

The DEARBORN HISTORIAN

Quarterly of the Dearborn Historical Commission

Volume 22

Winter, 1982

Number 1



Included in this issue...

* *PATRICK AHERN, HENRY FORD, AND FAJR LANE*

* *TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN RETROSPECT*



City of Dearborn, Michigan
HOME TOWN OF HENRY FORD
MAYOR JOHN B. O'REILLY

The seed for Dearborn's greatness was planted in the late 18th century when pioneer settlers industriously carved "ribbon" farms out of the Michigan wilderness lining the Rouge River. Their frontier spirit, enterprise, hard work and pride of community set an example for generations to come.

Recent years have been marked by an increasing awareness of our rich heritage and a genuine desire on the part of Dearborn citizens to know more about our city's roots.

This interest and concern, sparked immeasurably by an able and dedicated Dearborn Historical Commission, has helped bring about the growth of a fine city museum complex. More than 30,000 people now visit the recently restored Commandant's Quarters and the McFadden-Ross House annually to view ever-changing exhibits or take part in educational programs. "The Dearborn Historian" is published quarterly in an effort to spread a sense of history throughout our community.

But, if our museum program is to continue to flourish and grow, we need more citizen help. Family records and artifacts are needed so that our collection and knowledge may be expanded. With your help, we will be able to continue building a living picture of Dearborn's proud past for the benefit of our residents of today and tomorrow.

John B. O'Reilly

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Winfield H. Arneson, Editor

COVER: This copy of a tintype (ca. 1850-55) was copied at the request of Henry Ford in 1924, and labeled "Mr. Ford's Grandfather." It is quite possible that it is Patrick Ahern. Henry Ford doted on his grandfather Ahern with whom he grew up, but there is little mention of his grandfather John Ford (1799-1864), whom Henry (1863-1947) could not have remembered. Henry's grandfather Litogot died about 1842.

(Photo courtesy Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum)

ART WORK: by Mary V. MacDonald

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THE HERITAGE OF THE PAST IS THE SEED THAT BRINGS FORTH THE HARVEST OF THE FUTURE.
...The National Archives, Washington, D.C.



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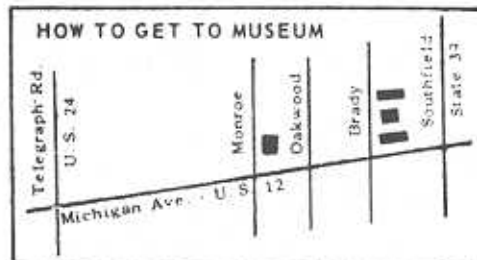
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PATRICK AHERN, HENRY FORD, AND FAIR LANE

Ford R. Bryan

The reason Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford of Dearborn, Michigan, chose the name "Fair Lane" for their Dearborn residence has been somewhat obscure. The name Fair Lane is usually associated with the Irish County of Cork, and also with Henry Ford's father, William, who immigrated from County Cork in 1847. Recent research at the Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum, investigating the Ahern family with whom William and Henry Ford lived for many years, reveals a definite connection between Patrick Ahern and Fair Lane. Fair Lane was an area in the northwest section of Cork City, a district which in the early 1800's was a respectable residential neighborhood. Before that it was probably literally a lane. Both Aherns and Fords lived in Fair Lane. Some of those Fords could possibly have been distant relatives of industrialist Henry Ford of Dearborn. But our interest is especially aroused when we learn that Patrick Ahern was born and raised in Fair Lane, and that Patrick Ahern was the only grandfather that Henry Ford really knew and loved. It is a long and intriguing story, so let us get on with it.

There is evidence that Patrick Ahern was born in Fair Lane, Cork, in 1804.¹ His father was Daniel Ahern and his mother was Catherine Neil. He had a brother, Cornelius. The brothers worked as butchers in the English Market, a large municipal meat market in Cork. When about 26 years old, Patrick joined the British Army, while Cornelius stayed in Cork and is said to have died there.² After Patrick's enlistment in England, the British Army shipped him to Quebec where he and some others quite promptly became absent without leave.³ This group made their way to Detroit unapprehended, where Patrick learned of work at the Detroit Arsenal, then under construction, in Dearbornville.

Sixty-eight men were on the Arsenal payroll in June, 1834, where Patrick Aharn(sic) is shown as having worked 24 days at the posted rate of 87½ cents per day, for a total monthly pay of \$21.22. Whereas most of the men signed for their pay, Patrick made his mark which was duly witnessed by the payroll clerk. Patrick continued his work at the Arsenal as "laborer, excavating and grading" during July and into August of 1834. He is not listed in later months nor following years.⁴

Patrick's name, apparently Aherne in Ireland, began to vary on documents from Aherne to Aharn, Ahern, O'Hern, O'Herin, O'Hara and other variants, perhaps because of his desertion from the British Army, but more likely because he could not write his name. Being Catholic, he may have had little intention of fighting for the British government, but may have seen the army as a means of getting to America. Patrick in Michigan, was saving money, making friends, and in particular had met a comely spinster by the name of Margaret Stevens(on), an Episcopalian who may have been about 12 years older than Patrick.

Property records show that a John Stevenson, born in Ireland, settled in Dearborn Township in 1831, and filed a location claim in September, 1833, for 40 acres in Springwells Township, on the northeast corner of the intersection of what is now Ford and Greenfield roads (Dearborn Ford Woods Park). This 40

acres was deeded by John Stevenson (1804-1889) and his wife, Susan (1809-1875) to Margaret Stevenson in consideration of \$50 (the government purchase fee) on July 4, 1834.⁵ Just eleven days later, July 15, 1834, Margaret and Patrick were married,⁶ and it was on Margaret's land that Patrick built a log cabin.

Soon after their marriage they are said to have adopted a girl, Fannie.⁷ It is not certain how long Fannie lived with them, but Fannie O'Heran(sic) is shown in early records of the Scotch Settlement School.⁸ Apparently Fannie had left by 1842 when Patrick and Margaret heard of an orphan girl in her third year, whose mother had died and whose father, a carpenter, was killed either by a fall from a roof,⁹ or from falling through the ice of the Rouge River while hauling logs with oxen and sleigh.¹⁰ This orphan girl was Mary Litogot, daughter of William Litogot of Wyandotte, Michigan. She had two older brothers, Saphara (1833-1878) and Barney (1838-1873), and one brother, John (1840-1862) who was a year younger. There is more than one story of how the Aherns first heard about Mary Litogot. In any case, it seems that Mary was the second girl adopted¹¹ by the Aherns.

It is 1841 before there is a record of Patrick's buying land for himself.¹² He began buying in bits and pieces. His first purchase was in Dearborn Township, a parcel of one acre for \$10 "lawful money." Then in 1842 he bought 10 acres more for \$75. Both of these plots bordered Greenfield Township, and the smaller piece adjoined Margaret's 40 acres. Then in 1845, for \$313.28, he bought the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 18, Town 2 South, Range 11 East, amounting to 40 acres, from a Benjamin Walker of the U. S. Army who had obtained it from the government in 1830. Walker took a mortgage for \$145, which Patrick paid off in 1846. This is the 40 acres directly south of Margaret's property where they had built their log cabin. (This is the land on which Patrick later built a new frame house in which Henry Ford the industrialist was born.) State, County, and School taxes on Margaret and Patrick's 91 acres for the year 1845 amounted to \$3.62, and were paid by Patrick O'Herin(sic) on Jan. 9, 1846.¹³

The 1850 Michigan Census¹⁴ reports:

	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Patrick O'Hern	45	Farmer	\$1800	Ireland
Margaret O'Hern	48	-	-	Ireland
Mary O'Hern	10	-	-	Michigan

By 1847 the second contingent of Fords had arrived, they also from County Cork, Ireland.¹⁵ They settled up on what is now Joy Road.¹⁶ The father was John Ford. The mother, Thomasine, had died at sea, and the oldest son was William Ford, age 21. This William Ford was well acquainted with hard work and poverty in Ireland. His family had been evicted from their 23 acres of leased land near Clonakilty and had come to America via steerage. William had been an apprentice carpenter in Ireland, and brought his carpenter tools with him on his voyage to America.¹⁷ He immediately set to work helping his father, and during the next few years also was employed by the Michigan Central Railroad in the western part of the State. Carpenters were in demand to build stations, platforms, and water tanks along the line. William's younger brother, Henry (1830-1901), was more adventuresome, and took off for the gold fields of California and Idaho, never to return. From there he later wrote back to William

saying he could never endure the cold climate of Michigan.¹⁸

During the 1850's, William continued to work both at home and as hired hand, at both farming and carpentry. In 1858, William's father, John (age 60), retired from his farm on Joy Road and went to live with his eldest daughter. At this time John sold his 80 acres, 40 acres to William,¹⁹ and 40 acres to a much younger son, Samuel (1837-1844). Son Henry in California seems not to have figured in the transaction. William paid his father \$600 for his 40 acres, and was very proud of at last being a land owner;²⁰ so much so that his first property tax receipt for \$5.70, for the year 1859, was framed and still exists in that frame.²¹

However, at this point, William (now 34) did not build a house on his own land, but rather had his eyes on Patrick Ahern whom he admired, and on Patrick's foster daughter, Mary (now 19), whom he admired even more. William had worked for Patrick occasionally, and now was helping him build a sizeable house on the property Patrick had purchased in 1845.

Either the 1860 census taker may have been hard-of-hearing, or Patrick must have had a terrifying brogue, as the 1860 record of the Ahern family is as follows:²²

	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Real Estate</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Patric O'Harran	50	Farmer	\$4000	Ireland
Margaret O'Harran	60	-	-	Ireland
Mary O'Harran	16	-	-	Michigan

About the time Patrick's new house was being finished, William Ford married Mary Ahern on April 25, 1861.²³ According to Nevins,²⁴ immediately after the wedding the couple moved into the log cabin occupied by the Aherns, and quite soon thereafter the four moved into the large new house. (The new house, incidentally, was on the Dearborn-Greenfield Town Line, and had to be moved in 1901 when Division Road (Greenfield) was constructed southward.) The house was a two-story structure with parlor, kitchen-living room, and eventually five bedrooms. In referring to this house, after having moved it to Greenfield Village, Henry Ford is said to have remarked apparently with considerable emphasis, "You see that home across the street there? That's my mother's home. My father just walked into that place. That belonged to my mother. That was my mother's home. It was her home and my father just walked into the place."²⁵

A son was born to William and Mary in January, 1862. This son died as an infant.²⁶ On July 30, 1863, a second son, Henry, was born in the Ahern household with no great fanfare. On September 26, 1863, about two months after Henry Ford's birth, a warranty deed was drawn, conveying Margaret O'Hearne's (sic) 40 acres with the old cabin to William Ford and Mary in consideration of \$400. By the next year Patrick had reached age sixty, and his retirement was imminent. On Feb. 15, 1864, Patrick Hern(sic) and Margaret Hern deeded the new house, together with the 51 acres on which it stood, to William Ford for \$1000. About three weeks later, March 7, 1864, William received \$500 in return for a lease which granted Patrick O'Hearn(sic) and his wife Margaret this same property to be used, "for the term of their natural lives."²⁷ All accounts seem to indicate that this arrangement succeeded for all concerned.




This picture, a copy of a tintype, ca. 1855-60, is labeled "Mr. Ford's Grandmother," and is believed to be Margaret (Stevens) Ahern, Henry Ford's foster grandmother. Mr. Ford's grandmother Litogot died about 1840, and his grandmother Thomasine Ford died at sea in 1847. Grandmother Ahern lived with the William Ford family until Henry was seven years old (1870), and is most likely to have been the grandmother photographed.

(Photo courtesy Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum)

In Witness Whereof, The part of of the said first part has hereunto set his hand - and seal - the day and year first above written. His

Sealed and Delivered in Presence of
The words "Margaret O'Hearn"
and "Margaret" inserted above
sealing.

Patrick O'Hearn 
Mark

James A. Randall
By 

Patrick Ahern's mark as it appeared on an 1867 document.

(Courtesy Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum)

At this point in time, the one year old Henry Ford, the future industrialist, is living in the house now owned by his mother and father, and shared by both foster grandparents. This is the year (1864) when Henry's grandfather, John Ford died; and his grandmother, you remember, had died at sea. So when Henry Ford later spoke of his grandfather or grandmother he was speaking of the Aherns.*

William Ford was probably the typical hard-working, land-hungry farmer of those times. On June 7, 1865, William and Mary sold the 40 acres on Joy Road, which William had bought in 1858 from his father for \$600. This he sold to Jacob Esper for \$2500.²⁸ A \$500 two-year mortgage from Esper and his wife to William Ford eased the transaction for Esper. With this money and some more, William was able on July 12, 1865, to buy 80 acres in Dearborn Township from George Moir for \$4000. This property is located at the northeast corner of Ford Road and Southfield. One week later, William Ford declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States.²⁹

In a strangely worded legal document of March 26, 1867,³⁰ the 40 acres where the original log cabin was built is now deeded by Patrick O'Hearne(sic) to "William and Mary, his wife, of the same place ... for \$400 ..." "This Grant being of the same land devised by Margaret O'Hearne to said Mary before she was married to said Ford, and this deed is on consideration of the love and affection of said Grantor to said Grantees, it being expressly understood and agreed that said Grantor Patrick O'Hearne retains the full use and possession, occupancy, Rents and profits of said land during the life time of said Grantor." "This property is the sole property of said Margaret acquired before her marriage to her present Husband." Patrick's legal signature on this document was again his mark. This same property had been already deeded to the Fords by Margaret in September, 1863, but without the life occupancy agreement. Patrick now seems to be trying to recover some personal security from Margaret's 40 acres, as he did from his own 51 acres in March, 1864. And even though Patrick had now deeded all of his and Margaret's property to William and Mary, he continued to pay the taxes which had risen to over \$50/yr. in 1867. On these tax receipts over the years, Patrick's name is spelled O'Hern, O'Heron, O'Herine and O'Harron.³¹

In less than three years Margaret Ahern died. She was buried by William Ford in the Ford Cemetery, with a handsome obelisk marking her grave. The stone reads: Born 1786, Died Jan. 15, 1870, Aged 84 yrs. Patrick is said to have revered Margaret, and to have kept her clothes neatly arranged in a closet for years after her death.³²

William and Mary Ford now (1867) have all of the Ahern 91 acres, plus the 80 acres bought from Moir. In a short time these Fords are recognized as prosperous farmers. The 1876 Wayne County Atlas proudly depicts the "Farm Residence of William Ford, Esq., Springwell, Wayne Co., Mich." in its illustration section.

The year 1876, however, is the year that Mary (Litogot) Ford died on March 29, following childbirth. Son Henry was only thirteen. A cousin of Henry's (Jane Flaherty) came to keep house. His grandfather would mean even more to him now. Henry's father, William, was a good, quiet-speaking, hard-working man. He expected his eldest son to take an interest in the farm. However, Henry, a boy

*The author uses this spelling because Henry Ford insisted in his interview with Ann Hood that "Ahern" was the correct spelling.

with vision, did not like farm work. This bothered his father who is quoted as saying such things as, "Don't know what will become of him, just tinkers all night."³³

Three years after his mother died, Henry, at sixteen, left home for the city. Grandfather Ahern stayed on the farm for another three years until his death in 1882. Patrick was buried in St. Alphonsus Churchyard, Dearborn. The old church records³⁴ showed: "Patrick O'Hera died June 3, 1882, 83 years old. He was found improvidently dead in his bedchamber." The markings on the slab in the St. Alphonsus Cemetery were as follows: Patrick O'Herin, Died June 1, 1882, Aged 84 yrs.

The fact that Patrick was a deserter from the British Army did not emerge until a few years before his death. It is said³⁵ that Patrick and William were in Detroit to buy fireworks for the Fourth of July, and William suggested going to the horse races in Windsor. Patrick didn't want to go, much to the consternation of William. William's insistence finally led to Patrick's explanation of why he was afraid of being apprehended by Canadian officials. So they came home to Dearborn without crossing the river.

Henry Ford later recalls his own youth in a short autobiographical sketch dated October 28, 1913:

"I remember my father hauling wood and seeing the redhead woodpecker, swallows, bluebirds and robins. My grandfather told me the names of all these birds. My grandfather was my mother's foster father. He was born in Cork City, Ireland on the 17th of March, 1804. He came to this country about 1825. After my mother married here, my grandmother lived with my parents. She died in 1870, and he in 1881. I do not remember her very well, but I spent many happy days with him. When I was in Ireland in 1912, I went to the church in Cork and found the record of his birth. His name was Patrick Ahern."³⁶

Henry Ford did indeed visit France, England, and Ireland during the summer of 1912, with Clara, Edsel, and Marvin Bryant in tow. This seems to have been a combined business and pleasure trip inasmuch as they were escorted much of the time by Mr. White of the Paris Branch, and Sir Percival Perry of the London Branch of the Ford Motor Company. Clara Ford found the birthplace of her mother, Martha (Bench) Bryant on a street in Warwickshire, England.³⁷ In Ireland, Mr. Ford spent time in Bandon and Clonakilty as well as in Cork.³⁸ In Cork he conferred with Rev. C. C. O'Connor of St. Mary's Cathedral, Sunday's Well, and left a gift to the Sisters of the Assumption. Edsel's diary version of this same day is as follows:³⁹

"August 10, 1912

We arrived in Cork at 9:30 had breakfast at Metropole Hotel. Walked about town. Father walked off alone-waited for him until 11, then drove out to Blarney Castle saw some girls kiss the stone enough for me. Had lunch there went to Bandon then to Clonakitty found Aunt Ann's house⁴⁰ took pictures saw church and school. Drove on through rain to Bantry Bay stayed at Vickery's Hotel-rather poor. Saw much bog, lots of peat."

This 1912 trip to Great Britian is thought to have been the impetus to a long and serious effort on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Ford to trace their ancestors.⁴¹

Correspondence from Rev. O'Connor began August 18, 1912, when the Reverend asked Mr. Ford for further information: "Can you let me know where your grandfather, Mr. Patrick Ahern was living in 1841? If he lived in Ireland, his name, as well as his age and parent's names will be found in the Census returns for that year..."

By October, 1912, Rev. O'Connor had located birth records of two Patrick Aherns: Patrick Ahern, son of Michael Ahern and Catherine Murphy, born March 13, 1804; and Patrick Ahern, son of Daniel Ahern and Catherine Neil, born March 17, 1804. It was some time before the Patrick of March 17 was established as the correct one. Rev. O'Connor stated that the Clerk would "be glad to get L1" for the search fee. The Reverend received L5 from Mr. Ford, "to use as your good judgement may direct." A newspaper clipping from O'Connor, with the heading "POOR CHILDREN'S EXCURSION" lists Henry Forde (per Rev. O'Connor) as donor of twenty shillings.

A letter from Henry Ford to Rev. O'Connor on November 23, 1912,⁴² includes the following paragraph which answers the Reverend's earlier inquiry:

"My grandfather, Patrick Ahern, lived here in Dearborn, Mich. in 1841, but sometime prior to that resided at Fair Lane; and it would appear to me that if your clerk would institute a search among the Ahern families who resided there during earlier years, some trace of them might be found."

The Reverend replied on December 6, saying, "I shall certainly endeavor to do all I can to trace any members of the Ahern family that may still be living in or about Cork. Fair Lane is quite near this Cathedral, so there will be no difficulty in finding out if any of them are there or in the district around it."

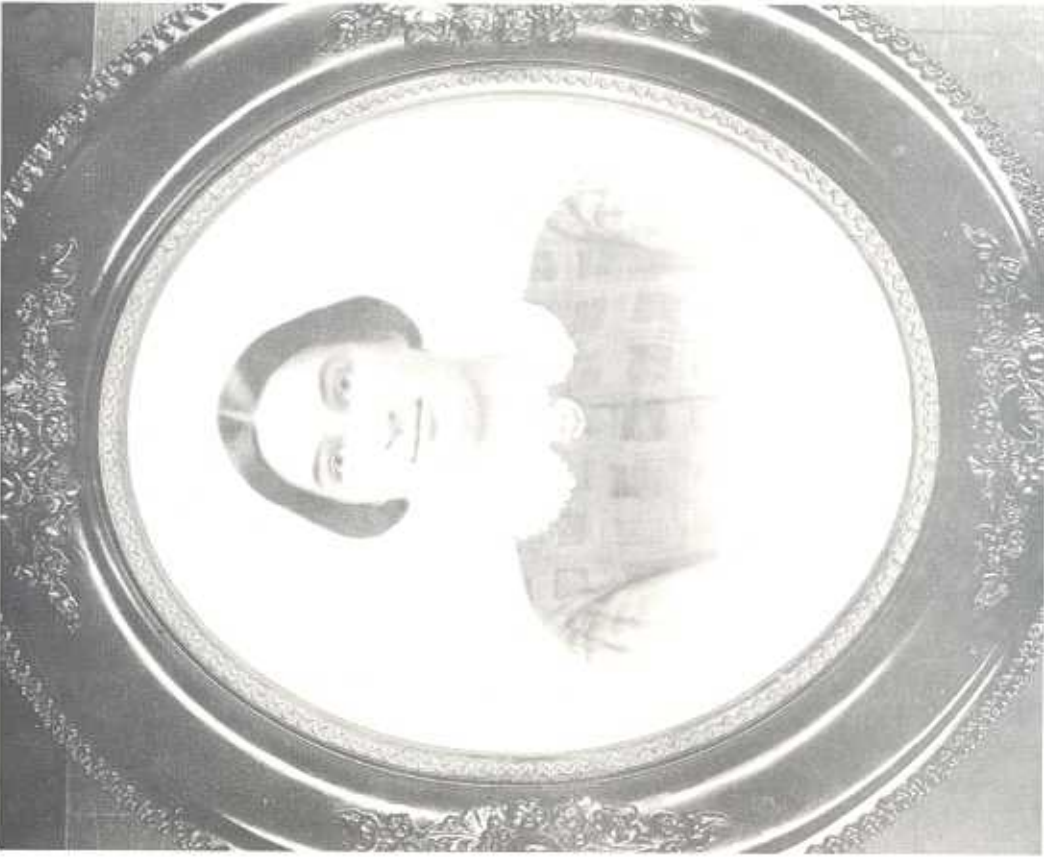
In late December, 1912, advertisements appeared in the News of the World, the Cork Examiner, the Irish Catholic, and at least one London paper reading as follows:⁴³

INFORMATION WANTED

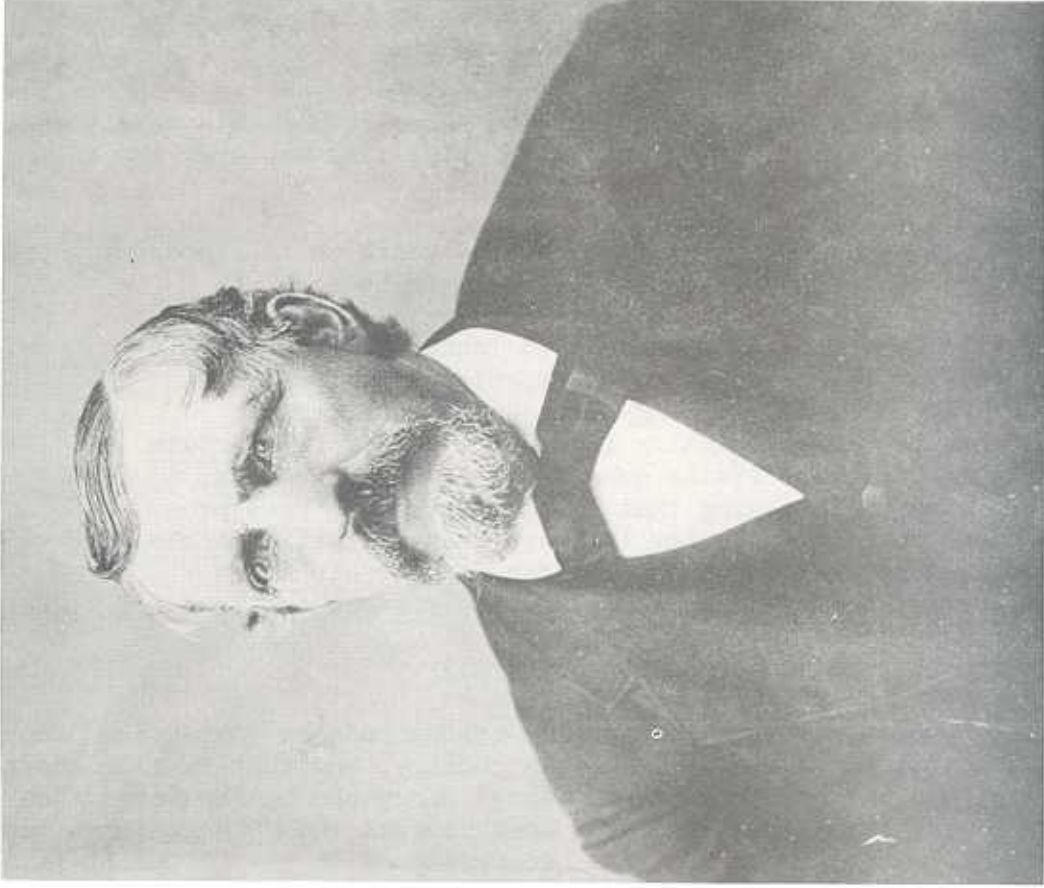
Of the relatives of PATRICK AHERN, who resided at Fair Lane, Cork, about the years 1820-1840. He emigrated to America about the latter date, and lived at Dearborn, Michigan, in 1841. Any information which succeeds in locating them will be liberally rewarded. Apply to

HENRY FORD, Ford Motor Co.
Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

Letters responding to the advertisements were collected by Mr. E. G. Liebold, General Secretary to Mr. Ford, sorted and the most promising ones forwarded to Rev. O'Connor for further evaluation and follow-up. The majority



Mary (Litogot) Ford (1839-1876), adopted daughter of Patrick and Margaret Ahern, wife of William Ford, and mother of Henry Ford the industrialist.



William Ford (1826-1905), husband of the Ahern's adopted daughter Mary Litogot, and father of industrialist Henry Ford.

(Photographs courtesy Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum)

of the letters, as might be expected, were from fortune hunters, thinking the name Ford meant that a very large reward, if not a legacy, was to be had. Lawyers insisted that their clients were relatives. Some respondents merely asked for a job, an automobile, or a little money, thinking they now knew how to reach Mr. Ford.

Rev. O'Connor was kept busy part time for two years on this project. One of his last letters seems to be in June, 1914. In it he says:

"I am sorry that we have not been able to locate Patrick Ahern; this, however, was perhaps only to be expected. It is a long cry from 1841 to 1912, and nothing having been committed to writing, it has proved practically impossible to say for certain who are now, in Cork, the living decedents of Patrick Ahern. But I agree with you in saying that 'our efforts have been productive of some results.' To say the very least, it is probable - I am afraid I cannot say anything stronger - that Kate Ahern, Mrs. Barry, her sister, Mrs. McNamara and her sisters are true relations of Mr. Ford."

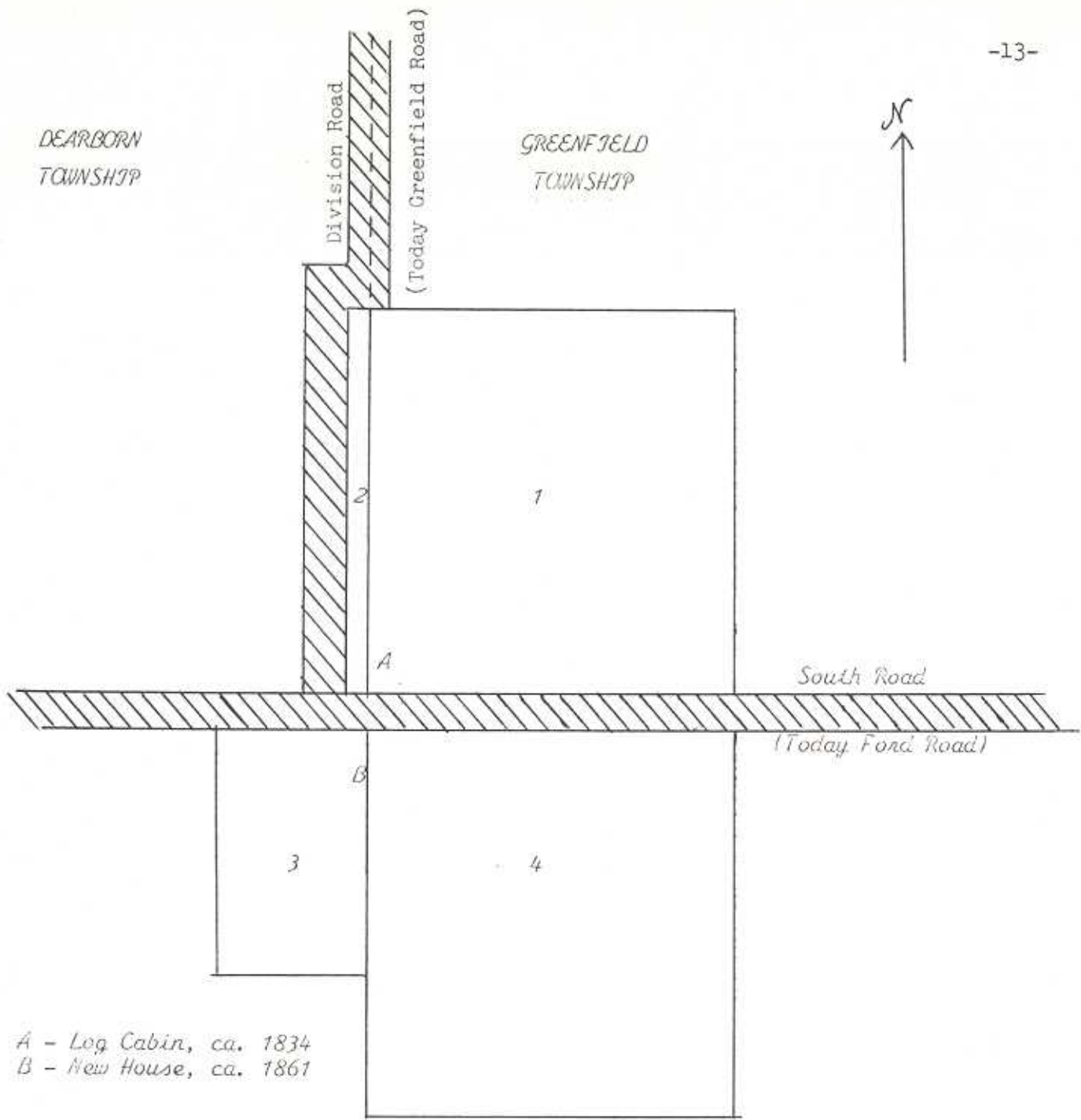
(Letter addressed to Mr. Liebold.)

It is quite obvious from this and earlier correspondence that Rev. O'Connor was never told that Patrick Ahern died in this country, and that Patrick Ahern was not Henry Ford's blood relative. Mrs. (Anne) Barry who had answered the December, 1912, advertisement had indicated that she was the "oldest inhabitant living in Fair Lane." The information she had presented to Rev. O'Connor in an interview was considered by O'Connor as worthy of the reward offered by Mr. Ford. Rev. O'Connor suggested L5.

Bits of information derived from the search initiated by Rev. O'Connor surfaced years later. The street called Fair Lane prior to Southern Ireland's independence is now named Wolfe Tone, in honor of a leader of the Irish rebellion of 1798.⁴⁴ At an earlier time, Fair Lane was a nice residential section, later it became a poor neighborhood where the tinkers lived.⁴⁵ A certificate of marriage between a Timothy Ahern and an Eliza Ford, both of Cork, dated 1838, arrived at Mr. Ford's office in 1916. There is correspondence in 1926 with a Charles Ford of 2 Wolfe Tone Street, "late Fair Lane," Cork, who claimed relationship to both Fords and Aherns, and who sought work for his son in the new Cork Plant of Henry Ford & Son, Ltd.⁴⁶

Mr. Ford personally acknowledged a Mrs. Katherine Gates of Malden, Mass., as a niece of Patrick Ahern, and visited her in March of 1924.⁴⁷ He also arranged to send her photographs of the old homestead in Michigan and the room occupied by Patrick. Quoting from a 1924 letter to Mrs. Gates, "One photograph shows his original gun and old clock. It was the custom in those days to carry the gun in and place it at the head of the bed each night. Another (photograph) gives a view of his dressing mirror, candlestick and old bible, all of which are original."

Mr. Ford's unusual fondness for his grandfather is evident in many ways. The meticulous attention given to Patrick's bedroom and his trusty shotgun in the restored homestead at Greenfield Village attests to a lingering love for his grandfather. And it is recorded that on the day of Henry Ford's death (April 27, 1947), "About 1:30 the chauffeur picked up Mr. Ford. They inspected



A - Log Cabin, ca. 1834
 B - New House, ca. 1861

	<u>Acquired by</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Ac.</u>	<u>Price</u>
1	Margaret Stevenson	1834	40	\$50
2	Patrick Ahern	1841	1	\$10
3	Patrick Ahern	1842	10	\$75
4	Patrick Ahern	1845	40	\$313

Today Greenfield Road extends south from the intersection of old Division Road and old South Road. It is interesting to observe that the site of the "New House" (B), which was industrialist Henry Ford's birthplace, is now approximately the center of the roadbed of Greenfield Road just south of Ford Road. There is a large Henry Ford Birthplace State of Michigan Marker just east of this location. The Ford Motor Company deeded a portion of land to the City of Dearborn during the Henry Ford Centennial Celebration in 1963, and the City maintains the mini park-like setting.

the flood damage on the estate, at Greenfield Village, and in two cemeteries. Henry Ford wore his bedroom slippers - 'clodhoppers,' he called them - as he and Rankin (the chauffeur) plodded over the wet ground to inspect the Ahern tombstone at the Catholic Cemetery at Schaefer and Warren roads. Then they returned to Fair Lane ..."⁴⁸ Henry Ford died at Fair Lane that evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Ford must have chosen the name for their stately new 1913-15 Dearborn home quite soon after the 1912 visit to Ireland and the section of Cork once known as Fair Lane. Mr. Ford, in particular, must have associated Fair Lane, Cork, with his cherished companion Patrick Ahern. It is not surprising, then, that Fair Lane became the name of the Dearborn estate which has now become a personal memorial to Henry and Clara Ford.

The recent confusion concerning the origin of the name Fair Lane for the Ford's Dearborn residence may be due to Henry Ford's association of the name simply with his "grandfather." It could easily be inferred that Fair Lane was the home of his grandfather, John Ford, and the birthplace of his father William Ford. However, the fact that Henry Ford, during the 1912 trip, searched for and found his Aunt Ann's house at Clonakilty, approximately 30 miles from Fair Lane in Cork, indicates that there was no confusion in Mr. Ford's mind as to the distinction between Fair Lane and his father's birthplace. Later, in 1925, Dr. Webster⁴⁹ reaffirmed the location of the Ford family in Ireland. He found that the Fords had lived as tenant farmers just a few miles outside Clonakilty, Ireland, and no mention is made of Fair Lane. Thus it seems that grandfather Patrick Ahern of Fair Lane, Cork, can be given the major credit for Dearborn's having a Fair Lane.

INFORMATION WANTED

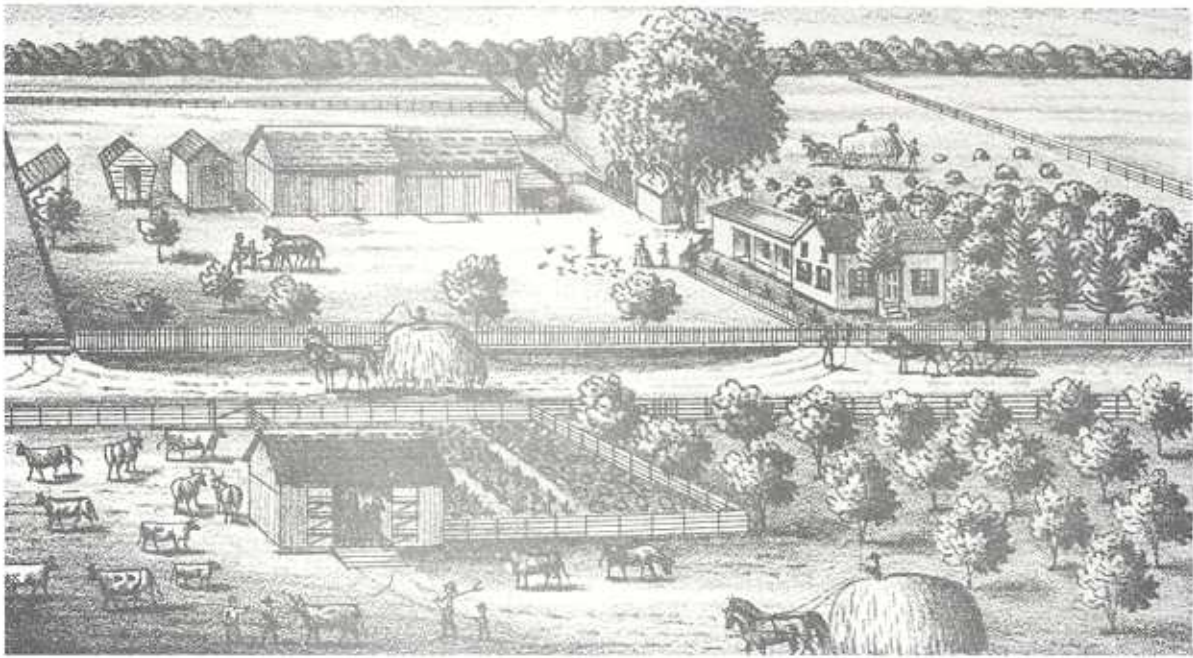
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Any information which succeeds in locat-
ing them, will be liberally rewarded.

Apply to:

HENRY FORD, Ford Motor Co.,
10579 Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

The above clipping was from the Cork Examiner, December 19, 1912, mailed to Henry Ford by Ann Barry, stating that she was the "oldest inhabitant living in Fair Lane." Rev. O'Connor thought she was "probably" a relative of Patrick Ahern. (Courtesy: Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum)



An 1876 artist's sketch of the farm which Patrick Ahern sold in 1864 to son-in-law William and daughter Mary for \$1000 subject to a lease allowing Mary's foster parents, Patrick and Margaret Ahern, to live on the premises for the rest of their lives. Margaret died in 1870, but Patrick, now in his seventies, was living on the farm with William (50) doing most of the work. The small building, left foreground, is the cabin in which the Aherns had earlier lived. Henry Ford's sister, Margaret (Ford) Ruddyman has said, "As children we had many good times playing in the loft of the old log house of the Aherns. The first floor was used as a shelter for the sheep; grain and hay were stored in the loft.

(Sketch copied from the Illustrated Historical Atlas, Wayne County, Michigan, 1876)



Patrick Ahern's bedroom in the William Ford home. Patrick lived with his adopted daughter and son-in-law from 1861 to 1882; from before Henry Ford's birth (1863) until after Henry Ford left home (1879). The bedroom was in the southeast corner upstairs, with window facing the farmyard. (See 1876 sketch)

(Photograph courtesy Ford Archives,
Henry Ford Museum)

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1. Acc. 23, Henry Ford Office, Box 31, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. Letters from Rev. C. C. O'Connor, St. Mary's Cathedral, Conk, Ireland (1912-1914).
2. Ibid.
3. Hood, Ann, "The Boy Henry Ford," unpublished manuscript dated April, 1940. Acc. 653, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. Ann Hood was a pupil in the Edison Institute Schools, and one of Henry Ford's favorites. She managed to interview Henry Ford at length and thus obtain direct information of a personal nature which she recorded in this well written manuscript.
4. "Detroit Arsenal Funds" (7-31-1833) No. 24, Mechanics & Laborer's Wages. Reel #15, 17745, National Archives. Washington, D.C. (Copy located at Dearborn Historical Museum).
5. Wayne County Land Tract Records, Liber 12, p.86, Wayne County Register of Deeds, Detroit, Michigan. (S.W.¼ of the S.W.¼, Section 7, Township 1 South, Range 11 East) On this deed to Margaret's property her name is spelled Stevenson. It is thought that John and Susan Stevenson may have been relatives of Margaret because the 40 acres was sold without a profit and because a Susan Stevens was the only witness to Margaret's marriage which took place just a few days after the land transaction. Perhaps John was Margaret's brother. But henceforth Margaret's name appears as Stevens.
6. Acc. 940, Frank Hill Papers, Box 8, p.70, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. The marriage took place at St. Pauls in Detroit with Addison Searle, Rector.
7. Hood, Ann, *op.cit.*
8. Acc. 1, Fair Lane Papers, Box 1, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. In a list of Scotch Settlement pupils, both "Fannie O'Heran" and "Mary O'Heran" are listed.
9. Ruddiman Margaret (Ford), "Memories of My Brother Henry Ford," Michigan History, Michigan Historical Commission, Sept. 1953.
10. Litogot, Edward B., "Reminiscences," (Typescript) Acc. 65, No. 196. Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum.
11. Mary (Litogot) Ford was an "acknowledged child" of the Aherns. There seems to be no records of legal adoption.
12. Acc. 1, Fair Lane Papers, Box 3, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. These appear to be original documents warranting ownership of the Ahern-Ford homestead property.
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14. 7th Census of the United States, "1850 Census of Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan, Vol. 1," (Dearborn Historical Museum)

15. Bryan, Ford R., "The Samuel Ford Family," The Dearborn Historian. (to be published)
16. "Early Land Transfers, Detroit and Wayne County," Wayne County, Michigan Land Records, W.P.A. Vital Records Project, Michigan State Library and D.A.R., Louisa St. Clair Chapter (1940). "John Ford of Greenfield Twp. purchased from Henry Maybury of Detroit on Jan. 15, 1848 - W¹/₂ of S.W. ¹/₄ of Sec. 35, Twp. 1, S, Range 10 E" (County Records Vol. 32, p. 254).
17. Ruddiman, Margaret, *op. cit.*
18. Acc. 1, Fair Lane Papers, Box 1, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. 1865 letter to William Ford from his brother, Henry, then prospecting in Idaho Territory.
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20. Ruddiman, Margaret, *op. cit.*
21. Acc. 1, Box 3, *op. cit.*
22. 8th Census of the United States, "1860 Census of Detroit and Wayne County Michigan, Vol. 19." (Dearborn Historical Museum)
23. Acc. 1, Fair Lane Papers, Box 12, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. Letter of Certification signed by Edward Duerocke, Missionary of the Congregation of St. Peter's, Detroit.
24. Nevins, Allen, Ford: The Times, The Man, The Company, Charles Scribners Sons, New York, 1954. (Mr. Nevins differs with Margaret Ruddiman who said that the Fords were served their wedding supper in the new house.)
25. Litogot, Edward, *op. cit.*
26. Acc. 587, Ford Cemetery, Box 15, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum.
27. Acc. 1, Box 3, *op. cit.*
28. Ibid.
29. Acc. 1, Fair Lane Papers, Box 33, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum.
30. Acc. 1, Box 3, *op. cit.*
31. Acc. 1, Box 4, *op. cit.*
32. Ruddiman, Margaret, *op. cit.*
33. Author conversations with Miss Olive Ford, great granddaughter of John Ford, William Ford's father. (Dec. 29, 1980)
34. Acc. 23, Henry Ford Office, Box 30, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. This information was collected in June, 1939 by R. H. Laird.

35. Hood, Ann, *op.cit.*
36. Acc. 1, Box 1, *op.cit.*
37. Acc. 889, Bryant Family History, Box 1, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum.
38. Henry Ford's grandfather, John Ford, had taken a life lease on 23 acres of land on the Madame Estate at Crohane near Clonakilty in 1819. Henry Ford's father, William (1826-1905), was quite likely born there. The family was forced to vacate the property in 1847.
39. Acc. 1, Fair Lane Papers, Box 31, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum.
40. Edsel Ford's Aunt Ann was most likely Anne (Nancy) Flaherty, younger sister of Henry Ford's father William. She was born near Clonakilty, Ireland, in 1834, and is identified in several photographs with Henry Ford at the Black Farm in 1911-12.
41. Ruddiman, Margaret, *op.cit.*
42. Acc. 23, Henry Ford Office, Box 31, *op.cit.*
43. Ibid.
44. O'Brien, Maire and Conor Cruise, A Concise History of Ireland, Beekman House, New York, ca. 1970.
45. Acc. 23, Henry Ford Office, Box 30, *op.cit.*
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47. Ibid.
48. Clancy, Louise and Davis, Florence, The Believer, Coward-McCann, Inc., New York, 1960. (Primary source: Rankin, Robert, "Reminiscences," Acc. 65, No. 4, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum)
49. Acc. 23, Henry Ford Office, Box 28, Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum. (See "Notes Topographical, Historical & Genealogical on the Ford Family" by Charles A. Webster, D.D.)

DO YOU KNOW THAT HENRY FORD I SAID?...

"...We often speak of the ignorance of the past; but our distant forefathers were no more ignorant than we. They were grinding the grist of experience through the mills of the mind and were discovering what was good and what was bad for them. That is all we are doing. What will be known in the future as the ignorance of this present generation is just the residue of discoveries which we shall not have time to make. Our responsibility is not to create a perfect world but to establish our discoveries of what is right by weeding out what we have newly discovered to be wrong, leaving to the future its task of the same nature..."

(Source: FORUM, October 1928: "Success.")

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN RETROSPECT

Winfield H. Arneson

On November 7, 1981, the 25th anniversary of the McFadden-Ross House as a Museum was commemorated by the Historical Commission and the Museum Staff.

On this beautiful autumn day a luncheon was held at the Fairlane Inn Motel for program participants, Historical Commissioners and Staff representatives. The program was held on the front porch of the Museum and a large audience was in attendance. We were honored to have the 17th Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry serve as the Color Guard and raise the flag. Further, we were pleased to have members of the Dearborn High School Band provide the music.

May we quote here the "Brief History of the McFadden-Ross Museum" as published in the printed program for the day?

Since 1839 this building and these premises have been an integral part of the development of the community of Dearborn. It was in 1839 that the federal government built a "powder magazine" here to serve the existing U. S. Arsenal of Dearbornville (1833-1875) which was located two blocks west. The Powder Magazine predates and served Detroit's Fort Wayne as it developed during the 1840's.

After the Arsenal was closed in 1875 and later auctioned in Detroit, the Nathaniel and Elizabeth Ross family purchased the Powder Magazine and a large parcel of land around it for conversion to a farm. Various changes and additions were made to the solid brick structure (made of local brick) between its purchase and the 1920's.

Mary Elizabeth Ross, daughter of Nathaniel and Elizabeth, was the last family survivor to live here from 1884 to 1950. Upon her death on December 30, 1950, her will disclosed that her home, barns, their contents and the acreage were to be given to Dearborn for museum purposes. She chose to name it in honor of her maternal (McFadden) and paternal (Ross) families.

After numerous alterations, for safety and museum purposes, the home became the second building of the Dearborn Historical Museum on October 27, 1956. It has served the community well in terms of exhibit programs, educational goals, a public meeting place for organizations supportive of the Museum work, a place for outdoor events and a home for the Historical Commission's extensive Historical Records and Library.

Since we have written numerous articles related to the McFadden-Ross story over the past 25 years, we wish to use this occasion to quote some of the statements made by our speakers. The program is reproduced on page 21.

Jason Thornburg, Commission Secretary, served as the General Chairman of the Anniversary Committee. Jessie Schneidewind, Commission Chairman, served as Master of Ceremonies. Other members of the Committee included Commissioners Richard Hagelthorn, Andrew Petrere and Lester Twork as well as staff members Winfield Arneson and Mary MacDonald.

We also wish to recognize the City's Recreation Department as well as Community Resources and Information Department for their assistance. In addition, the Dearborn Historical Society and its president Lawrence Sheppard hosted the reception following the ceremonies and this courtesy was much appreciated by all in attendance.

At this time here are some excerpts from the text of the speakers for the memorable occasion.

Mayor John B. O'Reilly. "For twenty-five years the lives of the citizens of Dearborn have been enriched as a result of a very generous gift made so many years ago. This Museum is the result of a great deal of love and fondness and care that Mary Elizabeth Ross had for her home town. Her generous gift has certainly provided the means for cultural enrichment over these years and it has meant a great deal to our community. I want to commend everyone who has had anything to do with preparing this most appropriate event today. It is indeed fitting that we pause and recognize the significance of this particular facility and that we have a better understanding of how it can play a role in each of our lives for the future..."

John Dufour. (Director of the Dearborn Recreation Department who assisted Miss Ross during her last years).

"Ladies and gentlemen, ask yourself this question, 'How did a little old sports supervisor in the Recreation Department back in the late '40's know Lizzie Ross?' Well, I knew her through my mother-in-law, Florence Kealey, who came to live with us in the late forties. At that time Miss Ross had willed all this property to the City of Dearborn to be used as a Museum after her death. City officials with Bert Schlaff, who at the time was the Administrative Assistant to Mayor Orville Hubbard, was looking for someone to take care of Miss Ross. [They were looking for] a practical nurse because she had reached the age of 84 and was having difficulty taking care of herself.

Florence Kealey ... was employed by Miss Ross for the summer of 1950. She stayed with her seven days a week. Miss Ross, all that time, had only two visitors - a lady by the name of Mrs. Faustman, who took care of her furnace ... and paid her bills; and a lady by the name of Mrs. Jansson, who did her shopping for her. They came over to the house once a week ... Miss Ross never left the house.

She was protected by one of the biggest damn dogs I've ever seen in my life. It was a big German Shepherd. That dog never left her side. Miss Ross was very feeble and she required constant attention ...

[Some] little anecdotes about Miss Ross. She fired my mother-in-law every day. My mother-in-law would go sit in the living room ... for ten to fifteen minutes. Then she would walk back to the bedroom and Lizzie would say, 'Am I glad to see you. I just fired the other one.' And that happened quite frequently.

The following was the program for the 25th Anniversary of the McFadden-Ross House as a museum. Commissioner Jason Thornburg served as General Chairman.

P R O G R A M

Prelude..... Dearborn High School Band
Director, Lawrence L. Pye

Master of Ceremonies..... Jessie Schneidewind
Chairman, Dearborn Historical Commission

Color Guard & Flag Raising..... 17th Regiment
of Michigan Volunteer Infantry
Commander, Sgt. William G. Boudreau

The Star Spangled Banner..... Dearborn High School Band

Invocation..... Dr. William D. Mercer
Pastor, First United Methodist Church

Welcoming & Acknowledgements..... Jessie Schneidewind

Remarks, Welcoming & Recognitions..... The Honorable John B. O'Reilly
Mayor, City of Dearborn

Personal Observations about Mary Elizabeth Ross, Benefactor.....
John Dufour, Director, Dearborn Parks & Recreation

A Home Becomes a Museum..... Iris Becker
Dearborn Historical Commissioner

Introduction of Speaker..... Katherine Cushman

Anniversary Address..... The Honorable Richard Austin
Secretary of State, State of Michigan

America the Beautiful..... Dearborn High School Band

Benediction..... Dr. Mercer

Postlude Music..... Dearborn High School Band

Reception and Tea to follow immediately in the McFadden-Ross House.

Courtesy Dearborn Historical Society

Public is cordially invited.



Above: Mary Elizabeth "Lizzie" Ross at home for her 84th birthday anniversary on July 24, 1950. She died five months later.

Above left: Miss Ross at the same time posing for the 'only birthday anniversary party' she said she ever had. Florence Kealey, pictured with Miss Ross, took care of her 7 days a week during the summer of 1950. John Dufour refers to Mrs. Kealey in the accompanying article.

This interior view of the Ross family home was taken in 1953, three years before the former Powder Magazine of the United States Arsenal became a public museum. Depicted are some of the books and records the Ross family accumulated over the 66 years the family lived here. Today, this area of the building is part of the Museum's Meeting Room.

(Photographs from the Museum's Historical Records & Library)





Two views of the Ross family residence during the early 1950's before it became the second building of the Dearborn Historical Museum. Above is the familiar front of the home. During the 1920's this side was actually the west side of the farmhouse. Prior to that time the present south elevation was the front of the home.

Below is the north elevation. The addition at the extreme left was removed between 1953 and the opening date of the Museum. Today's familiar 2nd floor addition at the east side of the building gives a balanced profile. Considerable work was done to the exterior and the interior of the structure in order to make it functional as a museum.

(Photographs from the Museum's Historical Records and Library)



She wouldn't pay my mother-in-law. My mother-in-law had to fight for her pay, but if there were any small jobs to be done around the house, Lizzie would tell my mother-in-law, 'Would you call John and tell John to come over and take the ashes out of the coal furnace ...' I'd come over and ... empty a couple of bushels of ashes out in the back and she'd give me a twenty dollar bill. And in those days twenty dollar bills were a lot.

She'd call me over to check the fence. There was a wooden fence ... and maybe there might have been two or three slats that had fallen down. I'd nail them back together and she'd give me a twenty dollar bill ..., but my mother-in-law had an awful time getting paid ...

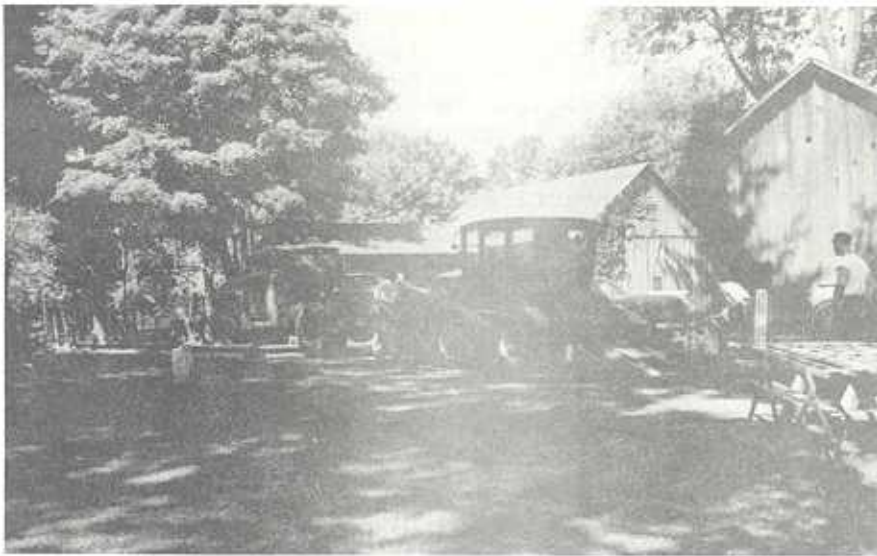
We used to come out on Sunday afternoons and sit under a tree with Miss Ross. My 2½ year old son would come with us. She took a liking to him and one day she turned around and [gave] a twenty dollar bill to my wife and she said, 'I want you to buy him a black suit.' In those days everybody wore black suits, especially the kids.

One day during the summer, she asked me if I would drive her to Woodmere Cemetery to see the grave of her brother and I said, 'I'd be happy to.' She never left the place except that particular day. She told my mother-in-law, 'You can't go. You have to stay home and take care of the dog.' So poor Florence had to stay home. Well, we took that trip to Woodmere Cemetery, down on Dix and Vernon ...

She was a tough old lady. In her own way she was very, very kind. She had willed this whole property to the City. One of the anecdotes ... was that Henry Ford desired this piece of property very, very much. In fact, it was the only piece of property that he didn't own in this ... area. And he kept after her for the property - to name a price. Lizzie would turn him down every time. In desperation he offered her a million dollars for the property. She turned it down. She told me this herself, whether it was true or not. She told me ... that one day he presented her with a blank check and told her to fill in the amount. She tore it up in front of him. Lizzie Ross had something that Henry Ford wanted and couldn't get."

Iris Becker. (Member of the Historical Commission in 1950 and again at the present time).

"Aren't you glad that Lizzie wouldn't sell this place? It was musty and damp and chilly ... for the winter. As spring went along, I remember Mr. Leonard Johnson [Museum Chief Curator 1955-1960] and Mr. Jim Barbee [also of the Museum staff] ... would find some very interesting things ... We had quite a time with the cleaning but some of you who were around then may remember the odor and the dust that was here just like when you go into an old building of any kind and decide to save it and make use of it ... We made some interesting discoveries ... We spent three years changing



Left: View shows the old Ross barns (1958) which today is the site of the Museum's Office-Storage-Workshop across the parking lot from the McFadden-Ross House. Shown arriving on the grounds is the 1922 Model 'T' Ford which formerly belonged to Dearborn educator and historian Malita Thiel Goebel. This black center door sedan has been a familiar sight in numerous local parades and various Museum events during the past two decades.

Below: This setting was re-enacted on November 7, 1981, as Michigan Secretary of State Richard H. Austin cuts the "cobweb." At left is Historical Commissioner Michael 'Jack' Tate, and at the right is Commissioner Andrew Petrone.



Above: The formal cutting of the cobweb at the front door of the McFadden-Ross House on October 27, 1956, marked the grand opening of it as a museum. Shown at the time are left to right: Ralph B. Guy, Sr., a City Councilman; Leonard G. Johnson, Chief Curator of the Dearborn Historical Museum; William H. Broomhall, another City Councilman; Charles P. Gilbert, also a City Councilman; Harry Molemaker, Museum Craftsman (background), the person who did much of the alterations during the years 1953-1956; and Joseph M. Karmann, former Mayor of Springwells and Fordson. Mr. Karmann was dressed in his favorite "Old Prospector's" garb.



(All photographs from the Museum's Historical Records & Library.)

this house. We had to make some decisions ... The Commission ... was concerned [because we] were going to use it for the public. How could we keep it a powder magazine, a lived in house, a very much lived in house, and still make it practical and pragmatic - a learning place called the Museum, that people could really enjoy.

... In those days everybody did everything including scrubbing the floors, washing down the walls, painting, digging, sorting, washing clothes, washing the dishes - everything ... There was a lot to do and we thank goodness for people. It wasn't just the Commission; it was the Staff that we had which was relatively small in those days - but a lot of people came [to help]: the neighborhood - the people that lived around here, [Historical] Society people, people from the East End and West End [who] were interested in this place and who heard that Lizzie had given [the property] to us ..."

Richard Austin. (State of Michigan Secretary of State and principal speaker for the occasion.)

"I'd like ... to congratulate all of you on your presence here this afternoon. I'd like to congratulate you on your program for this occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the McFadden-Ross Museum. I'd like to also congratulate you, and especially the Commission, on your continuing efforts to identify and restore appropriate reminders of your heritage which, of course, is a part of the rich heritage of the people of Michigan. And I certainly want to congratulate you on this Dearborn Historical Museum and the work that you have done in restoring this property - making it available to all of us.

... It's always a pleasure to visit the great historical exhibits located here in the City of Dearborn. And it has been my privilege on several occasions to join you in commemorating some important events in your history, and in the history of the City and our State. Although she lived a relatively quiet life Mary Elizabeth Ross was apparently a visionary. I would certainly liked to have known her. From what I've heard she was apparently a rugged individual to put it mildly. I wish that I could have attended the 1956 opening of the McFadden-Ross House. From all indications that must have been an exhilarating experience.

This site was referred to ... as the Detroit Arsenal at Dearbornville. It has certainly undergone an interesting transformation to domestic use. The Commandant's Quarters is now an outstanding military museum and, of course, the McFadden-Ross House displays the domestic scenes. Let's hope that Detroit doesn't ask for the return of these valuable properties. It would start another war and I don't think we need another war at this time.

I'm very proud to be your Secretary of State and grateful for the many opportunities afforded me for serving the people of the State. My experience here today is one of the many opportunities that I have as Secretary of State to join the people who work to keep alive and available the various historical media and



Above: Members of the Michigan 17th Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry as they march past the front of the Museum. This Civil War re-enactment group, under the leadership of its commander, Sergeant William G. Housman (extreme left), provided the color guard at the beginning of the ceremony.

Below: November 7, 1981, was a perfect autumn day. Enjoying the weather and happy occasion are left to right: Michigan Secretary of State Richard D. Austin, the principal speaker; Jessie Schneidewind, Chairman of the Dearborn Historical Commission and Mistress of Ceremonies; James H. Thornburg, Commission Secretary and General Chairman of the event; and John B. O'Reilly, Mayor of the City of Dearborn.

(Both photographs courtesy of Citizens Resources and Information Department, City of Dearborn.)



facilities for communicating in a very tangible way with our forebearers - the pioneers who struggled to carve a civilized and good life out of the raw land, the wilderness that was early America. It is important to us to be in touch with the thoughts and the spirit of that time as we cope with a very difficult, rapidly changing society to which we are trying to become accustomed.

The History Division of the State of Michigan, under the able direction of Dr. Martha Bigelow, along with the Michigan Historical Commission, performs functions similar to those performed by your Historical Commission - working with local governments and private historical groups in restoring, in registering qualified sites, sites that qualify to the State and Local Register, nominating sites for the National Register, authorizing and providing historical markers, processing historical grants and maintaining the Centennial Farms Register ...

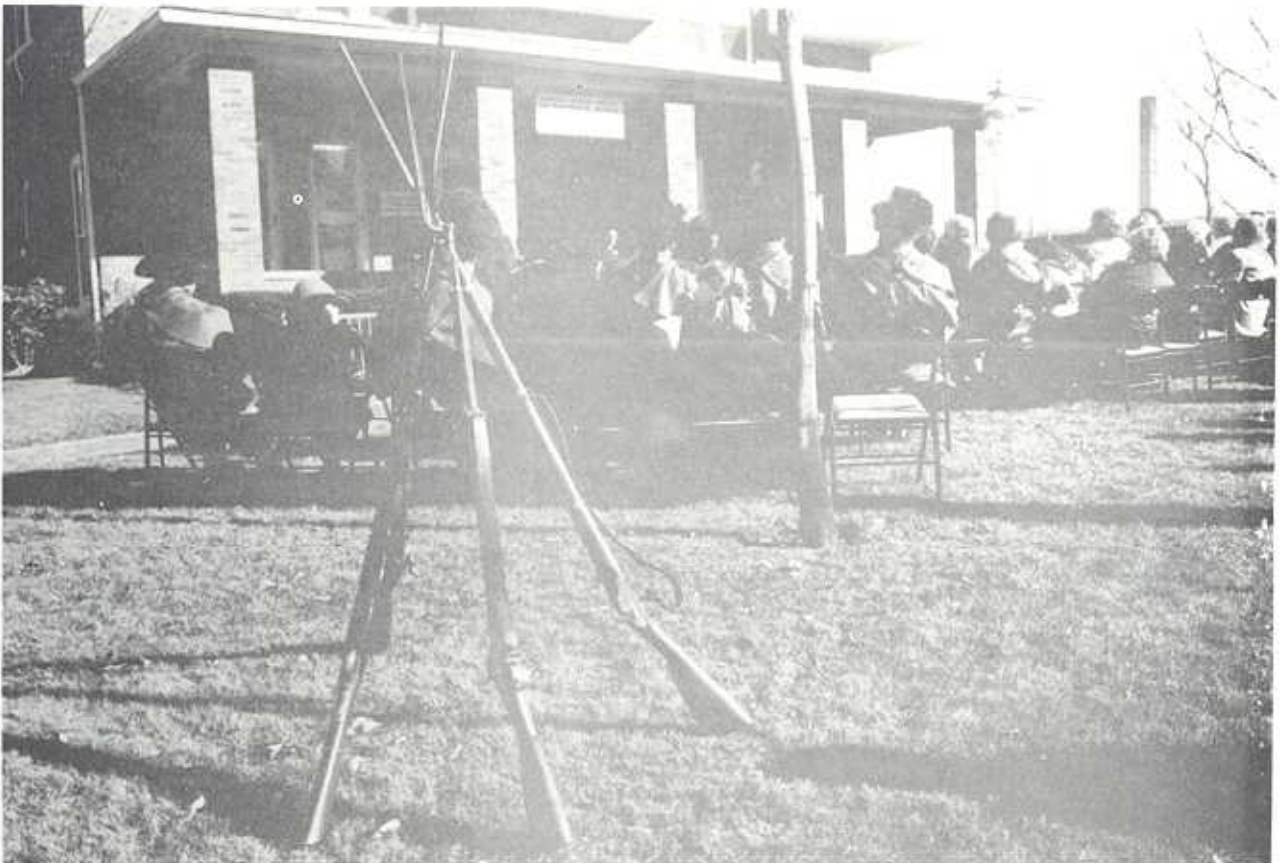
I am going to close these remarks by again referring to Mary Elizabeth Ross and this facility. Through historical museums like this museum, we are able to look at ourselves more clearly as individuals and relate to the people who formerly occupied this land ... to see more clearly that God has endowed each of us with a capacity for love and the power to survive. We can see more clearly that we are expected to understand that we must carry our individual weight - our obligations to our careers, our obligations to our family, our church, our community. We are able to understand the value of united action on the part of entrepreneurs, consumers, workers and citizens. We learn more clearly that in unity most goals are possible but it is not easy to live alone, to work alone.

There was nothing particularly spectacular about the life and the style of Mary Elizabeth Ross. She lived and worked quietly but she was part of the fabric of this community at a time worthy of recalling. It's of great value to us to reach back and hear these little vignettes, these little reminders and anecdotes about Lizzie Ross. She lived at a time when the pace was a little slower and the future was more predictable. And God knows we are living at a time when change is occurring so rapidly that it is extremely difficult for our institutions to keep pace. And we need desperately to be able to reach back and grab hold of the solid things that we can find in our past that will remind us that we're going to see through all of the problems we face. This is still the greatest nation that this world has ever seen. Despite all of our problems, we're living in probably one of the most beautiful and richly endowed states in this nation. And you certainly have a community of which you can be very proud. Again, I'd like to congratulate you on what you've done to make this facility and your past available to all of us. Thank you very much for letting me be part of this program.

Right: Mayor John B. O'Reilly greeting the audience of several hundred people from the front porch of this historic home.

Below: Members of the 17th Regiment of Michigan Volunteer Infantry at the left and a portion of the general audience at the right. Civil War muskets are stacked in the foreground.

(Both photographs courtesy of Citizens Resources and Information Department, City of Dearborn)



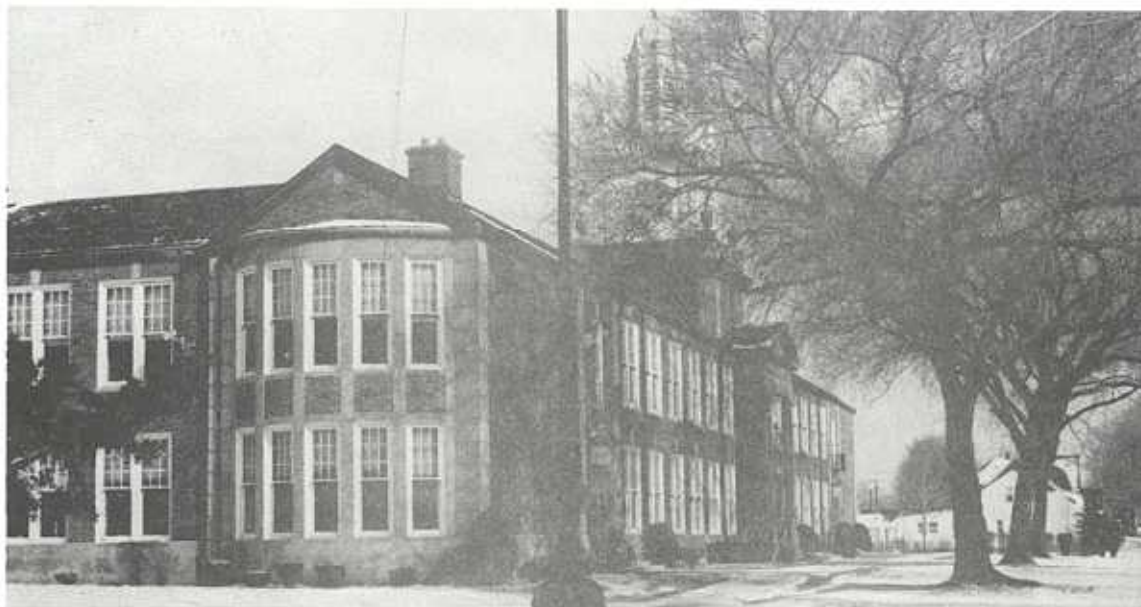
SCHOOL SKETCHES

Part XX

WOODWORTH SCHOOL

The Fordson Board of Education purchased land on a portion of the Woodworth farm for a new school in 1927. The cornerstone of the new building, to be named after pioneer Alfred Woodworth, was laid in September of 1927. It was a year before the first portion of the school was ready for occupancy, but in September of 1928 the school was opened to kindergarten through sixth grade students. The official dedication of the school took place on April 8, 1929. The school population was so great that the sixth grade stayed on to become the first seventh grade in the school history in the fall of 1929. It was not, however, until 1932 that the junior high was officially established by the Fordson Board of Education. In 1937-38 an addition of a swimming pool, enlarged cafeteria, music rooms, a small auditorium and classrooms was made. The orthopedic department of the Fordson Public Schools was originally intended for Woodworth, but was moved to Lowrey School in the 1930's. In 1940 the Fordson Board of Education purchased some additional property just to the west of the school for a playground. Prior to that time Woodworth students had been using Miss Eleanor Woodworth's property as a playground and some of those students still remember Miss Woodworth offering them lemonade and cookies after a hard baseball practice!

Alfred Woodworth, born at China, New York in 1818, was one of the pioneers who helped to shape Dearborn's very earliest history. As a small boy Alfred Woodworth came with his father, Josiah, and the other members of the Woodworth family to Batavia, New York in an ox-drawn covered wagon. At the age of ten Alfred Woodworth was bound out to work for four years and when his four years were up he joined his family on another move - this time to Michigan. The Woodworths settled in Greenfield Township and Josiah purchased 48 acres of land and built a cabin on the site of the present Woodworth School. Alfred Woodworth purchased 30 acres of land in 1840 and continued to buy land in the vicinity until his farm totaled 245 acres. Alfred Woodworth married Phoebe Jane Smith in 1843 and they raised nine children. The Woodworth House was built around 1860 to accommodate the growing family. Alfred Woodworth died in 1904 and was buried at the Scotch Settlement Cemetery.



A SUMMARY OF THE SCHOOL SKETCHES

(Please note: This brief summary is not intended as a complete history of the Dearborn area schools. Additional research on the townships which now make up Dearborn is being done and the author hopes to publish a more detailed account of the schools at a later date. However, material on the Dearborn Public Schools, the Fordson Public Schools, the Springwells Schools and the various township district schools is quite scarce. If any reader has information on any of these schools, the teachers, principals, academic or athletic events the Dearborn Historical Museum would appreciate hearing of them.)

What is today the Dearborn Public School system has a long and proud history dating back to the 1830's and the creation of the Dearborn, Springwells and Greenfield townships within Wayne County. Portions of these three townships and their school districts have formed what is today the City of Dearborn and the Dearborn Public Schools. Unfortunately, few records of the early school districts have been preserved so that the foundation history of the Dearborn schools is quite sketchy.

The present boundaries of Wayne County were established on November 20, 1826, and in 1827 the county was divided into nine townships. Two of these townships were named Bucklin and Springwells and in 1829 Bucklin Township was divided into two smaller townships - Nankin and Pekin. The early history of Wayne County was fraught with the insanities of local politics which resulted in numerous changes in township names and boundaries. On April 6, 1829, the third annual meeting of Bucklin Township was held in the schoolhouse at Scharzburgh, a small community on the middle branch of the Rouge River in what would be Dearborn Heights today. Bucklin Township was divided into eight school districts at that time. It was not until 1833 that Dearborn Township (approximately the present areas of west Dearborn and Dearborn Heights) was created and that four School Commissioners were elected. The School Commissioners divided Dearborn Township into nine districts.

While the development of the Dearborn Township School districts is not especially well documented the history of the Greenfield and Springwells township school districts is even less clear. The boundary line between Greenfield and Springwells townships was constantly being changed, sometimes on an annual basis, so that school district boundaries are equally vague. Many of these early districts are termed "fractional districts" - when two townships shared a school district. Students whose families owned property in more than one township were able to attend whichever district school they wished. As a result Henry Ford started his schooling at the Scotch Settlement School (Dearborn Township District #1) but later attended the Miller School (Springwells Township District #5). William Ford owned property in both Springwells and Dearborn townships, therefore his children could attend the schools in either area.

The modern Dearborn Public School system is basically composed of four separate school districts. The first of these districts is the Dearborn District #7 which was established in 1835 as the town of Dearbornville, around the Detroit Arsenal, began to develop. District #7 had originally been part of the larger Dearborn District #5, but due to the growth in population a new school was built in 1835 on Chestnut (Park) and Center (Monroe) streets. This

one-room school was replaced in 1857 by the Upstairs-Downstairs School; so named because it was a multiroom, two story building. The Dearborn Public School was built in 1894 on Arsenal land on a block of land bounded by Garrison, Mason, Morley and Center (Monroe) streets. This building contained all of the grades through high school. The first Dearborn High School graduating class consisted of four students in 1897. In 1917 the Garrison School was erected (renamed Salisbury School in 1937) making it the oldest school building still in use in Dearborn. Following the establishment of the Ford Tractor Plant and the Ford Engineering Division in Dearborn, the population and the schools grew very rapidly. In the ten year period between 1921 and 1931 the district added eight new school buildings! In 1944 Dearborn District #7 schools and the Fordson School District (along with those portions of Dearborn School Districts #2 and #4 which fell within the City of Dearborn boundaries) were merged to form the Dearborn Public Schools.

The Springwells Unit School District was established in 1921 to fit the new Village of Springwells boundaries. The Miller School was built at the same time providing the Village of Springwells with its first high school. There was a period of great growth in the Springwells/Fordson School District between 1921 and 1930 due to the development of the Ford Motor Company's Rouge Plant. The district name was changed in 1925 when Springwells was incorporated as the City of Fordson. In that nine year period the district added eleven buildings to its system. In 1941 Dearborn District #5 (also known as the Henry Ford School District) was merged into the Fordson School District. The final consolidation of school districts took place in 1944.

The fourth district to be added to the Dearborn Public Schools was the Fairlane (formerly Dearborn District #2) District in 1972. This addition completed the consolidation of what we call the Dearborn Public Schools. However, a gradually declining enrollment has caused further discussion of new consolidation with neighboring school districts. What was at one time a large group of scattered, individual schools and school districts has become a unified school system. However, a great deal of individuality still remains within the Dearborn Public Schools. Each building and each class has its own identity and personality - that is what a democracy does. The Dearborn Public Schools have strength from a proud past.



1857 Upstairs-Downstairs School

MUSE EDITORIAL

"An Appeal"

At various writings through the years we have indicated in THE DEARBORN HISTORIAN the Museum's interest in acquiring various materials for the collections. The goal has always been the same: to build better collections in order to serve the community. New readers come along and again we appeal to you to keep us in mind. We cannot emphasize too strongly that the success of the work of the Historical Commission is in large part due to the concern, the generosity and the vigilance of the public-at-large. Of course, collections refer to the written (archival) materials and artifacts. Leads as to where materials and artifacts may be found and help in promoting public awareness as to our objectives in Dearborn as well as in the related metropolitan area are always appreciated.

You, the public, may also be of assistance in other ways and we list some of them here:

- * Alert us about people who should be tape-interviewed because they have a story or knowledge of Dearborn or their families worth preserving for the future. Remember that few people write memoirs or record certain significant information.
- * Alert us about people who may have historically significant materials - both written and 3-dimensional, which could add to the continuing Dearborn story.
- * Alert us about people who may have a particular or unique knowledge regarding certain types of collections. This could help us update our general knowledge in certain areas.
- * Alert us about people who may be willing to serve as a Museum Guide a few hours each month or on a standby basis. Budget cutbacks in recent years have made this volunteer program necessary. People meet interesting visitors through this service. The people will be trained to serve as Guides.
- * Alert us about people who may be willing to help with the many facets of yard work as the nice weather approaches.
- * Alert us about people who may be willing to assist in putting our extensive costume collection in better order. Recently 100 lineal feet of racks have been assembled. Much sorting and work on the collection remains to be done.
- * Alert us about people who may be willing to work with cleaning, oiling, and restoring furniture.
- * Alert us about people who may like working with school children regarding craft projects.

We will be grateful to you and our community will benefit from the knowledge and expertise of its citizens. The contacts people make are often mutually rewarding.

NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

NEW EXHIBITS. Updating our new exhibits.

Town Hall: adjacent to the City Council Chambers may be seen a current exhibit featuring some of the interesting Museum clocks. Title of the exhibit: "Time and Time Again."

McFadden-Ross House:

"80 Years of Ladies' Hats"

"Irish Belleek"

"Victorian Silver"

"Ornate Pocket Watches"

"Victorian Jewelry"

"Dearborn Sports - Then and Now"

Commandant's Quarters: Always an intriguing building. Sometime, take note of the many detailed physical features of this outstanding 1833 landmark. For example, - note the 12 and 14 foot ceilings, the brass hardware, the hand-planed details in wood and the massive doors.

25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MUSEUM GUILD OF DEARBORN. On April 28, 1982, at Park Place, the Museum Guild is scheduling a dinner to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of this active Museum affiliate. In 1957 fifteen organizations first met at the Museum and its work at the Museum has been significant ever since. Elizabeth Albertson, a past-president of the Guild as well as a member of the Historical Commission, is general chairman of the event. A program will recognize the Guild's accomplishments and honor its past presidents. A limited number of tickets will be available to the public should you be interested. Call the Museum Office for further information.

CARRIAGE FUND UPDATE. A current and significant project of the Museum Guild of Dearborn is to restore one of the Museum's fine old carriages which dates back to the 1800's. An agreement has been made to have it restored by a professional restorer. About 1/3 of the goal has been reached by individual or group donations. Should you wish to contribute to this worthy project contact the Museum Office or pick up a form at the Museum. All contributions are tax deductible. The Guild is sponsoring a raffle for an afghan, a sampler and a cash prize. Tickets are 50¢ each or 3 for \$1.00. All proceeds will go for this project and the winners will be selected at the Heritage Fair on June 6. All Guild members and the Museum will have tickets. Tickets may also be purchased at the Fair - June 5 and 6.

THE BIG FAIR IS COMING. Mark Saturday, June 5, and Sunday, June 6, on your calendar. The Museum Guild of Dearborn is preparing its best and biggest Heritage Fair ever for its 25th Anniversary Year. Two days of activities are being planned. Frank Love is again the general chairman. His committees are working hard for a successful event you won't want to miss. Some activities planned include a horse show, several car clubs showing some of their fine restored vehicles, early gasoline engines, roving musical entertainment, many craft demonstrations, all types of collectibles for sale, a variety of foods and much more. The Dearborn Community Arts Council's "Art in the Park" will also be held again at the Commandant's Quarters June 5 and 6. Watch for further news items as the time approaches.

APPRAISAL CLINIC. The Museum Guild will sponsor another "Antiques Appraisal Clinic" on Saturday, April 3 at the McFadden-Ross House from 10 A.M. - 5 P.M. Stalker & Boos, Inc. will do the appraising. Charges are \$4.00 per item for no more than 4 hand-carried items. All proceeds go to the Museum Guild for the Museum's benefit.

APPEAL. What do you do with old or unwanted Christmas cards, Easter cards, or other special events cards? The Museum could use them for children's projects as well as placing some of them in the collection. Don't throw them away but rather throw them our way!

EASTER BUNNY COMES TO MUSEUM. For the second year in a row the Easter Bunny will pay a visit to the Museum to meet and greet the children. On Saturday, April 3, the Bunny will be at the Commandant's Quarters, Michigan at Monroe, from 9-12 and 1-4 P.M. Each child will receive a brochure about Easter symbols and some candy. There is no charge for this program.

REMEMBER
THE
1982
MUSEUM GUILD
FAIR DATES
Saturday, JUNE 5 and
Sunday, JUNE 6

TAPED INTERVIEWS

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| Career at Base Hospital 17, World War II | MRS. ELEANOR MAW |
| Concerning Dearborn's South End | MRS. CECILIA MANCE |
| Recollections of West Dearborn, ca. 1905-52 | MISS MILDRED CRONOQUE |
| Recollections of his early life, real estate, banking and organizational activities, Dearborn Chamber of Commerce & Dearborn Country Club | MR. RUSSELL F. SMITH |
| Concerning Dearborn South End, World War II, sports and his business | MR. MICHAEL ADRAY |
| Recollections of undergraduate work at Ford Motor, Dearborn Board of Education | DR. GRANT U. MacKENZIE |

RECENT DONATIONS

Jacket, puttees, ca. Spanish-American War, uniform accessories and costume items	MRS. ELEANOR MAW
Rifles, pistols, holsters, machete, ca. 1940's, ammunition and uniform accessories	MR. JAMES HITCHCOCK
Kathleen Parr manuscript "Summer Journey" and photos of the Henry Ford cemetery	MR. FLOYD L. HAIGHT
Dearborn related pamphlets, programs and photos of Miller School Class, 1926, Ford Airport Balloon Race, Zeppelin and Greenfield Village May Festival	MR. & MRS. RAY GOEBORO
Ice pick, hand truck, Henry Ford Trade School yearbook and World War II Army coat	MR. JACKSON ALLMENDINGER
1981 Divine Child yearbook, CLARION	DIVINE CHILD HIGH SCHOOL
Collection of P.T.A. material from Oxford School	MRS. MARGERY JAMIESON
Dictaphones, ca. 1950, 1963	MR. AARON J. BLUMBERG
Iron and trivet, ca. 1920, purse and Indian necklace	MS. NANCY GRADY
Adding machine, ca. 1930	MR. JOHN G. SMOLEY
Dearborn related photos	MR. FORD R. BRYAN
Dresses, ca. 1935, muff, camera, basket and exhibit items	MS. JOSEPHINE A. SMITH
List of owners of Dearbornville Lot 2 and book "LOOK BACK WITHOUT REGRET"	MISS MILDRED CRONOGUE
Slide project and glass slides	MRS. GEORGE McBATH
World War II Navy uniforms & accessories	MR. & MRS. P. T. SHERMAN
Genealogy and history of Purdy Family and map of Taylor Township, 1873	MRS. IRENE CHURCH
Minutes, reports, histories, awards, correspondence of American Legion Red Arrow Division, Post 361, Navy uniform & books	COL. JOHN D. McDANIELS
Dress and suit, ca. 1940's	MRS. WALTER JOHNSTON
Baby blanket and pillow cover	MR. & MRS. CHARLES BALNIUS

Howard genealogy and family photo	MRS. ARLENE ACKERMAN
Photo of Exchange Club members, ca. 1950	MRS. HEDWIG DAPPRICH
Photo of Dearborn Police World Champion tug-of-war team, ca. 1939	MR. ROY PAPKE
St. Alphonsus High yearbooks, 2 copies	ST. ALPHONSUS HIGH SCHOOL
Manuscript compiled for Political Science class, photo of E. Roy Bryant Family, old valentines, pen holders and health card	MS. TARA B. GNAU
Berns Dearborn Ridge Subdivision abstract	MRS. IRENE BINKLEY
Large collection of Dearborn photos	MR. DANIEL MULCAHY
Newspaper articles of bus strike, Jitney licenses and Jitney window signs	MS. ANITA LUX Citizen Resources & Inf.Dept.
Plumbing and Building Codes for City of Dearborn	MR. NORM GOMOLAK Dept. of Public Works
Collection of hats and shoes, bedroom doll and game	MRS. BETTY CONZELMAN
Early 1900's Christmas ornaments	MRS. WANDA COWPER
History, photos and booklet on the 50th Anniversary of Fairlane Assembly	REV. JOHN A. BOOHER Fairlane Assembly
List of persons eligible for military duty in Township of Dearborn 1861 & Guide to Henry Ford Water Works	FORD ARCHIVES & TANNAHILL LIB.
Store catalogues, Archie Bunker game	HISTORIC MEMORIALS OF DETROIT
Military manuals, World War II costume items, WW II Air Force uniforms, Avon bottle	MR. & MRS. ARTHUR JEFFERSON
1981 campaign material	MR. ROBERT KNOOP
Curtain stretchers & life size Santa Claus	MR. & MRS. HENRY L. MIGA
Books: STORY OF LAC STE. CLAIRE, ROMANCE OF GREETING CARDS, AVON BOTTLE ENCYCLOPEDIA, SHIPS OF THE GREAT LAKES & toy car radio	MUSEUM GUILD OF DEARBORN
1979, 1981 DETROIT SOCIETY FOR GENEALOGICAL MAGAZINES, costume items, World War I Military passes	MRS. MARION PARKHURST
Framed copy of the Constitution	MR. JOSEPH RENAUD

Abstract of Ruddiman Farm, copy of article "I Worked for Mr. Ford," hymnal & ledger	MISS CATHERINE RUDDIMAN
Copies of the DEARBORN INDEPENDENT	MR. FRANK W. SCHWARZ
Booklets on local and Michigan history	MRS. JAMES SMITH
Framed illustrations of 4 Dearborn historic sites	MRS. ILA S. TAYLOR
Magazines, Real Estate book, Presidential towel & photos of Calvin Building site	MR. STEPHEN A. VANDERPOORTEN
Abstracts of Dearborn subdivisions	MR. DUANE W. YINGER
World War II Army uniform and discharge of Robert T. Hoover	MRS. RONALD E. ROTHS
Patch and applique quilts, ca. 1930	MR. EDWARD A. TRAYLOR
Toy stilts and photos of Guimaraes children	MRS. DOROTHY GUIMARAES
Plaque and bridge fragments of the Miller Road bridge	MR. JOHN KENDILLE Wayne County Road Commission
Camera, ca. 1970	MRS. JOSEPH BARNES
Streetlamps, ca. 1900, sockets & bulbs, WW II medal & ribbon	MR. FRANK B. LOVE
Henry A. Haigh Family portraits	MR. HERBERT YAGLE
Collection of hats, shoes, purses & jewelry	MR. MORRIS D. AULGUR
Black beaded dress	MRS. LOIS M. FRENTZ
Photos of Reuter & Theisen families	MRS. IRENE K. MADAR
Farm implements	MRS. DOROTHY PHILLIPS
Stereographic Library	MR. & MRS. ROBERT H. RAMSDELL
Comprehensive collection of personal memor- abilia	KINGSLEY, SARA AND HENRY Mac- GUFFEY
City of Dearborn photos, ca. 1976-1979	DEARBORN PRESS & GUIDE
Collection of postcards, crocheted basket	MS. ROSE MARIE DOUB
Dedication material of the Ernest & Thelma Breech Pavillion, Henry Ford Hospital	MS. JEANETTE ASHER Henry Ford Hospital
Collection of old books	MS. MARIE NOLD
Seashore Pool photos and attendant patch	MRS. MARGARET K. SCHRADER



DEARBORN HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND COMMISSION SERVICES

* Exhibits

*Preservation of Two Historic
Arsenal Era (1833-1875) Buildings
Exhibit Annex: Early Farming & Shops
Period Rooms
Changing Exhibits
Special Exhibits*

* Education

*Guided Tours
Local History Lectures
Pioneer & Indian Lectures
Museum Collection Lectures
School Education Program
Junior Historians Program*

* Volunteer Program

* Souvenir Counter

* Special Events

* Cultural-Civic Meetings

* Research

*Historical Records & Library
Local History Files
Manuscripts & Archives
Microfilms
Books & Journals
Pamphlets & Newspapers
Photographs & Slides
Tapes
Maps*

* Historical Markers

* Publication Program

Quarterly: THE DEARBORN HISTORIAN

Book: THE BARK COVERED HOUSE

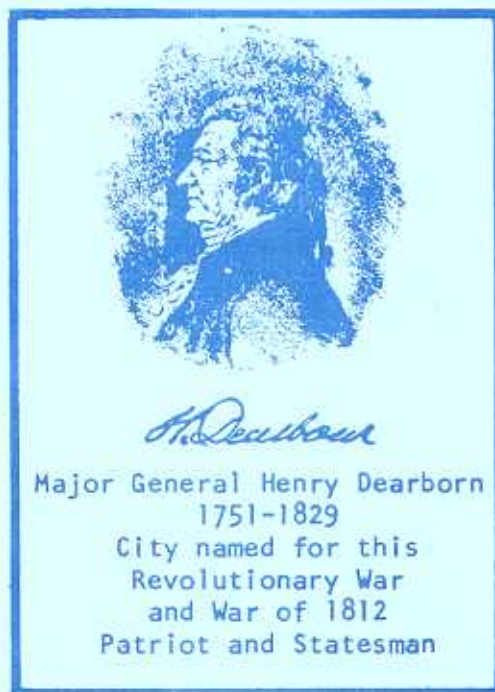
*Free Literature: Arsenal, Museum,
Research, Local History, Indian,
Dearborn Story, Dearborn's Names,
& Other Special Pamphlets*

The Museum sponsors the Museum Guild of Dearborn

The Museum is a member of:

- * American Association of Museums
- * American Association for State & Local History
- * Dearborn Community Arts Council
- * Dearborn Genealogical Society
- * Dearborn Historical Society
- * Historical Society of Michigan
- * Michigan Archaeological Association
- * Michigan Museums Conference
- * Midwest Museums Conference
- * National Trust for Historic Preservation
- * Organization of American Historians
- * Society of American Archivists

The Museum and Commission assume the responsibility of collecting, preserving and disseminating all aspects of Dearborn's long heritage by means of its educational, exhibit and research facilities.



Dearborn Historical Museum



*1833 Commandant's Quarters
(Listed on the NATIONAL REGISTER of HISTORIC PLACES)*



Exhibit Annex



Museum Office and Storage Building



*McFadden-Ross House and Historical Records and Library
(Originally the 1839 Powder Magazine)*