

## **FOREWARD**

By Don F. Cochrane

For more than a year Charles A. Spaulding has been writing about other people, from the first white men who invaded Hartford Township and subdued the virgin forests to those folk who are enacting the drama of community life in Hartford today.

His license to scribble facts, historical and personal, for present and future generations to read, has been by virtue of his appointment as historian of Hartford Township in connection with the Van Buren County Centennial Celebration in October, 1929.

Under that license he compiled interesting facts about other humans who have left their impression upon Hartford but scribbled nothing about himself. To rectify that omission it becomes necessary for The Day Spring to write about the historian - to make Hartford's history, of which he is the author, the more complete.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mr. Spaulding's life history is not unlike that of other Hartford folk about whom he has written, in its essentials. He was born, schooled, married, has worked and played, and after a residence of 63 years in this

community, he still commands a full measure of the confidence and respect of the towns folks.

That paragraph covers a normal, successful life - except as to the "when, where and how" - the details that are of biographical interest.

The when and where in Mr. Spaulding's life was October 1, 1856, at Grass Lake, Michigan. When he arrived his parents called him Charles A. At a pioneer country school in the woods near Grass Lake, he learned the rudiments of reading, writing and ruling - the schoolmaster doing the ruling.

When he was 10 years of age his parents decided to remove to Hartford. Those parents, who brought Hartford's future historian here, were Mr. and Mrs. Augustus N. Spaulding who became successful and highly respected residents of this township. The family settled on the 160 acre farm two miles south of town, now the Jay Johnson place. That was in 1867. A little later the father bought 100 acres across the road, now R.D. McLean's Beechnut Farm. It was this parcel that was destined to become the Hartford historian's home.

Charles A. Spaulding as a boy of 10 began attending the North Bell School southwest of town. Later, when William Havens built the first brick school house in Hartford on the present school site, Mr. Spaulding

transferred his studies to the Hartford Union School as the village school was called. He remembers that on his daily trips to this village he brought his gun along and hunted to and from school. The virgin forests and a few slashings extended all the way from the McLean farm to the village limits, with a clearing here and there where a farm house had been built.

Wild turkeys, partridge, black, grey and fox squirrels and rabbits abounded and Mr. Spaulding hunted them mornings and nights as he trudged back and forth to school. A log across the road from the present Maple Hill Cemetery furnished a convenient hiding place for his gun while he was spending a few hours each day with his school books in town.

Another happy date in Mr. Spaulding's life was December 22, 1880, when as the culmination of a youthful romance, he claimed Miss Katherine J. Putney of Hartford as his bride.

It was just 50 years ago this month that he began the erection of a new home in which to receive his bride in December. That home is part of the present Beechnut Farm house. It consisted of an upright, 16 x 24 and a wing. William Havens, who built many of the structures in Hartford, erected it for \$447 and furnished all of the materials.

From the beginning it was a hospitable home. One evening, Rev. F. B. Stearns, former pastor of the Hartford Congregational Church, and his family drove into the Spaulding farm yard and aroused the family from sleep. The house was already full - but the minister and his family were entitled to hospitality.

Mr. Spaulding and his hired man, George Furnham, took blankets and went to the barn to sleep. As he lay upon the hay that night, vainly wooing the goddess of sleep, Mr. Spaulding devised the plans for remodeling and enlarging the house. He put the plans into immediate execution, and it became one of the most spacious as well as most hospitable farm homes in Hartford.

That farm house was the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding from the date of their marriage in 1880 until 1920, when they moved to their present home on South Center Street. During those 40 years on the farm Mr. Spaulding was a successful farmer. He specialized in potatoes, growing from 10 to 30 acres of the spuds each year - and he knew his potatoes.

Although always keenly interested in civic affairs and a staunch Republican in politics, Mr. Spaulding has never sought public office. His first office was that of County Commissioner of the poor some 30 years

ago. Incidentally, he is again serving in the same capacity, having been appointed a few months ago by the Board of Supervisors to fill a vacancy.

He was nominated as the Republican candidate for Supervisor of Hartford once, but the "free silver" voters were too numerous then and he met his only political defeat. He has served many terms as a member of the local township Board of Review.

After leaving the farm in 1920, Mr. Spaulding was with the State Tax Commission for four years and had much to do with Michigan's revision of assessed values. His work was principally in the counties comprising the lower half of the lower peninsula.

The local historian has long been a member of the Hartford Congregational Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding have four children, Mrs. Nora Merriman of Schoolcraft, Chester Spaulding, affiliated with the Carpenter Paper Company at Des Moines, Iowa, Miss Marie Spaulding, a teacher in Grand Rapids schools, and Mrs. Josephine Eddy, of Evanston, Illinois.

It is an exceptionally readable and authentic history of Hartford that Mr. Spaulding compiled, and which was published in *The Day* Spring in 38 weekly installments. His intimate knowledge of Hartford, his

acquaintance with the people of the township, his ability as a writer and his devotion to the task made him the logical author of that history.

Scrapbook makers, who'd have their books complete, may append this if they like, to the "History of Hartford" by Charles A. Spaulding.

## **THE HISTORY OF HARTFORD, MICHIGAN**

**By Charles A. Spaulding**

When the first white settlers began to locate in this section of the county, bands of Potawatomies, Ottawas and a few Chippewas were quite numerous and were roving over the country settling (or rather camping) in different parts in different seasons. In the spring of the year they gathered near the large maple groves to make sugar which they would exchange with the Chi-mookie-man (white man) for such articles as whiskey, bread and pork. The largest of these sugar orchards was in the southeast part of the town on sections 23 & 24 from the Brown and Dowd neighborhood East to the Sheperd and Johnson's farms. Another was on the north side of the river below Fabius Miles' on Section 12 extending West down the river to the DeLong neighborhood, and several other small groves were in various parts of the town. In the summer season they moved their wigwams to the borders of berry swamps and near good fishing. The largest of these berry swamps was in the south east part of the town on the N.E. quarter of section 35 near Orson Olds. Another was in the N.W. part of town on the W. line and N. of the river. In the fall season they gathered on the lowlands and selected a place for their wigwams in the heavy timber where they were protected from the

wind. The game was principally deer, wild turkey and fur bearing animals. The most of the Indians were removed in 1838, however a few remained and some returned and in 1842 were again removed. Remnants of those tribes now live in the N. part of the Township.

About 1829 the lands were first opened for settlement and immigrants from Ohio, Pennsylvania and other Eastern states began to flow in slowly along the St. Joseph River. Several years later settlers began to press back from the river and locate and clear land. At that time the section of country all along the western slope N. of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor was almost a complete wilderness and Hartford was the home only of Indians and wild animals.

About 1835 a noted hunter and trapper by the name of Harvey Saulsbury came first into what is now the township of Hartford and built a cabin of bass wood logs with a roof of bark on the bank of the creek on the S.W. quarter of Section 14. This cabin was the first house in Hartford Township and was occupied by him on the hunting trips in which he ranged the line of swamps from the Dowagiac to the Black River. There were no white settlers for a long distance and this cabin was built as a halfway house between the Northern and Southern points of his range.

His summers were mostly spent at Niles and as the hunting and trapping season came on he started out dressed in deer skin trousers, blouse and slouch hat with his rifle on his shoulder and a load of traps on his back, would make his way to this place and generally remain here till spring, occasionally going to Paw Paw to exchange his furs for articles to sell to the Indians. He continued his hunting and trapping excursions until about 1845.

It is said that two men named Duncan and Sumner in about 1828 before any settlements were in this section, followed up Paw Paw River as far as Watervliet and built a saw mill under the bluff on the south side of the river, using the water of Mill Creek. This was near the mill of the Watervliet Milling Company.

A short time after this three brothers by the name of Stone bought a tract of land in the N.W. part of Hartford township on sections 5 and 8 for the timber. They cleared the land for the logs which were manufactured into lumber at the mill below. This continued for a short time when a flood filled the race way with sand, when they all left and their shanties became an Indian rendezvous. Sumner went to Cass County and was the founder of Sumnerville. The Stone brothers years

afterwards sold their lands to Alva DeLong for five shillings per acre receiving their pay in lumber.

The first actual settlers in the township were Ferdino Olds and family consisting of his wife and daughter, Julia, who later married Ansel E. Reynolds. Mr. Olds was a native of Cayuga County, N.Y., migrated to this place in December, 1836, and located land on the middle of the N. half of section 29, where Charles Havens now lives. On coming through to the place the family stopped at the home of Lyman G. Hill (who was the nearest settler and lived in the N.E. part of Keeler Township) while he put up a small log cabin which was completed January 25, 1837, on which day the family moved into it. Here they lived a short time but the family increased so rapidly that a larger house had to be built and a family of ten children was raised.

Ferdino Olds being the first settler was permitted to name the town, which he did, calling in Hartland after his native town in the state of New York, but, learning of another town of the same name in the state, at the suggestion of Mr. Olney, the name was changed to Hartford. Mr. Olds died in October, 1856. His brothers, Hezekiah and John, came soon after. The latter settled on the S.W. quarter of section 29 adjoining Ferdino. Hezekiah was a bachelor and lived with John. Orson settled

south of John on the same quarter section and later sold his farm to Sylvester McNitt. Ira and Harry came in later. Ira settled on section 28 on the farm afterward owned by William Day. Ira moved to Keeler Township near the north line. Harry was a carpenter. He lived here a few years and returned to New York. Edwin R. Olds, son of Orson, married Harriet, a daughter of Ferdino Olds, and in 1858 bought the N.E. quarter of section 28 and some time later bought the N.W. quarter of section 27. The house (built of logs and located on the west side of the road) stood about four rods northwest of Jay Johnson's present house. In the spring of 1861 he set out 200 apple trees of many different varieties and in 1867 he set out 800 more, making 26 acres of apple orchard in one block. Probably this was the largest apple orchard in the township at that time. This orchard has always had the best of care, and is owned now by Charles Johnson and is considered one of the best producing orchards in the township. Mr. Olds, his wife and daughter, Nettie, lived on this farm until 1868 when he sold the 160 in section 28 to Augustus N. Spaulding. He retained the 160 section 27 and in the spring of 1868 built a house and horse barn across the road. He then sold 40 acres to Mr. McNitt and 20 acres to a Mr. Carbine who taught the North Bell school during the winter. The next year he sold the remaining 100 acres to A. N. Spaulding

who moved the house and barn across the road and the old log house was torn down. This house is now used by Jay Johnson as a tenant house. After selling his farm he removed to Hartford village and built the brick hotel known for a number of years as the Olds House (now the Hartford House). In the year 1878 Mr. Olds engaged in buying stock, grain and wool under the name of Olds, Olney and Co. Mr. Olds retired from the firm in 1884 and later went to Chicago. Henry Hammond was the next settler after Ferdino Olds and located on the S.W. quarter of section 34. He erected a cabin for temporary use in the spring of 1837 where he lived until about the middle of May. He and Mrs. Hammond worked together in building a log house 16 x 22 moving into it as soon as it was completed. In this house January 3, 1838 a daughter was born who was the first white child born in the township. This was Catherine Hammond, afterwards the wife of Hiram E. Stratton.

The first white male child born in the township was Luke Conklin, son of Thomas Conklin, born in 1838. Thomas Conklin was a native of Rutland, Jefferson County, New York, and came to Kalamazoo in 1834, but not liking the country returned to New York. In November, 1836, in company with his brother James and Mr. Sellick, he came back to Kalamazoo. They had with them a yoke of oxen and a wagon. The first

night in the wilderness was passed under many difficulties. They felled a large beech tree and build a fire against it cooked their food. They slept on the ground with the wagon box turned over them. Snow fell during the night to the depth of two feet and continued the next day and the weather getting colder they decided to go to Battle Creek. While at Kalamazoo in the Fall of 1836, Thomas Conklin in behalf of himself, James his brother, Mr. Sellick, Burrell A. Olney and James Spinnings, all school mates and associates, entered about 1000 acres of land, most of this land being on Section 33, Hartford. The most of the members of this company were still in the East, and did not come out until the spring of 1837. March 14, 1837, B.A. Olney, who was 25 years old at that time, and James Spinnings, came from the East and they together with Thomas Conklin erected on Mr. Conklin's land a log cabin 12 x 12 in which they lived together six weeks, chopping and clearing land and doing their own cooking.

The furniture was crude in those days as the only tool of the time was an axe. Marsh hay was gathered to fill an old tick to make a bed. The three of them occupied the same bed with two blankets for covering. About the first of May the party separated and each commenced for himself. Mr. Spinnings lived with Mr. Olney and died May 2, 1841, this

being the first death in the township. After getting some land cleared and some corn and potatoes planted, a log house built, Thomas Conklin went East, married and returned to the new home about the first of October, 1837. Mrs. Conklin was a school teacher in the East and there in this new log house the first children of Hartford Township were gathered together and taught by her. Joseph Ruggles who was the first supervisor of Hartford Township was instrumental in organizing this school. Thomas Conklin died January 28, 1888 and was buried in the West Hartford Cemetery.

General Chadwick, Mr. Conklin and Orrin Sukes were the first school inspectors. The first school house was built of logs and was erected in the S.E. part of the township. There were five pupils and the school was taught by Olive Pool who received the munificent salary of \$1.25 per week.

About the first of June Mr. Olney returned to Jefferson County, New York and in the September following brought his wife, who was Miss Elvira Ely, to the farm and for about a year did the work of the farm without a team. In the fall of 1838 he purchased a pair of oxen which were used about ten years in the clearing up and logging incident to all new land in a timber country. Mr. Olney was a man of great physical

energy and business ability and always kept pace with the progress of his country. He left the farm in 1865 and formed a partnership with G. M. Fisher and I. N. Swain of Detroit, under the firm name of Swain, Olney and Fisher in the village of Watervliet.

Two years thereafter the firm was succeeded by Swain, Olney and Co. Mr. Fisher retiring and George Parsons and W. M. Baldwin entering the new firm. The forming of this partnership and the building of a large saw mill where the Watervliet Paper Mill now stands, and the large lumbering business entered into by them, made a ready market for a large part of the timber in Hartford Township. Parties having timber to sell cut the logs and drew them to some one of the banking places along Paw Paw River. One of these places was north of the village just south of the road bridge where logs would be banked between the river and the road to the south bend of the river and often when this space was filled there would be many logs banked on the west side of the road at this point.

Some time during the latter part of the winter or before the spring thaw Mr. Olney would meet the different owners of these logs by appointment, at the river bank, measure the logs and mark them. When the river was high enough so the logs could be run with safety, the

owners of the logs were notified and the logs were rolled into the river. The log runners, as they were called, followed up with their pike poles, broke the jams and worked the logs that had lodged along the river bank at different places out into the current of the river. It was an interesting sight to watch these men at their work. Sometimes one or two of them could be seen coming down the middle of the river each on a log which was almost entirely under water. At first sight a person not knowing what they were doing would think they were walking on the water. They were usually expert at the work although they did get their feet wet occasionally.

Some years later Mr. Olney engaged in buying grain, wool and produce in Hartford and was associated with his son, Horace, and Edwin R. Olds under the firm name of Olds, Olney and Co. Mr. Olney removed to Chicago and there made large purchases of real estate. A short time prior to his death he again took up his residence at the old farm and quietly passed away August 25, 1888, at the age of 76 years, 3 months and 29 days.

Ely Park, Hartford's beauty spot, is the gift of Horace M. Olney to the village, and is named in honor of his mother, whose maiden name was Ely.

Rufus Sayers of Wayne County, New York, was one of the surveying party who surveyed this section of the country and in 1836 he located the N.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 24 and made arrangements with a Mr. Wetherby to clear 20 acres for which he was to receive 80 acres of timber land. Wetherby made a clearing, built a log house and lived there for a time, but soon left it. Sayers returned to New York and in 1843 exchanged the land in Michigan with a neighbor Horace Dowd for land there, placing the value of the land at \$5.00 per acre. Mr. Dowd was a native of Massachusetts and had emigrated with his father's family to Wayne County, New York in 1828. In 1833 he went to Connecticut and brought home as his wife Miss Mary Barrows. In 1844 Mr. Dowd brought his family to Hartford.

The southeast quarter of Hartford Township was an almost unbroken forest and Lawrence was the nearest town when Horace and Mary Dowd and their little family arrived in 1844 to claim the northwest quarter of Section 24, and to be numbered among the earliest settlers of Hartford.

Incidentally, 80 acres of the original quarter are now owned and operated by a grandson, Arthur J. Dowd, the parcel having been owned continuously by the Dowd family for 85 years.

In 1842 Mr. and Mrs. Dowd were the owners of a farm in Huron, Wayne County, New York. This they traded to Rufus Sours for the quarter section in Hartford. Sours had worked for the government, surveying here, and bought the quarter for \$1.25 an acre. In the trade to the Dowds it was valued at \$5.00 an acre.

It cost Horace Dowd the amazing sum of \$14 to bring his family, consisting of a wife and three children, and their household goods from Buffalo, New York, to St. Joseph. The trip was made on a two-masted sailing vessel, by way of the lakes. The vessel put in at Chicago on July 4, 1844, and that night crossed to St. Joseph to land the Dowds at the port nearest to their destination.

The next day Mr. Dowd found a settler from Keeler in St. Joseph with an ox team. He brought the family to the David Manley home, now the Ralph Hughes place. They were made welcome there as well as at the home of Peter Williamson, who lived a little farther west. They stayed there two weeks, but then moved to a cabin owned by a French trapper on the Lammon farm east of town. This cabin is believed to have been erected in 1828, and said to be the first house in Hartford Township.

By the following February Mr. Dowd had completed a new log house on his own land excepting the doors and windows. They hung

blankets at the openings and moved in. Their household goods and farm implements had been brought up the river from St. Joseph on a flat boat.

In this pioneer environment they faced the hardships that befell the early settlers. The nearest railroad at the time was at Marshall, and the nearest town was at Lawrence. There was no road out to the main road, called the St. Joseph Highway and now U.S. 12, until 10 years later.

None of the land was cleared when they arrived, but they soon had a small clearing and by 1850 had planted an orchard of which 14 trees are still bearing.

Mrs. Dowd was an expert weaver, and soon had a loom. She did weaving for the family and for neighbors, and also kept silkworms and sold the raw silk.

The three children in the Dowd family when they arrived in 1844 were Henry, aged 11, Jefferson, 9, and Mary, 6. They spent their lives here. They first attended school in what Hartford now calls the "Pinery".

Later Henry Dowd acquired an adjoining farm. Jefferson had part of the home place, while Mary became the wife of Alfred Brown and lived on the next farm to the west.

The family attended the Baptist Church in Lawrence, and in 1858 helped organize the First Baptist Church in Hartford. It is a coincidence

that Horace Dowd, grandfather of Arthur J. Dowd, and Sylvanus Reynolds, grandfather of Mrs. Dowd, were the first deacons of the local church. Jefferson Dowd was the first clerk of the church. The Dowd's also helped organize the first school district No. 4.

The orchard set by Horace Dowd in 1850 was the nucleus of the fruit industry in southeast Hartford. Likewise, it was the forerunner of the present Arthur Dowd fruit farms, one of the fine fruit farms in the township.

The experiences of the Dowd's were not unlike those of other early settlers. They were another of the sturdy families that came into the pioneer wilderness and had a hand in organizing and shaping the destiny of the community.

Smith Johnson was a settler on Section 17 in 1843. He sold out to William Thomas who became a man of some prominence in the community. He is credited with establishing the first mail route from Saint Joseph to Paw Paw. Mr. Thomas was one of the first settlers of Hartford Township and had much to do with the opening of avenues of communication in this section of the state legislature in 1875. Mr. Thomas came to Hartford in 1843 but it was not until 1854 that the mail route was established and he accepted the contract, employing James E.

Griffin to drive the route. In 1855 one Dolph carried the mail, and a post office was established at "Hartford Center" with Griffin as the first postmaster. Following the appointment of James Griffin as Hartford's first postmaster, the early postmasters were successively M. F. Palmer, W. A. Engle, Nathan Thomas and J. W. Travis.

Perhaps the only Revolutionary soldier who ever lived in Hartford Township was Francis DeLong who was born in 1760. He and his wife came to the Township of Hartford in 1854 and lived with their children. Mr. DeLong enlisted in the American army on the 13th day of September, 1777. He was taken prisoner by the English forces at Charleston, South Carolina and was held prisoner for five months. He was then taken to the island of Jamaica where he was held for six years when he was transferred to Halifax and detained for one year, then sent to Montreal, and then three months afterwards he and his comrades in captivity were sent to the West Indies to fight the natives, but not being of the requisite stature of an English soldier he was discharged, a stranger in a strange land without money and without friends.

He finally succeeded in working his way to northern New York where he married and raised a family of eight children. Three grandsons of the old hero were in the Civil War, Silas, Henry and Nathan DeLong.

Freeman Stowe, a great grandson, was also a soldier. Numerous descendants of the old veteran, grandchildren and great grandchildren are residents of the townships of Hartford and Bangor.

He died in 1862 and was laid to rest in the Hartford cemetery in military style in the presence of friends, relatives and a few soldiers who had just been sworn into the U.S. service by C.H. Engle. The scene was an impressive one. "We are consigning to his grave", says Mr. Engle, "in the presence of the young soldiers one of the last of the Revolutionary heroes who fought for the liberty that was secured to us by such loyals as Francis DeLong".

Alvah DeLong was a settler of the town in 1839. He removed to California where he died. Two of his brothers, Asher and Allen, also became residents of the township.

In the fall of 1837 William Everett and his son, Richard B., settled on Section 26 and about the same time Alexander Newton settled on Section 13.

Ira Allen who was a soldier in the War of 1812 located in Hartford in 1839 having previously been a resident of Lawrence. He died about 1875.

Charles P. Sheldon was also a prominent early citizen of the township and was the first settler on the north side of Paw Paw River. He was several times elected as supervisor and was chosen as representative in the legislature in 1853. Another prominent character, Fabius Miles located three hundred acres on Section 12 in 1844. He also served as a member of the state house of representatives for the session of 1859-1860.

Adonirum J. Dyer came to Hartford in 1850 and engaged in teaching. In 1853, with a small company, he crossed the plains to California with ox teams. They were six months in reaching the Pacific Coast. He was instrumental in building the first store in the village of Hartford, which was afterward remodeled and fitted up for a hotel and was widely known as the Rasset House. The post office block now occupies the same site.

Returning from California in 1855, Mr. Dyer became the manager of Cross and Andrews saw mill, sometimes shipping as much as 150,000 feet of lumber in cribs floated down the Paw Paw River to Saint Joseph, thence across the lake to Chicago. Millions of feet of lumber and logs have been thus floated downstream. Mr. Dyer was a charter member of

the First Congregational Church of Hartford and gave liberally when the church was built in 1886.

Joseph Ruggles of Huron County, Ohio, when a young man had been teaching school in Pennsylvania and while there became acquainted with and later married Miss Sylvia Brown. They had seven sons, Fernando, Freeman, Martin, Lewis, Lyman, Eli and Wesley. Mr. Ruggles' son Fernando, came to Michigan in 1838 and in 1839 Mr. Ruggles fitted up two covered wagons, loaded his household goods, etc. in one and the family in the other. Both wagons were drawn by oxen. The roads were muddy ,and it took them two weeks to drive through to their destination which was the E ½ of S.E. ¼ of Section 31, T 3 S, Range 16 W. The township was then without a name but was later called Hartford, in Van Buren County, Michigan.

There were at this time but few settlers in the township, namely Ferdino Olds, Henry Hammond, Burrell A. Olney and Thomas Conklin. Mr. Ruggles and his two sons, Freeman and Martin, were charter members in the organization of the township and he was the first supervisor of Hartford Township. Schools had so far been supported by the men who sent the children to school. At the end of each term the payroll was made out. The man who sent five children paid, say, fifteen

dollars, while the man sending one paid three dollars. One man might be rich and would have no children so would have no payment for school, and yet his property was made valuable and saleable because of schools. Mr. Ruggles advocated that all real estate and other property be taxed because all property was equally benefited by schools. The matter was to be settled by vote in the school district and the strife between neighbors was most bitter. One neighbor went so far as to say that he would like to tie Mr. Ruggles to a tree and leave him there until the woodpeckers picked his eyes out. The vote was taken and the tax carried the day.

Eli Ruggles, son of Joseph Ruggles, tells about the little preacher as follows: "About the year 1849 the teacher told us to tell our parents that there would be preaching in the school house at seven o'clock. Very seldom was such a notice given out and we did not forget. Old and young, big and little were there at the house. A little fellow entered the door, took off his overcoat with a vim, walked briskly behind the desk and gave out a hymn and we tried to sing but we had to giggle he was such a little chap and every move was energy as though there was a small steam power somewhere propelling him to action. He began to preach and as he advanced in argument and earnestness and warmed up with his thoughts and rapid flow of words, he pulled off his coat, laid

it on a chair, not stopping a moment in his flow of words. Then as he farther advanced, off came his necktie and collar, and wickered as it was, we had to giggle again. But evening after evening his earnest presenting of gospel truth to us was so convincing that we forgot to notice his being little, and expected to see coat, collar and sometimes vest, laid aside as he talked to us of sin, of righteousness and a judgment to come. Yes, he was little, but he was big enough to hold up Christ before us, and through him, as in a mirror, many of us saw ourselves as God saw us, lost unless redeemed."

Soon there was a Free Will Baptist society formed there. In the spring time the question arose where could the site of baptism be administered? There was no lake near and with Baptists there is but one method of baptism, immersion. Meetings had been held at Hartford and there were some converts. A temporary dam was built across Pine Creek about one half mile west of Hartford and one Sabbath there gathered on each bank the people from the whole surrounding country. Brother Eastman, our little minister, was too small so Elder George Fellows, a former teacher of my brother Lyman's at Niles, took fifteen of us one at a time into the stream and there in the name of the Father baptized us in that faith, saying, "Ye are buried with Christ in baptism".

Eli Ruggles also tells of Hartford's first Fourth of July celebrated as follows: "It was agreed that the Fourth of July should be celebrated in our neighborhood. Ground was selected in Thomas Conklin's woods near the road. We all went there, cleared away the brush and built the platform for orator and singers. The farmer men and women, boys and girls, some mated and some mismated, came, some in four-horse wagons, some in two-horse wagons, some by foot and across lots, but they came, and the cannon came clear from Paw Paw".

"Philetus Hayden was the orator and he orated as well as it is done even in this modern age. The cannon had announced the rising sun, the coming of the orate, and now saluted the thirteen states. On the stand attuning their voices to "My Country **Tis** of Thee" and "Hail Columbia" are three Conklins, two McNitts, five Ruggles and five others. J.B. Adams leads with his clarinet. The orator has got down to earth again from his flights of fancy and bang goes the cannon. A cry is raised, some one is groaning on the ground and it proves to be the gunner, the tallest man in the crowd. George Washington Williams, his thumb is gone and his hand badly mangled." (Mr. Williams figured conspicuously in Fourth of July celebrations in Hartford village during the seventies, always holding a prominent place in the Snolagoster Parade.)

In the year 1840 the legislature enacted that Town 3 south of Range 16 West should be set off and organized into a township by the name of Hartford and that the first official meeting should be held at the house of Smith Johnson on Section 17. At the following presidential election held November 2 and 3, 1840, eighteen voters were polled in the township, twelve Democratic and six Whig. The citizens who exercised their right of franchise on that occasion were Alexander Newton, Cornelius Williams, Peter Williamson, Henry Hammond, Smith Johnson, Burrill A. Olney, Richard B. Everett and Joseph Ruggles, who deposited their ballots on the first day of the election, and Ira Allen, Fernando C. Ruggles, Caleb Johnson, Hezekiah Olds, Martin Allen, Paul Wilcox, Clark Laphem, Thomas Conklin, James Spinnings and Ferdino Olds on the second day.

Following is a list of the name of those who have filled the office of supervisor since the township was formed in 1840: Joseph Ruggles, Burrill Olney, Charles P. Sheldon, Sylvester G. Easton, William Thomas, Roswell Hart, Lyman Bridges, Howland C. Taylor, Thomas J. Johnson, Jesse Thomas, Stephen Dolle, Henry Spaulding, Archibald P. McWilliams, Howard Lobdell, John Ryan, John McAlpine, Jasper H. Thompson, Charles E. Anderson, Stephen Doyle and Moses Cullom, the present incumbent.

The first Protestant sermon preached in the township was by Rev. John Hammon a Baptist traveling missionary, father of the late Henry Hammond and Mrs. Broadhead.

The first wedding occurred at the home of Ferdino Olds on September 22, 1844, when Thomas Kemp of Bangor was married to Mehitabel Cone, a sister of Mrs. Ferdino Olds. At about the same time, James Griffin and Lucy Allen, daughter of Ira Allen, and Edward Ebar and Abigail Mellin were married at the home of Ira Allen. William Thomas and Burrill A. Olney were present and both being justices of the peace, each married a couple and divided the honors and the fees. The bridal parties went to Watervliet on foot where they joined Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kemp and all held their wedding feast together.

William Anderson came from Warren, Ohio to Lawrence in 1859, bought a saw mill on Brush Creek, operated it for about two years, and a little later in connection with Mr. Henry Stebbins built a grist mill on the river in Lawrence. About two years later he bought Mr. Stebbins out and continued to run it until 1868 when he came to Hartford and bought a saw mill where the old Anderson mill now stands, just north of the village.

There were two sets of upright saws in this mill. Mr. Anderson took one set out and built a grist mill in its place and continued to run the saw mill until 1897 when the property was turned over to his sons, Ed and Julian Anderson. In 1900 the other set of saws was taken out and an electric light plant put in its place. This plant furnished Hartford with its first electric lights and was used until 1910 when the present system was installed.

While in Lawrence during the '60's Mr. Anderson purchased many thousands of feet of white wood logs at \$3.00 and \$3.50 per thousand, delivered at the saw mill. He sawed these logs and the lumber was hauled to Decatur and sold for \$8.00 to \$10.00 per thousand. He also purchased many feet of black walnut logs for \$4.00 per thousand. These logs were sawed at the mill, the lumber hauled to Decatur and sold for \$12.00 per thousand feet.

Some of the older residents who are living in the south part of the county will remember that Decatur was quite a busy town in the '60's. Wheat was the farmer's money crop (or mortgage lifter, as some called it) at that time and the farming country tributary to Decatur produced many thousands of bushels of wheat. A farmer who lived 16 or 18 miles away in Hartford, for instance, and who arrived at Lyman Rawson's

elevator in Decatur about 11:00 a.m. would find himself in about the same predicament as the man who waits until December 31 to secure his automobile license. Many times he would find from 15 to 20 loads ahead of hi him waiting to unload. If he had brought his dinner from home he could eat it while he held his place but the team waited for its feed until after he had his load unloaded and he was sure to arrive home long after dark tired, cold and hungry. This was all changed in the year 1870 when the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad was built, for the Hartford farmer could make from two to five trips to market in a day instead of one long weary trip to Decatur. Eight or ten years after this the farmers began setting out peach orchards, apple orchards, cherry orchards, vineyards and all kinds of small fruit, and now we see hundreds of acres of beautiful 'well kept orchards where once the golden grain used to wave. At the present time there are many empty bins in the wheat elevators but most of the elevator men are selling coal and farmers are drawing coal away from the elevators. I am wondering if the young folks of today are aware that as recently as 1880 there was no coal burned in Hartford Township except in the blacksmith's forge. At that time the majority of the farms had wood lots and some of them even yet were clearing some portion of their farms and it was they who furnished the

residents of the village with wood with which to cook their meals and heat their homes, and a cord of beech or maple body wood 18 inches in length delivered in Hartford cost the consumer \$1.00 for green wood and \$1.25 for dry.

In the early forties before the Michigan Central Railroad was built through Decatur and Dowagiac in 1847, the grain was sown between the stumps and harvested with a cradle and threshed by horse-power, drawn to Paw Paw River and put on flat boats and floated down the river to St. Joseph. Mr. George DeLong and his brothers, John and William, operated one of these boats at this time.

In 1854 Roswell Hart, a native of Connecticut emigrated to this place having purchased of Courtland Palmer of New York, the N.W. 1/4, of Section 15. A part of this farm is in the Olds addition to Hartford. Mr. Hart was supervisor from 1871 to 1874 inclusive. In 1875 Mr. Hart moved to the southeast quarter of Section 14 where he spent the remainder of his life.

Martin Ruggles (son. of Joseph Ruggles) was a carpenter and bridge builder and was boss man to drive the piling for the grist and saw mills and two bridges at Watervliet and he built these bridges. Later he bought a farm on Section 17 on what is now U.S. 12 across the corner from the

school house known as the Thomas School. He taught this school several winters and was then elected county clerk by an overwhelming majority about the time the War of the Rebellion began. He then moved to Paw Paw, served one term of three years and was elected again for another term. Failing in health after he served about one year of his second term he gave up his work as county clerk and returned to his farm. He died at the age of 41 years and was buried in the West Hartford cemetery.

Freeman Ruggles, son of Joseph Ruggles, bought a farm on Section 31 west of his father's farm. He was a carpenter and lived to old bachelorhood before being married. He later bought land on Mill Creek about two miles southwest of his father's farm and built a saw mill, cleared land, cut roads and kept the saw mill running most of the time. After a few years he tore down the old log house and built a new frame house. About this time he met a good, smart, sensible woman teacher. They were married at her father's, David Woodman's, just east of Paw Paw. Mr. Ruggles took his bride to his new home where they lived many years till they sold out and moved with the addition to his family of one son and three daughters, to Hartford Center. The son, Eugene Ruggles, attended school in Hartford and was the first graduate of the Hartford High School. He afterward received a medical education and became

quite a noted physician in Chicago. He had many friends in Hartford and also in Paw Paw. He died about two years ago and was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery, Hartford.

Patrick Finley came from Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, and settled on the S.E. 1/4 of Section 35, Bangor Township, in November, 1854, where he resided until the spring of 1864 when he moved to the east 1/2 of the N.E. 1/4 of Section 11 in Hartford where he resided until his death in 1887. Both of the above tracts of land are still owned by the sons of Mr. Finley. About 20 acres of the Bangor tract was cleared and under cultivation when he came into possession. The Hartford tract was an unbroken wilderness when purchased in 1869 but was cleared and under cultivation before his death.

Patrick and Mary Doyle located in this township in 1857, coming here from Palmyra, New York, where they lived for several years and where three of their children were born, viz: Thomas A., Mary A., and Edward. They located just North of the Paw Paw River near what was then known as the Andrews Saw Mill (now the Anderson Electric Light Plant), in which Mr. Doyle worked for a year to two. Mr. Doyle then bought the farm known since as the old Doyle Farm on Section 11 east of the mill and moved upon it. At that time there was no laid out road by

this place and only about three acres cleared on the 128 acre farm. This clearing was not where the family wished to live, so a log house was erected in the woods several rods west of the clearing. It has been related by Mrs. Doyle that the first night they stayed in the new mansion the wind blew so hard that the family could not sleep for fear that the trees might be blown down upon the house. The next morning Mr. Doyle cut down all the trees that would reach the house if they fell. On this farm in the log house was born another son, Stephen A., who is now a resident of the village of Hartford, he having lived in the township and village all his life. He states that he did not do as Isaac Castleman did -- wait until five years old before locating here. He says that it was a good enough place for him to take his abode right from the start.

The family pulled together until the spring of 1864 when through some mishap Mr. Doyle lost all he had paid on the farm, having bought it on contract. The Civil War was then on in full force and Mr. Doyle enlisted in the spring of 1864 and was killed in the battle of Dallas, Georgia, on the 27th day of the May following. Mrs. Doyle then bought the farm again on contract and lived in the woods with her four children, the oldest nine years old and the youngest four, without any laid out road for years. Cleared the land and erected buildings thereon as fast as

she could get means to do so. A good share of her means were obtained from the sale of logs from the farm that were banked on the Paw Paw River and from the sale of hogs that she fattened on beechnuts. The children grew up on the farm and married one by one except the youngest who moved to the village. The daughter married, went West and died in Boone, Iowa. The mother died in 1910. The sons, Thomas, Edward and Stephen are still living. The family encountered many hardships. Mrs. Doyle has related that the wheat they raised during several of those years was taken by her and the oldest son, Thomas, with an ox team by the trails through the woods to Decatur to be sold. They had to leave about midnight, and if they had good luck and the oxen did not get too leg weary, they would generally get back home about midnight the next night. It was years before a highway was laid out either north or west of the farm out to the main roads and years before any other family located on that road.

In the days before the laying out of the highway mentioned, the family, in order to get to town, had to go on the trails through the woods to the road north, then west via what is now called Stoughton's Corners and then south to the little village. It might be interesting to contrast that

mode of living and travel with the present, still all seemed to enjoy themselves more than now.

Eli Ruggles tells about Gilbert Conklin's "pretty cub" as follows: "The table was surrounded by the men who were clearing land. I was helping mother and was sent out to get wood and chips. I heard a man hollering with all his might far away in the woods; the evening was then approaching and what little air was then stirring came from the same direction as the calling. I reported at once and out came the men and listened, yes that man is certainly in great trouble and a long way off. My brothers, Lyman and Martin, and Russ Parker took dog, gun and axe and away they ran. There was a wagon road in that direction to Waterford (now Watervliet). About twenty minutes later the hollering stopped and an hour later the men returned saying that they could not find him that they got near to his calling; then the calling stopped and they called and hunted, but to no avail. The next day from school we got the report and later got this statement from Gilbert Conklin. "I was returning home from Waterford on foot with a bundle of groceries tied in my bandanna (silk handkerchief) when a smallish animal came into the road in front of me, and I said to myself what kind of a chap are you anyway? It's a little cub as sure you're born and a pretty cub, you are

too. I believe I will catch you and take you home with me, so I grabbed for him, he ran, took a short circle in the brush and was just crossing the road again when I grabbed him. He squealed and then I heard a rustling in the brush and leaves a few rods ahead and there sprang into the road the mother bear coming with open mouth showing two rows of sharp teeth. Now its a fight or die with me and no club at hand and not a second to lose. I sprang up a sapling climbed with a vengeance, and a bear climbing for a vengeance was tight at my heels. I thought to kick her head but she might grab my foot in her mouth, then I broke off a limb and pounded her head but she only climbed a little closer to me. I yelled a long time but only echo answered. Finally the bear tired of hanging to so small a sapling, climbed down, went two or three rods distant, stood up on her haunches, opened wide her mouth, reached out her fore paws as if to say, "I'd like to hug you". Her eyes shone like balls of fire, for it was then getting dark. She then climbed a maple tree that bent right over the road where the cubs had preceded her. Then I climbed down but dared not go home but took to my heels back to Waterford, every moment I would look back to see if that black brute was on the chase.

Next morning men with guns and dogs returned with me to the scene of battle. There was the much scarred sapling, there were shreds of

my red bandanna handkerchief, but where were the groceries? The dogs took the trail and the bear was killed near Coloma. I arrived home with sore legs and very tired."

The sapling was left standing for many years after the adjoining timber was cut down and many persons have gone to view the scarred sapling where the bear treed Gilbert Conklin. Mr. Conklin was one of Hartford's prosperous farmers and owned a farm on Section 28 adjoining the Edwin Skinner farm on the west. He was the grandfather of Mr. Elmer Conklin and other Conklins too numerous to mention.

During the year 1844 Ralph Taylor and his sons Howland C. and Emory O. and three sisters, native of Rutland, Jefferson County, New York, settled on the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 4 and Austin Beaman of St. Lawrence County on land adjoining on the west. Mr. Taylor resided in Hartford 28 years and died at the age of 83 years. Emory O. Taylor gives some interesting facts in regard to pioneer life in the northern part of the township in the early forties as follows: "Our first day in Hartford Township we had dinner with Charles P. Sheldon who lived on Section 2. My brother, Howland C. Taylor, had previously purchased the W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 4 and we started out after dinner to find this land (which he had never seen). We followed an Indian trail and found the

witness trees between Section 3 and 4 at the S.E. Corner, then by following the section line west eighty rods we found my brother's land. There were only sixteen families living in the township at that time, and only two living north of the Watervliet road, viz. Charles P. Sheldon and Fabius Miles. We soon had a shanty up and were keeping "batch". Pork and flour were very scarce and we lived one week mostly on johnny cake and stewed pumpkin. The 10th of December snow fell about eight inches deep and remained about two weeks. We had not more during the winter."

"We hired S.G. Easton to dig us a well. He came from home in the morning, three miles, to our place and commenced digging the well. My brother and I cut a white oak tree the same morning and got out curbing while one man tended the digger and at night the same day Mr. Easton had dug to water, twenty feet, had the well curbed and went home. He came back in the morning and sunk a box which completed the well.

In January we dug a cellar, built a log house 18 x 24, and put on the roof. By that time we began to think about making maple sugar and commenced making our sap troughs. We made two or three hundred. The next thing necessary was a kettle in which to boil our sap. I was told one could be purchased in Cassopolis and was directed to go east on the

Watervliet road until I came to an Indian trail leading from a settlement of Indians north of C. P. Sheldon's through to Keelerville and from there to Cassopolis. This trail crossed the river near the Miles place and crossed the Watervliet road between Josiah Hill's and the town line, bearing its course south. I found the trail but soon lost it not being accustomed to the woods. I then found the section line north and south between Hartford and Lawrence, and with a good deal of difficulty in traveling around marshes and swamps and hunting up the line again. I finally got through to Keelerville about noon, tired and hungry. (Keelerville at that time, 1836, was located in Section 13 on the old Territorial Road near the east township line, where a village was platted by Wolcott H. Keeler, who built a large house and entertained travelers. The same year a post office was established there where it remained for twenty years, when in 1856 it was removed to the center of the township.

I concluded from the time I had been traveling that I must be within five or six miles of Cassopolis, but found by inquiring that I had over 20 miles yet to travel. I got my dinner and then struck out pretty lively for Cassopolis where I arrived at dark. The next morning I went down to the ashery and found a potash kettle for sale which was cracked and not fit for their use. They offered it to me for \$15.00 and I concluded

it would answer my purpose so paid them \$5.00 and started for home. I had hired one of Mr. Hawks' boys with team to haul it in. Mr. Hawks lived on the Watervliet road a little west of the county line. The second day we returned with our kettle which weighed 900 lbs. The next day after I started for my kettle my brother commenced tapping the bush. This was on the 18th day of February and when we arrived the troughs were running over with sap. We soon had our kettle placed and by March we had made 500 lbs. of sugar.

Some years later Emory C. Taylor moved to Cass County and Howland C. moved to Section 17 on the Hartford-Watervliet road where he owned a large farm and was considered one of Hartford's foremost farmers. He was at one time supervisor of Hartford Township. He was married to Miss Emma Goodenough of Arlington, Michigan on June 4, 1857. They were the parents of two children, Eva who married Howard Lobdell and lives on Maple Street, and Bayard, who passed away in 1887 at the age of nineteen years. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor resided on their farm until 1887 when they moved to the village where they spent the remainder of their lives. Mr. Taylor passed away June, 16, 1894 and Mrs. Taylor on June 22, 1910.

Hartford Township had a open well scare eighty years ago similar to the one which happened in Allegan County last year. It happened on the Joseph Ruggles farm in 1848. Stillman F. Breed who was teaching school in the neighborhood at that time tells about it as follows: It was in the month of February one beautiful, clear Sabbath day after the family had returned from church services when Eli Ruggles, a youth of fifteen went to the well with his younger brother and sister, Wesley and Mariah, after a pail of water and lost the bucket. His mother had gone to the nearest neighbors. Eli, with the assistance of his father, who was a large, athletic man but blind, by means of a rope and windlass, was lowered into the well, which was 22 feet deep, to recover the bucket. Reaching the bottom he placed his feet on the opposite sides of the well, when one of the stones dropped into the water then another and another in rapid succession, when Eli called to his father to wind the windlass and himself sprang up the rope with all his might, but when half way out the stones closed in upon him to the depth of three feet above his head. With position erect and both hands in which the rope was clasped, above his head, stones below, above and all around, he was firmly held in their cold embrace. The news was soon conveyed to the mother who hastened homeward. Wesley mounted a horse to convey the news to the neighbors.

I was seated by the fireside of a neighbor when I heard the voice of someone helling. I went to the door and Wesley told me with a stifled voice that Eli was in the well buried beneath the stones. Taking my cap I hastened to the place which was a mile and a half distant. Many teams were soon on the road hastening to the point of danger. When I reached the house I was met by the mother who said, "Oh Stillman, we have a trial now". Who can imagine the anguish of the mother's heart, the love she felt for her dear son? I saw, too, a father who was blind and could not behold the scene. How great must have been his anguish of heart. Eli's little sisters were weeping bitterly for they feared he would die. Great, too, were the fears of all lest he would die before we could remove the stones sufficiently to relieve him from his perilous situation. The poor boy was groaning under the pressure of those large stones. There was yet a circle of large stones at the top of the well held there by the frost and those lay projecting over the inside and there was danger of their falling every minute and any person would have been in danger of his life to venture in there. Mr. Gilbert Conklin proposed knocking these stones loose and letting them fall in, but Eli cried out, "Don't let the stones fall for my head is holding the stones apart". Mr. Robertson went into the well and commenced handing the stones out, but seeing they could not

work that way he came out and we tore away the curbing. Several more men had arrived to help release the victim from death which seemed to be his doom. It was enough to melt the most stubborn heart to hear the groans and cries of the poor boy and his prayers which was "O Lord, have mercy on me" and the prayer of the father and mother to save their son. Ansel Reynolds, the father of Mrs. Roy Hinckley, went in and worked until the boy's head and shoulders were uncovered, but the blood on the stones was too much for him and he was helped out. Mr. Samuel Robertson took his place and soon seeing the danger that both were in cried out, "Oh for God's sake, bring something that we can get these stones out faster. Let us save the boy". Men lay on their breasts around the well trying to hold those stones from falling but the sun was shining and the stones were thawing and fall they must. One man said "lay boards over him", another said "build a stage around him. Some board, some boards, for Heaven's sake". Here are boards in this lean-to and down comes the building quickly and the boards were placed around the boy at the outside of the well circle, coming together in the center and then the stones were loosened until they were all down. Then the stones were too heavy to be raised by any means at hand. Mr. John Olds had been digging a well a mile and a half away and a rope and tub were

there. Away flies Husen Taylor with his horse and cutter and soon the windlass was erected, then the stones were soon removed. As we neared his feet the boy was in great pain from the blood beginning to circulate again. We got almost to his feet when someone said, "Can't you get out, Eli?" Eli answered, I might by leaving one of my boots", and a shout went up and a dozen pairs of boots were offered and Eli was soon out and we were all glad to see him.

Nelson Rowe was the son of Daniel and Polly (Crossman) Rowe. He was born on June 14, 1816 in Cayuga County, New York, and was reared there to the age of 14. When he had reached that age his parents migrated to Oakland County, Michigan, where the father settled on a wilderness farm. He remained there helping his father in clearing and improving the farm until 1855 when he came to Van Buren County and purchased a farm in southwest Hartford in Section 32. At this time the farm was an almost unbroken wilderness and it was necessary for him to clear away a spot sufficient for a house and other buildings. After settling in Hartford in 1855 Mr. Rowe's entire life was passed here with the exception of two occasions when he made western trips, each covering a period of about two years. These trips were made between the years of 1859 and 1864 and were made by ox train. Barring these two trips his

life from 1855 was confined to the home place. Mr. Rowe was twice married. His first wife was Martha Ann Sibley, the marriage occurring October 24, 1849. His second wife was Ann E. Wood, the daughter of George and Lucretia Wood of Keeler, Michigan. Of this latter union three children were born. They were Jay M. born April 3, 1858, and who died September 10, 1887; George N. born July 28, 1865, and Alma A. born March 29, 1868, who is now the wife of Rev. Samuel H. Taylor, L.L.D. Dr. Taylor was pastor of the Congregational Church in Hartford for a number of years. Dr. and Mrs. Taylor have two children, a son, James Rowe Taylor, and a daughter, Alice Hope Taylor. They live in St. Joseph, Missouri. Nelson Rowe died December 20, 1907 at the age of 91 years, six months and six days. George N. Rowe was married on April 9, 1885 to Miss Jennie Eby, a daughter of George W. and Gertrude (Pierce) Eby of Grand Rapids. Mr. and Mrs. Rowe reside on the old home farm.

Emory H. Simpson, one of the thrifty farmers of Hartford Township, Van Buren County, was born in Orleans County, New York, January 17, 18281, and was the eighth in a family of 10 children. His parents were Asa and Minerva (Fish) Simpson, the father born in Onandaga County, New York in 1790, and the mother probably in Cayuga County, in 1794. Mr. Simpson grew to mature years in his native county and received his

education in the common schools. He was married in Orleans County January 8, 1854 to Miss Mary A. Thompson. In the year 1863 he came with his family to Hartford Township and located on the northeast 1/4 of Section 24. He also owned forty acres in Section 13. Soon after his arrival he was elected supervisor of his township which office he held one year, and in the fall of 1872 he was elected to the Legislature and re-elected in the fall of 1886. He served as a delegate to many conventions and had the distinction of having been elected to every office for which he ran. He died May 27, 1893, and Mrs. Simpson passed away September 9, 1902. Nathan Simpson was born at Carlton, New York, October 12, 1862 and while an infant came to Michigan with his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Emery H. Simpson. He spent his early life on the old homestead near Hartford, and was educated in the rural schools supplemented by a term at the Brockport State Normal in New York. He followed teaching a few years having taught several terms at Keeler where he was married to Miss Harriet, daughter of the late Charles Duncombe, of Keeler, on April 13, 1886. Following their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Simpson went west and settled in the plains of Nebraska. He assisted in organizing Box Butte County, Nebraska, and was elected county superintendent of public instruction. He also taught the first school in the county. In 1888 they

returned to Hartford and settled on a farm near the village, residing here until the Spanish American War. Mr. Simpson became captain of the 35th Michigan Volunteer Infantry, commanding Quartermaster of the 45th U.S. Volunteers serving two years in the Philippines. He was detailed Chief Quartermaster of the third District Department of Southern Buzon on General Bell's staff during an active campaign. After being mustered out of military service in June 1901, Capt. Simpson returned to Hartford and in November, 1904, was elected a member of the State Legislature from Van Buren County. He was re-elected in 1906. Later he served as Deputy Auditor General until appointed Warden of the Michigan State Prison at Jackson in 1910. During his regime as Warden he rehabilitated the prison industries, introducing the system of prison farms, installing a prison canning factory, and also introducing a new school system. During his administration the institution was self supporting. He resigned in 1916 and was appointed a member of the State Tax Commission where he also served several years. He resigned from the State Tax Commission to take the management of the various prison industries which position he was holding at the time of his death at Jackson April 28, 1925. A daughter, Frances Fae, was born July 28, 1887, married Ralph Z. Hopkins of Detroit, June 17, 1911 and resides at

2576 Hurlbut Avenue, Detroit. A son, Nathan Duncombe Simpson, born October 13, 1891, married Louise A. Lepper of Marshall, Michigan, November 23, 1916 and recently moved to 1390 Cadillac Boulevard, Detroit.

Joseph E. Parker was born December 16, 1840, in New Garden, Columbian County, Ohio, where he spent his boyhood days. On March 10, 1862, he was married to Malissa A. Ireby who died February 13, 1903. Six children were born to them. Orville H. who died May 13, 1912, Earnest who died in infancy, Mrs. Leona Spaulding of Hartford, Elva C. Parker and Mrs. Lettia G. Snow of Kalamazoo, and Lowell A. Parker of Lawton. In 1866 Mr. Parker came to Hartford with a number of Ohio friends and relatives. He purchased a farm two and one-half miles southwest of Hartford, on Section 29 now owned by E. W. Ewald, where the family lived until 1892 when they moved to Paw Paw. On coming to Hartford he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church and later transferred his membership to Paw Paw. During his 26 years residence on the farm he made many improvements, built one of the most commodious residences in the township at that time. Mr. Parker was universally respected by all who knew him and was esteemed for his

integrity and high ideals. He passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Ira Spaulding, on the 22 day of May, 1925.

George Washington Shepard was born in Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, in 1834. He was one of a family of eight children. When only sixteen years of age he expressed a desire to go west, at that time Michigan seemed in the far west to New York. In all probability the father grew tired of the lad's restlessness and discontent, so calling him to him one day the father handed the boy two hundred dollars with the advice to "Go west and grow up with the country". He came to Michigan and found work in Coopersville, near Kalamazoo. Later he found employment in a mill at Silver Creek, Cass County. While in this vicinity he became acquainted with and later married Ann Eliza. Swisher, daughter -of Jon T.. and Millicent Swisher of Silver Creek. Before the marriage took place he purchased 80 acres of timbered land about four miles southeast of Hartford in Section 35, erected a small house and cleared 10 acres. He then brought his bride to the new home. This land was covered with virgin timber and was cleared by Mr. Shepard and put into shape for farming.

Mr. Shepard was an indefatigable worker, a capable business manager and soon his ambition and energy became manifest in better

buildings, better farm equipment, better fences, better stock and a better general appearance in every way. Acreage was also added to the farm until he possessed 280 acres with fine farm buildings. Four children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Shepard, three living, John T. of Weyerhauser, Wisconsin, George E. of Hartford and Mrs. George T. Chamberlin of Hartford. Mr. Shepard always took an earnest interest and an active part in all matters pertaining to the progress and improvement of the township. He was at one time supervisor of the township but on account of ill health was obliged to resign before his work was completed. His health did not improve and he passed away at the age of 49 years. Mrs. Shepard moved to Hartford and built a modern residence on Shepard Street where she lived until she passed away in 1923.

Sullivan Cook was born in New York in 1835, spent his early life in Ohio and came to Hartford from Cass County in 1868. He had for years been in the milling business and owned a saw mill here until the bursting of the boiler December 5, 1872, at which time two men were killed and several injured. The killed were Mr. Gates, the engineer, and Charles Winegarden. He was connected with Eli Walker running a grist mill for about two years. In 1876 he purchased the Olds House (now the Hartford House) of E. R. Olds, and some time later rented it to Walter

O'Dell, a Mr. Waterman and Conklin at different periods. In 1883 he sold it to Ralph Richmond. After the disposal of his hotel, he engaged in farming in a small way. He was always deeply interested, in politics, being a great admirer of Peter Cooper in his time. In 1892, he started a Populist paper "The People's Alliance" and in 1894 was Populist nominee for representative from this district and in 1898 he was their nominee for governor. Politics was not the only thing Mr. Cook was interested in. He was an enthusiastic sportsman and during the latter days of August, I Paw Paw River and wild ducks were generally uppermost in his mind. During the seventies when the first of September came everybody within hearing of his gun knew that September had arrived. The writer, when a boy, enjoyed many days hunting with him and will always remember him for his keen wit and jolly appreciation of fun. Through the courtesy of his son, Frank Cook, I have his diary of 1871, and following are some extracts taken from it which I thought might be interesting to some of the young men who enjoy hunting:

September 1, 1871, went hunting down Paw Paw River. Killed 23 pigeons and 6 ducks. September 14th, went to Decatur with Wall Allen; September 15th, went down Paw Paw River with Jim Crandall; September 29, 1871, jumped account with Wall Allen; October 1st, went

hunting, killed one turkey; October 16th, went hunting, killed 15 ducks; October 17th, went hunting, killed five ducks, 13 squirrels, October 20th, went hunting killed one duck; October 24th, went to Decatur with Tom Johns; November 7th, went hunting, killed 2 turkeys; November 15th, went hunting turkeys, didn't get any; November 21st, very cold and stormy; November 22nd, went hunting, killed 6 turkeys; November 23rd, went hunting, killed 4 turkeys; November 24th, went hunting, killed 3 turkeys; December 2nd, started to go to St. Joe, didn't go, killed a turkey; December 6th, went after turkeys, killed some squirrels.

Mr. Cook was especially fond of hunting ducks and turkeys. He killed the greater part of these turkeys on Section 34, about one mile south of Will Floate's present residence. Mrs. Cook died in 1880. There were six children, Alice who was the wife of Volney E. Manley, and who died December 26, 1916, Laura, wife of Clem Manley of Lawrence, Mrs. May Deane of Kalamazoo, Mrs. Leah Howard of East Lansing, Frank Cook who, resides on the farm at Stoughton Corners and Ned who died very suddenly on his farm at Stoughton's Corners in the fall of 1904.

Luke E. Conklin, son of Thomas Conklin, was born in Hartford Township in 1838 and was the first male white child born in Hartford. Mr. Conklin grew to manhood on his father's farm. He then purchased a

large farm on Section 22 where he lived for over 41 years. He married Caroline Williams. Six children were born to them, three sons and three daughters. One son, died in infancy and another son, Frank, died in 1920. Those living are Chancy Conklin and Mrs. Jessie Jones of Hartford, Mrs. Arlie Fox of Marcellus, and Mrs. Mary Hunt of St. Petersburg, FL. His father married the second time and Elon Conklin of Grand Rapids and T. J. and O'Dell Conklin of Chicago were Luke's half brothers. Mr. Conklin lived to see the early Indian trails winding through the forest give way to pioneer roads and developed into improved highways. He had witnessed the transition from a heavily timbered country to one of the best developed farm communities in the state. He had also seen the tractor and the automobile take the place of the ox team of years ago. Mr. Conklin was an expert teamster with, both oxen and horses and he delighted in tackling difficult jobs of hauling large logs or stone. Mr. Conklin was known as an industrious farmer, a good citizen, an accommodating neighbor and was highly esteemed by all who knew him. He died in 1921 at the age of 83 years. A large boulder taken from the farm where he, had spent the greater part of his life marks his resting place in the West Hartford Cemetery.

Charles Nicolson was born in Delvay Elginshire, Scotland, October

10, 1835. At 19 years of age he came alone to New York in a sailing vessel taking six weeks to cross from Liverpool to New York City. He later came to Michigan and engaged in farming, which vocation he followed until April 18, 1866. At that time he married Ellen L. Spaulding of Grass Lake, Michigan, and engaged in the grocery business in that village, which business he carried on until 1869 when he sold his stock and moved to Hartford where he purchased an 80 acre farm, on Section 34 about three miles south of Hartford (known now as the Frank Myers farm). This farm was mostly unimproved at that time. Mr. Nicholson bought a yoke of oxen which he used for a number of years in clearing and improving the land. There was a large spring on the east end of this farm which, was about 20 feet higher than the land around the buildings, so he built a box around the spring, dug a ditch and laid iron pipe to the buildings which were nearly a half mile distant. This arrangement gave him a continuous flow of water both winter and summer for both this house and barns. This was probably the first water system in Hartford and was similar to the system used by the village at the present time. In 1882 Mr. Nicholson sold the farm and moved to Hartford village where he engaged in the grocery business in the brick store on the northeast corner of Main and Center Streets known now was

Schimmell's Battery Shop. Five years later he sold his stock of goods to H. L. Gleason, and some time later he purchased the old homestead then known as the A.N. Spaulding farm south of town, where he lived for 16 years when he sold the farm to Charles Johnson, retaining 30, acres on which he planned to build a modern house and partially retire from active labor. Mr. Nicolson had made two journeys to his native land and was planning on the third when he was taken ill with pneumonia and after a short illness passed away February 12, 1904. Mr. Nicolson was a man of high moral character, a staunch Republican and always interested in the welfare of the community. He was one of a number of men who gave literally, of both time and money to help secure Hartford's first railroad in 1870. Of his four children, three are living Mrs. Mortimer of Hartford, Mrs. Robert Webb of Sturgis, Michigan, and William who married Lotta Balfour and lives in Hartford. Edward, the oldest son, passed away when he was nine years old. Mrs. Nicolson passed away January 5, 1923, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Marion Mortimer, where she had made her home for a number of years.

William McKendree Day was born in New Providence, New Jersey, on April 8, 1825. He was married to Lydia Ann Cole of Belvidere, New Jersey, on September 28, 1847, at New Providence. In April, 1862, Mr.

Day came to Kalamazoo with his wife and six children, the eldest 13 and the youngest two. Mr. Day was a shoemaker by trade and after about a week moved his family to Cooper a few miles north of Kalamazoo where he worked at his trade and anything else he could find to do. After they had been living at Cooper about a year an older brother offered to furnish enough money to buy a farm and give him a chance to pay for it with interest at 6%. In March. he began looking for a farm and through a friend heard of a farm in Hartford that could be bought for \$2,000. This farm was in Section 29 but when he arrived he found it had been sold to Daniel Landon. At this time he became acquainted with Mr. John Van Ostrom who owned all of the S.E. part of the village and lived on South Center Street on the east side, near what is now the Charles Spaulding home. Mr. Van Ostrom helped him hunt another farm and he finally made a verbal bargain with Andrew Bartlett for a farm on Section 15 known later as the John Clinton farm. The bargain was closed Saturday about noon and Mr. Day started for Decatur to get the late afternoon train for Kalamazoo, but he arrived too late, the train had gone and there was no night or Sunday train. There was nothing to do but walk to Kalamazoo and then to his home in Cooper. He found the check from his brother for \$1,000 had arrived, so he engaged three men with their

teams paying them \$5.00 each to bring his family and household goods to Hartford, which was about 35 miles over very sandy roads. Mr. Day had gone the day before, but when he arrived here Mr. Bartlett had changed his mind and would not let him have the farm. Mr. Van Ostrom furnished him a house to move into until he could find another farm. After looking a few days he bought the Ira Olds farm on Section 28 where the family encountered many hardships during the first year and a half, losing one horse and two cows. This loss made it necessary for the family to go without milk or butter during the winter except at Christmas when one of the children was sent through the woods to the Olney farm (where the Yund family lived at that time) to bring a pound of butter for Christmas at a cost of 45¢.

This was in war time and butter and many other commodities were high in price. Their home was a log house situated a short distance east of the North Bell school corner. In this house the family lived for twelve years before a new house was build on the corner. Drinking water was carried from a spring half a mile distant for many years. Mr. and Mrs. Day joined the Methodist Church early in life and after coming to Hartford the family worshiped in the school house which stood on the corner where the Catholic Church now stands. At that time all

denominations worshiped together at that place. Mr. Day rarely missed attending Thursday night prayer meeting, many times walking three miles after a hard days work. It has been related that Mr. Day and Mr. George Fellows, who was a Free Will Baptist and lived two and a half miles west of town, rarely missed a Thursday night prayer meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Day were the parents of eight children, five girls. and three boys. The oldest daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, was born at New Providence, New Jersey, in December, 1848 and died at Hartford in December, 1901, leaving her husband, Charles Mather, and two children. The oldest son, Edwin Day, was born at New Providence, New Jersey, September 9, 1850, and was married to Sarah A. Bailey on January 26, 1876, who was born in Sproxtton, England, November 4, 1856. Mr. and Mrs. Day were the parents of six children all living: Mary Lena, William T., Franklin B., Herbert E., Charles W., Lulu Belle and Leo A., all born in Hartford. Mr. Day was one of Hartford's foremost farmers for many years. In the year 1906 Mr. and Mrs. Day moved to Hastings where they reside at this time.

The second son, George B., was born at New Providence, New Jersey, October 18, 1852, and died at his home near Beaverton, Michigan, April 29 1912, and was buried at Gladwin. He left a wife and four children.

Charles Wesley was born in New Jersey in 1854 and died when two years old. The second daughter, now the widow of Watson Plumb, was born at New Providence, New Jersey in December 1856 and now resides at Alpena, Michigan.

The third daughter was born in New Providence, New Jersey in 1858 and died at Hutchinson, Kansas in June of 1928. The fourth daughter was born in 1860 and died in Chicago several years ago leaving a husband and four, children.

The youngest daughter, Ella, was born in Hartford in December, 1863, and is the wife of John Miller. They have two children, Hazel of Lansing and Rex of Wheeling, West Virginia. Mr. and Mrs. Miller reside in Hartford.

Josiah Hill purchased the land of Alexander Newton in Hartford Township in Section 13 in 1840 where he resided until his death.

Robert Haynes came to Michigan with his parents from Livingston County, New York, in 1836 and settled in Lawrence where he lived until his marriage to Harriet Hill, daughter of Josiah Hill, in 1849 when he moved to the Hill farm which he purchased in 1869. Mr. and Mrs. Haynes were the parents of three children, two of whom are living, Harriet who married John Mantle, and Harvey, who married Mary Root.

Robert Haynes resided on this farm until his death which occurred in 1906.

John B. Olds came from New York about 1838 and settled on the S.W. quarter of Section 29 (now know as the Charles Rush farm). Mr. Olds was a veteran of the War of 1812. He was the grandfather of Clarence Olds. He was buried in the West Hartford Cemetery.

Ira C. Olds (son of John B. Olds and father of Clarence D. Olds) was born in Rochester, New York, in October, 1823, and came to Michigan in 1844 and located one mile west of Hartford and started the first nursery in Van Buren County. He went to California during the gold rush in 1849 in company with Howland C. Taylor (father of Mrs. Eva Lobdell) and Charles Poor of Decatur. In 1857 Mr. Olds was married to Miss Sarah S. Lewis who was born in St. Joseph County, Michigan, in May, 1832 and came to Hartford in 1853 and taught school a number of years. Mr. Olds lost his life in the Civil War. During Mr. Olds' absence in California his brother, Almon Olds, carried on his nursery business and was treasurer of Hartford Township in 1857. (In 1858 Sylvester Easton was elected and served in this capacity for a number of years.) A few years later he carried on a nursery business in Hamilton Township, half

a mile north of the Corwin Store and school house. He was superintendent of the Sunday school there for many years.

Clarence D. Olds was born January 3, 1861, on his father's farm one mile west of Hartford and was married to Miss Carrie Durkee of Decatur in 1889. Mr. and Mrs. Olds were the parents of four children, Don M., Carl D., Lucille, who died in 1895, and Louise, who is the wife of Glen Wilkinson. Mr. Olds first commenced business in Hartford in 1882 buying and shipping apples and other fruits and produce and in 1885 was interested in a produce store with Seward Van Ostrom. Mr. Olds has been interested in some business in Hartford continuously from 1882 until the present time excepting during his sojourn in Oklahoma from 1906-1913.

Ansel Goodspeed, second child of a family of 11 children of Herman and Louise Goodspeed, was born March 31, 1827, at Olcott, Niagara County, New York. He left home in 1846, worked on a farm seven months' for \$10.00 per month, helped build three large vessels at Olcott on Lake Ontario, spent two years in Michigan and Illinois, then returned to New York. On November 19, 1856, he was married to Caroline Bullard of Olcott, New York. In 1857 he drew his savings of 10 years (\$1,000,000) from a bank in Lockport, New York, two days before it

failed and again came to Michigan and bought 80 acres on heavily timbered land on Section 32 in the southwestern part of Hartford Township of Burrell A. Olney for \$900.00, \$600.00 down, the balance in one year.

He hired ten acres wind-rowed, then returned to New York. In September, 1858, with his wife, he once more came to Michigan and from: the unbroken forest carved out one of the best 80 acre farms in the fruit belt of southwestern Michigan. This farm is now owned by Volney Olds.

The first winter they lived with Hiram Ezra Stratton, an old friend and schoolmate while he made ready and built a frame house on his farm which they moved into on his 32 birthday. He changed his plans for building a log house to a frame one on Freeman Ruggles suggesting he take lumber he had for a house at his mill in Bainbridge, Berrien County, and pay for it with logs. Here their three daughters were born. Mrs. Effie R. Kipp and Marcella Goodspeed of Hartford, and Corella Perry of Mt. Sterling, Illinois, and it was their home until Mrs. Goodspeed's death February 10, 1894.

He was drafted during the civil war but Gilbert Conklin succeeded in hiring a substitute for him for \$100. He was always keenly interested

in schools, good roads and better methods of farming and was the first Master of the Grange Organized Co. in Hartford. For years he was agent for the Farmer's Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Dowagiac, Cass County, Michigan. After Mrs. Goodspeed's death he left the farm and with his daughter moved to the village of Hartford where he died July 11, 1914 at the age of 87 years.

Fred L. Simpson was born on the old Simpson homestead in Hartford Township June 10, 1869. He was the youngest son of a family of eight children born to Emory H. and Mary A. Simpson, who were among the honored and best known early residents of the township. Mr. Simpson was married to Catherine Hillard September 18, 1894 and in the spring of 1894 he purchased the south 100 acres of the old homestead and in October of that year he commenced buying livestock for Charles Wildey of Paw Paw, which business he continued for a number of years together with the supervision of his farm.

In 1896 he set out 10 acres of peach orchard, this being the first peach orchard on the farm. In 1900 he cut 1,000 cords of body beech and maple wood which he sold to William Packard of South Haven for \$1.40 per cord delivered and loaded on the car at the side track of the K.L.S. and C.R.R. north of the county farm.

In 1902 he moved to the village where he continued in the buying and shipping of livestock on his own account. In 1904 he engaged in the meat market business which he continued until 1906 when he sold to Warren Clark. In 1909 he purchased an 80 acre farm of H. M. Olney one mile south of the village and in 1912 moved to this farm where he and his family- lived until 1917 when they moved to the village, again where he continued buying and shipping livestock until failing health prevented him from further activities. After a long illness he passed away on April 9, 1925.

Mr. Simpson was identified with various community interests, having served several years on the village council, also as director of the Van Buren County Fair and of the local Gleaner Elevator Company all of which activities demonstrated his worth as a successful businessman and a substantial citizen.

Mr. and Mrs. Simpson were the parents of four children, two dying in infancy, Emory who was killed in an automobile accident September 8, 1927, and Charles, who is married and is living on the farm south of town. Mrs. Simpson resides at her home on North Center Street.

Lewis Landon, son of Daniel and Polly (Curtis) Landon, was born in New Phone, Niagara County, New York, September 20, 1854, and came

to Michigan with his parents in 1862. His father settled on a farm in Hartford Township on Section 29. Lewis grew to manhood on this farm and on May 13, 1875 was married to Miss Esther E. DeLong who was born in Beeman Town, Clinton County, New York, April 8, 1855.

Mr. and Mrs. Landon were the parents of one son, Dan. W., who married Miss Maybelle Anderson of Chicago. Mr. and Mrs. Landon lived on this farm until the burning of their house some years ago when they bought a residence on South Street and moved to Hartford. Mr. Landon was one of the good farmers of the township, a good neighbor and a man who was liked by all who knew him. He was a brother of Mrs. Horace Olney. He passed away in Hartford Village June 29, 1929. Mrs. Landon resides in the village home.

Mr. Isaac Castleman is probably the only man living who has spent 73 years of his life in Hartford Township. He was born in Utica, New York, January 21, 1852, and in 1854 he, with his parents, moved to Chicago where they spent two years and in 1857 they moved to Hartford, coming here when there was but one store in the village. This store was kept by Harvey Tamlin and Calvin Goodenough. Their stock of merchandise consisted of tobacco, coffee, tea and a keg of nails. It has been related that a barrel of whiskey was kept in one corner of the store

and a barrel of kerosene in another, and at that time a gallon of oil cost more than a gallon of whiskey.

Mr. Castleman married Miss Ella Grandy who was born near Defiance, Ohio, March 23, 1857, and who came to Hartford in 1875. Mr. and Mrs. Castleman celebrated their golden wedding July 5, 1929. At this writing, March 12, 1930, they are living one and one quarter miles east of town on U.S. 12 where they have lived for 44 years.

Samuel Frederick Warren was born in New Hampshire, August 31, 1833, and came to Hartford with his parents when a small boy. He later became the owner of a large tract of land in Sections 27, 28, 33 and 34, and during the seventies and early eighties he was one of the large wheat growers of the township. Mr. Warren was one of Hartford's prosperous farmers. About 1879 he bought the dry goods stock of A.H. Young which he sold in 1891 to his son Frank. He then commenced the manufacture of brick and tile which business he continued for a number of years. About 1880 he built the brick store building on the S.E. corner of Main and Maple Streets. He later built a house and barn on Section 33 south of town (now owned by Frank Eagan) where he lived until his death which occurred on March 17, 1906.

In 1853 Mr. Warren was married to Miss Lota Jane Hammond who was the first white child born in Van Buren County. She was the oldest child of Henry and Laura Gue Hammond and was born near what is now the village of Keeler when that part of the country was a wilderness and fires had to be built to keep the wolves away. Her playmates were Indian children. Mrs. Warren was an older sister of Mrs. Catherine (Hammond) Stratton who was the first white child in Hartford Township. There were 13 children born to this union. Zebiah Ella who passed away years ago, Charles Gue who married Ida Yund, and was in the mercantile business in Hartford for a number of years during the early eighties and later engaged in farming. At the time of his death in 1929 he owned large farms in Sections 34, 21 and 26. Mary E. and Sue who died in infancy. Hugh E. who married Grace Jones and who became the owner of his father's fine farm on Sections 27 and 28 and who died January 26, 1908. Abbie G. who married Seward Van Ostran and who died many years ago. Frank F. who married Myrtle Peters of Keeler and who was one Of Hartford's prosperous merchants for many years and who died in December, 1928. Hattie E. who became the wife of Fred Hopkins, one of Benton Harbor's prosperous merchants, George who is engaged in farming and who owns an 80 acre farm on Section 26, Allie B. who is the

wife of George Burkhard, an enterprising merchants of St. Joseph, Michigan. Cora M. who married Harvey Woodley and passed away some years ago. Herschel, who died when a small boy, and Luie who resides in Watervliet. Mrs. Warren passed away November 16, 1877. In the year 1878, Mr. Warren was married to Lydia G. Cook and three children were born to this union, Arthur and Joe, who died in infancy, and Burley, who was killed by being thrown from a wagon at the age of 13. The writer was a neighbor to Mr. Warren for many years while on the farm and will always remember him as a kind neighbor and one of the first to call to our home in case of accident or sickness.

Chester A. Putney was born in Middlesex, Yates County, New York, July 11, 1821. His father, Aaron Putney, was born in 1769 in Massachusetts, and the mother, Elinor (Adams) Putney was a native of New York. Mr. Putney's grandfather, Jedediah Putney, served in the Revolutionary War and was a son of John Putney, a native of England, who came to American when a young man and figured conspicuously in the early history of the country. Mr. Putney immigrated to Ohio when a young man and there married Miss Elizabeth Parker in 1844 and with the birth and death of her second child soon passed away. Mr. Putney was married to Miss Mary A. Pratt in 1850. She was the daughter of Ira

and Clarissa J. (Gillette) Pratt, native of Massachusetts and New York respectively, born in Rushville, Ontario County, New York. To this union seven children were born, three of who are living. Isabella A., who married Charles Mortimer, William C., who married Miss Emma Warren of Keeler, and Katharine J. who is the wife of Charles A. Spaulding. Those who have passed away are Clara who died in infancy, Orville C. who married Mariah Roosevelt of Keeler and who died at his farm home in Paw Paw, February 13, 1909, Jennie E. who died at her father's farm home in Hartford on December 26, 1871, and Josephine M. who was the wife of George Carpenter of Des Moines, Iowa, and who was killed in an auto accident near Stanhope, Iowa, July 26, 1925. In the spring of 1863 Mr. Putney came to Michigan and for two years resided in Keeler. In 1865 he came to Hartford and purchased the Beaman farm located on U.S. 12 two miles west of the village of Hartford on Sections 18, 19 and 20. He gave ten more acres of land on Section 19 to the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad Company for the right of way across his farm. In the fall of 1890 he moved to the village and erected a modern residence on Maple Street where he and Mrs. Putney lived until his death which occurred January 21, 1896. Mrs. Putney died December 4, 1903. Mr. and Mrs. Putney are both buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Augustus N. Spaulding, son of Ira and. Chloe (Rockwell) Spaulding was born in Addison County, Vermont, on the 6th of August, 1823. The mother was descended from an old family of Connecticut which was of English stock. Ira Spaulding was born in Connecticut in 1779 and served a short time in the War of 1812. He was one of a family of three brothers and three sisters. His father, John Spaulding, the grandfather of our subject, was born in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and as far back as the history can be traced they are of English descent. The maternal grandmother was a sister of Eliphalet and Dr. Knott. The first named was a minister of one congregation in Connecticut for over 60 years and the later was connected with one of the colleges of Schenectady, New York for the same number of years.

Our subject was born in Vermont and in the year 1834 came with his parents to Washtenaw County, Michigan, where they resided for 10 years when they moved to Grass Lake, Jackson County. In 1844 he was married to Mariah Crafts by whom he became the father of one daughter, Ellen, and one son, Frederick, who died in infancy. Ellen became the wife of Charles Nicolson of Hartford. After the death of his first wife our subject was married to Christianna, a daughter of Jacob Hais, who was a native of Germany. Unto this couple eight children were born. The living

are Charles A. who married Miss Katherine J. Putney, Mary L. who married John Lindsley, and Ira D. who married Miss Leona Packer. Those who have passed away are Nettie L., who married Albert Hammond and died in San Diego, California, in 1915, Anita C., who married Oscar Switzer and died in Chicago in 1917, Mertie A., who married Howard Van Ness and was drowned in Middle Lake in Allegan County in 1911, William A., who married Miss Lena St. John and who died in Paw Paw, March 17, 1928, and Howard who died at his mother's home in Hartford on December 22, 1906. In 1868 Mr. Spaulding came to Hartford Township where he engaged in farming which occupation he followed until the fall of 1885. At that time he purchased a home on Haver Street in the Village of Hartford where he lived until his death which occurred August 10, 1894. Mr. Spaulding was the first person buried in Maple Hill Cemetery. Mrs. Spaulding resided in the home on Haver Street until her death which occurred February 14, 1914.

Sylvester McNitt came with his wife and family of 10 children from Niagara County, New York, to Hartford in 1853. He purchased the south 60 acres of the S.W. 1/4 of section 29 and moved into a log house where they lived for four years. He then bought 80 acres of virgin timber on the opposite side of the road for which he paid \$2.75 per acre. Some years

later he built a house and barn on the latter farm where he and his family lived and worked together clearing the land, fencing and making many other improvements. Mr. McNitt passed away in 1864 at the age of 51. After his death the family remained on the farm until they were grown to manhood and womanhood. Mr. McNitt was a surveyor and it was he who surveyed the original plat of Hartford Village in 1859. He also surveyed the first plat of the Hartford Cemetery, now the Pioneer Cemetery. He sometimes did carpenter work and he built a number of houses and barns in the neighborhood. Mr. McNitt was married to Miss Susan Brown and seven boys and three girls were born to them before coming to Hartford. Orville, Evaline, Livere, Charles, Thadeus, Julia, Jane, Alpheus, and Archibald. Evaline became the wife of Valentine Stratton, Livere married Catherine Barrett and became the owner of the old farm. Alpheus married Miss Emma Havens and Archibald married Miss Marion Slayton. After coming to Michigan two more children were born, Flora, who became the wife of Marion Hoover and who lived in Hartford Village 51 years, and Franklin Sylvester, who lost, his life when six years old by falling into an open well. Archibald McNitt. who, was a schoolmaster of the writer at the North Bell School during the seventies is the only survivor of this large family. He resides in this village on

Bernard Street at this writing. He tells of deer and other game being very plentiful when he was a small boy and says he can remember his brother, Orville, killing two deer before breakfast.

Frank Lamb was born June 28, 1856. He was the only son who grew up in the family, the other son dying in infancy. He was the son of Charles Lamb, who was born in New Hampshire on December 30, 1822, and married to Emeline Bartlett in 1845. In 1854 they came to Hartford and settled on the farm where they spent their rest of their days. He died in 1906 and his wife in 1894. Frank Lamb finished his schooling at the age of 18. Before his 20th birthday on April 2, 1876 he was married to Miss Helen Pierce, a native of Hume, New York. Her father, William L. Pierce, a native of New York, was born May 24, 1825. He married Marian Brockett of New York, the date of whose birth was July 20, 1836. Their marriage took place in Ossian, New York, June 1, 1854, and 15 years later they came to Hartford Township where they lived on a farm until 1878 when they moved to the village. Mrs. Pierce died July 19, 1905, and her husband survived her five years, passing away August 13, 1910. Mrs. Lamb attended the Hartford school after finishing the course in the district schools. The first two sons of her union with Mr. Lamb, Roy W. and Orville C., did not live to maturity. A son and daughter were

later born to them, the son, Clare, November 18, 1887. He married Miss Iva Stratton and has a home not far from the old homestead. The daughter, Margaret, is the wife of Dewey Fredricks. They are living in the house built by Dr. W. A. and his brother, Cenius W. Engle, in 1857. Mr. Frank Lamb passed away November 26, 1929. Mrs. Lamb resides in the village with her daughter.

### **THE VILLAGE OF HARTFORD**

About 1844 in the spring one Bartholomew Showie came to this place, purchased of A. P. Pinney a part of where the village now stands, erected a small log cabin and cleared a piece of land. He afterward built a frame house and still later moved to Kansas. The only road was from Paw Paw to St. Joseph. A few years after his arrival Martin Ruggles entered land from the state on Section 16 and built the cabin afterwards occupied by Truman Fowler. This house was located near the place where Dr. M. F. Palmer built a few years later. About 1852 Francis Wilkes, a bachelor, came to the place and with Fowler erected a frame house on the south side of Main Street, corner of Center, put in a few goods and a quantity of whiskey. James Griffin lived in the back part of the store. About 1854-55 a very good class of settlers from New York and

New Hampshire began to gather at the Center and Roswell Hart of New York, and Ware Hilliard of New Hampshire settled here followed soon by Truman Stratton, John Van Ostrum and James Wolcott. Antoinette Stoughten taught the first school in the village, which was District #5, organized in July 1854 and was taught in the house of Harvey Tamlin. The same year Ira W. Allen and Willard Stratton built a store where the old Day Spring Office stood, about 14 x 22, one story high and put in a small stock of goods.

In 1857 Benjamin Randall opened a blacksmith shop on South Center Street. This shop stood on the lot now owned by Ed Hickey. Cyrus Boynton, in the fall of 1858, opened a store in the Rasset House, put in two cases of boots, several sacks of coffee and a few dry goods. His store was the general resort for the long winter evenings. The Olney block now stands on this corner.

The growth of the village was very slow until about 1870 when the building of the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad, now the Pere Marquette, was an incentive to more rapid settlement. The business part of the village was nearly destroyed by fire in June 1877. The population at that time was about 800. The village was incorporated April 1, 1877.

The territory comprised the east half of Section 16 and the west half of Section 15. The officers were to be a president, recorder, six trustees and a treasurer. The first election was held at the office of C. H. Engle, April 16, 1877, and the officers elected at that time were as follows: President, John W. Hubbard; Trustees Henry Phelps, Edwin R. Olds, Valentine Stratton, William Bennett, George H. Morse and Russell W. Stickney; Recorder, Levi S. Warren; Treasurer, Volney E. Manley.

In March 1859, Truman Stratton, Ware Hilliard, John H. Van Ostran, James Smith, W.W. Shepard, Roswell Hart and M. F. Palmer laid out a plat of land for a village which was surveyed by Sylvester McNitt and contained 47 .96 acre lots.

The first known addition is known as Van Ostran's and contains about seven acres. Hilliard's addition dated December 15, 1870, contains about eight acres. A .E. Reynold's addition bears date May 30, 1871, and contains 20 acres. Truman Stratton's addition dated May 3, 1871, contains 14 acres. Allen, Huntley and Stickney's addition dated February 2, 1872, contains 10 acres. Hilliard's addition (second) dated May, 1875, contains 10 acres. Warren's addition dated February 23, 1876 contains 16, 89-100.

Probably the first physician in the village was Dr. Milton F. Palmer, who was a native of Bridgewater, Oneida County, New York. When 11 years of age he came to Michigan and settled in Jackson County where he grew to manhood. After completing his professional education he came to Hartford in 1852. He was the second postmaster in Hartford. He commenced the practice of medicine in 1857. Dr. Palmer experienced the difficulties and privations of the pioneer physician and had his full share. He died in 1904 in his 79th year.

W. A. Engle, M.D., was born July 4, 1826, in Allegheny County, New York, and was the third in order of birth in a family of eight children, all of whom lived to mature years and became heads of families. His parents were John and Sarah (Alvord) Engle. The father was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, about 1795 and was a son of J. W. Engle who served in the Revolutionary War. He was a very prominent gentleman and was elected many times to represent his district in the state legislature. The Engle family came originally from Germany and the great-grandfather participated in the noted Germantown Battle. Mr. Engle grew to mature years in Allegheny County, New York, and was graduated from the University of Alfred of the county. He came to Michigan in 1855 and began the study of medicine in Ann Arbor from

which institution he was graduated with the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1857. He later located in Hartford and began the practice of his profession which he continued until about 1875 when he engaged in the drug business. Mr. Engle was married in 1863 to Mrs. Emily D. Woolsey, daughter of Daniel Van Auken of Bangor. Mrs. Engle had one son by her former marriage to Fred F. To her union with Dr. Engle were born two children, Mary who is the wife of J. J. Ingalls, and Manlius A. who still has charge of the drug store. Dr. Engle was connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church and was a member of the Michigan State Medical Society, in which organization he was very prominent being one of its oldest adherents. He was postmaster of Hartford for 10 years being appointed to that position by President Lincoln. Dr. Engle ranked among the skillful and progressive physicians of Van Buren County. He died November 20, 1907 in his 82nd year.

Dr. Ezra Palmer was a native of Orleans County, New York coming to Paw Paw with his parents when three years of age. After completing the study of medicine at the University of Michigan. In 1876, he located in Hartford where he continued the practice of medicine 33 years. In private life Dr. Palmer was a man of pronounced opinions and strong convictions. In professional life and in business affairs he was eminently

successful. He married the only daughter of Dr. M. F. Palmer, Mrs. Palmer enjoyed the rather unique distinction of having been the daughter of a Dr. Palmer, the wife of a Dr. Palmer, and of having been born, living her entire life and dying in the same house.. Dr. Palmer died September 17, 1909 in his 59th year.

Dr. Robert R. Lawrence was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 28, 1851. He was reared on a farm in Berrien County and began his education in the Union School in Benton Harbor. Having completed its full course of instruction he entered the University of Michigan in 1871 becoming a student in the medical department, and in due course received his degree of M.D. in 1875. He at once located in Watervliet, Michigan, and for six years was engaged in active practice as a physician and surgeon. In 1881 he came to Hartford as surgeon for the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad Company. He was successful in a material way as well as in his profession. He had an extensive practice and made many friends. He was married to Miss Carrie B. Merrifield of Coloma on March 23, 1876.

Jacob Oppenheim was born in Russia in July, 1854, the son of Bernard and Minnie (Dembokey) Oppenheim, neither of whom ever immigrated to this country. Mr. Oppenheim, was reared in the village of

Vistiten and attended the school of the place until his 16th year. When he was 16 he came to the U.S. locating first at Goshen, Indiana. He soon came to Hartford, however, on his peddling expedition. He carried his pack for almost a year before attaining a horse. He later obtained a team and in seven years had earned enough to start a store in a small way. His brother, Mark Oppenheim, had furnished him the money with which to buy his passage to this country and it was the same brother who let him have his first stock of goods on credit. Both kindnesses Jacob was able to pay back in later years. The little store that Mr. Oppenheim started so many years ago has grown into a prosperous business, besides he has accumulated other financial interests. In 1885 Mr. Oppenheim was married to Miss Anna Mittenthal of Detroit, Michigan. She and her husband have since become the parents of three children, the eldest M.O. Oppenheim now being the owner of the clothing store while Beatrice and Aubrey are with their parents in Detroit.

Alonzo H. Chandler was Hartford's first lawyer. He also had the distinction of having been South Haven's first lawyer.

Edward Finley was born in Palmyra, New York, in 1853 and was the son of Patrick and Bridget (Kaley) Finley, natives of County Carlow, Ireland. Mr. Finley came from New York with his parents when he was an

infant. They located on Section 35 in Bangor Township where they resided until 1864 when they moved to Hartford and settled on the E. 1/2 of the N.E. 1/4 of Section 11. Mr. Finley was one of a family of eight children born to his parents viz. Mary, Edward, Jennie E., John, James H., Ella, William T., and Louis. Mr. Finley served as postmaster of Hartford during Cleveland's administration and in 1889 entered into partnership with Horace M. Olney under the firm name of H. M. Olney and Co. in buying and shipping grain, seeds and wool. They also handled coal. In the year 1902, Mr. Finley purchased Mr. Olney's interest and continued the business until 1817 when he sold to the Hartford Gleaners Co-Operative Association who are still carrying on the business. Mr. Finely was married to Jennie Bennett in October, 1892. To this union were born three children, Edward B., Mary Agnes, and Leo Phillip. Mrs. Finley died January 22, 1926. Mr. Finley retired from active business life in 1917 and still resides in his home on South Maple Street.

Horace M. Olney, son of Burrell A. Olney, was a resident of Hartford the greater part of his life. He was born on the farm in 1847. On January 3, 1867 he was married to Miss Chloe A. Landon of Hartford who was the daughter of Daniel and Polly (Curtis) Landon, formerly of Niagara, New York. In company with his brother-in-law, D. W.

Goodenough, in 1868 he entered the mercantile business and continued in that partnership for two years. Then in connection with G. W. Smiley he built six miles of the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad between Bangor and Hartford. In 1878 he entered into partnership with E. R. Olds and engaged in buying and shipping grain, seeds and wool under the firm name of Olds, Olney and Company in Hartford. Mr. Olds retired from the firm in 1884 after which the business was conducted under the name of B.A. Olney and Son, the father being a silent partner for two years. In the year 1889 Mr. Olney associated with him Edward Finley under the title of H.M. Olney and Co. In the year 1902 Mr. Olney sold his interest to Edward Finley who continued the business until 1917 when he sold to the Hartford Gleaner Co-Operative Association. In the year 1906 Mr. Olney built the post office block, a fine two story structure 60 ft. square of marbleized Portland cement. The ground floor is occupied by the Olney National Bank, the post office, and the office of the Hartford Day Spring. The second floor is used for office purposes. The building is thoroughly modern in every respect. The Olney Bank was organized in 1910 and was first opened for business on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of September of that year. The officers of the bank at that time were as follows: President, Horace M. Olney; Vice-President, Jacob Oppenheim; Cashier, James

Ingalls; the Board of Directors consisted of the following: Jacob Oppenheim, M.C. Mortimer, E.R. Smith, O.M. Vaughn and H.M. Olney. In the spring of 1896 Mr. Olney presented to the village two acres of land opposite the Hartford House to be used as a park. The council at once appointed a park committee, M. F. Hoover, Charles Mortimer and Frank Warren, who attended to the clearing, surveying and so forth. On Arbor Day the citizens turned out in mass and about three hundred trees were planted under the direction of the Board. In 1910 Mr. Olney purchased lots No. 1 and 2 on the northwest corner of Main and Maple Streets. These lots had been used by J. W. Travis and E. R. Smith for a lumber yard for many years. After the removal of the lumber Mr. Olney presented this property to the village as a addition to the park. The removal of the lumber yard and planting the shrubbery and flowers was a great improvement as it gave an unobstructed view of one of the most beautiful parks in the county. At present it contains nearly three acres and is called Ely Park in memory of Mr. Olney's mother whose maiden name was Ely.

Stephen Doyle served as supervisor of Hartford Township from 1880 to 1891. He moved from the old farm on Section 11 in 1897 to the Village of Hartford. In 1899 he entered into partnership with Oliver High

under the firm name of High and Doyle. They bought the old elevator building owned and operated by Mr. H. M. Olney for years and moved it to its present location on what was then the K.L.S. & C. Railroad and engaged in the buying of all kinds of grain, hay, beans, and so forth, and in the handling of coal, until the year 1913 when they sold the elevator and business to Ray High and Charles M. Thompson. In 1900 Mr. Doyle was married to Lola Doyle, daughter of his partner, and two children were born to them, a daughter and son. The son died in 1920 at the age of 14 years and the daughter is married and at this writing is in Florida. Mr. Doyle was elected supervisor of the township in 1917 and served in that capacity until 1922. He was also elected secretary of the county fair in 1914 and served until 1922 when he resigned to accept a position as cashier of the First State Bank that had just been organized to take the place of the Hartford Exchange Bank. He resigned this position after serving two years and in 1926 was again elected secretary of the fair and at this writing still holds the position.

Mr. and Mrs. John S. Heald came to Michigan in 1871 and were continuous residents of Hartford until their respective deaths approximately half a century later. Mr. Heald was born in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1838. In 1862 he enlisted in Company C. Ohio

Voluntary Infantry, and remained in the service until the close of the war. He was wounded at the battle of Piedmont, captured and taken to the military prison at Andersonville, Georgia. On one occasion he escaped, but was followed, treed by bloodhounds and taken back to Andersonville. Later he was transferred to the prison at Florence, South Carolina. During the later ten months of the war he served as second lieutenant. He was married in 1866 to Miss Pauline H. Thomas at Pennville, Indiana. The first family home in Hartford was one of the frame buildings on E. Main Street. Mrs. Heald's millinery store occupied the first floor. Afterward Mr. Heald built what is now the Olds Grocery Store and moved his family to the second story. Still later they again moved to their then new home at the north end of Maple Street and Mr. Heald subsequently occupied himself with the few adjacent acres. In politics, Mr. Heald was an enthusiastic Republican. He was postmaster during the presidency of Benjamin Harrison, and his daughter Irma, now Mrs. F.S. Appleman, was his assistant. Mr. Heald maintained an active interest in the affairs of the G.A.R. and I.O.O.F as long as he lived. He was of a sociable disposition, always fond of people and crowds, and enjoyed being where things were happening. The Hartford canning factories and Van Buren County Fair were scenes of never failing interest

to him. He was active physically and mentally until the day preceding his death which occurred on November 21, 1916.

Pauline Thomas (Heald) was born in Mount Union, Ohio, of Quaker ancestry in 1844, and received her early education in a Friends' school. In the years preceding the Civil War her father, Dr. Owen Thomas, was an ardent abolitionist. During the struggle he was in charge of a government hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, and his family, who were with him, had an opportunity to view the conflict from close range. Her mother, Dr. Mary F. Thomas, was among the pioneer women physicians and a firm advocate of temperance and woman suffrage. From this atmosphere Miss Thomas may have absorbed the germs of her own later keen interest in public affairs. In her early womanhood she was a teacher. She was married to John S. Heald at Pennville, Indiana, in 1867. Soon after their arrival in Hartford she opened a millinery store and remained in business for 27 years. She was one of the early members of the local Woman's Christian Temperance Union as well as an enthusiastic worker in the Ladies Library Association and member of the Woman's Club. The welfare of the local school was a matter of vital concern to her and she served as a member of the Board of Education for a number of years. She was thoroughly convinced of the justice of

suffrage for women and did what lay in her power to hasten its coming. Her acquaintance in the county was wide in business and other circles. As she grew older and less able physically to participate in civic matters, her interest did not wane. This strong feeling and her uncompromising stand for the principles she believed right are undoubtedly the outstanding qualities for which she is remembered by those who knew her. Mrs. Heald died at her home on Michigan Avenue on July 26, 1926, nearly ten years after the death of her husband. Mr. and Mrs. Heald had three daughters, Miss Jessie M. Heald of Chicago, Mrs. F. S. Appleman of Washington, D.C., and Miss Marie F. Heald of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

George W. Merriman was born in Savannah, Wayne County, New York, January 4, 1851. His father was Elijah Merriman and his mother Mariah Winegar. He was reared on a farm and received his education in the common schools. He was principal of the Union School in South Butler, New York, in 1872 but resigned the same year to take a position in the Exchange Bank at Plainwell, this state, at which place he resided for ten years. In 1880 Mr. Merriman entered the law department of the State University at Ann Arbor from which he graduated two years later. He located in Hartford during the spring of 1882 and established the Hartford Exchange Bank. He was married to Miss Jennie Sherman of

Plainwell, this state. The fruit of this union was one child, Harry J. Merriman who was born in Hartford July 25, 1883. Mrs. Merriman died in 1888. In 1894 Mr. Merriman was married a second time to Mrs. Jennie (Smiley) Phelps. Mrs. Merriman died March 24, 1920 and Mr. Merriman October 25, 1924.

Henry P. Phelps was born in Lawrence on April 7, 1842. At the age of 20 he left and enlisted in a regiment of sharp shooters - the 66th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. He was with Sherman in his various campaigns. He was taken prisoner near Dallas, Mississippi, and about three months afterwards was released on parole but was not exchanged until about eight months from the time he was captured. At Peach Tree Creek, Georgia, on the 22nd of July, 1864, he was wounded, the day being that on which the gallant McPherson was killed. Mr. Phelps remained in service two years and eleven months and in the winter of 1865-66 after his discharge attended the Eastman Business College at Chicago. In the spring of 1866, he entered the store of H.M. Marshall of Lawrence and remained with him a year and a half, after which he engaged in the mercantile business in Hartford in partnership with his brother, William A. Phelps. The firm was continued about two years during which time a branch store was established in Keeler. H.P. Phelps

finally purchased his brother's interest in the business and continued at Hartford while the latter assumed entire charge of the store at Keeler. In September, 1879, Henry Phelps sold his establishment to Charles F. Young, who erected the fine three story brick store on the southwest corner of Main and Center Streets now occupied by J.H. Conrad. September 29, 1869, Mr. Phelps was married to Jennie Smiley, daughter of Mitchell S. Smiley, who was originally from Maryland and who settled in Arlington Township. Mrs. Phelps was born in South Avon, Livingston County, New York, September 25, 1849, and died March 24, 1920. Mr. Phelps was, accidentally killed on the railroad in September, 1877.

George W. Ocobock who was engaged in the mercantile business in Whitehall, Michigan, came to Hartford in September, 1885, and engaged in the dry goods business here. Mr. Ocobock was married on March 19, 1890 to Miss Emma Crager who was born in Berrien County, Michigan. Mr. Ocobock was assisted by his wife in the business until his death which occurred September 6, 1918. Mrs. Ocobock continued the business until 1927 when she retired. Mrs. Ocobock was very active in the Order of the Eastern Star, filling the office of Worthy Grand Matron of Michigan, presiding over the state meeting in 1907. She was an officer in the General Grand Capture Order of the Eastern Star (an international

organization) from 1907 to 1919, serving as a member of the various national committees during the World War. The Masonic Tribune of Seattle, Washington, dated February 21, 1919 tells of Mrs. Ocobock's visit to Seattle as follows: "The largest meeting in the history of Chapterdom and perhaps the largest that will ever assemble in Corinthian Room was that held by Myrtle Chapter No. 48 on Monday evening March 17. It is not often that a subordinate chapter has the great privilege and pleasure of having as their guest the Most Worthy Grand Matron of the World. But surely the large assembly that greeted this honored First Lady of the O.E.S. fraternity gave some slight evidence of Myrtle Chapter's joy in having this distinguished honor come to them on this momentous evening. Many large and enthusiastic assemblies have congregated in Corinthian Room on several other splendid occasions but Monday's assembly outdone all, and eclipsed past history. The members and visitors gathered early in their anxiety to get a glimpse of their honored leader. None were disappointed in what their fondest mental visions and pictures fancied she would look like, and each member returned home well satisfied. Sister Emma G. Ocobock, Most Worthy Grand Matron of the World had been chose to this honored position because of her queenly appearance and fascinating personality,

representing as nearly as possible in the human life, all that could be desired of one to fill this exalted station. She had won the heart of each and every one upon first glance, and her remarks were timely and all that could be desired. She closed her remarks by quoting a few verses of her thoughts of the West and she knew now why the writer had been inspired to write such a touching description of "Where the West Begins". Mrs. Ocobock owns a modern home on East Main Street where she resides at this writing. (CORRECTION - Henry P. Phelps was killed on the railroad in 1887 not 1877.)

Jacob Crager came to Hartford in December, 1870. Mr. Crager had made his home in Watervliet for about five years prior to date. He carried the U.S. mail and passengers by way of stage line from Paw Paw to St. Joseph until January 1, 1871, at which time the Pere Marquette Railroad from Chicago to Hartford was completed. He then continued to carry the mail for the government from Paw Paw to Hartford until January 1, 1883, when the Narrow Gauge Railroad was completed. He died January 5, 1883, just as his work for the government was completed.

Nathan Thomas came from Winona, Ohio, to Hartford, Mich. In 1870 and passed the first year on a farm and then entered the hardware trade which he carried on for seven years. At the end of the period he

was appointed post master of Hartford and sold his hardware business. Soon afterwards he moved to Paw Paw having been elected sheriff of Van Buren county. He filled this office four years then returned to Hartford and was again appointed post master. He held this office until after the election of Cleveland to the presidency and, on the appointment of his successor, bought a farm of sixty acres near Hartford where he lived two years when he was once more elected sheriff and again held the office four years. When his term closed he turned his attention to farming again but continued to reside in Paw Paw until his death. Mr. Thomas served years in the tenth Kansas Infantry under Captain Ferman and was mustered out of the army in St. Louis in 1864. Mr. Thomas was married to Miss Rebecca A. Votaw, March 1, 1866. She was the daughter of Moses and Mary Votaw, old settlers in Ohio. Five children were born to this union: Mary V; Wesley J. and Lester, and twins, Emmet E. and Jesse B. Wesley J. served as sheriff of Van Buren County at one time.

Ansel E. Reynolds was born in the Dominion of Canada August 8, 1828 and came with his parents to Ypsilanti, Michigan when he was 12 years old, later coming to Hartford and settling on the E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of N.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 28 now owned by J. H. Powers. He later rented his farm and opened a general store in Hartford village, one of the first enterprises of

the village. It was he who built the Reynolds block in which the first opera house was located. (This building is now know as the Hartford Town Hall.) Mr. Reynolds was a public spirited man and did much to promote the growth and prosperity of Hartford. He died in June 1910, his wife having passed away in 1896. They were the parents of six children. The youngest daughter still lives in Hartford and is the wife of Roy Hinckley, owner and proprietor of the Hartford House.

Lewis P. Walker was born in Columbian County, Ohio, February 1, 1862, the son of B.J. and Maria (Beck) Walker and came with his parents to Van Buren County, Michigan at the age of eight years. Here his father built a saw mill 3 miles north of Hartford which he operated there for three years. He then moved it to the village and continued to run it until 1883 in which year he moved it to Keeler Township. He stayed there for six years and then brought the enterprise back to Hartford, and sometime afterward took his son Lewis P. Walker into the business as a partner. Since his father's death, Mr. Walker has conducted the business alone and at this writing is engaged in the manufacture of the B-W easy chair. On November 5, 1896 Mr. Walker was married, to Miss Myrta Ray of Hartford. They have two children, Ruth and Ray.

Allen O. Olds came to Michigan from New York when he was one year old. He was reared on a farm and educated in the neighborhood school. During his early manhood the Civil War began and as soon as he was old enough he enlisted in Company G. 19th Michigan Infantry Volunteers and served in that company nearly four years, rising to the rank of first lieutenant, which rank he held until he was mustered out of the army. After the close of his military career he returned to Hartford and resided in the village for many years. He served as alderman for 18 years and in many other ways helped to promote the progress and general welfare of both township and village. He married Mahala Lewis and they were the parents of two children, a son Volney W. and a daughter, Minnie B. Mr. Olds passed away February 14, 1925.

Volney W. Olds was born October 31, 1869 in Hartford Township on the farm now owned by Ralph Hughes in Section 25. He is the son of Allen W. and Mahala (Lewis) Olds, both natives of New York. In 1872 he came with his parents to the village of Hartford. He obtained his education in the village Union High School and at the age of 15 years accepted a position as clerk in a general hardware belonging to V.E. Manely. On July 17, 1895, he was married to Miss Estella McAllister, the daughter of John and Lena McAllister, who was born in Buchanan,

Michigan. She was educated in the Hartford High School in 1886. Mr. Olds was appointed postmaster of Hartford in 1904 and received the appointment again in 1908, which position he held until 1912. Mr. Olds owns one of the many fine farms in the southwest part of the township and, he also owns a modern home, on North Maple. Street where he and Mrs. Olds reside at this writing.

Genius N. Engle was born in West Almon. Allegheny County, New York in 1832. He came to Michigan for the first time in 1855. He came to this state intending to teach school, which avocation he was engaged in the previous year but, admiring the beautiful timbered lands of western Michigan, he purchased 160 acres on Section 10 in the township, just north of the Paw Paw River. On this land he built a log cabin 10 x 12 feet in which he and his hired man "batched it" during the following winter, cutting logs to stock the Cross and Andrews Saw Mill which had just been completed. His nearest neighbor at that time in the almost unbroken forest was the late Chief Simon Pokagon, and while he was cutting logs the Chief was reading Greek, having returned from Oberlin, Ohio, where he had been attending school. His early acquaintance with the Chief, no doubt, was the reason why he became a fast friend and legal advisor of the Potawatomi Pokagon band. The following spring he

returned to his home in New York. Again coming to Michigan the following fall, he continued lumbering during the winter of 1857, making his headquarters at Stoughton Corners, then a town rivaling Hartford, with Mr. Stoughton, the father of Mrs. Hurlbut, a well-known former resident of this village. Returning to New York again the following spring, Mr. Engle married Helen J. McGibney of his native place, moving to Michigan in the fall accompanied by his brother, Dr. W.A. Engle. Mr. Engle and his young wife of 18 years kept house for the first time west of Pine Creek on the north side of the road, near the present home of the late A.W. Mann. The late Ira W. Allen and wife, who were married about the same time, lived just across the way. Mrs. Engle joined the M. E. Class of this place when it was organized and for 20 years was organist and leading soprano of The church. Mr. Engle was justice of the peace through the pioneer years of the village. Most of the law suits were tried before him and in those years when land was sold or mortgaged he executed most of the papers, and we might truthfully add that he tied a majority of the wedding knots. After the wedding ceremony he always gave each newly wed pair the following timely advise as they were leaving his office: "Remember this, good husbands make good wives, the good wives make good husbands; go thy way and live in peace". Many of the

soldiers of the great rebellion who enlisted here took the oath of allegiance before "squire" Engle. Mr. Engle was drafted in 1864, but just as he was about to leave camp for the front his only son, Henry, about two years old, suddenly died in consequence of which he received an honorable discharge after supplying a substitute to whom he turned over his suit of blue, paying him \$1,000. Mr. Engle and the late "squire" George of Keeler procured the subscriptions for building the first church in Hartford in 1866. He was superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Sunday School for 30 years and trustee of the church for many years. He did much building in Hartford, having built five brick stores and the Academy of Music. Mrs. Engle died in September, 1881, leaving three children. The oldest is Allie I. Engle, who has been principal of the Allegan High School for many years, John A. Engle and Clara L. Nobles, the youngest who lives in Allegan. In the fall of 1882 Mr. Engle married Sarah Webb, widow of Prof. Webb of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Her son Robert L. Webb, well known here, was then a small boy. He is married to Elsie Nicholson and they live in Sturgis, Michigan. Mr. Engle was a public spirited man and did much for the development and improvement of the village. He enjoyed a good clean story, and always had one in store for almost any location. Mr. Engle passed away March 30, 1915.

Frank F. Warren was the son of Fredrick S. and Jane (Hammon) Warren. He was born on the farm south of the village July 12, 1865. He lived with his parents until he was 16 years old when he came to the village and worked in his father's store on the S.E. corner of Main and Maple Streets. At the age of 21 his father took him into partnership which continued about four years when he bought his father's interest and continued the business in his fathers' store until about 1895 when he built a new store on the north side of Main Street where he sold dry goods, boots, and shoes until the spring of 1927 when he sold his stock of goods and retired. Mr. Warren married Myrtle Peters of Keeler, March 22, 1888. They had no children. Mr. Warren built a number of residences in the village and did much to promote many village improvements. He was village president, and also a member of the village council and held numerous other village offices. Mr. Warren passed away December 21, 1928. Mrs. Warren resides in the home on South Maple Street.

Charles Mortimer was born in Devonshire, England, October 3, 1845 and at the age of five years came with his parents to Middleport, N.Y. There he grew to manhood and learned the trade of a blacksmith ax trade which he engaged in upon coming to Hartford in the early **sixty's**. On November 7, 1866 he was married to Elizabeth Hamilton of Two

Bridges, New York, and returned with his bride to their new home in Michigan. To this union were born one son. and three daughters. The son, Marion Mortimer, married Miss Isabelle Nicolson. The daughters are Mrs. Hinckley, Mrs. Al Warkenten and Mrs. Edward Hickey. (Mrs. Mortimer passed away June 8, 1893. During his long residence here Mr. Mortimer was an important factor in the business life of the village. In the earlier days he was engaged in blacksmithing and carriage making, having erected a fine two story brick building as a blacksmith shop on the east side of Haver Street near Main, now known as the East End Garage. After retiring from that trade he built the brick block on the south side of Main Street which contains three stores, two occupied by James W. Walker and son and the other by Miss Adalyn Humphrey. He later built the brick building now occupied by the A.& P. Company. About 1878 he entered into the retail hardware business which he continued 35 years. He then turned the business over to his son and son-in-law who continued the business under the firm name of Mortimer and Hickey until 1918 when they sold to James Walker who, together with his son, Harold, are still carrying on the business under name of Jim's Hardware Company. On October 12, 1898, Mr. Mortimer was

married to Miss Isabelle Putney who still resides in her home on S. Maple Street.

Henry L. Gleason was one of Hartford's enterprising merchants for a number of years. He was born in Clarkson, Monroe County, New York in 1852 where he resided until he was 17 years old when he came to Michigan and worked with the surveyors on the Chicago and Michigan Lake Shore Railroad from Holland to Pentwater. He afterwards bought ties for the company. A few years later he engaged in the meat market business and bought stock with E. R. Olds. In 1877 he bought the Charles Nicolson stock of groceries in the northwest corner of Main and Center Street. The steadily increasing trade encouraged him from time to time to add new lines until he had one of the largest lines in general merchandise, crockery, dry goods, shoes and so forth to be found in this part of the county. In the 1884 Mr. Gleason took into partnership the Misses Lee and Gertie Smith, who were formerly employees. About 1895 they built a handsome two story brick building 54 x 87 ft. on the northwest corner of Main and Center Streets where they continued in business until October 1, 1898, when they sold their stock of goods to F.W. Hubbard and Co. who have continued until the present time. After the sale to Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Gleason interested himself in looking after

his fruit farm, buying and shipping fruit trees, ornamental shrubbery and so forth. Failing in health a few years ago he was obliged to give up active work and finally passed away January 25, 1929, and was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Eli Ruggles tells about the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for president as follows: "Well do I remember attending the Republican Convention at the Wigwam in Chicago when Abraham Lincoln was the choice of that convention for the next president. How the flags were waved and the handkerchiefs like snowflakes waved everywhere and the shouts rang out till the Wigwam fairly trembled with the ringing shouts of free men, and men to make others free. To reach the Capitol at Washington, Lincoln had to go in secret and on a train not known to most men, for it had been declared he should never go alive through Maryland. Fort Sumpter was fired upon by rebel cannon and all the North as well as South was eager for the fray. Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 men and there was a war meeting called at Hartford and Julius C. Burroughs was then the Michigan young man orator. There was no lack of volunteers. I remember my father said, "This was just beginning, is not the little breakfast spell that some think it, but will probably last for a number of years". Only a few weeks later there was a

call for 300,000 men. Then originated the song, "We Are Coming Father Abraham Three Hundred Thousand More." And they came and another 300,000 from the South met them and they fought like brave men long and well; they piled the ground with brothers slain.

Mrs. Lena Stevens of Central Michigan, Michigan, sister of the late John St. John, writes about Hartford's old hotel and about some of the first days the Civil War as follows: "Keeler St. John, my father, bought the old hotel in Hartford in the spring of 1860 just before the Civil War began. The next year in early summer a recruiting officer came to town and raised the first company of soldiers that left Hartford for the sunny South, one hundred and ten men. The captain wanted to feed them at our house the day they left town. I remember our folks thought it was impossible, but everyone said they would chip in and have a free feast. One man killed a beef and donated it, others sent potatoes, bread and butter and cakes, one woman helped mother bake pies all day, so the next day dinner was served to the 110 men in good shape. After dinner rigs were brought, the soldiers loaded in and driven to Dowagiac where they took the train and were shipped South. Very few ever returned. Mother, not liking hotel life, traded the hotel to Hiram Davis for his farm.

The old hotel has changed hands many times since that and I, understand an up-to-date bank building occupies the old site at present.

Mrs. Lena (St. John) Spaulding, Van Buren county's register of deeds, is a niece and namesake of Mrs. Stevens.

On Thursday morning, June 21, 1877, occurred the fire which swept before it nearly all the buildings on the south side of Main Street. The loss was about \$20,000 with but \$6,500 insurance. The origin of the fire was in the store of Jacobson and Spaulding, dealers in dry goods and groceries. The other firms were Paul Husen, jeweler; Levi Earl, butcher; C. Boynton, grocer; W. Watts, shoemaker; H.M. Olney, druggist; W. R. Mills, photographer; Harley and Smith, liquor dealers; A.H. Young, dry goods and groceries; John Gross, meat market; H. Eaton, clothing and groceries; Sherburne and Crafts, general merchandise. Within a fortnight, bids were made for vacant lots in the burned district. People from neighboring towns were anxious to secure lots but our town people at once commenced the work of clearing away the debris and making preparations to build. It was decided to allow none but brick buildings to be erected in the burned district. Our merchants were doing business right along in those days and didn't suspend for either pleasure or misfortune. They moved their goods into convenient vacant stores and

continued as if at the old stand. Mr. Olney moved into a vacant store in the Reynolds block, Eaton into the store just east of it, Young into the Morse building, Sherburne and Crafts into the old post office building, Paul Husen into Shadler's office and John Gross into J.P. Earl's building. Earl and Allen and C.H. Engle were the first firms to build. They built the store just east of what was until recently the Academy of Music. In August 1879 the row of wood buildings on the east side of Center Street from Main Street to Mrs. Maxim's house was burned. In 1883 the planing mill, sash door and blind factory of Olds Brothers was burned together with several barns and a dwelling house.

A Methodist society was formed as early as 1855 and used the old school house as a meeting place. Among the first members were Charles Doty (who was class leader), John and Maggie Van Ostrom, Fannie Goodenough, Mr. and Mrs. Abram Young, James Hastings, Helen J. Engle, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hammond. Some of the early clergymen who attended the charge were Revs. J. Hoyt, C.C. Kellogg, H.H. Jay, T.T. George, G.A. Buell, J.W. Miller, F.I. Beard, J.W. Webster and J.P. Force. The church, however, was not recognized as a separate charge until 1873 when E. A. Tanner became its pastor. For a number of years afterwards the churches at Hartford and Lawrence were united as one

charge under the ministrations of the same preachers. Since 1874 the following pastors have served the church: Revs. S.C. Woodard, N.M. Steel, F.I. Bell, V.G. Boynton, L.W. Earle, L.S. Matthews, H.H. Parker, W.W. Lamport, W.A. Prouty, J.R. Oden, A.E. Hawley, H.L. Potter, G.F. Carig, G.D. Draper, H.A. Lyon, George Killeen, R.E. Quant, F.L. Niles, Porter Bennett, D.J. Good, J.H. Rayle, W.H. Irwin, Russell M. Howard and John W. Broxholm (present pastor). About 1865 revival meetings were held in the community and the organization for a Methodist church was the outcome. Definite plans for the building of such a church were made in the year 1866. Mr. Cenius Engle became the prime mover for the church and on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January, 1866, the following trustees were appointed and elected viz: John N. Van Ostrom, Charles G. George, Cyrus Boynton, William Day, Charles Doty, Cenius H. Engle, Washington A. Engle, John G. Van Ostrom and Andrew Bartlett. At a meeting held February 5, 1866, Andrew Bartlett, John G. Van Ostrom and Cenius H. Engle were appointed a committee to select a site for the new church. Two days later they met again and chose the location described as follows: On a rise of ground on the south side of the east and west road east of Hartford Center about half way between the Center and the school house. The amount of ground purchased was 12 rods on

the highway and 7 rods deep. On the 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1866, it was decided that the new church should be 60 ft. long and 36ft wide and that W.W. Shepherd make bill of timber necessary to build the church. William Day paid his subscription in part by stone for the foundation and Edwin Day, his son, delivered the first load of stone on the ground. Mr. Bartlett, a local mason laid the foundation and the contract for the building of the church was probably let to a Mr. White of Keeler. The church was dedicated on November 10, 1867 with services both in the afternoon and evening with Elders Miller and Rease preaching. The subject of the sermon either in the afternoon or evening was "Time Written." A bell was purchased for the church in 1871. During the war Mr. Doty enlisted in the army and William Day was appointed as a class leader which position he held until his death in 1903. The choir in the early days was made up of Mrs. Helen Engle, Mrs. Beattie, Mrs. Hammond, Mr. and Mrs. John Van Ostrom, Mr. And Mrs. Cyrus Boynton, Mr. Hatch, the choir director, and Mrs. Helen Engle acted as organist when Mr. Hatch brought over his melodeon. In 1914 Rev. Fred L. Niles felt the need of a parsonage and so a splendid parsonage was built which has since been the delight of every pastor who has occupied it. During the pastorate of Rev. W.R. Irwin the church was rebuilt and

enlarged at a cost of about \$13,700. It was dedicated on February 10, 1924. The first Sunday School was organized in 1858 with Jefferson Dowd as superintendent. When the Civil War broke out Mr. Dowd enlisted and went to the front and Mr. Cenius H. Engle took up the work and for more than 30 years was superintendent of the school. This Sunday School was held in the old school house (which stood on the corner where the Roman Catholic Church now stands) until the new church was built in 1866. A large part of this information has been given to me by the present pastor Rev. John Broxholm, who has written a very interesting history of the church from its organization until the present time.

A meeting was held in the Reynolds Opera House July 8, 1883, to discuss the advisability of organizing a Congregational Church in Hartford. The Rev. Park A. Bradford, pastor of the Lawrence church was present and conducted the service. At the close of the service a vote was taken to ascertain the opinions of those present as to such an organization which resulted in a unanimous vote, and a finance committee was appointed consisting of A.J. Dyer, C.H. Sherburne, G. Van Vranken and Mrs. J.J. Hubbard to canvas among friends to ascertain if funds could be secured for the erection of a new church.

July 15<sup>th</sup> services were held at the same place conducted by Rev. P.A. Bradford and at the close the finance committee reported \$800.00 pledged for the new church. The committee was instructed to continue the canvass. It was decided by vote to organize the church society and the following names were chosen to prepare letters missive to neighboring churches to meet in council at Hartford on the 24<sup>th</sup>. On July 22<sup>nd</sup> at the close of divine services the following were nominated as officers of the church: Deacons, J.E. Sweet, Garret Van Vranken, Trustees, A.N. Spaulding, C.H. Sherburne, A.J. Dyer; Treasurer, Ann Spaulding; Clerk, William Watts. July 24, 1883, agreeable to invitations by letters missive from a number of professing Christians at Hartford an Ecclesiastic Council was organized, convening in the Baptist Church to take action in the matter of organizing a Congregational Church by the election of Rev. LeRoy Warren moderator and Rev. George S. Seavor scribe. The following named churches responded by pastor and delegate; First church, Kalamazoo, Rev. C.O. Brown, pastor, P. Hobbs, delegate; Covert, Rev. S.P. Spellman, pastor, A.S. Packard, delegate; Lawrence, Rev. P.A. Bradford, pastor Eaton Branch, delegate; Benton Harbor, Rev. W.H. Brewster, pastor; South Haven Rev. George Seavor, pastor, C. Hastings, delegate; Lincoln Park, Chicago, A.J. Dyer, delegate; Bangor,

A.B. Cochrane, pastor, C.C. Phillips, delegate; Cooper E. Andrews. The chairman of the local committee made a statement as to what had been done at former meetings showing that there was an earnest desire to organize a Congregational Church in Hartford and that steps had been taken towards raising money to build a new church building. The Rev. Park A. Bradford of Lawrence, who was acting in connection with the Congregational element here, stated that the pastor and members of the Baptist Church had shown the kindest feeling toward the new movement and had offered the use of their house of worship for this occasion and had otherwise treated them with Christian courtesy. After listening to a discussion of the subject from most of the active parties to the movement the Rev. E. Andrews moved, seconded by Rev. W.H. Brewster, "That for the honor of God this Council deem it advisable to proceed to the organization of a Congregational Church." That evening services were as follows: singing by the choir, reading of the scripture by Rev. A.B. Cochrane, sermon by Rev. C.O. Brown, propounding the confession of faith and covenant, Rev. Leroy Warren, prayer of recognition and consecration, Rev. E. Andrews, right hand of fellowship, Rev. W.H. Brewster, address to the church, Rev. LeRoy Warren. The charter members of this organization were Mr. And Mrs. J. Elliot Sweet, Mr. And

Mrs. A. J. Dyer, Mr. And Mrs. Garret Van Vranken, Mr. And Mrs. Geo. Fellows, Mr. And Mrs. William Watts, Mr. And Mrs. Charles Sherburne, Mr. And Mrs. John W. Hubbard, Mr. and Mrs. M.M. Seymour, Mr. and Mrs. A.N. Spaulding, Mrs. Charles Nicolson, Mrs. Stocum, Mrs. Mary E. Smith, Mrs. Hannah Utley, Mrs. Harriet E. Van de Vort, and Miss May Dyer. The first deacons were J. Elliott Sweet and Garret Van Vranken. Trustee for three years A.N. Spaulding, Trustee for two years. Charles N. Sherburne. Trustee for one year, Charles Nicolson. During 1885 a new church was built on South Maple Street and dedicated Wednesday, September 2, 1885 with sermon delivered by Rev. Leroy Warren. Since the organization of the church July 24, 1883, the following pastors have served the church; Revs, William Woodmansie, Samuel Taylor, E.M. Counseller, A.T. Waterman, William Miller, F.H. Bassett, F.B. Stearns, L.G. Herbert, Ruel E. Roberts, E.F. Lilly, J.S. Hamilton and A.B. Imrie. In 1919 the church federated with the Baptist Church and the Rev. J.S. Hamilton, a former pastor of the Congregational Church was their pastor until 1921. At this time the Disciple Church came into the organization and the three churches were federated with the Rev. L.G. Kent as their pastor until 1923. At this time the Congregational Church withdrew from the federation and engaged the Rev. A.L. Fisher who was their

pastor until 1928. Since that time the pulpit has been occupied by the Rev. Paul Hinkamp of Holland, who is their present pastor.

The Christian or disciple Church, as it is sometimes called, was organized in the Reynolds Hall (now the Town Hall) on November 8, 1886, after a series of meetings held by elder Levi Dewey of Dowagiac who was its first pastor and who served the church for about four years. A house of worship was erected in 1887 on Shepard Street. The church started with quite a large membership. The charter members were Cadmus C. Huntley, Henry O. Hatch, N.E. Strong, Thomas Bailey and many others. The first trustees were: Thomas Bailey, Henry O. Hatch, Cadumss C. Huntley, Nathan E. Strong, and Levi Dewey. The pastors who have served the church since its organization in 1886 are the following; Revs. Levi Dewey, J.H. Hammond, J.H. Reese, Nathan Fellows, Garry L. Cook, Willard McCarthy, F.F. Schultz, Frank A. Taylor, James A. Brown and J.C. Mathews. In 1921 the church withdrew and the two remaining churches engaged the Rev. John Balfour who ministered to them until 1928 when the Rev. M.H. Terry was engaged who is their pastor at the present time.

In the year 1858 Horace Dowd and family and others were dismissed from the church of Lawrence for the purpose of organizing a

church in Hartford. Letters missive were sent to the churches at Lawrence, Dowagiac, Paw Paw, Niles and Watervliet. Delegates were present from all of the churches except Niles. The Rev. S.H.D. Vaughan of Dowagiac was chosen Moderator and the Rev. A.A. Handy clerk. Horace Dowd and Sylvanus Reynolds were chosen deacons and Jefferson Dowd clerk. The sermon was preached by the Rev. S.H.D. Vaughan and the right hand of fellowship was given by the Rev. A.A. Handy of Paw Paw. The church was organized in the old school house with 17 members and Harvey Munger was its first pastor. Since the pastorate of Elder Munger the church has been served by the following ministers; Rev. Albert Gore, whose ministrations were terminated by his enlistment in the Civil War, Revs. W.M. Simons, W. Gates, P.S. Dean, J.F. Ross, J.G. Portman, S. Hendricks, Samuel Jackson, L.W. Olney, Charles Bailey, Walker, Armstrong, Chappell, J. Howard, Dean, Charles Rockwell, E.E. Branch, C.B. Kendal, C.A. Salyer, McConnell, F.A. Carlisle, J.B. Reynolds, James Walker, Preston, D.C. Henshaw and W. Cass Edwards. In 1919 the church federated with the Congregational Church and the Rev. J.S. Hamilton was engaged and was their pastor until 1921. At this time the Disciple church came into the organization and the three churches were federated with Rev. L.G. Kent as their

pastor until 1923 when the Congregational church withdrew and the two remaining churches engaged the Rev. John Balfour who ministered to them until 1928 when the Rev. M.H. Terry was engaged who is their pastor at the present time. The charter members of the church were; Mr. And Mrs. Horace Dowd, Mr. And Mrs. Sylvanus Reynolds, Mr. And Mrs. Andrew McNitt, Mrs. Disbrow, Mrs. Elvina Hunt, Miss Clarissa Crow, Mr. And Mrs. Chapin Reynolds, Mrs. Sylvanus Castleman, Mary Jane Disbrow, Mr. And Mrs. Alfred Brown and some others.

About 1861 a Universalist Church was built on the S.W. corner of Michigan Avenue and North Maple Street. This church was built almost entirely by the energy and means of Thomas Conklin. A Sunday School was organized with nearly 100 pupils and was sustained for some time. The church was finally sold to the Baptist Society in the summer of 1873 and the Universalist Society was abandoned. The Baptist Society owns this property at the present time.

George T. Chamberlin was born in Decatur, Michigan. His parents were Alfred E. Chamberlin and Sarepta Beals Chamberlin, both of Decatur. Mr. Chamberlin came to Hartford in 1876 and clerked in the H.M. Olney Drug Store until 1878 when the store was sold to Mrs. B.F. Humphrey of Indiana. Mr. Chamberlin then returned to Decatur, for a

short time attending Parsons' Business College at Kalamazoo. In 1880 he returned to Hartford and in company with Mr. Lou Codman purchased Mrs. Humphrey's stock of drugs and continued the business under the firm name of Chamberlin and Codman until 1883 when Mr. Chamberlin purchased Mr. Codman's interest and continued the business alone 44 years. In 1927 he took Mr. George Wilson into partnership with him and under the name of Chamberlin and Wilson they are carrying on the business at the present time. Mr. Chamberlin has been connected with this store for 50 years and is the only man in business in Hartford at the present time who was in business in 1880. Mr. Chamberlin has always been very loyal to his home town helping to promote everything that mean a betterment of conditions in the community. He has often been heard to remark that Hartford was the most progressive small town in the country. Mr. Chamberlin was married in 1885 to Elnora Shepard, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Shepard of Hartford Township. To this union two children were born, a son Rex L. and a daughter Camille. The latter passed away when 10 years of age. The son Rex. L. Chamberlin and family are living in Hartford at the present time.

William Bennett came to Hartford from Salem, Ohio in 1869 and

engaged in the hardware and farm implement business. He was first in partnership with Nathan Thomas; a Mr. Walton succeeded and he was in turn succeeded by V.E. Manley. From 1884 to 1893 Mr. Manley owned the business exclusively, Mr. Bennett giving his entire attention to farming implements. In 1893 he bought stock of Mr. Manley and with his sons carried on an extensive business in general hardware, building materials and bicycles. Mr. Bennett was one of Hartford's most popular business men.

A.H. Young came to Hartford in 1875 and went into business with his brother-in-law M. Hinkley. They occupied the old Van Ostrom building with their stock of dry goods, boots, shoes, and millinery. They moved their stock into a new store build by C.H. Engle on Main Street where they remained until 1883 when they sold the stock to Red Warren and son. Mr. Young then went to manufacturing staves and heading. Mrs. Young was also interested in the dry goods and millinery business and for years she was always found behind the counter.

In 1878 Downey and Robbins bought the lumber business of Earl and Allen. In 1880 they opened a grocery store in this place. About 1883 J.P. Barnes came here from the east and bought of Mr. Downey his interest in the grocery business and later he bought Mr. Robbins

interest as well. His stock was removed from this place to Grand Rapids.

George Carpenter started in the grocery business here in 1882. He was succeeded by Chester Conklin and Mr. Conklin was in turn succeeded by Giles Cook who sold to Leslie Britton. The last three died while in business. After Mr. Britton's death Jennings and McNitt bought the stock and after a short time sold out to G.L. Davenport and he sold the stock to M.J. Olds. In 1895, Mrs. Olds sold the business to C.H. Smeed of New Richmond who carried on the business for 12 to 14 years.

In 1885 John McAllister came to Hartford from St. Joseph and took charge of the Richmond House (now the Hartford House). After a year in the hotel he left that business and opened a restaurant and bakery here. He was one of Hartford's most popular and prosperous business men.

Olds and Stowe, manufacturers of sash, doors and blinds were among the oldest mill men of the place. The firm, then known as Olds Brothers was established in 1870. In 1882 their factory was burned and they rebuilt near the railroad.

Marion F. Hoover was born in New Lisbon, Ohio, June 22, 1839 where he resided until his enlistment in the Civil War. Returning to his native town after the war, he remained in Ohio until coming to Hartford

in 1872. He opened a wagon shop on East Main Street and conducted it for 45 years. Many of the wagons and sleighs that he built are still doing service on Hartford farms and for nearly half a century a "Hoover wagon" was the insignia of the best farm equipment. The decline of the wagon and buggy industry with the advent of the motor car and truck brought about Mr. Hoover's retirement from business in 1917. Mr. Hoover served more than three years during the Civil War with the "Fighting Seventh Infantry" from Ohio, enlisted on October 18, 1861 and serving until his discharge on October 26, 1864. In 1862 he was shot through the knees at the battle of Port Republic, Virginia, and spent a year in the hospital. He was then transferred to the invalid corps and later to brigade headquarters where he completed his service as a guard.

The late William Harley who resided on East Main Street and who died last year was a comrade of Mr. Hoover's in the "Fighting Seventh". Mr. Hoover was married September 25, 1876 to Miss Flora McNitt of Hartford who died at her home here in February, 1928 after a wedded life of over 51 years. They were the parents of four children, two dying in infancy. The two daughters living are Miss Laura Hoover, teller of the Olney National Bank, and Mrs. Cecil Lightner, also of Hartford.

Alex P. Shaw was born on the Isle of Skye, Scotland, August 5, 1844, and at the age of four years came to America with his parents and family settling at Clarkson, New York. On August 7, 1862 he enlisted at Rockport, New York in Company A. 140th. New York Volunteers, later known as Ryan's Zouaves and lacked one month of serving three years with his regiment. During those three years he fought in 22 engagements but was never wounded. Fredericksburg and Gettysburg were among the most important battles in which he fought. Mr. Shaw always attended the annual reunions of his regiment until a year ago. He attended the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and on that historic field he found still standing a little wall of stones which he had built for protection while the battle was raging. Lying on the ground he reached out and secured a stone at a time until he erected a wall that protected him from enemy bullets. At his death he was one of the last survivors of his regiment. Only 18 of them were living at the time of the last annual reunion. After the war Mr. Shaw was apprenticed to a carriage maker in New York and acquired the training to begin his trade in Hartford four years later. Starting in 1869 he built the first buggies ever built in Hartford. He began buiding buggies in his own shop then joined forces with the late Charles Mortimer, another pioneer wagon maker and later

became associated with the later M.F. Hoover. In 1883 Mr. Shaw went to Fairmount, North Dakota, where he farmed until 1901. He then returned to Hartford and put in nine more years building buggies and wagons at the Hoover shop. During the last few years Mr. Shaw had indulged in his hobby, that of gardening. Over a hundred varieties of flowers and seasonable vegetables always thrived in his garden. Flowers were his chief delight and he distributed many of them among the sick of the community. Mr. Shaw was married in 1872 to Miss Mary Manley who died in the fall of 1918. Some years later he married Miss Mary Elizabeth Gates who was a teacher in the Hartford schools in the late seventies. There were four children by the first marriage, a daughter Beatrice Shaw, who died in Fairmount, North Dakota at the age of 15 years, and three sons, Frank Shaw and attorney, Wanzo M. Shaw, newspaper publisher and postmaster, both of Sheldon, North Dakota, and Earnest Shaw of Caldwell, Idaho. Mr. Shaw died May 16, 1929 and was buried in the Maple Hill Cemetery.

Freeman S. Stowe was born in West Chazy, New York, June 23, 1844. At the age of nine years he came with his parents to Hartford Township where they settled on a farm later known as the Ryan farm northwest of the village. When Mr. Stowe was 17 years of age he enlisted

in the Civil War in Company D Sixty-sixth Illinois Sharpshooters and served three years and nine months. When he returned he bought 40 acres of land in the southwest part of the village which later was platted making two additions to the village. November 12, 1868, he was married to Emma Boynton, youngest daughter of Mortimer Boynton. They resided here and during the years that followed Mr. Stowe was prominently identified with the development of the village. He was extensively engaged in building and construction work with the late Allen Olds, a Civil War comrade. They also operated a planing mill and sash and door factory for many years. At one time this was one of Hartford's important industries. The name Olds and Stowe always meant good work. Mr. Stowe served as village president and as justice of the peace of Hartford Township and was otherwise called upon for public service. He was one of about twenty young men who went into the woods and paid their subscription by cutting timber for the M.E. Church. Before commencing the job he took off his hat and spoke as follows: "Now boys, we are going to build a house of worship and let us not swear and I propose that the first one that does shall pay five dollars for the church." All agreed. The second tree fell on the stump where lay Mr. Stowe's coat. When he saw the ruined coat he forgot about the forfeiture and swore a little, but he soon planked down

the five dollars and then said: "Let it go down in history that for the M.E. Church I struck the first blow, made the first oath and paid the first five dollars. Mr. And Mrs. Stowe were the parents of four children, a daughter dying in infancy, a son Charles who passed away in New Mexico in 1897 at the age of 24 years, B.A. Stowe of Covington, Ohio, and Mrs. Bertha McAlpine, widow of the late J. Clair McAlpine. Mr. Stowe passed away on April 30, 1929, and was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery. Mrs. Stowe who is 83 years old resides in the home of South Center Street, her daughter Bertha being her companion during her declining years.

John McAlpine was born in Past Creek, Chemung County, New York, January 28, 1845. His great grandfather was a native of Scotland who came first to England with his family and was sent as a reporter to America in the interests of the British government, but he immediately took sides with the colonists and served as a captain in the Revolutionary War and in consequences had all of his property confiscated in England. Our subject was a son of George McAlpine only son of John McAlpine. He came from New York to Cass County in 1858. He worked on farms for different men until February 15, 1864 when he enlisted in Company D. Berge's Sharpshooters afterwards known as the

66th Illinois Infantry. He was with General Sherman in all of his engagements and had many interesting experiences. He was knocked down by a bullet that had passed through and killed the soldier in front of him. He brought the battered bullet home with him. His daughter Ethel has it and she says she often wonders who the man was who lost his life that her father's life might be spared. Mr. McAlpine was promoted to corporal, was in the grand review at Washington and was honorably discharged July 11, 1865. At the close of the war he returned to Silver Creek and was married March 25, 1868 to Mary M. Phillips, a young school teacher, daughter of Richard and Jane Phillips who formerly lived with their family on what is now the Arthur Vanderlyn farm west of town. Their first home was a log house in Hamilton Township where a son John Clair was born October 2, 1869. Some years later they moved to Keeler Township where a daughter, Ethel, was born April 20, 1879. Mr. and Mrs. McAlpine worked together until they were the owners of a fine farm home in Keeler Township. In the spring of 1904 they moved to Hartford Village having rented the farm to their son Clair. Hartford having been their trading town for many years and many friendships had been formed. Politically Mr. McAlpine was a Republican and had served Keeler Township three terms as supervisor. The second year in

Hartford found him supervisor of this township which office he held until 1910 when he was obliged to resign on account of failing health.

The writer had been acquainted with Mr. McAlpine and his family for many years having been associated with him in a business way during the late eighties. He was a man any community would have been glad to have living in its midst. Always faithful to any trust, and especially so to the wife of his youth, always ready to minister to her wants during her long illness. He often expressed the wish that his life might be spared so that he might be able to share some of the burden which would fall so heavily upon his daughter Ethel. He passed away November 5, 19 10, and was buried in the Keeler cemetery. The invalid wife still lives in the home on Bernard Street where she is being cared for by her daughter Ethel. J. Claire McAlpine, only son of John McAlpine, was born in Hamilton Township October 2, 1869. Some years later he moved with his parents to Keeler Township where he grew to manhood. In 1886 he attended college at Valparaiso, Indiana and October 3, 1888 he was Married to Miss Minnie Shepard. Soon after their marriage he purchased a farm in Section 11 in Keeler Township where they lived until 1904 when they moved to his father's farm on Section 2. They were the parents of five children, a son dying in infancy, Mrs. Frank Neville of

Jackson, Mrs. William Bullard of Hartford and Miss Shirley McAlpine of Kalamazoo. Mrs. McAlpine passed away on February, 1913. In the spring of 1915 Mr. McAlpine moved to the village of Hartford, but still supervised the farm in Keeler. June 6, 1917 he was married to Miss Bertha Stowe and to this union a daughter Beth was born February 21, 1923. After coming to Hartford he engaged in selling automobile supplies in what was then known as the Corner Shop and some years later he engaged in the sale of agricultural implements. In 1926 he was elected member of Van Buren County Poor Commission which office he held at the time of his death which occurred April 19, 1930 with burial in the Keeler cemetery beside his first wife. Thomas J. Johns was born in New Garden, Columbian County, Ohio, December 22, 1836. He was the son of Nathan and Sara Johns. He lived with his parents until grown to manhood and then learned the millwright trade. In 1863 he went to Colorado where he worked at his trade for seven years. He then returned to his boyhood home and after a few months he came to Hartford and worked at his trade. In 1872 he was married to Melvina Van Ostrom, daughter of William and Mary Thomas. They were the parents of one son, Edward C. Johns who is married and lives in Watervliet. Mr. and Mrs. Johns commenced housekeeping in the house now owned by Mr. and

Mrs. Howard Lovdell. They lived here until 1887 when they sold their home to Howland Taylor. They then moved into a house he had built for himself on South Street now owned by Esther Landon. They lived here until 1922 when they sold this home to the late Lewis Landon. They then moved to Watervliet and resided with their son Edward. Mrs. Johns passed away February 17, 1924. Mr. Johns was a resident of Hartford 52 years and while living here built about 30 houses in Hartford, a number of which were built by him after he was 70 years old. The Wing house and the house now owned by William. Nicholson and a number of others in that neighborhood were among that number. He was one of Hartford's good carpenters who never had the name of slighting his work to gain a dollar. He was also active in the business life of Hartford in the earlier days, having operated a flour and feed store for a number of years in the building recently remodeled by the Hartford Baking Co. He had been supervisor of Hartford Township two years, and had been treasurer and clerk at different times. The writer called on him recently and found him in the pink of condition and evidently good for many more birthdays. He resides at the home of his son, Mr. and Mrs. E.C. Johns, of Watervliet with whom he has resided for the past nine years.

Edward M. Johns was born in Columbia County, Ohio, May 5, 1851. He lived with his parents until about 18 years of age. He then learned the mason trade. He came to Hartford in 1872 and on January 1, 1877 he was married to Mary E. Thomas, daughter of William and Mary Thomas. They commenced housekeeping in a house a short distance east of F.W. Hubbard's present residence. They were the parents of two daughters, Ruby M. Johns who passed away June 8, 1907, and Grace E. Johns who became the wife of Gaylord Thompson. Mr. Johns worked at his trade most of the time until 1887 when he purchased the book store formerly owned by Edward Finley which business he conducted until four years ago when he sold to Frank Hradecky, who is carrying on the business at the present time. Mr. Johns was an expert plasterer and in the spring of 1881 he did a large part of the plastering in the home now owned by R.D. McLean, south of town, and when finished, the beautiful white, glistening white walls were the delight of the newly married couple who went to live there. Mr. Johns has always been interested in the welfare of both township and village. He has held the office of township treasurer and village clerk and was a popular official. He has been resident of Hartford village 57 years. He says he came here when the tall grass and weeds grew in nearly all front

yards and the cowbells tinkled while the cows pastured in the village streets. He resides with his daughter, Grace, on Shepard Street. Mrs. Johns passed away in 1927 and was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery.

William Havens was a native of Stenben County, New York, where he grew to manhood and was married to Jane Lewis. After his marriage he came to Michigan and settled in Keeler Township, Van Buren County. He was a carpenter by trade and he built then a large number of the best country homes in both Keeler and Hartford townships. He built the house on the Edward Ewald place, the house on the H.L. Stratton farm where Dale Wolcott now lives, the Frank Roosevelt house south of Keeler and the R.D. McLean home south of Hartford. Mr. and Mrs. Havens were the parents of six children. Olive, who became the wife of Marcius A. Olds, Metcalf, who was married to Ella DeLong, Emma, who was married to Alphens McNitt, William, who married Charles Pierce and Charles W. who married Pearl Humphrey. Mr. and Mrs. Havens lived in Keeler until 1874 when they moved to Hartford Township, where they had purchased the middle 50 acres of the north half of Section 29. (Ferdina Olds, who was the first actual settler in Hartford, settled on this farm in 1831.) Mr. and Mrs. Havens resided on this farm until his death which occurred September 24, 1892. After Mr. Havens death, Mrs.

Havens moved to the village where she resided until her death which occurred February 4, 1923.

Edward W. Ewald was born in St. Joseph Township, Berrien County, Michigan on July 1, 1871. He was the son of Fred J. and Mary (Grimm) Ewald, both of whom were natives of Germany. When he was old enough he went to the local district school, and continued there until he was 18. He then went to work on a fruit farm and has ever since been connected with the same industry. On December 17, 1895, Mr. Ewald was married to Miss Clara Weber. She was born in Stevensville, Michigan, the daughter of John and Mary (Wright) Weber and was reared in the city of St. Joseph, where she attended the public schools. For three years she was employed as a clerk in a store in St. Joe. Mr. and Mrs. Ewald became the parents of six children, namely Evelyn, Leonard, Walter, Marjorie, Clare and Olive. In 1905 Mr. Ewald came to Van Buren County and purchased the old Packer farm two and a quarter miles southwest of Hartford in Section 29, where he and his family now reside. Mr. Ewald is known in Hartford as one of the scientific fruit growers of the township.

Edward Skinner was born in Kendall County, Illinois, on November 6, 1870. He is the son of Stephen and Eva (Brodie) Skinner, both of

whom were natives of England where they were married. They immigrated to this country in 1854 and located in Kendall County, Illinois. They made the journey across the ocean in a sail boat and it consumed three months time. Edward Skinner worked on the farm during the summer seasons and attended district school during the winter until he was 18 years old. His father died when he was 11 years old and he remained with his mother until she too passed away, after which his sister kept house for him until he was 30 years old. Part of this time he spent at Lisbon, Illinois where for three years he was engaged in business. After selling out there Mr. Skinner came to Hartford Township and bought the John Hines farm of 120 acres on Section 28 and he made his home there since 1903. In February, 1902 he was married to Mrs. Metta Sleizer who was Miss Metta Ostrom, born in Kendall County, Illinois. She was educated in the Newark school and later attended a seminary. To her first marriage were born two daughters, Miss Clara Sleizer who was a graduate of the Newark High School and was a teacher in the public schools prior to her marriage to William Phillips (Mr. and Mrs. Phillips reside on Oak Street in Hartford village and they are the owners of a fine fruit farm in Hartford Township on Section 28), and Miss Nina her marriage to L.C. Munson. Mr. and Mrs. Skinner reside on the

farm which is now considered one of the best fruit farms in the township. William Phillips passed away in 1957.

Charles J. Floate was the son of Walter and Sarah (Wentworth) Floate who came from England and settled in Macomb County, Michigan in 1854. They were 35 days crossing the ocean. Charles Floate was born March 10, 1856, and came to Clinton County with his parents when he was 10 years old. He remained with his parents until December 25, 1878 when he was married to Frances Ellen Skinner at St. Johns, Michigan. She was the daughter of Edwin R. and Ellen Skinner. Soon after their marriage they came to Hartford and resided for two years on the farm where William Floate now lives. In the spring of 1880 he purchased 40 acres of land in the southwest quarter of Section 33. There were only five acres of clearing on this farm and no road near except a trail through the woods. Mr. and Mrs. Floate moved into a log house without doors or windows and no floors in the kitchen. Blankets and carpets were used to cover the openings until such time as he could procure doors and windows to keep out the snow and rain. Clearing was done on the farm, fences built and many other improvements. A new barn was erected and a few years later a modern residence graced this one time wilderness farm. Mr. Floate was a scientific farmer and his land was tilled, fertilized

and tiled in a way to produce the best possible crops. Mr. and Mrs. Floate were the parents of six children, three of the number are now living and married. Edwin who lives in Wyoming, Albert who lives in Maple Rapids, Michigan, and William who lives on the old Skinner homestead two and a half miles southeast of town. Mrs. Floate passed away May 18, 1.924, and was buried, in the Pioneer Cemetery. Mr. Floate resides with his son William who is one of Hartford's best farmers.

Charles W. Havens was born in Keeler Township November 29, 1867. He came to Hartford Township with his parents when he was six years old. He attended district school and worked on his father's farm until he was seventeen, when he gave all his time to farming. September 28 1898, he married Miss Pearl Humphrey who was born in Gerald, Illinois. Mrs. Havens was educated in the high school of Mishawaka, Indiana and later came with her parents to Hartford Township to live. It was here that she met and later married Mr. Havens. They are the parents of three sons, William B., Russell and Gerald. Mr. Havens owns a good farm on Section 30 which he works in connection with the old Havens homestead where he and Mrs. Havens now live. Mr. Havens has always taken an active interest in the North Bell School, having been treasurer 21 years and director 6 years and at this time he is president

of the North Bell Homecoming Association. He has the distinction of having attended every school meeting during the past 31 years.

Alfred Richmond was born in Paw Paw Township and was the son of Charles and Margaret (Wood) Richmond. He worked on his father's farm and attended district school until he was grown to manhood. February 18, 1885 he was married to Miss Jennie C. Challans. About this time he purchased a forty acre farm which he worked in connection with other farms in the neighborhood. During the year 1888 he sold this farm and moved to Hartford and purchased an 80 acre farm one mile south of town. He remained here only a short time when he was engaged as farm superintendent of the Olney farm of 560 acres three miles south of town. He held this position until 1895 when he bought an 80 acre farm in Section 31, five miles southwest of town. Mr. and Mrs. Richmond are the parents of three children, Orlo who married Pearl Zoulek and resides in Kalamazoo, Alma who married Glen Baldwin and they reside near Schoolcraft, and Dean who married Adaline Russell and who lives on a farm across the road in Keeler Township. Mr. Richmond is one of the progressive farmers of Hartford Township. He has specialized in general farming. The house in which Mr. and Mrs. Richmond reside at this time is one of the old landmarks in the

township. It was built many years ago when no house was complete without a parlor and a parlor bedroom. The massive moldings are all hand made, massive panels under each window also constructed of hand moldings. All woodwork in these two rooms was made by hand. It was on this farm that Joseph Ruggles, Hartford's first supervisor, settled 91 years ago.

Albert H. Tuttle was the son of Simon and Juliet (Wrightman) Tuttle. He was born at Nunda, Livingston County, New York on September 18, 1841. At the age of seven years he came with his parents to Michigan. The family settled near Mendon. Two years later they came to Van Buren County settling in Keeler Township on a farm on the bank of Keeler Lake where Mr. Tuttle spent his boyhood. It was there that he was married on December 21, 1865 to Miss Lucinda K. Fassett of Keeler. Soon after their marriage, Mr. Tuttle bought a farm in Hamilton Township about three miles west of Decatur. On April 6, 1876 they came to Hartford where he and his father purchased 160 acres of timber land about one half mile south of town which they cleared and converted into a productive farm. As a young man on the farm he took up the study of law and in 1888 he was admitted to the bar by the Supreme Court. He occupied a law office in partnership with Lincoln H. Titus in what was

then the Merriman Bank Building. This partnership continued about two years, after which he continued the business alone for many years. Through his professional career in Hartford he was highly esteemed, for the sterling integrity that characterized his practice, as well as for his recognized ability as a counselor. For more than a quarter of a century he maintained an active interest in community affairs, having served as village president, councilman, member of the school board, justice of the peace, and in many other local official capacities, always discharging his public trusts efficiently and consistently. Mr. Tuttle believed in seeing America. He visited nearly all the principal cities in the U.S. and many historic places. Mr. and Mrs. Tuttle were the parents of four children, Nellie, who became the wife of Elmer Conklin and resides in Hartford on Hillsborough Street, Pearl, who married Louis N. Abbott of Fairmount, North Dakota, Charles, who married Miss Katherine Kingston of Bangor. They now reside in California, and Dell who died in Texas, June 26, 1906. Mr. Tuttle died July 14, 1921 and was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery. Mrs. Tuttle passed away January 13, 1922, and was buried in the family lot.

Charles S. Johnson was born in Minimac County, New Hampshire, August 9, 1849. He remained with his parents attending district school

in the winter and working on the farm in the summer until he was 21 years old. During the following six years he worked at carpenter work and taught one term of school. In the fall of 1875 he went to LaSalle Co, Illinois. The next day after his arrival he was engaged to teach school in Grundy County. During the next six years he taught school in different places during the winter and worked on farms in the summer. January 57 1881 he was married to Miss Olive Fowler, who lived near Newark, Illinois. After is marriage he rented different farms until 1900 when he bought a farm in Kendall County, Illinois. During the year 1904 he sold this farm and came to Hartford and bought 120 acres of Charles Nicolson on Section 28, one and one-half miles south of town, formally know as the A.N. Spaulding farm. He rented this farm to Claud Fowler for three years, during which time he and his family resided in the village on Edwin Street where he had purchased a village home. At the expiration of the lease he moved to the farm where he and Mrs. Johnson remained for four years. At this time he rented the farm to his son, Jay, and returned to his house in the village where they reside at this writing. Mr. Johnson made many improvements on the farm, remodeled the barns and built a modern residence. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson are the parents of two sons, Irving E. who is claim agent for the Monon Railroad

Company and is located at Lafayette, Indiana, and Jay F. who married Addie Meachman and resides on the old homestead.

Ira D. Spaulding came to Hartford with his parents when he was five years old. He spent his boyhood days attending school, fishing in Pine Creek, chasing squirrels on the rail fences, and working on his father's farm. While attending school at the North Bell School, he became acquainted with Miss Leona Parker. After this, his fishing excursions became less frequent and the squirrels around the Spaulding home seemed more tame, and Little Jim, the saddle horse, was quite often seen tied to Joe Packer's hitching post. Little Jim, as he was always called, continued to travel the road quite regularly until September 30, 1885, when they were married at the old Packer home. After their marriage he worked his father's farm for a term of years, and later bought a farm of 50 acres and erected a house and barn where they lived until 1920 when they bought a home on Bernard Street and moved to town, renting the farm to their son, Arlin. Soon after their marriage, Mr. Spaulding became interested in fruit raising and commenced by setting out a large peach orchard. He soon followed this with cherries, pears and apples and some years later a vineyard was added until at this time, he and his son Arlin have a continual round of pleasure trimming, burning brush,

plowing, harrowing, spraying, picking cherries, early apples, grapes and late apples. After the late apples are picked and marketed and the cider is in the barrel there is nothing to do but play checkers and fish through the ice. Mr. Spaulding has always been an enthusiastic fisherman and I think he has the distinction of having caught the largest fish caught by anyone who ever lived in Hartford. A hammerhead shark weighing 1200 lbs. This fish was caught while he and Mrs. Spaulding were spending the winter at Dania, near Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, a year ago. Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding were the parents of three children. Don, who married Miss Myrtle Newell and live in Lawrence, Florence, who married Irving Johnson and who passed away March, 4 1919, and Arlin who married Miss Ora Hill. They reside on the farm.

In the year 1893 there were two clubs formed. One was the Century Club composed of husbands and wives who met once a week, held a debate, or, more often, had a regular program for the evenings' work. The other was called the Ladies Magazine Club and as the name suggests was strictly a ladies club. There were about fifteen members enrolled with Friday afternoons the time for meeting. In the year 1895 the two clubs federated, formed their constitution and became a regular organized club under the name of the Hartford Women's Club. The

officers chosen at that time were as follows: President, Mrs. Crosby; Vice President, Mrs. Chamberlin; Secretary, Mrs. Codman; Secretary, Mrs. Sarah Engle; Treasurer, Mrs. Ocobock. The program committee were the following: Mrs. Elmer Conklin, V.W. Olds, Mrs. Manley and Mrs. G.T. Chamberlin. For several years the club convened in the homes of the members, finally the membership outgrowing those accommodations, rooms were rented over what was then known as the Downey Building. Later they moved to their present quarters in the Mortimer Building. When the club was first organized it was purely a literary club but after a time they outgrew their conservatism and took an active interest in outside affairs, particularly when it effected their own community. Civic and public health commanded much of their attention and many beauty spots in Hartford owe their origin to the club women of Hartford, viz, the beautifying of the park and the school grounds, planting flowers, shrubs and vines. The first waste paper baskets that graced our streets were purchased and placed by the Civic Committee of the club. Placards were also posted and attention called in various ways to expectoration on the side walks and in public places. The later as a precaution against tuberculosis. The women were soon rewarded by seeing the streets in a more sanitary condition. Public health work was carried on by

cooperating with the state in holding free clinics for both children and adults, and the proceeds from the sale of Red Cross Christmas Seals were used to help defray the expenses of same. The Cemetery Association was organized by the club and up to the time the fund known as the Harriet Palmer fund came into use, was carried on by this group of earnest women. During the World War period club work slackened somewhat and the use of the club rooms as well as the time and energy of the club women were donated to this cause. Mrs. Eva Lobdell was chairman of the local chapter, while another member, Mrs. Elnora Chamberlin, was appointed by the county as chairman of the woman's division Van Buren County Chapter Red Cross. The Woman's Club has always been a power for good in the community and has always been called into action when something worthwhile needed doing. The club has been honored by having one of its members, Mrs. Elnora Chamberlin, chosen to serve the state organization two years as corresponding secretary, two years as vice-president and two years as president. At the close of her term as president she was elected Director for Michigan for two years in the General Federation of Woman's Club, the largest women's organization in the world.

The Ladies Library Association was organized in November, 1895. The first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. G.T. Chamberlin, November 15, where the organization was really formed. In the course of a week a constitution and bylaws were drafted officers elected and membership and membership tickets on sale. A room was provided in the Merriman Bank Building which G.T. Chamberlin and Blashfield and Smith fitted up with paper, paint and shelving. About one hundred books were donated and 200 purchased and put in place. The Library was duly opened January 11, 1896, with Miss Helen Codman as librarian. The officers of the association were: President, Mrs. H. L. Potter; treasurer, Mrs. V.W. Olds; secretary, Mrs. M.F. Dean. The choice of books was placed in the hands of a committee with Miss Lee Smith as chairman. The room in the Merriman Bank Building was occupied by them until 1893 when they moved to the C.H. Sherburne Building on the north side of Main Street where they remained for some time and then moved into the Downey Building where the Leach Garage now stands. Here they remained until November 10, 1924 when they came into possession of the Merriman Home on Franklin Street. The official board has not changed to any extent in 35 years. Mrs. Pauline Heald and Mrs. Helen Euver served several years on the board in different capacities. Of

the present officers the librarian, Mrs. Lotta Nicolson, and vice president, Mrs. Ethel Anderson, have served seven years each. Mrs. Elnora Chamberlin has served as president of the association 30 years out of the 35 years of its existence. In 1925 an advisory committee composed of men was appointed by the board of directors as follows: Frank Eagan, Dr. VanRiper, Dr. Fox, M. Cullom, Marion Anderson, William Nicolson, A. Miller. V.W. Olds, and G.T Chamberlin. The records show that about 4,000 volumes have been accessioned, over 200 having been placed on the shelves this year. Much credit is due to this faithful group of women for the success the library has attained.

George F. Collett was born at Long Stanton, Cambridgeshire, England, September 19, 1840. He was the son of John and Harriet, Collett. He came to the U.S. with his parents in 1846 and located at Lockport, New York, later moving to New Buffalo, Michigan, where his father was connected with a furniture and cabinet shop. He served in the Civil war and after more than a year's service he contracted typhoid fever and was brought home and afterward given his discharge. On November 26 1866, he was married to Adeline S. Phillips, daughter of Richard B. and Mary Catherine Phillips at New Buffalo, Michigan. Three children were born to them, Edith Catherine, George Richard, and another

daughter who died in infancy. Mr. Collett had charge of a railroad construction gang during the building of the Chicago and West Michigan (now the Pere Marquette Railroad) from New Buffalo to Holland. He was then given his choice of any station on the line except St. Joseph. He chose Hartford. They lived in St. Joseph over a year and upon the completion of the railroad in 1870 they moved to Hartford. At that time there was no vacant house to be had, so they moved into the house on North Center Street with Mr. and Mrs. Joe Blake, where the H.L. Gleason house now stands. He later built a house west of the Baptist Church on Michigan Avenue, and later built another house on Mary Street. When they moved to Hartford there were but few stores, and almost all of the residents raised their own vegetables and it was a number of years before vegetables could be bought at the home stores. All garden truck for the Collett family was sent from St. Joseph. Mr. Collett was station agent at Hartford over 25 years. He was also agent for the railroad formally known as the Narrow Gauge between, Lawton and South Haven, and for many years was agent for the American Express Company. Mr. Collett never held public office, but was always interested in all public affairs. He was a Mason, and a member of the I.O.O.F. and G.A.R. and of the Congregational Church of Hartford. He

was one of the first subscribers for the Hartford Day Spring, and a subscription has been held by some of the immediate family to this date. During the last few years of his life he made his home at Paw Paw Lake summers and at Benton Harbor winters. He passed away at Watervliet December 27, 1905, and was buried at Hartford in the Pioneer Cemetery. Mrs. Collett then went to live with her daughter, Mrs. A.S. Miles and husband in Benton Harbor, spending her summer at the Paw Paw Lake home, "The Kenilworth" where she passed away July 26, 1921, and was buried in the Pioneer Cemetery. Mr. Collett's father and mother lived in Hartford the later part of their lives and were also buried an the Collett family lot.

In the year 1837 while this territory was still in the township of Lawrence the first school in what is now Hartford Township was taught by Mrs. Martha Conklin, wife of Thomas Conklin in their home in the south part of the township. The next year a second school was established in a log house about a mile and a half west of town and taught by Abigail Hellin. The first school house in the township was built of logs and was created in the southwest part of the township. There were five pupils and the school was taught by Olive Poole, who received a salary of \$1.25 per week. District No. 5 in the village was organized in

July, 1854, and the school was conducted in the home of Harvey Tomblin with Andoinette Stoughten as teacher. Two years later the first school house in the village was erected by William Shepard on the lot where the Catholic Church now stands. This house is now used for a dwelling and is located at the corner of Edwin and Washington Streets about two blocks north of its original location. In the summer of 1873 a brick school house was built on the present school site (a part of this building still remains in the central part of the present structure). The building committee at that time was Charles Mortimer, Richard Driscoil and Ansel E. Reynolds. The building was built by William H. Havens at a cost of about \$6,000, including fixtures. School opened in this building October 31, 1873, with 140 pupils enrolled, and A.L. Fox as superintendent.

In 1903 it became necessary to erect a new school house. Thomas J. Johns, Allen Olds and Edward Finley were elected as the building committee. A part of the old school house was used in the construction of the new building. The cost was about \$13,000. It contained ten rooms, one of which was occupied by the County Normal until 1922 when it was discontinued. In the year 1921 an addition of 50' x 96' containing an auditorium, assembly room and six classrooms were built on the north

end. The contract price for this addition was \$40,000. The school board at that time was composed by J.H. Conrad, Mrs. Marion Anderson, Mrs. S.M. Carpp, Harry Dowd and Fred Van Riper. M.L. Fear, superintendent of schools at Plainwell, was Hartford's superintendent when the latest addition was built. Mr. Fear gave much personal supervision to the plans for the building and also to its construction during the summer it was built. On the present school board are: Mrs. Zula Tyrell, Ray Buckman, Paul Richter, Dr. John D. Stewart and Ralph Hubbard. At this writing there are 328 resident and 90 non-resident pupils enrolled. Since 1905 the school has been on the University list thus making it possible for its graduates to enter the University without an examination. The present building is well equipped and ranks among the more progressive schools of the county. The system offers a comprehensive curriculum under capable supervision.

The business personnel of the village at this time **commencing at the railroad on the south side of Main Street**, is as follows:

- ◆ The Gleaner Co-Operative Elevator, John Boynton, Manager
- ◆ E.R. Smith Lumber and Building Material, with office on north side of Main St.
- ◆ The Bell Hotel, Alford Pitcher, Proprietor
- ◆ Hudson-Essex Sales Rooms and Garage, William L. Olds, Proprietor

- ◆ Hartford House, Roy Hinckley, Proprietor
- ◆ Leach Motor Co. Sales Room and Garage, Clare Leach, Proprietor
- ◆ Ford Sales Room and Garage, Robert Rankin, Proprietor
- ◆ Hartford Baking Company, Ruitter & Boon, Proprietors
- ◆ Park Cafe, Mr. & Mrs. William Shepard
- ◆ Barber Shop, Mr. N. Smith
- ◆ First State Bank, Pres. Clarence D. Olds; Vice President, Dr. J.D. Stewart & Herman Loeffler; Cashier, William Grahl
- ◆ Pool Room, Burns and Calvert
- ◆ Clothing Store, M.O. Oppenheim
- ◆ Grocery Store, Howard Curry
- ◆ Drug Store, Chamberlin and Wilson
- ◆ Clothing Store, Olds Bros.
- ◆ Grocery Store, Olds Bros.
- ◆ Chocolate Shop, Frank Ansteth
- ◆ Restaurant, Marvin Whitmore
- ◆ Gleaner Co-operative Grocery Store, Lester Smith, Manager
- ◆ Drug Store, M.A. Engle
- ◆ Meat Market, W.J. Clark
- ◆ Lunch Room, Schmedes and Yeckley
- ◆ Millinery, Adalyn Humphrey

- ◆ Radio Shop, Gordon Howes, Carl Sheel
- ◆ Jim's Hardware, James Walker, Harold Walker
- ◆ Plumbing Shop, Howard Wilkinson
- ◆ Barber Shop, J.C. Steinhilber
- ◆ Real Estate Office and Insurance, Paul F. Richter
- ◆ A & P Store, C.E. Weeks, Manager
- ◆ Hardware, J.H. Conrad

**Olney Block** --- (Olney)

First Story

- ◆ Olney National Bank, E.R. Smith, President; James 1. Ingalls, Cashier; Marion C. Mortimer, Assistant Cashier
- ◆ Post Office - Ralph Hubbard, Postmaster; Ed Bonning, Clerk, Mrs. Dale Wolcott, Clerk, Frank Tollar, Village Mail Carrier; S.M. Penwell, Rural Route #1; Dell Meachum, Rural Route #2; Ed Beatty, Rural Route #3
- ◆ Hartford Day Spring - Donald F. Cochrane, Editor; Donald S. Cochran, Advertising Manager.

Second Story

- ◆ Dr. Fred Van Riper, Dentist
- ◆ Dr. W.S. Hinckley, Dentist
- ◆ John D. Stewart, M.D.
- ◆ Dr. Leo Latus, Osteopathic Physician

- ◆ Stephen Doyle, Secretary Van Buren County Fair
- ◆ Funeral Home, Zuver and Calvin
- ◆ Wolverine Service Station, W.F. Goltz and Ed G. Cooper,  
Managers
- ◆ Garage on South Haver Street, Joe Gratzle
- ◆ Ladies Rest Room

**Commencing at corner of Main and Haver Streets on north side:**

- ◆ Standard Oil Service Station, Lyle Sweet
- ◆ Blacksmith Shop, Giles Schultz
- ◆ Furniture Store, Teitsworth and Teitsworth
- ◆ Filling Station and Tire Shop, Leon Kitzmiller
- ◆ Department Store, F.W. Hubbard and Co.
- ◆ Groceries, Roy Knapp
- ◆ Hartford Light & Power Company Offices
- ◆ Photography, Blanche Conaway
- ◆ Variety Store, James Knight
- ◆ Dry Goods, Abrams Bros.
- ◆ News Store, Frank Hradecky
- ◆ Electric Shop, O.E. Deal
- ◆ Lunch Room, Charles Abbott
- ◆ State Theatre, Joe Kizinski, Proprietor

- ◆ Club Room, L.O.Lewis
- ◆ Meat Market, Charles Hammond
- ◆ Cream Station, Anthony Miller
- ◆ Shoe Repair Shop, Joe Crisauilli
- ◆ Confectionery, A. Rutt

**North Center Street:**

- ◆ Bicycle Shop, Glenn Walling
- ◆ Garage, Dewey Fredericks
- ◆ Fruit and Produce, Clare Clover
- ◆ Coal and Feed Store, W.J. Markillie, Proprietor
- ◆ Hartford Lumber Company, Arthur Manning, President
- ◆ Van Buren County Canning Co., C. Corey, Manager

**About Town:**

- ◆ Antiques and Coal, Milton F. Boze
- ◆ Tri-County Telephone Exchange

**North Haver Street:**

- ◆ Kirchen and Gifford, Natural Preserved Foliages, Guy Gifford,  
President and General Manager; Theo Kirchen, Treasurer
- ◆ Wins Favor Products Co., J.H. Heuser, President; D.J. Bruggink,  
Secretary and General Manager
- ◆ Hartford Milling Co., A. Casteel, President; W.A. Keeney, Vice

President; Mary Casteel, Secretary and Treasurer

- ◆ Hartford Mfg. Co., Wood Working, H.D. Van Camp
- ◆ Borgmann and Walker, Inc., Rockerless Folding Chair Factory
- ◆ Jillson Hotel, C.H. Ormsby, Proprietor
- ◆ West Main Street Filling Station, Charles Ison, Proprietor
- ◆ East Main Street Filling Station, LeRoy Westcott, Owner

I find it impossible to make individual mention of many persons whose labor and influence have had much to do with the development of both the township and village. Some of this material has been gleaned from a few reliable published works, which bear on the subject but a large part has been obtained from many of the older residents of the township and from diaries written many years ago, and a part from the writer's memory. Those who have furnished much of this information are too numerous to receive individual mention to which they are entitled. The writer wishes to thank them for the help.

It has been called to my attention that in my compilation of Hartford's present day business enterprises in last week's final installment of Hartford History, several such enterprises were unintentionally omitted.

It is possible that I have still overlooked some business enterprises that should be mentioned, but the following should be added to make last week's list more complete:

- ◆ E. E. Stebbins, Plumbing
- ◆ L. E. Davis, Hartford Greenhouse
- ◆ A. Warkentien, Tailor
- ◆ Mrs. Alta Harley, The Valinta Shoppe
- ◆ Dr. F. N. Williams, Physician
- ◆ Harry Rush, Battery Shop
- ◆ Joseph Ladovich, Gas Station
- ◆ Henry Meachum, Horse Dealer
- ◆ Mrs. Gertrude Schurman, Schurman's Beauty Shoppe
- ◆ Edward Hickey, Furnaces
- ◆ Floyd F. Leach, Machine Shop and Foundry
- ◆ Mrs. M. A. Lawrence, Insurance
- ◆ Gaylord L. Thompson, Insurance
- ◆ H. S. Scott, Chiropractor
- ◆ B. Davis, Shoe Shop
- ◆ Albert F. Rutt, Green Lantern Fountain Lunch.

A History of Hartford  
 by  
 Charles A. Spaulding  
**Compiled by Lois and Larry Blyly**  
**February, 2006**

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