

INTRODUCTION

THE BEGINNINGS

Nothing challenges the historical imagination more than trying to recapture the landscape of the past. To imagine Springdale without the sounds of the automobile, the smells of gasoline and rubber, the hardness of the cement, the glare of street lights and the bright signs of the shopping malls seems almost impossible. Yet there was a time when the modern urban community that is today's Springdale was little more than a lush forest full of abundant natural resources undisturbed by human settlement. Along with the low rush of the wind, common sounds would have been the chirping of quail, parakeet and the passenger pigeon, the honk of wild geese and turkey, and the grunt of boars rooting the earth for acorns underneath the sturdy stands of oak. The odor of the virgin soil and the mushiness of vegetation slowly decaying in the perpetual forest gloom naturally complimented the contours of the gentle and rolling land, broken occasionally by natural ravines and small creeks.

Over time humans, first Native Americans and then Europeans, altered the terrain. Yet essentially the contour remains as it was when the Miami Indian felt the lilt of the land beneath his feet as he made his way across it in search of game. He trod a well-beaten path or trace. From time immemorial, long before the first white explorer intruded, Springdale's destiny was shaped by its location on a key transportation route.

The end of the American Revolution signaled a period of discovery and prolonged movement and settlement of the wilderness that is now the United States. Vast frontiers of new territory boasting of thick forests, fertile lands and seemingly unlimited natural resources beckoned adventurers who dared to dream of owning their own farm or even founding a city.

The creation of the Northwest Ordinance in 1787 heralded America's newest frontier between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River. The presence of unsettled

land along the western edge of "civilization" excited many Americans with a hope of economic betterment and a chance for adventure. The next two decades saw continuous movement of settlers from crowded eastern states into the Miami Country of Southwest Ohio, between the Great and Little Miami Rivers to the east and west, and the Ohio River to the south.

On August 23, 1806 John Baldwin platted the village which would grow to become Springdale astride a major transportation route called the Miami Trace. By that time the wilderness had been disturbed by Native American groups who hunted the land, and by white men who hunted and later moved with their families to settle the land. As more families traveled by flatboat down the Ohio River and began clearing the land for farming, tensions with Native American groups escalated. Responding to demands from settlers for more protection from the Indians, the federal government constructed Fort Washington in Cincinnati and sent more troops to defend the area. By the 1790s, block houses and stations, like the Pleasant Valley station near Woodlawn, dotted the landscape. General "Mad Anthony" Wayne and his army marched north over the Miami Trace in the fall of 1793 on their way to confront Little Turtle, a Miami chief and leader of a confederation of Indian forces.

Wayne's victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers on August 20, 1794 ended the Indian menace, freeing settlers to clear the forests seized from native Americans without fear of reprisal. One year later, Springfield Township was created. By the time Baldwin, an enterprising blacksmith, scythe maker and hotel keeper, decided to add real estate investment to his list of accomplishments, a number of families had already established substantial farms in the area. After 1801, a Presbyterian meeting house stood at the southern edge of the proposed village. Until then, the church, established in 1792, had met in a stockade at Pleasant Valley Station.

While Baldwin had evident entrepreneurial abilities, he sadly lacked imagination, at least when it came to place-names. If the township was named Springfield and the

church was the Springfield Presbyterian Church, then the village would also be Springfield. Thanks to proprietor Baldwin's logic, village residents sometimes waited as long as six months for letters that had been delivered mistakenly to the Springfield, Ohio post office near Dayton. Finally, in the early 1850s, the Postal Department, tired of the confusion, forced a name change on Springfield. Villagers who had been referring to their home as Springdale in their diaries and letters for several years, required little adjustment to the new designation.¹

Place-name notwithstanding, Baldwin chose his village site well. Local farmers used the Miami trace, which was now called the Great Road, to transport produce to the markets in Cincinnati. Mule trains carried military supplies over it from Cincinnati to Fort Hamilton.² By 1805, a stage coach operated over the Great Road. Eventually it would be improved and turned into the Hamilton, Springfield, and Carthage Turnpike, reportedly the most successful turnpike in the state.

Travelers along the trace were served by John Brownson's hotel on Lot 18 of the Baldwin subdivision.³ When Brownson died intestate in the 1830s, George Wilmuth purchased the property,⁴ which remained in the Wilmuth family for many years. In time the columned two-story hotel acquired an imposing brick facade which helped to give Springfield an appearance of respectability.⁵

During much of its early history the village was a rough, primitive place. At Turner's Tavern, loud, swearing, tobacco-chewing, whiskey-drinking mule-train drivers mingled in with foul-smelling hog drovers who stopped on their way to market. Numerous other travelers passed through to unknown destinations making for a sometimes volatile mix.⁶

As the years passed and the village grew and prospered, respectability spread through every part of village life. Pious church elders condemned the drinking and gambling that so often ended in violence. At the same time, hard-working farmers

denounced the taverns that lured young farmhands from the fields making them unfit for the next day's work.

While prosperity tended to soften rough edges, it took time. Legend has it that Squire William Woolley, who owned a tavern across the Butler County line, was the first man in Springfield to wear boots. Until that time, men and women wore a type of hand-made moccasin.⁷ For many early residents, boots and shoes were an expensive luxury. Still, by 1816, Springfield was one of the wealthiest villages in Hamilton County.⁸ William Chamberlain and Ichabod Crane platted additions.⁹ The village even incorporated on March 16, 1839 although no evidence has been uncovered that an actual village government existed.¹⁰ None of the letters and diaries of the period mentions it although participation in church and township activities is noted frequently. Indeed, the amount of control exercised by Springfield Township in the 1840s makes the existence of village government unlikely. The township collected taxes from Springfield, maintained the roads, raised the militia, operated the district schools, administered poor relief, held elections and kept law and order. Village government, if it did exist, would have been superfluous.

As early as 1791, when General Arthur St. Clair appointed Henry Weaver a territorial justice of the peace, Springfield residents filled many township offices.¹¹ In 1839, George Breaden was township supervisor and James McLean was constable. In 1840, the trustees elected Breaden constable, Samuel Ledman one of three judges, and John McGilliard, by then Springfield postmaster, the treasurer. George Wilmuth, the innkeeper, lost an election in 1849 for justice of the peace held in the Springfield "schoolroom." The trustees appointed John Cain their constable for that year. The minutes of the township trustees show that these and many other Springfield residents took an active role in township government.¹²

By 1850, residents referred affectionately to the village as "old Springfield." Rows of stately trees lined the portion of the Great Road, or Springfield Pike, which ran

through Springfield and was called Main Street, illustrating the village's growing stability. Most of the houses had little or no front yards and were built close to the street with a single step up to the front door.¹³ Despite an abundance of open space surrounding the village, the houses sat on small lots, harkening back to a time of Indian troubles and a feeling that physical closeness ensured security. A few houses had been built on Hickory and Walnut streets and along what came to be known as Springdale Road.¹⁴ Most of the vacant lots were owned by people who lived on the Pike and used them for garden plots or for their stables. Community life clearly centered around traffic generated by the turnpike.

Perhaps because of the noise and dirt from Springfield Pike, many of the homes had porches running alongside rather than in front of the house.¹⁵ Shutters on the windows facing the street offered a bit of privacy. The trees along the Pike provided something of a buffer from the busy road. The haphazard placement of flagstones offered the pedestrian little protection from the dirt and mud but an attractive white picket fence gave the street cohesion. Rambling roses, dahlias and sunflowers added an occasional splash of color. Sometimes a particular flower acquired great sentimental value. The Peterson family carefully tended a large sunflower in their side yard.¹⁶ In 1803, Martha Little carried a peony root across the Alleghenies into the wilderness as a reminder of her former life back east.¹⁷

Just north of the Springfield Inn, still operated by the Wilmuths, lived the widow Malinda Perlee with her three daughters, all under ten years old, and one boarder, George Bergen, the young Presbyterian minister from Kentucky.¹⁸ Peter Perlee, Malinda's late husband, had been an elder of the Presbyterian church and in his will left each daughter one thousand dollars when each turned eighteen and "property to my wife Malinda to raise them."¹⁹ The fact that George Bergen boarded with the Perlees clearly meant that the "property" was not enough for the family to make ends meet.

Taking in boarders was not unusual for respectable women like Malinda, for whom few other occupational choices existed.

On the other side of the Inn, Anthony Hilts, Jr. lived in an imposing shuttered, brick house. Next door stood a wagon and blacksmith shop, and the hotel was only a few hundred feet away. Building a large expensive house on a small lot in a crowded neighborhood was perfectly appropriate in 1850, with businesses and residences mixing freely. The families in Springfield usually lived over, behind or next door to some type of workshop. In this artisan village the workshop served multiple purposes. In addition to being a workplace, it also often became the center of family and social life. Work life and family life were completely integrated. Living next to a shop did nothing to diminish the high status of the Hilts family.

The Hilts family was restless and ambitious, and engaged in numerous enterprises. The first Springfield Hilts, Anthony, Sr., arrived in Hamilton County from New Jersey in 1807.²⁰ Hilts farmed but at various times he also operated a store, manufactured bricks and ran a pork packing business. In the 1850 census he listed himself as a merchant. His son, Anthony, Jr., farmer, merchant, mechanic, blacksmith, shoemaker, inventor and future reaper manufacturer, built the handsome Hilts house. His wife and daughters entertained neighbors and visitors in the spacious parlor oblivious to the noise of manufacturing next door.

Just north of the Hilts, Sr., house on the right side of Springfield Pike was "Cobblers' Row." Arthur Striker, a thirty-three year old shoemaker, had his workshop to the rear of his house on the corner of Plum and the Pike. His optimistic streak was most evident when he named his infant daughter "Wealthy." Although Striker had yet to acquire the worldly goods needed for his daughter to live up to her name, he had made some progress. He had enough work to require some assistance. A young man named Sylvester Bugatt, undoubtedly an apprentice, lived with the family. Neither William

More and Edward Edwards, two other cobblers who lived on this block, sold enough shoes to create a need for any helpers.

The northwest corner of Plum and Main shoemaking gave way to saddle making. William Van Dyke plied his trade with the help of both an apprentice, and a journeyman saddler, who had served an apprenticeship but had not as yet acquired the resources necessary to establish his own shop as a master. Like so many other Springfield residents, the Van Dyke family had migrated west from Somerset County, New Jersey about 1795. William's father, Dominicus, a Springfield cabinetmaker, died in 1814 when William was only five years old.²¹ He was apprenticed as a harness-maker and saddler in Cincinnati, walking there from Springfield to learn his trade. Van Dyke established his own shop in 1834. Van Dyke made an excellent saddle, and all the work, of course, was done by hand, the leather lovingly softened and shaped, the stitches strong and precise. Springfield fathers often bequeathed their sons a Van Dyke saddle or harness.

The saddler's shop must have been large because when William's children were older he made it available in the evenings so the young people could have a "frolic." The rolls of leather and the workbenches would be pushed aside, extra lamps brought in and lit, and then the music for dancing began. Many a Springfield courtship began in that unlikely setting.

According to most sources, younger brother Dominicus Van Dyke was a merchant tailor in Mt. Healthy, but the U.S. census shows that in 1849-50 he lived in Springfield with his wife and five children next door to William. In 1850, Dominicus practiced the tailor's craft in the little shed next to his home. An apprentice tailor lived in the household, and Dominicus employed another young man who lived in another house on the Van Dyke property.

In April 1849 Dominicus purchased from his brother "two Sorrel Horses, one Waggon [sic], one Wood Bed and two Red Cows, one Carriage, one set of Harness [and] One Saddle," for the sum of one hundred dollars.²² The price seems artificially low even

for the time yet perhaps this was part of an even larger transaction, probably William's purchase of Lot 25 and Dominicus' departure from Springfield. The bill of sale offers still another bit of information to use in reconstructing Springfield around 1850. J. L. Larew, who served as Springfield township clerk recorded the transaction, was the same James Larew listed in the census as one of the Van Dyke's neighbors.

John Dent owned the property at Cherry and Main just north of the Van Dyke's although it is questionable how much time he spent there. Dent traveled the region as a singing teacher. His circuit during the summer months extended as far west as Arkansas. His wife, Agnes, kept busy as the housekeeper for the large and active Hunt household.

Another Hunt, Dr. John Hunt, rode a different kind of circuit as one of Springfield's two physicians. Though he practiced throughout Springfield Township and was often away from home, anyone who opened the gate in the white picket fence surrounding the house and walked up to the office/residence was greeted by one of Dr. Hunt's several apprentices, grinding up some concoction in the apothecary or his wife, Amanda, or one of their seven children.²³

No visit to Springfield would have been complete without a visit to the tavern owned by Marcus Thompson and located next door to the Hunts on the corner of the Pike and what is now Kemper Road. Raucous and sometimes violent behavior characterized the patrons of this tavern, testimony to the failure of church and temperance movements in quelling the unquenchable thirst of a certain segment of Springfield society. In 1865, these problems still existed as evidenced by Mrs. Hunt, who witnessed a barroom brawl just a stone's throw from her home and said "It is sad to think of the horrible tendencies of intemperance."²⁴

Across the street, on the west corner, stood another "public house of entertainment," in the "mansion house" once occupied by the family of Nathaniel S. Schooley. First leased by Samuel Watson, who had operated a "public house of enter-

tainment" there during 1848,²⁵ John Hunt leased the estate from the Schooley executors and on February 26, 1849, sublet the house, stables and storehouse to John E. Sullivan, Innkeeper. Though Hunt agreed that there would be "no sale of spirituous liquors in the premises either by his agent or assignees," Sullivan ignored the agreement and almost immediately began serving spirits.

Sullivan's actions were hardly surprising considering that Springfield, after all, serviced all aspects of the stagecoach business. Travelers expected to quench their thirst and nothing washed the dust of travel from the throat better than a shot of whiskey. The temperance advocates had enough supporters to enable them to build a temperance hall in Springfield on the boundary line of Lots 8 and 9, but they simply could not put the taverns out of business.²⁶

The sounds of the forge rang out all over Springfield. Blacksmiths found Springfield's mix of stage and farm traffic very profitable. The noise from the smithy on Lot 13 near the school may have distracted the children from their lessons. The school, a charming white brick building with a cupola situated far back from the street, had been the Springfield Academy, a Presbyterian school for boys. According to Nelson's 1888 History of Hamilton County, the trustees left the school building unfinished. The neighborhood boys raised funds, hired a carpenter and finished the building themselves. This intense concern of the village boys for a school strikes the reader as suspect but Nelson was certainly correct in describing the Springfield Academy as being "for years a local institution of importance." Eventually the academy's trustees began fighting among themselves and the ownership of the school became the subject of litigation. The court sold the property at public auction, at which time it was purchased by the trustees of School District No. 4.²⁷ Springfield students took their lessons in that little brick building until the present Springfield School was built.

In 1850, many villagers attended the Presbyterian church at the corner of Church and Walnut streets. The church, originally located in the cemetery, had chosen this

location for its new building in 1833. The congregation took the old church bell, which in the early days of settlement had warned of Indian raids, and placed it in the new steeple. The bell still warned Springfield residents of danger and, more frequently, summoned them to important events including funerals and village socials. Membership in the church had rebounded to some degree in 1850, after it had been ravaged for three years by controversy over church discipline and slavery.

In fact, Springfield had an abolitionist church in 1850 in which Reverend Adrian Aten and his abolitionist friends delivered fiery sermons denouncing the evils of slavery. A few rocks had been thrown, a few windows broken, but essentially most of Springfield agreed with Aten's message, even if some disapproved of his means.

This description of Springfield in 1850 must end at the cemetery on the southern border of the village. St. Mary's Cemetery had antedated the village. What stories must be buried there of Indian raids and buffalo and bear, of family tragedy, and the triumph of the human spirit.

NOTES

History of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio: their Past and Present: Biographies and Portraits of Representative Citizens (Cincinnati: S.B. Nelson, 1894): 440. Hereafter cited as Nelson, History.

¹Henry and Kate B. Ford, History of Hamilton County, Ohio with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches (Cincinnati: L.A. Williams, 1881):361, 379-80. Hereafter cited as Ford, History. Information on the name change is from William's Cincinnati Directory, 1855 which indicated that mail headed for the North went through "Spring Dale."

²J.G. Olden, Early Reminiscences of Hamilton County (Cincinnati: H. Watkins, 1882): 138. Hereafter referred to as Olden, Reminiscences.

³Nelson, History: 480.

⁴Hamilton County Deed Book 41: 209 and 88: 392. Hereafter referred to as D.B.

⁵News photo of the inn taken in later years located in Springdale Presbyterian Church Archives.

⁶Blinn Papers, CHS, ms. 648, Box 25. Charles Blinn ms. based on the reminiscences of his mother, Helen Kemper Blinn.

⁷"The stranger who made his appearance with boots, fine hat, and coat with buttons subjected himself to the gaze, if not the ridicule of the neighborhood." Olden, Reminiscences: 69.

⁸John Kilbourn, Ohio Gazetteer 2nd ed. (n.p.: J. Kilbourn, 1816): n.p.

⁹DB R, no. 1: 54.

¹⁰Ford, History: 379.

¹¹Ford, History: 363.

¹²Springfield Township Trustees, "Minutes," 1839-1852. CHS, ms. QS869t, 1839-52, RMV.

¹³Marie Sharp Warwick to Evelyn Ireland, 10 Feb 1983. Warwick, born in 1893 in Springdale, has been interviewed extensively by Ireland about her Springdale experiences. Warwick remembered the village as it was in her childhood and certainly very little had changed since 1850.

¹⁴William D. Emerson, 1847 Atlas reprinted from Map of Hamilton County, Ohio (Knightstown, Ind.: Bookmark, 1982).

¹⁵Warwick to Ireland.

¹⁶Unidentified newspaper clipping reprinted in The Tracer, Hamilton County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society 4 (June 1983): 52-53.

¹⁷Cincinnati Biography, CHS, Little Family.

¹⁸U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Population Schedules," Seventh Census of the U.S., 1850, Ohio, 29, Hamilton County excluding Cincinnati, Springfield Township.

¹⁹U.C. Archives, Wills, Box 6, 24 Oct 1849.

²⁰"Hilts Family Bible Records of Springdale, Ohio," Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Bulletin 20 (Oct 1962): 279.

²¹Mabel Van Dyke Baer, "Augustus Mortimer Van Dyke and Related Millcreek Valley Families," Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Bulletin 12 (Jan 1954): 71.

²²Photocopy of document provided by Michael Sorter.

²³Alethia Hunt Woods Kelly, The Ancestor Hunt: A Chronicle of Middle Americans in the 18th and 19th Centuries (Torrington, Conn.: Rainbow Press, printers, 1985): 40.

²⁴Hunt Papers 5, 9: 334. This extensive collection of papers, destined for the Ohio Historical Society, is in the possession of Alethia Hunt Woods Kelly who kindly provided the author with extensive notes she has made for the inventory.

²⁵Hunt Papers, Ohio Deeds belonging to the Hunt Family, 13-15.

²⁶DB 208: 514.

²⁷DB 47: 622 and DB 114: 111.

CHAPTER ONE

WHITE SETTLEMENT

The end of the Revolutionary War signaled the end of British controls on settlement west of the Alleghenies and for the first time opened up the newly acquired lands in the Northwest Territory. This vast territory, considered by the British an important way to maintain peace with Native American groups, was viewed by Americans as a source of almost unlimited opportunity for wealth and property. Rich fertile lands and abundant natural resources beckoned farmers and their families to leave their homes in crowded, and expensive, eastern states. Revolutionary War veterans returned to their stony barren farms with federal certificates from an impoverished American government. Virtually worthless, these certificates had but one real value, which was to purchase land warrants in the new west.

In a major effort to pay off its war debts, the American government facilitated the sale and settlement of new western lands with the creation of the Northwest Ordinance in July 1787. One year earlier, New Jersey trader and Revolutionary War veteran Benjamin Stites stumbled upon the rich fertile lands of Southwestern Ohio while chasing down Indian horse thieves. Impressed, he enthusiastically encouraged other prospective land speculators, including his friend and New Jersey congressman Judge John Cleves Symmes, to travel down the Ohio River to see firsthand this land of unlimited possibilities.¹

Symmes, a man with a remarkable career already behind him, came back and immediately began negotiating to buy land from the federal government through the newly formed Ohio Company. On August 29, 1787, Symmes petitioned the Continental Congress for the purchase of two million acres of public lands between the Great and Little Miami Rivers in the Northwest Territory. Congress agreed to part with only one

million acres negotiating a price of 66 2/3 cents an acre, payable in U.S. debt certificates. The final bill came to \$571,437.60. On October 15, 1788, Symmes was granted a charter to develop the tract of land that became known as the Miami Purchase and reserved 40,000 acres for himself, his sole profit on the enterprise.²

Stimulated by the high cost of land and frequent articles in the New Jersey Journal, Symmes advertised his land during the latter months of 1787, inviting Revolutionary War veterans who still held land warrants and owners of federal certificates to redeem them for western land. Symmes invited the public to buy the land at his contract price until May 1, 1788. In early 1788, Symmes printed 3000 copies of the Trenton Circular which described the Miami lands as "unequaled, in point of quality of soil and excellence of climate, it lying in a latitude of about 38 degrees North, where the winters are moderate and no extreme heats in summer." Symmes may be forgiven for his hyperbole about the weather since at the time he had never spent a summer in southwestern Ohio. Despite this, his descriptions were quite accurate.³

Symmes determined to protect his lands from speculators who he felt had been "prejudicial to the population of the settlement of Kentucke...."⁴ He sold the land in quarter sections of 160 acres, but he stipulated that each purchaser had only two years to begin improvements. Symmes hoped thereby to prevent speculators from purchasing the land, waiting for the price to rise, and then profiting from subdividing it and selling it to others. According to Rev. James Kemper, one of his admirers, Symmes sought out farmers and their sons "as were of good religious character and induced them to come on immediately and improve the country." These settlers, according to Kemper, were a "poor lot" but "most respectable."⁵ Despite all of Symmes' efforts, his original purchase became a paradise for land speculators. With numerous agents selling land for him in both New Jersey and Ohio, often without establishing legal title to the lands, and with no provision made for an official land registrar to keep track of sales, Symmes became

embroiled in tangled legal battles over land titles that hounded him for the rest of his life. Further complications arose in February 1811 when a fire destroyed his home at North Bend, along with some of the original records.

The records that did survive illustrated how confusing the situation could be. For example, on July 24, 1796, William Chamberlain, who would later become one of Springdale's founding fathers, received permission to improve the forfeiture originally entered to George Kiekendall, who transferred it to John or Benjamin Cox for the use of Benjamin Cox, who was killed by Indians. Chamberlain was to take as his own and improve on-half of the section, the remainder to be held for Cox's heirs, but as of January 31, 1798, he had declined to make the improvements and the land was then deeded to John Jacobs.⁶

During the early years of settlement tensions between Native Americans who hunted the land that white settlers wanted to farm grew. Unlike the British who depended on the Indians to maintain peace with France, the federal government was determined to make these lands a part of a new American empire. By 1789, with defending the Miami Purchase a priority for the federal government, construction of a major fortification at Cincinnati was underway. Consisting of four "strongly-built" story-and-a-half cabins connected by stockades at four corner blockhouses and an enclosing fence on one acre of ground, Fort Washington, upon its completion in 1791, caused General Josiah Harmer to declare that the fort was "one of the most solid, substantial wood fortresses...of any in the Western Territory."

At first, the federal government tried to dictate its will upon the tribes but with no success. A second strategy was an attempt to buy the land from the Indians through treaty negotiations with the ultimate goal of eventually opening up all of the land west to the Mississippi River to white settlement. This effort, at first, was also unsuccessful. Despite the unsettled situation, settlers waiting in Fort Washington were anxious to

escape the confines of the fort to start improving their lands. Slowly, tentatively, they moved northward in the direction of the Millcreek to smaller fortified settlements called stations. Usually consisting of "but a small number of men living with their families in a single blockhouse or in cabins about a central blockhouse" station settlements were fundamentally defensive communities.

Settling the land was a very dangerous enterprise, a danger sometimes increased by the poor judgment of the pioneers. In the spring of 1794, Luke Foster and Henry and John Tucker chose to locate their stockade, Pleasant Valley Station, on a line between section 4 and 10, near the center of the very trace Indians used on their travels.

From 1789 to 1795, Fort Washington, under the supervision of General Harmer and General Arthur St. Clair, was primarily an operational base for the campaigns against the Indians, many of whom were supported by the British. Because of the determination of Little Turtle, a Miami chief and leader of the Indian forces, to protect the rights of Native Americans, the first three years of the campaigns were ones of failure. The first campaign, led by General Harmer in 1790, was doomed from the start because of inadequately trained and inexperienced troop and 183 soldiers were killed. A second, and significantly larger expedition of 3000 men was organization in 1791 under the command of General St. Clair. An inept leader, St. Clair mounted a fall campaign which met with disaster when a surprise Indian attack killed many of his soldiers. Finally, under the command of General "Mad Anthony" Wayne, who trained his troops for a spring offensive, the Indians were defeated at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1795.

The Treaty of Greenville, negotiated shortly after the battle, defined a line of demarcation that opened most of Ohio and Southern Indiana to white settlement. Officially, the Indians were paid for the land that they lost, provided with restricted lands on which to live and a guaranteed right to hunt north of the Ohio River. In addition, these groups were expected to live more like white farmers. In reality, they

were pushed farther west. For white settlers, the treaty effectively ended the Indian difficulties and for the first time encouraged massive migration into the area.

Sources indicate that many of the settlers around the area which became known as Springfield in 1806 were friends of John Cleves Symmes.⁷ Whether they knew him personally or by reputation, the "Jerseymen" certainly answered his call. They flocked to Springfield Township in general and particularly to Springfield village.⁸ Some of the earliest settlers were Dominicus Van Dyke II and his brother Peter, who settled in Springfield around 1795, and Harp Peterson and his family, who arrived from Monmouth Country around 1793.⁹ Numerous others followed. As late as 1850, 22 of 68 heads of families living in Springfield had been born in New Jersey.

Historic St. Mary's cemetery bears silent witness to the "Jerseymen," those Revolutionary War veterans and others who became part of the great migration into the Miami Purchase. Abraham Roll, who fought in the Revolutionary War along with his brothers John and Matthias, came to Ohio in 1805.¹⁰ His wife's relative, Samuel Vance, also served in that war as a lieutenant.

Private Cornelius Little fought with the Essex County, New Jersey militia against the British at the Battle of Monmouth. His sweetheart and future wife Martha, who lived nearby reportedly paced the floor for nine hours, refusing all food and drink, until the sound of cannon died away and her Cornelius returned to her side. In 1803, the Littles purchased land to the east of Springfield from former president John Adams, who had acquired it from Symmes, and continued their married life in a log cabin on the brow of a hill.¹¹

John Schooley was another veteran who established a prominent 19th century Springfield family. Jacob Skillman, a wagon master in Capt. William Davidson's company, bought his farm from Symmes in 1805,¹² then married General Luke Foster's

daughter Abigail. Their five sons were very active in the Springfield Presbyterian Church.¹³

Veterans from other regions of the country also found the West alluring. Michael Long from Pennsylvania, known as "Black Mike," established a grist mill on the banks of the Millcreek to the south of Springfield. His family, through its marriage connections, became an extremely influential force in the area. The state of Virginia sent a number of her sons to Springfield. John Wilkinson came from Virginia, as did Robert and William Preston, also at rest in St. Mary's cemetery.

Typically, Springfield's first settlers were farmers. Judge Symmes' enticing description of the land lured men tired of trying to raise crops in New Jersey's increasingly depleted soil. But despite the attractions of the west and the shortcomings of the east, it took courage, initiative and ingenuity to uproot a family and undertake an arduous journey into the unknown.

There were two ways to travel west, overland and by river. Overland was the far less comfortable since initially the trail over the Allegheny Mountains was a foot or bridle path. A packhorse or pack mule carried the pioneers and their supplies. Later, when the road was widened, the settlers used Conestoga wagons. While these allowed the family to transport more their possessions, the rain-gullied road often broke down even these sturdy wagons. Horses and oxen were essential to pull the wagon, yet other animals were used in a pinch. One example was Thomas Sorter, his wife and three sons, who lost of their oxen while crossing the Alleghenies in 1810. Sorter simply pressed the family's milk cow into unaccustomed service and continued the trip. According to one account, after traveling in this manner for six months they arrived "careworn and weary at their destination."¹⁴ Just imagine the state of the poor cow!

The decision to make the journey required extreme courage combined with the real knowledge that some would not live through the long and arduous journey to the

western lands. When Harp Peterson left Sandy Hook, New Jersey for the old Northwest in 1793, his family included a frail six-week-old infant named Sarah. Peterson held little hope that the sickly infant would survive the grueling trip. He prepared for that eventuality by purchasing a very small hair trunk to serve as the baby's coffin if she died on the way or be put to other practical uses if she did not. Happily, Sarah Peterson not only survived the long trip, but also the harsh life on the land her father bought from Judge Symmes just a mile southwest of Springfield. After outliving two husbands and seven children, she died February 24, 1883, just shy of her ninety-first birthday.¹⁵¹

Often pioneers to the Springfield area placed their possessions on a flatboat at Pittsburgh and took the much quicker journey down the Ohio River. At the end of the trip the boat could be broken down into planks and the planks hauled to one's home site where they became building materials. Teamsters met the boats in Cincinnati, prepared to haul planks and bedding, family, pots and the family Bible up the Great Road to Springfield.

While the long journey to the Northwest Territory took courage, cheap prices and even cheaper promises shored up faltering spirits. Whether they traveled overland by Conestoga wagon or down river by flatboat most settlers of Springfield discovered that their new home was all that they had been promised, and more. Dark, rich, loamy soil promised bumper crops. Forests of oak, buckeye, chestnut, sycamore, maple and pine provided building materials for cabins and barns, and firewood. Indeed, much of the land was so densely forested that many a man's arms must have ached at the very thought of clearing acreage sufficient to support a growing family.

Like other frontier settlers, those who moved to the Miami Country faced extreme hardship in the wilderness environment. Crude shelters or camps went up quickly to provide protection for families while they built sturdy cabins and cleared the land. New

arrivals were encouraged through pamphlets and letters to bring "two axes, two grubbing hoes, two common hoes, a plow and harrow, a grindstone, a criss-cut saw, two guns with powder and shot and fishing tackle." Providing the basic necessities of survival took on great meaning in this new unsettled land as families adapted to a way of life that was unimaginably different from what they had known in the east. Upon her arrival in 1796, Francis Baily wrote "here I am in the wilds of America, away from the society of men, amidst the haunts of wild beasts and savages....housed in a hovel that in my own country would not be good enough for a pigstye."

Chopping down the virgin forest was just the first step in a long and physically arduous process. Only after the family chose the house site, rolled the logs, grubbed the land, and cut and burned the brush and weeds could the settler build his house and plant the first crop. For many years one style of architecture prevailed, the log cabin. The first cabins wore their natural bark, but later the settlers removed the bark before they notched and fitted the logs together. Finally, the settlers began to give their interiors a more finished appearance by adding lime to mortar clapboard blocks into the chinks between the logs. Combined with the pieces of clapboard nailed to the rafters, a smoother look was created on the walls and ceilings.¹⁶ The neighbors, if any lived nearby, helped cut and haul the logs, and used their collective muscle to place the rip wholes and rafters.

"Civilizing" the Miami Country was a truly a family endeavor. From the start women contributed greatly to the settlement of this new land. Like their husbands or fathers, many women were attracted by the economic opportunities and shared the dream of transforming the wilderness into individual wealth. Yet upon arrival most women quickly found a hard life as everyone in the family helped to clear the land to plant crops. A harsh routine of daily chores, including planning and coordinating daily meals, dipping candles, making soap, spinning cloth, weaving and knitting, planting gardens,

preserving foods and churning butter, was quickly established and directed by the women in a family. Keeping the family together, and alive, became the top priority.

Out of necessity, frontier families tended to be large. How fortunate the family with several strong young sons was. In 1820, 5.3 persons comprised the average Springfield household, and much depended on the children in the household. Would they survive? In an age when infancy and childhood were perilous years many would die long before they could swing the ax. Would the population be old enough to be productive and young enough not to be a burden? In 1820, 36% of Springfield's male population of 128 were boys under the age of ten. The village could claim, however, 30 lads between the ages of 16 and 25, young, strong and still unmarried. Adolescent sons, even young adults, cleared land and worked their fathers' farm without pay. Even in those rare instances when a son's labor was not needed at home and he felt free to sell his services to a neighbor, his father expected and received his wages. This paternal ownership of a son's time was an unwritten law.

Nevertheless, hard work brought rewards, frequently in the form of the son's patrimony while his father still lived. Jacob Whallon labored for years clearing his father's large parcel of land just north of the Butler County line. When he married, his father gave him a substantial timbered tract for his own use. The task of subduing the wilderness began again, and as soon as his own son, Jonathan, became strong enough, "he began to assist his father in the cultivation of the farm."¹⁷

When John McCormick, Sr. died in 1815, he left his son James 183 acres in Section 13, "the land he now lives on," according to his will. Another son, George, received 106 acres just to the west of Springfield, and John's two grandsons divided the entire northeast corner of the 18th section, 3d township, 1st range, immediately adjacent to the village of Springfield.¹⁸ Dr. Jeremiah Breden, who died in 1836, bequeathed to his son

George his farm but only if he paid the executors of the estate \$200 within three years of his death.¹⁹

In the early years, the fact that many related families arrived together eased the labor problem considerably. Examples included the Longs, Schooleys, Riddles, McCormicks, and the Whallon brothers from New Jersey. When the Sorters came, the extended family included grown sons and their families. It is possible that those unfortunate enough to have a wagon full of girls and no helpful kin hired set-up men to help with the initial clearing. Those rare extra young males hired themselves out as set-up men. Apparently, not all were local inhabitants. Some itinerants earned a living as set-up men, moving steadily westward as the advance guard of the new frontier.

Set-up men's expertise also extended to cabin building. The nostalgic image of communal cabin and barn-raising efforts may only be partially correct as records reflected that men were often hired to help build. A set-up man charged around \$30 for his efforts but he was quick and experienced. Sometimes he was the only choice.²⁰

The Springfield area offered great prospects for settlement. Not only did its fertile and rolling land promise reward to enterprising farmers, but its position on Wayne's Trace made it easily accessible. Nearby, the Millcreek flowed between the two Miami Rivers which opened up the entire area.²¹ In addition, after 1791 and the erection of Fort Hamilton, troops and traders improved the trace and on this road Wayne's army marched to battle in 1793. An enterprising man who platted out town on a route with such potential seemed certain to reap rich reward. John Baldwin seized this opportunity when he platted Springfield. In addition, he owned a tavern further south on the Great Road where he catered to an ever-increasing number of travelers, perhaps encouraging some of them to move on to Springfield. Already by 1805, a four-horse stage coach furnished weekly service from Cincinnati to Hamilton and Dayton.²²

In the first few years, Baldwin's enterprise looked like Baldwin's "Folly." While the lots in the village changed hands rapidly, they rarely increased in value. Springfield suffered from the surfeit of land on the market. In fact, the entire economy of the area was less than might be desired. But the location was too good for the village not to thrive. By 1817, it was, besides Cincinnati, the most prosperous village in Hamilton County.

Three interrelated factors contributed to Springfield's prosperity. The first was its strategic location on the road that passed through Springfield, known at various times as Waynes' Trace, the Great Road, Hamilton Pike and Springfield Pike, which became the major route radiating from Cincinnati. Not only did it link Cincinnati with Carthage, Springfield, Hamilton and Dayton, but laterals branched out from it connecting the entire Miami Valley. From Hamilton the traveler could go east to Chillicothe and pick up the Zane Trace through Lancaster and Zanesville to Wheeling. At Dayton, a lateral branch extended to the other Springfield, Urbana and Piqua. Yet another branch at Hamilton took travelers to Eaton.²³ Wealthy farmers used the road to ship their produce to Cincinnati and the services of Springfield artisans who served both the farming community and travelers' needs. The road was an essential avenue to the back country and as late as 1841 it was still the most important road in the area.²⁴

The maintenance and improvement of this road was therefore of paramount importance for the area's economy. When Ohio became a state in 1803, the legislature required able-bodied males to work on the roads for up to ten days annually. Yet during the winter and spring, the Great Road could still become virtually impassable, eroded by heavy rains and bad weather. It gradually improved, however, as the swampy portions of the route were corduroyed. The War of 1812 and the difficulties in moving troops northward combined with the increase in stage traffic, focused attention on the needed improvement.

The growing demands for better roads led entrepreneurs to establish turnpike companies to maintain the roads. The first such company in Ohio was incorporated in 1809. Specific criteria, established by the State, provided that roads be 60 feet wide, set on a bed of wood, stone, gravel or other like materials, faced with pounded stone or gravel. Because of its local abundance, the road workers used maple instead of the more customary oak on the road.²² Although a considerable improvement, the constant pounding these roadbeds took soon eroded them as well.

Soon the farmers around Springfield and in other areas demanded macadamized roads.²⁵ By the spring of 1839, the Hamilton, Springfield and Carthage Turnpike Company had built a 16 mile stretch between Carthage and Hamilton.²⁶ The gatekeeper at the Springfield's tollgate at Princeton Pike collected fees based on an elaborate schedule set by the State in 1844.²⁷ Each time a horse and rider passed by, the gatekeeper collected a nickel for the rider and three cents for the horse. The fee for a two-horse sleigh or sled was ten cents, while a four-wheeled vehicle, drawn by two horses or oxen cost fifteen cents, though a horse-drawn cart was only ten cents. Each head of neat cattle was one cent while sheep and hogs were one-half cent each. Four-horse stages paid \$150 every quarter and six-horse varieties paid \$200. Most turnpike companies allowed the militia, funeral processions and Sunday worshipers to travel free of charge. All fees were good for ten miles.

The Springfield Turnpike soon became the most profitable in the State and, as a result, stockholders, many of who lived in Springfield, received handsome dividends. in 1839, the president of the company was Springfield resident John Morrow Cochran, grandson of a former Ohio governor. Although he later moved to the large Cochran estate just outside of the village, the Cochran family remained important in Springfield²⁸.

A second contributing factor to Springfield's prosperity was the stagecoach trade that rumbled through Springfield on their way to and from Cincinnati. Traveling from Hamilton to Cincinnati took a full day that began at 5 a.m.. Regular stops were made in Springfield to change horses and to allow passengers, already tired and hungry, to enjoy a hearty meal at Captain John Brownson's, or Turner's Tavern, before continuing the 12 mile trip to Cincinnati. The livery stable, hotels, taverns and other services associated with the stage generated considerable revenues for Springfield.²⁹

Additionally, jobs for teamsters and drovers were created. Some teamsters drove large freight wagons pulled by four to six horses. Springfield's proximity to Cincinnati meant a great deal of short-hauling by farm laborers who worked during seasonal slumps. In 1830, the typical farm laborer earned \$7 - \$8 a month and had to be very frugal to save enough to pay up to \$100 for a good horse and wagon. In comparison, a short-haul teamster earned up to \$2 per day, offering a real opportunity to save money for one's own team, or better yet, a farm.³⁰

Teamsters hauled primarily farm produce to the Cincinnati markets. While most farmers transported their own crops to market, more prosperous farmers hired the short-haul teamster. In the off-season, the teamsters hauled firewood, which by 1840 was in short supply and very expensive. A cord of firewood that cost \$2.50 elsewhere in Ohio sold for \$6 in Cincinnati.³¹ Farmers who still had forests to cultivate hired teamsters to transport the wood to sell at market for a handsome profit.

As the cost to move products to market rose, farmers soon discovered the advantages of sending their produce to town "on the hoof." Rather than shipping grain, farmers fed it to the hogs and cattle, and sent them trotting down the turnpike, at one or one-half cents a head to the city. Springfield had its share of men called drovers, whose particular skills involved shepherding a herd of squealing, grunting, undisciplined pigs to market. Little wonder these men congregated at Turner's Tavern, more commonly

known as "drover's heaven," where swearing, drinking and carousing did not endear them to the town's more genteel folk.³² In 1839, Anthony Hilts, Sr. built Springfield's only pork packing plant, which for a time operated as part of Cincinnati's larger pork packing industry, internationally famous as "Porkopolis."

A third factor of Springfield's prosperity was the success of its artisans and trades, which were closely linked to the farming community. In the "age of the horse" many of the artisan trades were directly or indirectly indispensable and by the 1840s, Springfield boasted two full-time teamsters, two blacksmiths, four wagon makers, three saddlers and a plow maker.

Other common occupation in Springfield involved the building trades. In 1850, six carpenters and two bricklayers not only practiced their craft in the village but built barns, sheds, and homes around the neighboring countryside. Jacob Peterson, a cabinetmaker, made expensive and highly prized furniture. Benjamin Skillman wove wool into cloth and Dominicus Van Dyke, Alexander Lewis, and Robert Rich turned it into clothing. Ashur Striker, William More and Edwin Edwards kept the village and the farmers in boots and shoes. Merchants Marcus Thompson, George Wilmuth and Perry Colburn satisfied the needs of local housewives for everything from hair ribbons to special-order pianos.

These merchants wore many hats. Colburn ran the village post office along with his grocery store. Both Thompson and Wilmuth operated taverns, which must have made for tenuous relationships with the conservative farmers who dominated the community. On the one hand, they depended on the farmers for economic survival. Yet, they also provided for the wants and entertainment of individuals quite different from prosperous farmers. At night, drovers and teamsters filled the taverns in pursuit of "the wild, free life."³³ Arguments and fights, sometimes bloody ones, resulted. Even the less volatile traveling agents and travelers who spent the night in the Springfield Inn represented

values alien to the respectable farmers who dominated community life. In the village of Springfield, the potential for conflict existed, and was played out in sometimes startling ways.

NOTES

-
- ¹ John C. Hover, Joseph D. Barnes and Walter Jones, eds., Memoirs of the Miami Valley, I (Chicago: Robert Law Company, 1919) : 27 (hereafter cited as Hover, Memoirs); Charles Winfield, "Life and Public Service of John Cleves Symmes," The New Jersey Historical Society, Proceedings % (1877-79): 23..
- ² Chris McHenry, Symmes Purchase Records: A Verbatim Copy of the Entry Book, Pamphlet, and Forfeiture. Records of John Cleve Symmes, 1787-1800 (Lawrenceburg, Ind., 1979): 10 (hereafter cited as McHenry, Symmes).
- ³ McHenry, Symmes: 10.
- ⁴ Ibid. 9.
- ⁵ Kemper Papers, Series 3, 1:37 CHS, typewritten copy of handwritten ms. By Reverend James Kemper begun in 1828.
- ⁶ McHenry, Symmes: 66.
- ⁷ Thomas Millikin to Rev. Andrew J. Hageman, 15 Apr 1893, Cincinnati Biography, CHS, Van Dyke Papers.
- ⁸ Hubert G. H. Wilhelm, The Origin and Distribution of Settlement Groups: 1850 (Athens, Ohio: c. 1982): Appendix A, "Population Census of 1850."
- ⁹ "Genealogical Notes," The Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Bulletin 16 (Apr 1958): 75.
- ¹⁰ Cincinnati Biography, CHS, Roll Family.
- ¹¹ Cincinnati Biography, CHS, Little Family. The source of this story is Helen Kemper Blinn who, as a small child, heard it from Martha Little.
- ¹² William S. Stryker, Official Registrar of the Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Revolutionary War (n.p.: DAR Lineage Books.
- ¹³ Ford, History: 371.
- ¹⁴ Charles W. Hoffman, "The History of Oak Hill": 22. Printed article in the Hoffman Collection, CHS, ms. 673. Some members of the family spell the name Sortor.
- ¹⁵ Obituary clipped from an unidentified paper in the Hoffman Collection, ms. 673, Box 13, folder 6, CHS. Other information came from Michael Sortor, a descendent of Sarah Peterson Sortor Cox.
- ¹⁶ Obituary clipped from an unidentified paper in the Hoffman Collection, ms. 673, Box 13, folder six, CHS. Other information came from Michael Sortor, a descendent of Sarah Peterson Sortor Cox.
- ¹⁶ William E. Smith, History of Southwestern Ohio: The Miami Valley 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1964): 174 (hereafter cited as Smith, History).
- ¹⁷ Portrait and Biographical Album, Champaign County, Illinois (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1887): 490.
- ¹⁸ Will Book 10, Hamilton County Probate Court: 437-440. Hereafter referred to as WB. All citations are for Hamilton County.
- ¹⁹ WB 2: 422.
- ²⁰ David E. Schob, Hired Hans and Plowboys: Farm Labor in the Midwest, 1815-1860 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975): 7. Hereafter cited as Schob, Hired.
- ²¹ Beverley W. Bond, Jr., ed., The Correspondence of John Cleves Symmes: Founder of the Miami Purchase (New York: Macmillan Company, 1926) : 8.
- ²² Hover, Memoirs: 44.
- ²³ Smith, History: 240.
- ²⁴ Charles Cist, Sketches and Statistics of Cincinnati in 1841 (Cincinnati, 1841) : 89.
- ²⁵ Blinn Papers, ms. 648:25. Charles Blinn mss.
- ²⁶ Smith, History: 235.
- ²⁷ Ford, History: 384; Charles Cist, Sketches and Statistics of Cincinnati in 1851 (Cincinnati: William H. Moore & Co., 1851): 131. Cist indicates that twenty-five miles were macadamized by 1851; Blinn Papers, mss. B648: 25.
- ²⁸ Smith, History: 240.

²⁹ Ford, History: 384. Evidence of Springfield ownership of turnpike stock comes from wills.

³⁰ Schob, Midwest: 45-6, 63.

³¹ Ohio Statistics, 1857, I, 21, 75-86.

³² Blinn Papers, mss. B648: 25.

³³ Charles W. Hoffman, "Samuel Furman Hunt," Ohio Archeological and Historical Society Publications 17 (1908): 240. Turner's tavern appears to have been on Lot 25 in the part of Springfield laid out by Chamberlain and Crane.

CHAPTER TWO

CERTAINTY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Many of the Springfield settlers came from the "Scottish Plains," of New Jersey, the counties of Somerset, Sussex and Essex, areas in which a harsh puritanical Calvinism still dominated. They brought their Presbyterian faith with them to the wilderness and for some it served as a bulwark. For others an unemotional Calvinism could not offer the support needed to brave the frontier.

At first, however, Presbyterianism offered the only certainty in an uncertain world. When the Springfield pioneers cut their way through the forest, gouged out a clearing and huddled together in clusters of two or three cabins, they faced an uncertain future. The threat of Indian attacks and deadly disease haunted them. But this fragile hold on life was only the most dramatic cause of uncertainty. When the settlers moved to Springfield, they had also loosened family and community ties. Now they faced remaking their lives and creating a new community hundreds of miles away in an unforgiving wilderness.

Like so many other new settlements, establishing a church assumed paramount importance. In 1792, even before they felt free to leave the stockade at Pleasant Valley Station, the faithful conducted religious services. The Presbytery of Kentucky responded by sending Reverend James Kemper, a newly ordained pastor, to minister to the needs of the Pleasant Ridge and Springfield Presbyterian churches. Mindful of the dangers of travel, "a detail of riflemen went down below the Kentucky River to bring him safely to his new field."

Once in Springfield, Kemper directed the members of his new flock to bring their rifles with them to services and to have them ready for use if necessary.

In 1796 the need for a meeting house led to a subscription:
We whose names are hereunto affixed, do promise to pay or cause to be paid to Mr.

John Schooley, Mr. William Preston, or Luke Foster, the several sums annexed to our names in cash or labor, for the use of procuring a piece of land for a graveyard and to defray the expenses of a temporary meeting house for the Presbyterian Society in the township of Springfield on demand - this fourth day of April, 1796.¹

NAMES	LABOUR DAYS	LABOUR WITH TEAM	CASH
John Schooley	2		L 1 10 0
Levi Sayer	2		0 15 0

Others heeded the call and the congregation moved into a log meeting house in 1798.² With the Treaty of Greenville in 1794 came a new security regarding Native Americans, in fact the Indians now became the object of the Springfield church's missionary efforts.³ The church struggled in the early years in its effort to find a full-time pastor. Archibald Steele preached for a few months, followed by Reverend John E. Finley who filled in briefly, and on October 7, 1800, John Brown, a man "noted for the independence of his views," began his ministry which "did not succeed so much."⁴ "Unfavorable reports as to his moral character" sealed his fate.⁵

By 1801, however, the future of the church brightened. James McCormick, brother of Springfield trustee John McCormick, permitted the building of a church and a cemetery on two and one-half acres of his land west of the Great Road.⁶ The new church was a two-story frame building, "nearly square with galleries on the three sides and a pulpit on the north end."⁷ Construction of the church was completed in 1803, although the congregation put the building into use in 1802 although it was not finished until the following year.

A fine new church required a permanent, ordained minister. The elders had been impressed with the preaching of John Thompson when he visited the church in the summer

of 1801. In October, William Preston applied to the presbytery to have Thompson ordained

as the minister of the Springfield church and on November 11, Bishop Kemper ordained him,⁸ beginning a thirty-three year relationship that was alternately close, stormy and highly eventful.

Thompson proved to be a dedicated, selfless individual. Preaching in the little unfinished church, Thompson spoke to the spiritual yearnings of his flock which grew steadily. On the last Sabbath in May 1802, seventy-one took part in the first communion. On April 9, 1803 Thompson held a highly successful revival. In the first twenty-two months of his pastorate Thompson baptized seventy-seven children and six adults.⁹ As the church thrived it prepared the way for the village that would soon develop around it.

Yet, from the time of Thompson's ordination, questions arose about his doctrinal purity. Rumors circulated that he had been infected by the radical doctrines taught at Cabin Creek, Cane Ridge and Red River, Kentucky.¹⁰ These areas were the hotbeds of the evangelical revivalism that spread like wildfire through the Kentucky and Tennessee frontier.

Periods of evangelistic religious fervor have been characteristic of America. Some of the Springfield residents may have had fathers who had experienced the revivalist atmosphere of the first Great Awakening in the 1760s in which preachers had alternately thrilled and terrorized their listeners with their "fire and brimstone sermons." Since then, however, the churches had refocused their attentions on questions of theology and Christian conduct. Such cold Calvinism could not satisfy the needs of the pioneers.

Camp meetings offered spiritual sustenance, and also met the need of the settlers for entertainment and sociability. Ordinarily, six or seven preachers would clear a spot

in the forest for their outdoor cathedral. Somehow word would spread. Soon entire families would begin arriving, their wagons loaded down with enough provisions to last a full two weeks. And then the excitement began.

Later in his life, Reverend James Finley described the impact of the Cane Ridge camp meeting he attended as a youth of twenty:

The noise was like the roar of Niagara. The vast sea of human beings seemed to be gitated as if by a storm. I counted seven ministers, all preaching at one time, some on stumps, others on wagons....Some of the people were singing, others praying, some crying for mercy. A peculiarly strange sensation came over me. My heart beat tumultuously, my knees trembled, my lips quivered, and I felt as though I must fall to the ground.¹¹

Could John Thompson, who was having such success at the Springfield Presbyterian Church, possibly be like one of these preachers?

In the spring of 1803 word came that charges had been brought against Richard McNemar, Thompson's intimate friend and associate.¹² In April, the presbytery met at the Springfield church to try McNemar on the charges of preaching abstract free-will doctrine which was grounds for excommunication. Persons unknown presented a petition to have both McNemar and Thompson examined for free-will doctrines which, of course, contradicted Presbyterian beliefs that the individual was predestined for salvation or damnation. After a marathon church trial which lasted from Wednesday through Sunday, the vote was three to two against excommunication.¹³ The people of Springfield knew their pastor and they knew him as a force for good. His preaching strengthened them more than any abstract doctrine ever could.

The Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, however, did care about abstract doctrine. In the summer it reversed its decision and dispatched William Robinson to the Springfield church to inform Thompson and the congregation of this new position.

Anticipating the synod's move, Thompson, McNemar and a third associate, John Dunlevy, seceded, and formed a new Presbytery of Springfield. Thompson was officially suspended on October 5, 1803.¹⁴

Although a majority of the Springfield congregation supported Thompson, McCormick, who had never actually deeded the meeting-house grounds, remained loyal to orthodoxy.¹⁵ So Thompson and his followers built a New Light church "a stone's throw from the old," that met at exactly the same time.¹⁶ They acquired the name "New Light" because Thompson claimed that God made his will known by an inward light in the heart of those individuals who honestly sought him. On June 28, 1804 the new Presbytery of Springfield dissolved itself as a governing body to make way for the Second Coming of Christ. In preparation Thompson and his followers wrote a document called the "last will and testament," in which they rejected the Presbyterian Confession of Faith and all other creeds but the New Testament. The logical next step was the abolition of the institutional church, including even the elders. The church members would choose their own preachers and support them through their own free will offerings.¹⁷

When Christ did not arrive immediately, Thompson continued to preach his New Light gospel in preparation for the eventual day of judgment. Over the next few years thousands journeyed to Springfield to hear his sermons. He continued the practice which he had originated at a Cane Ridge revival of dancing when the Holy Spirit moved him.¹⁸ The congregation soon joined in. The church could not accommodate the enormous crowds so in the summer it met outdoors in the forest later to be known as Hilts' woods.¹⁹

As the day wore into evening the preachers became hoarse from exhorting their listeners to repent. The darkened forest made it easy to imagine the lake of fire and brimstone that awaited the unrepentant sinner. The women in front began to tremble

and shake. Soon the enormous crowd would roll in ecstasy from side to side, catching at the saplings. Some worshipers barked at the trees because, as they said, they had the "devil treed." Others shouted and danced and spoke in tongues. Some fell onto the ground, completely unconscious.²⁰ In the words of Reverend George Bergen, a minister in

Springfield in the 1850s and an historian of the church:

The congregation of Springfield was greatly agitated, their meetings were very large and intensely exciting; and some of the scenes enacted, are almost, if not altogether, without a parallel, in the history of the church. The vast multitude, under the combined influence of light and darkness, swayed to and fro, like weeds in the wind. They were shaking and dancing, falling and rolling---and barking, singing and praying, preaching and exhorting, all at the same time.²¹

The New Light movement in Springfield grew for three more years.

Only five or six families stayed faithful to the original Presbyterian church. These stalwart supporters included the families of James McCormick, Benjamin Perlee, Michael Long and James Vance.²² Reverend James Kemper drove out often from his home in Walnut Hills to help the troubled Church. Many years later, the respected Springfield Presbyterian Church elder, C.A.B. Kemper, told his daughter Helen stories of those frightening trips through the woods when he was just six-years old. He made the trip sitting in a little chair at the feet of his parents.²³

At the end of the first year, in October 1804, Matthew G. Wallace began an unsuccessful stint as the minister. He was dismissed in 1807. Joshua Wilson and Daniel Hayden served occasionally during 1808 and 1809.²⁴ The church clung to its existence by a thread.

Meanwhile, divisions appeared within the ranks of the New Light movement. McNemar insisted that shaking should occur only when the spirit was present. Thompson disagreed. A far more serious rupture occurred shortly thereafter. The followers of Sister Ann May, founder of the Shakers, sent missionaries from New Lebanon, New York into the Ohio valley. The Shakers, officially known as the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming, wished to withdraw from society completely in order to await the Second Coming. In the meantime they established a new society in which they donated their worldly goods to the community and dedicated themselves to an austere life of worship and hard work.²⁵ In

some of their forms of worship, the New Light movement and the Shakers were similar, especially the shaking and the speaking in tongues. The Shakers, however, created radical new communities which separated the sexes, forbade sexual intercourse and supplanted their number through adoption.

In some ways it must have seemed a logical extension of the New Light movement. In any event, McNemar became a believer as did Dunlevy. Thompson, on the other hand, was alarmed and denounced the Shakers as the Antichrist, saying "I see the mark of the beast on that church as plain as I see the paper I write, and I know I see it by the light of God."²⁶ The Shakers moved on and established Union Shaker Village near Lebanon, Ohio. Most of the converts to Shakers were from the New Lights.²⁷ Shaker missionaries proselytized in New Light communities. Thompson, appalled at what he considered to be the excess of the Shakers and feeling responsible for it, fought it with all his energy. McNemar interpreted Thompson's opposition as a concern to protect private property. Together with other Springfield, men Thompson went to Turtle Creek where McNemar was holding a camp meeting. Interrupting the meeting, Thompson mounted the stand to tell the audience that the Shakers were liars and deceivers who only wanted to take their property.²⁸

Thompson's responsibility for the persecutions that followed is unclear. The Western Star, a Lebanon newspaper, had already stirred up hate with its distorted depiction of Shaker practices. The Shakers themselves felt the Springfield "schismatics" shared the responsibility.

It was currently reported among the New Lights that the Shakers castrated all their males, and consequently exposed their necks to the gallows; or divested of all modesty, stripped and danced bare in their night meetings, blew out all the candles, and went into a promiscuous debauch. And what was still more shocking-the fruits of their unlawful embraces they concealed by the horrible crime of murder.²⁹

The first mob arrived at Union Village on August 27, 1810. Reportedly the Springfield Light-Horse brigade was on hand and "many more of the baser sort from Springfield."³⁰ In the

melee that followed the crowd destroyed the Shakers' orchards and burned their buildings.³¹ Jealousy may have played a part in the violence. The Shakers were excellent farmers and received higher prices for their products than the farmers in neighboring regions.³² Mobs attacked Union Village again in 1812, 1813 and 1817. By that time, however, the Springfield New Light movement was defunct and, disillusioned, John Thompson had returned to the Presbyterian fold.

On October 9, 1811 Thompson asked the synod to restore him to the ministry and it granted his request "upon [his] bare confession alone" on November 22, 1811.³³ Remarkably, the following year the Springfield Presbyterian Church welcomed back its minister. According to Bergen, not a Sunday went by that Reverend Thompson did not mention the "last will and testament" and admit that he was more ashamed of his part than anything he had ever done.³⁴ Thompson led the church for the next twenty years. The congregation tried to avoid the painful subject of the schism with little success. Not only did Thompson bring up the "last will," but one elderly Springfield woman always forget herself and behaved in an embarrassing New Light manner. During Thompson's

sermons she would "shriek and rush to the pastor where she fell prostrate before the pulpit."³⁵ In that way she was his special cross to bear.

II

The New Light movement swept across Springfield with great intensity. Just as quickly it burned out, though not without dividing the community and leaving a legacy of religious bigotry and violence against the Shakers. But a mere account of this fascinating story does little to help understand the success of the New Light Movement in Springfield. Other areas succumbed to the second Great Awakening with its numerous sects and movements but not all frontier settlements responded as intensely as Springfield. Almost a century later, Judge Charles Hoffman, the historian of the church, indicated that it was

simply a matter of wicked people, saying "there is no doubt that there was much unbelief, and sinful living in the country around Springfield in the first years of the nineteenth century." William Henry Harrison, referring to the same time period, spoke of the general immorality all around Cincinnati.³⁶

The new religion emphasized the personal relationship between the sinner and God. While human beings had a tendency towards sin they also had the ability to choose God through his or her own self-induced spiritual awakening. Salvation, therefore, while ultimately a gift from God, was a gift chosen freely by the individual. Settlers who carved a place out of the wilderness also carved out a religion that fit the American cultural emphasis on individualism.

New Light preachers also de-emphasized learning. Again, notice the leveling tendency of this religion. Bergen commented that many of the New Light followers had not been members of the Presbyterian congregation. Perhaps they had not been because

of the stringent code of conduct and moral behavior such membership demanded. Small children and women took an active role in the revival outbursts. Bergen speaks of boys not older than twelve or thirteen preaching with all the "authority of the apostles." If indeed, part of the great response to the New Lights reflected a rejection of a socially stratified society, the movement allowed heretofore silent groups to challenge authority. In his most telling remark, Bergen commented that he believed the more unconventional forms of worship were "all highly calculated to shock the staid and the sober-minded."³⁷ His comments are particularly fascinating because he wrote while Thompson was still living, and he had the opportunity to speak with the elderly Springfield residents who had lived through the village's own great schism.

Unquestionably, the dangers and isolation of life on the frontier created a desire for a religion that spoke more directly to the emotions than did the existing Calvinistic Presbyterianism. But the full explanation of the popularity of revivalism is far more complex, involving the structural nature of a new, developing community. The evangelicals rejected any sort of hierarchical structure. In the established church, the main authority came from the elders, who were also often the more prosperous members of the community. A good example is the group in Springfield who remained loyal to the established church throughout the schism, staid farmers like McCormick and Perlee who had cleared large farms that were productive. These were men of strong influence. Conflicts arose as newcomers sought to establish businesses that catered to a transient population traveling Springfield Pike. These businesses often promoted drinking, dancing and card playing, all of which appalled the austere elders. Still, when travelers left their money at the taverns and the inns, it benefited the entire economy and many in the village, who may not have approved of these practices themselves, resented the pronouncements of wealthy farmers who could better afford to be pious.

NOTES

¹Ford, History: 381.

²Cincinnati Enquirer (22 May 1960): B16 (hereafter cited as Enquirer).

³Welsh, Buckeye: 80.

⁴George Bergen, "A History of the Springfield Presbyterian Church," ms., c. 1854 in Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:27 (hereafter cited as Bergen ms). Reverend Bergen wrote his brief history of the church at the urging of C.A.B. Kemper who feared its fascinating early history would be forgotten as the first generation of the congregation passed away.

⁵Charles Hoffman, Story of a Country Church (Cincinnati: Western Tract Society, 1902): 27 (hereafter cited as Hoffman, Story).

⁶An additional one-half acre would be acquired by deed from Peter Creager in 1812.

⁷Homer M. Noble, "The Springdale Presbyterian Cemetery," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society 8 (Jan 1950): 225 (hereafter cited as Noble, "Springdale").

⁸Hoffman, Story: 30. Thompson is sometimes spelled Thomson.

⁹Hoffman, Story: 32.

¹⁰Hoffman, Story: 43.

¹¹James Finley quoted in James A. Henretta, et al., America's History to 1877 (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1987): 288-89.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Hoffman, Story: 44.

¹⁴Hoffman, Story: 43-46.

¹⁵Noble, "Springdale": 225.

¹⁶Bergen ms.

¹⁷Springfield, Ohio Presbytery, Observations on Church Government, by the Presbytery of Springfield, to which is added the Last Will and Testament of that Reverend Body (Cincinnati: Brown, 1807): no page number.

¹⁸Richard McNemar, The Kentucky Revival (Cincinnati: Brown, 1808): 60.

¹⁹Hoffman, A Story: 73.

²⁰Both Bergen and Hoffman describe the scenes in Hilts' Woods. Hoffman: 73-75 and Bergen ms.

²¹Ibid.

²²Bergen ms.; Reverend William James, Historical Discourse Delivered on the 79th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Church, Springdale (Hamilton County, Ohio, June 4, 1876): 10.

²³Bergen ms.

²⁴Springdale Presbyterian Church Archives, List of Ministers.

²⁵Hoffman, Story: 61-63.

²⁶John MacLean, Shakers of Ohio, with Unpublished Manuscripts (Columbus, Ohio: F. J. Heer Printing Company, 1907): 46. Quoted in McNemar, Kentucky: 91.

²⁷MacLean, Shakers: 364.

²⁸MacLean, Shakers: 47.

²⁹The observations of a Shaker eyewitness to the actions of the mob. MacLean, Shakers: 366.

³⁰Youngs, Benjamin Seth, "An Expedition against the Shakers," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Quarterly 21 (1912): 405.

Reprint of a document dated 27 Aug. 1810.

³¹MacLean, Shakers: 46

³²MacLean, Shakers: 65.

³³Kemper Papers, CHS, Ms. qK32, Series 3 RM, Box 1:37. Reverend Kemper voiced his strong disapproval of the synod's action.

³⁴Bergen ms.

³⁵Hoffman, Story: 83.

³⁶Hoffman, Story: 36.

³⁷Bergen ms.

CHAPTER THREE

THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Springfield's New Light schism made for a dramatic story. Fortunately, such epic controversies were rare. For the most part Springfield's residents marked the passage of time by the seasons and their chores, churchgoing and visiting, annual rites of celebration, new births and the inevitable deaths. Such is the history of the vast majority of human beings everywhere. The patterns of everyday life suggest far more about the past than the unusual occurrences or the actions of the exceptional few. The material conditions of everyday life in Springfield are also worth examining to learn what it was like to live in Springfield in the first half of the 19th century.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century clapboard houses had begun to replace log cabins in the village. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that residents began to nail the boards onto their log cabins. In the attics of the few old homes still remaining in the village today, one can still see the log peg and pin construction of the earliest buildings. Soon, as residents prospered, buildings made of brick began to appear. In 1816 James Whallon built a two-story brick home west of Springfield. In the village itself brick became the vogue in the early thirties. The new church built in 1833 and the home of Anthony Hilts, Sr., on Springfield Pike, used bricks that Hilts made on his own farm. If Hilts' home is any indication, residents preferred a two-story building with a chimney built at both ends.¹ When the budget prohibited an entire brick structure, a facade on the side facing the street served the purpose of establishing an air of prosperity. For example, Col. John Brownson's hostelry on the northeastern corner of Main [Springfield Pike] and Apple offered its reassuring brick front to weary travelers looking for a respectable place to spend the night.²

Inside the homes furnishings were sparse but well-maintained. While Springfield may have been a wealthy community, that wealth was in the form of land, buildings and

furnishings rather than in cash. As a result, objects purchased with cash were valued more than those that were homemade as is evident from bequests in wills. In 1831 William Chamberlain, who platted the Chamberlain and Crane section of the village and was a prosperous farmer and tavern keeper, left his wife Anna "my eight-day clock [grandfather clock?] and looking glass." Time and time again these two items are specifically mentioned in wills. Apparently, no firm in the area manufactured them so merchants had them shipped in from the East. Even back East, at the turn of the century, the ownership of a mirror signified a degree of prosperity and could cost as much as two to five pounds.³

The Chamberlain household also included two beds and sets of bedding. Although not true in the Chamberlain's case, in many Springfield households, the best bed, and its quilts, pillowcases, coverlets, etc., often exceeded the value of all the rest of the furnishings combined. Other items of worthy mention were carpets, again a measure of a prosperity because they were not manufactured locally. Rugs, on the other hand, often referred to as "rag rugs," were homemade and not nearly as grand as carpets.

Mrs. Chamberlain also received a set of Windsor chairs, usually in sets of 6 or 12,, and a half-dozen common chairs. A handsomely-made Windsor chair could be used anywhere in the house, even the parlor. Although the will does not specify, it is possible that the Springfield craftsman, John Rogers, manufactured these, who was famous for his fine Windsor chairs. The common chairs referred to probably had rush seats and slat backs. These served nicely in the kitchen where most of the visiting occurred. Stemware, tableware, and "a common set of kitchenware" rounded out the inventory.⁴

When Epenetus Sortor Breden, widow of one of Springfield's physicians, wrote her will in 1841 she bequeathed similar items to her daughter. This time, however, the table cloths are described as linen, the teaspoons and tablespoons are silver, and the chairs are reed-bottomed, considered quite valuable at that time. Epenetus Breden

also bequeathed a mahogany chest and "glass", or a mirror, and a new bureau worth twenty dollars.⁵

Another example of the increasing variety and luxurious of home furnishings is found in the will of William Wooley, who kept a tavern on the Pike north of Springfield. His home contained green-painted Windsor chairs, several mirrors and a "fall-leaf", or drop-leaf, cherry table that adorned the parlor.⁶

Most of the social interaction continued to take place in the kitchen. Here the family congregated, and here neighbors sat when they dropped by to chat. Here too, of course, the women of the household prepared prodigious amounts of food. Much of it they grew in their own gardens. Even the village dwellers had small kitchen gardens. Many of the families with homes fronting Main Street also owned a back lot between the alley and Walnut Street where they cultivated sweet corn and tomatoes, cabbages and pole beans, as well as grape arbors and fruit trees.⁷

Much of the bounty grew wild. Blackberry bushes covered the countryside. Even grown men such as the successful farmer C.A.B. Kemper who lived on a farm outside Springfield could not resist the attraction. On a business trip to Reading, he stopped his horse alongside the road and picked four to five quarts, much to his daughter Juliet's delight. It seemed sinful to waste them. In 1858 Mrs. Hughes, wife of the Presbyterian minister, canned six dozen quarts. Quite enough for two people, according to the irrepressible Juliet.⁸ Berry picking provided a marvelous opportunity to exercise the hospitality that was at the center of community life. If too many berries hung on the bushes, others came to the patch to pick them. On one occasion twelve or fifteen pickers stayed at the Kempers for supper.

Fresh game supplemented the diet of pork, salt pork and beef. Typically, Springfield's young men had a passion for hunting. In the winter of 1860 sixteen-year old Sam Hunt and his friends spent countless hours hunting squirrel, snipe, pigeon and raccoon. Sometimes they bagged more than they bargained for, as Sam Hunt described

in his diary, "Gib Rush, Bill McGilliard, Tom Hatter and I went up to King's woods and cut a large elm, in search of coons but got none, but got a large swarm of bees and plenty of honey. Gib took the bees; Hatter the honey." ⁹ One has to wonder if Gib found the episode quite so amusing.

No one seemed to have considered the consequences of this indiscriminate slaughter of wild animals. In a land of plenty conservation seemed unnecessary. When the settlers arrived at the turn of the century large animals such as brown bears and buffalo roamed the Springfield area.¹⁰ Deer had once been so plentiful and so unaware of their danger from man that they paid uninvited visits to the small, isolated cabins. Cornelius Little shot one from his doorway.¹¹ Great herds of buffalo moved through the area. These massive beasts disappeared quickly. In 1812 Luke Foster who founded the Pleasant Valley stockade wrote Dr. Daniel Drake that buffalo had become so rare that Foster's horse had been frightened that morning by just the scent of one.¹²

Passenger pigeons were so numerous at mid-century that their flights darkened the sky. "Pigeons are flying over, in immense quantities; there are millions and millions. Some flocks literally cover the heavens. Some fellows around here killed 119 of them," Sam Hunt observed.¹³ Within sixty years those numbers dwindled dramatically.

A pot of fresh game stewing on the stove was simply an invitation to have a neighbor or even a stranger stay for supper. Of all the sociable activities associated with food, Springfield children loved best tapping the sugar trees. Numerous references attest to this annual delight although the number of trees that produced syrup became fewer every year. By March the long hard winters seemed unendurable, and the rising sap heralded the approach of spring. One day in early March 1856, young Juliet Kemper, distracted from her chores, sat at her window and gazed at the grove of trees just beyond the fields. "I developed a craving for a drink of sugar sap while looking at the woods," she wrote her absent brother. "The trees have been tapped and tapped but Ma says the more tapped, the richer the water."¹⁴ Ma's words added to Juliet's craving

but the Kempers had too much to do to go tapping that day. Families like the Kempers and the Riddles, lucky enough to have a sugar grove on their farms, became very popular indeed in sugar season. Letters that arrived in late January discreetly asked "will the trees be tapped this year" and suggested that a little visitor might be arriving in March!¹⁵ The old as well as the young appreciated the importance of maple syrup. When Benjamin Skillman died in 1871 he left his only son Thomas not only the homestead, the wagon and harness for two horses, but the sugar kettle as well.¹⁶

Old clothes were appropriate for berry picking and sugar tapping but the young ladies of Springfield delighted in dressing up in fancy beribboned gowns to attend afternoon tea. In their grandmothers' time no such choice of wearing apparel existed. They selected a linsy woolen dress for everyday and just about every other occasion. When Catherine Long wed John Riddle, Jr., the talk of Springfield Township centered as much on her wedding gown as it did on the very fine match she had made. Her father, known as "Black Mike," purchased the first-ever bolt of calico cloth brought into the area for his eldest daughter's dress.¹⁷ If Catherine followed the current fashions, she wore a dress block-printed with sprays of flowers and leaves styled with long sleeves and a waistline raised to just below the bust.¹⁸

Early on clothing represented a major investment in time or in money. Clothing was handed down, patched and re-patched until it was simply too worn to be patched again. Leftovers were used to make rag rugs. No one questioned whether a mother's dress, cut-down and remade, was of a style appropriate for her daughter. Age-specific clothing had no place in a society of scarcity. Thomas Sortor's will, written in 1833, reflected that frontier mentality. He bequeathed "all of my clothing" to his young grandson Thomas Murdoch.¹⁹

In most instances the women in the house made the clothing. Helen Kemper, granddaughter of Rev. James and daughter of C.A.B., took days off from school to make her "green dress."²⁰ Both girls and women worked at remaking old dresses, embroidery

and hemming. All of these tasks consumed so much time that women rarely had the needle and the thimble out of their hands. Nevertheless the greater selection of luxury items available in Cincinnati always had appeal. C.A.B. Kemper's account books and his daughters' letters show their liking for city finery.²¹

Not surprisingly, a spinning wheel and a loom were highly prized possessions. They offered single women one of the few ways to earn their support. When Levi Sayre wrote his will he specified that his "loom and tacklings" go to his wife Jane.²² Springfield families could outfit themselves from head to foot without ever leaving the village. In 1840 Stephen Schooley or one of a number of other merchants sold the cloth; Samuel Ledman did the tailoring. James McClean wove good, hard wearing homespun. By the end of the forties, Springfield also had shoemakers who could make both shoes and good serviceable boots.²³

Sometimes fancy clothes and farm living did not mix, particularly when ladies' fashion demanded voluminous skirts as it did in the 1860s. On one occasion in 1862 Juliet Kemper, dressed in her best "pink silk with the black silk jacket," joined her sister for a visit to friends in nearby Glendale. After a nice dinner complete with ice cream "which was quite a treat," the girls chose to take a shortcut home through the Greenwood pasture. The Greenwood's bull resented the trespassers; in fact, he took that pink silk dress as a challenge. The two girls dashed across the stubble fields and cleared the fence, skirts and all, just in time to escape the enraged bull!²⁴

Feeding a family was a hard, ongoing task that took the labor of members of the family, including the children. Springfield women bore the responsibility of washday, typically on Monday. The farm women washed not only the clothing and bedding for their families but also for the farm laborers and apprentices who lived with them. In fact, maintaining a minimum of material comfort was a full-time job in nineteenth-century Springfield.

While nineteenth-century Springfield had its charms, disagreeable aspects in daily life existed. Houses in the village built so close to the Pike were noisy and dusty. The architecture offered little in the way of privacy. Early in the century families rarely assigned specific functions to particular spaces. The earliest homes were usually little more than a main room and an attic for sleeping. Even after homes contained separate sleeping chambers, the best bed often kept its place of honor in the main room. Families continued to share bedrooms with children often sleeping in a trundle bed near their parents. William Wooley left his daughters beds to "include underbeds as well as upperbeds."²⁵ Not until the 1830s and 1840s did the parlor begin to make its appearance in the larger homes.

Cold permeated even the best-built house. The fireplace might have been pleasant to congregate around but it did not really heat the room. The summer months brought the opposite problem of stifling heat that could only be escaped by spending every waking moment possible outdoors. The candle or oil lamp used to light the rooms did not allow much to be done after sundown. The wax drippings and the ink blots still on the paper of Helen Kemper's letters attest to her frequent complaints of her candle burning down.

All too frequently men and women performed their difficult tasks while they were physically debilitated by illness. The reality of life lived under constant threat of deadly diseases conditioned the cultural patterns of the people of Springfield.

II

The letters and diaries of nineteenth-century Springfield residents are full of comments on death and dying. When the bell tolled in the little church tower, people stopped work to pay last respects, and funerals took up virtually the entire day. This preoccupation with death was quite understandable because sickness and death were a

constant part of everyday life. Springfield was luckier than villages of a similar size in that residents were serviced by a physician quite early. Dr. Jeremiah Breaden was the first, practicing medicine on Lot 8 on Main Street from at least 1817 until his death in 1836. Shortly after his death, his practice was sold to Dr. E. S. Close.²⁶ Dr. Joseph W. Hageman established his practice in 1819.²⁷ It is unlikely that either of these men had a medical education in the modern sense. Most doctors did not in the early nineteenth century. A doctor learned the healing trade just as other artisans learned their craft, by serving as an apprentice to an established physician.²⁸

In 1825, Dr. Hageman sold his practice to John Hunt, a young man fresh out of the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons. Hageman left Springfield for new opportunities in Mississippi where the prevalence of yellow fever and malaria in the delta region guaranteed a lucrative practice. Hunt's brother Furman, a Cincinnati land speculator, had lured the young man westward by describing Springfield as being "in a rich and thickly settled country, and in my estimation quite sickly enough."²⁹ Dr. Hunt was not disappointed and served Springfield until his death forty years later.

In the "sickly season" of July and August, a Springfield doctor could earn five to fifteen dollars daily or one thousand to fifteen hundred per year.³⁰ Building up a practice, however, took time. Dr. Hageman agreed to stay on in Springfield with Hunt as his partner until the latter "earned the confidence of [his] patients." Not until April 10, 1829 did Dr. Hunt purchase Hageman's offices on Lot 27 on Main Street for the sum of twelve hundred dollars.³¹

Doctors in small communities such as Springfield depended on attracting patients from the surrounding area. John Hunt even attended pauper patients for Springfield Township.³² He spent far more time serving those in the countryside than he did in his office. Dr. Hunt, who had a penchant for spirited animals, became notorious for the number of spills he took off his horse. Such accidents were an occupational hazard. When Dr. Hunt visited his New Jersey family in January 1829 his neighbor

Thomas van Tuyl wrote "Your accounts are about the same. The debtors know you are away and they will not be sued."³³

Nineteenth-century physicians took their limited knowledge into battle against a long list of killer diseases. Tuberculosis, commonly called consumption, could be particularly cruel and often struck the young. Helen Kemper's young friend Mary Wooley "took sick with the falling leaf and did not live to see the blossoms of spring; how deceiving is that disease consumption."³⁴ Typhoid fever was also common, killing residents in Springfield well into the twentieth century. On the other hand inoculation had lessened the threat of smallpox. In swampy areas malaria caused many cases of the "chills and fever" that perpetually afflicted our ancestors. Infant diarrhea carried off the very young in great numbers and the elderly succumbed to annual bouts of influenza.

As medical science was in a rather primitive stage, physicians tended to lump any number of disorders under "chills and fever." Occasionally physicians asked for a second opinion. Dr. Close, for example, consulted with another doctor when his patient C.A.B. Kemper nearly died from a "bilious" fever.³⁵

Relatives sent letters replete with details of illnesses that were guaranteed to disturb the sleep of the recipients. When after a long delay newlywed Malinda Peterson Thomas finally answered the letters of her Springfield relatives in 1849, she explained that a recent illness had left her extremely weak and with a very sore mouth. Still she felt lucky compared to many of her Maysville, Kentucky neighbors. Her mother-in-law, sick for four weeks, vomited constantly. The doctor did not expect her to live. There had been ten deaths a day for the past four days.³⁶ What horror the Springfield Petersons must have felt as they read Malinda's letter. The disease she described terrorized nineteenth-century Americans to the degree that newspaper editors often refused to report it for fear of creating a panic. It was cholera.

What Malinda did not know was that the cholera epidemic was also raging in Springfield. Indeed, it infected the entire area, most likely spread by an unwitting

steamboat passenger from the South. Before the first of September, cholera claimed over four thousand victims. A river city like Cincinnati, or even a village on a coach line like Springfield, was particularly vulnerable to contagious diseases. Mass panic greeted any news of a cholera outbreak. R. W. McFarland wrote of the desperate exodus from Cincinnati. "When we reached Springfield about dusk, fourteen old-fashioned stages were there to carry the passengers forward."³⁷

News of the outbreak spread quickly. Cootie Evans of Rising Sun, Indiana had intended to visit Springfield, but as she wrote the family of Dr. J. R. Hunt, "the cholera is raging so bad we were advised to stay at home."³⁸ The disease virtually wiped out the family of Lucretia and Nelson Naylor. Four of their children died in the weeks between July 10 and August 21, 1849. Two years later the disease returned taking the lives two more children and their father as well. A line of tiny gravestones in St. Mary's cemetery bears silent witness to one family's tragedy.³⁹

Although prevailing opinion of the day thought cholera attacked primarily the poor and the dirty, "King Cholera" did not discriminate according to sex or social class or profession. None was immune. In 1851, while Dr. Hunt tended to his Springfield patients, the disease struck his own family. In a letter written by his wife a year earlier to her daughter Anna, a student at Cooper Academy in Dayton, Ohio, Mrs. Hunt warned her to be careful on an upcoming canal boat trip. She wrote, "...be careful how you indulge your appetite on the boat for cholera is in the neighborhood. Drink only tea as the water is impure."⁴⁰

In June 1851, Anna returned home to Springfield to attend the funeral of her thirteen-year-old brother Oliver who had died from the disease. Upon her arrival she discovered that her twelve-year-old sister had also succumbed. The cholera epidemic continued to cut a swath through the family, including Mrs. Hunt, who was so ill her husband did not expect her to survive. She recovered but Anna was not so lucky. She died on June 23, just hours after she began showing the symptoms of the disease.⁴¹

For all his professional learning, cholera left Dr. Hunt defenseless. No medical intervention could save the victim and often only the strength of the patient mattered. The very young and the very old were especially at risk. The rapid onset of the symptoms contributed to the terror with which individuals viewed this disease. In extreme cases it struck its victims dead on the street. The symptoms were like no other except perhaps for cases of arsenic poisoning. Vomiting and diarrhea prostrated the patient while violent chills racked the body. Death was caused by dehydration. The face took on the mask of death, drawn and withered and dark blue in color. Patients recovered from cholera but the rapidity of its onset and the agonies it produced made it the most dreaded of nineteenth century diseases. Because there was no cure, a doctors treatment was sometimes experimental, contributing to the loss of fluids and causing death. First the doctor would bleed the afflicted, and then administer massive doses of mercury, usually in the form of calomel. A major side effect was caused by the mercury, which ate away at the gums and the lining of the mouth.⁴² Almost certainly, Malinda Peterson's sore mouth resulted not from the cholera but from the medical treatment. If the patient still survived, the physician could always resort to laudanum or sometimes all three of the preferred treatments simultaneously.

Apparently Springfield remained relatively free of cholera after 1851. In the years that followed, newly established public health boards in the nation's larger cities instituted sanitation and quarantine policies designed to prevent the spread of a disease that physicians could not cure. The days of the great cholera epidemics had finally ended.

III

Funeral rites reminded Springfield residents of their isolation, vulnerability and need for each other. But the village's isolation and hence the almost forced intimacy of

its residents sometimes led to conflict. Holidays and village rites, predictable and organized rituals, tended to defuse communal tensions. Springfield placed greatest importance on the Fourth of July which outranked even Christmas as the most-favored holiday.⁴³ The village planned festivities to entertain those of every age. Stories handed down through the generations told of carrying guns at all times, even to church, of Wayne's march and the Indian threats. The Springfield Township Pioneer Association could usually be relied upon to provide a speaker.

Springfield also shared the nineteenth-century passion for politics and many a local favorite son or a representative of the local party could be depended upon for a stump speech. It was an age and a village that prized oratory and the longer the speech the better. Samuel F. Hunt, who would later win fame for his speech-making, perfected his technique in Springfield.⁴⁴

Most of the children preferred the parades, the fireworks and the shooting of the big cannon. In later years, Helen Kemper Blinn remembered a Fourth when tragedy struck. The village men could not load the big cannon so a passerby, a stranger, stopped to volunteer his assistance. The cannon exploded and the stranger died instantly.⁴⁵ It was the kind of unexpected tragedy in the midst of celebration that left an indelible imprint. Mrs. Blinn remembered it vividly in her old age. Most celebrations were happier if not as exciting. Letters indicate that Springfield was overrun with out-of-town visitors in response to the numerous invitations issued by the sociable village youth.

Other important events included the Singing School recital. Springfield enjoyed the periodic services of a traveling singing master named John Dent. As an instructor in the 1840s, Dent became something of a legend for his "perfect pitch."⁴⁶ In any event, while in Springfield Dent would organize a recital for the girls. The girls busied themselves with rehearsals and sewing recital gowns. When Saturday night arrived, sleighs and farm wagons lined the sides of the Pike. People from the village and from

farms all around gathered on the second floor of a large room located above the post office. Sitting in the "nicely furnished" room with "astral" lights that hang from the ceiling, Springfield society enjoyed the performance of its young ladies until the "late" hour of nine p.m.⁴⁷

In the winter the Sewing Society sponsored its annual oyster supper. Springfield, like most of midwestern America, had a passion for oysters. Many people who came from the East fondly remembered oysters and missed them terribly when they moved to Ohio. Regularly scheduled stage coach runs over the Alleghenies made them an occasional, if expensive, treat. Packed in buckets filled with ice and covered with layers of straw and burlap, the oysters remained fresh until arrival at Springfield.⁴⁸ How the old-timers, many of whom grew up near the Jersey shore, must have appreciated this tasty reminder of the sea. The ladies from the Sewing Society sold oysters on the half-shell and wash-boilers filled with creamy oyster stew. Any leftovers were sold to the children for ten cents apiece.⁴⁹

Winter brought other pleasures. Deep, heavy snows, perfect for sleigh riding, fell regularly in Springfield in the mid-nineteenth century. Practically every family had a sleigh in the shed and horse in the barn ready to pull with the first good snowfall. Young people enjoyed taking their sleighs out to Hilts pond for enjoyable ice-skating parties.⁵⁰

Revivals and camp meetings were also repetitive village rites that refreshed Springfield and tended to bring people closer together. When the church held a revival, weeping penitents filled the long "mercy seat" in front of the pulpit. Camp meetings offered even more entertaining fare. In the 1840s revivalists often chose Kemper Landing on the Miami and Erie Canal for its convenience as a baptismal. Country girls dressed in their best crinoline frocks and fanciest bonnets packed picnic lunches and positioned themselves prettily under the big trees near the landing. The young men made dashing figures in their Sunday best complete with boots and tall hats. Perhaps some of them underestimated the practiced skills of the revivalists until they found

themselves rising from the water, "wetter than wash day" but feeling gloriously purified and saved.⁵¹

Agricultural fairs created strong village pride. None was better than the Hamilton County Agricultural Fair, the oldest of its kind west of the Allegheny mountains.⁵² Springfield farmers regularly served on the Board of Directors of the Hamilton County Agricultural Society and judges at the fair. In 1844 John M. Cochran acted as a judge of farm implements. One of the items, which was shipped from New Orleans for the competition, did not arrive in time. Thus Cochran missed his opportunity to judge Cyrus McCormick's "Virginia Reaper." Nevertheless, the Hamilton County Agricultural Association printed an account of the machine in an appendix to its report on the fair.⁵³ Perhaps Anthony Hilts, Jr., read the appendix, or perhaps he made a trip to see the machine when it did arrive. In any event, a few years later Anthony Hilts designed and built his own reaping machine in the blacksmith shop behind his Springfield home.

In the meantime, he and most of his neighbors concentrated on the more mundane categories which included, among other things, fruits and pickles, farm products and buggies. In 1848 Edmund R. Glenn, who a few years later would make his fortune when he sold a parcel of his farm to the Glendale Association, won a prize with one of his cows which produced milk that yielded forty-two lb. ten oz. of butter in just 21 days! Glenn must have been an accomplished farmer because he also won ten dollars for the best hay crop.⁵⁴ A.A Sortor's production of thirty-one bushels and forty pounds of wheat on one acre of ground garnered him top honors. Even the State Board of Agriculture deemed this harvest a "premium" crop.⁵⁵

Beribboned livestock marched around the show ring. In 1846 Joseph Cooper's short-horned cow "White Queen" impressed the judges.⁵⁶ But perhaps the keenest interest for the Springfield men were the horses. Numerous categories offered opportunities for everyone and in 1839 the premium list included ten dollars in plate

each for the best thoroughbred, the best roadster stallion and the best general purpose stallion. The owners of the fastest trotting stallion and the best "jack," however, took home prizes worth only five dollars.⁵⁷

Dr. Hunt, whose neighbors considered his personal choice of "frisky fillies" somewhat foolish, often judged the horses as did young Alexander Neave, a Springfield farmer whose reputation as a keen appraiser of horseflesh made him a popular judge at both the Hamilton County and the Butler County fairs.⁵⁸ Springfield's own prize-winning horses cut a "major swath" at the fair. Belladonna, Robert Hilts' fine Morgan horse, frequently took top honors. Morgan horses were trotting horses from Vermont that became extremely popular in southwestern Ohio when they were introduced into the state in 1848. Morgans were very large, and were dark bay or chestnut colored with flowing wavy manes and tails. Belladonna was an awesome representative of the breed.⁵⁹

Charlie Leggett brought the greatest number of prizes back to Springfield. This blunt-spoken Englishman had huge stables and an abiding love for horse racing. Indeed, in the 1880s, Charlie Leggett's was a professional rider.⁶⁰

Over time, the agricultural aspects of the fair diminished and its entertainment and social aspects increased in importance. The fairgrounds, located in Carthage, featured a two-tiered amphitheater with a show ring in the middle. A balcony ran behind the seats. Hucksters set up their booths and stalls underneath⁶¹ as Springfield residents enjoyed swapping stories with people from neighboring villages that they might only see once a year. Children delighted in slipping in without paying the ten cents charged for a grandstand seat. Once inside they teased the three-legged calves, gawked at the fat lady and tried to slip into the tents where shows were held "of special attraction" for adults only.⁶²

For special occasions, nearby Cincinnati offered theater, music halls and fancy parades. But the big city could be an intimidating experience, for human and horse alike, offering a stark contrast to Springfield's quiet and sparkling clean air. Helen

Kemper described riding her three-year old pony, Timmy, who had never been to the city, "He was very much afraid of the smoke and din of the foundry and a heavy cloud coming over made it very dark."⁶³

Most of all, Springfield enjoyed a good party. Any occasion was sufficient to issue the invitations. Early in the century the young people thought nothing of walking three or four miles barefoot to a country dance.⁶⁴ The parties might be at William Van Dyke's saddler's shop or a more formal affair at someone's home. When Samuel Hunt's sister Alethia married, the reception, complete with dancing, lasted until dawn.⁶⁵ A wedding often meant an entire week of parties as Malinda Peterson complained when her experiences as a bridesmaid to her good friend Eliza Riddle left her exhausted.⁶⁶ On numerous occasions the Hunt offspring mention the parties at which they "tripped the light fantastic" until dawn. Sleighing parties in the winter, and picnics and midnight horseback rides in the summer were regular events.

Springfield's rituals reinforced community pride and fostered the spirit of neighborliness. The compassion and kindness shown to others in time of need did not go unnoticed. In 1856 the Kemper's son Charlie became very ill away from home while attending Wabash College. His sister Helen wrote "if you were the President's son your illness would not have aroused greater interest. It makes me think more of Springfield than ever before."⁶⁷ When people left they yearned to return to the closeness and friendliness of the village. "I will come to Springfield in the fall for a visit of ten or twelve years," wrote a young friend of Sam Hunt's.⁶⁸ When William Hilts, brother of R.D. and Anthony Hilts, Jr., moved his family to Bloomington, Indiana, he wrote a letter to his friend C.A.B. Kemper full of nostalgia for the social and family gatherings at "old" Springfield.⁶⁹

NOTES

Edward Payson Whallon, Some Family Records: Partial Histories of the Whallon, Hagaman, Bickle, Bridgeland, Kitchell, Pierson, Ball, Bruen, Crist, Hughes, Vincent, Bloodgood, Jans, Farrand and Tuttle Families (Cincinnati: F. L. Rowse, 1934): 16.

¹Noble, "Springdale": 225-226.

²Noble, "Springdale:" 227.

³Kevin Sweeney, "Furniture and the Domestic Environment in Wetherfield, Connecticut, 1639-1800," in R. B. St. George, ed., Material Life in America 1600-1860 (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988): 280.

⁴WB 2: 462-464.

⁵Epenetus Breden [also spelled Breading], WB 16 (1 Dec 1841): 578-79.

⁶William Wooley, WB 3 (10 Dec 1850): 58. Also spelled Woolley.

⁷Hunt Papers 5, 7:303.

⁸Blinn Papers, Juliet to Helen Kemper, ms. B648, 3: 436.

⁹Quoted from Hunt's Diary by "Centaur," Cincinnati Enquirer (7 Jan 1923), ms. XH 496, 7, CHS. Hereafter referred to as Enquirer.

¹⁰Luke Foster to Daniel Drake, in Beverley W. Bond, Jr., "Dr. Daniel Drake's Memoirs of the Miami Country, 1779-1794," Quarterly Publications of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio 28 (Apr-Sep. 1923): 108.

¹¹Little Family, Cincinnati Biography, CHS, typewritten ms. by Ralph Ralston Jones of the Ohio Historical Society.

¹²Bond, Drake Memoirs: 8

¹³"Centaur," from Hunt diary entry, 5 Feb 1860.

¹⁴Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 3: 372.

¹⁵Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 2: 158, Harriet Kemper, Walnut Hills to Helen Kemper, 28 Jan 1847.

¹⁶WB 1, (6 Apr 1829): 503-505.

¹⁷Ford, History: 386.

¹⁸"Simply Stunning: Two Hundred Years of Fashion from the Cincinnati Art Museum," Exhibit catalog, 3 May - 4 Sep 1988.

¹⁹WB 2 (18 Apr 1833): 440-442.

²⁰Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 2: 170, 22 Feb 1848.

²¹Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 22: folder 7.

²²WB 6 (20 Apr 1825): 461-64.

²³Nelson, History: 440.

²⁴Julia Kemper's diary, entry of 22 Jul 1862, Blinn Papers, ms. B648 22:6.

²⁵WB 3 (10 Dec 1850): 58.

²⁶Hamilton County Deeds, DB 99: 86.

-
- ²⁷Kelly, Ancestor: 7.
- ²⁸Richard Dunlop, Doctors of the American Frontier (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1965): 4; Charles E. Rosenberg, The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1849, and 1866 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962): 154-158, hereafter cited as Rosenberg, Cholera.
- ²⁹Kelly, Ancestor: 37-38.
- ³⁰Ibid.: 38.
- ³¹Hunt Papers 2, 1:86.
- ³²CHS ms. qS869t, 1839-52, RMV, Springfield Township Trustees, "Minutes," 27, 21 Dec 1839. Hereafter cited as STT, "Minutes."
- ³³Hunt Papers, 2, 1:81.
- ³⁴Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 2, diary entry, 19 Feb 1848.
- ³⁵Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 2:153, Close to Dr. E.G. Kemper, 1 Sep 1849.
- ³⁶Thomas Papers, ms. VF, T 459, CHS. Malinda Peterson Thomas to John Peterson, 15 Jul 1849.
- ³⁷"A Chapter of Corrections," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Proceedings 15 (Jul 1907): 10.
- ³⁸Quoted in Kelly, Ancestor: 63.
- ³⁹Noble, "Springdale": 224-232 lists names and dates of births and deaths; the Hamilton County Genealogical Society has recently revised Noble's list; the Naylor family is mentioned by Helen Kemper in Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 3: 618.
- ⁴⁰Hunt Papers 3, 1:141.
- ⁴¹Kelly, Ancestor: 67.
- ⁴²Rosenberg, Cholera: 157.
- ⁴³Kelly, Ancestor: 70-71.
- ⁴⁴Charles W. Hoffman, "Samuel Furman Hunt, 1844," Ohio Archeological and Historical Society Publications 17 (1908): 240.
- ⁴⁵Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 25, notes of Charles Blinn based on his mother's [Helen Kemper Blinn] reminiscences.
- ⁴⁶Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 25.
- ⁴⁷Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 3: 403, 18 Dec 1856, Juliet to Charlie Kemper.
- ⁴⁸Charles Cist, Sketches and Statistics of Cincinnati in 1851 (Cincinnati: William H. Moore and company, 1851): 85.
- ⁴⁹Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 3:404, Juliet to Charles Kemper, 28 Dec. 1856.
- ⁵⁰"Centaur," 7 Jan 1923, ms. XH 496, 7, CHS.
- ⁵¹Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25.
- ⁵²Millcreek Valley News (16 Aug 1962) 1:3.
- ⁵³Annual Report, Hamilton County Agricultural Association, 1844.
- ⁵⁴Ohio Cultivator (1 Dec 1848): 181.
- ⁵⁵Ohio Cultivator (15 Apr 1848): 57.
- ⁵⁶Ohio Cultivator (15 Oct 1846): 155.
- ⁵⁷Hamilton County Agricultural Association, "Minutes," July 1839.

⁵⁸Poster for the 1860 Butler County fair lists Alexander Neave; Hamilton County Agricultural Society, "Minutes," 23 Nov 1852 - 2 Sep 1874.

⁵⁹Millcreek Vally News (12 Sep 1947): 1; hereafter cited as MCVN.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹MCVN (12 Sep 1947): 1.

⁶²Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25.

⁶³Blinn Papers, ms. B648 3:351, Helen to Charlie Kemper, 14 Jun 1852.

⁶⁴Miami Valley News (19 Jun 1884): 4.

⁶⁵Kelly, Ancestor: 201.

⁶⁶Thomas Papers, ms. VF, T459, Peterson to John Thomas, 20 Aug 1846.

⁶⁷Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 3:420.

⁶⁸Hunt Papers, 3, 2:160, 24 Jun 1857.

⁶⁹Blinn Papers, ms. B648 3:431, 20 Aug 1857.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE VILLAGE SPLITS OVER ABOLITIONISM

"He is an avowed abolitionist of the most violent stamp and a known and open advocate of disruption...." So wrote Jared Stone, pastor of the Springfield Presbyterian Church, about his predecessor, Adrian Aten. The man Stone described as violent and disruptive in 1848 had preached the first sermon in the new and still unfinished church fourteen years earlier. During Aten's eight-year tenure, fifty new members joined the church, and when he left Springfield in 1841, the well-wishes of the community rang in his ears. Yet when Reverend Stone wrote the words quoted above, he believed himself to be in a struggle with Aten and the abolitionists for the soul of the community. It may seem that Stone exaggerated but the abolitionists evoked that kind of response.

The nation agonized over the question of slavery in the forty years before the Civil War, touching virtually every aspect of life and every community. Even those who opposed slavery differed over how to respond to the institution. Early anti-slavery advocates hoped a moderate program of education and persuasion would lead the South to emancipate its slaves voluntarily. Some disliked slavery but feared the presence of blacks in northern society even more, and advocated emancipation and colonization to Liberia. Others were militant abolitionists who saw slavery as such an evil that they demanded nothing less than its total repudiation.

The furor over slavery convulsed southwestern Ohio, an area that had strong social and economic ties to the South. With only a river separating Cincinnati from the slave-holding states, many runaway slaves crossed the Ohio in search of freedom. The issue of slavery was subject to ongoing debate. Tensions led to a three-day race riot in Cincinnati in 1829 during which a mob drove blacks who were in violation of the Black

Codes, originally passed in 1802 to limit activities of free blacks. These laws required that blacks and mulattos living in Ohio have a certificate of freedom, and a bond for their good behavior and upkeep secured by two freeholders. The codes also excluded blacks and mulattos from the public schools and disallowed their testimony in court cases involving white persons.¹ Although tied to the South economically and by the sympathies of many of its white citizens, the Cincinnati area also became a stop on the underground railroad and a center of anti-slavery activities. James G. Birney printed his anti-slavery newspaper, The Philanthropist, in Cincinnati. In 1831 a mob destroyed the paper's offices.²

In Springfield men and women of influence had long been active in the anti-slavery fight. In April 1817 the Miami Presbytery appointed Reverend John Thompson as one of a committee of three to prepare a memorial "...on the subject of man-stealing and slavery." The presbytery tried to persuade the synod to ask the general assembly to make a statement on the subject. Although the committee failed in 1817, the following year Thompson went on another anti-slavery mission. This time he and two others persuaded the general assembly to deliver a statement against the sale of slaves. In a highly controversial move, the assembly made it the duty of the church to exclude from the sacraments those who dealt in the sale of human flesh.³

Thirty-six hundred blacks lived in Hamilton County in 1850, the greatest number in any Ohio county,⁴ but only a few blacks lived in Springfield. According to census data, no blacks were reported in 1820. Ten years later, in 1830, a girl between the ages of ten and fifteen lived in the household of O.G. Stearns, and a man between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-six in the household of Anthony Hilts. Living in the household of white persons probably meant the girl worked as a domestic servant and that the man was a farm laborer or apprentice. Although questions of race and slavery may not have affected them personally, many people in Springfield, like other Americans, developed strong beliefs on these issues.

Runaway slaves on fleeing North to freedom found sanctuary with sympathizers at several safe houses. In the area around Springfield, the home of John Van Zandt of Mt. Pierpont, a village near Sharon, became known as Eliza House because it supposedly provided the inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's famed Uncle Tom's Cabin. VanZandt, a former Kentucky slave owner who had freed his slaves and moved to free Ohio soil, did not hesitate to break the law in helping slaves to escape. In April 1842, after two of his Sharon neighbors discovered him with eight runaways in his wagon, he was turned in exchange for the reward offered by the slaves' owner. Salmon Portland Chase, the great Cincinnati attorney and abolitionist, volunteered to take the case and gave VanZandt a brilliant and impassioned defense. However, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against him and some observers felt Chase had ruined a brilliant career. Later, he became Secretary of the Treasury in the Lincoln administration and eventually the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. VanZandt, on the other hand, paid a high price for his convictions. He was imprisoned for a time and Eliza House was sold to pay his debts. The Methodist Church of Sharon barred him from its services.⁵

Since most of the national churches split over the issue of slavery, it was not surprising that the Springfield schism over abolitionism arose in the church. On one hand, the abolitionist leadership came from the ranks of the evangelical ministry. At the Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, for instance, the ardent abolitionist Theodore Dwight Weld encouraged open debate on slavery, and students organized abolitionist activities in the community. When the seminary's administration sought to halt this activism, large numbers of students and faculty withdrew and transferred to Oberlin College. These abolitionist ministers and students of theology opposed any compromise or any accommodation to the evil of slavery.⁶ On the other hand, the national churches also had southern congregations and southern ministers who justified slavery from their pulpits.

Shortly after Reverend Adrian Aten left his Springfield pulpit in 1841 and settled at Red Oak, he "became enlisted in the abolitionist cause and entertained schismatical and revolutionary views," wrote Reverend Bergen in his history. Aten openly opposed the Presbyterian policy on slavery. For twenty years the Presbyterian church had asserted that chattel slavery was not in itself in conflict with moral law. The Synod of Cincinnati and the Presbytery of Chillicothe agreed, stating their opinion that slave holding was not necessarily a sin and should not prevent the slave owner from partaking in communion. In April 1845 when the general assembly of his church again refused to denounce slavery, Aten protested vehemently.⁷

One year later, in April 1846, Aten's conscience led him to even greater extremes. At the Presbytery of Chillicothe, Aten denounced the general assembly's decision. Then he proceeded to attack the Synod of Cincinnati for approving and sanctioning the general assembly, risking his professional life. Yet his next proposal was even more drastic. He proposed a resolution to the Presbytery of Chillicothe that it separate from the general assembly and the synod until those bodies "returned to the principles of the word of God and the constitution of the Presbyterian Church." Chillicothe refused and Aten left the church he had served his entire adult life.⁸

Aten returned to Springfield in February or March of 1848 but not to his old church. Rumors circulated that Aten returned because of an invitation from the strong anti-slavery contingent in the village. Stone himself felt that Aten knew of influential families "unhappy over the alleged existence and tolerance of slavery in the Presbyterian Church and that if an opportunity offered itself would withdraw." Some of these families were his own relatives. Aten's wife, Margaret, a member of the influential Long family, had extensive family connections with most of the Springfield elite.⁹

Whether or not Reverend Aten went from house to house converting Springfield to the abolitionist cause, as Reverend Stone asserted, or whether he hired small boys as runners to canvass Springfield asking "are you willing that Mr. A. should preach here?"

it soon became evident that Aten did, indeed, plan to establish an abolitionist church in Springfield. Aten hoped to affiliate with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. In May 1848 the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church sent a committee to the field to inquire into the facts connected with Aten's proposal. In June 1848 it received Reverend Aten into the church by certificate from the Presbytery of Chillicothe. The group also granted a petition for the organization of a vacancy at Springfield. In October a call from the Springfield congregation for Reverend Aten was received and accepted.¹⁰

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church originally formed when Scottish immigrants split from the main body of Presbyterianism in 1782. The ARP was the most assimilated of a number of such sects. In 1830, the Western Synod of that church, which governed the Springfield church, resolved slave-ownership to be incompatible with Christian doctrines. Officially, the ARP did not support any specific abolitionist society but "...her doctrine, her discipline, her public sentiment are all against slavery."¹¹ The other synods refused to acquiesce in this resolution which led ultimately to another schism over slavery in the 1850s.¹² By 1848, Reverend Aten had established "a thorough-going Abolitionist Church...in which all tender consciences may find repose!"¹³ Many of its members came from other congregations, angering ministers like Stone. Those who left included:¹⁴

Phoebe Ann Sebring	Erase - gone to A
Lavinia Skillman Riddle	" " "
James Corrigan	" " "
_____ Richie	" " "
Martha Ogden	" " "

Even two of Kemper's fellow elders, Thomas Q. Skillman and Balthus Rusk, joined Aten's new church.

In January 1849 the Associate Reformed congregation built a church on the site occupied today by the Springdale School. Unfortunately, no complete list exists of those

who joined. In addition to the above, we have the church's records of those later received back in the fold.¹⁵ These include:

Elizabeth Huston
 Mary Ann Hoel
 Huldah Miller
 Mary Symmes McCormick
 Elizabeth Rusk
 Catherine Watson
 William Watson
 Mary Brown
 Archibald Brown

The nineteenth-century historian of the Millcreek Valley, J. G. Olden, also lists the following:¹⁶

Robert Watson
 William Hoel
 Edmund R. Glenn

The incomplete list--Bergen noted that fifty-one left so this list is approximately 40 percent of the total--makes it difficult to analyze the social composition of the new church. Certainly Reverend Stone considered that he had lost some of the more wealthy and influential members of his congregation. Judge Hoffman, in his history of the Presbyterian church, noted that the "defection of such wealthy patrons hurt the church."¹⁷ One wealthy member was Thomas Skillman, who, according to the census of 1850 owned real estate worth thirty thousand dollars. Another was Balthus Rusk, who listed his holdings at seventy-eight hundred dollars which would still made him solidly middle-class.

Many historians see a close association between abolition and the rise of modestly-wealthy middle-class manufacturers devoted to the principles of free enterprise and free labor, and separated from the established elites whose power they challenged. In Springfield specific data is lacking to test such a hypothesis. On the basis of very scanty evidence it would appear that the supporters of abolition in Springfield

were farmers and it would be difficult to see Thomas Skillman as anything other than a member of the local elite.

There is another connection, however. In a small, closely-knit village such as Springfield, personal and familial quarrels tended to become entwined around the town's most important institution, in this case, the Springfield Presbyterian Church. For some time before the actual schism, it had been a church in turmoil. The "Old School" Presbyterianism of the Springfield church demanded strict moral conduct from its membership. Drinking, dancing, card playing, gossip and failure to observe the Sabbath were all quite serious offenses. Yet judging from the numerous church trials, reality was very different as "members were disposed to walk disorderly."¹⁸ At least that was what Reverend Stone found. In the eight years (1841-1849) that he served the church, there were forty-four cases of discipline, including nineteen for intemperance, five for breach of the fourth commandment, two for slander, eleven for lying, six for being absent from communion and six for quarreling.¹⁹ So many trials occurred that the local press labeled the church "the courthouse."²⁰

Two trials in particular left unhealed wounds in the community and reinforced existing anti-slavery feeling that paved the way for Reverend Aten's return. The first of these trials began on September 15, 1847 when charges of "Unchristian Conduct" were brought against Ann Gibson. Gibson supposedly made slanderous allegations concerning Reverend Stone's treatment of a girl who had been living with his family and who, it was alleged, had run away to Gibson's house. The session found Gibson guilty but the fact that the charges involved rumors about its pastor created dissension within the congregation.

The second trial involved a clash between two of the most important families in Springfield. On June 29, 1848 the church notified Lavinia S. Riddle that she had been charged with refusing to live with her husband. Witnesses included John Riddle and his son, John L. Riddle. When the decision went against her, Riddle appealed

unsuccessfully to the presbytery stating that some of the testimony in her behalf had been left unrecorded. Thomas Skillman, the father of 22-year old "Liv," and a church elder, acted as her advocate. In that same month he left the church and joined Reverend Aten.²¹

Reverend Jared Stone himself participated in an Presbyterian Anti-Slavery Convention held in Hamilton on September 17 and 18, 1844. With his friend, Thomas E. Thomas, he prepared an anti-slavery tract. Thomas later avowed that though his friend was not an activist, "throughout his life, Jared M. Stone was a staunch, reliable, moderate, intelligent, and outspoken abolitionist."²² Stone held to the doctrine of his church of non-interference in the affairs of the state. Furthermore, he feared that slavery would split Presbyterianism along sectional lines as it had sundered the church at Springfield. He wrote that although he might "abhor slavery," he could not see "abandoning those church relations in the south on account of the feelings of those who lived in the free states."²³ On at least one occasion, a visiting minister at the Presbyterian church took up a collection to purchase, and later emancipate, a slave.²⁴

In the meantime, the Associate Reformed Church became the center for abolitionist activities. As a matter of policy, the church's leadership engaged "eloquent ministers who can proclaim the evils of slavery."²⁵ On Sundays and during numerous revivals they came to Springfield to help Aten spread the abolitionist gospel. Not everyone in the village approved. Some people who resented the message expressed their anger by hurling stones through windows and open doors.²⁶

With the end of the Civil War, the Springfield Associate Reformed Church closed its doors on October 23, 1864.²⁷ The Presbyterian Church welcomed back those who wished to return and one of the most tumultuous chapters in Springfield's history officially came to a close.

NOTES

Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:2, Reverend Stone's statement to the Associate Reformed Presbytery in which he voiced objections to the proposed establishment of an ARP church in Springfield.

¹Thomas E. Wagner, "Cincinnati and Southwestern Ohio: Abolitionist Training Ground," M.A. thesis, Miami University, 1967: 8; Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25.

²John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, 3rd ed. (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1966): 200-01, 234-241.

³Welsh, Buckeye Presbyterianism: 83.

⁴Leonard Erickson, "Politics and Repeal of Ohio's Black Laws, 1837-1949," Ohio History 82 (1974): 170.

⁵Hoffman, History: 18-21.

⁶John F. Hume, The Abolitionist (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1905; reprint N.Y., AMS Press, Inc., 1973): 49.

⁷Hoffman, Story: 93.

⁸Ibid.: 96-97.

⁹Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:27.

¹⁰"Minutes of the Ninth General Synod," in United Presbyterian and Evangelical Guardian 3 (July 1849): 100.

¹¹J.C. [Claybaugh], "Slavery," United Presbyterian 1 (Sept 1847): 198.

¹²John R. McKivigan, The War Against Proslavery Religion: Abolitionism and the Northern Churches 1830-1865 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984): 28-29.

¹³Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:27.

¹⁴Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:27.

¹⁵List of Communicants, Church Archives.

¹⁶Olden, Historical Sketches: 220.

¹⁷Hoffman, A Story: 99.

¹⁸Bergen ms., Blinn Papers, ms B648, 21:27.

¹⁹Bergen ms., Blinn Papers, ms. B648 21:27.

²⁰Hoffman, Story: 101.

²¹Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:27.

²²Alfred A. Thomas, Correspondence of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas Mainly Relating to the Anti-Slavery Conflict in Ohio. Especially in the Presbyterian Church (n.p., c. 1909): 64.

²³Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 21:27.

²⁴"Centaur," ms. HX, 496.

²⁵"Thoughts for the Present Crisis," United Presbyterian and Evangelical Guardian 1 (May 1847): 43.

²⁶Hoffman, Story: 97. Hume, Abolitionist: 64 notes that when he was a small boy in southern Ohio broken windows and doors, stains from old vegetables and rotten eggs marked the spots where abolitionists preached.

²⁷John Hunt's diary, Hunt Papers, 4, 5:8.

CHAPTER FIVE

SPRINGDALE'S CIVIL WAR

In 1861 the bitter debate over slavery finally led to civil war. On December 20, 1860 on the heels of Abraham Lincoln's election, South Carolina seceded from the Union. On February 4, 1861 the convention of seceded states convened in Montgomery, Alabama and on February 8, it adopted the Provisional Constitution of the Confederacy. With the Union broken, war was imminent. What did that portend for little Springdale? Initially the war brought enthusiasm and excitement as farm boys exchanged their plows for muskets and bright uniforms. Later on it brought unmown hayfields from want of farm labor, another son's name on the dreaded draft list, and memorial services for the fallen at the little white church. Finally, it concluded a long chapter in Springdale's history. After the war the veterans returned only temporarily before wandering away, taking with them much of the village's vitality and hopes for the future.

But in April 1861, while no one could escape the talk of war, life's routines continued. John R. Hunt, the son of Dr. John Hunt, took his spring break from Miami University. Mary Hageman came up from Glendale College to visit the village. In the next few days John socialized with his numerous friends, shopped for new boots in Cincinnati with his younger sister and, in general, celebrated the rites of spring in a manner customary to young college students. While normal activities continued in Springdale, on April 6 President Abraham Lincoln notified South Carolina that the federal garrison of Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor would be provisioned, by force if necessary. On April 12, when the commander of the fort refused to surrender, Confederate forces opened fire and the fort fell two days later. The chain of events thus set in motion would change irrevocably the life of John Hunt and millions of other young men.

Hunt greeted the war enthusiastically. He viewed enlistment as an opportunity for adventure and rapid advancement. In an obvious effort to solicit support from a person with some influence on his parents, he wrote seeking the advice of Judge J. Wilson Cochran, John Morrow Cochran's son and family friend. Judge Cochran gently informed John that his desire for heroics was unlikely to be fulfilled if he enlisted. Older men would be assigned positions of leadership. Instead he suggested that Hunt concentrate on his studies at Miami.¹ On the day after Fort Sumter fell, President Lincoln called seventy-five thousand state militiamen into federal service for three months. Hunt, back at Miami, enlisted three days later.²

But what young man could resist? The attack on Fort Sumter produced a surge of patriotism. The impatience to enlist was evident on both sides. In the first flush of enthusiasm, twenty-three youngsters from Springdale "joined up," fearing that the war would end before they saw action. None of them realized that in the war of attrition that followed, dreams of glory would give way to a struggle for survival.

R. D. Hilts, the brother of Anthony Hilts, Jr., fought desperately to prevent the enlistment of his son Johnny. The wealthy Hilts, who owned a number of large farm properties, encouraged Johnny to remain at home, attend the Farmer's College at Mount Healthy for a couple of years, and then assume the responsibilities of the farm. But father stormed and pleaded in vain. Barely seventeen years old and still quite small, John Hilts made up for his lack of stature with a king-sized stubbornness. When his friend John Hunt refused to help him get a position as a clerk in his own regiment, stating "...although I admire your patriotism and am glad to see you so willing to go forth in defense of your country and the stars and stripes," John Hilts ran away to become a bugler with the Merrill's Horse Cavalry, Co. C.³ Soon the glamour of war eroded quickly. Only a few months later Johnny bitterly regretted his rashness, for, as he wrote, if he had taken the advice of family and friends he would "now be in Farmer's College instead of this dirty hole, Sedalia [Missouri]."⁴

The young ladies, however, very much admired the new enlistees. Mary Hageman thought John Hunt's decision to "oppose their brethren of the south" a "most noble resolution." Indeed, the entire Glendale Female College abandoned the classroom to visit the brave young men drilling at Camp Harrison.⁵

The admiration of young girls for dashing young men in uniform helped in recruiting and, after the opening wave, when the Union needed help badly. The first men usually enlisted for a three-month period. Not finding the glory and glamour they expected, many of them returned home as soon as their term expired. Recruiters began offering sizable bounties in an effort to keep their regiments full.

Some young men, eager and exhilarated by the first news of war, had sober second thoughts while on the very brink of enlistment:

The patriotism of the Springdalers does not amount to much as the courage of nearly all, failed them when they went to enlist. It was all gas and no go....[Frank] Schooley and Ike Van Dyke went to Camp Harrison but that was as far as they got.⁶

In fact, young James Kennedy who expressed this opinion about his fellow "Springdalers," did not himself enlist. Instead he spent the war running Sunnyside, the family estate, for his widowed mother. Some men who did enlist regretted their decision and deserted. "William Books has run off and they are after him," wrote another of the Hunt brothers, Jim, "\$30 for anyone who will tell where he is."⁷ But for the most part Springdale's stellar record of participation in the war belies any casual comment about cowardly behavior.

Persuasive and ambitious young men often recruited their own companies. Elias Montfort of Glendale recruited the Springdale area heavily for Colonel Nathaniel McLean's 75th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. The 75th would suffer heavy casualties in the days to come.

In the early days of the war when most of the units were still militia the equipment allocated to soldiers varied enormously. Some favored brightly colored

uniforms, red or vivid blue. When those proved impractical for obvious reasons, the dull Union blue became standard. John Hunt's colonel told him that his unit would be supplied with blouses rather than coats which was viewed as good fortune since both sides insisted on issuing heavy woolen uniforms to their soldiers. A long march on a hot day left discarded coats throughout the countryside. Standard practice dictated a double-breasted coat which was quite inconvenient and later replaced by the single-breasted style. Then, as now, soldiers probably complained more about their footwear than anything else. Hunt purchased a pair of boots immediately, finding the brogans issued to him too coarse and heavy to wear. Other articles allotted included a knapsack, haversack, canteen, cartridges, cap boxes, shoulder straps, bayonet scabbards, a military cap, an undershirt and a pair of drawers of good material.⁸

Muskets provided the firepower for Hunt's regiment but Colonel N. C. McLean's 75th marched off to war with the latest in "rifled" muskets. In early January 1862 the 75th drilled almost constantly as it prepared for a campaign.⁹ The women in Springdale worked diligently as well, sewing clothing for their men to take with them.¹⁰ On January 25 the 75th moved out for its first position in western Virginia [now West Virginia] and "many were the tears that were shed" in Springdale.¹¹ Under the less than inspired leadership of Col. McLean, the 75th engaged in some of the bloodiest campaigns of the war. Springdale residents James McCormick, James Jackson, John Naylor, James Riddle, Michael Butler, George Cain and Stephen and James Skillman served in the 75th.¹²

Many Springdale men joined the 39th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, as well as the 81st and the 83rd. Hunt rose to the position of lieutenant in the 81st,¹³ his cousin, Alf Carle, was a corporal in the 39th, Co. A, a company which also included privates James Baker, David Carle, John W. Miller, Jacob Spinning, Robert Watson and Dave Brown from Springdale.¹⁴ Hunt's bugler friend, Johnny Hilts, served in Merrill's Horse Cavalry, Co. C.¹⁵ Forty-five year old Warren Wilmuth received his appointment as a sergeant in the

4th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, Co. D, on December 2, 1861. William Sprong also served in that regiment.¹⁶ When Hunt returned home on leave August 3, 1861 Springdale greeted him with a charming serenade. His appearance in uniform at the Presbyterian Church on Sunday morning elicited "oohs" and aahs from the younger members of the congregation.¹⁷ Even though he had yet to face actual combat, Hunt already knew something about the realities of war. Part of his regiment had pursued the enemy for four days, marching over one hundred miles of West Virginia mountains, sleeping on the ground and eating nothing but crackers and some beef they commandeered from a farmer's pasture, only to be ordered back to base before engaging the enemy.

For the first two years the war did not make a serious impact on the home front. Enough young men remained for adequate supply of dance partners at Springdale's incessant round of parties. Some continued attending Miami until the university finally closed its doors.

Then in January 1863 rumors reached Springdale that Lt. Col. Berry and Minor Milliken were among the dead and wounded at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. James Kennedy, a friend of the two, headed south to the scene of the battle but federal forces stopped him in Covington.¹⁸ Berry's wife had better luck. She and her brother made their way to Louisville, bought an old wagon traveled to Nashville. There she found the Colonel hale and hearty except for a slight wound to the wrist, lingering several days at the field tending to the wounded.¹⁹

Few neighborhoods had been spared fatalities as long as Springdale but the inevitable finally happened. Word arrived that Sgt. George McCormick died in battle January 11, 1863. McCormick was one of eight men of the 83d Ohio who fell at Arkansas Post and was killed just at the moment of victory.²⁰ Six months later the 75th OVI which formed part of the reserve forces at Gettysburg was thrown into battle at the front. The men demonstrated great bravery in the face of heavy losses in a successful

assault on a ledge of rock held by the enemy. But the unexpected fall back of General Oliver Howard's troops cut the 75th off from the rest of the brigade. With no way of receiving orders it was forced to fall back and many more men were wounded or killed, including James McCormick.²¹ In less than six months, The McCormick family lost two sons. James McCormick was buried on the plains of Gettysburg along with his Springdale neighbor, Jim Jackson.²²

The McCormick tragedy finally brought the reality of the war home to Springdale. Images of shining swords and parade marches disappeared. The sense of shock that pervaded the village led to a strengthening of purpose. Unfortunately the losses made it very difficult for the citizens of Springdale to tolerate dissent.

II

Not everyone in the village shared the same commitment to the war. In Springdale as in most other Ohio communities, many endorsed the leader of the Ohio Peace Democrats, Clement L. Vallandigham.²³ This Dayton, Ohio Democrat opposed the war on constitutional grounds and on more than one occasion had expressed his outrage at the immorality of slavery. Nevertheless, he felt that constitutional states' rights guaranteed the South protection for its "peculiar" institution. Once the war began, he spoke out against the increased powers exercised by the executive branch of government. He also condemned the Emancipation Proclamation, which was issued by President Abraham Lincoln and freed the slaves effective January 1, 1863. The economic impact on the South was dramatic, closing off an important southern market. Vallandigham's southern sympathies led to attacks from Republicans who called him, and other Peace Democrat followers, "Copperheads," and charges of treason.

Finally, in 1863, General Ambrose Burnside, commander of the Department of the Ohio, issued "General Orders No. 38." That edict declared that persons expressing sympathy for the enemy would be arrested and subject to court martial. On May 5, 1863

Vallandigham was placed under arrest and taken to Cincinnati for trial. There he was found guilty and imprisoned. President Lincoln chose not to make a martyr of Vallandigham and turned him over to the Confederacy which then exiled him to Canada.

Popular reaction to Vallandigham's arrest and trial propelled him to victory in absentia in the Ohio gubernatorial primary of 1863. The Vallandigham candidacy split many families, including the Hunt family of Springdale. Young Sam Hunt wrote that the "political situation between the Abolitionists and the Democrats is as bitter as the South is against the North." Evidently, Dr. Hunt could not support John Brough, Vallandigham's Republican opponent. Sam castigated his brother John, a Brough man, for going against the instruction of their father and for preferring the "abolition of slavery to the Constitution of the United States."²⁴

Vallandigham, running his campaign from his Canadian exile, suffered defeat at the hands of Brough, much to John's delight. Sam Hunt was a college boy with a college boy's enthusiasms but he articulated quite clearly Vallandigham's appeal to a great many Ohioans. Still, those who thought about straying from the Union quickly rushed back into the fold when John Hunt Morgan made his daring raid into Ohio and Indiana, July 8 through 26, 1863.

III

In early 1863, the fiery Confederate General John Hunt Morgan obtained permission to carry out a raid in Kentucky. However, without authority, Morgan carried the war across that border state and into northern territory. On July 1, 1863 he began to move north. As the people of Springdale celebrated Independence Day at Laurel Grove with the usual picnics and speeches, Morgan and his men marched through Kentucky towards the Ohio River. On July 13 he passed from Indiana to Ohio at Harrison. No one knew with any accuracy his direction or his intentions. Cincinnati panicked. As one citizen of Springdale stationed at the McLean Barracks reported of the urban folk,

"many [were] shaking in their boots for fear they would have to shoulder the musket or that Morgan might come and sack [sic] the city."²⁵ At 1 a.m. on July 14 a fast-riding courier reported to Burnside that Morgan was approaching with twenty-five hundred men and six artillery and that he seemed headed toward New Burlington or Springdale.²⁶

As Morgan crossed the Miami River he literally burned his bridge behind him:

As the red flames created by the great burning timbers rose skyward, they illuminated the entire valley. Before midnight the cavalry were brushing the northern outskirts of Cincinnati, all houses darkened, the night extraordinarily black and airless.

The men carried lighted flares made of paper...which they had stolen on the way.²⁷

Morgan's raiders were interested in stealing more than paper. They had their eye on good horseflesh. Morgan had pushed his men so hard that their horses literally gave way beneath them. By the time they reached the Springdale area many were searching frantically for new mounts. In Springdale, the raiders conveniently found a place noted for its quality horses. Was it just a coincidence? Conspiracy theories spread like wildfire. Vallandigham supporters, members of the Knights of the Golden Circle and other groups deemed subversive, supposedly informed Morgan of the location of valuable property that he could confiscate and directed him towards those who would support his cause. In fact, though, Morgan and his men rebuffed the efforts of the Peace Democrats. No evidence exists to show that Morgan selected his route to rally southern sympathizers.

The bells in the cupola of the Springdale church rang the alarm of imminent danger. General Morgan and his fatigued but hard-riding raiders dashed down Sharon Hill into neighboring Glendale. Union forces under General Hobson were in pursuit but still twelve hours behind. Both forces needed fresh horses. Springdale farmers tried, more or less successfully, to hide their horses. C.A.B. Kemper herded his fine stock into a ravine on his property.²⁸ Friends feared Morgan might have found the horses, "they being good travelers [that] would suit him well."²⁹ But they underestimated the practical, quick-thinking farmer. Another farmer, Charles Leggett, lost four animals

from his stable, located just outside the village.³⁰ According to Sam Hunt, narrowly escaped from "thieving marauders" belonging to Hobson's band while riding his brother's mare.³¹ All in all, Morgan brought more excitement to Springdale than it had enjoyed in many years. Nevertheless the fact that the village escaped the pillaging so many expected did nothing to diminish the complaints of its citizens. Many who had lost their horses resented having to travel to Gallipolis to reclaim them after Morgan's capture.³²

Ultimately Morgan's raid, together with the losses on the battlefield, led to a consolidation of Union sympathy in Springdale. With that unity and resolve, however, came bitterness. A scrap of a letter found in the Kemper papers denounced those sympathetic to the Confederacy vividly reflecting the new sentiments. The writer expressed the feeling that freedom of speech might be a worthy ideal "but at a time when the country is bleeding and the young are sacrificing their lives...[they] have no right to exhibit feelings of sympathy to the enemy."³³

IV

The seemingly endless demands for more soldiers forced Congress to pass a draft law in 1863. Numerous reasons for exemption still remained. The fact that married men were only drafted if there were no eligible single men in the district gave hope to Springdale maidens on the brink of spinsterhood. Helen Kemper, who thought she was approaching that state, wrote her female friends, "the conscription bill is inviting all the old bachelors to marry or go into the army."³⁴ The Union draft also permitted buying an exemption for three hundred dollars or the hiring of a substitute, leading to cries that this was "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight."³⁵

The draft established a quota for each congressional district based on its population. When a district met that quota it was free from the draft until the next allotment of

men had to be raised. In the spring of 1864 Springdale met its quota.³⁶ But in the next hundred-day call the draft took several men from the community.³⁷

The absence of so many young men created a labor shortage that reached crisis proportions at harvest time. James Kennedy worked the fields at Sunnyside like a common laborer, praying all the time that "Father Lincoln" would not order up so many troops that he would have to go.³⁸ Still, scarce labor meant higher prices for products, and increased war contracts replaced the lost southern market. Farm prices escalated. Corn sold for a dollar a bushel and hay for thirty dollars a ton.³⁹

Though by 1864 it would be just a matter of time before the final defeat of the Confederacy, the war dragged on. As Grant led his Army against Lee, and Sherman began his inexorable march to the sea, war-weariness hung like a pall over the community. When John Hunt's enlistment expired and he arrived home in October, Springdale seemed to him to be like a deserted village.

Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, exactly four years after the attack on Fort Sumter. On August 26, 1865 many Springdale residents attended a soldiers' welcome-home at Sharonville.⁴⁰ By September all of the soldiers had returned to the village except those who had died. Though another familiar round of parties began, somehow Springdale seemed a different place.

IV

The war brought a metamorphosis to Springdale. At first, the Civil War portended decline. The war uprooted a disproportionate number of Springdale's young men and broadened their horizons. When they returned they saw the village with new eyes, not as their charming ancestral home but, as in John Hunt's words, as a "deserted village." With the restless spirit so characteristic of veterans in any era, they looked for greater opportunities elsewhere.

Some veterans, of course, stayed behind. Ralph McCormick returned to his wife Caroline, five-year-old John, and two-year-old Anna. He and his brother Garret opened

a grocery business in Springdale. Once four McCormick brothers, so close in age, shared every experience. Springdale must have seemed a very different place to the two still living.

After the war those who walked down the Pike and looked on a side-porch, so characteristic of Springdale houses, might see a solitary figure sitting, his empty pants legs neatly folded and pinned above the knees. Mack Morgan lost his legs while serving as a private in the 3rd U.S. Artillery. Although no information exists as to the precise nature of his injury, his artillery service is highly suggestive. Artillery men were frequently poorly-trained and the big guns were unpredictable. In any event, Morgan survived his double amputation. More men died from post-operative complications than from the wounds that made an operation necessary.

Many men in this small village suffered injuries that impaired them for the remainder of their days. Elias Ellis, a captain in the 93d OVI, received a gunshot wound in the thigh that left him permanently crippled. Frostbite, rather than enemy fire, maimed John Collins in the 6th Ohio Voluntary Infantry. He walked with a permanent limp from the loss of the toes on his left foot. Other men, not so visibly impaired, suffered a loss of productivity because of chronic rheumatism, ruptures or lingering coughs.⁴¹ The records are silent on the shell-shock victims but they undoubtedly existed.

"What are Brouz Wilmuth, Henry Van Dyke and other young men about Springdale doing?" wrote John Hunt. "Anyone with energy who is willing to leave home can find good situations that will pay."⁴² Unfortunately for Springdale, many young men accepted John's version of opportunities out West. Henry Van Dyke, despite a limp from a leg wound received at Vicksburg, took his neighbor's advice. Many others returned only to drift away within a few years. The lure of the West led former Springdale residents to settle from Missouri to California.⁴³

No village, however small, escaped the Civil War which changed the future for individuals such as John Hunt and shaped communities like Springdale. In many

ways, the war sapped the community of its vitality and left it in the hands of an older generation which could not adapt easily to the forces of industrialization and modernization that characterized the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The once prosperous village faced a critical stage in its history in the late 1860s and 1870s. To avoid decline it needed an infusion of spirit and fresh ideas.

NOTES

Kelly, Ancestor: 75.

¹Hunt Papers, 4, 1:170.

²Hunt Papers, 4:1, John Hunt diary entry.

³Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1866, 11:727; hereafter cited as Roster.

⁴Hunt Papers 4, 3:208.

⁵Hunt Papers, 4, 1:177.

⁶Kelly, Ancestor: 80.

⁷Hunt Papers, 4, 2:197.

⁸Hunt Papers, 4, 1:182 and 183.

⁹Hunt Papers, 4, 3:207.

¹⁰Hunt Papers, 4, 2:197.

¹¹Hunt papers, 4, 3:208; Whitlaw Reid, Ohio in the War: Her Statesmen, Generals, and Soldiers 1 History of the State during the War and the Lives of Her Generals (New York: Moore, Wilstach and Baldwin): 434; hereafter cited as Reid, Ohio.

¹²Roster, 6:212-214.

¹³Roster, 6:469.

¹⁴Roster, 4: 99-102.

¹⁵Roster, 11:727.

¹⁶Roster 11:197.

¹⁷Hunt Papers, 4, 1:186a.

¹⁸Hunt Papers, 4, 5:245.

¹⁹Hunt Papers, 4, 5:252.

²⁰Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 5:614. Helen Kemper to Helen Chapin, 23 Feb 1863.

²¹Reid, Ohio: 436.

²²Hunt Papers, 5, 6:270.

²³Although their Republican adversaries used the term "Copperhead" as virtually synonymous with traitor, they were, in fact, Democrat opponents of the Lincoln administration who called for peace and compromise to end the war.

²⁴Hunt Papers, 5, 6:267.

²⁵Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 6:663. J.A. Means to Helen Kemper.

²⁶Charles Greve, Centennial of Cincinnati and Representative Citizens 1 (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1904): 839.

²⁷Quoted from Dee Alexander Brown, The Bold Cavaliers in MCVN (26 Jan 1961): 1.

²⁸Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25.

²⁹Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 5:663.

³⁰Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25.

³¹Hunt Papers, 5, 6:267.

³²Ibid.

³³Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 5:670.

³⁴Blinn Papers, ms. B648, 5:615.

³⁵Quoted in John Bowen, Civil War Days: Everyday Life during the War between the States (N.J.: Chartwell Books, Inc., 1987): 49.

³⁶Hunt Papers, 5, 7:287.

³⁷Hunt Papers, 5, 7:302.

³⁸Hunt Papers, 5, 7:288.

³⁹Hunt Papers, 5, 7:303.

⁴⁰Hunt Papers, 5, Folder 10, Leigh Hunt's day book, entry for 27 Aug 1865.

⁴¹U.S., Eleventh United States Census, 1890, "Union Veterans and Widows of Union Veterans of the Civil War," Ohio, Hamilton County, MF5025, No. M123, Roll No. 66: 5-6 for the village of Springdale.

⁴²Hunt Papers, 5, 9:329. After his discharge John worked briefly in the War Department in Washington, D.C.

⁴³

CHAPTER SIX
SPRINGDALE'S DECLINE, 1870-1900

Progress always followed Luke Foster. This energetic pioneer helped found Cincinnati, protected its first residents from lawlessness as one of the settlement's early sheriffs, and then left it when it became too populated for his tastes. Foster, who loved the beauty and challenge of the wilderness, moved north to Springfield Township. There he helped establish Pleasant Valley Station. He made his home two miles south of Springdale in present-day Woodlawn. He attended, and became a pillar of, the Springfield Presbyterian Church and a force within the Springdale community.

In this and many other ways he and his family presided over the area's transformation from forest to rich farmland and prosperous villages. Despite his own contributions to the process, Foster lamented the loss of the buffalo and woodlands as they gave way to the guns and the plows of the settlers. How ironic that a man with such ambivalent feelings toward "progress" should contribute so much to taming the frontier. By 1856 the ninety-seven-year-old Foster battled old age as fiercely as he had once fought the Indians and the lawbreakers. This still energetic man continued his normal activities. But one morning, as he turned to wave good-bye to his wife, he drove his wagon directly into the path of an oncoming CH&D locomotive.¹ Luke Foster finally fell prey to progress.

Did the same kind of thing happen to Springdale? The two decades following the Civil War were ones of decline in Springdale's history. Many believed that the decline had started as early as 1851, when the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton (CH&D) railroad directed its proposed route away from the village. Glendale, plotted in five-acre lots by the same railroad's officials, soon became a railroad suburb, rapidly growing

beyond Springdale in both population and prestige. Folklore has it that the railroad bypassed Springdale because local housewives feared smoke from the trains would soil their wash, and that a farmer between Jones Station and Springdale refused to sell the CH&D the necessary right-of-way because he thought a railroad would disturb the peace of his sheep.² Yet the reasons for Springdale's decline were much more complex.

One argument was that without a railroad station Springdale lost its importance as an agricultural retail center. Farmers could now stop and shop at a half-dozen new villages up and down the tracks. Certainly the railroad meant the end of Springdale as a post town, which translated into the closing of many of its taverns and inns. Yet according to census figures, Springdale's population actually grew in the twenty years after the war. In 1851, four individuals listed themselves as merchants and two others declared themselves clerks. By 1870 the number of merchants has risen to five and by 1880 to seven with four clerks listed.

Other sources suggest that the members of the professions abandoned Springdale for more prestigious Glendale and other centers on the transportation line. Professionals in Springdale included teachers, physicians, pastors and lawyers. Collectively they numbered nine in 1850 and 1860, eight in 1870, six in 1880 and six in 1900. These numbers are deceiving. Physicians and lawyers, the higher paid professions, did move away, and an increase in the number of lower-paid, lower-status teachers made up the difference.

Still, the village was clearly changing and the railroad was as much a symbol as a cause of what happened to Springdale. Before 1850 Springdale was an example of a successful, pre-industrial village based on servicing the needs of the neighboring farmers. Springdale had skilled artisans such as weavers, cabinetmakers, saddlers and tailors who manufactured items by hand and sold them directly to their customers and could thus be considered either craftsmen or merchants. So, in that sense, the figures regarding the number of Springdale merchants may be misleading since the census

enumerators listed the artisans by specific craft rather than as merchants. But even so, artisan occupations, so prevalent in the census of 1850, virtually disappeared by 1880. Two tailors and a weaver, a cabinetmaker, three lighting-rod makers, and a clock maker lived and worked in Springdale in 1850. None of those crafts was represented in the census of 1880 and Springdale's three shoemakers had been reduced to one. This represented the loss of ten occupational slots, possibly of ten heads-of-household, who had to find other means of supporting their families. If all of them moved away, this fact alone could represent a loss of fifty people, based on the Springdale average household size of five. Quite clearly Springdale failed to make the transition to the industrial age.

For a brief time in the 1870s such a transition appeared possible. One industry in particular showed promise. Anthony Hilts, Jr., began to manufacture mechanized farm implements, including a reaper. Hilts' enterprise reflected the times as mechanization began to revolutionize American agriculture in terms of "time and power." In 1840, more than three hours of human work time was required to produce a bushel of wheat. Fifty years later, with mechanization, that time had been cut to ten minutes.³ Hilts certainly did not invent the reaper. In fact, the question of just who did has long been debated, but clearly Cyrus Hall McCormick invented the first successful reaping machine in Virginia in 1834. McCormick opened his Chicago factory, the McCormick Harvester Works, in the 1840s. For years he toured the fairs and agricultural shows in the Midwest demonstrating the powers of his machine. Numerous mechanics and blacksmiths who saw the reaper were convinced they could make a better one. Anthony Hilts, Jr., mechanic and blacksmith, was one of many of these men.

In 1867 Hilts registered his own invention, a tongue attachment for the reaper, with the United States Patent Office. He claimed the attachment increased the amount "of leverage by operating it in advance of the reaper, and thus saving both time and power in harvesting a field of grain."⁴ Two men had to operate the Hilts reaper, one

drove while the other stood on the platform behind the reaper to rake off the mown hay or grain.⁵

The 1870 Census of Manufacturers for Springfield Township listed Hilts's Reapers and Mowers as a business with an annual production of goods valued at five hundred dollars or more. Information taken from the 1870 survey explains why Hilts could not compete with McCormick in the new industrial age. After the Civil War, machine manufacturing moved from the shop into steam-powered factories where workers produced units of durable, rust-proof steel. While the factory system required considerable capital investment, increased productivity and the economies of scale allowed manufacturers to lower their prices and still increase their profits.

Hilts, however, adopted none of these innovations. He continued to operate his business as an old-fashioned workshop. What else could he do on a capital investment of only eight hundred dollars? A saw and a planer comprised his list of equipment. In the age of steam and steel Hilts manufactured his iron reapers with horsepower. Three employees produced fifteen reapers a year worth a total value of two thousand dollars. With a payroll of eighteen hundred dollars a year and material costs of seven hundred and twenty dollars, even an additional nine hundred dollars in repair work could not make Hilts Reapers and Mowers a profitable enterprise.⁶

The firm stood little chance of increasing volume and profitability as long as it remained small-scale and labor-intensive. Notwithstanding the quality of the reaper it produced, the company could not compete with large, heavily-capitalized corporations using the new industrial techniques. Local legend suggests McCormick purchased Hilts's Reapers in order to eliminate the competition. While McCormick followed that course with a number of smaller firms, in this instance it would hardly seem worth the trouble. In any event, the patent office recorded no transfer of patent to McCormick.

If only for a brief period, Hilts manufactured a solid product. Farmers around Springdale continued to use his reapers and rollers until the turn of the century. At least

one former Springdale resident who lived on a nearby farm as a small boy remembers seeing the name Hilts stamped on old farm machinery.

For a village like Springdale, mechanization could be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, a market existed for Hilts's product. On the other, the mechanization of agriculture meant a marked decrease in the number of farmers and farm laborers needed to produce the same amount of food. A decline in their numbers could destroy a village dependent on a farming community.

Manufacturing in Springdale reached a peak in the 1870s. Jeremiah Gross produced carriages, plows, wagons and harrows. Peter Peterson manufactured plows. William Boerner made and repaired wagons. John Stolz represented the boot and shoemaking industry.⁷

In latter years Anthony Hilts, Jr., claimed that he began Springdale's shoemaking industry. Originally farmers tanned their own leather and once a year an itinerant shoemaker used it to make shoes for the entire family. Hilts decided to try shoemaking himself. He succeeded so well that neighbors came to him asking him to make shoes for their families.⁸ But the same problem that hampered the success of Hilts's harvester venture affected shoemaking. Springdale industries, based as they were on artisan handicraft, could not survive unless they mechanized. More than any other factor, including the loss of the railroad, the failure of its industries to mechanize led to Springdale's decline.

By 1880 with the demise of shoemaking and agricultural machinery manufacturing, the unemployed were moving away in search of job opportunities.⁹ As Springdale lost its vitality, even long-established families severed their ties with the village.

Johnny Hilts moved to Anthony, Kansas in February 1878. A decade later, in 1889, his brother R.D. Hilts, Jr., and his wife Alice McLean Hilts followed to nearby Mead Center, Kansas. The James Peterson family moved to Kentland, Indiana in 1871;

William McGilliard, Josephine Baldwin and Margaret Hilts Coombe and the H. B. Mayhew family journeyed to California, Archibald and Mary Brown and Lucretia Naylor to Illinois and Eliza Bernhart, Mary Miller and Allen Moore relocated in Iowa.¹⁰ Some of the oldest family names in Springdale disappeared from the directories and census lists and from the rolls of the Springdale Presbyterian Church.

Although the population declined dramatically, in 1887 Springdale still supported three blacksmith shops, three grocery stores, operated by G.V. McCormick, Perry Colburn and W.F. Winters respectively, a general store, Arthur Hough's open-air market and one saloon operated by Edward Mandeville. The saloon was new according to the Sharonville section of the Miami Valley News. "Springdale has no Saloons," an 1885 headline read, and "the morals of Sharonville have often been subject to comment from its virtuous neighbors."¹¹ Springdale residents had no right to crow. The mid-eighties were one of the few times in Springdale's long history when the village did not have at least one watering hole.

II

Despite the overall decline, a few newcomers settled in Springdale. In the late 1860s one of these new residents, Moses Tandy, moved into a house adjacent to the gate of old St. Mary's Cemetery. This twenty-two-year-old man migrated to Springdale from Kentucky with his eighteen-year-old brother James. Tandy began as a teamster but later established a plastering and construction business. His wife, the former Jennie Buckner, joined the Springdale Presbyterian Church. Tandy, who spent the rest of his life in Springdale, became one of its best-known residents.

Tandy was the most successful of a number of black Kentuckians, most likely freedmen, who located in Springdale after the Civil War.¹² Because of its proximity to the slave state of Kentucky, the Cincinnati area attracted many black migrants during and immediately after the war.

A few blacks had lived in Springdale for decades. In 1870, however, twenty-seven blacks lived in Springdale comprising 7 percent of the population. Most of them did not enjoy Tandy's level of success. All other black male heads-of-household worked as farm laborers in low-paying, seasonal jobs. Only two of the married black women listed themselves as housewives. The rest worked as laundresses and housekeepers. The single women usually worked as live-in domestic servants.

Ten years later only Tandy and a Civil War veteran named Wesley Baker headed black households. Blacks labored on the bottom rung of the ladder of economic opportunity, experiencing intense competition from whites for even their low-paying jobs. But Moses Tandy hung on. In 1910 the Hamilton County Auditors valued his home at nine hundred dollars, a sum comparable, or somewhat higher than the average Springdale dwelling. He had also purchased additional property outside of Springdale.

If only we knew more about these black Springdale residents. We can only speculate about their past. Why had they chosen Springdale? Did they all come from the same area in Kentucky? Just how difficult was their adjustment to freedom?

The possibility exists that they received assistance. The records of the Springdale Presbyterian Church indicate that the congregation donated funds for the "freedmen" but they do not indicate the specific uses of these funds.

III

By 1900 only 197 people resided in the village.¹³ Springdale was a sleepy village with none of the excitement of its post-days and no new enterprises gave hope for future growth as the manufacturing concerns had done in the 1870s. But people continued to live in the old houses fronting the dusty Pike and in many ways the traditional pattern of their lives continued.

The Presbyterian church still served as the community's religious and social center, owing much of its vitality to the leadership of Reverend William H. James. James, a young Princeton Theological Seminary graduate and a Civil War Captain in the 6th Army Corp arrived in Springdale in 1866.¹⁴ He ministered to the Springdale congregation for almost forty-seven years. When he died on February 17, 1903 the entire area mourned this gentle, compassionate and active man. During his tenure the congregation built a new church. Reverend James established a Christian Endeavor Society, helped organize the Springdale YMCA in 1869, operated a model Sunday School and in 1877 developed a Ladies Foreign Missionary Society.¹⁵

James's influence increased shortly after his arrival in Springdale when he presided over the wedding of Dr. Hunt's daughter Leigh to Isaac Wetherby of New Jersey. To the surprise of everyone, the young minister stayed on at the wedding reception even after the dancing began! The gossips may have wagged their tongues about the decline in the morals of the clergy, but the attraction was not the dancing. The Reverend James had his eye on the beautiful Lizzie Cochran whose father had been a principal figure in the old turnpike company, and whose siblings included a poet and a judge.¹⁶ In 1871 Miss Eliza Wilson Cochran wed the Reverend James. The family was an integral part of the community for many years. Son William became a lawyer and a Springfield Township Trustee. Howard, the younger son, became a physician and served the area from his Glendale office.

One of Springdale's few remaining landmarks dates from this era. In 1882 the Presbyterians decided to replace their old church with a new and larger building. After three years they finally raised sufficient funds to begin. The James family contributed generously as did the Mulhausers, a Cincinnati brewing family.¹⁷ In 1885 workmen dismantled the white brick church that dated from 1833 and on June 16 they laid the cornerstone for the new building.¹⁸ Over a fourteen-month period the new brick structure with square bell tower gradually took shape. Margaret Hilts Coombe gave the

church a new organ as a memorial to the Anthony Hiltz, Sr., family.¹⁹ J.S. Crawford, Dr. Benjamin Perlee, Dr. E.S. Close, Mrs. S.E. McCormick and Judge Samuel F. Hunt , in honor of his father, donated the large stained glass window that dominates the church. Other families contributed as they could and church-sponsored fund-raisers were well attended.²⁰

During construction of the new church, Springdale suffered a drought in the summer of 1885. Providing the workmen with the water they needed for laying the brick, or even for drinking, depleted even further the already depleted wells of the neighbors.²¹ But the Springdale tradition of sharing prevailed. On May 16, 1886 the congregation dedicated its new church with speeches that reflected the enormous pride both members and non-members felt in its long history.²² It seemed fitting that the church that towered over the other buildings in the village was the first sight encountered upon entering Springdale.

Despite the successful opening, the following years were difficult ones for the church. Membership declined along with the population of the village. The minister's salary, installing a new furnace, even the coal that heated the building in winter, taxed its resources. Reverend James, who was always trying to help Springdale's poor with food, fuel or money, was hard pressed to request assistance from his congregation.

Legacies left by the Hunt and Riddle families helped with the "mowing and grubbing" in the old cemetery.²³ Despite hard times, the church endured as a "people's church, supported by voluntary contributions, free pews, [and] no distinctions between rich and poor."²⁴

IV

Regardless of its size, importance or wealth, Springdale always enjoyed a full social life. People in this isolated little community largely created their own recreation. Socializing in the local tavern was a favorite pastime. Springdale usually had at least one

such establishment. Whether lifting a beer in friendship, discussing the price of crops or talking endlessly about politics, the men of Springdale considered the local bar to be their social club. Saloonkeepers did everything possible to encourage this conviviality. The longer the customers sat, of course, the more they drank. For a time, other enticements included free food of platters of sausages and bread for their customers to eat with their beer. By the late 19th century, this practice stopped for economic reasons. "Local saloon keepers have decided to abolish the free lunch counter" wrote the Springdale correspondent in early 1897, "hard times are upon us."²⁵ If eating and drinking and talking failed to lift the spirits, or if one tired of listening to "Uncle" Jim Roll re fighting the Civil War, one could always take a turn at the slot machines in the corner of the room, that is until Springfield Township outlawed them in 1905.²⁶

Every local politician worth his salt worked the saloons looking for votes. In Springdale the barflies played the candidates like violins, agreeing with every utterance, at least until the free drinks ended. Springdale's location so close to the Butler County line at times allowed these old codgers to string along free-spending politicians from both Butler and Hamilton counties. On one occasion a Butler County politician spent a couple of hours and several dollars in a Springdale saloon. As he left, one of the patrons drawled, "you be in the county that belong to George B. Cox and Butler's trocha begins just a half mile above."²⁷ He referred, of course, to Cincinnati's famed Boss Cox.

Springdale residents also engaged in more refined activities. Mrs. J.S. Chalfant spent July of 1885 enjoying the pleasures of Chautauqua.²⁸ A lake resort famous for its lectures, sports and artistic activities. Sarah Western, the local school teacher, organized literary teas for the ladies of the village.

The YMCA, organized in Springdale in 1869, also offered a distinctly different form of social club. The building, formerly Springdale's temperance hall, still served as a type of community center. When an ice cream craze swept the nation in the 1890s, Springdale, which had no ice cream parlor, turned the YMCA into a temporary one for

the season. In June, when the weather turned warm and the strawberries ripened, young people picked the berries and their parents donated the rich cream. The hall was spruced up and the ice cream maker brought out from storage. Originally, the sponsors, usually one of the church's organizations, "let one eat as much as a free lunch habitue and pay as much as a worm-eaten conscience dictated," but they soon discovered that some Springdale youth lacked any conscience at all! After 1897, patrons paid the set price of a quarter which purchased as much ice cream as they could eat.²⁹ In the winters, oyster dinners took the place of strawberry ice cream. Springdale's passion for oysters remained as strong as it had been in the 1840s.

Other events also retained their appeal. Springdale residents still packed the annual Hamilton County Fair. In 1905 the Hamilton County Board of Agriculture announced it was moving from Carthage to Oakley. The Springdale farmers and others agreed to hold their own fair in Carthage.³⁰ In 1911 the 57th Fair held in Carthage drew a record crowd of twenty-five thousand. The crowd enjoyed "Smittie's famous military band, Professor Harris' Hippodrome starring educated horses, a trotting ostrich and a dancing dog; the six Gangeis, a novel aerial act, and a good program of trotting and pacing races." Proud parents entered five hundred babies in the baby contest and Springdale farmers again paraded their prize livestock around the ring.³¹

Entertainment closer to home included the local roller rink. Springdale parents disapproved of the establishment because it threw boys and girls together without proper chaperone.³² The parents succeeded in having it shut down for a few months but youth prevailed and it reopened.³³

By the end of the century the village population was clearly aging and it became questionable whether Springdale could support any form of entertainment for young people. In 1860, the village's population of 355 had an average age of 23.8 with an average household size of 4.9. Only 18 percent of the population had been over forty. By 1900 that population had dwindled to 198 and the average age had increased by more

than nine years to thirty-three. Thirty-nine percent of the population was over forty. Families were smaller, now averaging only 3.6 persons. In 1860 the average household consisted of the nuclear family--parents and children--with an occasional live-in servant. In 1900 many elderly single people lived together to compose a household.

The numbers tell the tale of a dying community. Since very few jobs existed in the village, working people moved away to be near their employment or closer to public transportation. Many of the old houses on the Pike stood empty and boarded up. As one-by-one lifelong residents passed away, the village faced the possibility of extinction.

NOTES

The Hamilton County Will Books show that Foster was an administrator of numerous Springdale estates. He is also listed as the mortgage-holder for many Springdale homeowners.

¹Samuel Furman Hunt, Orations and Historical Addresses, ed. by members of his family with a biographical essay by Calvin D. Wilson (Cincinnati: R. Clarke Company, 1908): 456.

²Esther Benzig, Fairfield (n.p., n.d.): 127.

³R. Jackson Wilson, et al., The Pursuit of Liberty, II, Since 1860 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983): 536.

⁴U.S. Patent Office, Letters Patent No. 69,342, October 1, 1867.

⁵Ms. B648, Box 25, Essay of Glendale schoolchildren who had interviewed Hilts, quoted verbatim from an unpublished paper by Charles Blinn. n.d.

⁶U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Non-Population Census Schedules, Ohio, 1850-1880, Roll 46, 1870, "Products of Industry," Schedule 4. Microfilm 678.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25, Charles Blinn ms.

⁹None of the above industries is listed in 1880. Ibid., Roll 96.

¹⁰List of Communicants dismissed, Springdale Presbyterian Church Archives.

¹¹Miami Valley News (4 June 1885):2. Hereafter cited as MVN. The MVN, established in 1884, would become the Millcreek Valley News 16 Jul 1892.

¹²Charles Blinn indicates several freed slaves in the area. Blinn Papers, ms. B648:25.

¹³U.S. Bureau of Census, "Population Schedule," Twelfth Census (U.S.) 1900, Ohio, Hamilton County.

¹⁴Hoffman, Story: 113.

¹⁵The organization meeting was held 4 Feb 1891. Charter members included W.B. McGilliard, John Scheerer, Chris Skillman, Lizzie Skillman, Louise Hilts, Mary Huffman, Sarah Western, Charles W. Huffman, Frank Scheerer, William H. James, Emma Hilts, Lida Hilts, W. Brate and L. E. Boerner. This list of names reflects the persistence of the old families in community and charitable affairs.

¹⁶Kelly, Ancestor: 202.

¹⁷Major subscribers included, among others, George L. Miller, James M. Kennedy, Mary Mulhauser, Mary Kennedy, Margaret Huffman, Allene Huffman and Christian Moerlein. Springdale Presbyterian Church Archives.

¹⁸175th Anniversary Booklet: 1792-1967 (n.p., 1967).

¹⁹Springdale Presbyterian Church Archives.

²⁰MVN (19 March 1885): 3.

²¹MVN (23 July 1885): 2.

²²Nelson, History: 441. The new church included an auditorium, a pastor's study and classrooms, Hoffman, Story: 120.

²³"Cemetery Report," Springdale Presbyterian Church Archives, 1910; 175th Anniversary Booklet.

²⁴James R. Lovett, "140th Anniversary Bulletin" reprinted in the MCVN (10 June 1932): 7.

²⁵"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (1 Feb 1947): 1:4.

²⁶"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (30 June 1955): 5.

²⁷"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (8 Aug 1947): 4. The trocha referred to probably was the three Butler County commissioners.

²⁸MVN (1 Aug 1885):2.

²⁹"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (13 June 1947): 4. The Springdale contributor to the MCVN in 1897 was, in all probability, young William James, a student at Miami University at the time. He wrote under a pseudonym but his own name does come up frequently and the contributions began when the university let out in the spring and ceased in the fall. In any event, they are delightful and a wonderful source for a social historian.

³⁰"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (17 Mar 1955): 5.

³¹"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (10 Aug 1961) 1:4.

³²MVN (26 Mar 1885): 1.

³³MVN (12 Nov 1885): 4.

CHAPTER SEVEN
SPRINGDALE COMES BACK TO LIFE
1900-1940

With the opening of a new century came the dawn of a new era for Springdale. The introduction of the streetcar opened up new opportunities for growth giving new life the old village. In 1901, the Ohio Traction Company began operating between Hamilton and Glendale with tracks and lines running directly through the center of Springdale. A terminus was located at the corner of Sharon Road and Princeton Pike. Travelers to Cincinnati transferred at Springdale to the Cincinnati Street Railway, which had an exclusive franchise to use the city's streets. Since the company used a gauge that was wider than standard, feeder lines always terminated at the end of the Cincinnati tracks.

If farmers had indeed been reluctant to sell right-of-way to the CH&D back in 1851, in 1901 they greeted the traction line enthusiastically. The people in the Springdale area desperately needed an improved transportation system because the Pike had deteriorated as it diminished in importance. Improvements consisted of a few wagon loads of crushed stone on the most eroded sections.¹ Summer rains quickly turned its two lanes into mud and chuck holes. It was passable only because buggies had narrow treads and the wheels had a high perch, but the ride racked the body and jangled the nerves.² Horse-drawn wagons called omnibuses were even more uncomfortable and were very slow, averaging speeds of only five miles an hour.³ In the winter the people of Springdale turned up their coal oil lamps and stayed at home, unwilling to risk the adventure that ice and snow could make of a trip to Hamilton or Cincinnati along Springfield Pike. Shipping and receiving goods was also inconvenient. The Miami and Erie Canal carried very little traffic by the turn of the century causing

farmers to resort to the methods of yesteryear to get their livestock to market. In 1898 drovers herded cattle and hogs down the Pike just as they had done ninety years before.⁴

Although the streetcars left that problem unresolved, they certainly made a difference in the quality of life. An additional car attached to the end carried small freight items which permitted the Springdale grocery to stock perishable items. The drugstores in Hamilton or Glendale delivered medicines via the trolley. The crew even tossed out daily newspapers along the route.⁵ The people came to know the conductor and the motorman on the Millcreek line, including George Staten, who for many years conducted on the morning shift - 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. George Miller was the motorman.

The Millcreek Line, as it came to be known, reached top speeds of 35 to 40 mph along limited sections of the route. The trip to downtown Cincinnati took more than an hour including transfer time. But the old Millcreek cars made up for their lack of speed with their punctuality.⁶ People along Springfield Pike set their watches by the bright yellow cars. Initially a car ran every hour. A ticket to Cincinnati was thirty-five cents with shorter distances costing less.

The streetcars had numerous advantages over the train. For one thing, streetcars did not need to slow down as gradually before coming to a stop. Streetcars were quiet and electrically heated, and the passengers sat on comfortable rattan chairs and read their newspapers. In the early 1920, the traction company purchased new green cars with green leather seats. For a while it provided special smoker cars in which the men could escape to smoke their cigars and swap stories unfit for a lady's ear. Little boys always tried to sneak into the smoker but the conductor kept them out.⁷

The cars stopped several times a day in Springdale. In the late 1920s, Harry Dean's apple farm at the corner of what is now Rt. 4 and Cameron was the first stop north of Sharon Road. The next stop was at the corner of Peach. Two other stops were in the heart of Springdale: at A & R Biler's grocery and at Kemper Road. Passengers could then enjoy the 3.3 minute ride to John Sellers' farm before going on to the home

of Judge Charles Hoffman, author of a history of the Springdale Presbyterian Church. The final stop in Springdale was at the Poor's farm at the Butler County line.⁸

Thanks to streetcars, Springdale's slide into oblivion was halted forever. From 1901 to 1910 new families moved in along the Pike because those with jobs in the Millcreek valley factories or closer to the city could easily commute from the village. The school population increased as streetcars also made it easier for children to attend high school in other communities. Springdale School offered only grades one through eight. With the streetcars, however, students who chose to continue their education could travel to Mt. Healthy or Glendale high school.⁹

Despite its initial success, and a number of changes of ownership and mergers, streetcars had a short life span. The motorbus, which became popular after the paving of Springfield Pike from Carthage to the Butler County line in 1917, quickly proved buses practical and more economical than the streetcar. Motorbus companies could run more frequently, hire one employee rather than two, and, most importantly, eliminate the maintenance costs of miles of track and electric lines. The public paid the maintenance on the highways the buses used. The Millcreek tried to compete and in 1918 cut its schedule to every two hours. Still not profitable enough by the early summer of 1926, the Millcreek ceased operation to Springdale.¹⁰

The closing of its streetcars line made many in Springdale unhappy. Mothers who disliked mounted a campaign to get their streetcar back again. Mothers disliked the buses and felt more comfortable letting their children to ride alone on the streetcars. A campaign to reopred the line was mounted and, for more than a year the people of Springdale lobbied to have the Cincinnati Street Railway Company extend its line from Glendale to Springdale. They won the battle, if only temporarily. In March 1928 The Millcreek Valley News proclaimed "Street Cars May Day" as Springdale's new slogan because the Cincinnati Street Railway Company had already begun construction on a new loop at North Alley.¹¹ Service actually resumed before May Day, in mid-April. Cars

left the loop every half hour starting at 5:21 a.m. Ten cents took the passenger to Winton Road, thirteen cents to Mitchell Avenue, and twenty cents to downtown Cincinnati.¹²

The success of these efforts led to predictions of major new expansions of industry in the valley area. Springdale had successfully battled a major public utility, and for the first time in many years, Springdale looked toward a brighter future.

Eighteen months later the dream ended. The financial crash of 1929 and the depression that followed ended any hopes for economic expansion. The Cincinnati Street Railway Company saw little profit and less future in continuing the run to Springdale. Major repairs on the Pike forced the company to stop running temporarily and when the work was done it announced that service would not be restored to Glendale and Springdale. Wyoming became the end of the line. The company operated buses from Springdale to meet the cars at the north corporation line of Wyoming.¹³

Springdale again went to war against the streetcar companies. With no local government of its own, it worked through the Glendale Council. In late May 1930 concerned Springdale residents crowded the Glendale Council meeting, and presented a petition asking the council to submit their complaints to the Ohio State Public Utilities Commission.¹⁴ But PUCO granted the Cincinnati Street Railway Company the right to substitute motor bus transport for the streetcars.¹⁵ That decision marked the end of an era.

II

The private automobile made its presence felt well before the demise of the streetcar. While the farm animals continued to graze along the sides of the road, oblivious to the danger, cars operated by novice drivers careened along at ten mph. After numerous animal fatalities, the Springfield Township Trustees instructed their road supervisors to post notice with local farmers that under no circumstances were they to allow their livestock to graze on the public highway.¹⁶ Springdale mothers were

convinced that the automobile had to be the most dangerous means of transportation ever devised. Yet in fact, mishaps with the streetcars also occurred. In January 1918 the newspaper ran the following story: "A streetcar struck Nelson Roberts, 60, and a cow near Stop 34. After taking the man out from under the car, he lived only a short time....The cow was also killed."¹⁷ Nevertheless, accidents did nothing to alter most folks' opinion of the vast superiority of the streetcar over the automobile.

The increased use of the automobile almost led to the revival of Springfield Pike as a major transportation route. In 1911 Colonel W.S. Gilbreath devised plans for an efficient auto route stretching from Chicago to Florida. As the situation then existed, motorists driving to Florida from Chicago had to detour all the way east to Washington D.C. in order to connect with Rt. 1 down the Atlantic Coast. Gilbreath took a ruler to the map and chose a way to link North and South together, a route to be called Dixie Highway.¹⁸ In 1916 the Hamilton County Commissioners announced plans to improve Springfield Pike as part of this Dixie Highway road system to Florida.¹⁹ The next year the Commissioners accepted the bid of an Indiana firm to lay a brick pavement with grout filler and a concrete curb from Gas Hall, Carthage, to the Butler County line. The costs were estimated at \$131,870. The brick road was replaced by concrete block at the end of the twenties, which was in turn given a two-inch blacktop surface in 1951.²⁰

IV

Dixie Highway led to a controversy in Springdale between proponents and opponents of change. Samuel Smiley, a retired Indiana schoolteacher who became a prosperous farmer and entrepreneur after moving to Springdale, viewed the new highway as an opportunity. "The world is moving," a local newspaper quoted him as saying, "man or community that stands still is going to get run over." Others disagreed:

It would be a calamity for Springdale, which is the quietest place in Hamilton-co.[sic], to change her ways so late in life.

Springdale preserves the simple life of 50 years ago. It has a charm that few other communities have. It is the one place in the county where there never is any

excitement. Folks in Springdale are now neighborly. If it is made modern, new people will move in, so that one won't know his next door neighbor.²¹

Smiley tried his best to modernize Springdale. He built a few bungalows in the area which came to be known as "West Springdale." He even hired the local carpenter, Madison Sharp, to improve some of the old homes on Springfield Pike. Sharp moved the houses back on the lots, away from the road, turned some around, changed the plans of others and added porches. Poured concrete sidewalks replaced the old cobblestone paths.²² One of the many houses Smiley purchased was a two-story house on the Pike and Peach Street which eventually became the site of Springdale's firehouse. Smiley left an adjacent lot empty "as a means of beautification of the town." The grass was to be kept mowed in the little park and thirsty passerby's could drink their fill of Springdale's clear cold water from the pump that stood nearby.²³ Despite Smiley's efforts, Springdale did not change. Smiley had dreamed of a village government complete with a mayor and marshal, a public square and town hall, a drugstore and an ice cream parlor for the young folk.²⁴ But automobile travelers found no particular reason to stop in the village. Most passed through with scarcely a glance at Smiley's improvements. Springdale remained "old-fashioned."

Charming though it may have been, "small and old-fashioned" also had certain disadvantages. In 1911 the postal authorities abolished the Springdale post office, which had a long history. In 1815, John Baldwin, the first postmaster, provided the Cincinnati newspaper, Liberty Hall, with names of those who had unclaimed mail. In the 1840s the Kempers received letters addressed to Springfield although even then they referred to the village as Springdale. In the early 1850s the postal authorities changed the name from Springfield to Springdale in order to prevent confusion with the larger Ohio city.²⁵ In the 1880s the post office was operated by Perry Colburn, a son-in-law of Anthony

Hilts, Jr., and after him, by John Lindner.²⁶ Now it seemed that long tradition had come to an end. After considerable lobbying from the residents, Alfred G. Allen, the Second District Congressman, successfully interceded. But it did not last. By 1915 the post office no longer existed.²⁷

In addition to the inconvenience, the loss of the post office hampered local courting styles. Young peoples often met their beaux while waiting for the mailman who drove up in his horse-drawn spring wagon every day at the same time. With a post office that was now a Rural Route, they had to find another place to court.²⁸ During the next fifty years Springdale residents would be served at various times by post offices in Lockland, Hamilton, Glendale and Mt. Healthy.

More critical than the lack of a post office was the serious lack of medical care in Springdale. After Dr. George Wilmuth, left the village to work in Glendale sometime between 1910 and 1913, another fifty years would pass before the next doctor established a practice in the Springdale. Others had also come and gone. Before Wilmuth, Dr. James Heady, son-in-law of Dr. Hunt, served the village but also later moved to Glendale.

After Dr. Wilmuth closed his Springdale office, most of the residents chose Dr. Howard James as their physician. James, the son of the beloved and well-remembered Reverend James, also practiced in Glendale. He made his house calls in a circuitous route in a manner similar to that of Dr. Hunt in the 1820s. Babies, however, had a way of ignoring the doctor's timetable and arrived whenever they were ready. In those cases the husband drove to Glendale for Dr. James while an older child or neighbor hurried to the home of Fannie Wroot Sharp. Mrs. Sharp attended to the patient until Dr. James arrived and if something delayed him, she delivered the baby. After the delivery she stayed with the new mother to do the cooking and, if necessary, to show her how to care for an infant. Legend states that the James-Sharp team never lost a patient. Mrs. Sharp

mastered many folk remedies that brought comfort to the aged and the ill. Among many others was the use of a white chicken feather dipped in castor oil to swab bed sores.²⁹

Faith-healing and patent medicines were other alternatives to a physician's care and conventional medicine. Jacob Sorter earned his living by faith-healing, and sold a special elixir from the back of his wagon guaranteed to cure virtually all ills known to man and to woman. The absence of readily available professional medical care added to the attraction of these alternative methods. But undoubtedly there were other factors, including price and the deficiencies of medical science. Advances in medicine led to a decline in epidemic disease such as typhoid and diphtheria between 1900 and 1920. But cancer, diabetes and heart disease increased and medical science had no more effective treatment for these than Jacob Sorter.

Not surprisingly, cases in which quick treatment was vital often proved fatal because of the long distance to doctor or hospital. In one tragic gunshot case, Dr. Heady rushed from Glendale to remove a bullet from the brain of a young man, using the kitchen as an operating room. Although the boy would almost certainly have died even in a hospital, in these conditions he had no chance at all for survival.³⁰

Springdale also lacked police protection to confront crimes which occurred in the village and countryside. Horse thieves and felons" were the bane of rural existence but other types of crimes were also committed. One morning in January 1905 fourteen village dogs were poisoned, "the entire canine population of Springdale."³¹ Arson was also common, including fires set to barns or other type of farm building often resulting in lost livestock, farm equipment and hay. In perhaps the most serious case, a young man went on an arson spree, burning four barns, including that of his uncle, before he was apprehended.³² In Springdale, dependent as it was on the county's law enforcement agencies, the criminal stood an excellent chance of escaping scot-free.

To combat crime, in 1890 a group of men formed the Springdale Mutual Protection Company, Inc., whose object was

the mutual protection of its members in the suppression and prevention of horse stealing [sic] especially; also of theft generally, burglary and incendiarianism, the recovery of property stolen, and the arrest and conviction of the criminal.³³

The Board of Trustees nominated members who paid a one-dollar fee and swore an oath not to reveal the inner workings of the MPC. The entire operation had all the elaborate ritual and furtiveness of a small boy's secret club.

If a member of the society became a victim of a crime he reported it to the captain who called out the minute men as the members were called. The captain, his lieutenant and eight or more minute men immediately began to search for the criminals and stolen property. Although completely grass-roots in its organization, the State of Ohio gave it rather extraordinary powers:

The Springdale Mutual Protective Company, a company incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio for the purpose of apprehending horse thieves and other felons; and that by act of the Legislature passed February 10, 1885 and March 31, 1887, now has full power and authority, when a felony has been committed, to pursue and arrest, without warrant, any person or persons whom he believes or has cause to believe is guilty of the offense, and return such alleged criminal or criminals in any county in the State...to any officer of county in which the offense was committed, and there detain such accused person or persons until legal warrant can be obtained for his or their arrest.³⁴

How many "horse thieves and felons" the Springdale Mutual Protective Company actually apprehended or how long the company continued is difficult to determine. The elaborate ritual, the secret membership roles and the ranking of the men into captain, lieutenant, and minute men, suggested a "secret society" whose purpose may have been as much social as much as meting out rough and ready justice. In any event, MPC manifested a cavalier attitude towards civil liberties, part of the price Springdale paid for being "old-fashioned."

Fires--not only those caused by arson--posed a constant threat to the community. In November 1917 neighbors saw flames coming from Mrs. Arthur Hough's house on the Pike. The unskilled and poorly equipped "bucket brigade" fought a long and hard

but unsuccessful fight to save the home. The raging fire produced such heat that the men exhausted themselves in preventing its spread to adjacent homes.³⁵ If they had failed, by the time reinforcements arrived from neighboring communities, Springdale would have been a heap of ashes. Shaken by the disaster, the villagers met soon afterwards in the YMCA rooms to discuss better ways of fire-fighting.³⁶ It took nearly twenty years, however, before Springdale established a volunteer fire department.

IV

During the early 20th century, most of the men worked outside the village. Wives cooked them breakfast, fixed them lunches and put them on the streetcar to their jobs in the industrial Mill Creek Valley. All of this necessitated rising before dawn. First of all the fire in the big black cast-iron stove took time to heat up although undoubtedly the wood or coal for it was already in place. Hot water for bathing or a shave came from the tank on the side of the stove which was filled each night from the pump on the porch or the well in the backyard. Breakfast probably consisted of fresh eggs since chicken coops adorned the backyards of many Springdale homes. Then after a hurried good-bye and an admonishment to the children not to pester Miss Sarah Western, Springdale's favorite schoolteacher, the men rushed off. The streetcars waited for no one.

Saturday might be devoted to chores, but Sundays were reserved for neighborly chats, musical get-togethers and visits from friends and family. The members of the Harmony Club frequently met at the home of Harry Dean, who owned a piano. Or as the Bernhardtts, Wroots and Hamilton families discovered, "time was pleasantly passed with the music on the victrola."³⁷ Charity Carmen's numerous children and grandchildren adored their Sunday visits to the Carmen farm where "Grandma Carmen" always had a "crock full of warm crullers" waiting for them.³⁸

Many Springdale families saved their money for special summertime treats such as a day at the Cincinnati Zoo or Chester Park, a popular amusement park on Spring Grove Avenue. In conjunction with promotions at these places, the streetcar company

added a special car to handle the extra traffic.³⁹ Springdale families apparently favored the Zoo and Chester Park over the increasingly popular Coney Island, probably because the first two were closer. In any event, families sacrificed one of the backyard chickens for the occasion, and the family departed on the streetcar, picnic basket firmly in hand.

Chester Park offered entertainment for everyone. Swimming, the merry-go-round and other rides entertained the children. In the evening the exhausted children slept peacefully near the dance pavilion while their parents enjoyed a few minutes alone waltzing to the music of a live band. The management of Chester Park intended to keep it a place for family entertainment. In fact, some years later, during the "roaring twenties," the manager condemned the new Charleston dance craze, vowing to bar that "vulgar" dance with its wild new jazz music from wholesome Chester Park. He would stick to dances that would last, like the waltz, two-step, schottische and yorke, rather than indulge in a passing fad.⁴⁰

In 1916, the new speedway planned for neighboring Sharonville set Springdale agog. The people of Springdale and the automobile had a quixotic affair. On the one hand they loved it, on the other, neither cows nor people could keep out of the way. Cars collided, drove pedestrians into ditches and killed John Long Riddle's ninety-year-old widow, Julia. The initial attraction of the Sharonville Speedway may have been that it kept the automobiles off the roads! As Springdale residents would discover in the future, even a race track could not prevent their vulnerability to the automobile. In 1928 Herbert Hera ran into a racing auto which broke through the fence at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds leaving him with a leg broken in two places.⁴¹

But that was in the future. For two short years after its opening on Labor Day 1916, the speedway was the place to go. The all-wooden track, the largest in the world, attracted the most daring and the fastest auto racers. One of racing's most famous pioneers, Eddie Rickenbacher, drove there as did Barney Oldfield. Then the first World

War came and the speedway made way for an army depot. In March 1918 the Cincinnati Speedway Company went into receivership.⁴²

V

Springdale had other concerns when the United States declared war on Germany in 1917. Raging almost three years in Europe, most Americans could no longer remain neutral in their hearts. Many believed the stories of ruthless atrocities committed when Germany crushed neutral Belgium. At the same time, larger numbers were immigrants, newcomers from Europe who brought with them European sentiments. Many of the United State's German Americans "rooted" for their native land, as did many Irish Americans whose support for Germany was really an expression of their anti-English feelings. Samuel Smiley gave Springdale a firsthand account of Wilson's fears that partisanship would divide the nation. Smiley heard the campaign speech on "The Unity of America," given by the president at Music Hall in 1916.⁴³

Both the Allies and the Central powers recognized that if they gained exclusive use of American economic resources, victory would be theirs. Both sides tried to prevent America from trading with the other, Germany used its submarine warfare and Britain its more traditional sea power. Ultimately, the British blockade of Germany proved more successful. Although U.S. trade with Germany diminished steadily, trade with the British increased from \$600 million annually in 1914 to over \$2 billion by the time America entered the war "to make the world safe for democracy."

Unsurprisingly the coming of war affected the American economy, causing many prices to rise steeply. This inflation was particularly beneficial to farmers who had suffered from two decades of depressed farm prices. By 1915 Springdale farmers were receiving \$1.50 a bushel for wheat, the highest price recorded in many years.⁴⁴ The next year--a poor one, agriculturally--Congress set a minimum price of \$2.00 for wheat. That minimum meant little, however, since by then the United States Grain Corporation was purchasing everything the farmer could grow at \$2.20 a bushel.⁴⁵

The war also caused many shortages. Although the high prices encouraged grain production, it was still insufficient and Americans observed wheatless Mondays and Wednesdays. Meat and pork were also in short supply and sugar was such a scarce commodity that the government asked grocers to sell customers no more than two pounds each month.⁴⁶

Springdale, located in the middle of a farm belt and with its tradition of small garden plots even among non-farm families, suffered far less from food shortages than from the lack of coal. The winter of 1917-18 was unusually ferocious. The members of the Presbyterian church shivered through Sunday services as to save fuel. The Christian Endeavor Society and the other groups that met at the church canceled their meetings.⁴⁷ On January 19, 1918 all valley industries shut down for five full days followed by closures on ten subsequent Mondays. Harry A. Garfield, Director of the National Fuel Administration, ordered this drastic action to conserve important resources.⁴⁸

In another energy conservation move, the streetcars began to operate on a skip-stop schedule.⁴⁹ What ordinarily might have been a mere inconvenience was a real hardship because the winter of 1918 was marked by heavy snows and extreme cold. At midnight on March 30, 1918 Springdale joined the rest of the nation in instituting the first-ever daylight-savings time.

But civilians worried most about who would have to fight and for how long. Initially the various branches of the military service recruited volunteers. Volunteer recruitment ended on August 9, 1918, more than a year after Congress passed a draft bill that mandated registration for all men between twenty-one and thirty. The Marine Corp established its area recruiting station at Iglar's Drug Store in Glendale. Governor Cox posted notices in every village announcing that "shirkers will have to go to work, go to jail, or go out-of-town."⁵⁰

Cox's announcement reflected something of the shrillness associated with this war. Barely three years after he had advocated neutrality as a way to avoid the divisiveness of

war, Wilson now led an ardent pro-war campaign aimed at countering the considerable anti-war sentiment in the country. George Creel, chairman of the government's propaganda arm, the Committee on Public Information, used sophisticated advertising techniques to paint the Germans as depraved, bloody and cruel. Soon some Americans began to view their German-born neighbors as potential traitors. From February 4 through 9, 1918 all Germans who were not yet naturalized citizens had to register as enemy aliens.⁵¹ The government had the right to seize and administer their property. The Lockland school district, like many others across the country, banned the teaching of the German language. As a result, the war years were particularly bitter for Hamilton County which had a large German-American immigrant population.

Ordinary citizens set themselves up as self-appointed monitors of patriotic behavior. For example, since Sunday was a gasless day in the valley, citizens who appointed themselves to watch the streets reported the license numbers of violators to federal officials.⁵²

Even the degree to which one contributed to the war effort became an object of interest and comment. The Red Cross, for example, raised funds to provide for the soldiers' medical needs, entertainment and other types of relief work. In Springdale, Mr. and Mrs. James Lovett, Mrs. Frank McGilliard, Julia Allen and Louise Boerner were solicitors. Their district coordinator instructed them to list those who did not subscribe and to give the reasons why.⁵³ The list of noncontributors in Springdale must have been brief, since by all accounts the Red Cross drive in Springdale was a great success.⁵⁴

The actual combat involvement of American troops in Europe barely lasted a year. Naturally far fewer Springdale men served in this war than in the Civil War. One who did serve, Private Fred Niehaus, the son of Rudolf Niehaus, died from wounds suffered in France in one of the most important battles of World War I. The Germans had been entrenched in the St. Mihiel salient, southeast of Verdun, since 1914 in an extremely well-fortified position. The Allies, who had repulsed a desperate last-ditch

offensive by the Germans in the summer of 1918, began a counteroffensive shortly thereafter. St. Mihiel was an important target. Initially the attack stalled. Then, in some of the heaviest fighting of the war, St. Mihiel fell to the Allies. A Springdale hero, Private Fred Niehaus, A Company, 153d U.S. infantry, suffered wounds at St. Mihiel that cost him his life.⁵⁵

V

Springdale could not escape the ills that afflicted the nation in 1918, including the war, the blizzards, the anti-German excesses, and finally, the great influenza epidemic. Ten million people world-wide died from the Great, or Spanish, Flu, killing far more Americans than the German Army.

In October, Springdale School shut its doors and area churches agreed not to hold Sunday services. Soon communities banned all public meetings. The scourge spread so easily, doctors and others tending the sick wore masks. Still the death toll mounted. In Springdale, flu killed Cora Ruettinger Rush, the eldest daughter of George Ruettinger.⁵⁶ Many others were severely stricken. Few had the energy left to cheer the signing of the Armistice on November 11. The year that began with blizzards, heatless days and darkened factories ended with one of the worst epidemics the nation has ever suffered. Prayers of thanksgiving for the end of the war were joined with those pleading for a quick end to a terrible year.

NOTES

J. C. Slade, "The Millcreek Valley Traction Line: Glendale to Hamilton (Division) 1901-26," unpublished ms., Butler County Historical Society: 4-6; hereafter cited as Slade, "Millcreek."

¹"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (23 Sep 1954) 1:5.

²Slade, "Millcreek:" 3.

³Kenneth T. Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985): 35. Samuel Hunt preferred to travel by omnibus to the Hamilton from downtown Cincinnati to the Hamilton County Fair in 1865. How far the omnibus extended is unclear. In 1890 an occasional stage-coach ran from Sixth and Main in Cincinnati to Hamilton, according to Luke Feck, Yesterday's Cincinnati (Miami, Florida: E.A. Seaman Publishing, Inc., 1975): 54.

⁴Slade, "Millcreek:" 1.

⁵Slade, "Millcreek:" 40.

⁶Slade, "Millcreek:" 40.

⁷Slade, "Millcreek:" 26.

⁸Slade, "Millcreek:" 40.

⁹Slade, "Millcreek:" 19-20.

¹⁰Slade, "Millcreek:" 45-46.

¹¹(26 Mar 1953) 1:4.

¹²"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (16 Apr 1954): 1:4.

¹³"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (16 Jun 1955) 1:7.

¹⁴"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (2 Jun 1955) 1:4.

¹⁵"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (16 Jun 1955): 1:7.

¹⁶"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (6 Jun 1963): 1:6.

¹⁷MCVN (26 Jan 1918): 4.

¹⁸Enquirer (21 Feb 1936): 4.

¹⁹MCVN (1 July 1916): 1.

²⁰MCVN (3 Feb 1917): 1; MCVN (10 May 1951): 1.

²¹The Tracer: 52-53.

²² Marie Sharp Warwick to Evelyn Ireland. The MCVN noted also, "during the past two weeks Mr. Samuel Smiley and Burl Cramer improved Mrs. Smiley's new house by laying several hundred feet of cement and erecting new cement steps." (24 Nov 1917): 6.

²³ The information about Smiley's "beautification" efforts came also from Evelyn Ireland's extensive interviews with her aunt, Marie Sharp Warwick. Marie Sharp was a child of eight or nine when the Smileys moved to Springdale, which would have been in 1902 or 1903.

²⁴The Tracer: 52-53.

²⁵The Hamilton County Directory, 1855, indicates that mail from Cincinnati destined for the North went through "Spring Dale."

²⁶"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (18 May 1961) 1:4; Hamilton County Directory lists the names of postmasters.

²⁷The 1915 Hamilton County Directory lists the post office address as Rt.5, Lockland.

²⁸Warwick to Ireland.

²⁹Warwick to Ireland. Michael Sortor provided the newspaper clippings on the faith-healing Sortor and the flyer for the patent medicine.

³⁰Warwick to Ireland.

³¹"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (27 Jan 1955) 1:5.

³²"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (19 Feb 1953) 1:5.

³³Constitution and By-Laws of the Springdale Mutual Protection Company (Cincinnati: F. W. Freeman, 1891). Provided to the author by Michael Sortor.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵MCVN (17 Nov 1917): 6.

³⁶MCVN (24 Nov 1917): 6.

³⁷MCVN (19 Jan 1918): 4.

³⁸Warwick to Ireland.

³⁹Slade, "Millcreek:" v.

⁴⁰"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (3 June 1965): 2.

⁴¹"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (18 Jun 1953): 5.

⁴²MCVN (16 Mar 1918): 1; see Myron Luke, "Sharonville's Auto Speedway," reprinted from the Suburban Press (26 Apr 1973) for an excellent account of the track's history.

⁴³MCVN (9 Nov 1916): 6.

⁴⁴"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (4 Feb 1965) 1:3.

⁴⁵David Shannon, Twentieth Century America: The United States since the 1890's (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1963): 177

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷MCVN (5 Jan 1918): 4.

⁴⁸MCVN (19 Jan 1918): 1.

⁴⁹MCVN (2 Feb 1918): 1.

⁵⁰MCVN (11 May 1918): 1.

⁵¹MCVN (2 Feb 1918): 1.

⁵²MCVN (31 Aug 1918): 7.

-
- ⁵³MCVN (18 May 1918): 6.
⁵⁴MCVN (25 May 1918): 7.
⁵⁵MCVN (23 Dec 1918): 3.
⁵⁶MCVN (23 Dec 1918): 3.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CHALLENGES

All in all, the years between 1918 and 1945 were uneventful for Springdale. The community grew slightly, reaching a population of 405 in 1945. Buses replaced the streetcars, and while the number of automobiles increased, people on horseback continued to be a familiar sight on Springfield Pike. The residents of Springdale retained the village tradition of strong community and family ties. Although the names changed as old families moved away or died out and new ones moved in, the composition of the neighborhood did not. Newcomers were quickly integrated into the community.

While Springdale itself remained relatively unchanged, this was not true of the communities surrounding it. In the 1930s the United States government with its ambitious plans for a greenbelt community moved into Greenhills. Other institutional neighbors included Maple Knoll, a home for unmarried mothers and a maternity hospital formerly known as "the Home for the Friendless," that moved from downtown Cincinnati to the quieter environment between Glendale and Springdale. Other neighbors included the Hamilton County Glenview School for troubled boys and the Glenmary Home Missionaries. The later organization established its headquarters in Springdale in 1939. As is always the case, neighbors quarreled periodically. Glendale apparently used the open fields of the Comer farm as a city dump. When the residents of Springdale complained, the county Board of Health advised them to desist.¹ New names, new neighbors and new traditions appeared.

Springdale was such a sleepy little village any diversion was worthy of note. Every Springdale resident of a certain age remembers the Comer and Jordan Sale Barn.

The barns and the singular stone house of this establishment abutted Rt. 4. Walter Comer and his partner operated a combination livestock auction house, flea market and antique store. The rapid patter of the auctioneer, the clutter of junk in which the lucky one might find undiscovered treasure, the exotic-looking buffalo and Brahma bulls Comer imported from the West combined to form an indelible impression. Farmers came from miles around to sell and purchase livestock. They brought with them their coon hounds, their guns and their knives to swap in Comer's parking lot along with their tall-tales.

Jessie Rice, Comer's blacksmith who lived above one of the barns, sounded the alarm in 1938 when a terrible fire broke out. Many of the men in Springdale, awakened by the sirens, helped evacuate the horses. Comer and Jordan survived that disaster. But another fire in 1964 totally destroyed it. The people of Springdale rarely complained of the barnyard smells, the cars or the crowds of people drawn to the Sale Barn.²

For a time in the early twenties the Springdale Amusement Park operated a dog-track. The company received some notoriety in 1928 when the widow of the patent-holder for the rabbit used in dog-racing sued the park for patent infringement. The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a decision by lower courts in favor of Springdale Amusement, but the free publicity came too late since the Park had already abandoned dog-racing.³

The Springdale Inn Arena held boxing matches, of sorts. In 1925 it heralded as its feature on the "best boxing card of the season," Bobby Annmann vs. Kid Broad. Young Bobby had recently lost the Cincinnati flyweight championship, and the Springdale fight was the first step on a very long comeback trail for Bobby.

The great world events of the thirties and forties also impinged on Springdale's serenity. In 1929 a devastating stock market crash ushered in a world-wide economic depression. No one emerged unscathed from the thirties but rural areas such as Springdale had ways of coping denied to those living in more urban environments.

Still, life became hard for many. The valley industries cut back, laid off and shut down. Edward Schumacher, a former Springdale resident, recalls the exact day his pink slip arrived from Tool, Steel, Gear and Pinion Company. It was his first wedding anniversary. Six years later the company called him back to work!

In the meantime the Schumachers moved in with his parents, as millions of other young American married couples were doing. In exchange for room and board Schumacher agreed to help out on the family farm. He supplemented the family economy through a succession of odd jobs. He hauled manure for Mt. Healthy Hatcheries. He worked in Clyde Miller's Springdale grocery pumping gas out front, stocking shelves and doing any other chores that came along. Showing considerable initiative, he devised a portable feed grinder for the back of his Packard and earned some income by grinding feed for local farmers on their own premises.⁴

Many others adapted in a similar manner. Those in the painting business took jobs farther away from home. One Springdale painter who had no automobile climbed aboard the bus loaded down by his paint buckets and folding ladder, brushes, drop-clothes and other tools of the trade attached to every part of his anatomy.⁵ As a rule, work did not cease completely. Instead it became lower-paid, part-time and intermittent.

Fortunately for construction workers, Springdale experienced some house building in the 1930s. An Englishman named Colonel Bolling purchased lots and constructed houses in Cloverdale Gardens. Colonel Bolling would build one house and sell it and use the collateral from that house to build another. Bolling's houses had full basements on one acre lots. His crew used horses and mules to lay out roads. Colonel Bolling completed two streets in the development and then eventually sold the other lots. Most of them remained vacant for another ten years or so.⁶

Other workers found employment building the mains that brought water to Springdale and Sharonville. The Hamilton County Commissioners agreed to extend the

lines after the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that counties could finance them through bonds which were paid by assessments against the property owners. The county let the bids in 1931 despite the objections of some Springdale farmers who faced assessments of five thousand dollars or more. They hired an attorney to represent them but to no avail. Ninety-five percent of the property owners in Sharonville petitioned for city water. The prospect of jobs to build the mains served as a major selling point.⁷ Some construction firms promised to employ 75 percent hand labor and only 25 percent machine labor as a way of increasing employment.⁸

For the unemployed, life consisted of daily trips to the Employment Office in Wyoming. Later on, they had to trek to the Race Street office of the State Employment Service. Searching for a job through these channels lasted only until the bus money ran out.⁹ Luckily most men and women lived frugally in Springdale. Many people owned their own homes but, if they did not, the rent in Springdale was reasonable. Electricity came to Springdale in 1923 but few people owned electrical appliances.¹⁰ Families conserved by turning off the electric lights and using old kerosene lamps.¹¹

Winter heating bills were minimal since many of the old houses had never had furnaces installed. In the 19th century, families depended on heat from their fireplaces but by the 1930s many of these fireplaces had been boarded and replaced with gigantic coal stoves. On cold days the family stayed as close to the coal stove or to the cook stove in the kitchen as possible. Neither one warmed the entire house. At night people warmed themselves by sleeping under layers of homemade quilts. In the morning they dressed themselves in rooms in which ice sometimes coated the windows.¹²

The widespread practice of planting garden plots helped stretch the food dollar. Springdale women canned produce for the winter, made pickles and relishes and other foodstuffs. Many of them made their own bread. Grace Songer Huddleston recalls her mother's baking powder biscuits and whole wheat buns baked in the family's wood-fired range.

Self-sufficiency extended even to the making of soap, which was a mixture of lye and rendered fat. Placed in a pan and allowed to harden, the "soap" was then cut into squares "like peanut butter fudge," and was used for everything from doing the laundry to scrubbing the floors. On laundry day the family washed down the privy with the used wash water! "Waste not, want not" took on new urgency during the Depression.¹³

The pig often sacrificed its fat for soap making on Thanksgiving day, which seemed a very logical way to celebrate the holiday. The family rose before daybreak to place big kettles of water on the fire. When the guests arrived, they helped slaughter the pig, which was hung upright on improvised scaffolding and cleansed with scalding water. The children scraped the pig's skin clean. The women then began the laborious process of salting or canning the meat and rendering the lard. Very little was wasted. After a hard day's work family and friends sat down to a Thanksgiving dinner of fresh pork.¹⁴

Despite frugality and the advantages of living in a rural area, some people, of course, reached the point of desperation during the Depression. The Ladies Aid Society of the Presbyterian church tried to be aware of and sensitive to the needs of those in the village who were losing their struggle against poverty and helped them through donations of food or clothing.¹⁵

A major concern was the treat of severe illness which often required frequent, and costly, visits by the doctor or hospitalization. For minor ailments most continued with home remedies such as those that had been practiced by Fanny Sharp. For something more serious residents called Dr. Mathews, who made a circuit of the area from his Wyoming office. The good doctor occasionally "lost" the billing records of patients who had lingering illnesses and ran up substantial charges. Yet so many of his patients were poor and he could hardly forgive all their debts.¹⁶

Patients requiring hospital care went either to Hamilton or Cincinnati with the exception of maternity patients. Maple Knoll Hospital served the community as a

private maternity hospital and many Springdale residents began their life in the old brick building shaded by the grand old Maple trees. Still, any stay in the hospital for whatever reason could mean the difference between poverty and total destitution.

Those who needed to applied for public assistance only as a last resort. Still local and state funds ran out quickly and President Franklin D. Roosevelt hoped his public works programs would offer relief. In 1935 work began on a \$868,646 WPA project in Springfield Township which included reforestation, flood control and the widening of almost thirty-eight miles of township roads. Sixteen hundred men found immediate employment.¹⁷

One Springdale woman remembers a more mundane task performed by the WPA. The men built new privies for homeowners. A few still exist around Springdale, though they have long been unused and filled with cinders and ashes.¹⁸

Evidence of the WPA work still exists in bridges, roads and public buildings. These tangible effects were secondary to the primary purpose of these programs, which put men to work and money into the economy. In the end, surviving the Great Depression involved both the efforts of the state and the belt-tightening strategies of individuals and families.

Institutions had also to survive unprecedented economic crisis. Surprisingly, the Presbyterian church announced in 1932 that it had enjoyed one of its best years financially and that the budget had been balanced.¹⁹ In all likelihood, the church benefited from the publicity given it as it celebrated its 140th anniversary.

James Lovett, a Springdale resident and church elder, seemed very aware of the country's precarious condition as he surveyed the history of the church and the community on that occasion. At the time, 15,000 veterans and their families marched on the nation's capital, just as Congress was considering a bill authorizing immediate payment of bonuses to World War I soldiers, not due until 1945. His church had endured many disruptions, wars with the Indians, the New Light and abolitionist

schisms, and a divisive Civil War. On the eve of its 140th year, the church showed every indication of surviving the Great Depression as well.

The Springdale School fared less fortunately. In 1927 the school had moved into new, modern quarters and found itself in the midst of the Depression and in debt. At the end of December 1934 the outstanding debt amounted to \$45,250.00.²⁰ The school board exercised the most stringent economies to keep afloat. During the 1936-37 school year the board resolved to pay its teachers for ten months or for "as long as funds are available."²¹

During the Great Depression teachers generally accepted the salary, however low, the school boards offered. In 1936-37 the Board fixed its three full-time teachers' salaries at only \$125 per month for the ten-month year.²² Still the salary structure had improved since 1897 when the Springdale School Director boasted that he had "over fifty applications from teachers who are willing to take the job for grub and lodging...."²³

Tight economic circumstances led to problems with the neighboring Glendale School Board, which was owed tuition money. Since Springdale sent its grade school graduates on to Glendale or to Mt. Healthy High School, tuition was paid by the Springdale School Board. In October 1936 the superintendent of Glendale School submitted a bill for back tuition which was tabled because it was considered excessive.²⁴ This stall technique worked. Seventeen months later they agreed to a renegotiated sum of fifty dollars per student which Springdale would pay "as funds are made available."²⁵ A year later, however, the board decided to send Springdale students to Mt. Healthy High School. To transport the students, the school board rented an old bus from the Cincinnati Street Railway Company in 1937 and hired a bus driver.²⁶

The frugality of the Springdale boards can best be illustrated by their responses to the Great Flood of 1937, which forced the Springdale School to close until the city could again provide Springdale with electricity and pure water. Arthur Schaefer, the board president, managed to reopen the school more quickly by arranging for a temporary

supply of water from Glendale, which had its own village waterworks. Soon a question arose over the payment of the teachers for the days when the school had been closed. The board saw no reason it should pay for days not taught and approached the Hamilton County Superintendent of Education about the possibility of deducting those days from its teachers' pay. "Pay the teachers anyway," responded the superintendent, "the flood is an act of God!"²⁷

Another major new federal project was the building of planned community called Greenhills. When the U.S. government purchased farms in the area for the proposed greenbelt community, the board feared the district would lose school taxes dollars. On December 22, 1936, a resolution was sent to the Resettlement Administration which controlled Greenhills as part of the Department of Agriculture, requesting that the federal government pay tuition for students living on government property. Fears diminished somewhat when the government paid all delinquent taxes on property it purchased. Then in January 1937 the board signed a contract in which the government agreed to pay the school taxes on its real estate in Rural District 4, the Springdale district.²⁸ In 1939 the Department of Agriculture informed the board that it would pay the district \$654.00 for the year 1939 in lieu of taxes assessed for Greenhills.²⁹ That money paid a half-year's salary for one of Springdale's three teachers.

Educational philosophy began and ended with "spare the rod and spoil the child." Most Springdale school boards looked for disciplinarian teachers who would not spare the rod. "If there's any sense in a kid," claimed a school board president, "that's the way to sprout the germ."³⁰ Still, the children seemed to flourish. Mae Malone's gentle presence eased their adjustment to first grade and then through grades two and three. Miss Malone is still remembered fondly by her former students. Sometimes the older boys dreamed up a little mischief. The worst case involved vandalism in 1936 when the school was broken into, sporting equipment stolen and "ink spilled into the desk." The Cincinnati Enquirer reported the details of this delinquency.³¹

When the nineteenth-century school building was torn down in the 1930s, the new school provided the only building large enough for village meetings. The Springdale Men's Civil Club met there, the WPA held entertainment at the school and the fire department used it to stage its fund-raising performances. The school building even took the place of a local cinema when the volunteer fire department began to show "moving pictures" on Wednesday nights.³² Not only did the school provide education, a meeting place and recreation for Springdale's children, it also created several part-time jobs. Clyde Songer hauled for the school, and A.F. Murphy did plaster work and landscaping.³³ The district also employed a janitor, the school bus driver and, of course, the teachers and the principal.

The bus driver received a salary increase because this was in addition to his Mt. Healthy run.³⁴ Other new responsibilities taken on by the school board included operating a cafeteria which opened in October 1944 under the direction of Mrs. Roy. After November 6, 1941 the bus driver had new responsibilities. By the 1940s, parents demanded bus transportation for elementary school children. The board put the facts in a petition which it sent to state and county officials.

New problems faced the school board in the 1940s. The federal government played an increasingly important role in education which proved to be both a blessing and a curse. The Lanham Act provided for the district to furnish a room as a nursery school and paid half of the personnel salary. Discussions on setting up such a nursery school began in 1943³⁵ were abandoned after a short time. Then in March 1947 Elsie Roberts and Mary Hinkle established a more permanent program which provided a regular kindergarten class in the 1949-50 school year. Hinkle became its first teacher.

Other innovations fostered by government included special arrangements for mentally and physically handicapped students. Fortunately Springdale rarely had more than one or two students in this category. The board paid transportation and tuition expenses for them to attend schools offering specialized programs.³⁶ The state

government also offered to subsidize school lunches at the rate of nine cents per meal. Springdale children would pay twenty-five cents for their noon meal. At first, the board hesitated since the program required the immediate purchase of a refrigerator. The board would gradually be reimbursed but until then faced a real financial burden.³⁷ During the war years the Springdale School suffered from a rapid turnover in personnel. But when Edna Underwood was hired in August 1943 to teach second and part of third grade, the board acquired a permanent fixture.³⁸ Mrs. Underwood remained with the school until her retirement in 1960. At that time, she began a new career in politics as a member of Springdale's first village government.

Others hired during the period did not match Underwood's record. The schools principals, invariably men, found it difficult to commit themselves with the ever-present draft making their future unclear. Kermit Pack replaced A.G. Butz as principal in 1943-44, followed by Edwin Potee. The board's clerk filed an affidavit for an occupational deferment after he was reclassified 1-A.³⁹ After the war Edmund Hammond served for two years from 1949-50 until 1952-53 when principal Keith Perkins assumed control.

The students apparently felt the disruptions keenly as witnessed by a rash of disciplinary problems in 1943-44. Adjusting to three new principals in as many years exacerbated problems. The board first heard complaints about unruliness on the school bus, driven by garage-owner and fire chief, Chris Utrecht. Parents received word from the School Bus Committee that their children would walk to school until the unaccustomed exercise modified their behavior.⁴⁰ Problems included vandalism and carrying b.b. guns and slingshots on the school playground. The situation in the classroom deteriorated. Three teachers threatened to resign unless the principal restored order.⁴¹

World War II also eroded parental controls. Many fathers were gone serving their country overseas. Others worked long overtime hours in the valley's crucial war industries. Women also did their part in the factories. Long hours were

spent by both sexes in supporting the war effort. The Men's Civic club conducted numerous scrap paper and clothing drives.⁴² The Springdale "bondaliers," organized war bond drives.⁴³ Teachers sold war stamps in the public school.⁴⁴ In the meantime, frightened or simply bored children discovered undesirable ways of gaining attention. The Men's Civic Club met to discuss the problems. One solution, the members concluded, was to offer more organized and supervised recreational programs for the children.⁴⁵

The fears of German raids led the community to build a bomb shelter in front of the school.⁴⁶ Fortunately in this war public paranoia was usually kept within bounds. Hostility towards Germany did not affect German-Americans as extensively as it had in World War I.

Ration book cooking became an art. Women devised recipes for sugarless cakes and chicory coffee.⁴⁷ Liquor rationing began on June 1, 1943.⁴⁸

Local newspapers reported the movement of local soldiers at war, including Lt. Harold Sorter, who was "somewhere in the South Pacific."⁴⁹ The people of Springdale suffered through four years of the uncertainty and the anxiety, rent controls and rations. At the end all the men returned safely except for Leroy Warwick and Arthur Bockelman, Springdale's two fatalities in World War II.

As allied forces pushed back enemy forces at the Battle of the Bulge and headed for the Rhine River in early 1945, Springdale began to plan its V-E Day celebration. The plan was a little premature, and Germany did not surrender until May 8, 1945. The end of the war had to await victory over Japan. After the devastating atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese officially surrendered on September 2, 1945. The Springdale men gradually returned but not to the place they had left behind. The war brought changes to Springdale, to the nation, and the adjustment would be difficult.

The two and a half decades between the end of World War I and the surrender of Japan had been a time of testing for the Springdale community spirit. Not only had the

community coped with illness and the Depression, but its people had weathered problems in its school and the dislocations caused by war. The thirties also saw the organization of Springdale's most beloved institution, its volunteer fire department.

NOTES

MCVN (12 Aug 1971): 2.

¹"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (10 Aug 1961) 1:5.

²Jane Huber to author, interview, 27 Jan 1988; Frank Smith to author, interview, 18 Jun 1988.

³"Twenty-Five Years Ago," MCVN (19 Feb 1953): 5. The Springdale Amusement Park was actually located in Stockton, just north of Springdale. The site is now occupied by a defunct drive-in theater, the Acme.

⁴Schumacher interview, 28 Feb 1988.

⁵Huber interview.

⁶Schumacher interview.

⁷"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (26 Jan 1956) 1:4.

⁸"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (15 Mar 1956) 1:5.

⁹"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (23 May 1963) 1:6.

¹⁰According to Marie Sharp Warwick, "we blew out the lamps in 1923."

¹¹Clyde Miller's grocery had two pumps in front, one for gasoline and one for kerosene. Many people used kerosene to fuel their cook stoves. Huber interview.

¹²Grace Songer Huddleston to author, interview, 14 Mar 1988.

¹³Huddleston interview.

¹⁴"Thoughts of By-Gone Days," Helen Finsterbusch Courte Beekley to her daughter.

-
- ¹⁵List of expenses, Springdale Presbyterian Church archives.
- ¹⁶Judge William S. Mathews to author, 6 Jun 1988; Schumacher interview.
- ¹⁷"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (24 Nov 1960) 1:4.
- ¹⁸Huddleston interview.
- ¹⁹Springdale Community Church Bulletin, "Handbill announcing the 140th Anniversary of the Springdale Presbyterian Church 1792-1932."
- ²⁰Debt referred to in Springdale School Board, "Minutes," 1 Jan 1936. Hereafter cited as SSB.
- ²¹SSB, May 22, 1936.
- ²²SSB, 24 Apr 1936.
- ²³"Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (23 May 1947):4.
- ²⁴SSB, 23 Oct 1936.
- ²⁵SSB, 21 Dec 1937.
- ²⁶SSB, 28 May 1937.
- ²⁷SSB, 5 Feb 1937.
- ²⁸SSB, 25 Jan 1937.
- ²⁹SSB, 28 May 1939.
- ³⁰MCVN (23 May 1947): 4.
- ³¹Enquirer (13 Dec 1934) 4:32.
- ³²SSB, 24 Mar 1939.
- ³³SSB, 7 Aug 1939.
- ³⁴SSB, 27 Sep 1941 and 1 Nov 1941.
- ³⁵SSB, 30 Jun 1943.
- ³⁶SSB, 26 Feb 1945.
- ³⁷SSB, 24 Sept 1945.
- ³⁸SSB, 10 Aug 1943.
- ³⁹SSB, 26 Feb 1945.
- ⁴⁰SSB, 25 Oct 1943.
- ⁴¹SSB, 16 Dec 1943.
- ⁴²The Valley Shopper (29 Mar 1945): 1. Robert Thomas was the president of Springdale's Men's Civic Club; T. E. Tweddle and Ed Schumacher served as committee chairmen of the drive.
- ⁴³The Valley Shopper (17 May 1945): 1.
- ⁴⁴SSB, 25 Sep 1944.
- ⁴⁵SSB, 22 May 1944 and 26 Jun 1944.
- ⁴⁶SSB, 27 Sep 1944.
- ⁴⁷"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (15 Feb 1968): 1.
- ⁴⁸"Twenty-five Years Ago," MCVN (9 May 1968): 1.
- ⁴⁹MCVN (16 Jan 1944) 1:3.

CHAPTER NINE

THE SPRINGDALE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The grass fire fanned by the early spring winds threatened to burn out of control. The anxious farmer breathed a sigh of relief when he saw the truck careening around the bend. As it screeched to a stop Chris Utrecht jumped out and ran to the pumper on the front of the truck. He grabbed the hose and while he stood on the running board spraying, Ed Schumacher drove the Dodge around the fire until nothing remained but a sodden field of charred grass.

And that was the way the three-year-old Springdale Volunteer Fire Department operated in 1936. For years the community had recognized its need for fire protection. Grass fires and even house fires frequently burned out of control. Residents paid exorbitant insurance rates. When the Curry and Shephard Insurance Agency found it difficult to build up much of a clientele, it introduced a creative selling device. The agency agreed to contribute all insurance premiums collected for three years to a volunteer fire department.

So the newly organized Springdale Men's Civic Club organized a department, and a garage on Vanarsdale Lane served as the first firehouse. Together with the contributions of Curry and Shepherd, fund-raising activities and membership fees permitted Chris Utrecht, first fire chief, garage owner, school bus driver and mechanic extraordinaire to buy a Model T Ford and equip it with two thirty-gallon tanks filled with soda and water.²

The next step involved purchasing one hundred feet of one-inch hose and an adapter for the fire hydrants. Utrecht constructed this homemade fire engine with the help of his friends and neighbors. That kind of individual initiative characterized the volunteers who created the first fire department in 1933. The purchase of the 1-1/2-ton Dodge

truck with its front-mounted Barton pumper and its two hundred gallon capacity represented a real advance for the department. That fire truck served the community until 1957!³ To report a fire, one simply called Utrecht's garage, where another person sounded the alarm which consisted of a whistle connected to the garage's air pump.¹ Obviously pragmatism characterized the Springdale fire department from its inception.

The volunteer fire department immediately became the focus of village pride and volunteers were rarely in short supply. Many members of the fire department also served on the school board and/or were members of the civic club. The people of Springdale felt that the fire department belonged to all of them and they supported it as best they could. The wives of the volunteers solicited funds. Most citizens contributed fifty cents or one dollar. A contribution earned the donor an emblem to be placed on the front door to ensure protection in case of fire.²

In June 1945 the president of the board of trustees of the fire department, Ed Schumacher, announced tentative plans for a new fire house to be built on the northeast corner of Springfield Pike and Peach Street.³ Fortunately, the announcement stressed their tentative nature. In September the trustees solicited bids. The Valley Shopper reported the enthusiasm of Springdale residents.⁴ But almost two years later, in August 1947, the walls were up but the building still had no roof! Completion depended on funds to be raised at the big Labor Day Frolic. Only through the willingness and hard work of volunteers, fire department members and others, was work on the building completed.⁵

In 1948 the department elected a new volunteer fire chief to serve in its new firehouse. Frank Smith, a thirty-five-year-old native of Northside, served the Springdale Fire Department for thirty-three years until his retirement on January 1, 1981. Smith brought an unprecedented degree of professionalism to the all volunteer department. He was in charge of safety operations for the General Electric plant which provided him with constantly updated instruction in training, techniques, materials and equipment.

When General Electric sent Chief Smith to fire-fighting seminars he gained knowledge that he later transmitted to the Springdale volunteers. Obviously, fighting grass and barn fires in a community of six hundred did not require all the expertise Chief Smith possessed. As the community grew, however, its firefighting needs necessarily grew with it, and it was fortunate to have a volunteer as dedicated and as knowledgeable as Frank Smith. Perhaps the most telling testimony to his effectiveness is that when he retired, the city replaced him with a full-time salaried chief.⁶

In fact, the fire department made up in enthusiasm, initiative and knowledge what it lacked in material resources. Carnivals, raffles and the annual Thanksgiving Turkey Shoot continued to fund the department. Still, funds were usually short of actual needs and Smith was forced to work with equipment in Springdale that must have seemed archaic compared to the state of the art equipment he knew from his job at G.E. Finally in 1952, the department bought an old white truck from Lockland for one thousand dollars which was still in use on standby ten years later. Chief Smith also announced at that time that his department had a resuscitator in "good working order."⁷

Each year, the village eagerly anticipated various fire department fund-raising social event. Like other area fire department, the fire department sponsored an annual carnival and minstrel show produced by Lockland amateur show producer Millard "Skeet" Kunz. In the 1950s, fire department volunteers who participated in a "chorus line" provided a still unforgettable vision of knobby knees, only sacrificing their dignity. The Ladies Auxiliary, organized in 1955 and led by Mrs. Frank Smith, spent endless hours creating the costumes. The women did more than serve coffee and sandwiches at the site of fires, raising funds, purchasing kitchen equipment and helping to organize and produce the annual carnival.⁸

The grateful population of the Springdale Fire District passed a bond issue in November 1956 that provided the Fire District with nineteen thousand dollars for new equipment. The yes vote, representing 90% of the community, illustrated the almost

universal admiration and esteem in which the community held the fire department.⁹ With the new funds the Springfield Township Trustees purchased a 750 F.W.D. pumper for the department. Next, the department raised funds to purchase a crash truck equipped with generator-powered field lights, coats, boots, a smoke ejector and fire tools.¹⁰In 1961 the fire department began its life-saving service with a 1951 ambulance donated by Vorhis Funeral Home.¹¹ The following year when the new village government became financially responsible for the fire department, a new era began.

Springdale owes its fire department a debt of gratitude that goes beyond the obvious protection it provided. It gave the village a focus and a sense of pride during a crucial thirty-year period when centrifugal forces threatened the identity of the village. In a neighborhood with no high school, no industry, no post office and little commerce, it was becoming difficult to think of Springdale as being a distinct place. The Springdale Volunteer Fire Department gave the community a tangible institution and identity that represented Springdale.

Membership in the fire department provided motivated individuals with an outlet for their civic pride, and the members learned a great deal more than firefighting. They developed political and fund-raising skills as well. Bond issues forced the membership to learn how to organize and mobilize public support. Inadequate water supplies led the Springdale residents to lobby the City of Cincinnati and the Hamilton County Commissioners for additional and larger water mains.

Members of the volunteer fire department were prominent in the incorporation effort in 1959 and when the new city council was elected in 1960 the Springdale Volunteer Fire Department was well-represented. It can fairly be said that the fire department laid the civic groundwork for the regeneration of the village in 1960. The residents of Springdale recognize that fact and are deservedly proud of their fire department's history.

NOTES

¹MCVN (26 Oct 1961): 1.

²Frank Smith and Mrs. Becky Smith to author, interview, 10 June 1988. Members of the fire department in April 1942 were Chris Utrecht, Chief, Raymond Norrish, Ed Evers, Logan Slack, Robert Turner, Raymond Myers, John Martin, Paul Evers, Frank Sorter, Jr., Ed Schumacher, Elmer Cross, Robert Bechtold, Harold Garvey, Roy Roberts, Earl Neuhaus, S. Rolfs, Bert Spangler, Ed Bockelman, Howard Bechtol, John Farin, Harry Whalan, Jr., and Leslie Neuhaus. Cincinnati Post (24 Apr 1942): 29; hereafter cited as Post.

³The Valley Shopper (21 Jun 1945): 1.

⁴The Valley Shopper (20 Sep 1945): 1.

⁵MCVN (29 Aug 1947): 1.

⁶Smith interview; Council "Minutes," 3 Dec 1980.

⁷MCVN (15 Jan 1953) 2:4.

⁸Information on fund-raising and the Ladies Auxiliary, Smith interview. MCVN (31 Mar 1955) 2:14.

⁹MCVN (1 Nov 1956) 1:1 and MCVN (8 Nov 1956) 1:1.

¹⁰MCVN (26 Oct 1961): 1.

¹¹MCVN (26 Oct 1961): 1.

CHAPTER TEN

PRINCETON

The Princeton school district serves the Springdale community. Considered one of the more progressive systems in the nation, Princeton has a racially, economically and socially diversified student population. Despite periodic tensions generated by this mixture, the Princeton schools perennially earn accolades for both their academic and athletic accomplishments. Few people remember that thirty years ago great controversy surrounded the birth of the Princeton School District. Even fewer recall the role played by Springdale residents in that dramatic fight.

In 1953 when the fight began, the idea of a centralized, consolidated school district to serve the valley was already forty-three years old. In 1909 an organization called the Federated Improvement Society formed an Educational Committee to collect information from area school boards regarding curricula, facilities, enrollment and tax rates. The idea for a central high school, however, never extended beyond this feasibility study. Centralization made greater progress in other areas such as in Union Township in 1916.¹ Between 1935 and 1937 the Ohio Department of Education conducted a state-wide survey on the question which recommended the creation of a Glendale-Sharonville district to include Springdale, Crescentville, Evendale, Runyan, Glendale and Sharonville.² The Depression and World War II delayed implementation of that recommendation.

After World War II, consolidation again received a great deal of attention. School systems in the Millcreek valley and beyond found it virtually impossible to handle the pressures of "baby-boom" enrollment, exacerbated as it was by the influx of new families moving into new suburban housing developments spreading throughout the area. By 1949 Springdale School's enrollment had risen to 302 students.

In late 1950 the State Department of Education again recommended the consolidation of seven school districts, including Sharonville, Glendale, Crescentville, Evendale, Runyan, Stewart and possibly Woodlawn.³ A.D. St. Clair, field agent for the department, held local forum to discuss the proposal.⁴ In December the Springdale School Board rejected consolidation and unanimously supported a motion stating that it was "unalterably opposed to the proposed consolidation of school districts."⁵ Board president Lester Hinkle opposed consolidation. He and fellow school board member, Edward Schumacher, feared increased state control and the corresponding loss of local autonomy. What if in exchange for increases in funds and programs Springdale received a faceless, bureaucratic system? But school consolidation was the trend. Precedents in other areas of the state had already been set. By the end of the month, despite persistent rumors about the inclusion of Springdale School, Lester Hinkle, board president, reported to the Men's Civic Club that the Hamilton County Board of Education had promised not to take any immediate action.⁶

Edward Schumacher believed the Hamilton County Board of Education should make no decisions on the issue of consolidation until it made comprehensive studies of the area. To make his opinion heard, he ran successfully for the county board⁷ and was sworn in January 19, 1952. At the initial board meeting he demanded a comprehensive study which was approved by the board, as well as his recommendation that the Cincinnati Bureau of Governmental Research be retained to conduct the investigation.

At the same time, the Glendale Board of Education, which supported consolidation, grew impatient and on February 10, 1953, requested that the county board give official notification of its plans by June 1, 1953.⁸ On May 7, 1953 the Millcreek Valley News reported that the Glendale district supported consolidation because of large increases in its elementary school population accompanied by a declining enrollment in its high school.⁹

This seemingly innocuous item stirred up a hornet's nest. Rumors circulated that if consolidation occurred, some of the black children attending Glendale's Congress Avenue Elementary School would be assigned to Springdale School. County Board Superintendent Charles B. Crouch denied the rumors. He made clear, however, that the authority for assigning students rested with the county superintendent who based his decision on the proximity of the school to the student.¹⁰

During this time, Schumacher had been convinced of the benefits of consolidation and began a personal crusade to persuade others of the merits. To gain support, he attended PTA meeting after meeting, facing at times vehemently hostile audiences who considered him a traitor. His family feared his position at the center of this controversy would damage his insurance business. His friend Lester Hinkle, who still opposed consolidation, was elected Springdale's representative on a committee of the eight districts.¹¹ At its spring meeting the Springdale School Board approved Hinkle's resolution opposing consolidation. Allocating \$550 to commission a study by the Cincinnati Bureau of Governmental Research on the grounds, buildings and playgrounds of the Springdale district and its needs for the future. Only board member Ruth Schumacher dissented.¹² Despite opposition in their own community, the persistent Schumacher and others in favor of consolidation labored on.

Another consolidation supporter was Edward Hammond, former principal of the Springdale School and in 1953 the principal of the Colerain Consolidated Schools. He and Schumaker each addressed the Springdale PTA on March 18 and were rewarded with that organization's approval of consolidation despite the opposition of the Springdale board. The reasons for their support were simple enough. The Springdale PTA decided that the opportunities given to students through consolidation outweighed any possible loss of local control.¹³ In an article published in the Millcreek Valley News on April 16, 1953 Hammond lucidly explained those advantages. Individual school districts served educational purposes well in the past when the demands on the system had

been simpler. However, demographic, social and economic forces combined with new educational expectations created great inequalities among the eight districts. Teachers taught more than one grade and there were inadequate provisions for vocational education, counseling and health care. Additionally, two separate high schools in Glendale and Sharonville enrolled fewer than 130 students.

Changes at the elementary level were evident in a school population was growing by leaps and bounds. In 1952 the board approved an addition to Springdale School at an estimated at \$125,000. Not complete by the start of the 1953-54 school year, 326 students were crammed into temporary quarters in the village's churches. Even as the new quarters were being completed the board contemplated purchasing additional land for the future.

In May the county board delayed its decision for ninety days citing the necessity of giving the Bureau of Governmental Research sufficient time to complete its study. Schumacher announced that the board would abide by the bureau's recommendations.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, the report that came out in August 1953 recommended consolidation. Pooling resources would allow the schools to offer health services, a speech therapist, a psychologist and classes for the handicapped and learning disabled. Special teachers could be hired for classes in art, music and physical education. Consolidation would also permit vocational classes, home economics and commercial education.¹⁵

Proponents of the plan immediately formed a Citizen's Committee for Consolidation as a means of disseminating the bureau's report.¹⁶ The opponents also prepared for battle. In early November 1953 the Hamilton County Board of Education unanimously voted to create a new consolidated school district. The opponents obtained a restraining order until the constitutionality of consolidation could be tested. Vernon Wiegand of Springdale was one of the plaintiffs.¹⁷

Though the county board was financially unprepared for a prolonged court fight, Edward Schumacher approached Murray Seasongood, the respected lawyer and former

Cincinnati mayor for help. Seasingood listened to the details of the case and the board's financial status, and asked for a week to consider taking the case. When he called Schumacher with his decision, he informed him that his firm would accept the case for court costs.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the opponents of consolidation organized an apparently successful remonstrance petition. Under Ohio law a petition signed by a majority of citizens who voted in the last election within thirty days after the board's resolution could defeat or delay the new district.¹⁹ On December 3, 1953 the Millcreek Valley News reported that "SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION IS DEFEATED." The petition drive netted 2,032 signatures of registered voters in the November local election, more than the required 51 percent. The board countered, declaring that the remonstrance petition should have been based on those registered to vote in the 1952 general election. If based on the larger 1952 figure of 4,468 registered voters, the petition would fail.

The petition's organizers turned to the judicial system. On September 9, 1954 Judge John M. Renner of the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas declared the board's actions "arbitrary and contrary to law." Renner's decision elated consolidation's opponents. The remonstrance petition had been their only defense. The Ohio Supreme Court had already refused to hear a case challenging the constitutionality of consolidation when the board unified the Harrison, Crosby and Whitewater districts.²⁰ Yet the elation was short-lived. On Monday, January 14, 1955 the 1st District Court of Appeals dismissed Renner's ruling and threw out the remonstrance petition on the grounds that it did not represent a majority of registered voters in the presidential election of 1952.

The opponents hired former Supreme Court Justice Henry A. Middleton to carry their case to the Ohio Supreme Court. The Woodlawn, Sharonville and Evendale school boards and a number of individual citizens were listed as plaintiffs.²¹ In June 1955 the Ohio Supreme Court refused to hear the case.²² The long battle was over.

The fight was a bitter one in which Springdale residents figured prominently on both sides. In January 1955 the county board elected Ed Schumacher as its president. Appropriately Schumacher, who had expended such energy for so many years on consolidation, held that position when the court made its decision.²³

The consolidation controversy centered on three issues: local control, the effects on the tax rates and race. In Springdale the issue of local control was most important. Tax rates mattered little and everyone anticipated that Springdale's tax rates would remain much the same after consolidation. In Evendale, on the other hand, the fear of tax hikes was very strong. The industries around Evendale stood to lose most from consolidation and their financial contributions to the opposition forces allowed the fight to last as long as it did.

The issue of race was raised both in respect to the assignment of elementary school children and, with more inflammatory consequences, in regard to Lincoln Heights, a community located on the periphery of the eight districts which had a predominately black population. During the campaign, rumors circulated that the proponents of consolidation had a secret agenda: first, win approval, and then integrate the Lincoln Heights schools into the new district.²⁴ Those fears were unfounded since consolidation did not even include Lincoln Heights. The consolidation move occurred, of course, at the same time as the groundbreaking Supreme Court decision, Brown v. the Board of Education. By affirming the inherent discrimination in "separate but equal" schools, the decision made segregated schools unconstitutional. Nobody knew just what the effects of the Brown decision would be, but undoubtedly fears of racial integration were present and were sometimes manipulated by those who opposed consolidation. When, fifteen years later in 1970, the Lincoln Heights system was in fact incorporated into the Princeton School District, it was with a minimum of disruption. But in the period between 1952 and 1955 the issue was a volatile one.

Still, many of those in opposition abhorred these tactics and felt they clouded the most important issue which in their minds was that of local control. In Springdale, that control came to an end at 10:00 a.m. June 20, 1955, when by order of the Hamilton County Board of Education the Springdale Local School District was officially dissolved.²⁵

Challenges continued after the formal consolidation including the choice of a name for the new district. The name Princeton was finally chosen because of the area telephone exchange and a well-known local thoroughfare.²⁶ The board members were all chosen because of their strong interest in consolidation. These included Frank Jones of Sharonville as president, John Egbert, an attorney from Glendale, and Frank Pauzer, a research chemical engineer from Springdale, who served as the clerk pro tem.²⁷ On July 12, 1955 the new board met at Springdale School which served as its temporary quarters for the next few years. The choice of Springdale School seemed fitting considering the important role played by Springdale residents in the creation of the Princeton School District. When in 1959 Lester Hinkle was elected to the Princeton School Board, conciliation was complete.²⁸

Easing fears and gaining the cooperation of the opponents of consolidation headed the list of priorities of Robert Lucas, the first superintendent of the Princeton School District. Lucas, a field director of the Ohio Educational Association and a former principal, demonstrated wisdom and tact in accomplishing his objectives.²⁹

NOTES

-
- "Fifty Years Ago," MCVN (25 Jun 1959) 1:5.
- ¹Myron Luke, "Twenty-five Years of Progress at Princeton," The Princeton Piper (Mar 1981): 5.
- ²Bureau of Governmental Research, Report 116, "A Study of Eight Local School Districts," Aug 1953: 12; hereafter cited as BGR, "Study."
- ³MCVN (4 Jan 1951): 1.
- ⁴MCVN (4 Jan 1951): 1.
- ⁵SSB, Dec 1950.
- ⁶MCVN (25 Jan 1951): 2.
- ⁷Schumacher interview.
- ⁸BGR, "Study:" 12.
- ⁹MCVN (7 May 1953) 1:3.
- ¹⁰"False Rumors are Flying," MCVN (14 May 1953) 1:1.
- ¹¹SSB, 9 Mar 1953.
- ¹²SSB, Jun 1953.
- ¹³MCVN (26 Mar 1953) 1:1.
- ¹⁴MCVN (14 May 1953) 1:1.
- ¹⁵BGR, "Study:" 17.
- ¹⁶MCVN (22 Oct 1953) 1:1.
- ¹⁷MCVN (5 Nov 1953) 1:1.
- ¹⁸Schumacher interview.
- ¹⁹BGR, "Study:" 7.
- ²⁰MCVN (16 Dec 1954) 1:1.
- ²¹MCVN (17 Feb 1955) 1:1.
- ²²MCVN (16 Jun 1955) 1:1
- ²³
- Schumacher interview; MCVN (20 Jan 1955) 1:1.
- ²⁴Schumacher states he was frequently accused of keeping the Lincoln Heights issue "in abeyance" during the campaign.
- ²⁵SSB, 20 Jun 1955.
- ²⁶Luke interview.
- ²⁷MCVN (23 Jun 1955) 1:1.
- ²⁸MCVN (12 Nov 1959) 2:11.
- ²⁹Myron Luke to author, 18 Dec 1988.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SPRINGDALE REBORN

On Tuesday, November 3, 1959 Springdale went to the polls for the most important local election in its history. At the end of the day residents had voted 514 to 385 to become a village. Springdale, of course, had been incorporated in the nineteenth century. Then came the long years of decline and the loss of population to the point where it no longer qualified for official village status. The community seemed to relish its smallness. In the forties a brave little sign announced "Springdale, Unincorporated" to travelers on Springfield Pike.

The years after World War II brought many important changes to Springdale. Veterans returned looking to establish a normal family life, which by now meant a bungalow in the suburbs away from the bustle, crime, disorder and racial heterogeneity of the city. New houses were built in areas surrounding old Springdale. New business ventures began to make small changes in the village. In January 1948 a grocery store opened at the corner of Kemper and Springfield Pike, and later that year, the Chicken Dinner Shoppe began operations. Al Kattleman, who had done local hauling before the war, incorporated his firm as a long-distance trucking company.¹ Gradually, the idea of incorporating the village gained supporters.

As the village adjusted to a changing post-war society, small-town, community-oriented activities still prevailed. Local merchants sponsored the Springdale Veteran's Ball Club, a fast-pitch softball team which was managed by Roger Schoenberger and created as much interest in Springdale as the Cincinnati Reds. For the 1948 season the team played on a new ball field located on the property owned by Springdale Dry Cleaners, just north of the village on Rt. 4. That year the men of Springdale defeated the Glendale Grocery Club, in the first round of the Glendale Fast Pitch Softball League.²

Little girls attended Brownies at the Springdale Presbyterian Church, and girls from Hartwell, Lockland and other valley towns always enjoyed it when the district girl scout meetings were held in Springdale's still rural atmosphere. The hayrides were always the favorite entertainment at those events.³ In 1946 Reverend Noble of the Presbyterian church and Jack Flaherty worked together to organize a boy scout troop.⁴

Not all activities were as much fun. The piano teacher, Mary Bishop Ritchie, "presented her students in a piano recital." The small notice in the January 4, 1945 edition of The Valley Shopper represented months of practice for little girls, some of whom would have preferred less genteel activities. The women of Springdale had their church activities, and, after it was organized on February 6, 1953, the Springdale Garden Club.⁵

For older children, especially teens, Springdale did not offer much in the way of activities. Marian and Gus Heismann sometimes held a party for teenage classes at the Hayloft, their famous square dancing establishment at Rt. 4 and just south of I-275.⁶ On the whole, however, teenagers found little to do in Springdale except hang out at Harry Bachman's store, or congregate in front of the Miller's Antique Shoppe located in the old Anthony Hilts, Jr., house. Apparently the program of sporting events for the young people begun in the 1940s had ended. Youngsters complained they had to leave the school grounds by 5:30 p.m. This idleness concerned parents and adults in the village. For one thing, with so many new families moving to Springdale, they no longer knew all the children by sight. In 1952 the teenagers organized a volunteer drive in an effort to raise funds for a recreation center. The usual bake sales and car washes were insufficient for such a large undertaking and the project fizzled.⁷

The idea that the traditional community activities were not large enough to assimilate the newcomers made incorporation more attractive. Many felt that a village government could, and should, provide parks and a recreation center for the

community. At the very least it could provide the protection of a police force. In the meantime the building boom continued.

Continued growth created new challenges. Gas and sewer lines were not yet available in the village, so residents began petitioning to get them installed.⁸ The Men's Civic Club took the lead in the lobbying effort in August 1945 when it sent a representative to discuss gas service with the Cincinnati Gas and Electric Company. If all the residents shared the cost of installation he learned it would be relatively inexpensive.⁹ At the same time, the community lobbied for a traffic light at Kemper and Springfield Pike.¹⁰ Clearly, Springdale saw growth and progress in its future and it worked hard to negotiate these improvements.

Uncontrolled growth concerned many. Ray Winterrod and the Springdale Community Club feared that the community's unincorporated status would encourage the builders who would fill Springdale's open fields with jerry-built subdivisions. Winterrod, treasurer of the club and general manager for the John D. Mason Real Estate Company, pushed incorporation as the only means of controlling growth and protecting property values through zoning and building regulations. In January 1947, when the community club called a village meeting at the Springdale School auditorium to discuss incorporation. With 250 people crowded into the auditorium, Winterrod enthusiastically described the benefits of incorporation, which included increased local control, new sewers, sidewalks, and full-time police and fire protection to Springdale. Winterrod explained that incorporation did not mean higher taxes, and that the village could count on receiving the full share of the school levy, recovering what went to Springfield Township and to the county school administration. He also calculated Springdale's share of the state sales tax, beer and whiskey licenses and income from the state gasoline and motor vehicles license tax. To save additional money, services could be introduced gradually, as growth provided the resources to pay for them. Montgomery

and Arlington Heights both ran governments on tax duplicates less than Springdale's, Winterrod asserted.

Not everyone agreed. Edward Schumacher, for one, rose to rebut Winterrod's arguments. He asked whether Springdale was willing to lose the protection of the Hamilton County sheriff's department, and the four hundred dollars that Springfield Township paid to help subsidize the fire department, while waiting for the village to be incorporated. Schumacher especially ridiculed the idea that collection of inheritance taxes would add to village revenues. "We're working people," he reminded his audience. Then he moved to table the question of incorporation "indefinitely." His motion was seconded and adopted by acclamation.¹¹

Schumacher sensed that the building boom would not be as great in Springdale as others anticipated and he was correct. He felt the community could not afford vital services and he feared giving up those that it enjoyed from the township and county as a result of its unincorporated status.

Undeterred, the Springdale Community Club met again in 1947 and established a fact-finding committee to identify the advantages, and costs, of incorporation.¹² In the same year, Hamilton County established a Rural Zoning Commission to study the need for zoning in unincorporated areas. Springdale's civic leaders awaited the results of the study and the zoning plan it was expected to include. This Commission indeed saw the need for rural zoning and presented a plan which received the approval of the Regional Planning Commission. The county then placed it on the ballot in 1948 and Springfield Township voted its approval.¹³

Meanwhile, area builders found cheap land in the outer rim of the metropolitan areas. The government subsidized the building boom through its FHA loans, veteran's benefits, and indirectly, through a new massive interstate highway system. As early as 1945 Sherwood Reeder, the director of the county's master planning division, recommended that the proposed Millcreek expressway be built from the valley into the

Cincinnati downtown basin. Reeder maintained that such an artery would benefit the northern areas through faster bus travel.¹⁴ Even in 1945 few realized how dramatically expressways would boost the use of private automobiles which in turn led to suburbanization.

The Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan published in 1948 presumed that future development would occur on the perimeter, that residential areas would grow on the outskirts linked together and to the city's core by a system of expressways.¹⁵

The Millcreek Expressway (I-75) was under construction and the section between Dayton and Cincinnati would soon be completed. A Circle Freeway would eventually connect Springfield Pike, Princeton Pike, I-75, and Rts 25 and 42. With Springdale on the path of the proposed circle freeway, Springdale soon outgrew rural zoning.

Springdale's location at the hub of this impressive network created a flurry of interest. In 1956 Jeffrey Lazarus announced that the department store he headed, Shillito's, planned to build a 75-acre shopping center in Springdale to be completed in 1960. Although the project carried a hefty \$25 million price tag, Lazarus strongly believed that this new center, called Tri-County, would change the shopping habits of the region. The question for many was would Springdale benefit from the real estate boom that would inevitably follow, or would it be swallowed up by forces beyond its control? To try to answer those questions, the Springdale Civic League, founded just a year before, held a panel in discussion on the merits of incorporation as a means of controlling growth in December 1956.¹⁶

During these years, the sound of bulldozers and hammers announced the arrival, in force, of home builders. Concerned Springdale residents feared new residential subdivisions would devour open land, and leave nothing for the industrial and commercial development to provide Springdale with an adequate tax base. Property taxes from new residents, who bought inexpensive tract houses, were insufficient to pay for the basic municipal services. The schools were under tremendous pressure, and

although voters approved a one-mil levy in 1958, that money was already allocated for a nine-room addition to the school. In the words of Gustave Neuss, one of the founders of the Springdale Civic League, "If we don't do something, we will have a hodge-podge of a community, without any real source of revenue and completely built up with residences."¹⁷

As an unincorporated area, Springdale fell under the zoning authority of the Hamilton County Commissioners. The village had 750 acres of open land zoned A for single family residences, churches, schools and golf courses, on 20,000 square feet. Developers coveted that land, hoping that it could be rezoned C to allow them to build single family homes on smaller, 6000-square-foot lots. Although public hearings were sometimes held in Springdale, when developers applied for a zoning change, as a rule interested Springdale individuals or groups went to the courthouse in downtown Cincinnati for the commission meetings to voice objections or concerns. All too frequently the commissioners ignored local objections. Even when local efforts were successful, nothing prevented the developers and landowners from returning time and time again until they gained the zoning change they desired. Private citizens and civic groups were at great disadvantage in this war of nerves. To many, incorporation seemed the answer.

In February 1959 the civic league board met at the home of Horace Dimond to consider incorporation,¹⁸ and appointed Max Sanks, Jr. and Bruce W. Smith as co-chairmen of a committee to investigate all sides of the issue. The process was pushed forward by the proposed development of the Heritage Hill subdivision off Crescentville Road, which sought a change in zoning. On June 23, 1959, the Hamilton County Commissioners held a special zoning meeting to consider the request and hear from the Civic League, which presented the commissioners with a petition protesting the rezoning.¹⁹

This process underscored what many in Springdale felt, that Springdale could not protect itself if it had to fight every request for a zoning change on a case-by-case basis.

With the July 1959 groundbreaking ceremonies for Tri-County, events threatened to move beyond Springdale's control. To gain more control, the civic club formed a Committee on Incorporation with Neuss as President. Committee members Sanks and Smith acted as co-sponsors of a petition containing 350 names that was filed with the Springfield Township Board of Trustees requesting that an election be held on incorporation. On September 30 the first public hearing was held. Proponents of incorporation stressed that village status would add only two dollars per thousand valuation to the existing \$23.70 tax, and admitted that village government would have to be extremely frugal until Tri-County was operational and on the tax rolls.²⁰

Other arguments used in favor of incorporation included the need for police protection and support for the fire department. In 1959, fire department expenses ran \$4200, yet Springfield Township contributed only \$1100. Springdale deserved a fire department that did not require raffles and carnivals for its support. Utility rates charged by CG&E would decrease once Springdale acquired village status, helping to defray the tax increase.²¹

Springdale needed incorporation, said its sponsors, to bring adequate streets and sidewalks to the village. In the new sections the developers built only graveled streets. The small stores on the Pike lost customers because the housewives who did not drive and who were afraid to push their baby carriages over such an unpleasant, bumpy and dusty route.²²

Finally, Springdale had experienced the difficulties inherent in having voluntary organizations negotiate for services with public utilities and county officials. It had taken more than ten years after the Men's Civic Club began negotiations with CG&E for the gas lines to be installed.²³ Many parts of Springdale were still without sewers despite almost two decades of lobbying. City water mains had not extended to all parts of Springdale in 1931 and the Hamilton County engineer's office had long maintained it would not install sewers in areas not serviced by city water mains.²⁴

Springdale was caught squarely in the middle of the great city-county water controversy. Quite simply, the City of Cincinnati attempted to use its control over the water supply to annex outlying areas. The city tried the tactic unsuccessfully with St. Bernard, Elmwood and Wyoming in 1926.²⁵ Twenty-five years later the city pressured certain areas by turning off their water supplies. Hamilton County would then turn them back on. The city charged its non-resident customers 25 percent more than its residents. County Prosecutor C. Watson Hover claimed that under Ohio law it could only charge outsiders an additional 10 percent. Eventually the two parties reached an agreement. The county took charge of distributing water, reading meters, billing and improving mains in the unincorporated areas. The city sold water to the county at a discount rate.²⁶ Years passed as the city and county negotiated all the fine points of a contract, while in the meantime, the city refused to add additional water mains.

As the last stop on the water main, Springdale received whatever trickle the pressure in the undersized 12-inch pipes produced. In the summer, especially in west Springdale, the tap stopped running in the morning and stayed off until night. In a graphic demonstration of the dangers involved, Fire Chief Frank Smith opened a fire hydrant to show assembled news photographers what would happen if he had to fight a fire. Complaints to the city, the health commissioner, the Ohio Public Utilities Commission brought only referrals from county to city to state. It was tedious and frustrating.²⁷

On December 22, 1954, however, the Cincinnati City Council approved water main extensions,²⁸ and after the water department received permission to run a 24-inch main through Wyoming and Glendale, the work proceeded. By mid-summer 1956, Springdale had what most people take for granted, a free-flowing adequate water supply.²⁹ Would Springdale have received faster attention from city and county officials if it had been represented by its own local government?

Apparently the majority believed that to be the case. By election day 73 percent of Springdale voters had been persuaded and on December 31, 1959 they approved incorporation. For the second time in its history, Springdale had village status.

Unfortunately, the leaders of incorporation were unaware of the 1837 incorporation and could find no evidence that it had ever ended. Their legal advisor suggested they begin establishing the village government as quickly as possible so as to forestall any legal challenge based on those grounds. It was felt no court would disband a village that had already made irrevocable decisions.³⁰ But the elections of village officials had to await the May 1960 elections.

NOTES

MCVN (17 Jan 1947) 1:1.

¹MCVN (26 Apr 1951): 3.

²MCVN (26 Mar 1948): 2 and MCVN (9 Jul 1948): 5.

³Jane Murphy Huber described the girl scout activities as did Jo Perine Borack who grew up in Hartwell and relished those visits to Springdale.

⁴SSB, 7 Jun 1946.

⁵MCVN (13 Jan 1953) 2:2.

⁶MCVN (23 Jan 1955) 2:2.

⁷Post (8 Nov 1952): 6.

⁸Charles Lindner to author, interview, Feb 1989.

⁹MCVN (32 Aug 1945): 1.

¹⁰MCVN (14 May 1948): 9.

¹¹Schumacher interview; MCVN (31 Jan 1947) 1:1

¹²MCVN (21 Mar 1947) 1:1.

¹³Hamilton County Commissioners, Report of the Rural Zoning Commission (Cincinnati: 1947).

¹⁴MCVN (7 Sep 1945): 1.

¹⁵Cincinnati Metropolitan Master Plan 1948 (Cincinnati: Cincinnati City Planning Commission): 74.

¹⁶MCVN (6 Dec 1956) 2:11.

¹⁷Enquirer (15 Sep 1959): C1.

¹⁸MCVN (19 Feb 1959) 2:6.

¹⁹MCVN (18 Jun 1959) 1:1.

²⁰Enquirer (15 Sep 1959) 1C:1. The incorporation committee used the Springdale fire district as the boundaries for the proposed village.

²¹Ibid.

²²Mrs. Horace Dimond to author, Nov 1988.

²³MCVN (13 Sep 1956) 2:4.

²⁴MCVN (31 Aug 1945): 1.

²⁵"Twenty Five Years Ago," MCVN (2 Aug 1951): 1.

²⁶MCVN (19 Apr 1951): 1.

²⁷Post (17 Jul 1954) 4:2.

²⁸"Minutes," Hamilton County Commissioners, 125 (28 Dec 1954): 382.

²⁹MCVN (28 Jun 1956) 2:6.

³⁰Charles Lindner and Gustave Neuss to author.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE NEW PIONEERS

Springdale's rebirth occurred nearly thirty-seven years ago. As a measure of the changes in American society during that time, consider the following. In the spring of 1960 Springdale consumers paid ninety-nine cents a pound for T-bone steak. A new house could be purchased for the price of a 1990 automobile. Men still wore hats to the office. Reporters found the expressways then being constructed of novel interest because they were built without stop-lights. Fortunately for parents who were just adjusting to Elvis, the Beatles were still scruffy British lads who had yet to record their first hit. John F. Kennedy campaigned to be the Democratic Party's nominee for President of the United States. In Springdale, however, the election of local officials for the newly incorporated village momentarily diverted attention from the national campaign.

When Springdale voters approved a village form of government in November 1959 a new phase opened in the community's history. Residents who doubted the viability of village government cast their ballots in favor simply because they saw no alternative. The building mania threatened to overwhelm Springdale and residents felt as if they were losing a voice in their own destiny. Still, most in Springdale were opposed growth. Indeed, many in the village looked forward to mushrooming economic opportunities. But they hoped to minimize the costs of that expansion. At that time few could have anticipated the extent to which the face of their community would alter in the next three decades.

Electing village officers was the first order of business since from the time of incorporation until the election of officers in May Springdale had no government. The Civic League requested that the Hamilton County sheriff's office continue police protection, which Sheriff Dan Teehan agreed to do. Hamilton County continued to take care of

building inspections though it was not empowered to issue any permits. Springfield Township, at the request of the League, continued with snow removal. The elections were eagerly awaited, and on May 3, 1960, candidates for mayor, six council seats, a clerk and a treasurer submitted themselves to voters. Those elected would serve only until December 31, 1961, although in the future, terms would be for a full three years.

The Springdale Presbyterian Church compiled a "Who's Who of the Candidates" which gave their background and qualifications.¹ Each candidate gave his or her view of the biggest problem Springdale had to face. An interesting group, fifteen men and three women entered the race whose average was under forty. In general, concerns centered on zoning decisions. All the candidates supported growth. Some, however, demonstrated a greater concern than others that Springdale retain its "rural character."

Although the candidates ran on a non-partisan ballot, the voters favored those who had been most active in the incorporation process. Gustave Neuss, Jr., who had led the incorporation movement as president of the Springdale Civic League, won a decisive victory for mayor over opponents Ed Braun and Howard J. Metz. A general foreman in the Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion Department of General Electric, Neuss moved to Springdale in 1953. Although he had never held elective office, he was familiar with the intricacies of state and local government through his civic and job-related activities. In addition he was familiar with politics from the days his father held township office in New York.

Robert Seifert ran unopposed for the office of village clerk. Seifert was a former vice president of the Civic League who had helped organize accounting systems for other Hamilton County villages and sensed the momentous challenge the new government faced. In "Who's Who" he remarked, "In our haste to do what we think best for our struggling Village we must remember that what we do today we will live with for years to come, there will be no turning back."

Longtime Springdale resident Raymond Norrish ran for treasurer against a formidable opponent, newcomer Charles Pearson, a twenty-seven year old mathematics and computer whiz whose campaign concentrated on the issue of planning. Norrish emphasized keeping taxes low and services at an affordable level. The electorate preferred Norrish, the known commodity, by a small margin.

Charles Lindner led the balloting for council. Lindner, who held an M.S. in Civil Engineering from Purdue University, was president of the Civic League at the time of the election. His professional experience gave him much needed expertise in matters involving sewers, public utilities, drainage, easements and construction.

Other members elected to Springdale's first council included Donn Martin, a counselor at Princeton High School with a master's degree in education and Horace Dimon, another Purdue graduate engineer and Civic League member. Dimon who recognized the community's tendency to divide over controversial issues, saw building and maintaining a consensus as the greatest challenge facing the village. Edna Underwood, the long-time teacher in the Springdale School, was the only woman to win election. Another member was Virgil Fath, an elder of the Springdale Presbyterian Church and member of the Fire Department. Finally, Bruce Smith, a research technician at General Electric and member of the fire department, was elected. Smith collected much of the information in support of incorporation which the Civic League submitted to Springdale residents.

The new council was a relatively young group and quite well-educated. Two members possessed advanced degrees, and all but one had attended college. At first glance the technical orientation of the candidates is striking until one remembers that part of the population boom in Springdale resulted from the influx of young technicians who worked in valley industries. Only Underwood and Martin, as educators, did not fit this profile.

Not a single member of Springdale's new governing body had ever spent one day in elective office. These were the bright, energetic, concerned and inexperienced people the voters entrusted with Springdale's future.

II

The government-elect toiled for weeks planning the structure of the new village. Meetings to write the building code, to establish the building department and to draft the zoning code lasted far into the night, sometimes as late as 3:00 a.m. Mayor Neuss's family reluctantly abandoned its recreation room to become a temporary command post.²

On Tuesday evening, May 24, 1960 Judge Simon Leis of the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas swore in the first government officials.³ Driven by the urgency of village business the new council met at its temporary quarters in the Springdale School only twenty-four hours after the inauguration ceremonies. Five major zoning petitions faced the officials and they had yet to appoint a planning commission or adopt a zoning or building code. On that first night, council created a five-member planning commission, approved Mayor Neuss's recommendations for its membership, and unanimously elected Charles Lindner to be its chairman. The commissioners were to serve staggered terms, Marie Burbank for two years, William Walsh for four, and Benn Beckham for six. Council also appointed David James building commissioner. The new Village of Springdale also employed Paul Weber, of Larue and Weber, as legal counsel. Weber, who had served the Civic League during incorporation and acted as counsel to other area municipalities, provided valuable knowledge of local government. Next, council appointed members to various committees.⁴ Mundane organizational matters such as providing for the purchase of forms and stationery occupied what was left of the

evening. On June 8, council unanimously approved a budget of \$25,550 for the remainder of the year.⁵ Village expenditures would have to be minimal.

Since most of the council members ran on a platform of planned development for the village, hiring a professional urban planner ranked high on council's agenda. Vice Mayor Charles Lindner was in charge of selecting prospective candidates for the post. Since most of the local planners had been, or were at the time, associated with developers who had an interest in Springdale, Lindner felt the village could best be served by an out-of-town firm. Through his professional activities he knew many of the prominent planners in Ohio either personally or by reputation. The council accepted his recommendation of Charles Hatch and Associates, a Toledo firm with few connections in southwestern Ohio.⁶ Representatives of the Hatch agency advised the planning commission and the council on rezoning issues and in Feb 1961, the planning commission approved the firm's master plan for future Springdale development.⁷

At a special session held on July 6 the council passed Ordinance 6 that established zoning regulations. Retail, business, industrial and residential uses were given a specific location on the zoning map. While that type of zoning code is commonplace today, in 1960 it was hailed as innovative.⁸ Under the previous county-supervised rural zoning, development which involved "higher use" could occur on land zoned agricultural opening the door to mixed and spot zoning. The council hoped its new code would prevent mixed zoning and the encroachment of one type of use into an area set aside for another.

Opponents of the code included Lodge and Shipley, Inc., a Colerain Avenue machine tool firm which owned a forty-acre tract of land one-half mile north of the Tri-County Center, and who hoped to develop it as a retail center. L.C. Homes also owned land zoned industrial for which was planned residential development. In fact, L.C. Homes had six basements poured before the village government had an opportunity to write its zoning ordinances. Neuss obtained a restraining order on any further

construction until the code came into effect.⁹ Springdale's village government was determined to preserve that particular area near the B&O Railroad and the expressway nexus for industrial use. Although these special interest groups regarded the code as too restrictive, George Harnish, executive director of the Regional Planning Commission, declared that this kind of planning was being adopted by many other communities.¹⁰

Zoning issues continued to occupy council. On August 18 council zoned a parcel at Kemper Road and McClellan's Lane "F," light industrial, paving the way for the Kroger Company to build a warehouse and food processing facility.¹¹ Both the planning commission and the village council spent two years wrestling with the future use of the prized intersection at Princeton Pike and Kemper Road, considered prime land for retail development since 1949 when Hamilton County established its first rural zoning map. Jeffrey Lazarus's decision in 1956 to build Tri-County on the northwest side greatly increased the desirability of the remaining three corners.

The interstate highway system opened its longest stretch on July 31, 1960. At exactly 5 p.m. the six-lane interstate running the 34 miles between Tri-County and Dayton officially opened. One hundred automobiles waited in line on the Circle Freeway [I-275] which served as the southern entrance to the Dayton road. The longest single strip of expressway in the southern part of the state, The Millcreek Valley News reported the fascinating detail that the new highway had only two stop lights, one at each end. An uninterrupted highway from Cincinnati to Dayton awaited only the completion of a 2.8 mile stretch from the Circle Freeway to the Millcreek Expressway at Glendale-Milford Road.¹² In the meantime, Springdale residents experienced a preview of future traffic woes. Since the Circle Freeway extended only 2.5 miles between Rt. 4 and the newly opened expressway, Springfield Pike and Kemper Road traffic backed-up for a mile with motorists eager to experience driving on the new freeway. To get to the completed section, drivers had to go through the village.¹³

Two months later, on Monday, September 26, Tri-County Shopping Center officially opened. Springdale officials, Jack Pearlstone, president of the center's Merchant Association, the developer, Joseph Meyerhoff and others looked on as Mayor Neuss solemnly cut the ribbon.¹⁴ Perhaps he had seen the special section in Sunday's Cincinnati Enquirer in which several articles referred to the location of the center as Princeton and Kemper Roads, "north of Glendale."¹⁵ The failure of Tri-County to include Springdale's name in its press releases and its advertising would continue to be a source of contention for several years.

Relations with Tri-County worsened. Within months of the ribbon-cutting ceremony, shopping center attorneys filed four lawsuits against Springdale. Each involved the center's efforts to stop further retail development at Princeton and Kemper.

Tri-County, Inc. viewed the new \$5 million dollar center, developed by Robert L. Wigor and called Village Square Center for the southwest corner of Princeton and Kemper, its biggest potential competitor. Wigor held an option on land owned by the Glenmary Missioners of America, and his preliminary development plans included a one-hundred lane bowling alley, drive-in bank, junior department store, medical clinic and lab, swim club and recreation center, two chain restaurants, a drug and variety store, barber shop, dry cleaner, and a Frisch's restaurant. Wigor also expressed his intention to donate a site for a village municipal building. After receiving a nod from Harch & Associates, the planning commission gave its approval on August 2, 1960.¹⁶

The attorney for Tri-County, Inc., former Hamilton County Commissioner Donald Rolf, and a stenographer attended every public hearing on the Wigor plans, and He broached numerous objections on each occasion. He finally threatened legal action to prevent the construction, which he claimed might turn Springdale into a shopping center "slum." Today, retailers often welcome adjacent centers which they hope will lure additional shoppers into the area.

Despite Rolf's objections, council unanimously rezoned the forty-acre site from residential to commercial on November 4.. On the following Monday, Rolf filed suit on behalf of Tri-County in Hamilton County Common Pleas Court against Mayor Neuss and the Springdale council, seeking an injunction against the zoning change on the grounds that it was "vague and indefinite."¹⁷

The next day Rolf appeared at a planning commission meeting on the proposed Princeton Plaza shopping center, a twenty-three acre, four million dollar project directly across the street from Tri-County on Princeton Pike. Despite Rolf's heated opposition, the planning commission unanimously approved the plans. Owner Charlie Gilhart planned a restaurant, cocktail lounge, drive-in restaurant, grocery and self-serve department store. He intended to add office buildings and a recreation center at a later date. Gilhart maintained that his center, with its emphasis on office buildings, would not be as competitive to Tri-County as the proposed Village Square Center. Gilhart did not heed Rolf's dire warnings of impending bankruptcy if new centers were developed on the "four-corners." "We're going into this area because the growth here holds fabulous promise," said Gilhart.¹⁸

At the public hearing on the Gilhart rezoning, Rolf continued his objections. A third center, he insisted, would create unimaginable traffic snarls. Springdale's experience with the recent opening of the Dayton-Cincinnati expressway made that a particularly potent argument. But council was unmoved. When it approved the Princeton Plaza rezoning, Rolf, as expected, immediately filed for an injunction. But Al Huge, Jr., Gilhart's attorney, evidently negotiated an agreement with Tri-County, Inc. because the later withdrew its suit in early July.¹⁹

On Feb 22 at the request of nursery operator Peter Cassinelli, council rezoned thirty-five acres of land on the fourth corner of the intersection. Twenty-five acres of "B" residential were rezoned Restricted "E," shopping and ten acres to "F," light industrial. Other parts of the one-hundred acre site were already zoned "F." Cassinelli announced

he had no immediate development plans. In an amendment to the zoning ordinance, council ensured the planning commission of consultation rights when such development was planned. Cassinelli's attorney argued that the rezoning was "for the benefit of Springdale," that it would create a " uniformity of the corner.... in line with the Bartholomew Report."²⁰ He referred to an as yet unreleased master plan for Hamilton County. In fact, the Bartholomew Report, at least the preliminary report presented on May 23, 1961, indicated just the opposite:

Springdale - the Princeton-Kemper Road intersection has one regional center. Other commercial activities in the area should be limited to office and highway service facilities. A multiple dwelling district should be placed adjacent to Princeton Pike in this area.²¹

When the zoning ordinance took effect on March 24, Donald H. Rolf filed suit for Tri-County, Inc., asking for an injunction against an amendment and a declaratory judgment that it was unconstitutional. The provision of the ordinance under fire stated, "the land shall not be developed or sub-divided as for retail business or industrial purposes unless the owner thereof shall have first consulted with the planning commission." That, according to the suit, deprived all other owners of equal protection under the law and established a contractual relationship between the village and Cassinelli. The rezoning of the four corners of Princeton and Kemper left Neuss and the council defending themselves against four legal actions.²²

Tri-County, Inc. mobilized most effectively against the proposal for the larger, more threatening, Village Square Center. Rolf organized a petition demanding that a referendum on the zoning ordinance be placed on the November 1961 ballot.²³ Even if the popular vote upheld the ordinance the long delay would serve Tri-County's purposes by disrupting the project's financing as well as Wigor's ability to line up tenants. In fact, Wigor had originally hoped to break ground in November.²⁴

At this point council shocked everyone by declaring the original zoning ordinance invalid. Paul Weber, its legal counsel, announced that the village had inadvertently

neglected to give the required written notice of the proposed changes to adjacent property owners. The council scheduled a new public hearing for January 4,²⁵ where a new rezoning ordinance passed, this time as an emergency measure which meant the written notice was not required, thereby eliminating any future referendum.²⁶

Rolf secured a temporary injunction from Common Pleas Court Judge Charles Bell on January 14, 1961 to prevent Springdale from issuing building permits to Wigor until a hearing could be held on the validity of the emergency clause. Simultaneously, Common Pleas Court Judge Fred Bader delivered an opinion on the original injunction requested by Tri-County, Inc. against Village Square. Judge Bader decreed that while he had no power to intervene in the village's legislative process, he did feel that no building permits should be issued until a full hearing was held.²⁷

In his opinion on April 14, 1961, Judge Bell declared the January 4 ordinance nullified because it interfered with the rights of the citizens to a referendum vote.²⁸ Two months later Wigor presented a drastically revised plan that down-scaled Village Square from forty to nineteen acres, and eliminated the department store that had been the major thorn in the side of Tri-County, Inc.²⁹ When no one voiced opposition to Wigor's new plan, council rezoned his nineteen acres from "B" residential to EE, shopping.³⁰

But Wigor returned with requests to rearrange several buildings in the Village Square plat. A heated discussion ensued. Al Huge, attorney for the Princeton Plaza Center, intimated that Wigor was trying to circumvent opposition by developing the land piecemeal. Some individuals expressed doubts that the project would ever be completed.³¹ Wigor pleaded that rejecting his request would place him in a financial bind. Then he appealed to the village's self-interest pointing out that if the land reverted to the Home Missionary Society and then was later declared tax-exempt land for seminary use only, the village would lose all tax revenues on the property. On November 8 Wigor presented still another revision in which only two buildings would be rearranged. When

council learned that the new plan still included ground for a village municipal building, it approved the plan.³²

After all was said and done, the Village Square Shopping Center never materialized. As Tri-County, Inc. hoped, the long delays effected potential lessees and Wigor's financing. But the twists and turns, the revisions and the legal tangles that marked the first year of Springdale village government would continue.

By now many in Springdale opposed further retail expansion. Robert Vonderhaar, who owned a small farm southwest of East Crescentville and Chester roads, requested rezoning to develop a neighborhood center consisting of only a dozen or so stores. Opponents of Vonderhaar's plan obtained signatures on a petition from 78 percent of the residents of nearby Princeton Park subdivision. The organizers enlisted the sympathy and assistance of the giant Heritage Hill subdivision where 60 percent of the residents signed the petition "out of compassion for Princeton Park," according to Heritage Hill Civic Association President Charles McChesney.³³ Such shows of neighborhood unity would be rare in Springdale. The opponents turned out in force for the public hearing on January 25, 1961, and the council unanimously denied the Vonderhaar zoning request.³⁴

The village's desire to attract higher quality of new homes on rapidly diminishing supply of "A" zoned land received a blow in Feb 1961 when the Kanter Corporation requested rezoning from "A" to "B-2" on eighty acres of its 130-acre Munafu farm tract bounded by Kenn Road, Rt. 4, and I-275. Joseph Kanter, the developer of neighboring Forest Park, later announced that seventy-three acres of the farm had been sold to a developer who planned to erect a two hundred unit subdivision. Kanter demonstrated a surprising lack of tact in dealing with the village. Citing poor finances, he refused council's request to donate land for a village park. He insisted that Springdale could never attract the better housing it desired. Then to drive his point home, he maintained that the planned \$18,000 to \$22,000 homes on the B-2 zoned land would still be "double in

tax value" to the average Springdale home.³⁵ In May, despite, or perhaps because of Kanter's peculiar form of persuasion, the zoning ordinance passed its third reading.³⁶

Springdale ordinarily supported industrial development with its promise of jobs and tax revenues. In May 1961, Lord Baltimore Press, a subsidiary of International Paper Company, announced its intentions to locate a \$5 million box company in Springdale. Village officials had worked closely with Lodge and Shipley, the owners of the industrially zoned tract, and with C.G.&E. and the B&O railroad to secure the plant for Springdale. Indeed, Lodge and Shipley's fifty-three acres plus another 150 acres owned by L.C. Homes comprised an area village officials had zealously protected because its location near the railroad and proximity to industry in nearby Butler County made it extremely attractive for the type of light industrial development Springdale desired. In the past, Lodge and Shipley originally opposed Springdale's zoning code because it restricted its flexibility in disposing of the property. As recently as January council had denied L.C. Homes request to rezone its land from "F" light industry to "C" residence so it could develop 232 residential lots.³⁷ But the proposed Lord Baltimore plant fully justified the village's unwavering stance.³⁸

More good news followed in March 1962. Continental Can Company announced its plans to build a plastic bottle plant at Crescentville Road and Progress Place, another section of the Lodge and Shipley site.³⁹ Lindner, chairperson of the planning commission, indicated the night before the Continental Can announcement that two large industries were considering locating in Springdale but he gave no hint that an announcement would follow so quickly. Negotiations continued for four more months before an announcement could be made on the second project, but it was well worth the wait. On July 28, 1962 area papers headlined the news that Avon Products, Inc. had purchased a 54-acre site from L.C. Homes at Princeton and Progress Place on which to build an \$8 to \$9 million plant. Avon announced that its state-of-the-art plant would create a thousand new jobs.

Positive feelings about industrial development ended in November 1961 when Kroger requested rezoning for an additional thirteen acres to be used to build an ice cream plant and an entrance to their facility from Chesterdale Road. Residents of Heritage Hill organized to block the rezoning, arguing that a plant entrance on Chesterdale Road would create an unsightly appearance on the route into their subdivision, thus eroding their property values. Others expressed fears that odors from the ice cream plant would permeate the neighborhood. Thirty landowners and one hundred electors in Heritage Hill hired attorney Morris Niehaus to represent them. More than one hundred Heritage Hill residents crowded in to the November 22 public hearing to express their opposition. Kroger's representative attempted to allay fears, and assured them that the only odor they would smell from the ice cream plant would be vanilla. Kroger also promised to erect a greenbelt barrier of evergreens and oaks to shield the plant from view.⁴⁰

Opponents of the plant reminded council several times of campaign pledges made just weeks before. In the election campaign for the first full-term council, much of the rhetoric concerned promises to control Springdale's explosive growth. Some opponents pointed to the disappearance of "A" property. Still others accused the village of deviating from its own master plan. Mayor Neuss reminded the audience that a master plan was not set in stone, that it served only as a guide to zoning.⁴¹ Nevertheless, on December 13 the council responded to the opposition by voting unanimously to reject Kroger's proposal.⁴²

In the first seventeen months of its existence, the new village of Springdale evidenced certain enduring patterns. The village experienced rapid, even dizzying, growth, and demands for rezoning occupied excessive amounts of time and energy from the administrative and elective branches of government. The more Springdale grew and the more valuable land became, the greater the pressure placed on landowners to sell to developers. Zoning conflicts involved the city in almost constant litigation. In the first

six months of village government, Weber billed it for more than a thousand hours.⁴³ On many occasions the courts looked unfavorably on the position taken by the village. At the same time, zoning issues created a gulf between residents and their elected representatives. Residents cared about residential property values, traffic and overcrowding, and felt betrayed by a council that had promised one thing during the campaign and then ignored their concerns after the election. For their part, village officials failed to communicate effectively with constituents concerning the limitations inherent in zoning laws. Nor did they explain that the Hamilton County courts traditionally favored the right of the individual landowner to dispose of his property in the most profitable manner.

III

Springdale officials somehow found time to deal with the numerous other matters involved in establishing a new village government. At one of council's first meetings a member noted that July 4 was fast approaching, that parades were planned and that the circus would be in Springdale, all before the village organized a police force. Frantic at the thought of the village's liability if problems ensued, the council, at the suggestion of Mayor Neuss, appointed Fire Chief Frank Smith, Sr., and Max Sanks Jr. as part-time policemen.⁴⁴ Thus was born the Springdale Police Department.

On July 27, after lengthy discussions, the council decided on a pay ordinance for the police department. The chief would receive \$5,600 per year, policemen five thousand, and special part-time policemen \$1.75 per hour. At that same session, council confirmed the appointment of Richard T. Blue, L. Dean Giacometti, Frank B. Rolfes, and A. E. Vonholle as part-time policemen. On August 16 Mayor Neuss named Robert E. Robinson and Emil R. Kleinwaechter as full-time patrolmen.⁴⁵ Kleinwaechter declined his appointment, however, in order to take the examination for police chief scheduled for September 17.

A major need of the Springdale police was a police cruiser. Council accepted Stillpass Motor's low bid of \$2,048 for a 1960 Mercury Comet. Bruce Smith, reporting for the police committee, suggested the addition of a three-way electronic siren and a two-beam, beacon-ray, roof-mounted red light, but council decided these "extras" could always be added later.⁴⁶

On September 28, 1960 Mayor Neuss announced the name of Springdale's first police chief. Donald Stemann, a thirty-four year old eight-year veteran of the St. Bernard Police force, had tied with another three out of the twenty applicants for the position. His excellent performance on the oral part of the examination broke the tie.⁴⁷ Stemann's appointment completed Springdale's police force. In addition to Stemann and Robinson, full-time personnel included Douglas Renaker, a former Arlington Heights police chief. Max Sanks, Jr. and Frank Smith, Sr., served as part-time patrolmen, while three special deputies, Lawrence Clark, Oliver Hardin, and Clifford J. Potts, patrolled only the Tri-County Shopping Center.⁴⁸ Finding proper facilities for the police force baffled officials until the volunteer fire department offered to share its already cramped quarters.

This solution could only be a temporary. The fire department already needed to enlarge its two-stall building to house a \$27,000 fire truck that was on order. Space was also needed for the newly created life squad. All twenty-five members of the fire department and two village policemen had completed twenty-seven hours of life saving training. Vorhis Funeral Home donated a 1950 Chrysler ambulance which the department equipped. Life squad operations for the growing community began at 12:01 a.m., Sunday, April 1, 1962.

In the meantime negotiations began between fire department officials and council regarding an addition to the 1948 firehouse located on the northeast corner of Peach and Main. On June 25 the Fire Department Association voted to transfer the firehouse to the village of Springdale if the latter agreed to pay for improvements, which

included adding two more stalls on the first floor, adding a second floor for municipal offices, offices for the fire and police chiefs, and council chambers.⁴⁹

The discussions continued until July 26 when the Springdale council and the volunteer fire department agreed to affiliate with the village on September 1, 1961. The department transferred its land, building and equipment to the village, and assets valued at \$50,000. In turn, the village issued bonds to finance the estimated thirty thousand dollars to improve the firehouse.⁵⁰ The construction contract, awarded to Schwietzer Brothers on November 8 came to \$34,797.⁵¹

Since the promise of improved utilities had been a major selling point for incorporation, council took immediate action on this front. Councilmember Horace Dimond, chairman of the Utilities Committee, negotiated favorable gas and electric rates with Cincinnati Gas & Electric. The new electric rate contract meant an annual savings of \$7.80 per Springdale resident in the final two years of a five-year contract.⁵²

As an incorporated village, Springdale now had the authority to install the sewers so essential to its continued growth. In fact, a major stimulus to incorporation had been the county's snail-like pace in providing sewers to outlying areas.⁵³ On June 28, 1961 council approved an ordinance to have plans, specifications and estimates drawn up for its first sewer project.⁵⁴ On September 13 council authorized construction of another sewer to connect with the Hamilton County Trunk Sewer No. 1915 which would service 360 acres in Springdale's southeast section. An additional line to Cassinelli Square was to be assessed on owner Peter Cassinelli.⁵⁵ Controversy over assessments on property owners led to the naming of an equalization board. When that board raised Cassinelli's assessment from \$37,477 to \$71,207, however, he took the village to court.⁵⁶ Still, work on the southeast sewer continued with a projected two year completion period.⁵⁷

In the years that followed, council planned and executed other sewer projects for the southwest part of the village, south Springdale, north Princeton, and northwest Springdale. The impending start of construction on I-275 accelerated the timetable for

three of these projects which were approved on February 9, 1966 at a single council session.⁵⁸ Springdale became part of Sewer District No. 1 of the Metropolitan Sewer District in 1968. The county created the MSD after the State of Ohio threatened to ban new construction in Hamilton County until it met water pollution standards. The localities within that district signed an agreement with the county which gave it the responsibility of maintaining and supervising sewers.⁵⁹

In addition to providing the infrastructure for growth through its sewer and street rehabilitation program, council also planned parks and other recreation areas for the village. Council required residential developers to contribute one hundred dollars per lot for recreational areas.⁶⁰ Some developers chose to donate land. Donn Martin, chairman of the Health and Welfare Committee, reported on July 27, 1960 that Brennan & Associates had offered to donate twenty-plus acres for a park in its Heritage Hill development. Martin indicated that Ross Construction, the developer of Springdale Terrace, planned to give the city 7.558 acres for another park. Martin urged the creation of a Park Commission to "plan for and administer recreation and park areas soon to be acquired by the village," which council acted upon.⁶¹ In December, members appointed to the newly created park board included Martin Cavanaugh to a three-year term, Anthony Salvato to a two-year term, and William E. Valentine to a one-year term.⁶² Valentine resigned shortly thereafter and Edmund Taylor assumed the post. In January the group named Taylor park commissioner and Salvato recreation commissioner. The initial function of the recreation commission was to subsidize the Springdale Youth Basketball League. Taylor's task was to investigate potential park and playground sites.⁶³

In September 1960 Ross donated the land for Hilma Ross Park.⁶⁴ But Brennan rescinded his offer of the Heritage Hill land when his company suffered severe financial setbacks. Instead, he attempted to sell the land to the village for fifteen thousand dollars. After one of his company's creditors took possession, the price sank to eighty-

five hundred dollars, but at that point, Springdale chose to sue and have the property appraised by the court.⁶⁵ In August 1962, however, the village came to terms with the asking price for the nineteen-acre tract.⁶⁶ Several years would pass before Springdale developed its park system.

On April 24, 1962 the Post and Times-Star reported the resignation of Mayor Neuss, the architect for much of Springdale's phenomenal change. General Electric, Neuss's employer, transferred him to Utica, New York to head that division's metalworking and manufacturing departments. Vice Mayor Charles Lindner as vice-mayor would complete his unexpired term.⁶⁷ On May 12 Springdale honored its outgoing mayor at an open house held at the nearly completed firehouse and municipal building.⁶⁸ At the conclusion of the final council meeting chaired by Neuss, a resolution expressing the community's appreciation for his many services was presented.⁶⁹

Neuss's departure brought an end to one of the most turbulent, exciting and significant periods in Springdale's long history. He had been a persistent negotiator, capable of holding his own against almost any opponent. Within a period of slightly more than two years, he served as midwife to the birth of the village, created the source of its sustenance and established the foundations for its development. Mayor Neuss left Springdale quite a legacy. Continuing to build on his achievements would be a challenge for Springdale.

NOTES

Gustave Neuss to author, 18 Aug 1989.

¹The church supplied each candidate with a questionnaire. The responses were collected, printed, and bound in a small pamphlet for distribution.

²Lindner to author.

³Cincinnati Enquirer (May 25, 1960): B5. Hereafter referred to as Enquirer.

⁴MCVN (2 Jun 1960). News clipping from the scrapbook of Charles and Thelma Lindner. The Lindner's kept a complete file of local newspaper items pertaining to Springdale from incorporation through most of the year 1963. The items were usually labelled by paper and date but page numbers are sometimes not available. Items from the Lindner file hereafter referred to as "Clipping."

⁵"Clipping," MCVN (16 Jun 1960): 3.

⁶Lindner to author.

⁷"Clipping," MCVN (16 Feb 1961) 1:9.

⁸Neuss to author.

⁹Neuss to author.

¹⁰"Clipping," Cincinnati Post and Times Star (13 Jul 1960).

Hereafter referred to as P&TS.

¹¹Springdale Council, "Minutes," 18 Aug 1960. Hereafter referred to as "Minutes."

¹²"Clipping," MCVN (1 Aug 1960): 1.

¹³"Clipping," P&TS (5 Aug 1960): 5.

¹⁴"Clipping," P&TS (27 Sep 1960): B1.

¹⁵"Clipping," Enquirer (25 Sep 1960): J 4, 5, 6. The front page of the section made no mention of Springdale although it did include a map. The article on p. 8, "Springdale Prospering Again," hardly compensated for the other omissions.

¹⁶"Clipping," MCVN (22 Sep 1960): 1.

¹⁷"Clipping," MCVN (8 Nov 1960): 1; A179383, Tri-County, Inc. v. Village of Springdale, et al.

¹⁸Unidentified Clipping (8 Nov 1960).

¹⁹"Clipping," MCVN (6 July 1961): 1.

²⁰"Clipping," MCVN (30 Feb 1961): 1.

²¹Harland Bartholomew and Associates, Master Plan for Hamilton County, Ohio, Preliminary Report (St. Louis: 1961).

²²"Clipping," Enquirer (28 Mar 1961): 36.

²³"Clipping," Enquirer (19 Dec 1960): 38.

²⁴"Clipping," MCVN (2 Nov 1961).

²⁵"Clipping," Enquirer (19 Dec 1960): 38.

²⁶"Clipping," MCVN (19 Dec 1960).

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸"Clipping," MCVN (20 April 1961):1. Marjorie Rowley, Springdale resident had sued the village stating the January 4 ordinance interfered with her rights to a referendum.

²⁹"Clipping," MCVN (18 May 1961).

-
- ³⁰"Minutes," 14 Jun 1961.
- ³¹"Clipping," MCVN (2 Nov 1961): 1.
- ³²"Minutes," 8 Nov 1961.
- ³³"Clipping," Enquirer (9 Jan 1961).
- ³⁴"Minutes," 25 Jan 1961.
- ³⁵"Minutes," 19 Apr 1961.
- ³⁶"Clipping," MCVN (18 May 1961) 1:5.
- ³⁷"Clipping," MCVN (5 Jan 1961): 1. The 13.5 acre tract L.C. Homes, Inc. had purchased from George Fangman was rezoned to "F" light industry in early July. "Clipping," MCVN (6 Jul 1961): 1.
- ³⁸"Clipping," P&TS (11 May 1961): 12.
- ³⁹"Clipping," Enquirer (9 Mar 1962):
- ⁴⁰"Minutes," 22 Nov 1961.
- ⁴¹Ibid.
- ⁴²"Clipping," MCVN (21 Dec 1961): 1.
- ⁴³Unidentified "Clipping," n.d.
- ⁴⁴"Minutes," Jun 8, 1960.
- ⁴⁵"Clipping," MCVN (18 Aug 1960): 1.
- ⁴⁶"Clipping," MCVN (1 Sep 1960): 1.
- ⁴⁷"Clipping," MCVN (29 Sep 1960): 1.
- ⁴⁸"Clipping," MCVN (22 Sep 1960): 1.
- ⁴⁹Unidentified "Clipping," (26 Jun 1961).
- ⁵⁰"Minutes," 26 Jul 1961. "Clipping," MCVN (26 Oct 1961): 1.
- ⁵¹"Minutes," 8 Nov 1961.
- ⁵²Horace Dimond to author, interview, Feb 1989. "Clipping," MCVN (1 Sep 1960): 1.
- ⁵³P&TS (25 Jan 1958) 4:2. The Hamilton County Commissioners authorized a survey for a main sewer line to serve Springdale on March 15, 1955, and awarded a contract for the construction of trunk sewer 915 in 1956. That main sewer was supposed to connect to the existing trunk at Glendale-Milford road, run north to Kemper, then west to Princeton Pike, then southwest to the southwest of Springfield Pike. This left the southeast and south of Springdale without service however. MCVN (12 Jan 1956):1.
- ⁵⁴"Minutes," 28 Jun 1961.
- ⁵⁵"Minutes," 13 Sep 1961.
- ⁵⁶MCVN (16 Jul 1964): 1; (19 Aug 1965): 1. Council authorized a settlement of the suit on 18 October 1967, "Minutes."
- ⁵⁷"Clipping," MCVN (19 Apr 1962): 2.
- ⁵⁸MCVN (17 Feb 1966): 1.
- ⁵⁹MCVN (2 Jul 1964): 1; MCVN (16 Jul 1970) 1:2.
- ⁶⁰Neuss to author.
- ⁶¹"Minutes," 27 Jul 1960.
- ⁶²MCVN (22 Dec 1966): 1.
- ⁶³"Clipping," MCVN (11 Jan 1962): 1.
- ⁶⁴P&TS (15 Sep 1960) 4:3.
- ⁶⁵"Clipping," P&TS (2 Mar 1962): and "Clipping," MCVN (22 Mar 1962): 1.
- ⁶⁶"Clipping," MCVN (30 Aug 1962) 1:2.

⁶⁷"Clipping," P&TS (24 Apr 1962): 16.

⁶⁸"Clipping," Enquirer (12 May 1962).

⁶⁹"Minutes," 16 May 1962.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ANNEXATION, ROADS, AND RESIGNATION

After village solicitor Paul Weber perused the tax duplicates for 1961, he sent a congratulatory note to Max Sanks, Jr., who had headed the committee investigating incorporation. The figures more than justified the judgment made by Sanks when he recommended incorporation. Tri-County, Inc. had fulfilled expectations and Weber anticipated that within two years another \$8 to \$10 million would be added to the duplicate. "Beyond that, nobody knows, but it is obvious that the Village of Springdale is going to be a very prosperous one." The tax evaluation, approximately \$3.5 million at the time of incorporation, reached \$17,809,960 by the end of fiscal year 1961. Mayor Neuss, in his final annual report, suggested that "tax receipts were higher than anticipated in 1961. There is no need for any further taxes for operating expenses beyond the existing three-mil levy."¹ Neuss could be the master of understatement. Few villages have experienced such phenomenal growth in a mere eighteen months and the end was not in sight.

When Charles Lindner took office on May 23, 1962 he had good reason to be confident of Springdale's future. Lindner, who worked closely with Neuss as a council member, vice-mayor and chair of the planning commission, had been instrumental in this growth. He planned to continue to steer the village in the same direction during his own administration.

Members of the official family included Robert Seifert, Clerk, council members Edna Underwood, Horace Dimond and Virgil Fath. Raymond Norrish, the first treasurer, who found his position eliminated when council combined it with that of clerk, won a council seat in November 1961. James Redden was also a new face. Dimond resigned his two-year term to accept appointment to serve out the remainder of Lindner's four-year term. Council then selected Warren W. Champion, an executive

with the Realistic Company, to Dimond's unfinished term. Champion was also a veteran of the incorporation campaign.²

One of council's challenges during the next two years involved controlling a somewhat natural urge to spend revenues clearly on the horizon before they actually became available. Already the village owed more than thirty thousand dollars on the firehouse renovation and twenty thousand on a new fire truck. After considerable controversy council voted unanimously to reduce the first debt to twenty-one thousand and the second to nineteen thousand dollars.³ As a result, in 1963 the village operated with a budget deficit of slightly more than one thousand dollars. Although the future appeared very bright, building a complete infrastructure strapped the village.

The village government improved its financial standing when it established Springdale as a separate township. On September 26, 1962 council voted to petition the Hamilton County Commissioners for the change. The move exempted the village from paying an .08-mil tax levy to Springfield Township which no longer provided services other than the two hundred dollars it contributed toward annual election expenses. Township status also gave the village council the choice of retaining the thirty-two hundred dollars anticipated from the levy in 1963 for the general fund or to reduce taxes.⁴

Council chose to resurface many of the village's roads rather than to reduce taxes. Indeed, Springdale's potholed streets threatened to earn the village an unwelcome notoriety. Some holes could be patched but many streets, particularly in the older section of town, needed total reconstruction. After being confronted by irate residents from Smiley Avenue, Lindner reminded council on March 13 that the village still had to deal with the substandard streets built before incorporation by developers unrestricted by any type of regulations.⁵ Certainly the 150-year-old streets in the Baldwin subdivision could not be expected to withstand mid-twentieth century traffic. Lindner promised to

make rebuilding antiquated roads a top priority as time and funds came available. To that end, the mayor appointed Herbert Edgecomb as the village street commissioner.⁶

In the meantime, the county opened a section of the Springdale By-Pass (Northland Boulevard) that ran through the village. A special Hamilton County tax paid for this route. The next stretch that extended to Winton road depended on the approval and funds from the newly incorporated village of Forest Park. Another six-mile stretch of the Circle Freeway (I-275) opened in September 1962. Donald Rolf, Chairman of the Circle Freeway Committee of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce, estimated that the freeway had already resulted in some \$80 million dollars in new business investment for the area.⁷

As the previous two examples illustrated, while Springdale depended on an efficient network of roads for its economic lifeblood, in many instances building and maintaining those roads required the cooperation of other governing bodies. In no area would this be more obvious and more troublesome than Crescentville Road. Crescentville Road linked Rt. 4 and Rt. 747 in the very heart of Springdale's light industrial district. The road needed to be reconstructed and widened to four lanes in order to lure industrial development. As a secondary highway the reconstruction of Crescentville Road qualified for 50 percent federal funds. A request for such funds, however, had to originate with the county government which then petitioned the state to apply to Washington. To complicate matters, one side of Crescentville Road was in Hamilton County and another in Butler. So, the Springdale council requested that both sets of commissioners ask the State of Ohio to apply to the United States government for assistance in the rebuilding of Crescentville Road!⁸ Springdale would soon learn that subsidies came gift-wrapped in multiple layers of red-tape.

Springdale's yearning to add land zoned for heavy industry, which it did not have, and its desire to control Crescentville Road figured in the village's move to annex 328 acres of Union Township which lay across Crescentville in Butler County. Robson-

Middendorff, Inc., a development company already interested in building a thirty-one-acre plant and developing another 192 acres of the site, definitely added to the allure. Robson-Middendorff, however, wavered when the Butler County commissioners could not guarantee to supply the area with water and sewers. If Springdale could guarantee these services with annexation the entire area would reap the economic benefits. At the same time, Springdale solicitor Paul Weber represented the residents of the area in question, seventy-five of whom signed a petition requesting permission from the Butler county commissioners to annex to Springdale. Springdale filed annexation papers on April 23. While the Butler County Planning Commission approved the annexation, the Hamilton County commissioners deferred action on the petition until October 7 at which time they unanimously rejected the bid.⁹

Efforts to secure a regional hospital for Springdale also proved unsuccessful. Lindner appointed a Citizen's Hospital Committee in January 1963 to assist groups or agencies who might be persuaded to establish a hospital in the Springdale vicinity.¹⁰ The committee prepared a descriptive pamphlet on the village which was mailed to the administrators of area hospitals.¹¹ In 1964 Springdale attempted to capitalize on difficulties St. George's Hospital was experiencing in obtaining an expansion permit from the City of Cincinnati. That effort collapsed when the city issued the desired building permit.¹² Despite these efforts, building began in 1967 on Bethesda North in Montgomery and Providence Hospital in Mt. Airy to serve those in the northeastern and northwestern sections of Hamilton County.¹³

In most other ways, however, Springdale continued its expansion. On April 29 Ditto, Inc., a subsidiary of Bell and Howell, announced plans to build a \$1-million-dollar plant on an eight-acre tract in the Lodge and Shipley industrial area. "Another for Springdale" trumpeted the Post and Times Star¹⁴ with a planned completion in early 1965.¹⁵

Springdale's population kept pace with its economic growth, and it seemed certain that by 1970 Springdale would have the five thousand people necessary to qualify for city status. In fact, Ohio law required a city form of government once the population of a village reached five thousand. The statute made no further distinction based on size, which forced a small city to have officers it neither needed nor could afford. The Springdale Civic League, anticipating some of these problems, again took the initiative. On December 12, 1962 the League requested that council place a proposal for charter government before the electorate.¹⁶ Ohio law permitted "home rule," if a majority of a community's citizens established their own charter.

On February 7, 1963 Mayor Lindner appointed Horace Dimond and George McNeal to the newly formed Charter Investigation Committee.¹⁷ After several months of study the committee recommended that the issue be placed on the ballot. McNeal, chairman of the committee, pointed out that charter government offered Springdale advantages over village government even before it officially became a city. The Ohio General Assembly had drawn up the laws regulating village government in 1852. Outdated and inflexible, these laws failed to reflect the needs of contemporary society, nor did they adequately define the extent and limitation of the powers of village officials. Yet to revise any of these laws required an act of the state assembly. Persuaded by these arguments, council directed Weber to draw up an ordinance that authorized placing the charter question on the November ballot. On July 10, council approved this ordinance four to one, with Raymond Norrish casting the sole dissenting vote.¹⁸

On November 5 the Springdale voted "yes" on the charter question. At the same time the voters chose fifteen individuals to serve on the charter commission.¹⁹ The commission had one year to study and prepare a proposal to be submitted to the electorate.

While Springdale pondered the charter question and the type of government it wanted for the future, Charles Lindner's surprise resignation on July 24 instigated more

immediate changes. Lindner resigned, effective August 1, to become Chief Deputy in the Hamilton County Engineer's Office. Raymond Norrish, the vice-mayor, was sworn in at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 31, 1963. Springdale had its third mayor and the second appointed mayor in three years.²⁰

Norrish's political future depended on the approval of the voters in the November mayoral election. When Lindner resigned, council selected Max Sanks, Jr., one of six candidates for the seat and an announced candidate for mayor, to fill Norrish's unexpired term. If Sanks failed in his bid to become mayor, he would still remain on council, but if Norrish lost, he was completely out of the picture.²¹ Yet Norrish was elected mayor. It was an inauspicious beginning for a man who would become an adept politician and Springdale's longest serving mayor.

NOTES

Paul Weber to Max Sanks, Jr., 18 Dec 1961.

- ¹"Clipping," MCVN (18 Jan 1962).
- ²"Clipping," Enquirer (25 May 1962): 7.
- ³"Clipping," MCVN (18 Oct 1962): 1.
- ⁴"Clipping," MCVN (15 Nov 1962): 1.
- ⁵"Clipping," MCVN (21 Mar 1963): 1.
- ⁶"Clipping," Enquirer (12 Jan 1963).
- ⁷"Clipping," MCVN (30 Sep 1962): 1.
- ⁸"Clipping," MCVN (21 Feb 1963): 1.
- ⁹"Minutes," 9 Oct 1963.
- ¹⁰Members included Joseph Boggs, Gene Thompson, M.D., Clifford Potts, manager of the Tri-County Center, Henry Bond, president and general manager of Richardson Taylor-Globe and James Redden, council member and member of the planning commission. "Clipping," MCVN (17 January 1963): 1. A year earlier, John Combs, president of the volunteer fire department, notified council of the proposal of the Greater Cincinnati Hospital Council to locate a hospital in the northern Hamilton county area. "Minutes," 14 Feb 1962.
- ¹¹"Minutes," 27 Feb 1963.
- ¹²"Minutes," 12 Feb 1964 and 11 Mar 1964.
- ¹³"Minutes," 16 Aug 1967.
- ¹⁴30 Apr 1963: 10.
- ¹⁵"Clipping," P&TS (25 Sep 1963): 2.
- ¹⁶"Minutes," 12 Dec 1962.
- ¹⁷"Minutes," 2 Feb 1963.
- ¹⁸"Minutes," 10 Jul 1963 and "Clipping," MCVN (18 Jul 1963): 1.
- ¹⁹Members of the charter commission included George McNeal, Julius Darlington, J. R. Redden, E. Underwood, Robert Holt, James Cook, Philip Phelps, Charles McChesney, Charles Neville, Joseph Boggs, Robert Patton, Bruce Smith, E. Taylor, John Shellenberger and Laurence Sullivan. The vote on the charter question was 634 to 441. "Clipping," P&TS (6 Nov 1963).
- ²⁰"Clipping," MCVN (8 Aug 1963): 1.
- ²¹(16 Aug 1963): 14.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE NORRISH YEARS

Barely two months after he was sworn in as mayor, Raymond Norrish attended the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Avon plant. Among other honored guests were Joseph DeCourcy, Hamilton County Commissioner, and Ohio Governor, James Rhodes. Norrish smiled pleasantly for the cameras and appeared very much at ease with such distinguished company. Mayor Raymond Norrish was gaining confidence.

His father, John W., had served for many years as a public official in the neighboring community of Woodlawn. When Ray Norrish married Chris Utrecht's daughter, Ruth, in 1940 he settled in Springdale. Utrecht was Springdale's first fire chief. After his tour of duty in World War II, Norrish and his family established roots in the historic section of the village. The young man adopted his father-in-law's interest in the volunteer fire department and served for a time as its assistant chief. His family, his volunteer fire-fighting, his membership in the Civic League and his position as a PBX repair foreman for the Cincinnati Suburban Bell Telephone Company kept him very active.

Nevertheless he found time to win election as the village's first treasurer in May 1960 although his opponents questioned his commitment to incorporation and the new village. When council combined the positions of treasurer and clerk, Norrish ran successfully for a council seat. Although he came from a political family and had already demonstrated an ability to survive politically, he had yet to exercise the strong, sometimes opinionated voice that would make him a controversial mayor. Indeed, Norrish won the mayoral election more on the basis of his long-time residency and his genial personality than because of any positions he had taken on the issues. The voters felt that he represented the "old Springdale," a feeling reinforced by the location of his residence.

Those who knew Norrish well recognized the steely determination behind that gentle smile. They remembered his father telling Ray that he would never be accepted by flight school because of his small stature, which simply spurred him on to enlist in the air force, become a pilot, and serve his country in the South Pacific. During his first mayoral race, the local newspapers, not privy to Norrish's grit, doubted his ability to repulse a strong challenge from Neil A. Haller, the Democratic candidate. Haller, who lived in Heritage Hill, seemed the only candidate capable of mobilizing the all-important support of that independent-minded neighborhood. In addition, Norrish faced another candidate, Max Sanks, Jr., running as an independent, who had been part of the close circle fighting for incorporation. Norrish, a Republican, also ran as an independent. He promised fiscal responsibility, and slow but steady growth. His down-to-earth manner and easy charm appealed to Springdale voters who on November 5 elected him mayor in a landslide. He was sworn in for his first full term on January 8, 1964, along with Robert Seifert, clerk, and council members Robert Bryson and Howell Eugene Nell.¹

For the next twelve years Norrish fought almost constant battles to retain and enlarge the prerogatives of his office through the council, to prevent the encroachment of metropolitan government in any form and to preserve what in the eighties came to be known euphemistically as "family values." He could be a formidable opponent.

If the voters approved the type of government the charter commission recommended, he would be even more formidable. In March 1964 the commission came out for a mayor-council rather than a city manager form of government. Furthermore, the commission under Chairman George McNeal advocated a strong mayor with powers to name police and fire chiefs, the superintendent of public works and the building official. The mayor could also veto ordinances by tabling them for seven days.

On the other hand, five votes from the seven-member council the commission recommended could overturn the mayor's veto if it acted within thirty days. Council had the power, of course, to enact ordinances, contract for services and inquire into the

conduct of village officials and employees. Four seats were ward, or district, seats. An individual became a candidate for one of these seats by circulating a petition in the ward in which he or she lived to be signed only by that ward's residents. Three other seats were reserved for at-large candidates. In these instances, the candidates were nominated by petitions where 50 percent of the names came from residents outside the candidate's own district. Elections were to be on a non-partisan basis.² Each Springdale resident received a copy of the proposed charter before the election. On November 3, 1964 the voters voiced their approval of this form of government.

During these years, village officials faced other, often unexpected, problems. Heritage Hill residents complained about the presence of a pet lion in their neighborhood. Edna Underwood asked her fellow council members to prohibit bee keeping. James Redden assured her that a forthcoming revamped zoning ordinance prohibited the keeping of "unusual pets, poisonous, or carnivorous animals."³ In March 1965 Solicitor Weber informed council that the Glenmary Home Missioners demanded compensation for a pig killed by a stray dog. When the incredulous council asked how this could possibly be the village's responsibility, Weber advised that under a nineteenth-century Ohio statute it was indeed the responsibility of a township, and Springdale was now a township.⁴

In addition to pigs, lions and bees, the status of multiflora roses fell under the weeds and hedges ordinance and how to enforce the paint and cleanup ordinances were also the stuff of the bimonthly council meetings. Diminutive former schoolteacher Underwood nagged her "boys" to mind their language and their manners. They in turn benefited from her passion for precision because it forced them to clarify their thoughts as well as their speech.⁵ After the council meetings Mrs. Underwood made her way home. On some occasions her fellow council members made their way instead to the historic Century Inn in Woodlawn to discuss the evening's events over a few beers.

Soon, however, the proprietor of a Springdale establishment persuaded them that Springdale council members should do their discussing in a Springdale tavern!

Such harmony in Springdale historically did not last long. During the council meeting of May 12, Underwood, chair of the finance committee, read the state auditor's report on the 1964 investigation of the village books. The auditor, while finding no evidence of fraud, found Seifert's methods slipshod and negligent, citing vouchers kept in cardboard boxes, ledgers unposted since July 1962, transactions kept on scratch paper and long delays in the deposit of checks. On May 26, council member Nell asked for a vote of no-confidence and censure which passed unanimously. Seifert told reporters that this was one of three state audits during his clerkship and the first that contained any unfavorable comment.⁶ On June 2, council held a special session to allow Seifert to defend himself. With his attorney Carl Rubin at his side, Seifert read a statement and claimed that council had already tried and convicted him in an unfair procedure.⁷ Robert Seifert did not seek reelection.

George McNeal won election as Clerk-Treasurer in November.

Seifert's troubles embarrassed the village and humiliated a well-respected man. his genuine love for the village of Springdale led him to spend countless hours collecting information about its history. Perhaps some of his difficulties arose from a lack of organization but some also resulted from his failure to communicate to council his need for clerical assistance in managing an escalating workload. Council made provisions for part-time clerical help for the next clerk.

II

During the 1960s Springdale frequently found itself competing with the neighboring village of Forest Park. The two communities had developed quite differently. While Springdale had a venerable history dating back to 1806, Forest Park was a recent creation and the brainchild of Marvin Warner and Joseph Kanter, two

developers who bought a tract of government land in 1954 originally intended for the expansion of the New Deal greenbelt town of Greenhills. In 1956 they completed the first residential area in the town they named Forest Park. When the partners went their separate ways in 1959, Kanter became Forest Park's proprietor. Forest Park grew rapidly under Kanter's guidance. By the time the older community of Springdale began its expansion in the early sixties, it had a ready competitor next door. The relationship between the communities was further complicated by Kanter's interest in developing several properties within Springdale. While the two communities competed on a number of different fronts, they also cooperated on matters of common interest such as a mutual aid agreement between the fire and police units in event of a disaster.⁸ They successfully negotiated adjustments to the Springdale-Forest Park boundary line in 1967.⁹ When Springdale residents objected to air pollution coming from a Forest Park plant, then Forest Park Mayor Philip White shut down the offending company until it made corrections to its incinerator.¹⁰ The two communities also agreed to share the costs of resurfacing Kenn Road.¹¹

The competition between Springdale and Forest Park eased as they developed differently. While Forest Park had to search for commercial and industrial development to bolster its tax base in order to offer services to its residential community, Springdale's problems had more to do with controlling the growth that came its way. Gradually cooperation largely replaced competition.

But competition was only part of the story. The two neighbors also cooperated with each other and as their courses diverged, with Forest Park becoming more of a "bedroom" suburb than Springdale, cooperation tended to outweigh competition. Yet the two communities competed over where to locate a new branch library and Post Office. In 1963, Springdale council discussed the possibility of securing a branch library for the village. Hopes rose when the Hamilton County Public Library announced plans for a new branch in the Forest Park - Springdale area to be built in the first stage of its

twenty-five year expansion program. The Springdale Women's Club, the PTA and council lobbied the library board extensively, but the new Parkdale Branch Library went to Forest Park.¹²

Competitive scarcely describes the relationship that emerged in the "great post office war." Springdale had a post office in 1815, but had been without one for at least fifty years. At the time of incorporation a number of different postal zones served the Springdale area including zones 15, 40, 41, and 46, and the Glendale and Hamilton post office branches. Not surprisingly mail arrived erratically or not at all. In April 1961, the village asked its congressman, Donald Clancy, to intercede with postal authorities¹³ to create a separate post office. In July the department granted Springdale the right to use one zone, 46, and a new post office contract station to handle stamps, money orders and parcels. Yet the village was still without mailmen.¹⁴ Local officials felt their growing village deserved its own full-service branch office.

In early 1964 the postal service decided to replace its small branch office on the village square in Glendale with a larger office. When Glendale refused to rezone the parcel of land to the satisfaction of the postal authorities, they began to investigate sites outside of Glendale, including Springdale. A postal supervisor spent several weeks surveying possible sites in Springdale.¹⁵ Council kept close track of the search. By April 1965, council believed that while the postal authorities found the price of Springdale land expensive, they were "not interested in anything outside the village."¹⁶ Postmaster Joseph P. Scanlon and other officials gave "strong indications" that the new building would be on Rt.4 and Northland, a site also preferred by Glendale officials.

Five weeks later Congressman John J. Gilligan announced that the new Glendale-Springdale post office would be in Forest Park.¹⁷ Furious village officials appealed the ruling to Gilligan, Representative Clancy, and Postmaster-General John Gronouski. Even a desperate plea to President Lyndon Johnson fell on deaf ears.

An incensed Mayor Norrish cited the loss of the post office as one of the biggest blows ever to hit the village. Postal officials gave higher land costs and taxes as the reasons for not choosing Springdale, all of which Norrish refuted. Norrish and council saw the influential hand of Joseph Kanter pulling the strings in the postal department's about-face. Suspicions notwithstanding, no amount of pleading could change the outcome.¹⁸

In 1962, drainage problems at Kanter's building sites on the west side of Kenn Road in Springdale created more tensions. Springdale repeatedly threatened court action. Finally, Kanter promised to have the problem solved by September 1963. Six months later, Mayor Donald English of Forest Park advised the Springdale council that his village would be willing to "help" correct the Kenn Road drainage problem. After another six months, Forest Park agreed to pay three hundred of the estimated three thousand dollar costs. Three years later the problems still existed.¹⁹

Finally, Springdale and Forest Park locked horns over the annexation of 340 acres of land on Springdale's west side. Located along the proposed route of I-275 West, the annexation would have pushed Springdale's boundaries to Hamilton Avenue and would have also have given Springdale a choice piece of commercial, business and industrial land.²⁰ The Hamilton County Commissioners rejected Springdale's bid on December 16, 1964 by a vote of 3 to 0. Joseph DeCourcy, the president of the board, argued such an annexation would create a panhandle effect between Forest Park and Butler County. Springdale requested a rehearing but was turned down again on January 26.²¹ An irate Mayor Norrish announced a referendum on the question on the May ballot. Not only did the people who owned the land in that area have historic affiliations with Springdale and a desire to become part of the village, but Springdale was in a better financial position to offer them services. Furthermore, Norrish pointed out, anyone who looked at a map of Hamilton County could see just how little county commissioners cared about creating panhandles.²²

Although voters approved the annexation on May 5, the results were later contested causing the Hamilton County Common Pleas Court to void the election on the grounds that neither a general nor a primary election had been held in the township on that date.²³ The voters reversed their decision in another referendum held in November. In July 1967, Forest Park annexed the land.²⁴

III

In the 1960s, Springdale's tax duplicates increased at a pace other communities could only envy. In his report for 1965, Norrish announced a total revenue of \$35 million, up approximately \$6 million from the previous year, and an increase of \$13 million in two years. Still, growth was expensive and seven months later, council was faced with the prospect of cutting services and improvements by 13 percent in order to produce a balanced budget for 1967. Norrish told the Millcreek Valley News that Springdale faced either additional taxes or a curtailment of services.²⁵ Since no one relished the thought of either option, the alternative of an earnings tax became very alluring.

At this point, Robert W. Holmes of Avon and Henry Bond, vice president of the Lord Baltimore Press Plant, came up with a plan to persuade several Springdale firms to tax themselves voluntarily in order to maintain police and fire services. If successful, the council could avert, at least temporarily, imposing an increase in property taxes or the imposition of an earnings tax. On September 14 Norrish reported that Springdale industry had donated eighteen thousand dollars and council voted to defer action on the earnings tax.²⁶ Additionally, voters in November turned down a charter revision which was necessary to allow council to pass an earnings tax without a direct vote of the people. The village borrowed the sixty thousand dollars to build its municipal garage on Northland Boulevard which was dedicated October 19, 1967.

In the following years one community after another around Springdale passed an earnings tax. When the bill authorizing the passage of county-wide earning taxes was introduced in the Ohio legislature, Springdale officials were forced to face the issue

again. Under the Sealy Bill municipalities would share in the revenues which were based on the population ratios creating a major financial burden for Springdale which depended more on its extensive industrial and commercial complex than on its relatively small residential base.²⁷ Council felt the attraction of an earnings tax but the electorate did not. On February 26, 1969 council decided to try again in a special charter revision election scheduled for May 9. The village newspaper, the Community Messenger, explained the risks of waiting to place the earnings tax issue directly on the ballot in the November election. The Sealy Bill might pass in the meantime. Supporting both the charter revision and an earnings tax, the paper stressed the changing needs and responsibilities of village government, pointing out that twenty years before two-lane highways handled traffic adequately, but no more. In addition, Springdale's youth, of which 44 percent were under the age of nineteen, required recreational facilities. The paper asked why Springdale residents, who worked outside the village, should pay taxes to other municipalities while their own community collected nothing from non-residents employed in Springdale?²⁸

The charter amendment passed on May 9 and on May 21, 1969 council gave an earnings tax ordinance its first reading. The ordinance provided for a half-percent tax which became effective July 1. That rate continued only until council passed an ordinance on November 16, 1969 raising it to 1 percent effective January 1, 1970.²⁹ Officials hoped the village's earnings tax, expected to bring \$120,000 in 1970, would allow Springdale to add two new patrolmen, increase the salaries of village employees and develop Chamberlain park. Springdale officially became a city on February 12, 1971. The official 1970 federal census showed 8,127 persons living within its 4.3-mile boundaries.³⁰ It had more than doubled in size since incorporation.

As his diligence in monitoring the Sealy Bill proved, Norrish was a fervent opponent of metropolitan government who fought any encroachment upon Springdale's revenues or prerogatives. In 1969 he attacked a proposed study of a Hamilton County-

City of Cincinnati merger as a threat to "home rule government and the American Way of Life."³¹ In 1970 he expressed fears of legislation pending before the general assembly to abolish mayoral courts, "another encroachment on village revenues."³² The mayor worked in close association with the Hamilton County Municipal League, an association of suburban mayors, to halt this or any other curtailment of local government.

Springdale also began an expansive public improvement program during the Norrish years, including the building of a \$60,000 municipal garage on Northland Boulevard.³³ In 1968, council worked unsuccessfully to win voter support for a municipal swimming pool which was the first phase of a multi-million dollar municipal community center and recreational complex. Nevertheless, on August 26, 1970, Springdale council approved an ordinance for a \$5 million capital improvement program to fund a new municipal building, a community and recreation center and major street improvements.³⁴ Plans for the community center included rooms for social events, crafts and hobbies, tennis and an outdoor basketball court which converted to an ice rink in the winter³⁵. On May 4, 1971 Springdale citizens went to the polls to vote on a charter revision amending the city's debt limitation to allow the city to budget the money required for its ambitious program. Although officials tried to explain that this was not a tax increase, the voters rejected the amendment by a single vote, 699-698.³⁶

The Finance and Capital Improvements Committee faced the prospect of cutting back its program, and in July, council approved an ordinance to place still another revised debt limitation provision on the ballot for November.³⁷ This time the voters approved it by 1458 to 824.³⁸ On Memorial Day 1972, Springdale officially dedicated the first phase of its new recreation complex which included the main building, gymnasium, offices, pool area and horseshoe pits.³⁹ In June 1972 council awarded the contract for Phase II of the recreation center. This phase included six ball fields, tennis courts and a picnic and tot area.⁴⁰

Plans moved steadily ahead on the municipal center. On February 21, 1973 council authorized the construction contract for the building on Lawnview Avenue. The city government moved into its new home in the fall of 1974.⁴¹

IV

Bitter political infighting marred the achievements of the Norrish years. The November 1969 election left several members of council with frayed nerves which was reflected in the minutes of the first post-election council meeting. "Tempers Flare" announced the Millcreek Valley News in its report of the November 19 council meeting that lasted from Wednesday night until the early hours on Thursday morning. The controversy arose over an ordinance to amend the earnings tax introduced by outgoing council member Howell Eugene Nell, who was defeated by John Shellenberger.⁴²

Nell's ordinance redefined certain aspects of the office of the clerk, requiring that all of the clerk's appointments be approved by the council. At the same time, the ordinance placed the ultimate responsibility for the administration and collection of the earnings tax on the clerk. Shellenberger called it the last act of a "lame duck council," but Max Cooper agreed it was necessary to protect the village from cronyism.⁴³ After heated discussion council passed the amendment to the earnings tax ordinance despite McNeal's protestations. Shellenberger cast the lone dissenting vote.⁴⁴

At its first meeting following the December 1 swearing-in ceremony, the new council elected Shellenberger as its president. Sniping between the mayor and various combinations of council members continued for the next fourteen months. Then open hostilities flared when on March 24, 1971, Norrish wrote a letter to council officially requesting Shellenberger's removal as president on grounds that Shellenberger was incompetent to conduct mayor's court properly during the mayor's absence. Norrish insisted that Shellenberger's criticism of the conduct of the Springdale police during its investigation of a recent notorious case, plus his friendship with the defendant in that

case, proved he could not act impartially. When council met in special session on March 31, Shellenberger read an impassioned forty-five minute speech in which he quoted Martin Niemoeller, John Donne and Thomas Jefferson on the right to free speech and a fair trial. Norrish sat in silence as council approved the motion of Harold Carl to reject the mayor's letter. Fred Yingling who had abstained from the previous vote, then moved to investigate the actions of both Norrish and Shellenberger. This motion passed by a vote of four to two.⁴⁵

With the mayor up for re-election in November, no one was surprised when others entered the race. Shellenberger announced his intention in early May. Shortly thereafter, another council member, Alfred Voelkel, announced his intent to run. . In July, Norrish asked the voters to "stay with Ray on election day."⁴⁶ Accusations of police incompetence, and counter charges of loss of police morale, marked this bitter struggle. Voelkel called for "up-to-date" leadership and a restoration of public confidence in the office of mayor.⁴⁷ Norrish promised the maximum police, ambulance, fire and road maintenance services he had provided throughout his eight-year administration. Posters plastered every available surface as the candidates slugged it out through summer and fall. The defacing of campaign signs became so commonplace that council asked the Millcreek Valley News to warn perpetrators that they could be charged with trespassing and the destruction of private property.⁴⁸

Norrish asked the council to suspend its investigation until after the November election, stating his charges were made before he became a candidate for office, and did not want them to be interpreted as a political maneuver.⁴⁹ On October 20, Max Cooper made a motion to drop the probe. The motion received three votes in favor with two abstentions and one nay, so no ruling could be made.⁵⁰

In November, voters "stayed with Ray," but only by a 137-vote margin. Norrish received 1096 votes to Voelkel's 959, with Shellenberger finishing far behind with 348.

Although victorious, Norrish won with a minority of the vote, and he now faced a hostile council for the next two years.

Other council members felt voters' wrath. Incumbents Underwood and Reuscher lost their at-large seats. Voelkel had not contested his, running instead for mayor.⁵¹ When council met in special session on December 1, 1971 several new faces sat around the table. Doyle Webster had ousted George McNeal as clerk. Raymond Johnson and Vernon French, two newcomers, and Joseph Boggs joined Shellenberger, Cooper, Yingling and Carl. Shellenberger refused to allow his name to be entered into nomination for president of council. Instead, Yingling nominated Carl who was selected.

At this point Shellenberger unleashed his attack on the mayor. Under the Springdale charter, the mayor appoints members of the planning commission who are then confirmed by the council. Shellenberger moved to strike the name of Benn Beckham from the mayor's resolution while confirming Charles Lindner and Marie Burbank. Beckham, though a long-time member of the planning commission, had not acted "in the public interest," and Shellenberger accused Beckham of leading the village into numerous court cases while he allowed Springdale to be turned into a village with "a gas station on every corner." Council approved Shellenberger's resolution by a four to two vote and one abstention. Norrish then withdrew his own resolution and vetoed the council's resolution which had confirmed Lindner and Burbank. The mayor refused to submit a new list of names until council agreed to confirm the entire slate instead of individual nominees.

The impasse left the planning commission with only four members, an inadequate number with which to conduct business. Beckham appeared at the next council meeting to defend himself against Shellenberger's charges. Shellenberger admitted he had expressed only a personal opinion that had not been intended to reflect the feelings of council. Norrish read a letter which praised the first planning

commission, to which Beckham had belonged, for preserving the village's industrial zone.⁵²

Both sides took their case to the press. Carl issued a statement to the MCVN on December 6 describing a letter he had written to Norrish officially requesting a new list of candidates.⁵³ Norrish replied by accusing Carl, Shellenberger and Yingling of attacking Beckham because the latter had served as Norrish's campaign manager. Opposition to Beckham could only be interpreted as a "political grudge."⁵⁴ The impasse continued through January as council refused to accept Beckham, and Norrish refused to submit alternative names. Finally, the council and the mayor resolved the issue and at a special meeting on January 26, 1972 council approved three members to the planning commission. On February 16 council expressed its appreciation to Benn Beckham, Jr., and to Marie Burbank for their years of service.⁵⁵

The battle moved to new ground in February 1972 when Norrish asked council for a full-time assistant. Council was willing to comply because many members felt the city had grown too large to have only a part-time administrator. Some members also hoped an assistant would dilute the powers of the strong-minded mayor. In the months that followed, however, Norrish and council wrangled over who would control the hiring of the assistant.⁵⁶

Finally council members moved to end its feud with the mayor permanently by drawing up a long-discussed ordinance to amend the charter and change Springdale from a mayoral to a city-manager form of government.⁵⁷

During this time, the political wrangling became intertwined with a case in which Springdale Police Officer Corder was accused of serious misconduct. A departmental hearing was held on April 7, 1973 and the officer was placed on probation for six months, suspended four days without pay and reduced in grade and salary. On April 24 after an investigation of a second relatively minor misdeed, Norrish fired him.⁵⁸ Corder appealed his dismissal to the Springdale Civil Service Commission which ordered the

officer reinstated on the grounds that dismissal was too harsh a punishment for the second offense, and that he had already paid for his first transgression.⁵⁹ Norrish then appealed to the Hamilton County Common Pleas Court to overrule the civil service decision.⁶⁰ Subsequently, Corder alleged that his fellow officers acted improperly in discussing the case with the press.⁶¹ The attention given the case in the local papers embarrassed the city and raised questions about the integrity of the police department and the judgment exercised by the administration.

On August 15, 1973 Carl read a statement in response to comments attributed to Norrish in the Cincinnati Post of August 9 in which Norrish claimed the city-manager charter amendment was a move orchestrated by Carl in retaliation for the firing of Corder. The furious council reacted by passing the ordinance unanimously and the city-manager amendment was placed on the November ballot. Council also demanded a public investigation of the Corder matter. Norrish proceeded to veto various council resolutions intended to facilitate its investigation.⁶² On September 12 council held a special meeting to override the vetoes and form an investigative committee composed of Johnson, French and Yingling.⁶³ At this point Corder himself eased some of the tensions by resigning August 19 for "personal reasons."⁶⁴ A month later, Weber informed council that the Corder appeal had been dismissed on his own motion.⁶⁵

After a heated campaign, the voters rejected the city-manager charter amendment on November 5 by only 113 votes. They also showed their displeasure once again with council. Five council members did not return either because they chose not to run or because they were defeated.⁶⁶ The mayor was not up for reelection, so the electorate did not have the opportunity to pass judgment on his performance. Still the city-manager charter amendment vote had been close. Somewhat chastened, Norrish and the council were in a more conciliatory mood for the next two years. On January 16, 1974 council passed a revised ordinance regarding the administrative assistant's

position.⁶⁷ On June 19 it was announced that Cecil Osborn, a young professional city manager serving as an assistant in the neighboring community of Wyoming, was hired.⁶⁸

While many were convinced that Norrish had hired himself a political lackey, Osborn exhibited an objectivity and determination that soon proved his doubters wrong.⁶⁹ Osborn was very much his own man. In November 1977 the voters approved a charter amendment to create the post of a non-partisan city administrator which formally recognized Osborn's assumption of the day-to-day administrative operations of the city under the supervision of the mayor.

Springdale's experience reflected some of the inherent difficulties of non-partisan suburban politics. The middle-class professionals who shaped Springdale's charter from the beginning hoped to eliminate politics all together from municipal government. Their reasoning, perhaps unrealistic, was that non-partisan government hindered corruption, factionalism and the selfish individual who might be interested in public office only to further political ambition. With non-partisan government, Springdale would attract citizens who served only out of a sense of civic responsibility.

But public office entailed hours of service for little pay and little appreciation. Therefore citizens who did serve felt perfectly justified in basing their decisions on what they as individuals felt was best for Springdale rather than altering their viewpoint to fit the desires of the voters. If they were not reelected, at least they had done their duty.

On the other hand, the voters elected candidates whom they assumed to have the same values. The test of this trust came after the election and usually depended on how the elected official responded to a specific issue of concern to the individual citizen, for example, whether an apartment complex should be built in his or her single-family neighborhood. Of course, the voter's opinions on zoning for apartment complexes might be completely different if the complex was proposed for another neighborhood. This specific "issue-by-issue" approach gave the elected official very little latitude and led to a rapid turnover.

For a time, the mayor was protected from this volatility. Norrish became a master politician adept at keeping council off center. He retained the trust of the voters for so many years because his rhetoric reinforced their own personal values in regard to family, police and fire protection, crime and personal morality. Voters judged him a decent man who was on their side. On the other hand council members were judged issue by issue.

Eventually both mayor and council lost the support of the citizens. Apathy became the norm and fewer people were willing to make the sacrifices called for by municipal office. Public indifference or even hostility made civic responsibility unrewarding. Even as the city rejected the city-manager form of government, it moved towards greater professionalization in government. Perhaps salaried administrators would be more businesslike. Although Springdale certainly reflected a pattern of suburban politics that was not unusual, its particular circumstances intensified the factionalism and subsequent apathy.⁷⁰ The political infighting of the Norrish years reflected the general air of malaise and powerlessness that affected the city as it sought, sometimes unsuccessfully, to control its own development.

V

In the first years after incorporation Springdale's leaders fought to protect and control prime industrial land while encouraging its development. During the Norrish years, attention focused more on controlling the number of apartment buildings in the village as well as the type of commercial establishments developed. The community seemed constantly at odds, torn between the demands of the developers and the desires of the residents. The residents feared apartments would bring in a transient, undesirable population which would place burdens on public services and lower standards of the community. Many equated apartment dwellers with the poor,

minorities or singles, and wished to preserve a homogeneous community of suburban single-family homes.

Furthermore, the village found that incorporation alone did not make it the absolute master of its destiny. Time and time again, Springdale's residents made their voices heard on zoning matters but even when their elected officials responded, disgruntled developers and landowners frequently found a friend in the Hamilton County judicial system. The results were frustration, suspicion, and eventually, apathy. In addition, opposition to a particular development tended to emanate from the residents in a particular neighborhood, and not from the village as an entity. Residents who felt their own property values threatened became active until the crisis passed, then they became passive again. Voices demanding closer attention to the total or long-range impact of development were few and far between.

This pattern was reflected as early as 1965 when Robert Laughlin and Arthur Lewis bid to build 143 apartments on the twenty-acre Seinsheimer tract north of I-275 and Chesterdale Road. As the village's first apartment complex, many were concerned about its impact. For their part, the developers argued that the topography of the land made it unsuitable for single-family homes, and that the multiple-dwelling units they planned would attract "executive-type" tenants. This led the opposition at the public hearing. Opposition was led by the Heritage Hill Civic Association, which as one of Springdale's first subdivisions had a long history of activism. Early county zoning laws had created a neighborhood that was wedged in the northeastern section of Springdale between Sharonville and the industrial park, and cut off from "traditional" Springdale by I-275 and the Tri-County commercial district. A sense of isolation as well as problems with the developer, who declared bankruptcy before the completion of the subdivision, helped make Heritage Hills a force to be heard. Seventy-five people attended the public hearing on April 14, 1965. According to the association spokesperson, a tally of 99-13 opposed the zoning change, and were concerned about overcrowding of schools, the

decline of property values and traffic pressures on Chesterdale Road. Despite this opposition, council approved the Laughlin-Lewis rezoning request two weeks later.⁷¹ On May 26, a newly formed group, the Springdale Action Commission, appeared with a petition containing 728 signatures from residents of Heritage Hill and its neighbors, Springdale Terrace and Royal Oaks. The petitioners pointed out that the charter allowed for a referendum on an ordinance upon the petition of 10 percent of the total voters who had voted in the preceding general election.⁷²

Laughlin's lawyer attacked the validity of the petition asserting that it did not comply with the state code which required the filing of a certified copy with the clerk before it was circulated. The petitioners, on the other hand, argued that it conformed to the requirements of the village charter. Norrish moved to table the question, pending legal opinion.⁷³ The attorneys for Laughlin filed a mandamus action with the Ohio Supreme Court, which allowed the highest court as a matter of right to hear the case when first argued. On June 23 council decided to take no action on the petition for a referendum. The petitioners filed suit.⁷⁴ But the Ohio Supreme Court disallowed the petition, and Laughlin built the Springdale Greens apartments.⁷⁵

Despite fears that single-family residential neighborhoods would be hemmed-in by multiple-family units, the Laughlin project opened the floodgates to numerous other developments. Finally, in 1967, the request to build "The Colony at Springdale," a 432-unit complex on a portion of the Maple Knoll tract south of the village, brought the villagers' discontent out in the open. Concerned about the rapid expansion of the village, councilman Joseph Boggs, suggested the planning commission develop a master plan,⁷⁶ and let land-use professionals advise about specific zoning situations while developing suitable land-use plans. With a master plan in hand, Springdale's position would hold more weight when developers challenged a zoning ordinance in court. On November 22 council tabled the rezoning ordinance on the Colony development until it could receive expert advice. After some controversy between council and the planning

commission over who to hire, council authorized Dalton and Dalton of Cleveland to study the land left in the village to draw up a master plan for its use.⁷⁷

In the meantime, Max Cooper, vice-chair of the village planning commission, received an opinion on the Colony rezoning from Ernest Combs, the executive director of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. Combs had serious reservations about the site plan, and also felt that it represented spot rezoning that would harm the resale of the single-family homes on Cameron Springs Drive. In addition, Springdale had a disproportionate number of apartments to single-family houses. In 1967, Combs reported, Springdale issued more multi-family building permits than any other Hamilton County jurisdiction with the exceptions of Forest Park and Cincinnati.⁷⁸ Paying little heed to Combs's opinions, council approved the \$7.5 million complex after Multicon, the developer, submitted new plans that reduced the number of units by 42 percent while allocating more space for office buildings. Boggs asked when the apartment construction would stop but his opposition voice was in the minority.⁷⁹

Laughlin returned to the planning commission in 1968 with a proposal to add 144 new units to the existing Springdale Greens unit, making a total of 390 apartments. Once again citizens expressed concerns about existing apartment density, traffic flow and the tax burden of additional services.⁸⁰ On the advise of Dalton and Dalton, who said the multiple-dwellings would still equal no more than 25 percent of total housing units after the apartments were completed, council approved the zoning change by a four to three vote. Boggs, Shellenberger and Voelkel voted against the plan. This time the Heritage Hill Civic Association could not muster the support needed to influence council. In a last-ditch effort to halt the development, Richard Brillhart, president of the association, asked Mayor Norrish to veto the ordinance. Norrish refused, stating the plans had been approved by the planning commission and recommended by the master planner. He pointed out that the land in question, squeezed as it was between the existing apartments and I-275 had little value for other uses. Norrish noted that apartments

provided more taxes than inexpensive single family residences, and finally, that any type of development in that area would increase traffic flow.⁸¹

When Joseph Kanter requested a zoning change from single-family to multiple dwelling to build 480 apartments on land bounded by I-275, Rt. 4, and the Springdale Knolls subdivision, a large number of Springdale residents appeared in council chambers bearing a petition containing 381 names. The opponents claimed that approval would bring the ratio of available housing for apartments from 25 to 40 percent while the regional planning commission recommended only 10 percent. In the end, council unanimously rejected Kanter's request.⁸²

Kanter reappeared before the planning commission on October 6, 1969 with revised plans and the blessings of Dalton and Dalton in hand.⁸³ This time, the project included a motel, an office building and ninety-five apartments, and the planning commission recommended the project to council. At the public hearing on December 17, council tabled the matter for three months after residents voiced considerable opposition.⁸⁴ Kanter returned in March 1970, and council rejected him again.⁸⁵ Two years later, on April 19, 1972, council passed Kanter's request for townhouses despite questions concerning density, sewage, drainage and traffic problems on Glensprings and sixty Springdale who residents had appeared to voice opposition. Council member Harold Carl voted in favor of the development despite his personal dislike of it because, he felt, the courts would ignore the decision-making powers of council anyway. It would not be the last time those views were heard in council chambers.⁸⁶

Nothing, however, demoralized Springdale more than the refusal of the courts to uphold the expressed desires of the residents in the Schottenstein Department Store case. And, once again, the village planner's own opinion was used against it in court. On January 22, 1969, 125 Springdale residents appeared at the public hearing on a request to rezone a 26.5-acre tract of the Ricking property from office to retail in order to build a discount department store. Most of the 125 opposed the rezoning, and a

petition containing 500 signatures was presented. Officials recognized they could not enforce the existing residential zoning and had hoped to rezone the tract "office" in order to create a buffer between Tri-County to the east and the residential area to the west. At the public hearing, residents also expressed irritation at the traffic problems on Kemper Road. For the first time, residents and officials spoke of fears that Springdale's commercial development had reached the saturation point.⁸⁷ Council rejected the re-zoning unanimously, which was followed with new court action.

Springdale began a thirty-month battle through the courts in an effort to make its decision stick. Only when the Ohio Supreme Court refused to hear Springdale's appeal, on the grounds the case involved no constitutional issue did the village give up its fight.⁸⁸ Hamilton County's plans to float a \$3 mill bond issue for building the store was especially galling to council, and on September 15, 1971 it passed a resolution protesting the use of public funds for the project. The resolution served only to express its rage.

In the meantime, Brune-Harpeneau-Torbeck proposed a plan it named Century XXI for the 143-acre Glenmary Missioners site. This was the largest development ever considered in Springdale. The Missioners, who no longer needed the large expanse of land, expected to use the proceeds from the sale to expand their missionary work. Initially, in October 1969, Springdale denied the \$27 million development because it called for high density apartments. But the village approved Century XXI when the developers returned with a revised mixed-use plan. After this council expedited the project as much as possible, considering it a tremendous advantage to have the property developed as a diverse, totally controlled unit.⁸⁹

Working with Century XXI's developers highlighted some serious liabilities in the zoning code with regard to this type of sophisticated multi-purpose, long-term project. Under the existing zoning code, the developers needed parts of the Glenmary plot rezoned office, some general business, and some industrial. Furthermore, the developer, working on a long-term schedule, found it expensive and difficult to provide the

planning commission and council with the detailed plats and plans for parts of the project not expected to be completed for five more years. As a result, council began to consider legislation to use planned unit developments (PUD) as a means of handling similar projects in the future. A large-scale, unified land development which allowed for a mix of land uses and/or dwelling types, and provided an area of common open space. The PUD permitted greater administrative flexibility, and enhances the bargaining power between the municipality and the developer, strengthening the city's site plan review function and control over the tempo and sequence of development.⁹⁰

Springdale had been disillusioned by the effectiveness of planners and master plans. Dalton and Dalton was hired in 1968-69 because of uneasiness about over development, and in the hopes that a professional opinion would buttress the village's position in the courts. That was not to be the case. On June 1, 1974 Charles Lindner, former mayor and president of the planning commission, expressed the opinion that the "Master Plan did not reflect the thinking of the present or past Planning Commission."⁹¹ Lindner's statement came at a public hearing on the request for the rezoning of the land to be developed for inexpensive single-family homes on small lots, and such rezoning was in accordance with the master plan. Numerous speakers, including the mayor pointed out this was exactly the type of zoning, proposed earlier by Hamilton County, that had threatened to inundate Springdale with low-tax producing properties and ultimately led to incorporation originally.⁹²

In a legal opinion to council, Paul Weber argued that while the residents south of Kemper Road wished to have the property preserved as a "bird sanctuary," but Springdale was in the center of the greatest expansion area Hamilton County has ever known, and that it was impossible to stop it. Weber's opinion seemed to indicate that council could only hope to obtain "reasonable" development and that efforts at anything more were futile.⁹³

Springdale officials were tired of hearing such advice, and sensing the public mood, chose to go on the offensive. Mayor Norrish asked "Why be defeatist?" The city should hold fast to its zoning requirements through court action if necessary.

To win in court this time, Springdale needed to strengthen its position and the first order of business involved revising the current zoning code, which had last been revised in 1970. Council member Keith De Green drafted still another revised code designed to facilitate interpretation, update procedures in processing building permit applications and, most importantly, buttress the city's power in areas of weakness.⁹⁴ The city also began to hire planning consultants to report on the most advantageous use of particular undeveloped sites, again part of the new "offensive" strategy.⁹⁵

While council's new thinking reflected a responsiveness to its electorate, the problems of development simply did not disappear. Regardless of the makeup of the planning commission, city council, or the person who held the mayor's office, Springdale continued to face frustrations of development while enjoying the comfortable fiscal position that development provided.

V

In November 1975 the Springdale voters cleaned house. For twelve years they had supported Norrish loyally, forgiven him his errors and praised his accomplishments. In 1975 Raymond P. Johnson, president of the council, challenged him in the mayoral race. Johnson, the 44-year-old father of nine children and a seventeen-year resident of Springdale, was a Proctor and Gamble engineer. He ran on the platform that Springdale needed a change, a new leadership to keep pace with the city's rapid commercial and industrial growth. The voters agreed, and Johnson defeated Norrish by 318 votes.⁹⁶

Norrish eventually returned to public service as a member of the planning commission. He now had more time to exercise his passion for golf and to research the history of his beloved community. When Norrish died of cancer in 1987, Springdale

mourned his passing. Even those who clashed with him in his numerous political battles were always susceptible to his charm.

NOTES

Norrish received 1037 votes, Haller 440, and Sanks 342. Seifert who ran for reelection as clerk against Democrat William Crosby won handily. Two council seats were contested. Winners were Robert Bryson and Howell Eugene Nell. "Clipping," Enquirer (6 Nov 1963).

¹Horace Dimond resigned in 1963 for business reasons. After January 8 the five-person council included the two mentioned in the text and Underwood, Sanks and Redden.

²Enquirer (15 Oct 1964): 27.

³"Minutes:" 25 Mar 1964.

⁴"Minutes:" 10 Mar 1965.

⁵Dimond to author.

⁶Enquirer (27 May 1965): 14.

⁷MCVN (3 Jun 1965): 1 and 10 Jun 1965: 1.

⁸MCVN (5 Jul 1962): 1.

⁹"Minutes:" 16 Aug 1967 and 27 Sep 1967.

¹⁰Although, White's action came only after Norrish suggested that photographs of the emissions sent to the Air Pollution Control Association might be of some assistance! Norrish to White, 26 Jul 1968.

¹¹Norrish to White, 17 May 1968.

¹²"Minutes:" 13 Feb 1963, 13 May 1964, 9 Feb 1966 and 23 Feb 1966.

¹³MCVN (27 Apr 1961): 1.

¹⁴MCVN (6 Jul 1961): 1; "Minutes:" 27 Sep 1961.

¹⁵MCVN (17 Dec 1964): 1.

¹⁶"Minutes:" 28 Apr 1965. Councilman Robert Bryson, on the public utilities committee, spearheaded Springdale's efforts to secure the post office.

¹⁷MCVN (8 Jul 1965): 1.

¹⁸Mayor's Report for the Year 1965, 26 Jan 1966; "Minutes:" 26 Jan 1966; MCVN (3 Feb 1966): 1; MCVN (12 May 1966): 1.

¹⁹"Minutes:" the following dates: 13 June 1962; legal action, 30 January 1963; Kanter has started to fix, 25 Sept 1963; reference to English letter, 25 Mar 1964; 24 Apr 1964; agreement with Forest Park 14 Oct 1964; Kanter writes promises action on problem, 27 June 1965.

²⁰"Minutes:" 9 Dec 1964; 13 Jan 1965.

²¹"Minutes:" 27 Jan 1965.

²²MCVN (4 Feb 1965): 1.

²³MCVN (30 Sept 1965): 1.

²⁴Zane L. Miller, Suburb: Neighborhood and Community in Forest Park, Ohio 1935-1976 (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1981): 112.

²⁵MCVN (21 Jul 1966): 1.

²⁶"Minutes:" 7 Sep 1966.

²⁷MCVN (22 Feb 1968) 2:4.

²⁸Community Messenger (3 May 1969): 1.

-
- ²⁹MCVN (29 Oct 1979): 5; "Minutes:" 19 Nov 1969.
- ³⁰MCVN (21 Jan 1971): 1.
- ³¹MCVN (25 Sep 1969): 3.
- ³²Mayor's Report for the Year 1969.
- ³³MCVN (4 Apr 1968): 5.
- ³⁴"Minutes:" 26 Aug 1970.
- ³⁵MCVN (29 Apr 1971): 1.
- ³⁶MCVN (6 May 1971): 1.
- ³⁷MCVN (29 Jul 1971):1.
- ³⁸Enquirer (8 Nov 1971): 45.
- ³⁹"Minutes:" 21 Jun 1972.
- ⁴⁰"Minutes:" 20 Nov 1975.
- ⁴¹"Minutes:" 16 Oct 1974.
- ⁴²Howell Eugene Nell was first elected to a 4-year term in 1963. In February 1968 he was appointed to an at-large seat which he chose to resign in order to contest Shellenberger's seat in District 1. The new council included Underwood, Shellenberger, Al Voelkel, Max Cooper, newcomer Fred Yingling who defeated Joseph Boggs, Harold Carl and Earl Reuscher.
- ⁴³MCVN (24 Jul 1969): 1. Council approved Albert Siegrist as Tax Commissioner and Mrs. Shellenberger as his assistant on 16 Jul 1969, "Minutes."
- ⁴⁴MCVN (27 Nov 1969): 1
- ⁴⁵"Minutes:" 31 Mar 1971; MCVN (8 Apr 1971): 2:2. Carl defeated William Jessup in Nov 1969. For years Carl's wife, Esther, edited The Community Messenger.
- ⁴⁶MCVN (22 Jul 1971): 1.
- ⁴⁷MCVN (3 Jun 1971): 1.
- ⁴⁸MCVN (21 Oct 1971): 1.
- ⁴⁹MCVN (12 Aug 1971): 1.
- ⁵⁰"Minutes:" 20 Oct 1971.
- ⁵¹MCVN (11 Nov 1971) 1:7.
- ⁵²MCVN (23 Dec 1971): 1.
- ⁵³MCVN (16 Dec 1971): 1.
- ⁵⁴Ibid.
- ⁵⁵"Minutes:" 15 Dec 1971, 19 Jan 1972, special meeting 26 Jan 1972, and 16 Feb 1972.
- ⁵⁶"Minutes:" 18 Jul 1973.
- ⁵⁷The discussion on hiring an administrative assistant is from "Minutes" on the dates indicated in the text.
- ⁵⁸Post (14 May 1973): 9.
- ⁵⁹Post (25 May 1973):11; 31 May 1973: 23.
- ⁶⁰Post (31 May 1973): 23.
- ⁶¹Post (1 Jun 1973): 15.
- ⁶²"Minutes:" 14 Aug 1973.
- ⁶³"Minutes:" 12 Sept 1973.
- ⁶⁴Post (21 Aug 1973): 2.
- ⁶⁵"Minutes:" 19 Sep 1973.

⁶⁶New members included Keith DeGreen elected to an at-large seat. DeGreen, a newcomer, had sued the city to have its residency requirements declared unconstitutional. An amendment later deleted that requirement from the charter. Others included Keith Spangler, Art Lovett and Marguerite Boice. Howell Eugene Nell, a council member defeated by Shellenberger in 1969, defeated Paul Trapani. Vernon French and Paul Johnson were not up for reelection.

⁶⁷"Minutes:" 16 Jan 1974.

⁶⁸"Minutes:" 19 Jun 1974.

⁶⁹Keith DeGreen admitted that he had not expected Norrish to appoint a professional but since he had he publicly apologized to the mayor. "Minutes:" 5 Feb 1975.

⁷⁰See Kenneth Prewitt, "Political Ambitions, Volunteerism, and Electoral Accountability," American Political Science Review 64 (March 1970): 5-17 and especially Ann Lennarson Greer and Scott Greer, "Suburban Political Behavior: A Matter of Trust," in Barry Schwartz, ed., The Changing Face of the Suburbs (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 203-220 for an elaboration of the model of "non-partisan" suburban politics on which this interpretation is based.

⁷¹MCVN (22 Apr 1965): 1; MCVN (6 May 1965): 1.

⁷²"Minutes:" 26 May 1965; MCVN (27 May 1965): 1.

⁷³"Minutes:" 9 Jun 1965; MCVN (17 Jun 1965): 1.

⁷⁴MCVN (1 Jul 1965): 1.

⁷⁵"Minutes:" 14 Jul 1965.

⁷⁶"Minutes:" 8 Nov 1967. Of course, there had been a master plan drawn up by Hatch & Associates just after incorporation.

⁷⁷"Minutes:" 27 Mar 1968. The planning commission had recommended Ladislas Segoe and Associates.

⁷⁸Ernest Combs to Max Cooper, 29 Mar 1968.

⁷⁹"Minutes:" 28 Feb 1968.

⁸⁰Community Messenger (5 Oct 1968): 1.

⁸¹Norrish to Billhart, 18 Sep 1968.

⁸²"Minutes:" 10 April 1968; MCVN (18 April 1968): 1.

⁸³Planning Commission, "Minutes:" 6 Oct 1969.

⁸⁴MCVN (26 Mar 1970): 1.

⁸⁵MCVN (25 Jun 1970): 3.

⁸⁶MCVN, 27 Apr 1972; "Minutes:" 19 Apr 1972.

⁸⁷Lester Hinkle suggested a "timed-ban" on commercial development. Councilman Voelkel voiced the opinion that the saturation point had been reached. Councilman Shellenberger suggested "no more centers until we are ready for them." "Minutes:" 22 Jan 1969 and MCVN (30 Jan 1969): 1.

⁸⁸MCVN (17 Jun 1971): 1.

⁸⁹John Shellenberger to planning commission, December 16, 1969, in response to concerns expressed by that body that council had acted without requesting its recommendation. Shellenberger was

explaining why council felt compelled to move swiftly and that its actions were only tentative.

⁹⁰Definition based on Robert W. Burchell, Planned Unit Development: New Communities American Style (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1972).

⁹¹"Minutes:" 1 Jun 1974.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Weber's opinion to council and Norrish's reply, Misc. Papers, 24 Jun 1974.

⁹⁴"Minutes:" 31 Jan 1975.

⁹⁵"Minutes:" 4 Dec 1974.

⁹⁶Post (5 Nov 1975): 12.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

With the election of 1975, a new era in Springdale began. After twelve years of Norrish's administration, the mayor's gavel passed to Raymond Johnson. The voters finally demonstrated faith in council by reelecting Vernon French, the first incumbent to be returned in six years. On November 19 Kenneth Schneider replaced Paul Weber who resigned after seventeen years as legal counsel.¹ Finally, in 1975-76 with its major capital improvements virtually completed, Springdale directed its attention toward new goals.

When the electorate chose its new mayor, it also passed an amendment limiting mayoral authority by an overwhelming margin 1529-686. The mayor could no longer veto resolutions passed by council. The power struggles between the mayor's office and council that had marked the previous years diminished. Johnson's leadership contributed to the easing of tensions within the government, and between the government and those it represented as well.

A minor incident illustrated the new mayor's approach. A representative of Swallen's requested a temporary permit to sell lawn and garden materials outside the store. This practice violated city ordinances and Johnson firmly pointed out the new city administration's concerns about the full enforcement of the law. If council desired to modify the ordinance in question it had the power to do so, but until it did, the law stood. After this statement of principle, Johnson demonstrated his flexibility. If Swallen's saw this as a hardship case, Johnson suggested they go to the Board of Zoning Appeals for relief. He offered to discuss the matter personally with the Swallen's representative and, if necessary, arrange a conference with the city's legal counsel.²

Johnson backed up his management style with extensive preparation, spending an average of twenty hours a week on mayoral business. When he ran for reelection in 1980, he did so unopposed, certainly a tribute to his competence and popularity. But the long hours combined with his employment as an engineer with Proctor and Gamble and his family responsibilities took its toll. Johnson, who suffered a heart attack in September 1981, chose not to seek reelection in 1983.

In the meantime Springdale continued its move toward greater professionalization in government. In 1973 council passed an ordinance creating the positions of mayor's court prosecutor and health commissioner.³ The voters approved a charter amendment in November 1977 which officially wrote the position of city administrator into the charter, thereby recognizing the greater responsibilities assumed by Cecil Osborn.

The city had also attained a measure of maturity. The population, which had increased nearly 300 percent between 1960 and 1975, stabilized near the ten thousand mark.⁴ The city could finally enjoy the fruits of its long-term capital improvements program, including resurfacing all of the subdivision streets and the building of a magnificent recreation complex that served the community. City government and services also moved from the cramped converted firehouse on Springfield Pike to the new municipal building and firehouse on Lawnview.⁵

By March 1972, the new zoning code was completed and presented to Solicitor Schneider for his review. The new code reflected council's desires to protect Springdale's residential neighborhoods by containing retail businesses with buffer zones. If anyone thought the city had embarked on a smooth path, Walter Comer quickly disillusioned them. Comer had a developer for a 33-acre tract north of Northland and west of Cherry, Plum, and Grandin. His original proposal, presented in 1974, to build FHA-financed homes on small lots on the land had led to the latest revision of the zoning code. Council had taken the matter under advisement in April

1974. When the residents turned out en masse to oppose it, council rejected the request. The following year, Comer and his developer returned with a request for multi-family zoning for the site and a proposal for condominiums which council also turned down. In December 1976, Comer then challenged council's refusal to rezone his acreage on Northland Boulevard from office to general business so that he could develop the property as a car lot. Council denied the request because a residential district abutted it on the west. Comer answered that a surfeit of office space existed in the Tri-County area and that an automobile agency, Kerry Ford, already sat on the other side of the property.⁶

In an effort to improve its legal position, Springdale hired its own planner who testified the area could not support an all single-family development and recommended the multi-family zoning. In April 1977, the city reached a comprehensive settlement with Comer, and agreed to the general business rezoning for the property next to Kerry Ford, provided it was developed in accordance with a site plan already filed. All nearby residential property was rezoned RMF-1 with stipulations. The city required the development to be at least 50 percent condominium, established a 100-foot setback line, and required the developer to provide his own access street.⁷ Under those circumstances, the city felt fortunate to impose some controls at least.⁸

When the city turned its attention to the revitalization of Rt. 4 in late 1977, it chose to continue its initiative in establishing transitional zoning based on the recommendations of professional planners. Council selected Vogt, Sage, and Pflum, to conduct a study for the revitalization of the central business district along Rt. 4 between I-275 and Northland Boulevard. The purpose of the study was "to retain the environment of the village, enhance the business aspects, and maintain the characteristics of the residential section."⁹

The planners worked in conjunction with a Revitalization Committee composed of business representatives, residents and property owners in developing a thoroughfare

plan. Their report emphasized the need to ease the traffic load on Rt. 4 by widening it to four lanes through the business district. At the same time, it hoped to reduce the impact of revitalization on the adjoining residential area between Kemper and Sharon Road, as well as maintain the residential character of the areas west of Rt. 4. The report encouraged the clustering of office building development through preventive rezoning, if necessary, in order to stop encroachment of commercial or retail development into residential areas. Such low-intensity uses would also lower traffic levels, which was another major concern of the city. Council also altered the zoning code to provide for transitional or buffer districts. A public hearing to discuss this change was held on February 21, 1979, and council member Marge Boice reminded council that one buffer-type zoning, "OB," already existed, and she feared the creation of transitional district zoning might cause other problems. Schneider assured her that transitional zoning had been upheld by the courts, and Mayor Johnson added that while it might not be the perfect solution, it was better than nothing. Council passed the ordinance by a six to one margin.

But in 1981, when the planning commission recommended office zoning for four tracts of land in the Springfield Pike and Northland area in accordance with this philosophy, property owners loudly complained about the devaluation of their property.¹⁰ One plea came from Paul Kattlemen, who reminded members of the contributions his recently deceased father Al and his mother Virginia had made over many years to Springdale, and argued the "impracticality" of office zoning. Sentiment gave way to brass tacks, however, when Kattleman threatened legal action if council approved the zoning. He stressed that under Ohio law the constitutionality of zoning had to be applied to each particular piece of land, parcel by parcel. Kattleman pointed out that in 1980 a federal district court denied the city of Willowby and its individual council members immunity in a lawsuit against the city. In a four to three vote council rejected the office zoning despite the pleas of Mayor Johnson.¹¹ Three years later,

council reconsidered¹² and approved office zoning for the three remaining parcels. Kanter Corporation, which wanted to develop a Wendy's on one of the parcels at the corner of Rt. 4 and Northland, took the city to court.¹³ The court date was set for October 24. Persuaded that the city's position would not prevail, on October 19, 1983 council authorized Schneider to file a judgment entry in the Kanter suit. Springdale would have a Wendy's but it would have to conform strictly to the site plan. Once more, Springdale found its plans for controlling its own destiny in a shambles.¹⁴

Although few large-scale properties suitable for development still remained in the city, council sought to forestall lengthy and expensive, and frequently futile legal battles over them by the use of a Community Unit Plan (CUP), alternately known as a PUD, Planned Unit Development, which allowed the municipality greater voice in development. Because of more flexible guidelines, PUDs gave the city greater bargaining power in dealing with the developers. This was the approach the city took with Universal Home Builders, Inc., headed by Joseph Schwarz, which received tentative approval in December 1977 to develop the 106.5-acre Springdale Lakes area, just north of I-275 and Rt. 4. Schwartz's initial plan called for 335 condominiums on sixty acres, forty-five single-family houses and a motel and commercial area on the property fronting Rt. 4.¹⁵ On August 16, 1978 council approved a community unit plan for the development called The Crossings, which included a Sheraton Hotel that would be built in the commercial zone on Rt. 4. The developer would fill in the 11-acre man-made natural drainage run-off lake that had provided recreational fishing for Springdale residents. Other, smaller lakes would be retained. The planning commission placed restrictions on the rest of the commercial property, including no auto dealerships, fast food, amusement or recreation centers.¹⁶ The condominiums and single-family houses behind the commercial area would buffer the Oxford and Beacon Hills subdivisions.¹⁷

No one, of course, anticipated that the national economy could do so much to erode even the best-planned PUD. Inflation rates skyrocketed from 5 percent in 1977,

when Schwarz made his plans, to 14.5 percent by January 1980. Astronomical interest rates combined with an unemployment rate that reached 10 percent in 1982 led to the collapse of the real estate market. Schwartz, stuck with unsold condominiums on his hands, shocked the planning commission in January 1982 by proposing to build a \$30 million high-rise apartment building for older adults instead of completing all of the condominiums. The planning commission called it an "erosion of the PUD" and rejected Schwartz's revisions.¹⁸

On August 4, Schwartz informed council of his application for FHA and VA financing to allow for thirty-year fixed-rate mortgages at 16 1/2 and 15 1/2 percent respectively. Council endorsed this action.¹⁹ Schwartz's troubles, however, did not end and neither did Springdale's headaches with The Crossings.

III

In February 1980, while still dealing with growing pains inside their own boundaries, Springdale officials seriously considered annexing Union Township. As described earlier, a similar effort in 1963 failed when it was rejected by the Butler County Commissioners. On February 6, representatives of the Union Township Incorporation Committee attended Springdale's council meeting and expressed alarm about maintaining the tax base needed for their Lakota School District. Fearful about becoming the target of annexation, Union Township residents sought Springdale's support for their incorporation bid. According to the Ohio Revised Code, however, an area with a population under 25,000 needed the consent of municipalities within a three-mile radius to incorporate. A year earlier Fairfield had annexed 110 acres of industrial land near Port Union. Springdale was the committee's final stop. After he heard the request, Vernon French, president of council, called an executive session.

Much to the consternation of the incorporation committee, when council returned French announced the creation of a committee to investigate the possibility of

Springdale annexing part of Union Township. Springdale welcomed the cooperation of Union Township trustees.²⁰ The usual factors attracted Springdale, including the desire to manage area traffic, and control undeveloped industrial land. Indeed, the traffic along Crescentville Road and Princeton Pike, the key routes to Springdale's industrial parks and to Tri-County, worsened steadily over the years. Mayor Johnson told the Enquirer that Union Township could not control the problem and Butler County had not.²¹

At the same time, the committee recognized that industrial development in the area being considered, approximately three square miles, would give Springdale a more balanced tax base but it also evaluated less positive aspects of annexation.²² A new Ohio law required that if the annexing city swallowed up an area that comprised more than 15 percent of a community's tax base, than taxes were to be pro-rated over a seven-year period.²³

On May 7, Administrator Osborn reported to council a few sobering facts including that the city poured in \$3.4 million in capital improvements and another \$1,150,00 in tax reimbursements and services, the annexation would lead the city into a \$6.8 million deficit over a ten-year period.²⁴ On August 6, James Beamer, chairman of the annexation committee, reported a conservative figure of a \$2 million deficit after ten years just to provide services and upgrade Rt. 747 between Crescentville and Mulhauser roads. To pay for the expense of annexation, the committee concluded, would mean floating bonds, readjusting current capital improvements priorities or raising taxes. By a four to three vote, council resisted the temptation.²⁵

All the talk of annexation motivated Butler County Commissioners to commit themselves, apparently, to widening the road, or at least that is how council interpreted their actions. Yet when the issue rose for the third time in 1985, nothing had been done.²⁶

On August 8, 1974, millions of Americans sat riveted before their television sets and watched Richard M. Nixon resign as president of the U.S. By early 1975 nearly forty officials of his administration, including vice president Spiro Agnew, had been named in criminal indictments. After the national trauma of Watergate, disclosure laws and "open government" became political issues.

The climate of Watergate even affected Springdale. On February 25, 1976 Doyle Webster, city clerk, commented that council's executive sessions had become "very conspicuous." Schneider responded with a list of six topics that could be discussed in executive session, the most important being discussion of personnel problems or employee negotiations, pending litigation and property purchases or sales where the public interest was affected.

The issue of openness in city government pitted the preservation of confidentiality, when information hurt an individual or the public interest, against the public's right to have its business conducted openly. Finding the proper balance plagued council for some time to come. Doyle Webster, who loudly proclaimed his opinions on the subject, refused to let the issue die.

Webster came by his passion for openness in government quite naturally, and it was a central part of his personality. Webster never repressed his feelings, whether anger or enthusiasm, and he was willing to accept the consequences. Springdale voters showed their appreciation of the feisty, outspoken clerk by keeping him in office. Webster demonstrated considerable acumen in guiding Springdale's finances through the shoals of inflation and stagnation which was so characteristic of the national economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Webster prided himself on running a tight ship, limiting expenditures and debt, and keeping real estate taxes low. In the early 1980s he quoted President Reagan on economic discipline although, unlike his role model, he succeeded in reducing Springdale's deficit. In 1975 after a hard-fought battle Webster persuaded council to

reduce the debt incurred by the city in its capital improvements program. While many council members preferred to continue rolling over the debt each year, Webster prevailed upon them to issue a ten-year bond to pay off this indebtedness.²⁷ That strategy paid off handsomely when interest rates soared in the early 1980s. If Springdale had still been rolling over the debt, the annually escalating interest rates would have been devastating.

The inflationary spiral created other budgetary concerns. The expenses of running the city, with salaries, equipment, and insurance, threatened to outpace revenues. In 1977 Springdale's budget contained a \$114,000 surplus, but Webster predicted that would shrink to \$11,000 in 1978 and \$21,000 by 1979. In light of these considerations, Springdale officials began to consider new sources of revenue. The erection of several new motels, in addition to the Sheraton, made a motel-hotel tax a possibility and, on June 21, 1978 council approved a 3 percent motel tax allocating that the revenues go to municipal services and operations.

When regional motion-picture theaters became the trend in the 1970s, two chains, Showcase Cinemas and Mid-States Theaters built complexes in Springdale. In response, Springdale imposed a cinema tax. The Showcase Cinemas, operated by National Amusements, Inc., a Boston company owned by the powerful Sumner Redstone, cried foul at what it termed Springdale's "inflationary and discriminatory" tax. National Amusements tried to have the courts repeal the tax but Springdale prevailed.

The chaotic economy affected the earnings tax. In 1979, it grew at a 14 percent annual rate but by the first half of 1980 it had plummeted to 7.8 percent. Still, Webster took advantage of the prevailing high interest rates to make profitable investments for the city. As a result, Springdale successfully weathered the economic storm and was ready to move ahead when the economy rebounded in 1984.²⁸

These years saw a nagging uncertainty that Springdale, which for so long had sought to manage its growth, might soon have no growth to manage. In 1982 the city

lost some major companies. The Kroger candy plant was vacant, Cincinnati Financial Services planned to move to Fairfield for more space and Cincinnati Microwave built its new plant in the Landen area.²⁹

In response, the City of Springdale took advantage of Ohio Development Finance Commission loans to lure new business. One example was the General Motors Corporation, which showed interest in locating a field office on Tri-County Parkway. When G.M. came to Springdale, it meant that G.M. had to withhold the earnings tax for any Springdale resident working in any G.M. operation.³⁰

In April 1983, council initiated a move to have local businessmen organize a Community Improvement Corporation in an effort to entice new business to Springdale. CIC president Jeff Tullock explained that the CIC would issue industrial revenue bonds [IRBs] and give information to businesses in the area about other forms of available state and federal financial assistance. Although the CIC was authorized to issue IRBs, council had first to approve the bond issue. While the city conferred its tax-free status to IRB's, the debt was the responsibility of the applicant, not the city.³¹ It also promoted Springdale's high level of services to business. Springdale chose to create its own bond-issuing agency so that if the State of Ohio began to limit the number of industrial revenue bonds it issued, the CIC would be in place to fill the gap. In 1984, Springdale entered another period of prosperity and eventually the city dissolved the CIC..

Mayor Johnson announced in July 1983 that he would not seek a third term. For twelve years he had worked extremely hard for the city in two terms as mayor, and one as councilman. He told the Enquirer that he felt particularly proud that during his tenure the city widened Springfield Pike from Kemper to I-275, and Princeton Pike from Kemper south to Glendale, and that the city's population did not decline as happened in neighboring communities but held firm at the 10,000 mark.³² Johnson saw his role as bringing greater stability to Springdale. Indeed, under his tenure, Springdale came of age.

It may seem ludicrous to say that a community established in 1806 matured in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but in a certain sense that was exactly what happened. Springdale's challenge now rested in managing and improving its existing resources. In the second half of the eighties, Springdale has become more aware than ever before that its most precious resource is its people.

NOTES

Marge Boice, Art Lovett, Gene Nell, Herb Spangler, and newcomers Robert Weckman and Ray Boyd joined French on council. Keith DeGreen had announced his resignation in September 1975 to open a law practice in Springdale.

¹"Minutes:" 5 Nov 1975. That council member reelected in November 1975 was current mayor, Vernon French.

²"Minutes:" 18 Feb 1976.

³"Minutes:" 19 Dec 1973.

⁴"Minutes:" 23 Nov 1960; "Minutes:" 21 Sep 1977. Springdale contested the census bureau's estimate of 8063. It requested and paid for a new census which arrived at the 9,762 figure. The \$6500 the census survey cost the city, enabled it to retrieve \$250,000 in federal revenue sharing funds for 1977-82 Enquirer (23 Aug 1977): D3.

⁵Enquirer (2 Oct 1976): C3.

⁶"Minutes:" 1 Dec 1976; "Minutes:" 15 Dec. 1976.

⁷"Minutes:" 20 Apr 1977.

⁸Schneider defended the settlement when former Mayor Norrish expressed concerns over the apparent change in policy at a council meeting. "Minutes:" 18 May 1977.

⁹"Minutes:" 7 Sep 1977; "Minutes:" 4 Jan 1978.

¹⁰Enquirer (19 Mar 1981): E3.

¹¹"Minutes:" 18 Mar 1981.

¹²Lynn Waxman, Weckman and Metcalf were outvoted by French, Boice, Oakum and Beamer. When council tried again in 1983 Lynn Waxman opposed the ordinance because the Kattleman property had not been included. She was joined in opposition by Nell and Bradburn.

¹³"Minutes:" 16 Feb 1983 for the rezoning and 6 Jul 1983 for the report on the lawsuit.

¹⁴In a bizarre turn of events, when the rezoned parcels were plotted on the zoning map it was discovered that the rezoning had only applied to the front of the lots, the rear of the lots not being included in the original description. When an ordinance was proposed to make the zoning uniform, council rejected it, citing that rezoning reduced property values. Now the front half of the lots were zoned "OB" while the rear remained GB and neither were large enough to contain an office building on its own! "Minutes:" 21 Sep 1983.

¹⁵Enquirer (17 Dec 1977): D2; (28 Mar 1978) C2; and (15 Jun 1978): C3.

¹⁶Enquirer (30 Jul 1978): B2.

¹⁷"Minutes:" 16 Aug 1978.

¹⁸Enquirer (13 Jan 1982): B3.

¹⁹"Minutes:" 4 Aug 1982; Enquirer (4 Sep 1982):C3.

²⁰"Minutes:" 6 Feb 1980.

²¹Enquirer (29 Apr 1980): D2.

²²"Minutes:" 12 Mar 1980.

-
- ²³Enquirer (4 Apr 1980): B2.
²⁴Enquirer (4 Apr 1980): B2.
²⁵"Minutes:" 6 Aug 1980.
²⁶"Minutes:" 6 Nov 1985.
²⁷Enquirer (18 Jul 1982): B4.
²⁸"Minutes:" 2 Jul 1980 and 20 Mar 1985.
²⁹"Minutes:" 7 Mar 1984. Remarks of Chad Rink, Springdale Tax Commissioner.
³⁰"Minutes:" 21 Feb 1979.
³¹"Minutes:" 7 Dec 1983.
³²Enquirer (21 Jul 1983): C3.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

TURMOIL AND ADJUSTMENTS

In the 1960s, the middle-class suburban dream that offered escape from big city woes ended abruptly. Drugs, crime, pornography, escalating divorce rates and racial tensions afflicted all parts of American society. Like thousands of other suburban communities, Springdale responded with teen curfews, a tough drug policy, support for law-enforcement agencies and a reaffirmation of "family values." All were attempts to cope with social forces beyond Springdale's control.

Other national trends and tensions also touched Springdale. It shared in the agony of Vietnam. The generation that had experienced World War II felt shock and confusion at the lack of support this war generated. Springdale lost more men in this war than it had in World War II. Vietnam, however, could not be handled, only endured. In this war, as in all past wars, Springdale sent her sons to battle and, year after year, council passed resolutions memorializing the dead. On Memorial Day 1969 the community held a parade and honored the village's gold star mothers. One year later, Councilmember Voelkel organized another Memorial Day parade and Springdale dedicated a Memorial Park wall on Northland Boulevard. In 1976, the city placed a plaque in the amphitheater honoring "the victims" of Vietnam.¹

The civil rights movement touched Springdale directly, and the inclusion of the all-black Lincoln Heights School population in the Princeton School District and its increasing number of black residents required the community to broaden its perspective in matters of race.

Springdale residents responded by turning inward during these years. The village-wide sociability of the past ended. Springdale people preferred weekend trips in

their R.V.'s, boating on the Ohio River, yoga or other personal-enrichment classes at the recreation center to community projects. Springdale also followed the national trend in segregating according to age. Golden-age groups now organized functions for the elderly who were no longer integrated into the rest of the community. Despite the national character of these trends, Springdale was still a community with its own particular character and uniqueness that affected its response on many of these matters.

In 1970, the Springfield's total population was 8217, of which .68 percent, or fifty-five, were nonwhite. Of that group, thirty-one were black. Ten years later and new federal fair housing laws saw a significant increase in the number of blacks, which grew to 8.2%, or 838 of 10,111. To place this increase in historical perspective, it merely brought Springdale back to the black/white ratio of 1870 when twenty-seven black residents in Springdale comprised almost 8 percent of its population.

Springdale's citizens apparently had about the same level of racial tolerance, or intolerance, as their peers in other area suburbs. An area civil rights group organized "Operation Welcome" in May 1968, to encourage local governments to pass resolutions in favor of open housing.² The sample resolution read:

We, -----, hereby welcome as citizens and neighbors all people, irrespective of race, creed, or religion.

Like other cities, Springdale council tabled the motion. By August, only Woodlawn had embraced "Operation Welcome".³

"Operation Welcome" came at a time when the frustrations of urban renewal, increased poverty and displacement led many blacks to take to the streets. Riots erupted in predominantly black neighborhoods in Cincinnati in 1967 and 1968, and although a very small percentage of the population came into contact with the violence, tensions mounted throughout the metropolitan area. Springdale council passed a riot ordinance on October 11, 1967.

When the state ordered the transfer of Lincoln Heights students to the Princeton School District, rational planning and level-headed common sense led to a smooth transition. Superintendent of Schools Lucas and his team formed a Superintendent's Advisory Committee of each district to monitor the mood within each community, and as a result, open communication derailed potentially damaging rumors. The merger increased black enrollment in Princeton schools from 13 percent to 33.7 percent with a minimum of problems, testimony to Lucas's masterful handling of the situation.⁴

Springdale also worried about increased crime although the new village did not have its first homicide until December 21, 1965. Nevertheless the village's situation differed somewhat from that of other municipalities of a similar size because the shopping mall attracted great numbers of non-residents to Springdale each day. The village had responded quickly to the pressure on the police department created by the task of patrolling Tri-County Center. As the numbers of shopping centers in the city increased, so too did the number of burglaries and theft. The police department began its first K-9 unit in 1980 which included Patrolman David Buschmann and his trusty companion Trooper.⁵ The K-9 innovation proved quite popular and successful.

Juvenile crime was another worry for Springdale residents. A wave of teen vandalism, including tire-slashing and spray-painting, hit the city in the fall of 1970. In his report, Mayor Norrish expressed his concerns over what he saw as the loss of parental control.

On October 29, 1970, more than 100 voiced their opinions on a proposed strict curfew. Children under twelve years of age would be banned from the streets after sunset unless accompanied by a parent or a guardian. The ordinance set limits on those up to age eighteen, including a provision that would have prohibited more than two persons, eighteen or younger, driving a car after sunset "aimlessly or with no specific destination." After the more obvious objections were voiced as to enforcement, council tabled the ordinance.⁶ In September 1974, however, several residents appeared at a

council meeting to support a more precise ordinance and this time the measure passed. At about the same time, the city added thirty new policemen.

Concerns over juvenile crime also contributed to the support for the community recreation center. As parents had 40 years earlier, many felt recreational facilities for youth would reduce crime. The recreation center, which opened in 1972, offered Springdale's young people sports and recreational facilities that were the envy of many private clubs. Yet, despite its obvious benefits, the center alone could not combat the temptations or the pressures that faced the young in the 1970s and 1980s.

Parents, police and city officials also worried about drug use.⁷ After an investigation of the constitutional aspects, council adopted a licensing ordinance on November 17, 1982 restricting and regulating the sale and display of drug paraphernalia.⁸ Fears that children spent their time playing video games rather than attending classes led the city to license and place restrictions on the exhibitors of these amusements.⁹

The city's concerns about protecting the public morality extended to adults. Springdale, which had no motion picture theaters until the Mid-States company built the Princeton Plaza Cinemas in 1965, soon found itself with many now which the city sometimes considered to be a mixed blessing. In 1975, when the Showcase Cinemas booked the R-rated film "Emmanuelle" Mayor Norrish and the Springdale police threatened the theater manager with arrest. Columbia Pictures and National Amusements, Inc., the owner of the Showcase, sought an injunction against Norrish and Police Chief Stemann. On October 31, 1975, U.S. District Court Judge David S. Potter judged the film not to be obscene.¹⁰ Springdale's concerns were typical American concerns and their responses were typical midwest responses. Some measures worked better than others.

One successful measure was the city's support of programs for the elderly, and during these years Springdale's elderly citizens had much to cheer about. For one thing, the

Southwest Ohio Senior Services, Inc. acquired thirty-two acres of the old Maple Knoll property, and planned to build thirty cottages for independent living and a four-story 120-unit building for those needing assisted care. The planning commission and council approved these plans in early 1975.

A year later, Southwestern Senior Services proposed a health care facility at Maple Knoll, which was financed by Springdale revenue bonds. The city acquired the site, financed construction and leased it back to Southwestern at a rate sufficient to pay off the bonds. On May 19, 1977, The Maple Knoll Village Senior Citizen's facility was dedicated. Three years later, the Center for Older Adults opened and provided an outreach program that included meals-on-wheels, day care and bus service. When Maple Knoll established a Gerontology Institute to train personnel, Springdale pursued Community Development Funds for the project,¹¹ continuing an ongoing, positive and mutually-beneficial relationship.¹²

Now the community did not have to suffer inadequate health care as it had for so many decades. The city established its own health department in 1973 and employed Ronald Elbe as the first health commissioner in early 1974.¹³ While the health commissioner discharged the city's responsibilities through inspection and licensing of public facilities, and in caring for other sanitation and environmental concerns, the public health nurse probably made a greater impact on the individual Springdale resident through educational, screening and testing programs. At first, the health nurse worked only twenty hours per week but in January 1976 it became a full-time position at the instigation of councilperson Marge Boice.¹⁴ Other new medical centers were built in Springdale giving residents access to a number of medical specialists. The location of Mercy Hospital in nearby Fairfield provided the community with a modern hospital.

A variety of churches ministered to Springdale's spiritual health. The venerable Presbyterian church moved from its 1886 brick building into a new modern structure in the early 1960s.¹⁵ The Springdale Church of the Nazarene, founded in 1938 as a

storefront church, grew steadily in the following decades.¹⁶ The Atonement Lutheran Church of Springdale, organized in 1961, held its first services in the Hayloft.¹⁷ Others have followed and while none has exercised the same long-term influence on Springdale as the Presbyterian church all have contributed to the community.

As new theaters and restaurants opened the residents found a plethora of entertainment choices. Many preferred to create their own entertainment. In fact, nothing created a more heated controversy in Springdale than the infamous R.V. ordinances. In the original ordinance council restricted parking for these vehicles, prohibiting parking on the street and even in the side yards of residences. Bombarded by the complaints of furious R.V. owners, council decided in 1980 not to enforce the ordinance until it could be modified. After three years of periodic deliberation and heated public hearings, council passed a relaxed regulation in October 1983.¹⁸ Residents simply would not be deprived of their R.V.'s just because they lived in houses built on small lots or with narrow driveways.

Throughout it all, council hoped to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the city by developing and implementing a "streetscape" for Springfield Pike that included widening the Pike and the planting of numerous trees.¹⁹ In just a few years, the greatly expanded and spruced up old pike once again had rows of mature trees lining it which was its nineteenth-century characteristic.

Council and the residents of Springdale cared about the city's public image. Since the development of Tri-County and the focus on the Princeton Pike - Kemper Road area, the city's identity became obscured. The shopper-visitors to the area never saw the attractive residential neighborhoods and, as a result, perceptions of Springdale were based on the commercial district. A sensitivity about the inevitable confusion developed, yet many Springdale residents took a certain pride in the fact that their tidy, prosperous city was such a well-kept secret. That sense of pride, however, was forged out of much adversity.

NOTES

MCVN (29 May 1969) 2:6.

¹"Minutes:" 31 Mar 1976.

²"Minutes:" 8 May 1968.

³MCVN (8 Aug 1968): 1.

⁴The Community Messenger, a Springdale community paper, commended the Princeton administration for its skill in handling what could have become a racial issue.

⁵Enquirer (7 Oct 1980):D-2.

⁶MCVN (24 Sep 1970): 1.

⁷"Minutes:" 15 Feb 1984.

⁸"Minutes:" 17 Nov 1982.

⁹"Minutes:" 7 Jul 1982.

¹⁰Post (1 Nov 1975): 38.

¹¹"Minutes:" 18 Jul 1984.

¹²"Minutes:" 15 Sep 1976.

¹³"Minutes:" 20 Feb 1974.

¹⁴"Minutes:" 7 Jan 1976 and 21 Jan 1976.

¹⁵MCVN (19 Jan 1961) 1:2. Groundbreaking ceremonies were scheduled for January 22.

¹⁶MCVN (10 Sep 1948): 11.

¹⁷MCVN (14 Oct 1971) 1:5.

¹⁸"Minutes:" 19 Oct 1983.

¹⁹"Minutes:" 1 Jul 1987.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN TO CONTROL OUR OWN DESTINY

When Raymond Johnson stepped down in 1983 only two candidates sought the office of mayor. Vernon French, a council veteran of twelve years, ran on a ticket that promised continuity, and he stressed a recent Cincinnati Post poll indicating that 60 percent of Springdale residents were satisfied with their city government. His opponent was twenty-six-year-old Richard MacGraf, who had only lived in Springdale one year and argued that city officials' unresponsiveness had led to a loss of business. McGraf misread the mood of the voters who were far more concerned about the responsiveness of government to the needs of residents.

The Post poll sought to ascertain how Springdale residents felt about specific city services, including fire, police, and recreation. Overall, Springdale residents were generally satisfied. Yet a broader issue was how Springdale residents felt about their community. How they felt about Springdale, or even whether or not there was a sense of community, was far more difficult to determine.

In fact, Mayor French and the newly elected council were concerned about public apathy. The next five years saw officials attempting to generate interest in public affairs by enticing more candidates to run for office and, hopefully, in strengthening Springdale's sense of community.

City officials became aware of the value of Springdale's long and rich heritage. Yet the reality was that more than two decades of growth had erased many physical reminders of the gentle old village. For many residents, and certainly for the thousands who entered the city to shop and work each day, Springdale's identity was indistinguishable from that of Forest Park, Sharonville, Fairfield or the other towns along the northern perimeter of the Greater Cincinnati area.

One tangible piece of Springdale's historic identity still remained at the corner of Springfield Pike and Cameron Road, although its crumbling headstones was hidden by weeds. Here, in St. Mary's cemetery, rested William Chamberlain, one of the village's founders, with other men buried who had fought for national independence and national unity. Evidence of wealth and poverty, of ravaging epidemics, of family unity and family rivalries all existed in St. Mary's cemetery. But it was evidence at risk of extinction. Since the Springdale Presbyterian Church could not afford the restoration or even the simple upkeep of this treasure.

For more than ten years various members of council, led by Marge Boice, negotiated with the church for transfer of the cemetery to the city. Finally, on August 19, 1987, Boice announced that the city had received title to the property,¹ and Springdale began an extensive restoration and clean-up program. Additionally, the city received a grant from the Urban County Community Development Fund to restore and extend the cemetery's wrought-iron fence.²

While the historic cemetery revealed a great deal of Springdale's past, much knowledge had been lost. Anthony Bradburn represented council in its search for ways to retrieve lost information and in August 1987, council authorized a contract with the Midwest History Workshop, a non-profit organization, to assess what research materials, if any, still existed. This history is the result of that commitment. A citizen's history committee was formed to actively involve Springdale residents in the continuing collection and dissemination of historical materials.

Springdale also became more aware of symbols and ceremonies as a means of strengthening community ties. A mortgage-burning ceremony held on December 1, 1985 represented the burning of Ordinances 13, 14 and 15-1975, which had authorized the city to sell 10-year bonds. The ceremony signified Springdale's freedom from debt. Those present included former mayors Norrish and Johnson as well as many past and present members of council.³ Mayor Norrish reminisced about the budget problems of

the early days, and Mayor Johnson commented that the "sixties group got the ship afloat, the seventies group tried to keep expenses under control and to provide more services."⁴ The ceremony brought together many former adversaries who now put aside their differences and celebrated the city's many accomplishments.

Harmony did not always prevail. Nothing created more divisions in city government than the question of confidentiality. In Springdale's case, the state's sunshine law, contrary to its name, produced storms. In 1976, council listed topics appropriate under the law for executive session. In 1983 council voted itself the right to expel any member for two weeks who leaked information discussed in executive session. Loose-lipped former members were liable for a fine of up to \$1000. The ordinance brought council's rules into conformity with the charter which give council authority to expel members for "leaks," but the move which the press seized upon with glee was a public relations fiasco.⁵

The issue simply would not die. Attorney Schneider advised council on April 3, 1985 of the State Supreme Court decision releasing charter cities from the obligation to abide by the sunshine law. At that time, council president Dave Okum introduced an ordinance to allow council to discuss any matter in closed session as long as it made its formal decisions publicly. The ordinance also permitted guests, upon the majority's approval, to provide confidential information in closed session.⁶ After consideration by its rules and laws committee, council decided on a compromise that allowed it to meet in executive session with representatives of two outside bodies, the planning commission and CIC.⁷

In March 1988, council again rejected a proposal that would have allowed it to vote for an executive session on any matter at all. Opponents of the measure stressed that secret discussions created a lack of public trust. That evening, however, a controversy erupted when council excluded Mayor French and Clerk/Finance Director

Webster from its executive session. The tempest continued for some months until an ordinance was passed that spelled out who would and would not be included.

In the meantime, responding to the dramatic upturn in the national economic climate, Springdale's financial situation rebounded. The pivotal year was 1984 when the earnings tax increased 10.1 percent over the previous year. In 1985 the city collected \$3.5 million in earnings taxes, an increase of more than \$300,000 over the previous year.⁸ When the federal government eliminated revenue sharing Springdale hardly felt the pinch at all. Webster reported that the city had never depended on those funds for operations and he had not counted on it in preparing the 1987 budget.⁹

Although signs of economic prosperity pervaded Springdale in 1984, Joseph Schwarz, developer of Springdale Lakes, was not so lucky, four of his condominium units, built in 1978, still unsold,¹⁰ he sought buyers for his residential and commercial properties.¹¹ From 1984 through 1987, Schwarz brought developer after developer before the planning commission and council, all of them pitching revisions of the PUD. Ryan Homes pulled out in 1984 when it failed to win the support of the Crossing's Condominium Owners' Association.¹² Oxford Enterprise Development, Inc., proposed building apartments instead of condominiums on the site, but neither the association nor council approved that plan.¹³

Then in June 1985 Schwarz reappeared with a proposal to sell 35.4 acres to W.O. Brisben for construction of 198 residential condominiums.¹⁴ After Brisben met with council's consultants, modified his plan, and reached an agreement with the Crossing's Owners' Association, council approved his project.¹⁵ Two years later, in June 1987, one of the Crossing's residents saw a rental sign in front of the new condominiums. A call to the number listed revealed that Brisben intended to rent rather than sell the units. Neighbors deluged city hall and council with questions about how space zoned for condominiums had come to contain apartments.

On July 1 Cecil Osborn explained that apparently after council approved the change in the PUD one of Brisben's employees leaked the information about the rentals. In response, the city revoked his building permit. Brisben threatened court action. Both the city's attorney and its planning consultants agreed that no legal distinction could be made between owner-occupied and tenant-occupied condominiums. Thus, technically Brisben had built condominiums which he owned and rented to tenants.

This opinion came just as the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a decision that municipalities and city officials were liable for damages resulting from the denial of reasonable zoning requests. The city could do little, other than requiring a letter of credit from Brisben before he rented any units that the city could use, if necessary, to maintain the condition of the units.¹⁶

When asked how this situation could have happened, resident Bill Bolen quoted one of the more expressive council members who responded, "we got snookered."¹⁷ Residents and officials alike were determined not to let that happen again by ensuring that any new development plans would be examined with a very sharp eye.

III

With 1987 came another new wave of interest in Springdale for retail expansion. In July, Kravco, Inc., managers of Tri-County which was now owned by Equitable Life Insurance Company, announced plans to add 370,000 sq. ft. of retail space to the mall. Well aware of the massive traffic jams in and around the existing center, especially during the peak Christmas shopping season, Springdale secured an agreement from Kravco to make major road improvements to Princeton Pike and Kemper Road. Word that two rival malls were planned within a two mile radius of Tri-County promoted Kravco to accelerate its timetable for expansion.¹⁸ One of these centers, the Forest Fair Mall, was located in Forest Park and Fairfield, with the other developer, Shopco, Inc., a New York firm, planning to build its center southeast of Princeton Pike and Crescentville Road, just north of Tri-County Mall.

Shopco planned to locate its center on a 141-acre site used as a park by the General Electric Employees Activities Association. The complex deal took three years to complete, and if Springdale approved the zoning change, Shopco agreed to purchase 240 acres from the Burchenal family in nearby Woodlawn as a site for a new GEEAA park.¹⁹

The planning commission, which had the right to hire planning consultants and to charge their fees to the developer, retained Shaw, Weiss, and DeNaples to guide it through the complexities of the Shopco proposal. That the commission had enormous difficulty finding a local firm without commitments to either Shopco or Kravco was a strong indication of the struggle to come.²⁰

In the autumn of 1986, when Shopco approached the planning commission for the first time, two years and considerable funds had already been spent on the project. The planning commission held the first of many special meetings on December 26 and Shopco officially applied for the zoning change from RF-1 to PUD the following spring.²¹

When the planning commission met on June 30, 1987 for the public hearing on the Shopco plans, the discussion continued until nearly three o'clock in the morning. Nevertheless still another meeting had to be called for July 21. Shopco Development Director Frank Lanza outlined the plans for a colossal \$203 million complex containing 1 million square feet of floor space which would later be expanded to 1.5 million. A ten-story hotel, a strip retail center, offices and condominiums would complete the project. Shopco had commitments from McAlpin's and J.C. Penney, and Lanza referred to ongoing talks with Elder-Beerman, which later formally committed, and an unnamed fourth department store. Shopco won the competition with Kravco and Tri-County for the first two mall anchors.

Typically, the first public reaction came from Heritage Hill, the neighborhood destined to feel the greatest impact if the center materialized. With its long history of community activism, it seemed to many as if Heritage Hill had been preparing for this moment since its inception. Squeezed between expressways and industry, and depen-

dent on over-traveled Crescentville Road for egress, Heritage Hill had a long tradition of bitter struggles over development.

Three points, traffic snarls, increased flood risks and decreased property values, concerned Heritage Hill. Yet despite numerous objections, the planning commission approved the project by a six to one vote. Anne Barnett, a resident of Heritage Hill, immediately announced that a committee would be formed to express her community's opposition to council.²²

Council scheduled its public hearing for August 19. Noted Cincinnati attorney C. Francis Barrett, represented Shopco, and in a "beautifully orchestrated presentation" he attempted to defuse the opposition by addressing the issues of concern one-by-one. Shopco promised to build a storm sewer capable of handling one million gallons more than the ten-year capacity required to allay fears of flooding. As far as traffic was concerned, plans to widen S.R. 747 (Princeton Pike) to eight lanes from north of Crescentville Road to south of I-275 complemented plans to widen Crescentville Road six lanes at Princeton Pike, narrowing down as it neared Heritage Hill to the east. In addition, Shopco promised to build a railway underpass at the cost of \$6.5 million to allow free flow of traffic on Princeton Pike, and to prevent backup on I-275. The company would use mounds of landscaped earth to shield Heritage Hills, creating a pastoral effect. Barrett also projected that the center would add 3000 permanent new jobs and \$600,000 annually in city revenues from earnings, entertainment and real estate taxes, with an additional \$1.1 million for the Princeton School District.²³

Shopco had a number of important political and legal supporters. State Senator Stanley Aronoff, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, appeared at the public hearing to answer questions about the widening of S.R. 747. Councilmember Marge Boice noted that the Ohio Department of Transportation had indicated not less than a month earlier that widening S.R. 747 would not begin until 1990. Now it appeared that the project might begin as early as the end of 1987. "If Shopco does not go through, then

will it be delayed until 1990?" she asked Aronoff. The senator replied that North 747 would go through in any event. Constructing another interstate interchange would depend on the results of a necessity study.²⁴ Council, however, wanted to hear that information directly from ODOT officials.

Despite their thoroughness, Shopco executives misread Springdale. While some cities desperately needed the revenues a center of that scope could provide, Springdale did not. The people of Springdale already regularly endured the stress created by heavy traffic, and the thought of even greater congestion was appalling. Years of listening to glossy presentations and splendid promises had created a very sophisticated, and cynical, citizenry. Chris Burns, a founder of Springdale Concerned Citizens, the group organized to lead opposition to the mall, expressed the prevailing attitude:

We're not going to have this shoved down our throats. These people want to come in here from New York, build this thing, and walk out with money stuffed in their pockets. But we have to live with it.²⁵

The hearings recessed, to be continued in September. On September 2 the aisles and doorways of the council chamber had to be cleared of residents eager to speak. A throng waited outside the chamber door struggling to hear the proceedings.

Rarely had Springdale experienced such unity among its various neighborhoods. "It's not just a Heritage Hill problem, its a Springdale problem," one individual commented. Numerous residents voiced fears that Springdale would become a "blacktop" city, and "a place to shop, not to live." John J. Kelley, Jr., attorney for the Springdale Concerned Citizens Committee, presented council with a petition signed by 1,527 residents who opposed the mall. The next evening the recreation center became the site of the hearings in an effort to accommodate the masses of residents who wished to attend.²⁶

Local attorney Tim Burke, who represented Equitable Life and Kravco, played on Springdale's fears of litigation. He brought into the open what Marge Boice would come to refer to as "the subtext of court action" if council refused Shopco. Burke obviously knew much about Springdale's recent history. "Too often," he said, "local officials who anticipated being sued acquiesced to zoning changes." They feared that if they went to court and lost, they would lose any protection they might otherwise obtain by negotiating concessions from the developers. The city should not allow that unspoken threat to limit its choices, Burke argued.

Finally Burke addressed what must have been in everyone's thoughts, the June 1987 Supreme Court decision which allowed local officials to be sued for damages by developers. Burke argued that case applied only when zoning restrictions prohibited all other profitable uses. The existing zoning on the GEEAA property allowed for more intense use and a reasonable economic rate of return, he stated.

Two representatives from ODOT answered questions about whether road improvements depended on approval of the Shopco development. One representative indicated the widening of Princeton Pike to five lanes would "proceed as planned," if the council refused Shopco, but not to the eight lanes projected if Shopco was successful. The I-275 interchange, though dependent on the outcome of the necessity study, "would jump to the head of the list," if Shopco went in and built the underpass.

Hours before the final assembly on October 7, attorneys for Shopco filed an anti-trust suit against Kravco. The suit asserted that Kravco's efforts against the rezoning represented an illegal move to block competition. Shopco also claimed that Kravco helped organize the community opposition.²⁷

During the October 7 meeting, Springdale's city engineer, Wayne Shuler, presented the city's own traffic analysis. Some questioned the validity of the traffic count presented by Shopco. According to Shuler's analysis, the existing interchange did not have the capacity to deal with the traffic. Yet both federal and state governments

became involved in building the proposed interchange and in widening Crescentville Road over I-275 and such involvement frequently meant long delays in construction. Shuler questioned if the improvements could be accomplished even by the year 2000. Therefore, he felt the city had to consider the impact of the Shopco development in the event of delays in road improvements.

The room filled with tension as the evening wore on. Finally a representative of Springdale Concerned Citizens demanded to know how council would vote. Marge Boice articulated the mood of Springdale:

I want my no understood loud and clear. I am voting no because I honestly believe a city has the right to control its own destiny, and no one has earned that right better than our own city.²⁸

Her fellow council members added their own emphatic "no's."

Those who thought that the council's rejection of the Shopco project would put an end to the matter were badly mistaken. At first, the vote seemed to unify the community in its opposition to the idea of a large New York corporation trying to dictate its will upon Springdale. However, that unity disappeared when Shopco filed a \$20 million lawsuit against the city. Personal and political divisions deepened amid the finger-pointing and second guessing.

For the next 2 years, a calculated campaign of intimidation and intrigue, unlike anything ever seen in Springdale, ensued pitting council member against council member, resident against resident. Finally, after a long and tortuous legal battle, a settlement was reached wherein Shopco pledged not pursue future developments in Springdale, plus it agreed to pay the city \$50,000 towards any legal costs.

More importantly to city officials, Shopco also issued a public apology, stating its satisfaction that Springdale's decision was the "product of a good faith determination" by public officials which was "beyond reproach." Though feelings of relief and

vindication surrounded the settlement, which to many stood as "proof that a city can stand up to the threat of intimidation of legal action in order to protect the principals of good land use planning," no one could ignore the tremendous personal and political toll that would take years to heal.²⁹

NOTES

Post (28 Oct 1983): Special Section, 11.

¹"Minutes:" 19 Aug 1987.

²"Minutes:" 16 Sep 1987.

³Among those present were Alexander, James Beamer, Marge Boice, Tony Bradburn, Peter Curtner, Harold Carl, Art Lovett, Don Metcalf, Gene Nell, David Oakum, R. Patel, John Shellenberger, Herb Spangler, Fred Voelkel, Bob Waxman, Bob Weckman and Fred Yingling. Keith DeGreen and R. Boyd lived out of state. Edna Underwood was in a nursing home. Max Cooper, Earl Reuscher and Joseph Boggs were deceased.

⁴"Minutes:" 1 Dec 1985.

⁵Enquirer (17 Feb 1983): A1.

⁶"Minutes:" 3 Apr 1985.

⁷"Minutes:" 15 May 1985.

⁸"Minutes:" 20 Mar 1985 and 6 Nov 1985.

⁹"Minutes:" 21 Jan 1987.

¹⁰"Minutes:" 4 Apr 1984.

¹¹Mary Roden, "Springdale Residential Land Waning," Cincinnati Business Courier (Jun 16-22, 1986): 3b.

¹²"Minutes:" 1 Feb 1984.

¹³"Minutes:" 4 Apr 1984.

¹⁴"Minutes:" 5 Jun 1985.

¹⁵"Minutes:" 17 Jul 1985.

¹⁶"Minutes:" 1 Jul 1987.

¹⁷Bolen referred to the remark in the context of the Shopco hearings. "Minutes:" 7 Oct 1987.

¹⁸Enquirer (27 Jul 1987): E1.

¹⁹Post (20 Aug 1987)

²⁰"Minutes:" 15 Apr 1987.

²¹Attorney C. Francis Barrett outlined this timetable at Shopco's public hearing, "Minutes:" 2 Sep 1987.

²²Enquirer (22 Jul 1987): E1 and (23 Jul 1987): E1.

²³"Minutes:" 19 Aug 1987.

²⁴"Minutes:" 19 Aug 1987.

²⁵Enquirer (20 Aug 1987): D1.

²⁶"Minutes:" 3 Sep 1987.

²⁷Post (8 Oct 1987): 1B.

²⁸"Minutes:" 7 Oct 1987.

²⁹Council Minutes,....

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

A DECADE OF BALANCE 1987-1996

As the 1980s came to a dramatic close, Springdale was at important crossroads.

On one hand, the Shopco decision created such political upheaval and distrusts that many wondered if the wounds would ever truly heal. Yet on the other hand, Springdale continued to grow and thrive becoming an even more important regional economic force. If nothing else, the Shopco experience illustrated the savvy business sense of both Springdale's political leaders and its administrative staff, and a stubborn willingness to fight to control Springdale's destiny. In the years to come, that destiny would depend on healing those wounds, and successfully balancing continued economic growth with efforts to retain a sense of community for Springdale residents.

The turn of the new decade found Springdale still reeling from its experience with

Shopco. As the legal battles wore on, hard feelings, suspicion and bitterness divided

the community. Those feelings carried over into 1991 when Mayor Vernon French, a

veteran council member and two term mayor, lost his bid for reelection to challenger

and former Springdale assistant city police chief Ron Pittman. Fifty-one percent of

Springdale residents turned out to vote during an offyear election reflecting a desire

for some kind of change. ¹

Despite all the turmoil, however, new businesses continued to move to Springdale. The years heading in to the 1990s were characterized by economic

growth and increasing revenues. A diverse mix of retail, commercial, industrial and office complexes helped keep Springdale from becoming too dependent on any one

employer. Earnings' taxes generated by the over 50,000 people who worked in the city made up a substantial part of Springdale's budget representing, by 1990, 61% of all revenues.²

As these revenues grew so did the need for greater city services. In 1974, Springdale employed 35 full-time employees. By 1990, that number grew to 55 full-time and four part-time employees with still more needed. Between 1989 and 1991, 14 new "rank and file" employees were hired, mostly in the police and fire departments. Yet the increases represented more than just added personnel, they reflected a need to respond to additional workload. Arrests were up 31%, DUI arrests were up 331%, and the number of auto accidents had increased 81%.³

Other departments were affected as well. One example was the Building Department, which projected a 192% rise in building permits for 1990. To handle the increased work, that department grew from one person in 1974 to five by 1990.

To meet the growing demand for health inspections for the numerous new restaurants opening in Springdale, up from 550 to 1600, the health department

expanded its staff from two fulltime to two fulltime and two parttime. Collections in

the Tax Department grew 125%, requiring that department to hire more staff to

handle the increase. By 1993, Springdale employed 103 people.⁴

Just about every aspect of city life and operation had expanded so significantly

that by 1989 the administration had outgrown its municipal building.⁵ After much discussion and debate, including consideration of projected future growth, council

voted in 1991 to fund the building of a new, much larger structure rather than to expand the old center.⁶ At a projected cost of \$5 million, the council's decision to pay cash for the new building illustrated just how far Springdale had come economically.⁷ Finance director Doyle Webster reminded Council that less than 20 years earlier, the city had to borrow to build its first municipal building, stating that "if we had to, we could write a check this evening."⁸

There was an urgent use for the old municipal center as well. Further plans called for the renovation and reuse of the old building to provide a new, bigger physical plant for the growing police department. Total cost for the renovation, which would provide 11,000 square feet for police offices, was projected at \$1 million. Clearly Springdale was a city on the move.⁹

Yet a reading of council minutes during these years illustrates that deep political divisions and suspicions persisted. Some members voiced concern about the financial condition of Springdale and the speed with which the city seemed to be spending all that it brought in. Of particular concern was the decision to build a new municipal building, and to pay cash for it, which seemed to some a frivolous, controversial action.¹⁰

No doubt much of the bad will was a result of the Shopco affair and its lingering aftermath. Just four months into the new council's administration, Councilman Ken Alexander remarked "it would be easy to blame the previous

Council for our current fiscal shape, however their only downfall was believing what they were told by the previous Finance Committee, the Finance Director, the previous Mayor, and the City Administration."¹¹

Yet in reality Springdale was experiencing an unexpected downturn in its economy. Springdale was not alone as the entire United States adjusted to the Gulf War and its impact. High inflation and a rise in unemployment affected the whole country and especially Springdale which depended heavily on earnings taxes for revenues. A significant decrease was first felt at the end of 1991 with an actual shortfall of \$250,000 in revenues from the earnings tax. Earnings for the first quarter of 1992 were just as flat leading some to wonder if it was wise for the city to add new staff, renovate police headquarters and build an expensive new municipal building.¹²

Even though the economic downturn was short-lived barely lasting three years, it was enough to create new challenges and disagreements on council. For one thing, the city had grown way beyond its ability to continue the traditional practice of splitting its revenues between its general fund and the capital improvements fund. In the past, revenues were split 50/50 between the two with emergency transfers whenever necessary.¹³ The downturn illustrated that Springdale no longer had the luxury of automatically allocating 50% of its income to the capital improvement fund. To continue to support its growing infrastructure, the city simply needed more flexibility and, in 1993, Council passed an ordinance to discontinue the 50/50 split.¹⁴

The downturn also underscored that jobs, and subsequent earnings taxes, were the "lifeblood of the community." By "throttling back" on new hires and tightening its belt administratively, the city weathered the flat revenues with relative ease. More importantly, unlike other cities, city officials weren't forced to

raise taxes.¹⁵ Construction of the new municipal building, the cost of which was scaled back dramatically at the recommendation of Mayor Pitman, and renovation of the new police headquarters, went ahead on schedule opening in 1992 and 1994 respectively.¹⁶ Luckily, however, 1994 brought an end to a stagnant economy which was reflected in an 2% increase in revenues from earnings taxes over 1993. 1995 opened with an even stronger showing of 9% over the year before. While the days of double-digit growth were probably gone forever, Springdale had successfully rebounded and was growing again.¹⁷

As administrators adjusted city operations to meet the demands of the economy, Council worked on its own agenda. One particularly controversial item was an attempt to revise the city's Charter and change the elected position of Clerk of Council/Finance Director to an appointed, full-time position. As defined in the Charter, the Clerk of Council/Finance Director was an elected position with a term of 4 years. Since 1971, 1 person, Doyle Webster, a vice president with PNC Bank, had been elected by popular vote 6 times.

At a July 1994 Council meeting, President Randy Danbury presented a notice from Tim Sullivan of the Charter Revision Committee stating that the committee had voted 4-0 to recommend that the Charter be revised to eliminate the elected position of Clerk of Council/Finance Director and replace it with a new, full-time position. Webster was particularly surprised since he had attended the last 2 Charter Revision Committee meetings and couldn't recall that particular vote. Further investigation revealed that the vote occurred at a meeting that wasn't properly advertised to the public. Subsequently, all action from that meeting was voided by President Danbury.¹⁸

Still, the issue wouldn't die. In the fall of 1994, Webster informed the Council of his intention not to seek re-election in 1995, stating that "hopefully the Charter

decision can now be made void of any personalities and politics and strictly for what's best for this City."¹⁹ Finally, in February 1995, after months of further review, an ordinance to put the issue on the May ballot to let the voters decide came up for a Council vote. Specifically, the ordinance, if passed, stipulated that residents would vote whether or not to eliminate the elected position of Clerk of Council/Finance Director and replace it with a new, appointed full-time position.²⁰

The ordinance drew heated discussion as each side of the issue squared off. Proponents wanted the ordinance passed to allow the voters to decide whether to make the change or not. As Councilman Robert Wilson said, "It's giving residents the opportunity to vote whether they want this or not..." But other council members felt that removing the public's right to fill that position by election every 4 years and replacing that right with political appointments took away an important check and balance. Councilman Tom Vanover voiced what others felt when he said "It's thinking like this that clearly exemplifies the belief that the electorate is not intelligent enough to make the best choice of the person to fill that position."²¹

Finally, the discussion was closed. Despite the efforts of those who supported the ordinance, it failed to get the 5 votes required to pass. Questions of motivations were directed at both sides of the issue. Addressing the Council, Charter Revision Committee member Tim Sullivan expressed his frustration stating that "...personality politics which has existed on the Springdale Council for years can be far more destructive than any partisan politics which are, of course, prohibited by our Charter. We saw a perfect example of this tonight." Still others were relieved by the vote, consoled by the thought that this was "a position that has worked well for us for thirty years."²²

Other Council activities stirred up the community during these years. One of the most controversial involved the decision by Mayor Pittman to promote Beth Burket from Information Systems Coordinator to Assistant City Administrator in 1992. While the Charter specifically gave the office of Mayor hiring and firing responsibilities, the practice over the years had been to allow the City Administrator to recruit, interview and then make recommendations to fill a position. With the resignation of the current Assistant City Administrator Bill Nelson in July 1992, who went onto become City Manager of Tipp City, Ohio, Mayor Pittman directed Cecil Osborn to begin the recruitment and interview process.

Numerous applications from qualified candidates were received and Osborn had narrowed the search to two candidates when, in October, Mayor Pittman announced to Council that he had appointed Beth Burket as acting Assistant City Administrator.²³ Osborn was especially surprised by these actions since the Mayor had not communicated his decision to him. In fact, as far as Osborn was concerned, Beth Burket was never a serious contender for the job, an opinion based entirely on the fact that she had no training nor experience in city administration. When Osborn asked if he should continue the search process, Mayor Pittman said "no." In December, the Mayor announced to Council that effective January 1, 1993, Burket would become the permanent Assistant City Administrator.²⁴

With Burket now his permanent assistant, Osborn immediately advised her in her new supervisory capacity. One of the first items Osborn spoke to her about was the city's "no fraternization" rule which specifically prohibited managers from fraternizing with subordinates. He reminded her that relationships that she developed in her former job might be inappropriate since she now was in a

supervisory position. Burket assured Osborn that she understood and agreed with that regulation.²⁵

Yet it wasn't long before problems arose as Burket settled into her new administrative position and responsibilities. Within months Osborn heard rumors about Burket's relationship with a Springdale police officer. When finally confronted by Osborn about the rumors, which were later confirmed by a videotape of Burket and the officer taken by her husband, Burket admitted that she had indeed disregarded the no fraternization rule.

Osborn's first recommendation was to demote her. However, after the videos came to light, he realized that her behavior was simply too inconsistent with professional leadership, and conflicted too greatly with the institutional standards that all Springdale employees were expected to uphold. With those considerations in mind, Osborn changed his recommendation to termination.²⁶

Suddenly, the city found itself facing more litigation as Burket filed a very public lawsuit to get her job back.²⁷ The defendants included the City of Springdale, Cecil Osborn and, interestingly, the man who promoted her, Mayor Ron Pittman.²⁸ Osborn, meanwhile, hired Derrick Parham as Assistant City Administrator. Unlike Burket, Parham had "hands-on" experience having previously worked for the City of Montgomery, Ohio.²⁹

Although the city would ultimately win at every legal level, Burket's legal actions spanned 3 years and caused embarrassment and tension within the City and its administrative staff.³⁰ Many staff members disagreed with Osborn's actions and some felt alienated. Yet Osborn knew he had acted properly and, more importantly, that his actions reinforced the fact that Springdale's administration was going to remain a

professionally managed one.³¹

From the start, the Burket incident disrupted Council and further reflected deep division. Mayor Pitman's unilateral appointment was not illegal but was certainly unprecedented, and essentially forced the administration to make the best of an awkward situation. Her subsequent actions only further underscored what many saw as a lack of leadership on Council.

Responding to Burket's legal actions, Councilwoman Marge Boice commented that "Ms. Burket was appointed by Mayor Pitman. I think it is unprecedented in the City of Springdale. This is the first time an appointment of that magnitude was made without any discussion with the City Administrator." She went on to point out that while Osborn was taking the "heat on this" he had "absolutely nothing to do with that appointment."³²

Although these years saw enormous time and energy devoted to political maneuverings and stressful legal situations, much was accomplished in fostering positive growth in the community. Two areas of the city, Tri-County and the Route 4 Corridor, received particular attention.

From its start in the 1950s, the Tri-County area continued to be extremely important to Springdale. Although many could hardly believe it, 30 years of development along 747 and Kemper Road had yet to peak, and businesses continued to move in. In 1995, over 10 new businesses, including Wal Mart, Dick's Sporting Goods, Best Buy, Chili's and the Macaroni Grill, opened with great success in a relatively small undeveloped area along east Kemper Road.

Several important factors contributed to the continued success of that area. First was its location near to 1-275 which became increasingly important as new suburbs exploded into northern Hamilton, Butler and Warren Counties. Tri-County remained a strategically convenient destination. Another important factor was the diverse mix of companies that moved to Springdale. Striving to

adhere to its original land use plan established in the early 1970s, Springdale officials worked to avoid becoming a one company town. Instead, they worked to attract a wide range of companies, big and small, that were retail, commercial, industrial and service oriented.

Those efforts served Springdale well when one of its largest employers, Avon, was forced to downsize and laid off hundreds of employees in 1992.³³ No one discounted the loss of earnings taxes at a time when the city's overall economy was tight, yet its diverse economic based lessened the sting somewhat. Four years later, in 1996, Avon announced plans to expand and add 600 new jobs.

A third important factor was simply that Springdale was maturing as a municipality. By the 1990s, Springdale had witnessed businesses come and go over the years and every effort was made to reuse those properties that became open or vacant. Ordinances and zoning requirements were implemented to ensure that standards remained high when new projects were proposed. One particularly successful example of reuse was the Delhi Plant and Garden Center, which was opened on the site of a car dealership that had gone out of business. A final factor was that Springdale was now clearly a regional economic force. People didn't just come to Springdale to shop at Tri-County, they also came everyday to work in Springdale.

As important as the Tri-County area had become to Springdale, residents grumbled over increased traffic, noise, crime, and more than anything else, the growing perception that Tri-County was Springdale, instead of the other way around.

As Springdale residents knew, Tri-County wasn't even part of "downtown" Springdale. And except for Heritage Hills to the north and east of Tri-County, most of Springdale's residential neighborhoods were on the other side of town.

Perhaps that perception was inevitable as the use of the name Tri-County was perpetuated by new developments. Time and again city planners and officials tried by recommendation or suggestion to convince developers to use Springdale in a new name but they met with little success. Tri-County as a name and destination was simply too well known in the region and developers were unwilling to experiment with the public.³⁴

By the late 1980s, concern over Springdale's identity grew. As new businesses began to move west along Kemper and Northland Boulevard, many worried that continued unchecked development would completely takeover Springdale. In 1990, a quality of life survey conducted by the Tri-Sector Research Group, Inc. clearly illustrated residents' desire to balance commercial and residential development. Other issues of concern included loss of green space, traffic, noise and congestion, and the impact of Forest Fair and other developments in Butler County. Respondents also expressed a strong desire for a more "cohesive Springdale with a common identity."³⁵

The survey also reflected a strong desire for new, upscale housing, which tended to support the concern of city officials who watched as Springdale's population grew older. New suburbs with large expensive homes outside of Springdale enticed increasing numbers of families who wanted to "move up" to move out of the city. Former higher-end neighborhoods like Beacon Hills and Oxford Hills were full and there was little turnover. Finally, Springdale was running out of land for major new residential communities.

To address these concerns, city officials began the creation in 1988 of a land use plan for Springfield Pike, or the Route 4 Corridor, between Sharon Road and I-275. Because of its length and importance in tying Springdale to greater

Cincinnati and Hamilton, equal consideration had to be given to the Pike's "regional significance as a major artery" and its historical role as Springdale's "main street." The principal goal, as Cecil Osborn described in September 1988, was to achieve "an overall well planned land use system that allows appropriate commercial development to flourish along side residential uses."³⁶

That year, Council contracted with BOHM-NBBJ to conduct a comprehensive land use study of the Springfield Pike corridor in order to develop a policy to plan for future development of this area. Intended as a "planning instrument" the study had 3 goals: develop Rt. 4 as a community spine to help foster a sense of community identity apart from the regional development, protect existing residential areas and increase the amount and types of residential development, and to improve Springdale's image as a residential community.

For the next 18 months, research was conducted in different ways to determine community needs and desires, data about existing neighborhoods, market potential, alternative land use types and appropriate zoning categories, and appropriate corridor goals, objectives and development concepts. A special Town Meeting, newsletter and workshop were three ways the project involved the public.³⁷

In October 1989, BOHM-NBBJ presented its study to the Planning Commission and asked for further public input. A follow-up meeting in January 1990 produced minor revisions. The consultants then presented a final plan to the Planning Commission in March 1990. At that meeting, the Commission approved the plan and sent it along to Council for adoption.³⁸

The final plan, which was adopted by Council in June 1990, provided comprehensive recommendations for the area that was divided into 4 distinct geographic segments. The plan underscored the importance of recognizing the distinctiveness of each segment while also linking them together. Just as important, the plan provided detailed justification once and for all for the use of zoning.

As Council was about to vote to adopt the plan, BOHM-NBBJ's Larry Hillman reminded them again of the importance of controlling development along Springfield Pike. Springfield Pike, he said, was more than just a street, it was "the spine of Springdale, it is your core, your history and where you find your future can evolve."³⁹

Today the biggest symbol of the plan's success is the new municipal building which serves as a central focal point toward creating a "downtown" identity for Springdale.

One of the major objectives of the land use plan was to protect Springdale's residential neighborhoods and at the same time increase its housing stock. For years a growing concern had been the inability to provide new communities of what were called "high-end" houses, or those that ranged in price between \$250,000 and \$350,000. Many people left Springdale for new "high-end" communities in Fairfield, West Chester and Mason.

An important opportunity to address that problem was created in 1989 with the building of a new upscale neighborhood along Sharon Road and adjacent to the Glenview Golf Course.⁴⁰ Developed by builder Alan Zaring, Springdale officials felt that the community was just the type the city needed to attract and keep residents.

At over 300 acres, city officials initially imagined a community similar to Carpenter's Run in Blue Ash, which featured an award-winning public golf course

surrounded by beautiful upscale homes. Although Cincinnati ultimately retained ownership of the golf course, Zaring began annexation negotiations with Springdale. Finally, in 1992, the subdivision was annexed to Springdale. With over 80 new upscale homes and a park, Glenview became a major asset to the city.⁴¹

For many residents, the adoption of that plan came in the nick of time as new developments, including expansions at Maple Knoll Village to the south and the BP Station to the north, surfaced.⁴² One major new development that captured the community's attention was the proposed plan to build a Hooters Restaurant adjacent to the Springdale Music Palace. First presented to the Springdale City Council in February 1991, the plan requested a major change in the PUD which was outlined in comprehensive detail in the new land use plan.⁴³

Numerous concerns quickly grew out of this request. For one thing, the request represented a significant move away from the guidelines set forth in the BOHM/NBBJ plan. Secondly, many in the community questioned whether the market for another restaurant in Springdale truly existed. At the March 20 meeting of City Council, Councilman Alexander voiced what others thought when he reminded Council that "there was a lot of planning that went into that hillside when this was conceived, and now we are starting to stick restaurants in there...I can't picture a restaurant sitting inside another restaurant's parking lot..."⁴⁴

As residents and council members became more familiar with the Hooters operation, real concerns about the restaurant chain and its image emerged. At the April 17 council meeting, representatives of Hooters' and Music Palace owner Terry Marty addressed the Council and emphasized the family-oriented nature of the restaurant. In response, Marge Boice presented a calendar of Hooters' girls which she and many others thought, through its photographs and text, denigrated women generally and the Hooters' girls particularly. She questioned whether this

kind of marketing tool fit with Springdale's family-oriented community, and stated "I found this calendar distressing, certainly not family oriented. I don't think that is the image we want."⁴⁵

Despite assurances from the franchiser and Music Palace owner Terry Marty, Ordinance No 29-1991 was defeated by a vote of 5-2 at the May 5 Council meeting. Two weeks later, a letter from Terry Marty's attorney was read in Council requesting that members reconsider the ordinance. For Marty, whose restaurant had suffered a variety of setbacks in recent years, the ordinance represented a chance to save the Music Palace. Through his attorney, Marty addressed many of the issues of concern by agreeing to restrictive covenants, including "1) No hard liquor would be served on the premises, only beer and wine; 2) No "Happy Hour" promotions for any type of alcoholic drinks would be allowed; 3) No promotional calendars be sold on the premises; 4) The corporate uniform code that is mandated by the franchiser, which is jogging shorts and white t-shirts would be strictly adhered to with no exceptions."⁴⁶ Despite his assurances, no action was taken.

Six months later, many in Springdale were surprised to learn that even though Council voted down its original ordinance, the Hooters project was back in the works. In January 1992, Terry Marty resubmitted his request to the planning commission which approved it 7-0. In February, Ordinance No. 2-1992 requesting preliminary approval of a development plan for the construction of a Hooters Restaurant on the property of the Springdale Music palace at the Crossings of Springdale was presented to Council.⁴⁷ After preliminary discussion, the meeting was opened to the public for comment. Many residents spoke for and against the proposal, with concerns about the restaurant's image, parking, location, traffic and noise heading the list. Despite these concerns, the Council reverse its earlier vote, passing the ordinance 4-3.⁴⁸

Controversy over the prospect of a Hooters Restaurant in Springdale continued to grow. The issue was so divisive that Council voted in April to let the residents decide for themselves by unanimously passing Ordinance No. 22-1992, which would put the Hooters issue on the ballot in the upcoming fall election. The long delays and constant changes in policy proved too costly for Marty, who in September withdrew his request to improve the Music Palace and ultimately sold his property to the owners of Hooters. With his action, Council repealed Ordinance No. 22-1992.⁴⁹ In April 1993, a final plan for a Hooter's Remington Roadhouse restaurant was quietly submitted to and accepted by the Planning Commission. All the modifications originally proposed by Marty were in place, as well as a closing time of midnight.

In July 1993, the restaurant opened in Springdale.⁵⁰

In addition providing development guidelines, the Springfield Pike Corridor study underscored other important activities that were implemented to support Springdale's residents. A community recycling program was initiated in 1990 with the creation of a recycling drop-off center. Commenting on the projected annual cost of \$7500, Osborn assured Council that "any recoverable revenues will reduce that by 30-50%." Indeed, by 1994, 2100 out of 3300 households in the city were voluntarily participating in the recycling program. City officials vowed that they would "try to do better" in promoting the program and getting more of the public involved.⁵¹ By 1995, recycling efforts were even more sophisticated with special days set aside for different materials.

As the recycling program expanded, so did concern for yard waste management. By 1993, city officials were working to set up a workable program with Rumpke to pick up residents' yard clippings. Stickers and special bags were available at the local Thriftway store and at the municipal building.⁵²

The city's tree planting program, which began with the planting of 21 trees in 1985, grew to a high of 625 trees planted in 1991. In recognition for its efforts to keep Springdale green, the city received the Growth Award from the Arbor Day Foundation in 1995, recognizing that the city had "gone beyond the standard requirements for recognition as a Tree City." Those efforts continue with Springdale's designation a Tree City U.S.A. in 1995 and 1996.⁵³

In an effort to build the community's identity, Council decided in 1992 to sponsor a new annual community event around the Fourth of July holiday. The event, which became known as the Spirit of Springdale Festival and was organized under the auspices of the Parks and Recreation Commission, started out as a three-day weekend event of music, entertainment, merchandise booths and, most important of all, a major fireworks display. The event was a great success with up to 15,000 people attending. All agreed that this could become an important annual community event and planning for an even bigger festival for the next year began in September .⁵⁴

Over the years, the Spirit of Springdale has grown to become a regional event. A parade was subsequently added as were more family and child-oriented activities. Challenges for organizers in the first years included handling larger and larger crowds, providing an adequate sound system during the fireworks, and dealing with safety issues surrounding the fireworks display. Changing winds and blowing ash caused a few minor injuries. By 1995, the event had succeeded in its goal to bring Springdale residents together and was one of four major summer events along with the Tri-City Girl's Tournament, the Ray Manis Tournament, and the USSSA Women's Softball League.⁵⁵

These years also saw the development of important regional collaborations regarding diverse issues. In the late 1980s Springdale followed Cincinnati's lead

in toughening its gun control legislation beyond State requirements. By 1993, Springdale had established a 24 hour waiting period for delivery of handguns.⁵⁶

Another regional collaboration began in 1990 when Springdale initiated the I-275 Corridor Study, which examined the area between Hamilton Avenue and I-71. With a \$300,000 grant from the State of Ohio, Springdale and 4 other communities are studying ways to plan for future developments.⁵⁷

In 1992, Springdale affiliated with the Miami Valley Risk Management Association's Worker's Compensation with Kettering, Beavercreek, Miamisburg, Montgomery, Troy, Vandalia and West Carrollton. By joining with other municipalities, Springdale hoped to reap the benefit of savings in the long run. In its first year in the pool, Springdale saved over \$20,000 and continues to participate in the program today.⁵⁸

To better coordinate continued economic growth through tax abatements and collaborations, the city created its first enterprise zone in 1992 which stretched from Route 4 east to its incorporation line. A year later, 6 new enterprise zones were established, creating 400 new jobs while retaining 500 jobs. Total payroll amounted to \$10.5 million dollars, generating revenues in earnings taxes of \$254,000 from the combined new and old jobs. Today, enterprise zones are an important part of economic development in Springdale.⁵⁹

Surprisingly, for all its economic growth, a major piece missing in Springdale's business community was a Chamber of Commerce. Years of economic development and growth didn't spark an interest or identify a need on the part of business owners to come together on a regular basis with each other and city officials. That changed in 1996 with the formal creation of a Springdale Chamber of Commerce.⁶⁰

With the 1995 elections came another shift in political leadership. After announcing that he would not run for Clerk of Council/Finance Director, Doyle

Webster instead became a candidate for Mayor. Webster's victory over Pitman illustrated that once again voters wanted change.⁶¹

Compared to the start of the 1990s, the years midway were calmer and gentler. In March 1996, Mayor Webster introduced a new 4-part program called Springdale Community Pride. Designed to involve Springdale residents in the general upkeep of the community, the first phase was the "Neighborhood Clean-up, Fix-up" followed by "Residential Debris Removal." The third phase handled "Animal Control and Public Health Nuisance Complaints." Finally, the program culminated in a successful citywide yard sale and recycling day at the Community Center. Participation at all levels was extremely high.⁶²

The relative calm of mid-1990s suggested that perhaps Springdale had reached an important point in the healing process and could now concern itself with the future, and what that might mean for the city. One by one, as the city positively resolved its legal conflicts, attention moved beyond the lawsuits and bad feelings to community development and stability. Attention focused on major projects, including continued growth in the fire and police departments, especially with regard toward a possible new fire substation on the east side of town, and expanded services.

As the city's physical plants age, the number of capital improvement projects was sure to rise. Now that a new municipal building was in place, and the old building renovated for use by the police, city officials would soon need to revisit renovation of the recreation center's physical plant which was nearing 25 years old.⁶³

As a regional economic force, Springdale will be affected, more than ever before, by regional issues. Changing transportation patterns, especially in the development of mass transit systems, could greatly impact the city, which has traditionally depended on the automobile for movement to and from Springdale.

Organizationally, city officials will need to look to the future with an open mind, and even more than that, position the city so that it serves as a major force in planning the changes in years to come.⁶⁴

Other regional challenges may include consolidation of services between community and community. That is already happening to a degree as Springdale shares its emergency medical services with the Village of Glendale, which currently lacks the sufficient tax base to support those services. Because of Springdale's broad tax base, it will become incumbent upon city officials to ensure that Springdale remains a leader in providing quality services. Providing leadership regionally will be imperative to ensure that Springdale doesn't miss out on major regional future developments.⁶⁵

One thing is certain. Whatever the future holds for Springdale, city officials and residents alike have learned much from its history. To hold onto its history and sustain its identity, Springdale cannot dwell on the past but look to the future. Even more than that, the city must be a leader in planning for that future to ensure that when opportunity knocks Springdale isn't left behind.

¹Springdale City Council Minutes, 20 Nov 1991; 1Dec 1991.

²"Minutes:" 20 June 1990; 3 July 1991.

³Cincinnati Enquirer, 8/8/1989; "Minutes:" 20 June 1990.

⁴"Minutes:" 20 June 1990; 9 June 1993.

⁵"Minutes:" 21 June 1989.

⁶"Minutes:" 11 July 1990.

⁷"Minutes:" 21 Nov 1990; 2 Jan 1991.

⁸"Minutes:" 15 May 1991.

⁹"Minutes:" 15 April 1992.

¹⁰"Minutes:" 5 May 1992.

¹¹"Minutes:" 15 April 1992.

¹² "Minutes:" 15 April 1992; 16 May 1992.

¹³"Minutes:" 15 April 1992.

¹⁴"Minutes:" 17 June 1992; 17 Feb 1993; 5 May 1993; 19 May 1993; Ordinance No. 39-1993.

¹⁵"Minutes:" 13 June 1994.

¹⁶"Minutes:" 5 May 1993; 16 March 1994.

¹⁷"Minutes:" 18 May 1994; 4 Jan 1995.

¹⁸"Minutes:" 20 July 1994; 27 July 1994.

¹⁹"Minutes:" 16 Nov 1994.

²⁰Ordinance No. 4-1995; "Minutes:" 1 Feb 1995.

²¹"Minutes:" 1 Feb 1995.

-
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³“Minutes:” 21 Oct 1992.
- ²⁴Interview, Cecil Osborn, 1/16/1997; “Minutes:” 16 Dec 1992.
- ²⁵Interview, Cecil Osborn, 1/16/1997.
- ²⁶Ibid.; Letter, Tony Bradburn to Beth Burket, May 14, 1993; “Minutes:” 19 May 1993.
- ²⁷Cincinnati Enquirer, 4/26/1993; Cincinnati Post, 6/17/1993.
- ²⁸“Minutes:” 9 June 1993.
- ²⁹“Minutes:” 21 April 1993.
- ³⁰“Minutes:” 19 Oct 1994; Cincinnati Post, 10/20/1994; Cincinnati Enquirer, 12/29/1994; “Minutes:” 15 Feb 1995; 15 Mar 1995; 19 April 1995.
- ³¹Interview, Cecil Osborn, 1/16/1997.
- ³²“Minutes:” 9 June 1993.
- ³³“Minutes:” 20 May 1992.
- ³⁴Ibid.
- ³⁵“Minutes:” 7 Feb 1990.
- ³⁶“Minutes:” 18 April 1990.
- ³⁷“Minutes:” 18 April 1990.
- ³⁸Springdale Pike Corridor Study, Springdale, Ohio. BOHM-NBBJ, February 1990.
- ³⁹“Minutes:” 18 April 1990; Ordinance No. 24-1990.
- ⁴⁰“Minutes:” 1 Mar 1989.
- ⁴¹“Minutes:” 16 May 1992; 17 June 1992; Cincinnati Enquirer, 6/21/1992; Cincinnati Post, 6/21/1992; Cincinnati Post, 9/21/1992.
- ⁴²“Minutes:” 19 Jan 1994.
- ⁴³“Minutes:” 20 Feb 1991.
- ⁴⁴“Minutes:” 20 Mar 1991.
- ⁴⁵“Minutes:” 17 April 1991.
- ⁴⁶“Minutes:” 1 May 1991; 15 May 1991.
- ⁴⁷“Minutes:” 22 Jan 1992; 19 Feb 1992.
- ⁴⁸“Minutes:” 19 Feb 1992.
- ⁴⁹“Minutes:” 2 Sept 1992.
- ⁵⁰“Minutes:” 21 April 1993; 19 Jan 1994.
- ⁵¹“Minutes:” 16 May 1990; 20 July 1994.
- ⁵²“Minutes:” 21 April 1993; 14 Dec 1993; 19 Jan 1994; 16 Mar 1994.
- ⁵³“Minutes:” 20 June 1990; 5 April 1995.
- ⁵⁴Minutes, Parks and Recreation Commission, 4 Feb 1992; 3 Mar 1992; 7 April 1992; 5 May 1992; 1 Sept 1992.
- ⁵⁵Minutes, Parks and Recreation Commission, 1 Mar 1994; 5 April 1994; 6 Sept 1994; 5 Sept 1995.
- ⁵⁶“Minutes:” 3 Nov 1993; Resolution No. R37-1993.
- ⁵⁷“Minutes:” 18 April 1990.
- ⁵⁸“Minutes:” 2 Dec 1992; Ordinance No. 78-1992.
- ⁵⁹“Minutes:” 15 Sept 1992; 1 Dec 1993; 2 Nov 1994.
- ⁶⁰“Minutes:” 6 Nov 1996; Interview, Cecil Osborn, 1/16/1997.
- ⁶¹“Minutes:” 1 Dec 1995.
- ⁶²“Minutes:” 6 Mar 1996.
- ⁶³Interview, Cecil Osborn, 1/16/1997.
- ⁶⁴Ibid.; Interview, Doyle Webster, 1/16/1997.
- ⁶⁵Ibid.; Ibid.