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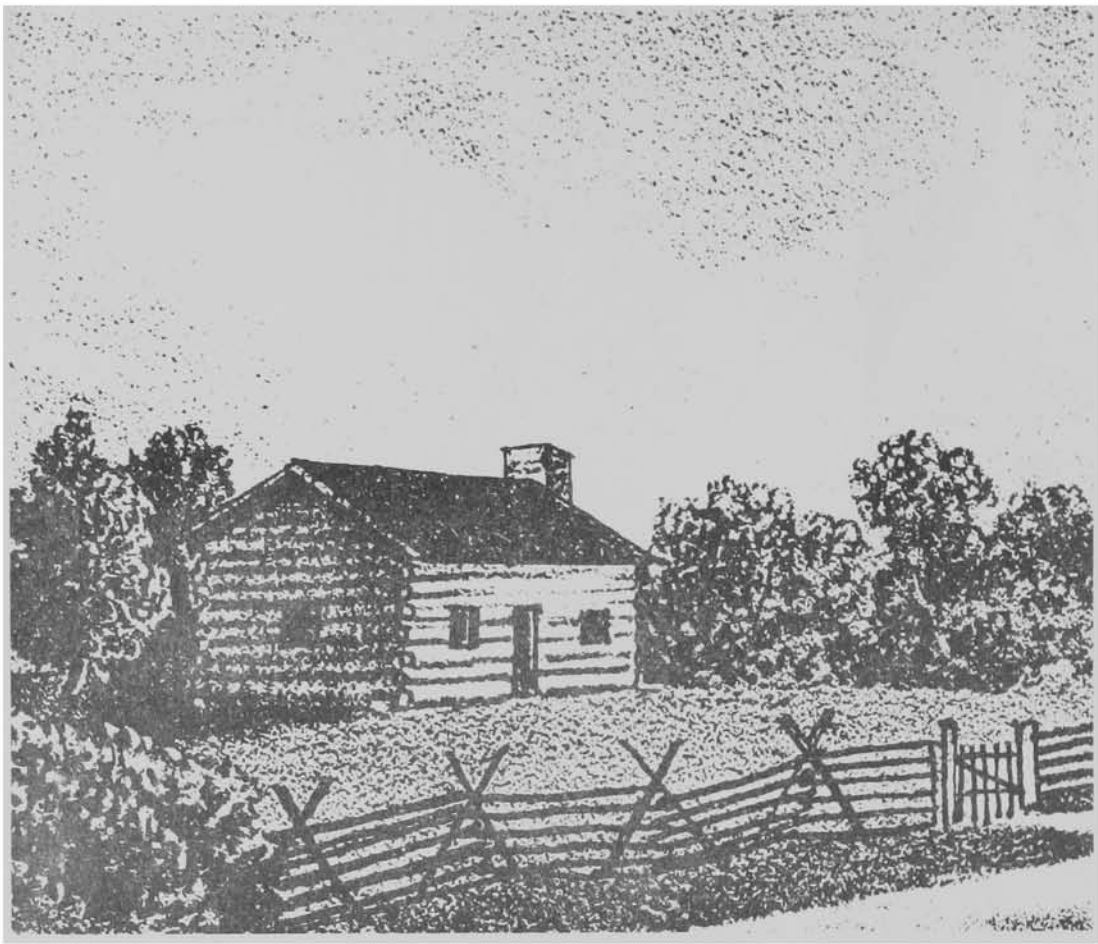

PATCHEN CABIN, WEST DANBY

Jared Patchen owned but never lived on the site of this cabin. In 1823, his son John completed the dwelling after living eight years in the cabin, birthplace of his children: John, Jr., who went West; Ira the merchant, and Polly, whose mother died when she was six weeks old and who was cared for by Mrs. Moses Barker until her father remarried. Polly was the grandmother of Miss Evangeline Thatcher, present occupant of the Patchen homestead.

Danby Historical Sketches

By TRESA CORTRIGHT
Town Historian

1968

DeWITT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY of TOMPKINS COUNTY, Inc.
Ithaca, New York 14850

Contents

Preface

Earlier in the century, upon solicitation by the State Museum, the Iroquois Nation turned over for safekeeping its wampum belts which recorded the history of the Confederacy and its six tribes. Now that the elders have died and the younger generations lack a source of tribal history, the Iroquois have asked return of the belts that the deficiency may be overcome.

A similar situation exists in most communities throughout the State. Local history is being forgotten through neglect by the intermediate generations. Like the Iroquois sages, who desire restoration of wampum so that their historical record may be studied by the young men and women of their several tribes, some persons are making valiant efforts to provide descendants of the pioneers and their successors with their historical record.

During the last decade the DeWitt Historical Society has been assisting in collecting local history and printing efforts made by local historians. Because of high costs and limited sales—750 copies represent a big seller—the Society has established a modest printing department and has lent its services to workers in the field embraced by Central New York. Contributions of labor and the equipment have made the project self-sustaining so that nearly 80 titles have been produced.

The first such pamphlet for 1968 is the one in hand, the work of Mrs. Harold Cortright, longtime historian of the Town of Danby. Its title represents a collection of 72 articles which serve to present some of the history of the town for residents that, like the Iroquois, seek ways to learn the story of their community. These seekers include not only those who have forgotten but newcomers as well who have had no opportunity to learn it.

Writing under her personal name, Tresa Cortright, the author offers a variety of sketches that vary from accounts of rattlesnakes, wild bees, blacksmiths, a century-old farm,

and the length of stovewood used in Little Red Schoolhouses, to a one-night benefit party that endeavored to utilize 100 gallons of oysters.

There is mention of a tavern whose one side was wholly windowless, and another of a blacksmith who constructed one of the first bicycles, a high-wheeler. Church histories, the story of the Soldiers' Monument in Danby village, Indian fishers and hunters in the town, and a post office that was started in a bedroom.

DeWitt Historical Society has been happy to co-operate with the author in producing a modest volume that will go a long way towards enabling the current residents of the town to develop their interest in community history.

W.H.,Jr.

DeWitt Historical Society
February 15, 1968.

Source of Danby's Name Uncertain

The name of the town is believed to have been derived from Danby, Vt., seat of a land grant awarded the Earl of Danby in 1760. Some early settlers in our town came from Vermont. Our town was first included in the Town of Spencer, Tioga County, by an act of 1806. In 1811 Caroline, Danby and Newfield (then called Cayuta) were organized as towns, and in 1822 all three were annexed to the newly formed Tompkins County.

During 1789, three families from Kingston, New York, located at the foot of East Hill, Ithaca. This was before the Indian lands had been opened to Revolutionary War claimants; hence, through fraud or mischance, they lost possession of these lands. Jacob and John Yaple and Isaac and John Dumond relocated in Danby about 1795; the third from the Ithaca settlement, Peter Hinepaw, seems too have taken up a claim in Danby, as indicated on an early map, but report says he moved to Aurora, Cayuga County. The names of Hinepaw and Dumond have disappeared from county rolls but Yaple descendants still reside in Danby.

During 1797, these settlers built the first gristmill with millstones quarried and dressed on South Hill, Ithaca. Two years later they built the first sawmill on the same site.

In 1797, Dr. Lewis Beers and brother Jabez came into the town from Stratford, Connecticut, purchased 200 acres from the Johnson brothers, cleared a site during the summer and occupied it with their families that September. It was later known as the E. L. B. Curtis farm, home of Dr. Beers' grandson. In later years it was owned by Erie J. Miller and now is the property of Dr. Wendell Bryce.

Joseph Judson, 15, and William Collins, 16, were indentured boys brought in by Dr. Beers. Another brother, Abner, Jr.,

came in 1804, and still later Dr. Beers brought in his parents. The community became known as Beers Settlement.

Commencing in 1798, Dr. Beers kept the first inn, a house whose dimensions were 20x22. He resumed his medical practice because of malaria epidemics among the settlers on the flatlands. He became postmaster 1801-2, justice of the peace in 1807, to be followed by his brother Jabez, who later was the first member of Assembly from the county. Abner kept the first store.

Before the town was organized in 1811, other pioneers included Elias Deyo, Joseph Todd, Archer Green, 1797; David Clark, 1801; Lewis Beardsley, Benjamin Jennings, Moses Banfield, 1802; Deacon Hezekiah Clark, John Pumpelly, Benijah Tichenor, 1803; the Swartouts from Ulster County; John Thomas, William, James, Abram, and Samuel, 1804; John Miller, Nathan Beers (cousin of the doctor) Comfort Butler, 1805; David Smith, Aaron Bennett, 1806; Seneca Howland, Amos Hall, 1807; Elbert Curtis, M.D., 1809.

At the first town meeting assembled March 11, 1811, Stephen Beers, Jr., was elected supervisor; Uri Hill, town clerk; Nathan Adams, Aaron Bennett and Benjamin Jennings, assessors; commissioners of the highways, John Yaple, Seymour H. Adams and Hudson Jennings; overseers of the poor, Jacob Yaple, Stephen Beers; constable and collector, Birdsey Clark; constable, Hudson Jennings; fence viewers and damage appraisers, Lewis Beardsley, Hezekiah Clark, John Dumond, John Yaple; poundmaster, Hezekiah Clark.

Measures voted at this session included establishment of a town pound; restricting boar hogs (not to run at large, fine 25 cents), and purchase of ballot boxes.

Indians Hunted and Fished Here

During the time the Cayuga Indians occupied that section of the Dark Forest which embraced today's Danby, there seems to have been no permanent villages within the town. In fact, only two such settlements in the county have been located, both in Enfield.

By no means does this lack of permanent locations indicate absence of the Redmen. Quite to the contrary, the topography of the area was favorable for hunting and fishing. It is known that the Tuscaroras at Inlet Valley and the Saponis at Pony Hollow visited Jenning's Pond during the autumn to procure supplies of fish and game for the winter's food store. The two Enfield villages were well within range of the pond, so there must have been Cayuga hunters there long before advent of these two tribes who came from the South as late as 1722.

When spring put in its appearance, the Indians were only too happy to escape from their winter quarters, move into the open country, erect temporary shelters and proceed to add variety to the winter diet—new-laid bird's eggs were the delicacies sought. A few weeks later they set out to plant gardens, then as the season progressed came the harvest. The year was closed by the hunting days of fall and early winter.

For these purposes there were a number of campsites scattered about the county, one of which being in the vicinity of today's Danby village. This was, no doubt, a fishing and hunting site as the proximity of Jenning's Pond would suggest.

The Danby Trail, as it has come to be recognized, left Ithaca by way of Spencer Street, picked up the Catharine's Town Trail at the foot of South Hill, then climbed the hill and continued on to Danby village. The main trail continued to Spencer Lake, where it joined the Inlet Valley Trail and followed it to Tioga Point, now Athens, Pa. Another approach to these

hunting grounds was the Inlet Valley-West Danby Trail which ran from Inlet Valley to Spencer Lake and there joined the Danby Trail.

After Sullivan's expedition in 1779 destroyed the Iroquois Confederacy in Central New York, the Cayugas abandoned their lands and fled across the Niagara River into Canada. Few Cayugas were ever seen in the Danby area after the migration. An occasional hunter came back to grounds with which he was familiar, but the last remnant was a small group that in the early 1790's lived on South Hill. While they tarried, they spent the summers cropping the nearby uplands, but in winter sought the protection of the ravine on Six Mile Creek.

Climate and soil condition of Danby were conducive to the agricultural products of the primitive Redmen. There grew abundantly his corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, gourds, and tobacco. There was likewise a rich variety and liberal supply of natural foods that were had for the harvest: roots, nuts, seeds, bark, berries and many another that was added to the dietary of the natives.

Even the wild rose made a contribution of its hip which, after autumn's killing frosts had ripened it, the foragers ate with avidity. When the pioneer arrived, he, too, ate rose hips with as much gusto as his predecessor had shown for them. But there is no reason to believe that either knew the seeds were a rich source of Vitamin C, something unknown to both races.

Danby Farm in Family More Than 100 Years

Tompkins County's first century farm has been in the Todd family since 1837. Owned by Mr. and Mrs. Milton Todd, the farm of 125 acres is in West Danby.

Moses Barker, father of Maria Barker who became the wife of Goyne Todd, paid $4.25 an acre for the land when in 1837 he purchased it from the Pumpelly estate. Originally, it was a part of the Watkins and Flint purchase of 336,880 acres from New York State in 1794. The Todd ownership has descended to the fourth generation.

Hall Family Active Businessmen

Amos Hall came to Danby about 1807, and two years later his sons Silas and Leonard came to live here. They were long engaged in business activities. Leonard's son Albert Hall lived in the old home in the 1870's. Frank Sprague and Mrs. Virginia Sprague were owners of the property in 1960, and possessors of one of the Hall account books.

Charles C. Howell and Aaron Bennett, as appraisers of Leonard Hall's estate under date of April 15, 1848, reported a total of $1,305.54 in personal property. No realty was referred to. The total was made up of balance on mortgage, $597.18; promisory notes totaled $232.09; accounts due, $36.27, and good current money on hand, $440. At the time, this was a comfortable working capital for a village enterprise.

Perhaps the word "good" in this appraisal carries greater significance than we attribute to it at present. Our money is stable whereas a century ago bank issue varied from bank to bank and even day by day. Messers. Howell and Bennett were careful to observe the distinction.

An excise license dated 1828 and issued to Leonard Hall over the signature of Lewis Beers, supervisor, is extant. These licenses were granted between 1828 and 1833, both inclusive. Stage drivers on the Ithaca-Owego turnpike found overnight accommodations at the Hall home, and stage horses were changed here. Inquiries as to the name of this establishment have been unavailing. Nevertheless, it is an interesting place with bank cellars, its steep stairs, and its upper apartment which can be entered from the ground level of the bank behind the house.

In 1834, Benjamin Elliott invented a machine to produce alternate motion that was applicable to churns and other similar machinery. Leonard Hall furnished the $100 required to obtain a patent.

Ten years later, when the Ithaca Falls Woolen Mills Co. was formed, Leonard Hall subscribed for four $25 shares. But it is doubtful that his dividends ever returned him the investment, even though Lewis Beers was president of the company and J. J. Speed, secretary.

On September 2, 1864, Albert Hall paid the U.S. Internal Revenue Service $3 tax on a carriage. W. C. Curran was the collector.

During the early decades of the 19th century general stores were centers that dispensed information such as often was useful to its rural customers who were without today's extension service. The proprietors filed what appeared to them as answers to questions to be asked. This account book like thousands of others became a repository of advice good, bad and ridiculous in the light of today's knowledge.

Suggestive of those recipes and formulas were some in the Hall account book that told how to make Christmas pudding, lemon cake, grafting wax, horse distemper, felon and hydrophobia cures as well as others. It is difficult to imagine any housewife of the day who sought a recipe for puddings and cakes.

By way of an explanation for our younger generation, grafting was done by a specialist who transferred a small branch, or cion, from a particularly fine fruit tree to that of a native tree whose fruit was of low quality. Apples and pears were the most commonly grafted.

Where the new cion was fixed to the host branch, the area was covered with grafting wax as a protection against wind and rain until new growth united the two stems. This wax was made of a mixture of resin, beeswax and tallow melted together. It was usable for years, but had to be warmed sufficiently to enable the operator to spread it over the exposed section of the stock stub. The writer has some grafting wax at the Hobby House and a grafted apple tree nearby.

Another type of information comes from a bill of sale, for it informs us of the price of white lead and linseed oil, ingredients for paint that enabled the beautiful houses to add charm

to the landscape. Albert Hall bought of Schuyler & Dix, Ithaca, July 5, 1833, 200 pounds of pure lead in oil for $20, with a 5 per cent discount for cash, and 9 gallons of linseed oil for $16.75.

Still another Hall account is revealing. Elijah Hallet on February 12 spent a day boiling sap and was paid 25 cents. During April he spent one day each chopping wood and stacking lumber, and was paid the going wage, 25 cents. Picking stones was less profitable for he received 20 cents for a day so spent. In May he did better as he drew 50 cents a day grafting. Planting potatoes apparently was not counted as skilled labor for he again drew 25 cents. Dragging, now known as harrowing, must have been downright degrading: two and a half days at it paid him 35 cents. Then a half day sowing plaster brought him $1. Plaster was gypsum and sowing it by hand was a disagreeable job; perhaps no one else would do the work.

Mother of Pioneer Kidnaped in France

Perhaps as far back as 1777 a three-year-old girl was kidnaped by a man and a woman from her parental home in France. The kidnapers brought her to New England and arranged for her care with a farmer near Boston but, after paying for a month's service, the couple was never heard from again. Her name was unknown, but the farmer's family bestowed its name upon her and she became Rebecca Coleman.

In after years she married Conrad Davis, native of Wales who had come to Massachusetts with his parents. Their first child was James C. Davis, born in New Jersey in 1797. Davis had married Susan Gertrude Horn who was born in Easton, Pa., in 1795.

This Davis family was among the early settlers in Danby, but before 1834 they loaded their belongings and children in an oxcart and went to Steuben County. He died at Corning in 1853 and the wife two years later.

Barefeet in Summer Saved Boots for Winter

In common with all of the early settlers who came to Central New York after 1790, those who chose Danby as a future home to be carved out of the Indian's Dark Forest, wore leather boots. This footwear was produced by local artisans who shod all members of the family.

As autumn approached, the head of the household brought the shoemaker to his home, and there the shoes and boots were fabricated from home-grown hides that had been tanned in a nearby small tannery. Then, when all feet were prepared for cold weather, the shoemaker remained a guest in the home until summoned elsewhere to likewise provide footwear.

Everyone was saving of footwear. Men would go to church in clement weather barefooted and bareheaded, with nothing on but a linen shirt and a pair of tow-cloth pants. These were his working clothes but they were clean. Some women went barefoot in warm weather as did men when their work permitted. All children went barefooted from early spring to late fall—and enjoyed it.

There was no shoe blacking. For Sunday wear and going to meeting, everyday footwear was cleaned, greased with tallow. A homemade blacking was a mixture of tallow, beeswax and lampblack melted together; another was lampblack mixed with the white of an egg. When applied, these would provide a shine.

Until 1820, boots were made to fit either foot: there were no rights and lefts. Until late in the 1880's, leather boots were preferred for general wear as they protected one's feet against dirt thrown up by unpaved streets. Urban boot wearers let their pant legs cover the leg of the boot, but rural workers tucked trousers into the leg of the boot.

The first shoe store in the county appeared in Ithaca in 1840. But it was not until after the Civil War that wearing shoes became a general custom.

Blacksmith's Accounts Tell a Story

Charles F. Mix was a Danby blacksmith during the third quarter of the last century. His account book was in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. David Moore when this record was copied in 1963. It's an inventory of the merchandise used and the services rendered by the universal artisans from pioneer times until engines displaced the horse.

June 1, 1871—Seth Dorn dbt. to 4 new and 4 old shoes, and corked (caulked) $2.60; from page 209, 27.76, 14.75 .....
July 27—set 8 shoes and fix whiffletree and irons 1.50
Sept. 11—set 2 new and 4 old shoes, corked & set ..... .70
Oct. 1—1 new and set 7 old shoes 1.75
Settled all acct. up to date by note April 2, 1872.
June 25, 1871—Gilbert Parshall, made spud 1.50
Sept. 11, 1871—D. Beers (son of ——) repair sulkey pd. 1.50
Sept. 25—Charles Mack Fall, set 2 tyres, mended chain.. 2.35
Nov. 14—Shingle make ..... .75
2 new shoes and 2 old 1.30
Nov. 24—John Fish, repair cutter ..... .50
Aug. 9, 1872—Gilbert Parshall, set 2 shoes ..... .30
Aug. 9, 1872—John Sears, set 4 tyres, repair wagon 5.00
Sept. 7, 1877—Osker Jennings, repair buggy ..... .30
July 7—John Sears, set 4 shoes ..... .60
William Sears, Bal. on page 288 ..... 4.35
Peter Signer, Dtr. to 2 new shoes ..... .90

The spud was for peeling bark, the "tyres" were for wagon wheels, and the shoes for hooves of horses.

School Registration 880 Century Ago

With 880 pupils registered in its district schools a century ago, Danby was second lowest in the county. Enfield with 720 stood at the foot of the tally. At that time there were 11,913 pupils registered in Tompkins County, Town of Ithaca furnishing 2,477; Dryden was second high with 1,790.

Farm Home Was Typical of Its Day

"Ours was just an ordinary farm," wrote Nelson Genung of his parental home about 1875. He continued, "some fields were productive, some quite otherwise. The buildings were very good and the house was large and comfortable. In the front yard were four tall spruce trees and one maple. The front fence, as well as the house, was always well painted. There was an abundance of flowers in great variety all through the summer, and also shrubbery and rose bushes. Mother always had a fine flower garden in addition to the display in the front yard. Everything was neat and tidy both inside and outside the house.

"There was an abundance of fruit in good variety, and we always had a splendid vegetable garden. We had a liberal supply of things to eat during the summer, and for winter the cellar was always piled to the ceiling with apples, potatoes and other fruits and vegetables, canned fruits of all kinds, and a barrel each of pork and cider. Every fall the woodshed was filled to the roof with seasoned stovewood.

"Carrots for the horses and mangel-wurzels for the cattle were included in the winter stores. The granary and corncrib were full, and the mows filled with hay and straw. Thus the stock as well as ourselves, were well supplied throughout the winter months.

"I have often compared those days of abundance with our present-day (he was writing in 1934) practice in the city of living from hand to mouth, of purchasing each day our requirements in the way of food for the next twenty-four hours."

It will be noticed that he did not make a comparison of the qualities of the home-produced food with that which comes in cans. Perhaps, he silently held there was no comparison, a

view in which he will find many sympathizers of the older generation. Continuing he writes:

"This farm was purchased by my Father at a high price just after the close of the Civil War. There was one exceptionally good field on which wheat was usually raised. Father frequently told me that he paid for the farm with the wheat he raised on this field. He usually sold his wheat for one dollar a bushel in those postwar days. Thrift, I think, played its part, too, but he never scrimped.

"A few acres of woodland supplied us amply with fuel and lumber. In the winter, logs were cut and hauled to the sawmill. During the summer we drew firewood on a sled which could be handled by the horses in the woods more easily than a wagon.

"What I have said of my rugged ancestors is equally true of all our pioneers. They all came from long distances, took up land, cleared the forests, pulled the stumps (and there are still sound pine stump fences as witnesses), plowed, sowed and harvested with crude agricultural implements.

"Both my grandfathers made many of the contrivances and tools needed about the farm. They mended boots and shoes for the family and even made new ones. My grandmothers spun flax and wool, wove cloth and rag carpet, made butter and cheese, dipped candles, and helped care for the sick. Our neighbors did likewise."

Although Mr. Genung does not discuss candlemaking, two kinds were produced: dipped and molded. Dipped candles required more time and effort than those made in molds. The fats used always contained a large proportion of tallow for quicker cooling and slower burning. This fat was kept warm, the strings forming the wicks were lowered by hand, then lifted straight up and hung on horizontal bars to drip. All drippings were carefully saved and remelted. As soon as the cooling and hardening were completed, the dipping and cooling process was repeated until the candle became large enough and long enough to suit the maker's purpose.

Mr. Genung continues in his Memoirs:

"Everybody was up early in the morning and worked until

late at night. I often saw, in summertime, one of our neighbors up on his hillside farm, very early in the morning, after his cows. I once asked him at what time he was up. 'Well,' he said, 'in summer I'm up every morning at 4:15, but in winter I grow lazy and don't get up until almost 5 o'clock.'

"Some years later I was back at Grandfather's overnight and knowing them to be early risers, I planned to be up in ample time for breakfast. At 6 o'clock I came downstairs and in passing through the dining room I noticed they had not as yet set the table, but on entering the kitchen my Grandmother greeted me with, 'I saved some breakfast which I placed in the oven to keep it warm.' I stepped to the door and looked out. The men were at work in the hayfield and apparently had been there for some time.

"All the families in the neighborhood worked hard, saved their earnings and enjoyed life to the full. They had no telephones, automobiles, radios, or moving pictures; but they enjoyed picnics, ball games, oyster suppers, church entertainments, donations and singing school."

In the early days, these donations were not of money but of farm-produced foods that ranged from vegetables, potatoes and grain to a live pig, poultry, eggs, honey and maple sirup and sugar. Sometimes, surplus cothing and home-knitted items were contributed. Through these donations, the minister and his family were provided assistance, and so were unfortunate families who came to need through no fault of their own. Another device was a supper, whether oyster, chicken or otherwise, not including a pancake supper for there was no novelty in a meal that was served each day in every home.

'Aunt Natty' Was Danby's Oldest Surviving Pioneer

Abigail, "Aunt Natty" Judson was in 1873 the oldest among the last survivors of the pioneers who came into Danby after Dr. Lewis Beers led the way in 1797. She was 83 and the widow of James Judson, who came as a 15-year-old boy indentured to Dr. Beers and was the first teacher in the town.

Initial Events in Danby History

First houses (cabins) erected by John and Isaac Dumond and Jacob and John Yaple, in 1795.

First frame house erected by Lewis Beers, 1801.

Isaac, son of John Dumond, was born August 12, 1795, first birth in the town.

The first death was that of Joseph Rogers' wife, 1797.

First sawmill and first gristmill erected by Yaple and Dumond, 1797.

First schoolhouse was erected in Beers Settlement (Joseph Beers, teacher), in 1800-1.

First church was erected by the Presbyterians in Danby village, 1820; became Congregational, now Federated Church.

First tannery erected by Luther Foster half mile outside the village, 1810.

West Danby Active Century Ago

Just under a century ago, West Danby was an active rural business center as is indicated by a directory listing of 1873.

Justice of the Peace—David A. Nichols.
Churches—Baptist and Methodist.
Postmaster—Ira M. Patchen.
Blacksmiths—Alonzo Beach and J. Lewis.
Boot and Shoe Store—George Shaw.
Carpenter and Builder—James Grant.
Carriage and Wagonmaker—Charles English.
General Merchandise—Ira M. Patchen.
Mason—Aleck Dewitt.
Physician—Dr. Aaron Tibbets.

Night Raiders Picked on Deacon Jennings

Several clothes lines in Danby were robbed during 1870, a lowgrade rural thievery that afflicted communities from time to time. In one of these raids Deacon Jennings suffered most when not only his clothing was taken, but the line was stolen as well.

Turnpike Answered Transportation Need

Pioneers entering Danby came primarily to develop farms. Among them were such essential artisans as carpenters, coopers, weavers, shoemakers, tailors, blacksmiths, and such professionals as doctors, teachers and ministers. But all of these cleared land and developed supplies of food and fibers for their families; their arts and professional practices were secondary to providing a living.

Since but only two acres were cleared each year, and this by exchange of work, the farmers were handicapped by the dense forests in efforts to produce food sufficient for sustenance. Yet within a remarkably few years they were producing corn, wheat, pork, livestock and forest products in excess of local needs. Lacking transportation facilities, these plentiful yields could not be sent to market advantageously to the producers.

Beef cattle were sent in droves to Philadelphia, turkeys were driven on their own feet to New York City, pork went out pickled in brine and barreled. Wheat was so bulky that conveyance costs to Albany for shipment down the Hudson to the New York market took 30 cents out of the 50 cents a bushel the farmer was paid. To solve this inequity, the grain was for a time converted into whisky that was a third less bulky than wheat and fetched three times the grain price. Corn, rye, barley and buckwheat were consumed at home so the maximum of wheat might go to market.

An initial solution to the transportation handicap in Danby came with the building of the Ithaca-Owego turnpike. Dr. Lewis Beers was among the sturdiest proponents of this improvment. Incorporated in 1807, the 37-mile toll road was completed for years later at a cost of $37,000. It was impossible to raise this sum of money capital in the new country, Dr. Beers has written and explained how contractors and other creditors

were paid one quarter of their account in money, one quarter in notes with interest payable annually, and the remaining one half in stock of the company. At completion there remained due $1,000, and this Dr. Beers and Charles Pumpelly, as security, borrowed from the bank in Derby, Connecticut.

At expiration of the charter in 1841, the road became a public highway. At that time Dr. Beers had presided over the board of directors for 32 years.

The good feeling this road created in its terminal villages led to the naming of its entrance into Ithaca as Owego Street, and the village of Owego reciprocated by naming the entrance there Ithaca Street. But this era of good feeling ended in 1867, when Ithaca renamed Owego Street State Street, and Owego responded by discontinuing the Ithaca Street designation.

What this turnpike meant not only to Danby but to the developing region for miles around, is illustrated by shipment of plaster (gypsum) from the Syracuse beds to Owego, as a river port on the Susquehanna. Records kept of tolls show that after gypsum supplies from Nova Scotia had been cut off during the War of 1812, as many as 800 teams hauling plaster daily passed over the 'pike.

Something similar is provided by reports of David Quigg, an Ithaca merchant who set up his establishment in 1801. He sent annually in droves a total of as many as 1,000 head of beef to the Philadelphia market at a profit of $5 a head.

Shipments of grain, leather, hides, lumber and similar bulk goods were transshipped to arks on the Susquehanna River at Owego and carried to Baltimore. Mercantile goods came from Philadelphia wholesalers to stores in this area by four-horse teams hauling heavy covered wagons. Thus the road was extensively used and brought to Danby considerable revenue through accommodations of stagecoaches and freight wagons at taverns along the route.

Change Stirred Danby in Spring of '69

A Danby correspondent of The Ithacan wrote under date of April 19, 1869:

Some time has elapsed since through your columns Danby has been heard from, but do not let our friends in the world around us for one moment cherish the idea we are dead. Oh, no! Far from it, only sleeping. Sleeping the deep sleep that, with mud for our covering and snowbanks for pillows, in the early springtime annually comes upon us. Before the genial rays of an April sun, however, our coverlet fades away, our pillow sinks into nothingness and we awake, not as yet to find the Ithaca and Towanda R. R. with its attendant bustle in working order upon our western borders.

But acceptable to our nostrils comes the savor of warm sugar rising up from the numerous maple groves 'round about us, to whose shades your correspondent might often have been seen in company with other Danbyites wending his way after the toils of the day, there to remain into the wee small hours, feasting sumptuously on "biled eggs," warm sugar, etc., not washed down as in the days of yore by liberal draughts of hard cider, old rye and like beverages so welcome to the thirsty spirit, for a great change has fallen upon Danby. The discovery that water, besides being useful for washing, etc., makes quite an agreeable drink, has just burst upon the minds of the rising generation here, and temperance reigns supreme. So mote it be!

Jennings Lake Proposed for Pond's Name

A Crane's Hill reporter in 1895 suggested that Jennings Pond be called Jennings Lake. He explained this proposal by saying that the Ithaca Water Company had purchased the water rights and had drawn off the water to facilitate removal of stumps and logs. Its surroundings were improved at the time, and an unsightly old pond, he declared, "had been transformed into a respectable lake of 40 acres in area."

He Was Tired of This World

In the neighborhood, there was a character by name Taylor Hall. He was a godly man who always tried to do what was right, Nelson Genung records in his memoirs. His supply of this world's goods was scant, yet he never begged but accepted whatever was offered. He always started early for church and stopped at those houses on the way where he was likely to be invited to breakfast. As a consequence, he ate often and heartily on Sunday mornings.

His coat was very shabby. One Sunday morning a neighbor brought him a good coat, which pleased him greatly. He put the coat on, but whent it came time for the service to begin he slipped on his old coat and carried the good one in on his arm.

He always spoke at quarterly meetings, his remarks often somewhat humorous. Usually he ended by saying, "The world is tired of me and I am tired of it; I hope I'll die before the next quarterly meeting." The church officials wished to restrain him from speaking so often, and finally Brother Birch said, "Leave it to me; I'll fix him."

At next quarterly meeting Brother Birch sat alongside Taylor and got a grip on the tail of his coat. In due time Taylor attempted to get up, but Brother Birch held him down. "Hold on," said Brother Birch, "a lady over there wishes to speak; don't be in a hurry."

There was another attempt to rise, with the same result. Finally, Taylor grabbed the top of the pew in front and, with a lunge, up he came. His message:

"I came here today for the purpose of speaking. The devil, he came too and sat down alongside of me and has been trying to hold me down by the coattail. But I won't he held down by the devil. I'm bound to say what I have to say in spite of the

devil. The world is tired of me and I am tired of it, and I hope I'll die before the next quarterly meeting."

Poor Taylor! He was in the woods one day, chopping wood, when a dead limb fell and hit him on the head, killing him instantly.

Native Son Violinist, Music Educator

W. Grant Egbert (1867-1928), founder of Ithaca Conservatory of Music, the forerunner of Ithaca College, was a native of Danby. He was a son of William Egbert and wife, Esther R. Grant.

At 7, the boy violinist made his debut, and at 14 entered Syracuse University where for seven years he was student and instructor. A dynamic young man, he possessed an ambition for higher musical attainment, and went to Europe in 1890. A brilliant young musician, he was one of five to win entrance to a famed Berlin school of music. There were 50 violinists from around the world in the competition the Danby native won.

Back in Ithaca, he sought to establish a school of music, and wrote several persons in the city, seeking help. Max Gutstadt, a violinist of ability, alone responded, and in 1892 the Ithaca Conservatory of Music began operations under management of Gutstadt. The school, located at 402 E. Seneca Street, had a faculty of eight and 125 students.

During February 1931, the State Board of Regents incorporated its successor, Ithaca College.

District Clerk's Book Served 44 Years

When George Deplese, clerk of Jersey Hill school district 11, wrote up the minutes of the 1836 annual meeting, he began on page 1 of a new blank book. At the annual meeting October 8, 1880, Clerk J. W. Lambkin was authorized to buy a new book, not that the first was filled but its binding was giving way. In those days the clerks used words so sparingly that 57 pages had sufficed for the minutes during the 1836-1880 interval.

Farm Development Rate 2 Acres Annually

Pioneers who came to the Danby wilderness proceeded vigorously to remove the dense forest and make the land arable. It is commonly held that an average of two acres of land were cleared annually by the firstcomers. Their sons and grandsons kept up the pace so that by the end of the first three quarters of a century two out of every three acres had been improved. In round numbers, this was 22,000 acres as against 11,000, but the latter must include areas that were left wild because of their topographical features.

Without adjusting the value of the dollar of that time with what it is today, one finds that a valuation of $10 was put on the overall acreage, or $18 per acre for improved lands. This may indicate that returns were small in relation to the labors expended in converting the forest-clad land to farms. Only Enfield and Caroline had lower valuations a centry ago.

The population of Danby was almost equally divided between 1,182 males and 1,149 females, for a total of 2,331, second lowest in the county. (Enfield had 1,912). This population was divided into 488 families of whom 424 owned their home property. There were 880 pupils in the 16 school districts.

Statistics indicate that the pioneer era was passing for there were counted in the census 934 horses as against 1,946 working oxen and calves. A count of more than 1,300 cows may be taken to mean a large number of the calves were raised for replenishing the dairy cows, so the number of working oxen did not greatly exceed the horse count. When horses equal or exceed the number of oxen, the pioneer era ends.

Although more than 1,500 yards of cloth were still produced in the home, domestic weaving was a dying industry, for only slightly more than half a yard per person could not contribute much to the economy of the town. Only Dryden and Lansing

had more sheep than Danby's 7,000 head, but its 1,500 swine ranked third in the county. With 7,800 bushels of winter wheat, Danby's production was third from the bottom of the tally, but its nearly 150,000 bushels of spring wheat ranked it third.

The town's hay crop of 3,500 tons was exceeded by that of three towns, but Dryden only exceeded its production of almost 18,000 bushels of potatoes, a crop for which it was long famed. Five towns exceeded Danby's 131,000 pounds of butter, and its two tons of cheese ranked fourth for the county but fell far short of the 18 tons accounted for in Groton.

Chestnuts Were Plentiful Then

"After the first heavy frost each fall," remembers Nelson Genung in his memoirs, "the four older grandchildren spent a couple of weeks at Grandfather Howard's, to gather chestnuts. On his farm were several chestnut trees out in the open fields which squirrels seldom visited. Each morning Grandfather, with a long pole, would whip off a quantity of the nuts; an aunt living at home would help us gather them. Grandmother made for each of us a large bag from an old sheet on which she embroidered our initials. When the time came for us to go home, all bags were well filled with chestnuts."

The memorist terminated his narrative with the group's return home. Here the chestnuts were allowed to dry for some time, when they became sweeter and more chewy. Children were allowed only a small quantity to peel and eat at this stage because stomachs could easily be upset by this treat. Boiled and sprinkled with salt was another treat. Sometimes roasted on the lids of wood-burning stoves, they often furnished a tasty treat for visiting neighbors during the evening. A far cry from the snacks and beverages of today.

For 104 Years There Was a Dr. Beers in Danby

Since the early histories of Tompkins County contain frequency references to a Dr. Beers, confusion arises as to the relationship with the well-known Dr. Lewis Beers. There were four Beers physicians who practiced in Danby for 104 years—from 1797 to 1901.

The first was Dr. Lewis Beers who came from his native Stratford, Conn., and settled in the woods on what in recent years has been known as the Erie J. Miller farm. That was in 1797. Eventually, his brothers Abner, Jr., Jabez and Nathan and their parents made up Beers Settlement.

The second was Dr. Frederick Beers, a son of Stephen Beers who was a cousin of Lewis Beers. Stephen and his brother Isaac were lumber merchants at the Inlet after Stephen gave up farming in Danby.

Dr. Eli Beers was the third Danby doctor of the name. He was a son of Abner Beers, Jr., and a nephew of Dr. Lewis Beers.

Dr. John F. Beers, last of the dynasty, was a son of Eli and Electa Beers and a grandnephew of Dr. Lewis Beers. A graduate of Ithaca Academy, he received his medical diploma from Georgetown University in 1862, then joined the Medical Staff of the Army and served eight years. He returned to Danby in 1874 and practiced until his death in 1901, aged 61.

The DeWitt Historical Society has published a pamphlet biography of Dr. Beers under the title for "Lewis Beers, Danby's Pioneer Doctor," and another, "A Romance Come to Danby," which recounts how he as the poor man's son won the hand of the rich man's daughter.

Million Oxen Gone From State

As recently as 1890, there were more than a million head of oxen in New York State, but today this favorite draught animal of the pioneer is a showpiece at some county fairs. When the primal lands were cleared, his day was at an end. Rapidly he gave way to the horse which, in turn, was displaced by the internal-combustion motor.

Many of the pioneers, their families and small possessions were hauled, slowly and laboriously, by oxen into the wilderness that became Tompkins County. It was these animals and generations of their successors which worked for a century as man's faithful servant. They hauled the logs into piles for burning or to the primitive sawmills for conversion into lumber which they hauled back so that their masters might escape from log cabins.

It was the ox which provided the power that wrested the stumps from the fields and then pulled the plow to convert cleared areas into arable acres. Trails and bridle paths became roads by the labor of the ox; early sawmills and later threshing machines were powered by treadmills which the ox trod patiently, hour after hour. In 1816, Timothy S. Williams operated a sawmill at Trumbull's Corners by ox power.

Called the poor man's team, oxen needed little care and could fend for themselves when it came to food and shelter. Before the new settler could spare time to erect a stable for his ox team, they sheltered themselves in the forest, and when he had no fodder for them they fed upon browse and swale grass. His gear was simple and he need not be shod for shoes were a handicap in the woods and upon stump-infested clearings. The simple yoke was not beyond the skill of the pioneer to fashion, and it was so durable that it endured stress and strain for generations. Nor are these the only factors which fitted the ox so advantageously into the rudimentary agrarian economy of those early days: the tamer of the forest reared the ox on his own soil and "broke him to yoke" under his own tutelage.

Oxen Shod in Special Stocks

It was observed in reviewing these accounts that no mention was made of ox shoeing, notwithstanding the ox team was the draft animal of the pioneers. When working in the woods, on farm lands or occasional hauling on dirt roads, it was not necessary to fit their hooves with plate-like iron shoes to protect against unnecessary wear. On icy roads the protection against falling was even more necessary to prevent fatal injuries to a valuable team.

The blacksmith at his forge and anvil shaped these shoes, two to each cloven hoof. Roughly resembling the figure "9," the flat part covered the hoof and supported the caulks at toe and heel of the shoes. Holes punched along the outer edge provided openings through which nails were driven into the horn-like structure.

Not all blacksmiths were equipped to shoe oxen. When a team was brought in for shoeing, one at a time was tied in a "stock." This was a narrow stall-like structure that stood outside the shop. A broad belt was fastened around the body of the resisting beast, and a chain attached to the belt ran around a roller that extended across the stock. One end of the roller was equipped with a spoke so the chain could be wound up by manpower; the ox lifted off his feet, the shoes were nailed on.

With disappearance of the ox from Danby and neighboring towns, the stocks were razed. Now but a fragile memory of them remain. So the ox and so the blacksmith.

District 11 Received $69.35 in State Aid

By 1880, when there were 19 pupils in the school of District 11, Danby, public money had climbed to $69.35 from $15.56 received 44 years before. To support the school in 1880, an additional $55.74 was raised by taxes.

17 School Districts Set Up in 1800

School for pioneer children in Danby began to spring up wherever a settlement indicated need. The town was laid out in 17 school districts, of these 14 were in operation as recently as 1931. Those then remaining are listed with pertinent dates and comment.

Beers Settlement, 1800-01; first school in town; at Beers Settlement; no trace remaining.

Name unknown of school in District 1, Crumtown Road; now a residence.

South Danby, District 2, South Danby across from church; now a residence.

Upper Bald Hill, District 3, North Bald Hill (four corners); burned during the 1950's.

Adams Settlement, District 4, Dr. & Vose Corners; no trace.

Yaple, District 6, near South Danby camp; no trace.

District 8, Danby village; three teachers, last school to be kept; closed 1962, demolished.

Center Schoolhouse, District 9, east side of Highway 96-34, on Y-shaped plot; now residence.

Jersey Hill, District 11, Jersey Hill; now residence.

West Danby, District 12, West Danby, almost across from Baptist Church; biulding sold by Todd family.

Smiley Hill, District 13, Smiley Hill at junction of Smiley Hill Road; now residence.

Durfee Hill, District 14, Durfee Hill; still standing.

South Bald Hill, District 15, Lower Bald Hill; building sold, moved.

Hall or Sprague, District 16, Willseyville Road, east side of highway; now residence.

Danby Elementary, Gunderman Road; opened autumn of 1962; only school operating in the town which is now part of the Ithaca School system.

Candlemas Day One of Reckoning

Early-day Danby farmers lived close to the elements, observed their portents and accumulated experience upon which they relied heavily for guidance in their day-to-day activities. They condensed this hard-earned wisdom into aphorisms that were easily remembered, genuinely trusted and readily passed on to posterity.

No doubt the philosophy of Benjamin Franklin, expressed in the brevities of Poor Richard in his almanac, set the pattern. The almanac, published and widely circulated for years, found a place beside the family Bible in even the rudest frontier cabin. When no longer published, others took its place and were similarily relied upon until farm papers began to appear.

One of these "sayings" suffices as an example of rural wisrom condensed to a few meaningful words. It is: "Candlemas Day, half your pork and half your hay," or "Candlemas Day, winter halfway." The date was February 2, now commonly referred to facetiously as "Groundhog Day," when the woodchuck or groundhog peeps out from his burrow. If the day is sunny, spring will arrive early; if overcast, four to six weeks of winter weather remains.

This adage reflected the pioneer settler's worry over having enough foodstuffs for both family and livestock to carry him through the season from October to May. As here used metaphorically, "pork" represents the family's store of food, and "hay" that of the livestock.

Actually, pork was the chief meat diet of America until 1880, when western beef superseded it. Pork was a natural food for the early settlers since hogs were prolific breeders which foraged for most of their provender, and pork and its products were easily preserved by smoking, salting or putting down in brine. All the skills required for rearing hogs, preserv-

ing and cooking pork products were within the skills of even an isolated farm family.

For perfect keeping, smoked meat was often sewn into white cotton bags and buried deep in a bin of oats, where the temperature and moisture content were nearly perfect for keeping the meat until well along in the summer. Lacking an oat bin, mothers often sliced and fried ham, then placed the slices in a crock and poured grease over each layer. A heavy cover or plate was placed over the top layer when the crock was full. As needed, a few slices were removed and fried. Fresh sausage was preserved in this manner, but never kept so long. Usually, this crock was set on the cellar bottom of hard-packed natural material.

How great was production of pork in the pioneer era is indicated by a State census of Alma, Allegany County, taken 30 years after its agricultural development began. At the time the population was 611 and pork production 23,350 pounds, or nearly 40 pounds per capita.

With an indicated two tons of hay for each of the 358 head of livestock at the time, farmers there must have had cause for worry by next Candlemas Day. However, with oats and corn supplements and plenty of browse on unimproved lands, they "made out" for another year, as did their Danby contemporaries.

How 14 Chickens Disappeared in Two Weeks

During the Centennial celebration of 1876, his parents spent two weeks in Philadelphia, Nelson notes in his memoirs, then adds:

"I was eight years old, Ina (his sister) six. They left us with a man to do the work on the farm and a neighbor's daughter to attend to the housework. They told us we might do whatever we liked and have anything we wanted to eat during the two weeks they were to be away. We decided to have chicken each day for dinner; hence, there were fourteen chickens less when they returned."

Maple Trees Provided Sweetening

Although making maple sirup and sugar were processes the earliest Europeans learned from the Indians and their "sweet water," it was different in Danby. When the first settlers came in, their predecessors were not around to teach the art; but this was no handicap for back East maple sap had been processed for decades. They brought the know-how with them.

With muscovite sugar 18 cents a pound, the pioneer went without sweets much of the time. This product was a soft, brown sugar and not the granulated product of today. Thus, it behoved these firstcomers to utilize the sugar in maple sap to save the cost of "store-bought" sweetening and to provide a more liberal supply.

When sap began to rise in the maples, farmers bored half-inch holes in the sunnyside of the trees and fitted into them spiles down whose little trough the sap trickled on warm days. From the lower end of the spile the sweet water dripped into a wooden bucket. Before nightfall, the sap was carried to the cabin to be boiled down in large iron kettles called caldrons set up outside. Finishing the product usually was done in the kitchen.

Made of sumac or similar soft wood with a large pith, the spiles were whittled by hand. One end was rounded to fit snugly into the auger hole a half inch or so. Two or three inches of the spile was left round for strength, but the remaining six or eight inches were cut away for half the diameter and the pith removed the whole length by means of a redhot wire. These spiles were usable year after year, and it was decades later before metal ones replaced the hand-hewn sumac spiles and metal evaporators outmoded the kettles.

Besides the welcome addition of maple sirup on pancakes and hot biscuits, it was used to preserve fruits. Plums, grapes,

pears and peaches were cooked gently in the sirup, transferred to crocks or jars and covered with lids. Stored in cool cellars, these fruits were available for long periods. Served in tiny glass dishes mounted on standards, two or three spoonfuls were a sufficient serving because of the extreme sweetness of the preserve. Of course, all this was before the days of canning in glass jars and the present method of freezing.

Churches Served Pioneer Needs

The pioneers realized the need of places of worship, so they organized societies early and erected church edifices as the community developed. Appended is a list of Danby churches.

Congregational, in village, 1807; erected 1820; dedicated 1867.

North Danby Methodist Episcopal, 1811; erected 1832.

New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian), Beers Settlement; 1816; erected 1823; dedicated 1825. Abandoned, became barn standing as late as 1912.

West Danby, Baptist, 1821; erected 1840; dedicated 1841.

Christ's, 1826; erected 1834; dedicated Sept. 29, 1836.

Episcopal Protestant, No. 2 School.

South Danby Methodist Episcopal, 1830; erected 1836; dedicated 1837.

West Danby Methodist Episcopal, 1869; 1870; 1870.

Baptist, date unknown; Danby village; became First Baptist in Ithaca. Original building now occupied as town hall.

Danby Reporter Lamented Inertia of Local Swains

A Danby reporter for The Ithaca Journal in 1876 sent in his news and added his lament occasioned by one of the items.

"A large number of invited guests assembled at the residence of E. L. B. Curtis June 29, 1876, to witness the marriage of his daughter Phoebe to Llwellyn Elsbree of Towanda, Pa. It is just as I expected, young fellows, you have again allowed one of Danby's fairest daughters to be taken away by a gentleman from abroad."

Excerpts From Nelson Genung's Memoirs

Nelson H. Genung (1868-1936) was a native of South Danby who kept alive his interest in the mores of his home community and left a written record of life there. Because of its excellence as local history of the period, this author has made liberal excerpts from his memoirs, a copy of which is in the DeWitt Historical Collection.

* * *

Elm Patriarch Succumbs to Finnish Custom

There were several old elms treems scattered about South Danby community, mostly in open fields, some still standing. One of these, the pride of the neighborhood, stood all by itself on a farm which was recently (written 1934) sold to a family from Finland. One of the first acts of the new owner was to cut down this patriarch and leave it lying on the ground for several years.

I tried to determine the reason for this apparent wanton destruction of so noble a tree for "Only God can make a tree," and a century of time had been required in the making of this one. Finally, reading in a history of Finland, I learned that in that country, when a peasant clears his farm, he is required to clear away the forest for at least a thousand feet on all sides beyond the boundaries of the farm.

Situated so far north, often above the Arctic Circle, the sun during the summer months circles so close to the horizon that much of the cleared farm would otherwise be in shadow throughout the extremely long day of sunshine. Thus, the necessity for clearing away the forest on all sides.

The new owners apparently had the impression that this mammoth tree would throw a heavy shadow over a large portion of their farm and stunt crops.

New Schoolhouse Frame Put Up in a Day

The new South Danby schoolhouse was built in the early spring and completed in time for the summer session. After the carpenters had framed the timbers, the neighbors had a "bee" or "raising" one afternoon and set up the framework, put on the sheathing and roof boards. All the boys of the neighborhood were there, too, feet and legs bare.

The roof boards had been set up endwise against the framework, and many of the boys amused themselves by climbing these boards the way they would climb a tree. One boy, as he neared the top, slipped but clung to the rough hemlock boards to ease his fall, with the result that he filled the calves of his legs with hemlock slivers.

We borrowed some pocket knives from the men and spent the remainder of the afternoon, in relays, digging out the slivers. The victim was Spartan: no moan came from his lips.

Thanksgiving Day at South Danby

Grandfather and Grandmother Howard always invited their four daughters with their families for Thanksgiving dinner. This feast was, to us children, one of the outstanding events of the year. On one occasion the snow was so deep that we had to take down the fences and drive through the fields.

They served chicken with dumplings, mashed potatoes, and everything else that goes to make up a Thanksgiving dinner. Grandfather was very liberal with his helpings, and those first served usually received three pieces of chicken each. After the first few helpings, two pieces were served and later only one.

I always watched closely for fear that, by the time the grandchildrens' turn came, there would be only backs, necks and wings left. But no! There were always enough nice pieces remaining to serve the grandchildren generously. Grandmother always looked out for that.

Bedroom Became South Danby's First Post Office

A post office was established at South Danby in the early

days, away back in the hills far from any through routes of travel. This put South Danby on the map of the United States where it remained until the coming of rural free delivery early in this century. Then the post office was abolished, and now the name South Danby is seldom seen in print. It is the "forgotten village."

This post office was installed in one corner of what had been a small bedroom in a private house, the remainder of the room being occupied as a general store.

Oyster Supper Long Remembered

An oyster supper at South Danby in 1874 was long remembered. At the time, oyster were shipped in one-gallon wooden kegs. Being uncertain as to what quantity was needed, the merchant in Ithaca suggested that one hundred kegs be taken, with the understanding they might return all kegs unopened. And he further offered to furnish a good oyster cook without charge, which offer was accepted. On the appointed evening the cook commenced opening the kegs and cooking oysters. The first thing the committee realized, the cook had opened ninety-six kegs. That night every family took home enough oysters to last the remainder of the winter.

Mail Delivered to Danby Patrons at $1 a Year

During the latter decades of the last century, when the agrarian economy was breaking down, a dollar was hard to come by and it represented much labor or considerable service rendered. This is illustrated by the daily mail carrier between the post offices at Ithaca and South Danby. He carried passengers and parcels, but also delivered mail to patrons along his route. His charge for this service was $1 a year.

There wasn't much mail: a weekly newspaper, farm journal, a church publication and an occasional letter. This man is reported to have grown fat from a lack of exercise while his horse grew thin from too much exertion.

Old Accounts Reflect School Costs

A few entries from old account books are presented to give an idea of school administration expenses during earlier era.

1830—District 16, Hall school. Public money for Danby is $53.33; Candor, $3.

1835—District 16, March 16. Received of Albert Hall, trustee, $45 in full payment for my services as teacher in District 16, Danby and Candor, during the past winter. W. H. Andrews.

1850—Danby, April 2. Received of Albert Hall, collector, District 16, $14.70. George W. Eastman.

1865—Financial receipts and disbursements, year ending: March 3. Draft from Supervisor Joann M. Puff, $30; raised by rate bill, $12. For term ending March 3, 14 weeks: teacher of second term, Ella A. Puff. No. weeks taught, 14; amount of wages, $28.

August 5. Balance of public money in supervisor's hands, $15.52; amounts apportioned to Danby, $44.14, to Candor, $1.38.

1882—November 1. Lumber and delivery of same, $4.10; labor done repairing schoolhouse, $4; drawing water and cleaning schoolhouse, $2.50; new curtains, $1.75; one broom, 30c; 5 pounds of nails, 25c. Total $13.20.

Bird's-Eye and Curly Maple Became Firewood

Another observation Nelson Genung remembered and included in his memoirs, has to do with the indiscriminate use of timber.

"For several years, Father purchased each fall from a neighbor some very large hard maple trees for firewood. Four or five such trees sufficed to supply us with wood for the entire year. These trees, three feet in diameter at the base, cost us one dollar each.

"On splitting this firewood we found it to be the most beautiful bird's-eye and curly maple imaginable. It should have been made into furniture instead of ashes."

A North Bald Hill Winter Incident

By Dorothy Slighter Loomis (Mrs. Raymond)

North Bald Hill, District No. 3, schoolhouse was at one time located on a knoll between the former Philip King farm and the Milt Snyder place, but on the opposite side of the road.

For some reason, it was decided to move it, and this was done with teams of oxen and on rollers to the present foundation where it stood until 1957 or 1958, when it was destroyed by fire of uncertain origin.

Some of the teachers in this district were: Mary Beers, Cassie Jennings, Louisa McDaniels, May Savocool, Edward Gay, Roy Loomis, Mrs. McCord, Viva Baker, and Mrs. Arthur Van De Bogart. Two others were Helen M. Crowell of North Spencer, now Mrs. Charles Van Ostrand, and Jennie Allick who is still living in West Danby.

During 1913, the school was closed owing to the fact there were no children of school age in the district. Then, in the spring of 1914 the family of Arthur Slighter bought the old John Mettler place. They had two children, Ralph and Dorothy.

Another family, that of Lewis Wixson, living in the district had a boy, Carl, who would be of age to go to school that year. It was decided at the school meeting to contract with the South Bald Hill district and transport the three children to that school. Milt Snyder was hired to carry them by horse and buggy during spring and fall and by cutter or bobsled in the winter.

One day during the winter of 1914-15, Milt called for the children, Dorothy 6 and Ralph 12, and they started from the Slighter farm for the South Bald Hill school. The other pupil, Carl Wixson, did not go that day.

It was after a severe blizzard had piled the roads with drifts

in many places then glazed them with a freezing rain. A hard crust of ice covered the snow. At the top of the hill by the Billy Beers place, the horse stumbled in the drifts, the cutter tipped over, dumping little Dorothy wrapped in a fur robe out on the ice. She started to slip on the ice and soon was sliding down across the field to the edge of the woods far below. Ralph slid part way down the slope but caught a shrub and managed to bring himself to a stop.

Milt, struggling with the horse, saw that the children were unhurt and then righted the cutter. Slipping and sliding down the hillside, he picked up the little girl and carried her back up the slope to the cutter by stomping footholds in the ice. Ralph had managed to get back up to the cutter in the same way, and finally all were tucked away again under the warm fur robe and started on their way, laughing at the sight they must have made sliding down the side hill on the ice.

Local Blacksmith Constructed Bicycle

Early in the 1880's the building of high-wheeled bicycles became a rage that engaged the efforts of many iron workers. C. F. Mix, a Danby blacksmith, produced a handmade machine in 1883. Since Dr. Smith, village doctor, is reported to have taken several headers on his vehicle, it is supposed he was riding one of the current models. The Mix brothers were capable workers and have to their credit several accomplishments in the mechanical field, among them the calendar clock mechanism for clocks produced by the first calendar clock company about 1860. A model of one calendar device is in the DeWitt Museum.

School Libraries Apportioned Small Funds

In 1880 the Town of Danby received school aid from the State to the amount of $1,787.28, of which $28.80 was earmarked for school libraries. Considering the fact there were seventeen districts, these must have been inactive and considered unimportant.

Passenger Pigeons in Flight Like a Storm

Today, only the oldest residents of Danby have memories of stories recounted of the flocks of passenger pigeons that once darkened the sky in their migration flights. And of the inhumane slaughter of the voracious visitors from the South as they winged their way to the nesting grounds as far north as the Canadian wilds.

There is a detailed account of a massive flight into the State in 1876, but after that date disappearance of the bird, commonly known as the "wild pigeon," was rapid for by 1885 the bird was so scarce that the shooting of a pair in the Fall Creek marshes merited a news report.

How the pigeons were caught and in what quantity is suggested by a report out of North Lansing in late April 1869, less than a century ago. It was stated: "Last Monday Samuel Davis caught with a pigeon net 204 wild pigeons in three hours. The birds were very thick; flocks were seen flying in every direction, and the buckwheat stubble was fairly blue with them."

During the year the pair was shot at Fall Creek, another bird was hatched somewhere. This one became famed as the last passenger pigeon known to exist. It died, aged 29 years, in the Cincinnati Zoological Garden on August 29, 1914. For several years after its demise, boys in Danby, as well as in the former nesting areas throughout the United States, sought in vain to find a pair or even a single bird.

Commonly called "wild," the passenger pigeon was a native American species that inhabited eastern North America. Its range extended from our southern states northward to Hudson Bay and westward to the Great Plains. One of the earliest references to these birds is that of May 1687, when the bishop of Montreal noted the destruction wrought upon the colonist's

crops by these birds made hungry by a migratory flight that coincided with the time of sprouting seeds.

In size, the passenger pigeon compared with the common turtle dove, but was characterized by a long, wedge-shaped tail. Coloration made the bird distinctive. The male was of a dark-slate color above and a dull-white underneath with violet, green and gold on the neck. Drab-colored above and dull-white beneath, the female wore only slight traces of the brilliant markings of the male.

Flight of this migrant was rapid and sustained. They traveled in massive flocks from their wintering areas in Georgia and South Carolina to nesting grounds as far north as Northern Canada. In the South, their principal food was rice and other wild grains; throughout New York State beechnuts were a favorite. Beyond the beechnut zone, berries and similar summer vegetation provided sustenance, even buckwheat as stated in the North Lansing report.

It has been held that disappearance of beechnuts contributed in large degree to extinction of the species as they were deprived of beech mast over a large region covered by their migratory flights. Mass starvation must be added to mass slaughter as cause of the sudden disappearance of this bird.

Mass slaughter of the pigeon had as its object obtaining the small portion of delicate meat the breast provided. Packed in salt, carcasses of the pigeons were shipped to city markets in flour barrels. This slaughter was as cruel as it was wasteful. When the birds alighted, hunters armed with lanterns and clubs went among them to club them to death or maim them. Thousands were picked up at every roost, but no less a number was left to die on the ground. A more humane way of capturing wild pigeons was use of large nets spread between trees against which the birds flew.

The massive flight of 1876 mentioned above occurred one morning in March in the Delaware Valley. The sun was shining and the sky was cloudless when suddenly the sun was hidden as if by a dark cloud, and a noise like that produced by a gale of wind or roll of distant thunder was heard. The woods

began filling with wild pigeons which occupied tree after tree, and still the air was black with one great mass of moving birds for as far as the eye could reach.

As soon as the birds were at rest, two woodsmen began to wage war against the migrants. With long poles they swooped among the birds, right and left; at every blow dozens fell to the ground, killed or maimed. Residents of the vicinity armed themselves with guns, clubs, lanterns and torches, and began a slaughter that lasted two hours. It was estimated that 10,000 birds were killed or wounded.

To determine, if possible, the extent of the flight, the two woodsmen walked five miles through the forest. As far as they could see on either side the birds occupied all the trees; later, it was found that the flight extended more than a dozen miles.

Next morning the remaining birds rose from the beechwood site they had chosen for a nesting place, and disappeared. Two days later the pigeons reached a protected haven on the Beaverkill, but soon a heavy snow fell. Within a few hours not a bird was to be seen, but later they were found nesting in the beechwoods of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Little Red Schoolhouse Gets High Rating

The little red schoolhouse that once dotted the State and Danby, too, is now but a memory to those of an older generation who learned their ABC's and some other subjects there. At long last it is pleasant to hear an authority speak well of the district school. Says Dr. Paul B. Sears of Yale University:

"The one-room school, now almost vanished, was at once a community and, under good teachers, an excellent educational device, enabling pupils to teach and to learn from each other. Large schools often have the warmth of an orphan asylum, submerging the individual."

Former Sea Captain Came To Danby

One of the early settlers in Danby was Matthew Sisson. A native of Rhode Island, he was a former sea captain.

Little Remains of Yaple Millsite

The first Yaple home was located on the west side of the present Ithaca-Danby highway, directly opposite the Ernest Sincebaugh farm. At this location were a grove and a schoolhouse, both bearing the name Yaple. The latter has become a residence which is currently the home of Earl DePuy.

Peter Yaple, grandfather of Mrs. Alice Swartout and son of pioneer Jacob Yaple, was owner and operator of the Yaple gristmill on the Buttermilk stream. Abutments of the old bridge or possibly the milldam and the millstones may still be seen, and the lowlands are assumed to be the bottom of the millpond. This site is on the Malcolm Miller property now owned by his widow. Permission would be given to view them, thought Mrs. Swartout who gave this information.

Albert Lecoq owns and occupies the farm commonly known as the Dumond farm, but no one seems to have established proof that it is the home established by pioneer John Dumond after his unhappy experience in the military tract.

District 11 Elected Librarian in 1849

It may be surprising to learn how early district schools had libraries and librarians. On April 22, 1849, District 11, Danby, elected Charles Roper librarian and instructed him to buy books from the public money. It is doubtful that he purchased many volumes for the state funds amounted to only $29.25, and it was to be shared with the teacher's salary.

This method of establishing public libraries in district schools may be considered noble in thought, but its ending was ignoble. Volumes written by learned men were couched in language far beyond the understanding of rural America and as a result were rarely circulated. After some 190 numbers had been scattered, the plan was abandoned. Today the DeWitt Historical Museum has a near-complete set of those numbers, some of which were found in the attic of a schoolhouse during the early 1900's.

Soldiers' Monument Is Special Landmark

For a century the Soldiers' Monument in Danby village has stood as a very special landmark and a memorial to the forty-five men who lost their lives in the Civil War. To honor them, the Soldiers' Monument Association was organized July 4, 1866, with Charles B. Keeler, president. Other directors were E. L. B. Curtis, Levi C. Beers, John L. Hance and the Rev. Warren Meyo.

Financing required some time, and during 1869 numerous local-talent plays were staged. Among the titles were "Uncle Tom's Cabin" which sold 879 tickets, the record number. Other titles included "Popping the Question," "We're All Teetotalers," "She Stoops To Conquer," "The Lady of Lyons and the Stagestruck Yankee," and "Toodles." Admission, 10 cents.

In this manner, a fund of $1,900 was built up. Through contributions from patriotic organizations and interested persons the fund grew to $3,000. E. L. B. Curtis, John L. Hance and Josiah Hawes were named a building committee.

The granite base of the monument supports a 29-foot column of Italian marble. It is surrounded by an iron fence. Engraved are the names, dates of death and ages of the town's Civil War Dead.

Today, the monument still stands in front of the Town Hall as a landmark that recalls to each passing generation those who were the Boys in Blue of another century.

In this connection, the letters of Daniel Carson are of special interest. He was a soldier from Danby who wrote several to his former employer, Ira Patchen, delineating the life of a soldier. A member of Co. I, 179th New York Regiment, Carson was wounded in action during August 1864, and died of typhoid fever in a Washington hospital the next April 13.

Somewhat illustrative of the bitter feelings engendered by

the war is the comment found in a West Danby letter of October 23, 1868. Written by B. A. Todd to D. W. Barnes of Auburn, the letter is now in the DeWitt Historical Collection. The paragraph in question:

"John T. Hoffman spoke here today to the Rebs and a great demonstration was made. I expected to see them burn the Colored Church as there is no orphan asylum here, but the effects of their favorite beverage so put them in a condition that they could not walk, only roll and creep. Whiskey has advanced today five cents a gallon and with an upward tendency the demands exceed the supply." A postscript: "Hurrah for Good Government."

"The Rebs" were the Democrats whose candidate for governor John H. Hoffman was elected. Grant was the successful Republican presidential candidate that year.

Mix Recorded Wheat Loans

The Mix account book contains also records of 1871 wheat loans, examples of which follow:

Sept. 1. Charles Marcus Bradford and Sarah dbt. to 6 bushels of wheat lent.

Sept. 4. John Johnston wheat lent, 10 bushels.
Charles Ostrander, 6 bushels.

Sept. 5. Pat Rian dbt. 8 bushels wheat.

Sept. 6. Philo Sabin dbt. to 6 bushels, $90. ($9.00?).

Sept. 9. Joseph Ryant, 4 bushels of wheat, 6.00.

There is, of course, no explanation of why 6 bushels on Sept. 6 carries a debit entry of $.90 and another three days later is set down for $6.00, although only 4 bushels were involved. Nor are we told why wheat was lent, but it probably was put out on shares with the understanding the grower would return a specified percentage of the crop. Mix was a blacksmith and machinist at Danby.

Hunting Wild Honey Profitable

Hunting wild bees was a sporting event to the pioneers that paid well. Its risks were a challenge to their daring and ingenuity, and the hunt broke the monotony of unending days of hard work. Then, too, a successful venture produced a substitute for high-priced sugar. A good market existed for honey and beeswax which produced cash income.

Although similar in appearance and habits to the domestic bee, the wild bee was native to the forest and indigenous to Danby. Its dislike for man was evidenced by a retreat deep into the forests as interloping settlers encroached upon the bee domain, and ultimately hives were to be found far in the solitudes of tracts unoccupied by the habitations of man. (Hives as here used means a place inhabited by bees and not the skeps of the domestic apiary.)

For hill locations of hives, the wild bees chose an elevated site far up an unfrequented, shaded ravine and near a body of water. In flat country, the bees located near the margin of a lake or stream but in the greatest seclusion possible. Generally, the hollow of a tree of great size was appropriated for the purpose, a deceivingly small entrance affording entrance to the hive with a maximum protection from both observation and discovery.

Here a colony remained for years, inhabiting the same abode under normal conditions, untiringly accumulating honey and yearly sending forth new colonies. With difficulty and the exercise of much skill, the bee hunter located these retreats and established access to the store. Not only the persevering pioneer but insects and animals, especially the bear, were the natural depredators of the wild bees.

There were men in Danby, as in most communities, who became expert as bee hunters, but farm youths went on bee

hunts as a holiday sport. Hunters equipped themselves with a supply of honeycomb, strained honey and a box some six or eight inches long and four or five wide.

This box had a slide on the top and one in the center, each of which moved in grooves. In the upper lid was a piece of glass, and comb honey was placed in the lower compartment. The bee hunter carried this box to an area which he had determined was visited by bees.

Professional hunters, in capturing a bee that would serve to locate the bee tree, used this box. Observing a wild plant that blooms in late October, an aster commonly known as the frost-blow, and finding a bee feeding upon it, the hunter deftly placed the box with lid draw beneath the bee and transferred it into the box. When the lid was closed, the bee was observed through the glass which was then darkened by drawing the slide over it. The bee settled upon the honey and began eating.

With both slides open, the trapped insect was left to its own devices. After feeding, the bee left the box, soared and flew in circles about the box as if to fix its location for a return to it. Each gyration grew wider and higher until at last the bee took off in a line for its hive. At this point in the venture, the skill and vigilance of the hunter met the severest test. He carefully watched the direction of the flight and computed the distance to the hive by the length of absence of the bees from the feeding box. He allowed three miles to the minute for the flight and return.

After the bee had made several journeys from the feeder box to the hive, the hunter again secured the box and proceeded in the direction he had determined as that of the hive. At this point somewhat of a complication entered. The captured bee communicated his find of honey in the box to other bees which came to feed from it, but they often came from other hives and took different routes back. To avoid this confusion, the hunter marked his guide bee and then confined his attention to it.

After deciding that he had the direction definitely established, the hunter moved toward the location. When he decided

that he had gone far enough for a deviation in the line to manifest itself, he again released the bee from the box and, after repeating the reconnaissance, the bee made a straight line for the hive. It often occurred that the hunter had passed the tree in which the hive was located, as was indicated by the bee's doubling back on the hunter's track.

In instances where the hives had been effectively hidden it was necessary for the hunter to establish several lines in this manner. Then he would correct his line of approach and determine the location by the point where the flight lines intercepted. Rather skillful triangulation.

As a welcome break in the daily routine of fall harvest, farmers and their sons turned bee hunters for a day, usually on a Sunday during a spell of "October's bright blue weather." Lateness of the season made the bees urgently industrious, the calm and brightness favored tracing the flights from feeding areas to the hives. A combination of these factors made it possible for this amateur type of hunters to achieve a satisfactory degree of success even though they used a simpler method of tracing the hive.

In a cleared spot on an elevated situation these less professional hunters built a small fire and heated small, flat stones. Upon these stones they burned some comb honey to attract bees which were then fed fresh comb honey. After the bee had set off for the hive, the comb was removed and the box substituted for it. On return to the feeding box, the bee was trapped in the box to serve as a guide for a path to its hive.

Once the tree harboring the hive was definitely located, it was felled and the whole colony of bees exterminated, commonly by burning straw. Destruction of the bees was considered necessary by the hunters to protect them against onslaughts of the enraged insects in defense of their hoard. Likewise, these hunters defended their ruthless destruction by the necessity to eliminate the members of the hive lest absent ones lead hunters along a false line as wanderers returned to the disrupted hive. Despite this precaution, false pursuit often happened.

There seems to be no record of bee hunting in Danby, but an Upstate bee hunter described it in 1850 as an exciting sport that, pursued by a skillful hunter, was profitable as well. He cited a month's work by three men who gathered more than a ton of honey and 400 pounds of beeswax. The honey sold for $15 a hundredweight and the beeswax for 20 cents a pound. These hunters located fifty-seven hives during the season, each of which produced from 35 to 150 pounds of honey.

Experienced bee hunters discovered early in their careers that wild bees permitted some persons to approach the hive with impunity but that others were met with instinctive hostility.

Village Post Office Existed a Century

With establishment of rural free delivery service through Ithaca, the post office in Danby village was discontinued December 13, 1902. It was a century previous that the first post office was set up in the log cabin residence of Dr. Lewis Beers in Beers Settlement after his appointment as postmaster in 1801-2.

In 1811-12, the office was moved to the residence of Jabez Beers, a brother of the doctor. The doctor was a Federalist and this brother a Republican-Democrat.

About 1827, the office was moved when Hudson Jennings became postmaster.

In 1834, Aaron Bennett became postmaster and the office was moved to his residence on the Ithaca-Owego turnpike. After 23 years it was again moved to South Danby and located in the present residence of Charlotte Eckert Hautala.

In 1850, a post office was established at West Danby with John Patchen as postmaster, and the office located in his residence. It was discontinued when rural free delivery came in.

Cemeteries Established Early

Along with roads, mills, schoolhouses and churches, cemeteries were early necessary components of settlements in the wilderness. Private burying plots were used until a church was erected and a community cemetery developed in a fixed location nearby.

In the Town of Danby there are ten historic cemeteries, but dates of their first use are lacking. However, as the burying ground customarily followed establishment of the church, it is possible to approximate their beginning dates as formal cemeteries. The ten and locations are listed below.

Presbyterian, originally, now Congregational, just off Bald Hill Road, near town barn.

Danby Rural, originally Curtis, on Curtis Road.

South Danby, on Peter's Road.

West Danby Methodist, corners in West Danby Rte. 96-34 and Maple Avenue.

Briggs Burying Ground, Jim Brown Road, West Danby.

Mettler Burying Ground, North Bald Hill, included in Government land.

Undesignated, Crumtown Road, east side.

Dr. Vose or Adams Settlement, Nelson Road near Steventown Hill turn.

Undesignated, Shale Pit Road or Jones Road, west side.

Perhaps Miller as was school in that vicinity, South Danby Camp Road, west side.

West Danby Baptist, on the hill beside the Baptist Church in West Danby; now known as Community Cemetery.

Tombstones first erected in pioneer cemeteries were made of local stone slabs or boulders. Marble stones came into the area after the Erie canal began providing transportation for products of the Vermont quarries.

Plans for beautifying neglected cemeteries of the Town of Danby were begun in 1960, Adams Settlement being done first and followed by the South Danby Cemetery. Maps were made first, then stones and markers moved to a safe place to await removal of brush and leveling, when they were reset. The Highway department did the work, but it has proved to be too time consuming, so plans for further work to be done by specialists are now under consideration.

Mutual Insurance Company Began in 1860

Danby Mutual Insurance Co. was organized in 1860 with a capital of about $60,000. The first directors were Moses T. Denman, Lewis B. Hanford, Joseph Todd, Lyttleton F. Clark, and Marcus A. Beers.

Terms of the insurance were 1/10th of one per cent for five years with 35 cents added for survey and policy. No risks were taken exceeding $2,000, and only detached dwellings, farm buildings and their contents were insured.

A report of January 1, 1866, after five years' operation, showed $198.77 collected for surveys and policies, $70 collected for loss, or a total of $268.77 received. There was cash on hand of $70.83, leaving $198.14 as the entire expense for the five years.

Do You Remember Your First Day in School?

Do you remember when you first started school in Danby, Grandpa? It was about 1894 and the schoolhouse may have yet been painted red. You carried a first reader, a slate pencil and a little slate with a frame cushioned by red cotton-wool band so as to save teacher's nerves when you dropped the slate on your desk or on the floor. And there was a little, round tin dinner pail all shiny and new. It contained a sandwich, a couple of homemade sugar cookies, a red apple and maybe a piece of meat. It was a little pail because you were a little guy, even if you strutted that first day of school.

Amy Barker, 95, Recalls Pioneer Years

In the summer of 1887, Mrs. Amy Barker was interviewed by Prof. George Barker Steven, D.D. (1854-1906), who recorded much of the interview. Mrs. Barker was then in her 95th year, but she was able to narrate clearly and vividly the story of her early days. She died December 9, 1888.

Born April 27, 1793, she was the daughter of Phineas Spaulding. He saw military service during the Revolutionary War under George Washington, and moved from Whitehall, Washington County, this state, to Tioga Point when she was 3 1/2 years old. A year later, Spaulding removed to the Town of Spencer.

In Spencer he took up his home in the unbroken wilderness upon land that is now commonly known as the John McQuigg farm. This land was transferred to the Town of Danby upon its formation in 1811. Mrs. Barker recalled the ten years spent on this farm, the building of the log house, early struggles and privations, planting of apple trees, some of which still stand.

From this childhood home her father moved when she was 13 to the place now occupied by ——— Maynard, but in 1957 by Oliver and Jean Marilahti. It is half way between Spencer and West Danby. The journey was made by oxcart through the woods. While living here, at the age of 19, she married Moses Barker, son of Squire Barker of Spencer.

In telling of life in her father's home, she told of acquiring her first pair of shoes. A certain "old Mr. English" had a heifer which suckled her calf. After the calf had satisfied his hunger, it fell to Amy to milk the udder dry. For her summer's work in attending to the heifer, she received a pig which she exchanged for a pair of coarse homemade shoes. This footwear may have been rudely made, but their lack of style was more than offset in durability for she wore them until she was 18.

However, it must be remembered that everybody went barefoot from spring to fall.

Her first calico dress was made from five yards of cloth bought by her mother at six pence (12 cents) a yard when she was 14. The usual dress goods was blue and white homespun, many a yard of which she had spun and dyed during her early years.

For a part of the winter after Mrs. Barker was married, she lived with her husband's father in Spencer, and here her first child, a daughter, was born. In the spring of 1814, on the day her baby was four weeks old, she rode horseback to her father's home, carrying the baby with her.

She and her husband moved with cart and oxen to West Danby and settled on the farm now occupied by G. A. Todd. He was the great-grandfather of Milton Todd, its 1967 occupant.

They chose a site for their dwelling near the stream which crosses the road just below the Todd residence. At that time there was no road, and no neighbors nearer than the place now known as the Stratton farm. The woods were well inhabited by bears, wolves, foxes, deer and rattlesnakes. Mrs. Barker declared that she feared the snakes more than all the others, especially since cooking was done out-of-doors and there was constant danger of encountering those venomous reptiles under the house, where they would frequently crawl and, if not watched, into the house. She killed many of the would-be intruders right on her doorstep, a gruesome but necessary act.

Mrs. Barker described her wedding dress, of which, like any bride, she was proud. It was of bleached white cotton which her brother Phineas had bought for her. She had woven a piece of cloth with which to purchase a pair of shoes. When she left her father's house to begin housekeeping, she said all her dishes could have been easily carried in a pail.

When asked in the interview if she ever was discouraged during those days of poverty, she replied: "Oh, no! We had lots of courage. I knit mittens and sold them at the store. We worked hard and lived plain, but we never suffered for victuals. We always had milk, butter and bread, generally rye. We had

some pork though not as much as we wanted. In season, we had pumpkin pies that were sweetened with pumpkin molasses, a product we made from frozen pumpkins: the juice was 'tried out' and boiled down until thick. Sometimes our mince pies were made with venison for the meat."

There was excitement in her growing-up days. One incident she remembered concerned John McQuigg, a boy who lost himself in the woods while hunting the cows. It occurred during the time her family lived on the McQuigg farm. For miles around scattered neighbors turned out to seek the missing boy who was accompanied by his dog.

Not until four days and three nights had been spent in ceaseless and anxious search were the boy and his dog found. They had wandered to the vicinity of Owego. The boy had fed on wild berries and lain close to the faithful dog to keep warm at night. Both were well starved, the dog nearer dead of the pair.

Of rattlesnake experiences, she had not a few. The most serious was that in which her brother James was bitten on the ankle. He and an older brother William were reaping grain with a sickle on the hill to the west of their house at West Danby, and their sister Amy was binding the grain after them. Without warning, a huge rattlesnake sprang from a little thicket and bit James in the ankle. All three were barefooted, of course.

At once, William killed the reptile and Amy pressed the wound repeatedly to work the poison out, but before they could get James to the house the poison had so affected his whole system that he could neither walk alone or speak plainly. He never wholly recovered, for sometimes his skin was covered with spots and rings ran around his body.

One day, when in her home in West Danby, Mrs. Barker was startled by a wildly frightened cry from a young schoolboy just outside. On going to the door, she was more startled still at seeing a huge rattler lying directly before the door wih his head spread out flat on the ground, the most dangerous posture. Her first impulse was to blow the dinner horn to call to

the men folks to come and dispatch the snake. But she feared to leave the creature lest he escape under the house. Looking up to the roof of a little piazza over the door, she saw the handle of a pitchfork that was within reach, and with this instrument she soon dispatched the intruder, and the boy entered the house peaceably on his errand.

Her days at school were few, but she progressed far enough at home to "read in Baker," which is understood to mean to read and spell in a book having words of five letters, the first of which was "baker."

Of many an early evening she took her baby in her arms and went into the woods to hunt for her cow whose bell was a guide that led her barfooted over the rough ground. Meantime, the young mother kept a sharp lookout for rattlesnakes.

Mrs. Barker related that once she made a journey on foot from West Danby to Isaac Hugg's home where Horace Furman lives now near "Huggtown Pond," which has since become dignified by the name Spencer Lake. The farm became the property of Furman's daughter, Mrs. Cynthia Collins, who sold it in 1957 to the William Seeley, the present owners.

Having heard that Mr. Hugg was going to Ohio and would see her sister living in that state, Mrs. Barker determined to see him and send a little gift to the sister. She had then three children, Wealtha, Mari and Louisa. Strapping the youngest on her back and leading the other two by hand, she trudged over the rough road to her father's house just south of the present Center schoolhouse. Then leaving the children, she traveled to Huggtown Pond, saw Mr. Hugg, arranged for delivery of the gift, and returned to her father's. Taking her three children, she reached home that same day.

When Moses Barker purchased his farm of 125 acres in West Danby, land in that region was worth six dollars an acre. It required 20 years to pay for this farm, even at that rate. The process of clearing land was laborious and slow, markets for his produce were distant and money was scarce. Finally, when debts were paid and the depression of many long years had disappeared, a new dwelling was erected. It stands on the Tod farm today. Then they helped build the Baptist Church.

Bride of 1886 Shopped Bush & Dean

In preparing for her wedding in 1886, Miss Sara N. Beers of Ithaca purchased June 12 at Bush & Dean's materials for her trousseau. These materials, quantities and prices are found in a bill from the firm. At the time she and her younger siser, Anna B, boarded at 66 West Seneca Street, Ithaca.

A graduate of Cortland Normal School, Miss Beers taught in Ithaca and in Gloversville schools, and at the latter place met William F. Ward. In October of that year they were married and went to Gloversville to reside.

Miss Beers was a descendant of Nathan Beers, a younger brother of Dr. Lewis Beers who settled in the Town of Danby early in 1797. Her daughter, Dr. Elsie Ward of Gloversville, now deceased, carried on the Beers' tradition of medical doctor, a record of 104 years during which there was continuously a Dr. Beers practicing in Danby.

The bill:

6 1/4 Lace 40	$ 2.50
2 Lace 40	.80
5/8 Lace 6/	.60
7/8 Lace 22/	2.41
1 Gloves	1.80
1 Gloves	1.22
1 Gloves	.69
1 Gloves	.22
2 Buttons 4/	1.00
2 Buttons 30	.60
2 Buttons 30	.60
1 Han.	.36
1 Trim	.40
1 Han.	.45
3/8 Ruche 65	.24
7/8 Ruche 20	.18
7/8 Ruche 20	.17
22 yds. Silk 12/	33.00
8 3/4 yds. Dress Goods 10/	10.94
8 yds. Dress Goods 1.15	9.20
9 yds. Dress Goods .90	8.10
1 3/4 yds. Velvet 3.50	6.12
1 Parasol	4.50
6 Sateen 30	1.80
7 Silesia 15	1.05
2 Silesia 2/	.50
15 Cambric 6	.90
4 Canvass 2/	1.00
18 Steels 3	.54
3 Steels 10	.30
	$92.25

Bush & Dean was a partnership comprised of F. M. Bush and O. L. Dean which began business in 1886 as successor to Jackson & Bush. "General dealers in Foreign and Domestic Dry Goods," the firm continued for half a century. Many items in the bill of goods were priced in shillings (12 1/2 cents) as indicated by the "/" mark. Shilling was used by older persons until after 1900, but chiefly in oral speech.

Footwarmer Protected Feminine Toes

Churches of the pioneers in the Danby wilderness were unheated and services often were three hours long. In winter, the women attendants found footwarmers essential domestic equipment not only for use in church but in the sled box to and from services. Earliest models were small, metal boxes mounted in wooden frames. Live coals were placed in the boxes to generate enough heat to avoid frozen toes.

Even though the women spread their skirts over the little heaters, research over several years located only one which set afire the garments of a worshipper. Later, earthen jugs and metal containers that held hot water came into use. Soapstones heated in the oven were still another but later device. Vulcanization of rubber before midcentury spelled the end of most of the primitive footwarmers by substituting hot-water bottles.

Tavern's South Side Windowless

The tavern that stood at the junction of Michigan Hollow and the Smiley Hills road was known as the Germantown Tavern. The building faced the Smiley Hill Road, and on this, the northern side, there were twelve large windows on the second floor. Strangely, the southern side was a broad blank wall, a feature that leads us to believe the stairway went up along the south wall to a hall from which rooms opened to the north. The kitchen was on the right of the main entrance which faced Michigan Hollow Road; the barroom was on the left.

Mrs. Cynthia Furman Collins of North Spencer offered this description of the tavern in 1960. A daughter of Horace Furman, she was born August 17, 1875.

Old Danby Families Recalled

Although some of the pioneer family names have disappeared from the Danby roster, there are still many to be found participating in today's hurly-burly world that is in such great contrast with that of their ancestors whose names they bear.

When Wilbert Patchen died in 1944, the name ceased in the town. He was a ballplayer of note; his last game in big-league ball was played in 1895. He never married. He and his brother Albert were the only children of Ira Patchen who married Mary Signor of Michigan Hollow Road, a daughter of Adjoniah Signor. Albert married Libbie Weed, but he and their only son died young, and she married Dr. Haines Thatcher, our beloved doctor for many years.

In the deed to the Patchen farm there is a stipulation that the Geneva, Ithaca and Sayre branch of the Lehigh Valley Railroad had a free "right of way" across this property as long as a railway station was maintained at West Danby, but it seems not to have been enforced. The farm now is the property of Lawrence E. Cortright.

Henry Hutchings, brother of Thomas, married Velma Weed, sister of Libbie Haines and of Chester and Charles Weed. Their children were William; Ona, who married Charles Cole, and Fanny, wife of Carl Durling. The Cole children were Alvord, Laura and Haines, of whom the latter is president of the Ithaca Savings and Loan Association.

DeWitt Allick of West Danby married Charlotte Bailey of Newfield. Their son Charles married Elinor Foote, who for years made her home with D. M. (Mack) Kellogg and wife Augusta. She was the middle child of a family of seven born to Lafayette Foote and wife. Her grandfather, Adam Foote, was head of the family that lived in Odessa.

Charles and Elinor Foote had three children: Jennie who

remained unmarried; Bessie who married Don Van Buskirk and whose children are: Frances, Mrs. Joseph Gosh; Jennie, Mrs. Jorma Uotilla of Spencer who has a son and a daughter; Virginia, Mrs. Robert Workman of St. Petersburg, Fla., who has a daughter; and a son Dale Van Buskirk who is married, has two sons and lives in Newfield. George Allick is married and lives in Ithaca. He has no children.

DeWitt Allick had a brother Nelson who settled here. He and his wife had three daughters, all of whom died young.

Benjamin J. Jennings, direct descendant of the pioneer family of Jennings, served many years as town clerk and was a prominent farmer. He died in 1961.

Prof. Malcolm Miller, who died in 1960, was the author of two books, "The Dog" and "The Dissection Guide to a Dog's Anatomy." He was for many years head of the Anatomy Department at Cornell.

Forty years' service as pastor of the Congregational Church at Danby made the Rev. Frank B. Tobey an outstanding minister. Summer Sunday afternoons for 14 years he held services in the Yaple or Hall schoolhouses or outside in Coon's grove. His favorite nickname was "the Marryin' Parson," because of the scores of couples who came to him to be married. Though he became blind, his faithful wife assisted him and he continued preaching, dying in 1937, aged 95.

Three Danbyites were ministers. The Rev. Carlton Carpenter, Baptist, served in Waterloo, N.Y. The Rev. Thomas G. Miller served in the Methodist Church in Trumansburg. The Rev. Charles Sabin spent most of his ministry in Pennsylvania, where he died.

Erie J. Miller, who died during May 1964, spent much of his life in Danby. In his younger days he and his younger brother John earned designation of the Miller Brothers Battery when they played baseball in surrounding areas. Erie was long employed by the D. B. Stewart grocery firm in Ithaca. A veteran of World War I, he was a member of the Danby Federated Church, American Legion and several lodges. His automobile

dealership in Ithaca was established in 1930 and is being carried on by his son Robert.

Harold F. Dorn, native of Danby, died May 10, 1963, in Bethesda, Md. A graduate of Cornell, in 1935 he became chief statistician of the National Institute of Health, and prepared the survey which led the Public Health Service to seek a link between lung cancer and smoking. After 1960, he was chief of biometrics research of the National Health Institute. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery, his widow and two children surviving.

A direct descendant of Nathan Beers, who pioneered in 1797 with his brother Dr. Lewis Beers, was Dr. Elsie C. Ward who died November 30, 1963, in Gloversville, N.Y., where she had long been engaged in health services. She was the daughter of William Ward and Sarah Beers Ward, of whom the latter's preparations for their wedding appears in this publication.

Danby Organized County's First Brass Band

The first brass band in Tompkins County was organized and maintained by a group of musical young men in the village of Danby. Between 1830 and 1849, this band was the pride of the county. It played for the dedication of the Clinton House in 1832. During the "Tippecanoe-and-Tyler-Too" campaign that elected William Henry Harrison in 1840, the band made a hit throughout Central New York when it appeared at rallies, for that year the outfit was mounted on well-trained, fine-looking horses.

During 1845, Tornado Hook and Ladder Co. of Ithaca visited through Ohio, Indiana and Michigan, accompanied by the Danby band. Entertained by the fire department of Cleveland, the band earned honors for itself and the firemen.

Some of its members were Samuel Jennings, Jesse Jennings, Josiah Hawes, George W. Bruce, Dr. Fred Beers, Curtis Mix, Everett Beardsley, Martin L. Smith, Luther Roper, Sheldon Bierce, Soloman Roper, Orrin Mix, Alanson DeForest, Harvey Miller and Ben F. Grant.

Old Accounts Tell Much of Early Customs

Business account books of a century and more ago convey much local and social history of their time, and do so in details that are not found in general narratives. Not alone do they emphasize the great amount of labor that was expended to earn a dollar, but tell us that great strides have been made in education of rural dwellers; spellings here are used as a measuring rod of this advance.

One of these interesting account books begins on the first page: Leonard Hall Book. Salisbury 1803. Jan. 19th 1803. The next entry is dated Spencer, May 20, 1809. An absence of punctuation will be noticed; perhaps it didn't matter for his enterprise; spelling is "by ear."

The change in place names is taken to mean that it was made shortly after Leonard Hall came to Danby to make his home and fortune.

May 20—Benj. Bush, deter, to horse 8 per hr..... $ 0.16
May 26—then agreed to pay me five bushels of corn to satisfy me for plowing corne ground 2.00
June 10—to one pare shoose 1.90
27—to one hame collas ..... .80
to one hame iron ..... .80
April 3, 1815—Silas Hull began to work for me for 1 year
to youse of my horse to go to 8.00
to cash ..... .50
to coffin 1.50
to leather for 1 pair shoes 1.50
to two pound tobacco ..... .62

1,000 Tons of Tanbark Moved From Danby

Some idea of how densely Danby was forested is derived from the fact that in 1885—almost a century after settlement —1,000 tons of hemlock tanbark were peeled in West Danby It required six weeks to haul the bark from the woods over a road especially constructed for the purpose.

Seven Boys Under One Load of Hay

Roscoe Hutchings wrote the following family sketch which is brief but interesting for the historicadl facts it includes.

"My father, Thomas Hutchings, was born in 1844. At 19 he enlisted for Civil War service and served from 1862 to the end in 1865. He was wounded by a piece of shell which he carried in his leg to his dying day at age 93.

"When he was 28, he married Julia Williams, and they became the parents of seven children. Father and mother bought a farm in West Danby, agreeing to pay $4,000 for it, but probably paid twice that sum before it was paid for.

"Of course, we children grew up on the farm. One day we were drawing in hay in the good old-fashioned way—horses and haywagon. My Uncle Henry was loading the hay. We all wanted to ride on the last load to the barn, but Uncle Henry said to my father, 'Tom, if they all get on to ride, we'll tip over.' Nevertheless, all seven of us got on.

"The load was being sidled past the gate when, sure enough, over it went with all of us under! We crawled out, one by one, till Uncle Henry said, 'I guess they're all out, Tom.' But Brother Tom, still under, called out, 'No, they ain't either.' "

The seven children were: Ralph; Robert, married Grace van Ostrand; Roscoe, married Jennie Tupper; Thomas, known as Tommy; Louise, married Earl Crance; James; Ruth, married Ray C. Wilcox of Odessa. In 1967 she was the sole survivor of the family.

Danby Farmer Furnished Timbers for 'Enterprise'

For the building of the first steamboat on Cayuga Lake, the Enterprise at Ithaca in 1820, Jeheil House of Danby furnished the timbers for the craft. He was an early-day lumberman in Ithaca and operated a 185-acre farm in Danby.

Danby Inventor Improved Calendar Clock

Josiah H. Dawes of Danby has been credited with invention of a calendar clock on 1853. There was a calendar clock of that era, but the records in Washington indicate that the patent granted Hawes was for an improvement of the existing clock. Failure to register February 29 in Leap Years and other imperfections were fatal to its commercialization.

In 1854, W. H. Akins of Speedsville made improvements in the calendar mechanism, then sold his rights to Huntington & Platts who arranged with the Mix Brothers of Ithaca for its manufacture. Sometime after 1862 Huntington & Platts sold the clock to the Seth Thomas Clock Company. The Civil War made it impossible for the local clock company to avert failure, and the Thomas company took the remaining assets to reimburse it for parts made for the Ithaca firm. There is no record that this company ever manufactured any of the timepieces.

West Danby Post Office in Same Space Since 1874

An unusual allocation of space for the post office at West Danby is noteworthy. It is in the same place it was in 1874. Events leading up to this permanency begin in 1850, the year the first store in the community was built by Ira Patchen. This building burned in 1874, but it was rebuilt immediately.

Then for more than 30 years Patchen owned and operated this store, when it was purchased by Andrew Snyder and his wife, Mayme Jackson Snyder. In 1936, the present building was bought by the West Danby Grange, and space rented to the post office in exactly the same portion as in the original building, home of its owner-occupant Miss Jennie Allick.

A picture shows the 1874 store and the Patchen home. This log cabin was located on the John Patchen farm directly west of the present home of Miss Evangeline Thatcher. Polly Patchen, sister of Ira, was grandmother of Miss Thatcher.

Elizabeth Meyer is postmaster, the only fourth-class office remaining in the county.

They Killed the Royal Goose

By Elizabeth Genung

The Danby Banfields descended from James Banfield, Jr., born in 1747. He was the son of Sir James Banfield, a member of the English Parliament. James, Jr. came to America in 1759, about which there is an interesting story.

When James Jr. was about 12 years old, he and his cousin Francis King were playing with slingshots near an artificial lake on the king's grounds at the rear of the palace. They were trying to hit some geese swimming in the lake. Young Banfield accidentally hit and killed one of the Royal geese. Knowing that King George II often dealt very harshly for more trivial acts than killing a goose belonging to him, the badly frightened boys decided to escape, if possible, from the royal wrath and parental punishment.

Accordingly, with Francis King, who considered himself an accessory to the crime, Banfield hastened to the London wharves where they boarded a vessel about to sail, and concealed themselves in the hold. They were not discovered until the ship was well out to sea. When the ship reached Boston, the captain had the boys bound out to a ship builder for a term of years, so they could earn money to pay for their passage to America. This occurred about 1759, after which date there is very little record available about either of the lads until the outbreak of the Revolutionary War in 1776 when both enlisted at Oldtown, Maryland, and were mustered into Capt. Andrew Hines' Company and Col. Otho Williams' regiment for seven years.

At the close of the war they were married to two sisters, James Banfield Jr. married Tabitha Jones and Francis King married May Jones, probably in Northern New Jersey. They

eventually located in Ithaca, raised large families and, having received extensive land grants in 1818, they became successful farmers.

When they removed to Danby and where the land grants were located I do not have any record; the Town of Danby was not divided into military tracts as it was a part of Tioga County when the survey was made.

James Banfield Jr. and his wife, Tabitha, are buried in the King Cemetery on Stone Quarry Road. Tabitha died in 1823 at the age of 58 and James Jr., died in 1832 at the age of 75.

My paternal grandmother was Phoebe Banfield, a school teacher who lived in the Town of Danby at the time of her marriage to Luther Gere Genung in 1840, who was born on Snyder Hill in the Town of Dryden. One record reports Phoebe as the daughter of David Banfield, son of James Jr. In the Genung Genealogy her father is named as Moses Banfield. I do not know which was her father, but I do know that James Banfield, Jr. was my great-great-grandfather.

I am enclosing a list of names and addresses of persons who have records, or access to records, of some of the families given by Nelson Genung. Mrs. Byron Nelson or Mrs. Charles Voss may have information about the Howland family of whom I have no knowledge except that they were early Danby settlers.

There is an interesting note about Francis King who came to Ithaca with James Banfield, Jr. King became a farmer and an expert in Horticulture. Tradition has it that the well known Tompkins County King apple was named for him. There is a question whether the Kings who developed large apple orchards in the Town of Ulysses were related to or descendants of Francis King. Some of the early residents of that area gave them the credit of developing this apple. Mrs. Voss thinks they may be related to the Danby Kings but she has no record of it.

Stovewood Length of 1855 Recorded

Providing firewood for the district schoolhouse stove was an important—and sometimes acrimonious—matter at the annual meeting. Specific length of the wood is seldom mentioned. However, at the annual session of District 5, Danby, on October 2, 1855, length was set down at four feet and the price "twenty-one shillings six pence" or $2.63 a cord. An additional stipulation required the wood be sawed into two-foot lengths, split and piled in the woodhouse. Persons who attended a district school around 1900, and even later, will recall the box stoves which accommodated two-foot lengths of wood which was delivered ready-cut and piled.

District 11 Paid Teacher $1.50 a Week

Sally Ann Everet taught 25 pupils in the Jersey Hill school, District 11, Danby, during the seven-week winter term and on May 27, 1836, she was paid $10.50 for her services. On September 17, she received $5.06 as part remuneration for the summer term, this payment being the balance in the state aid for the school year.

Early Supervisor Served 11 Years; Another, 8

During the first several decades of organized government in the town, names of men who served as supervisors reappear at brief intervals. Benjamin Jennings, a pioneer, served 11 years; Josiah Hawes, eight; at intervals, Dr. Elbert Curtis was elected for five terms. The Curtis family provided seven supervisors; the Beers, six.

Danby Pioneer Grange Was an Early One

Only seven years after the Grange was born in Washington, D.C., Pioneer Grange No. 230 was organized at Danby September 5, 1874, with 20 charter members. The first officers were: Master, Joel Banfield; overseer, Brazilla Dorn; secretary, W. E. Chapman; treasurer, L. C. Beers; Ceres, Miss Clara Roper; Pomona, Mrs. J. E. Judson; Flora, Mrs. W. E. Chapman.