TRACE

THE ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN MAGAZINE

Camera Ready

The Life and Legacy of a Visual Anthropologist

p. 16

WINTER/SPRING 2020

The Archives of Michigan is part of the Michigan History Center and home to more than 120 million historical records. The archives is open for public research six days a week: 1-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. There are more than 10 million records available online for public research at the archives at www.Michiganology.org.

The Michigan History Center is part of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its museum and archival programs foster curiosity, enjoyment and inspiration rooted in Michigan's stories. It includes the Michigan History Museum, 10 regional museums, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, and the Archives of Michigan. Learn more at www.michigan.gov/mhc.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to www.michigan.gov/dnr.

VOLUME 5 / NUMBER 1
EDITOR: Mark E. Harvey
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:
Leslie S. Edwards
Bob Garrett
Mary Zimmeth

ON THE COVER: "Little Tune" Reverend Edison Vane, 91, entertaining the folks at the Eaton Rapids Parade, ca 1972. Read more about photographer Norris Ingells on page 16.

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James Medrano, photographed by Norris Ingells, rows past his submerged car during the Lansing flood, April 1975.

I typically write the editorial at the end of the production process. Sounds like procrastination, right? Maybe a little, but it is also so I can see the larger picture of the issue; how the tone and length of the articles mesh with the images and how the cover influences the mood of the issue.

And then this spring everything changed.

I have always been drawn to images. Pictures tell their own stories and convey emotions sometimes difficult to capture with words. As the COVID-19 pandemic began to affect how we lived I automatically began taking pictures. Pictures of store closing signs, billboards, notes in people's windows and empty streets. I couldn't stop. It is history in the making. The past 60 days have changed the things we took for granted. Shopping, exercising, gathering, traveling and working morphed from routine into risk. There is so much we cannot do right now. But we trust (and hope) that it won't be this way indefinitely. In the meantime, we take and share photographs.

Norris Ingells understood how photography communicated emotions, time and place. That makes our collection of his work for decades as a "visual anthropologist" in Michigan particularly appropriate for this issue and our cover. His approach and range demonstrate the impact of images in our everyday communication.

Photos submitted by RN Bethany Shaffer and Angela Roberts as part of the Michigan History Center's COVID-19 collecting project

Today social media, newspaper web sites and blogs are flooded with millions of COVID-19 themed images documenting our unique moment in history. Researchers in the future won't struggle with a lack of COVID-19 imagery, but they may struggle wading through the mass of materials with varying degrees of description and uncertain rights issues. Many cultural heritage institutions are trying to formalize collecting COVID-19 materials to ensure some standardized access. The Michigan History Center launched a COVID-19 collecting initiative on April 10, 2020. The public can share photos, audio or video files with descriptions of their own perspective at Michigan.gov/MHCStories. The submissions will become part of the permanent collection of the archives.

The other collection featured in this issue comes from an earlier time, but it is as fascinating as photographs in its origin and content.

The 19th century story of Ora Labora has been told and retold. Archivist Leslie S. Edwards, with the help of some German translators, reveals these new resources and the light they shed on the life and work of founder Emil Baur. If you have heard the story before, you'll find new information. If you do not know the story, you'll be intrigued.

This issue is a first for staff as it will only be published electronically. We encourage you to ensure receiving future print editions of *TRACE* by becoming a member of the Michigan History Center at www.Michigan.gov/MHC.

Mark E. Harvey

Mark E. Harvey

State Archivist of Michigan

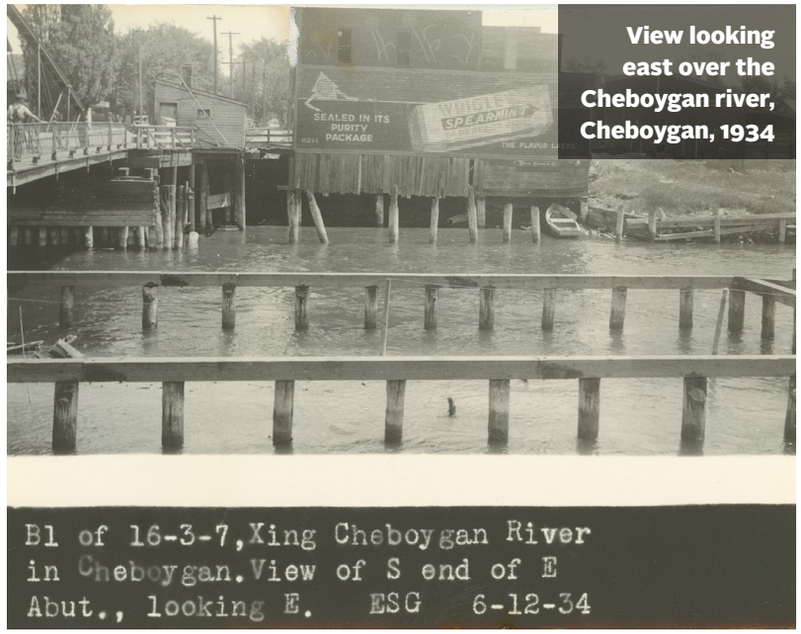
New Collections in the Archives:

The Archives of Michigan collects government records and private manuscripts. Here are some notable recent accessions. All records are available for research in the Archives of Michigan reading room.

STATE AND LOCAL RECORDS:

Cheboygan County Probate court records, 1871–1967. This record group consists of case files (1922–1939), probate calendars (1925–1966) and journals (1871–1967). There are also three volumes of indexes.

Detroit Board of Assessors records, 1960–1967. This small record group consists of assessment records that record the location of commercial buildings in the city of Detroit from 1960 to 1967. The records include ward and lot numbers, the assessed property and building values, the dimensions of the property, and the dates of assessment. There are also slides of the buildings and/or property, sometimes including photographs before and after construction or renovation.



View looking east over the Cheboygan river, Cheboygan, 1934

Faygo's original manufacturing plant, Gratiot Avenue, Detroit, 1967

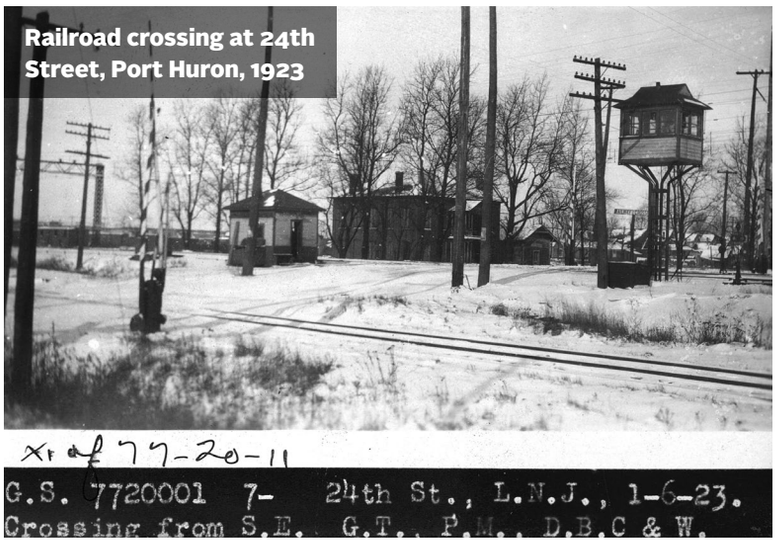
Keweenaw County Circuit Court records, 1874–1960. These records include petitions for naturalization (1899–1904), certificates of naturalization (1907–1929), naturalization correspondence (1939–1945) and one volume of jail records (1874–1960). The jail records list biographical information (age, birthplace, residence, occupation), the charge against him/her and whether the person was convicted, acquitted or released, usually to another institution.

Michigan Attorney General, Criminal Division records, 1943–1958. This record group documents selected investigations regarding subversive activities in Wayne County (1952), the

Jackson Prison investigation (1945–1948), the Sherman Putnam case (1947), gambling (1943–1952) and the case of the United States v. Jimmy Hoffa (1957). There are also materials that relate to the establishment of Michigan's Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime (1950–1953), the Justice of the Peace Study Committee (1950–1958), Model Acts (1950–1953) and parole board case files of prisoners with life sentences (1956).

Soil Conservation District Organization records, 1938–1980. The State of Michigan created conservation districts in 1937 as independent units of government to prevent and control soil erosion. Over the years, the districts worked with local landowners to protect, improve and enhance natural resources, including water conservation, wildlife habitats, woodlands and recreation areas. The records include correspondence, district work plans, survey reports and corresponding hand-colored soil maps. They document the establishment of the district (usually through public hearings) and often contain the names of local farmers. Also included are histories of regional agriculture that may have data on farming trends by nationality.

State Highway Department photographs, 1914–1960 (bulk 1922–1942). This record group consists of hundreds of 3" x 4" black and white photographs representing all 83 Michigan counties. The photographs, taken by highway department staff, illustrate railroad crossings, bridges and culverts that cross over or under roads and rivers. Of particular interest are the photographs that show street and town/city scenes, railroad depots or train yards, rivers or creeks and residential areas. In some cases, there are photographs showing before and after repair or replacement, and some even show construction workers on the site—building bridges or culverts or laying railroad tracks.



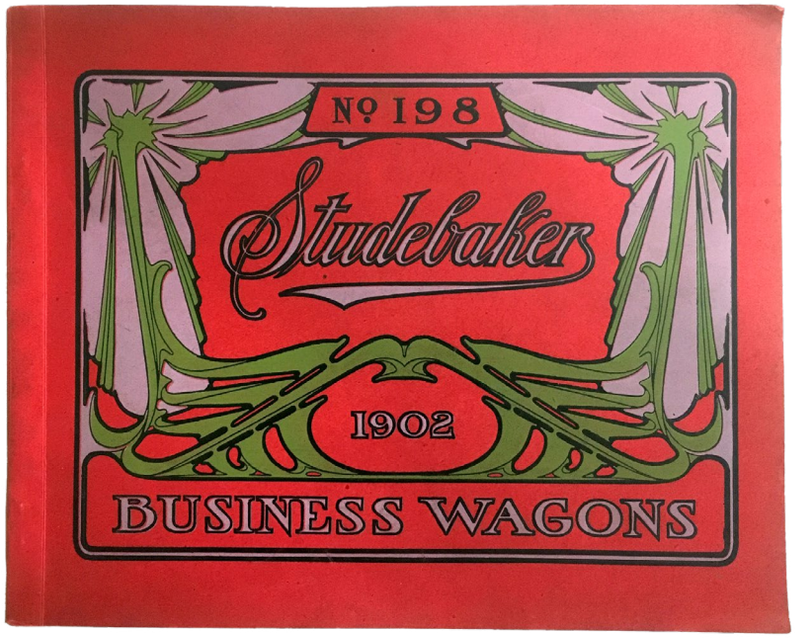
Railroad crossing at 24th Street, Port Huron, 1923

State Highway—Cobbs and Mitchell Building (Cadillac), 1938–1952. In 1905, the Cobbs and Mitchell lumber firm hired Detroit architect George D. Mason to design its new office building in Cadillac. The Cobbs and Mitchell building also served as a showplace for the company's lumber products. Completed in 1907, the building featured nine varieties of native Michigan wood. The State Highway Department purchased the building in 1938. This small record group details the acquisition, renovation and maintenance of the building, which served as the North Regional Office of the State Highway Department and was designated a state historic site in 1981. Included are correspondence, specifications, contracts, materials lists and articles about the dedication.

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS:

Records of the Woman's Relief Corps (U.S.), Fitzgerald Post (Hastings, MI), 1887–1917. The Woman's Relief Corps, the auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, was a patriotic society dedicated to veteran relief work and promotion of such values as loyalty, patriotism and devotion to the nation. The five volumes of the Fitzgerald Post records contain meeting minutes, attendance lists and financial records. The minutes include convention and Decoration Day (now known as Memorial Day) activities, elections, new member applications and reimbursements of bills relating to Civil War remembrances and memorials.

J. C. Schneider family photograph collection, 1858–1958 (bulk 1890–1930). This collection documents the John Conrad "J.C." Schneider family of Lansing, Michigan and the J.C. Schneider & Sons carriage and wagon company. The company,



1902 Studebaker trade catalog from the J.C. Schneider family photograph collection

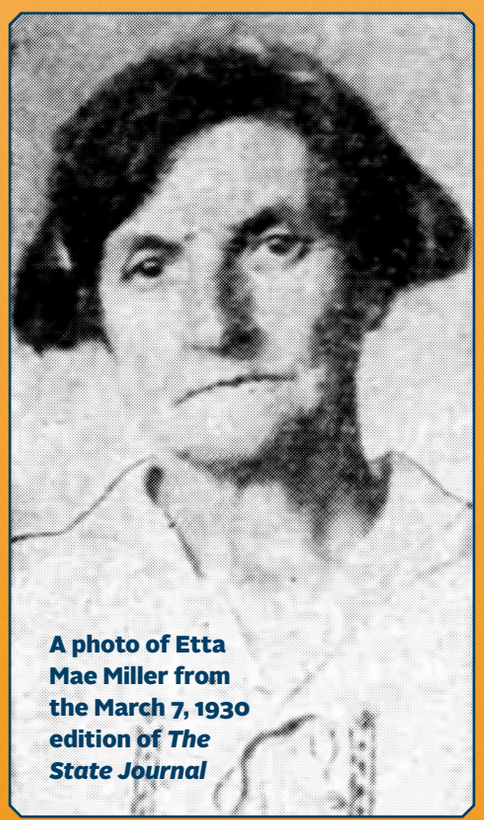
which was established in 1899, manufactured custom-made horse-drawn carriages until around 1918, when it expanded to build motor truck bodies in addition to wagons. The bulk of the collection consists of glass plate negatives and photographic prints that document the family and some of the carriage designs. Also included are trade catalogs, magazines and clippings related to the manufacture and design of carriages, carriage parts and the use of carriages, as well as advertisements for American automotive design (1901–1940). Many of the advertisements are for early companies, including Apperson, Chandler, Marmon, Jewett, Locomobile and Whippet.

Society of Women in Transportation Papers, 1978–1998. The Society of Women in Transportation organized in February 1978 as an advocacy group for women trying to gain equal opportunity and wages within the Michigan Department of Transportation. The founding members aimed to promote the professional growth and career development of women in the transportation field. They focused on improving perceptions and attitudes towards women in the field, assisting administrators in locating, recruiting and promoting qualified women in administrative and upper level positions, and facilitating communication among women within the transportation field. This accession includes the society's constitution, correspondence, membership lists, newsletters and newspaper articles.

Minutes of the Michigan Motion Picture Exhibitors' Association, 1916–1923. In late 1910, the Michigan Motion Picture Exhibitors' Association (MMPEA) was formed to ensure the welfare of moving picture exhibitors across the state. It held its first annual banquet on January 4, 1911, at the Burns Hotel in Detroit. Minutes (1916–1921), make up the bulk of the collection. There are also seven photographs of Michigan theaters, including the IdleHour (Alma), the Vaudette (Grand Rapids) and the Victory (Bay City), and a photograph of the members of the 1911 State Convention of Moving Picture Exhibitors held in Detroit. Other names associated with the collection are the "Detroit Exhibitors' League" and the "Detroit Local #1" of the Motion Picture Exhibitors' League of America.

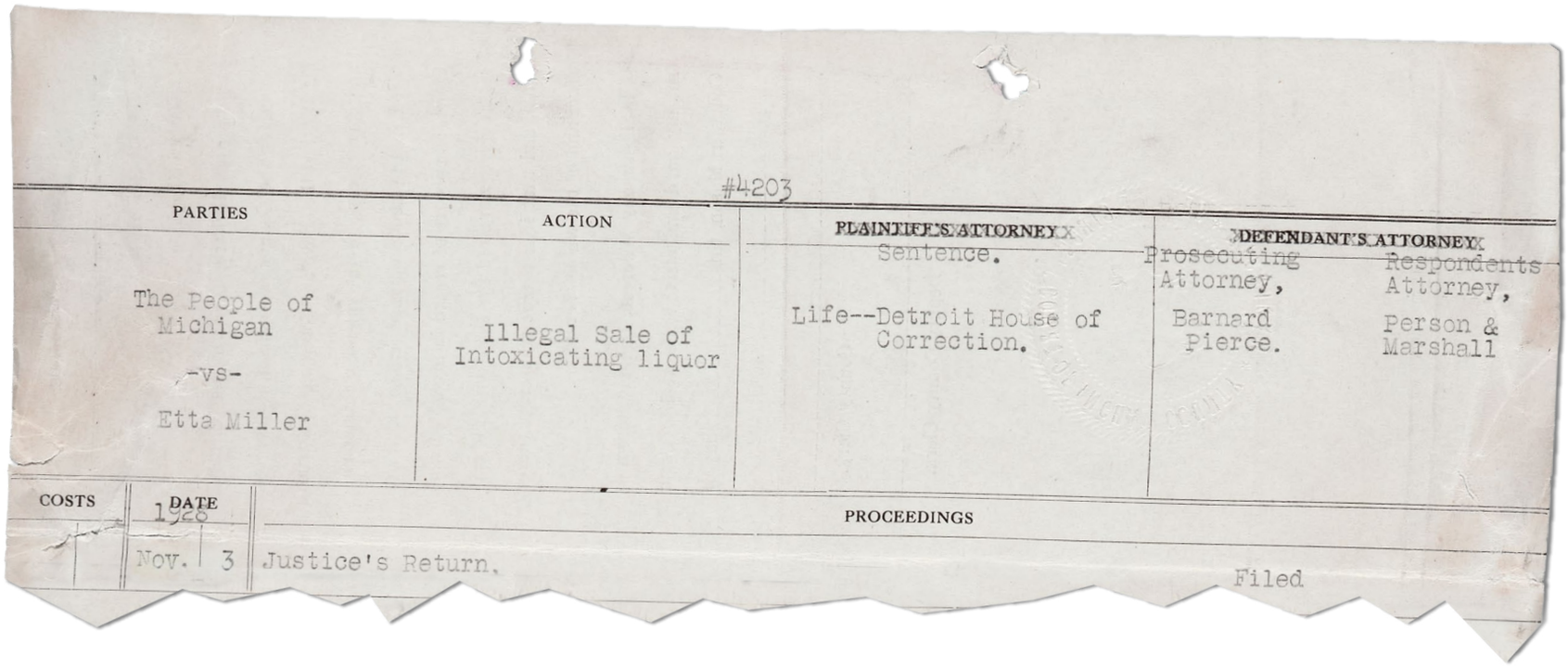
The 1911 state convention of Moving Picture Exhibitors' in Detroit

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: ETTA MAE MILLER AND A PINT OF LIQUOR



A photo of Etta Mae Miller from the March 7, 1930 edition of *The State Journal*

BY BOB GARRETT



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PARTIES	ACTION	PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY	DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEY
The People of Michigan -vs- Etta Miller	Illegal Sale of Intoxicating liquor	Sentence. Life--Detroit House of Correction.	Prosecuting Attorney, Barnard Pierce. / Respondents Attorney, Person & Marshall

COSTS	DATE	PROCEEDINGS
	1928 Nov. 3	Justice's Return. Filed

A page from the Michigan Supreme Court case file on "The People of Michigan v. Etta Mae Miller," 1929

Few would deem Etta Mae Miller a dangerous criminal. The *Detroit Free Press* described the 48-year-old as "slight, bright and bird like" when she was sentenced to life in prison in December 1928. Michigan courts had lost patience with alcohol offenders during the Prohibition era and made an example of Miller.

The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, passed in 1920, banned the production, sale and transport of "intoxicating liquors." In practice, it was difficult to enforce, and raising taxes to increase enforcement often proved unpopular. Prohibition supporters began calling for harsher penalties, believing that they would deter offenders. The Michigan legislature then passed the "habitual offender law" (Michigan Public Act 175 of 1927), which classified Prohibition violations as felonies and mandated a life sentence for the fourth felony violation.

Police first arrested Etta Mae Miller for liquor violations in 1923. They arrested her again in 1925 and 1927. She served 60 days in jail for the first offense and six months in jail for each of the other two. Her fourth conviction occurred on December 12, 1928. According to a January 1, 1929, article in the *Baltimore Sun*, the amount of alcohol involved in her four cases combined was "only a little more than a gallon."

Lansing police officers William Knapp and Frank Eastman stated in the Ingham County court file that they had been on "vice duty," driving through Lansing in search of Prohibition law violations, when they saw a truck pull into the driveway of a house belonging to Matt Smith, Etta Mae's neighbor. They then saw Etta Mae, who they knew well, pull "two bottles out from under her cloak" and hand them to one of the two men in the truck. The officers followed the truck and ordered the driver to stop. One of the men threw the bottles out of the window. Knapp and Eastman pulled over the driver and recovered the bottles. While the bottles had been emptied, chemical analysis later determined that they had contained "moonshine whiskey." The officers arrested Etta.

Etta's husband, Alvin, was already serving a two-year prison sentence for his own Prohibition conviction (his third), leaving Etta Mae as the sole means of support for her children. While she wasn't the first person convicted under Michigan's new habitual offender law, she was the first

woman, and her plight naturally evoked sympathy and public outrage.

Michigan State Senator Seymour Person, who had opposed the habitual offender law, and attorney Claude Marshall represented Etta Mae at trial. The two advised Etta Mae to stand mute when asked for a plea, thus mandating a plea of "not guilty" and forcing a jury trial. During the trial, the two raised frequent objections and made motions to have the proceedings quashed, laying the groundwork for an appeal. They hoped that on appeal the Supreme Court would rule on the validity of the habitual offender law. Ingham County Circuit Judge Charles B. Collingwood repeatedly denied the defense team's motions. Prosecutors spotlighted Etta Mae's previous liquor violation convictions, hoping to secure the life sentence.

In his address to the jury, Collingwood acknowledged the special circumstances of the case. He explained "that this particular law has not been tested out by our higher court in regard to whether it is constitutional or not" and that Etta Mae's lawyers may indeed hope to test the law in the Michigan Supreme Court. He advised the jury that their role was only to determine whether Etta Mae was guilty beyond a reasonable doubt of the alleged crime.

Bottles of alcohol seized by Michigan State Police during Prohibition

The jury of eight men and four women deliberated for only fourteen minutes before rendering a guilty verdict on December 12, 1928. The trial received national coverage, and the verdict sparked national outrage. Had the "dry movement" finally gone too far in its zeal to stop alcohol consumption? *Time* magazine reported that a man who pled guilty to manslaughter had received only a $400 fine on the same day that Etta Mae received her life sentence. Some Prohibition proponents pushed back, insisting that Etta Mae deserved her sentence, which turned public opinion against them. To many American citizens, the "dry forces" seemed fanatical in their

THE TRIAL RECEIVED NATIONAL COVERAGE, AND THE VERDICT SPARKED NATIONAL OUTRAGE. HAD THE "DRY MOVEMENT" FINALLY GONE TOO FAR IN ITS ZEAL TO STOP ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION?

law-and-order zeal. The public wondered about the fate of Etta Mae's children, and *The Washington Post* reported, "The prosecution...said that the oldest of the children is able to care for the others, the youngest of whom is 13."

On February 1, 1929, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that Etta Mae had been granted a rehearing by the Michigan Supreme Court. The paper also reported on the political battle being waged in the state legislature. Governor Fred Green's administration supported proposed legislation amending the criminal code to eliminate the mandatory life sentence in the case of alcohol offenders. Meanwhile, the *Tribune* noted that "Senator Leon F. Miner of Owosso, spokesman of the ultra-dry forces," had introduced an opposing bill that would effectively nullify the Green administration-supported bill should it pass. Ultimately, the legislature modified the criminal code to eliminate the mandatory life sentence for fourth-time alcohol convictions, and Governor Fred Green commuted Etta Mae's sentence to "seven and a half to fifteen years."

Then, in November 1929, came a surprising development. Frank Eastman, one of the officers who had arrested Etta Mae, publicly confessed that he and his partner, William Knapp, had framed Etta Mae in her third arrest and conviction. The *New York Times* quoted Eastman, who said that the alcohol in that arrest had been "planted in a cupboard in her house by Knapp's orders." On March 12, 1930,

Michigan State Police seizing a still during Prohibition

the *Baltimore Sun* reported that Eastman had been charged with bootlegging and dismissed from the police force. Etta Mae told reporters that "Knapp made the snowballs and Eastman threw them," and "I don't think one was any better than the other."

That same month, the Michigan Supreme Court ordered a retrial of Etta Mae's case. Etta Mae was transferred from the Detroit House of Corrections back to the Ingham County jail in Mason. The *Baltimore Sun* reported that she was released on a $20,000 bond "within an hour of her arrival." For the first time in almost a year and a half, Etta Mae was free. While she awaited her retrial, the prosecution faced its own obstacles. Frank Eastman had disappeared. The prosecution did not know if they could locate him or Emmet Clark and John Haines, the two men to whom Etta Mae had allegedly sold liquor. Person and Marshall, Etta's attorneys, filed a motion to have the case dismissed, and Ingham County Circuit Court records show that the motion was granted on April 19, 1930.

Despite the reprieve, Etta Mae continued to break the law. Records show her arrest in 1940 for the illegal sale of alcohol and for operating a house of ill repute. On June 8, 1955, she died at the age of 75. The *Lansing State Journal* reported her death and noted that she had "been living more or less in seclusion in late years." Researchers can find the records detailing Etta Mae Miller's story in the Ingham County Circuit Court records (Record Group 89-284) and the Michigan Supreme Court records (Record Group 96-181) at the Archives of Michigan.

Reshelving Michigan's

Objects that connect to people's stories are at the heart of the Michigan History Museum, part of the Michigan History Center. The center's museum staff cares for 130,000 items, from Sojourner Truth's tobacco pouch to homemade paper dolls. They come from different cultures, communities and localities around the state of Michigan. And we're about to get even better at it.

In 2018, the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded MHC a three-year grant to reinvent collections storage infrastructure for the museum's collections. Collections were relocated to a new, larger facility in 2007, but they continue to grow. The IMLS grant provided partial funding for 5,000 square feet of improved space-saving shelving and allowed us to hire a move coordinator, Heather Locke, to tackle the project.

Purchasing new shelving is only one part of the project. Each object must be tracked in the collections management database so that staff always know its location. Over the past year, the museum collections team has relocated 16,000 artifacts and removed old, mismatched shelving to make way for a brand new Spacesaver high density mobile shelving system. Utilizing the height of the warehouse space, the new systems will be 12 feet tall (double the height of the old shelving). Shelving units will move on a series of tracks to expand aisles and access artifacts as needed. The new system will include roughly 150 clothing rods and more than 3,300 shelves, providing six times the previous shelving space.

The new space will increase capacity and open up the opportunity to decompress areas that are packed too tightly. Staff can then reorganize materials, conduct inventories, create storage mounts for fragile items and assess conditions to identify any necessary conservation work. Along the way, curators will photograph objects and update storage locations to allow for better accessibility.

The shelving installation began the last week of February and will be completed sometime this summer, when staff will move MHC's 15,000-item clothing collection into its state-of-the-art new digs, protecting a piece of Michigan's cultural heritage for generations to come. *—by Heather Locke*

Contractors laying down the track for the new shelving units, February 2020

History

Old museum shelving; Artifacts are being inventoried and relocated in preparation for new shelving, May 2019.

Some of the new shelving equipment delivered and waiting to be installed, March 2020

THE SAVE MICHIGAN HISTORY PROGRAM

The Argus Museum; Marguerite De Angeli; The St. Clair County Library; The Lapeer District Library; An Argus camera (clockwise from top left)

The diverse stories of Michigan are not saved in one museum or archives, but in hundreds of organizations and institutions across the state. The Save Michigan History program, begun in 2016, helps smaller Michigan historical organizations and institutions better preserve archival records. Archives staff and Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board (MSHRAB) members provide on-site assessments and basic workshops to improve knowledge and skills across the state. There are also small regrants available to organizations for well-defined projects.

The Archives of Michigan administers the Save Michigan History grant program in partnership with MSHRAB and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). The board, appointed by the governor, serves as a central advisory body for historical records planning and for NHPRC-funded projects in the state. It works in conjunction with the archives to facilitate cooperation and communication among historical records repositories and information agencies within the state.

The board awarded $4,449 in 2019 to three organizations for a variety of projects that will increase availability of historical records around the state:

- The Argus Museum in Ann Arbor will digitize and provide online access to photographs, company records and publications from Argus Camera, Inc., which manufactured cameras and radio equipment in Ann Arbor from 1931 to 1980.

- The Lapeer District Library will create a searchable database from a handwritten inventory of a collection from local author Marguerite De Angeli, making the collection easier for researchers and librarians to use.

- The St. Clair County Library will digitize and provide online access to a ledger listing residents of the county poor home from 1857 to 1893.

- In 2020, the Save Michigan History program will have a refreshed web presence with new short-form videos to communicate basic archival theory in a concise format.

A New Vision for Straits State Park

Turn south off US-2 just west of I-75 and you'll discover 80 acres of Straits State Park a few trails, spectacular views of the Mackinac Bridge, the Father Jacques Marquette National Memorial and an open circle where a museum destroyed by fire in 2000 once stood. Today the circle comes to life one August weekend a year for a powwow. Then quiet returns.

Now imagine the same 80 acres welcoming many more visitors with indoor and outdoor experiences that surprise and excite them. The site challenges people to rethink the past, and perhaps the future. It's fun.

Interpretation along trails, around the powwow circle and in the learning commons introduces both the Native American and the French heritage of the region. History and outdoor recreation join to encourage healthy lifestyles. A recreation bridge across I-75 links it all to the park campground and the St. Ignace community.

This is the vision of the Straits of Mackinac Heritage Center Collaborative: DNR's Michigan History Center and Parks and Recreation Division; the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians; Moran Township; Lake Superior State University; and the Mackinac Straits Health System.

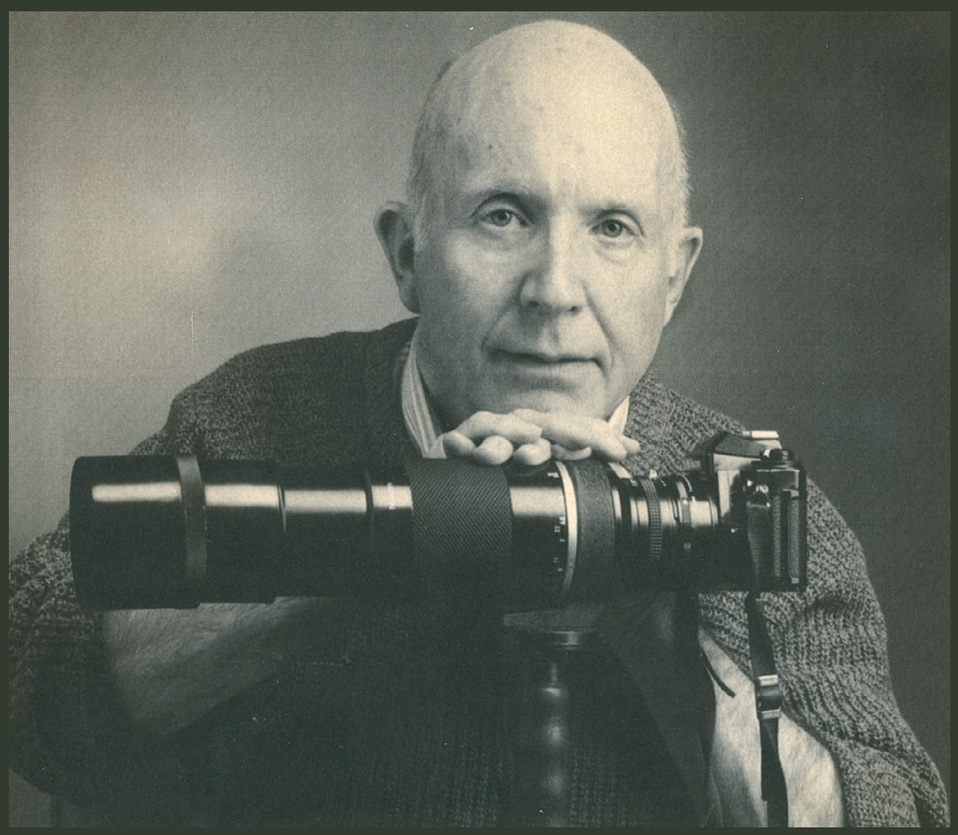
In 2018 the National Endowment for the Humanities gave the partnership a challenge grant of $500,000. The grant must be matched by $1.5 million by July 2023. The Michigan History Foundation has taken up the challenge of helping the collaborative raise the matching funds.

For more images of the collaborative vision, visit www.StraitsHeritage.org. *—by Sandra S. Clark*

The Michigan History Foundation raises private funds for the preservation and interpretation of Michigan's history. Since 1989 the foundation has served as the funding partner of the Michigan History Center, its museum sites, archives and collections. Support comes from individuals, founda-tion grants, and corporate gifts. To donate and to learn more, visit www.michiganhistory.org.

MICHIGAN HISTORY FOUNDATION

NORRIS INGELLS: Visual Anthropologist



By Mary Zimmeth

A photo of Lansing kids at play taken by Norris Ingells; Ingells (left) from the *Lansing State Journal* Collection at the Archives of Michigan.

Michigan State University nursing students protesting the proposed elimination of the College of Nursing, 1981 (left); Ingells had an eye for finding beauty in mundane tasks (right).

Photojournalist Norris Ingells (1933–2005) carried his camera everywhere. For more than 50 years he created visual stories of the famous and the not-so-famous for the *Mount Pleasant Daily Times-News* and the *Lansing State Journal (LSJ)*. His subjects included Martin Luther King, Magic Johnson, children playing at Lansing's Frances Park, vendors at the Lansing City Market and veterinarians at Potter Park Zoo. His camera captured Michigan State University sporting events, as well as student protests. His newspaper beat varied, including civil rights, science, nature, aviation and travel. He photographed parades, festivals, boats, lakes and Lansing street scenes in the frigid winter and in the sweltering summer. He captured dire events: accidents, fires, and floods, including one of the worst floods in Lansing's history in 1975. In retirement, he wrote columns on art, lighthouses, flowers and insects—especially insects. He hoped to convince readers that all "bugs" are beautiful. An inveterate recorder of the world at large, Ingells lived to be camera-ready, looking for that next superb shot.

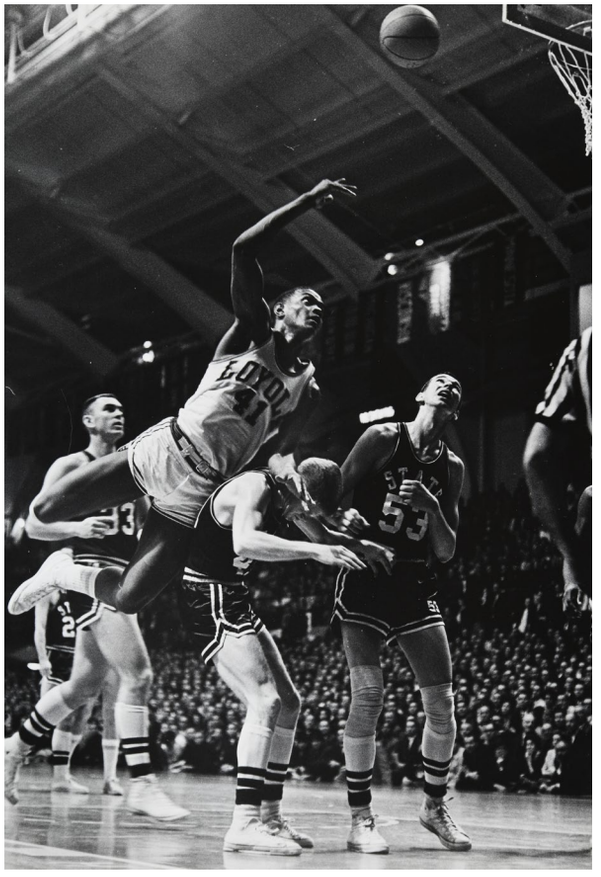
In 2006, *Lansing State Journal* columnist, Jim Hough, nominated Norris Ingells for induction into the Central Michigan University (CMU) Journalism Hall of Fame. Hough described Ingells, a CMU alumnus who worked for the student newspaper, *Central Michigan Life*, as a "special figure on the CMU campus long before he became a photojournalist. We always thought he would be killed some day in a football endzone or basketball court as he shot so many great and award-winning photos there. In those days, Norris was more recognizable than the president."

Other colleagues from the *LSJ* supported the nomination. Mark Nixon, editorial page editor, praised Ingells as a true Renaissance man who could have been a naturalist, a classical music critic or a science writer. "That he chose photography over any number of other professions is not surprising. Norris, son of a missionary, found photojournalism to be something more than a career. It was a calling." Hugh Leach, an *LSJ* reporter, noted his colleague's tenacity for pursuing stories that "helped right wrongs or bring about positive changes." Bruce Cornelius, who worked with

Lambing with George Good at MSU, ca. 1980 (left); Beauty is in the eye of the beholder (right).

Ingells for 17 years, summed it up, calling him a "a visual anthropologist," worthy of induction into the CMU Journalism Hall of Fame. Norris Ingells achieved the honor on November 4, 2006.

The only son of Lillian and Clifford Ingells, Norris was born in Manistee, Michigan, and graduated from Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant where he majored in biology. Ingells enlisted in the Navy (ca. 1955) and was assigned to the aircraft carrier *USS Leyte*. The *Leyte s*aw service during the Korean War, but it spent most of its time conducting tactical operations along the eastern seaboard and in the Caribbean. Ingells was an editor and photographer for the ship's newspaper. Before his tenure with the *Lansing State Journal* (1964-2005), he was editor of the *Mount Pleasant Daily Times-News* from 1958 to 1964. Ingells married Carol Copeland in August 1965; their daughter, Melissa, was born two years later. Ingells retired from the *Lansing State Journal* in 1995 but continued to write nature and travel columns until his death at the age of 72 in 2005. Melissa Ingells Benmark donated her father's photograph collection to the Archives of Michigan in 2015.



NCAA Mideast regional semifinal college basketball game between Loyola and Mississippi State at Jenison Fieldhouse, East Lansing, March 1963. Known as the "Game of Change," it was a landmark contest that helped alter race relations on the basketball court.

Emil Baur, ca 1870

BACKWOODSMAN CORRESPONDENCE:

A GLIMPSE INTO THE EMIL & BERTHA BAUR PAPERS

BY LESLIE S. EDWARDS

Claire Lewis moved to Cincinnati in 1974. While cleaning the basement of her new home, she found a cloth bag peeking out from behind the copper coils of the original water heater. The soot-covered bag contained stacks of 19th century letters written in English and German by Emil and Bertha Baur and other family members. The letters stoked Ms. Lewis's curiosity, and she discovered that in the 1860s, Baur had launched the ill-fated utopian community of Ora Labora in Michigan's Thumb Region. She guarded the letters for more than four decades. But when she downsized and moved to Minneapolis in 2018, she thought the letters should be in a research institution and sent them unsolicited to the Historical Society of Michigan. In 2019, the letters were transferred to the Archives of Michigan.

Processing a collection of German-language materials is difficult. Before arranging and describing the collection for researchers, we had to break through the language barrier, which included the old form of German cursive called "Kurrent." I contacted the Department of Linguistics & Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages at Michigan State University for assistance. Professor Lynn Wolff put me in touch with Professor Emeritus Patrick McConeghy, who enthusiastically offered his assistance. Together, he and I devised a transcription/translation project. Archives assistant Peter Richards digitizes the documents, and Professor McConeghy transcribes them into contemporary German. They are then translated into English by archives assistant and graduate student Frances Heldt and volunteer Aaron Chappel, a graduate of the University of Michigan.

We began the project with the earliest documents (1850–1869), focusing first on those that appeared to relate to Ora Labora. While the process is time-consuming, the documents have already shed new light on the Baurs and their contributions to Michigan (and Ohio) history.

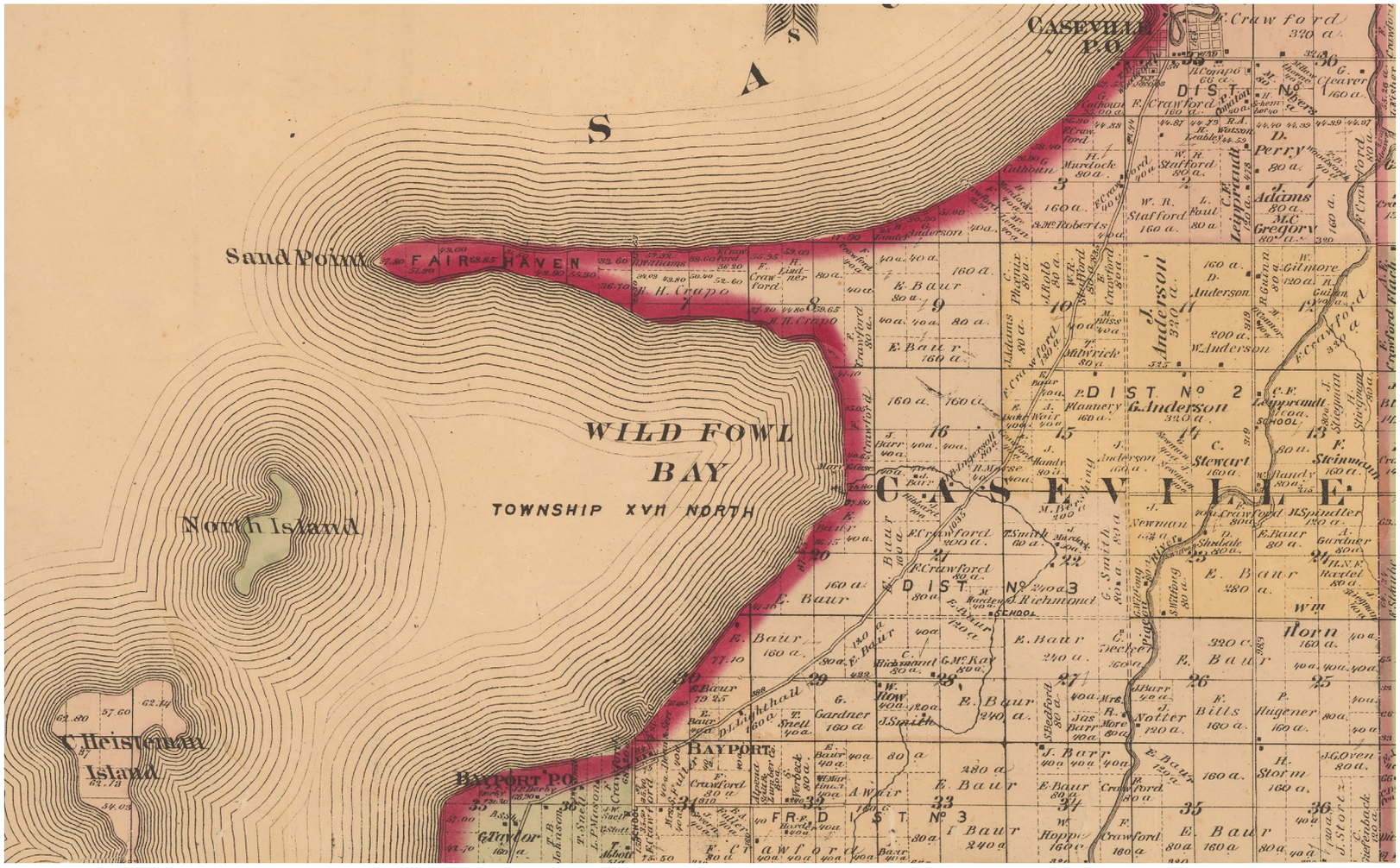
The Emil and Bertha Baur Papers, 1848–1905, comprise mostly correspondence and family photographs. The correspondence topics include: Baur family letters, Emil Baur's work as an educator and agriculturalist in Ann Arbor, his religious writings, the German colony of Ora Labora in Huron County, and the work of Baur's sister, Clara, and his daughter, Bertha, at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

In April 1850, at the age of 19, Emil Baur emigrated to the United States on the *Stad Antwerpen*. He likely made his first stop in Cincinnati, where his brother Theodor had settled two years earlier. He quickly set out across Ohio. A letter from Theodor, dated August 8, 1850, was addressed to Emil in care of Ohio Governor Allen Trimble. Emil became a convert to the Methodist faith, possibly through Trimble's son Joseph, who was a Methodist minister and leader in the Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Baur began to devote his life to missionary work in 1852, first in Cincinnati, then in the Pittsburgh German Mission District. In 1854, he was appointed to the Michigan Mission District and stationed in Ann Arbor and later in Detroit. He met his future wife, Bertha Johanna Christina Herzer, in Detroit through her brother Herman, who was also a missionary. From 1858 to 1862, Baur preached the Ohio circuit and was stationed in Cleveland and Canal Dover.

Baur met many influential religious leaders throughout his life, including German-born immigrant Wilhelm Nast, who in 1838 organized the German branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nast also edited the German weekly paper, *Der Christliche Apologete*. Founded in 1839, it became the leading religious journal of German Methodists in the U.S. and had a following in Germany and Switzerland. Nast

This is the cover of a small autograph booklet featuring Emil Baur's hometown of Reutlingen in Württemberg, Germany. The autographs in the booklet revealed a going away party for Baur in February 1850. He emigrated two months later.



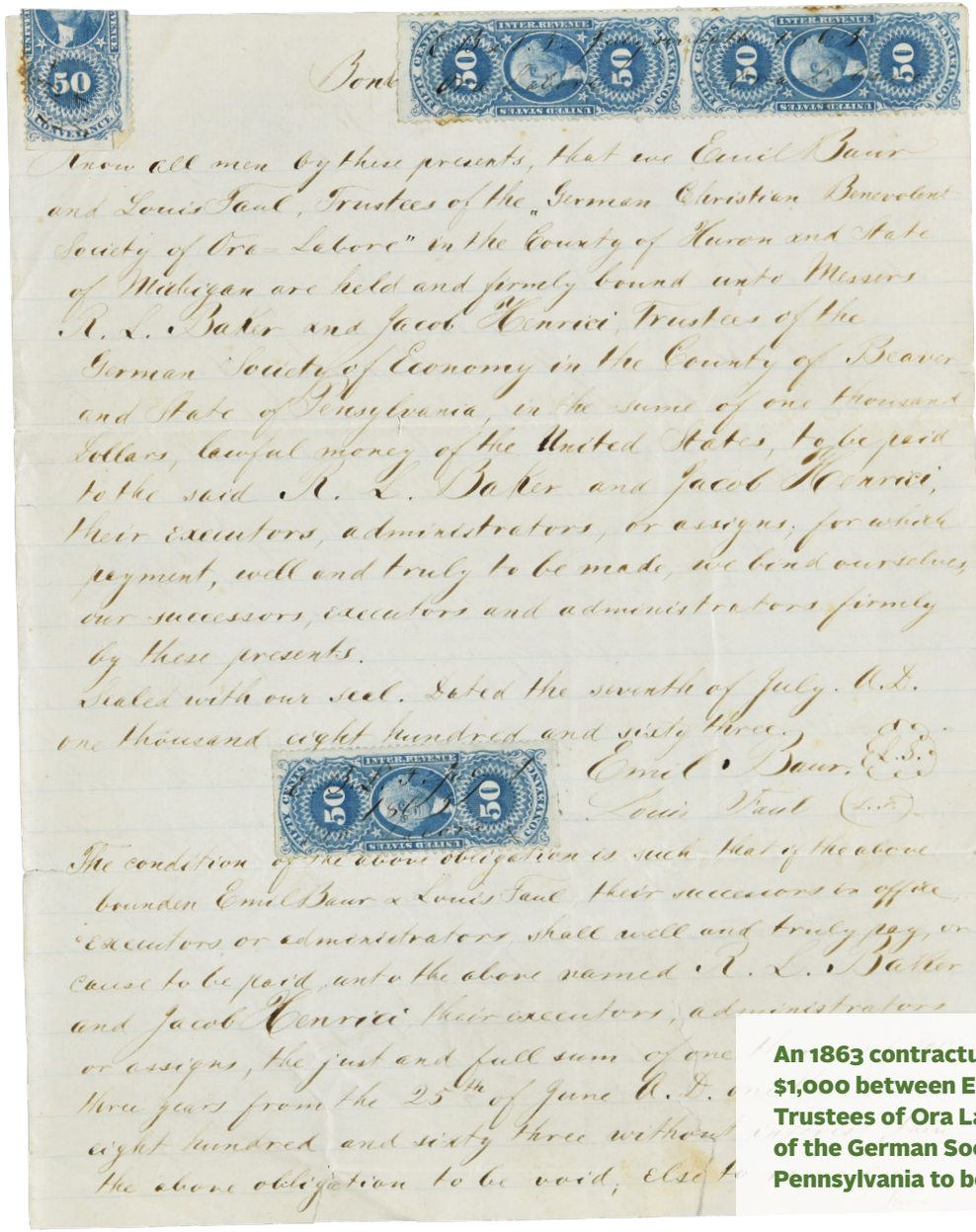
Caseville Township in Huron County, 1875. Emil Baur, who still held 4,500 acres of Ora Labora colony lands, worked as the agent for the proprietors of the Harmony Society, Jacob Henrici and Jonathan Lenz.

became one of Baur's spiritual advisors. As an itinerant preacher often traveling to remote areas, Baur agonized over the conditions of the poor, and especially over what he considered to be the plight of widows and their "orphaned" children. He envisioned a Christian community that would house and care for those in need. He wrote to Nast about his ideas for an orphanage. Nast responded in a letter dated May 9, 1854, "I consider it not good to open it for different reasons . . . we have to build churches, to entertain preachers, to support mission, Bible and tract societies, before we go on to build orphanages . . . everything has its time. We have different work. I do not believe that we are appointed to this work, at least not now."

As Baur continued to preach his circuit, he also found time to visit cooperative religious communities—the Shakers, the Harmony Society in Economy, Pennsylvania, and the Zoarites in Ohio, which had been established by German separatists from his homeland of *Württemberg*. He imagined a Utopian community in which German Methodists could live in mutual cooperation and harmony following the principal tenets of Methodism. In early 1861, Baur began to set his plan in motion. He corresponded with his friend, Michigan State Geologist Alexander Winchell, about the agrarian benefits of land in mid-Michigan, and with S. S. Lacey, Commissioner of the Michigan State Land Office, about the availability of such land through the Homestead Act. By the end of the year, Baur had received approval from a committee of German ministers from the North Ohio Conference. He used Nast's *Apologete* as his

sounding board for formalizing his plans, marketing the colony and recruiting members. The Emil and Bertha Baur Papers contain a March 13, 1862, draft of Baur's formal appeal, which shows an early name for the colony—"der deutsche christliche Hinderwälderwohlthätigkeitsverein" or the "German Charitable Backwoodsmens' Benevolent Society." The name eventually became the "Christian German Agricultural and Benevolent Society of Ora et Labora" or "Ora Labora" (pray and work).

By September 1862, Baur and a land-search committee secured 166 acres along Wild Fowl Bay in Huron County, with additional lands set aside for acquisition by the colonists through the Homestead Act. The site for Ora Labora was a half mile from the bay, on a dune ridge surrounded by forested wilderness and swamp lands. In December, Michigan's Board of Control passed a resolution setting aside the state swamp lands for colony use on the condition that drainage ditches be dug. Additional lands were purchased by Emil Baur as representative for the colony. In the spring of 1863, several colony members journeyed ahead to clear land and build houses in preparation for settlement. By the summer, the colony's constitution was finalized; Ora Labora had an established post office; and the Baur family, among others, moved to the colony.


Bond

Know all men by these presents, that we Emil Baur and Louis Faul, Trustees of the "German Christian Benevolent Society of Ora-Labore" in the County of Huron and State of Michigan are held and firmly bound unto Messrs R. L. Baker and Jacob Henrici, Trustees of the German Society of Economy in the County of Beaver and State of Pennsylvania, in the sum of one thousand Dollars, lawful money of the United States, to be paid to the said R. L. Baker and Jacob Henrici, their executors, administrators, or assigns; for which payment, well and truly to be made, we bind ourselves our successors, executors and administrators firmly by these presents.

Sealed with our seal. Dated the seventh of July. A.D. one thousand eight hundred and sixty three.

Emil Baur (L.S.)

Louis Faul (L.S.)

The condition of the above obligation is such that if the above bounden Emil Baur & Louis Faul their successors or assigns executors or administrators shall well and truly pay or cause to be paid unto the above named R. L. Baker and Jacob Henrici their executors, administrators or assigns, the just and full sum of one [illegible] three years from the 25th of June A.D. [illegible] eight hundred and sixty three without [illegible] the above obligation to be void, else to

An 1863 contractual loan agreement for $1,000 between Emil Baur and Louis Faul, Trustees of Ora Labora, and the Trustees of the German Society of Economy in Pennsylvania to be paid back by 1866.

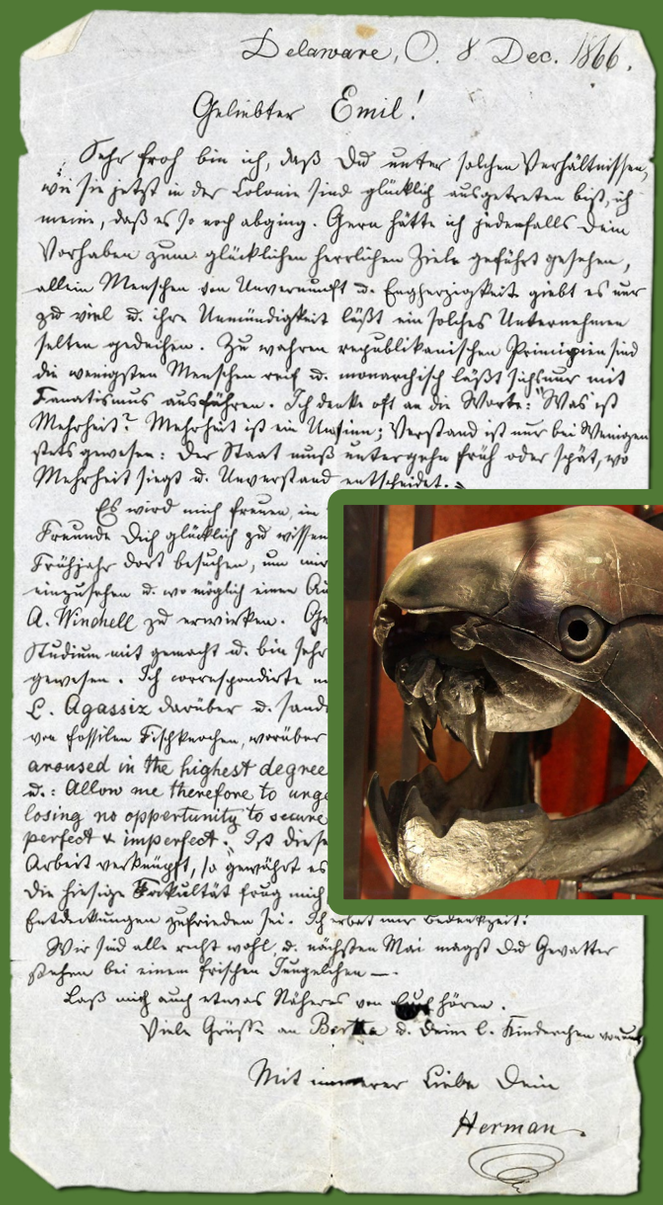
The hardship of wilderness living soon took its toll. Colony members, who were primarily trades and craftsmen unaccustomed to pioneer life, quickly discovered the difficulty of clearing land, digging ditches and building roads, especially with the incessant mosquitoes. The colonists lacked money and supplies; cooperative and harmonious living evaporated. Discouraged and disgruntled members began to abandon Ora Labora, many of them blaming Baur. Exhausted, in ill health and impoverished, the Baur family returned to Ann Arbor in the fall of 1867.

Emil Baur's dream had ended. He could not manage the colony affairs from afar, and the financial and emotional burdens overwhelmed him. The trustees agreed that the colony system was unsuccessful, and Ora Labora was dissolved. For "God's work in the backwoods," Baur had risked his life, his honor, his assets and the health and happiness of his family. In March 1879, he wrote to his daughter Bertha that he sometimes felt as if no one loved him. Though he worked as a German language teacher and horticulturist in Ann Arbor, he spent the remainder of his life

Emil Baur poses with his three sons, ca 1880.

negotiating lands for colonists who chose to stay in the area, fighting with state land office representatives and trying to find ways to pay off the debts of the society. John Duss, senior trustee of the Harmony Society, tried to reassure Baur in a letter dated January 24, 1893: "There will be no trouble for the entire society . . . besides you have done nobly and if you should make mistakes even we would not feel bad—so once more—compose yourself and feel at ease." One year later, on March 8, 1894, Emil Baur shot himself in the head. In a letter to his widow, Bertha, Baur's sister Clara wrote "why did I not understand that the cries of his spirit were for exclusive labor in Christ's Kingdom. Added to this were the unsufferable agonies brought upon him by the cares of the Colony and thus his great heart and brain received the death blow."

The Emil and Bertha Baur papers continue to shed new light on the story of Ora Labora. Once the translation project is completed, portions of the collection will be available online at Michiganology.org.



In this letter dated December 8, 1866, Baur's brother-in-law Herman Herzer refers to his discovery of fossil fish bones. Herzer sent drawings and photographs to naturalist Louis Agassiz, who wrote, "Allow me therefore to urge upon you the importance of losing no opportunity to secure every part of these bones however perfect & imperfect."

Herzer was credited with the first discovery of several Late Devonian fossil fish bones in the banks of the Olentangy River in Delaware, Ohio. Commonly known as "Herman Herzer's terrible fish" due to their prehistoric armor and sharp teeth, the fossils were identified and named "Dinichthys herzeri" in 1873.

"NOT ADDING UP" EMIL WENGER, TRUST, AND A CONTESTED PROBATE FILE

Emil P. Wenger's story did not end with his death in 1916. The Michigan Supreme Court did not settle the final distribution of his estate until 1949. Wenger, an executive of the Burroughs company, died in White Plains, New York, on June 2, 1916. According to the *Detroit Free Press,* he "had been in poor health for more than a year." The *Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record* noted that "he had gone to White Plains in an effort to recover his health."

At the time of his death, Wenger had amassed a small fortune as a successful businessman in Detroit's Burroughs Adding Machine Company. The estate inventory outlined Wenger's holdings, including real estate, stocks, personal property ($500 for his automobile) and cash. They totaled nearly $1.2 million (or $20 million in 2020 dollars). In his Last Will and Testament, written in August 1912 shortly after his youngest child was born, Wenger created a trust for his four children. It stipulated that each child would receive $10,000 from the trust property upon reaching the age of 25, an additional $10,000 at age 30, and the remaining trust funds at age 35. When Wenger passed, his oldest daughter Alice was 16; his youngest, Louise, was only four. Louise eventually became the center of a court struggle that would add two more years to the already 31-year wait for her funds.


Louise Wenger Grossi

Before turning 25, Louise married Piero Grossi, an Italian citizen. She lived in Italy with her husband and family, only making brief visits back to the United States throughout the 1930s and 1940s. She retained her American citizenship due to the repeal of the Expatriation Act of 1907, but the uncertainties of World War II interfered with her second trust payment. She turned 30 in 1942, but could not leave Italy. Her second trust payment was withheld because the United States and Italy were at war. The final release of the trust fund at age 35 (1947) was not authorized because the wartime payment from 1942 had been withheld.

Wenger's estate trustees filed a question with the Chancery division of the Wayne County Circuit Court asking for direction regarding the 1947 final release. "Was Louise Wenger Grossi entitled to the final release even though she had not received the second distribution in 1942?" The circuit court decided it could not modify the conditions of the trust and therefore because she did not receive the second payment, she could not receive the final payment. Not surprisingly, the dispute traveled through the appeals court and then to the Michigan Supreme Court, where in case #44307 (*Evans v. Grossi*), the court overturned the lower court decisions and ruled that Louise Grossi was entitled to the final distribution of her portion of her father's estate. The justices ruled that the lower court had the authority to modify the conditions of a trust in order to fulfill the original intent of the trustor. Louise Wenger Grossi ultimately received her final payment of more than $1 million, as indicated in the 1949 trustees' final account in Wenger's probate file.

Emil Wenger's massive probate estate file (approximately 2,500 pages) touches on several different research collections, including Michigan Supreme Court case files, business records, circuit court chancery files and naturalization records. The Wenger file is available for research at the archives as part of an ongoing project, where the Archives of Michigan is working with FamilySearch.org to digitize Michigan's historic probate records and provide free online access. Wayne County estate files dating 1901–1967 are now available onsite at the archives (RG 2018-67) and will eventually be online at FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/3292257). Pre-1901 Wayne County estate files are available onsite at the archives (RG 85-35) and online at FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/233649). *—by Kris Rzepczynski*

BOOK REVIEW

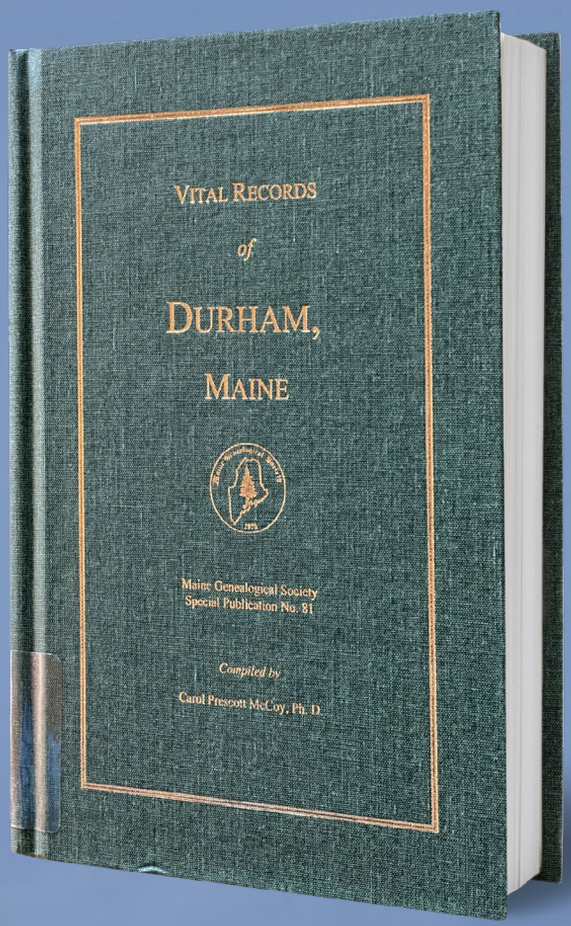
Vital Records of Durham, Maine

Vital Records of Durham, Maine is now available to researchers. Published in 2018 by the Maine Genealogical Society (MGS), this source compiles births, marriages, deaths and cemetery readings from the Androscoggin County town (located about 25 miles north of Portland).

With records dating from 1767 to 1892 and some 20th century family entries, the volume provides a transcription of vital data abstracted from the original Durham town record. Key genealogical data includes birth date and location, bride's maiden name, marriage date and location, and children's birth dates and locations. This book is part of a larger series of vital records indexes and transcriptions published by MGS that document dozens of Maine communities, including Alna, Bangor, Dresden, Portland and Wells.

An essential resource, *Vital Records of Durham, Maine* is now on the shelf (call number: **F 29.D9 M33 2018**) in the Abrams Foundation Historical Collection at the Archives of Michigan. One of the larger genealogical collections in the United States, the Abrams Collection contains published family histories, immigration resources, cemetery transcriptions, directories, county and local histories, military records, getting-started handbooks and more. States of particular strength include those with historic and migratory ties to Michigan: the New England region, New York, Pennsylvania, the Midwest states of Ohio and Indiana, and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

—by Kris Rzepczynski



The Union Church in Durham, Maine, was built in 1835 as a multi-denominational church. From 1922 until 1986, it served as town hall, and now houses the local historical society.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