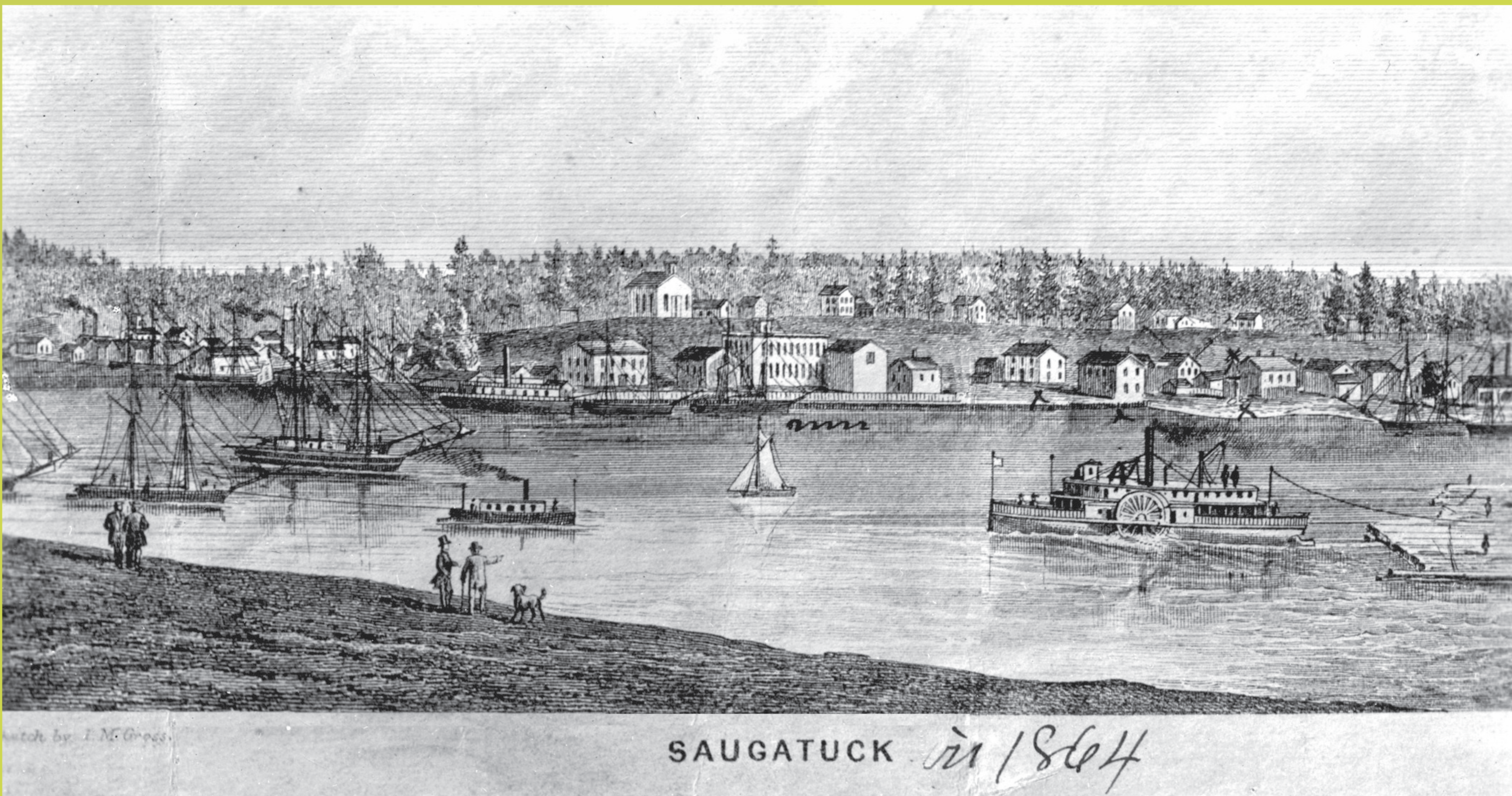


WILLIAM G. BUTLER, settler in Saugatuck, who arrived in 1830 with his wife and two children.

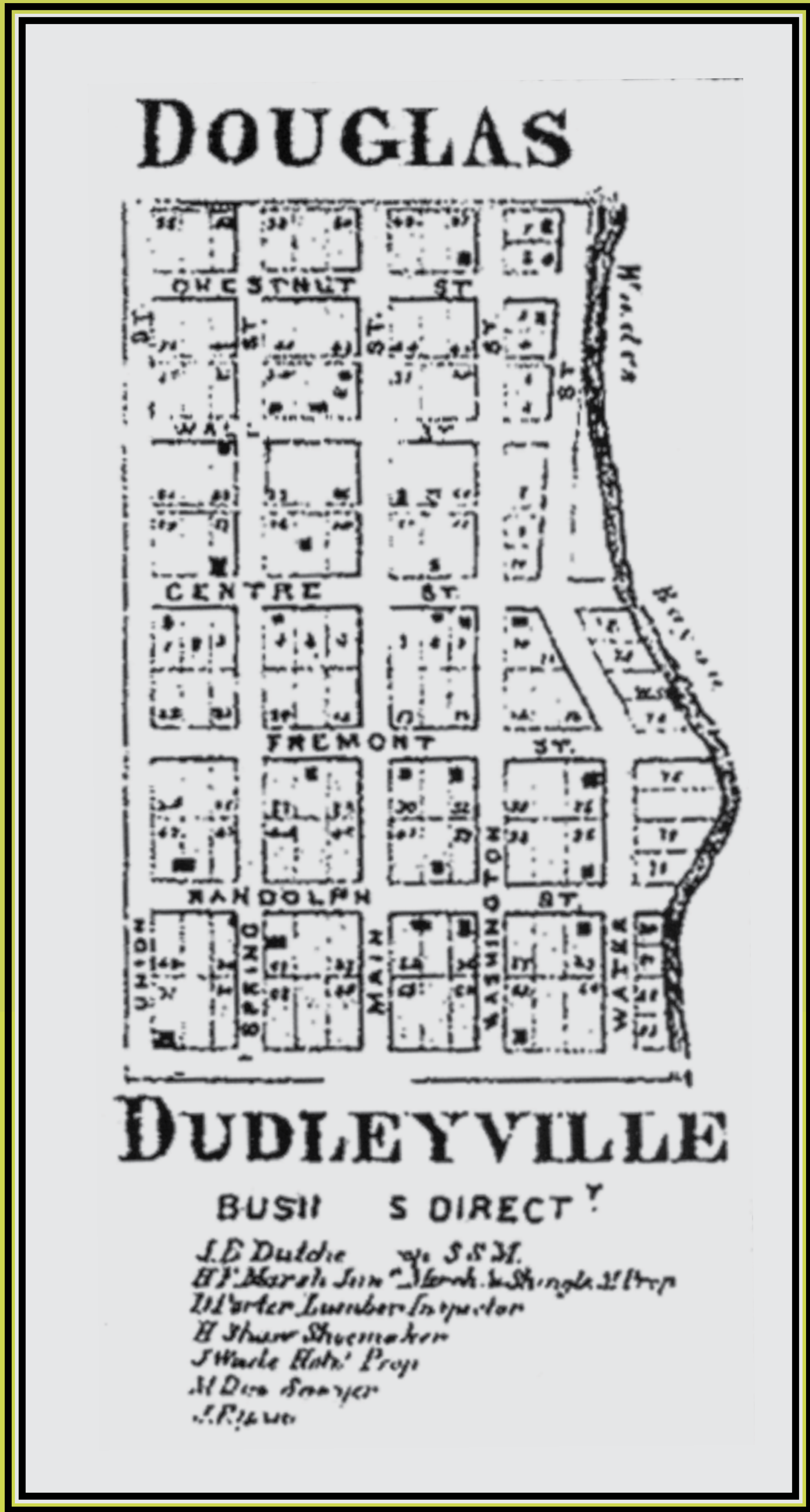
BEGINNINGS



No COVERED WAGON FOR THE BUTLERS

William G. Butler, the founder of SAUGATUCK and the first white settler in Allegan County didn’t exactly rush into the area. He was born in Connecticut and, as an adult, moved to Pennsylvania where he ran a store, found a wife and was married. Butler, his wife, Mary and at least one child moved on to Elkhart, Indiana, where he attempted to run a store with little success. In 1830, hearing of the money to be gained by land speculation in the Territory of Michigan, he went exploring on horseback to find a likely settlement site.

He returned to Elkhart, packed up his wife and (by this time) two children, and took a riverboat up the St. Joseph River to St. Joseph at the mouth where he bought passage on a passing sailing vessel heading north on Lake Michigan. When they arrived at the mouth of the Kalamazoo River the sailboat anchored off shore while Butler and family, with all of their belongings (tradition has it, including a covered soup tureen) were rowed ashore in a small boat. The captain waved, wished them a happy settlement, and sailed away.



DOUGLAS began in 1851 when Robert A. McDonald, William Scovill and Michael B. Spencer of Saugatuck bought farmland on the south side of the river. For a while, they tilled the soil, but did not live there. At the same time, actual settlement was undertaken by Jonathan Wade and family who built the first mill and then resided on a section they called Dudleyville. It was not until 1861 that William F. Dutcher, formerly of Pennsylvania, arrived with 12 members of his family and and platted a small village which he called Douglas.