinlin, Albert Aselage, unknown. Courtesy of Elizabeth Brucken Seiters.



A Ft. Loramie School Picture taken around 1920-
Front row. left to right: Christ Keifer, Albert Bramlage, Lawrence Schlater, Clarence Raterman, Norbert Ernst, Urban Brucken, Carl Keifer, Elmer Romie, Bernard Barhorst, Edward Wise, William Schroeder. 2nd row: Marietta Keifer, Clara Sommer, Veronica Drees, Helen Stang, Alma Boerger, Alma Rottinghaus, Agnes Danzig, Hilda Wise, Clara Rethman, Martha Borchers, Clara Albers, Theresa Wise. 3rd row: Ferd Mader. Teacher. Henrietta Tecklenburg. Lucille Baxter, Emma Fleckenstein.

## MCLEAN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.1

*By Rita Hoying*

The beginnings of the McLean Township School District No. 1, later on more familiarly known as "Dirksen (Dircksen) School", is as murky as the Great Black Swamp whose outskirts reached in this area of McLean Township. Records show that McLean Township was divided into six school districts in 1850, agreeably by law. The description of District No. 1 is:

District No. 1: Beginning at the northwest corner of section 5, town. 8 south, range 4 east; thence east to northeast corner of section 3, town. 8 south, range 4 east; thence south to the southeast corner of section 10, town. 8 south, range 4 east; thence west along the section line to the southwest corner of fractional section 3, town. 8 south, range 4 east; thence north to place of beginning.

It is known that prior to 1850 there was already a school in this vicinity of McLean Township. This school building could have been on the Seger farm, in Section 4, Southwest Quarter. This land was originally part of the large landholdings of the Ayers family. It was purchased from the U. S. government by William Ayers. October 8, 1835. Evidence of a school building can be substantiated by members of the Seger family who know the place of the building's foundation. It was perhaps at this school that B. Henry Shermann was a teacher in 1846.

Mention must be made of several anomalies concerning this area of McLean Township. As shown on several old letters the people of this area received their mail from Minster, Mercer Co., Ohio, and thus these people are many times recorded to be from Minster. Only later did they change to a Berlin or Loramie address. Also for the most part the people of this area were members of St. Augustine Parish in Minster the early years. In 1852, several families in the western portion became members of the newly formed St. Joseph Parish in Egypt in Auglaize County.

In an arithmatic book given to thirteen year old Clemens Hoying (Hoyng) in 1846 by his teacher, B. Henry Shermann, there are several inscriptions that are of interest. Teacher Shermann made the notation that he had been a teacher at the school at St. Rose, Ohio, Berlin School District No. 2 and at School Districts No. 1 and 3 in McLean Township. Clemens Hoying also notes that he is from Minster, Mercer County, Ohio and attended School District No. 1 in McLean Township. Notice also the spelling of Hoyng to Hoying.

The history of School District No. 1 disappears into the foggy mist of time and makes its reappearance

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again on an 1875 map of Shelby County. The school house of District No. 1 is found on a small tract of land on the farm of Clemens Henry Gudenkauf. Commencing with the year 1881, a more consistant history of the School District No. 1 can be told. On September 9, 1881, the Board of Education of McLean Township, consisting of Bernard Drees, Henry Schurman, Henry Menke, Herman Toller and Henry Watterkotter purchased from Gudenkauf a tract of land for $30.00. This parcel of land was at the southeast corner of the north half of the northeast quarter of Section 4, containing 13.75/100 acre which included 3.7/100 acre that had been purchased earlier.

In 1882, Gudenkeuf sold the portion of his farm that contained the school lot to Frank Lange Sr. In 1894, the heirs of Frank Lange sold to the Board of Education of Dirksen (Dircksen) Special School District, a segment of land for $55.00 that enlarged the school lot to 31.75/100 of an acre. This sale had one stipulation that a school building had to be built in six months or the land contract could be reclaimed by the Lange Family. In 1894 a new school house was built and was called "Dirksen (Dircksen) Special School".



Dircksen School.

Dirksen (Dircksen) Special School house was a one room school with one teacher teaching all the grades. Classes consisted not only of geography, history, arithmatic, but also reading and penmanship in German and English. Catechism and Bible history were also taught as the teachers and students were Catholic.

A complete list of teachers who taught at Dirksen School is unavailable. Before 1894, two of the teachers were Bernadine Gudenkauf and Crescentia Grussi. Miss Gudenkauf's two brothers followed in her footsteps. Miss Grussi, a native of Sidney, was a sister of Fr. Alphons Grussi C.PP. S., who served as an assistant pastor in Minster from 1891 to 1894. Fr. Grussi in his time was a well known author of children's stories.

Other teachers were: August B. Gudenkauf 1894-1898, Henry J. Gudenkauf 1898-1903. These two brothers then attended Medical School and Dr. August located in Sidney, Ohio and Dr. Henry in Minster. Herman Kloecker 1903-1905, John Barhorst 1905-1910, Frank Brinkman 1910-1911, Ed Sudhoff 1911-1913, Ed Ernst 1913-1915, William Eilerman 1915-1917, Mrs. Eleanor Bornhorst 1917-1921, Mrs. Louise Bergman 1921-1922, Miss Lucille Slosser 1922-1923, Mrs. Eleanor Bornhorst 1923-1924, and Mrs. Elsie Elsass 1924-1928.

The 1928-1929 school year found the pupils attending other schools. On July 5, 1928 the records show that the 2,841.64 acre school district was divided as follows: 522.56 acres to Ft. Loramie Walkup School District, 760 acres to Jackson Township No. 2, Egypt, and 1559.08 acres to Minster School District. The land and building was sold by the School Board and has had several owners throughout the years.

In June 1932, the first reunion was held and they continued for about ten years, It not only brought together the former teachers and students, but also their families.

Of the various Dirkson group pictures available, the students on the December 10, 1900 were identified. The last surviving member was Mary Duwel Fortman and she passed away January 15, 1987.



1st row: Millie Bornhorst, Bernadine Poeppelemman (Mrs. Joseph Drees), Edward Brandewie, Minnie Meyer, Clem Albers, Fred Poeppelman, Ida Dircksen, (Mrs. Sylvan Griner), Katie Dircksen (Mrs. Fred Bergman), Fannie Schmiesing (Mrs. Ed. Sudhoff), Anton Drees, Elizabeth Bornhorst (Mrs. John Poeppelman).

2nd row: Clara Poeppelman (Mrs. Fred Hoelscher), Celia Brandewie (Mrs. Henry Thaman), Fred Buschman, Ben Fortman, Ben Poeppelman, William Meyer, Mary Duwel (Mrs. Anton Fortman), Henry Duwel, Celia Dircksen (Mrs. Fred Hilgefort), Ben Drees.

3rd row: Bernadine Bornhorst (Mrs. Louis Barhorst), Josephine Drees (Mrs. Peter Kothman), Gertrude Buschman, Herman Bornhorst, Rose Poeppelman, (Mrs. Joseph Huber), Katie Brandewie (Mrs. John Dues), Ella Schmiesing.

4th row: Ben Dircksen, Frank Poeppelman, Albert Brandewie, Joseph Drees, Henry J. Gudenkauf-Teacher, Rose Sommer (Mrs. John Schmiesing), Arnold Dircksen, Louis Meyer and Charles Seger.

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# Village Government

## HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

*By Urban Ratermann and James Schulze*

The Village of Loramies was incorporated in 1889. Before it was incorporated a meeting was held in the school house in Berlin, Ohio. (Now Fort Loramie) on October 6, 1884 on the pros and cons of incorporating. This meeting held five years before the village was incorporated was recorded by William H. Quinlin, Temporary Secretary. Attached are the minutes of the meeting.

Future generations and, posterity, are always desirous of knowing the History of the bringing into existence of any body politic, or municipal or private corporation, therefore, these lines are typed by the person, who at date of action taken as shown by them appertaining to the incorporation or bringing into existance this Village was connected with that event, whereby posterity may ascertain that part of the history of Fort Loramie, Shelby County, Ohio, and are a copy of the notes or memoranda of the meeting held at that date.

Fort Loramie, Ohio, May 15th, 1920, Milton Quinlin.

Berlin, Ohio, October, sixth, 1884

In response to a Petition signed by citizens of Berlin, Ohio, and vicinity, setting forth a desire for having the above named place Incorporated, and meeting to be held on October, sixth eighteen-eighty four, an assemblage was held in the school house in said Berlin, as described by said petition;

This meeting was called to order by Henry Menke, Sr.;

Motion was made by Henry Menke Sr. that Stephan Kirner act as chairman, motion was seconded, put before the house, and carried by the affirmative;

Motion made by Val. Gaier, that Will. B. Quinlin act as Temporary Secretary, motion seconded, put before the house, and carried by the affirmative;

The Chairman then arose and stated the desire of the call for this meeting, requested order, and all persons to express their opinion regarding this place becoming Incorporated, and also then called upon Henry Menke Sr., who expressed himself in favor of Incorporation; next Henry Rottinghause gave his views in short way that he thought it not desirable under present circumstance to Incorporate, responded to by Henry Menke Sr.

Motion was then made by John B. Willman that Henry Menke Sr. read the names signed to said Petition referred to;

Motion made by H. Menke Sr. that Mike Moorman express his opinion, Mr. Moorman responded saying he was not prepared and unable to comply with the desire of the motion; John H. Willman was next called upon to give his opinoin, and responded speaking in favor of Incorporation; Joseph Rieger was called for his opinion, and spoke a few words in favor of Incorporation; Val Gaier next called, and responded by saying that others had stated his desire to have place Incorporated;

Motion made by Henry Menke Sr. that a Committee of five be selected to act as Agent to proceed towards having this place Incorporated, motion seconded, put to the house, and carried by those voting in the affirmative.

William B. Quinlin, Secretary.

Albert Hasebrook was the first elected Mayor of the Village of Loramies. He was elected July 29, 1889. In the 98 years of this Village, 15 Mayors have served. William H. Quinlin served longer than any other mayor 1918 thru 1933 and 1940 thru 1945 - 22 years.

Urban Ratermann was the youngest elected Mayor at the age of 26. Also Ratermann was the last Mayor to serve a two year term. Starting in 1968 and thereafter the elected term for Mayor has been a four year term.

In 1912 and 1913 term, a person served on the Village Council who was born in Germany and was never a citizen of this country. This person also served on the voting pole.

Fort Loramie was known as Berlin, prior to 1889, however when it was incorporated, it was the Village of Loramie, since there was already a Berlin, Ohio. Then in 1912 after the mail service was confusing Loramie with Lorain, Ohio and Laramie, Wyoming, the name was changed to Fort Loramie.

The south end of Fort Loramie on South Main Street (Route 66) was known as Bucktown. Legend

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has it, that the name came since there were a few unmarried elderly gentlemen who lived in this area.

Historic - Greenback Road. Land on the north side of this road was owned by a Ratermann family and land on the south side was owned by a Boerger family. There was a dispute over the location of the road and because of the cost of the litigation, it became known as "Greenback Road."

**VILLAGE OF LORAMIE AND FORT LORAMIE**

*INCORPORATED 1889*

MAYORS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Albert Hasebrook | (1889-1893) | 5 years |
| 2. Thomas Walkup | (1894-1897) | 4 years |
| 3. John Barhorst | (1898-1901) | 4 years |
| 4. William Sherman | (1902-1909) | 8 years |
| 5. John Barhorst | (1910-1911) | 2 years |
| 6. August Kuck | (1912-1913) | 2 years |
| 7. William Sherman | (1914-1917) | 4 years |
| 8. William Quinlin | (1918-1933) | 16 years |
| 9. Oliver Slattery | (1934-1939) | 6 years |
| 10. William Quinlin* | (1940-1945) | 6 years |

*(Council President B. G. Eaton served as Mayor after Quinlin died)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 11. Albert Brucken | (1946-1951) | 6 years |
| 12. Urban E. Ratermann | (1952-1967) | 16 years |
| 13. Anthony Winner** | (1968-1971) | 4 years |

**(Council President Lester Barlage served as Mayor after Winner died)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 14. Lester J. Barlage | (1972-1979) | 8 years |
| 15. Doyle Iiams | (1980-Present) | |

MARSHALLS OF THE VILLAGE OF LORAMIE AND FORT LORAMIE

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Christian Kirsch | 1889 served 3 years |
| 2. Frank Moeller | 1892 served 2 years |
| 3. J. B. Puthoff | 1894 served 10 years |
| 4. John B. Raterman | 1903 served 2 years |
| 5. Bernard J. Gerling | 1905 served 6 years |
| 6. H. Wm. Behrns | 1910 served 2 years |
| 7. Gerhard Tecklenberg | 1912 served 4 years |
| 8. John Romie | 1915 served 10 years |
| 9. Anton Toller | 1924 served 2 years |
| 10. Frank Nabor | 1926 served 2 years |
| 11. George Raterman | 1928 served 6 years |
| 12. Rhine Bollheiner | 1934 served 8 years |
| 13. George Klocker | 1942 served 6 years |
| 14. Anthony Pleiman | 1948 served 2 years |
| 15. Henry Bollheimer | 1950 served 12 years |
| 16. Carl Wuebbenhorst | 1961 served 10 years |
| 17. Vernon M. Frey | 1970 served 18 years (to present time) |

The following streets were added to the village in the years indicated. Louie Street and Herman Street in 1950; Eastview Drive 1952, Leo Street and Ben Street 1957; Oakwood Street, Grandview Street 1957; Monterey Drive 1962; Sioux Street 1975 and Miami Street 1984.

Miami and Erie Canal thru Fort Loramie, the section in the main business section west of North Main Street, was filled in the late forties, now used as a park and two parking lots. The section from Vogelsangs Cafe to the Saw Mill (Loramie Banking Center) was filled in the late Fifties. The remaining section of the canal was filled from 1970 to the present time.

Property located on the northeast corner of Main and Elm Streets was voted out of the corporation by the Village Council so it could be used as a Tavern, the Village having the number of liquor permits allowed by law. When it was no longer used as a Tavern it was to be annexed back to the Corporation. These records were lost and the property was not annexed back to the Village until 1964.

William J. Inderrieden served as Village Treasurer from 1912 to 1954, 42 years.

Joseph Borchers served from 1955 thru 1965, then in 1966 the Treasurer position was combined with the Clerks position, Clerk-Treasurer and James Schulze was the first Clerk-Treasurer in Fort Loramie.

Martin Romie was the Village Clerk from 1926 to 1952, 26 years. Albert Romie served as a council member for 24 years, from 1934 thru 1957.

In 1937 and 1938, all the brick sidewalks in the Village were replaced with concrete walks, with W.P.A. labor.

In 1940 the Board of Public Affairs was established to manage the water works system that was being installed. First Members of the Board were August Gaier, President, Clem Ruhenkamp and William Raterman.

When the bond issue was passed for the Water System, there was also a requirement as to the number of properties that had signed up to tap in. The Board needed a few more signers to proceed. When the well driller arrived they did not have the necessary signers, so the driller, drilled a dry hole for several days, while the Village negotiated a contract with residences (outside the corporation) on the south end and this gave them the required number of tap ins.

Richard Simon has served on the Board of Public Affairs for 18 years, from 1958 thru 1975.

George Bornhorst was the first full time employee hired by the Village of Fort Loramie in September 1961.

The first Planning Commission was appointed for the Village in June 1967. Members were Melvin Puthoff, Alvin Rosengarten and Doyle Iiams. Melvin Puthoff is still serving on the Commission.

Income Tax Ordinance was passed by the Village Council on October 27, 1975, with an effective date of January 1, 1976. This 1% income tax now generates approximately $96,300.00 annually for Fort Loramie.

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**A COMPARISON OF INCOME, EXPENSES AND SALARIES**

| | 1912 | 1987 |
|---|---|---|
| Population | 489 | 1,000 |
| Income | $3,412.41 | $534,347.28 |
| Expenditures | $3,150.75 | $544,728.81 |
| Mayor | $ 50.00 | $ 1,500.00 |
| Clerk | $ 50.00 | $ 3,500.00* |
| Marshall | $ 75.00 | $ 21,900.00 |
| Legal Council | $ 50.00 | $ 800.00 |
| Councilman | $ 2.00 per month | $ 360.00 annually |
| Hired Help, Hourly | $ 0.35 per hour | $ 5.50 per hour |
| Treasurer | $ 30.00 | $ 0.00 |
| Fines | $ 15.00 | $ 1,463.00 |

* (Clerk-Treasurer)

## SEWAGE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

1. April 20, 1954 - A preliminary sewage report was issued by Carl Simon Consulting Engineer of Van Wert.

A. The report was based on a 1950 census of 508 (180 water users)

B. The report at that time suggested a "package type" sewage treatment plant.

C. Cost of the project (estimate) was $160,900.00.

D. The proposed plant site was proposed in the area which the present plant is located.

E. The Village went on a yearly permit basis to emit secondary treated sewage into waters of Ohio (The Loramie Creek).

F. This permit was allowed for renewal until June 13, 1967. At this time an order was issued by the Water Pollution Control Board: Time-table for Village toward sewage.

1. Preliminary report by 7-1-68.
2. Detailed plans and finance program by 12-31-70.
3. Construction begun by 12-31-71.

This was the beginning of the present sewage program.

2. April 11, 1968 - The Village obtained permission from the Shelby County Board of Health to allow new construction without secondary leeching system treatment. This was allowed because the Village was in the process of developing a sewage system.

3. February 1968 - Council interviewed engineering firms.

A. Burgess and Niple, Columbus, Ohio

B. Finkbeiner, Pettis and Strout, Toledo, Ohio

C. A. M. Kinney, Cincinnati, Ohio

D. Chester Kurtz, County Engineer for Logan County (Designed the plant at Russelvania which we visited).

4. May 13, 1968 Council hired the firm of A. M. Kinney but due to contract differences, the firm was dropped.

5. September 17, 1968 - Council interviewed Mr. Nelson Watson Consulting Engineer from Crawfordsville, Indiana. Hired December 9, 1968.

6. Preliminary report was submitted April 14, 1969, to the State for approval. Estimate cost $610,000.00.

7. With the approval of the preliminary report, the Village initiated a sewage charge ordinance in order to raise funds to offset the project expense. To date the rate charge has raised enough funds to pay for the engineering cost. (3/4 of total).

8. A public hearing on sewage was held June 19, 1969 in order to give the residents first hand information on the State ordered sewage system.

9. At this time, the Division of Natural Resources was planning the development of Blackberry Island and their proposed sewage system. Village officials went to Columbus to investigate the possibility of bringing that sewage to Fort Loramie in a joint effort in hopes to reduce cost. The State turned thumbs down.

10. Presented application to the Ohio Water Development Association (OWDA) August 11, 1969.

11. September 8, 1969 - Authorized engineer to prepare detailed plans and specifications.

12. As requested by the Ohio Water Pollution Control Board, an ordinance was passed prohibiting storm sewer, drain connections, footer tile, etc. to enter the sanitary system.

13. Detailed plans and specifications were issued to the State for approval in October 1971, who in turn ordered changes. Revised plans were resubmitted in December 1971, and approved Jan. 3, 1972.

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14. With approval and revised estimates, the sewage finance committee studied the areas open for financing the system. ($740,000.00)

15. Feb. 1972 - A study was made to explore the possibility of joining the Minster sewage system. This report showed that the possibility of savings could be had. Therefore, the engineer was instructed to initiate a preliminary study.

16. March 1972 - Representatives of the Village went to Columbus and met with the FHA and OWDA representatives. This meeting was had to get the financing program rolling. (Both for loans and grants)

17. April 17, 1972 - Preliminary report was received on the cost estimate to join the Minster system.

A. Minster will prepare a study of cost to add Loramie to their system. (Figure necessary to see if joining Minster is feasible.)

18. Through the direction of the Federal E.P.A., The Village of Fort Loramie was directed to plan a system whereas the Village of Minster would be the treatment center.

19. The Village finalized the plans and legal matters during the "seventies".

20. The contract was awarded to the Degan Construction Co. of Lima, Ohio for the construction of the sanitary sewer system in November of 1978. The contract price was for $1,683,846.50.

21. Financing of the project came from federal grants, village funds, and a 40 year loan from the Farmers Home Administration for $598,300.

22. The project was completed in March 1980.

23. In 1986, the Council was approached by the County Commissioners concerning the possibility of joining the Lake Loramie Sewer District. Due to the increase in treatment cost to the Village by Minster, it became attractive both financially and for long range growth reasons.

24. Council moved to join in with the Lake Loramie Sewer District in September 1986. The estimated cost was $641,700.

25. Construction will begin in 1988 with completion in 1989.




Fort Loramie Village officials, 1987. Standing, left to right: Council members, Richard Wehrman, Paul Freytag, Doyle liams (Mayor), Robert Eilerman, Gary Bensman, Alvin Rosengarten, and Jerry Slonkosky. Members of Board of Public Affairs are shown in front: James Schulze, Clerk: Michael Gavit and Jerry Schwartz. Absent was BPA member, Roger Schmitmeyer. Courtesy of Sidney Daily News.

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# This and That

## THIS AND THAT

*By Clarence Raterman*

Gypsies would camp with their wagons to a place outside of the town. They would come into town dressed in their colorful costumes. The women sought to tell fortunes and the men to sharpen knives, scissors, etc. Often times when they could draw the people out of their homes, another gypsy would get into the house by the back way to get what they could get.

My oldest brother had an early auto. If a storm was brewing the storm curtains were placed on the raised top. In balmy days the top could be laid back. In the evening the auto was equipped with coal oil lights.

Winter was a hard time for autos. My father worked at Minster Machine during World War 1. Every night the car was drained of its water. In the morning water was heated in the tank of the wood burning stove to place in the radiator. A bucket of corncobs was lit and placed under the oil reserve of the motor. With heated water in the radiator and warm oil in the motor, the magneto was set and the car was ready to crank. Cranking the car caused many broken arms.

One Sunday when our family was out for a drive, we had a flat tire on an old mud road east of Loramie. We had no jack. My father and older brother took rails from an old rail fence. Rails were put on the ground to provide height. Another rail was used as a jack. With the tire fixed, the fence was rebuilt and away we went.

Corn cobs were used to start the wood burning stove. We boys had the job of taking our express wagons to Sherman's Elevator, where they had a large pile of cobs due to shelling corn. While filling our sacks, corn cob battles were often fought.

Many young men would walk into town on Sunday nights to see the town girls. If anyone had a horse and buggy HE WAS IT, and drew a date with the most desirable belle. One of the favorite pastimes was playing hide and go seek in the cemetery.

A troop of soldiers marched through Ft. Loramie during World War 1. They encamped on the south side of Loramie Creek at Arkenbergs. Many of the town girls were attracted to the encampment. Many irate fathers also visited getting their daughters home.

Occasionally Fr. Moeller would allow we boys to climb the church bell tower to the top. The view was marvelous, but the pigeons and their secretions did not like it a bit.

When anyone died of an infectuous disease it was necessary to fumigate the house after the burial. Windows and doors were stuffed with rags along their outside exteriors. Everyone moved out for the night. A powder was lit and the smoke allowed to enter the house through a key hole.

Tramps were common. I remember my 'mother providing many a one with a bread and butter sandwich, along with a cup of coffee. The town marshall would let them sleep in the jail house over night. If they needed clothing Fr. Moeller would send them to Willman's Store to get fitted. The congregation or he paid the bill.

When my father was unable to drive due to illness in the late 1920s, I joined with him in the insurance business. A policy was due near Egypt. The first question asked of me by the old German farmer was "Can you speak German? When I said "No" He said, "I'll be in to see your father."

Hunting honey from bumblebee nests was a favorite pastime. Old shingles were used to swat the bees. Stings were treated by holding mud or horse manure to the sting.

Smoking reeds was our introduction to the filthy habit. If someone obtained real cigs or stogies, culverts were the places for doing the deed.

When the creek backed up, high water would come to the edge of what used to be Kirners (now Gaiers parking lot). The field was Ft. Loramies first swimming pool. Of course we wore swimming suits, in the form of old pants or underwear.

No one had any money. We created our own games. All of us had chores to do, and we had better do them, or else. In the winter we made ice cream by taking fresh snow and putting red sugar on it. Pop corn was common and mom's cookies were a treat, just as they are today.

Berlin, was the recognized name for Ft. Loramie on Shelby County Court House records, until the late spring of 1889, when it became Loramies, with the incorporation of the town. In 1890, the name was changed to Loramie. On March the 23rd of 1912, the

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Sidney Daily News printed the following: Adolph Raterman, August Wise, J. D. Inderrieden, B. J. Wuebker, J. B. Raterman, Emil Siegel, John Albers, John Boerger, John Walkup, Sr.; John Seger, Joseph Rieger, John H. Willman, John Bramlage, and Henry Tecklenberg, all residents of Loramie, have filed a petition in court to have the name of that village changed to Ft. Loramie. The change is asked for on account of the post office at that place being changed to Ft. Loramie by the government recently, to avoid confusion with Lorain, Ohio.

Besides the above designations, records show that the town also had been referred to as Lormies and Lorimers.

The following was found in old records of St. Augustine Church, in Minster, by Rita Hoying: In the year 1844, the 13th day of February, we, Heinrich Herzog, pastor of St. Augustines, in Minster, and Louis Navarron, priest, blessed there, in the congregation of St. Michaels, in the City of Berlin, Shelby County, Ohio, a cross planted in the middle of the cemetery, of the very same congregation, hereafter its cemetery, according to the Rite of the Holy Roman Church.

Therefore attested, Louis Navarron, priest.

In 1875 merchant ice houses took care of the task of providing for cold beer to thirsty patrons. There were four known ice houses in Ft. Loramie: Vondrelles, Bruckens, Rottinghouses, and Lehmans. At the bulkhead on Lake Loramie, Raterman and Steinemann, had an ice house with Cincinnati connections. Another ice house was in operation at the Basinberg turn around. During the 1910's, the ice man was part of everyday life, until the electric refrigerator took his place.

In 1850 the northern part of Cynthian Township was added to McLean Township.

In 1883 Berlin boasted of having two livery stables, Ernstes and Gaier, north of the present day Grimm apartments, and Teckenbergs, which burned in the 1910s, located where the Park Street garage now operates.

In 1883 Berlin had two drug stores: Hummer and Vocke, and Wm. Quinlins.

Before the aqueduct broke, this was the favorite spot to go skinny dipping. The boys got down in the trough when an occasional horse and wagon, or horse and buggy, passed on the old mud road, that connected Minster and Ft. Loramie. With the aqueduct gone, we boys retreated to the Little Wasteway. This was a place on the old canal feeder, which had a gate that let water from the feeder into the Loramie Creek, when the water was too high in the feeder. It was about 12 feet deep by the gate, and the basin below was three or four feet. We had an agreement with the Minster boys, as to the times we would use the feeder. Beginners were put in the wasteway basin, where they learned to swim. When they thought they were ready, they were brought to the top of the feeder. They had to swim across the deep water of the feeder canal under the watchful supervision of the older boys. If they succeeded they joined the older boys. If they did not, they were again placed in the basin. Some times the caretaker would forget to chain the gate. The gate was opened and it was fun to throw ourselves in the gushing waters. Another fun item was pulling ourselves to the bottom of the deep water, using the gates' iron bars that closed and opened the gates. When we reached bottom we left go and shot to the top. One boy decided he would make a life preserver. He took six molasses cans, cleaned them out, put the lids on, and tied them around his waist. He jumped from the top of the feeder into the water below. All the lids popped off, and we had to drag him out of the water.

Taxes were to be paid in Sidney between 4:30 a.m. and dusk. It was an all day task to get this accomplished in the 1800s.

Celebrations were often held at Filburns and Shorts in the early 1900s. A favorite means of getting there was to walk to the reservoir, and rent a boat to carry you the rest of the way.

Kloeker's Woods, Boerger's Woods, and Bender's Park have been Ft. Loramie's celebration places.

Up to 1825 only reading, writing, spelling and numbers were permitted to be taught. Up to the 1900s teachers were examined only in reading, writing and arithmetic.

Halloween in the 1920s consisted of three days of pranks. The first night was corn night, when shelled corn was thrown at doors and windows. The second night was cabbage night; when homes had their doors pounded by cabbage heads. On the eve of "All Saints" pranksters carried off property and deposited it in some other location. The next day was a day of curiosity, people went around the town seeing what happened, and hunting their belongings.

The church parking lot was a weed patch inn the early 1900s. Fr. Moeller had two tennis courts placed on the south side, with the provision that girls could not wear shorts.

Medicine shows, held in Brucken's Hall, were a common form of entertainment in the early 1900's. The show consisted of two people; one playing a white man, the other a black. These comic acts were given between sales pitches for patent medicines, soaps, and household articles. It would be announced that some citizen of the village had used one of their products with marvelous results. Several girls from the community were selected to run for

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beauty queen, and every article sold would have a certain value in points, that could be deposited in a jar marked with her name. After selling an article for a certain price, the price would be reduced, resulting in more sales. A show usually ran for one week.

In 1925 Ft. Loramie had a movie theater in old St. Michael's Hall. Fr. Moeller bought two movie projectors. A slide machine was purchased to show ads and future shows. For 25 cents you could see a movie every Sunday night. Clarence Raterman ran the machines. At one time movies were also shown in the old Freytag warehouse across from the present day bank.

Barney Krampe, the local Moline Tractor dealer, showed comedies and Moline tractor films once a year in the present Ft. Loramie Home Appliance Store. Food made from some farm crop, such a alfalfa, soybeans, etc. was given free to the public. Barney also participated in plowing contests held in New Bremen, at the Farmers' Picnic, a yearly event, that attracted great numbers of Ft. Loramie people.

Snuffy Smith of the comics, depicts real life in the early 1900's in Ft Loramie in relation to splitting wood, and the wash tubs with people bathing. Early Ft. Loramie boys and girls bathed in wash tubs with heated water from the tops of stoves, and tanks attached. Saturday was bath day, because you had to be clean to go to church on Sunday. In large families bath water was used for more than one kid, due to the large amounts of water required. During the summer the boys generally escaped baths by using the old swimming hole.

Going barefoot started in early spring. Outside of going to church,' shoes were generally not worn until school started.

The priest carried great weight in early Ft. Loramie. No farmer would think of going to work in his fields on Sunday until they would get the priest's permission.

Many families in early Ft. Loramie raised a pig for butchering purposes in the fall. It was mostly fed from table scraps. Children in the family would make a pet out of the pig and there were many tearful farewells when the pig was shot and stuck with a knife for blood pudding. The old hot water barrel where the pig was hauled in and out for dehairing, the rack for the carcass, the sausage stuffing machine, the gathering of the neighbors to help, a supper of sausage patties, sugar curing, canning of sausage in grease are all favorite childhood memories.

Currents and gooseberries were found in all the gardens together with rhubarb. Dandelions were the first green food of the year as groceries did not handle green vegetables. Lettuce, endive, etc. were referred to as rabbit food.

## THIS AND THAT

*By Evelyn Busse*

Did you know?

There was a livery barn on Church Street. Later a weekly paper "The Western Times" was published at the same location. Now it is used as an apartment.

Did you know?

Ft. Loramie has highest elevation of any point between Cincinnati and Toledo. Elevation 512 feet from Cincinnati and Ft. Loramie; 395 feet from Toledo to this town.

The original estimate of cost to construct canal was $2,500,000. It actually cost $12,500,000. and opened in 1841.

Loramie Reservoir (Lake Loramie) was one of the reservoirs built to supply water to canal. It was formerly farm land. Some of the settlers there were Hoelscher, Rottinghaus and Eilerman. They were still moving as water was filling the diggings.

Last official canal boat trip to Ft. Loramie was made in 1912. William Combs, Captain, and Louis Goffena hauled a load of gravel on DeCamp Statler from Newport to Loramie.

Did you know?

State Route 66 was originally a main Indian Trail.

Did you know?

In 1880 Ft. Loramie boasted of a Nieder Korn Hack Line.

First inheritance tax collected in Shelby County was that of the W. J. Sherman estate, December, 1894. He died in July, 1894.

Loramies Post Office changed to Ft. Loramie, Jan. 1, 1911.

In the 1930's, Ft. Loramie had their first tennis courts. They were located on what is St. Michaels parking lot, west of church. While courts were made of dirt, some good games and tournaments were held there.

Did you know?

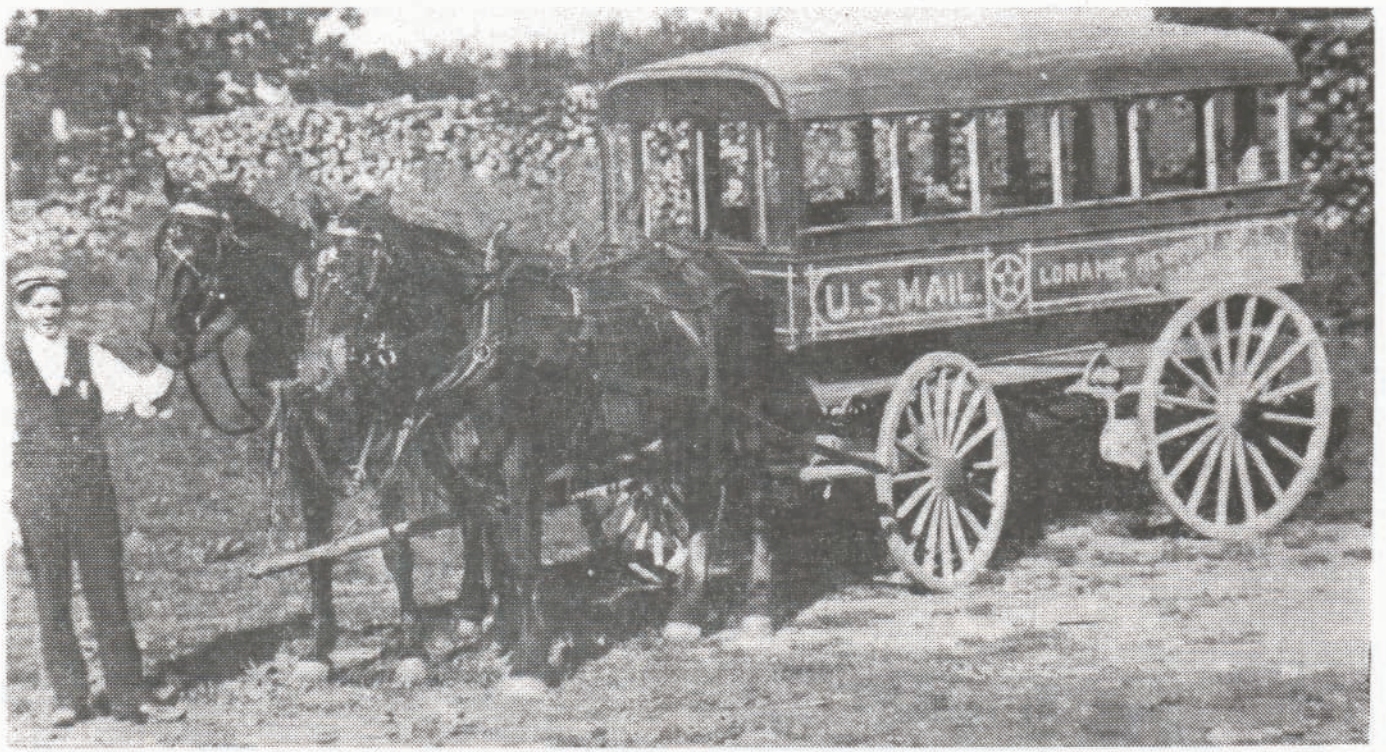
A good flow of oil was struck in vicinity of Ft. Loramie on February 10, 1927.

Do you know any of these early Fort Loramie residents? These next two pages of photos are from late 1800 and early 1900 newspapers loaned by Mary Ellen Holtvogt.

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The fire department of 1885 to 1890 pictured with their new "pumper." Left to right, first row: Philip Griner, William Henke, August Wise, Joe Focke, Jacob Uhleman. Second row: Christ Kirsch, Valentine Gaier, John Wilkens, William Sherman, John Anthony, Martin Lehman, Barney Gerling, Henry Wolf, Henry Wendlin, Joe Reiss, Barney Lammers, Henry Quatman. Third row: Math Brucken, Gust Wise, John Seger, Gust Merring, James Cardo, Gerhard Kleinhenz, Barney Puthopp, Paul Lautebue, John Quatman, Henry Surman, John Kirner, John Romie, Philip Anthony, Joe Quatman, Bill Edwards.




The U. S. mail and passenger "hack" which made a daily round trip from Fort Loramie to Newport, Oran, Sidney, and return, covering the 30-mile trip in a full day's time. Pictured here is the driver and caretaker, John Severin.

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It's a good guess that "these guys" were the hottest outfit in town. The Shingledecker band. Left to right: Ira Griner, George Brown, August Wise and John Walkup. Two drums and two flutes.



The boys class of Ft. Loramie schools in 1900. Left to right, rear row: Joe Boerger, Ed Wendeln, Louis Koverman, Ben Fleckenstein, Henry Poeppelman, Joe Arkenberg, Christ Kirsch, Ben Holthaus, John Broering, Philip Barhorst. Third row: Teddy Rethman, John Raterman, Williw Wolfe, John Quinlin, Fritz Cutter, Will Schulz, Earl Flynn Sylvan Griner, Boy Brucken, Urban Gregor, and schoolmaster, B. J. Borchers. 2nd row: Raymond Quinlin, Joe Holthaus, Henry Lehman, Carl Lehman, Ed Naber, Jake Bollheimer, Frank Jones, Karl Kirsch, Aloysius Quatman, and Ferd Arkenberg. 1st row: Raymond Mougey, John Gregor, Julius Boerger, Grover Cox, Leo Reiss, Barney Wilkens, Will Barhorst, and Frank Barlage.

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# Architecture

## LOCAL ARCHITECTURE PROVIDES INSIGHT FOR FT. LORAMIE'S HISTORY

*By Ferdinand E. Freytag, Architect A.I.A.*

### INTRODUCTION:

This study is based on information of an Ohio Historic Inventory of houses and buildings in Ft. Loramie, prepared by Dan. Becker through the organization of the Shelby County River Corridor in 1978. All of these buildings and information are filed in the Wilderness Trails Museum, Ft. Loramie.

The goals of this inventory is to survey and identify all the houses and buildings with significant architectural features or historical importance as related to the development of Ft. Loramie. The buildings in Ft. Loramie are mostly Vernacular with popular architectural style detail and influence. Berlin (Fort Loramie) was platted in 1837.



The Karl August Freitag home Vernacular style "Common to the area" is located 79 S. Main Street and Greenback road. The home was designed by Albert Freytag who was the oldest son and studied architecture through a Correspondence Course out of Scranton. Pennsylvania. Karl Freitag, a mason, built this house as his own in 1910. Karl August Freitag born Oct. 12. 1858 in Oppershausen, and Maria Christine Nee Schmidt born March 10. 1862 in Mulverstedt Germany Province of Saxony. These two villages are located between Erfurt and Eisenach.
Karl August Freitag and Marie Christine were married Jan. 3. 1886 in Mulverstedt. Rev. Pastor Stelzer officiating.

### VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Our ancestors carried over with them the way of building they knew best. This is Vernacular Architecture, all vernacular means in an architectural sense is "Common to the area" it is not a high style textbook example of architecture. It is important because it is a style that is commonly used in an area by the people there and often relates to the country from which they came or is associated with a particular local builder or Architect. Most of the architecture found in Ft. Loramie, Ohio is Vernacular.



Karl August Freitag's occupation was a bricklayer and stone mason who built his first house in Oppershausen. Germany in 1885. they lived there for three years. They had two sons. Albert age 2 years. 2 months and Louis 1 year 4 months. They lived in this home in Oppershausen. Germany until Sept. 4th. 1889 when the family came to America on S.S. Munchen. port of debarkation Bremen. Germany. They arrived at Port of Baltimore. Maryland. U.S.A. Sept. 17. 1889 then by Immigrant train to Amarilla. Texas then to New Braunfels. Texas. A brother George Freitag. of Karl Freitag lived in New Braunfels. He came to America earlier, another brother Heinrich, the oldest, remained in Germany.
A daughter. Maria was born May 12th. 1890. died in infancy. was buried in New Braunsfels Cemetery. A stone cross built by Karl Freitag markes the grave.
A second daughter Bertha was born in Texas Aug. 31. 1891. in the same year they left Texas and came to Ohio. Karl couldn't stand the climate so their doctor advised them to go to a climate similar to what it was in Germany.
They eame to the vicinity of Covington, Ohio and stayed with friends who came from the same town in Germany. The Freitag's then moved to (Berlin) Ft. Loramie, Ohio. Children born in Ft. Loramie were Edward, Nov. 17. 1893. Herman, Aug. 30, 1895, Hermina, Feb. 23, 1900, Ferdinand, Apr. 21, 1902 and Pauline, July 19. 1904.

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This home is a vernacular cottage style, c. 1880, located at 53 South Main St. Originally it was the Schmidt Home and was the birthplace of Ferd. Freytag in 1902. The home is now owned by Aloys (Bud) Hoelscher.



A vernacular style home built in 1911 and was the home of Peter Krampe, a blacksmith and his wife. Located 17 Elm Street. The vacant lot next to the home had the blacksmith shop of Peter Krampe where you heard the ringing sound of his hammer on the anvil forming horseshoes and watch him shoeing horses. It was a most enjoyable sight and experience for the school children who passed the blacksmith shop.



Peter Krampe's Blacksmith Shop. Leo Wilkens, Frances Brucken, Elizabeth Brucken, and Hy Seiters in front.



The Albert Freytag home, another Vernacular style home built in 1911. It is located at 46 S. Main Street. Lot 49 and was designed and built by Albert Freytag. He was the oldest son of Karl and Maria Schmidt Freytag, born in Oppershausen Province of Saxony, Germany on Jan. 29, 1887. Albert studied architecture through a correspondence course out of Scranton, Pennsylvania and was also a bricklayer by trade taught by his father. He designed several homes and helped lay brick. He was also the Architect on the bank building located next to Busse's market now owned and occupied by Busse's.
He married Amelia Boerger, daughter of John and Mary Sherman Boerger who lived on 38 S. Main Street, Lot 30. Albert and Amelia Freytag had five daughters, Maria, Louise, Elsie, Paula, Margaret and three sons, Karl, Albert and Robert. The home consists of one and a half stories with a poured concrete foundation. Wall construction of brick from the local Wagler brick yard. The gable roof with shed wall gables on each side in the roof. A porch across the front with a pediment roof with stucco and post infill, the porch has brick railings and posts and cement floor.



This Vernacular style home was built pre-1868. Located 48 S. Main St. This is the only house identified as a log house with walnut siding. The floor joist are hewn logs with flooring of two foot wide boards. It sits far back from the street, there was formerly a fence along the street and square limestone entrance columns and columns at corners of lot. The large front lot was utilized as a cow pasture. The old Miami & Erie Canal was within 50 feet of the back of the house.
The home was occupied for a long time by the Burkhard Zimmerman family. Then was purchased by Albert Freytag. Herman and Elizabeth (Grothaus) Freytag lived there and their son Richard was born in the house during the depression. Ferd and Sylvia Freytag lived there with their children Julia and Philip from 1932-1937, then Albert Freytag sold it to Robert Freytag, his son. The home is now altered by a new owner with aluminum siding.

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A Vernacular style home at 22 Elm Street. Original owner, Bernard Pillie in 1872 and then the home of Bernadine Raterman, his daughter. J. B. Raterman became owner in 1896.
The Raterman family were early settlers and land owners of the area. They came from Alfhausen. Hanover, Germany in 1834. J. B. Raterman and Katherine Lauterbur had 8 children Ida. Mary. Anna. Nickolas. George. John. William and Clarence.
The home was built by Valentine Gaier. a leading builder after the Civil War. Note the brick sidewalk. and curbs and the picket fence which were common around the turn of the century. The present owner. Leo Schulze. 1987.



Another Vernacular style building located 14 W. Main Street. built 1892. Facing a parking lot across the street originally the Miami and Erie Canal. This building housed the First Bank in Berlin (Ft. Loramie). Later it became the residence of John Wilkens. Mr. and Mrs. Wilkens children were Loretta, Ursula, Alice. Bernard. Edward and Norbert. Alice married a Reser and had a son Elmer who was reared by his grandparents after his mother died.
Also of interest. to the left is the William Borchers Store who moved to Ft. Loramie in 1910. bought and improved the building. This store opened in 1910. It was also the ticket and freight agent office for the Western Ohio Railroad (Electric Traction Line) as well as the Wells Fargo Express.



The August and Katherin Wise home of Queen Ann Vernacular style of frame construction was built in 1913 and is located at 28-30 South Main Street. The original August Wise sawmill was located on the rear of lot adjacent on the north lot. now The Loramie Banking Center.
August Wise married a daughter Magdelin of Joseph Reiss of Ft. Loramie. The Wise's had 7 children Esther and Teresa (twins). Hilda. Katherin. Madge. Verona and Edward.



The John and Mary (Sherman) Boerger Home. built in 1895 and located 38 S. Main Street. A one story addition was added in 1901. Vernacular style frame construction now has aluminum siding. John. Mary Boerger and children Gertrude, Amelia. Teresa. Mary. Paul and Carl lived there.
John Boerger was one of the original partners in the Loramie Banking Company. founded in 1904. The present owner is Gary Grimm.



The Christian Kirch home is vernacular style and located 26 W. Main Street. Lot 34N. It was built around 1856 and fronts upon the park which was originally the Miami and Erie Canal. Christian Kirch who was appointed postmaster of Ft. Loramie in 1907 owned this lot from 1872-1900. This building was the Post Office at one time. He was also the first Marshal of Loramie. The building now is the residence of Richard Monnin.

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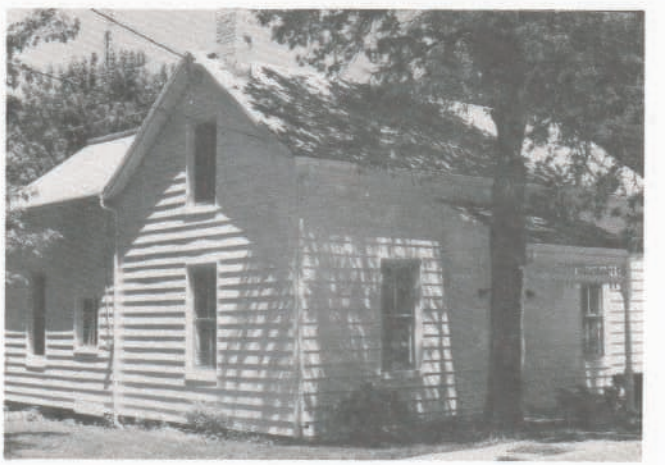
A Vernacular style home located at 28 W. Main Street. built in 1875 and fronted upon the old Miami & Erie Canal. now a park.
A picture at the Ft. Loramie Historical Society taken about 1915 of this house. showing the bays on the front of the house. Bays were original with front porch and railing and brick foundation of bays added in 1940 by Edw. Freytag. local brick mason. Edward Freytag married Ethel Speckman of New Bremen. her grandmother was a Cardo. Edward and Ethel's children were Paul. Mary. James and Edward Jr. (twins).



VERNACULAR COTTAGE ARCHITECTURE
The Leander Notheis house is a Vernacular Cottage Style located on 28 Elm Street. Lot 143. across the street is St. Michael's Church. The house was built prior to 1883.
Leander Notheis, a teacher. had two sons Joseph an organist for the St. Michaels church and principal of Ft. Loramie School. Florian another son also a teacher. Two daughters. Elizabeth and Rose.
The house is somewhat altered. the original had wood siding, it now has asbestos shingles, the front door stoop and brick and concrete platform and wrought iron railings were added later. Home now owned by John Vagedes.



The Bernard Vogelsang. Vernacular style residence located 24 W. Main Street across the street from the Miami and Erie Canal Park. Ben Vogelsang operated the Vogelsang Cafe and his sons Elmer and Ralph carried on with the business. The building sits in the point of a triangle bounded by S.R. 66 the north by S.R. 705 and the west by the old Miami & Erie Canal. A bridge was over the canal in front of the building at one time.
This Vogelsang home was built of brick by Karl Freytag. a brick mason and his sons in 1913. The owner now Raymond Larger.



A Vernacular Cottage Style home c. 1880, home of Jacob Uhleman, wife and children.He was a shoe cobbler and also the lamplighter for Berlin's (Ft. Loramie) street lights. Present home of Marie Barlage.

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A small Vernacular Cottage Style. located 16 W. Main Street facing the Miami & Erie Canal, now a park. Also across the street was the end of the interurban street car track. The street car came to Loramie in 1910 from the North - Minster, New Bremen, St. Marys, Wapakoneta, etc.
This building was built in 1910 and used as Albert Anthony's barber shop sometime around 1912-13. Later it became the First American Legion Home in Ft. Loramie, then a small library operated by Albert Brucken.



A Vernacular East Lake Style at 41 Park Street. Built in 1900 for Dora and Dona Gudenkauf. An addition was added in 1902. B. J. Wuebker purchased this property in 1904. He was president of the Loramie Banking Company also involved in running the Flour Mill with the Bramlage family, owners of the mill. Present owner Henry Goldschmidt, 1987.



The Vernacular East Lake Style built in 1888. The home of Bernard Pillie Jr., wife Lottie and a daughter Elizabeth. Located 47 Elm Street, fronting S. R. 362. A very shady lot adjacent to the school grounds. Bernard Pillie was a farmer with large land holdings. Present owner is James McGowan.



A Vernacular East Lake style home at 30 West Main Street, facing the Canal Park, originally the Miami & Erie Canal. John Beaver bought the lot in 1857 and constructed original portion of building. In 1892 Thomas Walkup, M.D. purchased the home and added front portion of the house with his office in the basement in 1901. He had three signs for his basement office; the top sign was "Dr. Walkup" the sign with arrow - Walk Down, at the bottom landing, the sign with arrow, Walk In.
The front entrance door on the porch has an irreplaceable etched glass print of Art Nouveau flowers and print of an early pioneer home and yard. The home was also owned by Henry Barhorst, a wealthy Land owner who later went broke. The home was purchased by Herman and Edward Freytag and Herman lived in this home when remarried to Esther Vornholt widow of Vernon Conradi. Herman had a son, Richard from his first wife, Elizabeth Grothaus.
Esther had a daughter Joan Conradi, who took the name Freytag, her preference. The home is now owned by John Stoddard.



The William Quinlan home built in 1911 of Vernacular East Lake Style, located 24 Elm Street, lot 133. It faces the church parking lot at Elm Street and State Route 362. Mr. and Mrs. Quinlan had three children, Marie a teacher in the Ft. Loramie school for fifty years, she taught First and Second grade and sons Raymond and John.
Mr. William Quinlan owned a drug store located 35 N. Main Street in 1870 which faced the Miami & Erie Canal. This building was also the location of the first telephone operator in Ft. Loramie.
Drugs and supplies for the drug store were shipped from Cincinnati or Toledo by canal boat.
The porch has been altered on this home at a later date. Home now owned by James Mescher.

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An Italianate Vernacular Style farm house at 40 Park Street. S. R. 705. It was built in 1892 for Henry Holtvogt and later the Joseph Gaier property who farmed the area rear of the farmhouse which ended at the Greenback road.
The Gaiers had children. Tillie. Mary and Julius.
This was the original site of the log house built by Johann Raterman in 1834. The log house was burned in the Raterman Mill fire in the 1880's. Many Berlin area people were baptized here by Fr. Navaron before Berlin had a church.

## BUNGALOW

The Bungalow was a new concept in housing design, the style was first seen in the 1890's and continued until 1940's. The Bungalow is usually a one and half story house with pitched broad gables and spread out well beyond the walls to a covered front porch. There are four homes in Ft. Loramie of this style of architecture. Nicholas Ratermann house, 26 Elm Street, the Barney Krampe house, 13 Elm Street, the Wm. Inderrieden house, 29 South Main Street and the Albert Brucken House, 36 South Main Street.



A Bungalow Style home at 36 S. Main Street was the home of Albert and Clara (Walkup) Brucken built in 1920. Children were Martha Jane. Norma and Eileen.



A Bungalow style home at 26 Elm Street. designed and brickwork by Albert Freytag. Built in 1916 for Nicholas Raterman, a veterinarian. It is across the street from St. Michael's Hall and parking lot. Present owner Lawrence Holthaus. A chicken hatchery and later the home and office of veterinarian Dr. Eaton once occupied a building to the rear. Before erection of home the V.B.C.used the lot for money raising events.



A Bungalow Style home at 29 S. Main Street. Original owners were William and Josaphine Inderrieden. Present owners Wm. H. & Esther Borchers. 1987.



The William Albers residence. 1930 American Tudor Revival style. The Tudor Style sometimes referred to as Jacobean, this style originated in England in the 16th and 17th century. This is the only Modified Tudor style designed by Ferd. E. Freytag Architect who was born and reared in Ft. Loramie, Ohio. Located on the corner of Elm Street and Middle Street noted as 12 Middle Street Lot 104. The Ft. Loramie School is across Elm Street.
The feature that identifies the design as Tudor Revival is the front gable with a decorative brickwork as half timber work. A recessed porch on the right corner arcaded with brick posts with radiated brick and stone arches with key stones over the entrance.

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Originally a large two story frame vernacular style home was on this lot and was owned and built by John Eilerman in 1886 and was moved in 1929. one block east to 40 Elm Street. lot 106. facing the school grounds. ball field and parking lot. William Alber's father John and mother Katherine lived a few blocks S. E. now state route 705. They had three boys, William. Lawrence and John. also three girls Clara. Loretta and Victoria.

## SECOND EMPIRE STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE

The Second Empire style of Architecture is typically a two story house with a Mansard roof with gabled roof dormers. The Shelby County Court House, Sidney, Ohio is French Second Empire Style Architecture.



The William Sherman residence is the only Second Empire Style in Ft. Loramie, situated at the convergence of State Route 705, Park Street and Main Street, also Walnut Street. Immediately to the East is the Old Miami & Erie Canal bed now filled in. Their children were Frank, William, Victoria and Mary.
The House was built in the late 1800 for William Sherman a dealer in livestock who later built a mill and grain elevator behind this house. The office of Doctor Frank Raterman was located here for a long time. The building is encircled by a porch supported by fluted Roman Doric Columns and has a balustrade with turned spindles. The porch roof has a gable with a sunburst panel.
The foundation material is coursed rustic limestone. Wall construction is brick. the brick came from the Wagler Brick Yard in Berlin. now Ft. Loramie.



FEDERAL STYLE ARCHITECTURE
The Kirner home a Federal Style was located at 42 W. Main Street. lot 38. Built 1851-1852. faced East toward Elm Street and a swinging bridge over the Miami & Erie Canal, now a park.
The house was originally built for Bernard Meyer a merchant. who also built the first flour mill in Ft. Loramie in 1858. It is still in operation today. as the Ft. Loramie Milling Company. The house consists of a basement and two and a half stories and gabled roof. The foundation walls are coursed rubble stone and house proper walls of brick. The home had sixteen rooms and a porch was added later.
This property was purchased by Gaiers Garage and torn down and made into a parking lot.
Another Federal Style is located 22 W. Main St., built 1875, Elizabeth Seiter former owner, now Elmer Reithman.



A brick residence located on 10 West Main Street on a corner lot. The home faces East toward the original Miami and Erie Canal bridge, now Canal Park. Present owner John Holtvogt. The building is of Federal design and was the home of John Willman who owned the Willman Store on the corner of 11 North Main Street, lot 84 and Park Street. The store was destroyed by Fire in 1912 and rebuilt a new store in 1913. Mr. and Mrs. John Willman had 3 sons, Frank, Joseph and Mathew. also daughters Adella. Emma and Clara.

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The residence and law office of David Shuffelton. 19 South Main Street. A Vernacular style home was built 1894. now altered.
This home was built for August Wise. owner of a saw mill across the street. Later this was the home and Doctors office of Doctor Frank Raterman.



This barn is out of place in streetscape which is Main Street. Was located at 21 S. Main Street. Wall treatment was a novelty siding on the front and vertical plank sides.
Barn was used at one time as the only movie theater Ft. Loramie ever had. This theater was operated by the Arkenberg brothers (Ferd. Albert and Jule) for two winters in 1914-1915. Chairs were borrowed from Danzig's Funeral home and the generator from Loramie Mill. The barn was heated by a wood burning stove. The present owner Edward C. Freytag Jr. Structure now removed.



THE WILDERNESS TRAIL MUSEUM - FT. LORAMIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
This building with an incised gablestone dated 1853 is a Greek Revival Style. Located 37 N. Main Street. corner Main and Elm. Builder H. H. Dressman. Opened as a grocery store. then a boarding house. For some time it was a residence for the Bernard Pauwell family.
In the late 1930's or early 40's. Mr. Al. Gehrig of Cincinnati purchased the place and had a restaurant in it.
Ft. Loramie Historical Assn. purchased the building in 1971 and established the Wilderness Trail Museum.
The front of the building faces West across the street is the old Miami & Erie Canal. now a park. This building is near the original location of a swinging bridge that crossed the canal. It was built of steel I-beams and wood, cantileved at one end with heavy cast iron wheels turning on a round track. the track was built on a solid foundation. a heavy metal spring also attached to the main bridge structure and foundation. When a canal boat wanted to pass through the mules or horses pulled the boat and the front end of the boat opened the other end of the bridge and glided through. When the boat cleared. the heavy spring brought the bridge back in place again. As school boys after school let out they hurried to the bridge if a canal boat was going to pass through to get a ride on the bridge.



A bank building of Neo Classical Revival design located 17 Main Street. lot 18NW. East side of Canal was designed by Albert Freytag Architect and builder in 1920.
The building is now owned by Busses Meat Market and used as a butcher shop.




Ft. Loramie Fire Department and Village offices is Colonial style. built 1942. Designed by Ferd. E. Freytag. Architect A.I.A.

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# More Local History

## EARLY HISTORY OF THE FORT LORAMIE AREA

*By Madeline Maurer*

Physical evidence and fragments of tradition from pre-historic times (before written history) clearly indicate that the great glacier that covered much of the northern part of North America in the Dark Ages did cover the Fort Loramie area. It is further indicated that several Indian tribes including the Miamis and Shawnees frequented the area.

Early historic times (beginning in the early 1500's were dominated by the hunting and travel of the Miami Indians (St. Marys River Valley); the Ottawa, Miami, and Shawnee Indians (Maumee River Valley); the Mingo and Wyandot Indians (Sandusky River Valley); the early Shawnees (great Miami confluence); the Mingo and Seneca Indians (Mad River Valley); and the Delaware, Mohican, and Muncie Indians (Scioto Valley).

The geographical location of the area and the Loramie Creek which passed through it provided a good travel route. The rich woodlands which covered the area made it an excellent hunting ground. This drew many Indians to the area though none settled here.

With the travels of the French explorer, Robert LaSalle, came the French claim to northern waterways including the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi River. Since claiming a waterway also meant claiming all the land that drained into that waterway, the claiming of the Mississippi River by the French meant that they also claimed the Ohio River Valley of which the Fort Loramie area was a part. The French quickly realized that because of the rich woodlands, this would also be a rich fur trading area and so they established trading posts throughout the territory in order to capitalize on the fur trade with the Indians.

Fort Loramie is on one of the first white reservations within an Indian territory since a six (6) mile square around Peter Loramie's trading post was so designated.

Peter Loramie endeared himself to the Indians as did most French traders. They prospered through the fur trade until the British tried to establish fur trade in the area as white men began moving westward from the Eastern colonies.

While the French and British had, for many years, battled over the trading rights in the Ohio country, they did cooperate to stop the Indian "Beaver Wars" in northern Ohio (which had brought a stop to Indian travel and trade in Ohio for almost 100 years), helping to bring about a treaty which settled the Indian boundaries.

George Rogers Clark is credited with destroying Loramie's trading post during a raid on area Indians and their friends and Anthony Wayne with building a fort near the site of Loramie's store a few years later.

French domination of the area fur trade was relinquished to the British in the 1700's and white settlers began moving into the area.

## DON PIERRE LOUIS LORAMIER

*Notes from Auglaize Historical Association*

### I His Origin and Was He A Priest

*By Charles F. Pepple*

If there was ever a man of mystery in northwestern Ohio it must truly have been Don Pierre Louis Loramier (notice the difference in spelling), or Pierre Loramie as we know him. More legend and tradition surrounds this man than perhaps any other figure in the history of northwestern Ohio. Who was this man Loramier? Where did he come from: Was he a Jesuit priest who became an Indian trader after being stripped of priestly authority by Pope Clement XIV's suppression of the Jesuits in 1773? What became of Loramier after his store was burned by a detachment of George Rogers Clark's army in 1780? Why was Loramier detested and hated as a murderer and renegade by early settlers of Kentucky but yet was honored by many of these same people as an esteemed and respected citizen of the Missouri Territory? These are some of the questions I will attempt to answer in this article.

From the best evidence available it appears the Pierre Loramier was born in Etienne or Lachine parish, Island of Montreal, District of Montreal, Canada in March, 1748. He was the son or grandson of one William Loramier, a captain in the French army stationed in Canada. This William Loramier in

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turn was born in 1695 and was the son of William and Jenny Guillbaut Loramier who were natives of Paris, France. As far as is known, the elder Loramiers never emigrated to the New World.

Was Loramier a Jesuit priest? This question has intrigued students of area history for years and many writers of the past thought he was. Col. John Johnston, the noted Indian agent of Piqua and Wapakoneta, referred to Loramier as the "French Father" and wrote:"I have seen the Indians burst into tears when speaking of the time when their French father had dominion over them; and their attachment to this day remains unabated. The French trader Loramie possessed entire control over the Indians, and was in this respect fully equal, if not superior, to any of his countrymen. The reason why he possessed the control over the Indians is in a higher degree character and not because he was a priest and Jesuit."

This passage is somewhat ambiguous if interpreted to mean that Loramier was a priest and missionary, but, nevertheless, many writers have assigned that meaning to this quotation.

Some other sources which credit Loramier with being a priest are as follows. Professor C. W. Williamson of Wapakoneta said: "As a boy, my grandfather living in Auglaize County, told me many times it was generally known that Loramie was a priest."

Editor J. O. Amos of the Shelby County Democrat also identified Loramier as "a French Jesuit priest." Another area newspaper editor, Henry Wildermuth, writing in a series of German language articles stated that Loramier was a priest and said, "he had gathered all his knowledge from good English authority and authors." Reverand William V. Bigot, of Fort Loramie, Ohio, in his Annalen der St. Michaelsqemedinde (Annals of St. Michael's Parish) also concluded Loramier was a priest. Father Bigot based his conclusion in part on each of the foregoing sources and also cited a passage from J. G. Shea's History of the Catholic Church in the United States to support his position. In the passage cited by Father Bigot, Shea had puportedly described how Loramier was sent to the Shawnee and Wyandot Indians of northwestern Ohio in 1769 by the Archbishop of Quebec at the request of Vicar General Gibault of Vincennes and a Father Meurin of Kaskaskia.

In all likelihood, however, Loramier probably was not a Priest. Although Colonel Johnston referred to Loramier as the "French Father" it is significant that in quotation previously cited he did not directly describe Loramier as a Jesuit priest or missionary. Also, in his voluminous correspondence and reports Johnston never referred to Loramier as a priest. The idea that Loramier was a priest is probably based more on cultural bias rather than fact.

Loramier had left the country before Johnston arrived and Johnston's only knowledge of Loramier came from the Indians. Among the Indians Loramier was highly respected and revered leader who exercised tremendous authority and influence over the Indians and in all Indian cultures it was customary to accord the title of "Father" to such a person. Thus, the origin of the descriptive title "French Father." Since all Johnston's knowledge of Loramier derived from the Indians, we must conclude that he obtained the term "French Father" from them also.

To a person of European background the title or word "Father" means something quite different than it does to the American Indians. If the word does not denote parentage in some form it is automatically associated with the priesthood. Hence, it is understandable how early settlers and writers could easily be misled by the term "French Father." Upon hearing our reading of such a reference and being unfamiliar with Indian language usage and custom, they would immediately associate the reference with what they were familiar in their own cultures.

In the case of the passage in Shea's Church History cited by Father Bigot, a diligent search of this material failed to find a mention of Loramier's name or even a similar name.

A further argument against the thesis that Loramier was a priest is the following. Reverend John H. Lamott, S.T.D., did extensive research in the history of Catholicism in western Ohio and published the result of his work in the History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in 1921. In this work Father Lamott made the following statement: To the hypothesis of Reverend William V. Bigot that Pierre Loramie, who conducted the trading store at Loramie, Ohio, from 1769 to 1782, was a Jesuit father, and therefore entitled to the honor of being the first priest stationed in the Cincinnati archdiocese, we cannot subscribe. For not one convincing proof is adduced for the hypothesis, nor have we been able to find in our investigation of the matter a trace anywhere of any such Jesuit father in the New World.

Perhaps the most telling argument against Loramier's priesthood, however, is found in the archives and record depositories of the state of Missouri. During the late 1790's and early 1800's Loramier lived in Missouri and was District Commandant of Cape Girardeau for the Spanish government. From documents of the period and accounts of persons who were personal acquaintances and friends of Loramier we learn that he was illiterate. Although he spoke fluent English, French, Spanish and several Indian languages, and dialects, Loramier could

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neither read nor write any of the European languages. Hence, it was necessary for the Spanish Governor at New Orleans to provide Loramier with a secretary to handle the paper work of the district. (This secretary was a Frenchman named Berthelmy Cousin and he kept a detailed account of Loramier's activities which is still preserved in the Archives of the Indies in Seville, Spain.) The Jesuits have never been among the most scholarly of the orders and it is thus impossible to believe that a man with the intellectual capacity to master Latin, religion, philosophy, etc. In preparing for the priesthood could neither read nor write his native tongue nor could have become proficient in reading and writing the Spanish language.

Thus, after considering all aspects of the question of Loramier's priesthood, I must conclude that he was neither priest or missionary. I also further believe that the tradition which holds that Loramier was a priest originated in nothing more than simple lack of understanding by the early white men of Indian language and custom.

**II Loramier's Arrival in Ohio and Flight to Missouri**

Pierre Loramier's contact with the Indians began early. His father, William Loramier, being an officer in the French army exercised the privilege granted to certain French officers of the period and traded with the Indians at his various duty stations. The elder Loramier became well known as a trader and had been described as a man who "traded with the Indians at the portage of the Miami and Maumee rivers" which was the major trading area in Ohio at this time. Thus, when young Loramier reached adulthood he was well schooled in the complex intricacies necessary to secure the confidence of the Indians and maintain a strong, friendly relationship with them; the kind of relationship on which all successful Indian trade was based.

As the son of a French officer, Pierre Loramier was also well versed in the military profession. Although the French army in North America was officially disbanded and returned to France after the French defeat by Great Britain in the French and Indian war, many of the officers and men were natives of Canada, as were the Loramiers', and these soldiers remained behind among the French civilian population of Canada. Consequently, there was smoldering resentment among many French residents against British rule and some of the former French soldiers were not adverse to taking up arms once again against Great Britain. This was especially true on the western frontier where control of the lucrative Indian trade had passed from French to British traders. Thus, when Pontiac's Rebellion against the British erupted, Pierre Loramier, at the age of fifteen years, put his knowledge of the Indians and the military arts to practical use and served as a junior officer under Pontiac when the Ottawa chieftain besieged Detroit in 1763.

In 1769 Pierre Loramier established permanent residence in Ohio at the site of Pickawillany or Loramie Creek. He was twenty one years of age at the time and arrived in the company with the intention of establishing a trading post. Following destruction of the British post here in 1752 by the French and Indians the French commandant at Vincennes had recognized the value of the place as a trading post and had tried to establish traders there. This effort was unsuccessful and one early account describes the French venture at Pickawillany thusly:

The place did not possess enterprise or spirit, and was not widely known as a trading post until 1769, when a Canadian French trader named Peter Loramie established a store there.

Although the Loramiers' were successful at Pickawillany, Pierre did not remain there long. In the same year that the post at Pickawillany was established, 1769, the younger Loramier moved further up Pickawillany or Loramie Creek and built a post on the site of present- day Ft. Loramie, Ohio. William Loramier's name does not appear in the record subsequent to this time and the fate of both he and the post at Pickawillany has never been learned.

Loramier enjoyed the complete confidence of the Indians and his store soon became the major center of trade in Ohio. Here the Indians came from over a wide area to trade for those things that made their life in the wilderness far more endurable. Loramier was a firm supporter of the Indians in their struggle against the white man and his store also became a rendezvous point for war parties and major sources of supply for arms and ammunition as the Indians moved southward to attack settlers in Kentucky and Ohio River traffic.

Loramier was a man of business first, but he also was a man of action and sometimes accompanied war parties on their incursions into Kentucky. It was on one such occasion in 1778 that Loramier was a member of the Shawnee war party which captured Daniel Boone and brought him to Ohio.

In 1779, the Shawnee nation was divided over whether to continue making war against the white man, seek peace, or emigrate west of the Missisippi River. At this time Spain was openly inviting Indians east of the Mississippi to emigrate to the Spanish territory of Upper Louisiana to serve as a buffer between the Spanish settlements and the Osage Indians. In exchange for their services the Indians were to receive large grants of land which they were to enjoy in perpetuity.

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The Shawnees were unable to resolve their disagreement as a nation and those favoring emigration decided to accept the Spanish invitation on their own. Loramier escorted the emigrating Shawnees into Spanish territory and by so doing established a contact with the Spanish government which would serve him long and well in the future.

In 1782, Loramier's store and the Shawnee towns on the Big Miami and Mad Rivers posed such a threat to settlements in Kentucky that the Kentuckians determined they must be destroyed. Accordingly, in November, 1782, an army commanded by George Rogers Clark moved against the towns and Loramier's store. The main part of the army under Clark destroyed the Shawnee towns on the Mad River while the remainder under Benjamin Logan destroyed Upper and Lower Piqua on the Big Miami then moved up Loramie Creek and attacked the store. The trading post was looted and burned and Loramier barely escaped capture and certain death if he would have been taken. He fled to the then Ottawa village of Wapakoneta for refuge and remained there until it was apparent that his business was destroyed and his life would be in constant jeopardy if he stayed in the country. Thereafter, Loramier left Ohio never to return.

After leaving Ohio, Loramier settled near Vincennes, Indiana, and traded along the Wabash River. His business venture here failed and Loramier became deeply indebted to a trading company. To escape his creditors and recoup his losses, Loramier fled almost penniless across the Mississippi into Spanish territory. In Missouri as in Ohio, Loramier had the complete confidence of the Indians and he began a thriving trade among the Delaware and Shawnee Indians many of whom he had earlier escorted from Ohio.

In 1787, then, Pierre Loramier settled near Saint Marys, Missouri, and began a new life which would bring him fame and wealth far beyond what he could even have imagined in Ohio.

**III Loramier in Missouri and Loramier the Man**

After fleeing creditors east of the Mississippi River, Loramier settled near present-day St. Marys, Missouri. Because of his rapport and influence with the Indians, Loramier was able to enter into a lucrative Indian trading arrangement with the Spanish Commandant of the St. Genevieve District in which he settled. Loramier continued to encourage Indians in the United States to emigrate to Spanish territory west of the Mississippi and thereby further increased his influence among the Indians and his usefullness to the Spanish government. In rocognition of the importance of his services to the Spanish crown, Loramier was appointed Agent for Indian affairs in Upper Louisiana by the Spanish governor in New Orleans. As a result of his appointment Loramier received exclusive Indian trading rights in a large portion of the Missouri country and title to the Spanish equivalent of 33,600 acres of land.

In 1794 Loramier settled on the west bank of the Mississippi in an area known as Cape Girardeau. He received title to this particular tract of land in 1795 and became a naturalized citizen of Spain the same year. Cape Girardeau was organized into a Spanish district and Loramier was appointed commandant and captain of militia. As commandant, Loramier received the Spanish title of "Don" and at this time he discontinued use of his first name "Pierre". Thereafter, he would be known as "Don Louis Loramier".

Under the Spanish system of colonial government the commandant was top civil and military administrator of his district and was responsible only to the Spanish governor in New Orleans. The commandant was responsible for law enforcement, acted as judge and jury in the administration of civil, criminal and military justice, was responsible for defense of his district, supervised Indian affairs and managed the settlement and economic development of his district. This was a formidable enough task even for a man with a thorough European education, but for a man handicapped by illiteracy as was Loramier, although he had a competent legal secretary to assist him, it must have been even more formidable.

Loramier served with distinction as commandant of Cape Girardeau until the United States purchased Louisiana. He was a strict disciplinarian in law enforcement and administration of justice who did not hesitate to invoke capital punishment, apply the lash or banish convicted criminals from his district when he believed circumstances warranted. Although Loramier could not read or write, he had a keen analytical mind and would not sign a document or approve a legal measure until it had been read and fully explained to him several times by his secretary, Berthelmy Cousin. Even after Cousin's several explanations and advice, however, the final decision was always Loramier's and he was never overruled or reprimanded by his superiors in New Orleans for rendering a wrong decision or making a bad judgement. A further tribute to Loramier's intellectual ability is the fact that in spite of his illiteracy, he was appointed judge of the common pleas court in Cape Girardeau by American authorities after purchase of Louisiana by the United States.

After becoming commandant of Cape Girardeau, Loramier apparently held no grudge against the Americans because he had been driven from the U.S. He encouraged American settlement in Missouri and was especially interested in attracting German and Swiss settlers because of their reputation for

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possessing exceptional agricultural skills. To encourage settlement Loramier offered free tracts of land, some from his own holdings, to prospective settlers. Immigrants to settlers average 680 acres and were free from taxation.

American feelings toward Loramier also mellowed considerably after he was driven from the Ohio frontier. Many former enemies, some of whom had personally fought against him in Kentucky and during the campaign against his store, accepted Loramier's invitation to settle in Missouri. Again, in a tribute to the stature of Loramier as an individual, American settlers who once detested the very mention of his name, now universally held him in the highest esteem.

Don Louis Loramier was married twice. His first wife, whom he married in Canada, was named Charlotte Pemanieh Bouganville. Charlotte's father was a French Officer named Bouganville who served as an aide to Louis de Montcalm during the French and Indian war and her mother was the daughter of a Shawnee chief who at one time lived in the vicinity of Wapakoneta. There is also reason to believe that Charlotte herself may have been born at Wapakoneta. Seven of Loramier's eight children, four sons and three daughters, were born of this marriage. Charlotte died March 23, 1808, and was buried in the family plot of Loramier Cemetery in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Loramier married a second time about two years before his death to a Marie Bethiaume. Marie's father was a French-Canadian trader who had lived in Ohio before coming to Missouri and her mother was also a Shawnee Indian woman. No children were born of this marriage. Loramier also had a son born out of wedlock to either a French or Indian woman, but whom Loramier raised and made a partner in his trading business. This son was named William Loramier and in later years became one of the leading farmers and land owners in Boot Hill country of southeastern Missouri.

The recollections of persons acquainted with Loramier present an interesting picture of the trader. In physical appearance, Loramier was an imposing figure. At a time when the average height of men was between five feet, six inches and five feet, seven inches, Loramier stood a towering six feet tall and emphasized his tallness even more by a very erect manner of walking. He is described as having had a handsome face of fair complexion with blue eyes. He also had a profusion of jet black hair which he wore in a plaited, waist-length queue bedecked with varicolored ribbons. Although Loramier was not considered a dandy or vain man by his contemporaries, he was unusually fond of fine clothes and always appeared in public flawlessly attired.

Loramier was fond of horses, racing and was an inveterate gambler. He maintained a herd of eighty five horses and often rode them himself in races. It is also remembered by all who knew him that although he sometimes lost considerable sums of money betting on his horses, he never failed to pay a gambling debt which he considered a debt of honor. It is also recorded that when riding in races Loramier used his waist-length queue of hair as a whip to urge his mounts to greater speed.

As was common in that time and place, Loramier also owned slaves. Census statistics compiled in 1803, reveal that he owned a total of sixteen slaves, three male adults, seven male children, one adult female and five female children. Ownership of the slaves represented an investment of several thousands of dollars and in itself is indicative of the tremendous wealth Loramier managed to acquire as a servant of the Spanish crown.



Marker about three-quarters mile north of town shows location of Peter Loramier's Trading Post and Fort.

Site of Old Fort Loramie, Ft. Loramie, Ohio.



Site of Ft. Loramie north of present village. Old Aqueduct Bridge in Foreground

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Don Pierre Louis Loramier died in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, June 26, 1812, at the age of sixty four years. He was buried beside his first wife, Charlotte, in the family plot of Loramier Cemetery on the banks of the Mississippi River in what is now the northern part of the city of Cape Girardeau. Although the cemetery is no longer in use, it is one of the tourist attractions of Cape Girardeau and the visitor will find the Loramier family grave site one of the most impressive features of the grounds.

### A LETTER FROM EARLY SETTLERS

In the early 1980's the Rev. David Hoying of Minster, Ohio, found this letter in a museum in Germany. It was written by the great-great-grandfather of Ambrose Broering to relatives in Germany. It concerns the Broering farm located several miles southwest of Ft. Loramie.

Dear Brother, Brother-in-law, and Sister-in-law,

We have received the letter of the year 1843 and it seems that you are quite healthy and content and that you, and your children were spared from the epidemic. Or were you vaccinated? We were deeply concerned about this. We still wish you would write us and give us the details. We were in good health when your letter arrived and trust that you too will be in good health when you receive this letter. And if perchance, your health would not be good, it would sadden us very much. We are, thank God, very healthy and content, and during this time we have had four children. Our oldest, Heinrich is dead. Anna, our second is still healthy and well, and is three and a half years old. Our Diana, the third, was nine months old when she died. Our Maria, our fourth, is now six months old.

Presently we have five cows that are providing milk, and two oxen for farming, and eight hogs, for a total of 15 and have one horse for riding and plowing Turkish wheatland. The plows here are different from those in Germany. One does not have a wood beam or steel beam under the plow beam, merely a beam that one would fasten with a single tree. We have 17 head of hogs being raised close by and have butchered 10 and we have butchered two oxen and we have 22 chickens. We have good rye, winter wheat, buckwheat, Turkish wheat, good potatoes, pumpkins, flax, snap beans, peas, onions, and many things that you have in Germany. We have saved from all of the work and were able to sell a good amount this year. Malt rye, using measures you are familiar with, costs four dollars here and malt winter wheat costs 5-1/2 dollars and malt oats costs 2 dollars, a bushel of potatoes costs 24 Grote (penny) and a pound of cured bacon costs 6 grote. We have 62 acres of land. Of that 30 acres is ready for farming and the rest is still woodland. One acre is 3 1/2 seed bushel according to your measures. We do not have any great debt on any of our land.

A town has been laid out with the name of Berlin, and we are about 15 minutes from it. As yet there is no church. We go to church in Minster, about an hour and a quarter distance from us, where we generally see Franz Evers and Jan Brackman. Hermheinrich Klane Von Stuckenborg is our first neighbor. We already have quite a few neighbors a little farther away from us. We want you to know Hermheimrich Gudenkauf and the Hoying brother from Krupenfart are about 1/2 hour from us, and all the Von Hagen and Vechta people living in area are well, healthy and happy. We want to know how our sister and brother-in-law are getting along, and also want to know whether elder father Janzen, is still living and how many children does my sister have? Further, we wish to know things in Hagen and Vechta. How many have died since we left there? We would also like to know how Ernst Strongborg and his wife and children are getting along. Know how our relatives are doing; my Uncle Kenkel and his children, and my Aunt Pfung?

We make our own sugar here. Here we have trees that you tap in the spring of the year and the sap runs out and cools into sugar. we also make our own soap from lye that is strong. The lye is made from wood ashes, and then mix bacon rind and hot fat in it and cook it until finished. We also make our own vinegar from sugar, water, and the harvest wine.

Greetings to Mr. Heinrich Gudenkauf, wife and children. Also greetings to Bernard Stromberg, his wife and children. Finally greetings also to all our friends and relatives.

Farmers do not have it same way as in Germany. In my house in which I live, we do not have any other things (animals). The cattle we keep in the barn and there we also have our grain and hay and straw. Here we do not cure our bacon in the house. We have a special little house for it. The newly cleared land here is filled with thick roots and strong. Here we have trees that are 5 to 6 feet thick. 60 to 80 feet tall. Wood has no money value. Man has to clear it away and burn it just to get it out of the way to make the land farmable.

I also would like you to know that we do not have any black bread here. The bread that we eat here which we bake daily, from winter wheat flour. We have plenty of bacon and meat to fill any appetite.

I would like to go back to Germany again, but not to stay. My tax for the land and the cattle amount to two dollars a year. I have to work two days on the main road.

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With this I will close my letter and give the Hagener greeting from Hermhinrich Broring in Shelby County, Minster, Ohio.

When you write again, then, send it to this address:

Hermhinrichs Broring in Minster, Mercer County, Ohio.

## ROADS

*By Ambrose Broering*

Our forefathers, in pioneer days, had great courage to leave their homeland to start a new family life in a new land in the wilderness. In March of 1837, my great grandfather, Hermhinrichs Broering, and his bride, Maria Agnes (Barhorst) Broering left Vechta, Germany, crossed the Atlantic, and settled about a mile and a half southwest of what is now Ft. Loramie.

My father told me that my great grandfather worked on the canal project, as supervisor of 40 men, for one dollar a day. My great grandmother cooked for this group and received two dollars a day. They worked long enough to save $350.00 towards buying a farm of 88 acres valued at $555.00, on October 9, 1837.

He mentions that roads west of Berlin were very bad at times due to high water and low lands. Bridges then were impossible to cross, thus cutting off supplies at Berlin. The Broerings would walk on the highlands to Wood Land, new called Willowdell, to get their groceries and oil for their lamps.

Persons who owned land were assessed taxes for personal property and real estate, which was paid to the county, plus two days a year for labor on the roads to keep them in shape. A costly time was when a road was upgraded to a gravel road. The cost was borne by adjoining land owners, with county assessments for a number of years. Now we fill up the car with gas and pay as we ride. GAS TAX is a new name for TOLL FEE.

On January 13, 1873, the Berlin & North Star Transportation Company was formed, with John Walkup as President. One hundred and two people subscribed $10,400.00 to form the Berlin & North Star Toll Pike. The cost to build the road was $9,688.84. The profit of $711.16 was spent building a tool shed on the east bank of Mile Creek, at the junction of Friemering Rd, and 705. A toll gate was also placed there.

Some of our roads came because of surveyor lines and high land passage. As more settlers came, the roads were improved. The Greenville Treaty Line was first surveyed in 1835. The first quarter mile later became part of Berlin. The line continued east until it turned north east approximately at the Luthman Road. Part of this road was rebuilt in the year 1880, because of the high water level of the reservoir. It was then built in a straight line to Swanders forming the Swanders-Loramie Road.

From old records, maps and family tradition, as well as the writings of Leonard Hill, Shelby County historian, I have gleaned some of the following history.

An Indian trail, called the Miami Trail, was the first pathway to the Loramie area. It came up from the south on the east side of the Miami River until it reached Piqua. From that place it followed the west side of the Miami until it reached Pickawillany, an Indian village, near the mouth of the Loramie Creek, where it turned northwest in a direct line to the site of the Loramie Trading Post. After going north for a few miles from that point, it divided; the western division going to Ft. Wayne, and the eastern portion following the Auglaize River to the Maumee River, and on north to Detroit.

From 1807 to 1818 that part of Shelby County, south of Greenville Treaty Line, was part of Miami County and the records of all roads laid out during that period are to be found in the record books of Miami County.

The following was the procedure for establishing a new road. First a group of citizens signed a petition asking for a road, and giving its general desired location. The county commissioners then appointed three viewers, who with the aid of the county surveyor, a chain man, and a tree blazer, proceeded to pick out the best route. They measured and marked it by blazing trees. They then reported back to the commissioners, who authorized or rejected the road way.

The first road that crossed present day Shelby County came from Piqua to Ft. Loramie in 1803, coming north close to the junction of the Hardin Road and Lockington, it went north approximately two miles from that point, then on to the site of old Ft. Loramie. The angling part of the Farmers Pike (705) into Ft. Loramie is a segment of that road. The Farmers Pike became the Sherman Toll Rd. with the first toll booth near the present farm of Bernard Aselage. In 1846 all turnpikes became state roads.

Just a year later, another road was laid out from Piqua to Ft. Loramie, that with a few minor changes, is Route 66 today.

On January 7, 1817, the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, created the Piqua-St. Marys Turnpike. Joseph Mendenhall, commissioner of Shelby County, signed the corporate papers for this county. The road started at Main Street in Piqua and then through Houston and Minster to St. Marys. (Berlin was not in existence at the time.) The capital stock was seventy five thousand dollars, and shares sold for twenty five dollars each.

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Section 5, of this enactment, stated that said company was authorized to demand and receive from any person traveling said road, the following toll, for every ten miles travel on said road, and in the same proportion to whit: For every four wheeled carriage drawn by two horses or oxen, fifteen cents; for every extra horse or oxen, five cents. For every sled or sleigh, drawn by two horses or oxen, ten cents; for each extra horse or ox, five cents. For every horse, mule, or ass, six months old or upward, led or driven, three cents. For every head of meat cattle, six months old or upwards, one cent. For every head of sheep or hog, one cent. For every four-wheeled pleasure carriage, drawn by two horses, thirty cents; for every extra horse, five cents. For every four-wheeled pleasure carriage drawn by one horse, twenty cents. For every cart, drawn by one horse, or two oxen, ten cents; for every extra horse or ox, five cents. In 1889, the commissioners of Miami County, purchased from the shareholders, all of the turnpike that was in Miami county.



A Mud Road. Courtesy Rita Hoying.

## HISTORY OF LORAMIE

*As written by Henry B. Sherman, Sr. in 1875*

It is not known who the first settlers at Loramie were for farming purposes, those of early date being either traders, hunters or soldiers. Among the first to take up land for farming purposes were James Furrow who settled at Loramie; Joseph Christian and Nathen Mendenhall and William Prillaman. James Pillied came after these early settlers and took up a farm west of Loramie. Isaac Edwards came in the year 1833 and was the first school teacher in the bounds of what is now McLean Township, Shelby County. This was several years after the first settlers came to this township. The first schoolhouse stood not far distant from where the boatyard was located north of Loramie. Six weeks ago we were in Loramie and met John Edwards and Mike Schiltz from whom we gleaned the following facts about the early settlement of the town of Loramie. The original proprietorship of Loramie was William Prillaman. It was laid out west of the canal and was a part of the Prillaman farm. His brother Christian Willaman owned the land east of the canal and both their farms were north of the Greenville Treaty Line. The town plat was surveyed by Hon. Johnathan Counts. The land south of the street passing the Tecklenberg hotel was at that time the property of the government. The canal was staked off when the town was laid out, but no work had been done on it. The Post Office was kept by James G. Furrow at the old fort where the Arkenberg homestead stands. Mr. Furrow kept a store and a general store was kept by J. M. Pilliod. The original road was cut through the country when the campaign was made against the Indians. The roads were corduroyed in the worst places by laying logs and poles across them. As soon as seettlement began at Piqua, Minster, New Bremen and St. Marys, these towns were supplied with groceries, clothing and other necessities by wagons which made regular trips through from Dayton to Ft. Wayne. That they might assist each other through the swamps the teamsters went in parties of six or more. When darkness came on, these teamsters stopped with settlers along the route or camped out. Almost every resident along the road from Piqua to Ft. Wayne was known as a tavernkeeper. Returning from the north they carried south, furs and other things purchased from the Indians and such produce as the farmers sent to market. As the population increased the wagon trains became more and more numerous and afforded better facilities for reaching the markets. Grain, pork and hoop-poles were the principal articles the farmers had to sell. Taxes were low, but had it not been for the hoop-poles that were sent to market in these wagons, many a farmer would not have been able to pay his taxes.

The first farmers in the vicinity were of English descent. The first German who settled in this community was named Whitebread. He located near where the reservoir bulkhead now is and was called the "Dutchman" by his neighbors. In 1834 and 1835, two families followed that of J. B. Raterman, namely William Sherman, Sr. and J. M. Pilliod, at one time the largest landowner in the neighborhood, owning about four hundred acres. When the town was laid out the lots were bid at auction and sold readily. The residence of William Prillaman was where the Stephen Kirmer house now stands on the west side of the canal. Joseph Mendenhall, who afterwards became a county commissioner, kept a tavern where John Gaier's bakery once stood. The first frame house was built as an addition to the tavern of Joseph Mendenhall. Dr. Clark Ayers was the first resident physician and built the first brick house, a small one story residence, on the ground where Stephen

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Kirmer's house now stands. The nearest mills were in Sidney, Piqua, St. Marys.

The town was called Berlin and the name was given it by James M. Pilliod and Charles Schiltz, who had come from New Berlin in Stark County. The first building erected after the town was laid out, was put up by Ishmael Lattimore and stood southeast of the old warehouse. Bernard Meyer started the first store in town. He carried his goods at first on his back from Piqua. H. H. Dressman started a store shortly after Meyers. These stores included the same of groceries, drygoods, liquors, etc. When work was begun on the canal there was a large imigration of people most of whom were low Germans and Catholics. Among these were H. H. Dressman, Bernard Pille, Ignatz Schell and others. They first came as laborers on the canal, but soon took up land and became permanent settlers. The first cemetery was the old army cemetery near Ft. Loramie. It is not known just where it is, but was supposed to have been located on the Furrow farm, which is now the Arkenberg property. James M. Furrow, who died March 11, 1842, told the old settlers that during the Indian War a general in the American Army was killed at a battle fought at Loramie with the Indians and was buried by his side. The grave of the general is not marked and neither history or tradition records who it was. In excavating in a gravel pit one quarter mile north, remains of human beings have been found, some who are supposed to be soldiers, but is more probable they are Indian remains of an early date; as it was known that these forts built by Wayne and other officers were only for temporary purposes and soldiers who died in the service were buried a short distance from the forts. The Furrow family cemetery is surrounded by a stone wall and this family was supposed to be the first settlers near Loramie. An old cemetery was established near the canal on an elevation about one-half mile north of town. Many of the early settlers were buried here, but time is rapidly effacing the evidence, that it had ever been a cemetery and unless some one takes care and has it enclosed, the graves of the early settlers will soon become unkown. The Catholic cemetery near the St. Michael's Church was consecrated shortly after the work commenced on the canal and before any steps were taken to build a church. James M. Pilliod became propietor of the land east of the canal and south of the Greenville Treaty Line. He sold thirty acres of the northwest corner for $25.00. This included the land on which is located the hotel, mill and all the south half of the town of Loramie. The canal was finished in 1841 and as soon as it was opened the wagon trains stopped and the taverns along the roads became simple farm houses. The first boat to arrive at Berlin was the State Boat. It came upon a Sunday and stuck in the mud south of town. It was visited by the whole population of the village and its arrival was hailed with great joy. The next to come was a packet boat. It was called "The Belvidiere" and was commanded by Captain Wilder. As soon as the canal was opened, trade became extensive. Merchants from Cincinnati shipped their drygoods, groceries, salt, hardware and such articles, via the Miami and Erie Canal, and the Erie Canal to New York, while they sent north sugar, grain, pork, whiskey, etc. The produce was bought by local dealers and sent north or south as the best market demanded. Hoop-poles and cordwood always found a ready market along south. Grain was usually shipped north. Every town along the canal was a busy place and grew rapidly. Business was prosperous and packet numerous. The railroads have worked a great change since.

The first mill was built in Loramie in 1858. It was owned by Bernard Meyer and Reddy Brothers. It soon passed into the hands of Meyer and Kirmer and later became known as the Loramie Milling Company. Among the early merchants were B. Meyer, who at one time was the richest man in town, but died poor.

Among the early merchants and tradesmen of Ft. Loramie who operated their establishments in the years 1850-1900: John H. Willlaman, general store; Miss Emma Willaman, millinery; Michael Moorman, broker and merchant; J. D. Inderrieden, stoves-hardware and tinware; J. H. Rottinghouse, grocery and restaurant; Bushman and Rottinghaus, stave and coppershop; Jacob Ullerman, boats and shoes; Joseph Quarterman, blacksmith: Jos. Quarterman, Sr., veterinarian; Herman Bushman, plow repair and blacksmith shop; Joseph Vondrelle, hotelman; Henry Tecklenberg, hotel keeper; Benjamin Gregory Inman, physician; H. W. Hopkins, physician; Dr. J. W. Costoli, Dr. Walkup, Dr. Pepper, Dr. Hamer; Vincent Schmitz, tailor; Herman Behrns, tailor; Mary Chessler, milliner and dressmaker; Jacob Schuler, cafe; Peter Stacher, cafe; Valentine Gaier, carpenter and contractor; Moorman and Kirmer, flour mill; Raterman Bros., mill and warehouse; Henry Borchers, boatyard and dry-dock; Menke Bros., hardeware; Hamer & Vocke, drugs; Barlage & Gregor, Meats; Barlage & Focke, meats; Meyer & Kirmer, millers; Bernard Gerling, dealer in marble and tombstones; J. H. C. Quartman, cafe; John Puthoff, shoemaker; Jos. Rieger, shoemaker; Peter Rieger, boot and shoe dealer; Henry Lehmkuhl, undertaker; August Bruken, agricultural implements; August Riever, cafe, J. C. Gaier, bakerry; W. H. Ernst, drygoods; Loramie Milling Co., Philip Anthony, wagon maker.Anton Brucken, lumberman and sawmill operator; Ben Vogelsang, cafe; John Romie, saddle & harness maker; Joseph Niederkorn, hack and mill line; Joseph Sextro, hackdriver; Christian Wagler,

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brick and tile manufacture; Ed. Brown, nursery stock; John A.Lowman, harness shop; Matt. Bruck-en, cafe.

In 1849, Loramie, like many other towns along the canal, suffered from the ravages of the cholera. Perhaps it would be better to say, the cholera was most prevalent in the country about Loramie. Forty persons died of the cholera in McLean Township within a period of two months and scarcely an individual who took it recovered. Mary Furrow and her son took it and died. Mary Furrow was the wife of James Furrow. John E. Furrow died July 29, 1849 and Mary Furrow two days later.

The Catholic Church was organized about the year 1838 and the first brick church was begun in the year 1849, It was a plain structure thirty-six feet wide by sixty feet long. Sometime afterwards a twenty foot addition gave it an eighty foot length.

In 1853 Father August Berger came to Loramie and took charge of the congregation. He remained until 1857. During his stay the first priest's house was built. He was succeeded by Father Muckerheide, who remained until 1863. He in turn was succeeded by Father Anton Meyer, who remained till 1873, when his health failed and he was succeeded by Father William Bigot. When Father Bigot came to Loramie, he was told by Archbishop Purcell, that besides his regular work as pastor, there was need of a new church. The work was begun and on October 21, 1879, the cornerstone was laid for the new church. It was as warm as a mid- summer day and 2,000 people stood in the sun and witnessed the ceremony of laying the cornerstone. On the second day of July, 1881, the church was completed and consecrated by Archbishop Elder in the presence of 3,000 people. The church is sixty-five feet wide and 165 feet long. It is well finished both inside and out, and is one of the finest churches in the state. At that time it had a congregation made up of two hundred families.

From the early history of Loramie, its population as well as that of the surrounding country, have been members of the Catholic Church. This was not only the case of the early settlers, but when the territory was under French control, of a period of which we are able to gather from the tradition and the early history of the northwest. Peter Loramie was a Catholic missionary among the Indians at Loramie for thirteen years. His great influence among them is attributed to this fact. Another evidence is the finding of a solid silver cross by Matthias Utz in the year 1871, while making an excavation west of Loramie that had been lost or buried there. The cross was fashioned after those worn by French or Spanish officers during the eighteenth century. The finding of this cross and the gold cross near Rhine and the scraps of historic facts were able to obtain proof that Loramie and the early French post in this section of Ohio was a Catholic missionary station among the Indians as well as a trading post.

Loramie in 1875 has a nice schoolhouse with an active board of education and at the present time (1875) and the teachers are Joseph Lenz, Paul Lauterbur and the Misses Dora and Lena Gudenkauf. The physicians and surgeons in the town are Dr. J. W. Costoli and Thos. Walkup. The former represents the allopathic and the latter, the electric. Both are popular. Loramie has had a popular hotel for many years. It was formerly called the "Vondrele House". It is now called the "Tecklenberg House". It is under the management and proprietorship of Henry Tecklenberg. Canal boats that plied the Miami and Erie Canal in the early days: Hackberry, Ocean, General Sherman Dunbar, Shawnee Tribe, Eclipse and Lady Elgin. The last known skipper was a James McEvoy whose boat hauled gravel between Piqua and St. Marys.



Elm Street looking east. First building to left: the doctor's house: Hamer, Hopkins and ? Second building-The Lattimore House-the first log house built in Berlin after it was founded. It is here shown covered by frame. Third building the Barney Krampe Imp. store-three stories high with a rope elevator. Courtesy Marian Aneshansley



Early view of South Main Street looking south.

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The old Wm. Ernst's Grocery Store built in 1889. Later it was Pleiman's Grocery and then Fleckenstein's Grocery. A livery stable was to the north. Today it is owned by Gary Grimm. Courtesy E. Seiters




Willmans store and dwelling before the 1912 fire.Courtesy E. Seiters



Horse and Buggy Days



Main street. Ft. Loramie and Miami-Erie Canal looking north. Note square on street in foreground was a scale used for weighing livestock, etc.



Ft. Loramie Indian in early days before it was vandalized.



Early view of Brucken's Cafe. Matt Brucken and Heny (Boy) Brucken in foreground. Courtesy Ruth Jennings.

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Reverend Wilhelm Bigot. Pastor of St. Michael's Church for thirty years. during which time church was built in 1879. Also wrote "Annals of St. Michael's".




Bohlander Mill located at one time south of Ft. Loramie on Loy Road.



The old Vondrelle House. Later owned by the Tecklenbergs and other owners. Ice house to the left. Beer garden in back of ice house.



A May Altar. Usually located on various corners in town. The religious made a pilgrimage to each and offered prayers. Courtesy Elizabeth Brucken Seiters.



A group of young folks: Rose Bollheimer, Elizabeth Brucken, Frances Brucken, Margaret Knostman, Mose Flinn and Ray Quinlin. In background, old fire department and bell tower. Courtesy E. Seiters.

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Former public school. Later Township House. Present site of Community Fire house. Note town pump and watering tank is barely seen on far right.



Dressman's Store, now Wilderness Trail Museum. 2nd building south is now Ft. Loramie Branch Library: 3rd building was Quinlin Drug Store.



Laying curbs on South Main. Courtesy E. Seiters.



Old Time Butchering. Left to right: Leo Reiss, John Kneufner, John Reiss, Rhiney Bollheimer, Adolph Bollheimer. Courtesy Ed Reiss



Main St. Rottinghouse's ice house is shown along the canal bank. The Ft. Loramie Fire Department's bell tower and also an auto outnumbered by horse-drawn vehicles. Courtesy M. Aneshansley.



Fish caught at Rottinghaus and Willman wharf. Sun fish were plentiful at Wise's loading dock. Picture is turned around. Look in mirror to get right image. Courtesy E. Seiters.

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First Western Ohio passenger train. High bridge to southeast. Canal boats passed underneath.



Dressman Store. corner of Main and Elm. Now Wilderness Trail Museum. Next door was Monument Shop. now the library.



Early meat market in Ft. Loramie. Identity of meat cutters unknown.




Ft. Loramie looking south. Main street on left. Note Wise Sawmill in background.



Aerial view of West Main looking north. Note the "tall bridge" (boats went under the bridge).



Sawing logs on Bob Utz's farm. Courtesy Mary E. Kramer.

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Gaier's Garage with Gust and Chub. Courtesy Bertha Gaier.



The old swinging bridge connecting Elm and West Main. Canal boats would hit the bridge swinging it open. Willman's meat processing plant is to be seen to the northeast. Meat was packed here to be sent to Cincinnati. Courtesy Paul Gaier.



Monument and cannon erected by Village Beautiful Club on canal bank. Cannon was used for metal in World War II. Cannon was called "Big Rosie" for Rose Koverman, as the gun was delivered to her name.



Old Time Thrashing. Courtesy Mary E. Kramer.



Old-Time Hay Loaders. Courtesy Rita Hoying.



Inderrieden's First Store. Left to right: Gus Cook, J. D. Inderrieden, Unknown, Bill Inderrieden. Courtesy Paul Gaier.



The old hearse owned by Barney Danzig (Furniture and Undertaking). Drivers are Wm. Danzig and Martin Romie, with horses Molly and Dolly. Horses were trained to strut when they heard the Church death bell. Courtesy Mary E. Holtvogt.

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## MEMOIRS OF FRANK WILLMAN

*Written in 1973 for Sidney Daily News*

*By Clarence Raterman*

The year 1873 was a year of trouble. The scandals of President Grant's administration had created suspicion and distrust of the President and his friends. Over speculation due to the aftermath of the Civil War had caused the fall of several large firms. Return to normal conditions, with the withdrawing of the government from the farm market, brought collapsing prices to the farmer.

The country in September 1873, plunged into one of the greatest depressions up to that time. Into this troubled world Frank Willman was born, the son of John H. and Magadalena (Humer) Willman. His father came from northern Germany and his mother from Luxembourg.

Berlin, which was the name of present day Fort Loramie, was founded in 1837 by William Prillman and named after New Berlin, Stark County, from whence several large landowners came. The village contained Loramie Creek to the west; the proposed Miami and Erie Canal to the east; the Greenville Treaty Line to the south and Bernard Meyer's business place (now Arnold Kirner's property) to the north.

By the time Frank arrived, the village had grown south to present day Center Street by the Neumer and Boerger additions, and east to Church Street, by means of the Vondrele and Bushman additions. Bernard Pille owned land east of the school, while the lots east, 99 to 122, and south from Church Street to the Greenback Road were owned by J. B. H. or Henry Raterman, who died the same day Frank was born. Courthouse records show 30 lot owners in 1859, with Berlin having valuation of $10,193. In 1870 there were 61 lot owners with a total valuation of $30,630, and in 1900 the list had grown to 107 names, only 33 of which are still common in Fort Loramie.

The business community of Frank's boyhood was mostly centered along the canal, or on Elm Street. The public school stood where the township house is presently located. The parochial school (attended by children making their first communion or getting confirmed) was the old St. Michael's Hall. Across from the public school stood the post office and store of Henry Menke (now Brauns Hardware). On the north side of Elm Street, west of Brauns' was the blacksmith shop of Joseph Quatman and the office of Dr. Hamer.

Along the canal north stood the packing plant of Gast and Willman, the warehouse of F. Gast & Co., Conrad Brucken's sawmill and planing mill (near Hilda Surmans). Here also was a cattle bridge for transporting animals from one side of the canal to the other.

On the canal by George Sommers, was Henry Borchers' Boat Yard (repaired 40 boats and manufactured an average of five or six new canal boats a year). Halfway between Berlin and Minster stood the Sieferd Distillery (whiskey 15 cents per gallon). Across the old swinging bridge (canal boats bumped it to one side) on West Main Street was the oldest store in Fort Loramie, that of Bernard Meyers, who did a thriving business as a country store, dry goods, tinware, stoves and lumber.

On the west side of the canal Joseph Rieger operated a store for boots and shoes. Philip Anthony manufactured and repaired wagons, while Lehman and Moller operated a tile mill west of Loramie Creek.

On the east side of the canal were located numerous and sundry businesses, including the Willman Drygoods Store.

The church was the old chapel, which still stands. A foot bridge crossed the canal near Borchers Ice Cream place, while the "Tall Bridge" (boats could go under it) crossed the canal by present day Vogelsangs Restaurant. The old military road of 1812, built to supply the garrisons at old Fort Loramie and St. Marys, was the principle road in the village, following the course of the canal.

"It was covered" Frank recalls "with three or four inches of dust, and it sure felt good on my bare feet." There were no sidewalks, and business places had flat quarry stones (two-feet square) in front of their stores. These were hauled in from Piqua.

In the late 70s, Frank recalls, the improvement of the old Piqua, St. Marys Road (Route 66) began. W. J. Sherman was the surveyor and August Wise built many of the culverts. The "Democrat" stated that the road cost $4,000 a mile to build. When this road went through Berlin, sidewalks were built and board and picket fences sprung up between the sidewalks and residences.

Berlin had no government of its own during Frank's youth, everything being done by McLean Township Trustees. In 1880 the census showed McLean Township to have a population of 1545, with 388 of these (80 families) living in Berlin. One constable lived in Berlin and one in the township. County and state elections were held the second Tuesday in October, and presidential elections in November. There were no primary elections, the candidates being chosen by party committees.

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Politics was a serious business in old Berlin as well as in Shelby County. The "Democrat" described a political rally at Berlin in the campaign of 1876. Fifteen hundred people gathered for the rally with 250 torches. Residents illuminated their homes with candles and coal oil lights in the windows. The marchers went through the streets, led by the Berlin band. A hickory pole was erected in front of Lemms' on the canal bank, with Tilden's picture on the top. Afterwards the crowd listened to three hours of oratory.

Frank remembers the time Garfield beat Hancock in the presidential election of 1880. The Republicans were jubilant. The only problem was there weren't enough of them to erect a victory pole.

The Democrats used hickory; the Republicans ash poles. A group of the Democrats offered to help the Republicans erect their pole. The help was accepted and soon the pole was erected. Only then did the Republicans see that the Democrats had exchanged pictures on top of the pole. The Democratic candidate, Hancock, smiled down on the crowd. The Republicans were furious. One of them obtained a shotgun and shot the picture from the pole. This provoked a free-for all that required the law to settle the matter.

"Quill" the news correspondent for the Democrat, writes about the same election: "Berlin's first count showed Hancock, 317 and Garfield 38. This count gave the Republicans six more votes than they had in October elections. We demanded a recount. As you know some of our Germans do not know the English language. One of the poll workers, Mr. Roop, had mixed six of the Democratic ballots with the Republican votes. I pointed this out to the judge, Mr. Hasabrook. He corrected the mistake and everything settled back to normal. The final count was Hancock 323, and Garfield 22. This lopsided majority of Democratic voters continued up to the election of 1928. When Al Smith lost Shelby County, many of the voters turned Independent and the Republicans picked up business at the polls.

One aftermath of the election was a canal boat load of Democrats paying off the election bets by going to Salt River. "Quill" described the Democratic leaders getting on the boat in April of 1881. Quill was appointed keeper of the demijohn and the Fort Loramie Band played "Forget, Forget Me Not," as the boat pulled away from the Rottinghouse wharf. Salt River was a mythical place something like Shang Ri La today.

Religion was very important in Frank's youth. The Rev. Meyer was the Catholic priest of Berlin in 1873, but the Rev. Bigot came the next year. Frank still recalls his boyhood amazement for the tremendous hole made for the church basement in 1881. Quill reported that when the cross was erected in June of 1881, it took 34 minutes to raise the 450-pound cross to the summit, 210 feet from floor level. After the cross was fastened to the steeple, John Knostman stood erect on top of the cross.

Services were held Sundays at 6 A.M. and 10 A.M. with Vespers at 3 P.M. The 10 A.M. Mass was the most popular and lasted from one and a half to two hours. Many of the people in the county would go to church in the morning by horse and buggy, and then walk back for Vespers. According to Frank, the people wished to rest their horses.

Services at the church were very colorful during Frank's youth. One account of first communion on April 29, 1881, notes: "Father Bigot, escorted by 50 children, 10 dressed in white with scarlet capes and four with banners, went from the church to the schoolhouse where 29 boys dressed in black and 30 girls in white were led back to the church, while the bells were rung and the cannons were fired. After services dinner was served to the communicants and families in the schoolhouse. Anton Heitman and Adolph Sherman had their hands burned by a premature explosion of the cannon."

Frank recalls that the two cannons were hauled from the church basement by wheelbarrows on special occasions, laid flat on the ground, loaded with powder and tamped with bits of slate. On one occasion a brick was dislodged on the rear of the church due to the explosion.

The Fort Loramie band also entered into church festivities. Newspaper articles tell of escorting ladies of St. Anne's Lady Society to the church from the school on their anniversary. On another occasion a band member was greeted at the door of the church by the band and taken to the Vondelle House for refreshments.

Frank states that newly married couples would always be held up by the servers afer a wedding and the couple forced to donate a little to the alter boys. Also, children would wait at the iron gate from which the couple would exit from the church grounds and be paid off in pennies before they would open the gate.

The newly married couple could also expect to be belled. One instance that Frank remembers was the belling of F. Gast and Mrs. Zurline.

"Cowbells, tin horns, tin pans, oyster cans, and circular saws were used to make noise. Gast set it up; 12 kegs of beer," the newspaper reported. Frank added, "We belled him five nights in a row before he gave us anything."

McLean Township in 1880 listed 80 families in Berlin, 70 families east of the village and 55 on the

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western side. They were overwhelmingly German in ancestery, with a few Irish and French thrown in.

The election for township officials took place in April, and at that time school officials were chosen, Berlin was District 3 of a five- district board. The other districts were Dirksen, Sherman, Walkup and Dieters. Each district elected a director and they chose a clerk. They met in one or the other of the school houses.

As part of their duties, they were required to visit each schoolhouse and hear the children read and cipher. Berlin had nine months of school, and the county districts seven. The school year would start around the middle of September. School hours were 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. with two recesses a day and an hour off for lunch. Berlin had two school masters and the others, one.

Frank Willman recalls that the desks were 10 feet long with eight pupils to a bench. Girls were on one side of the room, boys on the other. Boards were made of pine and painted black to be used as black boards. Chalk was used on the board. All instructions and problems in arithmetic were on the board.

There were no grades but the children would return each year and start where they left off the year before. Frank says, "To start school we had to bring our slate, a slate pencil and an A.B.C. book. Everything was in German. We had reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, and some history and geography. If we read real well for the school board, they would give us a new slate pencil. One way we made the teacher mad was to use a stone and make it squeak on the slate." Pupils went to school at six years of age through age 15.

For amusements Frank remembers checkers, dominos, andy-andy over and card games such as woodpile, eucher, sheephead and sixty-six. A fun time was every weekday at 7 P.M. when the hack would arrive with the mail. Started in 1889, the hack would leave Berlin at 7 A.M., go to Wynant (Newport), Dopkins Corner (Oren), Hardin, Georgetown, and then Sidney. Here it would pick up the mail and return by the same route.

Berlin parents would send their children to get the mail. The kids would congregate around the town pump (drinking water came from public wells), jostle each other and "skin the cat" on the towns hitching racks. When the mail would arrive Postmaster Menke would call out the names of the people receiving mail, and the children would take it home. Any unclaimed letters would wait until the next day.

The Fourth of July, Easter, and Christmas were the big holidays. July 6, 1877, is described by the Shelby County Democrat at that time: "The celebration started with a mass at 1 o'clock. The band led the way out to Pilliod's Woods (Boergers), west of the village. The village was decorated with flags and banners. In the woods was a dance platform, and refreshment stands. The Minster Fire Dept. attended in full uniform. Two hacks were kept running till 6 o'clock (Fare 5 cents one way) Fifteen hundred people attended the picnic, the proceeds from which were used to buy a safe for the church. One of the attractions on the grounds was a standing ladder, on which the participants could time their ascent and descent efforts."

Christmas was a time of expectation, the same as today. For months people would be making homemade gifts to be placed on plates around a table on Christmas Eve. The Christmas tree was lighted with candles, and oranges, a scarce commodity in those days, would find their way to the table at Christmas. St. Nick always came the first part of December, bringing candy to good children and rotten apples to bad ones. On Christmas eve, the children were visited by Old Nick (The Devil) and Kris Kringle (The Christ Child).

Old Nick, a man dressed in old clothes, unshaven and carrying a black snake, would come into the house in a very rough manner, sometimes using profanity, and scare the kiddies. Then Kris Kringle (a lady dressed in white,) carrying sleighbells, would enter and ask the children to pray. Those who did received candy, while those that did not were chased by Old Nick. If everyone prayed, Old Nick shied away from them, and ran outside.

Frank Willman, whose father operated a store, as well as a meat packing and shipping plant, recalls many early day business practices. Mental arithmetic took the place of cash registers, with the prices in even numbers, except for nickles. Frank recalls, "You better add it right, because the person on the other side of the counter was adding it too. When the Willmans purchased their first cash register, they used it more or less as a change box, with Frank still figuring in his head or with a lead pencil.

Customers came with baskets to take home their purchases. A whiskey jug stood on the counter and the customers were free to help themselves. Among prices Frank remembers were: potatoes, 25 cents a bushel; coffee, 12 cents a pound; prunes, 13 pounds for $1; wheat 50 cents to $1 a bushel; oats, 35 cents; hogs, $3.90 per 100 pounds; cattle, $2.60 per 100 pounds; ham, 16 cents a pound; sugar, 10 cents; ladies stockings, 5 cents; overalls, 50 cents; chickens, 4 cents a pound; eggs, 5 to 10 cents a dozen; postage stamps, 3 cents; plays, 25 cents; tea 40 cents; interest loans, 6 to 9 percent; poplar trees, $20; Walnut trees $80.

Due to excesses of printing greenbacks (paper money of the Civil War), no paper money was ac-

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cepted. and since silver and gold coins were hard to come by. most of the trade was done by barter. Eggs, livestock, and wooden material comprised the bulk of materials brought to the store.

One account of March 28, 1881, by the Democrat stated: "The canal banks are piled high with spokes, hubs, handle timber, bending timber, saw logs and hoop poles. Mr. Willman and Mr. Moorman have $10,000 worth on hand. Mr. Willman is calling for 15-canal boats alone, to carry away his produce. Navigation will soon open and we will, again be able to see the other side of the canal, and a lot of money will come into town."

As a sidelight on the Willman's business activity, I. H. Thedick, one of Sidney's early businessmen, received his first experience in merchandising behind the counters of Willman's store. According to Frank, Mr. Thedick was sent to Berlin from Cincinnati, by the same man who sent Frank's father to the village to start a store and another man, Ronnenbaum, to start farming so they could send their produce to Cincinnati. After a time spent clerking, Mr. Thedick and Philip Raterman went to Sidney and started the store of Thedick & Raterman.

No hogs were butchered at the packing plant. Farmers would butcher the hogs at home and bring the meat to the plant. Here it would be salted and packed in open boxes for shipment in the spring, when navigation would open on the canal. Pork sides were often stacked like cordwood for shipment, on the canal boats. During the season, when no ice was on the canal, live shipments were made.

Frank recalls one shipment of live hogs that capsized south of Fort Loramie with a total loss of cargo. Beef was very seldom eaten and was considered far inferior to hogs. Cream and cheese were made from milk and since there was no demand for the milk, large amounts were used to feed the hogs. In Berlin people had cows and kept the milk and butter from spoiling, by placing it in molasses buckets and lowering it by rope, to dug wells.

Most of the trade was with Cincinnati, Piqua, Troy, and Tipp City, although J. D. Inderrieden got his lumber from Toledo. Ice was a very important export. The Loramie Reservoir, at the Bulkhead, had a very large Ice house, and the Basinburg south of Fort Loramie had two. Most of these were built and operated by Cincinnati people. According to Frank, labor was cheap during the winter time as no one had any work. Two-foot square blocks of ice were sawed from the lake, sometimes averaging eight, 10 and 12 inches thick. They were stored in the ice houses awaiting spring and the canal boats. The Brucken sawmill furnished sawdust to store the ice.

Runaway horses were common events of the 1870's and speeding while intoxicated brought a $10 fine and five days in jail to the guilty party. One ordinance was passed forbidding owners of hogs to allow their animals to run at large without rings in their noses, to prevent them from rooting up the highways, Another forbid owners to use shabby and unsafe harness on horses. Every able bodied man was obliged to give two days of free labor to the township each year.

Lots sold in Old Berlin for $300 each, while an 80-acre farm in McLean Township was worth around $1,500. Lager beer at Lemms and the Vondrele Beer Garden was priced two big glasses for five cents and a shot of whiskey, five cents. One account in the "Democrat" tells of 30 men helping Clem Hilgefort harvest his season's crops: 140 bushels of wheat, 333 bushels of oats and 21 bushels of rye. This was considered a good harvest.

Old Berlin is now Memory Lane to Frank and modern Fort Loramie flexes its muscles on the site of the old town, proudly claiming its heritage.

## BOYHOOD MEMORIES OF AMERICA
### 1920 - 1940

*By Francis Urban Puthoff*

My great grandfather, Bernhard Kleine Puthoff, was a farmer as was his son, Frank M. and as was Frank's son, Bernard L. who was my father. It was a heavenly place for a boy. The house was a double log one with rafters from the woods. It had a spacious kitchen which was connected to the main body of the house with living room, three bedrooms, and an upstairs.

Throughout the years the family table was set in the middle of that spacious kitchen with a linoleum floor laid over the wood flooring. The flat range stove stood on the south wall and behind it, the woodbox. A hot water reservoir served all with hot water. In the corner of the kitchen was the sink with a kitchen cabinet above it and always a full water bucket with dipper for drinking. The meals - while it makes me cry to think of them - were always so very good -- fried chicken, pork, beef, ducks, wild rabbit, biscuits, pancakes, homemade bread, fresh corn boiled on the ear, lima beans, peas, tomatoes, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, grapes, currants, cherries, plums, apples, apple pie, peach pie, pumpkin pie and of course, one cannot forget the cane molasses of the 1930's.

The farmhouse of the 20's stood near the drilled well which had a windmill 40 feet high and which was later drilled to 60 feet deep. The water was always cool and supplied all our needs. The trumpet vines and honeysuckle flowers grew to the top of the windmill. These attracted many hummingbirds. To

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the north of the house stood the smokehouse where the hand-turned separator separated the cream from the milk. The rear of the smokehouse was used for smoked ham and other meats prepared in the winter. To the west of the house stood the very old chicken house in an orchard of twenty fruit trees - peach, plum, cherry, apple, quince and pear.

Near the windmill stood the woodshed. It was stocked with wood during the summer for the long, cold winter. On the north side of the shed were tools of every description, including a grindstone and very up- to-date tools including draw knives, wood chisels, vises and a work bench. This is the only building which still stands today from the early 1900's.

Oh yes, one cannot forget the tool shed and the wheat and oats granary where we used to jump in the wheat. There was a price to be paid for that, too, for Vera got some in her ear and it started to grow! Of course, one could never forget the huge, beautiful barn, 50' x 100' x 40' high with its slate roof and its marking, "F. M. Puthoff, 1902". Northward past the barn was the corn crib and the hog house.

I can still see the use of the farm barn yet with perfect clearness. I can see all its belongings, all its detail--the eight horse stables filled with its horses and colts, the hay in the haymow, cow stables for sixteen milk cows, a stable for three heifers, another for three steers, and another for the small calves, a harness room and oats bins. The hay was lifted into the mow by hay forks and slings in the summers. In July and August the threshing machine was set in the barn, straw was blown into the straw mows above the cow stables with the excess straw blown outside to the east side of the barn onto a haystack.

In 1927, electricity was brought from the lane with John Plas doing the wiring of the house, the chicken house for 300 brown leghorn chickens, the barn, hog stable, woodshed, and all other buildings.

The long 500 ft. lane ran toward the country road. It was a dusty place in the sumnmer time. The lane was fenced on each side as were all the fields sized about 10 acres each. In the fields grew the corn, wheat, oats, alfalfa, soy beans, etc. In addition there were 10 acres of woods with its pond. The trees were hickory, walnut, birch, oak, sugar maple, ash, ironwood, cottonwood, elm, and sweet gum. Raspberry patches in the woods provided fruit for pies and jam. Wild strawberry plants in the lane provided a delicacy for us. Once in a while a bee nest or a harmless snake could be found. They liked to be in the sun to sun themselves.

The bluebirds made their nest in the wooden fence posts, the swallows had their nests made of mud in the hog pen rafters, while the pigeons ruled the barn and the sparrows liked the straw stack. Of course, the buzzard could always be counted on to give us the location of dead animals in the fields while the chicken hawk would hang motionless in the sky waiting for a proper time for his meal.

The country schoolhouse was two miles from my father's farm. It stood in the center of St. Patricks, Ohio, a farm community of about 40 farm families. It had three rooms - one for plays, the center room, as well as one for the first four grades, and one room for grades five through eight. Mary Gigandet taught the first four grades and Esther Gigandet grades five to eight. This was 1928. Prior to this, teacher Lachey had been in the one-room school for about 30 years. My father talked about his teaching in this school.

Every morning, Monday through Friday, for eight years I walked that gravel road to school in the cool of the morning and in the glooming at the end of the day. All of the pupils brought their lunches in baskets, bags, and dinner buckets. In the shade of the trees at noon we ate together. after that was play time.

I spent these beautiful years until age fourteen with memories that were full of charm, so is the memory of it yet. I can call back the mystery of the deep woods, the earthy smells and faint odors of wild flowers, the cleanliness of rain-drenched foliage, the clatter of raindrops on the tool shed roof, the hammering of the woodpecker and the sound of the hoot owl at night, the hurried glimpse of a squirrel and once a deer at 6:30 early in the morning standing in the garden. I can call it all back and make it as real as it ever was and as blessed.

I can call back the back eighty acres, its loneliness and peace. I walked it many times to trap early in the morning for skunk, possum, squirrel, coon, and fox. I see the vast hawk hanging motionless in the sky with its wings spread wide and the blue showing through the end wing feathers. I can see the woods in their autumn dress, especially the hickory, chestnuts, and walnuts for the scramble of the nuts after the first frost usually around October 15th. I know the stain of walnut hulls and how soap and water doesn't really get the stain off the hands.

Then came the fall repairing of machinery in the shed below the granary. Here was the buggy, disc cutter, roller, corn planter, corn plow, grain binder, grass cutter, single plow and riding plow, wagon, hay loader, harrow and spike-tooth harrow, gravel wagon and log wagon, all horse drawn. Later the Fordson tractor in the 1930's started to replace the horse.

One could never forget "Douey", the ever faithful brown shepherd dog who slept under the granary in the summer and in the barn during the winter. You

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called him and he was there to help get the cows from the field, ever present where you were working. It is like yesterday. I want to go back for some moments. In his happiness he raced and scampered around but never in the house. He would never come into the house. He was a watchdog of all watchdogs.



1920's. The Fordson Tractor Replaces the Horse on the Farms of Ft. Loramie.

### TORNADO STRIKES FORT LORAMIE AREA

*By Henrietta Heckman*

A tornado struck Shelby County on Palm Sunday, April 11, 1965. One person lost her life in this tornado. She was Mrs. Bernadine Barhorst, age 75, who resided on the Schmitmeyer-Baker Road. A son, Martin Barhorst, was seriously injured.

The tornado touched down southwest of Ft. Loramie and did damage in the south part of town and continued east on to Anna, Ohio.

Three farm homes and barns east of Ft. Loramie were completely destroyed, plus an undetermined amount of damage.

Papers were found from the Barhorst farm as far away as Mt. Gilead, Ohio.

People from the area spent several weeks helping others less fortunate in the area by donating clothing and household items and helping in any way they could.

The Ft. Loramie American Legion opened up their Post Home as an emergency center.

### THE BLIZZARD OF 1978

*By Henrietta Heckman*

In the early morning hours of January 26, 1978, the Ft. Loramie area was hit by a blizzard which lasted about thirty- five hours. All electricity was out and the high winds had drifted all the roads shut. It was impossible for trucks to get out to sub-stations west of town. As a result no furnaces were workable. The homes with gas space heaters, and gas stoves were comfortable and the occupants invited their less fortunate neighbors to spend the night.



Bender's Park After Blizzard

Snowmobiles were the only means of transportation. St. Michaels Hall was opened to anyone needing a place to keep warm.

The Ft. Loramie Fire Department were on hand taking care of those living alone, showing the caring spirit of a small community.

### BASEBALL - A RESEARCH BY MEMORY

*By Joe Turner*

Baseball in Fort Loramie played a major roll in sports back as far as the late 1880's and the early 1900's. Basketball, golf and tennis were unheard of in those days. Baseball brought the community together on Sunday afternoon. Fans followed the home team very religiously throughout the summer. Every Sunday a game was scheduled at Fort Loramie. A steady stream of fans on foot, a few on bicycles and fewer in automobiles could be seen on their way to the old ball diamond. (You will note I am calling them diamonds). That is what they were, very little backstop, no bleacher seats, just a "skinned" area for the infield. The first diamond we remember was located behind the Holthaus Elevator in a pasture field. The next diamond, as near as can be recalled, was located on Busse & Sons farm along State Route 705, west of Ft. Loramie. The entrance to the field is still visible as you drive by. Next the loyal fans journeyed north of Fort Loramie, to the Henry Barhorst farm. Ferd Fleckenstein now owns this property. This

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field was ideally located with sufficient level playing area to present a decent diamond. It was used as Fort Loramie ball park for quite a few years. There was one problem! This same field was used to pasture a herd of cattle. A clean-up crew went in early every Sunday to take care of the leavings of the week. The field was abandoned when the local high school purchased land from Martin Romie and a permanent diamond was created.

The first picture on record of the ball team is shown. One cannot help but note the primitive appearance of the team as far as equipment, uniforms and protection. No chest protectors or shin guards were used in the early days. Frank Schulze played on the Black Swamp team. He cannot recall how the team came by its name, but the diamond was located west of Fort Loramie on the Tony Bornhorst Farm, later owned by Allie Brandewie. The Black Swampers were active during the late teens and early 1920's.



Black Swamp Team. Courtesy Herb Brandewie.

The Black Swamp team gained quite a reputation in baseball and were considered an outstanding group of athletes.

Names and positions of team pictured:

Front row, left to right: Elmer Schulze, ss; Tony Bornhorst, c; Harvey Schulze, 2nd B; Leo Bornhorst, p. Back row: Henry Schulze, fan; Ben Sturwold, lf; Fred Schulze, cf; Lawrence Brandewie, 1st b; Joe Schulze, p; Frank Schulze, 3rd b; Leo Schlater, rf; Henry Sturwold, fan.

Black Swamp booked games with teams from neighboring villages at random and had many winning seasons. There is no records of wins and losses nor whom they played. Almost all the team were farm boys who worked hard on their respective farms all week and played ball just as hard on Sundays.

With the acquisition of land, plans were made to make a ball diamond. However, there were several obstacles to overcome. Firstly: an open ditch ran diagonally through the field from Elm St. to the north west end of the field. When the school gave permission to close the ditch, the Works Progress Administration office was contacted and they agreed to grant us monies to cover the cost of the material to install a concrete culvert. A contractor was engaged and, a year later, in 1937, the ditch was closed. The Shelby County Engineer, Ed Maurer, was approached and he surveyed the field to make a gentle grade from Romie's property line to the school. Mr. Maurer's office offered his services at no charge. According to his survey there was sufficient cubic yardage along 3rd base which could be moved to the ditch and beyond and would cover over one foot deep. The Shelby County Highway loaned the use of a bull-dozer and heavy grader. Only obligation was the cost of gasoline and payment of operator. The results were a beautiful ball diamond, one of the best around.

The pictures by Bill Simmons and the article by Bernard J. Losh of Sidney Daily News tells the balance of the story. One more item, the $100.00 borrowed from the residents of the community was reduced by money-making ventures: Ft. Loramie Athletic Ass'n. had dances and stag parties, etc. $65.00 of the original $100.00 was paid back.

$35.00 was a small investment to pay for the baseball field Ft. Loramie has. When finished with a five foot fence along right and left field, dugouts, a good backstop, grass in the outfield, ample bleacher seats, a concession stand and a fine lighting system, Ft. Loramie had one of the finest baseball parks in western Ohio.

The author was fortunate in finding copies of an old newspaper, "Loramie Progress". This newspaper printed the results of all the games played during that period: 1916-1917. All the results were listed: hitting, fielding and all outstanding plays by individual players. Those representing Ft. Loramie Village listed in box score are: Leeper, 3rd base; Byrne, catcher; Bachman, short stop; E. Schwartz, center field; Huenke, pitcher; Couchot, 1st base; Anthony, 2nd base; Vogelsang, left field; Sherman, right field; W. Schwartz, utility.

Anthony: many will remember "Pop" Anthony for his all-round ability as a ball player. Frank Sherman was a steady player. Elmer Vogelsang was speedy and a fine outfielder. The balance of the players were from out-of-town and no records are available for them.

Records are available regarding baseball in Ft. Loramie during the 1930s and early 1940s. From the "Western Times", a newspaper owned by George Fleckenstein and printed during that era has extensive baseball data. Those teams were some of the

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best balanced players in baseball. The names listed in the box score will bear this out. They played winning baseball in 1936-37-38-39, and won the Shelby County Championship in 1939. Being an active member of the team during those years makes it easy to recall the players and their performance on the diamond.

The box score, from an old newspaper, below between Minster and Loramie shows an impressive record of the players:

**BOX SCORE:**

| Loramie | AB | R | H |
|---|---|---|---|
| Maier ss | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Schamp 2b | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Busse cf | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Saltmarsh c | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Barhorst c | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Brandewie rf | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Schulze 3b | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Paulus lf | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Turner 1b | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Winner 1b | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Larger p | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Keysor p | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Minster | AB | R | H |
|---|---|---|---|
| L. Vanderhorst c | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Meyer 2b | 5 | 0 | 2 |
| Bachman ss | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Anderson 1b | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| D. Vanderhorst p | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Koester cf | 4 | 0 | 3 |
| Coble lf | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| A. Fisher 3b | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Boecker rf | 1 | 1 | 0 |

| Innings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | R |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minster | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Loramie | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | x | 11 |

Frank Schulze, 3rd base, had a long and successful career at this position. Good glove man, steady and dependable; also good with the bat in a clutch.

Johnny Maier, short stop, had excellent range, an accurate arm and one of the best lead off men, I was privileged to play with.

Burdette, "Bus" Schamp, second base, ability could not be put into words: dependable, steady, and a definite 300 hitter, he thought baseball with the best.

Alvin Busse, centerfield. Alvin was a ball player's ball player. He loved the game and always gave 110% effort. He could hit, field, run and had a good throwing arm.

Saltmarsh, catcher. "Big Salty" as he was affectionately called had a good throwing arm and could hit a long ball.

"Rich" Barhorst, catcher, all round player, proved to be a scrappy receiver and a good field general. "Urb" Brandewie, right field was a tall rangy player, just a rooky but played the position well. He left as he accepted a position in another area.

Joe Turner, first base, a left hander, who filled the position very capably, showed his love for baseball and carried a batting average well over 300 most of his playing years.

"Big Al" was the nickname carried by Al Winner, first base. He was a big, strong boy. Six feet-four, long arms and when he swung that 36 inch Louisville Slugger bat (Lou Gehrig model) and made contact that baseball was long gone. Most times out of the park. Al and Joe Turner shared first base position for several years.

Ralph Larger, pitcher and out field. Ralph was just beginning to play semi-pro ball at that time. He soon developed into a fine ball player. He was a brainy pitcher, an excellent outfielder and a good hitter. Pound for pound he had more energy and spirit than any player I ever associated with.

Al Winner and Joe Turner co-managed the team for a number of years. In 1941 came the shock of the Pearl Harbor incident. Becoming totally involved took a large number of our boys in the all-out effort of winning the war against Germany and Japan. Many of the boys volunteered or were drafted. Rationing then became a way of life, causing a shortage of civilian goods, including baseball equipment, uniforms, gloves, balls and bats. The sport of baseball went into a definite decline. The war ended in 1945 with a tremendous victory for the Allies, and our country gradually came back to normal. In 1948, the Western-Ohio League was organized. Governing members of the new group were Al Lay, first president; Victor Blanke, Secretary- Treasurer. Balance of commission were: Al Franzer, Osgood; Sebastian Shappie, Newport and Joe Turner. When Al Lay retired Joe Turner became president, and served for the balance of the commission's existence.

The first teams to represent the Western Ohio League were St. Marys, Ft. Loramie, Kettlersville, Maria Stein, Botkins, Osgood, Russia, Houston, Newport and New Bremen.

The organization of Western Ohio League acted as a stimuli as it arranged schedules, hired umpires, adopted and kept a complete record of all teams in league, ordered all supplies. It was very successful for several years. Baseball interest mounted with a healthy increase in attendance. Fans were talking baseball once again. Much credit must be given to the sports writer for Sidney Daily News, "Zack" Crusey. "Zack" was a familiar figure on the sidelines at the baseball games, with his pipe, camera and note pad. He didn't slight any games, always being there for a few innings at least. The ball managers were instructed to call in box scores as soon as game ended. He stayed at his desk until 11 p.m. every evening. The Monday edition of the News always carried every box score of the weekend. "Zack" always used the proper baseball terminology and always added a bit of humor to his writeups. During the existence of Western Ohio League (1948 to 1956) Ft. Loramie fielded teams of various players. A game and box score found in Amos Memorial Library shows that, while they played a respectable game and 500 ball, they failed to win enough games to reach a play off or a League championship.

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Then a trend developed where some players decided to play for pay. In order to strengthen some of Loramie's positions, Bernard "Bunny" Busse, manager, decided to hire a few players, not always with good results. The hired player did not justify the salary he commanded. As time went on this trend became more costly and it was one of the determining factors in termination of baseball in Ft. Loramie in the late 1950's.

When baseball was terminated it became a cause of concern as to what would happen to the ball field. Would it become useless. Then softball entered the scene and the park is in use more than ever. The Soft Ball Association has invested large sums of money in improving and maintaining the park. Soft ball proved a blessing in disguise. While a name active in baseball may be overlooked it will be strictly unintentional. Some records are not complete and years are missing in available records. However, here is some names we have run across in research.

Fred Anthony was an outstanding pitcher. John Greiner played outfield. Marion "Wild Bill" Paulus, outfield; Tom Ernst, an outstanding pitcher, had an excellent record in high school, and a bright prospect as a pitcher for the city team. Unfortunately, Tom was involved in a serious auto accident, resulting in badly fractured leg, which greatly handicapped his ball playing permanently. Ray Larger will always be remembered for his steady performance at second base, good defensive player and a good hitter. Jerry Schafer, a good many years was remembered as an aggressive catcher and a good field general, and had the ability to keep the team on their toes. Excitement ran high in 1945 as Norman Paulus pitched 2 consecutive no-hit, no-run games for the Ft. Loramie High School team. He received a large amount of publicity for this accomplishment. Norm earned the honor by his ability, determination and stamina. Scouts from several major league clubs contacted him and he accepted a tryout with a farm team of Cincinnati Reds. However, weighing all possibilities carefully Norm decided to return home and completed his baseball career with Ft. Loramie. On completion of four years college he is now teaching in a neighboring town.

Randy Schafer, lastly, almost made it to the top of ball. Graduating from Ft. Loramie High School, Randy attended the University of Toledo. He played baseball with the Toledo team as a short stop and first baseman. While playing with Toledo, the Montreal Expos became interested in Randy. Upon graduation from the university, he signed to a Montreal Class A farm team. After several years with Class A, Randy was traded for "Rusty" Staub, a well-known pro baseball player and promoted to a Class AA farm team as first baseman and catcher. He earned the regular catching assignment and he was progressing nicely in that position, hitting well and for four years prospects were bright. For no apparent reason his knee started to give him trouble and the doctor advised an operation. Unfortunately the surgery was not successful and his baseball career ended.

A final note: Baseball has been wonderful to me all through life and has helped me in many ways. I will pass along some advice to any boy or girl who has ambitions in that direction: Conditioning is very important, next learn fundamentals of game, and listen to your coach and practice, practice, practice.

## BASKETBALL IN FORT LORAMIE

*By Joe Borchers*

Two state championship basketball teams from Fort Loramie High School, first in 1977 with George Hamlin as coach, and in 1987 with Dan Hegemeier as coach. Those headlines make every inhabitant of Fort Loramie feel mighty proud and justly so.

Yes, basketball has come a long way in this village since 1930's, when Brucken's Hall was the home court for the group of rugged pioneers who led the way in establishing the hardwood sport in these environs. Even at this early date the team had the name "Indians" emblazoned on their uniforms.

Back in those days young men in the community seached for an outlet, for a medium to occupy their time. There was no television, no bowling, with the possible exception of those parties centered around the beverage that was "home made."

Included on the roster were such prominent athletes as "Dutch" Brucken, Leo Greiner, "Pete" Raterman, "Peanuts" Ernst, Urb Wissman, Charlie Sharp, Al Winner, "Bud" Rieger, John Greiner, and Joe Borchers. There were others who played a game or two, but were not considered "regulars." Bill Danzig was a well known coach of this era. After leaving the team to pursue active teaching duties at McCartyville, Pete Raterman went on to greater heights as coach of the McCartyville boys' teams. During his years at the school, he contributed scores of top basketball players to the Anna High School program.

Competition wasn't hard to find with practically every town in the area "fielding" a team. Kettlersville, McCartyville, Rossburg, Bellefontaine, Sidney, Piqua, Versailles, Minster, West Milton, New Bremen, St. Marys, Marion Township. The larger towns had church teams, factory teams, but no matter we played them all.

Travel was usually limited to two cars, with a collection being taken up (amongst the players), before departure for gas money.

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Ft. Loramie's first basketball team. William Danzig coach. Rest of team unknown. Courtesy Evelyn Busse.

One of the most memorable events of the thirty-eight game season, was a contest with the Jack Keefer All-Star Girls' team from Dayton. It was played at McCartyville, to a standing room only crowd. Needless to say, the girls won, but everyone enjoyed the evening. Another big game was one with the Marion Tigers (Maria Stein). This was days after "Dutch" Brucken had been killed in an auto accident. The team was fired up and pulled off a victory over a tough team.

Brucken's Hall was the scene of many games, and it was legend to hear the remarks of players from Dayton, and other large towns, as to whether we really were going to play a game in such small quarters. There were no showers, but Mom Brucken let us use her kitchen as a dressing room.

To help with the finances, the team sponsored dances in the hall, one of the orchestras playing frequently was Donn Smith, whose band is still very much in demand.

During the early days of basketball at Fort Loramie High School, Brucken's Hall was shared with the varsity for some of the games, and the original high school tournaments were held there.

Memories -- only three of the Indians of the 1930's are still living today, in 1987.

## 1987 STATE CHAMPS




Ft. Loramie High School 1987 State Basketball Champions. 1st, row left to right: Cheerleaders, Lisa Albers, Julie Schmitmeyer, Lynn Busse, Kay Poeppelman, Denise Barga, Karen Turner. 2nd row, kneeling: Craig Fiessinger, Paul Maurer, Joe Haddox, Jeff Liess, Steve Smith. 3rd row, standing: Tom Brandewie, Todd Gaier (partially hidden), Don Goldschmidt, assistant coach; Dan Hegemier, Coach; Dan Wehrman, Dan Braun, Mark Holtheide, Brian Albers, Paul Barhorst, Dan Hoelscher, Alan Hoelscher, Mark Pleiman, Dave Drees, Alan Frilling, Tony Brandewie, reserve coach. Courtesy Sidney Daily News.

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# Businesses Past-Present

## BRUCKENS

*By Elizabeth (Brucken) Seiters*

Matt Brucken, the founder of "Bruckens" was born south of Minster in 1857. His father, Conrad, and his uncle Matt were raised east of Dusseldorf, in northwestern Germany. They left Germany from the port of Amsterdam, in Holland, bound for Baltimore. Due to severe storms at sea, they landed in New Orleans six weeks later. They came up the Mississippi and Ohio rivers by steamboat to Cincinnati, and thence to Minster. His uncle Matt's wife and son died at sea.

When Lake Loramie was being made, Conrad Brucken started a sawmill at the bulkhead on Lake Loramie. Its purpose was to handle the trees being cut in Lake Loramie, and surrounding area. This mill also furnished sawdust for many of the icehouses in the area. Later, when most of the trees in the Lake Loramie area had been disposed of, the sawmill was moved south of Borchers Boat Yard, about where Hilda Surman once lived. For a period of time, the canal feeder, and the strip of canal from the feeder to the new location was used to float logs from the former location at the bulkhead. This had to be carefully managed so as not to interfere with canal traffic.

My father, Matt, built his house in a former cowyard on Elm street. He later built the Bar and Restaurant now called "Bruckens". When his wife Cornelia (Rieger) passed away in 1887, he sold his house and business to a Mr. Quatman. He then worked in the Wise Sawmill as head sawyer.

After a second marriage to Mary Hilgefort in 1888, he bought Bruckens back again in 1896. Under him the business took many forms: a bar, restaurant, dance hall, political gathering place, entertainment center, and basketball court. After he retired, his son, Henry (Boy) ran the business until 1958. Henry sold the business to Tony Winner and Dick Bensman. Although the business has changed hands several times since then, it still carries the Brucken's name.

Matt served on the school board and village council for many years, was active in the Mens Society of St. Michael's Church, and was a charter member of the Ft. Loramie Fire Co. He dabbled in real estate and built the first cottage at Lake Loramie. He died of pneumonia at the age of 78, in 1935.



BRUCKENS Courtesy E. Seiters

## BUSSE & SONS, INC.
## Since 1919

*By Evelyn (Fleckenstein) Busse*

Formerly known as L. W. Busse & Sons, the business was founded by Louis William Busse, born in Minster, Ohio, on May 8, 1881, the son of Heinrich Joseph and Maria Anna Decker Busse. Louie was the youngest of ten children. He grew up in Minster, Ohio, and on August 24, 1904, he was united in marriage with Cecilia Mary Dwenger, daughter of Bernhard and Elizabeth Ahrns Dwenger of St. Rose, Mercer County, Ohio.

Louis worked from a very early age as butcher and meat cutter for his brother, Henry, in Minster. In 1919, with a growing family, he founded the meat market in Ft. Loramie, and the first location was in a building at 21 North Main Street. This building is now an apartment building with a barber shop in the front area. Several years later he purchased a building at 15 North Main Street owned by Christ Wagler. The meat market has been in that location ever since. Mr. and Mr. Louis Busse were the parents of nine children; 5 girls and 4 boys; Verlina (Reser), Lucille (King), Bernadette, Marian (Parke), Betty (Jones), Ludwig H., Bernard, Frank, Alvin H. After Louis became disabled, the four Busse sons operated the meat business with their sons learning the business as they grew up.

Verlina married Elmer Reser and they were parents of three children; Lucille and husband, F. A. King,

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had one son; Marian and her spouse, Donald King have two children; Betty and husband, Leonard Jones, had a son.

Ludwig H. married Alma Rottinghaus; they had four children: Carol, Bonnie (Gaier). William and his brother, Paul are associated in the corporation.

Bernard J. married Teresa Frantz and were parents of two children: John B. (Jack). Their daughter, Ruth, married Virgil Geise and he is with Busse & Sons, Inc.

Frank, son of Louis and Cecilia, died in 1944, after being with the business for many years. Alvin, youngest son, married Evelyn Fleckenstein, and they had four children; Thomas with business, Michael, Susan (Heyne) and Anne who also works at market.

When Louis Busse first founded the business, he did most of the slaughtering out in the farmer's fields. Later he built a small slaughter house west of Ft. Loramie and worked from there.

During the 1940's a modern slaughtering facility was constructed and in 1968, with the purchase of the old bank building, 17 North Main Street, a processing plant was added.

During the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's, many people came out to Lake Loramie (at that time known as Loramie Reservoir) for the good fishing found there. They camped in primitive conditions with no refrigerating facilities. They purchased supplies daily and learned to enjoy freshly butchered meats. By word-of-mouth, the Busse name became synonomous with good meats. People came from a distance to purchase the Busse products and their name became known for high-class meats using old-time German recipes carried down through the years and hard to obtain elsewhere.

After sixty-eight years the old time recipes brought from Germany are still being used and enjoyed. The market handles meat from the live product to finished product--butchering, processing, freezing, curing, or fresh, wrapped when customer buys. This is a service enjoyed at very few markets.



Early butchering was done out in the field. This shows an unidentified man with gun and Louie Busse sharpening his knife preparatory to dressing out the animal.




L. W. Busse Meat Market. July. 1926. at present location. Shown are Gerhard Tecklenberg. meat cutter, and Louis Busse. Proprietor.

## EMMY'S BRIDAL SHOP

*By Emily L. Bensman*

Emmy's Bridal Shop was established October 1, 1980. Emily L. Bensman is proprietor and bridal consultant. The shop is located at 111 East Park Street in Ft. Loramie.

Mrs. Bensman specializes in personal attention to the customer in the private showroom. Work is by appointment to schedule that personal time.

Emmy's Bridal Shop carries full lines of bridal gowns, bridesmaid dresses, mother-of-the bride dresses, prom and formal dresses and tuxedoes. Many needs will be ordered to size. All accessories appropriate to the formal wear business, as well as invitations are available.

## ERNST FILLING STATION

Ft. Loramie Landmark

*By Tom Ernst*

Aloys H. (Phil) Ernst was born in 1895 on a farm east of Ft. Loramie in Shelby County. He was the son of Bernard and Catherine (Borchers) Ernst.

In 1921 he married Louise Inderrieden of Ft. Loramie and they were the parents of three children; one son and two daughters. He started his own business in the Bender Building on Park Street, selling Ford autos and tractors. He was in this business until Model T Fords were no longer manufactured.

In 1926 Phil moved into a new block building on Park Street where he sold Chevrolets and Pontiacs. The building is presently (1987) known as the Barhorst Body Shop. During this year he also became associated with Standard Oil Co. in the Bulk distribut-

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ing business. This ended when the railroad into town was discontinued.

In 1932 Phil bought a service station on the north end of town, end of Main. He purchased the building from William J. Borchers, added a garage in the rear, and went into business as Ernst Sohio Service Station and Garage.

He was in that location until 1955, when he built a new building in the present location on North SR66.

Aloys (Phil) retired in 1957, when his son, Tom, bought the business and operated it until he retired in 1984. Phil died in 1976.

Thomas is married to the former Anna Mae Ernst and they have four children: three daughters and one son.

In 1984, Tim Ernst, grandson of Aloys and son of Tom, bought the business which is still operated under its name, "Ernst Sohio Service Station and Garage".



Ernst Sohio Filling Station and Garage, North Main Street, in 1954. Courtesy Tom Ernst.

## HISTORY OF FT. LORAMIE CAST STONE PRODUCTS, INC.

*By Charles Wendeln*

In the early 1900's, a local man named "Wagler" manufactured building brick. He was located just south of the present site of Ft. Loramie Cast Stone Products, on SR66. Sometime in the 1920's the present site was purchased by another local man, Alf Quatman. He started producing water-proof concrete block. The forms he used to make the block came from Bay City, Wisconsin. That firm was called "Bay City Cast Stone Products" and it is from this that Quatman named his business.

The old brick plant sold their brick locally and also shipped them out of the area via the Miami-Erie Canal by canal boat. The block plant never used the canal which is just west of the site.

In 1929, Harry J. Wendeln, a single man at the time, purchased the business from Alf Quatman. Wendeln married the next year. His wife, the former Arnolda Hilgefort. is still the principal stockholder.

Harry Wendeln died in 1963, and the business was taken over by three of his six sons; he also left one daughter. The boys associated with the business are Ted, John and Charles Wendeln.

Harry J. Wendeln, also an auctioneer and realtor manufactured block and sold building supplies and agricultural fertilizer until the early 1950-'s. He discontinued the concrete block because brick masons would no longer lay the heavy type block he made. Pressed cinder type block were much lighter and easier to handle. Harry started manufacturing decorative concrete lawn ornaments: deer, bird baths, flower urns, picnic tables, etc. Today the three sons, Ted, John, and Charles still manufacture the ornaments plus many custom-made pre-cast concrete items used in construction and various special situations.

Harry J. Wendeln died in 1963. His wife, Arnolda is retired.

## FLECKENSTEIN TILE YARD

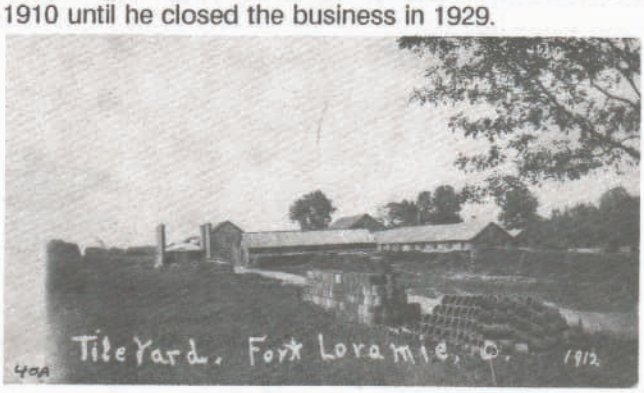
*By Ferd J. Fleckenstein*

Drain tile manufacturing was started at Ft. Loramie in 1881.

The tiles were made out of wet clay that had to be free of stones. The first tile-making machine was powered by horses, pulling equipment in a circle around the tile machine, which made flat-bottom tiles. By the year 1900, steam power was used, and round tiles were made.

Tiles were needed by the farmers to drain the flat lands around the Ft. Loramie area.

Some of the operators of the tile plant were Kleinhenz & Volke; John Holthaus, Clemens (Clay) Daniel and Gregor Fleckenstein. Fleckenstein made tile from 1910 until he closed the business in 1929.




Gregor Fleckenstein Tile Yard. located west of Ft. Loramie.

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## FIRST BAKERY IN FT. LORAMIE

*By Matilda C. Baker*

The house at 36 West Main Street, Ft. Loramie, was built in 1888 by John Gaier. It served as a home, a grocery store, and a bakery. A small one-room building, added to the back of the house, contained a large brick oven which was heated by a side firebox that used regular split logs three feet long. Herman Gaier bought the home including the grocery and bakery business from his brother John in 1898. Together with his wife Mary Louise, Herman worked in developing a flourishing business.

They baked bread, coffee cakes, and doughnuts and were famous for their rye bread baked on the hearth, zwieback, and large sugar and ginger cookies. Later they added layer cakes to the list of bakery products.

Using a horse and delivery wagon, they took their baked goods to Minster, Newport, Houston and Willowdell.

In 1907, they enlarged the store and added two rooms, one on the first floor and one on the second floor, and a front porch to the L-shaped house. In time Minster acquired a bakery of its own, and baked goods were trucked in from larger towns as well. The bakery in Ft. Loramie was closed about 1927, when the Gaiers retired.



Gaiers Bakery and delivery wagon. Courtesy Mary E. Holtvogt

## FT. LORAMIE DAIRY

*By Alice Romie*

In the early 1900's, Ft. Loramie had no house-to-house delivery of milk. Village residents would buy their milk from farmers or city folk who owned cows. As time went on, it became more and more difficult to find someone who would sell milk.

John Romie, Sr. purchased one cow, intending to use the milk for his family's personal needs. Before long, Mr. Romie's friends and neighbors began asking him if they could buy milk from him. Customers became a familiar sight at the Romie residence, each bringing a little tin pail with its own identification tab.

As time went on, Mr. Romie's business grew so he decided to purchase another cow. Eventually he had a herd of 10 cows; five Holsteins and five Jerseys. He would take the milk to the

Woehrmeyer Bros. Dairy at Minster to be bottled in glass pint and quart bottles. When the dairy barn at Minster was destroyed by fire in 1927, Mr. Romie began taking his milk to the White Mountain Creamery at New Bremen (now Beatrice Foods).

In 1931, John Romie, Sr. became ill and his son Albert took over the business. He began house-to-house delivery of milk by purchasing a horse and a milk wagon. The horse was trained to remain at designated spots on the delivery route until his master whistled. Then the horse would move to the next stop.

In 1933, Mr. Romie purchased his first open bed truck. The dairy products would be packed in ice and covered by a heavy canvas. During his 40 years as a milk man, he purchased nine trucks--the last one being an insulated truck.

During his early years as a milk man, Mr. Romie would make an early morning trip at 4 a.m. to New Bremen every day to pick up the supply of dairy products for the day. In 1952, he installed a refrigerator cooler in the milk room in his garage, and Beatrice Foods began delivering the milk to his home.

The dairy business has seen many changes since 1931. In the early days, such products as milk, buttermilk, coffee cream and whipping cream were bottled in quart, pint and half-pint glass bottles. They had to be returned to the creamery every day to be washed, sterilized and reused. Today, all products come in paper containers which are disposable. Also, new health laws required milk to be pasteurized and homogenized. New products such as 2 percent milk, sour cream, butter, cottage cheese, ice cream, chocolate milk and fruit juices were added to the dairy line under the name, Meadow Gold.

During his 40 years of service to the community, Mr. Romie delivered dairy products in Ft. Loramie, Lake Loramie, St. Patricks, Houston and Russia as well as, to the schools in Ft. Loramie, Russia, Houston and Hardin-Houston.

Mr. Romie retired in 1970 and sold the business to Ray Fiessinger. By that time, supermarkets in the neighboring towns gave housewives an opportunity to purchase milk and other dairy products along with their groceries instead of depending on the friendly milk man.

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The Last truck of the Ft. Loramie Dairy.

## FT. LORAMIE MILLS

*By Kathy Siegel*

The first mill in Ft. Loramie was built in 1858 by Bernard Meyer and the Reddy Brothers. Soon it passed on into the hands of Mayer and Kirner. This first mill was known far and wide for its excellent performance. Everywhere Loramie Mills was spoken of. It was a blessing for the whole territory. Now the farmers need not go the long and tiresome way to Piqua or Sidney to have their grain ground into meal. The Loramie Mill was equipped with the newest machinery and for that reason deserved all the praise. Now the stores in Loramie all bettered themselves, put in more stock so the people need not go elsewhere to buy necessary household goods.

The Mill operated solely as a flour mill for many years. In 1877, part of the real estate sold to Jacob Schuler. History is vague for a period here until 1939 when William and Leo Inderrieden, administrators of the J. D. Inderrieden estate, sold the mill to L. A. Landman, but he owned it only for a short time. On November 18, 1942, Anthony Ernst and John A. Siegel bought the mill together. They made many improvements shortly after that time. Mainly a flour mill, they now included grinders, mixers and shelling facilities to begin grinding feed. It was then converted to a feed mill. All new electrical work was done by Louis Borchers and Heinl Electric. In 1948, Anthony Ernst sold his interest in Loramie Mills to Ed. C. Frilling. They operated it together until 1951, when John A. Siegel continued the operation for many years. During that time they built silos to hold fourteen thousand bushels of oats and a storage shed for fertilizer and storage.

In 1977, the Mill sold to John M. and Kathy Grisez Siegel, who own and operate the business today. In 1979, they added storage facilities to accomodate sixty thousand bushels of grain. The mill has been operating as a feed mill and prior to that, a flour mill for approximately one hundred thirty years.

Much of the structure is walnut beams and oak. The supporting joists are such that no pins were used but weight is the factor to support the structure which is one of the oldest buildings in Ft. Loramie, Ohio.



Ft. Loramie Mills

## GAIER'S GARAGE AND SALES

*By Richard and Judy Gaier*

Gus Gaier's interest in automobiles developed from working part-time for Al Brucken who ran a garage in an old barn behind Brucken's Cafe. Gus was nineteen years of age when he returned to Ft. Loramie, after working in a bakery in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Al Brucken sold Overland cars first, but later switched to Chrysler and Plymouth models, soldering radiators in a shed behind Gaier's Bakery on West Main Street. His first engine overhaul job was done for Henry Boerger and he was paid $50.00.

When Gus decided to construct his own building, it was Henry Boerger to whom he went for a loan. Henry loaned Gus $1,000.00 and Gus's brother, Elmer (Chub) Gaier became his partner. In 1922 the original 30x50 foot structure was built. The Buick Touring car wrecker you see in the picture was purchased at that time. It was also in 1922 that Gus and Chub became sub-dealers for Gus Ashman from Sidney. They sold Star and Durant automobiles.

In 1930 a new Model A, one-ton truck was purchased for a wrecker, and a 50 foot addition was built on the original structure. On April 28, 1931, Gus

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Gaier's Garage

married Esther Larger and their wedding dance was held in the new addition before it was opened for business. The 1930's were busy times for Gaier's Garage. Prohibition was in force and bootlegging had become a profitable business. Most of the back roads in the area were still dirt and turned into mud in rainy weather. The Gaier's received calls at all times of the night and early morning hours. Their customers wanted their cars out of the ditch before prohibition officers could catch them running bootleg beer. Esther says, "It was almost like being married to a doctor!"

The present Chrysler-Plymouth dealership was started when Richard, who is the present salesman, ordered his first new car. He bought a 1965 Plymouth convertible from Drivers' Motors in Piqua and subsequently became a sub-dealer for Drivers Motors during the 1965-66 model year. In 1966, Gaier's Garage became a direct dealer under the ownership of Bill, Ted, Junior, Rich and LeRoy Gaier. Gus told the boys not to order more than three cars. When he came home from his Michigan fishing trip, he was greeted by three car carriers, unloading a total of sixteen cars.

In 1969, major renovation was done to the building. A showroom was remodeled out of the front part of the garage to accommodate three new cars. Also a 150 by 60 foot addition was put on to the back. This increased the service department considerably. The building then measured 60 feet wide and 300 feet long.

Gaier's Chrysler-Plymouth sell approximately 300 new car units a year and they draw their customers from Miami, Darke, Auglaize, Allen and Shelby counties. Each year they sell 2 or 3 as far away as Florida, Texas or California.

At the present time Gaier's Chrysler-Plymouth Sales is in the process of adding the Dodge Line to their agency. To accommodate this new business, a complete parts department and new offices were added. The showroom has also been redecorated. They take the same pride in their business that their father, Gus Gaier, did.

## FT. LORAMIE FURNITURE STORE

*By Jerome Slonkosky*

Ft. Loramie Furniture Company originated in April of 1931.

Elmer and Beatrice (Lallemand) Dapore purchased the building from Mr. Albers, Funeral Director, and William Danzig, furniture. The American Legion Home was the original location.

In 1943, Elmer purchased the Inderrieden Hardware store at auction. The building was renovated to accommodate furniture and the move was made from the Legion home to the present location.

Elmer and Beatrice Dapore sold the business in 1962 to Frank and Irene Dapore Boerger and Jerome F. and Miriam Dapore Slonkosky as a partnership.

In 1979 Frank passed away and the partnership was sold to Jerome Slonkosky who has operated it since, featuring quality furniture and carpet. The business has operated as a family business for fifty-six years.

## HISTORY OF G-W TOOL & DIE COMPANY

Carroll Grimm and Vernon Westerheide formed a partnership called G-W Machine Shop in August, 1946. They rented a building from Hoying-Westerheide Hardware (which they remodeled completely) adding an office and heavy concrete floor. Their idea was to do general repair machining and to build special machines. They built a number of these special machines for different companies such as American Box Co., Triplett Electrical Instrument Co., Comet Air Craft, etc.

This type of operation did not keep the shop busy, so they decided to begin building tooling and metal stamping dies. The first die was built for "New Idea", a company in Coldwater, Ohio, that built farm machinery. The die business proved to be quite successful.

The first Punch Press was acquired through a trade with "Name Plate & Monogram", a company in Spencerville, Ohio. One "die" for a "Bliss 85 Ton Straight Side".

The press did two things; it allowed them to try out the dies and furnish sample parts to their customers and also start, in a small way, the stamping business.

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Since the company was growing and most of their business was in the tool and die area, it was decided to incorporate and change the name. So, June 1, 1953, the G-W Tool & Die Company was born.

They were doing die repair for Marwil Products Co. (a company in Wapakoneta, Ohio, which manufactured and wholesaled auto replacement parts, tail pipe hangers, muffler clamps, etc). Marwil Products employees went on strike and shut down the Wapak plant. Mr. Grimm suggested to Mr. Marwil that they would be willing to run the dies that they had repaired and were at G-W. Mr. Marwil sent material to G-W and they started making "Muffler Saddles". The steady pounding of the press made precision tool work almost impossible, so G-W leased part of the Wooden Shoe Brewery Building, bought more presses and took up metal stamping in earnest. The tool business was growing and the building on Frankfort Street was bulging at the seams.

Joe Turner (a Ft. Loramie habadasher) came to G-W one day to discuss some business concerning the Lake Loramie Improvement Association. Grimm & Westerheide were both active in that organization at the time. Joe remarked that G-W required more room and since there was no place to expand, would they consider moving to Ft. Loramie? Joe contacted owners of empty buildings in Ft. Loramie, but none were large enough. With Harry Wendeln (owner of Ft. Loramie Cast Stone), they formed the Ft. Loramie Development Corporation, sold stock and built a building to the specifications of G-W Tool & Die Co. So, after eleven years in business, G-W moved to Ft. Loramie, Ohio.

Soon after, Sid Marwil, owner of Marwil Products, had a heart attack. He was thinking of going out of business when Mr. Grimm suggested that G-W Tool would take over all of his manufacturing and he could concentrate on sales. So all of the Marwil Products machinery was moved to Ft. Loramie in 1958.

With G-W's know how for designing special machines, they were soon rolling threads on both ends of the U bolt at once and forming the bolt in a punch press at 140 pieces per minute.

By the end of the first year in Ft. Loramie, they required more space, so another bay was added. A year and a half later, a second addition was made and in 1971, the High Bay was completed.

In 1972, G-W was contacted by a Mr. Mel Oilman, an engineer from Detroit, Michigan, who had patented a "Steel Form" to make lightweight steel trusses. He was looking for a company to design and build a machine to manufacture this truss.

Mr. Westerheide went to Detroit and acquired prints and sample parts. G-W got the job of building the machine and also the right to manufacture the product, called C/O Truss. They set up the machines in the high bay and became the only supplier in the world for C/O Truss. So they had another product.

In 1979, G-W received an order to build two truss lines for Iran. These were built. However, assembly of the machines would require more space than presenetly available. Therefore, on the far side of the back lot, a 50 by 150 foot building was erected, using the trusses manufactured by G-W.

Before machine assembly could be completed, the Shah of Iran was overthrown. Despite this, the machines were completed, shipped and paid for, but never put to use. The whereabouts of the two machines are unknown.

G-W always tried to stay ahead, or at least be competetive. They were among the first to have Electrical Discharge Machining as well as Wire E.D.M. These helped to develop progressive dies. As Grimm often said, "Don't be afraid to re-invent the wheel".

In 1983, Grimm & Westerheide decided that it was about time to retire. G-W Tool & Die Co. was then split into four companies; G- W Tool & Die Co., to continue the building of special machines, tools & dies; G-W Metal Products, to make the metal stampings, package and assemble automotive products; Lorcoa, Inc., to manufacture and sell C/O Trusses, and G-W Realty, to own and lease all real estate.

In January of 1984, Grimm & Westerheide sold the G-W Metal Products Company to Marwil Products, a division of Maremont Corporation, and they then both retired from daily operations.

The G-W Tool & Die Co. is presently managed by two of Grimm's sons, Gary and Steven, both of whom have much experience in the operation.

Lorcoa, Inc., is managed by Westerheide's son, Vernon J., who is expanding an entirely new product line.

## JOHN ALBERS & CO.

*By Victoria Albers*

JOHN ALBERS & CO., a well-known Ft. Loramie business on Elm Street, was formed by John Albers, Sr., and Anthony Hoying in 1910.

Albers was a carpenter and contractor and he built the building which still houses a hardware store. Later, the building next door, a former funeral establishment operated by Henry Lehmkuhl, was purchased and converted into a "tinshop".

A lumber shed, which, which has since been moved, was built for lumber supplies and a cabinetry shop.

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The Albers, Hoying partnership continued until 1921 when Hoying retired from the firm and William, eldest son of Albers was admitted to take his place. Also associated with the firm were two other sons of Albers; Lawrence and John, Jr.

The business dealt in hardware, cabinetry, lumber, plumbing and heating until 1965 when it was sold to Donald Braun.

Mr. Braun operates the Hardware Store in its original location and an Auto Parts Store in the former tinshop.

## HOLTHAUS ELEVATOR

*By Alfred Holthaus*

Located at 11 Canal Street, in Ft. Loramie, the present Holthaus Elevator was built around 1911 by William Sherman. At that time it was known as the Sherman Grain Co.

Their principal business was buying and selling grain and seed in the local area. A coal yard located directly south of the main building supplied a source of fuel for heating and cooking to many residents of Ft. Loramie.

Rail access, in the early years, supplied a means of transport for grain and supplies. And, as one would look out the front warehouse door, he could see within one hundred or so feet, the Miami-Erie Canal.

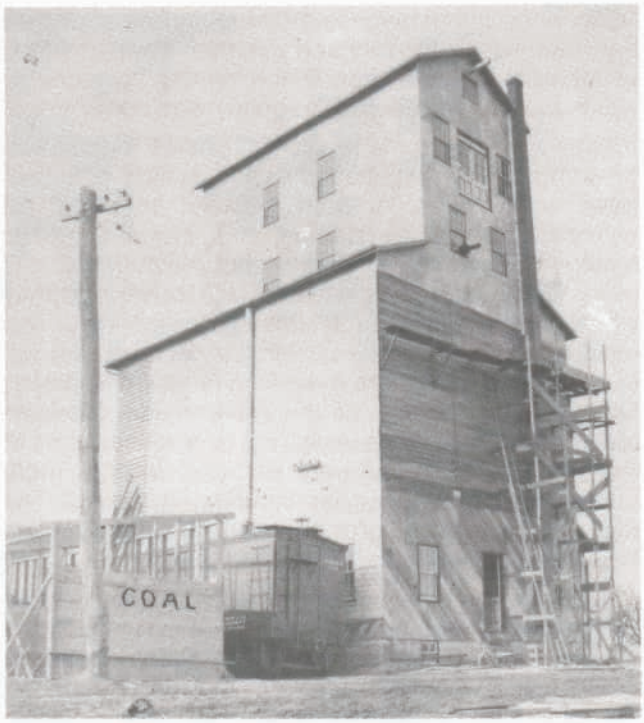
For a period of time the building was leased by Lock Two Mills of New Bremen to store grain for their flour mill. During this time it was managed by Bill Sherman's son, Frank.

Between 1935 and 1943, the elevator was leased by Bernard and Charlie Middendorf. Then, in 1943, was purchased by the two brothers. It was at this time the business expanded into supplying feed for livestock and also they bought and sold livestock. This was the beginning of Middendorf Stockyards.

On September 1, 1964, Alfred Holthaus, Sr., Manager of Middendorf Elevator, purchased the business from Charles Middendorf and changed the name to the presdent Holthaus Elevator. The Business has been a part of the Holthaus family since then and is currently owned and operated by Alfred Holthaus, Jr.

Present supplies and services include Purina Livestock and Pet foods, grain merchandising, fertilizer, seed, chemicals, animal health supplies, livestock equipment, baking goods, on farm consulation, lawn and garden supplies and much more.

The times have changed, but the spirit of working together with the people of the area goes on at the Holthaus Elevator.




Sherman Grain Co.. now familiar as Holthaus Elevator.

## BARNEY KRAMPE IMPLEMENT STORE

In the building now occupied by Goubeaux's Ft. Loramie Home Appliances and Cutaway Styling Salon, the former Barney Krampe Implement Store started. Barney Krampe was a blacksmith by trade. In 1894, he left the blacksmithing to his brother, Peter, and started the implement business.

In 1896, he erected the present building to store his implements and buggies.

In 1902, he enlarged the building for his expanding trade for surries, harness, farm wagons, ranges, galvanized roofing, gasoline engines, wire fence and fence posts. He featured the Moline tractor, and was one of the leading promoters of the old Farmers' Picnic at New Bremen.

## INDERRIEDENS HARDWARE STORE

J. D. Inderrieden came to Ft. Loramie from Kentucky. He served an apprenticeship in the tinsmith trade in Minster. In 1872, he started a store dealing in hardware, stoves and tinware.

This was replaced by a much larger building, now housing the Ft. Loramie Furniture and Carpet Store. Outbuildings housing lumber, fence and other products were later built. He was a leader in Ft. Loramie's schools, clubs and business and the leader in the movement to incorporate Ft. Loramie.

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Inderrieden Hardware Co. J. D. Inderrieden was a well- known businessman. His sons. Leo and William, later ran the business.

## LARGER BROS. MILK CO.

*By Ralph M. Larger*

There are very few people in Shelby and surrounding counties who haven't had dealings with the Larger Brothers (Ralph and Ray). Ralph, the eldest of the two brothers, graduated in 1936 from Ft. Loramie High. At that time, he had already been working three years for William Quatman, driving the cream routes. This was mainly due to the death of their mother at the age of 42.

Ralph took over the route in 1937. His brother, Ray, joined him several years later. Ralph hauled milk to the White Mountain Creamery, New Bremen, while Ray hauled to Sidney Dairy in Sidney, Ohio. This dairy was under the management of Arnold Henke, and later his son, Richard. The Henkes always gave the best in quality and service. Ray and Ralph, in the early 40's, expanded their business to include Dayton, Piqua, Greenville, etc. Present day, 1987, they are hauling all over Ohio and Indiana.

Hauling milk during the war years was not all that easy due to old equipment and no way to get new.

Can milk was the thing and it continued strong until 1951. At that time the brothers had six trucks running every day to Dayton.

In 1951, they installed the first farm bulk tank in Ohio on the Mr. & Mrs. John Poeppelman farm near Osgood. However, it was almost three years until the farmers were ready to change over to the tank style of storing milk. In 1960, Larger Brothers took the last can truck off the road.

This method is still being used in 1987. Ray and Ralph celebrated fifty years dealing with farmers, always trying to give them the best in service. They have the most years of service of any tank haulers in Ohio.

Both brothers are married and raised families. Ralph married in 1941 to Wilma Meyer and has three girls and two boys. Raymond married Virginia Baker in 1948 and has three girls and one boy.

Both brothers agree a vacation would be fine,-- they are interested in keeping fit and preserving their health. They have always been interested in keeping Ft. Loramie a safe and sound place to live.



Can Milk Truck of the 1940's. Ralph Larger stands beside truck.

## HISTORY OF THE LORAMIE BANKING COMPANY

Ft. Loramie, Ohio
1904 - 1981 (merge)

The Village of Ft. Loramie, Ohio, has had a banking company since the year, 1904. It began with a very modest beginning as a co-partnership, with capital stock of $10,000.00. The following Ft. Loramie businessmen were the original partners in the Bank: Michael Moorman, Bernard J. Wuebker, William J. Sherman, and John Boerger. These four men took the position of President, Vice-President, Cashier and Assistant Cashier, respectively.

The Loramie Banking Company was incorporated as a State Bank in October, 1915, and operated under a State Bank Charter until its merger in 1981. It was a member of the American Bankers Association, Ohio Bankers Association, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the Shelby County Banker's Association.

The Cashiers of the Bank, to the year of 1963, were W. J. Sherman, 1904-1905; A. F. Ratermann, 1906-1937; E. F. Day, 1937- 1943; H. A. Bornhorst, 1943-1962; and Paul F. Ahlers, who has been employed at the Loramie Banking Company since May, 1955. With the fine leadership of Mr. Ahlers, the

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Board of Directors of the Bank, and the faithful employees of the Bank, the institution continued to prosper and service the community and surroundings.

During the winter of 1962, Mr. Herman A. Bornhorst, who had held the position of Cashier and Director for many years, died after a short illness. Mr. Bornhorst was also President of the Ft. Loramie Businessmen's Association at the time of his death.

Paul F. Ahlers moved from the position of Cashier, at year-end, 1976, to the position of Executive Vice-President. With the Cashier's position becoming vacant, James M. Hoehne, an employee of the Bank since May, 1963, became Cashier. The assets of the Loramie Banking Company continued to grow over the years, from a figure of $58,500.00 at year-end 1904, to an amount of $21,136,000.00 at year-end 1978.

The year 1979 marked a milestone for the Bank, as it celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. At the date of this anniversary, the following served on the Bank's Board of Directors: Paul F. Ahlers, Richard J. Frantz, Howard M. Jelly, Frank H. Marshall, Hugo F. Meyer, Paul C. Perin, and Roy O. Roeth. There were a total of twenty-one employees employed at this date.

During the history of the Loramie Banking Company, it was necessary to move to a new banking facility, due to growth and expansion, three different times. The initial location, in 1904, was located on West Main Street; the second location was on North Main Street in 1919; and to the present location on South Main Street, in the year of 1969. A Branch of the Loramie Banking Company was opened in 1976, at the corner of St. Rt. 66 and St. Rt. 47, in Newport. The branch facility was built to better serve the area to the south of Ft. Loramie.

The year 1981, ended an era of The Loramie Banking Company, as our Bank joined forces with The First National Bank, Sidney, Ohio, due to a merger. The Loramie Banking Company had total assets of $25,250,000.00 at the time of this merger.

The First National Bank, Sidney, with branches now in Ft. Loramie, Newport, Anna, Botkins, and three branches in the city of Sidney, continues to grow and serve our communities. The total assets of The First National Bank, at year end 1986, was $165,883,028.00. There are currently 738 Shareholders of the Bank and 107 employees working at the Bank in full-time and part-time positions.




Picture of first location (1904)

Picture of second location (1919)





Picture of 3rd Location (1969) - present

Picture of Community Branch (1976)




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## HISTORY OF LORCOA INCORPORATED

*By V. Jay Westerheide, General Manager, Lorcoa, Inc.*

Lorcoa was incorporated in 1982. The firm was originally a part of the G & W Tool and Die Company. Lorcoa's President is Vernon Westerheide of Ft. Loramie, and Carroll Grimm of Minster is the Secretary-Treasurer. Lorcoa's General Manager is V. Jay Westerheide of Ft. Loramie.

The manufacturing operations began in 1983, with production of the 6" and 8" patented steel joist material. In 1984, Lorcoa purchased the Melco steel Corporation and began production in Ft. Loramie of the Melco Steel Building System. Various roll formed products for the construction industry were also added.

In the 4-1/2 years that Lorcoa has been in existence, employment has gone from 5 to 15 employees with an optimistic picture for the future.

The company has manufactured many different types of structures such as restaurants, shopping centers, retail stores, nursing homes, car washes, and steel homes. There has been over 300 structures manufactured by Lorcoa and shipped to various parts of the country.

We very much enjoy being located in Ft. Loramie and look forward to the future of our progressive community.

## MARWIL PRODUCTS COMPANY

*By Gary Martinick*

Marwil Products Company, now located at 62 Elm Street in Ft. Loramie, Ohio, was founded in Detroit, Michigan in 1945 by Sidney Marwil. Marwil Product's initial product was spring U- bolts. Between 1945 and 1953, when the company was moved to Wapakoneta, Ohio, the product line was expanded to include muffler clamps and exhaust system hangers.

In 1958, Sid Marwil sold one-third interest in the company to the Maremont Corporation of Chicago, Illinois, and one-third interest to AP Parts Company of Toledo, Ohio.

The following year, 1959, the company moved to Ft. Loramie, Ohio and started a long relationship with the G-W Tool & Die Company. G-W Tool supplied the building, labor and some equipment to manufacture parts for Marwil Products. Shortly after this move, Sid Marwil repurchased full ownership back from Maremont and AP Parts.

In 1964, the tables were turned again and the Maremont Corporation acquired full ownership of Marwil Products.

Since 1964, Marwil Products has remained a part of Maremont, while Maremont has gone from a family-owned business to a publicly owned company traded on the New York Stock Exchange to being owned by Allusuisse-The Aluminum Company of Switzerland, to most recently, a Division of Arvin Industries. In the fall of 1986, Arvin Industries, which is a major supplier of exhaust systems to Detroit along with a diversified group of other businesses, purchased Maremont and thus Marwil Products is now part of that Columbus, Indiana, based company.

In 1983, with Bill Marwil, Sidney Marwil's son, now its President, Marwil Products purchased the manufacturing portion of G-W Tool & Die Company. It was necessary because of greatly increased sales in the muffler clamp and hanger product line to be able to control the manufacturing portion of the business.

Marwil Products manufactures a wide range of U-bolts, metal stampings and muffler clamps and exhaust hangers. These products are either shipped in bulk or are individually packaged per customer request. Marwil's largest customer is its parent company, Maremont. The next largest volume is shipped through our own muffler clamp customers - warehouse distributors, auto parts stores, muffler shops and private labelers. Marwill Products continues to be a major supplier of U-bolts to Detroit original equipment manufacturers: General Motors, Chrysler and American Motors. Stampings are supplied to such companies as Goodyear, A. O. Smith and Certified Slings.

The current facility contains manufacturing warehousing and office space totaling over 35,000 sq. ft. There is an additional warehouse operation with 10,000 sq. ft. located in Bowling Green, Ohio. Over one hundred dedicated Marwil Products employees make this company a major asset to the Ft. Loramie Community.

## MIDDENDORF STOCKYARD COMPANY

*By Kathy Middendorf*

In 1914, a thirteen year old boy whose name was Charlie Middendorf, persuaded his mother to co-sign a fifty dollar bank loan in order to buy a spring wagon and horse to haul chickens. From this meek beginning a company has grown spanning three generations with five locations, and it is known today as Middendorf Stockyards Company.

Even though Charlie stated with a spring wagon and horse, he was soon using a new method of transportation, the truck, which, when it came into being, increased the speed and volume of his business.

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As his business grew, Charlie saw the need for supplies to be shipped back to Fort Loramie from the areas he was selling his chickens. Thus, besides chickens, he began hauling freight. Soon after, Charlie added cream hauling to his list of business services. He brought the cream to Equities Dairies in Lima, Ohio, and on his return trips, he brought freight back to Fort Loramie and surrounding area.

Next, Charlie started to branch out more in the livestock area. In the late 1920's, he rented the scale at the defunct Sherman and White Elevator in order to weigh hogs. A few years later, he bought the elevator and brought his brother, Bernard, in to manage it. It was known as Middendorf Elevator. Charlie then built a stockyards next to the elevatorr. These buildings are still in use today by Holthaus Elevator, the present owners of the operations.

After this, Charlie devoted all his time to buying livestock while his brother, Bernard, ran the elevator. As his sons became old enough to help, they began working at the stockyards. In 1951, Charlie's son, Richard, became a partner in the business. They soon outgrew the area in town, so in 1957, a new stockyards was constructed southeast of Fort Loramie, along Dawson Road. On seven acres of ground purchased from Ben Aselage.

In 1963, Charlie retired, and Carl and Max became partners with their brother, Richard.

Today, this site is the center of the whole operation. All of the orders come back to Fort Loramie, and all of the paperwork is done here. The tractor-trailers are also serviced here in the garage.

In the mid-1960's, a yard was purchased in Botkins, Ohio. This yard also outgrew its town setting and, in 1975, it was moved east of town to Botkins Road near Rhine, Ohio.

During the late 1960's, the West Ohio Livestock Exchange in Celina was purchased by Middendorfs. This branch served the people of Mercer and surrounding counties.

In the early 1970's, Richard decided to sell his interest in the Fort Loramie and Botkins yards to Carl and Max. He then took over the operation of the Celina stockyards while Carl and Max ran the stockyards at the Fort Loramie and Botkins sites.

Next came the purchase of the Kenton Farmers' Market in Kenton, Ohio, which is located sixty miles northeast of Fort Loramie. It was acquired by Carl and Max in 1977.

Urbana, Ohio, was chosen as the site for the next expansion of Middendorf Stockyards. It was purchased in 1985 and serves the people of Champaign and nearby counties.

The newest addition is located in Shipshewana, Indiana. It was purchased in 1986 and is managed by one of Charlie's grandsons.

In all, Middendorf Stockyards has twenty employees at the five locations. The yards serve the needs of packers, farmers, and ranchers in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Wisconsin and New Jersey. The company was built on hard, honest work and the trust of its customers. That is what kept it going for the past seventy-five years, and it will continue to grow. It's amazing how far fifty dollars can go!

## QUINLINS DRUG STORE

This building occupying the site of the first Catholic Church, in Ft. Loramie, is just south of the library, and is owned by Carl Borchers. Wm. H. Quinlin, born in the St. Patricks area, established his first drug store in Coldwater. In 1883 he moved to Ft. Loramie and started his business here. A telephone exchange occupied the rear of the store and the upper floor was an apartment occupied by one of the operators of the exchange.

A variety of products were sold such as corn and bunion plasters, local post cards, remedies for dyspepsia, womens' ailments, colds, Carter's liver pills, and for most of the other complaints of that time. Toys around Christmas were sold, as well as shaving mugs and other trinkets for everyday sale. A large bowl of eye glasses occupied a counter. Since an optometrist was not available, people would try the various glasses until they found one they could see with. Jars of powders, pills, and roots such as sassafras, ginger, and chicory occupied the shelves. These potions were ground up, if need be, and everything was weighed on a scale to determine the exact amount required by the doctor.

Souvenirs of all varieties were sold, and comics featuring: Jiggs and Maggie, Alphonse and Gaston, The Toonerville Trolley, The Katzenjammer Kids, Mutt and Jeff and other old favorites were on display. The section occupied by books featured Horatio Alger books, such as Sink or Swim, Brave and Bold and other books about struggles against odds and heroic deeds.

When Mr. Quinlin retired the building was occupied as a Variety Store, Paint Store, Jewelry Shop and as an apartment.

## THE RATERMANN INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

By Urban E. Ratermann

The Ratermann Insurance Agency, Inc. as it is now known, was started by Adolph F. Ratermann in 1935,

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after he had served 35 years as Cashier and Director of the Loramie Banking Company.

The Agency represented both Mutual and Stock Companies, specializing in Fire, Casualty, Health and Life Insurance.

Upon Adolph F. Ratermann's death in February 1950, his youngest son, Urban F. Ratermann continued the agency. Urban "Turp" Ratermann had attended the University of Dayton and Ohio Northern University, Warren G. Harding College of Law. The Agency continues to operate as an Independent Insurance Agency, with membership in the Independent Insurance Agents, the Professional Insurance Agents, and the Sidney-Shelby County Insurance agents Assn.

The Agency initially was located at 32 South Main Street in Fort Loramie, until 1969, when it was moved to 18 Greenback Rd., and then in 1982 to its present location at 10800 St. Rt. 66.

In September 1982, the third generation, Steven E. Ratermann joined the Agency. Steve is a graduate of Wright State University and had been employed by the Emerson Wagner Realty Company and the First Federal Savings & Loan in Sidney.

### ROMIES' SHOE REPAIR AND SPORTING GOODS

Since the turn of the century, Romies has occupied a niche in downtown Ft. Loramie. Started by John Romie Sr., the business originally consisted of making and repairing harnesses and other leather goods for the area's horses. Assisting their father, and learning the trade were his sons, Martin and John Jr.; who took over the business in 1927. When tractors took the place of horses the brothers added shoe repairing and other leather work. With the death of Martin Romie, John Jr. became the sole owner. Today at the age of 84, with sixty years of experience, he still operates the shoe repair at his own pace. Over the years a sporting goods department was added, catering to local and Lake Loramie vacationers. These vacationers also contribute to the shoe repair business. Lettering and the collection of the village water bills is also handled by Romies. In 1968, Richard Romie purchased the business from his father, and his family help with the store operation.

### TURNER'S MENS WEAR

*By Joseph Turner*

When seven years of employment at the National Cash Register, located in Dayton, Ohio, ended in disaster as the stock market crashed in 1929, and when disaster followed disaster as my savings in a Building and Loan Co. was impounded because of foreclosure; my insurrance policy was lost because of bankruptcy; a block of NCR stock went from $84.00 a share down to $4.00 a share; two building lots I owned lost much of their value. Finally, in 1931, after the third layoff of employees my foreman informed me that, since I was single, I would no longer be needed. After packing my belongings, I returned home, with only my Model A Ford and my clothes to show for seven years of efforts. My father informed me I could stay home. In return I tried to earn my keep. Dad furnished the paint and I painted all the buildings from the barn to the outhouse for my board and room. I mention this because it is hard to realize the financial difficulties caused by the 1929 depression. When work was available I labored for one dollar a day in the harvest fields.

In 1931, my brother-in-law, Al Winner, operated a barber shop and dry cleaning business in an old building. He decided to build a new structure in a new location on Main Street. This building included space for an additional business site approximately 20 ft. by 40 ft. After much deliberation and thought, with no capital, and thoroughly disenchanted with shop work, I decided to venture into the men's clothing business. I borrowed the necessary capital from two friends, found and leased five fixtures, a three-way mirror and a clothing rack, with an option to purchase them for a price after three years.

As I mentioned before, I was thoroughly disenchanted with factory work, and for several reasons: your position is never 100% sure, your wages are limited to what the factory will allow, if you are on production work, regardless of whether you are capable of earning fifty percent more; and you are constantly under the supervision of your foreman. This is what prompted me to venture on my own. I decided then it would be my business only, what I earned. When the merchandise arrived and was properly displayed I advertised in local newspapers for the opening day which was May 12, 1933, Saturday. Still just coming out of the depression, and with no previous experience I had a firm determination to succeed. The first seven months were a struggle and I was very apprehensive. At that time after inventory, I found a five hundred dollar increase in merchandise and no increase in accounts payable.

The next three years were an interesting learning experience. In 1937, the depression was losing its grip on the country and business was increasing and could command better prices for products. Also, in 1937, when Mr. Winner closed his barber shop and dry cleaning, I was forced to buy him out in order to continue my business. I contacted Adolph Raterman

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at Loramie Banking Co. and informed him of my predicament. Either buy, or be out of a livelihood. I found that the bank had complete confidence in me and loaned the money to make the transaction. Three days later I had the deed for the property. I added new displays, and the volume of business increased. The business went beyond expectations.

Then the shocking news, the attack of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, immediately plunged us into World War II. President Franklin D. Roosevelt at once took over hundreds of factories all over the country and the entire production was assigned to the Armed Forces. Rationing was put into effect for all civilians, and included food, clothing, tires, gasoline, meats, etc. The business man was put on allotment, which meant only so much could be purchased for resale during a certain period. This soon created a real shortage, and, in a short time the demand for clothing was far greater than the supply of merchandise to move. This shortage continued until after the war in 1945.

On January 10th, I married the former Rosemary Wissman and lived in the brick house on the corner of Elm St., and SR66. The house had no inside plumbing, Heatrola wood and coal burning stove and we stayed there thirteen years. These were happy years. In 1946 I was able to financially repay all my creditors and was debt-free for the first time since the beginning of my business venture. I had built a 40 ft. addition to the building, purchased a dry-cleaning plant; spotting board, new presses in conjunction with clothing. In seven years both businesses increased to the extent I decided that one had to go. I sold the dry cleaning business to Don Wehrman in 1953.

When all the dry cleaning equipment was gone I, with the aid of a fixture company representative, drew plans for new fixtures and complete modernization of the building. This remodeling drew more and more business and the next fifteen years were most rewarding. The loyal customers from the local and surrounding areas were greatly appreciated and are responsible for the growth in business. My wife assisted greatly in the years from 1953 until my oldest son, Frank, entered high school and worked with me until his graduation. Son John then took his place for four years. Son Paul then did likewise. In 1955 we built a new home at 44 Elm St. and moved in on December 16, 1955. On retirement in 1968 we sold the business to Robert Poeppelman and wife, Betty, from Osgood.

We have six wonderful children, Frank, graduate of Bowling Green University, teacher of music in Ft. Loramie School Systems; Roseanne is a graduate of St. Rita's School of Nursing in Lima and is Supervisor of Nurses in a Piqua Rest Home; John, graduate of Miami Jacobs, Dayton, is employed at Minster Machine Co.; Paul, studied electronics in Columbus, Ohio, served 3 years in the Navy and is employed at Gilardi's Pizza, Sidney, Ohio; Elaine is a graduate of Urbana College and is teaching at Marysville, Ohio; Michael is employed at Gudorf & Sons as Sales Manager. He lives at home. We have fifteen grandchildren.

## WAGLER'S BRICK YARD

*By Ferd E. Freytag, Architect A.I.A.*

This old Ft. Loramie business was located approximately one-half mile south of the corporation line, just south of the present-day Ft. Loramie Cast Stone Products Co.

This operation, owned by Christ Wagler, consisted of three mud pits, each twenty feet square and four or five feet deep. Clay soil from adjoining lands was hauled to these pits and mixed with sand, lime and water, and all puddled by hand until the right consistency was reached and ready to be molded into brick-size molds, 2 inch by 4 inch by 8 inch size. Each mold was made of wood and held ten to twelve brick forms. These forms were sprinkled with sand; the mud packed into the forms, and the excess cut clean of the mold. These molds were then stacked into a drying shed. This work was all done by hand.

When the material was dry and ready to handle, the dry brick were removed from the forms and stacked until there was enough accumulated to build the kilns. The kilns were built of the dry brick in the form of stepped arches two feet six inches in width, by four feet high and approximately ten feet in length. The brick were set up edgewise, spaced an inch or so apart, so the heat could penetrate and burn the product. Dry brick were laid over the stepped arches to a height of eight feet or more.

Each kiln was spaced eight feet from its neighbor and was fired with cordwood day and night for a week or so. Brick was only made in the late spring and summer.




Christian Waglers Brickyard

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Three types of burnt brick were produced; the arch brick was closest to the fire and was commonly called a clinker. It was dark or black in color and was used as a decorative brick. Face brick was used for exterior work, facing the exterior of the structure. Soft brick was used to back up brick behind the face brick.

Making brick in the late 1800's and early 1900's was a tedious and time-consuming trade, but a very rewarding field to experience and observe.

## WAYNE TRAIL TOOL & DIE CO.

Company History

Wayne Trail Tool & Die Co. originated on September 15, 1962, when a partnership was formed by Paul C. Perin and Melvin R. Puthoff.

Machinery was purchased and a 26" x 44" building was rented and business began. This building was located at 15 East Center Street, which is now Greenback Road, Ft. Loramie, Ohio.

Mr. Vernon E. Vandenbrock joined the company on March 11, 1963, at which time the company was incorporated. Mr. Vandenbrock actively shared in the management until his death on July 19, 1970.

On December 1, 1964, a land contract agreement was entered into between Wayne Trail Tool & Die Co. and the Ft. Loramie Development Corporation to purchase 2.06 acres and erect an 80' x 80' Armco Steel Building. The location of this acreage was at 203 Park Street, Ft. Loramie, our present location. Wayne Trail Tool & Die Co. moved into this building in December, 1964.

On July 31, 1965 an adjoining 2.11 acres was purchased and during the spring of 1967, an 80' x 120' addition was added to the main building.

On May 31, 1969 Wayne Trail Tool & Die Co. completed the terms of the Land Contract with the Ft. Loramie Development Corporation. An Additional 1.02 acres was purchased on May 20, 1970. A 40' x 96' warehouse was built in 1975 and an 80' x 200' addition was added to the main building in 1978. An additional 2.485 acres was purchased on November 13, 1979. This brought the total acreage to 7.675 acres.

The construction in 1964, 1967, 1975, 1978 brought the total square footage under roof to 36,000 square feet.

Presently Wayne Trail Tool & Die Co. employs approximately 80 people and services approximately 75 customers. Some of the larger customer accounts include: Aeroquip, Chrysler, Dana, Delco Moraine, Ex-Cell-O, Federal Mogul, Ford Electronics, Ford Motor, G.E., Hobart Corporation, Minster Machine, Parker Hannifin, Roots, A. O. Smith, U. S. Navy & Westinghouse.

## WEHRMAN INSURANCE AGENCY

*By Richard Wehrman*

When Wehrman Insurance Agency started the company was called "American Farmers Mutual Insurance Company", a division of Kemper Insurance. This company offered a full line of coverage in all lines of insurance. They had their own local adjuster, rather than processing our claims through an adjustment agency. The company name is now Federal Kemper Insurance Company located at 2001 East Mound Rd., Decatur, Illinois.

I became a licensed agent for them on May 7, 1951, my agency was one of two located in Shelby County. Several years later I acquired agencies in Auglaize and Darke Counties, giving me a three-county area.

My office has always been in Ft. Loramie; 1951 to 1965 at 30 East Park St., from 1965 to present time at 55 Elm St.

My agency was presented the "One Hundred Million Dollar" achievement award in 1957 for Life Insurance production. The "Life Sales Safari" in 1968 gave their "Fifty Million Dollar" award. The types of life protection offered over the years has seen many changes, all of which were beneficial to the insured. The most recent, a policy offered to juveniles for a very reasonable one-time premium.

In May of 1986, I received an award for being an agent of Federal Kemper Insurance for thirty-five years.

My agency has always helped promote school, county and community projects and activities, by giving monetary donations and also entering floats, various years, in our annual July 4th parade.

As of March 15, 1987, I have retired from Federal Insurance Co. after thirty-five years.

Patrick Elsass of Botkins will be the new agent serving my clients.

## W. J. BORCHERS STORE

*By Joe Borchers*

W. J. Borchers Store from 1907 to 1987, eighty years at the same location.

Joseph B. and William H. Borchers, associated with their father until 1953, when the two brothers formed a partnership. William H. Died in 1973. His wife, Esther, continued in the business to the present time.

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In the early years it was a family operation with each of their five children doing their share.

Known primarily as a General Store, the business carried just about everything, promoting the expression; "If we don't have it, you don't need it". A complete stock of shoes, men's work clothing, yard goods, footwear and groceries.

It was the first store in town to have fluorescent lighting. A new brick store front was added in 1942, and a complete remodeling of the interior was carried out in 1960. Various other improvements have taken place through the years with new refrigeration and the latest computerized check-outs.

A pioneer in grocery and food merchandising, with White Villa Famous Foods as the sole supplier since 1924. As the years went by many of the lines were phased out, with more emphasis placed on food lines and related items. A glorified convenience store operation is the present format for the business.

Throughout the years a complete line of healthcare items have been stocked for the needs of the community.

## VOGELSANG'S CAFE

*By Robert Vogelsang*

Ben Vogelsang first started in the restaurant business in 1900.

In 1920, he purchased the building which houses the present-day cafe. He bought it from the Wagner Brewing Co., of Sidney, Ohio. The building set on the edge of the Miami-Erie Canal.

During prohibition years, the building was occupied by Willman's Department Store which sold men's clothing. At that time Ben Vogelsang had his business across the street which is now known as the Loramie Station.




Vogelsang's Cafe. Ralph Vogelsang and Harry Raterman Bartenders.

In 1929, Ben's son, Ralph Vogelsang, reopened the restaurant at its present location. Ralph died in 1951, and at that time, Bob Vogelsang (Ralph's son) helped his mother, Irene, run the business before he and his wife, Betty, took over the business in 1957. Bob ran the business from 1957 until 1984. In all, the restaurant was in the Vogelsang family for over eighty years.

## WILLMANS

John H. Willman was sent to Ft. Loramie in 1855, by Cincinnati interests, to establish a drygoods and grocery business. The canal was in operation and a territory rich in resources needed to be developed. Most of the trade of that time was barter. The canal bank during the winter time would fill with forest products and require fifteen or twenty canal boats to be sent to Ft. Loramie in the spring. (A freight car can hold as much as an old canal boat.) The original building burned in 1913, along with their residence, but the replacements were erected immediately. The store was rebuilt on the same spot, and the residence just south of Borchers Store.

Besides the Willman brothers, Joe and Frank, other old-time employees were Frank Nabor, John Tecklenberg, Fred Hilgefort, Rose Willman, Elizabeth Seiters, Ed Steinke, Ida Seger, Adeline and Katherine Hasebrook, Lillian Holiet and Emma Willman. The latter five were employed in the millinery shop. A huckster wagon was started after World War I. The first driver was Ed Steinke and covered the entire Ft. Loramie area.

With the retirement of Frank Willman the store became the possession of James Quinlin, who added a carry out. Later the regular store was discontinued and a craft shop operated by Dorothy Quinlin and Mary Catherine Mescher took its place. When it was discontinued, Harry Boerger Furs was the occupant. The Quinlins have now sold the building to a new owner.

## AUGUST WISE SAWMILL

1881 - 1944

*By Madge (Wise) Westerheide*

Justus Wise and wife sailed to this country from Holland about 1853. With them came his son August D. Wise and daughter Louisa. They came from Cincinnati to New Bremen, where he learned the saw mill business.

From there August D. Wise moved to Ft. Loramie and bought and sold land to build up a cash reserve to build his own saw mill. In 1881, August D. Wise

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built his own saw mill one mile north of Ft. Loramie, next to the canal and just south of where the canal is fed by Lake Loramie. In 1882, several families were brought from the old country to help in the mill in this new land of freedom. The Bernards and Reiss's were some of the families. In 1892, a larger mill was built in Berlin, now Ft. Loramie, on the east bank of the canal in back of where the Ft. Loramie Banking Company now stands. Father and son were associated in the business until the death of August D. Wise in 1902. After this time August J. Wise took over the saw mill. Many buildings in town were built with this lumber, including the church, where all can see a stained glass window with his name on it. The mill also produced ax handles, potatoe and apple crates, and specialty wood products. As many as 80,000 ax handles were produced in one year. Joseph Reiss was his steam engineer. There were seven employees when the mill was moved into town and more employed later.

August J. Wise, known as "Gus" to the villagers, operated the mill in the last years converting it over to electricity in order to compete as the railroads and trucks cut deeply into the canal traffic, and the use of softwood replaced the native hardwood.

"Gus" served his community in many ways. The volunteer fire department, Knights of St. John, to name a few. If a snow threatened, he would rise at four o'clock on a Sunday morning to clean the snow off village walks so the faithful could attend church.

In the decline of the canal, people still needed to travel. Mr. Wise started and helped to fund the Interurban Trolley, that ran between Ft. Loramie and Minster. It also carried products to the railroad in Minster to be sent out to the world and brought back needed consumer products to Ft. Loramie.

School children traveled to High School in Minster until 1932. Ft. Loramie built a complete school partially due to Mr. Wise's efforts 100 yrs. after his ancestors decided to leave Germany and seek a land of opportunity in the wilderness of America. The saw mill and the grain mill were the largest employer in the village for over half a century.




Wise Saw Mill. Courtesy Mary E. Holtvogt

This famous landmark of Shelby County operated many years and in 1941, V. B. Blayney bought and operated the mill until 1944, at which time it burned and was all but destroyed. The Ft. Loramie Banking Co. is now located at this spot.

## THE VILLAGE FLORIST

*By Pamela R. Ginn*

The building currently housing the business known as The Village Florist is located at 11 East Park Street, Ft. Loramie, Ohio, and was, at one time, situated on the Main Street where the Busse Processing Plant is located.

In the early days of the building, it housed a shoe repair shop run by Joe Sauer. The building had been moved to make way for the Loramie Banking Co., as they built a new structure there.

According to sources, it was moved by a Mr. Miller from 17 North Main to its present location. It was used as a rental property and later transformed into the home occupied by Joe and Rose Willman.

Upon the death of the Willmans the property was owned by Dorothy Geise. It was during this time that it was transformed into a floral shop.

Since that time it has continually been the location of a flower shop, and the current site of The Village




The local flower shop. Once located at 17 North Main. Moved to construct bank building.

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Florist, now owned and operated by Pamela R. Ginn who purchased the land and business in December, 1982.

In keeping with the German heritage of the village of Ft. Loramie, Pam is a direct descendant of Jacob Helman, a native of Oberlustadt, Germany, who was born in the early 1600's.

## VOLKE DISTILLERY

*By Rita Hoying*

The Miami Erie Canal furnished transportation for the products of the many businesses that flourished along its route. One of these was the Vocke Distillery. The Vocke Distillery was located in northern McLean Township about midpoint between Ft. Loramie and Minster.

The distillery probably was built in the late 1850's. John H. Vocke was the owner. In time, ownership passed to his son Herman H. Vocke, and in the 1870's his son-in-law operated the distillery. The distillery became known as the Seiferd Distillery and whisky was 15 cents a gallon.

On the deed of 1862, the following was listed:

1 iron steam boiler with its adhering parts containing: 12 flues, 1 patent grist mill, 9 beer tubs, 1 mash tub, 1 still and all copper pipes on said premise, 4 water tanks, all gearing on premise, 1 engine with the appurtenances.

This business had ceased operation by 1880 and the land was purchased in 1882 by Maria Anna Sanders. After her marriage in 1886 to Bernard Duwel the land became known, even to this present day, as the Duwel farm. The distillery building was dismantled in 1883 and the beams were used for other buildings.

About 20 years ago a large tree in the area was felled and large flat stones were discovered at its base. The stones were possibly the building's foundation stones. Among the few artifacts found was a whisky glass.

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# Activities=Organizations

## FOURTH OF JULY IN FT. LORAMIE

*By Dennis Cordonnier*

Fourth of July picnics in early Berlin, and later Ft. Loramie, were held in Boergers Woods near the Mile Creek and Kloekers Grove south of town. The Ft. Loramie Red Cross, which operated during World War I, probably had one of the early parades to celebrate the holiday, a homecoming parade in 1919. Later, parades were led by the V.B.C--early Booster Club. Loramie Fire Company took charge of these parades for a number of years, followed by a ten-year period of no parades.

A group of interested citizens of Ft. Loramie, Ohio, convened and made plans to revive the old time Fourth of July celebration of bygone years.

The first year, 1968, Ron Winner volunteered as General Chairman. Those serving with him were: Lester Barlage, Jim Bornhorst, Leo Berning, Melvin Puthoff and Morrie Frey. Anne Busse was selected as first Miss Independence Queen. A large parade was held on the fourth, and, up until 1987, a fireworks display was enjoyed by the many people who attended the picnic. Proceeds went to finance various projects the organizations were working on. Fifteen organizations of Ft. Loramie were involved in money-making stands at the affair. Basically the same groups work every year to make the "Old Time Fourth" a success.

In 1969, seventeen organizations worked to make the day a success with Melvin Puthoff acting as general chairman, a post he held for five years, to and including 1973. Mary Ann Sailor of Jackson Center, was "Miss Independence", parade chairman was Lester Barlage.

In 1971, Janis Schwartz was crowned "Miss Independence". The usual large parade attracted over one hundred entrants, including high school bands, floats, marching units, clowns and a pet parade.

In 1972, an estimated 15,000 people crammed into Ft. Loramie. Cars lined the road two miles in each direction from the town. Barney Rapp Tours from Cincinnati brought three busloads of people to view the parade. Debbie Marchal, from Sidney RR, was crowned "Miss Independence". This year seems to be some confusion in reporting as we find Lester Barlage, Don Wendeln and Jerome Barhorst all listed as parade chairman.

1973 finds Melvin Puthoff serving his last year as General Chairman. Jerome Barhorst is parade marshal. Sue Slonkosky earned the "Miss Independence" title and the Singing Soldiers from Sidney provided entertainment.

1974, the seventh annual "Old Fashioned Fourth of July" had centenarian, Frank Willman, as Grand Marshal, and Connie Meyers captured the title of "Miss Independence". Walt Sanders was given a special recognition. Dave Shuffelton served as general chairman. Rita Hoehne and Don Wendeln were parade co-chairman.

1975: The Grand Marshal for this year's parade was coach, Irv Besecker and the Marion High School State basketball champions. Vickie Middendorf was chosen as "Miss Independence". Parade chairman was Don Wendeln, general chairman not mentioned.

America's Bicentennial Year, 1976, July 4th had as its theme, "America, Let's Celebrate" and many beautiful floats comprised the large parade. General Chairman, Rita Hoehne, served for this year. Don Wendeln and Frank Turner served as co-chairmen for the parade. A special Mass was said on the Canal Park. Grand Marshal was John Kramer and "Miss Independence" for the year was Rose Marie Larger.

"Fairy Tales" was chosen for the theme for 1977. A large parade with many floats and bands began at 2 PM. The Kiwanis again served their famous barbequed chicken. C. L. of C's, Knights of St. John and Auxiliary, American Legion Auxiliary, Booster Club, Boy Scouts, Kiwanis, St. Ann's Sodality, Band Mothers, Fire Department, Junior Class, Ft. Loramie Historical, Cub Scouts, Youth Organization and 4H Club comprises the majority of those organizations which have worked through the years to make the picnic a success. The Grand Marshal for 1977 was George Hamlin and his State Basketball Champions. "Miss Independence" was Denise Boerger.

Grand Chairman Rita Hoehne served another year and Frank Turner was Parade Marshal. Grand Marshal was August Gaier, Sr. Teresa Hoying won the crown of "Miss Independence" for 1978.

"Holidays and Their Customs" was the theme for the 1979 "Old Fashioned July 4th". Joseph Turner

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was Grand Marshal and Queen for the year was Linda Eiting. Again Rita Hoehne served as General Chairman and Leon Stockman was Parade Marshal.

1980 theme for July 4th celebration was "Frontier Days". George Martin and Dennis Cordonnier were co-grand chairmen. Parade Marshal was Leon Stockman. The World War I Veterans were the Grand Marshals. They included: Herman Freytag, Al Naber, Ed Quinlin, William Albers, Lawrence Reed and Ferd Arkenberg. Kay Poeppelman was "Miss Independence".

1981 was a great picnic for the whole family with such names as "The Shelby County Line" band and Dr. Creep on hand for the festivities. Mark Schmiesing served as General Chairman. Grand Marshal was Alvin Rosengarten and Teresa Buehler wore the crown as "Miss Independence".

Twenty thousand people gathered to watch the 1982 July 4th parade; the theme being "Good Old Summertime". Miss Ohio, Juliana Marie Zilba crowned Mary Jo Berger, of Minster, Ohio, as "Miss Independence". Joseph Borchers led the parade as Grand Marshal and Dennis Cordonnier and George Martin served as co-general chairmen for the two-day affair.

"A Salute to Disney" was the interesting theme for 1983 July 4th celebration. Many original floats appeared at the parade. Esther Ernst was Grand Marshal and Dennis Cordonnier and George Martin were again general co-chairmen. Nancy Kay Prenger of Coldwater captured the crown of "Miss Ft. Loramie", and was crowned by Pamela Riggs, the reigning Miss Ohio. The new queen also was honored by winning the right to represent the area in the next Miss Ohio Pageant.

In 1984, Dennis Cordonnier acted both as General Chairman and Parade Marshal for the "Old Fashioned Fourth of July". The theme was "Story Book Land". The picnic was a two-day affair, starting on the third and ending on the fourth. "Miss Ft. Loramie" title was captured by Jill Henschen and she was crowned by Melissa Bradley, the reigning Miss Ohio. John Romie led the parade as Grand Marshal.

In 1985, the village of Ft. Loramie celebrated the holiday on Wednesday, July 3rd and Thursday, July 4th. Ferd Fleckenstein was honored by being asked to serve as Grand Marshal; Sharon Holthaus was crowned "Miss Independence" and Dennis Cordonnier served both as General Chairman and Parade Marshal.

1986 marked the nineteenth consecutive year of the "Old Time July Fourth". The theme was "Our Lady of Liberty" and drew many entries in the large parade at 2 PM on July 4th. WHIO, Channel 7 personalities Jim Baldridge, Pat Garwood, Bruce Asbury and Mike Hartsock appeared in the parade. Anchorman Jack Hicks from Channel 2 also appeared to enjoy being on the float. Dennis Cordonnier acted as General Chairman and Parade Marshal. Karen Turner won the "Miss Independence" title.

1987 is the Sesquicentennial Year of Ft. Loramie. As such a much larger celebration was planned and the "Old Fashioned July 4th" picnic was held three days. It started on Friday evening, July 3rd, ran all day on the 4th and ended at 6 PM on the 5th.

Everything was bigger and better than it ever had been before. The parade was scheduled to start an hour earlier, at one PM, to allow a longer period for general merriment. On Friday evening, "Miss Independence" was chosen. Jean Bornhorst became the reigning monarch and Darla Cordonnier was runner-up. A list of Grand Marshals was headed by Don Wayne of Channel 7 fame. Others included all past Grand Marshals and all past Independence Queens.

Dennis Cordonnier, again, was General Chairman and Parade Marshal. America's Sky Diving Clown, "Super Chicken" made his annual visit. 1987 was the first year that Ft. Loramie's July 4th activities had complete coverage from Channel 7. The parade itself was shown live on Channel 7. Many personalities were in the parade. Channel 8 and 2 also showed the parade on delayed broadcast.

Fourth of July at Ft. Loramie is one of the most successful picnics in the area. To make it the outstanding success, it took many people serving on committees, and many other interested residents who worked long and often thankless hours for the end result. A multitude of names should be mentioned as being important to the endeavor. Rather than miss even one, a sincere thank you is extended to all. The wish of the majority is that Ft. Loramie's "Old Fashioned Fourth of July" may continue for years to come!

## POST 355 FT. LORAMIE AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY

*By Robert Barhorst II*

On March 3, 1920, Ft. Loramie American Legion Post 355 was given a Charter with 15 members. Leo F. Nahstoll operator of the local hotel was the first Commander. This Charter hangs on the wall in the present legion home.

The permanent Charter was granted on January 13, 1926. The first meeting place was on the corner of Main and Park streets, on the second floor of what is now Vogelsang Cafe. Later the old township house was used. In the thirties the Brucken house on the northeast corner of Main and Elm, then in

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Benders Park before moving to Albert Anthony's old barber shop at 16 West Main Street.

In 1947, to accommodate the World War II Veterans, the present home at 31 North Main Street was purchased. It was 35 feet wide and 120 feet long. In 1947, a 40 x 70 foot ballroom was added. A larger kitchen was put in one corner to fry chicken the firing squad had started in July of 1956.

In 1966, a kitchen was built, 12 x 70 on the north side of the ballroom. The old kitchen was too small to handle the crowd. Fred Ernst had a plan and a large conveyer-type french fryer was built. It is the largest fryer of any organization in the United States. It can serve 1,000 people a half-chicken every hour. The Legion Chicken Fry is held the second Saturday of every month.

The Hall Trophy Case is full as the men were in many parades and conventions. A total of 45 men were Commanders of Post 355. The Commander the last 2 years is Del Barhorst. This last year the Post had the back entrance sided, a new front and north side was put on the building. On February 10, 1987, a Charter was given to start The Sons of American Legion. It is one of the largest Charters given in the State with members on the Charter.

Post meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at 8:30 PM. It is active in all scouting, little league and community affairs.

Present Officers are:
President, Del Barhorst
1st Vice, Floyd Palsgrove
2nd Vice, Henry Barhorst
Adjutant, Robert J. Barhorst II
Financial Secretary, James Quinlin

**FT. LORAMIE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 355**
Since 1935

*By Evelyn Fleckenstein Busse*

On March 11, 1935, Post Commander Albert Naber and Post Adjutant, Herman Freytag, endorsed the first application of a group of eligible Ft. Loramie ladies to form an American Legion Auxiliary in the village.

Department President, Blanche Thomas, of National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, signed the second endorsement on March 16, 1935, and the National Secretary; Gwendolyn Marillowell, officially welcomed Unit 355 to the fold with the third endorsement April 12, 1935.

Nineteen members were listed on the charter as Lauretta Cardo, the first Unit President, signed the application. The first officers installed by 2nd District President, Mrs. Lloyd Kelley, along with Mrs. Cardo, were: Janet Gerling, 1st Vice-President; Hermina Freytag, Secretary; Treasurer, Ursula Wilkens. Later Edith Toller took her place; Chaplain, Pauline Seger; Historian, Freda Slattery; Sergeant-at-Arms, Lauretta Wilkens.

They served until November when regular officers were elected. Sophia Zimmerman was installed as president at that time.

Through the years the organization worked diligently at various money-making projects. They participated in many community service affairs; planted flowers on canal bank, Christmas baskets for needy, sponsored Cyril Raterman as first candidate to Buckeye Boy State; Christmas for kids; Christmas gifts to military. They sold poppies and contributed to various hospitals, veterans' homes and orphanages.

They sponsored outings for Legion and Auxiliary, purchased American flags for schools, decorated auxiliary graves. Flood relief received donations.

The auxiliary, after fifty-two years, still is active in projects mentioned, plus many more worthwhile endeavors.

For a time, before Post Home was purchased on Main Street, they held their meetings at the Smith Hotel, corner of Main and Park St. During those years much emphasis was given to the social aspect of meetings. The sessions were usually closed with covered dish suppers or similar menus and those older members were nostalgic about some of those "good old times". They did not neglect the main issue of the auxiliary, "helping their neighbors, especially the veterans and their families".

In 1947, soon after the conclusion of World War II, there was a concerted drive to enlarge membership of the auxiliary. Various new projects were introduced. They adopted a six-bed ward at the Veterans' Hospital in Dayton. They purchased new colors and sent cookies to the Chillicothe Home. Patricia Fleckenstein became the leader of newly organized local Girl Scouts sponsored by Unit 355 under the leadership of Rose Fleckenstein, President. The organization now sent its first girl to Buckeye Girl State. Candidates were three members of Junior Class of Ft. Loramie School: Barbara Quinlin, Grace Potts and Jane Boerger. Voting resulted in a tie. The final drawing sent Jane Boerger to Columbus for week of Girls State. The week's session is presented each year to give the students a clearer understanding as to how the government is run from township level through state office.

In 1954, the Blood Bank was held in Ft. Loramie to aid a sick veteran. The Bank started on a regular basis, October 30, 1969. Seventy seven people were examined with sixty-five units of blood given.

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Through the years since then, the Legion Auxiliary and community have contributed many pints of blood. In February, 1987, one hundred seventy people registered and one hundred fifty nine units of blood collected, showing a steady growth in contributions.

The membership has been actively involved in the pros and cons of various laws before Congress. Unit 355 supports research to stamp out Hansen's disease.

During the conflicts, the auxiliary manned a Ground Observers' Corp., spotting and listing aircrafts seen. They collected large amounts of clothes when the area was faced with the Palm Sunday tornado disaster in 1965. The Legion Post Home was turned into a distribution center for the tons of clothing donated to the disaster victims.

They sponsored picnics for various childrens' homes, including Stillwater Hospital for retarded.

In the Centennial year, 1976, the unit assisted in publishing a cookbook and assisted Ft. Loramie Historical Association in publishing the "Annals of St. Michael's" which has been translated from German to English by Pauline Seger, a charter member of auxiliary.

July 17, 1968, the Past Presidents' Parley of Auxiliary Unit 355 was organized. As the name signifies, this is an organization of the Past Presidents of the local unit. They pledged to help as needed in veterans' affairs and hospital. Eight past presidents attended that meeting and Esther Seger was elected Chairman; Esther Ernst served as the first Secretary-Treasurer. These are the only offices the society has. Four meetings are held a year. Rather than an election, the officers serve in order of presidency. They are presently (1987) sponsoring a nurse's scholarship open to students of Ft. Loramie, Russia and Houston.

When the local American Legion Post purchased the Post Home on Main street, the Auxiliary moved to this structure. Through the years, they have helped the Post in buying decorations for the building. They have helped the men in their community efforts, helped entertain children and veterans and hospital parties.

The auxiliary is an integral part of the history of the Ft. Loramie area.

## HISTORY OF APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

*By Henrietta Borchers*

In 1882 An Historical event took place; when the Apostleship of Prayer or League of The Sacred Heart as it was sometimes called, was established in St. Michael's Parish. The Apostleship of Prayer is a Program of Spirituality with Great Love and Zeal for The Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Organization grew and by 1950's 200 members were enrolled. By this time transportation and communications were getting much better.

In an article in the Telegraph Register, Archbishop Karl J. Alter recommended that His people belong to The Apostleship of Prayer. In response to this under the supervision of Rev. Paul Rattermann, a parish membership drive was conducted, in which everyone in the parish was contacted. The drive was very successful. Many of the Promoters have been very dedicated all these years through the enlightment and motivation of the Spiritual Directors.

God's Love and shining Light was on St. Michael's Parish and still is and God willing, it will continue forever, through the motivation of Spiritual Aid's such as the Sacred Heart Badge. The familiar Sacred Heart Badge owes it's origin to St. Margaret Mary. On one occasion, when Christ appeared to Her, he expressed the wish that those who Loved Him, should wear or carry a picture of The Sacred Heart. St. Margaret Mary responded by making some Badges in the year of approximately 1690. They were really the first Sacred Heart Badges. Some of our Promoters are still making the Sacred Heart Badges, which are being used by many, especially the sick, lonely and the aged. They are very comforting.

We promote the use of the Sacred Heart Bulletin board in the center vestibule of the church with many Spiritual Aids such as The Daily Offering Prayer cards, Family Consecration leaflet, Holy Father's Intentions for the year, Application Blanks and Identification Prayer cards to carry in your billfold, etc. All these are available for all Christians.

The Organization does not have monthly meetings but keeps very active with a Promoters Bulletin keeping everyone informed on activities, Spiritual Readings, etc.

Another way of promoting; we give First communicants and Graduates a gift to inspire them with The Love of God. Also sponsor an Evening of Renewal at Maria Stein Retreat Center. The Apostleship of Prayer helps arrange a Communal Anointing of the sick in which 75 to 100 parishioners renew the Sacrament of Anointing. Our Spiritual Director has a special Mass at this time; a very inspiring occasion.

On the Centennial Anniversary June 18, 1982, a beautiful Mass was gracefully celebrated on the Feast of The Sacred Heart. The Celebrant, Father Gerald Bensman and Concelebrant Father James Byrne; followed by a wonderful program in St. Michael's Hall. which was very impressive as Mark

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Gehret portrayed The Sacred Heart of Jesus and Vicki Hoelscher portrayed St. Margaret Mary. Father Byrne was the guest speaker. The entire parish was invited for the special occasion. God's love touched the hearts of many.

The Apostleship of Prayer is a world-wide organization for all ages and for all times. At present our membership is 1,750 and 93 promoters. We are thankful to all our Spiritual Director Leaders, Officers and Promoters. May God bless all of them.

Spiritual Directors; Reverend William Bigot, August Adelmann, Anthony Moeller, Paul Rattermann, Clarence Liebold, John Brucker, Edwin Francis, Joseph Bruening and Gerald Bensman. Leaders; Mrs. Sophia Raterman, Miss Anna Raterman, Miss Eleanora Fleckenstein and Mrs. Henrietta Borchers. Present Officers; Mrs. Henrietta Borchers, Pres., Mrs. Eileen Borchers, Vice Pres.; Mrs. Emma Nutt, Sec., Treas.; Mrs. Elfreida Sanders, Sacristin; Mrs. Rosella Boerger.



Apostleship of Prayer Centennial Anniversary Program. June 18. 1982. Mark Gehret - portrayed the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Vickie Hoelscher-portrayed St. Margaret May.

## HISTORY OF CATHOLIC LADIES OF COLUMBIA COUNCIL 203

*By Bonnie Turner, Norma Middendorf, Charlene Seger*

Founded in 1897, the Catholic Ladies of Columbia is a Fraternal Life Insurance Association, incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio.

Every adult member receives a monthly C.L. of C. Index. This publication has information pertaining to the financial stability of the Association, the business conducted by the Board of Directors and activities of the various councils.

The local council members have benefits of social friendship, as well as giving many hours and financial aid to charities and participating in civic projects.

St. Michael's Council 203 was organized by Mildred Hogan. The first meeting was held September 1, 1938.

Twenty-four members signed the charter. Of this number, four ladies are still faithful members aof the council. They are: Beatrice Dapore, Henrietta Nerderman, Elizabeth Seiters and Hilda Steinlage.

Mary Vogelsang was elected as first president. Father Anthony Moeller, who was the spiritual advisor at the time asked that the Council "work for the missions and especially for the Blessed Sacrament."

The first large gift given in 1941, was a Mass Kit to the Home Missioners for their Chapel Trailer, a Ciborium and alter cloths for St. Michael's Church; a chalice for a war chaplain; a chalice for the new Maria Stein Retreat House. Every year, donations are given to missionaries and mission sisters.

The Catholic Ladies of Columbia's list of contributions to different worthwhile causes are endless; impossible to list.

They maintain a free scapular rack in St. Michael's Church. This is a group of Catholic women working together for better Christian living in the community.

Interesting facts: Penny bingo was played to start a treasury in 1938.

Held first card party January 6, 1939. Receipts: $12.22. September 28, 1969, card party. Receipts were $285.00.

Approximately 20,400 cord rosaries were made in twenty years.



C L of C's At Work 1951
1st row, sitting, left to right: Mrs. F. J. Raterman, Eleanora Fleckenstein, Augusta Bornhorst, Lauretta Cardo.
2nd row: Carrie Arling, Theresa Kemper, Anna J. Raterman, Catherine Stang, Rita Hilgefort, Louise Raterman.
Standing: Agatha Nerderman, Agatha Frilling, Agatha Frilling (Nerderman), Bernadine Westerheide, Bernadina Eilerman, Henrietta Heckmsn, Marge Rethman, Mary Holthaus, Elizabeth Barhorst, Bertha Puthoff

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First Initiation was May 7, 1939. Thirty-five members participated.

The council still uses gavel donated by first president, Mary Vogelsang.

The first Christmas gift exchange was in December, 1938. Each member brought a ten cent gift.

First flag was donated to Council by Lauretta Cardo and agatha Nerderman.

## HISTORY OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN

*By Robert Barhorst, 2nd*



PROCESSION IN ST. MICHAELS CHURCH IN CELEBRATION OF 75th ANNIVERSARY OF KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN. 1971. Left to right: Lavern Lachey, Colonel Stovel, Dennis Bertke, Earl Volk, Joseph Buening, Robert Zimmerman, Ed Lefeld, Andrew Albers, Joe Frey, Richard Kuest, Rudolph Link, Urban Berning, Roger Schwieterman, Robert Albers, unknown, Elmer Link and parishioners.

Commandery #300 received its Charter November 22, 1896, and held its first meeting on November 28th the same year, in the old St. Michaels Church building which presently occupies the C.C.D. Program.

During that meeting it was moved to make dues 25c a month and the trustees would furnish the wood for heating the building.

The original charter members were: Anton Brucken, John Barhorst, August Brucken, J. L. Niederkorn, Wm. J. Sherman, Frank C. Willman, Wm. H. Behrns, P. Anthony, August Wise, Jr., Bernard Kirsch, John Kirner, Bernard Holtvogt, Joseph Winehover, Adolph Raterman, Albert Kirsch, Joseph Hilgefort, Joseph Barlage, John Holtvogt, H. B. Pleiman, Peter Rieger, John Siegel, George Willenbert, and John Lehmkuhl.

The first officers were elected at the first meeting and they were: President-Anton Brucken, 1 Vice-John Barhorst, 2nd Vice-August Brucken, Treasurer-Frank Willman, Recording and Cor. Secy-J. L. Niederkorn, Financial Secretary-W. J. Sherman, Commander-Wm. Behrns.

At the 75 year Jubilee in November of 1971 one charter member, Frank C. Willman, who was 98 years old was a guest speaker. He lived to be 102 years old.

There has always been a fully equipped uniform rank which has been very active in all church functions.

In 1970 the meetings were moved to the new St. Michaels Hall where monthly meetings are held the second Thursday of every month starting at 8:30 P.M.

The current officers of the Knights of St. John are: President-Robert J. Barhorst II, 1st vice-Paul Poeppelman, 2nd vice-Mark Schmitmeyer, Corresponding Secretary-Bernard Poeppelman, Treasurer-Jim Holthaus, Financial Sec'y-Ed Sanders, Trustee-Lavern Lachey.

## LADIES AUXILIARY OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN

*By Alice Romie*

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Knights of St. John is a fraternal and charitable organization that works closely with the Knights of St. John Commandery. The auxiliary was organized during several meetings in September, 1938. It was named St. Michael's #284 with meetings to be held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in the old St. Michael's Hall.

The first elected officers were: Hattie Raterman, President; Mary Barhorst (Leo), Past President; Esther Danzig, First Vice- President; Lauretta Wilkins, Second Vice-President, Elizabeth (Brucken) Seiters, Recording Secretary; Alice Romie, Financial Secretary; Rose (Koverman) Willman, Treasurer; Ella Borchers, Messenger; Rose Mary (Wissman) Turner, Sentinel; Madge (Wise) Westerheide, Guard; Zelma

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Hilgefort, Trustee; Alma Busse, Trustee; Viola Olding, Trustee; and Rev. A. Moeller, Spiritual Advisor.

The membership consisted of 55 charter members, of which 13 are still active members. Several of these charter members left Ft. Loramie and transferred to auxiliaries in other cities and other charter members have been called to their home in heaven. Catherine Tecklenburg was the first death and Eleanor Fleckenstein was the first applicant to become a member of the new auxiliary.

The auxiliary's new officers were installed by Beatrice Pulskamp, deputy organizer from Celina, on October 20, 1938. She presented the charter and the by-laws were sent to Teresa Ganster, the Supreme President, and were approved.

The Auxiliary began working with the Knights of St. John Commandery in such activities as serving the Communion breakfast and the lunch following the New Year's Eve dance for them and helping at the Christmas party for children under 10 of both organizations at St. Michael's Hall.

During the month of November, the ladies entertain the folks at the County Home with songs and readings of their era. A treat of ice cream and cake is greatly appreciated by these people. Several weeks of practice under the direction of Marie Quinlin went into this project.

Some of the money-making ventures include bake sales, hat sales, raffle tickets, dances at Walkup Country Club, plays in which members of the auxiliary are the characters, saving box tops and labels for redemption, saving used sales tax stamps for cash, the July 4th instant Bingo stand, and smorgasbord dinners.

Charitable activities include making cancer pads and dressings for the Shelby County Cancer Unit, making card rosaries for Father Schmieder, Chaplain, during the Second World War to give to the soldiers and send to the mission, making white Communion dresses, making baby layettes, making gowns for Wilson Memorial Hospital, donating used clothing and food to needy families and sponsoring for many years a Christmas scene, with lights and trees at the north end of the village.

Members also promoted the living rosary, with each member saying one decade every day. This totaled between 75 and 100 rosaries every day for peace.

Ft. Loramie is a member of the 7th District of the Ladies Auxiliary. Other members are Newport, Minster, Botkins, Coldwater, Maria Stein and Celina.

Meetings are held in April and October, each auxiliary taking its turn in having the meeting. In July the district also has a Field Mass at the Relic Chapel at Maria Stein.

A Junior Auxiliary was organized on December 9, 1956, with 27 charter members and the name Our Lady of Fatima #45.

At the death of a member, the ladies meet at the funeral home and have special prayers. Also, at the first meeting after the death of a sister, the ritual prayers are said and the charter is draped for 30 days. Members also attend the funeral mass in a body. At the death of a parent or a family member living in the household, prayers are said at the funeral home on the afternoon before the funeral. Get well, sympathy, wedding and baby congratulation cards are sent to members.

Past presidents of the auxiliary are:
Hattie Raterman, 1938-1940 *
Mary Barhorst, appointed *
Sophia Fleckenstein, 1940-1941 *
Alice Romie, 1941-1943
Rose Willman, 1943-1944 *
Lauretta Wilkens, 1944-1946 *
Elsie Albers, 1946-1948 *
Lauretta Wilkens, 1948-1950 *
Elizabeth Seiters, 1950-1952
Mary Raterman, 1952-1954
Victoria Albers, 1954-1956
Eleanor Schlater, 1956-1958 *
Germaine Poeppelman, 1958-1960
Marie Meinerding, 1960-1962
Alfreda Siegel, 1962-1964
Helen Hoying, 1964-1966
Theresa Ortwerth, 1966-1968
Evelyn Busse, 1968-1970
Rose Mary Turner, 1970-1972
Helen Sanders, 1972-1974
Rita Hoehne, 1974-1976
Hilda Siegel, 1976-1978
Bonnie Turner, 1978-1980
Euletta Bensman, 1980-1982
Thelma Meyer, 1982-1984
Marilyn Winner, 1984-1986
Rita Hoehne, 1986-present

* deceased

### THE V.B.C. AND OTHER REMEMBRANCES

*By Agnes McCarthy (Danzig)*

They say as you get older you can remember the past better than the present. I'm at that point so here goes.

I'll begin with the canal boat and the old mule that pulled it. It was a very flat boat with a small cabin, and the north bridge would swing from east to west. If you wanted to go to Gaier's Grocery store, or just take a ride, you would get on the bridge and when the canal boat would hit it, you would swing with it

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until it would swing back into place. The other bridge near Vogelsang's saloon was high enough to let the boat go under.

As I recall, there was a diptheria epidemic when I was several months old. I've been told that my brother and sister had it and my sister died at age 7 as did a number of Ft. Loramie children, mostly in the second grade. My mother told me people would burn their mattresses and toss them into the canal along with everything else, until the canal was such a mess that the Village Beautiful Club came into being. I think it was formed by Marie Quinlin and other civic-minded women. Anyone who owned a rake would go out every night, or those that could during the day and rake the canal banks from one bridge to the other. If you were in the 7th or 8th grades, you could be a member of the club. Most of the women in town belonged to it.

The club had cake walks, where you could win a cake and had different things at the schoolhouse, to help pay for expenses. They also joined the Lyceum Circuit, which brought musicians, plays and other performers to old St. Michael's Hall. There were usually four performances each season. When I was about 14 or 15, and in High School, I had to introduce Cornelius Otis Skinner. Marie Quinlin was sick, and since I was the only one she felt could do it, I got the job. I remember being scared to death, The V.B.C. also gave plays. One I recall was "Cricket on the Hearth" and a lot of people who lived in town were in it. The club would use the money they made to plant bushes, trees and flowers on the canal banks until they became very beautiful. Skating on the canal was great. The big bonfires on the bank to keep us warm made skating comfortable. We always had to be careful when we came near Wise's Sawmill, as the ice was thinner there because of the steam from the mill. I also remember the boys playing hockey with sticks and cans.

Every summer a small circus would come to Ft. Loramie and would set up in Barhorst's field just the other side of the Kirner residence. The boys would help water the animals, and would get the right to ride on the circus wagons during the big parade the circus would make on the streets of Ft. Loramie.

I can remember how crazy we were after World War I was over. Everybody was shouting in the streets. If you bought war stamps, a star and your name was hung on the classroom door. I remember the big parade the night the war was over. All the bells in town were ringing. Wise's sawmill's whistle was blowing and the Ft. Loramie Band played all over town.

I remember going to mass on Christmas morning at five o'clock and there always seemed to be lots of snow.

I can remember the Toonerville trolley that took us to Minster to High School after they passed the law that you had to go to school until you were 16. Before the trolley, Ester Wise and I rode to school with the Bramlage boys in their car. I remember the driver of the Toonerville was Martin Romie.

I remember the black hearse that my father had. It was pulled by two beautiful black horses named Dolly and Molly. They were trained to start to strut when the death bell would start to toll as the hearse approached the church.

After the Village Beautiful Club was abandoned, the Booster Club took over. They would always put on parades and hold picnics at Bender's Park. I suppose that they still do. I will always remember Ft. Loramie with deep affection.




Village Beautiful Club 1st row, sitting on floor, left to right: Theresa Boerger, Mary Boerger, Hilda Surman 2nd row, sitting: Gertrude Boerger, Adele Wolfe, Ethel Speckman, Clara Lehman, Margaret Gaier, Nora Lehmkuhl 3rd row, standing: Agnes Naber, Catherine Hasebrook, Emily Witsky, Irene Walkup, Susan Gaier, Lauretta Wilkens, Marie Quinlin, Henrietta Tecklenberg, Ann Kirsch, Tillie Wolfe, Denie Surman, Minnie Raterman



Ft. Loramie's First Booster Club. Left to right: Joe Sauer, Mat Brucken, John Albers, Joe Willman, Fred Bertke, Gerhardt Tecklenberg, Bernard Vogelsang, Elmer Vogelsang, Hy Seiters, William Borchers, Ralph Vogelsang, Clem Ruhenkamp, Albert Anthony, Phil Ernst, J. D. Inderrieden, Wm. Albers. Courtesy E. Seiters.

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## LORAMIE BUCKEYE CLUB

*By Evelyn Fleckenstein Busse*



Officers for Loramie Buckeye Club (1908-1911) included Charlie Bollheimer, president: Albert Freytag, secretary; George Fleckenstein, treasurer; Frank Fleckenstein, chairman.

The Loramie Buckeye Club, a young men's social club, was organized and held their first meeting on February 28, 1908. Officers elected were: Charlie Bollheimer, who served two months as president. He was replaced by Christ Kirsch, Jr. Other officers who served were: Albert Freytag, secretary; George J. Fleckenstein, treasurer; Ben Gerling, Vice President; and Frank Fleckenstein, chairman.

Their first year's membership was forty six. An entrance fee of $1.00 was assessed and dues were ten cents weekly. This was later increased to fifteen cents. The by-laws read it was established as a moral basis for a better preservation of social standing. They maintained a health club and purchased punching bags, boxing gloves and other exercise equipment.

The club maintained one of the first libraries in town and books were ordered monthly from the State Library in Columbus. Christ Kirsch was mentioned as the first librarian. The club held dances and card parties for the public and also for private entertainment. The band was comprised of five members.

Club rooms were rented from J. B. Hilgeford and were located in a home situated on Main Street in Loramie. Later two rooms were rented from Henry Sommer. A year later that house sold to Bernard Danzig. That same day it was resold to Matt Brucken.

The regular meetings were held on the last Sunday of each month. Visitors were welcomed to the club room at all hours and members were requested to observe the laws of decorum and propriety toward them.

As the members married the interest in the club dwindled and it was disbanded in December of 1911.

## FT. LORAMIE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

*By Ambrose Broering*

In 1935, Ft. Loramie had no industry. Its citizens travelled to other towns to work, and many moved to these places. To stop this exodus, increase the taxing value of the school district, as well as provide local people a place to work, the Ft. Loramie Development Corporation was formed.

The first officers were: Harry Wendeln, Pres; Joseph Turner, 1st Vice Pres.; Ambrose Broering, 2nd Vice-Pres; William Albers and Herman Bornhorst, Directors; John Broering, Sec. and Treas.

The purpose of the Corporation was to seek out industries for the town and help with the building of factories.

The G-W Tool and Die Company of Minster was the first firm to come to Ft. Loramie. The Wayne Trail factory came in 1965. To induce G-W to move from their crowded quarters in Minster, to Ft. Loramie, two acres of land was bought on option from Ben Aselage. Thirty-eight thousand dollars was pledged by Ft. Loramie people to help with a building to cost $50,000. Later the additional money was raised. This industrial park now has four factories and all the money originally raised has been paid to the stock and bond holders.

The medical building was the last endeavor for this corporation. One hundred thousand dollars was pledged and the building now owned by Dr's. Campbell and Steurnagel came into being. The corporation disbanded in 1984.

## THE LAKE LORAMIE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

*By Roger Schoch*

By the late 1890's and early 1900's the once proud interim link in the establishment of faster, economically viable and dependable transportation, the Miami-Erie canal system together with its water storage and release facilities (among them Lake Loramie), was rendered into a state of obsolescence by an even more innovative and progressive means of commerce, the railroads. With the abandonment of this system of waterways inevitably came the usual lengthy period of neglect. The canal channels themselves became choked with weeds and scrub timber,

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the locks deteriorated, some towards apparent disintegration and the impoundments (lakes), sporting an over-abundance of stumps, trees and vegetation, and silted almost to a point of being un- navigable, attained more the appearance of swamps than once functional bodies of water. One of the main factors at this time inhibiting the improvement and maintenance of the canal system for recreational use was the depressed economy. In short, the State had no funds available for such "frivolities" and on an individual more familial basis, the main order of the day was to eke out a living as best one could in an era of austerity. In plain words, work of necessity, had precedence over pleasure.

Some individuals in the 1910's and 1920's did manage to organize and to improve sections of the canal for nostalgic or historic reasons and usually the waterways within the various villages were visually changed to conform with or to enhance the appearance of that particular area. Generally though, the system, especially the lakes, lay sadly neglected.

In the late 1930's a group of dedicated people recognizing the lake as a potentially valuable resource managed to use their influence to convince Robert Kamper, State Representative at the time, that it might be politically advantageous to provide a dredge for Lake Loramie. Eventually through his good offices the lake was graced by the presence of a used dredge and although some of the "old-timers" avow that the unit spent more time under repair than in dredging, it marked the first really positive step made by the State towards the reclamation of Lake Loramie.

In the 1940's with the economy improving and with more State money being allocated for outdoor recreational facilities, basically the same group of area men and women realizing that the best way to be influentially persuasive was by organizational and numerical representation, decided to form the Lake Loramie Improvement Association. After a meeting formalizing the organization, the articles of incorporation were filed June 14, 1949, were notarized by Mildred Anderson of Fort Loramie, and were forwarded to Columbus. The official recording of the document was made in the office of Charles F. Sweeney, Secretary of State, on June 18, 1949. The officers at the time of incorporation were: Frank Unum, President; Clarence Nagel, Secretary; Louis Hoying Sr.; Treasurer; Joseph Turner, Mark Goetemoeller, Herman Albers, Ray Monnier and Frank Unum, Trustees Pro- tem. The appointed agent responsible for the "reception of legal processes, tax notices and demands against said organization" was Joe Turner. Joe later served for 17 consecutive years as president of the organization he helped to foster (truly a stellar lesson in dedication). The initial verbiage on the articles of incorporation was as follows: "To work for, aid, sponsor, assist and do such things as are necessary for the improvement of Lake Loramie and surrounding community, for the betterment of conditions for hunting, fishing, recreational activities, and any and all other matters and things that will improve Lake Loramie and surrounding community. This, in essence is what the Lake Loramie Improvement Association is all about.

On a state-wide basis the Association strives to work with, and in some cases, to recommend projects to the various departments in Columbus on allotted capital improvements at Lake Loramie and to co- operate in the implementation of these programs. On an area basis the Association began by publishing an annual "flyer" which has now improved to the status of a yearly booklet and aptly named, "The Outdoors Recreational Guide For Lake Loramie". The booklet contains a map of the lake designating the landings, camping area, swimming beach, bait shops and other information valuable and pertinent to all who intend to make use of the facilities listed. The booklet is financed by the advertisers subscribed within and is free to the public.

Local projects have varied with rabbit, pheasant, and in 1986-87, quail raising, all with proper environmental release in the Fall to planting and growing sun-flowers in chosen plots to provide sustenance for local winter birds during periods of inclement weather. The Association has long been a proponent of, and assists with the establishment and anchoring of brush piles at strategic locations in the channels and lake to enhance the habitat for better fishing. This is usually accomplished when the ice is thick and any area is readily accessible. When the ice melts, the brush piles and anchorage system sink at just the right designated spots and have provided in the past some of the best fishing locations on the lake. The Association also makes monetary donations to Ducks Unlimited, the Wild-Life Federation and to other organizations as deemed relevant and worthy by the members. Much of the gravel dispensed at various locations around the lake and especially at "P" island, has been purchased by the Association. The purchase in 1985 of a two-way radio for use in the park manager's car has also been a valuable asset to the operational efficiency of the lake management.

One of the major accomplishments of the organization was in 1976 with Jim Hegemann as President. When the State issued an edict that all leases of state land at Lake Loramie would be cancelled at the end of the year it created havoc among the people who for years had been improving (in many cases at great expense) their land and residences at the lake. A special meeting was called for and convened in

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April 1976 at Minster High School and was attended by a very large contingent of area people from Lake Loramie and surrounding territory. After various opinions and discussions (at times quite heated) were aired, and after terminating a question and answer period engaged in by the people affected and by the state officials and county commissioners, the State relented and agreed to sell to the lessees, thirty land tracts, to extend leases to some other for life interest or for extended periods and to cancel instead of all leases as originally planned, only nine. This was considered a major victory for the owners who were about to be so unjudiciously devastated by the original order. Mr. Hegemann made many trips to Columbus and worked many hours to affect this decision and there is little doubt that his leadership role as representative of the Lake Loramie Improvement Association was the major factor in the final outcome. In the years 1981-82-83 the Association also donated to the State Park, playground equipment and the formal dedication of this much used and appreciated addition was made in 1983. The Association also promotes the annual ice-skating party, provides and serves hot-dogs, pop and hot chocolate for this event, sponsors the yearly junior carp derby for kids up to and including 15 years of age and with the help of many fine businesses and organizations provides prizes for this event, assists park personnel and also participates in the annual hog butchering exhibition as well as the boat parade and Fall Festival held at the State Park.

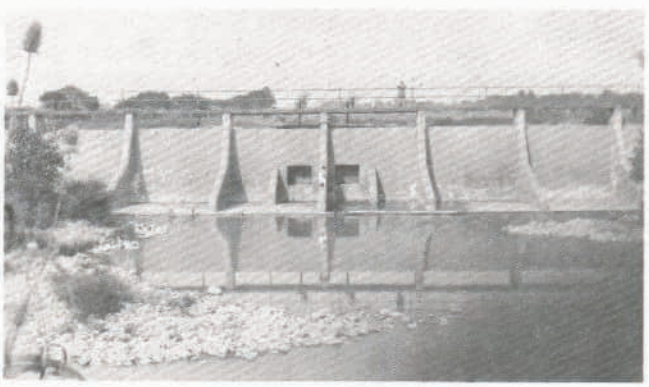
Some of our generous and benevolent members also volunteer the use of their pontoons and donate of their time to provide and supervise scenic trips for many of our senior or handicapped citizens, so they too can enjoy the environs of our lake which we take so much for granted. On a more personal plane, the Association provides for its members only, an annual dinner meeting in January and in the Summer, a picnic in July. The two events are well attended and do much to demonstrate the comraderie of people engaged in meaningful endeavor. The present officers for 1987 are: Gladys Cain, President; Bill Ripploh, Vice President; Gert Ripploh, Secretary; Bill Fabian, Sgt.- at-Arms; Ed Baumer, Charles Otting and John Filburn, Trustees. As with all organizations the Lake Loramie Improvement Association is always seeking new members and with them, the varied and innovative ideas they represent. Dues are $3.00 annually and any of the officers will gladly supply details of membership. The Lake Loramie Improvement Association looks forward toward a long and fruitful future.



1938 The first clam-shell dredge in Lake Loramie. Courtesy M. Aneshansley.



Bulkhead - Sandbagged during 1913 flood.



Wasteweir (also known as Spillway) shortly after it was built in 1905. The first wasteweir was made of logs hewn by hand and fastened together with long spikes. It washed out in 1903.

## A HISTORY OF MUSIC IN THE VILLAGE OF FORT LORAMIE, OHIO

*By Frank Turner*

As I write this history of music in the community of Fort Loramie, it becomes apparent that I must divide my report into three areas: music in the community, music in the church, and music in the school. Although all three are intertwined, these divisions make understanding the overall picture easier.

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## MUSIC IN THE COMMUNITY

Music as a means of entertainment was quite important in the early years, particularly prior to the popularity of television. There were a number of family and community bands or orchestras that performed at community functions, dances, and weddings. Organizations such as the Meyerholtz Orchestra, the Arkenberg Band, and the Brandewie Orchestra were common. The Fort Loramie Orchestra was listed on the program of the Fort Loramie Schools commencement exercises of 1913. Also listed on the same program were piano duets played by Misses Frances Brucken, Elizabeth Brucken, Frances Ulliman, and Ursula Inderrieden.

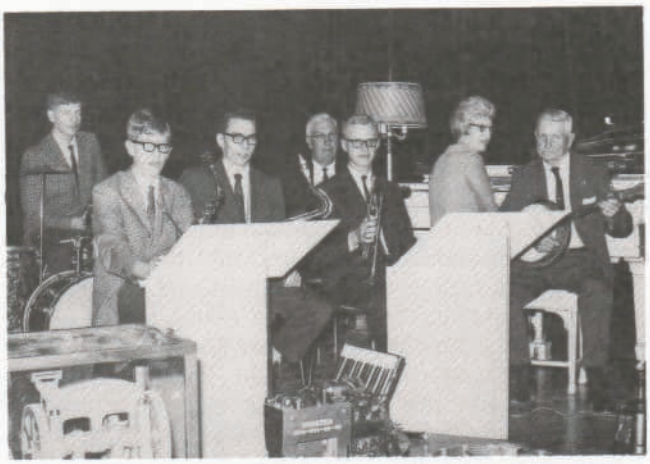


Arkenberg Band. Julius. Albert and Ferd.

Musical theater and minstrels were popular attractions in the early years of the village. These productions usually took place in what is currently known as old St. Michael Hall or in the school. Members of the community were involved with the preparation and performance of most of these productions. In the very early years, traveling groups of performers known as the Lyceums would come to the village to put on their productions.

I personally remember one example of a community production: an operetta performed by the St. Michael Knights of St. John and Ladies Auxiliary in 1950. The play, entitled "An Old Kentucky Garden," depicted the old South prior to the Civil War. Much of the music was songs written by Stephen Foster. Gilbert Hilgefort portrayed Stephen Foster; Eileen Winner portrayed Jeanie, and my father, Joseph Turner, portrayed Colonel Staunton. The entire cast numbered nearly fifty people, most from the immediate Fort Loramie area. Rev. Anthony Ley directed the play, and Marie Quinlin directed the music. The cast rehearsed for several months and presented several performances to sold-out audiences.

In more recent years, particularly with the popularity of television and the availability of theater in cities in close proximity, such as Dayton, community theater no longer is a common means of entertainment. However, in the mid seventies, a group was formed to sing German folk songs at the annual German Heritage Days festivities. They call themselves the Berlin Sangen Chor, and have approximately twenty members.



Bruns Orchestra - L to R Joe Bruns. John Bruns, Fred Bruns. Ed Bruns, Frank Turner, Norma Bruns and Joe Huber.

## MUSIC IN THE CHURCH

Exactly when the organ in St. Michael church was installed is not known for certain. However, according to "A History of Shelby County" (1913) there was a consecration ceremony at 6:00 A.M. on October 2, 1881, and a solemn pontifical Mass at 10:00 A.M., with singing by the Maennerchor of Piqua. Vespers were held in the afternoon, during which the St. Michael church choir sang.

The early organ was hand-pumped by bellows near the pipes. An electric pump was added in 1925. In 1910 more pipes were added, and in 1985 the pipes reached their current collection. The console in the early days had to be located close to the pipes because the air action had to be sudden. Now, with the use of electronics, the console is located about forty feet from the pipes, close to the choir loft rail. This allows the organist to better be aware of the proceedings in the church proper.

Early organists included Ferd Mader, Joseph Notheis, Pat (Hoban) Sloan, Victoria Albers (1928-1936 and 1956-1986), Mary Vogelsang (1936-1956, Irene Freytag (1965 to present), and Helen Barhorst (1981 to present).

Choirs have taken a variety of forms since the beginning years. There have been men's choirs, which normally sang at the "High Masses" and at important services; a children's choir, known as "St. Cecelia's Choir," which sang at weddings and at morning weekday Masses; a ladies choir, which now

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sings at funerals; and currently a mixed choir, which sings at Christmas, Easter, and for several other services throughout the church year. The mixed choir is under the direction of Frank Turner.

Victoria Albers, who recently retired, recalls that Frank Willman sang as soloist for years at funeral Masses. She also recalls how, for years, the first Mass on Christmas morning was at 5:30, with carols beginning by the full choir at 5:00. She also recalls all those Sunday afternoons she had to come back to church to play for services while her friends were out enjoying themselves.

Currently music is part of every Sunday Mass. The choir no longer leads the singing except at special events. The songs are now led by cantors, who are all St. Michael parishioners. There is also a guitar group that leads the songs at one Mass per month.

MUSIC IN THE SCHOOL

In the early years of the school, music was an incidental part of the school curriculum, songs being sung for entertainment and relaxation. Music was also an important imgredient of many theatrical productions within the school. The instruction of music was provided by those classroom teachers who had some musical training.

One in particular was most influential in providing Fort Loramie students with capable music instruction in those early years - Marie Quinlin. Miss Quinlin, who taught in the Fort Loramie Schools for over sixty years, mostly as a first-grade teacher, could sing well and played the piano proficiently. Those who were fortunate enough to have had her as a teacher particularly remember her rhythm bands. Marie also directed many school plays and pageants during her tenure.

The instrumental music department took form during the late thirties. Mr. Frank Lucas organized an orchestra, which at first numbered twelve members. As the orchestra grew the Fort Loramie High School Band was formed. Each member provided his own instrument and uniform. Since Mr. Lucas shared his teaching time with other schools in the county, instruction took place only on several days a week.

In September of 1948, the Band Mothers organization (now known as the Band Parents) was formed. Mrs. Ray Geise saw the need for an organization to help raise the funds necessary to outfit a band properly. She served as the first president of the organization, which had thirteen members. Through card parties, dances, bake sales, dinners, ice-cream socials, raffles, etc., funds were raised to purchase new uniforms and larger instruments for the band. Over the years, they met in the firehouse, members' homes, the school cafeteria, the school kitchen, and the school band room.

Upon Mr. Lucas's retirement in 1950, Mildred (Reichert) Hein became the band director. In the next several years, she was followed by Catherine (Ratermann) Custenborder and Bessie High. During these ladies' tenures, the band continued to grow in numbers and reputation. In 1954 Jeannette Wagner became the music teacher. In addition to her duties as the band director, she created both the boys and girls glee clubs, both of which became fine performing groups.

In 1964 Frank Turner took over the duties as band director, with Miss Wagner continuing as vocal and general music teacher. Miss Wagner retired in 1975. Janice Workman became the elementary music teacher in 1978. Mr. Turner took a leave from 1977-1979 as music teacher. His replacement was Mr. John Blakeslee. Mr. Turner resumed his duties as music teacher in 1979 and continues to serve in that capacity to the present day.

There are a number of performing groups now functioning within the school: the Kids' Korus (comprised of select fourth, fifth, and sixth graders), the Fifth Grade Band, Sixth Grade Band, Junior Band, High School Band, Pep Band and High School Chorus. A large number of students enter the district solo and ensemble contests each year in both junior high and high school competition.

Over the years the school has presented a number of musicals. In the last three years, "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," "Godspell," and "Annie Get Your Gun" have been presented. Mr. George Martin has directed these three performances.

## FORT LORAMIE BRANCH LIBRARY

*By Karen Anthony*

In January, 1977, the Ft. Loramie Branch of the Amos Memorial Public Library was opened. The library is located at 37A North Main Street in Ft. Loramie. The Ft. Loramie Branch is the fourth branch established from the Sidney Amos Memorial Library system. The other branches are the Anna Branch, Botkins Branch and the Jackson Center Branch.

The town had formerly been visited regularly by a bookmobile from the Amos Memorial Library. When the property next to the Ft. Loramie Historical Association became available, Jay Fleckenstein approached the Amos Memorial Library Director, Doris (Polly) Stephens and asked about the possibility of having a branch library established in the building next to the Museum. The library board of directors was contacted and Mr. Fleckenstein was told that the Amos Memorial Library would be agreeable to the idea if the building would be provided rent- free.

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A Friends of the Library group was established and contributions to a fund to help in setting up the library totaled $5,603.50. The Chairman of the Friends of the Library Association was Dorothy Meyer, the Treasurer, Anita Richards and Secretary, Rodney Bensman. Others serving on the Friends of the Library Board were Kay Block, Margie Iiams, Evelyn Busse, Louise Ratterman, and Jay Fleckenstein. Many Friends of the Library members solicited for contributions and helped in the preparation of the building for the library.

The Historical Association would insure the building itself and be responsible for maintenance and upkeep on the outside of the building. The Town Council of Ft. Loramie was approached and agreed to contribute also to the project.

The Library Director of Amos Memorial Public Library was at that time Mrs. Doris Stephens. The Board of Directors was comprised of Mr. Thomas Faulkner; President, Mrs. J. Oliver Amos, and Mr. Harley Knoop, Mr. Lloyd Lutz, Mrs. Robert Dunham, Judge L. E. Bauer and Mrs. H. M. Sharp.

Open House and Dedication of the Branch was held on April 24, 1977, with J. Fleckenstein as Master of Ceremonies and Reverend Father Joseph Bruening giving the invocation.

Mrs. Debbie Jutte Blakslee was the first branch supervisor and Karen Holthaus Anthony was the assistant when the Library first opened. The current staff consists of Karen Anthony, branch supervisor, Kathy Schafer, assistant and Marica Schulze, substitute. Dorothy Meyer has served as a substitute and Jane Albers as assistant.

The current Library Director is Mr. Robert Belvin. Serving on the Board of Directors is Mrs. Judith Westerheide, President; Mrs. Donna Shinn, Secretary, Mr. Bruce Boyd, Mrs. Sondra Dunham, Mr. Harry Faulkner, Mrs. Jill Francis and Mr. Michael Puckett.

There are two people at the main library in Sidney who work directly with the branches. Working as Branch Library Coordinator is Memory Wilson and Mary Deal, who delivers books to the branches weekly.

## HISTORY OF THE FT. LORAMIE COMMUNITY FIRE CO., INC.

The Ft. Loramie Community Fire Co., Inc. was formed in the year of 1884, which makes the department 103 years old. Fr. Wm. Bigot, Pastor of St. Michael's Church was instrumental in the purchase of a hand-operated pump in 1883, just after the newly built Raterman Saw Mill burned to the ground. Fr. Bigot was a French Army Chaplain during the French-Prussian War. Fr. Bigot was decorated by both sides.

Speaking of early steps in the direction of fire protection, an item in one of the scrapbooks, dated 1884, reads "Fire engine has just arrived and will be one of the main attractions at the Fourth of July Picnic".

Another notation, later the same year, "Berlin has organized a Fire Company to take charge of the new Ft. Loramie engine recently purchased. The following officers are elected: Henry Menker, Sr., President; Valentine Gaier, Vice-President; John H. Willman, Treasurer; Stephen Kirner, Fire Chief; Albert Hasebrook Assistant Chief; Henry J. Rottinghaus, Scretary; Christ Kirsch, Hose Reel Captain; Jacob Ullerman, Assistant Hose Reel Captain; Henry Menker, Jr., Charles Widner, Nozzelmen, Tony Kummell, John Henke, Guides; and Henry Borchers and John Flynn in charge of hose.

The Hamilton hand pumper was followed by a Howe gasoline engine pump in 1910. Both of these pumps were mounted on a horse-drawn wagon, but the department didn't own any horses. It seems there were always some horses available at a nearby establishment, The Danzig Funeral Home. Their horses were kept in a Livery stable, which was in an area behind the present Brucken's Cafe.

In 1928, the first truck-mounted pumper was purchased. It was a Dodge truck, with the fire apparatus built by the Howe Fire Apparatus Co. of Anderson, Indiana. The truck was an open-top cab with a 500 gallon water tank, with a 300 gallon-per-minute piston pump.

The second truck was a 1938 V-8 Ford truck with the apparatus built by Howe Fire Apparatus Co. It was a 300 gallon capacity rotary pump.

In 1950, the department voted to purchase a new fire truck. It was to be another Ford chasis, with Howe built fire apparatus. The members decided on a 500 G.P.M. rotary pump.

On February 4, 1954, a committee was appointed to look into purchasing a tanker, that is a truck that would only haul water to fires. On March 1, 1954, a Ford chassis was purchased with Howe building the tanker. The truck had a 1,220 gallon water tank.

On October 4, 1962, the members of the department voted to purchase a 1963 Ford chasis with a Howe built 750 G.P.M. pumper with 800 gallon water tank.

In the fall of 1965, the tank in the 1954 tanker began to leak.

The members voted on November 30th to purchase a new tanker rather than to repair the old one.

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The department purchased a Ford chassis with a Howe built 1,500 gallon tank. A 6" quick dump was later added to the rear of the truck by the members of the department. This truck remains in service today.

In 1968, a committee was formed to look into either building or purchasing a Grass Fire Truck. After several months of discussion and looking at other grass trucks, the members decided to build their own new grass truck. It was also decided to go house to house to collect for donations to pay for the new truck. A 1969 G.M.C. 3/4 ton pickup was purchased. A 250-gallon water tank was added along with a portable pump.

As time went along other fire department equipment was added to the truck. After several years the portable pump was replaced with a P.T.O. pump. The reason for this was that the portable pump was too slow in filling tankers.

A 1981 Chevy 3/4 ton replaced the 1969 G.M.C. as the G.M.C. was involved in an accident while responding to an arson fire. The members voted to replace the truck rather than to have the 1969 truck repaired. Therefore, another grass truck was built by the members.

In 1976, another Ford chasis was purchased, with Howe Fire Apparatus Co. building the apparatus. This truck replaced the 1950 truck. It is a 1,000 G.P.M. pump with a 800 gallon water tank. This truck was put in service in 1978 and is the present first-line pumper.

The department is in the process of replacing the 1963 pumper with a custom-built Pierce fire apparatus. It will have a 1,250 gallon-per-minute pump with a 2,500 gallon water tank. This truck is to be received in about a year.

The department contracts protection to the residents of McLean, Cynthian, and Turtle Creek Townships along with the village of Ft. Loramie.

Our leaders have not been so numerous as our equipment. There has only been six Fire Chiefs. Stephen Kirner was elected the First Chief, that was of the original Berlin Fire Department in 1884. He served as Chief until 1899, when John Raterman replaced him as Chief in 1901. August Gaier, Sr. took over the helm of Chief in 1932 and remained in that position until 1961, when Vernon Morris Frey took command. Theodore Wendeln was elected Chief in 1972 when Chief Frey retired, Jerome Barhorst was elected Chief in January 1985, and is the present Chief.

The present active members are Jerome Barhorst, Chief; James Plas, Assistant Chief; Mike Hoying, 1st Captain; Paul Seger, 2nd Captain; Tony Winner, 1st Lt.; John Plas 2nd Lt; and President, Rick Meyer, Vice-President; Dan Rethman, Secretary; Greg Quinlin, Treasurer; Roger Behr, Mike Busse, Tom Eilerman, Jr., Rex Frey, Dan Geise, Roger Heitkamp, Dave Hoelscher, Mark Hoelscher, Mark Hoying, Rob Hoying, Tim Mescher, Ken Meyer, Kirk Motter, Gary Pleiman, Rich Romie, Dave Ruhenkamp, Jan Schmiesing, Jeff Schulze, Eric Seger, Roger Siegel, Tim Siegel, Vernon Siegel, Jim Slonkosky.

Honorary members: Vernon Frey, Donald Ruhenkamp, Theodore Wendeln.

Standby members: Ralph E. Gaier, Elmer Rethman, Jim Quinlin, Norb Siegel, Bob Siegel, Ben Aselage, Urban Holthaus.

Retired members: Ott Boeckman, Carl Barhorst.



Present Ft. Loramie Fire Company



1987 Present Fire Department. 1st row, left to right: Jerome Barhorst, Chief; Tony Winner, Lieutenant; Mike Hoying, Captain; John Plas, Assistant Chief; Paul Seger, Captain; John Plas Lieutenant. 2nd row: Gary Pleiman, Dan Geise, Greg Quinlin, Jim Slonkosky, Ted Wendeln, Ken Meyer, Urban Holthaus, Sr., Jeff Schulze. 3rd row: Roger Heitkamp, Dave Ruhenkamp, Tim Mescher, Eric Seger, Rich Meyer, Mark Hoying, Dan Rethman, Rich Romie, Roy Hoying, Tim Siegel. 4th row: Rex Frey, Mike Busse, Kirk Motter, Dave Hoelscher, Tom Eilerman, Roger Behr.

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## FORT LORAMIE POST OFFICE

*By Alice Romie*

The post office has seen many changes as the penny postcard and the horse-drawn buggy have given way to modern methods of distributing the mail. In the earlier years, postmasters conducted their business from their workplaces or homes. Since 1950, they have conducted the business of the post office from a modern building on Park Street. The volume of mail has increased greatly, and the rural route has seen the demise of the horse-drawn buggy and the advent of the automobile. First class mail, once 2 cents, is now 22 cents, and that penny postcard is now 14 cents.

According to Post Office records, O.H.P. Baer was the first postmaster. He was appointed on Feb. 10, 1843, as postmaster of the Village of Berlin, as it was known then. The name was changed to Loramie in 1893 and to Fort Loramie in 1910.



Ed Utz and Christ Kirsch in front of Kirsch post office. Kirsch was first Ft. Loramie marshal.

Postmasters were appointed from the civil service register when the office was recorded as a fourth class post office. Fort Loramie remained a fourth class office until 1936, when it became a third class office. In 1940, it was designated as a second class office and holds that class today. First, second and third class offices were designated as presidential, meaning the President of the United States appointed the postmasters, upon the recommendation of the congressman of the district where the applicant resided and approval of the Democratic or Republican County Central Committee. The postmaster could remain in office until the presidential party changed. That rule was changed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during his term of office, when all postmasters were placed on civil service status.

Fort Loramie belonged to the Lima Sectional Center and in the early 1980s was transferred to the Dayton Sectional Center. Mail was cancelled by a hand canceller in the early days. Now all cancellations are done by the Sectional Center.

When the Zip Code was inaugurated, it was hard for patrons to remember the numbers 45845, so the village mayor and council agreed to paint the numbers on all sides of the water tower in large numerals.

In 1936, the post office moved from the Gregor Building on Main Street when it was sold to F. A. King. That building now houses the Trails Restaurant. The post office moved to the Gehring Building, also on Main Street, where the village library is now. In 1950 the post office again was asked to move because the Post Office Department refused to pay an increased rent.




Post Office in the old Greger building, now "The Trails". This bldg. was also a meat market, and Wissman's Cafe. Courtesy A. Romie

With approval of the Post Office Department, Albert Romie purchased land from Mr. and Mrs. Joe Willman to build a post office building. The Greenville Treaty Line forms the north line of the lot on Park Street. Construction began on Oct. 11, 1950, and the building was occupied on Dec. 15, 1950, when the first mail was distributed.

The building was dedicated at an open house on Jan. 2, 1951. Reverend Father Anthony Ley gave the invocation, Harry Wendeln was the toastmaster and Joseph Borchers was master of ceremonies.

The Fort Loramie Band played the National Anthem, while the flag was raised for the first time with Boy Scouts doing the honors. The Sidney Daily News paid tribute to Fort Loramie's new, modern post office building in an article stating, "The Fort Loramie post office is doing business in what is believed to be the finest structure of any like- size small community in the nation."

Postmasters who have occupied this building are: Alice Romie, from 1950 to May 30, 1971; Zelma Hil-

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geford, from 1971 to Jan. 22, 1972, as officer in charge and from 1972 to May, 1976, as postmaster; Luella McGowan, from May, 1976, to Sept. 11, 1976, as officer in charge and from Sept. 11, 1976 to the present time as postmaster.

Mail was delivered to the post office by street cars, buses, and finally by the Star Route carrier from Wapakoneta, Ohio. Fort Loramie had three incoming and outgoing schedules every day except on Sundays. Mail was dispatched in a locked mail pouch, labeled "Via Way Pouch." This pouch contained mail for Minster, New Bremen, St. Marys, Celina and New Knoxville patrons. The postmaster would open the pouch, remove the mail for his office, lock it again and send it on the way to the next post office. There was also a pouch labeled Det. and Cin. Tr. #54 in which mail for all the states and larger cities was placed. Five or more letters to a city were sent under separate labels and placed in the Det. and Cin. Tr. #1 pouch. The rest of the cities were placed under a Det. and Cin. label marked mixed and the clerks on the train would sort them en route. Ten or more letters for one state were also placed under a Det. and Cin. #2 label with the state being marked on the top part of the label. Also a separate pouch for the mail going to Wapakoneta was made every day. On the 5:30 p.m. dispatch, a pouch labeled Lima. Ohio was also made.

At the present time, all mail is sent to the Sectional Center for cancellation and sorting. Almost all mail is delivered the day after mailing.

An important event every year at Christmas time was the sending of packages. Fort Loramie Meat Market would send parcels of smoked and celery seed sausage and hams to almost every state in the United States and even overseas. Each Christmas, between 100 and 125 parcels weighing from 5 to 70 pounds each would be sent. Several of the factories at St. Marys and Fort Loramie would also send gift parcels of sausage to their salesmen, and the Grammer Cafe of Cincinnati received 140 pounds of sausage every week for many years.




Post Office at Peter Riegers Boot & Repair Shop. Ed. Utz, who succeeded his brother Matt Utz is pictured with his mail wagon and horse. Courtesy Mary E. Kramer

The Fort Loramie postal route covers territory east, west and south of the village and has grown from 20 miles to the present 75 miles. The route dips into Mercer, Auglaize, Darke and Shelby Counties and now serves 455 families.

The first rural route from Fort Loramie commenced on Feb. 15, 1905, with Edward Utz as the first carrier. He remained on the route until his retirement in 1921. When he began his career as a rural mailman, he used a horse and buggy to deliver the mail on a 20-mile route. In later years he used a car.



Ray DeLeat- Rural mail carrier. Courtesy A. Romie

Ray DeLaet started his career as a rural carrier on Aug. 15, 1921, in Dawson, Ohio. He moved to the rural route in Houston, Ohio when the Dawson Post Office was closed in 1928. He moved to Fort Loramie on April 1, 1935, as the second rural carrier. Mr. DeLaet purchased a new Ford car every year, going from the Tin Lizzie to the more modern and deluxe car. He retired on Nov. 30, 1959. Cyril Seger was appointed as the third regular carrier on July 23, 1960.

Charles Utz was appointed the sub. rural carrier at the age of 17 and held that position until his retirement in 1975. James Boerger held the position from 1975 to June 3, 1977. The present carrier, Elton Pluman, was appointed June 4, 1977.

Clerks who worked at the post office are Emma (Borchers) Kaiser, Marian (Raterman) Aneshansley, Marian (Busse) Parks, Rita (Wendeln) Hasselman, Florence (Keifer) Hilgeford, Mary (Couchet) Gephart, Luella (Romie) McGowan, Catherine (Helmstetter) Barhorst, Billie (Sommer) Maier, Mildred (Romie) Coble, Ann Seger, Norma (Mullenkamp) Siegel, Zelma (Rousseau) Hilgeford and Freda (Bertke) Sanders.

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The following have served as postmasters for the Fort Loramie Post Office:

LORAMIE'S POST OFFICE
Shelby County, Ohio

| Postmasters | Appointment Dates |
|---|---|
| O. H. P. Baer | February 10, 1843 |
| Joseph Mendenhall | December 21, 1843 |
| Bernhard Mayer | January 28, 1846 |
| Casper Volker | July 27, 1861 |
| Milton Kemper | May 16, 1865 |
| Robert A. Richardson | February 15, 1869 |
| Joseph Lemon | March 28, 1870 |
| Henry Menke | February 16, 1877 |
| Michael Moorman | August 24, 1883 |
| Joseph Niederhorn | October 27, 1885 |
| William Quinlin | September 1, 1886 |
| Michael Moorman | May 10, 1889 |

Changed to LORAMIE on April 5, 1893

| | |
|---|---|
| Albert Hasebrook | April 5, 1893 |
| Mrs. Clara Hasebrook | January 24, 1894 |
| Michael Moorman | July 23, 1897 |
| Lester C. Pepper | May 8, 1906 |
| Christian Kirsch | August 28, 1907 |

Changed to FORT LORAMIE on October 17, 1910

| | |
|---|---|
| Christian Kirsch | October 17, 1910 |
| George E. Kirner Acting Postmaster | March 1, 1919 |
| Peter M. Rieger Acting Postmaster | May 1, 1919 |
| Peter M. Rieger, Postmaster | June 30, 1919 |
| Mrs. Florence Hilgefort | December 2, 1925 |
| Frank C. Gerling Acting Postmaster | August 21, 1935 |
| Mrs. Alice B. Romie | February 7, 1936 |
| Mrs. Zelma M. Hilgeford Officer-in-Charge | May 31, 1971 |
| Mrs. Zelma M. Hilgeford Postmaster | January 22, 1972 |
| Mrs. Luella L. McGowan Officer-in-Charge | May 7, 1976 |
| Mrs. Luella L. McGowan Postmaster | September 11, 1976 |

## FORT LORAMIE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1971

*By Evelyn Fleckenstein Busse*

The Fort Loramie Historical Association was organized February of 1971. Since this particular area is important to history, several interested citizens set about making the public aware of the value of these surroundings as it pertained to the past. Their aim was to put Fort Loramie on the map.

The first invitational meeting convened January 19, 1971, in the local American Legion Post 355. Anne L. Busse, J. W. Fleckenstein, 2nd, George Martin and Evelyn Busse chaired the affair. Approximately twenty local citizens attended. They expressed their interest in the project and another meeting was held on February 2, 1971. Election of officers resulted in a roster headed by George Martin as president; Evelyn Busse, Secretary-Treasurer; J. Fleckenstein, 2nd, Curator; Committee Chairpersons: Patricia Fleckenstein, Program and Publicity; Membership, Anne Busse; Finance, Joan Benanzer; Edmund Quinlin, Site.

The aims as listed in the by-laws: "It shall be the purpose and the objective of this association to do all in its power to collect all the available historical material connected with, or associated with, the history of Fort Loramie and the area and carefully preserve the same. It shall also be the purpose of the association to collect, preserve, and diffuse such information as may be available in the field of genealogy connected with the above named area. The objectives named shall include the local, county, and area papers, old church records, private papers, monographs, letters and other materials of such nature. This shall mean, ultimately, the writing of the history of the area from the beginning."

For several years, through the courtesy of the local American Legion Post, meetings were held at the Fort Loramie Legion Home.

Various projects were held to raise money to support the organization, including dinners, bake sales, private donations, bridal fairs, etc.

When the John Diener family of Minster, Ohio, donated the Bornhorst family shoe making equipment to the organization, a one-room building was rented. This was located on West Main Street. This display became the nucleus for the first museum in Fort Loramie.

In 1971, a log cabin, was donated to the Historical Association by the Karl Rethman family of Fort Loramie. It was placed on Canal Park in the center of the village. The structure had stood for many years on Rethman's farm on SR705, east. William Rottin-



Wilderness Trail Museum. Since 1853. at corner of Main and Elm Streets.

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ghaus erected the building probably in the 1870's. It is a one room, one floor log building, 14'x16' with a porch extending an additional eight foot.

With the help of local citizens, the cabin was moved and set in place where it still stands. Herman Freytag, Edward Freytag and Edmund Quinlin made the major repairs and Gary Grimm put on a new roof.

It was christened "The Pierre Loramie Trading Post" in honor of Pierre Loramie, who was believed to be a French Jesuit priest, and who first settled Loramie as a trading post.

It was furnished as was the period of that day (1769) with skins, lamps, cooking utensils, etc., a loft for sleeping and fireplace for preparation of meals.

As an aid for modern purposes, electricity was installed. To complete the project, landscaping of the time period made a beautiful setting for the cabin.

Within a very short period, the seams of the first museum on W. Main St., were bulging and the organization was pressed for space for the many artifacts which had been donated.

In 1973, the historical association purchased Margaret's Inn, a large dwelling on corner of Main and Elm Street. This structure, built in 1853, had an interesting historical background. Mr. H. H. Dressman had it erected and it served as a grocery, boarding house, private residence, and, at one time, even had a beauty shop on the upper level. In the late 1930's, Mr. Albert Gehring of Cincinnati, purchased it and converted it into a restaurant.

Under different ownership, it served in this capacity until purchased by the historical association.

The small rented room on West Main Street was closed and all artifacts moved to the ten room building at 37 North Main Street. The original two-story dwelling, constructed of brick, had eight rooms: four down and four up. It had a small brick summer kitchen back of main structure.

Through the years, a lean-to type kitchen and hall was added to the rear, and the summer kitchen was joined to original dwelling, providing extra restaurant seating. The house had three fireplaces; one upstairs; two down.

At this time the association, with a vote of the majority, selected the name, "Wilderness Trail Museum" which had been proposed by Marie Quinlin.

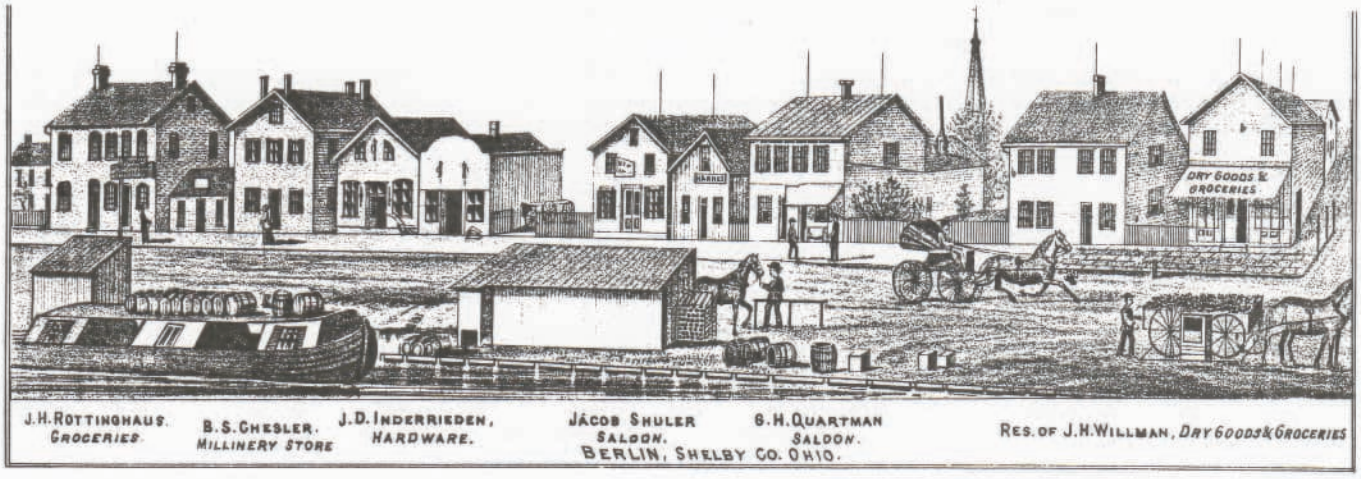
In fall, 1976, the historical association purchased the small building at 37A North Main Street, adjacent to Museum. Through the efforts of Museum curator J. W. Fleckenstein, 2nd; the village of Fort Loramie realized a dream and a branch library was established in newly purchased building.

During the years, the organization has established a genealogy section in conjunction with the public library. They purchased a microfilm and microfiche reader, have many historical reference books and census films of area. Genealogical and historical buffs are welcomed to enlarge their knowledge in these fields, using Fort Loramie historical facilities.

Since their beginning the organization has worked hand-in-hand to maintain and promote the history and genealogy of area and new artifacts are being added regularly. In 1987 expansion plans are in the making.

In 1975, Pauline Seger, a local resident, translated the German book, "Annals of St. Michaels." The book, published in 1907, and written by Father Wilhelm Bigot, while pastor in the local Catholic Church was a history of Fort Loramie, as well as the church and its parishioners. The Fort Loramie Historical Association was instrumental in having the English and German version published in one volume. It was sold out within a very short time.

The 1987 membership now stands at forty-eight and is headed by J. W. Fleckenstein, 2nd, with board members; George Martin, Karen Anthony, Anita Richards and Evelyn Busse.




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# Native Origins

## DIARY OF AN EARLY IMMIGRANT

*By Henry B. Sherman, Sr.*

In the beginning of September 1835, after the real and personal property of our homestead had been sold, we made preparations to immigrate to North America. For that purpose we selected the State of Ohio. We left our home in East Bevern, near Muenster, in Westphalia in the beginning of September 1835, and then we rented a large teamster's wagon that had been taking merchandise from Bremen to Muenster. We, with our family, were taken to Bremen. Our family consisted of father, mother and five boys; Joseph, Henry B., (the writer of this sketch) Bernard, John and William. Three families of our neighborhood left with us and we all went in this wagon to Bremen. The names of these families were Henry Hoelscher, Henry Stollbehn and John Stockman. September 11, 1835 we all arrived at Bremen and were taken to the ship's agent, Mcklor. Our ship passage cost twenty-two thalers in gold and that included our board for each person for the whole passage. In Bremen we were all put in one boat that had one mast and one sail. On that boat we were all transported down the river Weser to Bremen Haven. The boat left Bremen the same day at 11 o'clock that morning and the next morning at day-break we landed at Bremen Haven. It was ebb-tide and the boat could not enter the haven until floodtide set in at noon and then ran into the haven along a three-masted ship, and we all boarded the ship. The ship was called "The Pilot". The vessel had not as yet taken on board her cargo and passengers, therefore we had to remain on board about ten days, before it was fully laden and it was not until the 22nd day of September 1835, that the ship left the Bremen Haven and took down the Weser into the North Sea, a six hour journey. Coming into the North Sea the wind was not favorable to pass the English Channel. It was blowing from the south. So the officers of the ship concluded to go around by way of Scotland. To accomplish that purpose, they sailed further to the north, to the sixtieth degree of latitude, in order to get around the northern part of Scotland.

The sea at that degree of latitude was very rough and very cold, so much so, that some of the passengers had to ascend into the hold of the ship to keep from freezing. After the ship passed the northern extremity of Scotland, the ship sailing south, leaving England and Ireland on our left. As the ship neared the Irish Coast, we could see our shores and lighthouse. From this point we left the rough, stormy North Sea and sailing to a more congenial place south to the Azores Islands, lying due west one thousand miles from the Straits of Gibralter and from either continent of Europe and Africa. The group consisted of nine islands and belonged to Portugal and were noted for their fertility, the chief crop being grapes. From this point the ship took a northerly route to the North American Coast. In nearing the American shores the ship passed through the gulf stream, running out of the Gulf of Mexico, between Cuba and Florida and running along the North American coast. The warm water comes from the south and forces the cold water to the shores of New Foundland. From hence it crosses the Atlantic Ocean in Norway. It is said the water in the stream runs in its narrowest places at five miles an hour.

After passing the greenish waters of the gulf stream, we came in sight of land. It was the coast near the capes of Charles and Henry, at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay. In nearing shore a pilot was taken aboard who took complete charge of the ship.

There are two lighthouses at the entrance of the bay, one on Cape Charles on the Maryland side and one on Cape Henry, on the Virginia side. The bay is one hundred and seventy miles long and so wide that land could scarcely be seen from either side. On the evening of Oct. 31, 1835 we landed safe at Baltimore, after a pleasant journey from our former home from across the Atlantic Ocean. After landing at Baltimore, our goods and effects were unloaded from the ship, and also the goods and effects of our neighbors. These goods were loaded on a dray and taken farther into the city into a large warehouse. Baltimore is a fine city and has many fine buildings, one in honor of George Washington, and many fine churches. The largest church is the Catholic Cathedral.

There are many teamsters, who had large-heavy freight wagons, drawn with six horses who made it their business to carry goods across the Aleghany Mountains to Wheeling in West Virginia on the banks of the Ohio River. On one of these wagons our goods and effects were loaded and some women and their children who could not make the journey on foot, were seated on top of the wagon a distance

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of three hundred miles, which took us seventeen days to travel. Along the road we passed through many towns, among these were West Minster, Cumberland, Somerset, Union, Little Washington and Brownsville. At the last named town we crossed the Monongahela River. The road from Baltimore to Wheeling is very mountainous and hilly, fertile valleys with good farms and on every farm the traveler finds large orchards with good apple trees on them. The trees were so full of apples, as much as trees could bear, that the people could not make good use of their apples.

At Wheeling we took passage on a steam boat down the Ohio River for Cincinnati, leaving Wheeling on the steamboat at 11 o'clock in the morning and arriving at midnight at the wharf at Cincinnati. The river was up high, in a good shipping condition. Remaining in that city for two days our goods were hauled on a canal boat and we took passage to Dayton. The canal from Cincinnati to Dayton had been finished one year or two and in good shipping condition. The canal to Piqua they had not commenced to work at and was not finished until two years after this, in the year 1837. Leaving the Stoltebehn family in Cincinnati, we and the Hoelscher family traveled on to that new settlement of Stallotown (Minster). Coming to Dayton on the canal boat we rented a teamster wagon, which took us on to Stallotown for twenty dollars. Arriving there we rented an old house for one month and moved into it. We then went to Piqua to the land office and entered eighty acres of land for one dollar and a quarter per acre. After we bought the land, we could not find it and got a surveyor who showed us the land and the lines. The next day we took our oxen, a bed and provisions to make improvements and build a house on it. In going to our land, before we found our land. About one hour before sunset we came upon the land. Now the first thing we had to do, we built a fire and made us a supper. Water for coffee we found ready in a pond. After we had taken our supper, we made ready for a sleeping place. For that we selected a big white tree, putting sticks and poles against that and covering it with prairie grass, putting grass and leaves into the hut and spreading it on the ground and spread our beds on it. We slept comfortably for we were very tired. We had a large fire built near the opening of the hut, near the white oak tree. After we had been sound asleep, the fire climbed up at the tree and had set the hut on fire, good luck that someone had awakened.

The next day we went to work in earnest to put up a small house or shanty as we may call it, about twenty feet square with a clapboard roof on it, caulking up the crevices with clay and made a door and chimney on it. The house was finished up and ready to move into which we did in a few days after. Then we went to clear some ground for us for a summer crop, such as corn, potatoes and all sort of vegetables. During winter and part of spring we had cleared up over seven acres of land. Then we bought us two milk cows and several hogs. Hogs will fatten in the woods, for there is plenty of mast for hots to fatten on, as acorns, hickory nuts, beech nuts and others; and for cows and cattle there is plenty of pasture more than they need and enough left over summer to do them over next winter; for there were no cattle to eat it over summer.

Land bought at one dollar and one quarter was not taxed before five years. Tax on cattle was twelve and one half cents each, on horses fifty cents each. Eggs cost five to six cents per dozen and butter cost from five to eight cents per pound. Coffee from ten to twenty cents. Dry-goods and clothing were dear. The woods and country around were full of game of all kinds and turkeys were so plentiful they could be seen almost any time when going into the woods. Many hunters made a living by hunting, the hindquarters of a deer brought from sixty to seventy-five cents, the forequarters of a deer twenty-five cents, and the hide sixty cents. In the summer of 1836, we two oldest boys went to work on the canal below Piqua. The wages were twenty-six dollars per month for twenty six working days. We also worked on the canal in the spring of 1837 at the same pay, when the canal below was finished. In 1838, work commenced.

## TAX RECORDS FROM OLD GERMANY

The following account of the RATERMAN family gives an idea of how estates started, names originated, and how property was taxed and measured in Germany, during our German ancestor's time.

The late Ben Raterman, of Sidney, is responsible for these records. After World War II, and during the occupation of Germany by foreign troops, he began a correspondence with Fr. Herrinbrook, who was the pastor at Bersenbrook, in Hanover. Where the Raterman family attended church, during the time they lived in Germany. Shortly after Ben's death in 1947, the following records were sent to Ben's family by the archivist of the church.

During the wars fought by Charlemagne, so much booty was collected, that he turned the land and tax collection rights over to the churches. After the Protestant Reformation, this right belonged to either the Catholic or Lutheran church, dependent upon its ruler's religion.

In this account note that the important item is the farm, not the people living on it. The name Raterman

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does not appear until 1599. During that time there were four changes in ownership, but the farm name of Raterdinck, remained the same. Also note the interchange of RATERMAN and Ratermann, with a Ratherman thrown in for good measure.

Note the various taxes: hearth, or smoke, inheritance, animal, land, pastor, caretaker, separate church orders, monthly, as well as rent and service required. The way they figured area in bushel seeds and malter is interesting, as well as the taxes paid in thalers or tolers worth $.72, reichsthaler - $1.00; groschen 1/3 of a thaler, and the pfennig 1/100 of a reichsthaler.

(1 Hectar equals approximately 2.471 acres. The land area was 9 malters x 2.471 acres for a total of 22.239 acres.)

Photo Copy from History of the Ratermann Family by Bernard J. Ratermann and The Rev. Albin H. Ratermann.

From the Keeper of the Archive — August 1947
Bersenbruck . Sud — 23 Uber Bramshe

**Sole Heir Ratermann, Thiene**

Credit Books of the Osnabruck Bishops
Heinrich von Holstein (years 1402 to 1404):

Henneke the child was bequeathed according to the right of the servant with the heirloom Raterdink in the farm community Thiene in Kirchspiel Alfhausen. (These heirlooms were properties which the Bishop as the owner gave to deserving members of his estate. Vg.) 28 January 1403?

---

Otto Von Hoya (1410-1424):

Arnold von Holsten was recompensed with the house of Wilhelm Ratinoh. 18 December 1412.

---

Johann von Diepholz (1424-1437):

Hinrich Goes is recompensed according to the right of the servant. . ." with Raterding zu Thiene Kirchspiel Alfhausen." (10 Jan. 1427?)

---

Heinrich von Moers (1442-1450):

Hinrich Goes has received according to the right of the servant. . . Raterding with all that belongs to it in Kirchspiel Alfhausen. (3 May 1442?)

---

Konrad von Diepholz (1445-1482)

Hamme zu Lobeck is bequeathed to the advantage of the church of Bersenbruck and of St. Vincent's with an heirloom called Raterding with all that belongs to it in Kirchspiel Alfausen in the farming community of Thiene. Hinrich Goes at this same time declined it in the presence of Dethard von Wedigen and Heinrich Guldentunge on Wednesday after Christ's Ascent to Heaven in the year (14) 64 (according to the right of the servant). (16 May 1464)

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In Section 88 No. 3 of the state archive Osnabruck which gives an overall view into the relatively high number of cattle of the estates, the estate Ratermann is according to my reckoning not positively identifiable.

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Section 89 No. 1a: Head-Tax-Register of 1512: Gosschalk Raterdinck . . . five persons? (Gottschalk R. has to pay a head tax for five persons).

---

Section 88 No. 16: Hearth tax of 1599

| | |
|---|---|
| "Johann Raterman | 2 thaler; 0 groschen; 0 pfennig |
| wife | 1 thaler; 0 groschen; 0 pfennig |
| servant Husselten Mann | 0 thaler; 4 groschen; 0 pfennig |
| wife | 2 groschen; |

Section 88 No. 34: Inheritance tax register of 1631:
(house or estate tax register Vg.): "Johan Raterman burned up

| | |
|---|---|
| rented | 3 thaller; 0 groschen; 0 pfennig |
| house | 0 thaler; 10 groschen; 6 pfennig |

(The inherited house is evidently as a result of the 30 Years War burned down: the owner, therefore, instead of the full tax of 6 thaler, was levied only 3 thaler tax).

---

Section 88 No. 54: Livestock tax register of 1655:
"Raterman: 3 horses,

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 pony, 2 cows, | |
| 3 oxen, 3 pigs, 10 sheep | 4 thaler; 0 groschen; 3 pfennig |
| Personal stock: 2 horses, | |
| 2 cows, 4 oxen, 1 pig | 2 thaler; 17 groschen; 9 pfennig |
| Baking house: 1 cow, | |
| 2 oxen | 0 thaller; 16 groschen; 0 pfennig |

(The number of animals must be considered as relatively high; the personal stock are the quarters of the owner who had given the estate over to his successor; in the baking house the bread was baked; it also served as rent house).

---

Section 88 No. 59: Animal tax register of 1659:
"Ratermann: 5 horses,

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 pony, 2 cows, 4 oxen, | |
| 3 pigs, 11 sheep | 5 thaler; 16 groschen; 0 pfennig |
| Personal stock: 2 horses, | |
| 3 cows, 1 oxen, 2 pigs | 2 thaler; 17 groschen; 9 pfennig |
| Baking house: 1 cow, 1 ox | 0 thaler; 12 groschen; 6 pfennig |

---

The same tax was indicated by Section 88 No. 54 live stock tax register of 1661.

---

Section 88 No. 78,I: Explanation of occupancy 1664:
Raterman: Inherited estate — 1 male heir
Personal stock — 1 attendant
Baking house: no man over 16 years
Barn: 2 men over 16 years

---

Section 88 No. 72: Livestock register of 1666:

| | |
|---|---|
| Raterman | 2 thaler; 18 groschen; 6 pfennig |
| Personal stock | 1 thaler; 5 groschen; 0 pfenig |

(In the baking house and in the barn there is evidently no stock Vg.)

---

Section 88 No. 75,II: land and hearth tax of the 28th of February 1667: "Raterman with personal stock and barn, 1 main hearth and two secondary hearths; 14 bushels seed personal land at one-half thaler; 28 bushels seed personal land at one-quarter thaler; yearly rent; 3 cartload hay; two and one-half bushel garden; (the bushel seed is literally translated from seed/"Scheffelsaat", which is approximately equal to an area of 833 square meters.)

---

Section 88 No. 82: Tax register of 1667:
Raterman — Personal belonging to the cloister Bersenbruck.

---

Section 88 No. 78,I: Revised tax register of 1667 (25 August): "Raterman — Class VI — 3 thaler tax" (Class VI is the second best group since the division of the local estates are Class V to Class VIII Vg.)

---

Section 88 No. 94: Smoke tax register of 1672:

| | |
|---|---|
| "Raterman residence | 2 thaler; 0 groschen; 6 pfennig |
| Personal residence: Burned down, will now be occupied again and starting with April 1674 | |
| assessed with | 0 thaler; 16 groschen; 9 pfennig |
| The barn half rebuilt | 0 thaler; 10 groschen; 6 pfennig |

Presently barn occupied by a poor blind woman tax free.
The baking house occupied by pauper tax free.

---

Section 88 No. 82: Head tax description December 1707:
"Ratermann: 1 mother; 1 owner; 1 wife;

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 servant; 1 maid | 1 thaler; 7 groschen; head tax |

---

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Household: 2 men, 2 women,
1 adult son — 1 thaler; 17 groschen; 16 pfennig head tax

---

Section 88 No. 109: smoke and livestock tax register of 1709
Ratermann:

| | |
|---|---|
| Main house | 2 th.; 0 gr.; 0 pf.; smoke tax |
| Personal house | 0 th.; 15 gr.; 9 pf.; smoke tax |
| Barn | 0 th.; 10 gr.; 6 pf.; smoke tax |
| Barn | 0 th.; 10 gr.; 6 pf.; smoke tax |
| Month's tax | 2 th.; 15 gr.; 9 pf.; smoke tax |

---

Section No. 82: Tax register of October 1711:
"Ratermann: Personal belongings to the
cloister Bersenbruck — 2 th.; 19 gr.; 5 pf. monthly tax "

---

Section 88 No. 169: Tax and hearthstead register of 1776.

| Raterman: | smoke tax |
|---|---|
| Main house | 2 thaler; 0 groschen; 0 pfennig |
| Personal house | 15 groschen; 9 pfennig |
| Barn | 10 groschen; 6 pfennig |
| Baking house | 10 groschen; 6 pfennig |

---

Section 88 No. 236: Register of estates year 1803:
Raterman:
5 maltersaat tilled land
1 maltersaat 3 bushel seed
grazing land — 0 maltersaat; 9 bushel seed 2/4 holzung

(1 malter is equal to 12 bushel seed which is equal to 833 square meters; the later large size of the estate was due to the division of the former commonwealth-owned Mark Thiene).

---

Section 92 No. 5: Measurement and assessment register of 1717-23.
4) Full heir Jurgen Rathermann.
Personal — To the church of Bersenbruck

Garden land:
house garden
personal garden
barn garden
baking house garden

Middle Land:
2 at Norter Esch d. Hahlbreden
2 at Norter Esch d. Hahlbreden behind the garden
1 in the Depen Flag
2 great esch at the Wallriesen
1 fine Klausz acre ditto
3 ditto fine Flag on the Wiemarke
3 on the Sprickelriese
2 Sprickelriesse ? HL
1 long ? at the Depeu Road
2 at Helmans Halt Camp
2 hinter Berrischen Camp
The Camp at the House
Addition at the house with extra grazing land

Grazing land:
His pasture at the Tiener Crock
Pasture and forest land: Tea Norter
grazing area
The Erve grazing land
The Camp at the house grazing land
The barn garden addition grazing land
The garden at the house

Summation: 6 malt. 11 bushel seed, 1/4 and 2 becher

---

Assessment: No. 4: Jurgen Ratermann, full heir personal to the church of Bersenbruck, smoke tax. 2 thaler from the personal estate 15 groschen, 9 pfennig: monthly tax 2 thaler, 19 groschen, 5 pfennig; rent 4 malter rye and 1 malt Habern, 1 bushel seed richterkorn, 24 Voigt sheaf; pastor corn 1 bushel seed rye, 1 bushel seed oats, 1 bread; kuster korn 1 bushel seed rye and 4 sheafs, 4 times each year a service may money of 1 reichsthaler; and canon 5 groschen.

Register 100A, I, Office Bersenbruck, November 29:
Measurement of 1788:

| | Malt | Bushel Seed | Square Acre | Acreage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| In the Great | 23 | | 50 | |
| Esch IV | 55 | | 50 | |
| | 129 | | 9 | |
| | 32 | | 33 | |
| | 33 | | 35 | |
| Giesbolds | 55 | 7 | 23 | |
| Kamp | 59 | | 21 | |
| | 73 | 3 | 2 | |
| | 76 | 4 | 8 | |
| | 79 | 11 | 47 | |
| | 94 | 2 | 33 | |
| Pastures | | | | Garden |
| Wall Law | 107 | 1 | 8 | Homestead |
| Upper Esh | 115 | 1 | | Acreage |
| | 123 | | 38 | |
| | 127 | 5 | 38 | |
| | | 6 | 20 | |
| | 30 | 7 | | |
| Easter Esh | 18 | 2 | 28 | |
| | 38 | 3 | 52 | Pasture |
| | 39 | 9 | 40 | Acreage |
| | 40 | 2 | 24 | Pasture |
| | 41 | 4 | 25 | Homestead |
| | 55 | 7 | 41 | Pasture |
| | 1 | 4 | 7 | Garden |
| | | | 10 | Homestead |
| Easter Esh XVII, i. 2: — | | | —malt 2 bushel seed 53 square acres garden; 36 square acres pasture | |
| Pasture XVIII, i 8: | 7 | 9 | 26 | pasture |
| | 1 Malt | 103 | 715 | |

The size of the full inherited estate amounted, therefore,: 9 malter of bushel seed, 13 square acre
(1 malter = 12 bushel seed; 1 bushel seed = 54 square acres)
(Square Perch); 1 bushel seed = approx. 833 square meters
1 Malter equals approximately one Hectar land area.

---

Hesepe uber Braunsche, Sept. 1947
sig. G. Varvic, Rector.

## FORT LORAMIE AREA NAMES AND EUROPEAN LOCATION LISTINGS

The following compilation is a listing of the European places of origin or some of the people of the Fort Loramie area. The names and places have been taken from various sources. The gathering of this type of information has been and is an ongoing process involving years of research. Many times towns or areas have been misspelled or come from a nearly illegible source. Town locations have been gleaned from U.S. census records, funeral (memorial) cards, family bibles, family histories, biographies, church records, letters, Father Bigot's 1874 Parish Census, immigration lists, emigration lists, newspaper obituary notices, and other sources.

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The listing includes "new" names, "old" names, and names that are not easily recognized as "Fort Loramie Names". Some families no longer live in the community, other names are maiden names of wives of some of the residents.

Family names are sometimes found in listings of more than one town or area for several reasons. Sometimes people in the same family were born, lived or worked in more than one town or area in Europe and at various times different places of origin were listed. Families with the same name but seemingly unrelated to each other may have settled here. Sometimes the discrepancy comes from a mistake by the person taking or giving information.

Names or places that appear with a ? behind them indicate that there are reasons to believe that a person is from an area but it is not proven or that the spelling of a name or place is wrong.

The names of towns and villages are in small type. Government areas, or government districts, A. = Amt REG. = Regierungsbezirk and Countries are in capital letters. Other abbreviations used are BAD. = Baden, BAV. = Bavaria, BEL. = Belgium, FRA. = France, HAN. = Hanover, HOL. = Holland, HOHEN. = Hohenzollern, IRE. = Ireland, LUX. = Luxemburg, OLD. = Oldenburg, SWITZ. = Switzerland, WESTPH. = Westphalia, WURT. = Wurtemburg.

The area of the Alsace is listed in several ways as Elsass Lothringen, Germany, Alsace Loraine, France, UN. AL. = Unter Alsace or OB. AL. = Ober Alsace. LOTH = Lothringen.

An astrisk, *, behind a place name means that the it is unclear if the place named refers to a town, region or both.

Town names that have no area or region listed with them are located in Germany.

| European Location | Name |
|---|---|
| Alfhausen | Meisterman |
| | Raterman |
| ALSACE | Courtade |
| | Kruse |
| Altenoythe | Sprock |
| Amsterdam, HOL. | Weise |
| Ankum | Clune |
| | Dressman |
| | Dwenger |
| | Fullenkamp |
| | Helmsing |
| | Vonderheide |
| Aschaffensburg, BAV. | Fleckenstein |
| BAD. | Hazler |
| | Pfefferle |
| | Praestei |
| | Schwarz |
| | Siegel |
| | Stephen |
| | Zimmerman |
| Bahlen | Bramlage |
| | Middendorf |
| Bahwinkel, A. LINGEN | Lammers |
| Bakum | Hesselfeld |
| | Meinerding |
| | Menke |
| | Ording |
| | Vehorn |
| BAV. | Bauer |
| | Daniel |
| | Krug |
| | Overbeck |
| BEL. | Fegg |
| | Neuberg |
| | Schuler |
| Bergen | Grau |
| Bersenbruck | Mescher |
| | Schmidt |
| | Wissman |
| | Holdheide |
| Boekel, OLD. | Thobe |
| Bremen? | Willman |
| Broglein, A. LINGEN | Gels |
| Burglinster LUX. | Niedercorn |
| Cappeln | Meyer |
| | Otten |
| | Sommer |
| | Thobe |
| Coesfeld | Riethman |
| County Sligo IRE. | McGowan |
| Damme | Ahrns |
| | Arkenberg |
| | Beckman |
| | Bergman |
| | Boerger |
| | Broerman |
| | Bruns |
| | Buessing |
| | Emken |
| | Geise |
| | Lange |
| | Liening |
| | Luebke |
| | Mescher |
| | Meyer |
| | Moorman |
| | Pille |
| | Poeppelman |
| | Puthoff |
| | Rottinghaus |
| | Schmiesing |
| | Severin |
| | Stricker |
| | Surman |
| | Tangeman |
| | Vonderheide |
| | Weubker ? |
| Dingle, OLD> | Thobe |
| Dinklage | Barlage |
| | Bornhorst |
| | Hilgefort |
| | Middendorf |
| | Seger |
| | Seiters |
| | Vonderheide |
| Emsteck | Meyer |
| England | Hall |
| | Martin |
| | Short |
| Essen | Albers |
| Ettlingen, BAD. | Lump |
| FRANCE | Carity |
| | Jardot |
| | Pilliod |
| | Wallion |
| Frankfort | Faulstich |
| Frierstein | Borchers |
| Fulda | Schuler |
| Garrel | Dress |
| | Wendeln |
| Geisslingen | Albeitz |
| Greven | Wendker |
| Hagenau, U . - AL. | Lehman |
| Hamburg | Indereieden |
| HAN. | Farno/Vernot |
| | Imholt |
| | Knuefner |
| | Mundorf |
| | Otte |
| | Rotert |
| | Smakes |
| | Tapke |
| | Therling |
| | Vernot/Farno |
| | Wachsmuth |
| | Wilke-Mundorf |
| | Wilke/Wilken |
| | Zurline |
| Handorf | Ahrns |
| | Lehmkuhl |
| Harderberg | Ernst |
| HESSE | Wolf |
| HESSE - DARMSTADT | Anthony |
| HOHEN. | Benanzer |
| | Locker |
| | Meyer |
| | Reiber |
| | Schafer |
| | Wolf |
| HOL. | Vanderhorst |
| Holdorf | Barlage |
| | Lange |
| | Schlarman |
| IRELAND | Quinlin |
| | Walkup |
| ITALY | Anthony |
| Kappelsen | Kirner |
| Karlsruhe | August |
| Kettenkamp | Bertke |
| Kirchzarten | Goldschmidt |
| Klesburg | Muller |
| Kloster Lage | Goettmoeller |
| Laer | Paul/Pauwel |
| Langforden | Kloene |
| | Meyer |
| | Surman |
| Ligsdorf?, OB. - AL. | Gast |
| LIPPE - DETMOLD | Henke |
| | Schlater |
| | Weise ? |
| Lohne | Bramlage |
| | Hoying |
| | Wehrman |
| Lonigen | Sturwald |
| | Wolke |
| Loningen | Aselage |
| LOTH. | Maseran |
| | Schevene |
| Lutten | Timmerman |
| LUX. | Lauterbur |
| | Schilz |
| | Schuler |
| Luxenburg, BEL. | Hummer |
| Mengen, WURT. | Wehinger |
| Meppen | Mueller |
| Merpsein | Stackler |
| Merzen | Schmidt |
| Mettingen | Overbeck |
| Neudorf | Bauman ? |
| | Bodenmueller ? |
| | Bollheimer ? |
| | Gaier |
| | Kirsch ? |
| | Kistner ? |
| | Notheis |
| | Siegel ? |

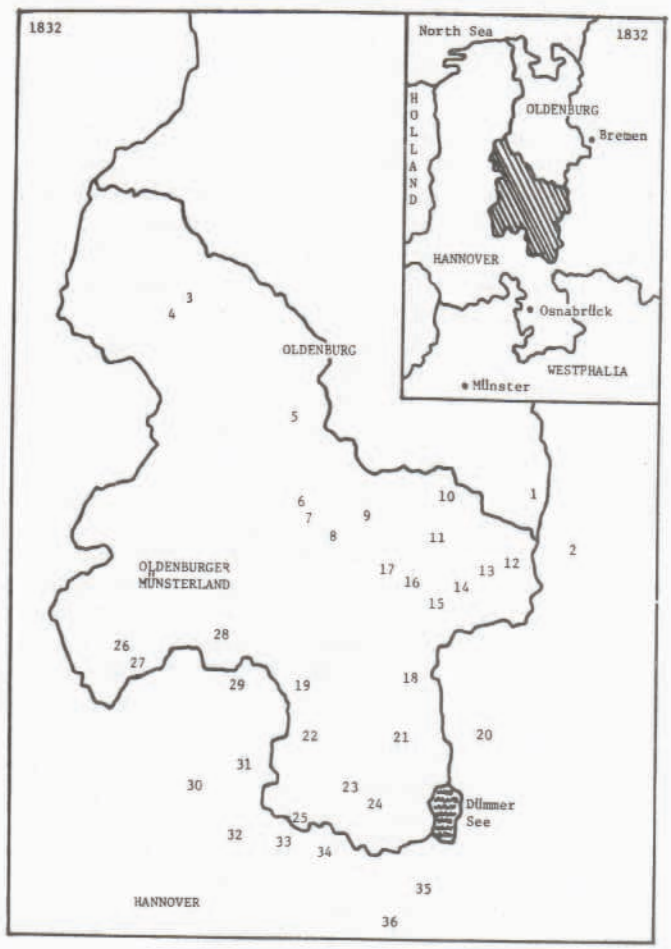
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| European Location | Name |
|---|---|
| | Wilhelm ? |
| | Zimmerman ? |
| Neuenkirchen | Boeke |
| | Boerger |
| | Brandewie |
| | Hinders |
| | Holdheide |
| | Inderrieden |
| | Vogelsang, ? |
| | Vondrele |
| | Winner |
| Nussloch | Lehmkuhl |
| | Reichert |
| | Wieman |
| OBER - ALSACE | Linder |
| Ochtrup | Gerling |
| OLD. | Kingel/Kenkel |
| | Klocker |
| | Meyer |
| | Prenger |
| | Rethman |
| | Scherberding |
| | Willenberg |
| Oldorf | Arling |
| | Brokamp |
| | Geise |
| | Lange |
| Opperhausen, THUR. | Freytag |
| Osede | Lang |
| Osnabruck | Koverman |
| | Schmitmeyer |
| Osnabruk | Hinders |
| Ostbevern | Bensman |
| | Eilerman |
| | Goehr |
| | Haselhorst |
| | Hoelscher |
| | Holthaus |
| | Krampe |
| | Middendorf |
| | Pelster |
| | Sherman |
| | Suedheus |
| | Vogelsang, ? |
| | Wattercutter |
| Oythe | Ahler |
| | Albers |
| | Frilling |
| | Quartman |
| Ozenrath | Toller |
| Reasta, HAN. | Luttmer |
| REG. DUSSELDORF, | Rosengarten |
| Remagen | Stang |
| RHEIN * | Mehl |
| RHEINE * | Tostige |
| Rheine* | Braun |
| | Heine |
| | Hut |
| | Lem |
| Riesenback | Heilers |
| Rust, BAD. | Utz |
| Saarbrucken | Brucken |
| Schwagstorf | Pleiman |
| | Sanders |
| Steinfeld | Barhorst |
| | Bergman |
| Stodtlin, WURT. | Rieger |
| Straelen | Rosengarten |
| SWITZ. | Kemper ? |
| | Nunlist |
| Telgte | Schemmel |
| Twistringen | Beckman |
| | Buschmann |
| | Pelster |
| | Wilkens |
| UNTER - ALSACE | Kessler |
| | Zircher |
| Untergrombach | Biederman |
| Vechta | Broering |
| | Busse |
| | Gudenkauf |
| Vorden | Schulze |
| Weissenburg, HAN. | Danzing/Danzig |
| Wessum | Rose |
| WESTPH. | Dreses |
| | Mergentrup |
| | Tieges |
| WURT. | Laup |
| Wurzburg, BAV. | Reuss |
| Zweibrucken | Barnhard |
| | Hoffman |

To the best of our knowledge this is an accurate account of this information. Compiled and submitted by Rita Hoying and Karen Anthony.

The numbered location of these places can be located on the map of Oldenburgisches Munsterland found below.

1 Wildeshausen
2 Twistringen
3 Altenoythe
4 Friesoythe
5 Garrel
6 Cloopenburg
7 Craplpendorf
8 Calppeln
9 Emsteck
10 Visbek
11 Langforden
12 Goldensted
13 Lutten
14 Oythe
15 Vechta
16 Bakum
17 Vestrup
18 Lohne
19 Dinklage
20 Diepholz
21 Steinfeld
22 Holdorf
23 Handorf
24 Damme
25 Neuenkirchen
26 Loningen
27 Hukelrieden
28 Essen
29 Quakenbruck
30 Ankum
31 Bersenbruck
32 Alfhausen
33 Kloster Lage
34 Vorden
35 Hunteburg
36 Ostercappeln




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## IMPRESSIONS OF GERMANY TODAY

*Written by Francis Urban Puthoff*
*Great Grandson of Bernhard Kleine Putthoff*

I remember the death of my grandfather, Frank (Francis) Puthoff when I was seven years old. Since I was his first grandchild and was named after him, he was quite proud of me. Before his death on June 6, 1929, he made me come into his room, kneel at his bedside to make two promises - one, to always be honest, and two, to remain in the Catholic faith. I always prayed a lot for him after that, and my curiosity a year or two later made me ask my father (Bernard) about his grandfather, Bernhard Klein Putthoff.

I asked my father where his grandfather was born, and he said, "not too far from Damme". He smiled and told me a story about Damme and I said, "some day I would like to go there". He said, "Francis, I believe that is not possible". The story about Damme always facinated me. I did not forget it and later in life it seemed more important to me.

My pre-first grade German served me well for when I volunteered in 1942 for the service, I made known the fact that I could speak and understand some German. To this day, I believe that is why I was sent to the South Pacific.

Upon leaving the service in 1946, I was promised, as a Reservist, a free trip at age 60 by the Air Force to anywhere in the world. At age 60, I decided to take advantage of this opportunity and since I had been working on the Puthoff family heritage, this seemed like an excellent idea in order to do further research and to go to Damme to see whether the Puthoff's were still there. My first two attempts at free rides from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base failed as active duty personnel had first choice. My wife, Freda, finally made arrangements to fly to Luxemburg by Icelandair. Prior to this I had taken a short course in Conversational German.

During my initial research, I found the Bernhard Putthoff birth certificate on record in St. Victor's Church, Damme, West Germany. Also ship records where Heinrich Puthoff left Germany at the same time that Franz Stallo and Caspar Boerger left. The 1850 census records of Mercer County show Heinrich Putthoff and also Bernhard Putthoff, age 25. I believe Bernhard came in 1836 as a hired hand working on the farm for Heinrich Putthoff in Mercer County on Kremer Road. The Heinrich Putthoff Century Farm is still there. Heinrich married a widow Goeke who had two children. The daughter was named Elizabeth. Bernhard Kleine Putthoff married Elizabeth Goeke in about 1856. The present brother, John Kleine Putthoff, who is buried in the old Fort Loramie Cemetery also came at the same time.

Bernhard and Elizabeth had several children, their oldest, John, was born in 1859 followed by Mary, Rose, Elizabeth, Anna, and Frank (Francis). They also had one child named Heinrich who was kicked by a horse at age 10 and died.

I arrived in Luxemburg on Monday, May 17, 1982 at 12:00 Noon, rented a car and proceeded to travel the unknown. On Tuesday, May 18, I was somewhat apprehensive and frightened by the many unknowns, and as a result, careful attention was given so that this traveler would not get lost!

Why did I want to go to Damme? My answer was partly out of curiosity and partly out of respect for the terrible six weeks ordeal our forefathers spent in travel to emigrate to the new land. It took 15 hours by plane to Luxemburg and that seemed so long, but nothing compared with their trip.

After leaving Luxemburg, I drove from noon until 5:00 P.M. across the border to Cologne, Germany. I went to the tourist center for information on rooms and was directed to take a bus to Bonn (the capital of West Germany), which took 1-1/2 hours, to seek shelter at the Reingold Inn on the Rhine. The farmers' homes were neat. There were many barges and pleasure cruises on the Rhine. Konrad Adenauer's residence in Bonn was pointed out. Being plenty tired this first day, I went to bed at 10:30. The lodging was not too restful - the bed was hard, the water cold, and noise from the train every one-half hour kept me awake much of the night.

On Wednesday morning, May 19, I gave serious thought about going home, but as it turned out, this was the only uncomfortable night. Up at 5:10 A.M., paid my $22 bill including breakfast, and started the 1-1/2 hour ride back to Cologne.

Believe it or not, I lost my car in Cologne. I had parked it where I thought was East of the great Cathedral which I thought was sufficient direction for a landmark. As it turned out, I spent over one hour looking for it until St. Anthony came to my rescue! What a relief!

The trip on Autobahn #1 was a great 3 hour ride from Cologne to Damme with speed limits of 60 to 100 mph in three lanes - I was careful.

Upon arrival in Damme in the afternoon, my first stop was at St. Victor Church where I visited with the pastor. He arranged for two days and two nights at Hotel Regina in Damme.

Later, same afternoon, I decided to drive to Osterfeine, 5 KM east of Damme. I stopped at the church which was so beautiful (like Fort Loramie, but one-third of the size), gothic architecture and flying buttresses style. It was such a happy trip to Osterfeine, and I soon found myself beside the church in front of the stone memorial honoring the World War II sol-

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diers from that area. Four young Putthoff men from the Osterfeine community had given their lives. That was an extremely painful experience for me to know my relatives had suffered so much.

Six high school students were coming from school so I took a picture, asked about family names, and to my surprise, five of the six had family names like Fort Loramie families. They directed me to the Putthoff families one-third mile away, so I visited Heinrich Putthoff and got my first German conversation going. He invited me in for cookies and coffee and asked me to come again Friday afternoon to talk. Heinrich says that all Putthoff's in Osterfeine are related. He is an egg salesman, has several trucks and 10,000 chickens right on his farm. His place has been in the family as long as he can remember. He, his wife, and daughter-in-law were very nice.

In the early evening, I drove to Bernard Putthoff's on Langenteiler Road, introduced myself, was graciously received, took a picture of him and his wife. They invited me in for more cookies and coffee and showed me the beautifully sculptured home on the living room wall of the Kleine-Putthoff's where Bernhard (my great grandfather) was born. They have two sons and one daughter. They arranged to have another sculpture in wood made of the same home like they had on the wall for 300 marks, so I asked that this be done and it now hangs in the home of my brother, Donald, of St. Patrick's.

After spending an hour at Bernhard's, I went next door to August Putthoff's home. He had four brothers who came to America in the '20's (California), only one of them now living, Frank, who lives in northern California near Oregon. August had been a soldier in the German Army, was captured by the Russians and kept in a Siberian concentration camp from 1942 to 1947. He talked about the World War II bombings in Bremen and Hamburg but said there were none in Osterfeine and Damme. He has a son named Francis, and also three living sisters who met me there for Sunday dinner.

In the early evening I went to Dummer Sea which resembles Lake Loramie and Lehmkuhl's Landing, and counted 50 yachts and 50 sailboats. From there, I went to mass in Damme (Ascension Day) and there were many people at church. Then on to the Dandy Disco to watch the young 18 to 20 year olds. There I met a young man, Rainer Scheper, a banker's son, who wants me to be his pen pal. It was a long, tiring but exciting day, and I went to bed at 9:15 P.M.

This morning - Thursday, May 20 - a German breakfast consisting of cheese, pepper bologna, rye bread, raisin bread, one hard boiled egg, jelly, a good pat of butter, and plenty of coffee. After this, I stopped in at the Rathaus Restaurant and copied names from the Damme telephone book from there and different villages nearby of people with the same names of many that I knew during my lifetime in Ohio.

Later on, I decided to go to Steinfeld, Holdorf, and Holthausen, Germany (small villages) and all within a few kilometers apart. Also drove to Vechta to meet relatives of Ambrose Broering (Heinrich Broering). Lohne and Steinfeld have many Holthaus names. I took a picture of the Holthaus Appliance Store along the main street in Vechta; also the old Holthaus Farm at Holthausen. The main building at Lohne has a name of Anton Hoying in stone. There were eighteen (18) Broering families in Vechta. They are large farmers and grain dealers. The pastor at St. George knew them well. The Middendorf's live in Holdorf.

I came back to Damme in late afternoon and visited all the graves at St. Victor Catholic cemetery. There are no other churches except Catholic in Damme, Steinfeld, Lohne, Osterfeine, Vechta, Holdorf. The farmers have nice homes, all the buildings are brick as well as the barns. Crops looked super in the spring and the animals were well cared for. There were many of the same names in the Damme Cemetery as are in Fort Loramie and Minster cemeteries, but no Putthoff's.

In the early evening, I drove to Osterfeine cemetery and found the graves of the Putthoff families. There are no Stallo graves in this cemetery. The Stallo grave is in the Damme Cemetery. Next, back to Damme for dinner and, by chance, met Rainer Scheper again. He is 13 years old, has one older brother but no sisters. They live above the bank as do many business men in town who have their businesses on the street levels, and homes upstairs. All are absolutely neat and clean and well organized. Maybe that's why the town looks so clean and inviting. Now,I am ready for another great day tomorrow.

Today, Friday, May 21, I visited Holdorf to check out the Middendorf's. They are farmers and large grain elevator people. I also saw some Holthaus graves, bought cards to send, and made an appointment with Der Burgemeister of Damme for next Tuesday at 4:00 at his office in the Rathaus.

There was a funeral mass at 2:00 in Osterfeine and cemetery service for an Otto Lemkuhl which I attended. The men and women from the church parish all dress in black. They go to the cemetery first and then to the church. It was impressive. Death is certain. Black, to me, seems to give respect by the parish community to its deceased member.

After the funeral, I returned to the Heinrich Putthoff Egg Farm. They again had cookies and coffee waiting. Heinrich suggested I get some ancestry information from his wife. My opinion is that some of his

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family a few generations ago settled in Cincinnati and Maria Stein.

Next back to Damme where I met the banker's son, Rainer Scheper, again and he informed me that his father had purchased a bicycle for his birthday today so the bicycle had a birthday also. Later I walked to the Herr Steindebeck farm and he showed me his operation of 1,000 Yorkshire fattening hogs. (By the way, Rainer had studied English, and could communicate fairly well.)

The owner of the Alte Borse Gasthaus in Osterfeine helped me understand the area and the people a lot.

It is now Saturday, May 22, and I am still in Osterfeine. About 11:00 A.M., I visited the widow of another Bernard Putthoff and their children, for they had invited me for lunch. They showed me their eight milk cows, three fattening calves, and then the carpenter shop where cabinets, windows, and doors were made. Bernard had been an exceptional carpenter as many cabinets were sculptured by hand and chisel. He died at the age of 52 of lung cancer a couple of months before my visit. Bernard, the son, and his mother invited me again to stay for dinner. The younger Bernard's wife is a teacher and they have three children. Herbert, his brother, also lives here and ate with us - he also has three children.

After dinner, they showed me their garden with Kohlrabi, cabbage, potatoes, peas, and carrots; also their shed for machinery for the farm, barn for the cattle, and a field of maize.

The widow's name was Hedwig and she lived in her home along with the two married sons and families. The barn adjoined to the house, and was very old.

In the evening, I went back to Osterfeine and to the cemetery. There I met Julius Krone, a farmer, his wife, and one daughter. They wanted to talk and to tell me about their relatives in Kansas. They were so enthusiastic that we talked about 1-1/2 hrs. in the cemetery and invited me to come to their home for dinner the next day, Sunday.

On Sunday, I ate dinner with the Julius Krone family in Haverbeck - wife, Adele, son Julius, Jr., Hildegarde and Renate, all teenagers, and Stephan and young Bernard, Jr. They are a happy family and do much laughing. Hildegarde speaks some English and that helped. Father liked to talk and mother was exceptionally nice.

On May 24, Monday, Herr Krone invited me to go on a tour to Bergfeine where the Gr. Puthoff and Kl. Puthoff's had lived. The Kl. Puthoff home was 1/2 Km. on the north part of the 51 hectars. J. B. Winterman lived in the old house and the Gr. Puthoff's sold to the Kl. Puthoff's (then Winterman) and then to present owners.

Julius Krone took me to Herr Reinerding farm who owns the Puthoff property now. We took a picture of the burned out house of Maria Angele Puthoff (who married a Winterman but retained the name 'Putthoff'). Herr Schnittker, a neighbor, scooped ground and stones to put on great grandfather's grave at St. Patricks, Ohio!

In the evening, I met Franz Kuhlman, who owns a Motel-Restaurant outside Damme, and his elderly mother at her home. She had been a school teacher and the conversation centered around the area and experiences of the past sixty years. Julius Thaman was also present - he planned to come to an Oktoberfest in Minster, Ohio.

Later in the evening, I visited the Bernhard and August Putthoff families again. August gave me his pocket knife, and his sister, Augusta, gave three beautiful handkerchiefs. They told me about the Osterfeine Community Festival held in June in which the whole community takes part. In the evening I went to the Alte Borse (Bar and Restaurant plus Gasthaus). Five German young men sang me some German songs, I danced the German Polka with the bartender's wife. They enjoyed that but I think they really enjoyed my cowboy songs. What a treat! It was a good day.

On Tuesday, May 25, Franz Kuhlman, (whom I mentioned above), drove me to the Kloppenberg Museum. He had been a former prisoner of war (WW II) in the U. S. (Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Massachusetts) and spoke very good English. He was a very learned man and knew his European history quite well. He explained the meaning of many of the family names in that area. He also told me about the rise of the Nazis under Hitler, when about 10% of the population were Nazi, another 40%, mostly youth, were educated to be followers, 10% were actively opposed, while the remaining 40% were against the Nazis but had to remain silent, or else be persecuted.

The villages are close together and the village and the largest farm usually have the same name. Which came first one cannot tell.

In the 1930's, a farmer, Herr Ortman, was sent to the concentration camp for opposing the Nazis. Also, another farmer, Herr Nieberding opposed the Nazis and sold his farm near Vechta and moved to Maryville, Kansas. These are only a couple of instances. Herr Kuhlman's sister went to jail for 30 days for speaking out against the Nazis but was finally freed when a friend later testified to the SS troops that she did not.

He told me many other interesting facts about the people and the government, etc.

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It is now Wednesday, May 26, and time to leave Osterfeine in preparation for my return flight. I was driving toward Muenster when at the turnoff on Autobahn #1, I met a young German soldier, Joe Kleine, Age 22, who was on leave and going to Frankfurt to visit his parents. After getting to know him a little, I allowed him to drive my car and got a trip I'll never forget! 120 mph (200 KM on the car speedometer). He stopped with me and wanted to show me Marbury Castle and the college town. Lodging this evening at Hotel Ernst near Frankfurt. We talked about the village clock which shows the phases of the moon at all times and small people who come out of the clock at intervals with greetings. We talked about Black Forest clocks, Bavarian trips, politics, war and peace. His father has a Doctor of Engineering degree and they lived in the U.S. for five years after the war so we could converse in English. He also was quite an astronomer with a telescope in his own back yard, and his wife was very charming.

The type of architecture around Marburg is called "Fachwashkhaus". Gold etchings with words of wisdom adorn many houses. This is an example of one such verse:

The jewelry of this house is its cleanliness.
The spirit of this house is its religion.
The luck of this house is contentment.

It is now Thursday, May 27, after a good night's rest in Hotel Ernst. After about a one hour drive, I arrived in Koblenz and took the ski lift overlooking Koblenz on top of the mountain fortress. Here one sees the ships of various sorts coming together at the point of the Rhine and Mosel Rivers. It was very beautiful.

In the museum at Koblenz were such things as (1) evolution of the grain elevator, (2) the windmill and grinding grain, (3) evolution of the printing press and printed word, (4) evolution of the scythe - grain binder - threshing machine to the present combine, and (5) evolution of small boats to small vessels to present transport ships.

All the information is so useful for understanding how all became easier for a better life. We have so much to be thankful for since our background is rooted in prior history which helps make our present day American standard of living possible.

After enjoying the beautiful scenery of the Rhine and Mosel Rivers, I left from Koblenz to Trier (about 2 hours) up the Moselle River. The scenery was so beautiful with grape vineyards to the top of the mountain, 800 feet high from river's edge developed over 800 years. What work!! Some of the best wines in the world come from this area.

Again I picked up some hitchhikers - a young man from London on honeymoon with his French wife. The encounter was delightful. They were going to Metz, France, about 25 miles from Luxemburg. He drove my car so again I had a chauffer.

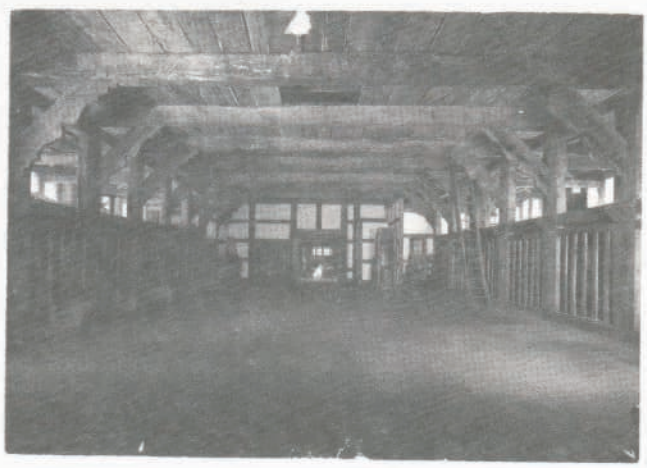
This evening I visited Luxemburg central city, then back to the Hotel Sheraton in preparation for a good night's sleep and return trip.

On Friday, May 28, I had breakfast in a French Restaurant at the Hotel Sheraton which was served with class, after which I drove to the Airport where I turned in the car rental and awaited the 2:30 departure to New York, Pittsburgh, and then Dayton.

The vacation was so very beautiful, the people were all so very good, helpful, pleasant, and friendly.



This is an aerial view of farmland around Steinfeld near Vechta and Damme. It really is not too much different from the Fort Loramie-St. Patrick's area.



1800's The inside of a barn-home in Damme. W. Germany.

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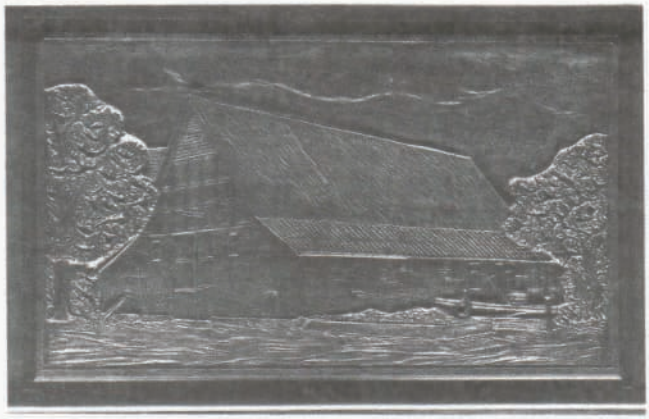


s built in about 1857 by Bernhard (Kleine) Puth
vas added later by Bernhard's son, Frank, about

This original log home at St. Patrick's. with cellar. was built about 1857 by Bernhard (Kleine) Puthoff. first generation German-American. The addition on the left was added later by his son. Frank. in about 1902. The home was later razed as a result of tornado damage in 1965 and replaced with a new house. This Twentieth Century Farm is now owned by Donald T. Puthoff. great grandson of Bernhard (Kleine) Puthoff.

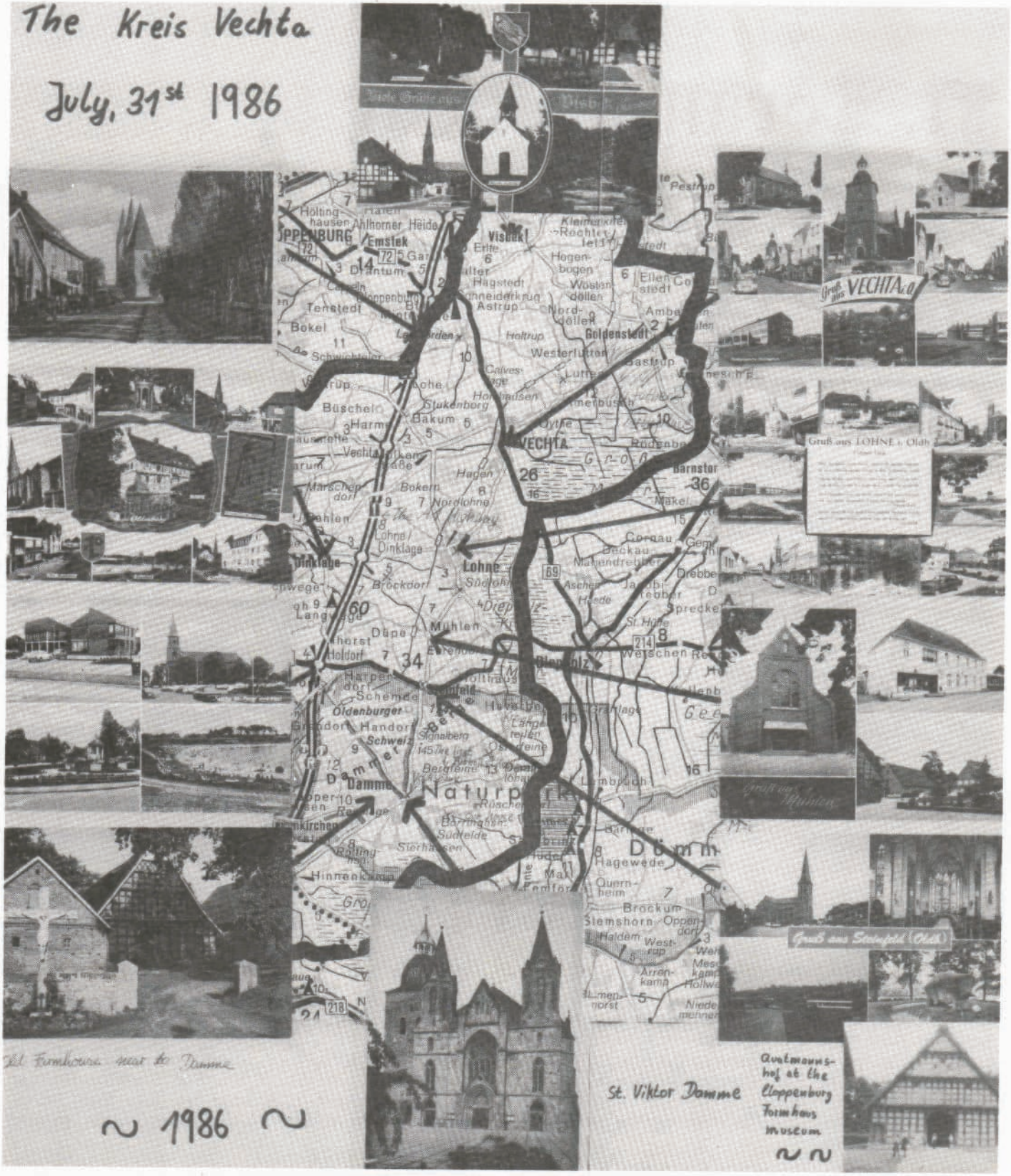


Osterfeine Catholic Church in Osterfeine - about 4 miles East of Damme - built in 1898. where today's Puthoff families go to church (1987). The land in the background is Puthoff homeland.



Bernhard (Kleine) Puthoff. 1828-1886. was born in Damme, Germany, and died in St. Patricks. Ohio. This picture shows the family living quarters in the rear of this German house-barn. The front doors of the barn opened for hay wagon with the hired hand's quarters above the horse stables which were in front of the barn. Cow stable doors are on the sides. On the right front of the picture you will see a grinding mill for grain and an oak tree on each side. About 1930. a house was adjoined to the right rear of this structure. The Puthoff's have been in Damme by title to farm property since the 1500's.

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When one considers that 1/3 of the population left Damme, Vechta, and Oldenburg during the years 1820-1850, and emigrated to U.S.A., one can plainly see that the names in the telephone books in this area are plainly the names in Shelby, Auglaize, and Mercer County areas. Some of the buildings, especially the churches, have stood there since the 12th century. Note the architecture also similar in this area.

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# Ft. Loramie Today

## FORT LORAMIE TODAY

*By Tom Millhouse*

Since the early beginnings of the village some 150 years ago, Fort Loramie has been a growing, industrious community and that heritage is being carried forward today.

From the first businesses in the pioneer era to the most recent addition to the business community - A&B Printing - commerce has been an important facet of life in Fort Loramie. During the early days farmers would bring their commodities to Fort Loramie to be transported on the Miami and Erie Canal. The canal is gone, but agriculture remains an important aspect of local commerce.

Among the businesses with ties to agriculture are Fort Loramie Mills, 12 S. Main St.; and Holthaus Elevator, 11 Canal St. and Middendorf Stockyards, 9758 Dawson Road, who is a major buyer of hogs.

Busse and Sons Meat Market, 15 N. Main St.; since 1919, continues to attract customers from far and wide for their fresh-killed meats. Larger Brothers Milk Transport Co. maintains a fleet of trucks that haul milk from area dairy farms to be processed. Cropmate Co., with an office at the intersection of Dawson and Greenback roads, handles the fertilizer needs of area farmers.

Over the years industry has become the primary source of employment in Fort Loramie. Wayne Trail Tool & Die Co., 203 Park St., is a major employer in the area. Lorcoa Inc., 195 Ben St., manufactures lightweight metal trusses. Another industry located in the eastern section of the village is G&W Tool and Die Co., 62 Elm St. Adjacent to G&W is Marwil Products Co., manufacturer of car muffler clamps, U-bolts and other automotive parts.

St. Michael Catholic Church has remained a focus point for both religious and social activities in Fort Loramie. The Rev. Gerald Bensman presently heads the church and the Rev. Christopher Armstrong is the associate pastor. Mary Lou Bornhorst and Marge Rethman share the duties of directing the religious education programs.

The church presently has about 650 families in the parish. Church- 1related organizations include the St. Ann Rosary Alter Society, St. Joesph's Men's Society, the Council of the Ladies of Columbia, Knights of St. John and its auxiliary group.

St. Michael's Hall was built just west of the church in the late 1960s. The large brick hall hosts a wide variety of activities from wedding receptions to dances, parish meetings and banquets. The facility not only is used by Fort Loramie residents, but also by people from surrounding communities.

Another focal point in the community is the Fort Loramie Local Schools. Heading the current administrative team is Superintendent Jerry Argabrite, High School Principal John McNeely and Elementary Principal Madeline Maurer. Nelson Barhorst is the president of the Fort Loramie Board of Education.

There were 767 students in grades kindergarten through 12 during the 1986-87 school year. Grades kindergarten through eight go to the Elementary School on Elm Street while the remaining students attend the new High School at the intersection of Greenback Road and Ohio 705.

There are a number of organizations related to the local school system. The Music Boosters support the local music programs and the Athletic Boosters give financial support to the sports programs. The latest undertaking by the Athletic Boosters, a new baseball field at the High School, was dedicated in April. The Athletic Boosters received assistance with the project from the GYM Committee and the board of education. Created to spearhead the construction of a new gymnasium, the GYM Committee has undertaken many projects to benefit the local schools.

Mayor Doyle liams heads the village government. Robert Eilerman is council president. David Shuffelton serves as village solicitor in addition to having the only law office in the community. Roger Siegel is the village utilities director.

Vernon Frey has served as village police chief for a number of years. Chief Jerome Barhorst heads the Fort Loramie Fire Department and John Plas is president of the organization. In addition to the volunteer firefighters, members of the Fort Loramie Rescue Squad also give their time to help their fellow citizens. Tom Wiesner is president of the rescue squad.

There are several service groups in the community. James Schulze serves as president of the Fort Loramie Kiwanis Club. The Fort Loramie Youth Or-

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ganization raises money to provide recreational activities to local youngsters, including baseball, softball and soccer programs.

Another group which helps support a variety of local activities is American Legion Post 355, 31 N. Main St. Delbert Barhorst is post commander. Organizations affiliated with the Legion post include the Ladies Auxiliary, Firing Squad and Sons of the American Legion. The SAL chapter was formed earlier this year. The Legion is known to many area chicken lovers for its monthly chicken fries.

The village has several restaurants and taverns which attract a regular following. Brucken's Cafe, 10 Elm St., has been serving chicken and other meals for many years. Another restaurant known for its meals is the Trails Supper Club, 13 N. Main St., Vogelsang's Cafe, 10 S. Main St., also has a steady clientel. Loramie Station, 11 S. Main St., and Al's Place, S.R. 66, both cater to a younger crowd and are known for their pizzas.

Borchers White Villa Market, 12 W. Main St., is the place for groceries in Fort Loramie. Willman's Drive-Thru Carryout on Park Street carries a full line of party supplies and the owner, James Quinlin, also operates a state liquor agency at the location. The other carryout in the village is the Canal Drive-Thru, 9890 S. R. 66.

When the canal faded from the scene as a major mode of transportation, water power was replaced by horsepower, automotive horsepower. Several businesses in town have a tie to the automotive industry, the most obvious being Gaier Chrysler-Plymouth, 36 W. Main St. The dealership carries a full line of Chrysler Corp. cars and trucks, and also has a service department and body shop.

The Park Street Garage, 12 E. Park St., performs body repair and paint services, as does Churchside Body Shop behind St. Michael's Hall.

Ernst Sohio, S. R. 66, and Gaier's Service, S. R. 66, both handle a variety of mechanical repairs and sells petroleum products.

The downtown remains the focal point of local business. The Loramie Banking Center of First National Bank is located at 26 S. Main St. The center is the village's lone financial institution. Riding the wave of popularity being enjoyed the video-cassette recorder industry, The Main Video, 27 N. Main St., is one of the newer downtown businesses. By contrast, just a few doors down is one of the older businesses, Romie Sporting Goods and shoe repair shop. Another long-time business is the Fort Loramie Furniture Store. The store also sells appliances.

Fort Loramie Home Appliances, 15 Elm St., sells refrigerators, ranges and other appliances. Hoying TV, 60 Elm St., sells televisions and VCRs, as well as providing service. Ron Hoying Appliance Service, 290 Monterey Dr., repairs appliances throughout the area.

Fort Loramie has several other businesses that specialize in various services. Gary Poeppelman Farm Drainage, 10720 S. R. 66, helps farmers alleviate drainage problems. Insurance services are rendered by the Urban E. Ratermann Agency, 10800 S. R. 66. Andrew Poeppelman Painting handles both interior and exterior painting jobs, being based at 83 Eastview Dr. Donald Ruhenkamp, 76 S. Main St., operates an excavating business.

The village business community includes three businesses that cater to the grooming needs of both men and women. John's Hair Stylists is located at 10 W. Park St., while the Cutaway Styling Salon is at 15 Elm St., and Jim's Barber Shop's address is 21 N. Main St.

Eilerman Welding Shop, 16 S. Main St., provides welding services for farmers, businesses and residential customers. Tom and Jerry's Inc., 9943 Dawson Road, offers plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning services. The Fort Loramie Coin Laundry is located on Elm Street.

Fort Loramie Cast Stone Products, 9801 S. R. 66, manufactures ornamental concrete products ranging from replicas of the Statue of Liberty to deer that adorn many area lawns.

Two more businesses located on Park Street are Emmy's Bridal and Specialty Shop, 111 E. Park St., and K&K Trophy Sales, 126 Park St.

When summer rolls around people yearn for ice cream and for many years the place to get ice cream in Fort Loramie has been Borchers' Dairy King on Main Street. At one time tans were only associated with summer, but tanning salons have turned tanning into a year-round activity. The Sun-Flower Shop, 29 N. Main St., has tanning facilities in addition to unity candles, cakes and other items. Another business associated with weddings is the Village Florist on Park Street.

Schwieterman's Drug Store, located on S. R. 66 at the south edge of the village, opened a store in Fort Loramie a few years ago. Another business founded in Fort Loramie in the past several years, is National Medical Homecare, 4040 S. R. 705. The firm specializes in home health care supplies and services. Also on S. R. 705, will be found the Middendorf Stockyards Co. an integral part of Fort Loramie's history of growth and development.

In addition to attorney David Shuffelton, several other professionals practice in Fort Loramie. Dr. Joseph Steurnagel, M.D., and Dr. John Campbell, D.D.S., have offices at 20 S. Main St. Optometrist Dr. Jeffrey Ahrns has an office in the Town Center offices on South Main St.

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Braun's Hardware and Auto Parts, 16 Elm St., offers hardware, small appliances, paints, car parts and a variety of other goods.

The Fort Loramie Historical Association has played a major role in the community for a number of years. Not only did the group found the Wilderness Trail Museum, 37 N. Main St., the organization also owns the building next door which houses the local branch of the Amos Memorial Library. The organization was instrumental in having the library in the village. The log cabin on Canal Park in the center of the village was placed there through the association's efforts. The society founded the annual German Heritage Days celebration held each year in August and the Colonial Williamsburg Christmas Dinners held in December.

The other major celebration of the year is the Old Time Fourth of July. Thousands of people line Main Street to watch the parade and then go to Bender's Park for other festivities.

The local post office, now located at 13 E. Park St., has been a stopping point for village residents since the days of the canal. Luella McGowan is the present postmistress. Cyril Seger delivers the rural mail.

The village park on Louie Street offers a variety of activities, including tennis, basketball and horse shoes.

The Village Hall is located at 20 S. Main Street.

The community is now one hundred fifty years old and is still growing. Several new homes have been built locally in recent years and new streets are planning to be developed in the near future. The population stands at about 1,015 and counting.

Commerce also continues to prosper in the community. A&B Printing, 15 W. Park St., was founded recently and is operated by Randy Ahlers and Mark Bornhorst.




American Legion Post Home



Wayne Trail Tool & Die Company



Lorcoa Company



Loramie Branch. First National Bank



Busse & Sons Meat Market

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Gaier's Garage and Car Sales



Borcher's White Villa Store




Ft. Loramie Furniture Company




Ft. Loramie's Only Motel and Dairy King



On the Tennis Court

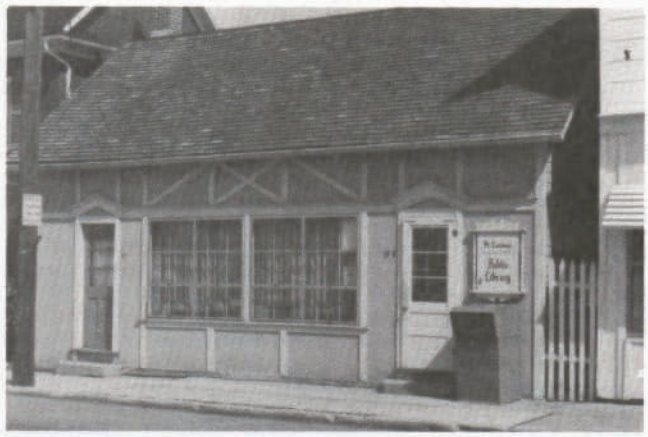


Relaxing on Basketball Courts

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Ft. Loramie High School



Ft. Loramie Library, Branch of Amos Memorial



Ft. Loramie's Town Hall

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