

Descriptions of Early Lansing

By Jerry Lawler

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1830s

Lansing Shunned by Indians and Early Settlers

There was a lot of swamp where Red Cedar and Grand joined. The area was heavily timbered. There was good fishing but there was little game. Trees were so big that deer had no browse to eat. Settlers passed Lansing by because of lack of drainage for the same and because it costs more to clear the land of heavy timber than the land was worth at the time. Source: The Ingham County News, Centennial Issues; April 23 and 30 and May 7 and 14, 1959; pg. 8

1838 Description of Lansing

That the examination and survey (of branch of Clinton and Kalamazoo Canal down valley of Cedar river to navigable waters of Grand river) has been made, and the route found practicable and feasible. This route in point of importance and interest to the state, has much merit, and perhaps may be considered the most important connection that can be formed in the state, uniting the great thoroughfare across the peninsula with the rich and fertile valleys of the fairest portion of Michigan--a section of the state perhaps unsurpassed in the richness of its soil, and abundance of its valuable timber, and the superabundance of its invaluable water power, which is met with through the whole extent of the route on the Cedar, the Looking Glass and Grand rivers and their numerous tributaries. It opens into the mineral region, which from present examinations bids fair to become of immense importance to the state...

A little to the west of the principal meridian line, I found the county uneven and much broken the river crooked, and the banks rising into high bluffs from fifty to eight and ninety feet in height, with broad and deep valleys occasionally intervening, which induced me to keep a high level and carry the line back from the river.

At the north bend of the Cedar, below the junction of the outlet of Pine Lake, on section thirteen, town four north, of range two west, I intersected a line with the Cedar River, but on meandering the stream below this point, we found it very crooked and in some places shallow. I also continued the line across to Grand River, intersecting at the mouth of Alcott's creek, on section nine. The last mile and a half on this line is objectionable, from the embanking it would

require across a wide swamp and the deep cut through the high ground bordering upon the east bank of Grand River.

This could, however, be mostly avoided by changing the route to the south and intersecting Grand River near the junction of the Cedar. The objection to intersecting with Grand river at this point and making it the point of termination for the canal route, is, that the river is extremely crooked below and not navigable except in high water, above the mouth of the Lookingglass, or Lyons, at the mouth of the Maple. The country from this point to the junction of the Lookingglass with Grand river, lying between the two rivers, is mostly high and rolling, interspersed with low valleys, swamps and marshes, which would be difficult to overcome without great expense in the building a canal and making a line so crooked that it would be a serious objection to the route.....

This route, in connection with the eastern division of the main line when constructed, will open a more direct communication to market, for as rich and a greater extend of territory, than any other contemplated work, of the same distance, in the state; and over no portion of the state of the same extent is there to be met with anything in proportion to the amount of water power that can be improved upon this route.....

Between the junction of the Cedar and the mouth of the Lookingglass, in passing down Grand River, twenty-seven bars were found, on which the water was less than two feet deep. Seven-teen of these were less than a foot and a half, and nine of them not exceeding one foot.These examinations were made during the last part of October, Source: Report on the Cedar and Grand River Branch of the Clinton and Kalamazoo Canal by Jarvis Hurd, Civil Engineer; 1840 House Documents; No. 50; pgs. 834-840

1838

Marian Munroe, daughter of Jesse Munroe, native or Pawlet, Rutland Co., VT; moved Amherst, Erie Co., NY where Marian born (Dec 8, 1818), moved Eagle, Clinton County, MI in 1836; married James Turner on October 1, 1843.

“About 1838, Mrs. Turner made a visit to friends residing in mason, going on horseback, accompanied by a relative. She went via Okemos, fording the Cedar River at that point, which was so swollen that Mrs. Turner--then Miss. Munroe--

was obliged to hold her feet upon the horse's back to keep them out of the water. On their return to Clinton County they followed the Indian trail along Grand River, and stopped for lunch on the ground, or very near, where the Turner mansion now stands. Miss. Munroe was greatly pleased with the location and the fine view it afforded, and remarked that she should not wonder if, when she was married, she might someday make her home there. The prophecy has long since been fulfilled, and certainly there is no more pleasant site for a home in Ingham County, overlooking, as it does, a long sweep of the beautiful river and a broad scope of cultivated county in all directions. At the time of this first visit the whole region was a wilderness. The high bluff bank of the river at this point is clothed with a majestic growth of forest-trees, then open and unobstructed by undergrowth, with cold, pure springs gushing from the slopes, and dashing to the river below. This is to-day the most romantic spot in the vicinity of Lansing, and with a small outlay could be transformed into a picturesque park. " Source: History of Ingham and Eaton counties Michigan with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Their Prominent Men and Pioneers by Samuel W. Durant. 1880.

1843-4 Description of Lansing

Isaac Nelson Wolcott born November 9, 1836. "When seven years old I made a trip to Lansing with one of my uncles and some of his neighbors. We made the trip with ox teams and made North Lansing our stopping place. There were three houses there, but all of them were on the east side of the river, and as there were no bridges in Lansing people coming from, the south were obliged to ford the Red Cedar river out near the lad race track east of the city, then travel on to the North Lansing settlement. When the Capitol was moved from Detroit to Lansing, I had a small part in the work and helped to move the furniture for the Capitol building." Source: Isaac Nelson Wolcott at meeting of County Pioneer Society, reprinted in Pioneer History of Ingham county compiled and arranged by Mrs. Franc L. Adams, Vol. 1, 1923; pgs. 728-9.

1847 Description of Lansing

May 29, 1847

A correspondent of the Monroe Advocate thus describes the new capital of Michigan:

"It is 25 or 30 rods west of the centre of section 16, town 4 north, range 2 west. -The selection is a good one, but in my judgment not the best that could have been made. Mr. Seymour, who owns sec. 9, north of sec. 16, is laying out a village on his own land, and Mr. Townsend who owns sec. 21, south of section 16, is also laying out a village on his. The general character of the lands in this vicinity is uneven or rolling. The soil is fertile, mostly heavy timber, with birch, maple, oak, &c; and capable of sustaining a dense population. The Grand River, a beautiful stream, larger than the Raisin, "Makes its devious course" through the county, turning to all points of the compass to find a lowly bed. It seldom, overflows its banks even in high water. It is very favorable for slack water navigation from Grand Rapids to Jackson, and it has been concluded, by estimates, that the sale of water power thus created would defray the expense of buildings dams and locks. Lansing forms a centre of a large tract of valuable farming country, called the "Grand River country." Unsurpassed by any in the state for fertility, health, and all the elements of wealth and power, and is destined, I think, at no distant day, to rival the older portions of the State in population and influence. The capitol being located on the school section will make some delay about commencing improvements. The lots are to be laid out, appraised, and offered for sale at auction, before anyone can make a purchase, which will require some four or five weeks at least. Some improvements will in the meantime, be made on the lands of Seymour and Townsend. Water power abundant and will soon be improved. Lime has not yet been found in any considerable quantity nearer than about 40 miles; most of the stones to be found are granite, boulders, etc., The nearest post office to be found, at present, is at Delta, Eaton county, about 5 or 6 miles from the capitol; but it is expected that soon an office will be established here, and G. W. Peck, Esq., Speaker of the House of Representatives last winter, be appointed Post Master. It is also expected that Mr. Harmon, of Detroit, will start a paper here about the first of July, and Mr. Peck is spoken of as editor." Source: The Signal of Liberty, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 29, 1847.

Legislators Description

Jul 6, 1847

The editor of the Marshall Expounder, who has recently visited the new Capitol, thus discourses:

We had the pleasure, a few days since, of visiting the new *Capitol* of the State of Michigan, and we must say that in the location, and the general appearance of the country, we, were happily disappointed. Whatever doubt there may have been, and perhaps still is, about the policy of selecting a spot off from the present main thoroughfares of the State, there can be no dispute about the fact that the Commissioners have made a *beautiful* location. The school section, upon, the centre of which the Capitol is to be built, is at the confluence of Grand and Cedar Rivers, and is, we think the handsomest body of heavy timbered land we have ever seen. We traveled over the most of it, and with the exception of a narrow strip on the west side, which is rather low, we found no portion of it but what would make handsome building spots. The whole town as laid out is covered with majestic elm, beech, maple, oak, walnut and sycamore trees in great abundance, and if the proper discretion and taste is exercised in cutting out those not needed for shade and ornament, "Michigan" can be made one of the most beautiful and picturesque cities in the country.

As we wound our way around stumps and over logs in the 'clearing,' the novel and striking scene which was spread out before us bro't (brought - can't read word) freshly to our mind the pictures in the geography representing Jamestown in its infancy--with this difference--the Virginia Capitol was commenced in the erection of *log* houses--at the Capitol of Michigan, there is evidently more aristocracy, for the buildings are all of *sawed* lumber. At the time, we were there, about 30 buildings (such as they were) had been erected, and the number increasing at the rate of 2 or 3 a day. There are two hotels, four or five stores and some mechanic shops already up and occupied, and also in the course of erection one of the best steam saw mills probably in the State, which is to be finished in time to saw the lumber for the new Capitol. Col. Glen informed us that he intends to have the Capitol building ready for the State officers by the first of November about which time, the Auditor General told us he should remove his office. The State building is to be of wood, ninety by sixty feet, two stories high, and is to

accommodate the Legislature and all the officers of the State Government. It is not to be erected on the square of twenty acres which has been reserved for the permanent, State buildings, but upon a square adjoining.

The school section is laid out into about 1200 town lots, which were appraised at from \$10 to \$300 each, amounting in the aggregate to \$80,000. 500 lots were put in market, by offering two and withholding two alternately--57 lots were sold for \$5000 a besides considerable number since entered at the land office, --a map of the village may be seen at the land office in the village, or at 'Michigan'.
Source: Jackson Patriot, July 6, 1847.

Aug 1847

The whole site of Lansing was then a dense wilderness, excepting a few small clearings here and there, and Mrs. Burr remembers well of getting lost in the woods on the west side while returning from North Lansing. The paths were almost impassable.

"Their house was partially completed, so that they occupied it at Christmas, 1847. 18-pg. 115.

Aug 7, 1847

Charlotte Cook to Riley township to son George H. Cook (shoemaker) of Lima, New York; other son Joseph H. Cook resided at time in DeWitt:

We think you might do well here at the Capitol, they are doing quite a flourishing business there I expect. They have now six or eight stores and groceries, two or three taverns, one steam saw mill, a furnace and tin shop, two blacksmiths, two show shops, one bake shop, one doctor, and Mr. Apthorp (also of Riley township) and Leander butcher for them. David Cochran is there at work on the state building. We heard almost a week ago that it is getting quite sickly there.

Source: DeWitt Area History #4, Government Center, State, County, Township by Kenneth R. Coin

Sep 1847

"When I came to Lansing two years after this (1847) from New York states, " said Mr. Bush, in speaking of his early advent into the new state capital "Michigan City" as the place was then called, consisted of a few log houses close to the river bank and along the road that is now Washington Avenue. Cedar street was then as prominent as Washington avenue. The latter, from Michigan to north Lansing, was full

of trash heaps and logs, and dense woods bordered it on both sides. "Source: John N. Bush in The State Republican, April 14, 1909.

Serenaded every night by the denizens of an immense frog pond near the cabin (southwest corner of West Saginaw and N. Washington - 623 N. Washington) and with clouds of mosquitoes indoors and outdoors adding their plaintive thrills. These and other romantic sights and sounds, like the snarling of wolves, the distant cry of the panther--like a woman in distress--and watching the pretty deer as they fearlessly browsed among the newly made brush heaps, made for us a new and novel experience.

These deer were perfectly safe, as far as we were concerned, not a gun on the place, and not a man who knew how to shoot one if we had it. (The family had come from the east and "civilization.")

We were, however, frightened later on, when one evening in the early winter, the cabin door opened softly and in stalked four Indians, who, after giving the usual grunt, proceeded to spread their blankets upon the clay earth and lie down, heads to the fire, and remain quietly there until morning. Rising at the first peep of day, they filed out in the same order as they had come in, again giving us the grunt. It is needless to say that the only sleeping done in the cabin that night was by those four Indians.

We soon found that our fears were needless as we were frequently visited in like manner, as night would sometimes overtake the Indians when tracking bears.

Source: Uncle Dan's Pioneer Recollections

In the pioneer days this area was no field of dandelions, but a spring-fed swamp. The swamp was full of poison sumac, skunk cabbage, willows, and snakes. According to old timers' tales it was not uncommon to see water snakes stretched out full length on a log along the banks of streams. There were snakes of all kinds, striped snakes, green snakes, blue racers, rattlers, black snakes and during the Civil War, copperheads. pg. 41.

Source: Uncle Dan's Pioneer Recollections

The territory lying along Grand avenue, west to the foot of the hill from Ionia street, north to Saginaw St., in those days

was a swamp, very wet and fed by springs from under the hill. The swamp was infested with poison sumac, skunk's cabbage, snakes, and willows. I once had the hardest snake fight of my life here with a moccasin. Of course, I came off victor. There were striped snakes, green snakes, blue racers, rattlers, black snakes, and during the Civil war, copperheads. The state caused a deep ditch to be dug along Grand avenue to Saginaw St., and thence to the river, which reclaimed this waste land and made Grand avenue passable in this locality. pg. 59

Source: Uncle Dan's Pioneer Recollections

One year ago there was only one house, a barn and sawmill in the entire neighborhood and now there is more than a hundred scattered here and there among the trees forming on the whole a most grotesque appearance.

Source: Letter from David Cockran to Mr. Revi Rosenkrans, March 26, 1848.

"At the "lower town," as North Lansing was long called, and on main Street, in the south part of the town, the land was dry and easily drained of any surface water, while the central portions were more level, and the clay subsoil held the water like a huge dish." D pg. 128.

1847

"The west bank of the Grand, when the hotel (Seymour) was building, showed not a sign of the white man except occasional marks of surveyors who had been sent here by the government to locate the Capital site and survey the town. For miles upon miles west was unbroken timber." LSJ 1921; 267 pg. 587.

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"I can remember the old red wooden bridge that spanned the river then at Franklin street. The butternut tree that stood on the east and south side of the east abutment." Source: Dr. F. N. Turner; Pioneer History of Ingham County, compiled and arranged by Mrs. Franc L. Adams, Vol. I, 1923; pg. 463.

1847-48

"The old capital building was erected in '47, to be completed and in readiness for the session of the legislature the following January. Stumps were all standing, but later pulled out with a stump machine, a great curiosity to me. During the first few session of the legislature the members found much difficulty in securing board and rooms, the Benton, Lansing and Seymour hotels being about the only available places, these being usually well filled with transients. As they

laboriously wended their way through mud and mire, around stumps, over logs and through brush, may an invective was hurled against the instigators of the removal of the State capitol into the wilderness. Some of the more fortunate welcomed the opportunity of rides in lumber wagons to convey them to and from their distant boarding places. Ludicrous scenes often occurred to these dignified members and senators, but they soon learned to take the inevitable with as good grace as possible under the circumstances.” 276 pg. 177.

Jan 20, 1848

Your request, that I shall furnish you daily with a sketch of such of the proceedings of the Legislature, and other matters as shall be of public interest, I will endeavor to observe. Let me state then, at this place, that whatever I may write a comment upon, shall be done at all times candidly and impartially, without fear, favor, or reward.

I shall not in this letter, although my first from the “new capitol,” attempt to portray the romance of a Legislature in the woods, or the peculiar advantages to be derived by the law-makers of our State, in the absence of those *appliances* which were always so convenient at Detroit, when even the most trivial matter was to be acted upon. In this remark I would not be understood as censuring the citizens of Detroit, because I know full well that they never had half the undue influence of interference in the capitol with which they were charged. Yet that city was made, during the session, the *nucleus* of lobbies who will never find their way out here, because of the entire absence of other available business on which they generally relied for the payment of their expenses. Politically, Detroit should rejoice at the removal! If she has lost the capitol, she has robbed the pot-house politician of the available cry of “Detroit influence”—an epithet so potent in the mouth of some, that I doubt whether Mr. Buel, the worthy Speaker of the House, could have been elected to that station had the session been held at Detroit.

In point of talent and industry, the present Legislature will compare favorably with any that have preceded it. I do not agree with the “Free Press,” in pronouncing this the best and most talented body that ever assembled in Michigan, (an enlogium, which, by the by, it has always pronounced at the commencement of every democratic Legislature,) attention to legislative business, and proper regard for those liberal principles shadowed forth in the Governor’s excellent

Message, no previous body has ever assembled within the wales (walls) of the capitol of this State, which can be said to excel them...

Yours, &c., JUSTITIA

Source: Jackson Patriot, January 22, 1848.

Jan 21, 1848

The Legislature has now been in session near three weeks, and as a natural sequence, much business has accumulated on the tables of members--while a large portion of it is yet receiving that necessary digestion before the proper standing committees. That more has not yet been achieved in these several preparatory departments of legislation, can hardly elicit surprise when it is remembered that many of the members of most of the important committees are under the necessity of traveling at least three or four miles after three o'clock, in order to get together, and then must adjourn before dark if they would avoid risk of broken necks and limbs in perambulating the woods after dark--stumbling into brush-heaps, falling over stumps, and butting out their brains against piles of cord wood. From the upper to the lower town it is some mile and a-half or two miles, with the capitol about mid-way. At each of these places' members may be found boarding. The lower town may undoubtedly boast of the best Hotel, kept in "all the region round," under the auspices of mine host, Milo H. Turner,--than whom there is not a better fellow in the circle of any gourmandizer's acquaintance. Your Jackson friends will always find him "a gentleman-at-home."...

JUSTITIA

Source: Jackson Patriot, February 1, 1848.

Feb 1, 1848

The New Capitol

A correspondent of the Marshall Expounder, writing from Michigan, gives the following sketch of the town and its beauties:

The Capitol is situated upon Grand River, about eighty miles North of West from Detroit, forty miles from Jackson, forty-four from Marshall about the same from Battle Creek, and about eighty miles from Grand Rapids; being about as near the geographical centre of the State, as could be well selected. On the 1st of January 1848, it contained as near as could be ascertained, about fifteen hundred inhabitants, who have all gathered there since the 1st of May last. Its buildings present a most unequal distribution of the works of Nature and Art, from the magnificent Palace, to the most

humble shanty. In the upper town are two respectable public Inns, and one large brick edifice not yet finished, designed for a public house, built by Messrs. Bush and Thomas, together, with a good many respectable dwellings both frame and log; three stores, several groceries, and a "ball alley." Upon the school section, buildings of all descriptions are being erected, some finished and some not. Here, in or near the centre of the school section, is the Capitol Building--it is 68 by 95 feet--is a fine substantial looking wood building. In the lower part of the south end, is the Hall of the House of Representatives. In the second story, is the Senate Chamber. Both rooms are good and fitted up with the old "Fixings," brought from the old Capitol at Detroit. In the north end are the offices of the Auditor General, Treasurer, and Secretary of State. Above are the Governor's room and Library. The building is good and reflects great credit upon the active and efficient commissioners whom the state selected to superintend its erection. The Lower Town presents the same unequal newness, that characterizes the appearance of the whole.--The "Seymour House," owned and kept by Mr. Turner, a very gentlemanly and civil man, is by far the most commodious house in the town, being about 50 feet in width, 128 feet in length and two and half stories in height. A large part of the members of both houses stop here and appear very happy and comfortable. But that "Ball Room" we were thrown into a perfect state of wildness, when examining its grandeur. Only think of a room 128 feet in length and the width of the whole house, and "arched all over head," where the gay, the young and the old, will trip the light fantastic toe; while in this state of excitement the following poetic effusion came forth; although not altogether original it answers a good purpose. It was in these words--

"Let all the *Little Landlords* join,
To make one perfect *room*,
O! Turner! when once compared with thine
How mean their *works do look*."

In the lower town, are three stores, several groceries, a good school house, a sawmill, a furnace, a grist mill being built: and all the Mechanical arts in full operation. In fine, the whole plat, from one end to the other; the River, its grandeur--the noble banks--the make of land--the richness of soil--presents to the beholder an irresistible charm which draws forth from him a lingering wish that if, consistent with the will of Divine Providence his lot may be cast here.

The first sermon was preached in the Senate Chamber by the Rev. Mr. Brown; his text was as follows: --*The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former.*

The Rev. Preacher gave us an interesting and elegant discourse, upon the principle of improvements, progression &c., commencing with the building of the first temple by Solomon, giving a minute history of the principal events which have transpired in the moral, political and religious world, from the singing of the first stars in heaven down to the present time.

Source: Jackson Patriot, February 1, 1848.

Mar 4, 1848

The weather has been cold and unpleasant today and a ride from Jackson was not very agreeable. The "woodsmen" do not seem to be "sparing the trees" much, if I can judge of the number of sawlogs in progress of transit to the mills.

I will remain here a few days and will keep you advised of transactions in about the Capitol.

Source: Jackson Patriot, March 13, 1848.

Mar 26, 1848

..Since I left your place I have met with nothing more than commonplace adventures and have finally taken up my residence for a time at the above named village (Michigan) or the new capital of Michigan of which I will endeavor to give a description; It is situated in the county of Ingham and Township of Lansing at the point where the Grand and Cedar rivers unite their waters and plow together toward their destination. The entire plat is about two miles long and one mile wide, embracing the whole of section sixteen and about half of nine and twenty-one. One year ago there was only one house, a barn and sawmill in the entire neighborhood and now there are more than a hundred scattered here and there among the trees forming on the whole a most grotesque appearance. I have been here most of the time since last June. I am working at the carpenter and joining business and pass off for a very good workman as far as framing is concerned...I have purchased a lot and shall probably build upon it next year. Elisha is also here and works at chopping and teaming. Father lives in the town of Eaton Rapids, about fifteen miles up the river from this place.

Our legislature has been in session nearly three months and there is a fair prospect that they will continue as much longer and accomplish nothing in the end.

Politics and Religion are about as little talked of as the man in the moon or the famed bucephelus; and as for the Liberty men, they are very few but true to the cause, for none same the true and tried friends of the oppressed dares to avow himself in favor of universal freedom lest the overwhelming tide of popular prejudice should bury him in oblivion. yet there is a hope for the better for a spirit of sympathy is silently at work in the hearts of the more benevolent portion of community which will eventually arouse itself to action which fully ripened for the public benefit.

...I have not had the ague yet and do not expect to have it but feel very thankful for the kind attention that she (Mrs. Rosenkrans) would have bestowed upon me had I of needed it."

Source: Letter from David Cockran to Mr. Levi Rosenkrans, dated March 26, 1848.

Mar 30, 1848

The rain has fallen to-day in torrents, and the "streets" are not in altogether the best condition desired by pedestrians. Turn whatever way you will, and mud,--and that of the muddiest kind,--stare you full in the face. Unlike the national metropolis, you are not beset by hackman at every corner of the street, but left to pilot your own way among fallen trees and huge stumps, to the imminent peril of sound limbs and unbroken bones.

Source: Jackson Patriot, April 17, 1848.

1870

Architecture

After the Capitol was erected, Washington avenue was cleared of trees and then the stumps, after which architecture began gradually to make its appearance along the sides of the street in the shape of log houses. This style of architecture may consistently be called Western. having no occasion for Roman, Grecian, or Elizabethan architecture, the pioneers of the West invented a style to suit the needs of a settler, and which must be seen to be appreciated. it is still better appreciated after it has been used as a residence. pg. 8

Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870.

Aug 15, 1913

In the spring of '48 the settlers utilized every root and log available to keep out the mud and water from the streets. The worst place was at Ottawa and Washington. At this point there was a run of water, which completely submerged the road. Logs and planks were thrown in so as to make the way passable. Some 20 years ago a sewer was put in at this point by the city and the logs and planks were found to be in as good condition as the day they were put in there.

When Jenison's store was built we had to go down in a gully and climb some rudely erected stairs to order to get to our work. There was a thick tamarack swamp on the east side of Washington Avenue from Saginaw Street to Shiawassee Street. Nobody would buy the land. That was the mistake made by most of us pioneers. We couldn't see far enough ahead to realize that we were rich in lands and that the people would come pouring in by the thousands later on. We used to comment on that swamp and say that it would never be fit for anything but a goose swamp. You could have bought it for almost a song then, but now it's much different. I don't know how much it would come to now but it would be more than I would want to pay at any rate.

"In the wild woods in the midst of solitude and silence. I've been lost in the woods many times, but I always found my way out. I was never lonesome there with the tall trees for company. I enjoyed it all. Give me my rifle and hand-axe and the woods and I'll be happy. I enjoyed camping out. In the coldest of winters we could fix a comfortable sleeping place in less than 30 minutes. My greatest desire now is to go up north and hunt. All is confusion now, with factory whistles screaming the blatant calls to work, and people, people everywhere."

Source: John N. Bush in Lansing State Journal, August 15, 1913.

Mrs. E. R. Merrifield Account

Daughter of John Thomas

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Early impressions are most lasting, but it is no easy task to gather from the byways of memory the incidents and facts which make the prose of everyday life.

In the year 1844, a man named Page moved into the wilderness of interior Michigan. When he had nearly reached

the center of the State, a river swollen by spring freshets, stopped his progress. "Here will I settle," said he. "I will dam that river and build a town," soon a log house was built into which he moved his family. A mill was subsequently finished, standing until a few years since, a land mark of early times at North Lansing.

Comment: Nonsense

Shortly after this settlement by Mr. Page, the impression became general that Detroit was not a safe location for the seat of government on account of its exposed position on the frontier. At that time the prospect of a war with England was a frequent theme of conversation, and my youthful fancy pictured bands of English soldiers or of Indians marching through from Canada and butchering all they came in contact with.

The excitement over this apprehended danger finally culminated in the resolve to remove the capital to the interior of the State. Then arose an exciting contest between the towns of the State, each desiring to capture the prize, and great bitterness of feeling resulted, and amid much agitation the legislature decided to locate the capital in the wilderness.

I was a school girl in Detroit, and with my father, who was a member of the House from Oakland county, attended several sessions to hear the discussions on the removal. According to the act, the commissioners looking for a site for the capital came upon the settlement mentioned, and decided that should be the location. This was in 1847. In the following year the edifice to be used for the capitol was erected in a clearing made for that purpose. The same year my father removed to the growing settlement and built on the east side of the river on Cedar street the first store in the then wilderness. Later with his partner he built two hotels, one on Cedar street known as the National Hotel, the other on the corner of River and Main streets, called the Michigan house. Both these hotels burned, one in 1855, one later.

Comment: Thomas legislator in 1846 not 47; debated discussed was in 46'.

Comment: noted father partner with Hunt & Quackenbush in hotels - doubt.

In October 1848, father removed his family and all his goods, to take up our abode in the place of great expectations.

Twelve large loaded wagons came through the forest taking four days to come from Farmington, twenty miles west of Detroit....

Even then, streets had been laid out with due regard for the future greatness of a metropolis and on all maps of the time were printed with imposing clearness. But paths and Indian trails were the more frequently used roadways. Well do I remember passing the one solitary log house that stood on the lot formerly owned by Col. Burr, between the Michigan House where we lived and the capitol. Stump machines were busily employed in clearing village lots and roadways.

The winter of 1848, which was unusually severe, saw much sickness, and almost every house had one or more cases of brain fever, or as now called, spinal meningitis. main street was at that time the best improved street in the city.

A change of administration in 1849 brought a new set of clerks in the different offices. The society people amused themselves with sleighing parties and an occasional dance. The clerks in the departments were styled "capital boys," and included some who are now Lansing's oldest and most respected citizens.

The opening of the old Benton House was a great event and duly celebrated with a social party, dancing, etc. Chas. P. Bush was the proprietor, and cook and waiters were engaged from one of the steamboats running between Detroit and Buffalo. The first marriage celebrated in Lansing took place in this house.

The arrival of the legislature was always hailed with interest. Some members came in one-horse buggies, some by the only stage that ran into the city from Jackson, the then terminus of the M. C. R. R. to Mr. James Turner, Sr., belongs the credit of pushing the plank road enterprise which made it possible to cover the distance between Lansing and Detroit in a single day.

A widely printed article on the early days in Lansing says that the first frame house built in Lansing was the one on Turner street, North Lansing, built by Mr. Turner in 1850. Evidently the writer was mistaken since our family came to Lansing in 1848 and moved into the Michigan House. Several times during the summer of '49, in company with

young land friend I rowed down the river to Mr. Turner's. Many small frame dwellings were building in different directions, but Lansing was for more than a score of years a city of "Magnificent distances." I am told that the first dwelling erected in the city was situate near the Hudson House block and built by Mr. Darling in 1847.

I have already said that Main street was the best improved in the city. On that street were shoe stores, a tailor shop, bakery and a jewelry store. Early in the fifties trade began centering in what was called "Middle town," and Main street ceased to lead.

In the summer of 1849 Mr. Cooper, the secretary of state, had the Capitol yard graded and laid out in flower beds around the trees. In due time the flowers were charming, and I still keep a faded bouquet gathered from that primitive flower garden.

A two board walk laid from the Capitol to the newly finished Seymour House at North Lansing, or Lower Town as it was called, was considered a great addition to the city improvements. A mill at the north end of the city attracted the trade of farmers, and that was for a time considered the most desirable location for business. Among the citizens locating there were James Turner, Sr., H. H. Smith and F. M. Cowles.

An anecdote is told of the Hon. H. H. Smith on his arrival here in 1850 with the intention of becoming a resident of the capital. On selecting a lot, he found the agent, no very great task in those days. Accompanying him to the desired location, he inquired the price of that lot. "Well," said the speculator, "the location is central, the ground high, and in five years it will be in the center of a large, flourishing town, and will double in value in that time," to all of which Mr. Smith assented. Again asking the price the man said, "I don't care to sell, but should like to encourage immigration to this part of the town. The timber is well worth the price of the lot, and I will make it to you cheap, only \$450 a foot. Mr. Smith drew a long breath, his face assumed a lengthy shape and smiling faintly said, "I will take just six inches of the lot."

The first religious services held here after the location of the Capitol were at North Lansing as it is now called. The congregation were called together by the effective blowing of

a tin horn. The first church erected was the Free Will Baptist recently used by the Industrial Aid Society. The North Lansing Methodists had repaired an old barn and held services in it some time. The different denominations in the middle town held services in the house and senate chamber alternately, the Episcopal in the state library, the clergyman coming from Flint every four weeks...

Often in my journey around Lansing I think of the great change, and wonder what the old pioneers, who with a helping had made Lansing what it is today, would say if they were permitted to return. It would be to them like Rip Van Winkle's sleep and coming to himself in find everything changed.

Mrs. E. R. Merrifield

Source: Early Days In Lansing; A Well-Known Lady's Personal Reminiscences.

Undated newspaper clip in Lawler collection.

1848

Oscar F. Camp built log shanty in deep of forest; 26 rods of 726 N. High St (1891 address); purchased land in 1847; this in 1848 "before Washington Avenue was hewed out of the forest, and at that time that roadway had simply been cleared of underbrush, so that teams could creep thorough, but the main part of the timber was still standing...When Mr. Camp brought his family to Lansing, in 1848, they came with three teams from Detroit and having settled them in the old log shanty he went to work to clear off the farm...When he purchased it (land) he paid \$20 for six acres of land \$13 for eighty acres and \$6 for another forty." Source: Portrait and Biographical Album of Ingham pg. 404

1848 Description of Lansing

Dec 25, 1848 Daniel W. Buck in December 1848 employed in furniture factory in North Lansing:

"My first Christmas in Lansing was not spent in Lansing at all, but in Delhi, where my brothers-in-law, the North's, lived. I remember the morning well. There was no slight that winter and I started from North Lansing to go out to Harrison North's to dinner. I drove down Washington avenue, it was a road through the woods then, and the stumps were not cut out of the road yet. I got lost in those woods one night where the Baptist church is now and went by way of Dryer's place over by the location of the School for the Blind in my efforts to get to the Lansing House. Well I drove down the avenue

and on my way from Franklin street to the corner of Allegan street, I passed just three houses. Two of them were log houses and the other was a slab shanty. The shanty was where Mrs. Peck's place is (1896). And one of the log houses was at the corner of Washington and Shiawassee street. At the Allegan street corner was a store. A man came up here from Ohio and built that with money he got by robbing a bank. We did not know that then, but we found it when he was arrested and taken back. The Lansing House was on the next corner. It was a log house; I drove past that and along the avenue until I came to Main street. Then I turned east and crossed the old bridge which then went across the river from the foot of Main street. There I struck woods again and strictly speaking that was the end of my Christmas in Lansing, for I spent the day with the North family. There were not more than two or three hundred people here then, and there was no village or city organization. The town was simply part of the township. North Lansing was a good deal more of a place than this end of town." Source: *State Republican* December 19, 1896.

1850 Description of Lansing

- Feb 1850 The forests were standing within gunshot of the capitol. I counted some two hundred buildings there and did not notice one beside the capitol that appeared to be finished. Source: Pioneer History of the Settlement of Eaton County, Personal Reminiscences by Rev. W. B. Williams; Historical Collections, Collections and Researches made by the *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society*, Vol. XXII. 1894. pg. 534.
- 1854 Towns. --Lansing is a new town, handsomely laid out in the midst of a fertile, healthy, and beautiful country. Source: Modern Geography by J. Olney, published by Pratt, Woodford, Farmer, and Brace of New York City. Reprinted in Clinton County Republican-News, Centennial Issue, 1956; Section J, pg. 5.
- Sep 1856 The September day in 1856 when we mounted the stage coach at Jackson to penetrate the north woods of Michigan's Capitol bright and balmy. We had a new As we made our way northward, we penetrated a dense smoke from the burning forests, marshes, and swamps of central Michigan. As evening came on, while we were yet ten miles away, the darkness became impenetrable. A man with a lantern in their

hand ahead to pilot the way, and two others beside the leaders, enabled the driver to pick his way only with difficulty. All the passengers walked, including two ladies. A little girl of one of the ladies not being old enough to walk a gentleman of the party took her in his arms and carried her. I noticed the gentleman closely. Tall, erect, with a benign and intelligent face a deep rich, cultured voice, he was a man to be noticed in any place. We shared with him the labor of carrying the little girl. Arriving in town, we stopped at the Lansing House, a frame dwelling standing across the avenue east of the present Lansing House, and which was kept by J. M. Shearer. We registered next to the kind gentleman who had carried the child. He registered, "H. Seymour, Utica, N.Y."

The next morning we sallied out and found our friend, John Horner, who was teaching for Miss Rogers, in the Michigan Female College, which occupies the Ohio House, in front of where C. T. Marks' livery stable is. he boarded at the Columbus House, a France hotel standing where now is the Hudson House, and kept by Mr. C. C. Darling. We got a rig and drove to North Lansing, where we were to teach. Washington avenue was ungraded, and part of the way the roadway twisted about to avoid the stumps. In front of the present Methodist church was a deep gully. Down by Alton's cooper shop was another, from the bottom of which one could not see a block ahead or behind. There was no sidewalk, and few houses between the towns. J. Turner & Case kept a store on the corner of Franklin and Turner streets, and the ...Mr. Turner lived in a one-story house, just north of his store, which is still standing. He was the director of the school district and had hired us to each the school a year for them, to us, princely sum of \$600. Miss Hattie Seymour was one of the assistant teachers. ... The brick school house in the first ward, recently removed to make way for the present one, was the scene of our labors....

H. H. Smith, D. L. Case, and James Turner were the potential triumvirate of Lower Towns. James I. Mead kept a store on the corner of Cedar and Franklin streets, but he attended strictly to business....H. H. Smith & Co. kept a store where Northrop's drug store now is, and between that and the hotel (now Franklin house), kept by Horace Angell, there were no buildings, as there were none between it and the river....John Tooker was a genial, witty young fellow, who

worked in the foundry. Hart's mill was the only one in town and was managed by Ben. Hart. Judge Hart yet lived in Lapeer. There were just four brick buildings in towns, the Benton House, the Merrifield building, occupies now by W. G. Patterson, the present Second National bank building, and the store of Mr. F. M. Cowles, since burned and rebuilt, where N. F. Jenison now is. Burr & Grove kept a hardware store about where Simons' Palace store is now. ...John Thomas & Co., of which firm major Merrifield was a member, kept a dry goods store next door. David Ekstein kept cigars and toys, and Lederer & Brothers kept a clothing store about where Newman's store is now. D. W. Buck was in the furniture trade. J. C. Bailey kept the only bank in town in the present Second National bank building. Van Murphy was postmaster and kept the office up near the Hudson House.

J.W. & E. Longyear kept their law office over Bailey's bank.

The brilliant George W. Peck was a star of the time. D. C. Leach lived in a one-story wood dwelling next north of the fine brick he afterwards built on Washington avenue. he was editor of the Republican, which was printed in a wooden building then standing in the rear of the Hudson house, but which has been removed, and is used by G. B. Sutton as a livery stable. The Journal was then edited by George W. Peck, who soon after sold it to S. P. Mead....

Dr. H. B. Shank, Col. Jones, Judge William Chapman, Judge Pinckney, that fall elected Judge of Probate, with others named, were among the leading citizens of Middle Town. A wooden bridge on main street, one on Michigan avenue, and another on Franklin street, were the bridge supply of the town. A line of "Elegant four-house post coaches" to Jackson, and another to Detroit, were the principal means of communication of the State with its Capitol. ...

The school building for Middle Town was a one-story wood structure, near the Free-Will Baptist church.

A raw, straggling village of perhaps two thousand people, scattered over space enough for a place of 15,000, reached only by states, the Capitol of Michigan was not the pride of the State. ...

A gristmill and a portable sawmill situated where Allen's lumber yard is, and run by Ramsdells, now of Manistee, the

Lower Town foundry, and Paramelee's carding mill, constitute the manufacturing interest of town.
Source: Reminiscentail by George P. Sanford, Lansing Journal, February 22, 1883; Michigan Pioneer Society, Vol. VI; pg. 292-295.

Dec 29, 1856

A Detrouiter's Opinion of Lansing.
The editor of the Advertiser writing from this place says:

"Lansing is bound to be a large place. Ten years from to-day will find Lansing a place of thirty thousand inhabitants, well-built, and enjoying a flourishing trade. --There is a large and productive surrounding country to support it, rich by nature, and now fast setting with the best class of emigration from Ohio, new York, and new England. Isabella, in which the county seat was located, under the act passed by the Legislature, two years ago, now has well-nigh a thousand inhabitants. Gratiot county is settling fast, and Clinton, also, all of which will look to Lansing as a point of trade and a market. The nearest place, of any size, to the southward, will be Jackson, which is about forty miles; Howell to the eastward, which is thirty-four miles; and St. Johns, perhaps, which is twenty-two miles to the northward. This gives a fee scope for growth, and makes tributary to Lansing, an immediate section of farming county, unsurpassed, weather for natural advantages of productiveness, or for resources.
Source: The Lansing Republican, December 12, 1856.

1856/7

..Capital of the state, and is beautifully situated on the right or north bank of Grand river, which is here navigable for bateaux.....The city was commenced in 1847, and on the twenty-fifty of December of that year became the permanent seat of the State government, being at that time surrounded by an almost unbroken wilderness. It is now the centre of an active and increasing trade; and its future is predestined to be one of prosperity. The streets and public square are well arranged, and its public buildings projected on a scale of more than ordinary elegance. The State House a large and handsome edifice, surrounded by an enclosed park, is situated on an eminence 50 feet above the level of Grand river, and overlooking a beautiful region of woodland and intervals. The township is traversed by Grand river, which is the center receives Cedar river from the east, and has, also, several small streams, all affording an immense water power.

The surface is level, and the soil rich and productive, and is now being well farmed, yielding the grains and excellent vegetables abundantly. The township is situated in the extreme north west corner of the county, The city, beside the state buildings, contains four fine hotels, five churches, about 20 stores, and two newspaper offices, several flouring and saw mills, and a number of machine shops, foundries, ex. It is connected by Plank roads with Detroit, Jackson, and Marshall. Eighty-four miles north west from Detroit.

Population of city 3,000, of township 1,200.

Source: State of Michigan Gazetteer & Business Directory for 1856-7, published by H. Huntington Lee & Co. & James Sutherland, Detroit 1856; pg. 143.

Dec 20, 1856

Pursuant to the provision of act No. 130 of the Legislature of 1855, a site for a State Agricultural School has been located upon a farm of nearly seven hundred acres, situated three miles east of the village of Lansing, On the south side of the plank road leading to the city of Detroit. The site of the Collage buildings occupies a beautiful eminence upon the farm and is distinctly visible from the capitol square in the village of Lansing.

Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction dated December 20, 1856; Joint Documents for 1856; Document No. 7.

1858

In the morning I arose and hastened to the window to view the Capital city. I must confess to a feeling of disappointment, as I looked out upon an almost treeless expanse, dotted occasionally with a small house. I do not remember much about the walks, but Washington Avenue was the only street I think, which possessed any, and that only planks laid down on the ground.

The Capitol was a very unpretentious wooden building, situated on the west side of Washington Avenue between Washtenaw and Allegan Streets.

...During the warm weather Mosquitoes, flies and cow bells were plentiful; the cows ran wherever they chose during the day and at nigh sleep almost impossible, as they tossed their heads incessantly to rid themselves of the tormenting mosquitoes. Source: Mrs. Frances Reeks Carnahan; Michigan Pioneer Experiences 1710-1880 with Genealogical Data and Anecdotes; Contributed by Michigan Society Daughters of the American Revolution, 1933.

- 1859 "Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Westcott living at corner of South Washington Avenue and Elm street. There were only two or three houses on that side of Grand river, but dense woods clear out to the road that is now Mt. Hope Avenue, except the block between Elm and South streets, which for some reason had been partially cleared. "267 pg. 596.
- 1859 In 1856 Theodore Raeejeph Foster moved family to Lansing built home in 1859 on 300 block of North Chestnut Street. "At the time there was only one other house on the street and that was located at the corner of Lapeer and Chestnut Streets. Sycamore Street was the beginning of the untouched forest where Mr. Foster used to hunt wild turkeys. The north side of the west half of what is now (1966) Ferris Park was then a large pond. Source: Notes of Theodore Raeejeph Foster family in 1966.
- 1856/7 ...Capital of the state, and is beautifully situated on the right or north bank of Grand river, which is here navigable for bateaux.....The city was commenced in 1847, and on the twenty-fifty of December of that year became the permanent seat of the State government, being at that time surrounded by an almost unbroken wilderness. It is now the centre of an active and increasing trade; and its future is predestined to be one of prosperity.
- The streets and public square are well arranged, and its public buildings projected on a scale of more than ordinary elegance. The State House a large and handsome edifice, surrounded by an enclosed park, is situated on an eminence 50 feet above the level of Grand river, and overlooking a beautiful region of woodland and intervals. The township is traversed by Grand river, which is the center receives Cedar river from the east, and has, also, several small streams, all affording an immense water power. Source: State Gazetteer 1856/7, pg. 143.
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1860

The necessarily slow progress of clearing up a heavily timbered country, and the want of other means of communication than by common roads, has prevented that rapid progress which has been exhibited in some western towns, but Lansing has had a steady and healthy growth. When the extensive range of country which is naturally tributary to it finds its market in the city, which must result from the completion of the Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay railroad from Owosso, on the Detroit and Milwaukee road, to Lansing, a rapid improvement and a heavy increase of business and population may be well expected.

The natural advantages of the city are superior to most inland cities. Situated on the Grand River, with an extensive water power, partially improved and another of equal consequence yet to be improved and surrounded by a country of great fertility of soil, which much valuable timber and with extensive bed of coal already discovered, and fixed by the constitution as the permanent seat of government of a great and growing State, its progress is certain, and its inducements to capital and enterprise unsurpassed.

Source: George W. Hawes' Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1860; by F. Raymond & Co. Detroit, pg. 219.

1861

"The towns, which is laid out on an extended plan, has at present a scattered appearance. The state capitol (of wood) was erected at in the summer of 1847, at the expense of about \$15,000. The state agriculture college is situated three and a half miles east from the capital, and has a model farm of about 700 acres: it is crowded with pupils, and the noble example set by Michigan, in founding this institution, has been followed by several other states. The house of

Correction, for juvenile offenders, opened in 1856, is about three fourths of a mile east from the capitol. In 1852, a plank road to Detroit was constructed, at an expense of \$130,000. Plank roads also connect it with Jackson and Marshall. Population about 3000.

Source: Our Whole Country or the Past and Present of the United States, Historical and Descriptive. By John Warner Barber and Henry Howe, Vol. II, 1861, pg. 1128.

1861-1865

The Lansing of war-times had the advantage of being located at the geographical center of the lower peninsula, and the disadvantage of not having as yet emerged from backwoods conditions. The Capitol, a church-like little structure of wood, painted white, stood on the main street of the primitive town; the hotel accommodations were of such a character as to make any change in them a subject for newspaper congratulations; and the means of ingress and egress were by stage to the nearest railroad at Jackson.

Source: A Sketch Of The Life of Sullivan M. Cutcheon, With Particular Reference To Michigan Political History During the War of the Rebellion by Charles Moore; Historical Collections, Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, Vol. XXX, 1906.

1863 Description of Lansing

Michigan State Gazetteer for 1863

Lansing, a city of Ingham county and Capital of the State, beautifully situated on the Grand river, about 100 miles northwesterly from Detroit, and as nearly as possible in the center of the settled portion of the State.

Latitude 42 deg. 43 min. north, sand longitude 84 deg. 29 min. west. The city was commenced under the name of "Michigan," in 1847 (it having been decided by an act of Legislature passed the same year that the Capital should be here located), and on the 25th of December of that year became the permanent seat of government, being at that time surrounded by an almost unbroken wilderness.

The first settlement made upon the territory which now constitutes the city of Lansing was by the Hon. James Seymour, who erected a small log house and a saw mill in 1846 in what the fourth ward is now. The name "Lansing" was given the city in honor of one of its early settlers in the year 1849(1848).

The necessarily slow process of clearing up a heavily timbered country has tended somewhat to retard the growth of the city, but notwithstanding its many disadvantages it has increased with a rapidity that has satisfied its most sanguine friends. Its situation, in the center of a fine farming district, is such that it cannot fail to become a place of considerable commercial importance, and when its contemplated railroad connections are completed it will undoubtedly take rank as one of the first cities of the State.

The city is at present composed of three villages, known respectively as the "Lower," "Upper," and "Middle" towns, having a population of nearly 4,000. The act of incorporation as a city was obtained in 1859.

The State House, a large two-story frame building, was one of the first houses commenced in the town, and the first session was held in it in 1850 (1848)

The Grand river at this point furnishes an excellent water power, which has been partially improved. About one mile above the city' proper is another water power, no advantage of which has yet been taken.

There are now within the city eleven churches, five hotels, two flouring mills (turning out 10,000 barrels of four per year), there tanneries, two breweries, three saw mills, two sash and blind factories, three iron foundries and machine shops, two printing offices, several brick yards, and a large number of mechanic shops. There are 200,000 pounds of wool purchased here annually, and a heavy business is carried on in grain and other products. About a mile from the city there is an extensive quarry of fine building stones. The city is handsomely laid out, in a high and healthy location, on gently rolling ground, and already boasts of several elegant private residences and public buildings. An extensive system of grading and public improvement is being carried on by the city government, which, when completed, will add greatly to the appearance of the place.

Coal of excellent quality has been found in the vicinity and has been worked to some extent. it is found in conjunction with fire clay and kidney iron, similar to the deposits at Jackson, Corunna, and Owosso. The soil in the vicinity is fully equal, in productiveness, to that of any portion of the State, and is especially adapted to the growth of cereals.

Besides the public buildings, there are at or in the vicinity of Lansing the "State Reform School," the "Michigan Female College," and the "State Agricultural College," all elegant structures that reflect great credit upon the city and State. The Benton House is one of the best conducted hotels in Michigan and is managed in a style not inferior to that of the best hotels in the country. The State Library in the Capitol contains 16,000 volumes and is open to the public. it contains an original portrait of the Marquis deLa Fayette, painted by Horace Vernet, in Paris in 1836-37. Among the rare and curious works in the library is a copy of Livy, three hundred and forty-seven years old, printed in German text, in Paris. Also a work entitled the "Laws of Nemo," containing "Fourteen Volumes in One, Embracing a Code of Laws that Governed 300,000,000 of the Human Race for 1,000 years, without alteration or amendment," translated from the Burmese, and printed at an English Missionary Station in the Burmese Empire. The library also contains the largest and best collection of law books in the State, and one of the best in the country.

State Reform School

Superintendent - Cephas B. Robinson.

Assistant Superintendent-Harmon B. Crosby

Teachers- Eve. Charles Johnson, Harmon B. Crosby

Matron- Mrs. Sarah A. Hibbard

Physician- J. B. Hull

Chaplain - L. R. Fisk

The "State Reform School" is a beautiful structure, of brick, on the east side of Grand river, about three-fourths of a mile from the center of Lansing, but within the city limits. The institution consists of a main building four stories high, with two wings (also four stories, but of less height than the center building), and at the end of each wing a tower five stories high. The entire length of front is 238 feet. The towers are 37 feet square, the wings 34 and the main building 56 feet deep. The building is constructed in the most thorough manner and is girded and braced with iron throughout. There are 160 boys now in the institution (1862), 162 being the highest number at any one time within its walls. The inmates are employed principally in farming and gardening, there being 30 acres of excellent land attached to the school, and the balance in tailoring, shoemaking, chair making and the necessary work about the premises. Five hours out of the

twenty-four are devoted to study (all the branches of a common school education being taught by competent teachers), six to labor and the balance to sleep, eating and recreation. A chapel in which religious services are held each Sabbath, a reading room and a bathing room are attached to the school and are always accessible to the boys. The Superintendent, Mr. Robinson, is a gentleman who thoroughly understands his position, and never for a moment loses sight of the great object of the institution, the reformation of the youth under his charge. His firm but kind mode of conducting the school has not only made him a favorite with the boys but has been the means of saving many of them from the consequence of vicious training.

....

Ingham is situated in the south-central part of the State and is bounded on the north by Clinton and Shiawassee, east by Livingston, south by Jackson, west by Eaton, and contains 564 square miles. The surface is gently undulating in the southern part of the county, but in the north part it is level, and there are extensive marshes. No county in the state contains a greater variety of soil, and it is to this circumstance, added to its central position, that it was selected as a favorable locality for the agricultural college at Lansing. The soil is exceedingly productive. the county is intersected by the grand and red cedar rivers and their tributaries. the following is a list of the towns; Alaiedon, Aurelius, Bunkerhill, Delhi, Ingham, Kinneyville, Lansing, Lansing city, Leroy, Locke, Mason Village, Meridian, Okemos Village, Onondaga, Stockbridge, Vevay, Wheatfield, White Oak, Williamston. The population in 1860 was 17,456. The value of real estate owned is \$6,106,798; the whole number of occupied farms, 1,576; acres improved, 81,295; acres unimproved, 93,151; total wheat in 1860, 140,043 bushels; rye, 7,683; Indian corn, 233,426; oats, 103,757; potatoes, 85,607; wool, 89,803 pounds, butter, 400,055 pounds; maple sugar, 190,513 pounds.

There are four water and four steam flouring mills, capital invested in them, \$50,500; manufacturing 31,324 barrels of flour; annual product estimated at \$182,625. There are four water and twenty-one steam saw mills, with a capital invested of \$67,600, producing annually 11,418,000 feet of lumber, estimated to be worth \$87,717. Aggregate of capital invested in all kinds of manufacturers, mills included, \$215,165, yielding an annual product of \$521,325.

The whole number of children, between the ages of 5 and 20, is 6,388, of whom 5,569 regularly attend school. Amount raised by rate bill, \$1,299.51; raised by two mill tax, \$5,933.39; qualified male teachers, 65; female teachers, 183. Mason is the county seat. The Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay Railroad is completed from Lansing to Owosso, in Shiawassee county."

Source: Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1863-4, second edition, compiled and published by Charles F. Clark, Detroit, 1863, pg. 374-375.

1863

In February 1850, Hon. Z. Chandler was in town, and our difficulties were discussed with him. He at once promised (on behalf of himself and friends) to pay \$15,000 towards building a plank road from Lansing to Howell, to connect with a road then building from Detroit to Howell. On his promise (afterwards increased to \$19,500) a charter was at once obtained. The organization was perfected in the following June and in July, Messrs. Smith, Tooker, Turner and Seymour began the work and completed it to Howell in November 1852. This road at once became the outlet of the north half of Ingham county, nearly all of Clinton, and about one third of Eaton counties, and Lansing became an important market. In October, November, and December 1855, 28,000 bushels of wheat passed the first gate and about 3,000 tons of goods and freight in the same time. In 1856 the sale of merchants goods had reached over \$300,000, but this was the last year that wheat was purchased for milling and shipping till this year, 1863. The completion of the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad diverted our marketing, and in 1857, 1858, 1859, 1859, 1860 and 1861, our business greatly declined. In 1862, the railroad from Owosso had got so near the city as to afford some facilities for business, and attraction was again directed by our wide-awake merchants, to the importance of a good market.

During the summer of 1862 our merchants purchased over 80,000 pounds of wool, more than had ever been purchased before since business began here. Unfortunately the railroad did not reach the city till late in November and our wheat crop was mostly hauled elsewhere, but in December a regular market was opened for wheat, both for milling and shipping and note it notwithstanding the bad roads of the past winter, we have been able to purchase about one

thousand bushels per day, the largest part being manufacturer into flour. Besides the wheat, our business men have purchased and shipped about 5,000 fat hogs, and a large number of small articles the products of the farm and dairy.

The completion of the railroad has at once developed new avenues for trade and industry. We are so near Grand Rapids that we can sell plaster cheaper than at any interior points on the Michigan Central Railroad; and although the farmers south of us have not been accustomed to come this way, yet the sale of this article will reach full three hundred tons. It would have been five hundred tons with the usual sleighing.

Of course our manufactures are yet in their infancy; yet we now employ a large amount of labor in producing lumber, leather, flour, and castings. We have three saw mills, two grist and flour mills, of large capacity; two foundries which annually make about one hundred and thirty tons of castings, mostly for agricultural implements, and turn out full eight hundred plows, five hundred cultivators, and a large amount of cauldrons, heavy plate stoves, hot air furnaces, and articles of domestic use. We have three tanneries, mostly engaged in the manufacture of oak uppers and harness leather. Chairs and cabinet furniture are manufactured here on a large scale.

In business we have passed the Rubicon. The last load of wheat and the last load of wool has been hauled from this region to Jackson, and we wish to give their business men of Jackson and Dexter due notice that we expect to handle the crops and sell the goods for just *half way*; and if they are not wide awake, we shall be over the line. We beat them already in *facilities*. We have a wheat elevator, out of which we can load a car for a shilling.

Lastly we are boring for salt like "all the world and the rest of mankind" in Michigan and if we are successful, who shall say that Mr. Olcott's vision of "steamboat navigation" shall not be realized yet, in a daily line to Grand Haven, Chicago and Milwaukee?--down freight of salt, staves, flour and passengers, and back freight of plaster and heavy goods, pine lumber, &c., Let Saginaw look out for her laurels! We are nearer the west than they.

And since the subject of navigation is broached perhaps, I had better give you the *statistics* of our noble river. At this place the river is two hundred feet wide, and at the low stages of water it furnishes about 22,000 cubic feet per second. From Hart's Mills to the village of Portland it falls 105 feet, from Portland to Muir 60 feet, from Muir to Ionia 8 feet; total fall from Harts' Mills to Ionia, 173 feet. The distance by the river from Harts Mills to the mouth of the Maple River, at Muir is 56 miles and 75 chains, so the average fall is over two and a half feet per mile. When you and I are old men, we shall see this water power turned to good account, and between the town and Lyons we shall see 20 villages with 500 water wheels, turning endless, countless spindles, looms, saws, leather, mill stones, etc. in fact this very 50 miles of Grand River, from Lansing to Lyons, is yet to be the *manufacturing* region of the State of Michigan . The salt freights and steamboats are not yet quite settled. We shall see about that by and by.

Source: Article original printed in Advertiser & Tribune Detroit, March 26, 1863; Reprinted Lansing Republican on April 8, 1863. Some variation in dates and couple of other words. Version here, Advertiser & Tribune; signed WASHTENAWSEBI.

1863

Being far inland its business progress was very slow. Inaccessible in every direction except by "mud wagons." The hauling of goods from Detroit cost \$1.00 or \$1.25 per hundred pounds. Of course no produce could be bought, and but little was done in the way of trade.

Source: Historical Sketch of Lansing; Its Trade and Commerce Present Advantages and Future Prospects, letter dated March 10, 1863 and signed WASHTENAWSEBI; printed in Advertiser & Tribute Detroit, March 26, 1863, and Lansing Republican on April 8, 1863. Some variation in dates and couple of other words. Version here, Advertiser & Tribune.

1863

The location of the College has often been objected to, as being too remote from the more thickly settled parts of the State, and too difficult of access. It should be remembered that the selection of its site was confined to the vicinity of Lansing by act of Legislature. But the difficulty itself is fast being obviated. Lansing is now accessible by railroad from the north, and the line will soon join the Central road. The great Saginaw valley is rapidly filling under the newly developed resources of that region, and the villages along

the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad are rapidly increasing in population, so that Lansing bids fair to be, at no distant day, the geographic center of the general interests of the State. Source: Second Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture of the State of Michigan for the year 1863; Joint Documents for the year 1863.

1864 Description of Lansing

I have recently been up to Lansing to supply the place of Rev. Mr. Armstrong, who has been to New York and Philadelphia on business. I will tell you a little about Lansing and its 'lions.' In the first place, as you know, its our State Capital--born some seventeen years ago, on the bank of Grand River, and, in the shade of a dense broad forest--"timbered land." Of course, with its rapid growth & improvement, it has still an air of rudeness. Population say three thousand. Many very fine buildings, public some and some private. Some families wealthy, and, of refined and polished manners. Most appear to be person of accidental fortunes and sadly wanting in social culture and elegant manners. In point of morality & religion they impress one favorably. **The State House is of wood--a very plain, inelegant, and unpretentious building.** I passed through it, visited the senate and representative Halls, also the Governor's room. As the Governor was absent--gone to Washington--and his chair was vacant, I concluded I should never have a better opportunity to get into it and so sat down. How well I filled the "Chair of State" I have to others the privilege of deciding. I have faith to believe, however that "posterity will do me justice" in that respect. The Building contained the more important State Offices is of Brick and is fair in its proportions and style--but decidedly plain. the State Agriculture College is three miles away. It stands on the margin of a Farm of 700 acres wanting a fraction. This building and three Professor's Houses are plain & substantial fabrics. Barns and out buildings are all becoming. As I visited it last fall, I omitted to see it this season. The stock is all "blooded" and, in general, fine. The Students are all "Alf & alf" --a kind of cross between the cleanly & genteel student of science and the plain, stout, & dirt-begrimed sons of the soil. then there's the "Reformed School" for delinquent, rather criminal boys. This is a noble edifice standing in the center of 30 acres of elevated ground. Well enclosed & cultivated--the work of the boys. Everything is in fine order. Two hundred boys are there. I addressed them

three successive Sabbaths. They behaved well, sang finely and many of them are well disposed.

Then there is a school for Ladies, styled a *College*! I have but the wing of an intended Edifice. I merely walked by it. A gentleman interest in it-not the proprietor-invited me to visit the institution and said he would introduce me to Miss Rogers the Principal. I rang his bell, but he had gone out, and I was obliged to be content without seeing the interior. The Institution is scarcely to be deemed flourishing. Located a mile out of town, it fails to accommodate day scholars. They have an Academy for boys & girls on the margin of the city, and it is well patronized. A Union school and its branches competes the Education system of the town. Rather the biggest lion of the place, just now, is a "Salt spring." They have bored down 1400 feet and penetrated 40 feet into salt rock. the brine is the strongest known in the country, being 84 per cent. As yet they have failed to 'pack' to tubes so as to exclude the fresh water. The day I left, they began anew their effort and felt sanguine of success. The presence of brine is certain, &Y, if they fail in this boring, they will repeat their efforts. The present boring was imperfectly performed. When this salt enterprise is a success, &, the R. Road to Jackson is complete - say a year hence-the citizens of Lansing will deem themselves 'made.' And, this I may add, will let us up into the pine, salt, and plaster districts, and thus we and the Capital are expecting a decided mutual benefit. Thus much for what I have seen and heard though. Source: Letter of E. N. Nichols of Tecumseh to Lieut. DeLoss LeBarron, dated July 8th, 1864. Reprinted in Michigan History Magazine, Vol. 29, No. 3, July-September 1945; pgs. 414-416.

Jul 11, 1864

"Lansing is the Capitol of the State of Michigan and contains a population of over 4000, in the city, which is rapidly increasing. We have one rail road from the north, and another from Jackson is commenced, and has sufficient funds to insure its completion within a short time. It is in the county of Ingham, which has a population of 20,000 and this is the only Congregational church (Plymouth) in the county. It is the seat of the State Legislature and the Supreme Court hold here two terms yearly, while other offices center here connected with the Capitol. The Church organized with twenty-seven members, nine males and eighteen females and other will join soon.

“There are in the city two Presbyterian, one Methodist, one Episcopalian one Lutheran and several minor organizations...”

Source: Application to American Home Missionary Society for funds by members of Plymouth Congregational Church

1865 Description of Lansing

1865 Memorial of H. G. Wells of Kalamazoo asking an appropriation for the Agricultural College and remonstrating against the removal of the college.

Admit that its location, at the time made was not as fortunate as might have been that errors in its management have occurred;

The objection of “inaccessible location,” is obviated to a certain extent, by the opening of the railroad from Owosso to Lansing, and the more recent completion of railroad communication from the Saginaw Valley to the Detroit and Milwaukee Railway, easy access is thus given to the people of a large portion of the State, to reach the College within the compass of twelve hours. A line of road is now in process of construction from Lansing to Jackson, with a certainty of completion before the next regular session of the Legislature: this done, and the phrase of the Executive Committee, “inaccessible location,” will have as little meaning in connection with the “Agricultural College,” as, I trust their resolution will have force with your honorable bodies, in inducing legislative provision for its removal. Your own wise forethought has, undoubtedly, contemplated the extension of the Grand Trunk Railroad, from Port Huron to the southerly extreme of Lake Michigan. The character of the country intervening between these points, and the lines of the Railroad already constructed across the Peninsula, indicated that the city of Lansing will be a prominent point on this great thoroughfare. Source: Memorial of H. G. Wells, House Document 11 of 1865 and Senate Document 17 of 1865.

1868 Description of Lansing

I’ve been through Lansing. ‘Tis a “big thing,” taken all in all, but poorly filled out.

The town is situated on one of the curves of beauty of the Ram's Horn R. R., and is three or four miles, more or less, westward from the Agricultural College. Derives most of its importance from its propinquity to the above-named establishment. It is bounded on the north and west by the "Big Marsh," on the east by illimitable Mud, and on the south by infinite Swamp. It is also on the Grand River; Grand River is noted for pollywogs and cranes, and mostly navigated by this sort of craft.

The houses are sown broadcast among the shrubs, and grubs, and holes, and knolls of an Oak Opening. Big lots in Lansing, equal to those famous ones of Great Salt Lake City. Lots about twenty-five rods square. Every man apparently resigned to his lot, in Lansing, as not many are seen on the street; but with women it is far otherwise. Lansing is noted for beautiful women, ugly men and the "Big Hotel." It also has many soda Fountains, Saloons, and such a multitude of Churches, that every house you come to that is not a barn or a dwelling house, or a saloon, or the "Big Hotel," or something else, is a meeting house. Every possible, and impossible, religious denomination has a church. Dutch Reformed, and Dutch Unreformed; Baptist, Softshelled, as well as Hardshelled; Methodists and Universalists and Multinationalists, all have their Churches.

The Lansingites think Lansing is a capital place for a Capitol. (Serious doubts!) Lansing is divided into Lower Town, Middle Town and Mackerel Point, the last named division lying at the junction of the Grand River with the classic Red Cedar (made classic by running through the grounds of the Agricultural Farm, popularly so called.)

The standard of morals in Lansing is not so high as it might be, and it is made decidedly no better by the association of the people with biennial Legislators and occasional Constitutional Conventionists. There is, however, an oasis in the vast desert of Lansing; it is the Female College. A healthful, moral atmosphere pervades this place, (they take the Bubble), and I will even defend it with all the vigor of my immortal pen.

The State buildings are splendid, and the grounds surrounding them are finely and artistically laid out, particularly the Croquet grounds.

Lansing possesses many fine things. A new State House of sandstone; cost \$300,000 (in prospect). A system of street cars running in all directions; cost \$100,000 (in prospect). A population consisting mostly of honest men and modest women (in far prospect).

Lansing is a "Big Place." Telemechus Toothbox.

Source: *The Bubble*, 5th edition, August 29, 1868, student Michigan State Agricultural College paper.

1870 Description of Lansing

The city then was but a wilderness, muddy streets with no sidewalks or pavements of any kind. There were very few houses, and only two hotels, the Half-Way house, on the downtown area, and the Green Tree hotel at Cedar Street and Michigan Avenue. There was but one grocery store and no dry goods or clothing stores. "But then it didn't matter," Mrs. Tooker said, "As there wasn't much money in those days."

Also recalling the Indians that used to pass through their yards, Mrs. Tooker said that they used to slave over a hot cook stove, baking bread and other foods to exchange with the Indians for fowl, in order to keep them on friendly terms. A barn recently razed on the property about four years ago (1943), she said, revealed the skeleton of an Indian.

The only form of amusement in those days she related were quilting and Pedro parties at various homes or attending the Republican and Democratic meetings held in the old capitol building. She said she also saw the laying of the cornerstone for the new capitol building.

Source: Pioneer Woman Tells of Early Like In Lansing; State Journal, March 1947. Story about Mrs. Martha Moore Tooker, 1119 N. Washington avenue; moved Lansing in 1870 in cover wagon; married Ed S. Tooker in winter of 1878.

Note: Unclear talking about 1870 or 1878; probably 1870.

1870

Washington avenue is a trifle over one mile and a half long; Elizabeth street, which is a continuation of the avenue, reaches from the southern terminus of that avenue to Eaton Rapids, a distance of eighteen miles. It may be as well, perhaps, to state that Elizabeth street is only load out into

city lots for half a mile from the northern end. Franklin street, running at right angles with Washington avenue, crossing near its northern terminus, is one mile in length, partly built up with business blocks, as is Washington avenue, one mile south of Franklin street, where Michigan avenue crosses it at right angles, running parallel with Franklin street. Michigan avenue runs from the west line of the city eastward to the Agricultural College--a distance of four or five miles. It is however, only used for city purposes for about a mile from its western end. From a quarter of a mile north of Franklin street to upwards of one-half mile south of Michigan avenue, the city is well built up. There are, in addition to the three streets given above, nearly sixty additional thoroughfares, the majority of which are from a mile to a mile and a half in length: the shorter ones generally running from east to west, and the longer ones from north to south.

Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870; pg. 11.

In order to appreciate the size of our large city, a stranger will do well to follow the following directions: Start from the Lansing House and go to the Reform School, and after passing through that institution return to the Capitol and pass through that. (It might, perhaps, be as well to spend a day in viewing this piece of architecture, the office of which seems to be to expose a valuable library to destruction by fire. Many of these books could not be replaced but still it is kept housed in this gorgeous structure, which, by reason of the material used in its construction, is liable to be burned as soon as it has the opportunity*). Proceeding from the Capitol, pass over to the State offices, and from thence ramble up to the Washington avenue bridge. From this point go to the Fair Grounds, and from thence proceed to the Michigan Female College, which, by the way, is another monument to the enterprise of the State, or would have been, had the life-work of Miss A. C. Rogers and her sister been appreciated by our State legislators; as it is, certain members of the last two Legislatures have reason to hang their heads for shame when they remember this subject. One or two of those members must occasionally discover that their tailors have made a mistake and made their clothes considerably too large for them. From the College go to the North Lansing depot, and from there return to the hotel by way of Franklin and Cedar streets, and Michigan and Washington avenues. By the time the pedestrian has

followed this nose according to these directions, I feel confident that he will agree with me that Lansing is a large city, notwithstanding the jeers of Bath, Delhi, and similar cities throughout the State, and yet he will have traversed only to entire streets, and portions of five others, walking a distance of about eight miles. if he is still skeptical as to the greatness of our city, he is advised to perambulate the remaining fifty-four streets, or more, if he can find them.

* The last Legislature passed an act appropriating \$5,000 for the purpose of obtaining plans and specifications for a new Capitol. -M.D. Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870: pgs. 17-18.

At considerable trouble and expense we have had engraved a map of the various railroad lines now building or proposed to Lansing. It will at once prove to all, the future importance of the Capital as a railroad center, and as a favorable point for the development of large manufacturing interests, that require both capital and convenient and competing lines of railroad to ship manufactures to market points in all directions. Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870; pg. 27.

Meantime, every year sees new residences--many of them elegant ones, and nearly all displaying much taste, (a *woody* taste, generally,)--springing up in every quarter in such profusion that the aspect of the city changes materially nearly every year, and in place of the country roads, stumps, wild land and "cat-holes" of a few years since, we now see graded streets, level, well cultivated gardens, and a rapidly increasing city, which is destined in the future to be --etc., etc., etc. Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870; pg. 40.

The ten years intervening between the issue of the city charter and the present time, have seen almost a complete metamorphose in the place; the only landmarks by which the absentee of a few years if enabled to judge of this whereabouts, and the old rookery, dignified with the name of Capitol, and that, even, is somewhat altered, for aside from the ravages of time, and addition has been built at the south end. (By the way, those aforesaid "ravages of time" are extensive,) and one or two of the old stores that here and

there forlornly stare at their new and imposing neighbors, while they seem regretfully to look back to the me when they lorded it over the adjacent stumps and frog-ponds, and with another gaze at the new comers, to desire to follow their old companions that be “gone before.” This desire, I am happy to be able to state, is occasionally being gratified, the only pity is that the wishes of these old landmarks have been so long disregarded. Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870; 41.

Capital only, with a little brain to “back it,” is required to make Lansing a large manufacturing town. It has three large water-powers, only one of which is as yet improved. The railroads now being constructed to his place, and already completed, will make it an advantageous point for any branch of manufacturing, unless it be that of wooden nutmegs and hams, which do not sell as well here as in new England. There is here an excellent point for the erection car and repair shops. In fact, there is an opening for anyone desirous of locating in an enterprising, rapidly growing, and pleasant city. To any one desirous of purchasing a farm in the vicinity of a good market, and where the market value of farming lands if doubled every few years. I can confidently recommend the vicinity of Lansing as one unsurpassed by any other locality in the State or West. Source: A History of the City of Lansing From the Foundation Thereof Down To the Present Time by M. Dash (J.M. Longyear), 1870; pg. 43.

1872 Description of Lansing

Capital of the State of Michigan lies seven miles north of Delhi, 37 miles north of Jackson and 65 south of Saginaw.

The first settlement was made here in 1844. In 1847 the State Capital was located here, and in the following year the first building for the accommodation of the Government was constructed. In 1866 the first railroad was completed to this point, now there three railroads entering here. The Jackson Lansing & Saginaw extends from Jackson through Lansing and Saginaw to Wenona 116 miles. The Detroit, Lansing & Lake Michigan Railroad extends from Lansing northwest to Greenville 57 miles. The Peninsular Railroad extends from Lansing through Battle Creek to South Bend, Indiana, 120 miles.

Lansing contains 3 banks, 2 newspapers, 7 hotels, 1 business college, 14 dry goods stores, 20 groceries, 7 druggists, besides a large number of other mercantile and manufacturing establishments. The Michigan Agricultural College, and the Michigan Female College, also the State Reform School are located here. : population of the city 7,000.

Source: Bailey's Gazetteer and Directory of the Lines of Railway Extending from Cincinnati to Northern Michigan, Sandusky, Ohio, Western Publishing Company, 1871.

1872 Description of Lansing

"When I reached Lansing," says Mrs. McPhee, "I remarked, 'Have they brought me to the jumping off place of the world?' My notion of a Capitol city was vastly different from the aspect that Lansing then presented. It was nothing but a rambling, poorly built, little village, seemingly set in a marsh. Why, I can remember what we called Third Ward Park (Central Park, Capitol Avenue and Kalamazoo street) was a veritable swamp with a hummock of dry ground in the center. I have actually seen men go in boats along what is now Sycamore street in the spring of the year.

Source: Account of Mrs. Alex McPhee. First husband of Eban McPhee, brother of Alex, printed in The Lansing State Journal in 1916. Reprinted Pioneer History of Ingham county, pgs. 501-502.

1873 Description of Lansing

"Lansing, the Capital of Michigan, Its Advantages, Natural and Acquired, As a Center of Trade and Manufacture"

Purpose of pamphlet show "how Lansing had become the commercial and financial, as well as the political Capitol of a great State."

"In the horseshoe formation made by the Grand river is located section 16, upon which stands the State Capitol and the main business center of the city. Another business center is located in the northern section of the city, upon the east bank of the Grand river known as North Lansing, where a number of manufacturing establishments are located, as well as many stores.

"The population of the city and township of Lansing in 1845 was 88; in 1850, 1,229; and in 1855, 1556. The city was organized in 1859 and its population by the census of 1860 was 3,085, and of the township, 497. The population of the city in 1864 was 3,573, that of the township remaining nearly the same, having fallen off 28 from the census of 1860. In 1870 the population of the city was 5,243, and of the township 823- a total of 6,666. By that census the township contained 183 voters and the city 1,230. At that time the city was divided into only four wards. of the total number of people in the city, 4,403 were native born; 838 were foreign born; 77 coloreds, and there was one native born Chinaman. There were 1,065 dwellings and 1,091 families. The land about Lansing was heavily timbered and anything but inviting to settlers. The first railroad was built from Owosso to Lansing in 1862. The growth of the city from the time of the location of the Capitol up to 1872 was slow and did not come up to the expectations. Many of the residents feared that the city would lose the Capitol buildings and it was not until the years of 1871 when the legislature voted \$1,200,000 to be raised by taxation in six years for the building of the State house, that the question of Lansing's retaining that position permanently was regarded as finally settled. Since that time the population has steadily increased until at the present time, April 1873, the court is 8,556. The future of the city may be regarded as secure."

.....

"The water power at Upper and Lower Lansing is excellent. That at North Lansing has been utilized and has become the nucleus of a large manufacturing interest; that at the Upper Town is equally good and is only waiting for the right men to avail themselves of it. The fall obtained at each of these privileges is nine feet, and the amount of water is limited only by the Grand river.

....

"We are situated in the midst of the finest variety of hardwood timber of the following sorts: Beech, maple, ash white oak, basswood, black walnut, cherry, etc. The finest beech and hard maple, which exists in great abundance within the immediate vicinity of our city, is now available for wood, at \$2.50 per cord, a price rendering it of little or no value, at a greater distance than four miles from our city, yet this lumber would be a mine of wealth if properly utilized. Any Amount of it could be furnished for years to come at from \$10 to \$12 per thousand feet, delivered in the city, manufactured into lumber of any shape. Large quantities of

oak, ash, walnut, cherry, hickory, and rock-elm are being shipped from our city and the country adjacent thereto to eastern and western markets."

"Another great advantage we possess is our easy access to the extensive pineries of northern Michigan. We have direct connection with this great lumber region by means of two railroads diverging from our city to the northeast and northwest, penetrating the pineries for over 100 miles each, which afford freight for said roads for at least a quarter of a century to the utmost capacity. The average number of cars laden with lumber passing through our city at the present time will exceed 100 per day and must increase very rapidly as the roads are extended northerly.

.....

"A much more extended reference might be made to the advantages of our timber lands in connection with the manufacture of articles composed largely of wood, and especially such as are in constant demand in our own and adjacent states, such as agricultural implements, furniture, railroad cars and other products. It is very questionable economy for our railroads to ware out thousands of cars in hauling from and through our city to distant points the raw materials for the building of other cars to take their place. These are considerations worthy of some note at least by manufacturers.

.....

"A question of first important to any manufacturing city is that of fuel. In this respect Lansing again comes up to the front with a wealth of wood and coal accessible and cheap. Being situated in the midst of heavy forest of hard timber, wood, being the most easily and cheaply obtained, has been hitherto the staple article of fuel and for some years to come it will continue to be plenty at low prices; but in all cases, when it becomes necessary to use coal it can be obtained in good quantities and quality within 12 miles of the city at the rate of \$4 to \$5 a ton.

....

"Mr. George B. Hall, who is supplying the brick for the new State Capitol, is also shipping large quantities to Jackson and other towns, and there is no good reason why, within our abundant and cheap fuel, our direct and competing lines of railroads to Chicago, we may not send to that extensive and growing city millions of brick every year at remunerative prices. They are now being furnished at the yards at from \$5

to \$6 a thousand. The demand for drain tile is just commencing and must increase rapidly.

..
"Lands within 15 miles of the city range in value from \$25 to \$40 per acre for timbered and from \$25 to \$75 for improved farms.

.....
"There is no better chance to realize fortunes from the advancement of real estate than is now offered in farming lands about Lansing. Their advancement must be commensurate with the growth of the city."

....
"All establishment that have started here, using wood, have been more than successful, owing to the abundance of all kinds of timber and its cheapness. There are several establishments in this line, among them being three manufacturing sash, doors, and blinds. They have on the average of 100 men constantly employed and in fact there is no limit to this business as the goods may be shipped to any part of the country. The manufacture of chairs is getting to be one of the important industries of the city owing to the abundance of maple, beech, and oak in the surrounding territory. One chair factor has been operating in Lansing for a period of four years.

.....
"Iron manufacturing is still in its infancy, but little as yet having been accomplished in this line. Messrs. Cady, Glassbrook and company, manufacture agriculture implement, sawing machines, and do a general jobbing and machine business. They are the leaders of Lansing's iron works. They employ at 10 men and will turn out about \$15,000 worth of business this year. The Lansing Iron Works does an extensive business in steam engines and railroad work. E. Bement and Sons are making a specialty of agricultural implements. They have been located in Lansing for nearly four years and are steadily increasing their business each year. They are employing on an average of 15 men and will turn out about \$18,000 worth of business this year. They are rated as Lansing's leading manufacturers.

.....
"The citizens of Lansing donated 45 acres of land and the north end of the Misses Rogers' female college to the grand lodge for the purposes of an Odd Fellows Institute. Miss Delia Rogers generously donates a large portion of the land purchased, a library of 1,500 volumes, and a fine

philosophical apparatus. The land and buildings are located in the northeast portion of the city and valued at \$70,000. The whole, when completed, will cost about \$300,000. During the years of 1871-2 an addition of 57 feet square, constituting the main front, was put up at a cost of \$30,000. The entire structure is to be completed as fast as the demands of the order may require.

1883-4 Description of Lansing

Lansing is situated upon a beautiful site, well elevated above the stream, moderately undulating, with broad streets and avenues crossing each other at right angles, nearly all of which are graded, and many of which are lined on either side with forest trees, now of sufficient size to afford a luxurious shade in summer, and some of the streets are well paved. Washington avenue, a mile, and a half long, seven rods wide, and as level as a house floor, is one of the finest streets in America. The principal portion of the city is situated on a horseshoe bend of the Grand River, which encircles it on three sides, affording five facilities for skating in winter, boating in summer, and furnishing the city with ice and abundant water power. But it was the construction of the railways that gave the city its greatest impetus of growth and improvements and placed the political capital in communication with the commercial centers of the State. Source: Lansing City and Ingham County Directory 1883-84; Vol. I; R. L. Polk & Co. Publishers; 1883.

Feb 22, 1883

In seven different directions our citizens fly by the magic power of steam. A beautiful little city of ten thousand people has crowded out and replaced the rough backwoods town of twenty-six years ago (1856). Source: Reminiscentail by George P. Sanford, Lansing Journal, February 22, 1883; Michigan Pioneer Society, Vol. VI; pg. 295.

1890's Description of Lansing

There was a horse car in the town, 40 years ago (1880), when I started in business here and there was just one-horse car, and that was all. Lansing had about 12,000 people then. Its growth in the meantime has been amazing. John Carr did a flourishing livery stable business at the corner of Shiawassee street and Washington avenue then. Electricity was not generally used; oil and gas were,

however. There was no sewer system, or public water supply, and almost no telephones.

There were very few houses south of the Washington avenue bridge. The Hollister block, now the Capitol National Bank building, was of six stories, and very highest in town. The Downey hotel, with a stove in the middle of the lobby, was a four-story building, and other hotels of the town included the Hudson house, where the Strand theater is now; the Evert house, where R.E. Olds' residence is, and the Chapman house where the VanDervoort hardware store now stands.

The city hall and the post office had not been built then, of course. The city government was on the second floor of what is now the Consumers Power building, 110 West Michigan avenue. The jail was near the river bank, on Michigan avenue with a laundry on one side of it, and a saloon on the other.

The post office was in the building now occupied by the Redfield and McKeone clothing store. (Note: this is where Rich's No. 2 lunch room is now - 1928-, in the Dodge block, northeast corner of Washington avenue and Ottawa street). An old residence was on the present site of the post office, and was used by a manufacture of tombstones.

The old Prudden building, where the present one now stands, was once the Whitney building, and above this, toward the capitol was a row of one-story buildings, a bakery among them. A tin type gallery was on the corner where the hotel Olds now stands; later there was a fried cake shop there, and the wares were peddled about the town on a three-wheeled cart.

Mead's theater, or 'hall' was on the second floor of the building on the southeast corner of Washington and Ottawa, Bucks' opera house was on the next corner, north across the street, where the Gladmer' is now. On the site of the Tussing building was the Methodist church; the Presbyterian had a frame church several blocks up the street, at Genesee. you could see the steeple for a long distance.

Mayor James F. Hammel, in office from 1900 to 1903, was thought to be absolutely crazy when he extended Pennsylvania avenue south through the Morgan-Zabriske farm, south of Mt. Hope avenue, but the property down there

sold just the same. Mt. Hope had for years been regarded as a fixed southern boundary of the city. Source: J.W. Bailey in interview in State Journal shortly before death on Dec. 13, 1928.

1891 Description of Lansing

The beautiful capital of Michigan, with its stately public buildings, its business streets lined with handsome stores and manufactories, and its avenues of beautiful homes where dwell the intellect, wit and beauty of the city, resembles on the map nothing so much as a fat spider with numerous legs of railway sprawling in every direction. The fact of its being a railroad center is to a student of ethics a most important item, for it proves the place to be an important manufacturing as well as distributive point, where the brawn and sinew that make the social structure integrally strong is to be found.

Source: *Portrait and Biographical Album of Ingham and Livingston Counties, Michigan*, by Chapman Bros. 1891.

Aug 1891

In 1847, because of its central location, and as a party of a compromise between other places greatly desiring it, the state capital was located at Lansing, and from that time all eyes were turned toward the new capital in the wilderness, and it grew rapidly and steadily. There was no boom. It was a solid, substantial growth and the business gradually concentrated around the capitol building.

Railroads came and trees fell, stores sprang up, and mills and manufactories were established. The city became metropolitan. It acquired street cars, water works, electrical light plants, and a hustling, bustling population. The business men were wide awake and seized upon every change to better the city...

Railroads came and the city became a railroad center. Still there were no booms.

Not even when 6,000 souls claimed Lansing as their home were there any boom. Real estate sold for only what it was worth, and more and more invested in its daily, and it brought a good price for it was valuable. All this came to pass until Lansing became the model city of the State with a population of 14,000 people and with advantages unrivaled.

It now challenges the world's competition, and it does so successfully...

because it is the city of conventions, and is the best all-round market in central Michigan, if not in the state.

because it has metropolitan hotels, enterprising and lively metropolitan newspapers, handsome and well-cared for parks, excellent shaded resident streets, well paved business streets and the best system of water works, and the purest water in the state; because it has a fine police department, fire department service and fire alarm system; because it has the D. L. & N., and the L. S. & M. S., and C. & G. T. the Michigan Central and the D. L. & G. R. railroads running through it, with a transit railroad of its own;

because it has one of the best public school systems to be found, with 2,700 scholars enrolled and 54 teachers employed in eleven school buildings, and the graduates enter the state university upon a diploma; because it has five banks, representing a capital of \$606,000, three buildings and loan associations nineteen churches, a city hospital, two cemeteries, two public libraries, five hotels or miscellaneous schools, thirty-three benevolent societies and ten city newspapers; because, in short, it is Lansing Michigan, which speaks for an almost infinite number of other advantages none less important, and

because it is one of the healthiest spots on the globe.

This souvenir edition is published to give an insight into Lansing's most important features, here vast manufacturing interest, which no city of its size in the United States can equal. Lansing's future is eminently a manufacturing one. The railroad facilities and central location compel it, and eventually the city is to become the metropolis of Michigan. Source: State Republican Souvenir Edition, August 1891.

1902 Description of Lansing

With unrivaled facilities for commercial and manufacturing enterprises; a splendid location both in regard to climate conditions and the possibilities of great development; and all the features of a modern, twentieth century community, the city of Lansing stands preeminent in the middle west. As the

capital of the great state of Michigan it enjoys privileges and opportunities than other cities are unable to secure.

In the past decade the industrial progress of Lansing has been truly wonderful. New enterprises have sprang up on all sides, have made splendid beginnings are now experiencing a genuine and lasting prosperity. The vim and energy which have been created by the advent of these new industries have spread in all directions and been absorbed by every industry new and old. today Lansing is in the center of a thriving, bustling, hard-working, prosperous, and enterprising set of manufacturing institutions. From a business point of view the awakening of Lansing to a realization of its possibilities has been a happy one. It has brought contentment and bright hopes for the future. It has aroused attention to Lansing's sterling advantages. it has called prospective manufactures' notice to the unexcelled business conditions of this city. It has caused Lansing to become the point around which revolves almost the entire business of central Michigan, a magnificent agricultural region.....

There is still plenty of room for more manufacturing industries, and Lansing wants them. The facilities are by no means exhausted.... All the requirements of industry are near at hand and no city is better provided than Lansing in the ways and means of industry prosperity. Its growth as a manufacturing center has been remarkable. The signs of the times indicate as strongly as it is possible that the growth will be continued year by year, and in the augmenting of its industries Lansing sees its brilliant future as a manufacturing center. Its products will reach the remotest corners of America and will travel across the seas to the furthest confines of the earth.

Source: The City of Lansing by G. Walter Meade; Twentieth Century Edition, The Lansing Journal, Art Souvenir Edition, issued by The Lansing Journal, January 1902.

1904 Description of Lansing

In the canvass made by the State and Federal census authorities the city of Lansing makes the best showing of any city in the State so far as the growth of its manufacturing industries is concerned. In 1900 there were seventy-four manufacturing enterprises in the city; this year the number is ninety-eight. Although there is an increase of only 32 percent in the number of institutions, the capitol, output, wages, men

employed, etc.. has increased over 100 percent in four years.

Source: Detroit Free Press, October 19, 1904.

That Lansing has surpassed every other city in the State in its industrial growth during the past four years is indicated by the figures of the census bureau relative to its factory statistics in 1900 and 1904. While the number of factories has increased a third, the amount of capital invested is 191 percent greater, the number of men employed has more than doubled, as has also the amount of wages paid. The value of products is 134 per cent greater, being now \$6,887,415 annually as compared with \$2,942,306 only four years ago.

Even these figures do not give an adequate idea of Lansing's prosperity and progress, for since they were gathered the big Olds automobile concern, the new Reo Car Co. with a capital of \$1,000,00, has been formed, and a number of other new institutions have been added to the city's list, while other have increased their capital..

There may be more prosperous cites than Lansing, but every one of its citizens is like a man from Missouri in the matter, and 'you've got to show him.'

Source: State Republican, October 19, 1904.

1909 Description of Lansing

Those who today gather to listen to the reminiscences of the pioneers who were here fifty years ago today when Lansing was incorporated as a city. will have an excellent opportunity to note the progress it has made during a half of a century of "ups and downs" such as attend any community. They will have an opportunity of hearing how the "downs" were bravely met and the "ups" were enjoyed, and should receive an inspiration similarly to meet future ups and downs to surmount any obstacles that may arise in Lansing's pathway to the larger, livelier and lovelier city we all are confident it is destined to be.

Never in the past has the future of Lansing seemed more full of promise and never have its citizens been as united and so enthusiastic in their hopes and plans for the uplift of their city. It is the sprit which counts and the sprit which if

persisted in will make the Lansing of fifty years equal the city of our fondest dreams.

Here's to Lansing! May it be all that we want it to be, and may we never cease to want to make it all that it should be.
Source: Fifty Years Old Today, State Republican, April 15, 1909.

The birth of a city is a significant event. Just as in the lives of the parents the birth of a child is significant. Lansing has had a unique history. It has been endowed with peculiar advantages. In one brief sentence it was made the capitol of Michigan, and its natural advantages have enabled it to keep pace with what has been expected of it and in other ways it has been kindly dealt with. Its future is as bright as the sun in the morning, young man, and I congratulate you. We turn the city over to you, the new generations, trusting that you may treat it as fairly and with as much interest in the future as we have in the past.

Source: S. L. Kilbourne quoted in State Republican, April 15, 1909; from speech "Lansing As A Village."

"When I look out over this beautiful city, see the smoke from the chimneys of its manufacturing establishments and its growth, it seems to be I am living in a dream and this is not the Lansing I once knew as a mere dot in a wilderness."

Source: Marian Turner (Mrs. James Turner) at age 90, quoted in State Republican, April 15, 1909.

Physical Description (New Material)

After a time, we find him clearing and building on the northeastern corner of Pine and Maple streets. Why did he locate here? At that time a small spring brook crossed Maple street near the corner of Pine and meandered down across Franklin street near Mr. Alfred Bigsby's place and emptied into Grand river, east of our present (1923) gas works.

This creek could give him plenty of fresh water and the banks could be utilized at small expense and not much digging as a cooling cellar for his brewery. A vacant square just east of his building which had a small grove of maples and other trees on its north side could, if his business was a success and needed expanding, be bought or leased as a beer garden, also the creek flats with its dark, rich soil was

an ideal cabbage patch. The unfenced commons south and west of is location afforded pasture, with no expense, to his cows.

My earliest recollections of this brewery was the present building with its long porch on the east side, the brew house proper set a short distance north, a young forest of hop poles along a drive on the eastern side, for German thrift and custom made him raise his own hops which he used in his business, his bustling wife waiting upon customers in the front room while her good man was busy with the brewing. Very distinct recollections come to me now of this front room with its sanded floor, the tall hop poles with their swaying vines, the smell of steaming malt, the tinkle of cow bells on the common and the harsh, guttural tones of the German customers, mingled with clouds of tobacco smoke from some large porcelain pipes. The creek with the dark forest as its background and impenetrable swamp--Bogus Swamp--that hid the springs from which it had its source, must have stirred memories in the brewer's mind of the Black Forest in Germany. Source: Pioneer History of Ingham County, compiled and arranged by Mrs. Franc L. Adams, Vol. I, 1923; S. Franc L. Adams, Vol. I, 1923; pgs. 450-

1836

Alcott's or Olcott's

Stream ran into east side of Grand River near N. Lansing dam. Named for S. B. Alcott who was land looker for Lee, Seymour and Bushnell of NY state; name camp on site in 1836.

"The stream drained the land north-easterly of the present bridge including the site of the Gier division of Motor Wheel corporation.

"To the east of the Gier plant was a small unnamed pond south of the bend in the old Lake Lansing road. It was on the banks of this stream that the ashery of James M. Turner was located and gave the name of Ash to the street that eventually was laid out.

Price's Creek

"A second stream flowing from the east into the Grand river south of the Saginaw bridge was commonly called Price's creek for Capt. John R. Price who owned land through which the stream flowed.The stream where entering the Grand flowed into a small backwater that at one time was used as mill pond."

?

"It is difficult to believe, but at one time saw logs were floated down the Cedar river from the present Potter park and the holdings of H. & E. Morgan. Scofield's sawmill was located on the north side of the backwater of log pond on land now occupied by the Lansing company. In 1872 the land and mill were occupied by D. G. Canfield coal and lumber yard. The steam flowed from the east through property now occupied (1959) by the Simon Iron and metal company, crossing the Michigan Central and Pere Marquette tracks to drain the land of Oak park, which was at that time Lansing's cemetery, and the land of the present Motor Wheel corporation.

"To the north and east it drained a pond located near the intersection of Sheridan and Pennsylvania avenues there are oldtimers in the city who insist they used to swim in that pond. The drainage basin includes the land to the north of Saginaw street, including the site of the brick yard that was located about one and one half blocks south of Franklin avenue on Larch street.

West of Pennsylvania and Saginaw

"The land west of Pennsylvania avenue from Saginaw street to the junction of the Grand and Cedar rivers drained to the river with no real water courses, it being a gradual slope so that most the distance was a damp springy ground except from Kalamazoo street south, where the river bank was high and the drainage was toward the south into the Cedar river."

Shiawassee Street Spring

"The question of the water supply for the Boys Vocation School or the Boys Industrial School, as it was then called, was a serious one, and eventually settled by obtaining water from a large flowing spring located on Shiawassee street near the present (1959) freight depot of the C. & O. The flow from this spring was forced to the school through wooden pipes by a hydraulic ram. As the school grew, required more water, and the land between the railroad and the school land was cleared, the spring diminished in volume so that it was necessary to obtain a new source. The new supply was obtained from a much larger spring near the Grand river south of Shiawassee street and from here the water was forced to the school by steam engine. It was not until 1871 that a six hundred foot well was drive on the school property which produced an abundance of good water."

Tool Gate Creek & Pond

"Near the intersection of Sheridan and Grand River avenue was Toll Gate No. 1. This tool gate gave the name of the largest creek on Lansing's east side. Toll Gate creek or drain, as it was more commonly known, drained most of the land east of Pennsylvania avenue to Harrison road, and south of Grand River avenue to the Red Cedar river.

North of the toll gate on the present Groesbeck golf course was a couple of small ponds that were the source of the creek. The larger of these ponds was known as Toll Gate pond. The creek from the pond flowed south to cross Michigan avenue, and thence southeasterly to join the Cedar. Located on the property of the Boys Vocational school were a couple of small ponds that were known as the Reform school ponds and were much used for skating by the public. These ponds were gradually filled in.

Source:

The North Lansing area is missing three lakes.

The most prominent of the three was Toll Gate lake, which occupied the flatter portion of what is now (1957) Groesbeck municipal golf course, just north of E. Grand River avenue.

It got its name from the fact that a toll gate was located on the old Detroit-Howell-Lansing Plank road along what is now E. Grand River avenue.

This lake was very shallow, but some old-timers can still recall it.

To the south was Reform School lake. Driving past on E. Saginaw street, at a dip in the road, you can still see a shallow depression, and you don't have to be old to remember it, either.

The third lake was located about a quarter of a mile north of Toll Gate lake and is not being filled in, having become merely another low spot in recent decades. it is best remembered as a favorite skating spot the early part of the 20th century.

Source: The State Journal, Wed. May 15, 1957.

Middle Town Streams

"In Lansing's old 'Middle Town' there were two unnamed steam that can be recalled by a few of the citizens living here at the present time (1959).

Genesee Stream

The stream that entered the Grand river near the foot of Genesee street flowed from the west from Ferris park. At the present site (1959) of the Lansing storage building there was a deep ravine that required a foot bridge with a handrail. old timers say it was quite a feat for early legislators who roomed at the old Seymour house at north Lansing to accomplish the crossing of the foot bridge on their way home after the closing of the day's session. The land at the corner of Lapeer and Pine Street drained to the southeast toward Genesee street to form the drainage basin of the steam, the course of which could be said to follow Genesee street to the river.

Source:

The north side of the west half of what is now (1966) Ferris Park was then (1859) a large pond. Source: Notes of Foster family of Theodore Raeejeph Foster Home.

"George R. Woodworth, Lansing's pioneer boot and shoe merchant, came to Lansing in 1855 and purchased land on N. Washington avenue. north of the present Lansing Storage building. He selected the site (west side of the 100 block of N. Washington) because there was a good-sized spring on the property, the overflow of which flowed to the south to enter the steam that came down Genesee street from the west.

Ottawa Stream

In close proximity to the south at Ottawa street, another of "Middle Town's unnamed steams had its sources west of Pine street, one of which was a small pond located near Pine and Shiawassee street. This pond extended into the west block of Ferris park and was used for skating by boys of the neighborhood. It was even claimed that before the neighborhood citizens started using it as a dump it was large enough and deep enough to be used as a swimming hole.

"The outlet of this pond flowed south along Pine street; up Ottawa street, where it joined a steam from the west that had

its beginning near Logan street and flowed the general course of the present Ottawa street. The land north of Ottawa street and east of Sycamore street drained into a small pond located in the rear of the former W. K. Prudden residence.

“Owing to the contour of the land the stream followed today’s Ottawa street., flowing past St. Paul’s Episcopal and Central Methodist churches, the city hall, Tussing building and the old Thoman mill, to enter a backwater or bayou of the Grand river. The mouth of the stream was a boat house that sheltered the racing shells of the old Grand River Boat club.

The land at the old city hall,was below the street level, and before the present building (old city hall) was erected was the site of a stone crusher that prepared stone for the first of the macadamized streets. Farmers for miles around the city cleared their fields of stone and brought them to the crusher to receive some remuneration for each “perch” of stone delivered.”

Source:

“At the corner of Ottawa Street, on the west side was quite a descent, making a flight of steps necessary. Running diagonally across the street was a deep ravine, which in the spring was filled with a raging torrent of water.

Source: Mrs. Frances Reeks Carnahan; Michigan Pioneer Experiences 1710-1880 with Genealogical Data and Anecdotes; Contributed by Michigan Society Daughters of the American Revolution, 1933.

Weinman Creek

Rising in the marshland west of VerLinden avenue and the Belt Line railroad, Weinman creek was one of the large streams of the city. flowing northeasterly through what is now Westmoreland subdivision to Logan street and thence north to Saginaw street, where it flowed diagonally through what was commonly known as the “40 acres”. This tract was heavily timbered before platting with Princeton, Chicago and Wisconsin avenues, near Brook street, from which the street derived its name, the creek flowed northerly to near the corner of Pine and Maple street. Between maple street and Franklin avenue on the banks of the creek was located the old Weinman brewery, and it was from this brewery that the creek derived its name.

"From the brewery the stream flowed northeasterly to enter the river west of Seymour street, and east of Stambaugh island, which is no longer discernible. West of the Belt Line, near its source, was a branch which flowed through the land of Seneca Pratt. It was called Pratt's drain. The low march land on the rear of Pratt's farm and the territory to the north was a favorite hunting ground for the boys of the 1880s and 890s for a mess of frog legs.

Bogus Swamp & Creek

"The land north and west of the present Oldsmobile Forge plant drained into the Bogus Swamp creek, which flowed into Dryer creek, which in later days was known as Dryer drain. The Bogus swamp creek derived its name from the fact that a gang of counterfeiters was supposed to have had headquarters in a shack in the large swamp just south of Saginaw street.

Marvin Creek

Entering the Red Cedar river just west of Cedar street, was Marvin Creek, later called Marvin drain. This stream had its source near Paris avenue, flowing northerly near Maplewood avenue, where low land in the rear of the present lots indicate the old creek bed. Near Riley street a branch from the west joined the main creek. This branch drained land as far west as the present (1959) Federal Forge company, and was called Mallory drain. Near Maple wood school another branch from the east joined the main stream. This drained land from as far east as the Michigan Central railroad.

Near Cedar street and Mt. hope avenue the creek flowed through present Walter French school land. on the southeast corner of Mt. Hope avenue and Cedar street lived Matthew Marvin, for whom the creek was named. Marvin operated a tavern at this home, which during the period of the Civil war, was painted red, white and blue. he was the father of Kate Marvin Kedzie, wife of President Kedzie of Michigan Agricultural college. The stream flowed northerly to near Norman street, where a branch from the west joined the main stream. This branch had its source west of Washington avenue, draining land south of Barnes avenue and east of Coleman avenue, and crossed Washington avenue near the L. S. & M. C. right-of-way. It was openly a few years past that in digging the street at this location, a large brick culvert was found about six feet below present grade line. From Norman street to where the creek joined

the Grand river, the stream could be considered to almost parallel the present right of way of the L. S. & M. C.

Mineral Well & Creek

East of the Red Cedar river and south of the Grand, near the junction of the two rivers on property of the Jarvis Engineer company, was the old Lansing Magnetic Well and Bath House, site of the Mineral Well hotel.

? Creek

Another unnamed creek, flowing in to the Red Cedar river from the south and its source south of Baker street and east of the Michigan Central right-of-way. The low land east of the Michigan Central tracks indicates its approximate course to the river. On the north side of the Red Cedar river the soil was much lighter and sandy, and there were no well-defined creeks. On the north side of this light land, on Beech street, the soil became heavy, and on Beach street was located Hall's brick and tile yard. It was from this year that most of the brick was manufactured for use in construction of the present state capitol building.

? Creek

Beginning about where Ward's Hearing salesroom is now located, another unnamed stream had its source in the flat land now occupied by the Atlas Forge plant. This stretch of low, level land was usually flooded in the spring and was used mainly for summer pasture. The creek flowed almost due north to enter the Grand river in Moores park just west of Glenn island. The course of the stream may be seen in the low lot on the north side of W. Mt. Hope avenue in the 500 block and farther north on the west side of Bradley avenue in the 1700 block, where originally there was a ravine that has been filled and is now a park site owned by the city.

Country Club

Farther west on land owned by the County club may be seen the channel of another unnamed stream, the gully of which is now crossed by Moores River drive. The pond on the County club was created by building a dam across the channel of the stream, which drained most of the county club land. Just to the east of this stream was a much smaller and shorter creek that drained the northeast corner of the golf links and land to the east of it. Traces of the old creek bed

may still be seen in the low land on the south side of Moores River drive in the 1800 block.

Capital and Washtenaw

1865

“...two or three Congregationalists selected a lot (1850) on Capitol Avenue south of Washtenaw Street, upon which Mr. Hutner had paid taxes of nearly \$200 in the fifteen years. it was not an attractive spot, on the east side of the street and Mr. Hunter cheerfully relinquished any claim he might have had in it. There was not walk within 30 rods; in the rear there were stables with a blacksmith shop close by and a foundry across the street. Further the land was swampy, as was most of the area.

Source: Under the Mustard Tree Centennial 1864-1964; Plymouth Congregational Church, Lansing, Michigan; pg. 6.

Indian Fields

1836

“He (Milo S. Baker) removed with his parents to Oneida, Eaton county Michigan, in 1836. Their teams made the first wagon track from a point nine miles west of Howell, though Williamston and Lansing, to Grand Ledge. The Indians had a corn field at the mouth of Cedar river, now in the city of Lansing, but there were no white inhabitants along the river for many miles.”

Source: Early History of Michigan with Biographies of State Officers, members of Congress, Judges and Legislators, published pursuant to Act 59, 1887.