Duncan Farm and "The Roost" of Oscar Steiner

Becky MacKay, Volunteer, Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Written September 4, 2025; Updated March 30, 2026

Abstract

The original purpose of this research was to conduct a deed search to determine when Duncan Farm operated as a working farm and as a rural, recreational retreat for Black families and organizations. Frank and Janie Duncan and their children moved into the Cuyahoga Valley by 1905 and were among the few African American families living in the valley at that time. The Duncans bought farm property in 1915 and became one of Cuyahoga Valley's first Black property owners. Duncan Farm stood on the west side of Riverview Road, about 1.5 miles south of Peninsula, Ohio, in what is now Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Frank and Janie Duncan continued to live, work, and host events on Duncan Farm through at least the late 1930's. The search for deeds into the 1950's for the same property uncovered other intriguing owners, Oscar and Dorothy Steiner. The Steiners converted an old barn on the former Duncan farmland into their own vacation retreat that they called "The Roost." In the 1950's, Oscar Steiner created what is now known as Sylvan Pond. Today, this legacy is enjoyed by visitors to Cuyahoga Valley National Park and can be accessed from Oak Hill Trail.

The Duncan Family

Frank and Janie Duncan were both Black and born in Virginia. Frank Duncan was born on September 28, 1877,[1,2] and Janie Estelle Duncan (nèe Newman) was born on February 1, 1878.[3] They were married in Washington, DC, on September 30, 1896.[4] Frank and Janie Duncan had 11 children together, which included an unnamed infant who died in 1904 and a daughter Sadie who died in 1920 during the year she was born.[5] A family portrait[6] from circa 1909 is presented in Figure 1.

The birth records for the Duncan children enable the family's journey to be traced as they moved from Virginia before settling in the Cuyahoga Valley in Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio. The first three children (Harry, Frances, and Sydney) were born in Virginia.[2,7] LeRoy, the fourth child, was born in 1902 in Bingham Center, Pennsylvania.[2,7] Next came Anna May, who was born in May 1904 in Cleveland, Ohio. Birth records indicate her parents were living at that time in Richfield Township, Summit County, Ohio.[2,7,8] Nettie Matilda was born in September 1905 in Richfield Township, but her parents' residence had changed to Boston Township.[2,7,8] The children who followed (Carrie Janie, Clarence, and Ruth) were all born in the Cuyahoga Valley (in Boston, Botzum, and Everett, respectively).[2,9,10] Birth records for Carrie Janie from 1908 also indicate The Duncans' residence was in Boston Township.[9] Thus, the Duncans had moved to Boston Township and the Cuyahoga Valley sometime between May 1904 and September 1905, and were among the few African American families[11-14] living in the Cuyahoga Valley during the early 1900's.

Janie Duncan's sisters, Ida Lee and Cora Harris, moved to Macedonia and Bath, respectively, in Summit County, Ohio, by 1907.[15,16] Ida Lee gave birth to baby Flora somewhere in Ohio circa 1905,[17] so given the

timing, it is possible that the sisters may have even traveled with the Duncans from Virginia to Ohio. However, the Lee and Harris families did not move into the Cuyahoga Valley until years later.[18-20]



Figure 1: Duncan family photograph taken in Summit County, circa 1909. Top row: Janie Duncan. Middle row: Frank Duncan, son Sydney, and daughter Frances. Bottom row: son LeRoy, daughter Anna May, and daughter Nettie Matilda. Photo is from Reference 6.

The Duncans' Residence by 1910

The US Census records indicate Frank and Janie Duncan were renting a house on a farm in Boston Township in Summit County, Ohio, in 1910.[7] Seven of their children lived with them at that time, along with a hired farmhand named Emlain Jackson from Virginia. The 1910 census listed 32-year-old Frank Duncan as a farmer and an employer. No street address was provided in the census records.

The US Census Bureau published aggregate data for the Black population up through 1915, including agricultural statistics that were organized by county in each state.[21] Summit County had only one farm in 1910 that was reported to have been operated by a Black person.[21] The Black farm operator was a tenant, not a farm owner,[22] and the farm was comprised of 180 acres.[21,22] Since Frank Duncan rented a farmhouse and was listed as a farmer and a farm employer in the 1910 census record,[7] one wonders if the only reported Black person operating a farm in Summit County was Frank Duncan. If it was, then Frank Duncan would have yet another distinction.

In an attempt to answer this question, the 1910 census sheet that contained the Duncan family was carefully examined. The sequencing of names on a census sheet can help to determine where a family lived in the community, if the census worker used a systematic approach when collecting census data. The preferred method was to canvas the population along each road without crossing back and forth

across the road.[23] Specifically, the heads of families, who owned their homes and were listed on the census sheet before and after Frank Duncan's name, were noted. Those names were then compared to landowners shown on the 1910 Boston Township plat map, a portion of which is shown in Figure 2.[24]

The heads of families, who owned their homes, were listed in the following order on the relevant 1910 census sheet:[7] James Noland, Frank Duncan (renter), Thomas Major, and James Scobie. These sequenced names of homeowners on the census sheet appear in the upper left quadrant of the Boston Township plat map in Figure 2. These homeowners all had property adjacent to Allen Welton's dairy farm,* which was located on what is now Major Road. Welton's property was comprised of two adjacent parcels that are outlined by a dashed blue line in Figure 2. Since Frank Duncan's name was between that of James Noland and Thomas Major in the 1910 census record, it seems very likely that the Duncans initially rented a house and operated a farm in this vicinity on Major Road after moving into the Cuyahoga Valley.

The acreage of the Welton Farm in 1910 helps to corroborate this idea and may pinpoint where the Duncans lived and worked. Allen Welton's farm was 184 acres,[24] which was nearly equal in size to the 180-acre farm that was reported in Summit County in 1910 as being operated by a Black person.[21,22] This suggests that Frank Duncan initially rented a house on and operated the Allen Welton farm.

It should be noted that in 1880 Charles Lamper was a general laborer in the village of Boston, Boston Township, Ohio. His race was given as "Mulatto" in the 1880 US Census records.[25] However, he was listed as a white farmer in Boston Township in the 1900 and 1910 US Census records.[12,13] Since Charles Lamper was listed as a white person in 1910, he was not counted in the 1910 Agricultural Census for Black farm operators. In addition, Charles Lamper was not associated with a 180-acre farm. The current research points to Frank Duncan as being the only Black person who was reported to operate a farm (of 180 acres) in Summit County, Ohio, in 1910.

By 1915, the Duncan family moved to another farm property that they purchased on Riverview Road (indicated by orange stars in Figure 2), and this is supported by the accounts of Ruth Lab. Ruth Noreen Lab (nèe Baxter) lived in the hamlet of Everett in Summit County, Ohio.[26] Ruth Lab was born in 1903 in the house of her great-great grandfather Alanson Swan of Everett. She attended grade school in a one-room schoolhouse with the Duncan children. She said that the Duncans greatly improved the school's music program and that she became very good friends with "a couple of the Duncan girls."[26] Anna May Duncan and Nettie Matilda Duncan were the closest in age to Ruth of all the Duncan sisters,[2,5] so it is likely that Anna and Nettie were the girls with whom Ruth was close. Ruth recalled that she and the Duncan girls traded lunches with each other in school and that "Mrs. Duncan made wonderful biscuits."[26] The Duncan girls remained close with Ruth and came back to visit her after they had moved out of the area. According to Ruth, the Duncans lived in a house "on the west side of Riverview Road just north of where the B & O Railroad crossed the road."[26]

_____

*Note that Allen Welton died in 1878. The farm stayed in their family until 1948.[27] Today, this park-owned land is operated as Greenfield Berry Farm.[28]

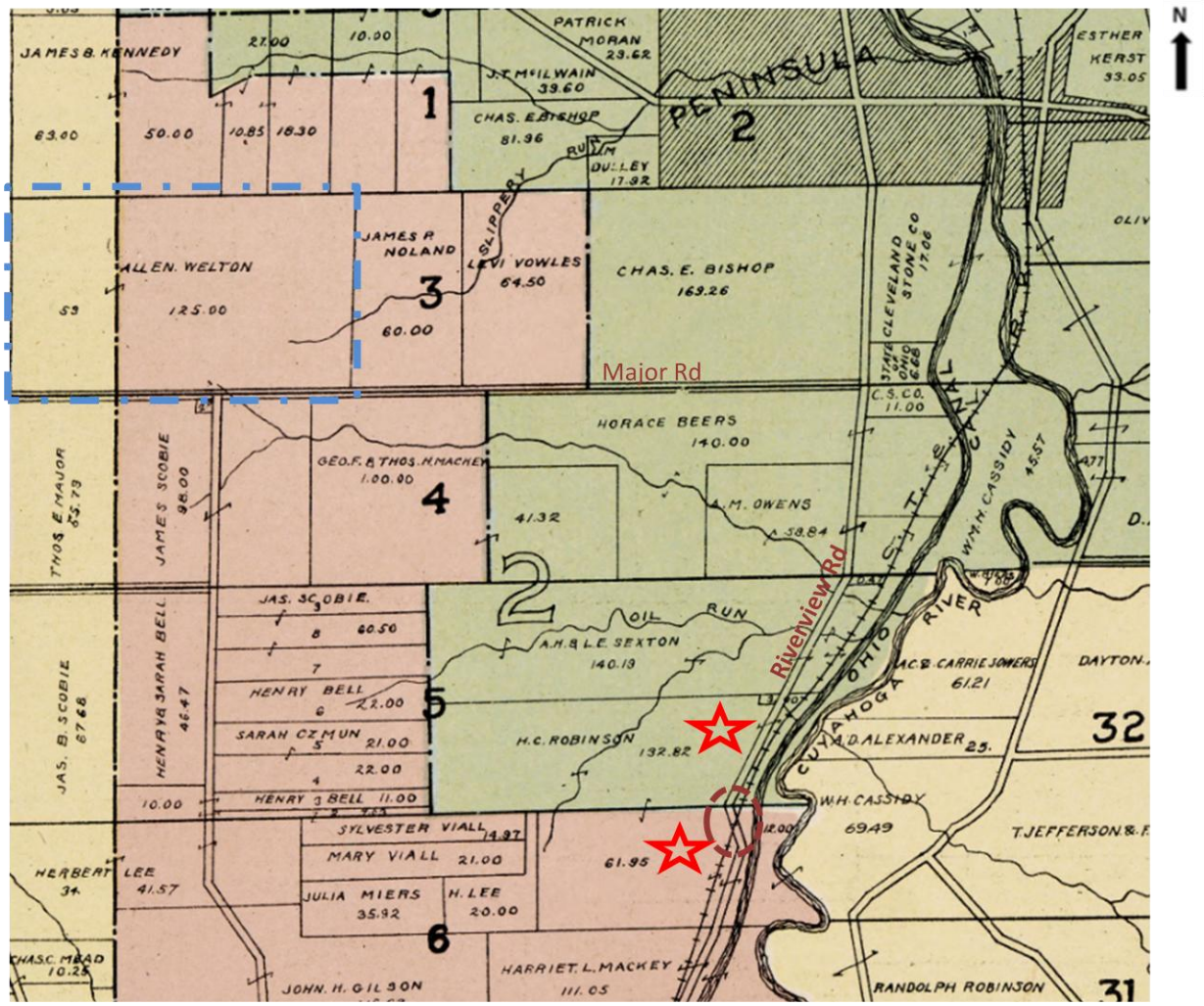


Figure 2: The 1910 Boston Township plat map shows two relevant properties. Allen Welton owned two partial lots totaling 184 acres, which are outlined by blue, dashed lines. H.C. Robinson owned property totaling 194.77 acres; this property is indicated by two orange stars. Frank and Janie Duncan purchased this latter property in 1915. The location where the railroad tracks cross Riverview Road is an important landmark and is indicated by the brown, dashed oval. The plat map is from Reference 24.

Duncan Farm Purchased in 1915

On October 20, 1915, Frank R. and Janie E. Duncan purchased a total of 194.77 acres in Partial Lots 5 and 6, Tract 2, in Boston Township from Dayton A. and Nora B. Ely for $11,000.[29] With this purchase, the Duncans became one of Cuyahoga Valley's first Black property owners. The ownership of this property had changed three times in 1915 before Frank and Janie Duncan acquired it.[30,31] The deed search results showing the ownership chain for this property is summarized in the Appendix from 1915 to the present. The property now resides within Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Figure 2[24] shows the partial lots where Duncan Farm was located, although the property was owned in 1910 by Harley C. Robinson (indicated by orange stars). The acreage for H.C. Robinson's two partial lots

adds up to 194.77 acres, which is consistent with that in the Duncans' 1915 deed. The full plat map[24] shows that this property was approximately 1.5 miles south of Peninsula and west of the Ohio Canal, along what is now known as Riverview Road. It is notable that the north property line of Lot 6 (in pink) is near the location where Riverview Road crosses the railroad tracks, which is outlined by a brown dashed oval in Figure 2. The railroad tracks still cross Riverview Road today in the same, or similar, location. The location of this property is consistent with Ruth Lab's description of where the Duncans lived.

It should be noted that the location of the Duncan Farm property described here differs from the erroneous locations indicated in two other references. The Green Book Cleveland [32] currently shows Duncan Farm 0.4 miles further north along Riverview Road, and the Conservancy Concept File for the Brandywine Golf Course Project[33] displays Duncan Farm on the western bank of the Cuyahoga River and more than 0.6 miles north of its actual location. These other references approximated the location of Duncan Farm.

Frank and Janie Duncan obtained a mortgage from Dayton A. Ely in the amount of $3,750 on October 20, 1915,[34] the same day that they acquired the property from Ely. A condition of this mortgage was that the buildings on the property had to be insured in an amount not less than $4,200. The premises were free from encumbrances, except for a substantial mortgage to H.C. Robinson in the amount of $6,500 with interest.[34]

Starting in 1919, Frank Duncan contributed to his community and supplemented his income by performing labor for Boston Township. In 1921, he began using a team of horses to do road work in the township.[35] Until World War II, most road maintenance, ditch mowing, and snow removal in Boston Township was performed by local citizens under the supervision of citizen road superintendents.[35]

The Duncans Sold the Farm in 1925 to a Cleveland Man in the Milk Business

When the US Census was taken on January 16, 1920, Frank Duncan was listed as a farmer on property that he owned, although the property was still mortgaged.[36] He and his wife lived on the farm along with eight of their children plus a granddaughter. The census records categorized the farm as a "general farm."[36] It is noteworthy that in 1920 only two farms in Summit County were reported as being operated by Black and "other nonwhite" farm owners, and none were operated by Black and "other nonwhite" farm tenants.[37]

The conditions of Frank and Janie Duncan's first mortgage from Dayton Ely were complied with, so that mortgage was discharged on June 8, 1920.[34] But a few days earlier, on June 5, 1920, the Duncans took out another mortgage from Dayton Ely in the amount of $3,100.[38] The premises were free from encumbrances, except for the sizable mortgage that had been due to H.C. Robinson on March 1, 1920, of which $4,900 remained unpaid.[38] Thus, the Duncans appeared to be $8,000 in debt in 1920, which in 2026 dollars adjusted for inflation would be equal to $137,166.[39] Ely transferred the right, title, and interest for the 1920 mortgage to The Peninsula Banking Co. on November 23, 1921.[38]

In August 1925, after ten years of farm ownership, Frank and Janie Duncan sold the 194.77-acre property to Harry B. Pratt (incorrectly written as Harry R. Pratt) and Charles D. Hajek for a consideration of $100.[40] Harry and Bertha Pratt and Charles and Elsie Hajek obtained a mortgage for $3,000 from Frank Duncan.[41] The premises were free from encumbrances, except for mortgages in the amounts of $4,900 and $2,100 that were held by The Peninsula Banking Co.[41] Thus, it appears that farming during this time period had not been profitable for the Duncans, and Pratt and Hajek took on all of the existing debts on this property.

Interestingly, Harry Pratt was in the milk business. He was a sales manager at Telling-Belle Vernon Co.,[42] which at that time was the largest distributor of milk and ice cream products in the State of Ohio.[43] The company had a reputation of high standards for milk quality and cleanliness, and in 1928, became a division of the National Dairy Products Company, which used the Sealtest brand name to indicate testing specifications of the highest quality.[44] Harry Pratt later became a Shaker Heights councilman and President of Baker Laboratories, which produced baby food and milk for babies.[45,46] Charles Hajek was a banker.[47] Both men lived in the Cleveland area. Charles Hajek died on June 28, 1929.[48]

In October 1926, Pratt and Hajek transferred part of the property ownership to three investors who lived in the Cleveland area. An undivided 1/5 interest in the property was conveyed to each of the following: a paving company manager named J. P. Pejsa;[49,50] a bank secretary named George A. Spear;[50,51] and a dentist named James V. Gentilly.[53,54] The property transfer to each of these men was for the consideration of $10 and other valuable considerations. Two years later, on October 10, 1928, Pratt, Hajek, Pejsa, Spear, Gentilly, and their wives obtained a $10,000 mortgage from Walter W. Corlett for the 194.77-acre property.[55] Soon thereafter, the conditions of the $3,000 mortgage from Frank Duncan were complied with, and that mortgage was discharged on December 3, 1928.[41]

Tuberculosis Concern in Cleveland's Milk Supply and the Start of Certified Dairy Farms

In the 1920's, City of Cleveland health officials had serious concerns about humans contracting tuberculosis and typhoid from inferior milk that did not pass the city's inspection tests.[56] A tuberculosis epidemic had been observed in cattle in the northeast counties of Ohio around 1925. The City of Cleveland shifted its milk supply sources from counties in northeast Ohio to counties that were further south and west of the city because of this epidemic.

The Health Commissioner in the City of Cleveland set new milk safety standards, and on February 7, 1926, published a list of 100 dairy farms approved by the City of Cleveland health officials.[57] A partial listing of dairies in the Cleveland Milk Zone that were registered as approved dairies by the City of Cleveland Health Department is shown in Figure 3.[57] Duncan Farm was not on that 1926 list. The dairy farms of Frank C. Mackey and E. T. Rennebaum were the only approved dairies from Boston Township on that 1926 list. The farm of W. W. Thornton in Everett was also an approved dairy farm in 1926.

Dairy	P. O. Address	Distributor
Wm. Erf & Son	Bellevue	Telling-Belle Vernon Co.
W. M. Cheeke	Berea	Producers Milk Co.
Joe Zdansky	Berea	John Soeder
Frank C. Mackey	Boston	Old Meadow Creamery
E. T. Rennebaum	Boston	Old Meadow Creamery
C. P. Brown	Brunswick	Producers Milk Co.
E. Lyons	Brunswick	Producers Milk Co.
J. Lyons	Brunswick	Telling-Belle Vernon Co.
C. W. Damon & Son	Brunswick	Producers Milk Co.
C. W. Ankerman	Burbank	United Dairy Co.
R. Dougherty	Burbank	United Dairy Co.
W. E. Uhler	Burbank	United Dairy Co.
E. F. Hosmer	Burton	Telling-Belle Vernon Co.
Halfred Farm	Chagrin Falls	F. E. Walker
C. W. Cares, No. 2 Farm	Chardon	Schneider Dairy Co.
R. D. Gates	Chardon	Old Meadow Creamery Co.
Geauga County Home	Chardon	O. A. Dean
Howard L. Deucker	Chippewa Lake	United Dairy Co
Harold S. Flickinger	Chippewa Lake	United Dairy Co
Chas. H. Long	Chippewa Lake	United Dairy Co
Matt Starr	Chippewa Lake	John Tischler
Montrose Dairy Co.	Copley	F. E. Walker & Meyer Dairy
A. D. Saalfield	Copley	Tom Kyselka
B. J. McKelvey	Creston	United Dairy Co.
J. M Steele	Creston	United Dairy Co.
Forest View Farm	Elyria	Hospitals
W. W. Thornton	Everett	John Hrabak

Figure 3: A partial listing of dairies that were registered as approved dairies by the City of Cleveland Health Department is shown as of January 30, 1926. From Reference 57.

However, Duncan Farm was added three years later to an expanded list of approved dairies for supplying milk to the City of Cleveland.[58] On October 1, 1929, five dairy farms in Boston Township were approved by the Public Health Department of Cleveland, Figure 4.[58] The Duncan Farm was listed as having a herd of 17 cows (Figure 4), which was as large as or larger than the herds on the other approved dairy farms in Boston Township.

Boston Township

No. 383. Chester Lee
No. cows 12. P. O. Peninsula, O.
Loc. ½ m. S., 1 m. W., 1 m. S. of Peninsula. Oak Hill Rd.

No. 439. John H. Scobie
No. cows 15. P. O. Peninsula, O.
Loc. ½ m. S., 1½ m. W., ¼ m. S. of Peninsula.

No. 571. R. W. Engel
No. cows 17. P. O. Peninsula, O.
Loc. 1 m. S., ¼ m. E. of Peninsula. Ritche Rd.

No. 572. A. W. Bell
No. cows 10. P. O. Peninsula, O.
Loc. 2 m. W., 1½ m. S. of Peninsula.

No. 1114. Frank R. Duncan.
No. cows 17. P. O. Everett, O.
Loc. 1 m. S. of Peninsula.

Figure 4: The complete list of dairy farms in Boston Township approved by City of Cleveland, as of October 1, 1929. From Reference 58.

It is interesting to note that Frank Duncan's name appeared in the approved dairy listing in 1929 (Figure 4), although the farm property had been transferred four years earlier to Harry Pratt, et al. Thus, Frank Duncan continued to live and work on his former farm and was recognized as the operator of the farm. The 1930 US Census[59] also indicated that Frank Duncan operated the farm on which he rented his home, because a Farm Schedule Number was assigned to him. A unique Farm Schedule Number was assigned to the family member who lived in a house on a farm and operated that farm.[60] Farm Schedule Numbers had also been assigned to Frank Duncan in 1910[7] and 1920.[36]

A working hypothesis is that Harry Pratt facilitated dairy farm improvements and the dairy certification of Duncan Farm. He and Hajek purchased the property when Cleveland was shifting its dairy sourcing, and the farm became certified within four years after their purchase. Field experts at Telling-Belle Vernon Company routinely worked with dairy farmers to teach them barn cleanliness practices, proper feeding of the cows, and recommended clean milking and cooling methods.[61] As an employee of Telling-Belle Vernon, Harry Pratt could have assisted in making such improvements at the farm. This research suggests that Harry Pratt purchased Duncan Farm to improve dairy operations and profit from the sale of certified milk to the City of Cleveland for distribution by Telling-Belle Vernon Company.

The Chester Lee Farm, which was adjacent to and west of Duncan Farm, and nearby Scobie Farm were also added to the 1929 approved dairy list (Figure 4), which may suggest that Harry Pratt assisted these other nearby farms in a similar way. William Lee, a grandson of Chester and Jeannette Lee, recalled his grandmother saying that they had to "inoculate the cows on the farm or give them antibiotics."[62] His grandparents took the milk on a wagon to Peninsula for shipment by train. William Lee recollected that his grandmother was "a sharp lady" and "the first woman in Peninsula to go to college."[62] She had a "business head" and was looking for new ways to make money on the farm, so they started growing and selling Christmas trees.[62] Jeannette Lee learned where to get saplings for free and expanded the family farm business to supplement their dairy farm income during the Great Depression.

Duncan Farm in the 1930s and Financial Difficulties during the Great Depression

The 1930 US Census indicated that Frank Duncan, age 52, was a farmer and in the truck industry.[59] There were still only two farms in Summit County reported to have Black farm operators in 1930, although that number increased to six in 1935.[63] The census also listed Frank Duncan as an owner and self-employed.[59] This ownership designation did not refer to the farm that he lived on and operated, but instead referred to his truck business, the F. R. Duncan Supply Co. By 1930, Frank Duncan began using a truck for road maintenance work in Boston Township, instead of using a team of horses.[35] Frank Duncan received checks from Boston Township from 1931-1932 that were made out to the "F. R. Duncan Supply Co."[35] These particular checks indicated that he hauled coal to the needy in the community and hauled cinders for road work on Wheatley Road. Other cancelled checks from 1930 to 1938 were made out directly to Frank Duncan, F Duncan, or FR Duncan, and these checks were payment for hauling cinders with a truck, doing road work with a truck, road trenching, and providing unspecified labor.[35] In 1935, Duncan

received nine checks totaling $423, which was the highest amount he was paid by Boston Township in any single year. This amount is equal to approximately $10,229 in 2026 dollars.[39]

The 1930 census records also indicate that Duncan rented his home for $16.50/month on a farm in Boston Township.[59] A boarder named Henry Euell was living with the Duncan family. Since Euell's occupation was a farm laborer, it seems quite likely that he was working on Duncan Farm. It was not uncommon at that time for hired farmhands to live with the family on the farm where they worked. The census taker did not record the Duncan home address. It appears that Frank Duncan continued to live and work on the same farm through most of the 1930's, and this seems to be supported by the notices in newspapers of the various activities that were held at Duncan Farm.

Social and holiday events for Black families and organizations were hosted at Duncan Farm in the 1930's and 1940's. Information about these events is based on only a few advertisements and brief summaries published in local newspapers. The frequency of these organized events is not known. It does not appear that the Duncans placed formal advertisements in newspapers to publicize that the farm was available for recreational activities. Rather, it seems more likely that use of Duncan Farm for such activities came about largely through "word of mouth" and family connections with some clubs or groups. For instance, Harry Duncan, the oldest of the Duncan children, was a member of a club that had its annual picnic at Duncan Farm in 1940.[64]

However, the group sponsoring an event at the farm sometimes placed a newspaper ad for communicating important details, such as dates, times, and driving directions, to their members. For example, one read "Meet us at Duncan Farm for an Old Fashion [sic] Picnic and Dance. Sponsored by the Criterion Social Club." Specific details followed.[65] The ads from the sponsoring organizations would have helped to promote the farm as a place where African American groups could recreate away from Akron and Cleveland. As hosts, the Duncans appeared to provide what was needed for each event: "Mrs. Duncan made possible an enjoyable day for all."[66] A fee was charged for some of these day events. Two examples are "Free Parking…Free Dancing…Admission 10 cents"[65] and "Entry Fee for Dog $1.50" for a hunting club event."[67]

The known events at Duncan Farm during the 1930's included an Easter egg hunt for 46 children in a church group in April 1931[68] and a picnic and dance in August 1938.[65] The driving directions provided in the advertisement for the picnic and dance were to take "Route 8 to 303, turn right into Peninsula, Ohio, turn left on Everett St. to Duncan's Farm."[65] Everett Street is current-day Riverview Road.[69] This advertisement provides evidence that Duncan Farm was still functioning as a recreational retreat in 1938 and was still located south of Peninsula on Riverview Road.

Financial difficulties arose for the Cleveland owners of the farm during the 1930's. As mentioned earlier, Walter W. Corlett had granted a $10,000 mortgage to Pratt, Hajek, Pejsa, Spear, Gentilly, and their wives in 1928 for the 194.77-acre property.[55] The principal and interest of the mortgage was due on or before October 10, 1931,[55] but these conditions were not met. In April 1937, a legal case was brought to the Common Pleas Court of Summit County, Ohio, against Pratt, et al.[70] As a result of this case, Edwin H. Corlett, the nephew of the deceased Walter W. Corlett,[71,72] was able to recover $13,350 from Harry B.

Pratt, et al.[70] Following the judgment, an Order of Sale for the two parcels of land in Boston Township was issued by the Summit County Sheriff, and the property was sold on July 2, 1937, to the highest bidder at a public auction.[70] William C. Dixon, Trustee for Edwin H. Corlett, was the highest bidder and purchased the property for $10,700.[70]

William C. Dixon was not only the Trustee for Edwin H. Corlett, but he also married Arvilla B. Pratt, the daughter of Harry B. Pratt, in November 1934.[73] Interestingly, as Corlett's legal representative, Attorney Dixon took his wife's father and business associates to court.

The Duncans in the 1940s

The 62-year old Frank Duncan continued working as a dairy farmer in 1940 and had worked all 52 weeks in the year prior to the 1940 US Census.[74] There were six "nonwhite" farm operators in Summit County in 1940.[75] Frank and Janie Duncan rented a farmhouse for $25/month and lived with their sons Clarence and Harry, as well as with Harry's wife Laura, in 1940.[74] It is not clear if the Duncans moved to a nearby farm after William Dixon purchased the farm property, or if they continued living on the same farm that they had purchased in 1915.

The Duncans were listed on Sheet 5A in the 1940 US Census for Peninsula, Ohio.[74] This census sheet was not straightforward with respect to residents' addresses. The census worker had written "W. Main" toward the top of the sheet in the first column under location.[74] However, W. Main was not the street address for all of the residents listed on that census sheet.[76] Some of those residents lived on Riverview Road and others lived on West Main Street, but all of those identified lived at, or near, the intersection of Riverview Road and Main Street in Peninsula.[76] In contrast, in the 1930 US Census record,[59] the Duncans were listed on the same page as residents who were known to live further south in Everett, Ohio.[76] This analysis may suggest that Frank and Janie Duncan had moved to another farm in Peninsula by April 1940. Frank Duncan's World War II Draft Registration Card[77] indicated that his place of residence was in Peninsula on West River Road. A portion of Riverview Road, south of Main Street in Peninsula, had also been known as River Road.[78]

Picnics and club events continued to be hosted for Black organizations at "Duncan Farm Peninsula, Ohio," between 1940 and 1942.[66,67,79] The driving directions for a hunting club event at the farm were described in an advertisement as: "Take Route 82 to Riverview Road. Follow to Duncan Farm."[67] This advertisement did not assist in pinpointing the farm's specific location, although Peninsula was mentioned.

Frank and Janie Duncan lived at 2296 East 101st Street in Cleveland, Ohio, about two years before Janie died in 1945.[3] In May 1946, Frank Duncan married Lucy Battle (nèe Harris) in Summit County.[2] The marriage certificate indicated that Frank's residence at that time was in Peninsula. It was reported that Frank Duncan returned to his birthplace, Bull Run, Virginia, in 1949 after retiring from his Ohio farm, and moved to Washington, DC, in 1950.[80] Frank Duncan died in 1954.[80,81]

Later Property Ownership Transfers and "The Roost" of Oscar Steiner

William C. Dixon continued to maintain ownership of the former Duncan property until 1948. In 1948, he transferred the property to Bertha M. Pratt (Harry Pratt's wife) and George A. Spear, Jr., who was the son of a former co-owner (George A. Spear).[82] Then after Bertha's death, her undivided one-half interest in the property was transferred back to Harry B. Pratt.[83]

However, in November 1951, things took an artistic turn when the property was purchased by The Graphics Arts Building Company,[84] which was an Ohio Corporation with Dorothy Steiner (nèe Pasch) serving as President and Oscar H. Steiner as Treasurer.[85] The Steiners lived in Shaker Heights, Ohio. They were attracted to the pastoral setting and wooded hills of the former Duncan farmland because it was peaceful and reminded them of a Vermont landscape.[86] The Steiners purchased the property knowing that an extensive remodeling effort would be necessary to transform an old barn on the premises into a livable country retreat. Oscar Steiner was a successful construction engineer, who developed low-cost housing projects.[86,87] He also co-founded an international cooperative for housing Cleveland-area graduate students who were having difficulty completing their degrees due to financial hardships during the Great Depression.[88,89] Dorothy Steiner was a local actress who starred in theater productions in Peninsula and at the Cleveland Playhouse.[76,90]

Oscar Steiner estimated that he labored some 1,500 hours[87] converting the old barn into their country residence that was called "The Roost." He did most of the remodeling work himself, although a plumber and a carpenter were also put to work on the extensive renovation. The general exterior and some of the large wooden beams in the interior of the original structure remained unaltered.[86]

The Steiners collected art, rugs, furnishings, and mementos from their numerous trips through the Caribbean, Guatemala, Mexico, Africa, and Europe. These objects were used for decorating the country home.[86,87] Dorothy Steiner had an international collection of roosters in a variety of sizes and materials. A newspaper article reported in 1954 that The Roost got its name from the collection of Mexican tin roosters that were prominently displayed throughout house.[87] Oscar Steiner's favorite hobby was painting. He painted a 10-foot rooster above the exterior door on the remodeled barn[86] (Figure 5), which reflects the name of the country retreat. Peggy Jo Whitman, a long-time caretaker of The Roost, believes these events happened in a different sequence. She thinks The Roost got its name after Oscar Steiner painted the large rooster, and then Dorothy Steiner started collecting roosters with which to decorate the house.[90]

After the remodel of the old barn was completed, the Steiners began using the house primarily on weekends between Mother's Day and Halloween.[90] Oscar Steiner planted metasequoia trees (also known as Dawn Redwood or *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) on the property in May 1954.[86] These trees are distinctive, deciduous conifers with stringy bark. Oscar Steiner also dammed a nearby stream to form a pond.[86] The Chadima family, who lived nearby, helped Steiner dig for the pond, and somehow the Chadimas "lost their jeep" during the construction of the dam.[90] This dam formed the currently-named Sylvan Pond, which was on the Steiner property, a short walking distance from the renovated barn. The pond can now be accessed by park visitors from Oak Hill Trail.



Figure 5: 10-foot rooster originally painted by Oscar Steiner above the exterior door of the country retreat. Photo was taken August 26, 2025. Photo: NPS/Becky MacKay.

Historical aerial photographs from 1952 and 1959[91] confirm that the pond was created during the 1950's. An aerial from 1959 shows a large pond present in about the same size, shape, and location of current-day Sylvan Pond, whereas an aerial of the same area in 1952 shows only a streambed lined with trees. This stream is also evident in the plat map in Figure 2, where the headwaters of the stream are shown in the upper left corner of the orange-starred 61.95-acre partial lot and near H. Lee's 20-acre parcel.

The Steiner family utilized the pond for swimming and bass fishing.[76,86] The locals called the pond, "Steiner's Pond."[92] Around 1965, Robert N. Lee (son of Chester and Jeannette Lee) used a four-ton bulldozer and dynamite to enlarge the southwest end of the pond so it would extend onto the Lee family property for their use and enjoyment.[92] The pond was later renamed "Sylvan Pond" by Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area staff. The Steiners also constructed a pier and an impressive boat house at the water's edge.[90,92,93] Peggy Jo Whitman noted, "It was not just a boat house. It was nice. They had a fireplace in it [and held] parties [there]."[90] The boat house was eventually removed, likely in the 1980s,[90] due to incidents of vandalism during the winter months when The Roost was vacant.

Beginning in 1960, Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman became the Steiners' caretakers for The Roost.[90] They never stayed in The Roost. The Whitmans occupied another house on the property along Riverview Road and lived there year-round.[90] The Whitmans had no telephone during their early days as caretakers. Every Thursday at 4 pm, Reid and Peggy Jo would go to a pay phone in Peninsula at the corner of Route 303 and Akron-Peninsula Road to receive a call from Mrs. Steiner.[90] Mrs. Steiner would provide instructions on what she wanted at The Roost for the weekend visit. Peggy Jo says, "Mrs. Steiner was very particular."[90]

The Steiners Transfer the Property to their Daughter and Son-in-Law

After decades of enjoyment at The Roost with their children and grandchildren, the Steiners sold the property in February 1977 to their son-in-law and daughter, Robert and Judith N. Rudolph.[85,94,95] This property transfer occurred a little more than two years after Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area was established in December 1974. In October 1978, the Rudolphs sold a small parcel of 2.7773 acres in Lot 6, Tract 2, to Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman,[96] who had been living in the house on that small parcel at 5328 Riverview Road since 1960.[90]

As it turns out, Oscar Steiner was not the only artist in the family. A detailed mural (Figure 6) appears on another side of The Roost, opposite to the side with the large rooster. It was painted in 1991 by the wife (artist Nancy Jackson) of the Rudolphs' oldest son, Adam[90] and depicts roosters, family hobbies, a perched owl, numerous flying birds, and other wildlife. The mural contains radio telescopes to the left of the pair of roosters, which is undoubtedly connected to the Rudolphs' youngest son, Alex, an astronomer who studied star formations.[97] On the far left is an object that looks like a conga drum. Adam Rudolph is a composer and percussionist who plays congas.[98,99]



Figure 6: A mural was painted on another side of The Roost. Artist's name is shown in inset. Photo was taken August 26, 2025. Photo: NPS/Becky MacKay.

The short music score that was painted at the top of the mural in Figure 6 is clever. The musical notes appear to represent the "underlay of a Charlie Parker lead solo,"[100] according to jazz experts at Murray State University in Kentucky. Charlie Parker was an influential jazz saxophonist and composer in the early 1940's.[101] His nicknames were "Yardbird" or "Bird."[101-103] Yardbird was a common term for chicken.

Some say that Charlie Parker's nicknames resulted simply from his insatiable appetite for chicken,[101,102] but band leader Jay McShann had a more entertaining anecdote.[104] He tells the story that while traveling

on tour with Charlie, one of the band's cars hit a farmer's chicken on a two-lane highway. Charlie insisted that they stop to pick up the dead bird and have it cooked and served for dinner. As the story goes, Charlie's band members started calling him "Yardbird" after that, which was later shortened to "Bird."[104] Since the renovated barn was called The Roost and the mural contains numerous birds, the inclusion of a score from a musician called "Bird" seems quite fitting.

In addition, five intriguing human statues were placed at The Roost among the metasequoia trees (Figure 7). These statues were also created by artist Nancy Jackson.[90] The statues personified five women, but they apparently did not represent family members.[90] The statues were beginning to degrade due to years of direct exposure to the elements. They are no longer on the property, but have been gifted to a family friend for displaying and safekeeping in his front yard in Richfield Township on Route 303.[90] A large rock near one of the metasequoia trees displays several brass plaques. One plaque relays part of the story of the rediscovery of these trees in the 1940's, long after the species was thought to be extinct. Another set of plaques memorializes the previous owners of the property: Dorothy Pasch Steiner 1900–1981, Oscar Hershel Steiner 1896–1989, Judith N. Rudolph 1929–1991, and Robert M. Rudolph 1926–2012.



Figure 7: Five statues placed among the metasequoia trees on the former Rudolph property. Photos were taken January 2, 2020. Photo: NPS/Rosemary Allen.

The Rudolphs Sell their Property to the US Government

After Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area was established, the National Park Service began acquiring land and purchasing properties from private owners. On October 9, 1980, the US government purchased the Rudolph property of 167.8 acres for $498,700.[105] The deed contained terms and

conditions for a Term Estate to Robert and Judith N. Rudolph, their heirs and assigns, for residential purposes for a term of 25 years from the date of conveyance to the United States.

A diagram of the Rudolph property was provided in the 1980 deed records and is given in Figure 8.[105] It depicts the long driveway, the house (The Roost), and a barn relative to the centerline of Riverview Road. That barn has since fallen down on the property. However, the house (The Roost) is still standing. It is located up on a ridge and cannot be seen from Riverview Road. The lease for the Rudolph family had been renewed by the US Government beyond the original 25-year term. However, the lease was not renewed recently, and as of the time of this writing, the house is on Cuyahoga Valley National Park's demolition list.

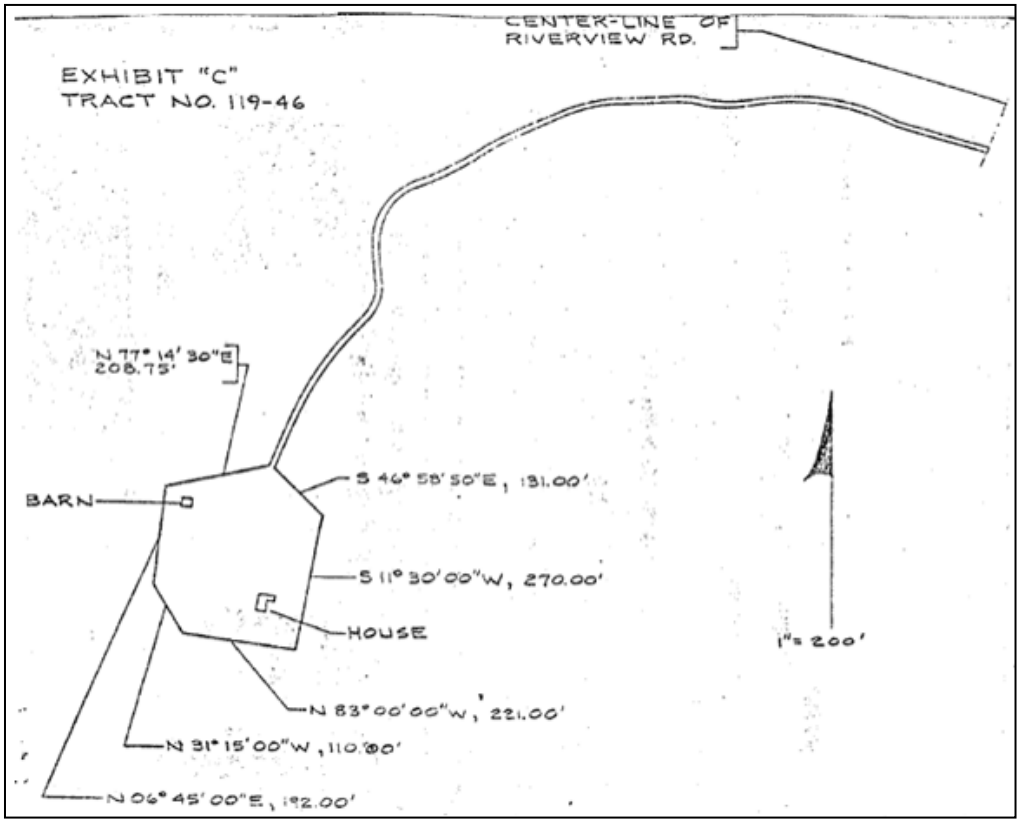


Figure 8: The former property of Robert and Judith N. Rudolph showing the long driveway and placement of the house (The Roost) and a barn relative to Riverview Road. The structure labeled as a barn has since fallen down. From Reference 105.

The former property of Robert and Judith N. Rudolph, which resided in Boston Township's Partial Lots 5 and 6, Tract 2, is also depicted in Figure 9[106] as the US Government's Land Tract 119-46. The long driveway and the placement of the house (The Roost) within a six-sided figure had been previously drawn in by hand on the land tract map in Figure 9. This hand drawing approximates what is shown in Figure 8. The 2.78-acre property that the Rudolphs sold to Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman in 1978 is also evident in Figure 9. It appears as a small, rectangular parcel in the northeast corner of Boston Township's Partial Lot 6, and is labeled as Tract 119-45 in Figure 9.[106] This small parcel contains the house where the Whitmans have lived since 1960; Figure 9 illustrates that this land parcel is located along Riverview Road and north of where the B & O Railroad Tracks cross Riverview Road.

https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2317632

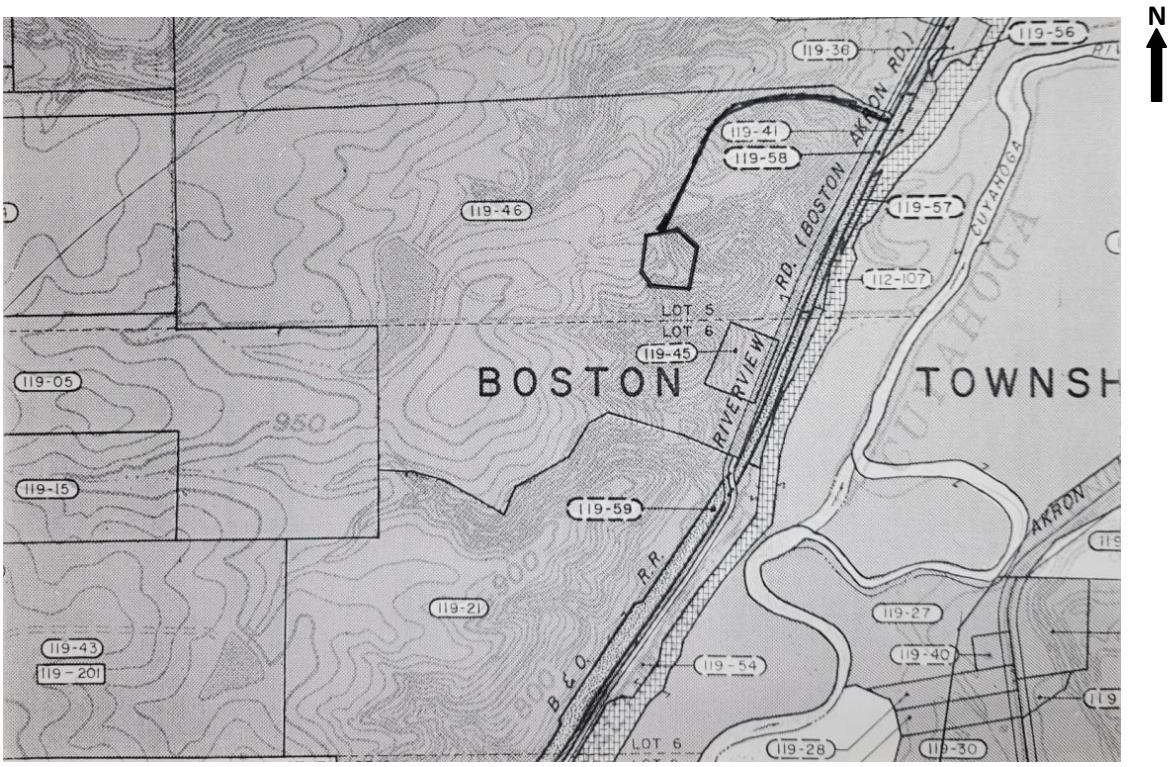


Figure 9: US Government Land Tract Map showing the former properties of Robert and Judith N. Rudolph (Tract 119-46) and Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman (Tract 119-45). From Reference 106.

The Whitmans also Sell their Property to the US Government

The Whitmans sold their 2.78 acres to the US Government on October 14, 1980, for $76,384.[107] The deed contained the terms and conditions for a Life Estate to Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman and their survivors for residential purposes from the date of conveyance to the United States. As of the time of this writing, Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman are still living in the brown house (Figure 10[108]) in Partial Lot 6 at 5328 Riverview Road that they have occupied since 1960. The house is visible on the west side of Riverview Road, north of where the railroad tracks cross the road.

Different dates have been given for the original construction of this house. Public records indicate that the house was built in 1838.[109] Some old plat maps of Summit County include symbols that represent structures built on lots. However, a plat map of Boston Township for 1856[110] shows no building on the relevant Partial Lot 6 in Tract 2 where the house at 5328 Riverview Road stands today. Peggy Jo Whitman believes that the house was built in 1885, based on the year that was engraved in the sandstone steps in the front of the house.[90]

The historic property assessment that was performed by Cuyahoga Valley National Park in 2001 described the house as having historical significance and a Queen Anne style of architecture with



Figure 10: House at 5328 Riverview Road, where Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman are living at the time of this writing. Photo is from Reference 108. *Was this the house where The Duncan family lived for more than two decades?*

Eastlake details.[108] Queen Anne was a popular architectural style in the United States from circa 1880 to 1910,[111] which lends more credence to the date given by Mrs. Whitman. However, either date of 1838 or 1885 puts the original construction of the house at least three decades before the Duncans purchased the property from Dayton and Nora Ely in 1915. As a result, this house would have been available as a residence for the Duncan family.

Ruth Lab indicated that the Duncan family lived on the west side of Riverview Road just north of the railroad tracks crossing,[26] which is consistent with the location of the Whitmans' current residence. *Is the Whitmans' current residence the same house where Frank and Janie Duncan lived for over 20 years? It seems quite likely.*

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank: Randy Bergdorf, Director/Fiscal Officer of Peninsula Library and Historical Society, and Rebecca Jones Macko, Interpretive Park Ranger at Cuyahoga Valley National Park, for many helpful discussions; Peggy Jo Whitman, the long-time caretaker of The Roost, and William Lee, former Oak Hill resident, for sharing their insightful recollections; Cuyahoga Valley National Park Volunteers Sally Childs for taking the initiative to forward musical score photos from The Roost to the Music Department at Murray State University, Rosemary Allen for providing fabulous photos of the statues at The Roost, and Gary Diefendorff for reminding me about an aerial photography website; and Grant Day, Cultural Resources Program Manager at Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and Arrye Rosser, Interpretive and Education Specialist at Cuyahoga Valley National Park and my supervisor on this wonderful project, for many useful discussions and for reviewing this paper.

References

1. Frank Duncan, "Virginia, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Birth Records, 1853-1896," https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en/GQ5J-DL7/frank-robert-duncan-1876-1954, accessed August 27, 2025.
2. "Frank Robert Duncan, BIRTH 28 SEP 1877, Bull Run, Virginia, USA, DEATH 1954," Robinson-Naylor-Harris Family Tree, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/family-tree/person/tree/73764062/person/34291000581/facts, accessed August 27, 2025.
3. Ohio Department of Health, Certificate of Death for Janie Estelle Duncan, #46654, Ancestry.com, https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2022/38/93891478_25f75a4d-58aa-4c97-a446-5cd0b1355c68.jpeg, accessed August 13, 2025.
4. "Frank R. Duncan in the Washington, District of Columbia, U.S., Marriage Certificates, 1870-1920," https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/62863/records/194082?tid=&pid=&queryId=7408e1a3-e2f9-45c8-9b8d-0ce56e3b47e2&_phsrc=KhL659&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 27, 2025.
5. "Family Time Line," in Frank Robert Duncan, 28 September 1876-1954, https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en/GQ5J-DL7/frank-robert-duncan-1876-1954, accessed August 27, 2025.
6. "Frank Robert Duncan," in Robinson-Naylor-Harris Family Tree, Gallery, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/73764062/person/34291000581/media/32a20409-308c-4749-be5f-f0322b234b59?galleryindex=1&sort=-created, accessed January 15, 2026.
7. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 4B, Ancestry.com, accessed February 7, 2024.
8. Anna May Duncan and Nettie Matilda Duncan, "Indexed Birth Records – Summit County, Ohio," vol. 4, p. 61, online: p. 236 of 241, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/2144/records/10464, accessed December 27, 2025.
9. Carrie Janie Duncan, "Indexed Birth Records – Summit County, Ohio," vol. 4, p. 67, online: p. 237 of 241, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/2144/records/10464, accessed December 27, 2025.
10. "Summit County, Ohio, U.S., Marriage Records, 1840-1980 for Clarence William Duncan," 1933-1941, Volumes 66-85, Vol 80, 1940, Online: p. 480 of 679, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/imageviewer/collections/2145/images/4440629_00198?pId=248067, accessed December 21, 2025.
11. Rebecca Jones Macko, Interpretive Park Ranger, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, personal communication with Becky MacKay, February 19, 2026.
12. "Charles Lamper and Daughter Stella Lamper," Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Schedule No. 1 - Population, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 9, Ancestry.com, accessed February 19, 2026.

13. "Charles Lamper and Sister-In-Law Ella D. Wilds," Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 3B, Ancestry.com, accessed February 19, 2026.
14. "Widow Elizabeth Johnson and widowed Daughter Daisy Young," Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population, Boston Township, Peninsula Village, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 5B, Ancestry.com, accessed February 19, 2026.
15. Lottie Lee, "Indexed Birth Records – Summit County, Ohio," vol. 4, p. 168, online: p. 44 of 285, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/2144/records/74493?tid=&pid=&queryId=976a4c20-de09-4f86-99c6-4018899013b2&_phsrc=KhL691&_phstart=successSource, accessed December 27, 2025.
16. John Harris and Cora Newman, Summit County, Ohio, Marriage Records, 1840-1980, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/imageviewer/collections/2145/images/4441419_00235?pId=1063442, accessed December 21, 2025.
17. "Ida F. Newman, BIRTH ABT 1874, Virginia, DEATH 10 APRIL 1924, Peninsula, Ohio, USA," Dickerson III Family Tree, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/family-tree/person/tree/1499268/person/652107408/facts, accessed December 22, 2025.
18. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population, Macedonia, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 5A, Ancestry.com, accessed December 21, 2025.
19. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population, Bath Township, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 8A, Ancestry.com, accessed December 21, 2025.
20. Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920–Population, Boston Township, Peninsula Village, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 2B, Ancestry.com, accessed December 21, 2025.
21. "Table 71.-Farms Operated by Negroes (term used in the document)-Number, Acreage, and Value of Land and Buildings, and of Implements and Machinery, by States and Counties: 1910," in Negro Population 1790-1915, p. 663, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/black-population-1790-1915/00480330ch08.pdf, accessed January 11, 2025.
22. "Reports by States with Statistics for Counties North Carolina – Ohio," in 1910 – Report by States: Nebraska to Wyoming, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, United States Department of Agriculture, Census of Agricultural Historical Archive, pp. 336-337, 1910, https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/archive/files/41033898v7ch3.pdf, accessed February 21, 2026.
23. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, Washington, Thirteenth Census of the United States, April 15, 1910, Instructions to Enumerators: Population and Agriculture, Form 8-1964, pp. 21 and 42, Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1910.
24. Online Map Room, Summit Memory, Atlas and Industry Geography of Summit County, 1910, Atlas and Industrial Geography of Summit County - Boston, https://www.summitmemory.org/digital/collection/new-maproom/id/328, accessed February 14, 2024.
25. "Charles Lamper and Daughter Stella Lamper," US Census: 1880, Village of Boston, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio, Page No. 16, Ancestry.com, accessed February 19, 2026.

26. Ruth Noreen Baxter, Oral History Interview, Transcription by granddaughter Estella E. Lab, April 1995, Folder: Communities: Everett: History of Everett, Courtesy of the Peninsula Library & Historical Society (Peninsula, Ohio); also Hawkins Library, HRF-Towns: Everett (Unionville), General file, Courtesy: National Park Service, Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
27. "Farms," https://www.nps.gov/cuva/learn/farms.htm, accessed March 24, 2026.
28. "Welton Farm," https://www.nps.gov/cuva/learn/historyculture/welton-farm.htm, accessed February 15, 2026.
29. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 529, No. 2611, p. 507, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/6A7FBF068774C3E1FD5F7A9DF15196FF5FFBA9A6.
30. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 515, No. 15067, p. 345, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/51238947B5B335B388A876CAC7BBE1A5F5EB5D0B.
31. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 516, No. 17285, p. 342, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/B8DF0DD7D8FB6F799A2FF00120B7231BA7A8BBD6.
32. Tara Bostater, Duncan's Farm, *Green Book Cleveland*, CSU Center for Public History + Digital Humanities, https://greenbookcleveland.org/locations/duncans-farm/, accessed August 8, 2025.
33. "Histories of the Valley," Landscape Framework Development, Engagement #2, Dec 10th 2023, https://www.conservancyforcvnp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Dec10ConceptFile_FA.pdf, accessed February 4, 2024.
34. Summit County Mortgages, Book No. 508, pp. 354-355, from Records Center, Summit County Fiscal Office, obtained February 15, 2024.
35. "Checking History: 1917 through 1951, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio," https://www.bostontownship.org/townchecks.phtml, accessed August 30, 2025.
36. Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920–Population, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet Nos. 9B-10A, Ancestry.com, accessed February 7, 2024.
37. "County Table I.- Farms and Farm Property, 1920, with Selected Items for 1910 and 1900," Reports for States, With Statistics for Counties; and a Summary for the United States and the North, South, and West – Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, in 1920 Census: Volume 6. Agriculture, Reports for States, with Statistics for Counties and a Summary for the United States and the North, South, and West, pp. 298-299, https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1922/dec/vol-06-agriculture.html, accessed February 21, 2026.
38. Summit County Mortgages, Book No. 796, pp. 467-468, from Records Center, Summit County Fiscal Office, obtained August 19, 2025.
39. "$DollarTimes," https://www.dollartimes.com/inflation/inflation.php?, accessed March 24, 2026.
40. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1034, No. 116366, p. 569, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/F4B28E06F5518F33E6F23AE78D19B32170505DEF.
41. Mortgage Deed – with Dower and Insurance Clause, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1050, No. 116367, pp. 595-596, from Records Center, Summit County Fiscal Office, obtained February 14, 2024.
42. "Will Build Plant to Make Homes," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 14, 1920, p. 64.

43. Guy T. Rockwell, "Telling Reports Profits Despite Decline in Sales," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 18, 1925, p. 13.
44. Jim Lanese, "William E. Telling: Dairyman and Businessman," Cleveland Historical, https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/1027, accessed August 13, 2025.
45. "Baker Lab Board Chairman, Harry B. Pratt, 79, Dies," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, December 15, 1956, p. 28.
46. "Harry B. Pratt," Obituary, *Sandusky Register*, December 15, 1956.
47. Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920–Population, Cleveland Heights Village, District 0528, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Sheet No. 11B, Ancestry.com, accessed August 12, 2025.
48. "Charles Dominich Hajek," in the U.S., Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current, Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/60525/records/133341800?tid=&pid=&queryId=eeb00fce-7b35-4791-a4bd-0acf58f56edf&_phsrc=KhL39&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 12, 2025.
49. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1129, No. 161644, p. 595, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/B5470253B6A6D60D9667D9D85B43D8A3239E5AC3.
50. Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920–Population, Cleveland City, Ward 16, District 0339, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Sheet No. 2A, Ancestry.com, accessed March 7, 2024.
51. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1129, No. 161645, p. 596, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/20EF7576C38D3D82CC33B7047EDAE1E52F30410B.
52. Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920–Population, Cleveland City, Ward 25, District 0481, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Sheet No. 4B, Ancestry.com, accessed March 7, 2024.
53. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1129, No. 161646, p. 597, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/351F4C27EB753A38CCAA0FAFD9139BF3739BC574.
54. Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920–Population, Cleveland City, Ward 26, District 0507, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Sheet No. 2B, Ancestry.com, accessed March 7, 2024.
55. Mortgage, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1263, No. 236209, pp. 138-141, from Records Center, Summit County Fiscal Office, obtained February 13, 2024.
56. W. M. Tugman, "City Seizes Shipment of 500 Gallons," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 27, 1926, p. 1.
57. "City of Cleveland, Department of Public Health and Welfare, Division of Health," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, February 7, 1926, p. 3.
58. "*Progress in Cleveland's Milk Supply, 1878-1930* / *Cleveland (Ohio),"* Division of Health, call number 650.3 C59D4, microfilm, Cleveland Public Library, Business, Economics & Labor Department; also available in print in Cleveland Public Library, Science and Technology Department, Call number Ref SF232.O35 C54 1930.
59. Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930 – Population Schedule, Boston Township, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 6A, Ancestry.com, accessed February 7, 2024.
60. Form 15-100, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, Fifteenth Census, Instructions to Enumerators: Population and Agriculture, p. 42, Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1930.
61. "If It's Belle-Vernon, You Know It's Pure," Brochure, 1920, Cleveland Public Library, Call number REF SF 261 .I3 1920ZX.

62. William Lee, personal communication with Becky MacKay, January 7, 2025.
63. "County Table I. Farms, Farm Acreage, and Value, by Color and by Tenure of Operator, 1935 and 1930; Farm Land According to Use, 1934 and 1929, in Agriculture – Ohio, pp. 106-107, https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/archive/files/1935-Ohio-COUNTY_TABLES-1514-Table-01.pdf, accessed February 21, 2026.
64. "12 Blue Mooners Social Club," *Cleveland Call and Post*, July 25, 1935, p. 4.
65. Advertisement, *Cleveland Call & Post*, August 25, 1938, p. 4.
66. "Progressive Link Club," *Cleveland Call and Post*, August 3, 1940, p. 10.
67. "Coon Chase & Picnic," Advertisement, *Cleveland Call and Post*, May 2, 1942, p. 11.
68. *Akron Beacon Journal*, April 7, 1931, p. 6.
69. Randy Bergdorf, Director/Fiscal Officer of Peninsula Library and Historical Society, email to Erich Schnack, et al., August 13, 2021.
70. Sheriff's Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 1745, No. 427433, pp. 453-455, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/394558C0F1DC5C41FD8EC65A212C89087C75DB42.
71. Census of the United States: 1880, Warrensville, Cuyahoga County, Ohio Page No. 13, Ancestry.com, accessed August 22, 2025.
72. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910–Population, Phoenix Precinct, Maricopa County, Arizona, Sheet No. 17B, Ancestry.com, accessed August 22, 2025.
73. Cuyahoga County, Ohio, U.S., Marriage Records and Indexes, 1810-1973 for William C Dixon, 1926-1951, Reel 095 Marriage Records 1934 Oct-1935 Aug, Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/1876/records/1189042?tid=&pid=&queryId=9ae5d9ea-3e4e-4e94-a777-27d0ffe1227d&_phsrc=KhL165&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 25, 2025.
74. Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 – Population Schedule, Peninsula, Summit County, Ohio, Sheet No. 5A, Ancestry.com, accessed February 7, 2024.
75. "County Table I. Farms, Farm Acreage, and Value, by Color of Operator, 1940, 1935, and 1930; Farm Land According to Use, 1939, 1934, and 1929, and Value of Buildings and Implements and Machinery, 1940 and 1930," in Volumes 1 and 2: First, Second, and Third Series State Reports, Census Year 1940, pp. 444-445, United States Department of Agriculture, Census of Agriculture Historical Archive, https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/archive/census_parts/1940-ohio/index.html, accessed February 21, 2026.
76. Randy Bergdorf, Director/Fiscal Officer of Peninsula Library and Historical Society, personal communication with Becky MacKay, August 27, 2025.
77. Frank Robert Duncan, WWII Draft Registration Card, Ancestry.com, accessed August 9, 2025.
78. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Peninsula, Ohio, October 1916, https://sanborn.ohioweblibrary.org/viewer/?id=26857, accessed September 17, 2025.
79. "On the Avenue: Gone is Summer," *Cleveland Call and Post*, September 12, 1942, p. 21.
80. "Ex-Ohioan Dies in Washington, D. C.," *Cleveland Call and Post (1954-1962)*, August 14, 1954, p. 1_C, *ProQuest Historical Newspapers,* https://www.proquest.com/hnpclevelandcallpost/docview/184250458/F92714EC33FD45AEPQ/1?accountid=3355&sourcetype=Newspapers, accessed September 17, 2025.

81. "Frank R Duncan," in the U.S., Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current, https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/60525/records/84586811?tid=&pid=&queryId=dc7e4dc4-64ac-46f0-bd2b-99adf46201c8&_phsrc=KhL167&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 27, 2025.
82. Quit Claim Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 2549, No. 761007, pp. 453-455, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/64DE74BABC9F471C963227339CD02A532DF191A4.
83. Certificate of Transfer of Real Estate, No. 864467, The State of Ohio, Cuyahoga County, in the Probate Court, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 2871, pp. 498-499, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/FF1872BCBEA839AD0435C9AC3C25F53AB48622C9.
84. Ohio Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 2882, No. 874220, pp. 526-530, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/8D4B64A07F5881E65A997F7663F54BF40BBE1B41.
85. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 5890, No., pp. 312-315, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/BC932F4A11C8AC0D700E88CEAB5D004CC663782B.
86. Cecil Relihan, "Barn With a World of Charm," *The Plain Dealer*, September 17, 1961, pp. 272-273.
87. Mary Hirschfeld, "Their Home Is "South of the Border"," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, January 24, 1954, p. 168.
88. "History of Steiner House," https://www.steinerhouse.org/origins-and-organization/history, accessed August 29, 2025.
89. "Steiner House Cooperative: Established 1936," https://www.steinerhouse.org/, accessed August 29, 2025.
90. Peggy Jo Whitman, Caretaker of The Roost, personal communication with Becky MacKay, December 2, 2025.
91. Aerial photographs for 5328 Riverview Road, Peninsula, OH, https://historicaerials.com/, accessed November 22, 2025.
92. William Lee, personal communication with Becky MacKay, March 26, 2026.
93. Report of Survey on Tract 119-46, 5328 Riverview Road, Peninsula, Ohio, Report No. RS 6160-2-044, September 16, 1982, United States Department of the Interior, Hawkins Library, CUVA Resource Management Collection, Series 1: Land Tract Files, 119-46: RM, 1982-2010, Courtesy: National Park Service, Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
94. "Obituary Judith N. Rudolph," https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/search/collections/61843/records/596923279?tid=&pid=&queryId=83809bd0-4a7e-42f2-9c54-1d3ad813374e&_phsrc=KhL84&_phstart=successSource, accessed August 21, 2025.
95. Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930 – Population Schedule, Cleveland Heights City, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Sheet No. 7B, Ancestry.com, accessed August 21, 2025.
96. Quit Claim Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 6182, No. 931391, pp. 791-792, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/F28DBED5F7F7B9790FFE9D905F7883CD5C2B389E.
97. "Alex Rudolph, Professor," Educause, https://members.educause.edu/alexander-l-rudolph, accessed December 2, 2025.
98. "Adam Rudolph: Composer/Percussionist," https://metarecords.com/adam.html#anchorbio, accessed March 7, 2026.

99. Greg Burk, “Adam Rudolph Interview, 1999,” https://www.metaljazz.com/2006/01/adam_rudolph_interview_1999.php, accessed March 7, 2026.
100. Dr. John Dressler, Professor Emeritus, Horn and Musicology, Department of Music, Murray State University, Murray, KY, personal communication with CVNP Volunteer Sally Childs, September 11, 2025.
101. “Charlie “Bird” Parker,” Historic Missourians, https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/charlie-parker/, accessed September 14, 2025.
102. Mike Guy, “Yardbird,” Jazz Anecdotes, Seacoast Jazz Society, https://www.seacoastjazz.org/yardbird.html#:~:text=We%27ll%20never%20know%20when,chicken%20than%20any%20other%20justification, accessed September 14, 2025.
103. “Charlie Parker,” National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/people/charlie-parker.htm, accessed September 14, 2025.
104. “Celebrating Bird: The Triumph of Charlie Parker,” Premiere: 8/17/1989, https://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/charlie-parker-documentary/15474/, accessed September 14, 2025.
105. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 6441, No. 18659, pp. 467-476, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/2369DBE6D7E85E59EFCFBCAD1DA945517B85E96F.
106. US Government Land Tract Map of Boston Township, Hawkins Library, CUVA Resource Management Collection, Series 1, Land Tract Files, 119-46: Title, 1980, Courtesy: National Park Service, Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
107. Warranty Deed, IBAV Summit County Land Records, Book No. 6441, No. 18707, pp. 513-518, https://ibav.summitoh.net/vw/D1AC0D3317F1006D113B9FF047E8A600C600E8A4.
108. “Historic Property Assessment, Cuyahoga Valley National Park,” Building Number HS-332,3,4, 5328 Riverview Road, April 2001, Hawkins Library, CUVA Resource Management Collection, Series 1, Land Tract Files, 119-45: SUPs & ROVs, 2000-2005, Courtesy: National Park Service, Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
109. “PARID: 0600648, USA, ROUTE: BO0003901003001, 5328 Riverview Rd,” Parcel Viewer 4.0, County of Summit, Ohio, Summit County Fiscal Office, https://propertyaccess.summitoh.net/Datalets/Datalet.aspx?UseSearch=no&pin=0600648, accessed November 22, 2025.
110. Online Map Room, Summit Memory, Summit County Map 1856, Boston Township, https://www.summitmemory.org/digital/collection/new-maproom/id/185, accessed January 12, 2026.
111. “Queen Anne Style 1880s - 1910,” National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, https://www.nps.gov/articles/queen-anne-architecture.htm, accessed February 13, 2026.

APPENDIX: Deed Summary for the Duncan Property from 1915-present*

Transfer Date	Grantor (From)	Grantee (To)	Book Volume	Book Page Number(s)	Deed Type	Property Location	Lot (P=part of lot)	Acreage	Consideration	Notes
2/25/1915	Harley C. and Laura Robinson	Anderson M. Laughlin	515	345	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$10,000.00	
4/19/1915	Anderson M. and Lillian J. Laughlin	Dayton A. Ely	516	342	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$1.00	
10/20/1915	Dayton A. and Nora B. Ely	Frank R. and Janie E. Duncan	529	507	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$11,000.00	
8/17/1925	Frank R. and Janie E. Duncan	Harry R. Pratt and Charles D. Hajek	1034	569	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$100.00	
11/27/1926	Harry B. Pratt and Charles D. Hajek	J. P. Pejsa	1129	595	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$10.00 and other valuable considerations	Conveys undivided 1/5 interest
11/27/1926	Harry B. Pratt and Charles D. Hajek	George A. Spear	1129	596	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$10.00 and other valuable considerations	Conveys undivided 1/5 interest
11/27/1926	Harry B. Pratt and Charles D. Hajek	Jas. V. Gentilly	1129	597	Warranty with Release of Dower	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	194.77	$10.00 and other valuable considerations	Conveys undivided 1/5 interest
5/25/1938	Sheriff Walter P. O'Neil	William C. Dixon, Trustee for Edwin H. Corlett	1745	453-455	Sheriff's Deed	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	170.55 more or less	$10,700.00	Parcel along south boundary of P6 was sold by 1931.
12/10/1948	William C. Dixon, Trustee, and Arvilla P. Dixon	Bertha M. Pratt and George A. Spear, Jr.	2549	453-455	Quit Claim	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	170.58	$10.00	
10/8/1951	Bertha M. Pratt, deceased	Harry B. Pratt, executor	2871	498-499	Real Estate Transfer, Probate Court, Cuyahoga County	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	170.58		Conveys undivided 1/2 interest
1/17/1952	Harry B. Pratt and George A. Spear, Jr.	The Graphics Arts Building Company	2882	526-528	Quit Claim	Boston Township with part in Peninsula Village*	P5-6, Tract 2	170.58 more or less	$1.00	*"Part now in Peninsula Village" was handwritten on deed
1/17/1952	William C. Dixon, Trustee, and Arvilla P. Dixon	The Graphics Arts Building Company	2882	528-530	Quit Claim	Boston Township	P5-6, Tract 2	170.58	$10.00	
3/8/1977	Graphics Arts Building Company	Robert and Judith N. Rudolph	5890	312-315	Warranty	Boston Township	P5, P6, Tract 2	170.58	$10.00 and other consideration of $75.000.00	
11/27/1978	Robert and Judith N. Rudolph	Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman	6182	791-792	Quit Claim	5328 Riverview Rd, Peninsula, OH 44264	P6, Tract 2	2.4998	$1 and other considerations of $100,000.00	

https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2317632

APPENDIX: Deed Summary for the Duncan Property from 1915-present, concluded

Transfer Date	Grantor (From)	Grantee (To)	Book Volume	Book Page Number(s)	Deed Type	Property Location	Lot (P=part of lot)	Acreage	Consideration	Notes
10/16/1980	Robert and Judith N. Rudolph	The United States of America	6441	467-476	Warranty	Village of Peninsula and Boston Township	P5-Village Peninsula, P6-Boston, Tract 2	167.80	$498,700.00	Cuy Val Natl Rec Area-Tract 119-46
10/17/1980	Reid and Peggy Jo Whitman	The United States of America	6441	513-518	Warranty	Boston Township	P6, Tract 2	2.50, more or less	$76,384.00	Cuy Val Natl Rec Area-Tract 119-45

*All deeds may be found in the IBAV (Index Book Archive Viewer) for Summit County at https://ibav.summitoh.net/#, and each deed is referenced in the text with a link provided.