

## CHAPTER IV

### ALAIEDON TOWNSHIP.

History by O. B. Stillman; Dubois school; sketch of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Speer, Lewis H. Stanton and Mr. and Mrs. Jas Stienhoff; Jefferson City; pioneer stories by Harlow Tallman and Betsey Webber; Alaiedon Township meeting reported by school districts; first county farm.

1874

In collecting material for the early history and settlement of the township of Alaiedon, I am indebted for assistance to Nicols Lewis, Joel B. Strickland, E. W. Pattison and R. Tryon.

The township of Alaiedon was in an early day, together with all the towns east of the meridian line, called Aurelius. In 1836 or '37 the territory now comprising Alaiedon, Delhi, Lansing and Meridian were set off and called Alaiedon. In 1841 Delhi, Lansing and Meridian were organized, leaving the township of Alaiedon with the old name.

In giving a history of the early settlement of the township, I have confined myself to the township as it is now organized.

In December, 1836, James Phillips settled on the west half of the southeast quarter of section 30. He was the first white man who settled in what is now Alaiedon, Delhi, Lansing and Meridian. Joel B. Strickland settled on the north east quarter of section 17, in March, 1837. Eli Chandler came in the spring of 1837, while Wm. Lewis and his two sons, Nicols and Jacob, with their families, settled on section 29 in September of the same year. They were preceded by Egbert W. Patterson, who settled on section 28 in May, 1837. He built the first log house erected in the town, about a year before his family came. He is still living, though perfectly blind.

Adam Overacker settled on section 28 in the fall of 1837, on the farm now occupied by Wm. P. Robbins. Samuel Carl settled in the summer of 1837. Wm. C. Leek settled on section 3 in the

spring of 1837, and died there in 1852. Wm. Childs settled on section 30 May, 1837. John Strickland settled on section 20 in the winter of 1838. He is still living on the same farm at the advanced age of 93 years, and can tell some good stories of pioneer life yet.

John Hudson settled on section 7 in the summer of 1838. Jacob Dubois settled on section 36 in the spring of 1838, and his son, Garret Dubois, settled on section 35 the same year. He now lives in Bunkerhill. Stephen Dubois settled on section 25, 1838, and Matthew Dubois settled on the same section in the same year. Nathaniel Blaine settled on section 17 in the spring of 1838, while Horace Haven in the following winter took up land on section 21. P. Phillips and Major Bentley came the same year. In 1839 Nathan Davison came to section 15, Alexander Dobie to section 10, and Isaac Finch to section 14. Conrad Dubois and John Douglas came in 1840, Wm. Manning in 1841, Lewis Kent took land on section 25 the same year, and Daniel Stillman settled on section 3 in February, 1841, and died there 1862. John Asetine settled in 1842, David Finch in 1843, and R. Tryon in 1844.

In 1836, Stevens T. Mason (then Governor of Michigan), with J. Payne and George Howe, platted the village of Jefferson, on section 22, with a view to getting the county seat located there. A saw mill was built by Wm. and Nicols Lewis, in 1837 in the village of Jefferson.

The first township meeting was held at the school house in Jefferson, on section 29, in 1838. The first officers were: Supervisor, Wm. Lewis; Town Clerk, Jacol Lewis; Treasurer, James Phillips; Commissioner of Highways, Nicols Lewis, Joel B. Strickland and Adam Overacker; Justices of the Peace, Wm. C. Leek and Jacol Lewis.

The first postmaster was Wm. Lewis, appointed in 1839. The first school house was built in 1837 on section 27, in Jefferson, and was taught by Mary Ann Rolfe in the summer of 1837.

The first white child born in the township was Mary Strickland, born July 19, 1837. She became the wife of Rev. A. Clough.

The first white person to die in the township was the wife of James Phillips, who died in June, 1837.

The first ministers to preach in the township were Elder **Breck-enridge** and Elder Jackson, in 1837.

At the first town meeting held in the township there were but 15 votes polled, This comprised all or nearly all of the voters in the four townships of Alaiedon, Delhi, Lansing and Meridian.

I have gathered such facts as I could under the circumstances. Most of the pioneers have gone to their long home, and it is difficult to get exact dates.

The first records of the township have been lost up to 1842, when Alaiedon became a township by itself,

O. B. STILLMAN.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 3, ALAIEDON.

Books with genuine board covers are among the things of the past, and are **treasured** among the relics of by-gone days. The first book of records for District No. 3, in **Alaiedon** township, is one about 6 x 7 inches in size, with real wooden covers. These were originally concealed by a mottled brown paper covering, with leather back, but the paper has worn away leaving the wood exposed. Not only the book itself, but its contents as well, are of interest to those engaged in collecting Ingham county history.

During the last few years much has been said concerning the Dubois family and the part its members had in making history for this county, and in the records of this district, which is known as the "Dubois school," it is found that members of that family had a prominent part.

The residents of District No. 3 gathered for their first school meeting on **Nov.** 11, 1841, when Jacob Dubois was chosen as moderator, Garrett Dubois as director, and Steven B. Dubois as assessor for the ensuing year.

At that time it was voted to build a school house on the S. W. cor. of S. **W.**  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. **25**, T. 3 N. R. 1 W., "said building to be made of logs, **22** ft. square, with a shingle roof and a good box stove." It **was** also voted that \$100 **be** raised by tax for building and furnishing said 'house,

The tax run from \$3 to \$16 per capita, some paying in labor at five shillings per day, some **in** hand riven shingles at 40 cts. per hundred, some in lumber, while one paid in nails at 10 cts. per

pound, lumber at \$8 per thousand, and glass for windows. There were twenty-four pupils in the school the first year; the books used were Cobb's and the elementary spelling books, History of the United States, New English Reader, Grammar and Geography, **the** inference being that the "Cobb's" mentioned were books on mathematics. Three months school each year was the rule until 1850 when it was voted to have both a summer and a winter school, and about that date it was voted to raise 60 cts. to pay one tax payer for inspecting the teacher, Money for teachers **wages** was raised by levying a tax **on each** child of school age.

In 1855 at a special meeting it was voted to replace the log school house by one made of brick, to cost \$900, but this building was not completed until 1857 and then by vote of the tax payers it was made of wood instead of brick. In **1859** it was voted to purchase a Webster's Dictionary at \$4.00, and also voted to assess the parents  $\frac{1}{2}$  cord of wood for each scholar attending school. In 1891 a third school building was **erected**, and this time a brick one, at a cost of not to exceed \$1,000. At some time during the years of its existence this district had become a fractional one, lying in both Alaiedon and Vevay townships. Up to 1881 the highest wages paid were \$35 per month for a male teacher and **\$28** per month for a female, while during the '60's a teacher from the gentler sex received the munificent sum of \$8.60 per month while her brother, for doing he same work, received **\$25**.

The contracts made during the '60's all bore United States revenue stamps. Not until well along in the '80's was the old system of having the teacher "board, round," sampling all the viands in the district, as well as all the beds, done away with.

#### VENERABLE OLD COUPLE.

Mr. and Mrs. John W. Speer, of Alaiedon Township, Have **Trav-**elled Together Nearly Sixty-two Years. Written in **1912**.

Comparatively few married couples are spared to live fifty years of wedded life together, and the instances of husband and wife who share each other's joys and sorrows for sixty years are rare indeed; but Mr. and Mrs. John W. Speer, of Alaiedon **Town-**are well along in the sixty-second year of their joint pilgrimage,

having lived all that time on the farm which Mr. Speer helped clear and improve; thus being among:- the very earliest of the remaining pioneers of Ingham county, as well as having, possibly exceeded all others in the duration of their married life.

Mr. Speer was born October 3, 1827, in Seneca county, N. Y., and at the age of ten came with his parents to the far West, as Michigan was then known. Instead of driving through Canada, the family came by the luxurious route via Erie canal to Buffalo, thence to **Détroit** by steamboat, where they obtained teams and wagons and proceeded to their first stopping place in the new land in Washtenaw county. Here they lived ten years, and in 1847 the family again left **their** home and came over the "short hills," over the portages and through the "oak openings" to the heavy timber land where Mr. Speer now lives.

On January 20, 1850, Mr. Speer married Miss Sylvia Aseltine, who was born in Canada, at the foot of Lake Champlain, Sept. 11, 1891, and came with her parents to Michigan in 1837, driving the entire distance, and settling in Washtenaw county the same year in which her husband came. Her family came to Ingham county in 1842, all the inhabitants in common suffering the usual privations and hardships of pioneer life.

After the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Speer in 1850 a home was built. This was a log house of one room which served as kitchen, parlor, dining room and sleeping apartment. A stone fireplace, with a **hearth** of flat stone, and a chimney constructed of sticks laid up cob-house fashion and plastered with mud inside and out, served as a range and heater. The roof of the house was made of "shakes," riven out of bolts of straight-grained timber by means of mallet and froe, driven by pioneer muscle power, and placed in such a manner as to answer every purpose of protection from storm. In this home they lived while subduing and making of the wild land, a **fertile** farm, and here, they raised their family and literally grew up with the country.

The oldest son relates an incident of his early boyhood that was not only of much importance to him at the time, but indicates one of the social customs as well. His parents had bought their first cook stove, which was an event of interest to the community, and the boy had acquired a pair of new red-topped, copper-toed boots-an affair of far **greater** magnitude to him. The rats had

even then begun to colonize **Michigan** in **great** numbers, and to prevent them from lurching off his boots he used the stove as a safety vault. One evening, as was customary in pioneer days, a houseful of company came, and as was also customary the hostess cooked for the visitors a supper. In the morning a broken-hearted boy was viewing the remains of a pair of red-topped boots, baked too hard to be of any **value**, except, possibly, as dessert for an Arctic explorer.

Mr. and Mrs. Speer have five children living-Mrs. Olivia Minkler, who lives with her parents at their home in Alaiedon; Marcellus, a well known farmer, and Mrs. Mary Upton, both of Vevay; John Speer, of Alaiedon, and Mrs. Ada Van Horn, of Lansing.

Mr. Speer has for several years been in poor health, and is now partially helpless. Mrs. Speer at the last meeting of county pioneers was called to the platform and introduced to the audience as having been a resident of the county for 60 years, and is a strong, vigorous woman for one of her years. As this couple look back over the way they have travelled together, and note that the dense forests and swamps, the impassable trails and all the hardships and privations of early days have been succeeded by fertile, well-tilled farms, comfortable farm buildings with modern equipments, improved highways, and indeed all the improvements that go to make the sum of modern **country** life, they can say as very few people in any place can truthfully assert, that all this transformation from the old days down to the present occurred during the years they have walked together as husband and wife.

#### LEWIS H. STANTON, A PIONEER OF INGHAM COUNTY.

Written by Mrs. Harriet Stanton Bristol, Mason, Mich., 1916.

Lewis H. Stanton was born in the city of Newark, N. J., in the year 1835. He was the eldest son of Daniel H. and Harriet White Stanton. When he was four years of age his parents, with their two small children, took the long trip overland by emigrant wagon to Michigan. This was then a much more perilous expedition than a trip to the wilds of Africa is today. They encoun-

tered many thrilling experiences in the journey of four weeks bad weather, with roads almost impassable, where now the luxurious trains make the trip in less than twenty-four hours.

They sometimes stopped by the roadside to cook their noon-day meals and were glad after the weary day of traveling to reach a settlement at nightfall. Everywhere they met with the kindest hospitality.

The family finally settled in 1841 in Ingham county, taking up 200 acres of land from the government in the township of Delhi, one mile east of where the village of Holt now stands. They were accompanied from New Jersey by Mrs. Stanton's sister, who later became the wife of John Ferguson, another early pioneer of the county.

The father, Daniel Stanton, was a builder by trade and when the State Capital was located in the woods eight miles north of his clearing he helped to build many of the first houses in Lansing.

Of the family of eight children who were born to Mr. and Mrs. Stanton, only one, Mrs. George W. Bristol, of Mason, survives. Lewis being the oldest of this group of children he, at an early age, became a helper in the home as all boys of those pioneer days were expected to do, and passed through a boyhood filled with interesting incidents.

When he was six years old, and the nearest neighbor lived a mile away, one day at night fall the boy was missing. How the news traveled so rapidly through the surrounding country seems a mystery to us of today, but they soon gathered from many miles around, bearing torches, bells and guns, for there were bears and wolves in the forest, and all realized the danger the child was in. Special anxiety was felt because only a few nights before bears had come to a neighboring homestead and carried off a couple of pigs from the pen. The searching party organized and started in every direction to look for the lost child. The women had gathered as well as the men, and they waited with the grief-stricken mother in the log cabin, eagerly listening for the report of a gun, which was to be the signal when the boy was found, but not until about one o'clock in the morning did they hear this welcome sound. Little Lewis had wandered four miles from home and was so badly frightened by the darkness and the strange sounds of the forest that he had crawled into a hollow log, and though he heard

the calls of the men he did not dare answer until he recognized his Uncle John Ferguson's voice. No record of the intervening years were kept, and we next find him at the age of sixteen employed in driving the stage coach and carrying the United States mail from Lansing to Marshall, which was then the only railroad station in that part of the State. Travel was slow, and it took one entire day to go and another to come, with Charlotte as a half-way station. Stops were also made at Eaton Rapids and Olivet. When there were no passengers the lad often made the trip on horseback. The trail lay through dense forest and over corduroy roads across swamps, and deer, bear and wolves were a common sight, and must have sometimes struck terror to the boy's heart. He soon found, however, that they would not attack a person unless molested. Indians were numerous and always inclined to be friendly. Mr. Stanton often spoke with pride of his friendship with Okemos, the old war chief of the Saginaw-Chippewa tribe. He was a frequent visitor at the Stanton home and he and other redmen that he sometimes brought with him would enjoy the good meal served by Mr. Stanton's mother. They would beam with good nature, lift the babies and say "nice papoose" in their deep gutters1 voices.

In 1856 Lewis Stanton married Miss Angeline Stillman, daughter of Daniel Stillman, who was the first white settler in Alaiedon Township.

For nearly forty years they lived on a farm in Alaiedon and five children came to bless their union. Arthur, the oldest son, a young man full of promise, died at the age of twenty. Mrs. Eunice Bogar died in 1908 at Chapin, Mich., and John M. Stanton, a prosperous farmer of Alaiedon, died in 1914. The mother passed to her reward in 1800. The surviving children in 1916 were Mrs. May Stanton Williams, of Washington, D. C., who was for many years a missionary in South Africa, and Mrs. Elizabeth Gregg, of Charlotte.

In 1893 Mr. Stanton married Mrs. Mary Crane, who is still living at Charlotte. She was a cousin of Millard Filmore, President of the United States. She is proud of the fact that she rode on the first steam railroad car that ran from Buffalo to New York.

Mr. Stanton reached the age of 80 years, but he was still young in spite of it. His powers of intellect, his keen sense of humor

and his kindly interest in everything about him remained strong until within a few days of his death. The end came Oct. 31, 1915, at his home in Charlotte where he had lived for the last six years.

He often spoke of the marvelous changes which he had seen take place in this part of Michigan since he arrived here a small boy with his parents in a wilderness full of Indians and wild beasts. He was a member of the Ingham County Historical and Pioneer Society, a faithful attendant at the meetings and one much interested in the work it was doing.

Lewis Stanton was a man of sterling integrity, a devout Christian, hospitable and generous to a fault, always eager to do others a service, and wherever he lived he was respected and honored by a wide circle of friends: Throughout life he fulfilled the spirit of this sentiment:

"I live for those that love me, for those that know me true

For the Heaven that smiles above me, and waits my coming, too.

For the cause that lacks assistance, for the wrongs that need  
resistance,

For the future in the distance, and the good that I can do."

#### INGHAM COUNTY PIONEERS MARRIED FIFTY-EIGHT YEARS RECALL EARLY DAYS.

The State Journal—1919.

MASON, April 9.—Mr. and Mrs. James Steinhoff, of Alaiedon Township, have just celebrated their fifty-eighth wedding anniversary at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Bert Baldwin, of Mason, where they are staying for a few weeks, having recently sold the farm where they located 55 years ago. There, on the 80 acres, taken up from the government, they settled in a little log shack, coming from Jackson county, where Mrs. Steinhoff had lived as a girl, and taught school, getting ten shillings a week, and boarding round. Big oak trees were chopped down and piled and burned to make way for the little cabin, and the surrounding clearing.

Mr. Steinhoff states that his first field of corn was put in by using an old ax to break open a bit of soil, while his wife following

dropped the kernels of corn into each hill thus made. "And it was the biggest corn I ever raised in my life," he adds. There was no such thing as a plow, and although they were only half a mile from neighbors, who lived across the swamp, they were on no broken road, and only a path through the woods guided them to friends.

"Wcro you lonesome," was asked of the bride of 58 years. "Well, sometimes I got pretty blue," she answered, "but you know there is something fascinating about developing a farm from the wild, every little thing you do, a tree chopped down or a flower bed planted, everything adds just so much to the home you are making, so I did not often mind."

And as the years rolled on they added room after room to the little one-room log shack of their first housekeeping days on the old farm until they had quite a spacious dwelling. This in turn, however, they also outgrew and the time came when they moved out of the old log house and into the new commodious building which now stands on the place.

#### HELPED TO BUILD M. C.

Mr. Steinhoff vividly remembers the building of the Michigan Central Railroad through this section of the country. Indeed, he helped to score the timbers for the building of that first road, and both remember the day when the first train passed over the road.

All wheat had to be brought to Mason, then little more than a four corners, to be ground into flour. "I remember working all one week hewing timber for two bushels of wheat at \$3 a bushel," he said with a smile, as they mentioned the high cost of products nowadays, which with perhaps two exceptions, tea and calico, are at the present time higher than they have ever known. "Of course in Civil War times, things were high, but not like they are now, although I did pny 45 cents a yard for one calico dress, and from a dollar to a dollar and a half a pound for tea," Mrs. Steinhoff said.

Ten shillings in money, a couple of pigs, and a few hens composed the young couple's wealth beside their farm and little home when they set out to conquer the wilderness. "Folks were friendly in those days, one neighbor was not different than an-

other," said Mrs. Steinhoff. And as the crop land grew in size, and crops were bountiful, good times came on, but even before real plenty came the neighbors frequently gathered together and went from one home to another for a general good time. At those evening gatherings there were no meager "light refreshments," either, but a real feed, a hearty supper cooked by the capable housewives in the late evening, a whole baked spare-rib or its equivalent, being a common feature of such gatherings. While for picnics or any planned gathering folks used to bake a young pig whole.

Mr. Steinhoff comes of a long-lived family, his great grandmother having lived to the ripe old age of 116 years. He remembers her well, as he does his great grandfather. He himself is a Canadian, and after coming to Mason was one of the men who helped to build the Mason Baptist church.

A horse and carriage in those early days was almost a curiosity. Indeed there were but two spans of horses in that part of the country. Practically all team work was done by oxen, and in contrast to the roads of these days he remembers the time when it took two team of oxen to haul ten bushels of wheat to mill from the farm in Alaiedon Township to Mason.

### JEFFERSON CITY.

Levi Ketchum, a pioneer of Alaiedon Township, died in 1915, and a short time before his death told the following incidents regarding the early history of the township and its city of that day.

Mr. Ketchum was born in 1835 in a log house on the banks of a little river where the city of Cleveland now stands. When he was eight years old his parents moved to Alaiedon Township, and his early days were spent in the old log school house with its big stone fireplace, on the site of the present school house in the Canaan district. When nine years old he witnessed a tragedy that always lived in his memory. It was in what was then known as Jefferson City, a little burg which Alaiedon people looked forward to seeing become the metropolis of the county, though now it lives only in tradition. They, some of them, had great hopes of seeing the State Capital located there, or at least the county seat

of Ingham. Here, near the little village, a murder had been committed, and Mr. Ketchum, a nine year old lad, was present when the murderer rushed in with his bloody ax, and when he went with a band of men to look for the body of the man he had killed. The boy attended the ensuing trial, heard him convicted and sentenced to life-long imprisonment at "The Tamaracks," as Jackson prison was then known, owing to its high stockade of tamarack poles.

When ten years old young Levi went to work for his uncle, William Ketchum, who took up land in Alaiedon Township in 1837. This uncle had a contract with Jackson prison to supply logs, which the prisoners could make into scythe snaths, the idea of keeping the inmates of the institution usefully employed being in force even at that early day. It was to drive a team of oxen to and from Jackson, with its load of logs, that the youth was hired.

It was about this time, while he was still a boy and with a boy's love of excitement in him, that news came to "Jefferson City" that Barnum's Great Circus was coming to Jackson.

It was probably the first time the circus had visited Michigan, but its fame had traveled far ahead of it, and with all of youth's enthusiasm young Ketchum and a boy friend decided to go to the circus. The fact that they would have to walk there and back, about twenty-eight miles each way, was no damper to their anticipated pleasure. To save shoe leather, they hung their boots over their shoulders until they reached the city. They could only scare up twenty-five cents between them in the way of currency, but they saw the circus and returned home safe and sound.

Another unusual event which lived with especial clearness in his mind was the great tornado which passed through that section in 1858. This windstorm lowered trees, tore down buildings, killed much stock and one man. To those present at the Canaan school reunion in 1914 Mr. Ketchum traced the path of the storm fifty-six years before.

He well remembered Chief Okemos, the Indian of great renown in Ingham county. Many of his childhood playmates were Indian lads.

Mr. Ketchum married Katherine Harris in 1858, and to the

day of his **death**, on all occasions of state, he wore the silk plug hat he had for his wedding.

#### ALAIEDON NOTES, JULY 8, 1878.

As much attention is being given to anything pertaining to pioneer days, I will give you a sketch of a circumstance that occurred in this county in 1844 or '45. John Douglas, who then and now resides in the township of Alaiedon, became involved in law, and with their crude ideas of criminal jurisprudence it became necessary, in order to vindicate the majesty thereof, that he be sent to jail, at least that was the sentence of the honorable court.

Here was a **dilemma**. There was not a pair of horses on that side the **swamp**, and catch old John walking to Jackson (Ingham county had no jail then) for the purpose of going to jail when he got there. Never. "The constable, Mr. Cooper, was equal to the emergency. He got two yoke of oxen hitched to a sled (in the month of July) and drove to Douglas' cabin. He saw them coming and scorning to run backed off to a pair of board **bars** and clasping his arms around one of the boards coolly awaited the result. Cooper and his assistant executed a flank movement, took the bar out of the posts and with John still hanging to it put it on the sled and started for Jackson. They came in that manner to Hiram Parker's between Mason and **Dansville**, where they got him and his ox cart and sent the sled back home. In the town of Bunkerhill the constable pressed the father of the writer of this article, with his horses and wagon, into service, and carried their prisoner through. Think of that! Taking six oxen, two horses and four men two whole days to get a prisoner to Jackson. Now the **same** job can be done by one man in two hours. I do not believe there was ever a merrier party went to jail. All were full of fun except the constable, who was apprehensive of an escape or a release, but John told him he would not leave him half as soon as he would want him to, They left the prisoner safely in the hands of the sheriff at Jackson, and started back, but the first man the constable saw when he got into **the "settlement"** was John Douglas. One of the Mason lawyers had got there and

had the papers all ready for the prisoner's release, and he was out of jail and home ahead of them.

Signed, **PIONEER** BOY,

**Mrs. Betsey** Webber, one of the Munroe sisters, well known to all older residents of **Ingham** county, tells **the** following pioneer story which cannot fail to be of interest to Alaiedon residents. At the time of this incident she lived with her parents in Clinton county, near what is now Wacousta. She says:

"One cold day in November, 1888, our people had an urgent appeal for them to send one of their girls to an uncle's in Ingham county, about four miles beyond Mason, which made **the** distance thirty-five miles through the forest. The matter was talked over, and it was decided that **Betsey** should go-must necessarily go on horseback, as there was no other way. My brother being fourteen years old and myself sixteen, he would have to go to bring back the horse which I should ride.

"We started and went as far as Grand River City, now Delta, fed our horses and were ready to **start** again. Now it was nineteen miles before coming to another house, and the road so bad we had to walk our horses nearly all the way, and intensely cold weather. Passed through where Lansing now stands-it was a howling wilderness. When we came to Okemos we were in hopes to find some Indians so that we could go into their wigwams and get warm, but not so; they had all gone farther north into the woods. The river was to be forded, the sun was nearly down, and then we had seven miles of Indian trail before coming to another house. We were thinly clad and very cold. The river was frozen from each bank, three or four feet. My brother got a large stick and broke the ice, so we got down into the water very well, but when we came to the ice on the other side the horses had to rear and plunge and break the ice themselves, and if I had not been an expert horseback rider should have been thrown into the river (Red Cedar river), but we came through all **right**. Now we struck the trail to go to the next stopping place.

"It being dark and the ground heavily covered with leaves we lost the trail, and how to find it we didn't know, but we stopped and considered what was best to do, I said to brother, "I will stand still and hold the horses, and you take a circle round and see

if you can find the trail." The first circle was made to no effect, and another larger to no effect, and still the third and he could not find it. By this time another idea had come into my mind—that we get down low to the ground and follow our track back until we struck the trail, and this we did. After walking some distance we found it and felt to rejoice. Then we mounted our horses and went on our way, hoping soon to come to a **clearing** where someone lived where we could stop and get warm at least, for we were nearly **frozen**.

"Please bear in mind we were a couple of children lost in the dense forest and **death** almost staring us in the face, but yet we were brave. None but pioneers could **have held** out. After a while we could see that we were coming to **an** opening, and a small shanty stood near the road; we did not know who or what was there, but we summoned all the courage we could and went in, and found an old couple there by the name of Strickland. I think they must have been perfectly dazed at our unexpected appearance. We asked them if we could stay with them all night, and have some supper and get warm. They asked us many questions—where we were from, and where we were going? We told them we were from Clinton county and going to Hiram Parker's, an uncle of ours. He said, 'Oh, yes; we know Squire Parker; he is our justice of the peace; fine man he is, too, but we can't keep you, but one mile from here is a good place for you to stay, and it is a good road.' So we went out and got our horses and started again. I had not gone but a few rods from the house when my horse got his feet hung in the logs or poles thrown in a bad place in the road and frozen in. He made a desperate spring to extricate himself and broke the girth of the saddle and threw me to the ground. Fortunately I came to my feet unhurt, and then **had** to repair the break and get ready to start again. This we did and hastened on our way; found the rest of the road very good. Now we came to a place called Jefferson City, with one or two houses and a sawmill, but best of all we found a hospitable lady by the name of Lewis, and she took us in and cared for us.

"She made me some composition tea and warmed my feet, got US some supper and was a real Samaritan. Gave us nice beds, and in the morning we were ready to make the rest of the journey,

and reached Uncle Parker's about noon, where I remained until nearly spring, my brother returning home with the horses the next day after we reached our destination."

Lansing, June 1, 1891.

Later notes concerning Jefferson City:

"Consulting Mrs. **Webber**, the writer of this article, an old lady upwards of eighty years, in 1911, she said Jefferson City consisted at this time of two log houses and a saw mill. It was located on the road from Mason to Okemos, she thinks about four or **five** miles from Mason. Mr. Lewis had gone to a school meeting. There is no such place in **Ingham** county today, and very few left who could locate the city. The settlement was platted on section **29**. The entire section was purchased by George Howe, of Manchester, Washtenaw county. A company was formed of four persons and the city laid out in **1838**, but the plat was never recorded.

"Among the first settlers we find two families of Childs's and Lewis's, **and** one called Phillips. Thirteen log houses and a school house were erected previous to **1840**. Mr. Howe built a saw mill on the creek and carried the water to it in a ditch ninety rods long.

"In 1842 Capt. J. P. Cowles purchased land including some in the proposed village situated on both sides of the road and including about forty acres.

"Great hopes were had of the new city, which now included ten or fifteen acres of cleared land, six log houses, school and school house. The roads leading to it were Indian trails, designated by marked trees. Apparently it was the end of the trail, as you entered and returned by the same road. It was the center of the county and nearly of the State.

"Great inducements were offered settlers and a few lots were sold to eastern parties. Three miles and a half away was the rival city of Mason, consisting **of** a **saw** mill, frozen up, a few houses and forests. Jefferson City is now known as the Isaac Drew farm, and no sign can be found of its expected grandeur."



## A STORY OF PIONEER LIFE.

Told by HARLOW V. TALLMAN.

In 1844 my father, Timothy Tallman, and my mother, Marie Tallman, left the township of Byron, Genesee county, N. Y., and started for the wilds of Michigan. My father being a cooper, he made some large barrels to pack their household goods in; no chairs, no bedsteads, no tables, no stands of any kind.

We reached Jackson the last of October, where a man by the name of Daggett met us to bring us to Eden, Ingham county. He had an ox team and lumber wagon. We left Jackson just daylight and moved north, coming through Leslie and on to Eden. We got within one mile of what was two years later known as Hopkin's tavern, Mr. Daggett thought he could save a little distance by cutting across lots, as it was then dark. My father and two brothers commenced cutting down the underbrush, while Mr. Daggett held the old one-candle lantern. My mother and my sisters were on the load, while my youngest brother and myself were in mother's lap. Our seat was a board on top of the barrels. We kept on going until we found ourselves in a tamarack swamp, and lost at that. Then the men folks set up a howl and what was the result? A man by the name of William Kirby came in sight; he had a lantern, one-candle power, a dog, ax and his gun, thinking someone had treed a bear. Mr. Kirby then took us to his house for the rest of the night, and in the morning we had to make backward over 100 rods to a log house owned by Zeb Eggleston. A one-room house, with no floor to speak of below. My father and the older boys went to work and made some bedsteads out of poles. We stayed there until 1845, then moved up on section 28, and there my father died leaving my mother with eleven children, three little ones and four big ones to look after her in Michigan, four having been left back in the East to care for themselves.

Ten years later my mother married a man by the name of John Pierce; he had a big family, so we Tallman children had to shirk for ourselves.

In 1854, just so sure as I am alive, a naughty wind came along one day and it liked to have swept us all away. It was sure a

cyclone. It came through Delhi, Alaiedon and Wheatfield. It blew my stepfather's barn down, part of his log house and took all we had upstairs, so it left us destitute of bedding. I lived in Alaiedon at the time with my mother.

A few years ago when Mr. Tallman was some younger than now (1920) he gave a fuller description of that same cyclone, which he said occurred on Monday, June 22, 1854:

The storm came from the southwest and traveled to the northeast. Its approach could be heard before it could be seen. The white clouds appeared to be rolling and tumbling like the waves of the sea. The black cloud looked like a balloon, having a long tail resembling an elephant's trunk. This cloud would lower almost to the earth and then shoot upward, darting here and there, tearing up trees two or three feet in diameter, and scattering them over the cleared fields. The path of the hurricane was a quarter of a mile wide.

When it reached the home of John Pierce a barn 40 x 60 feet was blown away. It left the ground like a bird and passed out of sight.

The storm next struck the house occupied by the Pierce and Tallman family. Mr. Pierce was working in the field with his son James. They started for the house but were blown to the ground. Mrs. Pierce, her daughters Susan and Jane and son Harlow Tallman were in the house at the time. The upper portion was blown away down to the chamber floor, and with the contents of the chamber carried away.

The west door was torn loose, blown through the house and out of the east door, the east door and window disappearing at the same time. Hail stones of immense size fell and the rainfall was like a cloud burst. Two big balls of fire rolled across the floor and out through the east door. The family went into a bedroom about fifteen feet away and the darkness was like that of midnight.

The storm traveled at the rate of 40 or 50 miles an hour with the black cloud taking the lead.

After the storm passed Susan Tallman was missing. The floor of the living room was torn away. The wind had entered the cellar by an open hatchway and the floor went out through the window and doorway made into kindling wood. The young woman was found in the dooryard, covered with mud and dirt,

her face and head being badly bruised and bleeding. She was somewhat dazed and could not tell how she reached the yard, but must have been caught in the current of wind passing through the rooms. A hog weighing 200 pounds was taken out of a pen and carried **100** rods, being found with a broken jaw.

The next house struck was that of Wm. Childs, who with his three sons was in the house at the time. They saw the storm approaching and went into the cellar by a trap door. Mrs. Childs and one son were in Mason that day. The house was destroyed and the contents blown away.

Two other houses in the neighborhood were unroofed. A man named Henry **Cline** was killed by a falling tree on Section 22, Alaiedon. Hogs and sheep were seen in clouds as the storm passed over Jefferson City.

#### MIDSUMMER MEETING OF THE INGHAM COUNTY PIONEER AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, HELD IN ALAIEDON, AUGUST 4, 1920.

After adopting the plan of holding a meeting in every township in the county in order to get all the data possible for the county history, the first out-of-doors meeting was held on the lawn at Lloyd Laylin's in Alaiedon, August **4, 1920**, and it can be chronicled as an entire success.

The residents of the **township**, and those who had moved away, showed their interest in the scheme by gathering on that day about 200 strong. The day was perfect, and the huge forest trees on the lawn made a delightful grove for such a meeting.

On the porch were spinning wheel, reel, ox yoke, a tall silk hat in the box made to hold it, a mirror, picture, shawl, homespun sheets, bed coverlets, most of them over **100** years old, a wedding vest, small chair, spoons and other relics and keepsakes which dated back to the fifties, old books, one bearing date of 1788. These historical curios attracted much attention, but as the noon hour drew near all eyes turned toward the long tables set on one side of the lawn which fairly groaned beneath the load of good things for the inner man. Soon all drew round the festive board

and after Rev. W. B. Hartzog had returned thanks all fell to and the toothsome viands soon disappeared.

In the shade of the monarchs of the forest all found seats, and the meeting was called to order by the president of the society, Col. L. H. Ives. After making a few happy remarks he invited all who desired to become members of the county society and **33** availed themselves of the privilege. The president then turned the meeting over to Mrs. Fred Brenner, chairman of the day, who had prepared an Alaiedon program under the auspices of the Alaiedon Woman's Club.

All sang America, Rev. Ainsworth, of Holt, offered prayer, Mrs. Willis Butler welcomed the guests, and Mrs. Franc L. Adams, secretary of the county society, responded.

Mrs. Leslie Palen then sang "Darling, I Am Growing Old," and responded to an encore. Dr. F. N. Turner, of Lansing, being present, by request told some of his recollections of Alaiedon, after which the history of the township was given by school districts, Mrs. W. A. Melton leading off with District No. **1**, known as the Phillips district, including in her paper some township history new to many:

#### DISTRICT NO. 1.

The township of Alaiedon is bounded on the north by Meridian, east by Wheatfield, south by Vevay and west by Delhi. The eastern boundary was surveyed in 1824 by Joseph Wample, the north and west boundaries in **1825** by Lucius Lyon and the south boundary in **18%** by John Mullett. The principal streams are Mud and Sycamore creeks. In the northeast corner of section 19 is what is called the Phillips school house, District No. **1**. The first school house that I have any knowledge of was a little red building, afterwards sold to John Strickland for a home, and moved about 80 rods onto the north part of what is now the George Marquedant farm. This was replaced by a larger building which after a few years was sold to the Grangers for a hall. In **1885** the brick building which we now have was built. The year **1865** is as far back as I can find any account of. The school teachers were paid \$2.25 and \$2.50 per week. Wood was bought for 80 and 90

cents a cord. Teachers had to teach every other Saturday and always boarded round the district. I once heard a school teacher say that the children always wanted to sleep with the teacher, so she had the pleasure of sleeping with a good share of the pupils in the school, food, bad and indifferent. One thing I used to enjoy in school was spelling down. We would choose sides and stand in rows each side of the school house, and then proceed to find out who was the best speller.

In the old Sanders' spelling book were several pages where **words** were **pronounced** the same but with different meanings. How we **used** to try to catch each other on those words ! Often I see words spelled wrong, making their meaning altogether different from that intended, and I think it is a pity Sanders spellers with their abbreviations and definitions are not used now.

Just west of our school house is the Strickland cemetery. I am sorry to say it is a disgrace, grown up to brush, and it ought to shame any man in town enough to see that it is put in good shape. Once' in our Sunday school we appointed a cemetery committee to put it in order. We thought we had the good work started, but the men would not act, so there we are. Some would like to move it, while others say the law is such it cannot be moved. It is full of graves, and a good share of their relatives are gone, so there is no one to take any interest in the matter.

I find that Joel B. Strickland took up his land from the government Dec. 10, 1835, on section 19, and John Strickland took up land on the same date on section 20. Nathaniel Blaine owned the land on the north side of the road going east. I remember when I was a very little girl of Mr. Blaine's and Mr. Wells' people stopping at my folks on their way from Lansing and being there for supper. At that time Mr. and Mrs. Wells (Mrs. C. J. Rayner's parents) kept the county house.

In the township of Alaiedon was laid out a city, appearing finely on paper, and having a glorious, hoped for future before it. This was the village of Jefferson wich was platted on section 29. The entire section was purchased by Josiah Sabin July 14, 1835, and about 1837'38 the northwest quarter was purchased by George Howe, from Manchester, Washtenaw county, Mich.

A company was formed of about four persons from the same neighborhood, and the village was laid out in 1838. The plat was

never recorded in Ingham county, and probably nowhere else. Among the settlers were two Childs' families, two Lewis's and one Phillips. Thirteen log houses were erected previous to 1840 (according to the pioneers of those days), also a log school house. Mr. Howe built a saw mill on the creek, and carried the water to it through a ditch 90 rods long. In 1842 Capt. J. I. Cowles purchased land on section 29 including part of the village plat, which covered about forty acres. When Capt. Cowles bought his land all the buildings mentioned above were standing on his property, and he operated the mill for some time before he moved to Lansing in 1847. He sold the property in 1849. A double log house and a frame barn were built on the village plat in 1844 by George Howe. Capt. Cowles was assessed with the west half of the northeast quarter, the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter, and the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section 29, together with 23 acres on the north half of the same section, above the saw mill, between the opposite banks of Mud Creek. The 23 acres being water privilege only.

It was at first expected that a respectably sized village would grow up, but business refused to seek that locality, and the people who had bought lots to which they had no title lost confidence in the future prospects of the place, became dissatisfied and most of them moved away. William and John Childs and perhaps some others settled in the neighborhood.

The saw mill at the village was built by Nicholas Lewis and George Howe after the village was platted, and they owned undivided interest in the property. The village plat was laid out on both sides of the road extending north and south. Some time later a division was made, Lewis taking the portion on the east side of the road and Howe that on the west side. The latter also took the saw mill which was on the east side. Capt. Cowles purchased Howe's interest including the saw mill. Mr. Lewis sold his property at the village to A. M. Hobert, of the State of New York.

Jacob Lewis and his sons came from Oneida county, N. Y., in 1835, and for two years lived near Manchester in the township of Sharon, Washtenaw county, Mich. In September, 1837, they moved to Jefferson village, and in 1862 the family of Nicholas Lewis moved from Alniedon Township to Vevay. Daniel A.

**Hewes** was an early arrival in the locality possibly coming before **Capt. Cowles**.

Silas Beebe, who settled in Stockbridge in June, **1838**, made a trip through **Ingham** county in February of that year, and in his diary of the journey thus speaks of Jefferson:

"We stayed over night in Stockbridge Township, left after breakfast for Ingham Center; we soon struck into timbered lands and saw less of swamps and marshes. Roads were less traveled but, guided by marked trees, we found our way to the Center, called Jefferson City. The first blow toward this place was struck last September. It has now some ten or fifteen acres cut down ready to clear, five or six log houses peopled, a school house and school. We went on foot about a mile and found two huts, a little clearing and a family going in, but here was the end of a beaten road, and the end of all road except an Indian trail.

"We had designed to continue our journey to **DeWitt** in Clinton county, only fourteen miles from this place, but were obliged to forego the journey for want of a road. At Jefferson, which will undoubtedly be a place of some importance some day, being the center of the county and nearly of the State, we had great offers made us if we would locate there, but things looked too new and prospects of gain too far to suit our views. So we gave it the go-by for the present. On the 25th of February we left for home, taking, from necessity, the route by which we came in, there being no other way out of the city. Three and one-half miles south of this is a place of about equal claims, called Mason. A saw mill (frozen up), a few houses and surrounding forest are all it can boast of."

At the time of Mr. Beebe's visit, therefore, it seems that Jefferson City was a place of greater pretensions than Mason. It has been hinted by some that had the former place been in the hands of more energetic persons its future would have been vastly different from that which is known.

Mason, the rival place, was at once pushed to the front and maintained its supremacy over all other villages in the county except Lansing, which was backed by the State.

By an act approved March **13, 1838**, the four townships comprising the northeast quarter of the county of Ingham were set off and organized into a separate townships by the name of Alaiedon,

and the first township meeting was directed to be held at the school house at the City of Jefferson. From the territory thus have since been organized the townships of Delhi, Lansing and Meridian, leaving Alaiedon to include township 8 north in range 1 west.

At the first town meeting there were fifteen votes cast. The first school at Jefferson village was taught by **Mary Ann Rolfe** in a log school house which was built in the summer of **1837**. On Oct. **3, 1839**, District No. 1 reported **26** pupils.

My sister, Mrs. Adelaide Jones, of Jonesville, Mich., being several years older than I, of course could remember farther back than I could, so I wrote to her for information about Jefferson City. She wrote me all she could remember, and that she had heard our mother tell.

They told this story: "One day a man rode into the place on horseback and said, 'we are going to have a Fourth of July celebration and want every man, woman and child to be sure and come to Jefferson City.' There were very few horses in the locality then, and my sister remembers going to the celebration and riding after the ox team; she also remembers seeing our mother marching in the procession and has an idea of the dress she wore, of course it was one she had brought from the east two years before, when she came in as a pioneer. They came in **1845**, making the celebration an event of **1847**. I have often heard my mother tell of Mrs. William Long, who lived where **Holt** is now, borrowing two sunbonnets which my mother and sister wore when they came from York State, for her two girls to wear to the Fourth of July celebration at Jefferson City. No doubt it was the same year, for I never heard of but one celebration being held at Jefferson City.

"School records were not very accurately kept, nor were they always saved in early days, otherwise I might have had a more complete record."

A history of District No. **2**, known as the **Robbins** school, was read by Mrs. Clair Wilkins as follows:

Little do we know, as we sit in our comfortable homes or ride in our automobiles, of the men and women who helped to make the land what is. We cannot realize the hardships that they endured,

or the dangers that surrounded them, yet by the strength that overcame these hardships and faced these dangers were laid the foundations of the splendid farms that we see around us today.

The first settler in District No. 2 was Egbert Patterson, who bought his land in 1836. Later, in 1839, William P. Robbins bought 80 acres from Amos Overacker, who had cleared five acres and built a small log cabin. Mr. Robbins cleared the remaining 75 acres alone. The first school house was a small log shanty built in 1839. Miss Harriet Childs was the teacher. At that time there were six pupils in the district and school was held for three months.

In 1851 Charles Foler moved from New York. In 1863 Martin Laycock bought the land where Harold Laycock now lives. About that time Mrs. Kay came from England with her children, Mary, Richard and Alfred Robinson. Samuel Lamb and his son Samuel and grandson Lambert moved from Ohio in 1865.

It was about this time that Augustus Gillespie moved from Tecumseh and Everett Beardsley bought land that is now a part of the Benham farm. In 1869 Perry Stevens bought his farm from Mr. Davidson. In the spring of the year 1871 Nathan Severance purchased the land where his son Frank now lives. In 1864 Davis Fitzsimmons bought his farm from George Traver. It is now owned by his daughter, Mrs. Walter Pratt.

Mrs. Severance, Richard and Alfred Robinson and Lambert Lamb are the only early settlers now living in the district.

#### DISTRICT NO 3, ALATEDON, THE DUBOIS DISTRICT.

By MRS. ROY DRESSER.

The Dubois's were the first to settle in this district. They were natives of Ulster county, N.Y. In the spring of 1836 Martin Dubois, with his family, his father and mother, John and Sarah Dubois, settled on a part of section 35. Geo. Hale now owns this farm.

Some time later, in the fall of 1836, Matthew DuBois settled on section 24. He lived there a few years then sold to Polly Speer, and her grandson, Marcellus Speer, now owns this farm.

In the fall of 1838 Jacob and family settled part of section 36,

where Mr. Fuger now lives. The next of the DuBois' to come was Garret. Hearing glowing accounts of Michigan from his brothers already located here, he concluded to join them. He arrived here some time in the spring of 1838 and settled on section 35. He cleared about ninety acres of this land. In the year 1842 he built the barn, said to be the first frame barn built in the town, and in 1845 he built the house and these buildings are still standing. In 1859 he sold this farm to John Every, of Jackson, and it is now owned by his daughters Addie and Ella Every of Mason. In 1840 Conrad DuBois settled on section 24 and lived there until 1844 when he sold to Rudolphus Tyron, of Washtenaw county. Mrs. Ella Cooper, a daughter of Mr. Tyron, now owns this farm. Another of the DuBois's who settled here was Stephen, who settled on section 24, right across the road from where the school house now stands. He came in 1838.

Of all the early settlers the DuBois's were the most prominent and noted family in the town. They are descendants of Geoffrie DuBois, a knight banneret and companion to Duke William in the conquest of England in the year 1066. Martin DuBois, a brother of John, one of the early settlers here, was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, and is buried in the Fitchburg Cemetery in Bunkerhill Township. His grave was the first Revolutionary soldier's grave to be located and marked in Ingham county. It is from this family that District No. 3 got its name "DuBois," and it is better known by that than the number.

Other early settlers were Sylvanus Jermaine, who settled on section 26, on Feb. 28, 1836. Chas. Collar now owns the farm.

D. Coleman and Geo. Cooper the same year settled on this section. David Finch settled on a part of section 35 in 1840. He was the local minister and was one of the first to be buried in the cemetery in this district. His coffin was made by Mr. Tryon in Garret DuBois' door yard. In 1865 James Steinhoff settled 80 acres on section 26 and this was his home until last year when he sold the farm and moved to Mason. The rest of this district was located by John Rayner, as near as can be learned.

The first school meeting in the district was held in Martin DuBois' house on Nov. 11, 1841. At this meeting Jacob DuBois was elected moderator, Garret DuBois director, and Stephen DuBois assessor for the following year. At this meeting it was

decided to build a new school house. The site chosen was on the southwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 25. The building was to be 22 feet square, built of logs, have shingle roof, box stove and cost **\$100**. The desks and benches ran all the way round the room, except space for a door at one end and room for the pulpit or teachers desk on the opposite end. Before this all meetings had been held in Martin DuBois' house.

The price paid for labor for building the school house was five shillings per day. The first teacher was Samuel DuBois, who was fifteen years of age. He moved here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen DuBois, in 1838. Samuel taught in different places after that. When he reached manhood he studied medicine and graduated from the University of Michigan.

The number of pupils who attended this school was seventeen, and the books used were elementary spelling, history of the United States, grammar and geography. Three months of school was taught the first year.

In 1856 the frame school house was built. D. H. Parkhurst owns this building, and it stands across the road from the present school house. The first teacher in the new building was Kate DuBois, and the number of scholars 35.

In 1891 the brick school house was built at a cost of **\$1,000**. P. E. Searl, cashier of the first State and savings bank in Mason, was the first teacher, and had 52 pupils.

The cemetery in this district is one acre of land near the school house, given by Martin DuBois. The first grave is said to be that of Sarah DuBois, the mother of Martin DuBois, who died in 1841, five years after they settled here. In this cemetery is found the grave of one soldier of 1812, Abel Irish, and seven Civil War veterans, Solomon Rqwell, John Hasbrook, George Phelps, Talcott Irish, Wm. Tweedie, Ezra Blanchard, and Austin Riggs.

Wm. M. Webb, of Aurelius, one of the early day teachers in district No. 4, known as the Canaan, told some of his recollections. The building was made of logs on the plan that has already been described. He told of the big cyclone that swept over that section when many buildings were destroyed. One huge log was carried into Mud Creek and driven so deep into the mud by the force of the wind that eight years after it was still standing there and had become a well known landmark. A family by the name of

Childs lived in the path of the storm, and when the father saw it coming he called to his boys to flee to the cellar. As Mr. Childs started down the cellar stairs he slipped into his coat, getting one sleeve on before the storm struck. The wind whipped his coat off slick and clean just as he dropped the cellar door; cellars had trap doors in those days. When all was quiet again he opened the door and one of his boys exclaimed, "Why, pa, the house is gone," and so it was, scattered to the four winds of heaven. Mr. Childs was often heard to remark that when he ordered the boys into the cellar was the first time in their lives that they obeyed him without parleying.

#### DISTRICT NO. 4.

DATA PROCURED BY MISS MARGUERITE LINDSEY.

The record book of District No. 4 bears date of 1844, and the clear, concise reports, written in unfading ink, with the good penmanship, perfect spelling, and well expressed reports, makes this book of 76 years ago a valuable souvenir of those early days.

On March 22, 1844, a meeting was called by W. H. Child, town-ship clerk, to be held at the home of Volbert Phillips, for the purpose of organizing fractional District No. 4, of Delhi and Alaiedon, the meeting to be held on April 10.

At this meeting John Pierce was chosen chairman and W. II. Child secretary. The officers elected were W. II. Child, director; Elias Phillips, assessor, and John Pierce, moderator. On April 25 another meeting was held to arrange for raising a tax for the purpose of building a school house. It was voted to buy one acre of ground of John Pierce on which to erect the school house, and a tax of **\$100** was levied to pay for the building and \$20 to pay for land and other expenses.

The first school census taken October 1, 1844, was as follows: Nathan Child, James Child, William Child, Lemuel Pierce, Phineas Pierce, Calvin Pierce, Matilda Pierce, James Pierce, Almon Pierce, Lucinda Phillips. In 1854 the census list had numbered sixteen names, and there was a noticeable increase between then and 1865 when sixty-one names were recorded.

In 1854 we find that J. S. Wood and O. B. Stillman were each

allowed 75 cents for "inspecting the teacher," and it was also voted "that a tax of one dollar per scholar be levied for the support of the school." At the same meeting it was resolved "that the district board fix up the school house fit for a school."

This same year the part of the district lying in Delhi was detached and other lands in Alaiedon added, so that the entire district then laid in Alaiedon. An appraisal of the property was made and its value set at \$25, of which \$2.73 was ordered paid to Delhi, with one dollar of the building fund, and a just proportion of the primary moneys, then the district became No. 4, Alaiedon.

**In 1868 the reports show that the district owns a new school house** which cost about \$600. The building project had been voted on several times before the majority of tax payers could be brought to vote in its favor. The wages varied from \$2.50 per week with board, the teacher boarding round, to \$25 per month in 1873.

No names of early day teachers are found in the book.

The district was named Canaan School by Gilbert Drew, who for many years was superintendent of a Sunday school held at the school house.

Miss Cynthia Wilkins added this very interesting sketch of **District No. 5, known as the Leek School:**

In 1837 the first settler in this community, Wm. C. Leek, located with his family of five children on section 3, on the farm where we today are assembled, and which is now owned by his grandson, Lloyd Laylin.

Mrs. Leek burned off a brush heap and planted apple seeds that she brought with her from the East. From this planting grew their first orchard. Mrs. Leek lived here six months before she saw another white woman.

**District No; 5, known as the Leek District, was organized in 1840.** The log school house was built on a plot of ground leased to the district by Mr. Leek for a term of 99 years.

In 1839 A. Dobie, with his family of four children, settled on his farm one-half mile south of this plot. In 1841 D. Stillman with a family of six children, settled on his farm one-half mile north of the school house. In 1843 S. L. Rathbone, with a family of five children, settled on his farm one-half mile west of the school house, and in 1844 F. B. Wilkins, with a family of four children,

settled on his farm a trifle more than one-half mile west of the school house. All these farms are still occupied by direct descendants of the original owners.

The first post office was at Mason, and the first ministers who preached to the people came from Mason. With the exception of one or two short periods, the Leek District always maintained a preaching appointment at the school house until the late '90's, and it was re-established in 1900 at the Memorial Church, a mile west of the school house.

In 1842 there were twelve children in the district between the ages of five and seventeen, four who were under five, and over seventeen also attended school. In 1843 there were fifteen scholars. The teacher was paid \$1.00 per week and "boarded round." In 1846 wages had advanced to \$1.25 per week.

In 1847 the township bought half an acre of land from Mr. Leek for a "Burying Ground;" there were no cemeteries in those days; had there been we should have missed that old time hymn,

"Oh, carry me home, carry me home, when I die,  
Carry me down to the Burying Ground.  
But don't you carry me by."

Mr. Leek by ceding land to the people for school and burial purposes unwittingly made his name imperishable. In 1878 an adjoining half acre was purchased as an addition to the cemetery, and in 1890 four acres were bought on the opposite side of the highway and opened up as a cemetery. Thirteen of the nation's soldiers, and perhaps more, lie in the Leek Cemetery.

By 1850 enough more families had arrived to swell the number of the scholars in the district to 44. About this time the log school house burned down and was replaced by a frame building, heated by a box stove instead of the log house fireplace.

Not a very long time afterward a set of "outline maps" was purchased and hung on the walls of the new school house, and the man who sold them taught an evening geography school. His method of teaching was unique and most effective. With a long pointer he traced on the maps the divisions of the earth's surface, and pointed out the mountains, rivers, gulfs, bays, capes and cities. The class followed the pointer and sung the facts he gave them to the tune of "Old Dan Tucker."

Primitive school life was not without its excitements and diversions. One day a strange dog appeared in the open doorway. Stood for an instant with his front feet on the sill looking in at the children, then some pigs rooting outside attracted his attention and he turned away. A little girl, with more presence of mind than the teacher, shrieked "mad dog," sprang over the benches and slammed the door shut. The little girl was right. It was a mad dog and was shot after biting two or three animals that later died of hydrophobia.

In the way of diversion there were singing schools for the grown up pupils and spelling schools for everybody, while the boys and girls of lesser years were well supplied with sports and activities of their own planning. They not only had playthings but they made the things they played with.

Their grape-vine swings, in the forest shade, grape-vine skipping ropes and teeter boards balanced on a rail fence, were just as alluring as the modern high post swing in the glaring sunlight and the teeter boards of evolution mounted on steel rods. Then there was the "Big Pond" with its hand made rafts in summer, and the ice in winter; and there was sliding down hill, on handsleds on boards and sometimes on a bob-sled borrowed from a neighbor. One time the crust on the snow was so hard the girls threw their shawls down and slid down hill on them. Their mothers never knew it.

And last, but not least, there was the Tamarack swamp, less than half a mile away, with its inexhaustible supply of chewing gum. Just think of it! Genuine tamarack gum! No artificially flavored by-product of coal refuse, but the life, the elixir of the tamarack tree, bringing joy unspeakable to the hearts, of those youthful seekers after knowledge and woe unfathomable to the unhappy wielder of the "birch." That teacher who could successfully cope with the "gum problem" was teacher, diplomat, general, all rolled in one.

The first group of pioneers of the Leek District turned out thirteen school teachers; they lacked, of course, the multitudinous qualifications of the modern teacher; were, no doubt, short on phonetics and object lessons. The main object in the minds of the young victims of those ancient methods of recitation was to avoid the birch-but they could spell.

The old school house has lately been completely renovated, outside and in. All traces of pioneer days and all defects have been removed, a heating plant has been installed, and the new house, like the Phoenix of old, rises from the ashes of its old self, the equal of the standard school house of today.

So far as known no resident of the Leek District has ever achieved national renown, and none have ever landed in prison, or in politics, and it is a comfort to reflect on the saying of Abraham Lincoln, that "the Lord must like common folks, he made so many of them."

#### DISTRICT NO. 6, ALAIEDON.

WRITTEN AND READ BY MRS. FRED BRENNER.

In the early days before the steamship made us near neighbors to the mother countries across the ocean our forefathers bade their dear ones a sad adieu and, one by one, made the tedious journey of weeks or months to this new land, here to wrest by hard labor a livelihood and home from the untried soil. As the East became more thickly populated they turned their faces Westward, many finding a haven in our own Michigan.

Often several families of like nationality desiring to be with others of their native tongue would settle in one locality.

This seems to have been the case in District No. 6 of Alaiedon, which earned its name of German district from the number of German families who settled here, and were too busy to realize what the history of its early development would mean to their descendants.

Among the early settlers were the Riggs families, Leslie and Austin, Valentine Raddle, Ernest Dell, the Gilberts and Slaters. A wagon road was cut through the woods from near Mr. Dell's farm and extended to the present site of Alaiedon Center. It was called the Morse road. A log school house was built on this road on the corner of Valentine Raddle's farm. Mrs. J. T. Green, of Holt, a daughter of Mr. Raddle's, tells an incident of the early days that is very interesting.

A Miss Rose Strayer taught the school at that time, boarding at the Raddle's home. Miss Strayer had a sister who was a



country milliner and who was making Mrs. Raddle a bonnet so she with her two children, Kate and Helen, accompanied the teacher to the school near the present site of the Leek school house in order to note the progress of the bonnet and to spend the night with her friends. The next morning Miss Strayer left for her school quite early. Mrs. Raddles, who lingered behind for a longer visit, finally started for home. The trail was dim and she soon lost her way and wandered about through the woods, climbing over logs and through the underbrush until she found a wagon track. This site traced more easily by little pieces of charcoal which had fallen from the wagons, and after a time she came to the clearing where the school house stood.

Mrs. August Wolf also tells of a trip she tried to make on the Morse road. Her father, Ernest Dell, who purchased his farm from the government in 1850, moved here from Lansing, and later promised his little daughters, Dean and Emma, that he would take them to Lansing. This was to be a great event. They started early one morning on the wonderful trip with a small one-horse wagon. Their father took the ax along in case a tree might have fallen across the track. They went down the Morse road, advancing very slowly, but finally found the road so obstructed as to be impassable. Mr. Dell turned the horse about and made his way back home, the little girls in the back of the wagon weeping out their disappointment.

Indians often came to visit these early settlers and the famous Mackinack trail passed through this settlement, where two Indian camps are known to have existed,

The need of a church was felt and a class was organized in 1853, church services being held at the homes and later at the log school house, while still later the school house which was built about one-half mile south of the old one became the place of worship. Finally a church was built on the old school house site, where services in the German language were held.

Some years ago this building was sold and the fact that there was ever a church here is fast becoming a township tradition.

Among the early school teachers was Susan Every, who taught here in 1859. She later married Jas. Steintoff, and was for many years a resident of Alaiedon. The second school house was rebuilt and remodeled a few years ago and is now a standard school, with many modern conveniences.

The thick woods of the early days of Alaiedon have been cleared away, the Morse road has given way to well kept highways, the Indian trail and camp is extinct, and the redman is known no more. The oxen and horse are replaced by the automobile, and the fine buildings and well tilled productive farms give evidence of the thrift and prosperity their present owners have received as an inheritance from their sturdy, industrious, God-fearing ancestors.

There being no No. 7, Mrs. Jas. True read a history of District No. 8, as follows (and it would seem that District No. 8 must have been organized while Alaiedon still included the townships of Delhi, Lansing and Meridian, for the description of the district as found in the records of 1842 do not coincide with the confines of the district now known as District No. 8, Alaiedon. This simply goes to prove how extremely difficult it is to get the early history exact and accurate. Editor).

A grant from the United States to the State of Michigan by Act of Congress, approved June 23, 1836, and accepted in the State convention at Ann Arbor, Dec. 15, 1836: "Every section 16 in every township of public land was granted to the State for the use of schools." Later the State sold the patent on this land in Alaiedon to Amos V. Steele, Nov. 28, 1865. No record of any deed or lease has been found.

At a meeting of the board of school inspectors of the town of Alaiedon, held the 22nd day of January, A. D. 1842, "Resolved that a new school district be formed in said township by the name and style of school district No. 8, and bounded as follows: To contain the south half of section 27, the southeast quarter of section 28, sections 32, 33 and 24 in town 4 north of range 2 west; also sections 3, 4 and 5, and the north half of section 8, north half of section 9 and section 10, in town 3 north range 2 west. The first district meeting to be held at the house of Henry H. North on the 26th day of February A. D. 1842 at 3 o'clock.

"W. H. Child,  
I. S. Finch,  
J. Ferguson,

School Inspectors.

"I certify the above to be a true record,

"W. H. Child, Deputy Town Clerk."

Feb. 22, 1842.

No. 8 district shall embrace all of sections 17 and 18, one-half of 19 and north one-half of 20.

At one time the farm adjoining the school site of District No. 8 was owned by the county, as was also the Lewis farm where the county house buildings were located.

The original first school house was a frame building which was later sold to E. N. Wilkins, and at present is used as a granary on the farm of Clair E. Wilkins.

A brick building was then put up and this is still in use, though it is expected that it will be replaced by the centralized school some time.

In those early days there were not the State homes for children that there are at present, or at least the youngsters were not all placed there, for each county farm sent a number of pupils to the nearest school, and they not only brought their lunch, but something known in modern times as "cooties." The report of some of the older pupils of No. 8 is that times were interesting at home as well as school after that. But perhaps they served the same purpose as David Harum's fleas, and "kept them from brooding."

Traveling in pioneer days was safe as far as the speedmaniac was concerned. Judging from the records of the township clerk which read "decided to raise \$150 for the purpose of making roads across the big swamp in the center of the township. March 22, 1843.

"D. C. Stillman,  
Joel B. Strickland,  
Isreal Chapman.  
Contractors of Highways.  
E. W. Patterson,  
Town Clerk."

It is also found recorded that the amount of mill tax to be collected in the township of Alameda in 1866 is \$111.50. Of this amount \$25 to be taken out for the township library leaders and \$86.50 to be divided among the several districts, No. 8 to get \$10.16. This was dated Dec. 20, 1855. In 1919 the mill tax in District No. 8 was \$200.20.

In early days teachers were examined by a board of school inspectors, and the wages varied from \$3 to \$10 per month and

board round. Those were the times when it was nice to be a director's wife. If there happened to be any undesirable boarding places in the district the teacher passed them by and went to the director's instead; also if the teacher's home was some distance away the week ends were spent in the director's family.

Nearly every profession has been followed by various pupils from this school; perhaps more have taken up agriculture than any other profession, and the farms in the district speak for themselves. Land that was purchased for a few dollars per acre, swampy and uncleared, today would sell for \$200 per acre.

Although we cannot boast an Abraham Lincoln, we are right proud of the boys and girls who have gone out from District No. 8, and we can all find a lesson from the pioneer life. "Despise not, the day of small things."

Mrs. Eva Felton, of East Lansing, told of her experiences in District No. 9, known as the Sandtill School. She well remembered her pride in the spelling contests held there, and of her efforts to become one of the best spellers, and she could boast that she was often victorious. She had her trials in later days when it fell to her to make out the rate bill for the school, and then wait for her pay until the money could be collected. As to the organization of the district she was unable to give dates or figures.

District No. 11 and 13, known as the Douglas School, was described by Mrs. John Keippe.

Almost a century ago the land now covering District 11 and 13 was a vast and desolate wilderness, but foreign emigration soon made a populous East; and a westward movement became necessary. Some were luckily led into Michigan by river or lake, and by Indian paths which they used for their guides. They lived in log huts, made by hewing the logs to fit upon each other and roofing them with clapboards.

One well known family among these early lotne seekers was the Manning's, who settled in this district. J. W. Manning is still living on the old settlement place and is the oldest pioneer in the district at the present time.

After the toil and strife of the reconstruction period of the Civil War the land was cleared for farming and placed on a progressive basis.

About 1880 the population increased, education advanced and

the essentials of mankind became greater. Churches and schools were their only social functions. It was then that the first school house was erected, being constructed out of an old log house. It was situated across the road from the old Douglas settlement, and was named after the same, Nathan Weston now owns the Douglas place.

The first teacher to bring forth educational knowledge to the district was Myrtle Blake (now **Mrs. Frank Hillard**).

After a few years of successful teaching the school house burned and a new one was built, which is still at the Douglas Corners.

#### THE COUNTY FARM WHEN IT WAS IN ALAIEDON,

**MRS. WILLIS BUTLER.**

January **7, 1838**, and June **6, 1839**, Horace Havens and Richard **Rayner** bought from the United States government the tract of land described as E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section **21**, T 8 N, R 1 W, now known as the **W. J. Walker** farm..

On January **9, 1844**, this land was deeded to the Superintendents of the Poor of Ingham county, and their successors in office. The superintendents at the time of this transfer were Peter **Linderman**, **Geo. Matthews** and Caleb **Carr**.

As **this** was not thought by the Board of Supervisors to be the proper procedure, the land was transferred in 1877 by the Superintendents of the Poor to the county of Ingham,

**Feb. 9, 1878**, the county of **Ingham** deeded to **O. J. Lewis** the old county farm site and secured his farm in Meridian township, which is the present location of the county home.

During John Bradman's period as keeper the county house burned, six persons being burned, four incompetents and two who were insane. It was thought to have caught fire from the smoking of some of the crazy women kept there,

The building was immediately rebuilt.

The county farm was located in Alaiedon township thirty-four years. After **it** was taken into Meridian township most of the buildings were moved to near-by farms.

To S, Lee Cook, the last keeper in Alaiedon township, fell the

task of transferring the inmates and property to the new location,

The keepers of the poor house during the location of the institution in Alaiedon were Wm. F. Near, James Reed, Joe Hudson, Dan Leek, David Fitzsimmons, John **Bradman**, Augustus Wells and S. Lee Cook.

The secretary of the Ingham County Pioneer and Historical Society while doing research work found the following information regarding the poor funds for the county:

"The first recorded action of the board of supervisors in regard to the poor of the county was in June, 1843, when \$50 was appropriated for their use. In 1844 the importance of having a home for this class of people was seen, and 80 acres of land on section **21** in Alaiedon was bought for \$400. This was added to until the county owned about **200** acres of land, which cost **\$3,858.72**.

"Since the county **was** organized the amount appropriated for the maintenance of the poor has increased from \$50 in 1843 to \$8,850 in 1870."

At the last named date the appropriations seemed to have reached their zenith, The government had not yet made provisions for adequate help for the soldiers of the Civil War and their families, the relief societies which had flourished during the war had dissolved, these veterans, who had taken three, and some of them four, years out of the best earning period of their lives, and had returned "with crippled bodies and health impaired," had no other resource but to call on their home county for help, and of necessity the amount the supervisors were asked to provide must be large,