

Mary Turner, daughter of Melzar (1780 Maine - 1869 Michigan) and Anna (Field) (1791 Connecticut - 1865 Michigan) Turner, was born 20 September 1832, New York. Mary, probably the youngest of the Turner children, was about 10 years old when she came with family into the Okemos, Ingham County, Michigan area to live. Her father was a veteran of the War of 1812 and a cabinetmaker who later became the first supervisor and treasurer of Meridian Township, Ingham County.



Mary was one of 5 pupils taught by a Miss Samantha Worden in a log cabin school about 2 miles from Mary's Okemos home. Miss Worden, a native of New York state, would leave her teaching career to marry Bela Lathrop in October 1846, Ingham County and move to Shiawassee County, Michigan. Bela, born 1818, died in 1867, leaving Samantha to raise 5 children. While Bela was interred Fremont Cemetery, Bancroft, Shiawassee County, Samantha by the 1880's relocated to Cloud County, Kansas. She would die there about 1883.

Picture and Caption, "Meridian Township" by Jane Rose, Used with permission

Schooling in Okemos was limited in the 1840's with only basic reading and writing taught. With the marriage of her teacher, Miss Lathrop, in 1846 Mary most likely ended her formal education. The 1850 and 1860 US Federal census for Ingham County enumerated Mary continuing to live with her parents.

Education was an important, basic need for the pioneers, and space was used where available. The first local school was convened in 1844 in a cooper shop owned by Daniel Young. The school was located east of Okemos along Hamilton Road, and Samantha Worden taught the children for \$1 a week. A minimum of five children needed to be enrolled for the school to have legal status; two of the five children were enrolled at age three in order to meet the requirement.



Retired Pastor Dies After Fall

**Frederick T. Crane Succumbs
at Mountainside After
Home Accident.**

The Rev. Frederick T. Crane of 272 North Mountain Avenue, Upper Montclair, died Tuesday in Mountainside Hospital from injuries received in a fall down a flight of cellar stairs in his home that morning.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 at The Home for Services, 56 Park Street and will be conducted by the Rev. Dr. Norman D. Fletcher, pastor of Unity (Unitarian) Church. Interment will be in Restland Memorial Park, East Hanover.

Mr. Crane was born in Michigan eighty-one years ago. A retired Unitarian minister, Mr. Crane studied for his degree in theology at St. Lawrence University. He had pastorates at Stowe, Vt., Warwick and Sterling, Mass., retiring seventeen years ago from the ministry while at Sterling. He came to Montclair fourteen years ago and since then has made his home with his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Crane of the North Mountain Avenue address.

He was a former member of the Bergen County Astronomical Society and a member of the Unitarian Ministerial Union.

Mr. Crane had many hobbies, among which was a small work shop in the basement of his home, where he had a small printing press and a lathe for wood turning.

Besides the son with whom he lived, Mr. Crane is survived by his wife, Mrs. Gertrude S. Crane of New York and two other sons, Frederick

L. of Ann Arbor, Mich., and Benjamin F. Crane of New York.

Mary married widower Cyrenus "C. C." Crane, about 1869. C. C. had lost his wife Caroline (Hart), born 1827, in 1868 to "consumption." Mary became an instant mother to 2 young boys but gave birth herself 1 April 1870 to a son named Frederick Turner Crane. A daughter named Carolyn was added to the family 11 October 1874.

C. C., a farmer, was born 1823 in New York. He died, age 64, from Bright's Disease, 15 December 1887, Meridian Township and was interred Riverside Cemetery, Okemos.

Mary married widower George C. Young 21 July 1890, Mason, Ingham County. George, born 3 March 1821, died 19 February 1903 and was buried near his 1st wife, Julia, and son Romanty in Riverside Cemetery, Okemos.

Mary's 2 children grew up and married. Frederick "Fred" became a Unitarian minister serving in Vermont and Massachusetts. Frederick lived to age 81 when he died of an accidental fall in 1951.

Daughter Carolyn married Walter Smith and moved to Maine where she died 2 December 1924.

Mary lived with her son Fred and family for a number of years. She moved back to Ingham County about 1922. At age 95 she gave the "grandmother's toast" at the Okemos Mother and Daughter banquet. In 1931 at age 99 she was interviewed for an article in the Lansing State Journal.

Lansing State Journal, May 16, 1927

OKEMOS BANQUET IS WELL ATTENDED

OKEMOS, May 16—About 175 persons attended the Mother and Daughter banquet held in the school auditorium, Friday evening, under the auspices of the Parent-Teacher association. Potted red geraniums made effective decorations.

The following program was given: Violin solo, Miss Bernice Bitgood, accompanied by Mrs. M. Ethel Leu; introduction of toastmistress, Mrs. Alfred Williams; toastmistress, Mrs. Clifford Griffith; daughter's toast, Miss Catherine Harvey; musical reading, Miss Beulah Hager and Miss Irene Beaumont; mother's toast, Mrs. J. O. Grettenberger; music, girls' chorus; grandmother's toast, Mrs. Mary Turner Young; chart-olo solo, Miss Beatrice Bitgood, accompanied by Miss Bernice Bitgood; address, Mrs. E. O. Izant, of Lansing.

An interesting feature of the program was the fact that Mrs. Young, who gave the grandmother's toast, has nearly reached the ninety-fifth milestone of life.

First White Child in Okemos, Mrs. Mary Turner Young, Is 99

Special to The State Journal:

OKEMOS, Sept. 23—Okemos friends joined Mrs. Mary Turner Young, the oldest resident in this vicinity, in celebrating her 99th birthday anniversary, Sunday, September 20.

Mrs. Young was the first white child in Okemos, having come here from New York state at the age of 10 years with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melzar Turner, and has spent the greater part of her life in this community. Her father, a veteran of the war of 1812, built the first frame house in the village and was the first supervisor and treasurer of Meridian township. There were but two other families in Okemos, those of Freeman Bray, who was the first postmaster and the office was named Sanford in honor of Sanford Marsh, the other resident. The mail was brought once a week on horseback and only a few weeks ago, Mrs. Young visited at the home of Mrs. Mary Bray Hammond in Grand Ledge, and enjoyed seeing many old relics which she remembered as a child, among them the first cabinet of boxes used as a postoffice. The Ann Arbor Argus, a weekly newspaper, was their only reading matter, Mrs. Young relates. She walked two miles through the woods to attend school, in a log cabin on the Kilbourne farm. Miss Samantha Worden, the teacher, had five pupils and received a salary of one dollar a week, which was paid by the parents of the pupils, a system known as the "rate bill."

The Turner family were very friendly with Chief Okemos, for whom the village is named. He used to store supplies in their cellar, when the Indians went to Canada for their "presents" from the government. Mrs. Young said the young folks drove ox teams in those days and "they thought they had good times" as she recalled some of the parties she attended. The marriages were performed by the justice of the peace and church services were held in Mr. Bray's log house once a month, the only minister being a Methodist circuit rider.

Mrs. Young says she has seen six generations of the Turner and Bray families. In 1853, the Turner family moved to Lansing, where Mr. Turner was employed as the first cabinet-maker for Daniel Buck, pioneer merchant. The water from the Turner well having been used for state offices. Mr. Young has been married



MRS. MARY YOUNG

twice, her first husband being Cyrenus Crane, a Lansing wheat and wool buyer. She has one son, who is a Universalist minister in Sterling, Massachusetts, her only daughter having died in Maine, eight years ago. She later married George Young, whom she survives.

At the age of 92 she came alone from Massachusetts to Michigan. Mrs. Young has been a great reader in her later years and has made many beautiful rugs, 12 during her 94th year and 25 during her 93rd year, besides several dresses, and on her 94th birthday made a dress for her grandniece, Miss Jessie Turner, a teacher in the Henry R. Pattengill school in Lansing, which she was proud to wear.

Mrs. Young is now making her home with Mr. and Mrs. William Kirkpatrick in Okemos, where she has received many callers during the past few days, who are hoping that they may greet her again on her 100th birthday next year.

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Mrs. Young was the first white child in Okemos (Charlotte Bray was born December 10, 1842) having come here from New York state (in 1842) at the age of 10 years with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melzar Turner, and has spent the greater part of her life in this community. Her father, a veteran of the war of 1812, built the first frame house in the village and was the first supervisor and treasurer of Meridian township. There were not but two other families in Okemos, those of Freeman Bray, who was the first postmaster and the office was named Sanford in honor of Sanford Marsh, the other resident. Their mail was brought once a week on horseback

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Mary didn't live to her 100th birthday. She fell 31 January in the Kirkpatrick's home and broke her hip. The fall and aftermath exacerbated Mary's frailness and she passed away on Monday 1 February 1932. Mary was interred Mt. Hope Cemetery, Lansing.

Lansing State Journal (Lansing, Michigan) Monday 1 February 1932

Special to The State Journal:
OKEMOS, Feb. 1 — Mrs. Mary Young, 99, the first white child to live in the village of Okemos, and once a friend of Chief Okemos, his son, and his grandson, died at her home here Monday morning. She would have been 100 years old next September 20.
Mrs. Young came to Okemos with her father, Melzar Turner, in 1842 from Washtenaw county. Mr. Turner had formerly lived in New York state, had crossed Lake Erie into Ohio, and finally traversed the old log trail into Ingham county. There were only two other families in the community at that time and Mary was the only child.
Within a year four other children came to live in the settlement and with them Mrs. Young trudged two miles through the woods to her first school teacher. Having come from the more civilized districts Mary and her companions were frightened at the Indians, but soon came to know and trust them, making the red-skinned children companions in their play.
Not many years after coming to this county, Mr. Turner moved to Lansing where he was a cabinet maker for the founders of the M. J. and B. M. Buck Furniture company.
Mrs. Young had been living with Mr. and Mrs. William Kirkpatrick, at whose home she died. She is survived by one son, Frederick Crane, living in Massachusetts, and one grandson, Ralph Crane of New Jersey. The body was taken to the Palmer-O'Donnell Funeral home in Lansing. Arrangements will be announced later.

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Battle Creek Enquirer (Battle Creek, Michigan) Monday 1 February 1932

DIES IN 100TH YEAR

Okemos, Feb. 1 - Mrs. Mary Young, the first white child reared in this village and one-time friend of Chief Okemos, for whom the community was named, died here today. She would have been 100 years old next September. Mrs. Young was born in New York state and came here in 1842 from Washtenaw county.

Marshall Evening Chronicle (Marshall, Michigan) Tuesday 2 February 1932

Okemos - Mrs. Mary Young who lacked only seven months of being 100 years old, died here Monday. She was the first white child ever raised in this territory, and knew the Indian Chief Okemos, for whom this town is named.

1 PLACE OF DEATH		MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH		State Office No.
County <u>Lansing</u>		Michigan of Vital Statistics		33 3929
Township <u>Madison</u>		CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		Register No. <u>10265</u>
Village _____				
City _____		(If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number)		Ward _____
2 FULL NAME <u>Mary Young</u>				
(a) Residence No. <u>R 4 B #1</u> <u>Cadmus</u> St., Ward _____				
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred <u>3</u> yrs. <u>6</u> mo. <u>6</u> da. (If non-resident give city or town and state)				
How long in U. S. if of foreign birth? yrs. _____ mo. _____ da. _____				
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		
3 SEX <u>Female</u>	4 Color or Race <u>white</u>	5 Single, Married, Widowed or Divorced <u>Widowed</u>	21. DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year) <u>Feb 1 1932</u>	
6 If married, widowed or divorced, give name of (or) WIFE of <u>George Young</u>		22. I HEREBY CERTIFY That I attended deceased from <u>Jan 21 1932</u> to <u>Jan 31 1932</u> and saw her die on <u>Jan 31 1932</u> at <u>11:30 AM</u> to have occurred on the day stated above, at <u>11:30 AM</u>		
6 DATE OF BIRTH (Month, day and year) <u>Sept 20 1832</u>		The principal cause of death and related causes of infection were as follows:		
7 AGE	Years <u>99</u>	Months <u>4</u>	Days <u>12</u>	If LESS than 1 day _____ hrs. _____ OR _____ min.
8. Trade, profession, or occupation (kind of work done, no opinion necessary, handicaps, etc.) <u>house</u>		Sensible Hardening of arteries		
9. Industry or business in which work is done, no silk mill, saw mill, bank, etc.		Other contributory causes of impotency: <u>Angina Pectoris</u>		
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year)		11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation		If operation, date of _____
12. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) <u>New York</u>		Condition for which performed _____		
13. NAME (city or town) (State or country) <u>Michigan</u>		Organ or part affected _____		
14. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) <u>Not known</u>		Was there laboratory test? _____ Autopsy? _____		
15. MAIDEN NAME <u>Anna Tracht</u>		In case of violence state if accident, homicide or suicide _____		
16. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or country) <u>Not known</u>		Where did injury occur? <u>At home</u> (Specify day, month, year) <u>Jan 27 32</u>		
17. INFORMANT <u>William Kirkpatrick</u> (Address) <u>R 4 B #1 Cadmus</u>		In military, home or public place? <u>Home</u>		
18. BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL Place <u>Palmer O'Donnell</u> Date <u>Feb 4 1932</u>		Was disease or injury related to occupation or profession? _____		
19. UNDERTAKER <u>Palmer O'Donnell</u> (Address) <u>Palmer O'Donnell</u>		Signed <u>Wm. Wilson</u> M. D.		
20 FILED <u>Feb 2 1932</u> <u>Lansing</u>		Address <u>Palmer O'Donnell</u>		