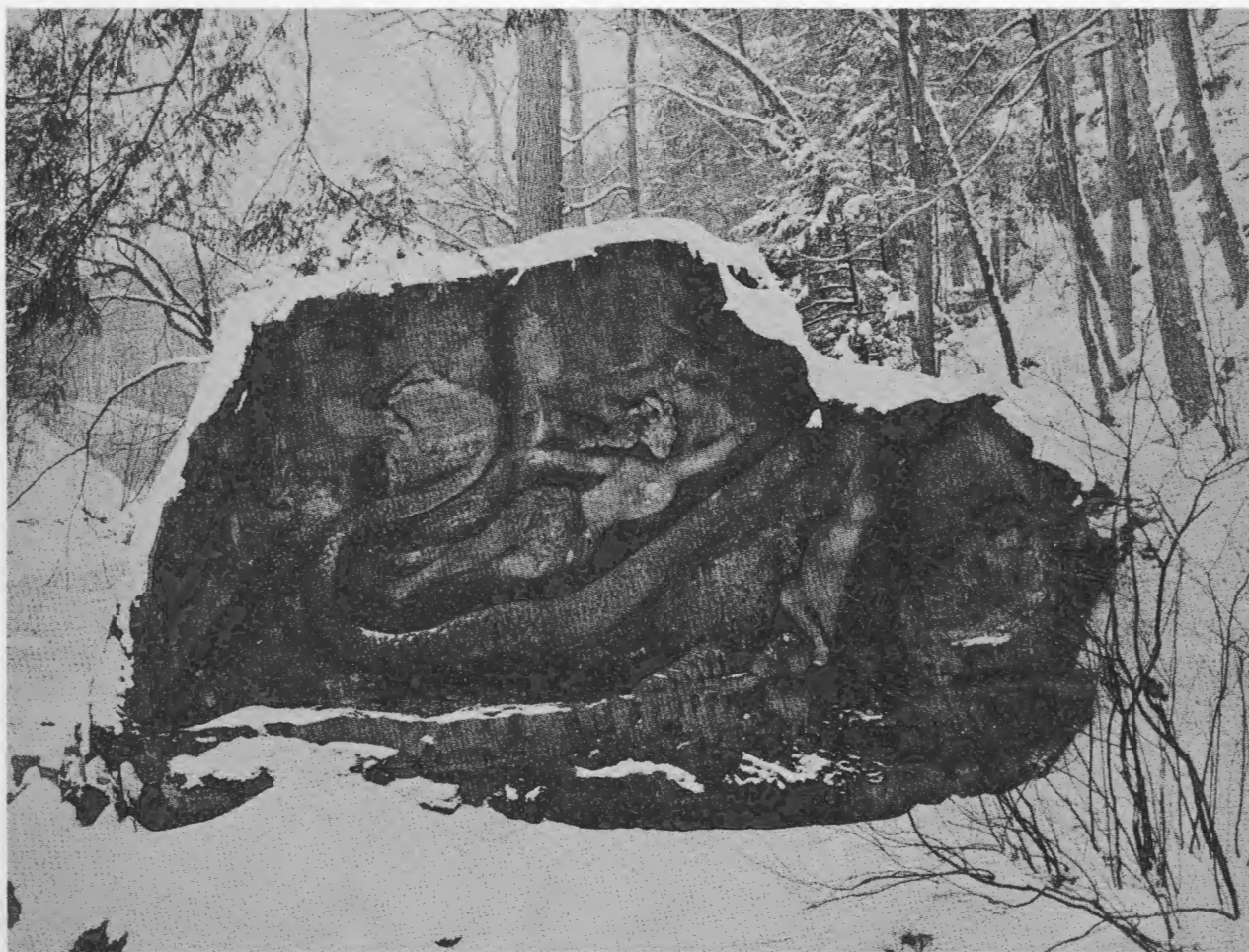


# **The Life and Work of Henry Church, Jr.**



By Jane E. Babinsky  
and  
Miriam Church Stem

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1987  
Chagrin Falls, Ohio

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## FOREWARD

This book was originally written in 1972 as a sophomore English project. I have been asked over the years by many people for copies of my book, so I decided it was time to revise it and have it printed so that those that are interested in Henry Church, Jr. could have an accurate written account of his life. We are fortunate that the Church family kept well written diaries, journals, account books, and also kept photographs and important documents which made our research much easier and enabled us to give an accurate account to our readers.

I would like to thank my grandmother, and co-author, Miriam Church Stem, for doing all of the initial research. I would also like to thank Elroy Sanford for the beautiful work he did reproducing the photographs and to the following museums for recognizing the artwork of Henry Church, Jr. — The Cleveland Museum of Art, the Western Reserve Historical Society, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center.

Jane E. Babinsky

**The Life and Work of Henry Church, Jr.**  
A Blacksmith and Untaught Artist



*1836 - 1908*

By Jane E. Babinsky  
and  
Miriam Church Stem

This is a picture of the Church family taken right after the Civil War. Included are the father, mother, brothers, sisters, and the mates of the married ones. The sister Flora whose picture they are holding died October 24, 1864 of camp fever (probably malaria) which she contracted from her brother Austin when he came home from the Civil War with it.

From left to right, starting with the top row — Blendina Mills Church, (wife of Royal Church) - Royal, Henry, Henry's wife (Martha Preble Church).

Middle row — Austin, the mother - Clarissa Sanderson Church, the father - Henry Church, Sr., Jerusha Church Pepper (half sister) and her husband Henry Pepper.

Bottom row - Clara holding a picture of Flora, and Jane.

Henry Church, Sr. was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, and was the grandson of a Revolutionary War soldier. His father, Joseph, gave \$5,000 to help found Amherst Academy which later became Amherst College. He also gave a part of his farm in North Amherst for the Agricultural School, where is now located The University of Massachusetts.

Henry, Sr. learned the blacksmith trade as an apprentice in Amherst and was married and had one child, Jerusha. His wife died when Jerusha was very young. When Jerusha was seven years old Henry married Clarissa Sanderson of Sunderland, Massachusetts and they went to live in a part of the Frary House in Deerfield where he had a blacksmith shop. The Frary House which figured in both the French and Indian and the Revolutionary Wars is now open to the public as are all the buildings in Deerfield.

The Erie Canal was opened in 1825 and people began to move westward. The friend of Henry Church, Sr., Noah Graves, had gone west to look for a place for a paper mill. When he found the falls of the Chagrin River he sent for Henry, Sr., who came in the spring of 1834 and looked the situation over and bought land for his home and ordered it built. A blacksmith was necessary in every community.

He returned to Deerfield to bring his wife and two little girls to their new home in Ohio. They came over the Berkshire Hills by "public conveyance" to Troy and over the Erie Canal to Buffalo. Then by steamer to Cleveland and by lumber wagon to what was to become Chagrin Falls, arriving October 4, 1834. They were on the way a total of 21 days.



The Church family shortly after the Civil War. They are holding the picture of Flora who had died recently at the age of thirteen.



The first Church home was on the site of the present Havre's store and the blacksmith shop was just north of it. It was in the woods with no other buildings around it and it was the third house built in what is now the village.

In Austin's reminiscences he writes, "For a few years they had hard work to make things meet and Henry was born (May 20, 1836) when father could hardly keep the family from hunger . . . and mother used to say Henry was born when none of the family had enough to eat." The father hunted wild turkey, deer, and wild pigeons for meat. They had to make everything they used — all clothing, the carpets for the floor, the candles to see by at night, and besides caring for the two little girls and Henry, Jr., the mother boarded the carpenters who came to build other houses.

This picture was taken after the park was laid out in 1872, but before the bandstand was built in 1877. The young maple trees were set out around the park by different merchants. The man with the dog at the southwest corner of the park is Henry Church, Jr. He planted the tree at that corner and on it he put an iron band with a round plate on which it said, "Let me be upon this tree until a century I shall see," but when the pavement had been laid for a few years the moisture was cut off to the roots of these trees, so they began to die, and in the 1940's this tree was taken down, so it did not last a century.

The business places were built up on both sides of the Church home, but by that time the family had moved to West Orange Street. In 1882 when the McClentic building was built the house was moved to the south side of Hall Street, facing the entrance of Walnut Street to Hall and it has been remodelled so many times it does not look like the original house.

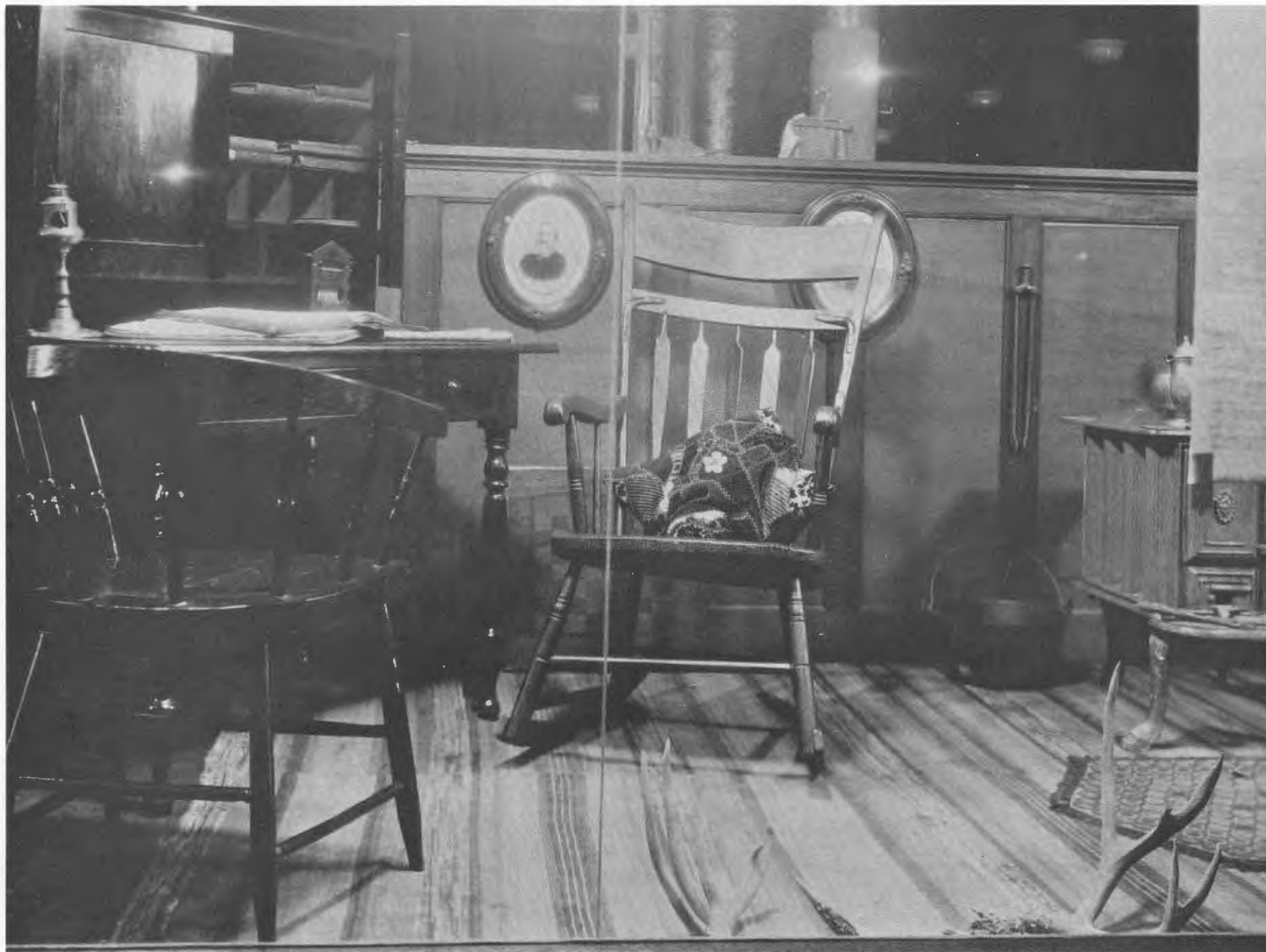


Triangle park shortly after it was laid out - about 1872. The trees were planted by local businessmen. The house with the picket fence was built by Henry Church, Sr., and is where Henry Church, Jr., was born in 1836. Henry, Sr., built his blacksmith shop north of the house. There were woods all around. When the McClen-tic block (now Havre's) was built in 1882, the house was moved to Hall Street at the end of Walnut Street.





All of these furnishings were from the first Church home. The cradle and high chair were used by Henry Church, Jr., born in 1836 - the second child born in Chagrin Falls.



Furnishings from the home of the family of Henry Church, Sr., who was the first Justice of the Peace. The desk was used by him and the whale oil lamp on the desk was brought from Massachusetts by the Church family. The antlers in the foreground were from deer shot by him.

After the Church family had lived in the house on Franklin Street for five or six years they sold it and bought a house on West Orange Street from Samuel Graham who was moving westward. Henry, Sr. built another blacksmith shop at the back of River Street. This house was on the present site of Coulter Chard Galleries. The rest of the children were born here and their parents lived here until they died.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Church, Sr. were strong abolitionists. This house was an underground railroad. Austin writes, "As long as I can remember runaway slaves were brought to our house, nearly always in the night time and our folks would care for them through the day, then some others would take them on out to Cleveland, put them aboard a boat, and direct them to Canada . . ."

"Father and mother always got up and got something for them to eat, then fixed a bed on the floor and put them to rest for the balance of the night. During the next day often the neighbors would come in and have a talk with them. Once a slave and his wife were brought to the house, and I remember of seeing my mother cry when told of some of her experiences in slavery."

"Generally during the day a small purse would be made up for them. Some of them did not seem to realize what money was."

"To the question as to how they could travel and not lose their way, they would say, 'We followed the star', meaning the North star, I suppose. They would travel nights and hide days and I suppose trust to luck to find a morsel to eat."

One time the Church family found out that they had kept overnight a slave of Henry Clay of Kentucky.

The Church children always knew at breakfast time when there were slaves in the house because their dishes of mush and milk were small. They had to share their food with the slaves.



This house on West Orange Street (site of Coulter Chard Galleries) was the home of the Henry Church, Sr., family from the early 1840's until the parents' death in 1878. The picture was taken the day the house was torn down about 1919.

The only pictures we have of the first school houses in Chagrin Falls are those which Henry Church, Jr. sketched. This first one, built soon after the first settlers came, was very crude. It was made of slab wood and was built among the trees at the foot of the hill on the east side of Main St. The children played in front of it on the land which is now Triangle Park.

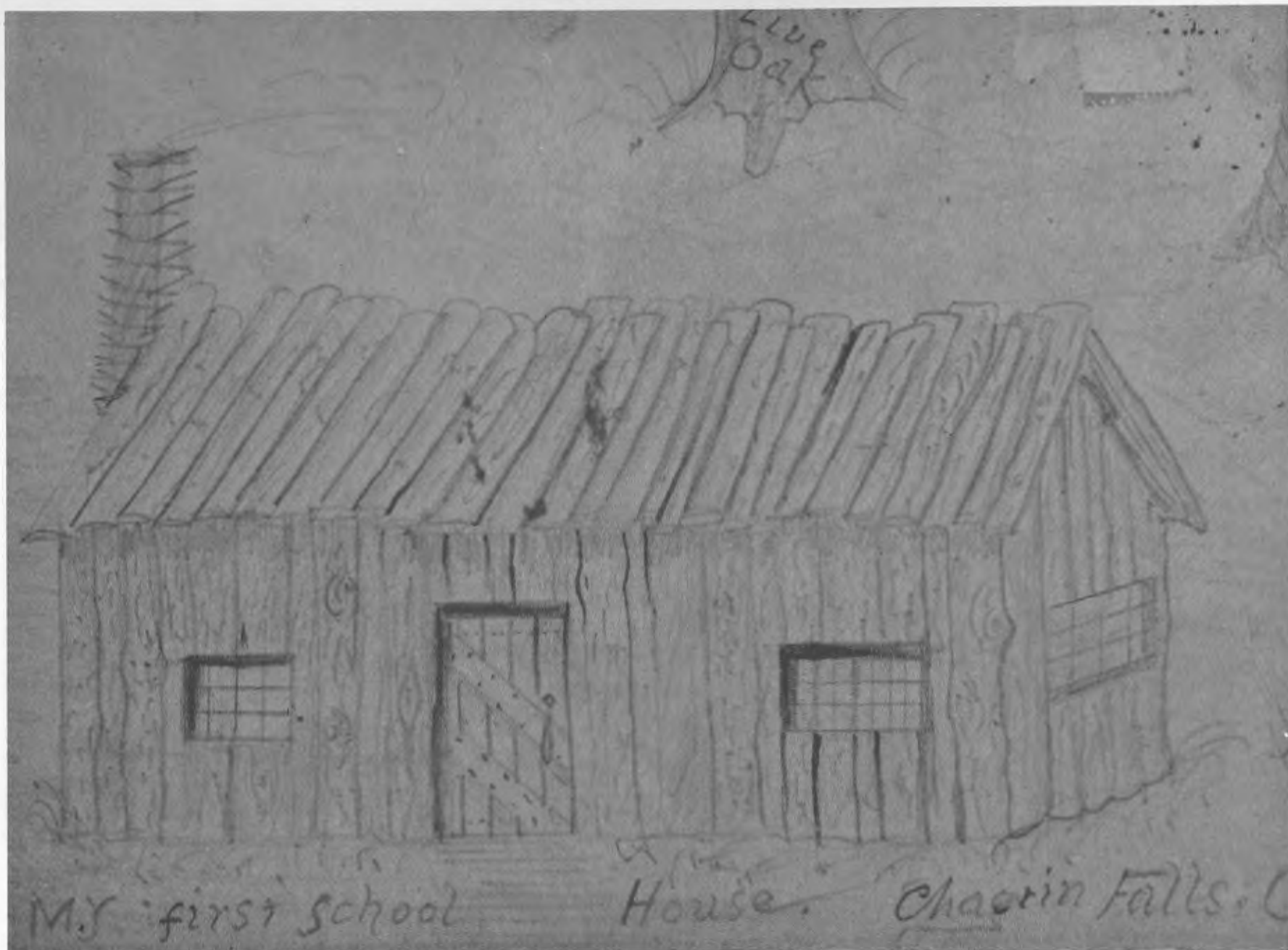
The first teacher was Almeda Vincent and she was paid fifty cents a week and "boarded around," which meant she lived with the families of the students for a week or two at a time for her food and lodging.

Later, little one room school houses were built in different parts of the town by the different churches. The one which was across from the present Hillcrest Office Building was built by the Bible Christian Church which was made up of English people who came to Chagrin Falls around 1845. The children did not have to go to the school nearest their homes. They could go to the one that had the teacher they liked the best.

The Church children went to the school on East Cottage Street at the end of School Lane which ran from Orange Street to Cottage Street. It was on a hill and the children slid down it on their sleds in the winter time. Notice the boy on the sled in Henry's drawing. (Following page)

Their lessons were on what was known then as the fundamentals — reading, writing, and arithmetic. The books were small, but they seemed to learn a lot. They had spell downs with other schools. Their spelling and penmanship are good in their diaries.





The only picture in existence of the first school house in Chagrin Falls. It was drawn by Henry Church, Jr., as he remembered it when he attended school in it. (He also drew the district schools on the following pages. They were located around the town.) Rough hewn of slab wood, the above school was built by the early settlers shortly after they arrived, as they recognized the necessity of educating their children.





AT THE END OF SCHOOL LANE - THE ALLEY  
BETWEEN ORANGE AND COTTAGE STREETS

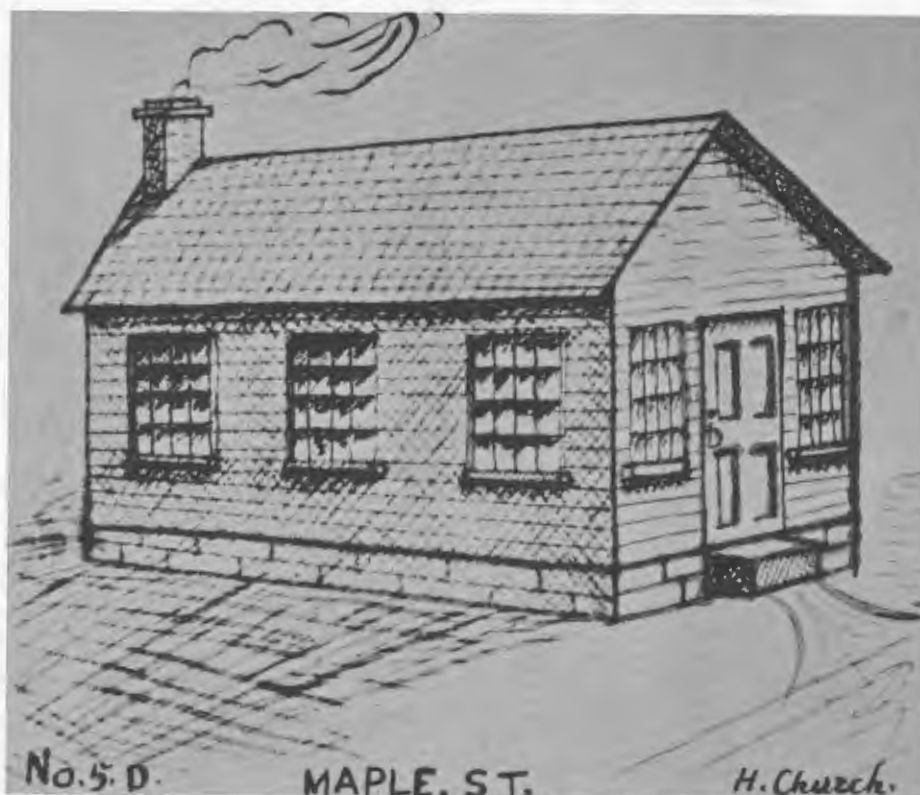


ON PARK CORNER OF NORTH <sup>W</sup> HIGH STS



## SITE - OPPOSITE FALLS THEATRE

(Across from the Hillcrest Office Building)



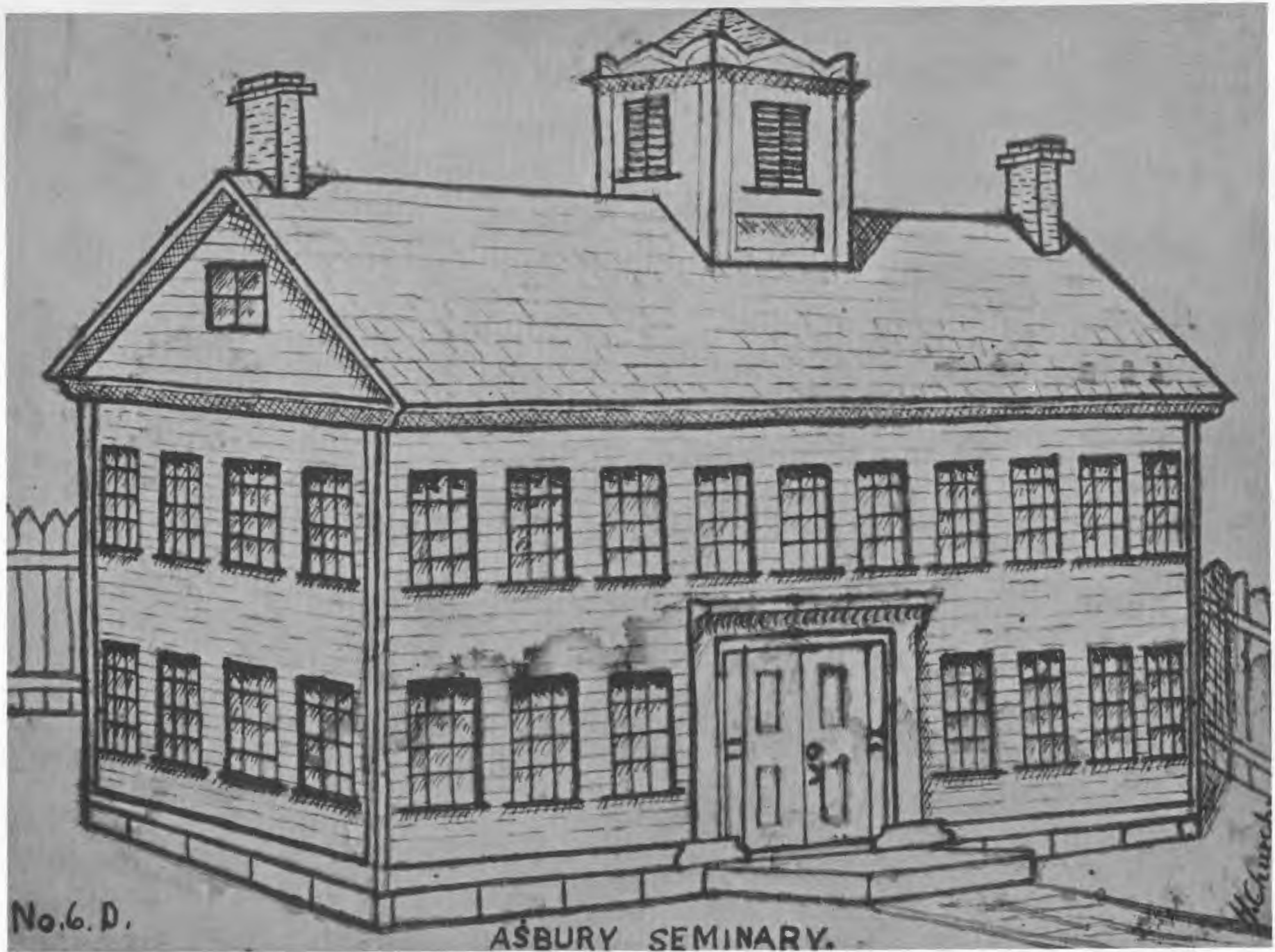
## SITE - HOME OF WILLIAM HUGGETT

(93 Maple Street)

The Asbury Seminary was a wooden building with four class rooms and was built by the Methodists on the site of the present Philomethian Street school. Philomethian means "Love of Methodism" and it was named Asbury after the circuit riding Bishop Asbury.

This school corresponded to what would be attending college today, although it was really a high school. Henry Church, Jr. never went to school here. In fact, Henry probably never went to high school. As the Church children became old enough they were sent to school, district school, and kept in school until old enough to reach up and get hold of the bellows pole and blow the fire for their father.

Austin writes, "My only regret is that we could not have had better education but early times were hard times . . ." Even though Henry was lacking in formal education he was very "well read" on the topics of the day. He read a lot, especially on such deep subjects as philosophy and theology.



The Asbury Seminary was a frame building on the site of the present Philomethian Street School. It was built in the 1840's by the Methodists - before there were public schools. It corresponded to a high school today. Henry Church, Jr., did not attend this school, but he sketched the picture.

On September 18, 1859, Henry Church, Jr. married Martha Preble. They were married by a Justice of the Peace, Jeremiah Evans, in his home which looks very much the same today. It is on the northwest corner of Water and Center Streets.

Martha Preble was born in Augusta, Maine, where her father was a circuit riding Baptist Minister. On one of his missionary trips he did not return and was never heard from. Many of these preachers were killed by Indians and it is thought that this is what happened to him.

The mother with her large family was destitute, so she took them down to Lowell, Massachusetts, where they could get work in one of the manufacturing plants. Martha Preble went to work in the thread factory at the age of ten. Later they settled in Chagrin Falls and Henry became acquainted with Martha.

When they were married they went to Parkman, Ohio, where Henry had his first blacksmith shop. It was up there that their first child, Jessie, was born. They lived in Parkman less than two years and when they moved back to Chagrin, Jessie was a baby and she and her mother rode in the stage coach, but the road was so rough that Henry walked all the way over the muddy road and carried a clock and mirror so they wouldn't be broken.

Eight years later their only other child, Austin Henry, was born in the house that stood beside Henry's blacksmith shop which he built in 1861 at the corner of Franklin and Pearl (now W. Washington). This is the site of the Masonic Temple building and Lowe's Electronics.



# MARRIAGE LICENSE



State of Ohio, Cuyahoga Co., ss.

To any Person authorized to solemnize Marriages in said County.

You are hereby authorized To solemnize the Marriage Contract between

Mr. Henry Church

AND

Miss Martha Preble

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereto set my hand and

the Seal of the Probate Court of said County.

the seventeenth day of Sept

in the year of our Lord One Thousand

Eight Hundred and Fifty nine

Samuel W. Fielden Judge.

By

Deputy Clerk

## MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY,

That by authority of a License under the Seal of the Probate Court of Cuyahoga County,

Mr. Henry Church and Miss Martha Preble

were by me, on the eighteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord

One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty nine legally united as Husband and Wife.

Jeremiah Evans, D.

Marriage license of Henry Church, Jr. and Martha Preble, September 18, 1859.

\*Note: Martha's name is misspelled on the marriage license.





Jessie Church (Sargent), daughter of Henry and Martha Church (1860 - 1951).



Austin Henry Church, son of Henry and Martha Church (1869 - 1929).

This is the first photograph of Henry Church's blacksmith shop and home beside it. The home was moved down on Olive Street in 1922 and the shop was torn down to make way for the new Masonic Temple building.

They were still using oxen for heavy work when Henry Church, Jr. built his blacksmith shop, so he had to shoe both oxen and horses. It cost more to shoe oxen as their shoes were in two parts because they had cleft feet. Henry's account book tells of the many things he did besides horse shoeing. He charged Joshua Overton one dollar for shoeing his pair of mules and pulling their eye teeth. He put the metal rims on wagon wheels. The apparatus to do this can be seen at the left in the picture of the inside shop. He sharpened lots of stone chisels as there were many stone quarries around Chagrin. He mended anything made of metal and all for a few cents.



The first picture of the blacksmith shop and home of Henry Church, Jr. It was located at the corner of Franklin and Washington Streets (site of the Masonic Temple building and Lowe's Television shop). He built it in 1861.



The inside of the blacksmith shop showing the anvil and tools. At the left is the handle for pumping the bellows and the wheel and rod below that is the apparatus for putting the metal rims on wheels for wagons and carriages.





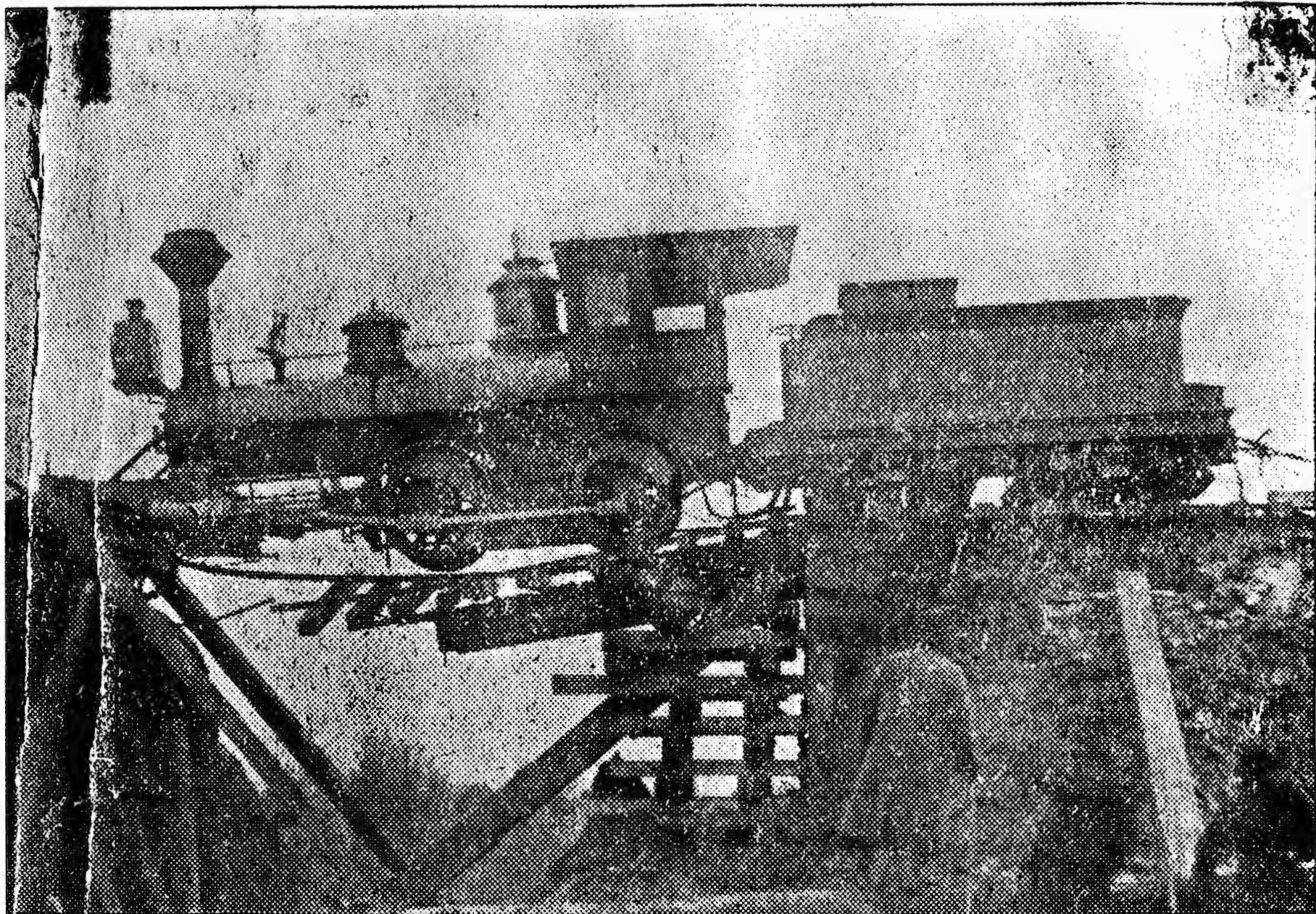
A picture of a team of oxen and a horse and carriage. Oxen were still being used for heavy work in the early days of Chagrin Falls. They had cleft hooves, so their shoes were in two parts. The blacksmith charged more to shoe them.



For many years Chagrin Falls had no transportation except over mud roads by stagecoach and lumber wagons. After trying three times to get a railroad through here the business men put up \$22,000 for a narrow gauge to connect with the Erie Railroad in Solon.

From the Exponent of May 1, 1881, it says, "Henry Church's smithy is now the repair shop for the C.F. & S.R.R." And again on November 24, 1884 — "Henry Church receives the credit for the tasteful manner in which the narrow gauge engine appears."

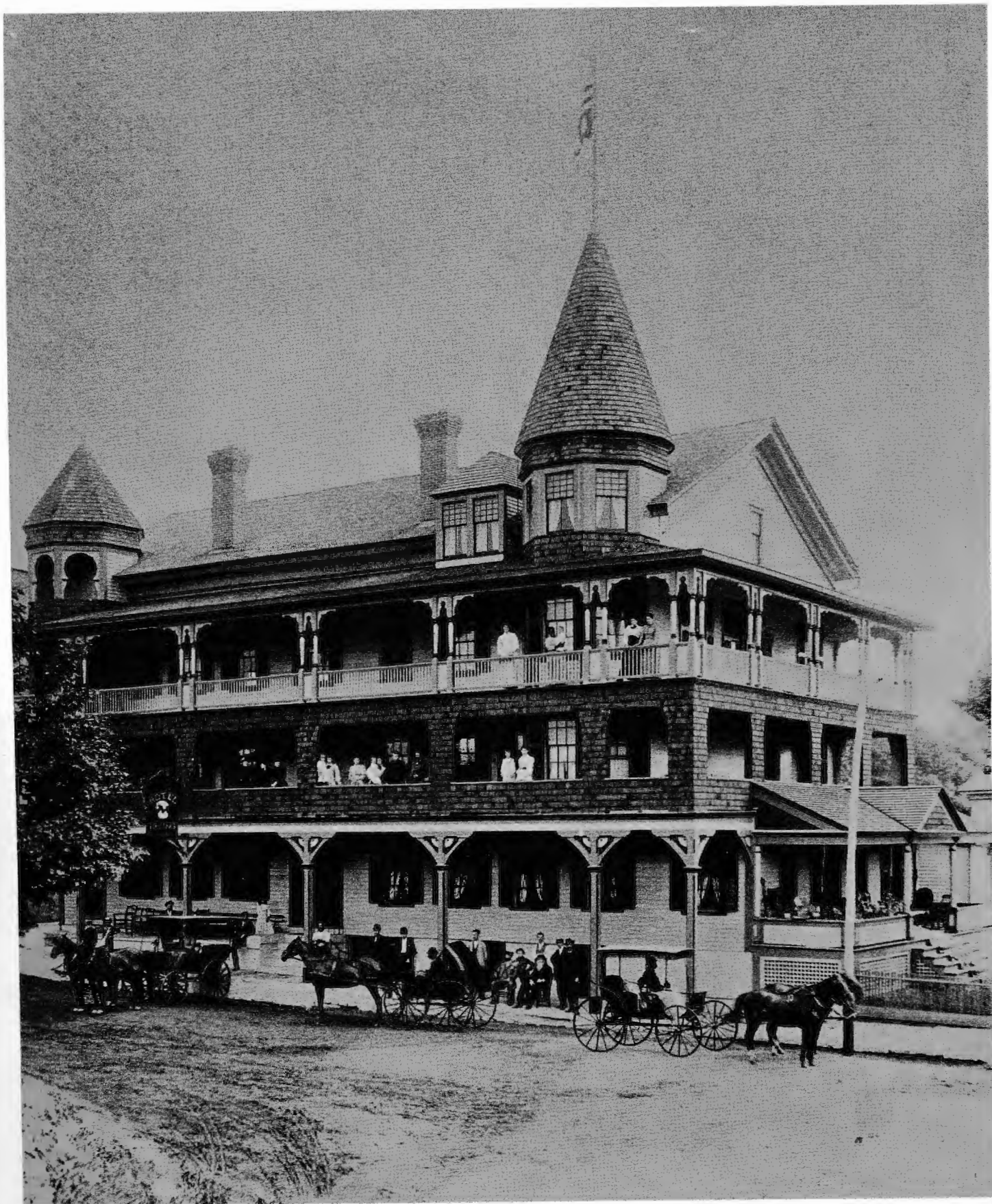
This is a picture of the wreck when the trestle between Chagrin Falls and Solon washed out during a rain storm one spring.



After several attempts to get a railroad through Chagrin Falls, five of the local businessmen built a narrow gauge railroad to Solon to connect with the Erie. This picture was taken when a Spring freshet washed out a trestle on the road.

The Irving House hotel was built in 1853 on the northeast corner of Main and E. Washington Streets and was remodelled in 1892. On the third floor was a dance hall and every Fourth of July and New Year's Eve there were big dances held there. Henry Church played his base viol in an orchestra with Alf Utley, Ed Miller, and Prof. Seibel. In 1897 the Irving House burned and was never rebuilt.

Speaking of fires, there was no bell or siren to call the volunteer firemen, so Henry Church would go to the corner of the shop and cup his hands around his mouth and shout "Fire" so loud that he could be heard all over town. He always kept a list of the fires in town — from the beginning of the village.



Irving House built in 1853, remodelled in 1892, burned in 1897. Never rebuilt. Location - Northeast corner of Main and Washington Streets.



The town hall was a one story building, as it is today, when it was built in 1847. It was built by Aristarchus Champion for a meeting place and a library and it was privately owned until 1864 when the township trustees bought it. In 1875 the second story was added for an opera house. (The second story was destroyed in a fire in 1943 and the town hall was restored to a one story building.)

When the second story was added with a cupola on top Henry Church, Jr. made and donated the weather vane. He and another man also painted the scene for the drop curtain on the stage, only they did not get together on the wind direction. It was a seascape with a little boy holding a flag standing on the beach. His hair was blowing one way and the flag another.

Henry and his brothers played in the Silver Coronet Band which gave many benefit concerts and plays at the Opera House.



The town hall after the second story was added for an opera house in the 1870's. The one story town hall, as it is today, was built in 1847. The fire in 1943 destroyed the second floor, so it was restored as a one story building.



The only art training which Henry Church, Jr. had was from watching Archibald Willard paint on "The Spirit of '76." He would walk four miles to Solon over muddy roads and take the Erie Railroad train to Cleveland and go to the top floor of the Ryder Photograph Gallery to watch Willard paint on his canvas.

Willard was the same age as Henry Church, and when Willard was fourteen years old he lived in South Russell east of the old cemetery on Bell Road. His father was a Baptist minister and preached in a church on the southwest corner of Bell and Chillicothe Roads. Willard was the same age as Henry, so no doubt that they knew each other when they were young.



"The Spirit of '76" painted by Archibald M. Willard at the time of the Philadelphia centennial.

Henry Church painted during the Victorian period when most artists were content doing realistic still lifes and portraits that did not give way to creative imaginations. E. P. Richardson stated in his book, *A Short History of Painting in America*, "One of the revealing signs of weakness in this generation is that it ignored many of its own best painters because they were too independent, too original, too far removed from cosmopolitan taste and the fashionable modes of painting."

Looking at Henry Church's paintings one can see the creative imagination that he had. His paintings reflected his feelings and many of them had a statement to make whether serious or humorous. Some of the methods used to achieve his goals were the use of vivid colors, creative imagery, and occasional use of reverse perspective.

Many people viewed Church and his artwork as being rather strange. They did not recognize the creative techniques used in his artwork but associated his artwork with Church's interest in Spiritualism. (Spiritualism was a very popular form of amusement and social activity during those days.) It was unfortunate that Henry Church, Jr. was never recognized as a great artist during his lifetime.

This self portrait was done by Church in the 1880's and was last known to be in the collection of Samuel Rosenberg, a private collector in New York. This painting is considered by many to be his masterpiece. Church's self portrait remotely resembles the typical portrait found hanging in the Victorian parlor. The portrait is a realistic likeness of himself and done in a shape that was typical of the period, but, however, he took it one step further by adding the symbolic muses encircling his head like a halo. Not only do we see what Henry Church looked like, but we see who Henry Church was. Each muse represents an important part of Henry's life. The muse touching up his "artistic" eye represents his work as a painter, the muse at his temple represents his trade as a blacksmith, the muse at his skull represents his love of sculpturing, and the two muses at his ear represent his musical ability (Henry made his own viol and harp, which he played in a local orchestra.) Also take note that the more physical activities of blacksmithing and sculpturing are represented by masculine muses while the other muses are of a feminine nature.



Self Portrait painted by Henry Church in the 1880's. This painting is said to be his masterpiece. The painting is oil on canvas and measures 28½ x 21½ inches.

The fruit picture, or Still Life (as it is called today), was painted by Henry Church in the late 1870's. The colors are very bright and have remained so over the decades. Henry used nothing but Prang colors and he bought so many and paid so much for them that often his family suffered financially.

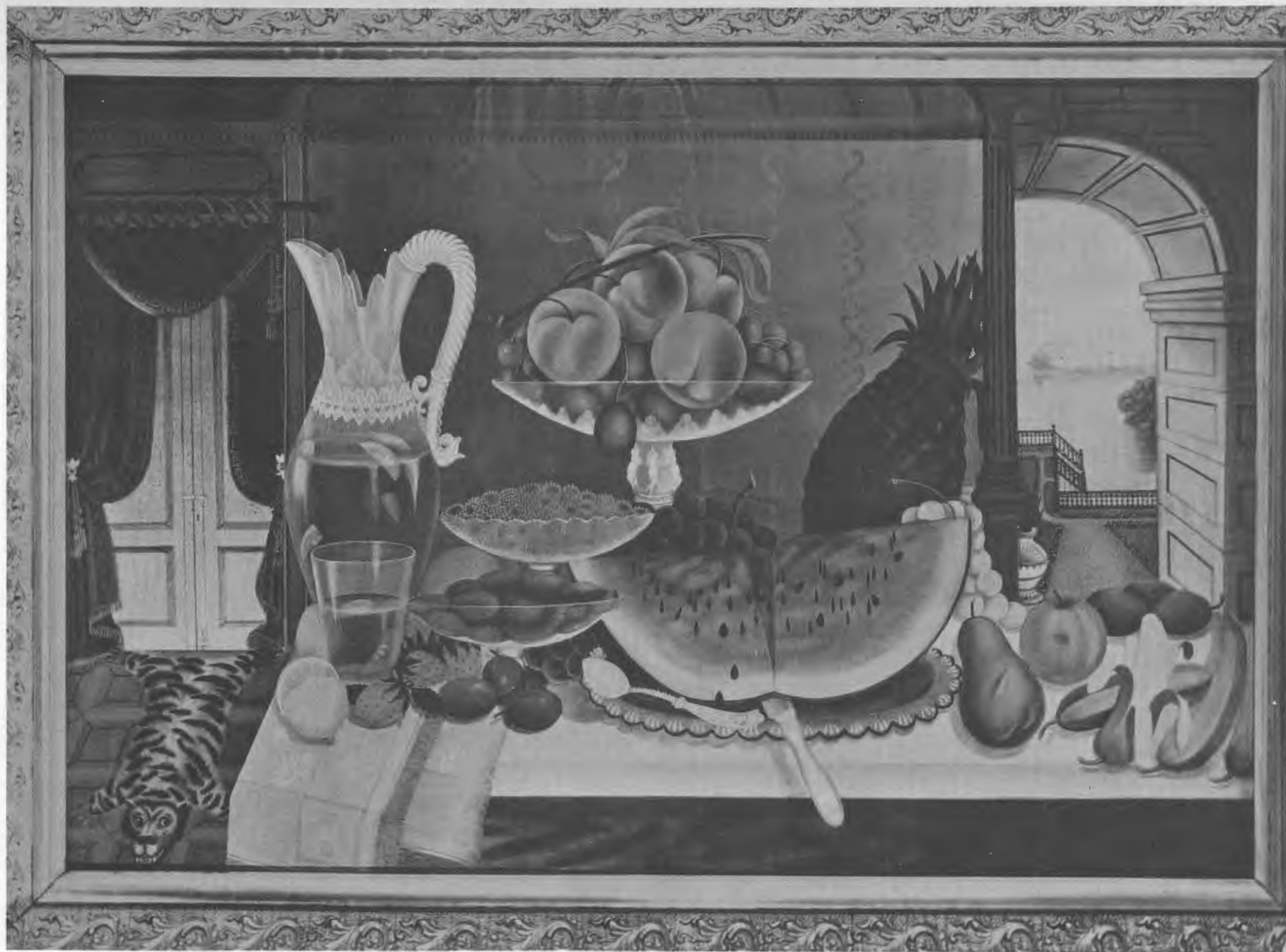
The Monkey Picture was painted several years after the Still Life (somewhere between 1895 - 1900) probably after Church tired of looking at the sedate Still Life and decided to spice it up with a little sense of humor. We find the monkeys, which have just escaped from their cage, making a mess of the still life while fighting over the only banana. Notice the face on the watermelon and how the seeds are dripping down from it as if it were crying. Church also gave life to the tiger rug on the floor (the monkey is choking it with its' tail as the entire pitcher of lemonade is about to fall on it.) (Following page)

Henry Church is considered to be a folk artist. True folk art, however, is a highly developed, traditional craft. Unfortunately, nobody has been able to come up with a category for the American artist that was self-taught and did not procure a living from his or her craft. So, for now, we will call Henry Church a folk artist, even though I would prefer to call him an amateur artist.

Church's artwork finally gained the recognition it deserved when he was chosen as one of the featured artists in a special exhibit of American artists at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City during the winter of 1980. It was not too long after this exhibit that the Monkey Picture was purchased (from Samuel Rosenberg) by The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The Still Life is owned by Miriam Stem, Henry's granddaughter, and has been on loan at various times to the Cleveland Museum of Art and was also featured in a travelling exhibit on the art of food and drink. One can also find the Still Life featured on the front cover of a nutrition textbook.

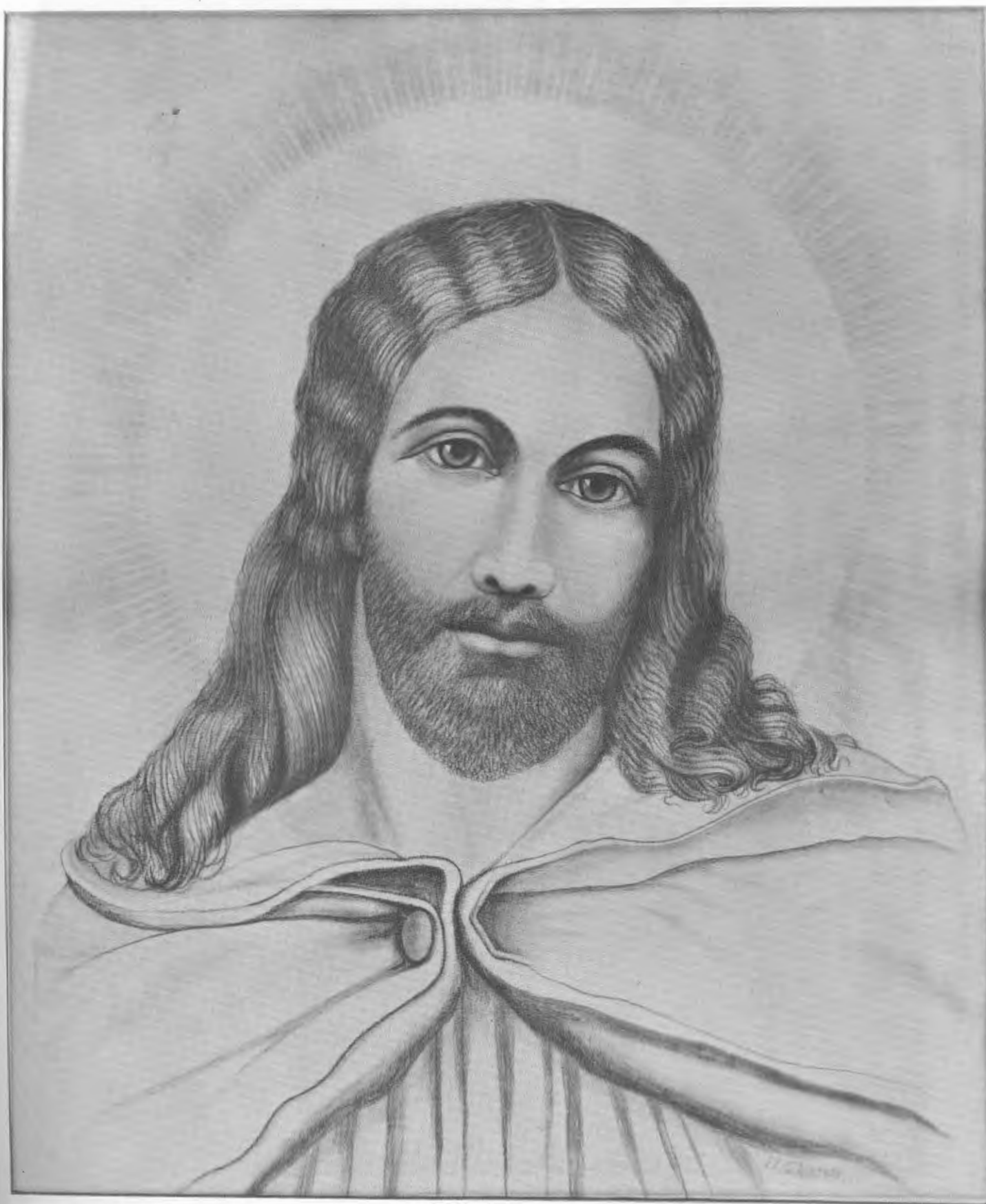




This fruit picture, or Still Life, was painted by Henry Church in the late 1870's. It is oil on paper backed by cloth and measures 26 x 38 inches. The painting is in a gilt frame also made by Henry Church. Collection of Miriam Church Stem.



The Monkey Picture was painted by Henry Church in the late 1890's. It is oil on canvas and measures 28 x 44 inches. This painting is in the collection at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Virginia, where it can be seen on display.



Charcoal drawing on paper of Christ, by Henry Church, Jr. Collection of Miriam Church Stem.

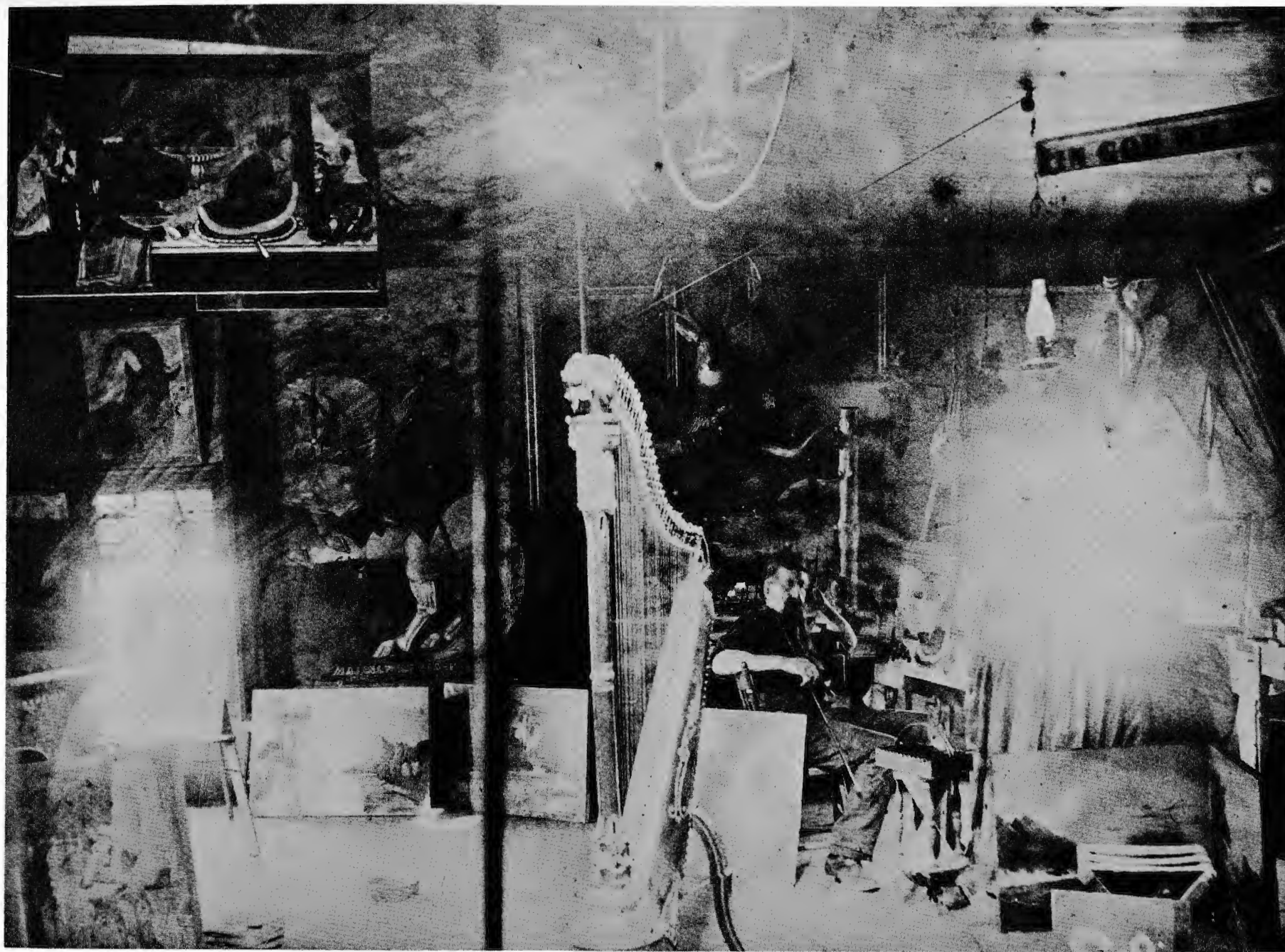
His art gallery over the blacksmith shop was where he did most of his painting. As seen in the photograph, there was a variety of his work there — the harp that he made, above this two carved wooden birds on a perch in an iron ring, and numerous oil paintings. The large painting at the left of the harp is nine feet tall and is of Major General Kearney on horseback. This painting was donated by Miriam Stem to The Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland where it was restored and can be seen (with two other paintings by Henry Church) currently on display.

The sign at the right at the top read "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash." There was also a sign which hung in the back of his blacksmith shop which read —

"Since man to man is so unjust  
I hardly know which one to trust.  
I trusted many to my sorrow.  
Please pay today, I'll trust tomorrow."

Many children would stop at the blacksmith shop after school and Henry would let them have the key to go up to the art gallery and look around.





Henry Church in his art gallery on the second floor of his blacksmith shop. He is working on his still life. Another similar still life is in the upper left hand corner, possibly the first in the series. The lighting was by oil lamps.



Henry Church liked to hunt and fish and as he roamed up and down the Aurora branch of the Chagrin River he noticed a huge rock which he evidently thought would be a good surface on which to work with his hammer and chisel. He would work on his sculpture by the river after he closed his blacksmith shop about four o'clock in the afternoons, walking the two miles and carrying his lantern to light his way home after dark. Many writers have tried to give his work an air of mystery by telling that he only worked at carving on the rock at night. Henry worked on his project in the evenings because it was the only time he was able to do so without interfering with his blacksmith shop.

Writers have also tried to give the carving a mythological meaning, but what he attempted to depict was simply the progress of the ages in the history of this country from the Mound Builders, Indians, and wild beasts to the age of American liberty as indicated by the Stars and Stripes and the eagle. Besides the squaw, which gives the rock its name, encircled by the serpent, there is a papoose, a skeleton and skull, a panther, a quiver of arrows, the shield and eagle.

On the river side of the rock he had outlined a pioneer woodsman chopping down trees, a log cabin, and farther on an outline of the Capitol building in Washington. He never finished these as people began to bother him which made it difficult to concentrate on his work.

After Squaw Rock became a part of Metropolitan Park visitors to the park began to vandalize the rock until now it is difficult to distinguish the figures.

Art critics claim that this sculpture is well designed and well balanced and is remarkably done by one with no training.



"Squaw Rock" on the Aurora branch of the Chagrin River in Metropolitan Park, carved in 1885 by Henry Church, Jr., blacksmith, artist.

Above Squaw Rock on the opposite side of the river just off Solon Road was a stone quarry. A narrow gauge railroad carried the stone to Solon where it was put on flat cars from the Erie Railroad and taken to Cleveland.

It was from seeing these large blocks of stone that Henry Church got the idea of carving the numerous objects of various sizes, subjects, and shapes. Most of the stone came from this quarry and was brought to the back of his blacksmith shop where he did his carving.



Stone quarry off Solon Road on the east bank of the Aurora branch. A narrow gauge railroad carried the stone to Solon to the Erie Railroad. Henry Church got some of the stone for his sculptures from this quarry.



Stone owls (glass eyes from taxidermist) carved by Henry Church, Jr.





Stone carving entitled "Angel of Night" by Henry Church, Jr.



Stone dog carved by Henry Church, Jr.



Iron greyhound dog - made by Henry Church, Jr., blacksmith, artist.

This piece is probably the best of all of Henry Church's stonework as far as workmanship is concerned. It is carved out of one piece of stone and is entitled "A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed." It is a shepherd being attacked by a mountain lion and the shepherd dog has his teeth through the flesh of the mountain lion. The shepherd's staff is of iron and at the base of the carving on the other side is a lamb.



"A Friend in Need is a Friend, Indeed," carved in stone by Henry Church, Jr.



This picture was taken in the back of the blacksmith shop where Henry Church was working on several carvings. The lion when it was finished was placed in the front yard of their home and later moved to the Church lot at the cemetery where it is today.

People from Cleveland used to take the interurban car out to Chagrin on Sundays and they would walk down Franklin Street and gaze at the stone work in Henry Church's yard. One Sunday Jay Athey and Harvey Rice came out to Chagrin and admired the stone work in the Church yard. Harvey Rice was known as the father of Ohio's free public schools because when he was in the State Senate in 1851 he introduced a "law that created free public schools in Ohio, supported by taxes rather than by voluntary subscription." The public square in Cleveland had just been named Monumental Park because the statue of Moses Cleaveland had been placed there and they were looking for art works or objects pertaining to the history of Cleveland.

These two men were attracted to the frog chiselled out of a piece of stone six feet square which was to be made into a fountain with an iron tube holding a large umbrella-like mushroom of sheet iron.

Mr. Athey and Mr. Rice wanted to buy the frog for Monumental Park, but they thought Church's price of fifty dollars was too much. They finally got the price down to eighteen dollars provided he would put it on a flat car to get it to Cleveland, which he did and they stored it in the Sheriff Street Market until they could place it on the park. It was never put on the park and no one knows what became of it.



Stone sculptures in the back of the blacksmith shop which Henry Church was working on. The lion when finished was his monument in the cemetery. The frog was purchased by Harvey Rice for Monumental Park in Cleveland.

Geauga Lake Park in the 1880's was a popular place to go for picnics. People from Chagrin could take the train over to Geauga Lake. Henry Church took some of his work over there and opened up a museum in 1888. He charged ten cents admission.



The art museum in Geauga Lake Park in the 1880's. There were both stone work and paintings. The admission was ten cents.

This picture taken in 1897 shows the stone work in the front yard of the Church home. Henry is standing at the gate and his wife and granddaughter, Hazel Sargent are on the porch.

At the time the shop had been rented to Robert Gane. Henry had been concentrating on trying to sell his art work, but there did not seem to be a market for it.

Not shown in this picture is the millstone, which is now on the park. (The millstone is to the extreme right of the blacksmith shop.) Henry Church and three other citizens of Chagrin Falls had hauled a pair of millstones up from Bentleyville where they had fallen in the river in 1872. They had been used in two other mills before being taken to Bentleyville where Adamson Bentley used them. These men had a sentimental feeling toward these stones as they had ground corn to furnish food for them in the early days. They wanted to put them on the park which had just been laid out, but Mr. Williams, the mayor, wouldn't let them, so Mr. Blakeslee put one in his yard, now the home of Miss Elizabeth Rodgers, and Mr. Church put the other at the corner of his shop and put a post in the center with a tin lantern on top which he kept lighted and this was Chagrin's first street light.

When the shop was torn down to make way for the Masonic Temple building in 1922, Henry's son, Austin, offered it to the town and they put it on the park where you can see it today.





This picture was taken in 1897 after Henry Church had rented his blacksmith shop to Robert Gane who is standing at the right in the doorway. He is standing in the gateway to the house and his wife and grand-daughter are on the porch. Many pieces of stone work were in the yard - including the lion.

This picture of Mr. and Mrs. Church was not taken too long before Henry passed away in 1908. He is reading the Spiritualist paper, "Banner Light."

Over in one corner of the room is a small Edison phonograph. His friend, Mr. Flohrs, had made some records a short time before of a speech by Henry and some band music which were to be played at Henry's funeral. (This enabled Henry Church to speak at his own funeral).

The funeral was private and was held in the Church home. A quartet sang and his friends Mr. Irving Pope, former owner of the hotel, and Honorable Martin Dodge, a U. S. Senator, made some remarks. Dodge said, "He was not one who lamented that he had not been present when the universe was created in order that he might have improved upon its construction, but he thought that each day was a day of creation, and he sought to make the world better as he passed along from day to day, performing the duties devolving upon him."

Then the record of Henry's speech was played and Miriam Stem, Henry's granddaughter, remembers best what he said at the end. "We will now have some music after which we will retire to the cemetery. Good-bye at present. Thanks to George Flohrs." Mrs. Stem was ten years old at the time and recalls that she was seated in the front bedroom for the funeral.

The entire funeral sermon was taken down because all of Henry Church's brothers and sisters were living in California.



Mr. and Mrs. Henry Church, Jr., in their living room. He is reading "*Banner Light*," the Spiritualist paper.

The sculpture of the lion and the lamb with the little child leading them had been placed in the cemetery two or three years before Henry Church died and he was buried beside it. Vandals have taken away the child and broken out the glass eyes.

The verse in the Bible which the monument illustrates is Isaiah 11:6 — “The lion and lamb shall lie down together and a little child shall lead them.” One time three little school girls, Nellie Gurney, Nettie Morris, and Phoebe Sanders, stopped to look at the lion when it was in the front yard. Mr. Church told them he would give a nickle to the one who would come back and tell him where the verse in the Bible was that the sculpture represented. Nettie Morris was the only one who came back with the answer.



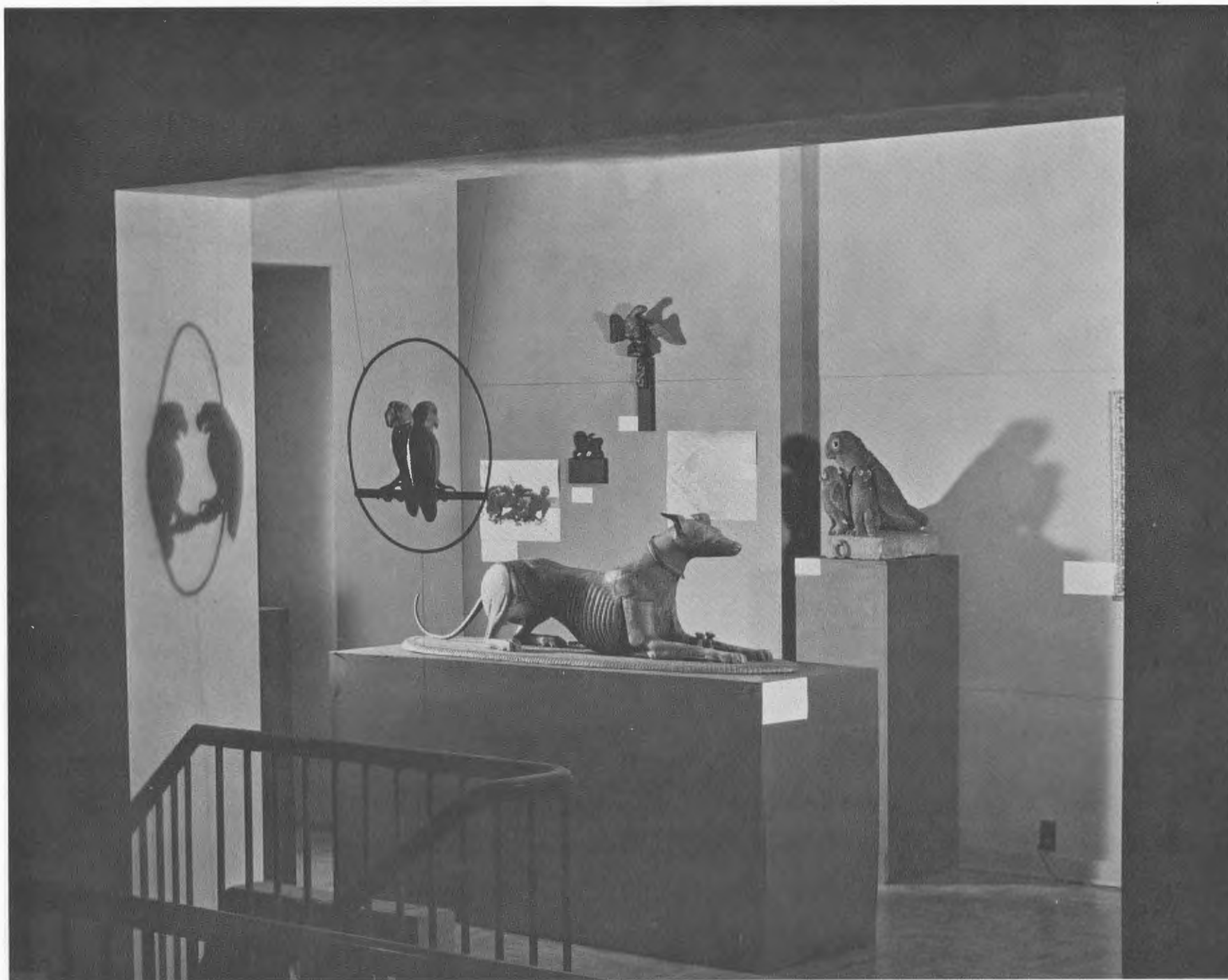
Henry Church standing beside his monument in the cemetery which had been placed there two or three years before he passed away in 1908. The monument symbolizes the Bible verse: The lion and the lamb shall lie down together and a little child shall lead them.



This collection shows many things concerning Henry Church's work and life. One of his self portraits done in charcoal is hanging in the center. At the extreme right of it is the head of a deer done in painted velvet over wood with antlers he probably got while hunting. The harp at the left and the stone owls in front of it are examples of his skill. The picture of Christ in the lower left hand corner is done in charcoal. His anvil and tool box are in the lower right hand corner. In front of those are pictures of his son, Austin H. Church and his grandson and namesake, Henry Church.



The window of the Brewster and Church Company filled with memorabilia of Henry Church during the centennial of Chagrin Falls in 1933. His self portrait done in charcoal is in the center with his anvil and horse shoeing box below at the left and above that the head of a deer carved out of wood and covered with velvet with antlers probably from a deer he had shot. In the left hand corner is his picture of Christ done in charcoal, and the harp he made. The stone owls represent his sculpturing.



The exhibit of Henry Church's work in the Akron Art Institute done by the director, Mr. George Culler, in 1951.



Some of Henry Church's artwork was on display at the Chagrin Valley Artist Show in the town hall in 1965. Mrs. Stem is at the left - she is giving a talk on her grandfather to the third graders from Chagrin.

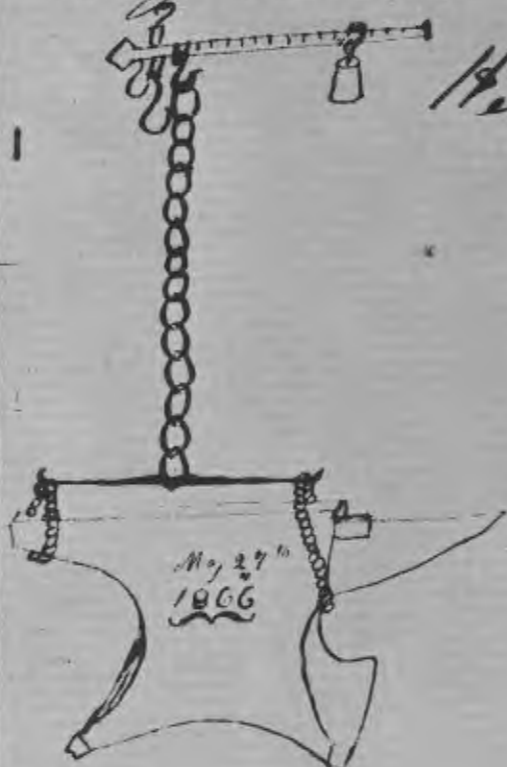
# Son of Vulcan

My sledge and hammer lie reclined  
My bellows time have lost their wind  
My fire is extinct. My forge decayed  
My vice is in the dust all laid  
My coal is spent. My iron is gone  
My nails are done. My work is done

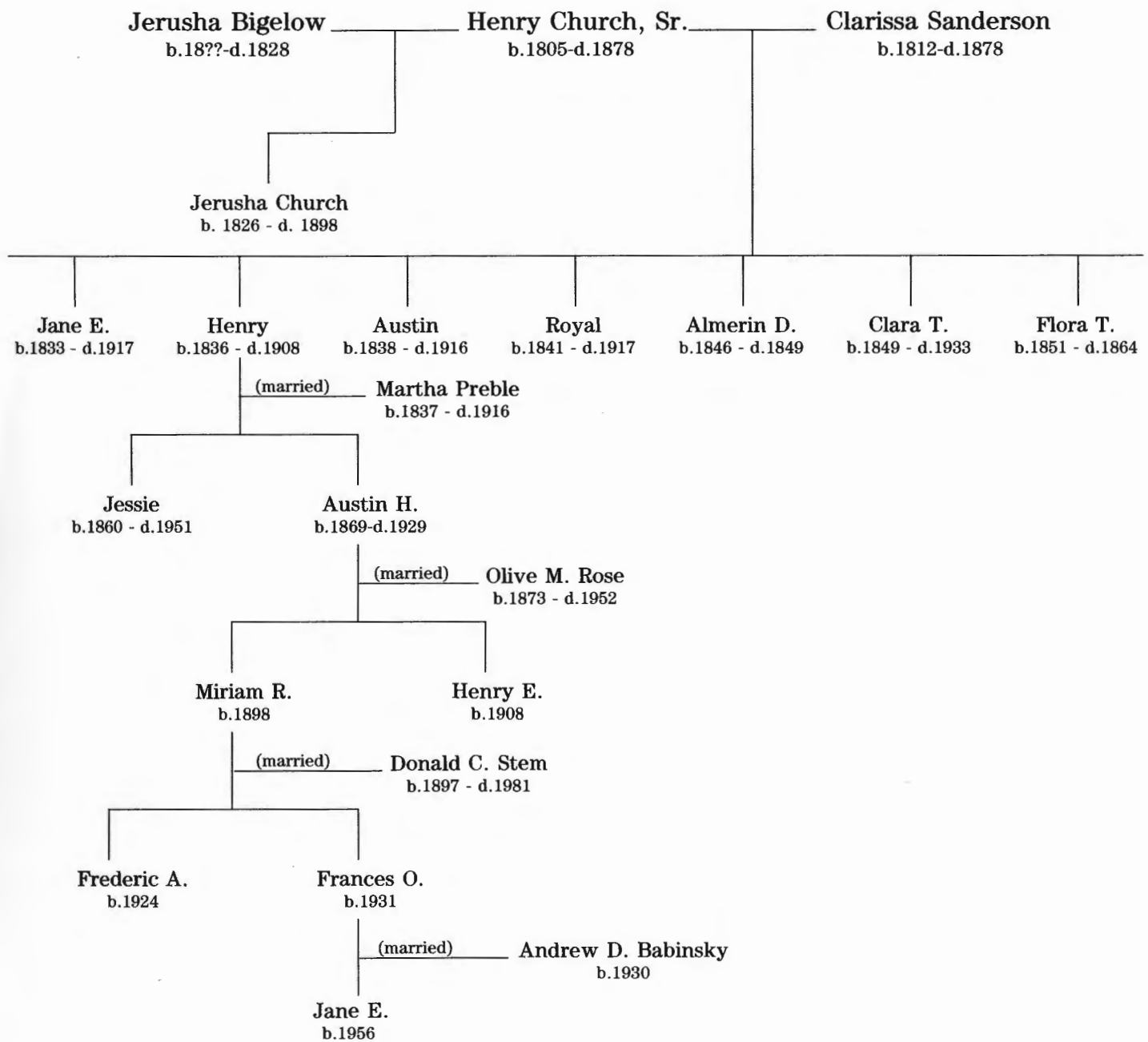
Henry Church, Jr.

Chagrin Falls

Cuyahoga Co  
Ohio







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- Photographs:
- From Daguerreotypes
  - From Stereoptican Views of Chagrin Falls by Frank Shaw, 1870's
  - From Pictures by E. R. Higbee, Chagrin Photographer
  - From Sketches by Henry Church, Jr.
  - From Collection by Austin H. Church, Taken from 1888 - 1929
  - From Photos by George Culler, Director of The Akron Art Institute, 1951



Church's Self Portrait on display at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. Pictured with the portrait from left to right - Frances O. Babinsky, Miriam Church Stem, and Jane E. Babinsky.



HAND-CARVED CONERSTONE, possibly the work of Henry Church, 19th century blacksmith, artist and sculptor, was found last week when a brick carriage house was demolished to make way for Hamlet Hills retirement center. Shown with the stone is James E. Bauman, Hamlet president, who said it will be used over the fireplace in the main lounge of the development. The carving is similar to and of the same period as the works of Church, who carved Squaw Rock, but no positive identification had been made early this week. The stone bears the inscription "1894" above a face. In the loop of the "9" another, smaller face is carved.