PROJECT SCROLL RESEARCH NOTE 2026-43

The Pioneer Log Cabin's first season in print, 1923: Log Hauling Day, the name "Cass County Historical society," Harmon's souvenir song, the grand opening of 17 October and the cabin's own song

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SUMMARY

The Pioneer Log Cabin at Cassopolis, Michigan, is usually described from the cabin's own papers, compiled in 2012: logs hauled on 4 April 1923, the cabin raised on 23 May, dedicated on Pioneer Day, 20 June 1923, and opened as a museum on 18 June 1924. Five records of 1923 fill in that first season. A Cassopolis report of 6 April says that about eighty farmers came to town "Thursday" (5 April, not the Wednesday announced) with "auto trucks, teams and tractors," paraded behind two bands and took logs of six kinds of wood to the fair grounds, "for the cabin to be erected by the Cass County Historical society": the earliest use of that short name yet found. On 16 June the Society's secretary, Charles O. Harmon, copyrighted his song "On the Winding Christianna" as a "special souvenir ed.," four days before the dedication. In September a country column announced "the grand opening day for the completed log cabin" on Wednesday, 17 October 1923, "and all the pioneer relics." And the program of "commemoration services for the Log Cabin memorial," held at the cabin on Sunday, 28 October 1923, included a song, "Old Log Cabin," with "words by Jay C. Northrup," the giver of log No. 6.

THE RECORD

1. **"Pioneer picnic" item, Dowagiac, 14 February, *Monroe Evening News*, 14 February 1923, p. 4**

> *"A log cabin will be erected on the fair grounds, near Cassopolis, by the society this spring. Every community in the county will be asked to contribute a log."*

Digital Michigan Newspapers, Central Michigan University · See the record (https://digmichnews.cmich.edu/)

2. **"80 Farmers Assist Cass Log Rolling," Cassopolis, 6 April, *South Bend News-Times*, 7 April 1923, p. 3**

> *"In response to a call for logs for the cabin to be erected by the Cass County Historical society 80 farmers came to town Thursday with auto trucks, teams and tractors. They paraded through the streets behind two bands. The logs of ash, maple, oak, sycamore, whitewood and birch were taken to the fair grounds."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn87055779/1923-04-07/ed-1/?sp=3)

3. **Marcia Gaskin, comp., *1923 Pioneer Log Cabin Museum Searchable Donor List* (Cassopolis, 2012), unpaginated: Harmon's letter to the log donors**

> *"Log Hauling Day, Wednesday, April 4th, 1923"; and "The Log Cabin was dedicated on Pioneer Day, June 20, 1923."*

Pioneer Log Cabin Museum, Cassopolis; scan at the Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/pioneer_log_cabin_museum_text_searchable1a)

4. ***Catalog of Copyright Entries*, part 3, Musical Compositions, new series, vol. 18 (Washington, 1923), entry 11291**

> *"ON THE WINDING CHRISTIANNA; words and music by C. O. Harmon ... Special souvenir ed. © June 16, 1923; 2c. June 18; E 564885; Chas. O. Harmon, Cassopolis, Mich."*

Library of Congress, Copyright Office; scan at the Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/catalogofcopy183libr)

5. **Country news column, *South Bend News-Times*, 21 September 1923, p. 25**

> *"Wednesday, October 17, is the grand opening day for the completed log cabin in Cassopolis, and all the pioneer relics."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn87055779/1923-09-21/ed-1/?sp=25)

6. **"Commemoration Services for Cass Co. Log Cabin," Cassopolis, 23 October, *South Bend News-Times*, 24 October 1923, p. 32**

> *"Commemoration services for the Log Cabin memorial in Cass county will be held here at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon. ... The cabin will be open all day and the following program will be given: ... Song. 'Old Log Cabin,' words by Jay C. Northrup."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn87055779/1923-10-24/ed-1/?sp=32)

7. **Gaskin, ibid., donor list, log No. 6**

> *"Jay C. Northrop," sixth on the numbered list of log givers.*

Pioneer Log Cabin Museum, Cassopolis; scan at the Internet Archive · See the record (https://archive.org/details/pioneer_log_cabin_museum_text_searchable1a)

WHAT IT CHANGES

The cabin's first season gains four dated events between the logs and the museum: a Log Hauling Day on Thursday, 5 April, with numbers, vehicles and the kinds of wood; a souvenir song copyrighted for the dedication; a grand opening of the completed cabin on 17 October 1923; and a commemoration service on 28 October with a song of its own, written by one of the log givers. The short name "Cass County Historical society" is carried back from 1927 to April 1923, the month the cabin's logs came in.

LIMITS

The Log Hauling Day report gives “80 farmers” and “Thursday”; the cabin’s own papers give Wednesday, 4 April, the day announced. Neither 1923 newspaper item says how the grand opening or the commemoration went. The words and the tune of “Old Log Cabin” were not printed. The copyright entry records a souvenir edition of Harmon’s song but does not connect it with the cabin in words; the link is the date. The newspaper texts are read from the Library of Congress’s OCR and checked against the page images’ wording; the 24 October OCR reads “Jay O.” for “Jay C.”

WHAT WE SEARCHED BEFORE CALLING IT NEW

The cabin’s booklet of 2012 (Gaskin); the Cass County Historical Society’s and the cabin museum’s pages; Wikipedia; articles of 2003–2013 in the *Leader* (Dowagiac); Glover (1906) and Claspy (1970); *Michigan History*, 1923–1931; the *Catalog of Copyright Entries* for 1921–1923; Chronicling America for Cassopolis and the cabin, 1923–1924; web searches for the song titles and the society’s name. None reports the Log Hauling Day numbers, the October opening or the commemoration program, or names the cabin’s song.

Our standard for calling a finding new is set out in How we research (projectscroll.com/how-we-research/), and how we weigh each kind of record in Scrollsigns (projectscroll.com/scrollsigns/).

“New” means new to print as far as we can tell. If you know of an earlier publication, tell us and we will credit it here and raise the note’s version.

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here is drawn from the published and public records cited below; nothing on this page is a statement about either organization's present management, finances or conduct. This page is not connected with the historical societies of the same name in other states. People active today are named only as they appear in published reports and public records, and any help from individual members or volunteers is credited to them personally, not as an endorsement by either organization.

WORKS CITED

Earlier work, catalogues and databases named in this note, besides the records quoted above.

1. Michael Urbanski, "The cabin a county built," *Project Scroll* (2026), Part 2 of the series on the Cass County Pioneer Society. https://projectscroll.com/news/the-cabin-a-county-built/
2. Michael Urbanski, "The cabin that opened twice," *Project Scroll* (2026). https://projectscroll.com/news/the-cabin-that-opened-twice/
3. Michael Urbanski, "Old Log Cabin, the song," *Project Scroll* (2026). https://projectscroll.com/news/old-log-cabin-the-song/

THE FULL STORY

The finding is set out in context, with the rest of its sources, in The cabin a county built (projectscroll.com/news/the-cabin-a-county-built/). In the discoveries register:

- `cabin-fairgrounds-plan` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#cabin-fairgrounds-plan)
- `log-hauling-report-1923` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#log-hauling-report-1923)
- `harmon-souvenir-song` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#harmon-souvenir-song)

HOW TO CITE THIS NOTE

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