

Uncle Hawley Drake, Howe's Hollow and Concord Twp.



In 2022, Concord Township will celebrate its 200th anniversary. Many notable historical events have impacted the township dating back to the Western Reserve era, including its famous Girdled Road remnants. Among them are a 200-year old barn, Chair Factory Falls and a small house located on Fay Road that, since the late 90s, sits on a Lake Metroparks property. This is the abridged story of that house and the Concord family who resided there from 1856-1907.

The story begins with Eber Howe, who moved to the area in 1819. A Whig, abolitionist, businessman and more, Howe at age 21 was foremost a journalist. He was a founder of the *Cleveland Herald* and delivered it to the future Lake County residents weekly. In 1822, he founded the *Painesville Telegraph* and resided on Mentor Avenue. His original home, designed with the aid of Jonathan Goldsmith, still remains. 1838 saw Howe move to Fay Road; and again his small home had some Goldsmith influences. Howe's Hollow became an important part of the lore of the Underground Railroad. Before his

departure in 1856, Howe is credited with assisting hundreds on their route to freedom.

The story continues with Hawley Drake, born in New York and part of a family who built and owned a chair factory in Montville, Ohio. In time his brother moved to Concord Township; and together they purchased the Howe and Frederick Rogers woolen mill. In 1856, Drake moved into the Howe home at Fay Road, married Cynthia of Madison, Ohio; and in addition to being a factory owner, became a farmer. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1865. By then Drake had become a Sunday school superintendent, President of the Lake County Agricultural Society, temperance supporter, *Painesville Telegraph* correspondent and noted abolitionist. His Drake's Hollow was well known and helped hide runaway slaves as part of the Liberty Line during the Civil War. Hawley and wife Cynthia had three children. The Drakes passed in 1906 and were buried at Evergreen Cemetery in Painesville. A *Painesville Telegraph* article affectionately referred to them as Uncle Hawley and Aunt Cynthia due to their many kind acts. Their home still stands in Liberty Hollow, although efforts to preserve the structure have proven marginal. Its demise may be inevitable as early as 2019-2020.

Sources- Documents from the Susan Clark family collection, 2011 Local Lore by Max and LMP archives.

Submitted by Dan Maxson

Local Lore by Max, 2010-2016 - The News-Herald Community Media Lab - Volunteer Trustee / Docent - FHHS / Fairport Harbor Lighthouse & Marine Museum - Volunteer Curator / Docent - Old Stone School, Concord Township