

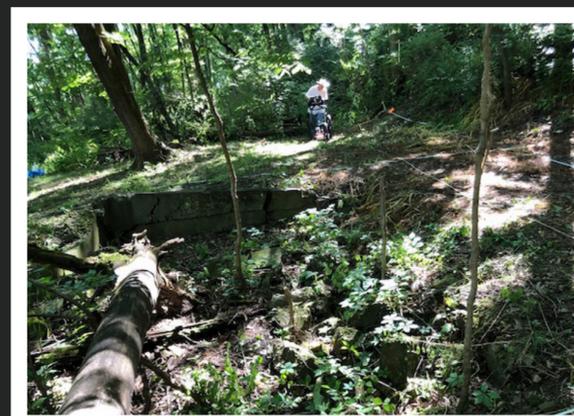
## #7. Shell Expert's Cottage and Garage

No description of the Shell Expert's Cottage has been identified, but a 1916 map suggests this cottage was identical to the Foreman's Cottage. This cottage was initially referred to as the Scientific Assistant's Cottage, but by 1930 (if not earlier) annual reports refer to this residence as the "shell expert's house." The house was abandoned in the early 1930s and razed in 1935. The first "clam/shell expert" at the station was John Boepple (1910-1911), founder of the pearl button industry in Muscatine in 1891. Boepple died in 1912 from a blood infection he developed after stepping on a mussel while conducting research in the Wabash River in the fall of 1911. John B. Southall, a native of Iowa, was the next "shell expert," and first occupant of the cottage. Southall, a US Bureau of Fisheries employee, was transferred to Fairport in 1912 and supervised mussel surveys in the Upper Mississippi and Upper Missouri rivers until at least 1925. In the late 1920s Southall was transferred to other stations where he supervised pond construction. In 1930, he returned to Fairport to oversee new pond construction, particularly for largemouth bass.

An archaeological survey recorded several undocumented concrete features in the vicinity of the cottage: a concrete foundation for a two-car garage assigned to the Superintendent's Cottage; two concrete features; and a concrete culvert, sidewalk, and steps that provided access to the Lower Road. The larger of the two foundations may be part of the basement foundation. Three feet east of the basement foundation is a small concrete platform which may be part of the house foundation.



Overview of garage foundation next to Shell Expert's Cottage in 2020, facing northeast.



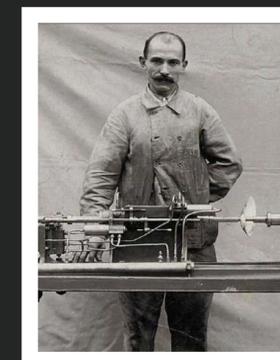
Overview of basement foundation within the Shell Expert's Cottage in 2020, facing west.



Overview of basement foundation within the Shell Expert's Cottage in 2021, facing west.



Overview of garage assigned to Superintendent's Cottage in 1941, facing north.



John Boepple, founder of the pearl button industry.



SCAN ME

