

BACH & ABEL, NORTHWEST CORNER, MAIN AND WASHINGTON, 1886



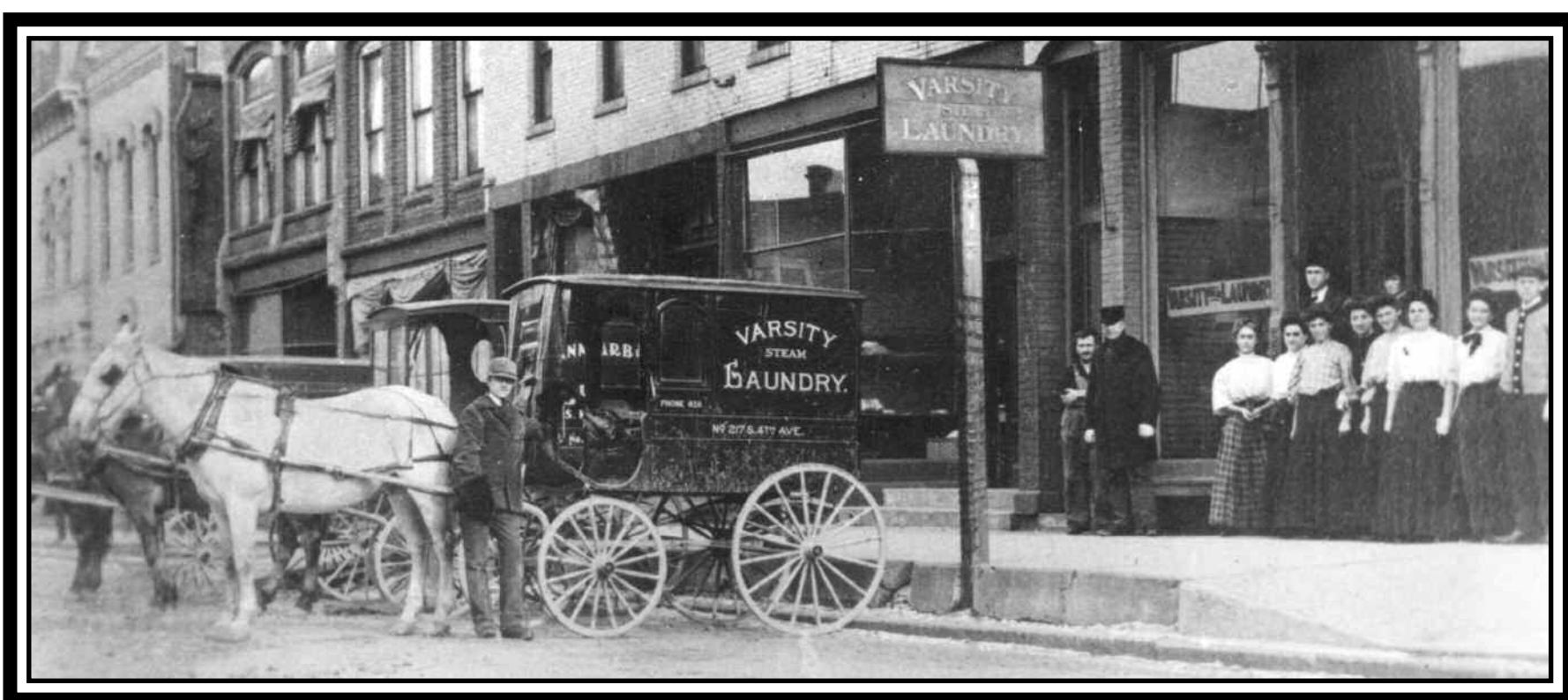
BRUNO ST. JAMES'S
STAFF READY TO
SERVE CUSTOMERS,
CA. 1900.

BERTHA MUEHLIG'S
EMPLOYEES POSED
HER IN FRONT OF A
CHENILLE BEDSPREAD
FOR A BIRTHDAY
PORTRAIT.

DRY GOODS

Dry goods were sold on this corner for over 120 years. In 1867 Philip Bach moved his store to this new business block selling fabric, cloaks, blankets, linens, and notions. Ann Arbor once supported as many as fifteen stores selling dry goods. Before these shops began to carry ready-made items, most clothing, bed sheets, and household linens were made at home. Dressmakers, milliners, and tailors provided custom clothing. When Bruno St. James purchased the store in

1895, he employed Bach's young bookkeeper, Bertha Muehlig. Loved by her customers and employees, she owned and ran the business from 1911 until her death in 1955. Muehlig's specialized in old-fashioned, hard-to-find items like "Tillie Open Bottoms" (women's long underwear). William Goodyear, St. James's former partner, ran another dry goods business nearby. By the 1950s, Goodyear's had expanded next to Muehlig's to become downtown's largest department store.



BEFORE COMMERCIAL LAUNDRIES BEGAN TO ADVERTISE IN THE 1870S, LAUNDRY WAS DONE AT HOME. BY 1888 ANN ARBOR STEAM LAUNDRY WAS THE FIRST TO USE COAL-FIRED POWER. IN 1905 VARSITY LAUNDRY OWNERS H. B. TENNY AND FRED LANTZ POSED IN THEIR DOORWAY AT 215-217 SOUTH FOURTH AVENUE WITH THE WOMEN WHO DID IRONING, MENDING, AND HAND TOUCH-UP WORK. THE COAL MAN WEARS A LONG BLACK COAT.



IN AN ERA WHEN EVERY WOMAN WORE A HAT, MILLINERS WERE ESSENTIAL.