

# THE HISTORICAL TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE GRANVILLE, OHIO, HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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*Exploding another of the Land's Legends:*

## HOW LICKING COUNTY GOT ITS NAME

by Robert W. Alrutz



EVER SINCE WE MOVED to Licking County 40 years ago I have been intrigued by the origins of local place names. The most unusual name is that of the county itself. The name of the county is based upon the fact that it is the primary source of the Licking River. Hill, in his 1881 *History of Licking County, Ohio* gives the origin of the name "Licking River" in his passage:

"The latter name (Licking) is supposed to have been given it from the fact of there being in early times some 'salt licks,' as they were called, upon or near its banks, which were much resorted to by deer and buffalo and, subsequent to the settlement of the county, by domestic animals."

Use of the name "Licking" for a stream is not unique to Ohio for there is a Licking River in Kentucky, which also has a north and south fork. This Kentucky river empties into the Ohio River opposite Cincinnati. The Licking River of Kentucky, which was earlier called the "Great Salt Lick River," flows near the town of

Grant's Lick and through the Blue Lick Battlefield; hence one can see some basis for its name.

According to my Rand McNally World Atlas, and appropriate highway maps, there are also a number of streams called "Lick Creek." There is such a one in Indianapolis, Indiana, one in the panhandle of Maryland, one empties into the Licking River of Kentucky, and there is also one near Johnson City in eastern Tennessee. All of these one may assume are associated with a salt lick or salt spring. Salt springs were noteworthy for being attractive to game animals and for the distillation of salt for domestic use. Salt was a very valuable commodity, before the advent of reliable refrigeration, for its use in food preservation.

Fine and good — but where were the salt licks in Licking County, Ohio and where are these licks now? Even in the above quote Hill said "in early times." The only salt licks of note that I am aware of is the one at Chandlersville in Muskingum County, east of Zanesville. This spring empties into Buffalo Creek, a tributary of Salt Creek, which joins the Muskingum River at Duncan Falls, some nine miles downstream from Zanesville.

This salt spring was heavily utilized by game. Colonel James Smith in the diary of his captivity (1755-59) by Ohio Indians recorded the fact that buffalo had created great roads through the county to reach this salt source and that the Indians traveled there to kill their game. On one such hunt the women ". . . used their small brass kettles . . . to make about half a bushel of salt."

Muskingum is, of course, one of our many place names based upon a name applied by the Indians who inhabited this region when it was taken over by the "settlers." Another such name is Pataskala, a name twice applied to the Licking River by Hill. Also, Bushnell in his **1889** *The History of Granville, Licking County, Ohio* states that the Indians called the river the "Pataskala." Further, Hill says the Licking was also called the Lick-Licking, and Evans Lewis' map of 1766 shows it as the "Lick Branch" of the Muskingum River.

This multiplicity of names compelled me to look up two publications by Professor August C. Mahr formerly of Ohio State University. The first, published in the Ohio Historical Quarterly in 1957, is entitled *Indian River and Place Names*, and the second, *Practical Reasons for Algonkian Indian Stream and Place Names*, appeared in the Ohio Journal of Science in 1959.

Professor Mahr outlined the migration of Indians retreating from the colonization of the East Coast. "An Indian migration always tried to take its start by canoe on a big water course..." The main river, such as the Ohio, was used until they chose to paddle up one of its tributaries. In this manner new areas were opened up. The Indian travelers marked river mouths with characteristic names that described the conditions that those following might expect. To quote Mahr, but omitting the Indian words:

That is why some of the Delaware [Indian] river names of Ohio apply to the mouth of the river rather than to the river in its full length. The Licking River, for instance, a tributary to the

Muskingum, is one of these. The name Lickin is adapted from the original Delaware form . . . It means 'where there is . . . at a given point . . . receding flood water.' Note that the verb stem . . . basically implies a dropping water level. To Delaware Indians canoeing up the Muskingum, the name indicated that, at times when the Muskingum carried high water, the flood backed up in the mouth of the Licking as far as a certain point upstream and, therefore, promised good canoeing, but afterwards receded again, and so one had to look out.

He further points out that: "Another name, Pataskala, was given to the Licking by other Delaware Indians for the same purpose of canoe navigation and remained in use until far into the 19th century. . . . Pataskala is a white man's transcription of [a Delaware word] meaning 'up to some point'. . . What alone is essential, though, is the identical meaning of the names Licking and Pataskala in their original Delaware forms for the same river, or rather its mouth."

Professor Mahr discusses the fact that the Delaware Indians of Ohio were fully aware of the salt licks and gave a number of streams, such as the Mahoning, names bearing the stem word "m'hoani," which was their word for salt lick. He also notes that the naming of the Licking River was done by ". . . a folk etymology of the white man. . . . The name Licking is a white man's adaptation of an original Delaware form "W'li/ik/nk . . ."

Therefore, one of the legends of the "Land of Legend" is the origin of the name Licking. It is not an English word denoting the existence of salt licks, but a distortion of Indian words describing the characteristics of the river at its mouth where it empties into the Muskingum. Further, our county could just as well have been named Pataskala County.

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## THREE CHEERS FOR GRANVILLE ROTARY!

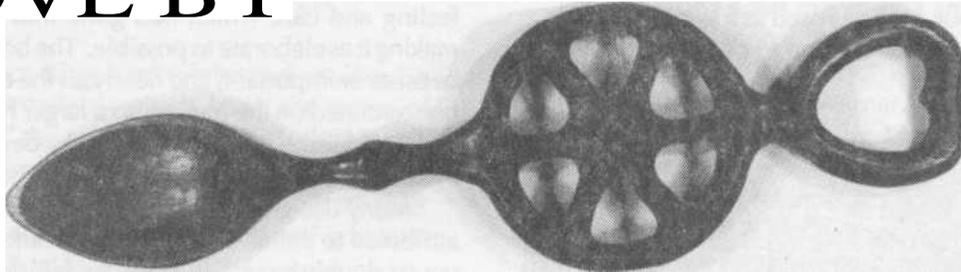
You will not see volunteers with wheelbarrows and wagons full of tools and equipment dodging the traffic to cross South Main Street this summer. This equipment will be kept in the new storage building, a gift from the Granville Rotary Club, who will provide all materials and labor for construction. It will be both

a useful and attractive addition. Just ask the volunteers who loaded and pushed those wheelbarrows last summer how useful it will be. We are very grateful to Rotary for understanding this need and meeting it.

The 10 by 12 foot building will be near the south border of the Burying Ground and built in the style of the mid-nineteenth century when the greatest number of burials occurred. Major considerations for choosing the site were to preserve the historic

integrity of the Burying Ground and, of course, to be certain that the building was not placed on known grave sites. The Village Board of Zoning Appeals has granted us a variance from the 50-foot setback requirement which was necessary to avoid grave sites. The building permit is in hand. Watch the papers for the date of our "barn raising" and come by to watch, or to help!

# LOVE BY



## THE SPOONFUL

### *The Story of the Welsh Love Spoon*

by Warren Rhys Evans

AS I WAS WALKING down the street in Carmarthen in South Wales during a recent visit, I ran across a small shop selling Welsh Love Spoons. Though I am of Welsh descent, I had not heard the story of the Love Spoon so I went in and purchased several spoons and some literature on the tradition of the spoons.

Many household items in the 16th and 17th centuries were made of wood, including several types of spoons. It is not known exactly when the idea of the Love Spoon originated; the earliest surviving one is dated 1667, but since wood is not as durable as many artifacts it is probable that this tradition is much older.

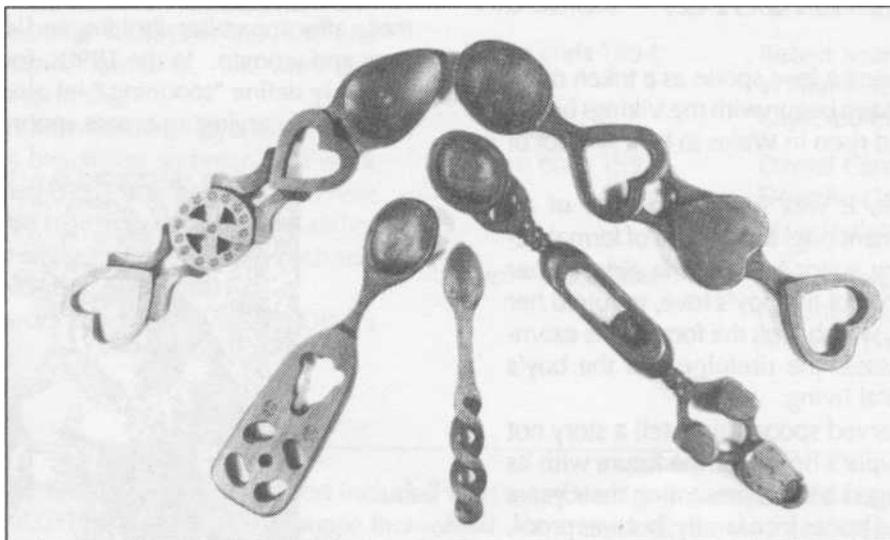
The custom of giving a Love Spoon to the lady of your choice has been around for a long time in Wales. The young man would spend many hours during long winter nights working on a spoon, which traditionally he presented to the lady of his choice as a token of his love. If she accepted his gift,

it was an informal agreement that they were engaged to be married. Over the years the custom has been extended and Love Spoons are now given to relatives and friends as cherished gifts.

Besides a good sharp knife, a major tool used to scoop out the concave side of the spoon was a "twca cam," which is translated as a "bent dagger." It had a long handle which would rest on the shoulder; by pulling it toward the carver it formed a hollow in the wood resting on his knees. The blades were probably made from old scythe blades by the local blacksmith and tempered so as to be nice and sharp.

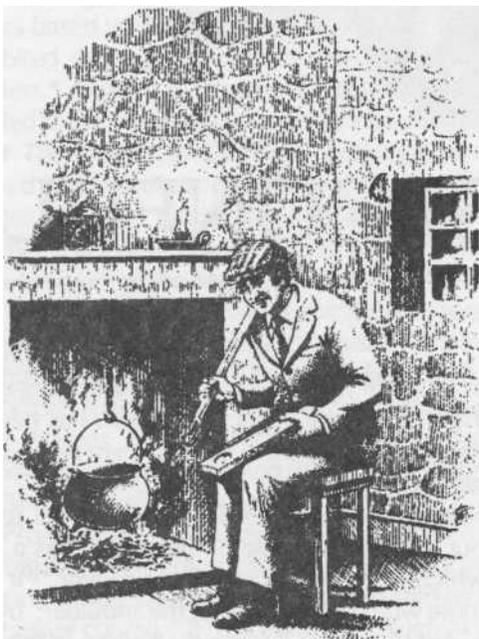
The most common wood used in Wales in the 16th and 17th centuries was sycamore, which was preferred for culinary spoons since it did not "taint" the food. Some

oak, elm and holly were also used. Now, there are many desirable carving woods readily obtainable -- mahogany looks great as does walnut and cherry; basswood is easy to carve, and there are lots of fancy oriental woods as well. I am sure our Welsh forefathers would have loved to work with them.



*These lovely examples from the collection of Maggie Brownfield demonstrate the variety of motifs and artistic styles found in Welsh Love Spoons*

When young men in the 17th century started to develop a more stylish type of love spoon, which had no domestic purpose but only was used as a symbol of love and as an ornament, there seemed to be no limit to the



*Starting a spoon with a "Twca Cam."*

variations in size, shape and decoration. Since the donor made the spoon himself, he tried to emphasize the feeling and care which had gone into its creation by making it as elaborate as possible. The bowl of the spoon became unimportant, and nearly all the elaboration was concentrated on the handle, so a larger handle than that required for the culinary spoon was developed to give the carver more opportunity to demonstrate his skill.

Many designs have been developed and meanings attributed to them: a single heart meaning - my heart is yours; double hearts meaning - we feel the same for each other; a horse shoe - good luck and happiness; a lock - my house is yours; a wheel - willingness to work for a loved one; chain links- captured love; and many, many others.

I am a beginning wood carver and not very good at it, but have turned out a few Welsh Love Spoons along with a few other items - mostly dogs and birds. I enjoy getting back to Granville every now and then where I spent many happy summers visiting my grandparents, Cyrus and Emma Evans who lived at 464 Granger Street.

*Warren Rhys Evans is the son of Raymond Evans and great-great grandson of Joseph Evans, who was one of the two stone masons who helped build the museum building in 1816.*



## 'SPOONING' IN JUNE

The custom of giving a love spoon as a token of affection is believed to have begun with the Vikings but by the 16th century it had risen in Wales to be a symbol of betrothal.

Among rural folk, it was (in the absence of an unaffordable engagement ring) the symbol of formal acceptance of the young suitor by both the girl and her father. The girl, assured of the boy's love, required her father's endorsement, which took the form of his examining the spoon to assess the usefulness of the boy's hands in earning a rural living.

Thus, the hand carved spoon might tell a story not only of the young couple's hopes for the future with its chains, hearts and caged balls representing their years together, their love and hopes for a family, but was proof, before the whole village, of the seriousness of the "spooning."

In the early 20th century, "spooning" had come to mean affectionate handholding and kisses between young men and women. In the 1990s, few young lovers can probably define "spooning," let alone connect it to the practice of carving an ornate spoon as a token of love.



*Our Readers Write Us:*

## PROFESSOR KING ON THE 'WILLARD WARNER' HOUSE

Professor Horace King kindly informed us about a brick house on Broadway which bears the name of "Willard Warner," the subject of **The Historical Times** article in the last issue. Professor King wrote that "the handsome brick at 303 East Broadway, now the property of Orville Orr and an annex of the Buxton Inn" is known locally as the "Willard Warner House."

Professor King suggests, however, that "this building has absolutely no connection with your Willard Warner." He goes on to set the historical record straight with the following observations:

It was built in 1815 for Appleton Downer, a jurist and banker of Zanesville, and father of E.M. Downer who gave his name to Avery-Downer House. It was once known as Di I ley House and later as Avery Apartments. It was purchased in 1955 by Robbins Hunter, Jr, when he moved from Newark to Granville to take up residence in the Avery-Downer which he had just purchased. Hunter did some extensive remodeling to this brick; he sand-blasted the walls to remove years of paint to reveal the front wall laid in Flemish bond and he added mature Federal style details, cornice and entrance from a house

he dismantled in central Ohio. This changed the stylistic character completely; then he named it the "Willard Warner House."

Professor King notes that during an inventory of the house for the National Register, he "...protested the change in name as bad history." But, Professor King tells us, "Hunter retorted that Warner was a distant relative who had been neglected by Granville and he was making amends."

Our readers will recall that a principal claim of the Warner biography in the Fall issue was that indeed he had been all but forgotten by contemporary Granvillians.

The interest in preserving Warner's name by Mr. Hunter, Professor King suggests, rests on "the claim of relationship with Warner [which] seems to have come from the marriage of Warner's sister, Helen, to Willis Robbins, an early Newark Banker." And Robbins Hunter was, Professor King notes, a "namesake."

Our thanks to Professor King for this informative explanation of why Willard Warner has a house bearing his name on Broadway in Granville. The author of the biography did not know this important fact and is grateful to Professor King for both informing us of this fact and explaining why a local building central to the main street in Granville bears the name, albeit without historical foundation, of Willard Warner.

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## OLD COLONY SUMMER SCHEDULE

This summer's work in the Old Colony Burying Ground began May 1. Jim and Minnie Fannin, our consultants from the Fannin-Lehner Preservation Consultants in Concord, Mass., were on hand to lead and inspire us. They were here for 10 days in late April and early May and will return in late June. The work day during that visit will be June 26.

On the weekends in between, our loyal volunteers will continue the work begun last summer. All work days will be announced in The Granville Sentinel. There are jobs in the Old Colony to fit every strength and ability from re-setting and washing stones to bringing lunch and cool drinks. Call 587-0560 to volunteer.

Remember: Major work day set for June 26! Others will be announced.

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

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THE HISTORICAL TIMES is a quarterly publication included with membership in the Granville Historical Society and is sent to all members. EDITORIAL BOARD: Maggie Brownfield, Florence Hoffman, Anthony Lisska, Robert Seith. SEND QUESTIONS, Comments and suggestions to: THE HISTORICAL TIMES, Granville Historical Society, P.O. Box 129, Granville, Ohio 43023-0129

## CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

The Civil War Roundtable sponsored by the Society meets monthly on the third Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. in the D-Room of the Denison University Physical Education Building. The following is the revised schedule for the remainder of the spring:

**May 18:** Neal Meier [Ohio State University], "Sherman's March Through Georgia and the Carolinas on Fire." [Rescheduled from February] Mr. Meier continues his successful presentation from last autumn on Sherman's marches and battles.

**June 15:** John Noecker, "The Treason Trials in Indianapolis." This is an account of the Copperhead activities in our neighboring state of Indiana.

All members of the Society are invited to participate in these programs. Presentations and discussions normally last for an hour and a half.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please renew your membership soon if you have not done so already. Bob Seith has created a computer file for membership so we have finally come into the technological age regarding membership lists. Dues for **1993** remain at \$5.00 per person.

At the Annual Meeting in April, the Society membership voted to increase dues, starting in 1994, to \$10 per person, per year. The new dues rate will go into effect with renewals and new memberships paid after November 1, **1993**.

The membership also approved plans to cultivate "sponsorships" from business and industry neighbors, at a rate of \$100 each.

## BUDGET MAI I ERS

David Neel, Society Treasurer, has developed a line-item budget process for the Society. Each committee chair presents a budget request list and justification early in the fiscal year. The board discusses the requests—this year at the February meeting—and votes on the budget for the year. The board has attempted to be "good and faithful stewards" of the funds provided for the harmonious running of your society. We have developed and approved a balanced budget once again, and it was approved at the Annual Meeting in April.

## SIGN UP A FRIEND IN THE SOCIETY

The population of Granville village and township continues to grow. Many folks come to the area because of the "history and tradition" of Granville. This history can become more alive and significant for both newcomers and oldsters through active membership in our Society. Please encourage your friends to join the Society.

Membership benefits include a subscription to the award winning *THE HISTORICAL TIMES*, invitations to the Society programs, support for Society projects like the Old Colony Burial Ground restoration, the continuation of our museum, the Fourth of July Photography Exhibition, the re-publication of William Utter's *HISTORY OF GRANVILLE*, sponsorship of the Civil War Roundtable, and the general upkeep of the Old Academy Building.

