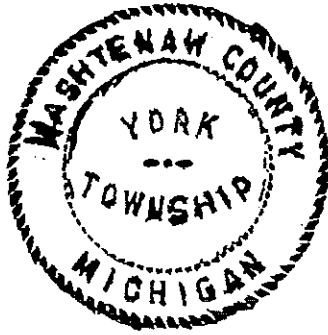


YORK TOWNSHIP - 1834-1976



COMPLIMENTARY COPY

SANDRA RICHARDSON - SUPERVISOR - 1975 . . .

IN RECOGNITION OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'S
BICENTIENNIAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

1776 - 1976



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE YORK TOWNSHIP CITIZENS ASSOCIATION'S BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE EXPRESSES TO EACH OF YOU OUR APPRECIATION FOR CONTRIBUTING INFORMATION AND MATERIAL FOR OUR BOOKLET . . . OUR FIRST EDITION . . . COVERING YORK TOWNSHIP HISTORY, FOR THE ARTIFACTS AND PICTURES OF THE EARLY SETTLERS HOMES, ETC., FOR THE DECORATIONS NEEDED FOR OUR TOWNSHIP HALL AND THE BOUNTIFUL FOODS FOR OUR REFRESHMENT TABLE . . . BUT MOST OF ALL FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME FROM YOUR VERY BUSY DAYS.

HOW WE WISH WE COULD ACKNOWLEDGE EACH ONE OF YOU INDIVIDUALLY . . . BUT BECAUSE OF TIME, SPACE, AND VERY LIMITED FUNDS . . . WE KNOW YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE IN THIS OUR FIRST-TIME EFFORT.

HOWEVER, DUE TO THE VERY SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND EFFORTS GIVEN OUR COMMITTEE BY THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS, WE WOULD BE REMISS IF WE FAILED TO SPECIFICALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THEM HEREIN . . .

JAMES K. RICHARDS . . . SON OF OUR CHAIRMAN E.R. "BUMP" RICHARDS, FOR HIS RESEARCH OF, AND THE WRITTEN REPORT ON, YORK TOWNSHIP HISTORY.

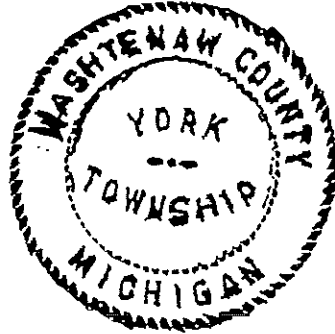
STUART THAYER . . . WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, FOR ATTENDING OUR WORK SESSIONS AND PROVIDING THE NECESSARY INSIGHT AS WELL AS THE ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH SPURRED US ON.

BARBARA AND JOHN STOMMEN . . . STOMMEN PUBLICATIONS FOR THE MEDIA EXPOSURE IN THE MILAN BOOSTER FOR FIVE WEEKS.

PAUL TULL - FOR MEDIA EXPOSURE IN THE SALINE REPORTER.

AND, TO EACH OF YOU FOR ATTENDING OUR OPEN HOUSE ON SUNDAY - OCTOBER 24, 1976 HELD IN RECOGNITION OF THE BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THESE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1776-1976) FOR WITHOUT YOU OUR EFFORTS WOULD HAVE BEEN FRUITLESS.

YORK TOWNSHIP - 1834-1976



IN RECOGNITION OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'S
BICENTIENNIAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION PAGE.....	ii
DEDICATION PAGE.....	iii
YORK TOWNSHIP MAP - 1818.....	1
YORK TOWNSHIP MAP FROM WASHTENAW COUNTY ATLAS - 1874.....	2
A BRIEF HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF YORK TOWNSHIP.....	3 - 7
YORK TOWNSHIP - POPULATION RECORD FROM CENSUS RECORD..... OF 1890 - 1970	8
PICTURES OF EARLY SETTLER'S FARMS AND RESIDENCES IN..... YORK TOWNSHIP	9 - 14

INTRODUCTION

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS THE FIRST PUBLICATION SPECIFICALLY RELATING ONLY TO THE HISTORY OF YORK TOWNSHIP . . . COVERING REPORTS AND REMINISCENCES, FACTS AND FABLES . . . OF OUR EARLY AND CONTINUING HISTORY.

ALTHOUGH THIS IS AN UNSOPHISTICATED EDITION, WE HOPE YOU FIND IT INTERESTING, AWAKENING AN AWARENESS OF OUR HERITAGE, OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF THESE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA . . . CELEBRATING ITS BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY IN THIS YEAR OF 1976 . . . AND INSPIRING OTHERS TO ENHANCE ITS CONTENTS IN FUTURE EDITIONS . . . THUS PRESERVING OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT, AND OUR FUTURE FOR POSTERITY.

YORK TOWNSHIP CITIZEN'S ASSOCIATION
BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

E. P. Richards
(CHAIRMAN)

Jean G. Austin

Nadine Strzyba

Janet H. Hink

DEDICATED TO

YORK TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS - PAST AND PRESENT

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM IN OFFICE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM IN OFFICE</u>
NOAH WOLCOTT	1834	JESSE WARNER	1879
WILLIAM MOORE	1835- 1836	JOHN W. BLAKESLEE	1880- 1882
LYMAN CARVER	1837	ALFRED DAVENPORT	1883- 1897
JACOB COOK	1838- 1839	ARCHIBALD D. McINTYRE	1898- 1901
UZZIEL KANOUSE	1840	EDWARD P. WARNER	1902- 1906
JOHN KANOUSE	1841- 1842	SHERMAN COOK	1907- 1908
LYMAN CARVER	1843- 1848	GEORGE F. RICHARDS	1909- 1912
CALEB MOORE	1849	WILLIAM KELSEY	1913- 1916
JAMES M. KELSEY	1850	JOHN LAWSON	1917- 1932
CALEB MOORE	1851- 1852	HERMAN OELKE	1933- 1948
JAMES M. KELSEY	1853	MRS. HERMAN OELKE	1948- 1949
CALEB MOORE	1854- 1856	THURLOW SANFORD	1949- 1970
H. H. BRINKERHOFF	1857- 1858	CHARLES HAYES	1971- 1974
THOMAS GRAY	1859- 1864	SANDRA RICHARDSON	1975-
PETER COOK	1865- 1872		
JESSE WARNER	1873- 1876		
JOHN W. BLAKESLEE	1877- 1878		

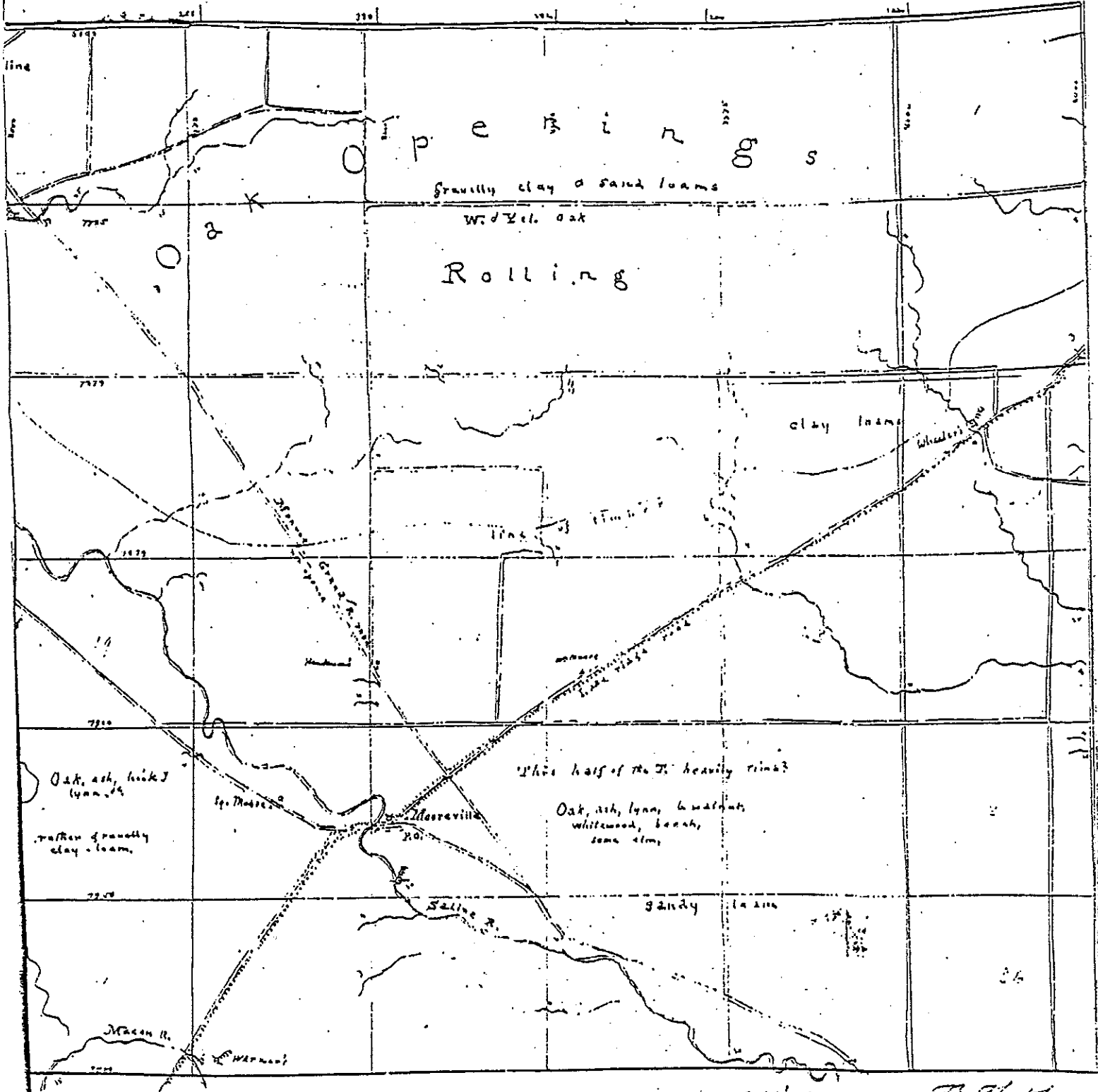
Washington County

Washington Co

Town N 4 South R N 6 East

YORK.

YORK

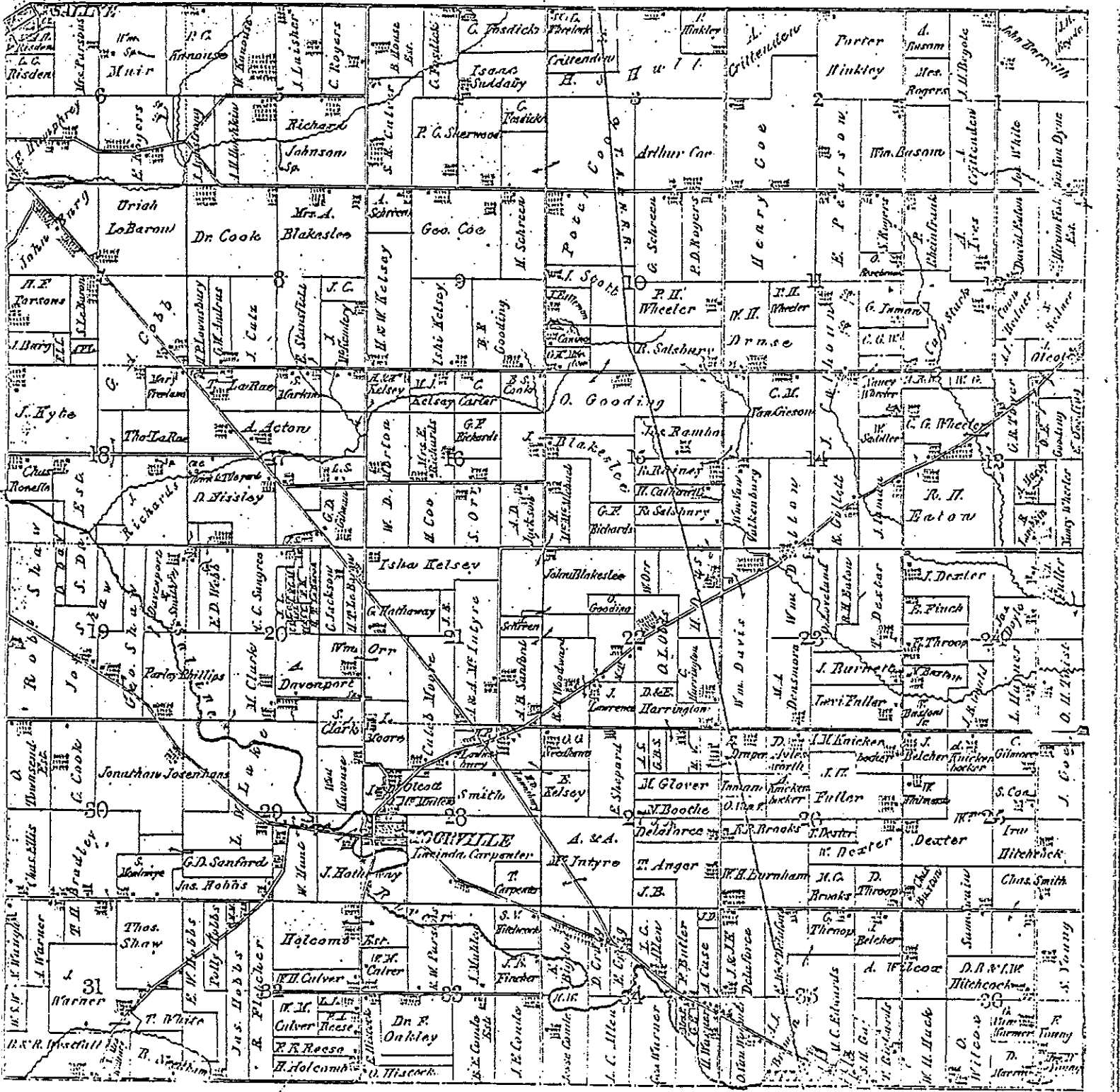


NO. 1000000 IN LAND OFFICE

1818 2/4 3/4

J. B. Fluck

MAP OF YORK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP FOUR SOUTH, RANGE SIX EAST.



R.H. Dowling

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF YORK TOWNSHIP

When chiefs of the Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatome and Wyandot tribes signed the Treaty of Detroit in 1807, the last Indian claims to the lands that would become York Township, were relinquished. It was to be a number of years, however, before the first white settlers began to clear the forests west of the Huron River. Remoteness, the dislocations of the War of 1812, the Financial Panic of 1819, and unfavorable surveyors' reports all served to delay the spread of American civilization into Washtenaw County.

It is safe to assume that occasional hunters and fur traders traversed the land that eventually would become known as York Township. But, it was not until 1823, when Woodruff's Grove, later absorbed by the southward sprawl of Ypsilanti, was established as the first settlement in the County. The following year Ann Arbor, further up the Huron River, was attracting settlers. In 1825 the opening of the Erie Canal provided the impetus for a great westward migration from the State of New York and New England which provided York Township with its early residents and as a result the Township's population would number 1,197 in 1837 . . . the year that Michigan was admitted to statehood.

Until March of 1834, when the organization of York was approved by the Territorial Legislature, its lands were divided between Ypsilanti and Saline Townships. The two easternmost tiers of sections were attached to the former, the remaining four to the latter. Its name was suggested by Representative William Moore and derived from the "YORK STATE" origins of so many of its inhabitants.

In Mooreville, which the previous year had consisted of a single log house, Boaz Lampson presided over a Town Meeting which chose the first Township Officers. Noah Wolcott was elected Supervisor - William Moore - Justice of the Peace - and Othniel Gooding - Clerk. The establishment of Civil Government ratified the existence of the previously-erected benchmarks of westering civilization, the first mill, school and church.

As early as 1827, "land lookers" had ranged the Township, seeking out the most fertile and healthy section. Some were speculators, or their agents, searching out desirable locations which could be resold to late-comers at a price substantially above the uniform government price of \$1.25 per acre. Others intended to settle, bringing their families to

make homes in the wilderness. Not unknown was the man who was both settler and speculator. One of these was Oliver McLouth who, even as he began clearing a York Township farm wrote glowingly to his brother of the profitable prospects of his investments in land on the Kalamazoo River. These pioneers discovered an area almost equally divided between the "oak openings" of the north, and the timbered land south of what rapidly became known as "the ridge", a glacial moraine that extends diagonally across the township from Section 13 south-westerly through Section 31.

A wide variety of hardwoods forested the Township . . . and game was plentiful (see James Fuller ms.). Numerous springs and rivulets traced their way through the woods, and the Saline River meandered across the western and southern portion of the Township.

In August - 1824, the first land entry was made by Friend Whitlock in Section 6. By the following fall, John Gilbert had filed in Sections 5 and 6, Orange Risdon filed in Section 6 and John Butterfield in Section 7.

The first houses - both of logs - were built in Section 7. Although it has not been established who their builders were, they stood on lands later owned by the Parsons and LeBaron families . . . names which date from the period of early settlement. It is a reasonable assumption that the distinction of being the first to build homes in the woods belongs to the forebearers of these two families. One can speculate that they were much like the "small log house" (28 by 18 feet) that Oliver McLouth erected in the northeast part of the Township in 1835. It is unlikely that they were of the more elaborate "double-pen" construction chosen by the family of James Fuller at about the same time. This building consisted of two sections resting on a single fifty foot sill and covered by a single roof, separated by a "dog-trot", or breezeway. (see James Fuller).

By 1826, other land owners in the Township were Millard Ware, Asahel Sawyer, Alpheus Putnam, Aretus Belding, Josiah Dunning, John Walworth and William and James Walworth.

The Chicago Road, though nearly impassable in wet weather, was open as far as Ypsilanti by 1829, and in the next few years permanent settlement began in earnest. The evidence that these were families seeking a home is still to be seen on Township mailboxes. James Miller, Carey Stark and Conrad Redner, were among the first. Jacob Cook was early established on Sections 3 and 10. William Richards immigrated from Nottingham, England in 1830. Humphrey Davenport had taken up land in the southwest corner of the Township, and Othniel Gooding in the Section 15, by 1834.

Other early pioneers were Oscar McLouth, Samuel Bishop, the Shaws, John Parsons, Leander LeBaron, Ephraim Judd, Josiah Hathaway, Lorin, Caleb, and William Moore, Daniel Carpenter, Sheffield Newton, Isaac Clark,

Jesse Warner, William and Elizabeth Druse, Mathew Salisbury, Arthur Coe and the Kelseys.

A later reminiscence of the settlement period recalled the many kindnesses of a Mr. French, a one-legged veteran of the War of 1812, during the times of hardship when land was being cleared and the first crops planted.

Those early days were often, indeed, times of harship. The brutal labor of clearing land with hand tools and oxen, which must be accomplished quickly so that a crop could be planted, took its toll in broken bones, sprains and aching muscles. Until the first harvest . . . the pioneers were forced to depend on their savings, on wild game, fruit and nuts, and on the generosity of their neighbors. Food not grown at home were dearly bought. Oviver McLouth recorded the cost of provisions for man and beast in 1825 . . .

Wheat at a dollar a bushel

Corn at five shillings (about 60¢) a bushel

Pork at six or seven dollars a hundredweight

Still, optimism prevaed, and the will to survive and prosper was strong. McLouth asserted that he and his family, on their frontier clearing, "have had our health better than we ever had it in York State". (See James Fuller Ms. for additional information on these general topics.)

The first sawmill was erected at Mooreville by Isaac Hathaway in 1833, perhaps at the mill site which is recorded just west of Dennison Road on an 1873 map. Soon there was a second, built by Aaron Wheeler on Honey Creek. Wheeler had taken up land occupied in the mid-twenties by Alanson Snow, who was something of a local legend. Several members of Snow's family had been killed by Indians in Huron County, Ohio during the War of 1812 and his animosity toward the "red men" was well-known in the neighborhood. A hunter and woodsman with little inclination toward farming, Snow soon followed the game . . . which disappeared as the number of clearings multiplied . . . and he remained as a subject of tales told before winter bedtimes . . . a silent avenger roaming the snowy woods.

The York Mill, on Spring Brook just south of Saline was put in operation in 1836 by Moses Rider, and a fourth was sawing lumber on Mill Brook by 1838. Together these mills, according to an early settler, produced lumber for much of Washtenaw County.

The Township's first school building was built in Section 18 in 1831. Burtis Hoag furnished all the logs and other materials and was paid \$50.00 for its construction. Washington Morton, who later farmed in Section 16 (probably at the northeast corner of Moon and Jewell Roads) was retained as school master at a salary of \$12.00 per month.

James Fuller has left a description of the original Tamarack School, in another part of the Township, which might well have applied to this first one. (See James Fuller ms.)

The first church formed was a Baptist fellowship organized at Mooreville in 1831. Later the congregation relocated at the site of the present York Baptist Church at the corner of Platt and Stony Creek Roads. By 1881 there were five churches in Mooreville alone.

As the farms of York were cleared and became increasingly productive, there was accelerated competition between Mooreville and Milan for the business of the surrounding countryside. Milan, names for Milan Township in adjoining Monroe County, had lagged behind, although the Township's first store had been established there in 1835 by Elijah Ellis.

Mooreville vied for predominance as the Township's major trading, civic, and social center, although Milan was rapidly gaining advantage. A Washtenaw County history published in 1881 catalogued the services offered by the two hamlets.

IN MOOREVILLE . . . there were two stores, a hotel, a steam sawmill, two blacksmith shops, a wagon shop, Alfred Davenport's cheese factory, the aforementioned five churches, and a "fine new school building".

MILAN . . . boasted of four dry goods stores, one grocery, one hardware, one drug store, two milinery stores, two wagon shops, two blacksmiths, two hotels and a church.

One resists speculations about Mooreville's view of the seeming triumph of commercialism over religion in her down-river rival. The crucial factor in the outcome of this rivalry was one which came into plan countless times in late-nineteenth century America . . . the coming of the railroad.

The difference between prosperity and decay lay in the railroad's builder's choice of routes. According to a descendant of an early Milan family, the Toledo, Ann Arbor and Grand Trunk Railroad was originally surveyed through Mooreville. However, Milan boosters, by persuading railroad officials to change their plans, hitched their wagon to the Twentieth-Century Star. The Ann Arbor Railroad was completed in May of 1878. Two years later, the Detroit and Butler Railroad, which would become a part of the Wabash system, crossed the southeast corner of the Township. Its junction with the Ann Arbor Railroad at Milan cemented the village's future as a shipping center.

By the early 1900's there were seven doctors practicing in Milan and seven groceries in the "downtown" area. Tolan's Hotel occupied the building

which later became Moore and Minto's store. Charlie Gauntlett owned a race track and ball diamond west of the Ann Arbor Railroad tracks and north of Main Street, which was a center of activity for the sporting crowd.

A Generator, at Wiley Lampkin's brick yard, furnished electrical power for a number of Milan residents long before Detroit Edison made electricity generally available. Not incorporated as a village until 1885, by 1906 Milan was the second largest village in Washtenaw County.

The railroad brought a least temporary expansion to other locations in the Township of York. A post office and a grain elevator erected by the Cook family were established at "Urania Station" where the Ann Arbor Railroad passes through Section 3. Some three miles further south, near the present York Baptist Church, another post office operated at the "Nora" stop.

The railroad also increased the prosperity of the surrounding country-side, providing access to the Nation's markets, for Township farmers. Wheat, wool, apples and pork were shipped in large quantities from Milan.

In 1880, the Township's 192 farms averaged 112 acres, and the 1879 corn crop averaged over 67 bushels per acre, making York Township one of the most productive townships in the State of Michigan.

There is still much more York Township history to be recorded . . . both past and present . . . the effect on its growth due to periods of depression throughout the United States . . . wars, that always have great impact on all communities, industrial revolution, that definitely tempers progress wherever its touch is felt. It is hoped that this booklet will be updated in order to have as complete a written history of York Township as possible.

With the advent of the Federal Correctional Institution, various industrial facilities in bordering communities, residential growth was stimulated. And, in 1972, during the Supervisorship of Charles Hayes, York Township constructed its new Township Hall on Stony Creek Road . . . serving not only its officials but its residents for social needs as well.

York Township . . . its future looks bright . . . its potential growth is promising . . . its past gives us all a heritage of which we can be proud.

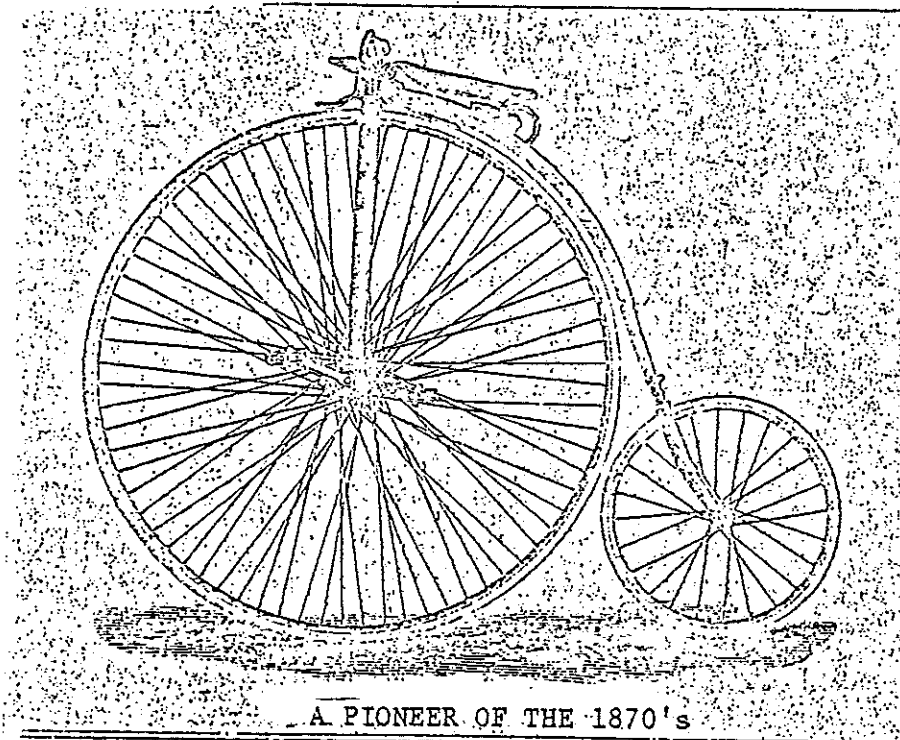
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YORK TOWNSHIP

POPULATION RECORD 1890 - 1970

1890	1,323	1930	1,104
1900	1,246	*1940	5,268
1910	1,129	*1950	6,870
1920	1,052	1960	7,006
		1970	6,217

* - THESE FIGURES REFLECT THE IMPACT OF THE YPSILANTI STATE HOSPITAL AND THE FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, RESPECTIVELY



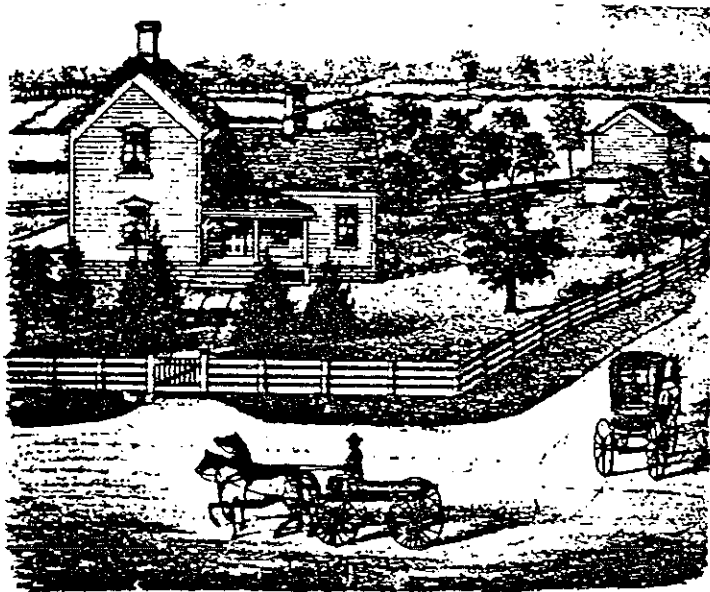
PICTURES

OF

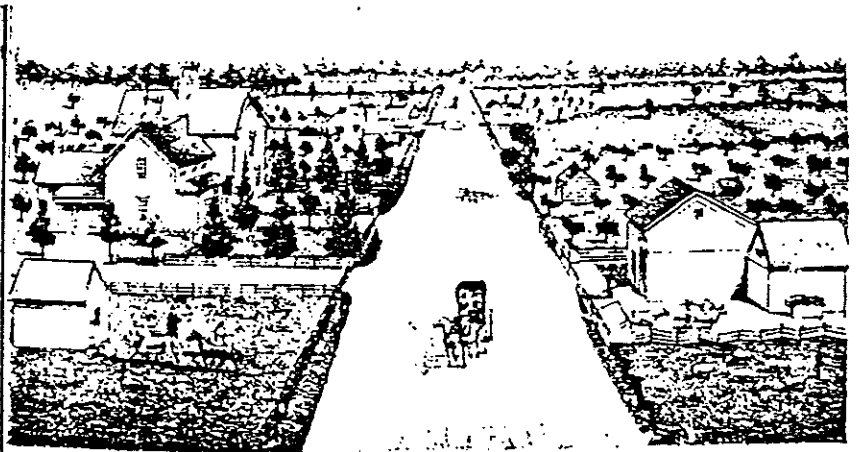
EARLY SETTLER'S FARMS AND RESIDENCES

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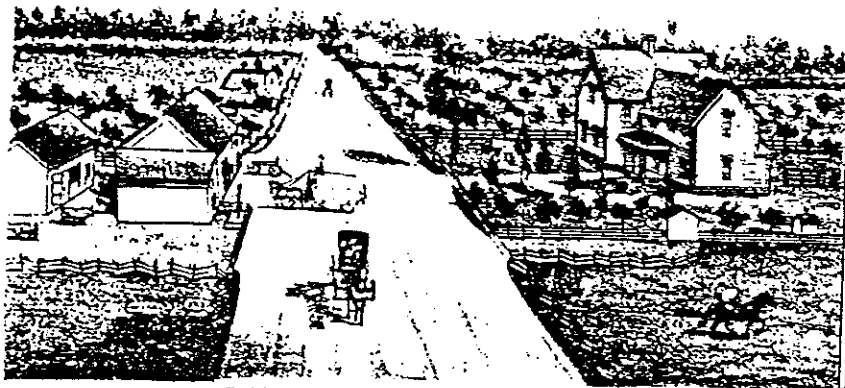
YORK TOWNSHIP



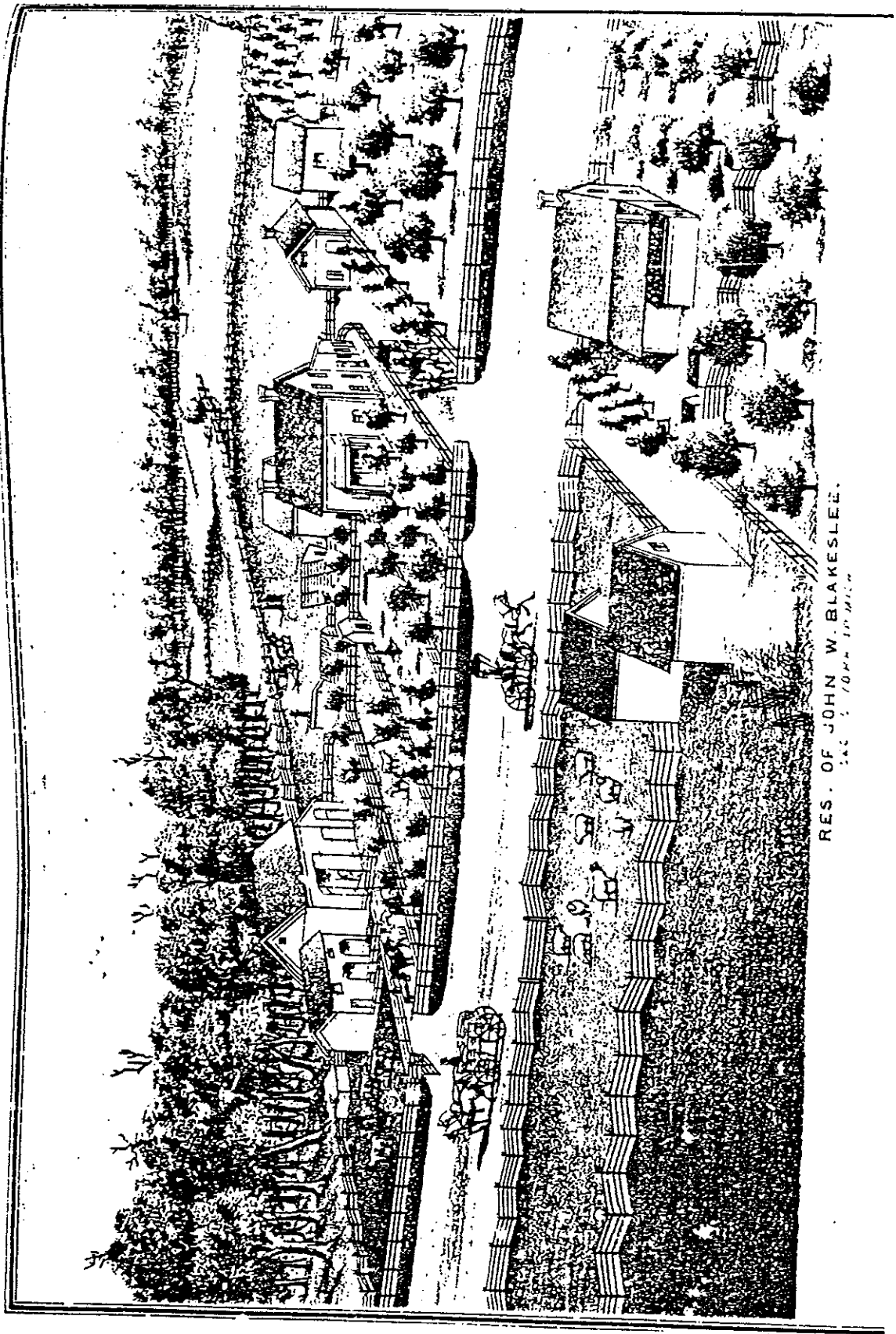
RES. OF JUSTUS CORWIN, SEC 19 YORK TP MICH.



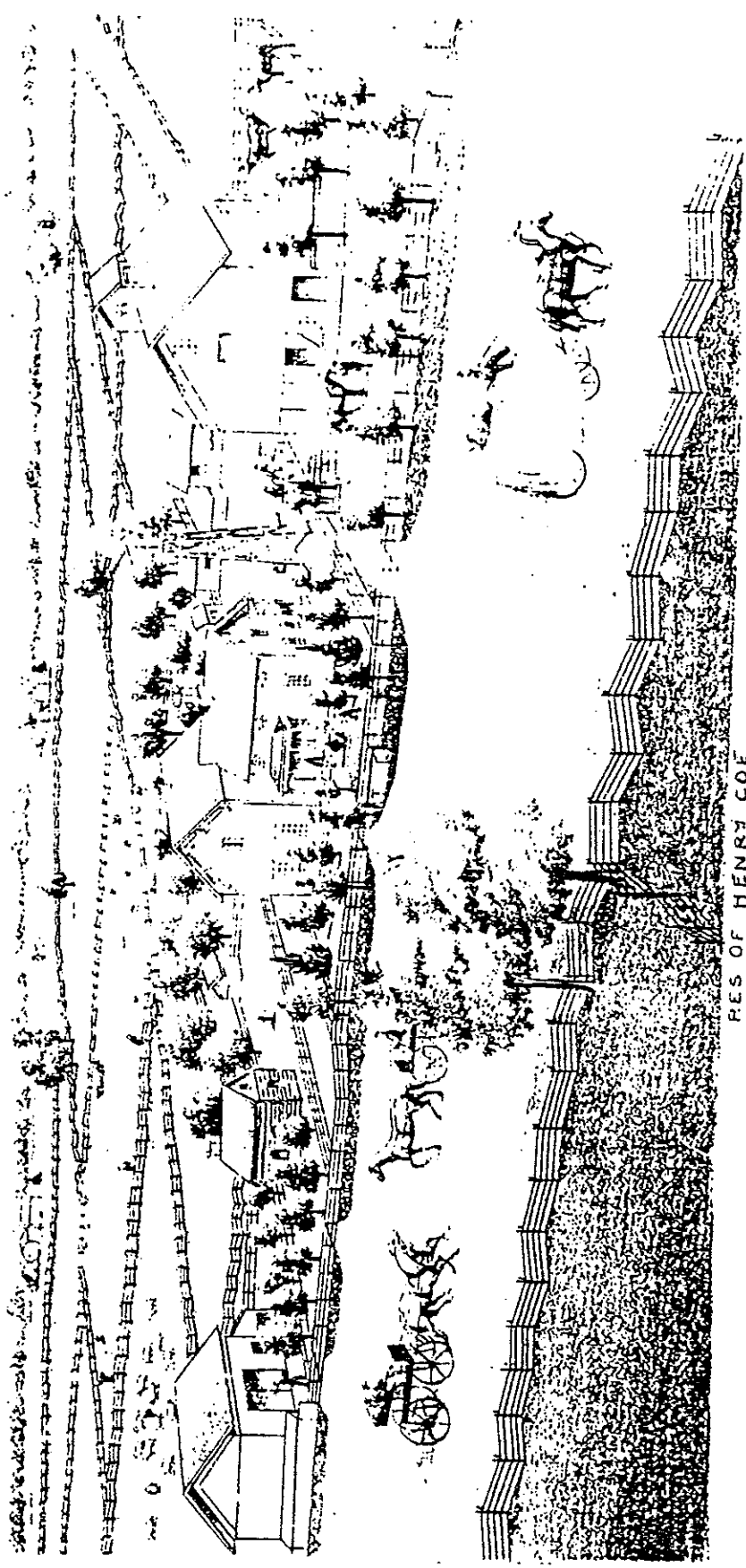
RES. OF WM. DEXTER,
SEC 26 YORK TP MICH.



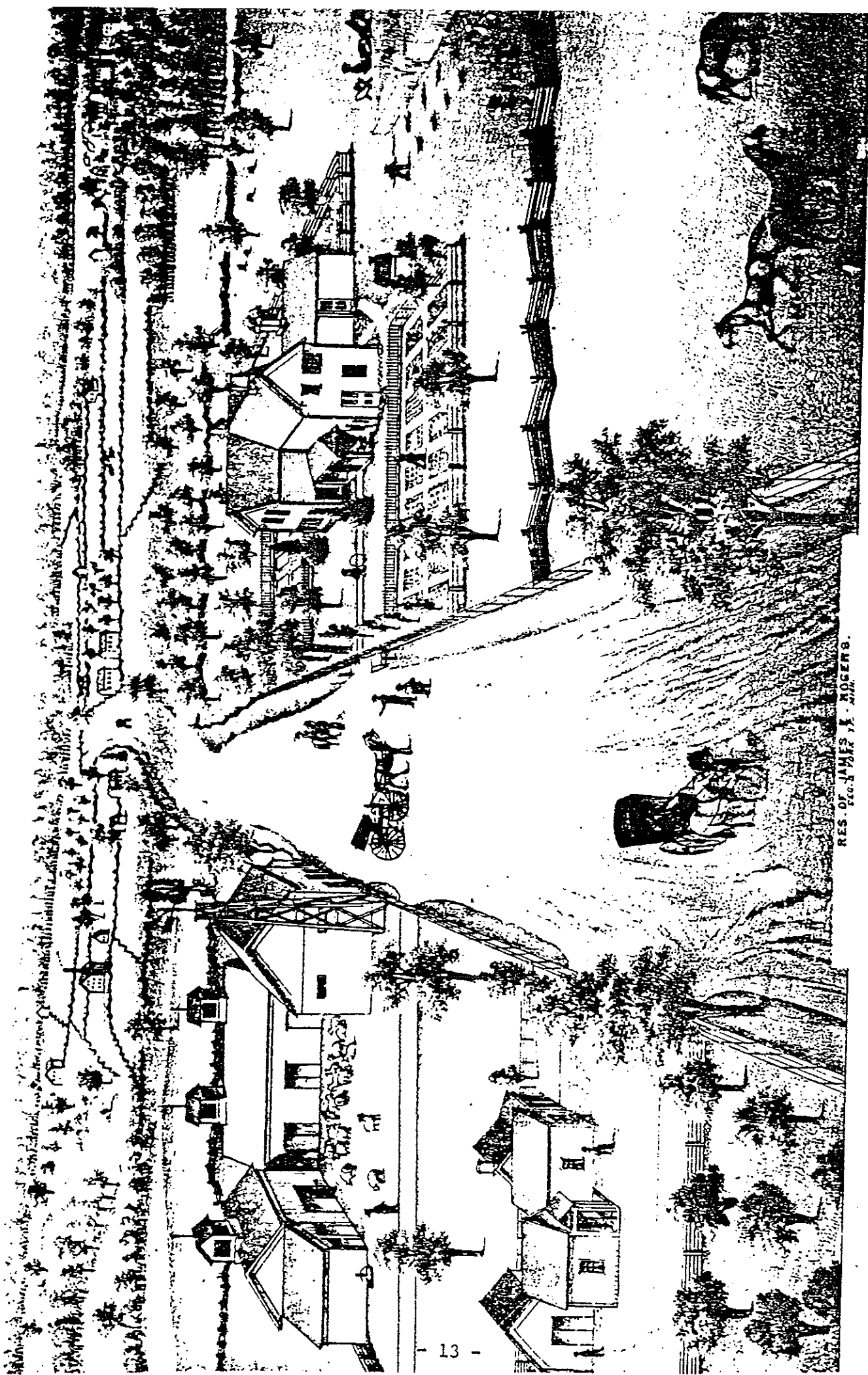
RES. OF THOS. H. FULLER,
SEC 24 YORK TP MICH.



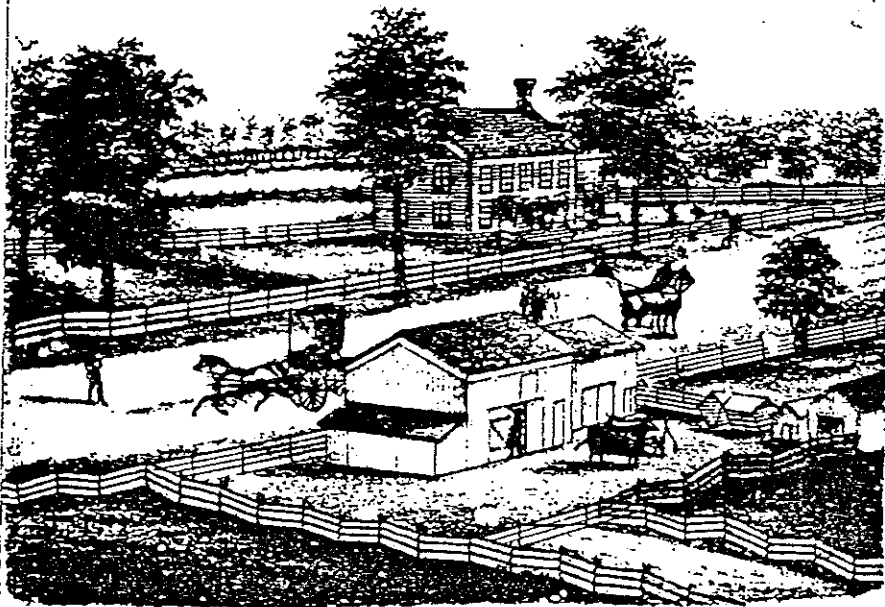
RES. OF JOHN W. BLAKESLEE.
SAC. 1, 10th 10th 10th



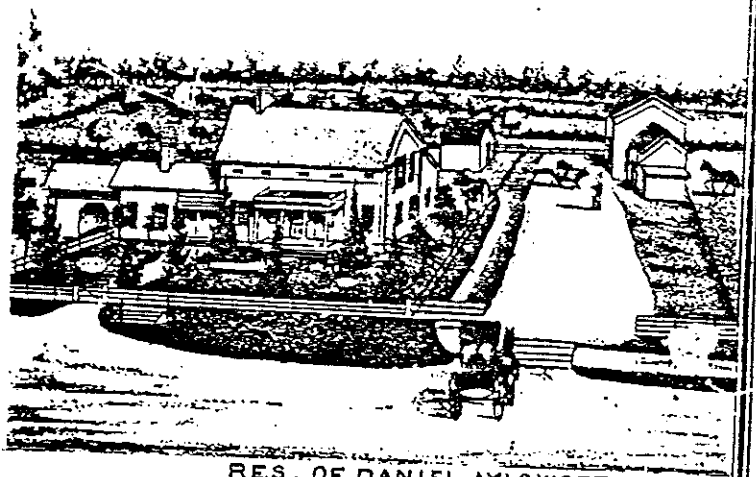
RES. OF HENRY COE.



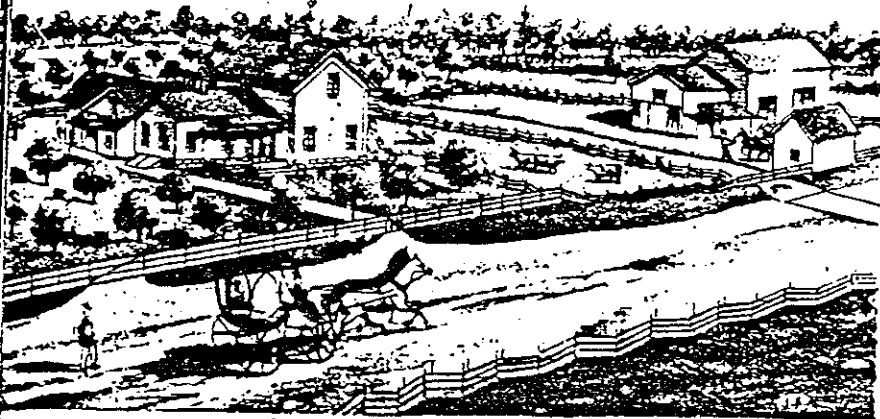
RES. OF JAMES E. ROGERS.
DEC. 2 1862



RES. OF WM. BASOM, SEC. 2 YORK TWP MICH



RES. OF DANIEL AYLSWORTH,
SEC. 16 YORK TWP MICH.



RES. OF J. U. FULLER,
SEC. 16 YORK TWP MICH

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN
OUR 1976 CELEBRATION . . . YOUR
PRESENCE AND YOUR PURCHASE OF
THIS BOOKLET HAS CONTRIBUTED TO
ITS SUCCESS.

WE WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY
TO EXTEND TO YOU AN INVITATION
TO JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR MEETINGS
AND, HOPEFULLY, FROM THIS ATTEND-
ANCE YOU WILL WANT TO BECOME AN
ACTIVE MEMBER OF OUR GROUP . . .

YORK TOWNSHIP CITIZEN'S
ASSOCIATION