

LEGACY

A newsletter of the Bloomfield Historical Society

Fall/Winter 2010 Volume 5 Issue 2

South Carolina Secedes! Charleston Taken! War Clouds Loom!

This was the news in the Bloomfield area in the fall and winter of 1860-61. Today, all of Oakland County is preparing to recognize the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War and the part County residents played.

Michigan sent around 90,000 men to defend the Union. Of the men who served from Bloomfield Township and didn't return, 29 are recognized on the memorial that now resides in Shain Park in Birmingham. Six were killed in action while the rest died of disease.

The memorial itself is almost as well traveled as our Civil War soldiers. Never actually in Bloomfield, the obelisk was originally (1869) erected in the center of the intersection of Maple and what is now Old Woodward. When traffic got too heavy (1896) it was moved to Greenwood Cemetery. In 1964, as part of Birmingham's Centennial, it was moved to City Hall. Today you'll find it newly restored in the south-east corner of Shain Park.



Soldiers and Sailors Monument (August 2010)



The names of Bloomfield's Civil War soldiers

James Grinley D
Oscar R. Drake K'd
Orville A Drake D
J. Kelley D
Malcom Carter K'd
Peter Lowes D
Alpheus Madden D
Andrew Simpson D
B. F. Leach D
John Hollinshead D
William Potter D
William Hollinshead K'd
James Davie D
Omer Fall K'd
Henry Lewless D

John Leach D
G. L. Bassett D
A. J. Stone D
George Briggs K'd
John French D
Truxton Talbot D
James Briggs K'd
Frank Bowen D
Isaac C. Morgan K'd
Byron McGraw D
James Grier D
T. J. Barnum D
Robert Lowes D
William Irving K'd
Killed (K'd) or died of disease (D)

SOCIETY SEEKS INFORMATION!

Civil War

Are you interested in the Civil War? Enough to help advise our exploration into local Civil War history? We're looking for information on all of our Bloomfield men in blue. If you know of photos, letters, artifacts or anything else that will help us tell their stories we'd like to hear from you. We're also looking for expert volunteer contributors for subsequent issues of *Legacy*.

Century Home research

Do you live in a Bloomfield Century Home- or know someone who does? Are you curious about the farmland that your home now occupies In *info@* this issue John Marshall shares some of the tools he uses to determine the previous owners of the many Century Homes we have in the area. Once in a while we find a current owner who adds to our history by providing early photos or other information that isn't contained in the County records.

If you can add to our knowledge base we'd like very much to hear from you at info@bloomfieldhistoricalsociety.org.

INFO@ ...



Society Historian John Marshall tackles questions you ask:

Marmaduke Lawson, Richard Hotham and the Mysterious Stone Foundation

Society member Larry Trinkaus asked for some help while researching the Beach family who were early residents of Bloomfield Township. One member of the family had owned the home that Larry lives in today. Larry had been given a photograph from a Beach descendant of the substantial house of Thomas Beach which once stood on the southwest corner of Adams Rd. and Westview. Studying the picture there appears to be a small dwelling south of the house on Adams.



Courtesy of Beach family

Curiously, five years ago, while helping a couple research the history of their house (also on Adams, just south of Westview) I noticed the remains of a fieldstone foundation on the front of their property. It was about 20-feet long and 15-feet wide. Could the small dwelling in the photo of the Beach house and the remains of the foundation be related?



Stone foundation 2010

I decided to learn what I could.

People

(Durant's *History of Oakland County 1817 – 1877*, page 320)

I checked Durant for references to the Beach Family. (Note: The editors of *The Book of Birmingham* (1976), made this relatively easy when they reproduced most of the chapter of the 1877 History dealing with Bloomfield Township – and indexed it.) I found one brief reference to Thomas Beach.

... in the southeast quarter of section 12, Marmaduke Lawson and Richard Hotham purchased a small tract in the spring of 1827. They were Englishmen from Yorkshire. Lawson had three children and Hotham five, but they lived together in a *small log house* on land now owned by Thomas Beach. They had selected an eighty-acre tract adjoining (W ½ of SE ¼ Sect. 12), but before they could raise the required funds to enter it, it had been purchased by Hartford Cargill, from New York.

This brief reference further piqued my curiosity. What more was available about these very early Bloomfield Township residents who had emigrated from Yorkshire, England? Could their small log house have sat on the foundation in the front yard of the house researched in 2005? Why did Samuel Durant still know of them when he compiled his history almost 50 years after they first came to the Township? Perhaps he learned of them from the records of the Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society which he used in preparing his history.

May 26, 1821	James Skidmore	George Smith	June 18, 1824
	Dec 7, 1851		Robert Purks
			May 24, 1823
May 26, 1821	Dennis Kelly	Hartford Cargill	Daniel Willard
	July 26, 1828		June 4, 1824
			Nov. 8, 1830
			Samuel

Property Transactions

(From the Tract Index and Deeds in the archives of the Oakland County Register of Deeds office)

The history mentioned the SE ¼ of Sect 12. The tract index shows the following pertinent transactions:

On the same day, May 22 1833 – D. Lawson and R. Hotham each purchased adjacent 10 acre parcels for \$28.00 on the north end of the E ½ from Daniel and Betsy Millard (*Liber 8, pages 28 & 29*).

In Sept. 1835 – Hotham sold his 10 acres to Salmon and Rhoda Mathews for \$100.00. (*Liber 11, page 189*)

(Continued on page 3)

From *Bloomfield Blossoms* by Kay Smith

Talking History – Yours

Way back in the early 1970s Patricia Pilling, local cultural anthropologist, conducted a series of oral histories with area residents. She worked with a simple cassette tape recorder and often the sound quality is less than you'd hope for, but you can listen closely and hear the stories of Milky, the Twin Pines Clown (aka Clare Cummings), Mrs. Alfred LaBelle (the LaBelle stationery store in Birmingham) and Mrs. Mary Harmon Forman (whose family were Bloomfield pioneers). To find them search the Library's website for "Pilling."

Dave Bogart, Society Board member, has initiated a new effort to capture Bloomfield memories using digital video. He interviewed long-time resident Virginia Lee Smith who reminisces about the beginnings of the Bloomfield Township Public Library and 50 years of Bloomfield living. She shares fascinating stories about the library, the construction of her home, as well as recollections of restaurants and retailers now long gone. Recorded by Bloomfield Community Television, the interview is available on DVD at the li-



You may not be Milky the Twin Pines Clown but Dave Bogart would like to talk with you anyway. He can be reached via info@bloomfieldhistoricalsociety.org.

(info@ Continued from page 2)

U.S. Census

(From ancestry.com on the computers in the Township Library.)

1830 - "Duke" Lawson (age 50 - 60 yrs) and Richard Hotham (age 30 - 40 yrs) are listed on adjacent lines of the census form in the area where they should be if they were actually residing on the property on the SW corner of Westview and Adams Roads.) Could Richard's wife Jane have been the daughter of Lawson.

1840 - "Duke" Lawson is still listed in Bloomfield Township. However, the family of Richard Hotham is not. Expanding the search to the rest of Michigan, they were listed in Sterling Twp., Macomb County?

1850 - "Duke" Lawson and his wife are no longer listed. (He and his wife would have been between 60 and 70 years old.) Perhaps they had died or moved elsewhere. Richard and Jane Hotham are again listed in Sterling Township with their seven children, ranging in age from 6 to 21 years. The two oldest were born in England the rest in Michigan.

Township Tax Rolls

(The tax rolls for most Oakland County Townships can be accessed on microfilm in the Kresge Library at Oakland University.)

The annual Tax Rolls are sometimes very helpful because they are organized in a partial alphabetical order by last name. Therefore, if you know the name, and can find it on the tax roll, you will know what property was owned. Because they are annual the tax rolls can sometimes fill the 10 year void between censuses.

NAME	DESCRIPTION	** Number of Acres in each tract or parcel. **		** Value of each tract or parcel. **
		Section, Township, Range.	Acres. 100ths.	
Lawson Jacob.	10 acres on E 1/2 of SE 1/4	18 2.	10 40	65.
Lawson Duke.	10 acres on E 1/2 of SE 1/4	12 -	10 -	40.

In the **1842 Tax Roll for Bloomfield Township** "Duke" Lawson is listed. His property is described as being: *10 acres on the end of E 1/2 of SE 1/4 of Section 12.*

This is consistent with where the old fieldstone foundation can still be seen along Adams Road. Richard Hotham does not appear because as was learned from the census data he had moved to Sterling Twp.

To learn more about Richard and Jane in Sterling Township look for an expanded version of this article on our Web site.

[Editor's note: The Greek Revival Beach family home bears a strong resemblance to both the Torrey House and the Benjamin-Barton Farmhouse. It adds to our understanding that this type of architecture was prevalent in the Bloomfield area in the mid-19th century. Sadly, the house no longer exists.]

Chief Pontiac

Controversial Ottawa leader challenged British rule in the Midwest 250 years ago

He led a rebellion that failed to oust the British from Fort Detroit in 1763 but that continued for three more years. Legend has it he was buried on Apple Island in West Bloomfield after he was assassinated in 1769. Who was he? Why the controversy?

Local historian, archeologist and author Charlie Martinez will trace the life of Pontiac from hunter, trapper and warrior to leader of an Indian conspiracy to topple British colonial rule in the years before the American Revolution.

Martinez' career spans 40 years. He currently is historian at Pine Grove in Pontiac, home of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society.

Bloomfield Historical Society



artistic interpretation by John Mix Stanley

A Local History/Local Resources Program

Come and bring a friend!
Open to the public at no charge
Sunday,
Sept. 26, 2010
3 to 4:30 p.m.



Community Room
1099 Lone Pine Road
Bloomfield Township MI 48302

The Bloomfield Historical Society Board

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Compliments of Macomb Duplicating

What is It?



Where is it?

Here's a hint (or two): The table is made by a local craftsman. It's made of local materials.

You'll be able to see more like these objects later this year when the bell rings to welcome the community to a grand reopening event.

Watch for the next *News Between Newsletters*.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Bloomfield Historical Society is dedicated to fostering an appreciation of the rich history of the Bloomfield area by identifying, promoting and conserving our heritage. We encourage research to educate and engage all generations.

www.bloomfieldhistoricalsociety.org

info@bloomfieldhistoricalsociety.org