

# THE HISTORICAL TIMES

QUARTERLY OF THE GRANVILLE, OHIO, HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume XVII Issue 1

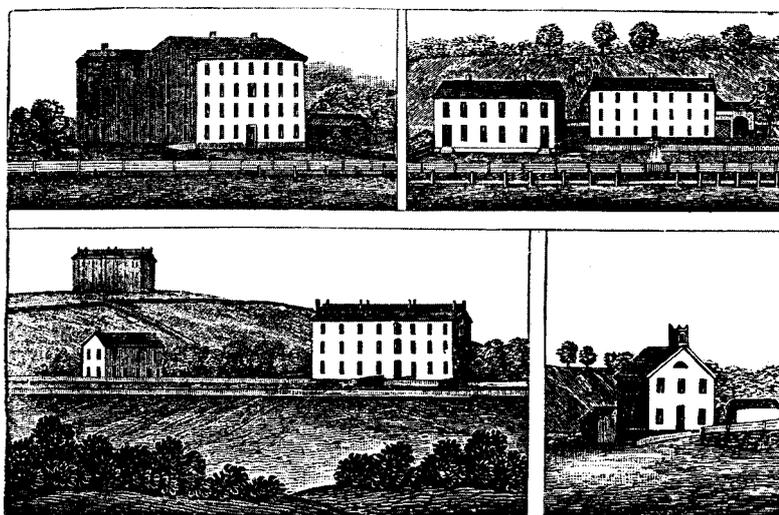
Winter 2003



## ANNUAL MEETING TUESDAY APRIL 22

Maggie Brooks, President of the Board of Managers, requests all members and interested folks mark Tuesday, April 22 on their calendars. The annual meeting of the Historical Society will take place that evening. A program will be part of the evening along with an update of the many projects undertaken by the Board of Managers since last spring's meeting.

## *The Ohio and Granville of 1831: The Religious and Social Conditions*



Drawn by Henry Howe.

LITERARY INSTITUTIONS, GRANVILLE, 1846.

On left lower is the Baptist College ; on the right lower Male Academy ; on left upper Presbyterian Female Seminary; and on right upper Episcopal Female Seminary.

In his recently published *Ohio: The History of a People*, Miami University Distinguished Professor Andrew R. L. Cayton, writes perceptively about the nineteenth century origins of Ohio colleges in small villages across the state:

With [two] exceptions, all of the colleges were supported by Protestant denominations. More than twenty received charters in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The schools were initially a happy marriage of local boosterism and religious zeal. Congregationalists, Methodists, and other sects needed to train ministers and establish bases; small towns needed something with the cachet of a college to put them on the map. The union of church and town in a college formed the quintessential "respectable" Ohio institution, mixing secular and sacred purposes in the larger cause of progress.'

This issue of *The Historical Times* publishes for the first time in nearly a century an essay that appeared in *Memorial Volume of Denison University: 1831-1906!* This volume appeared on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary on the founding of the college. The essay discusses the religious, economic and social milieu of the Village of Granville in 1831. The Editors leave our readers to decide if Professor Cayton's description appropriately fits Granville and the founding of Denison University.

# THE OHIO AND GRANVILLE OF 1831: THE RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

It was a busy, unorganized, primitive but promising period in Granville's history when the college, which became Denison University, came into being. Jonathan Going's' vivid picture of his trip down the Canal from Cleveland to Newark on his way to the Lancaster meeting<sup>4</sup> in May 1831 is eloquent of prevailing conditions. Says he:

The population seems to be a sprout just cut from Babel. Our passengers from Cleveland to Newark on the Pittsburgh canal boat consisted of three Connecticut peddlers and four families, being emigrants for Cincinnati, one of them English, a second Scotch, a third Irish, and finally a German.

The choice of Granville for the college site was not alone determined by its position at the center of the state and by the offer of an eligible site, but by its character as an oasis of New England traditions and spirit in the midst of the shifting sands and turbulence of the New West. It had been formed in 1805 as a colony from Granville, Mass., and setting up in the wilderness its church, its school and its town government brought bodily from its New England home, it had maintained for twenty-five years, as it still maintains after more than a



Jonathon Going,  
Founder of Denison University

century, the external form and much of the inner spirit of a New England Village.

Something of the appeal which Granville made to thoughtful minds seeking a site for the College, may be understood from a study of the religious and social conditions prevailing in the town at the time and for some years previously. It was a notable revival time in Granville, especially in the Congregational church of which Dr. Jacob Little was the able and energetic pastor

## The Mighty Religious Revival of the 1830's

In Dr. Little's New Year sermon for 1831, he had given the following religious statistics:

Population of the township, 1749; inhabitants over 14 years old, 1046; number of non church-goers, 286; professors of religion, 363; members of temperance societies, 612; member of juvenile temperance societies, 75.

Attention was called to the fact that on one street (Main street) there were sixteen families, and that all of these families read a religious paper, all attended the Presbyterian church, and fourteen of the sixteen maintained family worship. Of the 317 families in the township 109 were reported as having family prayers. It was a year of great revival throughout American, it being estimated that 200,000 persons were added to the churches that year. Granville shared in this great revival spirit in all its churches, but the record of the work in Dr. Little's church has been preserved in his own words, to which the writer of this account has had access.

In October 1831, after a period of special preparation by pastor and members, six clergymen visited Granville for a religious conference in the Congregational church. All six of the visiting ministers preached during the conference. An inquiry meeting would be held, following the preaching service, in another building. Three verses would be sung amid tense feeling and the pastor would arise and take his way to the inquiry room. Then all about the house one and another would rise and go with him. Seventy of the youth and young married people of the community went to the inquiry room on the first evening amid tears and rejoicing of ministers and congregation. The next evening one hundred and twenty went to the inquiry meeting, and the third evening one hundred and fifty. On Saturday evening there were two hundred inquirers and Sunday was a great day for the church and Granville. These were of course not all different individuals and not all of them were brought to a confession of religion, but the results were great and satisfactory.

The statistics given above in the New Year sermon will, when compared with present conditions, account in part for the striking success of this great meeting. It will be noted that the population was not far different from that of today. But while there were but 286 who habitually absented themselves from church, there were but 363 church members in all the township. It is probably that there were twice as many regular attendants upon church services as now, while there were probably but about one-third of the number of professed Christians that are enrolled in the Granville churches today. Especially on Sunday evening there was a large body in interested attendance in 1831 with many more non-members than members.

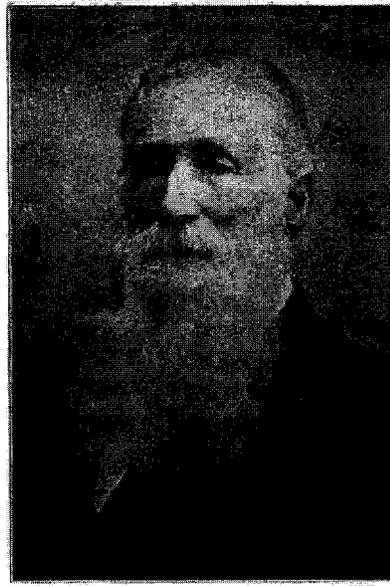
### The Coming of the Temperance Movement

Then the temperance agitation which had its beginning in the West at Granville in 1828, had already by the end of 1830 enlisted nearly twice as many members as were in the churches, and the moral awakening involved in the temperance movement was favorable to the deeper and more radical work of the religious revival of 1831. Add to this the fact that all America was under the influence of a mighty religious revival, which swept with tidal movement over it; and, under the leadership of such masterful minds as those of Jacob Little and other early religious teachers, the great revival of 1831 in Granville is not a strange phenomenon.

The opposition to the temperance movement was as pronounced in some quarters, even among Christians, as was its advocacy among others. For example, Rev. James Berry, pastor of the Baptist church at Granville, in reporting the fruitage of a revival work at and near Granville in 1830, remarks of nine candidates received at one time, that all of them were members of temperance societies, and all hearty friends of Bible, Tract, Education and Missionary Societies. But on the other hand, *The Western Baptist Miscellany*, which prints the foregoing intelligence from Rev. James Berry, has an item in its issue for April 1831, stating that "a (Baptist) church in Licking County has excluded several members for joining a temperance society." It adds that the same church a few years before excluded a son of one of these members for drunkenness. The path of rectitude would seem to have been a precarious one in those days when a church member must not be either too drunk or too sober.

### Lyman Beecher Comes to Granville

It was in 1832 that the celebrated Dr. Lyman Beecher on his way to Cincinnati and Lane Seminary, stopped at Granville to wait for the cholera to subside in Cincinnati, and preached for a week. Large numbers



John Pratt  
First president  
of Denison University

of inquirers, almost equal to those of the previous year, were brought out at these meetings. The account has come down to us of how Dr. Beecher in one of his vigorous gestures knocked a lamp from the high pulpit to the floor below. It was in 1831, also, that the stoves were first put into the Congressional meetings house, though many members shook their heads at the sacrilege, considering that sanctity and cold feet, piety and pneumonia, were somehow divinely associated.

It is interesting to find that the schools of Granville township were in 1831 taught by 31 persons, of whom 19 were professors of religion; surely a far poorer showing than in these days when our public schools are sometimes called godless. Significant also is the fact that one of Dr. Little's neighborhood meetings was held in 1828, or 1829, in the neighborhood where the college farm was first located, and that at one of its first meetings a ball was held in a farm building nearby, while a distillery adjacent was another element of opposition, and the roughs of the neighborhood endeavored to break up the meeting. The year 1831 saw the distillery abandoned and the house where the ball had been held turned into the first building for what is now Denison University.

### Temperance Redux

Granville is said to have the honorable distinction of having established the first temperance society west of the Alleghenies and by the year 1830, when the movement was made for the founding of the college, the society had already wrought a marked transformation in the community. The society appears to have been formed in 1828 and by the close of 1829 the following comparative statistics were given by Rev. Jacob Little, who himself signed the pledge in 1828:

No. of inhabitants in the township, 1660; No. over fourteen years old, 980; No. in temperance societies, 500; No. of families in township, 300; No. of families using no ardent spirits, 150; in 1827, township consumed, spirits, 10,000 gallons; in

1829, township consumed, spirits, 2,800 gallons, a saving of 7,200 gal.

Doctor Little proceeds to figure that this diminution, reckoning at 35 cents a gallon, amounted to \$2,520, and would be sufficient to pay taxes and cost of schools and charities in the whole township; which goes to show that other things were cheap as well as whiskey. The good doctor further specifies that in 1829 fourteen buildings had been raised without ardent spirits, and that sixty hard drinkers had been brought into the two temperance societies of Granville, leaving but eight common drunkards in that township as against twenty-eight in 1827.

In a letter to Rev. Geo. C. Sedwick, dated April 12, 1830, W. S. Richards, Secretary of the Granville Reformed Temperance Society, states that the society enrolls about one hundred members, not less than thirty-five of whom had been "more or less habitually intemperate." About five or six of this number had lapsed repeatedly, and one or more it was feared would prove incurable; but the society on the whole was greatly encouraged, as it had every reason to be.

A striking illustration of the change of sentiment on the liquor question dating from about the period of founding of our college is found in the fact that the noted citizen at whose house the Education Society was organized in Lebanon, at one time, it is said, possessed a distillery, while the college, as stated above, on its first site is said to have taken the place of a rendezvous for carousals in connection with a nearby distillery. Thus the reform so markedly brought about in Granville just preceding the year 1831 was clinched by the substitution of the Christian school for the drinking place. There were in 1828 six distilleries in the township. Yet in spite of the marked improvement in the brief two years of the movement, the gulf between the habits of today and those of seventy-five years ago is seen from that fact that in the statistics of 1829 (given as showing great progress in temperance) of the 300 families in the township only 150 were claimed to be free from the use of ardent spirits.

And not all of the improvement seen in 1829 and 1830 could be claimed as permanent. The town was in the freshness of a great religious and moral revival which it experienced during 1828, and many families and individuals were moved to an attempt at reformation who in some cases failed to maintain the reform. Yet the immediate change was revolutionary, and throughout the seventy-five years it has proceeded from a condition where the township had six distilleries and where a pastor signed the pledge only for example's sake, to the present condition, where no distillery or saloon is tolerated,

where any drinking must be done by stealth, and where the town has recently pronounced against the saloons by one of the most emphatic verdicts ever rendered, a vote of six out of every seven.

## The Economic Conditions of Granville in 1831

A study of the material conditions prevailing at Granville and throughout the country at the time is of equal interest.

On the back of one of the two original subscription papers for the purchase of the farm site of Granville College, some ardent solicitor wrote this picturesque and optimistic account of Granville, with a cheerful freedom from literary laws:

A short view of Granville and its advantages. it has a navigable feeder to the village, has three flouring mills with nine run of stone (one is A steam mill 4 Stories High and is Calculated to make one hundred barrels flour per day,) it has a furnace & Foundry both extensive operation, two saw mills two woolen Factories & with extensive Quarries of Free stone & an abundance of Stone Coal in the county near the bank of the Canal with A population of 1800 in the Village & Township situated on the Main Road from Zanesville to Columbus, with A daily line of Mail Coaches from City Washington to Cincinnati and is 139 miles from Cincinnati, 120 from Cleveland, 140 from Wheeling, 92 from Marietta, 105 from Sandusky City, with a Baptist Church of 90 members, & a new Brick—but *here the author ceases.*

With all of its crudity this picture is sufficiently complete to indicate clearly the advantages and promise of the Granville of 1831. It will be noted that in all the enterprises of commercial life, the Granville of seventy-five years ago was far in advance of the Granville of today, although the Granville of 1906 has for residence purposes many of the most modern city advantages. The importance and promise of Granville in 1831, however, are seen from a study of its relation to other towns and to the country at large at that date. Something of this is indicated in the picture just given of Granville's situation on the main road from Zanesville to Columbus; and on the route of the great through mail coach line from Washington to Cincinnati, in a day when there were as yet practically no railways. Still more may be understood by comparing Granville with other towns—Cincinnati had but twenty-five thousand inhabitants, Columbus had but about four thousand. The importance of Granville just

at this time was enhanced by the fact that the canal, then the only public thoroughfare in the state except wagon roads, ended at Newark and that passengers coming by canal from Cleveland and the East on their way to Columbus and Cincinnati passed through Granville, as on the other great thoroughfare from Washington to Cincinnati.

But when this optimistic picture has been drawn of the Granville of 1831, another and less flattering one remains. The new wagon roads were at some seasons of the year almost impassable and bridges were few. Private travel was for the most part on horseback. Merchants as a rule had their goods brought from the East over the Allegheny mountains by four horse teams, and western produce sought its eastern market by the same difficult and expensive route. Hence the consumer had the highest prices to pay for "store goods," and received the lowest prices for his own produce. Thirty cents a bushel for wheat must have caused the farmer a feeling which modern slang has closely identified with that small sum of money. Corn brought at times but twelve and a half cents, and oats six cents. Eggs were five cents a dozen. What self-respecting hen would work at such a price? When Stephen N. Alward brought butter to the Granville Institution

July 3, 1834, he got but eight cents a pound for it, though Seth Philbrook got nine cents for his on the same day, but it is not unknown to us today that "there's odds in butter." Either of them would have had to pay a full dollar for a pound of tea, when one dollar was as much as five of ours.

### A Floodtide of Prosperity

The general conditions of the period which saw the founding of Denison, were striking from almost any point of view. Granville was at its floodtide of prosperity. The delay in the extension of the canal beyond Newark caused by protracted work on the "Deep Cut," not only placed Granville on the main thoroughfare of

traffic from the East to Cincinnati, but brought lucrative canal contracts to Granville men and stimulated the material prosperity of the community to such a degree as to make possible the generous educational subscriptions which secured the college location and its rehabilitation after the fire.

The great moral revival connection with the initiation of western temperance reform at Granville and the remarkable religious revivals of the years 1828 and 1831 were deciding elements, together with the central location and the New England character of the village, in bringing the college to Granville. It is wholly probably that if

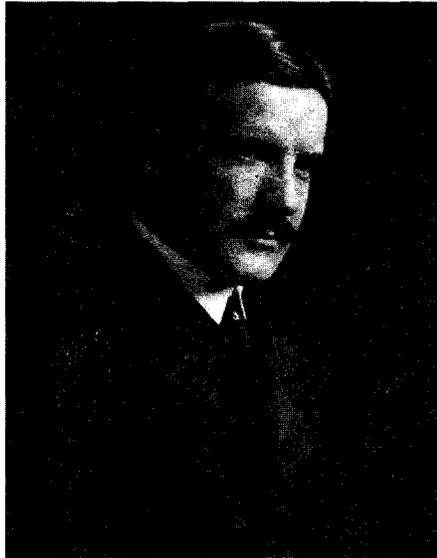
the movement for establishing the college had taken place five years earlier or later than 1831, it would never have come to Granville. For, previously, it had not come to special note, and within five years thereafter a series of reverses came to the prosperous village, from some of which she has never recovered.

### A Series of Reverses

In the year 1834 came an epidemic of fever which ravaged the town until there were scarcely enough of those untouched by it to care for the sick and dying. The church bells were forbidden to toll the death tidings and lives went out in silence in the stricken community. Col. Lucius D. Mower, the leading business man of Granville, died that year and

his spirit of enterprise was sadly missed.

The widespread financial panic, which culminated in the suspension of specie payments by the Granville Bank in 1837, had set in. Granville's hope of growth and prominence was soon quenched, for not only the great national road, but the railway also, passed a few miles to the south of the village, and its manufacturing enterprises dwindled to ultimate failure. It was doubtless the material prosperity and promise of the town which united with its constituent elements of culture and religion to bring the college to Granville in 1831, but when the brief material prosperity had passed, the college survived to bring to the town truer prosperity and wider fame than could ever have come from the factories and civic prominence of its early dream.



Our best guess is that Francis W. Shepardson (Denison University Alumnus, University of Chicago historian and first President of the Granville Historical Society) is the supposed author of this unsigned article.

## A Letter from the Past

It is a delicious reminder of the progress covered by the seventy-five years of our college history, to turn from the account of the record of a mile in 28 seconds, made by a steam automobile in Florida, and read in *The Western Miscellany* for January, 1830, the following communication giving an account of the opening of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, when its "flyer" consisted of a single car, drawn by one horse, at the rate of twelve miles an hour; the timidity of the ladies preventing their risking the perils of the rail till after the first trip.

Baltimore, Dec. 22 (1829)

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad

The Bridge over Gwynn's Falls was yesterday completed by the laying of the last stone on the eastern extremity of the south parapet. Carroll of Carrollton, our venerable fellow-citizen, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, presided at the ceremony, and the Bridge, in pursuance of a resolution of the Board of Managers, was named after him, The Carrollton Viaduct.

At twelve o'clock the Board of Directors assembled in the Company's ground on Pratt street, with Mr. Carroll, and proceeded in one of the railroad cars to the bridge, moving at the rate of from ten to twelve miles an hour. The rails from Pratt street to the Bridge, being permanently laid, afforded a fair specimen of railroad traveling to those of the Directors and visitors to whom it was novel, and we heard a very general expression of gratification from them all.... On the return of the directors the car was occupied by ladies and gentlemen and made another rapid trip to the bridge and back. By this time two of Winan's Cars, built by Mr. Imlay, one of them furnished with great taste and elegance, reached the ground, and the largest being occupied by 37 passengers inside and out, was drawn with the greatest facility by one horse. The ladies now became more confident, and the second trip of the Winan's presented a gay collection of plumes and flowers as its fair occupants were borne along at the rate of twelve miles an hour.

Something may be understood from this chapter of the local conditions which prevailed at the date of the movement for a college for the Village of Granville.



## Endnotes

The editors gratefully acknowledge Granville resident David Bingham, who kindly loaned this Memorial Volume of Denison University: 1831-1906. The editors had seen neither this volume nor this essay on the Granville of 1831 prior to Mr. Bingham's thoughtful loan of his book. Cookie Sunkle graciously typed the draft of this essay for the editors, and Laurie MacKenzie-Crane laid out this issue in its published format, as usual, with aplomb.

This essay has been edited modestly for ease of reading.

1 - Andrew R. L. Cayton, *Ohio: The History of a People* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2002), p. 90.

2 - *Memorial Volume of Denison University: 1831-1906* (Granville, OH: Published by the University, 1907). This volume contains two independent sections. Part One is entitled "The Development of the College," which contains several essays about Granville and the early days of Denison. Part Two, "The Seventh General Catalogue," is a compilation of much data directly related to the college over its first seventy-five year history.

3 - Jonathan Going was the founder and then the second president of Denison University. Denison's first name was the Granville Literary and Theological Institute.

4 - The meeting in Lancaster determined that Granville would be the site of the new Baptist college in Ohio.

5 - The original site of Denison University was on the Columbus Road where Middleton House now stands.

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## From our Readers of The Historical Times

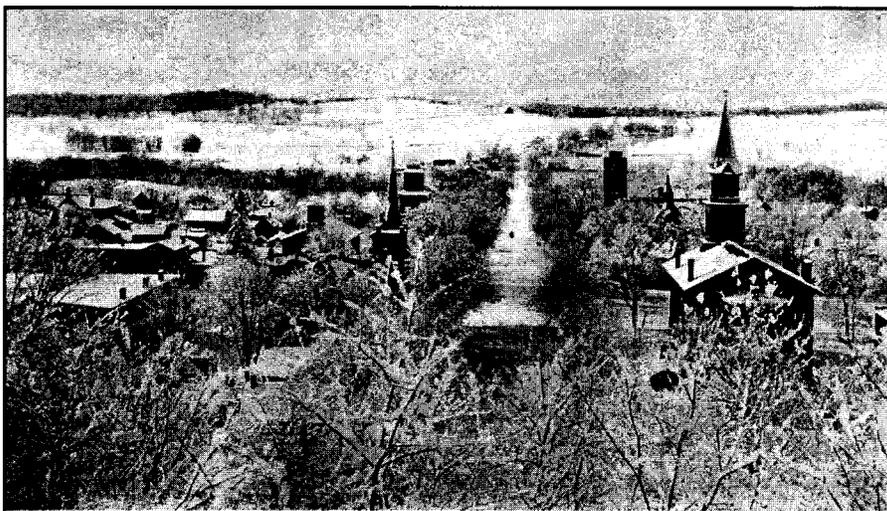
The editors are pleased to print the following comments and observations received from our readers. The article on "The Stills of Granville" that appeared in the Summer 2002 issue of this quarterly inspired several interesting letters.

**From his new retirement home in Minneapolis, former Historical Society President, Tony Stoneburner, writes:**

"During the weekend, I read "The Stills of Granville" by Anthony Lisska. The piece was informative and witty. Perhaps it looks at the Temperance Movement from the outside-in. Things often look different from the inside-out.

"Two pieces of writing about childhood in Granville by a woman whose early experiences informed her adult attitude, an attitude that subscribed to the Temperance Movement, may admit us persons of the Third Millennium & the Twenty-First Century to the inside-out view of a person in our village around 175 years ago.

"Mary (Lois Lovina) Abbott Murray, in *Incidents of Frontier Life* (1880), seems to be doing autobiography by attempting poetry. I do not offer her "chapters" as accomplished poems, only as glimpses of Granville at an early period—in relation to the consumption of alcohol that Dr. Lisska newly calls to our attention. They are "stills" from a motion-picture, as it were (from a "reeling"?).



### A Fight

One day in a porch that was just pailed around,  
I stood and saw drunken men in the street;  
With clothing torn and stained with blood.  
Like beasts in human form—  
They struck, and bit, and gouged each others eyes;  
And one was nearly blind the remainder of his life.  
My mother came into that porch,  
And little sister standing by, said, "Oh! Ma,  
Do not those men know that God can see?"  
But ah! They were blinded by alcohol,  
And little knew, but just to fight.  
How bitterly by Satan led, his weapon firey alcohol.

[28, Chapter XI, *Incidents of Frontier Life*  
by Mary (Lois Lovina) Abbott Murray, 1880]

### Left To Her Fate

Into a store I went, there is a woman sat already drunk.  
And still for whiskey begged:  
"Oh let me have just one glass more."  
No wonder that a child  
A sight so dismal would remember  
But that was not the last, of that woman to be told;  
For once she took her little babe,  
And horse-back went to town;  
The father sought the babe, and found it by the road—  
The horse was feeding near;  
The drunken mother, partly in a mud-pond lay!  
The father took the babe,  
And left the drunken woman to her fate.

[29, Chapter XII, *Incidents of Frontier Life*  
by Mary (Lois Lovina) Abbott Murray, 1880]

**Tony and Pat Stoneburner's new address:**

Covenant Village C-516  
5800 St. Croix Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55422

*(Readers Comments continues)*

## TAKE A LOOK BACK

"*So You Think It's Cold?*"

The Lancaster Road (Main Street )  
Granville in 1905



*From Our Readers*  
(Continued)

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From Gloria Hoover, also on "The Stills of Granville"  
summer issue:

"The Summer issue brought to mind several personal memories relating to Granville's wet/dry status for almost 100 years.

"Thirty years ago when writing business features for *the Granville Booster*, the original paper founded by Clark and Marguerite Snyder, an interview with Sallie Jones Sexton included the subject of liquor. As owner of the Granville Inn, she told me being unable to serve alcohol, always came as a surprise to out-of-town diners who were accustomed to having wine, or other beverage.

"During our talk she took me on a tour of the Inn including the basement. There were refrigerated cases filled with alcoholic beverages. None belonged to the Inn. Sallie explained that all containers were privately owned mostly by businesses. Each container was labeled with a name. She could serve it to the owners, but could not charge. A note about the basement: My comment about the ultra cleanliness of the place brought a remark from Sallie who said: 'I clean it myself!'"

"The alcohol subject was mentioned during an interview with Aileen Dunkin, a well-known Granville gift shop owner in past years. She said smiling: "Granville is known as the place where people vote the driest and drink the wettest!"

"This reminds me of what a long-time resident told me: "When archaeologists dig up Granville's backyards some-day, they will wonder about all the empty liquor bottles." She explained that during Granville's dry years and before commercial refuge trucks, and no plastic bags, an empty whiskey bottle was a problem for residents. It was a time when residents had a trash barrel in the backyard. The same person came weekly, picked up the barrel and dumped it into his small truck. So my friend said that the secret drinkers in the village just buried their bottles!"

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**Ann Hansen brings information from her research elaborating the various kinds of drink and the respective prices available during the early whiskey days in Granville:**

"Serenio Wright wrote on October 31, 1825 to Hosea Cooley, who was at that time on a visit to East Granville, Massachusetts, describing the price of various goods—and whiskey was twenty-five cents per gallon.

"The mention of 'flip' is in various account books. From Timothy Rose's Account book: December 8, 1806: "paid to Joseph Loveland for two gallons of Cherry Bounce, which we had of Lieut. Spelman." Sept 22, 1806: Josiah Topping Account: many entries for gin, whiskey, half-pint bounce, mugs of flip and honey sling." Timothy Rose also sold opium.

"Flip is a spiced, sweetened drink of ale or beer to which sometimes a beaten egg is added. From what I gather, it is roughly the same as caudle or posset, except that one or the other of those usually contains gruel and curdled mild."

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**And from Bob Shannon on the Fall 2002 Issue on the Forward Pass strategy and the claim that the historical credit belongs to Denison's George Roudebush and not Notre Dame's Knute Rockne and Gus Dorais.**

"Having read the earlier drafts several times, I have relived many of the interesting conversations that I had with Livy, George Roudebush, Dave Reese and Dutch Thiele. It goes without saying that Keith Piper would be happy with this professional contribution."

### *The Historical Times*

is proud to be in its 17th year  
of publication.

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