



Our Old Bookcase, July 6, 2017, History of Cassella

Photo caption: The Village of Cassella is located at the intersection of St. Rt. 119 and Cassella-Montezuma Road. Do any readers recognize these old buildings at Cassella?

OUR OLD BOOK CASE

By Joyce L. Alig, President, Mercer County Historical Society

This Cassella post card was being sold over ebay, by Jim and Donna Dehne from Richardson, Texas. There is a connection between the early settlement in Mercer County, Ohio and Texas. After the turn of the century, in the early 1900's, several Mercer County families moved to Texas. The railroads were being used for travel as well as transportation of goods, and the U.S. Mail. Post cards were a popular method of communication among families "here and there." This is my theory as to how the Cassella post card made it to Texas.

The Church at Cassella was named the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, and was formed in 1847. With the migration of German citizens in the 1830's and 1840's, St. Rt. 119 was right on the direct route of settlers entering Mercer County, from the Miami & Erie Canal at Minster.

The village of Cassella was platted as Marysville in 1860. On June 5, 1878, John Cron, Post Master wrote, "*The Post Office name of my office is Cassella. Its local name is Marysville.*" [The Cassella Post Office was discontinued June 15, 1905.] The 1876 Map of Mercer County stated that John Cron was Postmaster at Cassella Post Office in 1876. The 1882 "*History of Van Wert and Mercer Counties, Ohio,*" edited by R. Sutton, stated that John Cron was the Postmaster at Cappella [Cassella] from 1868-1876. The U.S. Post Office states that the Cassella Post Office was established in 1878. [Remember the old adage, "*Read not to believe nor disbelieve, but to weigh and consider.*"] Studying this photograph, it appears to me that the building on the left side of the photograph may have been the local General Store.

Often the early Villages had the Post Office mail, in their local General Stores. I wonder if this building in Cassella was the site of their first Post Office?

The October 16, 1980 Mercer County Chronicle newspaper carried photographs and a story of the fire in the store room of the Cassella Tavern. The area fire departments arrived quickly and prevented the fire from spreading to the main building. At that time, Dennis (Spanky) Kessen and Tommy (Tammy) Kessen were the owners. The newspaper reported that this tavern had been an old landmark in Cassella and dated back to the Civil War. Cassella was platted in 1860; it is possible the first General Store did date back to the Civil War, in the 1860's. The 1980 newspaper photograph of the Cassella Tavern building resembles the building on the Cassella Post Card above.

In 1976, the newspaper borrowed a photograph from Henry J. Leugers, of the interior of Cassella Saloon, dated about 1911. I wonder if this was the same building, known as the Cassella Tavern?

I re-read the "*History of Cassella*," written by Oscar Eifert, for the 1978 "*Mercer County History Book*." For those seeking the early history of Cassella, the early names for the local village included Marysville, Kappella, Frogtown, and Dog Town. In the 1980's Ray Feltz volunteered at the Mercer County Historical Museum. Ray would tell stories of Frog Town and Dog Town.

When I retired as Director of the Mercer County Historical Museum in 2004, I wrote several Township History books, for people doing research on a specific Township within Mercer County. The "*Passport to Mercer County Ohio History, Marion Township*," includes a bibliography of historical resources of Marion Township Villages and Sites, including Cassella's history. The Village of Cassella will have its 160th Birthday in 2020. Who is interested in writing a book about Cassella's history for 2020? Who wants to help the Mercer County Historical Society to preserve Cassella's history as a part of Mercer County's history?

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