

Chapter III

The Life of the Pioneer



INTRODUCTION

You are invited to turn back the pages of history and use your imagination if you wish to obtain a picture of this territory in the early eighteen hundreds. Peter Navarre and his brothers came here as the first white settlers of Oregon in 1807. They found dense forest of magnificent and stately trees such as the elm, the ash, the hickory and beautiful maples. Only Indian trails led through the forest to various trade posts, near by towns, and other Indian villages. Swamps covered large portions of the land. Luxuriant vegetation grew everywhere.

PRESQUE ISLE

On Presque Isle they found a large village of Ottawa Indians and took up their abode nearby. Since they were closely connected with the Indians they adopted, to a great degree, the habits and methods of Indian living. Some of them married

Indian squaws and soon there was established the best of relationship between these early pioneers and the Indians. They taught them how to cope with the difficulties of living in an uncivilized community, how and where to find food, what berries and roots could be eaten, what herbs and plants could be used for medicinal purposes.

LATER SETTLERS

In 1850, the national government granted all the swamp and overflowed lands remaining unsold after the 28th of September, 1850, to the respective states where such lands were situated providing the states would reclaim them. Ohio received twenty-five thousand six hundred forty acres, the most of which was located in the northwestern part of the state in the region known as the "Black Swamp". This consisted of land unfit for settlement until it was reclaimed by drainage.

In 1851, the legislature provided that the net

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proceeds received from the sale of the swamp lands should be appropriated to the General Fund for the support of common schools and the interest distributed to the several counties in proportion to the number of white male inhabitants above the age of twenty-one years, each county to divide its money, so received, in same manner as other school funds were divided.

This proved to be a help to schools and an inducement to the early pioneers who were able to purchase the land from the state at the rate of \$1.25 per acre. It attracted people of French, English, and German backgrounds. Some moved into the territory to carry on trade, others to take advantage of the low price of land on which they established homes, and some purchased from 1000 to 5000 acres for speculation.

EARLIEST SETTLEMENTS

The earliest settlements in the Maumee Valley before General Wayne defeated the Indians were started by building a blockhouse, around which were grouped rude cabins of the pioneers. It was necessary for these early communities to be grouped about the military posts scattered over the section. The post provided a place of retreat and shelter since Indians were lurking in the forest ready to scalp and slay the white men with whom they were at war. In fact, as late as 1815, two men were tomahawked in their cabin near Turkey Foot Rock on the Maumee. During the summer another man was scalped on the site of Maumee village.

These conditions together with the swamps delayed the settlement of the territory known later as Oregon, the village, and Oregon Township. However, after the Indians were defeated and there was less danger, people were led into thinking that the sites along the river would develop into thriving cities. For this reason, Oregon Village was established on the river between Fassett Street and 660 feet beyond what is now Hathaway Street. An account of this will be given in another chapter.

SETTLEMENTS

People from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, other parts of Ohio, from Canada, England, France, and Germany moved into the territory establishing homes along the east side of the Maumee and gradually pushing farther east to the lake.

Some of the pioneers came from New York in covered wagons bringing their families and few possessions with them. Others came by small boats from Buffalo.

LIFE OF EARLY SETTLERS

Often two or three families would arrive at the same time. Their first problem was to purchase the land and then erect a log cabin for the family.

THE CABIN

After selecting a spot for the cabin, they organized into a working group helping one another. If there were any settlers who had previously established their homes, they also joined the workers. The group included men and women for miles around, as this was time not only for work but also merry making as well. They greeted their new neighbors with joy and thus began the work of erecting new cabins.

One party would take care of the wood chopping. They would fell the trees and cut them into the required lengths. Another group would "snake" them by means of teams and chains to the selected spot. Here men would assort and put them in convenient places for the builders. One man would examine the trees near by to find the right type from which the clapboard shingles could be made. These trees had to be large and straight grained. The clapboards were three or four feet long and used without shaving. Another group would prepare the "puncheons" for the floor. These were made from logs with one side hewn and split with a broad ax.

The work of preparing the material for the cabin usually required a day depending on the number of men working. Then they were ready for the "raising".

THE RAISING

The next day was given to the "raising" of the cabin. What a great day this was for the women! It was their task to prepare food for these hungry men. They enjoyed this for as they prepared the food they could exchange experiences. Since they lived miles apart, this was indeed a day of enjoyment as well as a busy one for them.

During the "raising" the logs were notched at the proper places and laid one upon another. An opening was left for the door and at least one

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for a window, sometimes there were two windows, one on each side of the door. Another opening at the rear was left for the broad chimney, which was built on the outside of the cabin. Pieces of wood and plaster were used to fill in the chinks between the logs. This helped to make it weather-proof. The clapboards were held down by logs securely fastened. Wooden pegs were used instead of nails.

THE FURNITURE

The furniture consisted of three legged stools, a crude table, and a low platform used for a bed. In some cases the family brought a chair or two with them, a few dishes, a chest and other prized possessions.

PRIZED POSSESSIONS

Edward Momenee has a rocking chair over one hundred years old which belonged to his grandparents on his mother's side. It was brought from Ireland. This chair was cherished by his mother. It was her first rocking chair. It is coveted by collectors today but the family steadfastly refuses to part with the chair.

A highboy is now owned by Gladys Munday Newman who inherited it from her father, Charles. Her grandfather, Henry brought it with him from England about a hundred years ago. This piece of furniture is over two hundred twenty five years old. It was made of solid cherry. You can imagine how proud they are of this wonderful piece of furniture. They also have other pieces which were brought from England.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

The spider was like the skillet but had a long handle and legs so it could be set over the fire. The cover had an iron rim and fit closely on the spider. This made it possible to put coals on top as well as below. Deep iron kettles with handles were used. These could be hung on a crane over the fireplace. The griddle was somewhat like the spider but did not have legs. The crane was moveable so it could be swung out away from the fire when one wished to check whatever was being cooked.

Square openings were built in the chimney which served as Dutch ovens. A fire was built in the oven. When the oven was hot the coals were

raked out and the food to be baked was put into the oven.

Other kitchen utensils were long handled spoons, tin dishes, a wooden pail and dipper, split broom, lard lamp, candle moulders, tallow candles with holders, snuffers to put out the candles, tin lanterns and other crude equipment made to help lighten the burdens of housekeeping. In some cases gourds were used as dippers.

TOOLS

The tools were crude. However, the ax and the rifle, both of which had to be purchased, were probably the most important. A maul or wooden hammer was very useful. A frow was an iron rod, the edges of which were beveled. An adz was used to smooth the flat sides of logs, the awl in making moccasins, mending harnesses, etc. In some homes they had a hominy block. It was a large wooden block with a hole burned out. Corn was put into this hole and a wooden pestle used to mash it until the corn became soft. Others softened the corn by boiling it in lye and then placed it in a clean basket. It was then taken to the well where water was run through it until it was thoroughly cleansed and ready to cook. Seasoned with salt, pepper and grease, it made a delicious food called hominy.

A tin grater was used to grind corn. This grater was made of a semi-circular piece of tin with a number of holes punched in it. It was nailed to a block of wood and the corn was rubbed against the rough edges of the holes. After applying enough muscle to the corn it became coarse meal from which they made "Johnnie Cake" or cooked and served as mush. A mill was established later on the east bank of the Maumee where farmers had their corn and wheat ground.

Often the early settler made his own tools such as wagons, rakes, flails, and harrows. These were very crude, for instance, antlers of the deer were used as pitchforks.

Hoes and plows were purchased from the East. The plow was a necessity if the farmer wanted to raise corn and wheat. The frame of the plow was made of wood but the plow share was similar to that of today.

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IMPLEMENTS FOR MAKING CLOTHES

The spinning wheel was another prized possession. However, many implements needed were made in the home, such as looms of various kinds, reels, spools, flax brakes, card combs, and shuttles.

CLOTHING

The women made the clothes. They made caps from the skins of foxes or raccoons. Deer skins were used for men's trousers. They used flax and wool to spin into cloth. They learned to make dye from walnut, chestnut, or oak bark.

EARLY METHODS OF PLANTING

The first pioneers planted their grain by hand. This was a slow process and led to the making of crude implements that speeded up the work.

WHEELBARROW PLANTING

A narrow box with holes in the bottom at the right distance apart was attached to the front of the wheelbarrow. This was filled with grain and the farmer pushed the wheelbarrow across the field thus sowing seed the width of the box.

A MARKER

The marker was homemade. A piece of timber six foot long was used. At intervals three feet apart, a piece of lumber, pointed at the bottom, was fastened to the cross piece. Then two pieces of rounded wood about five foot long were fastened to the cross piece to form shafts between which the horse was harnessed. The horse pulled the marker beginning at the edge of the field which marked out three rows three feet apart. On the return trip the marker was placed so another three rows were marked out. When the entire field was marked one way the farmer began marking in the opposite direction. When he had covered the field it was marked in three foot squares and the place where rows met was the spot where corn was dropped.

THE HAND CORN PLANTER

A hand corn planter had been invented so one could place the planter at the point where the rows met, shove down the handle and deposit three or four kernels in each spot. This made it possible to plant the corn in straight rows which could be easily worked with hoe or cultivator.

WHEAT, OATS, ETC.

The farmer planted wheat and other grain by taking a handful from a sack and broadcasting it as he walked to the other side of the field. Later an implement with a wheel attached to an arm through which the seed could pass was used. A bag containing the seed was fastened to one end of the arm. By turning the wheel the seed was sent into the arm and scattered over the field. This was known as a fiddle and was used to plant grass seed.

CRADLE

The grain was cut by means of a cradle. As the cradler cut the grain, it fell upon the rack and was removed in a heap at the end of a swath. Binders would follow the cutters and place the grain in bundles tying each bundle with a binder made from the straw. About twelve or fifteen of these bundles were then set up in a shock capped with about two bundles to shed water. If a rain continued over a period of a few days, it was necessary to pull the shocks apart so they would dry in the sun.

CRADLERS

Men who had a knack of handling cradles went from one place to another cutting grain, especially wheat.

At that time there were many snakes in the field. These cradlers protected themselves by wearing leggings made of sheep skin. As the snake would strike the sheep skin, its fangs became entangled in the wool. The men would continue cutting until they reached the other side of the field where they took time to remove and kill the snakes.

REAPER

The average cradler could cut an acre of grain in a day. Some men could cut three acres. Fred Momenee, one of our pioneers, recalls that Gilbert Momenee was quite an expert and could cut three acres a day. However, this was a long day of twelve hours even for those cutting an acre. Such a slow process required much time as most men cut an acre a day. This would take four men ten days to cut forty acres which would mean that part of the crop would be ruined before it was cut. So the farmers welcomed the reaper which was invented by Cyrus H. McCormick in 1831. This machine was drawn by horses or oxen and cut a swath six feet wide. As the grain was cut, it was

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carried on a platform and raked off into piles by a man following the reaper. This machine made it possible for farmers to raise and harvest more grain. While one man cut the grain another followed to rake it off in piles but there was still need of men to bind and shock the grain. So McCormick experimented making improvements until the self-binder was developed.

SELF-BINDER

The self-binder gathered the grain into bundles, tied each bundle with binding twine, and threw it out of the machine. This reduced the time and number of men required to harvest the grain. However, farmers still put in long hours and every member of the family learned how to follow the binder and shock the grain.

The writer recalls how one farmer remained on the binder for hours. Since the pulling of the binder was hard work for the horses, at a given time, another team would be brought to the field to replace the tired horses; and with a fresh team, this man continued his work until darkness made it necessary to return to his home.

SUPPLY OF WATER

Each farmer selected a place near his house and dug a well by hand. The depth depended upon when he struck a vein of water which he felt would supply his needs. Since it had to be dug by hand with a shovel, it would be approximately four or five feet long and three feet wide. As the earth was removed, the walls were kept from caving in by making a box-like structure. After the hole was started and it was too difficult to throw the dirt out, it was placed into buckets and hauled up where it was dumped.

Sometimes the wells were twelve to fifteen feet deep. A strong platform was made in the center of which a box was built. Above this box a windlass was made to which a rope was fastened. The bucket was attached to the other end of the rope. By turning the windlass the bucket was lowered into the water. When filled the bucket was brought up by turning the crank in the opposite direction. Several years later when bricks were available the wells were bricked and the water was brought to the surface by means of a chain on which porcelain cups were attached at regular intervals which caught the water. As the crank was turned, the water would

be brought up and thrown out of a spout into a bucket.

The first method of bringing up the water where the wooden bucket was used no doubt gave the author, Samuel Woodworth, an inspiration to write the song, "The Old Oaken Bucket" with the refrain:

"The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket which hangs in the
well."

REFRIGERATION

Since refrigeration was unknown in those days what could be a better place than the old well in which to hang a covered container filled with butter or other food which must be kept cool? Of course, this meant one must pull up this container before lowering the "old oaken bucket" so another method was used by some farmers.

SHALLOW WELL

On the north side of the house where the sun did not shine, a small well was dug probably two or three feet deep. The food was placed in containers with tight covers and lowered into this well. A heavy top was placed over the well so dogs or other animals could not get the food.

PITS FOR APPLES OR VEGETABLES

To keep apples, potatoes or other vegetables from freezing they were put into a pile over which straw was placed, then covered with earth.

When a supply was needed the earth was removed from a spot and the amount needed taken out after which the opening was covered.

ILLNESS

Far removed from the services of a doctor, mothers and fathers learned how to take care of their children during times of illness. Much of their knowledge of the use of different herbs was gleaned from the Indians.

HERBS AND THEIR USES

Such remedies as the following made into a tea were frequently used:

Sassafras for a tonic
Horehound for colds
Peppermint for stomach cramps
Catnip to produce a quieting effect

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Mullein mixed with vinegar and applied as hot as one was able to endure was used for lameness or pain in the back.

Plantain leaves, wilted and sewed on cloth, were placed over the abdomen to check dysentery.

Other simple remedies such as sulphur and honey for sore throat, fat pork tied about the neck for sore throat, bread and milk used as a poultice, and charcoal and milk for a tonic were used.

Such diseases as diphtheria and scarlet fever often brought death to all the children in a home. During the diphtheria epidemic in 1882, Henry Lendorff lost four of his children.

A HELPER IN TIME OF NEED

Lucy Peach, a motherly woman, noted for her kindness and willingness to help others, was frequently called upon in cases of illness. Her genial nature and sympathetic understanding was an inspiration to those who were ill. She never refused to go, no matter what time of the night she was called, or the condition of the weather and roads. Frequently, she related some of her experiences which were very amusing.

On one occasion when the roads were very muddy, a horse was provided for her to make the trip. Riding horseback was a new experience but she decided to give it a try. Those were the days when ladies rode sidesaddle. Bravely mounting her steed and arranging herself for the trip, she gave the horse the "go" sign and immediately found herself sitting in the mud on the road. Nothing daunted, she tried again but, if possible, slid off in less time than she did the first. Then her escort suggested she get on astride. Clumsily arranging her clothes she mounted again. Now safely astride she felt secure so she picked up the rein and gave the horse the sign she was ready. Obediently the horse started but alas, he went right out from under her and left her sitting on a cushion of mud. Her merry laughter rang out, but she told the messenger he would have to provide a buggy while she went back into the house to change her mud splattered clothes.

WHEN A DOCTOR WAS NEEDED

In the early days there was no doctor on the east side of the river. This meant a doctor must come on horseback during the time of year when roads were muddy and at other times by horse and buggy. Added to this difficulty was that of cross-

ing the river by means of a ferry. In the winter, ice interfered with the ferry service. Often the ice was not safe and at such times a group of men formed a life line to get the doctor safely across the river. A rope was tied around the doctor's waist and was extended to the other side of the river where men pulled it in. To provide greater safety men were stationed at different places on the river to see that the doctor reached the opposite shore in safety. But the faithful doctors endured all these hardships for their patients who looked to them for help.

THE CHOLERA EPIDEMIC

Previous to the epidemic in 1854, according to an account given by Isaac Wright in his book *The East Side Past and Present*, Michael Horton died of cholera in 1852. He was then living on Charles Coy's farm.

Passenger steamers running between Toledo and Buffalo brought in emigrants. Records show that one of these steamers landed at Peckham and Berdan's Warehouse at the foot of LaGrange Street. The emigrants went ashore. They built bonfires and camped there during the night. One of their number died of cholera. Other cases developed, most of which were among the emigrants.

A number of cases broke out on the east side of the Maumee, which was a part of Oregon, and at that time called Utah. During the night of July 2, and the next day and night, twenty-seven people living in this part of Oregon Township died. The plague continued for a period of two months.

Victor Plumey, who established a grocery store on what is now Front Street in 1849, died of cholera July 2, 1852, and was buried the same afternoon. Louis Metzger, Celestian Plumey, Nelson and Bradley Smith attended the funeral. As they rode to the cemetery Nelson Smith said, "Poor Vic is gone; I wonder which one of us will go next." The next victims were Nelson Smith and Clarissa Plumey, wife of Victor Plumey. These people were buried under an apple tree near the corner of Oak Street and Starr Avenue. Later a number of victims were buried under this apple tree.

Peter Momany, one of the pioneers at this time, gave an account of the ravages of this plague on the Bay Shore. He said, "The first death was my sister Sarah, wife of Francis Jerome, early on the

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morning of July 4. My father, Anthony, Sr., died at 11 o'clock A.M. the same day. After my father's death my brother-in-law, Francis Jerome, came to my house with his six children and they all died in less than one week; not one of that family was left, eight in all. On Monday, July 10, a little boy named Samuel Slaughterbalk, living with me, also died and an old lady, Mrs. Shadwell, a nurse, living at Manhattan, was taken sick and died before she could get home. John Arquette and my brother, Anthony, Jr., and his wife died at Manhattan. All those named in this letter died or were taken sick at my house."

According to an article in the *Blade* by George W. Pearson, seventy-five out of one hundred seventy five on the East Side died during the plague.

INTERESTING INCIDENTS

Mrs. Edna Eteau Nofzinger recalls how her family looked forward to the time when they could purchase a new set of dishes. Tin dishes and odds and ends served their needs but it would be fun to set the table in style. Even the food would taste better. So the family set to work gathering hickory nuts. These were sold and the money was saved until they had the right amount. This was an achievement in which the entire family participated and were made happy when they reached their goal.

She also recalls that at that time steam ship companies used hickory nuts for fuel so they had a ready sale for their product.

MONEY FOR TAXES

A jar tucked away in a safe place became a bank where pennies, nickels, and dimes were saved to pay taxes. Such a jar was important to Grandfather and Grandmother Eteau. Owning twenty acres they had to meet their taxes of one dollar and fifty cents a year. To meet this problem they took the fat from the fish they caught, rendered it, and kept it in pint jars which they sold for one penny a pint.

HATS MADE OF STRAW

Gathering the best straw from the field and storing it carefully was another challenging task that confronted these pioneer women. Why do this? When winter days kept them indoors, out came the straw and the members of the family sat about

weaving hats and more hats, which they sold during the summer for a few cents each.

BARK FOR SKATES

As you glide swiftly and gracefully over the smooth ice or on a skating rink, return to pioneer days and consider your possibilities if your feet were clad in bark. Grandmother DeKay, as a child of a family of seventeen, wanted to slide on the ice. She had no shoes but that problem could be solved easily. She gathered large pieces of bark and in a short time had her feet clad in bark shoes. Now, she was ready to join others and enjoy herself even though it required effort and energy to slide on her homemade shoes.

INDIANS GATHER WILD RICE

The Indians living on Presque Isle were often seen coming down Otter Creek in their canoes. As they made their way through the thick growth of wild rice they carefully gathered all the rice they could and returned to their homes to prepare a meal.

COMPANY EVERY SUNDAY

How would you like to spend every Saturday scrubbing, cleaning, cooking and baking so that you would be prepared to feed a large group, the number always undetermined? Such was the life and activities of Mrs. Jonathan Wynn, her husband, being a Clerk of Courts, as well as a Justice of Peace, took charge of the legal papers of the people of the surrounding territory. On Sunday the people would walk to his home to get their papers, have legal documents signed, and listen to the news of the week which Mr. Wynn related. Of course, they made a day of it, enjoying the fellowship of the family and the delicious food that had been prepared.

Special Day on the Farm

SOAPMAKING

During the winter ashes were kept in barrels. In fact, ashes were stored throughout the year, also fat from the cooking and butchering was saved. When the appropriate time arrived in the spring the men of the family poured water into the ashes. It seeped through and was drawn off through a hole near the bottom of the barrel. This formed a brown liquid called lye. A big kettle suspended from a pole that extended from one tree to another

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was filled with this lye. The fats were placed in the lye and a hot fire kept burning under the kettle. This mixture was cooked until it became thick as jelly. It was then removed and cut into cakes which supplied the family with soap for the year.

CANDLEMAKING

Tallow which had been kept from butchering of cattle was melted in a large kettle. If the family did not have molds, they dipped rolled cotton cloth into the tallow. The tallow collected around the cloth and then was put into a candle rod where it became hard. Those who had the molds used a dipper and poured the hot tallow into each mold thus making six or eight candles at a time. This task was performed by the women of the household. It was an important day which meant much to each member of the family, for during the long winter evenings they would be supplied with the light furnished by these candles. How much cheer the light from a little candle brought to a home! It's difficult for one to appreciate the flickering candlelight when we can flood our rooms with light by turning on a switch. Yet we recall that Shakespeare refers to the light of the candle in *The Merchant of Venice* when Portia approaching her home, sees the candlelight shining through her window and says,

"How far that little candle throws its beams;
so shines a good deed in a naughty world."

THE MAKING OF APPLE BUTTER THE PREPARATION

This was two days' work in which the entire family participated. In case married brothers and sisters did not live near by, the neighbors were invited to participate.

The first day apples were picked up, loaded and taken to the mill where they were pressed into cider. In the evening the entire family, relatives, and neighbors gathered to peel and core the apples. Some families had an apple peeler which speeded up the work, but it took time and patience to core five or more bushels of apples. However, this group enjoyed working together enlivening the task with their chit chat.

SECOND DAY

This event took place in late October or early

November so those taking part had to be prepared for chilly or even rainy weather.

A large copper lined kettle holding twenty five or thirty gallon was hung from a huge bar erected for this particular occasion. A fire was built under the kettle into which cider had been placed. It was kept boiling until it simmered down to about half the amount put into the kettle. By boiling the cider less sugar was required to season the contents. Apples were then placed in the hot cider and now the tedious work began. A paddle fitted with holes and attached to a handle five or more feet long was used to stir the contents. The stirring had to continue for hours to prevent the apples from scorching. The members of the group took turns in the stirring. The men of the family came to the rescue frequently, and the older children were given this responsibility while the men took time out for meals.

RAIN ENJOYED BY CHILDREN

A lean-to was made to keep the rain off the apple butter and the one using the paddle. When the children took over, they enjoyed hearing the rain come down with a pitter patter on the roof of the "lean-to". They pretended they were gypsies and enjoyed this so much they were sorry when Daddy returned to take over the paddle.

MAPLE SUGAR TIME

In late winter and early spring the maple trees were tapped. A hole was bored into the trunk of the tree about three feet from the ground. A spout was driven into the hole and a wooden bucket hung below the spout to collect the sap. The bucket was covered to keep the sap clean. Each day the farmer collected it and placed it in a large container or tank. Large iron kettles were placed out of doors in the same manner as those used for soap making. A group of neighbors and friends met to help keep the fires going. It was boiled until most of the water evaporated as steam. The remainder was strained through woolen cloth and made a delicious sirup which they used on pancakes.

They ended the celebration by making the heavier sirup into maple candy. Everyone helped with the work and spent the evening having a social time with plenty of maple candy and good food.

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THRESHING DAY

What an exciting day for every member of the family! The children were delighted to see the large black combined boiler and engine hauling the huge separator turn into their driveway. It was such a fascinating machine to them. Now they could get into the yard and watch the men who came with the machine place the separator where the farmer wanted his straw to be stacked, then run the engine a certain distance away and place a large belt around the wheel on the engine and around another wheel on the separator. Previous to this, wood or coal had been placed near by so the fireman could supply his boiler and produce enough steam to run the outfit.

Men and teams were in the field loading grain so the threshers would be kept busy. When a load of grain arrived, the team was driven to the separator and the men pitched the bundles on a rack. A man took the bundles, cut the twine, and fed the straw containing the grain into the machine. Here the grain, separated from the straw, was deposited in a box which measured it. The straw was sent by a carrier up and out a short distance from the machine, then dropped on the ground where a huge stack of straw would be piled. As soon as one load had been threshed, another team was ready to move forward to take the place of the empty wagon which returned to the field for another load. The grain was placed in bags and hauled to a granary. It took about twenty men to take care of the hauling, storing, and running of the machine.

While this activity was taking place on the outside, much was being done on the inside to provide plenty of good food for these men. The women of the household with the help of neighbors or friends were preparing potatoes, meat, pie, cake, jelly, cookies, and what not for the main meal. In addition to this, provisions were made for midmorning and afternoon lunches with sandwiches, doughnuts, lemonade, and cold tea or coffee to replenish the men and restore their energy.

The labor supply was provided by exchanging work in the case of both men and women. The work was made lighter by the help of many hands while everyone enjoyed the sociability of the affair.

The length of time spent at one home depended upon the amount of grain each farmer raised. If a neighbor near by had a small amount of grain,

often arrangements were made for him to haul his grain to the machine, thus saving time and money for a second setting of the machine.

The owner of the machine measured the grain and charged the farmer a certain amount per bushel.

If the machine pulled in during the evening, the farmer's wife provided breakfast for the men who followed the machine from one place to the other.

QUILTING BEES

A quilt is a padded needlework cover. Before one was ready for a quilting bee many hours were spent in making quilt blocks by sewing pieces of cloth together forming a pattern. It might be a design of squares made of different colored cloth. This cloth was material left over from dresses that were made for members of the family. Sometimes the designs were complicated. The designs were varied and work of this type was highly prized. After completing the number of blocks needed, plain cloth was used to join them together to form the top of the quilt. Then the bottom of the quilt was made by sewing together pieces of plain cloth making it approximately seventy-two by ninety inches. Cotton was placed between the top and bottom and it was then placed on a quilting frame. This frame was fastened to the top of chairs and on them the quilt was stretched to its full length and breadth. The women of the community were then invited and the fine needlework began. Sometimes the families of the women were invited to come to supper and the group enjoyed an evening of singing, dancing, and a real talk fest.

MAKING HAY

This task usually required every member of the family old enough to work, in addition to one or two neighbors. However, the cutting and stacking of the hay was done by the men in most cases, but some women were able to load the hay on the wagon as it was lifted up to them by men with pitchforks.

CUTTING HAY

This was done by using the scythe which is a cutting instrument with a long curved blade attached at an angle to a long bent handle. This slow process of cutting and storing led to improvements which made it possible to raise more hay and

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clover for the feeding of horses and cattle. The mowing machine was invented by Peter Gaillard in 1812. It is made up of a frame mounted on wheels with a long cutter bar which extends to the side. The mower was drawn by horses and cut a swath from four to four and a half feet wide. With the use of the mower much time was saved. After the hay was cut it was necessary to allow time for it to dry. The amount of time depended on the weather.

RAKING

After the hay was dry it was put into windrows by the use of a one horse rake. If there was a boy in the family, he was given the task of raking. The long curved tines gathered the hay until it had a load, which was then tripped by stepping on a lever. This raised the tines and left the hay in a windrow. Sometimes a girl in the family took care of the raking.

STACKING HAY AND LOADING

Men followed and put these windrows into stacks. A wagon on which there was a wide hay rack was driven between rows of the stacked hay and men pitched it up to a man who loaded it on the wagon.

STORING HAY

It was then taken to the barn and by means of forks it was pitched from the load to men in the mow where it was evenly divided on the floor. This work was made easier by the use of a large hay fork which was suspended from the rafters in about the middle of the mow. A small rope attached to two levers on the fork made it possible to trip the load by giving it a jerk. A man on the load of hay put the fork into the hay, tightened the levers and moved to one side. In the meantime the driver of the team had attached the large rope holding the fork and connected by pulleys to the whippetree and the team moved forward pulling the fork with the hay up over the mow where it was tripped and the men in the mow distributed it.

The driver of the team was usually one of the women or girls of the family as the men and boys were needed elsewhere.

WATER BOY OR GIRL

One of the smaller children was given the task of carrying water to the field and providing the

workers with cool water to quench their thirst.

The writer recalls an experience as a water carrier. The days were long. It took many trips back and forth from the house to the field. Who wouldn't think of some way to eliminate part of the walking? So, when her sister came along driving one of the mules hitched to the rake, on she jumped just back of the mule. A rather bumpy ride and one that required the know-how of staying put but what farm girl doesn't soon learn how to take care of herself in dangerous positions? All went well until that mule decided it was time to go to the barn. Nothing could stop him. The driver was concerned about her passenger who despite all the bumps remained seated. In due time the driver stopped the mule by heading him into a picket fence. By that time every man in the field was running to the rescue. Too bad that ended the rides and her weary feet had to carry her back and forth throughout the hot days of harvest.

BUTCHERING

What boy or girl has not tried to trump up some excuse to stay home from school to take part in the activities that took place when hogs or cattle were butchered?

FIRST PREPARATION

Between 1837 and 1845, farmers let their hogs and cattle roam through the forest at will. Each farmer designated his stock by a mark which was placed on file in the county records. For example, John Consaul's stock was marked with a square crop off the right ear and a round hole in the left ear, and Leonard Whitmore marked his with a square crop off the left ear and a swallow fork off the right. In this way there was no doubt about ownership.

The hogs fed upon hickory nuts and acorns in the fall and the meat had a taste that many people did not like. To eliminate this taste the farmer would go into the woods, hunt for his hogs and take as many home as he expected to butcher. He placed them in a pen and fed them corn for two or more weeks. When he decided the weather was cold enough and the hogs ready the day for the butchering was set.

THE KILLING

Sometimes the hog was shot in the head first, then its throat cut so it would bleed. Other farmers

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cut the throat of the hog without shooting it. If the family was fond of blood sausage, the blood was kept and made into sausage, otherwise it flowed onto the ground. Time was allowed for the bleeding before the next step was taken.

SECOND PREPARATION

While the hog was being killed other members of the family were busy. A large black kettle was suspended between two poles. It was filled with water and a fire built under the kettle.

A platform about four feet high was built and a large barrel was placed at the end of the platform in a slanting position. A hook was then fastened into the mouth of the hog so that two men could place the carcass on the platform. The scalding water was put into the barrel and the men placed the hog in the scalding water, head up, moving it up and down to loosen the hair.

SCRAPING AND CLEANING

After the hog had been bathed in the scalding water, it was pulled up and placed on the platform. The men used scrapers to remove the hair. A gambrel was then used to spread the hind legs apart, each leg being fastened to the ends of the gambrel by inserting it into tendons of the leg. A rope was fastened to the center of the gambrel and the body of the hog was suspended head down from a limb of a tree or between two poles. More scalding water was thrown on the body to remove any hair or dirt.

REMOVING INTESTINES AND ORGANS

With a sharp butcher knife an incision was made in the belly and it was laid open from one end of the hog to the other. The intestines were removed and placed in a large dish pan. Then the heart, lungs, liver, spleen and kidneys were removed. There were large layers of fat around the kidneys. This was removed, saved and rendered into leaf lard.

The inside of the hog was thoroughly washed by throwing water upon it.

CARE OF INTESTINES AND ORGANS

The intestines and organs were carried into the house and placed on a large table. All the fat around the intestines and organs was removed and put into a large kettle. This kettle was placed on the stove and the grease fried out leaving crisp pieces

called "cracklings". The grease was poured into crocks and allowed to cool. This gave the family their supply of lard for several weeks. The crocks were carefully covered and put into a cool place, usually a cellar, ready for use.

The liver and heart were cleaned and served in various ways.

Some families cleaned the small intestines and filled them with sausage.

PICKLED PIGS FEET

The feet of the hogs were cleaned and pickled. They were then put in cans to be served as a delicate dish sometime later.

HEAD CHEESE

The head of the hog was cut up into fine pieces and made into head cheese.

THE MEAT

The carcass of the hog hung over night giving it time to cool. The next day it was cut into various parts, such as hams, shoulders, side meat, etc.

Part of the meat was placed into a barrel and strong salt brine poured over it until the meat was entirely covered. By this means the meat could be kept indefinitely. When served, a piece was removed and cut into slices, then the strong salt brine removed by boiling it in water for several minutes before frying.

Often the hams and shoulders were hung up in a smoke house. If the family liked bacon, part of the side meat would be smoked. A fire in a container was built and burned slowly allowing the smoke to penetrate the meat. This preserved it and the meat was left in the smoke house until the family wanted some for food. Usually it was freshened in the same manner as was the salt pork.

TENDERLOIN

The tenderloin, the tenderest part of a loin just under the short ribs, was served while it was fresh. This was a feast for everyone in the family. After butchering, each neighbor was given some of the meat which everyone enjoyed. As neighbors butchered at different times, there were a number of these feasts.

CHILDREN'S FUN

The children of the family watched all these activities. Many questions were asked. Here they

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were learning about the functions of the heart, liver, intestines and other organs at first hand. After all a day at home in this laboratory was valuable especially if parents were understanding.

Then what fun scraping the pig tails and putting them in the oven to bake. They sampled the "cracklings" and pronounced them good. But even more fun was had when they cleaned the bladders and inserted a straw into the opening so they could take turns in filling it with air. A cord was tied around the opening, and they had a bag which after being dried could be used as a punch bag. They took turns seeing who could keep it in the air the longest. Many happy hours were spent with these until at last someone hit it too hard and it was no longer of service.

THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS

These are family days. On such special occasions when families were large mothers, spent two or more weeks preparing for the feast. Foods of all kinds were prepared — roasted, boiled, and baked. Pies, cookies, homemade candies were made ready for this important event. The religious aspect of these days was not forgotten.

On Thanksgiving their minds turned to their many blessings. They were indeed thankful for enough food, clothing and heat to make life tolerable. So they took time to attend services and render thanks to God. At Christmas time they were thankful for small gifts. Sometimes these gifts were homemade and their trees decorated with popcorn.

Other times the children were told that Santa was so busy he could not get to their home but he would come later. Then mother by careful planning was able to get to the city when prices were reduced so she could purchase something for each member of the family. In some cases it was white gum in the shape of a heart with a picture pasted in the center of the heart and an orange for each member of the family.

Hard Days on Farm

Usually Monday, sometimes called "Blue Monday," was wash day. This meant long hours and back breaking work.

PREPARATION

To prepare for the washing it was necessary to pull up water from a well or cistern by lowering a

bucket to which a rope was attached. This required many buckets of water as water in two tubs were needed for washing and rinsing the clothes. Then a big copper boiler had to be partly filled in which to boil them, and water was placed in large kettles to put on the stove to heat for the washing. A tub was placed on a stand in which a washboard was used. Near this tub, two more stands were placed for the tubs in which clothes were rinsed. In the one tub bluing was added to the water to help make the clothes white. Another container with water would be used in which to place garments that were very soiled.

THE WASHING

With a big bar of soap on the washboard, the work began. Clothes were placed in the tub and thoroughly soaked with water. Then piece by piece they were placed on the board and the soiled spots soaped. Now the real work began. The clothes, garment by garment, were rubbed up and down on the board. Each white garment was checked, then placed in the boiler to undergo a process of boiling to further cleanse and kill the germs.

THE RINSING

The clothes were taken from the boiler, and were put into a tub of clear water, moved up and down to remove the suds and then wrung by hand and placed into the tub of bluing water. If fortunate, one might have a hand wringer which required more muscle work. Then such garments as skirts and dresses had to be put through the starch and wringer again.

HANGING CLOTHES

The clothes were then hung on the line in the back yard to dry. After being allowed time to dry they were taken from the line. The starched clothes were sprinkled, rolled up, and put away for ironing the next day.

IRONING DAY

This was another long, hard day. A hot fire must be kept regardless of the temperature outside. Flat irons were placed on top of the stove to heat. If one had an ironing board, that would be fine. If not, the table top was padded and used it as an ironing board. It required at least four flat irons to keep ironing, as in a short time the iron would

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cool and have to be replaced. It took time and patience to iron the starched dresses and petticoats with their ruffles. Then the sheets, pillow cases, towels, and what not had to be tackled. But this was not the end. Before putting the clothes away, buttons had to be replaced, garments repaired and hose darned. This required another full day of hard work.

CLEANING DAY

Armed with a dust cap, broom, dust pan and dust rags the housewife began cleaning the house. How dusty the carpets were and how the dust flew as she wielded the broom. That in itself would be hard enough, but then dusting all the furniture was another task. One nice thing about was it was that the house was not full of furniture, little "do-dads" on the "What Not", etc.

This part of the cleaning was then followed by the scrubbing. There was no covering on the kitchen floor. Every housewife took pride in keeping her kitchen floor white even though the boards might be somewhat rough and knotty. To keep the floor white, ashes or lye was used with soap. After applying plenty of muscle, the desired result was obtained.

BAKING

These were days of little refrigeration facilities so Saturday was set aside as the day for baking pies, cakes, bread, beans and other goodies for the Sunday dinner.

The yeast had to be set the night before to be ready for the baking of bread on Saturday. Then early Saturday morning after the breakfast was prepared and the family fed, the children were set to work helping to wash the dishes. Mother then turned her attention to the bread, kneading and putting it into loaves, letting it rise, and placing it in a hot oven to bake.

While the bread was baking she was busy getting the pies ready to put into the oven, as soon as the bread was ready to take out. Then her next task was preparing a huge cake so it would be ready for the oven as soon as the pies were baked.

The children were kept busy filling the wood box, carrying in water and a dozen or more other jobs that had to be taken care of. In fact, there was a job for every member of the household while the delicious smells coming from the kitchen made everyone eager to sample the goodies.

CHURNING

Each morning the cream that had formed on the pans or crocks of milk was carefully skimmed from the top and put into a container. Every two or three days the cream was placed into a churn. Before placing the cream into a churn scalding water was poured into it. This cleaned the churn and in cold weather raised the temperature which made the cream easier to change into butter. In hot weather after putting the scalding water into the churn, cold water was placed into it to reduce the temperature.

The churn was usually shaped like a keg. There was a hole in the cover through which the handle of the dasher passed. The dasher was filled with holes and was kept moving up and down thus bringing the heavier portion together until butter was formed. The milky substance was called buttermilk. The butter was then placed in a large wooden bowl and mixed with salt. A ladle was used to work the salt into the butter and remove the liquid. After it was thoroughly worked it was placed in a container with a tight cover and put in the cellar or well to keep cool.

The buttermilk was used as a drink. If any of it remained, it was used in making biscuits, pancakes, dumplings, and fried cakes.

Usually the children were given the task of churning. On days when the temperature of the cream was not just right, it took considerable time and patience to work the cream into butter. These were days the children did not enjoy, but they appreciated spreading their bread with butter and covering it with a thick layer of jam. A big slice of homemade bread spread with butter and jam was much tastier than any sandwich. They looked forward to such a lunch as soon as they arrived home from school.

School Days

Children were called early in the morning so that the entire family gathered about the table for breakfast. In many of the homes after breakfast the father read from the Bible and each member took part in prayer.

Then each child knew the chores assigned. The boys would help feed and water the stock. The wood-box was to be filled with wood for the day, water pumped and brought into the house. The girls washed the dishes, made the beds, and swept the floor.

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GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Mother supervised the washing of faces, necks, ears, and hands. She combed and braided the hair of the younger girls. Sometimes the braids were looped under and tied near the head with a red or blue ribbon. If the family could not afford the ribbon, some strong cord was used.

Mother with the help of the older girls of the family got the lunches packed. Often lunch for the entire group was put into a basket and placed in charge of the oldest child.

CLOTHES

Most of the clothes were homemade. The dresses were plain but durable. During the cold winter every member of the family wore long underclothes. These were usually made of cotton flannel. The hose were long and were knitted by mother or grandmother. The same was true of the mittens. Gloves were unknown. The shoes were heavy and coarse. During the bad weather the boys wore boots. In fact, this was often true of the girls as the mud was so deep that boots served as a protection. Everyone had to walk. Sometimes children walked two or three miles to school. Because of poor roads, long distances and extreme weather, many children were absent frequently. However, children endured all types of weather, and often arrived at school with hands almost frozen. Teachers frequently had to place the hands of children in cold water to relieve the pain and restore proper circulation.

AFTER SCHOOL

When the children arrived home after school, they changed from their school clothes to those which they wore as work clothes. After taking time to eat a large slice of homemade bread spread with butter and jam each child went about taking care of the chores assigned. After the evening meal the family gathered in the living room. Part of the time was devoted by mother or father reading aloud to the family and the rest to any school work they brought home. During the long winter nights, they often enjoyed eating apples and popcorn. Some families were interested in music and spent some time around an old organ singing. This often led to a singing school held in the school house once a week.

GAMES CHILDREN ENJOYED

During the winter when snow was on the ground, they enjoyed Fox and Geese, building a snow fort and having a battle with snowballs as ammunition.

Other games were Pump, Pump Pull Away, Long Ball, Crack the Whip, Blind Man's Buff, Drop the Handkerchief, Anti-Over, Hide and Seek, Duck on the Rock.

The smaller girls played house. They used listings which they broke into pieces and drove into the ground to separate their house into rooms. They collected broken dishes and various articles to put into the rooms. The smaller boys enjoyed playing horse. Two were chosen to be the horses, and with binder twine, lines were made. One line was attached to the horse on the right to his right arm and on the other one's left arm. Then by running twine from each outside line to the opposite arm of each they were fastened together similar to the arrangement of lines on a team. One boy was the driver. There were as many teams as could be paired up with drivers.

Social Life

These pioneers, hungry for companionship, made use of every opportunity for social activities. At such occasions everyone was welcome for miles around.

HOUSE WARMING

Every new cabin that was erected called for a house warming upon completion. This was attended by members of the community for miles around. Eating and drinking together they became better acquainted. The dancing that followed was enjoyed by young and old. Often friendships among young people developed into matrimony.

BARN DANCES

A new barn was initiated by inviting the community to a square dance. There were always one or more "fiddlers" in a community who were willing to provide the music and other who enjoyed "calling".

BOX SOCIALS

These were usually held at the school house. The children would prepare a program after which an auctioneer did his best to entice the crowd to keep raising the bid for each box.

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SLEIGH RIDES

Snow was welcome to the young folks. Plans were made for a sleigh ride some distance away from home. The harness of each horse was adorned with strings of sleigh bells and the box on the sleigh was filled with straw. Plenty of blankets were provided so there was no excuse for being cold. Arriving at some hall or school house, they danced until the wee hours of the morning, then returned home tired and weary, but happy.

SURPRISE PARTIES

The young people enjoyed surprising some friends when they knew they would receive a happy welcome. No home would be entirely unprepared as there were always apples in the cellar, cookies in the jar, and popcorn ready for the popper. Then there was the opportunity of turning it into a "taffy pull" where everyone enjoyed pulling taffy with a partner to see which couple could produce the best tasting taffy.

At one of these parties they found the family away. However, the boys managed to open one of the windows and get into the house. While waiting they found a jar of cookies which they sampled. The family on their way home from church noticed the lights in the house. They were surprised and concerned thinking someone had broken in to steal but were happy to find a house full of young people enjoying themselves.

THE ORGAN GOES TO CHURCH

One year a church was preparing for a special program. They had no organ but one of the members offered the use of his organ. He loaded it on a mud boat and the children followed the old mud boat carrying their prized organ to the church where everyone in the community could enjoy it.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The men spent many evenings in the country store sitting around telling stories, discussing politics, and eating cheese and crackers.

Some of their time was given to political meetings and elections which the women trusted entirely to them, but you may be sure most of the women voted by proxy.

Skating parties, singing schools, spelling bees, boat rides, and picnics were among the many things these young people enjoyed. During the summer many enjoyed visits to Presque Isle where they attended the opera, danced, or became children again riding the roller coaster or merry-go-around.

HUSKING BEE

The "husking bee" was another social activity which provided opportunity for fun and feasting.

In preparation for this event the corn was taken from the stalks and placed into two piles equally divided. Captains were chosen and each leader selected men to be on his side until all men present became a member of one of the teams. Then the work began in earnest, each intent on winning the contest. While the men were busy husking corn, the women were preparing the food for everyone, especially the hungry men. If by chance any man found a red ear, it entitled him to kiss the girl of his choice. However, during this time of merriment kisses were taken even though the red ear of corn was not presented in return.

Winter could not dampen the spirits of these hardy young people. They sharpened their skates and met at a huge bonfire built along the shore of the bay. Then they paired off and went gliding over the smooth ice. A few of them had become experts on skates and enjoyed entertaining the group. In time they became tired and stopped at one of the homes nearby where they continued their merry making with "eats" and games.

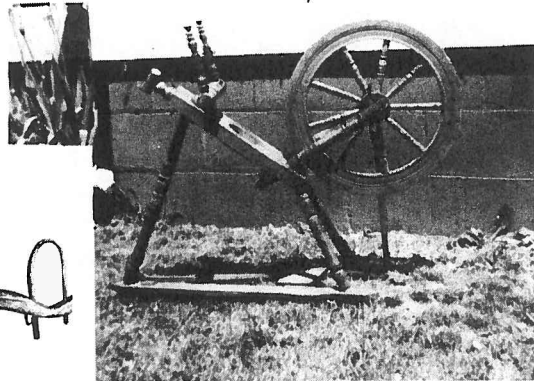
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Old Implements. A. Plow. B. Yoke for Oxen. C. Buck saw and Broad Ax. D. Cradle.

Ohio Historical Society, The Ohio State Museum.



Household Necessities. A. Wooden churn. B. Flat irons. C. Lighting Equipment. D. Bed warmer. Permission: Ohio Historical Society, The Ohio State Museum.



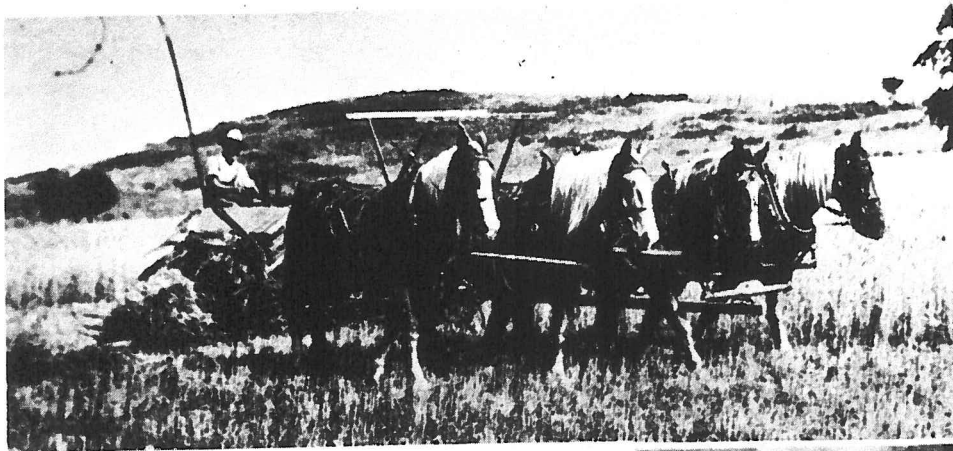
An old spinning wheel, over 100 years old.
Loaned by: Mrs. Helen Gonlet



The Improved Quaker Reaper, with Dropper Attachment.

From Ad taken from Ohio Farmer Magazine.

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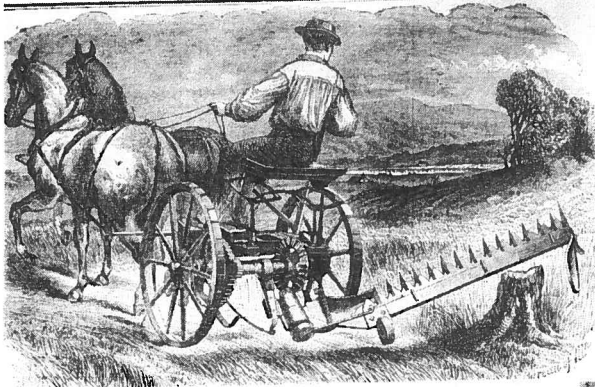


A Horse-Drawn Binder. From the days of Cyrus McCormick until the tractor "revolution," Ohio farmers harvested their grain in this way. *Right:* Corn in the Shock. Formerly a common and attractive sight. After drying, the corn in the shocks was "shucked" and cribbed for the winter. The self binder was another step forward.



To the right and below, a picture of corn cut and placed in *shocks*, for drying, is shown. The corn in shocks is a reminder of the *corn husking bees*.

OHIO FARMER, SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 1869.

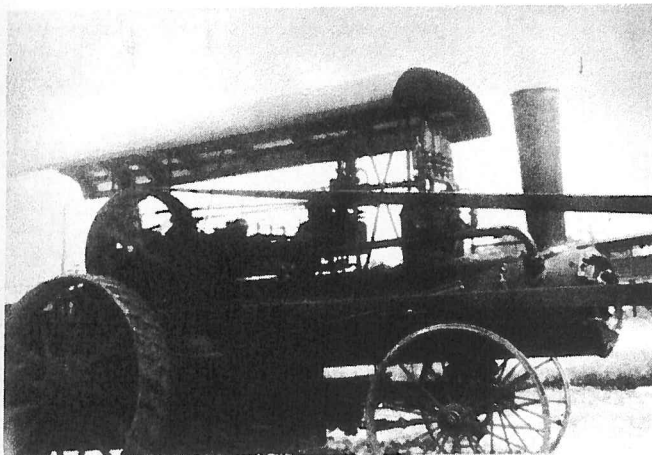


Both pictures — From ads in Ohio Farmer Magazine.

OHIO FARMER, SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 1869.

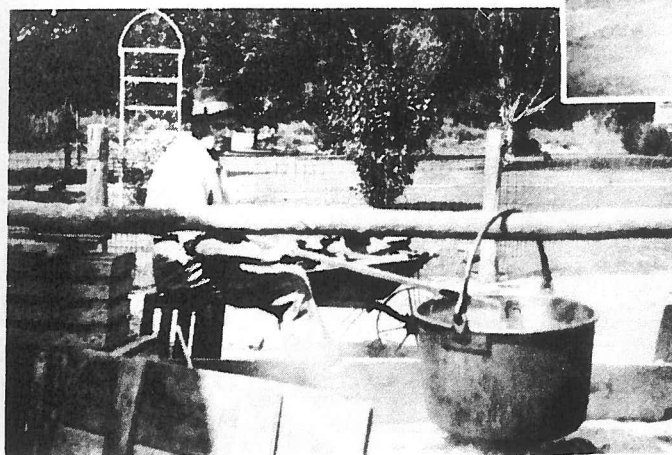
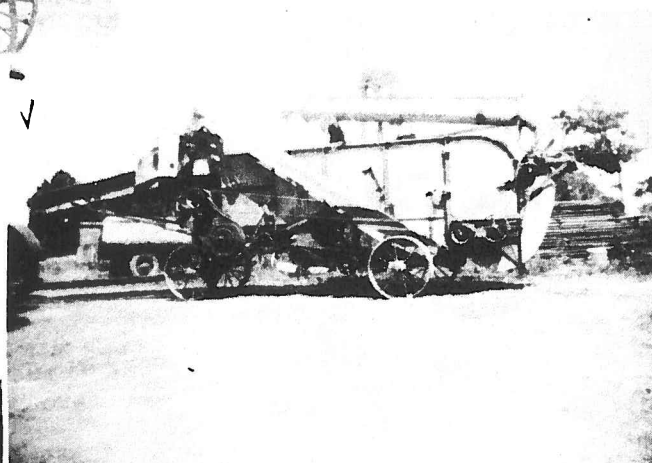


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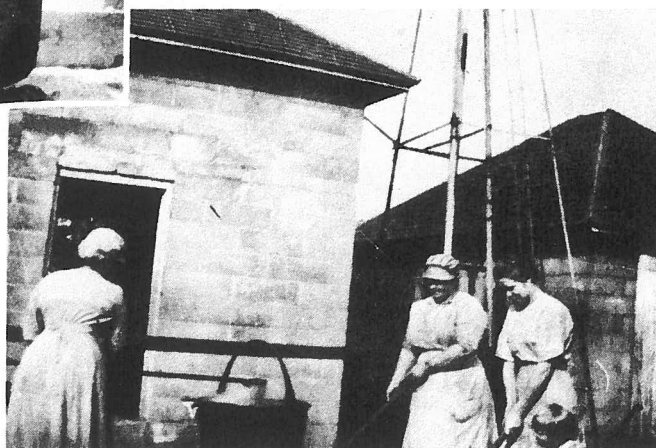
Threshing Day
Donated by Mrs. Helen Gonlet

Children watched this procedure with delight.
Donated by Mrs. Helen Gonlet



Making apple butter at The Wiemeyers.
Donated by Elma Wiemeyers

Busy Women at The Munday.
Donated by Gladys Munday Newman



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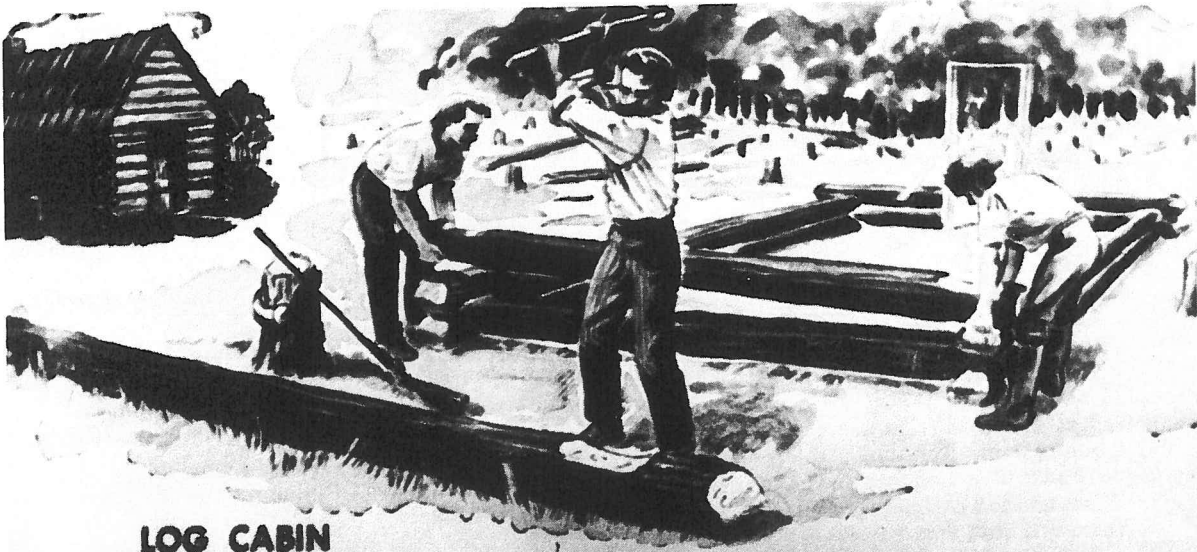
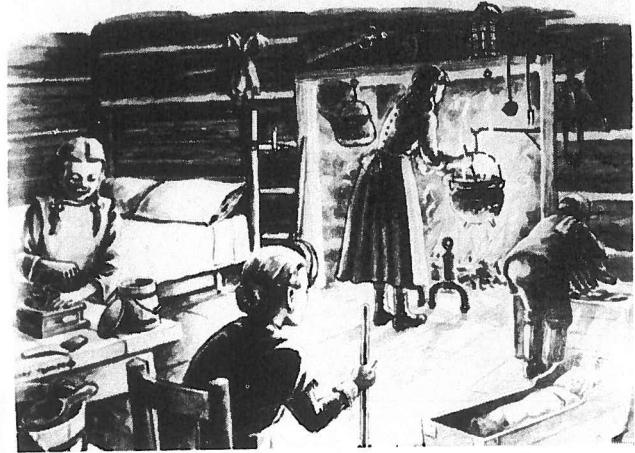


The Woodsman cut a path through the forest, cleared his land, and built a home in the wilderness. His broad ax is the symbol of pioneer courage.



Travelling on Foot, and sometimes on horseback, trappers, explorers, and adventurers crossed the Alleghenies during the 1700's and blazed the trails for other pioneers to follow.

HOME LIFE OF THE PIONEERS



LOG CABIN

In forested regions, or along wooded creeks on the plain, the first permanent home of the pioneers was the log cabin. After the trees were felled, the logs were trimmed, notched at the ends, and fitted into place. Thin wedges of

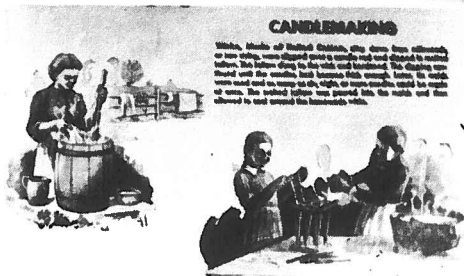
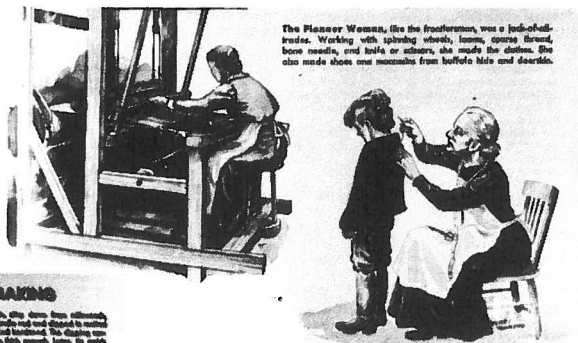
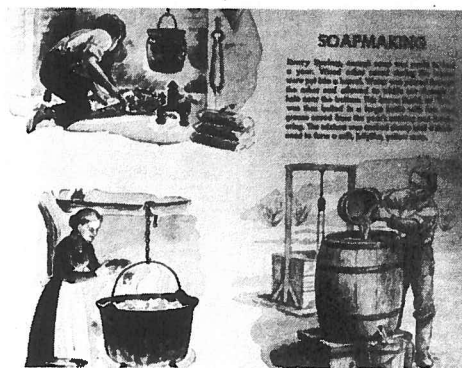
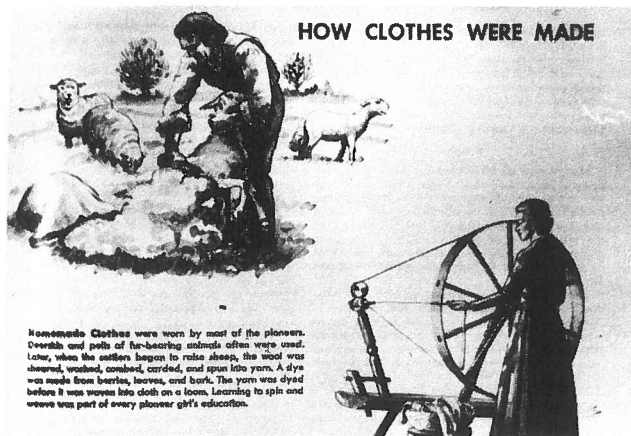
wood were inserted where the logs did not fit. The cracks were "chinked" or "daubed" with a mixture of clay, grass, and mud. The roofs usually were made with poles, which were covered with clapboards shaped by an ax.

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Some of our forefathers traveled from the east to Ohio in the covered wagons while others followed water routes making use of sail boats.



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