

# FULLERSBURG CHRONICLES

A Publication of the Fullersburg Historic Foundation

A wide-angle photograph of a waterfall cascading over a dam. The water flows from left to right, creating a white, turbulent wake. In the background, a dense forest of green trees stands behind the dam. The sky is clear and blue.

Historic Fullersburg Graue Mill Dam

# **TIMELINE – Fullersburg and Illinois Before and During Early European Settlement**

The human and natural history of the Fullersburg area dates back thousands of years.



Salt Creek



Artifacts



Native Americans



Voyager statue



Fur trappers



Jean Baptiste duSable

Native peoples lived here following the retreat of the last Glacial Age over 10,000 years ago. They were attracted by the abundance of game, the pure and navigable waters of Salt Creek and the natural resources of the woodlands and expansive prairies they needed for survival.

In 1974 an archeological salvage operation was conducted near the original Fuller Farmstead property west of York Road and north of Ogden. Projectile points, scappers and chert were discovered and confirmed to be 8,000 years old. All are ancient artifacts in safe keeping for future generations to be aware of and treasure.

Tribes occupying the Northwest Territory wilderness including the area of present day Fullersburg were the Chippewa, Sauk, Illinois, Kickapoo, Miami, Ottawa, Potawatomi and Winnebago. The tepees and huts they constructed were made of wood or covered with sod or earth. The clothes they wore were made of deerskins and the hides of furbearing animals. They traveled in canoes made of hollowed out logs or walked along the banks of rivers or streams. Interior trails followed deer paths. Many of these paths are diagonal roads today, including Ogden Avenue, the Southwest Trail known as the Old Plank Road in settlement times and the North/South Trail known as York Road.

On May 17, 1672 Father Jacques Marquette, Louis Jolliet and five voyageurs traveled in a birch bark canoe from St. Ignace, Mackinaw Strait, southward along the shoreline of Lake Michigan into the wilderness area of North America to map the interior and waterways, convert natives to the Catholic faith, establish trade between the natives and the French in Canada and find a shorter route from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico.

Native tribesmen showed them a portage area known today as Mud Lake which led to Lake Michigan and could be paddled in the wet season. This was the only portage in the region. This area became known as the Lyons Chicago Portage. The area of Fullersburg was only a short distance to the west of the Chicago Portage.

Fur traders from Quebec began to arrive in the area in 1675, and the Chicago Portage in Lyons became the gathering place for natives and explorers. Illinois furs were shipped to Paris and other cities in Europe to meet the insatiable fashion demand for beaver hides and animal skins.

In the 1760s, intense competition existed between France and England to control the North American fur trade.

This ended with the 1763 Treaty of Paris when the territory in North America east of the Mississippi River, except for Canada and Spanish controlled New Orleans, was deeded to England by France. The treaty included all of the Illinois Territory.

In the 1770s, the first resident of Chicago, Jean Baptiste Point duSable, a Haitian free black man, established a trading post near the shores of Lake Michigan.

During the Revolutionary War from April 19, 1775 to September 3, 1783 George Rodgers Clark conquered the Northwest Territory for the American Colonies from England aided by French settlers living in the area and native allies.

In 1783, the Treaty of Paris gave all native lands west of the Mississippi and south to Louisiana to the American Colonies.

On July 13, 1787 the Ordinance of Virginia defined the Northwest Territory as areas north of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and North and South Dakota. It set up townships and boundaries and included free and safe passage for all through the Chicago Portage.

The August 10, 1795 Treaty of Greenville Ohio gave native lands in Ohio and a six mile square area at the mouth of the Chicago River at the shore of Lake Michigan to the U.S. Government. George Washington was President of the United States at this time.

French control over territory in North America ended in 1803 with the signing of the Louisiana Purchase.

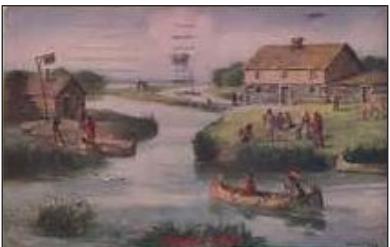
On February 14, 1803, plans were discussed by Chicago businessmen to build the I & M Canal to accommodate increasing traffic over the Chicago Portage.

In 1804, the first Fort Dearborn was built on the deeded land at the mouth of the Chicago River located at what is now the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Wacker Drive to protect the Chicago Portage, fur traders and early settlers. The original site is now buried beneath a parking garage and tons of concrete.

During the 1800s, some native tribes formed alliances with the British and others with the Americans.



Canal boat in operation



Fort and Chicago



State of Illinois



Blackhawk



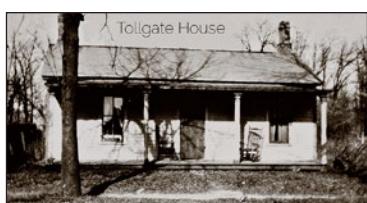
Treaty Gathering



Stagecoach



Cattle Drive



Toll House

On June 12, 1812, the United States declared war on the British Empire. British troops posed a threat to Fort Dearborn and Illinois settlers.

On August 14, 1812, Captain Nathan Heald held a council with Potawatomi leaders at Fort Dearborn to inform them that the fort would be evacuated and the provisions of arms, supplies and whiskey would be given to friendly Indians for safe escort to the garrison at Fort Wayne. However, Heald broke his promise and ordered all the supplies destroyed. This enraged the Potawatomi and they went on the war path.

On August 15, 1812, the garrison left Fort Dearborn to march to Fort Wayne. About a mile into the march, a band of Potawatomi warriors ambushed the garrison. During the ensuing bloody battle, officers and militia were killed along with women and children. Following the 15 minute battle, the Potawatomi took prisoners to their camp for ransom and burned the fort to the ground. The Battle of Fort Dearborn is also known as the Fort Dearborn Massacre.

Those involved in the early history of Chicago included Ogden, Wells, Hubbard and Kinzie, names we recognize today.

The population of the area continued to grow as more settlers moved in. The fort was rebuilt in 1816.

1818 - Illinois is admitted as a state into the Union.

The fur trade is still thriving in 1827 but pioneers are beginning to convert more areas of northeastern Illinois from forests and prairies to farming, residential, commercial and industrial use.

From April to August 1832, Chief Blackhawk, a Sauk warrior, led a brief bloody war against the U.S. Army killing settlers to regain native lands. General Winfield Scott mobilized troops to engage Blackhawk but a cholera epidemic sickened them and they did not see battle. It is rumored that an Army camp was located near the Fullersburg area but no evidence exists.

In September 1833, The Treaty of Chicago is signed by Chippewa, Ottawa and Potawatomi tribes deeding their remaining lands in Northeastern Illinois to the U.S. Government. This opened the territory to more European settlement.

Orente Grant, an Indian scout, and his brother David, are believed to have been the first white men in the Fullersburg area, originally known as Brush Hill, during the fur trader era. They remained in Fullersburg as settlement began and became successful businessmen and owners of property. The Torode family settled nearby in an area at present day York and Roosevelt Roads known as Frenchman's Woods.

Lt. King was also an early settler.

Native Potawatomi lived in the area along Salt Creek west of York Road as settlers arrived in greater numbers.

On September 21, 1833, the Treaty was put into effect. The first group of about 5,000 natives departed the Chicago area with Chiefs Alexander Robinson, Billy Caldwell and LaFrambois (all half breeds) on the trek to new lands west of the Mississippi River. The march was led by Colonel J. F. Russell. The march was a great hardship on the natives. Many sickened or died.

In 1834, Benjamin Fuller, age 24, arrived in Fullersburg from Broome County New York. He liked the location far away from the marshlands of Chicago on high ground near forests and clean water. He returned with his parents, Jacob and Candace Fuller, and brothers and sisters, the following year. The family traveled by horseback, covered wagon and canal boat and staked out a property where they built a log cabin in present day Oak Brook near Ginger Creek.

In 1834, the stagecoach began stopping in Fullersburg on the Old Plank Road route between Chicago and Naperville and was added to its regular schedule in 1836. The Old Plank Road Trail was also used to drive cattle to market in Chicago. Fullersburg was a one day's wagon ride from Chicago, making it a trading center and important way station for travelers.

Hotels were built to accommodate travelers.

A toll house was built at the eastern edge of Fullersburg near today's County Line Road.

In 1836, Salt Creek, originally known as the Little DesPlaines, was named when John Reid was hauling supplies and his wagon got stuck while crossing the creek. When the wagon tipped over, barrels of salt dissolved, turning the creek into briny foam.

Chicago was incorporated as a city on March 4, 1837 in Cook County.

The discovery of the Chicago Portage changed the course of history in Illinois. The location of the Chicago Portage is believed to be the reason why Chicago exists today founded on the shores of Lake Michigan and why Fullersburg became one of the oldest settlements in DuPage County.

# FULLERSBURG TODAY

Valerie Spale

Salt Creek Greenway Association and Fullersburg Historic Foundation

and

Donald Fuller

Fullersburg Historic Foundation

## Historic Fullersburg

Oak Brook and Hinsdale created a historic preservation ordinance in 1980 identifying the significance of The Fullersburg Historic District.

Historic Fullersburg is located along York Road north of Ogden Avenue and west on Spring Road and includes the Fullersburg Dam and Salt Creek in Oak Brook. Five original structures dating back to the early settlement days of Fullersburg exist in place today. They are the Ben Fuller Farmhouse, the Graue Mill and Museum, the Frederick Graue House, the York Tavern and the Faith Fellowship Church. The Graue Mill is only one of a few historic mills still in operation in the country. Step back in time at Fullersburg and relive the days gone by which represent thousands of years of history, human, natural and cultural resources. The District is a historical, recreational, open space and tourism destination unique to DuPage County and Illinois.

The Ben Fuller Farmhouse, Graue Mill and Museum, the Frederick Graue House, the Fullersburg Dam, the Fullersburg Woods Forest Preserve and the Fullersburg Woods Nature Center are owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. The Faith Fellowship Church and the York Tavern are privately owned.

The Historic Fullersburg District is a famous place to visit in the 30 mile Salt Creek Greenway for its open



space, nature education, recreational trails, the early history of DuPage County and northeastern Illinois, historic buildings and the historic Fullersburg Dam. The Greenway and Salt Creek connect Cook and DuPage Counties, municipalities, park districts, forest preserves, historical sites and communities in the water shed.

Fullersburg attracts about 250,000 visitors each year including children on field trips, families, fishermen, hikers, bikers, paddlers, artists, photographers, birders, historians, nature lovers and tourists. Wedding parties pose for photos along the banks of Salt Creek or overlooking the Fullersburg Dam waterfall. The beauty of the area and the picturesque beauty of the Fullersburg Dam are captured on canvas or through the lens more than any other scenes in DuPage County by those drawn to Fullersburg to express their art.

Fullersburg is a flyway for waterfowl and provides habitat for wildlife throughout the seasons.



## Fullersburg

### Thousands of Years of Human and Natural History

The Fullersburg area, except for the ravines of Oak Brook, was buried beneath a mile high glacier during the last Ice Age. As the climate warmed about 12,000 years ago, the ice and snow receded and the land was scoured

flat. Tundra moved in. Mammoths and mastodons roamed. The landscape features of northeastern Illinois and the Salt Creek valley emerged from the meltwaters. Pine forests grew in place of the tundra. Warming continued. The oak and hickory forests, prairies and wetlands of today replaced the pine forests.

The first people to inhabit Illinois, the hunters and gathers, immigrated to the Fullersburg area about 10,000 years ago from the southwest following the herds of deer, elk and buffalo. Salt Creek was used as a transportation route.

DuPage County maps indicate that the Fullersburg area was a Native American “chipping station” where artifacts were created by pre-historic man.

Projectile points and artifacts were discovered in ancient Fullersburg archaeological sites. An archaeological salvage took place on the original site of the Fuller Farmhouse in 1978 conducted by the Northwestern University Department of Anthropology and confirmed the presence of pre-historic man dating back to 8,000 B.C.

We walk the same ground at Fullersburg today as the first peoples who arrived here followed by the Chippewa, Sauk, Illinois, Kickapoo, Miami, Ottawa, Winnebago and Potawatomi, French and English explorers, fur traders and the pioneers who settled Fullersburg.

Orente Grant is believed to be the first white man in the Fullersburg area during the fur trader era.

Ben Fuller arrived in the area on horseback from Broome County, New York in the spring of 1834. He staked out a claim to land. His family and other early settlers followed. The Fullersburg area was known as Brush Hill then.

The Potawatomi village of Sauganakka encompassed what is present day Oak Brook from the 1700's to mid-1830's. Early settlers traded with and wrote about the Native American dwellings in Fullersburg north of Salt Creek along York Road. The Potawatomi occupied this area until after the signing of the Treaty of Chicago in 1833 when Native Americans deeded their lands in northeastern Illinois to the U.S. Government. This opened the region to European settlement.

At this time, about 5,000 Native Americans still lived in Fullersburg and northeastern Illinois. Shortly after the signing of the Treaty, they were marched from their homes to land west of the Mississippi River. Some became ill or died enduring the hardship of the march.

In 1836, the Frink and Walker stagecoach line added Fullersburg to its regular schedule. Fullersburg was the only stop on the route between Chicago and Naperville in those days. Horseback riders, over 500 teams with wagons and regular cattle drives all passed through Fullersburg.

A toll house was built later on the route. Barto Van Velzer was then the keeper of the toll gate on the Old Plank Road (today's Ogden Avenue).

Fullersburg was a thriving community in those days with three hotels, three taverns, post office, blacksmith shop, saw and grist mill, church, school and cemetery.

In the 1860's, Fullersburg became a stop on the Underground Railroad. Men from Fullersburg fought in the Union Army during the Civil War.

With the arrival of the Burlington Railroad in 1865 a mile to the south, traffic through Fullersburg declined. The center of commerce shifted from Fullersburg to Hinsdale.

### **Fullersburg Historic Places**

#### **Ben Fuller Farmhouse**

The Ben Fuller Farmhouse is thought to have been built between 1837 and 1840 as Ben Fuller's second residence in the area. A 1987 report suggests that the Farmhouse may be the oldest balloon frame structure in existence. Balloon framing was made famous in Chicago in 1833. A model of the Farmhouse is on display at the Oak Brook Library which duplicates to scale the balloon frame construction of the Farmhouse.



Ben Fuller built his farmhouse to reflect his wealth and stature in the community. It was considered to be a mansion at that time. The summer kitchen and the front porch were added between 1850 and 1855. Fuller lived in the Farmhouse until his death in 1863.

Balloon framing consists of sawn lumber with sheathing to both interior and exterior walls. Structures built using lighter weight framing were easier and faster to construct and required less labor than the heavy framing construction style commonly used during

this period. Balloon framing became a popular new construction style especially because of a growing demand for residential housing in Chicago, one of the fastest growing cities in the country.

Between 1920 and 1950, several modifications were made to the Farmhouse, including the addition of the second story addition to the kitchen wing.

To save the Farmhouse threatened with demolition and development of the land, it was moved from its original location at 948 York Road to a gently sloping hill at the southeast corner of the Fullersburg parking lot at the intersection of York and Spring roads and acquired from the previous owner by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County in 1981.

After 1987, reconstruction work was performed. This included rebuilding the front porch, replacement of the roof and installation of new windows, shutters and clapboard siding. The summer kitchen which burned in 1981 can be reconstructed. The Farmhouse is painted white with green shutters.

### Graue Mill and Museum

The four story Graue Mill and Museum was built by Frederick Graue in 1852. Three generations of the Graue family ground grain here for local farmers for more than 60 years. But this was not the first mill on the site. In 1837, Nicholos Torode constructed a mill here to supply lumber to local residents which he operated until 1849.

For a short period before the Civil War, the Mill was used as a station on the Underground Railroad. Slaves were sheltered here until they could be safely transported to Chicago and freedom in Canada.

In 1939, the Mill was acquired by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. Today the Mill is operated by the DuPage Graue Mill Corporation. The Mill is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as an Illinois Mechanical Engineering Landmark. It became a museum in 1951. Visitors can watch the 150 year old grindstones milling grain, enjoy spinning and weaving demonstrations and view artifacts of the Civil War.



### Frederick Graue House

The red brick Graue House was built in the Italianate architectural style in 1859.

The Graue family resided here while they operated the Graue Mill.

Over time the House deteriorated and was left vacant and could have been demolished and the land developed. At the urging of preservationists and historians, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County acquired the site to preserve its historical significance in Fullersburg.

Today the Graue House can be rented for receptions and reserved for private events. Art shows and special exhibits are held here now. Archival collections are stored on the second floor. Outdoor events are held on the grounds. The DuPage Graue Mill Corporation operates the property and schedules programs.



### The York Tavern

The York Tavern was built by Benjamin Fuller in 1843 and was known as "The Farmer's Home". Locals gathered here for news, to purchase merchandise and to socialize. Fuller used heavy timbers to frame "The Farmer's Home" in the medieval building style popular in Europe known as "fachwerk" or half timbered construction. The open spaces between the hand hewn logs were filled with bricks to strengthen and fireproof the building.

Examples of construction can be viewed at the York Tavern today behind framed glass panels, recalling the days when Ben Fuller set up shop here. The Tavern was historically rehabilitated in 2006.

The Tavern is a key element in the complex of historic buildings in the Historic District. It is located on the west side of York Road north of the Salt Creek Bridge.

The Farmer's Home was first licensed in DuPage County

in 1846 and is believed to be the oldest continuously operating, privately owned, eating and drinking establishment in DuPage County.

It was closed only during the Prohibition Era.



### Faith Fellowship Church

The Faith Fellowship Church was built in 1881 by local farmers who arrived from Hanover, Germany. It was originally a Low German (Pletdeusch) speaking Free Church. Services were conducted in German until 1920. Today the church serves the congregation of the Faith Fellowship Church which conducts services as non-denominational Protestants.

Recalling country churches of yesteryear, the welcoming steeple and stained glass windows invite visitors to experience the quaint beauty of this charming historic church and surrounding open space and woodlands.

A cemetery is located beneath the vintage oaks behind the church where local residents are buried including some members of the Graue family.



### Fullersburg Dam

Several dams were built at the present location on Salt Creek adjacent Graue Mill. The original dam was constructed in 1837 but lasted only a few years before it washed out.

It was replaced by a log dam in 1844 but it also washed out. This dam was replaced by a plank and crib dam in 1879. This dam washed out in 1916. The purpose of the dam was to generate power to operate the waterwheel at the Mill.

In 1934, during the Great Depression, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed the historic concrete dam which exists today. It is owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. As Salt Creek meanders through the Fullersburg area, its waters cascade over the Fullersburg Dam and enter the sluice gates of the Mill much as they did decades ago. The Dam is listed in the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, National Directory of Dams as the Fullersburg Dam.

The scenic beauty of the Dam draws visitors to enjoy the view and listen to the tranquil sound of falling waters. The Fullersburg Dam is a key attraction and historic anchor of the Fullersburg Historic District.

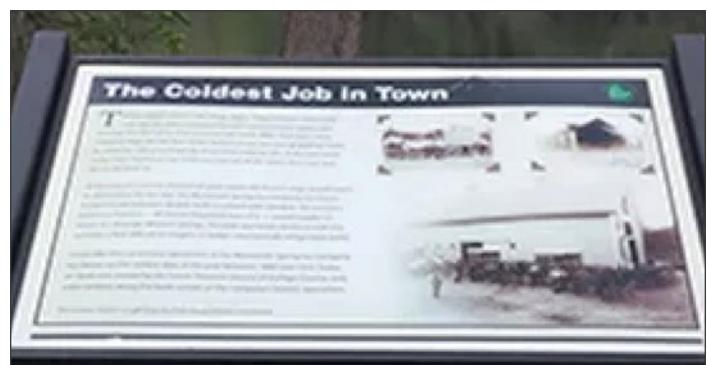


### Ice House Sign and Marker

Trail users pass the Sign commemorating the site of the Mammoth Ice Company Ice House owned by John Ruchty which stood here from 1880 to 1910.

Tons of ice cut from Salt Creek in winter was stored in the Ice House packed in saw dust to be delivered in summer to homes in the nearby suburbs by horse drawn wagons.

Cutting ice from the creek in the cold of winter was back breaking work. Workers often suffered from exposure to the frigid weather. Harvesting ice continued until the invention of refrigeration.





### Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center

The Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) from local wood and stone in 1934 on the western banks of Salt Creek within the 222 acre Fullersburg Woods Forest Preserve.

The Center was a canoe rental facility in its early days and a popular place for nature appreciation. Salt Creek was a pure and pristine waterway then. Later, when the creek became polluted from upstream discharge, water recreation activities were discouraged.

Today water conditions have improved. Visitors can paddle up and down the creek again and enjoy hiking the Center trails beneath the oaks. Conservation programs attract families. Special activities and exhibits keep children entertained and interested in nature education. The skeletal remains of a mammoth discovered in DuPage County are on display. Visitors can relax on the second floor deck of the Center and enjoy views of the creek and the oak woodlands. Waterfowl and wildlife can be seen in all seasons.



### Fullersburg Historic Cemetery

When Ben Fuller platted Fullersburg in 1851, he set aside land for a cemetery, which he donated to the community. The Fullersburg Cemetery is located on the north end of Garfield Street between Maumell Street and Fuller Road in Hinsdale. The cemetery was originally open to the public. As the Fullersburg community grew and the local population swelled with the founding of Hinsdale, development hemmed in the tiny cemetery. The only resort was to become a private cemetery. Burial is reserved for families who can produce a deed to a plot.

The cemetery is the final resting place for the many founders of Fullersburg and Hinsdale. The oldest stone marks the grave of Ben Fuller's mother, Candace Fuller, who died in 1847. (Hinsdale Doings) Jacob Fuller, Ben's father, and his wives were initially interred in the Torode Cemetery and later moved to the Fullersburg Cemetery.

The monuments and gravestones tell the story of the births and deaths of Fullersburg settlers and the lives they lived. The graves of infants and children at the Cemetery are reminders of the hardships and losses of those days.

The Cemetery is noted for many of the area's Civil War soldiers buried here who lived to return home. A gravestone for Morell Fuller, a drummer boy with General Sherman on his infamous march to the sea through Georgia from Atlanta to Savanna, marks his grave. Confederate soldier, John Andre, was buried in the cemetery in 1903 just south of the flag pole.



Unmarked graves are common in cemeteries of this age, but there is a paper trail to the contents of the Fullersburg Cemetery. In 1989, Bev Erickson of the DuPage County Genealogical Society created an inventory of headstones and grave markers. She also consulted records maintained by caretakers of the cemetery and the DuPage County vital records. The

resulting list included many entries not found in an earlier DAR list and was published in the winter 1991 issue of the DuPage Genealogical Society's journal, The Review. In the late 1960's the cemetery was fenced in to protect the fragile gravestones.

The Cemetery grounds are private and access is strictly limited. Each Memorial Day the cemetery flag is replaced in a simple ceremony. This is one of the few times the respectful public has access to the Cemetery.



### 10 Year Management Plan for the Ben Fuller Farmhouse

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County approved a 10 Year Management Plan for the Farmhouse on July 5, 2016 prepared by Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. as a Cultural Resource Evaluation.

The report recommends that restoration and maintenance of the Farmhouse include deteriorated wood framing as well as deterioration of exterior wood and trim.

The following conditions were also observed. Debonded stone cladding at the foundation wall, severe deterioration to wood related to the previous kitchen fire, deterioration of exterior cladding, evidence of insect damage to the exterior wall framing, peeling and flaking of paint, biological growth on sections of wood shingles on the roof and cracked window panes at all windows.

These conditions do not appear to cause an imminent threat to the structure.

**Significant Criteria.** Based upon the research and analysis conducted for the study, the Farmhouse appears to be locally significant under National Register Criteria A for its association with early settlement of Fullersburg and DuPage County. It is primarily significant under National Register Criteria C as an example of balloon frame construction which remains relatively intact.

The Plan identifies the following exterior and interior features of the Farmhouse:

- General mass and form
- Front porch with columns

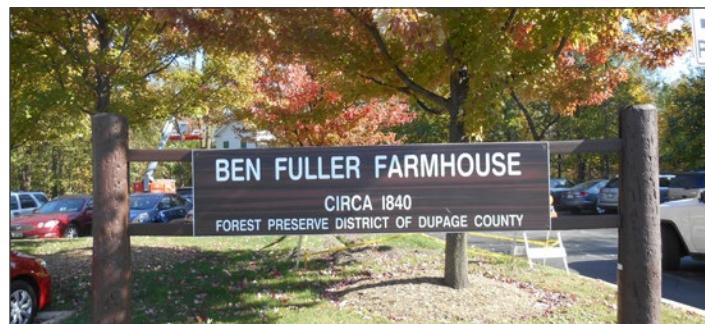
- Gable roof with cornice returns
- Multi-light wood-framed double-hung windows and louvered window shutters
- Front entrance with sidelights
- General construction consisting of original balloon frame construction and partition walls

The District's 10 Year Plan itemizes the following restoration and maintenance work to be completed at the Farmhouse

- Masonry
- Wood
- Roofing
- Windows

The District Plan recommends the stabilization of the Farmhouse for the pleasure and enjoyment of the citizens of DuPage County. The Farmhouse is included on the District's list of historic structures.

The Plan preserves the integrity of the Farmhouse until funds can be raised to restore the Farmhouse and open it to the public. The estimated cost to historically restore the Farmhouse is \$750,000.



### Plans for the Future of the Farmhouse

The Ben Fuller Farmhouse is ideally suited and located to serve as an Interpretive Center for the Fullersburg Historic District as a hub for the repository of information and artifacts relating to the land, water and people who occupied this site over many centuries and the cultures they left behind.

### The Role of the Fullersburg Historic Foundation at Fullersburg

The Fullersburg Historic Foundation (FHF) was founded in 1986 as a not-for-profit organization to support the work of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County in the Fullersburg area and work to protect the natural and historic resources in the area. Over the years, FHF

has supported land acquisition and the acquisition and restoration of historic buildings in the Fullersburg area. FHF has been involved in archiving and preserving historic documents and artifacts and compiling and distributing information about the historic sites of Fullersburg as a community service. FHF continues to serve as an advocate for the preservation and protection of the historic district and history of Fullersburg.

In 2004, the FHF Board voted to assume a role in the preservation of the Ben Fuller Farmhouse following the dissolution of the Ben Fuller Museum Association and to carry forward the work of the Association to restore the interior of the Farmhouse as an Interpretive Center for Fullersburg. Since then, FHF has focused on raising funds for the project, scheduling educational programs led by distinguished lecturers and presenters, publishing historical materials for public distribution and reaching out to elected officials, community leaders, the media and educators to inform them about the significance of the Farmhouse project and the Fullersburg Historic District.

FHF continues to work with the District to strengthen our public/private partnership and further advance the importance of the Fullersburg Historic District and the restoration of the Fuller Farmhouse. The Ben Fuller Farmhouse represents the best opportunity to interpret the history of Fullersburg and inform visitors about the significance of the area.

The Farmhouse is likely to be the first building visitors see from the parking lot when arriving at Fullersburg. It's not unusual for visitors to spend time walking up the hill and around the Farmhouse after exiting their vehicles and stopping to read the Benjamin Fuller and Farmhouse information located at the site.

In October 2012, FHF presented a Strategic Plan to the District to restore and open the Farmhouse as an Interpretive Center.

Concept Ideas for Adapting the Farmhouse as an Interpretive Center on the History of Fullersburg:

- A history of Fullersburg depicted by photographs, maps, illustrations and display boards - platted but never incorporated
- Ben Fuller and family, early settlers, genealogical information
- Native American history, archaeological history and survey
- Potawatomi Village of Sauganakka

- The life of Loie Fuller, Ben Fuller's niece, a dancer of international fame
- A cut out of one of the walls revealing the balloon frame construction of the Farmhouse
- The construction and history of the York Tavern, Graue Mill and Museum, Frederick Graue Home, Faith Fellowship Church and cemetery, Mammoth Spring Ice House
- Pioneer cemeteries - Fullersburg Cemetery
- Treaty of Chicago - 1833 - Blackhawk War - War of 1812 - The Illinois Territory
- Underground Railroad - Civil War
- The role of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)
- Plank Road/Toll Road and the coming of the railroad
- The historic Fullersburg Dam
- The natural history of Fullersburg and Salt Creek and the Ice Age

Once the Farmhouse restoration is underway, publicity about the project, the balloon frame significance of the Farmhouse, the beauty and open space character of the area, the historic Fullersburg Dam and the fascinating history of Fullersburg will attract more visitors to the area and will result in promoting Fullersburg as a tourism, historical, recreational, architectural and open space destination unique to DuPage County and Illinois.



# Summary of the Archeological Surface Survey of the Village of Oak Brook Conducted in 1974

Audrey Muschler—1975

For 10,000 years before the coming of the French and Spanish explorers, Indian cultures lived within the Village of Oak Brook. The Indians lived in near perfect harmony with their environment, and their passing left hardly a single scar upon the land to recall their presence. Their presence here is demonstrated by the finding of their beautifully chipped projectile points.

In April 1974, the Village Board contracted for an Archaeological Surface Survey of the undeveloped land in the Village. A walking survey was conducted in May 1974 by a staff member of the Foundation for Illinois Archeology. Dr. Stuart Struever, of Northwestern University, and director of the Foundation, prepared the report and the analysis. Residents who had found or collected artifacts in the village were interviewed, artifacts were photographed and identified, prehistoric sites were located, and an analysis and recommendation was compiled

Dr. Struever notes in the report, "Indian cultures were present in the Oak Brook area from at least the Early Archaic period (8,000 to 5,000 B.C.) through the period of pioneer settlement in the early 1800s. Most of the artifacts that have been collected by individual laymen and by the 1974 archaeological survey are projectile points, scrapers, knives—all tools associated with hunting and butchering. It appears that mixed forest-prairie area of northwestern Illinois abounded in game, particularly white tailed deer and the American Elk. It had a much lower potential for the gathering of wild plant foods and for fishing. It also had very little potential for hoe agriculture. We may tentatively suggest that the primary occupation of the area was hunting by bands which camped at favorable places for a short period while they sought, killed and processed game."

Two prehistoric sites were located by the walking survey: Oak Brook Site No. 1, on the Hawthorn Realty property south of 35th Street and Oak Brook Site No. 2 on the Coffin property near the Graue Mill on the Oak Brook-Hinsdale border.

The prehistoric campsite on the Hawthorn Realty property is of the Archaic period, probably dating in the range of 2,500 or 3,000 B.C. The campsite on the Coffin property is of the Early or Middle Archaic periods dating from 8,000 to 3,000 B.C.

Dr. Struever recommended that every effort be made to preserve these two sites until at least test excavations can be made. Such test excavations are planned for

the Hawthorn Realty property to determine if the prehistoric site extends below the surface. If so, further excavations would be recommended in order to preserve important information. Mr. Joseph S. Beale, Chairman of the Board of Hawthorn Realty Group, has shown considerable interest and has agreed to fund the test excavations of the Hawthorn property.

The third known prehistoric site was formerly the Harger Farm, located south of Harger Road and north of 22nd Street. This area is now the location of Eastern Airlines and other corporations. Mrs. Edward Epcke's (nee Marie Harger) collection consists of about 30 artifacts dating from the late Archaic period, 3,000 B.C. to the Mississippian period, A.D. 900.

Artifacts found by the Bluma Family on Spring Road north of the Coffin property date to the Late Archaic period, 3,000 to 500 B.C. and Early Woodland period, 500 to 100 B.C. Also, Village Trustee Joseph Rush has found a projectile point and a flint drill (3,000 to 500 B.C.) on his property north of the Bluma property. These findings suggest that Oak Brook Site No. 2 may actually extend northward in that area.

Other residents who own artifacts found within the village are: Mr. John Wegener, 2 Lochinvar Lane, who has found two (2) grooved sandstone abraders; Mr. W. Robert Watson, 2917 Oak Brook Hills Rd., who found three projectile points and a notched spearhead dating about 3,200 to 4,000 B.C. and a Tammus point dating from 750 A.D. to 400; Mrs. Arlene Birkhahn, 3312 York Road, with a projectile point of the Archaic period; Mr. Chris Anderson, 141 Breckenridge, with a single grooved axe dating from 3,000 to 500 B.C., and Mr. William Bates, 3432 Spring Road, with several projectile points found along a tributary to Salt Creek just west of the Fullersburg Forest Preserve, which dates to 3,000 B.C.

Dr. Struever points out, "Perhaps the most significant unknown aspect of the Oak Brook archaeological survey concerns the extensive area encompassed within three country clubs (York, Butterfield and Midwest) and the Butler International Sports Core. In all four areas much of the original land surface remains intact, though landscaping activities have superficially altered the ground surface in specific localities. All three country clubs and the Sports Core are now covered with grass intermingled with small areas of forest. Potential archaeological sites exist in all four areas but cannot be located at present, due to the vegetative cover."

1. Quit Claim Deed signed by Benjamin Fuller and his wife Olive Fuller dated August 18, 1862. The deed describes the location and size of the parcel of land being given to the Fullersburg Cemetery Association in Maine Township, DuPage County by the Fullers waiving all their rights and privileges under the act entitled The Act to Exempt Homesteads from sale on execution.

2. An inner panel and cover panel of the Quit Claim Deed signed by Benjamin Fuller and Olive Fuller transferring their parcel of land to the Fullersburg Cemetery Association recorded as #21281 in DuPage County in Book 44 signed by John Glos, on February 23, 1876, Clerk of Circuit Court and Ex-officio Recorder.

3. Quit Claim Deed  
signed on February 16,  
1876 by Marvin Fox  
and his wife Amy Fox  
deeding their parcel  
of land described by  
location and size for  
the sum of \$1.00 to the  
Fullersburg Cemetery  
Association in DuPage  
County with all rights  
under and by the virtue  
of the Homestead  
Exemption Laws of the  
State as the grantors.

4. Inner panel and cover panel of the Quit Claim Deed signed by Marvin Fox and Amy Fox granting the described parcel of land to the Fullersburg Cemetery Association recorded as #21282 on February 16, 1876 in DuPage County signed by John Glos, Recorder.

QUIT-CLAIM DEED—Chicago City Illinois Post, 11 Clark Street.

This Indenture, Made this 11th day of August in the year  
of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty One,  
BETWEEN Benjamin Fuller his wife Clara A. Fuller,  
of the first part,  
The Mullerburg Cemetery Association of the same County  
& State,  
part of the second part,  
WITNESSETH, That the said part of the first, for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar,  
in hand paid by the said part of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, and the said part of the second part forever released and discharged therefrom, by relinquished, released, sold, conveyed and assigned, by these presents do sells, releases, sells, conveys and quitclaims unto the said part of the second part, all their rights and assigns forever, all the right, title, interest, claim and demand, which the said part of the first part has in and to the  
foregoing described lot, place, or parcel of land, to wit:

Lot No 1 Subdivision in Block  
No 10 on the Town of Fullerton in said County  
After the following described lot of Land consisting of  
beginning at the South west corner of said lot, running thence North East 45 degrees thence west 55 degrees thence South West 45 degrees thence East 55 degrees to the place of beginning containing other acres of Land  
to be determined  
The said part of the first part reserves lots 1 & 25.

Land to be used as a Cemetery  
29, 44, 45, 60, 61, also eight feet off the North end  
of Lots No 26 & 27, also the alley six feet broad running  
west and south said lots are now between said lots.  
According to the plan of the Cemetery for their  
own use and benefit the balance of all the  
land described above to be used as a Cemetery.

To Have and to Hold the said together with all and singular the appurtenances and privileges thereto belonging, or in any wise thereto appertaining, and all the right, title, interest and claim whatever, of the said part of the second part, by the said Benjamin Fuller his wife Clara A. Fuller, to the only proper use, benefit and behoof of the said part of the second part, for ever.

And the said Benjamin Fuller his wife Clara A. Fuller,  
part of the first part, hereby expressly waive and release any and all right, benefit privilege, advantage and exemption under or by virtue of any and all Statutes of the State of Illinois, providing for the exemption of homestead from sale or assessment or otherwise, to the same extent as "An Act to exempt Homesteads from sale or assessment," passed by the General Assembly of the State of Illinois, A. D. 1851, and approved February 11, A. D. 1851, and an Act entitled "An Act to Amend an Act to exempt Homesteads from sale or assessment," passed by said Assembly A. D. 1857, and approved February 12, 1857.

In Witness Whereof, the said part of the first part herein set their hand and seal  
the day first above written.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED  
IN WITNESS WHEREOF {  
IN WITNESS WHEREOF {  
Benjamin Fuller  
Clara A. Fuller  
RECEIVED  
RECEIVED

# Graue Mill a Reminder of Past

The water wheel turns, the timbers groan and the stones grind the grain into flour in the pre-Civil War fashion at the Old Graue Mill. Today it is the only operating grist mill remaining in the Chicago area.

Frederick Graue and his partner, William Asche, completed their grist mill on the banks of Salt Creek in the summer of 1852. It had taken five years to build the 45-by-28-foot three-story structure.

Graue had built a saw mill in 1844, on Nicholas Torode property, but it had burned in 1848. Graue used the power provided by a brush dam built by Torode and Sherman King in 1837 for his mill. When the dam washed out in 1844, it was rebuilt with logs.

In 1849, Graue and Asche bought the mill site and the surrounding 200 acres. They decided to build a grist mill instead of rebuilding the saw mill because it appeared that logging did not have much of a future in the area.

The bricks for the structure were taken from Graue's farm and burned in a kiln at the mill site. The stone for the foundation and trim came from a limestone quarry 18 miles southwest of the mill site near present Lemont, Illinois. The timbers for the posts, the girders and joists were white oak taken from the timber along the Illinois and Michigan Canal near Lemont.

The mill race led easterly from the south side of the mill pond to the wheel. The roof was made of shingles.

The mill, which was the leading economic unit of the community, ground wheat, corn, oats and buckwheat. A millwright was brought from New York to install the machinery. The grinding stones were imported from the coast of France.

After three years of operation, Graue bought out Asche. Three subsequent generations of Graues then operated the mill.

During the Civil War syrup was made in the mill from cane boiled in steam. In 1881 Frederick Graue passed the operation of the mill onto his son William.

The log dam was replaced by a crib and plank dam in the 1870's. Some time before 1870, steam power was added to supplement the water power. A boiler and smokestack were built on the island north of the mill. In 1880 the boiler blew up knocking over the stack. The steam power was replaced in 1884, but this time the

plant and stack were built on the east side of the mill building, south of the mill race.

The crib damn washed out in 1916. After that there was no damn for 18 years. From that year until 1924, the mill operated only occasionally as more up-to-date methods made it obsolete. F. O. Butler bought the mill property in 1921.

In 1931 the mill was added to the DuPage County Forest Preserve District. The Forest Preserve Comisioners decided to restore the old mill.

The DuPage Graue Mill Corporation was formed in the spring of 1950. Leasing the mill from its owner, they operate the mill as a historical museum featuring items from the 1825-70 era. As part of the exhibit, the mill machinery was put into working conditions, and the mill grinds grain into flour 'a la 19th century.

## Old Indian Trail Opened Way for Settling 'Brush Hill' Area

In 1816, the Potawatomi (who then held all of the surrounding area) united with the Ottawas and Chippewas, seceding a section of land including the southeastern corner of what is now Lisle township, all but the northwest corner of Downers Grove township and the southeast corner of York township.

Previously, the Indians had roamed at will, content with their way of life. There had been no extensive settlement of their lands by settlers; although the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, the United States had received an area of six square miles from the Potawatomies to build a military road from Chicago to Ottawa to facilitate the building of an Illinois-Michigan Canal.

During the War of 1812, Potawatomi tribes had sided with the British, sticking heavily during the Fort Dearborn massacre.

The minor skirmishes outside Naperville during the Black Hawk war increased the migration of people eastward for protection within the confines of Fort Dearborn. They traveled the Old Indian trail as it was then known, a major east-west road of Indian travel. This trail, straightened and widened, would later become known as the Plank road and finally Ogden avenue. In 1831, the trail was designated as one of the

first two official highways of Cook county and carried the first stages from Chicago.

To help contain the Indians, President Andrew Jackson ordered Gen. Winfield Scott to proceed to the Rockford area to assist. While passing through this immediate area, Scott and his troops encountered the first ridge of some height they had yet seen. It was covered with hazel brush and they promptly dubbed the area "Brush Hill."

Following the Black Hawk war, on Sept. 25, 1833, the Potawatomies sold the northeast portion of their remaining lands. A section of this later became DuPage county.

The war over, soldiers returned home with tales of the available land to the west. More and more people packed their belongings and began the trek in search of new farm land and adventure. With this increased migration came the settlement of Brush Hill.

Lt. Sherman King had been in the area as an advance scout with Captain Naper, the founder of Naperville. At the close of the War, King returned. Some say King remembered the area and returned to settle. Others contend that King was ordered back into the Brush Hill area to keep under surveillance the remaining Potawatomi who hadn't as yet moved westward across the Mississippi river.

Originally, the area which became Hinsdale and Fullersburg was purchased by Robert Jones of New York City. It included the grounds of a large tribe of peaceful Potawatomies, headquartering along Salt creek north of the present boundary of Hinsdale. The burial grounds were located on part of the present day Fullersburg forest preserve, but were leveled during the construction of that preserve.

In no other place in America has the Indians lingered so long after the coming of the whites as they did in the midwest. Following the arrival of settlers in the Brush Hill area, a group of Potawatomies remained for some time, maintaining a smaller camp on the present site of St. Francis retreat at Mayslake.

They were friendly; relationships with the settlers were very good. It was not uncommon to see the Indians shopping in the local stores.

Finally, each spring the annual powwow was held in the vicinity of the present General Motors corp. building. Competition in bareback riding, pony races, foot races and shooting matches completed the day. To assure remembrance of the events, trinkets were sold.

In 1839, Captain Naper, then a representative in the state legislature, pushed a bill through the assembly in the old state house at Vandalia, establishing the original boundaries of DuPage county, until then part of Cook county. Abraham Lincoln probably cast a vote on this bill, for he was serving in the legislature then.

DuPage county was formally reorganized in 1839. When Naperville was platted in 1842, it became the first county seat. Wheaton was later officially designated the county seat. Finally, in 1869, militant citizens of Wheaton moved the records to their community by force.

Among the first permanent settlers in Brush Hill were Lt. King, two brothers, Oriente and David Grant , and the Torode Family.

The Torode family settled in an area north of Brush Hill, known as Frenchman's Woods. In 1835, they built a saw mill on the site of the present Graue mill. In addition, in 1840, they began operating a stone quarry located two and one-half miles from the mill on what is now York road. The venture was furthered by the opening that same year of Spring road, running along the creek from the Indian trail (Ogden avenue) to Roosevelt road.

Oriente Grant laid claim to land bordering the Chicago-Naperville-Ottawa stage coach route and proceeded to build a tavern, offering food and drink for the traveler. Overnight lodging was usually provided in Grant's own home.



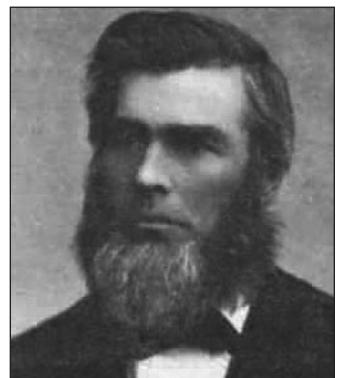
Benjamin Fuller



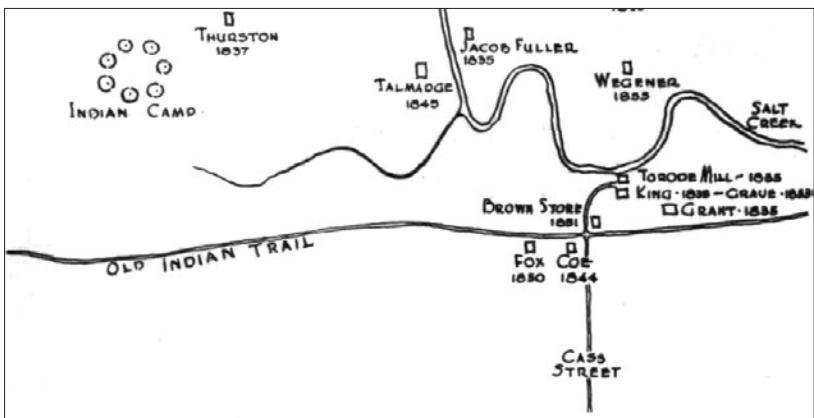
Charles Fox



Barto Van Velzer



Alfred Walker



## • EARLY FULLERSBURG •

Early Fullersburg is shown here. The old Indian trail is Ogden avenue and the "Cass street" is York road. Indian camp was in present Fullersburg forest preserve.

By March 19, 1835, a Brush Hill post office opened with Oriente Grant serving as postmaster.

From a history found in the historical files of the Hinsdale public library comes the following account of another illustrious settler.

"Early in 1834, Benjamin Fuller, then 24 years old, left his home and family in Broome county, N. Y. and started out in search of new land. He envisioned a tract of fertile land with fresh running water, open area to farm, and forest which would supply wood for the cabins.

"He was about to give up the idea of finding land in the midwest, for he found Chicago swampy and mosquitoey, when he met a traveler who described the rolling country 17 miles west of Chicago. Ben headed west over the Indian trail. He reached high ground in the vicinity of York and Ogden avenue. Here he met the first two white men known in the territory, King and Grant. They directed Ben on to the northwest, now the Oak Brook area.



Castle inn, south of Ogden avenue and east of York road, lacked fire places but it did possess the "heatingest stove" around Fullersburg.

"Ben selected a spot on what is now Spring road, three blocks north of the present Oak Brook village hall, with a small spring to the north known as Ginger creek. The creek was 'full of ginger' during the spring thaws, enough to supply power for a small paddle wheel Ben built to transmit power to a hand saw used to cut fire wood; hence the name Ginger creek.

"Ben returned to Broome county in the fall of 1834. By the spring of 1835, Jacob Fuller, his wife, and their 12 children, including Ben, began the trip west. Mercy and Catherine, two of the daughters, came by boat, a trip not previously possible until the completion of the Chicago port in 1833. Seventeen weeks of land travel brought the rest of the family.

"The first task was that of building a cabin. The completed cabin measured approximately 25 feet by 15 feet. Sleeping quarters for the children were in a loft above the main room, a ladder substituting for stairs. This cabin was located west of Spring road and north of 31st."

## \$1.25 an acre was land price

Upon arrival, Jacob Fuller purchased 160 acres at \$1.25 an acre. Ben, too, purchased land, 700 acres in all, from Washington street east to Wolf road, Ogden avenue north to Salt creek, south to the present railroad tracks.

Ben lived on a Mays Lake site next to the Potawatomi Indian village, now west of Illinois highway 83, north of Ogden avenue. These Indians later presented Ben's small son, John, a pony named Nienodi, in gratitude for Ben's having taught them how to shoe horses.

During 1836, the Castle Inn was built on the south side of the Old Indian trail, about a block east of York road. King was responsible for the construction but whether he or Grant was the actual owner remain in some question. Nonetheless, Castle Inn did profitable business.

By 1838, Elisha Fish, Henry Reader, John Talmadge, David Thurston, the Fullers, Marvin Fox, John Coe, Frederick Graue, Brown, Torode, Wagner, Ford and Barto Van Velzer had settled in the area. A row of poplar trees showed one boundary of the Torode's, while willows separated others.

Of German origin, Frederick Graue had immigrated to the United States from the Kingdom of Hanover, with his parents, seven brothers and one sister, in 1833. They eventually reached and settled in DuPage county, to the

northwest of Brush Hill.

In 1838, Graue, then 19, left his family and moved to the Brush Hill area where he cleared land and built a small house near the Torode mill. He worked in the mill, someday envisioning a grist mill of his own rather than a saw mill. Graue felt that bricks rather than wood would become the most commonly used building materials.

Mary Fuller was the first school teacher in the area. She would go from house to house accompanied by two very large dogs named Pedro and Nero. The dogs were mainly for protection from the wolves which roamed

profusely until as late as 1862. Mothers dared not send children into pastures after the cows for fear of possible attack from these wolves. With men from many communities participating, the annual wolf hunt was begun in an effort to curtail the threat of wolves in the area.

Miss C. Barnes became the school teacher after Mary had married Van Velzer. The school was then moved to a room in John Talmadge's home in Frenchman's Woods. Used also for religious services, this room was equipped with slab seats from the saw mill.

In the late 1840's, James M. Vallette of Naper settlement became the school master. During the week, he held class in the ballroom of the Castle Inn. Each weekend, on foot, he would make a round trip journey to Naperville.

Vallette was the first teacher to occupy the new school house which was completed in 1853 and in operation until 1938 when it burned. Ben Fuller donated the land on top of the hill adjoining Fullersburg cemetery on Ogden avenue for the school, which Sherman King built.

Also in 1853, the Rabbit Hill school was built in the northwest area by David Thurston. This building has now become a private residence. Completing the schools before the turn of the century was the Torode school, opened in 1865.

During 1840, John S. Coe of New York opened what has been referred to as the largest blacksmith shop in DuPage county. He later married Harriet Fuller, served as a road commissioner and ran a general store.



Mary Fuller Van Velzer

In 1843, Ben Fuller purchased the holdings of Oriente Grant, including the Castle Inn. Fuller probably never assumed management of the inn as a Mr. Lugin is listed as a manager during this period.

Ben and his father, Jacob, decided to move closer into what was the town of Brush Hill, then developing around the intersection of Ogden avenue and York road. Ben built a second tavern and the first hotel directly across the street from Castle inn. Known as the Fullersburg tavern, it later became the Grand Pacific hotel. Those travelers, unable to afford lodging, would cluster around the tavern seeking whatever protection it afforded from thieves and wolves. It was not uncommon for people to sleep in the hotel and then cook their own meals in a nearby grove.

During this time, more and more people were traveling the Indian or Black Hawk trail as it was called. If carrying freight, this was an almost impossible journey for if it wasn't mud, it was the ruts.

The only solution seemed to be the conversion of the trail into a corduroy road. In 1848, three-inch-by-eight-inch-by-eight-foot-planks were laid on stringers (logs) squared on one side, made of oak, at the cost of \$2,000 a mile. Although the official name was the Southwestern Plank road, it became simply the Plank road.

By 1850, the road was completed to Brush Hill. Toll gates were established and Barto Van Velzer became the first tollkeeper for Brush Hill. Tolls, by the mile, were 2 1/2 cents for a man on horse, 5 cents for a team and wagon, 7 1/2 cents for a four-horse team.

The eight-foot-wide plank road was peaked (roof-shaped) to assure drainage, but this also necessitated the greasing of wagons many times before the trip to Chicago was completed. The trip from Brush Hill to Chicago took eight to 10 hours.

Rapidly the planks warped, loosened, and even disappeared. Some floated away, causing the project to be called the "best investment afloat," although when the road was new, the stockholders realized a 30 to 40 per cent profit on their investment.

Other planks were ripped up to assist wagons stuck in the mud. Gradually, after repeated fills of stones, a solid roadbed was built up and travel increased. Eventually the toll house was moved and permanently attached to the back of a nearby house.

Increased numbers of settlers could now more easily move west. The traveling time to Naperville was now

one day. Taverns for overnight stops were about 12 to 15 miles apart, which then constituted a day's travel.

In 1850, Frederick Graue purchased the land where the Torode sawmill had stood before it had burned and completed the gristmill he had begun in 1847. Water power was supplied by a dam which King had built – the first dam of such on the creek. The workings of the mill were of wood, but these were soon replaced by more up-to-date machinery from the East. Eventually a steam turbin was used as the power supply.

Graue's partner in this venture for three or four years was William Asche. They operated on a "sharebasis," keeping part of the crop they ground. By 1858, Graue had built a brick home near the mill which still stands.

## Salt Barrel Was Left in the Creek

According to legend, Salt creek was so named when “a farmer from York, as the territory to the north was known, was returning home from Chicago with a wagon load of supplies. In his attempt to cross the creek, his wagon stuck in the creek bottom where the bridge now stands. He did manage to free his horses and proceed on his way, returning the following day with an extra team. He was able to recover his wagon. All supplies were accounted for except a barrel for salt which has dissolved, leaving nothing but the wooden barrel. Hence the name, Salt creek.”

It was in 1851 that Benjamin Fuller platted the town of Fullersburg. The town centered at the junction of Ogden avenue and York road, and extended approximately a block each way. At the same time, he divided much of his land among each of his five children, retaining the inns and lands south of them for himself. Benjamin Fuller became postmaster when the Fullersburg post office opened Feb. 3, 1859.

Three cemeteries served the Fullersburg community during this time. The oldest was the Torode cemetery located on the west bank of Salt creek, half way between 22nd street and the present Haeger road.

Some of the early settlers who has died were buried in sand near Mammoth spring, which was located on Spring road between 22nd street and Roosevelt road. A steady flow of water kept the creek filled at all times, but often the spring would erupt; underground pressure forcing a column of water eight to 10 feet into the air. It is now covered by a metal building east of the Oakbrook shopping center.

Nicholas Torode decided that this was not a fit place for

a cemetery because nearby was an area used as a sand pit, causing even more sand to wash over the graves, adding to the already unsightly view of many uncovered graves to wind erosion.

Torode admired a piece of land on the west bank of the creek owned by his own son, Peter P. He expressed a desire to be buried there and arranged an exchange of land that was never recorded.

When Torode died on Oct. 4, 1890, his wishes were carried out, and other graves were moved from the Mammoth spring area to the second piece of land. This area was eventually enlarged and was reached from a small road off Haeger road. Jacob Fuller and his two wives were buried in this cemetery, Fuller having remarried after the death of his first wife. The Torode family, not wishing the cemetery referred to as a private one, later changed the name to York cemetery.

A second cemetery was the Thurston cemetery located on the east side of Canfield avenue, south of 22nd street.

A third was the Fullersburg cemetery at the foot of North Garfield avenue. It serves as a final resting place of many of the Fullers and other original settlers.

In 1854, Alfred Walker, his wife Fanny Ann Hopkins Walker, his mother, and one son Clifford Alfred,



This plot of the town of Fullersburg shows the breakdown of lots in the community in 1852.



First home in the original village of Hinsdale was that on the Alfred Walker farm. House was built in 1857.

journeyed by stage from Vermont to Chicago to Brush Hill, by now known as Fullersburg. The last segment of the journey carried them over the Plank road.

Walker found a little group of settlers occupying a clearing in a grove around the two taverns, a store and a blacksmith shop. The family passed the inn and the tavern, stopping at a house on York road where they remained for some time.

On advice, he purchased from Ben Fuller 320 acres, the area from south of the present tracks north to Ogden avenue, County Line road to Garfield avenue. He also purchased the tavern and the inn, living in the inn while he decided where to build his home. He operated Castle Inn as a place of lodging, and the Grand Pacific hotel as an eating place.

A patent for the Walker property, now in the Edward Hines family, had been issued in 1839 to Grove Lawrence of Onondage county, N. Y., for 160 acres of public lands, sold at Chicago and signed by Martin Van Buren Jr., secretary to Martin Van Buren, president of the United States. Later this land was deeded to Joseph Battells; to Ben Fuller; then to Walker in 1854.

Mr. Walker was keenly interested in farming. A model farm emerged which attracted national attention. In 1873, an envoy of the Japanese government spent one year on the farm learning American agricultural techniques.

The farm itself was north of present Hickory street. Being heavily wooded, the area south was called Walker's Woods. Walker's home was built on the western edge of the farm on what is now Garfield avenue, at the foot of Ayres street. It was a large home consisting of 17 rooms and reportedly boasted the first indoor plumbing facilities in the area. From a second story window, Walker had an eight-mile unobstructed view. The second floor was destroyed by fire, and the remodeled one-story

home still stands in use as a private residence. What has become The Lane was the path Walker's daughter used to bring the cows in at night.

During the late 1850's, Henry Bohlander moved from York Center to Fullersburg where he established a harness shop on York road. His brother John, followed and started a hardware business. Whiskey was sold at 14 cents a gallon at the Bohlander tavern in 1871.

Ten men enlisted during the civil war, helping to fill the 1,500-man quota from DuPage county. Morell Fuller, one of Ben's sons, served as a drum major; while Walter Van Velzer, son of Mary Fuller and Barto Van Velzer was a fife major. Two others were Samuel Coe and Herman Fox.

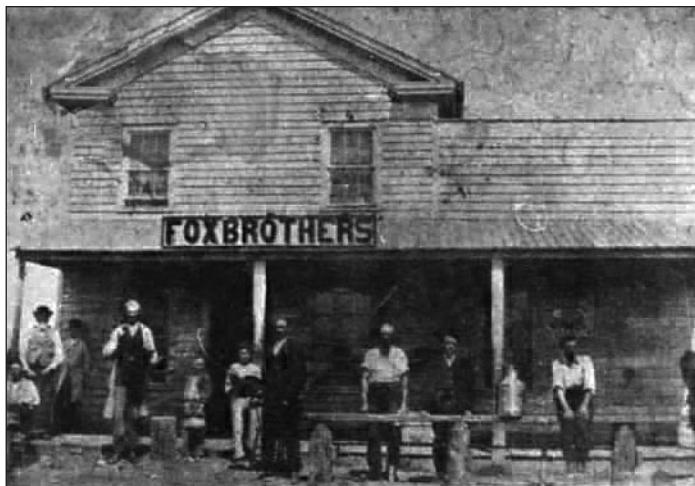
## Miss Loie Fuller brought fame

One of Fullersburg's most famous personage was Loie Fuller. Because of the extreme cold winter, Rueben Fuller moved his wife, Delilah, from their home to Castle Inn where Miss Fuller was born in 1862. A precocious child who delighted in reciting poems, Miss Fuller is most remembered as the originator of the Serpentine dance.

During her travels in Europe, she became good friends with the queen of Rumania. When the queen visited the United States, Miss Fuller brought the queen's daughter to Fullersburg for a visit.



Loie Fuller, who was the original serpentine dancer, brought fame to Fullersburg. She was born in the Castle inn and danced her way through Europe.



Fox Brothers' first store was located at the northeast corner of Ogden avenue and York road.

Loie Fuller died while in Europe in 1928. Her ashes were placed in France beside those of Sarah Bernhardt.

In 1864, Charles Fox began work for Ben Fuller in his general store located on the northeast corner of Ogden avenue and York road, becoming a partner by the time of his marriage to Betsy Fuller in 1866. Fox soon owned the store which he then operated for 22 years, both in Fullersburg and later in Hinsdale.

John F. Ruchty arrived in 1867. He had been a Frink and Walker stage driver, but was now the proprietor of the Castle Inn. He later became the last proprietor of the Grand Pacific hotel in 1887, after the Castle Inn went out of business.

Ruchty also began a natural ice business on the edge of Salt creek at Spring road and Washington street. A warehouse with 18-inch walls was built to house the ice, cut during the winter months when the ice reached a thickness of 12 to 18 inches. The ice was cut into 24-inch squares, stored, and then sold for 50 cents a hundred pounds. It often required as many as 60 men to complete the task. This company is now the West Suburban Ice co.



St. John Community church, 3724 Washington st., Oak Brook, was the only church in Fullersburg. It was known as the German United Evangelical Church in St. John.

The only church to begin in Fullersburg during these days was the "German United Evangelical Church of St. John" in 1878 now the St. John Community church, 3724 Washington St., Oak Brook.

## Railroad doomed Fullersburg

Talk spread that a branch of the CB&Q was to be laid running westward from Chicago to Aurora. Surveys completed in 1862 entailed two plans; one was to follow the Plank road; the other was to cut through the swamp and peat beds, one mile to the south of the Plank road. The first required a heavy cut through the high ground from York road to Downers Grove. The second required tremendous fill because of the swamps and peat bogs.

The men of Fullersburg prepared a petition citing "Little Brush Hill" as a center of well settled and productive country, boasting a gristmill.

Previously, Alfred Walker had started a cheese factory on his farm. It was a two-day trip to take the 100-pound cheeses to Chicago, so he was most desirous of a railroad in the vicinity.

When he "sold" five acres to the railroad for the sum of \$1, destiny had taken its course.

In June of 1862, an agreement was made by Alfred Walker to sell to the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy railroad, for the consideration of five cents, a 50-foot-wide right-of-way from County Line road to Garfield avenue.

A indenture was made in October 1862, between the railroad (John L. Riddle, representing), Walker, and his wife Fanny Ann Walker, for the sum of \$1.

What was once considered the most prosperous village in DuPage county, Fullersburg had seen her years of most profitable growth. Fullersburg had met her fate.



Fullersburg school stood on the "cemetery" hill between the north end of Garfield avenue and Ogden avenue. School burned in 1938.

# Fullersburg Today



Graue house



Ben Fuller farmhouse



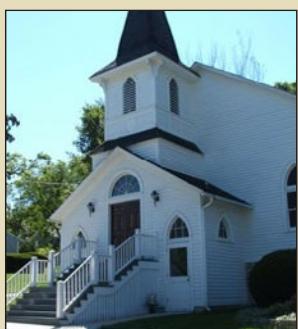
York Tavern



On the boardwalk



Scenic Fullersburg dam



Faith Fellowship Church



Graue Mill



Fishing at the dam



Kayaking



Fullersburg Nature Center—view from Salt Creek

The purpose of the Fullersburg Historic Foundation (FHF) is to support the preservation of the Fullersburg Historic District, print educational and historic publications featuring the history of Fullersburg, work with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County to raise funds to restore the historic Ben Fuller Farmhouse and inform community leaders, organizations and visitors about the important role Fullersburg played in the early history of DuPage County and Illinois.

A publication of the Fullersburg Historic Foundation a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization to the full extent of the law.

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Photos: Dave Waycie, Eric Schweister, Jean Follett, Faith Fellowship Church, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

