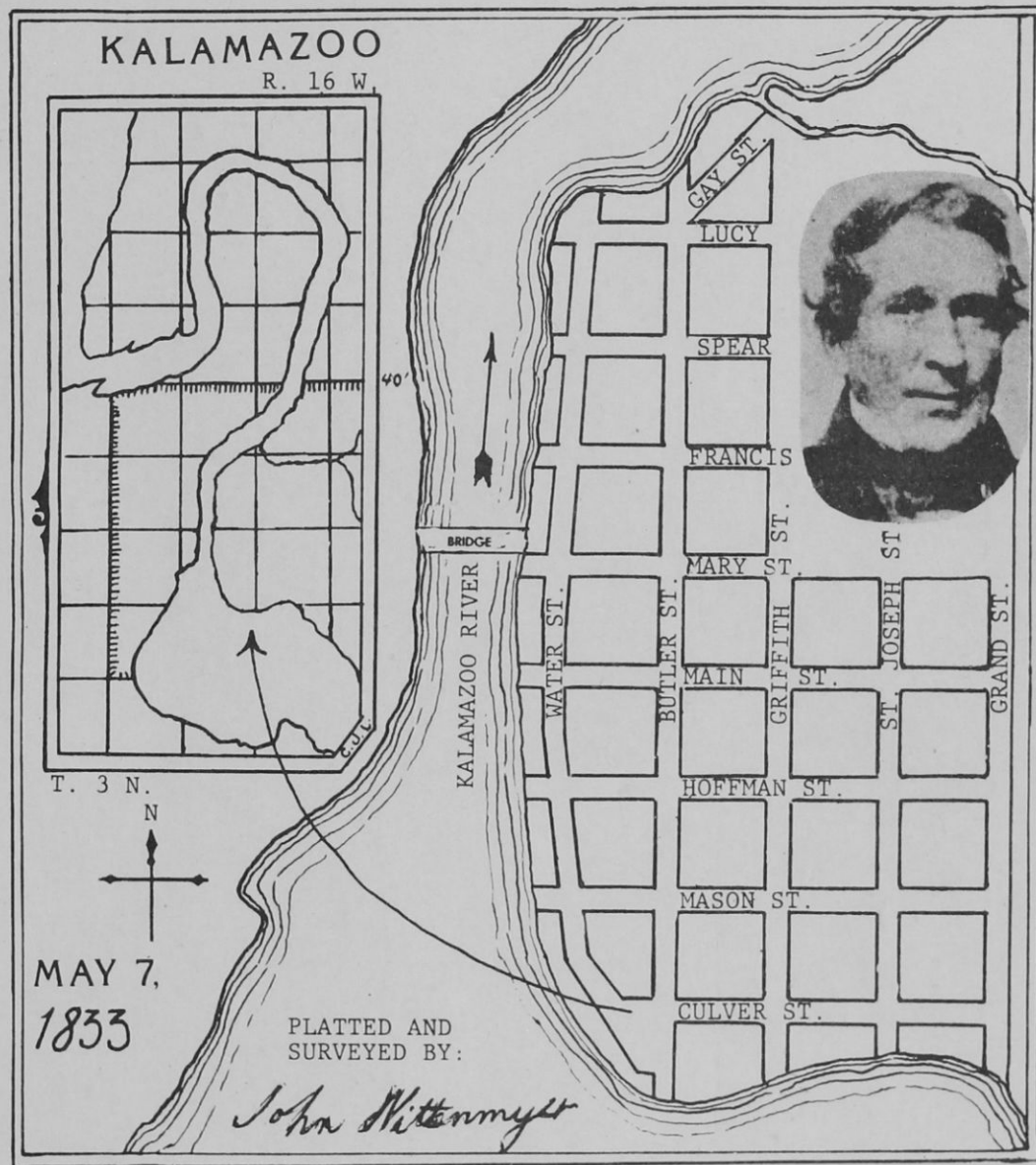


# The Early History of Saugatuck and Singapore, Michigan 1830-1840

NEWARK TOWNSHIP, IT'S PEOPLE AND SAWMILLS



By Charles J. Lorenz

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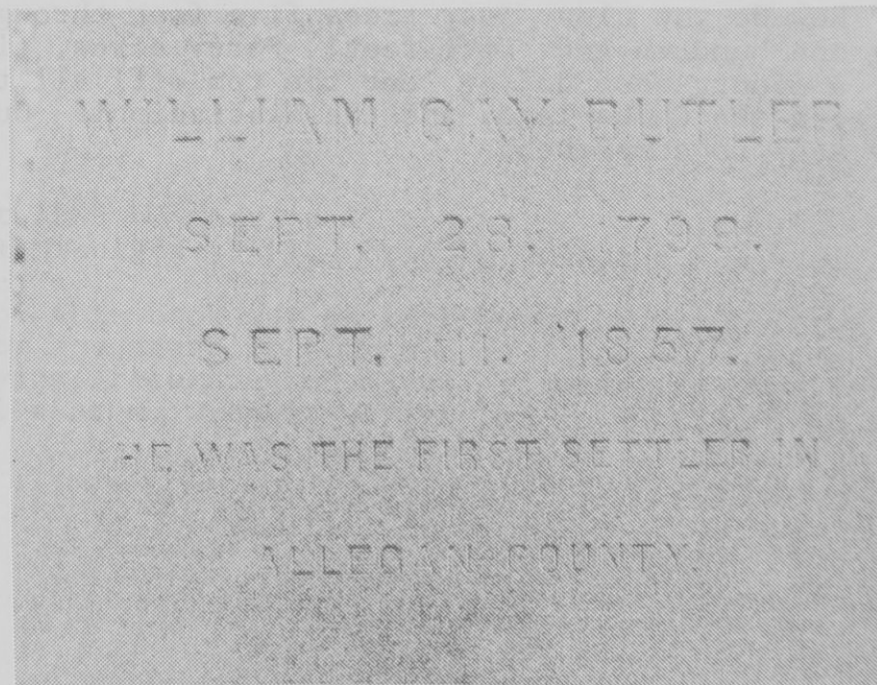
NEWARK TOWNSHIP, IT'S PEOPLE AND SAWMILLS

*Charles J. Lorenz*

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## PREFACE

This is a chronology of the first ten years of habitation of white settlers among the Amerindians, near the mouth of the beautiful Kalamazoo River Valley. It was written to bring together many sources of research material available today, but not so fifty years ago. The volume is footnoted so that anyone with a more intense interest can go back to the original source of the material for more detailed examination. When the first comprehensive history of Allegan County was written in 1880, many of the old settlers had already died or moved on, leaving the early record sparse and bare. In the course of writing and editing, some corrections were made for clarity and punctuation. It is hoped that these do not substantially change the material.

If you read and look closely, the paths of history are all around and come alive, as you explore the open dunes of the surrounding area. It was a time, when a man's address was part of a section of land instead of a house number. It was a hard time, when cultures came together on America's western frontier at the end of the fur trading era in this territory. It moved west past Illinois and the Mississippi river.

The author wants to thank the following people, who gave their time and special knowledge to various sections of this book. They include Gordon Aller, Lake Shore Manor, Saugatuck township, Michigan; Leroy Barnett, Reference Archivist, Michigan Department of State, Michigan History Division; Eugene H. Burrell, Reference Department Head, Elkhart Public Library; U. M. Clarke, Comstock Township Library; Alice C. Dalligan, Chief, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library; June Fox, Librarian, Saugatuck-Douglas Public Library; Ralph Haan, Herrick Public Library, Holland; Evelyn B. Hachey, Leominster, Massachusetts; James L. Hansen, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Mrs. Edward N. Kehl, Leelanau Township Library; Synthia Kievit, Fennville, Michigan; Richard Hathaway, Michigan Unit, Michigan State Library; Barbara Lampen, Netherlands Museum Archives, Holland; Mary Jean MacEwen, Local History Division, Rochester, N.Y. Public Library; Larry B. Massie, Acting Director, University Archives and Regional History Collection, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Waldo Library; Mary J. Pugh, Reference Archivist, Bentley Historical Library, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Gail M. Reynolds, Assistant Librarian, Boston Public Library; Mrs. Wilber Snyder, Paw Paw, Michigan; Mrs. Edmund D. Steele, St. Albans, Vermont Historical Society; Don Van Reken, Holland, Michigan; Barbara G. Troost, Maude Preston Palenske Memorial Library (St. Joseph, Michigan Public Library); Dietmar U. Wagner, Reference Librarian, Ann Arbor Public Library; Richard Welmers, Old Wing Mission House, Holland, Michigan; Darlene Winter, Herrick Public Library, Holland; Mr. and Mrs. Clarence B. Wolfe, Northport, Michigan.



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# The Early History of Saugatuck and Singapore, Michigan 1830-1840

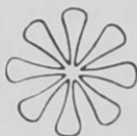
NEWARK TOWNSHIP, IT'S PEOPLE AND SAWMILLS

BY

CHARLES J. LORENZ

In commemoration of the arrival of the  
first settler of Allegan County, Michigan  
William Gay Butler in 1830

PART ONE



PUBLISHED BY

CHARLES J. LORENZ  
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## WILLIAM GAY BUTLER

### CHAPTER 1

May 30, 1980 marked the 150th anniversary, sesquicentennial, of the arrival of the first pioneer settler in what is now Allegan county.<sup>1</sup> He was here six years before Michigan became a state and five before Allegan was a county. Before coming to the area, William Gay Butler was a merchant in Williamsburg, Pa. While in Pennsylvania, he married his first of three wives, Mary Wells (1805-1835). She was a native of Hartford, Connecticut as was he. They were married in late 1826 or early 1827 at Dundaff, Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania. The announcement of their marriage appeared in the Hartford Courant on January 8, 1827. The couple's first child, Lucy J., was born in Huntingdon county, Pa. about a year later.<sup>2</sup> It is believed that Butler, his wife Mary, and his daughter Lucy came to the mouth of the Kalamazoo river aboard the schooner Madison. They were lightered to shore with household goods, provisions and a stock of trade goods.

William G. Butler was born on September 28, 1799 in Hartford, Connecticut, now called West Hartford. He was the third of seven children born to Jonathan and Elizabeth (nee Gay) Butler. Five of his brothers and sisters were, Eliza, George, Epaphras P., Maria B. and Nathan. He was the seventh generation removed from Richard Butler, one of the founders and proprietors of Hartford, Connecticut in 1639-40, in this order: Richard, Thomas, Joseph, Gideon, Zacheus, Jonathan and William G.<sup>3</sup>

For about a year, Butler and his family lived with the Indians at the mouth of the Kalamazoo river, where sections four, five, eight and nine cross in Town 3 North, Range 16 West. He traded with the Indians, before he had the future site of his town, which he named KALAMAZOO (now Saugatuck), surveyed and platted on May 7, 1833.

The territory that they came to was a wilderness frontier covered with a forest full of game. In 1829, it and the surrounding area was called Penn township, Cass county, a large area that today encompasses five counties. In 1831 a new boundary was established, which created Allegan township (the same size as

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1. D. W. Ensign, Ed. History of Allegan and Barry Counties, Michigan (Philadelphia, 1880), p. 324; Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 3, p. 301, Vol. 4, p. 171, Vol. 17, pp. 557-9, Vol. 38, p. 157; Henry F. Thomas, A 20th Century History of Allegan County, Michigan, (Chicago 1907), p. 32. See Appendix.

2. Obituary, Allegan Journal dated October 1, 1856, Allegan.

3. Lucius Barnes Barbour, Families of Early Hartford, Connecticut (Baltimore 1977), pp. 134-7 and 144-5.

the county is today), but part of Kalamazoo county. The Butlers followed the first trickle of surveyors who blazed the trees, neatly marking the towns and ranges prescribed by the Grayson Land Ordinance of May 20, 1785. Butler named his tiny hamlet after the river and had it surveyed by John Wittenmyer of St. Joseph, Michigan.<sup>4</sup> He bought this land in 1831 and his pre-emption covered 86 acres.<sup>5</sup>

At St. Joseph, Wittenmyer was elected village trustee in May, 1834, marshall in 1835 and was in business as a merchant and grocer.<sup>6</sup>

In the beginning, when there were no grist mills on the Kalamazoo river, Butler went all the way to Elkhart, Indiana to get his flour. There was a mill built there by George Crawford and Lew Davis at the mouth of Christina creek.<sup>7</sup> Carrying the heavy sack of flour back and being away from his family made Butler dread this job. In 1832, he built the sloop Groton.<sup>8</sup> This must have made the task of hauling flour easier, using a water route. After a time, it was unnecessary to travel far for meal, as shipments of it began coming down the Kalamazoo from mills inland. Farms were cleared, crops were planted between the stumps, grain harvested and brought to mill and market.

Butler encountered a number of different traders around the mouth. Some were French, French-Indian and American. This outlet and all the rivers along the coast of Lake Michigan were the favorite gathering places of traders for hundreds of years. The names of some of these men were Beauchamp (Bouchon), Palmer & Mayo, Rix Robinson, Louis Campau and his clerk Lucius Barnes,\* one eyed John, St. Pierre and Moreau & Godfroy. The trade in pelts and firewater was transient and none of these contemporaries of Butler stayed beyond their "contracted season" or they made settlement elsewhere.

The land that Butler came to would be divided again and again, but was first Penn township. It was organized only months before his arrival on November 4, 1829 and was part of Cass county which stretched from the southern state boundary to the Grand river on the north. Its eastern edge is the same as those of Cass, Van Buren and Ottawa counties of today. The first white settlers to come to the territory that Penn included were Dolphin and Nancy Morris who arrived on March 20, 1829, before it was organized.

---

4. F. Ellis, ed., History of Berrien & Van Buren Counties (Philadelphia 1880), p. 313. Wittenmyer came to St. Joseph in 1830 or 1831. When the Mexican War broke out, he went into the Army and rose to the rank of Colonel. He died soon after his return home.

5. History of Allegan and Barry Counties, Michigan, p. 31.

6. History of Berrien & Van Buren Counties, pp. 313, 317-7.

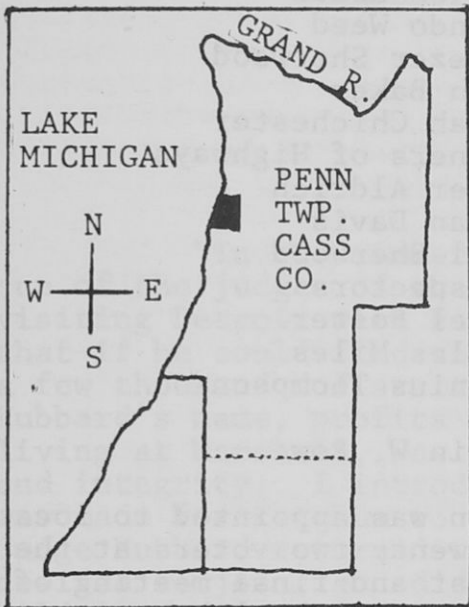
7. Emil V. Anderson, Taproots of Elkhart History (Elkhart 1949), p. 17.

8. May Francis Heath, Early Memories of Saugatuck, Michigan 1830-1930 (Grand Rapids 1930), p. 82. Elisha Weed, a ship carpenter was on the site that became Singapore in early 1832 and may have been Butler's boatbuilder.

\* Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 17, p. 557.



Penn township included what is today's Van Buren county and all the country north of it to the Grand river.<sup>9</sup> Martin Shields hosted the first township meeting on November 5, 1829, the day after the act was passed.

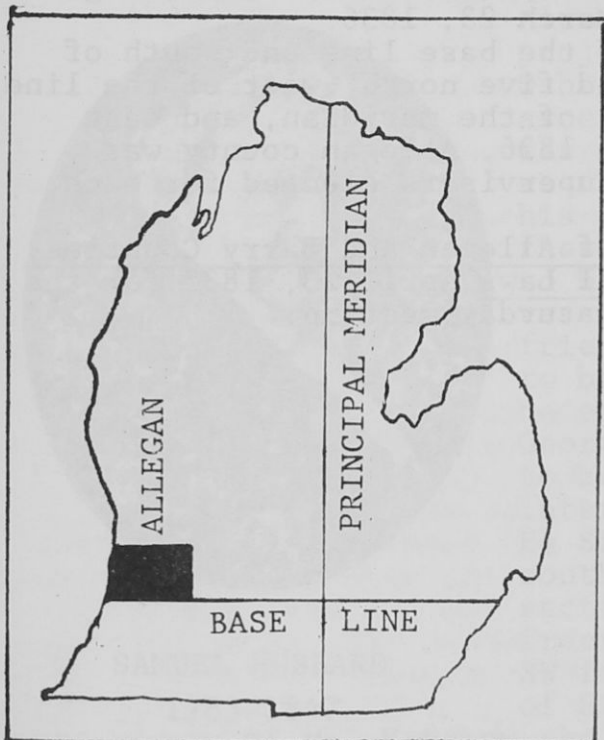


The small black block represents today's Saugatuck township. The dotted line was Penn township's southern boundary which is the modern Cass, Van Buren county line. Penn township stretched north to the Grand river.

On July 30, 1830, Kalamazoo county was organized.

The boundary of present day Allegan county was set by the territorial legislature on March 2, 1831.

Allegan township was formed and attached to Kalamazoo county in 1833.<sup>10</sup> In its lifetime, there were only three meetings held under those auspices. The first was on April 6,



Allegan is the black block. It was first a township of Kalamazoo county. Then it became a county with its own government.

Principal Meridian runs N. and S. at 84 degrees, 22 minutes, 24 seconds. Base Line runs E. and W. at 42 degrees, 26 minutes, 30 seconds latitude.

9. Territorial Laws, (Lansing 1928), Vol. 2, p. 786.  
10. Ibid., p. 997.

1833 in Otsego at the home of Dr. Samuel Foster on section 23.<sup>11</sup>

#### RESULTS OF THIS ELECTION

Supervisor	Overseers of Roads
Charles Miles	Orlando Weed
Clerk	Ebenezer Sherwood
Cyrenius Thompson	Uriah Baker
Collector	Abijah Chichester
Martin W. Rowe	Commissioners of Highways
Assessors	Turner Aldrich
Calvin White	Norman Davis
Daniel A. Plummer	Royal Sherwood
Ebenezer Sherwood	School Inspectors
Overseers of the Poor	Samuel Foster
Giles Scott	Charles Miles
H. C. White	Cyrenius Thompson
Moderator	Constable
Hull Sherwood	Martin W. Rowe

In 1834, a three man commission was appointed to locate a county seat for Allegan. There were twenty-two voters at the second meeting on April 7, 1834. The last and final meeting of Allegan township took place at the Pine Creek school house on April 6, 1835. It was at this meeting that William G. Butler was elected constable for the township.<sup>12</sup> They petitioned the territorial legislature for their own county organization in 1835 and held the first Allegan county election on August 12th of the same year. The county organization petition was granted on September 1, 1835 and the first representative from Allegan county was Elisha Ely, elected on March 23, 1836.

Its limits were north of the base line and south of the line between townships four and five north; west of the line between ranges ten and eleven west of the meridian, and east of the shore of Lake Michigan. In 1836, Allegan county was divided into four townships with supervisors elected for each.

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11. A 20th Century History of Allegan and Barry Counties, Michigan, pp. 6-7. See Territorial Laws April 23, 1833 for the legislative act to legalize this Saturday meeting.

12. Ibid.

## MAPS, PLATS, LOTS AND PLOTS

### CHAPTER 2

"In the summer of 1834, the Honorable Samuel Hubbard, one of the judges of the supreme court of Massachusetts, was visiting Detroit with his wife.<sup>1</sup> He remarked to me one day that if he could find the right man he would like to give him a few thousand dollars to invest in wild lands in Michigan, in Hubbard's name, profits to be divided. Mr. Sidney Ketchum, then living at Marshall, was in high repute for energy, good judgment, and integrity. I introduced him to Mr. Hubbard, and a bargain was made for Ketchum to invest five thousand dollars. After Judge Hubbard returned to his home in Boston some of his friends desired to join, and did join him in further investments in wild lands, but of these I have no knowledge. They were quite distinct from "the Boston Company" lands, in which I was a partner.



SAMUEL HUBBARD

1785-1847

and range. Of Mr. Ketchum the judge and his friends bought SE

During this summer of 1834, Mr. George Ketchum, then living at Marshall, Messrs. Stephen Vickery and Anthony Cooley of Kalamazoo, and Mr. Alexander L. Ely of Rochester, N. Y., projected the village of Allegan. Mr. Oshea Wilder, a civil engineer, had ascertained by examination, that there was about eight feet fall in the river at that place. Mr. Sidney Ketchum, in his searches for land, fell in with these parties, and it at once occurred to him that, to give value to the investments of Judge Hubbard and his friends, they, or some of them, ought to be interested in the village. So he entered into an agreement with George Ketchum and Vickery & Cooley, to buy for Hubbard their undivided interest, being two-thirds of the E $\frac{1}{2}$  SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , section 29; SW fractional  $\frac{1}{4}$ , south fraction, SW fraction of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , section 28, T2N R13W; and N part of W fraction of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE fraction of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW fraction of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , and NW fraction of SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 33, in same town

1. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 4, p. 173. Part of a letter written by C. C. Trowbridge.

fraction of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ; and they bought also the Brown fraction: NE fraction of NE $\frac{1}{4}$  section 33, both T2N R13W.

Mr. Elisha Ely of Rochester had entered into an agreement with George Ketchum and Vickery & Cooley, in November, 1833, to purchase one undivided half of their lands as above described, and to build a dam and erect a sawmill; and in May, 1834, the parties seem to have agreed that this interest should be conveyed to Alexander L. Ely, the son of Elisha. A deed was accordingly executed to Alexander, but it was never recorded, as the affair took another turn, to wit, the admission of Hubbard and his friends.

In 1834, Samuel Hubbard, Edmund Munroe, and Pliny Cutler of Boston, and Charles C. Trowbridge of Detroit entered into an agreement to buy of George Ketchum, Vickery & Cooley, and Hubbard was to hold the title. Hubbard subsequently lent some thousands of dollars to Ely, and Trowbridge was made a trustee to hold Ely's interest for Hubbard's benefit.

Very soon this little matter took on larger form. The four gentlemen mentioned organized themselves into "The Allegan Company", and they purchased twenty odd thousand acres of land, calling themselves in that transaction, for the purpose of keeping the accounts separate, as Ely had no interest in these lands, "The Boston Company."

The village plat was made, Mr. Sidney Ketchum worked hard, Mr. Alexander L. Ely and his father removed from Rochester to Allegan, the canal was dug, the dam built, and sawmill erected, school house and several tenement houses soon followed, settlers came, and the most sanguine visions were indulged."

C. C. Trowbridge (signed)

\* \* \* \* \*

Butler's town was sacred ground to the Ottawa Indians, who had been burying their dead on this low, flat land for decades.\* This cemetery is marked by a natural stone boulder at the southwest corner of Butler and Culver Streets in downtown Saugatuck. The Indians lived up and down the Kalamazoo and its tributaries, coming to hunt and trap in the fall and winter, and staying until sugaring time in the spring. There was another burial ground, in the county, upriver in Allegan at a place called Jenner's Rift (and now a part of the Allegan county fair grounds).

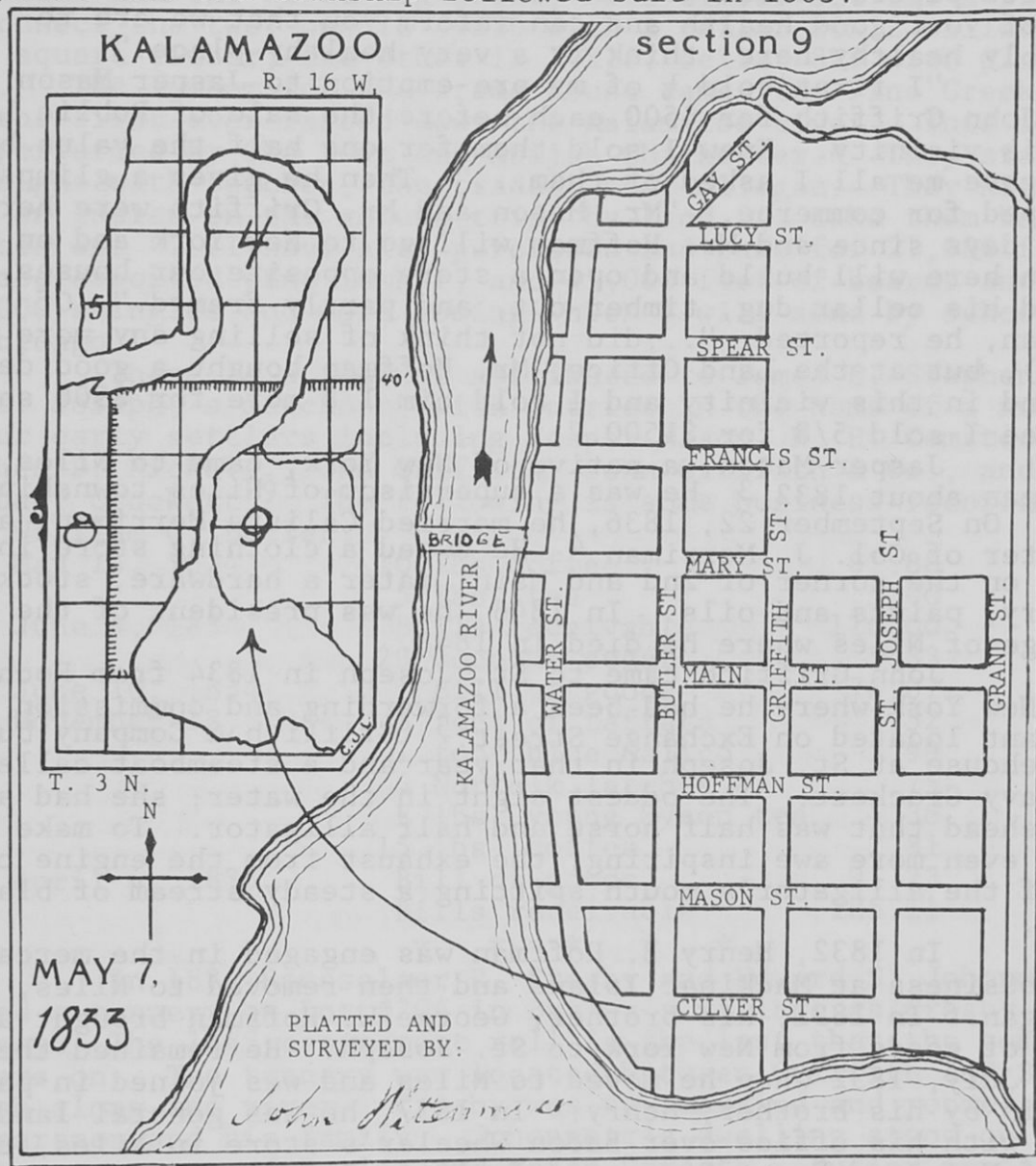
It was also common for them to bury men of stature in their tribe on the hillsides of the river to watch over the comings and goings, in spirit, of their descendants. Butler brought his family to this spot and cleared a place to build a one room log shanty. His letter to his father at Hartford on May 8, 1834 best describes the advances he made and the optimism he felt during those first years.<sup>2</sup> He and his wife had two children before any other white men came to live here, both long gone with no record of even their first names.

2. Early Memories of Saugatuck, Michigan 1830-1930, pp. 89-90.

\* This cemetery was partially excavated in 1929 and reported on in 1937 by George I. Quimby.



This is an approximation of Butler's town plat, which he named Kalamazoo. It shows the size of the town in relation to section nine and the river. The original plat was stolen at the turn of the century. The name of the village and township was changed to Newark in 1836, but the post office was called Saugatuck. By 1861, the town officially changed it's name to Saugatuck and the township followed suit in 1863.



Butler's plat of Kalamazoo was recorded at Bronson, Kalamazoo county on July 17, 1834. He named the streets of his town for the three men he sold land to: Jasper MASON, Henry B. HOFFMAN and John GRIFFITH. For his family, he named one MARY after his wife, LUCY after his daughter and GAY (now Newnham St.) after his mother's maiden name. He called the eastern edge GRAND and another ST. JOSEPH in honor of the direction from whence they all came. The main street of Saugatuck is BUTLER, his family name. There is MAIN, a prime street of Butler's time. WATER reflects the north-south street running adjacent to the

river. There are others lost to memory or of a later date. The original plat has never resurfaced, after being taken from county files.

Quoting from William's letter to his father, Jonathan, he writes, "Your favor of April 14th was received last evening together with the Courant. I have received two or three papers before for which I thank you. Was pleased to hear of your good health and can inform you that we are remarkably healthy here; think it a very healthy place."

"I first sold  $\frac{1}{4}$  of my pre-emption to Jasper Mason and  $\frac{1}{4}$  to John Griffith for \$500 each before the sale of Public Lands in this vicinity. Knew I sold them for one half the value but they gave me all I asked of them..." Then he gives a glimpse of hoped for commerce. "Mr. Mason and Mr. Griffith were here a few days since and Mr. Hoffman will go to New York and on his return here will build and open a store opposite our houses. He had his cellar dug, timber out, and partly framed." Of Hoffman, he reported, "...did not think of selling any more (land), but at the Land Office, Mr. Hoffman bought a good deal of land in this vicinity and I sold him  $\frac{1}{8}$  more for \$500 so you see I sold  $\frac{5}{8}$  for \$1500."

Jasper Mason, a native of New York, came to Niles, Michigan about 1832.<sup>3</sup> He was a supervisor of Niles township in 1835. On September 22, 1836, he married Calista Merriman, a daughter of Col. J. Merriman.<sup>4</sup> He owned a clothing store in Niles on the corner of 2nd and Main; later a hardware, stocking cutlery, paints and oils. In 1846, he was president of the village of Niles where he died in 1848.

John Griffith came to St. Joseph in 1834 from Rochester, New York where he had been a forwarding and commission merchant located on Exchange Street.<sup>5</sup> Griffith & Company built a warehouse at St. Joseph in that year and a steamboat called the Davy Crockett. The oddest sight in the water; she had a figurehead that was half horse and half alligator. To make the craft even more awe inspiring, the exhaust from the engine came out of the alligator's mouth spitting a steady stream of black smoke.

In 1832, Henry B. Hoffman was engaged in the mercantile business at Mackinac Island and then removed to Niles, Michigan.<sup>6</sup> In 1831, his brother, George W. Hoffman brought a stock of goods from New York to St. Joseph. He remained there until July, 1832 when he moved to Niles and was joined in partnership by his brother, Henry. In 1837, he was general land agent with his office over Bacon Wheeler's store in Niles, corner of Main and Front Streets.<sup>7</sup> In 1844, he was supervisor of Niles township and removed to Davenport, Iowa in 1853. George

3. Judge Orville W. Coolidge, A 20th Century History of Berrien County, Michigan (Chicago 1906), pp. 145, 163 and 169.

4. Niles Gazette and Advertiser dated November 1, 1836.

5. A 20th Century History of Berrien County, Michigan, p. 176.

6. Ibid., pp. 145 and 170.

7. Niles Intelligencer of April 4, 1838. October 16, (continued on the next page)

moved to Detroit in 1857 where he later died. Henry and George were the sons of Major William Hoffman who made his home in Niles after 1839.

Little mention is made of Mason, Hoffman, and Griffith beyond this 1834 letter. They settled in Berrien county.

Continuing Butler's letter, he says, "I have put up one frame and one hewed log house, have timber out for a frame to connect the two, one is 40X20 with a cellar 20X22 walled with square timber, the other is 14X18, cellar 8X9 with plank wall." The lumber for the frame house came from Pine Creek and was the first ever rafted down the Kalamazoo river. This feat was performed by Oka Town and Abijah Chichester.<sup>8</sup> They stayed overnight with Bouchon, the trader, near Allegan. They had to hire an Indian on the return trip, by land, to take them back. He goes on, "...I have also purchased and paid for 27,000 feet of good assorted pine lumber, and 45,000 feet of boards and 500,000 shingles and more coming which I will send by schooner to Chicago."

There is a journal attributed to James E. Stephens of St. Joseph, a merchant, with entries in the name of a number of our early settlers including Jasper Mason, H. H. Comstock, Stephen D. Nichols, John Griffith, John Griffith & Co., and the Davy Crockett.<sup>9</sup> The following is some business recorded with William G. Butler:

May 14, 1834	10 lbs coffee	\$1.88
	5 lbs. tea	5.00
June 4, 1834	Bills receivable	110.00
	20 mococks sugar	3.33
June 10, 1834	1 Bill of goods	76.07
November 18, 1834	8 feet of taffata	7.52
	1 foot blue Calico	3.99
	4 Norfolk latches	.75
	5 lbs. young Hyson tea	4.38
	15 lbs. coffee	2.81
April 4, 1835	Bill of goods	91.23
	Bills receivable	185.11

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1834 Rensselaer R. Crosby and Edward S. Johonnett opened a tannery on Lot #204 in Butler's village as Crosby & Company. The 1845 assessment roll is the last that the company appears on. The tannery was located between Griffith and St. Joseph along the river. Crosby was not married and roomed with his partner and his family. Johonnett's dwelling stood on the southwest corner of Butler and Mason Streets. Butler mentions Crosby in his May 8, 1834 letter, "Left home four days since

1838 issue; Secretary at a convention of Republican Whigs of Berrien county. June 12, 1839; 3rd V.P. of the Niles Total Abstinence Society and on September 9, 1840 was on the Board of Visitors, Niles Branch of the University of Michigan.

8. Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 26, p. 331. Vol. 17, p. 557, Lucius A. Barnes helped build the house.

9. Daybook attributed to James E. Stephens at St. Joseph, Michigan, 1834-1836 in possession of the Maude Preston Palenske Memorial Library, St. Joseph, Michigan.

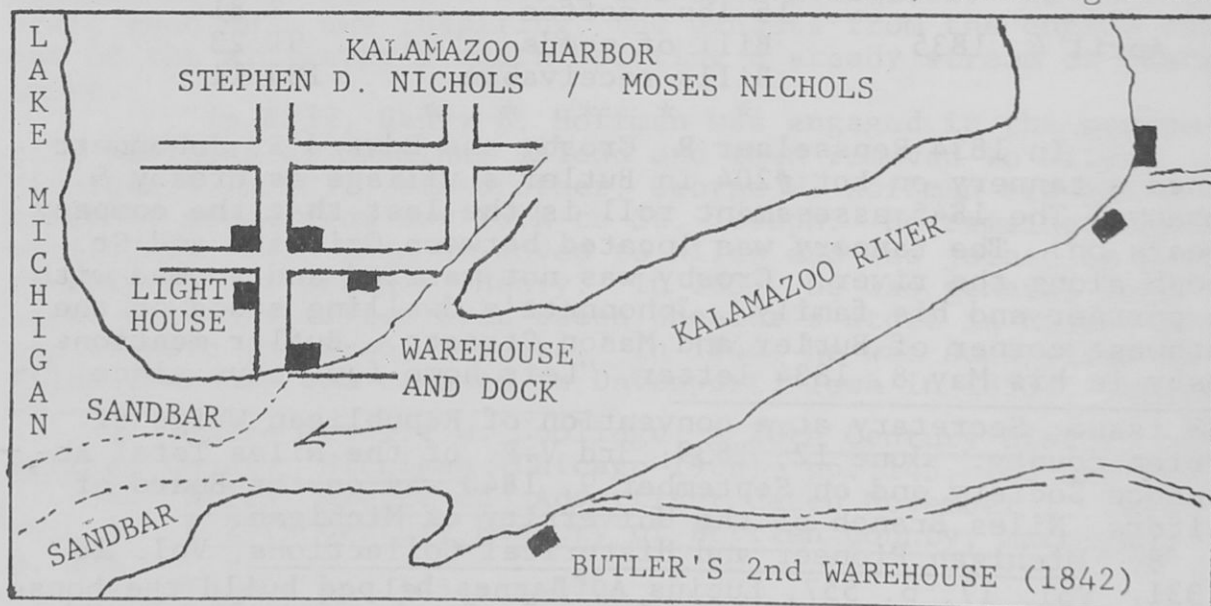


for Comstock, Kalamazoo county seat.\* Brought up 1200 pounds of maple sugar and have purchased one pair of oxen, 2 cows, and 2 calves. Mr. Crosby is going down with me. I now have a good horse, 15 large hogs and 20 spring pigs. There is more land entered at the office in this part of the country than any others in the U.S." R. R. Crosby was appointed postmaster of the village on May 2, 1835, its first.<sup>10</sup> A dispute arose over the name of the village and what the post office would be called. It will be dealt with a little later.

Butler tells of the first two warehouses built in the township this way, "Sold a gentleman from Wayne county, Ohio, two lots yesterday for \$100 each. He is to build me a warehouse at the lower end of my plat for which I am to pay him \$700 and Mr. Comstock has contracted for a warehouse to be built near the mouth of the river. It is to be 30X40 and two stories high; he to pay \$500 for same." River traffic was showing signs of life and both Butler and Horace Hawkins Comstock wanted to take advantage of it.

Comstock came from Cooperstown, Otsego county, New York, buying hundreds of acres of land in Kalamazoo county for speculation in 1831. He settled the future town of Comstock, hoping to make it the county seat.\* He had been an Indian trader and military supplier in the Detroit and Chicago trade. He was Senator from Kalamazoo county in 1835, 1837 and 1838. In 1849, he was a member of the House of Representatives from Otsego.

In 1832, Comstock bought the site which became the village of Otsego, secured a post office and was its first postmaster. In July, 1834, he came to the mouth of the Kalamazoo river, with Stephen D. Nichols, on a scouting and land looking mission. He bought 79.77 acres on the north side of the mouth of the river, had it surveyed and platted as the village of Kalamazoo Harbor. Nichols had three lots here, building a home



\* Although Comstock worked hard to have his village made county seat, Bronson (now Kalamazoo, Michigan) won out.

10. Walter Romig, Michigan Place Names (1973), p. 501.



and barn by the warehouse. In the meantime, at Comstock, a landing was built across from the town.<sup>11</sup> A warehouse was put up, which preceded the one at the mouth and was larger. He was authorized, by an act of the legislature on March 28, 1835, to construct a dam with locks 75X14 feet. In Otsego, he built a hotel and flouring mill, encouraging trade up and down the Kalamazoo river. It served the flow of commerce and was yesterday's super highway, cutting through the impenetrable forest. Logging operations began in Otsego, as early as the first men arrived in the fall of 1830, with as many as five mills. Much was done to clear snags that blocked river passage, beginning at a very early date. This kept the river open for traffic, rafts and logs for lumber. The warehouses provided storage and a place to transfer goods and farm products coming down river. Smaller boats moved the goods over the sand bar at the mouth and out to waiting sailing vessels and later, steamboats. The constantly forming sand bar prevented everything but shallow draft scows, Mackinac boats, rafts or canoes from going over it.

Stephen D. Nichols went East and, upon his return, came to live at the mouth of the river on September 29, 1834 and took up a quarter section of land on section 17, T3N R16W.<sup>12</sup> He ran a store for a couple of years, before becoming Kalamazoo Harbor's first lighthouse keeper. Later, a meeting was held and men from Pine Creek in Otsego joined with Comstock by subscribing money for the construction of the first dock which was built by Ira Chaffee.

S. D. Nichols was born on September 30, 1806 at Hampstead, New Hampshire, the first of six children born to Samuel and Alice (nee Kent) Nichols.<sup>13</sup> In 1833, he married Mary A. van Meter at Michigan City, Indiana and in short order removed to St. Joseph, Michigan, where they lived for a year.

We can get a picture of the Indian trade at the mouth of the Kalamazoo river by Nichols' sales and purchases about a year later, when he visited St. Joseph from Kalamazoo Harbor.<sup>14</sup>

September 3, 1835	For freight on sugar	\$ 1.50
September 4, 1835	76 lbs. Indian sugar	7.60
September 7, 1835	38 lbs. Indian sugar	3.80
	31 lbs. Indian sugar	2.17
	1 Buck skin	1.75
September 9, 1835	4 Indian worked bags	4.00
	35 lbs. sugar	3.40
September 11, 1835	43 lbs. sugar	3.44
September 17, 1835	1 Buck skin	1.50
September 19, 1835	2 Fancy bricks of sugar	
September 25, 1835	1 Deer skin	1.00

11. Michigan Pioneer and History Collection, Vol. 5, p. 360.

12. Ibid., Annual Meeting 1887, p. 22.

13. Harriette Noyes, A Memorial History of Hampstead, N. H. and the Hampstead Congregational Church.

14. Stephens, St. Joseph Daybook 1834-1836.

The last entry in the St. Joseph Daybook 1834-1836 for S. D. Nichols is interesting for a number of reasons. He bought a stove and 44 feet of stove pipe. It indicates use in a long or tall building; or both. They may have lived in a room of the warehouse until he built his home. He may have had his store here for the two short years before he became lighthouse keeper. The total bill was \$34.71, including 50¢ for getting stove across river. Frank Nichols, their son, describing his life by the mouth of the river in Early Memories of Saugatuck, Michigan 1830-1930, p. 186 says, "My mother owned the first cow and cook stove in that part of the country."

PART OF PAGE 330 OF THE ACCOUNT BOOK ATTRIBUTED TO JAMES E. STEPHENS

December 3, 1835

Saline Enos. Dr To Sundries

1/2 <sup>4</sup> Tobacco	21	13	
1 pr. Socks	2/6	31	
1 pr Ladies Shoes	121	150	
2 Gal. Molasses	61	150	
1 C.C. Chamber	41	50	
1 Spool Thread	11	13	
5 <sup>4</sup> Co. L. Sugar	118	108	5 15

P. Allen Ho	44 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Stove Pipe	1/6	531	
	2 Lin Square Irons	4	50	
	2 Short Lin for pipe	11	25	906

Stephen D. Nichols 1 Cook Stove 2000

Cash 1/2 for getting stove across River 50

34 71

It was about this time that he built the schooner New Hampshire, which he owned for many years.

## TRANSITION OF THE LAND--SETTLEMENT

### CHAPTER 3

Butler's closest white neighbors to the north were the proprietors of the Grand Haven Company.<sup>1</sup> They were Rix Robinson, who received a land patent for the mouth of the Grand river on December 2, 1833, Rev. William Montague Ferry, Robert Stuart and his brother-in-law, Capt. N. H. White. Rev. Ferry established a mission at Mackinac Island in 1822 and served as missionary there to August 6, 1834. He left Mackinac and arrived at Grand Haven, with a party of twenty-one on Sunday, November 2, 1834.

In 1833, Ferry made an exploration trip around Lake Michigan in a canoe with two Indian guides; starting from Mackinac. They traveled west to Green Bay and down the western shore of the lake, passing what is now Wisconsin and Illinois; making a number of stops along the way. These included Chicago, continuing around the lake, one at St. Joseph and the last at the mouth of the Kalamazoo river, meeting W. G. Butler and his family. The party then returned to Mackinac.<sup>2</sup>

Rix Robinson had a much longer history, in business on the Grand river, as a trader for the American Fur Company. Robinson acquired title to the posts of Madame Magdelaine Laframboise. She took over the posts of her husband, who was killed, and operated them to 1821, when she retired. There were 20 locations and by, 1827, Robinson was agent and sole manager. In 1834, John Jacob Astor, founder and president of the American Fur Company, retired and the company dissolved. Ramsey Crooks, Astor's partner since 1817, took over the Great Lakes Department, retaining the name American Fur Company. For all practical purposes, the trade had moved west. Crooks made his headquarters in the company's old precincts at Mackinac Island, conducting business from the store and warehouse. Robert Stuart was long a supporter of the Mackinac Island Mission, having been converted to Christianity by Rev. William M. Ferry, Sr. His partnership in the Grand Haven Company lasted a short time, when he retired to Detroit in 1835-6 and later became State Treasurer of Michigan.

The sub-post on the Kalamazoo river was located on the south side near a peach orchard of over 200 trees, in bearing, and planted in straight rows.\* The huts used by the traders were almost immediately taken up and used by settler,

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1. Leo C. Lillie, Historic Grand Haven & Ottawa County, (Grand Haven 1931), pp. 124, 131, and 132.

2. Ibid., p. 124.

\* There was a large Indian encampment here until whites came in larger numbers.