

THE DIARY OF ELIJAH PERKINS

(The original was sent to Virginia Armstrong Smythe 9-20-73. It was written on what we call a legal pad today. The pages were very fragile and were folded inside a wrapper that had contained the U. S. News and World Report. Written on the cover was "Belongs to Rex Armstrong" in the handwriting of Luther Perkins. This document is now in the possession of Carolyn Ford who resides in Florida.)

ELIJAH PERKINS

Will be 84 years of age the 18th of November 1876. Father's name Reuben: came from Ten Mile, Pa. I was about three or four years old then. I don't know where we crossed the Ohio River. Settled first on the Brown place near Dorsey's Mill. _____ Beans lived where Isaac Ramsey lives. _____ Steems lived just above us. I think the battle of Captina was fought before we came. At the forks of Capteen, a surveyor was killed by the Indians as was supposed either just before or just after we came. Mother died down the creek. Father up here. Father about fifty when he died. Called "Capteen" at first, not Captina. I don't know why Anderson's Run was so called. Hardesty Flood, Capteen very high then. Hasn't been so high since. Bears, wolves, beavers, have plenty of otters, squirrels, black, red and gray about equally divided. Have seen elk, gray foxes, deer, plenty of wild cats, plenty of painters, rattlesnakes, lots of 'em, plenty of eagles, plenty of Boo-owls. I remember seeing Indians when I was small.

We lived near Dorsey's four or five years. We moved up on Cat's Hill near the mouth of Cat's Run in the forks of Cat's Run. Lived there one summer. Then moved to the cave (cove?) just south of here. Father entered the land - 160 acres. Ruben Perkins widow lives there now. We lived there about ten years. Father died there. I think Everhart is sixteen or seventeen years older than I am. He has the Original record of all our ages in my father's old Bible. I know this. The last time I saw any wolves was about forty years ago. Thirteen wolves attacked a two year old steer in the cave near by. I heard them and got close to them before they disisted. When I got to the house, I heard them again. I took gun and went down. They had killed the steer and all gone but one. I killed it. Before that in early times, it was a common thing for the wolves to attack the sheep. The bears would kill the hogs. A rattlesnake killed a man named Davis who lived near where Sam Danford now lives. Davis lived only about a half hour after he was bitten. This happened when we were living near Dorsey's. I have heard of the name of Charlie Wilkey**. Have heard of the girl rescued by Lewis Wetzel. Don't recollect the name.

Sisk (?), & Tim & Sye Collins: John Waller (or Walles). It was Abner Barret who married Ann Collins. I have always heard that this was the first wedding on Capteen. Squire David Ruble married them. This was about one year after we came to Capteen.

The Collinses and Barret both families came to Capteen next spring after we came. James, Isaac, Tim, and Abner Barret all brothers. Robt Satty came shortly after we did. Abner Barret was the first blacksmith ever on Capteen. Barrets lived on Cat's Hill. Shop nearby. Abner, the blacksmith, the same who married Miss Collins. The Collinses lived below-in just below the old Brown place. The first child born Capteen was in (of) my father's family. About a year maybe less after we came to Ohio. The child died young.

Old Joseph Baker who lived near where Shaeffer now lives is supposed to have killed the last Indian killed in our neighborhood. Did it because the Indians killed John Baker at battle of Captina. This was said to have occurred while we were living at Dorsey's. I used to hear of Indian George, Wm. Heath was one of the first settlers near foot of Cat's Hill. I think that my mother was the first of the early settlers on Capteen to die. I was between three and four years old when she died-shortly after we came to Ohio-viz: Everhart, Reuben, Elias, Elijah, Rachel and Elizabeth. None except the one that died after we came to Ohio. Of all these, only Everhart and I are living. One child died before I was born in Penna. They called it Elias. Four children before me. None of them Twins. Dave Thomas was the first to live on the land which he entered. Old John Brown just above at mouth of Rocky Fork, Old John Aldridge and old David Blue, John & Daniel Wallers just below mouth of Rocky Fork.

Seth Wards was the first ~~born~~ cracker near mouth of Bend Fork was built 78 or 80 years ago. Distillery built a good many years afterward. Seth first settled in the house where John Danford now lives. Died there. Aron & Timothy Ward, half brothers of Seth, lived down the creek.

First school house up the creek was built at the mouth of run just west of A. Caldwell's on opposite side of the creek from Caldwell's house-on Jennings Perkins land-runs south into creek-built over sixty years ago. The mouth of school house Run was built about a year after we came to Ohio. First teacher in the house near Caldwell's was Joseph Martin. James Starr was the first preacher.

The Moors came to Ohio a year or two after we did and settled up the creek near Amster Moors. The old man was Michael. Jacob, Isaac and Michael were his children. Tobias Moore, his brother, came with family about the same time to same region of the country. They came from Penna. James Starr used to preach among these Moors. I have heard Rev. _____ Fordyce preach. He preached not long after Starr preached here.

Wooden hoes generally, wooden plows always, harrow all wood - used withes for fastening double trees Ropes for trace chains, collars best ones made of corn husks.

All wore moccasins. Those who wore anything on their heads made hats out of straw

or other material. Biggest part of them didn't wear anything. Wore shoes afterward on feet then boots. Saw umbrella first one about forty or fifty years ago. For a good axe had to pay \$4.00, \$3.00 for a hand saw. Most people used sleds. A man named David Hart had the first wagon I ever knew of. He lived near mouth of Cat's Run.

The first store in this country was at Newellstown owned by Jas. Caldwell. Josiah Dillon had the next one. It was on Capteen. Caldwell furnished him the goods. Calico generally 50 cents a yd. at St. Clairsville - Dillon used to ask the same. Whisky generally 25 cents a gallon.

Grapes were introduced about twenty years ago. Dillons salt well was bored by McLaughlin. Sharpened our scythes with a hammer. Never ground them. Rough whetstones. Straighter handles. Old Seth Ward had the first orchard I knew of on Capteen at the mouth of Bend Fork. _____ I don't remember that McKnight taught at Shipman Schoolhouse. This school huse built only about thirty years ago. I thought the Alex Danford brick house was the first one. Perhaps, Tommy Armstrong built the first and Ambers Danford the second. Ambers expended only one dollar in cash when building this house. Paid for material and labor in pork. When we first came there were hogs running wild in the woods, without owners. The hogs would eat the rattlesnakes - the old woods hogs. The "woods hogs" made better meat. Wheat growing in new ground on the creek bottoms would turn red - become "sick." People couldn't eat it without being made sick by it. Didn't have any nails those days. Jahm Danfords house was the first I ever knew shingled. Joseph Martin built it. First plank floors also. It was a hewed log house. The first one I ever knew of. The first Squire in this Tp. was Isaac Moore and held the office for 21 years. Only one at first. I think that people generally bought the material and made their own powder - one dollar a pound - got lead and flint somewhere across the river. Salt brought from east at first on pack horses \$1.00 per bushel. John Devore, the first peddler I knew of through here, carried miscellaneous articles. Feet frozen.

Seth Ward's mill was the first on the creek. Windells Mill was built 5, 6 or 7 years afterwards. It was the second. I think Seth Wards still house was the first. Don't know any thing about the Dorsey furnace for making iron. Old Jim Cree was an early settler. He was the discoverer of salt on Capteen - at Dillons.

I used to dig lots of ginseng - 20 cents a lb. green. Took it to Wheeling or St. Clairsville. Didn't have any New Orleans molasses in those days. Plenty of maple trees people made their own molasses. Percussion caps came twenty or thirty years ago. John Delancy best jumper I ever knew. Early settler but not among the first. The Delancys lived where the Groveses live on Bend Fork. Grandfather's name was Everhart. He was in the Indian Wars. When we came Belmont Co. wasn't organized. There were no townships. Arch Woods surveyed this county and Monroe. The first men who raised tobacco around here were Ben and Jesse Justice, who came from Md. some thirty years ago.

No broom corn at first. We made brooms out of hickory. Been raising broom corn something over thirty years. First, we had peaches, then apples, then cherries, a little red potato and a little white one---the first two varieties that I recollect. No rats when we came but the big woods rats. Afterwards came the black rats then the Norway rats which cleaned out the others. Grafted trees came around 25 or 30 years ago. Used to be lots of sarvices, hill grapes, & hickory nuts in the creek bottoms, grew black walnuts, white walnuts, white oaks, etc.

Submitted by Carolyn Ford

**According to Caldwell's History of Belmont and Jefferson Counties, page 165, "Charley Wilkey was a chief of the Shawnees. He was in command of the thirty warriors who attacked the fourteen men under the direction of Captain Abram Enochs at Cove Run on Captina Creek in the spring of 1794."

Shared by Helen Wallace
- grew up on Corb White farm
- Taught at Mt Horeb school