

# YPSILANTI GLEANINGS

## PAST SCENES and OLD TIMES

YPSILANTI HISTORICAL SOCIETY~ PUBLICATION~



Ypsilanti Historical Museum  
~ 220 N. Huron Street ~

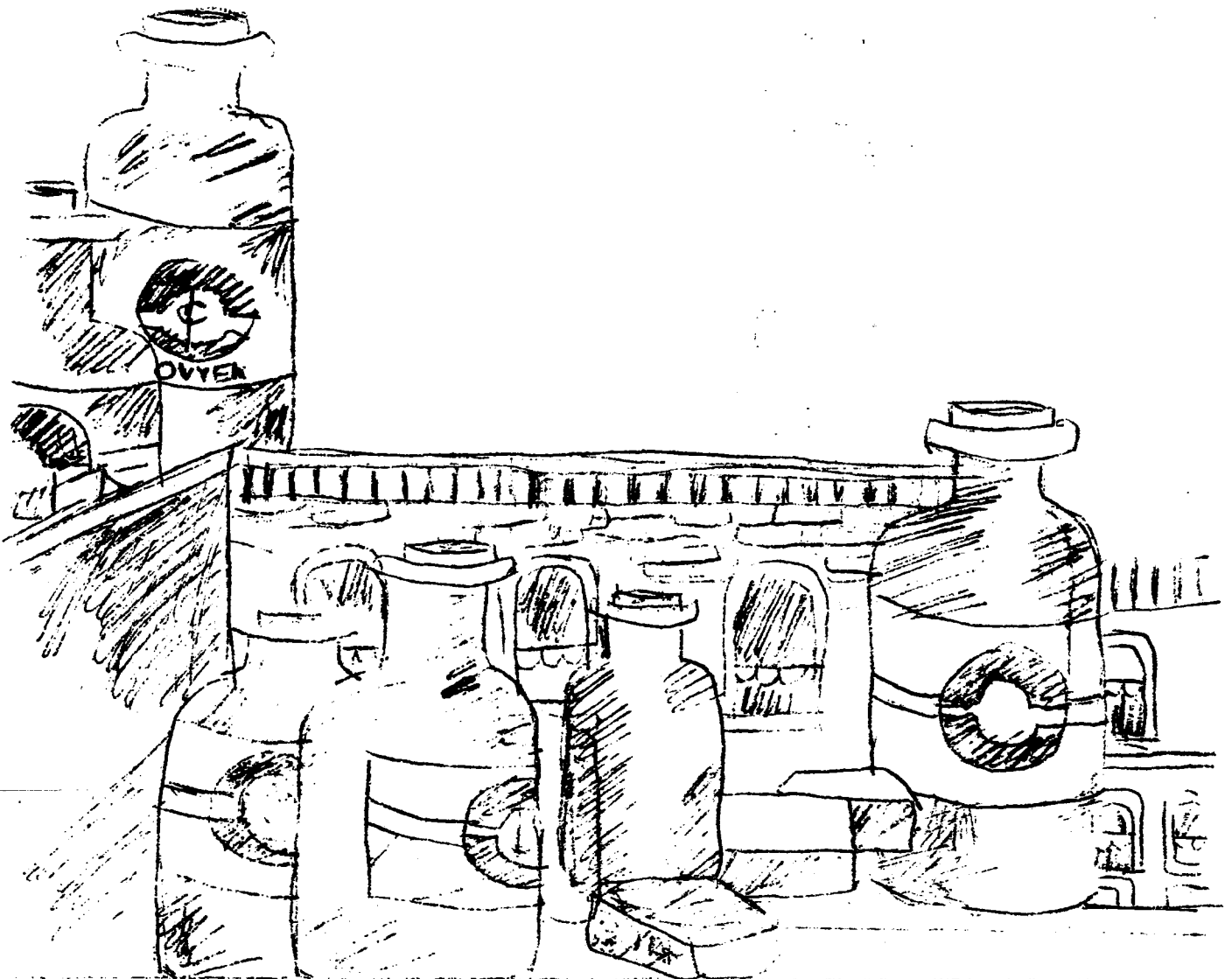
FEBRUARY 1973

Ypsilanti's Mineral Water Sanitariums  
Recent Acquisitions  
News From The Museum

Ypsilanti Historical Museum

Ypsilanti City Museum  
220 N. Huron Street  
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

YPSILANTI HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER  
FEBRUARY 1973

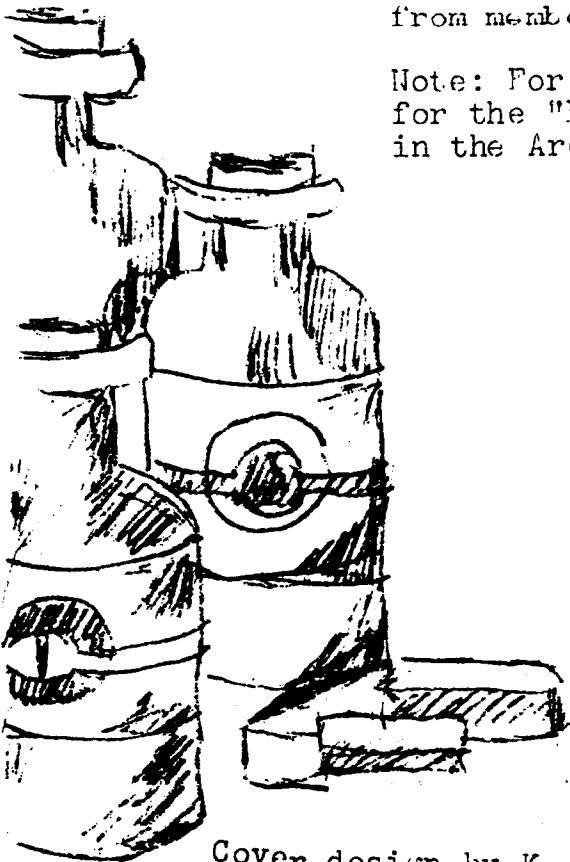


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The "Newsletter" always welcomes articles  
from members of the Society.

Note: For the most part the research material  
for the "Mineral Well" article was all found  
in the Archives of the Museum.



Cover design by K. I. Disbrow.

## YPSILANTI'S MINERAL WATER SANITARIUMS

Between the years of 1880 and 1917 there were two successful Mineral Water Sanitariums in our city, each supplied with mineral water from local wells. In an article in The Ypsilanti Commercial of December 15, 1883, entitled: "Ypsilanti, a Review of the City and Its Industries", we read:

...The Ypsilanti Paper Company (1) completed a well on their premises for the purpose of obtaining a supply of pure water for use in the manufacture of paper. The well reached a depth of nearly 800 feet, when they struck a vein of water that had a peculiar taste and was acknowledged to possess some medical properties. The real value of the water was not known until several very remarkable cures of cancer, rheumatism and other kindred diseases, could be traced to the effects of the water. The reputation of this mineral water spread very rapidly, and hundreds of our citizens can testify as to its beneficial effects. It became the one theme of conversation on our streets, and the demand for treatment from this water became more and more apparent every day. Our citizens became interested in the matter, and, seeing it would be a great addition to the city, offered a donation of \$5,000 to any one who would start a suitable establishment where persons suffering from disease could receive treatment from this water. After due consideration the proposition was accepted by George Moorman (2) and Clark Cornwell (3). These gentlemen began the erection of a building on the eighth of last May. They have pushed its construction as fast as weather would permit. It will be ready for occupancy about the first of January, and when finished, be the finest building in this city...

In the archives of the City Museum we have the original invitation to the opening of the Ypsilanti Mineral Bath House, (Huron n. of Congress (Michigan)). There were speeches given, music provided by the Ypsilanti Quartet Club and refreshments were served by the Ladies' Library Association. On January 12, 1884, The Ypsilanti Commercial carried a report of the

opening ceremonies. The speeches were praised, the Ladies' of the Library Association were congratulated on the refreshments and it was proudly noted that a reporter from The Chicago Times covered the event for his paper.

Six months later Tubal Cain Owen (4) announced that he, too, had a mineral well and claimed that his "waters" had even more curative powers than that of the Cornwell-Moorman well. The fact that frequent articles concerning the mineral wells appeared in The Ypsilanti Commercial seems to point up the fact that the townspeople, particularly the business men and landlords were keenly interested in the success of the Sanitariums. For instance, on July 26, 1884, there appears yet another article, entitled, "The Mineral Wells".

...These wells are rendering Ypsilanti famous the world over. The healing waters flowing free from these wells seem destined to be an untold blessing to affected humanity...Ypsilanti has already come to be the center of attraction for the halt, the lame and the blind, the palsied and paralytics. It is by no means a crippled city, but a city of cripples. The cry is every day, 'still they come.' Let them Come!! The Hawkins House (5), the Follette House (6), the Barton (7), and all the other hotels and numerous nice boarding houses are full. Ere another season a mammoth hotel may be in the process of erection.

About this same time the paper started listing the names of those registering at the Sanitariums. Helen McAndrew (8) had water from the Owen well piped to her "Rest for the Weary" establishment on South Huron Street. The editor of the paper proudly called especial attention to the names of "guests" of the Sanitariums who came from outside the state.

Tubal Cain Owen, the owner of the Forest Avenue Mineral Well, was not only a good business man but he was a wonderful promoter of his products. He erected a tall building over his derrick and in it established a factory for making soap, ("Sapon"), salts, ointments and other products of the well besides bottling hundreds of bottles and barrels of the mineral water, which he names "Atlantis", the name being in black lettering that reached from the ground to the top of the building. His charged mineral water he called "Paragon". He had various brochures prepared for the purpose of advertising his products and from one entitled, "Nature's Remedy; Natural Mineral Water From the Owen Mineral Well at Ypsilanti, Michigan and the DISEASES IT WILL CURE together with Directions for Treatment"- we read:

TO THE PUBLIC

The waters of the Owen Mineral Well is on the market to fulfill its errand of mercy, and we wish every one to know just exactly what he is using, that he may use it intelligently and rationally. We have no myths nor Indian legends to relate to appeal to the public's credulity. We sank our well on scientific principles in search of HEALING WATERS. We use the most approved modern machinery; we believe that waters of untold value to suffering humanity were below us, and we wanted to bring them to the light of day and utilize them for their legitimate purposes. Our expectations were high, and we believe they have been fully realized. We base the claims for our water upon the medicinal value of its mineral salts as demonstrated by the actual experience and testimony of the highest authorities.

In the same brochure the treatment of cancer was outlined as follows:

The water must be taken freely, three or four glasses a day, no matter how nauseating it may be. Sponge the entire body twice a day with moderately warmed water. Apply to the affected part thick cloths saturated with the water at its natural temperature, renewing them as

often as they become at all dry. After the disease shows signs of yielding, by no means cease the treatment, but continue it faithfully until the cancer is entirely healed. Beside apply the water by means of the cloths before mentioned, the diseased part should be bathed freely and frequently with the water. We cannot impress too strongly upon the mind of the patient, the absolute necessity of drinking freely of the water...

The cost of the Owen Mineral Water was as follows:

Per barrell	\$8.00	Pints, per doz.	\$3.00
per half barrel	4.50	Quarts, per doz.	5.00
10 gallon kegs	3.25		

In jugs, five gallons and under the water will be sold at the uniform price of twenty cents per gallon, and ten cents per gallon for package.

In yet another Owen brochure are listed testimonials from those cured plus a list of local people who claimed cures and the ailments of which they were cured are also listed.

Of course, the Ypsilanti Sanitarium (Occidental Hotel) also had its brochure. It was lavishly illustrated with pictures of the building and of its various rooms. The introduction to its brochure reads as follows:

#### THE YPSILANTI SANITARIUM

Was designed especially for the rational treatment of cases which require the constant attention of competent physicians and trained nurses. The natural advantages of Ypsilanti, viz.; High altitude, picturesque wooded country, and what is of most importance, The Ypsilanti Mineral Springs, make it especially adapted for a health resort.

The thorough equipment of its laboratories for research and study and its complete departments for the treatment of various diseases make it particularly desirable for cases that cannot practically be treated at home.

Experienced physicians and professional nurses are in constant attendance.

The Sanitarium will maintain perfectly equipped departments... From all boat lines touching Detroit, it is but a short trip. It is on the main line of the Michigan Central R.R., 45 minutes' ride from Detroit

and a little over 6 hours ride from Chicago. It is the eastern terminus of the Ypsilanti branch of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern R.R. and its connecting lines viz. the Detroit, Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor trolley lines. From Ann Arbor on the trolley line it is 30 minutes and from Detroit 1 hour and 30 minutes distant. On the Wabash R.R. Ypsilanti may be reached via. Belleville...

The interesting question is, why did Ypsilanti's flourishing and comparatively well known sanitariums close? An article in the Ypsilanti Press for September 9th, 1945, tells us that a Mr. J.M. Chidister ran the Occidental Hotel and Spa for the Cornwell-Moorman group during its first years of existence. Patronage declined and the spa was closed for a time.

About 1902, however, the mineral industry was revived by Dr. C. C. Yemans, prominent Detroit physician and long time professor in the Detroit College of Medicine. He repaired the well casing, restored the baths and opened part of the old hotel. Hospital equipment was installed and rooms were renovated and furnished for patients. Old students of Dr. Yemans sent patients from all over the country and business flourished. The Hospital, long needed here was filled. However, the hotel part, separately operated was carelessly kept. Patients were admitted without Dr. Yeman's approval and neted too many dt. victims. Their yells annoyed other patients and Mrs. Yemans. That appeared to be the last straw and Dr. Yemans retired. His successor, a young man whose chief interest was in breeding fancy dogs at Mt. Clemens, spent too little time here and the whole concern soon collapsed. About the time of World War One, Tracy Towner (9), Bert Moorman (10), and others again opened the well and the baths with Dr. G. F. Clarke, Bay City, in charge. There were patients but not enough for profit and new trouble appeared when the well casing started to collapse. The cost of 220 feet of casing was considered prohibitive, and again Ypsilanti's chance of increased income and mineral water fame went glimmering...

On the decline of the Owen Mineral Sanitarium, operated by



Dr. M. S. Hall, the same article states:

...To utilize the water baths, Dr. M.S. Hall put up a bath house, next each of 510 W. Forest Avenue, about two blocks from the well and fitted up the adjoining residence for a hotel. He had a large patronage for several years and amazing cures for many different diseases were reported. About 1890 he sold the buildings to Dr. O.E. Pratt, but he because of advanced age, finally closed it and sold the buildings for residences.

After Mr. Owen's death, his son Eber, continued for many years to ship quantities of the Owen water in bulk to Chicago and Boston in response to a steady demand...

In the closing paragraph of the same article the writer attempts to explain the decline and failure of the spas thusly:-

...Just why Ypsilanti's mineral water, equal in medicinal properties to other popular resorts, failed to become a permanent municipal asset seems unexplainable. Opinions of older residents brings out two possible factors.

1. Indifference of management including too frequently insufficient regard for comfort and entertainment of patients;
2. Determination on the part of several of the more wealthy and conservative residents that Ypsilanti should remain a quiet residential community and that industry of every kind should be discouraged.

These are good and valid reasons for the failure and closing of the Sanitariums of Ypsilanti; but something happened in 1906 of nationwide importance which in all probability was the most important factor in tolling the death bell for these centers of miraculous cures. In June 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Federal Pure Food and Drug Act which became a law on January 1, 1907. Stewart H. Holbrook tells us in his book, The Golden Age of Quackery that Harvey W. Wiley, Chief Chemist of the United States Department of

of Agriculture had been trying since 1883 to have a law passed to regulate the labeling of foods and medicines. "Tell the truth on a label", said Wiley, and "let the consumer judge for himself." The legislation of 1906 required honest labels. One of the prime instigators for the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Law was Samuel Hopkins Adams who early in 1906 wrote a series of articles for Collier's magazine entitled, The Great American Fraud in which he ruthlessly unearthed and named concerns and people who were advertising falsely. The reading public became awakened, and perhaps terrified, when they read Hopkin's shocking exposes. Common sense forced them to realize that no quick cure salts or waters would replace medical drugs as a cure. In The New York Times for October 3th, 1966, there is a very interesting article about spas which shows that although they have gone from our section there are many still in existence in our country. But the article also points out the changes which have taken place in their make-up. The final paragraph reads:-

...Spas reached their heyday in the 19th century when their special function was as important as the therapeutic activity. Today the less severe European spas still offer operettas, concerts, balls, parties and casinos to divert guests in search of pleasure with therapy.

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## Footnotes:

1. Ypsilanti Paper Co.- finally merged with Peninsular Paper Co.
2. George Moorman (1823-Orleans Co, Y.Y.-1895 Ypsi) Came to Ypsi. in 1853 and engaged in grocery business.
3. Clark Cornwell (1843 Foster's Mill, A.A.Twp-1903 Ypsi) Pres. Ypsi. Paper Co., School Commissioner, Alderman and Mayor
- 4-Tubal Cain Owen (1843-Ellery, N.Y.-1913 Ypsi) Came to Ypsi. after attending M.S.U. and engaged in milling business, acquiring interest in Ypsi.Flouring Mills and then owner of Atlantis Mineral Well.
- 5-Hawkins House - Congress (Mich)between Washington & Adams
- 6-Follette House-13 E. Cross 7 Barton House-cor.Washington & Adams.
- 8 Helen McAndrew (1825-Kilsyth, Scotland-1906 Ypsi) First woman M.D. in Washtenaw Co. Also interested in woman's suffrage.
- 9 Tracy Towner (1864-Ypsi-1943-Ypsi) Local lawyer - Mayor 1910-12
- 10-Bert Moorman (1856 Ypsi-1932 Ypsi) Son of G. Moorman. Pres. Moorman-Huston Co - hay and grain.

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On January 19th, 1884, shortly after the opening of the city Mineral Water House, the following poem by, "A Farmer" appeared in The Commercial

## YPSILANTI WATER

Come all ye weary, sick and sore,  
Who want to suffer pain no more,  
And take a drink of Cornwell's bore,  
Beside the Huron River

Let Smith and Sampson keep their drugs,  
Fetch on your glasses and your mugs,  
Your barrels, bowls and your jugs,  
And get the healing water.

If you are sick, just try our cure,  
Drink Ypsilanti's water pure,  
That health and life may long endure,  
And all your friends rejoice.

Moorman's put down another bore  
For water, gas and something more  
They say its better than before  
To drive woe and pain away.

If you are sad, with sickness worn,  
And have the headache every more,  
Just come and drink a healing horn,  
of Ypsilanti's water.

Theres forty new baths agoing,  
And all the healing waters flowing,  
Better days and health bestowing,  
On many a weary one.

If you are growing weak and lean,  
Just come and try our healing stream,  
And splash till you are pure and clean,  
And your troubles washed away.

They will bathe you either cold or warm,  
It will do you good and never harm,  
And it may come o'er you like a charm,  
And double all your joy.

You need not travel far and long,  
To drink Saratoga's water strong,  
We have the real thing at home  
Down on the books of Moorman

It's true, it has a woeful smell,  
But if your stomache don't rebel  
It's just the thing to make you well  
And praise up Ypsilanti.

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#### NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

#### RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Lee

SMITH'S GEOGRAPHY for 1850  
curved hoof knife (on loan)  
sheep shears-Michigan corn  
husking knife - draw shave-  
pig scraper- 2 "clevis"-  
corn husker (hand) implement  
to take "never slip" clips  
from hooves in winter.

Mrs. Olin H. Wyman

-----  
Lovely parasol-once owned by  
Goldie Belle Shephere 1902-  
03 Ypsi.State Normal

Mrs. F. Albert Walton

-----  
Books-old bottles - spice  
containers- cosmetic bottles-  
1920 ballot form- mason jar  
lids- legal forms-city maps-  
Christmas cards- old news-  
papers- diary of Aretas A.  
Bedell- souvenir folders-  
legal form made out by late  
Judge Stadtmiller.

Marian Peebles

-----  
Calendar - from the year 1776  
to 1978

Mr & Mrs Charles Roberts

-----  
easel- newspaper article on  
Roberts School - copy of Civil  
War letter.

Miss Jane Foreman	three bouquets of dried flowers 2 in the parlor - one in the hall way.
Mr & Mrs Howard Woodruff	red plush trolley seat from old inter-urban line portrait- Great grandma Cheeseman portrait- G.A.R. reunion in Detroit-Great grandpa Gady in picture - 3 books
anonymous	old fashioned egg carrier (kitchen upstairs in Museum)
anonymous	brown earthenware crock (kitchen)
James & Mary Westfall	Rawsonville School bell used by Joel Barlow who died in 1852 Board of Health, 1918 notice - "Persons suffering from Colds are asked to Withdraw, by order of Bd. of Health"
Mrs. J. Don Lawrence	Hand made mouse trap - in upstairs kitchen
Mrs Buelah Hankinson Foster & Miss Lucille Hankinson	2 piece dress and a jacket once belonging to Kate Arnold Hankin- son - their mother - photo album - "Souvenir of Ypsi" booklet
Miss Winnifred Elliott	2 brass trays - brass inkwell - brass candlesticks
Mrs. Alan L. Moore	two white woven bedspreads string of old-fashioned Christmas tree lights
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Meyer	Large metal lard can "Home Ren- dered Lard - Alban & Augustus, Ypsilanti, Michigan"
Mrs. Howard Wanty	"Souvenir of Ypsilanti" booklet
Miss Fannie Beal	China plate with lithograph on it of First Church in America - formerly owned by Mrs Harvey (Everett) Klemmer of Ypsilanti
Mrs. Effie L. Warren	Brown pointed shoes worn by Mrs. Warren's mother about 1900
Mr. Wayne H. Predmore, Sr.	Japanese Tea service - in upstairs kitchen cabinet
Mrs. Casimir Bobinski	Large package of "lamp black" from Michigan Ladder Co-Ypsi.
Miss Elizabeth Warren	Newspaper articles - souvenir folders and programs from 1949 E.M.U. celebration
Mrs. Hazel Cullis	small straight wooden chair- black jewelry box inlaid with mother of pearl - wall mirror - 100 yrs old with hand painted on glass picture at top.

Mrs. Robert R. Anscheutz	kitchen "pie chest", 2 children's books- canvas folding portmaneau- 3 Persian rugs (on loan basis)
Mr. A.F. Smith	Blue spot light to be used for display exhibits
Mr. Ralph Smallidge	Metal shelving to be used for display and storage purposes.
Mr. Foster Fletcher	Boxes of Christmas balls and other Christmas decoration.
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Chapman	Boxes of Christmas balls and Christmas window hangings.
Mrs. Lorne Kennedy, Jr.	Hand knit baby sox- flannel petticoat for baby- black and white waist-navy sun bonnet
Miss Lillian Ashby	Bone glove stretcher - button hook with semi-precious stone handle from England - "Song Knapsack"-school song book - Sections from N.Y. Times on 1939 World's Fair
Miss Betty Tunnickliffe	small pottery pitcher for Children's room - collection of Campaign buttons from 1896 to 1972 - 1972 - 1972 President- ial campaign material.
Miss Jane Foreman	"Nature" wreath made by Miss Foreman and others of the Ypsilanti Garden Club.
Mrs. Lawrence Klatt	Notebook-"A Selection of Historical Homes in Ypsilanti- Photographs and Information" Prepared in partial fulfill- ment of a course at E.M.U.
Mrs. E.S. Burkheiser	two photographs-one of Rosalee Clifford - one of her home- one Military button
Charles K. Bohn	Many photographs of New York Central train wreck at Ypsi.
Dr. Harry Smith	Slides of Wm. Post Home (2) Jeness House, Mansion House at Willow Run-Kiser Home-Breaker Home.
Mrs. Otis A. Tooze	1844 Poll book of Ypsilanti Township and Ypsilanti City
Mr. Elmer Wisner	Victorian wicker rocking chair in Museum "parlor"
Mrs. Laura Kerbyson	1923 clipping from Ypsi. paper giving important dates and events prior to Centennial
Mr & Mrs John Elwell	"Eastern Echo" August 1972- Screen for projector
Mr. James Westfall (found in attic of Episcopal Church)	original charter of "Degree of Honor Protective Asso"

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM-

The "Christmas in Williamsburg" program at Ardis School on November 14 sponsored by the Presentation Committee of the Museum was an unqualified success. The day was a typical November one - miserable - but plus all of the tickets sold ahead of time over 96 were sold at the door. Well over \$500 was made by this venture. The Committee wishes to thank everyone who so willingly helped.

The All City Christmas Tree Trimming Party on Sunday afternoon, December 10th was also most successful! Over one hundred people came - greeted friends - saw slides of our historical homes - laughed at the old magic lantern slides - sang Christmas carols and brought lovely tree ornaments. The Committee wishes to thank all who made this affair a success and a special thanks to all the ladies who donated such delicious Christmas cookies.

If you went to visit the Christmas Around the World display in the Old Greystone Hotel over the holidays we are sure you were impressed by the panorama display "First Christmas in Ypsilanti" seen there. Our display was made by our members Miss Eileen Harrison, Miss Betty Tunnicliffe and Miss Tunnicliffe's father, Karl Tunnicliffe.

Through the auspices of the Display Committee local artisans will show and demonstrate their skills at the Museum. Our member Mr. Gordon Struble demonstrated the art of spinning on January 20th and 27th. Future craft demonstrations will be, quilting, candle making, Easter Egg decorating, the art of needlepointing and doll making. Please watch our local papers for further information about these demonstrations.