

02/19/2022

Hi everyone,

As many of you know, Michigan celebrated its 185th anniversary of statehood last month. You might be surprised to know that the Warner farm began even before Michigan became a state. The first parcels of land that started the Warner farm were purchased on November 29, 1836 through government land patents by Hiram H. Warner. The land patents indicate that Hiram was a resident of Shiawassee County at the time, but the exact location of where he lived there is unknown. Hiram bought three 40 acre parcels in sections 10, 11, and 14 of township 2N R6E (later Brighton Township) for \$50 each. Of particular interest is that Hiram was able to use cash after President Andrew Jackson had issued the Specie Circular. This executive order, dated July 11, 1836, dictated that only the use of specie (gold & silver coin) would be accepted to purchase government land. Hiram, however, was able to take advantage of a loophole that allowed for the use of cash (likely of dubious value) to purchase the land months after the order was issued. The Specie Circular allowed "bona fide" residents of the state where they purchased land to use paper money until December 15th, a deadline barely two weeks after his purchase. The actual value of the paper money was likely a fraction of its face value. The 1880 *History of Livingston County* indicates that Hiram H. was a brother of Timothy Warner. In 1857, Timothy acquired the property in section 11 through a quit claim deed from L. K. Hewett, a land speculator that had purchased tax liens on the property.

Many are aware of recent attempts to submit an alternate slate of electors from several contested states in the last presidential election. Pundits, government officials, and others have categorized this situation as unprecedented. While this is likely true for presidential elections, however, a similar case transpired in a local election held in Brighton/Green Oak Township in 1836. A somewhat bizarre situation of electing two sets of township officials in Brighton/Green Oak Township occurred when Michigan was still a territory. The political discord stemmed from a disagreement regarding which voting rules to follow during the period when Michigan was attempting to transition from a territory to a state. At the time, Brighton Township was still part of Green Oak Township. The following excerpt from the 1880 *History of Livingston County* provides a detailed description surrounding the event:

"At the annual township election in 1836 the Territorial and State parties came into conflict on the question of jurisdiction. The Territorial law required a year's residence in the county and the payment of a tax before voting, and the State law required but six months' residence. The majority of the Board were Territorial men, and a man who lacked but a month of being a year in the county was deprived of the franchise. The Supervisor withdrew from the Board, and issued a proclamation in accordance with the State law, and organizing a Board proceeded to a barn and opened the polls (the election being held at the house of John W. Peavy), the State party, or 'barn party' as it was called by some, casting two-thirds of the township votes. In consequence of this, the township was provided with two sets of officers, both striving to do their duty, making out two sets of assessment rolls and other papers necessary for the proper execution of the law. At the special election, held September 12th, to elect delegates to the convention to meet at Ann Arbor to accept or reject the terms of Congress for the admission of Michigan into the Union, Green Oak held elections in two places and sent up two canvassers and two poll-lists. William C. Rumsey represented the State party, and Isaac C. Smith the Territorial. As county officers elected under the Territorial law could not legally canvass votes for State officers, their returns were rejected. A suit in replevin for the books and papers belonging to the town had been previously brought and adjourned for three months, the extent of the law. The trial was to

occur the next day. Meanwhile an amicable arrangement was effected; the contest was abandoned, all parties shaking hands, believing that each had acted in good faith. A harmonious general election occurred in the township in the following November." (Ellis 1880:326)

The Warner Pioneer Homestead is fortunate to curate a number of original family items. One of the items in this collection is now 200 years old. It is a leather bound book, entitled *The Grecian History from the Earliest State to the Death of Alexander the Great*. It was written by Dr. Goldsmith and printed in 1822 (several excerpts are attached below). Despite two centuries in age, the book is not a first edition for the title. The first printing debuted in London in 1774, however, this particular copy was printed and published nearly 50 years later in Philadelphia by Abraham Small. Several leaves have been found pressed between the pages. The book also contains evidence that it was a Warner family item from the 19th century with several pages used to practice the alphabet in pen and iron ink. In addition, the name of Lovisa Warner is written a number of times on several pages. Lovisa was the daughter of Timothy and Lucretia Warner, born in 1854 before the Greek Revival home was built. Given the publishing date of 1822, the book could have also been used by either of Lovisa's parents while living in New York.

Public outreach featuring archaeological & historical research at the site has continued to be a mainstay of the Warner Pioneer Homestead. Archaeology Day was held in October last year and due to covid concerns the event was held entirely outside for the first time. Displays from a number of sites and interested parties were set up in the parking lot in a large square that allowed for social distancing. Despite the chilly temperature, quite a number of attendees participated. As usual, we had a number of artifacts from the Warner site and Hicks school site on display. We enjoyed talking with other researchers and members of the public with interesting finds. This is the 10th year we have participated in the annual event. Special thanks to Stacy Tchorzynski and other members of SHPO for making this event possible. Also in October, a presentation was given virtually to the Huron Valley chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society, entitled "Piecing it Together: Making sense of 19th century ceramics". The talk featured artifacts recovered from the Warner site as well as samples from the modest but growing comparative collection to provide methods for analyzing and dating ceramics while also providing a number of "exceptions" to accepted categories.

Work on the book of the Warner family history has progressed during the winter months. Six chapters with illustrations are now complete filling out a total of 138 pages. These chapters cover the process of selecting land in MI, difficulties in travel, establishing a farm, the development of the township and Village of Brighton, and financial challenges in addition to providing background of the family. The book draws on the experiences of other pioneers from a variety of early sources to provide a more detailed account on the types of challenges encountered by Michigan pioneers. Chapter seven is currently in progress and will end at the year 1900.

Thanks goes out to my uncle, Chuck Warner, for the donation of a very nice display case. The glass case with mirrored bottom is a perfect fit for the "Turning the Soil" statue at the farm that depicts a man plowing with a two horse team. Thanks again, it is much appreciated!

Tim

THE
GRECIAN HISTORY,

FROM
THE EARLIEST STATE,
TO THE
DEATH OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

BY DR. GOLDSMITH.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

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Louisa Warner

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