William Henry (603 East Seneca Street), a joint carriage house, and a smaller residence for his sister (505 East Seneca Street). A stern businessman, Sage had no patience with procrastination. In daily letters to Miller, he badgered and scolded: "Your greatest fault and sin is procrastination. You will not do today what is possible to postpone to tomorrow." He fired the builder, John Snaith. Finally, in 1880, the buildings were completed.

Upon Ezra Cornell's death, Sage became the president of the Cornell Board of Trustees, devoting hours of his time and giving at least a million dollars in donations to bring the university to a stable and respected position in the world of higher education. Both Sage and his wife, who died in 1885, were concerned about the health of the Cornell students. When Sage died in 1897, his grand house was given to Cornell University for use as a student infirmary, as stipulated in his will. The facility was considerably enlarged in 1925. William Henry Sage sold his house to Phi Gamma Delta fraternity in 1898.

In 1901 Liberty Hyde Bailey, dean of the New York State College of Agriculture, built a residence in a corner of the former Sage property and used the former carriage house as his laboratory and hortorium. Both Bailey and his daughter, Ethel, enjoyed long productive lives working in their private hortorium and in the Bailey Hortorium located above Mann Library on the agriculture quadrangle. When Ethel died in the early 1980s, the Bailey property was sensitively converted to multiple housing by Novarr-Mackesey Construction, Inc. The project received an award from Historic Ithaca in 1985.

31. Henry Williams Sage house, Sage Place, designed by William Henry Miller in 1875. Sage bequeathed the house to Cornell University for a student infirmary.

Walking up East State Street to Eddy Street, we arrive at the area that was once the enclave of the William Henry Miller family. At 122 Eddy Street, Miller designed and built his own residence. As his financial fortunes improved, he enlarged it to accommodate a fine organ and a gracious dining room. At 118 Eddy Street, he designed a house for a family member, and in 1909, he designed and built the Gray Court apartments at 108–110 Eddy Street. This large stuccoed apartment house at the strategic Eddy Street–State Street intersection is now an East Hill landmark. When his wife, Emma Halsey Miller, died in 1929, 122 Eddy Street was acquired by Lillian P. Heller (Mrs. H. Howard) of the Cornell class of 1904. In exchange for maintenance help, Mrs. Heller boarded architecture students, establishing very close ties with them. Mrs. Heller died around 1957 and, according to her bequests, the house became the property of Cornell University. Known as Heller House, it is now administered by the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning, and is used for college receptions and for housing visiting lecturers.

The final family enclave on East Hill was that of the Driscolls, Irish Catholic quarriers who mined stone along North and South Quarry streets and built their houses on East State Street. The family patriarch, William Driscoll, immigrated to the United States and Ithaca in 1845 and made his living here as a stonemason. By 1883 his sons, Patrick, William, and John, had purchased the quarry sites that provided native stone for many of the buildings constructed in Ithaca. In addition, the brothers operated a large lumberyard and building supply store located along the shore of Six Mile Creek from the site of the present Wilcox Press plant to Aurora Street. They also directed a large contracting business.

The brothers formed the Driscoll Land Company and sold building lots around Brandon Place, Dunmore Place, and South Quarry Street. On one of these lots, the Ithaca Hospital Association constructed the Memorial Hospital in 1910; the general contractors were Driscoll Brothers. After the hospital moved to Trumansburg Road in 1958, the building served as a dormitory for Ithaca College students for fourteen years. In 1974 it was converted to housing for the elderly, known as Ithacare.

The Driscolls lived in the midst of their quarries, close to their State Street lumberyard. Father William lived at the intersection of Mitchell and East State streets, but when his house burned, a small farmhouse was moved from the Six Mile Creek area to 805 East State Street to become his home. John Driscoll built a large brick and stone house at 914 East State Street but sold it and purchased the house at 719 East State Street. In 1884 Patrick built his house at 717 East State Street. At the corner of North Quarry and East State Street, the Driscolls constructed what they called "The Block." It was a large angled building linking two connected houses facing North Quarry Street with two facing East State Street. Various Driscoll relatives lived there.

By the end of World War II, all that remained of the Driscoll's enterprises was the hardware store on Aurora Street. It was demolished when the Tuning Fork, linking Green Street to State Street, was constructed in 1957. Neverthe-

32. East Hill School, designed by William Henry Miller in 1881. An elementary school until 1976, the building and an annex were renovated by Sawtooth Builders in 1984 and now house cooperative apartments.

less, many of the Driscolls' buildings survive, a valuable legacy in stone and brick which will not be easily destroyed.

This part of our walking tour brings us to an interesting relic of early street paving in Ithaca. The first brick streets were laid in the early 1900s, and the intersection of South Quarry Street and Ferris Place, below Ithacare, provides an example of this early paving. The surface is bumpy and deteriorating, but useful for studying early paving techniques. Nearby, at 111 Ferris Place, stands the old farmhouse in which Benjamin G. Ferris, the fifteenth village president, lived from 1854 until his death in 1891. Ferris Place was named for him.

East Hill School

A central feature of the East Hill neighborhood at the corner of East State Street and Stewart Avenue has been the school building. By the late 1870s the original wooden school had become overcrowded. Soon after moving into his residence, Henry Williams Sage began pressuring the Ithaca Board of Education to replace it with a modern facility. In the summer of 1880 the board members

wrestled with questions. Where should the school be located? The most likely site was the old stone quarry, but opponents of this location described it as a stony oven, without soil, poorly ventilated, surrounded on three sides by slop holes and privies. Furthermore, they asked, how would water be brought to the site, and what would happen with the sewage? Proponents of the quarry site argued that the required filling and grading could be done, that water could be provided by the Ithaca Water Works, and sewage could be piped to Six Mile Creek, if necessary.

The board finally did choose the quarry site and, after soliciting design and site plans, selected those of Miller and his partner at the time, Edward Green. Costing $8,000, the four-room brick school opened in 1881. A second four-room wing was added around 1915 and the square one-story gym in the 1950s. The school, of course, provided a community focus. The children had a level playground for football and baseball, and their parents had a meeting place.

Living on East Hill

By the end of the nineteenth century, the East Hill neighborhood was well established. Faculty residences filled the vacant lots between the family enclaves. Water and sewer services gradually reached the area, as did first gas, then electric lights. To the residents' breathless amazement, in January 1893 the electric trolley made its maiden run, traveling steadily up State Street hill, then clattering along Eddy Street to the Cornell campus, and finally returning downtown via Stewart Avenue. Eventually, the trolley provided more than transportation: in the winter it would signal when Beebe Lake was sufficiently frozen for ice skating. When the ice was ready, a large white canvas on which a red ball had been painted would be tied to the cars.

What was it like to live on East Hill in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? One highlight of neighborhood life was the wintertime sledding, which some former sledders still recall with unrestrained enthusiasm. As soon as the first snow fell, the cheerful cry would be heard all over town, "C'mon, they're ridin' down Buff." Buffalo and Seneca streets were closed to traffic on Saturday afternoons. Young and old arrived with toboggans and Flexible Flyer sleds to zoom down the hills. Buffalo provided such a fast ride that if the toboggan made the dip and pitch without tipping at Stewart Avenue and the dip at Aurora Street, the passengers had to drag their feet to stop at North Cayuga Street. In 1914, however, a wary Mayor Tree banned coasting on Buffalo Street because of the danger of accidents. He said it was not like it was in the old days; now there were too many automobiles on the road. The gentler ride from Seneca Street to Schuyler Place remained open for coasting.

The recollections of Martin W. Sampson, Jr. provide a lively picture of an East Hill boyhood during these years. Born in 1914, Martin lived at 808 East Seneca Street with his parents, Julia and Martin (a professor of English at Cornell), and three siblings. Their house was designed by William Henry Mil-

ler. The interior had fourteen different levels: two steps leading up here, three steps leading there, throughout the house.

Professor Sampson was the founder of the Manuscript Club, a group of promising writers including Morris Bishop and E. B. White which met on Saturday nights in the Sampsons' home to read and discuss their latest works. The Sampsons also organized dramatic readings, an activity for which their living room was very well suited. The cathedral ceiling permitted construction of a balcony around the room from which the performers could speak. Young Martin, his siblings, and friends could sit on either side of the ten-foot-wide fireplace while the fire was burning and listen to the reading.

Mrs. Sampson ran the house with the help of a cook and cleaning lady who worked by the hour. She did the washing with the aid of a machine, but sometimes she had help with the ironing. Mr. Sampson's shirts were washed and ironed at the Forest City Laundry.

For a young boy, Martin seemed to have rambled across East Hill with a great deal of freedom. He crawled across the Stewart Avenue Bridge underneath the metal deck, and since he did not like the first grade teacher, he played hooky in the old quarry until he heard the schoolbell ring for dismissal. Halloween was another occasion to defy adults. Neighborhood children took advantage of the holiday to even the score with people who had been mean to them. For the most part, their revenge consisted of soaping windows, but they also made window rattlers out of wooden thread spools, cutting teeth into them and pulling them across the window by means of a stick and twine. In the winter Martin enjoyed sledding and ice skating, even though he once fell through the ice on Cascadilla Creek and his soaked clothing froze as he walked home. He was a member of Boy Scout Troop 7, but dancing and music lessons were also part of his childhood regimen. The piano recitals for Mrs. Taylor's pupils were held at the home of Mrs. Charles Bostwick at 705 East Buffalo Street. (Built around 1868, it was originally the Corson Girls' School.) Martin remembers that some neighborhood children died of diphtheria because their fathers disapproved of inoculation.

Just as Martin Sampson, Jr.'s recollections evoke much that was typical of East Hill life, so the recent history of his childhood home represents the typical fate of many of the neighborhood's private residences. In 1930 Martin's father died in an automobile accident, but Mrs. Sampson continued to live in the family home until 1946, when she sold it. In recent years it has been remodeled and converted to apartments. The fourteen different levels are now gone; the house is no longer the one Martin Sampson knew as a child.

From Family Neighborhood to Student Neighborhood

As living styles changed during the twentieth century, some of the large East Hill houses became too difficult to maintain for families who could not afford live-in servants. When these houses were relinquished by their owners, they

were often acquired by Ithaca College for use as dormitories or classrooms. During Leonard B. Job's tenure as president, from 1932 to 1957, seventeen buildings, mainly on Buffalo Street, were purchased by the growing college. After the college moved to its new campus on South Hill in 1965, eager landlords purchased the vacated East Hill buildings, converted them to apartments, and rented them to students.

The increase in student housing is not the only challenge the East Hill neighborhood has had to face. Around 1974 the Ithaca School Board indicated that East Hill School would be closed. This suggestion provoked a prolonged protest by residents of the area, who soon formed the East Hill Civic Association. During the 1970s, East Hill School had adopted an open enrollment policy and open classrooms. Students and parents alike were pleased with the innovative program in the old school building. They saw no reason to close it. But they lost their fight; in 1976 the school was designated an abandoned building and the students were assigned to various other schools outside the neighborhood. Anxious residents then wondered if the school would be torn down and if the entire site, the only green space on East Hill, would be covered with an apartment development. To protect the building, the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission created a historic district on East Hill, and eventually Sawtooth Builders successfully converted it into an apartment cooperative. This project received an award from Historic Ithaca in 1984. Although most East Hill residents cannot use the green space, it is still there.

Another crisis occurred in 1978 when Cornell University announced that it would close the multi-storied Sage Infirmary and convert it to graduate student housing. Although the university has been encouraged to provide more housing for its students, the East Hill Civic Association questioned the placement of students on lower Seneca Street. At this time, Tom Hanna, who had lived at 210 Eddy Street since 1970 with his wife Katherine and two children, became president or facilitator (his term) of the civic association. The Hannas were disturbed by the changes taking place in their neighborhood (they wanted East Hill School to remain open and were alarmed by the increasing numbers of students living around them) and asked the city planning department to study the East Hill–Collegetown area. A number of meetings were held in Sheldon Court with city aldermen, Cornell representatives, and East Hill residents to identify the neighborhood's problems and determine solutions. Hanna continued as the spokesman for the civic association until he realized he was its only voice. The others had lost interest or become discouraged. By 1985 the association had dissolved completely.

In the midst of this neighborhood of change lie several islands of calm. One is Fountain Place, a city historic district of three outstanding houses. Alarmed by the changes on East Hill, the owners requested designation to protect their homes for the present and the future.

The second is the Hinckley Museum on lower Seneca Street, located near the site of the former Reverend Samuel Parker residence, which was constructed in 1832. Parker gained considerable notoriety in 1834 by joining a bold missionary venture to bring religion to the Nez Perce Indians. His house be-

came a museum for the Indian relics he collected on the trip. It was damaged by fire in 1930, and the present structure on Parker Place bears little resemblance to the original. Antique lovers remember the Parker house as the location of Mary Van Allen's antique shop. In the 1960s it was a wonderful place to browse on a mild spring day. A tall, thin, white-haired woman, Mrs. Van Allen was an expert on old furniture and glass, operating in the midst of a marvelous antique clutter surrounded by numerous cats and kittens.

Her friend Henry N. Hinckley had grown up in the house at 407 East Buffalo Street and in the 1930s converted its carriage house, at 410 East Seneca Street, into his residence. An architect and antique collector, Henry N. Hinckley amassed a substantial collection of glass, china, silver, furniture, and paintings. After his death in 1969, the auction of some 1,300 items yielded about $120,000.

Hinckley's will directed that the proceeds of his estate be used to create the Hinckley Foundation in memory of his parents and his little son, Henry L. Hinckley II. The purpose of the foundation was to found, operate, and maintain a museum for the education and enlightenment of present and future generations. Some of Hinckley's antiques were withheld from sale to create the nucleus of the museum in his converted carriage house. Mary Van Allen was to have been an active director of the museum, but she died in March 1970. Nevertheless, Hinckley's wishes were realized by his old friends, Robin Hood Jansen of Trumansburg, D. Boardman Lee, Mary Wood Minnich, Richard M. Putney, and Eugene Shipe of Canadaigua. Although the early days of the museum were difficult, by 1981 the trustees could release Hinckley's assets for the foundation, according to the terms of his will. Today the museum stages exhibits, workshops, and seminars.

What is the future of East Hill? Tom Hanna offers some observations about the present that may suggest some clues to the future. He now sees more children on Eddy Street than he saw years ago, even though single-family residences now account for only ten percent (or less) of the building stock. Hanna feels that student lifestyles have changed, even in the past ten years. Such changes inevitably affect the neighborhood. Today's students seem to have more money and more cars than did students in the past. Whereas in 1978 the student/auto ratio seemed to be one car to four students, it now seems to be three cars to four students. Although the higher drinking age may be keeping more students out of bars, it has encouraged large, noisy house parties. Thus in spite of, or even because of, the current unprecedented construction in Collegetown to create more student housing, the main nuisance problems of East Hill—traffic, parking, congestion, and noise—remain.

Yet even as East Hill experiences the sometimes unsettling effects of change and transformation, the community and the city are working to preserve the distinctive heritage of the neighborhood's past. Although landlords now carve once spacious interiors into small apartments, the original exteriors of many buildings remain to testify to the date of their construction. Indeed, in recognition of the area's splendid diversity of style, the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission has formed a large district within East Hill that was placed on the

National Register of Historic Places in 1986. To ensure protection at the local level, in 1988 the commission began hearings to enlarge the city historic district created in 1978 around East Hill School so it would conform to the National Register district. Clearly, the ability of the East Hill neighborhood to incorporate its past in its present foretells a lively future.

4 South Hill

Clayton W. Smith

South Hill was populated long after downtown Ithaca was well established. Two natural features may have discouraged early settlers: Six Mile Creek separated the area from the rest of Ithaca and the hill was thickly covered with trees.

The South Hill part of Abraham Bloodgood's 1789 map of Ithaca is shown below. Today, the only street that is still close to its original location is Spencer Street. Columbia Street remains, but in a different location. Tioga Street did not extend across Six Mile Creek at that time.

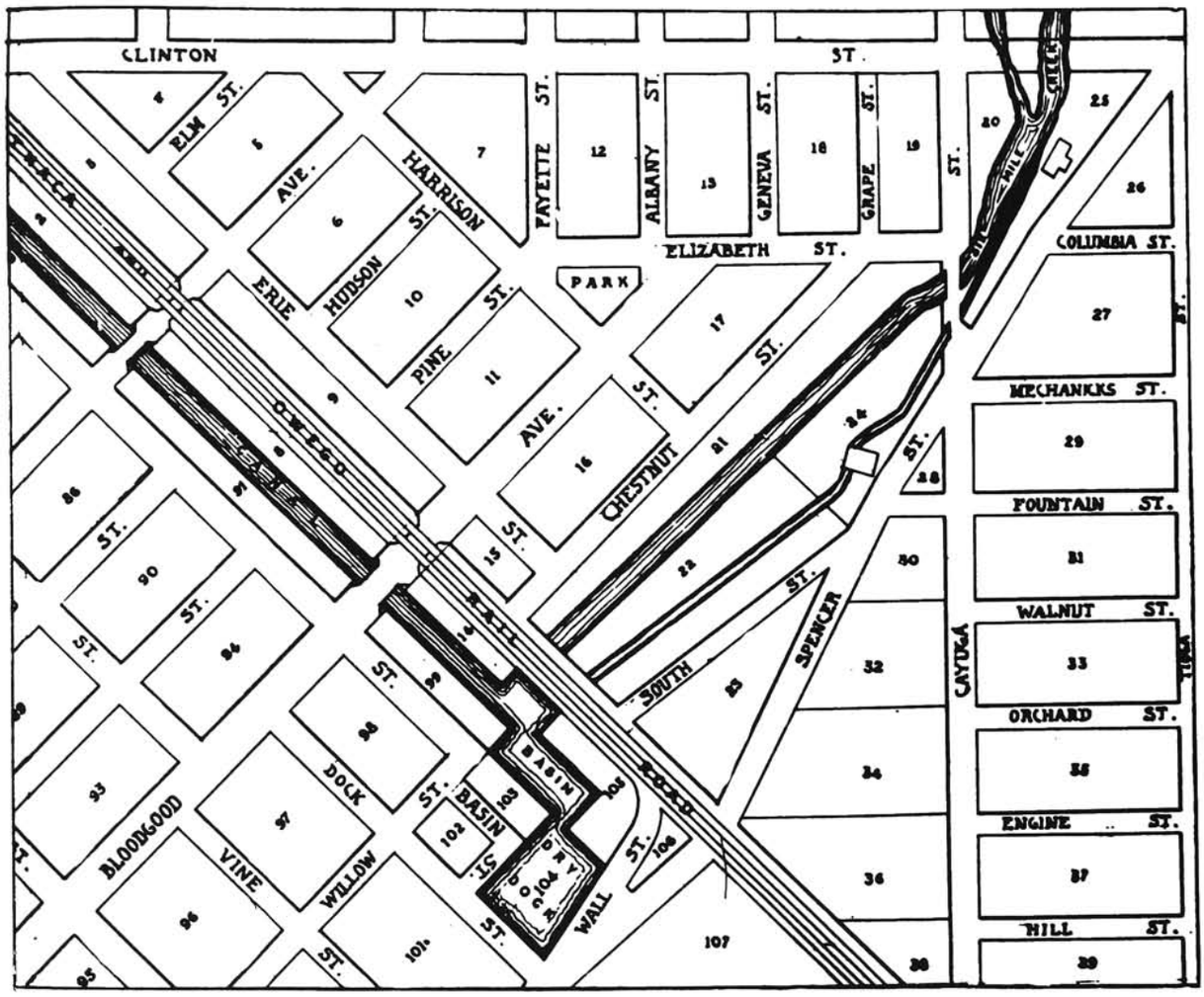
As the thick tree cover on South Hill was gradually cleared and the area became more and more developed, it acquired a varied and multifaceted character. Many small businesses, three major industries, and a flourishing educational institution have all found a place on South Hill. And even today, as Ithaca observes its centennial, the area continues to grow.

The Ithaca and Owego Railroad

Before there were many homes and businesses on South Hill, there was the railroad. The Ithaca and Owego Railroad was formed in 1827 and incorporated on January 28, 1828, the second railroad chartered in New York. The railroad opened in April 1834, and until 1840 it was drawn by horses. The first train from Ithaca to Owego had forty-nine cars, four loaded with passengers and forty-five with plaster and salt. During its first six months in operation it carried 3,300 passengers and 12,000 tons of goods. The twenty-nine-mile trip between Ithaca and Owego took three hours.

To get down into Ithaca the trains (both the horse-drawn and engine-powered varieties) used two inclined planes. The upper plane was 2,225 feet long with a drop of one foot in 21 feet. The lower plane was 1,733 feet long with a drop of one foot in 4.28 feet. The total descent was 405 feet. The planes used stationary power from a huge windlass worked by horses.

The railroad had its troubles with the inclined plane. It was time consuming to detach the cars and pull them one by one up South Hill. It took two hours to raise and lower a train of sixteen cars. Each car was detached and lowered by



33. A portion of the map showing Abraham Bloodgood's holdings in 1789. From John H. Selkreg, ed., *Landmarks of Tompkins County, New York.*

the use of a handbrake on the top section. In May 1842 a passenger car accidentally broke loose going down the plane. It was the practice to let the passenger car down the first plane with the handbrake while the passengers were on board. Thus the car was, as usual, detached from the rest of the train and proceeding down the plane. After it had covered one hundred feet, however, Mr. Hatch, brakeman and superintendent of the road, felt something give way. He soon discovered that the brake was not working. He leaped off thinking he could stop the car by blocking a wheel. This attempt failed, and he was now unable to warn the passengers of their danger. The passengers, seeing that things were not right, began to leap off, some injuring themselves. Mr. William Legg saved a lady passenger by picking her up around the waist and going to the rear of the car and dropping her in a smooth area away from timbers and trees. He then leaped to safety himself.

The car passed the engine house at a great speed and was scarcely visible. It stayed on the track past the second engine house, but at about 1,700 feet it left the track with a tremendous crash and went end over end some one hundred feet and was dashed to pieces. A Mr. Babcock who remained in the car the

34. South Hill around 1910. A train ascending the switchback can be seen just in front of the Morse Chain Company building. The abandoned route of the inclined plane is clearly visible to the right of the Morse building.

whole way lived but was badly injured—his nose nearly cut off and his right arm broken in two places. And he did recover.

The railroad was sold on May 20, 1842, to the state comptroller by default. A successor company, the Cayuga and Susquehanna, was granted a charter April 18, 1843. The idea of routing the train by Buttermilk Creek had been talked of in late 1845, and the work on the line up South Hill finally started in 1849. When this line was completed, the train ran from the steamboat landing on the Inlet through Inlet Valley to Buttermilk Creek, where it swung around on a gravel-filled trestle and started the climb to South Hill by means of a "Z" switchback. The train coming from Owego ran close to present-day Aurora Street at the top of South Hill and then switched to another track, the train running backward to the southeast close to the upper end of the second dam in Six Mile Creek. It was switched again, running forward along Hillview Place, past what is now Morse Chain, and gradually past Buttermilk Falls. The switchback covered five miles. The walk down the hill took a half hour—much less time than the trip by rail.

Ruth Reed (later Ruth Bailor) lived with her family at 413 Hudson Street in the early 1900s. When the Reed children first heard the DL&W (Delaware, Lackawanna & Western) climbing South Hill in the morning they knew it was

35. Aftermath of a DL&W wreck of September 28, 1889, close to Aurora Street across from The Home. Engineer O. Seely was killed when the engine and three of the coaches tipped over.

time to get up. By the time the train made the first switch-back they would be dressed and on the way to East Hill School, and when the train made the second switch-back and headed south on the main line, they would be in school.

South Hill School

A temporary school was built on South Hill in 1874 at 417 Hudson Street. The lot was owned by L. Day, who rented it to the school for an annual fee of $50. The school was one story high and had two rooms and two teachers, Clare Atwater and Celina Weed, whose salaries were $450 and $400 respectively for the school year. Primary classes were held in one half of the building and the grammar classes in the other half. H. H. Hayden was hired as janitor on September 7, 1875, at a salary of $75 per year. In 1876, sixty-seven pupils attended in the the first six grades. The school year was thirty-nine weeks long and was divided into three terms of thirteen weeks each. In 1877 a second floor was added, and in 1878 the rent went up to $202.50. The school now had seventy-nine pupils, forty-four in the primary grades and thirty-five in the grammar classes. The higher grades were sometimes promoted to Central School.

36. South Hill Elementary School in the mid-1900s. The building was converted to cooperative apartments by Sawtooth Builders in 1978–79 and is now known as the Acropolis Cooperative.

In 1881 there was talk of building a permanent South Hill School, similar to the East Hill School and closer to the foot of South Hill. The temporary school building was moved to the 100 block of Columbia Street, the same lot where later the red brick school was built. In 1907 this temporary building was moved once again, this time to Coddington Road, and it became a private home. The same year, the cornerstone was laid on the Columbia Street site and the red brick school was built.

Cornelia Williams of 321 Columbia Street, who had been a pupil in the temporary school in 1894, had by 1907 become a teacher, and she and her pupils moved into the East Hill School for one year until the Columbia Street school opened in 1908. In 1910–11 new classrooms with more windows were added, and Miss Williams was made principal. During World War I, she organized the South Hill children and they planted gardens in the Six Mile Creek Gorge under the Columbia Street Bridge. Miss Williams retired in 1927.

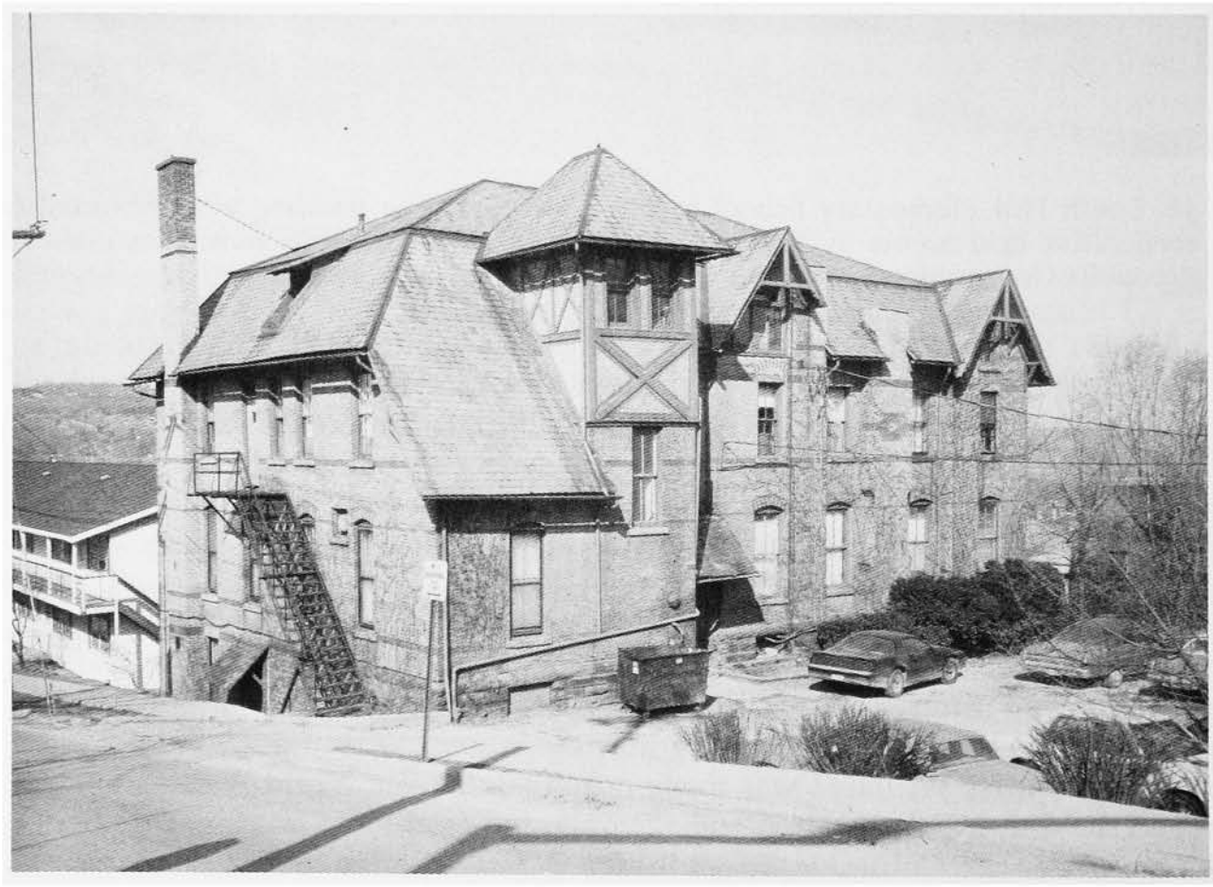
Following Miss Williams's retirement, Mrs. Beardsley became principal and served in that position until her death in 1937. Her successor was Mrs. W. E. (Westy) Gelder, who was principal for thirty years. She retired in 1969. From

1910 to 1955 the Columbia Street school had six classrooms and six teachers. Some renovations were made during these years, creating office space and a library and turning the basement into a gymnasium.

In 1955 the cornerstone of the new Hudson Street school was laid. The new school, which opened in 1956, had thirteen classrooms and thirteen teachers. It eventually expanded to include twenty classrooms (accommodating twenty teachers) and an office, library, gym, and outdoor play area. The gym was dedicated to Miss Cornelia Williams. In 1956 South Hill School had four kindergarten classes and over five hundred pupils. Since the redistricting of the Ithaca city schools in the early 1980s, children from Danby, Brooktondale, and other rural areas have been bused in to the school.

The Home

In 1877 Jane McGraw, the third wife of the wealthy Ithaca businessman and Cornell benefactor John McGraw, built a three-story building at 514 South Aurora Street for The Home, a residence for elderly ladies. The building was deeded to the Ladies Union Benevolent Society in 1886. The Home was used for about ninety years, until 1971, when the new McGraw House at 221 South



37. A recent photograph of The Home, which served as a residence for elderly, indigent ladies of good families from 1877 to 1971. Photograph by Clayton W. Smith.

Geneva Street was completed. The South Aurora Street home, designed by William Henry Miller, was very attractive. It still stands today at the corner of South Aurora Street and Hillview Place, now converted to apartments.

Speno Mansion/Oak Hill Manor

The building now known as Oak Hill Manor was constructed by Philip Stephens around 1880. The original lot was fifteen acres and had been a large grape vineyard, the property extending from Hudson Street to South Aurora Street. The house was designed in Italianate style and had ten bedrooms. The estate included a carriage house and barn.

Frank Speno, a local businessman and inventor of the Speno Ballast Cleaning Machine, purchased the home, barn, and carriage house from Mr. Stephens in 1912 for $8,000. He and his wife, Delia Hehir, raised seven children in the house, which remained in the family until Mrs. Speno's death in 1953.

The Oak Hill Manor Nursing Home purchased the Speno mansion, carriage house, barn, and land around the buildings in 1953, and the Ithaca Board of Education acquired most of the acreage for the new South Hill School. When

38. The Speno mansion at 602 Hudson Street before it became part of Oak Hill Manor.

the house was converted to use as a nursing home some of its elegant features were modified: two marble fireplaces, for example, were enclosed with protective grill work, and the crystal chandeliers in four large rooms were removed. In addition, the kitchen was moved to the basement to provide for a patient sitting room. The front hallway, however, still has its floor-to-ceiling mirror in a cherry wood frame. Rumor has it that this mirror came from Mark Twain's home in Elmira. The house also has handsome stained glass windows over the front door.

The mansion could accommodate fifteen nursing-home residents. The carriage house, now called The Cottage, was remodeled as a three-bedroom apartment for independent living. These two buildings constituted the nursing home until 1965, when a modern "skilled nursing facility" with sixty beds was constructed. Because the new facility was built in the front yard of the Speno mansion, the old house can no longer be seen from Hudson Street.

This new building is a two-story brick structure containing therapy rooms, an examining room, and dining room where about forty patients eat together. It also has a large living room and a recreational and conference area.

South Hill Neighborhoods

A little red schoolhouse on Hudson Street, about where Grandview Avenue now intersects Hudson Street, served as a neighborhood community center from the 1920s through the 1950s. Julia Troy Galbraith remembers attending dances there on Saturday nights in the 1920s. The music was provided by the Happy Bill Daniels Trio, whose members were Bill, Bob, and Mary Daniels. The schoolhouse was also used as a voting place, and LaGrande Chase held Sunday School there for the Salvation Army. Joe Centini organized Saturday neighborhood dish-to-pass suppers that included games after dinner, and the Home Bureau met there.

John Hart, Bob Meldrum, and Emmajane Gridley O'Brien all remember bobsledding, sleighing, or tobogganing from the top of Coddington Road, down to Hudson Street, and then down Columbia Street to the old hospital bridge. This was a long and quite safe ride in the 1920s and early 1930s. Frank Raponi remembers coasting down Columbia Street in the late 1930s and also swimming and skating at Van Natta's Dam. During the 1930s the neighborhood kids played in the wooded area at the far end of Renzetti Place.

As the recollections of those who grew up on South Hill during the 1920s and 1930s testify, South Hill at that time was a friendly and neighborly place. Neighbor greeted neighbor while shoveling snow or gardening. Long-time neighbors from Grandview Avenue and South Aurora Street used to have neighborhood card parties. During World War II, when many South Hill residents were away in the service, neighbors became especially close and dependent on each other. Victory gardens were planted on Grandview Avenue, and neighbors assisted each other through times of rationing and shortages. But

even during the war years there was time for fun: for example, riding downhill in the winter and warming oneself with cocoa or coffee afterward in a neighbor's heated garage.

Today, although a sense of community remains in some sections of South Hill, close-knit neighborhoods generally seem a thing of the past. Many houses that were once single-family homes have now been converted to student housing, and even the families who live in the apartment complexes usually stay for only a year or two. On South Hill, as in other Ithaca neighborhoods, the number of long-time residents is diminishing, the number of temporary residents increasing.

Pearsall Place

Pearsall Place, however, is still an active neighborhood. A block party is held once a year, usually in June, and it includes all the residents of Pearsall Place. The fun starts at about mid-afternoon on a Saturday, when the street is blocked off and games begin—volleyball, badminton, swimming in the Ciaschis' pool, softball on the THERM field, and other games in the street. Dinner, a dish-to-pass meal, begins about six o'clock. Each family is taxed a few dollars to cover the cost of meat and drinks. After the dinner, which is always accompanied by friendly chatting, dishes and tables are cleared away, and then the main event begins. Don Miller, a neighborhood resident, is a long-time square dance caller, and the dancing and the party continue to about 10 P.M.

The Pearsall neighbors also attend Ithaca College football games and have tailgate parties before the game. Some of the children are in youth sports, and their parents get together to attend the games, whether at home or away.

The Klondike

The area known as The Klondike lay on the former Conover Farm somewhat south of the city line. Around the turn of the century Frank Speno, who was a labor agent at the time, leased the land as a place for railroad workers to live. The workers, almost all single men from Italy, lived in shacks or crowded houses, cooking outside and washing their clothes in Six Mile Creek. Granny Hyde of South Hill is credited with naming the area The Klondike, in reference to the rough living conditions shared by the Italian workers and the Alaskan gold diggers.

The Klondike area included many open fields where the workers sang, played bocci, cards, and a game called "amore." Their saints days celebrations were famous and were written up in the *Ithaca Journal.* The workers loved children and organized foot races and other games for them on the Fourth of July. But homesickness and rough living led to fights, and the Ithaca police were regular visitors to the area in the early 1900s.

Gradually Italian families moved into the area, among them the Baldinis, the Centinis, and the Vicidominis, who had a bakery and grocery store on Pennsyl-

vania Avenue. During World War I many of the Italian workers returned to Italy. Others, however, eventually married and joined the mainstream of Ithaca life.

Terrace Hill

Three of Ithaca's most elegant houses were built on Terrace Hill in the 1860s on land once owned by the Pelton family. From east to west these houses were Whiton House, the Andrus home, and the McGraw house.

Whiton House was designed by the English immigrant A. B. Dale and built by George Whiton in 1874 at 201 South Aurora Street. George's daughter, Louise Whiton, lived there until the 1930s. The house is now the home of the Community School of Music and Arts.

The Frederick Andrus house was also designed by A. B. Dale. The house, which cost $6,500, was built of brick with stone facing. It had a light tower in the main elevation. The roof was slate and tin, and the tower had an iron cresting. Nearly all the rooms had fireplaces with marble mantels. Frederick Andrus, a local publisher and seller of books, lived there until his death in 1869. In 1873 the house was redesigned for William Andrus, Jr. by William Henry Miller.

The McGraw house was designed by Miller and built by Jane McGraw in 1878. In the late 1930s the Andrus and McGraw homes were destroyed to make way for the GLF (now Agway).

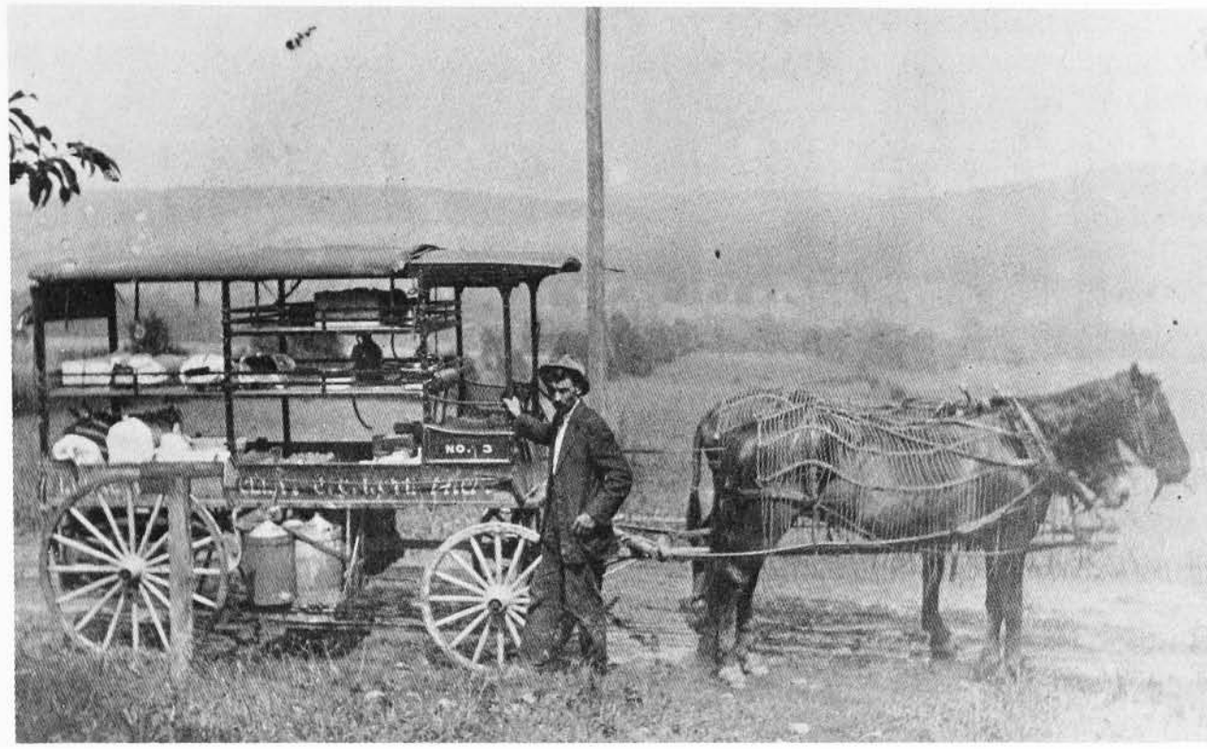
South Hill Industries and Businesses

One of the first businesses on South Hill was a brewery, built in 1823 on the east side of Six Mile Creek near the intersection of Turner and Pleasant streets. It changed hands several times and finally burned down in 1878.

Other early businesses on South Hill included the gunsmithies of L. Cook and J. Cooper, sometime before the Civil War. In 1867 Herman V. Bostwick built shops on East Clinton Street for a cooperage. Bostwick had a large business in barrels, firkins, and other coopered products. (Coopers make barrels, tubs, and any containers made with staves or hoops.) Several cigar makers were located on South Hill: August Schmidt at 506 South Aurora Street, Edward Green at 228 Columbia Street, and H. H. Moore at the corner of South Aurora and Hudson streets. Edward Green of 228 Columbia Street ran a wholesale and retail cigar business. The cigar-making business declined in the 1890s when ready-made cigarettes appeared on the market.

Early Groceries

Glenn T. Smith and his wife operated a grocery at 416 Hudson Street from 1900 to 1927. The Smiths also delivered to homes, first with horse and wagon and later with a truck. Spence Right was the truck driver and Bob Meldrum



39. Wilber Baker delivered groceries for J. G. Roth's grocery store on Coddington Road in 1910s. He visited a different rural area each day, delivering goods to families and taking their orders for the following week. Photograph courtesy of Helen Baker Phillips.

"hopped truck" and put up the grocery orders. In 1927 the Smiths sold the grocery to the Dooleys, who operated it until 1975. From about 1977 to 1984, the store space was used as Donna's Deli. It has since been made into apartments.

The Tagliavento Grocery store was started by James Tagliavento around 1925. James's son Louis and his wife took over the store in 1959 and ran it until 1975. The store started as a convenience store, carrying milk, bread, and a selection of canned goods and other staples. The younger Tagliaventos increased the store's stock so that by 1965 it carried almost all kinds of groceries.

Luce Dairy

The Luce Dairy at 410–412 Hillview Place was started in February 1913 by William A. Luce. Farmers from Lansing, Trumansburg, Interlaken, Trumbulls Corners, Danby, Coddington Road, Brooktondale, Slaterville, Ellis Hollow, and Snyder Hill brought their milk to the plant after morning and evening milking.

Before the advent of mechanical refrigeration, the dairy used ice to cool the milk after it was pasteurized. Ice was cut in winter at Danby Pond and brought by wagon or sleigh to the dairy, where it was stored in the large icehouse. Later, mechanically made ice from the Illston Ice Company or the Ithaca Ice and Coal Company was delivered to the dairy year round. After the milk was pasteurized and cooled, it was placed in glass bottles (later in plastic cartons) and

put in the cooler, ready for delivery. In its early years, the dairy made deliveries by horse and wagon or (in the winter) by horse and sleigh; later, trucks were used. At Morse Chain and the Ithaca Leather Pocketbook Factory, Luce Dairy sold its milk from a cart that went throughout the plant during the morning break. Of Ithaca's many dairies (there were fourteen in 1945), Luce was the last to go out of business, in 1971.

Southside Coal and Oil Company

In 1919 William J. Troy, an Ithaca drayman, started the Southside Coal Company, which eventually delivered coal to most South Hill residences and many others throughout the city. Mr. Troy's coalyard consisted of a large covered trestle, large scales that could weigh a truck, and an office area. The trestle was long enough so that coal cars loaded with coal pieces of differing sizes could be emptied into bins through the bottom of the railroad coal car and through floorless trucks. The coal bins were high enough so that trucks could simply back up to the bins and let the force of gravity do the work of loading.

The trucks that carried the coal had coal chutes, one end of which went in a cellar window. Coal shoveled into the chute would slide down into the cellar coal bin. Two or more chutes could be buckled together, if necessary. At some places, coal had to be carried in baskets and emptied into the cellar coal bin, a procedure that added to the cost of delivery.

Southside Coal and Oil was later run by Francis Troy (1942–44), Edward Pierstorff (1944–53), Harold A. Fish (1953–78). Its current owner is Harold A. Fish, Jr. In 1960 the name of the firm was changed to Southside Fuel Company. Today its products are kerosene, bottled gas, and Atlantic fuel oil. Following a fire in 1980, the plant was rebuilt with a three-room office area, an indoor garage and truck repair shop, and a vehicle wash bay.

The Leather Pocketbook Factory

In 1934, Oscar Swenson, a salesman for Rubin Apple Corporation, which manufactured pocketbooks in Brooklyn, came to Ithaca on business with Rothschild's Department Store. Rothschild's buyer, Gertrude Murphy, suggested over lunch that the Apple company should move to Ithaca. In the Depression years, the city actively tried to attract new businesses. Swenson conveyed the proposal to Mr. Apple, who opened a second factory (he retained his Brooklyn facility) in space leased from the Allen Wales Corporation at 616 South Aurora Street in October 1934.

The plant started producing leather handbags early in 1935, with supervisors who had moved up from Brooklyn and twelve local workers. The business expanded, and around 1940 the firm built a new plant on Hudson Street Extension to accommodate additional employees. The work was somewhat seasonal; at peak periods, the factory employed 130 workers.

The factory sponsored a softball team and bowling teams and allowed a one-week vacation with pay. During the vacation period the company shut down

and employees lacking vacation time could work on inventory or other jobs. The company closed in 1960.

Morse Chain

The history of Morse Chain is the story of its continuous growth. Founded by the Morse brothers in Trumansburg, who developed the Morse Equalizing Spring, the company was originally known as the Morse Spring Company. In its Trumansburg factory, the Morses' company manufactured horse-drawn carts, buggy springs, and the rocker joint. In 1892, when the rocker chain was incorporated into the design of the bicycle chain, the company changed its name to Morse Manufacturing. In 1898 it was incorporated as the Morse Chain Company.

Morse Chain expanded steadily. It developed a silent power chain in 1901, and between 1901 and 1904 it patented and marketed an optical pyrometer. The Morse Thermo Gage Company was founded in 1904. And in 1906, having outgrown its Trumansburg facility, Morse Chain moved to Ithaca and established itself in an 80,000-square-foot plant on South Aurora Street.

Soon after Morse Chain's relocation to Ithaca it became clear that wells would not supply sufficient water for all the company's needs. A big reservoir was built uphill from the plant. A water line was laid from under the Cayuga Street Bridge in Six Mile Creek to the reservoir. Water was pumped up the hill and allowed to flow down to the plant—but it was not for drinking.

In 1908 Morse expanded abroad: Westinghouse received a license to manufacture Morse products in England and Germany; and the automotive timing chain for Cadillac was developed. In 1914–16 the Ithaca plant quadrupled in size. In 1917 Morse got into airplanes with its division called the Thomas-Morse Aircraft Corporation and built the Thomas-Morse Scout for the U.S. Army. In 1918 it built the MB-3, which was the first real American fighter plane.

In the postwar years Morse added the Peters Morse Adding Machine to its product line, along with the Poole Clock and the Barr-Morse typewriter. In 1919 a new plant was built in England; in 1920 another new plant opened in Detroit. Additional space was needed in Ithaca, too, and the local plant was enlarged once again in 1928.

In 1929 Morse joined the newly formed Borg-Warner Corporation. The adding machine division was sold to Allen Wales, which later became a division of the National Cash Register Company. The airplane contracts and designs were sold to Consolidated Aircraft, which later became the Convair division of General Dynamics.

The roller chain was developed in 1935. In 1937 the design work for the chain was completed, and Morse began making pocket-sized Arithometer calculators. In 1939 the company undertook the manufacture of automatic furnace stokers. During the war years, 1941–45, the Morse Chain drive was used on Navy tugboats. In 1946 the Ithaca plant was modernized and more space added.

In the 1950s and 1960s Morse Chain expanded several times both at home and abroad (to Canada in 1954, to Mexico in 1962) as the company continued

to add new products to its line—speed reducers, Hy-Vo chains, SCR controls, and Chevrolet sprockets. In 1977 Borg-Warner Electronics was formed in Ithaca and housed in the old Peters-Morse Adding Machine building on South Aurora Street, and the first large Hy-Vo transfer cases were built at the new machine products plant nearby. Hy-Vo manufacturing space was expanded at the Aurora Street plant, and the new Hy-Vo Lite chain was introduced in the General Motors transmission for the projected X-car series.

In 1979 Morse Chain observed its fiftieth anniversary as a part of Borg-Warner. In that year it reorganized into two business units—Morse Industrial Products Division and Morse Automotive Division—with plants in Ithaca, Illinois, Colorado, Iowa, and Ontario.

In recent years Morse Chain has continued its tradition of development and expansion, adding new plants throughout the United States and abroad, and adding space to existing plants. A flourishing enterprise in the past, Morse Chain will remain a competitive corporation for years to come.

The Adding Machine

In 1928 the Morse Chain Company entered into an agreement with the Allen Corporation of Philadelphia, which had recently acquired the assets of the Wales Adding Machine Company, whereby Morse would continue to manufacture the Peters adding machines (which it had begun to produce in 1921) and Allen would sell them. The name of the machine was changed to Allen-Wales. In 1931 Morse's Adding Machine Division and the Allen-Wales Adding Machine Corporation merged as the Allen Wales Adding Machine Corporation and established its headquarters in a space rented from Morse on Danby Road.

Allen Wales manufactured and marketed adding machines throughout the country in the 1930s. During World War II, much of its factory capacity was used to produce articles for the war effort. In 1943 the company was purchased by the National Cash Register Company of Dayton, Ohio, and became the Adding Machine Division of NCR. NCR purchased the Allen Wales building and thoroughly renovated it, and a new factory was built on Danby Road in 1957–58.

In 1972 the company entered a new age, phasing out its electro-mechanical products in favor of computers. In 1975 the last adding machine was shipped and on November 21, 1975, a meeting was held to recognize the occasion. To most of the veteran employees present the event was like the funeral of a long-time friend.

Today the Ithaca plant provides printers for many other NCR products and produces personal and business computers.

THERM, INC.

THERM INC. was established in 1935 by Cornell University professor Paul Lincoln as the Therm Electric Meter Company. In 1937 the facility was moved from space leased from Cornell to a small building on South Hill, where it

remains today. Under Lincoln and later under Robert Sprole, father of THERM's current president, the firm manufactured electric meters, tool and die goods, and finished components for turbomachinery.

After a shaky financial period in the early 1940s, the firm expanded significantly in the fifties, particularly in the area of general machining, which continued to develop throughout the 1960s. THERM did work for IBM's early computers and produced components for Smith-Corona and IBM typewriters, molds for television screens, Pyrex ware for Corning Glass, and packaging machines for Inland Container Corporation. It also collaborated with Morse Chain of Ithaca in producing the transmission for the Oldsmobile Tornado, the first American-made car with front-wheel drive.

In the late 1960s the general machining that had accounted for so much of THERM's work for the preceding twenty years began to taper off. During the 1970s the company worked almost exclusively on more specialized machining: air foils and blading. Today THERM is the largest privately owned manufacturer of turbine blading in the United States.

Many changes have taken place at THERM since 1937, not least of which are the expansion of the plant from 5,000 to 130,000 square feet and the increase in the number of employees from only a handful to nearly 350. Over the years, THERM has distinguished itself by its ability to provide custom work on jobs that bigger firms would consider too small to undertake, and it has become known throughout the United States and overseas for machining excellence and innovation. Indeed, its capacity for innovation is well illustrated by its latest research, on the manufacture of engine components from industrial ceramics—research whose fruition is ten to twenty years in the future. No wonder THERM's own future looks bright.

Ithaca College

For many decades after its founding as the Ithaca Conservatory of Music in 1892, Ithaca College was located in scattered buildings in downtown Ithaca. Only its more recent history belongs to South Hill (see Chapter 1).

The need for a single, central Ithaca College campus was recognized as early as the 1930s. Leonard B. Job, the president of the college at the time, began a search for a suitable site. Finally, in the 1950s the college purchased land south of the city limits on South Hill. Under the guidance of a new president, Howard Dillingham, construction of the new campus began. The cornerstone of the first building, the student union, was laid on October 22, 1960.

Previously, in 1957, a group called the Friends of Ithaca College was formed by Roland G. (Red) Fowler, manager of National Cash Register and a college trustee since 1953. The object of this group was to raise money to help fund the new construction. The Friends group consisted at first of community members sensitive to the needs of the college and willing to contribute at least one hundred dollars a year. In 1961 the Friends raised over $250,000 for the construction of the first academic building on the new campus, appropriately

40. Muller Chapel at Ithaca College in 1987. Photograph by Clayton W. Smith.

named Friends' Hall. This building provided space both for classrooms and a library.

In 1964–65 the college built two fourteen-story highrise dormitories with a connecting dining hall. The towers have since become an Ithaca landmark, and traditionally at midnight on December 31 lights in the towers form numbers to mark the new year.

Several other buildings were constructed in the 1960s under President Dillingham: the administration building, named for former college president Leonard B. Job, who had seen the college through the Depression years; the music building (Ford Hall); the gymnasium; a dormitory; a redesigned science building; the library; and the performing arts building. By February 1965 all the departments of Ithaca College were finally installed on one campus. During the spring, the new campus was opened to the community for Ithaca Day. Students, faculty members, and staff welcomed the townspeople with guided tours, gymnastic performances, piano recitals, and sporting events.

A later addition to the college complex was the interfaith Muller Memorial Chapel, built in 1973. The chapel was the gift of the Muller family in honor of Herman E. Muller, Sr. and his wife, Florence Sidur Muller '33, both of whom were killed in an automobile accident in 1965. At the time of his death,

Herman E. Muller, Sr. was president of the college's board of trustees. The Muller family's gift fulfilled a long-time wish of Mr. and Mrs. Muller to build an interfaith chapel on the Ithaca College campus.

From the time of its beginnings as the Ithaca Conservatory of Music, Ithaca College has enriched the cultural life of the city. Over the years it has offered the community a wide variety of concerts, theatrical productions, sporting events, and, more recently, radio and television programs. Its educational offerings have become increasingly diverse, and so has the composition of its student body. Ithaca College now attracts students from forty-five states and thirty-eight foreign countries, and currently has a student population of 5,800. Although the increasing number of students has definitely affected housing patterns on South Hill—and not always for the best—the college has become as important a presence in Ithaca's cultural life as its twin towers are in the South Hill skyline.

5 Southside

Claudia Montague

The history of the Southside neighborhood is a black and white story, though certainly not a simple one. The Southside has one of the highest concentrations of minority population in the city. Although the histories of the Southside's black and white communities were sometimes interwoven, more often they ran parallel to each other. In some ways, the black community forged ahead on its own, creating a separate strand of the neighborhood's story.

The first recorded African living in Ithaca was one Richard Loomis, a slave who was the property of a Robert McDowell in 1788. By 1810 there were about forty slaves in the Ithaca area, one of whom was Peter Webb.

Webb was born into slavery in Virginia in 1792 and was brought to Tompkins County by John J. Speed. Webb bought his freedom for $384 in 1818 and built a log cabin on a farm in Caroline. He married Phyllis, a free woman, in a Baptist church in Brooktondale, with a white minister presiding. The Webbs were members of that church but in time began to feel the need for "a church where the spiritual emotionalism of the congregation merged and blended with that of the preacher."[1]

Most blacks living in Ithaca in the early 1800s attended the Methodist Episcopal Church, where the congregation was strictly segregated. They joined with Webb to found their own church, choosing the village of Ithaca because of its accessibility to free blacks on other counties. Furthermore, Ithaca was at the time an important "station" on the Underground Railroad, and many escaped slaves chose to settle here instead of pressing on to Canada.

From 1823 until 1825, the congregation met in a private home at the corner of what are now Green and Geneva streets. The denomination they chose to worship under was the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church, organized in 1796 in New York City. The Ithaca church, which was chartered on December 15, 1833, is one of the earliest AME Zion churches in America. It was given the name St. James at the time it was chartered. There is no record of who St. James was; the name possibly referred to the apostle, or it may have been chosen in honor of the Reverend Thomas James, the church's second minister, although he does not claim that distinction in his autobiography.

Once the church was chartered, the congregation was anxious to have its own building. On August 15, 1836, a lot was purchased from Richard Varick

41. St. James African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on Cleveland Avenue, around 1910.

DeWitt (son of Simeon DeWitt) for five dollars, and a square, one-story building was erected on Wheat Street, in the heart of the black settlement. Today that street is known as Cleveland Avenue. St. James AME Zion is still there, the oldest existing church structure in Ithaca. Its second story was added in 1861, increasing its seating capacity to two hundred. Further construction projects in the years from 1872 to 1887 doubled its capacity. A bell tower was built during that same period. The steeple had to wait until 1904, and a kitchen and choir loft until 1910. The giant rose-colored memorial window facing the street was installed in 1945, to honor those who fought in World War II.

The building itself underwent hard times and suffered from some neglect through the 1960s. In 1974, however, its place in local history was recognized when St. James was designated as a local landmark. This recognition encouraged church and city officials to petition for state and national landmark status. Both designations were granted in 1982.

St. James served a dual purpose in its early years. Not only was it a place of worship for free blacks in Tompkins County, it also played a role in the Underground Railroad in the period before and during the Civil War. Most churches in western New York stood against slavery, but a church founded and built by blacks almost guaranteed safe harbor. Many of the pastors at St. James were themselves escaped slaves. Furthermore, Ithaca was considered an abolitionist town. The opponents to abolition had their local proponents, but the village's primary newspaper was staunchly antislavery, and many of its white founders were willing to aid runaway slaves in their dangerous journey to Canada. Records indicate that Ben Johnson, a local lawyer and the village's third president, aided a free black barber named George A. Johnson in obtaining help for fugitives.

The Underground Railroad had two main routes through Ithaca. Escapees would arrive from Owego, then leave via Ludlowville for Auburn, home of the famous conductor Harriet Tubman, or head out toward Trumansburg and points west. Either way they were likely to spend some time at St. James, according to the church's records:

"It was a secret passageway and network of slaves fleeing bondage. . . . Harriet Tubman . . . is known to have visited St. James Church." The exact location of the hiding places in the church is unclear, but "it is known that Jermain Loguen, a former pastor . . . was one of the 'most efficient conductors of the Railroad' while in Ithaca."[2] Frederick Douglass is also believed to have visited St. James during the days of the abolition movement.

Some sense of what it was like to be a black living in Tompkins County in those days has been preserved by community members such as Ruth Thomas Mann, who has made a careful study of her own family's experiences in western New York.

Mrs. Mann's great-grandfather, Charles Reed, was born Charles Washington in Hagerstown, Maryland, the son of a white plantation owner and a black slave woman. Like many slaves, Charles never knew exactly the year of his birth, but it was most likely in 1827. Charles and his brother, Webster, ran away sometime during the 1840s. According to family legend, their decision to

flee Maryland was made after Charles witnessed the murder of a field hand by an overseer who was infuriated by an act of defiance on the part of the slave.

Charles and Webster made it to Canada, where they were befriended by a tribe of Mohawk Indians. The tribe's last name was Reed, and Charles and Webster adopted that name as their own, casting off the surname Washington as a gesture of liberation.

Charles married a young Mohawk woman, Mary Pickett, and eventually brought her to Trumansburg, where he bought a farm. At one point, Charles owned three farms and was able to buy his mother out of slavery and bring her to Trumansburg to live. He and his wife had seventeen children, seven of whom died in childhood. The rest either settled in the Ithaca area or left to find work elsewhere.

For the black community in the nineteenth century, residential development was a matter of living where one could. Southside blacks tended to settle in the northwest corner of the area, and their neighborhood grew on a family-by-family basis. Other areas of the Southside became neighborhoods through calculation and planning, and one of the more prolific developers was Charles M. Titus.

Titus was something of a nineteenth-century Renaissance man of capitalism. Born in Jacksonville in 1832, his education limited to whatever the local district could offer, Titus worked first in a drugstore in Trumansburg, then in

42. C. M. Titus, the major developer of the Southside.

a general store owned by H. F. Hibbard. When ill health dictated an outdoor lifestyle, he became a traveling salesman. He married Isabella Johnson, youngest daughter of former village president Ben Johnson, in 1855. Titus opened his own fancy-goods store in the early 1850s, but lost the business to a fire. In 1860, inspired by the Unionist cause, he headed for Illinois with the intention of joining the army, but he was sidetracked by an oil boom in northern Pennsylvania.

Titus still considered Ithaca his home, and in the late 1860s he turned his attention from oil to local real estate. Just outside the central part of the village was a great deal of undeveloped land known as the Bloodgood tract. It had originally been a 1,400–acre military lot named for Abraham Bloodgood, who took it over in 1789. Titus bought a 360–acre parcel of the Bloodgood land that lay south of Clinton Street in 1868. He also bought a large farm, which supplied dairy products to most of the city. And he began building. One of his earliest efforts was Sprague House, the sprawling edifice on the corner of South Albany Street and North Titus Avenue. Titus built the house in 1871 for a grand total of $6,400. At about the same time, Joseph Brittin Sprague, husband of Isabella Titus's sister Louisa, had decided to settle in his wife's hometown. Titus traded the new house for farmland owned by Sprague in Ohio.

Sprague was a formidable man in his own right. Generous and forward-thinking by nature, he was also blessed with the double advantages of inherited wealth and good family. Within months after moving to Ithaca he became the Democratic nominee for First Ward village trustee and was the only man on that ticket who won that year. Five years later, in 1877, village residents paid him an even greater compliment by electing him as their thirty-sixth president. Sprague discharged his public duties with vigor and enthusiasm. When his colleagues refused to support some project that was close to his heart, he found means to effect the desired change in spite of them. For example, he made a $1,000 contribution to Hercules Fire Company No. 6, which motivated the board to set aside sufficient funds for a new fire steamer. The company renamed itself Sprague Steamer Co. No. 6 in honor of his patronage.

Sprague House was a nineteenth-century showplace. Sprague and his wife had twins, a boy and a girl, but both died in infancy. The enormous new house in Titus Flats was therefore occupied by only two people, plus whatever serving staff they employed. The house itself is a sort of architectural mongrel, combining a Second Empire or mansardic form of picturesque eclecticism with Italianate features. It was an imposing structure to begin with and has been made even more so over the years by the addition of porches, towers, and new rooms. Its grounds originally covered a city block and at first they were bordered by a trotting course used by Titus and his friends. Sprague had the lawns landscaped and kept them open to the public. Unfortunately, they were also open to livestock, which at that time were allowed free range throughout the town. Constant grazing reduced the velvet lawns and elegant shrubs to stubs and tatters. When Sprague was elected village president, one of the first legislative acts he oversaw was the passage of an ordinance requiring that livestock be tethered or otherwise confined.

43. Sprague House at the corner of South Albany Street and North Titus Avenue.

Joseph Sprague lived in Ithaca less than eight years, but during that time he became one of the village's best-known and most popular citizens. Upon his death in 1878 the *Ithaca Journal,* a long-time political opponent, eulogized his "noble life and kindly nature," declaring that "no death except possibly that of Ezra Cornell's was in many years, if ever, so deeply lamented by the entire community."[3]

It is hard to picture Sprague House standing alone amid pastures and fields, but when Titus built the house its nearest neighbor was on Clinton Street. It did not remain isolated for long. By 1891 promotional literature for the newly chartered city noted with enthusiasm that "Mr. C. M. Titus has . . . just added another addition to the city of forty lots. These lots are . . . favorably situated for suburban homes, gardening and fruit growing purposes. . . . we can refer to none offering more advantages and promises for future development than the Titus West Side Addition."[4]

In developing his properties, Titus had to come to grips with the fact that the land was for the most part overgrown and downright soggy. All of the South-

side lay within an area known locally as The Tadpole, a swamp covering a large portion of the flats from the head of the lake to Buttermilk Falls. The Inlet, flowing north, represented the tadpole's tail. The nickname was doubly merited, since not only was the area tadpolelike in shape, it was a breeding ground for frogs. The wet conditions were aggravated by the presence of Six Mile Creek, a meandering tributary heading north to the lake between Seneca and Buffalo streets. In order to create more dry land on which to build, Titus had the creek filled in and diverted to a new channel running parallel to a freshly laid road, part of which had been his trotting course. He christened the new road Titus Avenue.

Titus was less gratified by his successful flood control program than he was by the street that bore his name. In 1897, in an interview for the *Ithaca Journal,* he confided, "It has been a popular idea that my chief expenditure in subduing this large tract attached to the clearing away of the valueless jungle growth and ditching and filling the swamps. While this was an expensive operation I have always considered the creation of Titus Avenue a larger item."[5] He was talking about North Titus Avenue, although he was already making plans for a parallel road on the other side of the creek, which he called South Titus Avenue.

Titus conducted his real estate transactions while at the same time dabbling in businesses ranging from typewriters to agricultural equipment to railroads. He was one of sixteen representatives appointed by the village trustees to draw up the charter that incorporated the village of Ithaca into the city of Ithaca. A staunch Republican, he served three terms in the state assembly. Titus died on Christmas Day 1907, at the age of seventy-five.

There was no lack of new developers eager to pick up where he left off. One of them was Andrew Cameron Hyers, whose work in that part of the Southside known as Titus Flats represented the first tract housing in Ithaca. Hyers was born in Newfield in 1863, and came to Ithaca as a cigar maker. When he entered the building industry is not clear, but it is known that he built his own house at 502 South Albany Street around 1904 and that he had erected ninety houses in the city of Ithaca by the time of his death in 1929.

Hyers built for the suburbanite. While residences in the center of the city were generally designed in a specific architectural style, Hyers was less interested in aesthetics than expediency. He built from a pattern book and subcontracted most of the work; for $200 he could hire carpenters to build to the point where the interior was ready for plastering.

Hyers's product may not have won rave reviews from an artistic point of view, and as the owner of a lumberyard he came in for a fair bit of criticism, incurring charges that his workmanship was shoddy. But the houses were snapped up by the citizens who made up the city's work force. Most properties sold for $2,500, and at $100 down and $15 a month made home ownership possible for people who earned an average of 50 cents an hour. Hyers built most of the houses on the street that bears his name. And like Titus, he was active in local politics; though a Democrat in a heavily Republican ward, he was elected to Common Council and the Tompkins County Board of Supervisors.

44. South Albany Street in the early 1900s.

Hyers's buildings form a strange little cluster around such edifices as Sprague House and suffer in comparison with some of the fine old homes on South Albany and Geneva streets. Although the contrast may have aroused some envy in the hearts of those who lived in the Hyers development, the newer houses must have represented an impossible dream to those who lived in less comfortable conditions elsewhere in Ithaca.

Ruth Thomas Mann, for example, says her earliest memories are of a tar-paper shack at the top of the East State Street hill just inside the city limits. Mrs. Mann, who was born in 1909, was the oldest daughter in a family of eight children. Her father was a tenant farmer, and, when he could get the work, a bricklayer. Of course, East State Street was a different world at the turn of the century. The shack was surrounded by cow pastures, and her father hunted and fished in the countryside nearby.

"It was a happy place," she remembers. "My grandmother lived in a nice house just across the street, and all the downtown cousins would come up for holidays and vacations. We had a stream in the yard, which sloped. In the