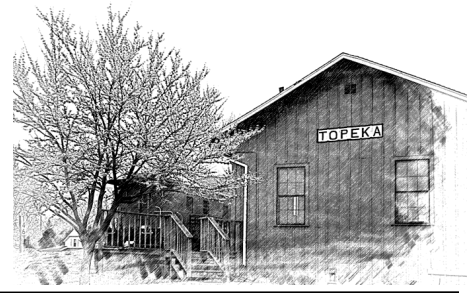




Mile 146

Spring - 2018



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Number 2

“The Browns of Hawpatch”

Most people know about the infamous John Brown who made the raid on Harpers Ferry that helped to trigger the Civil War in October of 1859. But what they don't know is that he had an Aunt Cloe and several first cousins living right in this area. One of those cousins, who shared his first name, was the first doctor in Hawpatch (Topeka). Thanks to the research of Tim Hudson, a descendant of the Brown family, we also know fascinating details about the lives of two other cousins, Volucia and Edward, who were prominent local educators. Edward even came to have another fascinating connection with the well-known writer, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and ended up as a character in several of her books.

The story begins with Cloe Pettibone Brown (1785-1852) who married the widower Judge Frederick Brown (a descendant of Peter Brown who arrived on the Mayflower in 1620) of Wadsworth, Ohio, in 1808. She was only 23 years old; he was 39 and the father of three. Cloe certainly possessed a keen interest and skill in the healing arts which she no doubt passed on to her son John. Some suggest that she may have learned some of her skills from an Indian squaw known for her use of healing herbs and who was the wife of Canadian trapper and trader John Homes who lived in the area. The History of Medina County says that, “She, perhaps, was the first practitioner of the county”.

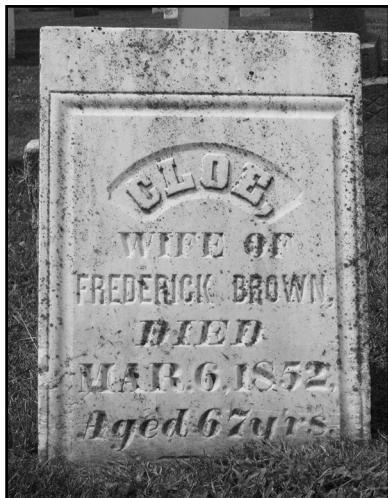
“It is said that Eve in the Garden of Eden, through transgression, entailed upon posterity the seeds of disease and death ‘and all our woe’. But ‘Aunt Chloe’, in the wilderness of America, with sympathetic heart and extended hand, afforded relief to many a suffering mortal, as if, in part, to atone for the stain upon her sex through the ‘fall’.” (History of Medina County, p.253).

Frederick's older brother, Owen, was a staunch abolitionist and underground railroad agent. Owen moved from Connecticut in 1805 to Hudson, Ohio. It was Owen's son John, considered martyr by some and a traitor by others, who led the ill-fated raid on the U.S. Armory in Harpers Ferry in 1859. Brown's hope had been to secure weapons and arm the slave. While he was ultimately taken captive, put on trial and hung for his crime, John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry set events in motion that helped to trigger the Civil War.



Judge Frederick Brown
1769-1848

Tim Hudson believes that John the abolitionist, whose boyhood home was in Hudson, Ohio, and who would have been 17 years old at the time, most likely attended the wedding of Timothy Hudson Sr. and Catherine Brown (Dr. John's oldest sister) in October of 1817. The wedding was held in the home of Timothy's father, David. David Hudson and Owen Brown were friends.



In reality, all the members of the Brown's and the Hudson's were all staunch supporters of the abolition of slavery, but not by use of force. There was even discussions about legally adopting a slave child and then educating that child to prove that Negro children were capable of learning. Timothy Hudson Sr. published an anti-slavery paper known as the “Advocate of Human Rights” (which is now lost) as early as 1835.

In 1842, due to declining health, Frederick retired to live with his son Dr. Marcus Brown in Circleville, Ohio. Marcus is said to have been a friend and

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one time traveling companion of Mark Twain. Following Frederick's death, March 14th, 1848, Cloe came to live with their son John on the Hawpatch.

Why and when Dr. John Brown (1812-1852) settled in Hawpatch is still a mystery. It may have had something to do with the fact that his half-sister had married Timothy Hudson, Sr. and was living in the area.

What we do know is that Dr. John Brown studied medicine in Wadsworth, Ohio, under Dr. George Pardee and came to what is now Topeka, where he joined the Hawpatch Presbyterian Church in 1837. On April 1, 1840, he was ordained as a ruling elder. His first wife, Emily C. Lyman, was the daughter of Captain George Lyman who served in the Revolutionary War. Tragically Emily died in 1838 at the age of 26 never having given him children. He later married Melissa Ann Phelps (1815-1896) with whom he had three children.

It is said of Dr. John Brown that "he attained a high reputation as a physician and a Christian gentleman." Unfortunately, he fell victim to an epidemic of erysipelas which ravaged the area, and died on January 24th, 1852, just five days after the birth of his son John J.

Within a matter of a few short weeks (March 6th, 1852), Cloe died at the age of 67 in the same house as her son, presumably of the same illness. Both are buried in what was then the Eden Chapel Cemetery (Row 40 # 18) west of Topeka. Their graves are some of the oldest in the Eden Cemetery.

According to Tim Hudson's research, following John's death, Melissa found herself "quite poor and with three children". For a time they lived with Timothy and Catherine. She later moved to Michigan. Melissa died on February 16, 1896 at the age of 80, and was buried in Fairmount Cemetery in Dubois County, Indiana.

Cloe Brown's oldest living child was Cloe Volucia Brown (1810-1850). She never married but did become a school teacher. Volucia, as she preferred to be called, started teaching at Kinsman Academy in Kinsman,

Ohio. Then, beginning in the fall of 1842 she taught two terms at The LaGrange Collegiate Institute in Ontario here in LaGrange County. From there she went to Wolcott Mills (Wolcottville) to the home of George Wolcott where she became the

first teacher in the newly established Female Seminary in Wolcottville. Volucia died in the home of George and Margaret Wolcott on September 14, 1850, at the age of 40 and was buried in the Ontario Cemetery.

Edward Brown (1814-1895) was the youngest of the children. He also became a teacher, and then an editor and a lawyer.

From 1840 thru 1842 he was a professor at Miami Collegiate Institute in Peru, Indiana. He then taught at Logansport and at the Lagrange Collegiate Institute in Ontario, Indiana. He served as principal there from May 9, 1843, until May 1, 1844. While at Logansport he studied law and in 1844 he opened practice at Lima (Howe), Indiana. Edward was also the editor of "The LaGrange Whig" in 1848.

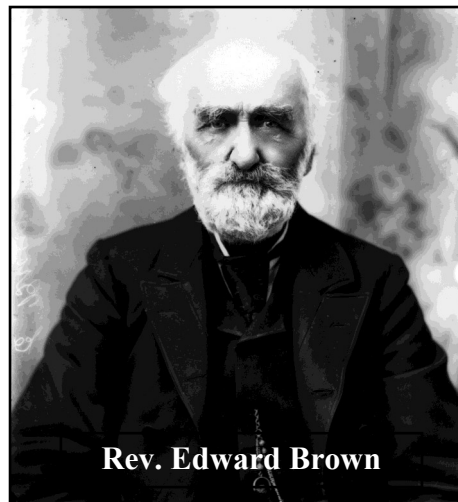
Brown left the legal profession in 1853 and was ordained at Green Bay, Wisconsin, as a Congregational minister. In June of 1880 he moved his family to De Smet, South Dakota, where he organized the First Congregational Church serving as pastor until his resignation on his 70th birthday.

It was there that his adopted teenage daughter, Ida Wright, became best friends with the future author Laura Ingalls. At his home on August 25, 1885, Rev Edward Brown performed the wedding for Laura Ingalls, and Almanso Wilder.

It is said that Laura was not impressed with what she described as Brown's "crude, loud style of preaching". However, both Brown and his daughter Ida appear as characters in two of Laura Ingalls Wilder's books "Little Town on the Prairie" and "These Happy Golden Years".

Edward Brown would later serve two terms as the Chaplain of the South Dakota Senate. He retired to West Superior, Wisconsin, and died on March 25, 1895. He was buried in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

As far as we know, there are no descendants of the Brown family still living in the Topeka area. However, the Brown family's contribution to the early development of Topeka and LaGrange County should never be allowed to fade away or be forgotten. *HG*



Rev. Edward Brown

Topeka Area Historical Society

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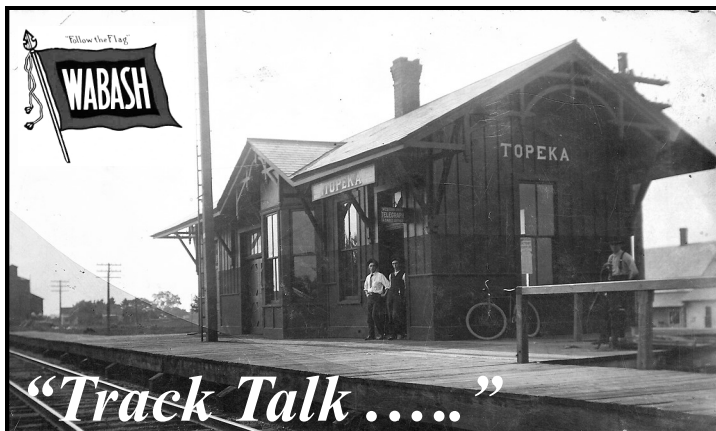
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Bryan McCoy, Director

Larry Shrock, Director

Answers:
1) Pettibone
2) Peter Brown
3) Melissa Ann Phelps
4) Lima (Howe) IN
5) 35 years

We are deeply indebted to Tim Hudson for graciously sharing his Brown and Hudson Family research with us and for allowing us to use the photos of Frederick and Edward Brown.



3rd Graders Visit the Depot



When the three 3rd Grade classes from Topeka Elementary School made their annual field trip to the Depot Museum they had no idea that one of their tour guides would be former station agent Denny Hollis. This was the first time we have had a former station agent available to serve as one of our tour guides.

As a former station agent, Hollis was able to give the students a unique perspective on the depot's day to day operations.

It was while Hollis was working here in Topeka that he met and later married Shirley Sprunger (THS Class of 1963). After living in Texas for many years, the Hollis' sold their home and retired to Topeka.

Updated website:

Be sure to visit the historical society's updated website at: www.topekahistoricalsociety.com.

Our thanks to the folks at LaGwana Media, and Asher Gingerich, for a marvelous job and a much needed update.



Coming Down the Tracks:



July 17, 2018

Show & Tell

Carry-in Meal, (drink provided)

Sept. 18, 2018

The Trail of Tears

The forced relocation of the Potawatomies

Topeka Area Historical Society Meetings are held
at the Topeka Branch Library - 6:30 PM

Visit us online at: www.topekahistoricalsociety.com

The Mile 146 Quiz:

1. What was Cloe Brown's maiden name?
2. What Brown arrived on the Mayflower?
3. Who was Dr. John Brown's second wife?
4. Where did Edward Brown have his law practice?
5. How many years did Keith Bobeck work for Yoder Farm Services?



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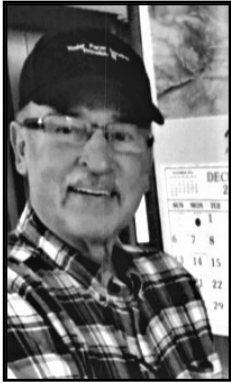
The Hawpatch History Detective

Keith Bobeck

1947 - 2018

It is deep sadness and regret that we report the passing of Topeka Historical Society Board Member, Keith Bobeck who stepped into Eternity on June 4, 2018.

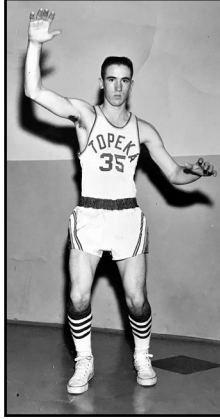
Keith was an outstanding athlete earning high school letters in basketball, cross country, track, and volleyball. He graduated from Topeka High School as a member of the Class of 1965 serving as class president.



After graduation he served a tour of duty in the U.S. Army being stationed in Germany. Following his discharge from the military, Keith worked for 35 years at Yoder Farm Services here in Topeka.

He leaves behind his bride of 48 years, Patce, and three daughters (Kelcie, Tina, Kim), and five grandchildren.

Keith, who possessed a quick wit, a mischievous smile, and never seemed to know a stranger, was greatly loved by everyone in the community. He will certainly be missed.



“I Don’t Want Dad to Find Out”

The year Karl Bobeck purchased this D19 Allis-Chalmers tractor from Seagly Farm Implements in Topeka, Karl was afraid that his father Freeman would find out and be upset over spending money on something that Freeman didn’t think they needed.

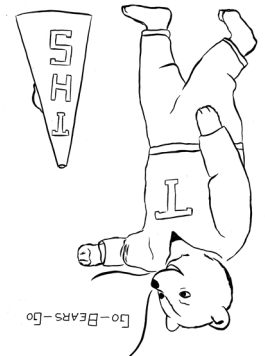
While we don’t know how much Karl actually paid for the tractor, he reportedly told Waldo Seagly, “I don’t want Dad to find out so keep it here at the store until we are ready to use it in the field.”

Unfortunately none of the people involved are with us, so we don’t know what Freeman’s reaction was when the D19 showed up at the farm.

Today the tractor is owned by Craig Helman who grew up near the Bobeck farm. When Keith Bobeck passed away, Craig graciously brought the tractor and parked it outside of the old Honeyville School (now Eden Worship Center) for Keith’s visitation and funeral.

HG

www.topekahistoricalociety.com



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