

At the time of his death, Kugler owned 16 of the lots in the original Hageman village with all of their improvements. He owned the mill and the distillery on the south side of Mill Street and over 1500 acres of farmland in Clermont County. All of present South Milford was Kugler farmland.

The Cincinnati Daily Gazette, Jan. 16, 1868 reported:

The Clermont Courier says letters of Administration were granted by the Probate Court of Batavia on the 13th on the Estate of John Kugler of Milford to Mrs. Kugler, the widow, bond \$100,000, securities: P.B. Swing, Esq., Samuel West, S.R.S. West, Dr. P.B. Gatch and William McGrew. This is the largest estate ever administered on in Clermont County.

After John's death, all operations ceased with the exception of the mill, which was carried on for a while by the West side of the family. Many people were put out of work and it took a while before Milford recovered from the loss of Mr. Kugler's industries.

On October 13, 1869, Rebecca married Edmund B. Townsend of Cincinnati. On June 26, 1871, Rebecca executed her will drawn up by the Reverend William Runyon of the Milford Methodist Church. She died on June 28, 1871. There were no children of this marriage.

Lawyers for the three families, the Kuglers, the Wests and the Townsends, contested the will. Appeals went to the State of Ohio District Court and eventually to the Ohio Supreme Court. In 1874, the high court ruled in favor of the West family and some settlements were granted then.

John's estate was settled in 1878. The proceeding was complicated by the fact that the personal property of John had not been settled. Rebecca's estate was settled in July 1889, but due to long litigation and the depression after the Civil War, legal costs consumed the estate. John, Matilda, and Rebecca are buried in the old I.O.O.F. Cemetery; his parents rest in the Camp Dennison Cemetery.

Historically, the enterprising grandson of Christian Waldschmidt, John Kugler, was the leading landowner and businessman of the Miami Valley for 40 years. The former Kugler Mansion and the stone buildings in historic downtown Milford are reminders of his importance to Milford history.

THE KUGLER MANSION

On Lot No. 1 at the corner of Mill and Water Streets stood an unfinished structure started by the Pearson (Pierson) brothers, which was acquired by Mathias and John Kugler when they purchased the Milford mill on Mill Street in 1828. By 1830, they had completed the building as a general store and living quarters for John and his wife, Matilda Caroline

ATTACH 4

Brower. She died in 1840 and two years later John married Rebecca Julia Evans West. They then converted the structure into what became known for years as the "Kugler Mansion", and lived there until John's death in 1868. When Rebecca married Edmund B. Townsend, they resided here until her death in 1871. Edmund may have lived here for a longer time. (For further information on this historic building see 'Millcroft Inn' in the restaurant section of Fun, Food & Festivities, Chapter XIX.)

Dr. Richard C. Belt married the niece of Rebecca West Kugler Townsend, and they came to live in this house in 1874. When Dr. Belt died in 1929, it was then occupied by Dr. Wiley and finally by Dr. Warren Thomas and family. The Thomas family later moved to a home on the corner of Mill and High. Their daughter, Noralee married Lewis Gatch, son of John Newton Gatch and Orpha Gatch. In 1939, the Millcroft began a long career as a restaurant. (See Chapter IX for Dr. Belt's biography).

COMMUNITY PROJECT-BUILDING A KEELBOAT

The following story is interesting reading and may well be based on some facts, but much of this has not been verified. David Kugler was actually a younger brother of John. David may have been relying on information about a relative who died in the South while on a keelboat trip. Some trading was conducted by Milford businessmen in New Orleans. Keelboats were used to move the goods from this area. Those men who took the boat down river had to walk back.

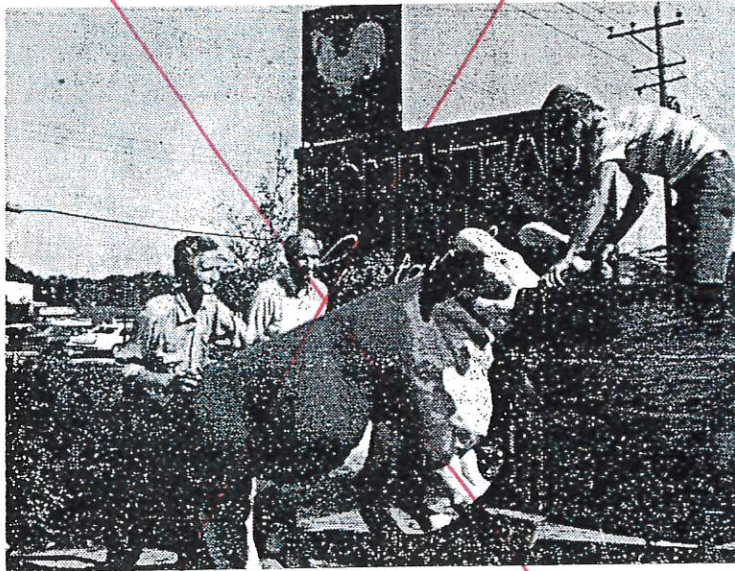
The construction of a very large keelboat, under the direction of **Samuel Perin** became a spectacular early community project, completed in 1820, on Milford's "Island". The unusually large keelboat was to float local corn and pork products down the Mississippi. It was a fifteen-month project, according to a letter written by **David Kugler** of Goshen, in 1885, when he was 80 years old. Born at New Germany, in 1805, he was one of Mathias Kugler's three sons and the older brother of John. His letter describes his life as a keelboatsman between 1820 and 1825. Then he details the unique marketing effort Milford area people created to improve their farm and mill profits in the wake of the terrible national economic panic of 1819:

Everything that went into the boat, from its construction to its cargo required a planned layout, which employed the cooperation of the entire citizenry for a period of 12 months. Giant trees were cut and split full length, then fashioned into crude boards six inches thick and twelve to twenty-four inches wide, and up to fifty feet long. David Kugler states that two teams of matched horses, four to a team, were used to drag the boards to the riverside. Often the combined effort of all eight horses was needed to get one board into the river. These raw boards were stacked along the riverbank to season. Next a dam was built above the Riffles at Milford. Several hundred feet upstream, wooden planks six inches thick were laid

Juanita Schott. Finding it difficult to run the business after Mr. Schott died in 1971, Juanita sold to Burger Chef Systems, Inc. and the business ceased to exist in September 1973.

In October 1973, the Shaw brothers, Charles, Don, and Jerry purchased the familiar twin steers that marked the entrance to the Homestead for so many years. The steers were unbolted from their cement blocks and blacktop surroundings and carried to greener pastures on the Shaw Farm at 1742 Vera Cruz Pike.

Steers Head For Green Pasture



A month later the Homestead building was razed to make way for the new Burger King operation. An interesting sidelight to the demolition was the finding of several dollars worth of dimes in an old perfume dispenser by two boys. It seems the function of this antique perfumer was to dispense a sweet aroma spray to the person inserting a dime in the slot. In 1978-79, this space became Hardees, which closed in 1994.

Today Milford has a number of fast food chain restaurants, and some specialty restaurants including Thai, Chinese, Italian and American.

THE MILL STREET MANOR (MILLCROFT)

Perhaps the best-known Milford restaurant is the Mill Street Manor (formerly Millcroft.) due to its history and location. The house's history is covered in the John Kugler story, Chapter IV.

The beginning of the restaurant era starts with **Miss Lilly Stimpson** on May 11, 1939, for that is when she opened a tea room and had lodgings for over-night guests. It was then called the Gilcroft Inn. She also operated a gift shop on the premises. The Inn

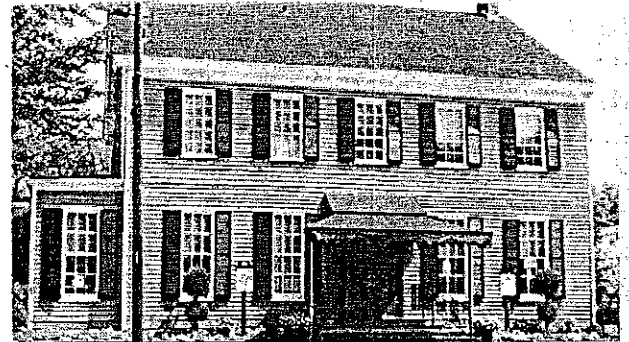
also had a room used by Mrs. Helen Thatcher as a Studio for the instruction of French and piano in 1940. The Gilcroft Inn remained open until May 8, 1941, despite renovations to the Tea Room, which closed that part for several months. **James Franklin** became the manager of the Inn's Gift Shop on May 28, 1941. On June 7, 1942, an announcement was made that the business was now the Millcroft Inn under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin. That same month the Millcroft leased the stone stable at the rear of the property to the Century Club, Cincinnati, for a clubroom to be called the Century Bar & Grill. After renovating the stable, this new venture closed quickly.

Franklin announced a remodeling of the Millcroft on February 8, 1946. The work included an addition to the kitchen, and a service building connecting the Inn with the stone stable. One of Milford's landmarks, the property was purchased by Franklin from **Miss Genevieve Caldwell**, Cincinnati landscape architect. Another change took place on October 7, 1947 when **Mr. Ned Pritchard**, Pleasant Ridge, purchased the business and later the property. Mrs. Franklin continued her Millcroft Gift Shop.

Two years later, **Robert Bell** of Terrace Park was the proprietor. Mrs. Franklin sold her gift shop to **Wayne and Mary Wheeler** in 1954 and it was closed sometime in 1956. Several owners and managers later, the property and business were sold to **Mrs. Sally Hough** of Indian Hill in October 1972. She closed the Millcroft in 1976. For two years **Mrs. Barbara Smith**, a Miami Township trustee, managed the restaurant until closing it in 1977.

In the spring of 1978, **Jerry Maisch** and **Steve Sargeant** bought the building and gutted the interior. It took 18 months to prepare for their grand opening in 1979 of a very fine restaurant. The bar room in the old stable was kept open during reconstruction of the main building. An open air seating area with a privacy fence was added.

Some interesting articles were found during the reconstruction: an 1839 tally book of John Kugler's, a slipper, vest and bonnet, an 1851 notebook with a child's penmanship practice inside "Specimens of Penmanship", an April 5th and a March 8, 1849 edition of the Clermont Courier, an April 14, 1847 Christian Advocate and Journal and a November 20, 1847, Saturday Evening Post.



MILL STREET MANOR

Mr. Sargeant became sole owner in 1983 and the operation closed in May 1985. In the fall of the same year **Mr. and Mrs. Steve Gonzola** became owners of the Millcroft. Once more the business closed, in March of 1991. The Cincinnati Enquirer announced on November 20, 1991 that **Mr. Williard Van Epps**, Terrace Park, and **Mr. and Mrs. Grahah** were purchasing the Millcroft. They opened in February 1992. In 1995, the Grahams too

over the operation and today, under new ownership, the restaurant is called the Mill Street Manor.

There have been rumors that the building had an underground tunnel used in the Underground Railway's efforts to move slaves to freedom in Canada. There is no proof that there is such a space or that the building was used in the Underground Railway system.

WES RAHN AND THE BARBECUE SHOP

One of the popular eating places in West Milford or Montauk, had a rough-and-tumble time getting established, but reflected the business-building efforts of many small enterprises of the present century. **Wes Rahn** related how his barbecue roadside shop emerged from an idea brought back from Florida at the end of the "twenties" by **Charlie Wagner**, who owned race horses as well as a plot of land along the Wooster Pike.

On that busy highway Wagner had erected a gasoline "filling station" that was operated by **Henry Pinkvoss** on shares, as a summer-time enterprise. **Bernie Benker** and a partner ran a barbecue and meat shop that Wagner and Pinkvoss created in an old building next door. Rahn had worked in the gas station next door, and in 1931 took over the operation of the Barbecue Shop with **Selah Copher** as a helper. Rahn continued to work at the service station during the day and after hours worked another shift at the barbecue. "I took in a grand total of \$7.50 our first day," he recalled with a grin. That winter, Mr. Wagner added another feature. For 25 cents, they sold you a hamburger, a piece of pie and coffee. Several neighborhood women provided homemade pies.

In 1939, they obtained a beer license and bought twelve beer glasses. **Selah Copher** left and in 1936, Rahn was able to borrow money from a Terrace Park butcher, **Tac Brown**, to purchase the barbecue at 222 Wooster Pike, which enjoyed a thriving trade.

Along Wooster Pike were several large businesses **Wes Rahn** remembered - **Clark's Feed Mill** selling both coal and feed, **Buckingham and Hair Lumber Company**, a saloon and a livery stable.

At the outbreak of World War II, Rahn boarded up the place and took a job at the **Wright Engine plant** in **Evendale**. In April 1946, he reopened the business, which became a very popular eating establishment. In 1958, he sold his business to **Frank and Irene Grady** who called it **Grady's Barbecue**.

Mr. Rahn married **Myrtle Lee Davis**. In 1922, they moved to the small stone house at **Camp Dennison**, which had been built by **Christian Waldschmidt**. The **Rahn's** lived there for many years. After his wife's death, **Mr. Rahn** continued to live there until 1990 and then moved to **Sem Terrace, SEM Retirement Center, Milford**. He died in 1993 survived by two children, **Wes Rahn, Jr.**, and **Mary Lee Rahn Sloan Jordan**. It was the