

# The Fossil

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## The Other Minter: In Search of John T. Minter

by David Goudsward

ONE NAME universally recognized in the annals of amateur journalism is Edith May Dowe Minter (1867-1934). Less remembered is that Edith met her husband through amateur journalism. John T. Minter was active in Haverhill, Massachusetts amateur journalism, which led to his becoming a professional journalist before his brief life came to a tragic end.

John Minter came to Haverhill with the building boom that followed the Great Fire of 1882. The fire destroyed the shoe manufacturing behemoth's industrial heart, but it was rebuilt within a year. The Irish came, first for the construction trades and then for the ever-increasing number of jobs in the revitalized factories that became Haverhill's Washington Street Historic District.

This was part of a second wave of Irish immigration to Haverhill that continued unabated through World War One. Unlike the first wave of arrivals from the "auld sod" in the late 1850s through the Civil War, this second Irish wave was not refugees from famine or displacement. These were willing emigrants who came in search of land and betterment using the new inexpensive travel innovation—steamships.

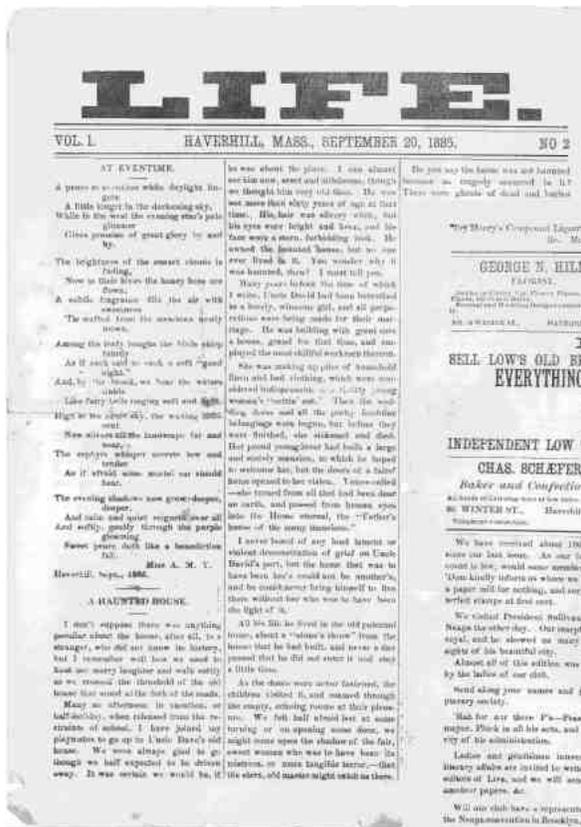
Minter's date and place of birth remain a mystery. Based on conflicting records given over his life, he was born sometime between 1863 and 1869 in Ireland. Minter is not an Irish name. It has been anglicized, possibly from McIntyre. Finding an Irish immigrant arriving in Boston sometime in the late 1800s with an uncertain surname makes looking for a needle in a haystack seem effortless. The only possible clue is Dr. Patricia Trainor O'Malley's study of Irish immigration in Haverhill, which suggests the majority of these steamship immigrants in Haverhill came from County Cork.

The earliest record of John Minter is

the 1883 Haverhill city directory, showing him as a clerk working at 115 Merrimack Street and boarding at 9 Sargent Square. Although Sargent Square had initially been an Irish enclave, a growing French Canadian presence was displacing the Irish. Minter relocated to another Irish area, Mount Washington. Sargent Square was soon renamed Lafayette Square.

Minter was a clerk in a Merrimack Street office of Moody & Bartlett. William Moody is a significant figure in Haverhill. He was just starting his law office at this time but was already entering politics. He would end his career as a Supreme Court justice, completing a

triad of positions in all three branches of the Federal Government. In 1885, Minter was a witness for Moody on the patents of his cli-



Pages 1 and 4 of John T. Minter's Life for Sept. 20, 1885. The last page includes ads for local businesses.

**George W. Hill, Publisher**  
 Also GIVES PRINTS OF ALL KINDS  
 120 Merrimack St., Haverhill, Mass.

**LONGFELLOW & CO.**  
 BELL-LAW'S OLD BROWN WINDSOR SOAP FOR THE CAKE, 3 FOR 25 CENTS.  
 EVERYTHING IN THE DRUG AND Fancy Goods Line 25 to 50 cts.  
 LOWER THAN RING STORES.  
 Longfellow & Co.,  
 INDEPENDENT LOW PRICED PHARMACISTS, WHITES CORNER.

**CHAS. SCHAEFER, Baker and Confectioner**  
 86 WINTER ST., Haverhill, Mass.

**C. J. DRINKWATER, CUSTOM TAILOR**  
 120 Merrimack St., Haverhill, Mass.

**FOR PURE DRUGS AND CHEMICALS**  
 100 W. 1st St., Haverhill, Mass.

**ADVERTISERS:**  
 Let it be a good location for you to advertise in. It has a large circulation among the best people of the city and vicinity.

**COOK'S CASH CLOTHING HOUSE**  
 Youths and Boys' Supplies. Fine Suits at very low prices. Fine Furnishing and Hats.  
 Cook, the Original Cash Clothier of Haverhill,  
 77 MERRIMACK STREET.  
 FRED. P. FULLER, Architect, Haverhill, Mass., Room 31 at St. Academy of Music.

ent William Knipe, a major shoe manufacturer in the city.

This suggests Minter was not the typical immigrant, but had a more substantial educational background and some office employment before arrival from Ireland. It remains another clue on his early life that tantalizes but offers no further insight.

Working and living in downtown Haverhill, surrounded by factories and blue-collar workers, John was also surrounded by saloons. Social drinking was not only a popular pastime; it was almost de rigueur. A casual glance at a city directory of the time will show dozens of saloons and a minimal temperance presence.

In July 1885, Minter was investigating starting an amateur press club in Haverhill. As part of the process, he wrote to other amateur press organizations, including the *Worcester Amateur*, published by Edith Dowe. Edith was the perfect source for information – she had just been involved in the creation of the short-lived Young Woman’s APA. Whatever advice Edith offered, it apparently worked. The first issue of the John Minter edited *Life* was released in August and specifically thanks Edith Dowe.

From the first issue, *Life* was a different amateur journal than the usual fare. It included local political endorsements, local advertising. And the paper actively recruited women editors and writers. The co-ed publishing was not unique, but its scope was remarkable from the beginning, a possible influence of Edith Dowe. The second issue was entirely a showcase of the female membership. While John Minter remained the editor, the issue was produced by associate editor Ester Morrison and featured all women contributions.

It plunged into the tempestuous waters of AJ politics and endorsed Edith Dowe for president of the Eastern Amateur Press Association in the September issue. Interest in the project multiplied. By some accounts, the Haverhill club membership was the largest in the Commonwealth aside from Boston’s Hub Club.

So focused on getting *Life* out, the amateur press association issuing the journal had never formalized. It did so in October, with John Minter as president and Edward P. Ryan as the editor. The timing was deliberate. Minter needed to standardize operations and get things running before stepping down as president to become a professional reporter at the *Haverhill Bulletin*. Ryan took over the presidency as well. Minter remained editor, in both official and unofficial capacities. He was elected president of the Massachusetts Amateur Press Association in December. He also met Edith Dowe for the first time. *Life* endorsed her run for NAPA editor.

In May 1886, Albert L. Sawyer took over as editor of the newly renamed *Haverhill Life*. Sawyer assumed leadership of a widely-read, professional-looking,

monthly journal. But maintaining the journal was becoming difficult—John Minter was no longer a presence. He had taken a job with the *Worcester Daily Telegram*. Minter had been setting the *Haverhill Life* type at *Haverhill Bulletin* and running the issues on their press. As long as it was on his own time and paid for the paper, the *Bulletin* didn’t mind. This is also why *Life* was a newspaper-sized affair, compared to most journals done at home with hand presses on standard sheets, printed, and folded.

Worcester was a lateral career move, but Minter had his reasons. The rumor column in the February 1887 issue of *Haverhill Life* explained. Edith Dowe was soon to be married. Dame Rumor did not mention to whom, but with John now in the same city as Edith, anyone in amateur journalism could connect the dots.

Almost a year after the move, on September 19, 1887, John T. Minter married Edith M. Dowe in Webster, Massachusetts, at the Park Congregational Church. There were shadows looming over the nuptials. John had quit his job at the *Worcester Daily Telegram* and purchased the *Worcester County News*. The first edition with John Minter as editor had been issued three days before the wedding.

This was a bad idea. The *Worcester County News* was owned by a local printer, E. C. Nichols. It is one of several newspapers named County News across the northeast; all were operated under the same business model. An experienced newspaper publisher would come into a town and establish a weekly paper. After developing revenue, circulation, the newspaper would then be sold to a local, who would basically be buying an over-valued printing press with a free newspaper thrown in. The new owner, usually unqualified, would need to run the press, create content, find advertising, and arrange distribution. Most of these newspapers did not last long. John Minter was precisely the sort of easy mark they looked for. He knew how to set type, write stories, and look for ads. But he had never done all three simultaneously at a professional level.

Ken Faig, in his biographical sketch of Edith Minter in *Dead Houses and other works* (Hippocampus Press, 2008), observes that her incomplete novelette “Love Without Wings” may be partly autobiographic. If he is correct, John and Edith’s roles at the *Worcester County News* can be reconstructed. John dealt with subscriptions, advertising, and payments. At the same time, Edith did editorial work and layout. A partner, Charles Pratt, handled actual content. Pratt also solicited correspondents in various towns to do a weekly local news/social items column.

Things started going downhill quickly. A month after the wedding, John ran a salacious gossip column on Mrs. Eliza Martin of nearby Oxford. The paper announced she had eloped with a Dr. Brigham of Fitch-

## CASTIGATING AN EDITOR.

He Feels the Weight of an  
Irate Woman's Horsewhip.

An Oxford Lady Resents the Charge  
That She Had Eloped.

Sensational Scene in the Lobby of a  
Webster Hotel.

*The Boston Globe for Nov. 28, 1887, reported  
Eliza Martin's attack on John Miniters.*

burg. The article also chronicled her life from her 20s to the current time. Mrs. Martin's response was to take a horse and wagon to Webster, track down John Miniters, and attack him with a whip. The injuries were minor, but the humiliation of a newspaper editor

being horsewhipped by an elderly woman was gleefully carried by newspapers nationally. Pratt would have actually written or approved the text, not John, but the publisher of record took the blame (and the lashes). John began drinking more heavily and apparently did not learn his lesson.

Things were not going well in Haverhill either. *Haverhill Life's* constitution and bylaws had been so hastily constructed that the journal struggled without a strong president/editor combination. It quickly exhausted the surplus fund created by John's use of the *Bulletin* to cover printing. This exacerbated internal politics. Including John Miniters, it went through five presidents in its 2½ year life.

By their first anniversary, the Miniters were struggling. Amateur journals had begun to notice Edith, always a prolific contributor, had gone silent. Edith was so busy running the newspaper and pouring more of her own savings into the operation that she may not have noticed the paper's revenue was incorrect. He was drinking any profits. And his alcoholism was getting worse.

In retrospect, one of the Miniters should have been monitoring Pratt's writings more closely. Instead, Edith, who was essentially running the paper, was too overworked to review content and was barely glancing at the copy going to press.

Pratt's inability to discern rumors from journalism became an ongoing issue. In late May, the *Worcester County News* ran an article suggesting President Grover Cleveland was verbally and physically abusive toward his wife. The claim was from a pamphlet distributed in New York, but Pratt claimed his source was a pastor who heard rumors on a recent trip to Washington. The newspaper again made national news, this time for being scolded by the *Boston Globe* for publishing such an obvious and scurrilous hoax. Such notoriety made John's attempts to sell advertising space increasingly difficult, which exacerbated his drinking. The spiral

continued. The offices were moved from Webster to Worcester to save on rent, even as debtors attached liens to the operation.

On May 19, 1889, it was business as usual in the Boston newspapers—public interest was riveted by the ongoing battle over the Bunker Hill monument's placement. The Aldermen were now threatening to wrest control from the Association and erect the memorial in Winthrop Square, just to be done with it. Buried among small tidbits that served more as filler than news was one simple notice that affected amateur journalism.

### Editor Miniters Insane

*Westboro. May 18, 1889.* John T. Miniters, editor of the *Worcester County News*, was committed to the insane asylum here today.

John Miniters's drinking had reached the stage where Edith had no choice but to have him committed. In 1885, Massachusetts first legally recognized inebriety as a disease. This permitted commitment (voluntary or otherwise) of alcoholics to the State Hospitals for the Insane. The hospitals were not happy about the sudden influx of alcoholics being sent to them. The Worcester Asylum's 1889 annual report mentions that "16 habitual drunkards" had been committed," putting the facility 50 patients over capacity. They were not the worst asylum in the Commonwealth for overcrowding. So, Massachusetts was forced to build the first of their hospitals geared explicitly toward "Inebriates and Dip-somaniacs." We don't know how long John was at the Asylum.

Edith tried to continue the *Worcester County News* herself, but there had been too much mismanagement by John. The final blow came in November when their Millbury correspondent began a series of mentions of a local mill owner L. L. Whitney. The less than flattering references culminated in December with suggestions that Whitney had hired a fellow named Brierly to torch a mill Whitney held an interest in. Whitney sued for libel.

On January 24, 1890, John and Edith were arraigned. Both pled not guilty. The bail was \$1000 each. It took Edith's mother Jennie time to post bail, leaving Edith and John to spend the night in the county jail. Whether John knew it or not, that was the beginning of the end of the marriage.

The hearing was held on February 11. Edith pled guilty and "threw herself on the mercy of the courts." Her lawyer's defense strategy shows how bad things had gotten. The court was informed that Charles Pratt had left the operation in November. John had not been involved in the operation since being released by the asylum. The libelous article, written by John Small of Millbury, was given to Pratt. He gave it to Edith. Overworked, she glanced at it and saw it looked similar to

*“Judge Aldrich said an unjustifiable and cruel assault had been made upon the character of Mr. Whitney. He then delivered a scathing rebuke against the publication of such matter in newspapers, stigmatizing it as the lowest and most unjustifiable form of attack upon a man.”*

*—The Worcester Spy, Feb. 12, 1890*



Pratt’s previous articles and sent it to layout.

John Small was easy to find for the case—he was in the county jail serving 30 days for drunkenness. Edith confirmed he was the man who claimed to write the Millbury column under the name P. J. Kane.

John Minitier was called to the stand and “made a very poor showing. He became rattled and told everything but what the court wanted to know” until the Judge told him to shut up. It was apparent to Edith that he had been drinking.

District Attorney Gaskill had no interest in pursuing the case. However, Judge Aldrich wanted to set an example for other scandal sheet newspapers. Calling it an unjustifiable and cruel assault of Whitney’s character, he continued the case until the May term.

On June 4, 1890, Edith again pled guilty and was fined \$128 in damages and costs of court. John did not attend. It appears the February hearing was the last time she saw him. It was a transformative period for Edith. She had parted ways with John. She had already sold the newspaper to N. W. Kennedy, the proprietor of *Windham County Standard* in Putnam, Connecticut. Kennedy planned to start penny dailies for the southern and northern parts of Worcester County. Jennie was spending more time in Wilbraham taking care of her parents. So Edith decided it was time to leave Worcester if only to avoid any further encounters with John. She accepted a position as a City Desk Editor in Manchester, New Hampshire. In 1892 Jennie sold the house in Worcester. For the next eight years, she would live in Wilbraham as her parents’ caretakers before her health began to fail. She then moved in with Edith, who had relocated to Boston. Because John Minitier was Catholic, they could not divorce.

Edith never mentioned John again, and he vanished from the records. The few records of him are city directories for 1892 and 1894 in Lowell, Massachusetts, a town with a vibrant Irish community. There, he moved from low-rent hotel to another, peddling extracts door to door.

On Tuesday, September 4, 1900, *The Lowell Sun’s*

headlines screamed that the US Government would not withdraw from Peking until China addressed outrages and losses on American business interests that resulted from the Boxer Rebellion. But below the fold was the type of story the prohibition-leaning newspaper loved to highlight.

John Minitier was found dead in his room at the St. Cloud Hotel. By day he had been selling essences and oils. By night, he drank himself into a stupor, and it finally caught up to him. The *Sun* reported he used to be a newspaperman at the *Haverhill Bulletin* and that his wife, Edith Minitier, had left him on account of the drinking. It also claims he had a brother in Haverhill who was a druggist. Considering the source material were fellow tenants recalling facts that a heavily intoxicated Minitier had mentioned during the month he was at the hotel, it is surprisingly accurate. There remains no evidence of a brother in Haverhill, so unless there was a step-brother or a cousin/friend who was like a brother to him, it’s another loose end in the early life of John T. Minitier.



*The Lowell Sun reported John Minitier’s death Sept. 4, 1900.*

The local coroner examined the body, who listed the official cause of death simply as alcoholism. The body was sent to an undertaker, where it remained unclaimed. They could not locate the Haverhill brother or his former wife. Edith, living in Boston, wasn’t aware John was even still alive. In April, in the 1900 census, she was already listing herself as a widow. This may have been because she assumed he had already drank himself to death or simply because “widow” status was much less complicated to explain to a census taker.

With no friends or family to claim the remains, the city of Lowell paid to bury John T. Minitier in Lowell’s St. Patrick Cemetery in an unmarked pauper’s grave.

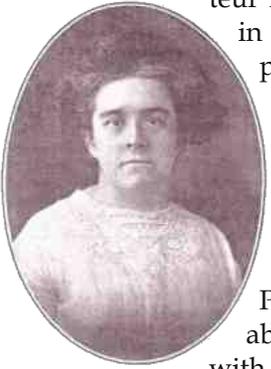
John Minitier’s lasting legacy may have been the concept of allowing advertising in *Haverhill Life* to underwrite expenses. This form was used by a new amateur journal that started in Haverhill as *Haverhill Life* ceased operations. The new journal’s arrival was fortuitous—they received the submissions formerly sent to *Haverhill Life*.

The new journal, *The Monthly Visitor*, started in December 1888. It issued 118 numbers, the last issue coming off the press in October 1898. The same publisher would return to amateur journalism in 1914. Charles W. “Tryout” Smith would use that same C&P Pilot press to produce 300 issues of *The Tryout*. ♦

# Edith Minter

by Ken Faig, Jr.

EDITH MAY (Dowe) Minter had more than forty years' active participation in the amateur journalism hobby, from her attendance at the New England Amateur Press Association's semiannual meet in 1883 through her final year of active participation in Boston's Hub Club in 1924. Surely, the highlight was her term as president of the National Amateur Press Association in 1909-10. She was also one of the participants in Zelda Armington's short-lived Young Women's Amateur Press Association in 1886-87. Probably her strongest identifications were with the New England Amateur Press Association and Boston's Hub Club. She was also one of the proponents of the Interstate Amateur Press Association in the first decade of the twentieth century.



She had two notable hiatuses in her amateur activity. The first was initiated by her marriage to John T. Minter, also an amateur journalist, in 1887. The young couple struggled to make a go of the *Worcester County News* but the newspaper failed after four years, as did the Miniter's marriage, on account of John's alcoholism. Edith retreated back to her mother's home in Worcester, and worked several jobs before joining the Boston society weekly *Home Journal* in 1893. She left the *Journal* in 1906, to devote her full time to writing. The Dorchester home that she shared with her mother Jennie (Tupper) Dowe from 1906 until 1918 became a center for amateur activity in the Hub. Edith became the doyenne of the Hub Club during its glory years from 1893 to 1924. In 1916, Henry Holt published her novel *Our Natupski Neighbors*, but the hoped-for sequel was never published. The death of Jennie Dowe in 1919 was a severe blow to Edith.

Edith's birthplace was Wilbraham, Massachusetts, and her second and final amateur journalism hiatus began in 1924, when she left Boston to retreat back to her birthplace, where she lived with Evanore Olds Beebe. H. P. Lovecraft visited them there in 1928, and marveled over the vast swarms of fireflies over the fields after twilight and all the local legendry. Some amateurs hoped that Edith would be able to attend the National's Boston convention in 1930, but her poor health forbade. She died suddenly in 1934, and was buried in her native town. Charles W. "Tryout" Smith published a slim memorial booklet in the year of her death, but a more substantial memorial did not emerge until 1938, when Hyman Bradofsky published an issue of *The Californian* largely devoted to her work. Paul Cook fumed when Robert H. Barlow published what

Cook regarded as Edith's best short story in his mimeographed magazine *Leaves* in the same year.

The short stories of New England life which Edith wrote found more favor with amateur than with professional editors. A few of the very best of them ought surely to have become anthology favorites by this point in time, but so far that hope has been unachieved. Edith loved two men in her lifetime: the first was her husband John Minter and the second was John Leary Peltret (another fellow amateur journalist), who entered her life in the first decade of the twentieth century. While Edith was left a widow by the death of Minter in 1900, she could not marry Peltret, who was already married. But they lived under a common roof in Dorchester for many years and went camping out in Wilbraham during the summers.

Now indefatigable literary detective and Fossil David Goudsward has shed some much-needed light on Edith's husband John Minter. While Edith was still alive, amateur journalists could only trade rumors about her husband. We are fortunate that David Goudsward has now given us a better view. ♦

## Edith Minter's Writing

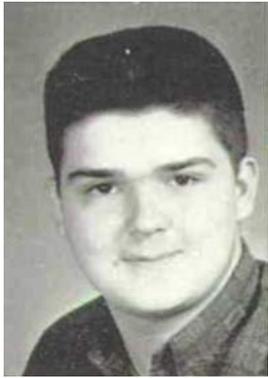
From *Cyclopedia of the Literature of Amateur Journalism*  
by Truman J. Spencer, published 1891

MISS EDITH May Dowe, who was latterly known as Mrs. Minter, entered amateur journalism in 1883. She, at one time, published the *Worcester Amateur*. She was known principally as a sketch-writer and in this field she gave early promise of reaching a very exalted position. It can hardly be said that this promise was entirely redeemed. Indeed, it is a question if her later sketches were of higher quality than those written in the early stages of her career. But in certain lines of writing she had no equal. Her strongest points were her power of minute description her dramatic sense, and her portrayal of child life. Her powers of description were wonderful in their microscopic detail. She applied them not so much to natural scenery as to the dress and appearance of her characters, and to the man-made characteristics of the surrounding scenes. She would describe an interior of a farmhouse with such charming fidelity as to make the scene vivid to the reader. Her pictures of childhood in her early sketches were strong, although even in these traces may be observed of a disposition to portray the morbid and abnormal rather than the natural. ... But in her best work there was much that was charming and touching. The childish chat of her characters was reproduced with pleasing vivacity and naturalness, and she found it easy to see the amusing side of character and incident. If she gained in anything in her later sketches it was in dramatic sense. The plots of her stories were often disconnected and abrupt, scenes were broken off, and transitions were sudden, but she had a master's eye for a dramatic situation. ... Her sketches were often in a psychological, introspective vein, in which, though oftentimes brief and unsatisfactory, she displayed much power. ♦

# Greenhillsiana

by Ken Faig, Jr.

SOME OF YOU may recall my account of student journalist Craig Marshall Smith in THE FOSSIL whole no. 373 dated October 2017. Smith and I both attended high school in the village of Greenhills, about fifteen miles north of Cincinnati, Ohio. Greenhills was one of three "Greenbelt" communities constructed by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration in the 1930s. (The other two completed projects were Greenbelt, Maryland and Greendale, Wisconsin.) To begin with, the federal government owned all the housing, and rented it to moderate-income white applicants.



Ken Faig, Jr. (1964)

A part of the land acquired by the government was reserved as "greenbelt," to preserve a parklike setting for the residents.

By the late 1940s, the government decided to get out of residential real estate, and the land and buildings were sold to the Greenhills Homeowners' Corporation (GHC) controlled by the then residents. Much of the original housing in Greenhills was multi-family, but by the 1950s tracts of mostly single-family homes were developed. The population doubled from three thousand in 1950 to six thousand in 1970. Zoning stipulations that limited the development of the surrounding "greenbelt" were litigated between the GHC and the

village beginning in the 1950s and not finally resolved until the mid-1960s, when the Supreme Court rejected a final appeal in favor of the village and its restrictive zoning. Most of the erstwhile "greenbelt" was eventually donated to the Hamilton County Park Board, to assure its preservation.

The village of Forest Park to the north eventually separated from Greenhills and established its own school district. After its population crested above five thousand, Greenhills advanced from village to city, but was forced to retreat back to villagedom when the population fell below the urban threshold. Today, the village of Greenhills has about 3,600 residents. The Forest Park and Greenhills schools were eventually combined into one school district (now called Winton Woods), and Greenhills High School, where Smith and I attended, graduated its final class in 1991. It is now a middle school (grades 7-8) in the Winton Woods district. A new primary school (K-6) is being built in the former "lower fields" adjoining the middle school —once the site for high school baseball and soccer games.

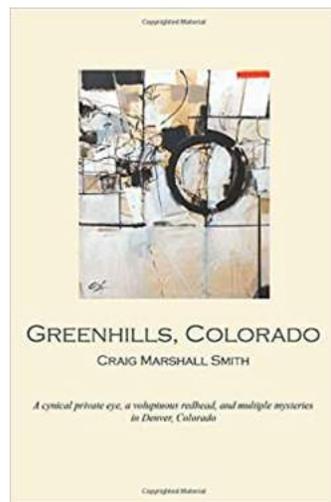
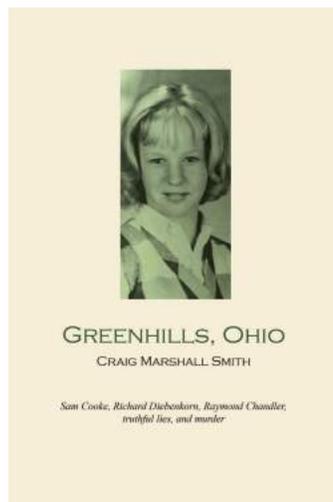
Aside from the remaining 1938 housing, there are probably three landmarks to be seen in Greenhills today: the Community Building, opened in 1938, which housed grades K-12, athletics and community events including church services, and remains the property of Winton Woods schools; the community pool just to



Greenhills, Ohio Community Building

the north of the Community Building (which dates to the same era); and the two-level Greenhills strip mall, to the north and west of the Community Building, the first of its kind in the nation. (The mall featured a bowling alley on the lower level, and a farmers' market shed in the adjoining parking lot.) If you are headed north through Greenhills on the main drag, Winton Road, only three stop lights intervene, at Andover, Faragut, and Sharon. Even if you obey all the posted speed limits and are stopped at all three lights, I don't think the traversal of the village south-to-north takes more than five minutes or so.

So why ought an insignificant dab on the map like Greenhills, Ohio occupy our attention and two books written by GHS alumnus Craig Marshall Smith? As re-



Craig Marshall Smith, *Greenhills, Ohio* (2020) and *Greenhills, Colorado* (2020). Published by the author. Available on Amazon.com.

collected in my article, it all relates back to a sultry summer night in August 1963, when my 15-year-old classmate Patricia Ann “Patty” Rebholz was strangled and bludgeoned to death on the way from a dance at the American Legion Hall (on Winton Road—where else?) to the home of her then boyfriend Michael Wehrung. Wehrung soon became the principal suspect in Patty’s



*Greenhills, Ohio under construction in the 1930s*

murder, but was sent out-of-state to military school for two years and only brought to trial—and acquitted—in 2001. I suspect that Patty’s murder remains engraved in the memories of all the students who were at GHS in her time, but Craig Smith perhaps more than others—he was a material witness to the slaying as explained in my article.

So *Greenhills, Ohio* is Smith’s fictionalized riff on the slaying. Smith has his own views on what happened—but his focus is the people of the town where the crime occurred. The protagonist, like the author, a retired art professor, encounters an odd interloper, Coco, on his visit back to Greenhills before the 2001 trial. This links back to a shooting in another time—at a seedy Los Angeles motel—and to an explosive redhead, Derry, encountered during his teaching career in Denver.

*Greenhills, Colorado* follows Mark Grayle, the detective involved in the Los Angeles motel slaying, into semi-retirement in Denver, where Derry’s wealthy father hires him to find his daughter. Meanwhile, Grayle’s girlfriend Margaret has a missing father whom he is also engaged to find. Grayle has the idea to write, and to hold auditions for, a play about Derry’s adventures to get her to surface. The play evolves into a documentary film financed by Derry’s father, while Grayle and Margaret journey to San Francisco and New York City in pursuit of their quests.

There are a lot of cultural references—Grayle is a film and modern art aficionado—and a lot of reflections on the pros and cons of city life, the teaching profession, and of the single and the married states. The novel ends happily for Grayle with his cases solved and his girlfriend Margaret set to attend graduate school in art in Denver. Grayle acquires a dachshund to keep him company during his girlfriend’s anticipated long hours in the classroom and the studio.

Smith keeps up a good pace in both novels, and successfully keeps multiple threads going. He has the knack of telling the reader enough to fire the imagination, but not so much as to burden it. I suspect most

readers will be left with their own strong images of characters like Grayle, Derry, Margaret, and Coco. Even some minor characters—like erstwhile girlfriend Terry, who may suffer from some flavor of autism—are deftly painted so that readers can form their own impression.

These two novels will not be to everyone’s taste, but they illustrate an erstwhile student journal-

ist’s continued mastery of the written word. The novels demonstrate that the author’s creative powers are not limited to his abstract expressionist paintings—they are also exhibited in his written words. Smith’s columns on the joys and travails of everyday life are featured in Denver area newspapers: <https://tinyurl.com/y8mbuqov>

I hope some of the readers of Smith’s columns will decide to try his novels as well. I don’t know whether he intends to bring his semi-retired PI Mark Grayle back for another engagement or not—we’ll have to wait and see.

As for the Rebholz case—still officially open and unsolved—I suspect that the passing of the last of the principal figures involved will eventually bring forth some books—and perhaps multiple theories—on the subject. For now, I join Smith in recommending Jim Hughes’s online account “Patty and Michael” at <http://www.codex99.com/unclassified/patty-and-michael.html> (All three of us are GHS alums—Craig 1965, Ken 1966, and Jim 1982.) J. T. Townsend’s *Queen City Gothic* (Authorhouse, 2009) also has a chapter on the Rebholz murder.

As for Greenhills, Ohio itself, I recommend Debbie Mills’s and Margo Warminski’s *Greenhills* (Arcadia, 2013), which is full of historical photographs. A narrative history Charles Bradley Leach’s *Greenhills, Ohio: The Evolution of an American New Town* (Case Western Reserve Ph.D. thesis dated January 1978) is published by ProQuest (formerly University Microfilms).

Greenbelt, Maryland and Greendale, Wisconsin have their own books. Joseph L. Arnold’s *The New Deal in the Suburbs: A History of the Greenbelt Town Program 1935-1954* (Ohio State University Press, 1971) is a good general history of the Green Towns. Jason Reblando’s *New Deal Utopias* (Kehrer, 2017) is a superb collection of contemporary color photographs of all three Green Towns. Finally, *Green Towns USA: A New Deal* (Lost and Found Productions, 2009), narrated by Glory (Green) Southwind (GHS, 1963), is an hour-long CD featuring all three Green Towns, but with emphasis on Greenhills. ♦

## New Home for AJ Papers

by Dave Tribby

FORMER FOSSIL Sean Donnelly wrote in November about upcoming transitions at the University of Tampa. His boss, Richard Mathews, was retiring and Sean planned to leave in early 2021. One of Sean's projects was merging the Haywood collection formerly at the University of South Florida with Leland Hawes's personal collection. "That core collection will remain here in the library. However the combining of the collections left us with a dozen or so boxes of duplicate amateur papers. It's a big variety of papers from different associations, ranging from the late 19th century to the 1970s or so." He wondered if I knew of anyone willing to come and take them away.

I contacted NAPA's Marc Brosey, and he was indeed interested—but unable to travel due to Covid-19 concerns. Sean doesn't need to empty his office until the end of spring semester, and Marc believes that schedule is workable. Marc was also interested in the papers left by Barry Schrader described in my October column, and has made arrangements to receive them.

### Membership Updates

Fossil Bill Boys wrote shortly after the October issue was distributed: "I notice that I'm not in the membership listing, but my mailing label says that my dues are paid up until 2022. Is this an accidental editorial oversight, or did Tom Parson omit me when he submitted the membership list to you?" Accidental oversight by the editor is what happened; somehow Bill's entry was not captured when I cut and pasted the membership information. He should have been second on the list, between Gary T. Bossler and Alan Brignull:

William E. Boys, 184 Reinhard Ave., Columbus, OH  
43206-2635

Recent membership updates:

- Mel and Linda Shivvers have upgraded from subscriber to full member status. They also made a \$25 donation in memory of Martha E. Shivvers (1915-2017), Mel's Mother, who joined The Fossils in 1994 and served as membership chair from 1997 to 2011.
- Other recent donations: \$10 from Ivan Snyder, \$35 from Jack Scott, and \$7 from Kent Clair Chamberlain. Thanks to all for your generosity!
- Cam and Rachael Shepherd are new joint members. Their address is 306 Rockhill Road, Mountain Brook, AL 35223. Cam is the son of Fossil John Shepherd. We now have three pairs of joint husband and wife members: the Shepherds, the Shivvers, and Ken & Carol Faig.

Many Fossil memberships come due during the first quarter of the calendar year. **If you receive a renewal notice with this issue, please send your check to our secretary-treasurer, Tom Parson, promptly.** Your renewal date is printed on your mailing label.

### Two Recent AAPA Deaths

Since the last issue of THE FOSSIL, two longtime AAPA members have died: Delores Miller, age 82, on November 22 and L. W. Lawson, 85, on January 12.

Those at Amateur Journalism Conference 2016 in Madison, Wisconsin, will recall the Miller family's talk about the rigors of life on their Wisconsin dairy farm.

Lawson, known by the nickname Jiyani, and fellow Oregonian Ivan Snyder, played a vital role in securing the transfer of the Library of Amateur Journalism from Oregon to Wisconsin in 2004. ♦

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## The Fossil

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of The Fossils, a non-profit organization for anyone interested in the history of amateur journalism. Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join. Dues are \$15 annually, or \$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to THE FOSSIL without privileges of membership, is \$10. For further information, contact the secretary-treasurer or visit our website:

[www.thefossils.org](http://www.thefossils.org)

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