

CRANBERRY RUN FARM — John and Betty Burns will soon be moving from their home here on Warner Road in Hubbard Township, where they have lived the past 17 years. The farmhouse was built in the early 1800s in Boardman and later moved to what was to become Cranberry Run Farm on Warner Road.



Historic Cranberry Run Farm Owners Want Home Preserved

By EMILY WEBSTER

Vindicator Trumbull County Staff

HUBBARD — John and Betty Burns are preparing to leave Cranberry Run Farm, but neither pretends the move will be an easy one.

Even before they became its owners, the historic farmhouse on Warner Road played a major role in the Burnses' lives.

As the residence of John Burns' employer, Hugh Bonnell, it was as well known to them as their own home: their three sons rode their bicycles in the hundred-foot-long basement on wet days, and the squire, a bachelor, often took his evening meals with them.

The Burnses' acquaintance with Cranberry Run Farm began in 1945, when John became the show manager for Bonnell's string of prize-winning Jersey cattle. By the time Bonnell passed away, in 1963, Betty Burns was so enamored of the place that she willingly gave up the new home her husband had built nearby.

"It was on Thanksgiving Day that the decision was finally made to move," John Burns said. "I was watching television, and Betty and the boys just came in and said 'We're moving.' And they started to do just that."

In the years since they purchased the property from Bonnell's heirs, the Burnses have put their own stamp on it: antique and primitive furniture occupies the rustic interior, and the pasture land that once grazed the cows now is fenced for high-moving Tennessee Walking horses.

The original 60-plus acres has been subdivided and sold off, so that Cranberry Run Farm now occupies some five acres reached by a gravel lane from Warner Road. In the spring, the Burnses decided to offer the homestead for sale, anticipating a move to Arizona.

One of the things they hope for most, Betty Burns said, is that the home's new owners "keep the house mostly as it is, and not change it too much."

Indeed, "change" would have to be a strange word to the timbers and plaster of

the old house — "houses" would be a better word, as the rambling structure is actually two homes joined together — since it hasn't been disturbed since 1927. But that change was a lulu.

Prior to that time, Cranberry Run Farm occupied a 400-acre site in Boardman, where Forest Lawn Cemetery has since been developed. Feeling crowded by the increasing encroachment of Youngstown's South Side, Bonnell decided to move — bag, baggage and house — to a portion of the Jonathan Warner farm. There were barns there for his cattle, and several houses which could be used for summer homes for his family.

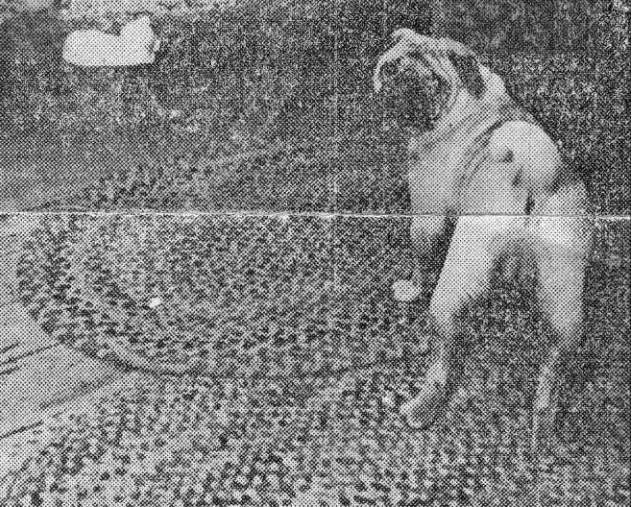
The move of the house, which had been built in the early 1800s by the Baldwin family, became a *cause celebre* from Boardman to Hubbard. Cut into three parts and mounted onto platforms with rubber-tired wheels, the caravan was hauled slowly through Youngstown.

It took two months to cover the 12 miles, and local writers, describing it in later years, called it "the best show in town." Trolley lines around Central Square were lifted to allow the two-story section to pass through; even the almost-vertical ride up the Wick Avenue hill didn't stop its progress.

But Warner Road itself did. The narrow road hadn't been designed to carry the weight of houses, even in three sections. The surface collapsed and the trailers sank into the mud.

Strenuous work recovered the house from nature, and it was finally set on its new foundation. Five new chimneys were built to accommodate fireplaces which are still in working order; one of the homes on the property was joined to the house, to make an "L" that now serves as a large apartment.

The move cost \$10,000, a princely sum in those days, but that figure paled beside the value of the items the house held. Antiques, porcelain, English silver and glass vied with the architectural splendors of butternut



HOME SWEET HOME — John Burns and his dog enjoy the warmth of the old Franklin fireplace in the farmhouse. The Burnses are not looking forward to the move from the Warner Road farm, and hope the new owners will cherish it as they have.

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paneling, a hand-carved mantel, and an 18th Century doorway taken from a home in Tennessee.

Bonnell was a world traveler and patron of the arts, a "gentle man," as the Burnses remember him, whose personality remains stamped on the home he loved so much.

Now, as John and Betty Burns move through the many rooms of the house — "There's 15, I think, counting the little ones," Betty said — and make their plans for the future, one concern is uppermost in their minds.

They want someone to love, not just own, the place.

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of Youngstown University Project

Early Affiliation With the YMCA

O H. 29

HUGH MANCHESTER

Interviewed

by

Alvin W. Skardon and David M. Behen

on

April 2, 1975

S: I know Mrs. Agler quite well. I think she once told me that her mother was a Butler. Old Mrs. Joseph Butler who died just in the last few years, was her aunt.

B: Where did the Bonnell family get its money? Were they in steel?

M: I think it was inherited wealth, mostly.

B: Was it made around here?

M: Yes, it was probably made through steel and railroads, and land. Hugh Bonnell had a farm out here, near Forest Lawn Cemetery, off of Market Street in Boardman Township. Do you know where that is?

B: No, I don't think I do.

M: It's just beyond Shields Road a little way. Just beyond that is Forest Lawn Cemetery. That was the farm owned by Hugh Bonnell. He was a nice old bachelor with lots of money and he had the most wonderful cattle of anybody around here. Half of the milk was cream. He had prize cattle, always. When the farm became too crowded out there in Boardman, he moved out to Warner Road and he moved his house down Market Street and out Wick Avenue and put it out on Warner Road.

B: That was quite a feat, wasn't it?

M: It was a nice, old, comfortable, small, wooden frame house and he liked it and took it with him. I believe they owned downtown real estate. Back in those days, downtown real estate was worth real money.

S: We've already talked about this conversation between Mr. Skeggs and Mr. Wick. Do you think Mr. Wick really had the idea of establishing an independent college? That seems to be implied in that letter.

M: It had been proposed that it be incorporated. I think that Skeggs didn't want the YMCA to lose control of the college. I lived through many years of that. We didn't get the college incorporated until 1937. In those original incorporation papers in the original setup, the majority of the Board of College Trustees had to be members of the YMCA Board or General Secretary of the YMCA. In the early 1940s the North Central Association said that it would not grant approval of the school as long as the YMCA was holding the strings. During that period, the Treasurer of the YMCA was the Treasurer of the College. He collected all the tuition and paid the teachers.