

WOMEN MAKE A MARK ON THE COMMUNITY

The primary role of a nineteenth-century woman in Ann Arbor was housewife and mother. Wealthy women, however, could devote time to worthy causes and even to business ventures. **ANNA BOTSFORD BACH**, the daughter of pioneers, married successful businessman Philip Bach in 1876. They entertained frequently in the parlors of their fourteen-room home on South Main Street opposite Packard Street. Mrs. Bach served nine years on the school board and was its first female president. An active member of the Ladies Library Association and the YWCA, she helped organize the Sarah Caswell Angell Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Old Ladies Home Association, later named in her honor.



Anna Botsford Bach

OLIVIA HALL shared the real estate interests of her husband, Israel. Concerned that the county fairgrounds with its horse racing track on Hill Street was a bad influence so close to the neighborhood school, she persuaded the Fair Association in 1890 to move the race track to her land at the back of the old Baldwin farm, past what would become Wells Street. She then subdivided the land between Hill and Israel Hall Avenue (later Cambridge) into blocks of residential lots.



Detail of an 1895 plat map of Ann Arbor (above) shows the subdivision established by Olivia Hall. Left: Israel and Olivia Hall in their Washtenaw Avenue mansion, now the site of U-M Ruthven Museums.



Carriage houses and unsightly driveways were consigned to the rear of the lots, off the service alleys that run through the middle of each block. Mrs. Hall was a staunch defender of the rights of women and a close friend of Susan B. Anthony, with whom she maintained a lengthy correspondence.

Unmarried women faced a less certain future. Many widows ran boarding houses so their children could attend the university. **ELLEN MORSE** and her mother, Hanorah, built and operated eight rooming houses for students in the 1870s and 1880s. She gave her house at State and Kingsley to the Sisters of Mercy for the first St. Joseph's Hospital. When the Sisters built a larger hospital on Ingalls, the house became the first Old Ladies Home.



▲ Ellen Morse, who built 419 North State Street, donated it for the first St. Joseph's Hospital.

Photo by Gregory Fox