

Historic Houses

by Margaret Murawski

Like many a new homeowner, Walter Beach wasn't quite satisfied with his house at 35 Summit St., Ypsilanti.

He and his wife and five children moved into the house in 1865, coming to Ypsilanti from Almont, Mich.

When the Beaches lived in Almont, Walter had raised Company F of the 10th Michigan Infantry, and gone off to fight in the Civil War.

At the end of the war, Walter, who had become a captain, decided that instead of returning to Almont, he would rather live in Ypsilanti.

The house he chose for his family had originally been built about 1850, but had been added to over the years. Since the Beaches eventually had eight children, they undoubtedly added a few rooms to the house, themselves.

But the most delightful changes

made by the Beach family were on the outside of the house. The long

veranda and the elaborate wooden "gingerbread" which Beach added to the front of the house were 19th century status symbols, and brought the house up to date.

The wide, comfortable porch must have had a wicker swing, where Beach's daughter, Sarah Kate, could sit when she entertained callers.

One of the most frequent gentlemen callers was Frank Joslyn, a young law student, who had also come back from the Civil War a few years earlier.

In 1871 Sarah Kate and Frank were married in St. Luke's Episcopal Church

also elected justice of the peace.

Finally in 1891 he and Sarah Kate decided to move to Muskegon, and the house was sold by the Beach family to Lizzie McLenahan, wife of a professor of penmanship at Cleary College. Since then the house has had many owners and is now an apartment building.



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But Sarah Kate's courtship had not been a completely happy time. In 1870, her mother had died shortly after the birth of a son. So, most of the burden of taking care of the motherless youngsters fell on young Sarah Kate.

After she and Frank were married, they moved into the Summit St. house and helped supervise her brothers and sisters.

Walter Beach wasn't happy there and returned to Connecticut where he married Maria Skinner. After a few years, he returned to Ypsilanti, but never made the house on Summit St. his home again.

He and his bride lived at 116 Maple St., and he took up his old business of selling insurance.

Besides raising her brothers and sisters, Sarah Kate now had three children of her own to take care of. Her husband, Frank, had entered politics and was elected city clerk.

Being popular with the voters, he held that job for 17 years, and was

also elected justice of the peace

Finally in 1891 he and Sarah decided to move to Muskegon. The house was sold by the family to Lizzie McLenahan, wife of a professor of penmanship at C College. Since then the house had many owners and is now an apartment building.