

Early Life in Southern Steuben The names of its Pioneer Settlers.

"Bath Plain Dealer" Bath, Steuben Co., NY

~References to Troupsburg~

With Thanks to Marion for her contribution.

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Nathaniel REYNOLDS of Troy, N.Y., a former resident of Troupsburg sends the following to the Farmers Weekly:

I notice of the death of Eber STILES and Daniel WILLIAMS, of Troupsburg, old friends and acquaintances of mine, for more than three score years and ten. I well remember Eber STILES' father helping me, when I was a small boy, adjust the grist of corn on my horse, when passing his house on my way from Troupsburg to Elmira, to mill a distance of sixty miles. Elmira was then called Newtown. At other times I went from Troupsburg to Bath and to Canisteo to mill on horse back. This reminds me of many familiar faces when I was a boy, among them old Mr. CRAIG, and Mr. SIMPSON, who were early settlers of Jasper. Old Mr. SIMPSON had a son named Curtis (*Curtis?*), and when in later years I went to school Curtis was the teacher. He told the scholars the rats destroyed much of his grain stored in the barn and wrote a letter setting forth his grievance and left the letter on the grain in the barn, and the rats all left the next night. I also went to school to Heatly SPENCER, son of another of Jasper's earliest pioneers. The school house stood on the southwest corner of the John MARLATT Four Corners, about 1 mile south of Jasper village, and a man by the name of PHENIX (Phoenix-jac) kept a store on the opposite corner, I well remember another face not quite so familiar, that of a large black bear standing by the wayside and taking my dimensions, while on my way to school. At that time nine miles of the distance between Jasper village and Colonel Bill STEVENS (Stephens-jac) was one of the unbroken wilderness, with not one shanty to mar the evergreen forest.

A boy by the name of James HAYES and I came through this wilderness, in the night on horseback, having been to Colonel Bill STEVENS to mill, and a panther kept us company for a mile or two by going a little distance from the road and keeping one constant scream; that and the darkness which was almost as thick as tar, made the chills run up and down my spinal column.

I remember Colonel Bill STEVENS paying a man by the name of DAVIS to walk by his side and fiddle while he, STEVENS ploughed; and I remember Major BENNETT, who built the Brick Tavern as it was then called at Canisteo.

I remember Nathaniel THACHER (*Thatcher?*), of Hornellsville the father of Mowry and Otis and all the generation of THACHERS I ever knew. Ira DAVENPORT kept a little store close by the creek at the upper end of the village. I think five or six houses were all that made the village at that time. DAVENPORT drew his goods from Albany by wagon with one span of horses, and afterwards he employed a young man by the name of Martin ADSIT who lives in Hornellsville at this writing, having lived a successful and honored life; an dlike myself, is looking backward over two or three generations that have been harvested by the "Great Reaper"

I well remember John MAGEE and William HUBBELL, and many other residents of Bath, who long since have ridden the pale horse out of sight. I remember taking dinner with my father at the house of a man by the name of STEVENS (Joshua Stephens-jac) on Bennett's Creek, who was some time after murdered by Indians. A poem was written relating the circumstances. I remember two or three lines which read like this:

From Squeaky hill two Indians came

To Bennett's Creek to hunt for game,

Their names were John Sundown and Curley Eye, & c.

I recollect when a town meeting held in Troupsburg, one of the voters passed a hat and all the rest put

their ballots in it, then the ballots were counted, and the man having the greatest number was declared elected Supervisor. "No tiger in that."

The old town records of Troupsburg were kept at this time by the Town Clerk, Samuel RICE, living about one mile east of Eber STILES' and one mile and a half west of the village of Woodhull, and one law made in that town was "that a hog should not run at large unless he had a yoke eight inches below his neck."

If I recollect correctly there were no Jasper, Woodhull or Greenwood. All were included in Troupsburg at the first. I can remember when there was not one iron plough in this country, all wood except a point made by a common blacksmith. No railroad, steam boats, cotton or wollen factories, till about the time that men of STILES' age were born, and not a saloon in America. Liquor was sold only in taverns.

I will close my letter by giving you a partial list of the first settlers of western Steuben as I recollect them, having no written history at my command.

They settled a little before and a little after 1810 and lived long enough that I became acquainted with most of them. I could give you incidents connected with almost every one of their lives:

Judge HORNELL, Nathaniel THACHER and Ira DAVENPORT of Hornellsville, and they lived and begot sons and daughters. In Canisteo, Major BENNETT, Colonel Bill STEVENS and Jerry BAKER, Jerry was once elected to the Assembly. And they lived and begot sons and daughters. In Jasper settled by a man by the name of PEAK and others by the names of SPENCER, CRAIG, SIMPSON, Adam and Nicholas BRUTSMAN, McMINDS (McMindes-jac), John MARLATT, and brothers, and they lived and begot sons and daughters.

In Troupsburg, was Samuel RICE, father of all the RICES, Mr. STILES, Louis HAYES, Squire REYNOLDS, father of all the REYNOLDSSES, William and Charles CARD. Mr. HARRINGTON, George MARTIN, the first Mr. CLARK, father of John and Noel, Messers. (*Misters-jac*) CADY and GRINOLDS; and they all lived and begot sons and daughters.

At this time the Indians and wild beasts had possession. Now, my boy, by looking over the landscape you can see what the Yankees have done in one lifetime. In many cases the fourth, and in some, the fifth generations are now living.

If the present Yankees had been living at Noah's time they would have built the ark in one year and rented it for the World's Fair, and sold excursion tickets and made money enough to pay the expenses and been out of patience waiting for the shower. If they had lived at Moses' time, would have gone through the wilderness in one year, built the city of Jerusalem in the next year, and had a saloon on every corner lot ready to treat the crowd when they came up to the temple to pray. (End of article)

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