

Accommodations in Lansing 1848

By Jerry Lawler

Prepared by the Forest Parke Library and Archives,
Capital Area District Libraries, 2021

Accommodations

Jan 10, 1848

The sojourners at this place are about forty-eight hours behind their neighbors in Detroit for news. The daily papers of course, are anxiously looked for, and, as in Detroit, the post office is filled the moment the mail arrives. When the horn blows, then you will see all wending their way towards the post-office. The Canada state line-too is as well known here as in Detroit, for all know that it is by that line that late news and "balloon expresses" are received. We should be a week behind the news were it not for the energy of John Edwards, who first conceived the idea of receiving late papers through Canada. When the telegraph is completed to Detroit, this line will have to "knock under."

We, that is many, are behind Detroit in little matters of delicacies, but editorial we, just received as a present from that prince of a good fellow, and good driver, Gallagher, a box, nicely directed, and marked "this side up," which contained a fine lot of Havannies, a can of Prince Bay Oysters, and half a dozen bottles of "Tom's Best." It would be safe to calculate that we had a great many friends about the time of the receipt of this box, and that three of "Tom's;" acquaintances who presented themselves, we took in, and gave "aid and comfort." Just present our compliments to the giver, and tell him that we have set him down, in our book, as "one of them."

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 14, 1848

Jan 11, 1848

In one of our letters, we stated that the State convention might perhaps be held at Jackson, instead of this place (Michigan), by order of the Central committee. We have since learned that a majority have refused assent to any change. The reason assigned for a change of place by some, was the rough state of the roads and lack of accommodation. If the present cold weather counties the roads will be comparatively good, as the numerous teams passing and repassing from this place to Jackson and Dexter, will make the roads quite smooth. To some portions of the State, and indeed to the large portion, this place is not as convenient of access or as cheap as Jackson, or some point on the Central railroad, but it is presumed that many will have business here, or a curiosity to see the location of the new seat of government which will compensate for the additional expense and inconvenience. The accommodations are fully as good as could be expected in a

place but eight months of age; for eight months since, the timber now used in the two or three hundred buildings, was growing in the wood and the ground covered by them a wilderness. The State committee having so decided, the State Convention will meet as stated in the official call, at Michigan, on the second day of February next.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 15, 1848

Jan 13, 1848

Michigan up to Detroit in "fixings"--the way they do it.
(Caption)

To-day the Speaker, Hon. A. W. Buel, gave a collation at his boarding house to the members and officers of the Legislature, the State Departments, and all his friends in town. The collation was well got up by Mrs. Bush, the accomplished lady of the Hon. Chas. P. Bush, whose guest the Speaker is, and if they do such things "proud" in Detroit they do it prouder in Michigan. The table was laden with everything an epicure could desire. Game of all kinds, viands, indeed everything was there except the *liquids*. Speaker Buel set an example to future speakers, when they give their "blow outs," as is usual, to do so on strict temperance principals.

We found many things on the table which we did not expect to see in this new country, and it seemed to us that we were at the *National* in Detroit, enjoying one of Garrison's *own*, for if he was ever come up to, the thing was done to-day at Mr. Bush's.

If any "more of the same sort" comes off this winter; we shall be there and will give our observations.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 17, 1848

*Collation-light meal.

Jan 14, 1848

Geo. C. Bates arrived in this famous city to-day. We have not heard his business, but presume it is of a private nature. It may be however that it is public, for he is anxious for a plank road, the opening of roads through this wooden country, as he is the fortunate possessor of some property hereabouts. George is a clever bellow--pity he did not stick to his first love--*Democracy*.

But to speak of *luck*. The fast line of Hibbard and Knapp's brought through a box directed to our humble self, which on opening we found to contain the following, on a paper "John Edwards complements to J. H. Hamron, Gen. Schwarz, Geo.

Griswold and Jed Emmons," accompanied by a bill of lading as follows: "1 can of Sardines, 2 Cans of Oysters, 1 Bottled Pepper Sauce, 1 box Salt, 1 Piece Cheese, 1 Bundle of Crackers, 1 bunch Mustard, 1 bottle of ____ and 2 copies of the history of the "four kings." Well what was to be done? The Gen. who is something of an epicure, rented the back parlor of an eating establishment, and in company with those for whom it was intended, a and a few friends "we didn't have much of a time, only we did." The giver will long be remembered by those who participated in the feasts and if "John ever comes up for the legislature and is doomed to banishment in the woods, he will get "tit for tat." That is the best we can promise. May he never want, and may the Canada Stages be as successful as the "balloon express" has been in distancing all competition.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 21, 1848

Jan 19, 1848

Feasts and amusements are the order of the evening at this place, just now. Gen. Schwarz, determined not be he out done by the speaker, gave a collation at this boarding house last evening which, considering all the circumstances attending the getting delicacies, was never surpassed in this place. The General spread the table with his own hands and the fowl, meats, sardines, liquids, celery, &c., &c., all came from his own cellar, and was put up by his own lady in a box and brought through by express. Some twenty of the General's good friends were there and drank many a bumper to his lady and himself.'

A ball is to come off at Turner's Hotel on the 22d February, which will be, no doubt, a splendid affair. Our young friends in Detroit could not do better than to visit this place on that day, and attend. We have our mind on several old bachelors who would do well to come. For instance, there is "Charley," "John," Phin," and a host of the same sort. Perhaps there wouldn't be a *time* if such a crowd should make their appearance.

There are arrivals from Detroit almost every day, and we are yet to see the man who is not pleased with the location and appearance of the Capitol and villages, for you must know there are three. The company, too, is good. It is a fact that there is as much life and gaiety in this place as there is in Detroit, and had we the conveniences, all would enjoy themselves fully as much.

The most difficult thing to agree upon by the Legislature, is the change of the name of this place.--There is not probably a person in either branch but dislikes the present name, yet hardly ten agree as to the one which it shall bear. The Senate adopted "Okeema," and the House "Lansing." A committee of correspondence has been appointed, but they cannot agree on either one. so it is, and what will be the result is more than can be told. The "old settlers" are in favor of Lansing, we believe. We are in favor of the name suggested by Senator Loomis, which was "Franklin," and what typo is there who would not favor that name? Our opinion is that Lansing will eventually be adopted, but we confess we do not like it. Although the place, by Legislative enactment, is now named Michigan, it is not known by that name, by settlers ten miles from here. When we were on our way hither, we inquired the road to Michigan, at a cross road and were answered "don't know such a place," but when we informed them that it was the new seat government, the response was, "O, the Capitol," or "Lansing."

Almost every day we see some new building erected. The "Upper Village" is rapidly improving and filling up. Some very fine and costly dwellings are under way. The largest and handsomest dwelling in the place is the one owned and occupied by Hon. Charles P. Bush. It is beautiful and convenient and being as Mr. B. has been compelled against his wish, to turn it into a boarding house. The Lt. Governor, the Speaker, Hon. E. H. Thompson, Hiram Stone, J. P. C. Emmons and Isbell are his guests, they admit their good fortune in being "taken in." There is a private boarding house within a few steps of the capitol kept by a widow which can compare with any. The Governor, state officers and deputies, Senators Allen, Griswold, Hart, Loomis, Hon J. D. Pierce of the House, our humble self, and others are "at home" there. Besides the Hotels, there are other boarding houses. So, it will be seen that there is enough to eat any places where it can be found. There are about a dozen beds in the capitol, which accommodates twice as many persons. There is no trouble about getting good board, but lodging arraignments are scarce, however, they are daily become more numerous, and one month hence with good roads, and one or two hundred persons can be accommodated in addition to those now here.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 24, 1848

Jan 20, 1848

The House transacted a vast amount of business to-day. The general order was taken up and cleared. No adjournment for dinner took place until past two o'clock, so many of the members who had a mile or so to walk, had a late dinner. This is most essentially a working Legislature. We have seldom seen a member's seat vacant during the hours of session.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 24, 1848

Jan 21, 1848

The weather for a few days, indeed for a week past, has been most delightful. The sun shines with the warmth of April, during the day, and there is just enough frost at night to keep the roads frozen. If the weather is as pleasant at Detroit, as here, we presume the bells are out in all their beauty, promenading Jefferson and Woodward avenues. We should like to look in to town and see. The bells are out here! We have to as many as are to be seen, in Detroit, but they are beautiful to behold." We counted seven come out of Church (the Capitol) on Sunday last, looking as pretty and fresh as new bloomed roses. In the Hall of the House the other day, we counted twelve ladies, part of them residents to this place, and part of them from Detroit. The *seventy* mentioned the other day as having been at the ball at Turner's were from all parts of this section of the State.
Note: Check "We have to as many"

The pleasant weather gives some of the members the blues. We could name several who are longing for home. Some three or four are absent on leave, and others would have asked before this, but for their modesty. The Senator from Wayne, although he won't acknowledge it, would give his old shoes for leave of absence for a few days.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 28, 1848

Jan 22, 1848

The members of the Legislature, and strangers also, find comfortable quarters. The chief difficulty in this respect lies in the fact that a part have rooms in the upper and a part in the lower village--nearly two miles apart; while but a few have accommodations near the Capitol.

The Seymour Hotel, in the lower village, is about a mile from the Capitol; but it is large, well furnished with comfortable rooms and a good table. The street from it to the Capitol is as broad as the Appian Way, but not quite so smooth. Huge stumps, fallen trees and cord wood from sad obstructions to any air line motions through it.

There are certainly many inconveniences and some privations to be endured here, yet any one can make himself on the whole very comfortable. Neither is the access to the Capitol very difficult to those who approach it from Detroit. The road from Jackson is opened and cut out the whole distance; and though certainly bad for perhaps fifteen miles, yet it is no more than we expect to encounter in almost any direction in a new country.

Truly yours, X

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; January 29, 1848

Feb 1, 1848

Much good nature seems to prevail at the Capitol, if we can judge from the tenor of letters written from there. The members seem to enjoy themselves well, in their forest life; and we are glad to learn that they are all disposed to work hard this winter and make a short session of it. There surely is need of dispatch of business, in order to save the people's money; for there is every indication that hard time are at hand. The war we are engaged in cannot be carried on without money. It must be recollected that money is one of the principal sinews of war.

All information from the Capitol speaks favorably of its location, its incipient improvements, and the commodiousness of the Capitol building. The principal public house, kept by Mr. Turner, is well spoken of; and his well-supplied table renders the story told of the "starved chicken," of which a "hasty *kettle* of soup" was made, rather apocryphal.

We don't know how many of the members and *cobblers*--but there is, at last, one *Shoemaker* among them. It is hoped, therefore that their *understandings* will be kept in good condition.

Source: *The Statesman*, Marshall, Michigan, Tuesday, February 1, 1848.

Feb 5, 1848

But yet we are not without pleasures. We had a concert here last night a *la Christy*--and which very much resembled the original so far as the lamp-black went, but alas! not much farther. We are also promised a Grand Concert the coming week by the Jackson Brass Band. The convention has also left among us a few distinguished strangers who contribute much to our social, or rather bar-room circles:--for our bar-rooms are about the only place where we can meet at all.

Among others our excellent friend Judge Hand is exhilarating our gatherings with his wit and good humor. Some of his repartees, jokes and conundrums, are becoming as famous here as they usually are in your good city (Detroit).

All these things make the days and nights gallop along as merry as chiming bells. If we have not the luxury and pomp of Detroit, you may be sure that we often made the woods of Lansing ring with our rounds of "lofty cheer."

One thing however is wanting; and that is the glorious presence and pure influence of the Ladies. In our brightest hours many a poor fellows heart steals away to his wife or his sweetheart and he longs for that society which is far dearer than all the enchantments of noisy convivial mirth.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; February 8, 1848

Feb 8, 1848,

We have about 2 1/2 inches of snow here this morning, which is looked on as quite a phenomenon this winter. Many of the gentlemen at Turner's Hotel were quite clamorous for a sleigh or at least a *sled* ride this morning, but alas! no vehicle of that kind could be "scared up" in the whole region. The *snowy* opportunity was of course lost to our inconsolable grief....

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; February 11, 1848

Feb 15, 1848

Correspondence, Feb 15, 1848

The business of legislation is going forward rapidly. The two Houses were in session yesterday nine hours. In sitting so long the members are obliged to get along without dinner. If these long daily sessions are kept up, this place would be a good market for *sausages*. The great scarcity of the canine breed would give *confidence*, and that is all that is essential in the case of banks and sausages, as old father Cist says.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; February 15, 1848

Note: Paper on Mar 13, 1848 notes Mr. Cist associated with the Cincinnati Advertiser.

Feb 21, 1848

...At 12 o'clock to-day, the Senate met the House in convention to listen to the reading of Washington's Farwell Address, by Hon. E. H. Thompson. It is needless for us to say the reading was good, or that the Senator is a good reader. The compliments he received by all present speak in

stronger terms than we can. On the reading being concluded, Hon. E. H. Lathrop offered the following resolution which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the thanks of the Senate and House of Representatives be, and they are hereby tendered to Senator Thompson, for the able and impressive manner in which he has read to us the farewell address of General Washington to his countrymen.

We regret to state that Hon. John Pierce, of the House, is quite unwell. He has been out of health for some days but was not compelled to leave his seat until Monday. His physicians do not consider him dangerously ill, but he will not be able to take his seat in the House for some days, if not weeks.

The "Grand Legislative" Ball is to take place to-night, and we expect a "grand" time. Bad roads and deep mud cannot keep the "boys and girls" away, as we have had abundant proof to-day. Several wagon loads of the fair sex arrived from the surrounding country this afternoon, and the cry is "still they come." The beauty of Monroe, Byron, DeWitt, and several other villages around will be there. All regret that we could not have had sleighing as the Jackson bells would have been here, and if they are a *few*," you better believe.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; February 25, 1848

Feb 22, 1848

Grand Legislative Ball!

A Grand Legislative Ball will be given at Lansing Hall (Turner's Hotel) in the town of Michigan, on Tuesday, the 22d February. Tickets for sale at the office of the Hotel. (Advertisement)

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; February 8 & 16, 1848

Feb 23, 1848

Correspondence, Michigan February 23, 1848.

The ball at Turner's went off in most magnificent style last night, and the merry dance was continued till morning. The ladies were beautiful, the music excellent, and the supper such a one as the gentleman host is capable of getting up.

Several of the ladies visited the House of Representatives to-day, and set several of the bachelor members half crazy, as well as a few of the married ones, though we would not mention their names for the world, as it might be the means of creating domestic difficulties--above all, don't publish it,

that the Speaker played the gallant to as many as *one*. The “gentleman from Hamtramck” was not absent.

The roads are bad--worse than when muddy.--The weather for 24 hours has frozen the ground just hard enough to make it horrible wheeling.

The Senate spend *five* hours in executive session today, consequently no other business of importance was transacted.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; February 26, 1848

Feb 25, 1848

President *pro tem*, Denton gives a Legislative supper this evening, to his friends. We have not leisure to attend but have no doubt all will pass off pleasantly. The attendance will be large, we should judge, from the *squads* we see marching through the bushes to the “lower town.” We saw four grave Senators and a prominent member of the House, riding down in a vehicle drawn by two (can’t read ...?) horses, with a yoke on, at a snail’s place.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; March 1, 1848

Mar 11, 1848

P. S. we are requested by several Detroiters, now at the capital to return thanks to R. Dermont, Esq., dealer in groceries, liquors, &c., on Woodward avenue, for a box of *delicacies* such as sardines, cigars, wines, &c., presented them, and to say that it arrived safely and in good condition, -
-Mr. D’s health was drunk by many friends and a united wish expressed for his prosperity and success. We assure our friends on our own responsibility, that his liquors and cigars are of the finest flavor, and “cheap for cash or approved paper, at wholesale and retail.” Call and see.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; March 16, 1848

Mar 20, 1848

The editor of the Advertiser appears to delight in originating and publishing “Roarbacks”-- the barest kinds of falsehoods. The Advertiser of Saturday last contains the following: “The majority of the locofocs members of the legislature were constantly playing cards at Turner’s” Now, this wholesale charge was known to be false by its author. The editor has not been here, and he can give no authority for the assertion. The whigs of course are no such men as playcards! We do not say they are. There was a general expression of disgust among the whigs in the Legislature on reading the above. We will refer the editor of the Advertiser to George C. Bates, Esq., who is known to be a prominent

whig, and who has been here all winter. If that gentlemen will not say the assertion above as well as the daily insinuations of the editor, are false, we are very much mistaken. Mr. B. is a gentleman and would not utter a falsehood even to make a little political capital. If the readers of the Advertiser abroad view, such falsehoods as they are viewed here by the whigs, the editor will gain very little by the course he has been pursuing.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; March 24, 1848

Mar 21, 1848

(Geo. C. Bates gave eulogy on life and service of John Q. Adams; Bates asked for permission to print, Bates denied.)

The letter of Mr. B. will be read with interest as it treats of Legislature matters--of the measures which have been and are yet to be acted upon.--The complimentary manner in which the Legislators are spoken of, is richly deserved, and will have the more weight coming from one who is politically opposed to the majority. The writer has been a daily attendant and can speak from personal knowledge. The remarks that he has "not yet learned that portion of the whig creed which forbids him to speak of the public acts and conduct of the majority, only in terms of bitterness and reproach," may not have been intended for the editor of the Advertiser, but they are peculiarly appropriate in his case, and we commend them to him. Our whig readers, and we have thousands of them will appreciate them and those of them who are personally acquainted with the parties, will readily make up their minds which to believe, and more especially as but one of them has been at the capital this winter.

(Part of Bates letter)

You are all well aware that the time allowed by the termination of my business at the Capitol was very brief; that it was written in the public Library, the only place of convenience, amidst the interruption and turmoil necessarily attendant upon Legislation, with private business constantly required my attention, and without access to any of these public documents or histories in which are recorded the public and private services and writing of that great man. Under such circumstances, it could hardly be expected that one far better qualified than I am, could do justice either to the illustrious subject or himself, and I am quite sure that I failed to do either....Having been compelled by private business to spend a great portion of the session at the

Capitol, and having been a daily witness of your labors, I cannot forbear to express to you on this occasion, my high regard for you as gentlemen, and to bear public testimony to the zeal, ability, industry, and integrity with which you have labored in the public service, and discharged your high and solemn duties to your constituents and your State. Although as you all know, I am as I have ever been, firmly, consistently and ardently opposed politically to a majority of your bodies, yet my vision is not so warped by prejudice, nor my judgment so blinded by party, that I cannot do justice to a political opponent, or speak with candor and fairness of his public acts.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; March 27, 1848

Mar 23, 1848

Music at The Capitol--Gillum and Wood's celebrated brass band has been out to Michigan, entertaining the members and visitors with two concerts, one at Turner's and one in the Hall of the House. The concerts were well attended, and the audience highly delighted.

Source: Detroit *Daily Free Press*; March 23, 1848