

# AMBERLEY VILLAGE



*Its History and Its People*

THE VILLAGE OF  
AMBERLEY VILLAGE

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“Herbert French envisioned that Amberley Village would be like Amberley, England, a beautiful countryside place in which to live. You could hear birds singing....He loved that English countryside. So when they gave him the honor of naming the village, he said, ‘This is like this beautiful village we go to visit named Amberley, in England.’ That’s how Amberley was named.”

—Chase M. Davies, former Hamilton County Judge



“I think the thing I most liked about living there was being against Rollman’s Farm. As a kid I loved to wander through fields and scrounge through creeks looking for fossils. And there were a couple of nice creeks back there with fossils. I didn’t know what the fossils were. I do now, but I didn’t then. It was the kind of place I really enjoyed being alone in for hours at a time, just doing my own thing, whatever it was. And that was a place where I could. I’ve never lived in another place where I could do that, really. And so it was pretty nice.”

—John Watts, former Amberley resident



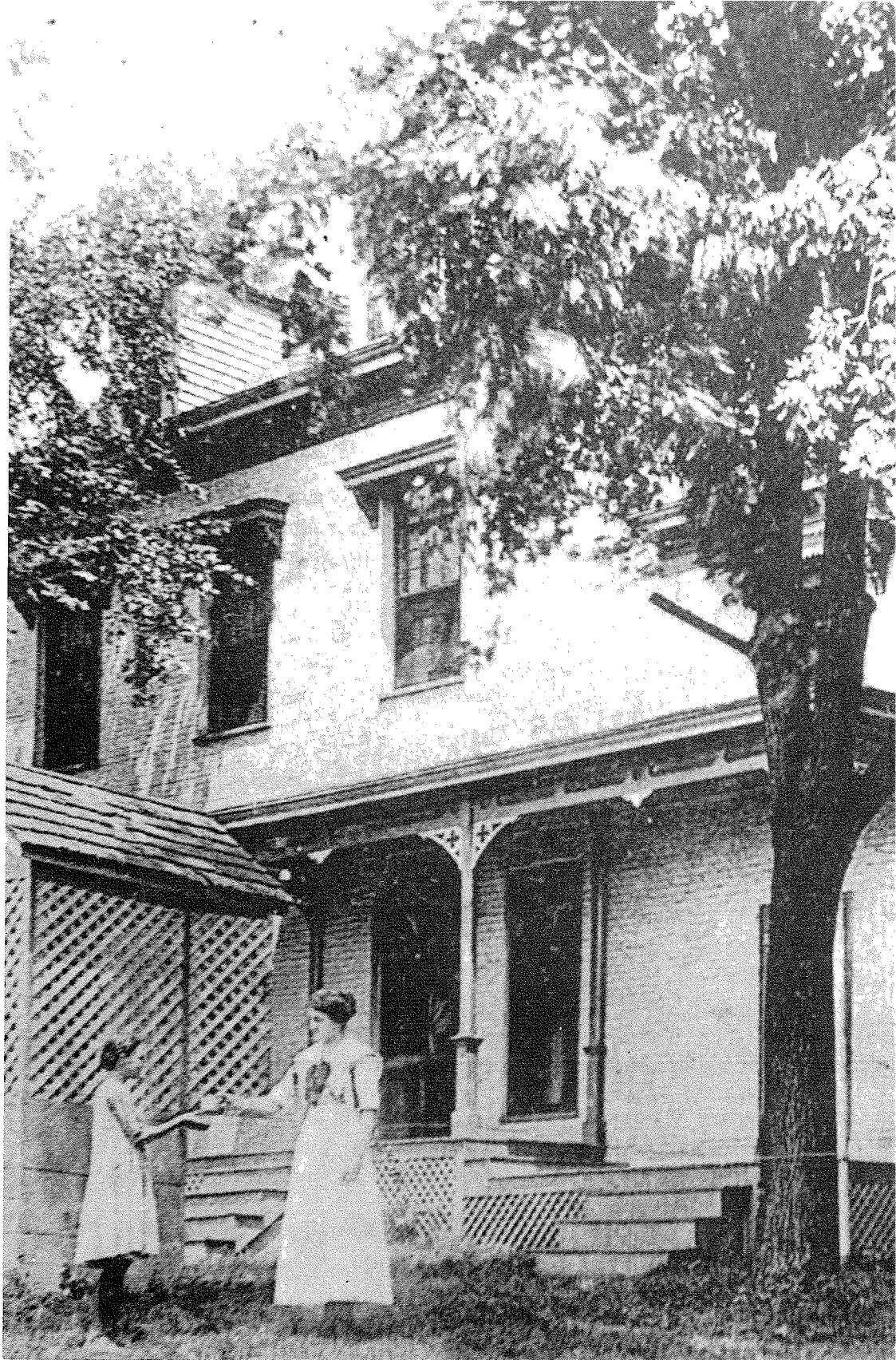
“There’s a certain place beyond the bridge that is always flowing, and there are always fish down there. Sometimes in dry weather, a snapping turtle still wanders through the Glen looking for water. It contributes to the rural atmosphere. And we have lots of birds and wildlife; little red foxes still run around, even now.”

—Ruth Klein, poet, Amberley resident



“The best thing about Amberley was services — police, fire, the whole bit of community services, such as service roads and responsiveness of community people to citizens. If a citizen says something to you, you don’t say, ‘Oh, I’ll refer you to the director of this or that.’ You aren’t big enough to say that; you have to respond directly. The people in Amberley have always responded to the fact that they have good services, good housing, and secure neighborhoods. It wasn’t that you were living in a big city; you were in a community.”

—John Muething, former Mayor



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## FOREWORD

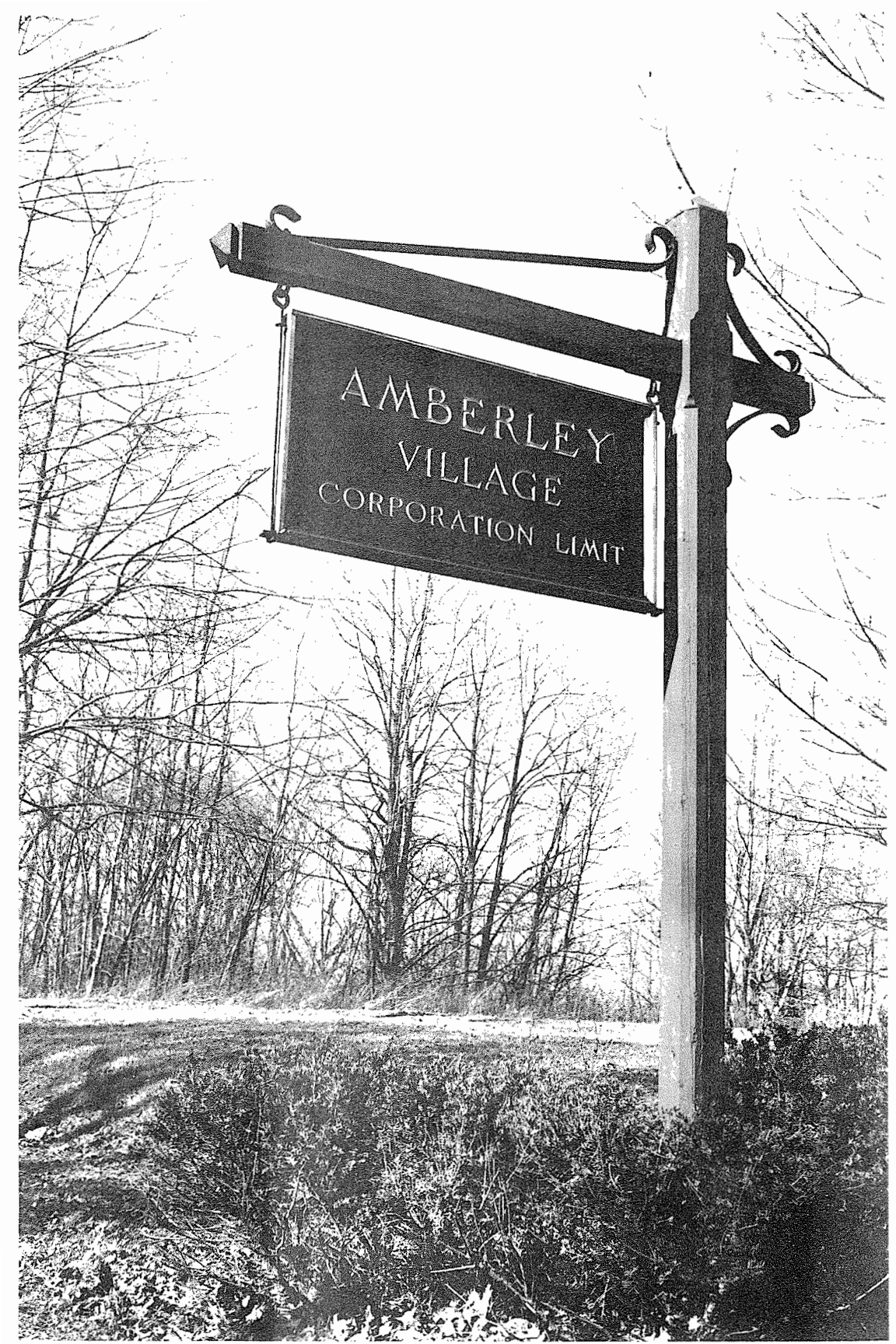
This book is for the residents of Amberley Village.

When the idea for a fiftieth anniversary book was originally conceived, the intent was to record a history of the residents of the Village who were here at its beginning and to bring the twenty-five year anniversary booklet up to date. As work on the book progressed, however, a rich history of Amberley Village was discovered; it dates back to Edmund Buxton, who was one of the original settlers of Columbia Landing. More data became available, and the format was enlarged. Through the technique of oral history, as well as documented research, we trust that we have presented the complete and fascinating story of Amberley Village.

Council is most grateful to all who have participated in the creation of this book. Many professionals and volunteers gave of their time. Thanks to F&W Publications, Inc., and particularly Michael Hoover for his patience, guidance, direction, and professional assistance;...to Priscilla Petty, whose hours of interviewing, research and compiling led to the discovery of the expansiveness of our history;...to John Watts for his tireless efforts, countless hours of time, seeking, recording, checking, and rechecking details, and finally writing the narrative summaries;...to Joan Bloss for her patience, interest, direction, and attention to detail;... We also extend thanks to Beth Franks for adding structure and comprehensiveness to the manuscript, as well as for placing suitable photographs throughout;...to Clare Finney for designing the book's cover and interior;...to Marianne Pressman and Barbara Steinberg for their untiring work on the Book Committee. Thanks to John Watts, Procter & Gamble, Gibson Greetings, and several Amberley residents, who supplied photographs. Thanks to all the interviewees for their insightful recollections of the past and present.

This work has become a labor of love and enjoyment. As you read, we sincerely hope you will discover new and interesting facts and will take pride in the Village in which you reside. We do not know how history will change in the future, but we do know that Amberley will always be a wonderful place to live.

—Richard S. Kerstine, M.D.  
Chairman,  
Book Committee



AMBERLEY  
VILLAGE  
CORPORATION LIMIT

## P R E F A C E

For at least five years prior to April 5, 1940, when Amberley became a village, some of the people who lived in the area that is included in Amberley Village realized it would be necessary to incorporate that area as a municipal corporation in order to provide them with local autonomy, to establish fire and police departments, and to provide educational and other governmental facilities.

The law of Ohio provided that municipal corporations that at the last federal census had a population of five thousand or more, are cities. All other municipal corporations are villages. In 1940, 606 people resided in Amberley, Ohio, whereas today, it is estimated that 3,000 people live there. In 1940, the tax duplicate amounted to \$1,850,000. Today's duplicate amounts to \$52,000,000.

Herbert G. French, who was Vice-President of the Procter & Gamble Company, donated the land upon which the administration building is located, and to him was extended the honor of selecting the name of the village. Mr. French had visited England and traveled through the English countryside on many occasions. He envisioned the new village as having the characteristics of an English countryside community, and he selected the name of an English town, Amberley, as the name of the new village in Hamilton County, Ohio.

Amberley, England, in 1940, was a small village on the top of the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire, with a population of about one thousand. It lies some 550 feet above sea level on the side of a large, open common, of some 600 acres, with old-fashioned, stone, gabled cottages so characteristic of the area, many of them roofed with stone tiles. There was no industry in the village.

Very much work was done by the members of the Committee of Concerned Citizens in obtaining the necessary information required for

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*Judge Chase Mason Davies was Chairman of the Republican Party and a member and president of the Cincinnati Board of Education. He was Judge of the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas for six years and Judge of Hamilton County Probate Court for thirty-two years. He was also a member of the law firm Davies, Hoover, and Bell.*

*Judge Davies' connection with Amberley Village's beginnings has made him an integral part of the Village's history. Every Mayor has been sworn in with ceremony and dignity by Judge Davies, whose speaking skills make each event seem very important indeed.*

the complex judicial proceeding involved in the creation of a new village.

Herbert French was a very kind and generous person who, actively and financially, supported many educational, musical, and other civic and philanthropic organizations. His beautiful home was built on a high point overlooking the creek that flows through his property. He loved animals and built a dog cemetery on the bank of the creek.

French willed his home and all of his grounds to the City of Cincinnati for park purposes. These grounds, now known as French Park, constitute the second-largest park in the Cincinnati Park system. (Mt. Airy Forest is the largest.)

Roy G. Elliott is another important name to remember in the history of the creation and organization of the Village. Amberley's first Mayor, Elliott lived on Ridge Road in Amberley. He was president of Gibson Greetings, Inc., the card company, located on Section Road in Amberley. A friendly man and a good neighbor, he was active in civic affairs. He raised prize horses, which he entered in competitions. No person put in more time and hard work in creating Amberley.

My long-time friends, Justin and Josephine Rollman, were residents of the Amberley area before and after the Village's incorporation. The Rollmans lived on a beautiful, 200-acre farm known as Rollridge Farm, which fronts on the east side of Ridge Road.

Justin Rollman was the first person who spoke to me about the urgency of creating a municipal corporation for the Amberley area. He was a member of the Committee of Concerned Citizens.

Charles Bird, another member of the Committee, served, without compensation, as the first Chief of Amberley's Police-and-Fire Department. Bird, along with Roy Elliott, was absolutely a leader in Amberley.

Roland Rodgers, the first Clerk of Amberley, operated the Rodgers Fruit Farm at Ridge and Galbraith Roads, where the Adath Israel Synagogue is now located.

Delaney Martin operated the Aracoma Horse Farm on a large tract of land on the north side of Section Road—west of Ridge Road—where he maintained riding stables, an oval track, and riding trails in the wooded part of the farm. Riding lessons were available. The farm was subdivided for residential purposes, and three of the streets are named Aracoma Avenue, West Aracoma Avenue, and East Aracoma Avenue.

Now why is Amberley not like other communities? Why is it a countryside? That's how Herbert French envisioned it. And one of the first things the people did was to maintain it like that.

—Chase M. Davies



*A*MBERLEY  
HISTORY

# EARLY HISTORY OF THE LAND



The history of Amberley Village's land is the history of all American land. It belonged to someone else, but was "discovered." A treaty between England and France in 1763 recognized England's claim to all land between the Ohio River and the Great Lakes.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, the treaty did not recognize the interests of the Delawares, Iroquois, Miamis, Mingoes, Senecas, Shawnees, or any other indigenous peoples who passed through, hunted, or lived in the area. This small detail was responsible for so many killings between Indians and the hunters, trappers, and settlers, that the land between the Miami rivers, north of the Ohio River, was referred to as the "Miami Slaughterhouse."<sup>2</sup> Slaughter continued until the Indians were soundly defeated by the troops of General "Mad" Anthony Wayne thirty-one years later, in 1794.<sup>3</sup>

Interest in this territory predates the 1763 treaty by a dozen years, when a surveyor from Virginia, Christopher Gist, performed the earliest known survey.<sup>4</sup> Gist was hired by the Ohio Company, the principals of which were land speculators John Hanbury, a wealthy London merchant; Thomas Lee, president of the Council of Virginia; and two of George Washington's older brothers, Lawrence and Augustine.<sup>5</sup> Gist walked in from Virginia, leaving there in late October, and worked his way west by a circuitous route. He arrived at the Miami Indian Village of Twigtrees, now Piqua, in February 1751. Gist explored the area south of present-day Dayton to the Ohio River, between the Great Miami and Little Miami rivers. Christopher Gist predated Daniel and his brother, Squire Boone, by nineteen years. A report of Gist's exploration, published in London in 1755 and in Philadelphia in 1756, created a desire among colonists and emigrants to settle the area.<sup>6</sup>

No known record exists of settlements here before the Revolution-

ary War. During the war, the British armed, trained, and incited local Indian inhabitants to kill any and all settlers and explorers. Thus, it was far too dangerous to settle, and that did not change significantly until the Wayne victory at Fallen Timbers in 1794.<sup>7</sup>

In 1786, a Boston company, composed primarily of Revolutionary War soldiers and led by Generals Putnam and Parsons, along with the Reverend Dr. Cutter,<sup>8</sup> moved west and south along the Monongahela and Ohio rivers; they established the first permanent settlement in Ohio at the mouth of the Muskingum River, 298 miles up the Ohio River from Cincinnati, near where Marietta is today. In the same year, Captain Benjamin Stites of Red Stone, Pennsylvania, traveled the same route with provisions for those settlers. Stites was chasing Indians who had stolen some Kentucky settlers' horses. When he entered the area, he made note of both the natural beauty and the fertility of local soil, especially in the valleys of the Miami rivers. Stites was so entranced with the area that he returned to the East, determined somehow to purchase some of the land he had seen. Traveling to New York, where Congress was meeting, he met John Cleves Symmes, a New Jersey judge who was beginning to speculate in frontier land. Judge Symmes advised Stites not to do anything until he, Symmes, could verify the quality of the land.<sup>9</sup> So, early in 1787, Symmes traveled west to the area. He was delighted with what "he had found" and immediately upon returning to New York applied in his own name to purchase two million acres between the two Miami rivers. Symmes actually had to wait several months to buy the land until Congress had drawn up the ordinance making laws for the Northwest Territory.<sup>10</sup> He was granted a contract for 1 million acres which, because of sloppy surveying, actually contained less than 600,000 acres. Of this tract he sold 20,000 acres to Stites, who did not pay for it until February 8, 1793.<sup>11</sup>

### THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS

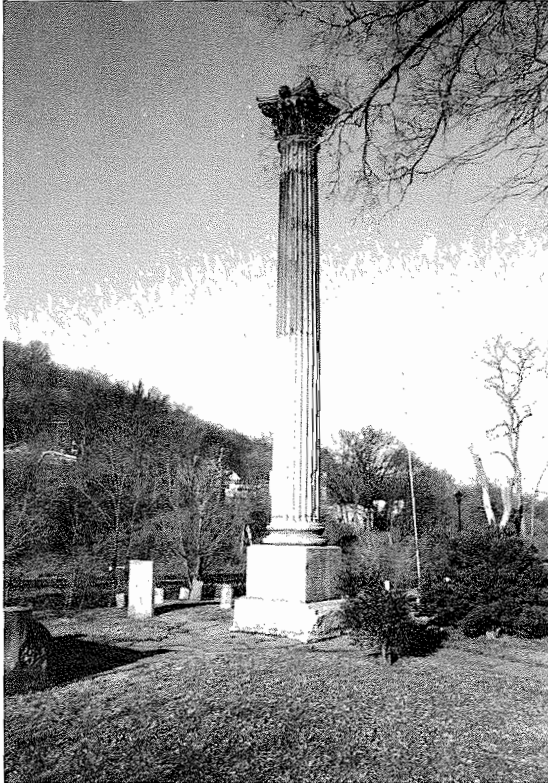
Captain Stites' stories of the area attracted others, and in very short order he had formed a party of twenty-six persons to settle the new land. Among the twenty-six was Edmund Buxton, age twenty, from New York. Buxton is believed to be the first settler in what is now the Village of Amberley.<sup>12</sup> Leaving civilization behind, this hardy band arrived in Limestone, Kentucky (Maysville), about seventy miles up-river from Cincinnati, in July 1788. There they drew up an article of agreement for the party and did some roof prefabrication for their soon-to-be-built cabins. Several months later, on October 15, 1788,<sup>13</sup> Congress granted Symmes his charter to develop the tract of land referred to as the Miami Purchase. The group then proceeded down-river for three days in their

flatboats, landing on the west shore of the Little Miami estuary—near present-day Lunken Airport—on November 18, 1788. This was just forty days before the landing at Losantiville, which was to become Cincinnati. Thus began the settlement named Columbia, the first settlement in the area. Here they established a picket line with sentinels to provide security from Indians while constructing a blockhouse, which was completed in a week. The women and children immediately moved in.<sup>14</sup>

In January 1788, a few months before the settlement of Columbia, Mathias Denman of Essex County, New Jersey, purchased land from Judge Symmes on the north side of the Ohio River, across from the mouth of the Licking River,<sup>15</sup> on which he proposed to lay out a town and establish a ferry across the Ohio River. The land was actually purchased by Israel Ludlow on behalf of Denman and two other subscribers, John Filson and Col. Robert Patterson.<sup>16</sup> It was Filson who devised the name for this new town, *Losantiville*—a complicated word made up of Greek, Latin, and French words and meaning “land opposite the mouth of the river.” His *Losantiville* was accepted by the others and was used until the name was changed to Cincinnati, in honor of the Society of the Cincinnati, by General Arthur St. Clair, on January 2, 1790.<sup>17</sup> Filson disappeared and was never heard of again, victim perhaps of Indians or of drowning. Ludlow and Patterson and their party, which totaled twenty-three men, landed at the foot of Sycamore Street in a small cove—now named Yeatman’s Cove because Yeatman’s tavern was later situated there—on December 28, 1788.<sup>18</sup> Thus began the great and beautiful city of Cincinnati, the “Paris of America,” the “Queen City of the West.”

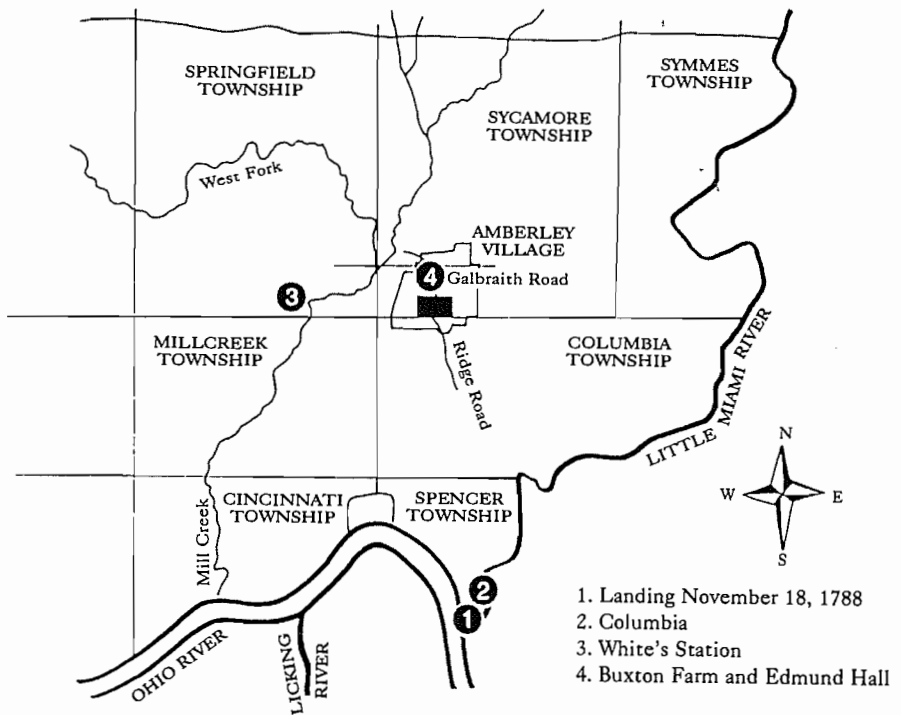
Judge Symmes paid a visit to the area, stopping at Columbia on January 31, 1789, and found it almost totally inundated by the waters of the Ohio. He moved downstream to Losantiville, which was also suffering from the high water. His group of settlers continued down-river and established a new settlement, North Bend, on February 2, 1789, at the Great Miami’s estuary on the east shore. Flooding and sometimes-hostile Indians concerned local residents, especially at Columbia, which had become a regular encampment for small, straggling bands of Indians from local tribes.

Tension between the Indians and settlers increased as atrocities on both sides persisted. The Indians began to recognize that with the construction of every new cabin and blockhouse, they were less and less likely ever to regain control of their land. Organized attempts to dislodge the white settlers began with the settlers’ defending “their” territory and sending expeditionary forces against the Indian tribes. Two of those expeditions were soundly defeated: General Josiah



Columbia was the first settlement in the land of the Symmes Purchase. This memorial stands next to the Pioneer Cemetery, located just west of present-day Lunken Airport.

The Pioneer monument in the Pioneer Cemetery. This column is supposed to have been part of the original Cincinnati Post Office.



Map of southeastern Hamilton County showing locations of initial landing at Columbia on November 18, 1788; settlements at Columbia and White's Station; Edmund Buxton's farm; Edmund Hall; and today's Village of Amberley.

today's Hartwell. They called their settlement White's Station, which meant it was a fortified community, though apparently the fortifications were minimal and largely indefensible. Only White's cabin was fortified, and only Gobel and Flinn lived nearby. The other cabins were actually built on the opposite side of the Mill Creek, nearly 100 yards distant. Prior's brother, Moses, and John Reily, were more than a quarter of a mile away to the south. At the time Jacob White moved his group into the wilderness, Indians were wreaking havoc throughout the Northwest Territory, and both Generals Harmar and St. Clair<sup>26</sup> were defeated by them in battle.

Moses Prior and David Flinn had established a modest business hauling supplies from Fort Washington to Fort Hamilton for the army. The same year that White's Station was established, 1792, one of Prior and Flinn's supply parties was attacked just south of Fort Hamilton on Pleasant Run. Moses Prior was killed. That drove Reily to sell his land and move his family back to Columbia. Mrs. Prior and her three children moved in with Andrew Prior, Jr., her brother-in-law, at White's Station. On October 18, 1793, while the Wallace family was away visiting in Cincinnati, White's Station was attacked by an estimated forty to fifty Indians. Andrew Gobel went to see why the dogs were

barking and was immediately killed. One of the Moses Prior children was playing in the Mill Creek when Indians fired at her. She ran for the house and was shot dead. Mrs. Prior ran out, and scooping up the dead child, ran back to her cabin. She snatched up a sick son, leaving behind the dead child and an infant in its cradle. She ran to the station, thinking that the Indians would spare the infant. Later, after the attack, the infant's lifeless body was found near the cabin's door.<sup>27</sup> In less than a year, Lydia Littell Prior had lost her husband and two of her three children to Indian raids. Such was life in the early 1790s in the Miami Purchase.

A description by William D. Ludlow of precautions taken to prevent Indian depredations follows. Ludlow was the son of sheriff John Ludlow, who arrived in Columbia in November 1789, when William was about ten years old. He wrote this account of his early life when he was about seventy:

When there was service in the village church I went with my parents. Every man was obliged to have his gun by his side. At White's Station in upper Carthage, few persons of today (1850s) can form any just conception of our constant apprehension, our constant sense of danger in those days. My father made it a rule for each of his men to have his rifle loaded and in hand on going out in the morning, and the supply of ammunition was to be constantly attended to. The plowman carried his gun on his back, the man with the hoe placed his gun from time to time against the tree ahead, and when engaged in rolling or raising logs, sentinels were placed in the outskirts to prevent surprises.<sup>28</sup>

For reasons not recorded, the Buxtons—Edmund, Lydia, son Dorcus, who may have died in Columbia, and son Charles Henry—moved to White's Station soon after the Indian attack there that killed Gobel and the two Prior children. Indian attacks were still common. On April 25, 1794, Indians attacked four men on horseback below White's Station, killing two of the men and stealing the horses. Later, on May 13, 1794, Major William Winston and military escort were attacked between White's Station and Fort Hamilton. Eight soldiers died in that attack.<sup>29</sup>

It appears that Amberly's Edmund Buxton and his family were at White's Station during these incidents. Family history says that during one continuous ambush around the settlement, Buxton volunteered to escape and bring back help and provisions.<sup>30</sup> But by the time he returned, the Indians had evacuated the area.

A third expeditionary force, under the command of General "Mad"

Anthony Wayne, was being raised, trained, and equipped in 1793, and eventually marched north along the Mill Creek, undoubtedly stopping at White's Station along the way. They met the combined forces of the warring Indian nations and defeated them in the Battle of Fallen Timbers, near today's Toledo,<sup>31</sup> on August 20, 1794.<sup>32</sup> Following the Battle of Fallen Timbers, Indian raids diminished in numbers, but were still an ever-present fact of frontier life. However, a year later, the somewhat unified Indian command met with General Wayne and signed the Treaty of Greenville—or *Green Ville*, as it is listed in early references—on August 3, 1795. The treaty acknowledged the ownership of the United States government of the northeastern part and southern half of Ohio.<sup>33</sup> After this surrender, Indian hostilities really ceased.<sup>34</sup> By 1804, Fort Washington was dismantled and reconstructed in Newport, Kentucky, and five years later it was torn down.<sup>35</sup>

### THE BUXTON FAMILY

While living at White's Station, Edmund Buxton bargained with Symmes for a half section (320 acres) of land about two miles east of White's Station. The southern border of the property ran for one mile along what is now Section Road and ran north for one-half mile. Today's Ridge Road passes nearby through the middle of the original property. Edmund's family stayed at White's Station while he trekked back and forth each day, clearing some of his land. The two-mile trip would have taken one to one-and-one-half hours each way on foot. Buxton constructed a log cabin there, and along with his new son David, who had been born at White's Station on February 28, 1795, the family moved to their farm, located in what was Pleasant Ridge, now the Village of Amberley. Edmund Buxton must have done well, because he received the deed to his property, signed by John Cleves Symmes, on April 13, 1797.<sup>36</sup> The purchase price was \$1 per acre, or a total cost of \$320 cash—not an insignificant sum in 1797.<sup>37</sup> Edmund's purchase was made six years before Ohio was admitted to the United States as the seventeenth state on March 1, 1803, and just after John Adams assumed office as the second president of the United States. The entirety of this 320 acres remained under the ownership of Edmund and Lydia Buxton's direct descendants until 1911, when Herbert French purchased 25 acres.

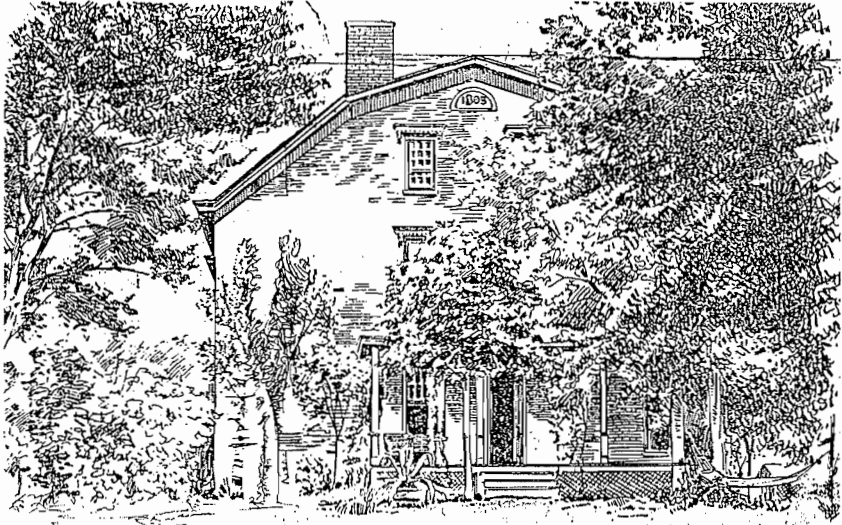
After he built his log cabin and his family had moved in, Buxton is reported to have purchased seed in Kentucky and planted, grown, and harvested the first wheat in the territory on his farm. With his fruit seeds from New York, he established an orchard, perhaps apple, one of the earliest of the area.<sup>38</sup> His farm was producing well, and so this

independent fellow decided to build for his family an ambitious home, one of brick. With the births of Anna on July 10, 1796; Moses on July 10, 1798; Jane on December 16, 1799; Enoch on August 1, 1801; John on October 24, 1802; and Aaron on March 13, 1804, the log cabin must have been bursting at the seams.<sup>39</sup>

Sometime after 1797, with help from Lydia, and no doubt also from Charles Henry, the eldest son, Edmund began to construct his house. Digging and firing clay for bricks and hewing and dressing timbers, all from their own property, must not have constituted too difficult a challenge.<sup>40</sup> We know he hired masons to lay up the three-foot-thick walls.<sup>41</sup> (Reports say three feet, but excavation by this writer of the foundation in 1989 revealed that the walls were two feet thick.) Edmund is supposed to have placed a huge bottle—reportedly two gallons—of peach brandy within the walls somewhere, completely bricked in, saying, “I don’t intend that these walls shall ever be torn down, but if they are, the wretches will find this is good stuff, and the fact that this



The remains of one of the two springs that used to flow near Edmund Hall. The Buxtons used it as a source of water.



THE BUXTON HOMESTEAD.

This etching of the Buxton Homestead (Edmund Hall) appeared in the *Commercial Tribune* on September 4, 1897. Note 1805 in upper wall at roof peak.

bottle is here will make them do the work with proper respect, 'til they get down here, at any rate."<sup>42</sup>

As the first floor of the house neared completion, Lydia gave birth to a son, William McVey, on March 10, 1806. At around that time, Edmund Buxton contracted pneumonia, from which he would never recover. Only four months and ten days after his youngest son was born, Edmund died; it was July 20, 1806, and he was thirty-eight.

Edmund had apparently not completed the house at the time of his death.<sup>43</sup> It was finished by his wife, Lydia, and their eldest son, Charles.<sup>44</sup> They named the building "Edmund Hall," a name the house retained into the twentieth century. Lydia and the eight surviving Buxton children—Dorcus and Enoch both died young—lived in Edmund Hall.

Lydia Buxton's father, David Flinn, purchased from John Cleves Symmes in June, 1795, 140 acres of land almost two years before Edmund took title to his land<sup>45</sup> (which could have been because Flinn had money and Buxton didn't). The Flinn property was just south of today's southern border of the Village of Amberley. The center of the Flinn property was about one mile from Edmund Hall. Since it is believed that Edmund selected his land in 1794 or 1795, it is possible that either Edmund's or David Flinn's actions influenced the other or that they sought to purchase property near each other.

Immediately west of David Flinn's property, also just south of today's Village of Amberley, an Andrew Pryer purchased 139 acres from

Symmes on April 4, 1807.<sup>46</sup> Whether this was the brother of David Flinn's deceased partner, Moses Prior, in the hauling business at White's Station, is not known, but Andrew immediately deeded 75 of the acres to a Moses Pryer,<sup>47</sup> who could have been Andrew's son, or the only child of Andrew's brother, Moses, who was not killed in the 1793 Indian raid at White's Station. The spelling in the deeds, PRYER, is different from the PRIOR found in most historic records, although some records spell the name PRYOR.

### SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET

The location of Edmund Buxton's grave remains shrouded in mystery. Family accounts usually state that he is buried in the Plainfield Cemetery in Sycamore Township. But a visit to that cemetery, located at the intersection of Plainfield and Cooper roads, indicates that although there are Buxtons buried there, Edmund is not among them. Mary Lou Rose, who is researching a book on the history of the community of Blue Ash, where the Plainfield Cemetery is located, says that the cemetery belonged to the Carpenter's Run Baptist Church, where Edmund was a member for a short time. Her research had not identified an Edmund Buxton among the burials of this cemetery or of another cemetery connected with this same church, located some distance away. The only other cemetery in existence in the area at the time of Edmund's death was the one at the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church. Terry Schwegman, who is in charge of their burial records, is certain that, even though there are a large number of Buxtons buried there, Edmund is not among them.

Edmund Buxton is probably buried somewhere on his farm, as was a common custom of the time. But there is another reason not to be surprised that Edmund does not appear in the local church cemeteries. Harold Buxton's *Information Concerning Early Buxtons*, unearthed at the Cincinnati Historical Society, holds the original records of the Carpenter's Run Baptist Church. Those records indicate that "Brother Buxton" was admitted to membership on April 20, 1799, by "recommendation" and that Lydia was baptized and joined on February 27, 1802. Then on October 2, 1802, Edmund was appointed to counsel with "Sister Mary Bowman," who was reprimanded about her reported "communing" with "churches not of our order," which was apparently somewhat scandalous behavior. Nine months later, Edmund was "solemnly excommunicated" for the "sin of adultery." The next day the church appointed "Brother Adam Lee" to contact "Sister Buxton" about a grievance laid by "Brother Abner Denman." Three months later "this matter," still unsettled, was postponed. Another month

passed and a group was appointed to seek a meeting with “Sister Buxton” for “reconciliation” with her church. Still another month passed with no meeting, and on December 28, 1803, with Lydia avoiding contact with the church committee, a vote was taken on whether to exclude her as well. She was not excluded. But on February 24, 1804, two months later, Sister Mary Bowman was excommunicated. On March 24, and again on April 28, 1804, attempts were made to reconcile Lydia, as the “grieved party,” into the church.

It appears that a strong case could be made that Edmund and Mary Bowman had an affair that was reported to the church by Abner Denman. The church throws Edmund out and either Lydia supports him and withdraws, or is too mortified to return under the circumstances. Repeated attempts are made to get Lydia to meet with church representatives and to return to the fold, all of which fail. Records are sparse, but it seems likely that Lydia never does return. Edmund dies in a couple of years, and Mary disappears. When Lydia reappears, it is at the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church, on the occasion of her marriage to John Shanklin in about 1817<sup>48</sup> and her burial there in 1836.

Lydia remained a widow for more than ten years after the death of Edmund in 1806, but she did remarry; her second husband was John Shanklin, who is listed as the first wagonmaker in Carthage in 1815. At that time Edward White—not to be confused with Jacob White of White’s Station—owned the northeastern part of Section 12 in Millcreek Township and decided to build a town. He sold 152 lots to fifty-eight different people, one of whom apparently was John Shanklin, the wagonmaker.<sup>49</sup> A John Shanklin listed on the Columbia Township Tax List in 1801 may or may not be the same John Shanklin. Family histories state that Lydia and John are both buried in the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Cemetery. However, it is unlikely that the John Shanklin buried in that cemetery was Lydia Buxton’s second husband unless the church’s grave registrations list is in error, since the records say the person buried there was born in 1806 and died in 1832 at the age of twenty-six, which would have made him eleven years old in 1817, when Lydia and John married, and she would have been about forty-three. This can’t be the same John Shanklin listed in the Carthage records, as he would have been only nine years old when listed as the first wagonmaker! Therefore, the John Shanklin buried at the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Cemetery is most likely Lydia’s husband’s son.

The 1820 Census for Hamilton County lists the ages, sex, and race of those persons living at the John Shanklin residence in Sycamore Township (Edmund Hall?). Those census records show that a young

male, who could not have been a Buxton, lived in the house and who would have been the age of the John Shanklin buried in the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Cemetery. The census records and the interpretation, in parentheses, are as follows:

- 1 free white male under 10 years  
(not Edmund's child; born after his death)
- 3 free white males between 10 and 16 years  
(William McVey Buxton, age 13 or 14)  
(Aaron Buxton, age 15 or 16)  
(not Edmund's child; probably John Shanklin, Jr.)
- 1 free white male between 16 and 18 years  
(John Buxton, age 17 or 18)



About eleven years after Edmund's death in 1806, his widow, Lydia, married John Shanklin. She died on June 16, 1836, at the age of sixty-two, and was buried in the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church cemetery.

- 1 free white male over 45 years  
(John Shanklin, Lydia's second husband, age unknown)
- 1 free white female between 10 and 16 years  
(not Edmund's child)
- 1 free white female between 16 and 20 years  
(not Edmund's child)
- 1 free white female over 45 years  
(Lydia Shanklin, age 46)

Two boys and two girls on this list could not have been children of Edmund Buxton, suggesting that John brought children into the marriage.

### THE BUXTON LAND

The first division of the original Edmund Buxton property occurred on October 7, 1825, when John and Lydia Shanklin deeded 120 acres on the east side of their property to "the heirs of Edmund Buxton."<sup>50</sup> The property going to Edmund's children at that time did not include Edmund Hall. Lydia died on June 16, 1836, at the age of sixty-two.<sup>51</sup> After her death, Edmund and Lydia Buxton's eldest son, Charles Henry Buxton, lived in Edmund Hall with his wife, Rebecca Ferguson Buxton, and their nine children. Charles Henry died on October 4, 1867, at age seventy-four, preceding Rebecca, who died on August 20, 1871. Edmund Buxton II, the eldest son of Charles and Rebecca, also lived in Edmund Hall with his wife, Eliza Cortelyou, and their six children. Edmund II died on February 7, 1891, following Eliza, who died on June 26, 1867. After the second Edmund's death in 1891, the house was purchased by Rebecca Buxton Thompson, the third child of Edmund II and Eliza, several years after the death of Rebecca's husband, Price Thompson. The Edmund Hall property had been reduced to sixty acres, on which she operated a prosperous dairy farm.<sup>52</sup> The other 240 acres of the original Edmund Buxton property had been divided, but were still owned by descendants of Edmund and Lydia.

On September 23, 1897, Rebecca, then age fifty-six, hosted the last reunion held in the house. Approximately 200 people, some four generations of Buxton's descendants, attended.<sup>53</sup>

Rebecca I. Thompson outlived her husband Price by forty-three years; she died in 1926. Well before her death, she built a house for herself across Ridge Road, leaving Edmund Hall for her son Victor Thompson, his wife, Ella, and their children. They were the last direct Buxton descendants to live in Edmund Hall. Janette Thompson Eiler, daughter of Victor and Ella Thompson, said that she and her siblings were born on the "Old Farm," the family name for Edmund Hall, and

stayed there even after the Edmund Hall property was sold to Herbert G. French. This was on December 23, 1922,<sup>54</sup> almost twelve years after Herbert French's first purchase of Buxton property on January 23, 1911. Between the time of the purchases of the first property and Edmund Hall, Herbert French also purchased the farms of Aaron and Frank P. Buxton.<sup>55</sup>

The sale of the twenty-five acres to Herbert French in 1911 was the beginning of the end of ownership of the Buxton property by direct descendants of Edmund and Lydia, and most of the property had been sold to nondescendants by 1930.

The last parcel to be sold out of the Buxton family was 4.9 acres immediately to the west of the Village Hall property and adjacent to Section Road. The parcel was sold in 1965 by Edmund R. Buxton and Charles H. Buxton to Al Kuhr and Sons,<sup>56</sup> who subdivided the land into four lots, each containing just over one acre. The first non-Buxtons to live on this property were Robert and Mary Ann Betagole, who moved into a new home on the lot closest to Section Road in 1970. Mary Ann Betagole, who had previously lived in Pleasant Ridge, remembers the old farmhouse with pillars and a big porch that had previously stood on the property. She said that, for several years after moving into the new home, they had to pull up volunteer vegetables, especially carrots, that grew up in the yard each spring.

Although the Thompsons, Buxton descendants, lived in Edmund Hall after it was purchased by Herbert French, it has been impossible to determine how long the Thompsons stayed. It is conceivable that they lived there until just a couple of years before French moved into his own home on the adjacent property to the south. French built onto one of the Buxton's simple farmhouses and transformed it into a house worthy of the property. It's said that the basement shows where additions have been made to the original house. French called all of the property Reachmont Farms.

Herbert French succeeded his father as treasurer of the Procter & Gamble Company in 1904 and became a vice-president of the Procter & Gamble Company in 1919, a position he held until his death at age 70 in 1942.<sup>57</sup> He was also a vice-president of the Board of the University of Cincinnati. Justin Rollman, an adjacent landowner, persuaded French to build a home on his new property in about 1928.<sup>58</sup> French landscaped heavily and maintained the southern half of what is now French Park as a private country estate.

At about this time, a close friend of French's, a prominent Cincinnati attorney and judge, Charles J. Hunt, while visiting French in his summer home on Little Deer Isle, Maine, fell from an unprotected

porch, fracturing his leg.<sup>59</sup> At a local hospital where he was recuperating, Hunt suffered a severe heart attack and died, at sixty-seven.<sup>60</sup> Herbert French gave the use of Edmund Hall to Judge Hunt's wife of thirty-six years, Jane Edwards Hunt. Records of a formal arrangement for widow Hunt to live in the house were not found. Perhaps there was no formal arrangement, because after French's death, Mrs. Hunt continued her residence in the house, by a verbal agreement with Cincinnati city officials, according to a *Cincinnati Post* article.<sup>61</sup> Absolutely no mention is made of either Mrs. Hunt or the Buxton house in Mr. French's will. Jane Hunt, according to county records, did not own the house, but she was perceived by local people as the owner. The house is pictured and identified as "The home of Mrs. Charles J. Hunt,"<sup>62</sup> and its significance as an Ohio Sesquicentennial Landmark is noted.<sup>63</sup> Mrs. Hunt was definitely living in the house in 1953, and she died on September 3, 1959.<sup>64</sup> Her obituary states that she lived in the house on the French estate and that she died in a "Worthington, Ohio, hospital after a long illness."<sup>65</sup> Amberley's former police chief, William J. Krueger, remembers the house and Mrs. Hunt, who was very elderly. Krueger says she had a great number of cats, twenty or thirty, which made a mess of the house. After her death in 1959, the cats were removed, but the house was in deplorable condition. According to Chief Krueger, the Park Board had the house torn down within a couple of years. A search of Park Board records has not revealed any data about the house or when it was demolished, but a date of about 1961 would fit the few pieces of information available.

Edmund Hall stood at the fork in a gravel road just north of and across Ridge Road from the Amberley City Hall. Today, this serves as the access road to the French Park Radio Tower Site and is off-limits to the general public. The tower transmits and receives radio messages for ten local police departments, including Amberley's.

Whether or not Edmund Hall was the oldest brick building in Hamilton County is open to speculation, but it was certainly one of the first, and it was definitely was the first "permanent" structure in what was to become the Village of Amberley. The history of a large part of Amberley's land, now used for the pleasure of its people in French Park, is wrapped up in the Buxton desire for their own farmland, wrested from the wilderness.

# THE BAXTER HOUSE

In 1797, James Baxter purchased approximately one fourth section of land (160 acres) from James Caldwell, who had bought the land earlier from John Cleves Symmes. Little has been found about either Baxter or Caldwell. Caldwell is identified as the owner of section 30 in Millcreek Township (just west of Amberley) in 1789, and a Major James Caldwell (the same man?) owned a house at White's Station in 1821. White's Station is in section 30 of Millcreek Township, so it fits.

Baxter left little to trace. By order of the Columbia Township trustees, he was responsible for the maintenance of roads within Road District #7. (The order is from April 1801. Road District #7 is not geographically identifiable any longer but appears to be included in this area of Columbia Township.) Ten years later he was elected Columbia Township Treasurer (1811-1818). Baxter is not listed on the voter role in 1798, but he does appear as a voter the following year (1799). His name also appears on the voter list of 1850, but it is likely that this would be a son or another James Baxter.

Reports contradict each other on the age of the house itself. A large 1800 is prominently displayed on the front of the house, located at 2930 Fair Acres Drive, just west of Ridge Road, south of Section Road. No one seems to know the origin of that date. There is no evidence whatsoever as to when the house was actually constructed. A report written about 1958 dates the house from 1807. One description says it was begun in 1797, and still another, in 1800.

Alverta Seybold and her husband Harvey, lived in the house nearly fifty years before selling it in 1987. Alverta states with authority that one important reason for the original Baxter purchase was the inclusion of many hardwood trees on the property. The floors of the house are reported to be 1 1/2-inch-thick ash, the door frames are all walnut, and the doors and cabinetry are all cherry, according to her. She notes further that the supporting basement beams are unhewn logs, many with the bark still on them. In an architectural report from the late fifties, the main house is described as Flemish bond (brick) on the front and sides. All original woodwork remains, including a lot of intricate hand carving. All cabinets, doors, and moldings are of solid cherry. Around 1850, a room was added to the east front (now a dining room). In about 1940, the

west side gained an addition (now bedrooms). The Seybolds built a back porch stretching the entire width of the original main house and a kitchen on the east rear in the late 1950s. The original front door was moved from the center of the main house, which was then bricked in to form a window, to the window located on the west (right), which was opened up to make a door.

There have obviously been some significant changes in the original Baxter House, but the basic structure and most of its parts were still intact when Mrs. Seybold sold it in 1987.



The Baxter House as it looked in 1950, when the Seybolds lived there.

Reports on when the house was built vary from 1797 to 1807, but 1800 is the date on the house itself.



# RECENT HISTORY OF AMBERLEY VILLAGE



What is now Amberley Village has been discovered many times, first by the Indians, then by the settlers and farmers, and finally, in the 1920s, by the affluent, who wanted to escape the city and return to the peace and tranquillity of the country.

A horseback ride helped bring Amberley Village into existence as a separate, named entity. In March 1927, Josephine Rollman and her husband, Justin, rode from their Avondale home through a beautiful piece of land just north of the city of Cincinnati. They fell in love with the land over which they rode, and determined to build a home in the area so they could take pleasure in the peace and rural atmosphere continually, not just on an occasional ride.

Recalled Mrs. Rollman in 1987, "We had barns and horses on our place on Redway Avenue, and Victory Parkway had a riding path where we used to meet a lot of people, like the Mashburns from Coca-Cola. But we used to ride cross-country, and we found this beautiful farm. My husband always loved farms, so he said, 'This is where we want to live; let's buy it,' and I said, 'Fine.' We came out here one Saturday and bought it the following Wednesday."

The Rollmans wound up buying three connecting farms, totaling about 250 acres and bounded by three roads: Ridge, Galbraith, and Sagamore. Said Mrs. Rollman, "We sold the house on Redway and moved to a penthouse in the Vernon Manor for the two years it took to build this house. The architect was Harry Price of Cincinnati. We surround French Park. It's beautifully situated, (one of) the highest point(s) in Hamilton County."

It was thirteen years from the time in 1927 that Justin and Josephine Rollman bought their property until Amberley became a village. When the Rollmans bought their land, A. Victor Donahey was governor of

Ohio and Calvin Coolidge was president of the United States.

Justin Rollman, who owned the department store Rollman & Co. at Fifth and Vine, called the first meeting to discuss forming a village for police protection (c.1937). He met at the clubhouse of the Ridgewood Golf Club with Chase Davies, not yet a jurist and still practicing law; Frank Bonham, then Mayor of Wyoming, Ohio; Roland Rodgers; William Koch; and Herbert French. That meeting led to little action other than a decision to proceed, said Rollman in a history of Amberley Village.

The residents voted to incorporate on March 7, 1940, and Amberley Village was incorporated on April 5, 1940. James G. Stewart was then mayor of Cincinnati and John W. Bricker was Ohio's governor. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was president, and the nation was on the brink of a second world war.

Amberley's first officers were elected on May 14, 1940, at a meeting at Roy Elliott's home. They were Mayor, Roy Elliott; Vice Mayor, Robert Strong; Treasurer, William Thede; Clerk, Roland Rodgers; Marshall, Charles Bird. Council members were Robert Strong, Charles Palmer, Harry Price, Frank Wehmhoff, Hugo Haller, and Harold Chapman. Solicitor was Chase M. Davies. Ordinance number 20 allotted Davies \$2,750 for his duties as solicitor and \$300 for his work on the incorporation.

The new Village needed an official building, so Chase Davies and Roy Elliott went to Herbert French and asked him to donate the land on the corner. According to Davies, "He said, 'No, but I'll give you the



This photograph of Reachmont Farms, taken around 1915, shows the land destined to become Amberley Village. This particular property was eventually purchased by Herbert French.

property that's up on the northern part of that.' And that's where it is now. It was a good piece of property and big enough to do what they wanted to do." Since French had been so generous, Davies suggested that French be given the honor of choosing a name for the new Village. French had toured England many times, and he felt the ultimate success of the Village would "depend upon the selection of a name which will add dignity and preserve the rural atmosphere of the territory."<sup>66</sup> Many of his listed possibilities were modified English village names, and one, "Edmunton," could have local significance, as Edmund Buxton, or "Edmund the Pioneer," as his descendants referred to him, settled the very land French owned. The list of names suggested by French follows: Moorlands, Connington, Surrey Village, Hawthorne, Amberley, Edmunton, High Meadows, Coverly, Cranleigh, Woodford, Waverly. Four people marked the list, and Connington and Amberley were the only two names chosen by all four people.<sup>67</sup> (A copy of French's letter and list of names is found in the Appendix.)

On September 14, 1942, at the height of the war, Chase Davies wrote to the village of Amberley, Gloucestershire, England, and asked for information on the Amberley of England. He received a letter, dated December 21, 1942, describing the pastoral setting of the English village, but no information about the origin of the name. Stanley Marling, who replied to Davies' request, said he hoped "to send some photographs of the village of Amberley" after the war, since he did not feel the censor would pass them, late in 1942.<sup>68</sup> (A copy of this letter is included in the Appendix.)

Amberley Village has retained its country-estate look because the first ordinance adopted by the Council established a planning commission, which has always kept as an objective a rural atmosphere. Only single-family residences were to be built. Someone must have sensed disaster and a possible attack on that rural concept, for on December 13, 1943, ordinance number 55 was passed "by three-fourths of the Council members," amending ordinance number 21 and adding "Section 6A. Intensity of Use of Land." It read, "No lot shall be used as a building site unless it has an area of at least one acre and an average width of not less than one hundred fifty (150) feet." Section 2 of the ordinance says, "This Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety and general welfare of the Village of Amberley, for the reason that various uses of property inconsistent with the proposed plan of the Village development herein provided are believed to be imminent and that such uses would permanently injure or partially nullify such original plan of development." The ordinance was signed by Roy Elliott, Mayor, and

Roland Rodgers, Clerk.<sup>69</sup> (NOTE: The one-acre ordinance did not apply to subsequently annexed properties.)

At the first meeting of the Amberley Village Council, a special committee of Robert Strong and Chase Davies was appointed to meet with the Cincinnati Board of Education about annexing Amberley Village to the Cincinnati School District.

The first funds that came into the Village were an apportionment of township funds, representing the Village's share of taxes collected in Sycamore and Columbia Townships and amounting to \$800 on July 5, 1940.

When Amberley was incorporated in 1940, 196 families, or a total of 606 people, lived there; the population, according to the most recent census, in 1980, was 3,442.

The quiet community of Amberley has a surprising amount of automobile traffic. On Section Road at Elbrook, near Gibson, 13,000 cars pass each day. On Galbraith Road at Ridge, at the top of the hill, 11,200 cars a day pass by, while at the bottom of the hill, there are 25,000 cars daily, but about 14,000 of them go onto Cross County Highway rather than passing through Amberley Village. On Ridge Road, in the area north of Pleasant Ridge, 10,000 cars a day go by.<sup>71</sup>

William Krueger, whom most regard as the first Chief of Police, came to work for the Village on January 1, 1941. Since he was not an Amberley resident, as required, he did not hold the title of Chief of Police until 1958. Charles Bird held the official title of Chief of Police, although Captain Krueger apparently performed the duties of the office.

Village Chiefs of Police have been Charles Bird (May 1940–November 1956); William Krueger (December 1957–April 30, 1974); Joseph Truesdall (May 1974–June 20, 1983); and current Chief Gary Benner (May 1983–).

In 1954, Amberley began operating under a city manager plan of local government,<sup>70</sup> which has survived until the present. Amberley's Village Managers have been Bud Anderegg, Oscar Egoff, Hugh Graff, Colonel Thomas Wasson, and Bernard Boraten. The Village Manager receives a salary.

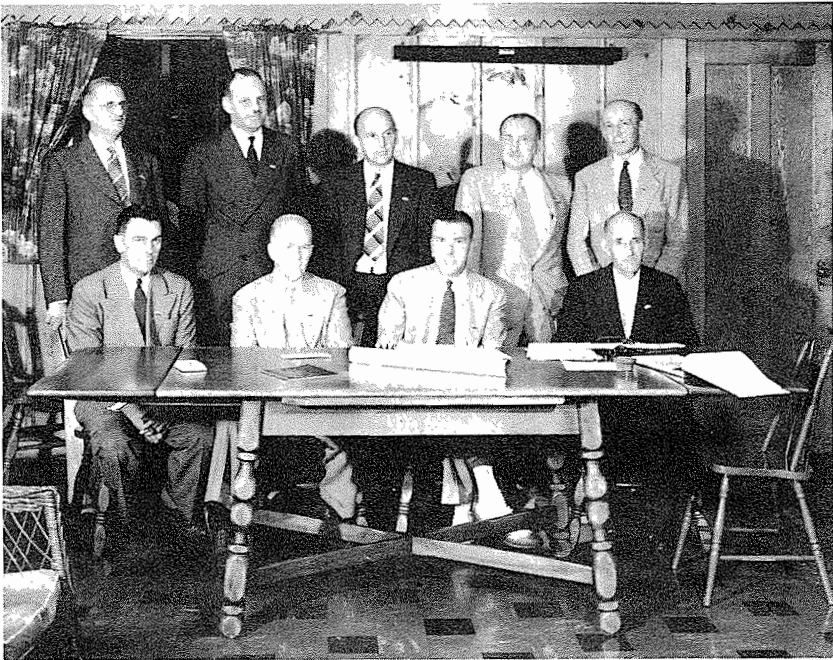
The first income tax, 1%, was instituted in 1970; its effective date was January 1, 1971. An increase in the income tax to 2% was passed in November, 1988, and it became effective on January 1, 1989.

Roy Elliott was the first Mayor of Amberley Village (May 1940–December 1945), and was succeeded by Hugo Haller (January 1946–November 1955); George Hammerlein (December 1955–November 1957); Hugh Graff (December 1957–July 1968); W. Henry Blohm (July 1968–November 1977); Arthur Friedman (December 1977–November

1983); John Muething (December 1983–November 1987); and current Mayor Gloria Haffer (December 1987–).

Amberley Village officials obviously serve more for love than money, for the Amberley Mayor makes \$1,800 a year, and the Council members, \$300 a year.

Each person who has served Amberley Village has cared to make it a better place for all, primarily by preserving its country beauty. That is the heritage—and the responsibility—all Amberley servants carefully pass to their successors.



Officers elected on May 14, 1940, at a meeting at Roy Elliott's home were, seated left to right: Charles Bird, Marshall; Robert O. Strong, Vice Mayor; Roy J. Elliott, Mayor; Roland Rodgers, Clerk. Standing, left to right, were Council members Charles Palmer, Harold M. Chapman, Hugo A. Haller, and Frank J. Wehmhoff, with Treasurer William L. Thede on the extreme right.

## AMBERLEY VILLAGE MAYORS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS 1940–Present

Member	Term of Office
Roy G. Elliott .....	5/40–12/45
Harold M. Chapman .....	5/40–11/57
Hugo A. Haller .....	5/40–11/55 .... Mayor 1/46–11/55
Charles R. Palmer .....	5/40–11/44
Harry M. Price .....	5/40–11/44
Robert O. Strong .....	5/40–12/43
Frank J. Wehmhoff .....	5/40–12/43
Carl J. Rauh .....	8/42–12/45
August Janszen .....	1/44–12/47
Parke G. Smith .....	1/44–11/51
William L. Thede .....	1/45–12/45
A. C. Cherry .....	1/46–11/55
R. W. Martindale .....	1/46–12/53
Edward Wertheimer, Jr. ....	1/46–12/47
Dr. Joseph Freiberg .....	1/48–11/57
David M. Watt .....	1/48–11/55
Thomas F. Russell .....	1/52–7/53
George R. Hammerlein .....	7/53–11/57 .... Mayor 12/55–11/57
Hugh A. Graff .....	1/54–7/68 .... Mayor 12/57–7/68
Hiram C. Bolsinger .....	12/55–11/67
Stuart E. Kaiser .....	12/55–11/57
W. Harmon Wilson .....	12/55–11/61
W. Henry Blohm .....	12/57–11/77 .... Mayor 7/68–11/77
J. Cromer Mashburn .....	12/57–11/65
Sidney Meyers .....	12/57–11/65
Herman H. Streitmann .....	12/57–11/59
George J. Pascal .....	12/59–11/61
Arthur A. Adler .....	12/61–11/73
Paul T. Millikin .....	12/61–7/69
Robert E. Isaacs .....	12/65–6/70
Melvin J. Kessel .....	12/65–11/71
Helen H. Fix .....	12/67–12/74
Charles P. Hagner, Jr. ....	8/68–3/79
Arthur H. Friedman .....	7/69–11/83 .... Mayor 12/77–11/83
Walter H. Meyer .....	8/70–
Herbert C. Lauber .....	12/71–11/75
Thomas H. Green .....	12/73–11/75
John L. Muething .....	1/75–11/87 .... Mayor 12/83–11/87
Gloria S. Haffer .....	12/75– .... Mayor 12/87–

Barbara J. Steinberg .....	12/75-
John C. Evans .....	12/77-11/83
Dr. Richard S. Kerstine .....	6/79-
Dean P. Fite .....	12/83-
Ann Fabe Isaacs .....	12/83-11/87
Marianne Pressman .....	12/87-
Walter W. Hattenbach .....	12/87-

AMBERLEY VILLAGE MANAGERS

1940-Present

Manager	Term of Office
Rupert Anderegg .....	1955-1956
Oscar T. Egolf .....	1956-1968
Hugh A. Graff .....	1968-1973
Thomas E. Wesson .....	1973-1977
Bernard E. Boraten .....	1977-

AMBERLEY VILLAGE SOLICITORS

TERMS OF SERVICE

1940-Present

Solicitor	Term of Service
Chase Davies .....	5-40-12/42
Augustus Beall, Jr. ....	1/43-3/77
R. Scott Croswell III .....	4/77-11/78
Stephen Cohen .....	12/78-

AMBERLEY VILLAGE

PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMEN

1942-Present

Chairman	Term of Office
Charles R. Palmer .....	1942-1944
Louis Kaufman .....	1944-1945
Charles R. Coler .....	1945-1950
Hugo A. Haller .....	1950-1955
Dr. John W. Devanney .....	1956-1958
W. Henry Blohm .....	1958-1968
Charles P. Hagner .....	1968-1979
Dean P. Fite .....	1979-

## AMBERLEY VILLAGE PLANNING COMMISSION 1942–Present

Member	Term of Office
Roy G. Elliott .....	1942–1946
Charles R. Palmer .....	1942–1945
John Hesselbrock .....	1942–1945
Otto Baum .....	1942–1944
Louis Kaufman .....	1942–1972
Charles R. Coler .....	1944–1950
Harold M. Chapman .....	1945–1955
J. Cromer Mashburn .....	1945–1948
Hugo A. Haller .....	1946–1955
William L. Thede .....	1948–1950
Richard L. Metz .....	1950–1961
Rupert A. Anderegg .....	1955–1956
Dr. John W. Devanney .....	1954–1963
Hugh A. Graff .....	1956–1958
	1968–1973
Oscar T. Egolf .....	1956–1968
W. Henry Blohm .....	1958–1968
Charles P. Hagner .....	1961–1979
Robert E. Morris .....	1963–1966
Arthur Friedman .....	1966–1969
Stanley Zahn .....	1968–1976
Dr. Robert M. Schneider .....	1969–1975
David Reichert .....	1972–1980
Thomas E. Wesson .....	1973–1977
Urban J. Gutjahr .....	1975–1981
Roy J. Kirby .....	1976–1977
Dean P. Fite .....	1977–
Lester Heath .....	1979–
Walter H. Meyer .....	1979–1984
Robert Heldman .....	1979–
Sylvan Reisenfeld .....	1981–
Charles Kamine .....	1984–

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMBERLEY VILLAGE

In March 1927, I purchased from Mr. Sandman my original parcel on Ridge Road abutting Mr. French's property. Later I added to this original purchase. There was only a lane leading to the Sandman house from Ridge Road. Ridge Road, Galbraith Road, and Section Road were all dirt roads and in very poor condition.

I immediately started to build our home, which was completed in April 1928. Mr. Herbert French, who owned the property south of my purchase but did not live there at the time, paid me a visit, and I induced him to build on his property, which he did at a later date. The only other homes, with the exception of those of the natives in this vicinity, were the Benedicts' and the two across Ridge Road built by B. H. Kroger for his two daughters. Both of these properties were for sale, and I purchased the thirty acres next to the Ridgewood Golf Club, which is now the property of my son, Henry Rollman II. The other house, south of this, was purchased by Alfred Jonap, now being occupied by the Hasties.

Some of the original families whom I recall living in this vicinity were the Grassmans, Langhorsts, Riesers, Hammels, Kochs, Rodgerses, Bells, and Buxtons.

Shortly after moving into our home, we had a serious holdup, and other irregularities occurred in the neighborhood. I realized the necessity of having protection and contacted Colonel Sherril, City Manager of the city of Cincinnati at that time. However, he was adverse to taking this territory into the city. I thought it was important to form a village for our protection and consulted with Judge Davies, who at this time was not a jurist, and Frank Bonham, at that time Mayor of Wyoming, Ohio. We arranged a meeting, which was held in the clubhouse of the Ridgewood Golf Club. Those attending this first meeting were Roland Rodgers, William Koch, Judge Davies, Herbert French, and myself. Although very little was accomplished at the meeting, it was decided that we should proceed and try to organize a

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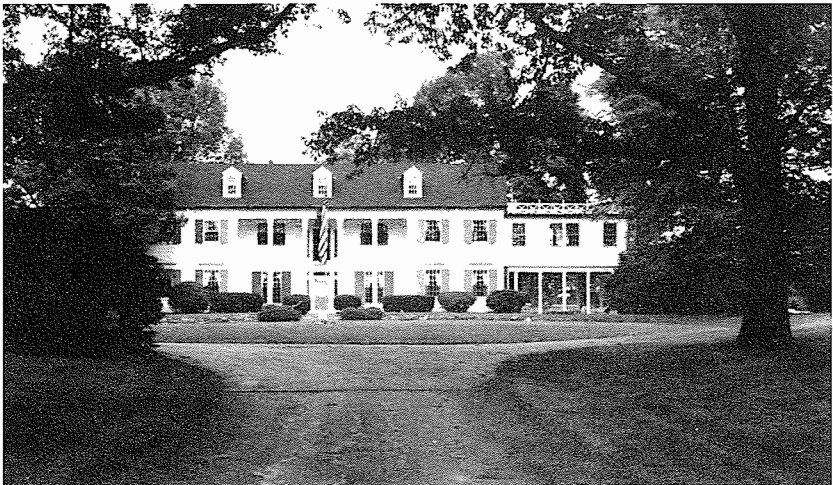
*By Justin A. Rollman (presented on July 26, 1961, at a dinner at the Village Hall honoring retiring police-department Lt. George Gassert after twenty-one years' service).*

village. There was very little opposition to our plan.

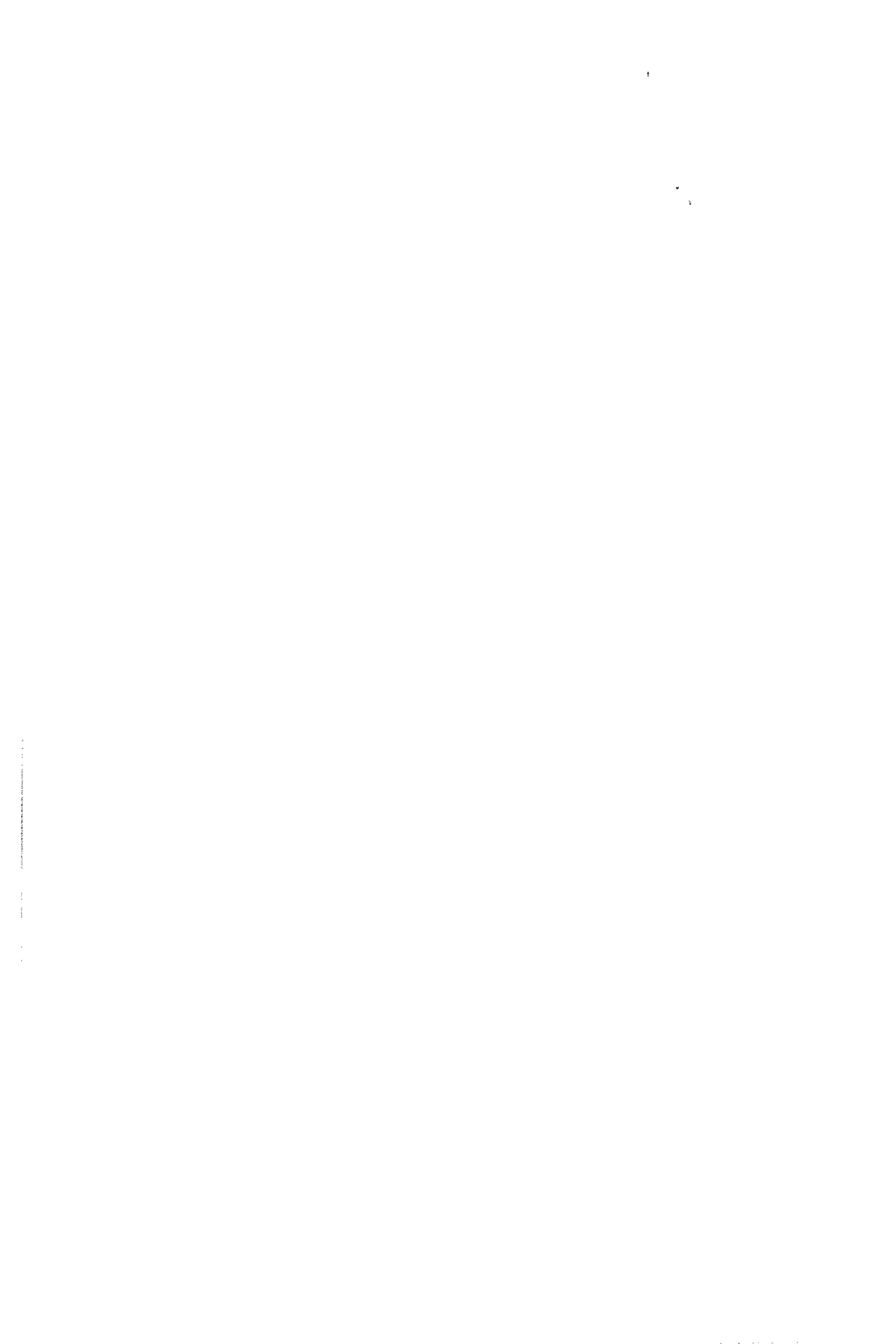
Roy Elliott bought the old original Rodgers property, which was then occupied by Charles Mullane. The old brick house was torn down, and Mr. Elliott built a new home on this site.

After a great deal of negotiating, meetings, etc., Judge Davies, Roy Elliott, and myself met in Roy's home and definitely decided to proceed with the plans for the formation of the Village. It was decided at that meeting to have Roy Elliott be the first Mayor, and Chase Davies, the Solicitor. A later meeting was held by a number of persons who had moved into the community, and the Kaufman fire definitely assisted in our plans. The reason this fire had such a tremendous impact upon our formulation of the Village was that we had no fire protection and only county police protection. At the time of the Kaufman fire, the Cincinnati Fire Department refused to come, and finally Reading Fire Department came to our assistance. I called Colonel Sherril personally during this fire, and although there was a fire department on Montgomery Pike, near Ridge Road, he declined to permit it to assist us. To assure fire protection, I personally signed a bond with the Sycamore Township Trustees guaranteeing the payment of expenses for use of their fire department in our community.

The Village proceeded in good fashion, and all of our mayors and members of Council have worked diligently and without compensation for the betterment of the Village. I do believe we have one of the finest incorporated villages in the United States.



The Rollmans' home was completed in April 1928, when Ridge, Galbraith, and Section were still dirt roads.





MAILBOX NAMES (Top Row):  
1. J. G. ...  
2. ...  
3. ...  
4. ...  
5. ...  
6. ...  
7. ...  
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10. ...

MAILBOX NAMES (Bottom Row):  
1. ...  
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*A*MBERLEY  
PEOPLE AND  
STORIES

INTERVIEW WITH

# HAROLD BUXTON

*by Priscilla Petty on March 24, 1988  
in a car in a rainstorm sitting in French Park*

The French House, which is still standing, the original part of it, may be the oldest house in Amberley Village. I've got tax receipts from 1836. It's one of the oldest houses in Hamilton County. In Camp Dennison, Ohio, there's a stone house, and some people claim *it* is the oldest.

"Now, I've met Mr. French a few times and he was a pain in the neck. All I know is that the older he got, the more pain in the neck he got. Even my grandfather admitted that. When he started this house, he had the idea—this was before World War I—that he was going to develop a very well-to-do area. But Indian Hill came along and he lost out. And Indian Hill became the place.

"Originally, the front of the French House faced toward Ridge Avenue. Down in front of it was a great big spring. And on my dad's farm, they had a real nice lake in here. Mr. French had put white tile all around it; and I don't know how far down. But the bottom part, my dad said, was sandy. The springs were down in the bottom, and it was really a big swimming pool. It had been a lake. My dad, as a boy, swam. There are pictures of a diving board there. In fact, one's made up like a post card. That's all filled in now. There were a number of springs around here. Up here, as far as I know, they just had a well.

"French died during World War II. My grandfather did, too. My grandfather retired only a short time before he died in his sleep. I don't

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*Harold Buxton is a lover of land, a man comfortable with the outdoors, as were his ancestors, who settled in what is now French Park. Mr. Buxton spoke of his family with a certain detachment as of a people and place long gone. But this place was his, in a way, this French Park; it had been his people's. As you read this, picture Harold Buxton sitting at the top of the hill, looking down onto the French property, and gesturing and remembering his youth and his father's and grandparents' days on the Buxton farm.*

know what Mr. French's final will was, but my grandfather was supposed to have witnessed one of Mr. French's wills. My grandfather always said that Mr. French was going to make this into a part of the park, but it was to be a home for boys. When it originally started out, the Girl Scouts were the ones that had it. Mr. French would have had a fit on that, too."

*So he just didn't like women at all?*

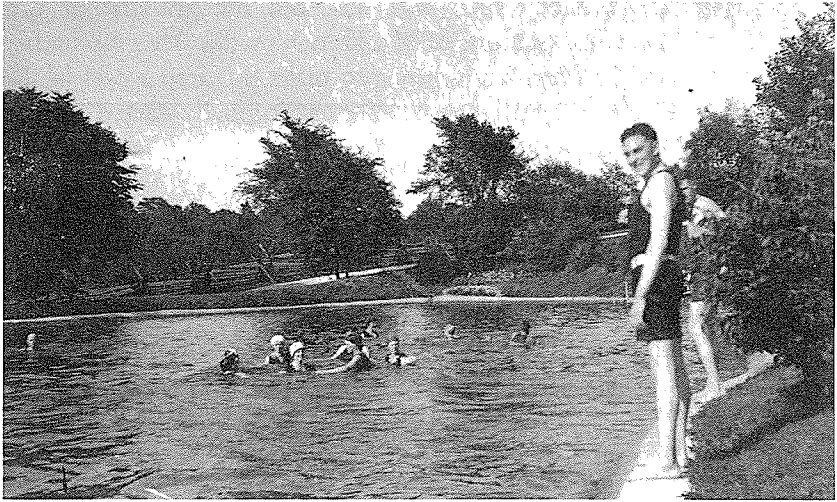
"He didn't. I don't know if *misanthrope* would be the right word for him or not. See, part of the deal—and I think my father was foolish in the long run—when Mr. French bought this place from my grandfather, was to provide a job and take an interest in my father at Procter & Gamble."

*Is there anything about the land that I should know, or the earlier settlers of the land?*

"There are two springs where the old Buxton house was located. Ridge Avenue was an Indian trail. You've got a slope to the south here. In winter time, your south hillside is a wonderful hillside to work. I'm outside cutting wood down for fires all the time. Now up here it's hilly. If you start in front of the French House and go on down, over Ridge Avenue and on down through Edmund Buxton's farm, that's all pretty flat land in there, and that's all good farmland.

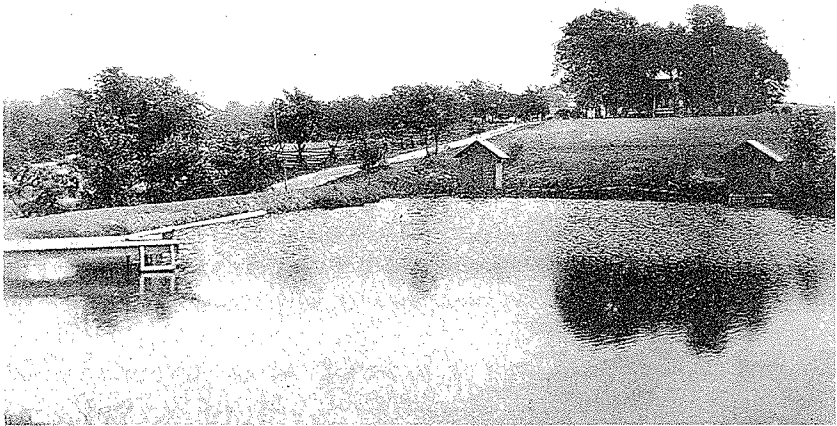
"Edmund Buxton was supposed to be a cobbler, originally. He was an apprentice of a cobbler in New York City. Here, of course, he never was a cobbler. He was a farmer. Edmund Buxton had seen this area, and he ended up buying, in 1797, a half section of land, or 320 acres, that is basically French Park, but then extends west of Ridge Avenue, toward Reading Road. Edmund died in 1806. At that time, he had started what was called Edmund's Hall, which was one of the biggest brick houses in Hamilton County. Now this, unfortunately, is the one the Park Board tore down. It was located almost opposite a lane a little bit north of the Amberley Village City Hall.

"And apparently, the story in the family was that a lot of that had been cleared by the Indians. My grandfather told me that when he was a boy, there were two places, circular areas, where there were two Indian mounds. Now the generations before my grandfather had removed the mounds because they'd be in the way of plowing; either Edmund or William McVey or Newton Stites or some of the others had done away with them. See, the family had different branches. They bought this land, the deed, in 1797. But they were living there, I'm positive, before that. See, Mr. French was interested because it went from John Cleves Symmes to a Buxton family, to him, and he liked that. Just why, I'm not sure.



Herbert French often held a big picnic for the people in his department at Procter & Gamble; activities ranged from swimming and riding to a living tableau in the barn. This photo is from sometime around 1930.

Reachmont Lake Pleasant Ridge, Cincinnati, O.



This postcard (circa 1920) pictures the lake, which has since been filled in, on Herbert French's property.

“Of course there were great trees, walnut and beech trees. Edmund’s Hall, the one that is torn down, faced Section Road. Now, if you had talked to Jeanette Eiler, she would say it faced Ridge—in her generation, which is compared to my father’s. When they had cars, they always drove up to the north side [back] of the house, but the original house faced south. If you went in from the Section Road side [south], you walked into Edmund’s Hall, and Edmund’s Hall was at least twenty feet wide. It might be thirty feet wide. I’d been in the kitchen a lot of times, when I walked over there with my grandfather, because you went from this side, and you always went in the kitchen. There were doors on all sides.

“Anyway, the first thing you saw was a big, circular, what I call a free-standing, stairway. And I’d say that stairway was wider than this car. And it went up and curved around and nothing supporting it, just standing out there, and it was beautiful, really. And then onto the third floor to the attic, it narrowed. It was really quite a sight. That’s why everybody called it Edmund’s Hall, because of the big hall, and they used to have dances in there. Although there’s a Baptist background, they got away from it real fast.

“My dad used to say he always liked it when the weather was real bad, because they made him go up to Pleasant Ridge with the family, up Ridge Road, and he said usually he’d end up walking, and his father and his grandfather would walk, and the women would be riding in the carriage, because of the weight, you know, the horses going up Ridge Hill. On rough roads they’d walk, and it would be easier on them. But he liked it when it was real bad because they would all meet in Edmund’s Hall, and somebody would get up and read from the Bible, and somebody else would play the pump organ and they would sing. He said there would be anywhere from twenty to thirty people sitting on that circular staircase. He really enjoyed it. I’d say on Sunday morning it would be church. But sometimes they’d get together in the evening.

“Another thing they used to do in the attic, which was way up on the top floor, and was really big. At one end they had it built up and had a theater up there. And Dad said there were three authors he would play and the Bible: James Fenimore Cooper, Shakespeare, and Sir Walter Scott. My dad’s favorite was James Fenimore Cooper because he said they had all those books here. If one house didn’t have it, the other house had it. Well, my dad always liked to be an Indian or to be Leather Stocking, or something like that, and they had all these old clothes there. They had old guns, Civil War uniforms, things like that. So they would take like a chapter—not only kids, but adults. I think this was mainly in wintertime, from what Dad said, when the chores weren’t too pressing. They would practically act out a whole chapter, put on a show at night



Edmund Hall as it looked in 1953. Inside, the cherry staircase was decorated with hand-hewn scrollwork. The smokehouse used by the original Buxtons still stood on the property at this time but was used for storing kindling wood.

and invite all the neighbors in. Mesloh is the name, I think, that Rollman bought the farm from. Meslohs, Thompsons, Baxters, Kincaids, they would all be invited into those things. And, you know, it was a way of entertainment.

“Jeanette’s sister, who compared to my dad in age, and Jeanette Eiler, said she (Jeanette) and my Aunt Mary Buxton Langhorst had spare mattresses which they kept for people who would come visit them, and they would lay the mattresses on the floor. She said she and my Aunt Mary used to climb up—they had a pile of those mattresses—and watch the adults perform.

“There was a tragedy connected with the Charles Buxton house, the wooden house, that was torn down. One evening, all the girls and young boys went out. Eddie Buxton, the mailman, was one of them, and he and his brothers and sisters went out to bring the cows in. They had a dairy, too. They got up there and a storm came up, and they took shelter under a tree, and one little girl by the name of Grace Buxton was

killed by lightning. My dad said that one of the things he remembered most was that the bells started ringing. See, each farm had a farm bell, and they had a system when they wanted help with something. And Dad said—my dad was just a little kid then—in his mind, the thing about it was the bells ringing; that was the thing he remembered about it.

“I remember that a Negro family lived on Plainfield Road, Garland Thompson. My great uncle was great on raising tomato plants from seed. Garland raised cabbage plants from seed. Then they’d trade back and forth.

“Garland was a cement man, as so many Negro men were in those days. When I was a young kid and the cistern would get empty, Garland would go down in the cistern with me and show me how to repair it. Then it got to the place where he and my great uncle would stand up above and just give me instructions.

“I guess Garland would be considered a self-proprietor, but he raced against horses in the Carthage Fair. He was famous. He held a certain amount of respect. You see, at a short distance, starting, a fast man can beat a race horse, for about 50 to 100 yards. That’s what Garland would do, and they’d bet on him. Garland was quite a person. He’d say over and over again—like I guess old men will—he’d say, ‘Well, you’re Frank’s grandson; Harry’s son.’ Usually he’d call me ‘Frank’s grandson’; he’d never call me by my first name.

“Now, what they did, my grandfather, great-grandfather, on his own property, you could work off your taxes by supplying rock and breaking it and throwing it on the road, like Ridge Avenue or Section Road here.”

*What do you mean “work off your taxes” supplying rocks to the road?*

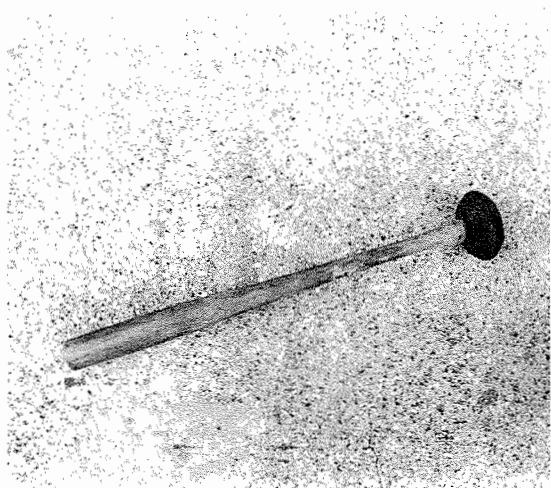
“They didn’t have regular county workers to do it; the farmers would help work off their taxes that way. When they would find rocks on the property, they’d stack them up. My grandfather said he supplied so many *perches*. A perch is a measurement of stone, of weight, and he’d supply so many perches, and then rather than paying so many dollars cash, he’d get credit for his farm tax on that.

“And my grandfather and Garland Thompson would take an old gunny sack, burlap sack, put straw in it, as much as they could get, and they’d sit on the road all day, and my great-grandfather would bring a big pile of rock, and they had a steel hammer about the size of a small tangerine with a hole in the middle, with a handle, and they’d chip the big rock into little pieces. I saw these old hammers in my great uncle’s barn; I’ve got one at home. It’s like a big washer except it’s heavier and bigger, and it has like a hammer handle on it. You used it just like a hammer. I think they called them *chipping hammers*.

“Garland would laugh and think it was so funny. He’d say, ‘You ask your father who Newton Stites paid for working all day and who didn’t get paid.’ Well, Newton Stites (Buxton), my great-grandfather, would hire Garland and pay him, while he made my grandfather, his son, work for nothing. They’d sit on these sacks full of straw, and by the time a few hours had gone by, they’d be half empty, but you had to work ’til the end of the day. So the next day you’d put more straw in the sack, to make a pillow out of the sack. He said they’d sit there with their legs crossed or their legs stretched out and just pat rock all day long. Life was rough in those days, really, when you get down to it.

“Talk about life that’s rough. When my aunt Mary Buxton, my dad’s sister, was born in 1902—Mary Buxton Langhorst—my grandfather went up to get Dr. McGrew in Pleasant Ridge. We were related to him, somehow. Dr. McGrew—now this was in horse-and-buggy days—was out on call. The other doctor who was there was a known drunk, and my grandfather referred to him as an opium addict, so my grandfather didn’t want to go to him. So he went out to Montgomery, Ohio, in his little buggy to get the doctor. A few years ago an airplane crashed into a bookstore in Montgomery, Ohio. That was where the doctor was, and that was their home, too. I was at my Aunt Mary Langhorst’s shortly after that crash and didn’t pay much attention when I read it in the paper, but she was all excited because the doctor’s two daughters were her good friends. Then she told me the story about Grandpa. Well, I think I’d heard the story before, too, going all the way up there to get the doctor and bringing him down here.”

Local farmers used chipping hammers like this one to break up rocks for the roads.



*How long would that have taken?*

“The Lord only knows.”

*That's a long way in a buggy on gravel roads. And what you're talking about really, is they'd chip the rocks because the roads were made of gravel, weren't they?*

“Well, you see, if you put a big rock on the road and something heavy goes over it, it hits one side, and the rock flips up. So it makes an awful bad road. But what you have to do is start with rocks about that size, and lay that down. Then you've got a bed and you put the gravel on top and it smooths things off. That's the way you make a road. Of course, if there's a pothole, you use pretty big rocks.”

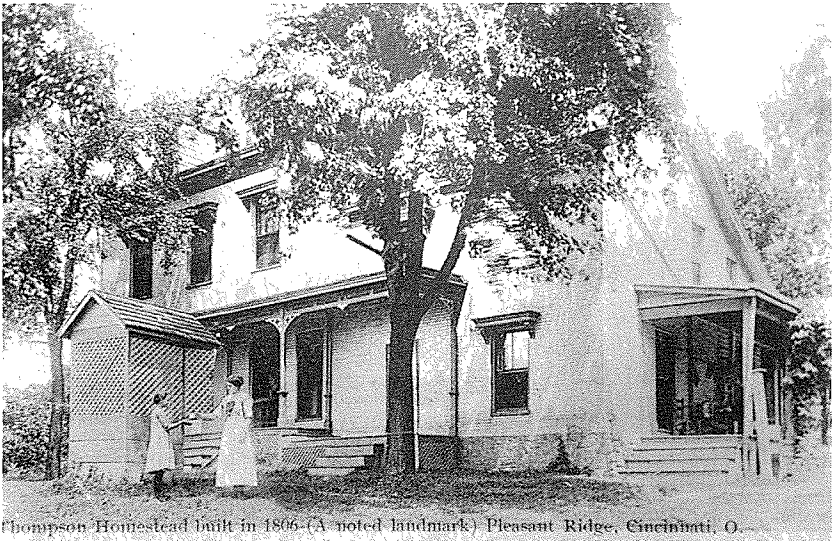
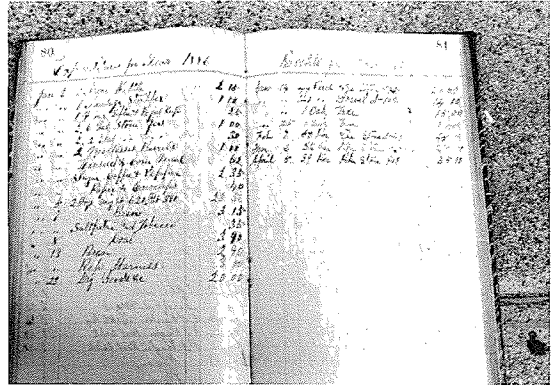
*Do you have any of the Buxton diaries or records?*

“My great-grandmother was Harriet Cochran Radabaugh Buxton; they all called her Hattie. My great-grandfather, Newton Stites Buxton, presented her with this little notebook on February 1, 1881, and he wrote a presentation. She kept a record of what she sold, and what's interesting to me is what a pound of butter sold for in the year 1881. She lists it all: nine pounds of butter, February 4, \$2.70; February 5, 1½ pounds, 45¢; February 7, 2 pounds, 60¢. But this goes on, and it's torn and messy. Amount of eggs sold for year 1882: February 4, ½ dozen; eleven dozen for \$1.65. That was a bargain. Ten dozen would be 120 eggs. About a cent a piece, I guess. The artwork in the books of that time always interested me. There's not much artwork in this one. But my Grandfather, Frank Buxton, was a pen-and-ink man. When Mr. French and he went up to Michigan, they kept an account. Mr. French did the bookkeeping and the account, and my grandfather decorated it. I saw it once. Mr. French showed it to me.

“The land remained pretty much in the family until my grandfather sold his farm, which is the present site of the French House. By that time, all he had left was something like 90 acres, which he sold to Herbert French. At the same time, there were two old-maid ladies who had a home up where the shelter house is now. They were descendants, actually granddaughters, of Edmund, and they sold their sixty acres to Mr. French. So Mr. French bought 150 acres of ground. Then about 1920, the Thompsons, who lived in the old Edmund's Hall, sold, I guess it was about 90 acres of ground, to Mr. French, too. The Thompsons come in because there was a Rebecca Buxton Thompson who married a Price Thompson. That was how come sometimes they call it the old Buxton Place, sometimes they call it Edmund's Hall, and sometimes they call it Thompson's.

“Their land extended west of Ridge Avenue, which would include

Hattie Buxton's account book dates back to February 1, 1881, when it was presented to her by her husband, Newton Stites Buxton.



Through the years, Edmund Hall has also been called the Buxton Homestead and/or the Thompson Homestead. This card is postmarked September 4, 1912. At that time, the house was occupied by Edmund's great-great grandchildren, the Thompsons, and was named accordingly.

parts of where the Village Hall is now, and they built a big old frame house; it's still there, up from the Village Hall. They kept some of that land over there where the Thompsons built a home. Then the land that is still further west, toward Reading Road, was held by a Charles Buxton. (That's where the little girl got struck by lightning, you remember.) He ended up selling it to other people, not Mr. French. And the last little bit of land, just about five acres, was owned by an Edmund

Buxton, the scoutmaster or the mailman, as he was called. This was adjacent to the park. There's a street going back there right alongside of French Park with four houses. That's the last bit of Buxton land, and they didn't sell that until 1965."

*So the Buxtons have had a tie to Amberley for a long, long time.*

"When I was a kid, the Buxtons, the Thompsons, and the Acombs were all over. The mother of a friend by the name of Ross Henthorne was an Acomb. He always tells a story that used to be told in Pleasant Ridge: you could never say anything about the Acombs, the Buxtons, or the Thompsons, because there's bound to be a relation there.

"My aunt lived in the brick house, what they call French House. It's the only house left on this property—that and the caretaker's house. Mr. French bought that house from my Grandfather Buxton. It was a lot smaller and he built onto it. You'd have to go down to the basement to see the old farmhouse and then the new basement beginnings. But it was just a common, old brick farmhouse. My grandfather or great-grandfather had the present "caretaker's cottage," they call it, built.

"They ran a dairy. Most of these farms were dairies along here. They began in sort of general farming; the land began wearing out; they had orchards and so forth; and they all switched to dairies. They couldn't get enough for the crops, with the wheat farms and so forth out West.

"When I was a little kid, like in the first or second grade, I can remember my Grandmother Buxton asking me how the Ohio River was named. I told her I didn't know. She said, 'Well, we always called him Edmund the Pioneer. He was on the Kentucky side of the river; that's where the white men first came, and he happened to step out on the river bank just at the same time an Indian stepped out on the Ohio side of the river. The Indian was surprised and said, "Oh." And my great-great-great-grandfather wanted to be friendly and he said, "Hi." The Indian was surprised again and he said, "Oh." So that's how the Ohio river was named. When I used to teach at Walnut Hills, I told my seventh graders that, and they got a charge out of it. I see all kinds of interpretations and stories, but they really don't know how that name came about. It's some kind of an Indian name, but they don't know what kind of name it is.

"Up to my grandfather's time, I think the Buxtons did pretty well financially. I go by some of the pictures. I don't know just what all the difficulties were. You know, families are so secretive. When my great-grandfather, Newton Stites, died, for instance, my grandfather wasn't the executor of the estate; his sister, my aunt Mary Cosbey, was executor. Which I think is sort of interesting. You would think that his son, particularly in those days, would be made executor. But one of his



Photo taken in 1910 in front of the Buxton house, which Herbert French subsequently purchased and enlarged. Pictured left to right are Harry Buxton, Clara Buxton, Mary Langhorst, Mrs. Gardener (their maternal grandmother), and Eunice Buxton (their paternal grandmother).

daughters was the executor of the estate, and I don't know what that indicates. They might not have trusted my grandfather too much.

"My great-grandfather said, 'All farmers are not Buxtons, but all Buxtons are farmers.' There are hardly any of those left now. There's only one farmer, that I know of, left in the Buxton family. And that's out of 150 or so living Buxtons."

INTERVIEW WITH

# JOSEPHINE FREUD ROLLMAN

*by Priscilla Petty on November 20, 1987  
at her home, Rollridge, in the Village of Amberley*

I come from royalty. My grandparents, the Archduke and the Duchess of Hapsburg in Austria, were shot and killed, and that was the beginning of World War I. My mother was brought to this country as a little girl. I was born in Detroit. My father was a brother of Dr. Sigmund Freud's. My full name is Josephine Freud Rollman.

"Dr. Freud was the founder of psychiatry, and later, when he had cancer, the Duchess of Marlboro, who was also related to us, brought him to England, and he died at her palace. He got cancer of the lip because he was smoking cigars all the time. Father visited his brother every year and took care of him as best he could. My brother, who was a Doctor of Law, also visited with my uncle when he grew older. The Hapsburgs—I have a lot of relatives there. The Archduke of Hapsburg is still going strong, and he looks just like my son. He was on [the television program *Lifestyles of*] *the Rich and Famous*.

"My cousin was a Lord Montbatten, who was shot and killed on his yacht. And I'm distantly related to the Queen. Well, all royalty is distantly related.

"But let me tell you something, Mrs. Petty. It doesn't mean one thing. It isn't who you are; it's what you are. 'Have I done enough to help people?' 'Do I care enough?' And I do. I can't begin to tell you the

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*Mrs. Rollman appeared for this interview in a floor-length, wine-colored purple velvet dressing gown. In her nineties, she walked with care, but erect. The lovely girl in the portrait above the fireplace mantel could still be seen in the woman who seated herself, with the aid of her "bodyguard," as she called him, to talk with me about Amberley Village. Much of the conversation, not related in the following text, revolved around her fears of burglars or kidnappers, the reason for which will be apparent from a story she tells. I regret that I didn't see her again after this interview before her death. She was a kind woman.*

number of organizations I've headed.

"I headed the American Cancer Society and brought Dr. Charlie Barrett on the board. During the war, one of the government men came to me and said, 'We want to show you something; will you go with me?' and I said, 'Sure.' So he took me to Suite 227 of the Federal Building. He opened the door and out stepped one little soldier. He said, 'This is your office.' I said, 'My office!' He said, 'Yes, you're now Recruitment Officer for the 5th Service Command for WACS.' I had West Virginia, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. They couldn't get anybody to take the job, and they knew I wouldn't refuse it.

"I didn't know what the girls wanted. You know what it was? To meet the boys. At that time, there was an induction center at Ft. Thomas, so I put on dances. I paid for everything, and they got to meet the boys, and they all joined up. We had the strongest command in the country.

"I also helped on the rationing boards because they were running short of help. If you recall, they gave out stamps for gasoline and food. We had nothing but big cars here, big twelve cylinder Packards using too much gas. So I bought a little Chevrolet, and I still kept the Packards, of course. Anything to help the government. It was a hard time to go through.

"I was president of the Republican Women and headed the Negro College Fund one year.

"Even Mort Waters, who was head of the CPO at the time, called me. 'Josephine, you have to head the Minute Maids.' We sold war bonds in the theaters. I had wonderful volunteers, and I used to give them little flags and certificates of accomplishment. And we started the Salvation Army down on Beech Street in Walnut Hills. They had two old houses there. My husband bought all the equipment, and we'd take care of the girls and their babies and train them and so forth. I headed that for many years.

"My husband brought the Rollman Receiving Psychiatric Institute here. He was a commissioner of the state of Ohio, and Cincinnati was the only city that didn't have a short-term psychiatric institute. That property belonged to the General Protestant Orphan Asylum and they moved to Mt. Washington, so my husband bought it and gave it to the state.

"We put a new wing on Rollman Psychiatric Institute, and I give parties for the employees every year, for the patients. I don't go near the patients because I don't know how to handle people who are ill. But I see they are taken care of. They have a wonderful staff, and I give them scholarships for those who want to go on with their studies.

"My husband established honor scholarships at the University of

Cincinnati. He gave parks to the city and was head of the Hamilton County Parks and built the Museum of Natural History, or they couldn't pay their employees, so he paid all their employees so it could go forward.

"I met my husband in 1920 when I went East with my mother for a birthday party my sister and her husband had—a big party with a dance after. We went to the theater with them first. My husband, Justin Rollman, and his father, Henry Rollman, were at the party. It was twelve o'clock at night, and my mother and I were getting ready to retire at our hotel. My sister called me and said, 'I want you to meet a wonderful young guy.' I said, 'You think I'm crazy? I'm getting ready to go to bed.' She said, 'You've got to talk to him anyway.' So she introduced me over the phone. 'This is Justin Rollman; this is my sister, Josephine Freud. And he said, 'Well, won't you come and dance with me?' I said, 'No, I'm going to bed.' He said, 'Will you meet me tomorrow morning? I'll be riding a big, black horse.' This was Atlantic City, on the beach. So my mother and I were sitting on the porch of the hotel and this man was riding back and forth on this horse. And I said, 'Look at that old fool. If he thinks I'm going to meet him, I'm not.' So my sister came along and she said to me, 'You've got to meet him. He's too wonderful a guy. You come down here.' The man was looking up and down the boardwalk, and he finally saw my sister and she introduced me. He got off the horse, handed it away, and we rode in one of those little carts that they have there, that are pushed at Atlantic City at the boardwalk, little carts and two people get in them and a man pushes them along the boardwalk. Beautiful, along the ocean. He held my hand and said, 'Will you have lunch with me?' I hadn't had lunch yet, so we stopped at a little restaurant. And we liked each other. And he said, 'Could we have dinner together?' I said, 'Well, I don't know, I have to call my mother and see if it's all right.' And my mother said, 'Well, if you like him.'

"We were engaged the day we met. We met on the sixth of May and we were married on the eighth of September the same year. He didn't live in Detroit, and he had to come up regularly. He was the dearest person.

"My mother didn't want me to move because I was the baby of the family. I was spoiled, I guess. My mother made my sisters take me when they'd go out on dates. Then I'd come home and tell my mother everything. They said, 'We're not going to take her anymore.' My mother and I never had any secrets. There was just beauty in our lives.

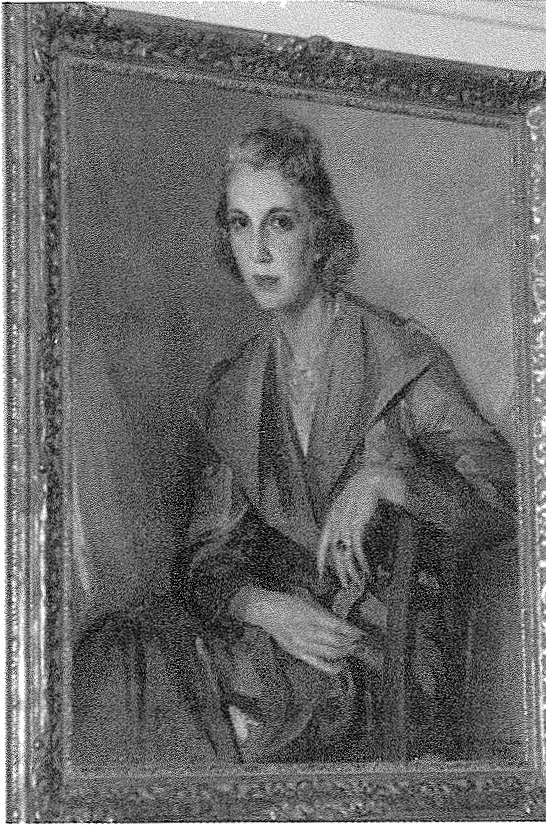
"We lived in Grosse Pointe, and our house was like the Vatican with all the cherubs and everything; the ceilings were all painted like that at home. My grandparents were great collectors of art. Then we had a big

Justin and Josephine Rollman moved to Amberley when it was still farm land, and helped to get the Village incorporated in 1940. These portraits were painted by Fritz Werner in 1937.



house in town. Then everybody started to move there—the Dodges, the Fords. Automobile people; that was Detroit. That was the big industry there. Of course, my father owned most of the property. He rented some of his property to Chrysler Automobile Company; he rented to everybody. In fact, Henry Ford came to him and said, ‘Oh, please, Mr. Freud, please help me.’ We called it *frood*; it became an Americanized name. But my father said, ‘No, but I’ll give you to my lawyers and let them help you.’ So he went to a firm by the name of Anderson and Rackum. Ford had no money, but he gave them stock in Ford and they made millions out of it. My father made millions out of real estate and silver mines.

“My mother and father were very strict. I had a wonderful family life with a home larger than this. I had tutors when I was three years old, and I could speak French fluently. Three things were stressed in our home: etiquette, discipline, and education. My mother was Catholic. I became Presbyterian, and my father wasn’t too religious. But he was the



most wonderful father. My father was very blonde, and my mother was beautiful. You could tell she was royalty. Everything had to be just right, all kinds of servants. All her gowns were made by one of the best couturiers. Well, it was just life; it was just my way of life. My husband loved it, too. He came from a fine home and wonderful parents. He died of cancer from the sun.

“My husband’s grandparents and parents were born here [in Cincinnati], and they were a wonderful family. I loved them. Of course, I was a stranger in Cincinnati. I’d never been here before except to pass through to go to Florida. My mother liked to travel and always traveled with a chauffeur and registered nurses, and she always wanted me with her.

“I’m not going to tell you how old I am because age is only a state of mind. If you think you’re young, you’re young. I have a doctor come regularly, one of the finest doctors. I have a perfect heart, and I don’t have high blood pressure. You know why? Because my life is guided by my love of Jesus Christ. That’s the way I live, by the guidance of my Lord. My husband grew up with Norman Vincent Peale. He made my husband



The Rollmans' home was completed in April 1928.

a director of the Marble Collegiate Church of New York. Then my husband helped build the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church.

“We have no liquor in the house, no drugs. I never did drink. We had big wine cellars at my father’s home; we had plenty of liquor here, but I decided no. It was the way I was brought up. We always served champagne and the finest wines to guests. We had a wine cellar with the racks; you know how they turn the bottles. But my husband and my mother and my father didn’t approve of it.

“We had big parties here [at Rollridge]; we could feed 2,500 people at a time. We loved to have them. We had orchestras, and of course we always had bars. Most people like to drink.”

*Who lived in early Amberley?*

“When we moved here [in 1924] there wasn’t anything here. And Herbert French, who was a very good friend of ours, the Treasurer of Procter & Gamble, would come out to visit us. He lived in Avondale somewhere, and he saw how lovely it was, and he bought that property, a farm, which is now French Park. And he built his house. He gave that to the city.

“Herbie French was a darling person and a wonderful neighbor. He was a bachelor, but he liked to be with us. My brother gave me a Steinway Concert Grand, and he [French] loved to come over and play the piano. He liked art and I did, too.

“We were getting along just fine [in the beginning]; we were

dependent on the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office for protection. We had a sort of community watchman as well. Roy Elliott and a lot of people moved here after we moved here.

"We went out a great deal, naturally. Well, one night we were out at a concert, and stupidly, I wore a short-sleeved evening jacket with a bracelet of 200 carats of diamonds. Nobody thought it was real. But there were thieves there, and they saw it and they followed us home. We got in front of our house—we have a big lantern here, and now we have searchlights all over the place. But I was just about to get out of the car when two men jumped out of a car behind us. We didn't know it because they drove without lights. One of them had a gun on my head and one had a gun on my husband's head. I screamed and yelled, and they said, 'We'll kill you if you don't give me your bracelet and everything you've got. We'll kill you.' And I never saw such a big gun in all my life. I couldn't see what the man looked like who held me up. He had a hat pulled over his face, seemed to be thin, and was well dressed. [The bracelet] had a very intricate lock, and it didn't please him that it took me so long to unlock it, so he put his finger on it; he scratched me, and he put it in his pocket. Then he took my pocketbook. I didn't have any money with me, but he thought I did.

"The man on my husband's side wanted a beautiful diamond ring my husband had on that was his father's. They wanted that ring. He couldn't get it off because it was tight, and the man said, 'We'll cut your finger off.' So my husband put it in his mouth until he got enough moisture on it and he gave it to them. He had about \$200 with him and a lot of credit cards and cards of great importance to him. We had two butlers on the first floor, and they each came out with guns. We had a lot of wild animals at that time on the place—foxes and opossum, and we still do—and they thought there was some animal because I was screaming so.

"So we had nothing but the sheriff's office, and these two butlers came out with guns, and the thieves said, 'We'll kill them if you don't send them back, and you, too.' They said they didn't care if they killed us or not. So my husband said, 'Go back; my wife is just frightened.' So they got what they wanted, the diamond jewelry. I tell you, I hid for two weeks I was so frightened.

"Well, my husband saw that we had no protection here in Amberley. So my husband said, 'We've got to have a village. We have to have a good police department; we have to have a good fire department.' So he decided to form a village. Well, Herbie French was delighted, too. My husband said, 'We can't live here unless we have police protection.' So Amberley Village was founded.

"So they started the wonderful police department, and the first police

chief here was Bill Krueger [Charles Bird]. Then my husband bought the police cars for them. He bought their uniforms. In the winter he bought them long, heavy shirts; in the summer he bought them short-sleeved shirts.

“It didn’t take long to organize it. If you knew my husband, things were done immediately. Never procrastinated. Then what to name it? They wanted to name it Rollridge, but my husband said, ‘No way; that’s the name of my home.’ So Herbie said, ‘I have an idea; what do you think, Justin? Amberley, after a little town in Amberley, England.’ My husband said, ‘Fine.’ So Amberley was founded.

“That’s how Amberley grew. Then people found it. We had very strict laws; every house had to have one acre before they could build. Then it grew and grew. The only linking property left is Rollridge Farms. It’s the only vacant piece left in Amberley.

“Rollridge will go to my children, Henry Rollman II and Joan Rollman Musekamp.

“We still raise cattle and sheep on the farm. We used to raise a lot of grain here, but it is not profitable. It was expensive and we got nothing out of it; it wasn’t contributing to anything. But the cattle and sheep are. They provide food for people. We have streams going through here. The lake down here is stocked with fish, and it’s fed by underground springs.

“I had the finest registered nurse taking care of my child all her life, until my daughter was married. She was more than a nanny; she was an intelligent, wonderful person. And she watched very closely. They threatened to kidnap my child after that Lindbergh affair. We had police-trained dogs and constant guards around here, with guns, patrolling the place.

“After a great deal of research, we found it was one of the men on the place who had lost his job. He wanted a quarter of a million dollars or he would kidnap her. It was a great worry.

“My husband built a recreation house. It’s still here. So Miss Anna Blue [the nanny] and my daughter would go down to this little recreation house and spend the whole day there. Miss Blue would cook her lunch, and they’d invite all the little children from the area.

“Amberley is a wonderful village, with the most wonderful police department, the finest manager, the finest police chief. The only thing about Amberley is that my husband wanted schools in Amberley. There was plenty of money here and plenty of room at that time. There’s no more room now. But one man with Federated Department Stores lived here, and said, ‘Well, you don’t have to have schools in Amberley; send the children to public schools.’ So the Council agreed with him, and so there were no schools. Then he moved out of Amberley, transferred.

“Herbie didn’t have any close relatives and had one woman he had a little house for, Jane Hunt. Her husband was his lawyer. Herbie had a little house up in Maine, with a little porch in front, but he didn’t have any guardrails. For some reason, his lawyer got up and went to the railing and fell and was killed. So Herbie built a little house for Jane. She was the dearest person. The house was right on his property, but it was near where our place slopes.

“When Herbie died, he gave his property to the city. The city accepted it, but Amberley patrols it. If the city hadn’t accepted it, Amberley would have.

“But boost our wonderful police department and wonderful mayor. The thing we don’t do enough is give people praise. Let them feel good; let them feel their accomplishments. Don’t criticize; give praise.”

# HERBERT G. FRENCH MEMORIAL TO HIS DOGS (FRENCH PARK)

From the first parking lot area inside the entrance to French Park, it is but a short quarter mile hike upstream along the creek to a memorial to five of Herbert French's dogs. Mr. French is remembered by many as being an owner and lover of Airedales. He was fond of walking his dogs along the many pathways meandering through his property, Reachmont Farms.

As you hike along the small stream near the French Park entrance, you approach an old masonry wall along the south side of the creek. Just past the easily seen wall on the other (north) side of the stream and about two feet north of the trail is a small granite boulder with a bronze plaque imbedded in it and flanked top to bottom by two small added sections. The plaque contains five names and dates of births and deaths. The uppermost plaque was added four years after Mr. French's death in 1942, so obviously someone else was involved in this project.

Many park visitors walking along that path have wondered to whom and by whom the plaque was dedicated. In the forty-three years that have elapsed since the last plaque was added, its surface has been battered to such an extent that some of the inscriptions are nearly illegible. The monument itself has been overgrown by grasses along the path and may be difficult to spot immediately.

## THE NAMES, DATES, AND INSCRIPTION

Sammy, June 8, 1934–Jan. 25, 1946

In Memory of the Reachmont  
Faithful Friends

Nick Jan. 15, 1917–March 6, 1925

Pete April 1, 1911–Aug. 7, 1925

Pal Dec. 20, 1921–Jan. 21, 1926

Robert Dec. 20, 1921–Dec. 20, 1934



Herbert G. French and his dog Nick, circa 1920. Nick is one of the dogs commemorated on the plaque.



Herbert French, one of the founders of Amberley Village, was known for his love of Airedales.

While some of the inscriptions on the plaque are illegible, it's still easy to see that Herbert French was an animal lover.



Herbert French bought this house from Frank Buxton, and added on to it.

INTERVIEW WITH

# JOHN WATTS

*Amberley Resident, by Priscilla Petty  
on December 28, 1988 at the home of Priscilla Petty*

We moved here in March of 1955; I was fifteen. We had lived in Valleydale, between Galbraith and Compton, just west of Vine, across the street from Drake Hospital. Our Amberley house was on the eastern edge of Rollman's Farm. Our western property borderline and their eastern property borderline were contiguous. It was gorgeous and very peaceful—it was like being on a farm, because just on the other side of the fence was a farm. I would not want to get up in the morning and milk cows; that doesn't interest me at all. But although I am not a person who would want to live on a farm, to be able to wander around the property as a kid was pretty neat. I was talking to another fellow from the area the other day and asked him about his experiences there. He wanted to know if I had ever been to the lake that's back on Rollman's property, and I said yes I had, but I had never gone any farther east than that because there was always a certain fear that I would be harassed by the property owners, whom I never met, never saw. And so, for some reason, that was my boundary. I never went any farther east than the lake in that area. And in the years I spent wandering around back there—and I spent day after day back there—I never once saw another living person, which was kind of a neat thing. Because where can you go around here without seeing another living soul?

"I could deliberately go to French Park, which I did, and there were

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*John Watts didn't feel he had much to say when I asked him to talk with me about his experiences in Amberley. He didn't think of his life experiences as "history." But the scenes he creates for you, the reader, are scenes that will soon be gone as the Rollman Estate is subdivided. Hunting and traipsing across property where one sees no living soul won't likely happen again in Amberley Village. His teenager's view of the kindness of Amberley's police also offers insight into the attitudes created by those who run the Village and work to make it a pleasant place to live.*



Justin Rollman put in this pond so he could drain his swimming pool without flooding Herbert French's property.



A pair of mallard ducks visits the Rollridge pond.



The Rollmans' cows were a fixture in Amberley Village for many years.

always people there. But the people at French Park did not stray much beyond the park boundaries. And being a modestly adventurous soul, I didn't have any scruples about climbing fences, so I went back and forth between Rollman's and French Park and between Rollman's and my folks' place, continuously.

"We did see a lot of cows. I don't know anything about livestock, but they were beautiful and healthy and gorgeous, big animals. Apparently they grazed them in certain fields at certain times, because for long periods of time there would always be cows out there. They would come right up to the fence and hang their heads over the fence and munch on the greenery in our yard. There were thirty or so. I mean, it wasn't one or two. Big herd. The fence was along the eastern boundary of the property, which went from the street to the back of the backyard, a distance of maybe 200 feet. And actually, the farm property bent around the back corner of the fence and extended for another probably fifty feet along the back property line. The fence would be absolutely solid cows, all the way along that whole area, just standing with their heads over watching us; not eating, just watching. It was eerie, it really was.

"I can remember many a time when there would be guests over and we'd be having a picnic in the backyard. I mean, cows standing there, hour after hour, staring at us. And it used to give guests the creeps. So

you'd run at the cows yelling, and they would run; they would scatter. But within half an hour they'd be back. But I can remember one morning at about four or five o'clock, being awakened by cows mooing loudly—I don't know why. But I remember being so mad, so angry at the disruption of my sleep that I went to a woodpile my dad had by the back door and got a small log. Then I ran out into the backyard and threw it at the cows and hit one of them right in the head. They dispersed instantly. And it gave me a great feeling of power, I guess, that I could make these animals—which were so much larger than I was—leave so quickly."

*How big was your parents' property?*

"Half an acre, probably. This would have been an area that was annexed by Amberley. It would not have been one of the original plots. There was a distinct demarcation between the houses in Amberley and the houses in Deer Park, which were just up the street a quarter of a mile, maybe less than that. So exactly what the circumstances were when those houses were built, I don't know. But the house that I lived in was built by a builder for himself. Apparently, he had built all those around there. For some reason—either they wanted to move or go to Florida or something—they sold the house. It was a cement-slab house with no basement, which was a problem, I think. I don't like basementless houses. It was cold because of that, and everything had to be wall-to-wall carpet; otherwise you'd really freeze on the floor. And there were some problems with the garage, which was attached and not heated, because on several occasions when my parents would leave for extended vacations in cold weather, pipes that ran along the ceiling in the attic above the unheated garage froze. This happened two or three times and caused tremendous amounts of damage when the pipes thawed and broke. There was always a problem keeping pipes from freezing because of where they were placed. But it was a nice house, and they lived there for thirty-three years, from '55 to '88.

"One of the things my parents always liked about the Village was the police and fire protection. They never had occasion to need fire protection. But when they would leave, they would always give the police a key and tell them when they were going to be gone. On several occasions when I had moved out, I needed to get in the house, and I went to the Village and identified myself and my reason for wanting to be in the house, and would get the key. I had a key myself but couldn't find it usually, because it was so infrequently needed. But the police protection was fabulous.

"One time there was a terrible leak—I don't recall what caused it.

My folks were in Florida. I had gone over to check on the house, and there was like two inches of water covering the floors. Since it was cement slab, the water stood on top of the slab. The damage was incredible. I opened the door and water poured out. I sloshed through and got to the phone and called the Village, and they had a crew there within five minutes. It was unreal; I just couldn't believe it. Apparently they'd dealt with this before, because they had squeegees and all sorts of things to squeegee the water and get it out of the house. They were there for not five or ten minutes; they were there for several hours. It was something I was very amazed at. And my parents were not presented with a bill. This was part of the service."

*Let's talk about some experiences you had growing up in Amberley.*

"I made a bullwhip when I was in college, and a fraternity brother of mine taught me how to crack it. I never was into firecrackers to any extent after having an accident with one as a child that affected my hearing. But I learned to crack this bullwhip. And on the Fourth of July and on other occasions, I would take the bullwhip out into the yard and crack it. One time I was doing that and a police car came zipping right into the backyard. An officer got out of the car and looked at me and said, 'How long have you been doing this?'

"And I said, 'Just a few minutes. Why?'

"And he said, 'Maybe ten?'

"And I said, 'Yeah, maybe.'

"And he said, 'Well, we had a report that somebody was back here shooting a .22, and I came back to see what was going on.'

"I laughed and he said, 'Was it this bullwhip? Crack it for me once.'

"I did and he said, 'Sounds like a .22 to me.' He turned around and drove out, shaking his head like, 'Strange kids around here.'

"I never really had a negative experience with the police. They were always...I interpreted it at least, that they felt their job was to help people. And I don't think very many police departments take that approach. It was a nice attitude. If somebody stepped out of line, they weren't there to harass you; they were there to tell you, 'This isn't such a hot idea. Maybe you'd better reconsider it.' I suppose if you didn't reconsider it, then they would jump on you. But I never heard of anybody bad-mouthing the police department, and that's pretty unique in this day and age, or in that day and age.

"I think the thing I most liked about living there was being against Rollman's farm. As a kid I loved to wander through fields and scrounge through creeks looking for fossils. And there were a couple of nice creeks back there with fossils. I didn't know what the fossils were. I do

The stream in French Park is a good place to go fossil hunting.



now, but I didn't then. It was the kind of place I really enjoyed being alone in for hours at a time, just doing my own thing, whatever it was. And that was a place where I could. I've never lived in another place where I could do that, really. And so it was pretty nice. I think it's very sad that the property will be broken up for a subdivision. I know it's inevitable. My folks knew it was inevitable. I suspect that was one of the reasons they moved, because they knew it was going to happen soon."

*So you never met Mrs. Rollman?*

"Never did. Never heard anything about her. Although, my dad had an experience with her. She had a very large tree that overhung the corner of his property, and the tree was struck by lightning. A large branch and half of the trunk came crashing down, smashed fences, nailed a couple of trees in the backyard, and did a considerable amount of damage. He called the Police Department and asked what should be done. They sent an officer out to look at it, and basically what he said is, 'Well, now, keep this on a friendly basis. Call Mrs. Rollman; tell her what has happened. She's a nice lady.'

"So, as my dad tells it, he called her, with a great deal of nervousness, explained who he was and what had happened, and she was very

gracious and apologized profusely for the damage and said that she'd have a crew out immediately to repair whatever needed to be repaired. And what they couldn't repair, for him to have repaired and send her the bill and she would pay it. Time passed and nothing happened. Two weeks, three weeks went by and the damage...the tree was still lying there. Dad was about ready to call her again when a truck with a couple of guys pulled up into his driveway. He saw them going out into the backyard with a chain saw, and he went out to find out who they were and what they were doing. They said they were the crew for Mrs. Rollman and they had been searching for this downed tree for two weeks. She had gotten her directions crossed, somehow, and they were looking somewhere in the vicinity of Winding Way, which was a different parcel of land. They finally concluded that there was no downed tree over there, and they started looking other places; they spotted this from the road and figured this must be the downed tree. And they apologized. They proceeded to cut it all up, split it and stack it for my father to use for firewood, which delighted him, and then they repaired the fence. And he never saw the bill or anything else.

"So Mrs. Rollman must have been a pretty nice lady. The only experience with Mrs. Rollman was through my dad, and it was a real fine experience. I never heard of anybody having a negative experience. But then, she must have kept to herself, because none of the people around me that I knew of knew her. Even though our properties adjoined, nobody ever saw her, had any idea who she was or what she looked like. And I understand she just recently died.

"I know that my parents were very fond of their neighbors. Although, interestingly enough, they had very little to do with the neighbors when I lived there, because I didn't really know the neighbors. I knew the people across the street, and I knew the people next door, and that was basically it. Other than that, I didn't make any attempt to, nor did anyone else make any attempt to establish any kind of friendly relations in the neighborhood. So that came after I left.

"I've heard several people criticize the lack of sidewalks, because it has a tendency to keep people in their own very small area. And sidewalks being an opening, almost a bonding kind of a transportation network, Amberley doesn't have it. If we wanted to take a walk—which we frequently did—you had to walk in the street. Although the area where I lived was a dead-end street, it was only a short dead-end street, and once you left there, you were immediately subjected to the vicissitudes of traffic.

"I remember when the tornado went through, back in '73 or '74, something like that. It hit the back of my parents' property, went

through Rollman's Farm, did a lot of damage. Knocked down gorgeous, old trees. Because their property was tree-lined—tree- and cow-lined. Where there wasn't a tree, there was a cow. It took out most of those gorgeous, old trees. The property never did look the same after that. Where it touched down, apparently, was very, very close to their house, because it did a tremendous amount of damage to the back of the house. I was not in town when it hit. When I got home, you literally could not walk into the backyard because of the tangle of downed timber. I've never seen anything like that before. It took six men with chain saws a week to clear the backyard. Which means all those trees were gone. Most of them were locusts, which as a kid you did not climb because they were honey locusts and they had the big spikes on them. But they were marvelously shaped trees.

"I can honestly say, after that destruction to those trees, I never felt about the property the way that I did before, because the trees did a lot to make it. The trees were on both sides of the fence. The fence actually went right between them, in some cases. The fence itself was not noticeable, because it had greenery growing on it and you could very easily not think of there ever being a fence there. It was a wire fence on wooden posts, but wide-spaced wire; not chicken-wire-type, more like six-inch squares. Large enough so that you could easily reach through, and therefore, visually, easily see through. But there were vines and various undergrowth around the fence, so you didn't really notice it. The farm was more an extension of the backyard than a separate entity. I graduated from high school in '58 and graduated from college in '62. My connection with the property basically ended in 1962; I lived there on and off for seven years.

"I have a lot of fond remembrances of that farm, just because it was so pastoral."

*They had sheep, too, didn't they?*

"They may have, but they didn't graze in the fields near our house; at least not that I recall. I don't ever remember seeing the sheep. And because my parents lived on the west, and to some extent, the southwestern side, I never saw the barns. I never went over there. I went as far as French Park; that's the farthest I ever went. French Park is on the south side, so I was very familiar with the area along the south side and the area along the west side of their property, but I was not at all familiar with the north and east sides."

*Anything else about Amberley that comes to mind?*

"It was sure a long way to high school. I went to Woodward. Most of my

classmates, as well as me, took the test to go to Walnut Hills. As far as I knew, nobody ever failed that test. But had I gone to Walnut Hills, I would have left all of my friends. My mother wanted me to go there badly, and I fought her tooth and nail, and I prevailed and I went to Woodward.

“I just remember it being a distance to high school from where I lived, because my father was not in a position to pick me up. It was like seven miles, and there was no bus service at all. It was very difficult to get back and forth. A couple of times I hitchhiked, but I did not like that. It made me very uncomfortable, so I didn’t do that very often. There was bus service that came up to the Kennedy Heights loop on Montgomery Road, which now no longer exists. But it was the turnaround place, so that’s all the farther east the hourly buses went. If I took the bus to the end of the route, I could walk from there, and that shortened the hike to about three miles. Every day. Sometimes I got a ride to the loop. I rarely got a ride home from the loop.

“And, unfortunately, I was on the swimming team and the football team and so forth, which meant that I got out at odd hours, and so it was often six-thirty or seven o’clock before I got home in the evening, very tired. Because it was a roundabout route and parts of it had no sidewalks, it used to take about an hour. I lived off of Sagamore Drive, on Lansdowne. Sagamore Drive dead-ended at a fence not far from my house. Had it gone through, there would have been a nice, direct walk. But, unfortunately for my travels, it did not. So I used to cut across people’s yards and climb fences and so forth to get to the end of Sagamore Drive. This would shorten my walk by fifteen or twenty minutes. Which was definitely a lot, because otherwise I had to go around through Deer Park.”

*So it would take you thirty to forty-five minutes to walk home?*

“Yeah, after a bus ride which involved two transfers. There was no direct bus, so you had to wait to transfer. Oh, it was awful. This was to Woodward, which was the closest school. At that time, I guess my mother did have a car. But in those days kids were not taxied around like they are now. The car was mainly for shopping and things like that. I don’t ever remember being chauffeured around much. I was pretty much on my own in that way. The girl that I was dating lived in Silverton, which was about a half-hour to forty-five minute walk, and I can remember walking that many, many times, angry because I wasn’t allowed to use the car. I was of age to drive a car, but I was not permitted.”

*So the rural aspect of Amberley Village is beautiful, but it has its disadvantages for a kid without a car.*

“Absolutely. It has its disadvantages to anyone without a car, because there is no public transportation, whatsoever, anywhere within the Village. And that’s as true now as it was twenty-five years ago when I left.

“One of the things that’s truly sad is the fact that nobody knows about this Frank Lloyd Wright house there that I had never heard of until recently. And I have asked people. I have asked a half a dozen other people who have lived in the area for years, and they’ve never heard of it, either.” [But John followed up on his curiosity about the house and tells us about it. A sidebar and photo follow.]

# FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE

What is probably the most unusual and certainly unique structure in the Village is the Frank Lloyd Wright “Usonian automatic” house designed and built for Gerald B. Tonkens on Knoll Road.

Tonkens, a prominent Cincinnati Cadillac and Oldsmobile dealer (now retired), approached Mr. Wright in the early 1950s, and the project was underway. Construction actually began in 1954 and was supervised by Eric Lloyd Wright, Frank’s grandson.

Acknowledged as the finest (and incidentally, one of the last) “Usonian” home designed by Wright (who was eighty-five years old in 1954), the building and its furniture (both built-ins and free-standing all designed by Frank Lloyd Wright) are unaltered by the Tonkenses, making this a Frank Lloyd Wright purist’s dream. The term *Usonian* was coined by Wright to describe a late period or concept in his work. It does not refer to an actual structure or group of structures, but rather to a spatial concept. An “automatic” home is one designed to be built by the so-called “average” person within their “average” means. Wright described the “Usonian automatics” as “affordable, beautiful homes for a democratic America.” The Tonkens home, complete with Wright’s signature by the front door, is a magnificent structure that was completed in 1956 (Wright died three years later at the age of ninety).

The steel-reinforced walls and ceilings are of preformed concrete blocks pierced repeatedly by rectilinear glass. Visually exciting from the outside, it is absolutely breathtaking from within. The mahogany furniture and paneling glow warmly against the austere grey of concrete, and the Tonkenses’ decorative touches—books, hangings, pottery—do a good job of embellishing what was already beautiful.



Frank Lloyd Wright designed this home for Gerald B. Tonkens in the early fifties.

Wright's signature plaque is incorporated in the front entranceway.





Entrance to the Frank Lloyd Wright house on Knoll Road.

INTERVIEW WITH

# RUTH KLEIN

*Amberley Resident, by Priscilla Petty  
on May 11, 1988 at her home in Amberley Village*

*W*e bought our first house in Amberley in the winter of 1940... the little white-and-brown house on the southwest corner of Section Road and Fair Oaks Drive. From our house down to the railroad tracks, there was nothing but the Boerger Dairy Farm. Its huge barn stood where Farm Acres subdivision is now. Cowbells tinkled as the animals clustered under the trees close to the fence separating the dairy from Glen Acres. And from the railroad tracks to Reading Road all the way down to Losantiville Road, there was only farm land.

‘As a young couple with one baby girl, we had found our dream house with a creek flowing around it, woods and wildflowers on the east bank, a great old elm tree leaning across the creek at the bridge. This tree gave the place its name, Sleepy Elms. Our mail came rural delivery from Lockland. There were no house numbers in the Village, only P.O. Box numbers.

‘Aracoma was a riding academy. Only the Salinger house and the Benedict estate (now Beechlands) lay between Fair Oaks Drive and the French property at Section and Ridge roads. Brookwood was being developed by Robert Strong on his family farm. Glen Acres was developed by the Kopf brothers, Walter and Larry, a former baseball player for the Reds. There were about ten houses here then, all designed by the architect Luigi Marioni.

‘After we’d been living in the Village for a few years, I fell in love with the house we are living in now, at 6754 Fair Oaks Drive. By then we had a baby boy, and the four of us moved up the road and up the hill in the fall of 1943, (the next summer we became a family of five, with the birth

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*Ruth Klein is a poet, a lover of words, and of our language used as it should be used, with accuracy and precision. We sat for this interview, in her home, which is as lovely and ordered as she. You’ll enjoy her reminiscences and recollections of a very young Amberley Village.*

of another baby girl). The same creek runs past our house in the back. There is a Glen Acres owl, which still hoots from the old trees. Twice it came down two of our neighbors' chimneys, once to sit on their grand piano and another time to nestle in their fireplace. We all screened our chimney tops after that!

"Everyone took great pride in their homes. Houses were built on two- and three-acre lots. Things changed after World War II. One-story homes became popular, but the desire to keep a rural atmosphere was the chief attraction to new homeowners. There are only three through thoroughfares in Amberley, no sidewalks or street lights, and the various subdivisions are all no-outlet areas.

"French Park was the home of Herbert Greer French. He was a bachelor and one of the men who helped to incorporate the Village. When he died, he left an unusual will. Originally, he owned the four corners at Section and Ridge roads. He had already given the northwest corner to Amberley for its civic center; the other three corners, including the vast acreage surrounding his home, he left to the City of Cincinnati for a park. If Cincinnati refused it, Hamilton County was to have it, and should the county decline, then Amberley Village was to inherit it. Albert Cash was Mayor of Cincinnati at that time and he grabbed. So now, in the very heart of our Village we have a public park belonging to Cincinnati!"

*Did it upset the residents of Amberley to think that there would be a park within its midst and they had no control over it?*

"Yes, of course. We thought that was very strange. And since Mr. French had lived here for such a long time, why he did that, I have no idea. But it worked out very well. The city was very cooperative, and the property and beautiful home up there were used as a headquarters for the Girl Scouts for many, many years. And it's just lately, maybe within the last five or ten years, that it hasn't been. But it's policed by the Cincinnati Police and also by Amberley Police.

"The police have always been wonderful here, watching everything. Crime is minimal, mostly breaking into cars and things like that, which nobody can do much about. The minute you call them, they come. We have cooperation with the Deer Park Life Squad and the Golf Manor Life Squad and Fire Department. Then we have our own police and fire. The cooperation between the city and the Village is so good."

*Can you describe some scenic spots in the Village?*

"There was a garden club, an Amberley Village Garden Club that started in the fall of 1940. I became a member in '41. When I was president of

In 1952, the Amberley Village Garden Club had forty active members and met on the first Monday of the month. Monthly talks covered such topics as "Continuous Bloom in the Border" and "Garden Accessories."



AMBERLEY VILLAGE  
GARDEN CLUB

1952-1953

OFFICERS

President—Mrs. CHARLES H. KLEIN  
1st Vice President—Mrs. D. M. WATT, III  
2nd Vice President—Mrs. W. L. THEDE  
Recording Secretary—Mrs. K. L. SCHANBACHER  
Corresponding Secretary—Mrs. HAYWARD GAY  
Treasurer—Mrs. N. J. GIANNESTRAS

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Budget—Mrs. N. J. GIANNESTRAS  
Conservation—Mrs. CHARLES PALMER  
Exhibit—Mrs. HARVEY SEYBOLD  
Good Cheer—Mrs. J. A. HESSELBROCK  
Hostesses—Mrs. HUGO HALLER  
Junior Gardeners—Mrs. E. A. COOK  
Membership—Mrs. R. E. RAITZ  
Planning—Mrs. CHARLES BIRD  
Program—Mrs. E. C. ELSEY  
Publicity—Mrs. E. W. MUELLER  
Telephone—Mrs. J. A. PIESCHE  
Transportation—Mrs. S. E. BERGSTRÖM

NOVEMBER 3, 1952

Speaker: Mrs. R. A. BICKNELL  
Topic: Nature's Own Christmas  
Ornaments.

Hostess: Mrs. J. A. HESSELBROCK

Assistants: Mrs. CHARLES BIRD  
Mrs. P. C. HEWETT  
Mrs. HARVEY SEYBOLD

Exhibit: Dried arrangement  
(may be painted)  
in any kitchen container

SPECIAL

NOVEMBER 21 - 22, 1952  
"Christmas Around the House"  
Lecture and Workshop  
Federated Garden Clubs  
Plan to Attend

the club, the four corners at Section and Ridge were just a mess. So the ladies of the garden club got the idea of beautifying those corners. We would pay our dues. We'd beautify the Village posts, announce where Amberley Village is. We'd plant flowers around them and donate money to plant flowers at Village Hall. The Garden Club has disbanded now. Almost all of its original members are dead or moved away, and gradually, everybody's life changed so much that it just wasn't feasible to continue. Although, once a year, some of the old members meet at Christmas time just to get together.

"But nevertheless, we thought our corner could be beautified. So I went to the Superintendent of the Cincinnati Park Board and told him our plan. This was in the early fifties. And since the roads make a cross, I said, 'It would be nice to have a circular planting to sort of set that off.' They cooperated beautifully, and we did our corner. They did the design for the planting and they did their planting of their three corners, and we paid for our corner. I remember I said, 'Well, what will happen when they widen the roads?' And Earl Gray, the Superintendent, said, 'They can widen them to twenty more feet and nothing will happen to the plantings.' So he thought for the future then.

"But, of course, the roads in Amberley won't ever be too wide, because we want to keep the rural atmosphere by leaving out sidewalks and street lights. There are jogging paths along the main arteries, though. And now, with the tennis courts and Little League baseball field and the athletic corner, they have also put a jogging path. The tennis courts are supposed to be used only by members, and you have to have a key slot to get in. But the jogging paths are used by people from all around. The Little League baseball field is delightful. Everybody looks forward to seeing the little kids out there with their families, playing.

"There are various creeks that run through the Village, and the one that runs under Fair Oaks Drive in Glen Acres never dries up. There's a certain place beyond the bridge that is always flowing, and there are always fish down there. Sometimes in dry weather, a snapping turtle still wanders through the Glen looking for water. It contributes to the rural atmosphere. And we have lots of birds and wildlife; little red foxes still run around, even now. And deer used to. When my children were little, the deer would come through our property. That's how I would make them behave at Christmas time. When deer ran across, I said, 'Now, see, Santa Claus is watching.' There are opossum and raccoons and owls and turtles. There's still enough wilderness around here. Of course, French Park makes a wonderful habitat for them. And, of course, the Rollman Farm is rural, still."

*Besides the physical ambience, what has made Amberley a different place from some of the other villages or cities? What has made it special to you?*

“The beauty. We love the Glen because of the rolling terrain. So many of the other developments are flat. Before there was so much building, the views from the higher places were magnificent. Still, there are places where you can see magnificent sunsets. The fact that it’s kept a rural atmosphere—that we like very, very much. Everybody loves that. They never wanted sidewalks or street lights. And, of course, our Council. That’s always a pleasant thing to vote on. There’s no acrimony. Roy Elliott was the mayor when we moved here and was the Mayor almost until he died, a long time. We always have had a good Council. And we didn’t have a Village Manager until much later, and I really can’t remember exactly when. But that’s all worked out very well, too.”

*Were there any incidents, or were there any decisions to be made, that Amberley residents were concerned about? Or did an individual live in his home and enjoy it and really not have a great deal of contact with others?*

“It’s mostly happy neighborhoods. Of course, the Village meetings are open to everybody. And if you have a problem, it’s always addressed. There were some things long ago, about dogs running loose. So there’s a law now that dogs have to be on a leash. Pools, you have to get permits, of course, for that, and they have to be fenced for safety reasons. Also, there are these rules that you can’t build too close to somebody else’s property line. You have to get permission from the Planning Commission for any addition you wish to put on your house. All those things are usually handled very pleasantly.”

*What are some of your experiences in the early days of the Village?*

“The first spring [1940] we lived in the house on the southwest corner of Section and Fair Oaks, there was a big flood. I had a little baby girl, twenty-two months old, and I saw the water rising and rising and rising and rising. I was ready to throw all my possessions in the bedspread and grab my baby and get out. I called up the Village Hall, and Bill Krueger, who was the Captain of Police, came down in his high rubber boots. He looked around and he said, ‘Mrs. Klein, you don’t have to worry at all. All of Cincinnati will be gone before the creek gets up to your house.’ He was later Chief for a long, long time, and he retired about eight or ten years ago. He still lives in the Village.

“Everybody was rationed during the war. You had to get special gas cards when you lived out here. In fact, we had to change pediatricians because our pediatrician was called to training camps, as so many of

the young recruits were getting childhood diseases who had never had them before. So we lost our pediatrician to the war that way and had to choose another one. And I chose one—of course, very well recommended—who lived in Lebanon but had an office here near Children's Hospital. He had to come through here every day, so he had plenty of gas for going back and forth to Lebanon, so I thought, 'Well, I'll choose him.' All the doctors came to your homes then. Now they take you in the doctor's office on a stretcher practically."

*Bernie Boraten said that your husband probably was as knowledgeable about what's gone on in the Village as anyone. He said, 'Charles Klein knows the Village. He sometimes takes the stance that you should have done things differently, but he has been a good person to have because he kept things in the right order.' He was complimentary of him, even though he takes an adversarial stance.*

"Charles is very knowledgeable. The two business properties in the Village, ours [the original Progress Lithographing Co.] and Gibson, are set so far back to make the main entrance to the Village appear expansive since they're on the railroad track. Well, what can you do with property that's on a railroad track? The Planning Commission decided, and they controlled the set-back from the street on homes and businesses.

"Now, of course, as I said, there were no homes all the way up from the railroad track to the little house on the corner where we first lived. That was the Boerger Dairy. There was a fence between our property and the rest of the property in Glen Acres, and the cows would come up to the fence and low. Some of the ladies up on Glen Acres Drive would feed the cows. One of the ladies who lived up there, Joanne Gross Stewart, was a wonderful organist. She played the organ in the Albee Theater, and she was a fine gardener, too. Neighbors who are still living in this area have things growing in our gardens that she gave us to plant.

"Those are unimportant things, but delightful memories. Around here, everybody gets along. In some areas, they don't always, you know. And it's mostly over petty little things like dogs running through. I have never heard of any major differences between people. They seem to be good neighbors. If we see anything that we think is suspicious, we can call up the police and they'll investigate for us. Of course, there's too much traffic going through the Village now. But anything suspicious is checked out. Nobody has the right to solicit in the Village except religious organizations. We really only get the one that comes through yearly, Jehovah's Witnesses.

"I can't think of anything else, truly. Everybody has pride in how his home looks, his garden, his lawn, and we all take care of everything

around the road. If something blows off of the trash truck, we pick it up. We watch that our streets are nice and clean. When we moved into this house in 1943, the trees weren't as tall as the house. Now they tower way over! And you can imagine, especially when the oak leaves fall down, they stay. We have to get them swept up three times, and we have twelve oak trees. So my dream is to live in a penthouse overlooking the river since I've had the trees. My husband says, 'No way. We're going out of here feet first.'"

*Have you written any poetry about Amberley Village experiences?*

"I write very feminine lyrical poetry. My nature poems have truly been inspired by my life here. The seasons, the woods, the streams, flowers, butterflies, fireflies, wildlife, songbirds (all Villagers feed the birds). Once, a few years ago, after a thrashing storm, a rainbow touched down on my front lawn. That *was* an inspiration—but no pot of gold! . . . just golden memories. When I was seventy, I published a book of poems. I am healthy and most grateful for that. I have good genes, a loving family, good friends and neighbors, and good inner resources. Amberley has given me the best surroundings."

# BINGHAM MEMORIAL TO A DOWNED FLIER (BROOKWOOD SUBDIVISION)

At the juncture of Fair Oaks and Willowbrook drives, on the north side of Section Road behind the mailbox shelter, in a modest triangular plot lies a quiet memorial to Ralph Devou Bingham.

Dedicated on Memorial Day in 1947 by the family and neighbors of Ralph and Louise Bingham, the bronze plaque, along with benches (now gone) were designed as a memorial to young Ralph, an Army Air Force flier lost in World War II. Mayor Hugo Haller and Rev. Benjamin Judd performed the dedication ceremony.

Sergeant Ralph Bingham was a B-17 radio operator attached to the Air Transport Command of the USAAF. He was on a flight that had taken him from Miami Beach to Marrakesh, Morocco; April 4, 1943, and his aircraft left Marrakesh on the final leg of its journey to England. It disappeared (probably in the vicinity of the Bay of Biscay), and Ralph, then twenty-four, was never heard of again. No trace of him, the crew, or the bomber was ever found. Ralph had been in business with his father in the Bingham Tool and Supply Company before enlisting and becoming a radio operator; he was survived by two brothers, Harry and Thomas. Harry James Bingham, M.D., of Pleasant Ridge, remembers these events of more than forty years ago, as his older brother became the only World War II veteran of the Village to be lost in action.



Bingham Memorial honors an Amberley resident and World War II flier who was lost in action.

INTERVIEW WITH

# RABBI MARK N. GOLDMAN

*by Priscilla Petty on February 2, 1989  
at Rockdale Temple, Amberley Village*

I spent nine years in college, because I was a music major first and I planned to be a concert pianist and not a rabbi. Juilliard [school of music] said, 'Make up your mind.' I couldn't; instead I came to Cincinnati, to the College Conservatory of Music near Mecklenburg's old beer garden.

'I'm from Hartford, Connecticut; I came here to college. My wife, Meryl, is from New York. In my enthusiasm to introduce Meryl to the history of Cincinnati and to this congregation, I brought her to the corner of Rockdale Avenue and Harvey in North Avondale. To my shock, there was only a baseball field there. I looked and I said, 'Maybe I forgot! I know the temple was here.' I was ordained in '67; I came here in '86 to become senior rabbi. And I couldn't understand what had happened. They told me that the year I left the temple was damaged in the riots, and then what was left, they razed. It had been desecrated.

[Pointing to recovered fragments of the marble Ten Commandments, which had stood in the Rockdale Temple.] "Evidently, when the fighting went on, the Commandments were smashed. But a couple named Lou and Marsha Lowenstein loved the old building, as a lot of people did, and they saved the broken fragments that you see now glued together. When I came to work here, they invited me over to their home in Amberley, and on their den rug had these particles on the floor. And I started to cry, 'cause I knew exactly what it was. 'What to do, Mark?' So we got a little committee together—a fine arts committee—and they

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*Rabbi Mark N. Goldman of Rockdale Temple is both a new and "old" resident of the Cincinnati area, for he went to Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music and to Hebrew Union College. During that time, he taught choir and was a religious school administrator at the Rockdale Temple. When he returned to the Cincinnati area in 1986, he saw it with fresh eyes, but with a historical perspective.*

donated the wherewithal and we hired an artist. I gave them the Hebrew of the missing Ten Commandments, and the artist etched it into the plexiglas backing.

“Also, over the ark of the old temple, in very large print was the phrase ‘Know before whom you stand’ or ‘Know before whom you are standing.’ Of course, the inference is God, and it’s wonderful—I remembered it because it had always been a favorite of mine. So they put that phrase here at the bottom. Then they wanted to have a name. I named this ‘The Promise Interrupted’ because in the Bible, you may recall, there’s the golden calf incident. The Jews are dancing around Mount Sinai in the story in Exodus, and Moses comes down with the tablets of the law, and he’s angry that they’re worshiping this idol, and he smashes the tablets in anger. But God, in His infinite mercy and love, according to the story, gives the Jews a second chance, and he gives them the second presentation of the Ten Commandments.

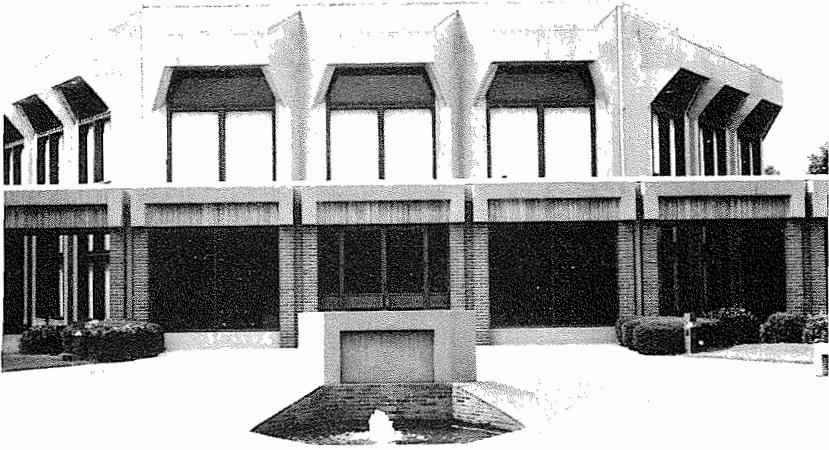
“So I thought of that story. These are the Jews, moving from North Avondale to places like Amberley, then Wyoming and Montgomery and Blue Ash, where they’ve also gone, and I called that ‘The Promise Interrupted.’ I’m very proud of this [the Ten Commandment fragments]. It’s a conversation piece that grabs people when they walk by.”

*Let’s talk about the beginnings of Judaism in Cincinnati.*

“Rockdale was founded as an Orthodox synagogue in 1824 and is the oldest Jewish congregation west of the Alleghenies. A lot of the old-timers here think that Rockdale was always Reform. But it couldn’t have been because there was no Reform Judaism in 1824. So in the 1840’s or 1850’s it turned to Reform as the movement started to catch hold.

“Reform Judaism officially took hold in Cincinnati, with the creation of Hebrew Union College in 1875. But the buds—the germs—of early Reform Judaism were first planted and started to grow in Germany at a time when the Jews were accepted in society—they were not disenfranchised. They came to America looking for a place to settle. And it was quite natural to come here, because Cincinnati and its famous seven hills looked a little bit like some of the towns in Germany—geographically—on the river. Also, they needed a welcoming, hospitable culture. So it was quite natural that Isaac Mayer Wise and the early German Jews came to Cincinnati.

Wise was a very brilliant organizer of American Reform Judaism and of great dignity and intellect, all of which he personified. But, obviously, in his time and place, he was a rebel and a radical. David Philipson was rabbi of our congregation for about sixty years, and he brought to his side a young man, Dr. Victor E. Reichert, who is our



Founded in 1824, Rockdale Temple represents the oldest Jewish congregation west of the Alleghenies. Through the years, Rockdale has had five permanent locations; this building was completed in 1969.



This sculpture, "Two Rabbis with Shofars," was commissioned in memory of a Rockdale member who had passed away. (Sculpted by Elbert Weinberg.)



The Isaac M. Wise Center on Ridge Road was built to replace the old Wise Temple in Avondale. Completed in 1976, it is affiliated with the Isaac M. Wise Temple on Plum Street in downtown Cincinnati.

Rabbi Emeritus, who's going to be—God willing—ninety-three on St. Patrick's Day this year.

“The Jews started down by the river in Cincinnati. Then when they improved their lot, they moved out. Amberley was a symbol of having made it. When I was a student, between '58 and '67, the temple was on Rockdale and Harvey avenues. The Jews lived mostly in the Rose Hill section of North Avondale. Then they started becoming pioneers, as it were. They went to Bond Hill and they went to Roselawn. Then, if they fared really well, they went to Amberley.

“When one went to Amberley in the sixties, when I was a student, that was going to the country. There was no Cross County Highway, of course. In fact, I remember getting on a bus—because I didn't have money for a car—to see Peter O'Toole in *Lawrence of Arabia*, and I got off at the Valley Shopping Center to go to the Valley Theater and, my God, you were going to the country. I still remember that. What's now Montgomery, where a lot of the people have moved as well, was Route 22, which I would take to drive back to my home in Hartford on vacations. Amberley was the northern perimeter to which neighborhood Jews were then moving, and it has now become, in twenty years, the southern perimeter for a lot of our congregants, because they are living in Blue Ash, Montgomery, Mason, Landen, Wyoming, places I never heard of.”

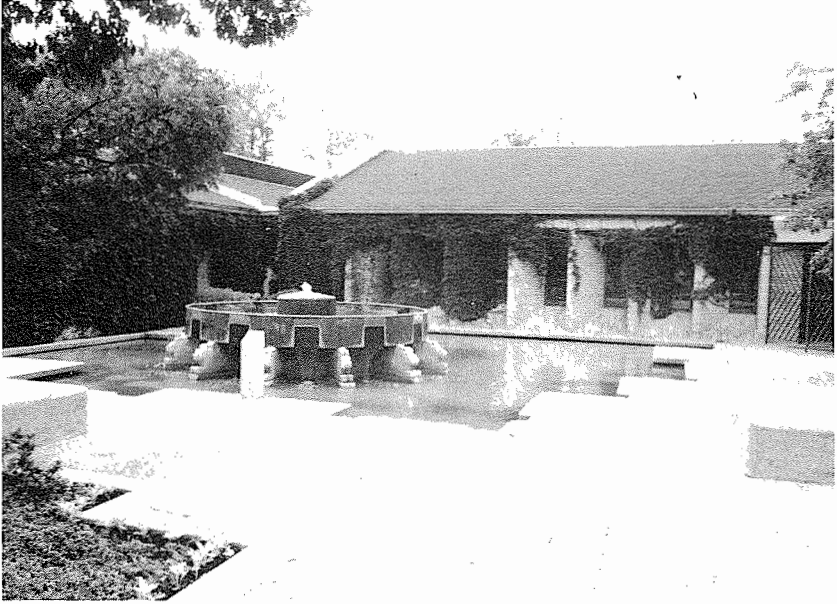


The courtyard of the Wise Center has a geometric beauty.

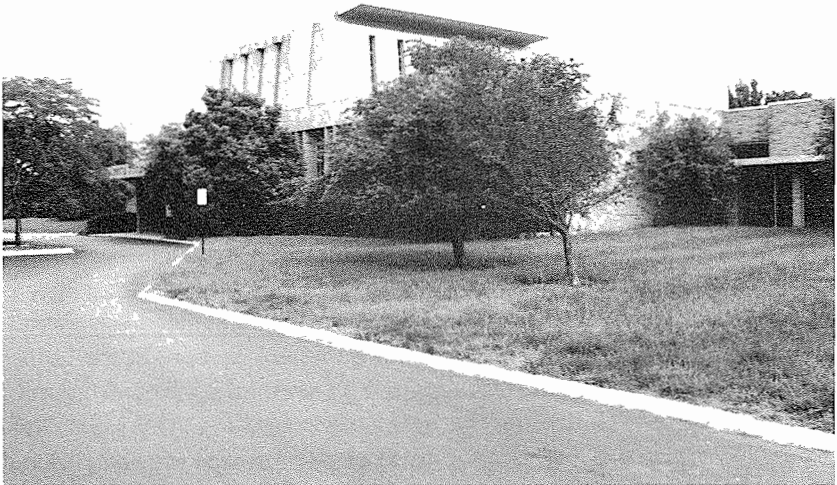
*What made you decide to live in Amberley?*

“I chose to live here deliberately. For me, Amberley was special when I was a student, and it was a symbol of success. It was a symbol of the right kind of place, an environment in which to raise a family. The community was devoid of any commercial business—I think that’s a law or a rule. It was countryish. And I’m an earth person. And being a Yankee, I wanted something where the topography of the land undulated—as we call them, ‘the rolling hills of Connecticut.’ So where we bought the home is... it’s rolling hills on Fair Oaks Lane. So I pretend it’s New England. And everyone who comes into that area always says, ‘Isn’t this great?’ It’s like a park to me. In spring, when it’s verdant, you can’t see your neighbors, practically, because of the trees. In the autumn, the colors rival Vermont.

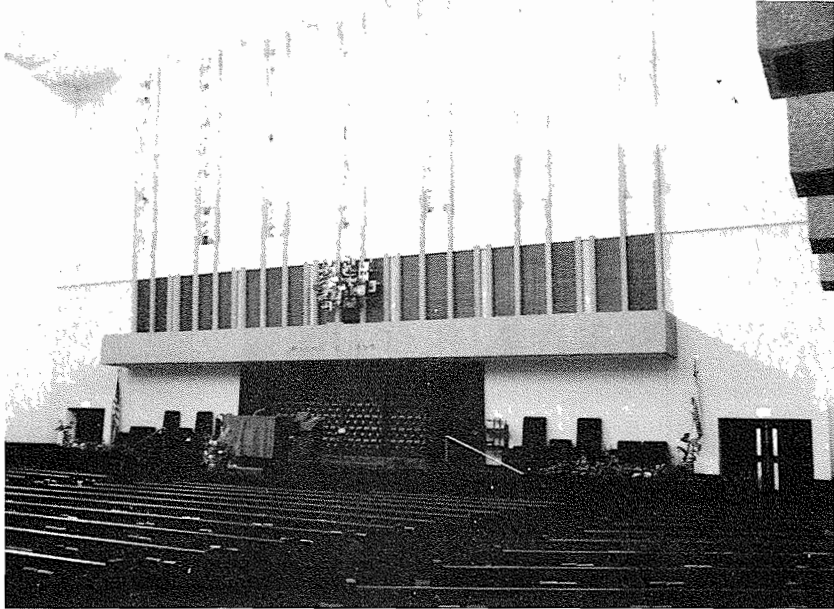
“When Meryl and I drove around here, after I knew I had been elected, I said—and I can hear myself in the rented car from the airport;



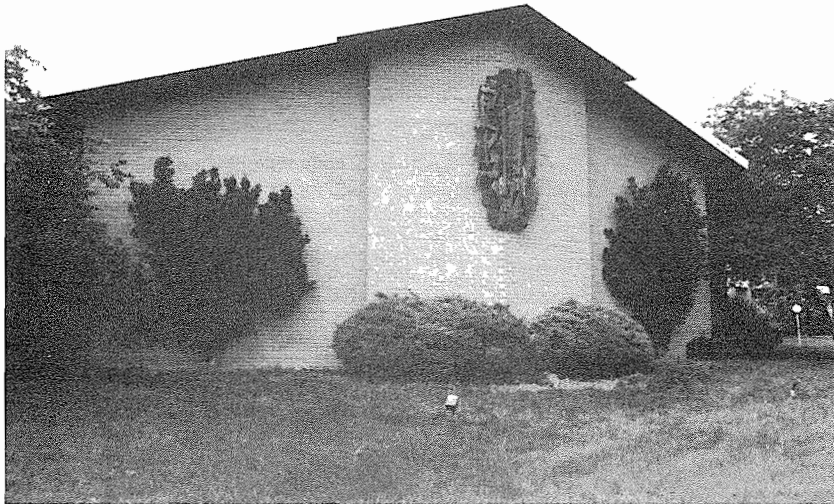
The fountain in the courtyard of the Wise Center is a brass basin supported by twelve bulls. Its design was inspired by a biblical reference to the fountain in the courtyard of the second temple in Jerusalem. (Sculpted by Theodore A. Gantz.)



The Adath Israel Synagogue was built on the old Rodgers Fruit Farm property and was completed in 1967. In the cornerstone is a piece of marble brought from Mt. Zion in Israel.



The seven stained glass windows in the Adath Israel sanctuary represent the days of creation. Its sloping walls rise to a height of fifty feet.



The congregation Temple Sholom was founded in 1954 by Rabbi Stanley R. Brav. Completed in 1960, Temple Sholom was the first synagogue to be built in Amberley Village. Planned as a three-stage project, the original structure was added to in 1967 and 1989.



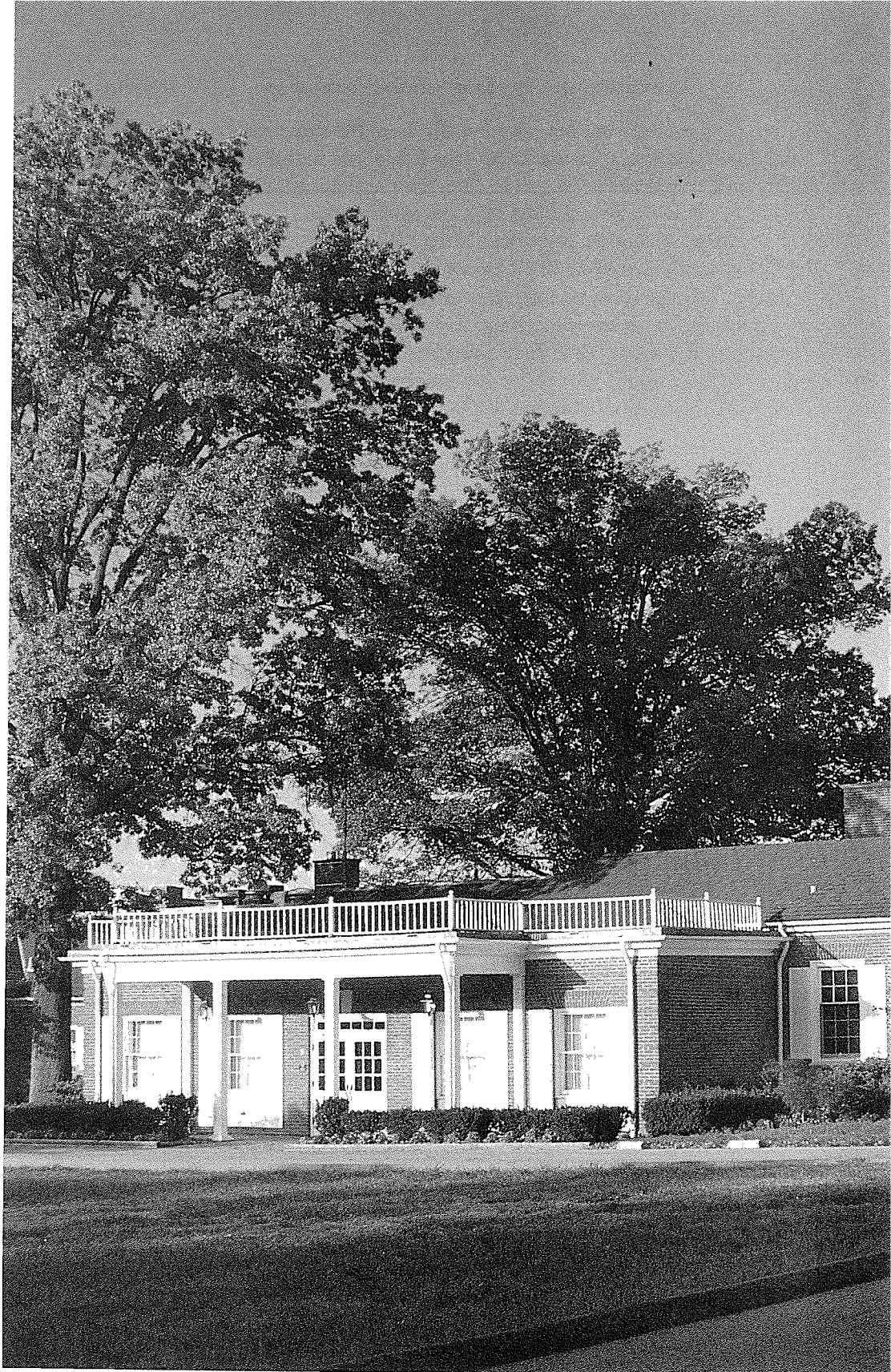
This wall on the grounds of Temple Shalom depicts the religious symbols of Judaism. It was designed by Stanford Brod and executed by Edgar Tafur.

this is my telescope of Amberley—I said, ‘You know, Mer, you can see, I love the city.’ Amberley has a romance for me. I say this, unequivocally, as a Hartford boy: This is my home. Hartford’s my nativity place, and it will always be that. But Cincinnati’s home. Of course, one of my legs is surely “Cincinnati”—because I spent nine years here in college. But my college years were not just college years. I became very much a part of the community, and my life for seven of them was at Rockdale Temple. And a lot of the homes in which I was treated hospitably were in Amberley. I directed Camp Livingston. It was then Madeira or Indian Hillish. It’s now in Indiana. A lot of the kids who came to the camp were from Amberley. My office was located in the Jewish Community Center. So there’s a special feeling about Cincinnati.

“I decided I ought to live near the temple, and because the temple’s in Amberley, maybe I should locate in Amberley. In my work, there are constant emergencies, so you don’t want to have to drive twenty minutes. But beyond the practicalities of being near the temple and all that it entails and my “crazy” hours, if you really got into my viscera, I wanted to live in Amberley because it was scenic—and there was this romance. And I’ve always found the people to be gracious and lovely. So I showed Meryl around that community with that prejudice. However,

without my prejudicing her—we usually have the same taste on most things, and that helps the marriage—she fell in love with Amberley, and she adores it here. She has made herself—even though she is a New Yorker by birth—very much a part of the community.

“And this is another important thing: People ask, ‘Where do you live?’ especially in a place like Cincinnati. And if you say, ‘Hyde Park,’ it means something; if you say, ‘Wyoming,’ it means something; if you say ‘Amberley,’ it means something; if you say, ‘Montgomery,’ it means something; if you say ‘Blue Ash’ today, it means, ‘Oh, that’s where the new people are going.’ Amberley has grace and style, plus history. It is close to all the action, but seems as though it is ‘away from it all.’”



*A*MBERLEY  
MAYORS AND  
OFFICIALS

INTERVIEW WITH

# JOHN MUETHING

*Former Mayor*

*by Priscilla Petty on July 22, 1988  
in his office in downtown Cincinnati*

The best thing about Amberley was services—police, fire, the whole bit of community services, such as service roads and responsiveness of community people to citizens. If a citizen says something to you, you don't say, 'Oh, I'll refer you to the director of this or that.' You aren't big enough to say that; you have to respond directly. The people in Amberley have always responded to the fact that they have good services, good housing and secure neighborhoods. It wasn't that you were living in a big city; you were in a community. I didn't move there for that, but we became aware of it after a while.

"I got into government because I was a friend of Henry Blohm, who just died. He was a client here. So when Helen Fix was elected to the legislature and had to resign from Council, there was a vacancy, and Henry called and said, 'Would you be interested in going on Council? It was something I had never been involved in before, but it was attractive in the sense that you were part of a community. So I said yes to Henry. It wasn't in the sense of fulfilling a duty; I was honored to be asked. But it takes you a little while in a strange environment. By that, I mean I had not been operating at all in the public sector. So you have to get your feet wet as to how you operate there.

"In a relatively short time, I came to enjoy it, particularly the people I was doing business with: the Council people, the police, the manager. I enjoyed being part of the government more from the standpoint of the people contacts than anything else. Honestly, I never had that much

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*John Muething says he moved to Amberley in 1962 "basically because I found a house that fit nine kids. We had always lived in the general vicinity, Dillonvale or Kennedy Heights, and it really wasn't a change of area. I wouldn't say we were moving to Amberley so much as we were moving to a house that fit the occasion. We recognized Amberley as a place of good community values."*

contact with the residents as such. I'm talking about those who were part of the 'official family.' They were always, throughout my time there, which was thirteen years, people that you enjoyed working with and had a good relationship with—just plainly high-class people.

"Amberley never has been politics in the sense of small-town politics or even Cincinnati politics, which is not small-town. We always operated in a family-type situation, or at least congenial—the type of situation in that you wanted to get along with everybody, so you entered into everything with, 'There's nothing that concrete.' You were willing to compromise what you were saying to try to accommodate somebody else who might have some feelings to the contrary. If you look at the records, out of 100 votes, 99 of them would be unanimous. That doesn't mean people didn't have different ideas, but you usually had discussed your situations, and it was only on rare occasions that anybody was a *nay* voter. That's not to be critical. I was a *nay* voter on occasions myself, but not often. It just indicated that people were willing to adapt themselves to somebody else and give a little ground.

"I guess the best part is that nobody had any personal agenda in connection with the government. Whether they liked it—and everybody did like it, I'm sure, but that was only part of it—everybody was there from the standpoint of 'Hey, I'm doing the job; I'm doing service.' This isn't a career path; everybody has their own career totally independent of Council. In fact, Helen is the only person who went from Council to any other type of political office. But I'm sure when Helen went on Council she didn't say, 'This is a stepping stone to legislature' or 'to that commission.'

"When you operate and say, 'It's not for me; it's for the community,' it's easy to compromise. Because when it's for the community, whether it's this way or a little variation, that's not difficult to work out. It becomes shades of gray rather than black or white. That's why I've always thought it was an enjoyable secondary interest: you simply enjoyed working with the people involved.

"In many other places, there are either deep-seated political or party divisions, and people line up that way. If you were to ask me what political party the people on Council with me were, I'd say, 'I don't have the foggiest idea and could care less.' Party doesn't mean a heck of a lot when you get into municipal affairs because there isn't any philosophical way you run a small community. Your ideas are to run it efficiently and make use of your resources in the best way for the people.

"Why has it worked this way in Amberley? It might relate to the fact it's of relatively recent vintage and to the nature of the community—both bedroom, and large bedroom. You had people pretty much of a class

who did not need anything associated with the government to make themselves anything more than they were or to make them more secure. Almost from the outset, Council was composed of people who were interested in public service rather than any other ends or aims. People who did it enjoyed it. They weren't saying, 'This is a hair shirt I'm wearing.' People were saying, 'What can I do to better the situation or keep Amberley as well-run as it has been and a good place to live?'"

*How many hours a week did you put in as Mayor?*

"As you know, the Mayor doesn't have an office in the Village Hall. I probably put in much less than my predecessor, Art Friedman, and much less probably than Henry Blohm. I did not physically spend a lot of time at Village Hall. I don't know how much time Gloria Haffer is spending. I used the telephone. The manager and I would be on the phone probably a couple times a day. Then there would be days go by that you wouldn't talk at all. Of course, there's Mayor's Court, which generally ran three hours. That was once every thirty days. Council meetings were a couple hours once a month; then there were committee meetings or stopping and talking to the manager or chief. My own guess, including phone calls, is that you wouldn't average more than seven to ten hours a week. I wouldn't. It's a lot, but you can do it on your own time and on your own schedule. Often, I'd just stop up in the morning before I went down to work and spend a half-hour or forty-five minutes and then drive on down to work. I'm just three minutes from the Village Hall, and to use that as a stop point on the way to work was nothing.

"By and large, when there's a vacancy, there's a management slate chosen by Council. Few elections in Amberley have been contested. If you had seven seats, it would be rare to have even one or at most two; you'd have no contest. That was particularly true if you had no vacancies. It was just a re-election of Council—'Okay, they're up for re-election.'"

*Why are people in Amberley satisfied with it?*

"Well, the more affluent communities generally end up with a feeling of both pride and satisfaction in their community, as long as it's half-way decently run. And Amberley, from the standpoint of services, is outstanding. As people say, 'You can always tell in winter when you get into Amberley because the streets are clear of ice and snow.' There's always been an attempt to maintain that sense of service to the community. If you lose that and if the administration of a city or village comes to think of themselves before they think of their community. . . . It goes back to the idea of what you're there for. We've been blessed with people who serve,

idea of what you're there for. We've been blessed with people who serve, at least in the elective offices, because this is something that is a good thing to do. You want to do it well; that's your only interest. It's not in saying, 'I'll be a Councilman today, a Mayor tomorrow, a Congressman next week.' Because then you get a totally different outlook on the agenda, which doesn't fit with the people. The idea is to do the best you can with the money that's available to you, to give people the best service they can get. That's what we're there for. We don't have any poor; we don't have to provide welfare or assistance to the poor; we don't have to do a lot of things that get into the agenda questions and, I think, into a lot of problems. What you're doing is providing good police, good fire, across the board, to everybody."



Amberley firemen participate in fire drills periodically. This one was staged at the Village Hall sometime in the late sixties.

*So a lot of situations that would create controversy Amberley doesn't have.*

"Everything you do, you can see. It cuts across the whole community. You don't have any particular constituency you're doing this for and not doing it for another constituency. It makes service a lot easier. You say, 'What's good for everybody in general?'"

*Can you recall any changes implemented when you were Mayor?*

"Those who preceded me did excellent jobs, so you're really following in a tradition or a vein that had been in place and seemingly working. We expanded the recreational facilities, but the ball fields had been there long before I came. Then it became soccer fields and we put in the track. In fact, when they put in the tennis courts, that's just when I was starting, and I was an opponent. I thought, 'People in Amberley don't need tennis courts; they have Crest Hills or Losantiville or the swim club or their own courts. They have more tennis courts than you can shake a stick at. Who needs municipal recreation facilities in a place like Amberley?' As time went on and I saw people did use them, I realized they were a worthwhile adjunct. Today, if I had to vote on the same thing, I'd say, 'Sure, I'll do it.' But at the time, it seemed sort of silly to spend your money on tennis courts for a place like this, because people don't need it."

*There were no shifts in direction, no great attitudinal changes?*

"You go back to the idea of 'What are you there for?' You're there to provide services to the community. Our finances never basically changed. The thrust of them would move from year to year between real estate taxes and this form of income, federal revenue sharing, which went out the door. The most we ever got, anyway, was about \$15,000 a year. That represented an extremely small percentage of the budget. As distinguished from a lot of things you read, like 'Federal revenue sharing cutoff is going to decimate this community,' it had little or no effect on us. We had adequate income. The Village today isn't in any crisis or anything, but some of the income sources are no longer what they were—the intangibles tax, among other things. That was terminated. There is a successor to it, in some respects, but there's a definite shortfall in income. And the expense side has gone up, as has anybody else's, without anything new. Simply the cost of providing the same services goes up every year; it never misses. I don't mean it's dramatically different than the inflation index; it isn't. But it's on the high side of the inflation index.

"Fifty percent of the budget, at least, and probably a little more, is personnel. Your personnel costs continue to go up and up and up, with

no dramatic increase in numbers of people. From the time I came there thirteen years ago to today, we might have three or four people more than we had at that point, which represents maybe ten percent increase in personnel, which I don't think is significant. For example, the police force went to a forty-hour week, which they had not been on before. All the things like that prompted you to have more people, but the increase was certainly not even significant, much less dramatic, compared to other areas of either private sector or public sector."

*What do you see as the future of Amberley?*

"With two exceptions, we don't have any developable land. One is significant—Rollman's—and that's going to be residential, which is consistent with what's there. So that isn't really going to change anything. You won't have a community that increases dramatically in population. We're at 3,500 people; you're never going to 12,000. If anything, you're going to go down. With Rollman's you might have a mild increase of 500 people. So I think it's going to be stable from the standpoint of any essential change in the type of people you have. The houses are going to continue to be first-class housing. Although I've said to a lot of people, 'If you want good bargains, go to Amberley.' Dollar-for-dollar, foot-for-foot, I think you'll do better in Amberley than an awful lot of places around town. That's not indicative of any dramatic decline in values, and I don't think it ever will be. We have substantial room in our tax structure to provide services. Our earnings tax has been at one percent; you don't have much lower. Cincinnati is at two and just added one-tenth, so Cincinnati's at twice the rate of earnings tax as Amberley. So you have room in there. There's still some room in your real estate tax, not a whole lot. There aren't a whole lot of other sources of revenue, but there's the room there and hopefully an expanding economy, which makes your earnings tax go up.

"Our big source of revenue on the earnings tax is Gibson. They had not expanded there at a time when the economy was generally expanding; they've been relatively stable. But I think at some point they'll increase. In addition to any rate increase, presumably you should also have a broader base. So I think the revenues can be held or increased to keep revenues in line with what it's going to cost to provide the services. My personal philosophy on that—and I'm not necessarily agreed with by everybody—is that the people want the services and are willing to pay for them. If you have to substantially increase taxes to provide the services, you do it. When I say the people want it, I don't know that they ever necessarily analyze it that way. But if you ask somebody, 'Hey, if you had to pay another \$100 on your property tax to



Gibson Greetings, Inc., located on Section Road in Amberley Village, is known throughout the United States.

maintain your police and fire and streets and so forth, or if you wouldn't pay that \$100 and you'd have some lesser level of service, what would you want?,' I think they'd clump almost 100 percent for paying the additional tax.

“But something goes with that. You don't have anybody who can say, ‘Oh, those fat cats at City Hall.’ You know what the members of Council make and the Mayor makes, so you don't have anybody saying, ‘I don't want to pay more taxes because you can conserve here by cutting your salary,’ or, ‘You shouldn't have a car,’ or something like that. I'm sure you well know that nobody has any perks, so you can directly relate for a citizen what he's paying to what he's getting. It's sort of like United Way saying ‘93 percent of what we collect goes to the poor,’ I'd say 98 percent goes directly to the police-and-fire and the tar on your street. There's a direct relationship between monies paid and value received, which I don't think you can say in some governmental situations. You can't say there's too much fat in there. People will say, ‘Well, we can cut down those payments to the poor.’ in some cities. Well, we don't have that. When you pay a dollar, that's for that cruiser out on the street. That's why I think people would be responsive to taxes. I'm always waiting for somebody to say, ‘Oh, you guys; you're making so much money,’ so that I can say, ‘Do you know how much I make? Twenty-five

dollars a month.' I've always had the perfect rejoinder for them. That's for a member of Council. I think that comes out to \$325. The Mayor made \$1,800 a year. There's no increase for Vice-Mayor, and I've always said, 'Why do we even bother with this darn money?' Nobody really had an answer. Shortly after I went on Council, they increased the Council from \$15 a month to \$25. I didn't know then why we bothered, and I don't know now. That's one nice part about it: nobody can ever accuse you of having any financial gain, that's for darn sure.

"I enjoy the job; I enjoy the people and the relationships that I'm sure will exist all my life. The people are and were real friends. You meet people in an environment different than your environment here [at the firm] where you meet them in a certain capacity. There, you meet, and to get along, you have to adapt yourself to that situation. It's simply a broadening of your experience, and I'm sure you learn something from it. I met people when I was with Amberley that I probably, in the normal course of events, wouldn't be running into—people that I really liked and liked to be with and liked to work with. That goes all the way up the line from the guys who worked on the service through the police and the Council, most of whom I consider good friends."

INTERVIEW WITH

# GLORIA HAFFER

*Mayor*

*by Priscilla Petty on July 22, 1989  
in her office in the Clopay Building  
in downtown Cincinnati*

*You are the first woman to serve as Mayor of Amberley Village. How did you get involved in Village service?*

“As a longtime resident, I felt a strong commitment to Amberley and a responsibility to participate in the community. I’ve been a resident of Amberley Village since I was twelve years old. My parents built a home on East Aracoma Drive in 1950. The Aracoma Riding Stable was originally on our lot, and the pond for the horses was next door. I lived there until I was married in 1962. My husband and I have been residents of Amberley since 1967.

“We lived on Arborcrest until 1978 and bought our home on Fair Oaks Drive in November of 1978. When I originally ran for Amberley Council, in 1975, there was a question whether tennis courts should be constructed in the Village. There were not many controversial issues, but when the tennis-court issue was presented, it seemed that everyone in the community had strong feelings on the matter, one way or another. I was a proponent of the tennis courts and believed that a community like Amberley Village should have some recreational facilities. There was a large tract of land next to the Village Hall that could be used for tennis courts.

“I felt strongly that there should be tennis courts, and I thought that I could make some contribution by serving on Council. There are two ways you can be elected to Council: two Council representatives are elected at large, and five Council members are elected from their districts. I ran from my district. It is my understanding that the founders of the Village wanted to insure that there would be a representative from all areas of the Village. I ran against the incumbent in my district, Herbert Lauber. I felt that he was doing a good job, but I was not certain how he felt about tennis courts. Another resident, Sidney Kaufman, was



The idea of building municipal tennis courts was highly controversial in the early seventies. Council voted down the issue when it was first introduced, but eventually approved it by a four-to-three vote.



The Amberley jogging track isn't just for exercise—it also provides a place for residents to meet and talk.

also running, so there were three of us running for one seat. I was fortunate enough to be elected, and I had the opportunity to vote for the tennis courts.

“After Council voted in favor of the project, no time was lost in building them, as there was some fear that the opponents would file a lawsuit to prevent their construction. The tennis courts have been an important recreational facility, and since that time, we have built the running track, which has also had continual use.”

*What have you learned from your Council experience?*

“I have learned that it is important to participate in local government. Many important decisions are made at both the local and state levels. Americans are primarily concerned with federal elections, but both local and state governments have a great deal of influence on their lives.”

*What do you see facing Amberley?*

“I hope it will continue to be a beautiful residential area with limited industry—as it has been in the past. However, it is becoming more and more expensive to provide high-quality services to our residents. Therefore, Amberley Village must be careful in its fiscal planning so that it can continue to be independent, and does not have to succumb to metro government.

“There are approximately 250 acres of undeveloped land remaining in Amberley Village. Once these properties have been developed, there will be no further expansion. It will be the government’s responsibility to continue to maintain and improve the roads, the infrastructure, and the services in the Village, and to keep it fiscally sound.”

*How did you come to be Mayor of Amberley Village? The first woman Mayor?*

“As a Council member, I have served as Vice-Mayor for two terms of Council, and during different terms, as Chairman of the Law, Police, and Evaluation committees. The Police Committee is responsible for issues that might arise in regard to our police-and-fire department, for example, overseeing personnel matters and approving purchases of equipment. The Evaluation Committee meets on an annual basis with representatives of the office, maintenance, and police departments to discuss wages and benefits for the respective employees. This committee is also responsible for reviewing the managerial performances of the Village Manager and Police Chief. The Evaluation Committee at times becomes involved with special projects, such as making recommendations on the selection of a Village Manager or Police Chief. The Law Committee reviews all new legislation to be presented to Council.”

*The opportunity to associate with people of the caliber of those on Council has been cited as a benefit of Council membership.*

“The residents of Amberley Village are very fortunate that many capable and dedicated people have been willing to serve on Amberley Village Council. I personally feel very fortunate that I have had the opportunity to work closely with them. Our Council members put in many hours of dedicated service to the Village at a tremendous personal sacrifice. Some of our Council members have not only served Amberley Village, but have made major contributions to the Greater Cincinnati community.”

*What makes Amberley Village unique?*

“Amberley is a unique and special place because it provides a rural atmosphere next to a large urban area; you don’t have to travel an hour or so to enjoy it. Also, Amberley Village offers high-quality community services to its residents. We have sixteen police officers for approximately 3,800 residents. Our police officers also serve as our firefighters, and some of our maintenance workers also serve as firefighters. Amberley is special because of the dedication of the residents to preserving the community. I hope that the residents continue to demonstrate their interest and concern when issues of importance come before Council. It is important that community participation continue.

“I am pleased that I have had the opportunity to serve on Council. I feel that it is a worthwhile endeavor, and I hope that I have made a contribution to the community. When I see people playing tennis, walking the track, or enjoying the amenities of the Village, I take great pride in knowing that I was one of those partially responsible for putting those things in place.”

INTERVIEW WITH

# ARTHUR FRIEDMAN

*Former Mayor  
by Priscilla Petty on June 14, 1988  
in his office in the Dixie Terminal Building  
in downtown Cincinnati*

I moved into Amberley Village in 1961 because I thought it was a nice place in which to live and to bring up children. I moved on Laurel Oak Lane, which is in the North Elbrook area, because Losantiville School was within walking distance for my children, and they were both young at that time. My son was going into the first grade, and my daughter was not yet ready for school. I thought it was a good community in which to live, and I still think it's a good community in which to live."

*What caused you to get involved in local government?*

"My first involvement with government in Amberley Village came about in 1964, when Gibson Greetings wanted to put a parking lot on a portion of their front lawn and have an access road into North Elbrook. There are practically no sidewalks in Amberley Village, and particularly none on North Elbrook. At the time I moved there, the whole neighborhood was filled with people like me, all younger couples with young children. I felt that Gibson Greetings had broken trust with the neighborhood by trying to place a driveway, run their tractor-trailers into Elbrook, and turn their front lawn into a parking lot. I participated in leading the community fight against it, and we came very well armed. We circulated petitions, and we had, not only that area, but I would say in excess of 75 percent of the residents of Amberley Village, on petitions opposed to Gibson Greetings's turning any portion of that front lawn into a parking lot, and also opposed to having an access road into North Elbrook. Gibson first asked for a permit, and they couldn't have a permit under the zoning, and they then requested a variance in the zoning. There was a public hearing held in October, 1964, when Gibson attempted to rezone a portion of their front lawn from Residence A, which it was, to Residence E, which permitted a parking

lot, and also access into Elbrook Avenue. You never know; you must oppose these things. I chaired the opposition, and the Planning Commission ruled in our favor.

“I was really more concerned, quite honestly, about running vehicles into North Elbrook, where children were walking back and forth up and down North Elbrook to school—I was more concerned about the safety than I was about parking the cars. But, on the other hand, I really didn’t see any need for them to park the cars in front of their building, as they had a tremendous area in the rear.

“That was really the first involvement I ever had with anything in the Village. A few years after that, I was asked to serve on the Amberley Village Planning Commission. That must have been about 1966 or ’67. I served for a number of years and always enjoyed that experience. Amberley Village Planning Commission has basically and philosophically been rather conservative in that it’s highly desirous of protecting the residents and the property values by rigorously enforcing the zoning ordinances of the Village. That isn’t to say that for good cause, variances have not been given in order to prevent hardships, but we were always very determined not to do any spot zoning. Let me see if I can give you an example of hardships. If someone needed to make a modification to his home, and maybe there might be a foot or so encroachment on a set-back, as long as it didn’t adversely affect a neighbor, we would permit that. But we would not permit radical changes in an area in order to permit a property owner to do something that might adversely affect the rights of other property owners or their well-being. If you start that, there’s no turning back. So we always have basically adopted a conservative attitude of treating everyone alike and only granting variances from the zoning code when a true hardship existed that could be corrected without affecting someone else. That was and still remains a basic philosophy.”

*What kinds of things might have been requested that weren’t in keeping with the spirit of Amberley Village?*

“From time to time, we have had a resident who wanted to place lights on their tennis courts. We felt that would certainly affect adjoining property owners and could affect them adversely if someone didn’t want light shining in their windows. We just adopted an almost absolute-no situation. Basically, on set-backs, we were very firm when people were planning subdivisions. We felt it was our job to protect the zoning as laid out by the Council of the Village, but, at the same time, to assist individuals upon whom zoning might have imposed some significant hardship. But not to rewrite the laws. That was Council’s job. And I believe



Chase Davies has sworn in every Amberley official since the Village was incorporated in 1940; this particular ceremony took place in 1969. Pictured left to right are Chase Davies, Charles Hagner, Melvin J. Kessel, Arthur Adler, Henry Blohm (Mayor), Helen Fix, Robert Isaacs, and Arthur Friedman.

the Planning Commission, to this day, basically follows that theory.

“In 1969, an opening existed on Council when a member of Council moved out of the Village, and I was appointed to fill his unexpired term. During the years 1969 through 1983, I served more than four years as a member of Council, four years as Vice-Mayor, and in 1977, I became Mayor and I was Mayor for six years. I enjoyed it. I always looked at it primarily as community service and not political. We’ve been blessed in that we have always enjoyed nonpartisan government. Since the beginning, there have been no party tags on either the ballot or make-up of our Council. We do not run as Democrats or Republicans; we do not govern as Democrats or Republicans. I can truthfully say, there were people I served with that I never did know their political preference, and it really made no difference. I think most of the people that ever served on government in Amberley Village served as community service and not with any ideas of going on in government service. I only know one person that ever went to any other elected political position from Amberley Village Council.”

*But the basic thrust of the Council was always a nonpolitical one, without aspirations for further political positions?*

“I feel that all of the people that have ever served on Amberley Village Council have served there as a demonstration of community service and not as a part of the political arena.”

*That fact changed the tenor of everything that Council did, of their deliberations and discussions, because there was no playing to the grandstands.*

“There was none of that. It was good for the Village and that’s all. We had some trying things. I was chairman of the Finance Committee for a number of years. I believe it was about 1971 that we came to grips with the fact that we just didn’t have enough money to properly operate this Village. We had to find means to secure more money. We decided to enact a Village income tax. That brought some opposition, particularly from our industrial community. We imposed the Village income tax, as most communities in Hamilton County have, whereby there would be no double taxation. In other words, if you paid a municipal income tax in one jurisdiction, you wouldn’t be taxed in another. For example, if a person worked in Cincinnati and lived in Amberley Village, Cincinnati would have priority on taxing his earnings because he earned them in Cincinnati. That would give that person an exemption in Amberley Village. By the same token, people who worked in Amberley Village, to the extent that Amberley Village collected tax from them, were exempt in other municipalities. Example: Amberley Village tax was, at the time we passed our first ordinance, one percent. Therefore, if a person worked in Amberley Village and he only paid one percent, but, if he lived in Cincinnati, which had a two percent tax, he would be obligated to pay Cincinnati the other one percent. At that time, practically all municipal taxes were reciprocal. I think that’s starting to change. But we passed this ordinance. We had public hearings, and I might say, they were very spirited. Some of our residents were opposed to it, and in addition to that, practically unanimously, the industrial residents. But this tax was essential. We had to have money to operate the Village, and we passed the tax and put it into effect in 1971.”

*How did Council convince people?*

“Well, there are some people that never get convinced. However, the overwhelming majority understood what we were doing. Even though there was some opposition, we ultimately, as a Council, felt it was in the best interest of the Village and we had to do it. When we passed the ordinance, I will have to say, our industries that opposed were willing to help us in every way implement it. As a matter of fact, I received phone

calls from some of the industries offering to do everything they could to help implement it in a proper way. And it was. Our ordinance was professionally drawn, and it was well set up and well handled. We had an absolute minimum of any opposition once it was in effect. It was recognized that we had to have the money and it had to come from someplace. The money was needed for the basic operation of the Village: police, fire, maintenance of the buildings and the roads, and everything that goes with the operation of our community. Under our Amberley Village Charter, the maximum that we can tax on real estate is seven mills, and the only way we can increase that seven mills is by referendum. We promised the residents—and that included the industrial residents—that as a result of putting in this tax, if we raised sufficient funds, we would reduce millage on real estate taxes. We kept faith with them and we did reduce it.

“The Village has always been operated by people who had interest in the good and welfare of the community, and that’s all. Nobody had any axes to grind.”

*Responsible fiscal planning is extremely important in governmental service.*  
 “The cost of operation of everything keeps going up. I look back at old budgets of Village operational costs, and I know how we operated that Village when I was Mayor. We were frugal, and we built up a reserve fund equivalent to one year’s operating costs that was intact when I left office. I don’t know exactly how it is today because we have had significant cost increases in these last few years. We have lost certain sources of income by a change of state law. I can sense the budget has to be higher. In my last year in office, 1983, the budget was in round numbers, \$1,400,000. When I became Mayor in December 1977, our budget for 1978 was just a little over \$800,000. We increased the size of our maintenance department and added other services just as every administration must consider.”

*During that period, the country experienced a period of amazing inflation and a period of rising expectations.*

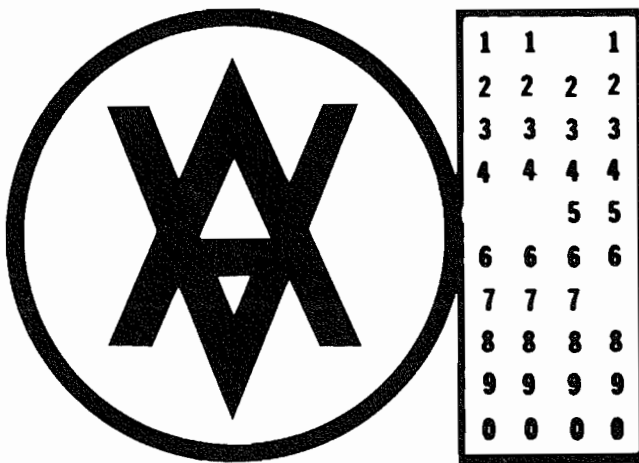
“We held spending as tight as we could. We weren’t altogether always satisfied. But we were able to do it. We tried to operate prudently, like you would operate a business. That was our objective. I felt like that was the objective of my predecessors, and I know that’s been the objective of the people who have been there since I’ve been gone.”

*How did people describe what they wanted Amberley to be—the spirit of Amberley and the look of Amberley?*

“Well, Amberley Village is a bedroom community. It was set out to be a bedroom community and was always to be kept as a bedroom community. The only difference, and I think, wisely, it was laid out with the industrial zone right along the railroad tracks. After you leave that, it is strictly residential. We’ve never had any commercial development in Amberley Village, and we’ve never felt that there was a need. There’s plenty surrounding Amberley Village. The park in Amberley Village does not belong to Amberley Village; it belongs to the city of Cincinnati. Our police have jurisdiction over the park, and at times, are assisted by the City of Cincinnati Park Police. The park is another ‘resident’ of the Village and is serviced as such.”

*Amberley Village has a history of providing security for its residents, using stickers on the cars to identify the residents.*

“That’s been for long years. Periodically, those had to be changed, though, because cars would be sold. This was just a matter of safety and good welfare in the Village and not to give any residents any particular license to speed or run red lights or anything like that. The purpose of it was for identification. We didn’t charge for these stickers, but we asked the residents to have one. When a sticker was issued to a resident, the stickers were numbered and the numbers were noted. This was only for the safety and welfare of the Village. This was not done as an act of punishment, or certainly not to raise funds. It was done solely as a matter of security in Amberley Village.”



Police Chief Bill Krueger came up with the idea of using stickers on residents’ cars, and Amberley began issuing the stickers in 1968.

*Which events during the time of your service to the Village are most memorable?*

“Prior to my becoming Mayor, while I was serving as Vice-Mayor, I guess one of the most controversial things we ever had happen in the Village—and looking back in retrospect, you really wonder why—was the building of the tennis courts adjacent to Village Hall. There were a number of people that were very much opposed to these tennis courts’ being built in the Village. There were public hearings and hard debate and letters written and people lined up, really hard-nosed opposed, and just as vociferously in favor of. You had it on both sides. We defeated it once in Council. Then it was brought back up again a couple of years or so later. Again, studies were made and questionnaires were sent out. It was really, truly, I guess, one of the most controversial things we ever did in the Village. And then Council finally passed it by a four-to-three vote. They were built. And then, to the credit of everybody in the Village, all hard feelings died out. And the people that were most opposed used them along with the strongest supporters. Still, to this day, they’re very, very popular in the Village. And the people in the Village, by and large, have shown wonderful cooperation over the years on using them. We have rules and regulations concerning use of the courts, such as little things like this: I think the rules say that the use of the courts changes on the hour or the half-hour, whatever the case might be. And if people go there in the midst of the hour, they give it up, although they’ve only used it a portion of the time. I truly believe that the residents have been most orderly in the use of the courts.

“And the people that opposed it all went by the board. Everybody was very happy. Everyone has a right to his opinion. There were people who were opposed, but once it was over, it was over. Amberley Village has always been that way. You might have some people strongly express their feelings, but you get it over with and it’s over with.

“I always felt that over the years, the rank-and-file of the people in the Village have confidence in Council and in the fact that Council was doing things for the best interest of the Village. While they might try, at times, to tell you, ‘Wait a minute, don’t do it that way,’ they still give you the license to think it out. And on matters that are going to carry us far afield, like the tennis courts and other things, anything that would change land use, we’ve always held public hearings and given people the opportunity to say what’s on their minds. When we did such things as impose the income tax ordinance, while we were permitted under our Charter to do this, we held more than one hearing, to be sure that everyone had an opportunity to be heard and voice their approval or disapproval.

“There are times when we have public hearings, which are advertised, and people don’t even show up. For example: Every year when we adopt a budget, we are required by law to have a public hearing. We set the public hearing and advertise it, but it’s rare that people show up. I guess the rarity is due to the fact that most people in Amberley Village feel that the Village is operated in a prudent, businesslike manner. Not everyone always agrees with our Council actions—you always have some tough critics. From time to time, you get telephone calls—people are not rubber stamps. As a member of Council, you have to spend considerable time looking at the affairs of the Village. But I enjoyed it or I would not have served. We’re fortunate we have a Village Manager so you have an operating officer, and the Mayor does not have to be operating officer. But I was in touch practically on a daily basis. Now, that doesn’t mean I was there every day, but by telephone. And, at times, it would be several times a day. And I’m no different from anybody else that was ever Mayor; they all did this. I was always by Village Hall a minimum of three or four times a week. Generally in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon, sometimes in the evening. I just thought that you had to be accessible. I felt like the Mayor had to know everything that was going on; it was his obligation. Fortunately, we have had good people carrying out day-to-day administration.

“We had a number of things happen when I was Mayor. Cable television came along. We had good, responsible members of Council who worked many, many hours on that, checking out which company we should go with. Part of Norwood was ahead of us, I believe, but we were probably the first community that was totally set up for cable television—with Warner Communications. We held their feet to the fire as tight as we could. We had good people on our Council who worked hard for that. In that connection, after Warner was in, we had a resident of the Village, without a permit, put up a communications dish—an absolute violation of Village ordinances. We ordered it taken down because he was in total violation. Our Law Committee worked long and hard along with our Village Solicitor, and we adopted an ordinance governing cable dishes. We didn’t outlaw them. But we greatly controlled them, to such an extent—it’s always been our feeling—that our ordinance became practically a model ordinance. It was written up in publications. We did such things as requiring residents to place them in their rear yards, directly behind their house, with height restrictions so that they couldn’t be seen. We had a large set-back from their neighbor’s adjoining property in the rear. We had big set-backs on side yards. We also restricted its use to only the person on whose property it was located, in order to keep someone from entering a commercial enterprise there, or

putting in a dish for a whole block. But we did not try to say, 'You can't.' We were not trying to be punitive, but if a resident was going to have a communications dish, we felt like it should be their responsibility, on their own property and not interfere with anyone else. And, although there were people in the Village who would have liked us to outlaw them altogether, we did not feel that we should go to either extreme. Again, like our zoning ordinances, we felt like the individual property owner should be protected. Our objective was not to punish but to do that which we felt was in the overall best interest of the Village."

*How do you envision Amberley's future?*

"As time goes on, I feel that the cost of operating a community such as Amberley Village is going to get extremely difficult. We are going to have to pay more for services. We operate a staff consisting of a Village Manager, a Village Clerk, clerical workers, police-and-fire, and maintenance. Government is just going to cost more. Cost of services keeps increasing—costs of maintenance and upkeep are greater. Everything is just up, up, up, and costs go up. Amberley Village, basically, can get no larger. We're landlocked. In Amberley Village, we have one large tract of ground that someday will probably be developed. It consists of a couple of hundred acres—after that, there's no more. All the burden of increased costs has to lay on what we have now, with probably some nominal growth. There are isolated lots where a house or so might be built. Over in what would be the northwest corner of the Village, down behind the old Mashburn property, there is about twenty plus acres of ground that is for residential use. It someday may be developed. What I'm saying is, there's very little left. So, as these costs keep going up, they are going to have to be borne by the residents.

"We have, I believe, the finest police-and-fire department that you'll find anywhere. We also have a good maintenance staff. Over the years, we've enlarged our maintenance staff, and we have a staff that can do a lot of things. But there are still a lot of services for which we have to contract outside. We do not have the capabilities, as practically no small municipality has, of installing new roads and bridges, curbs and gutters and things like that. We contract that out. All these things are costly. Cost of living and everything keeps going up.

"A study was made of the Rollman estate. This property is zoned Residence A, which means the building lots will be one acre for one residence, but then you'll lose part of that because you have to have streets. Ultimately, when it is subdivided, I think we will probably end up with 175 to 180 additional home sites.

"So the economic burden of maintaining the type of services that we

have becomes greater. By zoning we are single-family residences. The only exceptions to that are a few two-families that were annexed into the Village and came in with a whole section many years ago. It's nonconforming. There are only a few of these. But, by and large, we're single-family residences of Residence A (one-acre lots) or Residence B (roughly half-acre lots).

“We were hard-nosed when I was Mayor, in that we protected the rights of the majority at all times. We would not do anything just to do something for a person, particularly in zoning matters and land-use matters. We had people at one time who felt like they could best develop their property by putting in septic tanks. We were not about to have this kind of thing. We tried, seriously, to protect the values and the good and welfare of the entire Village at all times. That was always paramount. And I really believe—and I'm not just saying this for myself—I believe that every Mayor and Council that we have ever had strived to serve in that same manner.”

INTERVIEW WITH

# HUGH GRAFF

*Former Mayor  
by Priscilla Petty on July 23, 1988  
by telephone, Cincinnati to Maine*

*When did you decide to get involved in Amberley's government?*

"If I remember correctly, that was in 1953. I was selected by a group of citizens. I can't remember all their names, but they were part of a group of people that lived in the Sagamore Drive subdivision. The Village was expanding, and Council decided that section of the Village should have some representation. The Mayor called a meeting of citizens on Sagamore Drive, and I was the one they selected. I had to be elected, of course. I guess I didn't have any opposition, to begin with. But anyway, that's the way it started.

"We didn't have a two-party system, we just put our names up and they voted for us. Then we divided the Village into areas that would—or as close as we could get—have the same number of people voting. A member of Council was to be elected from each of those areas. There were five of them. That all added up to the fact that politics, per se, was out the window. You could be a Republican or Democrat; it didn't make any difference."

*Did you have any misgivings about the amount of time you'd have to devote?*

"No. I've seen a lot of this activity, and so I knew I'd have to devote quite a bit of time to it. But not as much as it could have been. The Mayor of Amberley doesn't have as bad a job as those in most villages or municipalities."

*You first went on Council and then became Mayor. What were the changes occurring in Amberley? What did you see happening then, and what needed to be done?*

"During the fifties we had subdivisions being developed, all that activity down on our western boundary. Gibson was partly under construction and partly in operation. After that, Pepsi-Cola came in. The next big example is Procter & Gamble."

*How did these companies choose that site?*

“Number one, Gibson Greetings, you know what they do: greeting cards. It’s a very clean operation. Of course, they had to appear before the Zoning Board to present plans and get approved, all that sort of thing. The Zoning Board and Council, and everybody in the Village, for that matter, wanted to be sure that if we had to build a business area, it would be done right. When Amberley Village was first laid out, the Zoning Board decided that the minimum-size lot was an acre. So the whole Village was designed Residence A; that was an acre. They started from there. After they went over Gibson’s plans, they decided to grant them permission to build in the Village.”

*Did someone try to attract these kinds of clean industries to the Village?*

“That I don’t know. I think the businesses did it themselves. They wanted a nice place to have a business, and it was a clean business, as is also the Pepsi-Cola plant. It’s clean and it’s not noisy. When Procter & Gamble came in with their warehouse, the Progress Lithographing was already there in Amberley. That was right across Section Road from Pepsi-Cola. As far as I know, the Kleins were there for quite some time. That is, Mr. Klein and his family. That was in existence before I came to the Village. Other activity in Amberley Village, zoning-wise, had to be scrutinized.”

*As you look back on Amberley’s history, from the time you were politically involved in the fifties, what kinds of critical decisions did Council have to make? What major issues did they deal with?*

“It was mostly expansion of the Village, the development of subdivisions, that sort of thing. Of course, we kept up a good Police-and-Fire Department. There was good rapport between the Village officials and the Police Department and the residents. Some of these places, as I understand it, public officials are under fire all the time from residents who want this, that, and the other thing. We were short on that deal; we got along pretty well. It all boils down to the type of people that you have and how you take care of them.

“One of the big things we did was to get a 1 percent income tax approved. That ran up the ante a bit. I think when I came in as Mayor, the budget was \$183,000. I don’t know what it is now, but I know it’s more than that. The point is, Amberley residents were willing to pay for the services, and the way we ran the Village, we didn’t have too much to pay.

“Also, in 1958 we renovated the Village Hall and added to the Fire Department. We have two jail cells, in case you’re interested. We

didn't keep anybody in there too long; just on the way to the Courthouse."

*How did your role change when you moved from Mayor to City Manager?*

"It didn't change too much. As Mayor, I was always in touch with Mr. Egolf, who was the City Manager before me. When I became City Manager, I was basically doing the same kinds of things I did as Mayor, except I had to do them all in detail. As Mayor, I didn't. Mr. Egolf was a good operator. In fact, the first Village Manager of Amberley Village was Bud Anderegg. He was very competent and very interested in politics. He was down at the Courthouse and City Hall.

"Helen Fix was the first woman on Council. I was the Mayor. We were sort of used to Helen because she was with the *Suburban News*. She would attend Council meetings and report on them to the paper. She was a very good reporter and Councilwoman."

*How would you characterize Amberley Village?*

"I think we can describe Amberley Village very well by saying it's country-style living in the city. The first people who moved here wanted to get away from downtown living, downtown Cincinnati. Justin Rollman, of course, is long gone, but his estate is one of the hottest spots in Hamilton County. He owned an enormous amount of land—nearly 300 acres.

"In fact, the thing I miss most is looking out my back door and seeing Rollmans' Herefords sticking their noses through my back fence. Since I was raised on a farm, they spoke my language."

INTERVIEW WITH

# HELEN FIX

*Former Councilwoman  
by Priscilla Petty on December 16, 1988  
at the home of Priscilla Petty*

*You were the first woman elected to the Amberley Village Council. What were your thoughts about being first woman on Council; why did you get involved; and what was the experience like?*

“That was my first experience in running for political office. I had been editor of a Suburban weekly newspaper. I was editor for *Northeast Suburban Life*. I lived in Amberley Village, and the person running for Amberley Council in the district in which I lived was unopposed. He happened to be with the Property Owners’ Association, or whatever it’s called, a group that was circulating a sound truck up and down Ridge Road, telling everyone to vote against the school levy. He was president of Associated Property Owners, or something, against more taxes. The sound truck used a woman’s voice. We don’t live on Ridge; we live right off of Ridge, but I could hear it. Even though Amberley Council had nothing to do with the school levy, our children go to the Cincinnati schools and so it upset me. The largest percentage of taxes go to the school district. So I asked some of the neighbors if they thought we should field a candidate to run against him because if we didn’t, he could win. They said, ‘Well, we’ll schedule the meeting.’ I was asked to run, and I didn’t want to run because I thought no woman had ever run for Council anywhere around there, and I didn’t think a woman could win. My husband said, ‘Do it; you can do it.’ So I accepted the challenge. I think one reason I won is because my opponent didn’t think he had anything to worry about. He just thought it was a piece of cake; he didn’t really have to campaign; and so I won. That was in 1967. The Council members, I think, were in shock. They weren’t hostile, but they were apprehensive. They’d never had a woman on Council, and they didn’t know what to expect. But I think when they found out that I was there for the same reason they were, to serve the best interests of the people of Amberley, they accepted me. So the next three times I ran, I ran as a member of the team. Issues aren’t women’s issues and men’s issues; they’re people issues, generally. We were all working for the good of the

Village, even though we had different agendas. It's interesting. I ran on the platform of no street lights and no sidewalks. The person who campaigned in the election before me campaigned for street lights and sidewalks. He lost. So I campaigned for no street lights, no sidewalks, and tennis courts. The tennis courts didn't come to fruition until at least a year after I was off Council, after I had been elected to the legislature. That was a big, big battle, the tennis courts. But I ran on that platform, and it took another Council member to push that after I left, Walt Meyer."

*How did you mount your campaign, and who helped you to campaign?*

"The treasurer of Federated, Albert Glaser, lived on my street. He said, 'If you do it, I'll be your campaign chairman.' So I did it. He no longer lives here. But I had lots of people, Democrats and Republicans, because the Amberley elections are nonpartisan. I had a phone campaign. I didn't go door-to-door because I didn't think it would go over in Amberley. In the first place, it's a long way to go; in the second place, people are security-conscious and won't answer their doors. So I had mailings and a phone campaign and post cards. I had friends send post cards to their friends. So I didn't win by a lot, but I won, I think by 150 votes. That was enough."

*And what do you think people were most afraid of?*

"Maybe change. I really don't know, but I think it was different. The person I defeated had been on Council twelve years. He was a—pardon the expression—good-ole-boy club member. I think that they just were apprehensive of some change. People are always afraid of change. I covered all the neighboring, surrounding communities for the newspaper, so I know that there were no women on any of the councils in that area: Silverton, Montgomery, or any of them; Deer Park or Golf Manor. There were no women. So I think I was probably the first, but I'm not sure. It could have been some other part of the county."

*Since you covered Council, had you sat in on Council meetings many times?*

"Oh, yes, many, many times; for years. I started covering that Council in 1955, so I knew how the Village ran. And I knew the people. I knew about municipal government, Village government, city government. Newspaper work is a good background. And I knew a lot of people—which I think my opponent didn't realize—by working on the newspaper."

*Did your opponent make any counterattack or mount any campaign in a negative way, or did he just sit back and think you didn't have a chance?*

"No. He didn't do anything, as far as I know. I wrote a letter that had some negative things in there—and it's not my style to be negative—and I showed it to my campaign manager. He said, 'I don't think you ought to do that.' So I didn't; I didn't do anything negative. But on election day, his wife was over campaigning for his son, who was running for office in Madeira. And someone said, 'Why don't you go over to Amberley?' The reply was, 'Oh, we don't have anything to worry about over there.'

"My opponent was a nice gentleman, but a lot of us were upset by his view on public education. He never shook my hand; he never congratulated me. I think a man takes it as an insult if he's beaten by a woman. I've only had male opponents, and I've never had one yet congratulate me. And the normal thing to do is to congratulate someone. When I won the primary for the House of Representatives, the campaign manager called and told my campaign manager they conceded and congratulated him, but I never heard anything from the candidate. His son congratulated me. He's very nice. He said, 'I think that's all you're going to get. My dad's the way he is.' Too many women today—young women—think that the battle is over, and it isn't. It's far from over. It's just a lulling, really. It's nothing blatant, but it's there. Women have to be the the best. You have to be a little bit better. You do work very hard because people expect a little bit more.

"We celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary while I was there. The new Council Chamber and the new police quarters were added on to the original when I was there."

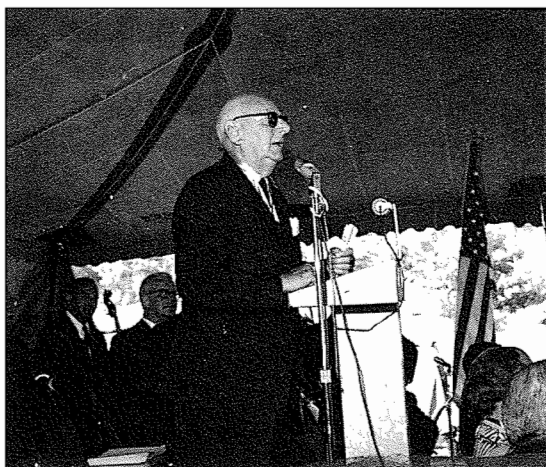
*What changes in thinking did you see?*

"I was there for four terms; eight years. John Muething took my place. I didn't see any changes while I was there. I don't think so. When I was saying how hard it was to make some changes, one Councilman said that some of the people on Council would be happy to put a moat around the Village and pull up the bridge. I didn't see any changes, except the building of the Village Hall complex. Of course, I think we have a pretty good form of government, the council-management form, and an excellent Zoning Commission. So I don't know if there was any need for any changes in government. One thing we did do was to put in the income tax. Since it was an earnings tax, I don't recall there being a lot of reaction. There was some, but it was just mostly

The twenty-fifth anniversary celebration was held on the grounds of the municipal building.



Residents who had lived in Amberley since its founding spoke at the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in 1965. Pictured is Justin Rollman.

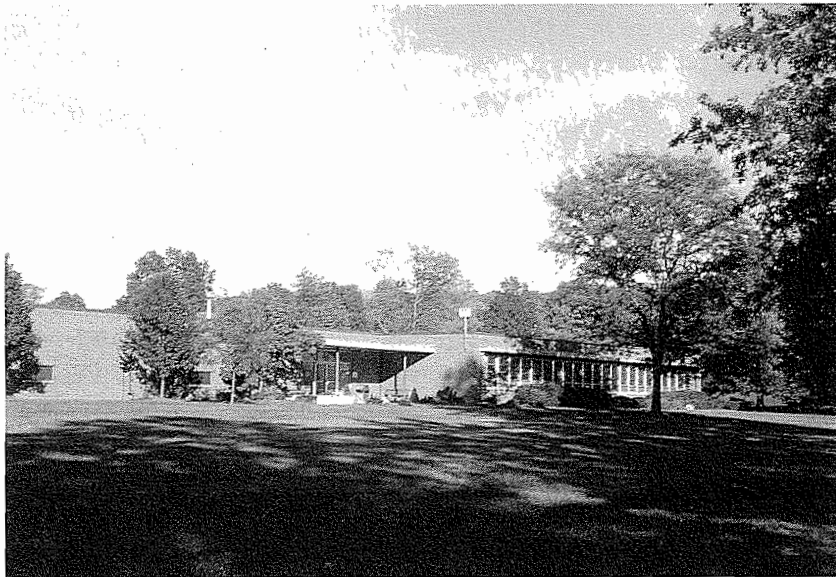


Though this photo shows her applauding, as one of the original residents of Amberley, Josephine Rollman also delivered a speech at the anniversary celebration.





The Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company, like other firms in the Village, is a light industrial plant.



Since the late fifties, Procter & Gamble's Advertising Service Department has been located on Sunnybrook Drive in Amberley Village.

from the people that worked there. We don't have a big industrial section; we have the strip along the railroad tracks where you have Gibson Greeting Cards and Pepsi-Cola and Procter & Gamble, down there next to Roselawn. Those people were not very happy. And then people who have maybe a business in their home in Amberley or who work and don't pay anywhere else, you pay it to Amberley. I paid it to Amberley when I was in the State Legislature."

*Looking at Amberley Village's government structure versus some of the other villages, the little cities around, how would you say Amberley is structured versus some of the others?*

"Frankly, I'm in favor of the council-management form, which is what Amberley has. In the state of Ohio, groups have two options when they incorporate. The first is to form a statutory type of government, which is very structured. It requires specific governmental positions and specifies that they be elected positions. The other option is home-rule charter. This permits a community to select a government which is more tailored to its needs. The charter-type government can also take several forms—strong mayor, or in the case of Amberley Village, the council-manager form. The founding fathers of Amberley exhibited farsightedness in selecting this type of government. Day-to-day operations are run by a professional (the Manager), and the part-time Council is not overburdened with this function. It handles the policy making and the final decision making.

("For example, Deer Park has a statutory government. Positions required to be elected: Mayor, President of Council, Solicitor, Auditor, Council. In Amberley Village, the charter specifies election of only the Council, which in turn chooses a Mayor from its members, appoints a Solicitor, free from politics, and a Treasurer and Clerk of Council.)

"I'm in favor of the Charter. We have a charter with the Council Manager. And then they have the integrated Police-and-Fire Department, which has worked very well. Policemen are also firemen. There's only one other place in the state that has that integrated Police-and-Fire Department. My own opinion is that the council-management form is an enlightened form of government, rather than the strong mayor. It takes it out of politics, although Amberley is nonpartisan. But then if you have a full-time person paid to be the Manager, you don't have a Mayor trying to juggle being a Mayor with his business, and the Charter protects the Manager, so Council can't intervene and tell him how to do his duties. He has certain duties that are his prerogative. And if they do interfere, they may lose their seat on Council. They hire him, yes. But he has certain well-defined duties. On appointments, for in-

stance, he recommends, and Council acts on his recommendations. The buck stops with Council, but the Manager is a full-time professional. And I just think a professional who's full time can do a better job than people who have jobs and do this part time. Council would not interfere with the running of the Police Department, of course. The Police Chief reports to the Manager, who has the running of the departments and the hiring of the people for the Service Department—just the general duties of running the Village like a business. He's the Manager in the sense that a person would be manager of the business end."

*How has Amberley avoided the political bias?*

"By being nonpartisan. Because there were Democrats and Republicans on Council, but you really didn't know who they were until you got to know them, and then you might find out. But it didn't matter. They very carefully kept it that way. I know other small cities and villages, Deer Park and Silverton and Blue Ash, that have partisan elections, and it gets very bitter. And people are the ones who suffer. Madeira is partisan. Now whether it's listed that way on the ballot, I don't know. If you go to vote, I don't know if it says *Republican* and *Democrat*, but there are two slates: one's Republican and one's Democrat."

*In 1975, you went to the State Legislature. Many people point with pride to the fact that Amberley Village Council isn't a political office, but that Helen Fix did go on to greater glory.*

"Well, I don't know if it was greater glory or not. A group of educators, teachers, and school board members were looking for someone who would be more sympathetic to education than the incumbent, who was representing the Twenty-sixth District. They asked me if I would run against him in the primary. They'd looked up in the voter list, and they saw an R by my name. They were really desperate. I was dumbfounded, and I said, 'Well, in the first place, he's a friend of mine. In the second place, you've got to give me a reason, because I thought he was doing a good job.' So I met with them, and they convinced me to run against him.

"If I had known how tough it would be when you're not endorsed, I might not have done it. Because if you're not endorsed, you're treated like a leper. You go to a Republican Club meeting, they won't introduce you; they won't let you speak. And the same with the Democrats: if you're not endorsed, you're just a leper. That was a three-way race, and I lost that primary by fifty-six votes. A three-person race out of 12,000. But education, again, was what got me into the race. Then two years later I ran. Again, I had to run in the primary, and this time I won. I was

there from '75 to '82: four terms, and I served on the Education Committee for three terms. I was the minority whip my last term.

"I used in my campaign for the State House that I thought it was important to have had the experience at the lower level of government, because to know how the laws you pass at the state affect the lower level is important. Lots of times State Legislators who have not been in at a lower level of government just pass a law, not knowing how it's going to affect the township, trustees, all the councils. Too often they mandate something and they don't provide the money. So the local government has to pick up the tab. I think it's important. And absolutely appropriate, if you think about it. Most people don't have that experience, but a lot of them have had. Norm Murdock was a township trustee; Edie Mayer had been a school board member; Dale VanVyven had been on Sharonville Council; Dick Finan had been Mayor of Evendale. I think it's important to start at the bottom and work up.

"After eight years, what happened in the Legislature, my district was gerrymandered, so I was put in the district with a Democrat incumbent. I had to make a choice of moving, selling a house, and moving to the new Twenty-sixth District. They redrew the boundaries, so I would have had to move and run against maybe the late John O'Brien in the primary, or run against Terry Tranter and spend about \$50,000 to run for a \$22,500 job. At that time, that's all it paid. I just couldn't see doing that, so I didn't.

"Then Governor Celeste appointed me to a job that paid two-and-a-half times as much, as a Republican on the State Labor Relations Board. I quit that, too, after three years. Frankly, my husband retired in '82, and when Governor Celeste appointed me to the State Employment Relations Board, I lived in Columbus five days a week; so he was down here and I was up there. The State Employment Relations Board is like the NLRB, except it's the state. Well, in the Legislature you're there three days. I lived in a hotel for five years, and I lived in an apartment for three.

"But being on the Amberley Council was a terrific help as a background for being in Legislature. You knew about government and just dealing with government and with constituents. I was appointed chairman of the Health, Education and Welfare Committee, which in Amberley means garbage. I mean, the big responsibility is garbage disposal.

"So the Village decided to contract for the service and have one collector. There were a number of people who collected garbage in Amberley, and it created a problem for some people. So we decided to have one collector and to do it ourselves, to put it on the tax duplicate, and have the garbage paid for through taxes. The contract was with one

firm. So we took the lowest bid, and the lowest bid turned out a disaster. We did this in the fall, and the garbage started piling up at Christmas time. I was the head of the committee, and I went to parties and I couldn't even get in the front door when the people would start screaming about their garbage piling up. So we had to get out of that contract and contract with another person because it just didn't work. The lowest bid is not always the best. The Amberley Charter says "lowest and best." And this definitely wasn't the best, even though it was the lowest. So, anyway, now the garbage collection is done very well. Rumpke does it. That first contract was a disaster. That was one experience with constituents."

*Did people call a lot when you were on Amberley Council?*

"Not a whole lot, no. One woman called a lot about Gibson Art. I guess her property backed up on Gibson Art and she didn't like the looks of what was on the parking lot, and she called quite a few times about that; she wanted something done about that. People called about zoning things, water in the basement, dogs—dogs were the big thing. We had a big, huge turnout for a hearing about dogs, leashing the dogs. Water problems and the drainage; the sewers backed up in the heavy rains. We have an excellent Police-and-Fire Department. So you had a policeman arrive in a matter of minutes, no problem."

*What about serving with the other people on Council?*

"We had a very good group, I thought. They were all very civic-minded. About the only time you had many people come to Council is if you were going to have something like leashing the dogs. They don't come to hear the budget. The income tax, I believe we had some people there when we were putting that on. But I think it's a low-key Council; they don't like a lot of publicity. It's kind of a low-key community."

*Is there a personality type that tends to choose Amberley as a home?*

"Professional types live here. A lot of Jewish people live here. A lot of people want to be close to Nativity Catholic Schools. Some people want to be close to parochial schools; some people want to be close to town, but not in town, because you're close to the expressways. To get downtown from Amberley takes about fifteen minutes. You're close to the expressways, but you have a rural atmosphere. I would say people want to kind of get away but not be way out. A lot of Jews have chosen to live in Amberley because there are four houses of worship here: Rockdale Temple, Wise Educational Center, Temple Sholom, and Adath Israel Synagogue.

"When I left Council, I recommended a number of people to suc-

ceed me, and several of them were women. Of course, I was delighted that John Muething was appointed, because he was totally qualified. I was very gratified to see that now there are three women on Council. It started out as one. Gloria Haffer, the Mayor, and Barbara Steinberg, and the new woman, Marianne Pressman, who was just elected. Gloria is a lawyer, and she's good at being a mayor because she has to preside over court.

"One thing about Amberley. I've enjoyed living there, but there's not a community spirit in Amberley like there is in, say, Deer Park or Silverton or Madeira. There's not a community spirit in Indian Hill, either. I miss that. I guess because the lots are farther apart, I think that's one reason. It fosters that apartness. People are neighbors but they don't necessarily socialize, and you don't have that community spirit. In Silverton and Deer Park, the Silverton Playground Mothers, the Deer Park Playground Mothers—all these groups in Silverton and Madeira and in Deer Park kind of bring the community together. We don't have that. All those areas were in my legislative district, and I got to know the people; Indian Hill, Terrace Park, Mariemont, and Madeira. So I got to know the areas pretty well. And Reading. There's community spirit in Reading, too. I don't know that the Amberley people necessarily want it. A lot of professional people work very hard, not that everyone doesn't work hard, but you know, when you work for yourself—a lawyer, a doctor—you don't get home 'til late, and you don't necessarily want to socialize; you want to put your feet up. We do have an awfully high percentage of professional people who are self-employed. I think our street is mostly doctors and dentists and lawyers.

"We moved into Amberley in '62. It wasn't Amberley when we moved; it was Columbia Township. Esther Drive was taken into Amberley when it was incorporated, but there was only one house on the street and then the street ended, and just woods. Lang came in and developed Dot and Esther; took down the trees and developed the land; put a street in. Amberley didn't take it in because it was vacant land. Before we moved, people who lived on Dot and Southwoods Lane, which is over off on Kincaid, and was also in Columbia Township, petitioned to be annexed, and Esther was part of it. So when we moved in, it became Amberley Village. We moved into that area because we wanted to be in the Cincinnati School District and we didn't want to go farther out. Then we were delighted when it was annexed."

*Has anybody influenced Amberley very strongly?*

"I think the Council members have worked as a team. The first Manager, Rupert "Bud" Anderegg, was an excellent choice for Manager, a very far-sighted individual. He understood the council-manager form of

government. He represented Amberley Village in meetings and on boards with other Hamilton County communities. In this capacity, he earned the respect of other Hamilton County municipalities.

“I wasn’t on Council then, but I think he managed the Village very well. I think the Council members who hired him and who were responsible for instituting the council-manager form of government; that was an inspiring idea. I would say that each Council in its way has contributed to serving good government. They’ve seen the needs for expansion of the facilities, and they’ve gone about providing for it. I think Council keeps on top of things. They’re low key and they work as a team. I don’t think anyone grabs the glory. We had good Mayors and we had good Council people.”

*Did you have any uncertainties at all when you took the job on Council?*

“No. I didn’t have any uncertainties about the Legislature, either. But when I got up there, then I realized no one told me exactly what the job was going to be like. They don’t prepare you for what it’s like to be a legislator; you just find out when you get there—just the amazing burden of everything. You meet all day long. Sometimes you have breakfast at quarter ’til seven and you don’t get out of committees sometimes until midnight or after. It’s just the amount of work and the amount of mail. It’s just overwhelming. You do all that in three days and you come home. You put in at least forty-eight hours in three days. There was an eighty-two-year-old legislator up there, a woman who handled it. She did it. It’s better now, probably. They get paid more, and there’s a little bit more help. Before I was elected—a couple of terms before I was elected—there was just a stenographic pool. No one had a secretary, just a pool of secretaries. Now two legislators share a secretary. When I was a whip, I had my own secretary.

“But Amberley was a good breaking-in for what it would be like to be in public office. Then when I got in the Legislature, I dealt primarily with problems that affected townships and villages and small cities. I introduced a bill to provide for the recall of township trustees. It’s been a problem around here, and they wanted me to do that. Then I introduced a number of township bills that I was requested to introduce.”

*What types of people find Amberley appealing as a home?*

“The reason we moved to the Amberley area was for the Cincinnati schools, but the schools have gone down, unfortunately. I think they’re back up now, but there was a period there when no one wanted to live in the Cincinnati School District. Because of that, the property values in some parts of Amberley are not as high as they should be. Some people

move out because of the school system. An awful lot of people send their children to private schools. When I was on Council—Amberley wanted to merge with Deer Park, be annexed to Deer Park, secede from Cincinnati and join Deer Park, and that was not possible. The State School Board has to approve it, and the State School Board won't approve unless the district from which you want to secede agrees. And Cincinnati was not about to let us go, although Deer Park was happy to have us.

“A lot of Catholics have moved in *because* of the Catholic schools nearby. It was about 70 to 75 percent Jewish. What it is now, I don't know. Many of the new people moving in are young people with children who go to the Catholic schools, because evidently Nativity is a good school. So our newest families are Catholic.

“I think Amberley is the way it is because of the people who have been on the Council, who have been mostly professional people and who are civic-minded. I remember Dr. Freiberg, who was a physician; Cromer Mashburn was president of Coca-Cola—people like that who gave their time and who were careful about the zoning. We had a terrific Zoning Commission. Zoning is important in a community. Sometimes I think being on the Zoning and Planning Commission is one of the hardest jobs of all because you really make people mad sometimes. The quality of people that have served and have contributed to the type of community is excellent.”

# AMBERLEY'S “NEW” VILLAGE HALL

The original Village Hall was constructed in 1940 on land donated to the Village by Herbert Greer French. At that time, the Fire Department had a two-bay garage, the Police Department, a single-room office, and there were no facilities for maintenance vehicles or equipment. By the late forties, these spatial limitations had created problems for the Village administration in their attempts to meet the needs of residents, and so in 1953, an additional bay was added for the Fire Department. This addition was financed by \$12,800 of the General Fund.

Five years later, in 1958, a Police Department addition was constructed at a cost of \$49,000; it was also funded by the General Fund (actually the Capital Improvement Reserve Fund of the General Fund). The one-cell jail gained another cell, and a Police Office and Communications Center was added, as well as an office for the Chief, an interrogation/conference room, kitchen, shower, locker and toilet rooms, and a partial basement for a darkroom and storage. The Fire Department purchased a pumper truck as well as new hoses, nozzles, and other necessary equipment at the same time, thanks to a general bond issue of \$32,000.

The problem of no maintenance space was finally addressed two years later, in 1960, through a \$9,000 appropriation from the Capital Improvement Reserve Fund. At that time the Village constructed a five-bay open, but covered, storage facility to be used as a shelter for maintenance equipment and supplies—especially salt-and-sand-spreading equipment for winter ice control.

The final step in the evolution of the “new” Village Hall was the remodeling-and-expanding project, which coincided with Amberley's thirtieth anniversary in 1970, and which involved the entire facility. The Village built a Council Chamber seating 110 people, new Village offices, an indoor five-station regulation twenty-five-yard pistol-range, firefighter training rooms, and an additional fire-engine bay. Everything else was renovated. The Police Department was enhanced by the purchase of extensive communication equipment as part of this complete overhaul. A General Bond Issue of \$276,000 and monies from the Capital Improvement Reserve Fund of the Village General Fund financed this most recent building-and-renovating program.

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*By John Watts*



Attending the July 30, 1957 groundbreaking for the Village Hall extension were (left to right) Edmund Buxton, lifelong resident; Hugh Graff, Vice Mayor; W. Harmon Wilson, Chairman of the Building Committee; Harold Chapman, Councilman; George Hammerlein, Mayor; Hiram Bolsinger, Councilman; Oscar Egolf, Village Manager; and architects Lloyd Sullivan, Clyde Sullivan, and Robert Isaacs.



Amberley Village Hall as it looked in 1958 after the Police Department addition was completed.



Present at the April 5, 1970, ribbon-cutting ceremony for the remodeled Village Hall were (first row, left to right) William Krueger, Chief of Police; Louis Kaufman, Chairman of the Planning Commission; Henry Blohm, Mayor; (back row, left to right) Chase M. Davies, first Village Solicitor; Charles Bird, first Village Marshall; Helen Fix, Councilwoman; and Arthur Adler, Councilman.



The most recent addition (1970) to the Village Hall included an indoor pistol range, police-and-fire training rooms, a new Council chamber seating 110 people, new Village offices, and a firehouse providing space for four trucks.

INTERVIEW WITH

# WILLIAM KRUEGER

*Police-and-Fire Chief, Retired*

*by Priscilla Petty on July 28, 1988  
at his home in Amberley Village*

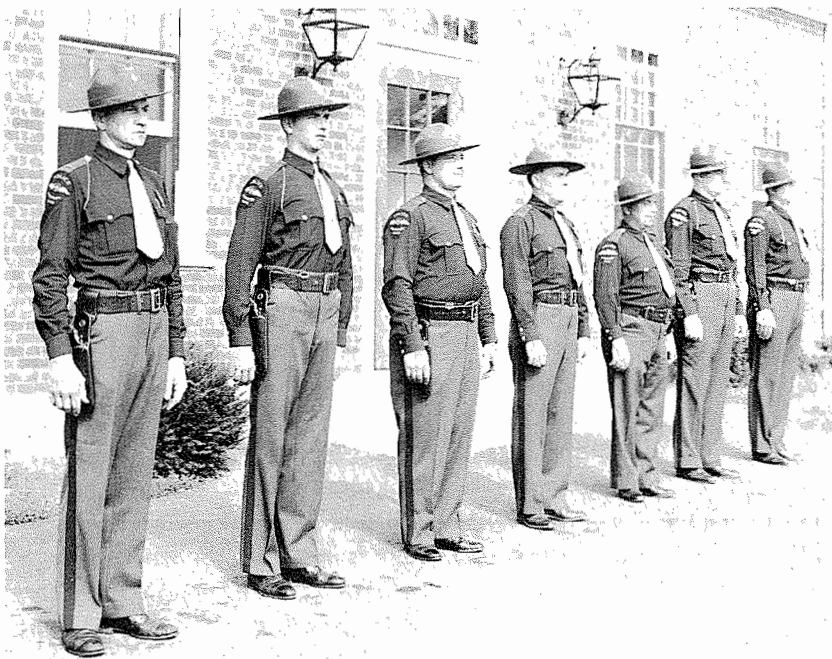
I was with Amberley Village a total of thirty-three years. I became the Hamilton County Deputy Sheriff in 1934. Part of Amberley Village was my territory. In those days, policemen were scarce. My beat—one-man—was from Springfield Pike out through Wyoming, all the way to Springdale, to the Fairfield line on Route 4, all the way to Wooster Pike, through Mariemont and all the way out to Milford. All the way to Loveland. That was my beat. One man. No radios in the car, no communication. You had to go through the telephone. That's the only communication they had.

“Of course, we had the same old thing of burglary. It's the same now as it was then. Burglary, when I was Chief here, was the most serious problem we had. We'd have thirty, forty burglaries a year. But just before I left, we were putting in burglar alarms. When I left, we had 200 alarms. The Chief down there told me they must have 600 or 700 now. When we built the new building, we had one room in the basement—we anticipated this—which was nothing but burglar alarms, all four walls. There was conduit coming in there four inches in diameter, nothing but burglar alarms.

“Since Amberley was part of my beat, I became acquainted with some of the people and their problems. I don't remember how I heard about the job, I think from a guy by the name of Charley Bird. He was the acting marshal. Amberley was incorporated in April of '40 and in about June or July, the building was under construction. The foundation was in, and they were putting up the building. When I first saw it and got interested, they started talking to me. They'd like me to take the test. I took the examination in November of 1940. I quit the Sheriff's Office on December 31 and went to work January 1, 1941, for Amberley Village. I was the first full-time employee. I was skeptical, and I hesitated to take it for a number of reasons. I had security where I was. In those days, to

give you an idea, I made \$1,800 a year as Deputy Sheriff. They offered me \$2,200 to come to work and start in this new department in Amberley. But, number one, at that time, they were having problems with annexation. Cincinnati would have loved to have Amberley, with that tax base. So I was questioning, 'If they would annex Amberley, what would happen to me?' I talked with a lot of authorities, and my good friend Dudley Outcalt was the county prosecutor. I talked with him, and he said, 'Bill, there's no problem. I would assume they would handle it the same as they did every other incorporated community. They would take the police officers from the community they're incorporating into the City of Cincinnati.'

"So I decided that I would take it. Brand new, not a piece of furniture in the place, vacant building, desk, no records, no type of records to keep. It was a matter of purchasing typewriters and forms to make out: arrest forms and disposition forms. It was interesting. Seven or eight of us took that examination, given by the City of Cincinnati. It was a police-and-fire examination. This was unique. Nobody ever heard of a



In 1945, the Amberley Police Department employed (left to right) Earl Brown, Joseph Greashaven, Morris Wesselman, Charles Bird, George Gassert, John Cunningham, and William Krueger.

Police-and-Fire Department integrated. Where I had the advantage in taking this test—and the officials knew it—I was a volunteer fireman, plus I was a Deputy Sheriff. The test was very easy for me.”

*Who had the idea to make this a joint Police-and-Fire Department?*

“I guess I had something to do with it. I had talked with the officials before I ever took the test. Charley Bird and Roy Elliott were key in the administration of Amberley, of developing the Police-and-Fire Department, putting up the building, and so forth. In fact, Roy Elliott lent the Village some \$25,000 when they incorporated, to start off. They never had any money. You had to wait until the tax duplicate came through from the following year, after the incorporation papers were put into effect, before you’d have an income. So we were starting on January 1 and somebody had to get the money to pay us our salaries. So it was a very unusual situation. We had five men—a lot for 640 people. I made a survey when we incorporated. The first thing I did, I went and visited everybody that lived in the community. I still did that up until I retired. They don’t do it anymore. I got a kick out of doing that. Good PR.

“Whose idea to combine the two? I would say the three of us: Roy Elliott, Charley Bird, and myself. It was not economically sound to have a police department and a fire department. That’s the reason they incorporated to begin with, because of police and fire protection. Now, here’s what brought that (the incorporation) on: I was the Deputy Sheriff in this community. Justin Rollman and his wife were coming home from the symphony and they lived off of Ridge Road, back about a quarter of a mile. Somebody robbed them and took about \$20,000 worth of jewelry off of her. Never did solve it. It was one of those cases that, well, there just was.... See, I was nothing but a patrolman then, and the detective section handled it.

“Then the next thing that really brought on the incorporation was that Louis L. Kaufman, who also lived on Ridge Road, had a fire. I happened to be there. I’m on a motorcycle, helpless, begging Cincinnati, Reading, Deer Park. Finally, Reading and Deer Park came. The whole quarter of this big huge home, all of the maid’s quarters, and the garage and half of the building, was burnt out before they ever got it out. Cincinnati refused to come. That’s what really brought on the incorporation. I mean, that really brought it to a head. Two of the prime incorporators were, of course, Justin Rollman and Roland Rodgers, who had the farm. He was our first Village Clerk. He lived at the corner of Ridge and Galbraith. And, of course, Herbert G. French. They were the main ones who brought it up for incorporation. So we decided right away that it would be impossible to have enough volunteers. When I first started

out, I started trying to get volunteer firemen. Here's what would happen: You'd get a gardener at one of these estates and they'd agree to let him be part of the Fire Department. Well, he'd be there a month or two and he's gone. It was just impossible. All you could get was gardeners and servants or somebody like that because nobody worked here. For you to organize, for you to have a full-time fire department, was just impossible because of the cost. So we agreed to the combination Police-and-Fire Department. Then, of course, the only municipality like that in this part of the state was right outside of Dayton. They still operate it. Four of us—officials and I—went up to inspect their system. They had an integrated Police-and-Fire Department, so we copied them. There are a number of communities that operated like this in Michigan: Dearborn, Gross Pointe Shores, Grosse Pointe. Those are real exclusive areas right outside of Detroit. They operated the same way. Later on, after we got organized, maybe two or three years, I and one of my lieutenants went up to inspect and got a lot of ideas.

“Then, of course, after we got incorporated, I made a deal with Deer Park. I was the captain of the life squad and Fire Department in Deer Park at that time. So I made a deal with them that they would back us up in case of a fire. They agreed to it, and we agreed to pay them so much



Amberley's first fire truck was a Seagrave, purchased in January 1941.

money for them to back us up. Then, of course, we organized, through cooperative agreement, all of Hamilton County as a cooperative effort, all of us integrating together, helping each other in case of a serious fire. So we had Golf Manor, Reading, Deer Park, and Silverton. I don't want to go into detail, but if a fire was in the lower end of Amberley, which is large, it would take Golf Manor. If it was up this way, we'd call Deer Park. So we had a pretty good system. Of course, as far as the police were concerned, we could handle the police problem. The police can wait, but fires don't. Minutes mean everything in fires.

"So we kept growing over the years. I started out with five men, and when I left we had sixteen. In thirty-three years, Amberley grew from about 640 people to about 4,300 or 4,400. So over the years, we had some tragedies. I guess the worst tragedy that we had was a fire on Twigwood. This is a two-story home. They had three children and two dogs. I have a tape somewhere of the mother. She couldn't sleep, as I remember, now. I'm thinking back twenty-five or thirty years. She couldn't sleep, so she went downstairs and got a cup of coffee and sat on the sofa in the family room and smoked a cigarette. She went back up to bed, and when she got up to bed, she smelled smoke. She went down again and saw that there was smoke coming from the sofa and going up the wall. She goes up and gets her two dogs, but the three children never made it. All three of them were killed. That was a pitiful story. We had some big fires over the years. Gibson Greetings, at the back end of their place, had a fire.

"Crime-wise, burglary was our biggest problem. Our first burglary I was gung ho in trying to solve. It was at the Goldsteins', who lived on Section Road. It was for \$2,600, and that's in 1941. Now, this is interesting [looking at a photograph]. That's the maid. These two guys, I nailed. Both had a record a foot long. This one, this was his girlfriend. They took her out. They knew that the Goldsteins went out on Sunday night for dinner. So they go over and pick up the maid, and take her out and get her drunk and take the keys away from her. They go out and they burglarize the house. That was our first burglary. Boy, I was determined I was going to nail them. So, I traveled all over the country. I got the one in Chicago, and the other one was Catholic and he went to a priest down in Louisville, Kentucky, and confessed to the priest. He came back on his own. We sent them both to the pen. I spent hours and days without sleep. We just never stopped until we finally caught them. It was interesting. The maid testified. We had no problem getting a conviction.

"We had a robbery at Ridgewood Country Club. The back end of the golf course went back into Reading, and there was all woods back in there. Number Thirteen hole was way back at the end. I've never heard

of this since. I mean, of committing a crime like this. But as these golfers would come down and be way down in that woods, maybe a quarter of a mile from anywhere, this guy would come up out of the woods with a gun, take their wallets away from them, and go down over the hill. We caught him.”

*Who have been the most interesting people in Amberley and the ones who have contributed over the years?*

“Cromer Mashburn was a great asset to the community. He was a member of Council and a member of the Police Committee. He and his wife both had a great interest in Amberley. He was president of the Coca-Cola Company. Justin Rollman always had a great interest in the community. Louis L. Kaufmann, businessman. He was very wealthy. He was more or less in the property investment business. He owned a couple of big buildings downtown. He was practically retired when I came here, and he died here. I guess I knew him twenty-five years before he passed away. Ruth and Charley Klein, owner of Progress Lithographing Co., were interested in the Village,

“Robert Strong was the developer of Brookwood Subdivision. He was a Councilman at one time. William Thede, he had a great interest; he was a vice-president of one bank. Dr. Joseph Freiberg, the orthopedic surgeon, was very active. Edward Wertheimer, the whiskey broker; Albert Regor, a vice-president of Chatfield Paper Company. Walter Kopf, who had a great interest in the community; he and his brother developed Glen Acres. I knew them all.

“In the early days, it was just a real friendly community. The people in Brookwood, at Christmas time, would throw a Christmas party in one of the homes and invite all the policemen. We got to know everybody and their problems, and it was a very interesting experience.

“I don't know how it started, but we had the women's Garden Club—twenty-five or thirty members. That's the only group that we ever had that was organized in Amberley. I'll tell you something that's unique about it—good or bad—we only have one school, and that's Losantiville. Our children went to ten different schools. There was no community outreach. You know how mothers-and-children groups get together and finally get acquainted and they belong to this group and then... Well, there was never anything like that in Amberley. Ten public schools. Now, Catholic schools, there was St. Xavier, St. John's, Nativity, Mother of Sorrow. They surround the whole community. There's nothing in Amberley. We have three [four] synagogues, but that's it. So there was never any real closeness of family. That's something a little unusual about Amberley.

“One of the unique things about Amberley is you’re nine-and-a-half miles from downtown Cincinnati and you’re out in the country. Roy Elliott, I never will forget our first Mayor. He got up and told people, ‘Now, you’re living out in the country. If you don’t like it out here, move out. No snow plows; no transportation. If you can’t afford two automobiles, move back to Roselawn.’ So we had no accommodations. I used to say to him, when we first got incorporated, we had no snow equipment or anything and it was terrible at times. He says, ‘That’s part of the fun of living in the country.’ Many times we would go ourselves and take it on our own to borrow Roland Rodgers’s truck and go and get a load of sand and sand the street. It was terrible. You just had everything clogged up. In the case of getting fire trucks out, it was impossible.”

*When did the attitude change that they wanted total service?*

“Since I left. I think when I left they had about three or four maintenance men. Now they have a Superintendent, with I don’t know how many, ten or twelve or thirteen employees in the Maintenance Department. When I first came, besides being Chief of the Fire Department and Chief of the Police Department, I was also Road Commissioner. You know what they gave me a year? You won’t believe it: \$200 to be Road Commissioner. Then I would go out and hire somebody to cut the weeds along the roadside, and if we had a problem with a road caving in, I’d get ahold of the County Engineer and get him to come out and fix it. If it was one of our streets, I’d get a contractor to come and fix it for us. Then, just to stay in shape, we used to cut the grass ourselves. We never thought anything of it. Today, you couldn’t get a policeman to pick up a blade of grass, let alone cut it. We did everything. But we all had an interest in the community. It was brand new. We enjoyed our jobs.

“Where the synagogue is now, the Adath Israel, that was Roland Rodgers’s fruit farm. When he passed away, it was up for sale and the temple bought it. Another interesting party that had an interest in Amberley was Sidney Meyers. Sidney Meyers donated some twenty acres where Wise Temple is. I met him at Losantiville Country Club a couple of years ago. He’s a great guy, a sharp man. Fashion Frocks originally was his business. Then he and his brother Phil developed Williamsburg. Then they developed a shopping center out here in Evendale. It’s at Reading Road and 126, that shopping center on the right. Then they developed a lot more. I’ll tell you another thing about Sid Meyers: smart. At the Cross County Highway, west of the swim club, there’s about twenty-five acres in there. Sid Meyers is the one that brought it up at Council that we should buy that. Everybody said, ‘What do we want

with twenty-five acres of ground up there in back of Reading?’ Well, boy, it’s the greatest thing they ever had. That’s where they dump all their leaves and store all kinds of things. In fact, at one time, they talked about building the maintenance building up there. They were scared of vandalism; that’s why they stayed where they were. But that was a great move on his part, and we bought that at a real price, about twenty-five years ago. Then the Rockdale Temple is on the old property of Reiser. His son-in-law was our second Village Clerk. I think the estate sold it to them.

“Then Herbert French was an unusual kind of a man. He was tall—six feet, I guess, or better—a well-proportioned gentleman. A loner; he never was married. His hobby was flowers. He had a greenhouse up there. He took a bouquet of flowers down to his office every day. He had two dogs. They were interesting dogs. He had an old house up on top of the hill, where French Park is, where the main house is. Way up on top where the park is, where they have the shelter house, he had an old homestead. He kept it furnished. I don’t care what kind of weather—rain, snow, or what—he’d take a walk up that hill into the fields with the two dogs. He’d go in there and sit and smoke his pipe and walk down. He had 235 acres there.

“We spent an awful lot of money fighting for French Park. I guess they don’t have it anymore, but Roy Elliott was the Mayor, and he said, ‘Bill, all the articles that come out in the newspaper in reference to the French Park deal, keep them in a folder.’ I had a folder about twelve inches thick when this thing was settled. Over a period of years—I think three or four—we spent a lot of money. I think it was something like \$10,000 or \$12,000.

“See, here’s what it said. It says, ‘I bequeath my estate to the City of Cincinnati to be used as a park. If they refuse or decide they don’t want it, then I bequeath that it be given to Hamilton County.’ Then when Amberley incorporated, he put a codicil in there and included, ‘If either one of these two [don’t want it], Amberley Village could have it.’ Well, Hamilton County, right away, said they didn’t want it. Cincinnati then finally decided that they wanted it. Now, the thing that we got into, what stirred it up is, ‘What is the interpretation of a park?’ There’s all kinds of parks. The kind of a park that we knew Herbert French would want is like an Eden Park or Burnet Woods. That’s the type of a park that Herbert French would think about. Not a Sharon Woods. Not a place where you’re going to have a lot of picnics and a lot of people. This is what we were fighting. We wanted them to develop a golf course there, rather than a regular park. The lawsuit was over the interpretation of a park. What kind of a park is Cincinnati going to put in there? This thing

went on, I guess, for three or four years. Of course, though, we got into this battle of contiguous property. We thought we had it sewed up. But Grand Vista Avenue, in Pleasant Ridge, runs dead down at the back of French Park. The last three houses are in Amberley, and we didn't know it. So that made it contiguous to Cincinnati, which made their having the park legal. We had special attorneys, Frost and Jacobs, appointed to handle this thing. That was interesting. Then Cincinnati kind of got the word on the type of park that we wanted and never did open it up to a real picnic ground. But the settlement in the end of this lawsuit was that the nine acres adjacent to the firehouse to Section Road, we bought for \$6,000 from the French Estate.

"When we first started, when I first came there, Justin Rollman was the key. He had 231 acres. Louis Kaufman, who lived across the street from him, and Alfred Jonap, and then Dr. Freiberg, lived on Knoll Road, and had that developed up there. Harry Price, the architect; great guy. He developed Knoll Road. I'll tell you another interesting party that we were talking about, Carl Rauh of Rauh Shirt Company. They're out of business now, but he lived up there. Harry Price developed Knoll Road and it's all one-and-three-quarter acres. There was Dr. Freiberg, Dr. Dorsey, the president of the Academy of Medicine, Ed Wisebaum, Beau Brummel, all people of means. Sid Meyers lived up there. Rube Goldstein, Ed Wertheimer, Al Levinson of Levinson Steel Company up here in Blue Ash. When Elbrook was developed, the smaller lots and Farm Acres, that all practically went Jewish. The eastern end here is more in the Catholic. You take Sagamore Drive, Gwenwyn Drive, Matson, Lynnhaven Drive, you get more of the Catholics in that area. But the western end, when that Elbrook Drive developed and they put in Twigwood and Laurel Oaks Drive and all those, that went almost all Jewish."

*Did it change the nature of the community when the synagogues were built here? Or were the synagogues built because the Village was primarily Jewish?*

"That's right. I think that really helped. Of course, there are a lot of Jewish people that walked to the temple. This became a problem with them, when they'd come out here. A lot of the old-timers wouldn't come out here because they wanted to walk to the temple. There's no place to walk in Amberley. There are no sidewalks. So some of them moved close to the temples. But there's not that much room, you know. Wise Temple was built right at the time I was retiring fourteen years ago. So I've never been in it. If there was ever a big wedding or anything of importance, it's downtown on Plum Street. But they have a lot of services out here.

"In my time, we had three tornadoes here. The worst one was the last

one, in 1972. When the tornado came up across Galbraith Road and hit all the places: the Carrousel, the Wishing Well down in Reading, it came up through the valley here and it just missed us here. It took the roof off of Crest Hills Country Club. I think there was over \$3.5 million worth of damage. We were up day and night, at that time. All the trees were down, and you couldn't get any equipment through. The trees were criss-crossed on Ridge Road. Then we had another slight tornado.

'I've lived in Amberley since 1952. The first house we built was on Lynnehaven Drive. There was another thing that was unique about this whole deal. When I came here, I didn't have the title Chief of Police. A gentleman by the name of Charley Bird was the Chief of Police in name. He had the title. He was general manager of Cincinnati Supply Company, and he lived on Section Road. In the interim, between the time that Amberley was incorporated in April of 1940 to January 1, 1941, until I was appointed, he was the Marshal or Chief of Police. So when I came, I couldn't take the title Chief of Police because the state law said you must be an elector. Which means, you must vote here. I didn't live here. Now, that's before we had a Charter. So, I came here with five people, and there was a fellow by the name of Earl Brown—he was a new Indian Hill ranger—and I started out as a lieutenant. This was like one of those dog fights. 'We're going to decide which one we want to make the Chief of Police.' So Brown stayed about a year or so and he left. So I could not become the Chief of Police, because I lived in Deer Park at the time, though I was determined I was going to be. I was maneuvering around with selling some property and buying a few lots here in Amberley and selling them and making a few bucks. I built the first house on Lynnehaven Drive. We lived in it five years. I subcontracted it and did most of the work. I did that with this one. I lived in that one five years and made a good profit off of it. Property was really booming, and I knew it, but never had the guts to take the chance. Then I built this one and we moved here in 1957. We've been here thirty-one years in July. Built this from scratch, all the flowers and the garden.

'It was an interesting career. After I retired in 1974, I wasn't satisfied with retirement. When it came out in the newspapers that I was going to go into the real estate business, Judge Olive Holmes, Judge of Juvenile Court, called me. She said, 'Bill, I'd like to have lunch with you.' She said, 'I'd like for you to become the Administrator of Juvenile Court.' I said, 'Oh, you've got to be kidding?' If there's any place I hated, it was Juvenile Court. You can't win down there. You have to be a social worker. I wasn't cut out for that. So, finally, she said, 'I want you to stay five years. That's how long I have in my term.' I said, 'No way, Judge.' So she kept after me and finally, I agreed to go down. I said, 'I'll stay two years.'

I ended up staying seven-and-a-half years. That was an experience. My title was Administrator of Juvenile Court. I had 350 employees and a \$3.5 million budget. A big job. I enjoyed it. I stayed down there, and I really got bugged up in it. Of course, you're dealing with a lot of people, and whenever you're dealing with people, you're dealing with problems and troubles—the employees, hiring and firing, and trying to make the budget. I had a lot of good people that worked for me, too. But I retired officially in '81. All I do now is play golf, go to the gym, and take care of the yard. I enjoy it.”

# THE ERUV DISTRICT

Mosaic Law, as observed by Orthodox Jews, states that on the Sabbath, you may not “carry” from one property to another, but you may carry anywhere on your own property. That property must be fenced or otherwise *physically* marked (a continuous wall, for example). Eruv means mixing, as in properties (sort of a way to combine or mix properties in a manner prescribed by law but also allowing freedom of carrying). *Carrying* means to take anything (useful or not) from one place to another.

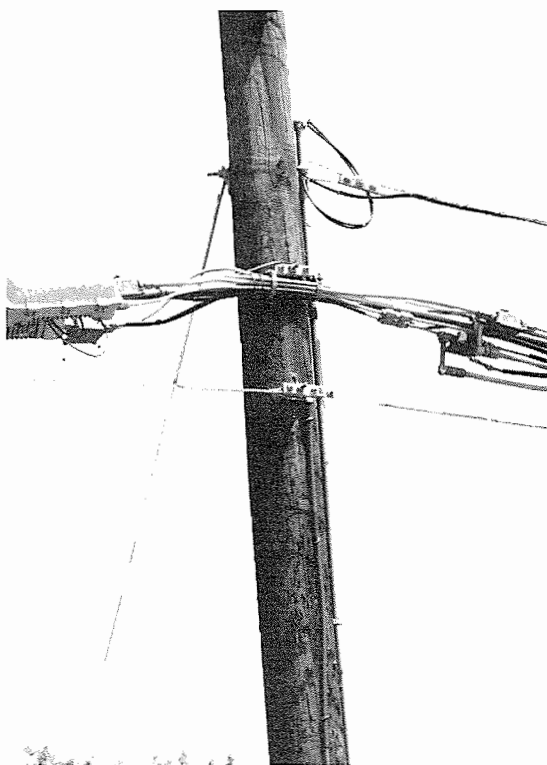
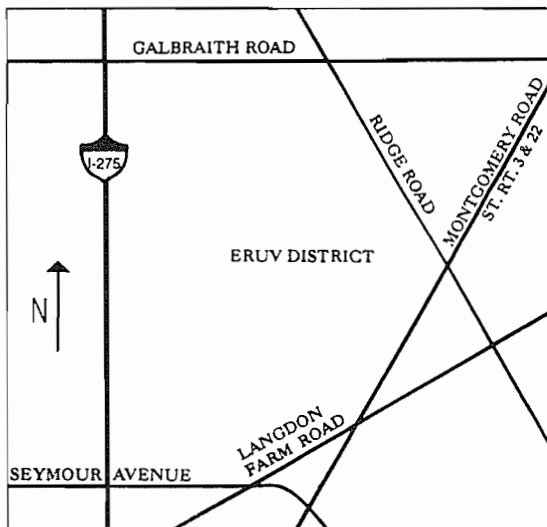
The Eruv idea is to create a district within which one can freely carry. There are Eruv Districts in cities like Toronto, Muncie, Silver Springs, Cleveland, New York, Jerusalem, and Baltimore.

About 1980, Rabbi David Indich went to Baltimore to investigate their Eruv District. With plans developed locally, the Eruv idea (which is not universally accepted) had to be presented to and approved by all local rabbis. The District must encompass any Hebrew schools, Kosher markets and restaurants, synagogues, and an Orthodox Jewish population of sufficient size and interest to justify the organization and expense.

Approved and established in 1987 here in greater Cincinnati, the “district” includes all of the criteria listed previously and a supporting membership of between fifty and sixty persons or families donating \$100 apiece each year. Cincinnati’s Eruv District runs from Galbraith Road at I-75 east to Ridge Road, then right (south) to Montgomery Road, then right (southwest) to Langdon Farm Road, then right (west) to Seymour Avenue, then right (west) to I-75 again. The interstate is considered a “natural barrier,” much like a river or ocean, and is used as the District’s western boundary. (See the sketch map on the next page.)

To mark the District, it was necessary to obtain the approval of each governmental agency through which the boundary would pass. Then arrangements with the telephone company to allow attachment of a wire from one pole to the next (continuously around the District) was made. The initial investment (purchase and installation of wire) was nearly \$5,000.

Every Friday, an individual carefully checks on the structural integ-



An Eruv District is a means of extending one's property, thus providing for compliance with Mosaic Law. Cincinnati's Eruv District was established in 1987.

rity (continuity) of the wire—that it remains unbroken from Galbraith Road at I-75 and back to Seymour Avenue at I-75. It is conceivable that an auto accident against a telephone pole or a windstorm that breaks overhead wires or construction in the border area of the District could disrupt the Eruv.

The western two-thirds of the Village of Amberley Village are included in the Eruv District.

# AMBERLEY SUMMARY AND INFORMAL VILLAGE TOUR

*Interview with Garry Benner, Police-and-Fire Chief  
and Bernard Boraten, Village Manager, by Priscilla Petty  
on October 21, 1987 at Amberley Village Hall*

GARRY BENNER: We think there are about 3,800 people in Amberley. We've actually lost population in the last ten years.

*Because there aren't as many children, and people are older?*

GARRY BENNER: Exactly, exactly. The community has gotten older, and I think perhaps one of the reasons we haven't attracted a lot of young families is the school system. We're in the Cincinnati Public School system. Children go to high school at either Woodward or Walnut Hills. For elementary school, they have the Alternative System in the city of Cincinnati; and some of the children go to the Roselawn College Preparatory School for elementary grades.

*Now that's a private school?*

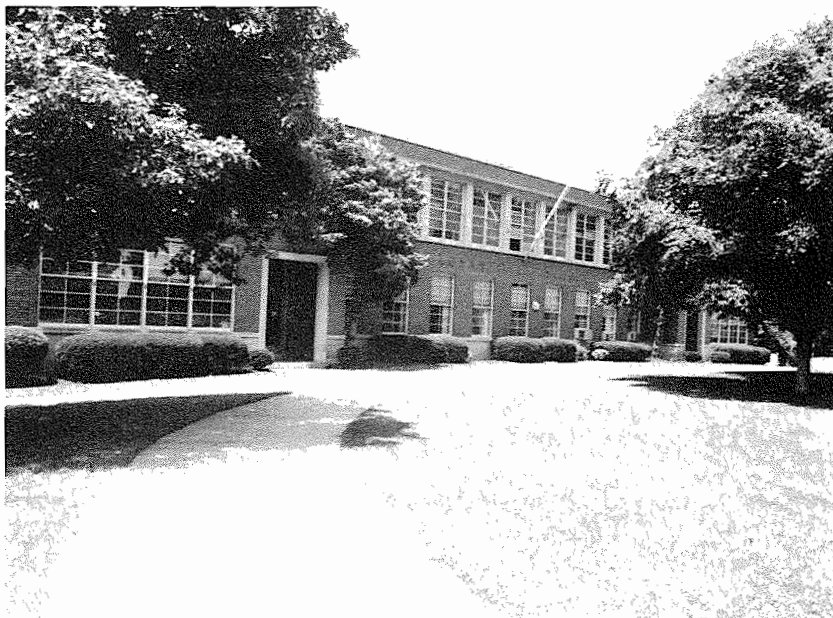
GARRY BENNER: No, it's a Cincinnati Public School. And we have Losantiville Elementary School here in the Village. Walnut Hills still offers a good education.

*It's not what it used to be twenty-five years ago.*

GARRY BENNER: Exactly. I was a graduate of Woodward High School in 1959, and it was a brand-new school and highly regarded. Whether or not it's what they say it is now, I have no firsthand knowledge. Most people would prefer to send their children other places, I think. In our new subdivision up the street on Burning Tree, for instance, quite a few

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*As I talked with Chief Garry Benner and Village Manager Bernard Boraten, it was obvious that both men serve the Village not just as a job, but as a profession. They function in an atmosphere that allows them to take a great deal of pride in their work, an atmosphere that encourages them to go well beyond the minimum in service. They are the people about whom most Villagers boast, and rightfully so.*



Losantiville Elementary School on Elbrook Avenue is the only school within the boundaries of the Village. It is part of the Cincinnati Public School System.

people send their kids to Cincinnati Country Day or Seven Hills.

We have about 1,300 homes here in the Village. We have a couple of new small subdivisions going in. The big one waiting to be developed is the Rollman property...

I've been here over twenty-five years. I don't live here, though. None of our officers live in the Village. We're an integrated Police-and-Fire Department. I am the Police-and-Fire Chief. The Lieutenants are Fire Lieutenants and Police Lieutenants, et cetera, right on down the line. We're required to live within a three-mile radius of the Village for fire response, but no one lives in the Village.

*I remember at one time you had stickers on the cars. That sounds like a good idea. Do you find that it was effective?*

GARRY BENNER: We still do. At one time, it was more effective than it is now. Now we have the regional computer system in Hamilton County and we can receive a registration on a motor vehicle within seconds. In the old days, you got two sets of books and you had to look registrations up in the books, and if there were any changes after the books were published, you didn't have that information available. But we've continued it; it's somewhat of a tradition. But I would have to say they are less helpful than they were at one time.

*As policemen and firemen, you must have to maintain great physical fitness.*

GARRY BENNER: I try to lead by example, somewhat, because I run and lift weights and do all that kind of stuff, and have for years, but it doesn't always work.

But we do a lot of good things here, and we have a lot of good people. We have sixteen sworn police officers. They're all firemen. Then we have three maintenance people who serve on the Fire Department, plus we have two civilians. Of the two civilians, only one is on the Fire Department. So we have a total of twenty people that are available for fire calls, all of them living within this radius, including the maintenance people. All of them have pagers, radios in their homes, so we have basically good communication at all times. Then there's very close mutual aid between all the departments around us.

*Do you have the kind of relationship as in Wyoming with the young people? I have three sons, and the police have always been so responsive to the boys. They'll talk to them, and a great number of the police—even though there are changes on the force over the years—seem to know them or recognize them. They just have gone that extra mile with the teenagers, when they were young and when they were first driving. Do you try to establish that same type of relationship?*

GARRY BENNER: We have that with our citizens, yes, I believe we do. We don't have it with the children because there aren't many children. There are very, very few children here.

*It's not a walk-around community.*

GARRY BENNER: No, it's not. We don't even have sidewalks here for the very reason that they want to keep it in a semi-rural atmosphere. And there's really no sense of community, in that there's no one place where they can go to be together, like a school system. We have a country club, but certain people belong to that and certain people don't. Many outsiders, people outside of Amberley Village, belong to Crest Hills. We have a swim club, the Amberley Village Swim and Tennis Club. But once again, it's the same type thing. But really, it's difficult to pin something like that down, where there's one central meeting area that people get together. We have the temples. We have four temples: Rockdale Temple, Isaac M. Wise Temple, Temple Sholom, and Adath Israel Synagogue.

*Do the temples attract a different age group? I know it's not just for Amberley people. You can't support four temples with this many people.*

GARRY BENNER: No, certainly. Really, the only time you see a lot of people at the temples seems to be during the different holidays. That's one thing that I have noticed, that there doesn't seem to be a lot of people there, every Sunday or every Saturday. It just seems like on the holidays that we're deluged by people here. We have all of our police officers working off-duty details, and there a lot of people that are here. Ah! Bernie's here now [Bernie Boraten].

As we were saying about the temples, there doesn't seem to be a great throng of people on a week-to-week basis. I know Adath Israel did have somewhat of a juvenile program going up there. They have a place where the kids can come and play pool and do some different things. It never really caught on great, and for a while they were running a school there. Then it moved to Montgomery Road, Yavneh Day School. So we really don't have anything ongoing that attracts and brings children together here.

*We were talking about having no sidewalks and no central gathering place for children, so that the police might not get to know the children and watch them grow up in the same way that some do.*

GARRY BENNER: We get to know the adults. We're close. Many times, you don't need an address; you get someone's name and you know where they live. You're bound to. On our particular department, we haven't had any turnover in four-and-a-half years. We haven't had an officer leave in all that time. Everyone here is a veteran and knows the people.

Crime in the community is very low. Last year, we had six burglaries for the entire year, which is an extremely low figure. We are fortunate and have had very few this year. The ones that we have had, we've been fortunate in solving, too. We just recently got two burglars that broke into the country club here just a couple weeks ago.

*What do you feel is most special about Amberley, having been here all this time?*

GARRY BENNER: It just seems to be a community extremely well governed. You know, that's the thing I would have to say, after looking at the professional people that have run this community the entire twenty-five years that I have been here. It's always been people that have one thing in mind with this community: to do the very best they can for it. I credit a lot of that to the professionals who are on our Council. And also the fact that we are nonpartisan in our politics here. People have a real sense of, "Let's do the best we can for the community." They aren't Republicans or Democrats; they simply run the Village government. I would have to say that's the thing that really strikes me the most. Take the Mayor, who's going out of office this year. John Muething runs one of the most pres-

tigious law firms in downtown Cincinnati. He has a lot of time that he has to spend at work. He's got a really big job down there, but he's able to devote all the time that he does to Amberley Village, and there's quite a lot of time that has to be devoted to it. Gloria Haffer, as busy as she is, and you know, red-eye special to California and back and forth on the same day every week for the last two or three weeks. And for her to be able to devote that kind of time, for very, very little pay. They certainly don't do it for the pay. I think that's the thing that really sticks out in my mind.

BERNARD BORATEN: The other thing that sticks out in my mind is the preservation of the rural atmosphere. There has been a strong emphasis upon the Planning Commission and the Council to preserve a rural atmosphere that coincides with the lack of sidewalks, but it includes large estates along the roads—a total effort to have it look like countryside, and we preserve that. No street lights. Where we permitted them, old traditional split-rail fencing along certain of the older properties has helped. So that preservation of rural atmosphere is found really only here in Amberley and, say, Indian Hill in the Cincinnati area.

GARRY BENNER: That's the beauty of an Amberley. If I were to say, "Why should you live in Amberley versus Indian Hill?" Indian Hill, obviously, has the bigger estates and the bigger homes, and it's fantastically beautiful out there, but it's not convenient there. Amberley Village has a lot of those things on a smaller scale.

BERNARD BORATEN: Approximately ten or eleven miles from downtown.

GARRY BENNER: But it's very close. It sits between two interstates, and it's very, very comfortable to live in Amberley Village and still have all the conveniences.

BERNARD BORATEN: It's a true rural haven within very heavily populated areas. You can look at an aerial photograph of Amberley and you can see the corporate lines, and then you look beyond the corporate lines and you see the high-density housing all around it, and it's a dramatic difference in appearance in the aerial photograph. So that's something that the Planning Commission and Council worked years to preserve. And French Park, being in the heart of the community, and the Rollman farm, are a big part of that. There are two huge blocks of land that are left green. Now the Rollman farm will eventually develop, but French Park will remain green. It's 275 acres, anyway, of woods there.

*May anyone use French Park, or is it limited to Amberley Village?*

GARRY BENNER: It's a Cincinnati Public Park.

BERNARD BORATEN: It's within the corporate limits of Amberley, but it's controlled by the Cincinnati Park Board, so it's open to anybody in the region.

GARRY BENNER: I would say the majority of the people who go into French Park are outsiders. Of course, I was here during the Vietnam War, and all the protesters used to hang out there. I went up there one time and they were flying a big black flag from a tree. But we patrol it. We enforce our ordinances because it is in Amberley Village.



French Park's 275.749 acres will always be a big part of Amberley's rural atmosphere.

# VILLAGE TOUR

*After the interview, Garry Benner and Bernard Boraten took me on an informal tour of the Village. As they pointed out the landmarks and I soaked up the atmosphere, I was struck by what a gorgeous place Amberley is. It was October, and the fall colors made me feel as though I were driving through New England. (NOTE: Numbers in brackets indicate location on map.)*

BERNARD BORATEN: North of French Park here on Ridge Road is the Rollman estate. [1] The Rollman estate is 204 acres. Mrs. Justin Rollman still plants crops on most of the property, has cows, chickens, and a few other farm animals. [Mrs. Rollman died in 1988.] This is the heart of our rural atmosphere right here. Obviously, the development of this property will be of critical concern to the Village in the future. The Rollmans had two children: Henry Rollman, who lives in Indian Hill, and Joan Musekamp, who lives here in Amberley Village.

GARRY BENNER: There's actually a five-room house over there that they built for their children as a playhouse.

This little subdivision across the road here is just a few years old. Henry [Rollman] had the original home over here on his property, and when he moved to Indian Hill, he subdivided this.

BERNARD BORATEN: We go from "Old Amberley" behind us to the ultimate in "New Amberley," right across the street. There are two new subdivisions besides this one that are going in. This one was built roughly five years ago, but it represents the new-style housing in Amberley. We have two other subdivisions under development that will have this type of housing.

GARRY BENNER: This is the original Rollman home, that Henry Rollman had. [2]

*Does Amberley have control over the individual houses as they're built?*

BERNARD BORATEN: No. We've elected not have an architectural review board, which, of course, is something that some other communities have. Thus far, we've left it sort of to the free market as far as architectural matters are concerned.

*The houses vary in price from what to what in this area?*

BERNARD BORATEN: Well, the building permits came in in the \$300,000

to \$400,000 range, but in actual fact, I think some of these houses on the market are valued higher than that. Building permits tend to show a lower number than the market value, and in fact, we're aware that the lots in here that were not originally sold were resold at nearly double their value later. There have been some houses in here, one in particular, that was put on the market at around \$650,000. Now, it did not sell. I think that the market range is going to be \$500,000 plus in this subdivision.

Crest Hills Country Club [3] is another big chunk of land which leaves open space at the present time. I'm not sure of the exact acreage, but we're talking a full eighteen-hole course there, and again, that keeps the density of the community down and keeps the open space very extensive. Between the Rollman Farm, Crest Hills Country Club, and French Park, you have a massive amount of unbuilt land. Now, this north end of the Village, north of Galbraith, is the newer end of the Village, as traditional Amberley has referred to it. Most of these homes were built after, say, 1960. Some of the first ones up here were actually built in the late fifties, but most after 1960, and all built in probably about a ten-year span. There are a few early homes left here; you'll see a few as we drive.



The Crest Hills Country Club was founded in 1939. Originally located on Seymour at Reading Road, it had a nine-hole golf course. In 1966, the club purchased the Ridgewood Public Golf Course, with an eighteen hole course, and relocated. The Club built a new clubhouse, and held an inauguration party on July 4, 1968.

But most of it was farm land that was cut up and subdivided. This end of Amberley is newer than the south end. This magnificent house is the former Cromer Mashburn estate. [4]

GARRY BENNER: Of Coca-Cola.

BERNARD BORATEN: This is Rockdale Temple. [5] The temples occupy large tracts of land, and again, it's relatively undeveloped with the exception of a temple.

GARRY BENNER: The swim club is across the highway.

BERNARD BORATEN: Amberley Swim and Tennis Club [6] is a private club and is not controlled by Amberley Village.

*So Amberley Village goes across Cross County Highway, but not very far.*

BERNARD BORATEN: Yes. We have a property over there of about twenty acres, [7] a clean landfill site that we use.

GARRY BENNER: The Wise Temple [8] was the last temple to go in.

*So the Isaac M. Wise Temple is basically next to Rockdale Temple.*

BERNARD BORATEN: One property separates the two—the Cromer Mashburn estate. As I've emphasized, this adds to the low-density impact of development in Amberley Village. A tremendous amount of natural environment is retained on two of these temple sites, particularly Rockdale and Wise.

*Well, someone thought ahead to try to make this attractive. Was that your Council? Did they encourage that?*

BERNARD BORATEN: Well, I think it was encouraged, but it was not a specific policy—it was never written down. But it's almost as though each Council was a standard bearer of the efforts of the Councils before them to protect that rural atmosphere. When we go back in the minutes of old Planning Commission meetings, you'll find numerous references to "rural atmosphere" in those minutes. So they knew what they were attempting to achieve. Nobody ever wrote it down to say that "this shall be policy," but it was also never forgotten. And I think that when development occurred, as a result, there was a constant watchdog effect by the Council and the Planning Commission to prevent tall-pole overhead lighting, to prevent anything that would tarnish at all the natural setting of the trees and the natural environment.

GARRY BENNER: This temple (Adath Israel Synagogue) [9] was the site of the Roland Rodgers Fruit Farm. He was one of the founders of the

Village. In fact, when I was first working here, the old home was here and the fruit farm still existed.

BERNARD BORATEN: Again, north of Galbraith, [10] we're looking at the newer developments that occurred in the early sixties. I think it was in 1971 that the U.S. Governors Conference came here to spend a day at the Rollman estate. The conference was meeting in Cincinnati. They hosted all the U.S. governors out here on one day. Mrs. Rollman has always been very involved in campaigns—sort of, I think, as a contributor to campaigns. She has a lot of political friends.

GARRY BENNER: Her husband certainly did, that's for sure. That's the old original farmhouse. This driveway goes around over to the main house, which is over on the other side.

BERNARD BORATEN: Look at these old barns around us. [11] You can imagine right now that we're forty-five, fifty miles from Cincinnati, out in Brown County somewhere looking at these farms. Look at the buildings; look at the fields out here. That's one piece of magic that Mrs. Rollman retains is the fact that you can't tell, when you're in the heart of her property, that you're not on a farm clear out in rural Ohio.

GARRY BENNER: That barn did not burn down; we burnt it down. That was a fire-training session here just a few weeks ago. They asked us to do it for them, and we were only too happy to do it because it's good training for us.

BERNARD BORATEN: On the south end of the site, where we really couldn't get back in there by car, there are some pretty steep ravines, and those are the headwaters for a number of the creeks that flow through Amberley. We're concerned about their development in the future from two points of view. One, that we don't want to see the ravines bulldozed, because they're naturally attractive, and also, we are concerned about the storm-water control once this would be developed. So there will be a lot of storm-water management concerns when the property develops.

*So you may have more control over the development of this property than you have the other subdivisions.*

BERNARD BORATEN: Right. We have recently passed legislation which allows us to require storm-water retention basins on properties as they develop, and they will be required there on the Rollman property. It's already in the effective law. We're on the east side of the Village now. We're near the Deer Park border, just about a block away. This is smaller housing. It was not in Amberley when it was first planned for building.

This was a part of general unincorporated Hamilton County.

GARRY BENNER: It's an easy tip-off because the garages face the street, and we have a Village Code that prohibits that.

BERNARD BORATEN: But this housing was planned under Hamilton County, unincorporated. Shortly after the plans were approved and foundation construction got underway and sewer lines were in, then Amberley annexed this area. Some people refer to it as the eastern border of the Village, almost as an eastern buffer to the Village. Most of the lots are less than one acre, which is not the standard in the Village. You'll find on the outskirts of the Village several areas where lots are less than one acre.

The bulk of the Village, probably 80 percent of it, is zoned minimum one-acre residential. And, in fact, many of those lots in the heart of the Village are two to five acres, easily.

We're only about 150 yards from the Deer Park corporation line, behind these houses on the right. [12]

GARRY BENNER: Most of the historic buildings are obviously down on the other end of town.

BERNARD BORATEN: Heading to the south end of the village—there were several large tracts of land held by single landowners down there, traditionally. Wachendorf is one name that was very big. He owned a lot of the original land before homes were built down there. He owned probably the entire Meadow Ridge, Elbrook, and Farm Acres subdivision land as a farm, I believe. It may have been called Wachendorf Farm at that time. There were several large landowners in that south and southwest end of the Village who broke up their land fairly early. One of the earliest developments that we'll see in a little bit is the Fair Oaks development. That is probably the oldest subdivision. I believe the name we're looking for there is Strong, last name Strong; Strong Farm was involved there somewhere.

GARRY BENNER: He was one of the first Councilmen.

BERNARD BORATEN: In Fair Oaks, some of those homes were built, I would suspect, in the thirties. There are some grand estates back in there. Then you had a second wave of building and development that kicked off in that area in the late forties and early fifties near Losantiville School, Elbrook; and all those areas developed then. That was primarily, again, the Wachendorf Farm. Then you've got another wave of building at the south end of the Village in the sixties, and that would include Beechlands and Aracoma, early sixties.

GARRY BENNER: There used to be a riding stable back in Aracoma. My mother used to take lessons there... This is one of the original homes of the Village. [13] Louis Kaufman built that home, and the story goes he had a major fire in his home, and they had no fire protection here. And that was one of the reasons why he got Justin Rollman and a couple of others together and they decided to incorporate and get police-and-fire protection here.

BERNARD BORATEN: There's an estate just north of Belkay that we're coming out of on Ridge. The first estate north of here is traditionally known as the Hastie Estate. [14] That again was one of the original farmers here.

One of the things that was important to us was, there were several of those large-estate houses which, during the energy crisis, became very inefficient, and we were concerned that people weren't going to move into these things and buy them. Well, when the energy crisis got over, not only were the houses energy inefficient but they were, a number of them, deteriorated, like the Hastie Estate. We had a flurry of people moving into these homes and doing some fix-up work inside. And that goes for the Mashburn Estate that we looked at on Ridge Road North. Dave Parker's place—that house was described to me as a possible dinosaur, because it was so large for heating purposes. But again, somebody like Dave Parker, baseball's National League MVP and former Cincinnati Red, moves in and says, "We can handle this." So there was a new breath of life given to some very old estate mansions during those years when those changes occurred. That was very important. Not only did it restore their integrity, but it improved the financial integrity of the homes around them. Rather than have a vacant estate house, you now had a very wealthy person living there making an absolute palace out of the place.

GARRY BENNER: There are a lot of original houses, too. Herbert Greer French, whom French Park is obviously named after, was a vice-president of Procter & Gamble. He never married, and when he died, he left his property to be a park. This was his home [15], and he's the one who actually donated the property where Village Hall is. They came to him and asked him for property, and he donated that entire block of land where the Hall is.

BERNARD BORATEN: Mr. French was responsible for naming Amberley.

GARRY BENNER: From a little town in England.

BERNARD BORATEN: Yes. Mr. French fell in love with a small village in

England by the name of Amberley. It has a lot of natural wild flowers; I've seen some photographs of it. French decided that he wanted to come back here and name this Village after it and then put into effect the kind of forefather-type approaches that would make the Village of Amberley Village here be retained as attractive and as rural as Amberley, England. You have a view up here of quite a distance. They tell me that you can see some of the towers on the extreme south end of the University of Cincinnati, at one point, maybe when the leaves are off the trees.

GARRY BENNER: A nice view of the lovely Millcreek Valley.

BERNARD BORATEN: All the property on both sides here is French Park. This is the unused portion. French Park has a lot of undeveloped, unused property within it.

GARRY BENNER: Now, this side of Section Road, east of Knoll Road, is in the city of Cincinnati.

BERNARD BORATEN: On the left-hand side [heading west], we're still in Amberley.

GARRY BENNER: We don't have any multiple housing, no apartments.

*But they call them Amberley House just to...*

BERNARD BORATEN: To improve the market value.

GARRY BENNER: This is somewhat of a famous house up here. It was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. [16]

BERNARD BORATEN: This is in many of Frank Lloyd Wright's books. People come here to try to photograph it. It's one of his famous designs.

GARRY BENNER: Gerald Tonkens gets real unhappy when people come in.

BERNARD BORATEN: We've just passed down Hudson Parkway. We're turning off of Section Road now onto Kincaid. We will be going through the Hudson Parkway area, as it's called. This is an area that was developed and almost entirely built while it was under another governmental jurisdiction. Then Amberley annexed it. So again, the lots, in some cases, are smaller than Amberley's zoning requirements. We have a number of storm-sewer lines through here that are perhaps even deficient compared to what Amberley would have required. This area, architecturally, associates itself with Pleasant Ridge in Cincinnati. You are finding when you're in this subdivision, the Farm Crest-Hudson Parkway area, you're feeling a pull to the south. This is really an extension of Pleasant Ridge.

GARRY BENNER: Bring us back around Hudson Parkway, go down Grand Vista; we have a couple of homes stuck at the end of Grand Vista. The whole thing is Cincinnati except the last two homes on the street, and it's really a beautiful street. I don't think many people realize that Pleasant Ridge does have a street like this. Big old English Tudor homes; it's gorgeous. Two of John Muething's sons live next door to one another. This one lives in Amberley Village, and this one just built in Cincinnati. This is Cincinnati here. [17]

BERNARD BORATEN: The borderline is right there.

GARRY BENNER: These last two homes at the end of the street are in the Village.

BERNARD BORATEN: They back into French Park again. Those back yards are French Park, so they have a permanent placement next to beautiful woods. It's like living next to a national forest.

GARRY BENNER: I love the canopy of trees. Nothing quite like trees to make a neighborhood.

BERNARD BORATEN: Let's head over to Farm Acres. These are attractive homes, small lots, nice woods around it, but brought in after they were built. Very narrow roads in here. On both corners on each side of us right now is French Park property. [18] Unused French Park land is held as greenbelt, and it again emphasizes the tremendous impact that French Park has upon the natural greenery of Amberley. It's all over us; it's all around us. Even those portions that the public doesn't even know are there are quite large.

*So is there a sign to indicate that this is still French Park? People really wouldn't know.*

BERNARD BORATEN: No. On the left, it's just vacant and held there. The impact of Herbert French in this Village is major. He dictated, in a sense, where the City Hall was going to be because he donated the land. Rather than sell off his own property, he dedicated it as a park. When he did that dedication, he kept in mind the greenbelt effect he was trying to achieve and he kept not only French Park proper green, but the four corners around Section and Ridge.

*It makes a huge difference in the feel as you're driving through.*

BERNARD BORATEN: If we had houses on every corner at the Section-and-Ridge intersection, it would have an entirely different impact in terms of view. This is Fair Oaks Drive North [19], and there are several drives that splinter off from this; Willow Brook, Meadow Brook. This



Driving along Section Road north of Ridge is like being out in the country.

is part of the old Strong Farm. This is one of the earliest areas of housing in Amberley. This is where some of the first Amberley residents showed up. At one time, off of Section Road, this was one of the only subdivisions in existence. All the rest of Section Road was nothing but farms. Now to this day, it's a very popular area to live; the house values are very strong. It's considered very private, very quiet, and very traditional. A few of the houses are more recent, but the bulk of them are older.

*People move to Amberley for a feel for the land and for the property.*

GARRY BENNER: I would certainly think so. It's beautiful.

BERNARD BORATEN: We've listed several draws, or magnets, to this community. One is certainly the atmosphere, the rural atmosphere, the trees; the house values are certainly there; the security that has always been perceived is certainly there. Another one is that it's become sort of a center for the Jewish community. That in and of itself keeps property values very high. The investment that the Jewish community has made in the temples is major and very long term. Those are big, expensive

buildings and institutions they've put there. That adds a great deal of future continuity to this area. You'll have Jewish families whose children will have as their goal to move back into Amberley someday. I know some young Jewish couples now, who have gotten out on their own and are living in, say, Western Hills or somewhere else, but their goal is to own a fine home in Amberley someday.

GARRY BENNER: This is our western border, Gibson Greeting Cards, [20] being in the Village here.

BERNARD BORATEN: Pepsi-Cola [21] is behind it; Procter & Gamble [22] is behind that. It's all in the Village.

*Procter & Gamble is in Amberley Village? Which part of it?*

GARRY BENNER: A big warehouse operation.

BERNARD BORATEN: You're looking at a very important part of our income.

GARRY BENNER: Gibson Greeting Cards pays a lot of bills.

BERNARD BORATEN: Now, something about the Gibson property: this is very interesting in the history of Amberley. This shows you how tough Amberley was in the early years. In the front yard of Gibson, you can see the big sign that they built out of shrubs. The entire front yard is zoned Residence A, one-acre minimum, single-family residential. The front yard of this industrial plant is also zoned Residence A, single-family residential.

*So what does that mean to these companies?*

BERNARD BORATEN: They can never expand their plants to the front, because that's zoned for residences only. So you have the ideal circumstance: the Gibson people will never give it up—they don't want houses in their front yard—and they will also never advance closer, so we have a preserved greenbelt around these plants. A greenbelt buffer. I'm not aware of any other community that's ever done that with residential zoning.

GARRY BENNER: They have expanded toward the back. Gibson has expanded a couple of times.

BERNARD BORATEN: But the front is preserved. That was one of the original deals that was worked out. The first plant that was ever here was called the Gruen Watch Company, before Gibson.

GARRY BENNER: This is Losantiville School. [23]

*Within Amberley?*

GARRY BENNER: Yes it is. It is in the Cincinnati Public School System; it's an elementary school.

BERNARD BORATEN: We're in the southwest end of the Village off of South Elbrook now and Meadow Ridge. One characteristic of this area of the community, particularly, is the association of many of the people living here, with the temples in Roselawn and Golf Manor. You'll find a large number of Jewish families living in here walk to the temples on holy days.

GARRY BENNER: They're Orthodox temples that are either in the city of Cincinnati or Golf Manor. There is also an Eruv District, where there actually are symbolic coverings put on utility poles.<sup>1</sup>

BERNARD BORATEN: This is the southern side of the Fair Oaks Subdivision [24], south of Section Road. And again, the housing in here is in the same age group as those on the north side in the Strong Farm area that we looked at. This street here to the south, Fair Oaks South, was one of the first streets stricken off of Section Road when the farms were broken up. For a while, as I said, Fair Oaks North and Fair Oaks South were the only streets coming off of Section Road for a couple of years after these homes were built. Then the subdivisions began to spread all over.

Fair Oaks South backs up against the Golf Manor corporation line. In the big aerial photograph at the Village Hall, you'll see the extreme difference in density right adjacent to one another. If you go about 150 feet south of these houses here on Fair Oaks South, you're into a very high-density housing area in Golf Manor [25], with nothing separating the two but a few trees.

*Do you influence the set-back from the street, or is that a matter of the first person's having built the house a certain distance back?*

BERNARD BORATEN: There's a two-layered zoning requirement on that. Minimum set-back is 50 feet. If you are building a house, and somebody else, as you indicated, has built their house before you, you must maintain the average set-back of any homes on either side of you within 200 feet. That has caused a lot of these homes on Section Road to be set back quite far. The first homeowners had them set back, and the standard had to be maintained. It gives us the very large estate look.

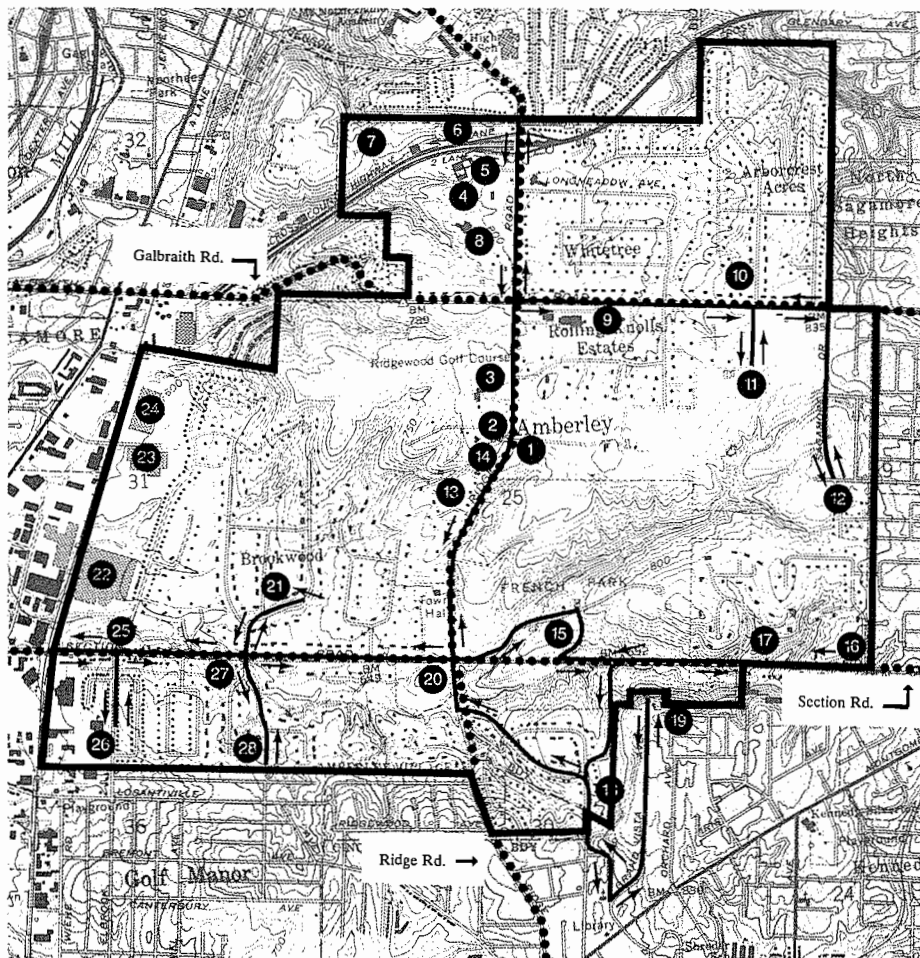
GARRY BENNER: The interest in our jogging track has held up real well. They have a third-of-a-mile track here, and then we just recently put an extension in this Village property, north of the Municipal Building.

BERNARD BOARATEN: Very attractive jogging, walking, hiking track,

whatever you want to use it for. It's all cinders. It's become extremely popular. Another thing is, to a certain degree, it's a place for Amberley residents to see their neighbors. We had a few residents come to us and say, "Finally, we have a place to talk to each other." You have some Amberley residents who meet each other down here after work and walk and talk.

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*A marked geographical area in which Orthodox Jews may "carry" freely on the Sabbath. See "The Eruv District."*

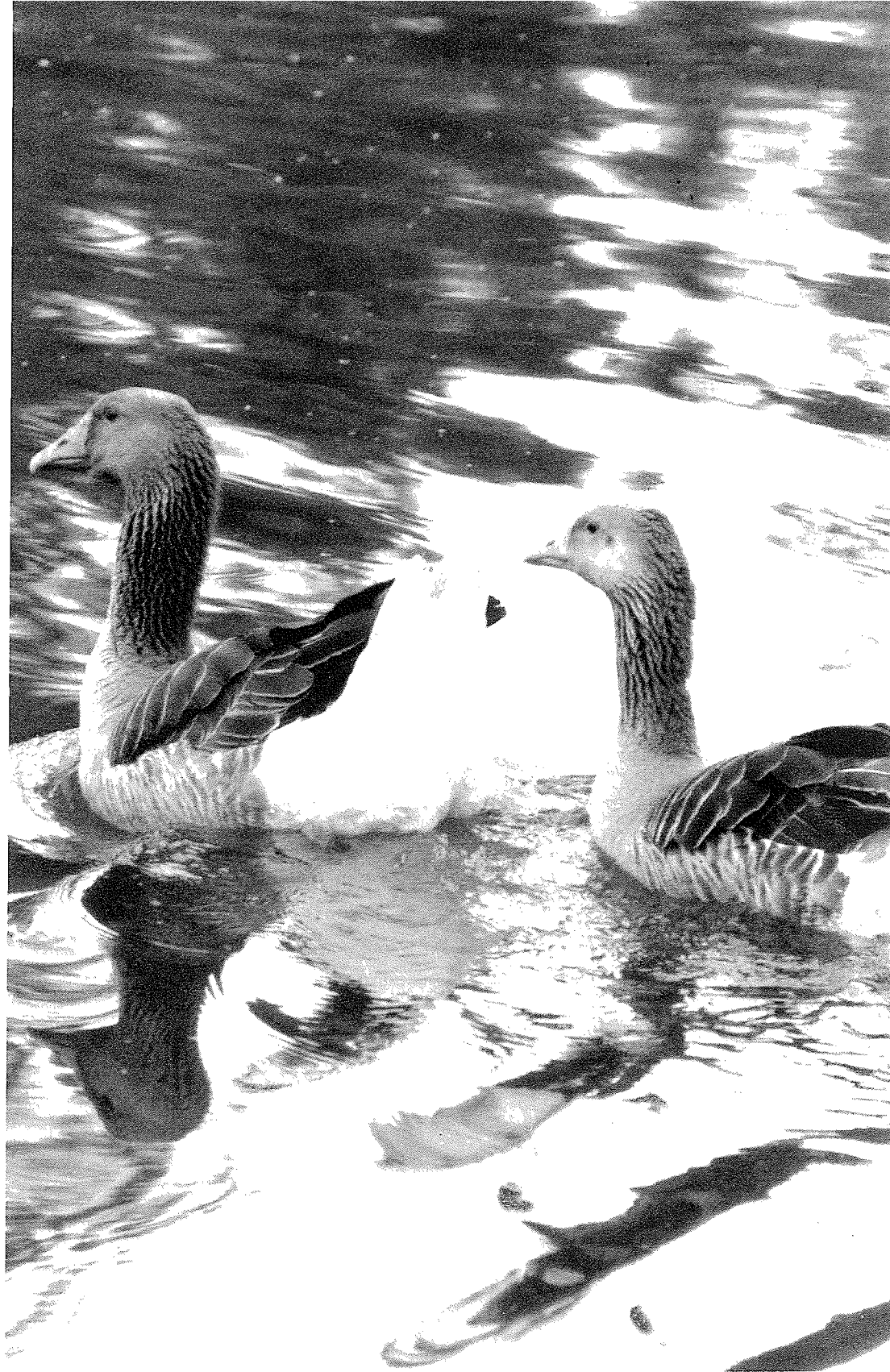


Route of the Village Tour, October 21, 1987 (Village Manager Bernard Boraten, Chief of Police and Fire Garry Benner, and Priscilla Petty).

# VILLAGE TOUR

1. Rollman estate
2. Rollman home
3. Crest Hills Country Club
4. Cromer Mashburn estate
5. Rockdale Temple
6. Amberley Swim and Tennis Club
7. Dump site
8. Wise Center
9. Adath Israel
10. Newer developments north of Galbraith
11. Rollman barns
12. Deer Park corporation line
13. Louis Kaufman home (one of original in Village)
14. Hastie estate
15. French House
16. Frank Lloyd Wright house
17. Cincinnati line on Grand Vista Street
18. French Park property
19. Fair Oaks Drive North
20. Gibson Greeting Cards
21. Pepsi-Cola
22. P & G
23. Losantiville school
24. Southern side of Fair Oaks Subdivision
25. Golf Manor border

# APPENDIX



# HISTORICAL FACTS

1. The Village of Amberley Village—A Concise Historical Timeline
2. The Life and Times of Edmund Hall
3. The Early Settlers

# THE VILLAGE OF AMBERLEY VILLAGE— A CONCISE HISTORICAL TIMELINE

*by John Watts*

- 1751 Christopher Gist from Virginia executes the first area survey.
- 1755/56 Earliest published account describing the area (London & Philadelphia).
- 1763 The Treaty of Paris, recognizing English territorial claims, is signed.
- 1786 Captain Benjamin Stites of Redstone, Pennsylvania, visits the area. Establishment of Ohio's first permanent settlement (Marietta).
- 1787 Judge John Cleves Symmes of New Jersey visits the area.  
Northwest Territory Ordinances establish settlement policies.  
Symmes purchases approximately 600,000 acres and sells 20,000 to Stites.
- 1788 (Jan.) Israel Ludlow purchases land from Symmes.  
(Nov. 18) Benjamin Stites and his party of 26 settlers (including Edmund Buxton) land at the Little Miami River estuary and establish the first permanent settlement in the area, known as the *Miami Purchase* (Columbia).  
(Dec. 28) Israel Ludlow and his party land at Yeatman's Cove and establish the area's second permanent settlement. (Losantiville, later to be named Cincinnati).
- 1789 (Feb. 2) Judge John Cleves Symmes and his party land at the Great Miami River estuary and establish the area's third permanent settlement (North Bend).

- c. 1789/90 Edmund Buxton weds Lydia Flynn.
- 1790 General Josiah Harmar's army is defeated by the Indians in battle near Fort Wayne.
- 1791 General Arthur St. Clair's army is defeated by the Indians in battle on the banks of the Wabash River in Indiana.
- 1792 White's Station is established on the Mill Creek (Carthage).
- 1794 Edmund Buxton and family move to White's Station from Columbia.
- (Aug. 20) General "Mad" Anthony Wayne's army defeats the combined forces of the Indian nations in the Battle of Fallen Timbers near Toledo.
- 1795 (Aug. 3) The Treaty of Greenville is signed. The Indians surrender all territorial claims to the United States government.
- c. 1795/96 Edmund Buxton bargains with Judge Symmes for 320 acres of land, now in Amberley Village. He constructs a log cabin, moves his family into the cabin, and plans a "big house."  
John McFarland, Francis Kennedy, Adam Lee, John Collins, Hugh Meek, and probably James Caldwell and John Daily purchase land from Symmes in what is now Amberley Village.
- 1797 James Baxter purchases 160 acres from James Caldwell.  
Elias Boudinot purchases 620 acres from Symmes. He immediately sells the property to John and Issac Mills.
- (Apr. 13) Edmund Buxton receives his property deed from Symmes upon the payment of \$320 and probably begins construction of Edmund Hall immediately.
- 1799 (Apr. 20) Buxton and others found Carpenter's Run Baptist Church in Blue Ash.  
John Dailey sells 160 acres to Andrew Rogers (Rodgers).
- 1800 James Baxter probably begins construction of the Baxter House of Fair Acres Drive.

- 1806 (Sept. 26) Edmund Buxton dies.
- c. 1806/07 Edmund Hall is completed.
- 1807 George Gwinup and John Winans purchase land from Symmes.
- 1813 John Clark and Patrick Long purchase land from the U.S. government.
- 1911 Herbert Greer French purchases a portion of the Buxton Farm—the first non-Buxton family member to do so.
- 1919 French becomes a Vice President of Procter & Gamble.
- 1920 Josephine and Justin Rollman take a horseback ride through Amberley.
- 1922 French concludes his purchases of Buxton land with the acquisition of Edmund Hall and surrounding property.
- 1927 Justin Rollman purchases approximately 250 acres just north of the French property.
- 1928 Rollman persuades French to construct a new home on the foundation of the former Newton S. Buxton home, south of Edmund Hall.
- 1934 William J. Krueger becomes a Hamilton County Sheriff. His beat includes present-day Amberley.
- c. 1936 Josephine and Justin Rollman are robbed at gunpoint in the driveway of their Amberley home.
- c. 1938 The Louis Kaufman home suffers a serious fire, most of the damage caused by a lack of prompt firefighter response from surrounding communities.
- 1940 (Mar. 7) Amberley residents vote to incorporate, primarily to gain police and fire protection.
- (Apr. 5) The OFFICIAL DATE of the INCORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE OF AMBERLEY VILLAGE.
- (May 22) Organizational meeting of Amberley Village held at the home of Amberley's first mayor, Roy G. Elliott.
- (June 3) First meeting of the new Amberley Village Council held in the home of Councilman Frank J. Wehmhoff. Herbert Greer French donates land to the new Village on which to build a Village Hall.

- (Aug. 26) A contract to build “a combination fireproof village administration, police, and fire engine building” is awarded to Al Neyer (\$18,224). The architectural firm of Henry Hake and Henry Hake, Jr. is employed to draw up plans/specs and to supervise construction.
- (Autumn) The Amberley Village Garden Club is established.
- (Nov. 19) Bonds are issued to construct and equip Village Hall (\$24,000).
- 1941 (Jan. 1) William Krueger becomes Amberley’s first full-time employee.
- (Jan. 6) The first Council meeting is conducted in the partially constructed new Village Hall.
- 1942 (Jan. 22) The first meeting of the Planning Commission of Amberley Village is held.
- (June 25) Herbert G. French dies.
- (Dec. 14) Chase M. Davies (Village Solicitor since incorporation) resigns to take an appointment as judge to the bench of the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas.
- 1943 The Girl Scouts of Hamilton County are given permission from the Village to use the French property and house as a summer camp.
- (Apr. 4) Sergeant Ralph D. Bingham dies in the crash of his Army Air Force B-17 bomber in Europe.
- 1947 (Memorial Day) Dedication of the Ralph D. Bingham Memorial at the intersection of Fair Oaks and Willowbrook drives.
- 1953 A Fire Department bay is added to the Village Hall.
- 1954 Construction begins on Gerald B. Tonken’s Frank Lloyd Wright “Usonian Automatic” house. Amberley Village begins operating under a City Manager plan of local government. The first City Manager is Rupert “Bud” Anderegg.
- 1956 The Frank Lloyd Wright house is completed. Oscar T. Egolf replaces “Bud” Anderegg as City Manager.
- 1957 (Dec.) William Krueger is finally titled Chief of Police after being the “de facto” Chief for many years.

- 1958 A Police Department addition is attached to Village Hall.
- 1960 A maintenance/storage facility is added to Village Hall.
- 1961 Edmund Hall is demolished and bulldozed by the Cincinnati Park Board.
- 1967 Helen Fix becomes the first woman to be elected to Village Council.
- 1968 Hugh A. Graff succeeds Oscar Egolf as City Manager.
- 1970 Amberley Village Hall is expanded and undergoes a complete remodeling and renovation.
- 1973 Thomas E. Wessen replaces Hugh Graff as City Manager.
- 1974 Chief William Krueger retires after 33 years of Village employment.  
Joseph Truesdale succeeds retiring Chief Krueger as the Amberley Village Chief of Police.
- 1977 Bernard Boraten is named City Manager following the retirement of Thomas Wessen.
- 1983 Garry Benner succeeds Joseph Truesdale as the new Chief of Police after 21 years on the force.
- 1990 (Apr. 5) The Village of Amberley Village celebrates its 50th anniversary.

# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF EDMUND HALL



1790	Edmund Buxton 1768-1806
	Lydia Flinn Buxton 1774-1836
1800	HOUSE COMPLETED
1810	John Shanklin
1820	
1830	Charles Henry Buxton 1793-1867
	Rebecca Ferguson Buxton 1792-1871
1840	Edmund Buxton II 1813-1891
1850	Eliza Cortelyou Buxton 1813-1867
1860	
1870	Rebecca I. Buxton Thompson 1841-1926
1880	Victor Thompson 1866-1925
1890	Ella Acomb Thompson 1866-1951
1900	PURCHASED BY HERBERT G. FRENCH
1910	
1920	Jane Edwards (Mrs. Charles J. Hunt)
1930	WILLED TO CITY OF CINCINNATI
1940	
1950	DEMOLISHED BY PARK BOARD
1960	
1970	

# THE EARLY SETTLERS

*List of the Original 26 Settlers  
to Arrive in the Symmes Purchase November 18, 1788  
(listed alphabetically)*

Baily, Greenbright	Shelby, Evan
Mrs. Greenbright	Shoemaker, Daniel
James F	Stites, Ann W.
Reason	Benjamin
Buxton, Edmond (sic) Edmund	Mrs. Benjamin
Cook, Able	Benjamin, Jr.
Cox, Benjamin	Elijah
Joseph	Hezekiah
Gano, John S.	Jonathan
Mrs. Mary S.	Wade, Thomas C.
Hemstead, ?	Woodruff, Allen
Kibby, Effram	Hampton
Mills, Elijah	
Jacob	

*List of the First Families to Establish White's Station in 1792*

David Flinn, his wife, and four children  
Andrew Gobel, single, but soon marries eldest Flinn child, Susannah  
Andrew Prior, his wife, and children (unknown number in 1792)  
Moses Prior, his wife, and three children  
John Reily and his family (number unknown)  
John Wallace and his family (number unknown)  
Jacob White, his wife, and three sons  
Lewis Winans (family unknown)

# HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

1. Copy of letter of January 25, 1940, to Roy Elliott from Herbert French, which included a list of twelve candidates for the village name.
2. Copy of letter of January 26, 1940, to Robert Strong from Roy Elliott containing Herbert French's list of candidates for the village name.
3. Letter of December 21, 1942, to Chase Davies from Stanley Marling, resident of Amberley, Gloucestershire, England, describing his English village in response to a request from Davies.
4. Copy of notice of election to decide on incorporation.
5. Copy of petition to Trustees of Sycamore Township for incorporation of Amberley Village.
6. Letter of May 26, 1961, to *The Columbia Encyclopedia* from Village Manager Oscar Egolf describing Amberley Village.
7. Edmund Buxton's Last Will and Testament.
8. Synopsis of the Last Will and Testament and the only codicil of Herbert Greer French.

# SPELLING OF NAMES

*In Historical Documents*

The first name listed seems to be the one generally preferred except where noted. The dates indicate map plats or other documents included in this book.

Brubeck (1869) or Burbeck (1884)—a tossup.

Buxton or Buckston in Edmund's will (1806).

Cortelyou or Cortleyou—one map reference in 1850.

Cosby or Cosbey (1869 & 1884) or Crosby (1847) in several map references.

Edmund or Edmond (1788)—Buxton's first name is spelled with an *b*' only on the original list of the first twenty six settlers at Columbia. It appears on the Pioneer Cemetery Monument with the *b*' for that reason.

Hammel or Hammell—one map reference in 1884.

Prior (usually) or Pryor (occasionally) or Pryer (Edmund's will in 1806; two property deeds in 1807; and one map reference in 1847).

Rodgers or Rogers (1799, 1847, 1884 and 1914)—The two spellings (1850 & 1940) seem to have been used almost interchangeably.

Slaback (1884) or Slayback (1914)—a tossup.

C

O

January 25, 1940

P

Y

Mr. Roy Elliott  
Cincinnati,  
Ohio

Dear Mr. Elliott:

I am sending you a list of twelve names which I have selected out of one hundred or more possibilities, and wish you would mull over them and see if there is anything in the list that seems promising. I have tried to bear in mind the suitability for a village such as is in contemplation, ease of pronunciation, and originality, and have tried to avoid anything which might savor of affectation.

Of these names some are modifications of English village names and some are names as they stand in England today. The name "Edmundton" is the only one with any local significance, and the explanation of that is that in so far as I know Edmund Buxton was the earliest settler; he was with the first boat load that landed at Columbia, and bought some three hundred and sixty acres (which included some of my own property) from John Cleves Symmes.

I telephoned you in the midst of my letter and in accordance with my assurance I enclose an original and two carbon copies of the list.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Herbert G. French

R. G. ELLIOTT  
THIRD AND PLUM STREETS  
CINCINNATI, OHIO

January 26, 1940

Mr. Robert O. Strong  
Section Road  
Brookwood, Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Mr. Strong:

I am attaching a copy of the list of names received from Mr. Herbert French. He feels, very strongly, that some of the success of our village will depend upon the selection of a name which will add dignity and preserve the rural atmosphere of the territory. I have checked a couple of the names which appeal to me.

I suggest that you mull over this list of names with the thought that we can get together on Sunday or Monday, either at one of our homes or, possibly, at Mr. French's office.

Attached also, is a copy of Mr. French's letter to me in which he explains his reason for the submission of this list.

Very truly yours,



MOORLANDS. ✓  
\* CONNINGTON. ✓  
SURREY VILLAGE.  
SYCAMORE VILLAGE.  
\* HAWTHORNE. 1 2 ✓  
\* AMBERLEY. 3 ✓  
EDMUNDTON.  
HIGH MEADOWS.  
COVERLY.  
CRANLEIGH.  
WOODFORD. ✓  
WAVERLY. ✓  
17

TELEGRAMS  
AMBERLEY GLOS  
TELEPHONE: AMBERLEY 14.  
STATION: STROUD. G.W.R.

LITTLEWORTH HOUSE,  
AMBERLEY,  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

21st December, 1942.

Dear Mr. Davies,

Your letter of September 14th, addressed to a Public Official at Amberley, Gloucestershire, England, was brought to me, though I am afraid I cannot claim to be either Clerk, Mayor or other Public Official.

Amberley is only a small village, on the top of the Cotswold hills in Gloucestershire, with a population of about 1,000, and we have no public Administrative Body in the parish, except what is known as a Parish Council (Amberley being part of a larger parish of Minchinhampton) and as the Parish Council meets only 6 times a year, and deals purely with small, local matters, you will see that its responsibilities are not very great.

You ask me for some history of the parish. A hundred years ago a Church was built here by Mr. David Ricardo, who had a considerable property in the immediate neighbourhood, and whose name you may possibly know as being one of the great political economists of the day. It was curious that he should build this Church, and two others in adjoining parishes as by birth he was a Portuguese Jew. His descendants still live in the neighbourhood, though their old property has recently been sold.

I think the accompanying magazine, which was issued on the occasion of the Centenary of the building of the Church, will give you some idea of the history, as far as it is known, of the parish. The derivation of the word "Amberley" seems to be quite uncertain. The second syllable "ley" is very common throughout England, and means "an enclosure" or "field". There is another Amberley, in the County of Sussex, and there is an Ambergate in Derbyshire. No doubt the "Amber" in each name has the same derivation, the corruption probably of some Anglo-Saxon word, which is now lost.

This village of Amberley lies some 550 feet above sea level, on the side of a large open Common, of some 600 acres, with old-fashioned, stone, gabled cottages, so characteristic of the Cotswold country, many of them roofed with stone tiles, consisting of two rooms downstairs, and two rooms up. Till recent years these cottages were occupied by labourers working in the neighbourhood,

TELEGRAMS:  
 AMBERLEY GLOS.  
 TELEPHONE: AMBERLEY 14.  
 STATION: STROUD, G.W.R.

LITTLEWORTH HOUSE,  
 AMBERLEY,  
 GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

-2-

but some have now been bought by elderly ladies in very reduced circumstances, who like to have a small dwelling-house of their own.

The house that I occupy was at one time a Farmhouse, dating probably from the 17th century, and it has been added to from time to time. The view from my house is very beautiful, looking across the valley to another spur of the Cotswolds beyond, largely covered with woods and farm-land, a great deal of the pasture of which has been ploughed up in order to grow corn.

From the top of the hill, which rises another 50 feet, there is a beautiful view right across the valley of the River Severn to the Forest of Dean beyond, and the North of the County.

There is no industry in the village itself, but in the valley below there are some Mills, and small Engineering Works, where most of the villagers are employed.

If I should come across any other information with regard to the village, which I think would interest you, I will certainly send it to you with pleasure.

At a small meeting held in the village recently, I read out your letter, which I need not say interested very much those who were present, and I hoped that possibly someone might be able to give some information with regard to the village with which I was not acquainted. However, I am afraid my appeal did not produce anything of much interest.

Let me add that the village feels very gratified that you should have selected Amberley, on the top of the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire, England, as the name for your new village in Cincinnati, Ohio.

~~Believe me, Very truly yours,~~

~~It~~ You may remember that Lord John Russell was very largely responsible for the passing of the first great Reform Act, of 1832. He was then Member for Stroud, which is a town in the neighbouring valley, and which then returned two Members to Parliament, of whom

TELEGRAMS:  
AMBERLEY CLOS.  
TELEPHONE AMBERLEY 14.  
STATION STROUD C 484

LITTLEWORTH HOUSE.  
AMBERLEY,  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

-3-

Lord John was one. In order to have a residence in the neighbourhood, he bought a place called Rodborough Manor, from a great-uncle of mine, where he occasionally resided, and when he was made Earl Russell he selected as his second title "Amberley"<sup>X</sup> from this village, Rodborough Manor being a very short distance away. I presume that, like yourselves, he thought that Amberley sounded a pleasant name.

There is one other small matter which may be of interest to you, and that is that Mrs. Craik, the author of "John Halifax, Gentleman", a book which is well known to you, lived for a time at a cottage in Amberley called Rose Cottage, and the village which in her book is called "Enderley" is really "Amberley", while Amberley Court, a large house on the outskirts of the village, is described as Beechwood.

I shall hope, when the War is over, to send you some photographs of the village of Amberley. I am not doing so at present, because I think that they might not pass the Censor.

Yours very truly  
Stanley Marling

X Lord Russell's second title was Viscount Amberley.

**VILLAGE OF AMBERLEY**

An election will be held at the Ridgewood Golf Club, on Thursday, March 7, 1940, from 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. to decide on the formation of the village of Amberley. We highly recommend the forming of this village. By this means our property can be zoned and protected, we will have adequate fire and police protection, a lower electric rate and many other services.

The mayor and council of this village will serve without remuneration.

Information and data collected by this Committee gives us the assurance that our taxes will remain at about the same present level.

**COMMITTEE ON INCORPORATION**

PETITION TO TRUSTEES OF SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP FOR INCORPORATION OF AMBERLEY VILLAGE

To The Trustees of the Township of Sycamore, Hamilton County, State of Ohio:

The undersigned being thirty (30) or more electors, a majority of whom are freeholders and all of whom reside within the following described territory situated within the County of Hamilton, State of Ohio, to-wit:

Situated in Section 24 - 30 and 36, Fractional Range 2, Town 4, Columbia Township, Hamilton County, Ohio, and Sections 19 - 20 -25 -26 - 31, Entire Range 1, Town 4, Sycamore Township, Hamilton County, Ohio, and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the center line of Section Road and the easterly right-of-way line of the P. C. C. & St. L. RR., in Section 31, Town 4, Entire Range 1, Sycamore Township, Hamilton County, Ohio, thence northeastwardly along the easterly right-of-way line of said P. C. C. & St. L. R. R., 4518.90 feet to the north line of Frank Hammel's 137.15 acre tract which point is also the south line of Globert Inc. lot, thence southeastwardly along the south lines of Globert, Inc., and Henry and Anna Lamping and J. S. Burkhart's tract for a distance of 2023.74 feet to the west line of B. Dunn's estate and the southeast corner of W. S. Burkhart's 30.21 acre tract, thence northwardly along the westerly line of the B. Dunn's estate 1147.08 feet to the northwest corner of said B. Dunn's estate and the north line of section 31, Town 4, Entire Range 1, Sycamore Township, thence eastwardly along the north line of said Section 31 and 25, 1857.30 feet to a point where the west line of the E. A. Leary's property line extended southwardly intersects; thence northwardly along the said west line of E. A. Leary's property 563.35 feet to the northwest corner of E. A. Leary's property and the south line of M. LeClair's tract; thence westwardly along the south line of M. LeClair's line 303.96 feet to the southwest corner thereof; thence northwardly along the said M. LeClair's west line 653.25 feet to the northwest corner of said tract and the south line of M. Stricker's tract; thence westwardly along said south line of said M. Stricker's tract 698.26 feet to the west line of Section 26 and the southwest corner of said tract; thence northwardly along said west section line of Section 26 for a distance of 1479.64 feet to the northwest corner of A. & C. Reiser's tract and the southwest corner of Anna M. Mullin's tract; thence eastwardly along the north lines of A. & C. Reiser and H. S. Livingston's tract and south line of A. M. Mullin's and A. G. Gutzwiller's tract for a distance of 5330.91 feet to the east line of Section 26; thence northwardly along the east line of said Section 26, 570.00 feet to the northwest corner of Ridgewood Golf Co. tract; thence eastwardly along the said north line of Ridgewood Golf Co. tract

-2-

1996.04 ft. to the northeast corner thereof; thence southwardly along the east line of Ridgewood Golf Co. 3951.90 ft. to the south line of Section 20 and the center line of Amity Road; thence westwardly along the south line of Section 20, 249.62 ft. to the northeast corner of Justin Rollman's 53.25 acre tract which point is also the northwest corner of G. E. Jones' tract, thence south 2633.66 ft. to the southwest corner thereof; thence eastwardly along the north line of Justin Rollman, M. Raidt and J. E. Jones tracts 381.00 ft. to the north and south half section line of Section 19 and the corporation line of Silverton; thence southwardly along the north and south half section line and the corporation line of Silverton 2685.00 ft. to the center line of Section Road, which point is also the south line of Section 19, Sycamore Township and the north line of Section 24 of Columbia Township; thence westwardly along the south line of Section 19, Entire Range 1, Town 4, Sycamore Township, Hamilton County, Ohio, 1980.30 ft. to the northwest corner of R. Clark's property; thence southwardly along the west line of R. Clark's property and the corporation line of City of Cincinnati; thence south 576.33 ft. to the northeast corner of Crestview Subdivision; thence westwardly along the north line of Crestview Subdivision 1141.42 ft. to the west line of Crestview Subdivision and the east line of E. Lang's property; thence southwardly along the west line of Crestview Subdivision and the east line of E. Lang's tract 115.00 ft. to the southeast corner of E. Lang's tract and the corporation line of the City of Cincinnati; thence westwardly along the corporation line of the City of Cincinnati for a distance of 754.00 ft. to the center line of Kincaid Road; thence south along center line of Kincaid Rd. 36.23 ft. to southeast corner of H. G. French's tract; thence westwardly along the south line of H. G. French's tract 1522.56 ft. to the east line of Lakewood Park Subdivision; thence northwardly along the east line of Lakewood Park Subdivision 150.83 ft. to the northeast corner of said subdivision; thence westwardly along the north line of Lakewood Park Subdivision 785.00 ft. to the center line of Ridge Road; thence southwardly along the center line of Ridge Road 1634.02 ft. to the south line of O. K. Benedict's tract and the north line of Ridgewood Subdivision extended eastwardly; thence westwardly along the south line of O. K. Benedict's tract and the north line Ridgewood Subdivision extended, 2138.00 ft. to the west line of Section 30, Columbia Township and the east line of Golf Manor 3rd Addition Subdivision; thence northwardly along the said west line of Section 30, Columbia Township and the east line of said subdivision 160.00 ft. to the northeast corner of Golf Manor 3rd Addition Subdivision; thence westwardly along the north line of Golf Manor 3rd Addition Subdivision and the north line of said subdivision extended westwardly 4300.00 ft. to the east right-of-way line of the P. C. C. & St. L. R. R.; thence northwardly along the east right-of-way line of the P. C. C. & St. L. R. R. for a distance of 1610.00 ft. to the place of beginning;

an accurate map of which territory is attached hereto, respect-



May 26, 1961

Mr. David Zukker  
Editor, U. S. Geography  
The Columbia Encyclopedia  
Columbia University  
New York 27, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

Copy No. 1940

The Village of Amberley Village, Ohio was incorporated in 1951. Settlement dates back to the Northwest Territory Land Grants and may be considered to be more or less coincidental to the settlement of Losantiville, the forerunner of the City of Cincinnati. The original settlers, some of whose heirs still reside in the Village, were the recipients of rural farm lands or woods as land grants.

By 1941, a few residential subdivisions with minimum one-acre lots had been developed with the remainder of area still divided among a few large country estates. The population was about 400, the area about four square miles. It was a rural suburb about 12 miles from the heart of Cincinnati. After a number of costly fires, the residents banded together to incorporate a rural type residential community primarily to establish a police and fire department and to insure the development of the community as a high type residential area.

The basic principals of the incorporation for the development of the Village have been followed. There is a full time paid police department which also provides fire protection. Only single family residences can be built in the Village with most of the lots being at least one acre in size, some one-fourth acres lots being permitted along the Village boundaries. There are no street lights and no sidewalks.

A few large estates remain. One has been deeded to public use for park purposes only. One has been developed as a privately operated golf course. ~~Two are operated as farms.~~

An industrial zone, serving as a buffer along a railroad on one boundary, has been established and occupied by high type industry, the Progress Lithographing Company, The Gibson Art Company (makers of nationally known Gibson Greeting Cards), Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company (serving the entire metropolitan area of Cincinnati), and the Advertising Department Warehouse and Coupon Redemption Station of the Procter and Gamble Company.

1000

4000

None of the area is zoned for Commercial purposes. There are currently about ~~900~~ families and a population of about ~~3300~~. The area now covers about 5 square miles with no further expansion or annexation contemplated.

From a sizable list of suggested names for the community, the incorporators selected Amberley, which was the name of a small community in England.

Since 1954 the Village has operated under the Council-Manager plan of local government. There is no local school system, the entire Village being included in the Cincinnati School District, with one elementary school building located within the Village boundaries.

Very truly yours,

AMBERLEY VILLAGE, OHIO

Oscar T. Egolf  
Village Manager

# THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

*of Edmund Buxton (1806)*

In the name of God Amen, I Edmund Buckston of the county of Hamilton and state of Ohio being weak in body but of sound and perfect mind and memory blessed be Almighty God for the same do make and publish this my last will and testament in manner and form following, (that is to say)

Item first I gave and bequeath unto my well beloved wife Lydia one third of my estate real and personal during her natural life, after my just debts funeral charges and other necessary expenses are paid, and the use of the whole estate provided she brings up and educates my children, Charles, David, Ann, Moses O., Jane, John M., Aaron and William McVay, and *carrying up the walls of my present brick building and putting it under cover and in a situation that it shall not be injured by weather,*

Item, second, I give and bequeath unto my eight children above named my whole estate after the death of their mother to be equally divided amongst them

I do hereby appoint James Baxter of the county and state above mentioned my Executor and my well beloved wife Lydia my Executrix of this my last will and testament hereby revoking all former wills by me made,

In witness whereof I have hereunto let my hand and seal the nineteenth day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and six

Signed sealed published and declared by the above named Edmund Buckston to be his last will and testament in the presence of us who at his request and at his presence have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses to the same

James Lyon  
William Jones  
John Pryer

Edmund X Buckston  
his

Recorded Sept. 26th, 1806  
Last Will and Testament  
of Edmund Buxton

SYNOPSIS OF  
THE LAST WILL  
AND TESTAMENT

*and the only Codicil of Herbert Greer French*

Payments to Employees:

To anyone employed for less than one year, \$50.

To anyone employed for more than one year, \$100 per year of employment up to five years. For every year over five years, an additional \$200.00 per year of employment.

Payments to Relatives:

Each living niece and nephew (four of them) 2500 shares of Procter & Gamble Common Stock.

Each living grand niece and grand nephew (six of them) 500 shares of Procter & Gamble Stock.

Family portraits and heirlooms to be distributed among interested family members for the betterment of the family.

To Nephew Dudley K. French, his summer home on Little Deer Isle, Maine.

Civic Distribution of Assets:

“Reachmont Farm” (most of Edmund Buxton’s original land) to the City of Cincinnati as a public park.

To the Cincinnati Art Museum, his extensive collection of prints (etchings, engravings, etc.) together with all associated materials such as frames, cases, books, and literature AND \$250,000.

To Christ Church of Cincinnati, \$50,000.

To Berea College, Berea, Kentucky, \$10,000.

To the University of Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Institute of Fine Art would be split evenly all other assets except for 3000 shares of Procter & Gamble Common Stock.

Payments to Women:

*Original Will:*

Miss Eleanor F. Cate—100 shares of P&G Stock

Miss Susan Hobbs, 233 W Lanvale St., Baltimore, MD \$25/month  
Miss Iva McCarney, 116 Duncan Ave., Paris, KY \$50/month  
Miss Antoinette Pease, 1508 Hinman Ave., Evanston, IL \$100/month  
Miss Delia Murray of Reachmont Farm, Cincinnati, OH \$100/month  
Miss Stella Jones, 183 W. 74th St., Cincinnati, OH \$200/month

Codicil:

Miss Elizabeth S. Woodworth, 107 E. 70th St., New York, NY  
\$100/month

Jointly sharing \$100/month

Miss Jean Howell,

Miss Helen Howell

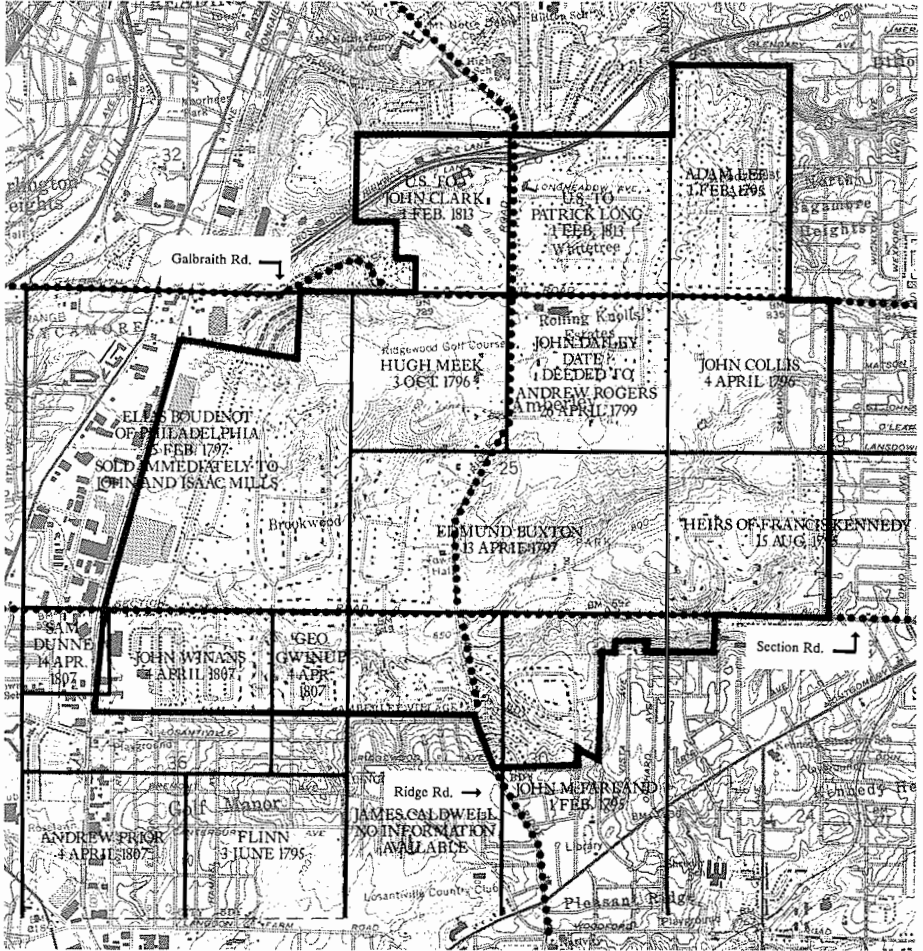
The Alexandria, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, OH

*Note:* There is NO mention whatsoever of the old house or its occupant,  
Mrs. Charles J. (Jane Edwards) Hunt.

# MAPS

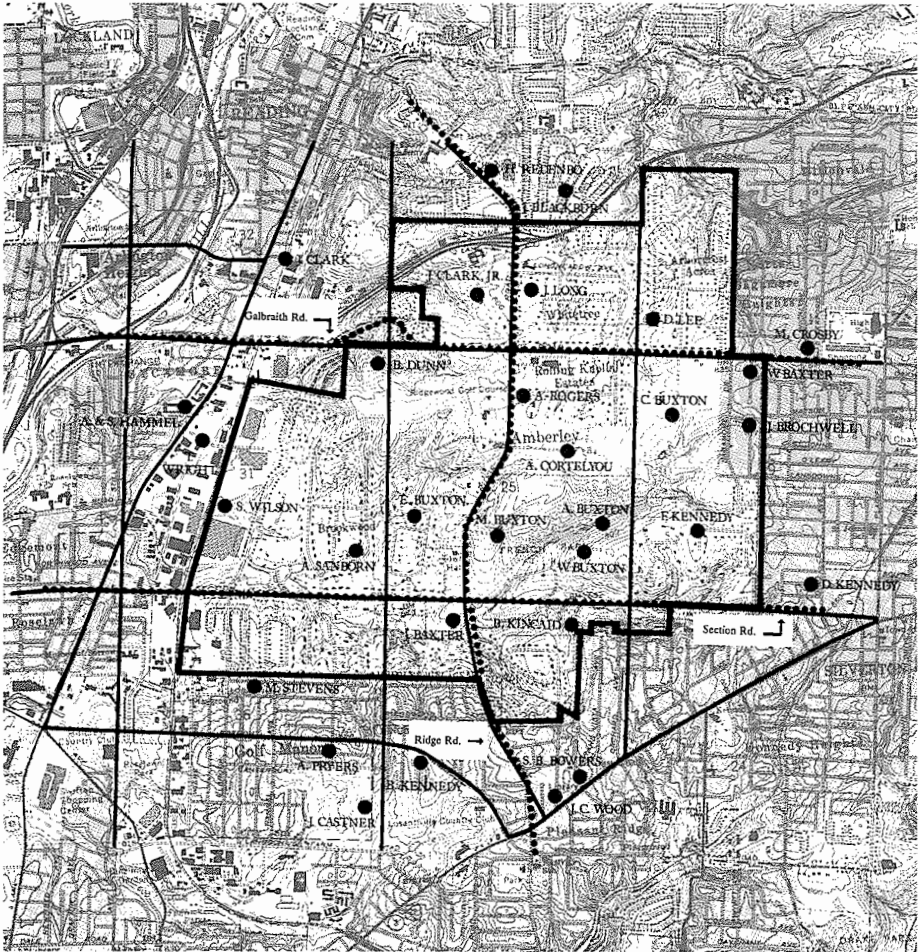
1. Map showing original purchases of land in what is now Amberley Village. All but two of the purchases were from Judge John Cleves Symmes. Also shown are the purchases of land, just south of Amberley Village, by David Flinn, the father of Edmund's wife, Lydia, and Andrew Prior, the brother or son of the Moses Prior who was a business partner of Flinn at White's Station and who was killed by Indians.
2. Map of 1847 showing main roadways and locations of houses in what is now Amberley Village.
3. Map of 1850 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in what is now Amberley Village.
4. Map of 1869 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in what is now Amberley Village.
5. Map of 1884 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in what is now Amberley Village.
6. Map of 1914 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in what is now Amberley Village. Nellie Raudebaugh, Rebecca Thompson, Blanche Marshall, and Carrie Shotwell, who owned parts of the original Edmund Buxton property, were all daughters of Buxtons.
7. Map of 1940 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in the year of the incorporation of Amberley Village. Also shown is the last remaining property held by a descendant of Edmund and Lydia Buxton, Edmund Buxton III.
8. Map of 1966 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village.
9. Map of 1989 showing landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village.
10. Map showing areas that were annexed to Amberley Village after its incorporation in 1940.

11. Map of Amberley Village in 1989 showing the three large undeveloped areas.
12. Map of 1944 Master Plan for Amberley Village showing proposed greenbelt and location of proposed schools. (Plan was not adopted.)



Original purchasers of land from John Cleves Symmes (except Clark and Long) in Amberley Village, 1795-1813.

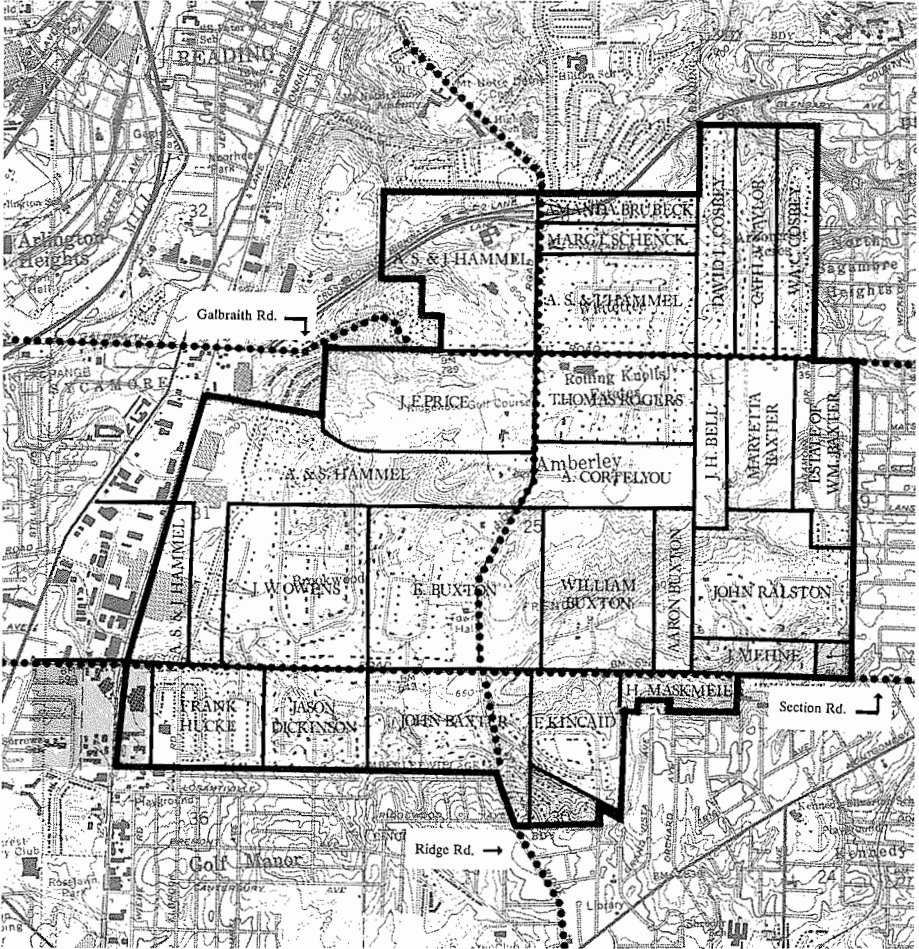
Note: not in Amberley - Andrew Prior and Flinn each 1/4 section in Section 36 of Columbia Township (now Golf Manor).



Main roadways and house locations in the Amberley Village area in 1847.

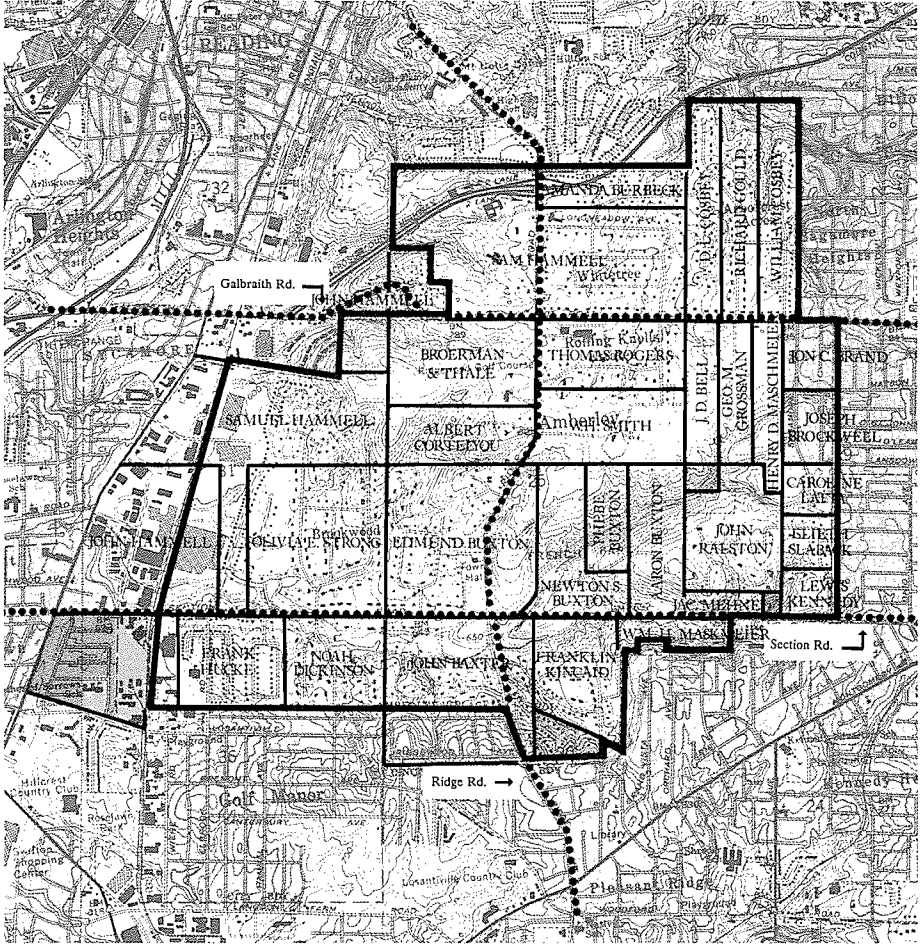
(From: Emerson, Wm. D., *Map of Hamilton County, Ohio*, C. S. Williams & Son, 1847)





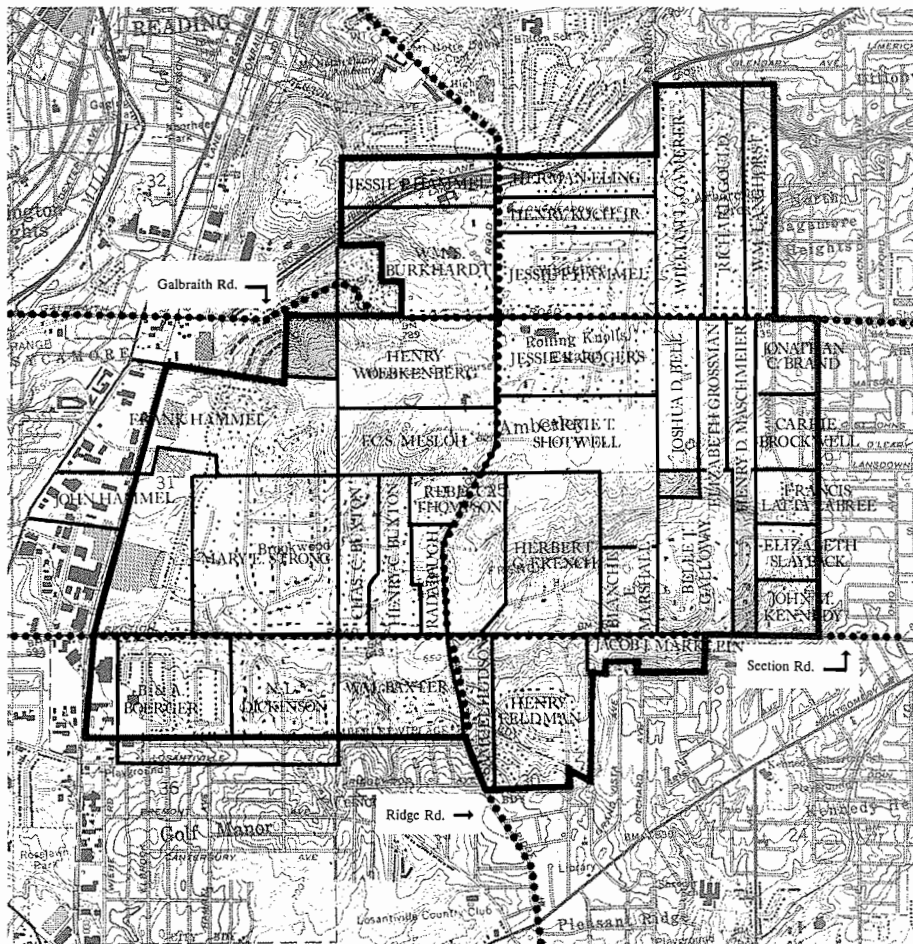
Map of landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village in 1869. Areas in gray are landowners (unidentified) who owned less than twenty acres. (Property lines are approximate.)

(From: Titus, *Atlas of Hamilton Co.*, C.O. Titus, Philadelphia, 1869)



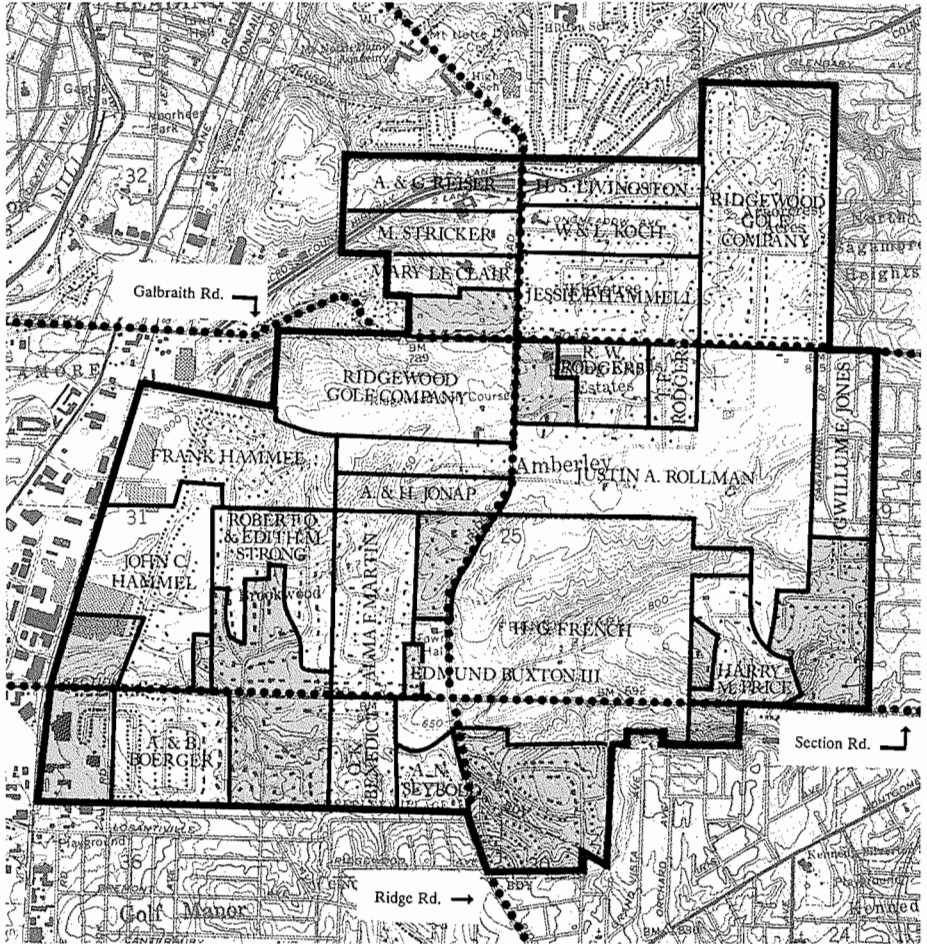
Map of landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village in 1884. Areas in gray are landowners (unidentified) who owned less than twenty acres. (Property lines are approximate.)

(From: Moessinger, Geo., and Bertsch, Fred., Map of Hamilton County, Ohio, A.M. Photo Litho, New York, March 1884.)



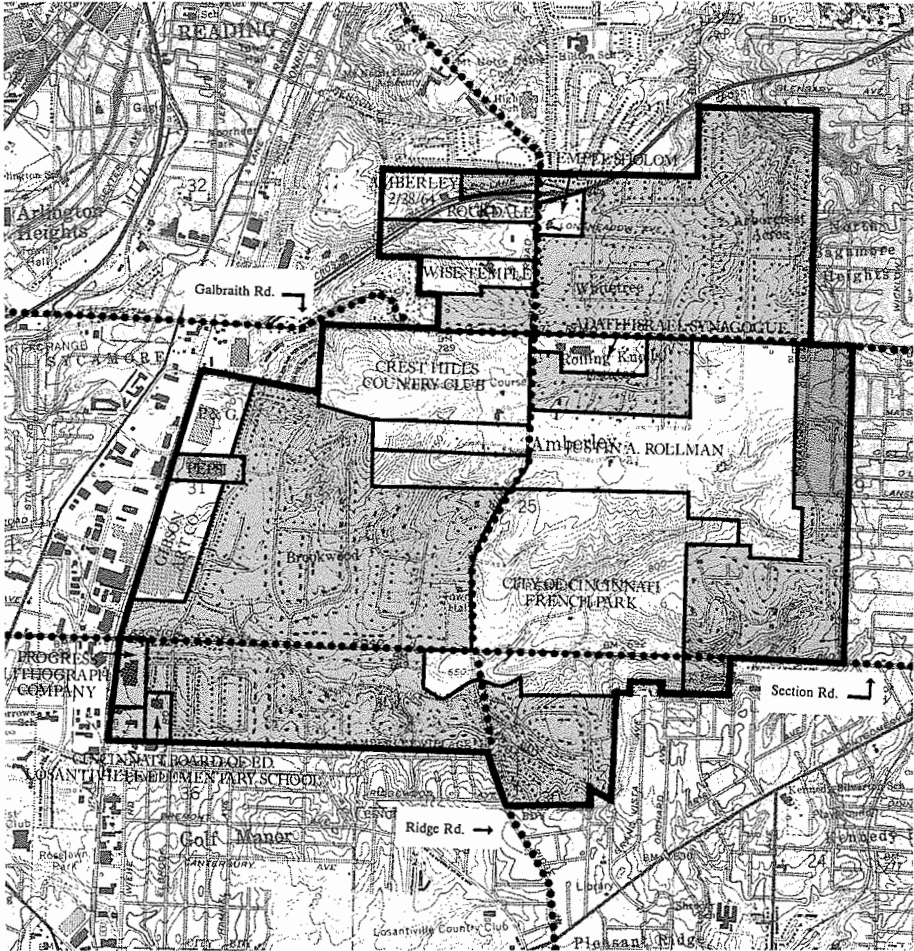
Map of landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village in 1914. Areas in gray represent landowners (unidentified) who owned less than twenty acres.

(From: Stewart, J.A., *Hamilton County Atlas 1914*, Stewart Map Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1914.)



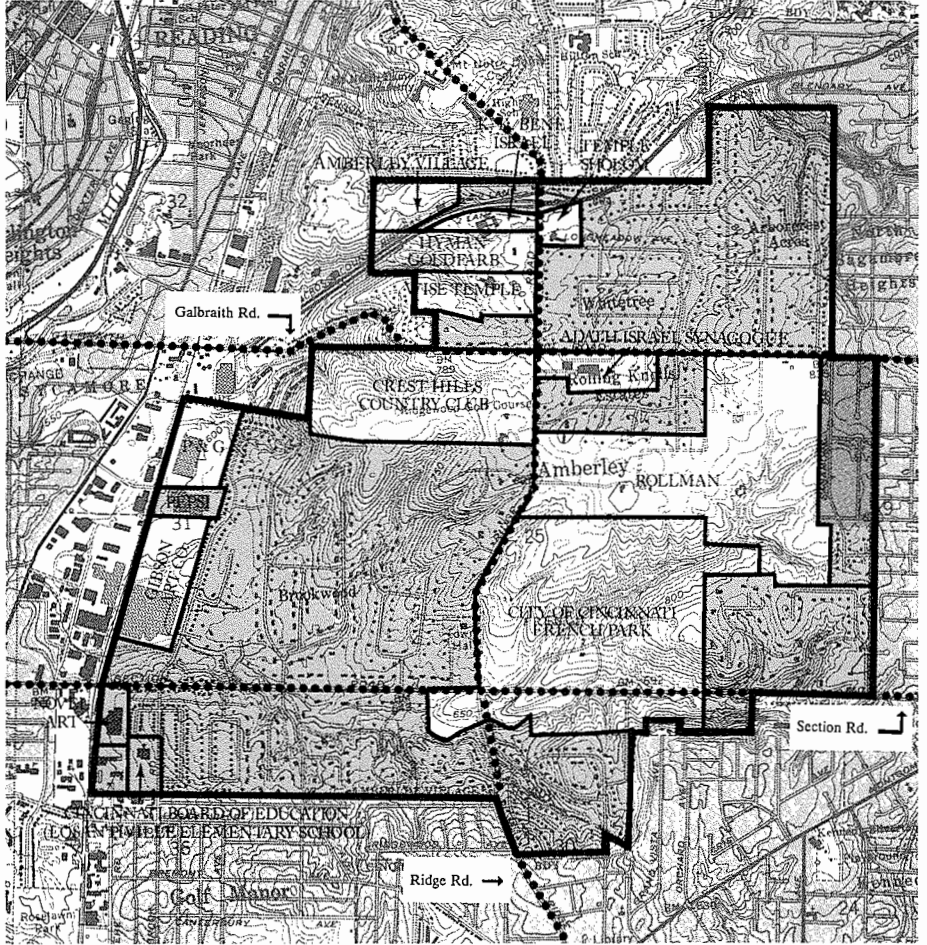
Map of landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village in 1940 (year of Village incorporation). Areas in gray are landowners (unidentified) who owned less than twenty acres.

(From: original plat of proposed incorporation, Feb. 10, 1940.)



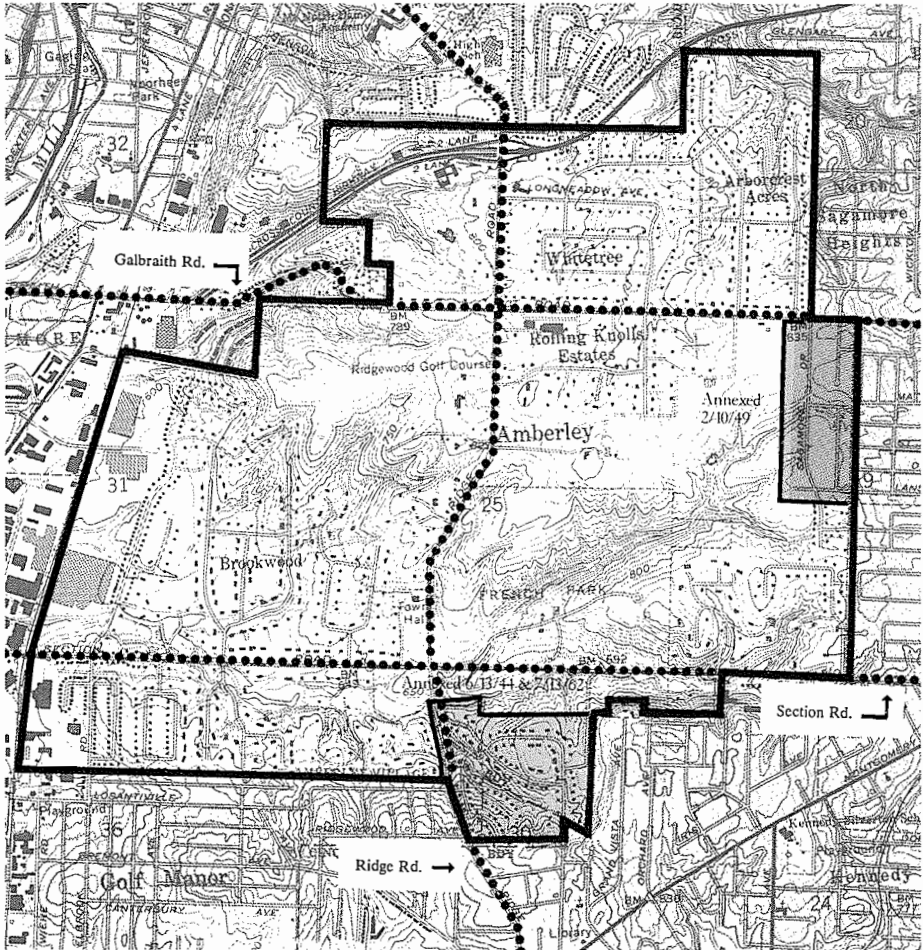
Map of landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village in 1966. Areas in gray represent landowners (unidentified) who owned less than twenty acres.

(From: Plat Map—Village of Amberley, Hamilton County, Ohio, 1966.)

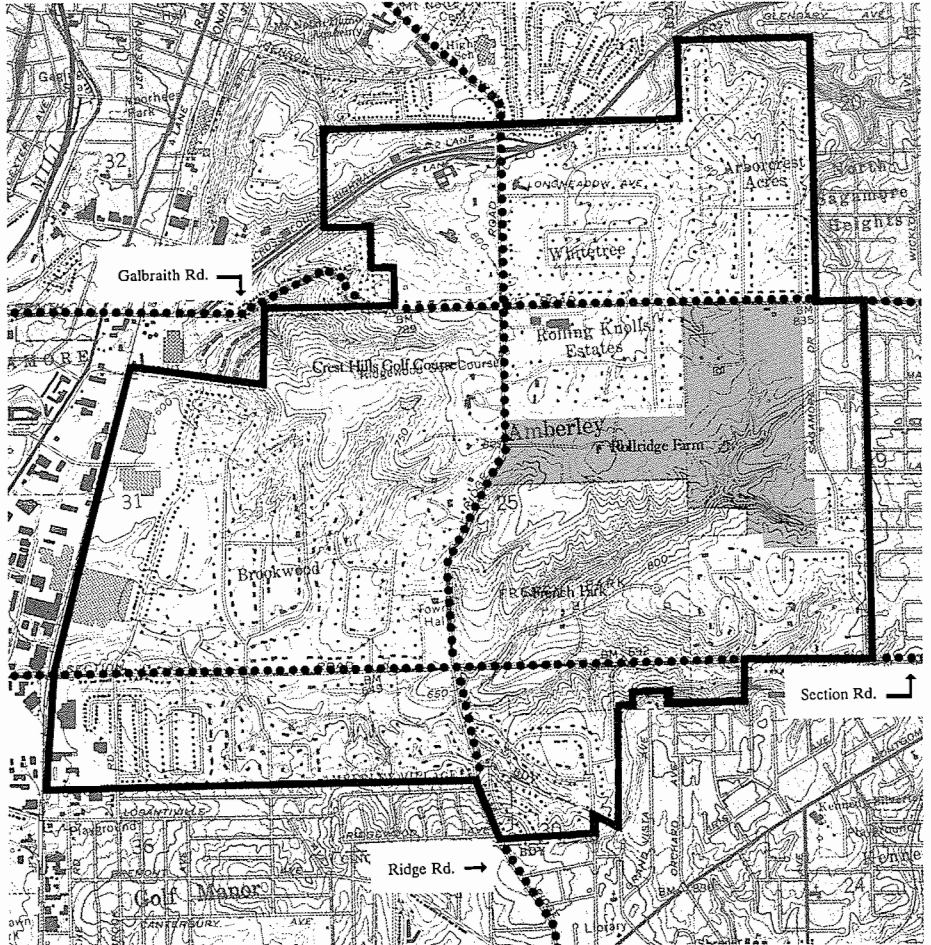


Map of landowners holding more than twenty acres in Amberley Village in 1989. Areas in gray represent landowners (unidentified) who owned less than twenty acres.

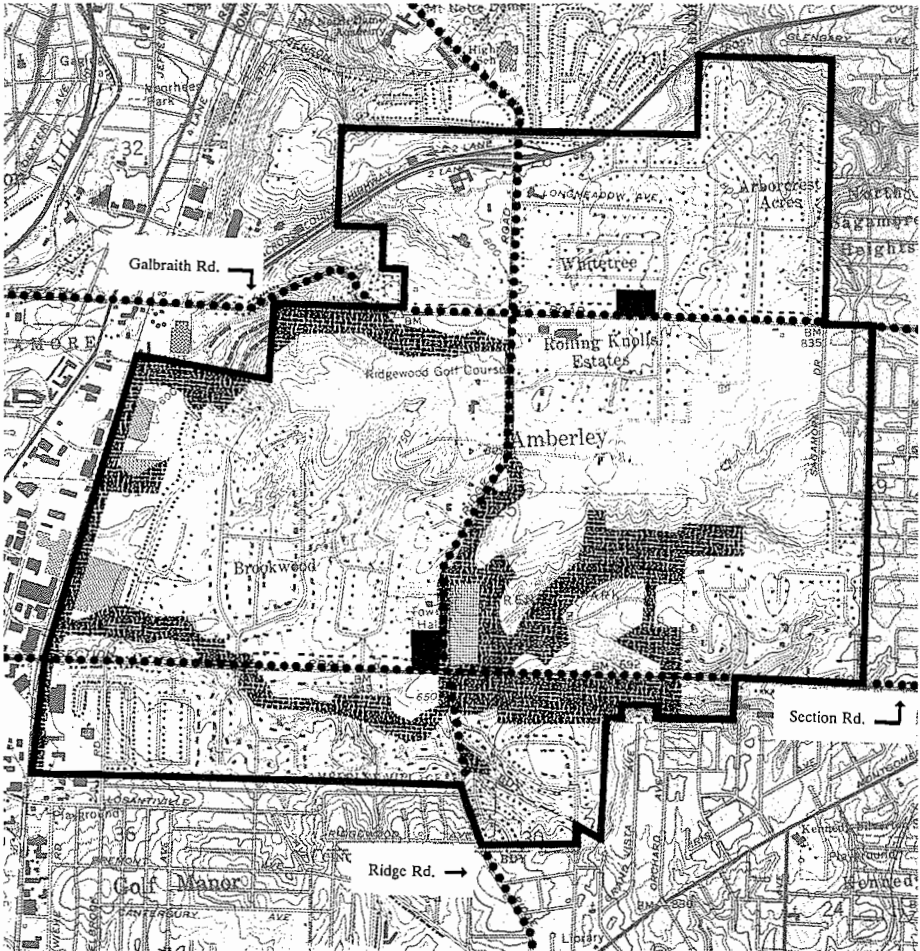
(From: Plat Map—Village of Amberley, Hamilton County, 1989, Village Hall.)






Areas *not* included in *original* Amberley outline but annexed at later dates.



The three large undeveloped areas within Amberley Village in 1989: Crest Hills Golf Course; Rollridge Farm, belonging to the Justin A. Rollman family; and French Park, owned by the City of Cincinnati.



Proposed Amberley Village Master Plan showing greenbelt, two elementary schools, and one high school. Proposal made in 1944 prior to settlement of ownership of French property. The plan was never implemented. No part of it was ever followed.

-  Proposed greenbelt
-  Proposed elementary schools
-  Proposed high school

## FOOTNOTES

1. Jones, A.E., *Extracts From the History of Cincinnati and the Territory of Ohio*, p. 7.
2. Morsbach, Mabel, *We Live In Cincinnati*, p. 44.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
4. Jones, A.E., *Extracts From the History of Cincinnati and the Territory of Ohio*, p. 11.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
10. Morsbach, Mabel, *We Live in Cincinnati*, p. 20.
11. Jones, A.E., *Extracts From the History of Cincinnati and the Territory of Ohio*, p. 17.
12. Family historians identify Edmund as a shoemaker. However, there is no evidence of this. Mrs. Peggy Stuntz of Marengo, Illinois, hypothesizes that since the name following Edmund's on the original list of the 26 first settlers (appears in this particular order in all historical documents) is David Shoemaker, that in an early copying, the two names may have become somehow written together and decoded incorrectly. This would have occurred very early, because the shoemaker story appears in late nineteenth-century family histories. Also, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a shoemaker was generally called a cobbler, rather than a shoemaker.
13. Hurley, Daniel, *Cincinnati the Queen City*, p. 16. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 'S', Page 203.
14. Jones, A.E., *Extracts From the History of Cincinnati and the Territory of Ohio*, p. 18.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-23.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
20. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, pp. 1, 12-15.
21. Buxton, Harold D., *Edmund Buxton—The Pioneer 1768-1806* Harold Buxton says that Edmund is listed as being a constituent member of the first church in the Northwest Territory (the Columbia Baptist Church, which was organized January 20, 1789). This cannot be verified or refuted, but his name is not included on the monument in Columbia that lists original members. Reference is made to a newspaper article by one Harry L. Hole for the *Western Star*, naming Edmund in a list of "First members and contributors to the Columbia Baptist church 1790-93."
22. Buxton, N.S., *The History of Edmund Buxton*, p.9.
23. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, pp. 4 and 12.
24. Scamyhorn, Richard and Steinle, John, *Stockades in the Wilderness*, pp. 150-151.
25. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 'I', Page 435.
26. Smith, Dwight L., "Wayne's Peace With the Indians of the Old Northwest," pp. 242-243.  
Harmar's defeat was in the fall 1790. St. Clair's, on November 4, 1791.
27. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, pp. 4-5.  
Scamyhorn, Richard, and Steinle, John, *Stockades in the Wilderness*, pp. 151-152.  
*History of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio.*  
Jones, A.E., *Extracts from the History of Cincinnati and the Territory of Ohio.*  
Olden J.G., *Historical Sketches and Early Remembrances of Hamilton County, Ohio.*  
Teetor, Henry B., *The Past and Present of the Mill Creek Valley*  
All of the above references mention and/or describe the incident of the Indian attack on White's Station and the death of the Prior children. These accounts differ in some details, even to the individual deaths.
28. Ford, Henry A. and Kate B., *History of Hamilton County, Ohio.* p. 33.
29. Scamyhorn, Richard, and Steinle, John, *Stockades in the Wilderness*, p. 153.

30. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, p. 5.
31. Morsbach, Mabel, *We Live in Cincinnati*, pp. 44-47.
32. Smith, Dwight L., "Wayne's Peace With the Indians of the Old Northwest, 1795," pp. 242-234.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Hurley, Daniel, *Cincinnati The Queen City*, p. 16.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
36. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book B2, Page 357.
37. Buxton, N.S., *Secretary's Book, Buxton Reunion, September 16, 1880*, p. 9.
38. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, p. 6.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
40. "The Buxton Home," *The Commercial Tribune*.
41. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, p. 6.  
In January of 1989, John Watts visited the site of Edmund Hall and excavated a short section of the foundation (see the photographs of Edmund Hall). The actual wall thickness is precisely two feet.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
43. According to Stuntz, Buxton began his brick house in 1805 and had nearly completed the first floor at the time of his death in 1806. N.S. Buxton puts the building start in the spring of 1806. It does not seem possible to accomplish as much as is reported between either of those dates and his death on July 20 of the same year. Four different newspaper articles place the start as early as 1797 with completion in 1805, the date in the upper west wall of the house. Buxton's will makes it very clear that the house was unfinished at his death (see Last Will and Testament of Edmund Buxton). It seems likely that the start was in 1805 or earlier, maybe much earlier. The finish would have had to be later than Edmund's death, probably several years, considering the complexity and sheer size of the task. There is nothing to confirm or deny this.
44. Buxton, N.S., *Secretary's Book, Buxton Reunion, September 16, 1800*, p. 11.
45. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book B2, Page 515.
46. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 26, Page 670.
47. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 26, Page 671.

48. Stuntz, Elizabeth Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, p. 8.
49. *History of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio*, p. 419.
50. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 23, Page 504.
51. Buxton, N.S., *Secretary's Book, Buxton Reunion, September 16, 1880*, p. 11.  
Lydia Shanklin (Lydia Flinn Buxton Shanklin) is buried in the cemetery of the Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church; in section F lot 74, grave 7 (see headstone photograph).
52. Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, pp. 8, 12-13.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
54. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 1296, Page 161.
55. Buxton, Harold D., *Edmund Buxton—The Pioneer 1768-1806*.
56. Hamilton County Real Estate Records, Deed Book 3408, Page 836.
57. Archives of the Procter & Gamble Company, Ed Ryder, archivist.
58. Rollman, Justin A., *A Brief History of Amberley Village*.
59. Rollman, Mrs. Justin A., interview with Priscilla Petty just before her death in 1988. Mrs. Rollman thought that Mr. Hunt had fallen to his death. However, Hunt's obituary tells a different story.
60. *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 28 September 1925.
61. *The Cincinnati Post*, 6 February 1954.
62. "Oldest Home in Hamilton County," 1953.
63. Ohio became a state in 1803 and celebrated its Sesquicentennial during 1953.
64. *The Cincinnati Post and Times-Star*, 3 September 1955.
65. *Ibid.*
66. Letter from R.G. Elliott to Robert O. Strong.
67. Letter from Oscar T. Egolf to David Zukker.
68. *Amberley Village, 25th Anniversary* (booklet).
69. Amberley Village Ordinance 55.
70. Letter from Oscar T. Egolf to David Zukker. Conversation with Village Manager Bernard Boraten.
71. Bernard Boraten, Manager of the Village of Amberley Village, 1989.
72. *Ibid.*

## I N F O R M A T I O N A L   S O U R C E S

### Interviews:

Bernard Boraten, Amberley Village Manager.  
Garry Benner, Amberley Police Chief.

Harry J. Bingham, M.D., brother of downed flier Ralph Bingham.

Roger Burdorf, a Buxton descendant.

Harold Buxton, a Buxton descendant and family historian.

Judge Chase M. Davies, friend of Herbert G. French and Amberley Village's first Solicitor.

Janette Thompson Eiler, youngest child of Victor and Ella Acomb Thompson (last Buxton family to live in the original house).

Rabbi David Indich of the Golf Manor Synagogue.

Charles Kallendorf, Auditor's Office, Hamilton County Court House.

William J. Krueger, former Chief of Police and Fire of Amberley Village.

Mrs. Justin A. (Josephine) Rollman, just before her death in 1988; property owner just north of H.G. French.

Mary Lou Rose, local historian working on a history of Blue Ash, Ohio.

Terry Schwegman, responsible for all church burial records.

Alverta Niemes Seybold, wife of Harvey Lewis Seybold, who died February 23, 1988. They were the third owners of the James Baxter House, the oldest standing building in Amberley Village (c. 1807).

Margaret (Peggy) Lynn Short Stuntz, a Buxton descendant and family historian.

Newspaper Articles:

*The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 28 September 1925, Obituary for Charles J. Hunt, p. 43.

*The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 21 February 1953, "House is Older Than Ohio..." p.3.

*The Cincinnati Post & Times Star*, 3 September 1959, Obituary for Mrs. Charles J. Hunt (Jane Edwards), p. 16.

*The Commercial Tribune*, 4 September 1897, "The Buxton Home," page unknown.

"Oldest Home in Hamilton County," newspaper clipping from unidentified paper, no date, et cetera. Based on article content, the date must be somewhere around 1953.

Unpublished Manuscripts:

Buxton, Harold D., *Edmund Buxton—The Pioneer 1768-1806*, November 1986.

Buxton, Harold D., *Information Concerning Early Buxtons*, June 1987.

Buxton, N.S., *The History of Edmund Buxton*, typed and handwritten (includes partial family tree sketch, etc.) 15 September 1880.

Buxton, N.S., *Secretary's Book, Buxton Reunion, September 16, 1880*.

*The Buxton Home*, typed paper for the 1897 Reunion, author unknown, 23 September 1897.

*The Oldest Brick House Erected in Hamilton County*, author and date unknown. Date is more recent than the French purchase in 1911.

Rollman, Justin A., *A Brief History of Amberley Village*, date unknown.

Stuntz, Margaret Lynn Short, *Edmund Buxton (1768-1806)*, 1977.

Unpublished Letters and Other Documents:  
(in chronological order)

Last Will and Testament of Edmund Buxton (9/26/1806)

Last Will and Testament of Herbert G. French (4/20/1937)

Letter from Herbert G. French to Mr. Ray Elliott (1/25/40)

Letter from R.G. Elliott to Mr. Robert O. Strong (1/26/40)

Original Platt of "Proposed Incorporation of the Village of Amberley Village," Joseph A. Dixon, Jr., Registered Surveyor No. 2696 (2/10/40)

First Codicil to the Last Will and Testament of Herbert G. French (5/6/40)

Letter from Stanley Marling (Amberley, Gloucestershire, England) to Mr. Davies (12/21/42)

Letter from Starbuck Smith (of Smith and Smith's Law Offices) to Mr. Augustis Beall, Jr. (1/27/44)

Letter from Geo. Guckenberger (Auditor of Hamilton County) to Hon. H.A. Haller (Mayor, Amberley Village) (6/7/49)

Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Amberley Charter Commission (4/22/54)

Letter from Hugh A. Graff (Amberley Village Mayor) to Justin A. Rollman (4/9/58)

Letter from Oscar T. Egolf, Village Manager, to Mr. David Zukker, Editor, U.S. Geography for the *Columbia Encyclopedia* (5/26/61)

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# AMBERLEY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Amberley is a village community perched on one edge of the National Trust land in Minchinhampton Common, overlooking the A46 Cheltenham to Bath road running along the bottom of the Nailsworth to Stroud Valley.

Approximately three miles long and up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile in width it is situated some 14 miles from Gloucester, 28 from Bristol and 100 from London which can be reached by the M4 Motorway and by a regular train service from Stroud of some two hours duration.

Prior to the building of its Church, Holy Trinity, in 1836 it consisted of the several hamlets of Houndscroft, Littleworth, St. Chloe, Amberley (the nearest one to the Church), Theescombe, Pinfarthings and Watledge. However, following its fairly rapid development in the latter part of the 19th Century and the early part of this one, the name Amberley gradually became used for the whole area as the hamlets became more or less joined together. Even today, many older parishioners in the hamlets still refer to their immediate area by the old name, and they are still used to describe the various parts of the village.

This size and population of Amberley has changed very little in the last 100 or so years, the present day figure of 1600 people in 450 dwellings being very similar to that of 1500 in some 350 dwellings at the latter part of the 19th Century.

At that time it consisted of several large estates owned by wealthy industrialists and retired military personnel, several sizeable farms and small holdings and numerous small cottages, tenements or houses, most of which belonged to the estates or farms.

Its make-up and way of life have changed considerably since its development previously mentioned with most of the estate land being used for a number of small, fairly exclusive houses, several of the estate residences having been converted into flats or apartments and the majority of the smaller properties have been converted into modern houses whilst their former gardens and orchards have been used to house a number of new properties.

Most of this development has occurred in this century, the majority of it in the period since the Second World War ended and property in

Amberley is very highly sought after with house prices being some 25 to 30% higher than comparable ones in the nearby valleys.

Despite the considerable development, which has generally been well controlled, Amberley is still a very attractive place to live with plenty of green spaces and the large tracks of common land nearby with its many wild flowers and plants during the spring and summer months.

Today, almost all of the employed inhabitants are in professional work such as bankers, solicitors, company directors and teachers with only a very small number employed in working class or manual jobs. Most commute daily to London, the Midlands and other nearby towns and cities and there is very little employment in the village except at its inns.

Another great change is in its community services, such as transport and shops with regular bus services to local towns and as many as eight shops of various sorts certainly well into the present century. The advance of the car has decimated these services with very infrequent bus services ending around six in the evening and one general shop combining as a Post Office and a bakery, although the Village still has three inns.

Education has also figured prominently throughout the life of the Village, having housed at different times, a number of private schools, a large independent one, Beaudesert Park, one attached to the Littleworth Methodist Church and its Village School. As present, the latter is very alive and popular, whilst Beaudesert has become one of the more popular independent schools in the area and there are also two special schools within its boundaries.

This then, is hopefully a reasonable account of our Amberley here in Gloucestershire from its inception to 1990.