

MANSFIELD MEMORIES: More than four corners in old town

By Kevin McNatt and Andrew Todesco

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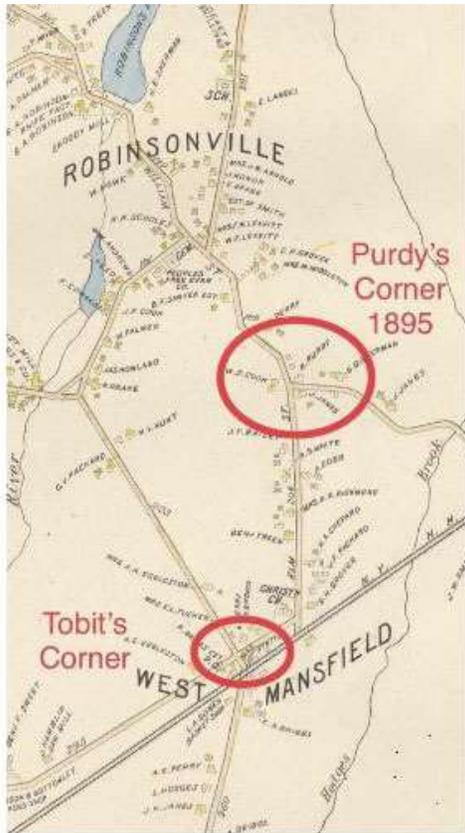
Purdy's Corner, W. Mansfield, Mass.

Purdy's Corner was at Old Elm and Williams streets, where Reuben Purdy once lived. Purdy was a Civil War veteran and a prisoner of war at Andersonville. [Courtesy/Mansfield Historical Society]

Mansfield once had unique nicknames for locales around town, including a series of “corners” usually named for a family that lived nearby. Let’s take a look at seven “corners” that were known to Mansfieldians of yesteryear.

Purdy’s Corner was at Old Elm and Williams streets, where Reuben Purdy once lived. Purdy was a Civil War veteran and a prisoner of war at Andersonville. In the late 19th century, the School/Elm Street area was configured differently. What is now Old Elm Street was part of the original Elm Street (as the name implies). Therefore, Purdy’s Corner was on a main stretch of road when Reuben lived there.

Down the street from Purdy’s Corner was the West Mansfield railroad station. It was located on present day Otis Street and was known as Tobit’s Corner, as John Tobit resided there. According to historian Jennie Copeland the station “put West Mansfield on the map.” Even railroad tickets read “Tobit’s Corner”! But by the 1860s the name fell out of favor and the station became known as West Mansfield.



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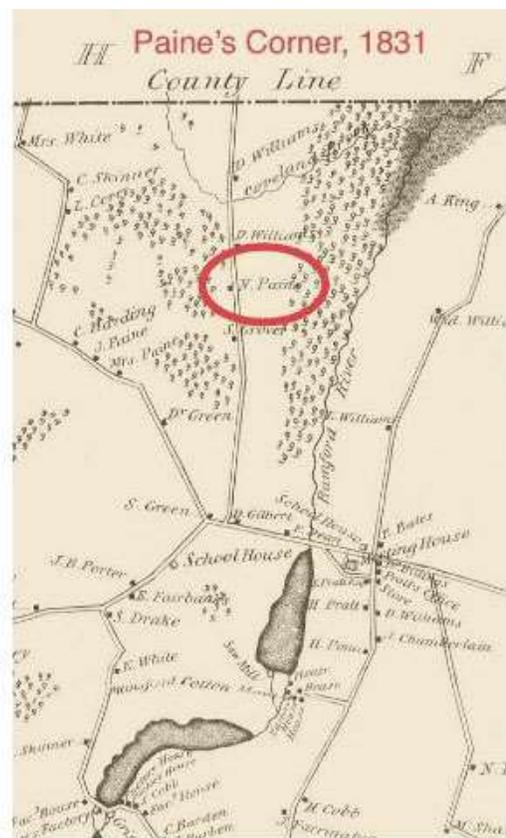
Paine's Corner. Several generations of the Paine family lived there, with houses and a farm. The Paines were on Central before Chauncy Street even existed. They can be found on maps as early as 1831.

Just down the street we would have found Hall's Corner at West and Central streets. Central Street was once the main route from Mansfield to Foxborough. Today's residents might be surprised to learn that until the 1950s, Route 140 passed through Mansfield by way of South Main, West and Central streets.

The intersection of Spring, School and Willow streets was known as Drake's Corner. An 1895 map of Mansfield makes it appear that all three streets converged into one spot. So if you think that intersection is awkward now, it was probably worse then. But at least there were no cars at that time.

Ginty's Corner was in East Mansfield. Jim Ginty owned a farm at the corner of East and North streets in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The cars of the Mansfield & Easton Trolley Company once passed Ginty's Corner, and Jim was not a fan. In Harry Chase's book "This Old Town" he features a colorful story of Ginty's feud with the trolley company. It should be noted that the now-familiar straightaway stretch of Route 106 from Mansfield (Flint Farm) to Easton (Target) was built in the 1960s. Before that Ginty's Corner was a main passageway between the two towns.

The center of town had a few "corners" as well. At the corner of Central and Chauncy streets was



At the corner of Central and Chauncy streets was Paine's Corner. Several generations of the Paine family lived there.

At North Main and Cottage streets is Eddy's Corner. Built by local contractor David Eddy over a century ago, the building is still adorned with a decorative sign denoting the name. The "Eddy's Corner" sign remains as a testament to a time before GPS when travelers had to rely on street names, landmarks and relative location to find their way.

One might not hear names like Purdy's Corner and Ginty's Corner nowadays, but they speak to a colorful bygone era in local history.

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