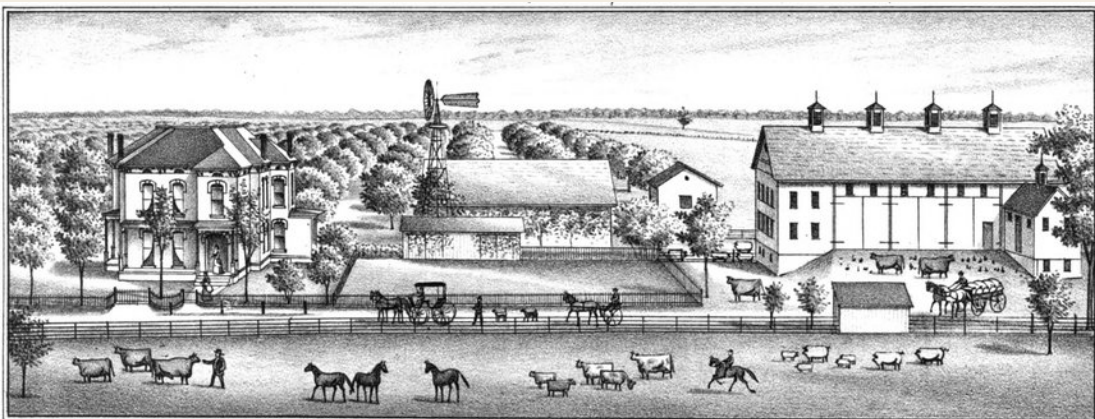




RESIDENCE OF HAMAN BORDNER, SEC. 12., PERRY TP., STARK CO., OHIO.

Only Ten Minutes and a Century Away

The Haman and Lidia Bordner House, 1880

4522 Seventh Street SW, Canton, Ohio



The family on the lawn, about 1895. The museum's caption names Haman, Franklin, and Franklin's children Niles and Verna; the rest, hired help.

A farmer named Haman Bordner bought eighty acres of this ground in January 1865 and lived on it in a log cabin. In 1880 he replaced the cabin with this house and had his name and his wife's cut into the stone over the door. His son turned the farm into the streets you drove in on. The house is what's left.

It's been a farmhouse, a family seat, a neighborhood's old survivor, a museum, and a home again. And it kept its own paperwork. The floor plans it was built from still hang in the front hall. So does the letter from the State of Ohio confirming its place on the National Register. So do two bank slips a Bordner son signed in 1899. Fifteen nitrate negatives turned up in the house this summer, and a family album's worth of prints followed. Some of them are on these pages.

The title of this booklet is borrowed. It's the line the Bordner museum printed on its flyer in December 1984, the first time this house was ever opened to the public. That flyer is part of the house's history collection.

One

The ground

1732 to 1880

Family legend has a Bordner walking to Ohio from Pennsylvania with nothing but a rifle and a dog. It was Haman's father, John P. Bordner, who made that walk, a teenager in the 1820s, on foot the whole way with a rifle, a bundle of clothes, and his dog, to join a cousin already farming in Stark County. The family's own genealogy, printed in 1967, tells the fuller story. The Bordners had been in America since 1732, when Balthaser Bortner stepped off a ship from Rotterdam at Philadelphia.

Haman was born here, in Bethlehem Township, in 1829, one of thirteen children. He married Lidia Kittinger in 1854 and spent the next eleven years farming land that wasn't his, in Pike, Perry, and Canton Townships, before he owned an acre. On January 24, 1865, he bought his first: eighty acres of Section 12, Perry Township, for \$5,000, from Samuel Lahm, a Canton lawyer who'd sat in Congress. The deed survives. Five years later he bought seventy-two more from the same man, and the farm grew west.

The Bordners lived in the log cabin for fifteen years. In 1877 they raised a barn big enough to pose the whole family in front of. In 1880, past fifty, Haman built this house.

He built it out of the farm. Two and a half stories of brick in the Italianate style, and inside, walnut and chestnut cut and milled on the property, never painted. American chestnut is the detail worth stopping on. The blight that erased the species reached Ohio a generation later. This trim came from trees that grew where you're standing, and it can't be bought now.



Haman Bordner. Watch for the crow perched at his shoulder.



Section 12 in 1896: the home farm, 213.33 acres. Kauffman atlas.



The
Bordner
family,
shortly
after
1880.
Framed in
the front
hall,
with the
museum's
typed
caption
naming
Haman,
Lidia,
Lidia's
mother,
Franklin,
Samantha,
and Emma.

Two The farm

The engraving on the cover was made for a county book in 1892, and it's a farm, not a house. Shorthorn, Jersey, and Guernsey cattle, Poland-China hogs, an orchard, a windmill, the great barn. That's Haman himself in the photograph above, seated with his dogs, with Lidia, her mother, and the children around him and the hired help at the edges.

The eighty acres of 1865 had grown to nearly 250 by the time the engraving was made, one unbroken stretch of Perry Township running north to the road that became the Lincoln Highway, with another 85 across the line in Jackson Township beside the field his son-in-law farmed. A quarter section and more, worked from this house for forty years. The family called it Hill Crest Farm, and the mail came addressed to "Hillcrest," Massillon Road.

"Notice date on barn in background 1877."

Three

The farm becomes a neighborhood

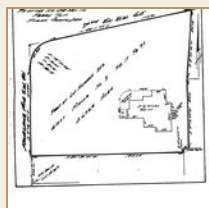
1903 to 1928



The 1877 barn, after 1903. The lettering is Frank's. Nitrate negative found in the house, 2026.

Haman died at home in October 1903. His will called the place Homestead Farm, and after Lidia it passed to Frank, who ran it another twenty years and painted his own name across the barn gable. Then, in February 1925, Frank did what farmers on the edge of growing cities did: he had forty-three acres surveyed into lots and filed the plat as West Manor. He sold every lot but one. The one he kept was Lot 209. You're on it.

The barn came down in 1927 and was hauled to Paris, on the east side of the county, where it stood another fifty years. The farm didn't vanish. It became the streets, and by the family's account Frank named them for his own household: Delverne for his daughters Audella and Verna, run together; Miles for his son Niles, softened by a letter; and Fairlane, the street this house fronts, for Franklin himself. The lots sold slowly, then all at once after the war, and the farmhouse stayed put while the fields turned into West Manor around it.



The survey that cut today's lot out of Lot 209 in 1974, the house drawn as a "2 1/2 story brick." Found in the house.

Four

The family

1880 to 1968



Frank and Emma Bordner, their grown children, and a granddaughter in the yard, in the 1920s. One of the nitrate negatives found in the house.



Frank Bordner in the yard, with the windmill from the cover engraving.



A girl at the gate, about 1920 – likely Frank's eldest granddaughter, seen above.



Niles, Verna, and Audella as children. A historian's copy of the original print.

Frank and Emma Bordner had three children: Niles, who married Bessie Jolly; Verna, who married a Whitney; and Audella, who married Walter Shellhouse and stayed. They raised all three in a frame house that stood beside this one from the 1890s until 1941, two Bordner households on one farm. Audella held the house until her death in 1968, the last Bordner to own it: 103 years of one family on the ground, cabin to widow.

Five

Saved

1974 to 2026



The house in the museum years, from the photograph that hangs beside the exhibit placard. The enclosed brick porch replaced the open veranda about 1920.

Two owners after Audella never moved in. A 1978 headline in the *Repository* called it an "eyesore," in the past tense. Jack and Gloria Cady had bought the house in October 1974 and spent a decade on it: roof, stone wall, plaster, floors, and about 150 pieces of Victorian furniture. In February 1978 the house went on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1984 the Cadys both retired and opened the front door to the public for the first time as the Bordner Museum of Victorian Furniture: ten decorated rooms, December 1 through 23, five dollars. The full season that followed, in 1985, drew under a thousand people. It was a house two retired people opened on weekends because they thought other people should see it.



The stone gateposts and wall, still standing today. The 1984 Christmas tour raised money for their repair.

They sold in 1986, and the house went back to being a home. One family held it thirty years. The owners who followed spent a decade on the parts of a house that don't show in a listing. In 2026 the kitchen was rebuilt to the walls, with the original brick exposed and its chandelier rewired and rehung. Everything the Cadys saved is still here.

1732	The Bordners land at Philadelphia
1820s	John P. Bordner walks to Ohio
1829	Haman Bordner born, Stark County
1865	Buys 80 acres, \$5,000
1877	The barn
1880	The house
1893	Reedurban platted on Bordner land
1903	Haman dies; Frank inherits
1925	West Manor platted
1927	The barn moved
1941	Frame house and windmill come down
1968	Last Bordner owner dies
1974	The Cadys
1978	National Register of Historic Places
1984	Opened to the public
1986	Sold; the museum closes
2026	Kitchen rebuilt

In the house's history collection, and staying with it:

1. County atlas engraving, 1892. The whole farm.
2. The floor plans, 1880. "Ground Plan" and "Chamber Plan," drawn to scale.
3. Farmers Bank of Canton deposit slips, 1899, signed Frank J. Bordner.
4. Victorian Christmas '84 flyer. Source of this booklet's title.
5. Ohio Historic Preservation Office letter, 1978, to Jack Cady here.
6. Bordner Museum brochure, April 1985.
7. Museum exhibit placard and photograph.
8. Family photographs, three frames, with the museum's typed captions.
9. Route 30, about 1920, from the unpaved road; trolley car No. 69.

Pieces of its history like the four-poster bed, the pier mirrors, the parlor draperies (sewn from the old Canton Palace Theatre's curtains), and the chandeliers stay with the house and go on being part of it.



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