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A Geographic Interpretation of the Growth and Development of Constantine, Michigan

Mary Jeanne Dowty
Western Michigan University

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A GEOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION OF THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF
CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN

by

Mary Jeanne Dowty

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
April 1967

PREFACE

Several books and articles have been published which have been, in part, devoted to the founding and establishment of Constantine, Michigan. A physical description of the soil and vegetation of Constantine Township is included in several booklets and articles. Primary source materials are available which furnish information about the origin and characteristics of the population of Constantine, Michigan from 1845 to 1960. But no geographical study devoted exclusively to this township has been published. The objective, for this writer, involved interpreting the relationships between the physical landscape and the cultural landscape both past and present.

Whenever differences in accounts were encountered, the writer has presented the variations and given the most reasonable interpretation.

The writer wishes to express her sincere appreciation to many persons who gave assistance and advice in making the writing of this thesis a realization. Thanks go to Dr. George Mallinson, Dean of the Graduate School, Western Michigan University; to Mr. Wayne Mann and

Mrs. Phyllis Burnham, Western Michigan University Archives, who have graciously assisted in locating historical documents; to Mr. Joseph Cox, Editor of the Advertiser Record, Constantine, Michigan for documents and information; to Mr. Fred Davenport, Postmaster, Constantine, Michigan for historical records and documents. The writer wishes to express her sincere appreciation to Dr. Elaine Hurst, biologist, for her advice and assistance in mapping the present vegetation of Constantine Township. She is especially grateful to Dr. Cyril Stout, Dr. F. Stanley Moore, Dr. Eugene Kirchherr, and Dr. Val Eichenlaub, advisors in geography at Western Michigan University, for their patience and advice. There are many others whose assistance was of considerable importance.

Mary Jeanne Dowty

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INTRODUCTION

The village of Constantine, Michigan is located on the St. Joseph River about 55 miles east of Lake Michigan. It is an agricultural community primarily noted for the production of butter and powdered milk. It is also well-known as the home of the Drake Casket Factory.

In its history of over a century and a quarter, this community has engaged in a variety of activities to support its population. When the community was first settled most of the township was abundantly covered with oak-hickory forest.¹ Beech, maple, and walnut trees were also plentiful. Sawmills were built making use of the waterpower available on the Fawn and St. Joseph rivers. Some of the lumber was used for frame dwellings for the growing population. A small amount of walnut lumber was shipped to the eastern markets by way of the St. Joseph River and the Great Lakes.² Although manufacturing of

¹Leslie A. Kenoyer, "Forest Distribution in Southwestern Michigan as Interpreted from the Original Land Survey (1826-32)." Reprinted from Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, XIX (1933), 108.

²"The House of Constantine," Constantine's Catalog and Manual for Woodworkers; Fine Woods from all Over the World Since 1812. New York: Albert Constantine and Sons, Inc., p. 31.

furniture also developed as the settlers cleared their land for farming most of the trees were cut and burned.

In the early 1830's wheat, which was grown as a money crop, was shipped down river to market but by 1835 a prosperous milling industry had been established at Constantine and flour, rather than wheat, was shipped to the eastern markets.

By this date Constantine was beginning to be recognized as a place of promise for many kinds of business and as a commercial center of the county. Steamboats began to run regularly on the St. Joseph River in 1842 and did so until 1850. Constantine was at the head of navigation and therefore served as break-of-bulk point. All the surrounding towns received their freight at Constantine.³

In 1851 transportation patterns were abruptly changed by the introduction of the Michigan Southern Railroad which was built through White Pigeon three miles south of Constantine.

Prior to 1850, population growth of this community was the consequence of the physical characteristics of the township, of historical events which affected all of

³Sue Silliman, St. Joseph in Homespun. Three Rivers: Three Rivers Publishing Company, 1931, p. 49.

southern Michigan, and of the character of the existing population of this township. After 1850 historical events appear to have been responsible for the decline in growth of the community.

Many attempts were made to secure a railroad in order to salvage the shipping industry which had collapsed. The community alternated between agricultural and industrial activities in its efforts to reestablish economic prosperity. At various times, from 1850 to the present, attempts were made to attract industry to the community. Although many industries were short-lived, a few survived.

In this study the major questions for investigation include: what physical conditions contributed to the development of Constantine Township and to the economy of the village? What were the conditions which attracted the population? What was the character of the population? How did the character of the population influence the development of the town? What is the present role of this community in the geography of southwestern Michigan?

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL SETTING

Three factors were directly responsible for the rapid growth of Constantine in the early years of its history. One was a historical factor--the same one that affected all of the southern counties of Michigan in the 1830's--namely, the private entry of land at \$1.25 per acre.⁴ Secondly, the physical conditions influenced the choice of the site and greatly determined the traffic pattern of the area until the introduction of the railroads in 1851. Thirdly, although the physical conditions were very favorable and historical factors instigated early settlement, the character of the population and therefore the choice made by the human factor determined the path the community followed in its development.

To better understand why Constantine became a commercial center of considerable influence, it is helpful to inspect the physical elements that created conditions

⁴History of St. Joseph County, Michigan, with Illustrations, Descriptive of its Scenery, Palatial Residences, Public Buildings, Fine Blocks, and Important Manufactories. Philadelphia: L. H. Everts and Company, 1877, p. 11.

favorable to this development. An account of components of the physical environment--topography, climate, and vegetation--contributes to a better understanding of the success of the early commercial ventures and sheds some light on the succession of events which have occurred in the past century after the decline of the community as a commercial center.

Situation

Constantine Township is located in western St. Joseph County near the border of the state of Indiana and approximately 55 miles east of Lake Michigan (Fig. 1).

Site

The village of Constantine occupies sections 23, 24, 25, and 26 of Constantine Township through which the St. Joseph River flows (Fig. 2).

The most significant feature of the township is the St. Joseph River which enters St. Joseph County at the eastern border of Colon Township (Fig. 1). It then flows northwestward into Leonidas and Mendon townships where it turns to the southwest and passes through Lockport Township and into Constantine Township, making its exit at the south side of Section 32 (Fig. 2).

The village of Constantine was built on the banks of

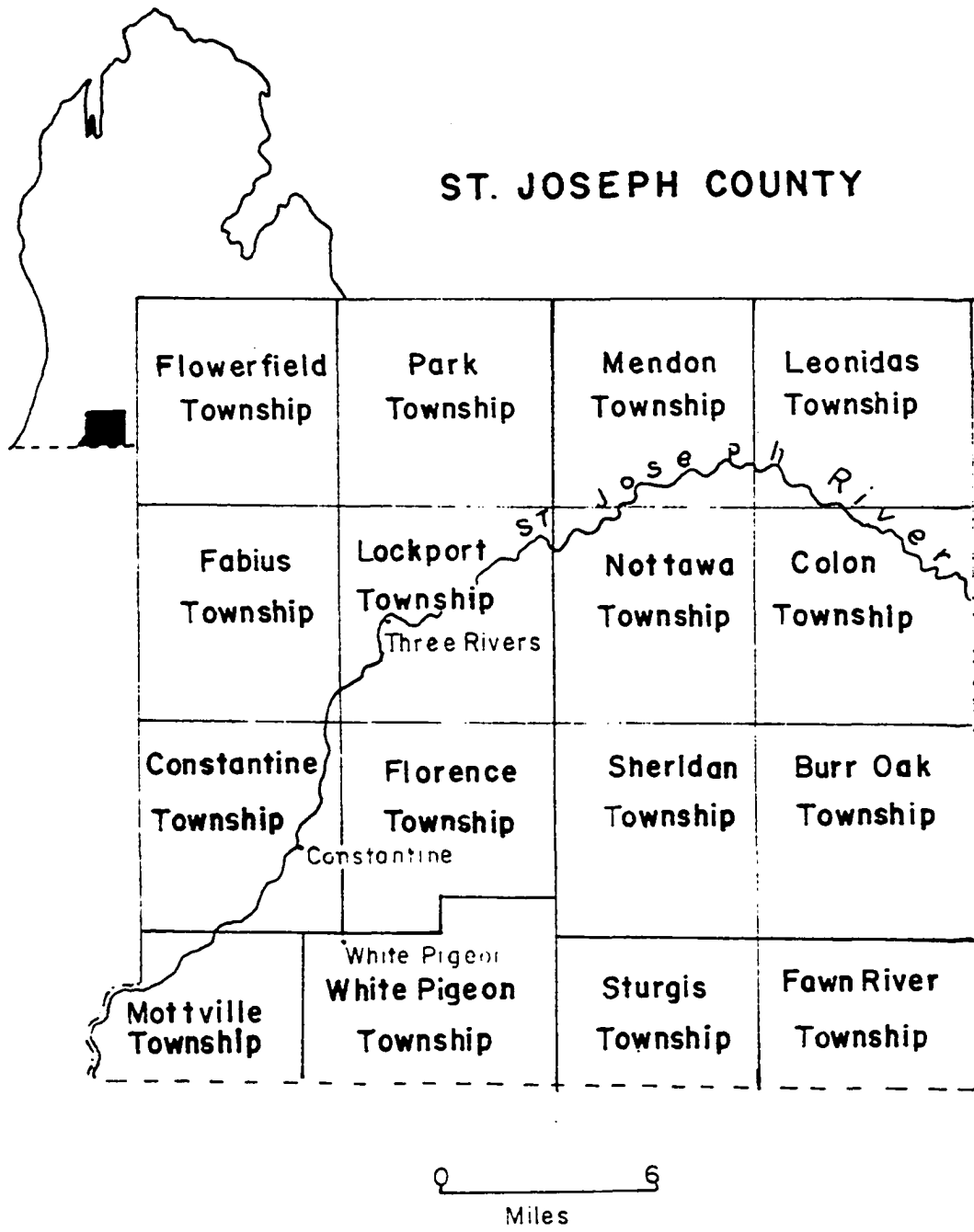


Fig. 1

Constantine Township

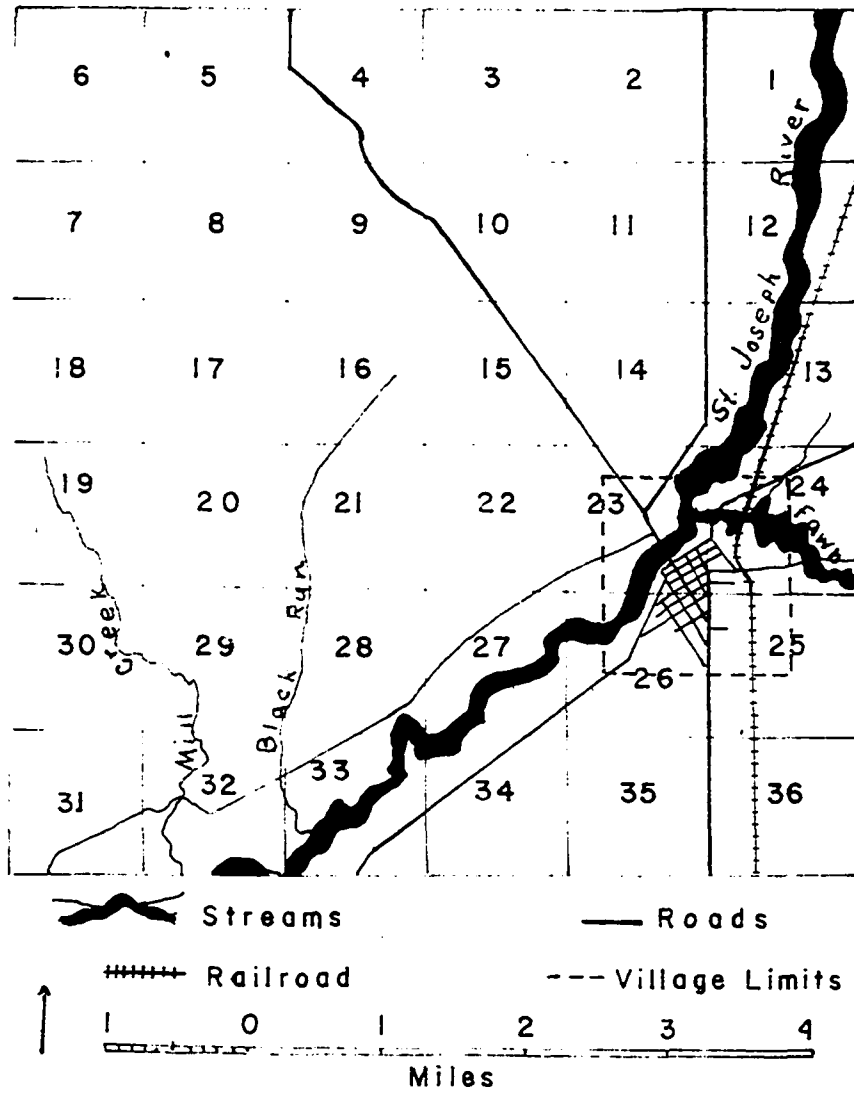


Fig. 2

a meander of the St. Joseph River where, flowing from the north, it makes an abrupt turn to the west-southwest. The river exhibits incised meanders with undercut slopes on the outside of the meander and slip-off slopes on the inside. The village was laid out on the southeast bank of the river on the outside of the meander and extended back beyond the edge of the forest onto the prairie land.

The present business district clusters at the river's edge with Washington Street (U.S. 131) crossing the river to connect the small business district on the north with the main central business district south of the river. Water Street was the original "Main Street." The three-story brick buildings, still standing, were built with their backs to the river (Plate 1). They were built on the undercut slope of the meander with their basements opening onto the very narrow flood plain. Located at the head of navigation on the St. Joseph River in the period of steamboat traffic, Constantine became prominent as a break-of-bulk point. The incoming merchandise was unloaded on the narrow floodplain with easy transfer to the basements of these buildings for storage. From the rear, these century-old buildings with their basements below the front street level rise four stories high, thus testifying to the great amount of river trade once experienced by the village (Plate 1).

PLATE 1



In the rear the buildings
are four stories.



Front of three-story building
first floor on ground level
Water Street

The village retains the original triangular shape although recent expansion is rapidly obscuring the old pattern. One side of the triangle originally paralleled the river with a northeast-southwest orientation; the second side extended north and south from the apex to the banks of the Fawn River; the third side of the triangle ran westerly from the apex to the banks of the St. Joseph River, which, at this point, flows southward (Figs. 3 and 4).

Topography

Existing surface. The surface of Constantine Township south of the St. Joseph River is essentially flat, showing three-to-five feet relief from the southeast corner of the township to within a half-mile of the village. The altitude above sea level of the prairie land south of the village is 810-815 feet. From this altitude the land slopes gently northward to 800 feet just inside the village.

The surface within the village slopes to 780 feet at the river's brink. The surface, over which both the St. Joseph and Fawn rivers flow, maintains an elevation of 800 feet until, at the site of the village, both rivers drop approximately twenty feet.

The surface to the northwest of the river provides

Village of Constantine

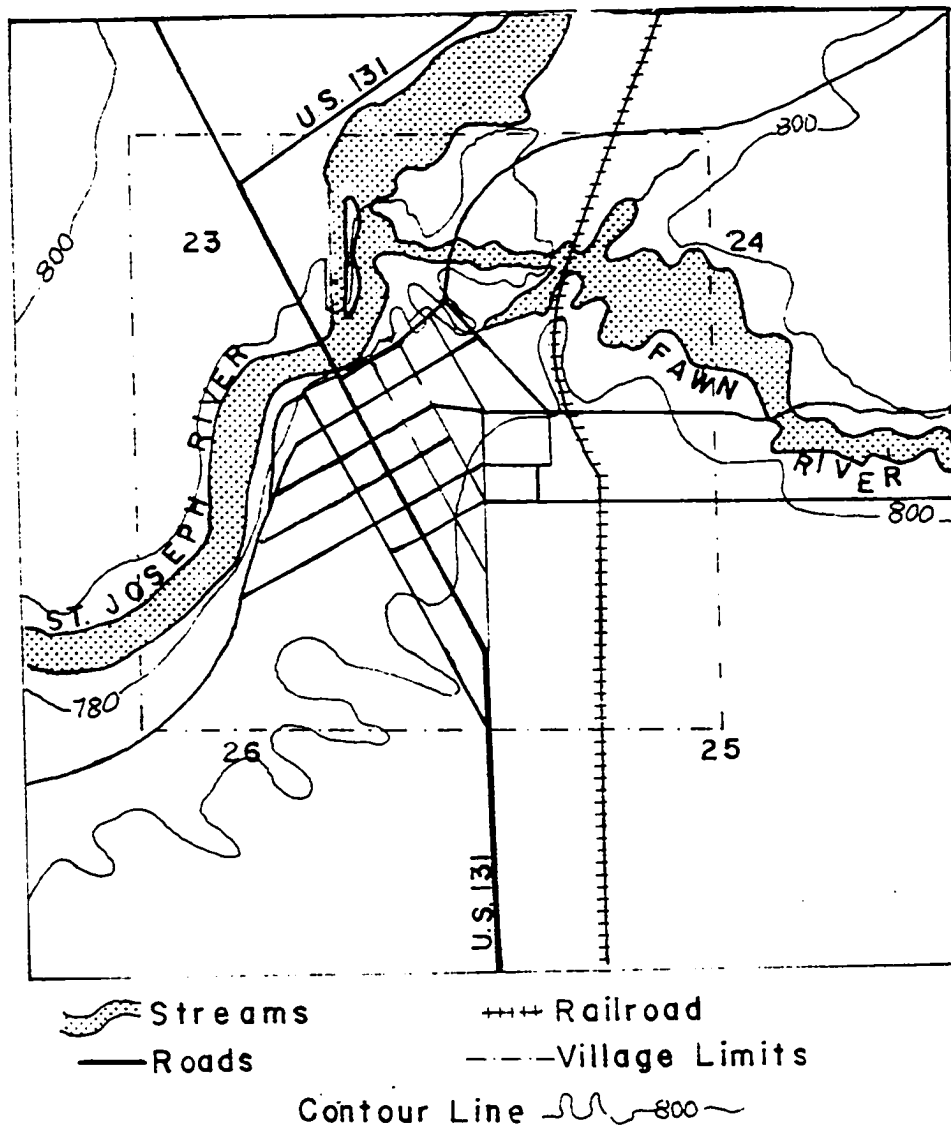


Fig. 3

VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE



Fig. 4: The village of Constantine is located at the confluence of the St. Joseph and Fawn Rivers and occupies sections 23, 24, 25, and 26 of Constantine Township. Aerial Photo from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. U. S. Department of Agriculture.

the only significant relief in the township and displays knob and kettle topography with depressions of swamp and marsh (Fig. 5). From an elevation of 780 feet at the river's edge the land rises to 900 feet in sections 2, 3, 5, and 6. Drainage is to the south by way of Mill Creek and Black Run. Mill Creek originates in the marsh located in the moraine in sections 3,4, and 8 and drains southwestward then southeastward into the St. Joseph River (Fig. 5). Black Run originates in the marsh land on the outwash plain in sections 16 and 21 and drains to the south into the St. Joseph River.

Influence of glaciation. A brief resumé of the glacial action will aid in the interpretation of the present topography and better show the origin of the four streams in the area.

The drainage pattern in Constantine Township is the result of the action of the Wisconsin Ice Sheet which advanced to its southern limit in Indiana to the south about 75,000 years B.P.* and retreated entirely about 11,000 B.P. As the ice sheet retreated into Michigan the fronts of the Saginaw and Erie lobes retreated northward and eastward. The Lake Michigan Lobe probably advanced

* Before Present.

CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP

REPRESENTED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DIVISION

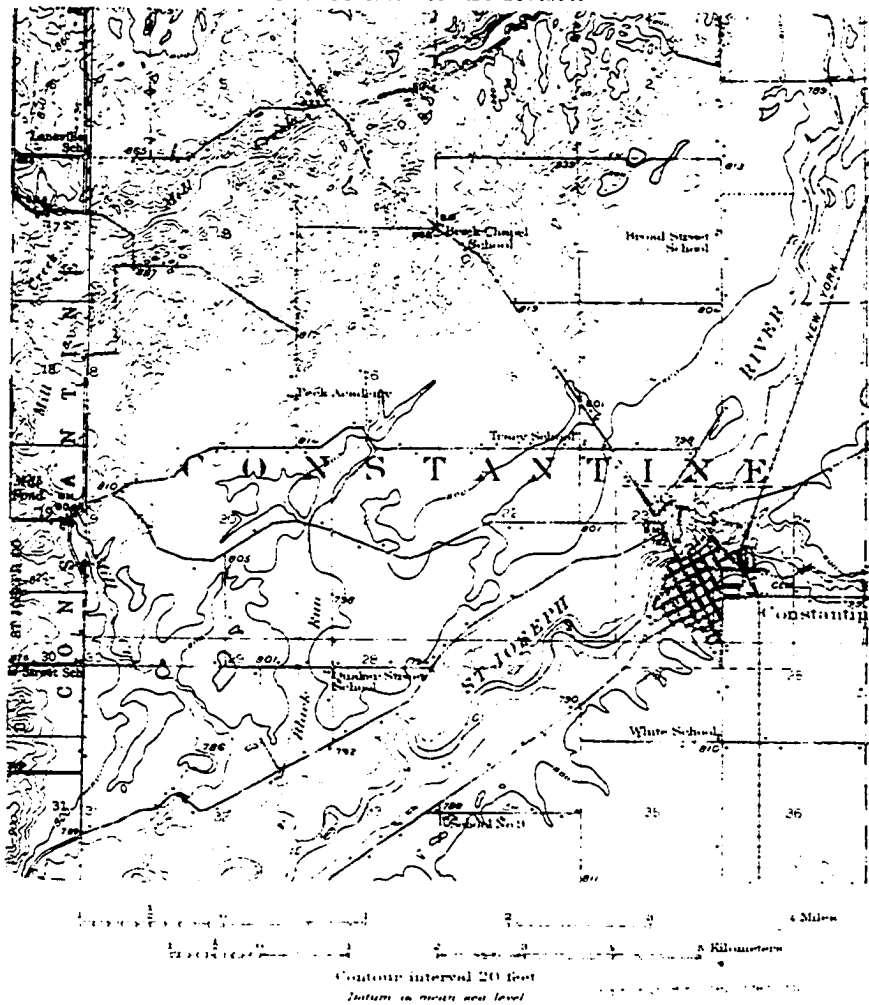


Fig. 5

southeastward after the Saginaw Lobe had retreated resulting in the formation of a large glacial drainageway in St. Joseph, Branch, and Kalamazoo counties.⁵ The Lake Michigan Lobe then retreated northwestward.

The ice sheet may have retreated into Michigan at the point where the St. Joseph River system passes into Indiana. Martin, in her study of Branch County, suggests that the Fawn River, tributary to the St. Joseph, was initiated when the ice was in advance in Indiana.⁶ The Fawn River, fed by the meltwater, flowed in front of the Saginaw and Erie lobes when they halted at a point west of Sturgis. At this time deposition of the Sturgis Moraines took place and the meltwater spread outwash as far as the St. Joseph River in Constantine Township (Fig. 6). Drift deposits at this place are as much as 136 feet thick.⁷

⁵Helen Martin, Map of the Surface Formation of the Southern Peninsula of Michigan. Department of Conservation, Geological Survey Division, Publication 49, 1955.

⁶Helen Martin, Outline of the Geologic History of Branch County. Department of Conservation, Geological Survey Division, 1958, p. 7.

⁷Frank Leverett and Frank B. Taylor, The Pleistocene of Indiana and Michigan and the History of the Great Lakes. Washington: United States Geological Survey, p. 150.

Surface Formations of Constantine Township

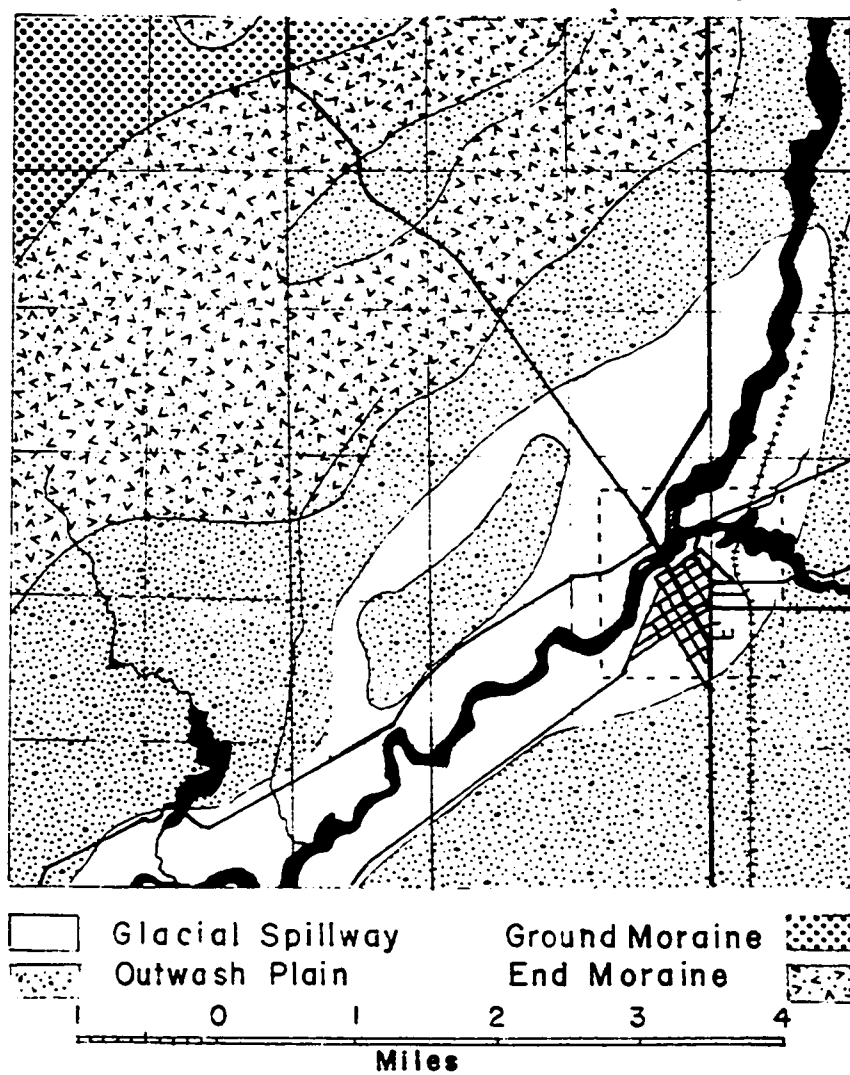


Fig. 6

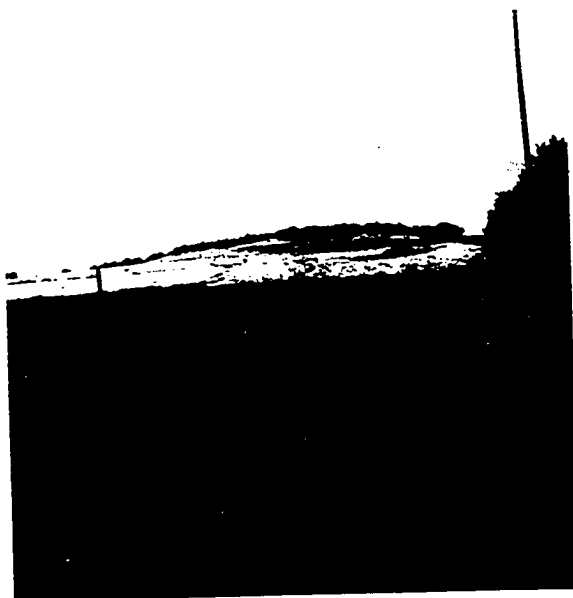
The St. Joseph River flowed in front of the Lake Michigan Lobe fed by the meltwater of both the Lake Michigan and Saginaw lobes as the ice melted rapidly during the retreat of the glacier. The river flowed southwestward to the present bend of the St. Joseph River near South Bend, Indiana. From this point the discharge was down the Kankakee River to the Illinois River and then to the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico.⁸

The moraine north and west of the St. Joseph River is evidence of an equilibrium of advance and retreat of the Lake Michigan Lobe at this period. The meltwater from this glacier carried sands and gravels beyond the moraine forming the outwash plain to the northwest of the river (Fig.6). This area is flat and much of it is poorly drained. Black Run originates in the swamp on the outwash and drains southward to the St. Joseph River (Fig.5). Northwest of the moraine are sandy undulating tracts whose surfaces are more rolling than the outwash plain and in which there are knolls as well as basins (Plate 2). This till plain was probably produced during the retreat of the ice across it instead of by outwash from the moraine.⁹ Mill Creek originates in the swampy

⁸Ibid., p. 151.

⁹Ibid., p. 194.

PLATE 2



Sandy tracts more rolling
than outwash plain.

depressions and drains southward to the St. Joseph River. Some of this land at present is part of the State Game Area (Plate 3). Some of this area contains abandoned farms; much of the land is idle and some of it is in woods now going through vegetative succession.

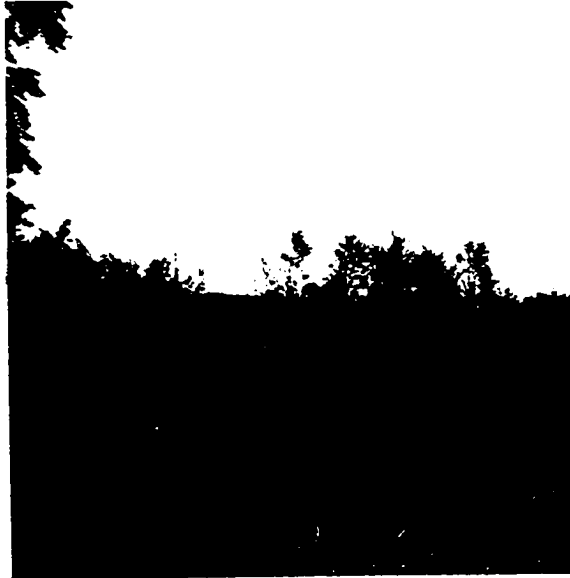
The meltwater from the Erie and Saginaw lobes formed the Coldwater River which joined the St. Joseph becoming the headwaters of the latter. Meltwater was also pouring into the St. Joseph system from the north. At this time drainage from Glacial Lake Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo River was southward into the St. Joseph River.¹⁰ This accounts for the wide valley many times too large for the river which presently flows in the St. Joseph channel. This probably also accounts for the greater depth of the St. Joseph River below Constantine which was effective in enabling navigation to take place to that point upstream and in the development of the village.

Climate

The only available weather data for the Constantine area have been recorded at Three Rivers about ten miles

¹⁰Helen Martin, Outline of the Geologic History of Kalamazoo County. Michigan Department of Conservation, Geological Survey Division, 1957, p. 11.

PLATE 3



Views in the State
Game Area

north of Constantine.¹¹ The station was established in 1895 and first located at the Three Rivers Library. The station was closed in 1899 and not reopened until 1927 when it was relocated at the Hydro Electric Plant about 3.5 miles northeast of Centreville. It was subsequently located at the Three Rivers City Waterworks, one-half mile southeast of the Three Rivers Post Office, then at the Armstrong Machine Works in 1942, and in 1956 at the Sewage Treatment Plant 1.3 miles south-southeast of the Three Rivers Post Office.

Summer temperatures average twenty-two days of 90°F or higher. About one summer out of three has days of 100°F. Winters average five days with temperature of zero or lower. One out of eight winters does not have a temperature as low as zero. The average dates of the last freezing temperature in the spring and the first freezing temperature in the fall are May 8 and October 9 respectively.

Precipitation is heaviest during the growing season, averaging 61 per cent of the annual total during the six months of April through September.

Cloudiness is greatest in the late fall and early

¹¹United States Weather Bureau in cooperation with Michigan Weather Services. Climatological Summary, No. 220-20. Weather Bureau Office, East Lansing, Michigan.

winter. This condition is augmented by the cold air passing over Lake Michigan during this time of the year and picking up warmth and moisture which causes instability of the air in the lower levels, rising air currents, and condensation causing cloudiness.

The prevailing wind direction in the Constantine area is southwest. Average velocity is highest in March with 12.8 miles per hour and lowest in July and August with 1.14 miles per hour.¹²

According to the scheme of classification by Trewartha, Constantine is located in the Dfa climate.¹³

Soils of Constantine Township

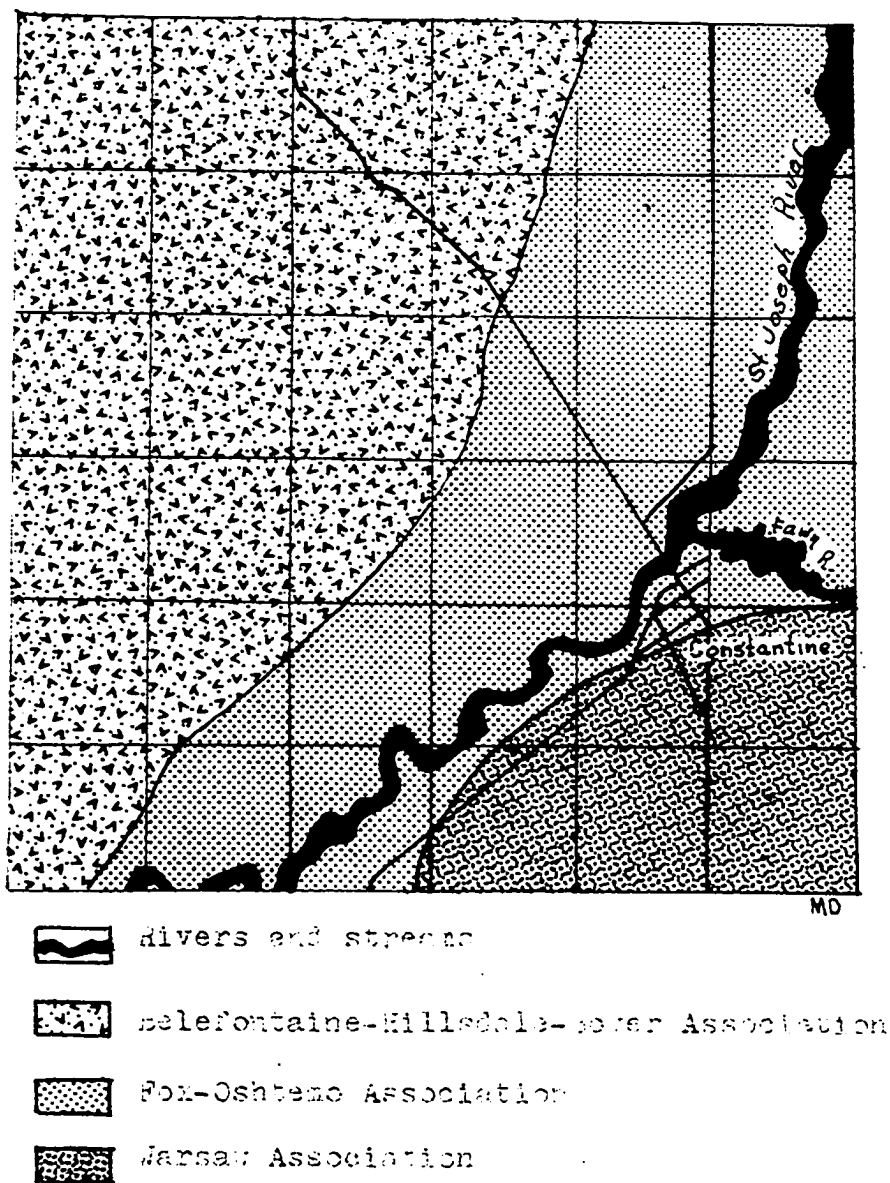
Constantine Township is located in the region of gray-brown podzolic zonal soils. There are three soil associations within the area, namely, (1) the Belefontaine-Hillsdale-Boyer, (2) the Fox-Oshtemo, and (3) the Warsaw (Fig. 7). Each has certain differentiating characteristics as the result of parent material,

¹²Climatological Summary, No. 220-20. Wind data are from South Bend, Indiana records which are representative of the area, according to A. H. Eichmeier, former State Climatologist, Weather Bureau Office, East Lansing, Michigan.

¹³Glenn T. Trewartha, "Climates of the Earth," Goode's World Atlas, edited by Edward B. Espenshade, Jr. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964, p. 8.

Fig. 7

GENERALIZED SOIL ASSOCIATIONS
OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP



Source: Major Michigan Soil Associations Map
by I.F. Schneider and E.P. Whiteside, Soil Science
Department, Michigan State University.

topography, relief, drainage, and vegetation.^{14, 15}

The Belefontaine-Hillsdale-Boyer is a complex association located principally on the rolling to rough terrain of the recessional moraine in the northwestern part of the township (Fig. 7). It is composed of slightly acid sandy loams and light loams, stony in places, with sandy and stony subsoils. Optimum uses of these soils include orchard, pasture, hay, forest, some small grains, or recreation.

The Fox-Oshtemo association, located on the level or pitted plains, terraces and old beach ridges of the glacial spillway, is a complex of light brown, brown sandy, and loam soils over sandy and gravelly clay substratum (Figs. 6, 7). Muck lands occupy spots nearer the present St. Joseph and Fawn rivers. The major original cover was the oak-hickory forest, hence a rather acidic condition best adapted to general farming, orchards, small fruit and truck crops. Such use is somewhat limited by the rather low natural fertility of the soil.

¹⁴J. O. Veatch, Agricultural Land Classification and Land Types of Michigan. Special Bulletin No. 231. East Lansing: Michigan State College, April 1933, pp. 18-25.

¹⁵Ivan F. Schneider, Types of Farming in Michigan. Special Bulletin No. 206, second revision. East Lansing: Michigan State College, September 1954, pp. 78 and map.

The third soil association, the Warsaw, is the dark brown sandy loam, loam and silt over the yellowish brown or reddish brown sandy loam or gritty clay substratum of dry stratified sand and gravel. These soils are located in the southeast corner of the township (Fig. 7). The original flora was grass prairie with scattered trees, chiefly burr oak. The level terrain and productivity of this association lends itself to small grains, hays, truck crops, and corn. Irrigation is sometimes necessary due to the droughty condition of the soil. The lack of moisture-holding capacity is a factor in the reducing of crop yields in some years.

Vegetation

Original survey. When the original land survey of the counties of southwestern Michigan was made between 1826-1832, the surveyor blazed two trees at each section corner and midway between on each section boundary line. He stated in his notes the kind, size, and location of the trees with reference to his stakes. When the records of these species are plotted on a county map, an outline of the area that was at that time occupied by each plant association can be delimited.

Using maps constructed from the original surveys, Kenoyer found that present vegetation, in terms of plant

associations, in Kalamazoo County, was essentially the same as in the period of early settlement.¹⁶ Using his study of Kalamazoo County as a basis, further work convinced him that studying the original survey records could establish very accurately the plant distribution at the time of settlement. In St. Joseph County these maps showed 76.5 per cent of the vegetation was made up of the oak-hickory association. The remaining vegetation included 11.5 per cent dry prairie, 7.0 per cent swamp, and 5.0 per cent beech-maple.

This study shows in Constantine Township approximately the same percentage distribution of vegetation associations as shown by Kenoyer.

A study of the relationship of vegetation to the site is very enlightening. Kenoyer stated that the oak-hickory complex was associated with the outwash plains.¹⁷ A comparison of the Constantine Township portion of his Forest Association Map of Southwestern Michigan with a generalized surface map based on Helen Martin's Map of the Surface Formation of the Southern Peninsula indicates

¹⁶Leslie A. Kenoyer, Forest Distribution in Southwestern Michigan as Interpreted from the Original Land Survey (1826-1832). Reprinted from Paper of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, Vol. XIX (1933). Published 1934.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 108.

that the oak-hickory association also extended onto the till plain and moraines (Figs. 6, 8). It is likely that this association was quite extensive. St. Joseph County has a greater amount of outwash plain than any other county of Michigan. To this may be added the sites on the till plains and moraines thus giving considerable oak-hickory forest. Also on the outwash plain of Constantine Township was the prairie vegetation with sparsely spaced burr oak trees. In many instances they were so far apart that the surveyor located the section corner not by reference to trees but by means of a stake driven into a mound raised in the prairie.

Present vegetation. Constantine Township is, at the present time, abundantly blessed with trees. While the oak-hickory association is still evident, maple trees predominate along the roads. The village streets are lined with maple trees planted by the first settlers. In the old pioneer cemetery five or six of the huge old oak trees can still be seen. Both virgin oak and hickory trees are growing in the cemetery east of the village.

Black walnut trees grow along many country roads in the southern part of the township. Walnut trees are observed with the oak-hickory along both sides of the St. Joseph River and along Quaker Street in sections 20, 21, and 22. They are found at the edge of the forest

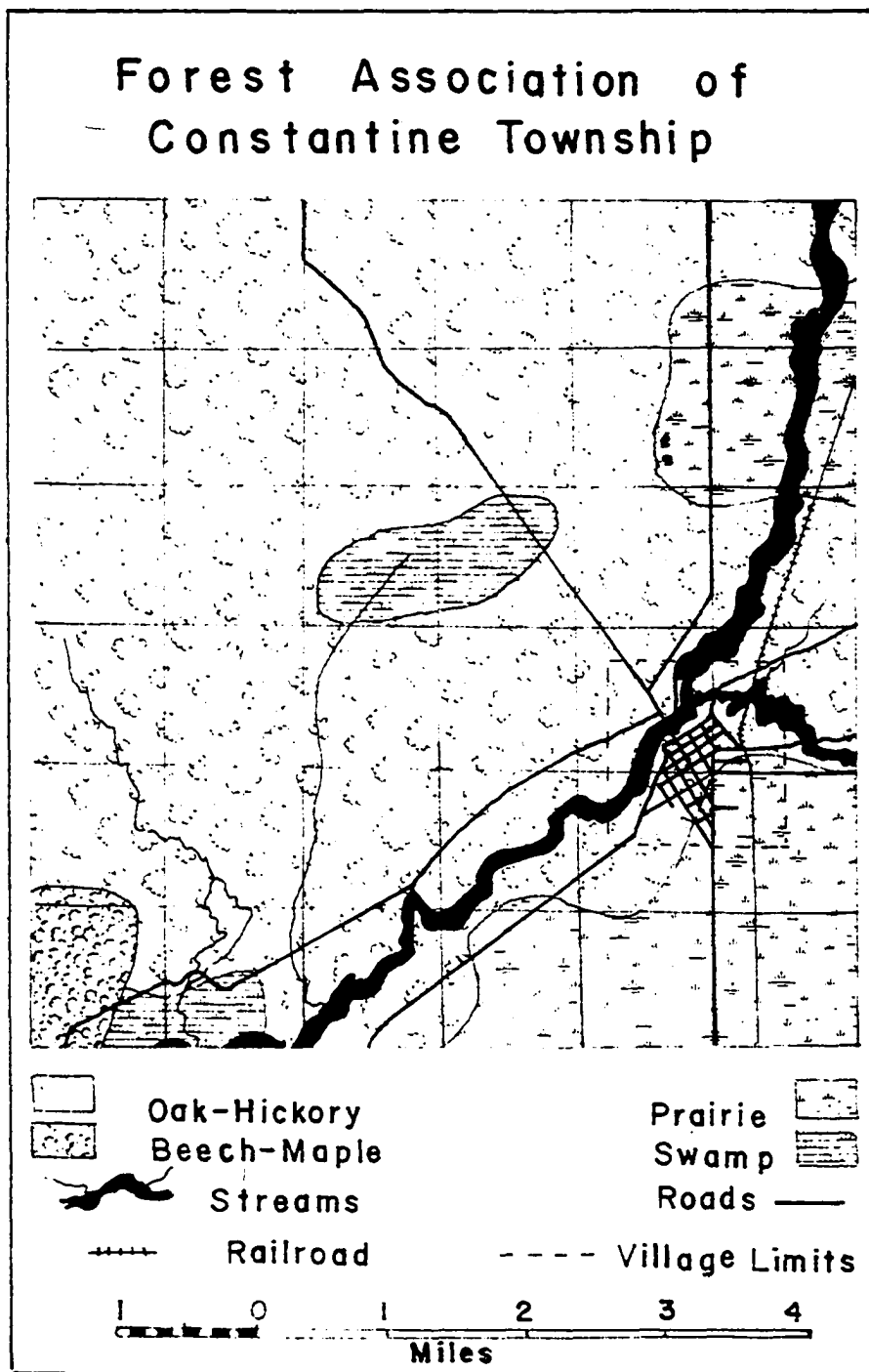


Fig. 8

associations on the south and also on the north in Section 2.

Almost the entire present forest cover is second growth. Much of the land in the northwest portion of the township was cleared of the original forest and then abandoned so that it is now covered with second-growth.

The general pattern of the land usage indicates that the land was cleared some distance from the road, which many times followed the section line. The farmsteads were built near the roads with farm land extending to the rear and on each side. In the back part of the farm, land near the center portion of each section contains the wood lot. The woods are not generally more than one-half mile from the road.

Prairie land is located on the northeast portion of the township and on the entire southeast quarter (Fig. 8). Sections 11 and 12 are flat prairie land. The vegetation association was noted by Kenoyer from the original survey records. The old oak-openings were the sites of the first farms in the township and were among the finest and most productive. The prairie extends into sections 13 and 14 and is presently used to grow corn and wheat. The prairie land in sections 35 and 36 is almost entirely devoted to corn and wheat with a few farmers raising beef cattle and hogs. One farmer raises trotting horses and

specializes in milk goats. The western portion of Section 35 is presently growing fruit including strawberries, apples, cherries, raspberries, and grapes. An extensive sprinkling system has been installed in the strawberry field as an insurance against drought at critical periods.

The farms of the township appear to be prosperous with the exceptions of those in the northwest corner. In this portion of the township is idle land. Abandoned farms and homesteads are there. In some places only the houses are unused. These farms may have been added to the neighboring acreage. Some land has been converted to State Game Area. Grazing land is abundant in the northern part of the township. Much of the flat land has a cover crop, such as clover. In the area being used as State Game Area, cover crop for game has been planted by the Conservation Department (Plate 4).

Summary of Physical Geography

The Village of Constantine is located at the confluence of the St. Joseph and Fawn rivers in Constantine Township, St. Joseph County, near the border of the state of Indiana. The St. Joseph River, which flows through the township from the northeast to the southwest, was a controlling factor in the development of the village. Constantine was located at the head of navigation thus a

PLATE 4



Lespedeza Meadow, winter game cover.
(Planted by Conservation Department)

prosperous river trade was developed which instigated the growth of the village.

Three major surface formations of the township are all the result of the Wisconsin glacier which advanced and retreated over the state. These are recessional moraine, glacial spillway, and prairie lands of the township which are the result of the deposition and erosion of the surface materials during the advance and retreat of the Wisconsin glacier.

The site of each of the three soil associations are closely related to the glacial features. The Belefontaine-Hillsdale-Boyer Association is located on the recessional moraine, the Fox-Oshtemo is on the spillway, and the Warsaw is related to the outwash plains south of the St. Joseph River. Each has its own optimum use determined largely by surface, mineral content, and moisture-holding capacity. The original vegetative cover was adapted to each of the soil associations. The Belefontaine-Hillsdale-Boyer had chiefly the oak-hickory complex. The Fox-Oshtemo cover was mainly oak-hickory with spots of muck. The Warsaw was the site of the grass with scattered trees, mostly burr oak.

The climate of the township limits the type of crops produced. The average annual temperature of the township is approximately 49.8°F. with the mean monthly

temperatures ranging from 73.3°F in July to 26.3°F in January.¹⁸ The cold winters and long hot summers together with the better soils produced the beautiful hardwood forests of oak-hickory and beech-maple which were abundant in most of the township when it was originally settled by the white man. The average annual precipitation is 35.5 inches a year. The soils with good moisture-holding capacity produced the forests while the soils with a lack of moisture-holding capacity produced grass prairie.

¹⁸"Three Rivers, Michigan," Climate of Michigan by Stations. East Lansing: Michigan Weather Service, February 1963.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTANTINE

The physical conditions of Constantine Township influenced the choice of the site of the village and influenced the traffic pattern involving the surrounding area when this community was first settled. Although the physical conditions, as previously noted, were favorable in the early history of the village the situation changed with the advancement of technology. To understand why Constantine became a commercial center of some influence but failed to keep pace with neighboring centers it is helpful to examine the historical factors. The historical factors include those events beyond the control of the inhabitants as well as those resulting from their choices and decisions. (Many of the events were, therefore, controlled by the character of the population.)

The history of Constantine has been divided into periods corresponding with the various stages of development of the town. Very seldom does one period end and another begin at a certain date which results in a certain amount of overlapping. Thus the divisions have been named for major events in the development of the village

instead of actual dates. Dates have been selected, arbitrarily, in order to interpret the relationship of the history with the data in the various period of population growth treated in Chapter III.

The first historical factor that contributed to the settlement of Constantine is related to the availability and private entry of land in southwestern Michigan. The land in St. Joseph County was surveyed into townships in 1825-26 and subdivided into sections in 1827.¹ The legislative council of the Territory of Michigan established the county of St. Joseph on October 29, 1829. When the private entry of land was established at the Land Office located at Monroe and the price of the land was reduced to \$1.25 an acre settlers began moving into the territory. Two other historical factors were important in the rapid settlement of southwestern Michigan. One was the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, thus giving better transportation for the population from New York and New England. The other was the beginning of the construction of the Chicago Road in 1821. The road was completed ten years later. This road followed the old Sauk Trail, or Pottawattomie Trail, from Detroit to

¹History of St. Joseph County, Michigan, 1877,
p. 18.

Chicago. It passed through what are now Wayne, Ypsilanti, Jonesville, Coldwater, Sturgis, and White Pigeon, but went three miles south of Constantine. It was a turnpike in that day and, although it did not pass through Constantine, it greatly aided the settlers in their trip from Detroit. This old Chicago Road is now known as U.S. 12.

The Period of Meek's Mill

Judge William Meek. In 1828 Judge William Meek came from Wayne County, Ohio to the White Pigeon Prairie seeking a suitable location on which to settle. He was directed to the confluence of the Fawn and St. Joseph rivers. He found excellent water power possibilities where the Fawn River now drops nearly twenty feet in less than one-half mile before entering the St. Joseph River.

Meek's holdings. According to the certificate of the register of the Land Office at Monroe, William Meek purchased the southeast fraction 1/4 of Sec. 23 in T7S, R12W, containing nearly 121 acres of land.² The deed was

²U. S. Government, Territory of Michigan. Land Patent of William Meek of land in T7S/R12W. Registered at Monroe, Michigan Territory and signed by Andrew Jackson, President of the United States, 1830. Available in Western Michigan University Archives.

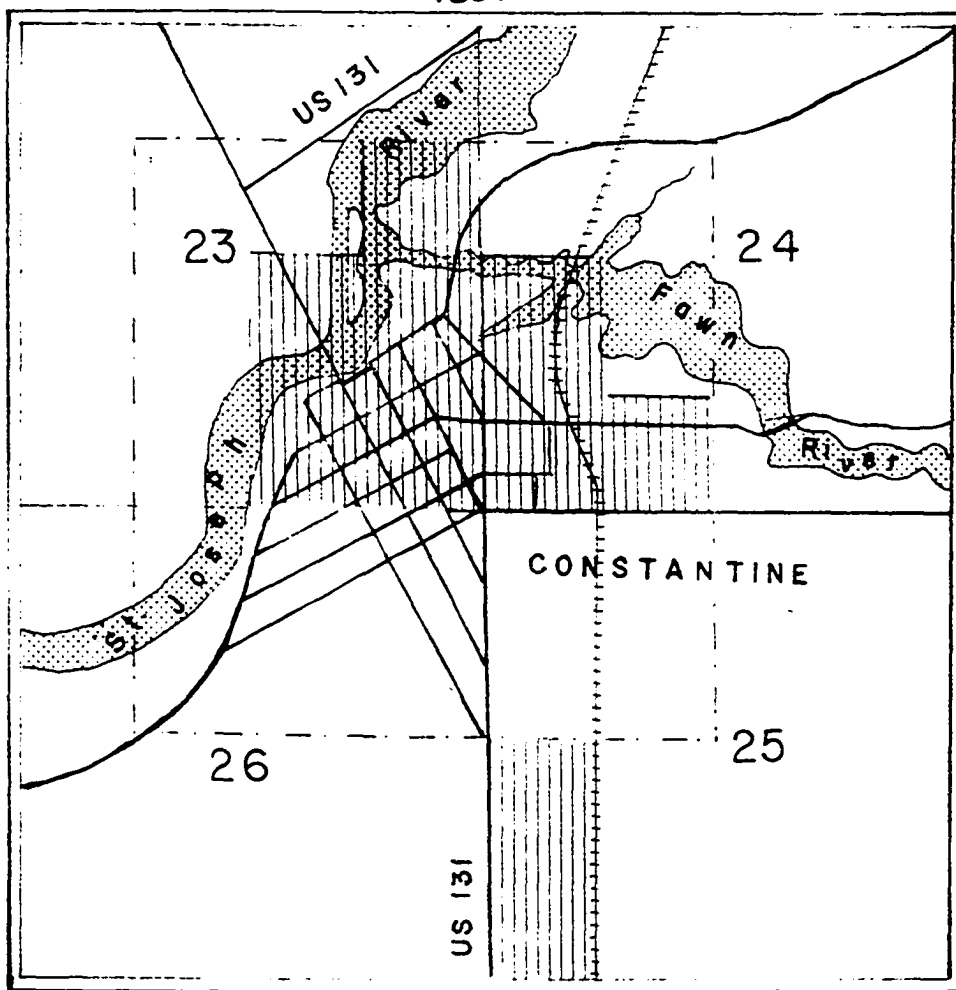
signed by Andrew Jackson on November 10, 1830. Early pioneer history discloses that Judge Meek purchased additional land within this area.³ On June 15, 1829, William Meek is reported to have entered the SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Sec. 23 and the SE 1/4 of Sec. 23. The following day another entry was made by him for the W 1/2 of the NW 1/4 of Sec. 36. Twenty-five other entries were recorded in the township that same year. On the land he had purchased, William Meek platted the village which for many years was known as Meek's Mills (Fig. 9).






Although Judge Meek chose as his mill site the confluence of the Fawn and St. Joseph rivers, he delayed building until at least the winter of 1829-30. During the first year of residence he cleared and plowed a few acres of his farm, the first in the township to be cultivated. He built a log house on the south bank of the St. Joseph River. After his land was cleared for farming he built a grist mill on Fawn River, or Crooked Creek as it was sometimes called.

Before the mill was completed, a dam and water wheel were built using local materials. The dam was a crude affair with sills of large logs secured from the local forest. These were sunk across the Fawn River. Brush

³History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 113.

Meek's Holdings 1830



-  Streams
-  Roads
-  Meek's Holdings
-  Railroad
-  Present Boundary of Constantine

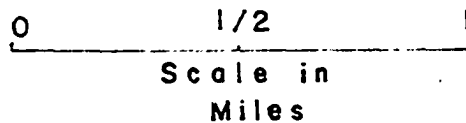


Fig. 9

and straw were thrown in above the mud sills, raising the water about eighteen inches forming sufficient head to turn the undershot wheel. The wheel was six feet in diameter and about eighteen inches wide. The wheel-shaft was a hewed log with arms mortised into it. The gudgeons were of wood, banded with iron that once served as tires of wagon wheels. The bedstone was a flat boulder, about two feet in diameter, that was found in the river (an erratic deposited by the glacier). The runner was made of a similar rock also found in the vicinity. The cog wheels, by which the mill stones were driven, were entirely of wood. When power was not needed a log was floated under the water-wheel to stop its turning. The log was removed when power was required.⁴

Meeks Mill became a service center. Meeks Mill became the service center for the surrounding community. Evidence that the mill was in operation in 1830, before other localities provided their own service, is indicated by the statements of two pioneers given to the historian of 1877.⁵ William Hazzard, of Centreville, told that he had carried his grists to this mill in 1830. Lewis

⁴Ibid., p. 21.

⁵Ibid.

Rhodes, who was then living on the White Pigeon Prairie, said that he went to Meek's mill in the fall of 1830 before Newton's mill, in his vicinity, started operating.

Further evidence is given, in the Michigan Pioneer Collection, that Meek's mill served an area at least fifty miles distant.⁶ In 1831 Enos Northrup took his first Michigan harvest of twenty-two bushels of grist to the nearest mill, which was Meek's, fifty miles distant. With two yoke of oxen he forded the Kalamazoo, Portage and St. Joseph rivers following an Indian trail to the mill.

Improvements and saw-mill. The next season, 1831, Judge Meek began a permanent improvement of his water-power by building a more substantial dam across the Fawn River and digging a mill race to take the water to the south bank of the St. Joseph where he built a small saw-mill. The saw-mill was put into operation in the summer of 1831.⁷

First store and school. To serve the community, Niles Smith opened a little frame store on the bank of the

⁶Sue Silliman, St. Joseph in Homespun. Three Rivers: Three Rivers Publishing Company, 1931, p. 126-27.

⁷History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 21.

river. Its site was at the south end of the present bridge. The basement faced the river while the first story opened out onto the ground-level in the front. In the winter of 1830-31 Thomas Charlton, a clerk in Smith's store, presided over the village's first school in the basement of that building. The room was gloomy, with one small window. The benches were split logs called puncheons, with sticks for legs. The desks were rough counters nailed against the walls. Next door to the store, on the corner of Washington and Water streets, was the Smith residence which later was used as a hotel.

Meek surveyed and platted village. In August, 1831, Judge Meek surveyed and laid out the village which was known as Meeks Mill. There were five families living within the surveyed area.⁸ For many years the village continued to be known locally as Meeks Mill although its official name was Constantine. The acceptance of this dignified name is said to have been seriously delayed by the jealousy of the nearby settlement of White Pigeon.⁹ Perhaps this jealousy also retarded the early growth of

⁸Cutler, History of St. Joseph County, Michigan, Vol. 1. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1911, p. 168.

⁹Ibid., p. 189.

the village as well. Many immigrants from the east who came to White Pigeon in their search for Constantine would be on the point of returning before they were directed to Meeks Mill. Immigrants were in possession of a gazeteer portraying the settlement as illustrated by:

A traveler in search of Constantine in the flush days of 1836 had an elaborate, lithographic ground-plan of the village, which on bond paper appeared to be "no mean city" like Tarsus of Apostolic days; but when the looker for corner lots and speculative investments arrived in the center of the city of his dreams, he was still in the woods, and its greatness was still in the keeping of its inhabitants, and its life lay all before it.¹⁰

Naming of the village. Historical data differ regarding the naming of the village. Niles F. Smith is credited with naming the village "Constantine." Some accounts state that he named the village after a friend.¹¹ According to another account the village was named after Margaret Constantine, whose husband, John, was founder of the Albert Constantine and Son Company of New York. John Constantine was a woodworker. He had come to this community in search of the fine walnut lumber available in the area.¹² But according to the family history, "The

¹⁰History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 116.

¹¹Knorr, Reg and Morrison, H. C. The Story of Constantine. Constantine: The Advertiser Record (1958), p. 5.

¹²"How was Constantine Named Constantine?" Three Rivers Commercial, August 23, 1962, p. 6.

House of Constantine," the founder of the town of Constantine was Thomas Constantine, who was supposed to have moved to Paw Paw, Michigan after leaving his name on the village, then known as Meeks Mill.¹³

The present Margaret Constantine believes that the founder of the town of Constantine was Thomas Constantine, who lived in the village during its early history and sold real estate. He left this vicinity under rather strange circumstances. The following is a letter written to a cousin who also had been inquiring about the family history and the naming of Constantine.

It was not Levi it was his father Thomas who founded the town of Constantine. He was in the Real Estate business, he and his partner sold the lots and were very successful, had money in the bank. Just at the height of their success his partner announced that he was going on a business trip; after he had gone Thomas discovered that all the money had been drawn out of the bank. He took his gun and went after him. In about a month he found him but all the money was gone. As the story goes, Thomas found good use for his gun and he immediately packed up all his belongings and with his one daughter and five sons, Thomas, Levi, John, Robert, and Andrew, came to New York¹⁴ . . and started the firm of Constantine and Company.

¹³"The House of Constantine," Constantine's Catalog and Manual for Woodworkers: Fine Woods from All Over the World Since 1812. New York: Albert Constantine and Son, Inc., p. 3.

¹⁴Letter written by Margaret Constantine, Trent House, New Bern, North Carolina, to Eleanor (Mrs. Remsen) Schenck, Greenacres City, Florida, March 10, 1950. Available in the Governor Barry Museum, Constantine, Michigan.

There is no record available of a Mr. Constantine owning property in the village. The Constantine name does not appear on any of the early tax records. The name of the partner of Thomas Constantine is not known. If the Albert Constantine and Son, Inc. was established in 1812 as their catalog implies it could not have been established after the family moved from Constantine back to New York and their claim of being the founders of the town is fictitious.

Freeze-up causes lack of power. The winter of 1831 was very cold and the St. Joseph and Fawn rivers froze solid thereby cutting off the source of power for the mills. A shingle mill had been built adjoining Meek's saw-mill but could not be put into operation because of the freeze-up. Lumber and shingles were not available nor was wheat flour to be had in the area. Without the mills in operation the pioneers had to prepare cornmeal with the "pioneer mill" and grind the buckwheat in coffee-mills. The coffee-mill was commonly used for this purpose by the earlier settlers before Meek's mill was in operation. Another device for grinding grain was called the "pioneer mill." It consisted of a block of wood or a stump of a tree with a hole rounded and smoothed into which grain was poured and ground to meal by means of a pestle attached to a spring-pole. Sometimes the pioneer women

produced corn meal by rubbing ears of corn on the bottom of a tin pan perforated with holes, the rough edges of the perforations forming the grater surface. Other mills were in operation in the county by this date. For example wheat flour was supplied by the Newton mill on White Pigeon Prairie, the Bliss mill on Pigeon Creek, and Beadle's mill in Flowerfield which operated during the freeze-up.

Baptist Church Society, schoolhouse, and school pond. In 1832 the people of the village and the Baptist Church Society, jointly, built a frame building to be used for general religious meetings until churches were built. Directly across the street to the south of the school building was a depression that in the early days was filled with water. This was known as the school pond which has been filled with dirt by the erosion of the banks of the pond and is now the village park. At one time a large bandstand of concrete blocks stood near the huge Civil War cannon at the south end of the park but it outlived its usefulness and was removed.

First roads. Prior to 1830 the settlers used trails for travel. The first roads were surveyed and built by White Pigeon authorities. In September of that year a road was surveyed from White Pigeon. It began at the north border

of the Chicago Road and followed the boundary between Ranges 11 and 12. That same fall a road following the line between townships 7 and 8 was built to the Chicago Road-St. Joseph River crossing at Mottville. The next summer a road "beginning at the northwest border of the St. Joseph river nearly opposite Meek's mill, at a thorn tree, and from thence runs north and northwest to west boundary of St. Joseph county, six miles, fifty chains and thirteen links" was surveyed by the highway commissioners.¹⁵ This road now is known as the Youngs Prairie Road. The summer of 1831 also was the date when the road to Mottville was surveyed and built south of the river. This is the present Riverside Drive, County Road #13. In the fall of 1832 the road from Youngs Prairie to Mottville was laid out. This is probably the north river road although it could be county road #12 or #14.

A confusing statement has been noted in the record regarding the road which is now U.S. 131 north of Constantine. The record states: "May 5, 1833, a road was surveyed from the north boundary of White Pigeon township south to Meek's mill, beginning at the corner of sections one and two, township six and sections thirty-five and thirty-six, township seven, range twelve west,

¹⁵History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 115.

thence south to the river opposite the mill."¹⁶ This is obviously an erroneous statement. If changed to read, "corner of sections 1 and 2, in T 7 and sections 35 and 36 T6/R 12 W then south to river opposite mill" it would then be the present U.S. 131 section of the highway which was named Broadstreet in the 1840's. It was partially worked in 1832. By the 1870's it was the finest boulevard in the township flanked by excellent farms on either side. At that time the street extended from Washington Street across the prairie to the bottom of the hill which separates Constantine and Three Rivers. The road turned west, following the lane at the John Dussel farm and joined the highway later known as M 60 at Ferguson Corners.

In 1832 a territorial road was surveyed and built through the White Pigeon Prairie north to Grand Rapids.¹⁷ According to the Sectional Map of Michigan, 1872, the road ran north from White Pigeon on the township line to the east side of Constantine, then followed an Indian trail along the east side of the St. Joseph River to

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

Three Rivers.¹⁸

Traffic on Water Street and Territorial Road. Traffic at Constantine, at this date, seems to have been mainly east and west. Settlers came into the township from White Pigeon, entering Constantine from the east. In 1832 White Pigeon was the terminus of the stage line from Detroit to Chicago.¹⁹ Water Street stretched from the west side of the village, followed the St. Joseph River, and extended to the northeast side of the village, crossed the Fawn River and continued in an easterly direction until it joined the Territorial Road at the northeast corner of Section 24 (Fig. 3).

Constantine as an Inland Trade Town or the Period
of River Transportation, 1834-1854

The river craft. The river traffic with many types of craft came mostly from the west carrying merchandise into the area. One of the earliest vessels was the pirogue, which was a dug-out canoe, thirty to forty feet long, made of white-wood. These pirogues could carry two to three tons of freight. After farm production caught up

¹⁸Sectional Map of Michigan, Atlas of the St. Joseph County, Michigan. Surveys by O. J. Lake. C. O. Titus, 1872.

¹⁹Cutler, p. 123.

with the local demand and there was a surplus of farm goods, the flat boats and arks were built to carry the produce downstream to St. Joseph, thence to be transported later to the eastern markets. The arks were square wooden boxes forty to sixty feet long covered with white oak plank and caulked with tow and slippery elm bark. They required great skill in handling. After the first arks were made and loaded it was found that nothing but flour could be safely carried in them. The first ark, which went down the river from Three Rivers in 1834, was loaded with wheat. At this time no one knew the strength of the current or the exact conditions of the channel. At the port of Constantine the lines were cast ashore and the stern gave way spilling part of the cargo into the river. The same mishap occurred at Elkhart. At Niles the ark was wrecked and the entire cargo lost. This ended arking until 1837 or 1838 when flour shipping began. In the meantime river freighting was done by keelboats.²⁰ While an ark could carry six hundred barrels of flour, the keelboats could carry only 350. The keelboats were as much as eighty feet long and seventeen feet wide. They were either poled upstream or, after

²⁰Cutler, History of St. Joseph County, 1911, p. 166-67.

steamboats made their appearance on the river, were towed by the steamboat to Constantine.

Steamboats. Steamboats began to run regularly on the St. Joseph River in 1842. They went as far as Constantine. Navigation further upstream was hindered by a shallow spot on the river known as Knapps. Being at the head of steamboat navigation was advantageous to Constantine. The chief job of the steamboat was to tow the keelboat upstream and carry light cargo downstream.

Barry's warehouse. In 1845 Governor Barry built a warehouse extending over the river so that the steamers and other boats could unload directly into the warehouse without extra handling. After the railroad came and navigation on the river ceased, the warehouse was moved to the bank of the river.²¹

Bridges. The river cut off much of that part of Constantine Township to the north from the business district which lay on the south bank. To accommodate the settlers, thus isolated, a bridge spanning the river was built in 1834. It was built on piles with a swing in the center to permit the passage of river craft. In 1841 the

²¹History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 117.

swing was changed to a high curving arch, an improvement necessary with the advent of the steamboats.²² The arch was above the level of the street.

Pioneer merchant. The business of the pioneer merchant was almost exclusively conducted by barter and exchange. Money was scarce as the emigrants had used up their cash for land and for expenses in reaching the area. The dealers took wheat, and had it floured and shipped the flour to their eastern creditors as the only medium of exchange within their reach.— Men had wheat, pork, and dairy products but could get no cash for them, so the merchants were forced to take their produce and run the risk of replenishing their merchandise on credit.²³

All the trade was concentrated on Water Street. It is reported that as late as 1865 nine-tenths of all the produce brought to town was bought and handled on Water Street.²⁴

²²Cutler, p. 380.

²³History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 20.

²⁴Constantine Mercury, September 14, 1865, p. 3.

Constantine as an Industrial and
Commercial Town, 1834-1854

Several industries were established in the village by 1834. Most of them were located along the river and on Water Street. Judge Meek's gristmill and sawmill were the first industries. The Fisher shingle mill adjoining the sawmill was built in 1831. In 1832 Abbott harness-makers established a business in the village. Meek financed Hawkins in a blacksmith shop and tools. Henry Gibler also was a blacksmith in Meek's shop in 1832. Furniture was manufactured. Gould built chairs and Beaufait built cabinets and furniture. Hunt and Grover manufactured fanning mills in 1834 for the purpose of cleaning the grain.²⁵

Service industries. This was the period when many new industries were established in the village. Several were service industries which aided the performance of other occupations. Meek had built a new sawmill in 1835. Sometime later a tannery was built on the creek and another was built in the village.²⁶

²⁵History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 117.

²⁶Constantine's Centennial, A Souvenir Program and History. Edited by Bastin Smits. Constantine: Advertiser Record, 1928, n.p.

In 1836 Judge Meek sold his property in the village and the waterpower to Joseph R. Williams of Massachusetts. Williams erected a flour mill which was completed in 1841. His partners were George Howland of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and the Hon. Daniel Webster.²⁷ The Williams' mill employed twenty men and produced 25,000 barrels of flour a year which was in great demand in the "Atlantic Country." Prior to this time none of the mills in Constantine had been able to produce flour of a fine enough quality to support a basic industry with a large eastern market. Although this mill brought income into the town from markets in the east, the out-of-town partners received a share of the profits. In 1856 the flour mill was destroyed by an incendiary; the dam was damaged maliciously. It was rebuilt later by new owners.

In addition to his flour mill Williams built a saw-mill in 1848. He also managed a large mercantile trade and shared with Governor Barry the shipping trade of Constantine.

Basic industries. Many of the new industries were basic and this brought capital into the village. Besides the milling industries, those concerned with agricultural implements and transportation were organized in the

²⁷History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 117.

village. During the 1840's Constantine was the rival of South Bend in the production of farm machinery and equipment.²⁸ House and Ulmann manufactured plows in 1836. In 1838 Bristol, a carpenter and cabinet maker, started manufacturing wooden hayrakes. In 1841-42 a stock company of mechanics built a foundry, later bought by David Stafford and enlarged for manufacturing separator-threshing machines.²⁹ Isaac Benham owned the first foundry, which produced andirons. He later manufactured plows. In 1858 Mitchell and Stafford, who in 1843 made separator-threshing machines, added the manufacture of reapers and mowers, waterwheels, and steam engines.

Industry was also concentrated on transportation facilities. Carter built sleighs while Samuel Teesdale was the first wagonmaker in the village and was in business until 1875 when he was succeeded by Cotherman and Company in the manufacture of fine carriages. John McMillan operated a ship-yard about one and one-half miles up the St. Joseph River from Constantine in 1837. The steamboat Constantine was built here.

Various other industries were organized, some using

²⁸ Charles Weissert, "Governor Barry and His Home," Kalamazoo Gazette, November 12, 1939, p. 8.

²⁹ Cutler, p. 170.

steampower. The furniture factory owned by Heyway and Francisco began manufacturing with steampower in 1836. Pease and Densi built a foundry in 1851 which was operated by steam. In 1877 it was owned by Rossman as an oil and harness-soap factory. R. M. Welch manufactured carding machines in 1844-45 which suggests the growing interest in the production of wool which later became an important industry in the village.

Village improvement. The advent of the numerous industries resulted in a change of population. In 1838, Constantine's population was 842, a hundred and eighty per cent increase over 1835. At this date Constantine was considered one of the most flourishing villages in the county. It did the greatest amount of business in the county and carried on a considerable amount of trade for an inland trade town. During the previous year several blocks of frame stores had been erected. A large amount of capital was enlisted in the improvement of the town. The town boasted seven dry-goods stores, a book store, an apothecary shop, and three physicians as well as other services.

First "safety" fund bank. The importance of Constantine as a service center was well expressed by Cutler when he wrote:

The importance of Constantine or Meeks Mill, as an industrial and commercial point of the county and southern Michigan, is fairly demonstrated by the fact that it enjoyed the distinction of possessing for about five years the first and only "safety" fund bank in this section of the state. It (the Bank of Constantine) was chartered July 23, 1836, with an authorized capital of \$250,000; and among the many applications made to the legislature for the purpose, this was the only charter granted.³⁰

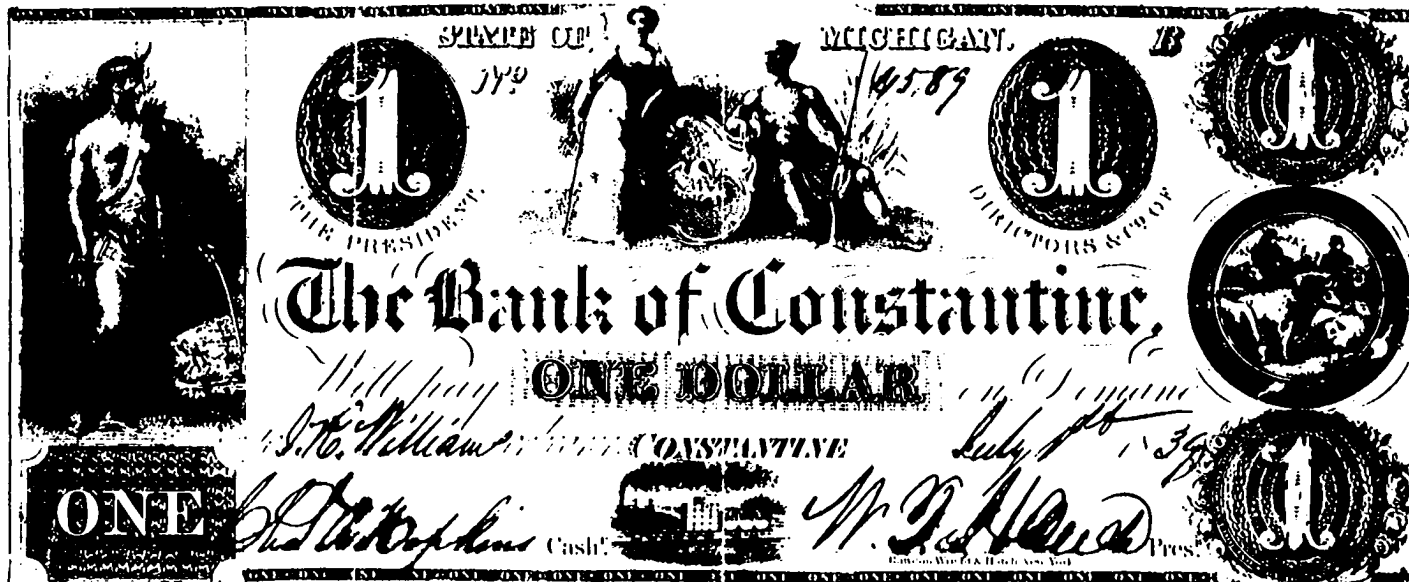
There were two types of banks in existence at this time, the "wild cat" and the "red dog." The difference between the two was in the bill of exchange. If the bills were printed, ready for circulation, they were "wild cat." If the locality of the bank of issue was left blank, to be filled in later in red ink, they were "red dog." The Bank of Constantine was a "wild cat" bank (Plate 5). It survived the panic of 1837 but suspended specie payment in 1841.

Newspaper. Among the important services and one of the most influential was the newspaper, the Republican, which was published at Constantine from July 6, 1836 to 1838. Politically the editors were Democrats and denounced the Whigs of the county.

Village charter. In the winter of 1836-37 the village expanded its territory through the addition of the area

³⁰Cutler, p. 378.

BANK NOTE, THE BANK OF CONSTANTINE, 1837



If the bills were printed, ready for circulation they were "Wild Cat". The Bank of Constantine was a "Wild Cat" Bank.

PLATE 5

on the northwest bank of the river. The village was platted as Constantine in 1831, but it was incorporated as a village under that name in the spring of 1837. The incorporation lapsed in 1839 and was not incorporated again until March 15, 1861.³¹ It is not known why the charter lapsed, but it is interesting to note that in 1836 Judge Meek sold his holdings and moved from the village. This is also the date the Constantine family reportedly left the village.³² It is possible that Judge Meek was not happy to have the village name changed to Constantine.

Stage line. Headquarters for a stage line which connected Kalamazoo and White Pigeon were established at Constantine in 1836. Passengers had breakfast at the tavern of Harvey Hunt in Constantine and arrived at Austin's Tavern in Kalamazoo in time for tea.³³

Post Office. The Post Office at Constantine was established in 1836. John S. Barry was appointed as the first postmaster after the Post Office was established.

³¹History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 25.

³²"How Was Constantine Named Constantine?"

³³Weissert.

Thomas Charlton had acted as postmaster before Barry's appointment. Mail was received by stage with the receiver paying the postage. After the railroad was built, they carried the mail until it was realized that the government did not intend to change the old contract with the stage line. Upon formal complaint and considerable criticism by the newspaper,³⁴ the Post Office Department asked for bids to carry the mail between the postoffice and the depot,³⁵ and later agreed upon a contract with the railroad to perform this service.

Canal and railroad projects. With business booming and the town growing rapidly, after 1836, more transportation facilities for passenger and freight, both by water and land, were needed. In the winter of 1836 a meeting was held at Edwardsburg, Cass County, to plan a canal from Niles to Constantine.³⁶ The canal would cut off the river route in Indiana. The canal project was discouraged but a plan for a railroad between the two points was endorsed. The crash of 1837 disrupted the plans and nothing further was done until the state sold its

³⁴Constantine Mercury, October 12, 1865, p. 3.

³⁵Ibid., July 19, 1866, p. 3.

³⁶History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 25.

interests in the proposed Michigan Central and Southern Railroad about 1850.

The Period of Readjustment
1850-1874

Change in transportation pattern. In 1851 transportation patterns were abruptly changed by the introduction of the Michigan Southern Railroad which was built through White Pigeon three miles south of Constantine.³⁷ The people of Constantine had assumed that the railroad would be built through the center of St. Joseph County touching Constantine and would strengthen the already well established east-west traffic. The charter held by the railroad stated that the road was to make the St. Joseph River a point on the line. The company was induced to take another route but to comply with the terms of the charter later built an extension from White Pigeon to Constantine.

The disappointment experienced by the people of the village was similar to that of many other communities in southern Michigan but Constantine probably suffered more drastically because the town served as a trade and commercial center based on the existing transportation pattern and facilities.

³⁷Ibid.

During the next decade or more many attempts were made to secure an east-west railroad, not only to salvage the shipping industry, but also to secure more convenient transportation. Even with the extension from White Pigeon, Constantine was left out of the main flow of traffic. The town suffered from the results of this inconvenience and tried many different ways to obtain this service. The inconvenience was evident as late as 1865. When the Constantine Hotel at the corner of Second and White Pigeon Streets changed ownership, the new proprietor introduced an elegant omnibus which was driven regularly to the local railroad station as a convenience to the guests of the new "Pennsylvania House." Also, the proprietor drove to White Pigeon each morning in time to make connection with the seven o'clock train for Chicago, and bring back passengers who may have arrived from the east.³⁸

From Depot to Station Street. Before 1865 the railroad station in Constantine was located between Depot Street and what was later named Station Street on the property owned by Harvey and Hagenbuch in the 1870's (Fig. 10). The Harvey Washing Machine Plant was located on this site

³⁸Constantine Mercury, June 6, 1865, p. 3, and Constantine Mercury, August 17, 1865, p. 3.

around the turn of the century. In order to reach the depot the tracks extended from the south and curved westward toward the St. Joseph River. The tracks paralleled Station Street crossing the millrace northeast of the Station Street bridge, then branching westward ran along what is now Station Street. The depot was located on the east side of the race on property presently owned by the Constantine Creamery. The tracks could have extended to that point, at that time, without obstruction. From the depot, the train had to be backed out and turned around. - This became quite a dangerous situation because many small boys enjoyed playing about the cars. The conductor complained that he had chased them away so often that he was tired of it.³⁹

During the summer of 1865 the freight house was moved to the new location on Station Street near Centreville Road.⁴⁰ The new depot and facilities were not ready for use until late August. The lack of railroad accommodations for shipment and storage of grain was a great inconvenience to the farmers and was a "detriment to business" of the place.⁴¹

³⁹Constantine Mercury, April 18, 1865, p. 3.

⁴⁰Ibid., August 13, 1865, p. 3.

⁴¹Ibid., August 24, 1865, p. 3.

Telegraph. In June of 1865, a telegraph line was built from White Pigeon to Three Rivers paralleling the railroad tracks which went no further than Constantine. It had to use its own right-of-way the remainder of the distance. The office of the Western Union Telegraph at Constantine operated as a branch connecting with the main line at White Pigeon.⁴² In 1865 a subscription of \$333.33 had to be made by Constantine to the company, to be refunded in telegraphing. It is presumed that the subscription was necessary to secure the services. Three Rivers' subscription was double this amount.

Efforts to secure railroad. As late as 1867 efforts were still being made to secure an east-west railroad. In November 1865, a meeting was held for the purpose of obtaining an extension of the Grand Trunk Railroad from Ridgeway in Lenawee County through Constantine to Chicago. No progress was made although later meetings were held. In 1869 the township made an effort to secure the "air line" of Michigan Central Railroad by offering the company \$50,000 as a loan if they would construct their track through the township, but the company declined the offer and built through Fabius Township.⁴³

⁴²Constantine Mercury, June 25, 1865, p. 3.

⁴³History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 25.

When all efforts failed to bring an east-west railroad to Constantine, the township built a railroad bridge over the Fawn River at Mill Pond and efforts were concentrated on building a line north through Three Rivers and Schoolcraft to Kalamazoo (Fig. 10). This was accomplished largely through township aid.⁴⁴

Another bridge. In 1869 a new highway bridge replaced the arched bridge near Barry's warehouse at a cost of \$13,000. In December it fell into the river and was rebuilt by the construction company the following winter.⁴⁵

Industrial production and commercial adjustment. An investigation of the growth of population reveals that there was a loss of residents who possessed capital.⁴⁶ The total population, however, remained stable with an increase of only two persons from 1850-1854.

The State Census of 1854 shows that there was also a decided decrease in the commerce at Constantine by this date (Table 1). In 1839-40 the only flour mill had employed twenty persons and produced 25,000 barrels of

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Constantine Centennial, n. p.

⁴⁶ Comparison of the Censuses of 1850 and 1860.

TABLE 1

INDUSTRIAL DATA FOR 1854^a

Flour Mills (water-power)	2
Flour produced (barrels)	4,000
Persons employed	6
Capital invested	\$27,000
Value of products	\$31,000
 Sawmills (water-power)	 3
Persons employed	9
Feet of lumber sawed	850,000
Capital invested	\$ 7,000
Value of products	\$ 7,700
 Manufacturing of all kinds	
Persons employed	25
Capital invested	\$12,500
Value of Products	\$ 9,500
 Brewery Production	
Beer (gallons)	50,000
Liquor (gallons)	400
Cider distilled (barrels)	15

^aCensus and Statistics of the State Census of Michigan, 1854, p. 335-338.

flour a year. In 1853 the two flour mills produced 4,000 barrels and employed only six persons (Table 1). Flour was worth \$7.75 a barrel in 1854 making the value of the flour production of the two mills worth \$31,000. At the same price per barrel the value of flour production in 1840 would have been \$193,750.

Although the flour industry slumped after the introduction of railway transportation the wheat grown must have been shipped out by rail as over 1,600 acres of wheat were harvested with a yield of over 22,400 bushels in 1854 (Table 2). Flour production increased by 1865 with 24,341 barrels of flour being shipped from the new railroad depot on Station Street.⁴⁷

Although business in general took a sharp drop after river transportation ceased at Constantine, the brewery was doing a fair amount of business. Besides 20,000 gallons of beer, the brewery produced 400 gallons of alcoholic liquor (Table 1). In 1859 the stock company of mechanics who had organized the foundry sold their holdings and built a distillery. This industry was closed with the advent of the revenueurs. Thus a number of men who once owned the foundry--one of the large industries of the village--lost not only their business but also the

⁴⁷Constantine Mercury, January 4, 1866, p. 3.

TABLE 2

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION OF CORN, WHEAT, HAY,
WOOL, PORK, AND BUTTER FOR CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP FOR 1854 AND 1874

Products	1854 ^a	1874 ^b
Corn harvested (acres)	1,862	1,880
Corn yield (bushels)	41,111	49,173
Wheat harvested (acres)	1,609	3,802
Wheat yield (bushels)	22,435	40,553
Other grains (bushels)	6,735	3,470
Hay (tons)	---	1,124
Wool (pounds)	7,286	15,237
Pork (pounds)	29,800	93,325
Butter (pounds)	18,204	29,020

^aCensus and Statistics of the State Census of Michigan, 1854, p. 332, 333.

^bHistory of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 114.

requisite capital to undertake a new venture.

Perhaps the decisions made by the inhabitants of Constantine influenced or controlled the economy of the village as much as the events which took place over which they had no control. Another incident illustrating this point was the destruction of Williams' mill by an incendiary in 1856. The dam was damaged as well. This may have been the decision of only one person but the village was deprived of another industry even though the mill was rebuilt later by new owners. In each case the owners of the industries lost their capital and both cases involved choices that were made by the inhabitants.

Constantine Hydraulic Company. By the 1860's Constantine had a few well-established industries--sawmills and flour mills, foundries, implements works, woolen mills, furniture factories, and a brewery. The village had transferred its interests from transportation to industry. By 1868 the Constantine Hydraulic Company was organized for the purpose of improving the waterpower of the St. Joseph and Fawn rivers. With no need for boat traffic on the upper river, a dam was constructed across the St. Joseph River. The completed project in 1873 included the dam and two runways or canals, one on each side of the St. Joseph River. Each canal was eighty feet wide and seven feet deep, having a fall of nine feet. It was planned so

that the waterpower could be used along a frontage of more than 4,000 feet and would cover sixty acres of ground. The cost of the improvement, which was \$35,000, also included two brick buildings, one of two stories and the other of three stories. Their present use is not known. Also, there were several frame structures. The project was completed in 1873. Improvements were made later on the Fawn River. In 1910 the entire waterpower was owned by the Constantine Milling Company, the Fawn River Manufacturing Company, and the village.

The Constantine Milling Company was organized in 1850 for the purpose of producing flour. They added a feedmill in 1870. By 1910 flour milling was one of the leading industries in the village with a daily output of 250 barrels of flour.

Sorghum molasses. Throughout the history of Constantine many of the industries have been related to the agricultural activities of the community. Two industries of 1865 attract attention. One was a small industry that was formed by several farmers for the manufacture of sorghum molasses. A considerable amount of sorghum cane was raised in 1865. The farmers were using the most modern crushing machinery and the latest improvement for evaporating syrup. Over 10,000 gallons of sorghum molasses were reported produced after the harvest of the

cane in 1865. Some of the syrup produced was refined to make a fine quality sugar.⁴⁸ This venture was the result of the loss of the cane sugar from Louisiana during the Civil War period.

Woolen industry. Another of the new industries was also closely related to the agricultural activities of the community. This was the woolen industry utilizing the product of the local farms. A woolen mill was built near Fawn River in 1864.⁴⁹ The Woolen Mill turned out "cloth yarn." It was reported that the excellent quality of work done secured a "large run of customers," and brought people to town from long distances, who, but for the mill, might have never come near it.⁵⁰ In 1865, the Woolen Mill purchased 25,000 pounds of wool from the farmers of the area. There were other customers for the wool in Constantine and outside the village. It was estimated that there had been 192,000 pounds of wool produced in the township, or at least brought to market for sale in 1865 (Table 3). The price of the wool ranged from

⁴⁸Constantine Mercury, December 28, 1865, p. 3, and Constantine Mercury, January 4, 1866, p. 3.

⁴⁹Cutler, p. 377.

⁵⁰Constantine Mercury, June 20, 1865, p. 3, and Constantine Mercury, July 27, 1865, p. 3.

TABLE 3

WOOL SOLD IN CONSTANTINE, 1865^a

Purchased	Quantity (pounds)
Woolen Mill, Constantine	25,000
J. N. Armitage, Constantine	10,000
Franklin Wells, Constantine	18,000
C. C. Warren, Three Rivers	30,000
L. B. Rich, Three Rivers	2,000
Hoag and Armitage, Three Rivers	3,000
Estimated wool not sold but held for higher price	104,000
Total produced (estimate)	192,000
Value at 45 cents per pound	\$ 86,000
Value at 60 cents per pound	\$115,200

^aConstantine Mercury, June 20, 1865 to July 27, 1865

forty-five to sixty cents per pound. At forty-five cents per pound the value of the total production amounted to \$86,000. At sixty cents, the total value was \$115,200. This was partially a basic industry as buyers from other areas came to Constantine bringing capital with them.

The Woolen Mill was probably established as a service industry to process locally produced wool but induced a greater concentration of wool production on the part of the farmers. The supply of cotton was cut off during the Civil War which necessitated the raising of sheep and growth of the woolen industry in many northern communities.

Agricultural activities. During the 1860's and 1870's Constantine was known for its fine quality of wool. The high quality of wool produced in Constantine Township was proclaimed when Franklin Wells of Constantine received the first award for his processed wool among 100 competitors at the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia in 1876.

Today much of Constantine Township is well suited for grazing as much of the land is unfit for cultivated crops but will produce pasture. The winters are cold which results in high quality wool. Doubtless conditions were much the same in 1854 when the farmers of Constantine Township raised 2,668 sheep (Table 4). The wool produced

TABLE 4

ANIMALS KEPT IN CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP IN 1854 AND 1874

Animals Kept	1854 ^a	1874 ^b
Sheep	2,668	2,598
Horses	318	375
Mules	---	15
Work Oxen	70	---
Cows	384	372
Other Cattle	190	253
Hogs	1,610	1,288

^aCensus and Statistics of the State Census of Michigan, 1854, p. 334, 335.

^bHistory of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 114.

that year amounted to 7,286 pounds. In 1865 the amount produced had increased to 192,000 pounds. This was the peak period as the quantity declined to 15,237 pounds in 1874 with the number of sheep about the same as in 1854 (Tables 3 and 4).

At the time when Constantine was known for its wool production, sheep-shearing contests and festivals were held. A five-year old buck sheep, that weighed 119 pounds when shorn, produced an average of twenty-two and one-half pounds of wool. A two-year old buck, weighing 80 pounds when shorn, gave fifteen and one-fourth pounds of wool.

After 1872 the farmers no longer made a speciality of pure-bred cattle or sheep. The majority of farmers of the township turned their attention to the raising of cultivated crops. To process these crops into feed for the cattle and sheep a feed mill was built in 1870.

Clearing and improving the land. From the time of settlement to 1854 over 7,000 acres of land had been cleared of trees. From 1854 to 1874 another 1,880 acres had been cleared and improved. By 1874 there were 143 farms in the township averaging 134 acres each.⁵¹ In 1854, 1,862

⁵¹History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 114.

acres of corn were harvested in comparison to 1,880 acres in 1874. The yield per acre was greater proportionately in 1874. The acres of wheat harvested doubled from 1854 to 1874. In 1854 there were 1,609 acres of wheat harvested. In 1874, 3,802 acres were devoted to wheat with a yield of 40,553 bushels (Table 2). In 1874 the yield of wheat per acre appears to have been less than in 1854. In 1854 wheat yield was 13.8 bushels per acre; in 1874 it was down to 10.6 bushels per acre. This could possibly suggest that the soil was being depleted as the rotation of crops and use of fertilizer was not generally practiced. Other possibilities would be variation of weather those two years.

Constantine Petroleum Company. One of the most exciting ventures undertaken by the inhabitants of Constantine during the readjustment period was that of the petroleum industry. The Constantine Petroleum Company was organized for the purpose of developing an oil-well. Funds were raised for a preliminary investigation of underlying strata. The company leased the land near the millpond dam where a water wheel was used to furnish the temporary waterpower for driving the drills. Wooden tubing was used until bedrock was reached. After the well had been drilled 426 feet, the brine was so strong that there was a statement to the effect that "if oil is not found, salt

may have a saving effect."⁵² At 510 feet the drill broke and was not recovered.

In 1870, in order to save their investment, the stockholders of the Constantine Petroleum Company formed the Mineral Springs Company to utilize the brines. Old timers have told of the springs which were located east of the Constantine Woolen Mill (Fig. 10). Although some oil was found it was not in sufficient quantity for production. The water was tested and found to contain a variety of minerals.⁵³ To utilize this resource, bath houses were built and for some time Constantine was a spa town. To furnish capital the Ladies Town Hall Association loaned the company \$370.00 "on condition that the water would be free to the people of Constantine. The money was to be repaid later to the Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Lutheran churches, equally, with interest at ten per cent."⁵⁴ Such was one more illustration of the decisions as well as the efforts of inhabitants that influenced the development of the economy of the village.

⁵²Constantine Mercury, August 10, 1865, p. 3.

⁵³History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 119.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Problems were great. The year of 1865 seems to have been full of problems for the village. The depot was moved to a more convenient site in order to extend the railroad north. During the harvest season the shipment of wheat was slowed by the lack of facilities. Livestock was not shipped at all because of the lack of facilities. The high hopes of the oil well vanished with a bubble of brine.

The mail schedule was another matter of irritation. Although on the line of a railroad, over which two trains passed daily, the mail arrived and departed by horse power, and on a schedule which did not admit connection with mail from the east. Until 1865 the mail was brought by train without compensation with the expectation that the contract would be given the railroad at profitable rates. But the contract was not changed. Constantine blamed Three Rivers for this lack of effort. The mails went back to the old schedule in which the mail from the east remained in White Pigeon twenty hours. Constantine wanted a new arrangement that would allow mail to be brought from White Pigeon in the morning and returned to make connection west in the evening. The editor of the Mercury criticized the Post Office Department for holding to the old contract because of a lower rate although a new contract could be made in the interest of the public.

Complaints were made to the Post Office Department. This resulted in more satisfactory service.⁵⁵

Fire hazard and brick buildings. Another problem loomed like a giant on the horizon. During the dry weather the possibility of fires was intensified. The Flour Mill had burned in 1856 causing great concern to the villagers. Because the heart of the village was all of wood construction and closely spaced, none of the stores could obtain fire insurance except at exorbitant rates. Many of the buildings were replaced by brick structures that still grace Water Street, the main street of the period. (Plate 6).

Intoxicants gave impetus to new main street. A problem arose from the large number of establishments on Water Street selling intoxicants thus making it most undesirable for the women and children to shop in other stores located there. This gave impetus to the construction of several store buildings on Washington Street, many of which are still standing (Plate 7). The sale of liquor was carried on to such an extent that there was little regard for public order. The editor of the Mercury declared that "more drunken men were seen on the streets and they were

⁵⁵Constantine Mercury, October 19, 1865, p. 3.

PLATE 6



Water Street

PLATE 7



Washington Street

drunker" than he had seen in a long time. He criticized the authorities for permitting this disgrace.⁵⁶

Apparently the newspaper helped form public opinion because in June "the drunkery next door to 100 Water Street" was closed and "everything was quiet and moral." "Women and children could walk on Water Street without a bodyguard and in no danger of being insulted and jostled by staggering drunks."⁵⁷

Apparently this is not a recent problem because in 1850 a prayer given in the Methodist Church in Constantine became quite famous. Elder Littlejohn asked the Lord to bless all the wicked towns round about and especially Constantine "where Governor Barry sold whiskey at three cents a glass."⁵⁸ Possibly intoxication had become a problem but there may have been a campaign afoot to discredit Governor Barry. The newspaper was strongly Republican, and in 1849, John Barry, a Democrat, had won the election for Governor of Michigan from a Mr. Littlejohn. Barry received 27,837 votes to Littlejohn's 23,540 votes.

⁵⁶Constantine Mercury, June 1, 1865, p. 3.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Constantine Centennial, n.p.

The Union School. Adjustments were made to the many problems, those created by the coming of the railroad as well as those created by the conservatism of the residents. Population increased at an increasing rate between 1860-1870. By 1867 the size of the school population was so large that a new school house was voted and an appropriation of \$20,000 made by the governing body. The site selected was block 42 of the original village plat (Fig. 10). The schoolhouse was situated on the rising ground in the southwest part of the village and overlooked the country for miles around. It was a three-story building constructed of white brick with a basement and foundation of boulder-stone. It must have been the pride of the community. The reports claimed that no other public school in the State was so well equipped for the instruction of children in higher branches of education.⁵⁹

Constantine as a Social and Religious
Center 1867-1900

By 1867 the village had adjusted to the loss of river trade and to the limitation of land transportation. It had survived the Panic of 1837 and the Panic of 1857.

⁵⁹History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 120.

Although by 1870 the new Hydraulic Company was not completed, there was a spirit of optimism concerning the future growth of the village. The population was still increasing, the new inhabitants adjusted easily to the culture of the village mostly because they were from the same places as the early inhabitants.

The institution that was probably the forerunner of all the cultural inspirations to follow was the Union School which had been built in 1867.

Only two social institutions had been established before 1870. The Odd Fellows Lodge was instituted in 1847 but became inactive in 1855, was reorganized in 1868 and continued until 1882, then reorganized again in 1924. The Masonic Lodge was instituted in 1849. This Lodge has had a long and continuing association with a membership of around 200 from the 1920's.

In 1872 the Patrons of Husbandry, a farmers' organization known as the Grange, was organized in Michigan. By 1875 Grange No. 236 was established in Constantine and became an institution of some importance with a large membership. In 1925 the membership stood at 120.

The religious life was not neglected. Although the Methodists were an established congregation before 1870, it was not until 1878 that the present brick structure was built on the corner of Centreville and White Pigeon

streets. The Lutherans, as well as the Methodists, were busy before 1870. Their church was built in 1866 on the corner of Canais and Fourth streets. In 1876 the Reformed Church was built across from the old School Pond which now is the location of the park on South Washington Street. This was a large brick edifice with beautiful stained glass windows. Great was the lamenting when it was razed; some felt it should have been preserved and used as a village community center.⁶⁰

In 1879 the Maccabee Hive No. 738 was organized by the men of Constantine and the ladies organized in 1886. Two years later in 1888 the Reformed Church united with the Presbyterian Church thus forming the Congregational Church. They erected the beautiful structure on the west side of Washington Street in 1888.

The cultural development of constantine hit the peak in the 1870's and 1880's. The religious congregations had accumulated enough money to build beautiful churches. Living conditions seem to have been on a much higher level than in the preceding decades. The need for social organizations and activities were evidenced by the establishment of such groups as the Odd Fellows, Masons, Grange, Maccabees, and Crossette's Silver Band. The

⁶⁰Constantine Centennial, n.p.

band was organized in 1871 and three years later had become so well-known that it was selected to perform at the laying of the corner stone of the new State Capitol in Lansing by the Governor of Michigan.

Almost every village of the period had an Opera House. The Opera House at Constantine had been established by 1887 and was located on the site of the present Ford Garage.

Although there had been an organization of ladies in the village called the Ladies Town Hall Association in the 1860's the greater number of ladies organizations were not established until after 1900. The Order of the Eastern Star was installed in 1902, and has had the largest membership of any organization of its kind in the village.

About this time the ladies of the community who were interested in music, art, and literature organized the Constantine Woman's Club. This club was instituted in 1904, for cultural or benevolent purposes. An endowment has provided, in recent years, a modern brick structure--the Charlotte E. Keightley Memorial Club House--which contains a hall, stage, kitchen and rest room. The will of Helen H. MacIllwain, dated April 25, 1957, provided \$25,000 as a bequest to the Constantine Woman's Club in the memory of her mother, Charlotte E. Keightley, to be

used for building a club house with space allocated for the use of the Constantine Public Library or other activities for the benefits of the residents of the Town of Constantine.⁶¹ There is presently a membership of about fifty.

The Olympic Temple, now the Pythian Sisters, organized in 1912 following the organizing of the Knights of Pythias No. 241 in 1907. The Rebekah Lodge, the ladies auxiliary of the Odd Fellows, was a late comer, being organized in 1926.

Constantine as a Service Center 1900-Present

Service institutions. Shortly before the turn of the century Constantine began to serve more fully as a commercial and service center. The First National Bank of Constantine, which had been organized in 1864, was reorganized in 1894 as the First State Bank of Constantine. About this same time another bank, the Commercial State Bank, was one of Constantine's financial institutions. The two banks consolidated in 1925 forming the First Commercial Savings Bank of Constantine.

Another important institution that made its

⁶¹Constantine Woman's Club Annual Program for 1966-1967.

appearance was the Public Library in 1915. Although the school library had been well stocked with books and was the pride of the community, the need for more facilities for public use was realized. It may be that the need of a Public Library was not realized before 1915. At any rate, the people who were in a position to provide a library didn't do so until the town was eighty-five years old. Originally the fee to borrow books was \$1.00 per family. Eventually the township provided funds for the operation of the library, giving the residents of the township free service.

Service industries. The Co-Op Incorporated feed mill serves the farmer by grinding his farm produce into feed for animals. No flour is manufactured at Constantine at the present time. The feed mill is located on Water Street at the site of the old Commercial Mill. The elevator, an establishment of the Co-Op, is located near the railroad depot to provide grain storage. A small amount of coal is sold by this concern. The demand for coal has decreased with the popularity of oil burners and gas furnaces.

Michigan Gas and Electric Company supplies both gas and electricity to the village. The company came into possession of the property of the old Hydraulic Company in 1912, utilizing some waterpower and purchasing

additional power from the Indiana-Michigan Power Company. The power plant is located on the St. Joseph River north-east of the bridge.

The village also has had the service of the Municipal Electric Power Company which was organized in the 1940's for the purpose of breaking the monopoly held by the Michigan Gas and Electric Company. The people voted in October 1966 to sell the village-owned electric plant to Michigan Gas and Electric. The Municipal plant was located on west Water Street. It used diesel engines exclusively for generating power.

Transportation service. Transportation is no longer a problem nor the lack of it a detriment to business. Trucks have easy access to the village by way of U.S. 131 which extends north-south. Also running north-south is the renewed line of the New York Central Railroad which after an intermission of business (1930-1940) again handles freight. The introduction of truck transportation accelerated the decline of the railroad transportation in this period.

The greatest transportation service in the community is furnished by the Constantine School District through the buses transporting hundreds of youngsters daily to and from the school.

Gas stations have replaced the blacksmith shops and

the livery stables of the earlier period. Around 1900 a huge livery service was in existence in the basement of the Brown Carriage Shop located on West Water Street. The building still stands extending back to the river bank. Gasoline stations have sprung up on several corners as the demand for this service increased.

Constantine Co-Operative Creamery Company. The Constantine Co-Operative Creamery Company was organized by a local farmer, Charles A. Brody, in 1915, in order to provide a needed market for the cream produced by the farmers of the area. Prior to this time a stock company operated a creamery in Constantine but it failed. The farmers were being subjected to low prices and it was evident to villagers and farmers alike that there was a need for such an organization. The industry was started with 50 members. The organization was to be a 100 per cent co-operative venture, not to operate for profit, but solely for service to the dairy industry. Thus the interest which was displayed by many of the farmers. Stock was sold only to producers of agricultural products and no business was done with non-members. Each stockholder was required to purchase one \$15.00 share of non-dividend paying stock. No stockholder could vote more than one share. Cream was gathered, butter was made and marketed, and the expenses deducted from gross sales with the

balance pro-rated back to the patrons semi-monthly according to the amount of butterfat furnished by the patron. The Board of Directors had the authority to set aside the amount deemed necessary for operation and expansion. During the first year 96,520 pounds of butter were produced. The farmer received 26.75 cents per pound of butterfat, which was higher than the prevailing price.

Despite stiff competition the company continued to grow. After 1942 the company changed from an all-cream to a combined cream-milk market. In 1951 a Grade "A" milk program was offered to members. In 1952 the creamery produced 4,000,000 pounds of butter. At the present time, 1965-66, there are 2,885 stockholders and an annual production of 3,423,396 pounds of butter; 35,077,110 pounds of Bulk "A" milk; 1,826,797 pounds of whole milk powder; 4,199,200 pounds of condensed milk, and 5,390,037 pounds of dried powder milk.⁶²

Originally the creamery existed as a service for the farmers of the township. In the expansion program the raw material is being gathered from far afield. The creamery trucks travel as far north as Paw Paw and Lansing, east as far as Hillsdale, and south into Indiana

⁶² Constantine Recorder, February 24, 1954, p. 1, and Fiftieth Annual Report of the Constantine Cooperative Creamery 1915-1965.

with a concentration of patrons in the Middlebury area. Presently there are only nine patrons of Grade "B" and only one Grade "A" patron in Constantine Township according to the huge map of creamery routes which can be examined in the Creamery office. Four Grade "B" patrons are located just beyond the Constantine Township boundary. With 900 patrons furnishing raw material only one per cent are located within the area that the Creamery was first organized to serve.

Basic industries. Many industries of Constantine can not be classified as service industries--e.g. casket factories, papermills, trailer and machine shops. These were organized after 1900 and thus contributed to the development of the community during the period of Constantine as a Service Center.

Several basic industries provide a living for many of Constantine's residents. The two largest of these are the papermill and the casket factory. The Constantine Board and Paper Company was organized in 1900 by Robert F. Weir. He leased the old brewery building, located on the St. Joseph River (Fig. 10), and remodeled it, installing paper machines which manufactured straw paper. In 1902 he bought property along the Fawn River, built a dam and paper mill, and moved the machinery from the old plant (Fig. 4). Fire destroyed this plant in 1918 but it

was rebuilt and in operation by the next year. In 1923 the plant was leased to the American Can Company. The mill employed 50 men and produced about 70 tons of paper daily. Later he sold the plant to the Davey Corporation, Jersey City, New Jersey. The present concern has 60 employees and produces 50 tons of paperboard daily which is made into folding boxes, set-up boxes (such as shoe boxes), and paper-cans (such as the cans used for cocoa mix or cleanser).

The Drake Casket Company was organized in 1914. The company owns the waterpower, being located on the old site of the French and Bonebright sawmill property, known also as the old cider mill and where walnut coffins were made. The Drake Company has warehouses at Pittsburgh, Waterloo, and Jackson.

In the early 1900's another casket factory was located on the millrace west of the French and Bonebright sawmill property. This was the Constantine Casket Company which was organized in 1895 and incorporated in 1909. This company had warehouses in Minnesota and Indiana and a showroom and warehouse at Toledo, Ohio. Sixty men and women, all residents of Constantine, were employed in this establishment.

The building which housed the Constantine Casket Company is at the present time owned by the Brenemen-

Hartshorn, Inc. which manufactures interior and exterior shades and folding doors. It is better known to residents as the venetian blind factory.

The E. L. Nichols Company, manufacturers of steel vessels for use in industrial refrigeration, is located on the banks of the old millpond, the former site of James Barnhart's tool and machine shop. At present the company has twenty employees. In 1964 and 1965 the company built two additions to the plant. The most recent, an \$80,000 addition, will provide for greater production. The firm markets products throughout the United States and some foreign countries. Formerly the E. L. Nichols Company was located on White Pigeon Street near Water Street, the present location of the Davis Manufacturing Company.

Mayfair Mobile Homes is one of the more recent industries to locate in Constantine. The plant is located east of the railroad tracks on Florence Road. This was among the first concerns to build away from the river although before 1920 the Upton Brothers manufactured the Upton Automobile in the cement block building west of and adjacent to the railroad tracks on Florence Road. Several other industries provide work for a limited number of residents.

Services. A service which was extended to a portion of

the village early in the 20th Century was the sewer system. The first survey for the sewer was made in April 1906. Another survey was made in August 1906 for the line and grade of the sewer.⁶³ This survey only partially provided the village with this service. That part of town with sewers before 1965 included the business district and residences close to the business district, those along Washington Street south of the river and Centreville Street. Most of the citizens waited sixty years until state regulations, aiming at cleaning up the rivers, literally forced the Village Council to appropriate the money for a sewage disposal plant and instigated the installation of sewer lines to all parts of the village in 1966. When the issue came up for referendum there was some opposition as many of the residents were happy with their septic tanks and some begrudged changing to the sewer because of the expense involved.

Postal Rural Free Delivery. Rural Free Delivery of mail was started in Michigan in 1896. By 1899 some fifteen rural routes were in operation. This service was very important to the township residents as a whole but may have had a tendency to curtail other services as the

⁶³Survey Records A, St. Joseph County, Michigan, Registrar of Deeds Office, Centreville, Michigan.

development necessitated fewer trips to town. Prior to 1900 the only way the folk in the rural township could get their mail was to come to the Post Office.

The first record of Constantine's Rural Free Delivery available is that of June 3, 1904.⁶⁴ At that time Constantine had two delivery routes. By July 1, 1904 the Postmaster at Constantine was authorized to establish a delivery program which would include four routes which extended beyond the east and west township lines (Fig. 11). Route 1 covered an area of 15 square miles, served 95 houses with a population of 427. The distance traveled was 24-1/3 miles. The route traveled east on Florence Road (extending two miles into Florence Township), made a horseshoe turn, continued two miles north, two miles east, then one mile north, and included the southeast half of Florence Township.

Route 2 covered 14 square miles with stops at 100 houses serving a population of 450 in the nearly 25 miles of driving. It started west from town on the north side of the river, extended almost to the Cass County line, thence north and west in Cass County serving houses built on the section lines of sections 23 and 24 of Porter Township, Cass County.

⁶⁴Records and letter to Postmaster at Constantine extending the rural routes, 1904.

RURAL FREE DELIVERY
CONSTANTINE, 1905

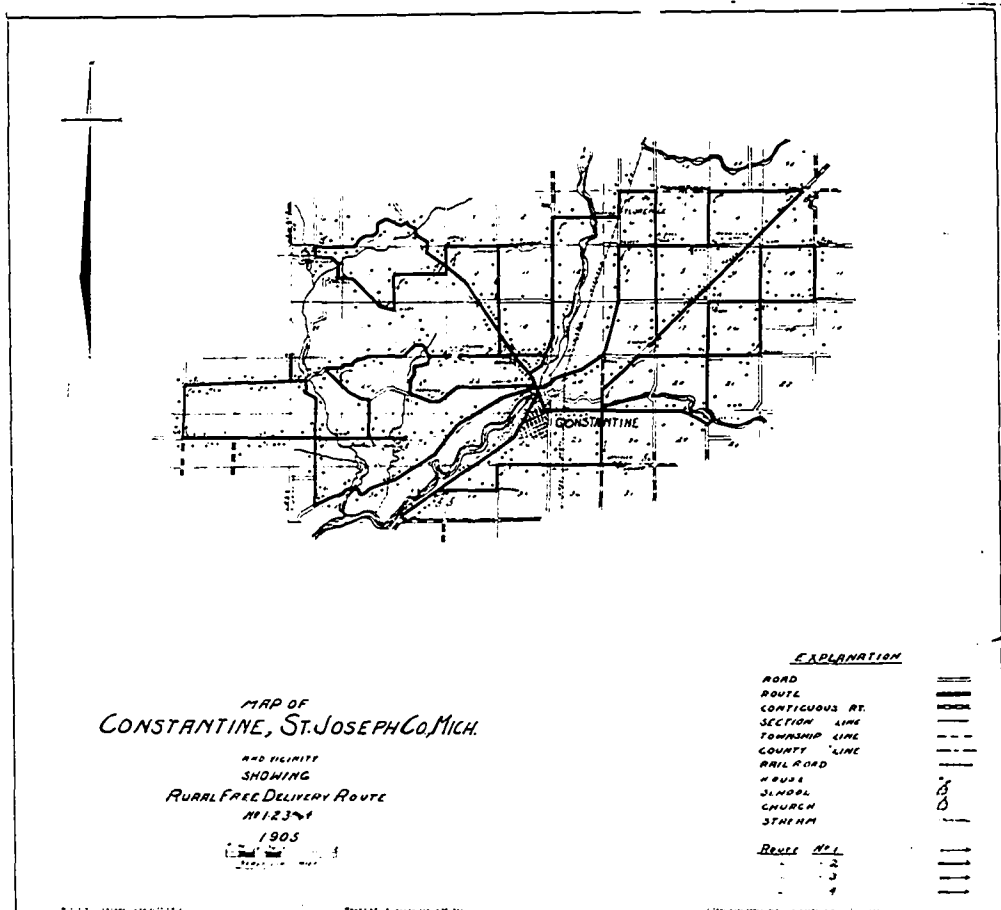


Fig. 11

Route 3 covered nine square miles with 70 houses serving 315 people, and served residents on Shaffer and Youngs Prairie roads. The route ran through the hills and wooded section in the northwestern part of the township which probably accounts for its shorter driving distance of 17-2/3 miles.

Route 4 had a total length of 21-3/8 miles, covered an area of 14 square miles with a population of 432, and served 96 houses.

In 1906 Routes 2 and 4 were changed, each adding one house, and adding about five miles to Route 2. Route 4 served the northwest half of Florence Township and Broadstreet (now U.S. 131 north of Constantine).

June 16, 1915, the Post Office Department authorized the "amendment" of the "horse and buggy" rural routes at Constantine and the commencement of three routes. The three routes had a combined length of over 77 miles whereas the horse and buggy routes requiring four delivery men were about 88 miles in length.⁶⁵ The routes were corrected again in 1926 with three country routes. With automobiles and hard surface roads delivery routes covering approximately the same territory are presently handled by two men.

⁶⁵Letter to Postmaster correcting rural routes, 1915. Loaned by Fred Davenport, Postmaster, Constantine, 1966.

The 1905 Post Office Rural Free Delivery map indicates that at the turn of the century the area on either side of Constantine Township was considered part of the service area of Constantine. All of Florence Township was served and at that early date sections 23, 24, 25 and 26 of Porter Township just over the Cass County line on the west of Constantine Township.

Newspaper sequence. The first local newspaper, the Constantine Republican, was published by Daniel Munger and Cowdry from July 6, 1836 to 1838. After ceasing of publication the files were purchased as a part of the Burton Historical Collection and are now in the Detroit Public Library. In 1851 Hull and Farquhar bought the St. Joseph County Advertiser which was published in Centreville and moved it to Constantine. Farquhar left the partnership that year, Levi T. Hull continued as editor of the Constantine Mercury and St. Joseph County Advertiser until his death in 1898. The Advertiser Record was then published by Kenneth B. Butler until March 11, 1931 when it was purchased by Joseph Cox, the present editor and publisher.

Constantine as an Educational
Center, 1868-1966

At the present time Constantine's role in southwestern Michigan is largely that of an educational center. Otherwise stated, more people come to town because of the educational facilities than are served by any other institution or service in the community. Recent expansion of industry and new housing developments partly caused the growth of the school system but the largest responsible item is the annexation of various school districts as well as the provision of expanded facilities.

Even before the town was surveyed and platted, the people who settled Constantine were interested in the education of their children. The first school was held in the basement of a store, probably as soon as the families were settled and it was discovered that Thomas Charlton could "keep" school. Other arrangements were made a short time later and the school was "kept" in a building at the corner of Water and Washington streets. The first schoolhouse, built in 1832, was used also as a general-meeting house until the churches were built. The building was located on Washington Street north of the park. The depression was at that time filled with water and was known as the School Pond. In 1847, the first schoolhouse was replaced by the second, a frame building

on the same site. At this time Constantine was booming. Barry had built his warehouse on the river, and industries were being developed. Population increased rapidly, thus requiring a larger structure. To meet this need a brick building was constructed on the same site in 1855. This was five years after the railroad was built through White Pigeon thus destroying the river trade of Constantine. It was about this time that other brick buildings went up, perhaps as a response to the great fire hazards. As late as 1877 the village did not own a fire engine.⁶⁶

It was to the credit of the people of the town that their interest in the education of the young people resulted in the constructing of the new building in 1869. A new site was selected several blocks south where a three-story brick building was erected. It is reported that at that time no other public school in the state was so well equipped.⁶⁷ This is probably a true, if subjective statement. The people who had been interested in the school system were professional men and merchants, such as Joseph Williams, Franklin Wells, and Governor Barry. These men held responsible positions. For

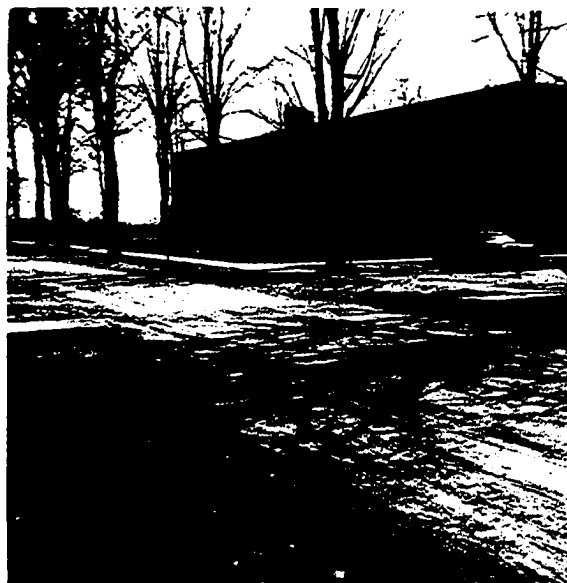
⁶⁶History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p.

⁶⁷Constantine Centennial, n.p.

example, Joseph Williams, who after his mill was burned in 1856 became the first president of the Michigan Agriculture College at Lansing (later called Michigan State College). He resigned this position to become the state senator from that district. He served as president of the senate and helped to reorganize the Agricultural College. Franklin Wells became the financial advisor of the Michigan Agricultural College and held that position for thirty years. He kept his office at Constantine and exerted influence in the affairs of the village.

Fire destroyed the third floor of the new school building in 1894. The building was remodeled in 1894 and again in 1910. In 1926 a fire destroyed almost the entire structure. During reconstruction, and until the new building was completed in 1927 (Plate 8), the high school was held in two store buildings and the elementary grades were housed in the churches. In the 1930's an addition was added for the industrial arts department (Plate 9). The school building housed elementary classrooms on the main floor and junior high and senior high school on the second floor. In 1952, a new elementary school, East Side Elementary, was built on White Pigeon Road near the junction with U.S. 131 (Plate 10). It was built in the new addition to the village where there are many young families. In 1956 a large addition was made to the

PLATE 8



Constantine School, built 1927

PLATE 9



Industrial Arts Addition

PLATE 10



East Side Elementary
built 1952

PLATE 11



Gymnasium, built 1956

school system through the construction of a new gymnasium which contains a stage and music rooms (Plate 11).

The more recent consolidation of the school districts, resulting in the elimination of one-room country schools, has contributed to the enlargement of the Constantine School District and building facilities (Fig. 12).

In 1965 the taxpayers approved a bond issue for the construction of a new elementary school building, Riverside Elementary, and a new high school building. The high school structure is located north of the Industrial Arts department and joins the gymnasium on the north. The street which passed north of the school is now incorporated in the school grounds and buildings. The old building, which was constructed in 1927, is occupied by the junior high school and includes grades 6 through 8, forming what is now called "middle grade" school.

The extent of the school district of 1965 illustrates that Constantine has indeed become an educational center (Fig. 12). The district extends into Florence Township, including sections 17, 18, 19, and 20; nearly all of sections 16 and 21; nearly half of sections 15 and 22; and portions of sections 9, 10, and 30. The district includes that part of Mottville Township south of the White Pigeon River except sections 15 and 14. Almost the

entire township of Porter in Cass County is included in the Constantine School District. A few sections of Porter in the vicinity of Union are not included, nor are sections in the center known as Shavehead. The school district extends farther westward to include part of Mason Township. The present school district includes several small villages and composes a school population of nearly 1,500 in 1966 (Table 5). This represents 800 children in K-6th and 680 in grades 7-12.

TABLE 5
 CONSTANTINE PUBLIC SCHOOL
 ENROLLMENT 1957-1967^a

Year	K-6	7-12	Total, K-12
1957-58	514	374	888
1958-59	585	436	1,021
1959-60	668	467	1,135
1960-61	654	476	1,130
1961-62	726	499	1,225
1962-63	787	510	1,297
1963-64	801	575	1,376
1964-65	789	643	1,432
1965-66	800	680	1,480
1966-67*	827	678	1,505

* estimated

^aSource: Superintendent of Schools, Constantine.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGIN OF THE POPULATION OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP, ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, MICHIGAN

The character of the population influenced the decisions made in the growth and development of the village. The immigrants brought with them their culture including language, religion, form of government, and customs. The ease with which the newcomers were assimilated into the population was evident in the various social and religious institutions. The origin of the population throws light on the type of people who first settled in the village and township as well as the origin of the increase. The way of life that these people brought with them was transferred to the Michigan Territory and modified to meet the changes and influences of a new environment. Not only the origin of the population but also the age and sex of those people are important in understanding the growth and development of the village.

This chapter is concerned with the origin of the population of the early settlement of Constantine Township. Research is from primary sources with the exception of the remarks about the history before 1850. Since census data did not record place of birth before 1850,

information has been taken from the history of the county, which is not complete regarding the origins. The primary research uses as sources the St. Joseph County Censuses of 1850 and 1870 as recorded by David Knox and James Hill, respectively, whom we assume were assistant U. S. Marshalls. The Census of 1884 was also consulted.

Information available from the 1850 and 1870 censuses includes name, age, sex, color, occupation, value of real estate, place of birth, whether married within the year, and whether "deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic." In addition, the 1850 census recorded persons attending school within the year, and the two terms, "pauper" and "convict" were added to the list of those who might fall under the general description of "deaf and dumb, blind, insane or idiotic." The 1870 census makes a division between real estate value and personal estate value. It also recorded the place of birth of each person, naming state or territory of the United States, or the country if of foreign birth. James Hill, the assistant marshall, who was the enumerator for the 1870 census, was very precise as he recorded not only the state in the United States but also the foreign state of origin thereby promoting the more accurate location of the origin of the population. Added information regarding the parentage of the inhabitants noted whether either the mother or

father was of foreign birth. The Census of 1884 recorded the place of origin of the parents. However, the sources are limited in the information available concerning the origins of the population in that it is impossible to pin-point any of the origins to a particular town or county. There is no way of knowing whether the people originated in rural or urban environment. With foreign origins the country of birth is the only record requested. Except for one city, Frankfort, Germany, which was an Imperial Free City, none of the origins report the exact community from which the people came. James Hill narrowed the field to a particular state within the foreign country. Even though the 1870 census noted when parents are of foreign birth, there is no record of their origin. For this information the Census of 1884 has been consulted. It is partially valuable in determining the national composition of the village as the origin from states do not supply the nationality of the peoples but only the paths that converge upon Constantine from the various directions and distances.

The entire population was counted according to origin, tabulating each person in the appropriate list of origins. From this information, per cents were calculated and tables and graphs constructed.

Sequent Occupance

Throughout the entire length of the St. Joseph River Valley is evidence in the form of artifacts of its once having been the habitation of the unknown and mysterious people who have been named the Moundbuilders. Who they were, where they came from and what happened to their civilization is not known. The time and cause of their decadence is also unknown. The second occupants of this region had no knowledge of the Moundbuilders, nor did they have tradition or legend of them when first they came into contact with the Europeans. The evidences of the Moundbuilders consist of garden beds, mounds and fortifications, implements in various stages of work, copper utensils and flints. Evidence of these earliest dwellers was found when, in 1831, an excavation was being made in the north plat of the village of Constantine. At later dates, farmers plowing fields along the river broke into ancient lily-pod ovens which were used to bake the roots of the lotus plants gathered from the river.

When the territory of southwestern Michigan was ceded to the United States, at the Treaty of Chicago in 1821, the Indians of St. Joseph County were provided for by reserving land for them to be known as the Nottawaseepee Reservation. The band of Indians known as the Nottawaseepee

Indians was composed of the tribes of Pottawatomie, Ottawa, and Chippewa Indians whose villages were scattered throughout the area. The reservation included some of the choicest lands in St. Joseph County taking in a portion of Nottawa prairie, the oak-openings of Mendon, Leonidas and Park townships.

The early white settlers, who looked with envy upon the Indians' land, supplied the Indians with strong drink which drove them into poverty and ruin. These drunken orgies, in addition to the settlers' fear of the Indians at the outbreak of the Black Hawk War, made them determined to dispossess the Nottawas of their land. Governor Porter induced the Nottawaseepe to sign a treaty ceding to the United States the land on which they lived. The Indians showed signs of rebellion and reluctance to leave, but the settlers were already moving onto the choice locations, closing up trails and driving off game. In the spring of 1840 the Indians were removed from their land, being escorted by government troops to Peoria, Illinois, where they were driven at bayonet point on board a steamboat. Their ponies were sold and their goods confiscated. Then the powerless impoverished people were taken down the Illinois to the Mississippi and up the Arkansas to the border of the Kansas territory.

First White Settlers

Among the early white settlers was Judge William Meek who came from Monroe County, Ohio, in the winter of 1828-29 and located at the confluence of the Fawn and St. Joseph rivers. He purchased his holdings from the Land Office in 1829. Seven other men took up land in the township in 1829. In 1830-31 four more registered their claims. History records only five origins of these first settlers.¹ Of these, four were from Ohio and one from Pennsylvania. Two Ohio counties of origin are known: Monroe County and Richland County. In the first two years of settlement the land south of the river was occupied. By 1831, the first farm was located in the oak-openings on the prairie north of the river. At a later date this area was called Broadstreet because a wide road could be built without first clearing a trail through the forest.

By 1834 people had arrived in Constantine from distant points further than Ohio and Pennsylvania. John Barry, who had come to White Pigeon from Amherst, New Hampshire, moved to Constantine in 1834 with his wife, a native of Vermont. He established a lucrative river

¹History of St. Joseph County, 1877, p. 113.

trade and was so influential in business that the town grew to a prosperous inland trade center in the 1840's. His contributions were not limited to the business world as he served his community at the Michigan Constitutional Convention and later served three terms as governor of the state.

The population of the town in 1835 was 300, according to the records. The township was established in 1837 and a census taken of the township in 1838 recorded 842 inhabitants.² Since this census is not available there is no means of checking the accuracy of the account. It would appear that this number was too high. (See 1845 census.)

A census of Constantine Township was taken in 1845 in which the sex and a limited amount of information regarding age are available. There is no information as to the origin of the population at this period. The population of the township was 829.³

Census of 1850

By 1850 the population of the township had grown to

²Ibid., p. 17, 115.

³Census of Constantine Township, 1845. Manuscript. Original and only copy available is in Archives, Western Michigan University.

1,494 persons from thirty different origins (Table 6). In 1845 Governor Barry had employed an agent to go to New York for the purpose of encouraging immigration to Michigan. In 1848 Governor Epaphroditus Ransom appointed an agent to represent the state in New York City. A pamphlet, The Emmigrant's Guide to Michigan, was later published which helped increase the population of Michigan.⁴ No doubt many immigrants were encouraged to at least see where Governor Barry lived.

Composition 1850. In 1850 nearly one-third of the population was of Michigan origin accounting for 477 persons. New York, the largest contributing source of immigrants, furnished 425 people which was over 28 per cent of the total population. Population of Pennsylvania origin accounted for 8.4 per cent with 126 persons. Ohio, apparently the principal source of the early growth, had contributed but 6.5 per cent of the population of the township with 98 persons by 1850. England matched Ohio's contribution with 96 people. Vermont and Massachusetts together accounted for 6 per cent or 90 persons. Although these two were relatively small source of population, they were wealthy contributors in that period of

⁴Willis F. Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965, p. 355.

TABLE 6

ORIGIN OF INHABITANTS OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN, 1850^a

Place of Origin	Number of Persons	Per. Cent of Population
1. Michigan	477	31.93
2. New York	425	28.45
3. Pennsylvania	126	8.43
4. Ohio	98	6.56
5. England	96	6.43
6. Vermont	54	3.61
7. Massachusetts	36	2.41
8. Indiana	31	2.07
9. Germany	27	1.80
10. Connecticut	22	1.47
11. Unknown	19	1.27
12. Canada	11	.74
13. Scotland	9	.60
14. New Hampshire	8	.54
15. France	7	.47
16. Rhode Island	6	.40
17. New Jersey	6	.40
18. Maryland	6	.40
19. Ireland	5	.33
20. North Carolina	5	.33
21. Virginia	5	.33
22. Maine	4	.27
23. Delaware	3	.20
24. Switzerland	2	.13
25. Alabama	1	.07
26. Holland	1	.07
27. Louisiana	1	.07
28. Newfoundland	1	.07
29. Nova Scotia	1	.07
30. South Carolina	1	.07
Total:	1,494	100.00

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1850. Manuscript.
Copy in Archives, Western Michigan University.

Constantine's growth. Very few people immigrated from Indiana before 1850 and so contributed only 2 per cent (Table 6). By 1870 those persons of Indiana origin, with an increase of about 70 persons, would amount to over 4 per cent of the 1870's population (Table 7).

Foreign origins. Those of foreign birth represented 11.25 per cent of the township's population in 1850 (Table 6). Ten foreign countries were represented with England the largest contributor (96 persons). Those of German birth accounted for less than 2 per cent of the population (Table 6). Nevertheless, in actual numbers, Germany was the second largest foreign contributor. Canada contributed eleven persons which amounted to less than one per cent. Scotland, France, Ireland, and Switzerland together contributed eighteen persons with less than one per cent each. Holland, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia each contributed one person. While the persons from Newfoundland and Nova Scotia were not enumerated in the population in 1870, it is possible that they were listed as Canadian.⁵ Holland contributed two.

⁵This is doubtful considering the character of the enumerator who listed the foreign state even though the report required only the country of foreign birth.

TABLE 7

ORIGIN OF INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE
OF CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN, 1870^a

Place of Origin	Number	Per Cent of Population
1. Michigan	516	39.97
2. New York	191	14.79
3. Pennsylvania	165	12.78
4. Ohio	102	7.90
5. England	70	5.42
6. Vermont	56	4.34
7. Indiana	54	4.18
8. Canada	13	1.01
9. Connecticut	11	.85
10. Massachusetts	10	.77
11. Prussia	9	.70
12. Virginia	9	.70
13. Ireland	8	.62
14. Wisconsin	7	.54
15. Hanover	6	.47
16. Illinois	6	.47
17. New Jersey	6	.47
18. Denmark	5	.39
19. Württemberg	4	.31
20. Atlantic Ocean	4	.31
21. Baden	3	.23
22. France	3	.23
23. Iowa	3	.23
24. Switzerland	3	.23

TABLE 7--Continued

Place of Origin	Number	Per cent of Population
25. Bavaria	2	.16
26. Belgium	2	.16
27. Delaware	2	.16
28. Holstein	2	.16
29. New Hampshire	2	.16
30. Rhode Island	2	.16
31. Saxony	2	.16
32. South Carolina	2	.16
33. Arkansas	1	.08
34. Hesse Cassel	1	.08
35. Hesse Darmstadt	1	.08
36. Holland	1	.08
37. Jamaica	1	.08
38. Maine	1	.08
39. Maryland	1	.08
40. Poland	1	.08
41. Scotland	1	.08
42. Tennessee	1	.08
Total:	1,290	100.00

^aCensus of St. Joseph County, Michigan, 1870.
Available in Archives, Western Michigan University.

State origin. Comparing the states of origin of the population an enlightening pattern is noted. The emigration from New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio appears as a broad direct path with 649 emigrants. New England states furnished 79 persons, while the southern states (Maryland, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, and Alabama) furnished only 19 persons to the population of Constantine Township (Table 6).

At least a portion of those of Indiana and Ohio origin were indications of temporary stops for their families. This is not indicated on the table. By inspecting the households, recorded in the census, a pattern often is shown of a family of children of decreasing ages with different places of birth migrating westward. In other words, a family originating in New York with older children born there moves westward into Ohio or Indiana. Here another child is born. Later the family moves to Michigan. By this method families could be traced from the parents' place of origin to Constantine.

In the 1850 Census 19 persons are recorded as of unknown origin. Possibly, in most cases, the enumerator did not take time to find out the origin if the person giving the information did not know. Tradition relates that a number of persons deliberately concealed their origin and some just did not know it.

Summary. In 1850 those of Michigan origin composed the largest segment of the population of Constantine Township. The population of New York origin represented the largest contribution of immigration. New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, with decreasing numbers respectively, proceeding westward, composed about 43 per cent of the total population. Those of New England origin, while representing only about 5 per cent, were important contributors to the economic growth of the township. The population from the southern states accounted for the same number of persons as the unknown origin--both relatively unimportant. England was the largest foreign contributor with 96 persons. Persons of German birth amounted to less than 2 per cent of the township population.

Census of 1870

James Hill, Assistant Marshall, enumerated 2,504 persons in Constantine Township in 1870.⁶ He separated

⁶His handwriting is easy to read and quite artistic. Not only the manuscript, but also the accuracy of recording places, facilitated research. There is never any question of what word has been written. There are no people of unknown origins or unknown occupations. Even the women are recorded as "keeping house" or "teacher." The children are recorded "at home" or "at school" if over five. A child of school age "at home" would probably also be noted as "idiotic." This record is not peculiar to Constantine but was standard data all over the country in 1870.

Constantine Township records into two divisions, the village and the township. In order to distinguish his use of "township" as the rural area that contained only farmers, from the political township, the 1870 township is referred to as the "rural township." The combined village and rural area will be referred to as Constantine Township. When comparing 1850 and 1870 population, "township" refers in each case to the area within the political boundary of Constantine Township.

Village population, 1870. In 1870 the Village of Constantine contained 1,290 non-rural inhabitants from forty-two origins (Table 7). Those of Michigan birth again accounted for the largest segment of the population, with 516 persons. There were more Michigan-born residents in the village in 1870 than there were in all of Constantine Township in 1850.

In the village the New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio pattern as second, third, and fourth rank is evident again. Those of New York origin were 191, Pennsylvania 165, and Ohio 102. These three states accounted for about 25 per cent, together less than the Michigan origin. Fifth-ranking England is the largest foreign contributor with 70 persons that accounted for 5 per cent of the village population. Vermont and Indiana contributed about 55 each, which together accounted for 8.5 per cent

of the population of the village. Canada contributed only one per cent to the village population. Thirty-four places, of foreign and national origin, contributed less than one per cent each to the village.(Table 7).

Regional origin. Comparing sources of population regionally for the United States, those native to Michigan composed 40 per cent while the New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio region, forming a straight westward route, composed 35.5 per cent. New England contributed 6.5 per cent to Constantine's village. In comparison, the origin of 1850 population was entirely from the east and south (Table 6).

Foreign origin. The foreign origins came from 21 different places including four persons from the Atlantic Ocean (Table 7). This may be explained by assuming that James Hill was as accurate as he characteristically seems to be and these persons were born during the voyage to the United States. Here is a good example of the limitation of the origins, hence nothing is known of the true origin or nationality of these people. From England came 70 persons accounting for 5.4 per cent of the village. Canada accounted for 13 persons or one per cent. Various other places accounted for less than one per cent of the population--some contributing but one or two persons.

Eight different states are listed within the German nation as contributing to the population of the village. In 1850, at a time when the country was not unified, the Germans in the population were recorded as originating in Germany. In 1870, as Germany was about to become unified, the people from this region were recorded as originating in particular states. Nine persons in the village came from Prussia (Table 7). Hanover and Wurtemberg contributed six and four respectively. Baden contributed three, Bavaria and Saxony contributed two each, Hesse Cassel and Hesse Darmstadt one each. Together the German states accounted for three per cent of the population of the village (Table 7).

Other origins contributing eight persons or less included Ireland, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark with Holstein, Holland, Jamaica, Poland, and Scotland (Table 7).

Summary. The village of Constantine population was composed of 40 per cent native born (Michigan folks) and 35 per cent of the New York-Pennsylvania-Ohio element. England was the largest contributor of foreign born population with 5.5 per cent, while Germany was the second-ranking foreign contributor with 3 per cent. Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania origins together composed two-thirds of the village population. Seven origins made up about 89 per cent of the village. Persons of 34 origins

accounted for about 10 per cent of the population.

Rural township population, 1870. The rural township population totalled 1,115 in 1870 (Table 8). These people originated in 33 different places, including Michigan which accounted for 41 per cent of the rural group.

There were fewer persons of Michigan birth in the rural township than in the village but they made up a larger percentage of their group than did the Michigan-born of the village (Tables 7 and 8). In the rural township Pennsylvania ranked second with 290 persons while New York ranked third with 130 persons. Ohio contributed 63 persons with over 5 per cent of the rural population. Four per cent of the population was contributed by Indiana.

England was the largest foreign contributor with 30 persons. Prussia accounted for over one per cent of the rural population and France slightly below one per cent. The other German states already mentioned and Switzerland, Canada, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales each contributed less than one per cent to the rural township.

Five origins accounted for 89 per cent of the rural township population. Over 40 per cent of this group was the native-born Michigan population. Ohio and Indiana contributed about 10 per cent to the rural population. The origins under one per cent accounted for almost 7 per cent of the rural population.

TABLE 8

ORIGIN OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE RURAL TOWNSHIP
OF CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN, 1870^a

Place of Origin	Number	Per Cent of Village
1. Michigan	459	41.20
2. Pennsylvania	290	26.03
3. New York	130	11.67
4. Ohio	63	5.65
5. Indiana	48	4.31
6. England	30	2.69
7. Prussia	17	1.52
8. France	11	.98
9. Switzerland	7	.63
10. Maryland	6	.54
11. Massachusetts	5	.45
12. Vermont	5	.45
13. Virginia	5	.45
14. Canada	4	.36
15. Ireland	4	.36
16. North Carolina	4	.36
17. Illinois	3	.27
18. Wurtemberg	3	.27
19. Hanover	2	.18
20. Hesse Darmstadt	2	.18
21. Holland	2	.18
22. Iowa	2	.18
23. Tennessee	2	.18
24. Connecticut	1	.09
25. Frankfort, Germany	1	.09
26. Minnesota	1	.09
27. Missouri	1	.09
28. Nassau	1	.09
29. New Hampshire	1	.09
30. Rhode Island	1	.09
31. Schleswig	1	.09
32. Scotland	1	.09
33. Wales	1	.09
34. Washington, D. C.	1	.09
Total:	1,115	100.00

^aCensus of St. Joseph County, Michigan, 1850.

Comparing Village and Rural
Township Origins, 1870

The total population of Constantine Township in 1870 was 2,405 with fifty different origins (Table 9). The Michigan-born inhabitants constituted 40.5 per cent of this, which had increased from 477 in 1850 to 975 in 1870. Pennsylvania and New York together accounted for over 32 per cent of the population with 775 persons. Evidently Pennsylvania people preferred rural to village life as there were nearly 300 in the rural area and 165 in the village. While New York had 190 people in the village a lesser number of New Yorkers lived on farms (Table 9).

Origin that preferred village environment. Ohio was another origin that preferred the village to rural life. Over 100 persons born in Ohio lived in the village compared to 63 in the rural township.

Less than half as many English lived in the rural township as in the village (Table 9). Vermont was overwhelming in preference to village life with 56 in the village and only 5 on farms.

Other people who preferred village life to farm life were those from Canada, Massachusetts, Virginia, New Jersey, Wisconsin, and especially Connecticut with 11 in the village and only 1 in the rural township (Table 9).

TABLE 9

PER CENT OF THE VILLAGE AND RURAL POPULATION
BY ORIGIN OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP,
MICHIGAN, 1870^a

Place of Origin	Village	Rural	Total	Per Cent of Total
1. Michigan	516	459	975	40.55
2. Pennsylvania	165	290	455	18.92
3. New York	191	130	321	13.36
4. Ohio	102	63	165	6.86
5. Indiana	54	48	102	4.26
6. England	70	30	100	4.16
7. Vermont	56	5	61	2.55
8. Prussia	9	17	26	1.08
9. Canada	13	4	17	.71
10. Massachusetts	10	5	15	.63
11. France	3	11	14	.58
12. Virginia	9	5	14	.58
13. Connecticut	11	1	12	.50
14. Ireland	8	4	12	.50
15. Switzerland	3	7	10	.42
16. Illinois	6	3	9	.37
17. Hanover	6	2	8	.33
18. Württemberg	4	3	7	.29
19. Wisconsin	7	-	7	.29
20. Maryland	1	6	7	.29
21. New Jersey	6	-	6	.25
22. Iowa	3	2	5	.21
23. Denmark	5	-	5	.21
24. Atlantic Ocean	4	-	4	.17
25. North Carolina	-	4	4	.17
26. Baden	3	-	3	.12
27. Hesse Darmstadt	1	2	3	.12
28. Tennessee	1	2	3	.12
29. Holland	1	2	3	.12

TABLE 9--Continued

Place of Origin	Village	Rural	Total	Per Cent of Total
30. New Hampshire	2	1	3	.12
31. Rhode Island	2	1	3	.12
32. Holstein	2	-	2	.08
33. Bavaria	2	-	2	.08
34. Belgium	2	-	2	.08
35. Delaware	2	-	2	.08
36. Saxony	2	-	2	.08
37. Scotland	1	1	2	.08
38. South Carolina	2	-	2	.08
39. Arkansas	1	-	1	.04
40. Frankfort, Germany	-	1	1	.04
41. Hesse Cassel	1	-	1	.04
42. Jamaica	1	-	1	.04
43. Maine	1	-	1	.04
44. Minnesota	-	1	1	.04
45. Missouri	-	1	1	.04
46. Nassau	-	1	1	.04
47. Poland	1	-	1	.04
48. Schleswig	-	1	1	.04
49. Wales	-	1	1	.04
50. Washington, D. C.	-	1	1	.04
Total:	1,290	1,115	2,405	100.00

^aSt. Joseph County Census of 1870. Manuscript.
Coy in Archives, Western Michigan University.

Some preferred farm life. Some groups had a higher percentage of people in the rural township than in the village. Pennsylvania was noticeably rural with 290 on farms and 165 in the village. Prussia was more rural minded, having 17 rural inhabitants compared to 9 village inhabitants. France had almost four times as many farmers as urbanites with 3 people in the village and 11 people in the rural township. The Swiss preferred rural life more than two to one over village life (Table 9). Maryland's rural contribution was six to one in the village. North Carolina was entirely rural with all four of Constantine Township inhabitants in the rural township.

Comparison of origins of township. In comparing groups for the total Constantine Township it is interesting to note the contrast in the Pennsylvania-New York population. Pennsylvania ranks second in population with over 450 persons. New York ranks third, having 320. Although not known why it is true, more Pennsylvanians lived on farms than in the village, while more New Yorkers lived in the village than on farms.

Indiana and England each contributed about 100 persons to Constantine Township population, each accounting for about 4 per cent. While Indiana folks were about evenly distributed between village and rural township,

of those of English birth 70 lived in the village and 30 lived in the rural township.

Ohio contributed 165 persons to Constantine Township in 1870. Over 100 of Ohio origin lived in the village.

Preference of location of foreign origin. Comparing foreign origin in regard to preference of location, it was found that nearly 140 persons of foreign birth lived in the village while 85 lived in the rural township. The English preferred village life to farm life, while Prussia is a contrast with nearly twice as many rural inhabitants as villagers. Thirteen Canadians settled in the village with only four on farms. There were more French on farms than in the village. The Irish and Swiss present a contrasting picture. Twice as many people from Ireland settled in the village as on farms, while more than twice as many people from Switzerland settled on farms as in the village. Together Hanover and Würtemberg contributed 15 people to Constantine Township. Ten of these settled in the village. All of those of Danish origin were urbanites. The four people born on the Atlantic Ocean settled in the village. Those in the total township population from Baden, Holstein, Bavaria, Belgium, Saxony, Hesse Cassel, Jamaica, and Schleswig, all settled for village life. Nassau and Wales, with one each, preferred the rural township. Thus those of foreign birth with

larger groups in rural areas than in the village were Prussia, France, Switzerland, Hesse Darmstadt, Holland, Nassau, and Schleswig. Only the Prussian group represents more than one per cent of the Constantine Township population.

Summary. Comparison of the rural township and the village data shows that:

1. Persons of Michigan birth were nearly equal between the village and rural township. There were over 500 in the village and over 450 in the rural township.
2. The people that came to Constantine Township from Pennsylvania evidently preferred farm life. Nearly 300 settled on the farms in the township while over 150 persons became village residents.
3. The New York origin was strongly village-oriented with 190 in the village and 130 living on farms.
4. Ohio contributed more folks to the village than to the rural township. Over 100 villagers were of Ohio origin as compared to approximately 60 farmers.
5. Twice as many English-born residents were villagers as farmers.
6. Vermont was strongly urban with less than five per cent of its population on farms.

Other important points of interest involve the per cent of population contributed by the various origins:

1. Michigan-born residents accounted for over 40 per cent of Constantine Township population.
2. Pennsylvania and New York together contributed over 775 persons with 19 per cent of Constantine Township coming from Pennsylvania and over 13

per cent from New York.

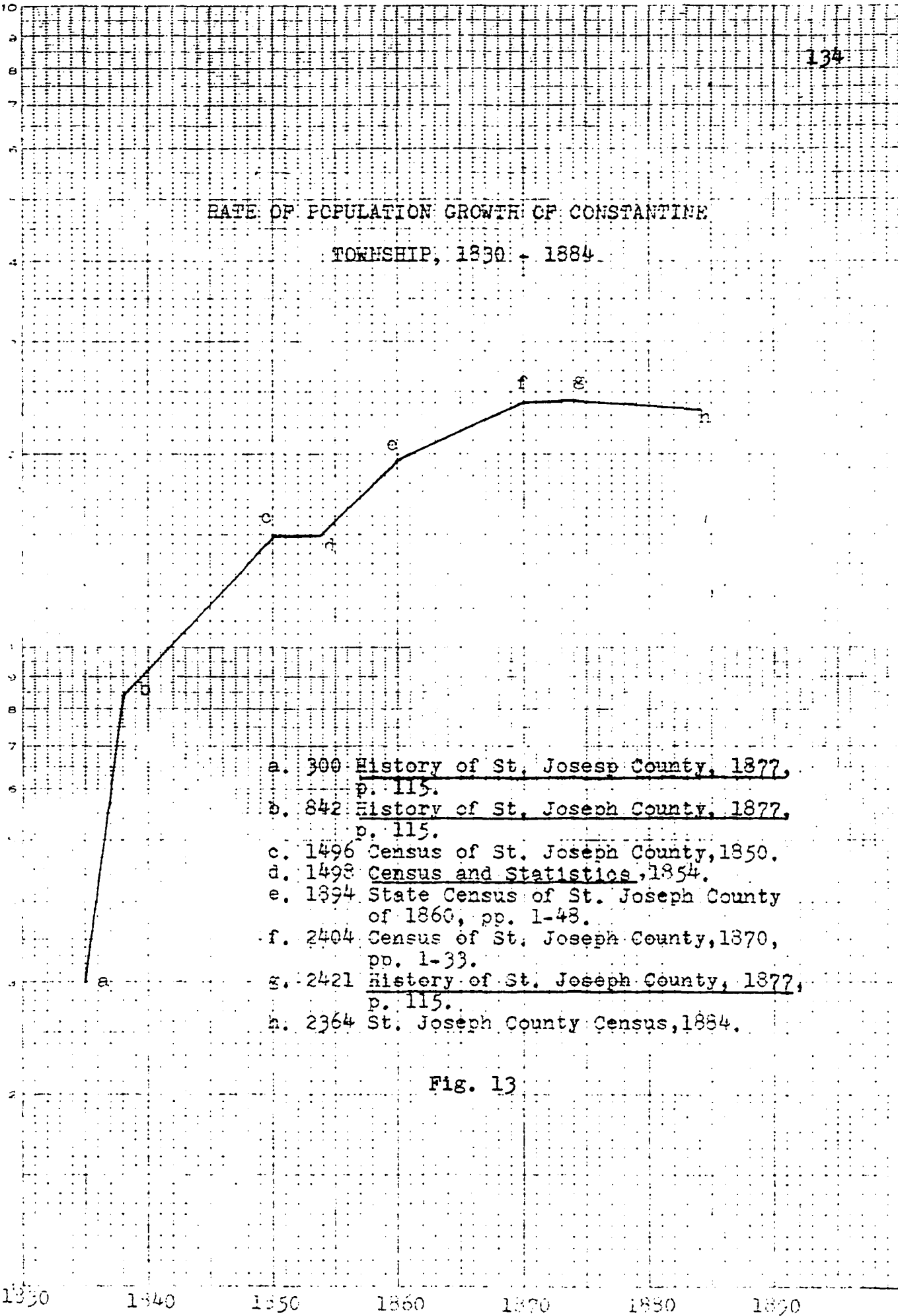
3. Ohio, Indiana, and England together made up over 15 per cent of Constantine Township's population with between 4 and 7 per cent each.

Change in the Origin of Constantine
Township Population, 1850-1870

In order to simplify the comparison of the population of 1850 with that of 1870, two tables have been constructed showing the change in population from 1850, when Constantine was a successful trade town and industrial center, to 1870, when the population began to be stabilized (Fig. 13). Table 10 shows the change in the origin of population from 1850-1870 of the states only. Table 11 shows the change in the origin of population from 1850-1870 of foreign states only.

The population of Constantine Township increased over 1,000 from 1850 to 1870. In 1850 the population of the township was nearly 1,500 and by 1870 had increased to over 2,500. The group with the greatest increase was the native-born Michigan inhabitants who increased nearly 500 from 1850-1870. Ranking second were those of Pennsylvania origin with an increase of 329 persons. Indiana ranked third according to increase in the origin groups. In 1870 the Indiana origin was 102, which were 71 more than in 1850. Those of Ohio origin also added 67 persons to the township's population.

RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP, 1830 - 1884



- a. 300 History of St. Joseph County, 1877,
p. 115.
- b. 842 History of St. Joseph County, 1877,
p. 115.
- c. 1496 Census of St. Joseph County, 1850.
- d. 1498 Census and Statistics, 1854.
- e. 1894 State Census of St. Joseph County
of 1860, pp. 1-48.
- f. 2404 Census of St. Joseph County, 1870,
pp. 1-33.
- g. 2421 History of St. Joseph County, 1877,
p. 115.
- h. 2364 St. Joseph County Census, 1884.

Fig. 13

TABLE 10

CHANGE IN POPULATION OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP 1850-1870 ACCORDING
TO STATES ONLY^a

Place of Origin	1850	1870	Change
1. Michigan	477	975	498
2. Pennsylvania	126	455	329
3. Indiana	31	102	71
4. Ohio	98	165	65
5. Virginia	5	14	9
6. Illinois	-	9	9
7. Vermont	54	61	7
8. Wisconsin	-	7	7
9. Iowa	-	5	5
10. Tennessee	-	3	3
11. Arkansas	-	1	1
12. District of Columbia	-	1	1
13. Maryland	6	7	1
14. Minnesota	-	1	1
15. Missouri	-	1	1
16. South Carolina	1	2	1
17. New Jersey	6	6	0
18. Alabama	1	-	-1
19. Delaware	3	2	-1
20. Louisiana	1	-	-1
21. North Carolina	5	4	-1
22. Maine	4	1	-3
23. Rhode Island	6	3	-3
24. New Hampshire	8	3	-5
25. Connecticut	22	12	-10
26. Massachusetts	36	15	-21
27. New York	425	321	-104
Total:	1,315	2,176	861

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1850. St. Joseph County Census, 1870. Archives, Western Michigan University.

TABLE 11

INCREASE OR DECREASE OF FOREIGN ORIGIN
OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP, 1850-1870^a

Place of Origin	1850	1870	Change
1. Germany (all states)	27	(54)	(27)
2. Prussia	-	26	26
3. Switzerland	2	10	10
4. France	7	14	7
5. Ireland	5	12	7
6. Wurtemberg	-	7	7
7. Canada	11	17	6
8. Denmark	-	5	5
9. Atlantic Ocean	-	4	4
10. England	96	100	4
11. Baden	-	3	3
12. Hesse Darmstadt	-	3	3
13. Bavaria	-	2	2
14. Belgium	-	2	2
15. Holland	1	3	2
16. Holstein	-	2	2
17. Saxony	-	2	2
18. Frankfort, Germany	-	1	1
19. Hesse Cassel	-	1	1
20. Jamaica	-	1	1
21. Nassau	-	1	1
22. Poland	-	1	1
23. Schleswig	-	1	1
24. Wales	-	1	1
25. Newfoundland	1	-	-1
26. Nova Scotia	1	-	-1
27. Scotland	9	2	-7
28. Hanover	-	8	-8
Total:	160	229	69

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1850. St. Joseph County Census, 1870. Archives, Western Michigan University.

Of the 54 different places of origin, 39 places contributed to the increase of population (Tables 10 and 11). Of these 39 places, 26 were not even represented in 1850. Ten of these places are accounted for by use of the German states instead of the country. Other foreign origins that appear in 1870 but not in 1850 are Denmark with five persons; Belgium and Holstein with two each; and Jamaica, Poland, Schleswig, and Wales with one each. Those of Atlantic Ocean origin were also an increase of four in 1870 as none appeared in 1850 (Table 11).

State origins that did not appear in the 1850 census but did in 1870 were Illinois (9), Wisconsin (7), Iowa (5), Tennessee (3), and Arkansas, Minnesota, Missouri, and District of Columbia with one each (Table 10). Whereas in 1850 the origin of the population was entirely from the east and south, in 1870 it appears that a number of persons who had gone west migrated to Michigan bringing with them children who were born farther west (Table 10).

Comparison of Per Cent of Origin Groups
in the 1850 Population and
the 1870 Population

By constructing a series of maps using concentric circles, a visual pattern is shown of the change in the per cent of an origin of the population of the years 1850 and 1870. The same symbol for the value of per cent has

been used on the maps not only to be able to compare the change in per cent between the two years but also to facilitate comparison of the foreign and state per cent change.

Change in per cent of foreign origin. Study of the table shows that in 1850 England accounted for between 5.0-9.9 per cent of the population of Constantine Township (Fig. 14 and Table 12), but in 1870 it amounted to between 1.0-4.9 per cent (Fig. 15 and Table 13).

The per cent of the township population from Ireland, Scotland, France, Switzerland, and Holland did not change greatly from 1850 to 1870. These origins in 1850 contributed less than one per cent to the township's population (Fig. 14). In 1870 these same origins, although they may have contributed a number of persons, still account for less than one per cent of the total population of the township.

Of all those of foreign origin, Germany presents the most interesting visual account. In 1850 it contributed between 1.0-4.9 per cent of the township population (Fig. 14). In 1870 the German origin was divided between the states. Prussia alone accounts for between 1.0-4.9 per cent of the 1870 population of the township (Fig. 15). Nine other German states appear with less than one per cent each (Fig. 15). It is on the 1870 map of Europe's

PER CENT OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP POPULATION 1850 ORIGINATING IN EUROPE

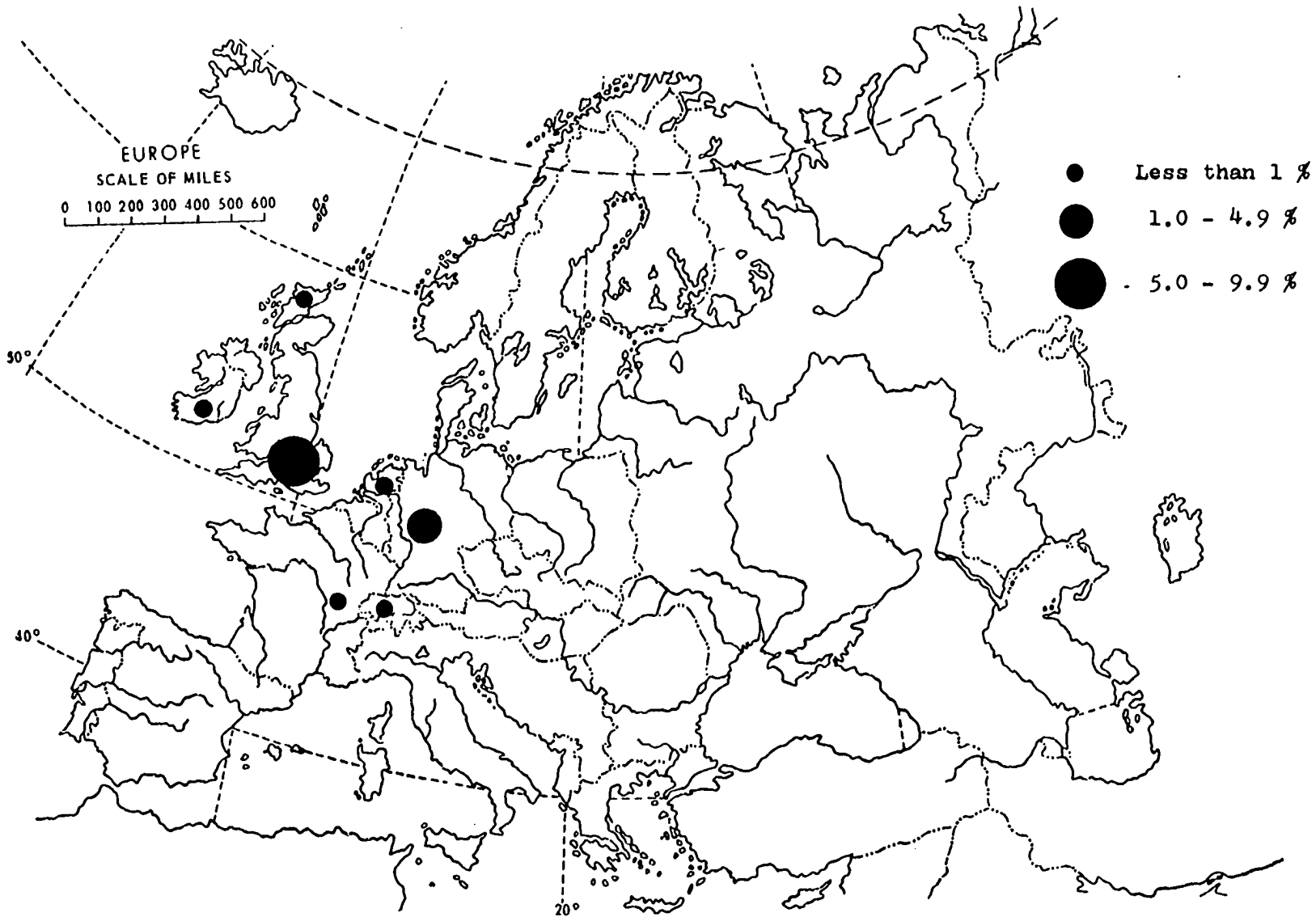


Fig. 14

TABLE 12

PER CENT OF POPULATION OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP, 1850, OF FOREIGN ORIGIN^a

Place of Origin	Number	Per Cent of Total
1. England	96	6.43
2. Germany	27	1.80
3. Canada	11	.74
4. Scotland	9	.60
5. France	7	.47
6. Ireland	5	.33
7. Switzerland	2	.14
8. Holland	1	.07
9. Newfoundland	1	.07
10. Nova Scotia	1	.07
Total:	160	10.72

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1850. Manuscript.
Archives, Western Michigan University.

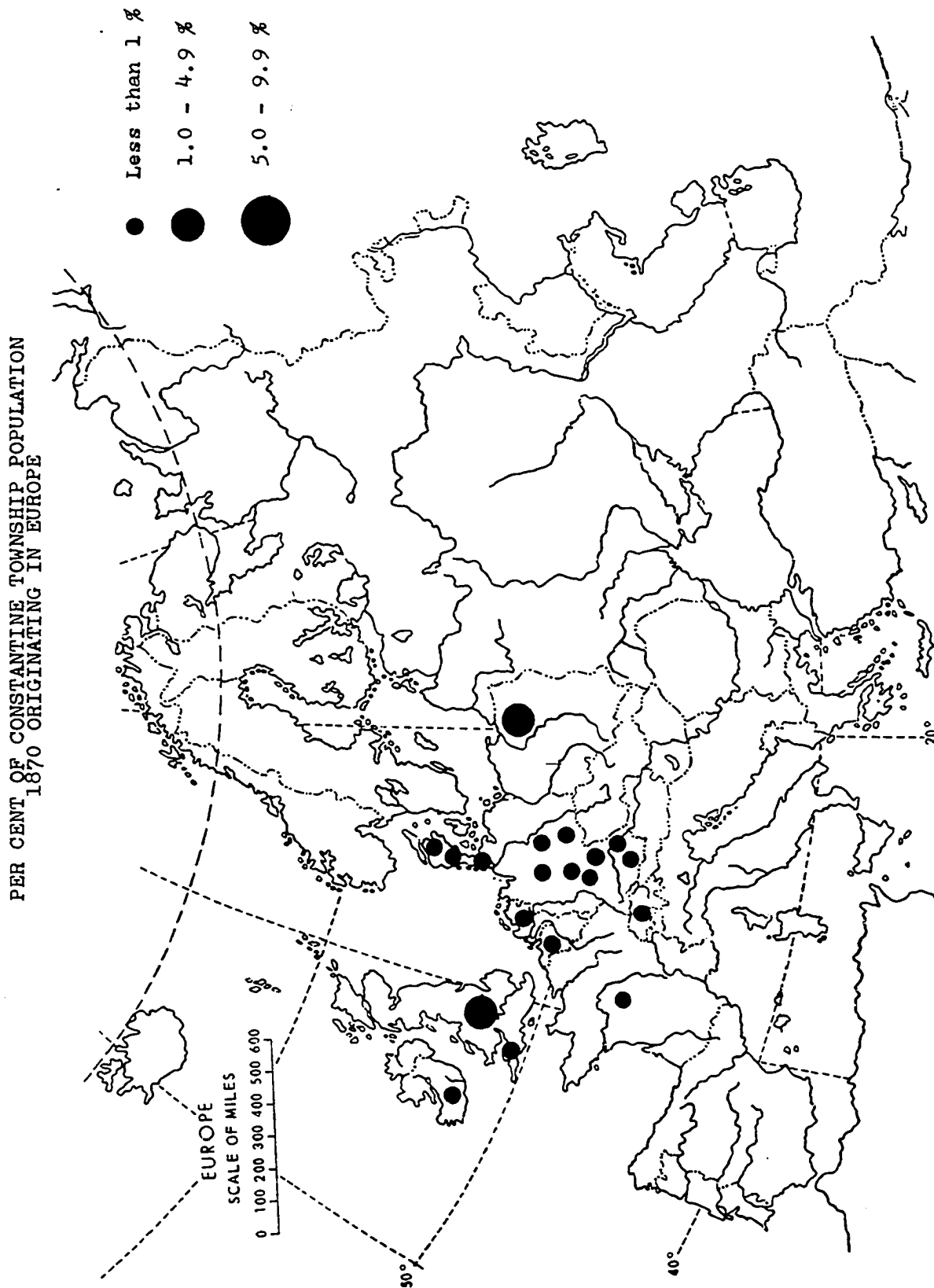


Fig. 15

TABLE 13

PER CENT OF POPULATION OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP, 1870, OF FOREIGN ORIGIN^a

Place of Origin	Number	Per Cent of Total
1. England	100	4.16
2. Prussia	26	1.08
3. Canada	17	.71
4. France	14	.58
5. Ireland	12	.50
6. Switzerland	10	.42
7. Hanover	8	.33
8. Wurtemberg	7	.29
9. Denmark	5	.21
10. Atlantic Ocean	4	.17
11. Baden	3	.12
12. Hesse Darmstadt	3	.12
13. Holland	3	.12
14. Bavaria	2	.08
15. Belgium	2	.08
16. Holstein	2	.08
17. Saxony	2	.08
18. Scotland	2	.08
19. Frankfort, Germany	1	.04
20. Hesse Cassel	1	.04
21. Jamaica	1	.04
22. Nassau	1	.04
23. Poland	1	.04
24. Schleswig	1	.04
25. Wales	1	.04
Total:	229	9.49

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1870. Manuscript. Archives, Western Michigan University.

contribution to the population of Constantine Township that a more accurate picture of foreign origin appears (Fig. 15).

Several new origins, that were absent in 1850, are noticeable in 1870. Three different areas in Denmark contributed to the population of Constantine. One was recorded as Denmark, while Holstein and Schleswig each added less than one per cent (Fig. 15 and Table 13). Belgium also is represented with less than one per cent.

Change in per cent of state origin. By observing the two maps of the state origin of Constantine Township population it is immediately noticeable that Michigan origin increased in per cent (Figs. 16 and 17). Even though persons continued to come to Constantine from various places, the number of Michigan births increased at a greater rate and therefore increased more rapidly in per cent while most other groups increased at a moderate or slower rate.

In 1850 New York was in the same category as Michigan, contributing between 10.0-34.9 per cent or 477 to the population of the township (Table 14 and Fig. 16). The two states of Ohio and Pennsylvania added between 5.0-9.9 per cent each or 225 to Constantine's population (Table 14). Four states were contributors of between 1.0-4.9 per cent of the township population. These were Vermont

PER CENT OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP POPULATION, 1850, ORIGINATING
IN THE UNITED STATES

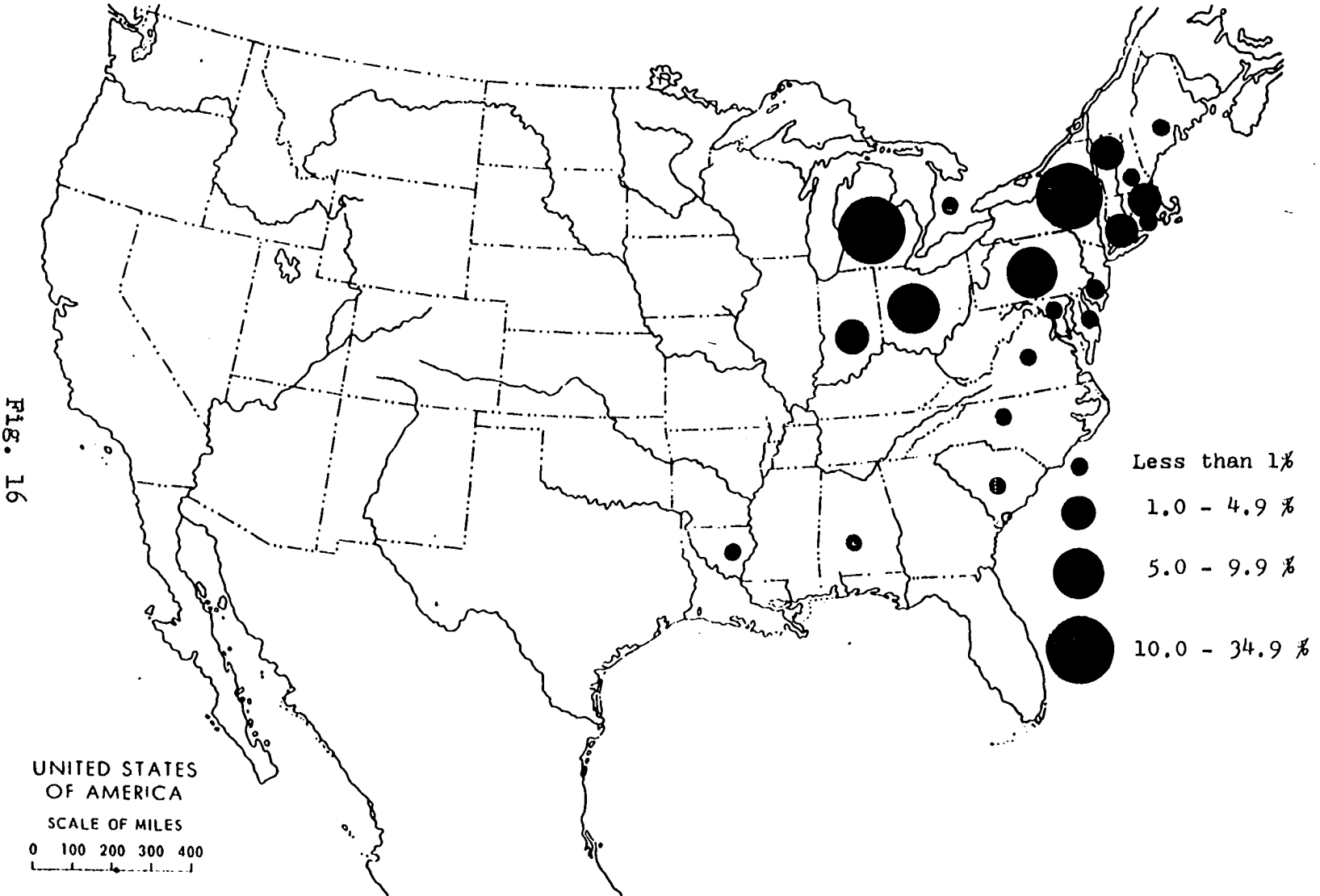


Fig. 16

PER CENT OF CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP POPULATION, 1870, ORIGINATING
IN THE UNITED STATES

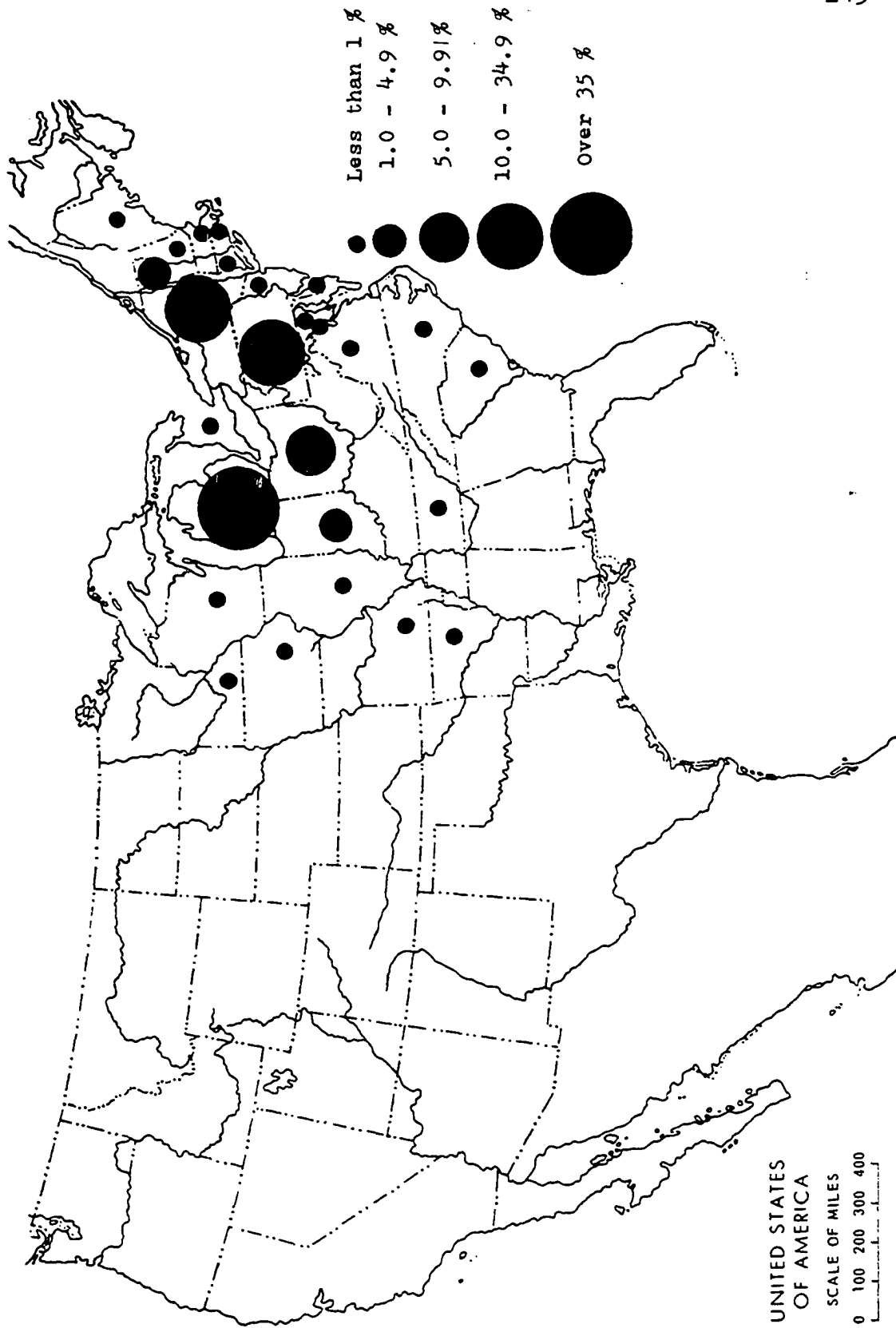


Fig. 17

TABLE 14

PER CENT OF POPULATION OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP, 1850, OF STATE ORIGIN^a

Place of Origin	Number	Per Cent
1. Michigan	477	31.93
2. New York	425	28.45
3. Pennsylvania	126	8.43
4. Ohio	98	6.56
5. Vermont	54	3.61
6. Massachusetts	36	2.41
7. Indiana	31	2.07
8. Connecticut	22	1.47
9. Unknown	19	1.27
10. New Hampshire	8	.54
11. Rhode Island	6	.40
12. New Jersey	6	.40
13. Maryland	6	.40
14. North Carolina	5	.33
15. Virginia	5	.33
16. Maine	4	.27
17. Delaware	3	.20
18. Alabama	1	.07
19. Louisiana	1	.07
20. South Carolina	1	.07
Total:	1,334	89.28

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1850. Manuscript.
Archives, Western Michigan University.

with 54 persons, Massachusetts with 36, Indiana with 31, and Connecticut with 22 (Table 14).

With very few breaks in the pattern, by 1850 Constantine Township received people from states adjacent to the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Louisiana, Alabama, North and South Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Maine each contributed less than one per cent of the total (Fig. 16). The largest migration appears to have been from northeastern United States with the highest per cent of the origin being New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio (Fig. 16).

By comparing the 1850 and 1870 maps the shift in the origin from 1850 to 1870 is apparent. The Atlantic coastal plain was well represented in 1870. The concentration in the Massachusetts-Connecticut area has disappeared with a greater concentration in New York and Pennsylvania (Figs. 16 and 17). By 1870 Michigan had increased per cent wise to more than 35 per cent of the total; Pennsylvania, which had furnished between 5.0-9.9 per cent in 1850, furnished between 10.0-24.9 per cent in 1870 (Figs. 16 and 17, Tables 14 and 15). Ohio and Indiana, even though increasing in absolute numbers, maintained their former per cent--Ohio with 5.0-9.9 and Indiana with 1.0-4.9 per cent (Figs. 16 and 17).

TABLE 15

PER CENT OF POPULATION OF CONSTANTINE
TOWNSHIP, 1870, OF STATE ORIGIN^a

Place of Origin	Number	Per Cent of Township Population
1. Michigan	975	40.55
2. Pennsylvania	455	18.92
3. New York	321	13.36
4. Ohio	165	6.86
5. Indiana	102	4.26
6. Vermont	61	2.55
7. Massachusetts	15	.63
8. Virginia	14	.58
9. Connecticut	12	.50
10. Illinois	9	.37
11. Wisconsin	7	.29
12. Maryland	7	.29
13. New Jersey	6	.25
14. Iowa	5	.21
15. North Carolina	4	.17
16. Tennessee	3	.12
17. New Hampshire	3	.12
18. Rhode Island	3	.12
19. Delaware	2	.08
20. South Carolina	2	.08
21. Arkansas	1	.04
22. District of Columbia	1	.04
23. Maine	1	.04
24. Minnesota	1	.04
25. Missouri	1	.04
Total:	2,176	90.51

^aSt. Joseph County Census, 1870. Manuscript.
Archives, Western Michigan University.

Besides the change in the per cent of the origin of the population from the northeast, a new pattern in the origin appears west of Michigan. The new origin comes from states adjacent to the Mississippi River which suggests the path of migration. Four states--Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois--to the west of Michigan contributed less than one per cent each to Constantine's population. Three southern states--Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee--were new contributors but furnished less than one per cent each to the township (Fig. 17).

Summary

The study of the place of origin of the settlers in the township and the village leads to a number of general statements about the population of Constantine Township:

1. The earliest record of origin is 1850. At this time the largest migration was from New York, with Pennsylvania and Ohio contributing large per cents.
2. All of the New England states contributed to Constantine's population with a concentration from Massachusetts and Connecticut.
3. Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Indiana, although providing fewer immigrants than New York and Pennsylvania, contributed between one and five per cent each.
4. By 1870 Pennsylvania had contributed more persons than New York. Pennsylvania increased in per cent while New York decreased in per cent.

5. Although losing population the New York origin was still in the higher per cent group, having more than 321 persons of the total (Fig. 18).
6. In 1850 the concentration of population origin was the northeast United States with emphasis on the states bordering the Great Lakes. Smaller numbers came from the Atlantic coastal plains states.
7. In 1870 the concentration is still along the same pattern with fewer people from New England and a scattering of states from west of Michigan.
8. In 1870 no state farther west than Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas was represented.
9. None came from farther south than Tennessee and South Carolina in 1870.
10. Canada, while increasing absolute population, per cent wise remained less than one per cent of the township population.
11. Of the foreign countries England with 5.0-9.9 per cent and Germany with 1.0-4.9 per cent ranked first and second respectively in 1850.
12. By 1870 England and Germany are in the same category, each contributing between 1.0-4.9 per cent of the total population of Constantine Township.

PER CENT OF TOWNSHIP POPULATION
BY ORIGIN FOR 1850 AND 1870
CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN

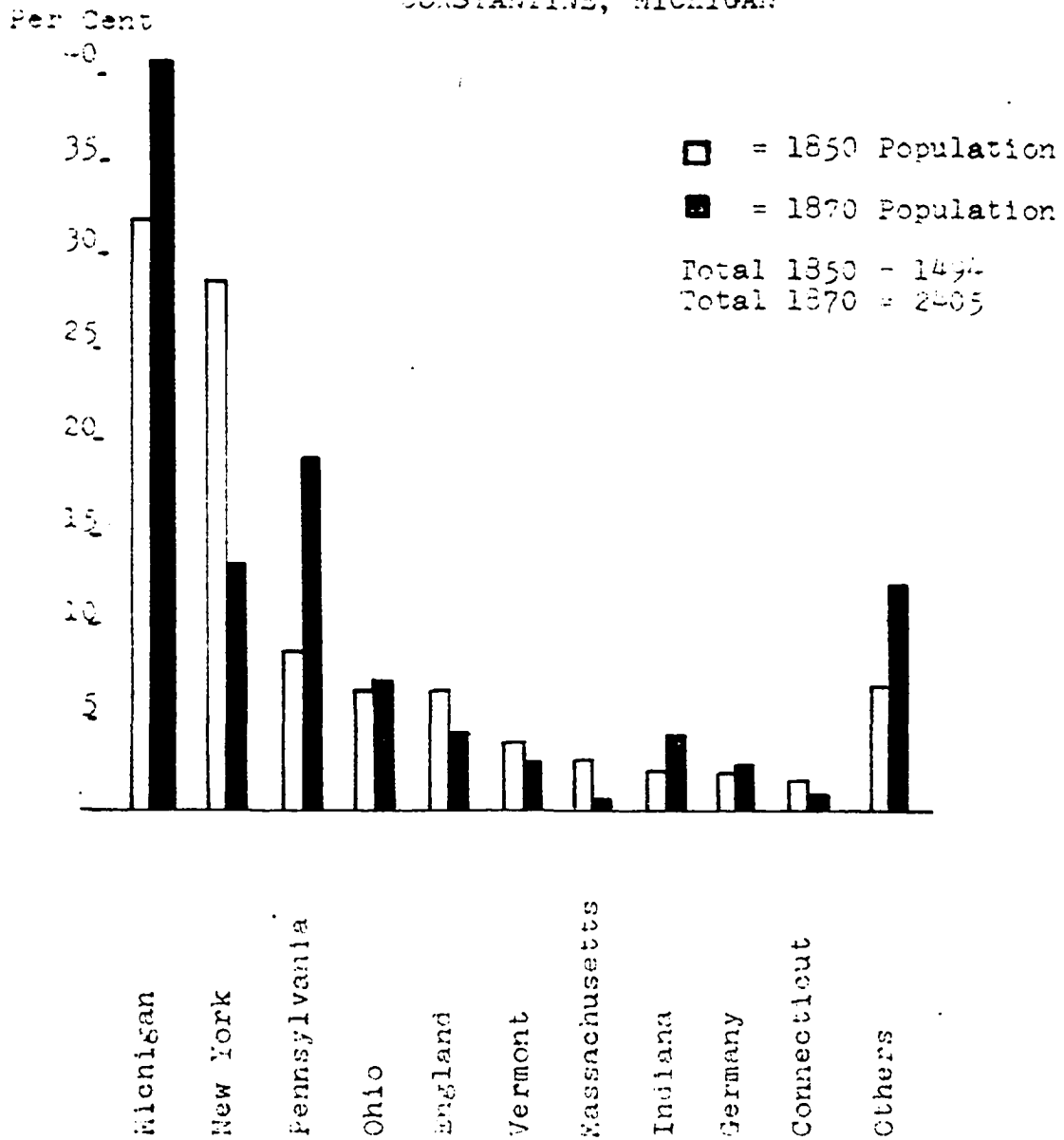


Fig. 18

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF THE AGE, SEX STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN 1850-1960

The origin of the population has given some indication of the type of people who first settled Constantine Township. The culture of these people became the culture of Constantine. During the periods of rapid growth from 1850-1884 the community gained in population not only by migration from other communities outside the state but also by natural increase of Michigan-born. This is shown by the tables giving the origin of the various groups. In each table the Michigan origin increased in per cent of the total township population while most other groups decreased in per cent.

The village, from its establishment in 1829, experienced a large increase with growth taking place at a rapid rate until 1884 when the village population was 1,398 (Table 16 and Fig. 19). After 1884 the population declined from 2,364 to 1,910 inhabitants in 1910. By 1930 the population of the township had increased by about 80 persons with the village gaining only 20 inhabitants. This is a very small per cent increase

TABLE 16

POPULATION OF THE VILLAGE OF
CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN
1850-1960^a

Year	Village	Rural	Total Constantine Township
1850	760	1334	1494
1860	879	1007	1886
1870	1290	1115	2405
1884	1398	966	2364
1890	1346	795	2141
1900	1226	693	1919
1910	1244	666	1910
1920	1277	649	1926
1930	1259	730	1989
1940	1384	794	2178
1950	1514	797	2311
1960	1710	1062	2772

^aSources: St. Joseph County Census, 1850.
Ninth Census of the United States, 1870.
St. Joseph County Census, 1884 (Manuscript).
Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910. (Statistics for 1890, 1900, and 1910).
Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930.
United States Census, 1950. (Statistics for 1930, 1940, and 1950).
United States Bureau of the Census, 1960.

THE RATE OF CHANGE OF POPULATION
OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE,
MICHIGAN, 1850-1960

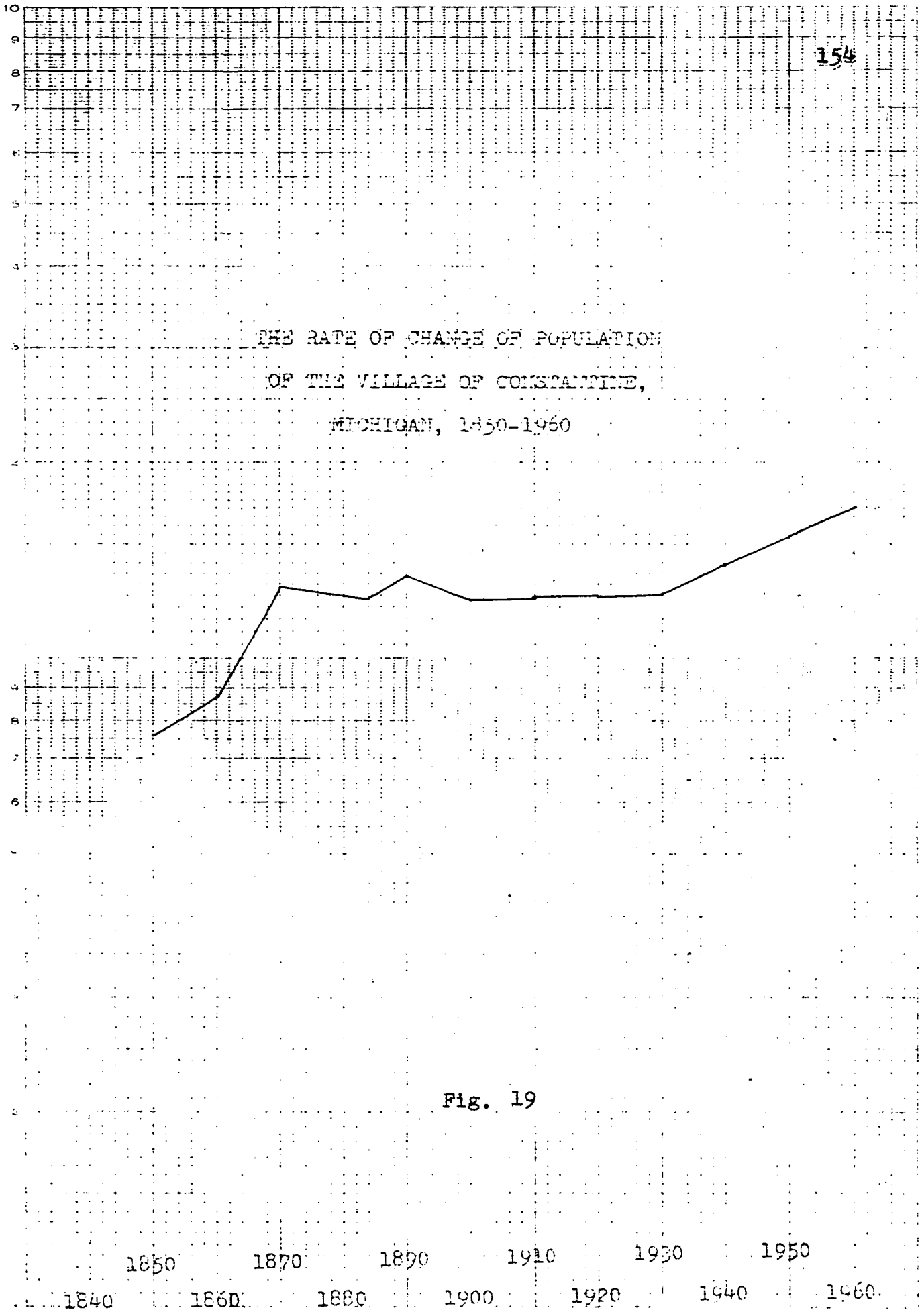


Fig. 19

averaging only one person per year over the twenty years. Obviously, folks were moving away or dying faster than they were moving into the village or increasing by birth.

Since it is reasonable to assume that people were not moving into the area but rather were moving away, the natural increase of the village is of interest. It cannot be assumed that the entire population in the lower-age brackets represent natural increase, but several points are brought to light when age-sex profiles are constructed for selected census periods.

The periods of rapid increase and those of decline or slight increase appear to have a relationship to the age-sex distribution of the population. Three age-sex profiles for the village of Constantine have been constructed for 1850, 1870 and 1884 showing the age-sex distribution during the period of growth and the period of incipient decline. The two profiles for 1940 and 1960 population indicate a period when the village appears to have experienced a growth.

Profiles of 1850, 1870, and 1884

The profiles of 1850, 1870, and 1884 clearly depict the increase in the per cent of the 65+ group and the decrease in the per cent of the youngsters under 5. In 1850 less than two per cent of the population was over

65 (Fig. 20). There were 6 males and 6 females in this category (Table 17). In 1870 there were 28 males and 29 females in the 65+ group, which accounted for five per cent of the population (Fig. 21 and Table 18). By 1884 over seven per cent of the population was in the 65+ category with 54 males and 40 females (Fig. 22, Table 19).

With the increase in the per cent of older people in the population of the village, there was first a decline in the per cent of the reproductive age group and then a decline in the per cent of a base of youngsters to maintain the growth. In 1850 the 310 persons under 15 years accounted for nearly 41 per cent of the population (Table 17). In this same period 49.5 per cent of the population was composed of 194 males and 185 females between the ages of 15-45. In 1870 the per cent of the young people had decreased with 38 per cent of the village population under 15 years, with 20 per cent females and 18 per cent males (Fig. 21, Table 18). In 1884 the per cent of those under 15 years old had decreased to 25 per cent with more boys than girls (Fig. 22, Table 19). At the same time there was a greater per cent of the population in the 15-44 group. Over 47 per cent of the population was between the ages of 15-44 but the base of young people became smaller by a decrease of around 13 per cent over 1870. In other words, in 1870, 45 per cent of the population

AGE-SEX PROFILES OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE MICHIGAN, 1850-1884

Fig. 20

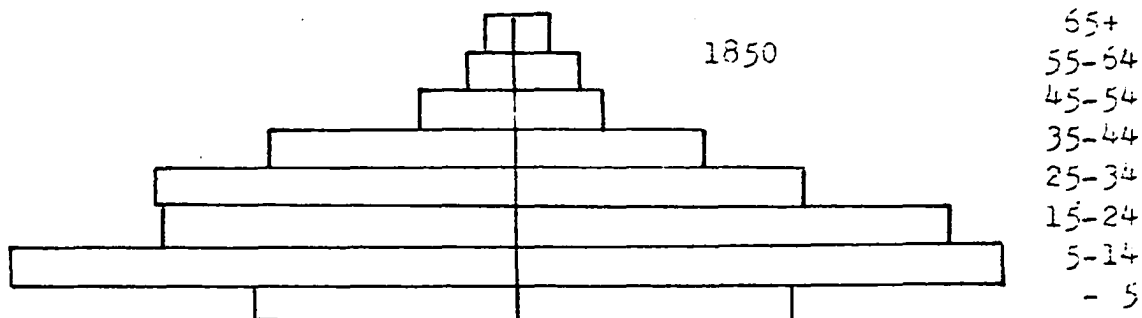


Fig. 21

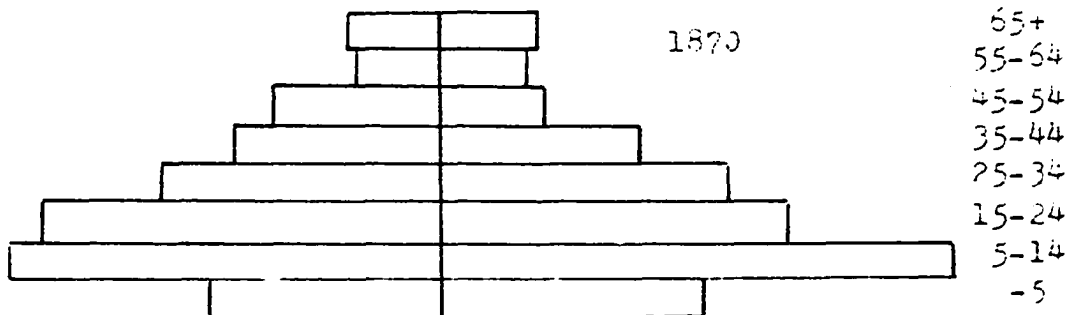
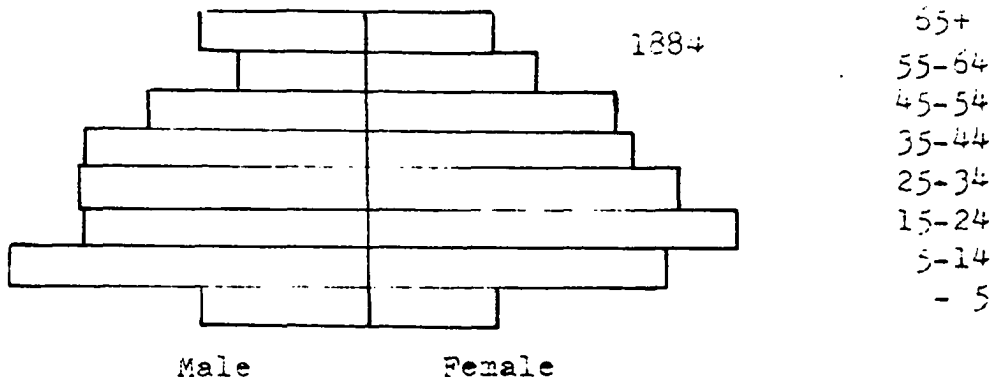


Fig. 22



Male Female
 12 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 . 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12
 Per Cent = 1%

TABLE 17
 PER CENT OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX
 OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE,
 MICHIGAN, 1850^a

Age	Male		Female	
	Population	Per Cent of Population	Population	Per Cent of Population
Under 5 years	54	7.09	55	7.29
5 - 14	103	13.51	98	12.90
15 - 24	71	9.39	88	11.55
25 - 34	72	9.45	59	7.70
35 - 44	51	6.68	38	4.94
45 - 54	20	2.63	17	2.22
55 - 64	10	1.28	12	1.55
Over 65	6	0.87	6	0.87
Total:	387	50.94	373	49.05

^aCensus of St. Joseph County, Michigan, 1850 (Manuscript).

TABLE 18
 PER CENT OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX
 OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE,
 MICHIGAN, 1870^a

Age	Male		Female	
	Population	Per Cent of Population	Population	Per Cent of Population
Under 5 years	71	6.28	78	6.90
5 - 14	130	11.50	152	13.46
15 - 24	122	10.80	101	8.93
25 - 34	81	7.17	84	7.44
35 - 44	62	5.49	58	5.13
45 - 54	52	4.60	32	2.83
55 - 64	24	2.12	26	2.30
Over 65	28	2.47	29	2.56
Total:	570	50.44	560	49.56

^aCensus of St. Joseph County, Michigan, 1870 (Manuscript).

TABLE 19
 PER CENT OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX
 OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE,
 MICHIGAN, 1884^a

Age	Male		Female	
	Population	Per Cent of Population	Population	Per Cent of Population
Under 5 years	53	4.26	43	3.46
5 - 14	116	9.34	100	8.05
15 - 24	92	7.40	120	9.66
25 - 34	92	7.40	102	8.21
35 - 44	91	7.32	89	7.16
45 - 54	73	5.87	83	6.68
55 - 64	40	3.22	54	4.34
Over 65	54	4.34	40	3.22
Total:	611	49.18	631	50.80

^aCensus of St. Joseph County, Michigan, 1884 (Manuscript).

(with 21.5 per cent females) produced a population base of youngsters that accounted for 38 per cent of the population, while in 1884 the reproductive age groups, composed of 47.5 per cent of the population (with 25 per cent females), produced the base of 25 per cent of the population.

Per cent of group over-45 increase. The people over the age of 45 composed 9 per cent of the population of the village in 1850. By 1870 this group, increased to nearly 17 per cent. By 1884 those past 45 accounted for 28 per cent of the village population and the young adults under 45 failed to produce a broad base of young for further growth.

Factors contributing to decrease of per cent of young.

Two factors appear to have contributed to the decrease of the per cent of young people in the village population. First, the increase in the per cent of older people which is accounted for by the older township residents moving to the village after retirement. Secondly, the per cent of males in the 15-44 group was not always equal to the per cent of females the same age. In 1850 the males exceeded females; in 1870 the number of females exceeded the males (Figs. 20 and 21). In 1850, with the smaller per cent of older people, the young broad base accounted for 41 per

cent of the village population under 15 years of age. In 1870 the per cent of older people was greater than in 1850 (17 per cent) (Table 18). In 1884, not only had the per cent of people past 45 increased (27.6 per cent) but also there was an excess of females in the 15-24 and 25-34 age categories (Fig. 22, Table 19). Since over 47 per cent of the village population was between the ages of 15 and 44 in 1884, and all the population under 15 amounted to 25 per cent of the population, it does not follow that given a large per cent of young adults (15-44) a broad base of youngsters will be produced. Rather, there seems to be a relationship between both the lower per cent of the population over 45 and a closer balance of male-female per cents in the categories of child-bearing ages. This would suggest that a decrease in the per cent of young people in the population might be accounted for by the imbalance between male and female in the 15-44 age groups.

The population of the village declined after 1890, losing 9 per cent in the decade 1890-1910. It remained relatively stable, increasing only 2.6 per cent by 1930 (Table 16). By 1940 the village population had increased to 1,384 and continued to grow at an increasing rate, having 1,710 inhabitants in 1960 (Table 16 and Fig. 19).

Age-Sex Profile of 1940

The age-sex profile of the village population of 1940 appears to be almost precisely balanced in respect to males and females (Fig. 23). Almost 50 per cent of the population was male and slightly over 50 per cent was female (Table 20, Fig. 23).

The 35-44 age group composed the smallest per cent of total population with slightly over 5.5 per cent each for male and female. The 25-34 age group had about 13 per cent with excess of males. The 15-24 age group was the largest (16.5 per cent) with a slight excess of males. The population of the under-15 composed about 21 per cent of the total village population with a balance between male and female.

In the 65+ category there was about 14 per cent, as compared with less than two per cent of the 65+ group of 1850 and the 7.56 per cent of the 65+ group of 1884. Comparing the 65+ group of 1940 and 1884, it is noted that the 1940 population of over-65 is twice that of the over-65 group of 1884 (Figs. 22 and 23).

Age-Sex Profile of 1960

Comparing the 1960 age-sex profile with the profile of 1940, it is evident that the base of under-15 group

AGE-SEX PROFILES OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE
MICHIGAN, 1940 AND 1960

Fig. 23

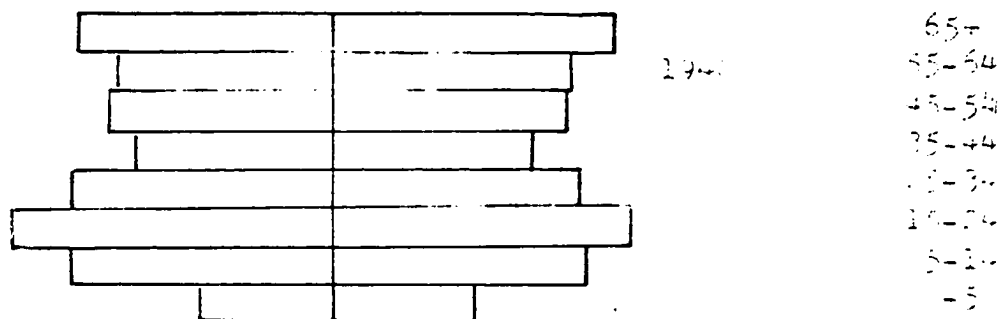
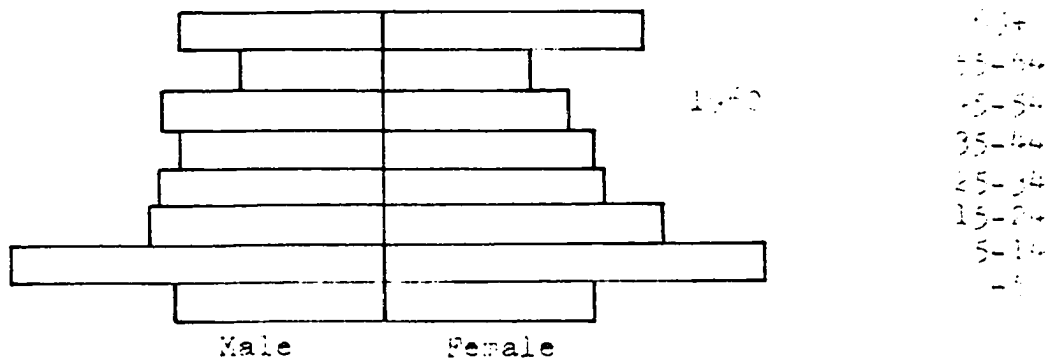


Fig. 24



10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
per cent

TABLE 20

PER CENT OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX
 OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE,
 MICHIGAN, 1940^a

Age	Male		Female	
	Population	Per Cent of Population	Population	Per Cent of Population
Under 5 years	47	3.44	53	3.85
5 - 14	98	7.11	95	6.88
15 - 24	118	8.49	110	7.94
25 - 34	98	7.07	88	6.38
35 - 44	72	5.18	72	5.18
45 - 54	84	6.06	85	6.15
55 - 64	79	5.73	86	6.19
Over 65	92	6.65	106	7.62
Total:	688	49.01	695	50.97

^aSource: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1940.

has expanded (Fig. 23). About 32 per cent of the population of the village was under 15 in 1960, as compared with 21 per cent in 1940. The largest single category for 1960 was the 5-14 group composing over 20 per cent of the population and evenly divided between male and female. The population of the 15-24 age group composed 37 per cent of the population as compared to the 40 per cent of the 15-24 category of 1940. The per cent of population of over-65 remained large (Table 21). There were 119 females and 93 males over 65 living in the village in 1960. More than 38 per cent of the village population in 1940 was over 45 as compared to 31 per cent in 1960.

Summary

A number of aspects appear significant in this analysis of age-sex profiles of Constantine, 1850-1960.

1. The young frontier village had very few older people. Those over 55 composed only five per cent of the population. Those over 65 were less than two per cent.

2. As the village became older the per cent of older people increased.

3. The early village had a very young population. Over 40 per cent of the population was younger than 15 years of age in 1850.

4. As the per cent of the total population over 65

TABLE 21

PER CENT OF POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX
 OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE,
 MICHIGAN, 1960^a

Age	Male		Female	
	Population	Per Cent of Population	Population	Per Cent of Population
Under 5 years	100	5.84	97	5.67
5 - 14	172	10.06	175	10.23
15 - 24	105	6.14	129	7.54
25 - 34	103	6.02	101	5.90
35 - 44	94	5.49	100	5.84
45 - 54	102	5.96	86	5.03
55 - 64	65	3.80	69	4.03
Over 65	93	5.43	119	6.95
Total:	834	48.76	876	51.22

^aSource: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1960.

increased the per cent of younger population decreased although not proportionately. In 1870, while the combined per cent of population over 55 had increased to 10 per cent from the 4.47 per cent in 1850, the under-15 group had decreased only slightly having 38 per cent of the village population in 1870 compared to the 40 per cent in this category in 1850.

5. The smallest per cent of under-5 was the 1940 group which was accompanied by the largest over-65 group.

6. A smaller per cent of the population under 15 appeared also to be related to the excess of one sex in the age groups of 15-44. This appeared to be more evident in the case of excess of females as was found in the 1884 population.

7. In the 1960 profile the two categories of over-65 and 55-64 had decreased from that of 1940, and the per cent of under-15 increased.

8. One interesting point is that per cent in the combined categories of the 25-34 and 35-44 have decreased continually since 1850. Not only does this mean that there is a lower per cent of the population in the reproductive ages, thus providing a narrow base of youngsters, but also may suggest that persons within this age group, both male and female, left the village. It could also suggest that people in this category are not attracted to

the village as the older resident seems to have been.

9. The per cent of males between the ages of 25-44 has decreased from 16 per cent of the population in 1850 to 12 per cent in 1960. This could indicate the lack of opportunity in the village for the young adult male who must bear most of the burden of supporting nearly all the rest of the population.

10. The 1960 profile would tend to suggest that the village will continue to grow. The large base of 5-14 without an excess of males or females may provide that new spark that is needed for continued growth. But perhaps this is only a manifestation of the affluency among the younger adults who have decided to make Constantine their home. The lower per cent of 15-24 group could mean that a larger proportion are away at college. The excess of males in the 15-24 group of 1940 does not show up in the 35-44 group of 1960. It very likely indicates that the males of 15-24 of 1940 left the village during the war and many failed to return but sought greener pastures elsewhere.

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