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# AN EARLY HISTORY OF LAFAYETTE/PAW PAW, MICHIGAN

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Early History of LaFayett/Paw Paw is a condensed version to which I have added a cover, Table of Contents, and hyperlinks. If you would like to read an expanded and much more detailed account, you may go to the "History of Van Buren County" which contains two volumes and 1,158 pages, by selecting the links below. - Dan Smith



# **History of Paw Paw Township, Michigan - Part 1**

**From: History of Berrien and Van Buren Counties, Michigan  
With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches  
of Their Men and Pioneers.**

**D. W. Ensign & Co., Philadelphia 1880  
Press of J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.**

**THIS township, originally called Lafayette and rechristened Paw Paw in 1867, is known in the government survey as town 3 south, range 14 west, and is bounded on the north by Waverly, south by Decatur, east by Antwerp, and west by Lawrence. It contains in addition to the usual township allotment of thirty six sections about a section and a half in the northwest corner, which was taken from the southwest portion of Waverly for the sake of convenience, this part being separated from the rest of the township of Waverly by a swamp.**

**Three Mile, Four Mile, and Eagle Lakes, and some smaller sheets of water pleasantly diversify the surface of the township; while the west branch of the Paw Paw flowing north through Paw Paw village furnishes at that point excellent water power, which is liberally employed. The Toledo and South Haven Railroad connects Paw Paw village with Lawrence, while the Paw Paw Railroad unites the same place with Lawton, on the Michigan Central road.**

**Paw Paw village is the seat of justice of Van Buren County. The township was named from it in 1867, and it was itself called after the river, named by the Indians from the paw paw fruit, growing thickly upon its banks.**

**The population of the township in 1874 was 2752, and the assessed valuation \$744,800 in 1879.**

## **PIONEERS OF PAW PAW OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE**

**In 1833, E. L. Barrett, induced by Peter Gremps, for whom he afterwards worked, came with his wife and several small children, and settled upon 160 acres of land near Paw Paw village before there was a framed house in the county, Capt. Barrett took especial pride in fine oxen, and at one time owned nine pairs, which he "broke" and trained with great care. He named them, respectively, Nick and Duke, Buck and Bright, Brin and Berry, Jim and Larry, Spot and Spark, Charley and Ned, Bill and Joe, Sam and Ez, Ben and Tom.**



With his oxen he used to break a great deal of land for new settlers, and boasted of breaking several hundred acres in a year.

Capt. Barrett built on a village lot in Paw Paw what is said to have been the first frame house in the county. He sold it to a man who moved it away, and while he was building another his family lived two weeks in the horsestable. He drove the first team from Paw Paw to Little Prairie Ronde, and upon his return experienced the exciting sensation of being chased by a panther and a pack of wolves. His first mercantile venture was the purchase of a barrel of whisky, at five "York shillings" a gallon, and the sale of it to thirsty settlers at fifty cents a pint, at which business he would have made a fortune in quick time could he have continued it extensively. He drove the first team from Paw Paw to Breedsville, when he moved thither the family of Mr. Brown, the father of Smith Brown. After living a few years in the village, during which time he logged and broke land, Mr. Barrett located permanently on his farm, north of the village, removing subsequently to a place on section 36, where he has since lived.

John Agard located in 1833 upon a place on section 1, east of Paw Paw River, and established a trading post at which he did a large business with the Indians, trading for furs, sugar, etc. He had on his place a dozen or more log huts, in which he stored his goods, and until his death his post was a famous resort for Indians, and usually presented a very busy scene. After his death, his family moving away, it was abandoned. Mr. Agard died suddenly of heart' disease, in October, 1835, and was buried on his place; his coffin being made by Williamson Mason, who still lives in Paw Paw village.

William Gunn settled upon section 1, and was about the only settler who in 1833 and 1834 did much at farming. He removed in after years to Iowa. South of Agard's post was William Acklcy, who, with Enos L. Barrett, dug the race for Willard & Grenips' grist mill, in 1838. He moved to Indiana.

In June, 1835, John Lyle and John K. Pugsley (the latter a bachelor), living near Utica, N. Y., started in company for the West, intending to look for land in Illinois. Journeying by way of the lake to Detroit, they traveled on foot over the Territorial road to Paw Paw, and just before reaching Jesse Abbe's tavern, on that road, in Antwerp, they overtook Edwin Barnum, who was bound for Paw Paw. When they reached the site of Paw Paw village, they found there, on the east side of the river, but two houses, one of which was Daniel O. Dodge's tavern, where they stopped for the night. Barnum remained in Paw Paw, and after a while settled on a farm a mile and a half west of the village, where he built a cabin 10 feet by 16 and went to keeping "bachelor's hull."



Lyle and Pugsley pushed on for Illinois, skirting the shore of Lake Michigan, and after a tedious tramp reached Chicago. They prospected a while in that vicinity, but found the prairies too low to suit them, and returned to Paw Paw Township, where they entered land on section 2, Pugsley taking 160 acres, and Lyle 240 adjoining him on the north. Pugsley began at once to build a cabin and clear his land, but Lyle hastened eastward for his family, whom he brought to Michigan in the fall of 1836, moving at once into Pugsley's cabin. There they also found Hugh Jones, who was at work for Pugsley, and who soon entered a farm just west of him, on which he lived until his death. The widow of his brother, Frank R. Jones, now owns the place.

Mr. Pugsley's cabin boasted but one room, but within its narrow limits Pugsley, Jones, and the Lyle family, aggregating thirteen persons (of whom nine were children), managed to live for the space of ten days, when Lyle's own cabin was finished, and he moved his family into it. Says Mr. William Lyle, in recounting the experiences of that time, " We all slept in that one room, and pretty well crowded it was too for thirteen of us, I can tell you; but then folks were not as particular in those days as they are now." Mr. Pugsley has resided in the township since his first settlement, and still lives on section 2. Mr. Lyle sold his farm in 1849, and moved to the village, where he resided until his death in 1870, aged seventy seven.

It has already been observed that when Mr. Lyle came to Paw Paw with his family he brought with him nine children, and it is a somewhat remarkable circumstance that they, as well as one child born after the settlement in Michigan, are all living today. John and William are living on farms in Paw Paw township ; Daniel and George in Dowagiac; Merwin is a druggist in Paw Paw, in which village, too, reside the five daughters, Mrs. Russell Parker, Mrs. Frank Parker, Mrs. Francis Selleck, Mrs. N. P. Conger, and Mrs. Edwin Barnum.

At the time of the settlement of Mr. Pugsley and the Lyles, that portion of the township was an unbroken forest, the only settler there besides themselves being Richard Hutchins, who located upon section 2 in the summer of 1835. Among those who settled in and near that neighborhood at an early date may be mentioned Joseph Luee, Loyal Crane, Henry Harrington, William and Nathan M. Pugsley, H. M. Pugsley, Amos Fleming, Ball, and the families of Jennings and Hicks.

In 1842, William and John, sons of John Lyle, left the parental roof together, to take up homes of their own in the south part of the township. John located on section 29 and William on section 32. That portion of Paw Paw was but



little settled at that time. Besides William and John Lyle, the settlers were Jesse Biekell, John Sherrod, Daniel Abbott, and Archibald Buys. Buys lived about a mile east of William Lyle, and except here there was no one between Lyle and the township line, nor were there any settlers whatever in the southeastern portion of the township.

Anthony Labaday and his wife came to Paw Paw village in 1836, and during the next year occupied a house previously inhabited by Lawson Grout, who in that year moved out to a farm on section 22, where he died, and where his son George now lives. In 1837, Labaday and his wife settled upon the farm of Williamson Mason (Mrs. Labaday's brother), in section 22, where they lived until 1842, when Mr. Labaday bought of Peter Gremps a farm on section 21, and lived there until his death, in 1860. His widow still resides on the place. When the Labadays moved upon section 22, in 1837, their nearest neighbor was Asa Hinckley. In 1838 they had another neighbor, Horace Chadwick, who moved to Illinois with his family about 1850.

Edwin Barnum, already mentioned, came to Paw Paw in 1835 when a young man, purchased 280 acres on sections 10 and 15, went at once upon his land, and lived there a bachelor until 1840, when he married a daughter of John Lyle. He removed to Paw Paw village in 1864, and resided there until his death, in August, 1875. His widow still lives in the village. Mr. Barnum held numerous local offices, and was for some years county treasurer.

James Cate, with his son Lorenzo, settled in 1836 upon section 9. He died in the township, and after that Lorenzo moved to the far West.

In June, 1835, Asa G. Hinckley, of New York, reached Paw Paw with his wife and five children, and settled on section 14, the land having been entered by Elder Jonathan Hinckley, his father, who came out a few months before, and who himself located in Breedsville. Asa moved in 1846 to a farm south of Eagle Lake, and died there in 1871. Later his widow moved to Paw Paw village, where she now lives.

In June, 1835, also, Richard Hutchins, of Oneida Co., N. Y., came with his wife and two children, and located upon section 2, where he died in 1870, and where his widow now lives.

John Barber, a Vermonter, came West with his family, in company with the Cate family, and located on section 8, where he died in 1838. West of him were the families of the Grouts and Henry Rhodes. Shortly afterwards Henry Monroe and Orimel Butler settled in that vicinity.



Loyal Crane and family, from Cayuga Co., N. Y., came to Paw Paw in 1837, his father having come out in the previous year and located land. Loyal settled upon sections 10 and 11, and lived there until 1865, when he moved to the village, which has since been his home. His father, James Crane, became a settler in 1840, and kept store in the village in 1842. He died in 1869, while visiting friends in Pennsylvania. Alonzo Crane, who settled on section 10 in 1840, died there in 1847.

Orimel Butler came from Western New York in 1836, and made l'rairie Ronde his home until 1843, when he removed to Paw Paw and located upon section 10, where he died in 1869. His son, William K., also settled in Paw Paw, on section 8, where he now lives. He obtained his farm of Sylvester Murch, whose brother purchased it from John Barber, the original settler. The house in which Mr. Butler now lives is the one built by John Barber in 1836, and is considered one of the oldest habitable houses in the county. H. W. Rhodes pushed westward from Monroe Co., N. Y., in 1835, and located on section 8. He now resides in Paw Paw village, his son occupying the old homestead.

Nathan M. Pugsley, being persuaded by his uncle, John K., already located in Paw Paw, came directly from his home in England to Michigan in 1838, and settled upon section 10, where he has since lived. His brother, H. M. Pugsley, now lives on section 7, on land which he located in 1845. A. R. Wildey came in 1835 to Paw Paw, and eventually settled upon section 9, where he now lives.

B. F. Murdock, now residing in the village, came to Kalamazoo in 1836, and to Paw Paw in 1842. Mr. Murdock passed much of his early life in the West in school teaching, having down to 1842 taught in five counties. When he came to Paw Paw he worked at carpentering, and sold fanning mills for J. M. Andrews, who was then manufacturing those machines in the village, as the successor of Jerome Walton.

Abraham Ball, of Ohio, came to Paw Paw in 1837, and started a brick yard on E. Barnum's farm, the first one in the county. He followed the business until 1849. In 1855 he died, while on a visit to Coldwater.

Edmond Hayes, a tailor, and Rufus Currier, a carpenter, made a trip from Pennsylvania to Paw Paw in 1838, returning the same year to that State, and reporting so favorably regarding the Western country that William H. Lee determined to accompany them to Michigan. The three set out in the fall of 1838, proceeding to Detroit by water, and traveling thence on foot to Paw Paw Village. Hayes and Currier remained in the village, where they proposed to ply their trades. Lee proceeded about a mile westward, to the place of Asa G.



Hinckley, for whom he engaged to thrash wheat, his pay to be one bushel in eight. He also bought an acre of land of Hinckley, and while he was building a cabin lived with Loyal Crane. He returned to Pennsylvania in the winter of 1839 for his family, with whom, and accompanied by Jesse Bickell, his brother-in-law, and Mrs. Bickell (the latter's mother), he came back to Paw Paw in February of that year, the entire journey being made by wagon, and ending at Paw Paw in snow eighteen inches deep. Lee lived on his one acre four years, during which time he plied his trade as a mason, working all over the county, until he became acquainted with most of the people living in it. In 1843 he bought of Willard Dodge a place on section 28, where he still lives. Mr. Lee's father (James Lee), his mother, and his brother Uriel came to Paw Paw in 1841, and located upon section 33, where Uriel now lives with his mother (aged ninety one), the elder Lee having died in 1852.

Mr. Lee says he used to get sugar for his family by plowing for Pee Pee Yah, an old Indian, who had a farm on section 22. The Indians were always well supplied with sugar, but could not master the business of plowing. Lee did not get much sugar for a day's plowing, and what he did get he had to divide with Asa Hinekley, to pay for the use of the latter's horses. Mr. Lee used to take his dinner with him when he went to plow for Pee Pee Yah. One day, at noon, he discovered that dogs had captured it. Marching briskly into Pee Pee Yah's house, he told the squaw that as her dogs had devoured his dinner, he must have some from her. The old woman handed him a wooden ladle, pointed to a large kettle full of stewed corn, and told him to help himself. He began to eat, when presently the dogs came up and joined him in the repast, dipping in with their mouths where he used the ladle. He rapped them sharply with the ladle, but they insisted upon keeping him company, and as he was desperately hungry, and was assured by the squaw that it was according to the etiquette of the house for the dogs to eat out of the same dish with the family, he proceeded to complete his meal, and soon got so that he did not much mind his canine messmates.

Pee Pee Yah was said to have been once a prominent chief of the Pottawattamies, but had turned farmer, and had bought of the government a quarter of section 22, which is known to this day as the Pee Pee Yah farm. There were in the township other Indians who owned small pieces of land, but Pee Pee Yah was the only one who ever approached the dignity of being a farmer, and his farming was at its best confined to the cultivation of a little soft corn and the boiling of sugar. He was, however, regarded by the other Indians as a superior sort of creature, and was much respected by them. When the government was endeavoring to procure the removal of the Indians of this vicinity to the West, he conceived the idea that it would seek to remove him, despite the fact that he was a land holder, and therefore fled to Canada with his squaw and child. He died in Canada, and the squaw then returned



with her child to Paw Paw, and reoccupied the farm. She afterwards sold it, however, to John R. Baker, and moved to Hartford township.

### LATER SETTLERS

John Sherwood, now living in the southern part of the township, was a settler about 1840. David Woodman (2d), who came with his father, Joseph Woodman, to Antwerp in 1835, located land on section 20, in Paw Paw, in 1841, and has made his home there since that time.

Jonas Harrison came with his family from New York in 1846, and located with his son, William H. on 40 acres in section 16. He took up a farm himself on the same section in 1847, and lived in the township until his death, in 1864. Of his sons, William H. lives in Kalamazoo, Albert resides on section 16, in Paw Paw, and Aaron lives south of him, on the same section. About the time Mr. Harrison settled in Paw Paw there were having in his neighborhood Henry Wilson, A. R. Wildey, Joseph Luce, E. Tyler, Mitchelson, William K. Butler, Riley Woodman, and A. Hemingover.

Henry Wilson, who located in Adrian as early as 1837, went from there in 1840 to Pennsylvania (whence he had migrated), remained there until the spring of 1846, and then came with his family to Paw Paw. He took up 40 acres on section 16, and has lived upon it until the present time.

In 1848, Philip Sherrod came from Western Pennsylvania to Paw Paw, and after working for farmers until 1851 bought a farm on section 29 of Nathan Lawton, and has lived there to this day. H. Cuddeback, a sailor on the lakes, came to Michigan with his father, Sylvester Cuddeback, in 1849, and located land on Section 28. The father settled on the farm, but the son returned to a life on the water, which he followed until 1851. He then became a farmer upon the place he still owns, his father removing subsequently to Lawrence, where he now lives.

David Woodman, who came to Michigan in 1834, settled in Antwerp in 1838, and in Paw Paw in 1858, where he still lives, at the age of eighty seven. Thomas B. Irwin came to the State in 1843, located in Lawrence in 1846, and in 1864 removed permanently to Paw Paw village. E. A. Thompson, who located in Paw Paw village, his present home, served between 1855 and 1859 as Deputy Secretary of State.



## THE CROOKED PAW PAW

Before the days of the Michigan Central Railroad, when the subject of water transportation between Paw Paw and Lake Michigan was one of much importance, the Paw Paw River was utilized, after a fashion, as a highway for flat boats, although it is generally believed that flat boating on the Paw Paw was never a paying business. As early as 1833, however, the Paw Paw was regarded as navigable, and the settlers entertained strong hopes that a part of the stream at least might be profitably used by steamboats.

In the spring of 1833 the Territorial government, desirous of promoting easy access to the river, authorized the construction of roads connecting the "Forks of the Paw Paw" (the supposed head of navigation) with Schoolcraft, Big Prairie Ronde, Adamsville, Little Prairie Ronde, Gun Prairie, and Barry County. "The Landing," near Lawrence village, came, later, to be a place where considerable freight was received for shipment down the river. In 1840, I. W. Willard, of Paw Paw, built two large flat boats, loaded them with flour from his mills at Paw Paw, and dispatched them to St. Joseph. The boats were the "Daniel Buckley," commanded by A. R. Wildey, and the "Wave," in charge of William H. Hurlbut. They made the trip, but occupied so long a time and met with so much difficulty, on account of low water, etc., that the venture was not profitable. Other efforts to utilize the shallow stream as a water highway proved similarly unsuccessful, and although there was for a time considerable flat boat traffic from Paw Paw to St. Joseph, the general verdict was decidedly unfavorable.

In 1848, however, interest in the matter was revived by the passage of an act of the Legislature appropriating 10,000 acres of land for the improvement of the Paw Paw, with a view to make it navigable, at least for flat boats; but the scheme miscarried, and the Paw Paw remains what it was, only a mill stream.

There are among the residents of the county many well known men who used to "flat boat it," and one is at no loss to gather a bountiful chapter of stories illustrative of life on the "raging Paw Paw" when the lusty boatmen poled their craft along its sinuous course and over its numberless sand bars. Mosquitoes were the bugbears of a boatman's existence, and by day as well as by night waged incessant warfare upon the river rovers, whom at times they drove well nigh distracted. William M. Lyle says he once shipped as cook on board a Paw Paw flat boat, and used to find the mosquitoes so thick that they would settle in swarms on the meat frying in the pan. Unable to get rid of them, he always fried them with the meat, or at least with the gravy, and served the food in that way. The boatmen never found fault, probably because it was mosquitoes and beef or nothing.



## **FOREST ADVENTURE OF A PIONEER**

About the year 1835, Edwin Mears, a young man living in Paw Paw village, set out in midwinter with a half dozen companions on a hunting expedition. In the course of the day young Mears found himself separated from his comrades, and despite his persistent efforts and shouts he could neither find them nor the way homeward. So he wandered through the woods four days and nights, half dead with cold and hunger, and at the end of the fourth day found himself on the shore of Lake Michigan. There he discovered an abandoned hut, and in it a few grains of oats, which he ate with great avidity, for he had had no food since leaving Paw Paw. four days previously. His sufferings from cold and hunger were intense, and he had about made up his mind to perish there when he heard human voices, and was rescued by a party sent out in search of him when it was found that he did not return home. He was in a most unfortunate condition, and for a time after being taken home it was thought he would die, but he at last rallied, and long survived to recount his painful experience. It is said that a few years afterwards Mr. Mears' rifle was found at the foot of a beech tree.

## **INDIAN SKULLS**

Skulls and other human bones have frequently been turned up by the plowshare, especially in the southern portion of the township. Indian burying grounds are known to have been laid out on sections 21 and 22, on the latter of which Pee Pee Yah had a farm, and there were within the recollection of many of Paw Paw's present citizens as many as two score of Indian graves there.

## **ORGANIZATION AND FIRST TOWN MEETING**

The township of Lafayette (now Paw Paw) was formed by act of' the Legislative Council on the 26th day of March, 1835, and included the whole of Van Buren County, which was then temporarily attached to Cass. The first township meeting was held at the house of D. O. Dodge, on the 4th of April, 1836, when Peter Gremps was chosen Supervisor; Daniel O. Dodge, Town Clerk; Edward Shults, Collector. By an act of the State Legislature, approved March 11, 1837, Lafayette (or Van Buren County) was divided into seven townships, of which the present Paw Paw retained the old name of Lafayette.

The first meeting of the new township of Lafayette (created under act of' March 11, 1837, giving Van Buren County separate jurisdiction) was held at D. O. Dodge's tavern, in Paw Paw village, on the first Monday in April, 1837. Levi H. Warner was appointed Moderator, and there were present D. O. Dodge, Town Clerk, and Peter Gremps, Supervisor. The polls being duly opened the



following freemen voted: Joseph Luee, R. Currier, E. L. Barrett, Peter Gremps, D. O. Dodge, William Eckler, E. Jones, John Barber, A. Buys, John Hughes, E. Mears, L. H. Warner, J. K. Pugsley, Edwin Barnum, D. Thorp, J. Barnes, D. Barker, A. G. Hinckley, H. Gray, C. G. Harrington, R. Hinckle, John Lyle, E. Shults, T. B. Colton, William Prater, Lorenzo Cate, M. Hoskins.

Thee following officers were elected: D. O. Dodge, Supervisor; Edwin Mears, Township Clerk; L. H. Warner, J. H. Simmons, J. K. Pugsley, and E. Barnum, Justices of the Peace; Joseph Luce, J. H. Simmons, and L. H. Warner, Highway Commissioners; J. H. Simmons and L. H. Warner, School Inspectors; Rufus Carrier, Edward Shults, and Edwin Barnum, Assessors; Charles G. Barrington, Collector; C. G. Harrington, Myron Hoskins, David Thorp, and L. A. Grout, Constables; E. L. Barrett and Asa G. Hinckley, Directors of the Poor.

At the second township meeting, held April 2, 1838, at the house of H. Wilder, the voters were John Barber, Rodney Hinckley, James Cate, D. O. Dodge, Edwin Barnum, Zethan Warner, Hugh Jones, Joseph Luce, L. D. Cate, Levi T. Ball, William Eckler, Charles G. Harrington, John Hughes, David Barker, L. H. Warner, Henry Gray, L. A. Grout, Williamson Mason, H. Read, Henry Rhodes, Peter Gremps, James Conklin, Francis Jones, S. C. Buys, E. L. Barrett, Archibald Buys, William Prater, R. E. Churchill, Joseph E. Roys, Charles Ivison, E. R. Hays, Martin Liscomb, H. Robinson, A. A. Greaves, A. G. Hinckley, and David Thorp.

At that meeting it was voted to raise upon the taxable property of the township money enough to purchase and fence one and a half acres of land for a burial ground.

### TOWNSHIP CIVIL LIST

A list of the persons annually chosen by the township from 1838 to 1880 to be supervisor, treasurer, clerk, and justice of the peace is given below:

1838.-Supervisor, J. H. Simmons; Clerk, H. Wilder; Treasurer, C. G. Harrington; Justice of the Peace, J. K. Pugsley.

1839.-Supervisor, Joshua Bangs; Clerk, J. H. Simmons; Treasurer, Joshua Bangs; Justice of the Peace, Joseph Luce.

1840.-Supervisor, J. H. Simmons; Clerk, J. H. Simmons; Treasurer, George Smith ; Justice of the Peace, F. H. Stevens.

1841.-Supervisor, Peter Gremps; Clerk, L. H. Warner; Treasurer, George Smith; Justice of the Peace, Loyal Crane.



- 1842.-Supervisor, Peter Gremps; Clerk, G. H. Baker; Treasurer, George Smith.
- 1843.-Supervisor, S. J. Foote; Clerk, A. Crane; Treasurer, F. R. Lord; Justice of the Peace, J. Shevarts.
- 1844.-Supervisor, J. B. Barnes; Clerk, A. Crane; Treasurer, L. H. Warner; Justice of the Peace, D. O. Dodge.
- 1845.-Supervisor, J. K. Pugsley; Clerk, A. Crane; Treasurer, A. J. Goodrich; Justice of the Peace, J. H. Simmons.
- 1846.-Supervisor, I. W. Willard; Clerk, Abner Hays; Treasurer, Edmund Smith; Justice of the Peace, S. H. Blackman.
- 1847.-Supervisor, Loren Darling; Clerk, Elisha Durkee; Treasurer, J. B. Barnes; Justice of the Peace, D. Woodman (2d).
- 1848.-Supervisor, Benoni Hall Clerk, Elisha Durkee; Treasurer, J. H. Simmons; Justice of the Peace, James Crane.
- 1849.-Supervisor, Benoni Hall; Clerk, Edmund Smith; Treasurer, H. W. Rhodes; Justice of the Peace, J. H. Simmons.
- 1850.-Supervisor, F. H. Stevens; Clerk, Edmund Smith; Treasurer, A. C. Kimball; Justice of the Peace, S. J. Foote.
- 1851.-Supervisor, J. K. Pugsley; Clerk, G. B. Sherwood; Treasurer, O. F. Parker; Justice of the Peace, A. Heminover.
- 1852.-Supervisor, F. H. Stevens; Clerk, G. B. Sherwood; Treasurer, B. D. Thompson; Justice of the Peace, John Reynolds.
- 1853.-Supervisor, G. B. Sherwood; Clerk, J. M. Longwell; Treasurer, N. P. Conger; Justice of the Peace, J. H. Simmons.
- 1854.-Supervisor, Elisha Durkee; Clerk, E. Mother; Treasurer, N. P. Conger; Justice of the Peace, James Crane.
- 1855.-Supervisor, Edwin Barnum; Clerk, B. D. Thompson; Treasurer, A. Stewart; Justice of the Peace, David Webb.
- 1856.-Supervisor, R. Avery; Clerk, George Voke; Treasurer, G. S. Cogswell; Justice of the Peace, L. B. Sheldon.



**1857.-Supervisor, Edwin Barnum; Clerk, T. R. Harrison; Treasurer, Thomas A. Granger; Justice of the Peace, Calvin Cross.**

**1858.-Supervisor, Edwin Barnum; Clerk, E. B. Butler; Treasurer, James H. Prater; Justice of the Peace, T. E. Hendrick.**

**1859.-Supervisor, Charles Selleck; Clerk, A. J. Sartore; Treasurer, E. A. Sheldon; Justice of the Peace, J. H. Simmons.**

**1860.-Supervisor, L. B. Sheldon; Clerk, A. J. Sartore; Treasurer, G. W. Ocobock; Justice of the Peace, O. D. Glidden.**

**1861.-Supervisor, G. J. Hudson; Clerk, T. H. Stephenson; Treasurer, T. W. Meleher; Justice of the Peace, George Young.**

**1862.-Supervisor, J. K. Pugsly; Clerk, T. H. Stephenson; Treasurer, Russell Parker; Justice of the Peace, T. E. Hendrick.**

**1863.-Supervisor, Charles Selleck; Clerk, J. J. Roe; Treasurer, Edwin Cate; Justice of the Peace, E. M. Glidden.**

**1864.-Supervisor, Loyal Crane; Clerk, S. H. Blackman; Treasurer, G. S. Lane; Justice of the Peace, H. P. Sanger.**

**1865.-Supervisor, Charles Selleek; Clerk, A. J. Sartore; Treasurer, G. S. Lane; Justice of the Peace, A. W. Nash.**

**1866.-Supervisor, Charles Selleek; Clerk, E. M. Glidden; Treasurer, J. W. Free; Justice of the Peace, T. E. Hendrick.**

**1867.-Supervisor, E. H. Glidden; Clerk, A. J. Sartore; Treasurer, J. W. Free; Justice of the Peace, E. M. Glidden.**

**1868.-Supervisor, O. D. Glidden; Clerk, Joseph Kilburn; Treasurer, John Pelton; Justice of the Peace, W. H. Randall.**

**1869.-Supervisor, J. L. Ross; Clerk, John Knowles; Treasurer, H. L. Eggleston, Justice of the Peace, A. H. Herron.**

**1870.-Supervisor, E. O. Briggs; Clerk, A. H. Harrison; Treasurer, H. L. Eggleston; Justice of the Peace, T. E. Hendrick.**

**1871.-Supervisor, E. O. Briggs; Clerk, A. M. Harrison; Treasurer, R. Rogers;**



**Justice of the Peace, S. H. Blackman.**

**1872.-Supervisor, E. O. Briggs; Clerk, A. H. Harrison; Treasurer, R. Rogers;  
Justice of the Peace, Wm. R. Butler.**

**1873.-Supervisor, Edwin Barnum; Clerk, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, R. Rogers;  
Justice of the Peace, C. E. Galligan.**

**1874.-Supervisor, E. O. Briggs; Clerk, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, R. Rogers;  
Justice of the Peace, D. Woodman (2d).**

**1875.-Supervisor, E. O. Briggs; Clerk, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, Charles  
Selleck; Justice of the Peace, S. H. Blackman.**

**1876.-Supervisor, E. O. Briggs; Clerk, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, J. J. Forsyth;  
Justice of the Peace, John Knowles.**

**1877.-Supervisor, J. W. Free; Clerk, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, A. C. Lindsley;  
Justice of the Peace, K. W. Noyes.**

**1878.-Supervisor, J. W. Free; Clerk, R. I. Jarvis; Treasurer, A. C. Lindsley;  
Justice of the Peace, W. H. Mason.**

**1879.-Supervisor, D. Woodman (2d); Clerk, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, Charles  
Selleck; Justice of the Peace, S. H. Blackman.**



## **History of Paw Paw Township, Michigan - Part 2**

**From: History of Berrien and Van Buren Counties, Michigan**

**With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches**

**of Their Men and Pioneers.**

**D. W. Ensign & Co., Philadelphia 1880**

**Press of J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.**

### **PAW PAW VILLAGE**

The first settlement in the present township of Paw Paw was made upon the site of Paw Paw village in the year 1832, when Rodney Hinckley located upon a farm in the northern portion of the present village. In that year, also, Pierce Barber, of Prairie Ronde, began the erection of a saw-mill on the river at the west end of the village. Mr. Barber soon sold his interest in the mill to Job Davis and Rodney Hinckley, who, however, soon disposed of it (in 1833) to Peter Gremps and Lyman J. Daniels.

### **THE PEOPLE**

These gentlemen came hither on a prospecting tour in that year, bought the mill property, improved it, purchased considerable land in the vicinity, and laid out upon it a village which they called Paw Paw. Daniels lived in Schoolcraft, and at no time became a settler in Paw Paw. Gremps, who came from the Mohawk Valley, in New York, to find a mill site in the West, returned to his home after purchasing the Paw Paw property, and did not settle permanently on his new possessions until 1835, when he moved into a cabin just west of the saw mill. Edward Shults, Mr. Gremps' nephew, came out from New York with his uncle, and worked for the latter in his saw mill.

While Mr. Gremps was absent in the East, his partner, Mr. Daniels, was busy looking after the saw mill and devising means to further the interests of the new village. He thought there ought to be a tavern, especially as the Territorial road was likely to pass through Paw Paw, and so one day in 1834, on meeting in Schoolcraft Daniel O. Dodge, who had been teaching school in those parts, he offered to give him an entire block in Paw Paw, and build a board house for him, if he would come on and keep tavern in it. Dodge agreed, and in the same year opened an inn, which became one of the most famous in this part of the State. Meanwhile, Enos L. Barrett had located land north of the village, but lived in a board shanty on one of Gremps' village lots. David Thorp was



also on the west side of the river, where he occupied a building, in which he lived and operated a turning lathe.

Shortly after Mr. Gremps' permanent settlement he sent to Stone Arabia, N. Y., and invited Dr. Barrett (a resident of that place) to come out to Paw Paw and set up practice. Barrett came, and lived in a cabin just west of Dodge's tavern. Dr. Barrett was the first physician of Paw Paw. He was sorely afflicted with phihisis, and after three or four years' practice at Paw Paw removed to Kalamazoo, where he ended his days.

Early in the summer of 1835, Mr. Gremps concluded that there ought to be a store in the village, and so he sent word to Edward Legrave, of Kalamazoo, that he wanted a carpenter capable of building a good store. Legrave found 'Williamson Mason (a carpenter from Wayne Co., N. Y., who had been in the West working at his trade since 1832), and induced him to go over and build Gremps' store. Mason started with three hands on Monday, July 6, 1835, and on the evening of that day reached Dodge's tavern, which was so full of people that he and his companions were compelled to sleep in a couple of abandoned shanties on the west side of the river. In them, too, they lived while they were building the store, which was erected in a short time, though in good style for that period. It was, of course, the first store in Paw Paw, and it stood west of Dodge's tavern, where Phillips' blacksmith shop is. Mr. Gremps moved his family into the back part of the building before it was entirely finished, and soon afterwards stocked the store with goods which he had brought from New York. and began business in it, with Edward Shults as his clerk.

After completing the store, Mason and his fellow workmen built a dwelling house for Mr. Gremps just opposite, which is still known as the Gremps house.

Mr. Mason, who is yet a resident and manufacturer at Paw Paw, says that when he came t.o the village, in July, 1835, it contained on the east side of' the river Rodney Flinckley's house, Dodge's tavern, and Dr. Barrett's cabin on the west side, Gremps & Daniels' saw mill, David Thorp's turning shop, and the two shanties occupied by Peter Gremps and Enos L. Barrett.

Soon the need for a blacksmith began to make itself felt. Rodney Hinckley had put up a blacksmith shop, but little work if any had been done in it. When blacksmithing was needed, the settlers went either to Schoolcraft or St. Joseph. So Peter Gremps said to Williamson Mason, " We must have a blacksmith." Gremps thought he could get Craig Buys, of St. Joseph County, a brother-in-law of Rodney Hinekley, and empowered Mason to promise Buys the gift of a shop if he would come. Buys did come, and occupied a shop



which Mason built for him on a lot west of Dodge's tavern. Buys plied his trade there about six years, and then moved to Ohio.

The first shoemaker of Paw Paw was Charles G. Harrington, who is now working at his trade at Lawton. Mr. Harrington came from Kalamazoo in 1836, and opened a shop in Paw Paw, in a building put up by Williamson Mason, just east of where the Dyckman House now stands. Mr. Mason also built the first school house in the village, in the fall of 1836, its location being on Gremps Street north of Main Street. Rodney Hinekley, of whom mention has been made, finally moved to South Haven, where he died.

Madison Eastman, a carpenter, settled in the village in 1835. He afterwards removed to Decatur, but returned to Paw Paw, and died there.

The first foundry in the village was started by Calvin Hawley, who was also one of the first carriage makers in Paw Paw. His widow, a sister of the late Edwin Barnum, still lives in the township.

Peter Gremps, the founder of Paw Paw, came West, as already observed, in 1833, to find a location for a mill, and while stopping at Schoolcraft discovered one John Derosier, who piloted him to Paw Paw, as a place certain to suit him. Grumps at once entered considerable land in the neighborhood, returned East., and came again in 1835, with his family. Mr. Gremps never lived out of the village after that. He built the first store, and was the first merchant and first postmaster. After a busy career, he lived during the latter years of his life in peaceful retirement, dying upon the old homestead in 1874, at the age of seventy three. Two of his children Mrs. Alonzo Shults and Peter H. Gremps are now residents of the village. Edward Shults, his nephew, who came to Paw Paw in 1834, and who was Mr. Gremps' right hand man in business for many years, caught the gold fever in 1849 and migrated to the Pacific slope, where he still lives.

Myron Hoskins, a carpenter, who came to Paw Paw in 1836. still lives in the village. William Prater, also a carpenter, came in the same year. J. H. Simmons, a cabinetmaker, came in 1836, and was the first who worked at that trade. He became a man of some mark, served as county surveyor and judge of probate. and lived in the village until his death. William Eagle, who now lives south Of the village, came in 1840, and followed the business of coopering. Richardson Avery, a carpenter, came to Paw Paw in 1835, and died in the village in 1875.



**Public-Houses.-Daniel O. Dodge's tavern in Paw Paw village**, on the Territorial road (known also as the Paw Paw House), was a place of considerable importance from its erection in 1834; and later, when stage coaching and other means of travel made the Territorial road an important highway, the old Dodge tavern was held in high esteem by those who traveled on that thoroughfare. It was an humble board shanty with four rooms, and measured about 16 feet by 24. Dodge's tavern was enlarged in 1835, and in 1836 was rebuilt. Mrs. Dodge was a famous cook, and gave the house great repute. The stages changed horses at that point, and for many years travel on the Territorial road was exceedingly brisk. It is said that Dodge had at one time as many as a hundred people at breakfast, and that Mrs. Dodge did the cooking for all of them.

The tavern stood on what is now the south side of Main Street, at the western end opposite the bank, and for a year or more was almost hidden by trees. Trees, indeed, were so plentiful in Paw Paw, even after the village was laid out, that travelers frequently rode through it without knowing there was a town there, and searchers for the village often asked at Dodge's where Paw Paw was. Dodge sold the tavern to Horace Wilder, but being afterwards forced to take it back, carried it on until it was destroyed by fire. Mr. Dodge continued after that event to live in the village in retirement until his death. His widow and a son, Thomas, now live in Lawton.

During Mr. Dodge's career as a Paw Paw landlord, Dr. Warner opened a tavern about opposite where the postoffice is now, but it had only a brief existence. James Crane put up the Exchange Hotel on the site of the Dyckman House, which latter, erected by E. B. Dyckman and John Smolk, was built soon after the burning of the old Exchange. The Willard House, remodeled by I. W. Willard from an old store building, was a popular hotel many years ago, but has long since ceased to be a public house.

**The Great immigration of 1836.**-The year 1836 brought a great army of land speculators and settlers to Michigan, and all along the Territorial road stages and taverns had more business on hand than they could comfortably manage. Travel was then at its flood on that highway, and travelers coming weary and footsore to a roadside inn with the glad expectation of rest and food, often found that neither could possibly be obtained; that the beds were all filled (having at least two persons in each), and that the larder had been completely exhausted. A participator in that bustling era says that Dodge's tavern was at that period like a bee hive, and even then could not accommodate one tenth of the people who sought its shelter. "Why," remarks this old settler, "I've known the time when the rush at Dodge's was so great, and the demand for



lodging so pressing, that travelers offered as high as a dollar for the privilege of leaning against a post." This probably exaggerates but also illustrates the situation.

**Early Merchants.**-It has already been observed that Peter Gremps opened the first store in Paw Paw. The next store keeper was Nathan Mears (now a merchant in Chicago), whose store was west of where the bank is. After him Edwin Mears opened a store on the corner now occupied by E. Smith & Co. James Crane was an early merchant, and kept store on Smith's corner.

Willard & Gremps opened a store on Main Street in 1838, and intrusted its management to Edward Shults. Willard afterwards bought Gremps' interest, and took Shults as a partner. Later the firm was Willard & Moffat, Isaac W. Willard was a man of considerable note in the community, and from 1838 until his death was closely identified with the interests of Paw Paw as a miller and merchant, and was a man of prominence in the community.

Alonzo Sherman came from the State of New York to Paw Paw in 1844, and engaged in mercantile business in the village as a partner with E. J. House, who was then keeping store in the building previously occupied by Edwin Mears. Since that time Mr. Sherman has been continuously engaged in trade at Paw Paw, and is now a member of the firm of Sherman & Avery, as well as extensively concerned in milling. H. L. Dickinson bought out Nathan Mears in 1845, and in 1847 became a partner with Alonzo Sherman. Mears went into business again, soon after selling to Dickinson, and in 1846 disposed of his store to William R. Hawkins; who had settled in Kalamazoo County in 1836, and had resided in Paw Paw since 1846. F. H. Stevens and Loren Darling opened a store in 1844 on the corner where Sherman & Avery now are, and remained there until 1847, when they retired from business. In that year Edmund Smith, a resident in the town since 1843, and a carpenter by trade, commenced in Paw Paw as a merchant, and still carries on that business.

The village has now five dry goods stores, four grocery stores, five drug stores, one clothing store, and numerous minor marts of business.

**Lawyers, Doctors, and Newspapers.**-The lawyers and physicians of Paw Paw are mentioned in the chapters devoted to the legal and medical professions in the general history of the county, and in the chapter on the press will be found notices of the various papers which have flourished or languished there.

**The Postmasters of Paw Paw.**-Peter Gremps was the first postmaster of Paw Paw, his appointment dating from 1835. Mr. Gremps, however, paid very little attention to the post office, Edward Shults, his clerk, being also the deputy



postmaster, and transacting the business of the office. Gremps was succeeded in 1842 by George L. Gale, and he was followed successively by John McKinney. John Smolk, A. J. Goodrich, F. H. Stevens, J. M. Longwell, J. W. Huston, B. J. House, A. J. Sorter, O. F. Parker, T. B. Irwin, and George W. Matthews, the latter being the present incumbent.

During the three months ending Dec. 31, 1879, \$800 worth of stamps were sold at the office, money orders were issued to the amount of \$6624, and \$3817.53 were paid out on such orders.

**Mills and Millers.**-The building of the first saw mill at Paw Paw and its transfer to Gremps & Daniels have been elsewhere mentioned. Gremps & Daniels controlled the property until the death of the latter, after which the mill passed to a numerous succession of owners, until it was worn out and eventually demolished. The mill site is near that occupied by the Phoenix Flouring Mill, which uses the same power. The latter establishment, containing two run of stones, belongs to Thomas L. Stevens, and is carried on by M. Wells.

In 1837, Stafford Godfrey, a mill wright, came from Chautauqua Co., N. Y., in response to an invitation from Peter Gremps, and in 1838 began, with R. E. Churchill, the erection for I. W. Willard and Peter Gremps of the grist mill long known as the Paw Paw Mills, which now contains six run of stones, and is carried on by A. Sherman & Briggs. The castings and stones were brought from St. Joseph, and that its completion gave much satisfaction may be understood from the fact that people had previously to go to Kalamazoo and to Flowerfield, St. Joseph Co., to mill. A. Sherman & Briggs also carry on the Central Flouring Mills, formerly used as a woolen mill.

Stafford Godfrey, here mentioned, settled in Paw Paw in a house which stood upon the site of the Dyckman House, and in 1842 and 1843 he and Churchill built the present county court house. His next important work was effected in 1856, when he built the brick Baptist church. Mr. Godfrey, aged eighty, now lives in the village.

Free & Martin have a planing mill in the village, and near there Williamson Mason occupies a building which was put up by J. H. Simmons in 1840, and in which Mr. Mason has a planing mill, turning shop, etc. In the same building George Birkenshaw has a woolen mill, in which he operates the first carding machine brought to Paw Paw, one Frank Taylor having introduced it into the village.

Aside from the manufacturing establishments above named, the principal ones are the foundries of M. Snow & Sons and W. H. Randall, both of which are engaged chiefly in the production of plows.



**First Wedding, Birth, and Death.**-The first wedding in Paw Paw was that of Hannah Mead and one Beffontaine, in 1833. The bride was a servant girl in the service of John Thomas, an employee at Job Davis' saw mill, while the groom was one of the mill hands. There was neither minister nor justice of the peace in the vicinity, but Job Davis, who declared that he had once been justice of the peace, said he knew the form of the ceremony, and thought it would be all right if he married them. They thought so, too, and were accordingly married by Davis, and began living together as man and wife. They soon moved to Indiana, and for aught that is known have lived as happily (or unhappily) as if a regular ministerial or judicial functionary had celebrated their nuptials.

The first child born in Paw Paw-Simeon, son of Archibald Buys is still living in the township.

The wife of Daniel O. Dodge died in 1837. and was the first who died in Paw Paw. She was buried in the tavern garden, but in 1838, when the cemetery in the northern portion of the village was laid out, her remains were conveyed thither.

**Indian New Year Calls.**-On the last day of the year 1835, Peter Gremps moved into the new house built for him by Williamson Mason and Joseph Royes. That evening Edward Shults-who by reason of a year's residence knew something of Indian customs-told the family that on the morrow they would be visited by a delegation of Indians, whose fashion it was to make New Year calls on the white settlers, for the understood purpose of ratifying friendships for another year. Sure enough, on the ensuing day a band of about twenty five Indians, gayly adorned with paint and feathers, called in force, somewhat to the trepidation of the women, whom the Indians insisted upon kissing despite violent protests. Altogether the affair was a jolly one, notwithstanding the kisses. Mrs. Dodge put on her war paint when the twenty five Indians demanded to kiss her, and by a sudden attack routed and drove them from her house at the point of the rolling pin.

**The First Fourth of July Celebration.**-The first celebration of the national holiday in Paw Paw occurred in 1836, and, according to tradition, was a very patriotic and enthusiastic affair, though confined to a limited number of patriots and enthusiasts. The ceremonies attendant upon the celebration included an oration by F. C. Annable (now living in Almena); an address to three veterans of the war of 1812 (of whom Harmon Van Antwerp, aged ninety, was one), presented by a youthful daughter of Peter Gremps, now Mrs.



Alonzo Shults, of Paw Paw; periodical "anvil" salutes, fired by Rodney Hinekley; and a banquet to everybody; the scene of the demonstration being the so called Public Square," an open space in the woods just west of the present court house grounds.

Village Incorporation and List of Officers.-Paw Paw village was incorporated under an act of the Legislature passed in the spring of 1867, and on the 6th of May of that year the first meeting for the election of village officers was held at the court house. The judges of election were Russell Parker and J. Whittaker, and the clerk was A. J. Sorter. Two hundred and eighty six votes were cast, of which Thomas H. Stevenson received 159 votes for president., and C. F. Allen, 127. A full list of the persons chosen annually to be president, trustees, recorder, and treasurer from 1867 to 1879 is here given:

1867.-President, Thomas H. Stephenson; Trustees, F. W. Selleek, Alonzo Sherman, Charles Selleck, E. G. Butler. Chandler Richards; Recorder, A. J. Sorter; Treasurer, Edwin Barnum.

1868.-President, E. O. Briggs; Trustees, G. J. Hudson, W. H. Randall, E. A. Park, Alonzo Sherman. Chester F. Allen; Recorder, A. J. Sorter; Treasurer, Charles R. Avery.

1869.-President, E. O. Briggs; Trustees, George Voke, J. W. Van Fossen, Joseph Davey, T. W. Melchor, William H. Randall; Recorder, A. J. Sorter; Treasurer, George W. Longwell.

1870.-President, Edwin Martin; Trustees, Sydney Cox, A. M. Harrison, E. C. Palmer, P. I. Bragg, Aaron Van Auken; Recorder. John Knowles; Treasurer, John W. Free.

1871-President, Peter H. Gremps; Trustees. Joseph Darey. E. C. Palmer, Russell Parker, Peter H. Gremps, Sydney Cox; Recorder, A. M. Harrison; Treasurer, Charles R. Avery.

1872.-President. G. J. Hudson; Trustees. J. H. Freeman, William Wiley. John W. Free. Joshua Hunt, Aaron Van Auken; Recorder. A. M. Harrison; Treasurer. Charles R. Avery.

1873.-President. J. H. Freeman; Trustees, Joshua. Hunt, George Voke, P. H. Gremps, William Read, A. W. Miller, James Meyers; Recorder. William H. Mason; Treasurer, Charles R. Avery.

1874.-President, I. W. Willard; Trustees, J. C. Rousseau, Joseph Kilburn, James Bennett; Recorder, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, C. R. Avery.



1875.-President. Peter H. Gremps; Trustees, E. O. Briggs, Joshua Hunt, A. W. Miller; Recorder, W. H. Mason; Treasurer, C. R. Avery.

1876.-President. Edmund Smith; Trustees. George W. Longwell, C. R. Ocobock, William C. Macullar; Recorder. William H. Mason; Treasurer, C. R. Avery.

1877.-President, Loyal Crane; Trustees, Joshua Hunt, A. W. Miller, R. E. Quick; Recorder. Seigfried Shafer; Treasurer, E. P. Hathaway.

1878.-President, Charles S. Maynard; Trustees, James Phillips, N. P. Conger. Charles Flanders; Recorder, Edgar M. Snow; Treasurer. E. P. Hathaway.

1879.-President, J. W. Ball; Trustees, Alouzo Schults, James L. Tyr roll, A. F. McNeil; Recorder. E. M. Snow; Treasurer, E. P. Hathaway.

**Paw Paw Fire Department.**-This department was organized Sept. 29, 1868, with one engine company and one hose company, H. L. Eggleston being the chief engineer. A hand engine and hose cart were then purchased and furnished to the companies; later a hook and ladder company was added. The original engine is still in use, although efforts are being made to supersede it with a steamer. The officers of the department are William Wiley, Chief Engineer; A. W. Showerman, Assistant Engineer; S. H. Lamont, Secretary; and M. P. Allen, Treasurer. The engine company numbers 37, Henry Hopping being the foreman. L. W. Meichor is the foreman of the hose company, which has 18 members, and R. E. Quick of the hook and ladder company, which numbers 14 members.

**Fires.**-The business centre of the village has on three occasions been ravaged by severe fires, and two of them were especially disastrous. The first conflagration of any note took place in 1859, when the old Exchange Hotel, standing upon the site of the present Dyckman House, was destroyed. In 1866 the flames swept both sides of Main Street west of Kalamazoo Street. The loss was a severe one, but the citizens afterwards found some consolation in the presence of the fine brick blocks which now line both sides of Main Street upon the district burned over in 1866.

On the 8th of January, 1868, the north side of Main Street between the Dyckman House and the post office was ravaged by fire, which incident has thus far been the last important conflagration in the village.



**The Peninsular Electric Telegraph Company** was organized in 1876, for the purpose of providing local telegraph conveniences. About two miles of wire are in use, and about 25 families enjoy the convenience of direct telegraphic communication between their homes and all parts of the village. O. W. Rowland is the President, E. E. Rowland the Superintendent, and F. J. MeEntee the Secretary and Treasurer.

**The Press of Paw Paw.**-The first newspaper in Van Buren County was published at Paw Paw in January, 1843, and was named the Paw Paw Democrat. Mention of that paper has already been made in the general history of the county, as also sketches of the several newspapers which have been published from time to time in Paw Paw village at later periods, down to the beginning of 1880, when the National Independent went out of existence. Shortly after that event the material of the Independent was utilized by a stock company in the publication of the Paw Paw Herald, which gives promise of success.

**Banking.**-The village of Paw Paw had no organized banking institution until Aug. 11, 1865, when the First National Bank of Paw Paw was chartered, with a capital of \$50,000. It was the outgrowth of the private bankinghouse of Stevens, Holton & Co., who had carried on a banking business in Paw Paw for several years previous to 1865, as the successors of Stevens, French & Co. The first Board of Directors of the First National Bank was composed of Thomas L. Stevens, Alonzo Sherman, James Crane, Thos. H. Stevens, Chas. S. Maynard, N. M. Pugsley, and E. O. Briggs. Alonzo Sherman was chosen president, and J. A. Holton cashier.

The bank has now a capital of \$100,000, a circulation of \$45,000, a deposit account of \$65,000, and a loan account of \$120,000. The bank building on Main Street was erected by the directors, and was first occupied in 1867. Mr. Alouzo Sherman is now the president (having filled that place since 1865), and F. E. Stevens is the cashier.

The robbery of the First National Bank in 1867 was for many years after its occurrence an important local sensation. It happened in March of that year, while the bank was occupying temporary quarters in B. M. Buck's hardware store, pending the completion of its new building. The cashier, E. O. Briggs, discovered upon opening the bank safe one Monday morning that upwards of \$22,000 in bonds and currency had been abstracted, and that, too, without leaving any exterior marks to show that the combination lock had been forced. Pinkerton's Chicago Detective Agency being called upon to furnish a key to the mystery, Sent one of its corps to Paw Paw, who managed so cleverly that although he resided at Paw Paw about six months as a professed insurance agent, no one, save two of the bank officials, knew his real



business, until he startled the community one day by causing the arrest of R. M. Buck, the hardware merchant (a young man high in popular esteem), on the charge of robbing the bank. The evidence against him was complete, and he was convicted and sentenced to three years' confinement in the State prison. Nearly all the money, which had been buried by Buck on a farm in Keeler township, was recovered.

## ORGANIZATIONS

**The Paw Paw Rifle Company.**-This organization was formed in 1839. Andrew Longstreet was chosen captain, Edwin Mears first lieutenant, and David Woodman second lieutenant. The command numbered about 40 men, and was attached to the 28th Regiment, 14th Brigade, 7th Division, of the State militia. The "Rifles" maintained an organization until the outbreak of the Mexican war, into which several of the members entered, when the company disbanded.

**Paw Paw Lodge, No. 18, I. O. O. F.**-This lodge was instituted Nov. 19, 1846, when a charter was issued to John McKinney, E. O. Briggs, Frank Taylor, C. R. Muffit, and John Smolk. It is now in a flourishing condition, with a membership of 78, and owns a handsome lodgeroom, the first session in which was held in 1874. The present officers of the lodge are C. W. Ward, N. G.; A. Van Auken, V. G.; O. W. Rowland, Sec.; C. Lich, P. Sec.; E. Martin, Treas.; C. N. Griffin, W.; O. N. Hilton, C.; Edward Snow, I. G.; ; William Jones, O. G.; C. A. Harrison, R. S. N. G.; N. P. Conger, L. S. N. U.; A. F. McNeal, II. S. S.; William Reed, L. S. S.; L. S. Tyrrell, R. S. V. G.; - Chapman, L. S. V. G.

Of the charter members named above only three are still living,-E. O. Briggs, Frank Taylor, and John Smolk.

**Paw Paw Lodge, No. 25, F. and A. M.**-This lodge was organized under dispensation May 6, 1848, and on the 10th of January, 1849, a charter was issued to A. W. Broughton, B. F. Chadwick, D. O. Dodge, Peter Gremps, Hubbell Warner, O. Warner, and John McKinney. Until the charter was obtained the lodge worked under the "Ancient Order." At the first election of officers, Feb. 10, 1849, B. F. Chadwick was chosen W. M.; J. B. Baker, S. W.; D. O. Dodge, J. W.; Peter Gremps, Treas. ; F. E. Stevens, Sec. ; Hubbell Warner, S. P.; Williamson Mason, J. P.; John Smolk, Tiler. On the 13th of February, 1849, the newly-elected officers were installed by John Stewart, G. M.; C. L. Bird, D. G. M.; H. Marsh, G. Marshal; Nathaniel Pullman, G. C. The lodge now owns a finely appointed lodge room, and has upon its roll 100 active members. The present officers are E. Curtis, W. M.; W. M. Thayer, S. W.; J. B. Smith, J. W.; C. G. Nash, Treas.; F. E. Stevens, Sec.; and Andrew Harwick, Tiler.



**Paw Paw Chapter, No. 34, R. A. M.-This Masonic body was organized Jan. 10, 1865, the charter designating J. R. Baker as H. P.; O. S. Simmons as K.; and E. O. Briggs as Scribe. The membership is now 60, and the officers are as follows: H. P., G. J. Hudson; K., William Dole; S., William Thayer; C. of H. E. A. Blackman P. S., Ela Curtiss; R. A. C., C. R. Ocobock; 3d V., Joseph Davy; 2d V., R. O. Beebe; 1st V., S. Shaefer; Treas., C. G. Nash; Sec., F. E. Stevens; Sentinel, A. H. Harwick.**

**Paw Paw Encampment, No. 30, I. O. O. F-Paw Paw Encampment was organized March 26, 1868. The charter members were C. M. Odell. B. Odell, C. Lich, S. H. Blackman, T. W. Melchor, E. Martin, and J. M. Brown, of whom all are still living except T. W. Melehor. The membership is now 28, and the officers are as follows: G. W. Matthews. C. P.; J. M. Brown, H. P.; William Reed, S. W.; O. W. Rowland, Scribe; C. Lich, Finan. Sec.; E. Martin, Treas. William P. Jones, J. W,**

**Paw Paw Lodge, No. 37, A. O. O. W-This is a section of a new secret society, and was organized Feb. 26, 1878. with 10 members. E. S. Dunning was P. M. W.; O. W. Rowland. M. W. and John Knowles, G. F. The membership on the 1st of January, 1880, was 26, when the officers were O. W. Rowland, P. M. W.; Albert Robinson, M. W.; G. M. Koons, G. F.; S. N. Wilkie, O. W. H. Mason, Recorder; B. F. Heckert, Financier; M. J. MeEntee, Receiver; R/ A. Whitman. G.; P. G. Forsyth, I. W.; A. E. Quick, O. W. Regular sessions are held every Thursday.**

**Martin Lodge, No. 18, A. Y. M.-This lodge was organized in 1874, with 10 members, L. R. Roberts being W. M.; Jonathan Grinage, S. W.; and B. F. Roberts, J. W. The membership is now 19. L. R. Roberts is W. M.; Edward Cable, S. W.; and Francis Smith. J. W. Paw Paw Lodge, No. 30, Knights of Honor.-The society just named was organized Dee. 1, 1877, with 13 members, B. F. Stearns being D.; John Ihling. P. D. and F. B. Kelly, R. The membership is now 22, and the officers are A. J. Mills, D.; H. Legrave, V. D. C. W. Ward, A. D. H. A. Rogers, G.; J. D. Sherman, T.; B. F. Stearns, R.; H. S. Williams, F. R; L. C. Woodman, Chaplain. Regular sessions are held the first and third Thursdays of each month.**

**Paw Paw Grange, No. 10, P. of H..-The Paw Paw section of the Patrons of Husbandry was organized Dec. 31, 1872, with about 20 members. The Masters to the present time have been Joseph Gilman, J. J. Qodman, T. R. Harrison, David Woodman (2d), A. C. Glidden, T. H. Harrison (second term), and J. C. Gould. The present officers are J. C. Gould, M.; S. D. Scans, O.; D. Woodman (2d), L.; A. C. Glidden, Chap. James Clancey, Treas.; O. H. P. Sheldon, Sec.; Peter Brummel, G.; H. D. Sherrod, Steward; M. Buskirk, Assistant Steward.**



**Blue Ribbon Club.-**At a meeting of seven friends of temperance, held in Dickson's harness shop in the year 1878, the Paw Paw Blue Ribbon Club was organized, for the sole object of promoting the cause of total abstinence, its seven founders having previously been members of the Red Ribbon Club (since dissolved), from which they had withdrawn in consequence of their dissatisfaction with its management. The Blue Ribbon Club increased in strength rapidly from the outset, and down to Jan. 1, 1880, had received full 400 members, of whom there were on that date 334 in active membership, inclusive of 54 in the children's department. Weekly meetings are held in the Opera House, at which pleasant literary entertainments are presented to the public free of charge. The present officers are E. B. Rowland, President; Jared Loveland, First Vice President; Charles Stevens, Second Vice President; Miss E. E. Crane, Recording Secretary; E. H. Lindsley, Financial Secretary; C. C. Hoppin, Treasurer; and Frank Rawson, Marshal.

**The Opera House.**-In 1876, George W. Longwell bought the building previously used for thirty two years as a Methodist church and transformed it into a commodious and tastefully appointed theatre. It has a seating capacity of 600, is supplied with a gallery, and has a stage well furnished with scenery and mechanical appliances.

**Library and Literary Association.**-An institution was organized in January, 1880, for the purpose of providing a public library and reading room, and has received at the outset such encouragement as to give it a strong prospect of success.



# **History of Paw Paw Township, Michigan - Part 3**

**From: History of Berrien and Van Buren Counties, Michigan  
With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches  
of Their Men and Pioneers.**

**D. W. Ensign & Co., Philadelphia 1880  
Press of J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.**

## **PROSPECT HILL CEMETERY.**

On the 24th of March, 1859, the Prospect Hill Cemetery Association was organized, for the purpose of providing a public cemetery on Prospect Hill. Land was accordingly purchased there and handsomely laid out with lawns, smooth drives, walks, and other attractive improvements. I. W. Willard was chosen president, Elisha Durkee clerk, and T. A. Granger treasurer. Prospect Hill is one of the highest elevations in Van Buren County. Upon its summit, in 1875, Mr. I. W. Willard erected an observatory 127 feet high, from which, on a clear day, it is said may be seen the waters of Lake Michigan and as many as thirty villages. The cemetery, which now covers an area of 30 acres, has many natural beauties, and is adorned with costly monuments. The present officers of the association are F. W. Selleck, President; J. W. Van Fossen, Clerk; and G. J. Hudson, Treasurer.

## **RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES IN THE TOWNSHIP.**

**Methodist Episcopal Church.**-The first sermon (of which there is any present recollection) heard in Paw Paw was delivered by Rev. Junia Warner, Jr., a Methodist Episcopal elder of Almena, in April, 1835, in Hinckley's blacksmith shop. From that time until 1839, Mr. Warner preached frequently in the village, as did occasionally traveling preachers from Kalamazoo and Silver Creek.

In the fall of 1835, Rev. J. T. Robe, in charge of the Kalamazoo mission, organized a Methodist Episcopal class in Paw Paw, with the following members : Theophilus and Charlotte Bangs, Junia Warner, Jr., Arminda Warner, W. Newcomb, Clarissa Newcomb, David Thorp, Junia Warner, Sr., Philura Warner, Sellick Longwell, Nancy Longwell, John Lyle, Oliver and Avis Warner, Horace and Susan Bonfoey, John K. and Emeline Bingham. Of the foregoing, two are still members of the church, namely, Arminda Warner, aged seventy five, and Charlotte Bangs, aged eighty one. David Thorp, who was the leader of the first class, offered his log chair shop on the west side of the river as a place of worship. After using it some time the class went into a framed house owned by Myron Hoskins. Afterwards the village school house was used, and in 1844 a church building was erected upon the site of the one now in use. The first church trustees were Theophilus Bangs, Junia Warner, Jr., Oliver Warner, Horace Bonfoey, and John Lyle.



Among the earliest pastors were Revs. T. P. McCool, S. S. Williams, E. Kellogg, and H. B. Beers. The church was at first attached to the Laporte district, Indiana Conference, afterwards to the Michigan district, in the same Conference, and later still to the Kalamazoo and Niles districts. The corner stone of the present handsome house of worship was laid Aug. 9, 1876. The structure, which cost \$6600, was dedicated Dec. 17, 1876. Soon afterwards a union meeting was held in it, when 75 persons were received into the Methodist Church, and 70 into the Presbyterian. Rev. J. K. Stark was the Methodist and Rev. T. D. Marsh the Presbyterian pastor.

During the forty four years of its existence the church has received into membership upwards of 2000 persons. The membership on the 1st of January, 1880, was 160, Rev. S. B. Mills being then the pastor in charge. The trustees are James Bale, Thomas Adriance, S. H. Blackman, C. A. Young, A. J.1 Sorter, John Walker, H. H. Hurlbut, and E. M. Snow. The class leaders are C. M. Gilson, James Abrams, and Samuel Qua. The Sunday school is in charge of C. A. Young, and has an average attendance of about 80.

**First Baptist Church.**-On the 21st of April, 1838, a few Baptists living in Paw Paw village met to talk about organizing a Baptist Church. Stafford Godfrey was chosen chairman, and William P. Baldwin clerk of the meeting. As a result the First Baptist Church of Lafayette was then formed, with the following six members: Stafford Godfrey and wife, William D. Baldwin and wife, E. H. Niles, and Ursula Conklin. E. H. Niles was chosen clerk, and Stafford Godfrey and William P. Baldwin deacons. Elder Hall, of Kalamazoo, was invited to preach once in four weeks. During the first year five members were added, namely, Archibald Buys and wife, Luther Branch, and Henry G. Monroe and wife.

On the 20th of March, 1841, the name of the organization was changed to "The Van Buren County Church, located at Paw Paw and Brush Creek," the reason being that worship was held at Brush Creek, as well as Paw Paw.

In 1844, the church being controlled by residents of Lawrence township, the Paw Paw members withdrew, and on the 8th of August in that year eight persons met in Paw Paw, at the house of Elder M. Clark, and organized the First Baptist Church of Paw Paw. The eight persons were Elder M. Clark, Stafford Godfrey, Alonzo Sherman, Matilda Engle, Lucy Ann Sherman, Jane Woodman, Elmira Baker, and Jane Legrave. The records do not indicate that the church employed any regular pastor for the first few years, but show that occasional supplies were provided. The school house was used for services, as was the court house. An attempt was made to build a house of worship in 1848, but it was not successful.



**Between 1850 and 1853 meetings were held but seldom, but in the latter year there was a renewal of interest. The membership increased to 37, and Rev. J. T. R. Jones was engaged as pastor.**

**In October, 1855, Elder Alfred Handy succeeded Elder Jones as pastor, and remained until 1859.**

**On the 9th of September, 1857, the corner stone of the brick church now in use was laid, and within a brief period the house was occupied for worship, services having previously been held in a building in Main Street now used as a part of Harris' carriage factory. The pastors since 1860 have been Elders Dunham, Walden, Maybin, Purrett, Galpin, Haydon, Stephenson, Choate, Heritage, and Wilkie. Rev. Mr. Wilkie, the last minister, retired in August, 1879, since which time the church has been without a pastor. The church membership on the 1st of January, 1880, was about 80. The deacons were then Stafford Godfrey, J. S. Cogswell, and Eli Wise. The church trustees are N. Grover, A. Sherman, R. B. Lane, A. M. Palmer, and J. C. Evart.**

**Christian (or Disciple) Church.-From an old church record dated March 25, 1843, is taken the subjoined entry:**

**We, the undersigned, members of the Church of Christ, having met at the dwelling of Brother Loyal Crane, for the purpose of setting in order the things that remain, have proceeded to do so by appointing Brothers James Crane and Loyal Crane bishops (elders), and Brothers Asahel S. Downing and Samuel Turner deacons. James Crane, Loyal Crane, Samuel Turner, Asahel S. Downing, Alonzo Crane, Daniel Abbott, James B. Crane, Almon B. Corey."**

**It would appear from the foregoing that an organization had been effected previous to the meeting above mentioned, and according to the best evidence the date of that organization was in February, 1842. Besides those above named as members, the following joined the church at the meeting of March 25, 1843: Rheuma Barnum, Sally Ann Crane, Hannah Downing, Alonzo J. Abbott, Eliza Crane, Ann Turner, Sarah Ann Barnum, Susannah Lee, Sally Armstrong.**

**At a church meeting held in the school house at Paw Paw, March 30, 1844, James Crane and Asahel S. Downing were appointed elders, Samuel Turner and Loyal Crane deacons, and Edwin Barnum and Loyal Crane evangelists. The first preacher was Rev. Mr. Martin, a missionary, who preached only at extended intervals. In 1858 the society purchased the meeting house previously used by the Baptists, and in 1861 the church edifice now in use was completed and occupied. At the close of that year the clerk reported that the membership was**



234, that 101 had been admitted during the year that 11 had been dismissed, that 3 had been excluded, and that 11 had "gone to the war."

After Rev. Mr. Martin's time, among those who served the church as pastors were Rev. Messrs. Martindale, Miller, Anderson, Roe, Wilcox, Lane, Jackson, Spencer, Frame, Crane, Ebert, Collins, Russell, Scans, and Brooks. Rev. Theodore Brooks, now the pastor, entered upon his charge in 1878.

The membership is now 219, and in the Sunday school (of which James Crane is superintendent) there are 13 teachers and an average attendance of 102 pupils. The church elders are David Woodman (2d), J. W. Ball, and N. P. Conger. The deacons are A. S. Downing (chosen March 25, 1843), M. P. Allen, S. Shafer, and J. F. Bullard.

**Free - Will Baptist Church.**-The Free Will Baptist Church of Paw Paw was organized Feb. 13, 1841, in School District No. 2, in the township of Antwerp, near Paw Paw village. The first members were Samuel Gilman, Judith Gilman, Abigail Woodman, David Woodman, Joseph Butler, Laura Butler, James Lee, Hannah Lee, Roxanna Lee, Susan Morrison, Silas Breed, and Anna Gray. The records mention the election of Silas Breed as the first clerk, but are silent as to the election of deacons. Those who have served the church as pastors to the present are Revs. Daniel Osborne, J. H. Darling, L. J. Whitcomb, Stephen Bathrick, G. P. Blanehard, G. P. Linderman, and 3. B. Drew, the latter being the present pastor, who began his services Sept. 1, 1878. Three hundred and eight persons in all have been received into the church since its organization. The membership on the 1st of January, 1880, was 200.

Worship was continued in the Antwerp school house and other convenient places until the completion of the present edifice, which was dedicated in 1859.

The deacons of the church are Philip Sherrod and O. H. P. Sheldon, the latter being also the clerk. The Sunday school, in charge of Edwin Douglass, has a membership of 150 and an average attendance of 90.

**First Presbyterian Church.**-The First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw was organized in the autumn of 1843, at the residence of Edmund Smith. The loss of the early records has rendered it impossible to reproduce the names of all the first members, but the memory of old residents supplies the names of some of them, as follows: Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Van Antwerp. Salmon Hunt and his daughters Mary and Margaret (one of them, now Mrs. N. M. Pugsley, being still a member of the church), Mrs. Edmund Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Elias Harwick, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Mills.



The first elders were Daniel Van Antwerp and Samuel Mills. The first trustees of the society, elected June 24, 1844, were Daniel Van Antwerp, Salmon Hunt, Samuel Mills, A. K. Axtell, Dwight C. Grimes, Lorin Darling, A. V. Pantland, Samuel Grimes. and Edmund Smith.

During 1844, Rev. James McLaurine was chosen to be the first pastor, who served about three years. After being then absent a year (during which time Rev. Mr. Davidson supplied the pulpit), he returned and remained two years. He closed his labors in 1850, and was succeeded by Rev. Mr. Holmes, who was followed in 1852 by Rev. Oliver W. Mather. For a brief season, in 1855, Rev. Mr. Whitney was pastor, and about the beginning of 1856 Rev. H. C. Tuttle entered upon the charge. Rev. Norman Kellogg succeeded him in 1859, and remained six years. In 1865, Rev. Albert E. Hastings began his pastorate, and in 1868 Rev. O. H. Barnard became the pastor, and remained until 1871. He was followed by Revs. N. Otis, C. R. Wilkins, and T. D. Marsh, the latter being now in charge.

During about a year after its organization worship was held in the ball room of the Exchange Hotel, and in 1845 a church edifice was erected near the court house. In 1856 the building was destroyed by fire, and in 1858 was replaced by the present structure, which was dedicated March 3rd of that year. The church has now a membership of 140, and the Sunday school an average attendance of 90. The present elders are Robert Morrison, N. M. Pugsley, Lyman Tuttle, John S. Tuckey, E. P. Mills, Chandler Richards, John W. Free, Henry Randolph, Thomas Tuckey.

**St. Mark's (Protestant Episcopal) Church.**-St. Mark's parish was organized at the court house in Paw Paw Feb. 22, 1851, by A. W. Broughton, Anthony Cooley, Thomas J. Pinnoek. Charles Selleck, I. W. Willard, Williamson Mason. T. W. Meichor, George B. Sherwood, J. R. Baker, E. S. Smith, George W. Ocobock, O. F. Parker, R. J. Merrill, Henry Ismon. H. L. Eggleston, A. V. Pantland, Peter Gremps, S. T. Conway, J. K. Pugsley, B. Hurd, A. Wilder, William Hill, and Benoni Hall. At the second meeting, March 11th, Theodore P. Sheldon and Thomas J. Pinnoek were chosen wardens, and I. W. Willard, George B. Sherwood, G. W. Ocobock, Anthony Cooley, J. K. Pugsley, and B. Hurd as vestrymen. Of the vestrymen the only one known to be living is J. K. Pugsley.

On the 3d of June, 1851, Bishop McCoskry gave his canonical consent to the organization of the church, and on the 1st of July Rev. V. Spalding was called to act as rector, at a salary of \$200 per year, it being understood that the Missionary Society would furnish him \$200 more. Mr. Spalding held his first service in an abandoned store, and used the counter as his pulpit. In February, 1852, a cooper shop belonging to the Messrs. Grimes, and previously used by the



**Congregational Society, was leased, at a rental of \$1 per week, being occupied about a year. That house of worship is now a portion of Harris' carriage factory. Mr. Spalding preached until December, 1852, and after that the church organization ceased its active existence for a period of thirteen years.**

**On the 11th of January, 1865, Rev. Dr. C. A. Foster, of St. John's Church, Kalamazoo, revived St. Mark's Church with considerable success, and remained in charge until January, 1866. Rev. Darius Barker was then chosen rector, and served as such until December, 1877, when Rev. George P. Schetky, the present rector, began his service. Shortly after Mr. Barker entered upon his pastorate he built a commodious addition to his residence in Paw Paw, in which the church met for worship until the erection, in 1876, of the edifice now in use.**

**The church membership is now 47. The wardens are D. C. Coleman and J. K. Pugsley; the vestrymen are C. J. Nash, F. E. Stevens, J. Davey, A. J. Mills, J. W. Van Fossen, and William Pugsley. The Sunday school has an attendance of 60, and is in charge of the pastor. The stations in St. Mark's parish are Paw Paw, Lawrence, Hartford, Bangor, Breedsville, South Haven, Pine Grove, Kendall, Lawton, and Decatur.**

**St. Mary's Church of the immaculate Conception (Catholic).-As early as 1848, Father Barron, of Notre Dame, at South Bend, used to visit Paw Paw occasionally for the purpose of holding mass for the benefit of the families of Pee Pee Yah and other Indians. In 1855, when the village contained seven or eight Catholic families, Father La Belle, of Kalamazoo, held mass in the residence of James Bennett, and came after that about once a month for several years, holding services generally at Mr. Bennett's house. After Father La Belle's death, there came Father Cappon, of Niles, Fathers Quinn, Tierney, and Murray, of Kalamazoo, and Father Roper, of Silver Creek, during which period Paw Paw remained a mission in Kalamazoo parish. It was then created a parish by the name of St. Mary's of the Immaculate Conception, with Rev. John Wernert as the first resident priest, who still holds that position. The present house of worship was commenced during Father La Belle's time, but was not completed until 1872. The attendance includes about 50 families. The missions attached to the parish are Arlington and Decatur. The church trustees are James Doyle, William Ryan, and William Hough.**

## **SCHOOLS**

**The first village school in Paw Paw was taught by Miss Roxa Agard, in the summer of 1835, and there being no better school house available, Rodney Hinckley's blacksmith shop was utilized for that purpose. The appointments of that school house consisted principally of a few slab seats, but the scholars are said to have been quite as studious and zealous as in some more pretentious**



institutions. There were perhaps ten scholars while the attendance was at its best, but there were times when not more than four or five would respond to roll call. Of that chosen band of ambitious girls and boys, those known to be living are Mrs. Alonso Shults (a daughter of Peter Gremps) and Jonathan J. Woodman, of Paw Paw, and Isaac Hinckley and his two sisters (children of Rodney Hinckley), now living at South Haven.

The next summer (1836) the village school was taught by Melissa Warner, in a log shanty on the west side of the river, just north of where Mason's planing mill now stands. That school had 15 or 20 pupils. During the summer of 1836, Williamson Mason and Joseph Royes built a schoolhouse on Gremps Street, and in the fall it was occupied, Lorenzo Cate being the first teacher in it, and being also the first male teacher employed in the village. That building was used not only as a school house, but also as a courthouse, and on Sundays it became a house of worship.

The condition of the public schools of the township on the 1st of September, 1879, according to the official report for the year 1879, may be learned from the subjoined table:

Number of districts (whole, 5; fractional, 4)	9
scholars of school age	859
Average attendance	756
Value of school property	\$51,300
Number of teachers	31
Amount paid teachers	\$4,073
Total expenses for the year	\$9,721

The school directors for 1879 were J. Andrews, W. Wilson, G. T. Sherrod, E. E. Crane, Charles H. Butler, H. Hinckley, B. Odell, W. M. Shepard, George L. Tuttle.

Paw Paw Union School-The building now used as a town hall was originally the union schools and although additions were made to its accommodations as the demand for room increased, there was still a lack of space, and in December, 1868, the district resolved to build a brick school house, to cost \$25,000, and to borrow the money required. The result was the present elegant and imposing structure which stands at the head of Main Street, and which is justly the pride of the town. The entire cost of ground, building, and furniture was \$40,000. The edifice was begun in the winter of 1868-69, and was opened for use in September, 1870. It contains six departments, high school, grammar school, two intermediate, and two primary departments,-in which the aggregate average



attendance is 414.

The members of the school board are E. O. Briggs, Josiah Andrews, G. J. Hudson, Andrew Richards, Aaron Van Auken, and George W. Longwell.

