Chapter 24   Local Organizations

College Hill Progress Club

For many years College Hill had the distinction of being considered a community of well educated and enlightened people. Its citizens provided men and women of vision and leadership in many fields. New theories of education were advanced at both Farmers’ College and the Ohio Female College. A women’s club, The College Hill Progress Club, was organized in 1887. Its membership consisted of most of the well known ladies of the Hill. In 1898-99 the theme was ‘Historic Spots in Our Own Country. Its active members at this time were: Miss Agnes Anderson, Mrs. Matie L. Bowman, Mrs. Anna H. Brown, Mrs. Carolyn D. Burns, Mrs. Rhoda L. Cairns, Mrs. Nettie Carroll, Mrs. Gena H. Coy, Miss Alice B. Coy, Mrs. Jennie O. DeGoley, Mrs. Carrie K. Dunbar, Mrs. Georgie B. Dunbar, Mrs. Mary E. Eastman, Mrs. Mary S. Ely, Mrs. Elizabeth Emerson, Miss Laura Emerson, Mrs. Laura V. Gano, Mrs. Nannie B. Goodrich, Mrs. Mary T. Gray, Mrs. Melissa D. Green, Mrs. Elizabeth A. Hart, Mrs. Emma M. Henshaw, Miss Lida Henshaw, Mrs. Julia B. Hepburn, Miss Grace Hickman, Mrs. Nellie H. Holden, Miss Persis P. Howe, Miss Katherine Hunt, Miss Annie Kilgour, Mrs. Helen W. Molony, Miss Carry E. Moores, Mrs. Ida C. Myers, Miss Katherine E. Pierson, Miss Alice Poage, Mrs. Jennie K. Nickerson, Mrs. Mary T. Pottenger, Mrs. Mary C. Pounsford, Mrs. Rhoda T. Rammelsberg, Mrs. Julia J. Rankin, Miss Margaret T. Roberts, Mrs. Anna M. N. Shipley, Mrs. Cora A. Simpson, Mrs. Laura G. Thomson, Mrs. Bessie L. Walker, Miss Henrietta Walker, Miss Emma Wilder, Mrs. Sarah B. Wilson, Miss Florence Wilson, Miss Harriet N. Wilson, Miss Henrietta B. Utz. Associate members were: Mrs. Margaret S. Anderson, Miss Florence Avery, Miss Julia A. Bissell, Mrs. Alice B. Bruce, Miss Jesse Cary, Miss Alice Ellis, Mrs. Margaret Pierson, Mrs. Anna B. Reid, Mrs. Hattie M. Sheets, Mrs. Sara R. Simpson, Mrs. Rebecca D. Stuart. Honorary members were: Mrs. Electa Thornton, Mrs. Emma Wilder, Mrs. Laura Taylor.

The October program was titled OUR COUNTRY, ‘One Land, One Tongue, One Flag, One God.’ The club sang ‘America’ to open the program; then followed a paper, ‘Past and Present,’ read by Miss F. Wilson, a talk ‘Our Flag’ by Miss Wilder was followed by singing the Star Spangled Banner. An intermission - then Mrs. Shipley read ‘Squire Bull and His Son Jonathan.’ Mrs. Nickerson read a paper, ‘Our Constitution and What it Means.’ This was followed by music: National Airs. The program closed with Conversation - ‘Vacation Gleanings’ led by Mrs. Rankin.

This was the general format of all the programs which were held bi-weekly. Other themes during this year were: Plymouth, Glimpses of Virginia, Our Public Servants (a special topic), Rhode Island Salem, Some of Uncle Sam’s Wonders, New Orleans, Our Wards (special topic: Indians), The Banks of the Hudson, Westward Ho!, Here and There in Florida. At the close of this year’s program is published this IN MEMORIAM: Mrs. Mary Pyle, Mrs. Mary D. Carmen, Mrs. Martha F. Carey, Miss Cara L. Olds, Mrs. Annie B. Kilgour, Mrs. Martha M. Aiken, and Mrs. Dellie S. Emerson.

The succeeding years the club’s theme was; ‘America in Literature.’ For the next few years the programs were miscellaneous in nature. During 1913-1914 the club discussed ‘Modern Drama.’ In 1909-1910 it had reviewed ‘Latin America.’ These College Hill ladies discussed every topic of general interest that came before Americans of their day. The membership of this club and its activities indicate the high standing of education in College Hill.

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1 Written by Mrs. Ruth J. Wells.
College Hill Lodge #641\(^2\) Free and Accepted Masons

The lodge was chartered October 17, 1917. Stephen J. Hauser of McMakin Lodge #120 was the first Worshipful Master. Others elected for that first year were Charles Eisen, A. M. Sadler, Frank K. Bowman, Paul Ward, F. P. Hull and A. J. Larmon. Many of these men were followed by their sons and relatives: Stephen J. Hauser by Stephen W. Hauser (1944), Alvin L. Sadler by Lewis L. Sadler (1942), Frank K. Bowman, Sr., by James C. Bowman (1924) and Frank K. Bowman, Jr. (1945).

Petitioners in that first year were Frederick B. Edmands, F. Lester Gary, Frank P. Hull, Charles R. McKinley, Elijah H. Matthews, Charles A. Ross, Paul S. Ward, Edward W. Wilson, Charles Wuest, Jr.

Those petitioning for degrees in 1917 were William F. Dunaway, Clarence M. Buck, John J. Dupps, Jr., Rollo I. Grau, Oliver J. Niederhofer, Elmer J. Niemes, Fred. S. Seebohm, George H. Stebbins, Ernest A. Tettenborn, Alexander Thomson, Joseph Woodwell.

The Lodge started at Town Hall and stayed there for over 50 years. In 1947 the Lodge renovated Town Hall, including the College Hill Eastern Star Chapter, even though they leased it from the City of Cincinnati.


\(^3\) Op. cit., 1968
Chapter 25   A College Hill Landmark - Twin Towers

It has been nearly a century since the first residents moved into this impressive building whose golden towers can be seen even from Kentucky. Although this is the second location, this is the first Methodist Home in Ohio, incorporated Aug. 4, 1899 under the name of The Methodist Home for the Aged. Its founder was Dr. Henry C. Weakley, a Cincinnati Methodist minister who also was instrumental in founding the Elizabeth Gamble Deaconess Association and the Christ Hospital. It was while Dr. Weakley was serving Christ Hospital as their business manager that he became aware of the problems of the elderly and the lack of housing and care available to those alone or infirm. Dr. Weakley believed that the “moral worth of a civilization, a nation, a church, or a family may be expressed by the care it gives its aged.”

The first Methodist Home site was an old 58 room hotel for sale at Yellow Springs, Ohio. The hotel had a splendid 14 acre setting and was once a resort for those visiting the springs located on the property. The Home was established and organized by representatives of the various Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Churches in Ohio. Dr. Weakley was the first general manager. In 1902 a fire destroyed the frame building, injuring no one but destroying all personal possessions. The residents of Yellow Springs provided temporary homes until another location could be located for the members. A former college dormitory at Granville, Ohio was used until a new structure was built.

Fortunately, Mr. and Mrs. Obed J. Wilson of Clifton heard of the Home’s plight and offered a gift of their 20 acre summer home on the brow of College Hill. Mr. Wilson was a partner in the publishing firm of Wilson & Hinkle4 which later became the Methodist Book Company, publishers of the McGuffey Reader series. Both of the Wilsons were children of Methodist ministers. They weren’t related to the other Wilson family in College Hill. The Wilsons gave an additional $70,000 for the erection of the north wing, containing the chapel. Later they donated the organ, their own private art collection and paid for construction of the art gallery. The flag staff next to the Wilson chapel was donated by Mrs. Amanda Landrum Wilson5, wife of Obed and sister to Lieut. George W. Landrum, to whom the pole is dedicated. Lt. Landrum fell during the battle of Chickamauga in 1863 while carrying messages for the Union.

Ground was broken for construction, June 2, 1903. Labor problems, increased costs and lack of money delayed building. The distinctive vitrified yellow brick was purchased from Hummel Stone and the limestone foundation blocks were probably cut from the Wilson quarry, just a few blocks south on Hamilton Avenue and from the site itself. The North Wing and Central sections were completed in 1908 and opened for occupancy. Forty residents came from Granville to Northside by train. They traveled up Hamilton Avenue by streetcars and carriages, some bringing their own feather beds along.

At this time the facade was only the main building, the right wing and one (right) tower. Still, it had a 191 foot frontage (completed it would be 305 feet).

The Romanesque tower is 150 feet high. Of much comment was the large retaining wall which stretched across the ravine. One day the retaining wall collapsed. The ravine was alleged to be an Underground Railroad escape route with a tunnel that terminated in the nearby Cary house. The weight of the wall caused the tunnel to collapse.

The Wilson Memorial Chapel was dedicated June 9, 1909. The service was conducted by Bishop Moore, a graduate of Farmers’ College. The chapel is described in a newspaper article of the time as “...occupying two floors, is beautiful in the extreme, with its softly tinted walls, its broad, graceful gallery opening onto the second floor, its encircling pews capable of seating 360, and its richly colored art windows.”

4 Walnut and Baker Streets.

5 For more information on the Wilson family, read, Queen City Lady, The 1861 Journal of Amanda Wilson, William Thomas Venner, 1996.
The new building was designed in a T-shape of the most fire proof materials available; there are no wooden floors or stairways, the roof when built was of red tile and iron, the outer walls of buff brick that has been vitrified. Even the interior partition walls were of hollow tile. Designed to house 300 people when the entire building was completed, “...the watchwords of the Building Committee were Simplicity, Symmetry, Capacity, Security, Durability, Adaptability and Comfort.” The plans called for the latest in convenience: elevators, steam heat, steam laundry and electricity. The projected building costs were $200,000. After all the funds were secured, architect and supervising architect, Samuel Hannaford provided the structure plans gratis as his personal contribution. This may have been the last building he personally participated in.

Twin Towers has a comprehensive archive on the building’s history. The following is a letter from Samuel Hannaford showing his involvement in the building:

April 8 1905

Winton Place O.

My dear Mr. Wilson

In reply to your inquiry regarding the progress of the Home for the Aged. I can state that for the last three weeks the work has been on the market. We have received bids by departments, and as an entirety, or lump bids. We have also had bidders from abroad, that is from reliable contractors from other parts of the State, as this was deemed advisable by the Building Com. And we consider that we have thoroughly sounded the building market with the following result. The lowest estimate, based upon a combination of the lowest department bids, amounted to the sum of $131,548, for both buildings.

The lowest lump bid, all the work going to one bidder, is that of “Hazen & Co.” for the sum of $131,273. or $275. below the combination estimate.

This is remarkably close bidding considering the magnitude of the work, and may be regarded as a clean competition without any collusion or attempted fraud.

I may state that the above figures do not include all the items, as for instance the facing brick is being furnished by the Trustees. The same being mostly on the ground. Then again Mr. Weakley has received several thousand common brick as donations-these to be used by the Contractor and paid for by him at current market rates.

Neither does it include the “roofing tile” which is donated by the “National Roofing Tile Co.” of Lima, Ohio. (I think that is the name of the Co.)

In regard to the plumbing—it has been determined to have this done by The Gibson Co. on the basis of 10/100 profit.

The heating also is outside of the contract.

As you are aware the letting of the contracts was postponed last summer in hopes of more favorable prices but this has proved a disappointment (sic). There has been no decline in prices—indeed an advance—but very slight. Our building demand, that is Cincinnati, has held its flood height in a remarkable manner; indeed the building permits of February and March 1905 far exceed in number & value those of last year. It is one of a half dozen cities in the country in which this is the case.

In regard to the North wing. The cost will exceed slightly the sum of $60,000. I have not the amt. of this separate estimate with me. I regret this but it is impossible to exactly gauge the building market in these days. If you desire the exact statement of the expenditures to date and the figures of the lowest bid on the North wing I can furnish them early next week.

In conclusion I would state that it is intended to award the contracts immediately, to that end I have an engagement with Hazen on the ground on Monday 10th inst. to look over the site. That there may be a thorough understanding of the condition of the buildings and the work to be done.

I have been on the site several times within a month. My latest visit being on Thursday 6 inst. Everything is in good condition and has passed through the winter without damage from frost or weather. As you may be aware I had the walls well covered with tarred paper last fall. The retaining wall is also in good condition. There is a slight amount of grading to be done. We hope to begin the same immediately. The main driveway I propose to macadam as soon as the grade of same is fully made. This driveway will be about 600 feet long & 20 feet wide. We also propose to build a parapet wall about 3’0” high the entire
length of retaining wall and the same to be furnished with a so called “Scotch Coping” or similar to the finish of the wall across “Poplar Avenue” (note: now Windermere Way) from the Home grounds. Unfortunately our stratified limestone fails when placed on edge which is strikingly evidenced by the wall mentioned. I am going to investigate the cost of making concrete blocks for the “Scotch Coping.” I am of the opinion that they will cost less than the same out of our hill stone or out of the “Flat Rock” stone of Indiana, which is also stratified limestone but closer in texture than our hillstone. The concrete blocks will not be stratified and therefore will not split and disintegrate as the copings on the wall referred to.

I think that we have a sufficiency of building limestone that we have quarried out of the cellars of the buildings and in the grading to build the retaining wall and they of most excellent quality, better than any we have bought.

Excuse the length of my letter. I hope to see you soon.

Yours truly,

Samuel Hannaford

Operating costs were more than anticipated. A prayer and a nickel a year for five years was asked from all Ohio Methodists. The untimely death of Dr. Weakly left a gap but in 1921 the void was filled by Dr. C. Lloyd Strecker who began to build a sound financial structure for the Home. He oversaw the construction of the south wing in 1937, completing the original facade plan in 1939. He also built a home on the grounds for the manager and his family on Windermere Drive. The Wilson homestead was remodeled in 1948 after being vacant for many years due to instructions in the Wilson will that the house should be demolished and used as the site of a new building for the parsonage and manager. After contacting the heirs, it was agreed to use the building as a nurse’s home. It was at this time that the Mt. Vernon style porch was added. Sadly, this house was torn down in later years.6

Twin Towers continued to flourish and other additions were added to accommodate more residents. With great sensitivity toward the original facade, the building has been updated without compromising Hannaford’s design. At the century mark, it is much loved by the residents of both Twin Towers and College Hill.

Twin Towers Senior Living Community continues to grow on its main campus, and a new facility, Twin Lakes, has been added in Montgomery.

Original drawing proposal for Twin Towers’ Façade, 1903

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6 Thanks to Rev. John Dunham, Mrs. Jane Allen, Dr. Joseph Graham of Twin Towers and Jack O’Neil for furnishing information.
Mr. and Mrs. Obed Wilson and their nieces, Miss Cora Stone and Miss Florence Wilson, took a trip around the world in 1883. They spent five months in Japan, spending winter in the snowy, northern Echigo Province where they were welcomed into the Inagaki family. Their daughter, Etsu, was raised in a samurai family, a life of discipline, obedience and culture. Etsu was born in 1874, six years after the ‘Restoration,’ a war which overthrew the feudal style of government. The war devastated many of the noble families, and while her family emerged with reduced circumstances, it remained proud and clung to the ideals and customs of the past. Through a marriage arranged by her brother to his former business partner while she was still a child, Etsu was betrothed to Matsuo Sugimoto who owned a Japanese ware store on Race Street.

To prepare for her life outside of Japan, she was sent to Tokyo to attend the Methodist Girl’s School. It was there that she learned English and became a Christian. The Wilson’s chaperoned her when she arrived in Cincinnati in the spring of 1898. Etsu stayed in the Wilson’s Clifton home and was married there. Her maid of honor was Florence Wilson and Matsuo’s was his business partner at that time, Kataro Shirayamadani. Mr. Shirayamadani is well known as one of the greatest artists for Rookwood pottery.

Etsu became close friends with Florence and, after visiting the John M. Wilson home, it was decided that the Japanese family would relocate to College Hill. Etsu considered Florence’s mother her ‘other mother.’ John Wilson was Obed’s deceased brother. His low white house sat on Windermere Way and was torn down in 1979. General Cary lived next door and entertained her many afternoons with his stories about American and local history. She joined the Grace Episcopal Church and the College Hill Progress Club.

A letter written by Ella Ferry describes the Sugimoto’s arriving in College Hill: “The first night they arrived at the Wilson home next to the Glenwood (Apartments), Florence Wilson called me to ask if she could bring them to the euchre party I was having that night. Etsu had never before been in the presence of men, but she was the star of the evening, of course. Mr. Ferry hurried to make it a Japanese affair and Japanese lanterns hung on the branches of all the trees and strings of them were hung from the porch down the lane and over to the railroad crossing and we had Japanese prizes - all done swiftly in a few hours but it was a lovely party. The gentlemen were most gracious to the little doll-like Etsu and before the close of the evening she was playing euchre for she was very, very clever...The Wilsons had visited in her palatial home in Japan and loved her dearly and it didn’t take her long to master English and Florence was able to introduce her into society and she was able to make considerable money with her talks on the Orient...

The Hill at that time had no division of social groups, but the young and less young mingled amicably and all society events included both. The euchre party above had 60 members and met every Saturday night at the homes arranged alphabetically for winter entertainment. These were not simple, informal affairs but full dress and a banquet served by regular caterer at midnight. For my first party, Papa had the archway built between parlors and we were able to accommodate nicely the entire group. I have preserved the list of the charming members of this club and so few survivors today - I can only mention Harry Pounsford, Matie Bowman, Tody Perkins at Methodist Home, Carl Rankin, Emma Wilder, Agnes Anderson; the large families of the Henshaws, the Thomsons, the Stewarts, the Simpsons, the Wilds and Wilders, the Averys, the Aikens all departed long ago...”

Both of the Sugimoto daughters, Hanno (Flower Born in a Strange Land) and Chiyo, were born at the College Hill Wilson home and later attended elementary school on the hill. Matsuo died unexpectedly in 1907 and Etsu returned to Japan with her daughters. Florence later visited them in Japan. For several years, Etsu would return to America for a time and return to Japan. Having started their lives in a more permissive culture, her daughters did not easily conform to Japanese life. She, her daughters and Miss Wilson lived in New York City while Etsu was a professor of Japanese at Columbia University (1920-1927). Florence returned with the family to Japan in 1927, and remained there until her death in 1932.
Her ashes are buried next to those of Etsu, who died in 1959, in the Aoyama Cemetery. Florence’s headstone is carved ‘The Living Embodiment of True Friendship.’ Both were cultural ambassadors of the world.

College Hill still harbors a legacy from the Sugimotos. The Oaks has a lovely male gingko tree presented to the Thomsons from Matsuo. Laurel Court has another gingko and Mrs. Jane Allen has a female gingko in her backyard on Belmont Avenue. A fourth tree was planted at the edge of the Wilson property, which later became a part of Twin Towers. It was killed by lightening and much to the sorrow of the residents, had to be removed. All these trees were planted at the same time. The Japanese admire the long lived, graceful gingko and its fan shaped leaves are frequently portrayed in their art.

Etsu wrote a charming book of her life in Cincinnati, A Daughter of the Samurai. Her other books are A Daughter of the Narikin (1932), A Daughter of the Nohfu (1935) and Grandmother O Kyo (1940).

Obed J. Wilson House  by Caroline Williams, 9-2-1951
Chapter 27  Furniture and Philanthropy: The Henshaw Family

Of the many prominent College Hill families, few stand out as that of George Henshaw, Jr. He left not only a successful business but a wealth of information about what it was like to come from England and start a business in Illinois and Ohio. In 1911 he wrote a manuscript about his family and the late Mrs. Dorothy Henshaw shared a copy with us.

George Henshaw Sr. was born in London in 1805, the son and grandson of soap manufacturers. George Sr.’s father died when he was five, and his mother when he was but seventeen. When he was fifteen, his mother apprenticed George to a cabinet-maker. He served there seven years. His master provided him food, lodging and trade training, while his mother contributed clothing, pocket money and the apprenticeship fee.

Before his apprenticeship ended, he married Ann Oldenburg and as soon as his seven years were over, he started business for himself.

“We all left London, England, early in November 1843. Our family consisted of father, mother and eight children...William a baby in arms who died during the long voyage. The name of the ship was Constellation, she was a full rigged ship of three hundred and sixty tons, having three masts and square sails. She was just an ordinary merchant ship and had brought a cargo of sugar to London from the West Indies, she had no accommodation for passengers, so father took his own workmen and put up cabins for our use, making things quite comfortable for us...

We had quite a long voyage, fully three months, we had many storms, the waves running very high, also calms when we hardly moved for days. We lay in sight of one of the Bahama Islands quite a long time, the natives bringing out to us oysters, fish, bananas, oranges, pineapples and several kinds of vegetables, they were eagerly bought by us and the few other passengers. We were especially glad to buy them as we had only salt meats and fish since leaving England and only such vegetables as could be kept, like potatoes, cabbage, etc. Canned things were not known in those days neither vegetables, fruits or meats. We baked bread and had ship biscuits. Condensed milk was not known, had it been we might have saved the life of our little baby brother, William, who was buried at sea. Father had to make the coffin himself, there being no one else to do so. The loss of the baby was a heavy blow to mother, who was greatly distressed to see her baby boy committed to the sea.

The fresh provisions were a most welcome change to us, as was also being able to obtain fresh water, the water we lay in at the time we sailed had become almost undrinkable, it smelt and looked like dirty pond water. During the voyage our sister, Sarah, while playing on the deck fell down one of the hatchways, she was unconscious for quite a long time. We were all very anxious until she recovered consciousness, as there was no doctor on the ship, we did not know what to do. We could only wait and hope, she was deaf for a number of years afterwards but finally recovered.

We finally landed sometime in the latter part of January or early in February, at New Orleans. Our final destination was Albion, Ill., a small town in Edwards County. It was settled by English people under the supervision of a gentleman by the name of Flowers, who bought a large tract of land which he intended to sell or lease to the people he brought over from England, but the whole enterprise fell through, land being so low in price, the men soon had means to buy from the Government at the ruling government prices, which was one dollar and quarter per acre. No one but a working farmer would exist at the prices paid for produce or livestock, nor could any one hire laborers and raise crops from the land and pay for the labor. The man had to own the land that worked it, and dispose of his wool and hides at the country stores for groceries and cotton goods. That was about the only farm product that could be disposed of, it having more value in a small compass than most other productions of the farm.

I give a sample of prices obtained when there was anyone who would buy: corn ten cents per bushel, wheat, not raised in the county, principally on account of a weevil which destroyed all the small grain, chickens, one dollar and fifty cents per dozen, egg, four cents a dozen, beef, two cents per pound, mutton, four cents per pound, pork, one dollar and fifty cents per hundred pounds. You could buy a whole deer from one dollar to two dollars. I have seen two large wild turkeys sell for twenty-five cents.
The men that were brought over from England by Mr. Flowers soon became independent of him and purchased land for themselves, leaving the land he had expected to sell them on his hands. Mr. Flowers and his wife died in poverty, while the men he brought over nearly all became quite well off by the time we reached the settlement.

Although our destination was Albion, Ill., father remained in New Orleans several days investigating what the opportunities were in his line of business. He found there were several establishments making very good furniture, the most important one and employing the largest number of workmen was a Negro.

We all went to see the market place where the slaves were sold. We found it in the basement of the old St. Charles’ Hotel. There were perhaps five hundred of them, male and female, in every shade of color, between the black African and others so white it took an expert to determine whether there was any colored blood in them or not, where there was the slightest vestige of it made them by law the same footing as one entirely black and all Negro. This state of things no doubt influenced father most adversely to remaining in New Orleans. It was different to what it is today, there were as many black as white people, the whites were mostly French or French descent to which were added quite a lot of Spaniards, there were perhaps less Americans than French. The houses in the old town were built in the old French style of architecture with iron bars across all the lower windows and doors, and courtyards in the center, with galleries all around looking into the courtyards. Many of the better houses had extensive gardens attached, even on the business streets, it was quite a foreign looking city...

As soon as father decided not to remain he engaged passage on the first steamboat bound for the Ohio River, taking passage for Mt. Vernon, Indiana, which was as near to Albion, Ill., as any other town on the River. Evansville, Ind. was about the same distance but it was understood the roads were not so good. The name of the steamboat was the Queen of the South, one of the best boats on the river. She had a load of sugar molasses and coffee, which was destined for the various towns and cities along the river, Cincinnati being the most important. While on the boat a Negro stow-away broke into some of our boxes and took out shoes, which he had on when he was taken prisoner. He was a runaway slave. They wanted to flog him but mother interceded and persuaded the officers of the boat not to do so. The incident in connection with this poor slave quite reconciled father and mother to having declined to remain in New Orleans.

We reached Mt. Vernon in five days, it was but a village of about two hundred people. We made immediate arrangements for the journey to Albion. The distance was sixty miles, all of the way mud roads. It took two wagons to carry the family and the most necessary part of our luggage, the balance coming afterwards. One of the wagons was drawn by a pair of oxen, the other by horses. The wagons sunk into the mud up to the axles at very frequent intervals and had to be pried out. We made very slow progress, taking between five and six days to make the distance. We had to seek the hospitality of farmers for meals and sleeping accommodations. The charges were very reasonable, would be considered ridiculously so at this time. As an example, the first night out we put up at one of the best farm houses in the country, we were seven children, father and mother, they had to cook supper for us which consisted of yellow corn bread which gave the appearance of pound cake and all of us children thought we were in for a grand feast, never having eaten or heard of corn bread, but we were dreadfully disappointed. The first mouthful was enough for us, we could not swallow it and watched for a chance to slip it out of our mouths (we afterwards became quite fond of it). They also gave us fried salt pork, what is known as side meat, with pickles only salted with vinegar, this also we could not manage to eat so we had to go to bed very hungry, having eaten nothing. Our hosts discovered we could not eat the food they gave us, although it was their regular food and in fact all they ever wanted, and determined we should have something different for breakfast, so long before breakfast we heard a great noise among the chickens, and for breakfast we had fried chickens and mighty nice they were. They sent to a neighbors for wheat flour, making fine hot biscuits which with plenty of eggs and coffee we finished one of the best breakfasts we had ever sat down to and we remembered it long afterwards. All they charged us for the whole lay out, supper, beds and breakfast for nine of us and the two drivers was ten dollars. Father thought the charge was too small and after much persuasion got them to accept fifteen dollars. The news of our greenness or
generosity traveled ahead of us and we found the later places we stopped at father did not complain of the charges being too small.

We finally arrived at Albion. Our drivers took us to a Tavern, so called, kept by quite an old lady named Woods. She had come with her family from England many years before, I think with the Mr. Flowers formerly mentioned. She had a family of several grown boys, who made their living hauling to and from the rivers, while the old lady saw to running the Tavern. We stayed there until we were able to secure a house to live in. We finally rented one of the best houses in the town, a brick house of quite a number of rooms, quite large enough for the needs of all the family. We were lucky as most of the houses were built of logs, a few were frame. There was a much better Tavern or Hotel kept by Mrs. Bowman, this was the place we should have gone to as it was much superior in every way to the one kept by Mrs. Woods.

Sister Sarah was some years after married to Henry Bowman, a son of the propriettress. We found quite a number of English people of good education and refinement, who took quite an interest in us and gave us advice as to the situation we were in, being new comers and having no experience as farmers. Father found he had made a mistake and had settled at the wrong place, there was nothing to do in the line of his regular business.

...The natives were very poor farmers, raising a little corn and a few hogs and sheep, kept mostly for the wool, which they carded, spun into yearn and then wove it into cloth. They dyed it with the stain from butternut hulls, and some dyed it blue with indigo. It made a very strong and lasting cloth and was about all they could get for the family clothes. The women made their dresses from the same material, as they seldom could afford to buy anything else, cotton prints cost from twenty to forty cents per yard, it was more beyond their means than fine silks or satin would be today.

There was another family named Thompson, also a doctor and a well educated man, with a family of children, who became quite intimate with us...also, an old Englishman named Tribe. He had a carding mill, the motive power was a steer, but it was frequently the milk cow of the family that was substituted. They farmed as well as run the mill...

Game at the time we first went to Albion was very plentiful. There were plenty of deer. I have seen them in herds of a dozen at one time. I have known them to run through the town in day time with the dogs following after them. There were also plenty of Wild Turkeys and pheasants, and quail in large numbers. Wild Pigeons in the fall when the acorns were ripe were in such numbers as to be incredible of belief. I have hundreds of times seen them pass over the town extending in width from North to South as far as the eye could see, and take a couple of hours to pass, over hundreds of millions must have passed in that time. They flew at great speed. They have been shot right at Albion with undigested rice in their crops, and the nearest rice being in South Carolina several hundred miles. At the time of this writing wild pigeons have become extinct, only a few days ago there was five hundred dollars offered for a nest of them (1911). They have, like the Buffalo, entirely disappeared.

Father soon found out a farmer’s life was not for him and he soon began to look out for some other place to locate. After investigating and obtaining all the information he could get, he decided upon Cincinnati as the most eligible place he could locate in. So to avoid the tedious wagon trip to the Ohio River he waited for high water in the Wabash River, and packing all up again we left for Grayville, Ill. situated on the Wabash River, only about ten miles from Albion and could be reached in less than one day. After waiting a little more than a day we got passage on quite a fine boat and reached Cincinnati, I think in three or four days...but our misfortune father became acquainted with a number of English people who were very dissatisfied with America, having made failures of everything they attempted to do, and wanted to return to their own country but had not the means to do so. It was the time the country was in a very bad condition, it had not yet recovered from the general bankruptcy of the year 1837, when the U. S. Bank of Pennsylvania failed and caused the greatest financial distress this country ever experienced. Trade of every description was as bad as it could be, there was but little money in circulation and that was all paper money. What were called wild cat banks were springing up all over the country and were passed at all kinds of discounts from 5 to 25%, the only ones that were at par were a few of the State Banks, such
as Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana and some of the Eastern State Banks - the rest, of which there were hundreds, were of the wild cat kind. These were located in all kinds of out of way places, the harder to get at the more valuable the locations were. Many were found in what was then termed the back woods, miles from any town, with only mud roads to reach them. There were no railroads anywhere this side of the Allegheny Mountains, at that time stage lines over mud roads were all the means of communication to be had, so the redemption of the notes of the wild cat banks was expensive as well as dangerous. To present notes at some of these banks was as much as the collector’s life was worth as the banks never expected to redeem them, as when they put them in circulation that was supposed to be the end of them. Many of them were never redeemed at all, they passed from hand to hand until worn out or the bank closed up. The result of this state of business by trading one with the other, little or no money passing between them. For instance, you wanted to build a house, being in the furniture business, you would go to the lumber dealer, bricklayer, carpenter or any other of the trades necessary in building it, agreeing to pay for it in furniture. The party you made the deal with would give orders upon you in such sums as he could trade to his workmen or to others who might be in need of furniture. The orders were for goods and were the same as checks on a bank against any gross sum that had been agreed upon. When all the orders combined equalled the full amount of the original deal that part of the house would have been provided for, and the same with all the other branches necessary in the construction of the house. The same way the employer would go to the clothing store, giving orders to your employees for clothing, and the clothing merchant would give orders to his workman upon you for furniture or trade them off to other merchants for other things wanted. Thus there were exchanges innumerable made, sometimes several exchanges having to be made before the desired article could be obtained. This was going back to the original system of barter but in the absence of money it brought back primitive customs. It was a cumbersome way of doing business but seemed to answer the purpose, at any rate it was the only way business could be transacted. It lasted many years, gradually giving way to the cash system as money became more abundant.

As I mentioned, there were a great many English here at the time of our arrival in 1844 and they were all mostly dissatisfied, and soon had father converted to their way of thinking and changed his views entirely. He had made arrangements to purchase a large tract of ground on Central Avenue, at that time called Western Row. This land was then an orchard and it was offered at a very low price, even for the depressed times. The price was by the acre. It had not been laid out for streets. Father also rented a store on Sycamore St. intending to open a store and start manufacturing...but father having taken the advice of his friends not to remain in America, at once canceled the arrangements he had made and proceeded at once on his way to New York, taking all of the family with him...Mr. John Spring tried his best to persuade him to remain in Cincinnati, but his arguments were futile against the combined persuasions of all his other countrymen to leave while he had the means to do so. They were no doubt sincere in their convictions that the country would never recover from the conditions from which it was suffering, things had been bad ever since 1837 and showed little signs of improvement up to this time. Values were at the lowest ebb, as a sample, flour was but two dollars and a half per barrel and the other produce in proportion. Transportation was so high that goods could not find a market except at prohibitive cost, in fact there was no way to reach a market except by river or canal, and these markets were so glutted at times that dealers were afraid to risk shipping to them. All travel was by stage, there were but few macadamized roads, most of them but primitive mud, which in wet weather made them impossible. A new era was, however, just beginning that in a few years made great changes in the whole face of the country. Railroads were the magic that caused the change, they soon had lines laid out to reach everywhere. A great many of them were premature and failed before being finished but it brought a new era to the nation and it soon developed those cities that were in the natural route of communication and they began to grow rapidly...

We left all these chances that would have come to us and proceeded on our return back to London. We left Cincinnati by steamboat for Pittsburg, taking several days to reach that city, and we immediately took passage by canal for Philadelphia, going by way of Holidaysburg. There the passengers were taken over the mountains by an incline road to the canal on the other side, where the passage was resumed.
The freight boats were made in several sections, easily taken apart. These sections were taken separately from the water by running an iron basket under them and drawing them out of the water. They were then let down on the other side into the continuation of the canal, refastened together and continued the voyage. This was a very economical invention, as when the boats arrived they were again taken apart and drawn from the water as before and hauled by horses without being unloaded right into the merchant’s warehouses in the city.

We continued our route to Philadelphia but were stopped by the authorities at Columbia, which is a few miles from Philadelphia, where there was a great riot in progress, the mob setting fire to Nunneries and other Catholic Institutions. The military were called out and martial law enforced. I was too young to know what the trouble was about, but it must have been quite a bitter one as many buildings were burnt and a number of lives sacrificed...

(They next traveled to New York). I don’t think father had any idea of remaining in New York... So with as little delay as possible father engaged passage for London on the clipper ship Victoria, a very large and handsome vessel and a quick sailor, as she made the passage in fourteen days, one of the quickest on record...

As soon as we landed at London father immediately went about reestablishing his business... He called to see his old customers, but was not received with much enthusiasm... After making every effort to get upon his former footing and finding it impossible to do so, and his capital rapidly growing smaller, he knew the end could not be long delayed... We had only been in London about six months... as soon as father had gotten rid of the business and settled everything the next thing was to return to America. We engaged passage on the good ship Espendola, of one thousand tons register, for New Orleans. The Captain’s name was Barstow, and the first officer was the captain’s nephew, his name being the same. We made the voyage in about six weeks, half the time of the former voyage. It was a modern vessel and quite fast and as large as the largest of those days. We had a very nice voyage. We did no remain any longer in New Orleans than time enough to get passage up the river to Mt. Vernon. We had quite an exciting event on our trip up the river, we got into a race with another boat and were side by side for hours. The point was who could reach the mouth of the Arkansas River first, where there were usually a lot of pine knots piled up for sale. The passengers at first objected to the boats racing but they got excited and helped the crew pass wood to the fireman. The ladies were as anxious to win as the men and did all they could to assist, in fact some of them assisted in passing wood. We won by getting first to the place where the pine knots were for sale. The Captain bought all the knots that were on the bank, amid the cheers of all the passengers. Getting the knots settled the race. They being nearly all rosin they made steam so fast the engines had all they could do to work it off as fast as it was made. The other boat had no chance afterwards as we easily left it behind. It was a very exciting episode while it lasted which was more than a day.

We again intended settling in Albion... I have never been able to account for it, as he had tried it already and found it impossible to make a living in the town, as the few people living there were very primitive in their wants, most of them had brought a little furniture with them when first coming to the place and had never found it necessary to add to it. Furniture was a luxury not attainable by them. I don’t remember that we ever sold a piece to anyone living in the town, what little we did sell was sold to people living outside of Albion.

We made coffins for the dead ones, sometimes they paid us in money but usually we had to take pork, poultry, corn, or something they raised on their farms for our pay. The lumber to make what little furniture and the coffins we made we had to buy at Graysville on the Wabash River and haul it ten miles. I remember father once forgot to take the money on one of the trips to Graysville, and mother not knowing how he would manage without it started on foot in hopes of catching up with the wagon and walked the whole distance to the mill before catching up with it. Mother was entirely played out before she reached Graysville for the roads were as bad as mud roads could be, in the worst places they took saplings and laid them side by side in the mud holes forming what is called a corduroy road, it made a very rough road but kept the wagons from sinking into the mud. We had a lot of this kind of road between
Mt. Vernon and Albion.

When we arrived in Albion this second time father was able to rent a stone house on the main street for a temporary home. We moved right into this as soon as we arrived, and bought provisions and started keeping house at once. This was quote as comfortable as going to one of the taverns and was much cheaper. We brought some furniture with us and were able to buy some more that was indispensable...As soon as father could rent a more suitable place we moved into it. We were able to get a fairly good house with a store room in front, entirely separate from it, and this we used for a workshop, after making work benches and putting up a turning lathe father and brother Ed went to work. We laid in a stock of lumber from Graysville, consisting of poplar, and cherry. Walnut was not much used except for coffins and we bought a little for that purpose.

The first piece of furniture they made was a corner cupboard or china cabinet for one of the well to do farmers. They also made a variety of other pieces, such as bureaus, bedsteads, tables, etc. Father did the turning of bed posts, while I being then about thirteen years of age worked the large wheel that gave motion to the lathe. Father had a treadle put on which could be used instead of the large wheel and one person could then do the turning as the treadle was worked by the foot. I was put to turning the smaller things such as table and chair legs. It was hard work for a boy as young as I was but I had to do it, and I think I liked working as well as most boys. I was about fourteen years old at that time. It did not take long to supply all the demand there was in the whole country and then there was no more to do except an occasional coffin to make. We used to get ten dollars for a coffin. They brought a corn stalk cut to the length and a notch cut in it for the width, and when we saw a man on horseback come along with a corn stalk we knew we were going to have a job. We always insisted on having cash for a coffin but we did not always get it and often had to take anything we could get.

Father soon came to the conclusion we could make no living in Albion...Father had for some time determined to leave mother and the family in Albion and go to Cincinnati, taking brother Edward with him and go to work at his trade. This course was to be a help financially as well as an experience in the ways of the country...True to this resolve they left Albion for Graysville and took passage for the Ohio River on a boat built especially for low water, this little boat could run on only a few inches of water. They used to say of it that when it stuck on a bar, the crew used to jump into the water and carry it into deeper water, it would be all right until it got fast again when carrying it over the obstructing bar was again repeated...This boat was the smallest freight and passenger steamboat I ever saw. It only ran to the mouth of the Wabash River and from there another boat had to be taken on the Ohio to Cincinnati, where they arrived in about four days after leaving Albion. Father and Edward went to a boarding house on Third Street near Walnut Street. They both got employment at once, father with Andrew McAlpin, who had the best furniture store west of the Allegheny Mountains. There are many handsome mahogany pieces of dining room and parlor furniture made by McAlpin still owned by the old families and highly prized by them. Edward got work at making bird cages with Wm. Chidsey, who did quite a trade with the country merchants. He also had a store where he retailed them. Mr. Chidsey did the wire work and Edward made the wood parts. Father’s job consisted of making Elizabethan chairs and rockers, and he made them six at a time and took about a week to make them. He got eighteen dollars for the six. Edward worked by the week, I don’t know how much his wages were.

Father bruised the palm of his hand which developed into a severe Tumor which caused such severe pain as to nearly drive him crazy. The doctor advised him to go home where he could have proper attention, and he came home unexpectedly and took us all by surprise. It took I think about three months before his hand was sufficiently recovered to be able to use it.

It was while he was laid up at home that he determined to take the family back to Cincinnati...Father sold everything except a few pieces of furniture had from England and we all left for Cincinnati by the way of Graysville on the steamboat Talma, arriving at our destination early in April 1847. Brother Edward had already secured a house for us on Eighth Street between Elm and Plum, which we at once occupied. Edward had been boarding with Mr. Chidsey but left there as soon as we got things straightened out at the house on Eighth street. Father kept on working for Andrew McAlpin and Edward
still worked for Mr. Chidsey until father rented a store on Sycamore St. a few doors above Third on the
east side. We occupied this store for some months. Next door north was a museum owned by Mr. Franks,
as was also the building we occupied. Part of the entertainment was called the Infernal Regions, a
representation of hell, and was known all over the country. Hardly any one came to the city that did not
visit it. The figures and scenery were the work of Hiram Powers, the great American Sculptor when a
young man, and before he became celebrated as a great genius. He was the creator of the well known
statue of the Greek Slave, which has a world wide reputation. There are copies of it in most of the
galleries in Europe. The infernal regions were no doubt very realistic and as near a replica of hell as
preached by the average divine of those days.

The family at this time was living in Newport, which at that time was a very small place. We rented
the house from a Mr. Cole, who while we were there opened one of the first pleasure resorts for the
benefit of the residents of Cincinnati. It was three miles up the Licking River and was popular for many
years. One of the Shinkles of Covington afterwards started a line of boats to Coles Gardens, as it was
called, and on Sundays the boats were crowded. It was on the order of our present Coney Island...

Father and Edward were quite successful with the store on Sycamore Street and began to make
friends and customers. I went to work at turning for a party by the name of Holmes, who made shoe pegs,
brushes and drawer knobs. I worked piece work, that is, the more work I was able to turn out the more my
pay was. I always preferred to work in that way, as I was a hard worker and was always making some
new contrivances to facilitate my work. At first I worked turning brush handles. I could not make more
than four dollars per week when I took the job, but I gradually improved until in a few weeks I was
earning six dollars per week (note: age 14)...The next place was with a Mr. Ritchie, who had a turning
shop on Fifth Street between Sycamore and Broadway. There they took in all kinds of job work. He paid
more than six dollars per week. There I turned table legs and bed posts, which I found much easier than in
Albion as the lathes were run by steam power...I can’t remember how long I worked for Mr. Ritchie but
when I left he paid me seven dollars and fifty cents per week. When I left there I went to work at a
furniture factory owned by John K. Coolidge.

Our furniture store on Sycamore Street prospered very well. We had one for some time on Walnut
Street between Pearl and Third Sts. and at this place we manufactured quite a number of articles. We had
a good run on a very pretty lounge that father had made in London. We could sell them just as fast as they
could be made. I think this couch was the foundation of our getting along so well as we did. Edward and
father made them all alone at the start but we soon had several workmen and the place became crowded.
It was at this juncture that the store on Sycamore Street was taken and Edward took charge of it. We
manufactured on Walnut Street and sold on Sycamore Street the most of what we made. After I had my
day’s work done at the factory where I was employed I used to turn for our own store. Father bought a
lathe like I learned to work on in Albion, that was worked by foot and on this I could do all the turning
that was wanted for our own shop. I worked usually until eleven or twelve at night. Edward always
stopped with me and we went home together.

The store on Sycamore was doing a good business and we were looking forward to soon having a
factory with steam power, but at this time we suffered one of the most severe misfortunes of our business
career. The Commercial newspaper began erecting a new building at the S. E. Corner of Sycamore and
Third Sts. The north end of their building reached to the south end of the building we occupied. There
was no law at that time limiting the depth of an excavation for the foundation of a building. This building
for the Commercial newspaper was the first building in Cincinnati ever erected with a double basement,
and because there was no law to govern the depth of the excavation the contractor took any precaution to
secure the safety of the adjoining buildings. The consequence of this negligence was that one night the
building we occupied went suddenly into the excavation, the building and all it’s contents fell. We were
notified of this occurrence in the middle of the night and we went at once to the site and found the
destruction of the building and stock complete. Our furniture was reduced to matchwood and was
perfectly worthless and we were reduced to a state of bankruptcy. We, however, did not shrink in meeting
the emergency. We told no one the severity of our misfortune but kept a stiff upper lip and immediately
took steps to retrieve our fortunes. We rented No. 85 Sycamore St. opposite the National Theatre. It was a much better house than we had. We manufactured in the top floors and kept the two lower floors for sale rooms. We removed all the goods from the Walnut St. store into the new house. We bought fresh goods such as we did not make ourselves. Our credit was still good as we had always paid as we agreed to do. There was but one party from whom we had purchased before the misfortune came to us raised any objection to giving us credit...All the others had sympathy for us and extended to us all the credit we needed, in fact they pressed us to buy more than we wished to. The new store was rented from Taft and Mallon, I don’t know whether it was owned by them or whether they merely acted as agents for the owner. Our President is the son of the above. We kept this store at No. 85 Sycamore for several years, our business increasing year after year until our quarters became too cramped for our extended business.

We commenced a suit against the Cincinnati Commercial paper and also the contractors for the building, for damages in destroying our stock of goods. We suffered great worry and expense. Sometimes we got a verdict and then the other side would appeal on one ground or another and they would be granted new trial. Perhaps we would lose on some technicality and it would all have to be gone over again. It cost us in the end more than the original loss and I think fifteen or twenty years of litigation. The builder, John Noble, died leaving no estate, and the Commercial paper having plenty of means to continue the suits, we dropped the whole matter. It would have been much better had we suffered the loss without trying to recover any damages. Our experience in this I think has prevented us from going into other lawsuits when we had justice on our side, but preferred to settle as best we could rather than run the risk of the law’s delay.

It was about the year 1851 father had an opportunity of renting a factory with machinery on the Canal between 14th and 15th streets from an Irishman named Fitzgerald. Our quarters had become so cramped that the business suffered and kept us from prospering as we should have done. As soon as we acquired possession of the factory we immediately went to work to adapt it to our use. Factories in those days were no more than bare brick walls and floors, they had none of the facilities as they have today. There was little or no provision made for heating further than a stove here and there, and in cold weather the workmen suffered, especially the men working on the machines and the turners. The feet suffered the most, it was usual to wear shoes made from buffalo skins with the hair inside, but even then the feet could not be kept warm. Men would not work now under such conditions. I myself worked in the basement without any heat, and most of the time with open doors to bring in the lumber often covered with snow and ice. The harder you worked the warmer you kept and I used to work hard and you may be sure most of the men for the same reason did the same. I, at once left the position I had at that time, having left John K. Coolidge about a year before and had taken a job with H. B. Mudge. I had left the former place because we disagreed on the price of turning bedstead posts, he made the price at thirty-five cents the set. I was able to make over three dollars a day at that price which he thought was too much for a boy less than twenty years of age. He would not pay the price any longer so I went to the Mudge concern. John K. Coolidge, after I left, could not get the work done at the price he had agreed to pay me and he tried to get me to return to him but I was making more than twenty dollars per week at Mudge’s so I refused to return. I was one of the fastest workmen known at that time and I could do double the work of other men. I was no doubt a great help to father as also was brother Edward, we both took a great interest in the business and did everything possible to help it along. We often remained at the factory until 12 o’clock at night to pack goods for shipment after we had worked all day. Edward at the books and I in the factory we soon had trade all over the country and made considerable money.

I had forgotten to mention that while we lived in Newport the soldiers returned from the Mexican War. They were in a terrible condition, ragged and dirty, quite different from the men I saw come by the Miami Canal from Michigan and land at Camp Washington. They went into camp on their return in open ground at the back of our house in Newport. They had suffered from want of food and had not yet recovered. Mother used to get up early in the morning and make biscuits and coffee for them. For mother’s kindness to them they were very grateful and they were there several weeks before being mustered out of service. Public opinion was much divided on the merits and honesty of this war. It was at
best a war to acquire territory by a strong country from a weak one. There is no doubt but what the United
States made a much quicker and better use of the land than Mexico could have done. We lived in Newport
two years and then father having bought the stock of furniture on Madison Street, Covington of Mr.
Ackerman, we moved there, living over the store rooms. It did fairly well, about keeping the family.
Mother attended the selling assisted by a young man whose name I have forgotten. We kept this store for
I think about three years, until father bought out the factory from Mr. Fitzgerald, before spoken of.

As soon as we began manufacturing we began to get wholesale trade. We made the best of work and
our business rapidly increased and in a few years this factory also became too small, and we had to add
one story to it and made other improvements. We put in the latest machinery, more than doubling the
output of goods. We had trade as far south as Texas and also in most of the states bordering on the
Mississippi River, up the White and Arkansas Rivers, in fact we reached everywhere. Our business was
flourishing and we were ready to branch out once more.

We bought a large lot on Second Street below Smith Street, belonging to a man named Sam Walker.
I think the piece of ground was one hundred by two hundred and fifty feet, for which we were to pay
fifteen thousand dollars. We paid, I think, two thousand five hundred dollars down and gave notes for the
balance. We were the last to buy a part of the tract which was a full block, and when the earlier purchases
were measured it left our lot less than we had bought. We declined to accept it and demanded our money
and notes back. It took about two years before we succeeded in a getting a settlement, it also cost us
lawyer’s fees. We had also bought all the joist for the building which we had to dispose of at a loss.

While we were waiting to find another suitable building lot we found the Mechanical Bakery corner
of Elm and Canal was for sale, it had been a financial failure as a bakery. David Gibson had advanced
flour to the company and it was sold by auction to the highest bidder to pay him. He bought it for I think
fourteen thousand dollars. He sold to us including all the machinery for twelve thousand, it was no doubt
a great bargain had we not brought a law suit along with the building. The ground was a leasehold with
the privilege of purchase at a valuation. This is the property we now occupy. It was well adapted for
factory purposes. We sold all the machinery used by the bakery except the engine and shafting, which
were the very best of the kind. It took several months to make the necessary changes to adapt the building
to our purposes. When it was ready we had one of the most substantial and complete factories in the city
or I think in the United States. Our business expanded rapidly. It was in 1858 we bought this property and
it was not until 1860 that any adverse conditions occurred.

As soon as the election returns in October showed the election of Lincoln, trouble began which
culminated in the firing on Fort Sumter. The whole country north and south went mad, states seceded one
after another until practically all the south was in rebellion. Business was a thing of the past in the North
and in the South it was confined to getting ready for the coming conflict which we in the North did not
realize to be possible. However, when the President called for the first quota of troops, people became
frightened as to what would be the end of it all. There is little doubt if the politicians of the South would
have allowed the people to vote there would have been a large majority opposed to secession, but as is
always the case a few aggressive ones carried everything before them, and before the common people
were aware they were committed to secessions and rebellion. Our business, as is always the case with the
furniture trade, collapsed at once as it is always the first to feel a reverse in trade and the last to recover
from it. We were obliged to suspend operations and did not resume again for over six months. The grass
actually grew on the streets. We had gone for several weeks and sold nothing and it was just as hard to
collect what was owing to us. The Legislature passed a law preventing the collection of debts by law for
twelve months. We lost all that was owing to us in the South, except one man in Mississippi by the name
of Lichtenstein who as soon as the war was over and he could come North paid us in full and offered even
the interest which we would not accept. This was, I think, the only case where a southern debt was paid to
us. Considering the exhausted condition of the whole southern country as well as the people we could not
have expected anything else. I think the most of them would have paid their debts if they could have done
so and provided their wives and children with clothes and food. For sometime after the war started we
were in great distress ourselves. We have gone home on pay day with less than any of the workmen. The
worst trouble we had was to pay off the men we owed money, when times were good they would draw but a portion of their weekly wages, leaving the rest of it to accumulate and draw interest, and when the times because of the war became so bad we could not no matter how hard we tried raise enough to pay them. I remember father, Edward and I after we had divided what we had between the men, we would only have a couple of dollars between the three of us. I remember just after I was married and we were keeping house on Dayton Street things had about reached their worst, and although we had a large stock of goods and material on hand worth thousands of dollars and practically free of debt except the small amounts we were indebted to the workmen, my wife’s father dropped in to lunch, we had already dined and had no bread left, I was going to the store and should have brought money back with me but at that particular time neither I or my wife had enough to buy a loaf of bread. I did not know what to do, we had only just moved into the neighborhood and were not acquainted with any of the grocers. I could not tell my wife’s father the condition we were in so I went to the grocer expecting to have to explain matters to him, but I was both pleased and surprised to have him speak my name and state he had heard I had moved into the next street and solicited our trade. I picked up the bread and told him I would stop in pay for it when I passed next day. He was as pleased to see me take it as I was to get the bread. This showed us the weakness of owing money to employees.

We determined never to allow the possibility of such a state of affairs again and to this day it never has. For nearly fifty years we have never owed any man in our employ a cent on the evening of our regular pay day. It was fully six months after the war began before we could find any way to utilize our factory. We had been able to dispose of some of our stock which had made us quite independent and comfortable.

About this time Miles Greenwood took a contract from the U.S. Government to supply them with a large number of Black Walnut gun stocks. By good fortune just after the trouble began and when things were almost at the worst, Mr. John Green, of whom we had bought large quantities of lumber ever since we had been manufacturing, brought down two canal boat loads of 2” black walnut such as the gun stocks were made from. We contracted with the Greenwood people to sell them the lumber which we had bought for fifteen dollars the thousand feet at thirty-five dollars and cut them into gun stocks for six cents each, all the lumber that would not make a gun stock to be ours. This deal looked and was a very profitable one as it enabled us to begin work in the factory, and gave us quite a large lot of ready money we badly needed. A few weeks after this a party came from the gun works at Springfield, Mass. and offered us seventy-five dollars the thousand feet for all the 2” walnut we could furnish. At first sight it looked as if we had made a great mistake in selling at the first offer but I think it was lucky we did, as it obliged us to start the factory to cut out the gun stocks, and when once we had the factory running we received orders for hard tack boxes. We had to take them very low at first, but as the demand increased we were enabled to advance the prices until finally we were able to make a fair profit in making them. The furniture trade became better and as the stock in certain lines became low we gradually put the men back to their regular work and discontinued making the army biscuit boxes. When business began to improve it went ahead very fast until in a short time we could not make our goods fast enough. Prices advanced very rapidly with the increased demand our customers advanced our prices themselves. It became so good at last we could not supply our customers. Father would not sell goods to others while our regular customers had unfilled orders with us. I remember an instance, we were shipping a lot of Dressers, they were on the sidewalk ready for the boat, when a dealer from the south wanted to buy them. Father told him they were all engaged, he asked what we were getting for them and was told twenty-five dollars each, he immediately offered us ten dollars advance but father would not take it as they were promised to others. The customer said we were fools, and I rather thought so myself, but father was that kind of a man. This example goes to prove that prices are made by demand and supply.

I have forgotten to mention that our store at #85 Sycamore Street having become too cramped for our increased business, we moved about 1856 to #26 Sycamore St. This building was very much larger, being twenty-five feet front and two hundred feet deep. It was very convenient to the river for shipping as there was as yet no railroads of much value running south. We often had this house packed to its fullest
capacity with the goods we manufactured after there had been low water. As soon as the river would rise, being so close to the shipping, we could get our goods down to the boats before others that were at a greater distance. We found this a great advantage, as we got possession of more southern territory, our business increased in proportion until at the close of the war we found our factory much too small for the business we would command. We had expected to have built an addition to the factory on the vacant part of the ground but would not do so until we had bought the ground upon which the factory stood. When we applied to the owner of the ground, he made the preposterous claim that the buildings that were on the ground at the time it was sold should be appraised with the ground, although, here was no improvement on the property when it was leased to the Mechanical Bakery Co. who were the original lessees. Of course, we objected to such an interpretation of the lease and commenced a suit for the immediate compliance with it’s provisions. Of course, like most suits at law when it is commenced there is no telling when or how it will be settled. This one was a long time before we could get it to trial. We were in a hurry, the other party was not. We waited until our patience was exhausted. As our trade was demanding more goods than we could manufacture we purchased a lot on the Canal east of Elm Street and immediately put up a six story factory for the purpose of making a larger quantity of chairs which part of our business had greatly increased. This is the property now owned by the L. A. Strobel & Co. and which we sold to them after the first financial and business depression. The whole country suffered after the conclusion of the war, owing to the depreciation of the paper money and the inflated value of all articles manufactured or grown. Suddenly everything both personal property and real estate began falling in price and many landlords reduced rent to tenants. The bottom seemed to have dropped out of everything. When prosperity was so great we had taken two stores on Walnut Street below Fourth Street on a lease of six years at a rate of six thousand dollars a year. We were to take out the dividing walls, making the two into one, put in plumbing, painting inside and out and putting in a new front costing several thousand dollars. This proved to be the worst investment we ever made, we had hardly moved into the new premises when things began to get bad....We always carried in stock a large quantity of lumber but it was, we thought, better to sell the property than reduce our stock of lumber as properly seasoned lumber was what had made our reputation for good work. We always carried from seventy-five to one hundred thousand dollars worth of lumber. ...

Soon after this father retired from the business...We concluded to dispose of the chair factory, discontinue the manufacturing of furniture and confine the business to chairs alone. We succeeded in disposing of the chair factory to L. A. Strobel...Father died on Feb. 20th, 1881. Mother died Oct. 16th, 1883. Had she not been so worn down and exhausted with waiting night and day on father I am sure she would have lived a number of years longer...She died at my house on E. McMillan St. No. 1429...

...In May 18787 the north end of the factory was entirely destroyed by fire...in the south end there was practically no damage to the building...Father declined to assist in rebuilding the factory...We had been renting a building next door for a number of years as a store house, it had formerly been an ice house, it was owned by James Beatty...We built it the full size of the combined lots, making a five story building and a good light basement. The frontage on Elm Street and Canal is one hundred and twenty-five feet. It made a very handsome factory and greatly increased our capacity for manufacturing. We were able to do a much larger business that we had done since Edward and I had controlled the business, and trade having improved we were able to make a lot of money. We made some years as much as twenty thousand dollars. Our business was greatly helped by an Association formed by most of the chair makers in the middle west, profits were very small and competition great. And lumber began to advance which it has...

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7 History of the Cincinnati Fire Department, 1895. At 12:24 o’clock in the early morning of May 8, an alarm from box 69 announced the fire in the G. Henshaw & Sons’s furniture factory, a four story brick structure at the corner Elm and Canal streets. It was a fierce and hot fire, the buildings across the canal being scorched by the intensity of the heat. The factory was completely destroyed, the loss amounting to $71,379.35 on which there was $54,102.99 insurance. During the fire a sudden wind and rain storm came up and whirled the flames in fantastic shapes, while the glistening drops of rain reflected the light through the sky a million fold. The storm lasted but a short time, but produced a grand spectacle for the time. While it drenched the spectators, the rain had little effect on the burning building, in which the fire contained until there was nothing left to burn.
continued to do up to the present time. We had at this time one of the largest and best chair factories in the country and could turn out chairs on as short notice as any other concern in the United States. About this time we were able to secure a contract from B. J. Montgomery of New Orleans for twelve thousand chairs, as we were the only bidders that would bind themselves to deliver them in two months, at which time there was to be had a political convention. It would be a great undertaking even for the immense factories that are operating today. We had to fill this contract besides taking care of our regular trade. These chairs were to be made of ash, which made it more difficult as ash was not being used at that time in making chairs. We had some trouble to secure enough dry ash suitable for the purpose, but we were in spite of drawbacks able to make delivery. Up to this time this order was the largest ever filled in this country and was the talk of the trade everywhere.

There was little change in business conditions up to 1893 when the most severe panic struck the country ever experienced by the generation. It went all over the country from east to west; it was as bad on the Pacific coast as in the east and continued until half the people were bankrupted. Had we not had several good years previously it would have gone very hard with us. In 1889 we had partially discontinued manufacturing and had changed the factory to fit it for retailing. During the years of the panic many factories found it impossible to prevent failure and were forced into liquidation. At any rate we averted anything of that kind. Fortunately our trade began to revive in 1898...

Our dear brother, Edward, died July 17th, 1902 at the house of his daughter Alice in West Croydon near London, England...on November 30th, 1902 our brother, Henry, died quite unexpectedly...Brother Henry had been with us during all of our business career, having been in the position of foreman over the chair makers and machinery department. He was an expert machine worker, and he invented and improved many of our machines and in many ways contributed to our success. Our sister, Anne, Mrs. G. W. Harris, died at Holly Hill, Florida Sept. 29th, 1907, leaving at this date, March 1st, 1908, but three of our family of eight. They are George, Sarah, and William."

George Henshaw March 2nd, 1911

George Henshaw was very civic minded. In 1901 he was a member of the Cincinnati Board of Police Commissioners. A brief biography about him says: "...He was appointed to the Police Board by Governor McKinley, and gave such satisfaction as a public official that he is convinced that he was reappointed a short time ago by Governor Bushnell. Mr. Henshaw is kind-hearted, and stands by an officer when he is convinced that the latter has done his duty. He is fair-minded to a degree, however, and insists that all members of the local force treat people courteously at all times. Mr. Henshaw takes an active interest in matters pertaining to the department, and is responsible for many valuable innovations in the service...Some of the new stations and patrol houses of Cincinnati were built under the personal supervision of Mr. Henshaw..."

George Henshaw, Sr. and his wife Ann (Oldenberg) bought the property at 5831 Glenview Avenue in 1866 for $3,500 from Norris Knight. Their son, Edward Henshaw, had a builder make him a lovely house from a former barn on their property. It was large enough for his family of 10 children. Since he was a furniture manufacturer, only one cupboard was built and chests and wardrobes provided the much needed storage. A story about the property is that is was part of the Underground Railroad, connected by a tunnel to The Oaks. This house was sold in 1920 to Ethel Stuart Snell and the property was separated from the empty adjoining lot. The house is named "Glenwood."

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8 Industries of Cincinnati, 1888. ...walnut and cherry used 1,250,000 feet. Has New York branch, sales in Mexico, Cuba and throughout the Midwest

9 Leading Manufacturers and Merchants, City of Cincinnati, G. Henshaw & Sons is mentioned ...as one of the foremost establishments of its kind in the U. S. Their capacity was 12,000 dozen chairs a year.

10 Police and Municipal Guide, Cincinnati, 1901

11 Community Resources for Enriching the 5th Grade Social Studies Program in the College Hill Schools, Marion Dinkelaker, thesis, 1952.
The land on which the house at 5835 Glenview Avenue stands was originally part of the 5831 Glenview Avenue property. The house was built in 1921.

Richard Henshaw, brother to Edward Henshaw who married Ellen Johnson, designed for them their house on Belmont Avenue.

Dorothy Henshaw gave an oral interview in 1992 to this Society. She related that during the Depression, the Mitchell Furniture Company proposed a Mitchell-Henshaw merger as both companies were having problems with their sale volumes. The Henshaws declined because the Mitchell company was deeply in debt and the Henshaws believed in carrying no debt load.

The G. Henshaw & Sons Furniture Company stayed in business until the 1940’s. Edward Henshaw, George’s nephew, was Mayor of College Hill. Edward married Ellen Johnson whose sister, Mary, married Rev. John Stanton Ely and her other sister, Lucy, married Lewis Crosley. Edward married Mary Knight, who came from England with her family on the sailing ship, American Eagle. Mary’s sister, Elizabeth, married Robert E. LeBlond, who was a printer. LeBlond began to manufacture tools and in 1890 began to produce drill presses and later, lathes. This was the beginning of LeBlond Tools, known throughout the world for the quality of its tools and machinery. The Knights first lived on Elm St. near the Hollenshades. Another Knight daughter, Carrie, married William Dunbar. Their only child, William, married Agnes MacLean. Their son, Richard, married Ann Aiken.

Edward and Mary Knight Henshaw were the parents of Edward Henshaw who married Ellen Johnson. They had one child, Lewis Henshaw, who married Dorothy Cummings. The Henshaw family had a tradition of naming the first son Edward and the second son George. Edward established and was the early president of the College Hill Building Association which first met in Flamm’s grocery. After Town Hall was built, the Association moved there. Edgar Cummings, Dorothy’s father, served as president also. Edward, Edgar and a few other College Hill residents also founded the Clovernook Country Club.

Dorothy Cummings Henshaw had a remarkable memory. The Cummings family attended College Hill Presbyterian Church along with Thomson, Pounsford, McCrea, Myers, Aiken, Greeno, Bagley, Wild, Cary and Wilder families. William Altamer was not only the principle of the College Hill school but also the head of the Sunday School. Rev. Charles Austen and Rev. Dale LeCount were ministers there.

When Dorothy married, she started attending her husband’s church, Grace Episcopal. Rev. Clickner was minister then, followed by Rev. Arthur Lichenberger, Rev. Brent Woodruff, Rev. David Thornberry and Rev. LeRoy Hall, from New Kensington, Pennsylvania. Other families attending Grace Church were the Bowman, Simpson, LaBoiteaux, Dunbar, Shoenwald, Chace and Emerson.

Dorothy will always be remembered for her graciousness and knowledge of antiques. Her parents were Edgar Cummings and Florence Phares. Florence’s father, John, lived in Finneytown and was a close friend of Henry Bowman. The land at the corner of North Bend and Winton Road has been in the Cummings family since 1820. That corner had a high hill that was leveled when the gas station was built. Edgar Cummings was the president of the Northside Bank, and owned Pierson’s Lumber Company for a time.

Dorothy was born on North Bend Road in a house her father built and is no longer standing. She was delivered by the homeopathic physician, Dr. Kilgore, who delivered most of the babies born on the Hill. About 1908 her father built a house at the corner of Larch and Davey Avenues. The Bauhmann’s lived next door on the Larch side of the corner and Newbold Pierson built a house next to them on the Davey Avenue side. The Bauhmann house had a large lot extending from Larch Street over to Llanfair. The Bauhmann’s had a family of five children, plenty to keep Dorothy in playmates. They were Richard, Ethel, Marguerite, and the twins Laura Belle and Emma Lea. West of the Bauhmann’s was the Burns-Ormsby property and next to them, the Simpsons. Paul Briol, his wife and daughter, lived at first in the Simpson house. This block was purchased by the Presbyterian Church and torn down in 1962 for the Llanfair Retirement complex.

Dorothy and Lewis’s first house was on Belmont Avenue but they returned to the Larch Street home
after the death of her parents. Dorothy’s friends included James Bowman, who lived out west and had a fruit orchard before moving to Larch Street, Mary and Frank Bowman who built a brick house on Belmont Avenue opposite Larch Street, the Flannigan’s who lived on Belmont Avenue next to Lucy and Louis Crosley, the Benedict’s who lived in a large white house on the south side of Belmont next to the Witherby house, and the McCrea’s who had a mansion on the north side of Belmont Avenue. Adaline Betts who married Charles McCrea had been a student at the Ohio Female College.

Dorothy remembered shopping at Pies Grocery, a wooden building still standing on Hamilton Avenue opposite Larch Street. Her family also shopped at Flamm’s grocery, later Fred Bolam’s, at Llanfair and Belmont Avenues. They purchased meat at John Ambon’s butcher shop, on Hamilton and Belmont Avenues opposite Grace Episcopal Church. As a girl, Dorothy’s close friends included Caroline Williams and her sister, Katherine, who married Dwight Maddux. She also played with Gene Ward who lived on Cedar Avenue across from the College Hill school. Gene later married William Taylor from England.

Dorothy was an accomplished painter, poet and writer, leaving us with two books of her College Hill memories. She lived a long life and this poem she wrote contains her essence:

Let these be the Beads of my Rosary;
The Peace of my Home, where I Love to be;
Happiness in my Dear One’s eyes,
Light and Distance in Seas and Skies;
And genuineness in Freely Giving;
Tenderness for all things Living;
The Love of an Understanding Heart;
Serenity at Life’s depart.

Lewis Henshaw’s uncle was Col. Albert Melville Henshaw who was commandant of the Ohio Military Institute for many years. A 1897 graduate of the O. M. I., he returned to the Military Institute as a history and civics instructor in 1905 after traveling, working and attending the University of Cincinnati. The O. M. I. had an average of 85 students. Albert married Nancy Ely, the daughter of Rev. John Hugh Ely of the Grace Episcopal Church. Rev. Ely became rector in 1878. Ely’s children were Mary, John Hamilton and Nancy. Rev. Ely’s sister ran a girl’s school in Clifton. Nancy Ely Henshaw was a graduate of Radcliffe, wrote poetry and was well known for her kennel of Scottie dogs. After the death of her husband, she built a double house on Blue Spruce and lived next to her sister-in-law, Alice Barrows Henshaw, widow of Stanley Henshaw who was an attorney for the Union Central Life Insurance Company.

The Henshaw House on Glenview Avenue
In the early 1900’s street cars operated by the Cincinnati Street Railway had a motorman in front of the car and a conductor in the rear. The motorman operated the car by turning a lever-handle. In bad weather sand from a sand box was sprinkled on tracks to keep the car from skidding. The conductor was on an open back platform to receive fares and issue free transfers. He would come back inside when the car was moving or the weather inclement.

The motormen wore black suits, blue shirts, a money changer and stiff black visor hats.

Northbound on Hamilton Avenue from Rockford Avenue, the early tracks were on the west side. Southbound tracks were on the east side of the hill. Sometimes the power would go off in the overhead trolley wires or trolleys would jump off the wires. If there was low power, the northbound car would have to wait until the southbound car was down the hill to get enough power. Later the street was repaved and the tracks were in the middle.

The Clifton Ludlow came from downtown through Clifton and Knowlton’s Corner to Springlawn Avenue, and then it would turn around and go back. They were always far enough behind the College Hill bus that the signal at Springlawn would not alert the College Hill bus to wait for transferring passengers. Especially at night the wait was twenty to thirty minutes minimum or more for the next College Hill bus. The grocery and candy store were highly used in cold weather.

College Hill high school students of the 1950’s went to Hughes High by street car, and paid their own transportation of a quarter a week. If you wanted to go to downtown from Hughes on the Clifton Ludlow, you could get a free transfer and come back from town on the College Hill bus.

Knowlton’s Corner was a main transfer point and the stores there did a thriving business.

Early street cars came north on Hamilton Avenue to North Bend Road, west on North Bend Road to the car barn on North Bend Road and Hamilton Avenue, where the bus would layover, then continue on North Bend Road to Belmont Avenue and south on Belmont Avenue to Hamilton Avenue. Later the car barn was removed and the layover was at Betty’s Sweet Shop in the morning (on Hamilton Avenue below Llanfair), and in front of the O.M.I. on Belmont Avenue in the afternoon.

Trolley buses replaced street cars. The trolleys had rubber inflated tires and could pull over to the curb. The old tracks were tarred over. This covering would wear off in spots and become a hazard in bad weather. In the days of the street cars the sanding of the tracks was an asset to automobile transportation. The streets were not sanded or plowed by the City in those days. Chains were a must on automobiles during that time.

During W.W. II and thereafter the Ohio Bus Lines were widely used by people of College Hill. They were privately owned and operated out of Hamilton, Ohio on a franchise. The buses came down Hamilton Avenue through Mt. Healthy and North College Hill. They were express as far as pickups from Hamilton Avenue and Belmont Avenue south bound to downtown but would let customers off at any corner. Northbound from downtown they could pick up at any corner but not let passengers off until Belmont and Hamilton Avenues.

Belmont and Hamilton Avenues to downtown took twenty minutes and cost a quarter a trip. (They loaded at Fifth and Walnut at the Greyhound Bus Station.). Their drivers were regulars and would look down the streets and wait for their usual customers. In later years they were purchased by the Cincinnati Street Railway and the service was lost.

Mr. Chilton Thomson added a bit to the transit history. His brother, Alexander Thomson, Jr., told him that when Hamilton Avenue was bad from winter weather, the repair cars of the Cincinnati Street Railway Company would drag automobiles up Hamilton Avenue hill from the end of the Ludlow Avenue

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12 By Virginia M. Geyler (1988)
car line, for twenty-five cents. He also wrote¹³: “The ‘white frame house’ on Hamilton Avenue below Belmont was, indeed, the toll house. My father, Alexander, and Uncle Logan both mentioned it more than once, commenting on how their earliest car, a White steamer, doughed and sometimes stalled when they reached that point. Of course, there were no toll charges then - in the ‘naughty noughts.’”

¹³ Mr. Chilton Thomson, private correspondence, 1 May 1994.
Ahrens is a well known name associated with fire engine construction. While the founder, Christopher Ahrens, lived in Corryville, members of his family lived at the house on the corner of Cary and Elkton Avenues and on Meis and Harbison Avenues. Christopher Ahrens’ children were John V. Ahrens, Mrs. Charles Fox, Mrs. George W. Krapp, Mrs. Florence Meyer and Miss Christine Ahrens. Ahrens’ granddaughter, Betty Meyer, was a lifelong teacher at Clifton Elementary School.

Aiken Three busts are in the foyer of Music Hall, usually unrecognized and unread. One is of Reuben R. Springer, a dry goods merchant and philanthropist who donated the funds to start construction of Music Hall, one is of the New York Philharmonic orchestra conductor Theodore Thomas who conducted the first May Festival, and one is of Charles Aiken who was once the Superintendent of Music in the Cincinnati Public Schools.

Born in 1818 in New Hampshire, Charles Aiken traveled in Kentucky and Pennsylvania as a bard after his graduation from Dartmouth College in 1838. He came to Cincinnati for the first time in 1839 but moved to St. Louis where he was a choral director and music teacher. Professor Aiken returned to Cincinnati in 1842 to be the successor of William Colburn, the first music teacher in the public schools.

Aiken’s first assignment in the schools was teaching music, only a part time job. To augment his salary he also taught Greek and Latin to seminary students. After several months, his music position with the public schools became full time. His choral musical work had procured much acclaim and respect and he was appointed Superintendent of Music (1867-1879). He also became partly responsible for the May Festival. He raised $3,000 from the public school students to complete the construction of Music Hall. He wrote music books and musical scores throughout his life. He died in 1882 and was buried in Spring Grove Cemetery.

Charles was married to Martha Stanley Merrill (1832-1895). They had six children: Walter Harris who married Lucy Bakewell Avery; Louis Ellsworth married Nancy Irwin; Alice Cordelia who married Charles H. Avery; Carrie Dewing who married Thomas Bagley; Susan Merrill, wife of Henry Pounsford, and Herbert Pinkerton who married Laura Emerson (1947). Lucy and Charles Avery were brother and sister.

Walter Harris Aiken (1858-1935) held the position as Director of Music some years later. He started his career in 1867 as organist in the first pig eye school in College Hill and was active in teaching music until his death in 1952. He married Lucy Avery (1862-1936), daughter of Dr. Charles Avery, and they had three children; Gwendolyn Bakewell Aiken (married Powel Crosley, Jr.), Walter Avery Aiken(1891-1952, married Opal Winter) and Victor Audubon Aiken (1897-1962, married Norma Quitter). Walter built a home on the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Aster Place that is still there today.

Louis E. Aiken (1861-1949, married Nancy Irwin), graduated from Farmers’ College in 1879, taught music at Hughes High School and supervised the music for College Hill Presbyterian Church. His home in Mt. Healthy was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Sadly, this house on Hamilton Avenue was demolished to make way for the recent Cross County Highway expansion.

Herbert P. Aiken was a graduate of Farmers’ College, and a violinist who also taught in the public school system. He left teaching and joined the Dodd, Werner & Co., and later the R. F. Johnston Paint Company as treasurer. Herbert married Laura Emerson and they owned “Old Acres,” a farm near Fernald in New Baltimore.

Aiken High School opened September 4, 1962 and was named in honor of Charles, Walter and Louis.

14 From information supplied by Jack O’Neil
Paul Briol was born in Spencer, Massachusetts in 1889. In 1909 he moved to Cincinnati along with his family. His parents, from Alsace-Lorraine, his sister and Paul lived in the Glenwood Apartments. Paul worked as a photographer and journalist with the Cincinnati Enquirer until he opened his own studio in 1932. While attending Grace Episcopal Church he met and later married Mary Elizabeth Emerson in 1920, daughter of Mary Adelphia Simpson and Dudley Emerson, who was the head of the Ohio Military Institute at that time. Mary Emerson’s sister, Ruth, married Howard Hannaford, and they were missionaries in Japan. She had two brothers, one of which, Earl Emerson, was the head of ARMCO Steel Corporation.

Mary Emerson was born in 1884, went to Miss Ely’s Preparatory School, and was a graduate of Wellesley College. She taught mathematics before her marriage at her former school, Miss Ely’s, in Clifton. Miss Ely was the sister of Rev. John Hugh Ely, minister of Grace Episcopal Church. Mary’s health was fragile and for several months she lived at a tuberculosis sanitarium in Minnesota. A free spirit, Paul was living in a tent behind the O. M. I. when he met Mary.

The Briol’s lived at 1812 Larch Street, next to her family and grandmother in the Simpson house at the corner of Larch and Belmont Avenues. Paul and Mary had one child, Joan (Jan) Biol born in 1923. During the Depression, Mary operated a nursery from the front room of their house. Biol worked as a professional photographer until a car accident in 1950 which forced him into semi-retirement. The Briols moved to Katonah, New York in 1962 to be near their daughter. Paul died in 1969, Mary in 1968. Both are buried in Spring Grove Cemetery.

Briol’s photographic reputation was founded by his use of the 8X10 camera and his darkroom skills. He photographed all that was interesting in Cincinnati and dramatic clouds were his trademark. He was most famous for his photographs of the Tyler-Davidson Fountain, downtown spires and Ohio River scenes.

His Honor, John E(ldridge) Bruce, graduated at Western Reserve College, Hudson, Ohio 1876, and came to Cincinnati in 1878. “He became a resident of College Hill in 1885, and was a member of Council before being elected Mayor, which position he has held for the past eight years. He was one of the Associated Press agents from 1879 to 1883, and from 1880 to 1888 conducted a College News Department in the Commercial Gazette. He was admitted to the practice of law in 1879, and he was first assistant U. S. Attorney for Southwestern Ohio from 1886 to 1889, at which latter date he formed partnership with Hon. H. Bromwell, the present member of Congress from the second Ohio District, with whom he is still associated. He was first assistant U. S. Attorney again from 1891 to 1898 under the second Cleveland Administration. He is a prominent member of the Masonic Order, being past master of N. C. Harmony Lodge No. 2. He is a member of the Episcopal church... Mr. Bruce was married Dec. 12th, 1883, to Miss Alice A. Knowlton, whose father, Cyrus Knowlton, was formerly principal of Hughes High School. They have two children...who were Edward Knowlton Bruce - married Katherine Pierson, and Carolyn Alice Bruce who married Hubert Frohman, architect of the National Cathedral in Washington, D. C. After Carolyn’s death, Frohman married Mary Ann Evans, daughter of Walter and Naomi Evans. At the time of this marriage Mr. Evans was the president of McAlpin’s department store. The Bruce’s lived on Groesbeck Road, next to the Chatfield home.”

Mr. Bruce was also the vice-president of the Western and Southern Life Insurance Company and another College Hill resident, Frank Caldwell, was the president. He served on many boards - a few being, director of J. A. Fay & Egan Company, vice president of Cincinnati Tool Company, secretary and treasurer of the Withrow Manufacturing Company, president of the Bartholomew-Ely School Company. Bruce had a keen interest in providing children playgrounds and amateur baseball and he was a member of the Board.

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15 Queen City Heritage, Vol. 47, Number 3, Fall 1989

16 Chic, March 17, 1900

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of Park Commissioners for many years. His interest in baseball led him to be the director of the St. Louis American Baseball Company and secretary and treasurer of the National Commission which oversees baseball. Bruce was the last mayor of College Hill, serving continuously from 1892. He was born in Cleveland, Oct. 1, 1856, a son of Eli and Caroline Eldridge Bruce. He established a law practice with his son who also was a member of the Ohio House of Representatives.

For many years, Bruce was in a law partnership with Congressman Jacob H. Bromwell.

Colonel Thomas C. Campbell was a lawyer that lived between College Hill and Winton Place. The 1884 map of Mill Creek Township shows a road coming up from Winton Place that has been incorporated in the Spring Grove Cemetery property. Originally, Gray Road had the same configuration as now but Linden Avenue extended from Spring Grove Avenue, through the other side of Gray Road hill, intersecting Gray Road south of the curves. William S. Groesbeck owned property here. Linden Avenue extended to Hamilton Avenue, the same as Groesbeck Road today. Linden Avenue was the access to many homes and the College Hill Rail Road ran up that valley, parallel to Linden. The intersection of Linden and Gray is still marked by an iron gate, closing off access onto Spring Grove Cemetery property. Lawyer Campbell lived off of this old Linden Avenues.

Col. Campbell represented William Berner, whose manslaughter conviction in 1884 sparked the riots and burning of the Hamilton County Courthouse. Berner received 20 years in jail instead of the popular sentence, hanging. Amid rumors of jury tampering a mob gathered and broke into the Court House, hoping to seize Berner and hang him. The troops were called into action, the Court House burned, 100 people killed and 300 wounded. Campbell was not a popular person for saving Berner’s life. Campbell was burned in effigy and his house was guarded by a regiment of militia on March 30, 1884, who stayed until the riots subsided. On April 1 the Evening Post printed; “At Tom Campbell’s house a continuous fusillade was kept up all day yesterday by the guards shooting at marks, probably to intimate that rioters would meet a warm reception.”

In the aftermath of the riots, a grand jury was convened to prosecute the former Berner jury and Campbell was charged with bribery and subordination. The selection process for jurors was changed and the political machine that Campbell was a part of was defeated in the November 1884 election, and was replaced with the new order - ‘Boss’ Cox.

Campbell’s house was burned, along with his law library, under suspicious circumstances. He moved to New York.

Mrs. Ruth J. Wells once asked Major Seebohm (born 1880), a noted College Hill resident who was a former Cincinnati policeman, and at that time in his 90’s, what his earliest recollection was. The Major said it was of a neighbor calling to his mother to hitch up the horse and buggy and go to the top of the hill to watch the mob burn the lawyer’s house. This could have been seen from Hillcrest Avenue which overlooked the Linden valley area. The Major also remembered that the carriage house wasn’t burned at that time and years later it was used by bootleggers during the Prohibition. He was there with the police when the gang was arrested.

It was on the strength of the Major’s recollections that Ruth Wells and Jack O’Neil decided in the early 1970’s to look for the Campbell house site, since Spring Grove Cemetery had acquired the property and they knew anything left of the house site would probably be destroyed. They went to the general area and though no charred wood remained, they located two areas that contained the remains of the house, some broken crockery and glass and a stone coping of a well.

Chatfield is a name long associated with paper. Chatfield, and later Chatfield & Woods, was a pioneer in the paper trade west of the Alleghenies. It became the largest paper dealer and manufacturer in the Ohio Valley. Chatfield & Woods was founded in 1832. Their papers spanned from stationary to manila envelopes, lithographer paper, newspaper, books, paper bags, flour bags etc.

For many years William Woods was the president and A. H. Chatfield was vice-president. The Chatfield Manufacturing Company was formed and expanded into paper used in construction - roofing,
felting, roof coatings, plaster board, nails, roofing surfacing and roof caps. The company was located in Carthage. A. H. Chatfield was president, Harry F. Woods, vice president. William H. Chatfield’s son, William H. Chatfield, Jr. was educated in the College Hill public school and the O. M. I. He formed the W. H. Chatfield & Morgan Company, stocks and bonds. Edythe Crosley married Albert Chatfield and lived in the old Chatfield home that once stood on Groesbeck Road. They had two children, Susan Chatfield who married William Hargrave and Lida Chatfield who married William Montgomery. See Crosley.

Later owners of the Ephraim Brown house were Robert Stewart Cochnower who married Edith Rankin. The house was surrounded by a pear orchard at that time. Robert was an M. D. but didn’t practice, preferring to be a superintendent at the post office. He supplemented his salary by selling life insurance. Edith’s father owned the Cincinnati Iron Works. The works were established in 1835 on Pearl Street. They manufactured iron building fronts that resembled stone, iron railing, grates, marbleized iron mantels, jails, doors etc. Robert’s father was John Cochnower, the first president of the Union Central Life Insurance Company, Cincinnati’s largest insurance business. It was founded in 1867 and in 1913 moved to its own 34-story skyscraper at Fourth and Vine. At that time it was the tallest skyscraper outside of New York City. It sold policies to everyone, from movie stars like Bette Davis to factory workers. According to his late granddaughter, Mary Edith (Cochnower) Vucinich, John was a wealthy man but died during a business panic, owing debts which consumed much of his estate. Mary Edith had a sister, Constance, who taught at Hughes High school.

There were two Rankin houses at the end of Savannah. Carl Rankin lived in one with his wife, Nell. They later built a house on the north side of Hillcrest Avenue. They had two children, Thomas Rankin and Leslie Rankin who married Edward Meyer. After Nell’s death, Carl married Helen Wild.

Edward Greeno married Juliette Rankin. Greeno was a mattress manufacturer and was responsible for gifts of land and money to the Twin Towers Retirement Community. They lived in the stone Caldwell/Prather house on the end of Windermere Way. Their children were John, who married Louise Squibb, Lucy and Alexander ‘Sandy’ who lived in the house until his death. The house was torn down and the land is now part of Twin Tower’s grounds.

Myers Y. Cooper was a successful Cincinnati businessman who served as Ohio governor in 1929-31. He was real estate speculator and house builder, founded the Hyde Park Lumber Company in 1902, and invested in banking and coal mining. He was also a College Hill developer although he didn’t live in this community.

Elijah Washburn Coy was born at Thorndyke, Maine in 1832, a son of a Baptist minister. At an early age Elijah learned to be a cobbler and with his earnings he went to Brown University, graduating in 1858. After teaching, experience as a principal, university president and as a lawyer, Coy came to Cincinnati in 1873 to become the principal of Hughes High school. He also was the author of several books, of which his Coy’s Latin Lessons became a widely used beginner Latin text.

The home of Coy and his wife Gena (Harrington) was 5819 Glenview Avenue. It was built in the early 1870’s.

The house was purchased in 1925 by William Crowley, a professor at the University of Cincinnati. Mrs. Crowley raised goats for their milk. The windows on the front porch extended to the porch floor and served as the doors for the goats, which lived on the first floor. Eventually the Crowley’s were declared incompetent by the courts. The house was sold in 1950 to the Kuhn family, who worked for many years to reverse the animal damage to “Goat Manor.” The house sold in 1985 and the present owners have completed restoration to this lovely Victorian home.
John C. Daller, president of The Clemens Oskamp Company, wholesale and retail dealers in diamonds, watches and jewelry, has been identified since 1860 with the house of which he is now the head. Starting as a boy entirely upon his own resources, he has climbed to the top of the ladder, and the record of his life cannot fail to be an encouragement to ambitious young men who are willing to labor and practice economy and self-denial early in their life in order to possess a competency in later years. Mr. Daller was born in Germany, September 26, 1846, and is a son of Clemens and Francisca Daller. The father came to America with his family about 1849, when the subject of this review was in his infancy and located on wild land in Colerain township, Hamilton county, Ohio. He was obliged to clear away the underbrush and heavy growth of trees, but labored industriously and developed this place into one of the productive farms of the county. The village of Creedville is now located on the spot upon which Mr. Daller settled more than sixty years ago. Mr. Daller Sr. died in 1887, at the age of forty-seven years, and the mother was called away in 1885, at the age of fifty-eight. Both are buried in the cemetery at Creedville.

In a primitive log schoolhouse near his country home John C. Daller received his introduction to the rudiments of book learning. His education was very limited, as he left school in his tenth year to provide for his maintenance. He began his contact with the business world by apprenticing himself to the watchmaker’s trade, spending four years at Ripley, Ohio. He then came to Cincinnati and secured a position with the firm with which he has ever since been connected. He worked at the bench continuously for ten years and was the promoted to the position of traveling salesman, a branch of the business which he liked so well that he has never entirely given it up, notwithstanding his responsibilities as president of the company, and he is now the oldest salesman traveling out of Cincinnati. Mr. Oskamp died in 1887 and his widow became sole heir to the estate. The son Alfred and Mr. Daller of this review purchased the mother’s interest but after five or six years Alfred Oskamp retired from business and his mother succeeded him as a partner of Mr. Daller. The business was so conducted until her death, in 1899, when Mr. Daller acquired the entire interest. Three years later he organized the corporation now known as The Clemens Oskamp Company, of which he is president, the other officers of the company being: A. O. Daller, vice president; John C. Daller, Jr., secretary; and Charles D. Baker, treasurer.

On the 22d of May, 1872, Mr. Daller was married at Cincinnati to Miss Amelia Oskamp, the eldest daughter of Clemens Oskamp, and they became the parents of six children, namely: Clemens, who is with the John Douglas Plumbing and Supply Company at Cincinnati; Geneva O., who married William Rickelman, a leather merchant; Gertrude O., who married Dr. George C. Kolb and died in 1903, leaving a young son; John C., Jr., who is secretary and manager of The Clemens Oskamp Company; Adele O., the wife of William F. Ray, secretary of the Crystal Distilling Company; and Adrian O., who is also associated with his father.

Mr. Daller and his wife make their home in a beautiful residence which he erected in 1893 at No. 5651 Belmont avenue, College Hill. Dr. Kolb and his son, a lad of six or seven years, are also members of the family. Essentially a man of business, Mr. Daller of this review has found greater pleasure in developing the important enterprises with which he has been so long connected than in any other pursuit and his energies are, therefore, given to his business. He is a life member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and is today one of the most highly respected citizens of Cincinnati and also one of the most successful jewelers this city has known.”

The Daller house became a dormitory for the O. M. I. and was torn down to build Aiken High

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17 Cincinnati-The Queen City, Cuvier Press Club, 1914.

18 Located in the area where Blue Rock Road crosses Cheviot Road.

19 by the O.M.I.

20 Dr. Kolb had offices in College Hill and Peach Grove.
John R. Davey built the home that was later known as “Oakwood.” The grounds were once part of the experimental farm of Farmers’ College. The dark red brick Italianate style house was built in 1868, and was designed by Samuel Hannaford. Davey was the president of Wilson, Hinkle & Company, and built his new bride, Martha Gibson, this mansion. They had four children. John died in 1907 and is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery.

The house was described in Kenny’s book, *Illustrated Guide to Cincinnati* (1875) as:...on the left, at the corner of Laurel Avenue, the fine residence and exquisitely cultivated grounds of John R. Davey, of the firm of Wilson, Hinkle and Company, the great school-book publishers. These grounds are possibly the most beautiful in the country. The grapery is two hundred and fifty feet in length. The greenhouse is filled with rare exotics, including four varieties of banana trees. On the left of the house is a beautiful lake filled with water fowl. More than a mile of gravel walks, with rich flower-beds on the borders, wind through the grounds.

At one time a lake existed in front of Oakwood which extended to today’s Larch Avenue and the gardens in back of the house grew to Llanfair Avenue. About three dozen houses now stand on what was Davey’s seven acres.

The American Book Company was founded by Wintrop B. Smith. Obed J. Wilson (of Clifton and College Hill) was the principal of the 12th district school, a position he resigned from in 1853 due to failing sight. He approached Mr. Smith for a job and did so well that when Smith retired, the firm was renamed as Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle. Sargent retired in 1868 and the firm was then called Wilson, Hinkle & Company. Nearly a decade (1877) later, the firm’s name was changed to Van Antwerp, Bragg & Company. In 1890 the name was again changed - it became the American Book Company. They published *McGuffey’s* Eclectic Education Series and printed all the text books used in the Cincinnati public school system, as well as many other schools across the country.

Dr. Philip Van Ness Myers was the last owner of the property and it became the residence of several of the unmarried teachers in the College Hill schools (about 1907). Two of the boarders were Miss Gatch and Miss Brown. The house was demolished in 1968. Over the years the land was subdivided and Larch Avenue and adjoining streets were built from this plat. Linden Avenue, where the home stood, is slightly curved because a huge oak tree was paved around when the street was laid. The tree was a landmark and stood until 1985 when it was removed due to a lightening strike. The house was torn down in 1969 to make room for an apartment building.

A descendant, Alice Davey Ante, wrote for us her memories: “Approximately 1908, my Father (Charles Gibson McKinney, grandson of John R. Davey through his daughter, Alice.) inherited the lovely cherry dining-room set from Oakwood. It was used in my family until 1952 when I married and the set came to me...where it is still in use. Dad remembered that the table could be extended to seat 24 at a formal dinner. If that table could talk, it would certainly have plenty to say about the family gatherings, the birthday celebrations, the bridge parties, the home-work sessions, the holiday observances and the scars it still bears from our vigorous ping-pong games. The marble-topped dresser has beautiful hand carved doors below and three beveled mirrors above. The two host chairs and the side chairs have the same carving on the backs. According to Dad, in great grand Dad’s time, silver and cut glass vases stood on either end of the dresser and were filled daily with long-stemmed red roses from the greenhouse. Between these stood a

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21 William Holmes McGuffey (1800-1873) was a Presbyterian minister and professor of ancient languages at Miami University. He was approached in 1833 by the Cincinnati publishing firm of Truman & Smith to write a series of readers for grade school students that, in addition to learning to read and spell, would also promote good manners, a sense of duty and faith. These readers covered a broad range of subjects from zoology, botany, and moral philosophy to history. McGuffey lived at Oxford for the three years it took him to write the four book Eclectic Readers series, for which he was paid one thousand dollars. His brother, Alexander Hamilton McGuffey, a lawyer, wrote an additional reader. Used in schools for decades, the books sold over 122 million copies and are still available today. The McGuffey home located on the Oxford, Ohio, Miami University campus and is used as a museum.
Howard Dock was the son of William Dock and Amelia Schwartz, immigrants from Alsace-Lorraine, France. William worked with another Alsacean friend, Michael Werk, the owner of Werk’s Soap Company. Werk was both the first Cincinnati soap manufacturer to gain national brand prominence (Tag soap) and the first candle manufacturer in the city. In 1884 he founded the William Dock & Co. Soap manufacturers. The company eventually merged with Werk soap. William Dock built a home in Clifton in 1913 for his wife, three sons and a daughter. Howard headed Werk’s from 1932-1949. The company was sold in 1951, but not the formula for Tag soap. By 1953 the company went out of business. The “old brown soap” passed into history. Tag soap was used for all types of cleaning; it washed floors and dishes, hair and acne, chased away chiggers and prevented poison ivy rash. The bars contained a metal tag that could be redeemed for various prizes. Howard Dock married Edna Stevens and had two children; Lois and Robert. The Docks built the house at 6081 Bellaire.

Charles Eisen lived in a large house at the corner of Hillcrest and Hamilton Avenues which was razed to build the Hillcrest Apartments. He started working for the John Church Company, which published music, as an office boy. He learned his way up the company and became accomplished at lithography, printing, engraving and writing music. He started to play the violin and was so proficient that he played in the symphony and at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair.

Answering an ad in the Times-Star that was seeking a partner in the chocolate business: He changed the policy of selling candy in bulk to that of packaging it in white and gold - ‘so ardent young swains could bestow on lady loves.’ All this while he was doing things for College Hill that a civic association now has to do, folks say, getting city fathers to improve streets and sewers, forcing the streetcar company to lengthen routes to College Hill, creating a bowling alley and a theater.22

While playing his violin during an English operetta, he had the inspiration for the name and slogan of his candy company; When Words Fail---Send Dolly Vardens. The name of the operetta was Dolly Varden.

Dr. Jacob Ferris lived in a large frame house at the south-west corner of Cedar and Hamilton Avenues surrounded by cherry, pear, and chestnut trees. The house had a large circular driveway. Dr. Ferris and E. N. Wild owned 13 acres on Hamilton Avenue and around 1900 subdivided it into lots, requiring a cash payment of $25.00 per lot and the balance in monthly payments.

In 1903 the first Mrs. Ferris and the Doctor divorced and Mrs. Ferris built a five room cottage at 1615 Cedar. That same year, Mrs. Ferris left College Hill and George and Katherine Forbes moved from the old Cary home located where the Hodapp Funeral Home is situated, to 1615 Cedar.

In 1907 Katherine Forbes was born there and years later married Edward Schevene. Mrs. Schevene Neuzel lived in this home until December 1979 when the City of Cincinnati purchased the house and slated it for demolition to make way for an expansion of the nearby business district. The cottage was bought before demolition and moved to Linden Ave.

Dr. Ferris’s son, Charlie and his wife Pearl, lived across the street. Charles was also a doctor. Later this would be the office of Dr. Armstrong.

Mr. Vitt lived next store and operated a hauling business with mules. That property was later purchased by Mr. Deters, who built a building for his son, who was a plumber. At the edge of the building, which fronted Hamilton Avenue, Deters had constructed a detached building for the post office. These buildings were built by Willis Forbes & Son. Mr. Deters, in addition to the building for his son, built a three room cottage for his two daughters. He turned the barn into an eight room house for himself.

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22 Cincinnati Times-Star, Wonderful Place to Live, College Hill, Robert Heidler, March 17, 1951
Mrs. Schevene Neuzel used to go Dr. Baumeister the dentist, in the RuthEllen building. The dentist would carry her across Hamilton Avenue and buy her a candy bar before sending her home.

**Daniel Flamm** (1820-188) and his brother, Joseph (1828-1904), were born in Wittenburg, Germany. Daniel built the wooden house at the corner of Cedar and Belmont and a cottage on Cedar near Lathrop which his son occupied. Daniel owned the property between Cedar and Llanfair on which his son built a grocery store. Flamm’s later became Bolam’s grocery. The store was later slightly remodeled to be used as apartments.

**Erasmus Gest** (1820-1908) was born in Cincinnati to the pioneer Quaker family of Joseph and Rebekah Gest. Joseph, who was also a merchant, started a second career as the City of Cincinnati surveyor on a part time basis in 1825. By 1840, this was his full time employment. Erasmus followed his father’s occupation and by 1836 he was working on the Whitewater Canal.

When Joseph’s sight started to fail and he could not find a suitable assistant engineer, Erasmus started to work for his father (1841) and was hired as the chief surveyor for the city. In 1847 he returned to the work he preferred as an engineer for the Little Miami Company and left the city. He also was the president of several railroads. Gest traveled to Paris and Great Britain to study how steel was made abroad.

After he returned, he served in the Civil War and afterwards returned to Cincinnati in 1864. He worked for several railroads and in 1869 he developed the Cincinnati Street Railway Company and the Covington White Line Car Street Railway, which he owned and operated. Later these lines were sold to the Cincinnati Consolidated Street Railway Company.

In 1878 Gest estimated the cost of construction of the College Hill Narrow Gauge Railway, which was planned to run along the berm bank of the Miami and Erie Canal.

Erasmus Gest’s papers, diaries, scrapbooks and letters are in the library of the Ohio Historical Society.

**Stephen Hauser** was the president of the Hauser, Brenner & Fath Company. He was born in 1838 in White Oak. He worked in a brewery at 14, learning to be a cooper. After working for several employers, he was able to buy out one and continued business under his own name. His firm used white oak and cypress to make beer and whiskey barrels, steam and fermenting tubs, casks and various types of cooperage for the beer and whiskey trade. Once they manufactured the largest beer keg in the world for the Buckeye Brewing Company. The Hausers lived in College Hill.

The **Haven** family owned a foundry. They lived at the bend of Cedar Avenue across from William Simpson’s house. The Haven’s had four children: William who married Mary McCrea, Frances who married a Galbraith, George, and Rebecca, who married William Edgeman. Mr. Edgeman purchased the Davey mansion from Dr. Philip Van Ness Myers.

**Paul Huston** came to the Colerain area in 1822, his father first settling the land near by in 1795, “...not long after Mad Anthony Wayne had gone through these parts after the Indians having come from Pennsylvania to the Western frontier with just one hundred and fifty dollars in silver, which he had saved from the wreck of the Continental currency; and his father had been a soldier in the Revolution, and gave his life at the battle of Brandywine...The homestead was a gift to his son, for the old gentleman had managed to leave a large farm to each of the seven children that survived him...”

**Doris Kappelhoff (Doris Day)** lived in College Hill on Elkton as a child. The family then moved to

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23 Around an Old Homestead, Paul G. Huston, 1906
Warsaw Avenue in Price Hill around 1940.

Timothy Kirby was born in Middletown, Connecticut in 1797. His father “...ran a schooner in the West India trade.” He walked across the Catskill mountains to Pittsburg and came by raft to Cincinnati when he was 17. He taught school, passed the bar in 1825 and attended Cincinnati College in 1828. He then became a land agent representing the Bank of the United States. In this capacity he purchased tracts of land when the original owner defaulted on the loan. He was a student of geology and once drilled a hole 600 feet deep planning for an artesian well. Instead he accidentally struck natural gas - and capped the well as he didn’t know what to do with the gas. According to the 1911 Souvenir History of Cumminsville “...for a short time a column of gas giving a flame forty feet high illuminated the fields round about. He built a fine brick house in 1843 on a knoll overlooking the community he helped to found, Cumminsville.” The property ended in a large pond which today would be at Chase Street and Pitts Avenue. His land was adjacent to Waggoner’s Run. He helped to build St. Philip’s Episcopal Church and the first Kirby Road school was built upon land he donated.

Edwin Knopf was a member of the College Hill Council (1901-1907) while College Hill was a village. His father, Julius Knopf came from Baden, Germany and served in the Civil War. Julius died in 1890, leaving his wife, Caroline, and his minor children; Otto, Alma, Walter, William, and Helen. The Knopf family lived for many years in College Hill. When Edwin was elected to Council, a party was given in his honor by Peter G. Thomson at the Scottish Rite Cathedral. The following were guests: Eugene Lewis (auditor), Jacob Bromwell (Congressman), Geo. E. Henshaw, Joshua L. & N. L. Pierson, John E. Bruce (Mayor), H. G. Poundsford, T. W. Pyle, John Wilson, W. R. Goodall, A. J. Willey, William Strasser, W. C. Hayden, J. Ed Deininger (Marshall), Dr. Charles Ferris, F. R. Strong, Frank Bowman, D. E. Pottenger, A. T. Deininger.

Charles Louis Laboiteaux was the final Laboiteaux in College Hill. He was the son of Isaac Newton LaBoiteaux/Laboyteaux. Charles founded the LaBoiteaux Company, and the Republic Paper Board Company, box manufacturing and paper specialties companies. He owned a large tract of land on the east side of Hamilton Avenue inherited through his wife, Edith Cist. The Cist’s originally owned that side of Hamilton Avenue down the hillside into Northside. The property had an octagonal house and a large white frame house, the latter still standing, where Frank Cist, Edith’s brother, and his wife lived. Charles was a member of the Park Board and donated, along with Mary H. LaBoiteaux, and Constance and Thomas E. Drake, LaBoiteaux Woods. The city purchased additional land to comprise the 53 acre preserve. The entrance was built through the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The landmark octagonal house was torn down and Hammond North was built on the site. Charles’s father was Isaac Newton LaBoiteaux who worked for Duhme & Company, jewelers.

The octagonal house was built in 1855 by an attorney. It had eight gables, each one with its own balcony. Each gable was supported by a pillar resting on the porch, which extended 232 feet around the house. The central room was 28 feet square. There were 60 doors in the house. The view must have been spectacular, sitting on the top of a ridge.

While the house was unusual, it was not unique. In 1849 Ordon Squire Fowler wrote A Home for All where he promoted the octagonal shaped house as being the most aesthetically pleasing and economical for encompassing the largest interior footage. What he didn’t consider was the amount of unusable awkwardly shaped rooms created when a rectangular floor plan was inserted into a multi-sided perimeter. Many communities had one of these oddly shaped houses, but usually only one. An example of an octagonal house, restored and open to the public in Hamilton, Ohio, is the Lane-Hooven house. Built of brick in

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24 Cincinnati Selections: an Omnibus, B. Klein.
1863, it is located at 319 N. Third Street.

Gilbert LaBoiteaux lived in Mt. Healthy and was a farmer, poet and writer. As a young man (age 10) in 1830 was a mail carrier.25 "When I presented my petition to be a mail carrier to William Burke, who was then a postmaster at Cincinnati, he read off the names with a voice that frightened me. Mr. Burke was a preacher as well as a postmaster...After carefully reading the petition, Mr. Burke took me to the office of Salmon P. Chase, then a young attorney, located on Third street, just east of Main, where I was sworn in...

I had no trouble in getting off my horse, but to get on again was a different matter. Postmaster Burke, however, was generally on hand to give me a boost. Mt. Healthy...started with a weekly mail. I will never forget my first ride. As there was but one saddle in the village I had to ride bareback. My compensation, or rather my father’s, for carrying the mail was $40 a year. I got a fi’ penny-bit for each trip, which is now equivalent to 6 1/4 cents. It was the lowest rate on letter postage. It would pay the postage on a letter just so many miles and no further. The next rate was 11 cents. The next rate was 18 3/4 cents, and 25 cents would carry a letter to any point in the United States where there was a post-office. In those days the receiver of the letter footed the bill. The receipts of the office didn’t pay the $40 for carrying the mail, so my father always had a little coming to him at the end of the year.

If I could command all the strenuous words in the English language I would fail to adequately describe the road between Mt. Healthy and Cincinnati, especially in early winter and spring. There was only one short stretch of the road, between Mt. Pleasant and ‘Hell town,’ now called Northside, that I had any respect for and that commenced just where the College Hill water-works stands, running along the ridge now covered by private dwellings. It was along that ridge that Gen. St. Clair, September 17, 1791, passed with his army of 2,000 men to exterminate the Indians and got badly licked.”

Gilbert lived a long life at the family home at 7345 Hamilton Avenue. One of his poems that he wrote for the Springfield Township Pioneer Association26 describes how he felt about farmers:

When the battle rages, when cannons crash and bellow,
The man behind the gun is a very useful fellow;
His valor, we admire, as he rushes on the foe,
But he gets his brawn and courage from
the man behind the hoe.

The soldier and the statesman we glorify in verse,
And their great achievements, always ready to rehearse,
We chisel them in marble, we crown them with a wreath,
We place them on a pedestal with name in bold relief;
We love this hero worship, but I would like to know
Why we never honor the man behind the hoe.

Leonard ‘Len’ Lanius founded American jiu-jitsu based on the idea that a smaller man can overcome a larger man using scientific principles. He also held a world lightweight wrestling championship. He married Minnie Duebel.

Jesse D. Locker: The Rev. Laban S. and Elizabeth Morgan Locker were living on Perry Street in Mt. Healthy when Jesse was born in the home of his grandmother, Winnie Cowan. Rev. Locker had the distinction of being the first African American in Ohio to be ordained as a minister in the Christian Church. The church paid very little. When the Reverend died in 1900 he left a legacy of a lapsed insurance policy and pocket change for his family. Rev. Locker’s church, the Christian Church of College

25 Times Star, March 16, 1910, Carried the Mail Eighty Years Ago.

26 One Square Mile, Mt. Healthy Historical Society.
Hill, once stood at the corner of Cedar and Piqua. After his death his wife and children moved to College Hill, where Jesse attended College Hill High School. Jesse worked for many College Hill families, doing his chores before and after school. Graduating as the valedictorian of his senior class, he was part of the last students matriculating from College Hill High School. Following classes attended Hughes High School for by then College Hill had been annexed to Cincinnati.

He worked for a year before he could afford to enter Howard University in Washington, D.C., graduating from its law school. It was in college that he met and married Anna French.

After his graduation they returned in Cincinnati, living in their 1210 Cedar Avenue home from 1918-1952. He started his law practice in 1919. While his practice was being established during the day, he worked as a janitor by night.

For 36 years he was a lawyer and became a leader in the Republican Party. In 1941 he was overwhelmingly elected to Cincinnati City Council, only the third African American man to do so. Winning five more elections he served as City Councilman 1942-1953. But when he was asked, he said that his proudest accomplishment was founding, along with George A. Martin, who was blind, the Negro Sightless Society of Ohio in 1945.

The Lockers had 4 daughters: Mary E., Vivian H., Bunny Cleo, and Junanita Alice. Mrs. Locker was active in many organizations, including the Republican Party. She loved flowers, building a water garden and green house for her hobby. Her Oriental Gardens were visited by residents and school children alike.

Well respected, when he was appointed as U.S. Ambassador to Liberia he remarked; First time I ever heard of Liberia was as a boy when a white missionary from Liberia, C.C. White, spoke at the College Hill Christian Church, of which my father, Laben S. Locker, was pastor. He told about the wonderful missionary work of the Negro missionary, Jacob Kennelly, who gave his life trying to save some drowning boys in Liberia. I never forgot about that, but I never dreamed of becoming ambassador there.

President Eisenhower appointed him Ambassador in 1953.

Locker resigned his city council position to accept the Ambassadorship. His service was cut short by his sudden death from a cerebral hemorrhage in 1955. His funeral was the largest ever seen in Cincinnati. His body lay in state at City Hall, the only person to be so honored. It was estimated that over ten thousand people viewed him during the four hours he lay in state. Representatives from Washington D.C. and the Liberian government attended his funeral.

Locker is buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Mt. Healthy. His Cedar Avenue home was demolished in 1987. Nothing in College Hill honors his memory by bearing the name of the man who said: “The greatest thing I hope will be said of me when I die is that I was a friend to the common man.”

Philip Van Ness Myers studied both law and teaching. He came to be the president of Farmers’ College in 1879, leaving his native state of New York. He held that position for a dozen years and was instrumental in the change from Farmers’ College to Belmont College. He resigned his position to head the history department at the University of Cincinnati. As an author he wrote a popular book on President Wilson, whom he greatly admired. Mrs. Myers also taught at Belmont College. They built a house across from the Davey mansion and since Mrs. Myers didn’t cook, the house was built without a kitchen. They took their meals across the street at “Oakwood” which they also owned. At that time Oakwood was a boarding house for College Hill’s unmarried women teachers. Myers also built the Glenwood Apartments that until recently stood on Hamilton Avenue.

Myers had an African American butler, Henry House, who later worked for the Henshaw family. Mr. House had at one time worked for a hotel in downtown Cincinnati. At the end of the day he would collect the scraps leftover from the day’s meals. He took the food to his house in College Hill to feed his hogs. By feeding and selling the hogs, he was able to put his five children through college.

The Neuzel family owned a brass foundry. Katherine Schevene (later Neuzel) wrote of her memories of her neighbors: “At Christmas time they had a wagon come out with brass articles for presents. We had a tall pair of candlestick holders on our mantle and Father had a comb, brush and mirror set and (Mother)
had an inkwell on her desk. They had some orange groves in Mexico... They (the orange grove) were finally confiscated by the government of Mexico in their revolution.” They also lost the strip of property that connects Marlowe and Cedar. It was their apple orchard.

**Dr. John B. Peaslee** (1842-1912) was the superintendent of the Cincinnati Public Schools (1874-1886). An innovator in the classroom, he introduced lined paper and lined slates for neat and accurate class work. Writing many textbooks, he believed in rote recitation, introduced a new method of teaching elementary math, required teachers to attend forestry lectures, changed the manner in which history and physics were taught, and encouraged commemoration of birthdays of celebrated authors, artists, and statesmen with special class work and readings. He was the founder of Arbor Day, first celebrated in Cincinnati on April 27, 1882 by planting Author’s Grove in Eden Park. Eden Park was chosen because the hillsides were bare from Longworth’s failed vineyard attempt. Other Eden Park Groves that consequently were started were Battle Grove, Pioneer Grove, and President’s Grove.

Peaslee married Louisa Wright April 25, 1878, a great-grand-daughter of Major General John Sites Gano, one of the original settlers of Cincinnati, and grand-daughter of Major Daniel Gano. When they married, the teachers of the Cincinnati Public Schools gave them a Weber piano and a French clock. Louisa died in 1894 and the couple had no children. The Wright family lived in Mt. Healthy.

Some of Peaslee’s family relocated to Cincinnati from New Hampshire and Massachusetts. They too were teachers. A cousin, Edward S. Peaslee, was a principal at Kirby Road school for 35 years. C. E. Peaslee also taught at Kirby Radd school for 49 years. He started teaching there in 1876 and was principal until 1911, when the current Kirby Road school was built. He then continued as a teacher until 1923. Dr. Leon Peaslee, John B.’s nephew, was a principal of Walnut Hills and Woodward High schools. Marshall B. Peaslee (John B.’s brother) was a teacher at Hughes High school, as was his daughter, Patricia D. Peaslee.

The 1884 College Hill map shows a C. R. Peaslee owning 11.2 acres adjoining the 48.8 acres of Sarah Harbeson. Betty Wittekind mentioned in a letter that one of Harbeson’s daughters married a Peaslee.

**Daniel Buell Pierson** The Pierson name has been synonymous with the lumber and building industry for many years. Daniel B. Pierson, the founder of the business, was born in LeRoy, New York (1815-1885) and worked for a lumber business owned by Mr. Newbold and Mr. LeRoy. Pierson was sent by them to northern Michigan to inspect timber land. His trip was extended, and Pierson came down the Ohio River on a log raft in 1850, landing in Cincinnati. Before leaving on this journey he married Lydia Hubbard Lathrop, also from LeRoy.

The name Lathrop originated with John Lowthroppe of Lowthrope, England. In 1585, John Lathropp was baptized in Eaton, Yorkshire. He received his B.A. and A.M. degrees from Queens College in 1605 and 1609. Rev. John Lathropp was the pioneer, coming to America.

The lumberyard was first located at 381 Plum Street, becoming a landmark at ‘the Elbow of the Canal.’ With access to the canal, oak and hardwoods came down the Ohio River from the Alleghanies, and the pine and poplar wood down the canal from the north.

Amid a building boom following the Civil War, Daniel opened a lumber company at 12th & Central, eventually buying the business from Messrs. Newbold & LeRoy. His sons, Joshua and Newbold, joined their father in the firm under the name of Pierson Lumber Company (1874). At that time Pierson built a home on West Seventh Street. He purchased a farm near the intersection of Cedar and Argus Roads, later buying a house in College Hill about 1856.

Daniel and Lydia were members of and active within the Episcopal Church. They helped to build old St. John’s Church at 7th and Plum Streets. In College Hill they were one of the primary founders of Grace Episcopal Church.

The Northside location for the lumberyard was picked because of the railroad access. Streetcars started taking workers further away from home for their jobs and the suburbs started to build subdivisions.
to accommodate the housing demand outside of the city’s core. The lumberyard soon outgrew its location and land was purchased on the east side of Cherry Street from the Knowlton estate. Shortly afterwards a fire swept through the lumberyard, destroying the offices and much of the stock. They rebuilt along the corner of Cherry and Cooper Streets.

In College Hill, Daniel and Lydia lived on 10 acres that fronted Hamilton Avenue. The original house on this site burned in the 1860’s and Pierson built the house that is presently standing with a long circular drive. After passing out of the Pierson family the house was in disrepair and became a boarding house. It was purchased by E. H. Lunken who gutted the interior and restored the property. The entrance of the house was moved to face Lathrop Road (Hillcrest Road), which wasn’t in existence at the time the house was originally built. It was then that the imposing pedimented full height Roman portico was added and a gazebo built to the rear of the property. In 1924, Mr. Orville Simpson purchased the home, and architect John Scudder Adkins did a complete remodeling. The house is located at 1422 Hillcrest Road.

Daniel and his family are buried in Spring Grove Cemetery. Daniel’s parents, Philo and Lucretia Buell Pierson, also moved to College Hill. Philo, who was a carpenter and a joiner, died (1865) and his wife later married Capt. Timothy Hatch. Lucretia Buell married Philo Pierson in Leroy, New York in 1811. In addition to their son Daniel, they had Catherine, William Porter, Clymene, Emily Eliza and Caroline. A family letter said: Her children-6, his children-11, their children-7.


Joshua attended school at Williston Seminary, East Hampton, Massachusetts where he was a good student and had respect from both the faculty and his fellow students. He joined his father in the lumber business about 1870. He also was the vice-president of the Northside Bank. At this time the lumberyards were located in Northside at Cooper and Cherry Streets. Pierson Lumber was later bought from the children of Joshua by Edward K. Bruce (Pierson’s son-in-law), Edgar Cummings (Dorothy Henshaw’s father), and Walter T. Askew, who owned The Oaks. Mr. Askew and Mr. Thornhill owned the business at the start of the Depression. Mr. Askew passed away suddenly and his widow, being unfamiliar with the business, sold their interest. Mr. Cummings was the first president following the sale, followed by Jack Thornhill.

Joshua and Lillie had the following family: 1) Ethel Seymour Pierson (born 7/19/1877) married James Churchill Bowman 2) Daniel B. Pierson (born 4/27/1880) married in 1902 to Mable Brown 3) Lillie E. Pierson (born 11/27/1885) married 7/5/1906, William E. Greene of Canada, a clothing merchant. Both J. C. Bowman and D. B. Pierson were fruit growers in Oregon. Lillie died and Joshua remarried to Kitty Ellis. They had a daughter, Katherine Ellis Pierson who married Edward K. Bruce, who later became the Assistant United States District Attorney and was a brother to John E. Bruce mayor of College Hill. Edward’s children were: a son who died young, Alice, Kitty, and Edward, who died in the influenza pandemic earlier this century. Daniel B. Pierson and Mable Brown had five children: Daniel, Frank, Mahlon, James and Margaret.

Joshua Pierson built three houses, one for each of his daughters, on the street he named Lathrop. Joshua died when 63 (11/24/1915). Not only was he a well known coal and lumber merchant but he was also President of the Northside Bank, a vestryman of the Episcopal Church, Trustee of the O. M. I. and a Mason.

James and Ethel Bowman had a large family; Margaret Pierson Bowman, Stuart Pierson Bowman who married Martha Ann Brennan, Henry Kemp Bowman married Catherine Bell Ginter, Eleanor Churchill Bowman who married John Gibson McKinney. The brothers, Stuart and Henry Bowman, laid the cornerstone of the present Grace Episcopal Church on land donated by their grandfather, Daniel.

James C. Bowman’s parents were Henry Swinfinn Bowman and Sarah Henshaw. Sarah’s parents were Ann Oldenberg of the Dutchy of Oldenberg, Germany and George Henshaw, a furniture
manufacturer from England.

When first married, James and Ethyl Bowman built a home in Hamilton, Ohio. Due to ill health, James moved his family to a 10 acre apple ranch in Hood River, Oregon. The Hood River Valley is still the area of premier fruit-growers due to volcanic soil, glacial water, warm days and crisp nights. Nine years later his doctor advised him to relocate back to Cincinnati. They moved to College Hill, settling at 5809 Lathrop. James took over the coal portion of Pierson Coal Co. which was started by Ethyl’s grandfather, D. L. Pierson. Their 3 children married and stayed in College Hill.

Newbold LeRoy Pierson attended school at Farmers’ College and a private school in London, Ontario, Canada. Although he never owned the business, he worked for the lumber company. He was also a secretary to the mayor of Cincinnati. Newbold was the developer of lower Cedar Avenue which had been a farm purchased by his father. The street name “Leffingwell” is a surname of the Lathrop relations. One of his children was Daniel Buell Pierson (born 1885). Newbold shared offices with Edgar Cummings, another building contractor. After 1918, Mr. Cummings left the construction trade, while Newbold had a business downturn and went bankrupt. Newbold had built a large home next to that of the Cumming’s on Larch Avenue and sold it to the Crosley family. Newbold built a small house for his family on Hillcrest Road. Shortly afterwards, he was killed by a street car.

Pierson built a log cabin land office at Hamilton and Ambrose Aves. After his subdivision was built the house was then moved to 1418 Cedar Avenue (Dr. Jacob Ferris’ second subdivision), sided, and used as a house. The house has since been aluminum sided but still can be recognized from the X-shaped cross beams protruding at each end of the roof. The house was first owned by Anna and William Hobson, the sold to George and Anna Dasch (1924-1947).

The late Richard Dasch, Jr., grandson of George Dasch, shared some of his family history. George Dasch was originally from Covington, Kentucky. He was a butcher and took his meat in a horse-drawn wagon along a Spring Grove Avenue, Winton Place, Northside, Goosey (east Cumminsville) and College Hill route. He purchased a whole side of beef from Meyers and did all of his meat preparation from the back of the wagon. He established the Daily Meat Market, a butcher shop/grocery store in Northside at (today’s Spring Grove Avenue and Dooley By-Pass) in 1907 when the Board of Health no longer allowed meat to be sold from a wagon. During the Depression he lost his business and went to work at Peebles Meats in Northside.

Louis Beierle, Richard Dasch Jr.’s cousin, was a delivery boy for the store. People would call in or leave a checked off list of the cuts of meat they wanted. He also delivered groceries, fruit and vegetables. The store had a succession of delivery vehicles, a REO Speed wagon, a Model-T Ford and a Richenbacker Touring Car. He would go to Kentucky to purchase barrels of cottontail rabbits that had been shot by hunters and then cleaned and sold the meat. Mr. Beierle lived in the left side of the building that was originally the House of Free Discussion in Northside. He worked for Mr. Dupps of College Hill as his chauffeur. He drove Mr. Dupps from packing house to packing house throughout New England. Mr. Dupps was vice-president of Cincinnati Butcher’s Supply.


The Pierson Lumber and Coal Co. split into two parts, the coal company being run by James Bowman and his son, Henry. As the demand for coal declined, they went into the tool rental and sales business.

Pierson’s had also purchased the Edgewood Lumber Co. across the street from them and that was sold to the Bowmans. During W. W. II the Pierson Lumber Company supplied lumber for crates for the Army Air Force at Wright Patterson Field in Dayton.

In 1950 Jack H. Thornell was president; Lewis J. Henshaw, vice-president and secretary and Clarence R. Rusk, treasurer. Under Mr. Thornell27, who had a degree in architecture and was a graduate

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of the O. M. I., Pierson’s Panel Homes was created. These easy to assemble home kits were very popular. This concept also eliminated one of the problems of the lumber business - lumber companies would supply the lumber to a contractor but wouldn’t get paid until the house was sold. The results would be cash-flow problems and Pierson’s would find themselves with houses in their inventory if the buildings didn’t sell. The company was sold to Ace Doran Trucking and Rigging in the 1950’s.

Mr. Thornell’s hobby was home radio. He made his own components and was a friend of Powel Crosley, Jr. Thornell’s radios are now part of the radio collection at the Cincinnati Museum Center.

**Pounsford** was once a name synonymous with stationary in Cincinnati. The patriarch of the family here was William, who advertised book binding as early as 1812. His son, Arthur, purchased in 1883 the property of A. D. E. Tweed, that sat on a prominent Belmont Avenue hill. Arthur was a founder of the Applegate and Pounsford Co.

The Pounsford Stationary Company was first located at Second and Main Streets, in downtown Cincinnati, an address that was at the center of the wholesale trade. The business stayed in the family until 1948 when it was purchased by the Chicago firm of Horder’s Inc.

Arthur was a nephew of Dr. Daniel Drake, and spent much of his youth at the doctor’s home. During his ownership the company became known for general publishing, printing and wholesale stationary. He planted thousands of trees in College Hill, which lent the streets a park like atmosphere. He was active in the building both of Town Hall and the Presbyterian church. He also was instrumental in having street car service extended to College Hill. Arthur’s great-grandfather, Thomas Graham, founded the first paper-making machine used in the west. His grandfather, James Graham, built Graham’s Paper Mills along the Miami River. His grandmother was a niece and ward of Ethan Allen Brown, U. S. Senator and Ohio’s former governor.

His son, Harry G., graduated from Farmers’ College and joined his father in the company in 1888, under the name of A. H. Pounsford & Company. He extended the company into the paper manufacturing business and became a sixty year director for the Champion Coated Paper Company. He also was part of the College Hill Realty Company, which controlled the former Glenwood Apartments. Harry was a well known figure, riding the #17 bus to and from his shop on Walnut Street. He was active in many philanthropic societies and a director of the Y.M.C.A. He was an elder in the Presbyterian church for 30 years and a fifteen year member of College Hill’s council. At his death in 1963 he left $195,000. of his estate to various charities.

Harry’s hobby was growing flowers and distributing them to businesses near his office on 4th Street, and to patients at Christ and Jewish Hospitals. His extensive garden at 5805 Belmont Avenue bloomed profusely from tulips to chrysanthemums.

The former Tweed house overlooked the city and sat on six acres, mostly lawn and gardens. The property was studded with old and unique trees left over from the Farmers’ College days. Along the rear of the property is the abandoned College Hill Railroad tracks.

Harry married Susan Aiken, daughter of Charles Aiken. His half-sister Sarah lived with him toward the end of her life. Sarah was one of the first graduates of the Western College for Women (now Miami University), Oxford, Ohio. She died in 1939 after being an invalid during the last fifteen years of her life due to a street car accident in College Hill. After Harry’s death in 1963 the property was sold in 1968 to Rev. Karl Kollath of the Hoffner Street Church in Northside. The church moved to Belmont Avenue years later when a tornado heavily damaged the Northside church.

Harry and Susan had Arthur G. and Stanley M. Pounsford. Arthur G.\(^{28}\) attended the O.M.I. and graduated from Cornell University with a degree in engineering. He was chief engineer for the Champion Paper & Fibre Co. at Canton, N. C. and then erected a pulp and paper plant for Provincial Paper, Ltd., at Port Arthur, Canada. He became a Canadian citizen and lived in Port Arthur.

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\(^{28}\) Times-Star, June 10, 1943
Pounsford served as chairman of four victory loan campaigns in Port Arthur and has been appointed by the Canadian government to have charge of a vast wood fuel production program in that region. He was bestowed the Order of the British Empire by the King for patriotic and philanthropic accomplishments. This gave him the right to be called Sir, and wear the British Empire Cross of Silver. He died in 1951.

His brother, Stanley M., died in 1987. He worked his entire life for the Pounsford Stationary Co. It was finally acquired by Ramsey Business Equipment in 1958 and Pounsford’s later moved from Main Street to Ramsey’s headquarters on Central Avenue. He served in W.W. I. Stanley built a house for his daughter Kathleen on Meryton Lane. Willis Forbes built the house, which was paid for by Harry G. Pounsford. Kathleen was the bookkeeper for the family stationary company and died in 1997.

Tyrone Edmund Power was born in Walnut Hills May 5, 1914. A graduate of Purcell-Marian High school, he earned money by working as an usher at the Orpheum Theater at Peebles Corner and as a soda fountain attendant in College Hill. In 1931, after graduating from high school, he went to Hollywood to join his father, Frederick Tyrone Power, and went on to stardom as a leading man.

During the 1920’s, C. Oscar Schmidt moved to College Hill from Clifton. When his forefather, Carl Schmidt arrived to join relatives in Cincinnati from East Prussia, “Porkapolis” was declining. Carl was a nephew of Mrs. Bertha Bruckmann, wife of the brewer Christoph Bruckmann, and through this connection he was apprenticed as a brewer. But his uncle, also named Carl Schmidt, had started his own company and invited the younger Carl to join him, as the elder Carl was in need of financing. The younger Carl entered into the meat processing machinery business in 1870 and changed his name to Charles G. Schmidt to avoid confusion. The two Schmidt’s continued in their partnership until 1886 when Charles opened his own business; Cincinnati Butchers’ and Packers Supply Company, located on Central Avenue. By living on Dayton Street he was only a short walk from his business. In addition to his work, Charles was also very active in many Cincinnati organizations, such as the Literary Society, the Turners, and was the honorary president of the North American Singing Societies which extended from Canada to Mexico.

Charles combined his butcher’s knowledge with a natural mechanical aptitude and patented a meat cooler which protected the meat from water dripping as the ice melted. He also patented a machine that cleaned sausage casings.

From these two inventions, Charles produced a line of meat packing equipment which helped to revolutionize through mechanization the industry of rending, processing and slaughter. Charles held over 100 patents for his innovations, which are still made under the Boss trademark. His mechanical talent was passed to his son, C. Oscar Schmidt (Sr.) who, in 1918, patented a hog de-hairer which shaved hogs before butchering. Stressing innovation, new product development, reliability and efficiency, the company shaped the meat processing industry and gradually shifted from processing into the less efficient area of slaughtering.

C. Oscar Schmidt moved his family to College Hill, living at 5701 Hamilton Avenue and later, on Linden Drive and Hamilton Avenue. His son, C. Oscar Schmidt, Jr. worked his way through college and received a degree from U.C. in mechanical engineering, a M.S. in engineering and an M.B.A. from Harvard. Just as his education for his career was starting, the Depression of the 1930’s began. He enrolled in the ROTC program which provided his uniforms and the ROTC stipend helped him with living expenses. During this time the company workers were paid, often at the expense of missed salary by the family. When his father died in 1944, Oscar C. Schmidt, Jr. and his brother William took over the business. In 1946 Oscar was elected the firm’s president. Gradually the business was diversified and expanded, at times acquiring their less successful competitors.

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One of the most important items the company developed was the electric stunner and animal restraint which helped the industry to comply with the Humane Slaughter Act of 1958. This device was not patented. Mr. Schmidt considered the development costs and the device his gift to the industry, and it was less expensive than the method it replaced.

Oscar Schmidt, Jr. holds over 35 patents and with his sons, Milton and Christoph, are working executives in the company. The Cincinnati Butchers Supply Company is the world’s largest manufacturer of butcher and processing equipment. Requests made for replacement parts on machines that the company manufactured 90 years ago are not uncommon. Located in Elmwood Place since 1940, the company is on its second century of production. Still family owned and operated, all six generations bear the name of Carl somewhere in their names. Still innovating, they have entered the pasta machinery industry as the company continues to adapt to an ever changing industry.

The Simpson family had several notable homes on the hill. The frame house at the corner of Larch and Belmont had a large larch tree in the front yard from when that property was part of the experimental farm. Named “Larchmont,” the house was built in 1870 and was probably designed by Samuel Hannaford, who was years later related through marriage to the Simpsons.

Robert Simpson was born in Rochester, Monroe Co., New York, March 16, 1830. His father was William Simpson and his mother’s name, before her marriage, had been Mary A. Penney. He was educated at the Public Schools and Collegiate Institute of Rochester and began his varied business career there in the counting room of the Rochester Union and Advertiser - then, as now, the leading paper in the city. After this he became a telegrapher on the line then in process of construction from the city of New York to Buffalo and thence into the Mississippi Valley. The company that constructed this line was the precursor of the Western Union Telegraph Company and at that time had its headquarters at Rochester. Mr. Simpson’s ability and devotion to his work secured his rapid promotion in the service of the company until he was placed in charge of its Operating Department in the city of New York; the office being at the corner of Wall and Broad Streets.

After the risings in Cuba, headed by Narciso Lopez, in 1848, 1850, and 1851, the Spanish Government, realizing the necessity to the maintenance of its authority of a telegraph line across the Island, sent agents to New York to contract for the requisite materials and supplies and also to engage someone competent to supervise the construction of the line and the instruction of its operators. Mr. Simpson was recommended for the position and in the spring of 1852, sailed for Cuba, where he stayed until the first division of the line was completed and in successful operation. After his return Mr. Simpson consulted the wisest business men of his acquaintance as to the probable future of telegraphy and all agreed that its development was so doubtful as to make it unwise for him to devote to it more of his time. September 12, 1854 he married Sarah J. Hartwell of Saratoga County, whom he met while acting as telegrapher at Saratoga. Mrs. Simpson’s parents were Thomas Hartwell and Phoebe Rogers, and they lived on a farm not far from Saratoga Springs. In 1855 Mr. and Mrs. Simpson went to Davenport, Iowa, where Mr. Simpson went into the lumber business. In 1858 he gave this up for the insurance business and established a general agency in the city of Davenport, including fire, marine and life insurance, in which he continued until 1861. Wishing to make a specialty of life insurance, he selected the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company of Newark, N. J., as the best to represent.

In 1863 Mr. Simpson accepted the agency in Ohio and selected Cincinnati as his headquarters. The agency of the company had been established in Cincinnati in 1845 under the charge of John W. Hartwell, one of the most prominent and highly esteemed citizens of the place. Mr. Hartwell held the agency until succeeded by Mr. Simpson.

Mr. Simpson was joined by his sons, Frank H. and Robert Simpson, Jr. in the business. Frank Simpson had his house on the northwest corner of Glenview Avenue and Meryton Place (originally

30 Courtesy of Jerry Simpson, written circa 1895.
named Highland Avenue and Huntington Place). This property is at 5801 Glenview. When he was first married he lived in a house next to that of his parents on Larch Street.

Upon first coming to Cincinnati, Mr. Simpson established his family in the city. They also boarded for a time at Riverside and afterwards at College Hill. They were so much pleased with the last place that they went to housekeeping there in 1866 and built, or remodeled, the house they now occupy, in 1867. The family came to College Hill in part to escape the cholera epidemic in Cincinnati.

The Robert Simpson house at the corner of Larch and Belmont Avenues, is still remembered by College Hill residents. Howard Hannaford, whose father was Ebenezer, a brother of Samuel Hannaford, married Ruth Simpson there. Howard was a Presbyterian minister and the couple became missionaries. They both taught English in colleges located in Tokyo. When W.W. II started they were held for a time in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. After their release they continued their ministry in the country of Lebanon. Every seven years they returned to College Hill for a visit, until the end of their lives when they moved to the Llanfair Retirement community.

Robert Simpson purchased the Cincinnati Northwestern Railroad, which was known as the College Hill Railroad and was its president. He was also president of the board of directors of the Ohio Military Institute, and a Mason. He died March 11, 1897.

The eldest son of Robert was William Thomas Simpson born in New York. His first business experience was when he was 14 or 15, collecting bus fares for the line operated by his father, prior to the building of the College Hill Railroad. When he was eighteen he and his father started the galvanizing works on Pearl Street, named W. T. Simpson & Co. This was the first galvanizing industry in this part of the country. Sheet iron was purchased and shipped from Pittsburgh to be galvanized here and was used for roofing and in construction. The company expanded, renamed as the American Galvanizing Works and was sold in 1903.

Simpson purchased in 1890 the Riverside Rolling Mill, reorganizing at as the Cincinnati Rolling Mill Co. The Mill made iron and steel sheets of standard quality and most of them were sold in nearby markets. His own Galvanizing Works on Pearl Street, and the American Steel Roofing Company, were two of this Mill’s largest customers.

This plant was run as a sheet mill until about 1897 when it was reorganized as The Cincinnati Rolling Mill & Tin Plate Company. It was then remodeled and operated as a tin mill, making standard Tin Plate Bright Plate, until it was sold to the American Sheet & Tin Plate Company in January 1899.

The American Steel Roofing Company approached Simpson in 1899 for his opinion on establishing a mill in Middletown, Ohio. Simpson, George M. Verity, and R. C. Philips founded the American Rolling Mill Company, later known as ARMCO Steel. A mill in Zanesville, Ohio was purchased in 1905 and Simpson became the first vice-president and general manager of this mill until his death.

He married Sarah Ricker but their only child died as an infant.

William owned many acres in southern Indiana which was his retreat for raising horses and racing roadsters. He followed his father as president of the board of directors of Belmont College. He died in his 1750 Cedar Avenue home, 30 March 1915. His widow continued to live in this Tudor style mansion.

The property was purchased in 1870 by Robert Simpson for $4,000 (about 5 acres, 2 lots) from Norris S. Knight. In 1882 Robert passed it to William T. Simpson. After the death of his widow, the estate went to her nephew Harold Simpson (1935). Three years later, the property was acquired by Logan Thomson. A little of the land was acquired in 1941 by the city for a change in the roadbed. The rest of the property was sold by Logan’s wife, Sylvia, in 1948.

Another son of Robert was Orville Simpson who lived at 1422 Hillcrest Road. He was born in Iowa and graduated from Farmers’ College in 1882. In 1885 Orville became the proprietor of the Straub Machinery Company which manufactured grist mills for grinding flour and meal. Robert had purchased this factory in 1844. Located at Front and John Streets, mill stones from this company were uncovered in

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31 ARMCO Bulletin, 1915
1998 during the construction of the new football stadium. In 1910 Orville built a factory at 1230 Knowlton Street, Cumminssville and changed the name to the Orville Simpson Company. The business was continued by his son, Lowe, who designed the first flour sifter in 1912 for a customer. He was followed in turn by his son, Jeremy, until 1988 when the first non-Simpson became its president. The company produces screening machines and is in business today under the name of Rotex. The sifters allow for sifting, grading and sorting raw materials - from wheat to plastics.

Orville died in 1944. He originally built a house on land that extended from the end of Salvia to the College Hill Presbyterian Church. It was a white frame house facing Hamilton Avenue that set back from the street with a wide lawn. The family later moved and remodeled the house on Hillcrest.

Frank H. Simpson’s son, Harold, built his house at 5675 Meryton Lane. Designed in 1891 by Samuel Hannaford at the behest of Frank, the property was also known as the Simpson weaning house. Frank’s daughter, Frances, married Charles Upson. Charles Upson had two brothers, Mark, who became a surgeon, and Herbert, who married Virginia Anderson, a relative of the Henshaw’s. James Bowman and his daughter, Eleanor McKinney, also owned this house.

George W. Smith lived on Larch Avenue and was a plumber and heating contractor. Active in his community, he was one of the builders of the original swimming pool of Town Hall. Others aiding in the construction were Charles Eisen, Clarence Dutell-a carpenter that lived on Savannah Avenue, Peter Douglas, George Fox, R. J. Dessauer, Willis and Rae Strief, Harry Toepfer, Edward Schnier, Sam Jones and Bill and Joe Hohmann. George Smith had three children: Ruth, Chester Arthur and Virginia. Ruth married William Hammelrath. Ruth has a vivid College Hill memory of W.W. I - that they picked oakum. During the school day, they picked the heavy fibers of the oily, smelly plants, which were brought to the school by the Red Cross. Ruth and William had two children who grew up in College Hill: Smith and Susan.

There also was a Thomson family in Northside, but NOT connected to the Thomson’s of College Hill. Another Peter Thomson had a son named Alexander. Alexander’s brother John married Janet Langlands. John’s estate, “Willowburn,” was in Northside to the rear of the Presbyterian church. The house was built in the Greek Revival style and was built by a willow bordered stream. The street next to the property was named Brookside. In 1870 Janet Thomson owned 49,250 acres of Northside.

Janet’s father was Alexander Langlands, one of the original property owners in Northside. Alexander bought 217 acres and built his home on a rise in 1822 at the corner of Blue Rock and Fergus streets. Later this home was owned by Ephraim Knowlton. Alexander and his wife were part of a group of seventeen people that immigrated from Campbellstown, Argyllshire, Scotland in 1822 and settled in Ludlow’s Station. Others in this party were the Rev. Riske, who married Israel Ludlow’s widow, Rev. David Fergus and his wife Janet Black and their daughters, Mary and Janet, who was Alexander Langland’s wife. They crossed the ocean together and ...journeyed by teams to Fort Pitt. There they built rafts and floated down the Ohio to Fort Washington. At Marietta the women were left, probably on account of the approach of winter and the security of the settlement.

At the time of Ludlow’s Station, the land was heavily forested. Willow trees grew along the banks of the Mill Creek, which had catfish, bass, salmon and sunfish. Herons waded along the shallows. The land was fertile and welcomed the settlers after a long journey.

Paul Sterling Ward built the house at 1646 Cedar Avenue. He was an engineer and inventor, best known

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32 Rotex thrives with focus on handling raw materials, Cincinnati Enquirer, Sept. 19, 1988, page D-14,


34 Souvenir History of Cumminsville, 1911.

**Caroline Elizabeth Williams** (1908-1988) was an artist who for nearly fifty years had weekly sketches of historic or interesting places in the Sunday *Cincinnati Enquirer*. In many cases, these sketches are all we have to trigger memories of bygone buildings. Her accurate and realistic drawings were collected by many Cincinnatians. Miss Williams’s father, Carll B. Williams, drew for the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, and was the director of their art department. The Williams family moved from Covington, Kentucky to College Hill in 1913 and lived at 1634 Larch Avenue. Paul Briol later moved down the street. When her father died in 1928, Miss Williams started to free lance her art. Her drawings for the *Cincinnati Enquirer* started in 1932 when she joined their staff. Miss Williams went to College Hill School, and Hughes High School. She studied art at the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati Art Academy, the Sorbonne in Paris, France and in New York. The family later moved to 1750 Cedar Avenue where her mother, Mary Teal Williams, operated a boarding house with their unused rooms. In the 1950’s she moved, along with her mother, to a log cabin in Burlington, Kentucky. It was here that she printed many of her books and sketches. Her sister, Katherine, and brother, Vernis, have also passed away.

Orville Simpson