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'AN ENJOYABLE RECEPTION'

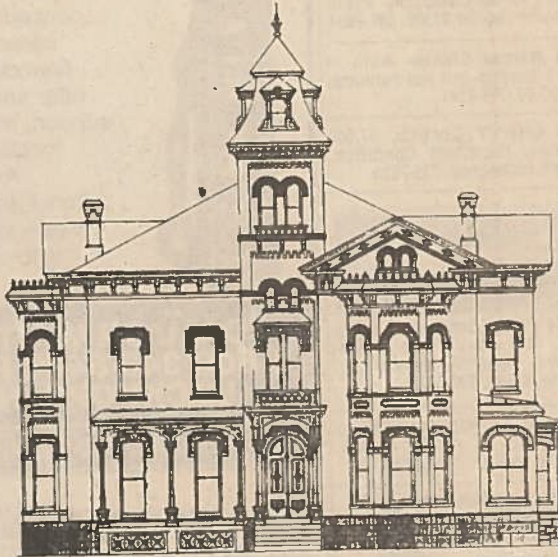
From a 1911 news clipping out of an Albion paper, we find a most interesting account of what is entitled "An Enjoyable Reception." Let us begin by first reading the article before some explanatory remarks:

"Mrs. E.K. Hart gave a large reception Thursday, February 2 from 3 to 6 p.m. About three hundred invitations were issued and in all its appointments, it was one of the most elegant affairs ever held in Albion. Mrs. Hart was assisted in receiving by Mrs. Walter Platt Cook of Buffalo, N.Y., Mrs. Walter Birnie of Springfield, Mass. and Miss Ruth Keeney of LeRoy. Mrs. F.J. Fessenden of West Newton, Mass. was expected but was detained from coming to the regret of her many friends here.

"The ladies assisting Mrs. Hart in entertaining were Mrs. Albert C. Burrows, Mrs. D.S. Beckwith, Mrs. Frances Forbes, Mrs. Harry P. Spencer, Mrs. C. Royce Sawyer, Mrs. Herbert T. Reed, Mrs. G.W. Carmer, Mrs. J.R. McGregor, Mrs. Warner Thompson, Mrs. Frederick Thompson, Mrs. Judson C. Curtis and Mrs. Lynn Moore Burrows. Vick, the florist, decorated the house, mantles and stair rail, beautifully with Southern smilax, begonias and other flowers. The dining room north, and across the hall, a southeast room, were used by Teal the caterer as serving rooms. The walls were covered with smilax vines and in the north room the table was centered with a great mass of American Beauty roses, and red shades covered the candles. In the south rooms the table was decorated with pink shaded candles and Kilarny roses, and the walls with smilax. The music was furnished by the Marthage orchestra of Rochester, which was stationed in the green house, where the sweet music could be heard in all the rooms. The ladies received in the reception room and the large parlor and library south, were admirable for such a large gathering. The scene was a most brilliant one, with the beautiful gowns, the greens, the flowers, under artificial lights used for the occasion. There were many guests from out-of-town."

Upon reading this, one can only picture a scene of elegance and refinement, picture perfect for proper etiquette of the day. Names of those mentioned were among Albion's elite at the time. Wives of lawyers, bankers and school superintendent were present.

Mr. and Mrs. E.K. Hart lived in the house



pictured here from an architect's drawing by W.V.N. Barlow. It was located at the southeast corner of Route 31 and Route 98. Built in 1877 by W.G. Swan, it was demolished in 1941 after Mrs. Hart died. It was one of many such mansions which once graced South Main Street in Albion often referred to in the earlier part of this century by middle class people as "Ruffle Shirt Hill." This was a term which sort of poked fun at such high tone affairs as Mrs. Hart's reception. Gatherings of this sort were not infrequent for this neighborhood back in those days.

Parties like this reflect an age long gone, that were part of a memorable era we can now only imagine. The writer of this article gives detail about appearances including the mention of the green house. This was a room on the south side with innumerable windows which might well have been called a conservatory. It is represented in the picture by the double window to the far right on the main floor.

Wouldn't it be interesting to know what Teal the caterer served for hors d'oeuvres. I'm sure refreshments would have been exotic, fitting right in with the aesthetic atmosphere. We have no indication of why the reception was given. But for whatever the reason, it reflects the lifestyle of the rich, their entertainment, culture, taste, refinement and most of all, what they were able to afford.