

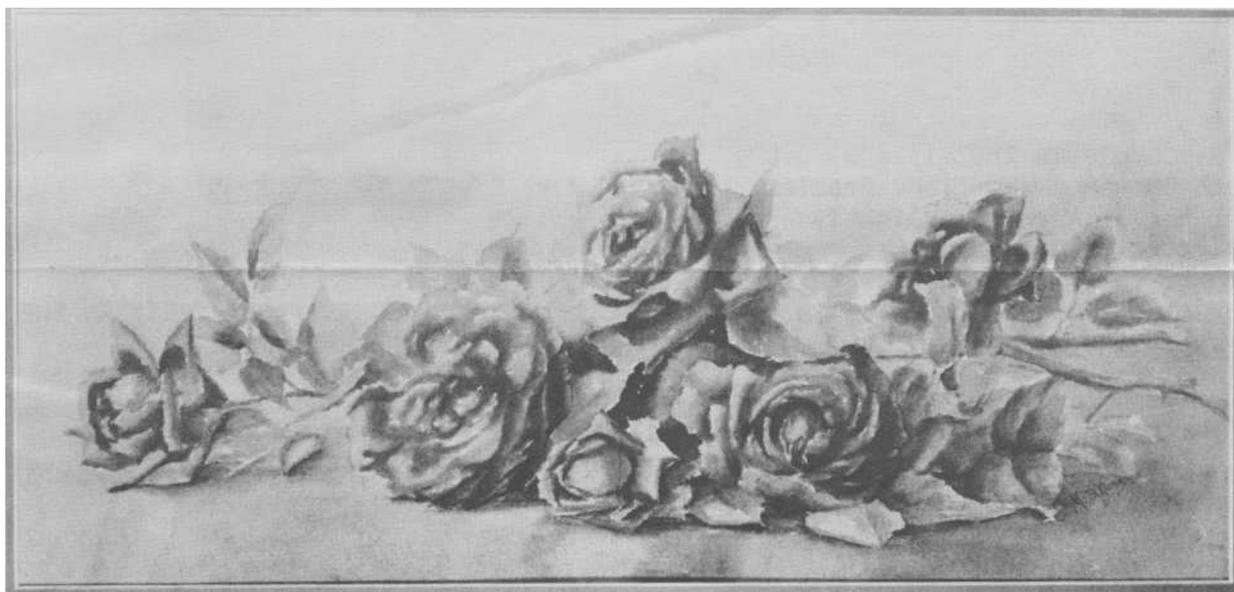
THE HISTORICAL TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE GRANVILLE, OHIO, HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME III NUMBER 2

SPRING 1989

PAINTER FROM THE PAST



THIS SPRING ISSUE OF THE HISTORICAL TIMES
FEATURES THE WATERCOLORS OF MISS MINNIE BELLE JONES,
A LONG TIME RESIDENT OF GRANVILLE.

The Society's collection of Miss Jones' original works will be exhibited at the Old Academy Building in July, where their delicate colors can be appreciated. Also on exhibit over the July 4th weekend will be photographs of historical Granville landmarks submitted to the contest sponsored by the Society.

PAINTER FROM **THE** PAST

Minnie Belle Jones, known affectionately in the village as "Miss Minnie" was a young woman in the era when young ladies painted on china, did embroidery and needlepoint or did water colors of the surrounding countryside and still life pictures of fruit and flowers.

BORN IN GRANVILLE

Daughter of Jacob and Lucie Jones, she was born in 1868 and lived for many years at 221 East Elm Street with her nephew, Arthur Jones. According to the Granville Presbyterian Church records, she was a lifelong member, having been baptized in 1874 and becoming a member of the church in 1888. Miss Minnie died November 5, 1955 at age 87 and is buried in Maple Grove Cemetery.

Several people in the village, among them Ruth Renneker and Libby Frazier, remember her as a short, slightly rotund little figure doing her shopping or going for a walk with her nephew, Arthur. She is recalled as a typical spinster of her day, immaculately and severely dressed in long skirts with a white starched blouse. She was never without a hat perched above her hair rolled in a bun at the back. On special occasions, such as church services, the hat had a veil.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Kathryn Richards recalls her taking part in many church activities. She taught Sunday School, had a Ladies Bible Class and was active in the Missionary Society. It was the custom after meetings to have potluck or some sort of refreshments, and Kathryn remembers vividly looking forward to the delicious meringues that Miss Minnie always brought in a basket with a white napkin covering them. She evidently liked to cook, as did her nephew, who in later years was noted for entertaining guests with elegant, gourmet dinners.



MINNIE BELLE JONES (1874-1955) AS SHE APPEARED AT THE GRANVILLE SESQUICENTENNIAL IN 1955.

Photograph courtesy of the Granville Life-Style Museum

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TWO WATERCOLORS BY MINNIE BELLE JONES.

Strangely enough, no one seems to remember her water color paintings. We do know that she studied painting with her next door neighbor Ella Humphrey, who gave private lessons to students in Johnstown, Alexandria and Croton in this area. One of Miss Minnie's water color still life paintings uses the exact model that appears in one of Ella Humphrey's pictures.

The Granville Historical Society is fortunate to have twenty-six of her paintings, a collection of landscapes of local scenes and several beautiful still life pictures of fruits and flowers.

Through her paintings Miss Minnie has left us a colorful heritage of life in a gentler age.

--Fanchion R. Lewis



A WINDOW

The Society is pleased to announce the purchase, recently, of the diary of Gerard Pratt Bancroft for the year 1873. This little leather bound volume which measures 3 1/2 by 6 inches gives us a unique glimpse into the life of this prominent citizen of Granville. Gerard P. Bancroft (1792-1885) was 81 years of age in 1873 and still actively engaged in his carpentry business which he carried on in frame buildings behind his home in Equality Street (now Elm Street). This brick home, which he built in 1824, is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Preston.

AN ENTRY EACH DAY

The diary has an entry for each day of the year in violet ink in a clear firm hand. There is much religious sentiment. Each day's entry begins with a Bible verse, or stanza from a familiar hymn. At the top of each page he notes the temperature and weather conditions and at the bottom the number of hours he has worked that day; usually six or eight, sometimes ten. He describes the work done in the shop and the machinery employed. The most frequent activity is sharpening saws, for which he usually charges 25 cents. He names the customers for whom he repairs chairs, makes tables, bedsteads, picture frames, stair bannisters and many stretchers for chairs and tables.

Some days he stands at the turning lathe all day and notes that he usually has a "cold" after doing so. The steam engine which powers his equipment needs frequent attention and repair. He mentions visits to and from family and friends and records letters written and received. Each Sunday he gives the subject of Mr. Dudley's sermon at the Presbyterian Church and comments on it. He records the tolling of church bells on the occasion of the death of Denison's president Samson Talbot on June 29.



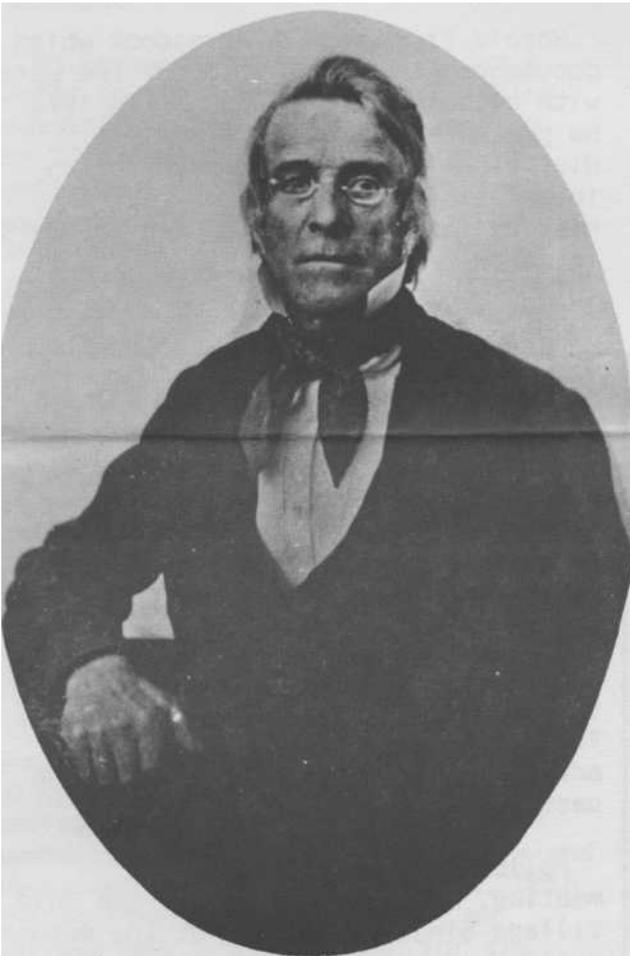
JANE LITTLE BANCROFT (1794-1884)

In early June, Gerard and Jane Bancroft travelled to Springfield. They went in their own lumber wagon to Union Station (south of Granville) and then by train with a change in Columbus. The round trip fare for both of them was \$9.40. The cost of this trip is listed with income and expenditures for each month in the back of the diary.

In 1873 a beef or pork steak cost 22 cents, eight pounds of sugar \$1 and a pound of chocolate 50 cents. Two and one-half pounds of "very good cheese" was 45 cents. In December he spent 10 cents for violet ink and \$1.25 for a Diary for 1874. He must have kept it and the many others which have been lost as faithfully as he did this one in 1873.

Gerard P. Bancroft and his wife Jane were members of the community for seventy years. They came to Granville in 1815 joining other members of the Bancroft family who had come with the original settlers. Gerard's father, Azariah, had trained his sons in carpentry and Gerard was noted for the excellent joiners planes he produced, and as the builder of several well known Granville houses. He was one of the first trustees named when Granville was incorporated as a village in 1832 and a life long officer of the Congregational, later Presbyterian, Church.

Henry Bushnell notes in his History of Granville that Gerard and Jane Little Bancroft, who were married in 1814, celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1864, their 60th anniversary in 1874 and that a surprise party was given them on their 66th anniversary in 1880. A brother of the groom and a sister of the bride, who had attended their wedding, were present at the anniversary in 1880. Bushnell adds that "Mr. Bancroft's step is still as elastic as a boy's, he is quick of speech and still files saws as well as any man."



GERARD PRATT BANCROFT (1792-1885)

*Photographs courtesy of
Mrs. Grace Yenni and
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Preston*



At the January 11, 1989 public hearing of the Development Commission, Richard Mahard, Secretary of the Historical Society Board of Management, read the following statement:

"On December 30th, we forwarded a letter to the Comprehensive Planning Committee, which is not the same as the Development Commission, but the Committee is the one which has been given the duty of developing a new Master Plan for the entire township. I'm advised that the members of the Development Committee have copies of this letter.

At a recent meeting of the Board of Managers, the Granville Historical Society (founded 1885), the secretary was instructed to send a letter to the Comprehensive Planning Committee of the Village urging the committee to exercise extreme caution and proceed with great deliberation as they work to update the Master Plan for the Village and seek to determine the future use of the extensive area of Granville Township soon to be annexed to the Village. Our organization is dedicated to the preservation and appreciation of the unique history and character of the Granville area, both the Village and the Township. We believe that a Master Plan for the development of the entire township should be devised which considers fully the impact of any development on adjacent areas of the community, especially the impact of the infrastructure, the roads, utilities, business, schools, recreations facilities, etc. Also, the committee should consider the impact on the intangible amenities, the spaciousness, the ambience, the

appearance and so forth. It is ironic that the major part of the acreage which has been annexed, the extensive Jones farm with the Bryn Du Mansion is the area which for many decades has given great distinctiveness to Granville. Now any ill-conceived and inappropriate development of the area could do much to destroy that distinctiveness. Once again, we urge the Committee to proceed with great care and deliberation and resist pressure for development which could greatly change the character of the Granville community.

Respectfully submitted, the Board of Managers of the Granville Historical Society."

The Historical Times is included with membership and is sent to all members of the Society.

Questions or comments may be sent to:

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Granville, Ohio 43023

Editorial Board: Florence Hoffman,
Anthony Lisska, Mary Ann Malcuit

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

In order to publicize the Historical Society's mission and to gather photographic documentation of the Village at the present time, we are sponsoring a contest open to the public. Amateur and professional photographers are encouraged to submit contemporary photographs of historical subjects in the Village. Entry forms and rules will be available at several places in the Village. The photographs will be displayed at the Old Academy Building during the 4th of July celebration. If you would like to help with this contest, contact Steven Katz at 587-1122.



FROM THE ARCHIVES--

AN ANNUAL SPRING RITUAL! THE CEREMONY OF THE CROWNING OF THE MAY QUEEN AT DENISON UNIVERSITY WAS HELD IN FRONT OF STONE HALL IN MAY, 1913.



The Granville Ohio Historical Society
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