

Bell Oak

A STORY ABOUT ITS ORGIN AND SUBSEQUENT HISTORY
(WRITTEN SOON AFTER ITS ONE-HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY)

Compiled by the late Max Graham (1890-1962) in 1960

Edited by Joyce Wagner and Susan Dietz

Typed by Susan Dietz

1984

Webberville, Michigan

Retyped by Luana Fuller 2012

Locke Township Treasurer

Dedication

We dedicate this edition to the

Graham Family

And to

Leslie Graham

In particular, who carries on the family tradition of lovingly preserving the history of Locke Township and the Village of Bell Oak.

Joyce Wagner
Susan Dietz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	i
PREFACE	iii
EARLY SETTLERS	1
BELL OAK GROWS IN SIZE	4
THE BELL OAK SCHOOL	8
THE SAW MILLS	9
THE VILLAGE PROPER	11
OUR DAILY LIVES	24
THE VILLAGE: 1873 - 1889	28
ERRATA	38
ANECDOTES	39
OBITUARY OF GEORGE FISHER	50
EDITOR'S NOTE	51
CHART OF THE VILLAGE	52
INDEX	53

PREFACE

We have attempted to retain the original flavor of Mr. Graham's writing, but have taken the liberty of adding punctuation, paragraphs, subtitles, etc., to make the narrative a little easier to follow.

We are grateful to the Graham family for their graciousness in allowing us to edit and distribute this manuscript.

We hope you will enjoy reading Mr. Graham's narrative as much as we have.

Joyce Wagner
Susan Dietz

September 1984

EARLY SETTLERS

The community known as the hamlet of Bell Oak was not one of the earliest settlements in the township of Locke. The earliest settlement was known as Phelpstown, for David Phelps and Watson L Boardman, a mile and half south. Several of the first-comers settled in a group a mile and a half to the northwest, in the vicinity of the Brown Schoolhouse. Among these were the families of Stephen Avery, William Carlton, Cornelius and Leonard Melvin, William Barney, and a few others further west in the Township.

Among the first settlers who had located before the first Town Meeting in 1839 were Moses Park and his wife Betsey and Joshua Marsh and his wife Elizabeth, who was Moses Park's daughter. Marsh is listed in Durant's History of Ingham County as a resident taxpayer (on Section 24) in 1844. It was Marsh for whom the mile of road through Bell Oak was named when it was surveyed in 1840. He was the first signer of the petition to have a school district organized, which was formed at a meeting held at the house of Josiah Nichols in 1842 and was numbered No. 5. It was the first district to be formed after the Township was divided into four districts in 1839. Josiah Nichols on 40 acres about where Elmer Hayne lives; he was probably the first settler (on Section 13) in the northeast quarter of Bell Oak. Marsh and Park might have lived just across the road where there was supposed to have been an old log house about back of Ralph Turner's.

Another settler (who might have been the first on to live on Section 24) on the south side of the road was Rebecca Pitts, a widow, who, with son, John Sheldon Pitts (about eight or ten years of age), came from Connecticut to land she had "taken up" from the Government in 1837. Her land comprised the land now (1960) owned by the Bloom brothers, from the store to the County Line. Mrs. Pitts married Solomon Pettingill in 1841. He was probably the father of Henry and Benjamin, referred to before.

Thomas Pinkney and wife Rebecca, with a son and 4 daughters, came from Genoa, Livingston County, in 1845, and bought 240 acres of land (in Section 14) from Almon Whipple, who had taken up a section and a half from the Government but had not become a resident.

The first schoolhouse was built across the road from Pinkneys soon after and was named the "Pinkney School" after Thomas Pinkney. It was built on the site of the present Bell Oak Schoolhouse on land secured from Orrin and Luana Lawson, and was a frame building, the first frame schoolhouse in the Township, which already contained four log schoolhouses (in Section 7, 14, 21, 25).

The farm to the west of Bell Oak (in Section 24)---Smith's---was occupied first by the McKie brothers, James and Peter, who, with their wives, Janette and Elizabeth, and their father, John, had come from Scotland. They afterwards traded that land with Andrew Kirk for the farms across the road where the land has been occupied by their families for more than a century.

On the west side of Section 13, there were also 80 acres owned by Orrin and Luana Lawson, who had come from New York and had been speculators in real estate in Ingham and Jackson Counties before they settled on this farm, where they resided until their deaths around 1870. Out of this farm was located the schoolyard (1845), the cemetery (1859), the site of the church (1887), and three village lots, including the location of the present store (about 1859).

To the east of the Nichols' "40" was the Hitchcock land of about 400 acres (being the east one-half of Section 13 and a corner of Section 12), which Kenneth Fisher now owns. Russell and Evelina Hitchcock and a large family of nearly-grown children came from Danville about 1845 and lived in a log house just in front of the home of Don and Eveline Lunsted. Thomas T. Brown and his wife Sarah Ann lived in Section 24, but had sold to William T. Wallace about 1847 (the John West farm) and had bought out William Carlton and wife Irena on land where Marilyn Yeager live and across the road from where the Brown School was built and from whom it takes its name.

There were also, before 1850, settlers by the names of Benjamin Barnes, Benjamin Brock (Teeples' farm), and Ebenezer Arnold and wife Amelia from Ohio, also with large family, mostly of school-age or older, where Fairbanks now live. Horace Chalker came from Unadilla, married Mathilda Pinkney and acquired land from the Pinkney estate in Section 14. Chalker was a gunsmith on the west side of the road before Bell Oak was founded. Another young man, Marvil P. Hawkins, came from Unadilla and married Charlotte Pinkney and became a farmer in Section 14 on land acquired from the Pinkney estate(the 80 acres where Emil Harlacher now lives). The Barber families, several in number, being those of Alfred, Jesse, David, and Sylvester, lived on several parcels of land in Section 24, mostly belonging to Gordon Hicks, Libbie and Don Hicks, and Hazel Hicks, probably before 1850. There were likely some others living in the vicinity about whom I have never learned and whose names do not appear in any of the data yet existing.

Several of the pioneer settlers had died before 1850: Stephen Avery 1844; Russell Hitchcock 1848; David Cole and Thomas Pinkney 1849. John Pinkney was the only son of Thomas and succeeded him on the farm.

Such was a sketch of the community surrounding the Pinkney School about 1849-1850, or around 110 years ago.

The farms, for the most part, were uncleared, except for a few small fields on the higher land, Locke Township having a large acreage of wet land, including the "Big Marsh" (in Section 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9) and the "Sauger Marsh" (in Section 1 and 12). There were also large areas, heavily timbered and in need of drainage, which were held by non-resident speculators (in Sections 12, 15, 20, 22, and 36) and were untouched by the woodman's ax for many years.. These included, around Bell Oak, the farms of Kenneth Fisher, Floyd Wagner, Charlie Rothney, Ralph Turner, Smith(Bloom), McKie, Hazel Hicks, Graham, Dansby, and most of Mahogany Farms. The west

side of Conway was similar, with few settlers, a few of whom were Van Dyke, Miller Patterson, Dixon, Dingman, S. Young, Patrick Watters, Prudy Stowe, and William Dillingham and his sons. There were no drains dug until twenty years later, and the roads were scarcely improved. There was a store at Williamston, saw and grist mills, another store north and east of Fowlerville, a post office at Grant's in Conway (the Cedar Post Office), and the settlers to the north of us could get lumber sawed at the mill on Glass River in Antrim, built by the Harmons.

Having described the community as best I could, let me set the stage, so to speak, on succeeding pages, for the events and actors who were to produce our small, but very lively and worthwhile, Village of Bell Oak.

Bell Oak Grows in Size

Probably the one thing more than any other that brought about the establishment of a saw mill in the community and the subsequent building of the hamlet known as Bell Oak, was the coming of Robert and Maria (Van Wert) Fisher with two daughters, Rebecca and Henrietta, and a son, George Lansing Fisher, to Locke about 1849 from Wayne County, New York. The Fishers purchased 40 acres of uncleared land (the east one-half of the east one-half of the northeast one quarter of Section 24) from Solomon and Rebecca Pettingill.

They were followed to this community a few years later (1855-1856) by Truman Spencer and wife Susan Ann and two small boys, Charles and George Delbert. Susan Spencer was a sister to Robert Fisher. Spencer was a millwright by trade and had lived in Yates County, New York. Also, at about the same time, came Fisher's parents, George and Elizabeth, and their three grown sons, George, Jr., James, and Samuel, and also the parents of Truman Spencer David and Abigail Spencer.

Soon after their coming, Truman and George Jr. (better known as "Junior Fisher") secured from John Sheldon Pitts ten acres and which thereafter was known as the "Mill Lot". (By this time, John Sheldon Pitts had reached maturity, had been a schoolteacher in Locke and Conway, had married Rebecca Tooley, and was farming his own land in Section 24.) Each had a one-third interest for a few years, then Pitts sold his interest to Spencer and Fisher, and the mill was operated under that name.

The first mill, an "upright mill" with a straight saw moving up and down pulled at both ends by large cranks and arms moved by power from a steam engine, stood on the high ground about directly back from Ralph Turner's house. There was a "mill road" leading back to it just east of Turner's house which was called "Pigtail Alley".

Spencer, about this same time, had bought an acre and a half from Orrin Lawson and built a house for his family (Perrin's house).

Junior Fisher married Elizabeth Mowers of Woodhull in 1857 and built a house just in front of the mill (Turner's). Two small houses were also located west of the Fisher house, toward the northwest corner of the mill lot, but somewhat farther back from the road, which was very low and wet at that place. The road was built on a "corduroy" of logs. This comprises all that is shown of the settlement on the Map of 1859, which I believe to be quite accurate.

This, then, is the story of the area now known as Bell Oak up to about the year 1860, and it was not to increase in size nor to acquire its name of "Bell Oak" for some years, until after the great Civil War and after some far-reaching changes had taken place. Let us now examine some of these changes, from the building of the first mill until about 1866, after the close of the Great Conflict.

First, the question might be raised by some who are interested in such matters, of how and where did the gear for the mill come? That cannot be answered, but let it be remembered that in many cities of Michigan in those early days, there were firms building boilers, mills of various kinds, and steam engines. And, too, the completion of the Plank Road from Detroit to Lansing made possible the hauling of large loads with comparative ease. (The road from the Plank Road to the mill, however, was very poor).

Or, who were the employees who worked in the mill? There were several, mostly young, men living in the community: James and Samuel and (later) Peter Fisher, Uriah and David Arnold, Benjamin Brock, Jr., David and Sylvester Barber, several Cole young men, Hitchcocks, etc.: so it seems that there was plenty of help for a mill crew, besides those engaged in clearing, logging, and farming.

Then there were some changes by families that we should record, all of them probably having some influence on the community afterward to be known a "Bell Oak".

The families of March and Park moved to Woodhull, possibly soon after 1845, and became active in the early history of that Township and the Town of Shaftsbury. Josiah Nichols and his son James, who married Mary Ann Avery in about 1845, went, about 1848, to Gratiot County, where they were among the first settlers. The Nichols' land in Bell Oak was occupied, according to the Durant History, by Albert Avery, although I have been unable to confirm that statement from sources familiar with Avery history. The Smith farm, as before stated, was owned by the McKies for a few years before being exchanged with "Andrew Kirk for their present land. I do not know if the Kirks became residents or not, but by 1860, Alonzo Doolittle was residing on that farm, although it was still owned by Kirk.

Truman Spencer, besides building and operating the mill, began to be active in politics. He was the Township Clerk and Supervisor of Locke before 1860, and in that year, was elected Sheriff of Ingham County, being elected at the same election, and on the same ticket, as Abraham Lincoln. Junior Fisher was also an active partisan, and, being as accomplished speaker, "stumped" to neighboring communities for the cause of the newly-formed Republican Party for abolition, which was a live issue then, and for the candidacy of Abe Lincoln. To Fisher was left the managing of the mill while Spencer was in Mason, 1860-1862. Spencer was defeated in 1862 and returned to the mill.

About that time, Spencer built a small store on his lot between the present houses and Kenneth Perrin and John Pinkney. Sometime, too, between 1857 and 1862, there was a post office established in the new mill community, and was called, officially, "Locke Post Office". I think Truman Spencer was the first Postmaster, with the Post Office in his residence, but since the building of his store, has probably always been in some mercantile establishment.

Also coming to the community before, or about, 1860, were the families of Peter V. Fisher and wife Caroline, with two small boys, from New York; George B. Chandler and wife Susan, with a son and daughter, Charles and Ella, from Livingston County; and Otto B Chalker, who lived on

the present Ehl land. Chandler lived where Floyd Wagner now resides, while Fisher first lived on the Harmon farm.

The Nichols' "40" had probably been increased to 80 acres by the addition of the 40 acres north of it before 1860, and had several owners, including N. Jones and Oramel Arms, before coming into the possession of David P. Spencer about 1865.

There were few changes during the years of the Civil War, except those made from the participation of many of its residents, many from the area answering the various calls for volunteers from 1861 to 1865. Among those from the mill settlement were: John D. Pinkney; Peter V. Fisher; James Fisher (who died while in the service); Rufus and Milton Hitchcock (who both lost their lives); Benjamin Brock; William Dillingham; Jacob Dingman; and Samuel Fisher. From Conway came James Arnold and George B. Chandler, who also died in the service.

Just before the breaking out of that conflict, an association was formed to establish a cemetery, with Robert Fisher elected President; John S. Pitts, Secretary; George Fisher, Treasurer; and Truman Spencer, Sexton. An acre was bought from Orrin Lawson for \$25.00 just east of the school lot and platted into 56 lots, and is the section just west of the church, extending back eight lots. There had been numerous burials around the community on almost every farm, and many of these burials were moved into the cemetery soon after it was platted, most of them being reinterred on the same day. The cemetery was probably not ready for use before the date of 1860, so that any marker which shows a date of death before that date marks the resting place of a person who had been interred in some other location before being bought to our cemetery. The Rowley Cemetery was established about the same year and few of the surrounding burial places were established earlier.

The community changed very little during the Civil War, except the changes caused by the War itself, which were many. Probably about a hundred men in the armies were from Locke, twenty-eight of them losing their lives, some being from the area being described, as already noted. The close of that conflict, however, caused many changes to occur, changes that were to affect our little settlement around the saw mill and make it grow into a size probably greater than that which can be remembered by anyone who is now living. These changes, too, were to give our settlement its name of "Bell Oak" within a few years after the War, as I shall now try to record. One thing that brought many new settlers into this and adjoining townships was the coming of many soldiers soon after the War, mostly taking up residence on land that had never had an occupant before this time.

Robert Fisher had increased his landholdings by purchase from the widow of Russell Hitchcock of 80 acres across the road from his original location, and James Fisher, before his death in the War, was living on an acre of that land on the corner where Mrs. Rinkus now resides. Thomas Avis and William H. Lum had also acquired land from the Hitchcocks, some of it now being the farms of Don Lunsted and Belle Rothney. Michael Burke had also entered the community, living on the north side of Royce Road, and Samuel Dains and Hubert F. Miller had settled west of the

"burg". South of us, David Phelps had sold to Daniel Burton and to the McKie brothers to make their farms assume their present form. Clark Pierce, a schoolmaster, had purchased the farm of Andrew Kirk, and was a resident and taught the school, while Israel King owned some of the Pinkney land where the Pinkney brothers now reside. Some of the young men who had been growing up around the mill were also holding pieces of land: the Cole brothers, Charles and David; Uriah, Henry, and David Arnold; and Orsamus Perry.

L. F. Cole and John Burgdorff and David Critchett were living on some of the Hicks' land on Sherwood Road, and J. B. Taylor, who was to own much land in the Township and finally become a merchant in Bell Oak and later in Williamston, was in possession of some of the Chamberlain land, Isaac Countryman had also become a resident.

After the close of the War, Truman Spencer was again elected Sheriff of Ingham County, serving two years, 1866-1868. A few days before the election of 1868, when he was again the candidate for re-election, he died suddenly, at the age of 49 years. His father, David P. Spencer, had died a short time before, as had Orrin Lawson, whose farm Spencer had acquired. Truman Spencer had, before his death, built a small house for his mother Abigail, widow of David. This house is now John Pinkney's. Solomon Pettingill was also deceased about this time. Spencer's residence in Mason as Sheriff also brought H. D. Rogers and family to the mill town, where he ran Spencer's store, and probably lived in Spencer's house (Perrin's). Rogers came from Mason.

There were two other things that happened at about the same time, both of which are of importance to our story; a new schoolhouse was built in 1866, and in 1867, the saw mill burned to the ground, a total loss.

The Bell Oak School

Now, sometime previously, probably around 1848-1855 (likely at the date when the Rowley and Fulton School Districts were organized), the District No.2, comprising, originally, the southeast nine sections of the Township, was disorganized and the territory divided up between the new Rowley District No. 6 and District No. 5 the Pinkney School. This division then extended our school district as far as Bill Lott's (in section 36), and the enrollment became very large for a small schoolhouse (I have heard that there were as many as 80 in the school at times).

So, in 1865, the electors, at the Annual School Meeting, voted to build a much larger building, to be built of oak lumber throughout. The firm of Spencer and Fisher furnished all the materials for the building. About a year later, probably 1866, it was voted to obtain a bell to be placed on the new schoolhouse. After its erection on the building, it was suggested by George Fisher, Jr. That the new school be called "Bell Oak", from the new bell on the oak schoolhouse. The idea caught on, and it became the name of the new school, gradually being extended to the "burg" and to the community, although it remained "Locke" officially until the Post Office closed in 1901.

This bell remained in use on the schoolhouse for about 30 years until they obtained a new bell with a "circle" for the bell rope. They sold the old bell to H. F. Miller, where it was finally mounted on the windmill, until about 1940, when the windmill blew over. Having been relieved of the responsibility of calling the hired man to dinner, it has occupied a favored position on a post beside our door, where it can be rung by anyone who would like to see and hear the sound of the "Bell Oak bell". Or, if interested, they might like to read the story of the naming of this schoolhouse from the *Detroit Free Press*, contained in the obituary of George Fisher, Jr. at his death in 1905.

THE SAW MILLS

About 1867, Spencer sold his interest in the lumber business to Fisher, and it was then known as "Fisher's Mill". Soon after that, the mill was burned to the ground, a total loss. Fisher soon rebuilt the mill on a much larger and better basis, about 20 rods west and a little ways south of the location of the old mill. A new "mill road" was established leading back to the east side of the mill, the location of which was just east of Henry Doty's house.

This second mill was also built for an "upright mill", and was used that way for about twenty years before a circular saw was installed. This required a basement and second floor where the saw and carriage were installed, the lower level being necessary to hold the gearing required to operate an upright saw. There was a tramway, running out to the south, alongside the skidways, on which the logs were drawn up to the saw on a carriage drawn by rope or cable wound on a big drum connected to a very large friction wheel that could be engaged by operating a long lever with a driven shaft. The sawdust was dumped on the low ground toward the home of "Doc" Atkins, known to most of us as the home for many years of Martha and Vera Randall, now Knight's.

On the east side of the mill at ground level was the boiler room, and a separate and unconnected steam engine of 40 horsepower that was placed about four feet from, and alongside, the boiler, with a balance wheel about five or six feet in diameter and a large pulley that drove a wide belt to the saw frame on the floor above. In back of the engine was a larger one, probably four or five feet in diameter, and maybe 20 to 25 feet long, with a large steam chest, out of which went the four-inch steam pipe to supply the engine, and a couple of smaller ones leading through the roof to the whistle and escape valve.

At the front, or north end, were the firing doors for slab wood or sawdust, while at the south end the smokestack, sixteen or twenty inches in diameter, extended through the roof and above the peak of the mill. At the north end of the mill were edging and slab saws and the lumber was run out on another track toward the north side of the mill lot, close to the mill road.

The building was of heavy frame construction, with posts and beams hewed out, some of which were of heavy dimensions, possibly around 12 or 14 inches by 18 or 20 inches, with "faces" for massive castings that were in use when it was an "upright mill".

The building was covered with wide boards of rough lumber, with various openings for various purposes, including the passage of logs, lumber, slab wood, and sawdust, and with many boards missing in the years that I can recall its appearance. The roof, built on log rafters at about a quarter or third pitch, was covered with "shakes" or long (two feet) oak shingles, some missing and showing the signs of frequent roof fires from the sparks from the smoke pipe.

The floor, upon which the operators were working, was made of wide boards, laid double, with many holes that had been broken through and patched with pieces of board and slab, many with holes being left unmended in the corners and wherever the men didn't need to stand. In

the southwest corner, there had been a shingle mill when the saw mill was new, which I believe was operated as a separate enterprise by Peter V. Fisher, who was an older brother of George Fisher, Jr. There was, too, in the early days of this mill, about the year 1872, a millstone installed in the northwest corner of the basement of the mill, in a room that was partitioned off for that purpose, where seed was ground for the local residents, the power for operation being taken from the shafting above. This feed mill was unused for some years, but was rebuilt and gotten into use during the last few years of the mill's life.

The structure was never painted and acquired a very weather-beaten look, the sides full of openings, the smokestack red with rust, and alders and other brush growing halfway to the eaves.

During the heyday of its operation, from the time it was built until about 1885 or 1890, it was in operation year-round, sawing lumber for local residents and for shipment. I have been informed that it was operated at times on a day and night schedule, with two shifts of men. It has been reported to me that black walnut planks were sawed the width of wagon stakes (34 inches and loaded on wagons to be drawn to Detroit, without unloading, for the manufacture of counter tops. The mill yard of about four acres after the various lots 13 in number) had been sold off, was, reportedly, full of logs at some seasons of the year. It was the only mill in Locke before 1870. It required about eight men for its operation. Materials were sawed in lengths and shapes for wagon manufacture and handles and round stuff were also made.

The mill was not so constructed at the beginning that logs longer than about 24 or 30 feet could be sawed, but it is my impression that the carriage and track were afterward lengthened to accommodate the longer logs. About 1885, the mill was changed to a circle saw mill and did a lot of sawing for a few years, its capacity being rated at 1000 feet per hour. In the 1890s, the "run" was for only a few weeks each year (during the early spring), sawing the logs that had been drawn during the winter when there was sleighing, mostly for barns and other buildings on adjoining farms.

THE VILLAGE PROPER

Mr. George Fisher, Jr., a couple years after coming to this place, married Elizabeth Mowers, who had been the schoolteacher at the Brown School for several years. She was the daughter of Christopher and Jane Mowers of Woodhull. This was about the year 1857, and they had built a house on the mill lot for their residence before 1860. This is the house now occupied by Ralph and Marian Turner.

Truman Spencer, soon after his advent into the community, bought about an acre and a half, 20 by 13 rods in size, from the Orrin Lawson farm, and built the house now owned by Kenneth and Maxine Perrin. There were two other houses, probably "mill" houses, standing on the "mill lot". The farm houses on the Lawson farm and the one on the farm formerly owned by Nichols, with the mill, and the small store built by Spencer, comprised all of the mill hamlet up to the time of the building of the new mill, the new schoolhouse, and the addition of a new name, that of "Bell Oak", to our small community.

Nor was the village to grow a little at a time; for in the five years following the building of the new mill and the new oak school, or about 1867 to 1872, it had a "boom town" growth, reaching a size as large, or larger, than at the present, and that meant several buildings were being erected every year, the population increasing until it was reported as being 150 to 200 in the Gazetteers published mat about that time. This made it larger than many of the hamlets that had been started in the surrounding area; for, of course, the present-day towns of Webberville, Perry, Morrice, Shaftsbury, Bancroft, and Durand were not to appear until the coming of the railroads.

To show how our "burg" grew, I have prepared a chart, made from the Assessment Rolls, showing when the various parcels were sold off, and indicating, as nearly as I can, when the houses were built, where their owners came from, and what their contribution to our community might have been. To do this, I have called the Nichols farm, "A"; the Lawson place, "B"; the John S. Pitts farm, "C"; the Andrew Kirk land, "D"; and the mill lot, "E"; with the various building lots marked "A1", "A2", "A3", etc. to indicate what piece of land they were divided from.

The first piece to be sold off of the mill lot (1867) was a parcel 9 by 40 rods on the west side containing $2\frac{1}{4}$ acres, purchased by Dr. Harmon A. Atkins, who lived on Section 3, where he had been practicing medicine for about twenty years. He built a house, now owned by Walter and Helen Knight, where he lived and followed his profession until his death about 1885. Dr. Atkins was Ferris McKie's grandfather; a granddaughter of the Doctor is Miss Bertha Malone of Highland Park, who has provided me with much of the data that is being incorporated into this story. Besides his professional interests, Harmon A. Atkins was a well-known historian and an interested observer of wild life. He wrote many articles for publication in the journals of that period, some of which are to be found in our libraries (mostly concerning the birds of the local area). His lot is marked "E1" on our chart and includes "E15" and "E14". (The numbers on these lots do not always indicate the chronological order in which these parcels became separate descriptions).

The same year (1867), there was a half-acre parcel sold to Alfred M. Decker, just east of Atkins' along the road. This parcel probably had a small house on it standing several rods back from the road, which was very low at that spot, and frequently was filled with water. This was one of the two mill houses shown on the mill lot, as I have reconstructed the growth of the village. Decker was a cabinetmaker and soon bought another small lot, marked "E13", on which he built a shop, continuing at the trade until he moved to Webberville soon after the founding of that village.

A.M. Decker came here, I believe, from Antrim. He bought, during his residence in Bell Oak, about four acres from John S. Pitts, located just south of the mill lot and running east 40 rods, probably with the idea in mind of cutting it up into lots for a subdivision. Upon his removal to Webberville, he sold the parcel to L.F. Cole, who held it a couple of years, and then, apparently, let it revert to the farm. That parcel is numbered "C1" on the chart.

There was another description of land, about a half acre in size, just west of George Fisher's house (Fisher's is marked "E1st) and extending west to the mill road, sold to Paschal Paola Pettingill, whose wife was Louisa, a sister of Truman Spencer. They came from New York with their family—a son, John, and daughters, Maud and Isabelle. Pettingill bought the old schoolhouse and moved it to the lot he had purchased, where it became known for years as the "Pash" Pettingill house. He ran, for some years, a peddling wagon, selling tinware, etc., running what was known to the community as the "Pettingill Wagon". Fifteen years later, he was a tollgate keeper on the Plank Road at a tollgate north of Brighton when his death occurred. His wife, Louisa (Aunt "Lo"), and son, John, moved into the house of her mother, after she (Abigail Spencer) died, and lived there many years. The old Pettingill house, which had been the Pinkney Schoolhouse, stood there until torn down about 1910 by Elbert Sowle.

He used the material from the old house to build a barn, just west of his house (E1st"). Ralph Turner, Jr. took down that barn and used the studding and 2 x 6's in building a garage on his house. The material was sawed on an upright saw and probably was from the old Pinkney Schoolhouse, probably sawed about 1845, likely at the Williams' Mill in Williamston that stood at the north end of the old dam (now covered up by the water of the millpond), about where the Cheney residence is located. Turner's lot is that of Fisher, Pettingill, and another parcel marked "E11" on the chart.

There were other changes in 1867; the Nichols farm had passed from David P. Spencer to Henry Armstrong; Thomas Avis was owner of 80 acres where Don Lusted now lives; William and Betsey Lum had removed from Section 25 and bought 80 acres of the Hitchcock land (that is now Belle Rothney's), where they were the first residents. Clark Pierce had acquired, and was living upon, the Andre Kirk far, ("D") and was the village schoolmaster during that year (1867).

The year of 1868 also brought many changes, but the activity was moved across the road, and mostly concerned the land of Henry Armstrong (or the northeast corner of Bell Oak) and the Nichols land which had subsequently been owned by Avery, N. Jones, Oramel Arms, David P.

Spencer, and Armstrong, some of whom, I am sure, had been nonresident owners. The house on this piece of land, I believe, was about where Elmer Hayne now lives. On the chart, this 80 acres is marked "A". In 1868, the west 40 acres (marked "A1") was owned by Andrew Jackson (Jack") Spencer, a brother of Truman, who had come from Yates County, New York after the coming of Truman, although I am unable to state in what year. His name of Andrew Jackson was probably given him at his birth in 1830 by his grandfather, who was one of the Presidential Electors who made Andrew Jackson President.

Spencer had, that same year, sold off a half-acre to H.D. Rogers, to Bell Oak merchant in the store that Truman Spencer had built in 1863, and still stood east of Spencer's house (B5). Rogers soon built the house that is now Hill Van Riper's ("A2").

The east 40 acres, marked ("A2), belonged that year to Israel King, but he had sold a quarter of an acre to John Dingman, who had built a house and barn on the lot. This lot is off the southwest corner of Hill VanRiper's land and is designated "A3" on the chart.

John Dingman was, I believe, one of the mill hands; his daughter, Jane, married James Fisher, and they both died young---he, in the Civil War, she, soon after, leaving two children. One child was raised by Dingman and was known as "Ding" Fisher; his brother was raised by the Fisher grandparents, George and Elizabeth. The Dingman house had many different occupants, finally serving as the housing for a meat market, with the barn storing the ice from Sauger Lake. The market was conducted by Edd Guthrie and Delbert Cole about 1906. Later, after the house was torn down, the lot became a site for a feed mill built by Seymour Holcomb.

Israel King also owned, about this year (1868), the lot where James and Lillian Orsborne now conduct the village store, and which shows on the chart as "B3". This lot, 4 by 13 rods in size, had a house on it that has been referred to as the "Plim" Allen or "Flynn Allen house, by some who remembered Bell Oak many years ago. It is my belief that the Allen house burned down a few years later.

Another change that was to lead to further development in our village was the purchase of the farm of Clark Pierce by Delos and Lydia Smith, who came from Osceola and their four children: Lawrence (Lonnie), Wilbert H (Bert), Harriet and Charles. This farm was then to remain Smith property for more than eighty years.

Further subdividing the mill lot during 1868, George Fisher had sold a lot to Titus B. Eggleston, just east of Decker's. This lot, according to my theory, had on it the other of the "mill houses" that I have described along the road, but sitting back from the road on account of the low ground between there and Spencer's lots on the other side of the road. I have indicated this low ground by a circle on both sides of the road. Before it was tiled and filled, there was frequently water standing on both sides of the road at this point. T. B. Eggleston was a veteran of the War and was probably the first blacksmith in the village, but stayed only a year or two when he moved to a farm in Section 29, now part of the Frank Cobb farm.

He was reported to be the best rifleman in the locality, being known to bring in a brace of black squirrels, all of them shot through the head. Eggleston's lot is numbered "E3", and the small lot where he built his blacksmith shop is "E4" (this is the west half of the lot where Henry Doty's house stands).

Truman Spencer had also built a house for his mother Abigail before his death in November of 1868.

The year of 1869 brought much increased activity when the small settlement began to close ranks with more buildings and first began to expand to the southwest onto the Smith farm.

George Fisher, Jr. sold a half interest in the mill and lumber business to Oshea G. Dunckel, also a Civil War soldier, who had been a farmer on Section 16, Locke Center, and afterward, on Section 15, about where some of Dick Dansby's farm lies. Dunckel and his wife, Elizabeth, their two sons, David and William, and several daughters also acquired the residence of Fisher, and shortly afterwards built a small store just a little west of his house (now Ralph Turner's). He operated this store, sometimes alone and sometimes with a partner, and was to Postmaster of Locke Post Office for a few years.

Meanwhile, Fisher lived in several different places; one was a lot on the southeast corner of the mill yard ("E10")—this lot might have been sold to Benjamin W. Brown before Fisher lived there. He also lived in the "Old Red House", the farmhouse on the Lawson farm, which had become the property of Truman Spencer before his death and remained in the hands of his widow, Susan Ann, and her sons, Charles, George Delbert, and Herman, for many years. The "Old Red House" stood where the house of Mr. and Mrs. Lynn is located. It was moved to the lot numbered "E15" when the present house was built and used for a barn, afterward, a garage, then torn down and the material is used in the garage joined to the house of Mr. and Mrs. Adams.

"Jack" Spencer had sold 19 ½ acres to George and Emma Gage ("A1B"), who had come to Bell Oak from New York. Gage was a brother to Jack Spencer's wife, Harriet. Spencer had also sold a parcel to Robert Fisher, who was a wagon maker by trade, and Fisher built a two story wagon shop of quite liberal dimensions upon it. Fisher had sold his farm east of Bell Oak (Ralph Turner's) to his son, George Lansing Fisher, who was a returned soldier of the late War. The farm was also owned on year by David Critchett, but was taken back by Fisher, where he and his wife Maria lived until their deaths in 1905 and 1908. The wagon shop, probably 20 x 60 feet in size and two full stories in height, had room and equipment for woodworking and ironing wagons, buggies, sleighs, and cutters on the first floor, and a paint shop on the second floor, with wide double swinging door above and a cleated ramp of plank leading up to them, through which the vehicles were drawn for painting and finishing. It was in this shop where Fisher built coffins for the community when the need arose. A small house was built on the east side of the wagon shop where it housed a family during some of the years of my recollection. The front part of the shop was partitioned off around 1895 and was used for a barber shop, the Proprietor being Frank McLean. A family also used it for living quarters during a housing shortage in Bell Oak about 1900. Fisher was succeeded by his son, William O Fisher, and they

bought more land from Spencer. This lot is marked "A4" and "A4A". There was a road just west of the wagon shop that led back to some small houses that had been occupied by families during the time of our greatest population, but these mill houses had disappeared before I can remember.

Israel King had also sold to Thomas E. Bently ("A2") and Bently had acquired the "Plim" Allen house, where the store is now. Bently sold a small parcel (30 by 82 feet) to B.F. Everts, who moved the little store from the Spencer lot to that location ("B4"). Apparently, Everts was operating a store that year, as he had a Personal Property Assessment on the Tax Roll of \$650. This lot of Everts was at the southeast corner of Orsbornes' lot (store) and would be about where the driveway is now. The store apparently sat on the ground; a few years later, when Mr. Hause was in that store, he found five inches of water on the floor when he opened the store one morning.

Moved to the farm where Arthur and Wesley Pinkney reside. There were two more lots sold off from the mill lot during 1869, one to Mrs. Susan Chandler, whose husband, George B. Chandler, had lost his life in the Civil War. Her lot is marked "E6": she afterwards acquired the lot just back of that one (E7"), which was very low ground, and where they had dumped the sawdust from the first mill.

Isaac Countryman and Henry Fletcher had two lots on the east side of the mill lot that are marked "E8" and "E9". Countryman built a house and finally acquired the Fletcher lot. A few years later, John S. Pitts sold the 70 acres, from which the mill property was detached, to Marvil P. Hawkins, who bought these lots and lived in the house. Later, Hawkins sold to George H. Price, who bought lot "E10", adding it to his farm. The house on "E10" stood vacant for many years, until about 1895, when Eric Hickey moved it onto the mill lot, just east of the mill, and fixed it up for a house (E16"); a short time later, it was again moved to lot "E12", where it is marked "E17". These three lots (E8", "E9", and "E10") now belong to the Bloom farm. The "jog" in the west line of these lots was straightened 40 years ago when R.D. Casady owned the farm, by an agreement between Roy and Mrs. Randall, who owned the mill lot.

These divisions had bought the size of the mill lot down to 5 acres, just one-half of its original size. The expansion of our village; therefore, shifted to the southwest corner, where, on the Delos Smith farm, there were some nice building sites.

Smith sold lots to Robert and Maria Kline and to their son, Warren, in 1869. Kline soon bought the lot of his son and built a house, where they lived many years, and where he followed his trade, that of a shoemaker. His house stood where the society known as the Ancient Order of Gleaners built their hall about 1913, which is now the Church Hall. These lots are "D1" and "D2". The Kline house, after being used as the meeting place of the Gleaners for about fifteen years, was moved to the site of the old blacksmith shop ("E4") and is now Henry Doty's house.

There were many other changes during that year; Solomon Pettingill had died, and his widow, Rebecca, sold her land to her son, John S. Pitts; Delinda Hitchcock, whose husband Rufus died in the late War, had sold her place on the Herrington Road to M.C. Wilkerson and bought a lot from D. A. Smith ("D6"); Edward Barnes was living on 20 acres, now the north half of Floyd

Wagner's, which belonged to Mrs. Susan P. Chandler; Alfred P. Leach lived on the Rothney farm; Henry Arnold had bought five acres where Murray Workman lives, and had sold to Susan A. Sowle, whose husband had died as a result of being scalded by steam in the mill; Hubert F. Miller, wife Lucia, and little daughter Inez had come from Leslie, occupying our farm, the first residents.

Jesse and David Barber lived on John West's, while John and George Burgdorff and Aaron Horton lived on parcels of the farm just sold by Hazel Hicks to Mr. and Mrs. Esch. Mrs. Phoebe Hicks and her twin sons, Azariah and William, had come from Brighton and bought the Alfred Barber land, now owned by Libbie and Don Hicks.

The Township Supervisor, David B. Phelps, had described the different parcels of land for the first time as "in Bell Oak Village". He also states that but one acre in five was improved in the Township, and that there were 126 log houses and only 107 frame houses in Locke. I have a list of some of these log houses, few of which were very near to Bell Oak, nor do I believe that any family has lived in a log house in Bell Oak itself since our village began.

In addition to the people that I have mentioned as living around Bell Oak during 1869, the following were assessed for "Personal" tax by the Supervisor in that year, as belonging to School District No. 5 (or the Bell Oak School), indicating that they were either young adults living with their fathers' families or that they occupied some rented house or mill house in the vicinity. The list: James Arnold; A.R. Barber; William Barber; Chandler, Charles, and Nathaniel Cole; George Dexter Denio; George Guthrie; William H Lum; George Orr; B.F. Everts; and H.D. Rogers. The last two named, Everts and Rogers, were storekeepers, and there were at least stores in town at the same time from this date until 1889, when there were three for many years. Nor will I be able to state, each year, just who was in what store during what year, as this data is not available in the Assessment Rolls, which are my best source of information. Having delineated in some detail the growth of our village through the year of 1869, let us see if we can discover what were the changes and how our village was to grow in the year of 1870.

This year inaugurated two business ventures, one of which was successful and an asset to the community for many years; the other was of short duration and is forgotten for many years, its history being unknown to but few other than myself.

The enterprise that flourished and lasted was the building of a new, and quite large, store building by Susan Spencer and her eldest son, Charles, on a lot 10 by 11 rods in size, directly across the road from the Spencer home, on a lot the purchased from Delos A. Smith, designated as "D7" on the chart, now the location of Edna Fulton's home. The store was operated at first by Charles Spencer, about 25 years of age, who apparently had received a business education, as his handwriting (as seen in Township records) is the nearest to being perfect penmanship of any persons who have written Township records in 122 years. He was Postmaster during the period when he operated the store. This store, probably as large as any ever erected in Bell Oak, was built with two stories, the upper floor being finished for a public hall. In this hall were the shows, concerts, exhibitions, lectures, political gatherings, etc. for the next 25 years, until it

was finally remodeled into living quarters by D.W. Fisher about 1895. It also housed at least two lodges, and possibly a third, that were organized in Bell Oak during that period.

There was no house or living quarters with this store for about 25 years, when D. W. Fisher finished off the hall above the store (sometimes known as "The Good Templar Hall") into living quarters. This store burned to the ground about 1901, but more of that later.

The enterprise of short duration to which I have made reference and which originated during 1870, was started when Mrs. Megiveron acquired the house and lot owned by John Dingman, and also bought a half-acre from Thomas E. Bently "cornering" on her lot—a piece of ground that extended out into the middle of Hill VanRiper's field, which was probably bought for use as a brickyard. I do not know if bricks were made there or not, but soon after this, her sons, one of whom was named William H. Megiverson, were making bricks on the farm of William and Betsey Lum, who had purchased from Phillip Roper the farm of Thomas and Mary Avis, both of whom were deceased.

This brickyard, directly across the road from the Pitts house (now Joseph Bloom's), flourished for a time, and with bricks being furnished to the neighbors for building and employment provided for several men. It seems that the operation of the enterprise must have run in difficulty, as there were several cases of litigation in the local Justice Courts about this time, the action involving the assets of the business. The whole operation ground to a halt in a rather inglorious manner when a kiln full of green bricks was fired and left in the care of a couple of men who got drunk and let the fires die out. This left a big pile of soft bricks in the field. Quite a few years later, after my father had bought the farm, the Pathmaster of the Road District and the neighbors who were working out their road taxes drew these soft bricks out and filled up the mud holes in the road east of Bell Oak. This was after I was old enough to remember the work on the road.

Robert Fisher built a house on his farm about this time, on the site of Ralph Turner's residence, and bricks from Megiveron's kilns were used in the chimney, the brick bearing the initials "WHM" on the side. The Fisher house burned down about 1907, and my father used some of the chimney bricks for a base for a steam-heating boiler. The bricks are still in use as a base under the furnace in Don Lunsted's basement. "Bill" Megiveron subsequently lived at Pine Lake (now Lake Lansing), where he had a summer resort.

T.B. ("Tite") Eggleston, when he removed from the village, sold his blacksmith shop to Israel Atkins, a stepson of Dr. Atkins. He was a soldier who always followed the horseshoeing trade, later going to Morrice, where he was for many years.

A.J. Spencer had sold a lot to Loron J. Beebe, a stonemason, who built a house just west of Fisher's Wagon Shop. On the Smith subdivision, Peter V. Fisher, who had been a farmer in Conway on the Harmon farm, lived in the James Fisher house (Rinkus) after the death of James (in the War) and his wife (Jane) soon after. This Fisher lot was five rods by twenty rods in size, and was situated back of the Kline and Spencer (store) lots. Peter built a house and lived in

Bell Oak several years until he acquired the farm in Section 12 where Kenneth Fisher now lives. P.V. Fisher was probably the earliest insurance agent in Bell Oak, writing the policies on most of the building of the neighborhood.

Another house on the Smith farm was that of Dr. George D. Langford, on a lot four by ten rods just west of Atkins', and a house still standing (Ranshaw's) might have been built before Fisher's. Langford, also a soldier, came to Bell Oak upon his graduation from the Detroit College of Medicine and began practicing. A few months later he was married to Miss Arvilla Sparhawk of Sand Creek, south of Adrian. They were here about three years, when they removed to Leroy or Webberville, where he continued to practice medicine, conducted a drug store in partnership with his father-in-law, Noah Sparhawk, and was Postmaster for several years. Langford later removed to Williamston, where he was successful physician until his death about 1895.

On a lot west of Langford's, Mrs. Delinda Hitchcock had built a house when she moved from the 40 acres (now part of the Rothney farm) where she had lived with her husband Rufus before his death in the Civil War. This house remained there until destroyed by fire around 1912. This fire (of the house on this lot), the burning of the "Plim" Allen house already mentioned, and the destruction of three stores, two of which were on the same site, were the only fires that come to my remembrance.

This accounts for the location of six lots in the Smith subdivision.

About this time, D.A. Smith laid out a road from the one-eighth post in the center of Bell Oak, which went south 17 ½ rods, west 20 rods, and north 17 ½ rods, to the Bell Oak Road. In order to do this, after he had sold some of the lots, there were 1 ½ rods taken off the lots of Warren Kline and Peter V. Fisher on the west side and 1 ½ rods from the H.A. Atkins lot on the east side and extended south from the northwest corner of his lot to the lot sold to Langford.

The road, 3 rods in width, then ran west the length of the Fisher lot (or 20 rods), the north, out of Smith land to the public road. These streets were named about that time, with the street on the east being called Atkins Street; that along the south side, Maple Avenue; and the one to the west, Smith Street. (They have now been designated by Detroit Edison as West Cole and East Cole).

Neither these roads, nor the Smith subdivision, nor any of the lots in "Bell Oak Village", were ever recorded as plats with the Register of Deeds of Ingham County. About sixty-five years later, this led to the crediting of the Methodist Church of Bell Oak with a parcel of land approximately three rods wide and twenty rods long situated on Section 24 of Locke Township, a parcel which never belonged to that society, but is actually the land devoted to what I have designated as "Maple Avenue", or the roadway between the lots of Arnold Andrews on one side and those of Lowell Ranshaw and Mervin Terrill on the other. This description of land appeared on the Tax Roll about 1936 when a SWA project was set up in Ingham County to correct the descriptions of land on the Tax Rolls. (A CWA project was a "white collar" project,

mostly concerned with paper work and records, as opposed to a WPA project, which was mostly physical, such as digging ditches, etc.) The men working on this project endeavored to get the correct measurements, etc., of each parcel, three by twenty rods, that didn't belong to any of the adjoining parcels and there was no road recorded, so they gave the parcel of ground to the Methodist Church Society, apparently because the lot now owned by Arnold Andrews was once (1909-1915) the location of the parsonage belonging to that Society when a pastor was stationed in Bell Oak.

It has always been a source of speculation to me why they credited this parcel to the Church instead of to some of the other owners, or giving it to the Smith farm, since there were no records to show that it had ever been transferred from that farm. And as there are no taxes assessed against the property of the Church, this description will likely remain on the books for a long time.

The year 1870 also saw the farms of Phoebe Hicks and William T. Wallace "squared up" into 160 acres each, as Sylvester Barber, who had lived on 2 acres on the northwest corner of John West's farm, had allowed this small acreage to revert to the farm, and he had succeeded Susan A. Sowle on the five acres west of Bell oak, now Murray Workman's. Burgdorffs and Aaron Horton had also removed from section 24 during this year.

When the year 1871 arrived, Bell Oak was still expanding but at a more moderate pace, like a person pausing to "get his breath" (a seventh inning stretch). George Fisher Jr. sold out his interest in the saw mill during this year to Benjamin W. Brown, which made the lumber firm "Dunckel and Brown", Brown was also a soldier in the late War; after a few years, he moved to Webberville.

Fisher owned various farms in the next few years in Section 14, 22, and 35, and probably cut much timber from them. He lived, during these years, in the "Plim" Allen house, the "Old Red House"; and a house on the mill lot numbered "E10". A.J. Spencer had also sold more land to William O. Fisher, son of Robert, who had acquired his father's interest in the wagon shop ("A4"). Robert had gone back to the farm where he probably built the first house (where Ralph Tuener Sr. now lives) about that year. (The former Fisher home had been across from where Charles and Kay Britten live). Spencer also sold Allen Beebe a lot just west of Loron Beebe's (numbered "A6") upon which no house was ever built. Spencer's "20" had been reduced to 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres by these subdivisions when he exchanged farms with Thomas E. Bently ("A2A") and bought out Mrs. Megiveron ("A3" and "A7"), which seems to have been the farmhouse for a few years.

George H. Carnes, whom I believe came from Conway, bought a lot from Smith ("D7") during that year and probably built a house (Terrill's) soon after, (I have heard that Delos A. Smith built the house, lived there a short time, and sold to Carnes, but the Assessment Rolls don't seem to point to that conclusion). Also in this year, Frederick Renn, a veteran, had succeeded William and Betsey Lum on the farm of Belle Rothney.

It was in September of this year that an event occurred which was, eventually, the factor which would halt the growth of Bell Oak and leave it a hamlet of about the size that it is at present.

The event to which I refer was the building of the railroad from Detroit to Lansing (Detroit, Lansing, and Lake Michigan), which was completed as far as Leroy (now Webberville) in September of that year. When the station was opened and a village begun to be built, a number of the residents of Bell Oak moved to that place and were the first residents of that town. For a few years, however, the railroad was a great boon to Bell Oak, furnishing shipment for its products and bringing freight and express to within a few miles of it. Before this, they had been compelled to go to Owosso or Bennington for their goods and to market their crops or to take the train for a journey to distant places. Mail and goods were also trucked through Bell Oak for the small places to the north of us, like Fremont, Glass River, and Rann's Mills, before the building of the Peninsular Railroad (Grand Trunk) six years later, when the founding of the villages along that road helped to further restrict Bell Oak to a small hamlet in a small community.

If Bell Oak had been started twenty years earlier, it might have been as large as many places were when the railroads reached them, or as large as Dansville and other places which the railroads passed by and have mostly remained about the same size. However, if the whistles of the first locomotives sounding through the woods that covered "Gamby's Plains" from steam-generated four-foot wood in their boilers, was a forecast of a day when Bell Oak should cease to expand and become just a little hamlet, no one paid any heed. The next year, 1872, saw things happening, things which were to mark our community for many years and whose influence is still with us.

In this year, Israel Atkins sold the blacksmith shop and house ("A3" and "E4") to George Dexter Denio, a returned soldier, who had grown up on Section 3, but who had lived, since the War, on Section 16. Atkins bought a lot ("A14") from his father, Dr. Atkins, and built a small house, part of which is still there. Oshea Dunckel and Benjamin W. Brown were running the lumber business, and Dunckel and Peter V. Fisher were keeping a store in the building that Dunckel had built.

H.D. Rogers, who had been in the store business for several years, had been associated with J.D. Taylor for a couple of years. George Ling and Samuel Craig were also in a store about this time, but I can't always tell from the data at hand just where these people were located or how long or at what particular times they were in business. Ling and Craig went to farming on the Gamby lands on Section 36. J.D. Taylor went to Williamston, where he was actively associated with the growth of that town, building stores, platting additions, etc.

Alfred M. Decker sold his house to Isaac E. Thayer of Bennington and went to Leroy, where he engaged in his trade (that of a cabinetmaker) and his wife opened the first millinery store in that new town.

L.F. Cole, who had lived on Hazel Hicks' land on Sherwood Road, came to Bell Oak during that year and formed a partnership with H.D. Rogers. They bought the land of Thomas D. Bently ("A1A") upon which they built a stave mill. This mill, for the making of barrel staves and heading, furnished employment for several men and provided a market for stave bolts from the surrounding farmers. This mill seems to have been quite an extensive establishment, with a boiler and engine, line shafting and belts, several saws, pumps, etc., according to data in my files, and stood on the high ground back of Roy Casady's house about twenty or thirty rods from the road on land now owned by Elmer Hayne.

Clustered around this mill were a few shacks, or mill houses, reached by a road running between the wagon shop of W.O. Fisher and the Lo Beebe house. These small houses were probably used for living quarters at different times, for Assessment Rolls usually had five or six people paying taxes on a personal property assessment in School District No.5 (Bell Oak) who didn't appear to be living in any of the other houses. These small houses had all disappeared before the time when I can remember Bell Oak. Cole also bought of Decker the parcel of land south of the mill lot and kept it during his stay in Bell Oak, but eventually let it revert to the farm of John S. Pitts.

Pitts also sold, about this year, 80 acres of his land to Wilson P. and Spencer Tooley of Genoa, and a little later, sold Tooleys all of his land and went to Arizona for his health; he died there within a few years and was buried in that Territory. Tooleys, while residents here, were raisers of hops, the culture of which was tried in Michigan for a time before moving west to Minnesota and now almost exclusively are grown in Washington and Oregon. These hops were grown on long poles and carried into a hophouse, where women and girls picked them, placing the hops in trays for drying with heat from wood fires conducted through the trays for that purpose. A drying house was built on the farm and later was used for a granary; it was rebuilt a few years ago by Emerson Parker into the granary on the Joe Bloom farm. It was reported to me that a plank walk was built on the south side of the road from Bell Oak to the farm for the convenience of the women who worked there. The production of hops, at this period, was chiefly confined to Locke, Williamstown, Meridian, and Lansing Townships in Ingham County. M.C. Wilkerson had also sold his farm to Luke Angell during that year.

This was the year when the Independent Order of Odd Fellows organized a Lodge (Bell Oak Lodge No. 178, I.O.O.F.), with members from Locke and Conway, which met in the hall over the store. Other members were added, some from Leroy; some charter members removed to that place, so after a few years, it was moved to Webberville, where it is still active. The Methodist Episcopal Class was organized in 1872, and Rev Joseph England was appointed as Pastor at Bell Oak at the Conference that year. This was the only year when a pastor was assigned to Bell Oak, although there has been a church organization with regular services continuously since that year. It is believed that Rev. England lived on Chase Lake Road in Conway Township. Much of the detailed history of this organization will be included in the "History of the Bell Oak Methodist Church" which I hope to be able to prepare in the near future.

Another development, which was to change the physical character of the countryside and leave its imprint on our village, was the beginning of public drainage under a statute but few a few years old and which was not begun to be used in the Township until about 1871. At that time, Squaw Creek was dug, and a beginning on the drains leading from the Vermillion Creek into the "Big March" was made. The year 1872 saw Wolf Creek dug out and the Spencer and Smith Drains completed. This last named drain came around from Wolf Creek through Arnold, Spencer, and Smith lands, carrying the water away from the low spots in Bell Oak and draining the swamp on Smith's just west of the store. It has now (1960) about reverted to its status of 1872, I believe. For the construction of this drain, the residents of the village were taxed a "Special Assessment" and into it were, eventually, run branch tiles that have about taken the water out of Bell Oak. In this connection, let me again refer to the area of low ground in the middle of the hamlet, and surrounded by higher ground, lying on both sides of the road, and which was frequently, before being tiled, filled with water. The roadway at this spot was built on logs, a corduroy road. These logs were pulled out when the County Road Commission graded the road for a County Road in 1924. This low ground in the center of our village was probably a contributing cause to a situation existing about that time when the people living around where the store stood referred to those living on the high ground around where Ralph Turner lives as "Canadians", and there was almost a feud existing between the two sides. It has also been reported to me by some old-timers that the boys used to put on their skates at the side of the road in Bell Oak and skate to Sauger Lake.

I have now recorded how our village grew from a mill in the woods and a couple of houses to about the it is at the present time---a period of growth that comprised only about five years; a growth that would be considered rapid, even at the present time---a development that saw a mill erected, another rebuilt after being destroyed by fire, a couple of shops, and an equal number of stores; about 25 houses, with an equal quota of barns, the organizing of a Fraternal Society (possibly two), the founding of a church, and growth of the school enrollment until it exceeded any number noted in recent years. And, if I were to describe it as a "Boom Town", I would be quite correct, for it had a raw, unpainted look---a huddle of a new houses, many without paint; mills and shops already looking weather-beaten with their rough roofs and rusty smokestacks; muddy or dusty roads with the stumps from the lately-fallen trees everywhere in evidence; roads and paths everywhere covered with the sawdust and bark from the constant movement of logs, stave bolts, and wood and lumber of a mill town; the whole hamlet framed in a backdrop of woods and swamp that had not been back very far on any of the surrounding farms.

And, from the stories that have been related to me, its residents were typical residents of a frontier or woodsman's town—a truly "rough and ready" population that wore handmade suits, dresses, and boots or shoes; where long whiskers were more in evidence than in a town celebrating its 100th birthday today; a town where whisky could be bought from the grocery store for dollar a gallon; and where, on Saturday nights, there might be quite a scrap between the gangs from different localities. It was also a nice town—a friendly place inhabited by the biggest-hearted people in the world, as I learned by first-hand contact a few years later, when

I, a bare foot kid, played in their yards and barns, went into their houses for cookies, spent my pennies in the stores, paraded, along with about twenty more boys, up the streets, making more noise than fifty Indians, played hide-and seek all over town 'til ten or eleven o'clock at night, whooping and hollering like wild Comanche's, or shooting our firecrackers from the store porch of David Fisher, when it was only by the sheerest luck that we didn't burn the store down every Fourth of July.

Now, before we follow the further development of our little village on a year-to-year basis, let us examine some of the conditions prevalent in the lives of the people living in our neighborhood, what families comprised our countryside, what work they were engaged in, and something about their recreation, schools, etc., in the halcyon days of 1870-1872, when our town of Bell Oak was having its largest growth of all the 100 years of its existence. This run-down of the activities of the community of that period is taken from a diary kept during those years by Jonas Malcolm Avery, who lived for 45 years on the farm now owned by Ray Wilson, now numbered as 4924 Haslett Road (in 2011 owned by Ronald Fitzgerald).

OUR DAILY LIVES

The people surrounding our village during those years came here to trade, to get logs sawed, for horseshoeing and repair work, for barrels and other items of the cooperage industry, to the post office for mail, to catch the “stage” (a current designation for the vehicle—a spring wagon—that was run once, twice, and later, each day of the week to the Plank Road, and after the coming of the railroad, to the station established by the railroad in McPherson’s woods, now Webberville), driven by some resident of Bell Oak who also took charge of the express shipments and drew the light freight for the stores. They also came to our village in the evenings to attend church services in the schoolhouse, Lodge in the hall over the store, the Spelling Schools, Lyceums, or Examination Days (for teachers), all a part of our school system of those days, when adults in the community took more interest in, and exercised more control over, our schools than we do in our more modern times.

The schoolhouse was also the place where the last rites were given for the pioneers, some of whom had been our first settlers, who passed to their reward during these years—the mourners and friends walking the short distance to our burial ground, keeping time to the tolling of the bell in the belfry.

This school building (or the hall) was the place of holding the speeches and political rallies (and I have understood that the citizens of that time were very enthusiastic supporters of our two political parties—and some others that have been forgotten), holding rallies, having torchlight parades with uniformed marching groups (there was a group of fifty in Bell Oak), and raising flagpoles. The Democrats employed a tall and slender hickory, leaving the top branch on it to identify it as being the emblem of their party after “Old Hickory” Andrew Jackson, while the Republicans settled for a tamarack or larch, similarly marked, each faction striving to erect one taller than the other.

And sometimes, putting up a “wigwam” or log house, in nearby towns, as a rallying place for their activities. On occasion, if their particular political party or other issue was successful in the election, to fire the anvils as a gesture of their happiness over their victory over the other party. Shooting the anvils was also the accepted method of welcoming the coming of daylight on the morning of the Fourth of July, though different groups have been known to start those festivities soon after midnight, wheeling the heavy anvils all around the school district, setting off a charge in front of everyone’s house, which made sleep pretty much of an impossibility. Now, as few of my readers ever saw the anvils fired, it may be of interest to describe the method a good-sized cannon. An anvil was procured from the blacksmith shop and usually placed in the middle of the road; the hole in the face of the anvil that was provided for the “hardie” was filled full of black powder (about an ounce) a “train” of powder laid along the face, and another anvil laid face down on the first one. A bonfire was burning, and a long iron rod was heated red-hot on one end, which, when drawn across the train of powder, made a tremendous report, with the anvils flying—sometimes several feet. Black powder was available at the stores at a cost of about forty cents a pound, so plenty of noise could be made with a reasonable expenditure of fund.

Neither, let it be assumed that the residents of our community in that period neglected their daily tasks, nor that they had a lot of idle time to devote to these interests, for if the old adage “Man works from sun to sun, but woman’s work is never done” ever applied to the activities of any people, it was true of our residents in the years of the 1870s, as I shall try to illustrate before we resume our chronological examination of the growth of our village.

Their lives were largely centered around the forest surrounding their homes; the farmer working in the woods in the winter, clearing new fields, handling the logs and lumber for the new building, splitting rails for fences, and cutting wood for their season’s fuel. Even the dwellers in the village were splitting and piling wood for their stoves, building fences and sidewalks with the boards sawed from the neighboring woods. This also concerned those in the village who were available as “day hands”, for if they went to the adjoining farms to work at a “going wage” of seventy-five cents per day, they would be working in the timber except during the planting and harvesting seasons. And those engaged in the manufacture of various things—like vehicles, tools, turned articles, and furniture—in our village were also using the wood sawed from the trees that the farmers and woodsmen had brought from their woods a season or two before.

They had weather such like we have had the last few years—its having been recorded that the winter of 1870 was very mild and “open”, with no snow until March; while the winter of 1872 was the coldest recorded in many years, the Weather Bureau still referring to December 24 of that year, when the temperature was reported to have fallen to -35 degrees.

Most of the field and woods work was being done with oxen; the Supervisor, David B. Phelps, reported more oxen than horses in 1870. To market their grain, they had to draw it to Owosso, Fenton, Pontiac, or Dexter for milling; they could get their wheat or corn made into flour or meal at Williamston or Fowlerville; for drugs, they went to Perry Center (Old Perry); to board a train, they went to Laingsburg, Bennington, or Owosso. To harvest the grain they cradled, raked and bound by hand (I do not believe that any reapers had been used in the community at this period); much of the hay was similarly cut with scythes, including much marsh hay that was cut and stacked on the marshes, to be drawn out during the winter the marsh was frozen, some of which was “put up” by persons at least ten miles away. During this period they had a very dry summer (1871, the year of the great Chicago fire), when the marshes got afire and hundreds of stacks of marsh hay were burned and the neighbors fought fires for several days and nights. When threshing time came, the separators were run by horsepower—David Critchett and James Sullivan being two of the owners of such outfits at that time (it was a few years later before any portable steam engines were used locally). John S. Pitts and Delos A. Smith were probably the only owners of mowing machines in the near vicinity while J. M. Avery had bought a mowing machine and rake in Owosso in 1872.

Other occupations involving the use of timber were the making of barrel hoops—William H. Lum having as many as two thousand piled in his woods east of town—while Solomon Pettingill had boiled ashes down to make potash or pearlash on the same farm.

Other asheries that were operating at that time were those of Oscar Perry on Sam Cornell's farm and to Selfridge brothers on the farm now owned by Mrs. Bekaert on Moyer Road.

They were making their own soap, carding and knitting their own wool, and making butter and cheese from the milk from the family cows, which were mostly Durhams or Shorthorns. Holsteins were unknown in the area until fifteen or twenty years later. They had large orchards, and apples found a ready market, many going to the lumber camps in the "pineries" which were then no further away than Chesaning or St. Charles and the area between those towns. Henderson was where our residents went to hunt deer.

If they wanted cider made, their apples went to the press of Mr. Hallett, who lived where Lew and Christine Merignac now reside; if apple butter as a spread for their bread or filling for their cakes was the commodity desired, their apples were taken to Mr. Alonzo Doolittle, who lived where Chris and Dora Dansby do now.

If they needed a new or stronger ox yoke, they visited Mr. Doty on Center (now Bell Oak Road), across from Roy and Amy Graham's. If they wanted to make rag carpets or color some materials, carpet warp and dyestuffs were required, they could be secured at the wagon shop of Robert and William O. Fisher, a wagon being priced at \$100.00. Deer and other hides were tanned or grained by J. M. Avery and others, while boots and shoes and other leather work were done by Robert Kline of Bell Oak. J.M. Avery and John Camp were also cobblers in the near vicinity.

Their houses, as well as their barns, were timber frames, which required a "raising" with the help of many of their neighbors. The roofs, which up to this date were all built on straight rafters—gambrel roofs having not as yet appeared in the vicinity—were covered with shingles sawed at our local mill. Every man had to work on the roads at least one day to pay his "Poll Tax" and then maybe several more days according to the amount of the valuation of his taxable property. This work was largely concerned with clearing new road right-of-ways or building "corduroy" or crossways in the low places. To do this, they were "warned out" by the Pathmaster, who was elected by acclamation for an established Road District, which was only about a mile in extent, the number of such Districts having reached 74 at the time of the abandonment of that system some fifty years ago.

Employment outside that offered by the surrounding farms, usually on a daily basis, was very scarce. Neighboring saw or stave mills, work on the new railroads, or in the lumber camps of the pine woods comprised most of the employment opportunities.

The different families comprising the trading area of the hamlet known as Bell Oak at the beginning of the 1870s, some of whom will be remembered by some of my readers, but many of whom have moved away and have long since been forgotten, were; the Lawries, Leaches, Halletts, Colbys, Southards, Liverances, Castalines, Prines, Crandalls, Perrys, Jacksons, Wolcotts, Chapmans, and the Hartwigs, Goodell, Corborn, LaRowe, Harper, Fletcher, and Young families on the Locke side of the County Line; in Conway, the Brittens, Kelleys, Valentines, Dorns,

Brimleys, Alvords, and the families of Carr, Washousen, Barnes, Kelsey, Keeler, Brown, Newman, Davis, Glenny, and Rose, along with others further away, traded in our stores and shops, received their mail from our post office, attended church in our schoolhouse, and brought their dead to their final resting place in our cemetery. Nor have we mentioned the names of the Coles, Chamberlains, and Pinkneys, who have lived in our community for a couple of decades more than a century and have watched our village grow. Most of these people came and went, ever since the time when our present Bell Oak Road was but a dim trail through the woods and the low ground leading east from Avery Road (Morrice Road to you).

And now, having led my readers “all around the sabbush”, so to speak, while I reviewed the state of our society of the years of 1870-1872, let us return to our chronological examination of the growth and development of our village during the period which will bring it down to a time when a few, a very few, of my readers will be able to remember our town even better than I can, a fact that should lead me to strive for more accuracy in dates, and more descriptions of people, incidents, etc., than in the story of the years gone by, if it is possible.

The Village: 1873 - 1889

The year of 1873 brought many more changes: the saw mill was sold by Dunckel and Brown to Waterman and Hovey, newcomers to Bell Oak. This firm owned much timber land in Locke in Section 15 where Chris Schults and Dick Dansby's lands are and in Section 1 and 12, long known as "the Hovey place", now land owned by Mr. Bauer and others.

The mill was probably operated at peak capacity during this period, as they were reported to be shipping all kinds of lumber, sawed stuff for the manufacture of wagons, etc., and turned material. A building stood on the north side of the road, about west of Elmer Hayne's residence, where the turning much of the surrounding country. That building was later moved to the Hovey farm on Herrington Road and used for a barn until it burned some 30 years ago. The mill was valued at its highest assessed valuation by the supervisors for tax purposes at this period, the mill being assessed at \$1,500 as real estate, in addition to a considerable assessment for personal property.

The stave mill also changed hands during that year. William Goldie, who owned considerable land in Section 10 and vicinity, mostly along Lovejoy Road, purchased the interest of L.F. Cole and H.D. Rogers in the stave mill; Rogers took some of the Goldie land in exchange. Cole seems to have left Bell Oak at this time, and it is believed that Rogers left the Bell Oak stores after having been in the different stores for about ten years. Goldie was in possession of the stave mill and the 18 ½ acres on which it was built for three or four years when he sold the mill equipment and, I believe, it was moved to Webberville. While here, he built a small store on the corner of his land, and it was operated by him and others for a few years but has been gone for many years. It stood about directly in front of Roy Casady's home. There were also two or three small shacks that were occupied for houses on the stave mill property, as before stated, shacks that have likewise been gone for many years.

John S. Pitts also sold the last of his land southeast of the village to Marvil Hawkins during that year; Dexter Denio sold the blacksmith shop to Israel Atkins and Castaline; Denio opened a shop in Section 3 or 4 about where John Ruppert lives.

There were two new firms in the merchandising line in the village—Charles Spencer and George Fisher Jr. were probably in the "big store", while Peter V. Fisher and David B. Phelps were possibly doing business in the "Dunckel" store.

The year 1874 changed the picture less than other years, but a few changes may be recorded. Mrs. Delinda Hitchcock sold her home—the middle one Maple Avenue (now gone) – to Benjamin A. Brown, and Charles Grannis owned the Rogers home, now that of Hill VanRiper. I do not know what contribution Grannis made to the history of Bell Oak, but I believe that another Grannis (first name unknown, and who might be a son or brother of Charles) was connected with the stave mill while it was still operating in Bell Oak. And, of interest at about this date in the notation of the Assessment Rolls that the valuation of the stave mill was placed

at \$1,400, or as much as the high assessment on the saw mill, which would indicate that quite a considerable business was being done there during this period.

John Lyon, of Section 1, owned the blacksmith shop, although I do not know if he was the operator. Peter V. Fisher had also traded his house ("D4") to John Shermon for land in Section 12, which was probably mostly uncleared land at that time, and where he and his family have always since resided. It is now the Kenneth Fisher farm.

P.V. Fisher also owned, about this time, twenty acres that formerly belonged to Edward Barnes, now a part of Floyd Wagner's land. H.R. Carnes also sold to Shermon, but I do not know if Shermon ever became a resident or not. It was shortly after this time that the death of Mr. Carnes occurred, and the Ritual of the I.O.O.F. was read for the first time by the Bell Oak Lodge at his funeral. Mr. Carnes was one of the charter members—the first Treasurer of the Lodge—and probably the first of its membership to pass away.

Another addition at about this time, and which is shown on the map of 1874, was the building of a blacksmith shop (marked "D8") on a small lot about the size of the building, located on the west side of Smith Avenue and taken out of the Smith farm. It had additions, probably built at different times, extending south along the road, with doors from the road into each, until there was a blacksmith shop, then a wagon and carriage shop, with a paint shop on the south end, each shop having the appropriate equipment for the use to which it was intended. It is difficult to say just who operated this shop during each year, but it can be stated that the shop was in continuously from its building until about 1910, when Frank E. Boardman acquired the property and closed it, keeping some of the tools and selling the building, which he had rebuilt but a few years before, to Arthur Chase, where it now stands as an addition to the barn on the farm of Euphemia Chase. The lot later became the property of the Locke Mutual Telephone Corporation and was used for pole storage for a good many years; it is now grown up to brush with the low ground surrounding it.

The year 1875 saw Oshea G. Dunckel owning the "big store", and Polk's Gazetteer of that year indicates that he was the only merchant handling groceries and hardware. Dunckel was also the postmaster. Other listings by that same publication included: Dr. H.A. Atkins, Allopath Physician; Dr. C. O'Neill, Allopath Physican (he probably lived outside of Bell Oak); Atkins (Israel) and Company and Barber and Castaline were blacksmiths; Waterman and Hovey, manufacturers of lumber and wagon makers' stock; William Goldie, manufacturer of staves and heading; L.J. Beebe, George Gage, William H Lum, Delos A. Smith, and A.J. ("Jack") Spencer were listed as masons; Fisher and Pettingill were wagon makers. This new partner of William O. Fisher's was John Pettingill, son of P.P. and Louisa Pettingill of the village, who was to spend most of his life as a blacksmith, painter, and builder of farm tools. There was also a photographer in Bell Oak making portraits of the local residents, the name of whom is unknown to me, although Charles Kline, son of Robert (the shoemaker), was a resident at this time, and he became an accomplished photographer and portrait painter, making pictures in the village a few years later.

Another enterprise that was characteristic of that period was the "Select School" held in the schoolhouse during vacations between the regular terms, when some teacher, who was usually a better-than-average instructor, would secure the schoolhouse and form a class, charging tuition. The pupils, usually of an advanced grade, came from an area embracing several miles and boarded with some family for the duration of the school. Many of our early teachers were trained for successful careers in the schoolroom in these schools. William Dillingham, Carrie Rogers, George B. Malone, and Florence Rann were teachers in the Select Schools.

From the year 1875 to about 1878 or 1879, there do not seem to be many changes, so we may pass them over without too much regard for detail. John Case, a cabinetmaker, was located here during these years, and John Lamereaux, a young graduate of medical school, located here for a short time. He went to Fowlerville, where he had a lifetime practice.

David M. Dunckel, son of Oshea, was keeping the store, although Oshea was listed as being postmaster, a position he held for many years. About 1879, George Delbert Spencer graduated for the Detroit College of Medicine and located in Bell Oak. "Del", as he was known to many people for miles around, was the son of Truman and Susan Ann (Fisher) Spencer and had lived here since his parents came to build the mill and start the town when he was four years of age. He had acquired a good education, having attended the school in Howell and Lansing and the University of Michigan before attending medical school and was well-versed in medicine. After his graduation, he married Rose E. Kline, daughter of Robert and Maria. She was a schoolteacher and had lived in Bell Oak almost all of her life. They had two children, Gertrude Jackson, of Wayland, who passed away during the year, and Charles Truman ("Pete"), who became a successful physician, practicing in Webberville and the surrounding community before his death in 1923.

George Fisher Jr. owned the store and house on the north side of the road during those years, but is not known whether or not he conducted a business there. Soon, he and his family moved to Webberville and afterward to Detroit where he was a commercial photographer. Cook and Loughlin of Fowlerville were owners of the blacksmith shop, probably a title acquired by virtue of a lien for blacksmithing supplies sold to some unfortunate operator. Herman Evans and M.L. Stewart were Bell Oak residents during this period, although in what capacity cannot be determined. Outside of the village, Marvil P. Hawkins had bought from John S. Pitts the 70 acres east and south of the mill lot, and a few years later bought the Countryman and Fisher lots ("E8", "E9", and "E10") and made the Countryman house the farmhouse ("E8"), while "E10" stood vacant back of the other house for many years. Noah Sparhawk had also bought the farm of Betsey Lum after her husband, William H., died. Sparhawk was father-in-law to Dr. Lanford of Webberville, and was a partner with him in a drug store at that place. That farm was without an occupant for 10 or more years, until purchased by my father, Arthur Graham, in 1889.

A little later, Daniel Dunckel owned the "big store", and Warren Barber, the store on the north side. David H. Dunckel also seems to have been the owner if both stores some of this time.

Michael Grannis had acquired Goldie's property, though the stave mill had probably been closed down. Charles Grannis conveyed his house ("A2") to Harvey Walters, who had become Jack Spencer's son-in-law. George B. Malone, who was the head of the Webberville Schools, married Miss Fannie Atkins, daughter of Dr. Harmon and Harriet Atkins, and had acquired the Hitchcock place ("D6"). Mrs. Cynthia Dunning was living in Susan Chandler's house. N.P. Stockwell and Mrs. Rachel Corbett were residents, but in a unknown location. Dr. George D. Spencer had located in the place marked "D4", bought from Shermon.

Outside the village, there were changes; Robert Pinkney, son of John D. and Rebecca (Fisher) Pinkney, had bought 40 acres east of Tooley's from his grandfather, Robert Fisher; Charles Chandler had added 20 acres bought from Elisha Kline to his farm; and George Price had succeeded M.P. Hawkins. Hugh Loughlin had also acquired title to the wagon shop, likely in the same manner in which he had had an interest in our blacksmith shops.

Another development in the Township that is known to but few people living at the present, and which must have been of much interest to the residents of Bell Oak in the period just before 1880, was the building of a couple of saw mills and a stave mill in Section 36, near the Gamby Bridge—one by Daniel Dinturff, owner of the entire section, which was, until this time, covered with some of the finest oak timber in Michigan, the other by Starks and Nichols. Their mill was on the north side of the river, between the old bridge and the new one. The Dinturff mill is thought to have been in the fields just north of the road leading to the old bridge. There were several mill shacks built and several families were residents. The mills burned, were rebuilt, burned again, and the enterprise, though reaching considerable proportions, was soon abandoned.

Sometime, also during these years, Lester G. Royce purchased the Frederick Renn farm (the Royce's coming here from Deerfield Township): soon after his arrival, he was married to Miss Ida Dillingham of Conway and remained on that farm many years.

In 1880, John Pettingill had acquired the Abigail Spencer house, Mrs. Spencer having passed away. John's father, Paschal, who was keeping a toll gate a little ways north of Brighton, had died in 1879, and John and his mother Louisa moved into the house of his grandmother, Mrs. Spencer, where they lived for many years. It is "A5". Oshea Dunckel returned to the milling industry, purchasing a half interest in the saw mill from Hovey and Waterman. George B. Malone engaged in the mercantile business during the year, buying the "big store" ("D3") and operating it. He also bought the Carnes' house adjoining his home from Shermon ("D7"). Malone was also, about this time, extensively engaged in the production of charcoal on several farms north and east of Bell Oak, having several people cutting wood and burning the charcoal in the woods, and drawing it to Webberville, where he rigged up an ingenious device for dumping the charcoal from the wagons into the railroad cars without handling it. The market for charcoal was furnished by the Detroit Foundry Company, which burned it in its furnaces. They had thirteen kilns along the railroad east of Webberville where they bought wood and burned it for their own use.

Another newcomer in the mercantile field was Ira Hawes, who was in two or more different

stores during his stay in Bell Oak, and I am unable to always follow his moves from store to store.

An issue of Polk's Gazetteer for the year of 1881 places the population of Bell Oak at 125 people and states that the "stage" was carrying passengers to Webberville for a fare of 50 cents and getting the mail at the same interval. The same publication gives Ira Hawes and Son as the only merchants during that year, probably in the little store on the north side which was owned by David M. Dunckel (who lived on "E3"). Dunckel has also bought some of the Fisher land in Section 24 owned briefly by Robert Pinkney. The "big store" was owned at this time by one Miles Williams, although it may have been unoccupied for a time. O.G. Dunckel was the postmaster, a post he held for many years. He had a small store adjoining his house on the west (marked "E1st") and had formerly been in business there. His business card said he was a dealer in "Groceries, Flour, Feed, and Yankee Notions". A similar business announcement from the "big store" at about the same time said they were handling "Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, Clothing, Crockery, Glassware, Yankee Notions, Etc.". This was quite an impressive line of merchandise, but I shall have to leave to my reader's imagination what was included in the line of "Yankee Notions" that seemed to be a popular line at both stores. There was another small store; it should be remembered, on the stave mill property, at this time owned by Mike Grannis, though it is not known how long it was kept as a store.

James Herman ("Herm") Spencer, the youngest of the Spencer sons of Truman and Susan, had taken over the operation of the farm ("now Lynn's) and shortly after added 40 acres (now Cameron's) to the farm. This "forty" had been a "nonresident" description on the tax rolls all these years while the surrounding farms were being improved. The woods along the present Morrice Road, at Royce Road, was a favorite camping ground for Gypsies, who were frequent visitors to the community. Loron ("Lo") Beebe had sold to George Delaney; W.O. Fisher and wife Belle (Pettingill) had bought the house then standing on the Arnold Andrews lot form "Del" Spencer. Joseph Waterworth was a resident this year, and Fred Blakeslee was a newcomer to Bell Oak. He married Katherine Pettingill and was in the blacksmith and wagon shops for quite a few years. An interesting item during this year was an assessment of \$60.00 to Dr. Langford for "Personal Property", which was for his driving horses which he had turned out on the farm his father-in-law, Noah Sparhawk, when they got sore feet from too much roadwork. Years later, we used to pick up small shoes from those horses on that farm by the dozen.

Luke Angell had transferred his forty acres to Peter V. Fisher in 1882, and David M. Dunckel had traded his forty to Waterman and Hovey for a half interest in the saw mill. This made the firm "Dunckel and Son", his father, O.G. Dunckel, owning the other one-half interest. They also owned the vacant lot designated as "E12".

The old Pettingill place (“E5”) had been sold to Adam Stephens, probably not a resident; H.D. Rogers owned the Hitchcock lot, probably securing it from George B. Malone, who had again resumed the occupation of a schoolteacher, but it is not known whether Rogers became a resident again or not. Other changes saw Fred Ewers following Israel Atkins as owner of “E14” ’ and Fred Blakeslee buying the Carnes (“D7”) house. W.O. Fisher was operating a wagon shop in the building on the west side of Smith Avenue (“D8”)—a considerable business, judging from the amount of his Personal Property Assessment (\$1,000.00).

Hugh Loughlin still owned the old wagon shop (“A4”), and John Lyon owned the old blacksmith shop across the road (“E4”); they may have both been unused. There were usually, each year, a few people listed as taxpayers, apparently residents of Bell Oak; William Norris was so listed in Section 24 during this year, while another source states that Eugene O’ Dell was a carriage painter in Bell Oak.

Later, possibly about the year 1883, W.O. Fisher owned both shops; also about this time, John Nichols had secured the Old Wagon Shop lot on the north side of the road; from this time on, it was probably used as a residence, a small house having been added to the east side. Ira Hawes and Son had bought the “big store” (“D3”) and were in business there. Fred Ewers bought the stave mill land of 18 ½ acres and is reported to have conducted a store there, but at what date, I am unable to say. He did sell his house (“E14”) to Joseph Waterworth; Rogers sold to Dr. Spencer (“D6”); David Dunckel sold the store property on the north side (where the present store is or was) to Hiram Palmiteer. Outside of town, Waterman and Hovey sold their 40 acres to James Harrington; his father, a few years later, lived across the road: years later, the road on the County Line was named “Harrington Road” after these families. Benjamin Brock also sold the land where they had lived for about 40 years to Michael Burke. It is now Ralph Teeple’s farm.

There seemed to have been few changes the next year, but 1885 saw many changes, especially in the people who were residents. Dr. Harmon A. Atkins died, after practicing in the Township for more than 35 years, about 17 of which were in Bell Oak. He was a good physician, as well as a poet and historian. He contributed articles about birds and their habits to journals on that day, some of which may yet be found in the Michigan State Library. Another death during that year, of a prominent resident, was that of Andrew Jackson (“Jack”) Spencer, who had been a real estate dealer, speculator, mason, and whose house had been home for many a traveling man and agent. He was also reported to have tried the foundry business in Bell Oak, but with what success I have been unable to learn. Also, during that year, Thomas (“Uncle Tom”) Spencer had removed from Penn Yan, Yates County, New York, which was the former home of the Spencer’s, to Bell Oak, had bought twenty acres from his brother, Jack, and a house in the village (“D4”) from William O. Fisher. His wife was Caroline; they had a daughter, Mary, who married Elbert S Sowle a few years later. Harvey Walters also bought, about this year, the farm of J.M. (“Mac”) Avery and wife, Marcia, who had cleared it up and built the buildings, living there since their marriage in 1845. It is now the Wilson farm. Harriet Spencer acquired their house in Bell Oak (“A2”) and lived there until her death after the turn of the century. John VanHoughton bought the Pettingill house from Stephens (“E5”), coming into the village from the farm north of the schoolhouse where the Pinkney brothers now reside.

John Pettingill and Fred Blakeslee, brothers-in-law, were in the wagon shop while George Teachout and George Pinkney were in the blacksmith shop. George Pinkney, a young man of about 22 years, was just beginning at a trade he followed all his life, spending many years at the forge and anvil.

The population figures given for this year of 1885 (150) seem to indicate that the houses were all occupied, and that the removal of some of its residents to Leroy (Webberville) a decade before had not caused it to acquire the designation of a "ghost town" .

Another year, Lester W. Benjamin had purchased the Tooley farm, having come here from the Boardman District after that farm had been owned by nonresidents for a couple of years. David W. Fisher had also acquired the farm across the road from his father Robert, and James R. Fisher, another son, was living on the acre on the corner (Bell Oak and Herrington Roads). James Herman Spencer had divided up his land, selling the north forty to David Cole, who had lived for a few years on the "Big Marsh" and who, during his occupancy of this 40 acres, had lived in a house at the east end of Hoxie Road on Morrice Road. The 40 acres south of that (of which Robert Cameron now lives on 21 acres) was sold by Spencer to Nathaniel Guthrie, who built the Cameron house. Spencer also, about this time, gave the Methodist Class a site for the church, deeded about 15 small parcels to as many of the members just back of the church lot where they built the horse sheds (these lots are now in the church yard, although not included in the description of the boundary lines of the church lot), and sold an addition to the cemetery which is the section just back of the church.

Another change in the near neighborhood was the transfer of the lands of William T. Wallace, who had died, to Jacob Stabler, probably a nonresident. Wallace, one of the first settlers in Section 24, was a very prominent man in the affairs of the Township and had been a resident for more than 40 years. His lands were those of John West and Gordon Hicks, as well as some in Section 25. George H. Collings was also a newcomer from Unadilla, succeeding VanHoughten on the farm now owned by his grandsons, Arthur and Wesley Pinkney. In the Village, there were few changes, but Blakeslees seem to be living in the Langford house ("D5"), while "D7" (the Carnes house) may have belonged to Delos A. Smith, who is supposed to have been its owner some of the time. Henry Corey was the owner of the store property on the north side ("A4"), possibly another of the nonresidents.

Another resident coming to Bell Oak about this time, and who seems to have been in some kind of business, was John Milemon, who had a Personal Property Assessment of several hundred dollars on the tax roll of that year, as did John VanHoughten, which leads me to believe that they were in some sort of mercantile business, judging from the amount of their assessments.

The next year, 1887 Mrs. Phoebe Dennison and her son, Ira Thayer, had sold their lot ("E2" and probably including "E13") to Luman Brown, and had moved to the forty acres at the corner of Haslett and Corey Roads, where Ira was a resident all his life. Asa Camp had also become a resident, having married Esther Dunckel, but I am unable to locate their home during these early years. James H. Spencer had also sold all of his land except the house ("B1"),

Elisha M. Ney becoming the owner of 36 acres on the north side of the road (from the village to the schoolhouse), including the “Red House” (Lynn’ s) and the barn, which stood facing the other direction (west).

Harvey Walters had also returned to Bell Oak, operating the “big store” (“D3”) which he had bought after selling the Mac Avery farm to Patrick Crahan. Lester G. Royce also bought, during this year, the store property on the north side (“B3” and “B4”). Let us recall that this lot had been the location of residence occupied by Israel King and Thomas E. Bently while they farmed the land just east of there. Bently had sold off a small piece, 30 by 82 feet in size, and had oved the original store onto the lot. He and others had “kept store” , possibly without interruption every year since. It is also known, from the recollections of residents then familiar with Bell Oak, that the residence, known as the “Plim” Allen house (though for what reason is unknown), had burned down. It has also been verified, from the memory of those who were acquainted with our village at that period, that the store was quite small, and that it rested on the ground without much of a foundation. Mr. Royce tore this store down and built the part of the present store that stood there until an addition was recently made. Royce’s also built onto the house at about the same time. They operated the store and it has been suggested to me that they were in this store two different times.

Another addition to the community this year (or it may have been late the year before) was the building of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the hill just west of the “Red House” on the east side of the cemetery. Data about the building of the church is very scarce and will be covered as fully as possible when I write the history of that organization. A feature that comes to mind was the well-beaten path running along the fence on the north side of the road, from the stores to the church and further out into the neighborhood. This path, of course, could have been worn by many feet and for many years before the building of the church, but it was well-remembered fact that many people, numbering, in fact, a sizeable congregations, would be walking up this path every time church services were held. There were, of course, a large number of people who walked to our village from a distance of several miles, principally for the purpose of getting their mail; a we; remembered route led across lots down the farm lanes of my father and that of Lester Royce, and on the northeast nearly to Nicholson, many patrons from that direction patronizing the Locke Post Office.

John Milemon had also left the village, owning the Wallace lands for a short time, and then leaving the neighborhood. Lewis and Susan Benjamin had also sold their land in Section 25, and became partners with their son, Lester, living in the farmhouse with Lester and Ida for some years when they retired to Bell Oak. A year later, changes occurred in the Fisher lands— Andrew, the youngest son, owned the south 40 acres, while James, who lived on the corner, had the north forty. The land of Peter V. Fisher had also been transferred to his sons—Francis H. (“Art”) succeeding his father on what is now the Kenneth Fisher farm, while S. Edward (“Ed”) Fisher was on the forty acres just south of Chandler’ s, now part of the Rothney farm. In the village, George Price, who lived on the farm just east of the mill lot, had just bought the “big store” and probably operated it at this period. Later, after his death, his widow Charlotte and sons, Gene and George, were in the store on the north side for a few years. James Herman (“Herm”) Spencer and wife, Ellen (McKie), about this time had purchase a lot on the corner

across from the store (“E15” —Adams’), and soon built a house there, the exact time of its erection I am unable to give. This house was erected with tamarack lumber secured from logs that grew in the swamp on both sides of Bell Oak Road just east of Stow Road, which, until there was a fire in the swamp during one of the dry summers, had been very thick with tamarack—so thick, in fact, that nothing could be seen across the swamp.

Another resident, during this year, was George Palmer, with a sizeable Personal Property Assessment; while it is not known what his occupation might have been, it can be imagined that it was mostly and investment in horseflesh, as he was a large dealer in horses, later running a livery stable in Fowlerville for many years.

And, in 1889, we may again quote from Polk’ s Gazetteer of that date, which states that Bell Oak was being supplied with daily mail from Webberville to the Locke Post Office, of which George D. Spencer was the Postmaster, and that the person carrying the mail was taking passengers for a fare of twenty-five cents. It lists O.G. Dunckel and son David as proprietors of the saw mill, and Blakeslee and Pettingill as owners of the wagon shop. George H. Price was operating the “big store” on the south side of the road, while Ira Hawes seems to have been in the store newly built by Lester Royce.

Jerome R. Fairbanks, a Civil War veteran (who had married Mrs. Mary Camp, mother of Asa Camp), had moved to the village where he lived in the house on “D6” , and was, by occupation, a carpenter. Oshea G. Dunckel was, for a few years about this period, the Justice of the Peace, and he also represented his neighbors as attorney in actions before other Justice Courts. This period saw much activity in action at law, judging from some of the dockets of the local courts, actions that brought many spectators to the trials, making it one of the most interesting events of the time. Many of the marriages at this date were also performed by Justices in their homes. “Squire” Miller and Charles Chandler were also in office about this time in or near the Bell Oak community.

James Herman (“Herm”) Spencer had also, about this time, after several years in school, become a registered pharmacist. About this date, he bought a part of the lot owned by Mrs. Maria Kline, upon which he built a store in which to conduct his business, which was a well-stocked drug store. The Post Office was later housed in this building, where it remained for many years. This store is marked “D2” . The upstairs rooms were finished off for a home for the newly-organized lodge of the Knights of the Maccabees, which had many members in the surrounding areas of Locke and Conway Townships. It was never used for any other purpose as long as Herm was in the store, although it was sometimes mad available for speeches, drain meetings, or traveling showmen. The “Good Templar Hall” , above the “big store” , was converted to living quarters by D.W. Fisher a few years later. The population given about this time was 200, which was the largest figure ever given.

And now, having brought this account of the growth and development of our one and only town of Bell Oak by a more or less chronological pathway down to the year of 1889, let me pause with this story while I fill in some detail concerning the life of Bell Oak during those thirty years, or so, since it became a hamlet in the woods—some stories that have been told to me about some of its residents while, during this intermission, our story can gather strength and momentum for its passage through the “Gay 90s” and on into the present century.

ERRATA

First, some corrections from information received since the preceding pages were typed:

The Pinkney Schoolhouse was built on land secured from the heirs on Ira Wilder (it is not known whether or not Wilder was a resident), and was called the Pinkney School after Thomas Pinkney, who had bought 240 acres from Almon Whipple of Howell in January, 1845 and lived across the road west of the schoolhouse. Orrin and Luana Lawson lived on the Wilder land soon after 1847, until their deaths about 1867. Thomas and Rebecca Pinkney and their family (correction: There was one son and five daughters who were pupils in the Pinkney School or older) came here from Genoa Township, east of Howell, where they were among the first settlers. They had come here from Salem, Washtenaw County, where they had also been first settlers, taking up land from the Government about 1827, and where their parents were also pioneer settlers.

Thomas Pinkney was a Methodist and there were Methodist meetings held in the schoolhouse shortly after it was built. He is also reported to have preached to the Indians from the door of a barn on the Pinkney land across the road from the home of Roy and Blanche Fulton. Thomas Pinkney died in 1849, Rebecca about ten years later. The elder daughters were married before their father's death – Mathilda, to Horace Chalker of Unadilla, who was a gunsmith and had a gun and blacksmith shop across from the schoolhouse and a little north, before the saw mill was built and Bell Oak was started; Charlotte, to Marvil P. Hawkins, also from Unadilla, and they were first residents on the present Harlacher farm, which was part of the Pinkney land.

I also stated in the story that Spencer had acquired the land where the Robert Cameron family now lives. I should have said that they bought the forty acres north of their eighty acres, which is now part of the Lockwood farm. It had been taken from the Government by Jefferson Pearse, who, with his wife Louana were first settlers in Phelpstown, living in Section 10, where Fred and Bertha Pinkney now reside. Pearse soon transferred this 40 acres to others, and it was in the hands of speculators until bought by Spencer. The field on the corner of Morrice and Royce Roads, referred to as a Gypsy camping ground, was not broken up from a stump field until about fifty-five years ago. It was through this woods and the Spencer land that the Spencer-Smith Drain was dug in 1872—one of the first drains in the Township. It provided an outlet for the water of Bell Oak, and most of the residents paid a Special Assessment to dig this drain. It drained the swamp west of West Cole Avenue so that it was cropped with the field for many years, although after a freshet there was a big pond such as it was before being drained. This drain was originally planned to drain some of the McKie land, which now is drained directly into Wolf Creek.

ANECDOTES

Before I print some stories of my own, I want to record a few stories of early Bell Oak, furnished to me by Mrs. Noreen Woodworth of Harper Woods, granddaughter of Truman Spence Fisher, who was born in the Fisher house on the mill lot (now the home of Ralph and Marian Turner) and great-granddaughter of George Fisher Jr., one of the founders of Bell Oak.

It was in the summer of 1860 the mill was flourishing, and George Jr. and Truman Spencer were beginning to prosper. They were ardent Republicans and took an active part in the campaign for Lincoln. Truman was a candidate for sheriff on the same ticket and both he and George Jr. stumped and campaigned for all they were worth! After the election, there was a big ball in Mason. For this momentous occasion, George Jr. went to Detroit and bought his wife the most beautiful silk dress he could find. It had yards and yards of flounces in the skirt and great hoops to hold it out so that she could hardly get through the door. It was the first silk dress that she had ever owned in her life, and it was said to be the first on in Bell Oak.

George Jr. planted the cottonwood tree in the front yard right after their house was completed. So, at the time of this story, the tree was about six years old. George Jr. owned two spotted carriage dogs that were also very good watch dogs. One morning, quite early, the family heard the all-firedest commotion out in the front yard. When they rushed out, they found that the dogs had three Indians treed in the cottonwood. These Indians wore the usual moccasins and leggings and breechclouts; but one of them had on a tall beaver hat with a feather stuck through the side, another wore the remnants of a brocade vest and very dirty white stock collar with a flowing tie, and the third one was decked out in a sort of frock coat with long tails and only one sleeve. The poor devils had come to beg food from the white people!

It seems that in the early days of settlement in Bell Oak, even as late as the 1860's, men carried their guns with them wherever they went. A few acres had been cleared around the scattered houses, but in between and all around, the woods were still pretty thick. One evening George Jr. and old Doc Atkins were out by the mill when they saw a bear nosing around at the edge of the woods. George raised his gun and shot the bear through the head. They hauled it home, skinned and dressed it out; but when it was cooked, it was so confounded though that even the dogs could not chew it. Anyway, the hide made a good rug!

Back in the days when my grandfather, Truman Fisher, was a kid, Bell Oak was a treasure trove of Indian relics. Old Doc Atkins, the next door neighbor, was an avid collector and young Truman was an enthusiastic explorer. But every time he found something worthwhile, Old Doc would wheedle it away from him. And then, if the article seemed rare enough, Doc would send it away to the Smithsonian Institution. So Truman decided to play a hoax on the old man.

He found a thin piece of soft stone, chiseled it into a smooth disk with a hole through the center, and then carved a lot of meaningless hieroglyphics on both sides. After this, he ground it with sand and water to soften the sharp edges, smoked it up good over an open fire, and finally buried it in damp leaf mold to finish the aging process.

After a time, he dug it up and carried it solemnly to Old Doc. Dr. Atkins was impressed, but mystified. He couldn't figure out what the object was or what it had been used for—so he packed it with great care and sent it to the Smithsonian. In due course of time he received an acknowledgement:

“A RARE FIND! UNQUESTIONABLY VERY ANCIENT! THE EXPERTS BELIEVE
IT TO BE SOME SORT OF WEIGHT USED ON SNARES OR NETS! !
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS RARE CONTRIBUTION!”

Doc was all puffed up with pride and importance, and Truman chortled in secret glee. This was ONE time he had put it over on his friend, Doctor Atkins.

One cold morning in early March 1861, Elizabeth Fisher, wife of George Jr., was in the kitchen preparing the noonday dinner. A great pot of beef and vegetable soup was bubbling on the range, and she had just finished removing the freshly baked bread from the oven. Suddenly the door swung open and there, crowding together, peering in, was a whole troop of Indians—eight or nine of them—chattering, sniffing, and making motions indicating that they were hungry.

Elizabeth was alone in the house with one month old Truman asleep in his cradle beside the range. She was too startled and frightened to speak—she just backed toward the cradle. But the Indians evidently accepted this passive resistance as an invitation, for the all cam jostling into the kitchen, grinning and licking their lips. One of them lifted the lid of the soup kettle, stuck in his finger, and tasted—Mmmmm Good! ! So without further ado he sat the kettle in the middle of the kitchen floor. The week's supply of fresh bread was torn in chunks to scoop or sop up the soup. When every last morsel was devoured, they trooped over to the cradle and stood looking at the baby, poking him playfully with their fingers, laughing, and chattering in their own language. Finally they left, with scarcely a glance or a nod at Elizabeth and disappeared into the woods.

But the next morning, she found just outside the kitchen door, a great, fat, buck deer, freshly killed—a token of gratitude for her hospitality.

It seems that prior to the establishment of the Bell Oak Cemetery, it was customary for each farm family to set aside a little section of its own land as a burial place for its dead. There was such a place on the Pinkney farm and another on the Robert Fisher farm. The Fisher plot was located on the forty acres which Robert sold to his father, George Sr., in 1856. After the establishment of the mill, when Bell Oak began to take on the characteristics of a village, it became necessary to make other arrangements.

From a study of Assessment Rolls and from things told me by Mrs. Elizabeth Hicks, it would appear that a parcel of land about two acres in size was purchased from Orrin Lawson about 1859 and laid out into six grave lots. John Pinkney was the first Sexton. When the day came and everything was ready, the people began to take up their dead from the many scattered little private graveyards for reburial in the cemetery. The unembalmed bodies in their flimsy worm-eaten coffins were in all stages of decomposition; as they were drawn along in open wagon, the odor was so horrible that even the horses were sick. I suppose it would be possible to catalogue quite a number of those who were moved by checking the date of death on the tombstones. Mrs. Hicks said her grandmother, Rebecca Pinkney was one, and she thought one or two of George Lansing Fisher's wives.

(Editor Max Graham's note: There were quite a few remembered places of burial besides those mentioned. On the land now owned by Orville Proud, on Roy Fulton's, then Cole land, across from the home of June and Cecil Moore (where there are one or more burials that have never been re-interred), on the former Scofield farm, on Archie Chamberlain's, and on part of the Strong farm on Bell Oak Road. I have been reliably informed that some of our pioneer settlers who died in early days couldn't be located when an attempt was made to remove them into the cemeteries. There were also quite a few removals to the Rowley Cemetery, established at about the same time as Bell Oak).

Thank you, Mrs. Woodworth, for these stories showing the life and times of our residents of 100 years ago. And now, here are a few more incidents about things and people gathered from many sources:

Rebecca Pitts, whom we have recorded as having entered land from the Government on April 10, 1837, and later settling on this land, is referred to in Durant's History of Ingham and Eaton Countries as: "The first female settler, a widow named Pitts, who, with one son, dared to face the hardships of pioneer life. With the help of her small boy she cleared a patch for corn and potatoes, working bare-headed and bare-armed, piling up the black and smoking brands of the newly cut fallow. For the first year she had hard work to drive the wolf from the door, but the wants of her little one nerved her to overcome all obstacles". John Sheldon Pitts, about ten years of age when his mother came to Phelpstown, grew up, became a schoolteacher, bought land next to that of his mother (land which is the site of the southeast corner of Bell Oak), married Hannah Tooley of Genoa, later married Prudence Street of Tyrone (who came to the Pinkney School to teach), sold his farm to Albert and Wilson Tooley, and went to the Southwest for his health, where he died in the Territory of Arizona. Rebecca Pitts, a widow, born about 1800, married Solomon Pettingill in 1841, the first marriage recorded in Phelpstown.

A few years ago, I had callers on Labor Day---Mr. Ferris Pitts of St. Louis, Missouri, and his sister, Miss Pitts, of Saginaw, who had stopped in the Bell Oak Cemetery looking for a "Pitts" lot, believing this to be the locality where their great grandmother, Rebecca, and their grandfather, John Sheldon Pitts, had lived. Not finding any markers (theirs is an unmarked lot), they inquired at the store and were sent to see me.

This is the story they told me about Rebecca Pitts:

Rebecca Sheldon married Asahel Pitts in Connecticut and the son, John Sheldon Pitts, was born. A few years later, her husband gathered up some money, partly from the sale of goods and furniture, and went west to seek his fortune. Weeks, months, and years went by and they never had word from him and never knew whether he had met death by accident, drowning, or at the hands of Indians.

Later she bought, or redeemed one of the pieces of furniture and brought it with her to Bell Oak, and Mr. Ferris Pitts said he had it in his home in St. Louis. It is a walnut bookcase and secretary of the Governor Winthrop style and is about 125 years old. John S. Pitts and family went from here to Tyrone and Fenton, where some of the family lived and where his wife, who was from Tyrone, remarried after his death in Arizona. Many of the family are buried in the Clough Cemetery in that Township.

John S. Pitts and his mother, Rebecca Pettingill, owned all the land from the store in Bell Oak east to the County Line (Herrington Road) on the south side of Bell Oak Road, and that land was probably the earliest to be cleared and improved in the Bell Oak area.

Solomon Pettingill, probably a widower, and father of Henry and Benjamin Pettingill, first settlers on Section 11 and 14, had lived toward Grand Rapids on the Grand River for a couple of years before coming to Phelpstown. He was a noted hunter and trapper, being given that title as an occupation when his death was recorded in 1867.

Tradition says that he killed a bear in a shack with a knife on land owned by Don Lantis or Orville Proud in Section 14.

Could it have been he who set the large (12 to 14 inch) double-spring trap we found in my father's swamp just north of Pettingill's?

His sons, Henry and Benjamin, soon removed to Howell and from there to the vicinity of Fenton. They were distant relatives of P.P. Pettingill, who came to Bell Oak with the Spencers.

The low land in Bell Oak referred to in my story was from about the road running south from the store (East Cole Avenue) and ran east by the homes of Messrs. Adams and Bump (5132 and 5136 Bell Oak Road) and extended to both sides of the road. Before they got tilled, it was full of water for several rods around every spring, in high water, or after a freshet (flood). I have even seen the house (now Bump's) entirely surrounded with water, and the residents (the Andrew Fishers) had a rowboat tied up to the front porch to be able to get to the road. The Adams house

was also surrounded, but there was a wide sidewalk (plank) leading along the west side of the house to the Post Office (just back of the house), with the water lapping under the sidewalk to the edge of the road (East Cole Avenue). It has been tiled in four directions and water has not gathered there in nearly fifty years.

It would be an interesting item if I were able to itemize the stocks of goods that were to be found in the Bell Oak stores in 1870 or about then. This I am unable to do, and data on the subject would be hard to come by. It is known, however, that there were no items sealed in tin until later; in fact, the home canners were preserving fruit, etc., without the aid of Mason jars, rubber rings, or zinc tops until a later date; if anything was “canned”, it was put in earthen jars and sealed with beeswax or paraffin.

Goods in the stores were whole, requiring cutting or grinding; foods came packaged in boxes, barrels, crates, pails, kits, kegs, or bales—the containers being almost entirely of wood—the commodity having to be weighed, counted or measured for the customer. There are numerous entries in the diary of Mr. J.M. Avery (who lived at Haslett and Morrice Roads, now the Wilson farm), which I have read, regarding the bringing of a quantity of goods from Owosso or Bennington for “Mr. Rogers” (H.D. Rogers, one of the earliest of the merchants of Bell Oak), the date of these entries being from 1870 to 1872. The railroad, Detroit and Muskegon (now Grand Trunk), was built into Owosso from Detroit about 1857. About 1862, the “Ramshorn” (so called because it was so crooked) was built through Bennington to Lansing.

About 1872, goods began to be shipped into Leroy, later called Webberville. The railroad (Detroit, Lansing, and Northern) was completed in September 1871, with a station established in McPherson’s woods when the hamlet, variously known as Leroy, Phelpstown, and Webber’s Mills, had to be moved from a half mile west, corner of US 16 and Webberville Road.

Early Bell Oak merchants had to go to the city stores and warehouses to buy their goods (Mrs. Ida Royce is reported to have gone to Detroit to buy goods about the time the present store was built), as drummers (salesmen to the present generation) didn’t begin to visit our stores until the 1890s when a liveryman would drive them out from neighboring towns. George Palmer and Jim Draper from Fowlerville and Abe Durham from Webberville are the drivers best remembered. (The drummers came from the town where their favorite hotels made possible and overnight stop). Mr. Edward A. Greenaway from Fowlerville rode a bicycle to Bell Oak to keep the stores of Dave Fisher and George Price stocked with flour from the Fowlerville Roller Mills. Even as late as 1910 (how many of my readers will think of 1910 as anything but a long time ago?), the neighbors, including the writer, were drawing the heavy items from the freight house—barrels of sugar, flour, molasses, vinegar, kerosene, gasoline, etc., and boxes and bales of coffee, tea, spices, etc., with lettering and labels indicating they were packed and shipped from the countries where they grew—in our lumber wagons every time we went into town with wheat or other farm produce.

Reports current around Bell Oak in my younger days indicated that much valuable timber, mostly walnut, was stolen from the woods—mostly from those of nonresident owners. Many stumps and tops of trees of that kind of timber were on my father's farm after I could remember, all of which had been stolen, according to the older residents.

In fact, they told my father that if he had the walnut timber that had been stolen off the farm (which had been without a resident owner for many years), it would be worth more than the farm.

One story of such an incident (the truthfulness of which I can't vouch for, however) was about an exceptionally fine tree, wanted by a couple of different groups. Finally, one of the parties cut the tree, and the log, of magnificent proportions, was hauled to the mill and arrangements were made to have it sawed the next morning.

One of the gang, fearing a trick by members of the other group, sat on the log all night to keep the others from stealing it out of the mill yard. However, he went to sleep and the other gang drove a wedge into the end of the log, hitched a chain to the wedge, and drew the log out of the bark and away to another saw mill. When the guard woke up at sunrise, he was sitting on the bark without any log inside it.

Another story, likewise unvouched for, was about an early Bell Oak team, whose owner had them up in the Sauger March skidding blue beech logs. He had them hitched to a 30-foot blue leech when they ran away; when he caught up with them, they were in their own stalls in the stable at Bell oak, with the log parked in the adjoining empty box stall.

Boxing was of prime interest to the young men and boys of Bell Oak in varying degrees and at different times, principally in the 1880s, when the Hicks twins, William and Ezra, and John Waterworth were so good that they had serious thoughts of challenging the heavyweight champs in the days of John L. Sullivan and others.

Some of these were reported to be very "handy with the dukes". Later, interest again grew in boxing, so that gloves were bought, kept in Fisher's store, and when the boys gathered in Bell Oak in the evening, they'd run Dave's buggy out of the buggy shed (corner of Bell Oak Road and West Cole Avenue), hang up a couple lanterns, and have an evening of entertainment. Of this generation, among the most proficient of the local boys were Chan and Len Cole and "Little Charlie" Cole, an acquired proficiency that was never forgotten, especially by Chan, who told me in his gray-haired days about going to Haslett to clobber a guy who had said that if he could get on the gloves with Cole, he'd knock him all over the place. Boxing kind of died out in interest after about 1910, when we were boxing in front of the store by the dim light that filtered out of the windows from the oil lamps hanging from the ceiling in Fred Simpsons' store.

Some other angles of the firing of the anvils on the morning of the Fourth of July:

A bunch of boys determined to shoot the anvils in front of every house in the school district between midnight and sunrise, so they wheeled the two heavy anvils in two wheelbarrows, covering several miles (and probably weren't much good for any work for the next few days). This was the night when George Hicks couldn't be with his friends, so wanting to be represented in some way, gave Tom Graham money for powder, so they'd have a full supply for a lot "booms". This, too, was the time when Leonard Ash lit the anvils with a lighted match and escaped injury (similar action has been known to cause the loss of both legs, in an incident not too far removed from Bell Oak).

The anvils have not been fired, probably since Frank Boardman sold the equipment, moved some to his farm (now Irving Jorgensen's), and sold the building to Arthur Chase, where it is a part of the barn on the Euphemia Chase farm.

I had one contact with the "mill hands" at the saw mill, when I conceived an idea of making a wheelbarrow. So I asked Will Dunckel for a wheel, and he gave me a flange wheel off the lumber truck, weighing about 10 or 12 pounds. I finally got it home (I was about seven years old) and tried to make a wheelbarrow, an attempt which never resulted in any success. We afterward put a handle in the wheel and used it to tamp sand, a use to which it was admirably adapted.

The big tree in front of the house of George Fisher Jr. (Turner's), of which mention has been made in the stories furnished me by Mrs. Woodworth, and planted by "Junior" Fisher, reached a mammoth size and spread before it was cut down by Clinton Sawyer about 1943 (a dug well and pump were located just a few feet west of the tree, but have been gone many years). Another large cottonwood (whether a planted or native tree I am unable to state) stood in front of the Kline house, about at the northeast corner of the Gleaners' Hall (Church Hall), and was cut down to make room for that building about 1913.

Another large tree—a poplar—stood on the Roy Casady lot became the subject of much speculation and conversation a few years ago. "It must be 100 years old", said some.

"Couldn't be", I replied. "I remember when it was set out". Other conversations ensued, seeming to indicate that I didn't know what I was talking about. Finally the tree gang from The Detroit Edison Company removed it and counted the rings—it was 65 years old.

Mention of a "stage" in my story may seem funny to my readers, so a little elucidation about the operation may be of interest. "The Stage", usually a two horse spring wagon, made a trip to Webberville after the railroad was built (possibly to Leroy to meet the stagecoaches on the Plank Road), twice a week or tri weekly (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), and after 1888,

daily, to get the mail, express, light freight, etc., for the stores, and to carry passengers (fare 25¢). The operator was hired by the Post Office Department (probably the Postmaster) for a twelve month period and was also appointed Express Agent for that duration.

Quite a few of my acquaintances remember riding on the stage from Webberville to Bell Oak, among them my cousin, Mrs. Etta Allen of Parker's Corners. Some of the people remembered as having driven the stage were Uncle Tom Spencer, Chester Burch, Nash Tyler, Oshea Duncel, and probably twice as many more.

Before the Peninsular Railroad (Grand Trunk) was built, some of these mail carriers also took the mail on a route to Rann's Mills (1865), Locke Road in Perry Township, Glass River in Antrim and Fremont (west of Bancroft on the Grand River Road).

Bell Oak blacksmith did more than shoe horses and set the wheels on wagons and buggies, for there were many different kinds of tools made in the shops of Bell Oak. Among these were rollers (both log and those made of plank bolted to a large circle of cast iron), wooden drags with cast teeth, both in the "A" drag style, and the square, or two-section, spike drags. Jump shovels, shovel plows, and two and three legged grasshopper corn cultivators, and even the first bean planter and cutter that I ever saw were made locally. Add to these the hay- and stock-and-stake wood racks of about five cords capacity, and it will be seen that a great many pieces of useful equipment for that day were constructed at the woodworking bench and forge and anvil of ninety years ago. With the advent of Rural Free Delivery of U.S. Mail, they were called on to make some of the mailboxes, which were very substantial and lasted many years.

The celebration of the Fourth of July was sporadic and irregular, as I remember it, though in the years when it was celebrated, the residents cooperated to make it a big affair.

The main event in a baseball-conscious generation was an afternoon ballgame, usually with the home team playing Locke Center, South Locke, Webberville, or maybe Nicholson or Rann's Mills. There were also running races (on foot and horse). Someone was sure to be making ice cream, turning the cranks on a dozen freezers packed with ice from Simpson's or Kingbury's icehouses (cut by hand on Sauger Lake), and in the evening, a quite creditable display of fireworks with the town full of people coming from miles around to celebrate.

The shooting of the fireworks was staged across the road from the "big store", at that time kept by D. W. Fisher, and just east of the house referred to as belonging to Kenneth Perrin, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kinne. On one occasion, the firing had just commenced with Jim Avery and Tom Graham in charge, when the whole supply became ignited and fireworks were

going off in every direction. Needless to say, the celebration of that year came to an abrupt halt.

There was always congenial company for us smaller fry in Bell Oak on the Fourth of July every year, whether our elders had planned any celebration or not; it was a day when we could gather on the front steps of Fisher's store and shoot firecrackers, letting the burned pieces of firecracker and punk fall down through the cracks in the floor made of 2 by 6s. However, my father had a custom which seemed supremely foolish to my brother Tom and me—a custom of mowing Canada Thistles in the pasture and other places on the Fourth of July in accordance with a belief that thistles that were cut on the day would be killed. Now I am sure that Tom and I didn't share our father's belief about the efficacy of cutting them on that day, especially as our fellows were already in town shooting firecrackers; but such was the discipline under which we were brought up, in those halcyon days, that the thistle patches were all laid low before we joined our fellow scientists on the shooting pad.

At one of these Fourth of July celebrations in Bell Oak, almost everyone had gone “uptown” except Arthur Chase, Tom Graham and me, as we were working on a stunt to be pulled off when the crowd had become the greatest. Arthur had found an old horse, so poor you could hang your hat on him most any place, resurrected an old buggy that had been thrown away several years before, wired it together, nailed some barrel staves and stuff on the wheels, and drove up to my father's woodshed. Here I got into the act and began blacking up Arthur and Tom—Arthur as a man and Tom as a woman—using burnt cork and lard, an assortment of old cloths for clothing, and old rags for packing, building up their figures 'til they showed up well in all the required places. Then they started for Bell Oak. I went on ahead, telling everyone that I had talked with a colored couple down the road and that they were going from Alabama to northern Michigan.

When they came into sight, everyone talked to them, brought out food and sandwiches, gave them ice cream and candy, even watered their horse, and there were few in Bell Oak that day but what believed that they were a colored couple just going through town.

One of the many blacksmiths in Bell Oak was Mr. Hager, who didn't stay to long; but while he was here, he acquired an ancient automobile, tinkered with it, and started to drive it to Milan or Monroe where he had come from and where he was returning. It is not my recollection that he got very far, leaving it at Brighton or vicinity.

This car was one of the oldest makes in America—a Haynes—and oldest ever to be in Bell Oak; if he had stored it until now, it would be worth thousands of dollars.

Field days, sometimes like the Fourth of July celebrations sans fireworks, were also part of the pictures of Bell Oak in summer days—in the days long since forgotten. These days, which had to have some planning, from whom I am unable to state, and probably built around a date when a

good ballgame was scheduled in the mill yard, drew a large crowd who would stay all day with friends and participate in the events of the day, which included races, games, etc., for which prizes were offered.

A Saturday night procedure in our three Bell Oak Stores, in which D.W. Fisher was the leader, was at that particular time during the evening when the largest crowd had gathered in the store; Dave would take the large scoop off the counter scales, plunge it into a barrel of unshucked peanuts, and set it out on the counter. Everyone stayed 'til the peanuts were all gone, and the store floor was deep with peanut shucks, ready for a big job of sweeping on Sunday morning.

A large trading area from beyond M-47 on the west to beyond Nicholson Road to the east and from Moyer Road to beyond the Fuller Schoolhouse, north and south, and lodge night every Saturday night for the Knights of the Maccabees, brought a lot of people into Bell Oak.

The local tradition, repeated within my hearing many times, and by many different people, agreed with the FREE PRESS story about the origin of the name "Bell Oak", that it was so called because the first bell in the Township (or vicinity) we placed on the new schoolhouse which was built entirely of oak, but that George Fisher's sister, Susan Ann Spencer, was the one who had suggested that the schoolhouse be called "Bell Oak" (from the placing of the first bell in the area on the new oak school building). So, whether it was "Junior" Fisher or his sister Susan, to the Fishers belong the honor of bestowing the name to our school and community.

There are a few explanations due about this new schoolhouse and the bell. The people of the Pinkney School District (which was then District No. 5) had voted the sum of \$200 to build a new schoolhouse at the Annual School Meeting held September 7, 1863. The meeting was adjourned for five weeks when they reconsidered the vote and a motion was made to rescind the action of raising the money. That failed to carry, and a planning committee was appointed, consisting of George Fisher Jr., Truman Spencer, and Orlando Brewer. The meeting adjourned for four weeks to November 8th, when the plans submitted by Truman Spencer were adopted "with such alterations as they may see fit."

On January 30, 1864, a Special Meeting was held when they again adopted the plan presented by the committee (presumably Spencer's) "with some alterations", and resolved to have a bell and belfry; the bell to be not less than 100 pounds in weight, and that George Fisher Jr. should have the job of building the belfry for \$5.

Nothing seems to have been done at the Annual School Meeting on September 5, 1864, but in 1865, they voted to sell the old schoolhouse to P. P. Pettingill for \$31.00, to raise \$470.00. For the building, including the bell, and to buy 12 cords of 22-inch wood to be delivered to the Pinkney Schoolhouse, and a building committee was appointed, consisting of George Dunkel, Truman Spencer, and William T Wallace.

Then, in 1866, they discharged the building committee, raised \$345.41 to pay the indebtedness on the schoolhouse, and sold some surplus building supplies (one keg of white lead, one barrel, and a pile of stones), which bought, respectively, \$2.60, \$1.25, and 90¢.

The bell does not appear to have been hung in a belfry for some years (due possibly to the election of George Fisher, Jr., who was to build it, to the office of Moderator of the School District in 1865), but was mounted on a pole on the peak of the schoolhouse at the front end, as is shown in a picture taken about 1871 or 1872 when William Dillingham was teacher. This picture, owned by Arthur and Wesley Pinkney, is the only one of its kind known to exist.

Later, in 1882 or 1883, a belfry was built and painted by George Price, Robert Fisher, and John S. Pittengill, at a cost of about \$25.. The school board when the "Oak" Schoolhouse was being built consisted of George Fisher, Jr., Moderator; James McKie, Director; and Otto Chalker, Assessor (Treasurer).

The story that the bell was the first in the Township may have included a much larger area, for it is known that there were no bells on any churches nearer than Howell, Lansing, or Mason.

It is my belief that the Brown School purchased a bell the next year, a bell that came into the possession of Ira Thayer when he bought the old schoolhouse and is probably still on the old Thayer farm at Haslett and Corey Roads.

THE DETROIT FREE PRESS
Sunday, September 24, 1905

PIONEER LUMBERMAN

Lived in Michigan 50 years

Settling in Forests in Ingham County
He Devoted Himself to Lumber Business
Until "Fisher's Mills" Became Famous.
Spent Declining Years In Detroit.

George Fisher, aged 76, pioneer lumberman of Michigan, died at the home of his son, T.S. Fisher, 48 Dumontier Avenue, yesterday morning, following an illness of two weeks. Mr. Fisher's illness was caused by a bad fall on the ice six years ago. At that time he injured his hip so badly that he has walked with the aid of crutches ever since. Two weeks ago his illness took a serious turn.

Deceased comes from a remarkably long-lived family. He is survived by three brothers and a sisters, all of whom has reached a ripe old age and are in excellent health. Over half a century ago, George Fisher came to Michigan from New York State. He settled in Locke Township, Ingham County, which consisted at that time of dense woods. Lumbering took up his entire attention, and out of the wilderness he hewed for himself and family a home and a handsome competence. Fisher's Mills became famous, and lumbermen from miles around brought logs to him to be made into lumber.

Around this industry there grew up a little village, which Mr. Fisher himself christened Bell Oak. A pretty story clusters around the name of this hamlet. When the school was built, the oak lumber came from Mr. Fisher's mills, and on the day that the bell in the tower first called the children to their tasks, it occurred to Mr. Fisher that this was the first bell that had ever rung in a tower in Locke Township. And thus, the little place was named Bell Oak.

Sixteen years ago, the deceased came to Detroit, where most of his children resided. Of late, he and his wife lived with their son on Dumontier Avenue.

Tomorrow the remains will be taken to Bell Oak to be buried in the village church yard, where lie the remains of his father and mother and his two brothers, both of whom lost their lives in the cause of the Union. Services will be held at the Methodist Church in the village. Besides the widow, Mr. Fisher is survived by the following children: T. S. Fisher, Mrs. E.A. Marvin, Mrs. H.P. Linderman, and Mrs. H.E. Lamb of Detroit, and Mrs. Frank O' Leary of Cincinnati.

EDITORS' NOTE

There appear to be three discrepancies in Mr. Graham's manuscript, but we left Mr. Graham's composition as he wrote it.

One of the inconsistencies is the name of the wife of John Sheldon Pitts: Page 4 states Rebecca Tooley was J. S. Pitts' wife---while page 41 indicates Hannah Tooley was his wife. There's always the possibility that he married Rebecca first and Hannah second, however.

There are several theories as to the location of Phelpstown; the only thing all of them seem to agree upon is the fact that it was located in Ingham County!

On page 14, the death dates for Robert and Maria Fisher are given as 1905 and 1908. The records of the Bell Oak Cemetery indicate their deaths occurred in 1905 and 1903.

We will let you draw your own conclusions on these items.

Joyce Wagner
Susan Dietz

INDEX

This index contains only the names of the early residents of Bell Oak and the surrounding area---the names of the later landowner and residents are not included in the list.

We have attempted to record each reference as it was encounter, but we' re human and mistakes will occur. Each reference is listed as made, even though some of the names are obvious duplicates (for example, the many listings for Dr. Atkins).

ALVORD	27	BARBER	29
ANGELL, Luke	21, 32	BARBER, A. R.	16
ARMS, Oramel	6, 13	BARBER, Alfred	2, 16
ARMSTRONG	13	BARBER, David	2, 5, 16
ARMSTRONG, Henry	12	BARBER, Jesse	2, 16
ARNOLD	22	BARBER, Sylvester	2, 5, 19
ARNOLD, Amelia	2	BARBER, Warren	31
ARNOLD, David	5, 7	BARBER, William	16
ARNOLD, Ebenizer	2	BARNEY, William	1
ARNOLD, Henry	7, 16	BARNES	27
ARNOLD, James	6, 16	BARNES	27
ARNOLD, Uriah	5, 7	BARNES, Benjamin	2
ASH, Leonard	45	BARNES, Edward	15, 29
ATKINS	12, 18	BEEBE, Allen	19
ATKINS and Company	29	BEEBE, L. J.	29
ATKINS, Doctor	9, 17, 20, 39	BEEBE, Lo	21
ATKINS, Dr. H. A.	29	BEEBE, Loron	19, 32
ATKINS, Dr. Harmon	31	BEEBE, Loron J.	17
ATKINS, Dr. Harmon A.	11, 33	BENJAMIN, Lester	35
ATKINS, Fannie	31	BENJAMIN, Lester W.	34
ATKINS, H. A.	18	BENJAMIN, Lewis	35
ATKINS, Harriet	31	BENJAMIN, Susan	35
ATKINS, Israel	17, 20, 28, 33	BENTLY, Thomas E.	15, 17, 19, 21, 35
AVERY	13	BLAKESLEE	34, 35
AVERY, Albert	5	BLAKESLEE, Fred	32, 33, 34
AVERY, J. M.	25, 26, 33, 43	BREWER, Orlando	48
AVERY, Jim	47	BRIMLEY	27
AVERY, Jonas Malcolm	23	BRITTEN,	27
AVERY, Mac	33, 35	BROCK, Benjamin	2, 6, 33
AVERY, Marcia	33	BROCK, Benjamin, Jr.	5
AVERY, Mary Ann	5		
AVERY, Stephen	1, 2		
AVIS, Thomas	6, 12, 17		
AVIS, Mary	17		

BROWN	27	COLE	5, 21, 27
BROWN, Benjamin	28	COLE, Chan	44
BROWN, Luman	2	COLE, Chandler	16
BROWN, Sarah Ann	2	COLE, Charles	7, 16
BROWN, Thomas T.	2	COLE, Cornelius	1
BURCH, Chester	46	COLE, David	2, 7, 34
BURGDORFF,	19	COLE, Delbert	13
BURGDORFF, George	16	COLE, L. F.	7, 12, 21, 28
BURGDORFF, John	7, 16	COLE, Len	44
BURKE, Michael	6, 33	COLE, Leonard	1
BURTON, Daniel	7	COLE, "Little Charlie"	44
CAMP, Asa	34, 36	COLE, Nathaniel	16
CAMP, John	26	COLLINGS, George H.	34
CAMP, Mary	36	COOK	30
CARLTON, Irena	2	CORBETT, Mrs. Rachel	31
CARLTON, William	1, 2	COREY, Henry	34
CARNES	20, 33	CRAHAN, Patrick	35
CARNES, George	19	CRAIG, Samuel	20
CARNES, H. R.	29	CRANDALL,	26
CARR	27	CRITCHETT, David	7, 14, 25
CASADY, R. D.	15	COUNTRYMAN	30
CASADY, Roy	15, 21, 28, 45	COUNTRYMAN, Isaac	7, 15
CASE, John	30	DAINS, Samuel	7
CASTALINE	26, 28, 29	DAVIS	27
CHALKER, Horace	2, 38	DECKER	13, 21
CHALKER, Otto	49	DECKER, Alfred M.	12, 21
CHALKER, Otto B.	6	DELANEY, George	32
CHAMBERLAIN	27	DENIO, Dexter	28
CHANDER, Charles	5, 31, 36	DENIO, George Dexter	16, 20
CHANDER, Ella	5	DENNISON, Mrs. Phoebe	34
CHANDER, George B.	5, 6, 15	DILLINGHAM, Ida	31
CHANDLER, Susan	5, 31	DILLINGHAM, William	3, 6, 30, 49
CHANDLER, Susan P	15, 16	DILLINGHAMS Sons	3
CHAPMAN	26	DINGMAN	3
CHASE, Arthur	2, 45, 47	DINGMAN, Jane	13
COLBORN	27	DINGMAN, John	13, 17
COLBY	26		

DINTURFF, Daniel	31	FISHER, David W.	34
DIXON	3	FISHER, "Ding"	13
DOOLITTLE, Alonzo	5, 26	FISHER, Elizabeth	4, 13, 40
DORN	27	FISHER, Francis H.	35
DOTY, Mr.	26	FISHER, George	4, 6, 12, 13, 48
DRAPER, Jim	43	FISHER, George Jr.	4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 14, 19, 28, 30, 39, 40, 45, 48, 49
DUNCKEL and BROWN	19, 28	FISHER, George Lansing	4, 14, 41
DUNCKEL and Son	32	FISHER, George, Sr.	41
DUNCKEL, Daniel	30	FISHER, Henrietta	4
DUNCKEL, David	14, 33, 36	FISHER, James	4, 5, 6, 13, 17, 35
DUNCKEL, David M.	30, 31, 32	FISHER, James R.	34
DUNCKEL, Elizabeth	14	FISHER, Jane	17
DUNCKEL, George	48	FISHER, Junior (See George, Jr.)	
DUNCKEL, O. G.	32, 36	FISHER, Maria	4, 14
DUNCKEL, Oshea	20, 30, 31, 46	FISHER, P. V.	18
DUNCKEL, Oshea G.	14, 29, 36	FISHER, Peter	5, 18
DUNCKEL, Will	45	FISHER, Peter V.	5, 6, 9, 17, 18, 20, 28, 29, 32, 35
DUNCKEL, William	14	FISHER, Rebecca	4, 31
DUNNING, Cynthia	31	FISHER, Robert	4, 6, 14, 17, 19, 26, 31, 34, 41
DURHAM, Abe	43	FISHER S. Edward	35
EGGLESTON	14	FISHER, Samuel	4, 5, 6
EGGLESTON, T. B.	17	FISHER, Susan Ann	30
EGGLESTON, Titus B.	13	FISHER, Truman	39, 40
ENGLAND, Rev. Joseph	21	FISHER, Truman Spencer	39
EVANS, Herman	15, 16	FISHER, W. O.	21, 32, 33
EWERS, Fred	33	FISHER, William O.	15, 19
EWERS, Fred	33	FLETCHER	27
FAIRBANKS, Jerome R.	36	FLETCHER, Henry	15
FISHER	8, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, 29, 30	GAGE, Emma	14
FISHER, Andrew	35, 43	GAGE, George	14, 29
FISHER, "Art"	35	GLENNY	27
FISHER, Belle	32	GOLDIE	31
FISHER, Caroline	5	GOLDIE, William	28, 29
FISHER, D. W.	17, 36, 47, 48	GOODELL	27
FISHER, David	23, 43, 44	GRAHAM, Arthur	30
		GRAHAM, Tom	45, 47
		GRANNIS, Charles	28, 31
		GRANNIS, Michael	31, 32
		GRANT' S	3

GREENAWAY, Edward A.	43	KELLEY	27
GUTHRIE, Edd	13	KELSEY	27
GUTHRIE, George	16	KING, Israel	7, 13, 15, 35
GUTHRIE, Nathaniel	34	KIRK, Andrew	1, 5, 7, 11, 12
HAGER, Mr.	47	KLINE	18
HALLETT, Mr.	26	KLINE, Charles	30
HARMON	3	KLINE, Elisha	31
HARPER	27	KLINE, Maria	15, 30, 36
HARRINGTON, James	33	KLINE, Robert	15, 26, 30
HARTWIG	27	KLINE, Rose E.	30
HAUSE	15	KLINE, Warren	15, 18
HAWES, Ira	32, 36	LAMEREAUX, John	30
HAWES, Ira and Son	32, 33	LANGFORD, Dr.	32
HAWKINS, M. P.	31	LANGFORD, Dr. George D.	18, 30
HAWKINS, Marvil	28	LAROWE	27
HAWKINS, Marvil P.	2, 15, 30, 38	LAWRIE	26
HICKEY, Eric	15	LAWSON	14
HICKS, Azariah	16	LAWSON, Luana	1, 38
HICKS, Elizabeth	41	LAWSON, Orrin	1, 6, 7, 11, 38, 41
HICKS, Ezra	44	LEACH	26
HICKS, George	45	LEACH, Alfred P.	16
HICKS, Phoebe	16, 19	LING, George	20
HICKS, William	16, 44	LIVERANCE	26
HITCHCOCK	5, 12	LOUGHLIN	30
HITCHCOCK, Delinda	15, 18, 28	LOUGHLIN, Hugh	31, 33
HITCHCOCK, Evelina	2	LUM, Betsey	12, 17, 20, 30
HITCHCOCK, Milton	6	LUM, William	6, 12, 17, 19
HITCHCOCK, Rufus	6, 15, 18	LUM, William H.	16, 25, 29, 30
HITCHCOCK, Russell	2, 6	LYON, John	29, 33
HOLCOMB, Seymour	13	MALONE, Bertha	11
HORTON, Aaron	16, 19	MALONE, George B.	30, 31, 33
HOVEY	28, 29, 31, 32, 33	MARSH	5
JACKSON	26	MARSH, Joshua	1
JACKSON, Gertrude Spencer	30	MARSH, Elizabeth	1
JONES, N.	6, 13	MC KIE	5, 7
KEELER	27	MC KIE, Elizabeth	1
		MC KIE, Ellen	36

MC KIE, Ferris	11	PEARSE, Jefferson	1, 38
MC KIE, James	1, 49	PEARSE, Louana	38
MC KIE, Jeanette	1	PETTINGILL	36
MC KIE, John	1	PETTINGILL, Belle	32
MCKIE, Peter	1	PETTINGILL, Benjamin	1, 42
MC LEAN, Frank	14	PETTINGILL, Henry	1, 42
MEGIVERON, Mrs	17, 19	PETTINGILL, Isabelle	12
MEGIVERON, William H.	17	PETTINGILL, John	12, 29, 31, 34
MELVIN, Moses	1	PETTINGILL, John S.	49
MERCHANT, John	1	PETTINGILL, Katherine	32
MILEMON, John	34, 35	PETTINGILL, Louisa	12, 29, 31
MILLER, H. F.	8	PETTINGILL, Maud	12
MILLER, Hubert F.	7, 16	PETTINGILL, P. P.	29, 42
MILLER, Inez	16	PETTINGILL, Paschal	31
MILLER, Lucia	16	PETTINGILL, Paschal Paola	12
MILLER, "Squire"	36	PETTINGILL, Rebecca	4, 15, 42
MOWERS, Christopher	11	PETTINGILL, Solomon	1, 4, 7, 15, 25, 42
MOWERS, Elizabeth	4, 11	PHELPS, David	1, 7, 16
MOWERS, Jane	11	PHELPS, David B.	25, 28
NEWMAN	27	PIERCE, Clark	7, 12, 13
NEY, Elisha M.	35	PINKNEY	7, 27, 41
NICHOLAS, John	33	PINKNEY, Charlotte	2, 38
NICHOLS	2, 11, 12	PINKNEY, George	34
NICHOLS, James	5	PINKNEY, John	2, 41
NICHOLS, Josiah	1, 5	PINKNEY, John D.	6, 31
NORRIS, William	33	PINKNEY, Mathilda	2, 38
O' DELL, Eugene	33	PINKNEY, Rebecca	1, 31, 38, 41
O' NEILL, Dr. C.	29	PINKNEY, Robert	31, 32
ORR, George	16	PINKNEY, Thomas	1, 2, 38
PALMER, George	36, 43	PITTS, Asahel	
PALMITEER, Hiram	33	PITTS, John S	6, 11, 12, 15, 21 25, 28, 30
PARK	5	PITTS, John Sheldon	1, 4, 41, 42
PARK, Betsey	1	PITTS, Rebecca	1, 41, 42
PARK, Moses	1	PRICE, Charlotte	36
PATTERSON, Miller	3	PRICE, Gene	36
		PRICE, George	31, 35, 36, 43, 49
		PRICE, George H.	15, 36
		PRINE	26
		RANN, Florence	30
		RENN, Frederick	20, 31
		ROGERS, Carrie	30
		ROGERS, H. D.	7, 13, 16, 20, 21, 28, 33, 43

ROPER, Phillip	17	SPENCER, David	4
ROSE	27	SPENCER, David P.	6, 7, 12, 13
ROYCE, Ida	43	SPENCER, Del	30, 32
ROYCE, Lester	36	SPENCER, Doctor	33
ROYCE, Lester G.	31, 35	SPENCER, Ellen	36
SELFRIDGE Brothers	26	SPENCER, George D.	36
SHELDON, Rebecca	42	SPENCER, George D. (Dr.)	31
SHERMON	31	SPENCER, George Delbert	4, 14, 30
SHERMON, John	29	SPENCER, Gertrude	30
SIMPSON, Fred	45	SPENCER, Harriet	14, 33
SMITH	5, 22	SPENCER, Herman	14
SMITH, Bert	13	SPENCER, Jack	13, 14, 31, 33
SMITH, Charles	13	SPENCER, James H.	35
SMITH, D. A.	15, 18	SPENCER, James Herman	32, 34, 36
SMITH, Delos	13, 15	SPENCER, Mary	33
SMITH, Delos A.	16, 19, 25, 29, 34	SPENCER, Pete	30
SMITH, Harriet	13	SPENCER, Susan	16, 32
SMITH, Lawrence	13	SPENCER, Susan Ann	4, 14, 30, 48
SMITH, Lydia	13	SPENCER, Thomas	33
SMITH, Wilbert H.	13	SPENCER, Truman	4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13 14, 30, 32, 39, 48
SOUTHARD	26	SPENCER, "Uncle Tom"	46
SOWLES, Elbert	12	STABLER, Jacob	34
SOWLE, Elbert S.	33	STEPHENS, Adam	33
SOWLES, Susan A.	16, 19	STEWART, M. L.	30
SPARHAWK, Arvilla	18	STOCKWELL, N.P.	31
SPARHAWK, Noah	18, 30, 32	STOWE, Prudy	3
SPENCER	8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 19, 22, 38	STREET, Prudence	41
SPENCER, A. J.	17, 19, 29	SULLIVAN, James	25
SPENCER, Abigail	4, 7, 12, 14, 31	TAYLOR, J. B.	7
SPENCER, Andrew Jackson	13, 33	TAYLOR, J. D.	20
SPENCER, Caroline	33	TEACHOUT, George	34
SPENCER, Charles	4, 14, 16, 28	THRAYER, Ira	34, 49
SPENCER, Charles Truman	30	THRAYER, Issac E.	21
		TOOLEY, Albert	41
		TOOLEY, Hannah	41
		TOOLEY, Rebecca	4
		TOOLEY, Spencer	21
		TOOLEY, Wilson	41
		TOOLEY, Wilson P.	21
		TYLER, Nash	46