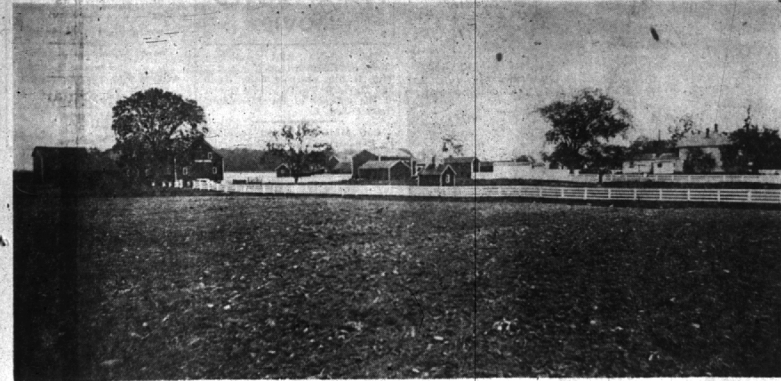


Southfield History, Change Recalled by Birmingham Man



LOOKING SOUTHEAST FROM CORNER OF LINCOLN AND SOUTHFIELD IN 1896

Now in city, Mudge's boyhood home was part of Southfield township

By ALICE E. MORGAN

To those of us who have more or less recently come into this section, it is difficult to imagine Southfield as a strictly farming area.

Today, we see busy highways over which flow countless tons of merchandise and an almost constant stream of passengers cars. We see beautiful homes and landscaped yards and smooth lawns.

There are Birmingham residents who recall the entire area as being made up of several large farms. One of these is Alvin A. Mudge of 788 South Adams, who was born in the Southfield area and has always lived around this section.

In fact, the growth of the whole section, including Birmingham, has put their residence in a busy part of the city. When they moved there 23 years ago, their home, directly across from the intersection of Holland avenue) was the last house in Birmingham to the southeast.

MUDGE RECALLS several incidents of the old Southfield area, handed down through his family, one of which was the kidnapping attempt made upon his grandmother, Rebecca Griswold.

A traveling band of Indians one day stopped to demand food at the

went through the area frequently and at most times peacefully.

A part of what was the original farm is now taken over by the Southfield cemetery.

Other sections are rich in history, and from time to time reveal incidents that excite the imagination.

Mudge recalled one excavation made in the area which revealed the skeletons of several persons, including a Catholic priest. While the man himself remained unknown, his calling was determined by the large crucifix which he wore and which bore the word "Montreal" engraved upon it.

"That was when I was a little boy," Mudge said, "and I can remember the relics being displayed in one of the stores here in Birmingham. There were arrow heads, skinning knives made of stone and several kettles of hammered copper."

"Everyone wondered if they were the remains of a war party which was surprised and killed and, if so, how the priest happened to be among them. Some said they were the skeletons of Indians and whites who had been killed in one

"THIS ONE LOST its romantic thrill when it was determined that they were the bones of a dairy herd which had been slaughtered when it was found to be infected with tuberculosis."

Southfield then, as now, was closely related to Birmingham as far as community interests were concerned. Birmingham was the social center of the Southfield area, as well as the commercial center.

"They used to come up here to the National hotel for dances, and what dances they were! They began in the early evening and kept right on through to sunrise!"

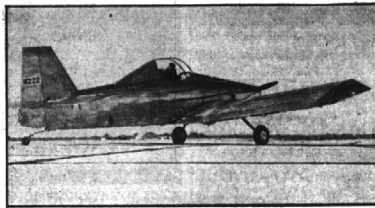
"We came here to trade and that was an event, too. It meant a trip and most likely a treat for the kids in the family. We all looked forward to it."

"LATER, MOST of us came to Birmingham to school. I rode a bike from the Cranbrook-Maple intersection over to Hill school every day. That is, every day that I could. The rest of the time I walked and I'll swear the mud was eight feet deep!"

"One of my teachers, Miss Sarah Ennis, still lives in Birmingham over on Townsend."

"We used to come into Birmingham to school and during the noon hour roam around town. A baker offered us a penny for every wooden box we would bring him. It got so a merchant could hardly hang onto a box long enough to get the merchandise out of it! We got our pennies and then spent them for candy. In those days you got a handful for a penny."

THE "OLD FARM," which was



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roughly bounded by 10 Mile road, to the south; Lahser, to the east; 10 1/2 to the north and Old Angling road to the west, is now bisected by Northwestern highway. The original log cabin still stands, although it has been built onto and modernized.

Mudge stated that it had been

in the family for well over a hundred years and appeared to be stated for another century or so.

"My family is still there, an aunt, Bertha Huston, lives in the house now. There are plenty of descendants to keep the farm in the family."

These incidents are among the memories of one man—a man of middle-age. Others throughout the section who are members of "old" families can recall others, weaving through the history of South-

field a thread of romance, intrigue, tragedy and gaiety.

THEY CAN RECALL the days of high-wheeled wagons and plodding farm horses. They can point out the lovely lawns which, not so many years ago, were dotted with grazing cattle.

Southfield, like every other community, is changing under the influence of time, but clinging self-ly to its past which gives it its true stature.



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