# RE-CALL OLD DAYS

## Two Prominent Western Citizens Relate Tales of Former Days. Spent Nickels for Pop-Corn.

The first Bloomfield Center School house was built 75 years ago or there abouts. It was built on the east side of Woodward avenue, opposite the Weston Hotel, in a settlement more largely peopled than is the present. You may know that the people were fore-handed and thrifty for there were only three log houses, the rest being frame, with the exception of the Fish family house which was of brick.

The families within a radius of one mile at that time were: Benj. Peck, Henry Bishop, George Morris, James G. Hunter, the Thatchers, the Barnums, Lucius Robert, one time Sup't of the old Plank Road Company, Avaham and Richard Vaughn, The Sibley twins, Freeman and Susan, John Daines, a prominent farmer and general-business man and who made the very first tile ever made in Oakland County, Baxter Gillett, Calvin Wickham, Edward Carter and Opdykes. These with the Farmers and the Westons, were the oldest families known to the present generation. A goodly number remember as far back as '68 years, and among the teachers were Henry Fish, Mr. Stiles, Mr Sloat, Mr. Belding, and Miss Hutchins and Julia Stone. It is impossible to give the names in the order which they came, but the last teacher in the real old school-house was R. M. Reed, some 64 years ago.

John Daines gave a plat of land for a new school house near the present site, west of Woodward ave. and a much more modern building erected, seating from 75 to 80 scholars. Miss Maria Ferris being the first teacher. In the former school-house, the seats were next to the wall, all around three sides of the building, with a long continuous desk in front and small seats in front without any desks, the children holding the book in their lap, and moving their seats when going to recite. The large room, with closet for dinner pails, wraps etc. was heated with a large box stove in the center of the room. As the older residents moved away or past on to their long home, their places were filled by others, and with the new school house came new faces in time. Among these were the Crofoots, Josephine and Anna Crofoot being especially popular for their charming voices and pleasing personalities which made them great favorites, and to this day their singing is enjoyed by all.

And then there were the Talbots, the Roses, the Lords, J. D. Benjamin, Thomas Stone, and later the Harshaws and the Hagermans.

The famous Bloomfield Center Literary Society originated by Emily Fish and Maria Thatcher, two literary young ladies of much talent, Emily Fish being particularly interesting as a reader and who read "Uncle Tom's Cabin," aloud many times to quite large and appreciative audiences, who never tired of her and Teacher R. M. Reed said; "Of all the places he ever lived, Bloomfield Center was the greatest and best place to get up a fine entertainment and the largest crowd in the shortest possible time." Their Debating Club was above par, as well as their music, and old Uncle Andy Wallace whom so many remember, was a fine singer, as well as the Cowans.

This school was also noted as a leader in all the Spelling schools held about the County, as leader in all the spelling schools, and if there was to be a spelling down match anywhere, the first question asked: "Is the Center school coming?" If they do, we will stand no show, especially if Ellen Watkins is there: and Ellen Watkins now better known as Mrs. Repp, complacently tells she never was known to be spelled down and now in her 80th. year has come clear from Cleveland, to join her old schoolmates for the past four years and she says, (God willing) she is coming as long as she lives, and as she sat rocking to and fro in her chair, making here and there a suggestion, eighty years old, and hair just as brown and wavy as any girl of sixteen, she was and is certainly wonderfully preserved in every way.

In 1908 in the grove between Pine and Orchard Lakes a few of the older scholars of the Center School, at a Picnic, among whom were Rose and Flora Daines, Sina Stevens, Tet Cowan, and Hat Stone, suggested that they continue the reunions and invite the old boys and the next year they met at Pine Lake, and organized the present society, known as the Bloomfield Center School Society, electing as officers, President Andrew Harshaw; Vice-President Hartson Barnum and Sina Stevens Secretary and Treasurer and has held the office ever since and the meetings have been held at the Center School House. The last two years they held their banquets at Will Hagerman's who kindly donated his house and grounds for the occasions and after the feast all adjourned to the School House for business, programs and remniences of ye olden time. Death has removed from their midst, Augusta Benjamin, Fen Weston, Harvey Weston, and Hartson Barnum, who was President of the society at the time of his death and Flora Daines. We are indebted to Ellen Watkins and Rose Daines for the information concerning this interesting school and society. The last meeting was the smallest ever and caused some disappointment but what promised to be a rainy day in the morning turned out to be very pleasant. They were highly favored with the presence of the Editor of the Birmingham Eccentric who swallowed the crowd in his usual jolly manner and in the most modest way imaginable refused the cream and cake.

The two following letters were received by the secretary of Bloomfield Center school and are well worth reading. One of them in particular pictures Bloomfield Center as she looked to a lad fifty years ago:

El Reno, Okla., Aug. 3, 1914.

To my dear Schoolmates and old Friends:

Your invitation to meet with you at the "Old Deestrick Skule" on August 10th, 1911, was received a few days since.

It was a great surprise as well as affording me a great deal of pleasure to realize I have not been numbered among the forgotten by the old schoolmates and friends of 45 years ago.

"Time in it's flight" makes many changes in the faces of a community, but not so many in the general topography of the country.

I can see as I stand, in my imagination, upon the little hill where the old Opdyke house used to stand and see the little cluster of buildings nestled in the valley and plot of every building and see the occupants as they were at the times we left the old farm in 1869.

Cannot remember the names of the dear ones except your Aunt Risa as she was the first who tried to instill into my mind the rudiments of an education.

Since receiving your invitation, the residents of that happy community have been running through my mind and as I stand on the old home sight, can see the residences of John Daines, Nicholas, formerly the old Barnum property, the old Weston hotel occupied by Jno. Hagerman and family, the Sloat residence and blacksmith shop, the Cowan home, afterwards the Baker store where we used to spend our pennies and nickels for popcorn balls and striped stick candy for we couldbe several hearts, the residences of Uncle Jake and John, the Morris house occupied and owned by the substantial and staunch old friend of every one, Theodore Beldin, next to the east and across the railroad were the Talbots, Hunters and Roses and hidden by the timber and hills, were the Stones, Pattens, Benjamin and Blackwick places.

On the north were the Crofoots, Patchetts, Scotts and Nyes. Lying to the west, Adams, Freeman Vaughn place occupied by Ben Wilson, Gilletts, Stevens, and the two Sibley farms, the Abe Vaughn and Lord places. The south on the same road was the Lance Pearsall place, who lived at one time at the Center.

In mud hollow were the Shaws, DeBree, Patchett, Dubois and Morris places. This hollow does not resemble the place as I saw it in those days, as it was completely changed the last time I saw it five years ago.

On the south were located the Cantines, Benedict, Lawrence and old brick house built by Fish as well as the maple grove planted by him many years ago.

Out on the Orchard Lake road were the Messrs. Joseph and Levi Allen, Furse, French and to the left on a hill was the Wallace place, owned by the Cowans.

There are, I presume, many that I have omitted which is not intentional as I would be glad to remember them all, but forty-two years effaces many things from one's memory.

There is no doubt many of the old familiar faces, as well as those who were my schoolmates, had left the community, before my departure for Birmingham, of whom I have lost track and since that time, no doubt there are many of them that have gone to their reward and are traveling the Browns from which no traveler returns."

The last time I had the pleasure of viewing that beautiful valley from the old home hill was occasioned by a call on my old Birmingham schoolmates, Steve Till and Sat Trowbridge. It looked more beautiful to me than ever, but was changed somewhat as the old Tamarack swamp had disappeared.

How well I remember the times we used to steal away from school to the swamp to gather gum, that would stick to our teeth until it was almost impossible to get our mouths open, and what we had in our pockets would be confiscated by the ever wary "schoolmarm."

I suppose the Juniper still grows on the little knolls on the Gillett farm, where we used to go to gather it by the armful for decorating the old school house for the "last day of school."

The old frame school house with its bell tower, is still vivid in my memory. Well I remember what a proud set of children we were when the tower was raised to the peak and the bell placed therein so we did not have the excuse when we were late, "Didn't hear the bell."

The old building has since been replaced with a brick structure, and the little grove of oak trees to the west where we used to have our swings, trapeze bars, play marbles and mumbledy peg has been reduced in size, and gives the old grounds a rather cramped appearance.

Can hear the cry of "Ante-Over" as we all used to join in playing ball around the old building, as well as the shouts and laughter of the boys and girls as we gathered on the little hill in winter to ride down hill on any kind of conveyance that would slide on the hard beaten snow.

There is also in my memory the old mill pond where the whole neighborhood would gather on holidays and skate and skate until we were ready to drop. It was here I learned to skate on a pair of turnover skates, given to me by Ned Daines, who had just been presented with a new pair for Christmas. Perhaps he does not remember the circumstance but I do and it will always be green in my memory.

Whenever I see or read Will Carltons poem "The Old Swimmin' Hole" reminds me of the times we had in the water learning to swim and ducking each other just for fun," untying knots in shirt sleeves and pant legs while the rest would stand around and throw mud on you, or run away with part of the clothes while you were getting the knots untied.

The old tile yard, owned and operated by Uncle Daines who numbered his friends by every man, woman and child who knew him, with its long shed, where the tile were made by hand, the red two story building where he and Uncle Jake Backenstose would stand at the little tables and put a lump of clay on it and with their feet on a treadle make the top spin and with their hands shape the mass of clay into a pitcher or any other manner of dish they wished. The old kiln where they burned the tile and crockery, was a great meeting place for the older element of the young people to congregate at night for children roasts and corn roasts, the chickens being borrowed from neighboring hen coops, the corn from fields adjoining their numerous pathways to the place of meeting. The melon patches, peach, pear and apple orchards donated their quota, as well, to the general fund of provisions. However as I was too young for such gaeities at that time, these incidents came under my notice by hearing my brother and his companions discuss them afterwards.

Well I remember Uncle Jim Weston as he used to sit in his chair on the porch of the old hotel with his arms across the back of his chair, smoking his pipe, seemingly at peace with all the world. Whenever I passed the hotel, was always recognized, and the question asked, "Stewey how's your leetle dorg"?

Uncle Henry Sloat standing at his anvil forming horse shoes and horse shoe nails from bars of red hot iron, sparks flying in every direction and causing a smile to cross his face when the sparks would strike the bare feet of the boys watching his operations.

Uncle Ben Warren, sitting on his bench, in the building on the southeast corner of cross roads, patching and making boots, cutting brands for his "wax ends," pasting them together and fastening the bristles in the ends, with as much if not more ease than you could thread a needle.

The old cider mill, with its large overshot water wheel, still stands clear in my memory, where we used to have load after load of apples, to be ground, run into a press, and the delicious sweet cider we would catch from the press and drink to our entire satisfaction, is certainly a pleasant memory.

How well I remember the old stone crusher that stood opposite the hotel barn, and how it used to frighten me when the whistle would blow, and how I would run and scream.

Such were the industries of that thriving, happy little community as I remember them in the sixties.

I was there near the close of the war that I remember an incident that amuses me very much as I think of it at the present time. I was trudging along the road after crossing a bridge at the foot of the hill, when I met several men on horseback. Stopping me and making me believe they wanted to draft me for their army, I was frightened and over the fence into Weston's meadow I went, through the tall grass, around the mill pond and over the creek through Wheeler's orchard, arriving at school late and breathless, saying as I sat down in my seat, "The soldiers were after me." Such and many other instances happened and would, no doubt, be more better appreciated, could they be told, than written.

The pleasant memories of the days spent at the old school house and among the people of Bloomfield Center will always be with me and hope you will all have the same warm feeling for the absent ones and the spot of our childhood days that I have for you.

My dear friends, am afraid am like the ministers, thoroughly have wearied you with the length of this paper but I know you will pardon me for taking up so much of your time. None of you can know the pleasure it would afford me, could I be among you, on this day to renew old acquaintances, meet the children of my schoolmates, and participate in the pleasure you all will have on the "Old Camp Ground."

With the best wishes and as Rip Van Winkle says, "Long life and prosperity to you and your families." I am,

Very sincerely yours,

STEWART OPDYKE.

Bozeman, Mont., Aug. 12, 1914.

Mrs. Rosina Stevens Bloomburg, Sec.

And all of my old schoolmates, I send you greeting. But Oh, how much I would like to be with you on this occasion, and feel the hearty hand shake, and hear your gentle voices express the words of welcome and good cheer, but circumstances are such that it appears to be out of the question. In the first place, the distance is so great, and at this time of the year it is difficult for me to leave my business, besides a journey of that distance would tax my vitality most to much in hot weather, so I as well as yourselves will have to forego the pleasure we might otherwise enjoy if circumstances were different. I am entitled to feel somewhat sociable, and thankful, on this occasion, as I passed the 70 mile post on the journey of life this morning, and I am well, and happy. And have about as much to be thankful for as the average individual, I consider one who was born 70 years ago has had the privilege of living especially the last 50 years in the most progressive, prosperous, and peaceful country on the face of the globe. And I doubt very much if any generation will ever see a better period. All of which I, am thankful for. I regret very much, however, in the face of all of this progress to see all of civilized Europe engaged in actual warfare, it is having its effect on our own country, as we can read of nothing else but war. Our own particular section (Montana) is especially favored this season, as we have a bumper crop of all kinds, and the prices begin to soar and it begins to look as though we were to be benefitted, financially at the expense of Europe's suffering. Now I must not trouble you with my ideas of the European war as a reunion of old schoolmates is no place for war, and I trust that your minds may entertain no thoughts on this day but those that are pleasant and uplifting.

I should like very much to meet with you all, and live over the good old school days once more, I most fully realize the changes that have taken place in the last fifty years. It does not seem possible that it has been 50 years since I went to school in the old Bloomfield Center school house and yet it is. Well if it is not to be my privilege to meet with you in reunion in this life I will hope to meet with you all on the other side of the divide.

Trusting that this will find you all in good health, and surrounded by all that makes life worth living, and now with love and best wishes to you all I will close, and subscribe myself as your old schoolmate.

E. BROOKS MARTIN.

## Attention! R. A. M., No. 93.

Attention, R. A.M. No. 93! Regular Convocation of Birmingham Chapter, No. 93, R. A. M., Monday evening Sept. 7th. 1914.

Plenty of Work. Come and help.

J. A. STARR, J. A. BIGELOW, H. P. Sec'y.

Mrs. T. B. Smith, of Maple avenue, entertained the Cosmopolitan club last Friday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Erwin and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Erwin, left last Friday for a motor trip to Bravo, Mich., to visit Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Nash.

# NEW HIGH SCHOOL

## Committee of Fifteen are Ready to Act—They Mean Business And Act for Our Interests.

Birmingham, Mich. Aug. 12th. '14.

Pursuant to a call made by the School Board, the following gentlemen were appointed to act as an Advisory Committee, to investigate and report on site for a High school, and advisability of building same.

George Purdy
Dr. N. T. Shaw
Frank A. Gordon
Thomas H. Cobb
George E. Daines
Frank Standart
Dr. D. M. Johnston
Frank Schlaack
John Hanna
Wilborn B. Harris,
W. D. Clizbe
J. F. Rundel
George H. Mitchell
Thos. D. Lynch
James L. Todd.

Members present:

Clizbe, Schlaack, Harris, Purdy, Harris, Purdy, Hanna, Lynch, Johnston, Shaw.

A temporary organization was appointed.

Chairman, W. D. Clizbe,

Secretary, John Hanna.

The President of School Board Mr. R. J. Coryell, made a short speech outlining some of the duties of the Committee, in locating site and building to be known as **The Martha Baldwin School.**

A motion was made and carried; That, the Secretary see each gentleman appointed by the School Board, and have them sign a written statemena that they will act as one of the Committee, and report the same to Mr. Coryell, President of the School Board.

Moved to adjourn meeting one week from to-night, or August 19th. next, at 7:30 p. m. Carried,

JOHN HANNA, Secretrry.

Birmingham Michgan, August 19 1914. Present

W. D. Clizbe in chair.
John Hanna. Secy.
Geo. H. Mitchell.
T. D. Lynch.
J. L. Todd.
F. A. Gordon.
Frank Schlaack.

Minutes of last meeting (on August 12) read and approved. Thirteen (13) of the gentlemen have signed their acceptance to act. J. F. Rundell will act if meetings are held first or last of week. Thos. Cobb refused to act and his place filled by Seymour D. Adams.

Mitchell moved, Lynch supported that the temporary organization be made permanent. W. D. Clizbe permanent chairman. John Hanna permanent Sec'y. Carried.

Todd moved Mitchell supported, if chairman is absent Dr. D. M. Johnston act as chairman pro tem. Carried.

Mitchell moved, Gordon supported that the Chair appoint the following Standing committees.

Committee on Rules.
F. A. Gordon.
Frank Schlaack.
Dr. N. T. Shaw.

Committee on Expense,
Geo. H. Mitchell.
Thos. Lynch.
W. B. Harris.

The committee on Rules report:

1. A quorum shall consist of seven (7) members.

2. That a majority vote should prevail on ordinary occasions.

3. That Ayes and Nays may be called for by any two members.

4. Any member may resign by written resignation to School Board.

5. That all votes affecting school site shall be by written ballot.

6. That all questions decided under rule five (5) shall have eight (8) votes on prevailing side and any question not receiving eight (8) votes on one side shall lie on table.

7. That this committee may adjourn from time to time or meet at the call of chair and secretary by request of three (3) members or more.

Lynch moved Gordon supported it is the sense of this committee that additional school room will be necessary inside of two (2) years. Mitchell and Gordon called for Ayes and Nays. Roll Call: Yeas, Geo. H. Mitchell, F. A. Gordon, Frank Schlaack, J. L. Todd, W. D. Clizbe, T. D. Lynch, and John Hanna. Nays none.

Mitchell moved Todd supported; the Chair appoint a committee of three (3) to interview architects to get information in regard to school buildings of various classes. Carried.

Gordon moved, Schlaack supported; that Mr. Coryell act with the committee. Carried.

The Chair appointed W. B. Harris, Frank Schlaack, and Geo. E. Daines.

Mitchell moved Todd supported; to adjourn to meet Friday, Sept. 4 at 7:30 P. M. Carried.

John Hanna. Secy.

## BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL NOTES.

The first semester of school year of 1914—15, will open Tuesday, September, 8. On Monday, September 7, the Superintendent will be in the high school office to meet new students who wish to inquire about the work or enroll before school begins. Office hours are from 9 to 11:30 a. m. and from 12:30 to 3:30 p. m.

RHODA M. STARR, Superintendent.

Born, to Mr. and Mrs. Byron Dawson, a daughter, August 22.

The Woman's Home Missionary society of the Methodist church met with Mrs. C. E. Edwards Thursday afternoon.

The aged creaking walk "down toward the power house" is dying. The D. U. R. will fill in the hollow with concrete and the village will build a cement sidewalk. And still another historical spot of Birmingham passes away!!

If you are interested in the welfare of the village's business and the best interests of a citizen it would be wise to attend the public meeting called in the village council rooms for next Monday evening. The outlook is for a stormy session as the right of the board to dismiss a village employee without giving a reason, is to be discussed. If this can be done then the sooner we have a commission form of government, the better will the public be served.

### AN ORDINANCE

Relating to the Driving of Motor Vehicles.

The village of Birmingham ordains:

1. That any person driving or in control of any motor driven vehicle within said Village, when passing a street car moving in the same direction or when motor-driven vehicle, shall not drive said vehicle nearer than six feet to said street car.

2. That any person driving or in control of such motor-driven vehicle, within said Village, shall, before passing a street car, which has stopped or is about to stop at a street intersection or station, except as hereinafter provided, give warning of the approach of such motor-driven vehicle by sounding a horn, gong or bell and shall not drive or cause such motor-driven vehicle to be driven at a greater speed than five miles per hour while passing said street car nor nearer than six feet to said car.

3. In no case shall any person driving or causing to be driven any such motor-driven vehicle within said Village pass a street car proceeding in the same direction as such motor-driven vehicle, except on the righthand side of such street car, provided, however, that this section shall not be given effect when there is no travelled roadway on the righthand side of the tracks of the street railway company, or for any reason, such travelled roadway is not open to traffic.

4. Before passing the station of the Detroit United Railway Company situated on Woodward avenue in the Village of Birmingham, when passengers are alighting or about to alight from the street cars of said company, or when passengers are boarding or about to board said cars, any person driving or in control of such motor-driven vehicle shall give notice of his approach by sounding a horn, gong or bell and shall bring said vehicle to a stop and shall not proceed so long as passengers are in the act of alighting from or boarding said car.

5. Any person who shall be convicted of a violation of any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be liable to a fine of not more than twenty-five dollars or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than thirty days or both said fine and imprisonment in the descretion of the court together with the costs of prosecution.

This ordinance shall become effective on the fifteenth day of September, A. D. 1914.

EARL A. MUDGE, Clerk.


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Toronto itself is a beautiful city and the Gateway to the Famous Playgrounds of America, viz: the 30,000 Islands of Georgian Bay, Charming Muskoka Lakes, Beautiful Lake of Bays, Karwartha Lakes, Algonquin Park, Magnetawan and French Rivers, and Peerless Timagami Lakes; also via the St. Lawrence to Montreal, Quebec and Sea-Coast Resorts.

Special rate from Birmingham to Toronto and return $9.34

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Premiums and Purses valued at $150,000

MILKING COWS & TESTING MILK

SHEEP, PIGS, CHICKENS

HORSE RACES

AUTO RACES

CIRCUS ACTS AND BALLONS

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MIDWAY

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Michigan's Fair—the Oldest in the United States—will be the Most Magnificent Display that any State Ever Attempted.

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Horses, cattle, sheep and swine in which run the blue blood of aristocracy will be on exhibition. The spectacular features of the Eastern Show Rings will be presented at the Evening Horse Show.

AN AUTO EVERY 10 MINUTES.

During certain portions of the day the Ford Motor Co. will manufacture a complete automobile every ten minutes. A production of 25 cars will be maintained each day of the Fair.

WARSHIPS OF THE AIR.

Giant air birds such as dealt destruction in the great conflicts in Europe will make daily flights and will carry passengers over the city of Detroit and the Fair Grounds.

HORSE AND AUTO RACES.

A harness racing program for each day of the two weeks and ten stake races with purses from $5,000 down are carded. Noted auto drivers will contest for valuable prizes and the U. S. Grant trophy.

FLOCK OF PERSIAN FUR SHEEP.

These valuable animals, the only ones of their kind in America, shown for the first time. Persia, apprised of the desire to found the industry here, has stopped their exportation. Their skins are immensely valuable.

WORLD'S NOTED BANDS.

The famous Kilties, just returned from a tour around the world, and the Ford Motor Company's band of 45 pieces will furnish music in the grandstand and on the grounds each afternoon and evening.

MIDWAY AND CIRCUS ACTS.

The best shows that ever lined the Pike. In addition, thrilling circus acts will be presented as free attractions in front of the grandstand twice every day.

PAIN'S FIREWORKS.

Stupendous display of fireworks will be given every evening. The capture of Vera Cruz by the United States Marines will be one of the pieces featured.

THE DETROIT MILK SHOW.

The state scoring contest of butter and cheese, prominent speakers for Labor Day, the Boys' State Fair School and balloon ascensions are among the many other attractions.

Write to 501 Bowles Building, Detroit for premium lists and other information.

YOU ARE INVITED

THE MICHIGAN STATE FAIR IS YOUR SHOW