

Historical Marker - L2054 - Founding of Marion / Marion Millpond and Dam (Marker ID#:L2054)



Front - Title/Description

Founding of Marion

Irish millwright Christopher Clark and his Canadian wife, Marion Hixon Clark, settled here in 1875 after purchasing 240 acres of virgin forest from the Ryerson, Hills and Company lumbering firm. They opened a general store and in 1878 began operating the sawmill that gave the settlement its original name, "Clark's Mill." The Ann Arbor Railroad, built through Marion in 1887 to carry lumber products from the mills to outside markets, also brought more people to the area. As the land was cleared of trees, it was purchased by farmers. Other businesses came to serve the steadily growing population, and in 1889 the one time lumber camp became the village of Marion, named for Mrs. Clark.

Significant Date:

Industry and Invention (1875-1915)

Registry Year: 1999 **Erected Date:** 1999

Marker Location

Address: M-66

City: Marion

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Osceola

Township: Marion

Lat: 44.10352700 / **Long:** -85.14793200

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Marion Millpond and Dam

This mill pond formed in 1878 when Christopher Clark built a dam across the Middle Branch River to power a saw, planing and lathe mill. Clark was drawn to the area by old growth stands of pine and hardwood. His business transformed the wilderness settlement into a prosperous community. For more than thirty years Clark's mill produced siding, shingles, flooring, moldings, and barrels. Fire destroyed the mill in 1909 as the lumbering era was drawing to a close. In 1911 Marion Clark donated the land surrounding the dam to the village for use as a park. The property has long served as a recreation center and wildlife habitat. The dam was replaced in 1930.