

1

### City Hall

This structure was built after the Civil War as a Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post. In the late 1870's, the west side was expanded to house Williamston's first village fire department; the bell tower was originally constructed to summon local firefighters.

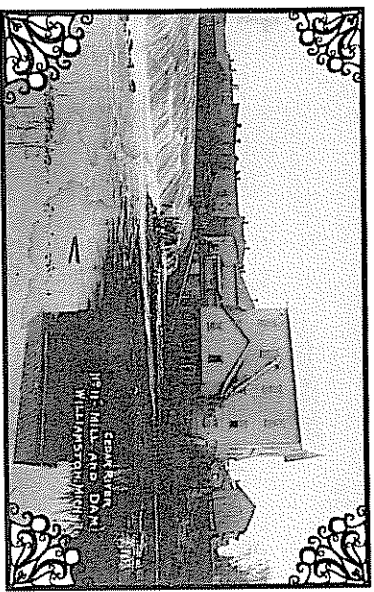
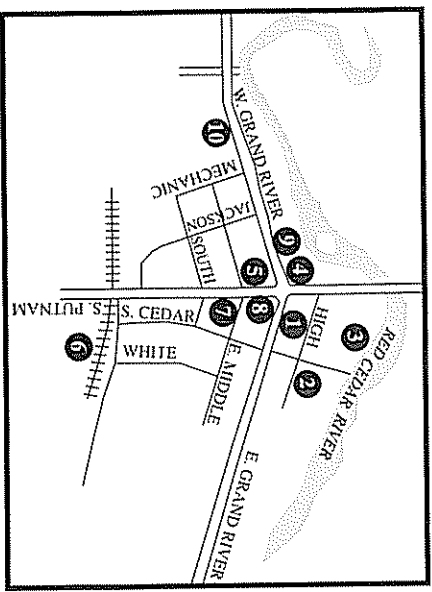
Originally, the GAR post was named after a young Civil War soldier who died while trying to escape capture: Eli P. Alexander, whose statue stands before the city hall today. While trapped with other Williamston soldiers on a train bound for the Confederate camp, Andersonville, Eli tried to escape. The other soldiers heard the shots that killed him.

After the last Civil War veteran in the local GAR post died in 1925, city offices moved into the hall. The building still houses city offices and the city council chambers today.

2

### First Baptist Church

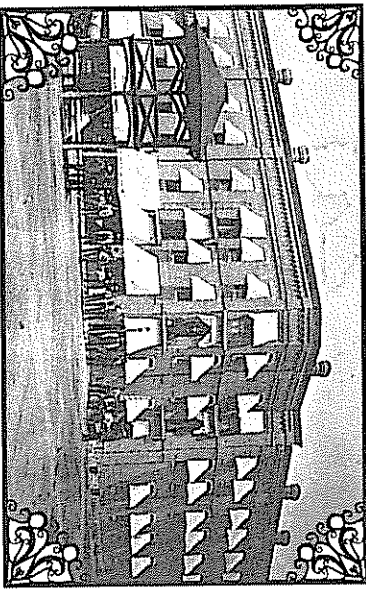
The oldest church in town, the First Baptist Church of Williamston was built in 1868, after members had met together in homes and schools since 1841. The building was in use as a church until 1970, and saw 19 pastors, including the Rev. Harold Reese, who preached from 1928 until the church built its new building in 1970. This building is located on High Street where it is currently used as an apartment building.



3

### Gristmill

The Williams brothers built a dam and sawmill on the Red Cedar River in 1840. In 1842, the gristmill was built, also by the Williams brothers, with a millstone brought from Detroit by wagon. The first gristmill burned down; soon after, another was built in its place. Both mills changed ownership many times before they closed permanently. The original millstone is now displayed in McCormick Park.



4

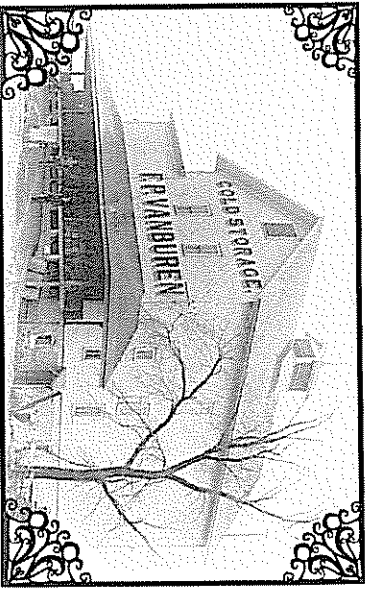
### Andrews Hotel

The original hotel on this site was constructed in 1852 as the Lombard House. After going through a series of owners, it was purchased by Charles Andrews, who razed it in 1887 and erected the building which stands today. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the hotels and taverns of Williamston served travelers between Lansing and Detroit and hosted frequent parties. Today the same building houses Wilkin's Electronics and remains a landmark of Historic Williamston.

5

### Wygant Butcher Shop

The shop currently known as Lions Den Antiques was erected in the 1880's as the Williamston State Bank. The bank occupied this location until it went under during the Depression. The Wygant family bought the bank in the 1950's and converted it into a butcher shop. The Williamston Bologna produced at the Wygant Butcher Shop was well-known throughout the mid-Michigan area. The butcher shop shut down in the 1960's, and the recipe for bologna died with Gregory Wygant in 1990.



6

### Ice House

F. P. VanBuren Cold Storage began handling eggs in 1882. Within a few years, VanBuren was buying and selling eggs and live and dressed poultry: by 1890, he handled 400,000 dozen eggs and 500,000 pounds of poultry a year, making him the largest buyer of eggs and poultry in Central Michigan. In 1895, Van Buren erected a building measuring 56 by 60 feet, but this structure burned in 1901. Immediately, the company rebuilt a larger ice house, which is the structure standing at this location, just south of the railroad tracks, a full century later.

The building boasts 18-inch-thick walls, once lined with hair paper and felt. Originally, Van Buren cut blocks of ice from the Red Cedar River during the winter and dragged it on sleds to the ice house. There it was stored against the inner walls, covered with straw and sawdust. The ice would last all summer and through the fall.