

## 1 Stamm Lane

The address of the home at the corner of National Road and Stamm's Lane has at various times been listed as 1730 National Road and 1 Stamm's Lane. Samuel Carter is the first recorded owner of the property in this area, farming the land and building an inn, often referred to as "Four Mile House," to serve travelers along the National Road. Traffic was busy after the road was completed to Wheeling in 1818. Passing by were as many as fifty heavy wagons in a row, with most that were expected to travel any distance hitched to six-horse teams. Cattle, sheep, and horses were often driven overland at the time and were housed in the farm's barnyards. And many times flocks of several hundred turkeys reportedly spent the night in large pens on the property. At least once a year a circus troupe passed through and spent the night at the tavern. More notable guests were Lafayette and later ex-President Martin Van Buren, who was lavishly entertained there in the late 1840's.

Later, ownership of the land and the inn/tavern were transferred to William Stamm, Jr. Stamm was a German weaver who immigrated in September 1833, along with his father, William Stamm, Sr. William Stamm, Jr. – later known as "Uncle Billy" – married a fellow German immigrant, Mary Franzheim, in 1840. Together they ran the inn for more than 60 years.



At the time the Stamms arrived, Wheeling already boasted numerous industries, including a paper mill, machine shops in North Wheeling, the Top Mill, and at least one brewery. Johann Ludwig (J.L.) Stifel also arrived in Wheeling in the 1830s and began a small dying establishment that ultimately became one of the most successful businesses that Wheeling has ever seen. After five years, the Stamms had made enough money as weavers to purchase a 100-acre tract of land where Mt. Calvary Cemetery now stands. That land was traded for the Carter property in 1848.

William Stamm, Jr. lived until 1913, when he was nearly 98 years of age. He credited his good health and strength to never using tobacco in any form and never becoming over-intoxicated. The Stamms had four children – William, Henry, Elizabeth, and Amelia. Elizabeth ("Lizzie"), the only one to marry, wed Louis C. Stifel, son of J.L. Stifel, in 1867. They had six children – sons Edward W. Stifel (who built what is now called the Stifel Fine Arts Center) and Henry G. Stifel (who built nearby "Shadow Knoll"), and daughters Marie (who married Oscar Burdats), Laura (who married John Stevenson), Cornelia (who married J.D. Merriman), and Elizabeth (who married Harry W. Gee). All six lived in Pleasant Valley, on or near National Road.

Following "Uncle Billy's" death in 1913, granddaughter Marie Stifel and her husband Oscar W. Burdats lived in the Stamm home. Oscar was the son of S.O. and Louise Glessner Burdats. The elder Burdats was listed in Wheeling City Directories as the proprietor of the Old Exchange Saloon in 1877-78 and later as "collector" and "general agent" for Reymann Brewing Company. Oscar was educated in Wheeling public schools and later attended the College of Dentistry at

what is now Temple University in Philadelphia. He opened his dental office on 16<sup>th</sup> Street in 1891 and was probably well established by the time he married Marie in 1897. He became active in various service organizations, including the Shrine, and is said to have been one of the men responsible for the founding of the Shriners' Crippled Children's Hospital program.

During World War I, as a tribute to William "Uncle Billy" Stamm, the family offered the Stamm Inn as a barracks to be used by troop trains going through Wheeling. This effort was supported by friends and neighbors who baked pies; knitted sweaters, socks, and helmets; provided Bibles, identification cases, and rosaries; sent preserves, fresh fruits, and "many dainties;" and chatted with the soldiers. "One room was fitted up as a reading room, and all kinds of late magazines and literature were provided as well as comfortable chairs and desks. The officers' rooms were on the first floor and the cots for the soldiers on the second. The kitchens and dining rooms were basement rooms." It has been said that the family buried their good china in the earthen basement floor to protect it while the soldiers were there.

In December 1925, the six Stifel siblings subdivided the Stamm estate, with each to receive one or more portions. Mary E. (Marie) Burdats was allotted the portion that included the Stamm House. The Burdats reportedly tried to preserve the old inn but were told by contractors and architects that the old brick walls were unsafe and that the structure could not accommodate modern conveniences. It was demolished, and the Italian Renaissance replacement that stands today was built. The original spring house still stands near the National Road/Stamm Lane corner of the property.



The next owners of the home were Charles Burdett Hart and his wife Emily Jule Stifel Hart, who lived there from 1954 until their deaths. As a daughter of Edward W. Stifel, Emily Hart was a niece of Marie Burdats. Prior to living in the home, the Harts had lived next door, at 1720 National Road. Charles B. Hart (1908-1988) was sales manager of Wheeling Stamping Company and a World War II veteran, having served in the U.S. Army Air Corp and retiring with the rank of major. Emily Jule Stifel Hart (1908-1994) was a founding member of the Junior League of

Wheeling, a benefactor of Oglebay Institute's Fine Arts Center, and a member of the U.S. Senior Women's Gold Association.

Later owners Lynne and Ben Exley IV, the first owners outside the Stamm-Stifel family, purchased the property in 1995.

Prepared by Jeanne Finstein, Friends of Wheeling  
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Sources:

- FindaGrave.com
- Finstein and Hendrickson, *Walking Pleasant Valley*
- Grant & Fuller, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, Vol. 1, p. 335
- Ohio County Deed Records
- Wheeling City Directories
- *Wheeling Intelligencer*
- WV Vital Records

Stamm Inn photo – Ohio County Public Library  
Newer house photo by Joanne Sullivan