

THE STORY OF THE HOUSE AT 35 SOUTH SUMMIT STREET

This large, frame structure, situated well back from the street on an ample lot, is a prime Ypsilanti example today, of a style of architecture widely popular in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, in the eastern half of the United States. Late Queen Anne, Neo-Jacobean, Edwardian Baroque- not label quite fits it. The steeply turreted tower, many gables, the long veranda across the front, with a smaller one above it, the extensive wooden railings combined with an abundance of tastefully executed wooden trimmings - and the small porte cochere on the south end of the house- all cast an aura of nineteenth century middleclass gentility over the place.

Actually, the house is much older than its exterior lines indicate. And, although the complexities of its architectural lines and intricacies of its trim exemplify the period in which they were added to the house, they also are marvellously typical of its complex history.

The house is situated on a plot of ground 212 feet deep, with a frontage of 175 feet on the east side of Summit Street. The land lies in French Claim 691, near the boundary line between French Claims 690 and 691. June 11, 1811, The United States patented to Romaine La Chambre, 622 acres as French Claim 691. Passing from owner to owner, acreage was gradually reduced. By 1840, William Cross and Mary his wife, deeded 3 acres to John R. Walker, from the 100 acres they had purchased from Jason Cross. During that same year, John Walker gave a Warranty Deed for one acre of his land to Abel Thompson. A minor complexity in the Abstract appears in 1841 when William and Mary Cross gave a Warranty Deed to Abel Thompson for a narrow strip of land approximating 8/100 of an acre in size. From May 1841, until the turn of the century, it is this land of one and 8/100 acres that changes hands.

Late in November 1842, Abel Thompson gave a Warranty Deed to Damon Hatch for this one and 8/100 acres. At the same time, Damon Hatch gave a mortgage contract to Abel Thompson for \$695.00. In 1845, Mr. Thompson assigned this mortgage to three individuals. One of these three died and the mortgage was in default. The property title went thru Chancery and Circuit Court. Between 1845 and 1852, at least nine people are involved in the story of the property. Because of the modest sums of money mentioned in the transactions, we are safe in assuming there was a small structure on the property.

On September 25, 1852, Abram A. Havens was given a Warranty Deed to the property and mortgaged it for \$500.00. On September 15, 1855, Abram A. Havens and Lau Jane his wife, gave a Warranty Deed to Ann E. Dolbier for the property. On the same date, Ann Elizabeth Dolbier and John Dolbier, gave a mortgage for \$1400.00 to Abram A. Havens. It is assumed that sometime prior to the Dolbier purchase, a good sized house was built. Study of the 1856 detail map of Ypsilanti verifies that J. Dolbier is owner of a clearly shown square structure on the site. Little is known about the Dolbiers. J. Dolbier is listed as one of the Trustees in the Baptist Church by Rev. G. L. Foster in his 1857 publication; "Past of Ypsilanti".

On December 4, 1858, the Dolbiers gave a Warranty Deed for the property to Albert M. Bartholomew. In the Ypsilanti Historical Archives, there is a hand drawn map of Ypsilanti made in 1859 by C.S. Woodard. We can see the outlines of the Bartholomews holdings on the east side of Summit Street, with the lines of a structure well delineated. Even more fortunate for this piece of research, there are sketches of dwellings and public buildings which form a frame around the map. One of these sketches is an excellent drawing of the residence of A. M. Bartholomew. It has a look of distinction, even though quite different from the house as it appears now. One can see the basic structure to which, at various times, was added all the baroque architectural appendages we see today.

Our first Ypsilanti City Directory, published in 1860, lists Albert M. Bartholomew, farmer, with his residence on Summit Street. An addition to the city of Ypsilanti, platted in the 1850's was called Hawkins and Bartholomew's Addition. It was land south of old Chicago Avenue and west of Summit Street, and included First, Second and Third (sic) Avenues. It is assumed that this Addition was part of Albert Bartholomew's farm holdings since the Addition bears his name.

Albert M. Bartholomew and Amanda, his wife, sold their Summit Street home to Stephen B. Morse on October 21, 1863. A new name is introduced into our story. The Morse name appears often in the old Ypsilanti records, but so far, we have no clear picture of the man or his family. He and his wife Julia, were the parents of two daughters, and we know they owned and occupied at least three rather large and imposing structures during the thirty or more years that they lived in Ypsilanti. Mr. Morse seemed to have great interest in real estate investments as his name appears on one of the Additions to the City of Ypsilanti and on other property within the City. His largest investment in improved property was perhaps, was when he bought the Larzalere Block.

The old three story brick building, on the southwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Washington Street, was built in the late 1840's by Solomon Y. Larzalere and was known as the Larzalere Block. However, when Mr. Morse bought the building it became known as the Morse Block. He also built the brick two story building on South Washington Street, behind the Morse Block, and facing on Washington.

Some information can be gleaned from the last will of Mr. Morse which appears in the Abstract on the property at 214 North Huron Street (a former owner, Mrs. Edgar B. Drury, was a Morse Daughter).

In the Ypsilanti Commercial for Friday, April 7, 1865, we find the following item under " Real Estate Sales" S. B. Morse residence on Summit Street to Beach Almont (sic), \$6,300.00 The item from the Commercial is not clear until we refer to the Abstract for the property. On March 22, 1865, Stephen B. Morse and wife Julia, gave a Warranty Deed to Walter P. Beach. There is a long article on Captian Walter Phelps Beach in the Portrait and Biographical Album of Washtenaw County published in 1891. Walter P. Beach was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1822 where he married Martha Ann Stacy in 1845. Soon after their marriage, they went to Almont, Michigan. It was in Almont, in 1861, that he had raised Company F. of the 10th Michigan Infantry and became its Captain.

During the closing months of the Civil War, Captain Beach, with his wife and five surviving children, came to Ypsilanti to live. Why they moved from Almont to Ypsilanti we do not know; two conjectures can be made, however; Both Byron and Sullivan Cutcheon were prominent residents of Ypsilanti. Byron Cutcheon had graduated from the Union Seminary in Ypsilanti and had gone on to the University of Michigan to graduate in 1861. He had just returned to the Seminary as a teacher when the war broke out. He assisted in raising a company in the Twentieth Infantry and was a Captain by September of 1862. Serving in the field during the war, he had been breveted Brigadier General of Volunteers by March 1865. He returned to the Ypsilanti Seminary to teach. His brother, Sullivan Cutcheon, a former teacher at the Seminary, was already practicing law in Ypsilanti and had served with distinction in the Michigan Legislature during the war years. The Ypsilanti Seminary was in a period of burgeoning growth and ever widening reputation. Families were moving into the area to take advantage of the educational opportunities afforded both the Seminary and the State Normal School, amongst these were former soldiers with their families.

Captain and Mrs. Beach had three more children after moving to Ypsilanti, Their youngest child George Skinner Beach, was born in December 1870. The next year in June, their second Daughter, Sarah Kate, was married to Frank Joslyn in St. Luke's Episcopal Church. This marriage is important to our story of the house at 35 S. Summit St.

The Ypsilanti City Directory for 1873-1874, lists Walter P. Beach as an Insurance Agent and his residence is given as 17 Summit Street So. (this was the old number) However, Martha Beach died on December 27, 1874. Her obituary appearing in the Ypsilanti Commercial paid tribute to her as a loving and devoted wife and mother and as a hard working member of St. Luke's Church. After the death of his wife, Walter Beach left Ypsilanti, There is a record of his marriage to his cousin, Maria C. Skinner in 1876 at Hartford, Connecticut. When he returned to Ypsilanti, he opened an Insurance Office at 48 E. Cross St. and lived at 116 Maple St. where he died in 1896.

Frank Joslyn and Kate Beach Joslyn took up their residence at the Summit St. address for we find them listed at 17 Summit St. S., until 1891 when they moved to Muskegon for six years. We believe that Kate's younger brothers and sisters lived out their youthful years in the Summit Street house. The Joslyns also had a son of their own. Walter B., born in 1875 and twin daughters, Kate B. and Fannie B., born in 1881. Frank Joslyn's biography appears in the Past and Present of Washtenaw County (published in 1906). He had seen service in the Civil War in two different Michigan Cavalry units and one of the Infantry units. He never resumed his formal education at the University of Michigan, which had been interrupted by the War, but had "read law" in his father's law office, Joslyn (Cauncey) and Blodgett and was admitted to the bar in 1881.