

INDEPENDENCE

Independence Township History from History of Cuyahoga County, Ohio; Part Third: The Townships, compiled by Crisfield Johnson, 1879.

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INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP HISTORY

Transcribed by Helen Rosenstein Wolf

Proofed by Gareth Morgan

Boundaries and Physical Features-The Pioneers-George Comstock-The Mortons-Frazer and Dickson-Z. Hathaway-Fisher and Brower, Cochran, Miner and others-John I. Harper-Rail McArthur-West of the River-The Skinner Family-Abraham Garfield-Resident Land Owners in 1848-Civil Organization-First Officers-Principal Officers-Roads-Canal and Railroad-Mills and Manufactures-Cleveland Acid Works-The Quarries-Kinzer Quarry-Hurst Quarry-Other Quarries-Independence Village-Post Offices-Physicians-Hotels-Trade-Schools-Religious Societies-Presbyterian Church-Evangelical Association-St. John's Lutheran Church-St. Michael's Church.

INDEPENDENCE is described in the original survey as Township C, range 12. It is bounded by Brooklyn and Newburg on the north; by Bedford on the east; by Brecksville and a small part of Summit County on the south, and by Parma on the west. The Cuyahoga River, flowing from a southeasterly direction, divides the township into unequal parts; nearly two-thirds of the area lying west of that stream. Excepting the valley of the Cuyahoga, the average width of which is about half a mile, the surface of Independence presents an elevated and broken appearance, although small level plateaus abound. Sandstone and blue-stone of excellent quality generally underlie the soil, and sometimes manifest themselves in bare ledges. The soil is generally fertile and appears to be well adapted for mixed husbandry. Besides the Cuyahoga, the streams of the township are Tinker's creek, flowing from the east; Hemlock creek, near the center, flowing from the west, and some small brooks in the northwestern part. The latter have deep channels, often forming gorges the steep sides of which bear a stunted growth of evergreens and present a picturesque appearance. Numerous springs abound, and the natural drainage is usually sufficient to render the soil tillable.

PIONEER SETTLERS.

The eastern part of the township was surveyed as early as 1808, and there, along Tinker's creek, the first settlements were made a few years later, probably in 1811, although the time and place cannot be exactly determined, as the earliest pioneers did not remain long in the township. To a more permanent class of settlers belonged George and Mercy Comstock, who came about 1812, and made their home on lot seven of tract four, where they resided during their lives. They had three sons: Peter, who lived on the place next east; George, whose home was on the present farm of William Honeywell, and Fitch, who

remained on the old homestead. Another Comstock family settled on lot two about the same time, where the head of it died in 1815, leaving several sons, two of whom were named Fitch and Joseph. On tract four, lot four, lived Daniel Comstock as early as 1813, who died there, leaving three sons, Albert, Stephen and Leonard, all of whom moved away.

In the Comstock neighborhood Samuel Wood was one of the earliest settlers, rearing two sons, Silas and Harry, the latter of whom is yet living in Northfield. About the same time (the early part of 1813) Lewis Johnson, a blacksmith, located in that settlement. He had a large family; one son only by the name of Thomas is remembered. Philander Ballou lived on the south side of Tinker's creek near its mouth, about the same period.

In the valley of that creek came among the early pioneers, Daniel Chase and Clark Morton. One of the daughters of the latter was drowned while crossing the Cuyahoga in a canoe. He had two sons named Daniel and Silas. There were other Mortons, living in the township about this period, viz: Thomas, Samuel and William.

William King was among the first to come to Independence. He lived on tract four a number of years, and then disappeared mysteriously.

In the southeastern corner of the township Stephen Frazee and James Dickson settled soon after 1812, and for many years were among the prominent pioneers. In the valley of Tinker's creek Asa and Horace Hungerford were also leading citizens at an early day.

Farther north, on the old State road, Zephaniah Hathaway, a Vermonter, settled in 1816, and resided there until his death, at more than ninety years of age. He had two sons named Alden and Zephaniah, who also remained in that locality. The sons of the former were Lafayette, William, Rodney and Edwin; those of the latter were James and Milo' most of these yet live in that neighborhood. On the same road Jonathan Fisher, another Vermonter, settled in 1816, living on the place now occupied by his grandson, Lloyd Fisher. North of Fisher, Elisha Brower settled about 1817, but soon afterward died, leaving four sons named John, David Pinckney, Daniel and William. Still farther north, near the Newburg line, lived a man named Ives, who died in 1819. He had a son named Erastus. David Skinner was an early settler in the same neighborhood.

In the northern part of the township, near the river, settlements were made about 1813 by the Cochrain, Miner, Brockway and Paine families. One of the sons of the first-named family, Marvin, became a prominent citizen of the township. William Green came from Brecksville in 1817, and settled on the Fosdick place. He had five sons named Harvey, Elijah, Jeremiah, Herod and Frederick, and several daughters, one of whom, Emily, became Mrs. Fosdick. Farther up the river John Westfall, a shoemaker, settled the same year. In 1823 he sold out to Smith Towner and his son, D. D. Towner. A son of the latter, Clark Towner, now occupies the place.

In 1810 John I., Archibald and William Harper, sons of Colonel John Harper a celebrated Revolutionary soldier who lived in Delaware county, New York, came to Ashtabula County, in this State, and in 1816 John I. emigrated from there to Independence, settling on tract two, near where the canal now runs, where he died in August, 1849. He reared two sons, Erastus R., who yet lives on the homestead; De Witt C., who moved to Michigan; and three daughters, one of whom married H. G. Edwards, of Newburg. John Maxwell, a boy indentured to J. I. Harper, moved to Galena, Illinois, after he had attained manhood, and while discharging his duties as sheriff was killed by a man whom he attempted to arrest.

East of the Harper place a man named Case settled about 1814; a few years later he met his death at a raising at Peter Comstock's. He had four sons, named Chauncey, Asahel, Harrison and _____. Samuel Roberts was a squatter on the present Omar place, selling out in 1825 to Nathaniel P. Fletcher, who moved, after 1833, to Oberlin, and there helped to found Oberlin College. Farther south Ephraim S. Bailey and John Rorabeck made settlements before 1816. The latter had served in the war of 1812. Colonel Rial McArthur became a resident of the township in 1833, but returned to Portage County in 1844. He was the surveyor of the eastern part of Independence in 1808, and attained the rank of colonel in the war of 1812. In 1810 John Wightman became a resident of Cleveland, living there until his death in 1837. His daughter, Deborah L., became the wife of William H. Knapp, who settled in Independence in 1833, and both are yet living on the place they then occupied.

West of the Cuyahoga the land was not offered for settlement early, and but few families found homes there prior to 1825. In the northern part Ichabod L. Skinner settled as early as 1818. He reared three sons, named Gates, Prentice and David P. The latter was murdered at his home a little south of the present acid works.

On the road south of Skinner, Abraham Garfield, father of Hon. James A. Garfield, lived a few years prior to 1820; and in the same neighborhood was Caleb Boynton, who died there in 1821; leaving four sons, Amos, Nathan, William and Jeremiah. Other settlers on the west side were William Currier, John Darrow, Jasper Fuller and Jaud Fuller.

In 1843 the resident land owners in this part of the township were the following: Conrad Schaff, Peter E. Swartz, Joseph Beichelmeyer, Sanford Foot, Ichabod L. Skinner, J. L. Skinner, John Walsh, Henry Wood, Hiram Pratt, John T. Gaw, Joseph Rose, David Yost, Martin Dirrer, L. Stewart, Peter Young, Jacob Walters, Nelson Loud, Benj. Wood, Moses Usher, Elijah Danser, David Barney, Harvey Green, John Foltz, Wm. Bushnell, Wm. Buskirk, Wm. Walter, John Shearer, John Schneider, Nathaniel Wyatt, Mathew Bramley, James Miller, S. M. Dille, David Stewart, H. Orth, Alvah Darron, Anthon Gaw, Andrew Hartmiller, M. Sherman, Abraham Gable, Daniel Alt, Peter P. Crumb, Elihu Hollister, Amos Newland, E. Clark, Wm. Ring, Elisha Brooks, Wm. Currier, Elijah Green, Jacob Foltz, Jacob Froelich, Mathias Froelich, John Froelich, Samuel Hayden, John Leonard, L. Wright, John Wolf, John Derr, J. Green, A. Newland, Thomas Cook, James Martin, Wm. G. Adams, Asa Hungerford, Ezra Fuller, John Needham, Rufus Johnson, Philip Gardner, Joseph Cunningham, Mathew Barker, Nathaniel Stafford, Robert Cook, Wm. Van Noate, Jacob Warner, Jasper Fuller, John Moses, J. F. Leonard, Mathew Gardner, Ezra Brewster, Jeremiah Gowdy, Lewis Kohl.

On the east side of the river the land owners in that year were as follows: Jacob Krapht, Joseph Miller, Marvin Cochrain, David D. Towner, Jonathan Fisher, Findley Strong, Zephaniah Hathaway, E. Gleason, H. G. Edwards, Abram Wyatt, G. Richmond, Wm. Giles, Moses Gleeson, William Gleeson, Roger Comstock, Wm. Green, Waterman Ells, Alfred Fisher, John I. Harper, Silas A. Hathaway, E. R. Harper, Benj. Fisher, Samuel Hinkley, L. Campbell, Allen Robinette, Horace Hungerford, Stephen Frazee, Rial McArthur.

CIVIL ORGANIZATION.

The records of the township from its organization till 1834 have been destroyed by fire. In that year the election for township officers resulted as follows: Trustees, John I. Harper, J. L. M. Brown, Marvin Cochrain; clerk William H. Knapp; treasurer, Jonathan Fisher; constables, Orange McArthur, Jonathan Frazee; overseers of the poor, Enoch Scovill, William Green; fence viewers, Alvah Darrow, Nathaniel

Wyatt. The number of votes polled was seventy-one. Enoch Jewett, Stephen Frazee and S. A. Hathaway were the judges of the election, and Geo. Comstock and Alvah Darrow served as clerks. On the 2nd of August, 1834, an election for justice of the peace was held at the house of William H. Knapp, when David D. Towner received forty-one votes, Wm. H. Knapp sixteen, and Stephen Frazee, nine.

Since 1834 the principal officers have been as follows:

1835. Trustees, Alvah Darrow, Jr., J. Zephaniah Hathaway, Jasper Fuller; clerk, Alfred Fisher; treasurer, Jonathan Fisher.

1836. Trustees, Enos Hawkins, Zephaniah Hathaway, Jasper Fuller; clerk, Alfred Fisher; treasurer, D. D. Towner.

1837. Trustees, Elihu Hollister, John I. Harper, John Rowan; clerk, Alfred Fisher; treasurer, D. D. Towner.

1838. Trustees, Alfred Fisher, Enoch Scovill, Samuel Durand; clerk, Wm. H. Knapp; treasurer, D. D. Towner.

1839. Trustees, Alfred Fisher, Wm. Buskirk, Samuel Durand; clerk, Harry McArthur; treasurer, D. D. Towner.

1840. Trustees, Marvin Cochrain, John Phillips, Wm F. Bushnell; clerk, Wm. H. Knapp; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1841. Trustees, Alfred Fisher, Daniel E. Williams, Elias M. Gleeson; clerk, Harry McArthur; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1842. Trustees, Finlay Strong, Wm. Van Noate, Isaac Packard; clerk, Harry McArthur; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1843. Trustees, Jonathan Fisher, Alvah Darrow, Wm. F. Bushnell; clerk, Harry McArthur; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1844. Trustees, Jonathan Fisher, Alvah Darrow, Wm. F. Bushnell; clerk, Harry McArthur; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1845. Trustees, D. D. Towner, Alvah Darrow, H. McArthur; clerk, B. H. Fisher; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1846. Trustees, D. D. Towner, Wm. Buskirk, H. McArthur; clerk, B. H. Fisher; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1847. Trustees, D. D. Towner, Wm. Buskirk, Joseph Cunningham; clerk, I. L. Gleeson; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1848. Trustees, Jacob Foltz, Silas A. Hathaway, Joseph Cunningham; clerk, I. L. Gleeson; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1849. Trustees, Jacob Foltz, Alfred Fisher, Alvah Darrow; clerk, I. D. Hathaway; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1850. Trustees, John Schofield, Alfred Fisher, Wm. Van Noate; clerk, Benj. Wood; treasurer, Erastus R. Harper.

1851. Trustees, E. R. Harper, James Miller, Wm. H. Perry; clerk, I. L. Gleeson; treasurer, John Schofield.

1852. Trustees, Jacob Foltz, James Miller, I L. Gleeson; clerk, Benj. Wood; treasurer, John Schofield.

1853. Trustees, Alvah Darrow, Jonathan Frazee, William Green 2nd; clerk, Benj. Wood; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1854. Trustees, E. R. Harper, Jonathan Frazee, John Foltz; clerk, J. K. Brainard; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1855. Trustees, James Miller, E. M. Gleeson, Ezra Brewster; clerk, J. K. Brainard; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1856. Trustees, James Miller, E. M. Gleeson, Ezra Brewster; clerk, J. K. Brainard; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1857. Trustees, Watson E. Thompson, John Foltz, Elihu Hollister; clerk, J. K. Brainard; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1858. Trustees, Watson E. Thompson, John Foltz, Elihu Hollister; clerk, J. K. Brainard; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1859. Trustees, Wm. H. Perry, Wm. Green 2d, Albert Comstock; clerk, J. K. Brainard; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1860. Trustees, Wm. H. Perry, Edward Heinton, Albert Comstock; clerk, G. B. Pierce; treasurer, I. L.

Gleeson.

1861. Trustees, Edward Heinton, Elihu Hollister, Jacob Lotz; clerk, J. K. Brainard, treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1862. Trustees, Edward Heinton, Seneca Watkins, Milo N. Hathaway; clerk, Wm. B. Munson; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1863. Trustees, Edward Heinton, Horace Hungerford, John Froilich; clerk, E. R. Harper; treasurer, I. L. Gleeson.

1864. Trustees, H. C. Currier, John Swartz, I. D. Hathaway; clerk, Wm. B. Munson; treasurer, Geo. W. Green.

1865. Trustees, A. Alexander, E. Hollister, Horace Hungerford; clerk, O. P. McMillan; treasurer, E. R. Harper.

1866. Trustees, A. Alexander, Edward Heinton, Seneca Watkins; clerk, O. P. McMillan; treasurer, E. R. Harper.

1867. Trustees, William Green, Edward Heinton, Seneca Watkins; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, E. R. Harper.

1868. Trustees, J. Frazee, Edward Heinton, Wm. Buskirk; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, E. R. Harper.

1869. Trustees, John B. McMillan, Edward Heinton, George Gabilla; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, John Bender.

1870. Trustees, John B. McMillan, Clark Towner, George Gabilla; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, John Bender.

1871. Trustees, John B. McMillan, T. F. Gowday, John Packard; clerk, D. S. Green; treasurer, John Bender.

1872. Trustees, George Cochran, B. D. Schrain, John Packard; clerk, Frank Brown; treasurer, C. Brown.

1873. Trustees, E. R. Harper, C. J. Green, Levi Summers; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, C. Brown.

1874. Trustees, Geo. W. Green, D. L. Phillips, George Summers; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, C. Hannum.

1875. Trustees, John B. McMillan, F. Litzler, James Watkins; clerk, Wm. B. Munson; treasurer, C. Hannum.

1876. Trustees, John B. McMillan, Max Buhl, John Giles; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, C. Hannum.

1877. Trustees, D. Fullerton, J. A. Hathaway, H. France; clerk, J. B. Waltz; treasurer, George Lambacher.

1878. Trustees, D. Fullerton, T. M. Gowday, H. France; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, George Lambacher.

1879. Trustees, D. Fullerton, T. M. Gowday, H. France; clerk, D. Gindlesperger; treasurer, George Lambacher.

The township owns a good hall, located in the public square, at the center, and maintains several fine places of burial. The largest of these - Maple Shade Cemetery - consists of four acres, on the State road, north of the center, and was purchased in September, 1865, of Sebastian Blessing. It contains a fine vault, and has been otherwise improved. Several of the religious denominations also maintain small but attractive places of sepulture.

PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES.

Several of the early State roads passed through the township from points farther south to Cleveland, and considerable attention was paid to the improvement of these highways soon after their location. In 1834 Henry Wood, Manly Coburn, John I. Harper, William Moses, Abram Schermerhorn, Zephaniah Hathaway, William van Noate, Nathaniel Wyatt, and J. M. L. Brown were appointed road supervisors. The township has had to pay a heavy bridge tax to keep in place the structures which span the Cuyahoga. At present these present a substantial appearance. In 1879 the levies for roads and bridges were one and one-third mills on the valuation of the township, and the supervisors were E. H. Koenig, Michael Halpin, N. Burmaster, Joel Foote, Hugh Gowdy, George Lambacher, George Bushnell, J. Walter, H. Giles, A. Comstock, T. Frantz, C. Mehling, J. F. Miller, William Fulton, C. H. Bushnell, and F. Beebe.

The Ohio canal was located through the township in 1825, William H. Price being the resident engineer. Two years later it was opened for travel. It is on the east side of the Cuyahoga, and has in the township a length of about seven miles, with four locks, numbered from thirty-seven to forty inclusive.

On the opposite side of the river, and following a course nearly parallel with the canal is the line of the Valley Railroad, now being constructed. Work was begun in 1873, but various causes have prevented its completion until the present year, before the end of which it is expected that the last rail will be laid. These avenues give or will give the township easy communication with the rest of the world, and the best of shipping facilities.

MANUFACTURING INTERESTS.

The township did not have any early gristmills nor factories. On Hemlock creek sawmills were erected by Ring & McArthur, and Clark & Land. On the site of the mill owned by the latter firm there is now a steam sawmill which is operated by J. G. Wing. It has a run of stone for grinding feed, and is also supplied with a machine for threshing grain.

About 1835, Finny & Farnsworth constructed a dam across the river at William H. Knapp's, and for several years a sawmill was operated quite extensively. Below that point M. Sherman put up a sawmill and machinery for turning and polishing sandstone. The sawmill is yet operated by John Geisendorf. On the site of the acid works, Harry Wood had a steam gristmill, which was destroyed by fire; and near there the Palmer Brothers had a steam sawmill, which is still carried on. In the southeastern portion of the township A. Alexander erected a good gristmill, which is yet operated by him, and is the only gristmill in the township.

Cabinet organs were made in the northern part of Independence until 1876 by the Palmer Brothers. The building is now occupied for the manufacture of "Currier's Section Sharpener," a very simple contrivance for sharpening mowing-machine knives without removing them. The material used is Independence sandstone, which, it is claimed, will not become coated with gum on being used for sharpening purposes. The firm also manufacture oil stones.

THE CLEVELAND ACID WORKS.

This important establishment was put in operation in 1867 by W. R. Anderson, for the purpose of restoring to available form the sulphuric acid existing in the refuse matter of oil refineries. Since 1872 R. H. Emerson has been the proprietor of the works, which have been superintended by J. C. Burmaster. The establishment embraces a number of large and well-arranged buildings; it is capable of producing six thousand carboys of acid per month, and it employs about thirty men. The spent acid is brought to the works by canal when navigation permits. The restoring process requires the use of two thousand tons of coke and about double that amount of coal annually. Among the peculiar features of the place are one hundred and sixty glass retorts, holding fifty gallons each, and five storage tanks, the united capacity of which is six thousand barrels.

THE QUARRIES.

Aside from the agricultural pursuits which engage a majority of the people of the township, the chief industry of Independence is the quarrying of stone. West of the river the surface is underlaid by a ledge

of superior sandstone, the composition of which is so fine that it makes the very best of grindstones. To quarry and manufacture these gives occupation to hundreds of men and constitutes a business of more than \$400,000 per year. Most of the products are shipped by canal, but a considerable quantity are drawn by team direct to Cleveland.

THE KINZER QUARRY.

This is on the county road, two and a half miles west from the center, and was opened in 1848 by Joseph Kinzer. He at first got out but a few grindstones, which were cut into shape by hand. He increased his business, however, from year to year until he had a good-sized gang of men at work. In 1867 Joseph Kinzer, Jr., succeeded to the business, and the following year employed machinery for turning his grindstones the motive power being steam. The lathe was first operated on the Darrow place, but has lately been removed to near the Kinzer quarry. From four hundred to one thousand tons of grindstones are produced in addition to large quantities of building and flagging stones.

THE HURST QUARRIES.

These were opened in 1847 by the owner of the land, Hiram Pratt. In 1860 he sold to James F. Clark, who associated with him Baxter Clough. The latter operated the quarry until 1872, when it became the property of J. R. Hurst, of Cleveland, the present proprietor. The grindstones were first prepared by hand, but in 1866 a lathe operated by stem power was provided, which has since been used to turn stones weighing from three hundred pounds to four tons. The quarry is supplied with two derricks, and gives employment to forty men.

At a point farther east, near the same road, Mr. Clough opened another quarry in 1867, which also became the property of Mr. Hurst, and at present gives work to thirty men, who are employed chiefly in quarrying building-stones. North of the center, stone was quarried as early as 1840 by M. Sherman, Erastus Eldridge and others. Mr. Eldridge operated the quarry quite extensively, building a horse railroad to transport the products to the canal. Here were procured the pillars of the Weddell House in Cleveland. Other operators in those quarries were A. Rothermail, Joseph Blessing, J. Merkel and Harry James. The latter erected a good turning lathe at the canal, and also built a wharf for loading canal boats. These and the quarry at the center have been leased by Mr. Hurst, and are now operated in connection with his other interests in the township under the superintendence of Marx Buhl.

West of the village are the quarries of the Wilson & Hughes Stone Company, employing a large gang of men, and operated since 1860; of Thomas Smith and of Ephraim West, each being worked by a gang of men. East of the center are quarries at present worked by J. Smeadley and Joseph Windlespecht; and southeast are the T. G. Clewell blue stone quarries, from which stones of superior quality for flagging purposes have been procured. A mill has been erected to saw the stone in any desired shape, and lately a lathe for turning grindstone has been added. Many other quarries are worked more or less, but the foregoing sufficiently indicate the importance and extent of the business.

INDEPENDENCE VILLAGE.

This place, sometimes called the Center, is the only village in the township. It is situated on the State road about equidistant from the north and south bounds of the township. It has a beautiful location on an elevated plateau which slopes gently southward toward Hemlock creek. In the early settlement of this part of the township, the proprietor, L. Strong, set aside a tract of land for a public square and village

purposes, but the place made a slow growth, and never assumed much importance as a business point. At present it presents a somewhat scattered appearance, and is composed mainly of the humble homes of those who find occupation outside of the village. It contains a Roman Catholic, a Presbyterian and an Evangelical church, a fine school-house, the town-hall and several hundred inhabitants.

The Independence post office was established on the east side of the river, at the house of Nathan P. Fletcher, who was the first postmaster. Until about thirty years ago, when it was permanently established at the village, the office was kept in different parts of the township at the residences of the postmasters. Those, after Mr. Fletcher, have been William H. Knapp, Nathaniel Stafford, John Needham, B. F. Sharp, J. K. Brainard, George Green and Calvin Hannum. The latter has been postmaster since 1865. The office is on the route from Cleveland to Copley, and has a tri-weekly mail. At the acid works a post office has lately been established by the name of Willow. John L. Kingsbury is the postmaster, and the mail facilities are the same as at Independence.

Several gentlemen by the name of Day followed the practice of medicine in the township many years ago for a short period, but Dr. William B. Munson was the first to establish a permanent practice. He is yet a resident of the village, but has retired from active duty. The present practitioner is Dr. S. O. Morgan. Doctors Charles Hollis and E. M. Gleeson were physicians in the township for short periods, but did not establish themselves permanently in their profession.

Before 1830 a tavern was kept on the canal by a man named Kleckner, in a house built by Philemon Baldwin, and farther up the river was "Mather Parker's tavern," which enjoyed a wide reputation. About 1836, Peter P. Crumb opened a public house north of the center, which he kept many years. Subsequent landlords were ----Hartmiller and George Sommers. The latter now occupies the place as a private residence. At the center a tavern was opened in 1852 by Job Pratt, who was followed successively by Hollis, Gunn, Eaton, Alger, Probeck and Wolf, the latter being the present landlord.

I. L. and Edward M. Gleeson were among the first to engage in the mercantile business in the township, selling goods at the twelve-mile lock. Other persons in trade there were Morrill, Rutter, Oylar and Bender. Soon after the Crumb tavern was opened, Benjamin Wood sold goods at the stand now occupied by Joseph Urmetz, but Horace Ball opened the first regular store at the center. His successors at that stand have been J. K. Brainard, George Green, Josephus Brown, Charles Green and Charles Memple, who is now in trade there.

Epaphroditus Wells had a store a few years opposite the tavern, and nearby another store was opened by Jacob and Samuel Foltz and I. L. Gleeson. These parties were followed by Currier & Watkins, who had a shoe store. The stand is at present occupied by Calvin Hannum. About eight years ago P. Kingsley opened another store, which is now kept by C. H. Bushnell.

The township has half a dozen shops in which the common mechanical trades are carried on.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The first schools in Independence were established east of the river. In 1830 there were four districts. In 1850 the condition of the schools was as follows:

<i>District</i>	Youth of School Age	
No. 1	56	\$37.50
" 2	51	66.23

" 3	50	39.21
"4	52	34.39
" 5	50	39.21
" 6	75	49.59
" 7	53	35.05
" 9	46	49.28
" 10	57	37.70
Fractional No. 4	4	2.58
" 8	74	48.88
"12	25	16.52
	611	\$587.73

In 1879 there were three hundred and seventy-three males and three hundred and twenty-three females of school age, of which number one hundred and seventy-six were between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years. The tuition fund amounts to \$3,242.25. Nearly all the districts have been provided with good school houses; the one at the center being two stories high. In this a school for the more advanced pupils of the township has been maintained every winter since 1870. The board of education in 1879 was as follows: B. D. Schramm, of district No. 9, chairman; D. Gindlesperger, clerk; No. 1, Frank Gleeson; No. 2, A. J. Farrar; No. 3, J. Hathaway; No. 4, Frank Fosdick; No. 5, George Lambacher; No. 6 John Giles; No. 7, Harry Rose, and No. 8, H. Faubel.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

It is said that the first religious meeting in the township was held October 1, 1836, by the Rev. Mr. Freeman, a Baptist from Cleveland. In February, 1837, a Baptist congregation was organized, which flourished a short time, but soon became extinct. About the same period a class of Methodists was formed which also failed to maintain its organization beyond a few years. Its meetings were held at the houses of those friendly to that denomination; but a common place of worship was soon after provided in a log school-house at the center in which the different ministers visiting the township preached. The Congregationalists were the first to organize a church which had any permanency, and which is at present known as

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN INDEPENDENCE.

The organizers were the Revs. Israel Shailer and Chester Chapin, of the Missionary Association of Connecticut. On the 24th of June, 1837, they united in church fellowship William F. Bushnell and his wife Betsey; James and Mary Miller; Betsey Brewster; Jane and Elizabeth Bushnell---seven in all. William F. Bushnell was elected deacon, and James Miller, clerk.

The meetings were first held in the log school-house, at Miller's corners, and then in the town hall. On the 17th of October, 1854, a society to attend to the temporal affairs of the church was formed, which had as its first trustees, Wm. F. Bushnell, Joseph Cunningham and Benj. Wood; as treasurer, James Miller; as clerk, E. Wells. The society was disbanded in October, 1873. Under its direction, in 1855, the present meeting-house was built at the center. It is an attractive edifice of the excellent sandstone found so plentifully in the township, and has a fine location on the west side of the public square. The cost was \$2,594.79; the finances being managed by the pastor, the Rev. B. F. Sharp.

On the 5th of February, 1862, the church became Presbyterian in form, and has since continued in that faith. Calvin Hannum, Wm. F. Bushnell and Daniel W. Abbott were elected ruling elders; and the former

and J. G. Wing at present serve in that capacity. The deacons are Joseph Miller and D. S. Green; the clerk of the sessions is Calvin Hannum.

The organizers of the church served two years as supplies. In 1845 the Rev. Mr. McReynolds served the church. Sometime before 1854 the Rev. B. F. Sharp came as a supply, and that year became pastor of the church, remaining until 1859. During his service the membership increased from seven to thirty-five. There has been no pastor since, but the pulpit has been supplied by Rev. Messrs. Morse, van Vleck, Bushnell, Jenkins, Edwards, Chapin, Farwell, Cone, Pettinger, and the present Rev. Bowman of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who preaches alternately here and in the Evangelical Church at this place. The church has had an aggregate membership of one hundred and eighty-five, but at present bears the names of only thirty persons on its register. A flourishing Sunday school is maintained, of which J. G. Wing is the superintendent.

Mainly through the efforts of the Rev. T. G. Clewell a very neat brick church was erected at the center, sometime about 1860, for the use of the

EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

and on the 7th of January, 1863, was duly organized the first board of trustees, composed of George W. Green, George Merkle, Francis Pillet, Henry Wentz and Mathew Bramley. Services have since been stately held in the English and German languages by the Rev. Messrs. Clewell, Hahn, Humber, Breit, Bernhart, Mott, Duderer, Hasenpflug, Horn, Orwig, Seib, Hammer and other clergymen who came from Cleveland for the purpose. The membership at present is small in consequence of removals. The trustees are Messrs. Crane, Windlespect, Sommers, Bramley and Newland. Jacob Schmidt is the superintendent of the flourishing Sunday school.

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH. (UNALTERED AUGSBERG CONFESSION.)

A short time after 1850, a number of persons living in the northeastern part of the township, who attended the services of the Lutheran church in Cleveland, took measures to establish a place of worship at home. Accordingly, on the 14th of October, 1854, a small framed meeting house was consecrated for this purpose, by pastor Schwan, of Cleveland. In this, the services of the newly organized body were regularly held until July 6, 1879, when a very fine edifice, erected on the opposite side of the street, took its place. This house is thirty-eight by seventy-five feet, and has a tower and steeple one hundred feet high. The church as an exceedingly handsome appearance and cost about six thousand dollars. The present trustees are J. H. Dreman, C. F. Scherler and Fred. Ehlert. The church has fifty members who engage in business meetings, and numbers two hundred and twelve communicants. The elders are J. H. Tonsing, J. H. Meilaender and Fred. Borgeis.

The congregation has had the pastoral services of the following clergymen: From 1854 till 1859, Rev. John Strieter; 1859 till 1877, Rev. Ch. Sallman; and since December, 1877, Rev. Otto Kolbe. The first of these pastors also taught the parish school, but since 1871 Augustus Schefft has been employed as a teacher. The school is taught in the old meeting-house and is attended by ninety pupils who receive instruction in both the English and German languages. Religious teaching forms part of the daily course, and the school is maintained independent of any aid from the State or county.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH (ROMAN CATHOLIC.)

In 1852 a small but neat house of worship for Roman Catholics was erected northwest of the center of the township, which was used until the growing congregation demanded a more capacious house. An effort was made to provide one better adapted for its wants, and in 1870 the present edifice was begun, but the work was slowly carried on. The building committee was composed of George Gable, Joseph Urmetz, Peter Wild, Albert Dobler, Anthon Eckenfelt and Joseph Effinger. In December, 1873, a storm caused the walls of the unfinished building to fall; but the following year they were again raised and the building began to be used in the summer of 1875. It was consecrated December 5, 1875, by the Right Reverend Father Gregory and Bishop Fitzgerald. The building committee at this time consisted of Charles Mehling, Fred. Beckhold, Frank Jermann and Jeremiah Hayes. The church is thirty feet by seventy, is built of brick, and cost eight thousand dollars. The present lay trustees are Charles Mehling and Casper funk. The society has a cemetery at the old stone chapel.

The church has about one hundred and seventy-five communicants who are under the spiritual tutelage of Father Fidelius, of the Franciscan Convent at Cleveland. Among other clergymen who have served there have been Fathers Bierbaum, Zungbeel, Boden and Rainerious, nearly all coming from the convent. The church has had no resident priest. A school is maintained which has been taught by John Jermann and Matilda Blessing.

*The story of the temporary residence of the Moravian Indians in this township is told on pages thirty-three to thirty-five of the general history.

Independence Township History from A History of Cuyahoga County and the City of Cleveland by William R. Coates, 1924.

https://archive.org/details/historyofcuyahog01coat_0/page/88/mode/2up

In the original survey, Independence is described as township 6 in range 12. In the matter of streams, so important in the early days, it is well provided. The Cuyahoga River divides it into two unequal parts and Tinkers Creek enters the Cuyahoga within its boundaries. On the north is original Brooklyn and Newburgh, on the east Bedford, on the west Parma and on the south Brecksville and a portion of Summit County, Northfield. It contains much rich bottom land and the soil generally is adapted to varied farming. Hemlock Creek flows through it from the west with falls providing considerable water power. It has quarries of sandstone (Berea grit) and blue stone. An extensive vein of red clay extends through the township and this in later years has proved to be valuable, being used in the manufacture of tile and pressed brick. Earlier the output from the quarries was very large. The portion of Independence east of the Cuyahoga was surveyed in 1808. The first settler, who came in 1811, was a man by the name of William King. He lived on lot or tract 4 for a number of years and then mysteriously disappeared. George Comstock and Mary, his wife, came as permanent settlers in 1812 and located on lot 4. Here they lived and died. They had three sons, Peter, George and Fitch, who remained on the old homestead. In this year and the following two other Comstock families came to Independence. One located on lot 2 and the head of the family died in 1815, leaving two sons, Fitch and Joseph, and a widow. Daniel Comstock settled on lot 4 and died shortly afterwards, leaving three sons, Albert, Stephen and Leonard. The old records are silent as to daughters, but they may have existed, unsung if not unwept. In this neighborhood in 1813 came Samuel Wood. He had two sons, Silas and Harry. In the same year Lewis Johnson, a blacksmith, located there, and this necessary industrial, social and political headquarters mingled its sparks of wit and iron and local news. Johnson had a large family, but only one son, Thomas, is remembered in the annals. Philander Ballou located on the south side of Tinkers Creek, near its mouth, about the same time as the Johnson family. Along the valley of this creek many settlers located quite early in the history of the township, among them Daniel Chase and Clark Morton. A daughter of Morton was drowned while crossing the Cuyahoga in a canoe. Clark Morton had two sons, Daniel and Silas. Thomas, Samuel and William Morton settled in this neighborhood about this time.

After the building of the Ohio Canal this neighborhood was the home and rendezvous of Jim Brown, the famous outlaw. Joseph M. Poe, who had often seen Brown in the days of his prime, described him to the writer as a man of fine personal appearance and of most pleasing manner. He was a kind neighbor and many instances are related of his deeds of charity and neighborly kindness. His operations were confined largely to the counterfeiting of gold coins. He did not bother with silver of less denomination than one dollar. His exploits continued for a long period of time and included some of the most daring escapes from the clutches of the law. At one time he passed, in Cleveland, a large quantity of counterfeit gold coin. Before doing this, he had arranged with confederates a relay course from Cleveland to Buffalo, having fast riding horses stationed at various points along the way for a night ride. He rode the distance without stopping except to change from one horse to another, a fresh horse replacing a tired one. He appeared in Buffalo to many as soon as possible after his arrival. He was arrested and brought to Cleveland for trial. He set up an alibi and brought witnesses from Buffalo to testify as to his presence there. These were the days of slow and laborious transportation, of woods and heavy roads. He was found not guilty, the trial judge holding that it would have been impossible for him to have been in Cleveland at the time the crime was committed and in Buffalo at the time proved by creditable witnesses. Brown was arrested in Louisville, Kentucky, at one time. A citizen there attracted by his good

looks and pleasing address consented to give bond for his appearance on the condition that Brown deposit with him the amount of the bond. This was done and the prisoner released on bail. He did not appear and the money, deposited to secure the bond proved to be counterfeit. His death occurred on the Ohio Canal near the scene of many of his most daring escapes. In attempting to elude capture he jumped from the gate beam of a lock to the deck of a canal boat that had just reached the low level in the lock and died from the injuries received in the fall.

In the valley of the river Asa and Horace Hungerford were located as early as 1813 and in the southeast part of the township Stephen Frazer and Horace Dickson located soon after. North on the old state road which leads through the Center, Zephaniah Hathaway, a Vermonter, settled in 1816 where he resided until death at the age of more than ninety years. He had two sons, Alden and Zephaniah 2nd. The sons of Alden were William, Rodney and Edwin and of Zephaniah 2nd were James and Milo. Jonathan Fisher, another Vermonter, came in 1816 and located on the farm later owned and operated by a descendant, Lloyd Fisher, who was prominent in township affairs and served as county commissioner of Cuyahoga County. North of the Fisher farm Elisha Brower located in 1817 and soon after died, leaving four sons, John David, Pinckney, Demiel and William. Still north a settler by the name of Ives took up a farm in 1819. He had a son named Erastus. David Skinner was an early arrival, settling on a farm west of the present Willow station of the Baltimore Railroad, formerly the Valley Road. A group of families came in 1813 to the northern part near the river settlement, the Cochran, Miner and Paine families. William 'Green came from Brecksville in 1817 and settled on what was known later as the Fosdick place. He had five sons, Harvey, Elijah, Jeremiah, Herod and Frederick. There were several daughters. Emily married a Fosdick and remained on the old place. In the same year, up the river, came John Westphal and the community was augmented in its industrial life by a shoemaker. In 1823 he sold out to Smith Towner and his son, D. D. Towner. Clark Towner later occupied the place. John I. Archibald and William Harper, sons of Col. John Harper, a Revolutionary soldier, came from Delaware County, New York, in 1816. They had started westward in 1810, stopping first in Ashtabula County and then John I. moving to Independence. He had two sons, Erastus R. and DeWitt C. and three daughters, whom the early chroniclers do not name except to state that one of the daughters married H. C. Edwards of Newburgh. The family was increased by a boy by the name of John Maxwell, who was bound out to Mr. Harper after the custom of the times. This boy, after his apprenticeship with the Harpers, moved farther on and became sheriff of a county in the far west and was killed while making the arrest of a desperate character on the border. In 1814 a man by the name of Case came with his family and a few years later was killed at a raising at Peter Comstock's. Four sons survived him, Chauncey, Asahel, Harrison and one other. Nathaniel P. Fletcher came this year and supplanted a "squatter," whose loose property he bought. This man's name was Samuel Roberts. Mr. Fletcher in 1833 moved to Oberlin, where it is said, he helped to found the college. In 1816 Ephraim S. Bailey and John Rorabeck located in the south part of the township. The latter was a soldier in the War of 1812.

Col. Rial McArthur, who surveyed the east part of the township in 1808, and later served as a colonel in the War of 1812, came as a resident of the township in 1833 but remained only a short time. John Wightman was an early settler, coming in 1812. He resided in the township until his death in 1837. His daughter, Deborah L., became the wife of William H. Knapp, who came to the township in 1833. West of the Cuyahoga there were very few settlers until 1825. Ichabod Skinner settled there in 1818. He had three sons, Gates, Prentice and David P. On the road south of the Skinner farm Abram Garfield, father of the President, lived for a few years prior to 1820, when he moved with his family to Orange Township. Caleb Boynton, an early arrival, died there in 1820 leaving four sons, Amos, Nathan, William and Jeremiah. Other families who early settled on the west side of the river were those of William Currier, John Darrow and Jaud Fuller. Among residents of the west side prior to 1843 may be named: John

Needham, Moses Usher, William Bushnell, William Buskirk, Nathaniel Wyatt, Amos Newland, Jacob Froelich, John Wolf, William Van Noate and Jeremiah Goudy, and east of the river, Moses Gleason, Allen Robinett, Roger Comstock and Col. Rial McArthur, whom we have mentioned.

The township records prior to 1834 have been destroyed and hence we have no record of the organization of the township, the selection of the name, etc. The first officers as shown by the remaining records, being for the year 1834, are: Trustees, John I. Harper, J. L. M. Brown and Marvin Cochran. Clerk, William H. Knapp. Treasurer, Jonathan Fisher. Constables, Orange McArthur and Jonathan Frazer. Overseers of the Poor, Enoch Scovill, Enoch Green, Fence Viewers, Alvah Darrow and Nathan Wyatt. Justice of the Peace, David D. Towner. Enoch Jewett, Stephen Frazer and S. A. Hathaway were judges of election and George Comstock and Alva Darrow clerks, and there were seventy-one votes polled. The Cleveland leader dated April 13, 1874, has an Independence item as follows: "The election passed off with the usual amount of scratching. The following ticket was elected: Justice of the Peace, O. P. McMillan; trustees, George Sommer, George W. Green and D. L. Phillips; clerk, C. H. Bushnell; treasurer, C. Hannum; assessor, Joel Foote; constables, W. Towner and C. Adams. Henry Doubler was quite seriously injured last week by his horse running away. A large gang of men are at work upon the Valley Railroad near the slip." Work on the Valley Road, now the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, was started in 1873. The Ohio Canal was located through the township in 1825 and opened for traffic in 1827, having four locks in the township. Thus, it was nearly fifty years before the township emerged from the slow traffic of the canal to the swifter traffic of the railroad. The canal, however, as late as 1890, was in operation carrying heavy freight and, in its northern division, grindstones from the quarries of Independence were a prominent factor. These were drawn by teams to the canal except in the case of a quarry operated by Erastus Eldridge, M. Shirman and others, who built a horse railroad to the canal for the transportation of their products. Independence stone became well known also as a building product. Aside from the one mentioned there were the Kinzer, the Hurst and the Clough quarries. The pillars of the Weddell House, once the finest hostelry in Cleveland, were taken from the Independence quarries. There were no early gristmills in the township. In 1825 sawmills were built on Hemlock Creek by Ring and McArthur and Clark and Land. In 1835 Finney and Farnsworth built a darn across the Cuyahoga River and operated a sawmill by its water power and below this a Mr. Sherman operated a mill for turning and polishing grindstones. This was later operated by John Geisendorfer, who served as county commissioner of Cuyahoga County. When the canal was built its excellent water power was utilized by A. Alexander, who built a gristmill on its banks in the township and ground grain for a large area, his customers coming from his own and surrounding towns. This was later operated by Clark Alexander, his son, who like Mr. Geisendorfer served as county commissioner. Cabinet organs were made in the northern part of the township by Palmer Brothers for some years. In this section extensive acid works were operated at one time. Crossing the Cuyahoga from the south by the state road you came to Acid Hill as it was termed. These works were engaged in restoring to available form refuse matter from the oil refineries, and employed a large force of men. Spent acid was shipped to the works by canal when navigation was open. Refuse from these works was conducted into a large lake on the lower level and there burned. Practical chemists have now learned the secret of making use of practically all of the byproduct of the refineries and the acid works have long since passed away, but the memory of those blighting fires remains. The great columns of smoke ascending by night and by day, the wild fires, typical of those once described as awaiting for the unbeliever, the blackened grass and trees are the setting, in memory, of Acid Hill.

The use of concrete, the larger development of the Berea quarries, nearby, and the larger capitalization of the stone business has operated to practically close up the quarries in Independence and the output at present is small. The great vein of red clay that extends westward from the Cuyahoga River to the western boundary of the township has taken the place of stone in the industrial activities of the

township. The Hydraulic Pressed Brick Company on the Baltimore & Ohio Railway, by the river, and extensive brick and tile works in the western part of the township, connected with Cleveland by rail, have an annual output of great value.

Among those who have served as trustees of the township are Alva Darrow, Jr., Zephaniah Hathaway, Jasper Fuller, Enos Hawkins, Elihu Hollister, John L. Harper, John Rowan, Alfred Fisher, William Buskirk, William H. Knapp, Daniel E. Williams, Elias M. Gleason, Harry McArthur, Finlay Strong, William Van Noate, William F. Bushnell, D. D. Towner, John Scofield, James Miller, Watson E. Thompson, William H. Perry, William Green 2nd, Milo N. Hathaway, George W. Green, George Sommers and D. Fullerton. Among the clerks are Alfred Fisher, William H. Knapp, Harry McArthur, B. H. Fisher, I. L. Gleason, J. D. Hathaway, Benjamin Wood, J. K. Brainard, G. B. Pierce, William B. Munson, O. P. McMillan, C. H. Bushnell, D. S. Green, Frank Brown, I. B. Waltz and D. Gindlesperger. Among the treasurers have been Jonathan Fisher, D. D. Towner, E. R. Harper, John Scofield, I. L. Gleason, George W. Green, John Bender and Carl Brown. The present officers of the township are: Trustees, Carl Kuenzer, John Fuerstein and Edward Lingler; clerk, A. B. Waltz; treasurer, John Lingler; assessor, Henry Froelich; constable, William Apel; justice of the peace, C. Peters. Mr. Apel succeeded Henry Froelich as clerk.

We have referred to Ichabod Skinner, a settler, coming in 1818, and his three sons, Gates, Prentice and David P. David P. Skinner while living in a brick house on the Skinner Hill, west of the present Willow station in the valley, was murdered in his home in the year 1868. He was a milk dealer, was reputed to be a man of means and had a safe in his house for the care of money and valuables, a piece of furniture somewhat rare in a country home in those days. Three men entered the house at night, were discovered by Mrs. Johns, a sister of Mrs. Skinner, who engaged them in close combat. She had one of the burglars by the hair in a desperate grasp, her husband, Mr. Johns, was battling a second with a chair, when Mr. Skinner, awakened by the noise, was shot by the third bandit as he rose from his bed. Two of the bandits were captured. Davis was tried and on the testimony of a second prisoner, "Hutch" Butterfield, and others who turned state's evidence, convicted and hung. Sometime afterward a change was made, and executions since that time were conducted at the penitentiary at Columbus. Butterfield was given a prison sentence but rumor has it that he was released later, or that a man called "Hutch" Butterfield lived for some years a quiet life in a small town in Northern Ohio, not very far from Cleveland, that it was common gossip that he had served a prison sentence, but that neither he nor his wife ever referred to the fact. The disclosures of Butterfield in the trial also implicated an officer of the police force of the City of Cleveland who was not tried in court but was forced to resign his position. Butterfield testified that he had only a knife on his person when he entered the house, adding that a knife was better than a gun in close quarters. It seems the assault of Mrs. Johns, who was the first of the household to attack, was so unexpected and violent that neither knife nor gun would have been available. A little woman but the descendant of a hardy pioneer, she showed the mettle of the race. Mr. Johns was in charge of the round house (at Cleveland) of the Valley Railway for many years.

Before 1830 a tavern was kept on the canal by one Kleckner, in a house built by Philemon Baldwin, and farther south on the river was "Mother Parker's" tavern, referred to in the chapter on Bedford, which had a far-flung reputation. In 1836 Peter Crumb opened a public house north of the center. Subsequent landlords were Mr. Hartmiller and George Sommers. This was often called the "Yellow Grocery." The color was yellow during some if not all of its most active work in providing for the wants of travelers but the groceries retailed were mostly wet. In 1852 a very fine tavern was built at the Center by Job Pratt. This was a fine hostelry for the time with a balcony extending along the entire front of the building and conveniences up to date. A picture preserved by its last proprietor, with the balcony and lower front filled with people, presents a most attractive appearance. Mr. Pratt was succeeded as landlord by Jake

Fultz and he by George Hollis. Mr. Hollis had a fine trotter and Mr. Fultz not succeeding very well in the tavern business sold him the tavern for the horse. Later Mr. Hollis sold the tavern to the proprietor, before him, and removed to Brecksville to engage in the same business there. It is not recorded whether these men simply traded back house for horse and horse for house or some other deal was consummated. In the years that followed many changes occurred. Fultz was succeeded by Gunn, Eaton, Alger and Brobeck in the order named. It was last purchased by Levi Wolff, the present owner. Mr. Wolff kept tavern for many years and still lives alone in the once attractive building. His father, John Wolff, came to Independence in 1840 from Pennsylvania. He lived for a time in Wayne County before coming to Cuyahoga. His wife Catherine and the children, then born, were with him. He purchased fifty acres of land on the cross roads for \$11 an acre, showing that land had increased in value since the first pioneers came. They had seven children, Henry, Jake, Dave, Elizabeth, John, Dan and Levi.

Levi is the only one living. He married Elizabeth Gindlesperger, by whom he had five children, Charles Eugene, Benjamin Franklyn, Jesse Lee, Clark and Ida. Franklyn, Jesse and Ida are living. The mother, Elizabeth, who was born in 1841, died in 1909, since which time, the children being married and away, Levi has lived alone in the old hotel building, its outer covering the worse for the storms of the seasons and the corroding hand of time, its interior lacking the care of the housewife. He is ninety-four years of age, the oldest person in Independence. There is not a person living in the township today who was there when he came with his father as a boy.

Next to the tavern and the blacksmith shop as a gathering place in the early days was the post office. The first post office opened in Independence was at the home of Nathan P. Fletcher on the east side of the river. Mr. Fletcher was the first postmaster. For some years the post office was at the residence of the postmaster, wherever that chanced to be. The daily mail and the cheap letter and paper postage made the central location of more importance in later years. About 1845 the post office was permanently located at the Center and in 1875 another one was established at Willow. Following Mr. Fletcher, who was the first postmaster, came in their order William H. Knapp, Nathaniel Stafford. John Needham, B. F. Sharp, J. K. Brainard, George Green, Calvin Hannah, C. H. Bushnell, George Usher, D. Gindlesperger, Leonard Merkle and C. W. Ferguson. The present postmaster is John Wisnieski, who was preceded by R. S. Mitchell. John Kingsbury, one-time amateur baseball hero on the Brecksville nine, was the first postmaster of Willow, which position he held until his death. John Needham, referred to as one of the postmasters of Independence, who, as we have said in another chapter, carried a daily mail on horseback from Cleveland to Brecksville during the four years of the Civil war, was the grandfather of May (Needham) Schmitt of Lakewood who has been prominent in the organization of the Daughters of Veterans. Mr. Needham was an interesting and useful factor in the anxious days for those at home during the great struggle. He had sons in the war and could mingle his personal and general news as he would call out in passing a dooryard: "Good news for you but bad news for me. We've won the battle but my son's wounded," and similar news from day to day.

There were no stores worthy of notice in the township until the opening of the Ohio Canal. The traffic in passengers as well as freight was considerable and trade sought the tow path. I. L. and Edward M. Gleason opened a store at the twelve-mile lock, among the first in the township. Travelers on the canal could buy while boats were sinking in the lock to a lower level or rising to a higher level as the case might be. This added to the trade from the surrounding farmers made business rather brisk. Others, including Merrill, Rutter, Oylar and Bender, engaged in trade, operating department stores on a small scale. Soon after the Crumb tavern was opened north of the Center, Benjamin Wood opened a store there. The first regular store at the Center was kept by Horace Bell. He was succeeded in the same locality by J. K. Brainard, George Green, Josephus Brown, Charles Green and Charles Memple in their order. Competition

becoming necessary to healthy trade, as the population increased, other and rival stores were opened. Epaphroditus Wells began trade opposite the tavern and nearby Jacob and Samuel Foltz and I. L. Gleason opened another store. Currier and Watkins opened a shoe store and their succedent was Calvin Hannum. In 1867 the mercantile business of the town was augmented by the opening of a store by P. Kingsley and his succedent was C. H. Bushnell. I. L. Gleason finally adopted the profession of law and practiced in the courts of the county and in the justice courts of first resort. His tact and eloquence in the latter made his name a household word in a large area of the county.

The first schools in Independence were established east of the river. In 1830 there were four school districts. In 1850 there were 611 youths of school age in the township and in 1879 there were 696 males and females of school age, a rather small increase in twenty years. In 1870 a two-story building was built at the Center, called the high school, having two school rooms, the present building occupies the site of the old, which was torn down. The district schools have been abandoned following the plan adopted by county and state. Work has commenced on a high school building at the Center to cost \$60,000 or \$75,000. A bond issue has been voted for \$100,000 for the building but the whole amount authorized will not be used. On account of the brick and tile manufactured in the township so near the building place, time, labor and expense is saved. Reminiscent of the "Little Red School House," two schoolhouses are still the property of the township, one on Rockside and one in the Lembacher district. These are not used, as busses bring all pupils from a distance to the grade and high schools at the Center. The present school board includes A. H. Webber, clerk, A. E. Sabin, president, and William Sitzler, Frank Sawyer and Richard Imar.

Dr. William Munson was the first regular, physician in the township. Several doctors came for short stays before his time. A brick house and attractive grounds overlooking Hemlock Creek was the home of Doctor Munson, who practiced in the town during a long period and until his death. Following him were Dr. S. O. Morgan (Sid), son of Doctor Morgan of early pioneer fame, Dr. Charles Hollis, son of George Hollis, tavern keeper in Independence and Brecksville, E. M. Gleason, son of the early pioneer mentioned, Dr. W. A. Knowlton. Sr., whose career we have mentioned, Dr. W. A. Knowlton, Jr., son of Dr. Augustus Knowlton, of local fame, Dr. I. N. Nolan, Dr. C. W. Dean, Doctor Lane and Dr. J. G. Layton, and Dr. Henry Morgan.

The Congregationalists were the first religious people to found a permanent church in the township. The first religious meeting was held October 1, 1836, addressed by Rev. Mr. Freeman, a Baptist from Cleveland. In February of the following year a Baptist congregation was organized but it only existed for a short time and then dissolved. Shortly after a Methodist class was formed, which dissolved after a few years of activity. Its meetings were held at various homes in the township but there was no settled minister and circuit preachers officiated from time to time. The organizers of the Congregational Church, now Presbyterian, were Reverends Chester Chapin and Israel Shaller of the Missionary Association of Connecticut. On the 24th day of June, 1837, the church was formed with the following members: William F. Bushnell and wife, James and Mary Miller, Betsy Brewster, Jane and Elizabeth Bushnell. William Bushnell was elected deacon and James Miller clerk. The meetings were first held in a log schoolhouse at Miller's Corners and then in the town hall. On the 17th day of October, a society of the church met to attend to its temporal affairs. Through the activity of this society the present meeting house was built in 1854. In 1862 the church became Presbyterian, uniting with the Cleveland Presbytery. Rev. B. F. Sharp was active in the building of the new church. Unlike most other religious denominations, the Evangelical Association of Independence first built their church and then organized. This attractive brick structure was built at the Center about 1860, largely through the efforts of Rev. T. G. Clewell. January 7, 1873, the first Board of Trustees was organized as follows, George W. Green, George Merkle,

Francis Pilliatt, Henry Wentz and Mathew Brantley. Services have been conducted in both the English and German languages. The present minister is Rev. J. R. Niergarth. St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized by residents in the northeastern part of the township in 1850, or rather at that time the agitation began with the idea of having a place of worship nearer home. On the 14th day of October, 1854, a frame meeting house was dedicated for worship by Rev. Mr. Schwan of Cleveland. Here the meetings were held until the erection of a fine church on a site opposite in 1879.

A Roman Catholic church was built northwest of the center of the township in 1852, which was used for services until the larger congregation demanded more commodious quarters. The present church building in that locality was planned and its construction started in 1870 but progressed slowly. The building committee were George Gable, Joseph Unnetz, Peter Wild, Albert Doubler, Anton Eckenfelt and Joseph Effinger. This committee had its troubles. Not yet completed, in 1873 the walls were blown down by a severe storm. The following year the walls were again built up and the building completed for use in 1875. It was consecrated in December of that year by the Right Reverend Father Gregory and Bishop Fitzgerald. A school has also been maintained by this church. Anton Eckenfelt, mentioned as one of the building committee, operated the Spring Mill in Brecksville for many years and was well known to all residents there.

The latest church building to be erected in the township was that built by the Evangelical Lutheran congregation about 1912 at the Center. It is a neat building quite modern in structure and was consecrated by Reverend Bay. As in the case of Parma, these religious organizations reflect the character of the inhabitants and it is probable that a census of Independence would show about the same percentage of German and foreign-born people as did Parma.

In politics the town has generally been democratic, at times close, and once at least it went republican. In the presidential campaign of James G. Blaine against Grover Cleveland, Blaine carried the town by two majority. The republicans were so rejoiced over the night returns that their enthusiasm found its vent in Hallowe'en stunts. One man who had been active for Cleveland found his heavy two horse wagon the next morning on the top of his barn. It was all in complete running condition, the heavy box in place and a short board placed under the pole as he had left it in his yard. The later returns, which gave the election to Cleveland, dampened the enthusiasm of the young republicans and they came down to earth, and we will assume that the wagon came down also.

A well-known landmark on the State Road south from the Center is a stone house on the Brantley farm built by the grandfather of M. F. Bramley of Cleveland, of whom we will speak in another chapter. Here Fred, as he is called, spent his youth and indulged in the pranks common to active youngsters in the country. The old Bradley homestead still stands and passers of a former time remember the stout presence of the original Bramley as it often appeared in the field or doorway of the old home farm. When this house was built stone was the wealth of Independence, aside from agriculture, and the house was a sort of emblematic structure. It is occupied at present by George Bramley and family.

We have referred to several of the Independence settlers, who served in the War of 1812. At the breaking out of the Mexican war or the year previous (in 1845), a muster roll of the township was taken by Albert Fisher, showing seventy-three men liable to military duty. This would indicate that the Government was preparing for the conflict and finding out in advance just what its strength was in man power. In the Civil war, the Spanish-American and the World war, Independence furnished its full quota of soldiers. In 1863 the township was formed into two military districts. Number 1 was east of the Cuyahoga and number 2 west of the Cuyahoga.

The only indication of the temperance sentiment in the township in the first four decades of its existence was when a vote to regulate the liquor traffic was taken in 1851. The vote stood thirty-four for and sixty-eight against.

The State Road through the Center and the River Road were the first to be used and improved. Citizens worked out their poll tax and mended the dirt track often to its disadvantage. The Pratt Road from the river to the Center was laid out in April, 1852. Other roads of intersecting character were soon after laid out. The first genuine road improvement came when the paved road through to Brecksville was built by the county. This was about 1890. Now the throngs of automobiles, busses and trucks that traverse the brick pavement through the township testify to its value. Says one: "This is the biggest and most important improvement that has ever been inaugurated in the township."

The original territory of the township has changed with the march of events and at the present time the Township of Independence includes a strip of land along the west side of the original survey. In March, 1839, a portion of the northwest corner was annexed to Brooklyn Township. In the last two decades the territory east of the Cuyahoga has been annexed to Newburgh and incorporated into two villages, South Newburgh and Newburgh Heights, and, most drastic of all the changes, on June 1, 1914, the Village of Independence was created. This includes the Center or the tract originally set aside by L. Strong for a public square and village. Strong, a first purchaser and promoter, had this tract surveyed into five acre lots, which he sold at auction and the sales were made at from \$9 to \$10 per acre. The Village of Independence as incorporated includes much more territory than that of the Strong survey, but the public square as planned by him is as he intended it to be. The first officers of the village were: Mayor, Frank Wisnieski; clerk, Ed Tryon; treasurer, George Rose; councilmen, Charles Sizler, Grant Cash, Joseph Blessing, Frank R. Castle, Edward Lembecker and Herman Vunderink. At this first election Mr. Tryon was elected clerk but soon after resigned and Arthur J. Goudy was chosen. On Mr. Gaudy was devolved the task of getting up the original records and establishing a system of accounts. How well he performed his task may be shown by the report of the state examiner, who pronounced his books the best he had examined. Mr. Goudy served nearly four years, completing the first term and being elected for two years more. He is now a deputy in the office of the Probate Court of the county. The first mayor was succeeded by William Cash and he by Alvin A. Smith, the present mayor. The other officers of the village are: Clerk, E. F. Keller; treasurer, George Rose; marshal, Jacob Lambacher; assessor, H. J. Faudel; councilmen, Joe Blessing, Peter Selig, Grant Cash, H. Vunderink and William Vunderink. F. X. Esculine was elected and served until his death a short time ago. H. J. Faudel, whom we have mentioned as assessor, entered the district school with a very slight command of the English language and we believe his schooling was confined largely to the "Little Red School House." He has lived in Independence from a boy. In 1893 he published a book entitled "Horse Sense," which has gone through several editions. Although Mr. Faudel makes no claim to professional knowledge, his book has been favorably commented upon by men of the medical profession in high standing. He calls his book "A school of practical science upon the perplexing problems of today, pertaining to life and health." The writer remembers Faudel as a pupil in his first school, in which he was endeavoring to teach "the young idea how to shoot." He could hardly make himself understood in English, but was keen for knowledge and industrious to a most astonishing degree. We quote a few passages from his book: "The term 'expert' is too easily won and too lightly worn to be regarded with respect." "You can remove a mountain if you take a little at a time, but you cannot remove it by hitching to it to remove it all at once." "Money serves but to bring the things we need. It is supposed to buy health, but only serves as the agent. But a life devoted to the teachings of Nature will buy more than all the coins of the realm."

Of the fraternal organizations of Independence the Grand Army Post should be mentioned first. Formed about 1870, it continued in existence for many years as a part of that great but now greatly diminished organization. Unlike many, its ranks cannot be replenished, as Time thins out its numbers. Only those who served in the army of the Union during the Civil war are eligible to membership. Among those active in Independence Post have been Thomas Goudy, C. H. Bushnell, George Lambacher, Ed Patton, C. J. Green, Francis Bramley and Hugh Goudy. There was the Good Templars Lodge, whose activities continued nearly as long. The lodge of Foresters, the Maccabees, the Ladies of the Maccabees and the Catholic Beneficial Association are still actively operating as factors in the township and village life.

An incident of historic interest which belongs to the chapter on Independence and has to do with the progress of events and particularly to a step forward in the practice of medicine in the county, is worthy of note here. William Goudy, a Scotch-Irish immigrant, one of the early arrivals in the township, who came from the north of Ireland, father of Thomas and Hugh Goudy and grandfather of Arthur J. Goudy, brought with him from the old country a stomach pump, which he sold to Doctor Streater, then the leading practitioner in Cleveland. This was the first one sold in Cleveland and the first one to be used in medical practice in the county.

UNLIKE OTHER TOWNSHIPS, INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP DOES NOT HAVE AN ENTRY IN THE MEMORIAL TO THE PIONEER WOMEN OF THE WESTERN RESERVE BY GERTRUDE VAN RENSSELAER WICKHAM.