

CRYSTAL TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Issue 2

January 2014

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Carolyn Brooks
 Brenda Geselman
 Amanda (Sheets) Otto
 Greg Snyder
 David Wight



Fred T. Kimball (1874-1937) in 1908. Picture courtesy of David W. Wulff.

CTHS Officers:

President: David C. Wight
 Vice President: Gregory E. Snyder
 Secretary: Amanda (Sheets) Otto
 Treasurer: Elizabeth (Hogan) Wight
 Trustee: Judie Schiel
 Trustee: Jerry L. Stockton
 Trustee: Ginny Wallgren

Next CTHS Meeting:

General Membership Meeting
 Thursday April 10, 2014 at 7pm
 At the CTHS Building

CTHS Email Address:

cths@crystalhistory.com

CTHS Website:

http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mi_cryshs/CrystalTownshipHistoricalSociety.html

KIMBALL & SON

By Greg Snyder

In the spring of 2012 Grace Stoolmaker donated several items to the CTHS. One of these items was an old “autograph book” from the late 1800’s belonging to Fred T. Kimball. Autograph books were the precursors to today’s high school yearbooks. They were first used by university students from Dutch and German cultures from the 15th through the 17th centuries. German immigrants brought the tradition to America and they reached their peak of popularity here around the time of the Civil War. The books are usually small and rectangular, full of blank pages for schoolmates, teachers, and other friends and relatives to sign. The signer often included a short verse or poem, and sometimes sketches, stickers or other adornments were included on the page. The signatures in Fred’s book were collected between 1883 and 1891 when Fred was between the ages of 9 and 16. Many of the signatures were familiar names from Crystal’s past, such as: Steffey, Frisbie, Lascelle, Rupright, Tow, Sigsby, Youdan and Slack.

Who was Fred T. Kimball? Fred, and his father Charles L. Kimball, were prominent Crystal businessmen from the 1880’s through the mid-1930’s.

Continued under “Kimball” on page 4

UPCOMING EVENTS

General CTHS Membership Meetings:

Thursday April 10, 2014

Thursday July 10, 2014

Thursday October 9, 2014 – Annual Meeting

All meetings start at 7p.m. and will be held in the CTHS Building, 415 S. Main St, Crystal

Other Crystal Events:

4th of July Parade – July 4, 2014

Art Fest – August 9, 2014

QUILT RAFFLE



The quilting ladies of the Crystal Congregational Church and the beautiful quilt they made and donated to the CTHS: Peggy Rowland, Stella Maharan, Dorothy Eggleston, Carol Lau, Carol Shaver, Shelby Hollister, Aletha "Lee" Thornburg and Mary Todd. Not pictured are Jenne Lou Trudgen and Agnes Sinclair. Photo by David Wight.

When Jenne Lou Trudgen learned of the formation of a historical society in Crystal a couple of years ago, she came up with an idea to help the organization. She asked her fellow "Quilting Ladies" of the Crystal Congregational Church to make a quilt that could be donated to the CTHS and used as a raffle prize to raise funds. The quilt was finished and donated recently and raffle tickets went on sale at the Winter Festival. Tickets are available for \$2 each or \$5 for three and will continue to be sold until a drawing is held at the Art Fest this August. Tickets will be on sale at the CTHS building when open and at other events over the coming months. If you see any of these ladies around town please give them a big "Thank You!" for their very generous gift! For more information on buying or selling tickets, please contact David Wight at 989-235-4513.

WINTER FESTIVAL 2014



Naomi (Slack) Turner, Liz (Hogan) Wight and Rosemary Horvath chat with a visitor to the CTHS table at the 2014 Winter Festival. Photo by David Wight.

The Winter Festival was held February 8, 2014 and this year included an indoor craft show and sale in the Crystal Community Center gymnasium. The CTHS had an information and fundraising table where we sold homemade breads and raffle tickets for the quilt. We sold about 45 loaves of homemade bread baked and donated by Naomi (Slack) Turner, Liz (Hogan) Wight, Janet (Spach) Warthman, Bonnie (Hammontree) Flint, and Greg Snyder. The festival was a great success for the organizers, the community and for the CTHS and we look forward to participating again next year.

CTHS BUILDING HOURS

The CTHS building is now open most Saturdays from 10am to 3pm and other times by appointment. If you are coming from out of town please verify that we are open before making the trip since we may not be open every Saturday. Call David Wight, Greg Snyder or Mandi Sheets-Otto if you have questions.

CTHS BUILDING FUND

A special "Thank You!" to all of our members who have donated to the CTHS Building Fund. Your generous donations have totaled over \$750 to date! This fund was established to help pay for the expenses necessary for the operation and maintenance of our new building, e.g. monthly utilities, supplies for cleaning and painting and maintenance. If you have not yet contributed but would like to, donations can be sent to: CTHS Building Fund, PO Box 169, Crystal, MI 48818-0169.

THANK YOU

The CTHS would like to thank the following people and organizations for their recent contributions of time, information, documents, artifacts, pictures, etc. If you have old pictures, documents, souvenirs or stories related to Crystal Township that you would like to donate or share (we can scan or photograph anything and we make house calls!) please contact David, Greg or Mandi at cths@crystalhistory.com or PO Box 169, Crystal, MI 48818. Thank you!

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Pat McShosh | Roe VanFossen |
| Viva (Jones) Bloss | Frances (Bloss) Snyder |
| Greg Snyder | Liz Wight |
| David Wight | Naomi (Slack) Turner |
| Anajayne (Walker) Feller | Lisa Roose-Church |
| The York family | Marilyn (Slack) Shiels |
| Jake Stockton | Marge Waldron |
| Rosemary Horvath | Carolyn Brooks |
| Amanda (Sheets) Otto | Duane McCracken |
| Bonnie (Hammontree) Flint | David Wulff |
| Miriam Zimmerman (Pres of Heritage Village Board) | |
| The Hubbardston Historical Society | |

CTHS PUBLIC EVENT



Larry Engle (left) discusses his collection of Native American arrowheads and stone tools while Jake Stockton (right) and Naomi Turner's grandson look on. Photo by David Wight.

On Saturday February 15, 2014 the CTHS hosted a public event at our headquarters at 415 S Main Street, Crystal. A hearty lunch of chili and potato with ham

soup, corn muffins, bread and butter, crackers, pickles and more was provided with a variety of desserts brought by the attendees. Larry Engle, of rural Stanton, was on hand to display and discuss his large collection of Native American arrowheads and other primitive tools and implements. Most of the arrowheads were discovered by Larry's grandfather, Robert C. Engle, on his farm near Clifford and Dickinson Lakes in Douglass Township. Over a dozen attendees were on hand for a very interesting afternoon.

CRYSTAL CORRESPONDENT

From the "Crystal" column of the *Carson City Gazette*, various dates in 1945. Mrs. Mabel West, Correspondent

April 26, 1945

- Birthday Party: Jerry Turner, son of Mr. and Mrs. Asher Turner, of Crystal, celebrated his sixth birthday, Friday, April 20th. There were 23 guests present. They all had a wonderful time. Refreshments were served and the guests all sang Happy Birthday to Jerry. He received many nice presents. Pictures were taken of all the little guests.
- Mrs. Mary Hammontree has moved into the former Will DeYoung house and Mrs. Mabel West, who formerly resided there, is now living in the Sturgis tenant house.
- Mrs. Mae Swartout returned last Thursday from the Soldiers Home in Grand Rapids where she spent the winter. On Monday a group of friends went to her home as a surprise to help her celebrate her birthday. A potluck lunch was served.

May 3, 1945

- Judd King has opened a second hand shop in front of the Arnold Becht garage.
- Sgt. Robert LaSalle met Col. Howard Price on a street car in London, England, recently.
- Clifford Strait, A. J. Sayres and Earl Hammontree were at Weidman trout fishing Saturday.
- There was a large attendance at the shower given Mr. and Mrs. Cecil McCracken Friday evening at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ed McCracken.

May 17, 1945

- Joe Price, Clifford Strait, Willard Wight, Harley Friend and Ernest Shively spent the weekend fishing.
- Ronald Burke passed away from a heart attack at his home near Sandy Knob.
- Mr. and Mrs. Leamon Foley are moving to their new home, the former Geo. Missner farm.

May 31, 1945

- Mr. and Mrs. Barney Shoen, who have spent the winter in Detroit with their son, Clifford, have returned to their farm home here.
- Miss Velma Shoen has come to spend the summer with her parent, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Shoen, after finishing teaching school at Monroe.

June 7, 1945

- Peggy Willars is assisting part time in the Henry Sturgis store.
- Pi Kappa Sigma sorority from Central Michigan College spent the weekend here at Brulers cottage.

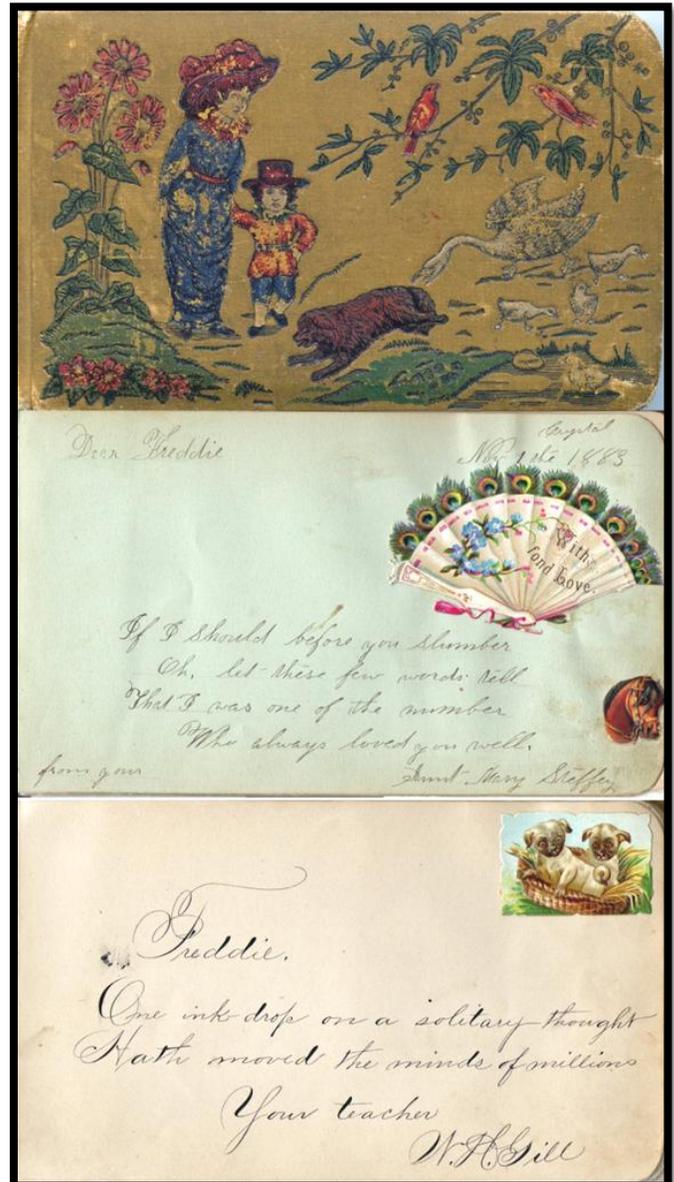
June 21, 1945

- Roger Hammontree had his tonsils removed at the Edmore hospital recently.
- The new school board elected, Monday evening, President, Otto Durbin; secretary, Florence Rule; Treasurer, Henry Sturgis and trustees, Prudence Steere and John Felton.

***"KIMBALL"* continued from page 1**

The story of the Kimball family of Crystal begins with Fred's father, Charles L. Kimball, who was born on February 22, 1850 in Duplain Township, Clinton County, MI. He was the youngest of at least 6 children born to Benoni and Nancy (Miller) Kimball. Charles' parents had settled here in the early 1840's, having lived in NY and OH before settling on a farm near the village of Duplain (then called Mapleton) about half way between St. Johns and Elsie. The farm was located where Hall Rd dead-ends into N Watson Rd, about ½

mile south of Colony Rd and the Duplain Cemetery. Charles' father was about 60 years old at the time of his birth and died when Charles was a child.



Fred's autograph book was typical of the time. It is a small book of blank gold-edged pages about 4.25 x 7 inches with a sturdy pressed and painted cloth cover and binding. Top: Fred's autograph book cover; Middle: entry from Fred's aunt Mary (Kimball) Steffey; Bottom: Entry from Fred's teacher W. H. Gill.

Charles remained in Duplain Township, caring for his aging mother, until the early 1870's when she presumably passed away. In 1872, at the age of 22, he moved to Crystal Township to live with his older sister Mary E. (Kimball) Steffey (1843-1927), wife of Civil War veteran, farmer and businessman Sgt. Hiram H. Steffey (1833-1890.) In 1873, Charles married Sarah E. Ginther of Sumner, Gratiot County, MI. She was born November 25, 1853 in Shelby, Richland, OH, a daughter

of German immigrants Christopher Ginther (1820-1860/65) and Christine Margaret Schmidt (1831-1899.) Her parents came to Michigan a year or two after Sarah's birth and settled on a farm in Section 36 of Ferris Township, just a few miles northeast of Crystal. Sarah's father died when she was a girl and her mother married Henry "Harry" Parr when Sarah was about 12 years old. Mr. Parr was a prominent businessman in Sumner.



Charles L. Kimball and Sarah (Ginther) Kimball, 1908. Pictures courtesy of David Wulff.

Charles and Sarah's first child was Frederick Theodore "Freddie" Kimball, born on February 27, 1874 in Crystal Township. Their other children were: a daughter Carrie M. born in 1876, a son Franklin born in 1879 and another unnamed infant who probably died at birth. Franklin also died at a very young age. During his first decade in Crystal Charles worked as a day laborer on his sister's and other local farms and also worked for his brother-in-law Hiram who had established a general store in the village of Crystal, probably located at the corner of Main Street and Lake Street where the Laundromat currently is located. Hiram's brother John F. Steffey was also in the mercantile business and John's son and stepson, Edwin E. Steffey and Eugene Hamilton would follow their father and uncle in this line of business in the future.

In the spring of 1883 Charles decided to get into the retail business too, and purchased the store lot that would be the center of the Kimball family business enterprises for half a century and two generations. Charles purchased the second lot south of Lake Street on the west side of Main Street from George and Jennie Young of Crystal. This property would be what is now the north end (the two-story end) of the CMS Internet building (see pictures on page 6.) The new store was called "Kimball's" and he sold groceries, dry goods and furnishings.

In August of 1890, C. L. build an addition on the north side of his store to hold more inventory. This narrow addition had a different roof line than the rest of the building and can be clearly be seen in the photos of the building, both the one from the early 1900's and the current CMS Internet. This advertisement from the August 23, 1890 issue of the *Crystal Banner* ran for several weeks after the store expansion:

Local Brevities To the Banner Reader

**I have just added a line of ladies, gents and children's shoes which I offer to the public at the lowest possible price. I also enlarged my stock of furnishing goods which I will sell in the same way. Give me a call, price my goods and see for yourself, I will compete with all competitors and will sell cheaper if possible. I have also a full line of groceries, Call on me before you go elsewhere.
C. L. Kimball, Crystal, Mich.**

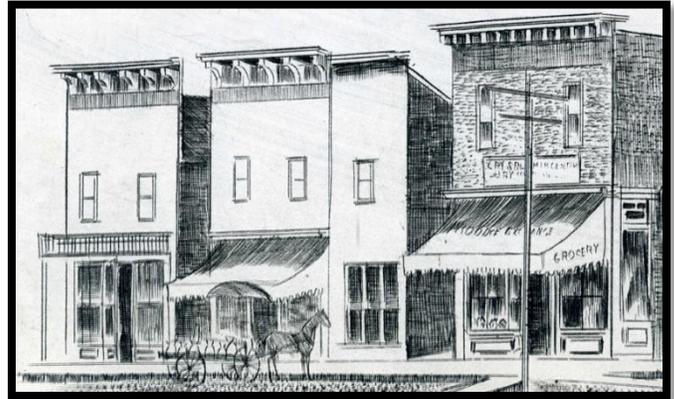
Eighteen Ninety-Five was a busy year for the Kimball family. Carrie Kimball married local blacksmith Fred Cline in July; Fred Kimball married Lucy Henderson (daughter of James and Sarah (Lowden) Henderson) of

nearby North Star Township, Gratiot County, MI on September 29, 1895; and Charles made Fred his partner in the business, changing the name from “Kimball’s” to “Kimball & Son.”



Lucy (Henderson) Kimball, 1908. Picture courtesy of David Wulff.

The west side of Main Street just south of Lake Street was the place to go shopping in those days. There were other stores in town, but here you had three general merchandise-type stores in a row: on the corner was the Crystal Mercantile Company (now the Laundromat,) next was Kimball’s (the north, two-storey part of CMS Internet, and Sturgis & Son (the south, one-story part of CMS Internet. The two-story Sturgis and Son store was torn down in the late 1940’s or 50’s and replaced with a one-story building.) Shoppers of the era were encouraged to bring in butter and eggs to sell or trade.



The west side of Main Street in Crystal just south of Lake Street. Top: 1906 sketch from “Crystal Lake Souvenir” by N. W. Wilcox. The building on the left was the Sturgis store (torn down circa late 1940’s or early 50’s,) the middle building and addition is the Kimball’s store, the building on the right was the Crystal Mercantile Company (now the Laundromat.) Middle: same view circa 1920. Picture courtesy of CTHS. Bottom: Same view as it looks today. Photo by Greg Snyder.

Golden King Flour

A perfect blend of Fall and Spring Wheat, manufactured in a full-roller mill by experienced millers.

Our Special

A splendid fall wheat flour, for sale by

KIMBALL & SON.

Manufactured by H. B. SLOCUM & SON,
HUBBARDSTON.

Advertisement from the Crystal Mail September 7, 1906.



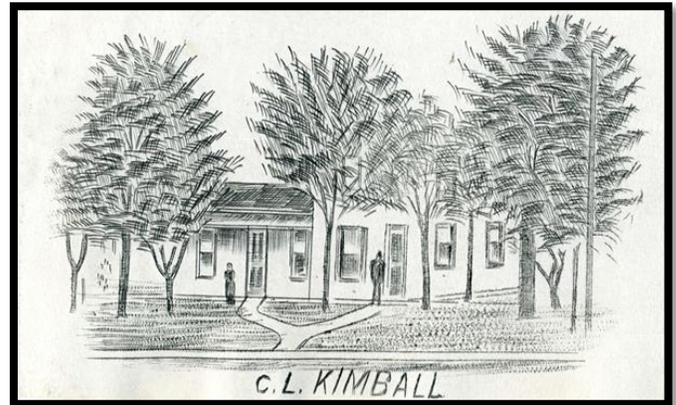
Top: The Kimball House Hotel, circa 1910 Picture courtesy of CTHS. Located at the north east corner of Main and Lake Streets in Crystal, this building is now the Choice One Insurance office, pictured above. Bottom picture by Greg Snyder, 2012.

In addition to his store, Charles owned an ice house, was involved in real estate and in the spring of 1902 he decided to get into the hotel business. He purchased lot 4 of block 1 of Drake's addition which is the building where Choice-One Insurance is currently located. The hotel was opened as the Kimball House, and Charles daughter and son-in-law, Fred and Carrie (Kimball) Cline helped run the place. The following entry is from the Crystal Mail February 20, 1903:

FINE PEDRO PARTY

A fine Pedro party was given by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kimball in the dining room of the new hotel, to about seventy of their friends. Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Smith won the prizes for best playing and J. C. Youdan and Mrs. John Campbell the other prizes. Flinch was also played and a fine lunch served. All unite in voting it a jolly time.

Charles also owned lots 1 and 2 and his daughter owned lot 3 of this block so the family owned the whole east side of Main Street from Smith Street to Lake Street at this time and the families probably all lived there.



The Charles L. Kimball residence on Main Street, 1906. From "Crystal Lake Souvenir," by N. W. Wilcox.



The beautiful stone house at 105 Smith Street in Crystal was built by Fred T. Kimball in 1904. It is now the home of "Stone House Treasures."

In the fall of 1903, Fred and Lucy bought a large lot at the head of Main Street from the Methodist-Episcopal Church. The following spring they build a large beautiful stone house for their residence. This house still exists, and has quite a history of its own as a private residence, funeral home, adult foster care home, restaurant and currently as the location of "Stone House Treasures."

In 1906, Charles sold his interest in the store to Fred and the store became the "Fred T. Kimball" store. Charles didn't retire completely, though. He helped his son around the store and he continued running the Kimball House hotel for several years.

Sarah (Ginther) Kimball's health began failing in the spring of 1918, and she died from the effects of a stroke

on November 5, 1919 just shy of her 66th birthday. Charles died just a few months later on March 21, 1920 of bronchopneumonia at the age of 70. He was a member of the Mt. Gilead chapter of the Free and Accepted Masons. His obituary described him as "...a man that was always ready to do the right as he saw the right to do, and a helping hand ready to be extended to anyone in distress." They were survived by their son Fred T. Kimball and daughter Carrie M. (Kimball) Cline Connelly; one grandson Robert Cline; Charles' sister Mary Kimball Steffey; and several of Sarah's siblings. Charles and Sarah are buried in the Crystal Township Cemetery.



This home at 203 S Main Street in Crystal was the home of Fred's Aunt, Mary (Kimball) Steffey. It is now know as The Candle Cottage store. After Mary's husband Hiram died in 1890, Mary often helped out in the Kimball family businesses. She left Fred and Carrie this house and the bulk of her estate when she died in 1927. Picture by Greg Snyder, 2012.

Fred took on a new business partner in 1920, Earl S. Hammontree. Earl had been an employee for several years and was now taken on as the junior partner and the store became "Kimball & Hammontree." Their partnership lasted until September 6, 1934 when Fred retired and Earl took over the business. Earlier that year the store had been refurbished with a new hardwood floor. Several years later Lucy sold the store building to Homer Spach and it became "Crystal Electric."

In addition to his store, Fred had been involved in buying and selling real estate in Crystal Township, western Evergreen Township and southern Ferris Township. He and his wife also provided mortgages for area residents, and they leased some of their farmlands to the oil and gas exploration companies during Crystal's oil boom.

Fred's retirement was not destined to last long. His health deteriorated and he died suddenly of a heart attack

on September 15, 1937 while walking in his yard. He was just 63 years old. Fred was a member of the Crystal Mt. Gilead Lodge No. 285 of the Free & Accepted Masons, an organization he had joined in 1904. He was both a past Master of that lodge and a member of the Royal Arch Chapter in Masonry. He was also a member of Crystal Chapter 9 of the Order of the Eastern Star. Fred was a member of the Methodist Church in Crystal and his funeral was held in his home with the Methodist minister Rev. J. M. Scott officiating. His pall bearers were J. M. Lascelle, C. W. LaDu, Alva LaSalle, Roy McConkie, Versel Case and Clare Stone. Fred and Lucy did not have any children, and besides his wife he was survived by his sister Carrie Connelly of Detroit and a nephew, Robert Cline. In his many years of business in the Crystal community Fred had a reputation for honesty and square dealing with his customers.

In the 1940's Lucy began splitting her time between Crystal and Lansing, where her brother Lowden F. Henderson and his family lived. She had a home there at 707 N Capital Ave. The house in Lansing no longer exists, but would have been on the west side of the street just north of W Saginaw Street and across the road from Durant Park in the Lansing Community College area. She had a cottage in Crystal on the west side of the lake just north of where Mildred Street meets Strait-Tow Blvd. She moved to Lansing permanently about 1953 and died there Friday August 19, 1955. She was a long time member and past matron of the Crystal chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. She was buried next to Fred in the Crystal Township Cemetery on Monday August 22.

ROWDY SATURDAY NIGHT DANCES

By Greg Snyder

The following are two editorials found on the front page of the *Crystal Mail* issues from the spring of 1907. These were pre-Palladium days in Crystal, but there were a number of dance halls and other places where people could get a drink and have some fun on a Saturday night along Lake Street and N Shore Drive across from the lake. It was the beginning of the summer season, and the dance halls were open and attracting enthusiastic crowds of revelers, much to the chagrin of C. W. LaDu, the newspaper's editor.

It should be noted that Mr. LaDu's grandfather was the Rev. Stalham W. LaDu (1854-1910) of nearby Coral, MI. Rev. LaDu was a Methodist minister for many years (1845-1874) and served two terms in the Michigan House of Representatives (1881-1884) where he was known as an "earnest advocate" of the temperance movement.

Whether these editorials are an un-biased account of the situation at the time or are exaggerated due to temperance zeal, they certainly paint a colorful picture of Saturday nights in Crystal in 1907.

May 10, 1907

AT IT AGAIN

The rowdy Saturday night dances have commenced again in Crystal and the curses and vile language of libertine and drunken boys can again be heard on Lake Street to the full satisfaction of those who delight in such things.

It is the wonder of all respectable people that old Satan does not sicken of the vileness that is emitted from the lips of some of his creatures.

Parents, if you have any love and respect for your daughters keep them off West Lake Street in Crystal Saturday nights where rowdyism has full sway and which reeks with such filth that it will contaminate the purest of your loved ones.

As we write we wonder how many of the citizens of Crystal will voluntarily tell us that they will support a movement to have the present Saturday night dances condemned as a public nuisance and by this means endeavor to have a more decently regulated town.

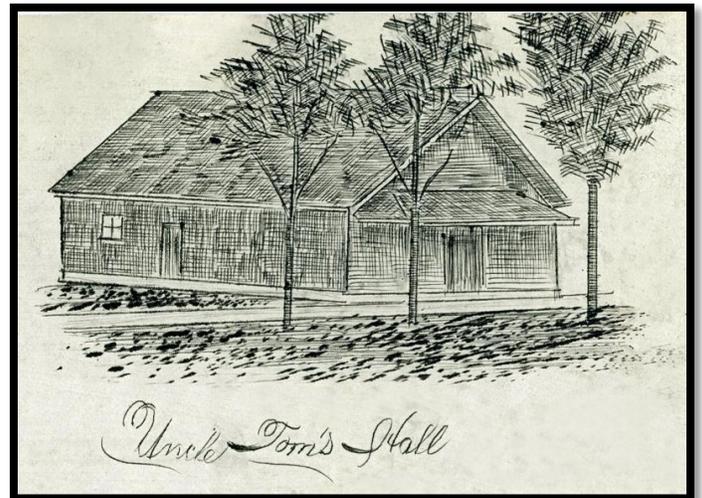
May 17, 1907

A PUBLIC DISGRACE

Many words of commendation have been given the editor for the article published in the last issue concerning the Saturday night dances that are now running and the lawlessness which runs riot on the streets coming from those who attend them. These dances are a menace to the good of the town and a public disgrace.

A few who attend these gatherings have seen fit to criticize us on the stand that we have taken in this matter, this we cannot help, we believe that we are in the right and many moral people are backing the sentiment that the present state of affairs should cease to exist.

If old Satan really has a very dear friend on earth it must be that he has the ordering of things on West Lake Street Saturday evening and people who respect the fellow will surely be found congregating around his headquarters.



Thomas Franklin, aka "Uncle Tom," had one of several the dance halls in Crystal. This picture is from the "Crystal Lake Souvenir" sketch book by N. W. Wilcox, 1906.

CRYSTAL GIANTS

By Greg Snyder

Last June the CTHS received an intriguing email from a man name Terje Dahl. Mr. Dahl, a resident of Norway, is the Editor of a Norwegian website called *Sydhav*, (www.sydhav.no) which means "South Seas." Mr. Dahl wrote: "Dear Sir, Have you seen the old article about the mounds with giant skeletons found south of Crystal Lake – do you have any information about the mounds, artefacts (sic) or the skeletons?..."

Giant skeletons found in Crystal??? The attachment was missing, so I turned to the internet and quickly found the article he was referencing. It was from the *American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal*, January-November, 1894, Volume 16, edited by Stephen Denison Peet, J. O., page 313. Here is the article:

A “STAMP” TABLET AND COIN FOUND IN A MICHIGAN MOUND.

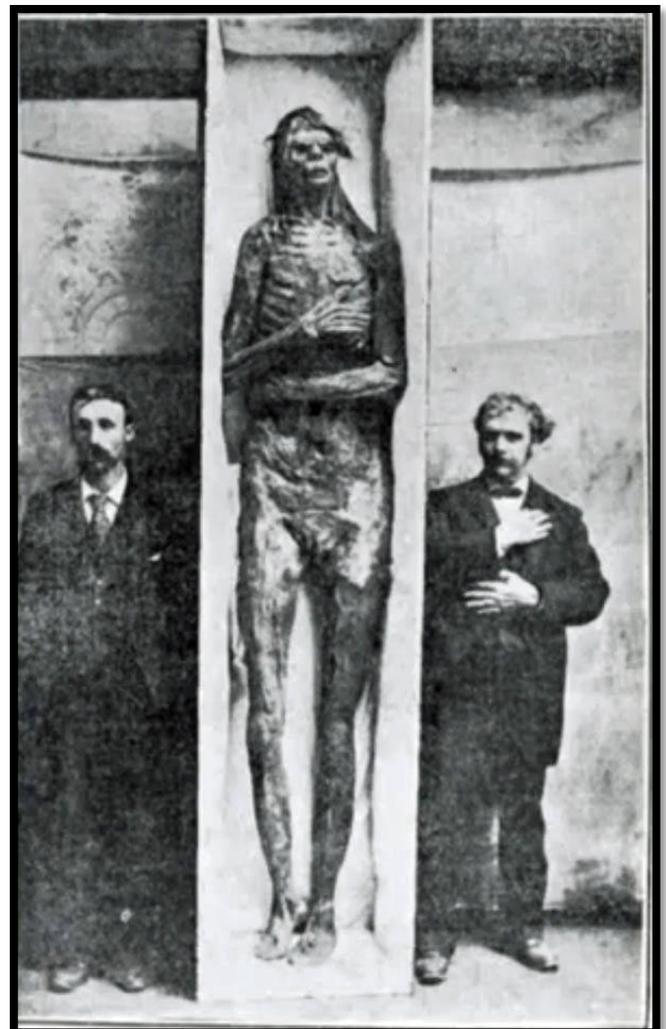
A Carson City, Mich., correspondent of the *Detroit News* writes that the remains of a forgotten race were recently dug up from the mounds on the south side of Crystal Lake, Montcalm County. One contained five skeletons and the other three. In the first mound was an earthen tablet, five inches long, four wide and a half an inch thick. It was divided into four quarters. On one of them was inscribed various characters. The skeletons were arranged in the same relative positions, so far as the mound was concerned. In the other mound there was a casket of earthenware, ten and a half inches long and three and one-half inches wide. The cover bore various inscriptions. The characters found upon the tablet were also prominent upon the casket. Upon opening the casket a copper coin about the size of a two-cent piece was revealed, together with several stone stamps, with which the inscriptions or marks upon both table and casket had evidently been made.* There were also two pipes, one of stone and the other of pottery, and apparently of the same material as the casket. Other pieces of pottery were found, but so badly broken as to furnish no clew (sic) as to what they might have been used for. Some of the bones of the skeletons were well preserved, showing that the dead men must have been persons of huge proportions. One of these mounds was partly covered by a pine stump three feet six inches in diameter, and the ground showed no signs of ever having been disturbed.

*the Editor does not endorse this find, for the prehistoric tribes did not place inscriptions on pottery nor coin in boxes, and did not often use “stamps” for their pottery patterns. Will the archaeologists of Michigan investigate and report?

Further research found that there is a small but persistent group of people around the globe who are convinced that giant humans roamed the earth in recent pre-history. They say that the numerous legends of giants in cultures all over the earth point to their existence. They cite dozens of “finds” recorded in newspaper accounts in the US over the past 150 years or so. The artifacts from many of these “finds” no longer exist, and part of the giant’s story is a conspiracy theory that artifacts proving the existing of these giants were stored in the Smithsonian Museum are now “missing” and perhaps destroyed to keep the information from the public. The internet and tools like “Photoshop” have helped spread more recent amazing stories of giant skeletons (complete with altered photographs.) Those are pretty easy to debunk, but it is harder to convince the die-hard believers when the artifacts supposedly found from a dig reported 100 years ago are now nowhere to be found.

The significance of the “Crystal Mounds” report is the stamped coins, setting these “giants” apart from the Native Americans who did not have the technology to mint coins. There are also several websites and books currently in print that aim to convince their readers of the existence of these giants and of the conspiracies that keep the proof from the public. *The Goliath Conspiracy*, by Philip Rife, *The Ancient Giants Who Ruled America: The Missing Skeletons and the Great Smithsonian Cover-Up* by Richard J. Dewhurst and *Discovering Ancient Giants: Evidence of the existence of ancient human giants* by William A. Hinson are some examples.

Whether or not you believe that Giants once roamed the shores of Crystal Lake, it is fascinating that our neck of the woods plays a small part in this world-wide conspiracy theory and that in 2013, someone from Norway who is active in the “Giants” community reached out to our Historical Society for information.



Real or an elaborate hoax? A picture of a supposed giant Native American found in Wisconsin over 100 years ago. Photo courtesy of South Milwaukee Now.