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Local History Sketches

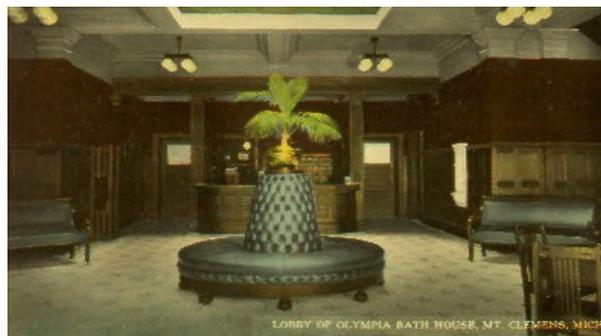
The Olympia Hotel and Bath House

by Nelly D. Longstaff

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One of the handsomest bath houses to be built in Mount Clemens opened its doors on June 1, 1903. Called the Olympia and located on Cass Avenue next to the **Fenton Hotel**, it was of enameled white brick with stately white columns. **Charles H. Parsons** and **Thomas B. Matthews** were the proprietors. In February, 1910, the Olympia Hotel Company was capitalized for the purpose of purchasing the Hotel Fenton. The hotel was completely renovated and a new brown brick front added. A Japanese tea room was a feature mentioned in the 1914 *Cutter's Guide*.



The lobby of the Olympia in a postcard view

In 1925, the **Elkin** family (father **Samuel**, sons **Max** and **Joseph**) purchased the Olympia. Samuel Elkin had come to Mount Clemens in a wheelchair about 1907; he was yet another visitor who remained to go into business. He began with a small boarding house on Church Street and later ran the **Elkin Hotel** at 37 South Gratiot Avenue. He added a third story to that building and also bought the nearby **Rudolph Hotel**. The Rudolph was originally called the **New National Hotel** and was built in 1900 by **M. Schaaf**. Later it was operated by **Julius Lichenstein** and **Maurice Sanft**, two of Mount Clemens's early Jewish citizens, who renamed it.

The Olympia Hotel and Bath House were purchased by **Samuel Kraemer** about 1936. Prior to this, he owned establishments at 25 South Avenue and 89 Cass Avenue and had been associated with **Leon Mandell** at the Elkin Hotel after the Elkins left. The Kraemer family operated the Olympia until 1955, when it was purchased by the city of Mount Clemens and torn down to make a parking lot.

For more information about the Olympia Hotel and Bath House, we recommend:

- Vincent, Maury. "Wrecking Crews Beat Out Dirge For Once Ornate Olympia Hotel," *Mount Clemens Monitor-Leader*, March 16, 1955, p.1.
- "Samuel Elkin, Hotel Owner, Passes Away," *Mount Clemens Daily Leader*, September 14, 1929, p.1, col.1.
- "Hospitality Keynote of Olympia Hotel," in *Pageant of Progress*. Mount Clemens, Mich. : Nellis Newspapers, [1928], sec.4, p.9.
- "Olympia Hotel is Sold to Sam and Max Elkin," *Mount Clemens Daily Leader*, March 21, 1925, p.1, col.8.
- "Matthews Now Sole Owner of Olympia Hotel," *Mount Clemens Daily Leader*, April 21, 1924, p.1, col.7.
- "The Olympia Hotel: This Will be the Name of the Rebuilt Fenton House, Now Owned by Olympia Bath Company," *Mount Clemens Monitor*, December 24, 1909, p.1, col.3.