In the mid-1800s, Irish immigrant Jeramiah Kilmartin, his parents Dennis and Johanna, and his brother Dennis moved from Ionia, Michigan, to Caledonia Township. There, Jeramiah met and married Mary Troy. On May 1, 1851, he purchased 80 acres of land nestled between a Native-American settlement on Kraft Lake and the Thornapple River. He built a farmhouse on the property, as well as a series of buildings, which he used to raise livestock and harvest crops.

Jeramiah and Mary raised five children—Edmund, Katie, Agnes, Josephine, and Theresa—on the farm. When Jeramiah’s health began to fail, his son Edmund worked to help provide for the family and only attended school intermittently. It took Edmund six additional years, but he graduated high school and later obtained a degree in architecture and engineering. In 1896, Edmund designed and built a new home for the family. Though he had to send out for some materials for the home’s siding, he used trees hewn from the property for a majority of the construction.

While delivering hay to Grand Rapids, Edmund met a young nurse, Helen Young, whom he later married. When they moved back to the farm, Helen assisted the local doctor, and she and her husband milked cattle and raised Percheron draft horses. They were the first in the area to own a new John Deere B tractor, add indoor plumbing to their home, and own a telephone. They had three sons: Edmund Jr. (Ed), Joseph, and Bernard. Ed built a home across the street from his parents and assisted with the farming operation.

After Helen passed away in 1992, Ed’s middle son, Michael, and his family moved into the home. Upon moving in, they updated the farmhouse and made improvements to the outer buildings. The family continues to use the land to grow soybeans and hay and raise chickens, cows, pigs, and horses.