

James Harvey Curtis & Sons Blacksmith Shop (Site)
HISTORY SHEET
General Information

Name of Structure: James Harvey, James S, & Brainerd T. Curtis Blacksmith Shop

Address: 3757 Mill St

Parcel ID: (543200) 65114-16-829499

Atlas: 1853: unlabeled; 1858: "JH & JS Curtis", 1874: "JS & BT Curtis B.S.Sh";
1904: "B.T.Curtis"

When Built/Mason: 1834, James Harvey Curtis

When Razed: 1910

Why: Torn down to build Second Reformed Church

Original Owner: James Harvey Curtis

Subsequently: Sons James S and Brainerd T; J.B. Malcolm (1903)

Original Use: Blacksmith Shop

Subsequent Use: Cooperage (1903)

Photographs: 2 - Historic: (Marion Historian, Carolyn Adriaansen)
One photo shows when being used as BSS, the other shows sometime after it was converted to a cooperage for making barrels in support of the nearby J.B. Malcolm & Company. Interestingly, the look of the building is identical in both pictures—no modifications to exterior had been made.

Description:

Design Details:

Long rectangular 1-story w/long side facing Mill St; wide opening for door from roofline to ground level was in center w/1 window to its left, 2 to its right; 12-over-8 sashes. Larger building built onto the rear flush with the gable end wall; but it was not cobblestone. Four very small windows randomly scattered on the right gable end, a normal door was set on the side very near the edge of the front quoin line. The left gable end was obscured by an attached large wooden structure.

Masonry Details:

Rough cut limestone (or sandstone) quoins of varying lengths and sizes. Rows per quoin varied. Windows had only wood frame—no lintels or sills. Fieldstones of various sizes, shapes, colors. Neat rows with strong horizontal mortar joints. Front and side elevations had same treatment with both stones and masonry.

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Overview:

Benjamin Curtis came to Marion in 1817. His son, James Harvey Curtis, and James' sons James S and Brainerd T Curtis—three generations—all followed the business of blacksmithing. In 1834 James Harvey Curtis built the cobblestone shop on Mill Street. For three generations they were the leading carriage and wagon makers and blacksmiths in the town. The cobblestone BSS was razed and the Second Reformed Church was erected on the site in 1910.

References:

Marion Cemetery

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21159269/james-h-curtis> (1800-1872; 72)

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21159270/james-satterlee-curtis> (1828-1902; 74)

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21159250/brainerd-t-curtis> (1834-1917; 83)

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn84031445/1872-07-04/ed-1/seq-3/> Wayne County Journal

"DIED... CURTIS— At Marion, Monday July 1, 1872, James H Curtis, aged 72 years, an old and respected citizen

Later on same page: VICINITY ITEMS... Mr James H Curtis, a highly respected citizen of the town of Marion, was buried on Tuesday, aged 72 years."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1902-05-02/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise
"James S Curtis was born May 5, 1828 on the spot now occupied by the Halsted house. At an early age he moved with his father, James Harvey Curtis, to the place where he died. He was never married and resided with his brother, B.T. Curtis."

James S Curtis dies in 1902 and within the year his brother, Brainerd T, arranges for J.B. Malcolm, owner of the adjacent "evaporated fruits, beans, and farm produce" business, to convert it to a cooper shop in support of his business operations.

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1903-01-02/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise

"B.T. Curtis' old carriage works will be converted into a cooper shop. Staves, headings and hoops will be bought ready for use and the barrels will be made here. This will be an added industry and one which should pay. There is a large demand for barrels here. The butter tub business might also be worked up."

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<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn85026906/1903-01-08/ed-1/seq-2/> Marion Enterprise

"J.B. Malcolm has purchased the building of B.T. Curtis on Mill St and will convert it into a cooper shop where barrels will be made to supply the large demand for them at the J.B. Malcolm warehouse."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1903-07-10/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise
"B.T. Curtis has leased his shops for a term of years to D. C. Putnam of Lyons, to be used as a cooper shop."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1906-08-31/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise
"D. C. Putnam & Co are making barrels for the fall trade at their shop on Mill street. Get your barrels of this firm and encourage the industry in town."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1907-09-27/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise
D.C. Putnam will soon begin the manufacture of barrels. He has a large quantity of barrel stock at the shop on Mill street.

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn84031445/1908-10-08/ed-1/seq-8/> Wayne County Journal
"D.C.Putnam of Lyons is again making barrels at the cooper shop on the B.T. Curtis place."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1910-09-09/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise
"A committee of the 2nd Reformed church have purchased a lot on Mill street of 80' front and the society will erect a church, commencing the work at once. This takes in the old landmark—the stone blacksmith shop and the carriage house, where in former years a brisk business was done by the firms of J.S. & B.T. Curtis. Mr Curtis now receives \$1,500 for the lot. The proposed new church will be an addition to the beauty of Mill St."

Note: 9/15/1910: Wayne County Journal

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn84031445/1910-09-15/ed-1/seq-8/>
"Two important real estate transfers were made last week. Members of the Second Reformed church purchased the lot on Mill street owned by B. T. Curtis and now occupied by the old stone blacksmith shop, for a site on which to erect a church. Consideration, \$1,500. The house owned by Abram Garlock is to be used as a parsonage."

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http://sodus.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011846-12311925&e=stone%20blacksmith&m=between&ord=e1&fn=record_usa_new_york_sodus_19100916_english_7&df=1&dt=3 SODUS RECORD, 9/16/1910

"The Second Reformed church society has purchased the old stone blacksmith shop and lot on Mill street for a site for their new church. Work will be begin at once on removing the old building and erecting the new church. The society has also purchased the residence of Mrs Hester Garlock on the same street for a parsonage."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074107/1910-09-30/ed-1/seq-3/> Marion Enterprise
"The Curtis carriage shop was taken down this week. The lumber will be used in erecting shed in the rear of the proposed Second Reformed church. Active work has been in progress clearing the lot for the proposed new Second Reformed church. Members are working earnestly for this place of worship and church home."

<http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/lccn/sn88074501/1917-01-20/ed-1/seq-3/> Newark Union Gazette

"MARION, Jan 16 — Brainerd T Curtis died at 7:30 PM last evening at his home in Mill Street at the age of 82 years after an illness of 3 weeks induced by an attack of acute indigestion followed by heart trouble. Mr Curtis was a lifelong resident of this village and highly respected in this community. He belonged to one of the pioneer families of Marion, being a grandson of Benjamin Curtis who came from Orange County NY in 1817 and taking up a farm and building a log house near what is now the home of Raymond B Skinner, east of this village. In 1828, James Harvey Curtis, son of Benjamin, built the house on Mill Street in which his son, Brainerd was born on 10/6/1834 and in which he lived all his life.

Benjamin, James Harvey and his sons, James S and Brainerd T Curtis—three generations—followed the business of blacksmithing. In 1834 Brainerd's father built the cobblestone shop in Mill Street, where he established the business, which was continued for many years by his sons, James S and Brainerd T, who were the leading carriage and wagon makers and blacksmiths in the town.

After the death of his brother, Brainerd Curtis carried on the business, from which he retired several years ago. The old stone shop, one of the landmarks of Marion, was removed and the lot sold in 1910 for a site for the Second Reformed Church.

Mr Curtis retained his faculties, having a keen interest in public affairs and current events. He was a staunch Republican. In August, 1862, he enlisted in the Civil War as sergeant of Company D, 160th New York Volunteers. He was with the Banks Red River expedition. He was discharged in August, 1863 because of illness.

On 6/4/1865 he was married to Harriet J Howard of Dansville, MI. Mrs Curtis died on 4/26/1904 at the age of 64 years. Since her death the eldest daughter has been the companion of her father, making the homestead attractive as ever for their family reunions. Mr

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Curtis' 82nd birthday anniversary was celebrated by all of his children and grandchildren at his home last October.

Mr Curtis was a charter member of John B Burrud Post, G.A.R., No 444, organized 6/19/1884. He was a regular attendant and supporter of the Presbyterian Church and deeply interested in its welfare. He leaves two sons, Warren H Curtis and Scott B Curtis of this town and two daughters, Miss Alice Curtis of Marion and Mrs Carlton P Fairbanks of Williamson, and four grandchildren ... Burial will be in the family lot in Marion Cemetery.