

Letter to the Editor

To Whom It May Concern:

In 1898, our grandfather, Turney Keller, opened the "Lunchroom" at 5529 Lake Avenue, which is now the Hyde Park Historical Society. (Ed. note: Lake Avenue was renamed Lake Park Avenue on April 14, 1913.) With the help of his two sons, Hosey (Harvey) and Charles Keller, the restaurant was continuously in operation until 1952. (Ed. note: One of the interviewees for the earlier articles thought that the restaurant had changed hands in 1948.)

Our grandfather with the help of his sons, leased the building for the entire time. We have no idea how much money was involved. He did have an accident on a trolley losing one arm, not two legs. (Ed. note: One of our correspondents in our earlier article had speculated that the IC had leased the building to Mr. Keller at no cost because he had lost two legs in a railroad accident.)

Before 1898, the building was used as a warming house for trolley personnel. The men gathered around the old pot belly stove and, we're sure, told some great stories. The notion that some food could be served came to our grandfather in 1898.

When our grandfather died in 1922, the boys, known as the Keller Brothers, took over the "Lunchroom." Their wives, Louetta and Marsha, also worked in the restaurant.

At the crack of dawn, breakfast was served. We can still remember the many aromas of home cooking. Bacon and eggs and oatmeal in the morning and if you looked at the wall one could see the specials for lunch, such as vegetable soup and meat loaf. There were no printed menus. The clientele was an integrated mixture of working males in Hyde Park. The counter was in two sections seating about twelve.

Our families spent many long hours making the "Lunchroom" very successful. The information above is correct according to documented papers from this time period. We have included various pictures for a visual remembrance of the times.

Sincerely,
Mary Bell Keller Johnson and Judy Keller Levantino

Ms. Johnson, the daughter of Harvey Keller, in a phone interview, told us that the lunch room was closed evenings and on Sundays. She herself was born at her family's residence on the 54th block of Harper Avenue. Turney's family was Christian Scientist and probably was a member of the 10th Church of Christ Scientist at 57th and Blackstone, now the vacant St. Stephen's Church. Ms. Levantino, her cousin, is the daughter of Charles Keller. —S.A.T.



**PROPRIETORS OF THE "LUNCH ROOM"
AT 5529 S. LAKE PARK AVENUE**

Postcard view c.1915 from the Keller family collection. From left: Turney Keller and his two sons Charles, and Hosey (Harvey), the eldest of the two. Note the wooden plank sidewalk in front of the building. Turney lost his left arm in a trolley accident. Members of the family are buried in Oakwoods Cemetery.