

Bedford Historical Notes

Asterhurst: This area is one of considerable historic interest in the history of Bedford - for it was here that Bedford was first started. Here, where Tinkers Creek leaves the confines of its deep valley and spreads out into a broad valley - the first settler of Tinkers Creek, Elijah Hobler, built his house in 1813.

Early maps of 1874 show two mills here - a grist mill and a saw mill. This is also the junction point of four roads - Lower Tinkers Creek Road; Benham Road; Egypt Road and the abandoned old Kutton Road. This is also the place where a major Indian Trail crosses the Ottawa Trail, which started at Lake Erie and followed Broadway Ave. through Cleveland, then through Garfield Hgts - via Turney Road - then down Benham Road to Tinkers Creek - across it to Egypt Road to the head of Sagamore Creek where it joined the old Moravian missionary-Indian route - the Sagamore Trail. From the Ottawa Trail there no doubt branched other trails throughout Tinkers Creek Valley - but mostly hunting and fishing trails or to temporary camp sites.

Egypt Road: This former Indian path got its name from

the existence of a mound behind the old Carey place. For many years it was part of the Cleveland-Pittsburgh Stage route - (Later the name was changed to - Benham Road.)

Old Stage Tavern House: On Egypt Road at the brink of the bluffs overlooking Tinkers Creek - there stood for many years the an old stag Coach Tavern. It was of unusual architecture which looked like two identical houses joined together giving it a broad frontage. Large oak trees framed the ends of the structure. On the side of the roadway near the top of the hill stood a long wooden watering trough for the horses - filled by a stone spring. When I first saw it - in the late 1920's - The Carey family lived in it. Carey was a teamster and the yard was full of wagons and construction equipment - across the road was a pasture full of miles. I visited the Carey place frequently and made numerous sketches of the old Tavern house. The tavern was 150 years old then. In 1930 - an accidental fire in the kitchen burned the place down. (Today, a small frame cottage marks the site.) Behind the house and yard at the top of a gentle rising hill stands a mound. This is the locally famous Egypt Mound after which the road was named.

Egypt Mound:

The mound is 28 ft. tall and in the shape of a flat-topped with its longest dimension oriented east and west. Except for some scattered clumps of bushes its sides are clear. A few old trees grow on the extreme top. On the summit are several graves of deceased Carey members. The mound is said to be of

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Down beyond the end of the remnants of lower Button Road, across Dunham Road on the south bank of Tinker's Creek is the Astorhurst Restaurant in Walton Hills Village. The golf course of the Astorhurst Country Club is on the rising hillside to the south.

The modern brick and stone restaurant is built around the old Astorhurst Villa, a rambling brick structure that housed a leisurely, genteel dining facility in the 1940s and 50s. Philip Astor was the proprietor, a fact that provides a hint as to the origin of the name of the Astorhurst.

A century before that, up on the opposite hillside to the north, another eatery (and drinkery) flourished, fed by the traffic of Button Road. This was the famous Mother Parker's Tavern, offering a rest stop for man and beast, a respite from the toil of fighting the mud and dust and ruts of the pioneer wagon trail.

Astorhurst

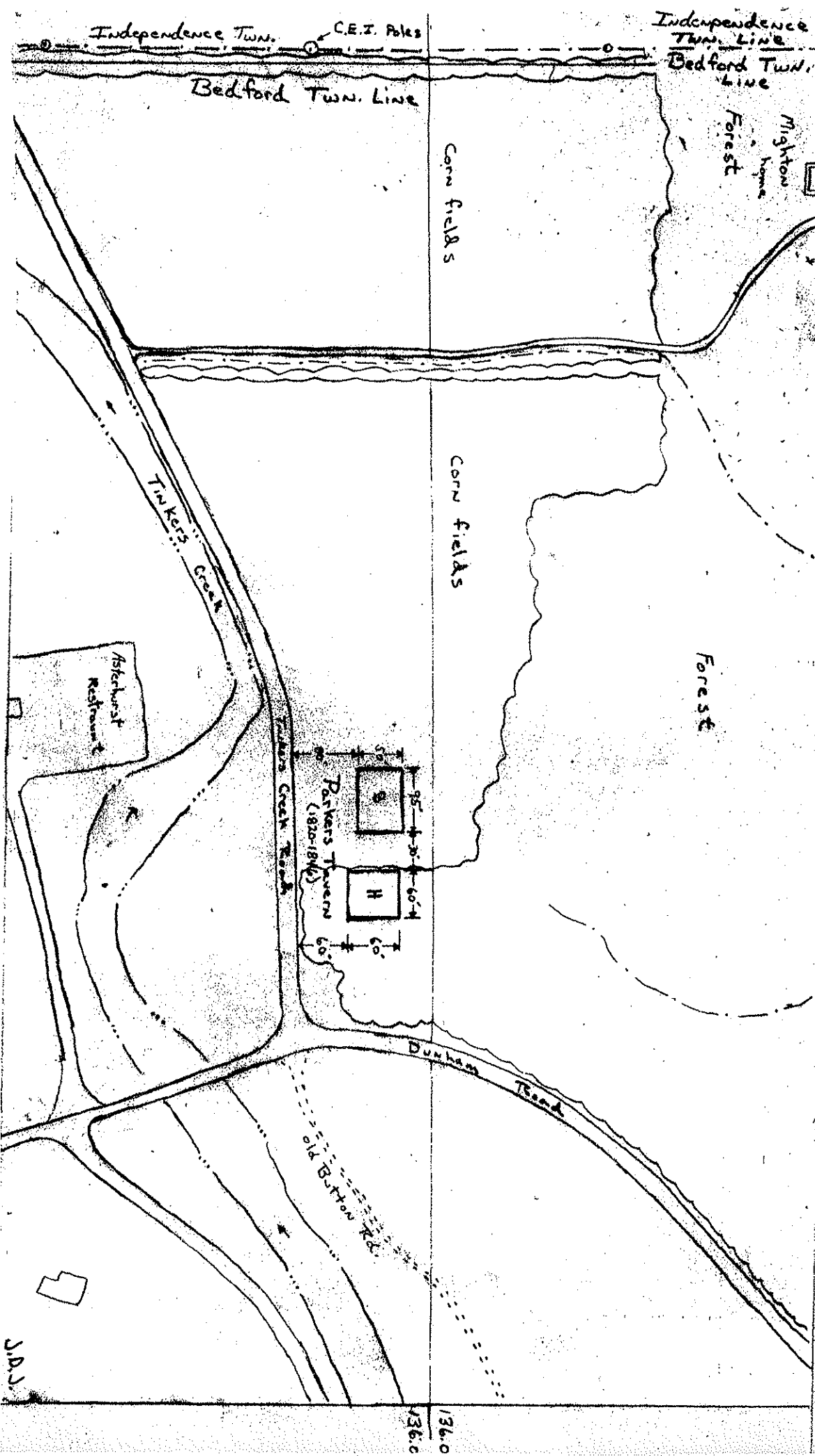
Astorhurst

*Ma Parker's
Tavern*

*7-30-
81
Bed Times*

MA PARKERS
TAVERN
LITTLE EGYPT

Site of
Ma Parker's
Tavern

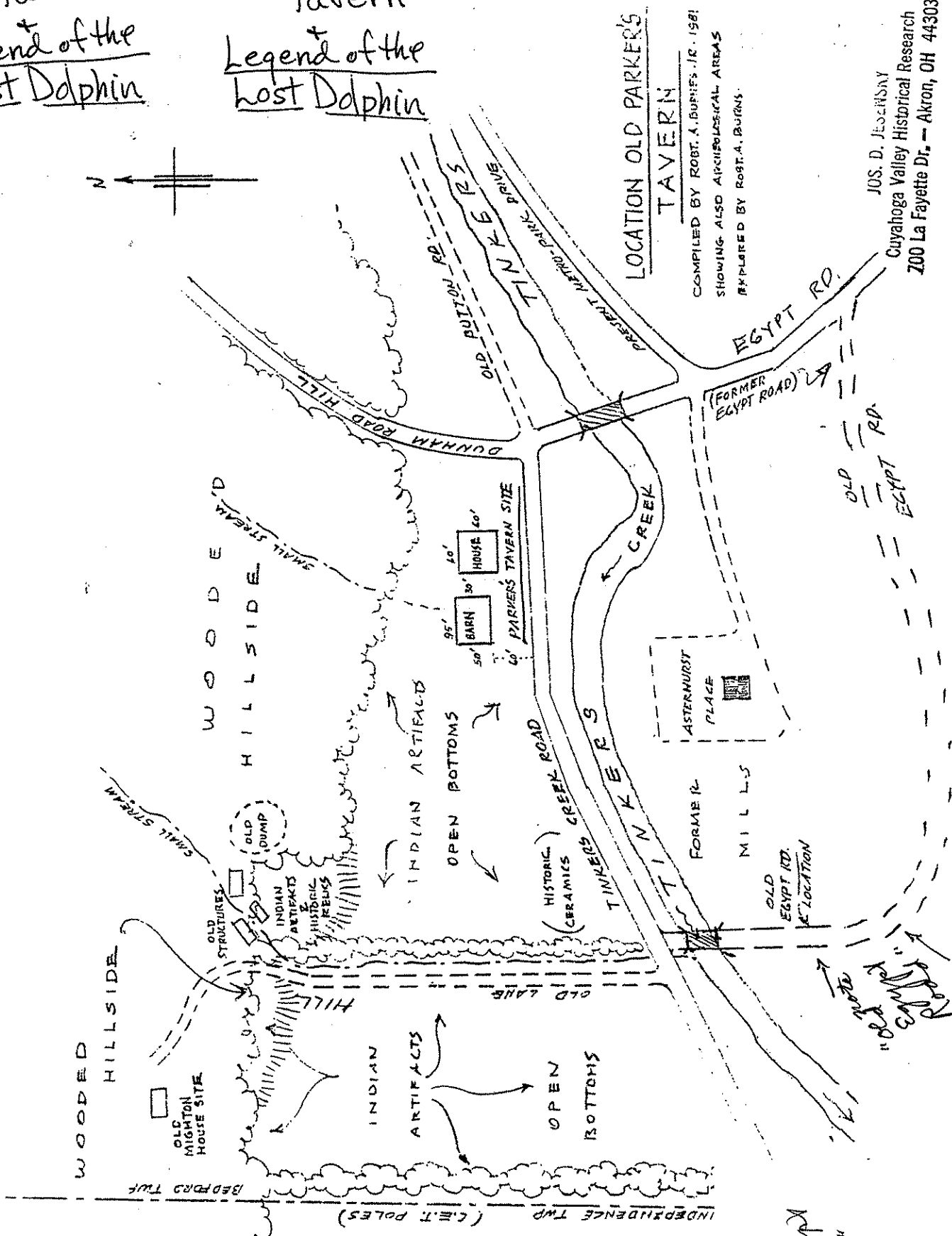


J.D.S.

Ma Parker's Tavern
Legend of the
lost Dolphin

Ma Parker's Tavern
Legend of the
lost Dolphin

(12)



LOCATION OLD PARKER'S
TAVERN
COMPILED BY ROBT. A. BURNIS, JR. 1981
SHOWING ALSO ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS
EXPLORED BY ROBT. A. BURNIS.

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note
"Old Egypt Road"

→ BEDFORD HISTORY

The story of Mother Parker and the Mysterious Strangers. (1)

(from Maurice W. Denk's article - Bedford Centennial -) 1949

Two strangers stepped out of the black wilderness of Tinker's Creek and into the light of Mrs. (Mother) Parker's Tavern one night in the early 1820's and, in departing, left behind them a legend that has persisted through the years.

Parker's Tavern was located on lower Tinker's Creek near the present intersection of Dunham and Old Button Roads. It was built between 1816 and 1818 by Cardee Parker shortly after Adams & Starr had built their grist mill near this part of Bedford Township. After the death of Mr. Parker, his wife - "Mother" Parker carried on the business of the Tavern and became locally famous for her hospitality, etc. She welcomed her guests with the sincere hospitality that was accorded to all pioneer travelers. Of her two, mysterious visitors, that night, she observed that the older one was a young man, tall and fine looking, and that his companion appeared to be little more than a boy. She made the visitors welcome and comfortable and then went about her routine duties.

In the morning, the two guests had disappeared into the green wilderness and Mother Parker set down the amount of their bill - to "lost" accounts and she soon forgot about the incident. But, the two visitors did not forget and several months later she received a letter and money several times more than the amount due her. In the letter was the "confession" that the young man - and "boy" were in reality an exiled prince and his young bride from one of the leading countries of Europe. It was requested that their visit be kept a secret from the public. Rumor persisted, however, that the prince later became a ruling monarch of an empire across the seas.

In 1827, the Ohio Canal was opened through Independence nearby and Mrs. Parker closed her tavern and moved there to open another along the Canal. Mrs. Parker never revealed the identity of her two visitors. (It has been also believed that the two visitors might have been THE LOST DUOIN (dethroned French King) - but that was not proved out.)

(by J.D.J.) - Elsewhere, in the early historical accounts of Ohio - there has been mention of a similar pair of royalties traveling through the state - a thing that could very well have been during those times - Perhaps the two visitors to Mother Parker's Tavern may have been the same - only Mother Parker could have verified such. The incident does add a touch of romantic mystery to the story of early Bedford Township.

J.D.J. - 1983 notes: In a recently acquired book - which had been long lost in obscurity - the story of the above "lost ^{Daughter} ~~couple~~" has been cleared up -

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a map showed the exact route of his travels in Ohio - mainly in the S.E. & Central parts - not any where near Bedford, etc. (So, there went another interesting bit of colorful local history!)

P.S. HISTORY IS FULL OF SUCH "MYSTERIOUS" TRAVELERS - SUPPOSED MEMBERS OF EUROPEAN NOBILITIES.

Mother Parkers Tavern and the 2-mysterious guests
Continued.

XXX This romantic story was commonly
accepted for some years - until in 1976 a translation
was made from a long-lost account, in French, of the journey
thru America by "The Lost Dolphin" - Louis-Phillipe - his
hidden diary. It was translated into English in 1976 - and
published by the DELACORTE PRESS - New York (for which I own
a copy) It relates - the day-to-day journey - illustrated by
the paintings of his brother, the Duc de Montpensier
who made detailed painted records of the scenery encountered.
Title of the book is - DIARY OF MY TRAVELS IN AMERICA -
by Louis-Phillipe, King of France - 1830-48

In it are confirmed the incidents related before of
their journey as far into the heart of Ohio - as Zanesville, Ohio
Louis-Phillipes diary breaks off in May 1797 - while he is at
Bardstown - considerably south of Ohio - His brother, Duc de Montpensier
takes it up the remainder of the stay.

This new book - while it does not delve too much into
descriptions on our own local parts of Ohio - did give an
interesting picture of America at that time - and, unfortunately
for colorful, local, stories - it does put the damper on
the romantic story of Mother Parker and her mysterious
visitors - once and for all. Perhaps Mother Parker did have
a pair of mysterious visitors -
but they certainly were
not the "Lost Dolphin" -
Louis-Phillipi?

Joe D. Jensen

1984

Riddle of Mother Parker's Tavern

Mid Winter in Wile New Bedford Visit?

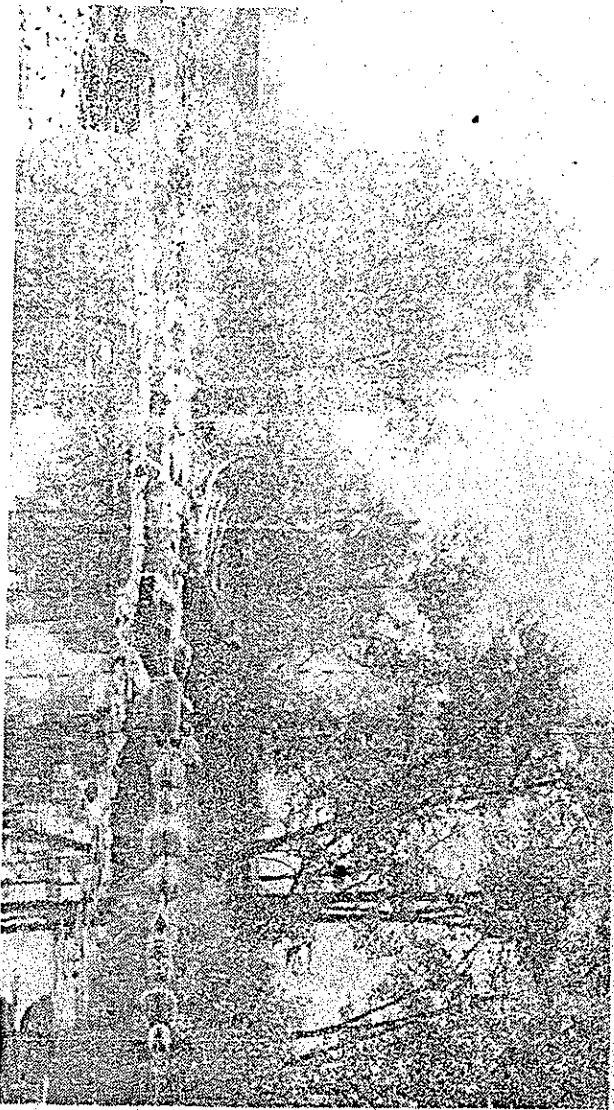
By Maurice W. Deak

It's Halloween once again and I suppose I should have a ghost story to tell.

The tale of Mother Parker and the two strangers doesn't concern witches or hypnotists, or even hobgoblins, but it does have a flavor of mystery about it. For it is a little without answer. If after you've read it, you choose to call it a ghost story, that is your privilege.

One dark night in the early 1800's, two strangers stepped out of the dark wilderness on Tinker's Creek and into the warm hospitality of Mother Parker's Tavern.

This was the first tavern in Bedford. While its exact site is not known, it was located in Bedford township a short distance this side of the Valley View village line. If you stand on the little bridge that carries Danham rd. over Tinker's Creek at the foot of "Shaker" hill, you can see just about how far from the place.



—Times-Register Photo
SITE OF MOTHER PARKER'S TAVERN—Near this idyllic spot along Tinker's Creek, Mother Parker's historic tavern once stood.

Two Strangers

The two strangers entered. Mother Parker noticed they were handsome and well dressed. One was tall, the other short and slight of build, appearing to be little more than a boy. After having dinner they retired to their room. When Mother Parker awoke the next morning, she found her two guests gone and their bill unpaid. Apparently they weren't gentle men after all. She put down the account as 'lost' and forgot about the matter.

Several months later, however, Mother Parker received a letter from overseas. It was a sum of money. At the time paid the bill in by the two mysterious lodge. The letter contained that the two were in reality an exiled prince and his pride. The prince later became king of one of the leading coun- tries of Europe. Mother Parker was sworn to secrecy by the letter and no one, save herself, ever knew the identity of the two strangers.

This is the story of Mother Parker's tavern that has been handed down in Bedford tradition. I have thought of it quite frequently and I have come to feel there may be something to it. It was not un- heard of for members of the no- bility to find their way into the Ohio wilderness. A Russian noble- man was with Colonel Crawford at the ill-fated expedition against Sandusky in 1782. In 1825 a group of French nobles stopped at Knager's House in Maumee. O- neer to be in the search for the Lost Dauphin. Louis XVII the Dauphin. It indeed he were alive, would have been 40 years old at the time.

Lost Dauphin

It is possible that two of these nobles stopped at the tavern in-

ent on Timber's Creek in their tire- less search. It is a possibility, un- less the Dauphin himself was one of the pair (if you don't have the historians who contend that he was killed in France in 1793).

Henry VIII and the English kings. There is no evidence that George IV or his brother William IV who succeeded him, ever trav- eled in Ohio.

We come now to the most likely candidate, handsome Louis Phi- lippe, King of France from 1830 to 1837. It is a historical fact that Louis Philippe traveled in Ohio at the time that Mother Parker cre- ated her tavern on the creek. After he became involved in a plot against the republic, Louis Philippe was forced to flee from France.

He turned up at Columbus on the Ohio river and you ever visit the famous "Our House" in that city you will see the very place in which Louis Philippe stayed while he was here.

Visited Coshocton

The French king-to-be is also known to have stopped at Charles Williams' famous tavern in Co- shocton, O., where he complained of the accommodations and where he was promptly booted out by Mr. Williams.

The beautiful Tuscarawas river flows into Coshocton where it joins the Muskingum. Louis Philippe might easily have shaken the dust of Coshocton from his feet and journeyed up the Tuscarawas and followed the portage path to the Cayahoga and thus found his way to Mother Parker's Tavern. At any rate, he returned to his country and became king of France in 1830 reigning for 18 years.

And so, our Halloween story is done. You may agree that it poses a riddle for which there is no answer, or you may call it just another ghost story. As for me, I

like to think that these two mys- terious strangers really stepped out of the black night into Bed- | Philippe.

END

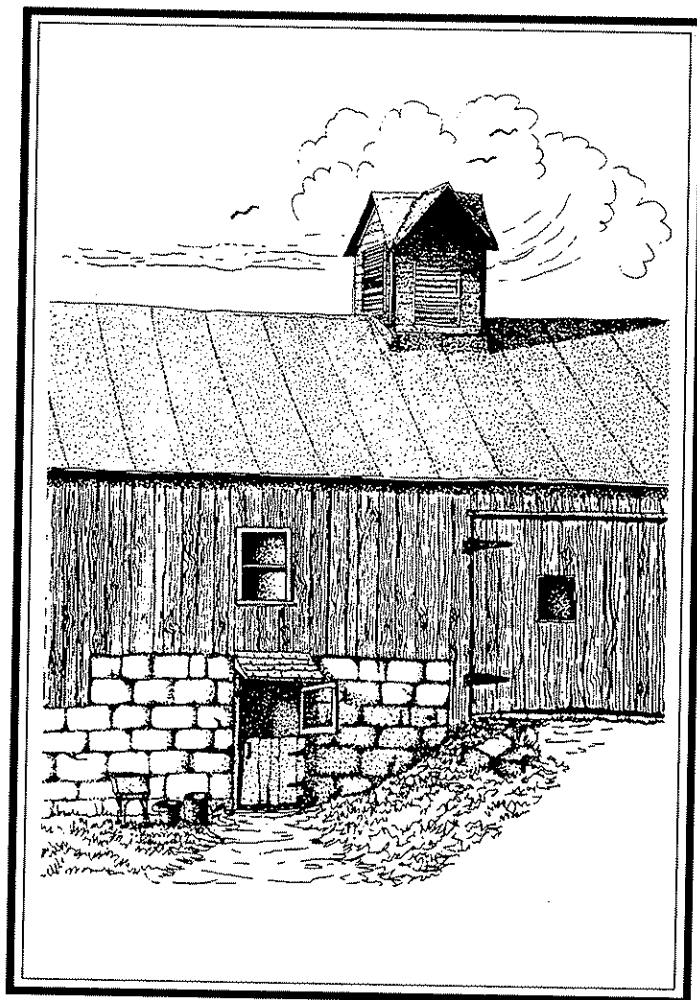
Bedford's An 1977 an English translation

was made of several "lost" stories written (in French) by Louis - Philippe - of his travels in the new Americas - It was a journal describing all the places he visited, etc. The book is illustrated in fine color prints of his travels, Montpelier, a well known artist and one of his companions on this visit. This was also a somewhat severe when matters of the royalty story. Included in the book is a precise map showing the route of their travels - The record they came to the north part of Ohio was Coshocton, OH. to the south and Erie, Pa. to the East - Therefore - the legend does not apply to our Tuscarawas creek.

There are no many different legends written about "The Lost Dauphin" that it would be fair to say that most were just a legend. Louis Bradford mentions one version in several of his books: The Farm, etc. It claims that before several years of another another about version appeared in the book - "Fifty stories from Ohio West." In another book describing the life and travels of James Audubon, the early naturalist - in which it is hinted that Audubon claimed to be the "first Dauphin" and so it goes - on and on - However, the new book published in 1977 mentioned above, does put a different light upon at least part of these legends.

9/25 January - 1977

The Village of Walton Hills
♦
TRACING OUR HERITAGE



BY
JEAN KAINSINGER with ROBERT KAINSINGER



WILLING BARN
was on Button Road
now razed.
Bedford Reservation Maintenance Garage
area

1989 photo
by Judi Schroeder

control solution and a water recreation facility for not only local residents, but for visitors and vacationers.

However, Lake Shawnee would also have destroyed the natural and historical sights within Bedford Reservation. Chances are, the lake and dam would also have changed the environment of neighboring communities, such as Bedford, Walton Hills and Valley View.

The LAKE SHAWNEE STORY

In 1961 County leaders planned to dam up Tinkers Creek near Dunham Road and create a huge lake within Bedford Reservation; the size of the lake estimated at more than 140 acres. Its 40-foot high and 200-foot long dam would have water gate controls and a roadway (Button Road) across the wall. Lake Shawnee would be two and one half miles long, stretching from near the Ranger Station on Egbert Road to Dunham Road. It would be the deepest man-made lake in Ohio; indeed almost as deep as Lake Erie.

The federal government was expected to pay for building the dam because it was categorized a major flood control project. Since Tinkers Creek and its tributaries supply one third of the water flowing into the Cuyahoga River, the dam would control flooding in areas of the Cuyahoga Valley.