Cupola Chronicles: Ashtabula County History from All Eight Sides of the David Cummins Octagon House!



Photo by Bob Lebzelterr

November-December 2026 Volume I Issue 2







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Ashtabula County History

Welcome to Cupola Chronicles



The Cupola on top of the David Cummins Octagon House on Liberty Street in Conneaut has eight windows and a narrow seat where it is possible to sit and think. It even offers the probability of walking from window to window and gazing out at the Liberty Street view to spot Orlandos Grocery Store, the tops of houses and the sense of Marcy's Funeral Home, and the possibilities of Conneaut Creek.

The younger days of the Octagon House provided a different view. The younger trees and much more sparse buildings created a landscape that offered a blank slate for historical days, years, and centuries to fill in. My goal in this journal is to fill in the landscape of blank pages with exciting and relevant Ashtabula County history stories from the vantage point of the Cupola. From here, we can travel together and learn about the people and places that make Ashtabula County, Ohio, special. Let us journey together.

I welcome reader contributions. In fact, using your stories makes my journey much easier. Please contribute them at: kathywarnes@gmail.com

Have a blessed and happy holiday season!]

Sincerely,

Kathy

Thankful for Past Blessings,



Journeying Into Future Blessings

Like many of the photos in the Ashtabula Maritime Museum, this one has no identifying captions about who, what, and where these people are going. They are a lot like we are looking intently into the future without stopping a moment to be thankful for and appreciate the past. Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful for the people who gave us our meaningful history and remind us that we have a say in shaping our present. Thanksgiving is the time to stop and give thanks.

Kathy

Bertha Bremner's World War II Scrapbooks

Mrs. Horace E. Bremner
1619 East Prospect Road
Ashtabula, Ohio

Bertha Bremner's husband Horace worked in an Ashtabula tannery, and she worked as a salesclerk in a local Ashtabula business. She spent years clipping news of World War II soldiers, battles, and other events from mostly the Ashtabula Star Beacon, creating a meaningful record of the War and how it shaped the lives of individuals fighting overseas and the home front.

Sgt. Adams Gets In Touch with Ashtabula in Italy

Sergeant Ronald Adams , son of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Adams, 1922 East 45 th Street, has had some interesting experiences in Italy where he is serving with the 182nd station hospital.

While a Red Cross worker was giving out cigarettes to the patients there, Sgt. Adams heard one say, "Where the heck is this town?" When he asked what town the fellow replied "Ashtabula."

Sure enough, the label across the top read 'Good luck from the Ashtabula Chamber of Commerce."

Sgt. Adams reports that he saw Vesuvius when it was erupting and that he had also visited an old and famous cathedral and the city aquarium.

One day as Sergeant Adams was checking on his mail, the new detached service diet nurse walked through and before leaving asked, "Which one of you is this Adams boy from Ashtabula?"

When he answered, she told him she as Maurine Cisne, formerly of Ashtabula General Hospital.

Her hospital unit had just come up from Africa.

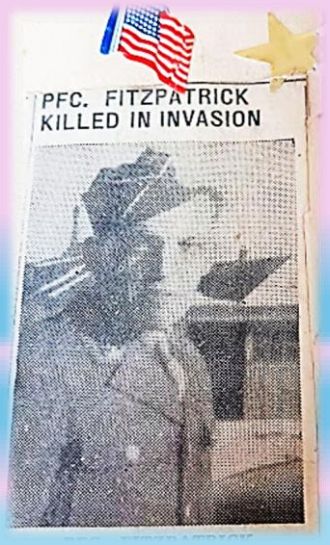
Sgt. Ronald W. Adams returned safely home to Ashtabula, Ohio, and was active in managing the 182nd Station Hospital veteran reunions into the 1990s.

PFC Fitzpatrick Killed in Invasion

Pfc Charles E. Fitzpatrick of Mechanicsville, has been reported killed in action in the invasion of France. He is the son of Mrs. Lawrence Wiesbarth.

Name	Charles E Fitzpatrick
Birth Date	25 Aug 1920
Service Number	35522612
Service Branch	US Army
Unit	325 Glider Inf. Regt.
Company	Co. "A"
Enlistment Date	2 Dec 1942
Death Date	8 Jun 1944
Cemetery	Calvary Cemetery
Cemetery Location	Cleveland, Ohio, USA

He served in Company A of the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division and was killed in action in France on June 8, 1944, just two days after the D-Day landings.
His remains were initially interred at a temporary military cemetery in Normandy before being returned home. He is buried at Calvary Cemetery in Cleveland,



Ashtabulan Gets Purple Heart



Pfc. Joseph Manyo, son of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Manyo, West Avenue and husband of Mrs. Margaret Manyo, 5719 Washington Avenue, has been awarded the purple heart for wounds received June 12 in the invasion of France.

The Purple Heart has been sent to his wife. Pfc. Manyo was wounded in the leg, but no further details have been learned. He is now in an English hospital. He had been overseas three months.

Pfc. Manyo landed on Utah Beach in Normandy on D-Day (June 6, 1944). He fought in France for two weeks before being wounded in action.

For his service and sacrifice, he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal.

After the war, he returned to Ashtabula, where he worked as a mail carrier for the Ashtabula Post Office until his retirement. He passed away on June 27, 2019, at the age of 96, and is buried at the Bay Pines National Veterans Cemetery in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Pfc. John Franklin Fannis in Saipan Battle

Word has been received by an Ashtabula family of the participation of their son in the invasion of Saipan.

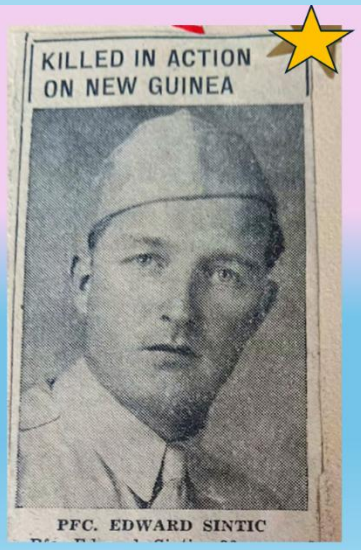
Mr. and Mars. Andrew Fannis, 4010 Lake Avenue, this morning received a letter from their only son, Pfc. John F. Fannis, of the U.S. Marines Motor Transport Corps., informing them of his transfer from Hawaii to Saipan.

In his letter he said, “I am now allowed to tell where I am and that it is all over and that I came through safely.”

Pfc. Fannis joined the Marines in October 1943.

Pfc. Fannis returned safely to Ashtabula. He died August 17, 1973, and he is buried in St. Joseph Cemetery in Ashtabula, Ohio.

John survived the battle for Saipan and the remainder of World War II. He returned to Ashtabula, married and raised a family, an he passed away on August 19, 1973 at the young age of 48. He is buried in St. Joseph Cemetery, Ashtabula.



Pfc. Edward Sintic, 30, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Sintic, Rock Creek, was killed May 26 at Sarmi, New Guinea.

His last letter dated May 14 spoke of a hip injury. No other details were given, and it was assumed that he was well.

Pfc. Sintic attended Geneva High School and worked at the Fisher Body Co. and a filling station in Cleveland. He trained at Camp Wolters, Tex., and on December 27, 1941, was sent to Panama where he was stationed a year. He then went to Australia and had been stationed in New Guinea a year and a half.

Two sisters and two brothers survive besides the parents. They are Mrs. Franis Rock and Miss Mary Sintic, both of Cleveland. Pvt. Joseph Sintic, stationed in the Pacific, and John Sintic, Rock Creek.

Memorial services were held June 26 at St. Mary’s Church, Orwell.

Former Conneaut Soldier Missing

Conneaut, July 21- Cpl. Charles Gebhardt, cousin of Al Gebhardt, and grandson of the late Mr. and Mrs. Charles O'Dell has been missing in France since June 17.

Cpl. Gebhardt, former Conneaut resident and a member of a glider unit, has been overseas since September. His wife, Madelyn, and mother, Mrs. Irene Gebhardt, live in Youngstown.

Tec5 Charles Henry Gebhardt
Gender
Male
Birth Date
25 Jul 1907
Birth Place
Erie, Erie County, Pennsylvania, United States of America
Death Date
17 Jun 1944
Death Place
Basse-Normandie, France
Cemetery
Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial
Burial or Cremation Place
Colleville-sur-Mer, Département du Calvados, Basse-Normandie, France
Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster



Conneaut Pilot Wins Silver Wings

Lieut. Richard Tully

Richard E. Tully completed h is flight training at Luke Field, Arizona, and graduated as a fighter pilot, June 27, receiving silver wings and a second lieutenant's commission. He is the son of Mrs. R.W. Hill, Conneaut.
The Conneaut High graduate attended Ohio University before enlisting.

Dr. Richard E."Dick" Tully, 90, Elkhorn, Wis., died peacefully, surrounded by his family on Friday, March 14. Dick was born on Jan. 29, 1924, son of the late James and Edna Tully and married M. Jean Campbell in Conneaut, Ohio in 1945.
After graduating from The Ohio State University's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1951, Dick moved his family to Elkhorn, where he would spend the next 33 years as a veterinarian at the Elkhorn Veterinary Clinic.
He died on March 14, 2014.



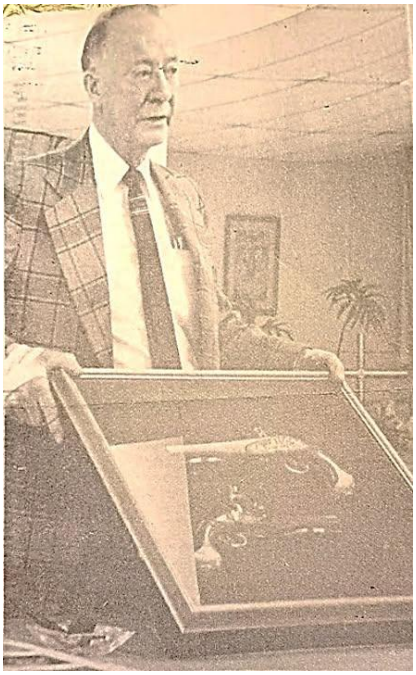
He was killed in the Mariana Islands in the South Pacific.

Conneaut Marine Killed in Pacific

Conneaut, July 27-Pfc. Howard D. Grable, 20, U.S. Marine Corps, has been killed in the Pacific, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W.L. Grable were informed in a message from the War Department.

Pfc. Grable entered the Marines last October and received his "boot" training in San Diego, Cal.
In January he was transferred to the Hawaiian Islands. In his last letter to his parents, he stated that he was aboard ship ready to go to a combat zone.
Born in Conneaut, he was graduated from Conneaut High School in 1942, where he starred in football. Before entering the Marine Corps, he was employed at the Conneaut Base Works of the General Electric Company.
Three other brothers are in the armed services. Cpl. Victor D. Grable in the Coast Artillery has been overseas 30 months and last was stationed in the Gilbert Islands. Sgt. Dawson E. Grable is stationed at Camp Swift, Texas. Pvt. Darl J. Grable, who entered the Army in April is at Camp Francis, Wyoming.
He also has an older brother Frederic A. Grable, Erie, Pa., and a sister, Mrs. Cleo Kelley, Geneva.
He is buried in City Cemetery, Conneaut.

Artifacts Lesson in History



Ashtabula Star Beacon, Saturday, February 26, 1983

Items from his American history such as this display case containing two replicas of pistols of George Washington, were shown by Charles H. Moses for the March meeting of the Ashtabula Area Museum and Historical Society. Moses' grocery store, which features antique displays, was featured recently on Channel 3's Del Donahoo Show. (Photo by Catherine Ellsworth).

Artifacts a Lesson in history

Catherine Ellsworth, Staff Reporter

"Collecting is inherent in all of us," said Charles H. Moses, as he talked on the art of collecting before the Ashtabula Area Museum and Historical Society Thursday. Meeting at Second Congregational Church, the group heard how collecting may range from keeping and cherishing a grandmother's favorite piece of China to hundreds of items pertaining to a particular subject, according to Moses. Whatever the scope of the collecting, it does preserve beauty for the sake of posterity.

Rules for collecting should be followed, including choosing something to collect that you will enjoy having, learn all possible on the subject, connect with a group or groups with the same interest, watch for fakes and reproductions, protect your collection, and above all, enjoy it, Moses said.

The particular interest of Moses is in American history artifacts. His collection includes numerous Civil War items, a few of which were shown to the group. Also displayed and explained were shaving mugs toys, weapons, albums, and items from the Hubbard family, early Ashtabula pioneers.

One item of particular interest shown was one of the ninety-five political campaign torches used in Washinton during the Presidential campaign of Abraham Lincoln. The wooden "gun" looking like a long rifle, has an oil burning lamp on the barrel end, which was lighted and carried as a torch in the parades.

Another rare item shown was a Boone rifle, that of Thomas Boone, cousin of Daniel Boone. It is the only complete gun of Thomas Boone's known to be in existence, Moses said.

In showing the items, Moses stressed that these things should not be collected for gaining financially, but for the enjoyment and gaining of knowledge. "The fun is in the knowledge you collect," he said. "Pick a category you would like to live with, study it, and it turns out beautiful."

Giving Thanks on Thanksgiving



Happy Hearts School students and their adopted grandparents say grace before their Thanksgiving meal Tuesday. Betty Hartley's Intermediate Class began the program of adopting residents of the Ashtabula County Nursing Home located across the street from the school in the early fall of 1988. The seniors visit weekly for games and help with classwork. Joining the students were Jeanette Bates, second from left, Nellie Meyers, fourth from left, and Ruth Burke, third from right. In the back at right is class assistant Linda Walford. On the right side of the foreground is Marge Johnson who helps transport the seniors. Photo by Jeanne M. Hawkins, Jefferson Gazette. November 24, 1988.

Santa's Tinker Hollow Christmas Eve Sleigh

(This story is based on Tinker's Hollow which brims over with stories. Merry Christmas!)



"I like tasting the snow!" Laura said.

"The snow's piled up in banks and drifted pretty high thick," Mama said, pushing back the curtain.

"It looks like the white frosting I help you spread on your devil's food cake," Mama.

"You must help me spread some of the frosting on the cake that is in the oven. Tomorrow is Papa's birthday you know. And Tomorrow night is Christmas Eve! "

"I know, I just finished knitting him a red and green scarf for his birthday. I knitted a red one for Santa to match his coat. I am not sure he will like it. I need to ask him. And I just finished my Christmas list, Laura said. "A Christmas gift for you and Papa, a gift for Jack, a gift for Snowball, and a visit with Santa are the other things on my list I have to buy," Laura said.

"I'm baking him his favorite chocolate cake with snow white frosting," Mama said as she grabbed two potholders and bent over the oven. She held up a round cake with a bulge in the

middle. “It is done. I got the oven a little too hot. It poked up in the middle, but I can hide it with frosting. I will just have to make some extra.”

“I’ll help you, Mama.” Laura went to the pantry to get the canister of white sugar. There was an empty canister sitting in front of the baking soda. That could not be the sugar canister. It was the sugar canister. Laura picked up the empty canister and walked back into the kitchen.

“We’re out of sugar, Mama,” Laura said.

“Oh no, we cannot be. Tomorrow is your father’s birthday! I must have the cake and frosting ready.” Laura knew she saw tears in Mama’s eyes. “I’ll go to Pelton’s in town to get some sugar, Mama.”

Mama sighed. “I would go, but I must help your Papa with the chores. Jack can finish giving hay to the horses and drive you into town with the sleigh.”

“Jack will not let me drive, but I “I” can drive too, Mama. Papa showed me how.”

“Do not you and Jack go fighting about who is going to drive that sleigh. He is the oldest! Let him drive unless something happens that he cannot drive. Then you can take over.”

Laura knew she would be driving the sleigh soon. She just KNEW it.



Jack hitched their horse Patsy to the one-horse open sleigh and called Snowball to climb in. Snowball was supposed to be the farm dog, helping Suzy the other farm dog, with the cows, but Snowball knew he was a house dog. When he was not helping Laura or Jack, he spent his time curled up in the kitchen beside the warm wood stove or sleeping on Laura’s bed.

“Come on, Snowball. We must go into town to get some sugar for Mama and find Papa a Christmas present,” Laura said, pushing him off her pillow. “And find Santa Claus and his sleigh,” she said to herself.

By the time Laura and Snowball arrived on the back porch, Jack had Patsy hitched up to the sleigh and was impatiently throwing snowballs at the snow-covered coal shovel Papa always kept by the coal bucket, also snow covered.

“Bull’s Eye!” Jack shouted. “I have a good arm.”

“Your arm’s going to get frozen if we don’t get going,” Laura told him.

“Hurry up, Laura! We must get there and back before dark.” Jack said.

Snowball took the time to roll in the snow several times and shake snow all over Patsy, Jack, and Laura before he jumped up on Laura's lap in the sleigh. "We sure gave him the right name when we named him Snowball," Jack said.

"We named him Snowball because we got him last year in December and it was snowy like this," Laura told him. "He is not the same color as a snowball, and he is not round like one either. Sit still! Snowball. We must get going,"

Snowball, Laura, and Jack settled into the sleigh and Patsy started off at a brisk trot. Laura pulled her warm scarf that Mama had knitted more closely around her neck.

"It's snowy out here, just like your name, Snowball," Laura said. "Better tie your scarf tighter around your neck," she told Jack.

"I have to stop and fix Patsy's blanket," Jack said. He stopped the sleigh and climbed down the step. When his boots hit the ground, he slipped and slid in the snow. Snowball jumped out of the sleigh and licked Jack's face. Jack stood up, brushing snow off his coat. Before he could fix Patsy's blanket, Snowball tugged the end of Patsy's blanket. Patsy started running up with Laura still in the sleigh. Snowball and Jack ran behind them, kicking up clouds of snow.

"Woah, Patsy, Woah!" Jack shouted. Patsy kept running.

Laura knew exactly what to do. She grabbed the reins and shouted, "Woah! {

Patsy kept running. Laura tried to turn Patsy so she could pick up Jack and Snowball, but Patsy kept running straight ahead.

Laura held on to the reins and guided Patsy down the snowy road. She saw the Girdled Road that ran by the Tinker Farm and Foundry ahead and so did Patsy. Laura and Papa often came to Tinker Hollow for plow points and one time Mama had come to buy an apple corer. Patsy seemed to think they needed to buy something from George Tinker, so she turned into the Tinker Farm and Foundry driveway and trotted up to the door. Then she stopped and neighed a greeting.



George Tinker opened the door. "Ah, we have visitors," he said. "Mrs. Tinker is currently gathering eggs in the henhouse, but I am here to welcome you."

"I'm looking for my brother Jack, our dog snowball, and Santa," Laura told him.

"Santa, I believe, may still at the North Pole getting ready for Christmas Eve," George Tinker told her. As for Jack and Snowball, they are walking down the snow road. Let us find them. I need to get something from my workshop, but I will be quick. We will find them."

George Tinker hurried into his shop and just as quickly came out carrying a sled behind him. He fastened the sled to the back of the sleigh. He whispered some words in Patsy's ear and then he got in the sleigh beside Laura. "Let's go find the missing," he said.

Patsy trotted back down the Girdled Road toward home. All she saw was snow, snow, snow, and more snow. "I do not see Jack or Snowball anywhere. Do you think they are lost?" Laura asked George Tinker.

George Tinker tugged looking over Paty's back at the ground. He smiled. "I think the snow will lead us to them. '

He pointed to a stone in the snow which suddenly wagged its tail. Laura stared at the wagging tail. "Snowball!" she shouted. "Stop swimming in the snow and what did you do with Jack?"

George Tinker pointed again."

"Jack, are you okay?" Laura asked.

Jack did not answer. He was enjoying the snow too much.

George Tinker smiled and pointed to the sled behind the sleigh. Jack, you and Snowball and Laura would enjoy some hot chocolate and Santa cookies that Mrs. Tinker made before you continue your journey to Peltons in Conneaut, would you not?"

Laura shivered. "Hot chocolate, here we come!"



Jack and Snowball jumped on the sled and Laura and George Tinker climbed back into the one-horse open sleigh. Patsy covered the trip back to the Tinker house with a gallop instead of a trot and they arrived at the front door in a cloud of snow. Jack and Mr. Tinker hurried Patsy to the barn for warmth, hay, and comfort.

Mrs. George Tinker– she said Molly was her name – hurried Laura and into the warm kitchen and pushed her into a chair beside the stove. Laura noticed a picture of a woman and man on the wall above the kitchen table. She had idea.

"Is that you and Mr. George Tinker?" she asked Mrs. Molly Tinker.

"Yes. I painted that last summer," Molly Tinker told her.

"Could you paint a picture of my Mama and Papa like that? Laura asked. "I would like to give them a picture like that for Christmas,"

"Yes, I could and would. I might not be able to have it finished before Christmas, but I will paint them. I can give them a promise card that says a Christmas present is coming soon,"

Laura hugged Mrs. Molly Tinker. "Thank you so much. One thing on my Christmas list is finished. Now I just need sugar and a gift for Jack and Snowball and a visit with Santa."

Mrs. Molly Tinker smiled mysteriously.

Soon Jack and George Tinker and Snowball blew into the kitchen in showers of snow. In no time at all they were all sipping hot chocolate and eating peanut butter cookies. Snowball ate two peanut butter cookies and the crumbs from Laura and Jack's cookies.

"The snow is still coming down like feather beds," Mrs. Molly Tinker said. "I do not think you children should try to go to Peltons or anywhere else in this weather. You must stay here tonight and sleep out the storm."

"Patsy told me she did not want to go back out in the snow, either. She is snuggling under her warm horse blanket and munching carrots, apples, and hay," Mr. George Tinker said.

"It is cold in that sleigh, but Mama and Papa will worry if we don't come home soon," Jack said.

"We have to get sugar, a birthday gift for Mama, and see Santa Claus about Christmas," Laura said. She shivered. "Even if the sleigh is cold."

"I have an idea," Mr. George Tinker said. "What if the sleigh had sides to keep out the wind and a motor to help Patsy move it along faster?"

"How can you do that?" Jack asked.

"George can do anything he wants to do. He is very handy." Mrs. Molly Tinker said.

Mr. George Tinker smiled at Jack. "Let us go out to the workshop and see what we can do. Laura, I know you and Jack do not want your Mama and Papa to worry about you. I have an idea. Molly, may we borrow that dog sweater you knitted for Amos> He and Snowball are about the same size."

Mrs. Molly Tinker pulled a bright red dog sweater out of a closet under the stairs. "This should fit Snowball," she said. "He can wear it while he swims through the snow to deliver the note to your parents that I attach to his collar."

Laura laughed. "I know! We can write a note and tell them we are here. Then they will not worry about us. The sweater will be a gift for Snowball because I can knit you another sweater, And the gift for Mama and Papa is the picture you are going to paint of them. But what about the sugar and what about the visit with Santa?" I have some extra sugar that I can send home with you tomorrow. I do not know Santa's schedule, so we will have to ask Mr. George Tinker about that. "Laura and Mrs. Tinker walked out to the workshop to find Snowball. Mrs. George Tinker carried the sweater for Snowball and slipped it over his head as soon as they closed the door of the workshop behind them. Laura fastened the note she had written to Snowball's collar. "Jack and Laura walked Snowball to the end of the Tinker driveway. Laura hugged Snowball and said, "Go home, Snowball," she said. "Go home and see Mama and Papa."

They watched Snowball tumble through the Snow, his red sweater glowing like the fire in Mama's cookstove. Finally, they could no longer see him, and shivering they hurried back into

Mr. George Tinker's workshop. He was wheeling a strangely shaped something that looked like a chicken coop on wheels to the front door of his workshop. "The one-horse open sleigh is now a one horse closed in sleigh," Mr. George Tinker announced. "It will be much warmer to ride in now."

"These sleighs are built to be light with open sides and easy to handle. People use them for sleigh races, and they are easy on horses. But there is no reason a person cannot add canvas to the sides or anything else they want to accommodate it to their needs. I put a small Tinker motor that our family invented for our mowers in it as well. You can drive your warm cozy sleigh home tomorrow:

After supper of chicken and biscuits, green beans, and chocolate cake for desert, Laura and Jack and Snowball and Mr. and Mrs. Tinker sat in front of the parlor stove. "Do you think that Patsy will care if the sides of the sleigh are covered?" Laura asked Mr. George Tinker.

"No, we'll just call it a two-horse closed sleigh instead of a one-horse open sleigh," he said. I might even make another one and display it at Dick Tyler's oil and gas station."

"Do you think Patsy will like it or hate it?" Jack asked.

"It should not make any difference Mr. George Tinker said. "It is just as easy to move, and it will help keep her warm too."

"But what about Santa?" Laura asked. Mrs. Molly Tinker. I finished everything on my Christmas list except talking to Santa."

Mrs. Molly Tinker looked thoughtful. "You never know where or when Santa will appear. Get a good night's sleep and see what tomorrow will bring."

The next morning after breakfast, Mr. George Tinker and Jack did the barn chores and Mr. Tinker went to his workshop to get the one horse closed sleigh. More snow had fallen during the night, and a snow shower landed on Mr. George Tinker's head. Quickly he and Jack hitched Patsy to one horse closed sleigh...

Mrs. Molly Tinker heated bricks to put at their feet and tucked them in with wool blankets. "I am just giving them extra heat. I know your one horse closed sleigh will keep them warm," she said to Mr. George Tinker.

"What about meeting Santa?" Laura whispered to Mrs. Molly Tinker. I still want to finish my list."

Mrs. Molly Tinker patted her shoulder. "Wait and see, Laura. Be patient and wait and see."

Mr. George Tinker started the motor he fastened to the sleigh. "I put enough gas in it to get you home. If it stops running, crank the side of it. If it quits just let Patsy pull the sleigh. Otherwise, let Patsy pull and the motor push. I fixed it so it would push very slowly so it will not scare Patsy."

When the motor started, Patsy looked over her shoulder suspiciously, but it hummed so smoothly that she trotted along the road just as smoothly.

Laura, Jack, and Patsy were home when they heard sleigh bells jingling. They looked around to see where the bells were coming from, but they could not see around a huge snowbank that blocked the entrance to their road.

“It sounds like the bells are coming from the snowbank,” Jack said.

“It sounds like they are coming from the other side of the snowbank,” Laura said.

They pulled their stocking hats off their ears and listened. A deep voice was singing Jingle Bells.

“Santa!” Laura shouted. “Where are you, Santa? I cannot see you because of the snow.”

Santa appeared from behind the snowbank.

“I am glad to see that since you did not put bells on Patsy’s tail so people can hear her coming- a bob tail you know - you at least stop to sing the song with me!

“I like singing Jingle Bells,” Laura said.

“One of my Christmas presents to you is a set of jingle bells,” Santa said, handing them to Jack. Put some on Patsy’s tail and some on your covered sleigh so people can hear you coming and there will be no meeting crashing of sleighs. That is what the whole song is about, after all.”

Santa got out of his sleigh and handed Jack and Laura shovels. “Here. Use these. They are made at a local workshop, just like the motor on the sleigh that brought you home safely. Santa helped them dig a path to their driveway. He refused Mama’s offer of hot cocoa. “I have lots of work to do before Christmas he said. Jack and Laura walked him back to this sleigh.

“Don’t worry,” Laura, Santa said, patting her shoulder. I like the scarf you knitted me, See you Christmas Eve.:

Santa climbed into his one-horse open sleigh and rode off singing Jingle Bells.

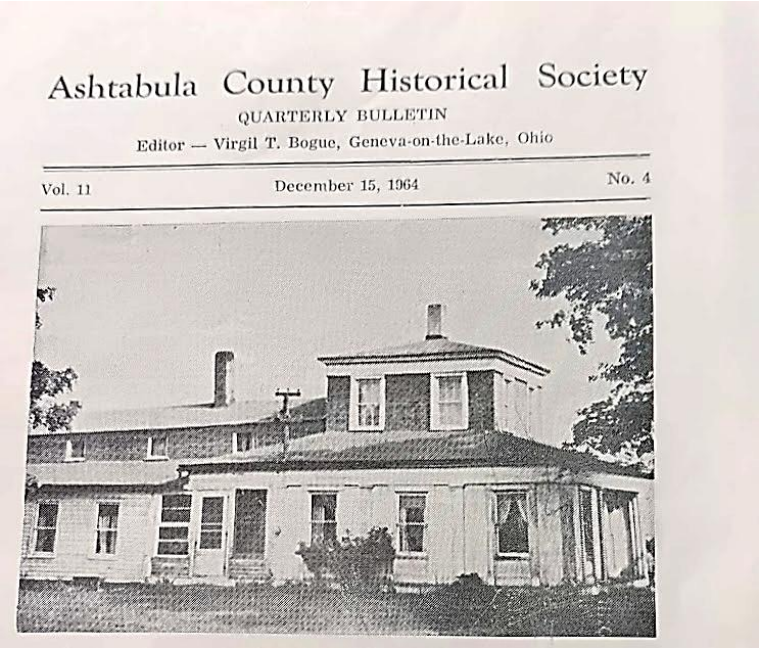


They turned their one horse closed sleigh into their driveway. Snowball ran down the driveway to meet them, throwing giant balls of snow.

Laura and Jack led Patsy into the barn and unhitched the sleigh. They hid the sleigh under a pile of hay. They would tell Mama and Papa the story of the sleigh tomorrow. Tonight, they had to watch for Santa.

From Days Gone By,

A Station on the Underground Railroad



Ashtabula County Historical Society

QUARTERLY BULLETIN

Editor — Virgil T. Bogue, Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio

Vol. 11 December 15, 1964 No. 4

Built by Leverett H. Osborn sometime around 1843 and designed for the purpose of hiding slaves, this home was sold around 1856 to Dwight R. Carpenter who continued its use as an Underground Railroad Station during the Civil War. It has since been known as the Old Carpenter House although it has had several owners since that time.

An old farmhouse which stands a mile and a half north of West Andover has been the subject of many stories from days before and during the Civil War. Long known as the Carpenter House, it was built by Leverett H. Osborn who came to Jefferson in 1830 but decided to purchase land in Andover which he did on August 1, 1931, from Joseph Trumbull of County of Hartford, State of Connecticut. The parcel contained thirty-eight ½ acres in lot two. Built about 1843, it is one of the very few houses in the county constructed expressly for the purpose of use as an Underground Railroad Station. It has been described as square with a sloping roof above which is a second story with what was called early New England, "A Captain's Lookout,' large enough for a good-sized living room and windows sufficient to light the room. A short section of stairway leads to "the Lookout Room."

It is told that after the Civil War, a courteous, friendly old former slave retraced the old Underground Railroad line along which he had traveled many years before to Canada. When he arrived at the house long known as The Carpenter House on the old State Road in West Andover, he begged to be allowed to sleep in his wagon and to be permitted to tether his horse nearby the owner willingly granted permission and invited him to partake of food, which he accepted, eating it on the rough board seat of his wagon. He asked if he might enter the house in the morning to look around as he had once hidden there for two or three days and nights.

Early the next morning he went into the house where the family and a neighbor, who happened to be visiting, were amazed when the Negro pulled the short section of the stairway and pointed to a space beneath the floor of the Captain's Lookout, explaining that he had hidden there until he could safely be conducted toward Canada by a friendly conductor. There was bedding in the secret compartment under the square box-like tower. Built three feet above the ceiling of the room below. Only three feet high, the hiding place tapered off under the eaves but was large enough to hide a dozen men. Mr. Osborn, who built the house, had foreseen the need for a second opening if the entrance was blocked, and a trap door was made and shaft disguised as a

chimney and passageway straight down to the cellar. The present owner, Reino Kettunen, pointed out to the editor, the spot where stood the old blacksmith shop near the house and of which is told that the blacksmith would signal the occupants of this secret chamber by a number of taps on his anvil. Many neighborhood women met during the Civil War Days in the lookout for sewing bees and quilting parties. The Old Negro told how every room and closet was searched and the ladies in the upper room made no objection, although the hostess knew there was a slave hiding in the dark space beneath the floor on which they sat.

The slave catchers entered and left the lookout room over the steps several times, never suspecting the hiding place. Had the slave been found, he would have been returned to his former owner, there flogged , and sold to a slave buyer recruiting labor for the cotton fields of Mississippi. The owner of the West Andover house would have been subject to a fine of $1,000, which would have been divided between the slave catcher and the informer.

The old house, whose history is wrapped up in good deeds, still stands and is occupied as a residence. The builder of the house, Leverett H. Osborn, was born on March 4, 1802, at Blandford, Hampden County, Massachusetts, died May 28, 1858, at West Andover, Ohio, and was laid to rest in West Andover Cemetery.

In March 1826, he married Harriet Nims of Fort Ann, Washington County, New York, who was born June 18, 1803, and died September 16, 1880, at Jefferson, Ohio. She also lies in West Andover Cemetery.

Leverett Osborn was a Whig, later a Republican, and a member of the Methodist Church.

A Reverend Joseph Badger Bear Story



Joseph Badger In the 1880s, the Kingsville Tribune published a series of historical sketches signed by PIONEER. He wrote a sketch about Reverend Joseph Bader, naming him as the first pioneer missionary in the Western Reserve.

Reverend Badger graduated from Yale College, and then he served in the Revolutionary War as a common soldier. After he fought in the Battle of Saratoga, the church sent him to minister to the Indians on the Maumee River as well as to the Western Reserve in general. In 1801, Reverend Badger settled his family in Austinburg and traveled on horseback through the wilderness of the Western Reserve to and from his Mission on the Maumee.

When the War of 1812 broke out, he left the Maumee Mission and settled in Ashtabula where he remained for some years, preaching in the Ashtabula County region of the Western Reserve. During Reverend Badger's sojourn in Ashtabula, the Missionary Society sent him an invoice of Bibles to be sold to those who were able to pay for them and to give to those that could not pay. An Ashtabula woman sent her small boy on horseback with a cheese to purchase a Bible. Reverend Badger weighed the cheese and dedicated that it fell short of the price of the Bible. The boy remounted his horse and then told the minister that he was a mean old fellow. Then the

boy put the spurs to the old mare, fearing that the Reverend would produce a couple of she bears to deal with his sass, Elisha fashion. He survived long after Reverend Badger to tell the story.

While on his missionary circuit in Harpersfield, Reverend Badger found himself treed by a bear and remained in the tree all night. The next morning, the bear started off in another direction to hunt for his breakfast. Reverend Badger descended from his tree and made his way to his home in Austinburg without a scratch, but the worse for his night's lodging.

In 1829, Reverend Badger preached his last sermon in Kingsville in the old Presbyterian Church. After that, he lived in Gustavus for a time, acting as postmaster during his stay. He believed that it was wicked to transport the mail on Sundays and wrote a letter to the Postmaster General, (either William T. Barry or Amos Kendall) instructing him to stop Sunday mail delivery. The Postmaster General wrote back, "I cannot stop the mail, but I can you from acting as postmaster." Reverend Badger preferred not to be stopped.



Waiting for Santa's Reindeer

The lights of the Octagon House and the "English Village," (really the neighbor's yard lights) on a night before Christmas.