

A Historical Caro Home

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The home at 219 N. Almer St. in Caro has served as the residence of exceptional people.

In researching the history of this beautiful property, I was amazed by the excellent judgment of those who made this location their home.

Dr. R. M. Olin

Dr. Richard Milo Olin was the early owner of the property before it was sold in 1916 to William J. Moore the renowned telephone mogul.

Dr. Olin was born in Perry, New York, in 1874.

After growing a practice in Caro, Michigan, Dr. Olin left Caro and Tuscola County and removed to Lansing, Michigan, where he was appointed as the Secretary of the State Board of Health in 1917.

The position was one of the most important positions in the State of Michigan at that time.

The name Olin Health Center should ring a bell to those who have attended Michigan State University.

Dr. Olin was the first full time physician at Michigan State University.

In 1925 Dr. Olin was hired as the Director of Health Services and held that position until his death in 1938.

The Olin Health Center was built in remembrance of Dr. Olin in 1939.

Much became of his country doctor—who once lived at 219 N. Almer Street in Caro.

W. J. Moore

When William J. Moore purchased the property in 1916, it did not look as it does today. However although W. J. Moore would reworked the property, it was still even in 1916 one of the best homes in Caro, Michigan.

The property even then had a large ground on which there was abundant shade, beautiful stables, and room for the storage of carriages and several automobiles.

The house was finished in hard wood and had a hardwood floor.

It also had hot water heating and ample plumbing.

The place offered all the greatest comforts then in a home that were amazingly refined for that time in our history.

After purchasing the property in 1916, W. J. Moore trimmed the trees, painted the buildings and garage, and installed a heating system in the garage.

He also put in a tennis court at the north end of the property.

W. J. Moore soon moved in fully-grown trees, many more shrubs, and built a private swimming pool that was the talk of the town.

New stone work was applied to the exteriors by local mason Claude Putnam who was paid in part with a telephone.

Eventually the property had a large ten car garage with dressing rooms for bathers who would swim in the pool.

There were three driveways, a mock model on the garage of the first car ever driven in Tuscola County, and a club room over the garage big enough in which to play basketball.

One of W. J. Moore's many interests was old automobiles.

He took pride in his 1914 Cadillac touring car.

Being a telephone entrepreneur, he also had twenty telephones in his home.

W. J. Moore loved telephones so much that he put one in every room.

The house also had an ample and spacious attic.



W. J. Moore invented ingenious door-openers and burglar alarms for his house and installed a mechanical trapeze to convey him and drop him from his second-floor bedroom into the swimming pool.

W. J. Moore was an early owner of automobiles.

He had a De Dion Motorette shipped to him from France in 1899.

It was the first car in Michigan.

A Cadillac was custom-made for him in 1914, which he outfitted with what he claimed was the world's first auto-telephone.

An incurable inventor, W. J. Moore ran Moore Telephone Company in the rural Thumb of Michigan for nearly sixty years.

W. J. Moore was born in 1870 in Brantford, Canada, and in 1955 died in Caro, Michigan. He was born in the same town that telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell was born.

W. J. Moore was also a cousin of telephone co-inventor Elisha Gray who founded Western Electric.

W. J. Moore was a master of gadgets.

In 1892 W. J. Moore began Moore Telephone and Cabinet Manufacturing Company in Caro, Michigan, which provided not only telephones but also provided phone services to rural customers.

Hotels and rural stores were the early users, but demand for home services grew so quickly that W. J. Moore's company also grew exponentially.

Many of Bell Systems' patents on telephone technology ran out in 1894.

The Moore Telephone Company sprang up just before that date in Caro, Michigan.

Bell Systems held patents on many facets of phone technology, but W. J. Moore was able to avoid patent infringement by inventing his own telephone.

The Moore Telephone Company was very successful and provided services to Caro and several neighboring counties for decades with little or no competition.

However, W. J. Moore later began to run his company with less attentiveness and increased his devotion to his gadgets.

W. J. Moore's neglectful management of the company eventually resulted in his dismissal in 1948 nearly 60 years after he started the business.

The Moore Telephone Company was reorganized under Andrew Moore who was W. J. Moore's son.

Henceforth W. J. Moore spent most of his time working on his gadgets.

The property at 219 N. Almer Street, Caro, Michigan, was later owned for many years by the local entrepreneurs Charles and Dorcas Vaughan.