

Baby's layette	
Shaker flannel	1 80
White "	3 10
Tennis "	36
Sleeve	50
"	50
"	93
Dress	69
"	85
Dress cloth	2 25
Blanket shawl	50
Embroidery	23
Stannum lace	08
Gloss	05
Tape	11
Safety pins	35
2 bits	12 27



The Porter family, Hattie, Howard and Ren pose for a portrait. The baby's layette was a complete outfit including clothing, bedding and accessories. The total cost, according to this list compiled by Hattie in June 1896, was only \$12.

drawing corn in the barn, they have 135 shocks in now. Lots of Love, Ma.

While it has been noted that this collection of letters might not be classified as outstanding literature, yet the two principal writers have ranges of perception and descriptive powers that are surely outside of the average person's ability to communicate, even in an age when letter writing was at its peak. And Emaline Brown, at this particular time before and after the birth of her third grandson, was removed from the daily contact that she normally enjoyed with her friends and neighbors on West Main Street and in other parts of the village, those relationships which represented the passing parade that she wrote about in such lively fashion. But she simply transferred her ability to communicate what she heard and saw around her to the circumstances of staying on the Porter farm for a while, and turned her pen to what was happening out in the barn and in the fields, what the men were doing, what the status of the harvest was, whoever was to visit, hardly anyone or anything escaped her attention.

Interestingly, too, Emaline's sisters, Amelia Colby and Addie Johnson could also write off a fast page or two adequate to put the recipient right in the picture about their opinions, prejudices, problems

and family traumas. There was a great deal of cluck-clucking, and it would be fascinating to know the extent to which thoughts expressed in many of the letters were extensions of conversations in which they "spoke their minds", or if the correspondence was a vehicle to convey that which propriety demanded not be verbalized.

One of Emaline's most "classic" letters was written on November 25th, 1894. It positively sped along with news:

Dear Laura,

Your nice long letter received, and I will answer your questions the first thing I do. Yes, Cook County went republican by a rousing majority, and just think of York State and New York City going republican, they have always been the stronghold of the democrats. The papers say the democrats are paralyzed and they are very quiet so I guess they are. I am glad my little Arthur hurrahs for the republicans.

Dell Hawley has not been in jail, and I think will not be for Fred was doing his best to kill him and Dell struck him in self-defense. Everyone says Dell is justified in doing as he did for he had to do it to save his own life. Fred said he wanted to get well so he could kill Dell and I guess he would if he had got well. I don't know what Dell hit him with.

No one knows why Wayland McIntosh ran away, when he went he left a letter for his father and said in it if his folks had helped him financially as they ought to, he would not have had to run away. And there he was getting two dollars and a half a day and his father gave him rent free and the rent of two flats there in the city, which probably made his income about four dollars a day, and could not live on that. They ought to starve. It almost kills his mother and Bessie feels very badly. The children worried old Mrs. Mac so that Mac told Bessie if she would go back to Chicago he would provide for her so she has gone back.

Emma Comstock has a little daughter, born yesterday. Mrs. Susan Church has a boy and I expect they are highly pleased. Lydia Frye is married to a Mr. Frye of Nunda, a hardware merchant. They will reside in Wauconda. Lucy Hennings is married to a German editor, will reside in Woodstock. The story was all over town a while ago that Cora Higley was to marry old Tom Freeman, and some really believed it. When Higley's folks heard of it they did not like it all and I do not blame them any.

Young George Comstock has kicked over the traces again, he had one of his tantrums two weeks ago and swore he would shoot his wife, but he shot the lamp to pieces and fired at a train of cars that was passing the house, broke the mirror in the dressing case, kicked the stove over, and broke a new sewing machine all to pieces. Gave his wife a black eye, then lit out, was gone several days, came home

prevent, you know I have lots of time. Will send you Addie's letter, Love from Ma.

At one point in the letters there is a reference to the Comstocks which infers that they are the Brown's nearest neighbors on West Main Street, although this fact has been hard to trace. The Crabtrees lived next door to the west, and the Dodge's lived directly across the street from the Octagon House. Tom Freeman lived further west (the E.J. & E had been put through his pasture), the Applebee's and the Waterman's lived on the north side of the street but to the east. County Land maps as close to this period as they exist show that George Comstock owned a large farm further west on County Line Road, in fact several hundred acres which spanned both sides of the area including Old and New Hart Roads. This section was known as Comstock's Woods, and was evidently used for an Annual Old Settler's picnic. It was all part of the property purchased in the early years of this century by H. Stillson Hart, and known as Hartwood. However that purchase must not have been directly from the Comstock family, because a 1905 map shows a George Comstock as owning 190 acres, but much further west along County Line Road, where the Van Hagen property was later. By that time the Hart Road area had been broken down into much smaller parcels.

In his summary of the earliest settlers coming into Cuba township, Arnett Lines lists both a Jared and a George Comstock, both from Vermont, and both arriving in 1833 at the age of 33. There is a question

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and is sick abed. He is living at Cary, is in the feed, lumber and coal business. Old George set him up in the business last spring, it cost him six or seven thousand dollars to start the young scapegoat in business and that is all the good it does. Jennie keeps sending for money to live on her husband is too lazy to do anything.

We are having lovely weather, it was lucky your dirt thawed so you could clean up your yard before winter sets in, am glad the windmill is all right. I think Arthur's drawers must be warm, guess he won't say boo when he gets in bed with them on. We all had a good laugh when we read about his fishing in the river, how well he remembers things. Will knit him some summer stockings if nothing happens to

mark against the date of arrival, and there should be, for all other research has indicated that the first white settler to live in Cuba Township as the Indians vacated the territory, was Amos Flint in 1834.

But the Comstocks were part of Emaline and Joe Brown's circle of Yankee friends and family, those of predominately New England stock whose families had formed the nucleus for the settlement of Barrington and Cuba Townships in the mid part of the century.

Next time: More about these families and their origins, especially the McIntosh's, the Kingsley's and the Waterman's; and, as the 19th Century nears its end, the changes coming to Barrington.

Setting 'bright' trend

Restoration colors like those on 1880's house

By BARBARA BENSON

Doesn't that house look beautiful? I wonder who lives there?"

"What have they done to the Octagon House, it never looked like that as long as I can remember!"

"It's really magnificent, did it actually look like that?"

"Where on earth did they get those colors from, Bess Hawley would turn in her grave!"

Would she—if she knew what had gone into the restoration of the Octagon House to its present appearance? To begin with, when the property was purchased by H. Parker Sharpe, the house was already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a designation received because of its unique architectural style, representing a mid-Nineteenth Century design innovation espoused by a few leading designers and architects of the

time. In order to take advantage of the Historic Preservation provisions in the 1981 Economic Recovery Tax Act, any restoration of the building had to retain and restore those characteristics of the building which had given it the National Register listing in the first place—the critical features.

In order to obtain the restoration certification, a tremendous amount of research was necessary to establish the original intent of the building. The critical features which came into consideration only referred to the exterior—the facade—of the building and not the interior. Fortunately, the condition of the building was such that in order to occupy it for modern usage it had to be almost gutted and rebuilt from inside out. During this process, evidence appeared in the types of construction used, that an earlier one-story building had existed before a

second level and the surrounding porch were added in the mid-1880's, shortly after Joseph Brown is first listed as holding title to the property. The porch was attached at the second level, and in between the first and second story there were remains of an earlier roof.

Since no documentation about the building has yet been found earlier than Joseph Brown's 1882 title acquisition, this simply added to the confusion in dating the Octagon House. Ownership of that section of property on West Main Street can be traced back to 1845, including at one time, Warren Hough who gave his name to Hough Street, but there is still nothing about the building, before 1882.

One of the techniques used to determine the original historical appearance and color of clapboard buildings is to analyze layers of paint scrapings taken from the surface. This process was done using

electron microscopes in the laboratories of Sherwin Williams. These analyses take into account the fact of color changes from weathering, and also that one layer of paint on top may change the color underneath. Also a factor is the change through a period of 100 years in the chemical composition of paints, and this mixing into layer upon layer. But when the verdict was in, it was felt that the colors used to paint the Octagon House restoration, resembled those used originally for the two-story structure of the 1880's.

The example is becoming apparent around town. Quite a few older buildings and restored homes, including the Sav-a-House are receiving more colorful treatment. There are two recent changes on West Station Street, one on Grove Avenue, and also on West Main Street.