PIONEER HOMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

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—BY—

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PIONEER HOMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

Prior to 1802 there was not a white inhabitant within the bounds of Chautauqua county, with the exception of one Amos Sottle, who about 1796 had located in a wigwam, with an Indian woman as his housekeeper, at the mouth of Cattaraugus creek, in the present town of Hanover. Eleazer Flagg, Esq., a native of Rutland county, Vermont, and late of the town of Stockton, informed the writer that in June, 1798, he was in the employ of Rufus L. Reed in transporting goods and provisions in bateaux, from Oswego over the lakes by way of Niagara river and around the falls to Presque Isle (Erie) where he had established a trading post. In the month of the following August, in company of three other young men, they returned to the East along the shore of lake Erie, halting at the mouth of Cattaraugus creek to recruit one of their number who had become enfeebled. At this place three or four acres had been cleared and planted to corn, beans, potatoes, pumpkins, squashes and melons. We were told by the late James Bemus that when his father settled at Bemus Point in April, 1806, that more than fifty acres along the creek, embracing also the site of the present cemetery and the woodland adjoining, showed unmistakable marks of previous cultivation. The more elevated position had been abandoned and had grown up to brush, with here and there a large tree. In the valley were two fields of about ten acres each, now overgrown with grass, from which they cut several tons of hay the first season. The lower field was at the Point and mostly east of the lake road, the other a half mile up the creek. In both of these fields were found potatoes, of the Lady finger variety, left there by the Indians. Mr. Samuel Griffith, late of Ellery, is authority for saying that when his father settled at Griffith's Point in March, 1806, about four acres of this interval was covered with a thick growth of oak, chestnut, soft maple and hickory, not any tree more than six inches in diameter, and corn hills were visible over the entire tract. Another field of the same character was found at the mouth of the Stillwater creek, by the early settlers; also another, about one acre, in the town of Stockton at the foot of Bear Lake With these exceptions, at this early date, the territory embraced within the limits of Chautauqua county was a dense forest owned by the Holland Land Company. The survey into lots, begun in 1805, was not completed till 1808. Access to the county from the east was usually along the shore or beach of lake Erie most of the way from Buffalo to Silver Creek. The early settlers from the south or Pennsylvania came chiefly via the Allegany river, the Conewango creek and its tributaries. In July, 1749, an expedition under command of De Celeron, consisting of 270 persons, officers and privates in the interest of the French government, cut a road from the mouth of Chautauqua creek to Chautauqua lake. This was known by the early settlers as the Portage road, and

for several years was the main highway from Cross Roads to the interior of the county. Hon. William Peacock informed me that in the early summer of 1779 he came over this road in company with a Buffalo Indian. Although opened nearly forty years before it was still a well beaten track and passable for teams, kept so undoubtedly by the Indians in their repeated visits and traffic with their brethren in the south and east. In the summer of 1808 William Bemus opened a road for the passage of ox sleds from his place to the foot of Bear lake in the town of Stockton. The people in the north part of the county cut the road the remainder of the distance to Canadaway, now Fredonia. The Bemus end was soon abandoned, the other is still in use. About the same time a road was opened from Sugar Grove, Pa., to Ashville, on Chautauqua lake. In the early summer of 1810 Maj Samuel Sinclair, an officer in the revolutionary war, opened a road from Canadaway to Mill Creek, and made the first settlement in what is now the flourishing village of Sinclairville.

In November, 1810, the Holland Land Company had established a land office at the head of Chautauqua lake with William Peacock as their agent. In order to facilitate the settlement of the county the company began, in the summer of 1811, opening a highway east from the head of Chautauqua lake to the Genesee river. The job was not completed till 1815 and was known as the Holland Purchase road. The same year (1811) another road was opened by this company running due north from Tinkertown (Dewittville) and passing a little north of Bear lake to Canadaway and known as the Chautauqua road.

It seems a well established fact that Col. James McMahon, who settled near the village of Westfield in 1802, was the first *bona fide* settler in the county of Chautauqua. Five poplar trees, sixty rods northeast of the boatlanding at Mayville, marks the place of the first settlement on Chautauqua lake (as also the southerly end of the Portage road), made by Alexander McIntyre, the celebrated Indian doctor, in the spring of 1803. A sketch of this man may be of interest to the public and if desired will be given at some time in the future. The usual price of wild lands was $2.50 per acre. Very few of the early settlers were able to pay in advance for their land, hence it was a general practice to take an article usually running ten years, with annual interest, paying down $10 or less on a hundred acres. Very many would take but fifty acres, incurring a smaller debt, and thinking that more could be obtained if they succeeded in paying for this amount. Taking the road from Sinclairville to Mayville not more than one in forty of the first settlers, who took articles of their lands, ever succeeded in paying for the same without help from abroad, by heirship or otherwise. All failed who took but fifty acres; those who took 200 acres or more sometimes would be able to secure 100 by selling the remainder in advance of the purchase price. Why this was so will appear as we advance and examine in detail the hardships and obstructions to be overcome in subduing the majestic forest and supplying the bare necessities of the increasing family. At the close of 1808 most of the lands along the main road, on the shore of lake Erie, in this county and around Chautauqua lake had been taken and occupied by actual settlers.

Let us now examine the obstacles to be bravely met by these pioneers, who sought to establish homes for themselves in the wilderness of Chautauqua.

Take for example Jeremiah Griffith who settled at Griffith Point in April, 1806. His son, Samuel, states that he was, at that time 15 years of age. The family consisted of his father and mother and six children, the youngest a babe of six months. They arrived at their destination, at sundown, on Saturday. Hastily erecting a temporary shelter with crotches, poles and boughs and kindling a fire in front, they made themselves comfortable till the following Monday. Early in the morning Mr. G. and the boys were busy with their axes

in cutting the second growth trees from the Indian fields around their wigwams, and soon had a cabin 16x20 covered with elm bark, fastened in place with poles and withes, (afterwards covered with pine shingles three feet in length.) The floor was of split chestnut logs, and the door was made of the same material; the fire place was a notch in the floor at one end of the cabin, made upon the bare earth with stones rudely piled against the wall of their dwelling to protect it from the fire, with split sticks laid up in cob-house fashion from the chamber floor upwards, being about six feet square at the base and tapering to three feet at the top, the whole wall covered inside and out with mud plaster. A lug pole crossed the chimney at the upper floor from which dangled a chain with several loose hooks, on which the good house wife hung her pots and kettles in cooking for the meals of the family. The wood used for the fire-place in the early pioneer, was usually about six feet in length. A huge back log often two feet in diameter was brought in on rollers and placed against the back of the chimney; on the top of this, a back stick, about half the size of the former; in front, a fire stick with each end resting upon a couple of holders, a foot in diameter, the middle being all filled up with smaller wood, making, when in full blaze, the most cheerful family fireside the world has ever known Around this fire sat the family on rude benches with perhaps a few splint bottom chairs for the parents and older portion thereof. This stick chimney was far from being fire-proof, and to protect it, a huge squirt gun in a bucket of water stood in the corner, which, with the watchful eyes of the family, was usually an ample protective. Lucifer or friction matches were unknown in those days to the pioneer, and the loss of fire was sometimes quite a calamity when neighbors were many miles away. But nearly all would contrive to own a flint lock gun and amunition. With these, and a little tow or spunk was found a sure and ample remedy. The gun was also the chief reliance in supplying the family with meat, chiefly from the deer that abounded throughout the forests of the county. During the winter months venison hams could be seen in nearly every cabin suspended on wooden pins to dry around the huge chimney or from the beams overhead. No better dried meats ever graced the table of kings, and when fresh was equal to the best domesticated animals. The pioneers around Chautauqua lake also relied much for animal food on the fish which they captured in any desired quantity with hooks or in their canoes by night with pine torches and spears. Speckled trout and horned dace were also found in large quantities in the numerous spring brooks which at that time were constantly flowing the year round. With the disappearance of the forest full three-fourths of these streams are dry nearly one-third of the year, and their shiney and sprightly inhabitants are seen no more. It is also doubtful if a single wild deer may now be found, even in the most extensive woodlands of the county. Chautauqua lake was often called the "meat barrel" of the pioneer who settled on or near its shores. It was not uncommon for a couple of men to capture 200 pounds or more of pickerel or bass in a single night.

A great majority of the early settlers to this county, with families, came with ox teams, on wooden shod sleds. One or two cows and a few sheep followed behind driven by the boys. If in the winter, they subsisted upon browse, the best of which was elm, basswood and maple tree tops, on which they would thrive as on the best of hay If in summer or in spring the herbage in the woodlands furnished abundant pasturage. One who has never seen our forest of fifty years ago can hardly conceive of the beauty and magnificence of the scene presented during the months of April, May and June. They were everywhere carpeted with ferns, leeks and a great variety of wild flowers up to the knees or hips, and along the intervals and water courses nettles and other wild herbage often were higher than a man's head

forming an almost impassible barrier. The patches of native woodland which now remain are no samples of the past when we search for herbage and wild flowers. The early pasturage has exterminated all except the most hardy, and the poisonous plants rejected by the cattle For more than thirty years after the first settlements many portions of the county depended almost entirely upon the woodlands for their pasturage and the tinkle of the cow bell was heard at all points of the compass. The writer has a vivid recollection, in his boyhood days, of tracing times without number the well chosen trail or paths of the cows and mounting a log to listen to the familiar note of our own bell. Whenever foiled in our search or misled by other bells of similar tone it was customary among all the boys to capture, if possible, an insect with legs an inch long, and holding him by one leg say to him, "Gran'ther, Gran'ther Gray Beard, tell me which way the cows are or I'll kill you." Of course he would throw out his spare legs to escape, but we always gladly received the information he was supposed to give and with renewed courage would pursue the search. The milk and butter was usually highly tinctured with leeks, and to make them passable as an article of food an onion, leek, or bunch of sives was placed beside the plate of each one at the table of which they took an occasional taste. The courageous and provident pioneer, having sheltered his family in a rude cabin, the next step was to clear away a patch and plant it to corn and potatoes, reserving small portions here and there, where the log heaps had been burned, for cucumbers, melons and other vines which in these places grew luxuriantly.

In order to understand the labor to be performed to clear away an acre of the native woodland it may be necessary to state that upon this would be found from forty to forty-five trees from one to three feet in diameter, besides the staddles, underbrush and fallen timber. This applies to the hard timber lands where beach and maple prevailed. It may seem incredible that a good axman would chop and prepare an acre of this in six days; an expert axman would often do it in four. First the staddles and underbrush were cut and thrown into heaps, then the larger trees were cut into sections sixteen to twenty feet in length for loging or to be drawn and rolled into heaps for burning. The tops were trimmed and thrown into piles and burned in order to clear the way for the ox team and men which were to follow. A full set required a teamster and three men with their handspikes to roll the logs in position. When these log heaps were well ablaze with innumerable sparks dancing and darting upward under an evening sky the scene was cheering and delightful to behold. The timber being all consumed the ashes were carefully raked into heaps, then drawn to the leach, water thrown upon them, the lye being caught in a trough dug out with an ax from a section of a large tree, then boiled down to a thick black pudding known as black salts. In those days this was about the only commodity that would bring cash. The price was $2.50 to $3.00 per hundred. The most prominent markets were at the head of the lake (Mayville), the rapids (Jamestown), and Canadaway (Fredonia) and Sinclairville, and at a later day other central villages of the county. Soon asheries were established in several localities where these salts were converted by burning in ovens and kettles into potash, and before the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 they were sent down the river to Pittsburg or over the lakes to Montreal where they found a ready market.

On the oak and chestnut lands it was customary to cut out the small timber and underbrush, girdle the large trees and leave them standing, plant the ground to corn and potatoes or sow to wheat or oats and thus obtain very good crops

The first grist mill was built near the mouth of Chautauqua creek in 1804 by James

McMahon and in 1811 Wm. Bemus built another a mile above the mouth of Bemus creek. These and other mills on the outlet, Silver Creek and Canadaway were a great blessing to the pioneer, but many were so far away and the roads so bad that they were often obliged to grind their corn with a pestle attached to a spring pole, producing a passable meal for Johnny cakes, in a hole dug out of a log. All kinds of crops committed to the virgin soil cheerfully responded to the efforts of the husbandmen. In especial manner the potato which would often give an average of a plump bushel for every six hills. Very little cultivation was necessary besides the planting. For this excellent tuber, forming at that day as at present a staple article of food, we search in vain for a substitute. With it starvation was impossible. An early settler used often to speak to us of the pleasure which he experienced when he dug his first hill of great smooth potatoes. The first noxious plant that encumbered the ground after clearing away the timber was the fire weed, but this would disappear after the second or third year, followed soon after by the bull thistle which would often cover the ground, if undisturbed, with a growth as high as a man's head, forming a barrier that no man or beast would dare to penetrate.

The manufacture of maple sugar was an important industry and gave to the people an abundant supply of this indispensible luxury, and with the great scarcity of money, was a convenient article of exchange. The sap was usually caught in troughs made with the ax alone, from the cucumber tree, and boiled down in kettles suspended to lugpoles, with the consumption of large quantities of fuel. The sugar camp was often the resort of the young men and maidens of the neighborhood, who, around the cheerful fire, would pass the fleeting hours in merry glee, over a feast of wax sugar spread upon the virgin snow.

Darias Knapp late of the town of Harmony was among the first settlers of that town. A few years previous to his death he informed the writer that his capital at the time he took an article of his farm consisted of *courage* and his *ax* on his shoulder. He said also, that he had made the trip on foot seventeen times between sun and sun from Buffalo to Panama. Joseph Sackett late of Stockton at an early day come from Buffalo to his home starting at early dawn and chopped a cord of wood before sundown. Naham Aldrich who settled on lot 2 above Long Pt. on Chautauqua Lake in 1807 was at the time unmarried. His wealth consisted of his ax only and that indomitable will which was his leading characteristic through life. These men all died wealthy. Aldrich boarded awhile with his neighbor deacon John Peterson but alarmed at the debt he was incurring he moved his quarters to his own premises and kept bachelor's hall, cooking his food in a skillet and lodging for several months in a hollow button wood log, his only shelter, his bed some straw with a single blanket. During the summer he captured many ducks with his gun from the feathers of which and an old shirt for a case he had a comfortable pillow. During this time he had occasion to visit Cross Roads and while there stepped into McGunnagle's store and thinking that a little pepper would make his duck potpies and cucumbers more palatable he said to the merchant that he would take a quarter if he would trust him a few months. He was very politely told that they did not trust out their goods. McGunnagle soon came to Mayville, where he was in trade for several years, but finally failed and became poor. Twenty-five years or more had passed since the incident mentioned at the Cross Roads and Aldrich had became wealthy farmer. McGunnagle was returning on foot from a visit to his old friends and patrons at Westfield and was resting himself in a sitting posture at the side of the road about half way between Glenn Mills and the height of land. Soon Aldrich came along up the hill with a gay team attached to a double seated light wagon with one of his neighbors

seated by his side. McGunnagle accosted him by saying, "Good day, sir, can I get a ride with you to the head of the lake?" The driver did not halt until he had passed him several rods, when he turned around and replied, "McGunnigle, what is the price of pepper to-day," and drove on

The period of bark covered cabins in the wood of Chautauqua was of short duration. The body of this primitive dwelling was made of light poles that could be placed in position by the help at hand. As soon as the country became more thickly settled and saw mills could be built from which boards could be obtained, the more substantial log house took its place. These were quite uniform in size, usually about 20x24 feet with a projection of the roof in front of ten feet resting on the beams that supported the chamber floor. This projection was called a stoop and under it could be seen pots and kettles, the wash tub, the wooden wash bowl, splint broom, and many other necessary utensils of the household in those days. This house was the first work of the pioneer. Straight trees and of uniform size were selected from the forest and drawn to the place chosen for the dwelling; the neighbors were invited to the "raising" and all made it a religious duty to attend, unselfishly forgetting for the present the duties of home No other foundation was required but the four logs the size of the building laid upon the level ground. When this was done four of the best axmen took a corner and cut a saddle and notch to hold the logs in position as they were rolled on skids to the proper place in the building. They were usually made a story and a half, the upper portion or chamber being the sleeping room of the family, access to which was a ladder or pins driven into the logs in the wall of the house, and occasionally rough board stairs. Three or four hours in an afternoon was sufficient time to raise a log house When the body was up the logs were cut away for the door and windows, the floor laid with unplaned boards, the space between the logs filled with split pieces of wood and plastered with mud, the gables boarded, the roof made of pine shingles and a stone chimney with jams and an iron crane for the pots and kettles, made for those days a very comfortable and convenient home. Occasionally, when brick could be obtained, an oven was built at one side of the fireplace, the flue entering the chimney. These ovens were of sufficient size to contain a half dozen loaves of bread, as many pies and a pan of pork and beans Fine dry wood was required to heat the oven for baking, but the result was satisfactory, and it is doubted if the modern range or cook stove is any improvement in this branch of cookery. Occasionally ovens were built outside the house on a log platform up to the hips. The house without an oven would substitute the bake kettle, a flat bottom, straight sided iron vessel with legs four inches long and an iron cover. The baking was performed by surrounding the kettle with live coals in a corner of the fire place, changing and renewing as occasion required. A loaf of bread baked in this manner, made of three parts of corn meal and one part of stewed pumpkin, was a great favorite with the pioneer. No better bread was ever made. It was thought that standing in the kettle over night would improve its flavor. Remove the cover in the morning and behold a brown loaf with a yellow tinge and aroma that would tempt the palate of an epicure. Johnny cake or brown bread baked upon a board or spider tilted up before the fire was also in common use. To cook a spare rib, duck or turkey they were suspended by a tow string before the open fire place, with an iron vessel underneath to catch the drippings from which the cook would bathe or baste the parts with a ladle or spoon, giving her charge at the same time a whirl that all portions might receive the benefit of the blazing fire. Plain roast potatoes and salt was often an acceptable and even a pleasing meal for the entire family. We should have stated that the open fire place introduced the use of andirons on which rested the finer portion of the wood in front of the back log in building

the fire. The hearth made of smooth flag stones three or four feet in width was always a necessary portion of the stone chimney. About 1830 the tin oven superceded the bake kettle. This consisted of a tin frame about two feet long and one foot wide, with a short iron pan for the dough with a cover of bright tin standing at an angle of forty-five degrees when open before the blazing fire and when new performed the work of baking to perfection on the principle of reflection. This oven was not popular with the family as it encumbered the hearth and obstructed the cheering effect of the fireside. The windows of the log house were usually made of single sash of six or nine lights of 7x9 glass. The hinges and latches of the doors were of wood. The door was opened from the outside by a string passing through a gimlet hole and attached to the latch on the inside. A person not of the household wishing to enter would rap with his knuckles on the door when he would hear from within the universal custom of the day—"Come in." He would pull at the latch-string and enter. The dining room, sitting room and parlor were all embraced in the same. If the family were partaking of their meal the stranger was always made welcome to a place at the table.

HOME MANUFACTURE.

Nearly all the clothing and linen of the family were manufactured from the raw material at home. Hence every farm would contain from a fourth to a half an acre of flax from which was made the summer clothing of the family Flax seed would bring in trade about one dollar per bushel, hence it was always permitted to ripen or rattle in the bolts before harvesting. It was then pulled up with the hands and bound in bundles so small they could be encircled by the thumbs and fingers of both hands. When dry it was taken to the barn and the seed whipped out by taking the bundle in the hands near the roots and striking the heads on an iron kettle turned bottom side upwards The next step to be taken was to convey the straw to a clean piece of meadow land where the grass had been harvested and spread it in thin swaths for rotting, which would require about four weeks. It was then raked and bound into bundles and reconveyed to the barn. In the early part of winter it was the business of the farmer to prepare the flax for the spinning wheel operated by the female portion of the family. To do this he first made use of a simple machine called a brake, which was followed in order of use by the hatchel and swingle, finally producing a soft and pliable mass twisted into what was known as a head of flax ready to be spun and woven into cloth.

In nearly all of the log cabins of fifty years ago would be seen the big and little wheels in active operation by the mother and girls of the family. The mother would be seated at the little wheel, distaff in hand, one foot upon the treadle, the other jogging the cradle at her side, containing a little rose-bud of humanity, the gem and pride of the family, at the same time singing a low soothing lullaby more charming than the music of the spheres. In one corner, one of the girls would be seated beside a basket of tow, carding it into bolts one foot long and two inches wide, with a pair of hand cards, while the sister would be moving backward and forward with nimble step beside the big wheel, full twelve feet in circumference, and spinning these bolts into yarn. Thirty knots was considered a day's work of flax or tow. Each knot contained forty threads six feet and two inches long, or about 250 feet The wheel in common use was the kniddy-knoddy, consisting of a single standard with two transverse heads and made of sufficient size to give the desired length to the thread. It was quite a knack to operate one of these and give it the proper flop and swing, it being held in

the left hand, but it was quickly made and occupied much less room, than the long armed fourheaded clock reel. During the winter and early spring it was the business of the women to manufacture sufficient tow and linen cloth for the summer clothing of the family and to replenish the bedding. The male portion were obliged to be satisfied with cloth made of linen warp and tow filling. This cloth was full of shives and for the first few weeks was extremely agravating, especially the shirts, rasping and scratching the body, as if filled with a thousand needles. The mother and girls claimed the clear linen and for dresses they would make a piece checked or striped with copperas, and when starched or ironed who will say the girls were not as attractive and winsome as those of the present day with their quirks, kinks and dingle-dangles of numberless patterns and butterfly ornamentations?, Beside the universal sun bonnet as a covering for the head, the ladies wore for many years the calash, made by covering a number of willow hoops with gingham or some fancy chintz. These bonnets would open and shut like a buggy cover, allowing the wearer to show to advantage all her bewitching smiles and flowing ringlets. She usually contrived to own a pair of French morocco shoes, only worn on special occasions and were expected to last for several years. During six months of the year she as well as the men and boys went about their business at home with bare feet. Straw hats for the men and boys were braided and sewed at home for summer use, and for winter the boys wore fulled cloth caps, with alternate strips of black and grey or blue, brought to a point at the top and usually tipped with a red tassel. Pocket handkerchiefs were also manufactured at home. Several of the neighboring women clubbing together for a piece of their finest linen with checks of copperas and blue and bor. ders of fantastic design. If there was any lack in delicacy and beauty, strenth and durability still remained and constant use was sure to improve the quality. Weaving was always performed by women, one or more skilled in the work being found in every neighborhood. The price for weaving plain tow, linen or flannel cloth, was about six cents a yard, and from six to ten yards was a good days work, the quills being wound by the aid of the swifts and quill wheel by one of the children of the family. We have a vivid recollection of winding the quills for a strong healthy woman who wove twenty yards of flannel in one day, but such cases were exceptional and was only possible where there was great strength and activity and little breaking in the warp and filling. These tow and linen cloths being manufactured into pants, shirts and frocks for the men and boys and dresses for the women and girls, sheets, pillow cases and towels for all, they were soon engaged in the manufacture of flannel for winter garments. Every farmer owned a flock of sheep and they were carefully yarded nightly to protect them from the wolves until the great wolf hunts of 1824 and 1826 in which the greater part of the county concentrated their able bodied men, equipped in the habiliaments of war, in the Cassadaga swamp in the town of Stockton, resulting in the extermina. tion of this scourge. The wool being taken from the sheep it was hurried off to the carding machine where it was made into rolls. Soon the girls are all busy again at the spinning wheel. A day's work was thirty knots of warp or forty knots of filling. Some of the most active would spin twice this amount. Frequently two or three wheels would be seen in operation in the same household when the whurr and whiz of the spindles and the merry snatches of song of the spinners rendered music quite equal to the light fingered modern lass who sings, or pounds the piano to the thrilling tune of the thunder storm. A piece of flannel sufficient for the outer clothing of the male portion of the family was sent off to the fulling mill to be dressed and returned for winter wear, the remainder being made into skirts and sheets for the family. For the women a piece of fancy check of black and red was also wove and sent to the mill to be

pressed and when made into clothing was tidy, tasty and comfortable. The main part of this was of home-made manufacture, but most of the young women could boast of one calico dress the most popular styles being figures of blue. These dresses were seldom worn except on extra occasions, such as Independence or New Years' balls and were expected to last several years. This frugality will not appear surprising when we learn that a young lady could obtain only five shillings a week at the spinning wheel and this sum would scarcely purchase a yard of calico. During the period of the log cabin feather beds were considered indispensible. The rough boarding of the gables would warp and it was no unfrequent occurrence to find the snow several inches deep covering the floor and bedding of the chambers, a condition demanding extra bed clothing. Hence every well ordered family kept a flock of geese and every young lady, on her marriage, expected one or two feather beds besides the linen and flannel which she had laid aside for that most important occasion of her life. The spring bed and mattress of the present day, dwelling with its plastered walls and ceilings have nearly exterminated the domestic goose. They are perhaps the most social of all the feathered tribes, in their walks always falling into line by pairs with the strongest gander as leader or captain, chatting merrily, perhaps of the events of the day and the prospects of the future. At night one trusty gander was always awake as sentry, warning the flock of danger and calling to them at stated intervals that "All is well," to which every member would answer "I am here." Geese feathers were also a medium of exchange at the stores and with the wagon peddlers, but the equivalent value was always claimed by the women of the household At an early day Perez Dewey, for many years a successful merchant at Sinclairville, made his annual circuit of the county with his great bay horse and covered wagon filled with Yankee notions which he sold largely to the women in exchange for geese feathers, receiving a pound for a yard of calico. In order to obtain enough for a dress it was necessary for the young ladies to run in debt for one year's crop, which was always granted by this kindhearted old bachelor. It so happened that one year he failed to make his accustomed visit and as nothing could be heard of him his customers began to congratulate themselves on the escape of payment. But soon the old familiar brown top covered wagon hove in sight causing no little flutter among his patrons as well as a great hub-bub and rackett among the geese

The furniture of the household was always plain, consisting of square legged bedsteads with rope or bark cordage and an awning overhead called a tester around which was a drooping fringe of net work tipped with tasty little tassels. Sometimes near the window would be seen a chest of drawers and near it a square legged stand over which was the looking glass with ornamental frame of jigger work brought by the mother from her eastern home. Near by stood the unvarnished cherry or pine cross legged table and in the spare nooks and corners, when not in use, a number of splint bottom chairs. On shelves against the wall or in the tall cupboard are displayed rows of bright pewter plates, standing edgewise, headed by the great pewter platter always in use at "boiled dinners" piled with cabbage, turnips, beets, potatoes and other vegetables, and near its side lies the bag of pudding stuffed with some kind of wild berries, a tempting slice of which is given to each one at the table, covered with sweetened cream During the war of 1812 and the consequen suppression of trade, wooden plates or trenchers and even tea cups and saucers made of the same material were common on the tables of the pioneer. This kind of ware was manufactured quite extensively by Allen Manley of Ellery, from his mill on Bemus Creek, and sold in exchange for maple sugar and other truck produced by the settler. On the beech and

maple lands every farmer expected to make their sugar or somehow get along without this almost indispensible luxury. Coarse brown earthernware, such as jars, crocks, mugs and milk pans were manufactured by Whittemore & Fenton of Fluvanna and Caleb Matthews of Gerry, all finding a ready market among the inhabitants. Ox teams and wooden shod sleds were the principle means of conveyance in taking their black salts and other produce to market, as well as in making their social visit. Even at their dances or balls it was no violation of the rules of etiquette for several young men to club together and convey their girls to and from the place of merriment in this manner during the winter months, all snugly wrapped in quilts and blankets, seated on a good supply of straw. As horses became more plenty riding double was the practice, the lady mounted behind her partner with her loving arm around his waist. Who shall say that these primitive customs were not productive of as much joy and happiness as the sterner rules of etiquette of this whirling, bustling age of advanced civilization. Then no carpets were ever seen upon the floors; the kitchen, dining room and parlor were the same, but as long as this was the general rule contentment reigned over all and merriment and cheerful song were the heritage of the household. Beyond a certain limit in the certain necessities of man it may be doubted whether the bestowment of gaudy equipage and magnificent dwellings will add very much to the sum total in the enjoyment of life. We settle these things by comparison—houses, furniture and dress striving with a laudable ambition not to be counted in the lower grade Hence the constant strife that annoys and the debts that trouble the present age. Spinning bees were quite common especially when one of the neighboring women by sickness or want of help chanced to fall behind in preparing her web of tow and linen cloth for summer use. Some one of the family with a team loaded with flax and tow would visit every house in a compass of two or three miles leaving enough for a days work at each place at the same time giving an invitation to supper at home a few days in advance. No one was ever known to refuse her share of the work and at the appointed time, each with her skeins of yarn under her arm, the roses of health on her cheeks and a throb of joy in her heart, would enter this neighbors house where she was sure to be received with the tokens of friendship and love.

Hunting for deer was not the general practice during the summer months or while the leaves were on the trees and the supply of fresh meats was principally drawn from the sheep fold. Whenever a sheep or lamb was slaughtered the neighbors were always remembered and a portion sent to each even when a return of the compliment was known to be impossible.

Religious societies were few and far between, but whenever a wandering missionary made his appearance and left an appointment to preach at the log school house or private dwelling everybody would turn out to hear him. But the general practice on Sunday was to call on some new neighbor, with words of welcome and good cheer, who had located in the woods, if only a few miles away. The road to one of these primitive homes is made by cutting out the underbrush and fallen timber sufficiently wide for the passage of ox teams and sleds, passing over roots and cradle knolls and winding around magnificent trees. Let us visit one of these new born homes in the month of June. The Creator, from his storehouse, has clothed the woodland in lovely green of various tints and bright flowers. Soon we come to an opening in the woods embracing a few acres. Up to the very door of the log cabin is seen the vigorous young corn and potatoes and whatever else may have been committed to the virgin soil, all cheering and hopeful to the husbandman. Dwelling, field, fences, plants, all are new, lending a charm only experienced on the frontier.

Originally one unbroken forest covered the country from the shores of New England to Cuyahoga river. It is generally conceded that for its density and the beauty and magnificence of its trees no portion exceeded Chautauqua County. Here, for untold ages, "Nature had sowed and reaped her crops" and the great solemn woods sported with the winds and the sunshine and listened alone to the growl of the wild beast, the whoop of the savage, the murmur of the limpid streams and the eternal dash of waves upon the shores of our fresh water lakes. Fate had sent forth her decree and every where in the footsteps of civilization was heard the ringing sound of the woodsman's ax and the crash and thunder of falling trees. In the struggle for existence the forest must die that man may live. Not only in this but every order of the vegetable kingdom and all the grades of animal life are made subservient to his will. (But we wander, to enlarge upon this point might show the cruelty and rapacity of man.) Having prepared a shelter for the family the next thing in order for the settler was to compel the retreat of the woodlands; every pioneer expecting to add a few acres each year to his improvements. Much of the chopping and clearing would be done during the winter months. Many were compelled to do so in order that the cattle might subsist upon the browse. In the spring the timber would be burned by rolling into heaps as before described and the ground generally planted to corn and potatoes. Necessity would often compel the children of tender age to labor in the field in picking up the bits of brush and light chunks of rotten wood that would impede cultivatian. After the timber had all been removed, before planting the crop it was customary to pass over the ground with a nine tooth drag. This farming implement was made of strong timber, often from the crotch of a tree, and the teeth from bars of iron one inch and a half square. This business was trying on the strength and endurance of the team as the drag would go hopping and jumping over the roots. One of our neighbors had a sprightly little boy known as Jimmy. When he was but five years of age he drove his father's ox team to drag a field of several acres of new land. He was prepared with a hand spike of suitable size so that whenever the drag caught among the roots he could lift it out and relieve the team. It was both amusing and instructive to see the great honest oxen with their mild eyes watch and obey the words and signals of this little boy. A few years later this little fellow was taught to yoke the oxen in the following manner: The yoke would be left on the top of a stump and near it was placed a block of wood about eighteen inches thick. When Jimmy was required to yoke the oxen he would draw out the bows of the yoke, drive up the off ox, draw the yoke along while he stood upon the block holding up the end while it rested on a prop the ox would carefully take his place and stand for the bow to be adjusted, then getting upon the stump he would lift the other end and say to the other ox to "Come under." These brutes seemed to admire their little master and would cheerfully obey his commands. Boys from seven to ten years of age were required to go to mill, often six to eight miles distant. The father would fill the bag about two-thirds full, divide it in the middle, throw it over the saddle and strap it on with the stirrup straps and mount the boy on top of the grist, telling him to look out for the mud puddles and hang on to the mane. After the grist was ground the miller always went through the same strapping and mounting process. My father owned a large beautiful bay horse remarkable for intelligence far above the average of his kind. He always refused to carry double, or at least a lady behind a gentleman, rearing and kicking and jumping sidewise until he was relieved of his extra burden. When we rode him to mill to Bear Creek Corners he was pretty sure to show us a trick when he saw a tempting bit of green grass at the side of the road. He would prance and kick up until we could stay no longer on the top of the grist and clutching the mane would slide to the ground. Then he was master of the situa-

tion He would never attempt to leave us but whenever we tried to take hold of the bridle before he was ready he would show his teeth and lay back his ears and very plainly tell us to stand off. As soon as he was satisfied with feeding we could lead him to a stump or fence when we would remount and pursue our journey. These tricks would sometimes so belate us that our return would be long after dark. Flour was seldom kept at the stores and a sack of flour could not be bought as at present and if for sale few had the money to make the purchase so everybody went to mill. In times of drouth the Rapids, Dexterville or Kennedyville, were the main dependence of a large section of the county. At such times a wagon would be loaded by the neighbors with a few bushels for each and with two or three boys for company and a yoke of oxen for a team would creep away to mill at the rate of about two miles an hour, never returning until the next day. The miller would usually keep us over night. On the road the boys would be constantly watching for vacancies in the corn field where would be found the melon patch, always free plunder for all to help themselves as they often grew by the wagon load from the new and virgin soil and no market but home consumption.

Logging "bees" were common whenever a man fell behind in preparing his chopping fallow for the spring crop or winter wheat in the fall. At such times for several miles away the neighbors were invited with their ox teams to assemble on a certain day. Often as many as fifty men in their tow frocks reaching to their knees, handspikes in hand, would assemble at the lowest edge of the field where operations were always begun, the logs being drawn and rolled into heaps on a down grade more easily than otherwise. The chopping is always prepared in courses for logging, requiring a team and set of hands to each. When the men all got to work there was always a strife to see who would first reach the opposite side of the field and the encouraging shouts of the teamsters could be heard for miles away. The oxen seemed to partake of the exhilerating excitement of the occasion and it was marvelous to see the great logs they were able to move. Having accomplished the logging of the entire field the next thing was to try the activity and strength of the teams by turning them tail to with several feet of slack chain and dropping the hooks together and starting at the word *go*. The best in three was declared winner and usually fell upon the team the first to start. This finale of the logging bee created much merriment and shouts of laughter. It may as well be told that the whiskey jug was considered an important factor in all these gatherings to give strength and activity to the men and in no case must the supply be exhausted. Few ever became intoxicated but every man seemed gay and joyous. Whoever is inclined to moralize upon this subject, let him at least be charitable and remember that these were days demanding courage and great endurance. True many fell beneath the blighting influence of intemperance, but everywhere the use of intoxicating drink upon the frontier has been the universal practice. Fifty years ago nearly every town in the county had its whiskey distillery, some of them two or three. Every man was expected to keep a good quantity of the stuff in his house and if a neighbor happened to drop in the bottle was always presented and he must drink before leaving. Indeed whiskey was so popular it was thought a gallon would go further in the family than a bushel of corn. The last scene in the logging bee was a good substantial supper when the men would disperse to their homes, happy in the thought that each had bestowed his might to foster good will and encourage his neighbor in the battle of life. These were days of rugged toil in the school of science to develope muscle and brain power in removing obstructions in the pathway of civilization. If there was a lack of refinement we must remember it was the offspring of the peculiar surrounding con-

dition so potent in forming the character of man. That of the mountaineer by the boldness of the crags and peaks, the wandering Arab by the sterile wastes, the sailor by the rough trials of the sea and the impetuous southerner by the fires of a tropical sun.

For over forty years the destruction of the forest of Chautauqua went on with unabating fury. Slashing was soon adopted, felling the trees in winrows and after drying several months fire was applied when all the brush would be consumed and often much of the larger timber Sometimes crops of corn and pumpkins were raised after a good burn, planted among the blackened logs. Frequently a good chopper would slash an acre of heavy timber in a day by "driving" the trees. This was done by the axman going over the ground and carefully noting the cant or inclination of the trees and then cutting a notch on each side, leaving half or more to break, then selecting a few large trees on the upper edge of the section as drivers and cutting these when the crash would begin. Each of these great monarchs of the forest would shriek and groan as if objecting to this wholesale slaughter, but soon yielding to the decree of fate with the roar and thunder of trembling submission go headlong to a common grave The scene was exciting and exhilerating and prophesied of better days and extended comforts to man. It will be remembered that we are still in the period of the log house. When the labor of the day was closed the men would spend the evenings in talking of the events of the day and relating stories and anecdotes of their eastern homes around the cheerful open fireplaces. In the fall of the year would always be seen long rows of pumpkins cut in circular strips a half inch in thickness and suspended on poles attached to beams overhead to dry. This was the main dependence for pies and dessert for the family until the apple tree came to bearing and added a welcome variety to the comforts of the table. The first roads were made by cutting out the fallen timber, underbrush and staddles sufficiently wide for the passage of sleds and winding around the larger trees. The wet and swampy places were made passable by corduroy or log bridges, usually called crossways. If a wagon chanced to pass over one of these highways they would go jumping and bounding over these logs, trying the patience of a Job, and the women would universally prefer to walk if they cared to retain their winsome smiles and attractive disposition. Deep and almost impassable mud holes were frequent along the main highways and during half the year teams were often "stuck" in the mud. The long lever would lift them out and long before night the men would find themselves besmeared with dirt from head to foot. Along the roads in the newer settlements woodlands prevailed and the occasional log cabin was always a source of pleasure, a thing of beauty and a joy forever to the weary traveler. Men of to-day may be disposed to condole the pioneer as they read of the hardships he endured, but the old man whoever he may be when questioned will say that he often sighs for the return of those days of simplicity and brotherly kindness. Then there was no favored aristocracy of wealth and so-called refinement that marks the present day, no "upper tens," no sharp lines to sunder the great heart of humanity. Very few felt themselves independent of their neighbors, to breast alone the tide of life and so cherishing the type of the good Samaritan they proclaimed good will to the world.

After the completion of the Holland Purchase Road in 1815 this was the main thoroughfare through the central part of the county and as soon as 1825 most of the land along this road had been taken by actual settlers. Taverns were frequent, most of them kept in the log cabin where there was scarcely room for the accommodation of the family of the inn-keeper. Often the beds of the emigrant were brought in and spread upon the floor, around the great

open fire-place. Kindness and good cheer made up for lack of space, and sitting room accommodations. Beginning on the east line of the county, the first hotel was Samuel McConnel in the valley of the Clear Creek, then passing over the high Gerry hills, for several years was the "seven mile" woods, beyond which was the inn of John Love in the valley of the Mill Creek, a mile south of Sinclairville. Three miles S. W., was the tavern of William Barrows on the west bank of the Cassadaga Creek, then that of Abel Brunson, Jonathan Bugbee, in the town of Stockton, then Bela Todd, John West, Cary Miles, John Dyre and Peter Bamhart; and if visiting the Land Office, two miles to the west is the head of the lake or Mayville, where the traveler put up with Jeremiah Tracy for many years one of the most popular inn-keepers in the county. Nearly all of the emigrant wagons were covered with white linen sheets tightly drawn over hoops bent and fastened to the sides of the box making a tent in which the occupants would frequently lodge in the summer months while enroute to their new homes in the woods. These inn keepers were not all engaged in the business at the same time. Todd closed up in about a year and Bugbee in three. West opened his hotel in 1824 and Brunson in 1830. West, Love and Bamhart were veteran inn-keepers.

During the spring and summer months and early fall the main thoroughfares leading west through the county were lined with emigrant covered wagons whose destination was to some portion of this county or to the Western Reserve in Ohio. On the completion of the Erie Railroad these all disappeared together with the country taverns. The stage routes running east and west were abandoned about the same time. A trip along the "Ridge Road" of Lake Erie the traveler will note the long line of desolation in ghostly hotels once gay and joyous with ringing laughter, sent to oblivion and trampled under foot by the iron horse and his train of thundering cars.

But to return. The lands being cleared of the timber they were enclosed on three sides by the Virginia Zigzag rail fence, first placing a row of bottom logs along the line and on top of these five or six rails to each length, closing up the rear of the field with a slash or tree fence. These bottom log fences would begin to reel and slide about in five or six years by the rotting away of the foundation. The same was noted in the log house whose foundation was subject to the same species of decay and soon had the appearance of an ill used cocked up hat and a cant as if desirous of running away.

The durability of the log house would hardly exceed twenty years when it would be vacated by the family for the frame house. But the old one would remain a few years longer as a reminder of the hard but cheerful days of their pioneer home in the woods where all agree were passed the most cheering and happy days of their life.

The county was originally settled by people from the eastern part of the State with an occasional family from New England, and very few of foreign birth. Their implements of husbandry were those in use in their eastern homes. The grain harvest was done with the sickle and the hay crop was cut with the hand scythe and gathered into winrows with the hand rake. Where the grain was not lodged a good hand would cut with the sickle, bind and put into shocks one acre in a day. Two acres was a day's work in cutting grass with the scythe, for which the laborer would receive fifty cents. The day would begin at sunrise and often continue till an hour or two after sunset. When several were engaged in cutting grass on the same piece, there was usually a strife with the leader to cut the corners of

the men in the rear. Jessee Walker, late of the town of Gerry, informed the writer that in the month of July, 1821, he took his scythe on his back, and went to the residence of Dexter Barnes of Stockton, a distance of nine miles, cut four acres of heavy grass and with his dollar in his pocket went whistling home, where he arrived before nine o'clock in the evening. It may be proper to state that a plentiful supply of whiskey was always given the laborer with his rations. In those days speculations in stocks were unknown and men were content to earn their bread by honest toil. If they were not so much refined in the sciences as those of the present day, they were not exceeded in good common sense, integrity and good will to their fellow man. All honor to the men who had the courage, strength and will to tussle with the forests of Chautauqua, giving thousands of pleasant homes to the onward march of civilization.

Occasionally would be seen the log barn among the early settlers but the frame was generally adopted. So far as I have been able to learn, my father, Jonathan Bugbee, built the first barn in the town of Stockton in the month of June, in 1814. The sills and plates were 16 inches square ; the beams 12x14 ; the ridge pole made of Cherry one foot in diameter ; the braces of hard wood and pinned at each end, and all else about the frame of the same massive proportions. The plates and outside beams projected two inches with an inch grove to admit the upper ends of the siding. Cut nails* at this time had not been known in the county if indeed in the world. Wrought nails were only used in the construction of this barn. They were hammered into shape by the blacksmiths of Pittsburgh, and brought up the rivers in canoes and over Chautauqua Lake to Mayville, where they were sold at seventy-five cents a pound ready cash, or four pounds of nails for one hundred pounds of black salts. At the "raising" the county was so sparsely settled men were invited from Mayville, the center of Charlotte and along the east side of Chautauqua Lake, many of whom were nine miles distant. Every man invited came to the "raising," and not a few brought their wives on their ox sleds. It was lucky that they had a full moon, as it was midnight before the frame was completed. Of course they were all provided with all they required for food and drink. It was customary at this time, on the completion of a "raising" for all the men to assemble in rows upon the plates and name the building, then at a concerted signal all would hurrah, at the close of which, one of the men selected for the purpose, would hurl the junk bottle, filled with whiskey, as far as possible from the building to the ground. There the activity of the men was put to the test to see who would first be able to arrive on the spot and announce its condition. Being tightly corked it was seldom broken unless it chanced to fall upon a stone or other hard substance. As a specimen of the naming of buildings, we may be permitted to give that of this barn, all others being nearly the same, only changing a few words as the occasion would seem to require :

> "The pride of the builder and owner's delight,
> Framed in ten days and raised at midnight."

The boards for the construction of this barn were drawn on an ox sled from Maj. Samuel Sinclair's mill at Sinclairville in the month of June, over the crossways and through the mud holes that prevailed during the greater part of the year in the early settlement of the county. My father used to relate that while drawing the boards for this barn on his return trip a mile and a half from home the sled struck a sappling as the oxen shied to avoid a mud

NOTE.—Cut nails were first made by machinery in Mass., in 1810.

hole and broke the yoke in the middle. He knew the workmen would soon be waiting for the lumber and some way must be devised to deliver the load in due time. His only tool for the construction of another yoke was an axe which was always present with a team on the road. Seeing a basswood tree the right size near at hand he cut it down, took out a section the right length, chipped out two notches or saddles for the necks of the oxen, when the very serious problem arose how the holes were to be made to receive the bows and the staple and ring. After a moment's reflection he split the yoke in two in the middle, cut notches of the proper size, put the staple onto the rear half, tied the sections together with three substantial withes made of river beech, put the new yoke upon the oxen, put the bows through the notches, hitched to his load and drew it home and was only an hour late in his arrival. This incident must not be taken as showing any peculiar tact or trait of this man, but as showing the indomitable perseverance of the pioneer of Chautauqua.

The barn above mentioned is 30x44 feet and is still standing on the premises in a good state of preservation, having just received its third coat of shingles. The first roof was of shaved pine shingles and failed in thirty years being blown off in many places by the wind. This will not be surprising when it is known that many of the shingles were fastened only with a gimlet and pine pegs. We have been thus minute in the description of this barn that it may be taken as a sample of others to be found in numerous localities all over the county.