

# **Downriver Back in the Days, Volume 3**

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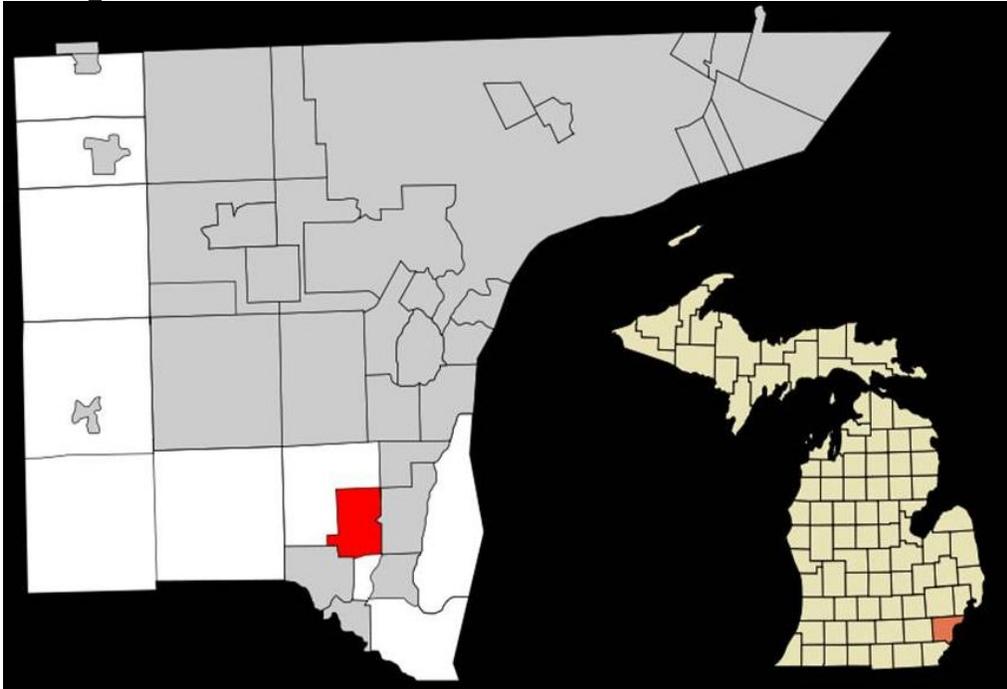
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## Chapter 17 - Woodhaven



### [City of Woodhaven Website](#)

One of the 18 Downriver communities, the City of Woodhaven began as a 19<sup>th</sup> Century section of Brownstown Township.

In his *History of Wayne County and the City of Detroit*, Clarence Burton described Brownstown Township as one of the nine townships that the Michigan Territorial Legislature created in 1827, and one of the largest in Wayne County. It is situated in the extreme southeast corner of Wayne County, with Taylor and Monguagon Townships providing its northern boundary. The Detroit River sets its eastern boundary and Huron Township its western boundary, with its southern boundary defined by the Detroit and Huron Rivers.

The part of Brownstown located on the Detroit River is almost as old as the July 1701 founding of the settlement of Detroit. Older geographies state that Brownstown served as the site of Indian councils between 1780 and 1806, and General William Hull negotiated his most important treaty with the Native Americans there in 1807. On November 17, 1807, General William Hull, Governor of Michigan Territory, and the chiefs, sachems, and warriors of four Indian tribes – the Ottawa, Chippewa, Wyandot, and Potawatomi- signed The Treaty of Detroit. Under the Treaty terms, the tribes ceded a tract of land comprising approximately the southeast quarter of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and a small section of Ohio north of the Maumee River to the United States.

Tradition has it that Brownstown Township is named for Adam Brown. In 1764, the Wyandotte Indians captured him in Virginia when he was just eight years old and brought him to grow up in their villages along the banks of the Detroit River. The Wyandotte tribe adopted him and he became one of their principal chiefs whose village stood on the Detroit River bank near the modern Village of Gibraltar. Adam Brown still lived in his village, known as Brown's Town, at the beginning of the War of 1812.

Some of the early settlers in Brownstown were Colonel Nathaniel Case, P.T. Clark, John Forbes, Jacob Garrett, Elias James, B.F. Kanpp, Dr. John Letour, William Munger, Michael Vreelandt, and Henry Woodruff. In the spring of 1827, Brownstown settlers held their first election and chose these officers: Moses Roberts, supervisor; James Vreelandt, clerk; William Hazard, Jacob Knox and David Smith, assessors; Elias Vreelandt, William Fletcher, and Isaac Taylor commissioners of highways; Isaac Taylor, constable; Freeman Bass, pound master; Arthur Rnark and Garrett Vreelandt, directors of the poor; Hirman Necox, Cloude Campau, William Fletcher, Isaac Thurson, John Conrad and Thomas Long, fence viewers.

In these early decades of settlement, most of the citizens of Brownstown farmed for a living. Eventually railroads joined Detroit River and Lake Erie transportation for township residents, including the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern, the Grand Trunk, the Michigan Central, and the Detroit, Toledo & Monroe Railroad. The main railroad stations were located in Flat Rock and Rockwood.<sup>1</sup>

Farming continued to define Brownstown Township's economy until the 1930s, when the Mobile Oil Company built a refinery on the corner of Allen and West Roads. As Mobile Oil hired more and more people to work in the refinery, workers built new homes changing the rural farming landscape to a more industrial one.

By the 1960s, more industries had located in Brownstown Township, including the Detroit, Toledo, and Ironton Railroad switchyard, Buckeye Pipeline Company and the Ford Motor Company. In 1961, a segment of Brownstown Township citizens decided to incorporate as the Village of Woodhaven and break away from the township. The boundaries of the new village were Vreeland Road on the south, Trenton the east, King Road on the north, and a half mile past Hall Road on the west.

The general manager of the Mobile Refinery, a New York native, fondly remembered the village of Woodhaven, in Queens, New York that he considered the most beautiful village in the country. This newly created village in Michigan reminded him of the New York Woodhaven, and he proposed the name **Woodhaven**. The residents of the new village accepted his proposal and named their village Woodhaven.

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<sup>1</sup> [History of Wayne County and the city of Detroit, ...](#) v.1. Burton, Clarence Monroe, 1853-1932. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1930

As the 1960s progressed and Woodhaven continued to grow, the communities around it noted its growth and its commercial value. Woodhaven village officials grew concerned that the admiring attention meant possible annexation, especially by the adjoining city of Trenton. To add to their concern, the state completed the construction of the I-75 expressway, splitting the village of Woodhaven in half. Propelled into action, village officials decided to preserve Woodhaven by incorporating as a city in 1965.

The United States Census Bureau fixes the total area of Woodhaven at 6.45 square miles, with its northern boundary being King Road, its western boundary half mile east of Telegraph Road and half mile west of Hall Road, and its southern boundary being Vreeland Road, all in Brownstown Township. Woodhaven's eastern boundary lies half mile east of Allen Road and Reeck Road between Van Horn and Vreeland, in Trenton. The 2010 United States Federal Census estimates the Woodhaven population at 12, 875.<sup>2</sup>

Woodhaven features two ZIP codes. The first, 48183 covers most of the city and Trenton and parts of Brownstown Township while the other, 48134, shared with Flat Rock, includes a small part of Woodhaven's southwest corner. The Woodhaven-Brownstown School District accommodates most Woodhaven pupils, but part of Woodhaven is in the Gibraltar School District. Woodhaven High School is in Brownstown Township.

Woodhaven is governed by a mayor and a city council. One of the many amenities that the city of Woodhaven offers its residents is the [WOOFhaven Dog Park](#) for both large and small dogs.

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<sup>2</sup> [United States Census-2010](#)

## Pioneer Roads of Woodhaven



In [History of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, Michigan](#), Clarence Burton traced the pivotal role of old Indian trails in developing the first land travel routes. Long before white men settled in south eastern Michigan, Native Americans had developed a network of trails mostly along waterways but also others that crisscrossed the land between their villages.

One of the most well-worn trails for the early settlers extended from the Miami Rapids or Maumee through the site of Toledo to Monroe and Brownstown to Detroit. It led travellers to the Indian village of Monguaga near present day Trenton. The trail from Detroit to Fort Dearborn on the present of Chicago was the longest continuous trail in Lower Michigan. Another trail that passed near the present City of Adrian and followed the Raisin River to the old village of the Wyandots and crossed both the Fort Dearborn and Miami trails.

The best known modern travel routes followed the lines of these old Indian trails. The first military road in Michigan Territory, extending from Urbana, Ohio to Detroit closely followed the Miami or Maumee Trail. The military road to Fort Gratiot followed nearly the same route as the earlier Indian trail. The Fort Dearborn Trail transformed into the Chicago Road, the most

travelled highway in the entire territory. The territorial roads that began to be constructed in the early 1820s followed the same routes.

In 1805, Judge Augustus B. Woodward planned five major roads- Woodward, Michigan, Grand River, Gratiot, and Jefferson Avenues-that would branch out from downtown Detroit in different directions. First surveyed in 1807, Jefferson Avenue began its career as Main Street but Judge Woodward eventually named it Jefferson Avenue in honor of his friend President Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson Avenue parallels the Detroit River west as well as eastward, and it has played an important role in Downriver history, including Brownstown Township.<sup>3</sup>

The major and minor roads in Woodhaven and the adjoining Downriver communities evolved from Indian trails to farm wagon roads to commercial hubs. Some of them like Jefferson Avenue and Sibley Road are named for presidents and businessmen and some for the family farms located on them.

West Road is Woodhaven's primary east-west artery where some businesses, the city's municipal complex and the only exit on I-75 are located. Allen Road serves as the major north-south route that displays most of Woodhaven's businesses.

King, Vreeland, and Van Horn Roads are east-west routes and Hall and Gudith Roads are north-south roads through Woodhaven.

A glance at some of the pioneer names of Woodhaven suggests the origins of some of the road names, although precision historical pinning isn't always possible. Cemetery names and occupants provide some names for naming clues and historical educated guesses for road names. Oak Ridge Cemetery is one of the oldest, active, burying grounds in Brownstown Township. In 1876, [Jacob Reese Vreeland](#) and [Abram Helferich](#) owned the land that now holds Oak Ridge Cemetery and both are buried in Section J, in the "old section" of the cemetery. Tradition has it that the cemetery began as a family burying ground with public burials beginning about 1880. Family tombstones date before 1880.

The surnames names represented in the cemetery include [Armstrong](#), [Brown](#), [Clark](#), [Hall](#), [King](#), [Peters](#), [Sheeks](#), [Van Riper](#), [Vreeland](#), and [West](#) that correspond with the names of local roads.

## **West Road**

West Road was originally called [Pine Road](#), and the 1933 and 1936 Brownstown directories noted that Pine Road ran from the Detroit River west to the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton Railroad tracks just east of Fort Street.

In 1933, a man named William N. Pine and his wife Louisa lived at 35 West Road in Trenton. Perhaps Pine Road is named after his family, and he and some of his family members are buried in [Bloomdale Cemetery](#) in Trenton.

The directories described West Road as a "continuation of Pine, west to city limits." The road, including the part west of Fort Street, was called Pine Road until the 1940s. Other Wests in the

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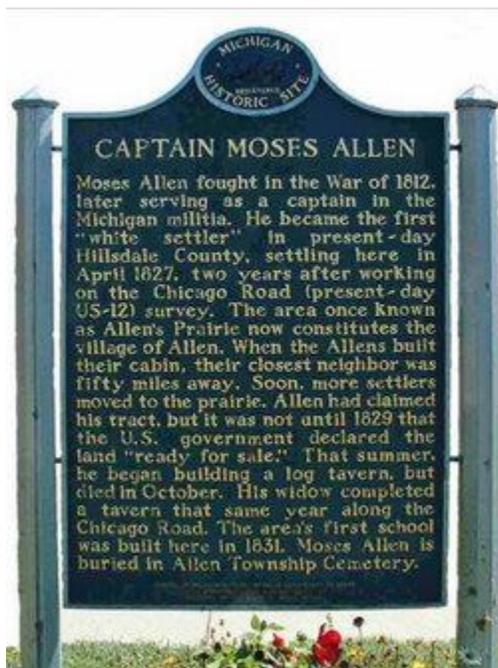
<sup>3</sup> History of Wayne County and the city of Detroit, Michigan, v. 2. Clarence M. Burton, M. Agnes Burton, editors ; H.T.O. Blue and Gordon K. Miller, associate editors. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1930.

Downriver area include Homer H. West in Ferndale Cemetery, Terry W. West, in Huron Valley Cemetery in Flat Rock, and several Wests in Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock.

## Allen Road

The Allen family footprint in Downriver is visible from 1819 when Thomas Allen brought his family from New York State to Detroit. His son Lewis, just five years old, grew up to become a lumberman and a lawyer. His land holdings included 276 ½ acres which eventually became Allen Park. Allen Park was named for Lewis Allen.<sup>4</sup>

[Giles Bryan Slocum](#) wrote a letter to his father Jeremiah from Port Lawrence (modern Toledo) dated January 9, 1832, detailing his land purchases. He said that he bought two eighty acre lots, one five miles south of the village of Monroe and the other on Swan Creek, about nine miles north of Monroe and 28 miles from Detroit. He wrote that he was very pleasantly located in the town and that he also was assisting in laying out a new town on the north bank of the Maumee River, four or five miles from its junction with Lake Erie. He said that a Mr. Allen, son of a gentleman that his father or grandfather referred to as Indian Allen of Allen's Creek, was surveying and laying out the town plat.<sup>5</sup>



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<sup>4</sup> Michigan Place Names: The History of the Founding and the Naming of More Than Five Thousand Past and Present Michigan Communities, Walter Romig. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986.

<sup>5</sup> Chronography of Notable Events in the History of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County. Frederick Carlisle. Detroit: O.S. Gully, Bornman & Company Printers, 1890; p. 152-153.

Captain Moses Allen, another early pioneer of the region, first settled in Brownstown and later Hillsdale County. He served on the team that conducted the first survey of the Pottawatomie trading trail that ran between Detroit and Chicago.

A native of New York State, he went to Canada as a young man and when the War of 1812 broke out between Great Britain and the United States, the British pressed him into service. As soon as Moses could, he deserted from the British Army and enlisted under General William Hull of the American army. After General Hull surrendered his army at Detroit, the British planned to hang Moses Allen and his comrades. Moses would have been hanged, but the captain of the ship happened to be a fellow Mason, so he helped Moses escape.

After the War of 1812, Moses settled in Brownstown and married Polly Barnes. He lived there until the spring of 1827 when he brought his family to the Hillsdale region. Moses and built a log cabin situated on land which he recorded in the land office in Monroe in 1829. His land sat a little east of the present village of Allen and as settlers flocked into the area Allen built a tavern on the site that later became Allen's Prairie and the Village of Allen. After Allen died, his wife and other family members continued to operate the tavern and his name survives in the township and village of Allen.<sup>6</sup>

According to the Belleville Area Museum, the Allen family lived for many years at the corner of Sumpter and Dunn Roads where the present township hall, police station, and senior center are located. An 1818 survey map showed that a graveyard sat on the property where members of the eight families who lived there are probably buried. Eventually the cemetery disappeared from area maps and it is not mentioned in public records.<sup>7</sup>

There are Allens in [Oak Grove Burying Ground](#) in Taylor, [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Brownstown, and in several regional cemeteries as well as [Woodmere](#) and [Elm Grove](#) Cemeteries in Detroit.

## King Road



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<sup>6</sup> [Allen and Allen Township. Captain Moses Allen](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Allen Cemetery. Captain Moses Allen](#) History of Hillsdale County.

King Road, an east-west road, stretches from Huron Township to Jefferson Avenue and extends into Riverview and Trenton as well as Brownstown Township. The road is possibly named after the King family that Madore King headed. The United States Federal Census of 1900 lists Madore King, his wife Agness, and their daughters Mary and Maggie living in Brownstown. Madore and Agnes are buried in [St. Mary's Cemetery in Rockwood](#).

## Van Horn Road

[Van Horn Road](#) extending from Jefferson Avenue to Huron River Drive, has hosted several businesses through the years including Chrysler Corporation and Chatham Shopping Center and Trafford Square in Trenton and Van Horn Market, Wood Haven Bowling Center and Woodhaven High School in Woodhaven.

The Van Horn family has been a part of Brownstown Township history since the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Cornelius Van Horn brought his family to live in Brownstown Township. The 1850 United States Federal Census shows Cornelius, his wife, Mary, and their children Joseph, 26, Abraham, 23, Lydia, 18, Calpornia, 15, Barton, 12, and Rachel, 7, living in Brownstown Township. Cornelius and Mary are buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock. His son Abraham and his wife Sarah are also buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#).



## Hall Road

Born on March 17, 1792, in Connecticut to Abijah and Ruth Seeley Hall, Ira Seeley Hal served in a New York artillery unit during the War of 1812. He married Harriet J. Worden and had ten children: Eliza, Mary Ann, Hiram, George, Charles, Ruth Ann, William, John, Clarissa, and Ira. He married Harriet J. Worden. The Halls immigrated to Michigan in 1834 and Ira filed a land patent for 80 acres of land located at 1 W<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>SW Michigan-Toledo Strip No 3 S 9 E 28.

Ira farmed and served as a Justice of the Peace.

The 1850 United States Federal Census lists Ira S. Hall, 56, Harriet Hall, 50, and their children William Hall, 16, George Hall, 23, Charles Hall, 21, George Hall 13, and Ira Hall, 8, living in Romulus, Michigan.

Ira is buried in [Romulus Memorial Cemetery](#), Romulus.



## **Gudith Road**

Born May 22, 1822, in Switzerland, John Gudith immigrated to the United States while still a young man. He married Julia Fraque Gudith who lived from 1820-1900. Their children included John D. Gudith, 1841-1919, and Francis Gudith 1842-1929.

John was a shoemaker and a farmer and his Civil War Service Record revealed that he enlisted in Company D, Fifth Michigan Cavalry on August 28, 1862 at Monguagon for three years at age 40. He mustered in August 29, 1862 and was promoted to Corporal. He was killed in action at Maubertown, Virginia, on October 18, 1864 and he is buried in Winchester National Cemetery, Lot 73.

John's son John Daniel Gudith, born in 1841, fought in the Civil War with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry. He joined the war with the rank of private and was mustered out with the rank of corporal.



John D. Gudith fought in the Civil War for the Union in the 2 Massachusetts Cavalry. He entered the war with the rank of Private and left with the rank of Corp.

On September 13, 1866, he married Susan A. Cross Anson, in Wayne County, Michigan and they had three sons, William Orin, Francis, and Lewis Gudith.

John and Susan are buried in [West Mound Cemetery](#) in Taylor.

William Orin Gudith and his wife [Mary](#) are buried in Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock.

Mary A. Gudith- March 14, 1876-May 7, 1961



## Early Brownstown/Woodhaven Pioneers

Fred Carlisle listed early Brownstown pioneers in his *Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County*. These pioneers settled and developed the township that would later produce Woodhaven.

### Jacob Knox

Jacob Knox was born in 1804 in Vermont to Jacob and Rachel Knox. He came to Michigan as a young man and settled in Brownstown Township. Land Office records in Detroit show that he purchased 160 acres of land on the Michigan-Toledo Strip in Wayne County on February 3, 1824. He married Eliza Pickering and they had one son and one daughter between 1836 and 1847. He died in 1860 at the age of 56.

### Seth Dunham

The 1820 United States Federal Census shows that Seth Dunham lived in Brownstown Township with his wife Olive whom he married on May 30, 1825.

### Peter Neisen



Peter Neisen was born in Germany on December 19, 1847, the son of Michael Niesen and Anna Mary Berneck. Later in his life, Peter decided to spell his last name Neisen, instead of the birth spelling Niesen. In 1862, when Peter was 14, the Neisen family traveled to the French port of Marseilles. On September 2, 1862, Peter, his mother, father, brother, sister, and his Uncle Peter sailed on the ship Magdalen for the United States.

By 1864, they were living in Wyandotte. Although he had been in the United States for just a few years, Peter volunteered to serve in the American Civil War and in 1865, he enlisted in the

194<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry. When the War ended, Peter came home to Wyandotte with his parents and his Uncle Peter, but quickly moved to a farm on Arsenal Road south of West Road in Brownstown Township. He met Amelia Scherer who lived with her parents on a nearby farm, and they were married in 1876. They had four daughters, Emma Walker, Minnie Prince, Kate Spence, and Caroline Tillman.

Peter died at his home in Brownstown Township on June 18, 1915, at age 67 and he is buried in [Oakridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## **Moses Roberts**

Detroit Land Office Records show that Moses Roberts purchased 80 acres of the Michigan-Toledo Strip on May 31, 1827.

## **Jacob and James Vreeland**

The 1880 United States Federal Census lists Jacob R. Vreeland, 55, as living in Monguagon Township with his wife Catoria, 49, and his children James E., 23, and Mary E., 20. He listed his occupation as farmer.

The 1900 United States Federal Census lists James Vreeland, 43, living in Monguagon Township with his wife Ida, 30, and their children Kittie, 8, Mary 6, Emma, 3, Jacob, 1, his father Jacob, 76, and their maid Emma Engfehr. James and Ida were married in 1891.

## **William Hazard**

William Hazard is shown in the Michigan Territorial Census of 1827 as living in Brownstown.<sup>8</sup>

## **Heman Alford**

[Heman Alford](#) lived in Gibraltar, Michigan and came to Wayne County in 1836. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows that he was born about 1826, was age 44 in 1870, and lived in Brownstown. He lived with his wife Harriet, 34, and their children Charles 12, Joseph, 10, and Juliann, 2. He listed his occupation as a shipbuilder.

## **Joseph M. Bird**

Joseph M. Bird was born in Seneca, New York to Peter and Margarett Bird. In 1876 he purchased land in Brownstown. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Joseph, 52, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Sarah, 42, and their children Charles, Jennie, Alice, and

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<sup>8</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Guley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64.

Norman. He lists his occupation as farmer. He died on December 22, 1907 and he is buried in [Riverside Cemetery](#) in South Rockwood.

### **James A. Blakely**

James Blakely was born in 1836 in New York. The 1850 United States Federal Census lists James A. Blakely, 14, living in Brownstown with his parents Hiram, 47, Eliza, 36, and his brothers and Elizabeth and Catherine Blakely and Conrad Pierson, Elijah Adget, and Samuel, Augusta, and Adelaide Stuart. James died in 1905 and he is buried in [Gibraltar Cemetery](#) in Gibraltar.

### **William J. Chase**

William J. Chase was born in Ontario, Canada on May 6, 1830, the son of Nathaniel and Catherine Carlisle Chase. He married Clara. He enlisted as a private on August 2, 1862, in Company K of the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry and mustered out on June 30, 1865 at Detroit. He married Clarissa and they had a son Elmer.<sup>9</sup>

William died on September 8, 1911 and he is buried in [Rumsey Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

### **Jason Clarkx**

Jason Clark was born about 1845 in Michigan. The 1870 United States Federal Census has Jason, 25, living in Belleville with his wife Martha, 20, and their son William.

### **John Cooke**

John Cooke was born about 1793 in England. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows 77-year-old John living in Brownstown Townships with his wife, Jane, 60, with their children Jennie and John and Leroy Roberts.

John died on December 29, 1871 and he is buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

### **Thomas D. Cook**

Thomas D. Cook was born in Michigan in 1834. The United 1880 United States Federal Census shows Thomas D. Cook, 46, living in Brownstown Township, with his wife Rachel J. Cook, 45, and their children Dale and Clarence. He lists his occupation as a farmer. Thomas died on October 15, 1905, and he is buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

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<sup>9</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

## **William A. Cohoon**

William A. Cohoon was born in New York about 1827. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows William, 43, living in Brownstown with his wife Sarah, 34, and their children George, Robert, Jed, and Sarah. William is buried [in Bloomdale Cemetery](#) in Trenton.

## **Ezra Guilfoil**

Ezra Guilfoil was born in Trenton in 1854. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Ezra, 26, living in Brownstown. He was single in 1880, but he married Lavinia Kruegar on August 29, 1892 in Wyandotte. He died in 1930. He is buried in [West Mound Cemetery in Taylor](#).

## **Garrett Garretson**

Garrett Garretson lived in Flat Rock and moved to Michigan from New Jersey in 1835. He was born in 1799 and died on June 23, 1871. His wife was Lillis Wood Garretson Sanders – 1807-1897. Their son Garret was born in 1828 and died in 1877. They are buried in [Oak Forest Cemetery in Flat Rock](#).

## **Freeland Garretson**

Freeland Garretson was born in New Jersey and came to Michigan in 1838. The 1870 Census lists Freeland Garretson, 45, and his wife Agnes, 35, living in Brownstown with their children Charles 8, Garret 4, and Albert, 1.

## **Amanda Hurst**

Amanda Hurst was born in 1809 in New York. She came to Michigan with her husband Samuel and their children in 1844. The 1860 United States Federal Census shows Amanda, 51, now a widow, living in Brownstown with her children Sarah, James, Catherine, Hester, and Harriet.

## **Edward William Hall**

Edward William Hall was born in Ohio on November 6, 1832 to Daniel and Sarah Hall. He married Anna Matilda Caster and they had a son, Sanford M. Hall. He died on January 25, 1900, and is buried in Richmond Cemetery in Macomb County.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

## **S.C. Hanchett**

Seth C. Hanchett was born in New York in 1811 and came to Michigan with his family about 1837. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows Seth, 59, living in Brownstown with his wife Betsy, 57, and his son Samuel, 26. Seth died on July 15, 1883, and he is buried in [Woodmere Cemetery](#) in Detroit.

## **Benjamin Knapp**

Benjamin Knapp was born in New York in 1820. The 1860 United States Census lists Benjamin, 57, living in Brownstown with his wife, Lucinda, 39, and their sons Goodman and George. Rhoda Johnson and John Laurens also lived with the Knapps.

## **James M. Knight**



James M. Knight was born in 1818 in England. The 1860 United States Federal Census shows James, 41, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Rhoda, 31, and their children Hellen, Emeline, Arthur, Francis, Elizabeth, and Florence. He lists his occupation as a farmer. James is buried in [Bloomdale Cemetery](#), Trenton.

## **Dr. Hiram W. Lobdell**

Dr. Hiram William Lobdell was born April 20, 1826 in Montgomery County, New York. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows Dr. Lobdell, 44, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Phebe, 32, and their children John, Daniel, Mary, and Susan. He died January 10, 1884, in Flat Rock, Michigan. Age 58 years, and he is buried in [Oakwood Cemetery, Flat Rock](#).

## **James Lindsay**

James Lindsay was born in Michigan in 1837. He married Grace Gallaway Lindsay and their children were: Agnes T. Lindsay Steward, William P. Lindsay, and James Forrest Lindsay. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows James, 32, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Grace, 25, and their children Miriam, Agnes, and William and his father John Lindsay, 74, and their farmer apprentice John McCarty, 16. James died in 1904 and he is buried in [West Mound Cemetery in Taylor](#).

## **W.S. Long**

William S. Long was born in Michigan in 1838. The 1860 United States Federal Census has William, 21, living in Taylor with his wife Sophia, 23.

## **John McComb**

John McComb was born in Ireland in 1830. The 1860 United States Federal Census shows John, 30, living in Brownstown with his wife, Bridget, 26, and their children Mary, James, and John.

## **William P. Munger**

William P. Munger lived in Flat Rock. He was born in New York on August 9, 1810 and came to Michigan with his family in 1823. He married Maria Springstead and their children were: Almeda Munger Hosmer and Cornelius George Munger. He died on May 5, 1884 and he is buried in [Oak Forest Cemetery in Flat Rock](#).<sup>11</sup>

## **Mrs. Thetis Milliman and David Milliman**

David Milliman was born about 1811 in New York and came to Michigan with his family in 1832. He was married to Thetis Sisslin Milliman who was born in Ohio about 1822. Their children were: Charles, Edmund, Selina, Harriet, and Orpha. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows David, 51, living in Brownstown with his wife, Thetes, 48, and their children Charles, Selina, and Edmund. David died on August 7, 1875 at age 59 and he is buried in [Rumsey Cemetery in Flat Rock](#). Thetis died on October 11, 1902 in Brownstown.

## **George McDonald**

George McDonald was born July 25, 1831 in Scotland and he married Amanda Fletcher McDonald and Sarah Ann Knapp McDonald. He died on October 28, 1910, in Brownstown and he is buried in [West Mound Cemetery in Taylor](#).

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<sup>11</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

## **Nelson Olmstead**

Nelson Olmstead was born about 1834 in Washtenaw County, Michigan. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Nelson, 46, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Juliette Vreeland Olmstead, and their children Minna, Frank, Harry, Susan, Fred, and George. He listed his occupation as a farmer. Nelson died on February 28, 1913 in Brownstown.<sup>12</sup>

## **John H. Peters**

John H. Peters was born August 20, 1819. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows John H. Peters, 50, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Caroline, 47, their children Wilmer, Carrie, and John and Charles and Frank Metcalf. John H. Peters died on December 20, 1900. He is buried in [Oak Forest Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

## **Benjamin Franklin Parsons**

Benjamin Franklin Parsons was born in Michigan about 1833. He married Carrie Oliver at Gibraltar, Michigan on July 25, 1869.

## **Victor Pink**

Victor Pink was born about 1840 in Ohio. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Victor, 40, living in Brownstown with his wife, Caroline, 30, and their daughter Florence. He listed his occupation as a farmer.

## **Thomas Quick**

Thomas Quick was born about 1824 in Canada. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Thomas Quick, 56, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Margaret and their children Thomas, Alex, Joseph, Cornelius, and Alice. Thomas died on July 30, 1912, and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Wyandotte.

## **Fabian Reaume**

Fabian Reaume was born in Canada about 1829. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Fabian, 51, living in Brownstown with his wife, Julia, 48, and their children Charlotte, John, Julia, Albert, Ida, Franca, and Edward. He listed his occupation as a farmer.

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<sup>12</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

## **Dr. James Reed**

Dr. James “J.P” Reed was born in New York about 1838. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows James Reed, 42, living in Brownstown with his wife Kate, 43. He listed his occupation as Physician and served as a surgeon in the United States Army. He died on January 17, 1909, and he is buried in [Woodland Cemetery](#) in Monroe.<sup>13</sup>

## **George D. Simpson**

George D. Simpson was born in Michigan about 1837. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows George, 33, living in Nankin with his wife, Jane 30, and their son Robert.

## **William Stofflett**

William Stofflett was born on March 25, 1824 in New York. The 1870 United States Federal Census showed William, 46, living in Brownstown Township with his wife Susan, 44, their daughters Cynthia and Frances, and Isaac Robinson. William died on August 16, 1896, and he is buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

## **George H. Varney**

George H. Varney was born in Michigan in 1842. The 1880 United States Federal Census lists George, 37 as living in Brownstone Township with his wife Mary, 31. George gave his occupation as a Hotel Keeper.

## **Jacob Van Cleof**

Jacob Van Cleof was born in New York in 1826. The 1880 United States Federal Census listed Jacob, 54, as living in Brownstown with his wife Delia, 45, and their daughter, Clara, 12. He gave his occupation as a farmer.

## **Barton Van Horn**

The 1850 United States Federal Census shows Cornelius Van Horn, his wife, Mary, and their children Joseph, 26, Abraham, 23, Lydia, 18, Calporna, 15, Barton, 12, and Rachel, 7, living in Brownstown Township. Cornelius and Mary are buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock. His son Abraham and his wife Sarah are also buried in [Oakwood Cemetery](#).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

<sup>14</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

## **Henry H. Van Riper**

Henry H. Van Riper was born on April 14, 1818, in New Jersey. The 1880 United States Federal Census lists Henry, 62, as living in Brownstown with his wife, Lydia, 52, and Jane Van Riper, 60, and Kitty and Mary Van Riper. He listed his occupation as a farmer. He died on August 31, 1887 and he is buried in [Port Creek Evergreen Cemetery](#) in Carleton

## **Alice Vreeland**

Alice Vreeland was born in Michigan on November 6, 1848. The 1870 United States Federal Census lists Alice, 21, as living in Brownstown with her husband Elias, 29, and their daughter Libbie, 1. Other people living with them were James Hawkins, Augustus button, Hattie Pink, Mary E. Cropsy, Sophia Norton, Zephreon Ogden and Michael Fern. Alice died on December 25, 1912 and she is buried in [Riverside Cemetery](#) in South Rockwood.

## **James H. Walker**

James H. Walker was born in Michigan in 1846. The 1860 United States Federal Census lists James, 14, living in Brownstown with his parents Thomas Walker, 53, and Hella Walker, 56.

## **John Wood**

John Wood was born about 1820 in Scotland. The 1880 United States Census cited John Wood, 60, a living in Brownstown with his wife Sarah, 56, and their son Edgar and daughter Ella, as well as their son Emery and his wife Flida and their son Harvey. John's mother Rachel Olch also lived with them. John listed his occupation as a farmer.

## **Irving T. Wood**

Irving T. Wood was born about 1840 in Michigan. the 1880 United States Federal Census shows Irving T. Wood, 40, as living in Brownstown with his wife Maggie J., 24, and his daughters Eva and Mable as well as his father Thomas and mother Phelena.

## Clayton Wisdom



Clayton William Wisdom was born on August 30, 1846 in Flat Rock to Clayton Wisdom and Elizabeth Tillstone Wisdom. He married Emma Dowling Wisdom. He died on April 29, 1914 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven](#).<sup>15</sup>

Other early settlers on the Carlisle list include C.W. Butler, Jesse Bowling, H.F. Ewing, Daniel Hendricks, Benjamin Hill, M.H. Mitler, John Materia, T.M. Munger, Lewis Northrop, T. O'Leary D. Smith, and Miss Mattie Wells.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Carlisle, Fred.. *Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County : period embraced, 1531-1890 : together with biographical sketches of the early explorers and pioneers*. Detroit: O.S. Gully, Bornman & Co., printers, 1890. P.63-64

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

# Some Veterans Once Residing, Connected with or Resting in Woodhaven

## Civil War Veterans

### **Solomon Baker**



**Solomon Baker** was born in 1828 in New York, the son of John and Maria Baker. He was 34 when he enlisted from Brownstown in Company D of the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry. He is buried in [Port Creek Evergreen Cemetery](#) in Carleton.

**William Henry Blanchard**-William Henry Blanchard was born in New York state in 1842, to Gabriel L. and Hannah Mary Henries Blanchard. They moved to Michigan on August 6, 1862, William enlisted in Company A of the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry from Brownstown Township when he was just 20 years old. He was taken prisoner at Wilderness, Virginia on May 5, 1864 and spent seven months in Andersonville Prison before his release on December 6, 1864. He mustered out on June 30, 1865. He married Hattie L. Rumsey and their children were Elnear, Charles and Daniel. William died in 1913 and he is buried in [Rumsey Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> It is not possible to list every veteran in every Woodhaven or Brownstown Township Cemetery, nor is it possible to tell their complete stories in one book. This list is just a beginning for future Downriver historians to research them all, but the length and scope of the list reinforces the debt all Americans owe to those who fought for their freedom. We owe them all a debt unlimited by family or community boundaries. They belong to all of us.

## Corporal John R. Brown



Born in New York on October 28, 1843, John R. Brown moved to Brownstown to farm. When the Civil War erupted John was just 19, but he enlisted in Company K of the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry on August 19, 1862. On May 8, 1864, John was wounded in the hand at the Battle of Spotsylvania. Recovering from his wound, he was promoted to Corporal on January 1, 1865. On June 30, 1865, he was mustered out with his regiment at Detroit. He took part in the Dedication of the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan's Monument at Michigan Day at Gettysburg on June 12-14, 1889. John died on April 16, 1924 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## John Chamberlain



John Chamberlain enlisted in Company D of the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry from Brownstown on September 1, 1864. He died in the hospital at Nashville, Tennessee on April 16, 1865 and he is buried in [Port Creek Evergreen Cemetery](#) in Carleton.

## Corporal Mark Chase



**Mark T. Chase** was born in 1836 in Ontario, Canada. The 1850 United States Federal Census shows Mark T. Chase, 14, living in Brownstown with his parents Nathaniel and Catharine Chase and his brothers William, 21, and George 1, and his sister Harriet. The 1860 United States Federal Census shows Mark 24, living and farming in Brownstown with his wife, Pheba, 23. On August 4, 1862, at Brownstown, Mark T. Chase was mustered into Company A of the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry as a Corporal. He survived the first day at Gettysburg and suffered two battle wounds. When he died on August 22, 1905, he was an inmate at the Northern Michigan Asylum in Traverse City. He is buried in [Forest Hill Cemetery](#) in Ewart, Michigan.

**William J. Chase-** Born on May 6, 1830 in Ontario, Canada, William J. Chase was the son of Nathaniel and Catherine Carlisle Chase and the brother of Harriet C. Chase Peters and Corporal Mark Chase. On August 2, 1862, he enlisted as a private in Company k, 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry and he mustered out on June 30, 1865 in Detroit. He is buried in [Rumsey Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

**Frederic Closser.** Born January 20, 1841, Frederic Closser fought for the Union in Company D of the 11<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows Fred, 29, living in Brownstown with his wife Charlotte, 21, and his son, William, 3. Frederic died on July 24, 1900 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven

**Julius B. Doty** was born on November 18, 1848 in Brownstown. He enlisted in Company D of the Fourth Michigan Infantry on August 22, 1864 for three years and he died at Murfreesboro, Tennessee on November 18, 1864. Another death date listed is December 20, 1864. He is buried in [Stones River National Cemetery](#) in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

**Corporal John D. Gudith, Father.** Corporal John D. Gudith was born in Switzerland on May 22, 1822. He came to the United States, settling in Brownstown and later Wyandotte and practiced his farming and shoe making vocations. He married Judith Frague Gudith and their children were John D. Gudith and Francis Gudith. When the Civil War broke out, John, then 40, enlisted in Company D, Fifth Michigan Cavalry on August 28, 1862 at Monguagon. He was promoted to Corporal and was killed in action at Maubertown, Virginia, on October 18, 1864 during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign. He is buried in [Winchester National Cemetery](#).

**Corporal John D. Gudith, Son.** Born in 1841, Corporal John D. Gudith was the son of John D. and Julia Frague Gudith. He married Susan A. Cross Anson on September 13, 1866 in Wayne County and their children included William Anson Gudith. John enlisted as a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Massachusetts Cavalry and was promoted to the rank of corporal. He died in 1919 and he is buried in [West Mound Cemetery](#) in Taylor.

**Albert Hale** was 17 years old when he enlisted in Company D of the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry in Brownstown. He is buried in [Union-Udell Cemetery](#) in Ypsilanti.

**William A. Knight.** William A. Knight was 21 when he enlisted in Company D of the 8<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows him living and farming in Brownstown with his wife Eliza. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Adrian Van Riper, Soldier Father.** Adrian Van Riper was born in September 1826, and he and his wife Mary Jean's children included Thomas and Henry Van Riper and Grace Van Riper Tharp. On December 30, 1861, he enlisted as a private in Company H of the 14<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry and was mustered out on June 5, 1865 as a sergeant. He is buried in the [Grand Rapids Veterans Home Cemetery](#) in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

**Henry Adrian Van Riper, Soldier Son.** Henry Adrian Van Riper was born on January 10, 1850, in Flat Rock to Adrian and Mary Jean or Jane Rhodes Van Riper. He married Helen Vanatten Van Riper and their children were William, Franklin, Henry, and Mary E. Van Riper Sproull. On February 20, 1865, Henry enlisted in Company D of the 11<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry from Brownstown. He mustered out on May 4, 1865 at Chattanooga, Tennessee. The military record lists his date of birth as 1846. Henry died on November 24, 1919 and he is buried in [Highland Cemetery](#) in Ypsilanti.

**James Vreeland.** James Vreeland was born on September 6, 1820. On August 27, 1862, 41-year-old Brownstown resident James Vreeland enlisted in Company B of the 5<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry Regiment. He mustered out on December 6, 1862. He died on May 5, 1879 and he is buried in [Oak Forest Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

## Michael James Vreeland



Mary Helen Stoflet, 1843-1910



Michael James Vreeland was born in Brownstown Township on October 20, 1838. He married Mary Helen Stoflet (Hall) in 1865 and they had two children: Thaddeus Whitney, born on January 6, 1866, and his daughter Mary Lois, born February 27, 1875. Michael enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry and was appointed to a lieutenant Colonel in June 1861. He fought in the Peninsula Campaign, the battles of Malvern Hill, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. On July 2, 1863, he was mortally wounded while successfully defending the Wheatfield at the Battle of Gettysburg. On March 13, 1865, the army awarded him the rank of Brevet Brigadier General for his distinguished service and merit.

The 1870 United States Federal Census shows Michael, 32, living in Gibraltar with his wife Mary Helen, 27, their son, Thad, 4, and William Henes. He listed his occupation as light keeper, and he was the keeper of the Gibraltar Light House from 1874 until his death in 1876.

Michael never fully recovered from his injuries and died at age 37 on January 18, 1876. He is buried in [Woodmere Cemetery](#) in Detroit.

## Lieutenant Walter H. Wallace



Walter H. Wallace was born on August 11, 1840, the son of David and Harriet Jane Hicks Wallace. He enlisted in the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, Company F, and he died at the Battle of Gettysburg on July 1, 1863, at age 22. He is buried in [Oak Forest Cemetery at Flat Rock](#).

## The Spanish American War

**Walter J. Robideau.**



Walter J. Robideau was born on January 9, 1880 and died on May 24, 1947. He was a private in the 6<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry in the Spanish American War. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

# World War I

**Walter St. Clair Ackerknecht** served in the Merchant Marines in World War I. He was born September 7, 1899 and he died on July 17, 1960. He is buried in [Huron Valley Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock, Michigan.

**John Robert Arnold**, born December 7, 1889, fought in World War I as a Corporal in Company A, 117<sup>th</sup> Infantry. He died on August 15, 1969, and he is buried in [Huron Valley Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

**William A. Boundy**, born May 21, 1894, served as a private in the United States Army during World War I. He died on September 25, 1975, and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township. He was a Polar Bear, part of the Polar Bear Expedition or the American Expeditionary Force North Russia Expedition, which was composed of about 5,000 U.S. Army troops. The Polar Bear Expedition landed in Arkhangelsk, Russia, to intervene in the Russian Civil War. The Polar Bear Expedition fought the Red Army in the region from September 1918 through July 1919.

**William Gerber** was born October 28, 1895 in Holmes County, Ohio. He died on March 19, 1976 in Coldwater and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

Born on June 20, 1895, **Charles N. Gibbs** served as a Sergeant in the 307 Repair Unit MTC in World War I. He died on September 27, 1966, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven](#).

**John Kroff** was born on August 22, 1896 and he fought in the United States Army in World War I. He died on June 28, 1983 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Guy Walker Lowenstein** was born on September 27, 1896, in Dyersburg, Tennessee. He served as a Private in Company C of the 322 Infantry in World War I. He died May 31, 1964, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Elmer Moshier** was born on September 3, 1895, and he served as an S2 in the United States Navy in World War I. He died on July 18, 1973 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven

**Ray J. Nesbitt**, born May 29, 1894, served in the United States Navy in World War I as a PHM3. He died on June 27, 1962, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Everett W. Noah** was born in 1895. He fought in World War I as a Sergeant in the 120 M.G. BN., 32 Div. the Red Arrow Division and he was wounded in action. He died in 1963 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Henry A. Oetting**, born January 6, 1898, served his country fighting as a Private in STU ARMY TNG CORPS in World War I. He died on November 22, 1962, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Frank Polito** was born on January 23, 1895, and he was a PFC in the Army during World War I. He died on October 5, 1992 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Amos H. Purdy**, born on February 26, 1895, fought in World War I as a PFC MTC. He died on December 29, 1954, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**John Regush** was born on January 7, 1897, and he fought in World War I as a Corporal in the 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry 1<sup>st</sup> Division, PH & OLC. He died on October 8, 1950, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Dane Lee Saucer**, born July 1, 1893, served his country as a Private in Sup CO 314 Infantry in World War I. He died on August 19, 1958, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Fred Stinnett, Sr.** was born on July 2, 1887, and he fought in World War I as an Infantry Corporal. He died on January 7, 1970 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**James Garvin Stone**, born September 22, 1927, served in the U.S. Navy during World War I. He died on April 13, 1984, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Mark H. Thomas**, born May 28, 1894, fought in World War I as a Private in the United States Marine Corps. He died on January 24, 1963, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Walter G. Vinier**, born January 16, 1895, served in World War I as a WT in the United States Navy. He died on February 10, 1970 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**George Stanley Webb**, born on December 3, 1890, served as a Private in Company A of the 138<sup>th</sup> Engineers in World War I. He died on May 31, 1958, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

# World War II

**Harry O. Abbott.** **Harry O. Abbott** was born September 4, 1925 in Trenton, **He** served in the United States Navy from 1943 until 1946 during the Second World War. A Flat Rock resident, he worked in construction maintenance at Detroit Edison's Trenton Channel plant for 38 years until his retirement in 1984. He died on February 3, 1995, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Andrew Adamovich** was born on October 15, 1925, and he served in the United States Navy as a S1 in World War II. He died on August 31, 2012 and he is buried in [Huron Valley Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

**Sgt. Henry Adams**, born March 4, 1917, served with the United States Army in World War II. He died on August 15, 1974 and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Ben Anton** served in the Marines before and during World War II and was wounded in the bombing of Pearl Harbor. He was born on December 16, 1916, and he died on May 2, 1984. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Eldon B. Arnett** served as a private in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was born on April 26, 1923, and died on May 11, 1991. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Kenneth J. Ashby** fought as a Corporal in the United States Army during World War II and Korea. He was born on July 11, 1923, and died on January 9, 1980. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Cecil Banks.** Cecil Banks was born on August 2, 1917, and he served in the United States Army during World War II. He died on April 7, 2004, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Matthew A. Boehmer** served in the United States Army during World War II. He is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**John Thomas Carroll**, born October 13, 1918, fought in World War II. He died on March 31, 2008, and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Bernard J. Clair** was born about 1921. He joined the United States Army and participated in the D-Day landings. He died on October 12, 2012, and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**George Cojocar**, born February 27, 1922, **fought** as a PFC in the 21 REGT USM 3 DIV. He was killed in action on July 25, 1944. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.](#)

## **Lawrence Davis**



Lawrence J. Davis was born on February 17, 1919. He fought in World War II as a PFC in the 101 Airborne Division. He was killed in action on October 10, 1944 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Allen Hicks**, born January 2, 1924, served as a PFC in the Marine Corps in World War II. He died on January 12, 1982, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Alvin F. Koch**, born November 27, 1921, served in the United States Army in World War II and earned a Purple Heart. He died on October 29, 1992 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Leslie Harold Marshal** was born on June 16, 1916, and he served in the Liverpool Scottish Regiment in World War II. He died on February 7, 1994, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## **Raymond Morris**



**Raymond Morris** was born on February 20, 1924, and he fought in World War II as a Sergeant in the Engineers. He died on June 12, 1944, during the Normandy Operations, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Frank E. Schultz, Jr.**, born September 14, 1923, fought in World War II as a Sergeant in the 406<sup>th</sup> Infantry. He was killed in action on November 17, 1944, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Alvin F. Van Riper** was born on March 21, 1917 and he served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army during World War II. He died on May 29, 1975, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Bernard S. Zielinski** was born on September 27, 1920, and he fought as a PFC in the United States Marines in World War II. He died on August 13, 1981, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

## British and Americans Fly, Fight, and Rest Together



British airmen graves in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Woodhaven

During the 1930s and World War II, the Naval Air Station Grosse Ile operated as an important testing and training ground for aircraft and pilots. Over the course of World War II, more than 5,000 pilots trained at Grosse Ile Naval Station, including Navy cadets and more than a thousand British RAF pilot trainees. Consolidated PBV Catalina Voght, FU Corsairs, Curtiss SB2C Helldivers, and Grumann TBM Avengers were the primary airplanes used at Naval Air Station Grosse Ile during the War, and trainers used SNJ and Boeing Stearman airplanes.

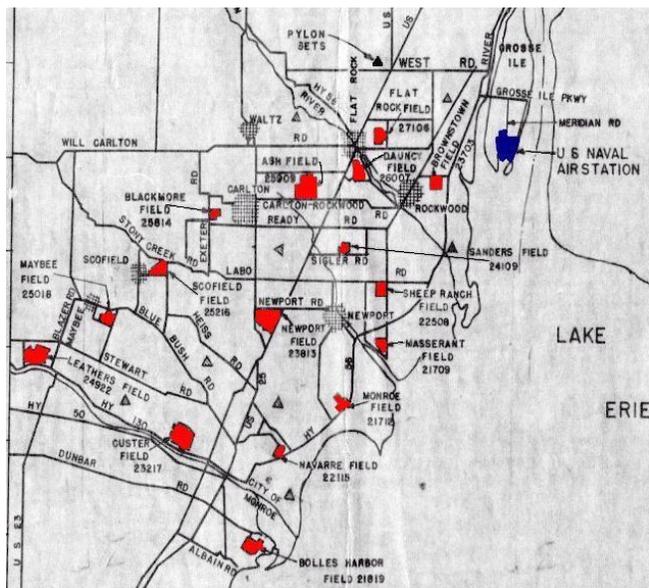
On August 28, 1941, Grosse Ile Naval Reserve Air Base expanded its mission to include training British aviation cadets in primary flight operations. The cadets who did not wash out after a month's basic training would move on to Pensacola, Florida to finish their flight training. More cadets washed out at this point in their training, so Grosse Ile became known as one of the Elimination or E-Bases.

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor propelling the United States into World War II. By October 1942, Naval Reserve Aviation Base Grosse Ile led all Navy Reserve bases training primary student pilots for the Allies and on December 9, 1942, the Navy changed the name of the base to U.S. Naval Air Station. By the end of 1942 there were more than 3,000 personnel at NAS Grosse Ile, with an increasing British aviation presence. The Naval Ferry Command also used the base as a refueling point. Two side wheel excursion steamers, the USS Wolverine and USS Sable were commissioned, converted, and used as training aircraft carriers. Most of the carrier qualification exercises in World War II took place on the Wolverine and

Sable and countless landing signal officers and ground crew successfully trained on the decks of these two ships. The training exercises produced at least 120,000 successful landings and approximately 17,000 qualified naval aviators.<sup>18</sup>

The volume of training exercises increased the probability of accidents and they did happen with some frequency. Between 1942 and 1945, more than 122 airplanes were lost and there were more than 200 deck accidents. Although most accidents produced just minor injuries, at least eleven naval aviators died.

Naval Air Station Grosse Ile also supported 16 airfields radiating through the Downriver area, and the Navy continued to operate some of them into the 1950s.<sup>19</sup>



## RAF Pilots Rest Far From Home

Eleven Royal Air Force student pilots from England were killed during the Second World War in training accidents at Naval Air Station Grosse Ile.

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<sup>18</sup> [The WW2 & The 40s at NASGI](#)

<sup>19</sup> [WW2 Military Airfields including Auxiliaries and Support Fields](#)

## Keith Maurice Hoare



[Keith Maurice Hoare](#) was born about 1923, the son of Maurice Arthur and Doris Irene Hoar of Egham, Surrey, England. He was the Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. He died on November 18, 1943 in a training accident and he is buried [in Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## Richard Giles Ingouville



[Richard Giles Ingouville](#) was born about 1923 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the son of Peter and Marta B. Ingouville. He was a Leading Airman of the H.M.S. Saker,<sup>20</sup> Royal Navy. Killed in a training accident, he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

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<sup>20</sup> SAKER I and II were accounting and administrative centers tracking officers and men from the Royal Navy who were in the United States for training or waiting for ships to be built.

## David Scott Parker



[David Scott Parker](#) was born about 1923 in Yorkshire, England, the son of George W. and Dorothy Parker. He served as a Leading Airman in the H.M.S. Saker II program. He died on May 21, 1943 in a training accident and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## William Thomas Pridmore



William Thomas Pridmore was born about 1918, in Kilburn, London, England to Thomas John and Margaret Pridmore. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve and he died in a training accident on September 23, 1942. He was buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

## Reginald Joseph Stephens



[Reginald Joseph Stephens](#) was born about 1922, the son of Ewart Joseph and Lucy Alice Stephens of Gloucester, England. He was the Leading Airman on the H.M.S. Saker and he was killed in a training accident. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## Derek Robertson Stewart



Derek Robertson Stewart was born about 1925, the son of John Robertson and Dorothy Stewart, of Kirkcaldy, Fife, Scotland. A Leading Airman, he served as part of the H.M.S. Saker, Royal Navy and he died in a training accident. He is buried in Oakridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

## Albert Creighton Summers



[Albert Creighton Summers](#) was born about 1926 in Hoveringham, Nottingham, England, the son of George Albert and Gladys Kathleen Summers. He was a Leading Airman of the HMS Saker and he died in a training accident on January 13, 1944. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## Harry Threadgold



Harry Threadgold was born about 1921 in Winsford in Cheshire, England, the son of Harry and Caroline Threadgold. He served with the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. He died on September 23, 1942, in a training accident while a student pilot with the RAF and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

## Arnold Hall Tulloch



[Arnold Hall Tulloch](#) was born about 1924 in Liverpool, England, the son of Arnold and Helen Tulloch. He served in the H.M.S. Saker, Royal Navy, and he was killed in a training accident on June 28, 1943. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## Arthur Raymond Turner



[Arthur Raymond Turner](#), born about 1924 in Manchester, England, was the son of Arthur and Lucy Turner. He was a casualty of World War II, on May 22, 1943, serving with the H.M.S. Saker II. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## Robert Walker



[Robert Walker](#) was a Leading Airman in the H.M.S. Saker program. He died in December 1943, as a World War II casualty. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

# A British Bomber Crashes At Detroit



The Ironwood Daily Globe of October 25, 1958 told the story of a jet plane crash that barely missed a hospital, a residential area, and killed six British RAF pilots on a mission in the United States.

The Associated Press story reported that a Vulcan B1XA908 of No. 83 Squadron flying from Lincolnshire, England to Lincoln, Nebraska – the “Lone Ranger” Exercise- a combination goodwill and training mission, crashed into the Detroit residential area after a massive electric systems failure. The jet impacted at a steep angle which made for a small impact area, but all six crew members were killed. The jet plane crashed in flames, just missing a big hospital and spewing flaming wreckage that tore apart three houses and damaging at least 20 more.

The huge bomber -- 95 feet long with a 100-foot wingspan and weighing about 70 tons -- fell only about 1,000 feet short of a riverfront U.S. Public Health Service Hospital, which has 17 patients and a staff of 30.

Witnesses said the falling plane was on a line with the hospital and "a couple more seconds and she would have landed right in the middle of it."

Trailing smoke and flame, the triangular delta-wing Vulcan roared tree-top high, clipping leaves and branches in an apparent desperate attempt to make the river. "It sounded like it would take the roof right off the house," said a witness. "There was this terrible thunderclap and then the plane burst into a big ball of fire. The whole sky turned red."

The area of the crash is one of two-story frame homes, a few blocks from fashionable Grosse

Pointe Park with its large Lake St. Clair estates.

Exploding fuel tanks of the four-engine bomber sprayed a five-block area. A number of persons reported slight injuries.

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Ewald were in their home when a fragment of the plane plowed into it. Ewald, 72, managed to get out, but a stuck door trapped his 65-year-old wife. A neighbor, Michael Durkin came to their aid.

"Mrs. Ewald was screaming for help," Durkin said. "She was on fire. Their dog was on fire too."

Between them, Durkin and Ewald freed the woman. She and her husband were taken to a hospital. Their Collie dog, Lassie, was found safe, cooling her singed tail in a nearby canal.

Several boathouses and small pleasure craft moored on the network of channels that lace the area were damaged by the fallout. Debris also showered down on a grade school playground crowded with children. Fortunately, none was hurt.

Torn-down power lines blazed eerily on the wet pavement as gas company workers ripped pavements and lawns to cap mains. Rain turned the earth to mud.

Armed police patrolled the littered streets to prevent looting and forestall accidents. One detail sifted the wreckage for bodies. Boat crews, meanwhile, searched the river and lake for the missing airmen. Officials of Selfridge Air Force Base at Mount Clemens said a dawn air hunt would be launched.

The failure occurred at around 30,000 feet and the backup system should have provided 20 minutes of emergency power to allow the aircraft to divert to Kellogg Airfield, at Battle Creek, Michigan, or one of several airports in the Detroit area. Due to a short circuit in the service busbar, backup power only lasted three minutes before expiring and locking the aircraft controls. XA908 then went into a dive of between 60-70° and before it reached the water it crashed, leaving a 40-ft crater in the ground, which was later excavated to 70 feet deep in an unsuccessful attempt to find the cockpit of the aircraft. All six crew members were killed, including the co-pilot, who had ejected. The co-pilot's ejector seat was found in Lake St Clair, but his body was not recovered until the following spring.

At Lincoln, England, the Royal Air Force said it held faint hope one crewman had time to use his ejector seat and parachute safely. However, no survivor had been found in more than 12 hours. Bits, no more, of bodies were strewn among the debris.

The British Air Ministry in London said the ship was from the 83rd Squadron of the Royal Air Force Bomber Command based at Waddington Air Base near Lincoln, England. Its captain, Flt. Lt. John Willoughby Moore, carried a message of good will from the mayor of that city to the mayor of Lincoln, Neb., near headquarters of the U.S. Strategic Air Command.

The rest of the crew were:

Flt. Lt. John Willoughby-Moore, Pilot.

Flt. Lt. Brian Peacock, Co-pilot.

Sqdn. Ldr. Harvey J. Scull, Navigator.  
Flt. Lt. James D. Watson, Navigator.  
F/O Anthony D. Baker, AEO.  
C/T Edward C. Evison, Crew Chief.<sup>21</sup>

### **Flt. Lt. John Willoughby-Moore, Pilot**



John Willoughby-Moore was born on April 14, 1924 in Hampshire England. He died on October 24, 1958, in Wayne County. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Woodhaven. Flight Lieutenant Moore, Service No. 576961 was the holder of the Air Force Cross. He was based at RAF Waddington and died while serving in the Royal Air Force. He was 34.

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<sup>21</sup> [Ironwood Daily Globe](#), October 25, 1958

## Flight Lt. Brian Peacock, Co-Pilot



Born June 16, 1931, England. Died October 24, 1958 in Wayne County. Flight Lieutenant Peacock was born in Hull. Service No. 3513565. He was 27. He was based at RAF Waddington and died while serving with the Royal Air Force. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

## Sqdn. Ldr. Harvey J. Scull, Navigator



Harvey John Scull was born September 30, 1923 in Northamptonshire, England. Squadron Leader Scull, Service Number 165638 was based at RAF Waddington and was 35 when he died while serving with the Royal Air Force. He died October 24, 1958, in Wayne County and he is buried at [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

Flt. Lt. James D. Watson, Navigator



Flight Lieutenant J.D. Watson was born on October 17, 1924, in England, and he died on October 24, 1958, in Wayne County. Flight Lieutenant Watson, born in East Grinstead and stationed at RAF Waddington, died whilst serving in the Royal Air Force. His Service No. was 167695. He is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## **Anthony David Baker, Flying Officer**



Anthony David Baker was born on August 5, 1935, in Greater London, England. He died October 24, 1958 at Detroit. Flying officer Baker, Service No. 4130310 Royal Air Force, was stationed at RAF Waddington. He was 23. He is buried in Woodhaven in Oak Ridge Cemetery.

## C/T Edward C. Evison, Crew Chief



Edward C. Evison, Crew Chief, was born on February 7, 1919, in England.

He died on October 24, 1958 in Detroit. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

# The Korean War

**PFC James Clarence Adams** was born on September 16, 1928, and he served in the US Army in the Korean War. He died on September 11, 2000 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Orion John Baily** was born on October 10, 1928. He served in Korea as a PFC with the United States Army. He died on December 4, 1979, and he is buried in [Huron Valley Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

**Felix “Phil” Camilleri** was born on December 16, 1931 in Malta. He fought with the United States Army in Korea. He died on October 18, 1982 and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Emil L. Hrivnak**, born September 10, 1928, served as a Corporal in the United States Army in Korea. He died on August 16, 1985 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

Born October 7, 1931, in St. Louis, Michigan, **Robert Max Huntoon** fought with the United States Air Force in Korea. He died on January 11, 2009, in Taylor, Michigan and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## **Roland J. Isler**



**Sergeant Rollin J. Isler**, born December 14, 1931, fought with the United States Army in Korea as a Light Weapons Infantryman. He was killed in action on August 2, 1950 and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Paul August Johnson** was born on August 23, 1935, and he fought with the United States Marine Corps in Korea. He died on September 2, 2003, and he is buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

## **William J. Logan**



**William J. Logan** was born August 16, 1926 and he served America in the Army, Air Force, and Pennsylvania National Guard in both World War II and Korea. He died on March 3, 2012 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**John L. McNamara**, born on July 10, 1927, served his country as a private in the United States Army in Korea. He died on December 5, 1977, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Bobby Joe O'Hara**, born on August 29, 1933, fought as a Corporal in the United States Army in Korea. He died on April 19, 1973, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Maurice Dale Swoveland**, born October 22, 1929, fought in Korea as a MM1 in the United States Navy. He died on March 1, 1989, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Chester Tackett** was born June 7, 1929, and he served as a Corporal in the United States Army in Korea. He died on November 2, 1989, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Rodger W. Wahlert**, born November 20, 1936, served in Korea as an A2C in the United States Air Force. He died on April 6, 1972, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

# The Vietnam War

**Serge I. Anctil**, born January 1, 1942, served as an Electrician's Mate Fireman with the United States Navy in Vietnam. He died on January 11, 1980, and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Spec John Keith Anderson** was born on November 6, 1948 and his home of record is listed as Southgate. He served in the United States Army in Vietnam as an SP5. He was killed in Vietnam on August 10, 1969 and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Keith D. Baker**. Private, U.S. Army, Vietnam. Buried in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**Henry Philip Baldwin**, born January 24, 1948, and listing his home as Wyandotte, served with the United States Navy as a Hospitalman with the 2<sup>nd</sup> BN, 12<sup>th</sup> Marines, 3<sup>rd</sup> MARVIV, III, MAF. He died in Quang Tri, Vietnam on March 19, 1969. He is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Howard James Bower, Jr.** was born on January 13, 1952, with his home of record listed as River Rouge, Michigan. He fought in the Vietnam War as a Machine Gunner in the United States Marine Corps and died on April 3, 1971, in Quang Nam Province in Vietnam at age 19. He is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**George Carroll** was born on March 31, 1941 and served as a Navy Ensign in the Vietnam War. He died on August 14, 1991, and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Paul D. Faarup** was born on December 16, 1950. He served as a Corporal in the United States Marine Corps in Vietnam. He died on September 9, 1971 and his memorial is located in [Oak Ridge Cemetery](#) in Woodhaven.

**James Eugene Fell**, born August 21, 1945, served in the United States Army in Vietnam as a Staff Sergeant. He died June 5, 1981, and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Robert Fell, III**, was born on April 23, 1970. He fought in Vietnam as an Army Staff Sergeant. He died on August 1, 2005 and he is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Norman Freda**, born November 2, 1945, served his country in the United States Army as a Second Lieutenant Field Artillery Unit Commander in Battery B, 1st Battalion, 11th Artillery, 9th Infantry Division, Vietnam, attached to 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, Vietnam. On January 31, 1969, he was killed in Dinh Tuong Province, Vietnam at age 23. He was awarded a Bronze Star w/V device and 1 Oak Leaf Cluster. He is buried in [Our Lady of Hope Cemetery](#) in Brownstown Township.

**Spec Henry Fugett**



**Henry Fugett** was born on June 3, 1948, and served his country in Vietnam as a Sp4 Co C 5 Cav 1 Cav Div. He died on October 14, 1967 in Vietnam and he is buried in Our Lady of Hope Cemetery in Brownstown Township.

Born December 17, 1945, **Joseph Gilroy** was a Corporal in the United States Marine Corps and served in Vietnam. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Charles S. Goebbel**, born October 26, 1950, served as a SP4 in the United States Army in Vietnam. He died on December 30, 1974. His memorial is located in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Wood Haven.

**Ronald C. Hart** was born on May 1, 1949. He fought in the Vietnam War as a SP5 in the United States Army. He died on June 1, 1980 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Gary Wayne Holbrook**



**Gary Wayne Holbrook**, born June 7, 1946, fought in Vietnam as a rifleman in the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines. He was killed in action on February 7, 1968 in Hue, Vietnam. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Spec Daniel Perry Holtrey**, born October 26, 1948, in Flat Rock was the son of George and Gloria Mary Holtrey later of Fort Smith, Arkansas. Drafted into the United States Army at age 20, Daniel earned the rank of SP5 and trained as a helicopter door gunner. He served with Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division (AMBL). On August 26, 1969, Daniel and Warrant Officer Rupert “Rusty” Albert Funderburk, Jr. and Warrant Officer Michael Nicholas Masuen, who had arrived in Vietnam the day before were flying a helicopter mission in Bing Long, South Vietnam when their Loach helicopter crashed. Daniel was awarded Army Aircrew Wings, The Purple Heart Medal for his combat related wounds, The Vietnam Service Medal, The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Service Medal, The National Defense Service Medal and The Good Conduct Medal. His name can be found on panel 19W, line 086 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. He is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**John Joseph Horvath** was born in 1948. He served as a Corporal in the United States Marine Corps in Vietnam. He died in 1979 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**James Thomas Irvin** was born on August 31, 1934 and served his country as a PFC in the United States Army in Vietnam. He died on December 25, 1973 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

### **Gerald McClain**



**Gerald D. McClain**, born on April 14, 1944, served as a Sergeant in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He died on November 28, 1995, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Clayton F. Robinson, Jr.**, born on January 20, 1947, fought in Vietnam with the United States Marine Corps. He died on August 15, 2000, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Chester Daniel Tilley** was born on November 9, 1926, and he fought for America in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam as an SSG in the United States Army. He died on January 15, 1977 and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven

**Martin J. Trondson** was born on December 31, 1947 and he fought in Vietnam as a PFC in the United States Army. He died on June 6, 1999, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Richard E. Vermette, Jr.** was born on February 20, 1950, and he fought in Vietnam as an SN in the United States Navy. He died on August 25, 1976, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Sgt. Vaughn T. Voyles**, born April 6, 1953, fought in Vietnam as a Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps. He died on May 27, 1986, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Stanley Ray Weir** was born June 10, 1949, and he fought in the Vietnam War as a Sergeant in the United States Army. He died on October 22, 2002, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Robbie B. West**, born January 14, 1947, fought as an SP5 in the United States Army in Vietnam. He died on March 24, 1990, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

**Michael Zocher** was born on September 7, 1956 and he fought for his country in Vietnam as a private in the United States Army. He died on February 15, 1976, and he is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Woodhaven.

# Pioneer Brownstown Businesses

The Michigan State Gazetteer of 1863-1864 published a capsule profile of Brownstown Township and a list of Brownstown businesses.

Brownstown, a Wayne County township and post office, was located 25 miles south of Detroit. The villages of Flat Rock and Gibraltar were located within Brownstown Township. The Brownstown post office was situated in the former village, two and a half miles north of the northern division of the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad. The population was 1,500.

William Aspinwall, Hotel

George Carson Justice of the peace.

Lewis Chattendon, Grocer.

John Cone , Justice of the peace

Richard Flint, Carpenter.

Freeland Garretson, Boot and Shoe Maker

Garret Garretson, Boot and Shoe Maker

Mrs. Garretson, Milliner

Enos Harnden, Cooper

William H. Hooper, Hotel Proprietor and Stave Dealer. Born in Michigan in 1816 and died on October 8, 1875 in Brownstown.

Albert Hosmer, Jr. Lawyer.

Henry Lawrence, Carriage Maker.

William S. Lawrence, Carriage Maker

Hiram W. Lobdel, Physician

Henry B. Merryll , Carriage Maker

John Miller, Justice of the Peace.

Willett S. Morey, General Store

Romeyn B. Murray, Lawyer.

Reverend James Nail, Congregational

John L. Near, Physician

William Osborn, Blacksmith

Benjamin W. Pierson, Carpenter

Joseph A. Pierson, General Store

Russell Ransom, General Store

Charles Sherburn, Blacksmith

W. Seward Vreeland, Flouring Mill

Reverend Thomas Waklin, Methodist

David Wallace, General Store

William L. Walters, Hotel and Livery Stable

Marcus Warden, Mason

### **Michigan State Gazetteer, 1867**

The 1867 Michigan State Gazetteer noted that Brownstown Township contained the villages of Flat Rock and Gibraltar with Flat Rock containing the post office of Brownstown. The village of Flat Rock contained six stores, two churches, two flour mills, a hotel, varied shops, mills, factories, and professional people. The population of Brownstown Townships was 1,500 and the population of Flat Rock, 500. A branch of the Detroit, Monroe, and Toledo Railroad ran through the township and stages ran through three times a day. Brownstown Township officers were John Hitchcock, supervisor

Chapin & Vreeland, General Store

Clark, General Store

James Farnham, Boots and Shoes

Freeland Garretson, Boots and Shoes

Mrs. Garretson, Milliner

William H. Hooper, Hotel and Stave Dealer

Oscar Herryman, Carpenter

Henry B. Lawrence, Carriage Maker

W.F. Lawton & Co., General Store.

Hiram W. Lobdell, Physician.  
Reverend Meecham, Congregational  
Henry B. Merrel, Carriage Maker  
R.B. Murray, Justice of the Peace  
Benjamin W. Pierson, Carpenter  
Joseph A. Pierson, General Store  
Russel Ransom, General Store  
Charles Sherburn, Blacksmith  
Charles Sherwood, Blacksmith  
Styles & Burton, Flouring Mill  
William Thorn, General Store  
Seward W. Vreeland, Flouring Mill  
William Voylan, Physician  
William Watters, Shingle Mill and Livery Stable  
Marcus Worden, Mason

### **Michigan State Gazetteer – 1887-1888**

The Michigan State Gazetteer of 1887-1888 described Brownstown as being a shipping point for timber and farm produce and the location of Flat Rock on the Huron River provided ample water power for more manufacturing industries than the two existing flour mills. Brownstown contained three churches – Baptist, Congregational, and Methodist- and a spacious public school building costing \$12,000. The township and village of Flat Rock also featured an opera house with a seating capacity of 1,100 people and a newspaper. Cornelius G. Munger was post master and there was a daily mail delivery. The population was 600.

Fred Burden, Blacksmith and Wagon Maker. Born 1848 and died in 1926. Son of George Burden and Ann Bushnell. Husband of Isadore Frances Vandercook. Married January 6, 1877 in Washtenaw County, Michigan. Buried in Huron Valley Cemetery, Flat [Rock](#).

Lewis J. Chadderton, News Depot

Clinton A. Chamberlain, Hardware

Reverend William Cook, Methodist Episcopal

Joshua Cushman, Drayman

Edwards & Shove (John Edwards, David Shove), Blacksmiths and Wagon Makers

Henry Egabroad, Publisher Flat Rock Journal

Daniel Estes, Carpenter

Flat Rock Gymnastic Club, Robert Turner. President, W S Morey secretary

Flat Rock Hotel, E P Shellenberg, proprietor

Flat Rock Journal, Henry Egabroad, Publisher

Freeland Garretson, Justice of Peace, Notary Public and Insurance Agent

Mrs. Lilly E. Garretson, Milliner

Henry Gordon, Music Teacher

Benjamin Hall, Lumber

Henry Harriman, Florist

Chesley C. Hitchcock, General Store

Albert Hosmer, Attorney- at-Law, late Clerk of the Circuit Court, and Proprietor of Huron Hotel

Albert Hosmer, Proprietor, Huron Hotel

William H. Lawrence, Blacksmith

Marvin Lennox, Barber

John H. Lobdell, Physician, Druggist, and Proprietor Lobdell's Opera House.

John I. Loss, Carpenter

Mrs. Marietta Loss, Dressmaker

G.W. Metier & Son (George W and Curtis L), Flour and Planing Mill

Marshall H. Metier, Flour Mill

Charles E. Miller, Cider Manufacturer

Willet S. Morey, General Store

Mrs. Margaret Morrisey, Carpet Weaver

Cornelius G. Munger, General Store. The 1870 United States Federal Census listed Cornelius Munger, 26, as living in Brownstown with his wife Maria, 23, and their children Edward and Gertrude.

Thomas M. Munger, Deputy Sheriff

[John L. Near](#), Physician

William Northrup, Painter

Reverend Robert Parsons, Congregational

Joseph A. Pierson, Insurance

Mrs. J.A. Pierson, Milliner

Henry W. Potter, Music Teacher

Seneca S. Potter, Furniture

William S. Potter, Carpenter

Public Telephone Station, Cornelius G. Munger, Agent

Andrew R. Reading, Meat Market

Arthur B. Reeves, Harness Maker

Francis Rice, Justice of Peace

James L. Rowley, Railroad and Express Agent

Edward P. Shellenberg, Proprietor, Flat Rock Hotel

Charles Shurben, Blacksmith

Samuel F. Smith, Cider Manufacturer

William Speicher, Harness Maker

Alpheus S. Stoddard, Shoemaker

Charles Stoflel, Saloon

Mrs. Jane Thorn, Dressmaker

Dr. Robert Turner, Druggist. The 1880 United States Federal Census shows Robert Turner, 36, born in Canada in 1844, and he was married to Ella C. Turner. He lived in Flat Rock, Michigan and listed his occupation as physician. He was still practicing medicine in 1910. He is buried in [Oak Forest Cemetery](#) in Flat Rock.

Jeremiah Van Riper, painter.

Eloise Cemetery

*Do Write Plainly with Unfading Ink - This is a Permanent Record.*

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANSING VITAL STATISTICS DIVISION. CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF DEATH. [The Registrar should number each certificate received or enter in space below, beginning with "No. 365 REGISTERED NO. 969"]

Place of Death: County Wayne, Township Wayne, Village Eloise, City Eloise. Location: In City     , Ward     , No.     , St.     .

Full Name Jeremiah Van Riper, Date of Death July 27 1901.

Hospital, Institution or Treatment West Hoop, How long an inmate or resident 1 mo, Sex male, Color white.  
Late or home residence Brownstown, Single, married, widowed or divorced married.

Age 76 years, months, days. Date of Birth 1825 (State or country) New York.

Occupation, if over 10 years of age Painter. Birthplace of father (State or country)     . Birthplace of mother (State or country)     .

Name of father not known. Name of mother not known.  
Date of burial or removal July 29, 1901. Place of burial or removal Eloise, County.  
Signature of undertaker Wayne Co. Home, Address of undertaker Eloise.

Medical Certificate of Cause of Death.  
I hereby certify that I attended deceased from July 1 1901 to July 27 1901, that I last saw him alive on July 27 1901, that he died on July 27 1901, about 8:30 o'clock, P. M., and that to the best of my knowledge and belief the CAUSE OF DEATH was as hereunder written:  
DISEASE CAUSING DEATH\* Sarcotia.  
Immediate cause of death     .  
Contributory causes or complications, if any fractured hip, 164 days.  
Post-mortem     .  
\*In case of a Violent Death, state (1) mode of injury and whether accidental, suicidal or homicidal; (2) what was the nature of the injury and the immediate cause of death; (3) contributory causes or conditions, e. g., septicemia. Also whether operation was performed, etc. In deaths from tuberculosis, cancer, etc., always specify what organ or part of the body was affected. In septicemia, give cause, especially if puerperal.

Witness my hand this 27 day of July 1901.  
Signature of physician, health officer or coroner R. H. Cahle, M. D.  
(Address) Wayne County Home, Eloise Mich.

## Michigan State Gazetteer – 1897

The 1897 Michigan State Gazetteer lists some Brownstown businesses and professions.

Freeland Garretson, postmaster.

William T. Barnum, Shoemaker

George Beaubien, barber

Josephine Bromley, artist

Fred Borden, Carriage Manufacturer, Blacksmithing and Machinist

Frank Chamberlain, barber

T. Dell Cook, County Superintendent of Schools

Lillie De Long, Music Teacher

Lottie De Long, Dressmaker

Sol De Long, Leader Cornet Band

Herman J. Diekman, Flour Mill

John D. Discher, Meats

Henry P. Ervling, Thresher

Daniel Ferstle, Saloon

Lorenzo Ferstle, Hotel

Flat Rock Cornet Band, Sol. De Long, Leader

Flat Rock News, J.L. Nevrkirk, Publisher

Freeland Garretson, Postmaster and Insurance

Reverend J.M. Giltner, Baptist

August Glicklich, Shoemaker

Benjamin Hall Jr, Lumber on Huron River between Rockwood and Flat Rock

Elizabeth Harriman , Dressmaker

Oscar Harriman, Carpenter

Philip F. Hasley, Physician

Chesley C. Hitchcock General Store

Mrs. Celia Hopper. Music Teacher

Lillie Horn, Milliner

Hattie Hoanior, Assistant Teacher

Huron Valley Creamery, Albert Upham Manager

Shell Lautenslager Shell, Meats

August F. Limbrlight , Jeweler

Wesley B. Littlefield , Justice

John H. Lobdell, Physician

Louis T. Loughrey, Hardware

Reverend M. Melvyn, Baptist

Daniel Metier, Drayman

G.W. Metier & Son -George W and Curtis L- Saw and Flour Mill

Louise Metier-Smith, Music Teacher

Charles E. Miller, Cider Manufacturer

Willett S. Morey, General Store

Cornelius G. Munger, Grocer

John L. Newkirk, Publisher and Proprietor, Flat Rock News

Revered W.T. Osborne, Baptist

Maude Parsons, teacher

Reverend Robert Parsons, Congregational

Jessie Pierson, teacher

William J. Porter, Market Gardener

Warren Potter, Furniture and Undertaker, Grand Trunk Detroit

Andrew R. Reading, Baker

Gertie Reading, Teacher

Isaac Robinson, Junk

Abraham Sherer, Mason

E. David Shove, Carriage Maker

Mrs. Charles Shurben, Carpet Weaver

Reverend Charles Simpson, Methodist

Samuel F. Smith, Cider Manufacturer

Edward G. Stevens, Notions

Minor D. Strang, Railroad and Express Agent

Dr. Robert Turner, Drugs

Albert Upham, Brick and Tile Manufacturer

Jeremiah Van Riper, Painter

Albert Wagar, Thresher

Sarah Wagar, Dressmaker

Jacob J. Wahl, Saloon

William L. Walters, Horse Dealer

John Wells, Farm Implements

Eber W. Yost, Principal of School

### **1907-1908- Michigan State Gazetteer**

The [1907-1908 Michigan State Gazetteer](#) listed business and professional concerns in Brownstown.

George Beaubien, barber

Henry J. Bonte, Brick Manufacturer

De Witt Brown, carpenter

William Bryant, Grain Elevator

Fred Burden, Carriage Maker

J.F. Burness, Veterinary Surgeon

Alfred Carter, Furniture

John Chamberlain, Corn Stubble

Cutter Co, John Chamberlain, Manager

John Chamberlain, Cattle Breeding

Willett Chamberlain, Agricultural Implements

Charles Chamberlain, Paper Hanger

Reverend Ainge Clement, Methodist Episcopal

M.W. Covert, Principal of School

Lille De Long, Music Teacher

Sol De Long, Music Teacher

William Douglas, Meats

Oscar Harriman Oscar, Carpenter

Philip F. Hasloy, Physician

Chesley C. Hitchcock, General Store

Reverend John P. Hutchinson Congregational

Charles Jubenville, Hay

August K. Limbright, Jeweler

Wesley R. Littlefield, Justice of the Peace

John H. Lobell, Physician

Louis Longprey, Hardware

Frank Metcalf, Fruit Grower

Curtis L. Metier, Flour and Saw Mills.

Station Detroit Creamery Co, James Broughton, Jr, Manager

W.J.A. Morey, Poultry Dealer

Cornelius G. Munger, General Store

Charles Nastali, Shoes

Isaac Robinson, Junk

David E. Shove, Blacksmith

Gail H. Simmermon, Railroad and Telegraph Agent

Oscar W. Smith, Proprietor Flat Rock Hotel and Livery

Charles D. Stoilet, Thresher

Charles Strewing, Fruit Farm

Reverend Fred H. Townsend, Methodist Episcopal

Albert Upham, Lumber

Lottie Vreeland, Dressmaker

Albert Wagar, Thresher and Supervisor

Delbert I. Wagar, Honey

Jacob J. Wahl, Saloon

George Wells, Agricultural Implements

Western Union Telegraph Company, G H Simmermon Manager

Williams Bros Co, Cannery

# Woodhaven – Growing in Business, Population, and Perks

In the 1930s, the Mobil Oil Company stimulated the growth of Brownstown Township when it built a large refinery on the corner of Allen and West Roads. President Harry Truman mentioned the [Mobile Oil Refinery](#) in a 1945 Executive Order as essential to the defense of the United States. People took jobs at the refinery and settled in the Township, building new homes and rearranging the landscape. More industry came to the Township and by the 1960s when Woodhaven became a village in 1961 and a city in 1965, other industries had settled in the area, including the Detroit, Toledo and Ironton Railroad switchyard, Buckeye Pipeline Company, and the Ford Motor Company.



Ford Stamping Plant, Woodhaven

Traverse City Record Eagle

Traverse City, Michigan

July 10, 1964

Ford's New Plant Means 4,000 Jobs

Detroit---ground will be broken next month on a \$192 million Ford Motor Co. stamping plant which will provide at least 4,000 new jobs for the Detroit area.

Gov. George Romney hailed the announcement by Henry Ford II Thursday, and said it would mean another 25,000 jobs for the state through work created by the big stamping plant. The

plant, biggest ever built by Ford in this country, will cover 2.5 million square feet on a 127-acre site in Woodhaven, a suburb 19 miles downriver from Detroit.

Romney said, "This is good news not only for Woodhaven, but for the whole state. An operation like this will stimulate other business. The 4,000 jobs could well generate five or six times those produced by the plant itself."

Ford said the firm studied several sites in the Midwest and finally decided that "what we wanted was right here in Michigan."

Romney saw in the announcement an indication that the industry is ending the sweeping diversification program started after World War II when plants were built all over the country.

The former American Motors president said Ford's announcement plus statements by other auto companies about new plants for Michigan "indicate the end of a period in which these plants are being located outside of Michigan. Now they will be focused in Michigan."

Ironwood Daily Globe

July 10, 1964

Largest Plant

By Charles C. Cain, Associated Press Writer

Detroit- (AP). Ford Motor Company has announced it will build the largest single plant in its operation at Woodhaven, Michigan, about 18 miles southwest of Detroit.

Henry Ford II, board chairman of Ford, said while Ford already has four stamping plants "we are adding this fifth plant because we expect our car and truck production and sales to be even higher in the near future than they have been in recent record breaking years."

Ford purchased the Woodhaven site from DTI Industries, a subsidiary of Detroit, Toledo and Ironton Railroad. Woodhaven is in Brownstown Township, adjacent to the western boundary of Trenton.

"When completed and in full operation, the plant will provide employment for about 4,000 men and women," Ford said, adding, "They will be working at new jobs - and I emphasize the word new. This plant will not replace any of our present facilities." Ford said that the company looked in many parts of the Midwest, and finally came to the conclusion that "what we wanted was right here in Michigan."

The Ford announcement gave no figures on the cost of the land or the plant.

News-Palladium, Benton Harbor, Michigan

June 9, 1966

**FORD MOTOR COMPANY**

**WOODHAVEN STAMPING PLANT**

Located South of Detroit, Michigan

Has Many Openings For

**DIEMAKERS**

**DIE TRYOUT** (experience in die repair, die barber,

Fitting, spotting, etc.)

**INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICIANS**

**MACHINE REPAIRMEN**

**WELDING EQUIPMENT REPAIRMEN**

**INSPECTORS-LAYOUT** (sheet metal or tool making experience)

STEADY EMPLOYMENT PLUS LIBERAL OVERTIME  
EXCEPTION EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  
CONTACT MR. LOU NEWMAN AT THE  
HOWARD JOHNSON MOTOR LODGE  
4 MILES SOUTH ON STATE 139  
AT JUNCTION INTERSTATE 94  
FRIDAY, JUNE 10, THROUGH SUNDAY JUNE 12, 1966  
BETWEEN THE HOURS OF  
6 P.M. TO 9 P.M. ON FRIDAY  
8 A.M. TO 8 P.M. ON SATURDAY  
9 A.M. TO 12 NOON ON SUNDAY  
OR STATE QUALIFICATIONS AND ADDRESS REPLIES TO:  
FORD MOTOR COMPANY  
WOODHAVEN STAMPING PLANT  
20000 WEST ROAD, WOODHAVEN

#### Commerce Continues on Allen and West Roads

As Brownstown Township continued to grow the intersection of Allen and West Roads became the hub of Woodhaven's retail activities. By 1971, Kmart and two gas stations occupied the intersection. By 1974, a Long John Silvers and Pizza Hut had opened and by the end of the 1970s a strip mall with a Kroger anchor and a Dunkin' Donuts had expanded the business district.

Meijer opened in 1990, Target in 1994, and by the end of the 1990s a Sears Hardware. In the late 1990s Mobile Oil Refinery and canning site had been torn down and cleaned up to open the way for Woodhaven Village Square, built between 2001 and 2005. Woodhaven Village Square included Walmart, The Home Depot, Applebee's and PetSmart stores.

#### **A Few Woodhaven West Road Business Family Trees**

A history of a community's businesses can provide an understanding of the heart and people of the community and furnish some interesting material. This Downriver Website traced some business, roads, and addresses and buildings in Downriver, furnishing some valuable leads for genealogists and historians and family members wanting to do further research. And, it is interesting to compare businesses to see how they evolve or don't evolve through the years of their history.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> [Downriver Locations Through the Years](#) – West Road

**16075 West**

Household Finance, 1976

Household Finance, 1977

Blockbuster Video, 2006

**16085 West**

Grove Drugs, 1969

Grove Drugs, 1972

Mister Music Sound Studios, 1975

Grove Drugs, 1977

**16105 West**

Country Candle Factory, 2006

**16115 West**

All American Salon, 2006

**18650 West**

First Baptist Church of Woodhaven, 1977

Woodhaven Bible Church, 2006

**18700 West**

Pipers Fine Foods, 1975

Ferguson Building, 2006

**18707 West**

Downriver Community Federal Credit Union, 2006

**18720 West**

Vegetable Bin Produce Market, 1975

Towne Club, 1977

Guardian Car Care, 2006

**18737 West**

Burger King, 1991

Burger King, 2006

**18742 West**

Woodhaven Car Wash, 1975

Westwood Auto Wash, 2006

**18744 West (NE corner of West Road & Monterey)**

N & J Party Store, 1977

Randy L. Odette, Certified Public Accountant, 2006

Burger Chef, 1975

Uncle Harry's Restaurant, 2006

**18775 West**

AT& T, 2006

**18846 West**

Church of God, 1977

Woodhaven Church of God Mountain Assembly Acts Revival Center, 2006

**18904 West**

Earl Connor, Jr., 1977

No Such Address, 2006

**18930 West**

Pet Supplies Plus, 1991

Mattress World Superstore, 2006

**18948 West**

Lawrence F. Weston, 1977

No Such Address, 2006

### **18950 West**

Woodhaven Beauty Salon, 1977

Firestone Mastercare Car Service, Located far back from the road, behind the building at 18930 West.

### **Woodhaven Commons Shopping Center**



Woodhaven Commons Shopping Center is located on the corner of SEC West and Allen Roads, opened in 1975 and last renovated in 2006. Covering an area of 310,000 square feet, it has about 18 stores.

### **19555 West**

Old Kent Bank, 1991

### **19600 West**

Wrigley's Supermarket, 1975

Big –K Mart, 2006

### **19900 West**

Gulf Oil Station, 1977

Total Gas Station, 1994

### **20050 West**

Dunkin Donuts, 1977

Dunkin Donuts, 1994

### **20076 West**

Coolseat Contractor, 1977

### **20089 West-Corner of West and Allen**

Socony-Vaccum Oil Company, 1930s-1950s

Mobile Oil Company Refinery, 1960s-1980s

Burden Construction Company, 1960s-1980s

**20090 West**

White Castle, 2006

**20900 West**

Ford Motor Company, 1977

**20915 West**

Louis Scheffler, 1977

**21001 West**

I 75 & West Mobile, 1977

**21055 West**

Detroit Barber Shop, 1975

**21860 West**

Woodhaven Shell, 1991

**21869 West**

Woodhaven City Offices, 1975

**22051 West**

McDow Amoco, 1994

**22061 West**

West Market, 1991

**22100 West**

Landmark Restaurants Inc., 1975

Country Kitchen, 1994

**22130 West**

Woodhaven Pharmacy, 1975

**22140 West**

Amore's Pizza Haven, 1975

**22169 West**

West Market, 1994

**22172 West**

McDonald's, 1975

**22211 West**

Down River Federal Savings & Loan Association, 1975

**22764 West**

Easy Pick, 1994

**23000 West**

Holiday Drive-In Theater, 1975

**23849 West**

Farmer Jack, 2007

## Riding to Woodhaven on Petri Bicycles



Photographer John Duguay (left) at work with Al Petri. (left)



Ecorse Mayor Dick Manning (right) marches with Al Petri (left) in an Ecorse parade in the 1950s.

Alexander Zoltan Petri, born in Indiana in 1918, is a true citizen of the entire Downriver region, living and working in Ecorse, River Rouge, Lincoln Park, Trenton, and Woodhaven. Born in Indiana on February 26, 1918, he moved to Michigan with his parents. He married Joyce Drouillard from one of the old Ecorse families in Ecorse on July 9, 1938, and they lived in River Rouge for a time. They brought up their sons Alexander Jr., Donald, and John in Ecorse, and they opened their first bicycle shop in Lincoln Park.

Al and Joyce Petri opened Al's Bike & Toy, in Lincoln Park on Fort Street in 1946. A 1954 advertisement for the store appeared in the Lincoln Park, Michigan City Directory.

*Al Petri & Sons*

*Your Down River Bicycle Store. New and Rebuilt bicycles, complete repairs, parts, and accessories, Schwinn Bicycles, lawn mowers sharpened.*

*Gold Bond and Nu-Enamel Paint Line*

*2317 Fort*

*Telephone: Dunkirk – 2-2333*



Lincoln Park location circa 1957

The Petris moved their store a few blocks down Fort Street to 2160, and then opened a second store in Trenton in 1967. In 1978 they moved to 22720 Allen Road in Woodhaven.



“Keeping Metro Detroit on Wheels Since 1946” is the slogan of Al Petri & Sons Bicycling & Fitness.

For more than 65 years, the Petri family has worked to provide the ultimate cycling experience to Downriver residents with [Al Petri & Sons](#) Bicycle Shops. The fourth generation of the Petri family continues to offer a full service bicycle shop, striving to provide customers with quality products and expert service.

Al Petri also loved politics as well as bicycles. He served as a Democratic member of the Michigan State House of Representatives from Wayne County 17<sup>th</sup> District from 1959-1964. He was a candidate in the primary for the Michigan State Senate 5<sup>th</sup> District in 1964 and 1966.

Joyce Petri died on December 12, 1996 and eventually Al married Nettie Knighton. When Al Petri died on Monday, October 30, 2006, his wife Nettie, three sons and their wives, seven grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and seven great-great grandchildren mourned his passing as well as countless Downriver friends and neighbors.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> [Alexander A. Petri](#). Detroit Free Press. October 30, 2006 Age 88 of Sun City Center, Florida, formerly of Ecorse. Survived by his wife Nettie Knighton Petri, sons Alexander Z. (Patricia) Petri Jr., Donald A. Petri and John R. (Valynda) Petri. Seven grandchildren, 18 great-grand-children and seven great-great-grand-children also survive. In state at the Ballheim Funeral Home, 4120 W. Jefferson Ave., Ecorse, Thursday 6 to 9 p.m. and Friday 12 Noon to 9 p.m. with a Rosary at 6 p.m.at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 4250 W. Jefferson Ave., Ecorse, Saturday 9 a.m. till time of Mass at 10 a.m. Interment Michigan Memorial Park.



Al Petri is seated left of Ecorse Mayor Dick Manning holding the microphone. He served on the Ecorse Council during the 1960s and 1970s.



Al Petri (right) and a colleague.

### The Woodhaven Log Cabin- Its Fate and Future

The story of the Woodhaven Log Cabin is a metaphor for the story of Woodhaven itself. The cabin wears its visible history in its logs, but its connection to the people that built it is inside and waiting to be discovered by people who care enough to explore it. It is a symbol of the past, and a hope for the future of Woodhaven and the entire Downriver region.



The Woodhaven log cabin as it appeared on the Woodhaven website.

The Woodhaven log cabin situated on West Road near I-75, has lived a long and varied life. In its early years it provided a home on West Road for a pioneer family, its rugged exterior and simple interior reflecting the grit, determination, and perseverance required to wrest a living from the woods and fields of early Brownstown Township. As time softened the rugged contours of pioneer life, the cabin kept its rugged nature, but also represented the future when it served as a city chapel, back dropping the marriages of couples starting a life together.

The 1950s the Lions Club dismantled the cabin and presented it to future Woodhaven village leaders. In 1968, Woodhaven citizen John Sledge Sr. restored the cabin piece by piece, even mixing his own mortar to chink the logs. He furnished the cabin using his own antiques and in 1969 he opened it to the public as part of the Michigan Week festivities. His request for donated pieces from the public garnered little response, so city officials closed the cabin.

The Woodhaven log cabin spent some years sitting on West Road near what would in time become the I-75 Expressway. Each time Woodhaven officials moved the cabin, they tried to preserve its heritage while embracing the new industrial, commercial, and residential growth of the city. Through the years the cabin has been upgraded and changed so it does not meet guidelines for historical grant money, although its architectural style has experienced a recent revival.

Through the years, the Woodhaven Garden Club has landscaped and maintained the cabin grounds while the city leaders continue to explore ways to preserve the log cabin as an important symbol of the Woodhaven's rich history.

## The Woodhaven Log Cabin - 2010



Robert Scheiwe and the Woodhaven Cabin. (A News-Herald Photograph)

In a May 2010 story in the [News Herald](#) by Anne Sullivan, Robert Scheiwe, who has lived in Woodhaven for fifty-plus years, gave some of the history of the Woodhaven cabin which stood on West Road in front of the police station for decades.

According to Robert Scheiwe, the Woodhaven log cabin served as a family home standing on West Road near the present I-75. He said that the cabin was built before the Civil War, making it Woodhaven's oldest building.

During construction of the I-75 freeway in the 1970s, officials moved the cabin to use as an office and when the freeway was finished, they moved the cabin to its location in front of the

police station. The cabin had two stories and measured about 18 by 20 feet, and when officials removed its brick façade, they uncovered authentic logs.

Time has worn the face of the cabin. Many of the logs are patched with caulk, and one of the outside walls started to collapse. Some of the windows are broken. A hole pokes through the roof, allowing sunlight to trace patterns on the floor. Rats and mice have burrowed tunnels into the cabin's foundation.

Robert Scheiwe swore that the critters were still busy burrowing inside as he inspected the cabin. He also noticed hand-hewn axe marks on the logs, showing the work involved in building a log cabin by hand.

Certain that the cabin could be renovated, Robert Scheiwe approached Woodhaven city officials. They agreed that the cabin could be renovated, but they said they didn't think they could find anyone to renovate it. Some suggested the possibility of rebuilding the cabin with new logs at a cost of about \$35,000.

Robert Scheiwe didn't think new logs alone would resurrect the cabin and he believed that if city officials weren't willing to do a complete restoration, a partial fix wouldn't work.

"If they can't fix it, my opinion is it should be put to rest because it's just going to get worse. It's a shame it's been let go this long."

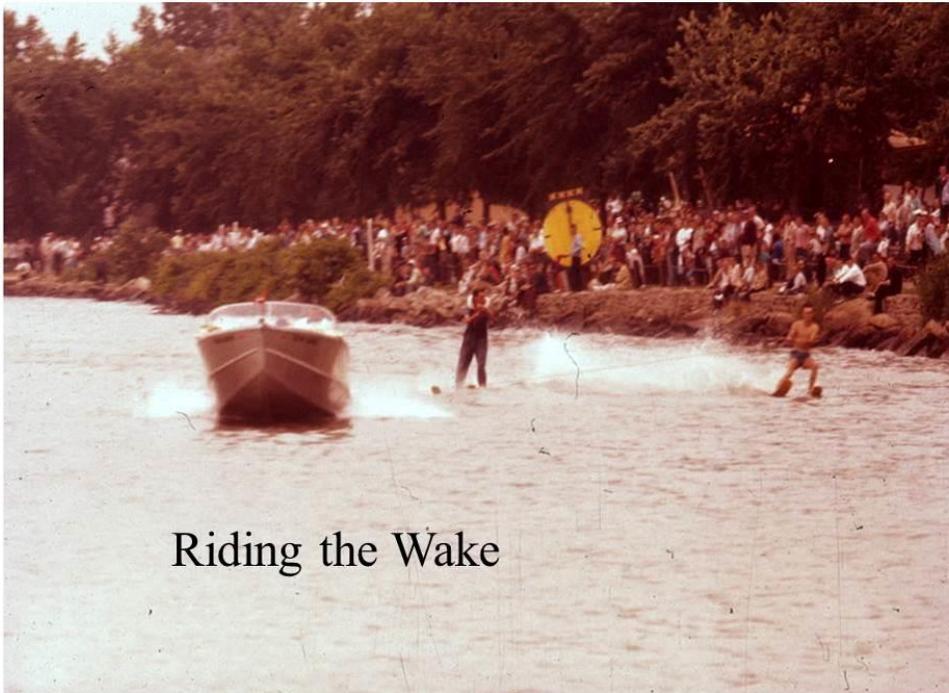
## Woodhaven Log Cabin - 2013

A [News-Herald](#) story dated January 26, 2013 by J. Patrick Pepper spotlighted Woodhaven's "positive changes" as part of a series of Outlook stories about community growth and development in 2013.

The story said that 2012 had been an eventful year for Woodhaven development and 2013 looked equally as good. Many of the changes took place in Civic Center Park, the greenbelt behind Woodhaven City Hall. The 2012 accomplishments in recreation included WOOFHaven Dog Park, the Woodhaven four-season rink, and a new scoreboard at the baseball diamonds in Civic Center Park. New tennis courts and restrooms were built behind the Community Center.

The most visible change in Civic Center Park involved the Woodhaven Log Cabin. The City demolished the log cabin that had stood sentinel over the area for decades before it became a city. In its place, the City of Woodhaven installed a waterfall surrounded by greenery, a new center piece for the municipal campus.

The early settlers in what later became Woodhaven – the Wests, the Vreelands, the Allens, the Kings – and others whose names are not immortalized with roads but whose contributions are just as significant contributed figurative logs to their cabins and the Woodhaven communal cabin. Even though the Woodhaven Cabin is gone, the people it represents still live in the bustling commerce of West Road, in the quiet farms along Vreeland Road, with some of their names etched in stones in shady hidden and often forgotten pioneer cemeteries. Their log cabin homes and their contributions to history survive modern brick and frame homes, forgetting, and indifference. They are the foundation of Downriver.



Riding the Wake

Holland Evening Sentinel, Holland, Michigan  
February 18, 1967

The Housing and Urban Development Department announced approval Friday of a \$1.5 million grant for a storm drainage system in Woodhaven, Michigan project. Cost is estimated at \$1.5 million. Construction is expected to start in June and be completed within a year.

Traverse City Record Eagle  
Traverse City, Michigan  
March 19, 1968

#### Boater Missing

Flat Rock...A young Taylor man was missing and believed drowned after the boat he and a companion were in capsized in the Huron River Sunday. The victim was identified as John A. Perry, 23. John Easterling, 30, Woodhaven, told police he managed to get to shore.

Ironwood Daily Globe

February 17 1969

#### Detroit Rocked by Explosion

Detroit (AP) An explosion which rocked the area early today at a fire set a fire at the Mobile Oil Company Refinery in suburban Woodhaven.

No one was injured the company said and damage was confined to the building in which the explosion and fire erupted. The cause was not ascertained immediately.

State Police at the Flat Rock Post, three or four miles away, said the explosion was heard and felt there.

The company said in a statement that the explosion, which it termed minor, occurred in the oil separator area where oil and other matter are removed from water before it is returned to the Detroit River.

All processing units of the refinery continued normal operations during the blaze, the company reported, saying the fire was well contained until extinguished.

At one time police reported a feeder line at been ruptured and was adding fuel to the fire, which they said was threatening a number of large storage tanks.

Ironwood Daily Globe  
October 23, 1970  
City Challenges Census Count

Detroit (AP) The City of Woodhaven has challenged in federal court the 1970 U.S. census count of a Downriver Detroit suburb.

The suit contends a city house to house count showed 2,647 residents in Woodhaven, which is 622 more than the Census Bureau's tabulation.

Woodhaven became the first Michigan city to challenge the census. The action asks that the U.S. Commerce Department be prevented from publishing the federal count in Woodhaven.

The nation's census count is to be published starting Dec. 1. ; U.S. District Judge Stephen J. Roth set a hearing for 9 a.m. on November 2.

The suit was the second reported in the nation. The first was filed by officials of East Chicago, Indiana.

"We found that there is no mention in U.S. statutes to challenge the census and there is no precedent," said Edward C. Johnson, an attorney for Woodhaven.

"And we can show that well lose more than \$266,000 in state and federal revenues based on population over the next ten years," he said.

The suit asks the Commerce Department to accept the city's own population count rather than its results from the Census Bureau.

Traverse City Record-Eagle  
Traverse City, Michigan  
October 24, 1970  
State Suburb Sues the U.S. Census

Detroit, Oct. 24---- Suburban Woodhaven has become the first city in Michigan and one of the first in the nation to sue the U.S. Census Bureau to stop publication of 1970 census figures. According to the suit filed in U.S. District Court here, the Downriver suburb said its own count turned up 2,647 persons in residence, 632 more than the numbers found by the official census. Publication of census figures was scheduled to begin Dec. 1.

U.S. District Judge Stephen J. Roth set a hearing on Woodhaven's suit November. 2. The suit asks a restraining order against the U.S. Commerce Department to hold Census Bureau publication.

Edward C. Johnson, a Detroit attorney handling the suit, said "we can show that we will lose more than \$266,000 in state and federal revenues based on population over the next ten years."

Holland Evening Sentinel, Holland, Michigan  
November 11, 1970  
Woodhaven Wins Battle

Detroit (UPI) the small Downriver suburb of Woodhaven asked the U.S. Census Bureau for an inch and got a foot. Now the community's neighbors are upset.

The City of Woodhaven had filed suit in U.S. District Court claiming that the U.S. Census Bureau had shorted it 622 persons when the 1970 Census showed that the town had 2,025 residents.

The Bureau first asked for a delay in court proceedings, and then gave up the fight by crediting Woodhaven with a population of 3,300.

"I damn near fell over," said Ed Johnson, an attorney hired by Woodhaven. "I figured this would be quite a battle that we'd have to go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The extra 1,305 persons that Woodhaven picked up had earlier been listed in neighboring Trenton and Brownstown Township. Harold Hood, Assistant United States Attorney, said the 1,305 had all been counted in one region and had not been properly separated into the different political subdivisions.

Trenton Mayor Clarence Hanlon fumed about the switch Tuesday. "That's fine for Woodhaven, but what about us?" he said. "I don't understand why we weren't told about this."

Brownstown Supervisor Donald Mahoney said "two people gave us two different numbers," when officials tried to find out what his township's population was. He said he had ordered the township attorney to begin court action to challenge the realignment. The 65 percent increase in

Woodhaven's population was expected to bring the city an additional \$500,000 during the next 10 years in state and federal funds which are distributed on a population basis.

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[Downriver Locations Through the Years – West Road](#)

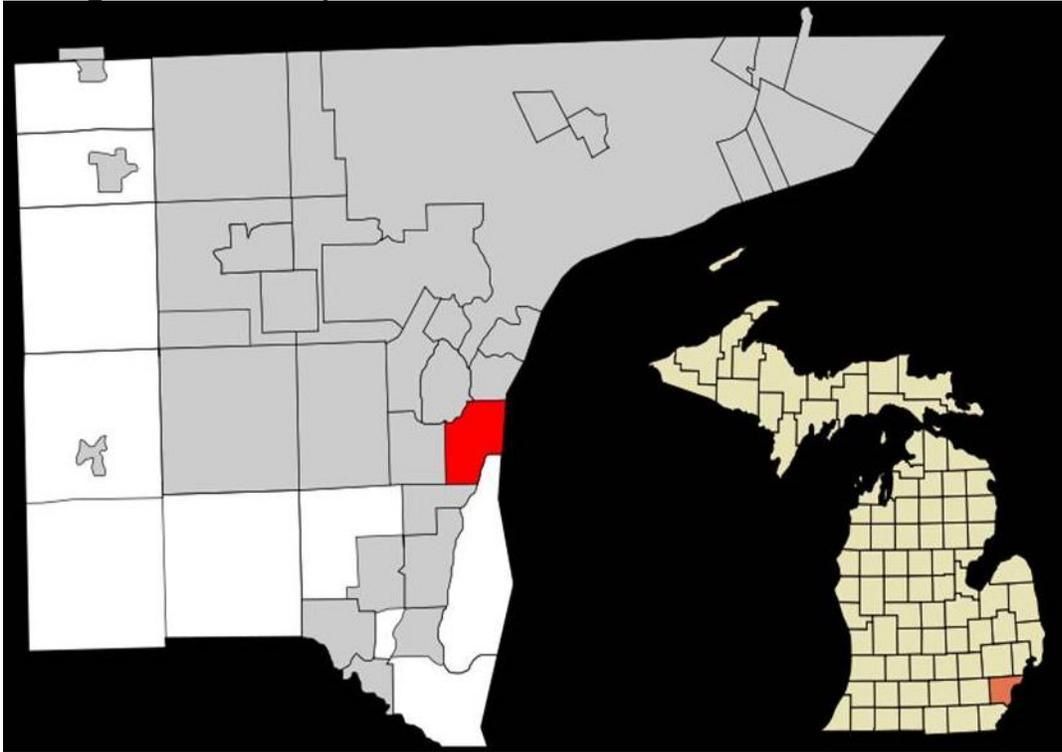
[The WW2 & The 40s at NASGI](#)

[WW2 Military Airfields including Auxiliaries and Support Fields](#)

[Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields: Michigan: Southern Detroit Area](#)

[Downriver Locations Through the Years](#)

## Chapter 18 - Wyandotte



[Wyandotte City Website](#)

[Ken Munson, Wyandotte, Images of America](#)

The Detroit River has shaped the history of Wyandotte, one of the Downriver communities along its banks, as distinctively as the other Downriver communities. Wyandotte is located about 11 miles south of Detroit, with Southgate defining its western boundary, Lincoln Park the northwest boundary, Riverview the southern parameter, and Ecorse the northern boundary. Wyandotte lies across the Detroit River from LaSalle, Ontario. A pioneering industrial and an ethnically diverse city, according to 2010 Federal Census figures Wyandotte has a population of 25,883 people.

### **Maguagua, the First Wyandot Village**

The villages of the Native American tribe called the Wyandot hugged the banks of the Detroit River like fog mists decades before the area became Ecorse Township and later the village and city of Wyandotte.

The story of Wyandotte is intertwined with a Native American tribe called the Wyandot or [Wendat](#), part of the Huron nation originating in the Georgian Bay region of Canada. The Wyandot and the French had coexisted since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, and the Wyandot had adopted many of the French customs, including building wooden frame houses.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> W.C. Butterfield in An Historical Account of the Expedition against Sandusky under Col. William Crawford wrote that “of all the savage allies of Great Britain in the West, the Wyandots were the most powerful. This arose not so much number of their warriors, as from their superior intelligence. Their long association with the French at Detroit, and, after that post fell into the possession of Great Britain, with its later occupants, had advanced them in

About 1732, the Wyandot established a village that they called Maguagua on the present day site of Wyandotte, its center closely paralleling Biddle Avenue between Oak Street and Eureka Road. The village was situated on the high banks of the Detroit River untouched by marshy wetlands, and featuring sandy loam soil good for farming. The Detroit River provided clean water and good fishing, and also made an easy canoe highway to Canada for the Wyandotte who wanted to visit their friends and relatives in their village in the Amherstburg region of Canada. Dense forests covered the land surrounding the Detroit River which sheltered animals and provided good hunting for the Indians. The Wyandot built large wood-frame houses called longhouses that they covered with sheets of bark. A single longhouse could measure 150 feet long and shelter an entire clan of up to 60 people. In some areas the Wyandot built log cabins for homes.

George Clark, publishing his *Recollections in Michigan Pioneer Collections*, wrote that Wyandotte was an Indian village with a number of houses, small orchards, and corn fields. He said that several families lived in the houses, after arriving from other states and that Wyandotte was a noted crossing and landing place for the Indians, with their trails branching off into the country. He reported that his family rented a house for a few years and then moved into a house which stood on the brink of the river, just below the present shipyard. The house was a hewed log one, standing between present day Plum and Grove Streets, and it was “said to have belonged to Blue Jacket.”<sup>25</sup>

The Wyandot called their village Maguagua which the local French, farming their ribbon farms, translated to Monguagon. Wyandot Chief Walk-in-the-Water, whose totem sign was the turtle, lived in an immense lodge outside Maquaqua on what is now the west side of Biddle Avenue. Wyandot canoes paddled the Detroit River as a trade highway to the fort at Detroit and an administrative highway to conduct their government and political affairs in their main village at Gibraltar, which served as the Council House headquarters and a site for International Council Fires.

Many Wyandot villages had reinforced walls or palisades around them for protection from enemies including their traditional Iroquois enemies, but Maquaqua did not have a wall or palisades around it. The Detroit River highway didn't bring their long standing Iroquois enemies to the unpalisaded village of Maquaqua, but the River did bring increasing numbers of white farmers seeking land and new lives. After unwillingly-because of treaty obligations- fighting with the Potawatomi against the English, the Wyandot Indians traded with the white farmers and lived peacefully alongside them. French, British, and American settlements overflowed onto Indian lands and in 1818, the Wyandotte signed a treaty with the United States government ceding their lands along the Detroit River. The United States government negotiated a treaty with the Wyandot, giving them lands on the Huron River near Flat Rock. The relentless westward advance of the whites continued, causing the Wyandot to move to Ohio, Kansas, and finally to Indian Territory, later to become the state of Oklahoma.<sup>26</sup>

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many respects over the surrounding nations.” \_\_\_\_\_ Butterfield, C. W. *An Historical Account of the Expedition Against Sandusky Under Col. William Crawford In 1782*. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co, 1873. print. (164-5)

<sup>25</sup> [Recollections, George Clark, Michigan Historical Collections, Volume I.](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Wyandot Indian Fact Sheet](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org/culture/history/timeline/1534-1842/); Wyandot History. <http://www.wyandotte-nation.org/culture/history/timeline/1534-1842/>

Tradition has it that after the Wyandot left their village white settlers coming into the area used their empty log cabins. When John Clark, a New York merchant, and his family came to Wyandot village in 1818, he and his family moved into a vacant log cabin standing between modern Plum and Grove Streets, near the Detroit River. Chief Blue Jacket had supposedly lived in the cabin.<sup>27</sup>

### **Before Ecorse Became a Township and Wyandotte a Village, the Land Lured New Settlers**

Before Ecorse became a township and Wyandotte a village, the prospect of affordable land lured a steady stream of settlers, many from New England and New York to Michigan Territory. Many of them were veterans of the War of 1812, claiming lands the United States government had awarded them for their service. Others were farmers in search of farm land. All of them bought land that the Wyandot had sold to the government. This virgin farm land at reasonable prices attracted new settlers like the clear Detroit River attracted sparkling sunlight reflections and fish. Three advertisements in the Detroit Gazette reveal the variety and amount of land for sale.

The Detroit Gazette of August 1, 1817, advertised:

For Sale

One Section, No.555, of most excellent land on Grosse Isle, on the west side of the island.

George McDougall, Agent for David S. McComb

August 1, 1817

In 1820, to offset unfavorable reports about the suitability of Michigan Territory for settlement Lewis Cass, Michigan Territorial Governor, created an expedition of 42 men to survey the western part of Michigan Territory. The composition of the Lewis Cass Expedition revealed that the people involved were as diverse as the Michigan Territory resources that the Lewis Cass Expedition enumerated. Besides well know men like captain David Bates Douglass, Henry Schoolcraft, James Doty, Dr. Alexander Wolcott, Jr. and Charles C. Trowbridge, expedition members included Roy, a Frenchman, serving as a pilot on Lake Superior; Baptiste, a soldier serving as a cook; ten Canadian voyageurs who managed the canoes; ten United States soldiers serving as an escort; and ten Native Americans serving as hunters. The Cass Survey reported Michigan land rich in natural resources, suitable for farming and crisscrossed with convenient waterways for transportation. Steamships traversed Lake Erie, land offices opened Downriver and new federal roads opened up Michigan Territory to settlement.<sup>28</sup>

A July 6, 1820, notice advised the public that a land agency office has been opened at the office of the Surveyor of the Michigan Territory in the City of Detroit for the purchase, sale, or exchange of lands public or private lying within this territory, the western districts of New York or Upper Canada, or the adjacent parts of the state of Ohio. Maps of the public lands with an accurate description of the soil and situation will be kept for examination; also a register or private lands, with plans of the same, offered for sale or exchange.

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<sup>27</sup> Edwina De Windt. Proudly We Record. Wyandotte Rotary Club, 1955

<sup>28</sup> Wisconsin Historical Collections, Volume XIII, 1895.

Maps, charts, and plans, deeds, mortgages, and other articles of conveyance executed with accuracy and on short notice; also bills of sale of vessels, charter parties, protests, bills of lading, manifests, and shipping papers.

Ball & Petit

Detroit, July 6, 1820

The January 3, 1826 issue of the Detroit Gazette carried this advertisement:

By virtue of an order of the Board of Trustees of the University of Michigan will be sold at Public auction, at the Council House in the City of Detroit, on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> Day of January next, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, a valuable tract of land situated on the River Detroit, at Maguagon, and adjoining the residence of Major Truax. The local situation of this tract renders it extremely valuable, fronting nearly four miles on the River, and the National Road passing directly across it. It is well worth the attention of purchases. The terms of sale will be made known on the day of sale.

John Hunt

Thomas Rowland

P. Lecuyer

H.J. Hunt

Detroit December 19, 1825

### **Ecorse Becomes a Township**

One of the original nine townships that the Michigan Territorial Legislature created by the act of April 12, 1827, Ecorse Township took its name from the Ecorse or Bark River, named by the French settlers for the birch bark that the Native Americans used to make their canoes and bark wigwams.<sup>29</sup>

The Wyandot village situated on the site of what is now Wyandotte served as a communication and trade crossroad for the Native Americans, with trails leading in various directions like the spokes of a trading and social wheel. The Native Americans, including Potawatomi and Ottawa, held councils there, the most notorious happening in the spring of 1763 when Chief Pontiac held his council to plan his attack on the fort at Detroit. Later, when enterprising businessmen discovered the vast salt beds below Ecorse Township they founded several companies to manufacture the salt. The Detroit River itself stimulated the growth of shipping and manufacturing. As time went on, Ecorse and Wyandotte served as the principal centers of commerce for Ecorse Township.

Eligible Members, Ecorse Township  
(Eligible to vote and hold office)

C. Bouchard -Ecorse

F. Cicotte-Ecorse

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<sup>29</sup> [Clarence M. Burton; The History of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, Michigan. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1930](#)

Charles Campau -Ecorse  
Michael Dunn -Ecorse  
Joseph Delisle -Ecorse  
J. Eberts -Ecorse  
John Frank-Delray  
John C. Frank-Ecorse  
Jacob Huntzen -Wyandotte  
J. Jenkle-Dearborn  
Nicholas Kittle-Wyandotte  
A.LeBlanc -Ecorse  
Thomas LaBlanc-Ecorse  
Charles Lapham -Ecorse  
A. Longrin -Wyandotte  
W.Longrin-Wyandotte  
Henry McKay-Dearborn  
Owen McQuade -Dearborn  
L. Montie-Ecorse

Antoine Montie-Ecorse  
John Mackie-Ecorse  
Evans D. Owen -Wyandotte  
Oliver Pelon -Ecorse  
H. F. Riopelle-Ecorse  
John Riopelle-Ecorse  
M.P. Rouleau-Ecorse  
Peter Reeves-Ecorse  
A.M.Salliotte-Ecorse  
Martin Sweetzer-Ecorse  
Oliver Salliotte-Ecorse  
Edmund Visger-Ecorse  
Abraham Whiting-Wyandotte  
William Winter-Ecorse  
Louis Weigert-Ecorse  
William Wohleke-Dearborn<sup>30</sup>

### **Stephen Mack Bought Land to Build Wyandotte**

Stephen Mack was born in Lynn, Connecticut in 1764, but moved to New Hampshire with his mother and father while he was still a child. Both Stephen and his father Solomon participated in the Revolutionary War and Stephen distinguished himself with his patriotism and bravery.

Stephen Mack first acquired his military title as commander of a Vermont regiment. After the war he returned to New Hampshire and farmed and operated a mercantile business and in 1788, Colonel Mack married Miss Temperance Bond, of Gilsom, New Hampshire. They eventually had twelve children.

A few years later he moved to Tunbridge, Vermont until in 1807, he moved to Detroit and entered a partnership with Thomas Emerson. Stephen left his family which by now consisted of 12 children at Tunbridge, Vermont until 1822, so his children could be educated, an advantage that Detroit did not offer at the time. His daughter Lovicy who married David Cooper came to Detroit four years ahead of the family and took charge of Stephen Mack's house, which was a two story building on Jefferson Avenue.

The Emerson & Mack partnership enjoyed a substantial business when General William Hull surrendered Detroit on August 6, 1812. Worried that the British would destroy their goods, the partners picked them up with their books and papers and put them in charge of Captain Adam Muir, who controlled the Government storehouse. When a battalion was organized to protect the frontier of Michigan, he became captain of a company of infantry and the British took Colonel

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<sup>30</sup> Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest territory and Wayne County. Compiled and arranged by Fred. Carlisle. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Borman & Co., Printers, 1890.

Stephen Mack a prisoner for his supposed influence with the American troops and sent him to Quebec. The business didn't revive until 1816 when David Cooper became their chief clerk. In 1818, Oakland County was opened for settlement and on November 5, 1818, Colonel Mack organized the Pontiac Company consisting of William Woodbridge, Solomon Sibley, John L. Whiting, Austin E. Wing, David C. McKinstry, Benjamin Stead, Henry L. Hunt, Abram Edwards, Alexander Macomb, Archibald Darrow, and Andrew G. Whitney, of Detroit, and William Thompson, Daniel LeRoy, and James Fulton, of Macomb. The Pontiac Company purchased a large tract of land, laid out the present city of Pontiac, and constructed a road from Detroit to Pontiac. The Company also built mills, erected buildings, and laid the foundation for a thriving town. Colonel Mack joined with Solomon Sibley and Shubael Conant and built the first flour and saw mill on the Clinton River, completed in 1821. Shortly after this Solomon Sibley was elected as Oakland County's delegate to Congress from Michigan Territory. In 1823, Colonel Mack established permanent residence in Pontiac and was elected a member of the first Legislative Council of Michigan Territory.

Colonel Stephen Mack had the foresight to purchase valuable real estate in Wayne County, including real estate in Detroit and the stone quarry near Trenton later owned by the Sibley family. In *Chronography of Notable Events in the History of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County* Fred Carlisle also states that Colonel Mack bought "a considerable portion of the present site of Wyandotte."<sup>31</sup>

Colonel Stephen Mack died at Pontiac, Michigan in November 1826, at age 62. After Colonel Mack died, Mrs. Mack moved to Kirtland, to live with a daughter who had married a distant relative of Mormon leader Joseph Smith. She died at Kirkland at age 80 years, not while on a visit to Salt Lake City, Utah as some biographers state.

### **Early in Ecorse Township History, Major John Biddle became a Political Powerhouse and a Gentleman Farmer**

In 1818, before Ecorse became a Township and Wyandotte a village and seven years before the University of Michigan Board of Trustees advertised land for sale, the first public sale of lands in Michigan took place. According to Silas Farmer some of the land that is now present day Wyandotte sold at \$40.00 per acre. When Major John Biddle sold his land to the Eureka Iron Company in 1854, it sold it for \$20.00 an acre.<sup>32</sup>

Historian Clarence Burton also mentioned the 1818 land sale when he wrote that the lots fronting the river were bid off during much excitement, some of them selling as high as \$40 per acre. Among the bidders were several citizens of Detroit and army officers stationed there, including General John R. Williams, Colonel Andrew Mack, Gen. Alexander Macomb, and Major John Biddle. This was in 1818.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Chronography of notable events in the history of the Northwest territory and Wayne County, compiled and arranged by Fred. Carlisle. Detroit: O.S. Gulley, Borman & Co., Printers, 1890

<sup>32</sup> Silas Farmer. History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan (Vol. 2). Detroit: Pub. By S. Farmer & Co., for Munsell & Co., New York, 1890. P. 1276-1277.

<sup>33</sup> Clarence M. Burton; The History of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, Michigan. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1930

Major John Biddle acquired some of the land that the Wyandot left empty when they moved to Ohio, adding his name to the list of early settlers in the area. A native of Pennsylvania and a veteran of the War of 1812, Major Biddle purchased 2,200 acres of land in a wooded section by the Detroit River from the Federal Government. Perhaps taking his inspiration from the estate farms of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, Major Biddle built a summer estate which he and his family moved to in 1836, and named it “Wyandotte” after the Native American builders of Maguagua. West Jefferson Avenue, beginning in downtown Detroit and running south to Berlin Township, is known as Biddle Avenue in Wyandotte, named in honor of Major Biddle.<sup>34</sup>

Born March 2, 1792 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, John Biddle had several family role models to inspire him. His father, Charles Biddle was the Vice President of Pennsylvania during the Revolutionary War and his uncle, Commodore Nicholas Biddle, later became the President of the United States Bank. His brother Major Thomas Biddle served in the United States Army and his brother Commodore James Biddle earned fame as a Naval officer. John began his education in ordinary schools before he entered Princeton College.

A few years after he graduated from Princeton College, John Biddle enlisted in the United States Army, and spent much of the War of 1812 fighting on the Niagara Frontier under General Winfield Scott. He earned a promotion from Captain of Artillery to Major and the Army assigned him to Fort Shelby in Detroit as Commander.

John Biddle traveled back East to New York to marry Eliza Falconer Bradish and they married on January 21, 1819 at Trinity Church in New York City. The couple had four sons and one daughter. Three of their sons did not survive childhood: Charles James Biddle lived from 1820-1825; William Stratford Biddle 1823-1823; and George Johnson Biddle lived from 1827-1828. Three sons and a daughter lived to adulthood: William Shepard Biddle lived from 1830-1901; Major James Biddle lived from 1833-1905; and Edward John Biddle from 1836-1892. Their daughter Margaretta Falconer Biddle Porter lived from 1825-1913.

In 1820, Major Biddle became Associate Justice of County Court, and Judge of Probate and Brown County Commissioner. In 1821, he left the Army to become Indian Agent at Green Bay, Wisconsin and a few years later he returned to Michigan to participate in its growth as a Territory and State and the transformation of Detroit from a frontier fort to a bustling city. From 1823 to 1837, he worked as Register of the Land office for the District of Detroit, selling farms and lots to settlers and settling ancient land claims at Detroit, Mackinaw, Sault Ste. Marie, Green Bay, and Prairie du Chien.

From 1827 to 1828, John Biddle served as Mayor of the City of Detroit and from 1829-1831, he was the Michigan Territorial Delegate to Congress. In 1835, he was a member of the Michigan Constitutional Convention and President of the first Michigan State Constitutional Convention, even though his Whig party was a minority party. He ran unsuccessfully as the Whig candidate to the United States Senate and later for Governor of Michigan. In 1841, he successfully ran for the Michigan State Legislature and served as speaker.

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<sup>34</sup> Chronography of Notable Events in the History of Northwest Territory and Wayne County. Fred Carlisle. Detroit: O.S. Gully, Bormon & Co. Printers, 1890.

Major Biddle also contributed to civic and cultural affairs in Detroit. In 1835, shareholders elected him president of the Detroit-St. Joseph Railroad, which later became the Michigan Central Railroad. In 1838, he became the first President of Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank after he served as Director from 1829-1838.

Following his religious and cultural interests, the Major joined St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in Detroit, serving as a vestryman and overseeing the building of the first church. He helped organize the Episcopal Church Society in Detroit in March 1825, and on November 3, 1830, he became Vice President of the County Bible Society that distributed Bibles and Testaments.

Thoroughly versed in Latin, Greek, and French, Major Biddle signed his name atop a notice of the Association for Promoting Female Education in the City of Detroit on December 4, 1834 and he was elected as a Trustee of the University of Michigan. On July 3, 1828, the Historical Society of Michigan was organized and organizers asked him to be its first Vice President, serving from 1828-1837, and then in 1837, he was elected President of the Society. One of his lectures, given on September 5, 1830, can be found in "[Historical and Scientific Sketches of Michigan.](#)" He also helped organize and acted in plays performed in an amateur theater located in a store at the foot of Wayne Street in Detroit.

"The Wyandotte", the Biddle summer estate in Ecorse Township was finished in 1835, and the Biddle family left Detroit and moved into their new home in 1836. The white colonial house sat on the corner of Vinewood and Biddle, on land that is the site of the present McNichol-Ford House also known as the Wyandotte Historical Museum. The flower filled front lawn sloped to the road, present day Biddle Avenue, that ran along the bank of the Detroit River. Tradition has it that runaway slaves escaping to Canada and Wyandot Indians worked on the estate as farm labor.

Major Biddle soon realized he didn't have the time or inclination to be a full time gentleman farmer and he spent more and more time on his estate near St. Louis, Michigan. By 1853, Major Biddle had sold "The Wyandotte" to Eber B. Ward of the Eureka Iron Company, and he and his wife Eliza returned to his old home in Philadelphia, later spending much time in Paris. In 1859, Major Biddle went to White Sulphur Springs, Virginia- now West Virginia-for the summer and he died there on August 25, 1859. He is buried [in Elmwood Cemetery](#), in Detroit, Michigan. Eliza Biddle died November 3, 1865, and she is buried in [Christ Church Burial Ground](#) in Philadelphia.

### **Wyandotte Becomes a Village**

On December 12, 1854, Major John Biddle sold his 2,200 acre Wyandotte farm to industrialist Eber Ward for \$44,000. The year before that Eber Brock Ward and a group of his business associates had organized the Eureka Iron Company on October 15, 1853. Detroit insurance agent Philip Thurber had vacationed near Marquette, Michigan the summer before and had investigated recently discovered iron ore in the region. He secured a sample of the ore from Mrs. Martha W. Bacon, who owned the land where it was discovered, and he had it smelted and tested.

The tests revealed that the ore was of superior quality and Philip Thurber returned to Detroit cradling his ore sample. He showed it to his business friends Captain Eber B. Ward, S.M. Holmes, R.N. Rice, U. Tracy Howe, John Hossna, and other capitalists including employees of the Michigan Central Railroad. These enterprising capitalists organized the Eureka Iron Company. Initially the company planned to build a blast furnace near the land where the ore had

been originally discovered, but the iron experts advised them that the original discovery site near Marquette was too remote to be practical for shipping and distribution.

Instead, Eber Ward and his associates bought Major Biddle's land with its extended Detroit River frontage and its possibilities for receiving ore shipments by water from Northern Michigan. Dense forests covered the land surrounding the River, providing endless charcoal possibilities and neighboring limestone quarries would enable Eureka Iron to cheaply manufacture the lime needed for ores and metal. In 1854, the year after they organized the Eureka Iron Company, Captain Ward and his colleagues built a blast furnace and bar mill with a full complement of buildings, including a boarding house for the workers. According to Silas Farmer, this was the real start of the village of Wyandotte, as more people arrived to work in the mills and built homes.<sup>35</sup>

Some of the pioneers of Wyandotte village were Darius Webb and Lewis Scofield, who built the Eureka blast furnace and rolling mill; John S. Van Alstyne, lawyer; and Frank and Fitzhugh A. Kirby, shipbuilders.

Between 1854 and 1866 Wyandotte developed into a thriving industrial village. The Eureka Iron Works and the Rolling Mills sprawled along the Detroit Riverfront, and residential community expanded westward to the railroad tracks. Wyandotte village streets followed the Philadelphia Plan, which William Penn originated in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Penn named one boundary line Front Street as his starting point and streets running parallel to Front Street were named with numbers from First Street to whatever number was needed. Streets running horizontally to the numbered streets were named for trees and plants. The total street plan created a checkerboard effect. This system spread all over New England and the Midwest. In Wyandotte, the Detroit River served as the focal point and the first parallel street became Front Street. In 1921, Front Street was extended and renamed Van Alstyne Boulevard.

The early pioneers also expanded their housing choices. The Eureka Iron Works built one floor frame houses called cottages for their workers along Biddle Avenue from Oak Street to Pine Street. Another style of home, two story frame structures, was called "Rolling Mill Houses" because iron industry workers lived in them. Eventually Biddle Avenue became the Wyandotte business district and the early pioneers moved their small frame cottages to less congested streets. These early pioneers often sat their houses on a wagon or a sleigh or just a crude timber box, hitched a team of horses or two to them, and dragged the house to its new site.

## **Welcome to the City of Wyandotte**

By 1866, the village of Wyandotte had grown so much that the State of Michigan granted Wyandotte a city a charter on December 12, 1866, incorporating it as a home rule city. On March 5, 1867, Wyandotte held its first election as a city. John S. Van Alstyne was elected as the first mayor; Peter Lacy, recorder; Thomas Jewell, marshal; and L. Ferguson, F.V. Briggs, and Alex Stewart as Justices of the Peace. Director of the Poor was E. Krieger and Franklin Nelson. School Inspectors were C. Schmidt, S. Pray. Aldermen from the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward, R.C. Conwell and E.P. Christian. Aldermen from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward D. Sullivan and R.W. Leighton. Aldermen from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward were H. Ocock and Fred Kreiger. Constables were C. Thon, R. Mahar, and R. Donaldson.

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<sup>35</sup>Silas Farmer. History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan (Vol. 2). Detroit: Pub. By s. Farmer & Co., for Munsell & Co., New York, 1890. P. 1276-1277.

The name of the first treasurer is disputed, but the two men usually named were Frank Brohl and J.F.W. Thon. On April 8, 1867, the new city held its first Common Council meeting, signifying a break away from the government of Ecorse Township.<sup>36</sup>

Wyandotte and the entire Downriver region continued to grow, and Wyandotte industries lined the Detroit River and moved inland. Immigrants from many countries made their way to Wyandotte to earn good lives for themselves and their families. In the 1890s, immigrants from many countries founded a community that they named New Jerusalem in present day Wyandotte. In 1900, New Jerusalem was incorporated as a village called Glenwood, but in 1901 it was changed to Bacon because there already was a Glenwood post office in Cass County Michigan. Herman Turske became the first postmaster of Bacon on October 21, 1901. Wyandotte annexed Bacon in 1905.<sup>37</sup>

On June 15, 1904, the city of Wyandotte annexed an unincorporated part of Ecorse Township that had been established as a planned development of residential and industrial property and originally called South Detroit. The annexation vote tallied 30 yeas to 10 nays, and the South Detroit subdivision became a part of Wyandotte. On April 14, 1924, Wyandotte annexed a large section of Ecorse Township to accommodate future residential housing.

In 1901, salt deposits were discovered under the City of Wyandotte and both the Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company and the Michigan Alkali Company were the main industries in the subdivision. In 1891, John Baptiste Ford founded the Michigan Alkali Company which eventually employed over 1,200 workers. Michigan Alkali, (now BASF) built large apartment style company houses at the north end of Wyandotte.

In 1902, Ford City was declared a village, name in honor of J.B. Ford, President of the Michigan Alkali Company and a prominent voice in local affairs. As it expanded along the Detroit River into Ford City and Wyandotte, both municipalities assessed and taxed Michigan Alkali Company differently. People in Wyandotte received necessary services and utilities that people in Ford City didn't. In 1920, Ford City was annexed by the Emmons subdivision to the north. Ford City's merger with Wyandotte was long contested and happened only after the Alkali searching for tax relief, offered the inducement of a new public hospital. On December 18, 1922, Wyandotte annexed the village of Ford City, the annexed area extending from Northline Road to Ecorse Creek and from the Detroit River to approximately Seventeenth Street.

### **Wyandotte, a Merging of Many Peoples**

Native Americans, French, German, Polish, Irish, Italian and African America people have been vital in the founding and growth of Downriver, including the City of Wyandotte. Between 1830 and 1836, over 140,000 settlers came to Michigan Territory before it became a state in January 1837. In the beginning these immigrants came to buy land and farm, but eventually as new

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<sup>36</sup>[Silas Farmer. History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan](#) (Vol. 2). Detroit: Pub. By s. Farmer & Co., for Munsell & Co., New York, 1890. P. 1278

<sup>37</sup> Walter Romig. [Michigan Place Names: The History of the Founding and the Naming of More Than Five Thousand Past and Present Michigan Communities](#). Great Lakes Books Series. Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1988.

villages, cities, and industries grew so did the demand for laborers and thousands came to work in Wyandotte factories and businesses and build homes and businesses of their own. After the series of treaties with the United States Government and their relocation to other lands, the Wyandot and their heritage remained firmly in the village and city named for them.

### **Wyandot Katie Quoqua, Belle of the Bowery Dances**

Catherine – Katie – Quoqua greeted the world in Ohio in 1806 on her father's the hunting grounds near Fort Recovery on the St. Mary's River. Given the Native American name of To-ma-me, she was the last member of her Wyandotte war chief father's family called "Quoqua" who fought with the British during the War of 1812. Along with many of her people, Katie was baptized in the old Roman Catholic Church at Sandwich.

According to an 1896 Detroit Free Press story, Katie earned the title of "the belle of the bowery dances" while still in her teens. Bowery dances could last all day and all night in the pioneering days along the Detroit River. People would come from up and down the River, and travel from as far away as Toledo to attend one of these dances under the trees. Indians came across the Detroit River from Amherstburg and from their camps up and down the River. When they could afford to help pay the fiddler, they joined in the dances. When they didn't have the money for the fiddler, they stood and watched, too proud to dance if they couldn't contribute to the fiddler.

Elijah Goodell, a member of a pioneering Downriver family, recalled that everyone joined the dancing, old fashioned square dancing, Virginia reels and country dances, and the Indians used to come over from Amherstburg and from their camps all up and down the Detroit River. White men danced with the Indian women the same as with white women and Elijah remembered his mother teasing his father about 'that tall and handsome squaw' he danced with at one of the Bowery Dances.

According to Elijah, he saw the belle of the Bowery Dances, Kitty Coque, the daughter of a Native American chief who lived at Amherstburg, ride past his house on horseback. Kitty Coque was the prettiest, wealthiest, and most skillful dancer along the Detroit River. He saw her riding along with her beautifully beaded leggings and blue broadcloth blouse, fringed and beaded. "Yes, indeed, when she rode through Ecorse, every man along the river road would come out and speak with her and she was a bright talker too, and could give them as good banter as they sent," said Elijah. He said that Kitty married a chief in Amherstburg and sent her daughters to St. Louis to school, afterwards moving to St. Louis to live with them.

In 1820, War Chief Quoqua and his band including 14-year-old Katie, left their home at Brownstown to settle on a small tract of land on the Huron River. Michigan Territorial Governor General Lewis Cass insisted that the United States government assign the land to them for a period of fifty years. Katie concluded that the Chief Quoqua's band had received the limited fifty-year lease because they had sided with the British during the War of 1812.

As well as her aptitude for Bowery Dancing, Katie also perfected her healing skills using roots and herbs that she gathered from the woods and meadows of the Detroit region. She cured many people who testified to the power of the medicinal roots she used in her preparations.

[Katie Quoqua](#) married Thomas McKee, a descendant of noted frontiersmen Alexander McKee and his son Thomas McKee who were born in Ireland.

### **The French Connections**

Along with the Native Americans, French settlers played a vital part in Downriver history, including Wyandotte. The [Campau family](#) pioneers include Daniel Campau who served as Wyandotte Mayor and [Claude Campau](#), a Civil War soldier who fought with Company I of the Fourth Michigan Infantry, buried in Mt. Carmel. [Agnes Longtin](#) who lived in Ecorse but is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte came from an old French family. Edward, the first Longtin to settle in Downriver, was born in the late 1820s in Montreal. When a cholera epidemic killed his parents and brothers and sisters, he and his sister Mary settled in Ecorse Township. Mary Longtin married Michael Roulo and they were the ancestors of many Roulo families Downriver.<sup>38</sup>

The Rousson family and the Potawatami Indians were instrumental in settling Wyandotte and Downriver because of a land transaction. On July 1, 1776, four days before the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia, the Potawatami Indians deeded an immense parcel of land to Pierre St. Cosme “for love and affection.” The tract of land covered most of modern Ecorse, Lincoln Park, Allen Park, and part of Wyandotte. It extended approximately 2,300 feet in both directions along Ecorse Creek and ran back four miles between Southfield Road – St. Cosme Line- on the north and a line close to Goddard Road on the south. The value of the land in 21<sup>st</sup> century appraisals would far exceed Frank Rathbun’s 1952 estimate of over \$20,000,000.<sup>39</sup>

Pierre St. Cosme was born at LaPrarie, Canada, in 1721 and he died in Detroit in 1787. He didn’t settle on his land grant and neither did his sons Pierre Junior, Dominique, or Amable. Instead, he sold the land in small strips to mostly French Canadian pioneers like Jean Baptiste Lerouz Rousseau. Jean Rousseau immigrated from Montreal to Downriver. He married Josephine Drouillard and they had at least two children, twins who were born in 1797. Elizabeth married Benjamin LaParge and later Alexis Labadie. Simon played a vital role in developing the Downriver section and Ecorse. Simon had 11 children, but his two sons died unmarried and his surname survives only on his tombstone.<sup>40</sup>

Toussaint Drouillard, born in 1805 at Detroit, was the son of [Jean Baptiste and Elizabeth LaBeau Drouillard](#). While still a young man Toussaint Drouillard moved to the unpopulated Downriver section of Ecorse Township and bought a “strip farm,” a 100-yard piece of land near the mouth of Ecorse Creek and stretching several miles inland from the Detroit River. Tradition has it that Toussaint Drouillard’s land stretched from the present day northern part of Wyandotte through Lincoln Park and possibly into Allen Park along Goddard Road. Countless other French families including Campaus, Monties, and LeBlancs settled on similar “French Ribbon Farms” along the Detroit River. These farms extended from the Rouge River to Southfield Road and beyond.

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<sup>38</sup> The Longtin Family. Frank Rathbun, January 29, 1953. Mellus Newspapers. Courtesy of the News Herald.

<sup>39</sup> The Rousson Family. Frank Rathbun. November 25, 1952. Mellus Newspapers. Courtesy of the news Herald

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Toussaint Drouillard married Theresa LeBlanc, possibly a daughter of early Downriver settler Pierre LeBlanc. Their children included Toussaint, Jr.; Peter, George, John, Joseph, Clarissa who married a Cicotte and Elizabeth who married Abram Montie.

Many Downriver documents, including an 1827 petition to incorporate the area between the Rouge and Raisin Rivers into a township to be named Ecorse bear Toussaint's signature. He died in 1870, and Theresa in 1879. They both are buried in the old Mt. Carmel Cemetery on Northline Road in Wyandotte. Granite slabs with their faintly discernible names cover their graves.<sup>41</sup>



Pierre "Peter" Drouillard and his wife Catherine Solo Payette were married November 23, 1857 at St. Patricks Catholic Church in Wyandotte. Peter was the son of Toussaint Drouillard and Theresa Leblanc and Catherine was the daughter of Claude Jean Baptiste Solo and Marie Ann Cloutier.

The Drouillards took an active part in Downriver affairs, including Edmund Drouillard, the son of Toussaint Drouillard, Jr. His obituary, dated March 20, 1931, revealed his community involvement:

#### E.T. Drouillard Passes at 70

Edmund T. Drouillard, a prominent resident of Ecorse Township and Ford Village before annexation, died on Monday at his residence, 705 Biddle Avenue. He was 70 years of age. Deceased was born in Ecorse Township, and had been active in business and political life almost up to the time of his death. For many years he was engaged in the mercantile business. Later he became a real estate agent. He was a member of the county board of supervisors in 1806, when the present county building was erected. He had also held various other offices in Ecorse Township and the village of Ford.

Surviving are the widow, Mrs. Ovid Drouillard; a son, R. Clifford; and a daughter, Elsa; also four brothers, George E., Columbus F. Alfred J. and Eli P. Drouillard.

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<sup>41</sup> Frank Rathbun. Pioneers of the Downriver Area. The Drouillard Family. September 18, 1952. Originally published in the Mellus Newspapers.

Funeral services will be held at St. Francis Xavier Church in Ecorse this morning, followed by burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.<sup>42</sup>

## Building Better Lives in Michigan

New settlers making their way to build new lives in Michigan had different reasons for leaving their homelands and different ways of building their new lives. Irish immigrants came to Michigan to escape the potato famine at home. German immigrants came to escape adverse political conditions. Polish immigrants came to escape poverty and adverse political conditions. Italian immigrants came to escape poverty and politics at home. Black people came because of slavery and to escape it. They all were from different countries and ethnicities, but they had some things in common. They came to Michigan determined to find jobs, and built better lives for themselves and their children. Many of them wrote home inviting others to join them in Michigan.

### Irish Pioneers - Smiling Eyes and Working Hands



James and Mary Mulfahy Cahalan

In 1855, Eureka Iron Company Superintendent Louis Scofield traveled to the East to recruit workers to settle in the new village of Wyandotte. Between 1845 and 1852, millions of people fled Ireland to escape the devastating potato famine. So many immigrants accepted Louis Scofield's job offer that by the early 1860s, Irish immigrants dominated the immigrant community in Wyandotte. James and Mary Mulfahy Cahalan, the founder of the Michigan branch of the Cahalan family tree, were among them.<sup>43</sup>

Once the Cahalans arrived in Wyandotte, James worked as a night watchman in the E.B. Ward Rolling Mill, and according to family tradition earned the title "Jimmy the Watchman."

*Landmarks of Wayne County and Detroit*, records him as the father of James Cahalan. Friends and family loved and respected Mary Mulfahy Cahalan for her good deeds and loving kindness. When Mary, 82, died at her home on Orange Street in Wyandotte on April 28, 1902, countless friends and family mourned her. Her grandson said that he had lived in the same house with his grandmother Mary for twenty years and he never heard her utter a cross or unkind word. Her

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<sup>42</sup> [Edmund Toussant Drouillard](#); [Eli J. Drouillard Dies of Typhoid Fever](#); [Elsa O. "Elsie" Drouillard – Wyandotte Teacher –](#); [Francis Elroy "Tippy" Drouillard](#); [Frank Christopher Drouillard](#); [Frank W. Drouillard](#); [Harold Thomas Drouillard](#); [Pierre Francis Drouillard](#); [R. Clifford Drouillard](#)

<sup>43</sup> Cahalan Family Website.

[http://www.loselle.com/One\\_Hundred\\_Orange\\_Street/James\\_%26\\_Mary\\_Mulfahy\\_Cahalan.html](http://www.loselle.com/One_Hundred_Orange_Street/James_%26_Mary_Mulfahy_Cahalan.html)

children Dr. James Cahalan, Dr. Richard Cahalan, John C. Cahalan, Mrs. Catherine Norton, Mrs. Anna McInerny of Detroit and Mrs. Patrick Needham of Traverse City and 18 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren survived her. She is buried with her husband James in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.<sup>44</sup>

Dr. Richard Cahalan and his brother John C. Cahalan, Sr. opened Wyandotte's first drugstore and John C. also served on the school board, and promoted municipally owned water and electric plants. He was the Downriver spokesperson for the Democratic Party and served as Tax Assessor of Wayne County. Richard is buried in [Mt. Carmel Cemetery](#) as is [John C. Cahalan](#).

James and Mary's grandsons carried on the family tradition of hard work and service. William Cahalan served as Wayne County Prosecutor and William Leo Cahalan sat on the bench as a Circuit Court Judge. Internist Dr. Joseph Cahalan gained national recognition for his diagnostic skills and he served for over forty years on the staff of the Wyandotte General Hospital (now Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital) and one of the hospital buildings was named in his honor after his death in 2006. He is buried in [Mt. Carmel Cemetery](#).

The Melody family was another of Wyandotte's first families. John, Mike, Patsy, and Anthony Melody came to Wyandotte in 1855. Born on December 26, 1851 in Ireland, [Anthony Melody](#) and his brothers immigrated to America with their parents. Anthony worked in the Iron mill in 1880, but by 1900 he had switched to being a laborer in the shipyards.

Anthony first married Jane "Jennie" Simmons who died on August 15, 1888. On November 27, 1889, he married Catherine Toomey in Detroit. He died in Ford City on May 8, 1910, of kidney disease and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

[Anna Melody](#) married Dr. James Cahalan, connecting two of the Irish pioneer families in Wyandotte history.

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<sup>44</sup>The Scrap Books of John C. Cahalan Sr.

[http://www.loselle.com/One\\_Hundred\\_Orange\\_Street/Scrapbooks\\_Of\\_John\\_C.\\_Cahalan\\_Sr./Entries/1902/5/1\\_All\\_Loved\\_Her\\_%28Obituary\\_of\\_Mary\\_Mulfahy\\_Cahalan%29.html](http://www.loselle.com/One_Hundred_Orange_Street/Scrapbooks_Of_John_C._Cahalan_Sr./Entries/1902/5/1_All_Loved_Her_%28Obituary_of_Mary_Mulfahy_Cahalan%29.html)



Anthony Melody

Many Irish immigrants living in Wyandotte were active in The Ancient Order of Hibernians, an Irish Catholic fraternal organization with the mission of protecting Catholic churches from anti-Catholic forces and assisting Irish Catholic immigrants. Their involvement in A.O.H. motivated many Wyandotte Irish families to become involved in politics, business, and civic affairs.

### German Settlers and Wyandotte Willkommen



The new state of Michigan needed new settlers and by the 1840s, Michigan State Senator Edwin M. Cust resolved to encourage people from other countries to immigrate to Michigan. In 1845, he introduced a resolution to establish a Foreign Emigration Agency with the mission of encouraging foreign immigration to Michigan. Michigan Governor John S. Barry signed it on March 24, 1845.

Agent Maximillan H. Allardt opened an office in Germany in 1869 and he encouraged Germans to journey to Michigan to carve out new lives for themselves so successfully that he became a top agent. He created a special German language magazine that he published between 1870 and 1875 that explored the advantages of living in Michigan. He distributed it throughout Germany, Bohemia, East-West Prussia, and Hungary at no charge to the takers. Maximillan H. Allardt and other recruiting agents also created Governor's Reports containing recruitment information and passenger lists.

These recruitment efforts were successful and thousands of German settlers came to Michigan to work in newly founded industries like the Eureka Iron Works and the Wyandotte Rolling Mills. Another group of German immigrants came to Michigan after the Revolutions of 1848 in Germany when they had to flee Germany to survive.

As well as establishing homes, German immigrants created churches in their new community. In 1861, a group of German families organized Trinity Lutheran Church with services in German, and by 1862, they had dedicated a new church-school building. Although German Catholic pioneers had attended St. Charles (later St. Patrick's) for several years, but they also wanted German church services so in 1871, they built St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church.

The German settlers organized The Arbeiter or Worker's Society in Wyandotte in 1872. They dedicated their Arbeiter Hall in 1891 which quickly became a popular place for club meetings, weddings, dances, and athletic events. The Arbeiter Society sponsored international lectures, theater productions, parades and other events. Although it disbanded in 1938, the Arbeiter Society paved the way organizations like the Downriver Germania Club in 1969.

### **Leonard Caspers**

Leonard Caspers was born on March 17, 1829, in Germany, the son of Mathias and Getta Caspers. He married Margaretha Dekers in Wyandotte on November 30, 1871, and they had eight children. He worked in the blast furnace and the Wyandotte Rolling Mill. The 1884 Census lists his occupation as a saloon keeper. During the first Grover Cleveland presidency he served as deputy customs collector for the Port of Wyandotte, occupying that position for four years. He died of typhoid fever on January 12, 1891, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery

### **Frederick Lave**

Frederick Lave was born on September 4, 1859 in Posen, Germany He married Mathilda Schendel on March 13, 1881 and they had nine children. He lived in Glenwood Village which Wyandotte later annexed. He was hit by a train near Vinewood and Tenth Streets while he was walking home from work. He died on September 6, 1897 and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

### **Peter Mauren**

Peter Mauren was born in Germany on August 1, 1848. The 1870 Census placed Peter Mauren in Dallas Township, Clinton County, Michigan, but by 1875, he lived in Wyandotte. He married Anna Otto. He was one of the founders of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Wyandotte. He died on December 18, 1897 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### **August Schweiss**

August Schweiss was born on August 8, 1842, in Germany. He came to America with his parents. After living in Detroit for several years, he and Frank Stieler walked from Detroit to Wyandotte in 1856. He worked in the old rolling mill. His obituary states "A decade ago he was a power in the Republican politics of the city." He died on April 12, 1907, from a complication of diseases and he is buried in Mt Carmel Cemetery.

## **The Power of Polish in Wyandotte**

Polish immigrants followed the pattern of Irish and German immigrants to Wyandotte, with most of them arriving in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Men quickly found jobs in the ship yard and chemical industries and their wives tended their children and struggled to adapt to a new country and new customs. Wyandotte's first Polish community settled on the west side of Wyandotte slightly beyond the railroad tracks and north of Eureka Avenue. By 1896, this settlement was known as Glenwood and it grew rapidly as more and more immigrants built their homes and raised their children.

In 1899, Polish immigrants living in Glenwood built Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church in the Italian Renaissance style, featuring extensive marble, ornamental plaster, and towering twin spires. They dedicated the building in 1900, and conducted the services in Polish.

Around 1910, a second Polish community grew around Ford City, located north of Ford Avenue and east of the railroad tracks while a smaller section grew north of Goddard Road and west of the railroad tracks. In 1914, Polish immigrants founded St. Stanislaus Kostka Roman Catholic Church to serve this new Polish community.

Still another Polish settlement grew in Wyandotte's south end and Polish parishioners founded St. Helena Roman Catholic Church in 1925 to serve the new settlement. The church also added an elementary school to the parish.

The Polish Roman Catholic Union and the Polish National Alliance were two fraternal groups affiliated with the Catholic Church that provided aid and encouragement to the Polish newcomers. The Polish American Citizens Club and three Polish Legion of America Veterans Posts were just two civic organizations providing opportunities for socialization and aid for Polish citizens. Through the years, Pulaski Memorial Park, named for Kazimierz Pulaski, provided a center for countless Polish social activities in Wyandotte.

## **Frederick Grabarkiewicz**

Frederick Grabarkiewicz was born on May 17, 1875, in Poland. He immigrated to the United States with his parents Martin and Josephine Grabarkiewicz and his seven brothers and sisters. He drowned in the Detroit River at the age of 16. On August 4, 1891, he left his job at the heading mill at D.H. Burrell & Company's Hoop & Stave Works. The Detroit riverbank opposite the mill had been recently dredged to a six-foot depth, and he couldn't swim. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

## **Hipolit Milewski**

Hipolit Milewski was born in 1882 in Poland. His World War I Draft Registration Card dated September 12, 1918, says that he was born August 13, 1880 in Russian Poland and that he was not a United States citizen. He and his wife Josephine lived at 114 Tenth Street in Wyandotte. He was a laborer for Michigan Alkali Co. Plant #2. He died in 1936 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

## **Italians Take the Streetcar from Detroit to Wyandotte**

Shortly after the turn of the Twentieth Century, a steady stream of Italian immigrants arrived in East Detroit and many of them took the streetcar from Detroit to find employment at J.B. Ford and Michigan Alkali Company in Wyandotte. Enough friends and relatives followed to make the Italians the last large immigrant group to settle in Wyandotte. Statistics reveal 338 Italians living in Detroit and Downriver in 1890, but by 1920 the number had jumped to 29,047.

In 1914, a large group of Italian workers and their families lived in Ford City, a community bounded by Antoine, Hudson, Second Street and the railroad tracks. These Italian families built substantial homes and planted gardens. The majority of these Italian families knew each other from Palermo, Sicily, and Italy and associated with each other in this new country. They played Bocci or lawn bowling and card games and in 1915 even organized a concert band that they christened Maestro Pellegrino's Italian Ford City Band. The band featured musicians from ages 15-25 and included many brothers and cousins like Joseph and Paul Pagano and Jim and Sam Vitale. The new band played concerts for the entire community and it laid the foundation for two Italian social organizations.

The San Guiseppi Society helped many new Italian immigrants transition to their new American lives. In 1924, the Santa Fara group, named for the patron saint of the Sicilian village of Cinisi, organized in Wyandotte. Group members had to be from Cinisi or married to someone from Cinisi.

Other groups served the Italian community, including the Non-Partisan Progressive Club organized in the 1930s. One of the club's first projects was resurrecting the former Pellegrino Band. Early in 1945, they club sponsored a war bond drive. Wyandotte citizen Anthony D'Anna canvassed Italian Americans in Wayne County and they raised \$16,000,000. They used the money to build a ship, the U.S.S. Cosselin, which was commissioned on October 19, 1945 to honor the memory of Seaman Joseph Polizzi of Detroit who had been killed in the war. The Non-Partisan Progressive Club endured until 1949.

In 1970, fourteen Italian Americans, many former members of the Italian Ford City Band, created the Downriver Italian Club. By 1975, the club's membership rolls totaled 440 people.

### **Pasquale "Patsy" Denard**



Pasquale "Patsy" Denard was born on March 30, 1895 in Italy and immigrated to the United States with his family in July 1913, and was naturalized on August 11, 1919. He served in the U.S. Army, American Expeditionary Forces from April 14, 1917 to August 13, 1919, taking part

in the Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne Campaigns. He died in 1987 and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

### **Vito, Antonino and Salvatori Giannola**



**Antonino "Tony" Giannola**



**Salvatore Giannola**

Vito, Antonino, and Salvatori Giannola were three brothers born in Terrasini in Palermo, Sicilia, Italy. Vito was born on December 10, 1872, Antonino, November 15, 1878, and Salvatore on July 24, 1887.

Vito Giannola came to the United States on the Cretic, arriving on March 27, 1907. Tony and Salvatore arrived in the United States on May 4, 1912 on the Mendoza. The brothers finally settled in Ford City where they opened a general store they called the Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company or A & P. They were involved in other enterprises in Detroit's Little Italy and soon had founded their Detroit crime family called the Detroit Partnership. They also married and had immediate families of their own. Vito married Grace Pagano and they had three children, Antonino married Pasqualena Butera and they had four children, and Salvatore married Rose Barraco and they had four children.

Tony Giannola, was considered the boss of Detroit's first Mafia family, and in September 1913, the Adamo Brothers, acting for a group of Italian businessmen in Detroit called the "White Hand Society" attempted to assassinate Tony. Tony was severely wounded, but he survived the assassination attempt.

A gang war between the Adamo brothers and the Giannola brothers erupted, and both of the Adamo brothers were killed. After that the victorious Giannola brothers dominated the Detroit Mafia scene. They acquired a well-earned reputation for being the wealthiest Italians in Detroit, always generous with their friends, but ruthless with their enemies.

Then Rival Mafia boss, John Vitale, moved against the Giannola family. One of Tony Giannola's friends was murdered and Tony left his Ford City home on January 3, 1919, to go to his friend's house to pay his respects. His adopted son and personal bodyguard Tony Alescio shot Tony Giannola dead in front of his friend's house.

Tony Giannola's murder touched off a Mafia War that claimed dozens of lives and changed the nature of Detroit organized crime. After Tony's murder, his brother Salvatore took control of the family in January 1919.

In February 1919, a month after his brother's murder, Salvatore Giannola survived an attempt on his life. His brother-in-law Pasquale D'Anna did not survive the attack. Three weeks later, John Vitale's son and two companions were shot in the lobby of the Wayne County Jail. Salvatore Giannola was charged with the murders, but he was acquitted.

In May 1919, Salvatore reluctantly agreed to a peace treaty between the two rival Maffias, and he decided to retire and pursue more normal interests. On October 2, 1919, three men shot Salvatore Giannola dead in front of the American State Bank at Monroe and Russell Streets in Detroit. One of the gunmen was Salvatore's person bodyguard. His funeral was deemed to be one of the most elegant in Detroit at the time.

Vito Giannola was not as heavily involved with the Mafia as his brothers. He managed to survive the Mafia war that took the lives of his brothers, dying of natural causes at the age of 72 on September 17, 1947. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Tony is buried in Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock and Salvatore is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

### **African Americans in Wyandotte**

Wyandotte's John Biddle family was involved with African Americans. A letter from William Biddle to Dr. Edmund Christian. "We were chiefly dependent in those early days on runaway slaves for farm laborers, sometimes having as many as fifteen on the place, the proximity to Canada offering them an inducement." <sup>45</sup>

Eliza Biddle had a close relationship with an African American. Elizabeth Denison, or Lisette, born a slave in Macomb County, Michigan, won her freedom by escaping to Canada and then returned to Detroit to work for prominent families. Through shrewd investments and careful purchasing she became one of the first black landowners in America, bequeathing part of her fortune to help build the St. James Episcopal Church chapel on Grosse Ile where people of all colors could worship.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Michigan Historical Collections, Volume 13, p. 308

<sup>46</sup> [Lizette Denison Forth . Isabella Swan, Grosse Ile, Michigan](#)

In 1831, Lisette began working full time for the John Biddle family. John Biddle was the mayor of Detroit and founder of Wyandotte, Michigan, and she spent much of her time at Biddle's Wyandotte estate. She developed close ties with the Biddles, especially the mayor's wife, Eliza Biddle, and stayed in their employ for the next 30 years.

John Van Alstyne, one of Wyandotte's founding fathers, wrote a 20-page reminiscence that he titled "Reminiscences of Early Times in Wyandotte." He cited some experiences of African Americans in Wyandotte when he lived there.

"Possibly some of you have heard of the belief current among the Negroes, that they are not allowed in Wyandotte. The history is like this. About 1859 or 1860, there was a colored barber who had his shop where the Justice's office now is. He was a man of herculean build and in addition to his ostensible legitimate business, he kept a saloon and gambling house. This was the last resort of many of the roughs. There was a Negro teamster in town, Obadiah by name, and at times when the barber was away, Obadiah and his wife would take charge of the shop for him.

One day when they were doing so, Obadiah went out to cut wood, and hearing a cry from his wife he went in to protect her, but found the door bolted. He had the axe in his hand so he smashed the door and intent only on protecting his wife, who was in no danger; however, he attacked the turbulent crowd within, and in the melee, injured some of them quite severely. They in turn set upon him, disarmed him and pursued him as he fled, caught him on Elm Street near Second, pounded him into insensibility and left him for dead in the street. He revived after a time and came up to the house of S.H. Farnsworth for protection, and succour. We bound up his wound, fed him, put him in a buggy and sent him to Ecorse to take the train for Detroit.

The roughs and their sympathisers went to the school house and held a meeting; they passed as they said a law that no Negro should live in Wyandotte, and they thought that they had done so.

For a number of years there were no Negroes here, but in 1868, there was a colored wood chopper in the third ward, a peaceable quite fellow, who on his trips down town had been from time to time reviled by rude boys that he passed on his way. He did not resent their words, but one day one of them was foolish enough to strike him, upon which the warm turned, and gave his assaulter a thorough trouncing. The old spirit was aroused again, threats were made that the darkey should be driven out of town, and steps were taken to organize for this purpose. But the village was now a City, the authorities took firm ground, a proclamation was posted that the law should be respected, the peace maintained, and rights protected. Twenty special constables were sworn in, some of them men who had been foremost in the Obadiah matter, and the trouble was over...<sup>47</sup>

Although John Van Alstyne noted that "the trouble was over," African Americans did not flock to Wyandotte, even after the Great Migration of African Americans to Detroit in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There has not been a substantial increase of African Americans living in Wyandotte since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The figures from the United States Federal Census show that from 1870-1910 there were no African Americans living in Wyandotte. In 1910 there were 2; in 1920, 10; in 1930, 9; Between 1940 and 1960 there were no African Americans living in Wyandotte. In 1960, there were 10; in 1970, 18; in 1990, 73; and in 2000 there were 149 African Americans living in Wyandotte.

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<sup>47</sup> [Reminiscences of early times in Wyandotte, by John S. Van Alstyne. Michigan County Histories and Atlases.](#)

These figures and some oral and anecdotal evidence prompted sociologist and writer Dr. James Loewen to include Wyandotte in his list of “Sun Down” towns in his book *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism*. According to Dr. Loewen, thousands of communities across the United States prevented people, mostly African Americans, from living in their community by force, law, or custom. These communities are sometimes called “Sundown Towns” because their residents posted signs at the city limits warning them to leave before sun down.

Several oral history stories about Wyandotte being a Sun Down town relate instances of African Americans being driven out of town and one story relates that a family was killed and their bodies found floating in the Detroit River. There are conflicting stories as to whether Wyandotte is a deliberate Sun Down town and if so, to what degree.<sup>48</sup>

One person writes: Wyandotte has not had any significant black population for most of its existence. According to a resident of Michigan, "As recently as 2003, when visiting friends in Wyandotte, the friends would make sure we were out town before dark."

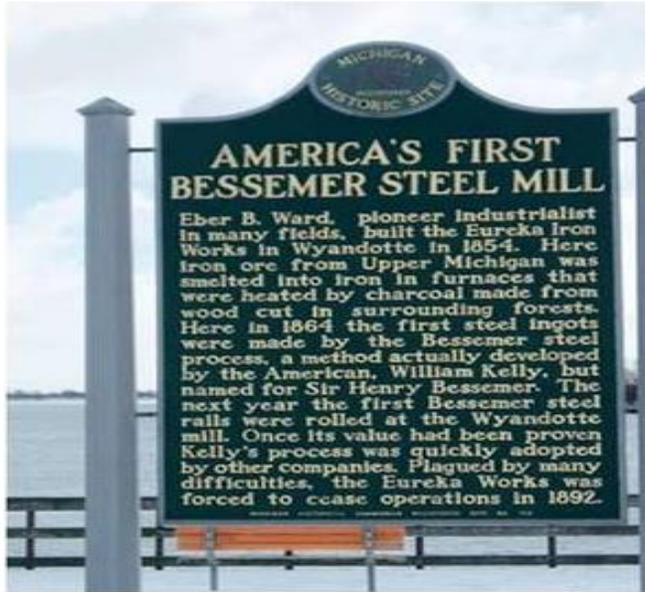
Another resident who has moved to Wyandotte recently said, "While the main population is white to this day, integration is definitely happening here. I've noticed more African Americans here than other communities like it, as well as Latinos. I have a very diverse group of friends, and many of them have visited me at my home. No one has mentioned being uncomfortable here or having any poor experience with my neighbors or other people in Wyandotte."<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> [Wyandotte. A Sun Down Town](#)

<sup>49</sup> James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism*. New York City: The New Press, 2005.

## Wyandotte's Industrial Founding Fathers and Founding Industries



### Eber Ward Develops Wyandotte and a Bessemer Steel Mill

In 1853, John Biddle sold his Wyandotte estate to Captain Eber Brock Ward of Eureka Iron Works for \$44,000. E.B. Ward trod many commercial paths. He built railroads and ships, founded rolling mills, mines, and transportation companies and directed banks. Most importantly for the future of Wyandotte, he headed the group that negotiated acquiring property and placing the foundation stones for the village of Wyandotte.<sup>50</sup>

In October 1854, Captain Ward organized the Eureka Iron Works with himself as president, T.W. Lockwood, Treasurer and George S. Thurber, Secretary. Principal stockholders were E.B. Ward; Harmon DeGraff; Silas N. Kendrick; U. Tracy Howe; Silas M. Holmes; Philip Thurber; Elijah Wilson; Thomas W. Lockwood; Francis Choate; and Sylvester Larned.

After their initial purchase of Major Biddle's 2,200 acre farm, Eureka Iron Works purchased many more acres of land, cut timber for charcoal, and divided the land into town lots and small farms. As soon as the men behind Eureka Iron Works built its factory, they began the

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<sup>50</sup> Abstracts of Wyandotte properties filed in the Wayne County Register of Deeds, 1854-1856

manufacture of pig iron in the same year, 1854. The company's initial capital stock totalled \$500,000 and the business grew so successfully that by 1873 the entire capital was paid up from its profits. Eureka Iron Works just as successfully created the village of Wyandotte. Selling town lots, building homes for the workers, and improving schools, churches, and civic enterprises spurred the growth of Wyandotte into a thriving village.<sup>51</sup>

Eber Ward chose a few trusted colleagues to help him develop the village of Wyandotte, including Darius Webb and Lewis Scofield, who built the Eureka blast furnace and rolling mill; lawyer John S. Van Alstyne; shipbuilders Frank and Fitzhugh A. Kirby; and Thomas McFarlane, superintendent of the Silver Smelting Works.

John Van Alstyne was studying law in the Detroit office of Barstow and Lockwood, held interests in the Eureka Iron Company so Captain Ward selected him as the logical person to handle real estate transactions in the new village. Six months later, Captain Ward promoted John Van Alstyne to manage Eureka Iron Works.

In 1860, Eureka Iron Works built its company headquarters on the southeast corner of Biddle Avenue and Elm Street. The three story building featured a corner entrance, round arched windows, a battered stone façade, and a mansard roof wrapping around the building's upper floors. The third floor had an auditorium that the community used for high school graduations, school plays, lectures, and other community events.

Captain Ward continued to follow innovative paths, smelting iron ore from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to remove impurities and transform it into iron. Wood from the surrounding forests was cut and made into charcoal to fuel Eureka Iron Works furnaces. In 1864, his company made the first commercially cast steel ingots in the United States using the Bessemer Steel process and creating a revolution in steel manufacturing.<sup>52</sup>

In 1865, Captain Ward used the Bessemer process to make steel ingots at Eureka Iron Works, and he rolled the first Bessemer steel rails in America. Eureka Iron Works made steel rails, and other iron and steel technology possible and practical and soon Detroit and the surrounding region produced major amounts of iron and steel.

As well as making iron and steel, Eureka Iron Works diversified into other areas. The company engaged in real estate sales, and in clearing and subdividing and selling the land surrounding the factory. As the land was cleared and the trees used for fuel in the mills, the company sold parcels of land to people to building houses and businesses.

Other industries soon followed the example of the Eureka Iron Company. Wyandotte industries like the Regent Stove Company produced stoves and other products and eventually the technology inspired Henry Ford to use hometown steel for his automobile assembly lines.

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<sup>51</sup>[Clarence M. Burton; The History of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, Michigan. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1930; Chronography of Notable Events in the history of the Northwest Territory and Wayne County, compiled and arranged by Fred. Carlisle. Detroit : O.S. Gulley, Borman & Co., Printers, 1890.](#)

<sup>52</sup> [The Steel Business: a Ferocious Geyser](#)

## The Eureka Iron and Steel Works



Eureka Iron and Steel Works Headquarters, Wyandotte, Michigan

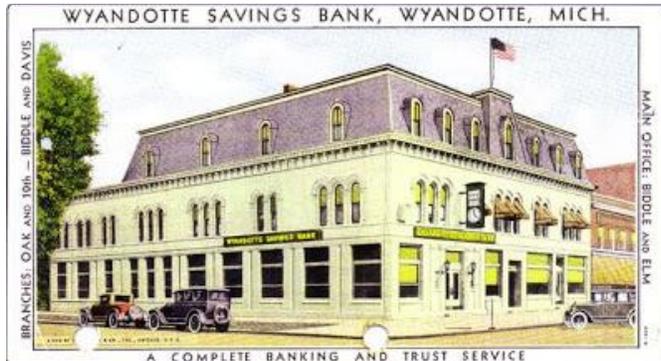
The Eureka Iron Works was reorganized into the Eureka Iron and Steel Works on December 19, 1883, with William K. Muir as General Manager; Sidney D. Miller, Secretary; George Hendrie, Treasurer; and J.S. Van Alstyne, Agent. In 1883, Eureka Iron and Steel Works produced 23,000 tons of manufactured iron, making charcoal pig iron from Lake Superior ores. The charcoal pig iron was used for foundry, car-wheel, and malleable products and boiler-plate, tank iron, and a variety of common and refined bar iron. The pig iron was sold from Boston, Massachusetts to Nashua, New Hampshire and through the Eastern, Middle and Western States, traveling as far west as Denver, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco.<sup>53</sup>

Eureka Iron and Steel Works prospered until the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but increasingly suffered a shortage of raw materials. The Company encountered multiple problems, including the death of its founder, Captain E.B. Ward, and it finally closed its doors in 1892. With the help of its Detroit River location, dense forests, and many salt mines deep below the city, Eureka Iron and Steel Works enabled Wyandotte to become the center of the iron, steel, and later chemical production industries.

<p><b>Pennsylvania Salt Mfg. Company</b> Incorporated 1850 in Pennsylvania</p> <p><b>Product:</b> Caustic soda, alumina, lye, zinc and calcium chloride, sulphates of copper and iron, and acids. Plants at Greenwich Point, Philadelphia, Natrona, Pa., and Wyandotte, Michigan.</p> <p><b>Capital Stock:</b> \$7,500,000.</p> <p><b>EARNINGS:</b> PAID DIVIDENDS OF 12% PER ANNUM FOR OVER 40 YEARS.</p>
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<sup>53</sup> [History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan: A Chronological Cyclopedia of the Past.](#) Silas Farmer. New York: Munsell & Co., 1890.

The Eureka Iron and Steel Works Company headquarters survived to create its own history. In 1871, John Van Alstyne founded the Wyandotte Savings Bank because of the difficulty of carrying money back and forth to and from Detroit on treacherous roads. Since the Eureka Iron and Steel Works building had extra space, John Van Alstyne located the bank offices in the Eureka Iron and Steel Works headquarters building.



In 1955, the Wyandotte Savings Bank Building was modernized with the third floor demolished, the original round arched windows replaced with rectangular windows, and the original stone façade removed. The modern incarnation of the Eureka Iron and Steel Works and the Wyandotte Savings Bank is known as the Municipal Services Building, which also houses the Wyandotte City Hall.

## The Wyandotte Rolling Mills



Wyandotte Rolling Mills and Offices – Detroit Public Library

E.B. Ward organized the Wyandotte Rolling Mills in 1855 to manufacture a variety of merchant's bar iron. The mills operated successfully for more than two decades, but after E.B. Ward died, the future of his industries came into question. Various parties controlled the

Wyandotte Rolling Mills until the fall of 1877, when it failed. The Eureka Iron Works bought the mortgage bonds and absorbed the entire mill complex.<sup>54</sup>

John S. Van Alstyne, one of Wyandotte's founding fathers, captured some of the personality of early Wyandotte in his Reminiscences. "So many men among the rolling mill hands were away from their families and free from the restraints and influence of their homes, that they readily, even though steady going and respectable, fell in with and yielded to the prevailing influences, so that Wyandotte seemed like a frontier or mining town. Dissipation and riot were the rule rather than the exception among a large class of the population, and it was then that Wyandotte acquired the tough reputation that followed it so long and even now is hardly lived down. These men were so reckless and noisy, that when they visited the tough and disreputable joints in Detroit, the local roughs went out and left the field clear for the Wyandotters, who owing to their wages, had more money to spend and were consequently more desirable customers."<sup>55</sup>

### **Wyandotte rolling Mills, June 1, 1888**

Detroit, Michigan. June 1, 1888. At Wyandotte, Mich. this morning two boilers in the Wyandotte Rolling Mills exploded, instantly killing two men and fatally injuring a third man. The men's names are Harry McCloy, night superintendent, whose head was blown off and his body mutilated; Patrick Finn, head crushed, and George Green, head and chest crushed. The first two were dead when taken out and Green died in twenty minutes. The damage to the mill is small.<sup>56</sup>

### **John Schermerhorn Van Alstyne, Wyandotte's Founding Father**

John Van Alstyne's contributions to Wyandotte equal those of Major John Biddle, in fact one of his biographers said that he is the father of the village of Wyandotte.

Coming from sturdy Holland Dutch ancestry, the Van Alstyne and Schermerhorn families were among the founders of the Dutch colonies in New York. John Schermerhorn Van Alstyne was born in Greenbush, New York on October 25, 1834. He received his early training in the common schools in Greenbush and he completed a course of study at an academy at Schodack Landing in New York. In 1850 when he was just 16 years old, John came to Detroit, Michigan and became a student in the law offices of Barstow & Lockwood. In 1855, he was admitted to the Michigan Bar.

Captain Eber Brock Ward organized the Eureka Iron Works about the same time that John Van Alstyne was admitted to the Michigan Bar and Captain Ward quickly realized that John Van Alstyne and his fellow lawyers, Barstow and Lockwood, could help his new business. In 1872,

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<sup>54</sup> [History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan: A Chronological Cyclopeda of the Past and Present, Volume 2, Silas Farmer. Detroit, Michigan: S. Farmer & Company, 1890; Clarence M. Burton; The History of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, Michigan. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1930](#)

<sup>55</sup> [Reminiscences of early times in Wyandotte, by John S. Van Alstyne. Michigan County Histories and Atlases.](#)

<sup>56</sup> Brooklyn Daily Eagle, June 1, 1888. Boiler Explosion Kills Three. Harry McCloy was 65 years old when he died and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte. Michigan Death Records lists Patrick Finn as an assistant engineer, 22 years old, and single.

John Van Alstyne assumed the management of the Eureka Iron Company, a position he kept until the company closed in 1892.

During the Panic of 1873, when businesses failed, times were hard, and people poor and hungry, John Van Alstyne leased a large amount of the company land in Wyandotte at a nominal rent to the people from the community so they could raise vegetables to feed themselves and their families.<sup>57</sup>

Always interested in local affairs, in 1867 John Van Alstyne served on the committee that secured a city charter for Wyandotte and he was elected the first mayor of Wyandotte, serving one term. Prominent members of both political parties urged John Van Alstyne to run for a second term as mayor, he declined. In 1871, he was one of the organizers of the Wyandotte Savings Bank and later president of the bank which he guided to become one of the best financial institutions in Wayne County.

John Van Alstyne was the director of the Eureka Land Company and the Wyandotte Land Company. In 1887, he supervised the borings made for natural gas in Wyandotte and he drew up the contracts for the drilling. The drilling was carried to a depth of 5,646 feet without discovering any gas, but the drilling uncovered a bed of salt at a depth of 735 feet.

These gas and salt drillings were carried on over a two-year period, and the discovery of salt beds was responsible for the soda ash industry in Wyandotte. The borings were made on land owned by Eureka Iron Works and after no gas was discovered, the Company sold twenty acres of land to Captain John B. Ford at a price that covered the expense of searching for gas. The No. 1 works of the Michigan Alkali Company were located on the twenty-acre tract that Captain J.B. Ford bought from the Eureka Iron company.

A loyal supporter of the Republican Party, John Van Alstyne was one of the founders and charter members of Wyandotte Lodge No. 170, Free and Accepted Masons and he served as master for more than 15 years. He was active in the Masons and in the Moslem Temple, ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine in Detroit.

On October 15, 1863, John Van Alstyne married Miss Ellen Folger, a daughter of Andrew J. Folger of Wyandotte. The 1870 United States Federal Census shows John Van Alstyne age 36, living with his wife Ellen, 28, and their two children Anna and John, in Wyandotte. Their son Frederick was born in 1871. John Van Alstyne listed his occupation as a lawyer and owner of a steam saw mill.

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<sup>57</sup> John Van Alstyne actions anticipated the policy of Detroit Mayor Hazen Pingree, who aided the poor people in the city of Detroit. Times were hard in America and in Detroit during the 1890s. People in the city couldn't buy farm produce and prices fell and farmers lost money on their harvests. Mayor Pingree appealed for the city to allow people to use vacant land for gardens and potato patches. Applications for garden plots skyrocketed and many people planted gardens to provide food for their families. The Detroit Free Press wrote in 1935 that "Pingree's potato patches broke the back of hunger. They were nationally acclaimed and copied."

The family's attractive homestead was the center of gracious and refined hospitality and the family was prominent in the social life of the community. John Van Alstyne's hard work and talent made him wealthy and he earned a reputation for impregnable honesty and integrity.

John Van Alstyne died on July 3, 1910, at age 75 and he is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Detroit.<sup>58</sup>

## **Silver Smelting and Refining Company**

### **Thomas McFarlane**

Along with his other enterprises at Wyandotte, Captain Eber Brock Ward established the Silver Smelting and Refining Company in 1871. He chose Thomas McFarlane, who had discovered the Silver Islet Mine years before, to supervise the Silver Smelting and Refining Company. With Captain Ward as president, Thomas McFarland directed operations at the Silver Smelting and Refining Company in 1872. Silver ore was brought by boats from the mines of Lake Superior's north shore to the Silver Smelting Company in Wyandotte where it was treated and sent as silver and gold bullion to the government to be stamped and afterwards sold in New York.

The lead was sold mostly to the Detroit Lead Works and the nickel saved in the nickel net was concentrated and sent to England. Then flushed with prosperity and certain that the bottom of the Silver Islet mine had nearly been reached, the Company made an unsuccessful attempt to refine Western Ore.

Thomas McFarlane was superintendent of the Silver Smelting and Refining Company for two years, and after him William Curtis served for two years and H.C. Hahn for one year. In 1878 Thomas McFarlane again became superintendent and held that position until the fall of 1878, when New York capitalists gained control of the Company and they along with Sidney D. Miller of Detroit disposed of the property. The building and land were sold to the Star Mineral Company.

At its highest point of operations, the Silver Smelting and Refining Company employed 75 to 100 men.

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<sup>58</sup> [Compendium of History and Biography of the city of Detroit and Wayne County, Michigan. Chicago: Henry Taylor Company Publishers, 1909.](#)

## Portraits of Wyandotte People and Places

### Ira W. Abbott

Ira W. Abbott. Born April 27, 1845, in Trenton. He was a Civil War veteran. He married Alwilda Abbott and they had a son Chester Abbott. He is buried in Grand Lawn Cemetery, Detroit.

### George Silas Beebe

George Silas Beebe was born in Fairfield County, Connecticut on November 11, 1826. From 1854 to 1898 he owned a mail wagon in Wyandotte. He died on February 15, 1898, and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

### William Belton,

William Belton, born in England on July 24, 1828, died at his home at 130 Front Street in Wyandotte on January 11, 1920 at age 91. A widower, he was a retired captain. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

### Daniel Campau Dies

Daniel Campau, mayor of Wyandotte from 1893-1894, deputy United States Customs Collector during Cleveland's administration, and captain of the famous rowing team that brought fame to the Detroit River, died suddenly from cancer of the throat. Mr. Campau had been ailing some time. He was marshal of Wyandotte many years and had lived in that city 40 years. He was 67 years of age.<sup>59</sup>

### Hattie E. Yops LeBeau



Hattie E. Yops LeBeau was born in Wyandotte on November 10, 1890, the daughter of August and Emma Yops. On April 11, 1912, Hattie married John Baptist LaBeau and they had two children. She died on April 5, 1918, and she is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

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<sup>59</sup> [Past Mayors of Wyandotte](#) Bessemer Herald, Bessemer, Michigan, November 13, 1909.

### Octave Mitchell



Octave Mitchell was born on November 12, 1847 in Canada and he came to Sibley, Michigan from Arthabaska, Canada which is halfway between Montreal and Quebec. He worked for the Church Stone Quarry Company and he married Julia Bourbeau on February 26, 1867, at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Wyandotte. He and Julia had 15 children before she died in 1902. On September 15, 1904, Octave married Mary Drouillard Valade who had been previously married to Charles Valade and they raised her four children as well. Octave died of injuries that he received when he was hit by a passenger car on the Detroit, Monroe & Toledo Electric Short Line Railroad. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### Reverend Peter C. Ryan

Peter C. Ryan, pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Wyandotte, was born on February 22, 1877, in Manchester, Michigan, a son of Mr. and Mrs. William Ryan. He attended school there, graduating with the class of 1895. He studied for the priesthood at Assumption College in Milwaukee, and St. Mary's of the West at Cincinnati. He was ordained in Detroit on July 5, 1903. Reverend Ryan served pastorates in Watervliet, Adrian, and as assistant pastor at Holy Trinity in Detroit before he came to St. Patrick's in 1929. He served at St. Patrick's until his death on June 6, 1944. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### Joseph Saucier, Sr.



AWOL from his wife for 20 years. Joseph Saucier was born in Frenchville, Maine in 1834, the son of Germain Saucier and Sophie Gate dit Bellefleur. He married Mary *Ringuette* Saucier and they had seven children.

A Detroit Free Press story dated February 28, 1899, on page 8, reported that after twenty years Mrs. Saucier had found her husband in Windsor.

The Detroit Free Press Feb. 28, 1899 page 8

After Twenty Years Mrs. Saucier Found Her Missing Husband in Windsor

After being lost to his wife and family for twenty years, Joseph Saucier returned to his home in Wyandotte yesterday afternoon. A few days ago he was found by his son-in-law at the Hotel Dieu, in Windsor.

His wife went to the hotel Monday and recognized him. Saucier denied his identity at first, but finally acknowledged it, after Mrs. Saucier had proved that he was her husband.

During the past twenty years Saucier has wandered about Essex county, picking up odd jobs, and finally settled at the Hotel Dieu, where he was employed as help.

He died November 21, 1924, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### **Edwin James Schloff**



Edwin James Schloff was born on March 9, 1920, was the last child in the family of nine children born to Celina and Joseph Schloff of Wyandotte. In 1938, he graduated from St. Patrick School in Wyandotte along with his twin brother Erwin and he enlisted in the Army before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. He participated in the Europe and Africa campaigns and survived Normandy, arriving safely home with five of his brothers who also served in the War. Edwin earned five Bronze Stars and one Silver Star for his valor in the war.

He was a lifelong Tiger fan and worked the turn styles of the old Tiger stadium at age 14 for the price of a hot dog and a coke and the privilege of watching the Tiger games. When he attended a Tigers game in the new stadium, he reminisced about his time in the old stadium.

Edwin retired from Firestone and the Teamsters as a dock worker. Continuing his service to others he became a certified nurse's aide at the age of 60, and worked with the elderly for eight years.

He died on January 11, 2010, and he is buried in the Schloff family plot in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### **Augusta Schwochow**

Augusta Schwochow was born July 22, 1860 in Germany. She married Herman Ernst Schwochow and they had seven children. She died on November 9, 1921 in Wyandotte and she is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.



**Augusta Schwochow**

### **Stella Stankevitch**

Stella Stankevitch was born in 1815 in Romania. Parents and husband unknown, she lived on Goddard Road in Ford Village. She died of old age and arterosclerosis at the age of 101 on January 7, 1917. She is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

### **William Richard Teifer**



William Richard Teifer was one of Wyandotte and Trenton's first firemen. The son of John Robert and Susan McCarn Teifer, he was born May 22, 1882. He married Elizabeth M. "Lillian" Groh Teifer on January 23, 1907. He died on June 29, 1942, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### **The Wyandotte Boat Club**

The Wyandotte Boat Club, established in 1875, is dedicated to promoting the sport of rowing in the Downriver area. A non-profit organization, it is rowing home base to six local high schools.

The club hosts two high school regattas, the Hebda Cup in late April and the Wyandotte High Schools Regatta or WyHi in early May. In the fall the Wyandotte Boat Club hosts the Heritage Day Head Race, featuring Club, High School, and college programs throughout the Midwest.

### Wyandotte Schools

Since 1855, the Wyandotte community has built 25 separate school buildings to educate its children and since 1901 all schools have been named for former United States presidents. Garfield Elementary School was built in 1932 and George Washington Elementary School was built in the 1930s. Thomas Jefferson Elementary School was built in 1950 and James Monroe Elementary School was built in 1954. Woodrow Wilson Middle School was built in 1956.

Dedicated in 1923, Theodore Roosevelt High School is Wyandotte's public high school and it has expanded at least four times since its dedication. The new school contained a print shop, library, auditorium, natatorium, lunchroom, music and public speaking rooms and science laboratories. Manual training and college preparation were included in the curriculum and beginning in 1923, the Wyandotte Public Schools offered a complete kindergarten through twelfth grade curriculum.

### David Zieminski



God's finger touched him and he slept  
We loved him most dearly and have wept.  
Do not cry for me he would tell you  
Love does not die people do.  
So when all that is left of me is love  
Give me away.

He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

## **Gun Fight in a Wyandotte Saloon**

### **Joe Rivetts Caught Without His Body Guard in Tear's Saloon**

Gangster guns exacted three lives for one night where a beer war has flared into sporadic outbursts of gunfire over a period of months. Caught without his body guard for the first time since he cut short Joe Evola's ambitions to become a beer baron by beating him to the draw three weeks ago, Joe Rivetts, 60, was killed by a volley from two revolving guns and a shotgun in the Wyandotte saloon of Charles Tear on November 7, 1931.

Charles Tear, 34, who was a Wyandotte patrolman until he resigned to open the saloon where the shooting occurred, fell behind the bar in the same volley. John Pellitier, 46, who was at the bar when the gunmen entered, was the third victim. He lived three hours. The others died instantly. The execution squad fled in the sedan which had been waiting at the curb, a driver at the wheel. Evola was killed in the Rivetts saloon on October 14. Rivetts, a veteran blind pig operator, had refused to sell Evola's beer, and a short time before his saloon was wrecked by Evola's gangsters, police said. A coroner's jury found only a few days ago that Rivetts had shot Evola in self-defense. Police said that there was no doubt but that last night's triple shooting was in reprisal for Evola's death.

Two men and a woman, their names withheld by Wyandotte police, were held today but their connection with the shooting was not revealed. A car answering the description of the one used in the gunmen's flight was found a few hours later parked on a Detroit Street.

By November 9, 1931 Sheriff Henry Behrendt and Assistant Prosecutor Herbert E. Munro had set up headquarters in the Wyandotte Police station directing a counter offensive against known dives and racketeers which had netted them nearly a dozen prisoners.

Captain Don Leonard of the State Police led two squads of troopers to Wyandotte, announcing his intention to "clean up Wyandotte immediately." Many of the places he expected to raid closed in advance of the raiding parties, he said.

The county forces, aided by two Wyandotte detectives, made the most of their visits to homes and dives traced through telephone numbers found on persons held in connection with the slaying of Charles Tear, Joe Rivetts, and John Pellitier Friday night. In one place they dismantled a brewery.

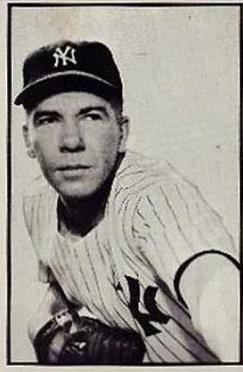
Assistant Prosecutor Munro said he believed Steve Musser, only survivor of the four men in Tear's Saloon when three gunmen entered in search of Rivetts, could tell much more than he has revealed about the massacre. Questioning will be continued he said until the former bar tender has told the entire story.<sup>60</sup>

Joe Evola, Joe Rivetts, and Charles Tear are all buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

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<sup>60</sup> News Palladium, Benton Harbor, Michigan. November 7, 1931.; News Palladium, Benton Harbor, Michigan. November 9, 1931.

## Bob Kuzava, Wyandotte Pitcher



Robert Leroy Kuzava was born in Wyandotte, Michigan on May 28, 1923, He graduated from St. Patrick High School in Wyandotte in 1942 and he served in the armed forces from 1942-1945 as a military policeman during World War II. He married Donna Meyers in Wyandotte on March 18, 1943 and they eventually had two children. Despite his baseball career, Kuzava continued to live in Wyandotte. The 1950 Wyandotte City Directory lists him and Donna living at 809 Vinewood in Wyandotte.

In the 1946-1947 season Kuzava, whose nickname was “Sarge, was a left handed pitcher for the Cleveland Indians, making his Major League debut against the Detroit Tigers. The Indians slated him for starting picture in a late season 1946 game in Cleveland, and he gave up only four hits and one earned run in eight innings. The game lasted 11 innings, with Tiger Dizzy Trout pitching all 11 for the victory.

Kuzava spent the 1947 and 1948 season in the minor leagues before his breakout season with the White Sox in 1949. That year he compiled a 10-6 win loss and nine complete game record for the Chicago White Sox. He finished fourth in voting for the 1949 American League Rookie of the Year. Kuzava pitched for the Chicago White Sox in the 1949-1950 season and the Washington Senators from 1950-1951.

On June 15, 1951, the Washington Senators traded Sarge to the New York Yankees for three players. Between 1951-1953, Kuzava helped the Yankees win three consecutive World Series. In the 1951 World Series game against the New York Giants and the 1952 game against the Brooklyn Dodgers, he gained saves and he was relief pitcher in the 1953 World Series against the Brooklyn Dodgers as well. For three seasons, Kuzava was a starting pitcher for the Yankees and he threw 12 complete games. He played with the New York Yankees from 1951-1954, and he earned three championship rings as a Yankee.

On August 7, 1954, the Brooklyn Daily Eagle published an item about Bob Kuzava, Yankee relief pitching hero of the 1951 and 1952 World Series. The story said that Bob had moved on to the last place Baltimore Orioles that day. The Orioles were understood to have paid slightly more than the waver price of \$10,000 for the 31-year-old Wyandotte, Michigan pitcher, although Baltimore general manager Art Ehlers declined to disclose the figure.<sup>61</sup>

From 1954-1955, Kuzava pitched for the Baltimore Orioles; in 1955 the Philadelphia Phillies; in 1957 the Pittsburgh Pirates and the St. Louis Cardinals in 1957.

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<sup>61</sup>Brooklyn Daily Eagle, August 7, 1954.

In 2003, he was inducted into the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame.

Over his 10 season career, Bob Kuzava earned these statistics:

49-44 Win –Loss record; Played 213 Games, 99 started; 34 Complete Games; 7 Shutouts, 58 Games Finished, 13 Saves;

862 Innings Pitched; 849 Hits Allowed; 427 Runs Allowed; 388 Earned Runs Allowed; 54 Home Runs Allowed;

415 Walks; 446 Strikeouts ; Eight Hit Batsmen; 18 Wild Pitches; 3,748 Batters Faced; 1 Balk; 4.05 ERA;1.466 WHIP<sup>62</sup>

After he retired from baseball as a player, Kuzava scouted for the Braves and Athletics for ten years. Another honor he enjoyed besides being inducted into the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame was having a Wyandotte baseball field name for him.

“I just worked hard and loved the game,” he said. “I got married in the service and had a family to support. I just wanted it bad”

### **Michigan’s Driver of the Year, 1958**



Harold E. West

1087 Electric, Wyandotte

An unassuming Wyandotte truck driver who has driven more than 1 ½ million miles without a single chargeable accident is today Michigan Driver of the Year.

Harold E. West, 1087 Electric, Wyandotte, was honored at a 7 P.M. annual driver awards banquet of the Michigan Trucking Association in the Hotel Olds, Lansing.

More than 300 state legislators, officials and community and business leaders were on hand to see keynote speaker Secretary of State James M. Hare, present the perpetual Diver of the Year trophy to West.

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<sup>62</sup> [Bob Kuzava Statistics](#)

West, 50, a driver for the George F. Alger Company, Detroit, for the past 27 years, has had only one minor nonchargeable accident in his entire commercial driving career.

In 1941, on two-lane U.S. 16 near Brighton, an overtaking car cut sharply back in front of West's truck. The car then stopped suddenly to avoid hitting a dog which jumped out in front of it. With oncoming traffic on the left and a ditch and trees on the right, West had nowhere to go but straight ahead. His right front bumper grazed the left rear fender of the stopped car – no claims paid.

The award came as a surprise to West who had been named October 1957 Driver of the Month by Michigan Trucking Association last week. He and the 11 other monthly winners for 1957 had been singularly honored before his name was announced as top driver.

At present West operates a tandem hauling bulk truck, hauling cement for the Alger Company.

He resides with his wife Helen and their 18-year-old son Raymond. A daughter Geraldine – Mrs. William Campbell – lives in Covena, California. She has a two year old son William, Jr. West's mother Sarah, 85, is living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, about 15 miles from West's birthplace in Lowber.

The award automatically qualifies West for consideration as the American Trucking Association's National Driver of the year, an honor won three years ago by a Detroit driver, Floyd J. Pemberton of Commercial Carriers, Inc.

West was chosen by a panel of judges including Commander Joseph A. Childs, Michigan State Police; Commander John C. Mackie, Michigan State Highway Department; Paul A. Martin, publisher-editor of the Lansing State Journal; Senator Haskell L. Nichols; Rep. Emil A. Peltz; Ferris Lucas, Secretary Michigan Sheriff's Association; and John H. Barr, engineer-director County Road Association of Michigan. Martin was chairman of the judge's committee.

Eleven Drivers of the Month honored with West were: January- John Van Brocklin, Gladstone; February- John Malloreay, Port Huron; March- Meredith Coates, Detroit; April-Bud T. Tompkins, Pontiac; May- Eddie C. Martin, Pontiac; June-Lawrence Durham, Detroit; July-Donald Wigent, Detroit; August-Chester Searing, Jackson; September-Albert Peterson, Detroit; October- Harold West; November- Patrick W. Halloran, Flint; December- Dale Buss, Detroit.

All drivers and their wives were guests of the Michigan Council of Safety Supervisors, a Michigan Trucking Association division.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> The Wakefield News, Friday February 28, 1958

## **The Affholter Family Legacy**

### **Sister Regina Mary Affholter**

Remembering Sister Regina Mary Affholter, June 1, 1927-December 19, 2011.

“So I will sing the praises of your name forever, fulfilling my vows day by day.”

This quote, from Regina Mary’s Book of Life page which each of us filled out several years ago, gives us a glimpse of what was in Regina’s heart all these years of her religious life. But let’s begin with the beginning. Rita Magdalen Affholter was born on June 1, 1927, to Lloyd and Irene Affholter of Wyandotte, Mich., to join her sister, Betty Ann. In the ensuing years, her sister Nancy and brother Lloyd, in that order, completed the Affholter household. Rita began her education at Woodruff School in kindergarten and transferred to St. Patrick’s in Wyandotte for first grade. She transferred to St. Mary Academy for high school where she continued with the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters as her guides through high school and eventually into the Immaculate Heart of Mary congregation, which she entered on June 27, 1945.

Regina learned how to work quite early as did all of the Affholter children, at the family owned Wyandotte Creamery and at their farm on Bluebush Road where they raised pigs and cows. The Affholters were thrifty people and knew how to use everything to the fullest. Mr. Affholter recycled the run-off from the creamery as food for the pigs instead of letting it flow into the river. Aside from that, many ice cream treats followed Regina into the community.

As a postulant, Rita Affholter was a lively addition to the large class of postulants who entered that summer when the community celebrated its 100 years of existence. In the course of the summer and the ensuing years in formation Regina exhibited her leadership and her many skills, particularly in sports. After profession on Jan. 2, 1948, Regina was assigned to Holy Rosary School in mid-Detroit where she worked with children whose families had many needs. Regina began her side career of obtaining school materials and clothing for her students and their families. At the same time, she worked unceasingly at developing a belief in themselves and awareness that there were opportunities “out there” for them.

In the 1950s Regina was assigned to teach at St. Peter Claver School in Mobile, Ala. She enthusiastically engaged in the students’ activities, including the initiation of a boys’ basketball team. Segregation was still alive. This prohibited her young men from playing against the white teams in the city, and there were no other black teams in the city. Undaunted, Regina enlisted the help of Sister Patrice, another IHM at a “white school,” and off the two of them went with their teams to play against each other in a distant city.

On their return trip they passed an ice cream shop. Knowing that the young black men would not be welcomed inside, the two sisters, in full habits, went in and ordered ice cream for the boys intending to take it to the boys waiting patiently in the cars. To Patrice and Regina’s amazement, the store manager refused to sell ice cream to the sisters because it was going to be given to the young black men. The two cars returned to Mobile, and their occupants enjoyed some great

Affholter's ice cream at St. Peter Claver. Those two pulled it off and their students had their eyes opened to a broader view of our world.

In 1969 Regina was assigned to Holy Redeemer where she ministered until 2003. It was at Holy Redeemer that Regina reached her epitome in the field of education. Regina continued her "extra-curricular" ministry of seeing that her students had what they needed in clothing as well as school materials. She began this work at Holy Rosary, continued at St. Patrick's and brought it to full-bloom at Redeemer by establishing a program to assist students who were struggling in classes. With financial assistance from generous donors, Regina began the program "Getting Educationally Motivated," better known as the GEM program, to offer individual assistance to students struggling to master their school work. This was an attempt to help those students tempted to drop out because of lack of interest and/or a need to develop learning skills.

Over the years there were more than 1,000 students who benefitted from this personal tutoring and guidance. A newspaper account tells about one student who paid little attention to his teachers and who caused trouble in the classroom. He was sent to the GEM room in the early 1990s and, after four years, was achieving well in his classes and even tutoring some of the younger students. He was quoted in the newspaper as saying, "This program has made me want to learn." Another account involves a little girl in second grade who was disruptive in class and not doing her work. Sister Regina Mary came to her classroom one day and said to her, "Tomorrow I want you to come to my room." Then Regina hesitated and asked the little girl for her home phone number. The little girl looked up and nervously asked, "Are you going to get me in trouble?" Regina answered, "No, I'm here to keep you out of trouble." The program has a 95 percent success rate. The GEM room continues to this day for students at Holy Redeemer with other Sisters and many volunteers.

On May 5, 1997, Regina was honored by the alumnae of Holy Redeemer when she was inducted into their Hall of Fame. She was awarded the Education Honoree for that year – a well-earned reward for all of her years of teaching. As all of the above was progressing, Regina had the opportunity to share a cottage at Wampler's Lake with many of her Holy Redeemer faculty and her IHM Sisters.

Her parents purchased a small cottage across from theirs which gave many people a chance to relax at and in the lake. Those gatherings were the highlight every summer for the IHMs celebrating a Jubilee. Regina invited the entire class out for a day and treated them with a day of relaxation and fun with boat rides, swimming and games. Regina was the truly the "hostess with mostest."

In 2002, Regina's dear friend, Sister Conradine Konefke died. They had worked together at Redeemer for many years and were strong supports for each other when problems in school arose. In 2003, when her own health began to cause problems for Regina she moved to the Motherhouse. It was then that she could slow down and turn to her ministry of prayer and visiting the sisters in the Infirmary.

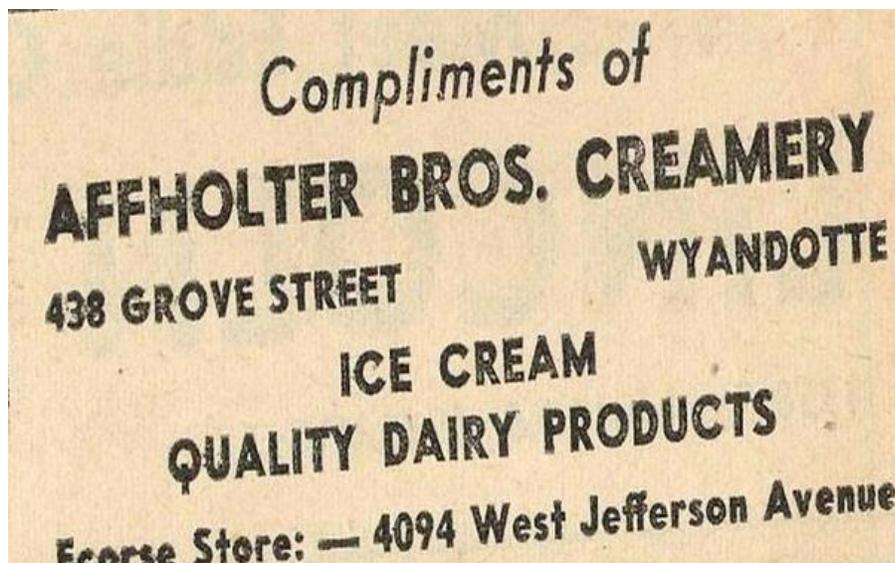
Many parents and teachers wonder if the values and the lessons they taught their children or students really had an impact. Earlier this month a proof that these values do take effect came to

light in a generous contribution made to our community in memory of Sister Regina Mary by a student whom she taught at Holy Rosary School in the late 1940s. He wrote, "I remember Sister Regina Mary at Holy Rosary School in Detroit. She was my fifth- or sixth-grade teacher. She could throw a football so far that we all thought she should play for the Lions.

Today I received a note from Sister Jane Arthur informing me that Sister Regina Mary is now in the health care unit. Please tell Sister that I will be praying for her. She made a huge impression on my life and I thank her for that.

" We close with the words quoted at the beginning of this Remembering - "So I will sing the praises of Your Name forever, fulfilling my vows day by day." And now, Regina, you have fulfilled your vows and now join your family members and our IHMs in singing God's praises forever. May you rest in peace. Mary Ann Untener IHM Dec. 21, 2011<sup>64</sup>

## **Affholter Bros. Creamery**



For several decades, Affholter Brothers Creamery operated at 438 Grove Street in Wyandotte with an Ecorse Store at 4094 West Jefferson. Through the years the Wyandotte News-Herald recognized Affholter's Creamery as a landmark business that made important contributions to the community as well as providing Downriver residents with delicious dairy products. In a January 1951 article, the News-Herald noted that Affholters Creamery had earned the honor of being the first Wayne County business to have all fifty employees voluntarily sign up for the Wyandotte

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<sup>64</sup> [Regina Mary Affholter](#)

Civil Defense program by January 1951. The article also noted that Affholters representatives were proud that 27 of their delivery trucks could quickly be converted to ambulances for the Wyandotte Civil Defense effort. The News-Herald said that Affholters had set a sterling example for other communities.

Generations of school children enjoyed milk from Affholters Creamery complete with throwable paper caps, and the memory of Affholters ice cream still tickles their taste buds decades later.



## Mooning over Blue Moon!



Blue Moon is one of the Affholters flavors most often mentioned, and one that provokes some controversy because different states including Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Michigan claim to be Blue Moon's mother state. [A 2007 Chicago Tribune Article](#) explores the question of Blue Moon's origin in some depth, but doesn't come to any definitive conclusions.

Cerena Childress promoted Michigan's claim to Blue Moon on one of her blogs when she wrote that "the reason there is very little known about the origination of Blue Moon Ice Cream because Alfred Shuryan was a humble man. Blue Moon was created at Affholter Brothers Creamery after World War II for the Soda Shop and customers of the Creamery in Wyandotte, Michigan. There were very few colored and flavored ice creams and it became popular."<sup>65</sup>

The 1941 Wyandotte City Directory listed Alfred Shuryan as working in the laboratory at Affholter Brothers Creamery. A World War II veteran, Alfred Shuryan died on April 28, 1979, and he is buried in Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock.

Although Affronter's Creamery has long been out of business, former customers have passed on the love of Blue Moon Ice Cream to their children and grandchildren and other states have adopted and adapted recipes for Alfred Shuryan's innovative ice cream.

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<sup>65</sup> California Astrologer Cerena Childress.

<https://santabarbaraastrologer.wordpress.com/2012/07/21/leo-2012-moons/>

## **.The Business of Wyandotte is Business**

### **Wyandotte Business, 1863-1864**

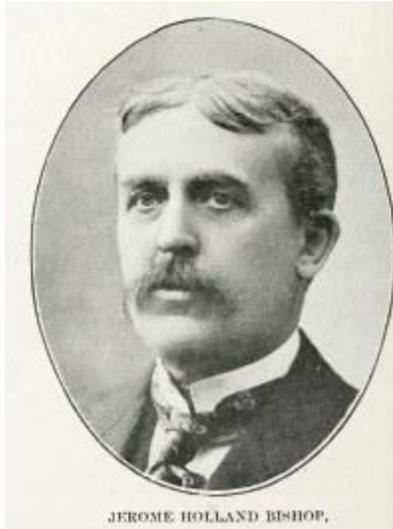
[The Michigan State Gazetteer of 1863-1864](#) described Wyandotte as an important manufacturing and post village in the township of Monguagon, 17 miles from Detroit by the Detroit and Toledo Railroad and 15 miles from Detroit by water. The railroad fare was 50 cents and the steamboat fare, 26 cents. Wyandotte citizens could worship at the Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and Lutheran Church and join organizations like the Order of the Sons of Temperance. There were three general stores, one saw mill, an extensive rolling mill, a blast furnace, a rail mill, manufactories or iron, several mechanics shops, etc. It had two mail deliveries a day, one in the morning from the east and one in the evening from the south.

Postmaster was L.O. Avery.

Lorenzo O. Aubery, general store  
William J. Baxter, grocer  
Patrick Beattie, boot and shoe maker  
Edmund P. Christian, physician  
Silas Clark, hardware.  
Moses Cohen, general store  
Peter Cole, saloon.  
Rev. M.C. L. De Petre , Catholic  
Henry H. Eby, general store  
Daniel Estes, carpenter  
William Farnsworth, soap manufacturer  
Leander Ferguson, justice of the peace  
Henry George, harness maker.  
John F. W. Hoeisch, grocer  
John Hurtel, carpenter

Russel F. Johnson, carriage maker  
Smith Johnson, blacksmith  
Rev. John Levington, Methodist  
George Marx, carpenter  
William F. Morris, justice of the peace  
Robert Mullthrope, boot and shoe maker  
Scippio J. Rennie, blacksmith  
John Robinson, mason  
Amenzer Sickmund, Eureka Hotel  
John Smith, saloon  
Van Alstyne, (Alexander Stewart and John  
S Van Alstyne), saw mill.  
William Thon, carpenter  
James Whitehead, merchant tailor  
Henry Williams, grocer

## Jerome Holland Bishop and the J.H. Bishop Company



Jerome Holland Bishop was born in Jefferson County, New York on September 3, 1846, but his parents William and Betsey moved to Redwood, New York when he was four years old. He went to school at a private academy and at age fifteen began teaching school at the village of Chippewa Bay on the St. Lawrence River. At age 18 he became superintendent of the Redwood village schools. He next taught at the Lowville Academy and then in Dyrenfurth College of Chicago.

Coming to Michigan in the winter of 1869, Jerome accepted a position as superintendent of Decatur, Michigan village schools. From Decatur he moved to Wyandotte to accept a position as superintendent of schools and he served in that capacity from 1871-1875.

Besides teaching school, Jerome had worked as head clerk in Sterling and Mosher's Bookstore in Watertown, New York, and a year as a bookkeeper in Memphis, Tennessee. After years of teaching school, he decided to search for a position that would better utilize his energy and ambition and offer him the challenge of a change in occupation. In 1875, Jerome Bishop founded the J.H. Bishop Tannery, located on the Detroit River shore between Chestnut and Superior Streets in Wyandotte, on land that is now known as Bishop Park. He decided to manufacture wool and skin goods, beginning with wool dusters and adding sheepskin mats in 1878, animal skin rugs in 1884, and Asia Minor angoras and China goat skin robes and rugs in 1888 and 1889. New York businesses were the only ones in the country who produced the same items, so Jerome had to rely on his own initiative and inventive powers to establish his business. He imported raw skins from China, Russia, Australia, South Africa and Europe to dry and dress in his own factory and he supplied furs to people across the country. After a 15 year struggle to build and expand his business, he earned a reputation for making the finest goods in Europe and America and established a large inventory and factory. His business later became known as the J.H. Bishop Company with offices in New York City, Boston, and Seattle.

## **Jerome Bishop, Wyandotte Booster**

A dedicated Republican, Jerome Bishop served as Wyandotte mayor in 1885 and was re-elected without opposition and support from both Democrats and Republicans in 1886. For several years he served as a member and president of the Board of Education. While he was on the Board of Education he worked to establish a public library and reading room and contributed much its books and support.

Jerome Bishop was a member of the Presbyterian Church and he was the superintendent of the Presbyterian Sunday School for fifteen years. Although he contributed generously to his own church, he gave just as generously to other churches that needed help.

In 1867, Jerome married Jennie Gray at Redwood, New York, and they had a daughter named Maud. Jennie died at Wyandotte in 1873. In 1876, Jerome married Ella Clark of Wyandotte, the daughter of I.S. Clark. Besides Maud, Ella and Jerome had children of their own: Jerome Bishop, Jr., Clive, Della, Wallace, and Mabel. In 1888, [Jerome Bishop](#) and his family built a large home on the corner of Superior and Biddle and they lived there until 1935, when it became the Wyandotte City Hall. The 12-story Bishop Co-op Senior Apartments now occupy the site of the original Bishop home.<sup>66</sup>



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<sup>66</sup> [Michigan Pioneer Histories](#)

## Another Ford: Captain John Baptiste Ford and Ford City



Captain John Baptiste Ford, the father of American Plate Glass, played an important part in Downriver history and proved that imagination and creativity are ageless. For Captain John Baptiste Ford and his sons, Edward and Emory, Downriver was a place where dreams in the dark of midnight became the reality of plants along the Detroit River in Wyandotte, Michigan, a cement plant in Alpena, Michigan, a glass plant in Rossford, Ohio, and a plate glass company on the banks of the Allegheny River near Pittsburgh. Ford's businesses sometimes travelled far afield from Downriver, but their foundation remained near the Detroit River in Wyandotte.

### **Captain John Baptiste Ford Understood the Importance of the Rock Salt Deposits and Created the Michigan Alkali Company**

In his *The City of Detroit Michigan, 1701-1922*, Clarence Burton traced the beginning of serious industry in the Down River District. He wrote that up into 1888, industry along the Detroit River front from Fort Wayne to Wyandotte and from the other side of Wyandotte to Trenton consisted only of a sawmill at Ecorse and one at Wyandotte. The rest of the riverfront scenery consisted of fifteen miles of marsh and a few fishermen's shanties. Muskrat and ducks watched the seasonal fishermen angling for sturgeon and the great ships passing back and forth between the Upper and Lower lakes carrying freight and passengers.

Then in 1854, Eber Brock Ward and his investors established the Eureka Iron Works on the banks of the Detroit River in Wyandotte and the sound of hammers overpowered the quacking of ducks and the chirruping of crickets. Eureka Iron Works prospered for several years, but in the 1880s the iron market took a downturn and the sources of fuel for the factory almost disappeared. The Iron Works crew drilled, searching for new sources of fuel. They didn't strike oil or gas, but they did find that Wyandotte rested on the beds of rock salt that extended between Trenton all the way along the Detroit and Saint Clair Rivers to Alpena and into Goderich Canada.<sup>67</sup>

When Eureka Iron Works closed in 1892, Captain John Baptiste Ford, a pioneer industrialist working for Eureka Iron Works, recognized the potential of the newly discovered salt beds and

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<sup>67</sup> [Encyclopedia of Detroit, Eureka Iron Works.](#)

worked to develop them because salt was one of the necessary ingredients needed to manufacture soda ash used to make plate glass.

In 1889, the United States relied mostly on Belgium and England for soda ash and Captain Ford wanted to end that dependency. He and his colleagues conducted a series of borings along the Detroit River in Wyandotte. They carefully analyzed the salt in the water from the Detroit River and of the limestone deposits a few miles away. Convinced that Wyandotte was the ideal place to manufacture soda ash, Captain Ford and his investors began work on a soda ash manufacturing plant which eventually became plant number one of the Michigan Alkali Company, with John Baptiste Ford as president.<sup>68</sup>

In the early 1890s, the Michigan Alkali Company manufactured a variety of chemicals, became prosperous and provided the foundation for the immense chemical plants at Wyandotte and Ford City, which was named after John Baptiste Ford in 1902. According to *Polk's 1907-1908 Wyandotte Directory*, the village of Ford or Ford City was an area “immediately north of Wyandotte and extends northerly along the Detroit River to Ecorse Village,” with an estimated population of 1,660 people. The City of Wyandotte annexed Ford in 1922. In the 1940s the company changed its name to the Wyandotte Chemicals Company which created many soaps and cleaners. It eventually became a part of and it still operates under the name of BASF industrial complex.

### **Captain John Baptiste Developed an Early Entrepreneurial Spirit**

John Baptiste Ford learned self-reliance early in his life. Born on November 17, 1811 in a log cabin in Danville, Kentucky, he was just two years old when his father, Jonathan Ford, joined the Kentucky Volunteer Homespun Regiment to fight the British at New Orleans in 1813. Jonathan Ford never came home and John Baptiste's mother Margaret Baptiste, daughter of Jean Baptiste an immigrant from France who fought in the American Revolutionary War, had to raise her family alone. When John Baptiste turned twelve, his mother apprenticed him to a Danville saddle maker, but he ran away from the stern saddle maker at age 14 and settled in Greenville, Indiana. He stayed in Greenville, Indiana, for the next 30 years. Mary Bower, a farm girl from Greenville taught him to read and write and he married her in 1831.

The newly married couple opened a small dry goods store and then a shop where they sold saddles and later they started a flour mill. During the Mexican War of 1846-1848, John Baptiste Ford won a large government contract to supply the United States Cavalry. His vision of traveling the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to open up the vast country west of the Mississippi River motivated John Baptiste Ford to build a boat company at New Albany, Indiana. His shipbuilding activities earned him the name Captain Ford.

### **The Father of American Plate Glass and the Michigan Alkali Company**

The 1860 Federal Census showed Captain John Ford, 53, living in New Albany, Indiana, with

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<sup>68</sup> [Michigan Alkali Company](#)

his 57-year-old wife Mary and sons Emory, 17, and son Edward, 14. The breaking out of the Civil War in 1861 provided Captain Ford with the opportunity to supply Union troops with the products that he made in his iron business. In June 1864, Captain Ford and Mary's son Emory graduated from Duff's Mercantile College in Pittsburgh. Emory toured some of the many glass works in Pittsburgh with his father, inspiring Captain Ford to open a glass firm back in New Albany. The captain and his son expanded into plate glass operations, something that had happened only in Europe to this point.

The 1870 census documented that John Baptiste Ford, age 58, still lived in New Albany, Indiana, with his 62-year-old wife and son Edward, 24, and grandson John B. Ford, age 3. According to his obituary in the *New York Times*, Captain John Baptiste Ford lost everything when he was 70 years old, but he didn't despair or retire into a poverty stricken old age. In 1874 he started the Louisville Plate Glass Works. In 1883, he and his sons Edward and Emory opened a new company in booming "Pittsburgh, the Gate way to the West," using money that he had made from some glass patents. The company became the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. (PPG) He became known as the father of American plate glass and the town of Ford City, Pennsylvania, was named for him.<sup>69</sup>

Even though he had a thriving company in Pittsburgh, Captain John Baptiste Ford continued to develop new businesses in Michigan. He founded Michigan Alkali Company, incorporated in 1894, with offices on Biddle Avenue. The J.B. Ford Company was incorporated in 1898, with Emory L. Ford as vice president and a capital of \$100,000.

By 1897, the Fords had sold their shares in the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company and established a new factory near Toledo, Ohio, that they called the Ford Glass Company. It later became known as the Libbey Owens Ford Glass Company.

The 1900 census shows widower John Baptiste Ford living in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, with his elderly aunt. He died at his home in Tarentum, Pennsylvania on May 1, 1903. In a May 2, 1903 story, the *Detroit Free Press* reported his death and noted, "Wyandotte owes its prosperity in great part to his industries." The story said that he possessed millions, but spent much of his money in religious and benevolent work. He is buried in Allegheny Cemetery in Pittsburgh.

### **The Wyandotte Portland Cement Company**

Polk's Wyandotte Directory of 1907 shows that John B. Ford's grandson John Baptiste Ford founded the Wyandotte Portland Cement Company, located on Biddle Avenue at the foot of Grove Street in Wyandotte. J.B. Ford was vice president, S.T. Crapo, president and treasurer and H.J. Paxton, secretary and general manager.

The Wyandotte Portland Cement Company was built on the low lands bordering the Detroit River. High grade materials were used throughout the construction and the buildings were made of steel with brick sides. They had clear spans, with the trestles being carried on brick pilasters. Since water and quicksand were discovered at two feet, the walls were built on brick arches

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<sup>69</sup> [Louisville Plate Glass Works Company](#); [Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company](#)

transferring the entire weight to concrete piers extending to solid ground.<sup>70</sup>

The plant buildings covered a relatively small area when compared with its total capacity, making it one of the most complete operating plants. The stock house has a capacity of 40,000 barrels, and all of the buildings covered an area of only 25,000 square feet. The plant averaged about 450 barrels of cement a day.

During 1900 and 1901, the city of Detroit used Wyandotte Portland cement exclusively for all of its public work. Portland Cement was named because its color resembled the stone from the Isle of Portland in the British Isles. A booklet about Michigan Alkali Company and the Wyandotte Portland Cement Company dated 1898, detailed some of the public buildings that Wyandotte Portland cement helped make possible. The city of Detroit used 3,500 barrels of Wyandotte Portland cement to build mosaic floors and artificial stone walks for the Wayne County Courthouse. The Detroit Water Works building contained 4,000 barrels of Wyandotte Portland Cement in its engine foundations. The Toledo Terminal Railway Company used 10,000 barrels of Wyandotte Portland Cement to build its bridge across the Maumee River at Maumee, Ohio. The engineers after carefully testing imported and American cement brands chose Wyandotte Portland Cement.

The 1910 census showed 43-year-old John Baptiste Ford, the grandson of Jean Baptiste Ford, living in Detroit with his 30-year-old wife Helen S. Ford and their two sons John Baptiste Ford, Jr., 13, and Fred, 11. The 1910 census also shows Emory L. Ford, the 34-year-old grandson of John Baptiste living at 1730 Jefferson Avenue in Detroit. He was a widower with a three-year-old son, Emory M. Ford. Jean Baptiste Ford's sons and grandsons inherited and further developed the businesses they had started together.

### **The Huron Portland Cement Company**

Like Wyandotte, Alpena, Michigan had the geographic good fortune to be located in the middle of immense limestone deposits. John Baptiste Ford's grandson John Baptiste Ford and his son Emory L. Ford founded the Portland Cement Company at Detroit in 1907, but they chose Alpena as the site for its plant because of the limestone quarries. John B. Ford served as first president to the company and cement production began at the plant in 1908.

Skilled management and workmen quickly shaped the Huron Portland Cement Company into the world's largest cement plant. The company also had its own fleet of ships that delivered cement to the entire Great Lakes region.

John Baptiste Ford presided as president of Huron Portland Cement Company from 1907-1939. Although it has changed names several times, the company still operates under the name of Lafarge North America.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> [Wyandotte Portland Cement Company](#)

<sup>71</sup> [LaFarge North America](#)

## **Edward Ford Plate Glass Company – Rossford, Ohio**

Born in Greenville, Indiana on January 21, 1843, Edward Ford spent his adult life working closely with his father in entrepreneurial endeavors and continuing with them after his father died. In 1898, Edward Ford bought 173 acres of farmland on the Maumee River outside of Toledo, Ohio, for his plate glass factory. In August of 1898, the Edward Ford Plate Glass Company broke ground. Edward Ford imported trainloads of workers from the glass plants that he and his father and brother had established in Pennsylvania to help make the Ford family's latest business a success.

Soon a company town grew up around the Edward Ford Plate Glass Factory. Edward combined the name of his second wife Caroline Jane Ross with his family name to christen his company town Rossford. As well as housing for his workers, Edward Ford built the Ford Club near the plant for his glass company employees to socialize with fellow workers and their families.<sup>72</sup>

Besides building a new industry along the Maumee River and providing jobs for people, Edward Ford found other ways to express his altruism. People would often see him walking into grocery stores, drug stores, and meat markets in Rossford, but they weren't sure about his purpose for visiting the stores. They didn't learn until after his death in 1920 that he had been quietly paying off the long standing accounts of many of his employees.

Although John Baptiste Ford and his sons did business in an era when many industries and capitalists built their empires on a foundation of exploited workers. John Baptiste Ford served as a role model of resourcefulness, persistence, and perseverance. He believed in his business ideas, he fought to implement his ideas against great odds, and he didn't let his age hamper him from achieving his goals. Despite the great wealth he finally managed to accumulate, he didn't isolate himself from the people that helped make it possible. In the truest sense of "giving back", he made many contributions to the communities where he lived and to the people that worked for him. Without Captain John Baptiste Ford and his sons Emory and Edward, Downriver wouldn't have developed into a humming industrial hub of south-eastern Michigan.<sup>73</sup>

## **Michigan Alkali People**

[Marceli Drziezanski](#) was born in Poland on March 16, 1892. He lived at 262 Vine Street in Wyandotte with his wife Boleslawa Hojnowska and he was a laborer at Michigan Alkali. He died on August 26, 1919, at the Emergency Hospital in Ford of hemorrhage and shock from fractured

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<sup>72</sup> [Edward Ford Plate Glass Company](http://toledoregionaltour.org/rossford-and-edward-ford); Rossford and Edward Ford. <http://toledoregionaltour.org/rossford-and-edward-ford>

<sup>73</sup> William Earl Aiken. *The Roots Grow Deep: The Story of Captain Ford*. Cleveland: The Lezius-Hiles Company, 1957. Arthur Pound. *Salt of the Earth: The Story of Captain J.B. Ford and Michigan Alkali Company*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Company, 1940.

right ribs, a ruptured diaphragm and stomach that he sustained when a fall crushed him between railroad car. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Piotr "Peter" Greloch, worked at Michigan Alkali. He was born on June 20, 1896 in Poland and immigrated to the United States. He married Mary Kulkowski and they lived at 371 Sixth Street in the village of Ford. He was killed at 88 North Line in Ford on November 27 1920, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Edward Kowalewski was born on February 17, 1897, in Warsaw, Poland. He lived with his parents Wladislaw and Vichtorya Kowalewski at 242 Vine Street in Wyandotte. He was accidently killed at Michigan Alkali Co Plant No 1, while temporarily seated directly in front of an uncovered switch against which he accidentally placed his head causing the contact which killed him. There was no inquest. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery on June 19, 1920.

Stanislaus Frank Krzywicki, born October 4, 1879, in Poland to Frank and Rozalia Krzywicki. He was married to Bronislawa Londkowska and they lived at 125 Hudson Street and worked as a laborer for the Michigan Alkali Company. He died at the Emergency Hospital in the village of Ford after he fell from a freight car and fractured his neck. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

James Rudd Lucas was born on October 20, 1863 in Essex, England, the son of William and Mary Ann Lucas. He married Elizabeth Adelia Taylor on September 9, 1886 in Sarnia, Ontario. As a result of an accident at Michigan Alkali Works, he had to have an arm amputated, and he died as a result on November 29, 1900. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Louis Mahalak, born March 11, 1880 in Wyandotte, the son of Frank Mahalak and Maryanna Szczepaniak. On July 12, 1904 Frank married Martha Singer in Trenton. He was Superintendent of Michigan Alkali and worked there for 39 years. He died on September 3, 1937, in Wyandotte and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Duncan McKeith was born in Sanilac County, Michigan on March 25, 1873. He lived at 88 Plum Street and had been a resident of Wyandotte for 23 years. He was divorced from Emma McKeith. He was found in the Detroit River at Michigan Alkali Company on May 14, 1920. An inquest determined that he probably fell from the dock and drowned. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

John Joseph Michalak, born on March 19, 1875, in Wyandotte was the son of Francis and Maryanna Michalak. He married Johanna Wegienka on June 1, 1897 at Saint Patrick Catholic Church in Wyandotte and they had seven children. He was a foreman at the Michigan Alkali Company. He died on July 29, 1939.

Vendal Orban, foreman at Michigan Alkali was born in April 1869 in Austria. He lived at 378 Sixth Street in Wyandotte and worked as a roofing foreman at Michigan Alkali Company. He was married to Theresa. He died on December 8, 1919, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

[Stanley Ptak, Sr.](#) was born in Poland on July 21, 1881 to Michael and Katarzyna “Kate” Stoinska Ptak. On May 23, 1905, he married Stella Kiosinska at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church in Wyandotte. He worked for Michigan Alkali Company. He died on March 1, 1933 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

[Frank J. Rakoczy](#) was born March 4, 1888 in Poland. He and his wife Rose lived at 355 Chestnut in 1910 when they were newlyweds. He was a packer in the ship room at Michigan Alkali. He died on May 8, 1928 in Detroit and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

### **Michigan Alkali Events**

Brooklyn Daily Eagle: Detroit Michigan. Thursday, December 5, 1901

Fire Causes Loss of \$500,000 Detroit, Mich. December 5, 1901. The main building of the Michigan Alkali Company’s soda ash plant at Wyandotte, 12 miles down the Detroit River, was completely destroyed by fire today. J.B. Ford, principal owner of the plant, places the loss at \$500,000.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle: May 10, 1916

Operations were resumed today at Plants No. 1 and 2 of the Michigan Alkali Company at Wyandotte and Ford Village suburbs of Detroit. Several hundred employees have been on strike for higher wages and shorter hours. A riot occurred near the plant Saturday night, during which one man was killed and a dozen persons were wounded.

The Ohio Farmer  
February 2, 1907

Its name is Wyandotte Dairyman’s Cleaner and Cleanser. Three years ago this product was first brought to the attention of the creameries, the cheese factories and the State Dairy Schools. Today the State Dairy Schools not only use it but also strongly advise its use by others, and the factory that does not use it is a rare exception. To the housewife an investment in a 5-lb sack of Wyandotte Dairyman’s Cleaner and Cleanser is an investment for better, purer and sweeter milk, a high grade product, bigger prices and less work. Ask if your factory man or dealer for a 5-lb sack of this cleaner or write the J.B. Ford Co., Sole Manufacturers, Wyandotte, Michigan. This cleaner has been awarded the highest prize wherever exhibited.

## **Tin Plate Pioneer's Ninetieth Birthday**

November 18, 1901

Pittsburgh-Captain John B. Ford, the father of the tin plate industry in the United States, celebrated his ninetieth birthday at his home in Creighton. Public services in honor of the event were held in the \$50,000 public building presented the town of Tarentum by Captain Ford. There were exercises of a similar kind at Ford City and Meadville, in this state, and at Wyandotte, Mich. where Mr. Ford's great soda ash plant is situated. Captain Ford is suffering from cancer. His mind is in excellent condition, but he realizes that the disease has placed a limit on his

## **Wyandotte Businesses – 1891-1892**

The [Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory](#) of 1891-1892 described several Wyandotte businesses including stave and hoop manufactories, a rug factory, two breweries, and a weekly newspaper, the Herald. The city had a system of water works and was lighted by electricity. Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, two Lutheran and 2 Catholic churches provided religious advantages for the city and a large union school building and a library of 1,500 volumes served the city. Wyandotte's population numbered 4,000. William Denman was postmaster.

Paul Adolph, groceries and shoes

Mrs. Margaret Aettolph , boarding house

Jacob Anspach, dry goods

Arlington House, L. Debo propr

Mrs. Matilda Bailey-. saloon

Baumler House, Gustav Baumler, propr.

Edward Beattie, Justice

William Belleville, carpenter and contractor

Rev. J.J. Bernthal, Lutheran

John Bigler, meat market

J.H. Bishop, rug and robe manuf. Arthur B Clark, sec.

Charles S. Boehne, saloon

Mrs. Nellie K. Briggs, librarian city library

Frank Brohl, baker

D.H. Burrell & Edward J. Burrell, management cheese box materials

Cadotte Hotel, T.D. Drouillard Propr

Cahalan Bros (Richard E and John C). drugs

James Cahalan, physician

Cecil L. Carl, agent Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad

Edmund P. Christian, physician

Everett N. Clark, hardware

John Clee, mineral paint manufacturer

Marlin A. Coan, shoes and justice

George W. Coomer, lawyer

John P. Debo. propr Arlington House and livery

William H. Denman, postmaster and agent  
Am Exp Co.  
Detroit Dry Dock Co. James McMillan,  
pres, Gilbert N McMillan sec and treas.  
Detroit Hoop and Stave Company, E.H.  
Doyle, Proprietor  
John P. Doll, Choice Wines and Liquors,  
imported and domestic cigars  
Reverend J.W. Dorrance, Presbyterian  
Edward Doyle II. Detroit Hoop and Stave  
Co. and Sec. and treasurer of Wyandotte  
Electric Light Co.  
Eli N. Drouillard, proprietor Eureka Steam  
Laundry  
Thomas Drouillard, proprietor, Cadotte  
Hotel  
Nelson Dupuy, grocer  
John Ebert, coal and wood  
Mary Eilbert, general store and saloon  
Eureka Brewery and Ice Co, Charles H.  
Riopelle and Hugo Mehihose  
Eureka Iron and Steel Works, Wm K Muir  
Pres. Sidney D Miller Sec. Eureka Steam  
Laundry. E N Drouillard  
John Franklin, bazaar  
Fury Bros (Edward and John). barbers  
William Fury, shoemaker  
John F. Ganley, barber  
Gartner Bros (Charles and Joseph),  
hardware  
William Gartner ,grocer and saloon.  
Charles H. Genthe, Jr. Insurance  
Mrs. Selma Genthe, confectioner  
Genthe & Girardin (Charles H Genthe  
Jr. Joseph Girardin, Jr.) grocers and agents.  
U.S. Exp.  
Mrs. Elizabeth George, dressmaker  
John R. George, saloon  
Louis and Edward George, grocers and  
saloon  
Mrs. Michael George, boarding house.  
Joseph Girardin. Maker of Iron Wheel  
barrows (Coal and Ore). Carriage and  
Wagonmaker and General Blacksmith  
Michael Graham, barber  
Dalton J. Haven, propr Wyandotte Herald

Lawrence Heide, saloon  
John Hills, bill poster  
August C. Hoffmann, Custom-Made Boots  
and Shoes; Repairing a Specialty.  
Ralph W. Hopkins, Wyandotte Planing  
Mills. Manufacturer of Sash Doors and  
Blinds and Dealer in Lumber, Lath and  
Shingles  
Archibald Hunter, justice  
Albert W. Jaehnke, sewing machines  
Josiah B. Johnson, blacksmith  
John J. Jonas, carpet weaver  
Frank A. Karth, hardware  
Mathias Kasper, baker  
Kaul Bros (Henry and Wm), dry goods  
John Kaul, boots and shoes  
Jacob Keim, physician  
Henry Klatt, II, wagonmaker  
Charles B. Kroger, Groceries, Provisions,  
Fish, Oysters, Game, Fruits and Meats of all  
Kinds Susan Kuntz, notions  
William E. Lacey, lumber  
Walter C. Lambert, physician  
Napoleon T. Langlois, physician  
Theophilus J. Langlois, Physician and Pres  
Wyandotte City Water Works  
Reverend George A. Laugel, Catholic  
August Lupton, grocer  
John Loeckner, Justice and Notary  
August J. Loeffler, dry goods  
Arthur E. Long, harness  
Alesium Longtin, carpenter  
Mrs. Harriet Longtin, milliner  
Frank Loranger, saloon  
McCleery & Craig, grocers (James P.  
McCleery and David Craig)  
Geo W. McDonald, justice  
McGlaughlin & Gorman (James S.  
McGlaughlin and M.J. Gorman). jewelers  
and cigar mnfrs  
Mrs. John McSorley, saloon  
Miss Emma Marquardt, dressmaker  
Marx Brothers (Theodore, William and  
Frank), brewers  
Theodore M. Megges, saloon  
Hugo Mehlhose, U.S. Express Co.

Louis Mehlhose, bottler  
Melody Bros, dry goods; Mrs. James  
Melody, milliner  
William Miller, saloon  
Hiram W. Millspaugh, Express Agent  
Morris M. Morgentau, tailor  
Francis Murphy, justice and notary.  
Miss Tillie Murphy, manager W.U. Tel.  
Company  
James H. Murray, saloon  
National Loan and Investment Company of  
Detroit. Mich; Officers of Advisory Board at  
Wyandotte: E. H. Doyle Pres.; T.D. Evans,  
vice. Pres; W. H. Denman, Sec.; August  
Loeffler, treas; Sylvester Pray Attorney  
Rev. Peter Nichol, Presbyterian  
Rev. Francis O'Rorke, Catholic  
A. Palmer, principal high school  
George Pardington, awning manufacturer  
Henry Pelant, shoemaker  
George Perry, milk  
Philip Potter, meats  
Sylvester Pray, lawyer  
Michael Quinnan, grocer  
Thomas Raynard, grocer  
Reno & Dodds (Denis Reno and Wm  
Dodds, blacksmiths)  
Daniel H. Roberts, grocer  
Henry Roehrig, shoes.  
Charles Roll, omnibus line  
Henry W. Ross, boarding house  
Isidore Rossi, confectioner  
Reverend Charles Saettele, Catholic  
Reverend Aloys Schmid, Lutheran  
Charles Sehuffert, saloon  
John Sendelbach, carpet weaver  
Shelly & Robertson, hoop and stave  
manufacturers

Charles Simon, tailor  
Smith & George (John H. Smith and Frank  
George) furniture and undertakers  
William Spears, general store  
Reverend Joshua Stansfield, Methodist  
Frank Stieler, Groceries, Fish, Oysters and  
Cigars  
William Stilling, baker  
August Tacke, meats  
John Tooling, saloon  
Julius Thiede, barber  
Charles W. Thomas, druggist  
Henry F. Thon and Christian F. Thon,  
furniture and undertakers  
Reino Thon, meats  
Frank Walsh, Michigan Central Railroad  
William Walther, jeweler  
Mrs. William Walther, milliner  
Charles Warmbier, general store  
Christopher Warmbier, general store  
Valentine Weingartner, shoemaker  
Henry Williams, flour and feed  
Louie H. Williams, harness  
Wyandotte Planing Mills. R.W. Hopkins,  
Proprietor  
Wyandotte City Water Works, Dr. Theodore  
J. Langlois, pres  
Wyandotte Cornet Band. Joseph Weirich,  
leader  
Wyandotte Electric Light Company, F.A.  
Kirby, president; Edward H. Doyle,  
secretary and treasurer.  
Wyandotte High School. A Palmer  
Wyandotte Savings Bank (John S. Van  
Alstyne pres. Wm Van Illa cash.  
Albert A. Zaddack, saloon

## Mark Reeves Bacon and Mary Ford Bacon



Mark Reeves Bacon, born February 29, 1852 in Phillipstown, Illinois, attended the public schools there and by 1871 he was teaching school himself at the Academy in Bolivar, Missouri. He studied law, was admitted to the bar on July 4, 1876, and began practicing in Fairfield, Illinois. He held office as Fairfield's City Attorney and served as a delegate to several state conventions.

On June 20, 1889, Mark Bacon married Mary Ford in Creighton, Pennsylvania. Mary was the daughter of Edward Ford, founder of Edward Ford Plate Glass Company and the granddaughter of Jean Baptiste Ford, founder of Michigan Alkali Company. Mary's father, Edward, worked for the Atlantic Steamship Line and he met Evelyn Carter Penn when she was traveling back and forth with her mother from Louisville to New Orleans. They married in 1865, and had two children, John who went to Harvard and eventually became president of a Ford subsidiary in Detroit, and Mary who married Mark Reeves Bacon. Evelyn died in New Albany, Indiana on April 14, 1870.<sup>74</sup>

After conducting the abstract business in Orlando and Jacksonville, Florida, in 1895 Mark Bacon moved to Wyandotte, Michigan. In Wyandotte, he became associated with the Michigan Alkali Company through his wife, Mary. The Bacons had three children, Elizabeth C., John B.F., and Milton E. Bacon.

In March 1917, Mark Bacon presented his credentials as a Republican Member-elect from Michigan's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District to the United States Representatives for the Sixty-Fifth Congress. On April 5, 1917, Mark Bacon and 49 other representatives voted against declaring war on Germany. He served from March 4 until December 13, 1917, when voter backlash against him for voting against the declaring war on Germany produced a successful recall campaign against him. Democrat Samuel W. Beake took his place. In 1918, he didn't stand for re-nomination, but instead retired to Wyandotte.

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<sup>74</sup> "Salt of the Earth," the story of Captain J.B. Ford and Michigan Alkali Company, 1890-1940; Arthur Pond, Boston: Atlantic Monthly Company, 1940. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Michigan Alkali Company. The Roots Grow Deep. William Earl Aiken. The story of Captain John Baptiste Ford and his son Edward, sponsored by the Libbey Owens Ford Glass Company.

Mark Bacon died at his winter home in Pasadena, California at age 89 on August 20, 1941. He is buried in San Gabriel Cemetery, San Gabriel, California. His wife Mary died on July 25, 1950 in California and is buried next to him.



The parlor of the Ford-Bacon home in Wyandotte as Mary and Mark would have enjoyed it.

In 1897, Edward Ford, son of John Baptiste Ford, hired Malcomson & Higginbotham to design a house for himself and his wife Carrie, but they lived in the house for just a short time before they moved to Toledo, Ohio, in 1900. Ford's son John B. Ford lived in the house from 1900-1902, and in 1902 Edward Ford's daughter Mary Ford Bacon and her husband Mark moved into the house. They lived there from 1902-1942, but spent much of their later years in California. When Mark Bacon died in 1941, Mary gave the house to the Wyandotte Public School System and it later became the Wyandotte Public Library.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> United States Congress. Mark R. Bacon. Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. [Detroit Metro Times](#)



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## Wyandotte Businesses Briefs

Meeting and Greeting the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: From the Business and Professional Directory of Wyandotte, Michigan, 1899

M.M. Bailey, millinery. 5 Maple and First  
T.E. Baisley, painter. 107 Poplar  
G.A. Balmer, Hotel. 92 Biddle  
William Beattie, Painter and Decorator. 12 Maple  
M. Bigler, Confectionery. 9 Biddle  
J. Bigler & Son, meat market. Eureka and 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Chas Biglen & Co., meat store. 91 Biddle  
J.H. Bishop & Co., Tanners. Front and Superior  
J.H. Bishop & Co., Druggists. Front and Superior  
E.A. Bowles, photographer. 121 Biddle  
William F. Bryant, Electrician. Front and Poplar  
D. H. Burrell & Co., Hoop Mnfr. Front and Mulberry  
Burlington Hotel, John Allen, proprietor. First  
Cahalan Bros & McInerney, Drugs. 79 Biddle Avenue  
A. Charlton, physician. 115 Biddle  
Fred Classon, Contractor and Builder. 188 Chestnut  
M.A. Coan, shoe store. 98 Biddle  
M.A. Coan, shoe store. 98 Biddle.  
Commercial & Savings Bank. Corner Biddle and Oak  
Mary A. Cole, Carpet Weaver. 142 Orange  
J.B. Debo, Proprietor Arlington Hotel. Biddle Avenue  
William Dodd, blacksmith. Biddle  
Dorrance 7 Garrison, druggists. Agents American and U.S. Express Co., 80 Biddle. Tel. 12

Thomas Drouillard, Crescent Hotel. Biddle and Eureka  
Nelson Dupy, grocery. 54 Oak  
H. Eberts, coal and wood. Front and Mulberry  
William Eilbert, saloon. 39 Biddle Avenue  
Eureka Brewing Company, Charles Riopell President. Front Street  
Eureka Ice Company, Ice Wholesale, Front and Poplar, Tel. 9  
William Farnsworth Bicycles, 20 Biddle  
J.B. Ford Company, Mngr. Starch, Washing and Baking Soda.

E.H. Fortenbaugh, White Swan Steam Laundry, foot of Oak.  
Hastings Fowler, Plumbing, Tinning, Roofing and Hardware, 82-83 Biddle Avenue  
J.B. Franklin, newsdealer. 116 Biddle  
William Gartner, Boot and shoe store. 11 Biddle. Tel 5  
Gartner Brothers Hardware. 17 Biddle Avenue, Tel 5  
M.G. George, grocery. Biddle and Eureka  
J. Girardin, meat market and groceries. 89 Biddle Tel 3  
Fred Ginzl, general merchandise. 74 Elm  
Girardin & Son, blacksmiths and wagon manufacturers. 65 First  
W.J. Gorman, saloon and restaurant. 41 Biddle Avenue  
Thomas Gray, flouring mills. Oak and Front Tel 1  
E.J. Harding, architect, over Wyandotte Saving Bank

E.S. Hinds, bakery. 90 Biddle  
R.W. Hopkins, planning mill, Front Street  
A. Jablowski, saloon. Pine and Third  
Mrs. P.R. Johnson, milk depot. 109 Fifth  
Frank Karth, hardware. 100 Biddle  
John Kaul, boot and shoe store. 19 Biddle Avenue  
H. Kaul, dry goods. 18-21 Biddle Avenue  
William Klump, meat market. 54 Pine  
William J. Kreger, boot and shoe store. Biddle  
C.E. Kreger, grocer. 60 Biddle  
N.Y. Langlois, physician. Eureka Avenue  
J. Leeling, central flour. 233 Oak  
A.J. Loeffler, clothing and furnishings, dry goods and gent's furnishings. 13-15 Biddle  
A.E. Long, harness. 21 First  
B. Lorange, grocery. Chestnut and First  
O. Lorange, blacksmith. First  
R. J. Lynch, photographer. 80 Oak  
Martin & Craig Mace, hardware. 41 Biddle Avenue, New Tel 47  
A.E. Marchon, mason. 185 Chestnut  
C.H. Marr, lawyer. Biddle  
Thomas McCleery, groceries. 85 Biddle Tel 49  
J.S. McGlaughlin, jeweler. 93 Biddle, Central Exchange  
T. Meggs, saloon. 99 Biddle  
Melody Brothers, dry goods. 67 to 73 Biddle Avenue  
Hugo Mehlhose, saloon. Arbeiter Hall, in connection, 110-115 Elm  
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of New York, J.N. Welch Supt. Eureka Block  
H. Meyers, saloon. Biddle and Eureka  
M. Morganthau, tailor. 102 Biddle  
William Mueller, the Bismarck Club, Biddle and Eureka Tel 34  
Murray & Beattie, boots and shoes. 83 Biddle Avenue  
Walter Murphy, barber. 45 Biddle Avenue

E.H. Myers, saloon. 62 Biddle Avenue  
F. Nellis, livery. Oak  
P.P. Nelson, dentist. 112 Biddle  
R. Nolan, barber. 94 Biddle  
M.A. Perry, grocery. Oake and Third  
S. Pray, lawyer. 100 Biddle  
J.J. Racho, grocery. 78 Eureka Avenue and Third  
Louis Riopelle, proprietor, Commercial Hotel. Biddle Avenue and Orange Tel 26  
D.H. Roberts, sewing machines. Chestnut  
Miss K. Roehrig, millinery. 13-15 Biddle Avenue  
Roehrig & McInerney, Insurance. Over Wyandotte Savings Bank  
J.D. Singer, physician. 40 Oak  
W. Snyder, restaurant, confectionery, figs and tobacco. 32 Biddle Avenue  
South Improvement Company, Limited, T.D. Evans, President; John C. Cahalan, Secretary; William Gartner, Treasurer. 79 Biddle Avenue  
William Spears, bazaar. 81 Biddle Avenue  
Frank Stieler, cigars and tobacco. 156 Oak  
Edward Stieler, grocery. 164 Oak  
Oscar Stieler, proprietor, Niagara Laundry. Biddle Avenue and Oak  
C.H. Thiede, Justice of Peace. 102 ½ Biddle Avenue  
C.W. Thomas, druggist. 87 Biddle Avenue Tel 17  
H & C Thon, furniture and undertakers. 23 Biddle Avenue  
W.V. Travis, cigars, tobacco, and confectionery. 47 Biddle Avenue  
Wagman Coal Company, coal and wood. 89 Biddle Avenue  
Charles Warmbier, general store. Second and Elm  
John L. Watson, merchant tailor. 71 Biddle Avenue  
J.Y. Weathway, saloon. Biddle Avenue

Wiesman Brothers, barbers. 808 Biddle Avenue  
Mrs. S. Wilkins, Victory House. 62 Biddle  
Mrs. Julia Williams, flour and feed. 37 Biddle Avenue  
J.H. Wiseman, cigars. 100 Biddle  
Wyandotte Brewing & Ice Company, Oak and Front  
Wyandotte Improvement Company, Limited. Thomas D. Evans, president;

William Gartner, secretary; John C. Calahan, treasurer. 79 Biddle Avenue  
Wyandotte Savings Bank, corner Biddle and Elm  
Wyandotte Weekly Herald, Newspaper and Job Printing, J.D. Haven, proprietor. 21 Oak.  
Tel 12<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Some Wyandotte businesses, 1899

# All Metal Products Company-Wyandotte Toys

doors on front of garage. Complete with one rubber tired heavy gauge metal roadster 4 3/8" long and one rubber tired heavy gauge metal coupe 4 3/8" long. Packed each set in shipping carton, weight 20 pounds.

**25c**



**ALL METAL PRODUCTS CO.**  
**WYANDOTTE MICHIGAN**

*Wyandotte Toys*  
**"ARE GOOD AND SAFE"**

No. 503 Circus Truck and Trailer. 19" long, 4 3/4" high, 3 1/4" wide. Cab and chassis made of heavy gauge steel, bodies made of beautifully colored lithographed metal in realistic design, wheels of colored wood. Both truck and trailer have rear doors and the trailer is detachable. Complete with assorted animals. Packed each in box, one dozen in shipping carton, weight 25 pounds.

**50c**

When writing to All Metal Products Co., will you please mention **PLAYTHINGS?**

**SEPTEMBER, 1936—PLAYTHINGS**



Bang, clackety, bang! Hopalong Cassidy pop guns, pistols, holsters, cap guns, brightly painted trucks and cars, toy trains and airplanes, all necessary equipment for lazy summer afternoons of cowboys and Indians with caps smelling like burning autumn leaves in the background. All Metal Products, the company that George W. Stallings and William F. Schmidt started in 1921 in Wyandotte, Michigan, manufactured all of these toys and gradually added other toys to their

inventory. Founders Stallings and Schmidt located their new factory in Wyandotte on Sycamore Street between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets, and manufactured their toys from scrap metal from the Ford Motor Company and other local scrap metal sources. They called their creations “Wyandotte Toys” and their company soon became famous for making pressed steel airplanes, trucks, ships, target games, pistols, and cap guns. They also made boxed sets of heavy stock paper soldiers and ships. The S.S. Kresge Company sold Wyandotte Toys in its dime stores and Sears featured them in its catalogue as early as 1922.<sup>77</sup>

All Metal Products coined the phrase, “Wyandotte Toys Are Good and Safe,” that would stimulate global sales and endure years longer than their business. For thirty years Wyandotte Toys produced enough toys and sales to vie for the title of the largest maker of toy guns and pistols in the United States. Then after a series of business setbacks, Wyandotte Toys moved to Ohio in the early 1950s, and Louis Marx and Company bought out the company in 1956. Wyandotte toys are still fondly remembered by people with gray hair, but young hearts still attuned to Wyandotte toys. Collectors covet Wyandotte toys and people zealously collect them.

Wyandotte Toys prospered enough through the Great Depression to open a second factory in 1930 which stretched along the railroad tracks near Second Street and Labadie. The company added metal airplanes, cars, and trucks to its inventory. A foot-long dump truck made of heavy gauge steel and with a steel radiator grille mounted to a red cab and a green cargo bed in the rear proved to be a popular new item along with a circus truck with multi-colored lithographed metal designs. Wyandotte toys also manufactured doll carriages, tops and a novelty toy called “Susie the Happy Hen,” complete with six white eggs. Most of the toys featured a prominent display of the Wyandotte name.

By November 1936, Carlton M. Higbie Corporation in Detroit extended a public offering of 45,000 shares of common stock of All Metal Products Company, with shares priced at \$5.90 each. The offering did not constitute new financing for the company, the shares having been acquired from certain large stockholders. The company agreed to make application to list its common stock on the New York Curb Exchange and the Detroit Stock Exchange.

The company was incorporated in 1921 and its present outstanding capitalization consisted of 260,700 shares of \$2 par value common stock of a total authorized issue of 300,000 shares.<sup>78</sup>

During the World War II years, All Metal Products produced rifle clips and flare guns as its share of the war effort, but the company kept a foothold in the toy business by manufacturing

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<sup>77</sup> The 1921 Wyandotte, Michigan City Directory lists George W. Stallings as living on Bondie Street. And his occupation as treasurer of All Metal Products. He was born on October 10, 1886, and died on December 17, 1972. The Wyandotte City Directory lists William F. Schmidt as Superintendent of All Metal Products. He was born on May 14, 1874 and he died on January 23, 1928.

<sup>78</sup> Brooklyn Daily Eagle, November 10, 1936

wooden and paper toys. The end of World War II and the late 1940s were prosperous times for Wyandotte Toys whose products entertained and educated many of the babies of the baby boom. By 1948, toy sales peaked at over \$8 million, the highest point in the toymaker's history. Another radical change came to the toy industry in the early 1950s, when plastic replaced metal as the toy making material of choice. The change in toy making material and a change in ownership and management took their toll on Wyandotte Toys. Sales declined and the company had to borrow money to keep the production lines moving. Some stories had it that the New York bank that had loaned Wyandotte Toys money demanded full payment on the 2.5-million-dollar loan because a family member of one of the bank trustees was a rival toy maker.

Wyandotte Toys couldn't repay the loan and they eventually they went bankrupt. The first Wyandotte Toys plant closed and the company built a new plant in Ohio to be closer to material suppliers and take advantage of the cheap labor, but the Ohio plant merged with the Louis Marx Toy Company. The remaining Wyandotte Toys plant closed in 1955, and All Metal Products Company went out of business in 1957.<sup>79</sup>

Bang, clackety, bang! echoes down time's tunnels and Wyandotte Toys wait on line and in antique shops for memories to stir and fingers to curl around and pull the triggers of Wyandotte Toys cap guns one more time.

**WYANDOTTE TOYS**  
**ARE GOOD AND SAFE**

MUSICAL TOPS  
MECHANICAL TOYS  
LITHOGRAPHED TOYS and GAMES  
POPGUNS and PISTOLS  
STEEL TOYS  
HOLSTER SETS - TARGET GAMES

ALL METAL PRODUCTS CO., WYANDOTTE, MICH.  
New York Office:  
Room 534—200 Fifth Ave. Phone GRamercy 5-6047

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<sup>79</sup> [The Story of Wyandotte Toys](#); [Wyandotte Antique Toys](#)

## Gartner Hardware



Charles Gartner

Charles J. Gartner was born in Wyandotte on January 23, 1865. He married Margaret T. Sullivan on January 18, 1894 in Wyandotte and they had five children.

While he was still a young man, he and his brother, Joseph Gartner took over an operating hardware business that a relative had established and founded Gartner Brothers Hardware Store. Joseph died in 1900, and Charles continued to operate the hardware business.

As well as dedicating himself to his family and hardware business, Charles contributed to his Wyandotte community. He completed several terms as city commissioner, served as commissioner of municipal service after the new city charter was adopted in 1926, and he was the director of the Wyandotte Board of Commerce. He was also a Wayne County Supervisor. Charles was a member of the Detroit Yacht Club, the Grosse Ile Golf and Country Club and the Kiwanis Club. He was a member of Saint Patrick Catholic Church.

Suffering from chronic heart problems, Charles went to Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit for treatment and died there on July 15, 1932. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

### **The Regent Stove Company**

The American Artisan, Volume 70, of 1915, reported that The Regent Stove Company of Wyandotte, Michigan, has been organized with an authorized capital stock of \$100,000 of which amount, \$67,000 has been subscribed, \$5,000 paid in cash and \$16,000 in property.<sup>80</sup>

### **1930 Wyandotte Businesses**

The Marx Company Ice  
Plant Open 24 Hours Daily  
2907 Van Alstyne Blvd.  
Wyandotte  
Phones 1 and 2 Wyandotte

Visitors to Wyandotte  
Edinger Apartment Hotel  
O.J. Edinger, Prop.  
114 Oak Street  
Rates, 2.50 per day and up

Downriver Federal Savings and Loan Association  
2959 Biddle Avenue  
Wyandotte  
Branch Office, River Rouge  
Savings Accounts Insured to \$5,000.00  
Mortgage Loans – Land Contracts  
Chartered and Supervised by United States  
Government

Navarre's Carpets- Shades –  
Linoleum  
2826 Biddle  
Wyandotte  
Tel: Wyandotte 0144

Downriver Chevrolet, Inc.  
3411 Biddle Avenue  
Wyandotte  
Phone: Wyandotte 1234

Home Furniture Company  
Complete Home Furnishings  
The Store of Friendly Service  
3230-34 Biddle Avenue  
Wyandotte  
Tel: 2020

<sup>80</sup> American Artisan, Volume 70, Edited by Daniel S Keeney Publishing Company, 1915.

## Wyandotte Factories Inspected

In 1922, several Wyandotte factories were inspected as part of a nationwide network of legislation that leaders of the Progressive Movement had been promoting for several decades. In the 1903 Annual Report on Factory Inspection, L.S. Russell of Michigan traced the background of the factory inspection laws and explained their importance. He wrote that the first proposition for the enactment of factory inspection laws in the State of Michigan came from organized labor and the Michigan State Senator introduced a bill requiring inspecting factories and workshops in 1893.

The Bill proposed the appropriation of \$1,000 to be used by the Commissioner of Labor to inspect all of the factories in Michigan, then estimated at over six thousand.

The Michigan House of Representative increased the appropriation to \$4,000 and the bill became law. The 1893 Inspection Bill paralleled an 1883 law that said the Michigan Department of Labor authorized collection of labor statistics. The law increased appropriations for the factory inspection division. A bill was prepared and passed without serious opposition for factory inspectors and giving the commissioner additional powers in connection with the work. The law provided for a well-organized system of inspections and enforcement procedures for child labor and safety and sanitary violations.

The increasing passage and enforcement of factory inspection laws sparked an ongoing debate that continues into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Some people believed that the conditions of factories, workshops and the composition of labor forces should be left to the discretion of the owners, operators, and employees. Others believed that the state had the right to regulate factory conditions and protect factory employees.<sup>81</sup>

The results of the 1922 Michigan Department of Labor Inspection for these Wyandotte businesses reflect the progress of the Factory Legislation.

### **Hubert S. Amiot**

The Michigan Department of Labor Factory Inspection Division reported to Hubert S. Amiot that the company had to provide a safety cover for the extractor within ten days.

### **Beals & Selkirk Trunk Company**

The Michigan Department of Labor ordered Beals & Selkirk Trunk Company to install guards on all emery wheels, a belt and pulley on the planer and build stairs leading to the window of the fire escape in the Nailing Department. All of these improvements had to be completed within ten

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<sup>81</sup> [“Factory inspection contemporaneous with collecting labor and industrial statistics, “by L.S. Russell of Michigan Annual Report on Factory Inspection, Issue 18, 1904](#)

days. The state required Beals & Selkirk to immediately stop permitting males less than 18 years of age and female employees from working more than 54 hours in one week and or longer than ten hours in any one day.

**The J.H. Bishop Company**

The Michigan Department of Labor informed the J.H. Bishop Company that it had five days to install guards on all exposed set screws on the shafting, provide skirt guards for shafting under the sewing machines and provide a safety cover the extractor.

**E.C. Bryan**

The Michigan Department of Labor ordered E.C. Bryan to immediately comply with its recommendation that female employees should not work longer than 54 hours in any week or more than ten hours in any one day.

**Detroit Shipbuilding Company**

The Michigan Department of Labor informed the Detroit Shipbuilding Company that it had five days to install a guard bevel gear on the drill press in the machine shop and on all emery wheels.

**Gartner Hardware Company.**

The Michigan Department of Labor ordered Gartner Hardware to immediately comply with its order to forbid females working for the company to work longer than 54 hours in one week or more than ten hours in any one day.

**Thomas Gray Flouring Mills**

The Michigan Department of Labor ordered the Thomas C. Gray flouring mill to install a guard on the crank shaft on the engine and bevel gear of the flour packing machine.

**Roman Kurzontkowski**

The Michigan Department of Labor notified Roman Kurzontkowski that the company had to immediately file a work permit for one boy between 14 and 16 years old. It informed the company that males under 18 years of age and female employees were not allowed to work longer than 54 hours in one week or more than ten hours a day.

**Marx Brewing Company**

The Michigan Department of Labor ordered the Marx Brewing Company to repair the low water alarm on boiler No. 2 and install a guard belt and pulley on the small engine in the wash room within five days.

**Melody Brothers**

The Michigan Labor Department instructed Melody Brothers to immediately comply with its order to prohibit female employees from working more than 54 hours in any week or more than ten hours in any one day.

**Michigan Alkali Company**

Michigan State Labor Department inspectors instructed the Michigan Alkali Company to install guards for all gears on pipe threading machine in the pipe department and bevel gear on drill press in the Machine Shop. They said that the company had to provide a spreader and guard for the rip saw in the Carpenter Shop, and place an iron guard rail around the fly wheels on the engine and guard belting in the Caustic Department. In the Drum Department, the state inspectors required Michigan Alkali to put guards on all gears on the punch press, a fly wheel on the tar engine, a belt and pulley on the seaming machines and set screws. In the Wash Room the state required a guard belt and pulley on the small engine.

**Pennsylvania Salt Mfg. Co.**

The Michigan Department of Labor ordered the Pennsylvania Salt Mfg. Co. to put a guard bevel gear on the drill press and on the gears on the box making machine and one emery wheel. The company had to repair the low water alarm on boiler No. 11 and all of the repairs had to be completed within five days.<sup>82</sup>

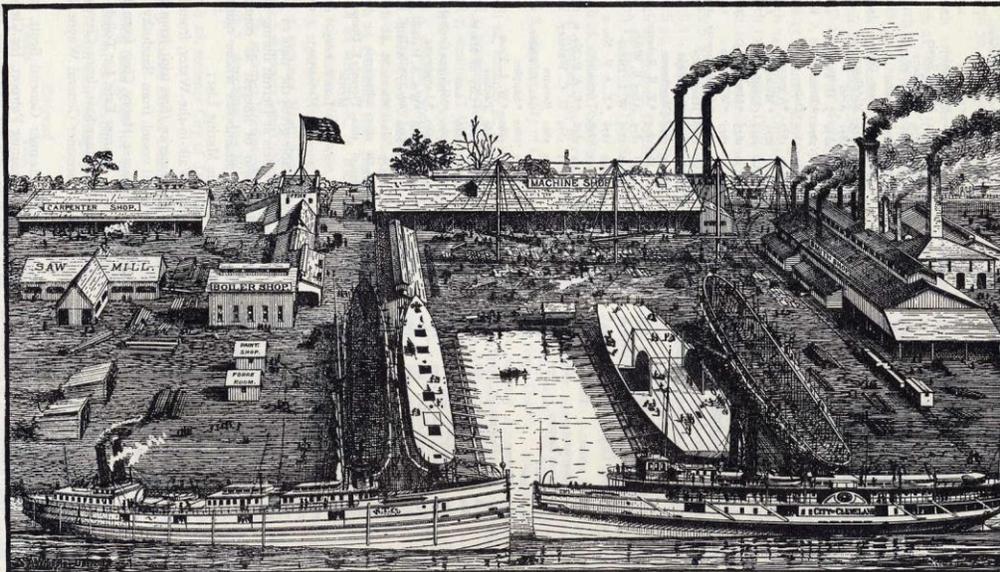
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<sup>82</sup> [Annual report of the Department of Labor of the State of Michigan](#). Michigan Department of Labor. The Department Factory Inspection, 1922

## Wyandotte Shipbuilding



Detroit Shipbuilding  
Company, Library of  
Congress



IRON SHIP-BUILDING DOCKS OF THE DETROIT DRY DOCK COMPANY, AT WYANDOTTE, MICH.

Eber Brock. Ward and Frank and Stephen Kirby helped created the shipbuilding industry in Wyandotte which lasted from the 1870s into the 1920s, producing steamers, tugs, and immense ferries.

Under the name of the American Shipbuilding Company, E.B. Ward built more than 200 ships, constructing hulls in Wyandotte and floating them up the Detroit River to Detroit to outfit them.

In 1873, E.B. Ward's Wyandotte Iron Ship Building Works built the first American ship with a steel hull, a tugboat called Sport which had a more than four-decade career before it foundered with six persons aboard off Lexington, Michigan in Lake Huron. Luckily, no lives were lost.<sup>83</sup>

Detroit Shipbuilding Company began as Campbell, Wolverton & Company, operating from 1852-1862. From 1862-1874, the company was known as Campbell & Owen and then Stephen Kirby acquired it in 1871. For a time, Marine City in Michigan served as the focal point to Michigan's shipbuilding industry, but it was so distant from a city with a large workforce that it did not grow. In 1872, Captain Stephen Kirby incorporated the Detroit Dry Dock Company which was located at Atwater and Orleans Street in Detroit.

In 1877, Detroit Dry Dock expanded, purchasing the Wyandotte Shipbuilding and Captain Kirby's son Frank supervised the company. According to local tradition, naval architect Frank E. Kirby and iron and steel magnate Eber Brock Ward conversed on a train from New York to Saginaw and came up with the idea of having another branch of the Detroit Dry Dock Company in Wyandotte next to the Eurkea Iron Works.

From 1877 until 1922, Detroit Dry Dock Company operated the two yards and produced a multitude of vessels ranging from lake steamers to railroad ferries. Henry Ford worked at the Dry Dock Engine Works from 1880-1882, as an apprentice machinist and his work helped develop his idea of adding an engine to a carriage to revolutionize transportation.

In 1899, the Kirby's sold the Dry Dock Company to the American Shipbuilding Company and consolidated the Orleans Street facilities and renamed them the Detroit Shipbuilding Company in 1913. The recession in the 1920s brought about the closing of the Wyandotte yard in 1922 and the Orleans Street yard closed in 1929. The Wyandotte Yard, located between Orchard and Plum Streets was never utilized and is now the northern end of the Wyandotte Shores Golf Club.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>SPORT Propeller. Official U. S. No. 115152. Built 1873, of 45 Gross Tons. On Dec. 13, 1920 vessel foundered near Port Huron, Mich. and became a total loss. Although 6 persons were on board, no lives were lost. Loss of U. S. Vessels Reported in the Year 1921. M.V. of U. S. for 1921 ; SPORT Built 1873 Steam Tug - Iron U. S. No. 115152 45gt-22nt 56.0 x 14.0 x 9.0 Foundered off Lexington, Mich., Lake Huron, December 13, 1920. Detroit/Wyandotte Master Shipbuilding List Institute for Great Lakes research Perrysburg, Ohio

<sup>84</sup> [Steamboats on the Great Lakes](#) ; [Detroit Shipbuilding Company](#)

## **Wyandotte Maritime Memories**

### **Amherstburg Echo**

Canadians as well as Americans took notice of the shipbuilding activity in Wyandotte and the Amherstburg Echo followed the wake of Wyandotte shipbuilding. On August 8, 1884, the Echo noted that the new steel boats at Wyandotte were rapidly approaching completion and August 15, said that one of the new steel steamers will be launched next week. On September 15, it noted that the work is being pushed rapidly forward, with 500 men being employed.

### **Amherstburg Echo, August 29, 1884**

One of the new steel steamships launched at Wyandotte last week was name the ‘Albany’ and the other to be launched next month is to be called the “Syracuse.”

A dispatch from Detroit states that from this time forth no licenses will be granted to persons to act as engineers or pilots for American vessels on the lakes unless proof is furnished that applicants are American citizens.

The Kirby Brothers of Wyandotte contemplate building a large pleasure steamer having three decks and of good speed to ply on the rivers for parties of pleasure. She will be fashioned after the steamer Garland, though much large and far more commodious.

### **Amherstburg Echo, January 9, 1885**

The Detroit & Cleveland Steam Navigation Company have just closed a contract with

the Detroit Dry-Dock Company to construct for them a mammoth side-wheel passenger steamer for their Detroit and Cleveland route, to be ready for the opening of navigation of 1886. The vessel will be constructed of steel and of the following dimensions: 270 feet keel, 40 feet beam and 16 feet depth of hold. The hull will be divided into compartments, so that in case of accident it cannot sink. The boilers will be four in number and built of three fourths inch steel and their weight will be 400 tons.

The wheels will be of the feathering type and 25 feet in diameter, driven by beam engine cylinder 60 inches in diameter and 12 feet stroke. The vessel will have a double row of staterooms, one above the other, somewhat after the style of the Fall River Line steamers and finished in mahogany.

The entire vessel will be lighted with electricity and her steering apparatus will be operated by steam. In fact, the vessel will contain all the modern improvements known in the way of outfit and appliances. The entire cost of this steamer will be \$275,000.

The plans and specifications will be made by Frank E. Kirby. This steamer will make the run from Detroit to Cleveland in probably less than five and a half hours. She will not only be the swiftest, but also the finest in all departments, and the safest steamer on Western waters.

### **Amherstburg Echo, April 3, 1885**

The steamer Riverside (Capt. John Desana) is expected to commence running on the Amherstburg and Detroit route as soon as the ice is out at Wyandotte. She will probably be down Sunday and take her route Monday.

### **Amherstburg Echo, July 3, 1885**

"Texas" writes as follows: - "William Fortier, who is now running a supply boat with provisions, newspapers, etc., at this end of the Detroit River to all vessels, barges, etc. passing up and down, has placed on Ballard's Reef, Grosse Isle, a scow with one red light, which he will keep there in good order every night during the season of navigation.

The United States Government has a buoy there which is all very well for daytime but it is at night that vessels run on that reef, which is a stone bottom and shallow. Besides, the old piles of several fisheries that have been erected there during the last forty years and are now underwater make this point a very dangerous one. It is on an almost direct course from Norvell's dock, Texas Landing, towards the upper end of Grosse Isle.

Vessels passing up the river must not go too far to the eastward or they go on Fighting Island point, or if they go too far to the westward they go on Ballard's Reef. A light on this reef will be of great benefit to navigation and save owners and insurance companies many dollars, and there is no doubt that they will contribute liberally

towards keeping up this light. Added to the cost of lightering and pulling off, the vessels nearly always have to go into the dry-dock for repairs, as their bottoms receive more or less damage

### **Amherstburg Echo, August 7, 1885**

The scow Trader, whose captain was arrested at Detroit on a charge of stealing small articles from different vessels along the river, has been seized by a deputy marshal at Wvandotte. A lot of stolen property was found on the scow, including several fishing nets belonging to a man named Meloche at Petite Cote, a camping outfit and a lot of paint identified as some taken from the steam yacht Sigma. Capt. Williams and a boy named Mueller are in confinement.

### **Amhertsburg Echo, November 13, 1885**

Advertisement

Steamer Riverside

[Central Standard Time]

The steamer leaves Hamilton's dock at 6:15 a.m., calling at Texas Landing, Grosse Isle and Wyandotte, arriving in Detroit at 8:30 a.m.

Leaves Detroit at 2:30 p.m., arriving at Amherstburg at 4:30 p.m.

M. Stafford, Clerk. J. DeSana, Master

Captain John DeSana was born on March 27, 1833. He died on June 16, 1910 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

**Buffalo Enquirer, March 16, 1894**

The new steel steamer Harvey H. Brown was launched at the Wyandotte Yards of the Detroit Dry Dock Shipbuilding Company on Wednesday. The brown is 362 feet over all or two feet longer than the Eddy of the same line

**Bessemer Herald, March 11, 1899**

New Steamer Launched

The new passenger steamer Pennsylvania, built by the Detroit Dry Dock Company, was launched from the Wyandotte yards. The new boat is 208 feet by 33 feet over the gunnels, 35 feet beam and 12 feet deep. She will carry passengers between Erie and Buffalo. She is expected to make twenty-three miles an hour.

**Port Huron Daily Times, Wednesday, November 19, 1899**

Number 133, the Admiral, the new steamer just completed at the Wyandotte yard of the Detroit Shipbuilding Co. for the American Steamship Co. will be launched on Saturday.

Steam screw Admiral. U. S. No. 107523. Of 4,651 gross tons; 3,547 tons net. Built Wyandotte, Mich., 1899. Home port, Detroit, Mich. 423.9 x 51.9 x 28.0  
Merchant Vessel List, U. S., 1901

**Detroit Free Press, October 13, 1900**

At High Noon today the new fire tug James Battle will be launched at Wyandotte. At

10:30 this morning Fire Commissioner Scotten's steam yacht Wanda will take thirty guests down, including the members and secretary of the commission, Chief Kendall and the battalion chiefs, a few city officials, designer Frank E. Kirby and newspaper men. There will be no champagne christening. Instead a handsome flag bearing her name will be broken out on a staff at the stern.

James Battle. Built October 13, 1900 Fire Tug - Steel  
U .S. No. 77444 198 gt - 123 nt 116.0 x 25.2 x 13.0  
(b) James Battle - Can - 1941 (C 174801 )  
Detroit/Wyandotte Shipbuilding Master List  
Institute for Great Lakes research  
Perrysburg, Ohio.

**Port Huron Daily Times, Monday, January 21, 1901**

The large new steel steamer David M. Whitney was launched at the Wyandotte yard of the American Shipbuilding Co., on Saturday afternoon. She is 426 x 50 x 28

September 29, 1912 Fire Destroys Detroit Shipbuilding

Fire of unknown origin almost wholly destroyed the Wyandotte plant of the Detroit Shipbuilding Company tonight. Officers of the concern say the loss may be over \$200,000. An excursion steamer in the course of construction at an estimated cost of \$1,500,000, was saved.

## **Buffalo Evening News, Friday, May 1, 1905**

The steamer L. C. Hanna, building at the American Shipbuilding Company's local plant for the Mahoning Steamship Company, will be launched next Tuesday. The keel of the propeller Paul Stackhouse, which is to be a duplicate of the Hanna, was laid at Wyandotte on Tuesday.

## **W.E. Fitzgerald, Wyandotte, 1906-1971**



The launch of the William E. Fitzgerald in Wyandotte on September 8, 1906.  
Detroit Publishing Company

The story of the William E. Fitzgerald bulk carrier begins with William and Julia Fitzgerald of Marine City, Michigan, the center of an active wooden shipbuilding industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Julia and William had six sons who were fascinated with the wooden sailing ships and early steamboats on the St. Clair River which joins the Belle River at Marine City. The six Fitzgerald brothers all became captains on Great Lakes ships. Julia and William's youngest son, John Fitzgerald was a lake captain who started a shipyard on the Kinnickinnic River in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. John's son William E. Fitzgerald (1859-1901) took over his father's business in the 1890s,

Captain John Fitzgerald's son William E. Fitzgerald, had a close friend Captain Dennis Sullivan of Wyandotte, Michigan. In 1906, Captain Dennis Sullivan built and christened the bulk propeller W.E. Fitzgerald in Wyandotte to honor his friend. The Detroit Ship Building Company in Wyandotte built the William E. Fitzgerald as Hull #167 for the Chicago Navigation Company in Chicago and she was launched on September 8, 1906, and she entered service in October 1906.

Perhaps as a prophecy of things to come, the William E. Fitzgerald didn't always enjoy smooth sailing on the Great Lakes. On December 14, 1926, she got caught in heavy seas outside of Port Arthur, Ontario and suffered damage to her frames and hull plating. Many of her hull plates were repaired and 25,000 rivets replaced at Superior, Wisconsin.

In 1928, Boom Electric Welding Company in Cleveland converted her to a scraper type self-unloader. Her conversion didn't keep her from rough seas. On November 25, 1930, she ran aground in the Livingstone Channel in the Detroit River, and on August 28, 1931, she got stuck in the mud in the Saginaw River.

In 1932, Gartland Steamship Company of Chicago bought the William E. Fitzgerald, and later that year she earned the distinction of being the first U.S. self-unloader to use the 4<sup>th</sup> Welland Canal. She struck the Lake St. Bridge in Chicago twice, once in 1939 and again in 1952.

In 1969, the American Steamship Company bought the W.E. Fitzgerald, but she never sailed for them. Instead, she laid up until October 1971, when the tugs Herbert A. and G.W. Rogers towed her to Ramey's Bend. The tow arrived October 21, 1971 and the W.E. Fitzgerald was scrapped in Humberstone, Ontario over the winter of 1971-1972.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> [The William E. Fitzgerald](#); W.E. FITZGERALD Built September 8, 1906 Bulk propeller -- Steel U.S. No. 203561 4940 gt - 3701 nt 420' x 52.2' x 29'  
Converted to self-unloader in 1928. Scrapped at Humberstone, Ont., winter, 1971-1972.  
Detroit/Wyandotte Master Shipbuilding List, Institute for Great Lakes research, Perrysburg, Ohio.



The Fitzgerald ship saga continued into the next generations after even William E. Fitzgerald died and the ship William E. Fitzgerald had been scrapped into maritime history. William E. Fitzgerald's son [Edmund Bacon Fitzgerald](#) (1895-1986) was the chairman of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company in Milwaukee when it built the ore freighter Edmund Fitzgerald and christened it for him.

The Edmund Fitzgerald was built and assembled at Great Lakes Engineering Works in Ecorse and River Rouge, Michigan, and launched on June 7, 1958 in River Rouge. The 729 foot, eight-million-dollar ore carrier was the largest on the Great Lakes at the time of her launch. Edmund's wife Elizabeth christened the massive iron ore freighter, whacking it three times before her champagne bottle broke over its bow.

Ironically, Lake Superior claimed the ship that had been named for William E. Fitzgerald's son Edmund on November 10, 1975, about three years after the ship that had been named for him was scrapped. The Edmund Fitzgerald went down in a Lake Superior storm 17 miles north of Whitefish Bay. All 29 crew members went down with the ship.



Edmund B. Fitzgerald or “Young Ed”

Edmund Bacon Fitzgerald’s son [Edmund B. Fitzgerald or “Young Ed”](#), was born in 1926 and died in 2013. Although he had accomplished much in his life, including bringing major league baseball back to Milwaukee, and becoming a successful executive at Cutler Hammer, the legacy of the Edmund Fitzgerald was never far from his mind. He once said that the launch of the Edmund Fitzgerald, witnessed by a crowd of 15,000, was the happiest day of his father’s life. And the day of the wreck, when 25 foot waves and near hurricane force winds roiled Lake Superior and sank the Edmund Fitzgerald was “probably the worst day of my father’s life.”<sup>86</sup>

### **Buffalo Evening News, Monday, March 21, 1910**

#### **Twins Successfully Launched at Detroit**

The twin steamers Arlington and Brandon of the Rutland Line were successfully launched at Wyandotte yards of the Detroit Shipbuilding Company on Saturday. Both vessels are of the extreme length allowed for the Welland Canal, 257 feet over all, 244 feet keel and 43 feet beam. Each boat is 26 feet 6 inches in depth. The unusually fine weather drew the largest crowd of the year from Wyandotte and the suburban towns to witness the dual launching

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<sup>86</sup> [Edmund B. Fitzgerald dies at 87; known for baseball, shipwreck ties](#)

**Brooklyn Daily Eagle Wednesday December 6, 1916**

The steamer Benjamin Noble was launched yesterday at the Wyandotte yards of the Detroit Shipbuilding Company for the Capital Transportation Company, of Detroit. Miss Olive Elaine Noble christened the boat for her father.

**John Augustine, 1919**

The son Eli and Fracewski Augustine, John Augustine worked at the Detroit Shipbuilding Company in Wyandotte and he lived at 345 Oak Street. He died at the age of 21 on May 20, 1919 of a skull fracture caused by an accidental head injury. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery

## **E.B. and Samuel Ward, Captains of Great Lakes Shipping**



Captain E.B. Ward

Captain Samuel Ward and his nephew Captain Eber Ward built several Great Lakes ships and contributed much to the growth and development of the Great Lakes.

The story of Captain Eber Ward ended in January, 1875. At about 10:45 o'clock in the morning of January 3, 1875, he suffered an attack of apoplexy while walking on the west side of Griswold Street, between Larned and Jefferson Avenues in Detroit. He collapsed in front of the banking office of E.K. Roberts. He was at once carried into Mr. Roberts' office and several excellent physicians attended him, but their efforts were all in vain. One of the doctors said that he probably was already dead within three minutes from the time he was lifted up in the street. Later, they discovered that Captain Ward had suffered a similar attack a few months earlier. The doctors immediately notified his family, friends, and many business colleagues in different sections of the country of his death.

From his thirteenth birthday when he became a cabin boy on the Great Lakes, until his death, Captain Ward sailed on Great Lakes ships, built Great Lakes ships, and expanded Great Lakes interests. He added his life to those of many others who contributed to the growth and development of the Great Lakes.

## **The Ward Family Moves to Michigan**

Captain Ward's story begins in Canada, where he was born in 1811. His parents had fled to Canada from Vermont in 1811, to avoid the consequences of the War of 1812. After the war of 1812 ended, Eber's parents returned with their family to the old homestead in the Green Mountain State, where they remained until he was six years old. His home was located in the town of Wells, Vermont.

Not long after the "second Revolutionary war" had ended the tide of emigration resumed its westward march. In 1818, Eber's parents with their family and many others traveled to the more lucrative fields of the south and West. They set out for Kentucky, but were delayed at Waterford, Pennsylvania, for some time, and here Eber's mother died. They changed their course and went to Ohio. After a short stay in that state, they gradually pushed westward until they permanently located in Michigan.

## **Eber B. Ward Becomes a Cabin Boy on a Schooner**

Eber's father, had first visited Detroit in 1821. This was sixteen years after fire had destroyed the old town. At this time there was only one frame house in the town. The average buildings were made of logs with cedar bark roofs. At this time, the largest vessel that floated on the lakes was only of thirty tons burden, and when a ship arrived at Detroit's solitary wharf, a curious scene took place. Men, women and children thronged the river's bank to get a glimpse of the strange visitor. At this period, and for several years afterwards, the whole fleet of the lakes could not carry as much as one of the present large grain vessels. Not one of the ships navigating the lakes was owned in Detroit. There were but three or four then on Lake Erie, and most of them belonged to the English. A public vessel known as the brig Hunter was the only means of water communication between Detroit and Buffalo.

E.B. Ward accompanied his father to Marine City in 1822, and in 1824 to Mackinac. Here he began his marine career by taking the position of cabin boy in a small schooner. At this time, he was only about thirteen years old, but had wanted to sail on the lakes for a long time. He diligently worked his way from cabin boy to one of the first places in wealth and importance in Detroit and in Michigan.

## **Eber B. Ward Clerks for His Uncle and Sails the Great Lakes**

Samuel Ward, Eber's uncle, was the leading shipbuilder of Marine City and Eber observed his energy and admired his enthusiasm. He called the youthful Eber from his sailor's life, and gave him a clerkship in his extensive warehouse. This marked the beginning of Eber's shipbuilding life. Being constantly in connection with interesting marine interests, he rapidly improved his

business talents.

*The History of the Great Lakes* sketches a picture of Marine City in Eber's time. It was located on the St. Clair River near Lake St. Clair and was formerly known as Newport. Captain Samuel Ward settled there about 1819 and in around 1824 built a schooner of 30 tons, called the *St. Clair*. She was shaped like a canal boat, full ends, with rudder "outdoors," and was tiny and schooner rigged. Captain Ward used the *St. Clair* to hold his stock and traded in general merchandise. He loaded her with skins, furs, potash and black walnut lumber for gun stocks in June 1826 and started for New York City.

### **Samuel Ward Sails the St. Clair Through the Erie Canal**

Samuel Ward arrived at Buffalo, took out the *St. Clair's spars*, and towed her through the canal to Albany with his own horses. She was then towed by steam down the Hudson River to New York, and returned the same way to his home, making the voyage in eight weeks. This was the first vessel passing from the lakes to the ocean via the Erie Canal. He made several extensive voyages in his little *St. Clair*. Captain Ward also sailed her from Detroit to Buffalo. She sailed into the new harbor in Buffalo that had been cleared of the sand bar. He didn't tranship his cargo to a canal boat. Instead, he lowered the *St. Clair's* masts so they would clear the bridges and was towed across New York to Albany.

From Albany Captain Ward sailed the *St. Clair* down the Hudson. It was the first through voyage from the lakes to the sea and had a profound effect on Great Lakes commerce. The cost of moving freight from Lake Erie to New York Harbor dropped from \$120 a ton to \$4.00 a ton.

About 1831, Captain Samuel Ward built the schooner *Marshal Ney* of 75 tons, the first boat built in the Ward shipyard proper. In 1832, according to a Gratiot Paper, Captain Samuel Ward built a steamer called the *Huron* and it was very successful. It netted him thousands of dollars and "laid the foundation of his large fortune."

The schooner *General Harrison* of 100 tons came out in 1835. She was "somewhat long and narrow, and somewhat cranky, but a good sailor." E.B. Ward sailed her as mate and he owned a quarter interest in her. Later, he became master. He took command of the *General Harrison* in 1835, and managed her successfully until his increasing interests demanded his presence at Marine City.

### **Henry Schoolcraft Praises Captain Ward**

Both Captain Eber and Captain Samuel Ward were excellent seamen. Henry Schoolcraft wrote about the terrific storm of November 1835. He embarked November 2, 1835 at Mackinac for

Detroit aboard a schooner commanded by Captain Samuel Ward. That same evening, a great storm blew up on the Great Lakes. Schoolcraft wrote that they had scarcely cleared the lighthouse when the wind increased to a gale. The crew reefed the sails and made every effort to keep under way, but the wind prevented it.

Captain Ward attempted to hug the shore, and finally anchored in great danger under the high lands of Au Sauble. "Here we pitched terribly and were momentarily in peril of being cast on shore," Schoolcraft said. One of the men fell from the bowsprit, passed under the ship and was lost. Everyone thought the ship would soon follow the sailor to the bottom, "but owing to the skill of the old lake mariner we eventually triumphed," said Schoolcraft. "He never faltered in the darkest exigency. For a day and night, he struggled against the elements, and finally entered the strait at Fort Gratiot, and he brought us safely into the port of our destination."

In 1839, Captain Samuel Ward built the hull for the steamboat *Huron No. 1*, but didn't have the money to finish it. His nephew Eber finished building the *Huron* and the *Huron* was placed on Lake Erie and run in opposition to a line of steamers at great profit. Eber later became a partner with his uncle at Marine City, where he continued a most successful business.

### **Samuel and E.B. Ward Operate Lake Steamers**

In 1841 the Wards brought out the steamer *Champion* and two years later the steamer *Detroit*. They operated independently as the *Detroit Observer* testified. In May 1844, the notice of the first steamboat combination formed on the lakes appeared in the *Detroit Observer* published by George L. Whitney. It said: "The owners of the steamboats on our lakes have completed an association for the ensuing season; the cabin fare from Buffalo to Cleveland is \$5; to Detroit, \$7; and to Chicago, \$14. The steerage to Detroit, \$3; to Chicago, \$7. We learn that the Julia Palmer and St. Clair do not come into the combination, but run on the "opposition line."

In 1848, the Captains Ward built the steamers *Franklin Moore* and *Samuel Ward*. In 1851 four side-wheel steamers were built at the Ward Ship yard: *The Arctic*, *Ruby*, *Pearl* and *Caspian*. By this time Marine City contained several ship yards and had a population of 3,500 people. Many of the village residents owned lake vessels.

### **Captain Eber B. Ward Comes to Detroit**

In 1850 Captain Eber B. Ward withdrew his interest from the *General Harrison* and came to Detroit. Here a larger and less occupied field expanded his opportunities for success. From that day until the year of his death, he pushed his marine interests of Detroit forward with a steady, powerful hand. 1855, Ward built the Eureka Iron and Steel Co. along the Detroit River, which used the innovative Bessemer steel making process. In 1860, he took over the presidency of the Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad and served until he died. Through his timely efforts Detroit commerce grew and prospered. Detroit's floating property nearly doubled and Captain Ward and

John Hutchins maintained a warehouse on the Detroit River for many years.

Captain Eber Ward entered another long term endeavor in Detroit. He became acquainted with a family named McQueen who lived in Hamtramck. The McQueens had sons and daughters, and Captain Ward married one of the McQueen daughters, Mary Margaret and they had five children. Years later, Captain Ward divorced his first wife and married Catherine Lyons. They had a son and a daughter. Their daughter, Clara, was born in June 17, 1873, in Detroit, Michigan and grew up to marry a Belgian Prince.

In 1872, Captain E.B. Ward built an iron tug boat, the first tug built of iron and the largest on the lakes. She was constructed by the Detroit Dry Dock Company, but was found to be not adapted for the work and was taken to New Orleans and sold. She went into the fruit trade in the vicinity of New Orleans

### **Some of Captain Eber B. Ward's Steamers and Sailing Vessels**

The names of the steamers and sailing vessels Captain Eber Ward built make up a long list. A few of his ships include the *Marshal Ney*, *General Harrison*, *Huron*, *Ruby*, *Pearl*, *B.F. Wade*, *Champion*, *Pacific*, *Samuel Ward*, *Franklin Moore*, *Atlantic*, *Ocean*, *Arctic*, *Planet*, *Northwest*, and the *Montgomery*. The Ward captains also built a number of smaller vessels.

### **Captain E.B. Ward Meets Dr. Increase Lapham**

Captain Ward had other interests besides shipbuilding. With Dr. Increase A. Lapham, Captain Ward played a behind the scenes role in agitating for a United States Weather Bureau. The records don't clearly state how the two men first came to know each other. It is possible they met onboard one of Captain Ward's ships. Dr. Lapham often sailed on Great Lakes ships on his scientific expeditions. The Great Lakes history record definitely places him on the *Sultana*. Dr. Lapham could have initiated a correspondence with Captain Ward, because they were both intimately involved with the Great Lakes, especially Lake Michigan.

It is more likely that they met when Captain Ward came to Milwaukee to pursue his business interests there. Increase Lapham had made countless observations of the rise and fall of water in Lake Michigan and determined the average level of water in the Lake. Engineers in Chicago and Milwaukee established the foundation of the sewerage works and water supply using these observations. Captain, later General, George G. Meade, used the observations for fixing the zero for soundings of the Great Lakes.

In 1849, Dr. Lapham made a series of painstaking readings which enabled him to find a slight lunar tide in Lake Michigan, almost like an ocean tide. Also in 1849, Dr. Lapham put a self-registering tide gauge at Milwaukee for the Lake Survey.

## **Captain Ward and Dr. Lapham Agitate for a Weather Bureau**

During these years, Captain Ward and Dr. Lapham preached to anyone who would listen about the necessity for a weather bureau. For fifteen years, Dr. Lapham persevered in collecting weather data and documenting the effects of weather on Great Lakes shipping.

In 1869, Dr. Lapham and Congressman Halbert E. Paine, published a report establishing the necessity for a weather bureau to prevent the loss of life and property on the Great Lakes. He proved it was practical to predict the frequency and intensity of great storms. He sent a long list of disasters that had occurred on the Great Lakes in 1869. It wasn't until his own weather predictions, based on his long assembled data were verified by the forewarned loss of property on the Great Lakes that Congress became convinced of the value of weather forecasting.

Finally, in 1870, Congress approved the weather bureau and employed Dr. Lapham as special aide in the War Department at a yearly salary of \$2,000 to inaugurate the weather service. The Signal Service office at Chicago sent out its first prediction on November 8, 1870, and the weather it predicted happened. Rejoicing, Dr. Lapham sent his first month's salary home. He and Captain Ward had won the Weather Bureau battle. In fact, they had won the battle too handily. Their efforts elevated the weather bureau to national and international status and resulted in other men taking over their positions in the Weather Bureau.

## **The Captains Ward Help Commercially Link the Great Lakes and the Ocean**

In the last few years before his death, Captain Ward had been gradually withdrawing from the vessel business and investing his extensive capital in another direction. He was invested to the extent of about one million dollars in the Chicago Rolling Mills, and half the amount in a similar corporation at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His stock in the Wyandotte Rolling Mills in Wyandotte, Michigan, exceeded half a million dollars and his floating property was valued at about half a million dollars. He owned real estate to the amount of over two million dollars and had in the neighborhood of three million invested in different speculations.<sup>87</sup>

The efforts of Captain Eber B. Ward and Captain Samuel Ward linked the commercial interests of the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean and thus to the rest of the world, Their ships and their enterprising spirits changed the history of Great Lakes commerce.

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<sup>87</sup> Brian Leigh Dunnigan, *Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838*. Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, Great Lakes Books, 2000; J.B. Mansfield, *History of the Great Lakes*, Volumes I and II.



May 14, 1910. "Detroit Shipbuilding Co. yards at Wyandotte, Michigan. Launch of bulk steel carrier *E.H. Utley*." Detroit Publishing Company

## The Detroit River and Demon Rum- Another Profitable Industry



Historians estimate that during the 1920s and 1930s about 75 percent of the illegal liquor brought into the United States during Prohibition came through the Detroit River corridor. Small communities like River Rouge, Ecorse, Wyandotte and Trenton are strung out like beads along the river from Detroit to Toledo, Ohio. Their geography encouraged rum running because of their location on the Detroit River, with Canada only a mile across the water.

The United States enacted [Prohibition](#) as law in 1920 by passing the 18th Amendment to the Constitution and another amendment, the 21st, didn't repeal it until 1933. The twelve years between amendments were lawless ones for the country in general and for the communities along the Detroit River in particular. Downriver people, including Wyandotte citizens created and participated in the rum running- bootlegging industry.

In 1922, Michigan Governor Alex Groesbeck ordered the state police and federal agents to clean up the Downriver area. Ford City was the first Detroit suburb to feel the activity of the state

troopers in their clean up of Wayne County ordered by Governor Groesbeck. Governor Groesbeck ordered late Saturday night that certain districts where it had been reported that lawlessness abounded “shall and must be cleaned up.” July 8 and 9<sup>th</sup>, 1922, in whirlwind raids, thirty troopers smashed into eighteen establishments, arrested 19 persons, and confiscated 12 stills, a truck loaded with liquor and a quantity of rifles and revolvers. The troopers worked on motorcycles following carefully laid out plans and the raid happened so quickly that bootleggers in every case were caught unprepared.<sup>88</sup>

Consternation and confusion reigned all down the Detroit River front when word of the troopers activities in Ford City spread. Rum runners ran for cover. Bootleggers closed up. For one night Michigan’s Barbary coast was closed and empty. When the raiding was over, Charles Gegeman, president of the village in thanking the troopers, remarked that he didn’t expect to “smell liquor on anybody’s breath for a year at least.”<sup>89</sup>

The next step in Governor Groesbeck’s campaign to eliminate Downriver rum runners and vice occurred on August 2, 1922, in Wyandotte when the Wyandotte police chief and three patrolmen were fired. John Denman, chief, and three patrolmen were dismissed outright and William Baxter, retired lieutenant of the Detroit Police Department was chosen chief of police, effective immediately. He said he had chosen several men to fill the places of the discharged policemen, but he refused to give out names.

The new members of the Wyandotte police force conducted five raids within a few hours of their appointments. The new police department of Wyandotte reported to Prohibition authorities that they obtained liquor at each place. State police raided the Stinson Hotel, one of the places frequented by Wyandotte police, but stated they failed to find any liquor.<sup>90</sup>

The next year, Downriver contained more than enough liquor to be discovered. A story in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle on Sunday June 10, 1923, titled *Canadian Beer is Flooding Detroit*, highlighted the scope of the river of rum, whiskey, and beer that flowed across and with the Detroit River. The Associated Press story said that mosquito fleet of between 30-50 small boats

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<sup>88</sup> Governor Groesbeck established a permanent state police post near Ecorse to monitor the liquor traffic. In response to the governor’s action, Ecorse village president and chief of police visited local blind pig owners and warned them that the state and federal officials meant business and suggested that they destroy their liquor supplies to prevent more raids in Ecorse. The leading bootleggers conferred and made a verbal agreement that Ecorse would be liquor free for 30 days to prevent federal raids. When the thirty days were up, liquor traffic in Ecorse returned to normal

<sup>89</sup> Monday July 10, 1922. Marshall Evening Chronicle  
Ford City Cleaned Up by Troopers  
Whirlwind Raids made by Thirty Troopers Smashed in Establishments  
Arrested 19 Persons, Confiscated 12 Stills, Got Lots of Liquor

<sup>90</sup> August 2, 1922. Marshall Evening Chronicle. Wyandotte Police Chief Dismissed. Three Patrolmen Also Dismissed as Result of Rum Clean up. Five Raids Made by New Police Force of Wayne Village

were supplying Detroit and its suburbs with the equivalent of between 50,000 and 65,000 pint bottles of Canadian beer every 24 hours. Rum runners said that the beer, smuggled across the Detroit River in cases, kegs, and barrels, was occasionally supplemented by shipments that came by railroad car through a tunnel under the Detroit River. The rum runners claimed that one of the biggest whiskey producers on the Canadian side used the tunnel to transport beer across the River and then the cars were consigned to Mexico but unloaded in Detroit. The rum runners estimated that the daily average of beer brought in through the tunnel at 800 cases or about 19,000 bottles.

According to the story, whiskey running across the Detroit River had sharply declined. Operators on the Canadian side who were lawfully producing whiskey, asserted that thousands of quarts of supposedly Canadian whiskey being offered for sale on the American side were made in America. They claimed that printing plants in Detroit turned out thousands of counterfeit labels to paste on bottles of whiskey made from moonshine or from colored or flavored alcohol. The counterfeit whiskey was poured into bonded bottles through holes drilled in their bottoms, the labels attached and they were ready to sell. The Canadian operators estimated that the amount of real Canadian whiskey smuggled across the Detroit River through regular smuggling channels totalled 200 cases a day.

Earl J. Davis, United States District Attorney at Detroit, charged that bootleggers received advance information about Federal Prohibition Enforcement agent raids. United States District Judge Arthur J. Tuttle ordered that the charges be investigated.<sup>91</sup>

“Frequently as many as three or four lawyers have appeared and represented themselves as counsel for me we have not yet arrested, and inquiry has revealed that often the bootleggers are not even acquainted with the lawyers who pretend to represent them,” Mr. Davis said.

On June 26, 1923, the Ironwood Daily Globe reported that Federal Prohibition Enforcement Agents stationed on the Detroit River and ashore at Wyandotte cooperated in a raid that resulted in the arrest of six men and the seizure of 10,600 bottles of Canadian beer, a 30-foot power launch and a heavy motor truck. The “Prohibition Navy” captured a 28-foot launch carrying 50 cases and five half barrels of beer in the upper part of the Detroit River.

On July 14, 1923, the Daily Globe reported that Federal Prohibition agents assisted by Representatives of the Treasury Department seized 200 motorboats off Ecorse, Wyandotte, and Trenton in the Downriver District. The operation continued in the face of an angry mob who according to the officers attempted at one time to dynamite a small bridge giving access to a boat well.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> “Canadian Beer is Flooding Detroit. “Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Sunday June 10, 1923.

<sup>92</sup> Ironwood Daily Globe. July 14, 1923. Dry Agents Take 200 Motor Boats. Federal Men Faced by Mobs at Ecorse, Wyandotte Trenton

The Marshall Evening Chronicle reported the raid in slightly more detail. The Evening Chronicle story said that two hundred motorboats were seized by federal and state officers in the Detroit River near Ecorse, Wyandotte, and Trenton. These river towns, each one famous as a rendezvous for Canadian booze smugglers, were raided in an effort to find booze smugglers in operation but only a small quantity of beer was discovered. The boats however, were seized when it was discovered that the owners had failed to comply with government regulations as to equipment. Owners of the boats will be summoned to appear at prohibition headquarters to be questioned before their boats are turned back, federal officials said.<sup>93</sup>

Despite some federal and state law enforcement gains, six years later, rum running still flourished on the Detroit River. A story datelined Toronto, January 24, 1929 in the Toronto Globe described a winter smuggling scene on the Detroit River. Two important events contributed to this round of blatant smuggling on the River. Chief of Detroit customs patrol officer Sumner C. Sleeper and a dozen of his men no longer held their jobs, and winter conditions of less than 100 feet of open water and six inches of river ice combined to give the rum runners an opportunity as smooth as ice tinkling in a martini glass.

The smugglers took advantage of the situation, speeded up production, and assembled their means of transportation. They used small automobiles, sleighs, and even old fashioned toboggans to transport an undetermined quantity of liquor and Canadian beer to Detroit and vicinity. They conducted their operations boldly and in sight of hundreds of spectators, who lined the shores to watch the progress of the scores of caravans over the frozen Detroit River. In several instances small cars whisked boats with steel runners across the ice. When water was encountered the boats were utilized. Farther down the river the ice was solid all the way across and the boats were not needed. On the Detroit side large cars labeled furniture and express were observed speeding away from the river. There was no attempt at interference.<sup>94</sup>

### **Dangerous Detroit River Encounters**

Ordinary citizens and wily criminals literally and figuratively “pulled an oar” in their efforts to transport liquor across the Detroit River for thirsty customers. Law enforcement officials, both federal and state and ordinary citizens and wily criminals often collided when their differing perspectives about the Volstead Act and Prohibition enforcement intersected in the River.

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<sup>93</sup> July 14, 1923. Marshall Evening Chronicle. 200 Motor Boats Seized by Officers

<sup>94</sup> Toronto Daily Globe, Thursday January 24, 1929. “Throngs See Rum Runners Cross Detroit River.”

The Ironwood Daily Globe of October 16, 1929, said that the Coast Guard reported that they were fired on after 4:30 a.m. when they had seized a beer laden rowboat and arrested its alleged owner at Grassy Island, opposite Wyandotte in the Detroit River. The officers were unable to discover the source of the shots.<sup>95</sup>

A year later, an encounter on the Detroit River turned fatal for Wyandotte resident Walter Grund. Born on January 5, 1899, he lived on Eureka Avenue in Wyandotte and worked as a brakeman for the Michigan Central Railroad. The U.S. Headstone Applications for Military Veterans revealed that Walter Grund served in World War I as a Private in Co. A of Motor Supply Trains #433.

The Ironwood Daily Globe of January 23, 1930, narrated the story of a meeting of Walter Grund and two border Customs Inspectors on the shore of the Detroit River in Wyandotte.

Walter Grund, 29, told police that he and a companion whose name has not been learned, were rowing along the river front looking for a missing rowboat. He said that neither he nor his companion was armed and that there was no liquor in the boat. They decided to pull up to the Maple Street dock, he said, but as he was stepping out of the boat, a uniformed man stopped out and shot him without warning. With a bullet wound in his stomach, Grund fell back into the boat which his companion immediately headed out into the current. Three miles from the scene the boat went ashore and Grund's companion deserted him. Grund lay in the boat for nearly an hour before his groans attracted the attention of Charles Snell, a night watchman who called police.

Shortly before Grund was discovered, two Customs border patrol officers walked into the Wyandotte Police Station and told the sergeant in charge that they had fired at a man thought to be a rum runner and believed they had wounded him. The officers refused to give their names. Wyandotte police said today that Grund has never been known to them as having been connected with the Downriver rum running industry.

The two customs officials told Ward Culver, assistant prosecuting attorney, that they shot Grund as he attempted to land a liquor laden rowboat on the Wyandotte shore. Walter Grund, probably fatally wounded, denied that he was armed or that he carried liquor in his rowboat. Attendants at Wyandotte Receiving Hospital reported that Grund who had been shot in the stomach, was dying.

At first federal authorities withheld the name of the agent who shot Walter Grund, but later announced that Agent Clare B. Hopper shot him. The name of the inspector who accompanied Agent Hopper was not disclosed.

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<sup>95</sup> Ironwood Daily Globe, October 16, 1929.

Colonel Heinrich A. Pickert, Collector of Customs, directed the investigation. The two inspectors involved were detained at the Customs House for the rest of the night and then were sent to John R. Watkins, District Attorney, to make statements.

Customs Border Patrol records revealed that Walter Grund had been arrested twice for liquor possession and was fined on each occasion. He was first arrested on June 3, 1923, in an automobile at Wyandotte and his load of liquor confiscated. He was fined \$500 in federal court and a similar fine was imposed on him in 1926, following his arrest in a Wyandotte saloon.

Colonel Pickert said the shooting was “Merely one of those things that happen in the line of duty.” He said he was not prepared to make a statement. No liquor was found in Grund’s boat after the shooting.<sup>96</sup>

Walter Grund lingered for three months, but died of his gunshot wound which caused an intestinal obstruction on April 9, 1930. He is buried in [Ferndale Cemetery](#).

When the 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment repealed Prohibition in 1923, traffic on the Detroit River returned to ships transporting iron ore, freight, and passengers instead of smuggling liquor.

Downriver breweries, including the George Marx Brewery, once again had to reimagine their products and retool to produce new brands of the newly legal liquid refreshment.

## **The Marx Brewery**

George Marx was born in Germany on March 24, 1834. He arrived in the United States on the *Sarah Park* on December 22, 1854, and eventually he came to Wyandotte and opened his brewery. According to the 1880 United States Federal Census, George Marx, 46, lived in Wyandotte with his wife Mary and their children Gertrude, William, Joseph, Frank, Nicholas, Emma, and John. He founded the George Marx Brewery.

Likely drawing on German brewing traditions, George Marx operated a brewery that stretched an entire block along Oak Street and the Detroit River. Inside the plant he installed brewing

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<sup>96</sup> Ironwood Daily Globe, January 23, 1930. Victim Denies Liquor Charge. Young Man Dying as Result of Attack Made by Customs Inspector Companion Deserts Him

essentials including grain tubs, malt hoppers, boiling kettles, mash tubs, storage tanks, bottling equipment and ice machines that utilized ice from the Detroit River.

Through the years, George Marx, his son Frank, and [Theodore Hoersch](#) who was a brewer and the secretary-treasurer for Marx Brewing Company for 28 years oversaw beer brewing. Their workers produced bottles and barrels of local brew, with Banner and Gold Star among the favorite brands. During its peak years, the Marx Brewery turned out more than 50,000 barrels of beer a year, with some barrels rolled across the street to supply the George Marx saloon and riverfront dance pavilion.

From 1863-1936, the Marx Brewing Company filled beer barrels and tapped kegs for Downriver beer drinkers. In 1896, the company briefly changed its name to Wyandotte Brewing Company and in 1910, it merged with its rival Eureka Brewing Company.

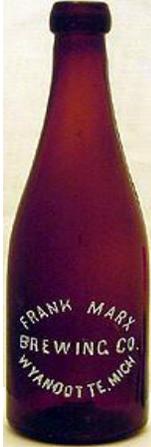
In 1920, when Prohibition became the law of the land, many breweries, including the George Marx Brewery, attempted to weather the transition from wet to dry by being creative with ingredients and brewing methods. During the 1920s, Marx Brewing Co. survived by making a non-alcoholic malt drink called “Marxie” and concoction called Malt-Juice, a supposedly “kickless” drink.

Despite their efforts to produce legal beer, in 1924 Federal government officials took George and Fred Marx to court in Detroit charging them with manufacturing extracts that could readily be converted to beer. The Marx lawyers argued that Marx Brewery wasn’t responsible for how buyers used their extracts, contending that holding them responsible would be comparable with arresting grocers for selling sugar which was an ingredient used to distil liquor. The court ruled in favour of the Marx Brewery.

But extracts and substitutes for beer did not replace the flood of genuine beer, wine, whiskey, and other liquor that rum runners and bootleggers smuggled in boatloads across the Detroit River from Canada. The brewery struggled during the legally dry years, making most of its money from making and selling Detroit River ice.

With the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the Marx Brewery once again brewed real beer, marketing a new ale called “Nine Castle.” Unfortunately, the end of Prohibition brought new problems for the company that eventually brought about its own end. Customer suspicions that the new beer brands were simply recycled old brands damaged the brewery’s reputation and dipped its sales. Stockholders lost confidence in the company after a series of scandals including charges of misuse of company funds and a shortage of new operating capital. After enduring two bankruptcies and reorganization, the Marx Brewery closed its doors for good in 1936, with its building standing vacant for years before the City of Wyandotte demolished it.

The Marx name lives on in the descendants [of George and Mary Marx](#) who are buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery as are their sons Frank Marx and William Marx and the Marx brand in the bottles decorated with the Marx logo that still exist along the Detroit River and online. Commercial brewing is making a Downriver comeback with microbreweries like Sports Brew Pub in Wyandotte and Fort Street Brewery in Lincoln Park.<sup>97</sup>



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<sup>97</sup> [Brewed in Detroit: Breweries and Beers Since 1830](#), By Peter H. Blum. Wayne State University Press, 1999

## The Bob-Lo Boats, Frank Kirby's Great Lakes Legacy

The whistle of the Bob-Lo boat echoing down the Detroit River long before the sunshine bounced off its glistening white paint and elegant lines made the little girl feel like she was watching Mark Twain on a Mississippi River steamer. The magic in her childhood was that the *Columbia* and the *Ste. Claire* steamers, known to her as the Bob-Lo boats, traveled back and forth from Detroit to Bob-Lo Island, stopping along the way to pick up passengers in Ecorse and Wyandotte. She didn't have to go to Mississippi before she could spell it to enjoy the magic of a river. She had her own river, the Detroit River, and in the Detroit River glittered her own island complete with carousel train, and Captain Bob-Lo who gave out coloring books and lap sittings to lucky kids. Three miles long and one-half a mile wide, Bob-Lo Island nestles like a tree studded jewel about eighteen miles down river from Detroit and a five-minute ferry ride from Amherstburg, Ontario.

The girl did not know that Frank E. Kirby, a naval architect, was also the architect of her summer magic. She savored the long slow trip down the river, watching the sun trail fingers through the water and wishing that she could do the same thing. Feeling like Christopher Columbus, the Bob-Lo boat's namesake, she stood by the rail, focusing an imaginary telescope on the Canadian horizon. Here she was, discovering new worlds, exploring the river, and anticipating an equally magical time when the Bob-Lo boat docked at Bob-Lo Island. The Dodge'em cars and the Carousel sang siren songs to her. She hurried down the dock and raced to her day of rides and revelry.

Another child from another era, the boy Frank E. Kirby also loved ships, shipping and the Detroit River. Fearing that Frank's passion might lure him into danger, his father Stephen warned him to keep away from the river during the boat races. The owners of two Great Lakes steamers exceptionally fast for their time arranged a race from Port Huron, Michigan, to Amherstburg, Ontario, about an eighty-mile course. Despite his father's warning, Frank slipped down to the Detroit River docks. He found a ship, hid in the hold and watched the race through a porthole.

In 1853, Captain Stephen Kirby and his family moved to Saginaw, Michigan, where he built ships, mills, a hotel, and dug a salt well. New York capitalist Jesse Hoyt who had connections in Saginaw, backed Stephen and his endeavors and over time, he began to appreciate the talents of his son Frank. In 1864, Hoyt persuaded fifteen-year-old Frank Kirby to study marine engineering at Cooper Institute in New York City. New York bustled with Civil War era shipbuilding and Frank Kirby got caught up in the excitement. At night he attended Cooper Union classes, but

during the day he worked on engine drawings for the Allaire Works and later for the Morgan Iron Works who were the leading marine engine builders of the day.<sup>98</sup>

After completing his studies and working in New York for six years, Frank returned to Detroit in 1870 to recover from an illness. He found that his father Stephen had just bought Gordon Campbell's interest in the Campbell and Owen Shipyard in Detroit. In July of 1872, Stephen as shipyard manager, incorporated the firm as the Detroit Dry Dock Company with a capital of \$300,000.

About this time Jesse Hoyt introduced Frank Kirby to Captain Eber Brock Ward. For 20 years, Captain Ward had controlled the largest fleet of lake steamers under single ownership and used his profits to build the Eureka Iron Works and the Wyandotte Rolling Mills in Wyandotte. The mills made rails for expanding Midwestern railroads and cast some of American's earliest Bessemer steel in the early 1860's.

For at least twenty years, vessels had been built on the Wyandotte site of the company's plant. In 1852, Campbell & Company launched its first large vessel there. Ten years later Mr. Owen became a partner and in 1870, Captain S.R. Kirby took over the Campbell interest. In 1872 at Wyandotte, Eber Ward financed the first Great Lakes shipyard to especially build metal hulls and hired Frank Kirby and his brother, Fitzhugh, to operate the yard. The *Merchant* built at Buffalo in 1862 and the U.S. gunboat, *Michigan*, built in 1844, were the only other iron vessels on the Great Lakes at the time.

The Kirbys built the first metal hulls for the small passenger steamer *Queen of the Lakes* and the tugs *E.B. Ward, Jr.* and *Sport*. *Sport* featured the first steel hull on the Great Lakes. Within ten years, more metal-hulled ship tonnage was built in Great Lakes yards than in all other American yards, including the Detroit & Cleveland Steam Navigation Company. Then the combination of the financial panic of 1873 and the death of Captain Eber Ward in 1875 reduced shipyard production to fast yachts with composite hulls – wood planking on iron hull frames. By 1877, the Detroit Dry Dock Company had absorbed the smaller concerns and a small plant at Wyandotte, which Captain Eber Ward had operated for five years. Now the owner of the Detroit and Cleveland Steam Navigation Company controlled the Detroit Dry-dock Company.

During the twenty-six years of the Detroit Dry Dock Company's operation, it built 125 vessels with a 140,000-ton tonnage. In 1880, the company began constructing iron steamers and built

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<sup>98</sup> Frank E. Kirby, Shipbuilder. The Magazine of the Great Lakes. Published by the Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Company, 1918.

many of the finest passenger boats on the Lakes. Its officers in 1898 were Hugh McMillan, president; Alexander McVittie, vice-president; Gilbert N. McMillan, secretary and treasurer and Frank E. Kirby, engineer.<sup>99</sup>

For forty-six years, Frank E. Kirby designed all of the Detroit & Cleveland Steam Navigation Company's passenger steamers, all side-wheelers and also those of the companion Cleveland and Buffalo Transit Company. In 1880, the company introduced its first iron-hulled steamer, the *City of Cleveland*, one of the earliest American ships with feathering paddle wheels. In 1881, Frank Kirby designed the first metal-hulled 1,100-ton bulk freighter-*Brunswick*- valued at \$150,000. The *Brunswick* was only a few months old when on the morning of November 12, 1881, while carrying coal from Buffalo to Duluth, she collided with the schooner *Carlingford* about 12 miles off Dunkirk, New York. The *Carlingford* was loaded with wheat bound from Duluth to Buffalo when the *Brunswick* struck on her port side just opposite the foremast. The *Carlingford* sank head first in about 20 minutes. All but one of her crew escaped in the lifeboats.<sup>100</sup>

The year 1884 proved successful for the Detroit & Cleveland Steam Navigation Company and Frank E. Kirby. At Wyandotte they launched the first large lake steamers with steel hulls, the package freighters *Syracuse* and *Albany*. Next came the *Lansdowne*, a 312-foot railroad car ferry, then the longest ship on the Great Lakes. With new cabin work, *Lansdowne* served as a restaurant on the Detroit waterfront for a short time, and then made daily runs between Detroit and Windsor for many years. Later in the 1880s, the icebreaking car ferry *St. Ignace* pioneered the bow propeller for improved icebreaking technique.<sup>101</sup>

One of Frank Kirby's last designs for the Detroit Dry Dock Company was the *City of Erie*, a side-wheel overnight freight and passenger steamer. Built in 1898 by the Detroit Dry Dock Company and launched in February 1898 for the Cleveland & Buffalo Transit Company, the *City of Erie* featured a 2,200-hp compound walking beam steam engine and six coal fired Scotch boilers. Along with her older sister ship, *City of Buffalo*, the *City of Erie* was built for the run between Cleveland, Ohio and Buffalo, New York.

The American Ship Building Company trust absorbed the Detroit Dry Dock Company in 1899, and Frank E. Kirby became an independent engineering consultant and produced some of his

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<sup>99</sup> Frank E. Kirby, Shipbuilder. *The Magazine of the Great Lakes*. Published by the Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Company, 1918.

<sup>100</sup> *History of the Great Lakes*, Volume I, p. 430

<sup>101</sup> The steel used in the *Syracuse* and *Albany* was part of the Bessemer steel cast at Wyandotte twenty years earlier and proved extremely brittle. The *Syracuse* had a long career, ending as a sand sucker at Algonac. The *Albany* was sunk by a collision in Lake Huron in 1893 with a loss of 24 lives. *History of the Great Lakes*, Volume I, p. 789.

best work. In 1900, he designed the *Tashmoo*, a 300-foot St. Clair River side-wheel steamer, which featured his lower inclined compound engines (these replaced the commonly used walking beam engine).

In a manner of speaking Frank Kirby competed with himself when on June 4, 1901, the *Tashmoo* and the *City of Erie* raced from Cleveland, Ohio, to Erie, Pennsylvania, in a 100-mile race for a \$1,000 prize. The steamers ran neck and neck until some adroit maneuvering in the *City of Erie's* engine room pulled her ahead of the *Tashmoo* by 45 seconds.<sup>102</sup>

Barely a year and three months later on September 15, 1902, the *Detroit Free Press* carried the story of another race between two Kirby steamers, this time the *Frank E. Kirby* and the *Columbia*. The Free Press account said that the steamer *Kirby* lay in wait for the *Columbia* and finally got what it had been looking for since the *Columbia* had been placed on the Bois Blanc Island route – a race!

The day before had been the end of the *Columbia's* season running to Bois Blanc Park and she was getting ready to go to winter quarters. The people on board the *Columbia* said that she was taken unawares, that she had 100 tons of water in her ballast tanks, and that they did not know there was to be a race until they saw the *Kirby* swing out from her dock and speed after them.

With a phenomenal burst of speed, the *Columbia* won the race. The crew of the *Kirby* claimed that they had gained on the *Columbia* until they had to stop for an up bound steamer and the dredges on the Lime Kilns. When the *Kirby* passed the *Columbia* at the Amherstburg wharf, the *Columbia's* crew waved brooms and ropes and shouted for them to pull down their pennant “Flyer of the Lakes.”<sup>103</sup>

When the *Frank E. Kirby* returned to Put-in-Bay, the mate announced that the crew was prepared to wager two month's salary on a second opportunity to beat the *Columbia* in another race.<sup>104</sup>

Another steamer that Frank E. Kirby designed for the Detroit & Cleveland Steam Navigation Company, the *City of Alpena*, had a narrow escape when bound from Cheboygan to Alpena on Lake Huron during a dense fog. A flash of lighting revealed the *City of Alpena* and an unknown vessel steaming directly toward each other, only a few hundred feet apart. The boats were running under check and the passengers said that a collision was narrowly averted with the boats passing only a few feet apart. When the passengers safely embarked at Alpena, they praised the crew for saving their lives.<sup>105</sup>

Around 1900, Frank E. Kirby collaborated with the Russians to create ice crushing car ferries for the Baltic Sea. After deciding to build these vessels, the Russian government sent a commission to America to get ideas. When the commission members reached Detroit, they stopped at the

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<sup>102</sup> Race between the *Tashmoo* and *City of Erie*

<sup>103</sup> [Red Hot Race Down the River. Detroit Free Press, September 15, 1902.](#)

<sup>104</sup> Ibid

<sup>105</sup> Light Flash Saved Two Boats, *Detroit Free Press*, June 16, 1902.

business offices of Frank Kirby, the man they had traveled from Russia to visit. Frank Kirby set to work and turned out sets of plans for powerful ice crushers. He modeled the icebreakers after the Detroit-built icebreaking ferries operating in the Straits of Mackinac.<sup>106</sup>

During his “golden” years, Frank E. Kirby created many other steamers. Collaborating with J.W. Millard of New York City, he designed the largest steamers for the Hudson River Day Line, including the *Washington Irving* (1913), *Hendrick Hudson* (1906) and *Robert Fulton* (1909). In 1903 Kirby produced *Tionesta*, the model of the modern engines-aft Lake Superior propeller passenger steamer. Her 1905 sister ship, *Juanita*, survived at Chicago as a restaurant but was drastically overhauled in 1941 and became the Lake Michigan ferry *Milwaukee Clipper*.

In 1924, Frank Kirby’s 546-foot Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Company sisters *Greater Detroit* and *Greater Buffalo* earned the largest side-wheeler title on the Great Lakes. Each steamer had berths equaling the peacetime *Queen Mary*.

One of the stories passed down about Frank Kirby illustrates his inquiring, mechanical mind. When people from all over America and around the world came to consult with him about shipbuilding, Frank would request and receive a healthy fee for a two hour consultation. When he had finished talking about shipbuilding, Frank would spend another two hours discussing and explaining such important questions as why a baker put a certain twist to his rolls. Frank was interested in the twist question because he considered it a technical matter and anything with an engineering angle captured his attention.<sup>107</sup>

Frank E. Kirby died in New York on August 25, 1929, fortunately not living to experience the Depression that would idle so many of his steamers. All of the great ships that Frank Kirby had designed had be scrapped or retired by the end of the 1950s, except the two that carried his legacy into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Frank E. Kirby designed the *Columbia*, built in Wyandotte and Detroit in 1902, and the *Ste. Claire*, built in Toledo and launched on May 7, 1910, entering service later that year. The *Ste. Clair* was named after Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River, underscoring the influence of

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<sup>106</sup> Frank E. Kirby, Shipbuilder. The Magazine of the Great Lakes. Published by the Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Company, 1918.

<sup>107</sup> Frank E. Kirby Shipbuilder, Water Way Tales, The Magazine of the Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Company, 1918.

explorer Robert de La Salle who paddled through the lake and river during the feast of Ste. Clair. The *Columbia*, named after Christopher Columbus, celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2002. She is the oldest steamer in the United States with the exception of ships classed as ferries.

Like all North American steamers, the *Columbia* and *Ste. Claire* are propeller driven. The *Ste. Claire* is 197 feet long, 65 feet wide and 14 feet deep. Her tonnage is 870 gft and 507 nrt, and her engine is triple expansion steam with 1083 horsepower. She can carry 2,500 people and she served 81 years on a single run – a record unequalled in U.S. maritime history. Built in Wyandotte and Detroit in 1902, the *Columbia* is the older of the two Bob-Lo boats. She is 216 feet long overall, and was last licensed to carry 2,500 people. She has been designated a National Historical Landmark, the government's premier designation for historical resources. Both steamers need restoration and efforts are being made to save them and put them back on the Detroit River.

The history of the *Columbia* and *Ste. Claire* are intertwined with an island in the Detroit River that generations of twentieth century people know as Bob-Lo Island. In the early 1700s, French priests established a Catholic mission on the island for the Huron Indians and the French christened the island Bois Blanc after the beech trees which covered the island, the “island of the white wood.” English tongues could not pronounce Bois Blanc correctly, so they corrupted the name to Bob-Lo until in 1949, the island became officially known as Bob-Lo Island. Bois Blanc, three miles long and one-half mile wide, is located about eighteen miles Downriver from downtown Detroit and is a five-minute ferry ride from Amherstburg, Ontario. In 1796, the British established a military post at Fort Malden in Amherstburg, and thousands of Indians from all tribes, journeying to trade furs with the British, camped on the island. For a time, Tecumseh, the Shawnee leader, aided the British in the War of 1812, made Bois Blanc his headquarters and used it as a base to attack the American mainland.

In 1839, a lighthouse was built on the southern side of Bois Blanc to guide ships into the narrow straits behind it. Captain James Hackett was hired as lighthouse keeper and owned fourteen acres of the island on a lifetime lease. In the 1850s, Colonel Arthur Rankin, M.P., bought the remaining 225 acres of the island from the Canadian government for \$40.00. During the Civil War, escaping slaves used Bois Blanc Island as a station stop on the Underground Railroad route to Canada. They landed on the beach and rested for a few hours or a few days before continuing their journey to Amherstburg and a new life of freedom in Canada.

In 1869, Colonel Rankin sold Bois Blanc to his son, Arthur McKee Rankin who starred in the New York theatre and belonged to New York's fashionable set. He built himself an elaborate estate on the island, stocked the grounds with deer, wild turkey, and elk, built extensive stables and treated his New York friends to Bois Blanc hospitality. Eventually his state career ended and he was forced to sell the island to partners Colonel John Atkinson and James A. Randall. Colonel

Atkinson's heirs sold the island to what then was the Detroit, Belle Isle and Windsor Ferry Company. In 1898, the Bob-Lo Excursion Line was created and the island developed as a resort. At the onset, the attraction of Bob-Lo was a day on the Detroit River and a picnic in the pastoral beauty of the Island. Henry Ford commissioned Albert Kahan to design a dance hall, which in 1903 was billed as the world's second largest. A carousel provided music and rides.

*Beeson's Marine Directory of the Northern Lakes* featured many Bob-Lo Park advertisements, as this 1914 ad touting the Great Dance Pavilion:

Bob-Lo (Bois Blanc Island) a beautiful pleasure resort situated 18 miles from Detroit at the mouth of the Detroit River at the junction of Lake Erie, owned by the Detroit & Windsor Ferry Company is the largest and has the best equipment of any of the excursion parks on the Great Lakes. Among the features are the stone and steel dancing pavilion having over 20,000 square feet of floor, amusement building...bathing beach, baseball diamond and athletic fields. No liquors are permitted.<sup>108</sup>

The 1915 *Beeson's Directory* presented some of the history of Bob-Lo Park and its attractions. It said:

This beautiful park is situated nineteen miles below Detroit opposite Amherstburg, Ontario, and near the mouth of the River where it flows into Lake Erie. The island's history is given as the first landing place of the great explorer LaSalle in 1679, at which time he arrived in the little sailing boat Griffen of about 60 tons capacity. Father Hennepin who was with La Salle, vividly pictures the beautiful river scenery, its attractive shores, a place abounding in game, fish and vegetation and peopled with members of the Huron and Wyandotte tribes of Indians. Recent excavations on the island have unearthed relics of the Indian village that flourished there two and a quarter centuries ago. Today the commodious and rapid steamers of the Detroit and Windsor Ferry Company who own this island have spent half a million dollars in improving it.<sup>109</sup>

The boat ride to Bob-Lo contributed greatly to the island's mystique. The boarding dock in Detroit started out at the foot of Woodward, but moved to behind Cobo Hall. The Bob-Lo boat also stopped at Downriver communities like Ecorse, Wyandotte and Trenton. The boarding dock eventually moved to Gibraltar in 1991. It took just over an hour to voyage to Bob-Lo Island, but Captain Bob-Lo and many bands and other entertainers made the voyage seem as brief as a toot of the Bob-Lo boat whistle. The bands on the second deck dance floor changed with the times –

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<sup>108</sup> Beeson's Marine Directory of the Northwestern Lakes, Season of Navigation 1914, Harvey C. Beeson, Publisher.

<sup>109</sup> Beeson's Marine Directory of the Northwestern Lakes, Season of Navigation 1915, Harvey C. Beeson, Publisher.

from Mrs. Walpola's turn of the century music to the 1940s big bands to the Latin Counts of the 1980s.<sup>110</sup>

The Brownings hired Captain Bob-Lo, alias Joe Short, from the Ringling Brothers Circus to entertain the children on the Bob-Lo cruise and he did just that between 1953 and 1973. He always wore an oversized hat, binoculars and handed out coloring books and small toys to the children on the trips. Captain Bob-Lo worked on the Bob-Lo boat until 1974 when he retired at age 90. He died in 1975, still singing the praises of Bob-Lo.

There were also moonlight cruises on the Bob-Lo boats. To teenagers and older romantics, the combination of the soft summer breezes, moonlight on the river, and that special person next to you made an unforgettable experience. Often the Bob-Lo boat would just travel down the river to Bob-Lo Island, arrive there about 10:00 p.m. and turn around, but that was enough for a memorable evening.

The American government made an unprecedented exception for draft-age men during World War I. The law said that draft age men could not leave the country (Bob-Lo is a Canadian island) but officials decided that it would be too much of a hardship for young Michigan men to be forbidden to go to Bob-Lo with their sweethearts during the summer. The Great Depression of the 1930s stopped the national economy in its tracks and the Bob-Lo excursions as well. Then Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1933 inauguration brought new hope and the New Deal and returning prosperity to the nation, and in 1935, the Bob-Lo boats resumed their river runs.

Financial trouble loomed for the Detroit and Windsor Ferry Company again in 1949. Arthur John Reaume, the mayor of Windsor, suggested that the island be turned into a national park, but the Browning family of Grosse Point, owners of a steamship line, bought the island and the boats. The Brownings turned Bob-Lo into an amusement park, building rides, roller coasters, and a funhouse. They installed a Ferris wheel, a dance hall, and an antique car exhibit. They brought in 300 exotic animals for a zoo, leading off with Socrates II, a giraffe. They built a mini railroad for rides around the island. In 1961, the Brownings replaced the island landing dock with the deck of the freighter *Queenston*, sunk in place. In 1973, they built the Thunder Bolt roller coaster of steel and it was one of the largest in the country. Another popular ride was the flue, a log carrying riders down a water slide. In 1975, the Brownings restored the original 48-house carousel from 1878, and it delighted children and adults alike until it was sold off piece by piece at auction in 1990.

The Brownings sold Bob-Lo Island in 1979 and it passed through the hands of several owners, including the AAA of Michigan. Rowdiness on the boats and on the island in the 1980s caused the crowds to keep diminishing and when Canadian police and immigration officials spent a day in 1987 rounding up members of the Outlaws motorcycle gang, the end of a 90-year era drew nearer. In January 1996, the steamers *Columbia* and *Ste. Claire*, which had carried as many as 800,000 visitors to Bob-Lo Island every year in the glory years of the 1960s and 1970s were auctioned off.

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<sup>110</sup> [Closed Canadian Parks, Bob-Lo Island](#)

Jo Santoro Cialkowski, a life-long resident and historian of the Downriver area, captures what the Bob-Lo boats have meant to thousands of people. She recalls the days of her youth in the 1920s and 1930s when a day at Bob-Lo was like the Fourth of July and Christmas together. The *Columbia* docked at the foot of Southfield Road and West Jefferson at that time, and she and her friends and family waited impatiently on the dock straining to hear the *Columbia's* whistle. She tapped her foot to Finzell's live band playing "Up A Lazy River." She remembered the picnics and games, riding her favorite pony on the merry-go-round and screaming as she rode the cantankerous "Whip." In her teens, she remembered dancing at the Bob-Lo Island dance hall. As the *Columbia* neared the Ecorse port, she recalled men taking off their straw hats to dance with the ladies as everyone waltzed on the *Columbia's* deck all of the way back to Ecorse.

Jo concludes her remembrance of the last cruise of the *Columbia* in 1991: "At the dock my eyes lingered for a long while as the *Columbia* horn blared "good night" and drifted off into the night, not knowing then that it was a lonely goodbye. Waving adieu with both arms, I walked away from the park and headed for home. It is my fondest hope that the *SS Columbia*, queen of the Detroit River, will be off to the seas again."<sup>111</sup>

Both the *Columbia* and the *Ste. Claire* are National Historical Landmarks, because they are among the last steamers of their type on the Great Lakes. *Columbia's* machinery survives almost intact from 1902, which is quite rare in Great Lakes ship history. The *Columbia* and the *Ste. Clair* also are an important part of the individual historical memory of countless people in the Detroit River region. Both boats made their last trips to and from Bob-Lo on Labor Day 1991. Since then, their story includes Michigan weather and rust, crud, holes, wear and tear, and even thieves.

The Friends of the Bob-Lo Boat *Columbia* is attempting to acquire the *Columbia* and restore her for excursions on the Detroit River. If the *Columbia* is restored to her former grandeur and returns to service, she will be the last classic excursion steamer in service in America and the last operating ship of her kind in the world.

The owner of the *Ste. Claire* also has the goal of restoring her and using her as a floating restaurant, dinner theater or conference center along the Detroit River or on Lake Erie.

The restoration of the *Ste. Claire* and the *Columbia* will be a race against the ravages of time and the necessity of buying enough time to raise sufficient funds to restore them. By all accounts, Frank E. Kirby was a modest, unassuming man who did not seek public acclaim, although the scores of ships that he designed won him well-deserved fame. Passing years fade memories of Frank E. Kirby, but two of his steamers still survive and can still be reclaimed from the ravages of time. Frank E. Kirby would modestly back the effort to restore the *Ste. Clair* and *Columbia* so that 21<sup>st</sup> century people can reap the benefits of his creative genius.

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<sup>111</sup> Jo Santoro Cialkowski, Memories of the Bob-Lo Boat Columbia.

## **Wyandotte-1959**

### **St. Francis Xavier High School Student (Ecorse) Industry and Government in Wyandotte -1959**

The story of the change of a swampy empty tract of land into a thriving community is a very interesting one. This story began quite a distance from this tract of land—in northern Michigan to be exact.

Mr. Philip Thurber, an insurance agent from Detroit, decided to spend his vacation near Marquette. During his journey he became interested in iron ore and when he found out its superior quality, had it tested and smelted. He then returned to Detroit and interested his friends, E.B. Ward, S.M. Holmes, R.N. Rice, Tracy Howe, J. Hossna, and others in a business proposition, which resulted in the organization of the Eureka Iron Company.

At first they planned to build on the site of the deposit, but later they decided it would be better to build closer to a more accessible source of fuel. As a result, they purchased the Major John Biddle estate of 2,200 acres with two miles of water frontage along the Detroit River, and erected a blast furnace. Eber Ward headed the group while negotiate the acquisition of the property and the starting of the foundation for the village of Wyandotte.

The abstracts of the Wyandotte property files, in part, state that (1) the land was bought to furnish the Eureka Iron Company with a place for blast furnaces and smelting and all other refining connected with ore, and to furnish the wood for charcoal and other fuel for their works and for the laborers to build their homes; (2) to furnish agricultural lands for raising produce for the laborers and employees of the company; (3) to furnish building lots for the offices of laborers and employees of the company on such terms as the director of the company shall direct and (4) to furnish sites and conveniences for individuals or companies for manufacturing purposes in iron or other metals in whole or in part or which may be for the convenience of the stockholders of the company. So was born the village of Wyandotte.

The streets of Wyandotte were named according to the pattern set by William Penn and the Quaker City of Pennsylvania. He took one boundary street and named it Front Street or the beginning point. Street running parallel to Front Street were named by the numbers—first, second, third, etc. The streets running horizontally were named for trees and shrubs

In Wyandotte, the focal point became the river and the first streets parallel to it became Front Street. Front Street followed the immediate water line and ran from Mulberry to Elm, which in the beginning was the east line of what is now Van Alstyne Boulevard. The Bishop Park Land developed later from the slag of the Iron works. At Superior, a fine beach began and extended to Poplar.

After the close down of the Eureka Iron Works, John Van Alstyne and some men plotted the property into building lots. This land covered an area from Eureka to Elm and what had been Front Street became Von Alstyne Boulevard. The rest of the street remained Front until March 4, 1921, when it was changed to conform by city ordinance.

As we saw above, the streets from Northline or the north boundary were named for trees—Spruce, Cedar, Mulberry, etc. The name Superior Boulevard was assigned because it was the only street besides Biddle that was made 120 feet wide by the Iron Company in Wyandotte. The names off the streets from Northline to Emmons Boulevard were plotted by pioneers of a territory designated as “Ford City.” After the annexation of this territory the names were changed to conform to those of Wyandotte proper.

After the Iron Works had filed its claim and had the property deeds settled, it turned its attention toward the building of a factory. Since the factory had to be built, little time was left for building homes. Therefore, in 1856, there were three available places of lodging—the Eureka Hotel, the Biddle House on the corner of Vinewood and Biddle, and of the Wyandotte no location and be definitely given. After the factory was completed, homes were built by the laborers and the employees.

Between the dates 1856 and April 8, 1867, there is much that could be said, but it can all be summed up in one paragraph. Boarding houses had been built to accommodate the surplus factory workers; gradually these were dismantled and all but one replaced by beautiful mansions. A school house was built on Chestnut Street. The first drug store in 1863, the first butcher shop, and the first bakery were all opened. In 1865, documents are agreed on this one point unanimously, the first funeral home was organized with H.F. Thon as funeral director. But even before his time, as early as 1857, J.F.W. Thon, a carpenter, took care of the dead by making coffins similar to the Egyptian mummy cases.

There are just a few of the firsts in Wyandotte. But April 8, 1867, marked the most important first of all...for on April 8, 1867, a new city held its first Common Council meeting. This date constituted a break away from the government of Ecorse. The government of Wyandotte consisted of a mayor and six councilmen. Since 1854, the people of Wyandotte had awaited the day when they would become a city.

On March 5, 1867, this dream was finally realized. The first elections were held and the result was as follows: Mayor John S. Van Alstyne; Recorder, Peter Lacy; Marshal, Thomas Jewell; Justices of the peace, L. Ferguson, F.V. Briggs, Alex Stewart; Director of the Poor, E. Krieger, Franklin Nelson; School Inspectors, C. Schmidt, S. Pray; Alderman 1st. Ward, R. C Conwell, E.P. Christian; 2nd Ward, D. Sullivan, R.W. Leighton, 3rd Ward, H. Ocbock, Fred Kreiger and Constables C. Thon, R. Mahar, R. Donaldson. There is some disagreement about the first treasurer—the two names usually given are Frank Brohl and J.F.W. Thon.

Although the Eureka Iron Works was the first and most important industry in Wyandotte, there were quite a few more over the course of the years. One of the most important of these was the Michigan Alkali Company and J.B. Ford Division. This new chemical industry was the successor to the great iron works. Although the Iron Works had been forced to give way to its successor, it was still considered to be the life-line of the city. "Proudly We Record," the history of Wyandotte, gives us this information.

The two furnaces and rolling mill consumed 6,000 bushels of charcoal per day, over two million bushels a year, or about 50,000 cords of wood. The crashing of mighty oaks and hickories was continually resounding in the air, clearing the in west Wyandotte of all trees, yet it was a good sound to hear, for it meant the mill was running, and at the same time the land was cleared for homes and farms.

For thirty years the industry boomed. In 1870, the city ranked eighth in steel output in the United States. In 1876, the Wyandotte Mill produced the largest piece of boiler plate up to that time. It was sent to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia where it was regarded with awe by thousands who perhaps thought of Wyandotte as a rough and uncouth western town, largely inhabited by Indians!

Still, there was a new adventure ahead of Wyandotte, one that was to revolutionize the steel industry, in Michigan and elsewhere. William Kelly had originated the Bessemer process of producing steel in the East, but had been unable to convince any manufacturers there to gamble on its success. Coming to Detroit, he convinced Eber Ward that it was worth a try, and Wyandotte ran the process for the first time in 1854. After a series of mishaps, however, the Eureka Iron Works closed its doors for the last time.

In searching for a new source of fuel, salt had been discovered below the surface of the Downriver communities. Thus it was that the Michigan Alkali Company was formed and took over the Eureka plant, or what was left of it.

Eber Ward had another interest, ship building. With the Kirby brothers, he was responsible for the building of over 200 vessels. This industry came to an end in 1920. Another of his pet projects, silver smelting, flourished for a time, to end in later years, largely due to difficulties in securing raw materials in a place so far removed from sources.

Wyandotte's municipal government has kept pace with its industrial growth, as might be expected. In 1925, a new charter was written, and the Mayor-Council type government was inaugurated. Wyandotte has proved itself worthy of the trust put into it by the early and later industrialists, who hoped to find in this Downriver community a favorable economic climate for the development of successful manufacturing plants.

# A Few Wyandotte Veterans

## Civil War



Richard Barrow fought in Co. H., 14<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry in the Civil War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William Robert Bellville was born May 5, 1824 in Belmont County, Ohio. He enlisted in the Union Army on March 7 1864 in Company I of the 25<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry. On April 1, 1866, he was promoted to full corporal. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Alexander Bondie fought in the Civil War as a Sgt. in Co. H, 14<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Jos. Bragenson, Co. H. 14<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, Civil War. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Claude Campau, Civil War. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

\_\_\_\_Cook. Served on the S.S. Dreyer. Band. 19 D. Ship. Civil War. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery. -

Hubert Coogan, fought in the Civil War as a Pvt. in the 10<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

James William Farnsworth, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.  
Company A, 77<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry, Civil  
War. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Hibrand. 54<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry. Buried in  
Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Hills, born in England on July 16,  
1837, immigrated to the United States. At  
age 23, he enlisted as a sergeant in Company  
I of the Fourth Michigan Volunteer Infantry  
on June 20, 1861 for three years, mustering  
out on June 30, 1864. He married Lena Thon  
on June 20, 1866, in Wyandotte. John Hills  
died in Wyandotte on December 20, 1906,  
and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Christian Krieger, born in 1839, enlisted in  
Company I of the Fourth Michigan  
Volunteer Infantry on June 20, 1861 when  
he was 22 years old, for three years. He was  
wounded in action in the "Wheatfield" at  
Gettysburg on July 2, 1863 and he mustered  
out at expiration of his term on service on  
June 30, 1864. He died in May 1873 and he  
is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

Charles LaBelle- Co. D 9<sup>th</sup> Michigan  
Cavalry, Civil War. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Manor, Corporal Company C, Fifth  
Michigan Cavalry, fought in the Civil War.  
He died on July 5, 1895. The Records in  
Headstones Provided for Deceased Civil  
War Veterans lists Frank's name, rank, and  
service branch correctly, but states he is  
buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in  
Wyandotte. Mt. Carmel has a record of a

Frank Manore, but Frank Manor is buried in  
Oakwood, according to his tombstone.

James Charles McKnight, Co. B. 24<sup>th</sup>  
Michigan Infantry, Civil War. He is buried  
in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Schumaker, was a Pvt. in Co. K of the  
24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, fighting in the Civil  
War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Joseph Schweiss, born December 2, 1839 in  
Germany, fought in Co. K. 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan  
Light Artillery in the American Civil War.

He died on January 18, 1897 and he is  
buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Dominick Shatelroe, Civil War. Son and  
cousins fought in the Civil War. One is  
buried in Arlington. He is buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Claude Solo, Co. I. 41<sup>st</sup> Ohio Infantry, Civil  
War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel, Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

George Spavin, 22, joined Company A of  
the 30<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry and fought in the  
Civil War. He died August 17, 1904 and he  
is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Maurice Trout, Co. B. 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan  
Infantry, Civil War. He is buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William H. Webb, born October 29 1836.

There is a William Webb enlisted in  
Company C of the 27<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry in  
Michigan Civil War rosters. William died on  
September 9, 1904 in Wyandotte and he has  
a headstone in Oakwood Cemetery in  
Wyandotte.

Corporal John Wolcott, Civil War.

Andersonville. Burial Oakwood Cemetery

## Spanish American War



Claude B. Bailey, born August 21, 1878, and he fought in the Spanish American War as a Private in Company B in the 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Infantry. He died on February 24, 1933 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph George “Joe” Cheplicki. Spanish American War Veteran/ VFW Post 1136. He was born on March 3, 1880 and died on September 2, 1963 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

August Flocko was born April 12, 1870 in Germany. He immigrated to Wyandotte where he lived on Sixth Street and worked as a day laborer. August fought with Co F of the 35<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry during the Spanish American War. He died on November 17, 1924 and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

John Gorman Jr., born on December 13, 1860, fought in the Spanish American War. He died on July 28, 1904 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John E. Riley, Company F, 35<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, Spanish American War. He was born in 1872 and died on September 4, 1911. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Charles Springsted, fought in the 35<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry in the Spanish American War. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Harry McCloy, Co. F., 35<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, Spanish American War. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John McCloy, Co. I, 51<sup>st</sup> Michigan Infantry, Spanish American War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Corporal Michael Purcell, Corp., Company F. 25<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, Spanish American War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Richard Toomey, Co. F. 35<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, Spanish American War. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Wroblewski, Spanish American War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,

Wyandotte. Wyandotte's last surviving  
Spanish American war veteran

## World War I



Frank J. Andrysiak, Michigan, born October 1, 1893, served as a Pvt. In the 144 Spruce Squadron in World War I. He died on July 16, 1960 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John S. Barcikowski, born November 27, 1892, fought in the U.S. Army in World War I. He died on August 16, 1975, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Albert J. Barnosky, born April 10, 1897 was a private in the French Motor Battalion, World War I. He died on June 20, 1933 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John F. Bednarek, Private, U.S. Army, World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John Behm. Born in 1896, fought as a Private in the U.S. Army in World War I. He died on September 18, 1976 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Matthew J. Behm, Polar Bear, 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry, World War I. Born June 13, 1889. Died June 30, 1935. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

James E. Bielman, born July 25, 1888 fought as a PFC in the U.S. Army in World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

George J. Bigler. PFC 24 Engineers. World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

William J. Biniarz fought in World War I as a Pvt. 1 Class in the 501 BN Tank Corps. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Thomas E. Blake was born on November 23, 1895 and he fought in World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Bozimowski. fought in the U.S. Army in World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William A. Boundy served as a private in the United States Army during World War I. Part of the Polar Bear Expedition. He is buried in Our Lady of Hope Cemetery in Brownstown Township.

George Chiplick was born March 28, 1890, and he fought in World War I as a private in the 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry 85<sup>th</sup> Division. He died on December 19, 1948 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Darcinski, Michigan. Pvt. First Class, 79 Field Artillery, 7<sup>th</sup> Division. World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Leonard Guy Darnell, US Army Med Corps., WWI, Private First Class. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Andrew Dedick, New York Mech Co. D. 108 th Infantry, World War I. Purple Heart. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Samuel P. Demmick. PFC Base Ord Depot 5, World War I.

Pasquale "Patsy" Denard. Patsy was born on March 30, 1895 in Italy and immigrated to the United States with his family in July 1913, naturalized on August 11, 1919. He served in the U.S. Army in World War I and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

James O. Dolan, Corporal U.S. Army. World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph W. Doliasz. Indiana. Pvt. Co. C 128, World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William J. Doyle, Sr, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Alfons Drozdowski, Pvt. Company a, 309<sup>th</sup> Infantry, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Albert J. Elias- Cook, 338 Infantry Regiment, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jacob Fickel, PFC. U.S. Army, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Leo L. Frankhouse, Michigan. Private, U.S. Army, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

George James Gartner. Private, U.S. Army, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Leon Joseph Geniac, S1 US Naval Reserve Forces, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank A. Gorski, PFC Co.B, 16 th Machine Gun BN, World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony Goscinski, Company M, 125<sup>th</sup> Infantry, World War I. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

George C. Gratz, Michigan, BKR1, U.S. Navy, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Hondzinski, Sr.-Ohio,Pfc. Battery B, 82 Field Artillery, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Joseph J. Kalesar, Pvt, U.S. Marines, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Frank Kalinowski, Illinois. Private Co. K., 58<sup>th</sup> Infantry, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Klapiec, Michigan– Horseshoer TRP H 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph J. Knuck. EM3 Engineers Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class – USNRF-United States Naval Reserve Forces, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Kowal, Pvt. 104 Field Artillery, 27<sup>th</sup> Division, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony J. Krolikowski, Pvt. 78<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 6<sup>th</sup> Division, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph L. Krolikowski, PFC Co. C 3<sup>rd</sup> Machine Gun BN, World War I PH. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Laurain, Wagoner, 329 MG BATL, 85<sup>th</sup> Div, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Lieminer, Pvt. 21 Infantry, Dec 26, 1932. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph T. Lilienthal, Bos'n USNR, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael Magolan, Corporal U.S. Army, World War I., Co. D., 45<sup>th</sup> Inf. 9<sup>th</sup> Div. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John P. Mahady, Pvt. General, Officers School, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Sygmund Matuszewski, Michigan, Pvt. Co. B 2 Dev BTN, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

James H. McClair, Michigan, Corp. U.S. Infantry, 32<sup>nd</sup> Division, World War I., Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William L. McDonald, Michigan – PFC 328 Field Artillery, 85<sup>th</sup> Division, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry D. McFarland, Corp. U.S. Army, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael R. McGlade, Michigan S2,  
USNRF, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Daniel E. McGuckin,, Michigan, Pvt. 104  
Field Artillery, 27<sup>th</sup> Div., World War I.  
Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph S. Moszczynski, Michigan PFC 333  
Guard & Fire Company QMC, World War I.  
Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Louis Edward Murray, PFC, Troop G, 11<sup>th</sup>  
Cavalry, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Mellis Frank Nichols, Pvt. U.S. Army,  
World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Patrick J. O'Halloran, Michigan. Chief  
Mechanic 11 Field Artillery, World War I.  
Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry J. Oscar, Corporal, U.S. Army, World  
War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Bronislaw Perkowski, Pvt. U.S. Army,  
World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Casper Peters, U.S. Army, WWI. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry Joseph Piasecki, Michigan, PFC,  
TRP G, 13<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, World War I. Buried  
in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Rafter, U.S. Naval Reserve, World  
War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Eli J. Renaud, Michigan, Private HQ Co.  
55<sup>th</sup> Infantry, World War I. Buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward M. Reuter, World War I Veteran.  
World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Clayton R. Riedel, Aviation Machinist Mate  
Second Class, U.S. Naval Reserve Force,  
World War I. World War I. Buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery.

Joseph Rusczyk, Poland. Pvt. 339<sup>th</sup>  
Infantry, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank H. Schultz, Michigan, Private 160  
Depot Brigade, World War I.

Charles Slocum, Pvt. U.S. Army, World  
War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Stanley T. Slumski. Pvt. 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 85<sup>th</sup>  
Division, World War I. Buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Clement O. Snyder, Pvt. 1Class, 359 Field  
Hospital, 85<sup>th</sup> Div., World War I. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley Strzelecki, Private Co. B, 2  
Development BN., World War I. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward Suchowiak, Michigan, Private 77<sup>th</sup>  
Infantry, 14<sup>th</sup> Division, World War I. Buried  
in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Boleslaw Sumowski, Ohio, Pvt. 322 Field  
Artillery, 85 Division, World War I.

Leo Swantkowski, 1891-1938, Pvt. 68<sup>th</sup>  
Infantry, 4<sup>th</sup> Division, World War I. Buried  
in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Unieski, Michigan, 4 Ammo TN4 DIV,  
World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Harry Van Houten, CPL U.S. Army, World  
War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Charles K. Wojno, Michigan, CPL 278  
Ambulance Company, World War I. Buried  
in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

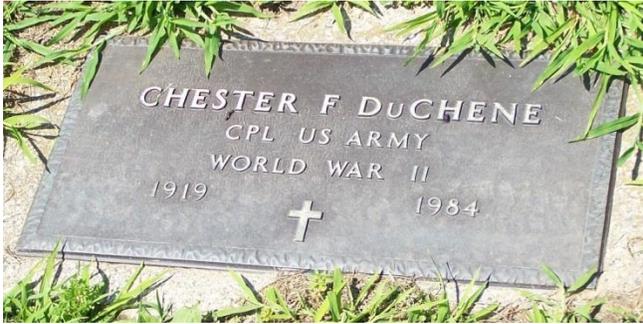
Stanley "Steve" Wojtkowiak, Veteran,  
World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Wolanowski, Private U.S. Army,  
World War I.

Henry Winiarski. Private Co. B., 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Development BN, World War I. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael N. Young, Pvt. Co. G. 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry,  
World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

## World War II



John K. Amiot fought as a PFC5 in the AAF Bomb Wing in World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Victory H. Alabrodzinski served as a Private First Class in the U.S. Army in World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John K. Amiot fought as a PFC5 in the AAF Bomb Wing in World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Andrew F. Androvic served in the U.S. Navy, World War II. He died is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Robert Frank Bahm served in the U.S. Navy, in both World War II and Korea. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Corporal Carl M. Bell fought in Co. D. of the 7th Infantry. He was Killed in Action in Italy on October 13, 1943. He has a Memorial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte, but he is buried in Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Nettuno provincial di Roma in Lazio, Italy.

Dr. Ferdinand P. "Fred" Bianco served as a Pvt. in the U.S. Army in World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John Biebel served as an Aviation Machinist Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class, US Navy World War II. He died on October 25, 1941 on active duty while stationed at the Naval Air Station, Nuences County, Corpus Christi, Texas. His memorial is in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Joseph Biebel, Michigan, Staff Sergeant, 107 Med Rgt, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John Joseph Buck, U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Ignatius I. Ciemierek, Tech 4, U.S. Arm World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Howard Clifford fought in the United States Marine Corps in World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thornton Combs fought in the U.S. Army in World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Russell George Connell, Private U.S. Army, World War II, He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Frank P. Corbett, U.S. Army Air Corps, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Charles William Cox, PFC U.S. Army World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Pfc. John B. Czaplicki, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Vincent Czerniakowski, Pvt. 164 Infantry, 41 Div. World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Eugene Dewimille. GM1 US Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Julius Dezsi, Veteran, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Bernard M. Dorobek, U.S. Merchant Marine, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Chester F. Duchene U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Paul Duchene- BM2, U.S.Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank W. Dumbeck, Tech 3 U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley Dumbeck – Corporal, 1328 Base Unit AAF-World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony K. Durcyzinski, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Kenneth Percy Eagle, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Fasca-Sgt. U.S. Marine Corps, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Leo J. Ferdubinski-PFC, U. S Army, World War II. Bronze Star, ex-POW. Buried in Mt.Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Leo John Filipiak. PFC, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Roman S. Fiolek, MM2, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Elmo O. Fivecoat. Pfc. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandott

Harold F. Fogarty, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Richard A. Fortuna, Staff Sgt. United States Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Father George B. Fortuna, Sgt. United States Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Private Joseph R. Frank, Pvt. 331 Infantry 83 Infantry Division. World War II. Died July 29, 1944. KIA Memorial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank T. Fronczk, PFC. United States Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Sgt. Anthony S. Gacioch-Michigan Sgt. 409<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Died December 15, 1944. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley B. Galanek- PFC-Company I, 136<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 33rd Infantry Division, World War II, Asia-Pacific Theater. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Pete Gambicki, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

August Joseph Ganz, Tech 5, US Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley Garczynski- PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Claude Leslie Geiger. Tech Sgt. 4, U.S. Army. World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Xavier George. Sergeant, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Paul Howard Gibson. Captain U.S. Army Air Forces. World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph J. Gilevich, Jr. AR3 U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony Glinka, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Mike Goodwin, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Chester J. Grabarkiewicz, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Jan "John" Grabos, S2C U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Harley M. Grigg. He served in World War II from 1942-1944 as a commissioned United States Army officer. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

James D. Good, Sr., Private, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Roman J. Grupczynski- Sgt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Antonio Gutierrez, Staff Sergeant, U.S.Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. William Harmon. 1920-1944. Ohio. Pvt. Med. Dept. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Donald Lloyd Hedger, born May 14, 1926, served in the United States Navy during World War II. Buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Sgt. Edward J. Helminski- Michigan – Staff Sergeant 107 MED BN, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Roger J. Jones, Sr. Tech Sergeant U.S. Marines, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William S. Jose, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Juback. Sgt. Co. D. 507th PRCHT Infantry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John W. Knack- Tech 119 Quartermaster Bakery Company, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony L. Kolakowski, CPL U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Walter F. “Lefty” Koralewski, Tech 5, U.S. Army World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stephen A. Krastes, PFC U.S. Marine Corps, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Walter S. Krogol. SSM3, United States Naval Reserve. World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edwin J. Krolikowski, Tech 5, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Franczik “Frank” Krolikowski, Michigan Private 1<sup>st</sup> Class, 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Private Troop M, 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

PFC Sylvester L. Krolikowski, PFC 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Walter Frank Krzemien, SSML3 US Coast Guard, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Karl F. Kukhahn, S1 US Navy, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. Wictor “Victor” Kulawczyk, 1922-1941. Pvt. U.S. Army. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley Joseph Kurczewski, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John M. Laritz, PFC U.S.Army, World War II. Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frances W. LeBar, Sgt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Alphonse J. Leszczynski, Sgt. U.S. Marine Corps, RES, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stephen Thomas "Steve" Leszczynski, CPL U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William John Lilienthal, Sr. Wyandotte Police Chief. , Sgt. U.S. Marine Corps, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Corporal Joseph T. Lilienthal, Jr. , Corporal U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Julius Lilienthal, Disabled American Veteran. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley F. Litwinski, World War II Veteran. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Walter Litwinski, World War II Veteran. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry F. Loeffler, World War II Veteran, PFC Co. G, 114 Inf. 29<sup>th</sup> Division, World War I. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Peter J. Lokuta, Pvt. 56AA TNG Battalion, CAC, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Alexander Loniewski, CP United States Marine Corps, WWII, A Company, 28<sup>th</sup> Marine, 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division, Iwo Jima. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

PFC Joseph Loniewski, 1924-1945, Michigan – 502 Parachute Infantry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Harry Anthony Los, Michigan S2, U.S. Naval Reserve, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Andrew J. Lucas, S Sgt. 1 Infantry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. Frank J. Lucas, Pvt., 319 Infantry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Casimir J. Lukasiac, US Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Charles A. Lukasiewicz, PFC U.S. Army, World War II, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph J. Lupinski, Jr., U.S. Navy, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Joseph J. Luppino, Sr. SI US Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thaddeus J. Lyjak, World War II Veteran. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Matthew L. Macek, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph F. Machnacki, Tech. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jerome F. Magolan, Michigan, CPL Infantry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Sergeant Charles W. Mahalak died February, 20, 1944, in Italy of wounds received during the beachhead campaign in Anzio. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Edward V. Mahalak, Tech 5 U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John L. Malay, Sr., U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward J. Malicki, Pvt. U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Chester J. Malinowski, Tech 5, U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward A. Malinowski, US Army, World War II. Decorated Veteran. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Ronald L. Matthies, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William F. Mayoros, Captain U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Albert C. McClain, U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Cornelius McGee, Corporal, U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John V. McGlade. Cox, US Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stephen George Messer, Cox U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John B. Michalak, Pvt. U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jerry S. Michalski, Private U.S. Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Stephen Mierzejewski, Spec. 5, United States Army, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph F. Mikola, S1, U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward Mikolajewski, PFC U.S. Army, World War II, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Walter J. Mikolajewski, AM2, U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

George Michael Miller. Baker Third Class, U.S. Navy, World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Mitchell, Weapons Technician  
Second Class, U.S. Navy, World War II. He  
is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Joseph C. Moczul, US Army, World War II.  
He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

William J. Moscicki, Sergeant U.S. Army,  
World War II. He is buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph E. Nagy. U.S. Army. Buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Frank Nerowski, S Sgt. U.S. Army,  
World War II, Bronze Star Medal. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

David A. Newell, CPL. U.S. Marine Corps,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Steve F. Nowakowski, Sergeant U.S. Army,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry S. Olkowski, Corporal U.S. Army,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Olszewski, U.S. Army, World War  
II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Henryk "Henry" Opitek, Polish Army World  
War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Leo L. Orzol, PO1, U.S. Navy, World War  
II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Peter B. Osack, Pfc. U.S. Army, World War  
II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte

Walter G. Page, U.S. Marine Corps, World  
War II, Purple Heart. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley J. Palczesny, Tech 4, U.S. Army,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Alexander W. Pasko, MSGT U.S. Army,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Pawlowski, World War II., U.S.  
Army. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Clive T. Pemberton. born January 16, 1916,  
served as a Master Sergeant in the U.S.  
Army during World War II. He died on  
October 15, 199 and is buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Lyle J. Pernot, Pvt. 8 Service Commander,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Piasecki, Corporal U.S. Army, World  
War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

John H. "Albert" Podsaid, U.S. Army,  
World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edgar A. Poleski, born December 27, 1920 in Michigan, entered World War II as an aviation cadet training in California. On October 23, 1942, Aviation Cadet Poleski died in the crash of U.S. Army Air Corps Basic Trainer-13A #41-10900 five miles north of the Lemoore Army Airfield, Fresno County, California. Second Lieutenant Don G. Crook also died. Cadet Poleski's memorial is in Oakwood Cemetery in Wyandotte

Roland E. Prichard, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Casimir J. Prybylski, Private U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Chester Joseph Prybylski, Sgt. 1559 Base Unit AAF, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Raymond J. Prybylski, PFC, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward P. Przygocki, Tech 4., U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Rafter, Michigan. Sgt. 509 Eng. Lt. Pon Co., WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Lawrence W. Rudick, CSP U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward Ruszczyk, SO2, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Leo C. Sacilowski, Michigan, 54 SIG Repair Co., World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

John Pablo Savala, S1, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Richard C. Scanland, Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Clarence Joseph Schloff, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edwin James Schloff, World War II. Pfc World War II. Five bronze stars. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Schultz, born January 18, 1912, fought as a Tech 5 in the U.S. Army during World War II. He died on March 10, 1945 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Chester Schultz, born May 10, 1919, served as BM1 in the U.S. Navy in World War II. He died on April 12, 1981 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Donald C. Schultz, Sr., U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Donald F. Schwochow, U.S. Army, World War II. He was born on February 16, 1927 and he died on April 25, 2008 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Senk, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Henry J. Serafinski, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Samuel L. Shepard was a sergeant in the U.S. Army in World War II. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John S. Shuryan, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
PFC Joseph A. Skrycki, PFC 350 Infantry, 88<sup>th</sup> Div. 1915-1944. Killed in Action. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Lt. Theodore J. Skrypiec, World War II. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Skrypiec was killed aboard U.S. Army Air Corps B-24D Liberator #41-24224 when the bomber struck a mountainside seventeen miles southeast of Tobe, Colorado while on a navigational training mission out of the Pueblo Army Airfield. Nine other airmen also perished. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony S. Sliwka, S Sgt, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John P. Slupski, Veteran WWII. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Slusne, Sgt. Co C. 1346 Eng. Battalion, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. Paul J. Slusne, Michigan Pvt. 23 Inf. 2<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Div., World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Jake Smentowski, Pvt. 6<sup>th</sup> Reg. U.S. Marines 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

George Parnell Smith, S1F U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Private Felix M. Smukowski, Pvt. Signal Corps, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry John Sobiech, Tech 4, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Sigmund Sobocinski, Tech 5., U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jacob John Sokolowski, PFC, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Casper J. Sommer, SSergt. , U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley F. Stempien, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William J. Sullivan, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Joseph Szczesny served in World War II as a private in the 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 85<sup>th</sup> Division. He died on October 6, 1943 and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Mike P. Tarnowski, Tech 4, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Louis D. Tchorz, Tech 4. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Wilson Teifer, Michigan, LCDR, USNR, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Robert H. Thiede, Tech 5. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Zolie S. Thomas, PFC. U.S. Army, World War II. Bronze Star. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Edward Tlalka, U.S. Army, World War II, Normandy. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Peter Tobasco, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry P. Toboy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Tokash, Tech 4, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Aloisius M. Tomasik served in World War II as a Teach in the 26<sup>th</sup> Bakery Co. Quartermaster Corps. He died on January 12, 1944, and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Sylvester E. Tomczak, Sgt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony J. Trusewicz, Jr. , Sgt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony Sylvester "Tony" Uroda. RM2 U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Charles H. Vargo, Tech 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battery, 12 FA Regiment, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Alfred L. Venier, 1925-1945, possible KIA. Michigan, Tech 4, 302 Infantry, 94<sup>th</sup> Division, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edmund Walter Weglicki, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Charles J. Weldi, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Victor James Whitty, Private U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Casimer W. Wiczorek, PFC U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

PFC Steve Wojcik, Michigan, Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class, 103 Infantry Division. 1921-1945. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael J. Wouczyna, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Adam A. Wojtkowiak, Pvt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward S. Wroblewski, TS US Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Raymond Wroblewski, PFC, U.S. Army World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley Wroblewski, PFC, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Peter Yasenчек, Sgt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Earl W. Zaddach, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Captain Edwin F. Zdunczyk, 1920-1945, Michigan, Captain Air Corps, D.Air Medal and 3 OLC. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Julius B. Zelazny, Pvt. Co. D, 156<sup>th</sup> Infantry, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Edmund Ziemiński fought as a Motor Machinist Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class in the United States Navy in World War II. He died on December 4, 1996 in Lincoln Park and he is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Wyandotte.

There is also a memorial for him in [Mt. Carmel Cemetery](#) in Wyandotte.

Leonard Sebastian Ziemiński, S1 US Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward J. Zientek, PFC U.S. Army, WWII. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte. Felix B. Zrgzemski, Pvt. U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

Edward J. Zuk, Tec 4, U.S. Army, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Ralph S. Zuzga, U.S. Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte. Edward F. Zyjewski, S1 US Navy, World War II. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte

## Korea



Earl Henry Shanaver, 17. Killed in Action in Korea.

Chester J. Baszczuk, U.S. Army in Korea. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Stanley Dominic Burzycki, PFC, U.S. Army, Korea. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph A. Carus, born January 11, 1932, fought in Korea as a Corporal in the United States Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

James F. Dunne. U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry J. Frodyma, Sgt. U.S. Army, World War II and Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Joseph Jurczyk. US Navy, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Richard R. Kowalewski, SPC U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Donald Louis LaCombe, Corporal U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Stanley Machnacki, PFC U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Richard A. Malinowski, Sr., U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Russell James McGlade, U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Lewis Mikolajewski, U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William J. Navarre, Sr., U.S. Navy Seabee, World War II. Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Earl L. Northrop, PFC U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
Edward Olender. Airman 1 class U.S. Air Force, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thaddeus "Ted" Olszewski, PFC. U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Alfred E. Paras, U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Ronald Pawlaczyk, Spc, Infantry, Korea.  
Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Pokryzwiniicki, PFC, Battery C 109  
Field Artillery Battalion, Korea. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Albert J. Pingitore, U.S. Navy, World War II  
and Korea. Air Medal. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Gerald William Shalda, Corporal U.S.  
Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. Earl Henry Shanaver, Killed in Korea at  
age 17. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

James M. Shuryan, Pvt. U.S. Army, Korea.  
Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Javier Solano, U.S. Army, Korea. Buried in  
Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyadnotte.

John J. Szewczyk, Jr., U.S. Air Force,  
Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Joseph P. Tomczak, Sergeant, U.S. Marine  
Corps, World War II, Korea. Buried in Mt.  
Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

James John "Jim" Walsh. Korea. Reburied  
in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph John Wirtel, CPL U.S. Army, Korea.  
Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry S. Witkowski, QM2, U.S. Navy,  
World War II, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William Adam Wozniak, US Navy, World  
War II, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jerome S. Yoscovits, I. Sergeant, U.S.  
Army, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley A. Zilko, Corporal, U.S. Marine  
Corps, Korea. Buried in Mt. Carmel  
Cemetery.

## Vietnam War



Lawrence M. Banasiak, Sp5, U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Dr. Joseph Anthony Berus, served as a SSgt. In the U.S. Army Air Force in Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Richard Henry Carr. Sr. U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Thomas P. Carroll fought with the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Stephen J. Chojnowski, Jr , Sgt. U.S. Air Force, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John Paul Cicotte, Sr. fought as a Private in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Daniel Michael Cole. Served as a SP4 in the U.S. Army Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,

Rudolph Gary Cooper fought with the US Navy in the Vietnam War. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

John J. "Jack" Cummings, II, SP5, U.S. Army, Vietnam. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Lawrence M. Fasca- SP 5, U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

David Michael Galloway. Sgt. U.S. Marine Corps, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony Glinka – SP5, US Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

PFC Daniel J. Kogutz, PFC United States Marine Corps, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Ronald Karagitz, SP4, U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Richard Bruce Kos – U.S. Navy, Vietnam. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.  
David R. Long, Spec. 4, U.S. Army, Vietnam. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

David John Lukasik, SGT, U.S. Marine Corps, Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Charles R. McLaughlin, U.S. Army, Vietnam. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Lester A. Pegouske, Jr., PFC. U.S. Army, Vietnam. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank Joseph Poniatowski, Vietnam War Veteran. Bronze Star for Bravery. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jeffrey M. Rees, Sgt. U.S. Marine Corps, Vietnam, Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Albert M. Schuster served as a CM Sergeant, US Airforce, in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

Johnny M. Sekmistrz, AG2 U.S. Navy, Vietnam, USS Tripoli. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas K. Smith, SP4, U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Sommer, 1946-1976- TSergeant, U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph L. Tullis, U.S. Army, Korea, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Johnny Michael Volosuk, U.S. Army, Vietnam. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

## More Wyandotte Soldiers



Peter Archulet was a United States Marine. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Robert Chesla joined the U.S. Army in February 1958 and served until February 1960. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

William P. Clark, seaman Second Class, US Navy. Died July 13, 1940. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John Charles Armstrong, Served on the USS California. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas M. "Mickey" Graybill, PFC U.S. Army. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. Mark J. Heft-1981-2000. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Donald Regis Flanigan, U.S. Navy. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph Goscinski, PFC U.S. Air Force. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Leo Herman-1895-1943. COR. 301 SN TN 76th Div. Sn Tn. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas J. Herubin – 1945-2013. U.S Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Robert Gerald Hurd, U.S. Air Force. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

William Vincent Kaul – U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Ray F. Keith, U.S. Air Force. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

George F. King, Michigan Div. 1, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael A. Lins. U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Albert Marshall Litwinski, Private. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Scott Allen Lukasiewicz, L CPL U.S. Marine Corps. Buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank G. Lutrzykowski, Michigan PFC Detroit OM Corps. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Peter Maciejewski. U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Menford H. Manly, U.S. Navy. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

James E. Maynard, Spec 3 US Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Charles J. Medon, MEG3 US Navy. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Phillip Edward Moisson 1946-1993. , Sergeant U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Daniel E. Morabito, U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Eugene J. Moszczynski, S1. U.S. Navy. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Boleslaw Olszewski, Pfc. 338 Infantry, 1938. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Earl J. “Butch” Paryaski, U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

James “Dave” Perry, U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward Piasecki, Corporal, U.S. Army, born 1932, died 1987. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Jay Alan Ratajczyk, SPC U.S. Army, Persian Gulf. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

John J. Reed, Corporal, U.S. Air Force, 1927, 2001. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Thomas Romatowski, Pv 2 U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stephen Sajewicz, 1915-2003. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. U.S. Air Force. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Eli M. Schartz, 1904-1976. U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael Allen Schmidt. 1947-2009. U.S. Navy. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Pvt. Joseph Schultz, Michigan, Pvt. 405 Infantry. 1912-1945. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

David Phillip Shalda, SP3, U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph P. Sieli, U.S. Army. 1932-1994. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph L. Sieg, Sr. 1931-2001. U.S. Navy. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley Staniszewski, U. S. Army, 1896-1936. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Robert Anthony Starman, Cpl. U.S. Army, 1963-1988. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Stanley J. Steffan, Ohio, Pvt. Trp. F. 14<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Joseph G. Sutka, 1943-2012. Corporal, U.S. Marine Corps. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Henry R. "Hook" Taurance, 1928, 1999, U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank J. Tomaszewski, Pvt. 13<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, U. S. Army. Died 1939. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Michael Wall, Co. A. 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Artillery. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Captain James Welch, died March 6, 1877, age 46 years. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Anthony Joseph Weldi, Sr. 1950-1999. U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Frank L. Whitty, Michigan, 1893-1955. Pvt. STU Army TNG Corps. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Louis Michael Wiczorek, 1949-2011, SP4, U.S. Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Corporal Anthony E. Wojtan, Corp. 841 Guard SQ AC. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Bennett Wrobel, 1899-1938, Pvt. 10 Infantry, 14<sup>th</sup> Division. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte.

Edward P. Ziolkowski, 1906-1987-U.S.  
Army. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

Edward Zygai, 1938-1980- SP4 US Army.  
He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery,  
Wyandotte.

## Dr. Edmund Christian- Wyandotte's First Doctor Keeps Wyandotte Healthy



Dr. Edmund P. Christian

George Clark, an early Ecorse Township pioneer, described the life of Dr. Brown of Detroit.

*Bilious fevers and ague were very prevalent, many of the people being prostrated by them. Dr. Brown of Detroit attended and prescribed for these suffering people, up and down the river, almost without money and without price. Had he charged and collected in proportion to the present demands of physicians, the money would no doubt have been a very large sum. He was our family physician three years; father paid him \$25.00 cash. On one of his visits he said to my father, "I must have one of your cows, for if I have nothing else to eat I can live on the milk."*

*He then had piles of accounts. In his last sickness knowing he must soon die, had had all these accounts burnt before his eyes, thus settling them for all time and saving his debtors and heirs much perplexity. It is hoped and believed that he left many a man in the profession possessed of the same humane and benevolent feelings that actuated him.<sup>112</sup>*

Dr. Edmund Potts Christian of Wyandotte encountered some of the same conditions in his Ecorse Township practice. A story by Frank Rathbun in the Mellus Newspapers spotlighted a smallpox and cholera scare in Wyandotte. Quoting from an old township record book, Frank Rathbun wrote that on January 1, 1858, the Ecorse Township board learned that smallpox had broken out in the community when Dr. E. P. Christian reported a case of smallpox in the home of George S. Beebe in the village of Wyandotte. The Ecorse Township Board resolved that the house of S. H. Farnsworth above the railroad on Eureka Avenue be occupied as a hospital and that smallpox victim Jerome Lee be moved to the home.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> [Michigan Historical Collections](#), Volume I. Recollections by George Clark, Ecorse. May 23, 1876. This Dr. Brown may be [Dr. William Brown](#) who lived and practiced in Detroit for many years, dying in 1838.

<sup>113</sup> Fences Built Around Victims by Frank Rathbun, April 28, 1955  
The Mellus Newspapers. Old Township Record Book Reveals Fear of Smallpox 100 Years Ago

.The next day the Ecorse Township Board met and expanded their quarantine precautions by decreeing that George S. Bebee's family and other people in his house and the man Lee wouldn't be allowed to leave the house with permission. They also ruled that no one could enter the house except the attending physician who was ordered to change his clothes upon entering.

The Township Board appointed Dr. Nash and Dr. Fields to go through the town and vaccinate everyone who had not been vaccinated and report the names of everyone vaccinated.

Edward Visger served as township supervisor and James Visger, clerk. William Witherspoon and Orrin Packard were justices of the peace. The board meetings were held at Packard's home in Ecorse. On January 9, 1859 the Board approved a bill for \$46 from Dr. Nash and a bill for \$40.00 from Dr. Field for the vaccinations.

Eight years later in 1866, Ecorse Township officials again faced the possibility of a cholera outbreak. This new board included James A. Visger as supervisor, Moses B. Widner, clerk, and justices of the peace Leander Furgason, John Hoersch, and Bartholomew Russell. The Township Board met in Leander Furgason's office in Wyandotte and passed a resolution concerning preventive and protective measures against cholera or other diseases, ordering owners or occupants of lands and tenements to remove all deposits of filth and other causes of disease within 24 hours of receiving the Township notice.

The order also applied to vessels master in any port or harbor in Ecorse Township. Anyone failing to follow the order would be subject to "penalty not exceeding one hundred dollars. "Clerk Moses B. Widner was directed to post notice of the order in Wyandotte and Supervisor James Visger ordered to give notice of the order outside of Wyandotte."<sup>114</sup>

Over three decades later, Dr. Christian and the City of Wyandotte authorities still had to be vigilant against cholera and escapees from cholera quarantines. On September 14, 1892, eleven immigrants crossed the Detroit River at Wyandotte under the cover of darkness in two small rowboats. All of them left Wyandotte on the 10:00 o'clock train. Customs house officials in Canada discovered the escape and reported the fugitives to Wyandotte officials who immediately investigated the matter, but found no clues as to the whereabouts of the fugitives. The story concluded that "the immigrants were of a better class and since then night patrolmen have been instructed to patrol the riverbank."<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Fences Built Around Victims by Frank Rathbun, April 28, 1955. The Mellus Newspapers. Old Township Record Book Reveals Fear of Smallpox 100 Years Ago

<sup>115</sup> Brooklyn Daily Eagle. Sunday September 18, 1892.

Dr. Edmund Potts Christian earned an undergraduate literary degree, practiced chiefly as an obstetrician with his medical degree, and used his scientific talents to make new discoveries about typhoid fever. He was born into an old Philadelphia Quaker family on April 23, 1827 in Friendsville, Pennsylvania. When he was seven, he came to Detroit with his father where he received his early education at a Detroit Academy. He graduated A.B. from Michigan University in 1847 and A.M. in 1850.

To earn enough money for his medical education, Edmund Potts Christian worked as a clerk on various Great Lakes steamers during the summer and studied during the winter. He graduated with his medical degree from Buffalo Medical College in New York in 1852. In 1854, Dr. Christian married Mary H. Foster, the niece of Detroit brewer, Richard Hawley. They eventually had six children: Edmund.A. Christian, Thomas Hawley Christian, May Christian, Carrie Christian Desmond, Frank Christian, and Hattie Christian.

After spending five years in private practice in Detroit and serving as in Physician of Detroit in 1856, in 1857 Dr. Christian moved to Wyandotte where he spent the rest of his career. He practiced medicine for 40 years in Wyandotte and for many years he was the only Downriver doctor. He served terms as a Wyandotte councilman, Wyandotte mayor from 1870-1871, and as a member of the schoolboard for 12 years. He was a charter member of Wyandotte lodge of Masons and a senior warden in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

Dr. Christian founded the second era of the Michigan State Medical Society and laid the foundation for the third era. He was a member of the Detroit Medical Society, the Wayne Medical Society, and the Detroit Gynecological Society. He kept careful clinical records of cases and shared them with his fellow physicians. He was one of the first physicians to identify milk as a vehicle for transmitting typhoid fever while his fellow doctors delayed and disputed the connection. He continued advocating his theory until it was proven and accepted. From 1855-1858, he was assistant editor of the Peninsular Journal of Medicine of Detroit and he wrote and published many articles in medical journals. About twenty of his articles are listed in the Surgeon General's Catalogue at Washington D.C. <sup>116</sup>

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<sup>116</sup>[Physician and Surgeon, A Professional Medical Journal, Volume 18. Detroit and Ann Arbor, 1896.](#)

When he died in Wyandotte of arteriosclerosis on November 17, 1896, Dr. Christian's obituary in the *Cyclopedia of American Medical Biography* described him as about five feet seven inches tall, slenderly built, with a short beard, keen blue eyes, and a kindly expression. He was nervous in movement, an indefatigable worker, absolutely honest and without guile in all his relations. He and his wife Mary are buried in [Woodmere Cemetery](#) in Detroit.<sup>117</sup>

### **Dr. Christian Delivered More Than Babies**

Dr. Christian delved into and delivered facts about typhoid fever and tuberculosis as persistently as he delivered babies. Dr. Christian's son Thomas Hawley Christian suffered a bout of typhoid fever requiring several months of recuperation and his daughter Carrie Christian Desmond died at age 27 of consumption (tuberculosis) so he had an intense personal interest in both diseases.<sup>118</sup> Typhoid fever is caused by a bacterium called *Salmonella Typhi* which lives only in humans. Once *Salmonella Typhi* bacteria are eaten or drunk, they multiply and spread into the bloodstream and the body reacts with fever and other signs and symptoms. Water contaminated by *Salmonella Typhi* is a frequent source of typhoid fever and 19<sup>th</sup> century water supplies were thought to be the major source of typhoid fever. Dr. Christian looked beyond water to find another source.

On September 28, 1890, Dr. Christian wrote to the Michigan Board of Health about typhoid fever in Wyandotte, stating that it had been unusually prevalent and severity in the fall. He explained that the city had introduced water works and Detroit River water the previous fall which coincided with the increase in typhoid fever, but he concluded that well water rather than water works water could be a probably typhoid carrier. Citing several Wyandotte typhoid cases as examples, he said that the typhoid fever originated in the milk.<sup>119</sup> Dr. Christian argued his case for typhoid contaminating milk in person and in medical journals, including in the *Physician and Surgeon*. His work and Wyandotte cemeteries revealed that the terrible T's, tuberculosis and typhoid fever, didn't respect the boundaries of time, place, or class. Native and foreign born Wyandotte citizens were equally stricken.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> [A Cyclopedia of American Medical Biography: Comprising the Lives of Eminent Deceased Physicians and Surgeons from 1610 to 1910, Volume 1. Howard Atwood Kelly. W.B. Saunders Company, 1920. Volume I, p. 220.](#)

<sup>118</sup> Men of Progress: Embracing Biographical Sketches of Representative Michigan Men

<sup>119</sup> Full text of "Typhoid fever in Michigan in 1890; a summary from reports by health officers, clerks and physicians." [Columbia Libraries Offsite. Health Sciences Standard.](#)

<sup>120</sup> [The Physician and Surgeon, a Professional Medical Journal](#), Volume 14. Dr. E.P. Christian Wyandotte.

## The Terrible Ts – Typhoid Fever and Tuberculosis

### Typhoid Fever

George Beldon Wood, born on February 17, 1855 in England, immigrated to Canada and eventually came to Wyandotte where he worked as a ship wright. He married Louise Rohrbach on March 27, 1880. He died of typhoid fever on October 10, 1880 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

John Oehring born in Michigan on October 22, 1873, married Rose Ellen Racho in Wyandotte on June 26, 1894. He died of typhoid fever on September 9, 1896 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Joseph Nowak, born in 1871, was married and the father of five children. He died of typhoid fever on June 24, 1903 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

George Lybik, born in Ecorse on March 27, 1891, died in Glenwood Village, now part of Wyandotte. He died of typhoid fever on January 15, 1905, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Frank Schwartz, born in Austria on August 1, 1883, lived at 144 Cherry Street with his parents Peter and Barbra Schwartz. He died of endocarditis with typhoid fever contributing on February 22, 1908 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Jacob Gorang, born March 25, 1881 in Austria. He lived at 70 Elm Street in Wyandotte with his wife and three children. He died of typhoid fever at age 27 on March 27, 1908, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Alexander Bakon was born in 1883 in Poland. He lived at 75 Hudson Street in the Village of Ford and worked in the coke oven at Michigan Alkali Company. He died at the Emergency Hospital in Ford on April 10, 1919 of typhoid fever and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery

Susan Molling was born on September 28, 1908 and she lived with her parents Peter and Lizzie at 170 Cherry Street. She died on August 7, 1920, of typhoid fever and she is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Leo Guzy, born on November 17, 1889 in Poland, lived at 358 Second Street in Ford Village. He was the husband of Aniela Kogut and worked as a molder for the Detroit Valve & Fitting Company. He died on November 17, 1920, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte.

## **Tuberculosis**

Tuberculosis in its many forms has infected human beings from King Tutankhamen to Eleanor Roosevelt. Dr. Christian encountered tuberculosis in his medical practice including these Wyandotte residents.

James McGlade, born in Michigan on January 1, 1875, was the son of Philip and Mary McGlade. On March 9, 1899 he married Gusty Dahlka and they had one child. He was a shipbuilder and he and his family lived at 68 Elm Street. He died of pulmonary tuberculosis on August 6, 1905, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery

Frank Pietrzak, born December 1, 1890 in Michigan, lived with his parents Jacob and Josephine Pietrzak at 328 Chestnut Street. He died on February 11, 1912, of pulmonary tuberculosis at 21 years of age and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Frank Eilberg was born on October 20, 1888 in Michigan. He lived at 58 Elm Street in Wyandotte with his parents Mathias and Mary Keveney Eilberg. He died of pulmonary tuberculosis on May 17, 1916, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

John McCabe was born on September 17, 1889 in Michigan, the son of James and Margaret McCabe. He was married and worked as a laborer. He died at the Detroit Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Detroit on

November 16, 1916 of pulmonary tuberculosis at age 27 years. He is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Wladislaw "Walter" Romanowski, born August 15, 1872 in Poland lived at 269 Eighth Street with his wife Katharine. He worked as a laborer. He died of tuberculosis of the lungs with influenza contributing at age 48 on January 18, 1920 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery

Kazmira Senkowski Kasprzynski, born November 30, 1899 in Poland, was the daughter of Stanislaw and Josephine Senkowski. She was the wife of Frank Kasprzynski and she died at their home at 153 Tenth Street on July 7, 1920, of tuberculosis of the lungs. She is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

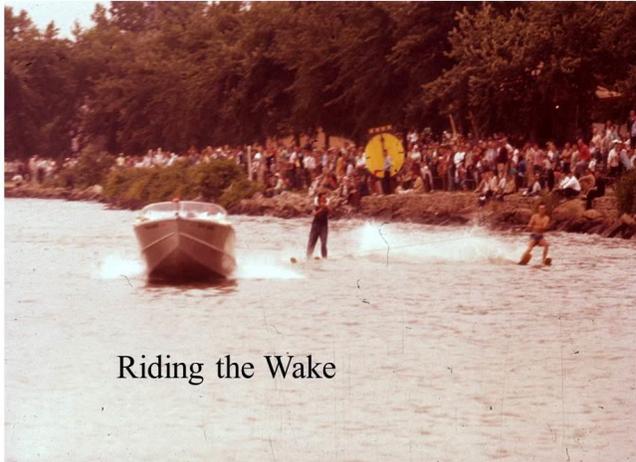
Andrew Dolinski, born June 11, 1900, in Michigan, was the son of Mike and Apolonia Wrzerinska Dolinski. He lived at 359 Maple Street. He died of tuberculosis at age 20 on August 9, 1920 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Alexander Witkowski, born in Wyandotte on July 5, 1920, lived with his parents Alex and Leocadia Witkowski at 46 Center Street in Ford Village. He died on August 17, 1920 of tuberculosis meningitis at age one month and twelve days and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery

Claude Campeau, born on April 27, 1899 in Michigan was the son of Frank and Ellen Tobach Campeau. He lived at 114 North Line in the Village of Ford and worked as a

shipbuilder for the Detroit Ship Building Company. He died of tuberculosis on October 9, 1920, at age 21, and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Stefan Kaslowski was born in Poland on March 30, 1890, the son of Jacob and Mary Kaslowski. He was the husband of Antonina Nowaci and worked as a laborer at Michigan Alkali Company. He died of tuberculosis of the kidney on November 21, 1920 at the age of 30 and he is buried in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.



## **Historical Associations Connected with Wyandotte and Vicinity** **By Dr. E.P. Christian, Wyandotte**

An intelligent perception of the relative topography of a place, in other words, its physical geography, is quite necessary for a comprehension of its history, of the circumstances or causes which have led to its settlement, have influenced its growth, have determined its character as a commercial or manufacturing center, or have given it other characteristics, and have had a bearing on its general history, and these determining and influencing physical peculiarities may not pertain alone to the immediate locality, but to neighboring influences ; to its physical environment.

A study of a history in this light may give a philosophical insight into causes of events appearing to have come about by blind chance or haphazard, by which they are shown to have been only natural sequences and results of natural surroundings and physical conformations.

A variety of circumstances may act as determining causes in the selection of a particular locality for settlement, as facilities for defense, of food supply and opportunities of barter and facilities for carrying on special forms of manufacturing, mining, etc. Any extended consideration of this subject, though possibly it might be made of interest, would occupy too much of our space.

In the early history of our country many localities became the seat of first civilized settlement, and the germs of future cities and centers of trade and population by reason of their having been already the seat of settlement of the " savages; and the Europeans were thus drawn there by opportunities of barter and facilities of procuring food, etc. But the fact of these localities having been already selected as the seats of Indian settlements did not happen by blind chance, but by some natural advantages of such localities.

The locality of Wyandotte had been an aboriginal settlement. Perhaps owing to this fact, it had been kept longer from white settlers seeking farms, for the Indians do not destroy the forests, living mainly by fishing and hunting; the latter not only for food but for peltries for barter. They seek the neighborhood of forests for settlement, and desire their preservation; and certain it is, that the locality on which Wyandotte stands, determined its choice as a site for furnaces and rolling-mills, by reason of the large tract of heavily wooded land covering and adjoining which would be available for manufacturing the superior quality of charcoal melted iron. This was one of the determining causes of its selection, others were such physical characteristics as had made it a point of election by the Indians, which we shall recount, and by reason of the facilities it offered for receiving the ores to be smelted from the mines of Lake Superior, the time for fluxes from the neighboring Monguagon quarries and the coal via the lake ports of Pennsylvania and Ohio from the mines of those states.

Looking on the map one will see Wyandotte located nearly midway between Lakes St. Clair and Erie. The Ecorse River empties into the Detroit River about two miles north of the center of Wyandotte, and the Monguagon about the same distance below, or south. From the mouth of the Rouge, half way between Wyandotte and Woodward avenue, to some distance south of the northern limits of Wyandotte, a marshy border lines the whole shore of the Detroit River, with the exception of about half a mile each side of the mouth of the Ecorse, on the north side where the village of, Ecorse or Grandport stands, and on the south, the river front of the farm of the late Hon. H. H. Emmons. The banks of the Ecorse are low and marshy on both sides, preventing access, which is to be noted as having a bearing on a historical statement to be referred to.

South of Wyandotte also to Trenton the Detroit River has a low marshy border, so that Wyandotte occupies the longest stretch of high bank free from marshy front, with easy access between Detroit and Trenton, I might perhaps say with truth, between Detroit and Gibraltar at the mouth of the Detroit River. Just above Ecorse the Detroit river begins to widen out, and to be separated into different navigable channels by the archipelago, which here begins with Fighting island, dividing the Canadian from the American channels, and extending from a mile or more above Ecorse to opposite the southern part of Wyandotte. Grosse Isle extends north from below Trenton to a point opposite the southern part of Wyandotte, the latter, with some smaller islands, dividing the American channels. Between Trenton and Amherstburg, on the Canadian shore, lies not only Grosse Isle, with smaller islands below, but also Bois Blanc, directly opposite Amherstburg, in Canadian waters.

So, then, the high banks at Wyandotte alone of all the American shore below the Rouge, afforded a fine camping spot on the very shore, with easy access to the river for drinking water, for fishing, for lading and unlading canoes and starting on expeditions, for the Indians of the lakes were canoe Indians, and performed their traveling for hunting, for barter or for war, on the water. The river, the lakes and the tributary streams were their highways; and what was a still greater advantage of the locality, as will be observed by its physical geography, as described, it offered the only spot below the Rouge for readily crossing to or from the Canadian shore, without a wide

detour around the islands. Almost directly opposite also lay the mouth of the Aux Canard river, offering suitable landing, with shelter for their canoes, and on the Canadian banks above was also a village of the Wyandottes, which we may suppose had constant intercommunication with their brethren of this village, and which tribe we may suppose had different settlements about the lakes in selected localities, and with which there would be more or less intercourse ; for we learn that the voyager Cartier, on his arrival at the island of Hochelaga, in the St. Lawrence, found a village of Wyandottes at that place.

Besides these geographical advantages of the locality, the waters, the marshes, the shores and the forests teemed with animal life, the water with infinite varieties of fish, the marshes with muskrats, valuable for food and fur, and the deep forest in the rear with game of all kinds, and animals furnishing sustenance and peltries for barter. Besides these advantages the land was a fertile sandy loam, easily cultivatable for their maize and such other vegetables and fruits as they were in the habit of raising. The forests and openings, too, furnished a variety of small fruits and nuts.

That the advantages of the locality were in fact understood and utilized as a place for crossing by the Indians is attested by Mr. Geo. Clark, late a resident of Ecorse, now deceased. Mr. Clark came to this locality in 1817. He presented a paper to this Society entitled "Reminiscences" as I think, and which was published in the first volume of the papers of the Society. He says this was a favorite place for crossing among the Indians, and that from here trails led to points above, below and to the interior. It is probable that these same facilities at this point and inconvenient obstructions and wider expanse of water below the islands, may have led also to its selection as the point of crossing of the British detachments from Amherstburg sent to cut off the supplies for Gen. Hull's army; and in the encounter with one of which detachments occurred the battle of Monguagon\* fought on almost the very ground of Wyandotte. To this we shall have occasion to again refer.<sup>121</sup>

Let us now take a glance at some of the interesting historical events of which the immediate neighborhood of Wyandotte has been the scene, and we shall see that it has notably participated in many of the occurrences which have helped to create the romantic history of Detroit, of Michigan and the northwest; a history not yet clouded with the myths of fable or the mists of legend alone, and which has furnished the material for some future epic not less romantic than that of any historical events so immortalized. We have mentioned Fighting Island as lying opposite and separating the American and Canadian channels. This, as you all know, has been made famous as the scene of the fight and the defeat of Pontiac's warriors in their attack on the night of June 19, 1761, upon the schooner Gladwin, dispatched from Detroit to hasten up the convoy of provisions and troops for the relief of the beleaguered garrison of Fort Ponchartrain, as

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<sup>121</sup> \* Mr. Daniel Goodell, recently deceased at an advanced age, who was in Hull's army and resided near here since that time and was familiar with the Indians, said to me that the Indians pronounced the name Mon-gon-gong.

the fort at Detroit was named. I hope I shall be excused for giving the description of the attack and repulse in the words of the historian Parton.\*

"The odds were heavy against the garrison, as their prospects of relief were growing less every day, but the gallant officer in command surveyed the danger that surrounded him with a cool courage and determined that the flag floating above him should never be struck while there was an arm to wield a sword.

"Meanwhile, the disastrous news kept arriving of the fall of one post after another till Detroit alone remained in the hands of the English. The cross of St. George had disappeared from the northern waters and the only symbol of England's power beyond Lake Erie was the solitary flag that still, morning and evening, was reflected in the stream that flowed by Detroit. One hundred and twenty men grouped beneath it and stood sole representatives of her dominions throughout that vast territory."

The convoy sent to the relief of the garrison, and for the hastening up of which with its sorely needed supplies the schooner Gladwin had been sent down to meet, had been captured by the concealed and wary savages while stopping for the night at a point on Lake Erie. The convoy consisted of batteaux propelled by rowers and was therefore obliged to stop at a favorable landing overnight, and by stress of weather the schooner became becalmed in the narrow channel between Fighting Island and the Canadian shore, and was watched by the savages emboldened by the success of the attack on the batteaux. We will let the historian give the description of the action:

"On came the gliding shadows without a sound, moving slowly and steadily so as to make no ripple, crowding closer and closer upon the dark object looming up before them, little dreaming of the keen eyes that measured their steady advance ; at length, when within a few rods the quick sharp blow of the hammer on the mast rang out with startling clearness on the night air. In an instant the huge monster gaped and shot forth flame. The whole heavens were illuminated. From deck and sides, from cannon and musket, the devastating storm fell ; the surrounding shores, the dark forests, the vessel, masts and crew, and the crowd of naked and painted savages huddled together on the stream were revealed as by a sudden flash of lightning. The schooner had allowed the Indians to approach so near before she opened her fire that the guns seemed to burst among the boats, blowing them out of the water. The effect was terrific. The roar and flame of such a volcano opening in their very midst and scattering such ruin around, for a moment utterly paralyzed the Indians. The next moment they were flying in all directions, yelping and screeching and never stopping till they had hid their swarthy bodies in the tall grass on shore. In this short time, they had nearly thirty killed and wounded."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> \* Harper's Monthly, vol. 22, 1861

This same island must have been considered a point of strategic importance by warriors civilized as well as savage; and as warfare is but savagery there is no reason why the savage should not be as much an adept in the selection of such advantages as the civilized commander, because this same island was occupied by a body of the so-called Canadian patriots in the outbreak of 1837-8. Especially in the winter season, as was then the case, would this be important, when by quickly crossing on the ice, an attack could be feigned or directed against either Amherstburg or Windsor, this place being about equi-distant from either, somewhere about ten miles.

Distinctly does the writer remember when a lad, being thought by his elders either too young or stupid to comprehend the tenor of the conversation, of hearing remarks about visits to the island and statements in regard to the number assembled there, preparations and probabilities of an attack on this or that point. \*<sup>123</sup>

Another point in the immediate vicinity of Wyandotte is historically interesting, as being the scene of the great council of Pontiac with the conspiring tribes who designed not only the capture of Detroit but of all the northeastern settlements and which preceded the outbreak of the war in which occurred the engagement, the history of which we have been narrating in the preceding pages.

Says Mrs. M. E. Shelden in describing the event, "With the close of the year 1762, Pontiac's arrangements were complete. Far and near he dispatched his swift messengers with gifts of tobacco and belts of wampum to call the tribes to a great council on the banks of the river Ecorse, a short distance from Detroit. The villages of Pontiac's tribe, the Ottawa, and the wigwams of the Huron, Pottawatomie, his more immediate allies, were near the place of meeting. Hither came deputations from the Iroquois, Delaware and Seneca of the east and from the Illinois and all the other numerous tribes of the northwest. The council fire was lighted and the pipe of peace was passed around the dusky circle.

Then Pontiac, the tall and stately chieftain, arose and addressed the assemblage in strains of impassioned eloquence. He spoke of their former happiness under the mild sway of the French and detailed the wrongs inflicted on them by the English. He repeated the fabrication of the traders that Onontio, their great French father, was hastening on his soldiers to help them subdue

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<sup>123</sup> \* As a historical souvenir, possibly of some interest, I hereby present to this Society, in behalf of Mr. Payne's family, this cannon ball, picked up hot from the ice on the river in front of the present Wyandotte by Mr. Payne, Sr., during these disturbances. Mr. Payne came to Michigan in 1831 and resided at the locality of Wyandotte till 1854, when he removed to his farm on the Monguagon, adjoining the Eureka county tract on the latter's southern edge, and fronting on the Detroit river. Mr. Payne hearing firing went on the ice to see if a crossing was being attempted by the so-called patriot forces. His man, who accompanied him, called out, " Here, boss ! Here comes a good wicket ball," at the same time striking it with an ax which he carried, as with a bat. The concussion threw him on his back forcibly, severely injuring him. The ball was still hot when picked up, though rolling a long distance upon the ice. It had come straight from the British gun on the Canadian side.

the English. He described the numbers and the prowess of the tribes represented in council and spoke of the ease with which their united efforts could crush the English and restore the Indian tribes the undisturbed possession of the hunting grounds of their fathers. The destruction of Michilimackinac was allotted to the Ojibway, and of Fort St. Joseph to the Illinois; the forts east and south of Lake Erie to the different tribes of the Six Nations, while Detroit, the most important of them all, was reserved by Pontiac for himself and his allied tribes. The assembled chiefs expressed their approbation; other preliminaries were settled and with dance and carousal the vast assembly dispersed."

We have given the account of this council as described by the historian, at length, for the purpose of calling particular attention to it, especially as regards the great number of savages who were probably in attendance, and for the opportunity it offers of locating its scene with more definiteness and accuracy than by the statement that it was held on the banks of the Ecorse.

The banks of the Ecorse are everywhere, on both sides, low and marshy and forbidding, the stream almost unapproachable except by canoe from the Detroit River, except as it has been made approachable by artificial means, with much filling in for approaches to the bridges which span its channel. The necessity of easy access to good drinking water alone, for such a multitude, which could not be found in the murky stream, but which could be had pure and limpid in the clear flowing Detroit, would make these banks a very unsuitable and unlikely site to be selected for the purpose of the encampment, but the banks of the Detroit, both immediately above and below the mouth of the Ecorse, furnish all the conditions necessary. To the north of the Ecorse stretches a half mile or more of a high bank bordering a deep channel, within a few feet of the shore. Here is where the village of Ecorse or Grandport stands, a very old French settlement. On the south side stretches for 20 or 30 rods a similar, but lower, bank. This is the river front of the farms of the late Judge H. H. Emmons, and below, that of the late Mr. George Clark. It was doubtless on the river front of what is now the Ecorse village that the dusky warriors gathered in council.

About the same distance south of Wyandotte as is the Ecorse above, the Monguagon, a sluggish, marsh-enclosed, fresh water lagoon, rather than stream, opens into the Detroit. This stream, now known as the Monguagon, is marked on the map attached to Stone Quarry Creek. Both this creek and the neighboring territory took their names from the village of the Wyandottes, Maguaga, which occupied the site of the present city of Wyandotte. The next township south of Wyandotte is Monguagon, in which is the village of Trenton, opposite Grosse Isle. The creek opens into the Detroit, nearly opposite Sibley's limestone quarries, and extends up northwesterly through the farm of Mr. George Payne.<sup>124</sup>

Across this creek on Mr. Payne's land are still to be seen the remains of a corduroy crossing said to have been constructed by Hull's army on the way from Dayton to Detroit, through a then

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<sup>124</sup> \* Lossing's History of Hull's campaign of 1812

almost unbroken wilderness. There can be little doubt that this is the case, as it is within an enclosed field back from the present road or any other road known to the present generation and back from the wide and deep water and flanking marsh nearer the mouth of the creek, and is where a crossing could more readily be constructed.

Besides this, Mr. George Payne, Sr., lately deceased at an advanced age, came to the Monguagon in 1831, when the facts connected with the history of the campaign and the war would be familiar with the numerous resident Indians as well as the comparatively few whites. These Indians, it will be recollected, were allies of the British, and under Walk-in-the-Water and others fought with the British at Van Horn's defeat and massacre at Brownstown, and again soon after were defeated and routed with great slaughter at the battle of Monguaga, on the present site of Wyandotte, by Col. Miller.

The following is a brief account of the affair as gathered from Cooley's history of Michigan:

“Colonel Van Horn had been sent out from Detroit to open communications and to bring forward much needed supplies for want of which the garrison at Detroit were greatly suffering. Van Horn had been met by a party of British and Indians from Amherstburg, his detachment defeated and massacred. It is almost certain that the British commander at Amherstburg was kept informed of the designs and movements of the American troops at Detroit, for Colonel Miller, with 600 men, was afterwards sent to open communications and bring forward supplies from French town, now Monroe. At Monguaga a force of British and Indians entrenched was met by Miller, was attacked and routed in August, 1812.”<sup>125</sup>

Says Lossing in relation to the fight: "A citizen of Detroit, who had joined the expedition, as he dashed ahead, was shot dead near the cabin of Walk-in-the- Water, the hostile Wyandotte chief, near Monguaga." (This must mean the village, because) "The day was waning and Colonel Snelling and his men were approaching the oak woods near Monguaga, not far from the Detroit River, when they received a terrible volley of musket balls from a line of Indians and British in ambush." The oak woods just below the village of Monguaga or the present Wyandotte (partly on the Eureka Company's land and partly on Mr. Payne's farm) were still standing and known by that name in the early days of Wyandotte. A part along the bank of the Detroit River, along the front of Mr. Payne's farm, being known as Fox Bridge, has been gone for a good many years. On receiving the volley from the enemy, a charge was made by Miller, and the whole line gave way "and was pursued by the cavalry for more than two miles, with great slaughter."<sup>126</sup>

Another point of historical interest which we shall mention, though not yet on our side of the river, one with which all Wyandotte duck hunters are as familiar as with the Monguagon or Grosse Isle marshes, is the River Aux Canard, emptying into the Detroit river on the Canadian

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<sup>125</sup> Harper's Monthly, May, 1863.

<sup>126</sup> Loessings War of 1812

side immediately opposite Wyandotte. This is the point to which Colonel Cass of Hull's army, afterwards territorial governor, minister to France, democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1848, etc., advanced on his expedition for the capture of Amherstburg. He fought and defeated the enemy at this point, and was turned back by orders from Gen. Hull, who had received news of its reinforcement from Niagara, recrossed the river at Detroit, and this was followed by the surrender of Hull.

Mr. Daniel Goodell, of Ecorse, previously referred to in a foot note, was a young man in Hull's army and was accustomed to take a much more lenient view of this act of Hull's than history has adjudged it worthy of. Mr. Daniel Goodell and Mr. Peter Perry, who lived near neighbors on the river road just beyond Wyandotte, (both recently deceased nonagenarians,) were both participants in the exciting events of the war of 1812 on this border, but on opposite sides, Goodell in the American army, Perry in the British.

Their children intermarried and a host of descendants call either of them grandfather. They have buried the hatchet of their grandfathers and were all loyal and patriotic during the rebellion and fought on the same side. <sup>127</sup>

We must now come down to a more recent period for events of interest to record regarding this locality; to a point which marks the beginning of the tide of immigration hitherward of a different class from those who first came to trade with the Indians or in government services, as were those who came when Detroit was but a trading post and a military garrison. Soon after the conclusion of the war of 1812-15, New Englanders and New Yorkers began to make their way beyond Lake Erie. Farms began to be sought for by those who had heard of the wondrous advantages and beauties of the country. The era of agricultural development and a higher stage of civilization were approaching, and there were not wanting those who were appreciative of the beautiful banks of our river as a site for their future homes.

Mr. George Clark came to the site of Wyandotte first in 1817, and resided in a log house, now gone, but standing a few years ago on the river road just below the shipyard. This house, he states, was said to have belonged to and had been occupied by the celebrated chief, Blue Jacket. It was in 1818 that the government road called the Detroit and Monroe was constructed by soldiers, and in this year the land along the river having been surveyed was put on the market. The bidding was very spirited and some sold as high as \$40 per acre. Among the bidders he

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<sup>127</sup> \* Near the center of the Wyandotte, north and south, there was formerly a marshy creek extending from its outlet in the Detroit River up across Biddle Ave., and thence northwesterly through the city; its outlet was through Chestnut St. from Biddle Ave. to the river. It had a deep marshy border from above the main thoroughfare, now Biddle Ave., to its outlet. It has now for a good many years been filled in with cinders from the mills. It was crossed by a culvert. The writer's office stands on the bed of the former stream, as does the Presbyterian Church on the opposite side of Biddle Ave. It is stated on the authority of Mr. Payne that the first casualty to Colonel Miller's force occurred very near this locality

mentions the familiar names of Colonel Mack, J. R. Williams, Gen. McComb, Major Biddle, Major Kearsley and Dr. Delaran.

We may conclude that a fictitious value was created by an artificial boom; after modern methods, or by the enthusiasm of a lively competition born of sanguine expectations, when we see that more than thirty years later this same tract of 2,200 acres, on a portion of which Wyandotte is built, was purchased by the Eureka Iron Co. from Major Biddle at \$20 per acre, just one-half the amount that was bid for some of the land in 1818.

Although a new era had dawned and emigration and civilization were advancing, yet in some respects there seems to have been a retardation if not retrogression ; at least the facilities of travel and communication seem not to have advanced with equal pace with the needs, for Mr. Clark says that after a short stay on his first visit, he sailed back to Cleveland and on the whole voyage did not see a solitary sail or vessel (the days of steamers on the lakes had not yet come) except a very small one lying at Maiden and two at Detroit. "There were said to be not more than six or eight on all the lakes, excepting the remains of Perry's fleet."

Compare this statement with that of the description of Detroit in 1793 by Rev. O. M. Spencer, who when a lad of twelve had been captured by the Indians. "In the spring of 1793 there were anchored in front of the town (Detroit) three brigs of about 200 tons each the Chepeway and Ottawa, new vessels carrying eight guns each, the Dominion, an old vessel of six guns, and a sloop, the Felicity, of about 100 tons, armed with only two swivels, all belonging to His Majesty George III. and commanded by Commander Grant. There were besides several merchantmen, sloops and schooners, the property of private individuals."

As illustrating the meager facilities for travel on the upper lakes, even at a much later period, when the tide of emigration had fairly set in, and the region beyond the lakes and entrance to the promised land of the western prairies was sought by this natural highway, I may mention the fact that in 1832, my father wishing to go from Detroit to Chicago, could only succeed in finding passage by a schooner to St. Joseph, on the Michigan shore of Lake Michigan, whence he made his way to Chicago around the head of Lake Michigan, on foot, meeting no settlement except at Michigan City, where the first building was being erected.

We are not sure but that even in 1793 there were more war vessels on the lakes than at the present time, but contrast the account of the merchant marine of even the time of Mr. George Clark's first visit, in 1817, with the mighty procession of the immense and magnificent steam propelled vessels, compared with the few tiny and sail driven vessels of that day ; a constant and uninterrupted procession day and night, from the disappearance of the ice in Mackinaw straits and the Sault St. Marie, in the spring, till their closing again in November, all in full view from where stood the log cabin of Blue Jacket, in which Mr. Clark had resided, on the banks of the Detroit.

Standing there, he might now see passing, the largest steamers from the extremes of the lakes, Duluth and Chicago, laden not only with the wheat and other products of the great northwest, but with the teas and silks of China and Japan, and the sugar and fruits of the Sandwich Islands and California, and the products of Oregon and Alaska, followed by the immense barges laden with the iron and copper of Lake Superior, some of these rounding to and tying to docks at Blue Jacket's home to discharge their cargo at the furnaces which have consumed in charcoal the forests in which he was wont to hunt the bear and deer ; or by the lumber barges in majestic tows from northern Michigan and Wisconsin, or by cargoes of salt from the Saginaws and other of the numerous salt producing points, or the products of the fisheries planted on every island, point and shelving beach of the lake and river shores. \*<sup>128</sup>

These, together with sail and steam pleasure yachts flitting here and there like a swarm of butterflies on the wing, make the river a beautiful sight to look upon at almost any time from April to November, and the constant agitation of the waters, if not calculated to impart to them healing virtues, like to that of the biblical pool, when the angel stirred the waters, has at least imparted growth and strength and wealth to the communities and general development to the tributary country.

As regards the agricultural development of this immediate neighborhood, it, in common with much of the border territory, has not, perhaps, been equal to that of much later settled interior southern parts of the State. This is in part owing to difference in habits and tastes of early settlers, and also partly to the fact that much of the land about, instead of being taken up for farms by intending permanent settlers, fell into possession of those able and disposed to hold it for prospective value. And this was why the locality of Wyandotte was selected for furnaces and rolling-mills by reason of the heavily wooded tracts in all its neighborhood. As we have seen, the land about here was thrown open to purchase by the government at Washington, in 1818. Its adaptability for cultivation had been known from its earliest settlement.

Says Cooley's History of Michigan: "There were, by actual count, in 1793, four hundred and forty- two (442) farms, mostly at Frenchtown on the Raisin, where the French had begun to settle in 1784; a few on Grosse Isle and some on the Rouge and other streams flowing eastward. Among the streams flowing eastward, we presume, was the Ecorse. This we judge to be so from the report of M. D' Agremont, which seems more descriptive of the physical characteristics of the land below the Rouge than at Detroit.

"M. D' Agremont\* left Niagara June 24, 1708, for inspection of the posts of Detroit and Michelmackinac, and from his report to M. Vandreuil I gather the following:

He disputes the description of the soil and its products as given by M. La Motte (Cadillac) and others. He describes it as consisting of a sandy surface, nine or ten inches deep, beneath which is

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<sup>128</sup> Early History of Michigan, by Mrs. Sheldon.

a clay so stiff that water cannot penetrate it. The timber he describes as small, stunted oaks and hardy walnuts. He acknowledges that the land produces good Indian corn, but says it is because the soil is new and he does not believe the fruits of Europe can be brought to perfection because the roots of the trees stand in the water. Considerable cider is made there, but it is 'bitter at gall.'

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As regards this a foot note he says, 'probably made of crab- apples, a spontaneous production of the country.' It must be remembered that the settlement at Detroit was not made till 1701, many years after the settlements above at Michilimackinac, Sault Ste. Marie and points on Lake Superior, which points had been reached and with which communication was kept up from Montreal by a short route by way of the Ottawa river, a traverse to the Georgian bay and thence by canoe again to these points, and that after the settlement at Detroit and the establishment of Fort Ponchartrain, under M. La Motte Cadillac, jealousies arose on the part of the upper settlements, established for trade only and deprived of the same agricultural advantages of the lower settlement, by reason of high latitude, long winters, rocky land, etc., especially unsuitable for raising maize and fruits and by reason of the inducements offered the natives for settling at Detroit and bringing their trade thither.

This jealousy very likely colored the report of M. D'Agremont, and dictated its disparaging character ; nevertheless the description of the soil and the trees, standing with their roots in the water could hardly apply to the high bluff on which Detroit was located, while it did describe very clearly much of that below the Rouge where probably the farms were located, the observation of which led to the description ; and whoever for instance may have observed the orchard on Judge Emmons' farm on the borders of the Ecorse, especially in the spring of the year or in times of high water, would have recognized the accuracy of the description of the roots of the trees having an appearance at least of standing in the water, and yet no better fruit is raised than in that same orchard and in others in like soil and situation.

As regards the bitter cider referred to, and as the foot note suggests, probably made from the indigenous sour crab, it is certain that the remains of old Indian orchards of a fruit much superior to the indigenous crab still exist on the banks of the Rouge and below Ecorse, and may it not be, as Mr. Bela Hubbard suggests in his very interesting book "Reminiscences of Half a Century," that both the apple and pear were indigenous here, particularly as he shows that most excellent varieties have here been developed from ordinary stock, and as the crab was undoubtedly indigenous, has it ever been tried what varieties might be developed from that by selection and cultivation in this, for these fruits, evidently so congenial soil and climate? <sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Early History of Michigan, Mrs. M. E. Sheldon

<sup>130</sup> \* When a lad, near a half century ago, I recollect well the visits with other boys we were wont to pay on nutting expeditions, to the woods, to a very luscious and sweet apple-bearing tree, standing alone of its kind on the edge of the bush on one of the farms below the city. It may have been on Mr. Hubbard's farm, near where the M. C. R. R. tracks now cross it. It was a large apple and the tree was certainly a waif, developed possibly from a seed deposited in the excrement of a bird or beast. This tree in uncultivated but virgin soil had developed a fruit for lusciousness

In 1818 the Indian title to the land along the river having been extinguished, and the tribe removed further back, the land was brought into market as we have seen; the tract on which Wyandotte is built was purchased by Major John Biddle. This tract comprised 2,200 acres, with two miles frontage on the river and the same depth.

As regards Major Biddle's occupation of it, I shall quote from a letter from Mr. Wm. Biddle, a son of the major, since the transfer living on Grosse Isle. He says: "My father purchased from the government and the patent was given, I think, in Madison's time. It was sold to the Eureka Iron (Co. in 1853 or '54, I think, for \$20 per acre, or \$44,000. My father built his homestead in 1835, and in 1836 moved his family from Detroit into the same. We lived there ten years. The property was heavily timbered, immense oaks and other forest trees covering nearly the whole tract. There were fields on the river bank running from what was then George Clark's farm on the north, to the land now owned by George Payne on the south, and extending in width to the road. There were also two fields, one at the north end of the house and the other at the south end, of about the same width as those on the river. However, my father's love for trees was so great that what he considered a clearing afforded great amusement to practical farmers and others passing the house.

We were chiefly dependent in those early days on runaway slaves for farm laborers, sometimes having as many as fifteen on the place, the proximity to Canada offering them an inducement. " There were large numbers of Indians at times on the farm. They were Wyandottes, but I do not] know of what particular branch. They had a burying ground just at the site of the saw mill below the works (rolling mills) and another somewhat back in the woods, about a mile south of our house.\*

It was in the latter that the chief Walk-in-the- Water was buried, but his remains, so we were told, were removed to the east to grace a museum or to gratify some antiquarian. This latter cemetery was burned over at an early day."

In 1853 the Eureka Iron Company was organized. Among the stock- holders were E. B. Ward, V. Tracey Houc, S. M. Holmes, Philip Thurber, Benjamin Vernor, Harmon DeGraff, T. W. Lockwood, S. M. Kendric, and others. In 1854 the Biddle tract of land was purchased by the company. On the first visit of a party of these gentlemen to their purchase, says Mr. John S. VanAlstyne, who has been officially connected with the enterprise from its start, and who was then present, the exclamation was repeatedly made by Mr. Thurber: "How like an English park."

I regret to have to state that the magnificent forest trees then still 'standing, which made the- scene so like an English park, and an opprobrium to Major Biddle's farming in the eyes of his

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and size not unworthy the finest grafted varieties. There was somewhere near this tree a fine variety of choke cherry tree, a great bearer.

neighbors, have almost entirely disappeared, many killed by the acrid, creosote-laden smoke from the charcoal kilns which at one time stood on the northwest corner of the rolling mill grounds, where now stands the bank block and Eureka Co/s office in the very heart of the city. Many did so trivial a circumstance to refer to is done not only as attesting to the beauties of the location as it appeared to members of the party at that time, but also as corroborating Mr. Wm. Biddle's statement in regard to his father's clearings for farming purposes, as to the impression they made upon the more practical, if less aesthetic, farmers of the neighborhood.

In 1855 the first blast furnace and merchant bar mill were erected with other necessary buildings, a large boarding house, etc. To these have been added by the company a second and larger blast furnace and various additions to the rolling mill for railroad iron, boiler plate and all other products of a well-equipped mill. At the beginning of this new order of things over the graves of Blue Jacket and Walk-in-the- Water, the only buildings standing on the whole tract were the already rickety and dilapidated log cabin of the former, which, however, continued to be tenable and tenanted for several years, and the Biddle homestead, which became the principal hotel of the place for many years, passed through vicissitudes of several partial conflagrations, has been altered and repaired and still stands, probably the most substantial wooden structure in the place, though erected fifty-three years ago. It is now owned by and is the residence of Mr. Thomas Watkins, who is in the employ of the company.

In 1872 or '73 the extensive ship yard for the construction of iron vessels was established under the superintendence of Mr. F. E. Kirby. In addition to these major enterprises there have been induced to locate here other factories employing many operatives ; among these, the stave and hoop factory of Shelley & Co., the Burrell & Whitman hoop heading and cheese-box factory a very large concern, also the Detroit Cooperage Co's factory of similar products, and notably the long wool rug factory of J. H. Bishop, a peculiarly Wyandotte enterprise, having had its beginning in a small venture in this place, and in consequence of want of moisture in times of drought, the clearing off of the trees generally hastening evaporation from the ground, and the grading and draining of streets and lots hastening the discharge of the rainfall, but more were cut down by owners of lots as the first improvement, the room being wanted for gardens and fruit trees, while there were still plenty of forest trees to be seen all around ; now the forests too have gone. But they were not content to cut down alone those on the lots, but destroyed also those in the streets abutting their premises. Of the magnificent grove which surrounded the old Biddle homestead but three or four remain.

On my own premises two primitive hickories still stand, their being permitted to remain and occupy ground that might be utilized for other than aesthetic purposes being a constant source of wonder and even of protest to many of my fellow citizens, in front of the grounds of the River Park Hotel opposite, a few only of a formerly large number remain, one of these, a magnificent towering whitewood (*Tulipifera Liriodendron*), having the scar of the axeman's work, when the former owner was about to have it sacrificed, but on my urgent appeals to " spare that tree,"

consented to let it stand, and in June, with its magnificent covering of large tulip blossoms, is the glory of the street.

Not more than twenty-five of the primitive growths still remain but as many of the streets are now well ornamented and shaded by growth of maples and other trees since then set out, the destruction of the former is not so much noticed. grown by the enterprise and business push of its owner to a business of large and constantly increasing importance. This is a source of special pride and interest to Wyandotte because of the fact that the owner of this alone, of all the large manufactories, is a resident of Wyandotte and is therefore more than all the others personally interested in the growth and all that concerns the welfare of the place, which interest has been manifested in various ways and numerous generous acts, especially in the reading room and public library supported mainly by his generosity.

The fact of the owners and stockholders in its manufacturing establishments generally being non-residents of Wyandotte has been a great drawback to its prosperity and its advance in wealth with all that that implies, because not the profits but only what has been paid out for labor has remained in the place, and though from this and other causes the expectations of its founders and hopes of its early settlers have not been altogether fulfilled, yet it is almost certain that its natural advantages must draw other enterprises until in the not distant future it will yet become an important manufacturing center.

During the war of the rebellion, Wyandotte, in common with all towns built up by iron manufactories, participated in the activity imparted particularly to that branch of manufacturing, and received an impulse which gave it a rapid and continuous growth for a number of years succeeding the close of the war. Indeed, it continued until the depression of 1873, which was, as I suppose, but the natural reaction from the unnatural activity of a long period of successful prosecution of almost all manufacturing enterprises.

During the war, though the place was not noted for having sent out many with epaulettes or shoulder straps, yet more returned with them. Her youth, more especially, were represented in the ranks, and she responded promptly and fully to all requirements for her quota, and supplied volunteers to every branch of the service by land and water, and enriched southern battle fields with the blood of some of the most promising and best beloved of her sons. They were among the rough riders of Sheridan, and marched through Georgia with Sherman, as they were also in all the campaigns in Virginia. Among the organizations especially and largely represented were the 4th, 14th and 24th Infantry (the latter the Wayne county regiment of the Iron Brigade at Gettysburg), the 1st (Brodhead's) cavalry, largely represented from this place and surrounding townships, the colonel himself a resident of Grosse Isle, and also the 9th cavalry, commanded by Colonel David, also of Grosse Isle.

From the 24th, among the first to fall, was young Asa Brindle, a nephew of Captain E. B. Ward, a young boy just arriving at manhood, who fell at Fredericksburg, and of those 350 killed, wounded and missing at Gettysburg, Wyandotte and Ecorse (for Wyandotte was still a part of Ecorse) bore their full proportion. Wyandotte continued an integral part of Ecorse Township until 1866. Then by reason of its rapid growth during and immediately after the war, the increase of valuation in assessment rolls and increasing need of local improvements, she sought and obtained from the legislature a separate municipal organization under a city charter.

The township of Ecorse was no less noted in those days for astute and sharp managing political leaders who could always succeed in having the important township officers elected from the outlying townships, such men as naturally had a care for the assessment and expenditure of township taxes after methods which, according to their judgment, would do the most good and which did not accord with the views of taxpayers of Wyandotte. In fact, it was the old story repeated of protest against taxation without representation but with resort to peaceable measures for redress. It may be said, too, as having its bearing on the matter, that the political affiliation of the two parts was different ; Wyandotte being a manufacturing town was of course republican, while Ecorse township was largely democratic.

Under the city charter Mr. John S. Van Alstyne was elected the first mayor. The writer had the honor of serving as an alderman in the first council.

During the twenty-one years in which she has enjoyed the privileges of a city charter, she has made various creditable municipal improvements, among which, we may mention, her city hall and a well-equipped fire department, with appurtenances, and has expended large sums already for sewerage. Her schools are organized on the graded system; the curriculum of her high school designing to furnish those candidates seeking it a preparation for entrance to the freshman class of the University, whither she has already sent many scholars, and her graduates are filling various honorable and influential positions in various fields and callings. The school board has three fine brick school houses, one in each ward; the higher departments occupying the central building.

Seven religious organizations are represented by church edifices and regular services; the Roman Catholics and the Methodists being among the first to occupy the field, as is usually the case in new places of special promise. The former had an organized parish, and a plain but suitable frame building, erected in 1853, and were ministered to for some years by Rev. F. De Prater. The old building still stands, and is used for a parochial school, a new and handsome brick church, St. Patrick's, having been erected some six or seven years ago. The German Catholics also have a large brick church, built in 1870, named St. Joseph's.

In 1857, the Methodists and Presbyterians were having services on alternate Sundays in the old school house, a frame building no longer used for that purpose. The Methodist church, at that time, was ministered to by that well known and revered veteran, Mr. Jacokes, still living at

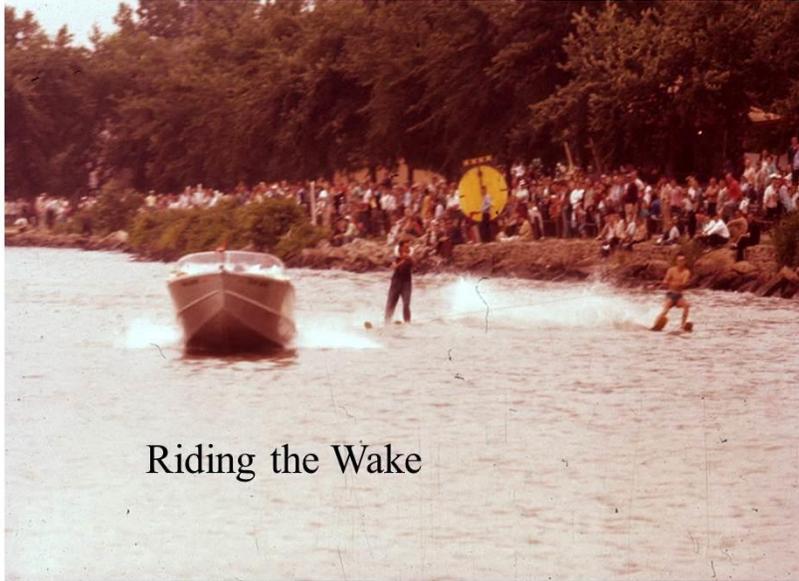
Pontiac, where he acts as chaplain to the Eastern Michigan Asylum for the insane. The Presbyterians were served by Reverend Mr. Nail, since deceased at an advanced age. The Methodists erected their building in 1860. The German Lutherans were the next to build, in 1862. St. Stephen's Episcopal parish was organized in 1860, and the church edifice erected in 1867. The Presbyterians built in 1867-68, and the German Reformed, an offshoot from the Lutherans, in 1870.

Wyandotte, then, with its liberal supply of churches, its generous school accommodations and its various social and beneficiary organizations, offers the means and instrumentalities of ministering to the various needs and aspirations of modern civilized communities, religious, educational and social.

In conclusion, if less than the last half century, I might almost say the last quarter, has seen the increasing business needs and enterprises reclaiming, improving and occupying for business purposes at least twelve of the twenty- four miles of the American shore of the strait, (excepting perhaps a couple of miles of front at Detroit still unoccupied) how long will it be before the business needs, advancing in geometrical ratio, will have occupied the whole of the remaining border? Already Detroit extends her manufactories to the Rouge and along its borders. The three miles of Ecorse's marshes must soon be reclaimed and occupied. Who then can doubt that in the not distant future the modern but more magnificent Byzantium, the product of a higher civilization, will extend itself along the whole of the borders of this western Bosphorus, embracing at least in connecting suburbs all the at present distinct but nearly contiguous towns? These appellations are appropriated not by a mere seeming geographical similarity, but more justifiably by historical parallels. For here, like to its eastern prototype, has been the point of crossing of national boundaries by hostile armies. And as the former during the 2,500 years of its historical existence has been under dominion of Greek, Persian, Roman and Turk, so the latter in less than 200 years of settlement has acknowledged the sway of Aborigine, French, English and finally American. <sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> [Michigan Historical Collections, Volume 13, p. 308](#)



Riding the Wake

### **Maebelle Mason and Mamajuda Island Light**

It seemed like an ordinary day at the lighthouse, but the morning of May 11, 1890, proved to be one of the most exciting days of fourteen-year-old Maebelle Mason's life.

Although it started out like any other Detroit River morning, the morning of May 11, 1890, proved to be one of the most exciting days of fourteen-year-old Maebelle Mason's life. Maebelle was the daughter of Captain and Mrs. Orlo James Mason, and Captain Mason was the keeper of the Mamajuda Island Light in the lower Detroit River across from Wyandotte, Michigan.

### **Maebelle Learns Light keeping on Mamajuda Island**

After spending her early childhood in St. Louis, Missouri, where she was born in 1875, Maebelle came with her parents to the maritime world of the Great Lakes and light keeping. Men dominated the 19th century lighthouse world as the primary keepers and wage earners.

Sometimes their wives took over as keepers when they became ill or died, but the records show a majority of male light house keepers. The records don't always reveal that women and children played equally important roles in light keeping and that tending the light was indeed a family affair.

Occasionally women like Abigail Becker and Katie Walker and their lifesaving deeds were documented, but many lighthouse women lived, performed brave deeds, and died unrecorded and unrecognized except by their families and friends. Maebelle Mason was young, brave, and her father was a light keeper so her contributions were recognized.

## **Captain Mason Goes Shopping on the Mainland**

In June 1885, Captain Orlo J. Mason was appointed keeper of the Mamajuda lighthouse in the Detroit River. Mamajuda Island, named for Mammy Judy a Wyandotte Indian woman, who established here fishing camp there and finally died there, stood at a junction of channels and long stretches of shoals that extended from the Island to the City of Wyandotte. In 1849, the United States Government built a lighthouse on Mamajuda Island and the keeper and his family lived on a small farm on the island.

Maebelle Mason had spent her childhood years learning self-reliance and reliability from her mother and father so she was ready for the task that she faced on the morning of May 11, 1890. That sunny morning in May, Captain Mason went to mainland Detroit for supplies, leaving his wife and daughter Maebelle alone at the lighthouse. He took the government boat, leaving a small, flat bottomed skiff lying on the island beach.

## **Maebelle Rows to the Rescue**

Shortly after Captain Mason left, Maebelle and her mother spotted the freighter C.W. Elphicke approaching close to the lighthouse. The master of the C.W. Elphicke, Captain Montague, leaned over the bridge rail and shouted a message. He said that a man was struggling in the water beside an overturned and sinking row boat about a mile upstream. The loaded C.W. Elphicke couldn't stop and rescue the man because of the strong current. Would the ladies let Captain Mason know about the man?"

The C.W. Elphicke chugged on and Maebelle and her mother dragged their skiff into the water. Reluctantly her mother agreed to let Maebelle rescue the man all by herself. Maebelle maneuvered the skiff into the river and floated with the strong current. She saw the man still clinging to the rowboat.

Maebelle rowed hard and a mile later, drew even with the overturned boat. Tugging and pulling at the man's clothing, she dragged him into her skiff and rowed back to the light house. Mother and daughter took him inside and made him comfortable. By the time Captain Mason returned from the mainland, the man had nearly recovered from his ordeal.

## **Maebelle Wins Medals and Remains Modest**

Word of Maebelle's daring rescue spread. The marine magazines of the day and the Detroit and Cleveland newspapers told her story. The Lighthouse Service awarded Maebelle the United States Life Saving Medal, which Commander Edwin W. Woodward of the United States Navy, presented to her. She received it at the Cadillac Hotel in Detroit during the National Convention of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1890. She accepted the medal modestly and said that she

had just performed an act of humanity.

The Ship Masters Association also presented her with a gold lifesaving medal with a Maltese Cross and a gold chain attached. Her medal was inscribed “Presented to Miss Maebelle L. Mason for heroism in saving life, May 11, 1890, by the E.M.B.A. of Cleveland.”

For years after, all of the steamers flying the Shipmaster’s Association pennant saluted Maebelle with their horns and whistles while passing the Mamajuda lighthouse.

### **Maebelle's Memory Lingers**

Captain Mason tended the Mamajuda Island Light for nine years and did his job so well that there was not one complaint against him. He ended his light keeping career tending the Ashtabula Harbor Light in Ashtabula, Ohio. Maebelle Mason lived a traditional woman's life after her Detroit River rescue. On June 21, 1892, she married James L. Connell, a stationary engineer. In 1896 they had a son named Orlo James, in honor of her father and a daughter Corrine in 1901.

The C.W. Elphicke sank in Lake Erie off of Long Point Light on Tuesday, October 21, 1919. By 1960, high water had entirely swept away Mamajuda Island, including the light house. Only a few boulders mark the place it once stood.<sup>132</sup>

But the memory of Maebelle Mason, the teenage heroine, perseveres.

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<sup>132</sup> *She Captains: Heroines and Hellions of the Sea*, Joan Druett, Wickbook, 2000  
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## Chapter 19 – Rivers of Downriver- Detroit River



### **Detroit River**

The Detroit River- Detroit meaning strait, is a 32-mile-long connecting channel stretching from Windmill Point Light in Lake St. Clair to the Detroit River Light in Lake Erie. The origins of the Detroit River stretch back in geological time about 10,000-12,000 years ago when it plummeted 1,300 feet deep and flowed northward in a series of rapids and southward toward the Gulf of Mexico. Then glaciers encased the River and its watershed in ice and when they retreated about 10,000 years ago they left limestone, dolomite bedrock, clay, silt, and pockets of loose sand. These geological ingredients combined to form the Detroit River of today.

The Detroit River expands to 1.5 miles wide, flows with an average current of 1.7 miles per hour, and reaches its deepest point between Belle Isle and Zug Island, at 50 feet. It contains more than 20 natural islands and provides an essential habitat for fish and wildlife. A vital link in the chain of Great Lakes flowing to the Atlantic Ocean, the Detroit River serves as an international

border between Canada and the United States and is a key link for Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway commerce. More goods cross its border than any other international border in the United States.

The Canadian part of the Detroit River watershed is approximately 90 percent agricultural, with the remaining ten percent consisting of urban, residential, and industrial lands around Windsor in the northern part of the River. The American part of the watershed is about 30 percent agricultural, and the remainder is 30 percent residential, 30 percent urban, and ten percent industrial. The Detroit River is the source of drinking water for over five million people and the source of fascinating history for a variety of peoples.

### **Detroit River Heritage**

The native people of the Downriver area called the Detroit River Wawiiatanong – which means “the place of the turned channel.” Early visitors boating on the Detroit River’s surface at night or in foggy weather noted as had the Indians before them that when the sun rose it always seemed to rise in the wrong place. This phenomenon was due for to the strong river currents than to any ancient miracles, so they named it Wawiiatanong.

Archeologists estimate that for more than 7,000 years Native Americans lived and prospered along the banks of the Detroit River. They used the river for transportation and commerce, and the coming of the white man expanded and enhanced the central role of the River as a link between the east and the developing west. In 1679, 35-year-old Robert LaSalle became the first European to sail across Lake Erie and up the Detroit River and by 1701, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, the French explorer and founder of Detroit, had established Fort Pontchartrian/Detroit, the first European settlement. Cadillac described the Detroit River of 1702:

“This river is scattered over, from one lake to another on both the mainland and the islands with large clusters of trees surrounded by charming meadows. Game is very common as are geese, and all kinds of wild ducks. There are swans everywhere; there are quails, woodcocks, pheasants and rabbits, turkey, partridges, hazel hens, and a stupendous amount of turtledoves. This country is so temperate, so fertile, and so beautiful that it may justly be called, “The Earthly parade of North America.”<sup>133</sup>

An 1813 map of the Downriver area over 100 years after European settlers had moved into the territory showed that the Native Wyandot had a name for every place from Detroit to Monroe, including the Detroit River islands. They lived in long established villages along the banks of Ecorse Creek and in one called Monguagon on the site of present day Wyandotte. The village of Blue Jacket, the great Shawnee Chief, stood further down the River at what is now Riverview and Trenton. Politically, Blue Jacket advocated unifying the Indian tribes to stop the white

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<sup>133</sup> [Cadillac’s Village or Detroit Under Cadillac. Clarence Burton, 1896](#)

invasion of the Ohio Valley and for a time he was successful. After Blue Jacket's death, the Wyandot moved into his village and renamed it "Truago." Near the southern end of Grosse Isle stood the village led by Wyandot chief Adam Brown. "Brown's town" was another major Wyandot village and gave the present -day township its name.

The French Canadian voyageurs paddled up the Detroit River in birch bark canoes on their way to Green Bay to buy furs and soon French and British interests clashed and escalated into the French and Indian War. The French ceded the Detroit River region to the British and after the Revolutionary War; the British in turn, ceded the region to the Americans.

The coming of the white man turned Cadillac's "earthly paradises of North America" into a waterway of trade and commerce. In 1855, the Detroit River supported a whitefish population plentiful enough to create more than 100,000 for markets in St. Louis, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Natchez. Deposits of coal, zinc, timber, lead, copper and salt stimulated manufacturing along the shores of the Detroit River by the mid-1800s. Soon an extensive ship building industry, factories, and gradually steel and automotive industries.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Detroit River that had been the main transportation link between neighbors developed into a hub of commercial and recreational activity. A 1908 *Detroit News* article listed the 1907 tonnage passing through Detroit as 67,292,504, compared to London's 18,727,230 and New York City's 20,390,953. Shipyards, including Great Lakes Engineering in Ecorse and River Rouge dotted the banks of the Detroit River.

The Detroit River has provided a habitat for industry, an accommodation that has challenged its health and well-being for decades. Industries- especially the chemical, automobile and steel industries- have used the river for manufacturing operations, transportation, and dumping. Most of its fish population has been contaminated with mercury and PCBs. In the environmental scheme of things, the Detroit River symbolizes the industrialized American River and the growing awareness of ordinary citizens and professional environmentalists alike of the interconnectedness between land communities, water, and people.

Industry and people brought pollution and degradation to the Detroit River and its tributaries including the Rouge River, Ecorse Creek, and the Huron River. Michigan Congressman John Dingell pointed out at the close of the Twentieth Century that "the Detroit River, like many rivers located in industrial centers around the Great Lakes, has lost more than 95 percent of its coastal wetland habitats, and despite the importance of such lands, these habitats continue to be destroyed and degraded."

## Resurrecting the Detroit River



The life of Gus Pappas has flowed with the Detroit River through seasons of conflict and change. Scion of Greek immigrant Sam Pappas, he became intimately acquainted with the Detroit River when as a young boy, he fished and boated on its surface and hunted for muskrat along its shores for his father to cook and serve in his riverside restaurant. As he grew older he joined the crews of the Ecorse Boat Club as it sculled and stroked its way across the surface of the Detroit River to countless championships. The splashes of competition and shouts of encouragement from the shore still hang in the air above the River and shadow shells from the Detroit, Wyandotte, and countless other rowing clubs glide through its waves.

As the years flowed along, Gus watched the River become muddy and sluggish and he often had to row through patches of rusty colored polluted water. “I’d put my oars in the water and watch orange liquid roll off of them,” he said.

Gus remarked that the muskrat that had lived for centuries in the marshes along the River, was becoming scarce. "They are clean animals and live in marsh grasses and like water plants. They didn't do too well for a long time in that river."

During the "bootlegging years" between 1920-1933, the Detroit River at times became a literal river of rum. Some historians estimate that virtually 75 percent of illegal bootlegging liquor traveled the Detroit River on its way to thirsty Americans. When Prohibition ended in 1933, even while the bootleg liquor still flowed, the Detroit River waters were being altered by greater pollutants than bootleg liquor. Industry and people on both the American and Canadian sides of the river reshaped it in ways that the rumrunners could never have imagined. The Ambassador Bridge and the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel were built in 1929 and 1930, during the Depression.

Henry Ford manufactured his automobile in and around Detroit and intense automobile and steel production and chemical and other industries began to mar the face and body of the River with pollution. The River had already carried disease epidemics like cholera and typhus in the late 1800s, but the industrial pollution and PCB and mercury contamination of the 1960s and 1970s threatened its very lifeblood.

In the 1960s, the Detroit River was one of the most polluted rivers in North America, and the Rouge River caught fire. Although the Detroit River and the Rouge River are still both identified as Great Lakes Areas of Concern or pollution "hot spots," Dr. John Hartig, director of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge points out that 40 years after the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act there has been a substantial cleanup of the Detroit River. "For the first time since 1916, we have whitefish reproducing in the Detroit River."

In April 1970 Great Lakes Steel Corporation in Ecorse joined the Metropolitan Detroit Water Department to neutralize two Detroit River pollutants. Great Lakes Steel began to use pickle liquor, a waste product to steel cleaning to remove phosphates from sewage at Detroit's Treatment plant. By itself, pickle juice turned the Detroit River orange and polluted it and the phosphates from the Water Department caused rapid growth of algae which decomposed used oxygen in the water and increased the "death rate" of the river.

In the 1970s, Great Lakes Steel led environmental incentives to clean up the Detroit River, and in 1998, a renewed effort to preserve and purify the river gathered a fresh head of steam and chugged ahead into the horizons of possibility, like the steamships that once plied the River. In 1998, the Detroit River was honored as an American Heritage River and became the first river with a dual designation when Canada also named it a Canadian Heritage River. This dual designation encourages American and Canadian cooperation in wise management and environmental restoration and underlines its significance as a national treasure.

Dr. A.M. Shannon of the Metropolitan Detroit Water Department and John Urban, Superintendent of Plant Operations at Great Lakes Steel cooperated in developing the method of

treating sewage with pickle liquor. All of the pickle liquor that Great Lakes Steel generated was used in sewage treatment. At a cost of \$500,000 Great Lakes Steel built a collecting system, three 70,000-gallon storage tanks and a loading station for tank trucks. Especially designed rubber lined tank trucks transported the pickle liquor from the steel plant in Ecorse approximately three miles to the sewage treatment plant.

### **The Detroit River, an American Heritage River.**

In 1998, President Clinton named the Detroit River an American Heritage River and in 2001, Canada awarded the Detroit River a Canadian Heritage River designation, making it the first International Heritage River system in the world. The Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative sponsored community based projects to promote environmental stewardship and to celebrate Downriver heritage and culture.

### **Detroit River - International Wildlife Refuge.**

At a conference in 2000, the then Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Herb Grey and U.S. Congressman John Dingell challenged a group of individuals and local, regional, state, and federal agencies in the United States and Canada to define future goals for the Detroit River Ecosystem. The conference participants created a consensus statement titled "A Conservation Vision for the Lower Detroit Ecosystem." They visualized that in ten years the lower Detroit River ecosystem would be an international conservation region where the health and diversity of wildlife and fish would be protected in existing habitats and restored in degraded ones. Ecological, recreational, economic, educational, and quality of life benefits would be sustained for present and future generations.

During the more environmentally proactive 1960s, a television advertisement featured a noble Native American paddling his canoe up the polluted Hudson River. As he paddled along gazing at the River, the camera panned in for a close up of his face and followed a solitary tear flowing down his cheek. It is not difficult to imagine him transported to the Detroit River as Jennifer Reed of the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research at the University of Windsor did in her keynote address at the State of the Strait Conference in 2001. In her address Reed posed some questions that Native Americans would ask us if they travelled up the modern Detroit River. They included:

Where are the whitefish and sturgeon? Where are the wetlands, inlets and small streams? Where are the deer and bison, the otter and mink? Where are the trees and grasses and prairies? What are those great steel boats? What is all that noise? And what is that smell?

In December 2001, President George W. Bush signed the International Detroit River Wildlife Refuge into law, the first such refuge in North America. Included in the bill is an appropriation to purchase land outright as well as establish an agency to manage the Detroit River habitat

mosaic. The Sibley lake plain prairie complex, located within the lower Detroit River ecosystem, could be purchased and protected under the provisions of this law. In 2012, the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, based in Grosse Isle, work to preserve and protect the Detroit River and its heritage.

In September 2012, Canadian and American officials gathered on Fighting Island in LaSalle, Ontario, to sign a cooperative agreement for the Western Lake Erie Watersheds Priority Natural Area Initiative. The Initiative is the Canadian response to the U.S. Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and symbolizes the Canadian commitment to the Canada-U.S. Conservation Vision for the Lower Detroit River Ecosystem. In conjunction with these efforts, [The Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative](#) has the mission of linking communities, residents, and visitors through greenways trails including and along the Detroit River.

### **Detroit River Diversity.**

The Detroit River has one of the highest bio diversities -diversity of plants and animals- in the Great Lakes Basin and the United States and Canadian governments have designated the River as a Biodiversity Investment Area. Despite being a heavily travelled corridor for Great Lakes' shipping, the Detroit River is also known for its duck hunting and fishing.

The River is located at the juncture of the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways and about three million ducks, geese, swans, and coots migrate annually through the Downriver area. More than 300,000 diving ducks stop each year to feed on wild celery beds in the River. Containing 65 species of fish, the Detroit River has an international reputation for its walleye fishery which brings in an estimated one million dollars to the Downriver economy each spring.

### **Bringing Back the Wetlands.**

Eighty-seven percent of the U.S. shoreline and 20 percent of the Canadian shoreline of the Detroit River have been modified with revetments and other shoreline hardening structures and many of the coastal wetlands have been lost from dredging, bulk heading and backfilling. Most of the remaining wetlands are found on the River islands. Recently, wetlands loss along the shores has diminished, but loss from agricultural conversions, shoreline modification, marina development, and urban growth is still concerning

### **Contaminated Sediments and Lingering Pollution Problems**

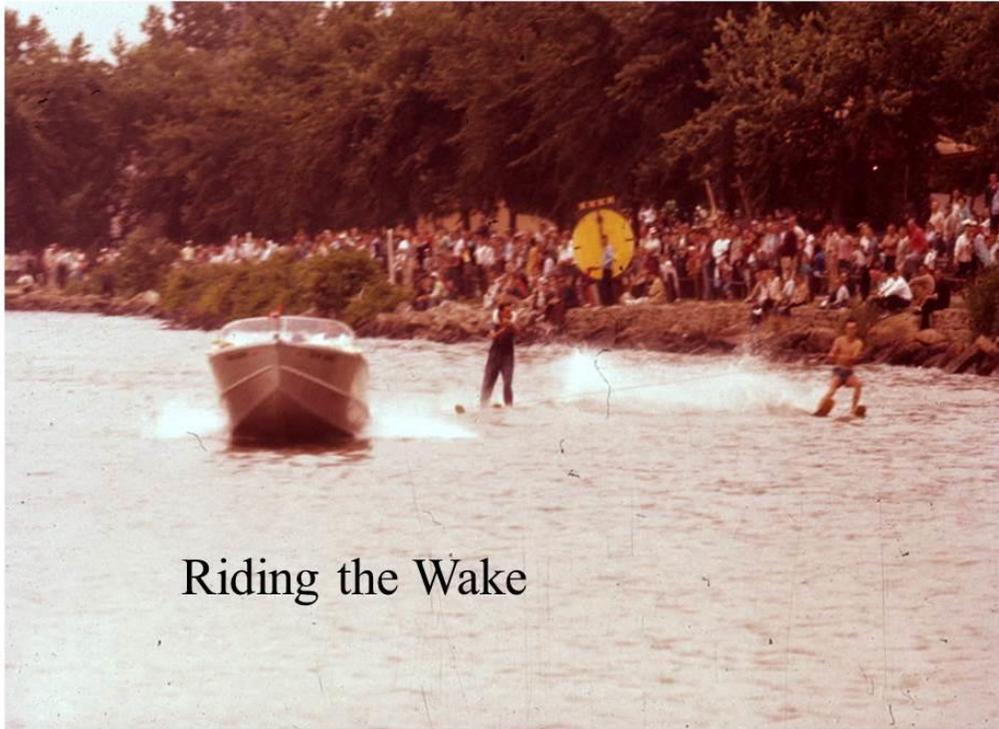
Industry along the Detroit River, especially along the United States side, contributed to the contamination of sediments on its bottom. Materials like heavy metals including mercury, oils, and PCBs are lingering reminders of the automobile and steel industries of the Industrial

Revolution that built and prospered Detroit and Downriver cities. In 2004, the Detroit River's "[Black Lagoon](#)" in Trenton, Michigan became the first contaminated sediment site to be cleaned up under the Great Lakes Legacy Act with the collaboration of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Jennifer Grandholm administration in Michigan. The project was completed using \$4.2 million in Legacy Act funds and \$2.3 million from the Clean Michigan Initiative.

Despite dramatic improvements in Detroit River water quality, the Michigan Department of Community Health still issued fish advisories in 2012. The Department cautioned people not to eat carp from the Detroit River and that for health reasons some people should eat only limited amount of specific sizes of redhorse sucker, freshwater drum, northern pike, walleye, and yellow perch because they contain toxic substances.

The Detroit Wastewater Treatment Plant labored to reverse the excess of nutrients that caused algae in the Detroit River and Lake Erie. Between the late 1960s and mid-1980s, the Detroit Plant reduced the loading of phosphorus from its plant to the Detroit River and since then the phosphorus loading has been stable.

For all of the technological sophistication of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the interdependence of people and their rivers is a concept that people still struggle to understand or incorporate into their lives. The stark, non-political, infinitely moral truth is that if and when we destroy the Detroit River and its tributaries, we are destroying ourselves. One more question should be added to Jennifer Read's questions that Native Americans have the moral right to ask succeeding generations. What if anything are we willing to do to preserve and protect the Detroit River and its heritage?



## **Lake Sturgeon and the Detroit River - Historic Partners**

Lake sturgeon and the Detroit River share a common sometimes tragic history of near death and a long, slow return to life.

Although lake sturgeon and the Detroit aren't exactly the same age, they are at least near contemporaries. The Detroit River flows through 345-million-year old bedrock and lake sturgeon genealogy stretches to 100 million years ago. Lake sturgeon descend from a prehistoric fish that resemble fossils from the Upper Cretaceous Period of 100 million years ago when dinosaurs roamed the earth and the Detroit River traces its ancestry to the Wisconsin Glacial Episode.

During the Wisconsin Glacial Episode of more than 10,000 years ago, glaciers covered most of Canada, the Upper Midwest, and New England. When the glaciers retreated, they left scour and melt water at their rims, melt water which created the Great Lakes. Between Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair the glaciers carved out an enormous stretch of limestone and dolomite bedrock more than 345 million years old that sloped north from Grosse Isle, leaving pockets of loose sand with at least 100 feet of silt and clay. These glacial leftovers created the Detroit River.

## **Lake Sturgeon Family Secrets**

Lake sturgeon or *Acipenser fulvescens*, one of 20 species of sturgeon, live in the Mississippi River, Hudson Bay, and Great Lakes basins and they are the largest native fresh water fish in their habitat. They are bottom feeders with a skeleton partially consisting of cartilage and skin with rows of bony plates. Sturgeons use their long shovel-shaped snouts to stir sand and silt on the beds of rivers and lakes while they are feeding. They usually have four barbels surrounding their mouth to help them sense and find their food.

Biologists consider lake sturgeon a near shore, warm water species, preferring water temperatures between mid-50s to low 70 degrees Fahrenheit and depths of 15 to 30 feet. Lake sturgeon can reach weights of up to 200 pounds and grow to be seven feet, with females developing longer and heavier than males. The rate of growth in lake sturgeon depends on temperature, the availability of food and water quality. They feed on insect larvae, crayfish, snails, clams, and leeches that they find along the bottom of lakes and rivers.

Many lake sturgeon make individual decisions about where they spend their time. Some of them remain in small territories during the summer months, and others travel long distances to spend the summer. Adult sturgeons have been observed to intermix in the Great Lakes when they are not spawning, but they return to spawn in the streams where they were born, often traveling far up rivers in the spring.

Female sturgeon become sexually mature between 21 and 33 years, most often from 24 to 25 years and male sturgeon mature sexually between eight and 12 years, although sometimes as late as 22 years. Sturgeon spawn on clean gravel shoals and stream rapids from April through June, choosing water temperatures of 55 to 64 degrees Fahrenheit. A female lake sturgeon can deposit from 4,000 to 7,000 eggs per pound of her weight. After they hatch, some lake sturgeon remain in the rivers where they are born for the first summer of their lives. The typical lifespan for lake sturgeon is 55 years for males and 70 to 100 years for females.

## **Lake Sturgeon and the Detroit River- A Shared History**

When French and English settlers established ribbon farms bordering the Detroit River, they noted that there were so many sturgeon during the spring spawning that they could capsize fishing boats. Most nineteenth century sturgeon fishermen couldn't imagine limits to the numbers of sturgeon that they took from the Detroit River if they bothered to imagine at all. Lake sturgeon seemed to flow as agelessly as the Detroit River itself. They had provided food for many Native American tribes including the Huron and the Wyandot.

Clarence Burton in his *The City of Detroit Michigan, 1701-1922*, wrote that up until 1888 the Detroit River front scenery consisted of fifteen miles of marsh and a few fishermen's shanties. Muskrat and ducks watched the seasonal fishermen angling for sturgeon and the great ships

passing back and forth between the Upper and Lower lakes carrying freight and passengers.

Until about 1860, fishermen considered lake sturgeon trash fish and believed that their flesh and eggs had no commercial value. Fishermen routinely killed them because they often damaged commercial nets and threw them back into the River. Fishermen piled up lake sturgeon on shore to dry so they could burn them. They fed sturgeon to pigs, dug them into the earth as fertilizer and stacked them like cord wood to fuel steamboats.

Then slowly the demand for lake sturgeon steaks and lake sturgeon eggs to be made into caviar increased, and so did sturgeon fisheries. In 1880, sturgeon fisheries from the St. Clair River in the north down to northern Lake Erie in the south produced four million pounds of sturgeon and in 1889 the catch numbered more than 4,000 sturgeon.

### **Fox Island Fisheries**

A *Detroit Free Press* story dated July 12, 1903, revealed the scope of the sturgeon fisheries in the Detroit River. In 1903, many fishermen named Fox Island, a small wooded island near the southern tip of Grosse Ile and the northern end of Bois Blanc, about a mile up the Detroit River from Sugar Island, the best sturgeon fishery in the United States. Every spring and summer hundreds of sturgeon weighing from 50 to 300 pounds each, were taken from the Detroit River and profitably sold, with some fishermen making as much as \$100 a day.

In July 1903, there were three fishermen living on Fox Island, and several others scattered along the river, but in the spring at the height of the fishing season, at least 15 to 20 fishermen made Fox Island their headquarters. They lived in seven fishermen's houses or shanties. On the American end of the Island, a little bay nestled and two of the houses faced the bay. The upper end of the island rose about a foot above water level, but at the downriver end a bluff about ten feet high ran about half the length of the island. Two of the shanties were located on the Canadian side of the island, along the face of the bluff. Several years before, workers on Fox Island had stored the dynamite used for the blasting operation on the Limekiln Crossing until it mysteriously exploded. Then workers thought it prudent to store the dynamite elsewhere.

### **Fox Island Sturgeon Fishing Required Special Skill**

Fishermen did not use poles, lines, spears, or nets to catch sturgeon; instead, they had to use a special rigging consisting of a strong line often reaching 150 feet long which they stretched across the bottom of the river from two anchors. Ropes held the long line up from the bottom of the Detroit River by ropes which ran to the floats on the surface. Small anchors were tied by short ropes along the bottom line. The anchors held the long line to the bottom of the stream, and the floats held it up just enough to allow the hooks to touch the bottom. Across the line about a

foot apart, the fishermen fastened scores of snubs or short lines, about two feet long. Each snub had a large needle pointed hook about three inches long and very strong fastened to it.

Instead of their mouths, sturgeon have a large opening on the underside of the head that they use to suck food from the bottom of rivers and streams. As the sturgeon swim along, the hooks catch in this opening and when they struggled to get free, they became entangled on the sharp prongs.

Each fisherman operated from one to one dozen big lines and examined them every morning to see how many sturgeon he had caught. Each fisherman used a boat to go to the floats and pulled them up. Even one big sturgeon on the line kept a fisherman busy and several fish kept him frantically active.

Passengers on steamers running to Sugar and Hickory Islands were accustomed to seeing miles of floats the size of paving blocks and set in rows to keep the sturgeon lines just at the bottom of the river. Visible for miles, the floats reached all the way from the middle of Grosse Ile to Lake Erie.

Before the United States government began deepening the Detroit River at Limekiln Crossing and using dynamite in its construction, hundreds of sturgeon were caught there and many were caught in the channel between Bois Blanc and the town of Amherstburg. Some of the old French settlers in Amherstburg spend a few weeks a year trying without too much success to catch sturgeon in their immediate neighborhood. Some fishermen also tried their luck between Bois Blanc and Sugar Island and as far into Lake Erie as Sandusky, Ohio, and others tried up the Detroit River near Peche Isle and Wolf's Point.

### **Landing Sturgeon**

A fisherman struggled to land a five-foot-long, 100 pound -or more- sturgeon propelled by determination to escape. The fisherman had to lift the fighting sturgeon into his boat which he did with large gaff hooks, which were short poles with heavy hooks fastened at one end. The gaff hooks were stuck into the sturgeon's side through the tough skin, and the fisherman quickly lifted the sturgeon to the surface by pulling on the float ropes. He flopped the fish into the boat and often the fish floundered around beating with its powerful tail. Many fishermen usually hit a big sturgeon on the head with a mallet to stun it.

A sturgeon fresh from the depths of the Detroit River resembled a shark but presented a pretty picture, showing a brownish gray back with a bluish coat and a pearly white underside smooth as velvet without scales. Many fishermen took their sturgeon to a pound, a cage in the Detroit River, made of boards on the sides and bottom with enough space between them to allow the free passage of fresh water, but spaced closely enough to keep the sturgeon from escaping. They kept the sturgeon alive in the pound until a weekly sturgeon buyer arrived.

After the fishermen checked their sturgeon lines and made necessary repairs, then they would fish for pickerel and bass or lounge by their shanties smoking and talking. Five or ten years before, the fishermen usually had good luck and a big catch, but in 1903 sturgeon fishing as an occupation took only part of the year.

### **Taking Sturgeon to Market**

The Fox Island fishermen and others along the Detroit River sold their sturgeon to buyers from Detroit for about \$11.00 each, no matter what the size. Many of the sturgeon weighed more than 100 pounds, enabling the seller to make a tidy profit. Sturgeon provided sturgeon steaks, a high priced luxury that topped many banquet menus.

A one-hundred-pound sturgeon generally yielded 25 pounds of eggs that were made into caviar, another luxury dish that was especially popular with rich people in the east and in Russia and Germany. Sturgeon eggs were packed in common salt and worth about 25 cents a pound, but after they were pickled for the table, they sold for much more money. As far as Detroiters were concerned, the Detroit River sturgeon provided the best sturgeon steaks and the best caviar in the world.

Sturgeon sounds or bladders that were formerly thrown away were sold at wholesale for \$1.25 a pound. From 20-25 sounds weighed a pound and they were used in purifying wines and whiskies.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Detroit served as the center for sturgeon buying and selling. Hundreds of Detroiters remembered when sturgeon were peddled on the streets for four cents a pound and the eggs and bladders thrown away. By 1903, so many sturgeon had been taken from the Great Lakes and the rivers emptying into them that their numbers drastically declined. The price for sturgeon rose to 30 cents a pound and the eggs were made into caviar that sold at retail for \$1.25 per pound can.

### **The Detroit River and the Sturgeon : Used up and Thrown Away?**

After decades of fishing, so many individual fishermen and fisheries took so many sturgeon that they quickly decimated the lake sturgeon population. In 1895 the lake sturgeon harvest numbered over 2.3 million kilograms, but by 1905, the number had fallen to less than 0.45 million kilograms. Pollution from growing lumber and steel industries along the Detroit River and development that destroyed their habitat also helped decimate the Detroit River lake sturgeon population. The slow reproductive cycle of sturgeon also worked against them. Most individual sturgeon caught before they reach twenty years old have never bred and females spawn only once every four or five years. Harvesting of breeding females for their roe also damaged population size. Few modern sturgeon reached the extreme old age or large size that their ancestors achieved.

Lake sturgeon populations throughout the Great Lakes have not recovered from decades of exploitation and they are estimated to be at less than one percent of their former abundance. Michigan, as well as 19 of the 20 states within their original range, lists lake sturgeon as a threatened species.

### **Lake Sturgeon and Detroit River Revival**

With millions of years of survival behind them, sturgeons have reached the endangered, but not the extinct stage of their lives. Beginning in the 1970s, lake sturgeon did not spawn in the Detroit River because of pollution, overfishing and habitat loss, but in the early decades of the twenty first century, lake sturgeon are again spring spawning in the Detroit River.

In 1997, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources formulated Michigan's first lake sturgeon rehabilitation plan that identified spawning places and information on seasonal movements and habitat use, but the lack of current data on Great Lakes sturgeon stocks has hindered rehabilitation efforts.

In the spring and summer of 2000 and 2001, researchers implanted transmitters to track ten adult lake sturgeon, evaluate their habitat use, and identify possible spawning sites. The researchers verified one spawning site in the Detroit River by recovering sturgeon eggs deposited on egg collection mats anchored at the site. They used telemetry data to locate several other possible spawning sites.

An April 2010 story in the *Detroit News* sounded hope for a lake sturgeon come back in the Detroit River. For the last four decades, environmental laws have targeted and reduced many pollutants in the Detroit River -- oil, phosphorous, chlorides, mercury, PCBs and municipal waste-- and once again, birds like ospreys and eagles and fish like lake sturgeon are increasing in numbers.

According to John Hartig, manager of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge on Grosse Ile, "This is clearly one of the most unique ecological recovery stories in North American history. If you look at how polluted we were...holy cow, have we come a long way." He hastens to add that there is much more to be accomplished in rejuvenating the Detroit River and the lake sturgeon, but the effort is ongoing.

Fishing for lake sturgeon has not yet been restored in Michigan. With a few strict exceptions, federal laws forbid sport anglers from keeping lake sturgeon, but the fact that now there are lake sturgeon to protect is a positive sign of their revival in the Detroit River.

Habitat restoration is an essential part of the revival of lake sturgeon. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service, the U.S. Geological Service and the Essex (Canada) Conservation Authority worked together on the first bi-national lake sturgeon habitat restoration project on the Detroit River. They built spawning beds at the north end of Fighting Island.

In 2012, Michigan organizations and government agencies including the Michigan Sea Grant team and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources built nine fieldstone and limestone underwater reefs in the Middle Channel of the St. Clair River to give lake sturgeon more spawning grounds. The Middle Channel supports one of the largest remaining populations of lake sturgeon in the Great Lakes.

Justin Chiotti, a fish biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, another agency involved in the reef projects, estimates that there are about 30,000 adult lake sturgeon at the Blue Water Bridge where Lake Huron flows into the St. Clair River, about 15,000 lake sturgeon in the Middle Channel of the St. Clair River, and 3,000 to 5,000 in the Detroit River.

As long as the Detroit River continues to keep the revival pace with the lake sturgeon, people in the twenty second century and hopefully beyond will enjoy these prehistoric Michigan natives.

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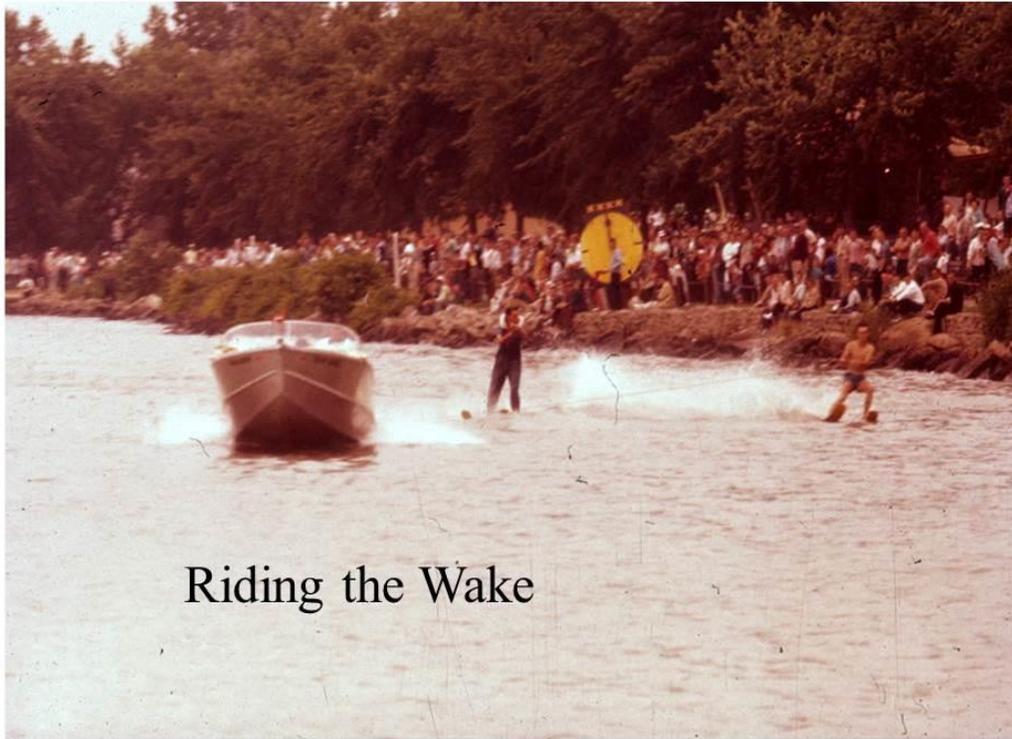
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## The Hacketts of Bob-Lo Island



Modern day mariners and maritime history lovers contemplate the *Edmund Fitzgerald* when November winds roar wildly over Lake Superior and ships founder, but a storm on Lake Superior in 1905 blew through the lives of Mrs. Thomas Hackett and Mrs. Thomas Honner with the same impact. Like the *Fitzgerald* which was built in the Great Lakes Engineering shipyards

in Ecorse and River Rouge located along the Detroit River, the *Ira H. Owen* capsized in a Lake Superior storm and the *Owen* too had intimate connections with the Detroit River.

Mrs. Thomas Hackett was Christaina Honner Hackett and the sister-in-law of Mrs. Thomas Honner. The fierce November 27 and 28, 1905, storm on Lake Superior claimed her brother Thomas, the third person she had lost to the Great lakes. Mrs. Elizabeth Duffy Honner, a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, knew and understood Lake Michigan moods enough to beg her husband Thomas to leave the lakes. He listened to her plea for a time, but once again surrendered to the lure of the lakes and went down with the *Owen*.

The connection of the Hackett family to the Great Lakes begins in Scotland and travels across the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Erie and to a farm outside of Detroit. Part of the story centers on an island in the Detroit River called Bois Blanc, "White Woods," or Boblo Island, named after the birch and beech trees growing in the region. An English corruption of the French words, Boblo Island is located directly west of Amherstburg, Ontario in the Detroit River on the Canadian side of the border. The island is about 2.5 miles long, 0.5 miles wide and 272 acres in size. The main north-bound shipping channel of the Detroit River lies between Bois Blanc Island and the Amherstburg mainland. A stone lighthouse built in 1836 on the southern tip of the island marks the historical beginning of the Detroit River navigation channel for ships traveling upriver from Lake Erie.

In the 1700s the French established a French Catholic mission for Wyandot or Huron Indians on Bois Blanc Island and it became strategically important when the British built Fort Amherstburg, now Fort Malden to guard the passage along the Detroit River. Guns from the fort could reach the island across the navigable river waters and secure it. During the War of 1812 Shawnee Chief Tecumseh used the island as his headquarters and Canadian rebel sympathizers used it as an invasion point during the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1838. The Bois Blanc Lighthouse, built in 1836, played an important navigational part in the Detroit River.

Bois Blanc or Boblo Island quickly became the center of lives of James and Mary Hackett and their children. James Hackett and his family established strong ties with Bois Blanc Island from the time they arrived on the Detroit River. His father James Hackett lived and died in Scotland where he married and reared a family. His son James was born in 1787 in Aberdeenshire, Scotland and was a sailor on the Atlantic Ocean for many years where he had many adventures and survived battles with a watery death. On one occasion, Captain James Hackett's brig carrying a full load of lumber wrecked in a storm. The people on board survived fourteen days without food and a French brig finally picked them up. As it turned out, the brig picked them up just in time because they were all so starved that they were ready to eat comrade who had drowned.

Before he left Scotland for Canada, James Hackett married Mary Riley who was born in Ireland and they had a family of ten children.

Captain Robert John Hackett.-Born in 1827. Died in Detroit, 1879. Great Lakes Captain.

Dr. James Hackett.-Lived and practiced medicine in Newmarket.

Captain Henry Hackett- Twin of Alexander. Born in 1821. Died in 1886. Great Lakes Captain. Built small ships on the Detroit River and at Owen Sound, Ontario.

On February 1, 1886, Captain Henry Hackett died in Amherstburg, Ontario at the age of 65. He and his brother, J. H. Hackett, organized the Northwestern Transportation Company in 1869.<sup>134</sup>

Alexander Hackett twin of Henry.-a merchant in Toronto

Dr. Joseph Hackett-Practiced in Toronto and Amherstburg where he died.

Eliza Jane Hackett.. Wife of Captain David Trotter of Amherstburg.

Christiana Hackett-died at 16

Thomas Hackett-1840-1894. First master of the Ministique. His son Captain Ralph Hackett, was killed in a tug accident in 1895.

Andrew Hackett-Born 1845-Operated river tugs along the Detroit River and the Canadian Lighthouse Service. Took over the Bois Blanc Island Light from his father in 1872, and his son Charles took over as keeper from him.

Francis B. Hackett-Born 1842. Owned a number of tugs and small steamers along the Detroit River.

### **The Career of Captain James Hackett, Keeper of the Bob Island Light**

James Hackett came to the Great Lakes in 1816 and began his sailing career on the lakes in the full rigged brig *Wellington* which was built and launched in October 1816 a short distance from Windsor, then called Moy. In 1817, Captain Hackett and the *Wellington* towed the schooner *Axmouth*, of about 30 tons burden and also built at Moy, to Sault Ste. Marie. The *Axmouth* had been built for the Northwest Fur Company and Captain Hackett had been designated to deliver her. When she arrived at Sault Ste. Marie, the *Axmouth* was hauled over the Portage on the Canadian side and relaunched into Lake Superior, which made her the first vessel

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<sup>134</sup> The 1870 United States Census states that Henry A. Hackett, 39, was a sea captain. He was born in Canada and in 1870 he had four children: Hellen, 13, Eva, 11, Grant, 5, and Frank, 7.

ever taken over the Sault Ste. Marie portage.

In 1819, Captain Hackett commanded the schooner *Champion*, and during subsequent seasons the schooners *Perseverance*, *Elizabeth*, *Victory*, *Brothers*, *Tecumseh*, *Good Intent*, *Sterling*, and *Erie and Ontario*. Maritime records show that Captain Hackett lost at least three of these ships. The *Brothers* sank near Port Burwell in 1833. He built the *Perseverance* which was lost in Georgian Bay in 1821, and the *Sterling* was lost at Goderich, Ontario in 1833.<sup>135</sup>

In 1828, he owned and sailed the *Alice Hackett*, a wooden schooner. On November 4, 1828, the *Alice Hackett*, carrying passengers, household goods, and livestock broke up at Fitzwilliam Island at the mouth of Georgian Bay. Tradition has it that the intoxicated crew after freely imbibing liquor being transported by the local barkeep, drove her ashore on the southern end of the island. The *Hackett* had been evacuating the military base at Drummond Island to Pentanguishene for the government. The passengers, their goods, the intoxicated crew, and Captain Hackett survived.<sup>136</sup>

In 1836 Governor General Francis Bondhead appointed Captain Hackett light keeper on Bois Blanc Island and served as keeper until 1872. Family tradition says that Mary Hackett was responsible for her husband's appointment as Bois Blanc light keeper. With babes in arms, Mrs. Hackett visited the Governor General and petitioned so effectively for the position for her husband that Governor General Bondhead immediately gave him the position and it stayed in the family for seventy years.

Another version of the story goes that Governor-General Bondhead passed Mrs. Hackett and the family dog "Sailor" one day. He admired the dog and asked if he could buy it. Mrs. Hackett said "No, but he could have the dog for the lighthouse keeping job for her husband. Whatever version of the story won him the position, as a token of appreciation, James and Mary named a son born on April 10, 1842 at the lighthouse, Francis B. Hackett in the Governor General's honor.<sup>137</sup>

*The Detroit Free Press* noted the death of Captain James Hackett which took place on September 24, 1872. According to the *Free Press*, Captain Hackett was the oldest of the Great Lakes navigators and a man of strong memory and easily recited many interesting incidents from his life on the sea and on the lakes. The flags of the shipping were at half-mast to honor Captain Hackett. Mary, his wife, and several of his children survived him.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Detroit Free Press, April 13, 1864. An Old Lake Pioneer

<sup>136</sup> Great Lakes Shipwreck File, Alice Hackett

<sup>137</sup> Francis B. Hackett biographical sketch; Commemorative Biographical Record of the County of Essex Ontario-containing biographical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and many of the early settled families. Illustrated. Toronto: J.H. Beers & Co., 1905. Pp 558,559.

<sup>138</sup> Detroit Free Press, September 25, 1872

## **Robert Hackett**

Captain Hackett's son Robert or Bob Hackett also became a Great Lakes captain and enjoyed the honor of having a tug named for him. The tug *Bob Hackett* was a wooden propeller driven steam tug built in 1869 by J.P. Jones of Amherstburg, Ontario and later owned by Odette & Wherry of Windsor, Ontario.

On September 8, 1885, the *Bob Hackett* collided with the Western Line propeller *St. Magnus*, bound from Kingston to Port Arthur, near the head of Bois Blanc Island in the Detroit River. Piloted by Captain George Odette, the *Hackett* was cut to the keel and took about three minutes to sink in sixteen feet of water. Luckily the *St. Magnus* picked up the *Hackett's* crew, but the *Hackett* sank so quickly that clothing containing money belonging to several of her crew went to the bottom of the River with her. One man lost \$160, another \$15, and a third \$20.

Captain Young of the tug *John Owen* passed up river and verified the report that the *Bob Hackett* was sinking and that her port light was just above water. The mate of the ferry *Hoper* reported that the lights shown by the *St. Magnus* were very dim and could hardly be seen when the collision occurred.<sup>139</sup>

The *Bob Hackett* had been sunk and damaged by fires several times. Within five years she was sunk at Windsor, Walkerville and Amherstburg, but always had enough insurance to raise her. She changed owners so often that it was difficult to keep track of her and there were many old outstanding bills against her or her former owners.<sup>140</sup>

On September 6, 1887, the *Detroit Free Press* announced that Judge Horne had given his decision in the case for damages that the owners of the tug *Bob Hackett* brought against the propeller *St. Magnus*. The *Bob Hackett* and the *St. Magnus* had collided between Limekilns Crossing and Bois Blanc Island on September 8, 1885 and the *Bob Hackett* sunk and proved a total wreck. Judge Horne found the *St. Magnus* at fault.<sup>141</sup>

The 1870 United States Census shows Robert I. Hackett, age 41, as a ship owner. Other people in his household were Allea J., 40, George A., 15, Mary A., 17, George H., 16, Robert, 14, Charles, 12, Walter, 2, and Honorre Shahan, 30.

## **Alexander Hackett**

The Canadian Census of 1881 lists Alexander Hackett, 49, as a merchant. His household included Margaret 55, and Emily, 19, Eliza, 18, Margaret, 16, and Alice 11. He and his brother

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<sup>139</sup> Detroit Free Press, September 25, 1872

<sup>140</sup> Canadian Census, 1881

<sup>141</sup> Detroit Free Press, September 6, 1887

Henry, were twins.

### **Henry Hackett**

*The Detroit Post and Tribune* of May 14, 1880 reported that Captain Henry Hackett of Amherstburg had gone to Winnipeg to superintend the construction of a government lightship to be used on Lake Winnipeg.<sup>142</sup>

Henry and Alexander Hackett were twins. Henry was born in 1832 at the lighthouse on Bois Blanc Island. The Canadian Census of 1881 lists him as age 49, a mariner; his wife Ida, 36, Franky, 15, and Grant age 13.

### **Captain Thomas Hackett-Great Lakes Captain-Born 1840. Died 1894.**

According to his obituary in the *Amherstburg Echo*, Captain Thomas Hackett was one of the best known and most skillful masters on the Great Lakes. He died of heart disease at on September 27, 1894, about 5 o'clock aboard his steamer, the *Volunteer*, lying at the foot of Orleans Street in Detroit. About 11 o'clock the previous evening he complained to his son, Norman, of a severe attack of what he thought was neuralgia and Dr. Lafferty was sent for. He ministered to the comfort of the sick man, and later his wife Mrs. Christiana Hackett attended him.

Captain Hackett spent a sleepless night, gradually growing worse. He complained of terrible pains at the back of his neck which spread slowly downward until they reached his heart, and he died. Mrs. Hackett was present at his death bed. Captain Hackett was a large man physically, but had suffered from poor health in the last three years, his maladies being catarrh and heart weakness.

Captain Thomas Hackett was born on Bois Blanc Island, where his father was lighthouse keeper on January 6, 1840. He was a sailor from age 14, his early experience being on sailing vessels. He began sailing with his brother Henry on the schooner *Conductor* in 1854, and in 1859, sailed the schooner *E.M. Peck*. In 1860 he sailed the schooner *Augustus Handy*, which was lost in Lake Superior on her first trip. He then commanded the schooner *Narragansett* and after that went into tugging and was master of the tugs *Zouave*, *William B. Castle* and *John Prindiville*.

Twenty-six years before that he superintended the building of the tug *Torrent* of Alger, Smith & Company and did his work so well that he was taken into the company's service as master of the tug. Later he commanded the tug *Vulcan* and steamers *Manistique*, *Schoolcraft* and *Volunteer*, the *Volunteer* being the largest raft towing steamer in the world.

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<sup>142</sup> *Detroit Post and Tribune*, May 14, 1880

It was while in the command of the *Vulcan* in 1880 that Captain Thomas Hackett one day sighted the Detroit passenger steamer *Marine City* on fire off Alcona. He at once let go his raft, steamed to the scene and by heroic efforts in which he was ably assisted by his crew, he saved the lives of some 70 or 80 people. A few who had, panic stricken jumped overboard before the tug arrived, were drowned. This would have been the fate of the majority on board had it not been for the tug, for not another boat was nearby at the moment, and the steamer burned to the water and sank.

The *Vulcan's* bow was partially burned away. Among the passengers saved were E.G. Voight, the wealthy Detroit brewer and his wife, and he presented Captain Hackett and Engineer McCabe who has been chief engineer of boats that Captain Hackett commanded for the past 27 years with gold watches and the rest of the crew were given silver watches. Upon his arrival back at Detroit, Captain Hackett was given a gold medal by the citizens.

Coolheaded, calculating, prudent and well-read in marine matters, Captain Hackett had no superior as a master, and was especially valuable in the raft towing business. He was married at Amherstburg on December 18, 1860, to Miss Christiana Honner, a sister of Captain T. Honner of Milwaukee and E.W. Honner of Malden, and resided on the river front below town on the farm now owned by N.A. Coste until he moved to Detroit about 11 years ago. He was a saving man and leaves his family in comfortable circumstances. He was a member of the A.O.U.W. and Shipmasters' Benevolent Association. His widow survives along with four sons and one daughter. The sons are Ralph, Thomas and Norman H. of Detroit, and Percy of Alpena, Michigan. Thomas and Norman are still home as is also daughter, Augusta M.

The surviving brothers of the Captain Hackett are Alexander of Colchester South, Captain Francis B. of Amherstburg and Andrew of Bois Blanc Island. Captains Robert J. and Henry Hackett of Detroit, Dr. James Hackett of Newmarket, and Dr. Joseph Hackett of Amherstburg, have all been dead for some years. Mrs. Captain David Trotter, the only sister to attain womanhood, is also dead.

The funeral took place on Monday afternoon at Detroit and was largely attended, a number of relatives from this vicinity being present.

General Alger, for whom Captain Hackett sailed so long, said about him: "Captain Hackett's death is a great loss to us all. He commanded our steamers from the year we entered raft towing, and was always placed at the head of list of captains and given the best boats to sail. I feel almost as concerned over the sad happening as though it had been a death in my own family, for he was an unusually conscientious careful man and made few mistakes. I have arranged for a general promotion in the line. Captain William Rolls, of the *Gettysburg*, will take command of the *Volunteer*, Captain Currie of the *Torrent*, will sail the *Gettysburg*, while Ralph Hackett, son

of the Captain and now mate of the *Torrent*, will command her.”<sup>143</sup>

Less than a year later, Captain Thomas Hackett’s son Ralph was going about his daily tugging duties when disaster struck. On July 18, 1895, Captain Ralph Hackett piloted his tug *Torrent* into the St. Clair Lake Ship Canal. As the *Torrent* traveled up the canal, she tried to avoid a collision with the steamer *Yukon* in tow of the tug *Sitka* and became entangled in the tow line. The tow line swept the deck of the *Torrent* stripping it of everything movable. Captain Ralph H. Hackett and the wheelman were instantly killed, and a watchman was knocked over board and drowned. The dead are: John Callanach, wheelman of Marine City, Captain Ralph H. Hackett of Detroit and David Kennary, watchman, of Port Huron.

The *Yukon* was in tow of the tug *Sitka*. After passing the *Sitka*, Captain Hackett noticed that *Yukon* was steering directly into his track. He was too near the side of the canal to turn sufficiently to avoid a collision. Captain Hackett thought the only way to save his vessel from being crushed by the *Yukon* was to attempt to cross the tow line from starboard to port. As he reached the line, however, it straightened out and was just high enough to pass over the deck and taut enough to sweep everything off the *Torrent*, including wheelhouse, smokestack, etc.

Captain Hackett’s wife was asleep in her berth on the *Torrent*. The body of the Captain was brought to Detroit. Kennary’s body was sent to Port Huron. Callanach’s body has not been found.<sup>144</sup>

### **Captain Francis B Hackett-Great Lakes Mariner**

Captain Francis B. Hackett was born April 10, 1842, at the Bois Blanc lighthouse, and his early lullaby was the music of the waves. He attended school in Amherstburg, and the age of seventeen was ready to try his fortune on the lakes. He began in 1859, as a boy on the schooner *William G. Grant*, plying between Chicago and Montreal, in the grain business. He transferred to the schooner *D.R. Martin*, still serving as boy, but next becoming a seaman on the schooner *John G. Deshler*. He built the tug *Minnie Martin*, which sailed for ten years and then purchased the tug *John Noyes*, and sailed that a year. He then built the passenger steamer *Robert Hackett*, which he sold after sailing two years, and then purchased the *Lake Breeze* which he sailed for one year and sold. During the following two years he sailed *The City of Dresden*, then took charge of the *Erie Belle*. After three years he bought the tidy little tug *Home Rule*, which he operates as a wrecking tug. His long experience on the lakes has made him familiar with all their moods, and few mariners have a better record as safe and reliable sailor.

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<sup>143</sup> Amherstburg Echo, September 28, 1894, p.5

<sup>144</sup> New York Times, July 19, 1895.

On February 6, 1866, Captain Hackett married Jean Gordon, who was born in Scotland, daughter of John Gordon. Her father was an uncle of John McLeod, ex Member of Parliament, and one of her sisters is the wife of J. Howard Hunter, inspector of insurance at Toronto. To Captain and Mrs. Hackett have been born the following children: Minnie, wife of Dr. M.E. Stafford of Detroit, has two children, Marjorie and Helen. Gordon, a dentist in practice in Detroit, married Lauren Hutton, daughter of Captain Hutton. Howard, a master mariner, in charge of the tug *Florence*, married Miss Elizabeth Vigar. Miss Annie is at home. The Canadian Census of 1881 records Francis and Jean Hackett and their children Mary 14, Gordon, 12, Annie, 7, and Francis H., 5.

Captain and Mrs. Hackett had a pleasant home situated on the river front at Amherstburg, in plain view of all the boats as they passed during the navigation season. Both were consistent members of and generous contributors to the Presbyterian Church. Politically Captain Hackett was identified with the Reform party. A.O.U.W.<sup>145</sup>

### **Andrew Hackett-**

Andrew Hackett succeeded his father James in 1870 as the keeper of the Bois Blanc Light and in 1901, Andrew's son Charles succeeded his father as light keeper. The Canadian Census of 1881 shows that a Andrew Hackett, born 1845, lived at Malden in Essex, Ontario. Thirty-six-year-old Andrew was Scottish and married to Agness, age 34. Their children were Henry A., age 13, May S., 11, David M., 9, Andrew R., 3, and Charles R., seven months old.<sup>146</sup>

### **Mrs. Thomas Hackett's Brother, Thomas Honner**

The family of Captain Thomas Honner traced its descent back to old Norman times, but his ancestors eventually settled in Ireland and his father Edward was born in Queen's County, Ireland. Edward Honner arrived in America about 1822, and after a brief stint at farming in New York, he moved his family to Cobourg, Canada. Thomas was born March 2, 1845 at Cobourg, Canada and his father moved the family to Amherstburg when Thomas was about three years

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<sup>145</sup> Francis B. Hackett biographical sketch; Commemorative Biographical Record of the County of Essex Ontario-containing biographical sketches of prominent and representative citizens and many of the early settled families. Illustrated. Toronto: J.H. Beers & Co., 1905. Pp 558,559. Parks Canada, Bois Blanc Lighthouse

<sup>146</sup>Canadian Census, 1881

old. Thomas and his brothers and sisters were educated in Amherstburg schools and he became a sailor at an early age. After a few years on the lakes he realized that he had to further his education so he attended the school at Oberlin, Ohio for two terms.

In 1862, Thomas signed on with the crew of the schooner *Narragansett* and spent almost two seasons on her. After the *Narragansett*, Thomas served on several other ships including the *Oneonta*, *Sarana*, *Thermutis*, *Sunrise*, and *Oakleaf*. Then he switched to tugs in the Detroit River and served as wheelsman on the *Prindeville* and *Castle*. For two seasons he was mate on the tug *Torrent*, owned by General R.A. Alger. In 1876 he became master of the tug *Hector* of Detroit and spent two seasons on her. After that he took charge of the *Castle* for the same company.

His reputation as a safe and reliable captain was by this time well established, and he was continuously employed in that capacity for some time, serving one year on the tug *John Owen*, towing rafts for General Alger. He served one season on the tug *Gladiator*, two years on the tug, *William A. Moore*, two years on the steam barge *Iron Age*, in the iron ore trade for McMillan & Co. and two years on the *Iron Duke* for the same company. He served two years on the barge *Morley* which had been rebuilt at Port Huron and christened the *Grand Traverse*. On leaving the *Morley*, he became captain of the *Wisconsin* and remained there until 1896, when the vessel was sold to the Crosby Transportation Company. Since April 1898, he served as the Inspector of Hulls in Grand Haven in which his sound judgment has been many times demonstrated.

He left Detroit and married a Grand Haven girl. She had a dread of the water and it was at her desire that he gave up his sea life for a time and became inspector of hulls at Grand Haven. This position he held for eleven years. But his love for the lakes led him to the captaincy of the *City of the Straits*, which plied between Muskegon and Chicago. It was only lately that he took the position as mate on the steamer *Ira H. Owen*.

He made his home at Grand Haven, Michigan, when on shore. He and his wife who was formerly Miss Elizabeth Duffy of Milwaukee, had three children: Belle, Thomas, and Elizabeth.<sup>147</sup>

Captain Honner was survived by a widow and three children in Grand Haven. Her sister in law Mrs. Thomas Hackett heard nothing from Mrs. Honner and she feared that the bereaved woman would be made insane by the blow.<sup>148</sup>

### **The Ira H. Owen**

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<sup>147</sup> History of the Great Lakes, Volume II. J.B. Mansfield, ed. Chicago: J.H. Beers & Company, 1899.

<sup>148</sup> Detroit Free Press, December 3, 1905.

Built at the Globe Iron Works in Cleveland, Ohio in 1887, the *Ira H. Owen* was a steel, bulk freight propeller. She went down in a fierce Lake Superior storm on November 28, 1905 near the Outer Island of the Apostles in Northern Wisconsin. Carrying a load of barley, she broke up offshore in 80-90 miles per hour winds and sank with all 19 hands, including Captain Thomas Honner.

The *New York Times* told the story this way:

*The Owen Went Down with Nineteen. 32 Vessels lost in all.*

Ashland, Wisconsin, December 1st. The steel steamer *Ira H. Owen*, with a crew of nineteen, is now known to have gone down in Lake Superior in the great storm. Its commander was Captain Joseph Hulligan of Buffalo, New York.

The *Owen* was last sighted about 40 miles off the Apostle Islands when it seemed to be in a bad way. Then the snow shut it from view.

Tonight Captain Chamberlain of the steamer *Sir William Siemens* reported that ten miles east of the Outer island he passed a mass of wreckage including life preservers marked *Ira H. Owen*.

Four vessels were reported lost today, including *the Owen*. The tug *Maxwell* and scow with ten men are lost. This makes the total death list 45. The steamer *Western Star* was wrecked at Ontonagon and the *Vega* at Fox Island. The total number of vessels wrecked during the storm of November 27 and 28 will start at 32.<sup>149</sup>

The *Detroit Free Press* reported the effects of the storm through the eyes of Mrs. Thomas Hackett. The story explained how she had already lost her husband and son to the lakes and now her brother had gone down with the *Ira H. Owen*. To make her situation even more desperate, her son Thomas was also sailing the lakes and all she could do was pray for his safety.

In her home at 411 Fourth Avenue, Mrs. Thomas Hackett mourns the loss of her brother, Captain Thomas Honner, drowned off the steamer *Ira H. Owen*. A cruel fate has pursued this woman throughout her life. When the ill-fated *Owen* went down it took with it the third of Mrs. Hackett's relatives who have met their deaths on the water. Husband, son, and brother are mourned by her.

Eleven years ago, Captain Thomas Hackett of the *Volunteer*, then head of the Alger line, died suddenly of apoplexy while his boat was tying up her dock in Detroit. Captain Hackett was a well-known vessel man and was for twenty-seven years the head of the Alger Line.

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<sup>149</sup> New York Times, December 2, 1905.

Eight months later the son, Ralph Hackett, was swept from the deck of the tug *Torrent* by the lines of the freighter *Yukon*, which was speeding through the channel of St. Clair Flats. His body was picked up a few days later, an ugly cut in his head showing where he had been struck by some object while he was hurled through space.

“Do you blame me for hating the sea,” sobbed the bereaved woman yesterday. “Think of losing my husband and then my son, and as if that were not enough, it has taken my brother from me too.”

To add the intensity of Mrs. Hackett’s grief, another son still sails the lakes. He is Thomas Hackett. Her nephew George Hackett is captain of the *Fleetwood*, and it is on this craft that the son Thomas sails.

“They say the *Fleetwood* is safe,” said Mrs. Hackett. “But I will not believe my boy safe until I hold him in my arms again.”<sup>150</sup>

Mrs. Hackett did hold her son Thomas in her arms again when he returned from his voyage on the *Fleetwood*. The United States 1910 Census shows Christiana, 68, as head of a household consisting of Thomas H. Hackett, 37, Rose E. Hackett, 24, listed as her daughter in law, and her son Norman H. Hackett, 33, and her daughter Augusta M., 33.

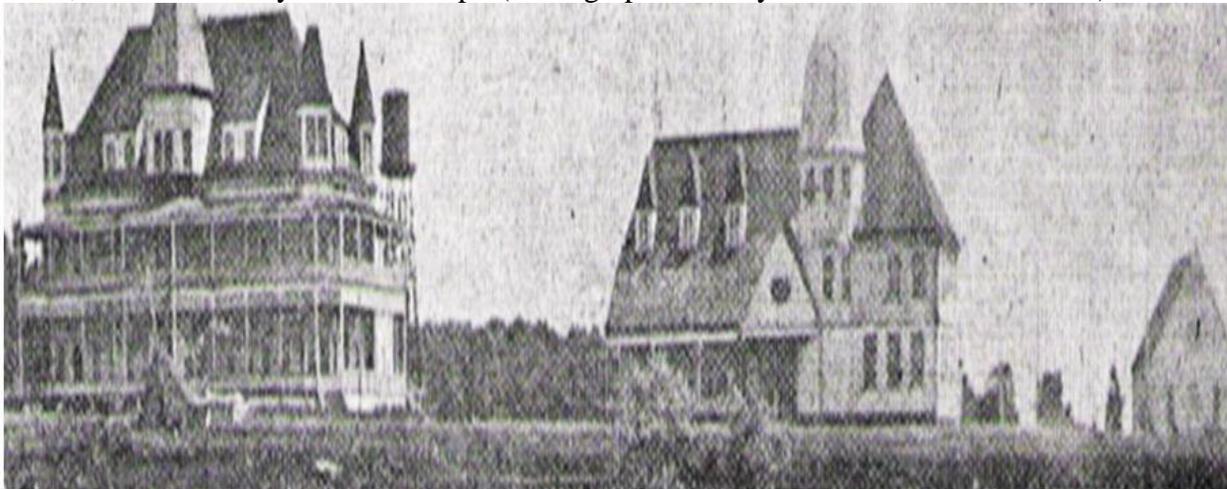
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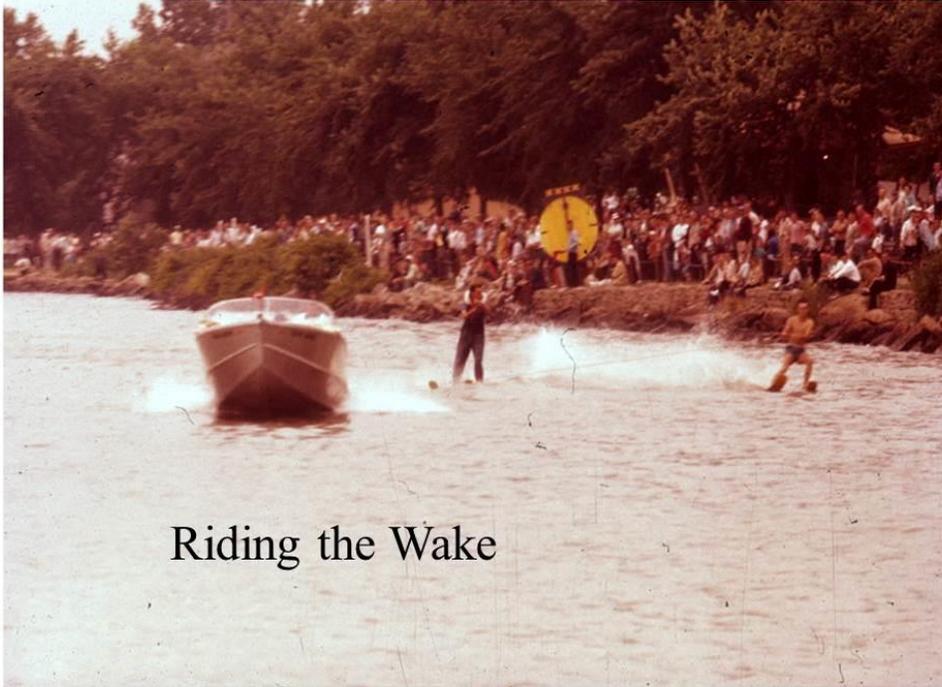
<sup>150</sup> Detroit Free Press, December 3, 1905

## **Detroit River Islands**

### **Summer Resort on Fighting Island**

A summer resort opened on Fighting Island in the early 1890s which its owners called Des-Chree-Shos-Ka, a combination of French and Indian words meaning “Here Is Everything.” The resort featured amenities including a 40 room hotel, six cottages, two boathouses, and a bathing beach. From 1891 until fire destroyed the resort in 1914, the owners struggled to maintain the resort, but it eventually went bankrupt. (Photograph courtesy of the Ecorse Advertiser.)





## **Sugar Island Pleasures**

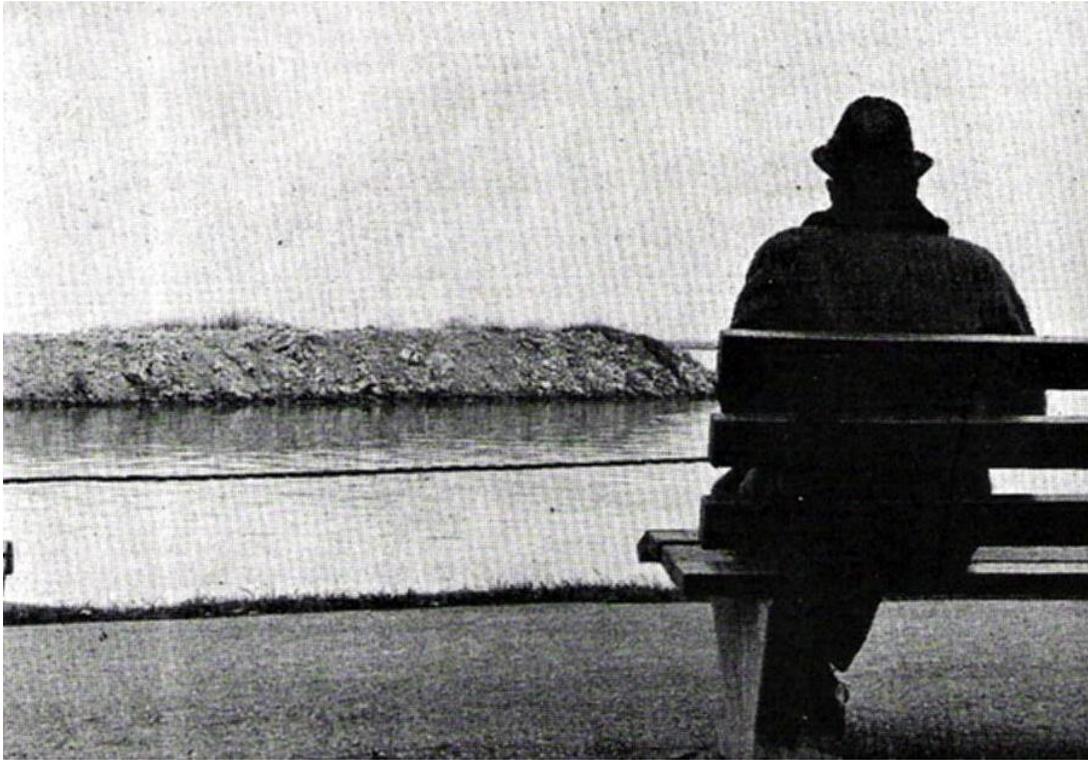
Between 1900-1940, Sugar Island, a small Detroit River island between Grosse Ile and Bob-Lo Island, contained a resort park and a large dance pavilion. Steam ferries, including the SS *Tashmoo*, carried people back and forth to Sugar Island. On the night of June 18, 1936, while departing Sugar Island, the *Tashmoo* rammed a rock. She landed her passengers in Amherstburg, Ontario before she sank.

Sugar Island is wooded and has white sandy beaches and easy boat access. For many years the island's owners planned to build a bridge and residential housing on Sugar Island, but environmental groups objected to this plan because it is a resting place for several migratory bird species. The US Fish and Wildlife Service purchased the island to convert into a nature preserve.

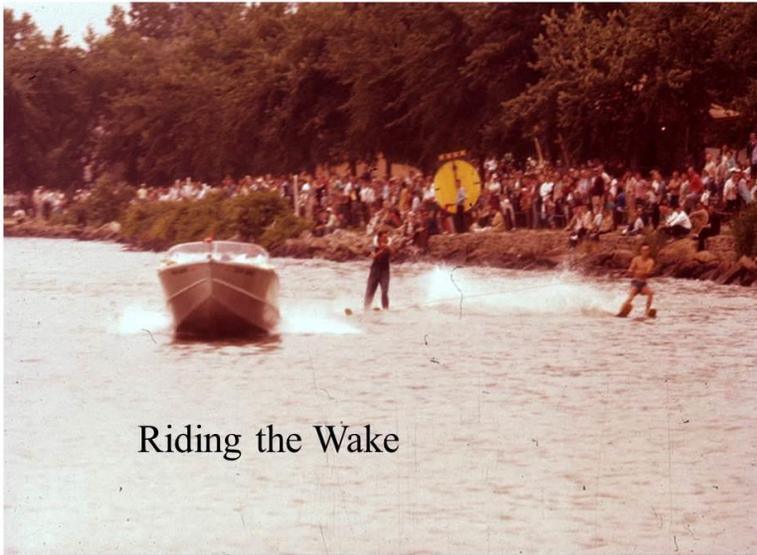


Ecorse Day, Sugar Island, 1921  
(Photograph courtesy of Rodney Tank)

## Mud Island Isn't All Mud



In 2001, the city of Ecorse donated 18.5 acre Mud Island and its surrounding shoals to the National Wildlife Refuge System. After several decades of growth, red and silver maple, white ash, cottonwood and willow trees have spread over about 75 percent of Mud Island. The trees provide important respite shelter for birds during their spring and fall migrations. During the breeding season, birdsongs including the notes of warbling vireos vibrate above the cottonwood trees. More than 71 acres of shallow shoals surround Mud Island, and water plants like wild celery flourish, attracting dabbling ducks and swans. The Ecorse Channel located between the City of Ecorse and Mud Island is a popular fishing spot for local anglers. East of Mud Island is a deep shipping channel featuring an immense wild celery bed in mid-stream that connects to Grassy Island.



Riding the Wake

## The Pioneering Clarks of Ecorse, Brownstown, and Northville



Grassy Island Fisheries - Google Images

Several branches of the Clark family that require genealogists to correctly establish family connections settled in the Downriver area and were good soldiers, fishermen, fish culturists, and citizens. They started their careers in New York and Ohio, and successfully concluded them in Ecorse and Northville, Michigan.

Wattros Clark, the grandfather of George and Lucy his grandmother, were from Norwich,

Connecticut, and when the Revolutionary War broke out, Wattros fought for the rebellious colonists at battles including Bunker Hill, Trenton, Princeton, New York and White Plains. After the Revolution Wattros Clark drew an officer's pension until his death in 1822.

John Clark, a son of Wattros was born on November 14, 1777, and his wife Sally Person Clark, George Clark's mother, was born in Brunswick, New York on June 1, 1780. She died at Buffalo, New York, on April 18, 1813, and John Clark married his second wife Sally Swain at Buffalo, on November 10, 1813.

A soldier in the War of 1812, John served as the captain of Saugerties Rangers. At this point his family lived at Black Rock, New York, and British soldiers destroyed most of their possessions. John's son George who was born on March 9, 1804, grew up during this time and he remembered many exciting stories from his childhood. One of his favorite stories involved a party of American soldiers who were eating a meal with the Clark's when suddenly a British cannon ball smashed into the room and cut off the table legs. Luckily, no one was hurt. George remembered that many times he and his brothers rolled cannon balls down the hill to be loaded onto boats. After living in Kingston, Buffalo, and Black Rock, New York, John Clark moved his family to Rocky River near Cleveland, Ohio and then to Michigan.

George Clark vividly remembered coming to Detroit around 1817. He recalled landing on the beach near the foot of present day Woodward Avenue and noticing that the farms and gardens extended to the Detroit River. He noted that all the vehicles "were one horse French carts, used for both pleasure and business, also for conveying water to the inhabitants in barrels."

In 1819, George Clark and his family moved to Ecorse. At first they lived in a log house just below Wyandotte and then they moved to Brownstown Township. George Clark spent most of his adult life in Ecorse, where he farmed, fished, and became one of the pioneer fishermen of the Great Lakes. He contributed much effort and knowledge to developing the fishing interests of the northwest.

### **The Clarks and the Grassy Island Fisheries**

In 1833, George bought Grassy Island in the Detroit River and built large fisheries there. Nelson Clark and George Clark ran the Clark fisheries off Grassy Island, just off shore from Ecorse, Michigan. The banks of the Detroit River immediately above and below the mouth of Ecorse Creek possessed all of the necessary conditions for a successful fishery. North of Ecorse stretched a half mile or more of high bank bordering a deep channel a few feet off shore on the spot where the old French settlement of Grand Port once stood.

James.W. Milner, a biologist from Waukegan, Illinois, in his 1874 Report on the Fisheries of the Great Lakes, fisheries stated that fisheries were established between the mouth of the Detroit River near Monroe, Michigan, and the city of Detroit before 1841, and they were considered to

be some of the most bountiful and profitable in the Great Lakes. The fisheries, called ponds, enclosed hundreds of white fish from fall to late in the winter, when they were taken out and sold at good prices. The best ponds were located around islands in the middle of the Detroit River where beneficial water circulation kept the fish vigorously healthy for months.

Ponds were made by driving piles close together in the Detroit River and lining the inside of the enclosure with planks, leaving joints about three quarters of an inch wide to allow water to circulate freely. At one end of the pond, workers installed a gate, hinged at the bottom of a river to a mud sill. The top of the gate floated at an about 45 degree angle and projected a foot or more above the surface, closing the pond entrance.

American fisheries established nine ponds in the Detroit River and Canadian fisheries created seven. By 1872, Nelson W. Clark and Samuel Wilmot of Ontario had established whitefish propagation fish farms on the American and Canadian sides of the Detroit River. On the south side a fishery existed on the lower bank where the river front farm of Judge H.H. Emmons and below that of fish farmer George Clark.

Thousands of lake whitefish and lake herring supported commercial fisheries in the Detroit River, ranking Detroit second to Chicago for handling over 3.4 million pounds of fresh mostly lake whitefish and lake herring in 1872. Most of the fish in Detroit fish markets were taken from spawning runs of lake whitefish and lake herring that traveled the Detroit River each fall

### **George Clark Owns the Schooner Fisher**

In 1844, George's father John Clark built a two-masted schooner at Grassy Island that he called *the Fisher*. In 1851, George's name appears on the ownership papers of the Fisher and on May 13, 1854, the Buffalo Democracy newspaper reported that the Fisher had arrived at Buffalo from Detroit. Her captain reported that on Thursday, February 23, 1854, a crew member named Charles Owens was lost in Lake Huron while hanging a light over the bow. All efforts to save Owens, 19, were futile.

### **George Clark Fish Expert**

On October 9, 1872, George Clark posted a notice to all fishermen in Detroit, Ecorse, and on docks in between. The notice said that on May 14, 1872, he marked certain white fish with brass tags and put them in the Detroit River. The tags were a piece of brass the size of a ten cent piece and a ring about the same size, with a similar ring linking the two together. The largest ring he put in the small fin on the back of the fish near the tail, each fish weighing about a pound and a half, the goal being to ascertain the growth of the fish.

He asked all fishermen catching any of marked fish to note when and where they were caught, weigh and measure the length and send them with the tags to Crowel & Co., S. John and Buck of Toledo; the Paxtons of Monroe, Michigan; James Craig, A.M. Campau, C. Hurlburt and J.P. Clark of Detroit; B. Reaume of Springwells; George Clark of Ecorse; and Mr. Reaume of Grosse Isle.

He said that he hoped that the fishermen on the Canadian shore would cooperate and if they caught any of the marked fish to send them to Davis & Co. and Merrill, fish dealer in Detroit or George Clark & Company's fish house in Detroit.

George concluded his notice by saying that "if the fish cannot be sent, please send the exact weight and length of the fish, with the tag, by mail, to any of the above parties.

George Clark

Ecorse, October 9, 1872"

In 1873, when the State Fish Commission in Michigan was organized, Governor Bagley appointed George Clark one of the commissioners and he contributed much practical knowledge to his office. He held the office of Fish Commissioner until he died in 1877. He never held any other office but on the Fish Commission, although he was urged to accept other positions.

### **George Clark, Citizen**

Besides farming and fishing, George Clark enjoyed inventing and perfecting different items. One of his inventions that he called Clark's Metallic Life Raft, was widely used on lake steamers.

George Clark also found time to donate to literary work and he wrote several articles for Professor Louis Agassiz about the different varieties of Michigan fish and he also donated specimens. He wrote many articles for *The Michigan Farmer*, based in Detroit. He was an energetic and zealous Republican from the founding of that party. In 1874, the Republican Convention assembled at Wyandotte unanimously nominated him for representative in the State Legislature, but although he felt honored he refused to become a candidate.

During the Civil War, George Clark spent much money and time collecting and shipping supplies and clothing to Michigan soldiers and also aided many soldier's families.

### **George Clark, Family Man**

In 1837, George Clark married Eleanor Sutliff in Ecorse and they had five children: Catherine, born in the township of Brownstown, November 15, 1838, and died at Ecorse, August 25,

1870. Annie R. born in Brownstown, November 22, 1840. Eleanor born at Ecorse, November 26, 1842. Edith E. born at Ecorse, May 20, 1845. Laura J. born at Ecorse on September 17, 1847. Eleanor died in Ecorse on March 19, 1849.

George married his second wife, Orpha Wright on July 17, 1851, and she died in Ecorse in 1854. They had two children, Charlotte O., born in Ecorse on October 6, 1852, and Clay W., born in Ecorse in March 1854 and died in September of 1854.

On January 10, 1856, George Clark married Rebecca J. Widner who was born at Chili, Monroe County, New York on September 19, 1827. Their children were Florence C., born April 12, 1857; Carrie E. born December 16, 1858; Frances G., born April 4, 1861; George, born November 22, 1863; Mabel M. born July 19, 1866; and Jessie L., born October 23, 1869.

### **George Clark, Inventor**

J.W. Hall in *The Marine Record* of noted that 1, 167 marine accidents occurred on the Great lakes in the year 1871 alone. Some inventors looked for ways to prevent accidents while others sought ways to preserve lives during accidents. George Clark responded to the Fisher's accident and the dangers of navigating on the Great Lakes by inventing a life raft, U.S. Patent No. 146,316.

On January 13, 1874, George Clark wrote of his own invention, "The nature of this invention relates to certain improvements in the construction of life saving rafts, and has for its object the preservation of life in case of disaster at sea, by making the raft very buoyant, thoroughly protecting the float cylinders, so they will not be injured under any ordinary circumstances, and furnishing a much more durable, a lighter, and more easily handled raft than those heretofore in use for this purpose."

"It is the desiring to have these rafts kept on the hurricane decks of steamers, whence they may readily be thrown into the water by one or two persons of ordinary strength, thus avoiding the delay and uncertainty of working falls and cranes in launching boats. Both sides of the raft being alike, it makes no difference which side is up when thrown into the water. I am aware that cylindrical floats are used; but these extend the whole length or breadth of the raft. These, being confined in a frame under certain circumstances and being rigid, might in a sea have the effect of levers to pry the framework of the raft to pieces. I adopt the short cylinders connected together in the manner described and laid in courses, to prevent such an accident and give greater flexibility to the raft."

Mostly a self-educated man, George Clark earned success in life because of his own energy and ability. He was simple in his habits and unassuming in nature. A close friend of Mr. Clark's described him as a man of remarkable force of character, strong purposes, great self-reliance,

unswerving integrity and rare good judgment. He carefully managed his business enterprises and his considerable property with a conservative attitude. His contemporaries said that “His rise to the position of universal confidence and esteem which he occupied is attributable solely to his sterling worth.”

When George Clark died in Ecorse on October 17, 1877, a close friend eulogized, “He was public spirited and progressive. He had his faults, but most people respected him. Beneath his brusque exterior beat a kind and considerate heart. “

### **Nelson Clark and Frank N. Clark in Northville, Michigan**

Beginning in 1869, Nelson W. Clark oversaw his fish propagation efforts in Clarkston, Michigan, but in 1874, he established a fish hatchery at Northville, Wayne County, on a spring water supply tributary to the Middle Branch of the Rouge River. Here he constructed a series of ponds and raceways, built a one story frame hatchery 30 x 80 feet, and equipped it with an apparatus of his own invention, which was afterward to be universally known as the Clark Hatching Box and Tank, which was used until the 1950s.

Nelson Clark and his son Frank N. Clark operated the fisheries as a private enterprise until 1880. In 1880, the Federal Government leased the property and employed Nelson Clark to operate the facility. This arrangement continued until 1890, when the U.S. Fish Commission purchased the plant and ten acres of land and Nelson Clark served as plant superintendent until he died in December 1910. During Nelson Clark’s administration improvements were made to the water supply and pond system and the hatchery rebuilt.

Frank N. Clark was recognized nationwide as an outstanding fish culturist and the Northville Hatchery became the basis for the United States federal hatchery system on the Great Lakes as well as the training ground for many fish culturists who accepted jobs and extended influence across the country.

### **Soldier, Citizen, Storekeeper Robert G. Clark**

Polk’s Downriver Directory of 1945 lists Robert G. Clark, United States Navy, and his wife, Mary, as living at 172 Cicotte Street in Ecorse. Better known as Bob, he was a disabled veteran from both World Wars, and for many years he and Mary successfully operated a grocery store on Cicotte Street.

People of a certain age who grew up in Ecorse will smile nostalgically at the mention of Clark’s Candy Store and recall the intense moments spent in front of the counter carefully choosing Mary Janes, Tootsie Rolls, Dots, and Jaw Breakers posing enticingly behind the glass.

Bob was active in many Ecorse clubs and organizations, and had a special interest in youth work. He was scout master for Troop EC5, sponsored by the Ecorse Kiwanis Club.

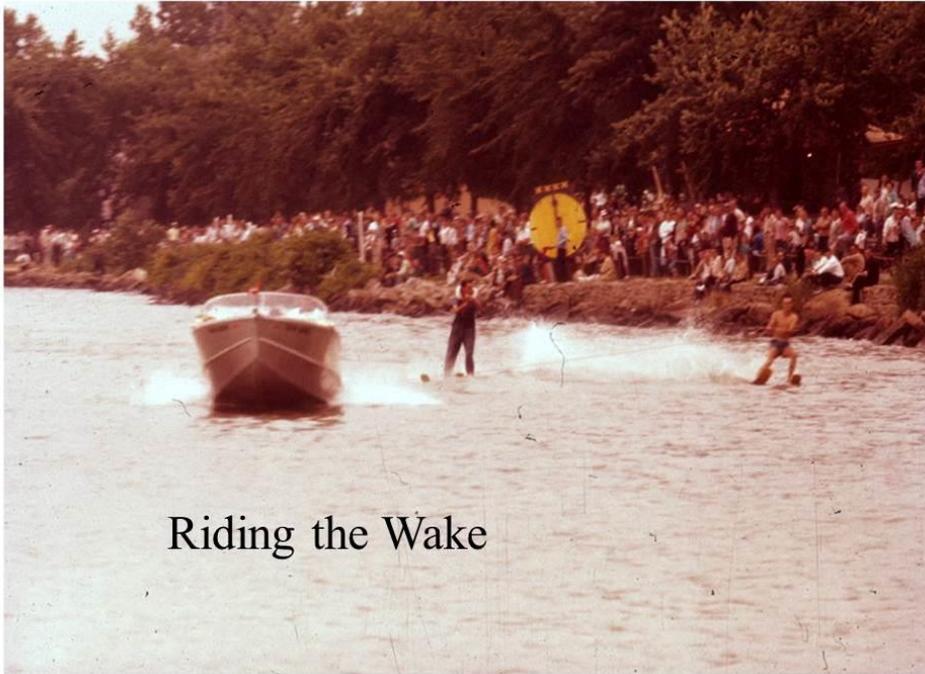
These are just a few of the Clarks that helped shape Downriver maritime history.

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Riding the Wake

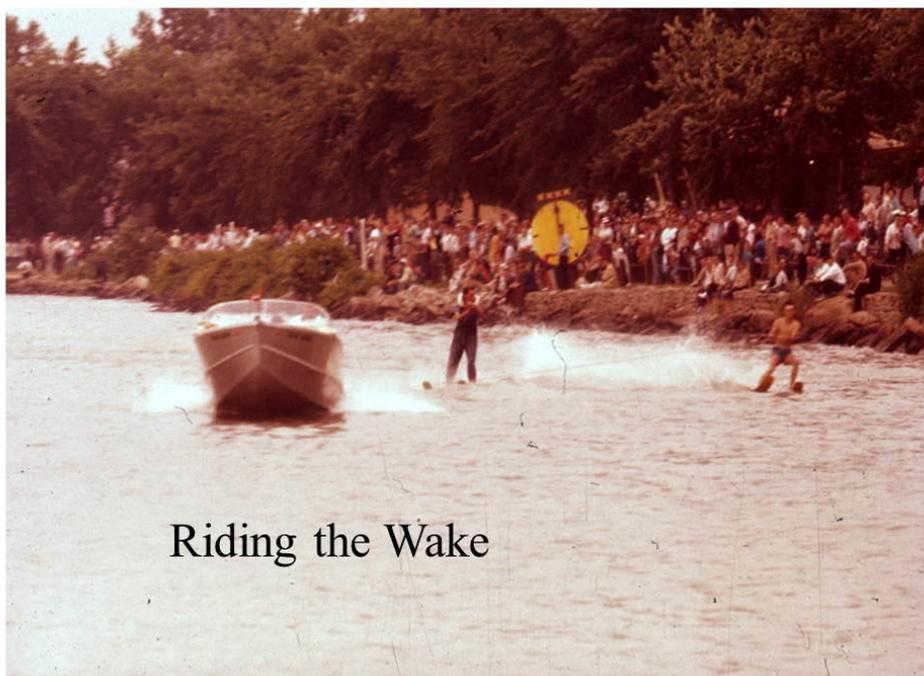
Detroit Gazette  
January 26, 1821

Over! Over!

The subscriber has obtained a licence to keep a ferry on the Detroit River, and calls on the public for patronage. He has provided an excellent flat, and his boats for passengers are superior to any that can be found on the River. Careful men have been engaged to attend the ferry, and constant attention will be given in order that passengers shall suffer no delay. Persons who wish to contract ferriage by the year, will be accommodated at a low rate, and landed at any point within a reasonable distance of the landing-place on the opposite shore. Freight will be taken over at a low rate. The ferry is kept nearly in front of the Steam Boat Hotel.

B. Woodworth

N.B. Persons wishing to cross are desired to give notice at the Steam Boat Hotel.  
Detroit, April 20, 1820



## **Detroit River Transportation**

Lawrence Meier

English 12

Term Paper, Sister Aniceta

January 5, 1959

By Lawrence Meier

People today think of the Detroit River as a connection between Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie, but, in reality, the river is the busiest river in the world. This can be better explained by the fact that one lake freighter passes Windmill Point at Detroit on the average of every six minutes.

For three hundred years, the sounds of travel have echoed along the shores of the Detroit River, from the schooners' signal cannon to the deep-voiced freighters of today.

Long before the city of Detroit was established, the native Red Men had learned to navigate the inland lakes and streams in bark canoes. When the French settled along the shores of the St. Lawrence River, they were quick to recognize the usefulness of the bark canoe in carrying on their explorations. These French adventurers, fur traders, and missionaries gradually uncovered the secrets of the vast land and waters of Michigan.

In 1679, LaSalle set forth from Niagara in the Griffon, the first sailing vessel on the Great Lakes. As he passed through the Detroit River, flocks of wild geese and swans circled the vessel curiously. Seeing this and the densely wooded area, LaSalle gave high praise for the Detroit River by saying "one of the finest prospects of the world." Little did he realize at that time that this area would one day be the manufacturing capital of the world.<sup>151</sup>

As time went on, the French developed stronger craft such as the pirogues and bateaux. Pirogues were large hollowed out trees. They were used extensively for fur trading. At first the bateau, a French word meaning boat, was known as any flat-bottomed boat used for timber and freight transportation, a shelter, and other purposes.<sup>152</sup>

In 1701 Cadillac, a Frenchman with a fleet of twenty-five bark canoes, founded Fort Detroit. The dark and forbidding wilderness which reached almost to the palisades of the little post made transportation by land impractical, and for years the bark canoes furnished the only dependable means of communication with distant settlements. Gradually, however, the canoes disappeared, and ships like the Griffon were making their debut in river travel.

At the close of the War of 1812, there were numerous ships on the lakes, but all were operated by the Government, since military needs received first attention. Private passengers often were refused transportation and Detroit merchants found it difficult to obtain shipping space.

This situation stimulated interest in shipbuilding. Within a short time schooners were coming off the stocks at almost every port along Lake Erie. Most ports turned out an average of two or three ships a year by the old hand method.

The City of Wyandotte was one of the better known shipbuilding ports. In its production yard, between 1872 and 1920, over one hundred and twenty five schooners and steam ships rolled into the swirling waters of the Detroit River from the ship yards at the south end of Wyandotte. A few well known ships that were built by the J.C. Clark, Eber Ward, and Lewis Scofield Shipbuilding Companies of Wyandotte were the *E.B. Ward*, *Grace McMillan*, *Wyandotte*, *Frank E. Kirby*,

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<sup>151</sup> Floyd R. Dain, "The Story of Water Transportation," Detroit History. Copyright 1951, p. 5

<sup>152</sup> Ibid

and *Michigan*.<sup>153</sup>

Other famous vessels on the river were the *Jay Cooke*, *Riverside*, *Gazelle*, *Pearl*, *Evening Star*, and *the Walk-in-the-Water*. The *Walk-in-the-Water* was famous because it was the first ship to carry on trade between Buffalo and Detroit.

On August twenty-sixth, 1813, the *Walk-in-the-Water* entered the Detroit River. Some settlers said the sailing craft was drawn by sturgeons and some believed it. At Detroit the entire populace came down to the landing. Among that crowd was Judge Woodward, proprietor of the Steamship Hotel, whose sign had just been freshly painted for the occasion, and a knot of Indians who took to their heels when the engineer let off a head of steam. With completion of her first run, confidence in the *Walk-in-the-Water* was established, and she was given a contract to carry U.S. mail.<sup>154</sup>

On November 1, 1821, the *Walk-in-the-Water* left Buffalo for Detroit in threatening weather and shortly thereafter encountered a violent gale. Even under full steam the vessel was unable to make headway, so the captain ordered several anchors thrown out in an endeavor to hold fast until the storm abated. Unfortunately, the anchor cables parted and the ship was cast upon the shore near Buffalo. No lives were lost, but the hull was damaged beyond repair. The engine was salvaged and put in a new vessel which was built in Buffalo during the winter.<sup>155</sup>

After the opening of the Erie Canal, Detroit and Southern Michigan grew rapidly in population. Soon the trade consisted of people and their belongings sailing up the river, and farm produce, furs, and lumber going down the river to Buffalo. This rush on transportation facilities brought larger and faster ships to the scene. As the ships grew larger, it was very dangerous and difficult for them to pass through the narrow river in full sail, so steam tugs came to the aid of the vessels and pulled them through in strings to the ports along the Detroit River.

Inner river trade was also carried on. Smaller vessels using the western channel made regular stops at Amherstburg, Sugar and Hickory Islands, Grosse Ile, Wyandotte, Ecorse, and Detroit. Ships using the Canadian channel, stopped at Amherstburg, Windsor, and Detroit. Smaller ships, making entry from the East Coast via Lake Erie, stopped at Put-in-Bay, then on to Detroit River ports.

However, despite the wonderful waterways, early transportation was hampered by violent gales on the Great lakes. The worst storm that ever hit the lakes was on November 28, 1905. The storm took thirty ships and nine-tenths of their crews. The most sensational disaster was the smashing of *the Matalfa* on the piers of Duluth. The ship broke in two, separating the crew. Rescue units

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<sup>153</sup> Mrs. Joseph DeWindt, *Proudly We Record*. Copyright 1955, pp 89-931 pp. 244-249.

<sup>154</sup> Walter Havighurst, *The Long Ships Passing*, (Macmillan Co. 1942), p. 122.

<sup>155</sup> Floyd R. Dain, "The Story of Water Transportation," *Detroit History*. Copyright 1951. Pp-13-15

could not reach them. Thus, most of the men froze to death as four thousand looked on. In the morning Duluth was covered with six feet of snow and two inches of ice had formed on everything along the shore.

On November 19, 1958, the worst storm in recent years struck the waterways of Michigan, sinking the 615-foot *Carl D. Bradley*. The winds came in gusts from sixty to one hundred miles per hour. Forty foot waves smashed the freighter into the two parts. Only two men out of thirty survived the sinking of this large ship.<sup>156</sup>

Because of these tragedies, fortunes in copper, iron, ingots, whiskey, machinery, shingles, coal, limestone, tobacco, corn, and wheat rest beneath the traffic lanes. Off the mouth of the Detroit River, the steamer *Clarion* sank with a load of locomotives. Near her lies the schooner *Lexington* loaded to her hatch covers with barreled whiskey. A legend still persists of a mysterious vessel that sank off Poverty Island, near Escanaba, with four and a half million dollars in her safe.

In spite of storms, fog, and other navigational hazards, men were willing to risk their money in shipping. Commerce had increased considerably, and ships were the best means of transportation. Today there are many kinds of cargo carried by freighters on the Detroit River. In early times cargo consisted of whiskey, lumber, coal, and farm produce. Over one thousand different kinds of cargo are shipped out of the Port of Detroit to many ports of the world. Detroit imports over five hundred different kinds of cargo from foreign ports.

Perhaps this transportation history of the Detroit River can be better understood if we regard the nature of the river itself. The Detroit River flows from Lake St. Clair to Lake Erie. It is a thirty-one miles long, three-fourths of a mile wide at Detroit, and widens to three miles at Amherstburg. The average depth of the river is twenty four feet at present, and it will be deepened to twenty seven feet upon completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway. At present one hundred and seventy-two thousand cubic feet of water passes down the river per second.

The river is dotted with numerous small islands ranging in size from Little Fox , about an acre in extent, to Grosse Ile, which is large enough to accommodate a naval base and an entire community. In Ecorse, the river widens and is separated into different navigable channels by a group of islands which begin with Fighting Island, dividing the Canadian Bob-Lo channel from the neutral Amherstburg channel.

Situated near the channels are the islands of the Detroit River, which are important from various standpoints. Some are natural; some have been formed by dredged-out channel sand and industrial waste. These islands are Belle Isle, Grosse Ile, Fighting Island, Sugar Island, Bois

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<sup>156</sup> Bob Pope and Herb Levitt, *The Detroit News*, Thursday, November 20, 1958. P. 1

Blanc, and Zug Island. Belle Isle and Bois Blanc are better known for their recreational facilities. Zug Island is used by Great Lakes Steel as part of its plant.<sup>157</sup>

Between Detroit and Canada the Ambassador Bridge is the only complete structure that crosses the Detroit River. It is high enough for any vessel to pass under it. Five thousand cars per hour can pass between Detroit and Sandwich, Ontario, on the Canadian shore. This suspension bridge is used by vacationers, working men, and truck transportation

Beneath the river is the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel. It was opened in 1930, and crosses between Detroit and down town Windsor. This vehicular tunnel is used by busses, vacationers, working men, and for truck transportation.

Another means of transportation between the United States and Canada at this point is the railroad car-ferry. The most famous is operated by the Wabash Railroad Company.

The Wabash car ferry *Manitowoc* heads downriver from its Windsor dock toward its Detroit terminus with an average cargo of thirty freight cars. The *Manitowoc* and two companion ships operate around the clock daily and through winter and summer. The three car ferries make twenty-five round trips in a twenty-four hour period, transporting an estimated eight hundred freight cars, or eight full trains daily. The trip up the river takes fifteen minutes, the down bound passage twelve minutes. The whole trip including loading and unloading, consumes two hours.<sup>158</sup>

Cargos are carried up and down stream by lake freighters which are propelled by different methods. Boats of yesteryear were either sailing vessels or steam boats. In recent years only coal and oil have been used as fuel. The sleek freighters of tomorrow will probably use atomic power. A good example of a modern freighter is the *Edmund Fitzgerald*. This vessel, employing diesel engines, was recently constructed and launched by the Nicholson Boat and Dock Company of Detroit. Its length towers higher than the Penobscot Building. The ship is surpassed by only six other ocean-going vessels.

The following statistics indicate the importance of river transportation. In 1957, during the navigational season of April 15 through December 1, 49,213, 831 tons of cargo came into Detroit from foreign ports. Also in 1957, 57, 712, 260 tons of cargo left Detroit for foreign ports. At present Detroit only handles high-priced cargo, and from this trade the city of Detroit makes \$12.50 a ton profit. The Detroit metropolitan area stands to lose nearly one hundred and ten million dollars in income during the next five years if adequate port facilities are not built to

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<sup>157</sup> U.S. Lake Survey, Detroit River, Chart No. 41, 1952.

<sup>158</sup> ] Bert Stoddard, "Foreign Cruise," The Detroit News, Sunday, October 26, 1958, p. D-9.

handle the expected increase in foreign cargo during that period. This is caused because the Detroit Terminal can only accommodate six small ships at a time. From these facts, it is apparent that new docks will have to be built to provide for the extra shipping load expected with the opening of the Seaway. <sup>159</sup>

Present prosperity for Detroit is shown by the fact that twenty-five scheduled ship lines run from Detroit to the foreign ports of Antwerp, Belgium, Rotterdam, Netherlands, Hamburg, Germany, LeHavre, France, Copenhagen, Denmark, Helsinki, Finland, London, England, Genoa, Italy, and Le Guarra, Venezuela. There are three hundred and ninety-five non-scheduled lines running from the Port of Detroit. Frequent regular steamship sailings and arrivals help to keep the cost of transportation down. Customers can also have cargo put aboard up to the sailing time. Total import travel time to the Port of Detroit via the direct all-water route is approximately the same as the combined ocean-rail time to Detroit from the East Coast. The same is true for exports. An approximate ten to twenty per cent reduction in transportation cost alone, if cargo is shipped via the all-water route from the Port of Detroit, has been shown by recent survey.

Having taken a synoptic view of Detroit River transportation, let's take an imaginary trip from the Atlantic Ocean to the Port of Detroit on one of the modern lake freighters, by means of the newly-constructed St. Lawrence Seaway. Leaving the Atlantic Oceans, a ship enters the Gulf of St. Lawrence which narrows to form the St. Lawrence River. It travels along this unrestricted waterway for one thousand miles to Montreal. Immediately above Montreal the present canal and lock system of the St. Lawrence River has its beginning. This ship winds its way through these canals and locks until it emerges into Lake Ontario. After crossing Lake Ontario, it traverses the Welland Canal and locks which connect Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, thus bypassing Niagara Falls. Cruising westward over Lake Erie, it would enter the mouth of the Detroit River. here, on the most extensively used waterway in the world, a few miles north of Lake Erie is located the port of Detroit.

Little did Sieur de Rene Robert Cevalier LaSalle realize that such a trip would ever be possible nor how prophetic his words upon discovery of the Detroit River would be. He thought of the river as having a fine prospect for the future. That future is with us today. It is a well-known fact that more ships pass up and down the Detroit River than all the ships using the Panama and the Suez Canals combined. Upon completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway, cargo tonnage will increase still more. Even though it is the shortest, the Detroit River is truly the busiest river in the world.

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<sup>159</sup> "The Ocean at Our Door," The Detroit News, editorial Page, Friday, October 10, 1958, p. 42.

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## **Chapter 20 – The Rivers of Downriver-The Huron, Ecorse, and Rouge Rivers**



Huron River – Wikimedia Commons

### **Huron River**

Part of a network of trade routes, The Huron River was named for a Native American nation living in southeastern Michigan. The Huron also called the Huron River the Giwitatigweiasibi. Rising out of the Huron Swamp in Indian Springs Metropark in northern Oakland County, the Huron River carves a 130-mile course through southeastern Michigan passing through the cities of Dexter, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Belleville, Flat Rock and Rockwood as well as thirteen parks, game and recreation areas. After flowing through Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Wayne and Monroe Counties, it empties into Lake Erie on the boundary between Wayne and Monroe Counties.

Featuring 24 major tributaries for a total of 370 miles in addition to the mainstream, the Huron river watershed drains 908 square miles and the river is designated a Scenic Natural River of

southeast Michigan. The Huron River flows through many parks and it is an excellent canoeing river with a relatively slow current and just a few rapids. Fishermen congregate on the river to try their luck at catching its variety of fish including rock bass, sunfish, bluegill, largemouth bass, walleye, catfish, carp, trout, Muskie, and Coho and Chinook salmon below Belleville Dam.

French priest Father Jean Dilhet visited the Huron River in 1798 as part of his parish duties and he named the outcropping of limestone rock on the south side of the Huron Rive, “Grosse Roche,” or Flat Rock. Father Dilhet wrote that he often despaired of convincing the inhabitants of the Huron and Raisin River regions that they needed to give up their partying ways in favour of more sober, responsible lives, but he told his superiors that he would continue to preach, exhort, and pray. <sup>160</sup>

A little more than two decades later, Reverend J.B. Finley described the Huron River as it looked on Sunday, December 14, 1823. He said that he and his party arrived on the Huron River on the Wyandotte reserve of eight sections and found a formidable difficulty. He wrote that “the river was just fordable and frozen on both sides for two or more rods. We alighted, took our tomahawks and cut the ice; then jumped our horses down into the water, got on and rode to the ice on the opposite shore. Here we sat on our horses and cut the ice, when the water was more than misdeeds deep, and I think a colder day I hardly ever experienced. After staying in the water nearly half an hour, we got on the ice and were not out of the water ten minutes before our clothes were frozen stiff.”<sup>161</sup>

On March 23, 1833, a state act incorporated the Huron Canal and Manufacturing Company with a capital of \$75,000 to complete a canal connecting the waters of the Huron and Detroit Rivers at Truago, (Trenton) to be completed by April 1, 1841. The board of directors consisting of A.C. Traux, S.B. Campbell, Henry Bennett, N. Dustin and C.N. Bennett unsuccessfully oversaw the canal building in the first of several such failed attempts.

Navigating and damming the Huron River proved to be more successful than connecting canals to it. Congress declared the Huron River navigable in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and until the railroads penetrated the region, flat boat traffic plied from Ypsilanti to Lake Erie. Mills dotted the Huron River banks and by the 1880s its waters furnished power to countless mills and at least 17 mill dams. Flour mills were the most plentiful, but saw mills and woollen mills provided power for wood and wool production. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Detroit Edison Company and the Ford Motor Company acquired and developed dams along the river to produce electric power.

By the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Huron River had many dams, 19 on its mainstream and more than 96 in the entire watershed, which were built to increase and maintain water levels in surrounding lakes,

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<sup>160</sup> Jean Dilhet. Rev. Patrick William Browne, S.T.D. Washington D.C.: The Salve Regina Press, 1922

<sup>161</sup> [The Wyandotte Mission at Upper Sandusky, Ohio. Methodist Episcopal Church.](#) By James B. Finley

uses which became environmentally controversial. At least a dozen of the dams were built for mill or hydroelectric power, forming large lakes behind them.

As with many Downriver rivers, the Huron River has its share of pollution problems, from phosphorous, animal waste, chemicals to sewage contamination. [Environmentalists](#) continuously study the Huron River to identify and work to eliminate pollutants and monitor the water quality.

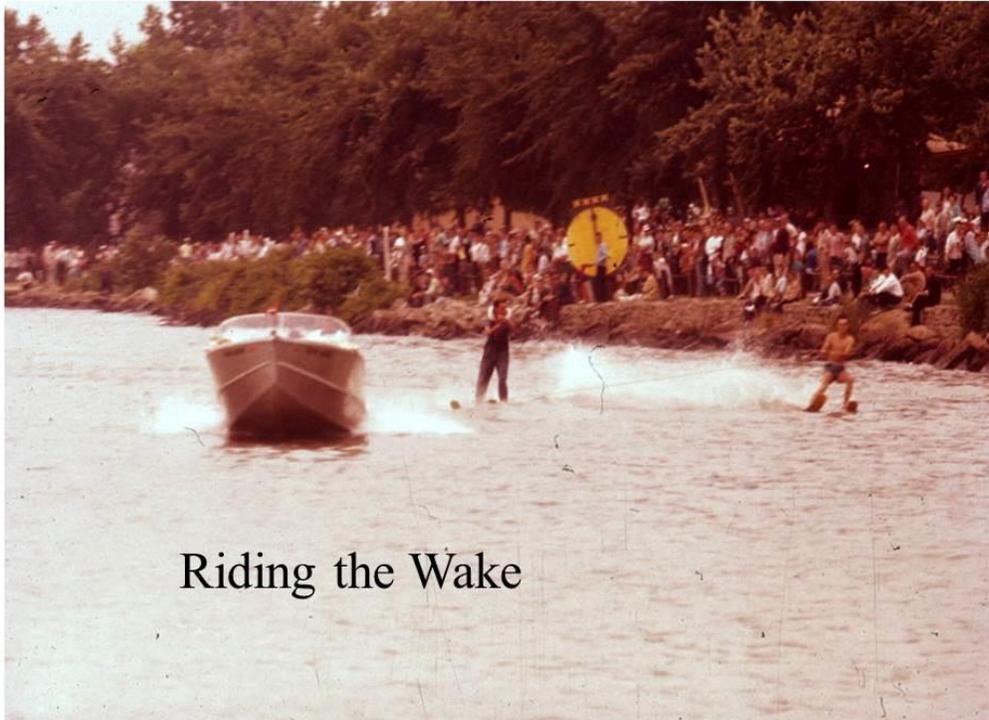
The Huron River Watershed Council conducts a Water Quality Monitoring program with its partners

The Middle Huron Initiative, the Livingston Watershed Advisory Group and the Alliance of Downriver Watersheds cooperate in a Water Quality Monitoring Program to understand nutrient and contaminant issues, identify pollutant hot spots and evaluate management practices designed to minimize storm water related problems in the Huron River Watershed. Its long term goal is improving the water quality within the Huron River Watershed.

[A Water Quality Monitoring Program](#) is conducted for the partners in the Middle Huron Initiative (MHI), Livingston Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) and the Alliance of Downriver Watersheds (ADW) to better understand nutrient and contaminant loading dynamics in the Huron River Watershed. The program also aims to identify pollutant loading hot spots and evaluate collective progress of best management practices designed to minimize storm water-related impairments. Overall, the program's long term goal is to evaluate progress toward improving overall water quality within the Huron River Watershed.

The Water Quality Monitoring Program was developed to respond to community interest in collecting data from the Huron River and its lakes and tributaries that would lead to a better understanding of pollution of the watershed. The Monitoring Programs is also designed to reinforce monitoring from other agencies including municipalities, universities, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

In 2009, faculty and students from the University of Michigan produced a multimedia presentation including dance, poetry, music and projects images exploring the Huron River and its impact on the communities along its banks.



Riding the Wake

Ironwood Daily Globe  
October 7, 1920

A Brighton man of 80 makes a yearly canoe trip down the Huron River about this season, paddling, fishing, and camping on the banks for two weeks at a stretch. What a splendid thing to do!

It is the memories stored up in healthful outdoor adventures like this that we always enjoy most in later years.

Bessemer Herald  
Bessemer, Michigan  
August 20, 1898

The Huron River has become low and a bad smell arises from its waters along the banks. Large numbers of dead fish are found along the shores.

# Ecorse River



Wikimedia Commons

The early French settlers named the winding stream that flowed through their ribbon farms outside of Detroit the Riviere aux Ecorces, which means the “river of bark”. They christened their river “river of bark” because the local Native American tribes had the custom of wrapping their dead in birch or elm bark and burying them at the mouth of the Riviere aux Ecorces. The two branches of the river meet at Council Point Park in Lincoln Park, where Ottawa Chief Pontiac held a historical council in 1763 before he and his soldiers attacked Fort Detroit.

The Ecorse River or Ecorse Creek, features a 43.4 square mile watershed, flows through the Downriver region, and it is a tributary of the Detroit River as well as having its own tributaries. The north branch of the Ecorse River drains about 18.75 miles and it flows through Romulus, Dearborn Heights, Allen Park, and along a small part of the southern border of Melvindale and Lincoln Park. Then it flows along the border of Lincoln Park and Ecorse. Its tributaries include the Trouton Drain, Freeman Drain, the Douglas and Kelly Drain, and Black Creek.

The south branch of the Ecorse River drains a 12 square mile area with tributaries including the Grams Drain in Southgate and the Brighton, Bondie, and the Sloss and Ganong Drains in Taylor. Enclosed underground drains, including the largest La Blanc Drain located near the junction of the north and south branches in Lincoln Park comprise the rest of the watershed. The South Branch of the Ecorse River winds its way through Romulus, Taylor, Allen Park and Lincoln Park. After it joins the north branch in Lincoln Park, the river forges the boundary between Ecorse and Wyandotte to its mouth at the Detroit River, with a marina located on both sides.

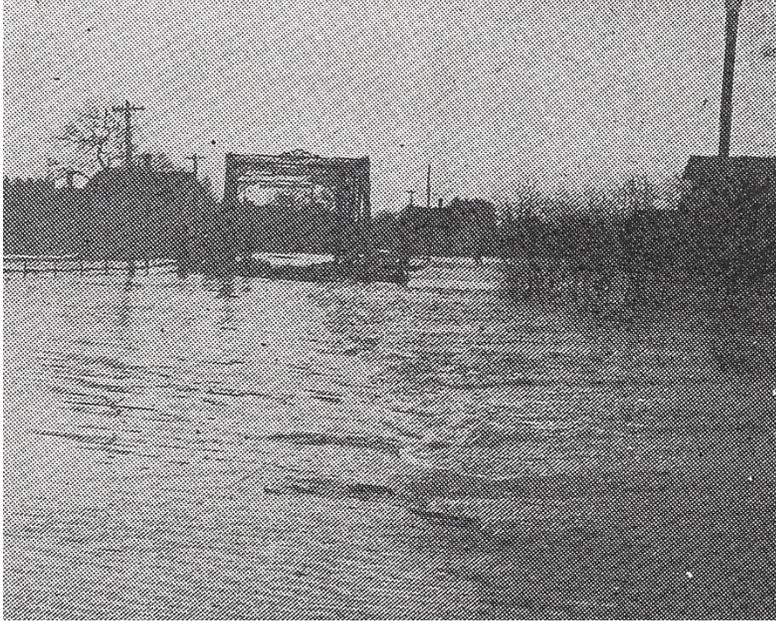
For nearly two centuries, the Riviere de Ecorces, or Ecorse Creek has wound through Downriver the marsh and farm land, presenting a rural face to the world. Apple, pear and peach trees that the early French settlers had planted showered blooms into its water. The marshlands that filled its mouth as it flowed into the Detroit River produced aromatic grasses that people used to feed their horses and cattle and even to stuff their mattresses. Settlers along its banks fished and caught frogs and gathered wild berries beside it. Several saw and gristmills and coal and brickyards dotted the banks of the creek, and in 1901 G.A. Raupp an Ecorse, lumber dealer, guided a raft containing 2,500,000 feet of pine, hemlock, spruce and tamarack logs coming down the St. Clair River for use in his mill on Ecorse Creek.

### **People and Pollution**

Twentieth century industrialization brought more mills and manufacturing along the creek banks and pollution as well. Since the Ecorse River is both heavily developed and heavily industrialized it is contaminated from residential and industrial sources, including the steel works along its lower branch. A Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Water Division report dated July 7, 2003, scientifically defined the Riviere de Ecorces and its territory. The report describes the Riviere de Ecorces and its watershed in this way:

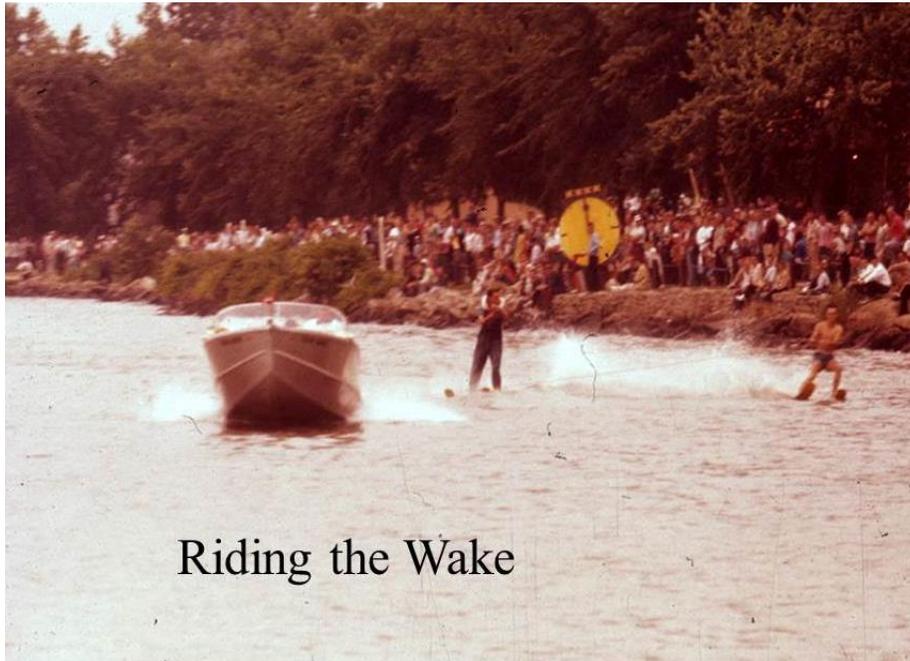
“The Ecorse River Watershed flows through both the Southern Michigan-Northern Indiana till plain and Huron-Erie Lake plain eco-regions in southeast Michigan. The watershed is approximately 46 square miles in drainage and is heavily developed, including the Detroit Metropolitan Airport property (Metro Airport) in the headwater region of the South Branch Ecorse River.”

The Ecorse River is also prone to flooding since it has low banks, is heavily silted, and much of its watershed features clay soil that is not readily absorbed into the ground. About 85 percent of the land in its watershed is developed, decreasing the land surface for absorption and damaging flooding happens often. A storm on May 21, 2004 produced four inches of rain and a more than six feet cresting of the Ecorse River in three hours. People living near the River are mandated to carry flood insurance.



Ecorse Creek overflows its banks to cover the Ninth and Mill Street Bridge in 1904.

The Ecorse River flows into the Detroit River. The Rouge River flows north of the Ecorse River into the Detroit River and the Huron River winds south of the Ecorse River on its journey to Lake Erie. The health, well-being and history of these rivers are important for environmental reasons, but also for political and social reasons. The Ecorse and Rouge Rivers flow into the Detroit River which parallels the Canadian shore and connects the Great Lakes to the ocean through the St. Lawrence Seaway. As the health of the Ecorse River fluctuates, so fluctuate the health and well-being of the Seaway and oceans.



## **Uproot Old Fruit Trees to Clear Site for Homes**

by Al DuHadway

The Mellus Newspapers

Another link with Ecorse's historic past disappeared last week, when excavators uprooted several ancient apple and pear trees on Eleventh Street near Pepper Road in preparation for the construction of several new homes.

The trees were planted a half-century ago in the orchard of the Sansouci farm, along the winding banks of the Ecorse Creek. The old brick Sansouci homestead still stands on Pepper Road, reportedly built nearly 100 years ago.

Older residents of Ecorse recall that Pepper road 50 years ago, was a winding country land along the banks of the creek. Fruit trees and willows abounded along the banks, and the fast-flowing clear waters of the creek were well stocked with fish.

## **Swimming, Skating**

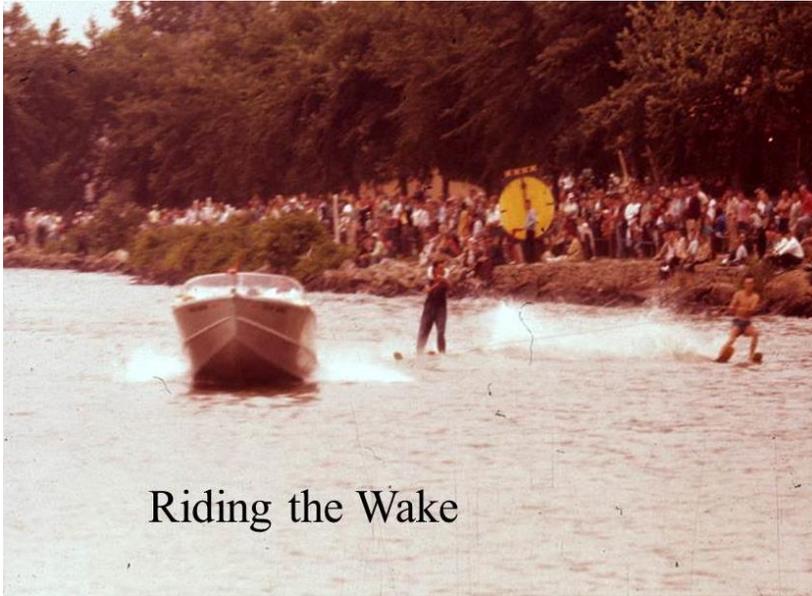
In the summer, the creek provided hours of swimming fun for local youngsters, and in the winter, ice-skating was a popular sport.

The banks of the creek were used in later years for refuse dumping and the water has been polluted by sewage and industrial waste. The winding creek bed had been dredged and straightened as a flood-control measure.

The Sansouci farm extended back into what is now Lincoln Park, and its orchard covered part of what have become Tenth and Eleventh Streets.

## **Street Paved**

The Pepper Road willow trees disappeared several years ago, when the street was paved, ending the last traces of the country lane once traveled by many young couples after services at the St. Francis Xavier Church. Only the ancient trees remained still bearing their annual fruit, until they were uprooted by the huge excavating machines. Old fruit trees, winding creek beds and country lanes cannot be permitted to stand in the way of progress.



## **The Ecorse River – the Bark Covered House**

*Michigan pioneer William Nowlin wrote a book he called [The Bark Covered House](#), about his experiences living on the family homestead farm along the north branch of the River Ecorse a few miles outside of what is now Dearborn, Michigan. The Nowlin family came to Michigan in the spring of 1834 from New York State.*

William Nowlin wrote about several of his encounters with the Ecorse River, including fishing for pike or pickerel. He and his family and friends looked forward to the Michigan spring when the ice broke up in the Ecorse River (Ecorse Creek) causing the water to run over the creek banks, somewhat resembling the mighty Mississippi.

Pike, often called pickerel, swam up from the Detroit River in massive numbers, ready for the fishing. Sometimes William and his companions used a canoe that they had fashioned from a white-wood log in their fishing. Other times they used two canoes as the pickerel lay in shallow water or old grass and they could be taken without a pole. By carefully scanning the water, William could see the small ripples the fish made with their fins while they moved around. A person in the back of the canoe could pole it carefully toward the ripples and when it reached the fish, the person in front could spear or shoot them. William watched the fish until they had swum almost in front of him, then he fired his gun. He said that it wasn't necessary to hit a fish with a bullet to get it. The impact of the bullet or charge hitting the water shocked or stunned the fish,

causing them to turn belly up. Sometimes William stood on a log lying across the Ecorse Creek watching for pickerel. One cloudy afternoon he fished with a spear and caught enough for several suppers.

### **Taking Advantage of the Fish Run**

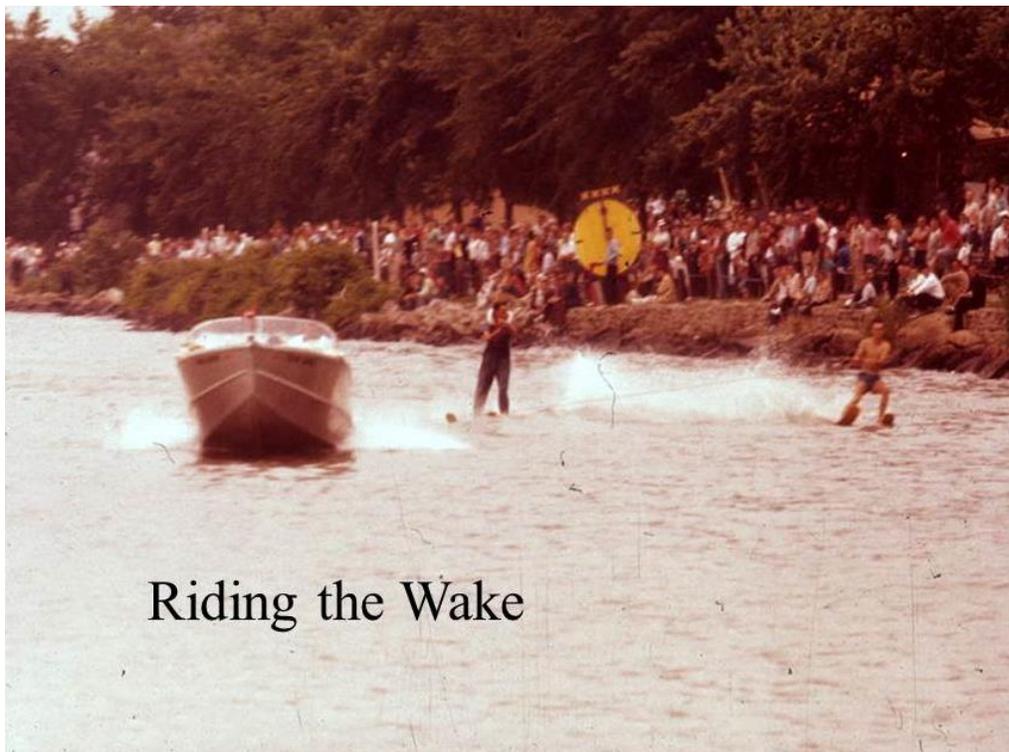
Every spring the pickerel ran up the Ecorse River for two or three weeks while the water rose, and then ran back into the Detroit River. William and his father made a two wing pike net, and by the time the fish were running back to the Detroit River, the water had settled back down into the creek bed. William's father John set the net in the creek, stretched both wings across the River and securely staked them. The mouth of the net, shaped like the top of a funnel and fastened with four hoops, opened up stream. When the net was fastened around the hoops it formed a tunnel about four feet long. Next came a bag net eight or ten feet long which was tied around the first hoop of the tunnel. When the fish came down the Ecorse River, they ran into the fish net and couldn't find the way out.

William Nowlin's father John said that when the fish were running back to the Detroit River it was sporting to catch them, but when they were going up, everyone along the creek should have a chance to catch them. William never saw his father put in his net when the fish were running up Ecorse Creek. When the fish were running back, most of them ran in the night and in the evening John Nowlin set his net. The next morning, he would have a net full of fish to eat and salt down for summer use.

Eventually, the fish stopped coming up the Ecorse River. William speculated that the reason they stopped might be that some fishermen put gill nets across the mouth of the Ecorse River on the Detroit River and prevented them from coming up the Ecorse. According to William, it was a well-known fact that fish will not run out of a big water and run up a small stream at any time except in the night.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> William Nowlin. *The bark covered house, or, Back in the woods again : being a graphic and thrilling description of real pioneer life in the wilderness of Michigan*. Detroit: Printed for the author, 1876



Detroit Gazette  
January 16, 1818

Lands for Sale

The subscribers offer for sale a tract of land, nine acres and three arpents in front, and running back from the River Ecorce to the St. Cosme Line, containing -----acres.

This tract abounds with fine timber, and on one part there is a fine sugar camp.

H.D. Brevoort

John Conelly

December 10, 1817

Detroit Gazette

May 21, 1823

Estate of William Dunbar

Public notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been duly appointed administrator of the estate of William Dunbar, late of the River aux Ecorces, in the county of Wayne, deceased. All persons having demands on the estate of said deceased are requested to present the same, and those indebted to said estate, are requested to make immediate payment.

George W. Davis

River aux Ecorces

March 20, 1823

## The River Rouge



Rouge River Rescue Photograph

The four main branches of the Rouge River, also called the River Rouge, wind their way through 127 miles of south-eastern Michigan before it flows into the Detroit River at Zug Island, the boundary between the city of River Rouge and Detroit. Its approximately 467 square mile watershed includes the entirety or parts of 48 communities totalling over 1,500,000 people and drains a large part of Wayne county as well as most of southern Oakland County and a small part of eastern Washtenaw County. The Rouge River for the most part flows through heavily developed industrial and residential areas, but still travels more than 50 miles of public lands. The government maintains the lower four miles of the Rouge River as a shipping channel from the turning basin to the mouth of the river at the south end of Zug Island.

From the time of Native American canoes, muskrat trappers, and French Ribbon farms, people have utilized the Rouge River to enhance their lives and industries. In the 1870s, Southern and Eastern capitalists introduced the business of rafting lumber and timber through the lakes, involving rafting sawmill logs for tugs and steamers to pick up or continue moving to their final destinations. The steam tug *Vulcan*, was a typical example of the growth of this business. During the year 1871, the *Vulcan* transferred twenty-four rafts of timber from Au Sable East. As a whole, the rafts contained about 20,000 feet of timber and not one of them was lost. Many of these rafts floated down the Detroit River on their way to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario ports, some of them making side trips to saw mills along the Ecorse and Rouge Rivers.

The Montie brothers of Ecorse, nephews of the River Rouge Cicottes, worked as raftsmen, riding the Rouge River outside of Detroit. Every day, dressed in their working clothes – red shirts, blue jean overalls and heavy boots-they wrestled logs into the Rouge River, created timber rafts, and shoved and guided them to their destinations up and downstream. The brothers earned an area-wide reputation for their strength, endurance and love of French songs and French partying. They were so widely respected for their skill that the members of the Ecorse Rowing Club implored the Montie brothers to come and row with them permanently.

Nineteenth and twentieth century shipbuilding and manufacturing, especially Henry Ford and his world changing inventions, changed the face of the Rouge River and its southeastern Michigan watershed. Factories used the ready water power for their operational needs and transportation and many like the Ford Company, shaped the river to suit its own contours. The River Rouge and its tributaries came to be the most heavily industrialized and polluted areas in southeast Michigan, with the river even catching fire in 1969.

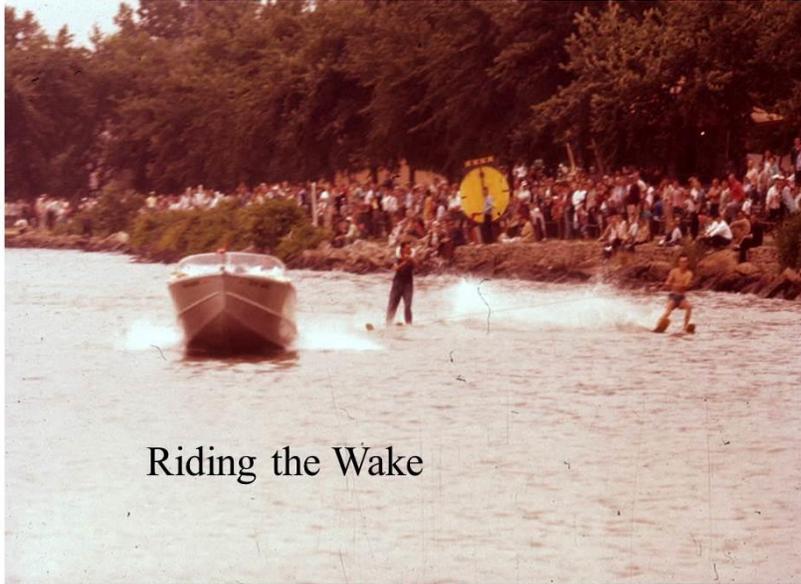
A story in the *Detroit Free Press* magazine section on Sunday, July 27, 1986, described the Rouge as a “sewer for a metropolis, discharge drain for industry, dumping ground for junk and garbage” and declared that the pollution made it impossible for the Rouge to be rehabilitated.

## **The Environmental Protection Agency and Friends of the Rouge**

In 2004, the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) implemented the Rouge River Remedial Action Plan with priorities including eliminating combined sewer and sanitary sewer overflows, controlling nonpoint source pollution, pre-treating industrial discharge, reducing peak storm water discharge and restoring contaminated sites.

In June 1986, the [Friends of the Rouge](#) sponsored its first annual Rouge Rescue river clean-up and it has been working to rehabilitate the Rouge River ever since then. The organization lists many accomplishments including the fact that more than 30,000 people have collected tons of trash and fallen trees from the river during Rouge Rescue and nearly 25,000 students have learned about the causes and effects of river pollution and monitored the water quality of the river.

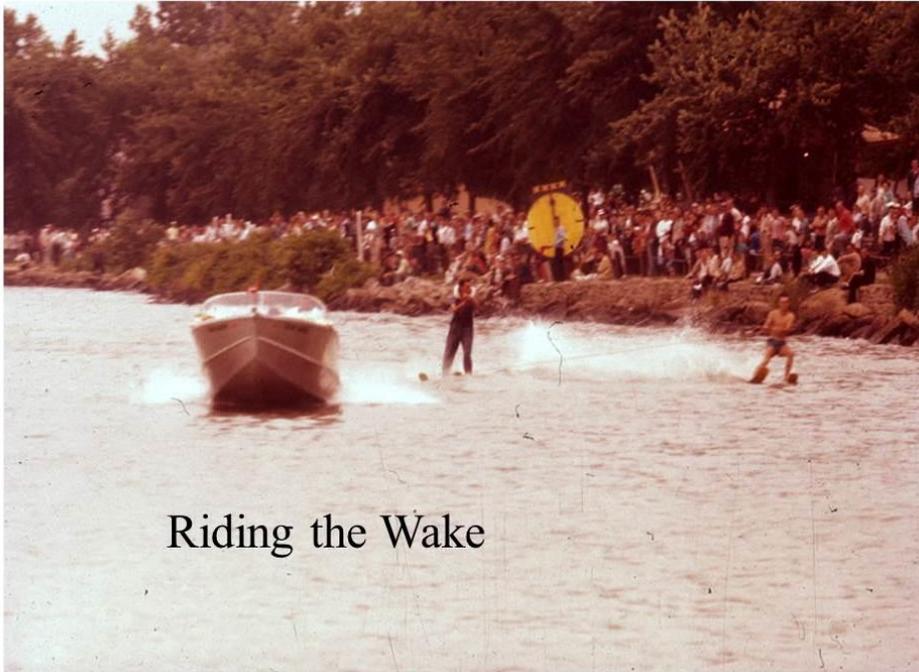
National, state, and local organizations have recognized the efforts of Friends of the Rouge to save the Rouge River, and in the spring of 2000, the Detroit Audubon Society named Friends of the Rouge as Conservation Organization of the Year. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Friends of the Rouge continues its efforts to save the Rouge River. In recent years the focus has shifted from a primary goal of making the Rouge a clean, sustainable habitat for wildlife and a natural resource to more of a restoration and education program to teach people how to protect the Rouge. Individual actions like not draining car fluids or lawn chemicals into sewers performed collectively help preserve the river.



Riding the Wake

Stray Ox  
Detroit Gazette  
January 3, 1823  
Stray Ox  
Came into the enclosure of the subscriber on the South side of the River Rouge, in the month of October last, a red brindle ox, marked with a T on his horns, the owner is requested to call, pay charges, and take him away.  
Richard Cruders  
20<sup>th</sup> January, 1823

Detroit Gazette  
January 9, 1818  
The subscriber offers for sale one third of the schooner Mink, lying at the mouth of the River Rouge, with her rigging and everything belonging to her, in complete order. Terms will be made known by applying to John Conelly.  
January 9, 1818

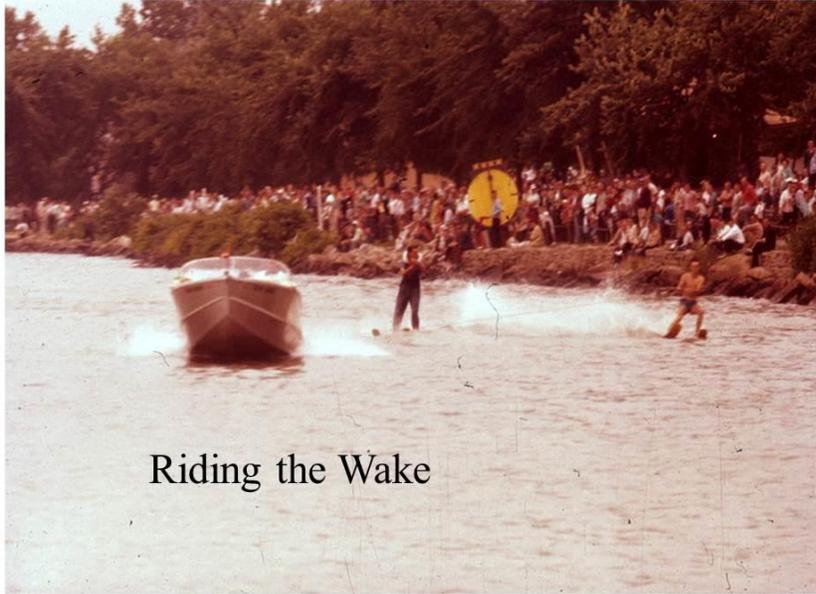


Riding the Wake

Ironwood Daily Globe  
February 8, 1921

Detroit, Feb. 8—Clark W. Himes, real estate agent located today by the Chicago police, disappeared Dec. 21 and it was believed he had been murdered. His automobile saturated with supposed blood stains was found on the banks of the River Rouge here on the day of his disappearance.

Personal papers were scattered about and the ground nearby trampled as though a struggle had taken place. The police dragged the river believing the body had been thrown in.



Riding the Wake

Ironwood Daily Globe  
Ironwood, Michigan  
July 31, 1923

Ford Builds Docks, Buys Own Boats  
Michigamme Mind Shows Enormous Increase

Lake Vessels Use Rouge

With the opening of the River Rouge vessels from the Detroit furnaces and tractor plant of the Ford Motor company, it develops that the Ford Company has made arrangements to obtain 500,000 tons of iron ore from the Lake Superior District this season, according to the Iron Trade Review.

Four mining companies share in the division of 300,000 tons purchased by the Ford Company in the open market place – 200,000 tons of the ore is to come from the only mine the company owns in the Lake Superior District. A shipment of 200,000 tons from the Imperial, the Ford mine on the Marquette Range, will mark an interesting step in the development of the mines.

## Opened mines in 1882

The mines were first opened in 1882, and were operated by the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company to the time the lease was surrendered in 1920 to the Michigan Iron Company the Ford subsidiary. The Iron and Land Company also purchased 400,000 acres of timberland in Northern Michigan at the time. Comparatively little was expected of the mine. Shipments had been small and the ore relatively low in quality, averaging about 45 percent metallic iron, and the cost of operating underground reduced its market possibilities. In some respects, however, the ore had advantages for a purchaser intending to use it in his own furnaces. It is a limonite and practically self-fixing.

## Shipments Show Gains

Prior to 1903, the mine shipments totaled 140,702 tons and up to 1923, the total was only 700,816 tons. The Ford Company made some improvements and began shipping 1922, the shipment for that year being 73,083 tons.

The largest tonnage ever shipped from the mine in one session to date was 115,478 in 1909. Production has been going on at a good rate, and this year it is planned to forward nearly a third as much as was shipped in the 49 year past history of the mine.

As Ford furnaces are consuming ore at a rate of 400,000 tons a year, and the River Rouge has been opened to the boats, those interested in the ore production and vessel transportation expect to see farther developments in line with the Ford policy of expansion. The company now is obtaining figures on two ore carriers each with a capacity of 12,000 tons.

## Improve River Rouge

The improvement of the River Rouge was undertaken jointly by the government and Henry Ford as described in the October 26, 1922, issue of Iron Trade Review. The river was dredged, widened and straightened, reducing the distance from the Detroit River to the Ford furnace from 4 ½ to 2 ½ miles, and making it navigable by the largest lake boats. The Ford Company built a basin almost opposite its furnaces.

Previous to the official opening, the steamer Oneida was loaded with ore at the Ford furnace for a test. The boat started with a sufficient load to draw 15 feet of water. The draft was increased gradually to 15 ½ feet.



The first steamer direct from the Upper Lakes and loaded with ore made the trip up the Rouge July 11.

#### Make Large Shipments

Mesabi Sinter is the product of the Mesabi Iron Company's magnetic concentrating mill and is part of a large shipment to be made by Clement Quinn & Co. These shipments also will include good sized tonnages of grades products from the various Quinn mines on the Lake Superior ranges. Some ore also is being forwarded from the mines in the M.A. Hanna Co., Pickands Mather & Co., and the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company.