

Terrace Park
From Unsettled Land to Incorporation
1789-1893



by
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and
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Acknowledgments

This research project was originally undertaken for the Terrace Park Historical Society for placement on its website to provide historical information about change in land ownership and to provide a kind of inventory of houses that remain from the pre-incorporation period so that anyone driving or walking through the village may get a sense of village history.

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Illustrations Interleaved with Text

The 1785 Federal Land Survey of the Miami Purchase	2
Early Stations within the Miami Purchase	3
Representations of how Covalt Station may have looked (2)	5
Covalt Station marker at St. Thomas Church.....	6
Two views of the Smith/Lindell House	9
Newspaper Notice of Zaccheus Biggs’s Administrator’s sale	11
Two views of the “Toll House” at 610 Wooster Pike	13
The Traber/Boone house at 601 Wooster Pike.....	15
The William Highlands log house at the intersection of Wooster Pike and Indian Hill Road	16
Two views of the Joseph Highlands brick house facing Wooster Pike.....	17
Charles Meurer’s painting of the Joseph Highlands House in 1904	18
Gravestones from Mill Run Baptist Church Cemetery	19
Two views of the Moore/Baysore home	20
The 1853 Schoolhouse at the intersection of Given and Indian Hill Roads	22
The Galloway House at 725 Wooster Pike	22
Little Miami Railroad Engine and Coal Car	23
Little Miami Railroad stock certificate: 1873	23
Map of Montauk from the 1869 Titus map insert	25
Brick Miami Baptist Church in Montauk and date stone from 1847	26
Plat of Partition of Camden City 1857	28
Front and back views of Iuen Tavern at 701 Wooster Pike	29
Joseph Iuen.....	29
Thomas R. Biggs subdivision of Gravelotte with an insert of the main area.....	30
Section 28 segment of T. R. Biggs estate.....	31
“Gravelotte” and its twin the Errett/Fenton House	32
Two views of the “Circus House”	34
Side view of “Circus House”	35
John F. and John G. Robinson	35
Buildings in winter quarters of the Robinson Circus using 1904 Sanborn map as guide ..	36
Modern day street map superimposed on the Robinson Circus winter quarters	37
Robinson Circus Elephant House	38
House at 732 Miami Avenue where circus performers practiced	38
Robinson Circus Animals and Wagons.....	39
Sumner P. Bacon family home at 305 New Street	40
Cement Houses built by George Washington Corey in the 1880s	42
The Baptist Church at 428 Elm Avenue	43
Original plan for the Baptist Church.....	44
Pattison and Iuen’s Subdivision of Lots 1 and 2 of Camden City	45
J. B. Iuen	45
Advertisement for Pattison and Iuen’s Subdivision.....	46
Receipt from John Pattison for payment of Lots 6 & 7 in Pattison & Iuen’s Subdivision of Terrace Park, now 302 Oxford Avenue.....	46
Plan of an original “Railroad House”	47
Examples of “Railroad Houses” before additions.....	48

Examples of “Railroad Houses” after remodeling	49
“Railroad Houses” according to Stella Galloway Boone in a 1942 paper for the Terrace Park Garden Club	50
J. W. Sibley pointing to the sign advertising his new 1886 subdivision	51
J. W. Sibley at home with his dog at 311 Harvard Avenue	51
The Chauncey Stuntz home at 625 Elm Avenue.....	53
Chauncey R. Stuntz.....	53
Successive Efforts to develop the area.....	54
“Territory of Proposed Corporation of Terrace Park” in 1892	55
Costs for “preliminaries to incorporation”	56
1893 Map of Terrace Park.....	57
Original Terrace Park Subdivisions (on a modern map).....	58
Parts taken from various maps of Hamilton County	59-66
Sources	67

Parts taken from various maps of Hamilton County

Map Date	Identifying Names	Useful Information Shown	Page
1835	Morrison & Williams	Covalt Station and section lines	58
1847	By Wm. Emerson Published by C.S. Williams	Names of residents, Baptist Church and School House symbols.	59
1848	A. W. Gilbert	Land owners, number of acres, original route of Little Miami Railroad, Meeting House and School House	60
1856	A. W. Gilbert	Camden City [otherwise same as 1848 map]	61
1865	Phillips	Land owners and number of acres	62
1869	C. O. Titus Atlas	Land owners and number of acres	63
1877	C. S. Mendenhall	Terrace Park	64
1884	Geo. Moessinger & Fred Bertsch	Land owners and number of acres	65

Terrace Park: From Unsettled Land to Incorporation 1789-1893

Introduction

Two thousand or more years ago in the area now known as Terrace Park, prehistoric Indians built what has been called the Camden Works.¹ This was a large irregularly shaped earthwork enclosing about 145 acres with at least one mound inside. There were more small mounds nearby. Although no evidence is visible within Terrace Park today, early settlers noticed remnants, now destroyed by modern construction. Much later Indian trails crossed the area.

The opening of the Northwest Territory in 1787 brought the first permanent white settlers to what was later called the Cincinnati area. Fort Washington was built there to defend the new settlers from Indian attacks.

John Cleves Symmes had purchased a tract of land between the Great and Little Miami Rivers known as the Symmes or Miami Purchase. Before Abraham Covalt came, a unique Federal survey had marked off the land into ranges, townships and sections. These became the legal description of each piece of property and are still in use on deeds today with very few early exceptions. All property in Terrace Park is in Fractional Range 2, Township 5 and in Sections 22, 23, 28 or 29.

Selected deeds, maps and houses provide valuable information about Terrace Park's pre-incorporation period.

Abraham Covalt's purchase of land was not confirmed by deed until after his death. His son Cheniah (spelled variously: Cheneniah, Cheminah, Chenimiah) received a deed from John Cleves Symmes for the Covalt land dated June 4, 1795, describing the acreage sold for \$806 as:

110 acres and 19 square rods – Fractional Section 22

318 ¼ acres and 22 square rods – Fractional Section 23

461 acres and 4 square rods – Fractional Section 28

320 acres in south half of Section 30

1,209 acres and a few square rods² - One rod equals 16½ feet.

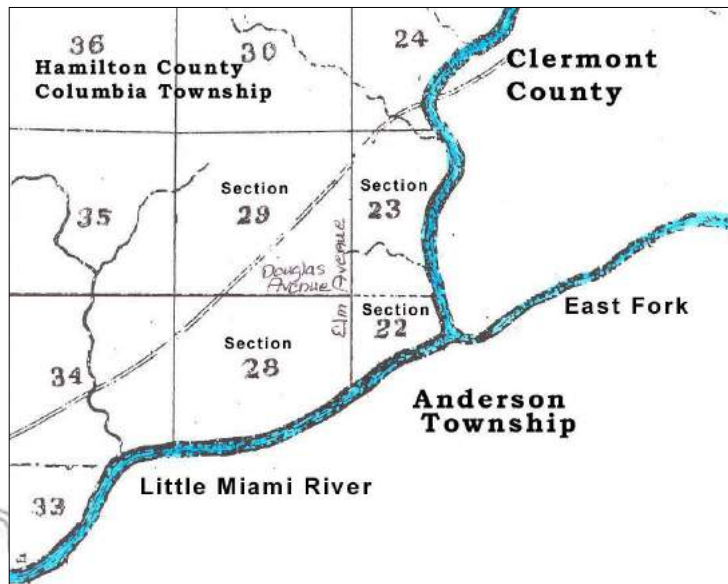
Although whole sections have 640 acres, Covalt received fractional sections because the Little Miami River cut into Columbia Township on the east and south reducing the size of a section. Covalt was prevented from adding Section 29 to his other property because it was reserved for religious purposes and not released for sale until later.

Note: Maps following the text may be enlarged on the Internet at www.tphistoricalsociety.org.
(Text continued on page 4)

The 1785 Federal Land Survey System divided the Miami Purchase into ranges, townships and sections.

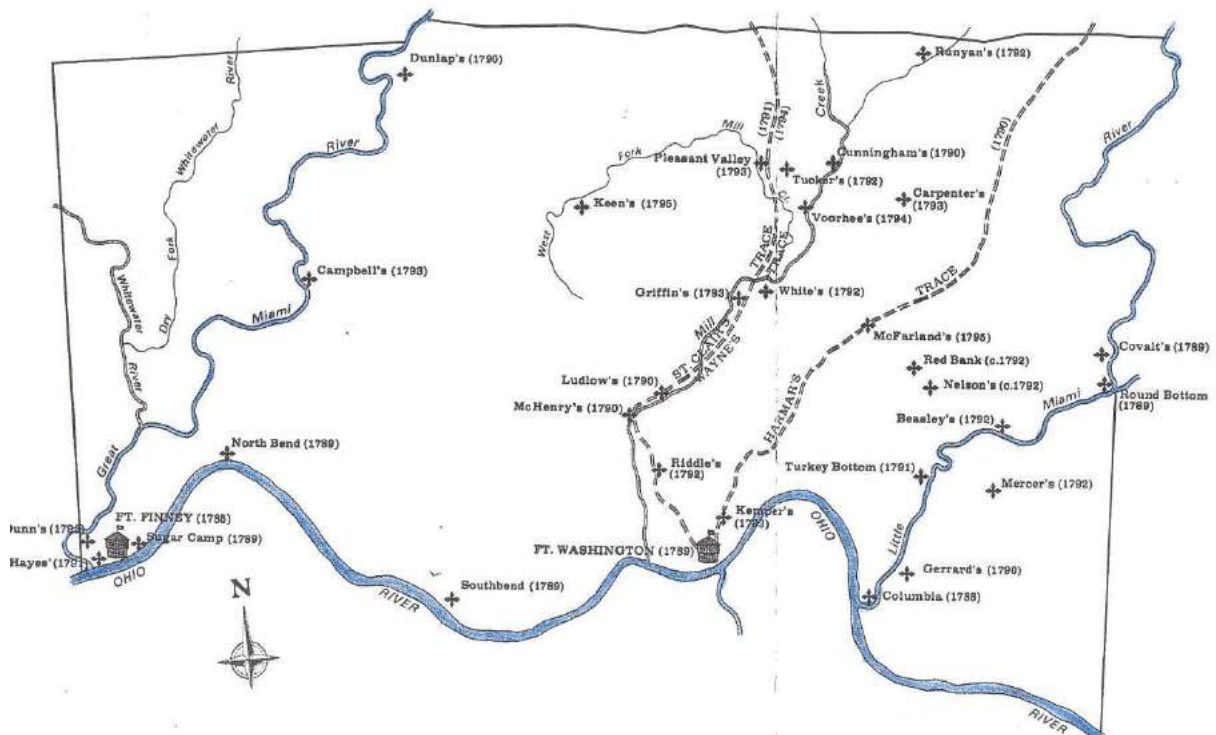
36	30	24	18	12	6
35	29	23	17	11	5
34	28	22	16	10	4
33	27	21	15	9	3
32	26	20	14	8	2
31	25	19	13	7	1

A township is thirty-six square



miles with thirty-six sections of 640 acres each. Terrace Park lies within Sections 22, 23, 28 and 29 of Columbia Township.

Present day Terrace Park boundaries are within Sections 22, 23, 28 and 29 but do not reach the section lines on the west and north where the village boundaries are very irregular. The Little Miami River cuts into Sections 22, 23 and 28 on the east and south reducing the number of acres in those sections.



Early Stations within the Miami Purchase.

Soon after the Miami Purchase of land between the Great and Little Miami Rivers, pioneers established stations for mutual protection. Two were within what is now Terrace Park: Covalt Station and Round Bottom Station.

From Historic Ohio County Map published by the Miami Purchase Association for Historic Preservation 1987.

The story of Terrace Park begins with the safe landing at Columbia in January 1789 of Abraham Covalt's party of forty-five people. The group of men, women and children included Abraham's wife, Lois, and their ten children: Timothy Isaac, Cheniah, Abraham Jr., Bethual, Mary, Sophia, Lucy, Lois, Ephraim and Jonathan. Covalt's daughter, Mary, recorded in her memoirs:

Captain Covalt had two boats, one 55 and the other 45 ft. long, the family occupied one, the other for his stock and farming implements for he came prepared for the wild woods. He had some 20 head of cattle, swine and sheep and 7 horses, the best that ever came to the west. We met with very few incidents of interest on our voyage with exceptions of our boats becoming stranded on the ice and that filled our hearts with fear and terror.³

After spending the night at Columbia the men in the party set out to locate their land seven miles or so up the Little Miami River. There they began building Covalt Station located near where St. Thomas Church stands today – probably a little closer to the river and Mill Creek – where before 1900 evidence of the palisade remained. This was the first settlement in what is now known as Terrace Park. The unusually large rectangular fort had a blockhouse at each corner and only one entrance. At night cattle and probably other livestock were enclosed in triangular pens outside each end. The fort had a total of seventeen cabins built into its four sides with roofs sloping inward forming just a wall on the outside making it difficult for enemies to enter.⁴ Elsewhere some stations consisted of a single blockhouse with cabins outside and pickets surrounding it all.

Covalt built a gristmill thought to be one of the first in the Miami Purchase, bringing with him not only the millstones but also a millwright/blacksmith named Hinkle.⁵ Besides milling, other important tasks included hunting for game and clearing land. Some land in the flood plain was clear enough to plant corn as early as 1790. Timber was needed to build the cabins and stockade.

Although some peaceful Indians traded with the pioneers, several settlers were killed during the first years and at least three others were abducted and held as prisoners. Only one of those captured, Frances Bedle, ultimately returned. The others were never heard from. Covalt Station had to be abandoned temporarily over the winter of 1791-92 because some of the able bodied defenders were called away by General St. Clair to serve elsewhere.

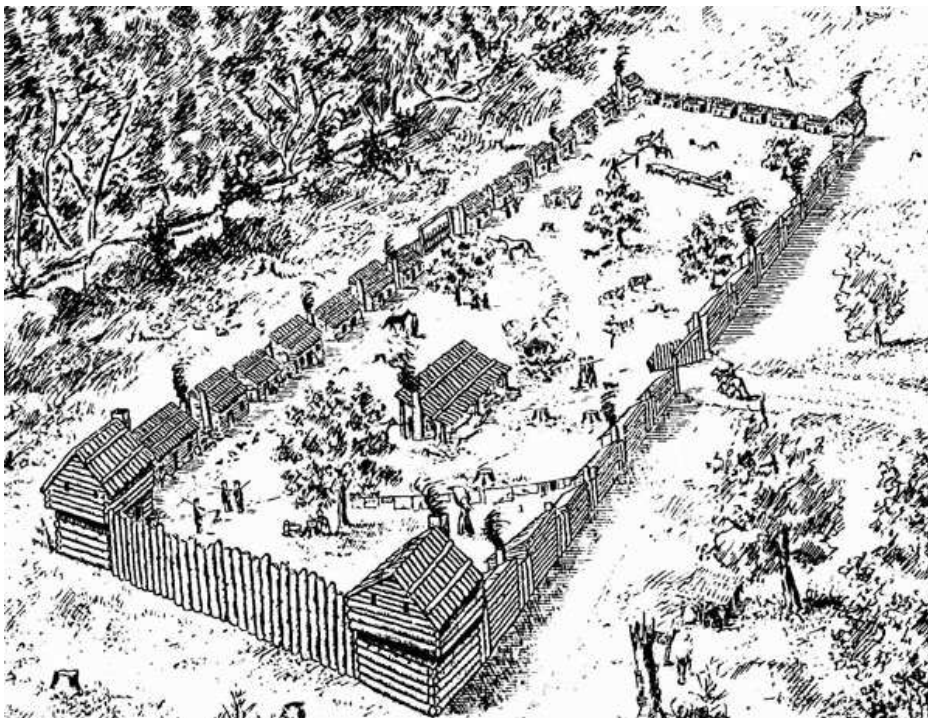
Less well known today was another smaller station called Round Bottom or Clemens Station. The question remains unanswered as to where precisely it was located although it is thought to have been at the south end of present day Terrace Park, possibly at the top of the bluff. Unfortunately, unlike Covalt Station, there is

(Text continued on page 6)

Representations of how Covalt Station may have looked.



From St. Thomas Episcopal Church 1876-1976.



**Fort Boonesborough as it appeared in 1778 from Stockades in the Wilderness
by Richard Scamhorn and John Steinle.**



Covalt Station marker at St. Thomas Church.

2006 photo

Blanche Bacon grew up at 305 New Street [see page 40]. After her marriage to Charles A. Meyers, she lived at 203 Cambridge Avenue.

no specific section location given. The term “Round Bottom” was used to designate the station as well as the larger area bounded by the bend in the river - - the Round Bottom. The place name preceded and outlived the station. Early stations usually were named for people or places.

It has been said that Forgerson Clemens and Isaac Morris built Round Bottom Station.⁶ Other early names associated with it are Jonathan Tichenor and Joseph Bedle. Morris and Tichenor were among the eight original members of James Kemper’s Presbyterian Church.⁷ At first Presbyterians met in Cincinnati, Columbia and Round Bottom. Later Round Bottom had its own congregation.

Both Abraham Covalt Sr. and Jr. and Forgerson Clemens lost their lives in separate Indian attacks. Troubles with the Indians continued until General “Mad” Anthony Wayne’s victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. The Treaty of

Greenville, signed the next year, took from the Indians all of present day Ohio except the northwestern section.

After the treaty and after receiving a deed for his father's 1,209 acres, Cheniah Covalt began selling land to the pioneers who were already there, starting with Joseph Bedle and Elizabeth Clemens, Forgeron's widow, who paid fourteen pounds for her land in Section 28. Two years later Jonathan Tichenor and Isaac Morris each got deeds to their parcels also in Section 28.

Columbia Township Trustees opened all of Section 29 ministerial land for sale about 1808. Some land had already been leased. To oversee the process, the trustees appointed Cheniah Covalt, Enoch Thompson and Walter Evans as trustees of the reserved section. Their first task was to have the land surveyed and subdivided into 80, 100 and 160-acre lots. These trustees, in turn, appointed various people including Cheniah Covalt himself, his brother Bethuel and William Highlands to determine the value of the different parcels ranging originally from \$2 - \$3 an acre. Jonathan Covalt, Abraham's brother, purchased an 80-acre parcel of the newly available land. Ownership did not always mean residence. Among other early purchasers who stayed were the Highlands, the Moores and the McClellands.

Cheniah and his wife Rachel deeded the fifty-acre Covalt Station property including Covalt Mill and Covalt Island to Bethuel, who in turn later sold it ending Covalt ownership of the station land. Cheniah and two of his other brothers remained in the area for a while. Three of his sisters who married locally into the Jones, Dove and Clauson families⁸ stayed longer.

What had been Covalt Station land went from Bethuel to Samuel Heighway and then to the Thomas Rue family and became known as the Rue Mill Tract. In 1817 Thomas Rue laid out a proposed Town of Zeigler as agent for his daughter, Christina.⁹ When by 1830 two known lots were sold they were no longer in Rue's family. Lot #18 included a 3-story brick dwelling house 18 x 22 and a 2-story stone cooper shop 20 x 30.¹⁰ Zeigler never lasted and never made it onto local maps. In 1840 L. E. Brewster and others petitioned the court to vacate the town plat of Zeigler. Approved in July, Montauk was laid out by the petitioners.

After her husband's death, Elizabeth Clemens married Isaac Bush and revoked an earlier deed that had transferred everything to her children. After her marriage the property became her husband's. He in turn deeded all of it back to Forgeron's children effective after his and Elizabeth's deaths. Her land, goods and chattels at that time provide a window into pioneer life. They consisted of:

40 acres of land and one house, 2 cows, four young cattle, 37 swine – some young some old, 3 beds and bedsteads with bedding, one large kettle, one pot – one bake oven, one tea kettle, one chest, one walnut table, 3 chairs, 2 pewter dishes, 2 large basins, 2 small basins and 6 pewter plates.¹¹

Although not belonging to Covalt Station but evidently known to the Covalt family, John Smith, a Baptist minister, also came from Western Pennsylvania. He had visited the area in 1791 and later returned to Ohio to live in Columbia on Crawfish Run near the end of Delta Avenue where he had a warehouse and distillery, turning corn into a productive money crop easily shipped to New Orleans. By 1802 he had settled on his Round Bottom Mills Farm, called "Mills" because he had both a gristmill and a sawmill. His house, known now as the Smith/Lindell House at 1005 Elm, was a log house rather than a log cabin having a second floor above four rooms downstairs. A later enlargement enclosed the original log structure. It is the oldest continuously lived in house in Terrace Park. Round Bottom Post Office was established on the farm¹² for a brief period because of its well-known and convenient location with people coming regularly to the mills.

Smith was a prominent pioneer known as a Baptist minister, miller, farmer, businessman, politician, trader, land speculator and government supply contractor. With so many activities going on, by mutual agreement he resigned his pastorship of the Columbia Baptist Church in 1796, although he did serve the Miami Island Church, which had formed about 1795, from 1801-1804. While at Columbia Baptist Church he performed the marriage of Mary Covalt to Joseph Jones in 1792, just four years after Mary had come to Ohio.¹³ They were to have twelve children.

Smith's political career started in the territorial legislature where he promoted Ohio statehood and then was elected one of Ohio's first two U. S. senators. He was charged with being involved in Aaron Burr's conspiracy following Burr's visit to Smith's Round Bottom Mills Farm. Although not convicted, Smith lost his reputation, his financial security and the confidence of Thomas Jefferson. After selling his land to help pay creditors, he sold at sheriff's sale his horses, hogs, cattle, sheep, still and still tubs.¹⁴ He left the area and died in Louisiana in 1824 where he had a few friends and relatives and where a probate sale distributed the rest of his worldly goods. Smith's Round Bottom Farm had grown to 710 acres. He had acquired most of the land of the earliest Round Bottom settlers.¹⁵ They had moved on.

(Text continued on page 10)



**John Smith's log house as originally built about 1799 faced the river.
1886 newspaper photo**



**Smith/Lindell House, 1005 Elm Avenue, after additions.
The front of the house now faces the road instead of the river.**

It was Zaccheus Biggs, formerly land agent in Steubenville, Ohio, who in 1809 began the saga leading to the purchase of three among many tracts of John Smith's land: 485 acres on the east bank of the Great Miami River and 200 acres on the west side of Crawfish Run. The third parcel of 710 acres included much of the land bordering the Little Miami River on the east and south¹⁶ of what is Terrace Park today. At the time of the Biggs purchase, it was identified as "land on which Thomas Regan Sr. now lives commonly called Round Bottom."¹⁷ He was postmaster there in 1806.¹⁸

Biggs erected his mills and distillery somewhere in the elbow of the Little Miami River in Section 22 and lived nearby. In addition to his businesses he served at one time or another as justice of the peace, supervisor of highways for his road district and in the state legislature. He was one of the first officers of The Cincinnati Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, Manufacturers and Domestic Economy¹⁹ and a member of the Milford Masonic Lodge. When he died intestate his real property was auctioned at an administrator's sale to settle his debts. From that time pieces of his estate were sold and resold sometimes at public auction, a common occurrence in those days.

John Kugler of Milford, for example, who lived in the house that became the Millcroft Inn, purchased in 1845 at sheriff's sale the 102 former acres of Zaccheus Biggs bordering the Little Miami River on the east and south. Soon thereafter he sold that tract to Henry Leaf of Anderson Township for \$6,000.²⁰ Henry farmed it and left it to his son Michael in 1871. The Leaf family held some of that land for three generations for 78 years.

Meanwhile, Zaccheus Biggs's son, Thomas, began to acquire land and piece together some of his father's former property, including his mother's former dower land that she had received by order of the Court of Common Pleas.²¹ At Thomas's death once again a large estate came on the market in various sized lots, never to be reassembled.

Paths, trails and wagon roads served to connect people and places as needed and brought more people to the area. Many do not show on maps and were not

(Text continued on page 12)

ADMINISTRATOR'S SALE.—BY virtue of an order of the Court of Common Pleas, of Hamilton County, will be offered for sale at public Auction, at the door of the Court-house in Cincinnati, on the 11th and 12th days of July next, sale to commence at 10 o'clock on said days; all the right, title, interest and claim of the late Zaccheus Biggs, dec. in & to the real estate hereinafter described; viz:—25 acres of land lying at the mouth and on the west side of Crawfish Run, in Columbia township, County of Hamilton; also, one tract of land situate in Clermont and Hamilton counties, containing six hundred acres; also, the mills and still house known by the name of the Round bottom mills, together with sixty acres of land adjoining the same.

The terms of the sale will be one sixth of the purchase money in hand and the remainder in three equal annual payments, from the day of sale, with interest, the purchase money to be secured by mortgage on the property purchased. For any tract of land bid off, if one sixth of the purchase money be not paid by 12 o'clock on the succeeding day, the same will be again offered for sale, and so continue until the terms of sale be complied with by purchasers, or the Administrator satisfied no sales can be effected.

The title to the above property is indisputable. Persons wishing to satisfy themselves of that fact can do so by calling on C. Hammond, Esq. of Cincinnati.

LAIN READY,
Administrator,

May 28.

46ts

Newspaper notice of Zaccheus Biggs's Administrators Sale.
The Liberty Hall and Cincinnati Gazette, May 28, 1828.

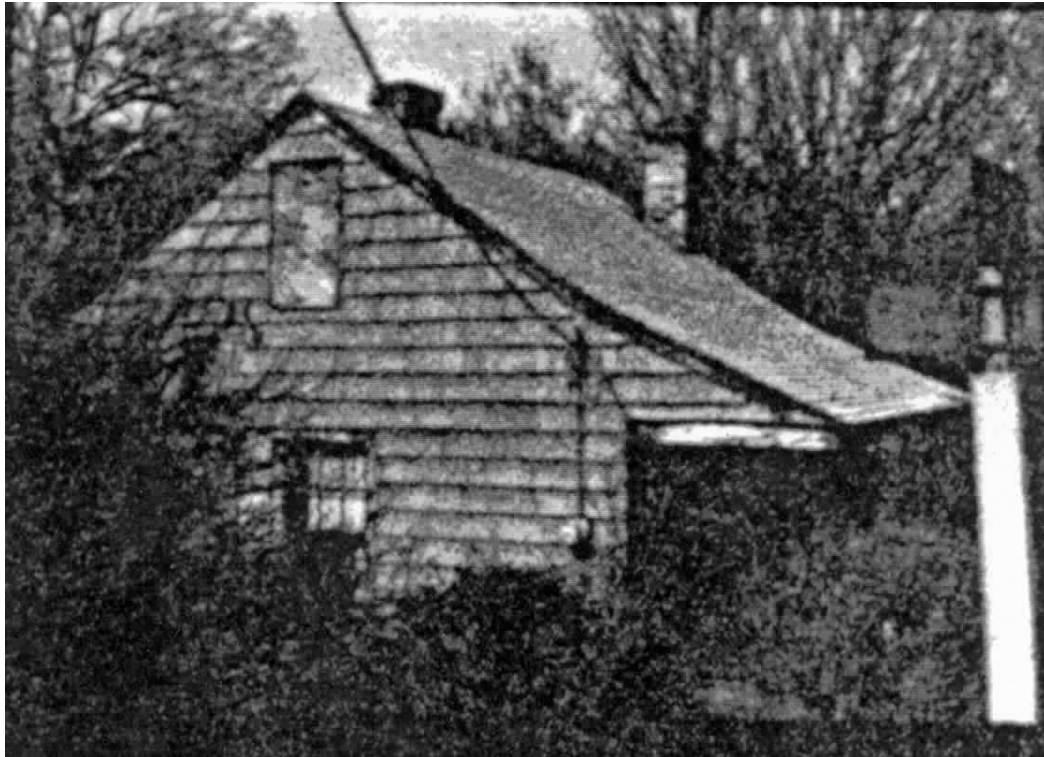
surveyed. By 1800 one trail had become a wagon road from Cincinnati to Chillicothe. Once the Indian raids had stopped, making the area a safer place to settle, traffic to and from Cincinnati increased. This road was in such bad condition that it was chartered as a toll road in 1828. A house built by 1869 on the north side of Wooster Pike, a little east of the present five-way crossing, is often said to be a tollhouse but documentation has not come to light. It was demolished in 1989 because of its deteriorated condition. Since there was a tollhouse at the Milford bridge it is unlikely that two would be so close together unless the one was for a bridge toll. The usual distance between tollhouses was about 10 miles. In 1911 the Cincinnati, Columbus and Wooster Turnpike became a public road, Wooster Pike. Among official local early roads Cheniah Covalt's house served as a point of reference. Although its exact location is uncertain today, it may have been near the split of present day Old Indian Hill Road and Indian Hill Road, or perhaps closer to Wooster Pike, probably in Section 23.

Between 1807 and 1814 at least three road descriptions in the Hamilton County Road or Columbia Township Records mention Cheniah. One road went northeast to the mouth of Sycamore Creek "beginning at a schoolhouse at Cheniah Covalt's, thence..." This is the earliest mention of a local school. It would have been a private or subscription school – not public – as was the custom of the time. John Smith had advertised for a schoolmaster and his friend John Reily had started a subscription school in Columbia as early as 1790. Joseph Ferris, who lived in what is now Fairfax, had a school for his and neighbor children. Education was important to the framers of the Northwest Ordinance and to the settlers.

A second road is described as the main road [today's Elm Avenue] from Round Bottom to Covalt's. The third was the first segment of a road "from Cheniah Covalt's lane" to Madison [now Madisonville], which had been recently laid out and was becoming a destination offering more stores and services not yet available close by. By 1811 Madison had twenty houses and was the voting place for Columbia Township.

This third road may be the same one referred to as "leading from the Baptist Meeting House to Madison." It is unclear when the Baptist Meeting House was built, but it was there in 1811 when John Anthony leased from the township trustees an 80-acre tract in Section 29 ministerial land. He in turn leased 4.6 acres of it "to the Babtist [sic] Society on which the Babtist [sic] meeting house now stands."²² The 1847 Hamilton County map shows the church symbol on Solomon Moore's land.

(Text continued on page 14)



Tradition says this house, built by 1869 at 610 Wooster Pike, served as a toll house.
1980 photo



Another view of the toll house.
1953 photo

A newspaper item in 1814 notified readers that “the Ohio Militia paymaster will pay soldiers at Chenemiah [sic] Covett’s [sic] stone house below Milford.”²³

Cheniah’s father and three of his brothers had been rangers in Western Pennsylvania. Cheniah later had served under Ephraim Kibbey of Columbia with Anthony Wayne’s Scouts and Spys.²⁴

Even after Covalt Station had burned in 1810 the name continued in use to identify the general area and appeared on a map as late as 1835. Soon after the fire a new structure was built nearby perhaps using some salvaged materials. It came to be known as the Traber/Boone home on the corner of Wooster Pike and New Street. An early owner of the home was Judge Alphoso Taft, first of the Cincinnati Tafts and father of President William Howard Taft. Later owners were Jacob Traber and relatives of the famous Boone family.

William Highlands with his wife, Elizabeth, arrived in the Newtown area from Brownsville, Pennsylvania in 1802 or 3, bought farmland in Columbia Township in 1805 and built their log house, which stood near the intersection of Wooster Pike and Indian Hill Road until about 1917. Their second home was built of brick on the side of the hill across Wooster Pike from what is now called the Highlands House at the end of Kris Circle.

Their son Joseph married Electa Turner, who grew up in the Turner house, at one time known as the Golden Pheasant on Round Bottom Road. He built the Kris Circle home perhaps as early as 1830. A painting by Terrace Park artist Charles Meurer shows a view of Joseph’s home in 1904. It’s one of the few Meurer did of Terrace Park landmarks. Highlands family members lived in the house until 1918 when they began to rent it. It is said that revenue agents once raided the house and caught one of the renters making bootleg whisky.

Pioneers William and Elizabeth Highlands were buried in the old Mill Run Baptist Cemetery near the junction of Old Indian Hill Road and Indian Hill Road. The few remaining stones or fragments have been moved to the St. Thomas Church Columbarium. Members of the Highlands family remained in the area for more than 100 years.

Another early settler buried in the old cemetery, Solomon Moore, had bought many acres of land north of Wooster Pike when he and his wife Rebecca came from West Virginia about 1820. The front door of their two-story brick house faced the present Given Road. It’s now 115 Red Bird Lane. Remnants of the old gravel driveway remain. The fireplace, mantle and side cabinets in the living room are original as well as is the smaller fireplace and mantle in the bedroom above.

(Text continued on page 21)



**The Traber/Boone home at 601 Wooster Pike was built in 1810/11.
1985 photo**



The William Highlands log house near the intersection of Wooster Pike and Indian Hill Road was built c. 1805.

Undated photo



**The Joseph Highlands House facing Wooster Pike was built in 1830/40.
The current address is 6 Kris Circle. 1999 photo**



**Earlier side view of the Joseph Highlands House.
Undated photo**



Charles Meurer's painting of the Joseph Highlands House in 1904.

Gravestones from Mill Run Baptist Church Cemetery.



William Highlands and Elizabeth Highlands, his wife.



Solomon Moore and Catherine Moore, infant daughter of Solomon and Rebecca Moore.



**The Solomon Moore home, built c. 1830s, originally faced Given Road.
2002 photo**



**Moore/Baysore home with 1950s addition to the left.
1983 photo**

Solomon and Rebecca had six children. After Rebecca died Solomon married Mary Ferris Bickley who also had six children. Solomon and Mary had three more so altogether there were 15 children. The place passed from the Moores to the Baysore family that gave its name to the road that eventually became Red Bird Lane.

At the junction of Given and Indian Hill Roads District #9 school was built in 1853 on land leased for 100 years from Solomon Moore.²⁵ Joseph Highlands was a director of the school. The building still stands having had a number of alternative uses including as a residence and a store.

Another early house in the Wooster Pike area known as the Galloway House, 725 Wooster Pike, may have been built as early as 1840. A ginko tree planted there in 1858 survives. William Galloway ran a nursery, and one of his employees later moved to the Chicago area and started what eventually became the biggest seed and forest supply company in the world: the George Ball Company.

Throughout Terrace Park's pre-incorporation period Columbia Township residents faced serious flooding in 1832, 1847, 1883-4; dangerous outbreaks of contagious diseases including first cholera in 1832 and later smallpox; and economic depressions, one as early as 1819, leading some to personal financial failure.

In the 1830s as a result of one of these misfortunes, some children were left without parents or their parents could no longer care for them so a daughter or a son was bound out as an apprentice into a home where they were cared for and taught in return for their service.

In one such case in 1832 a girl not yet eight years old was placed with a family north of Wooster Pike. The indenture contains the terms of her stay spelling out the obligations on both sides. At eighteen at the end of her term she was to receive "a suit of holiday clothes, bed, bedding and a spinning wheel."

A boy of sixteen was bound out in 1833 as an apprentice with a township family "to learn the trade or mystery of house joiner." He could not marry or frequent taverns until his term ended at age twenty when he was to receive "a set of bench planes and two suits of good wearing apparel."²⁶

The coming of the railroad made traveling easier and faster for passengers and freight. The Little Miami Railroad, chartered in 1836, the same year Milford was incorporated, reached Milford by 1841.

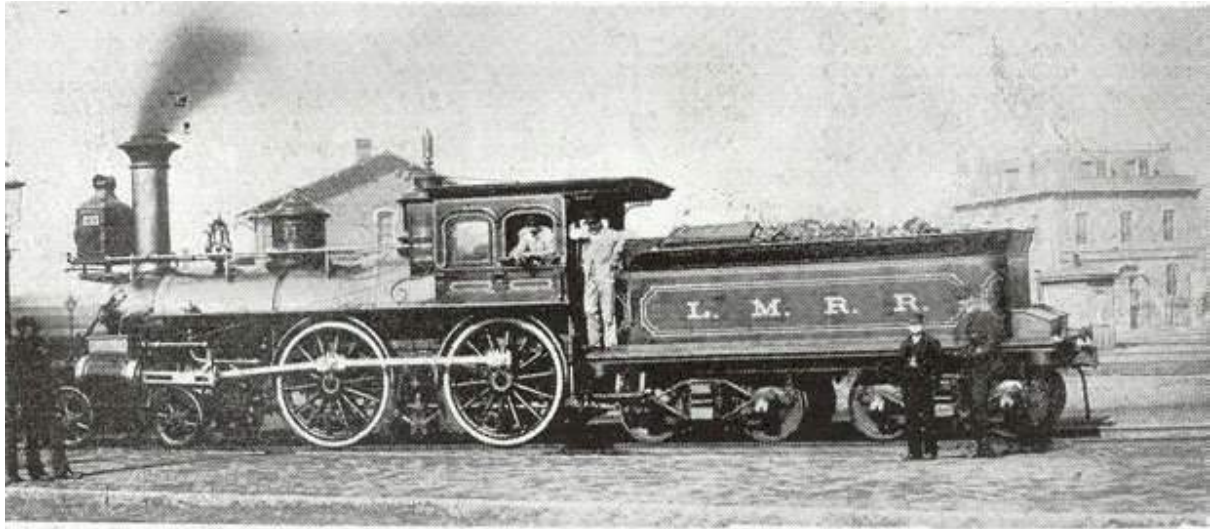
(Text continued on page 24)



**The 1853 Schoolhouse at the intersection of Given and Indian Hill Roads.
Photo after 1885**



**The Galloway House at 725 Wooster Pike may have been built
before 1840 or perhaps not until 1864/5.**



Little Miami Railroad Engine and Coal Car.
From April, 26 1973 newspaper article “First Train Comes to Miamiville.”
The railroad was completed to Loveland via Miamiville in 1844.



Little Miami Railroad stock certificate: 1873.
Henry Peachey was the Vice President of the National Lafayette Bank.
He died in 1891.

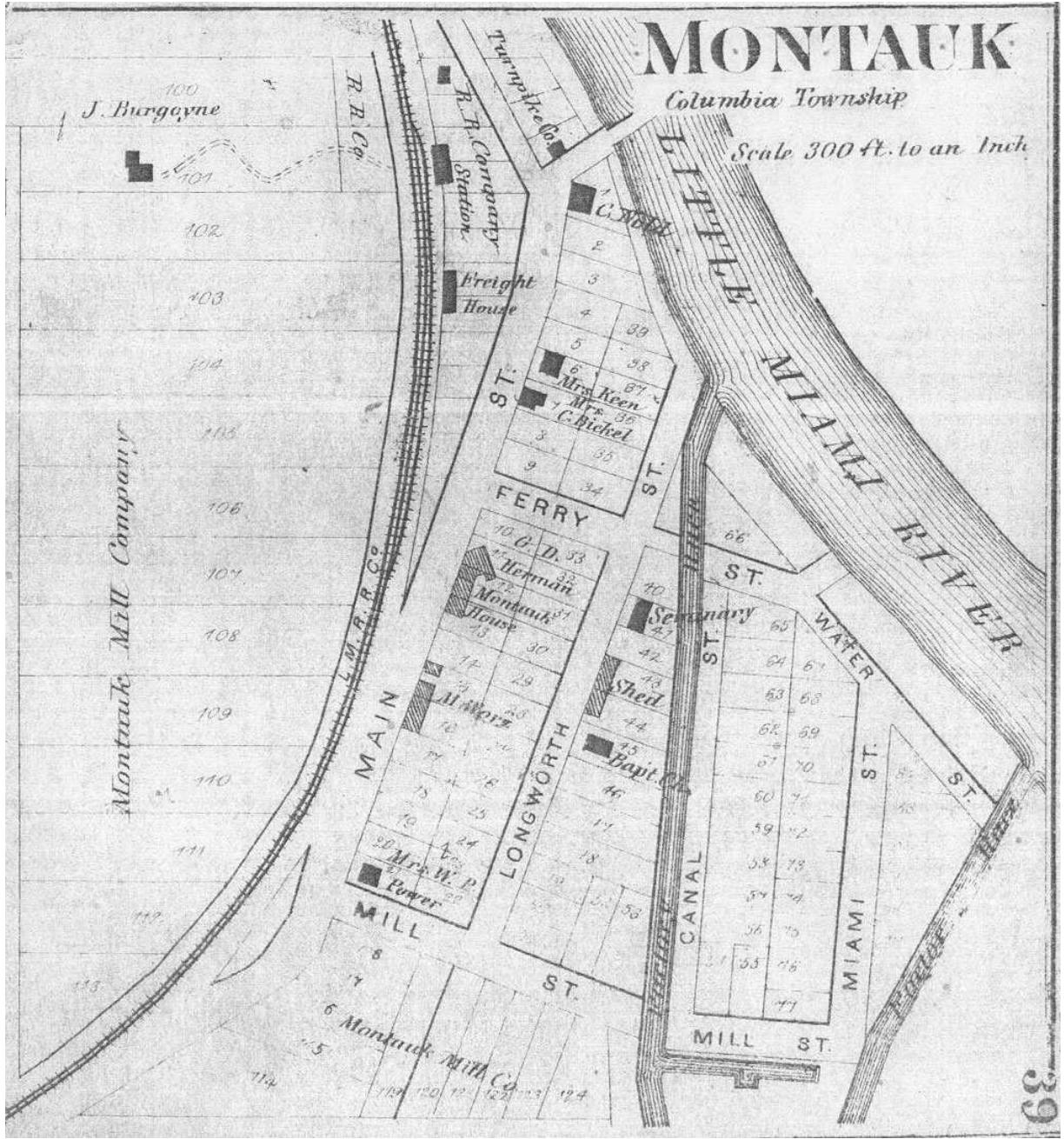
The first train passed over the road on December 14, 1841. City council and a large number of citizens were invited to take the initial trip from Fulton to Milford. It consisted of a brand-new locomotive christened the *Governor Morrow* [president of the railroad], a “brigade” made up of the *James Madison*, a thirty-passenger compartment coach (that is, sixteen inside and fourteen, including the guard, overhead in fine weather) the *Little Miami*, a twenty passenger side-seat car, and a freight car or so. It left Fulton at 11:00 o’clock of an overcast morning, but was delayed by a fall of earth across the track. This served only to prove the power of the *Governor Morrow*, and the train none the less reached Milford safely in an hour and a half. While the distinguished guests tarried over lunch, the townspeople were taken for a short excursion on the rails. The return trip to Fulton was made in the extraordinary time of less than an hour.²⁷

Originally the route of the railroad, shown on the 1848 Hamilton County map and also on an undated map of Camden City, ran north of Wooster Pike. In 1853 the route was moved to its present location south of the pike.²⁸ To straighten the track and reduce the grade, the railroad made several changes along the original line including upgrading the material for the rails and installing double tracks eliminating the need for passing sidings. Much of the gravel for laying the track came out of two local pits, one on Elm Avenue and one on Given Road. After years of discussion, the railroad right-of-way became a bike path in 2006.

Surrounding communities including Madison[ville], Milford and Montauk all succeeded in achieving an identity before Terrace Park. Anticipating growth that would accompany the arrival of the railroad combined with the advantage of being on Wooster Pike, Joseph Longworth, Larz Anderson, R. M. Shoemaker and L. E. Brewster laid out the town of Montauk in 1840. Although it didn’t last as an independent community, at least for a while Montauk showed signs of permanence with its various businesses: flour and saw mills, two factory canals, a blacksmith shop, carpenter shops, several saloons, a school and a hotel called Montauk House. A story handed down but not verified tells of a tavern owner who killed patrons for their money while they slept and buried the bodies in the riverbank.²⁹

The brick Baptist Meeting House was built in 1847 with the date stone still visible. There was also a black Baptist Meeting House. Montauk became a part of Milford by annexation in 1888 even though some of the land was on the west side of the Little Miami River. Thus Terrace Park’s incorporation line was prevented from going to the river, so the village never included some of the original Covalt Station tract. Much of Montauk was gone by 1900 and the flood of 1913 was the final blow to the low-lying area.

(Text continued on page 27)



Map of Montauk from 1869 Titus map insert.



The brick Miami Baptist Church in Montauk was built in 1847.



The date stone from 1847.

Early efforts to change this nameless area to a residential development failed. First, William Winters platted Camden City in 1857 at the intersection of Given and Indian Hill Roads, east to the river and south to the line at Douglas between Sections 23 and 22. Besides the 1853 school there was a blacksmith shop and a saloon. On the south side of Wooster Pike at this important intersection Joseph Iuen built a tavern. This was a two-story building of hand-fired bricks, an addition to an earlier frame tavern. It served as a last night's stop for farmers driving livestock along the pike before going on the next day to markets and slaughterhouses in Cincinnati.

Across the street from the inn James Iuen, Joseph's son, built a barn on his farm where the traveling animals stayed overnight. Iuen Tavern remained a landmark for about 100 years until a convenience store, an insurance company and a bank replaced it.

Another early building, now known as the Circus House at 1 Circus Place, was built on part of John Smith's original Round Bottom Farm and thus was part of what Zaccheus Biggs had bought in 1809. The house may have been built in the 1850s, perhaps by Thomas R. Biggs at the time of his second marriage. An entry in the Biggs family bible notes that T. R. Biggs "repaired to Round Bottom Farm in 1854" but does not indicate a specific house. He was born at Round Bottom Mills Farm in 1821. According to the Cincinnati Directory he had been living in Cincinnati before moving to the farm in the 1850s.

In the late 1860s Biggs built the Victorian Italianate style house now known as "Gravelotte" on the corner of Elm and Douglas Avenues. Recently an early two-story frame addition to the north side of the house has been further enlarged.

An unanswered question is who built the carbon copy of "Gravelotte" on the east side of Elm Avenue. The Titus map shows a house there. It's no longer there but has been identified as the Errett or Fenton House in old photographs. Whether Biggs built it for one of his daughters as has been speculated is not known. He had one daughter, Mary, by Catherine, his first wife, and Kate, Margareta, Sallie and Fanny by his second wife, Mary Elizabeth or "Lizzie" Langdon. There were no twin girls. The 1856 City Directory lists the Biggs residence as "near Milford" and later as "Gravelotte". Originally the name "Gravelotte" applied to the Biggs subdivision of 1873 – not the house. It included land south of Douglas Avenue between the railroad and the Little Miami River, his home and a railroad station, but with no planned businesses.

Biggs deeded 1.83 acres in his subdivision for a school³⁰ where the Terrace Park Elementary School stands today. In the same year he gave a small frame school building in Montauk, called Round Bottom School, to the Episcopalians – he was one – for St. Thomas Church.³¹ (Text continued on page 33)



Plat of the Partition of the Camden City property in Sec. 23, T.5, F.N.2, M.P. Being the same conveyed to William Winters by deed recorded in Book 131 P. 130, Ham Co. R. Surveyed by me June 13 1857. John L. Hosbrook

N. B. Said "New Road" and the road taken from No 6 are each 30ft wide and are Private Roads or easement.

Plat of Partition Camden City 1857 Section 23



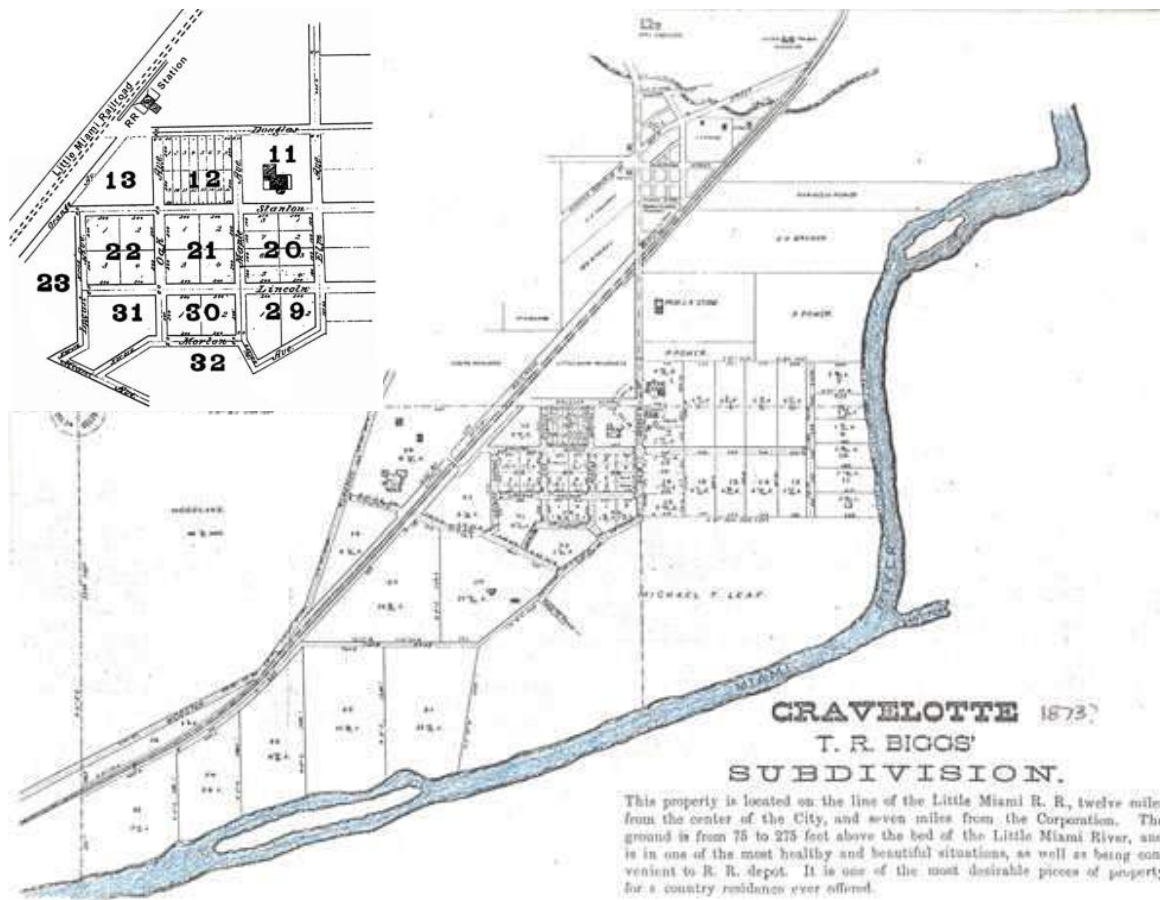
**Front of Iuen Tavern, 701 Wooster Pike.
The brick tavern in the center was built c. 1870 as an addition to an
earlier frame structure, which was on the left.
1998 photo**



Rear of tavern in 1957.



Joseph Iuen



T. R. Biggs Subdivision of Gravelotte.

---Subdivision---

**of
Thomas R. Biggs Estate**

in Sections 22,23 & 28 in Columbia Town'p

made be orderof Court in Case 61473

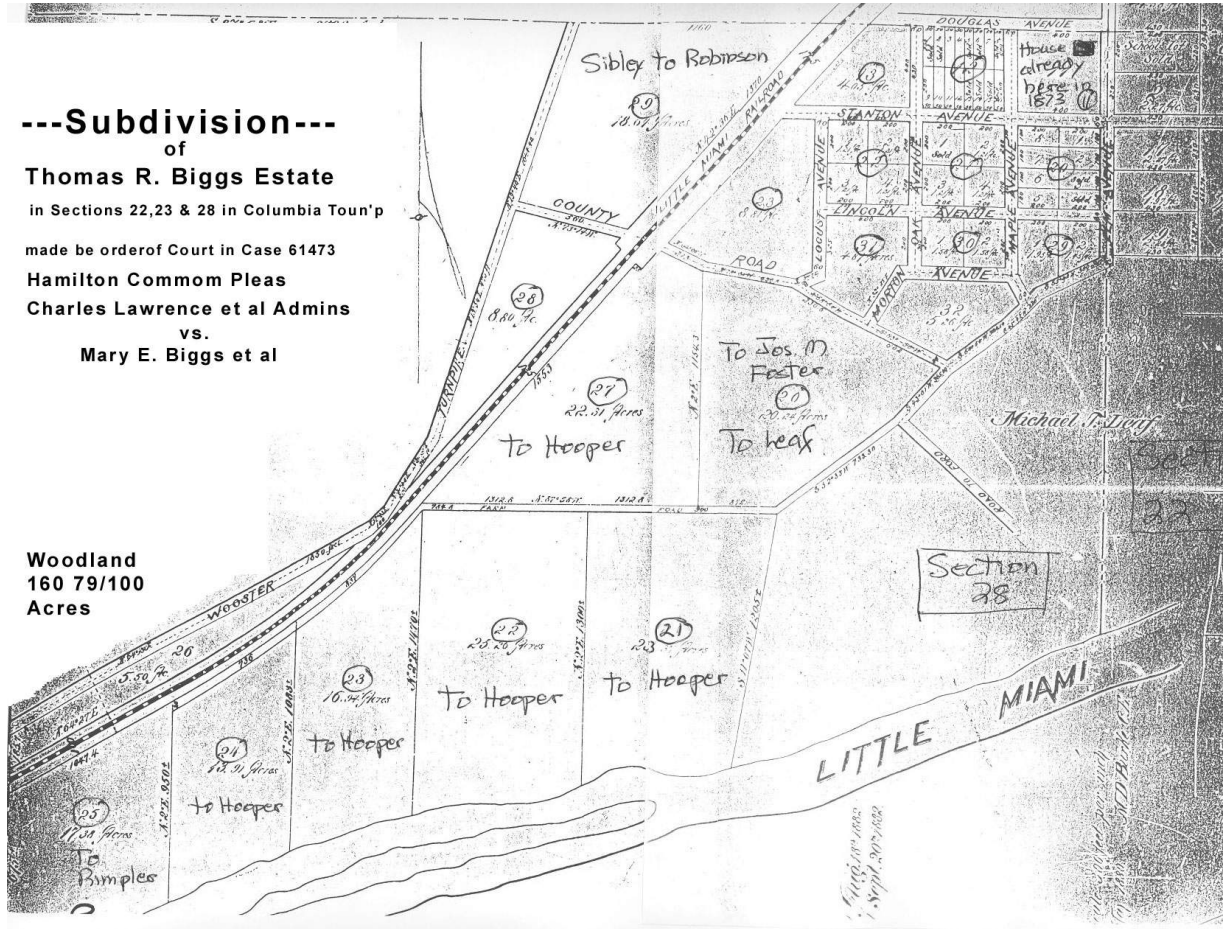
Hamilton Commom Pleas

Charles Lawrence et al Admins

vs.

Mary E. Biggs et al

**Woodland
160 79/100
Acres**



Section 28 segment of T. R. Biggs estate.



“Gravelotte” at 720 Elm Avenue was built c. 1869.
2002 photo



Errett or Fenton House.
Undated photo

As with his father, Thomas Biggs's Round Bottom Farm was sold at auction to settle debts after his death. An advertisement for the Tuesday September 28, 1880 Administrator's Sale listed:

Property of the late T. R. Biggs ...comprising Fine Residence, Barn, Outbuildings, Ice House, Orchard, Garden, Corn Lands, Wood Lands, on the best and most available Gravel Bed near Cincinnati.

There were also smaller blocks and lots sold – but not sold immediately. The Biggs Elm Avenue home in block #11 was appraised at \$6,000. Later Michael Turner Leaf bought from Joseph Foster the twenty-acre Lot 20 parcel for \$3,000³² that included the John Smith house to add to his farm.

In 1885 James Sibley purchased Lot 29 from the estate.³³ At the Administrator's Sale that house had been valued at \$25,000. The next year the John Robinson circus family bought it. They lived there while running the famous Robinson Circus and the farm became the winter quarters for the circus animals for a number of years. All of what has become Circus Place and Robinwood Drive and some of the Wrenwood Lane area contained circus buildings. Performers practiced in different parts of the village. Open porches on the house on the corner of Miami and Stanton as well as the barn across from Iuen Tavern were used this way. The barn burned sometime between 1913 and 1916. Elephants walking the streets or plowing fields surprised passers by. Other animals appeared in the roads from time to time and some at large.

A house built in the 1860s, just west over the railroad tracks on New Street, belonged to Sumner P. Bacon. He and Carl Floto, who later became Terrace Park's first mayor, were partners in the pig iron business. The house was demolished in 1996 because of extensive termite damage.

Even though early attempts at building a community all failed, they served as forerunners of Terrace Park. In time it became clear that something was succeeding because more people were buying land, building and moving to the area. Jacob Traber, who was a commission merchant with offices at the public landing in Cincinnati, built a large hilltop home with views of the river and a hoped for successful Camden City. He called his property Camden Terrace Farm and had vineyards on the hillside. Two pillars on Wooster Pike marked the entrance. Fire destroyed the house in 1893 but members of the Camden Terrace Farms Association used the old wine cellars as dressing rooms for their pool.

Jacob Traber is credited with giving Terrace Park its name. It has been said that he ran a naming contest in the 1870s, offering a sewing machine as prize. It is not clear whether anyone actually entered, but the name Terrace Park was clearly in

(Text continued on page 41)



**The Circus House as originally built in 1854/69 faced Elm Road.
Current address 1 Circus Place.**

1931 photo



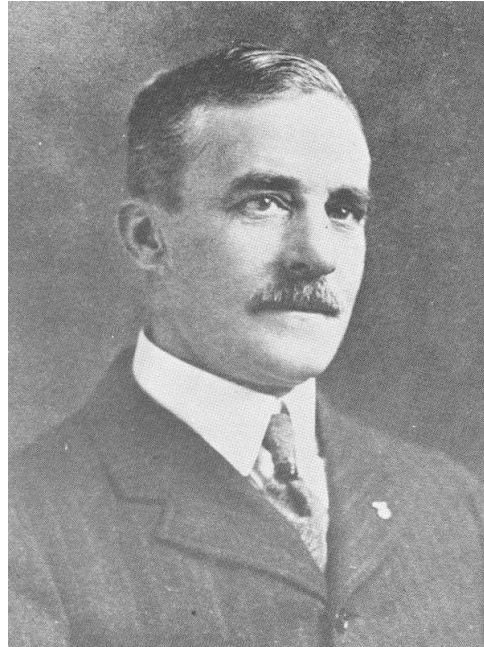
**The porches with decorative ironwork were added
by the Robinsons after a trip to New Orleans.**



Side view of the Robinson home.
Photo date unknown



John F. Robinson (II), "The Governor"
1843-1921



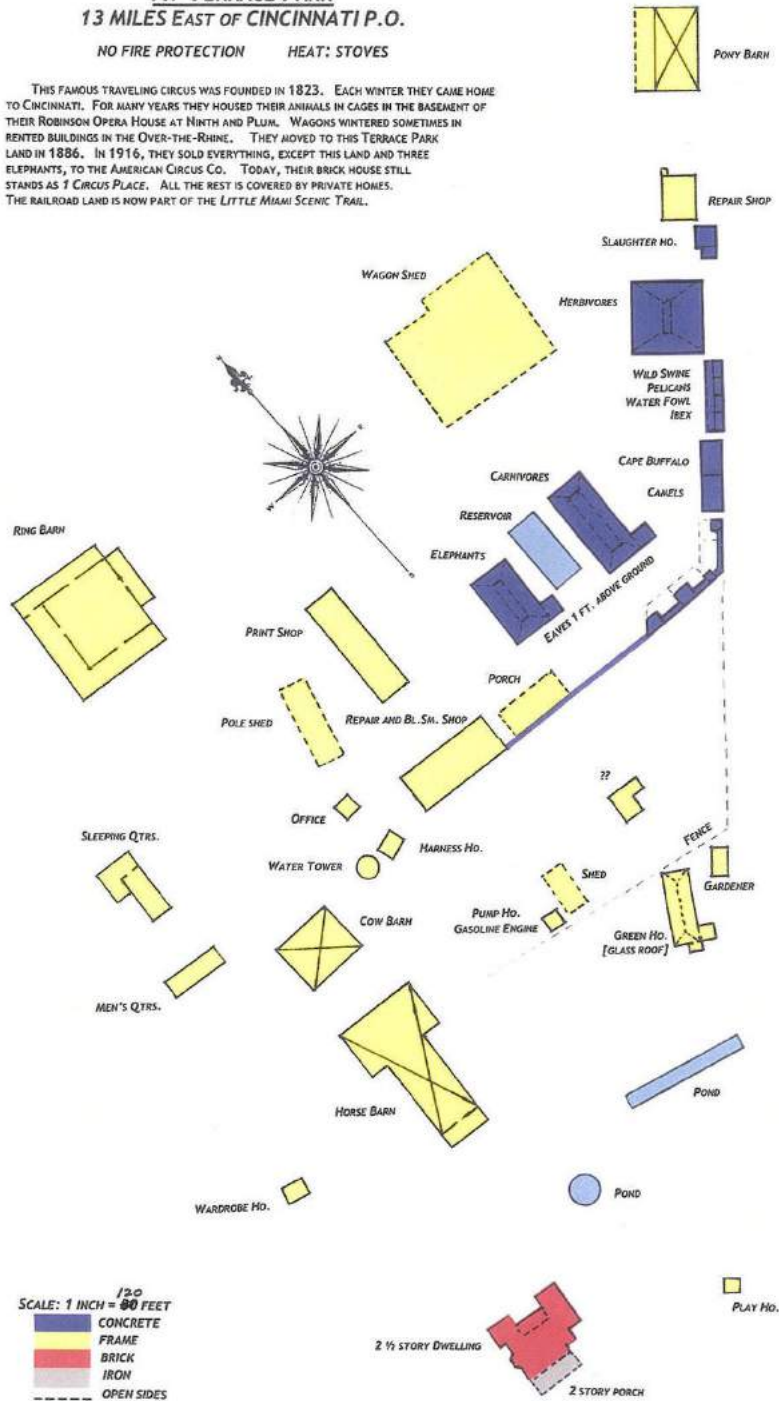
John G. Robinson (III)
1872-1935

From Give 'em a John Robinson by Richard E. Conover.

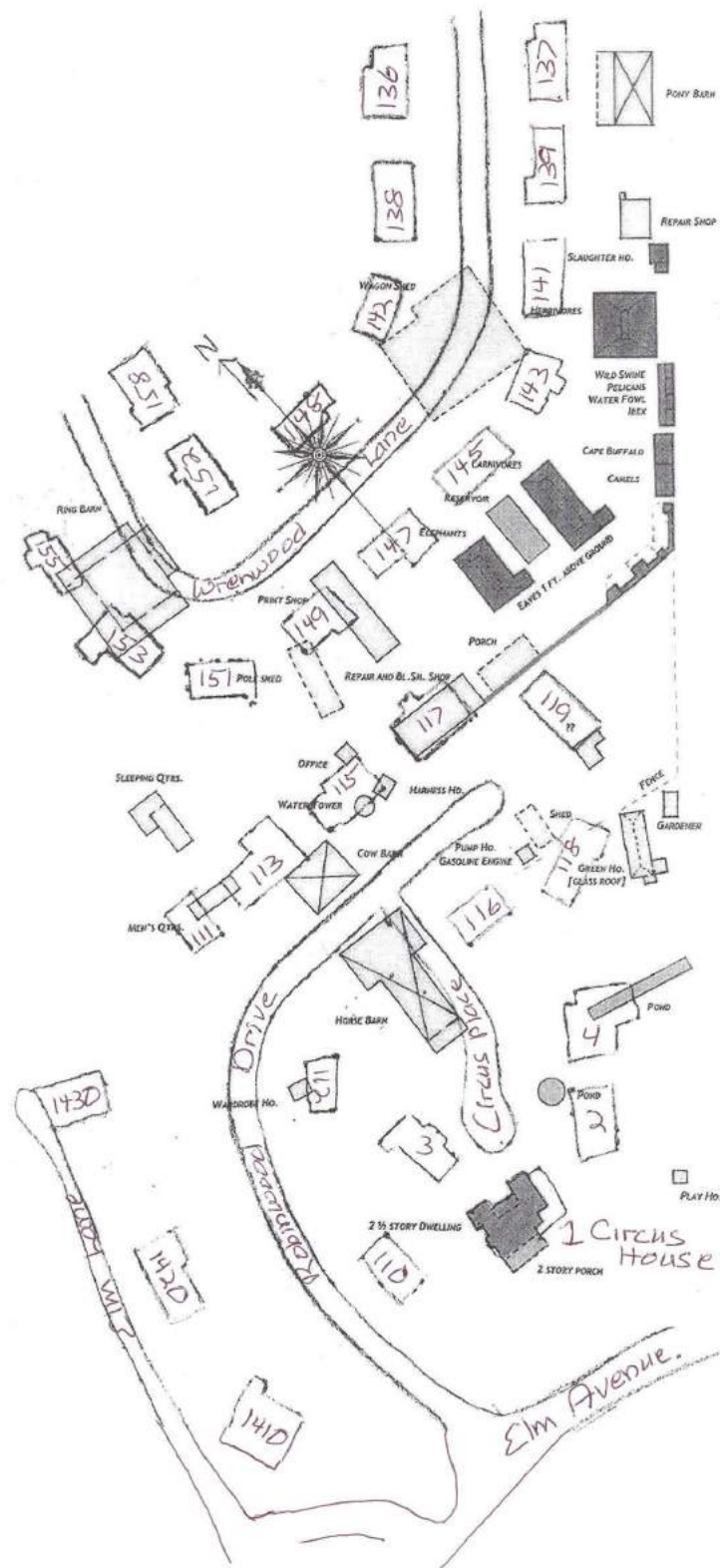
1904
WINTER QUARTERS OF JOHN ROBINSON'S CIRCUS
AT TERRACE PARK
1.3 MILES EAST OF CINCINNATI P.O.

NO FIRE PROTECTION HEAT: STOVES

THIS FAMOUS TRAVELING CIRCUS WAS FOUNDED IN 1823. EACH WINTER THEY CAME HOME TO CINCINNATI. FOR MANY YEARS THEY HOUSED THEIR ANIMALS IN CAGES IN THE BASEMENT OF THEIR ROBINSON OPERA HOUSE AT NINTH AND PLUM. WAGONS WINTERED SOMETIMES IN RENTED BUILDINGS IN THE OVER-THE-RHINE. THEY MOVED TO THIS TERRACE PARK LAND IN 1886. IN 1916, THEY SOLD EVERYTHING, EXCEPT THIS LAND AND THREE ELEPHANTS, TO THE AMERICAN CIRCUS CO. TODAY, THEIR BRICK HOUSE STILL STANDS AS 1 CIRCUS PLACE. ALL THE REST IS COVERED BY PRIVATE HOMES. THE RAILROAD LAND IS NOW PART OF THE LITTLE MIAMI SCENIC TRAIL.



Placement of buildings in the winter quarters of the Robinson Circus illustrated by William H. Graver based on the 1904 Sanborn map.



Modern day street map superimposed on the preceding plan of the Robinson Circus Winter Quarters, courtesy of William H. Graver.



Robinson Circus Elephant House.
Date unknown



**732 Miami Avenue was built in 1910 with open porches
on which circus performers practiced.**
1998 photo

Robinson Circus Animals and Wagons.



Tillie in the 800 block of Miami Avenue.



Elephant rides, mid 1930s - early 1940s.



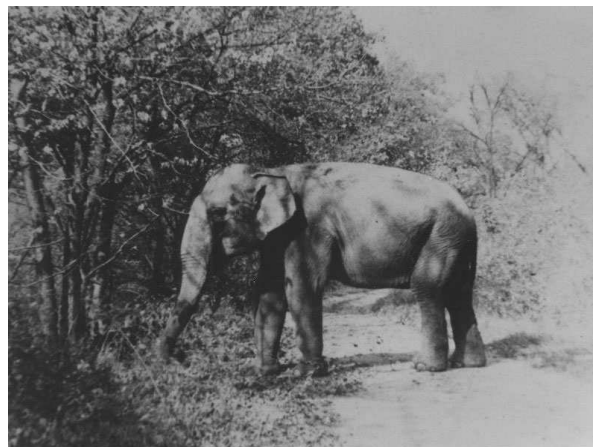
Robinson circus camels made Terrace Park a mecca for the curious during the winter.



Robinson Circus wagons taken in 1911 at the winter quarters.



Loading elephants into freight cars.



An elephant going to bathe in the river.



The Sumner P. Bacon family home at 305 New Street was built in 1866 and demolished in 1996.

use by 1877. A post office established about the same time was closed briefly in 1890 and reestablished in 1891.

A growth spurt to the area finally came between 1886 and 1892 with the Corey, Pattison and Iuen, Stuntz and four Sibley subdivisions. George Washington Corey laid out the area of Park and Western. The buildings at 722, 726 & 729 Park and his home at 722 Wooster Pike, recently changed to 723 Indian Hill Road, were made of poured concrete. The walls were poured a few feet at a time using hand made forms. It appears that the concrete was scored while still wet to give the buildings the impression of having been built of cut stone. This was a very early use of cement as a residential building material, probably the first west of the Allegheny Mountains. The cement had been brought over from Europe as ballast on sailing ships.³⁴ The story goes that the owner of some barges suffered bankruptcy, enabling Corey to obtain the powdered cement at auction for very little. In 1889 practically no cement was made in the United States.³⁵ Corey's 1890 plans for the concrete Baptist Church, now serving as the village Community House, included a steeple, bell - now at St. Thomas Church - and an immersion pool for baptisms.

Two Milford men, John Pattison, later briefly governor of Ohio, and John B. Iuen, a local farmer, merchant and prominent Milford banker, started promoting their subdivision in Lots 1 and 2 of Camden City. John B. Iuen was the brother of Joseph who had built the Iuen Tavern on Wooster Pike. Pattison and Iuen advertised:

We can build you a good, comfortable house of six rooms, on a lot 50x190, for about \$2,000.00. This includes cost of lot...You can build much cheaper at Terrace Park than in the city, and would only say to any one contemplating a move to the suburbs, don't decide on your location until you have seen Terrace Park ...We give free transportation for one year to each builder of a house ...³⁶

presumably on the thriving railroad.

James W. Sibley laid out 4 subdivisions, south of Pattison & Iuen, all the way to the bluff. He gave college names to the streets north of Amherst Avenue. For some time certain houses in Terrace Park have been called Railroad Houses" but nobody is quite sure why. They were probably built for sale or rent by Sibley in the 1890s. They were not owned by the railroad. The railroad company only owned the land where the tracks lay and the gravel pits from which roadbed material had been mined. Even the number of such houses varies with people's recollections. One characteristic the houses have in common is their cruciform shape, but recent

(Text continued on page 52)

These cement houses were built by George Washington Corey in the 1880s.



**Corey House at 722 Wooster Pike.
The present address is 723 Indian Hill Road.**
Undated photo



722 Park Avenue.
Undated photo



726 Park Avenue.
Undated photo



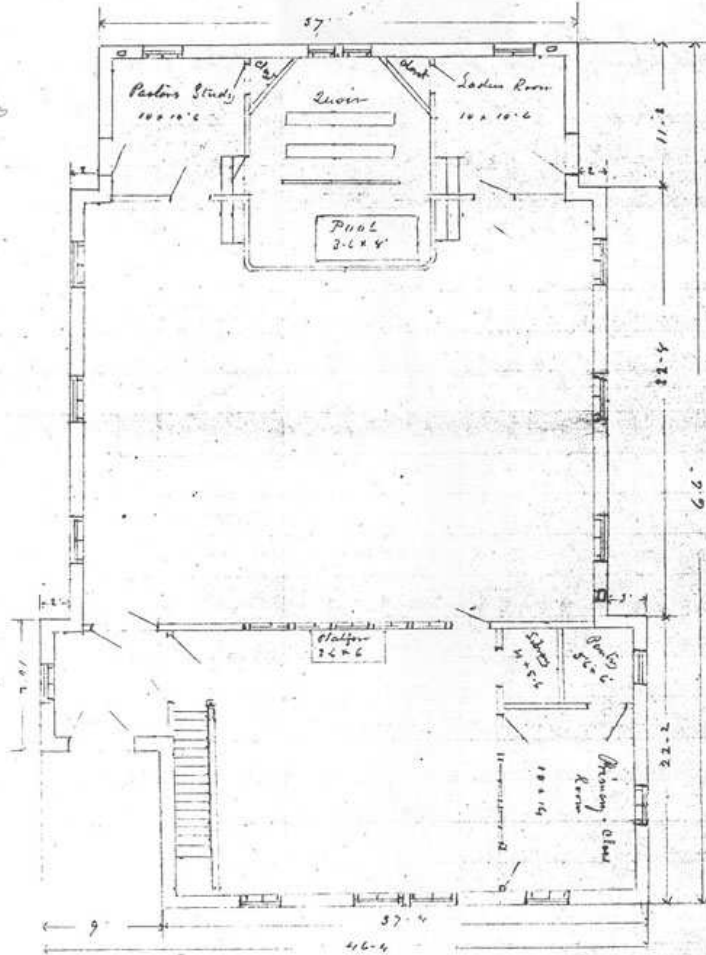
729 Park Avenue.
1985 photo



The Baptist Church at 428 Elm Avenue was built in 1890/1.
1900 photo, before the steeple was removed and the building became the Community House.

Plan of One Story Church. Concrete Wall: 12"

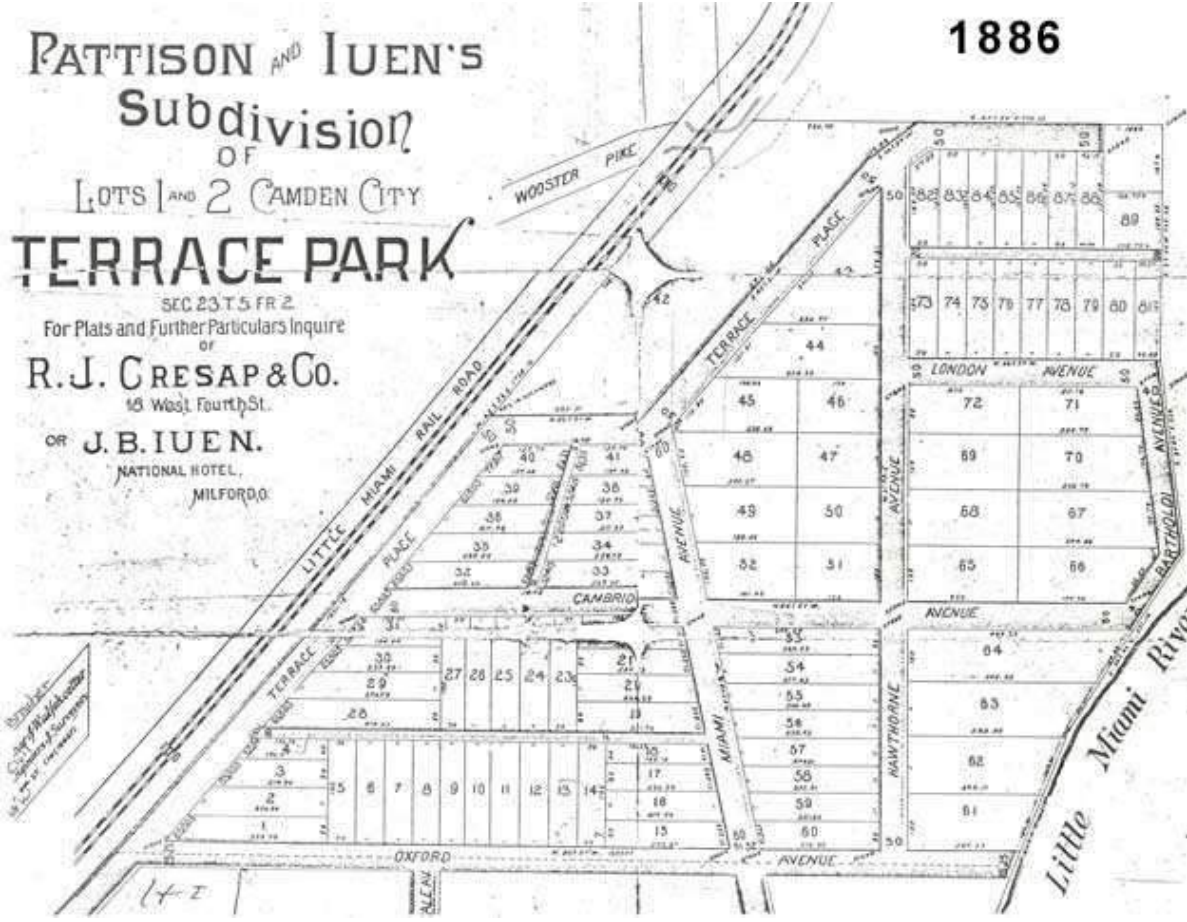
Copied from the original drawing for
The Baptist Church drawn by George W. Corey in 1889.
(Drawing courtesy of Robert Corey)



Cost of work done on the above in 1889. Exclusive of Labor & materials - \$342.94 being for
Quarrying & hauling, stone excavation for foundation, tools, screening gravel, building forms
inside foundation, Cistern, Wall, Lumber, Limestone & Sandstone - Lamin
Wall completed, Cistern ready for painting, Foundation walls all done, Just all done
plains on Wall's ready for commencement of concrete work - 3 cent yet due on the above
making donations & cash paid out -


Following is the estimate of material cost to complete the Building

Original plan for the Baptist Church.



John B. Ijen

PATTISON & IJEN'S
— SUBDIVISION —
TERRACE PARK.



ON THE LINE OF
LITTLE MIAMI
R. R.

+ 30 TRAINS DAILY +
— BETWEEN —
Cincinnati & Loveland.

DOUBLE TRACK, STEEL RAILS, and no other road running trains over this line; new and elegant coaches; attentive employees;—all of which are essential to comfort and rapid transit.
For beauty of scenery, natural and varied advantages of the sites, with a diversity of cheap commutation.

-5-

This property, situated on the Little Miami Railroad, thirteen miles from the Cincinnati depot, and seven miles from the corporation line, lying on a level plateau of gravel seventy-five (75) feet above the Little Miami River and forty (40) feet above the highest water ever known, is the most desirable location for a home to be found in the county. The underlying gravel insures good drainage for every lot. The scenery is beautiful, being surrounded by hills, and the beautiful Miami flowing by it, which gives excellent opportunities for boating, fishing and swimming. The accommodations for going to and coming from the city are unsurpassed in the world, and the fare is but little more than on the street-cars. Forty minutes' ride in a comfortable seat in a warm, light car will land you at your own home. Terrace Park Station is located on these premises. A free pass for one (1) year will be given to parties building.

A number of fine houses are now built, a good school within four hundred (400) yards, and four (4) churches a short distance from the subdivision. Lots are fifty (50) by one hundred and ninety (190), fronting on a fifty (50) ft. street, and running back to a twenty (20) ft. alley. Prices are lower than in any subdivision around the city. From three (3) to six (6) dollars per foot, with three (3) years' time to pay. Small payment down, and you get a full warranty deed to the lot. Will make very liberal terms with parties wishing to build.

-6-

Advertisement for Pattison & Iuen's Subdivision.

677

—office of—
UNION CENTRAL
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

No. Cincinnati, May 24 1886

Received from Louis Brehling + _____

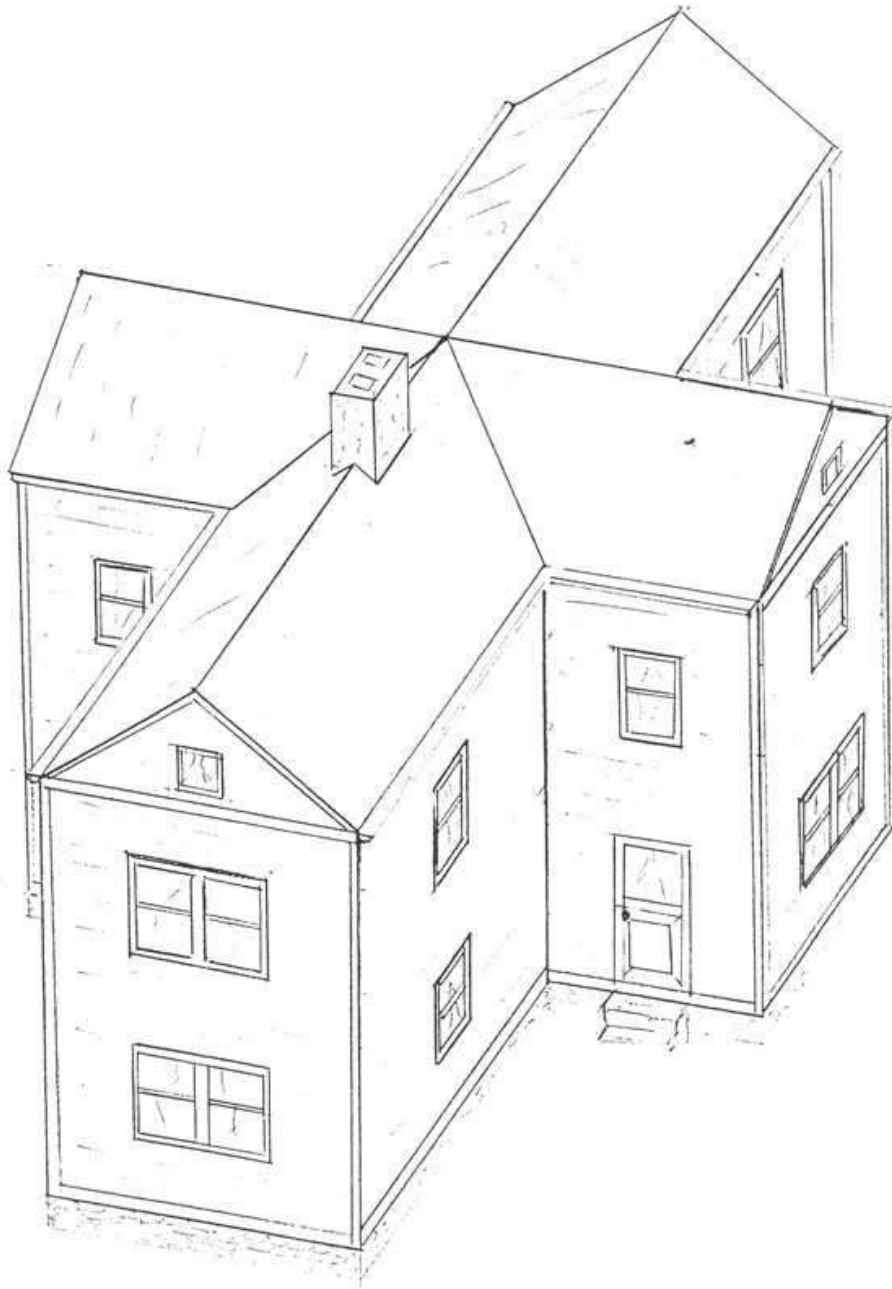
Fifty + _____ Dollars.

same being Cash paid on Lots 6 & 7 in Pattison & Iuen's
Sub. of Terrace Park
\$50.00

John M. Pattison

Blank No. 606.

Receipt from John Pattison to Louis Brehling [sic] for payment on Lots 6 & 7 in Pattison & Iuen's Subdivision of Terrace Park, now 302 Oxford Avenue.



Plan of an original "Railroad House."
Drawing by John Diehl

Examples of "Railroad Houses" before additions.



301 Stanton Avenue was built in 1890.
1965 photo



600 Stanton Avenue was built in 1898/9.
1966 photo



609 Amherst Avenue was built in 1892.
1972 photo



This house is shown as built in 1886 or 1890 next to 306 Rugby Avenue. It was moved in the 1920s and became 313 Oxford Avenue.
Undated photo

Examples of “Railroad Houses” after remodeling.



505 Stanton Avenue was built in 1890.
1999 photo



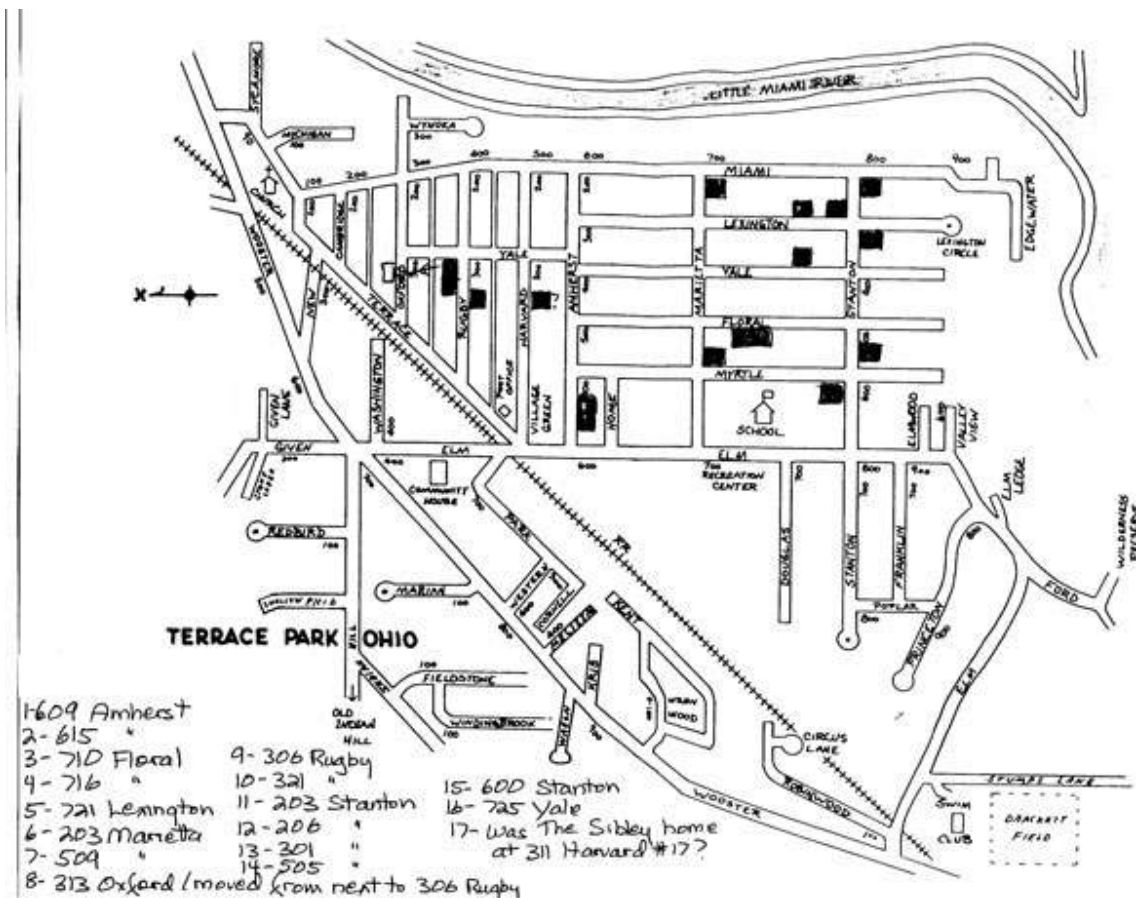
710 Floral Avenue was built c. 1892.
1998 photo



206 Stanton Avenue was built in 1895.
2005 photo



313 Oxford Avenue was moved from Rugby Avenue in the 1920s. 1998 photo



These are the "Railroad Houses" according to Stella Galloway Boone in a 1942 paper for the Terrace Park Garden Club. Seventeen were built by Sibley & Toph.



J. W. Sibley pointing to the sign visible from the railroad advertising his new 1886 subdivision.



J. W. Sibley at home with his dog at 311 Harvard Avenue.

changes have made some almost unidentifiable today. Another characteristic is their very steep staircases.

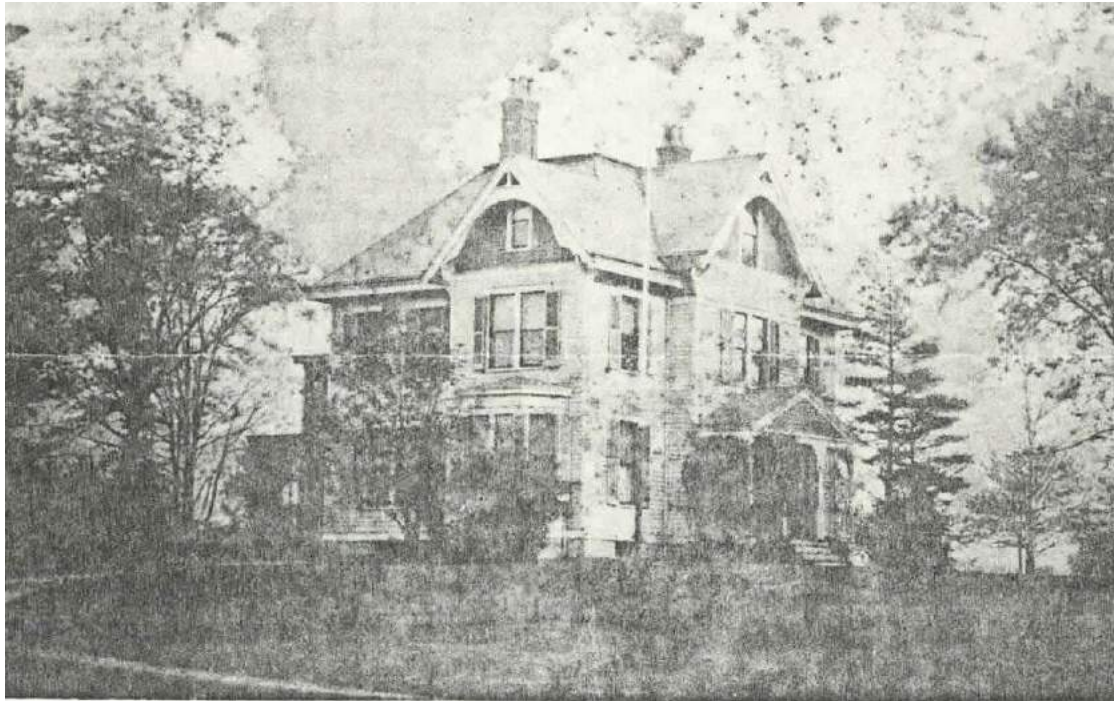
Chauncey R. Stuntz's subdivision included what is now Home Street, Myrtle to Marietta and Marietta to Elm. He moved from Milford into his new Victorian farmhouse at 625 Elm Avenue in 1868 with T. R. Biggs as a near neighbor. Taking advantage of the convenient rail transportation, he commuted daily to Woodward High School in Cincinnati where he taught subjects ranging from Botany, Drawing and Greek to Psychology, and later mostly Physics and Chemistry.³⁷ When the Terrace Park Improvement Society was formed in 1890 to try to stave off the possibility of Cincinnati annexing Terrace Park, Stuntz subdivided his acreage into building lots. His house still stands in the center of Lot #1, the largest in his subdivision. By 1905 many of the lots were sold but some were not built on until as late as the 1960s.

In 1892 the Terrace Park Building and Loan Company was incorporated to meet the needs of builders and buyers. Directors pictured the following year were: Louis Breiling, Russell Errett, Fred Filmore, Hayward Gatch, Charles Gegner, R. B. Jones, J. R. McGoren E. M. Rauscher and W. E. Williamson. Most of these families stayed in the Terrace Park area for many years. Seven of the nine were to serve on council and two as mayor.

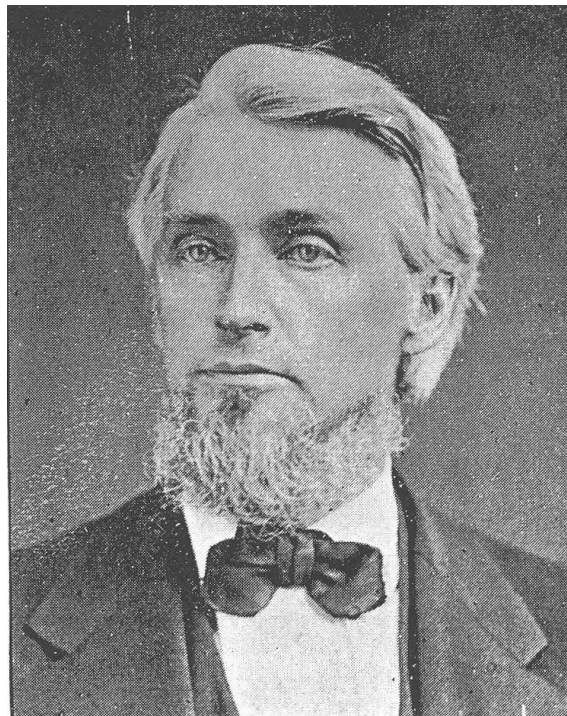
A petition signed by forty-eight men – no women – led to the incorporation of Terrace Park in 1893 as The Village of Terrace Park, putting to rest the fears of annexation to Cincinnati. In the first election the voters chose the following officers: Carl Floto, mayor; W. H. Voige, clerk; J. L. Galloway, treasurer; Thomas B. Shumard, marshal; Lucius Conkling, sealer of weights and measures; Russell Errett, Robert B. Jones, H. L. Simmons, John F. Robinson, O. M. Hill and E. C. Peebles council members.

The one hundred and four year pioneer, settlement and major development periods came to an end with incorporation. Terrace Park finally achieved an identity within specific borders and could begin controlling its own destiny.

The southern boundary however omitted the land between the bluff and the Little Miami River, an important area in Terrace Park's pre-incorporation history. Not until the 1940 annexation was that land brought into Terrace Park.



The Chauncey R. Stuntz home at 625 Elm Avenue was built in 1868.
Undated photo



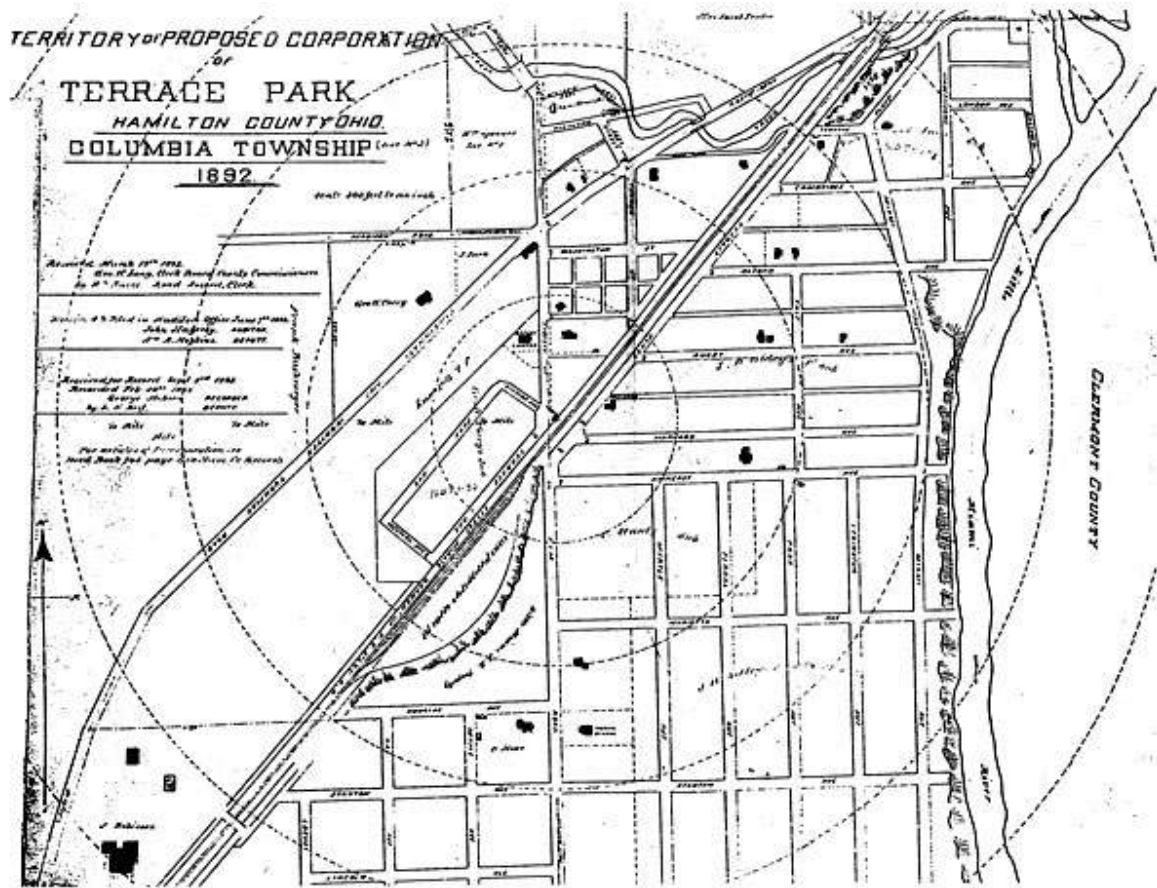
Chauncey R. Stuntz

SUCCESSIVE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP THE AREA

NAME	DATE PLATTED	GENERAL LOCATION	WHO	OUTCOME
Town of Zeigler	1817	In Section 23 near the Little Miami River and Mill Run	Thomas Rue	Vacated in 1841 by court action on petition of Brewster, et al.
Montauk	1840	Between Terrace Park and Milford on the Little Miami River	Brewster, Anderson, Longworth, et al.	Became part of Milford.
Camden City	1857	Part of Section 23	William Winters	Partitioned ¹ in 1886.
Gravelotte	1873	Douglas south of Elm and east to the Little Miami River	Thomas R. Biggs	Estate sale held in 1880 to settle debts
G.W. Corey Subdivision	1886	West of RR including Park and what is now Denison Lane.	George W. Corey	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
Pattison and Luen Subdivision	1886	North of Oxford	Pattison & Luen	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
J.W. Sibley Subdivision	1886	South of Oxford to north side of Amherst	James W. Sibley	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
J. W. Sibley 2 nd Subdivision	1890	Myrtle, Miami, Marietta, Stanton area	James W. Sibley	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
J. W. Sibley 3 rd Subdivision	1891	Amherst to Marietta, Yale to Miami	James W. Sibley	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
J. W. Sibley 4 th Subdivision	1891	South side of Amherst from Elm to Floral	James W. Sibley	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
Stuntz Subdivision	1892	North of Home to Marietta from Elm to Floral	Chauncey Stuntz	Became part of Terrace Park at incorporation
The Village of Terrace Park	Proposed incorporation 1892	Terrace Park name appears on a map as early as 1877		Incorporated in 1893

Notes:

1. Pattison & Luen and J.W. Sibley partitioned most of lots 1-4 of Camden City in 1886.
2. See maps for more specific boundaries.



“Territory of Proposed Corporation of Terrace Park” in 1892.

Terrace Park, Ohio, Feb. 15 1893.

Louis Weiding

Dear Sir:

The undersigned, legal agents for the incorporation of the village of Terrace Park, have finished their labors, so far as the preliminaries to incorporation are concerned, and beg to submit to the citizens the amount of costs incurred, viz:

Advertising Expense, Legal Notice,	\$ 51.72.
Recorder's Fees,	145.00.
Incidental Expense,	12.90.
Total,	<u>\$209.62.</u>

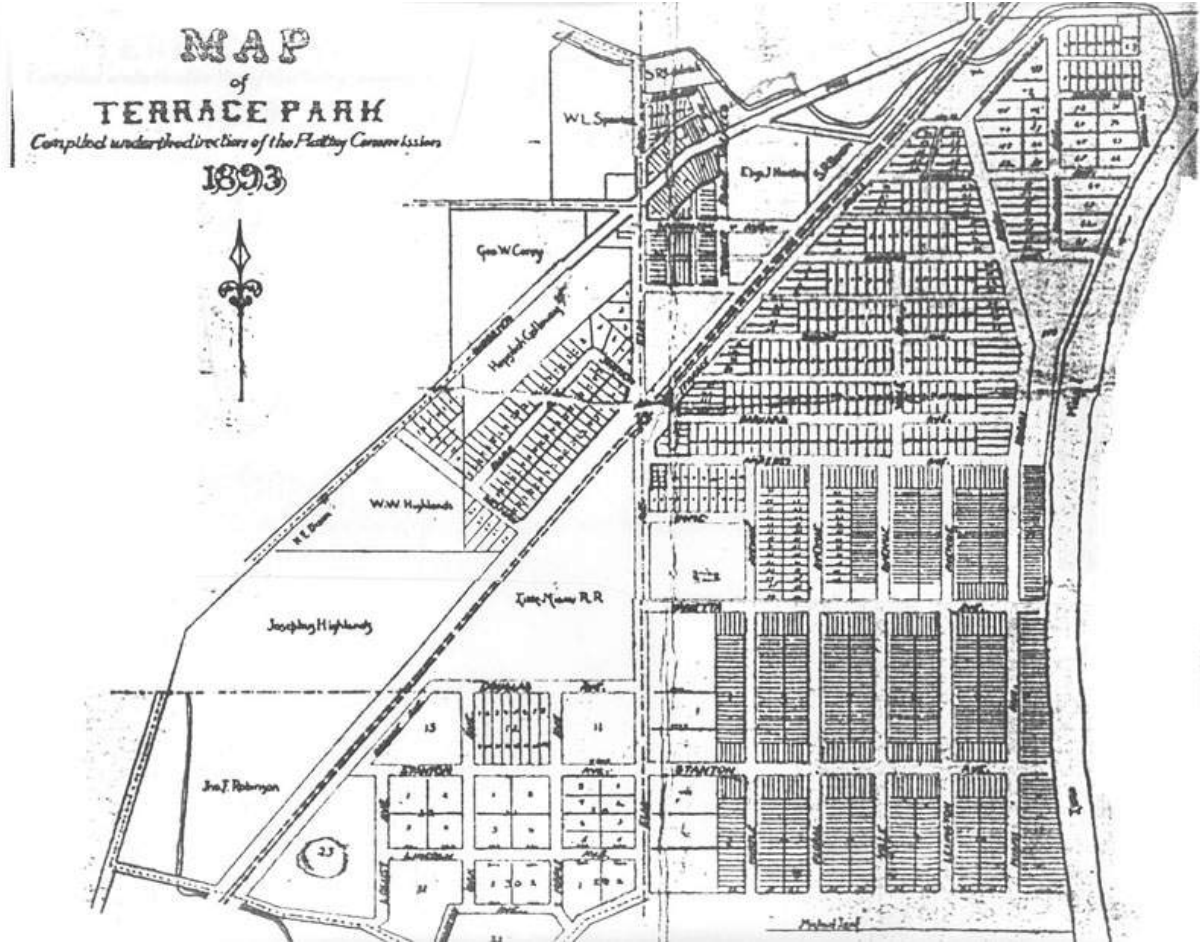
This will have to be paid before final incorporation can take place, and we have proportioned the same upon the holdings of real estate amounting in the aggregate to \$100,000. Your share will be \$ 3.00, which you will please pay to Mr. Chas. A. Howe, who will call upon you for that purpose, and receipt for the same.

Respectfully,

Russell Errett
C. Floto

Agents.

Costs for "preliminaries to incorporation".

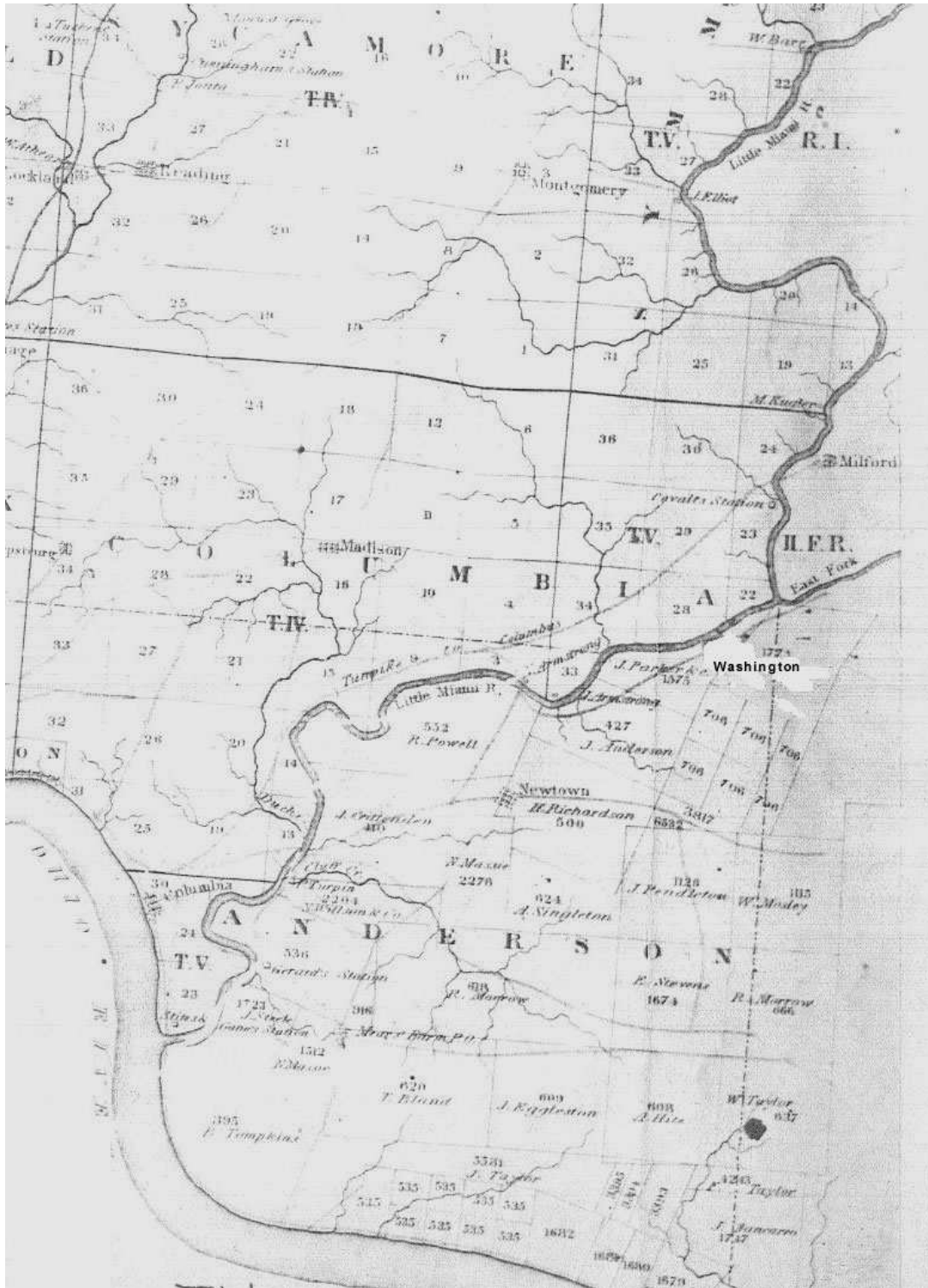


1893 Map of Terrace Park.



Original Terrace Park Subdivisions.
X = location of houses built by 1893

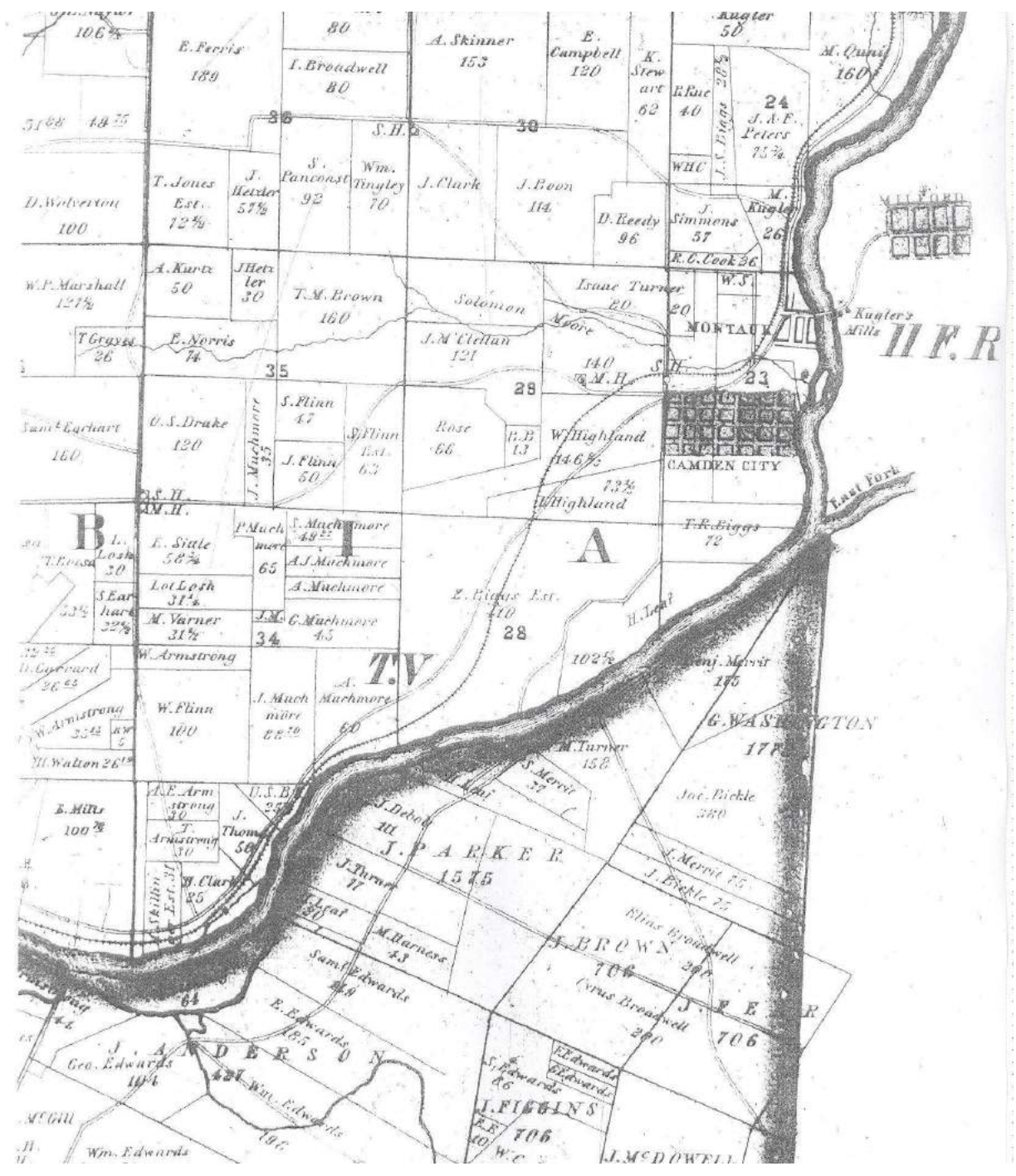
Parts taken from various maps of Hamilton County



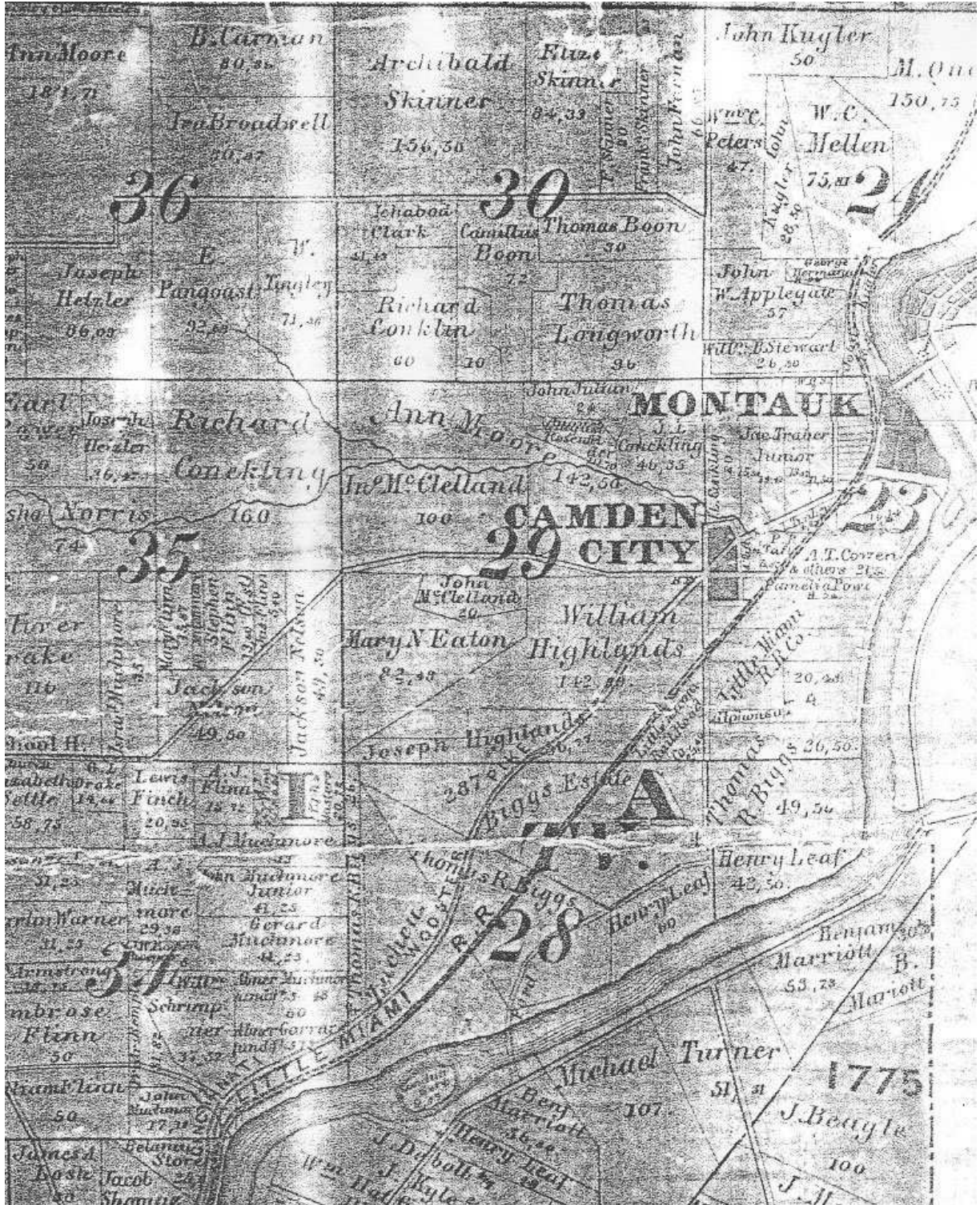
From 1835 Morrison & Williams Map showing Covalt Station and section lines.



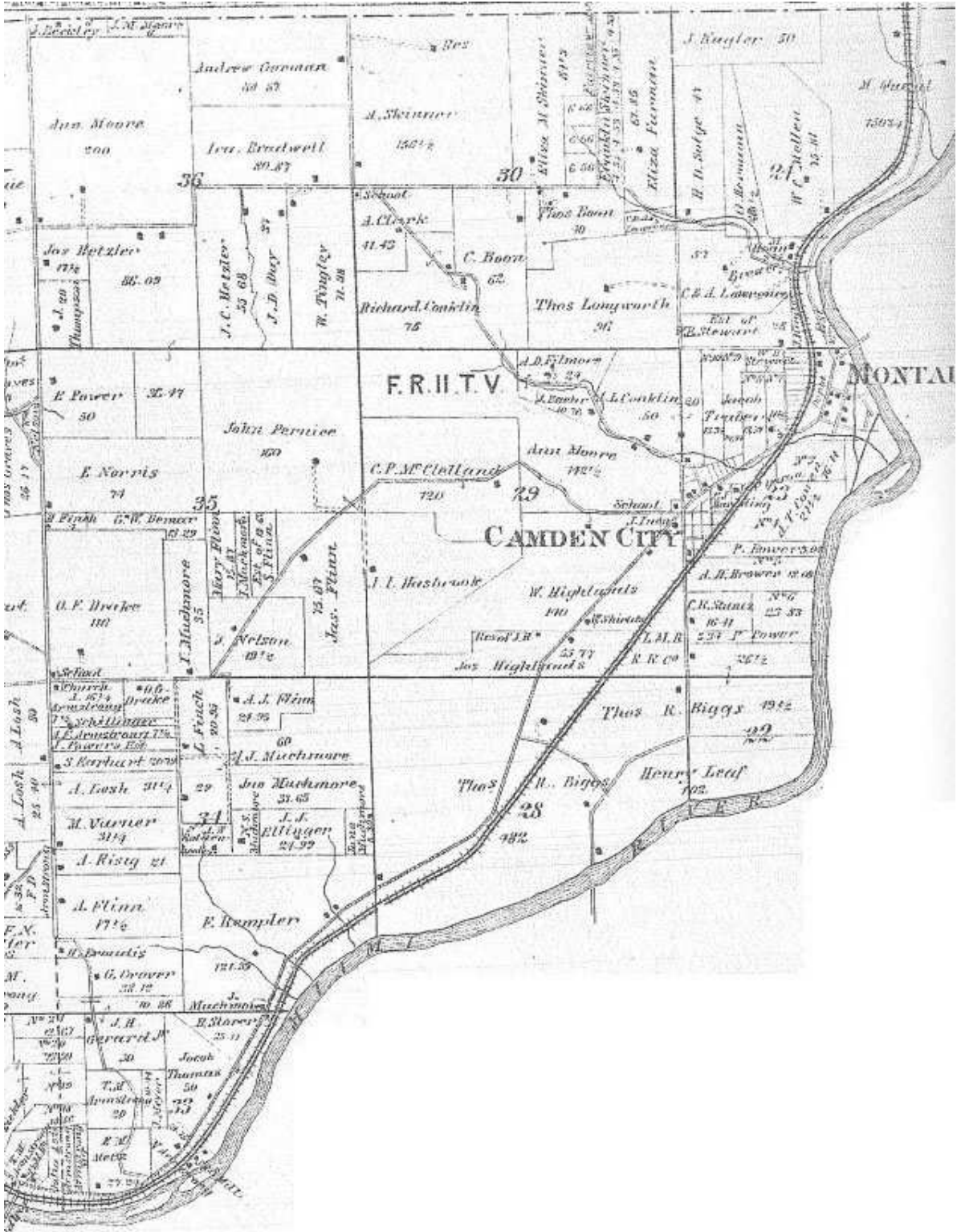
From 1848 A.W. Gilbert Map of Hamilton County showing land owners, number of acres, original route of Little Miami Railroad, Meeting House [MH] and School House [SH].



From 1856 A. W. Gilbert Map of Hamilton County.
Shows Camden City [otherwise same as 1848 map].



From 1865 Phillips Map of Hamilton County showing land owners and number of acres.



From the 1869 C. O. Titus Atlas of Hamilton County showing land owners and number of acres.



From 1877 C. S. Mendenhall Map of Hamilton County and Vicinity of Cincinnati showing Terrace Park.

Sources

1. S. F. Starr. The Archaeology of Hamilton County, Ohio, reprint from The Journal of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. Vol. XXIII No. 1, June 1960, p 27.
2. Virginia Ramond Cummins, Hamilton County Court and Other Records, vol. 2, pp. 163-64.
- 3,4,5. Mary Covalt, "Reminiscences of Early Days" from an undated manuscript in the Cincinnati Historical Society Library.
6. [Charles] Whittlesey, Narrative of Joseph Martin quoted from "The Cincinnati Daily Gazette and Cincinnati Weekley Atlas 1844." A reprint.
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Amherst Avenue, 41
 609, 48
 Anderson, Larz, 24, 54
 Anthony, John, 12
 Bacon, Family, 6, 33, 40
 House (305 New) iii
 Baysore Family, iii, 20, 21
 Baptist Church (428 Elm), iii, iv, 8, 19, 26, 41,
 43, 44
 Battle of Fallen Timbers, 6
 Bedle, Frances, 4,6
 Bedle, Joseph, 6, 7
 Biggs, Thomas R., iii, 10,27, 30,31, 33, 52, 54
 Biggs, Zaccheus, iii, 10, 11, 27
 Boonesborough Fort, 5
 Breiling, Louis, 46, 52, 56
 Brewster, L. E., 7, 24, 54
 Burr, Aaron, 8, 9
 Bush, Isaac, 7
 Cambridge Avenue
 203, 6
 Camden City, iii, iv, 24, 27, 33, 41, 54,62
 Camden Works, 1
 Chillicothe, 12
 Circus House (1 Circus Place), iii, 27, 34
 Clauson Family, 7
 Clemens, Elizabeth, 7
 Forgerson, 6
 Station, 4
 Columbia Township, 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 14, 21, 67
 Columbus, 12
 Conkling, Lucius, 52
 Corey, George Washington, iii, 41, 42, 44, 54,
 67
 Covalt, Abraham, 1, 4, 6
 Bethuel, 4, 7
 Cheniah, 4, 7, 12
 Jonathan, 4, 7
 Mary, 4, 8, 67
 Station, iii, iv, 3-8, 12, 14, 24, 59
 Douglas Avenue, 27
 Dove Family, 7, 67
 Elm Avenue, 12, 24, 27,33, 34, 54
 Errett/ Fenton House (707 Elm), iii, 27, 32
 Russell, 52, 56
 Evans, Walter, 7
 Ferris Family, 12, 21
 Filmore, Fred, 52
 Floral Avenue
 710, 49

Index

Floto, Carl, 33, 52, 56
 Fort Washington, 1
 Foster, Joseph, 33
 Galloway Family, iv, 21, 50, 52
 House, iii, 21, 22
 Gatch, Hayward, 52
 Gegner, Charles, 52
 Gravelotte (720 Elm), iii, 27, 30, 32, 54
 Harvard Avenue
 311, iv, 51
 Highway, Samuel, 7
 Highlands Family, 7, 14
 House, iii, 14, 16, 17, 18
 Joseph, 21
 William, 7, 14
 Hill, O. M., 52
 Hinkle, 4
 Iuen, James, 27
 Joseph, iii, 27, 29
 Tavern, iii, 27, 29, 33, 41
 Jefferson, Thomas 9,
 Jones Family, 7, 8
 Robert B., 52
 Kemper, James, 6
 Kugler, John, 4
 Leaf, Henry, 10
 Michael, 10, 33
 Little Miami Railroad, iii, iv, 21, 23, 46, 61, 67
 Little Miami River, 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 24, 27, 52, 54
 Longworth, Joseph, 24, 54
 Madison(ville), 12, 2
 McClelland Family, 7
 McGoren, J. R., 52
 Meyers, Charles A., 6
 Miami Avenue, iii, 39
 732, iii, 38
 Miami Purchase, iii, 1, 2, 3, 4
 Milford, 10, 12, 14, 21, 24, 27, 41, 52, 54
 Montauk, iii, 7, 24, 25, 26, 27, 54
 Moore Family, 7, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21
 Moore/Baysore House (115 Red Bird) iii,20
 Morris, Isaac, 6, 7
 New Street, 14, 33
 305, iii, 6, 33, 40
 Northwest Territory, 1
 Oxford Avenue, 54
 302, iii, 46
 313, 48, 49
 Park Avenue
 715, 67

722, 41, 42, 67
 726, 41, 42
 729, 41, 42
 Pattison & Iuen (John B.), iii, 41, 45, 46, 54, 68
 Peebles, E. C., 52
 Presbyterian Church, 6
 Railroad Houses, iii, iv, 41, 47, 48, 49, 50
 Rauscher, E. M., 52
 Reily, John, 12
 Robinson Circus, iii, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39
 Robinson Family, iii, 33, 34, 35, 52
 Round Bottom, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 27, 33
 Rue Family, 7, 54
 Rugby Avenue, 49
 306, 48
 Schumard, Thomas B., 52
 Sections, 1, 2, 27
 Shoemaker, R. M., 24
 Sibley, James W., 33, 41, 51
 St. Clair, General 4
 St. Thomas Episcopal Church, iii, 4, 5, 6, 14, 27,
 41, 67
 Simmons, H. L., 52
 Smith, John, 8, 9, 12, 27, 33
 Smith/Lindell House (1005 Elm), iii, 8, 9
 Stanton Avenue, 33, 54
 206, 49
 301, 48
 505, 49
 600, 48
 Stuntz, Chauncey R. (625 Elm), iv, 41, 52, 53,
 54
 Symmes Purchase, 1
 Symmes, John Cleves, 1
 Taft Family, 14
 Thompson, Enoch, 7
 Tichenor, Jonathan, 6, 7
 Townships, 1, 2
 Traber/Boone, iii, 14, 15
 Traber, Jacob, 33
 Treaty of Greenville, 3
 Turner Family, 14
 Voige, W. H., 52
 Wayne, Anthony, 6, 14
 Williamson, W. E., 52
 Winters, William, 27
 Wooster Pike, iii, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 24, 27, 33,
 41
 601, iii, 15
 610, iii, 13
 701, iii, 29

722, 41, 42
 725, iii, 21, 22
 Zeigler, Town of, 7, 54