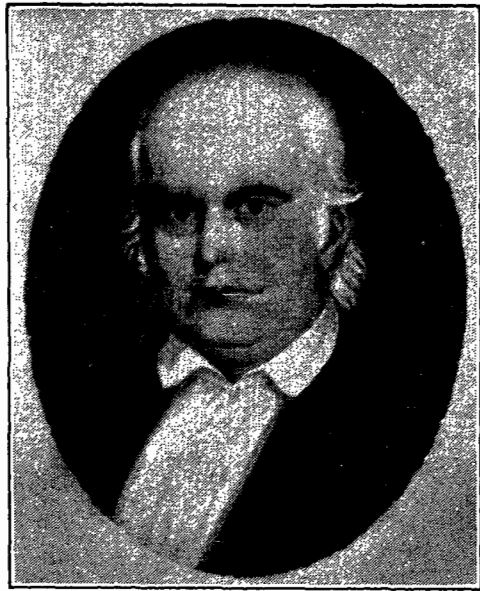


JOHN LYMAN

Eldest son of Major Isaac Lyman. Came to Lymansville with his father in the fall of 1809.



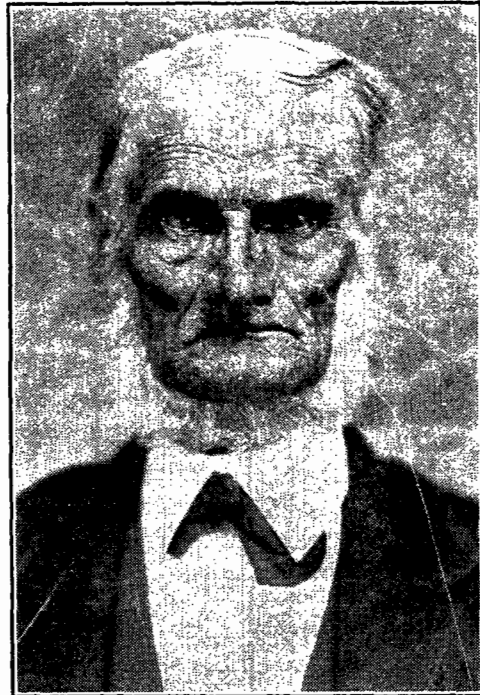
BURREL LYMAN

Second son of Major Isaac Lyman. Came to Potter County 1810.



BENJAMIN BURT

Third settler in the county. Brought his family to Burtville, May, 1811.



JOHN K. BURT

Son of Benjamin Burt, born 1811. First white boy born in Potter County.



wanted for \$2.00 per acre. Another authority tells us that Major Lyman received a bonus of \$10 for each new settler he induced to come in.

Major Lyman's house was roofed with shingles four feet long, riven from pine logs, the gables being covered with the same material. The floors were also laid of split pine logs in a similar manner. This house was only partly finished when he moved his family into it in the spring of 1810. During the season of 1810 he built a sawmill, and the next year a gristmill.

Soon after Major Lyman had settled at Lymansville, his former wife discovered his whereabouts and came with her family, assisted by her oldest son, Burrell, a young man of 18. It has been stated by more than one person whose veracity can not be doubted, that both wives and both families—or we might say, all three families, if we count the Spaffords—lived together under one roof for several years, till the young people married and set up for themselves. However, Mr. M. C. Burt says that the Major built a separate house for Laura Lyman and her family. Major Lyman's daughter Laura married Silas McCarthy, a carpenter who lived at Muncy, Pa., December 10, 1810, the marriage being the first to take place in the county. His daughter Eulalia born June 6, 1811, was the first white child born in the county. In due time, three more sons, Milo, Edwin, and Lewis W., were born, Milo, the eldest, dying when a young man of seventeen. Eulalia married Almon Woodcock, an early settler. Edwin and Lewis settled in Sweden Township. The older sons all settled in the county and will be mentioned later. Two of Major Lyman's sons went West in later years. In all, eight sons and three daughters of Major Lyman settled in Potter.

I have devoted so much space to the account of Major Lyman's family, because so many of his descendants are among our citizens to-day, probably more than those of any other man, and because so many of them afterwards became leading characters in our history and will be mentioned in succeeding chapters.

The east and west road that Major Lyman built through Potter County followed approximately the route of the Roosevelt Highway, but only small portions of it have remained on exactly the same location. Few relocations were made from the east line of the county to the mouth of the Nine Mile previous to the building of our modern concrete highways. The route followed the old road up the Nine Mile, crossing the top of the hill at the north edge of the Farnham Lyon place, thence across the John Miller place. From this point it followed about the

same course as the present road through the Corsaw neighborhood to Sweden Valley. The location from Sweden Valley to Lymansville has never been changed very much, if at all. From Lymansville to Coudersport the original road followed the flat instead of being at the foot of the hill as it is now. The old road left Coudersport by way of West Third Street, following the bank west of the site of the A. B. Mann house and the Braitling stone quarry, where its course may still be traced, coming off the hill at Eulalia cemetery. There is a minor relocation just beyond this point. From the tannery to the Fred Lehman place few changes have ever been made. Thence the old road followed the flat to a point about half a mile east of Mina. The next deviation from the present route began at the Kate Smith place and followed the flat as far as the John Lyman cemetery. Thence to the county line at Burtville, the location has remained unchanged. The oldest of the relocations were made more than 100 years ago, continuing at intervals down to the completion of the Roosevelt Highway in 1926.

Major Lyman's grist mill and sawmill are said to have stood east of the present State road at Lymansville, on land now belonging to Albert Mitchell, or possibly a little farther east. The whole of Potter County was at first attached to Dunstable Township, Lycoming County. In December, 1810, Potter County was organized into one township, to be called Eulalia, after the daughter of John Keating; this was also the given name of John Keating's wife. Major Lyman's daughter, Eulalia, the first child born in the county, was named for Eulalia Township.

The next settler to arrive was Benjamin Burt, who settled on a farm adjoining the county line at Burtville, which is named for him. He came from a point near Elmira in the spring of 1810. He cleared a piece of land and raised a crop of corn, which he stored in a granary that he built of split pine logs, and returned to his old home for the winter. The following spring he returned with his family, consisting of a wife and two children, Elisha and Joanna, reaching his clearing of the former season on May 4, 1811. The squirrels had gnawed into his granary and stolen all of his corn. He was obliged to make the long trip back to Elmira for seed corn, and he and his family were reduced to extreme hardship, but being of true pioneer stuff, they remained, and as the saying is, made good. A letter has been preserved from the pen of Benjamin Burt, recounting his experiences, together with one from John Peet, soon to be mentioned. These letters are now in a collection of historical documents at Harrisburg. They have been several times reprinted, and are familiar to many readers, but they are so well written

and describe so graphically the life of the pioneer, that they can not well be omitted from any history of Potter County worthy of the name. Here is Benjamin Burt's letter:—

“In the year 1808 an east and west road was opened through Potter County. Messrs. John Keating & Company, of Philadelphia, owning large tracts of land in the northwest part of the County, agreed with Isaac Lyman, Esq. to undertake the opening of the road. In the fall of 1809, Mr. Lyman came in, with several hands, and erected a rude cabin, into which he moved in March, 1810. He then had but one neighbor in the county, who was four miles distant. I moved in on the 4th day of May, 1811, and had to follow the fashion of the country for building and other domestic concerns—which was rather tough, there not being a bushel of grain or potatoes, nor a pound of meat, except wild, to be had in the county; but there were leeks and nettles in abundance, which with venison and bear's meat, seasoned with hard work and keen appetite, made a most delicious dish. The friendly Indians of different tribes frequently visited us on their hunting excursions. Among other vexations were the gnats, a very minute but poisonous insect, that annoyed us far more than mosquitoes, or even hunger and cold; and in summer we could not work without raising a smoke around us.

“Our roads were so bad that we had to fetch our provisions from fifty to seventy miles on pack-horses. In this way we lived till we could raise our own grain and meat. By the time we had grain to grind, Mr. Lyman had built a small grist mill; but the roads being bad, and the mill at some distance from me, I fixed an Indian samp mortar to pound my corn, and afterwards I contrived a small hand mill by which I have ground many a bushel,—but it was hard work. When we went out after provisions with a team, we were compelled to camp out in the woods; and, if in the winter, to chop down a maple tree for our cattle to browse on all night—and on this kind of long fodder we had to keep our cattle a good part of the winter.

“When I came here I had a horse that I called ‘Main Dependence’ on account of his being a good steady old fellow. He used to carry my whole family on his back whenever we went to a wedding, a raising, a logging bee, or to visit our neighbors, for several years, until the increasing load comprised myself, my wife and three children, five in all.

“We often had to pack our provisions eighty miles from Jersey Shore. Sixty miles of the road was without a house; and in the winter when deep snows came on and caught us on the road without fire, we should have perished if several of us had not been in company to assist each other.

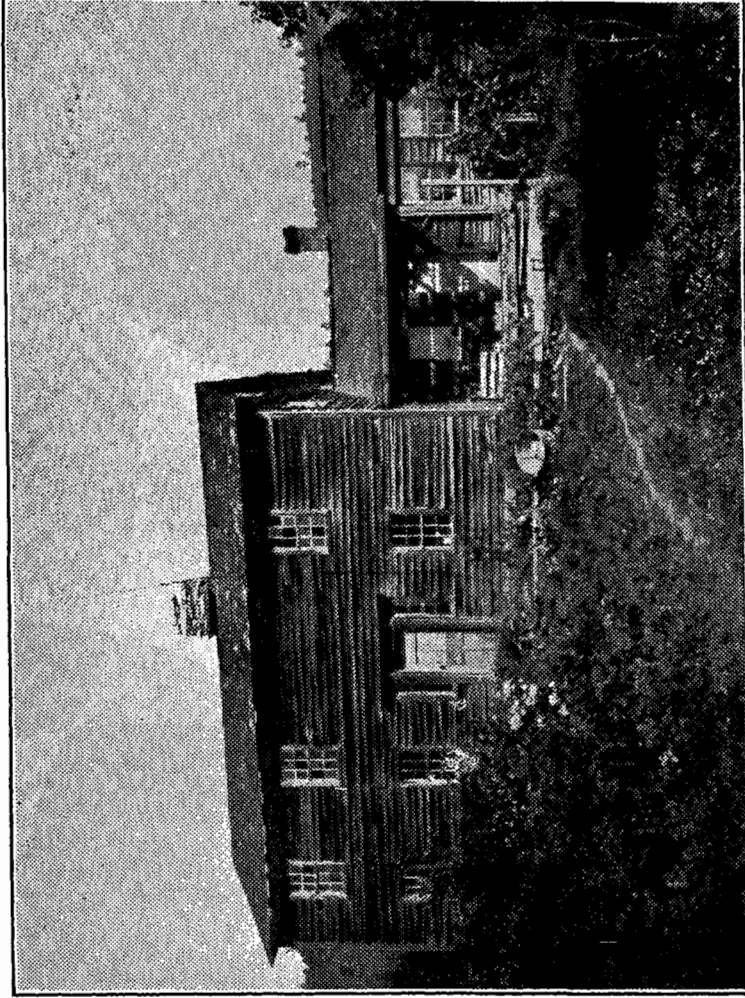
"The want of leather, after our first shoes were worn out, was severely felt. Neither tanner nor shoemaker lived in the county. But 'necessity is the mother of invention.' I made me a trough of a big pine tree, into which I put the hides of any cattle that died among us. I used ashes for tanning instead of lime, and bear's grease for oil. The thickest served for sole leather and the thinner ones, dressed with a drawing knife, for upper leather; and thus I made shoes for myself and neighbors.

"I had fourteen miles to go in winter to mill with an ox team. The weather was cold, and the snow deep; no roads were broken, and no bridges built across the streams. I had to wade the streams and carry the bags on my back. The ice was frozen to my coat as heavy as a bushel of corn. I worked hard all day and only got seven miles the first night, when I chained my team to a tree and walked three miles to house myself. At the second night I reached the mill. My courage often failed, and I had almost resolved to return; but when I thought of my children crying for bread, I took new courage."

Benjamin Burt, like Major Lyman, was the father of a large family, and among his descendants are many prominent citizens of the county to-day. His children all settled in the home neighborhood. His son John Keating Burt was the first boy born in the county, in the summer of 1811. His daughter Joanna married Frank Reed, one of the pioneers of the Reed settlement between Roulet and Mina. His daughter Sarah married Philander Reed, a brother of Frank, the first settler on Sartwell Creek. His daughter Elizabeth married James Reed, another brother, and his daughter Hannah married Matthew MacDowell, both of these being also among the early settlers on the Sartwell. The three sons, Elisha, John K., and Israel, also settled in the same neighborhood, John K. Burt receiving a gift of 50 acres from John Keating, adjoining his father's homestead.

Another extract from a letter of Benjamin Burt will complete our sketch of this hardy and resourceful pioneer. It is taken, as are the facts just related, from a paper presented by Mr. Monta C. Burt before the Potter County Historical Society:—

"The summer of 1811 was a bad season. I succeeded in raising a little corn which I pounded in a samp mortar, and this is all we had to eat except wild meat. The following winter my father-in-law, Israel Rickey, of Chemung, hearing that we were starving, sent us a load of provisions by my brother Israel. I soon had plenty of work, as the settlers commenced to come up the Susquehanna River to Shippen, now Emporium, with flat



THE OLD BURREL LYMAN HOMESTEAD AT ROULET

Built 1833. Torn down 1903.

Courtesy of Port Allegany Reporter



boats, and pack their goods across the Portage to Canoe Place, where they made canoes and floated down to the Ohio River. I had lots of work making these canoes out of white pine logs.

"There was a natural deer-lick near the mouth of Sartwell Creek about 30 rods from my corner, where I went whenever I wanted a deer. I wouldn't have to wait but a little while to get one, as a rule. I made a blind beside a hemlock tree from which I watched. One time when I was waiting in the blind, a piece of moss fell down close to where I sat. After a few minutes another piece fell. When I looked up, there on a limb lay a large panther watching me; evidently we were both looking for venison. I had no trouble killing him, after which I made my blind in the forks of a tree."

Most of the Burt family lived to a great age. Benjamin Burt himself died in March, 1876, aged 96, and some of his sons lived to be past 90, the last to go being Israel Burt, who died in 1908, at the age of 96.

Close after the settlement of Benjamin Burt comes that of John Peet, another famous pioneer. He came on May 23, 1811, settling on the place now owned by his great grandson, Julius S. Colcord. As I have already stated, a letter of his has been preserved, along with that of Benjamin Burt, just quoted. It is as follows:—

"It will be 23 years the 23d of May, 1834 since I moved into Potter County. Old Mr. Ayres was in the county about five years alone. In the fall before I came, three families, Benjamin Burt, Major Lyman, and a Mr. Sherman, moved into the county. The East and West State road was cut out the year before I moved in.

"It was very lonesome for several years. People would move in and stay a short time and move away again. It has been but a few years since settlers began to stick. I made some little clearing and planted some garden seeds, etc., the first spring. We brought a small stock of provisions with us. On the third day of July, I started with my two yoke of oxen to go to Jersey Shore to mill, and broke two axletrees to my wagon, upset twice and one wheel came off in crossing the creek.

"Jersey Shore was the nearest place to procure provisions, and the road was dreadful. The few seeds that I was able to plant the first year yielded but little produce. However, we raised some half grown potatoes, some turnips, and soft corn, with which we made out to live without suffering till the next spring at planting time, when I planted all the seeds I had left; and when I finished planting, we had nothing to eat but

leeks and cow-cabbage as long as they kept green—about six weeks. My family consisted of my wife and two children, and I was obliged to work, though faint for want of food.

“The first winter, the snow fell very deep. The first winter month it snowed 25 days out of 30, and during the three winter months it snowed 70 days. I sold one yoke of my oxen in the fall, the other yoke I wintered on browse; but in the spring one ox died, and the other I sold to provide food for my family, and was now destitute of a team, and had nothing but my own hands to depend upon to clear my lands and raise provisions. We wore out all our shoes the first year. We had no way to get more—no money, nothing to sell and but little to eat—and were in dreadful distress for want of the necessaries of life. I was obliged to work and travel in the woods bare-footed. After a while our clothes were worn out. Our family increased, and the children were nearly naked. I had a broken slate that I brought from Jersey Shore. I sold that to Harry Lyman and bought two fawn skins, of which my wife made a petticoat for Mary. Mary wore the petticoat till she outgrew it, then Rhoda took it till she outgrew it, then Susan had it till she outgrew it, then it fell to Abigail and she wore it out.”

The original letter of John Peet contains another paragraph, reciting the changed conditions in their family life at the time he wrote, by way of comparison with the hardships above described. John Peet came from Elizabeth, New Jersey. He, like the two pioneers whose lives I have already sketched, raised a large family. An account of them is given by his grandson, M. J. Colcord, of the Potter County Journal. The children were Mary, Rhoda, Samuel and Susan (twins), John, Abigail, Sarah, and Jacob. Mary married David Worden and Susan married his son William, both settling on Sartwell Creek, later emigrating to the West. William, Samuel, and John took up farms near Colesburg. Rhoda married Seth Taggart, son of a near neighbor, and they stayed on the home farm, becoming the owners at John Peet's death.

Abigail married Andrew Jackson, a preacher, who lived at Sheffield, Pa. Sarah married David Colcord, who settled in Homer Township, removing later to Cameron County. Jacob, the youngest son, settled in Homer on the farm now occupied by Will Russell, removing to Portage Township late in life.

John Peet was a man of high moral purpose and a professor of religion. The testimony of those who knew him is unanimous in declaration of his honesty and benevolent character. Yet he possessed some peculiarities that were a serious handicap in the struggles of pioneer life. In particular, Mr. M. J. Colcord states

that John Peet thought it sinful either to hunt or fish. This explains the straits to which he was reduced for food, described in the letter I have quoted. Mr. Julius S. Colcord, however, says that the Peets caught fish in a basket that they had constructed for the purpose, scooping them up from the stream, though Mr. Peet would not use a hook and line. But M. J. Colcord says that this basket was used only after the boys in the family had become old enough to be in some degree independent of the father. The reader may make his own choice between the two accounts. John Peet died in 1858 at the age of 86.

There is some difference of opinion about the route that Mr. Peet describes as having followed on his trip from Jersey Shore to Potter County. Men who have been familiar with the whole Pine Creek Valley have stated that they did not believe it possible that a man could have driven a team up the section of the Pine Creek gorge directly below Ansonia. These authorities believe that Mr. Peet left Pine Creek at Blackwell's, near the southern line of Tioga County, coming up Babb's Creek and taking an overland route that had been opened via Stony Fork, hitting the east and west road that had been opened by Major Lyman at a point a few miles east of Ansonia. In the same article it is stated that the early settlers at Ansonia and points up stream, who brought their supplies in canoes up Pine Creek from Jersey Shore, had built a cabin at a point six miles below Ansonia, known as Storehouse Bottom. Here they unloaded their canoes, bringing only small loads from this point up the swift current through the narrow and dangerous Pine Creek gorge.

Two other settlers came into the county from 1810 to 1814, the exact dates being unknown. These were John Ives, a soldier of the Revolution, who settled on the present site of Galeton, and Samuel M. Losey, who settled on Pine Creek on a farm adjoining the Tioga County line, his father-in-law, John Phoenix, settling on the adjoining farm in Tioga County. He bought 2,000 acres in Potter County, extending west from the site of his cabin 5 miles up Pine Creek. It is related that he had seen George Washington. He was born at Morristown, New Jersey. At the age of 22 he moved to Danville, Pa., and two years later to Elmira, and several years later to Tioga, Pa. He married Betsy Ives, a niece of John Ives, just mentioned, in 1809. Two children were born, a boy and a girl; the wife died in 1813. He married Olive Phoenix, a girl of fourteen, in 1814, and it was at about this time that he moved to Potter County. He was fond of having a good time, and it is related that on one occasion he rode a black bull all the way over from his home to Lymans-

ville to attend a dance, making good time on the road. He died in 1879 at the age of 106, the greatest age, so far as I know, ever attained by any person in Potter, with the single exception of Daniel Sullivan of Genesee, who died in 1916, aged 109.

John Lyman, eldest son of Major Lyman, settled on the farm near Roulet on which is located the cemetery bearing his name, in 1812; he was married to Lucretia Palmer at about the same time. Almeron Nelson describes a trip made by John Lyman to Jersey Shore for provisions in the summer of 1813. He started in July with a wagon, a yoke of oxen, and a horse, going by Babbs Creek, Tioga County, apparently over the same route as that followed by John Peet on the journey already described. Heavy rains set in before he had gotten far on the return trip, causing delay on account of high water. On the fourth day one of his wagon axletrees broke. The next day was spent in making another. One of his brothers then arrived from home in search of him, but even with this assistance his progress was slow. On the eighth day, near the house of Richard Ellis, at the Big Meadows on Pine Creek (probably near the present site of Ansonia) an axletree broke again. Mr. Ellis kept him overnight and assisted him in making repairs. The next day the horse was taken sick and died. Mr. Ellis took a yoke of steers and assisted them with their load for some distance. The next night they camped at the present site of West Pike, sleeping under the wagon. During the night a wolf came three times so near that they could hear him snap his teeth and hear his steps, but he was driven away by a little dog they had with them, howling frightfully as he went. They resumed their journey the next day, arriving at Lymansville on the twenty-second day after leaving home. Almeron Nelson also describes another trip made by John Lyman for provisions, in 1810, by canoe down the Allegheny to Kinzua, almost as dangerous and discouraging as that just described.

Very few trips like those of John Peet and John Lyman, however, were made by the early settlers; indeed these may have been the only ones ever made by the route down Pine Creek with a wagon. The ordinary means of transportation in those days was by pack horse, the driver going on foot. The pack horse trail from Ceres to Jersey Shore was first explored by Francis King in 1806, with two assistants, one of these being Jacob Tomb, who then lived at the mouth of Slate Run on Pine Creek, and the trail was blazed and opened in 1807, these explorers doubtless being guided by the traces of the old Boon Road of Gen. Daniel Brodhead.

In May, 1812, we find that an order was issued in court at Williamsport to open two more roads in Potter County. The first of these is described as "A road to intersect the road leading from Pine Creek to Ceres," and an examination of the survey on file in the county records at Coudersport shows that this road ran north from the plot that had been designated as the future county seat, following the same general course as the present road up the Allegheny to the Nelson Clark place, continuing up the Sheldon road, and meeting the Boon Road about half a mile beyond the Five Corners cemetery. The southern end of this road has all been relocated; its original course may still be traced, leaving the present highway near the house of Zalmon Robinson, and running far up on the sidehill, rejoining the present location near Gordon Hollow. Few people realize that this was the second road to be opened in the central part of the county.

The other road granted at the same session of court is described as "A road leading from the State road near Major Isaac Lyman's to the Tioga County line," and the survey notes tell us that it was 34 miles long. A careful plotting of the distances and bearings given in the record discloses the fact that the road in question is the Potter County section of the Jersey Shore turnpike, the surveyors having supposed that they had reached Tioga County at the east line of Potter instead of Lycoming County, as was really the case. The Jersey Shore pike was opened as a wagon road in 1811 and 1812, a part of it being built by Joseph Williams, of Williamsport. It is often supposed that this road was not opened till after the organization of the Jersey Shore Turnpike Company and the building of the toll-road, but the work then done consisted only in the grading and improvement of a route already in use. Two clearings were made at the time the road was opened, and a cabin built on each. One of these was at the present site of Cartee Camp and the other where the Lycoming Country Club now stands, known in former times as Herod's, where a road house was kept, but probably was not opened till some time from 1816 to 1820. The clearing at Cartee Camp seems not to have been occupied till about the time of the opening of the road as a toll road. A bridge over Kettle Creek on this road was ordered by court in 1815.

In 1810, the census of Potter County showed a population of 29 people, one, Asylum Peters, being colored. Only seven of these were women. The families of Major Lyman and William Ayres will account for most of this number, but there were probably a few others. In 1812, a celebration was held at Major Lyman's on the Fourth of July. It began with a chopping bee that lasted through the forenoon. Dinner and drinks followed, as was usual

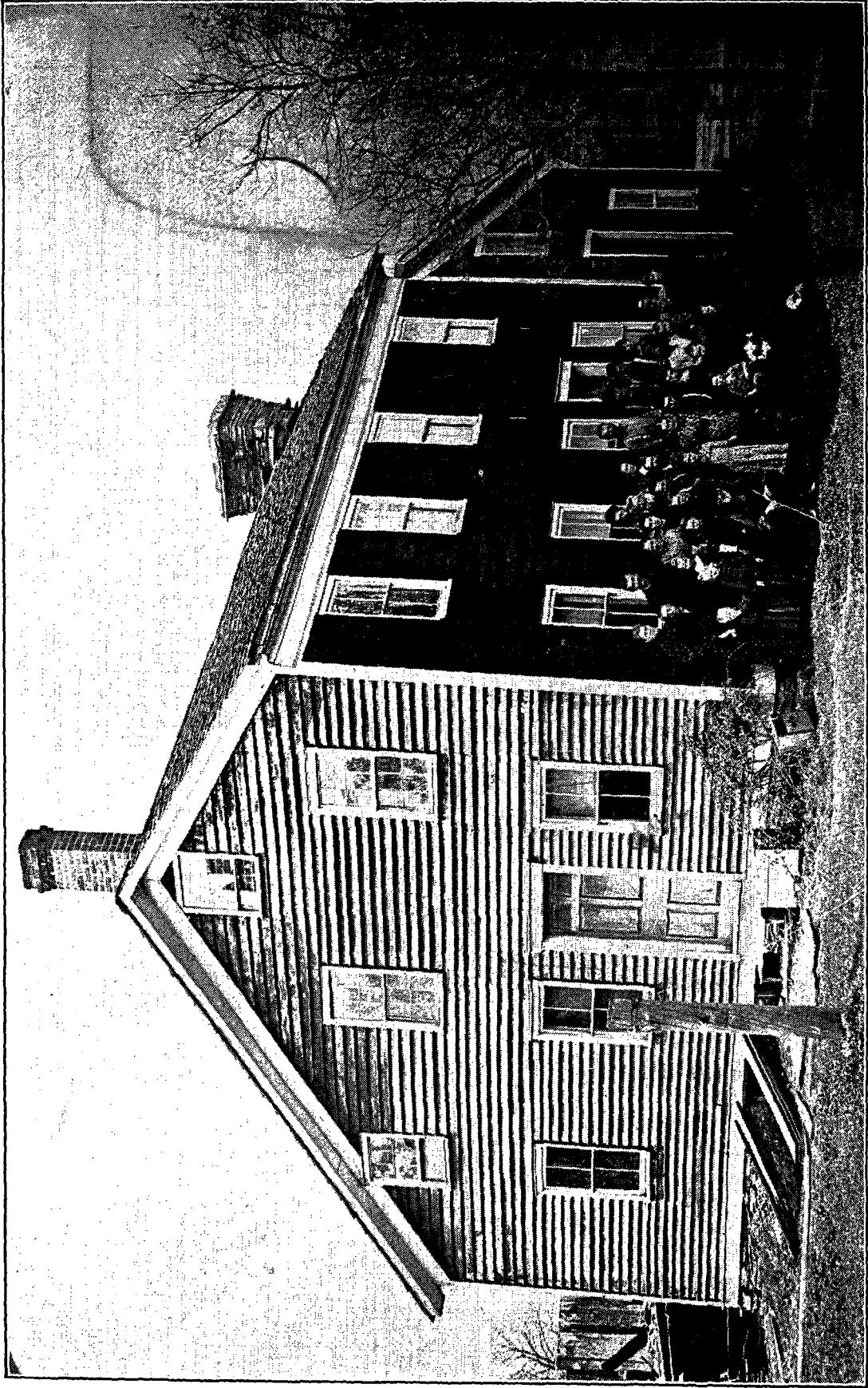
in those days at bees. The Stars and Stripes were raised on a tall tree and a huge pair of elk horns on another. It should be said here, however, that though Major Lyman kept a tavern, long the only one in the county, he did not keep liquor for sale, partly, perhaps, because his wife strongly opposed his doing so.

I shall not attempt to name all the settlers who came to the county before 1820. Many of them became discouraged and soon moved away, and their names are now almost forgotten. Several more settlers, however, deserve mention.

Solomon Walker settled at the mouth of Fishing Creek in 1811, but did not remain. Burrell Lyman bought a piece of land of William Wattles in 1813, on which he settled. Together with adjoining land he afterwards purchased, it embraced the farm now owned by his grandson, Milo Lyman, and the farm adjoining on the west. He is rightly regarded as the founder of the settlement of Roulet.

Jacob Vanatter settled in 1813 on the farm now known as the Bill Kimball place on Ayres Hill. He was a noted wolf hunter, as was also his near neighbor, George Ayres. The State paid a bounty of \$8.00 for wolf scalps in those days; several such bounties are recorded as having been paid to Indians. Vanatter killed 17 wolves from February to May, 1816. The scalps of these wolves were accepted by John Keating as payment on a piece of land bought by the wolf-slayer. Such transactions were common in those days. Vanatter's name is mentioned on several road views of this period. Obadiah Sartwell was the first settler within the original town site of Coudersport. He built a log house on the river bank back of where Mrs. Heck's house now stands, and a blacksmith shop on the land now occupied by the Potter County Garage. He became dissatisfied with his location and removed to McKean County at the mouth of Sartwell Creek, which bears his name. Daniel Clark came from Connecticut in the spring of 1816, and moved into the log house that Sartwell had built. On June 10, 1816, he moved into the log house that he had built on the farm we know by the name of his son, Nelson Clark, two miles above Coudersport on the river road, now occupied by a Mr. Moore. He had four children: Daniel, Nelson, Speedy, afterwards Mrs. Henry Nelson, and Lucy, besides a daughter who remained in Connecticut. The Clarks were among the prominent citizens of the county in the last century. Daniel Clark, Sr., was a surveyor, and made the first map of Potter County, for which he was paid \$150 by the State. He also laid out some of the early roads in the county.

The Clark family remained about eight years in the new home they had established, then they all went back to Connecti-



THE OLD JOHN K. BURT HOMESTEAD AT BURTVILLE
Built 1838. Torn down 1895. In front of the house, John K. Burt and his descendants, at the Burt reunion spring of 1895.



cut. The father returned to Potter in 1829, but died the same year, the mother having already died in Connecticut. Nelson Clark with his brother Daniel and sister Speedy then returned to Potter, Nelson residing on the homestead till his death in the latter part of the century. He held several county offices at different periods of his life, and was a prominent member of the Free Soil party and an agent of the famous Underground Railroad in the days preceding the Civil War. He was one of the organizers of the Prohibition party in Potter County. Daniel Clark, Jr., afterwards settled on the farm afterward occupied by his son, Nelson Clark, on Crandall Hill, at the place we know as Clark Corners. Previous to this time he lived at Colesburg for a few years. He was a farmer, cattle buyer, and in a small way a landowner.

John Taggart, Sr., settled on the river road below Coudersport in 1816, coming from Colevane, New Hampshire. The old Taggart homestead is now occupied by W. S. Gates, the place across the road, owned by J. M. Harris, being originally the property of John Taggart's son, Leonard Taggart. John Taggart, Sr., was generally known as Squire John to distinguish him from his grandson John. His sons were Leonard, Samuel, George, and Seth. John Phoenix Taggart was the oldest son of Leonard. Several sons of the family were among the prominent citizens of the county two generations ago. John Dingman and Nathan Turner, with their families, and Abram Dingman moved in on March 1, 1816. It was cold wintry weather. They became snowbound at nightfall on the Nine Mile and nearly perished. Three girls of the party mounted the three horses. Nathan Turner and his wife remained with the wagon, while the rest of the party set out to bring help. It became dark, and for fear of losing their way they were obliged to remain out all night. One of the party succeeded in starting a fire by firing a musket into the outer wood of a dead hemlock tree—there were no matches in those days—and thus kept the party from freezing. News of these people reached Lymansville the next morning, and John Lyman and Jacob Vanatter took fresh teams and went to their rescue.

Both families settled for a short time in a cabin on the farm now belonging to Justus Mehring, but they removed a short time afterwards to the farm known as the Stephen Sherwood place just below Mina, where they lived together for many years. John Dingman's parents afterwards came, and the elder Dingman, who was a millwright, built a mill on the river bank at the mouth of Dingman Run. It was badly damaged soon afterwards by high water; he then built another mill farther up the run, the remains of this last mill dam being yet easily seen.

Nathan Turner was accidentally shot and killed in 1834 by George Taggart, who mistook him for a deer. George Taggart grieved over this sad blunder the rest of his life.

Another well known settler of this period was Jonathan Edgcomb. He came to Lymansville in 1811 and started to clear a piece of land, but gave it up and returned to his former home near Lake George. He came again in 1818 and accepted an offer from John Keating of 100 acres of land on a site Keating should designate, if he would build and maintain a road house there for three years. This house was the old Cherry Springs hotel, and here Edgcomb settled in June, 1818, having just married Major Lyman's stepdaughter, Lucretia Spafford, then a girl of sixteen. The place was so remote from neighbors and so subject to annoyance from wandering Indians, who on one occasion filled up on whiskey and built a huge bonfire in front of the house (without, however, doing any damage), that Edgcomb and his young wife sold out when the three years were up and removed to Ayres Hill, settling on the farm we now know as the John Bloomer place, Mrs. Bloomer being a granddaughter of Jonathan Edgcomb. The Cherry Springs hotel passed successively to the following owners:—A Mr. Cannon, Abraham Kimball, Sterling Devans, S. D. Seward of New York, who built a new hotel, kept for many years by Warren Corsaw. It burned in 1897, and the site is now only a deserted and partially overgrown clearing on the Jersey Shore Pike.

Nathan B. Palmer was another early settler on Ayres Hill. His name is mentioned on several road views in early times, and he was the first county clerk. He afterwards removed to the state of Indiana, where he became a leading citizen and eventually was elected to the State Senate.

The first death in the county was that of a Mr. Beckwith, a settler on his way to McKean County. He was taken sick and died at Major Lyman's, and was buried on a farm formerly owned by Mort Benson, west of the corners at Lymansville. His grave was not marked, and its location is lost.

Another road was authorized by court in December, 1816. It is known as the old Angelica road. It followed the present road from Lymansville up North Hollow to the present fork of the road near the watering trough. Thence it followed a route long since vacated over the hill through the sugar bush on the Miles Harris place, coming off the ridge towards Colesburg across what is now the Albert Davie farm. Thence it led up Dwight Creek and over the hill east of Andrews Settlement, passing through the place now known as Reynoldstown. The old location from Ellisburg to Genesee was on the east side of the valley and led

over three very steep hills, instead of following the course of the stream; the northern portion of the old road is still open, being used only by a few farmers who live along its course. At Genesee it crossed the main branch of the river, meeting the road leading from Whitesville, N. Y., to Shongo, Wellsville, and Angelica, which seems to have been built several years before. The Angelica road was laid out by Daniel Clark, Sr. Only small portions of this road are now in use and some sections of it are now very difficult to trace.

It seems hard to understand at the present day why a road should be located with such steep grades, and on a course that would not now be considered by any road viewer. As a matter of fact, the first relocation on this route was made as long ago as 1827. This road was for many years the only route from Lymanville to Colesburg, the Allegheny road from Nelson Clark's to Colesburg being opened at a much later date. But we must remember that Lymanville, not Coudersport, was the center of population of Potter County in those days; that the early road builders followed the ridges instead of the valleys, when practicable, so as to avoid making dug roads and building bridges. Only three bridges had been authorized by court in Potter before 1820, all at the session of December, 1815, namely, over Kettle Creek on the Jersey Shore pike; over the Oswayo at Millport; and over Pine Creek at Walton, or possibly West Pike. The descriptions of roads and bridges in the official records of these times refer to land marks long since destroyed or obliterated, and are extremely hard to follow from the figures given. Some roads authorized by court were never built at all, and several were already in use before they were surveyed. I have attempted to describe only a few of the most important roads, including all those opened during the period now under consideration. These early roads were little more than tracks cut through the forest, and would be thought impassable by the traveler of to-day; those of us who worked in the lumber woods during the latter part of the 19th century will understand me when I say that they were just such roads as those over which we used to haul supplies to lumber camps. Little grading was done, and breakdowns on the road were the rule rather than the exception. No man would have thought of starting on a trip with a team and wagon without having an ax handy to cut out trees that often fell and blocked the road.

A road to the Cowanesque valley was cut through in 1820; it is still in use as the road from Sweden Valley to Ulysses via Brookland. East of Ulysses it followed the ridge nearly to Harrison Valley, this section of the road being little used after

the opening of the road via the Worden schoolhouse and the village of Mills, some years later. Mrs. Lavinia Lewis tells us that this early road ran east of the first settlements in the town of Ulysses.

It is certain that there were a few settlers in what is now Harrison township before 1820, but so little information about them is obtainable that I have deferred the description of these settlements to the next chapter. It is probable that there were also a few settlers in Sharon at this time, of which I can learn nothing beyond the settlement of Thomas Butler at Shinglehouse in 1806, already mentioned.

The first doctor who came into the county was Dr. Eastman, who divided his time between Lymansville and Smethport. Harry Lyman, third son of Major Lyman, went to Lawrenceville in 1816 and studied medicine with Dr. P. Powers—few doctors attended medical colleges in those days. He returned to Lymansville and practiced in Potter County till his death in the 1850's. During the latter part of his life he kept a hotel at Millport.

A short term of school was taught on Ayres Hill by Harley Knickerbocker, the teacher being paid by subscription, as was the case with several other of the first teachers in the County. Another term of school was taught near Lymansville by Israel Merrick, and another by Miss Cena Jackson, afterwards Mrs. Samuel Taggart. Obadiah Sartwell's log house was used as a schoolhouse by a man named Hurlburt. The exact dates of these terms of school are not obtainable, but those named all belonged to the period before 1820.

In 1816 a mail route was established from Jersey Shore to Olean, the postoffices on the route being at Lymansville, where Major Lyman was postmaster, and at Ceres, with John King as postmaster. Prior to this time, there had been no postoffice nearer than Jersey Shore. Later, a postoffice was established at Clara, said to be the next oldest in the County. The first mail carrier was one Wallace; then John Murphy, 1820 to 1824; James Collins, 1824 to 1828; Samuel S. Moss, 1828 to 1832; Moses Haney, 1832 to 1840. Many trips were missed during the deep snows in winter.

As previously related, the county was organized as a single township, named Eulalia, attached to Lycoming County, in 1810. In 1816, a new township was organized, to be called Roulet, named for John Sigismund Roulet, of Philadelphia, an associate of John Keating in the land company. Roulet township, as first organized, extended north to the State line, including the present townships of Pleasant Valley, Clara, and Sharon. Isaac Lyman, Nathan B. Palmer, and Samuel Beach were the viewers.

The first tax duplicate in Potter County of which we have a record is for the year 1813, but it is likely that taxes were paid before that time. The total amount of taxes assessed for the whole county was \$13.92 of which a small amount was abated, leaving \$12.00 paid over to the county clerk. The unseated lands seem not to have been taxed at this time, but appear on the assessment in 1817. About half of all the taxes collected were used as one might naturally suppose, in making roads. At this period there was but one county treasurer and one county clerk for Potter and McKean Counties, but each county had one commissioner and one auditor of its own. John King, of Ceres, was the first county treasurer and Nathan B. Palmer, of Ayres Hill, the first county clerk. All court business was transacted at Williamsport.

Potter County still contained only a few straggling settlements in 1820. The settlers in the central part of the county nearly all lived along the road from Sweden Valley to Burtville, with Lymansville as the center of population and the only post-office in the county. A few families lived on Ayres Hill; two near where Galetton now is, with an unbroken forest between them and the Keating farm in Sweden. There were a few settlers in the extreme northeastern part of the county; a road was only just being opened to connect them with the settlement at Lymansville. Their nearest postoffices were Spring Mills and Knoxville. There were also a few settlers in the Oswayo valley and possibly on the Honeoye or the Eleven Mile; their postoffice was Ceres. Their road to Lymansville led over Crandall Hill and down Sheldon Hollow. There were as yet no settlers on the Angelica road; at least none are on record till a few years later. A few families had come in from Sizerville to the present site of Emporium Junction; this region was then a part of Potter County. Roads were poor and used only for hauling supplies; people usually traveled on foot and followed the nearest route through the forest, which was open and afforded better footing than the roads. Trails often used were marked by blazing trees along the route. There was not yet a store in the county; to reach one, a trip of 70 miles must be made through the forest, camping overnight on the road. There was no market such as we know to-day. Such products as the settlers could sell were exchanged for supplies or turned in as payments on land. Money was very scarce and chances to work for wages even more so. The population had increased very slowly; the whole county contained only 186 people in 1820. The county seat was still at Williamsport. People lived on what they could raise or take from the woods. Men had literally to make their living in those days. Such was Potter County in 1820.

CHAPTER III

FURTHER SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. 1820-1833

The decade from 1820 to 1830 is marked by a speeding up of settlement and development in our county. Many new settlements were made, old ones increased in population, and several more roads were opened. First of all, let us make the acquaintance of some of the prominent settlers who came into the neighborhoods already partly occupied.

Cephas Nelson settled on the place now belonging to his grandson, Almeron T. Nelson, at Lymansville, in 1820. His wife was before her marriage Eunice Lyman, a daughter of Major Isaac Lyman. She was the first midwife who settled in Potter County and attended nearly all the early families. Another son-in-law of Major Lyman, Thomas Bellows, whose wife was Lydia Lyman, settled on what is now the Harold Holcomb farm in 1821. He remained several years and finally moved to Port Allegany. Almon Woodcock settled on what is now the Pfuntner farm the following year. Silas Nelson, a half brother of Cephas Nelson, settled in 1822 on the farm now owned by N. J. Leete & Son. In 1827 another brother, John Nelson, settled on the farm in North Hollow that we know as the Watering Trough farm, now occupied by George Rossman, being one of the first to locate on the Angelica road. Chester Corsaw settled in 1824 on the well known Corsaw farm in Sweden. He and his sons kept the famous Corsaw hotel, which in early days was at the junction of the Cowanesque road with the original East and West road, making it a frequent stopping place for travelers. His daughter afterwards became the wife of Marcus J. Flynn, well known in the middle of the last century as the keeper of a hotel at the place we now call Walton.

Joshua Jackson came to the county in 1820 from Broome County, New York. He lived for a short time on the Justus Mehring farm, then about a year in Lymansville, finally settling on Ayres Hill. His house stood nearly opposite to the site afterwards occupied by the Ayres Hill schoolhouse, near to the present township line between Homer and Summit. Another early settler at Lymansville was Alva Clark, a blacksmith by trade. His shop with an old fashioned stone forge, stood on the bank of the spring creek nearly opposite the Pfuntner house. He died in 1830. Reuben M. Clark came to Potter in 1823 and settled on the farm now owned by Joseph Grom at the mouth of Gordon Hollow, two miles above Coudersport.



JONATHAN EDGCOMB

Builder of the first hotel at Cherry Springs, 1818, and pioneer settler on Ayres Hill, 1821. The boy is his young grandson, Martin Floyd.



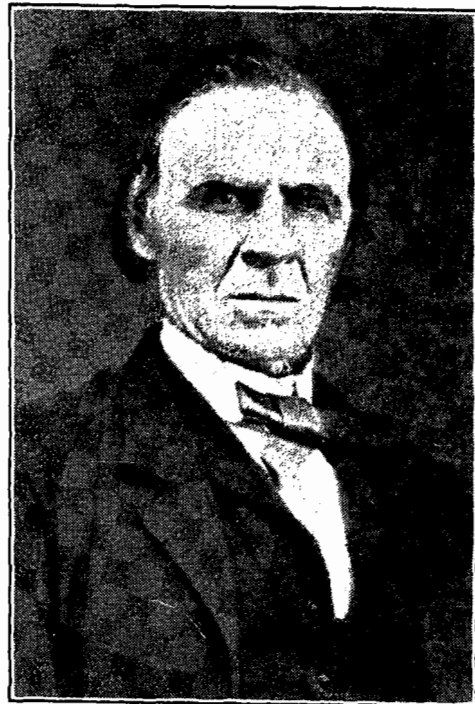
CEPHAS NELSON. 1783-1855.

Early settler at Lymansville, 1820.



SAMUEL HAVEN

Prominent citizen of Coudersport, came in 1835. Authority on local history.



JOHN EARL, JR. 1800-1880

Early settler on property now owned by the Elk Tanning Co. at Coudersport, about 1823. Son-in-law of John Taggart, who settled on the Allegheny two miles below Coudersport in 1816.



In the Roulet neighborhood, there were Jacob and Truman Streeter, owners of a sawmill, who took up land on the present site of the village of Roulet. They came some time previous to 1820. Russell Reed, the founder of the well-known Reed settlement between Mina and Roulet, came in 1823. His sons, Philander and James, were the first settlers on Sartwell Creek, each of three sons taking for a wife a daughter of Benjamin Burt, the other son, Frank, remaining in the Reed neighborhood. Another son, John, was an early settler in Coudersport. Reuben Card settled on the place now belonging to his descendant, Marcus R. Card, at an early date, probably before 1825.

In 1825 John L. Cartee settled in Coudersport and opened a hotel where the county jail now stands. He purchased the whole square for \$16.00. The original form of the name is Cartier (Cart-ya) and the family is of French ancestry. Captain David Ross came to Coudersport in 1827. He was a surveyor and agent for the Bingham lands, the agent for the Keating lands during this period being John King, of Ceres. Captain Ross married Mary Ann Knight, stepdaughter of John L. Cartee, soon after he came to Potter. He and his son, Sobieski Ross, were long prominent in the affairs of Coudersport and of Potter County, later becoming landholders on their own account and maintaining an office which is remembered by our older citizens. It was situated on North Main Street where the house of John Miller now stands. Among other holdings of the Ross estate were most of that part of Coudersport east of the Second Street bridge, and a large portion of what is now the South Side. Mrs. Ross outlived her husband and son, and in her old age contributed much to our knowledge of early times in Potter, through reminiscences given to Dr. E. S. Mattison, John R. Groves, and others. She was fifteen years of age when she came to Coudersport with her mother and stepfather in 1825. She has given an enumeration of the settlers living on the East and West road at this time, which I shall transcribe, adding an explanation of the exact place where each family lived, so far as I am able:—

1. Samuel Losey. Place adjoining the Tioga County line.
2. John Ives. On the present site of Galeton.
3. Keating House. The place now owned by Milo Freeman.
4. William Earl. He lived in the Keating House at this time, but this circumstance seems to have been forgotten by Mrs. Ross. His wife was Marietta Spafford, stepdaughter of Major Lyman.
5. Samuel Taggart. This name should have preceded the foregoing, but the names are here given in the order

that Mrs. Ross gives them. He lived on what is now the Bert Holcomb place. The old house stood on the opposite side of the road from the present farmhouse.

6. Silas Nelson. Now N. J. Leete & Son.
7. Cephas Nelson. Now Almeron T. Nelson.
8. Dr. Harry Lyman. Store nearly across the road from Cephas Nelson.
9. Major Isaac Lyman. Nearly on the site of the house now owned by Clyde Hall.
10. Alva Clark. Mrs. Ross does not give his first name. The place we know as the Jap Spafford place, now owned by Walter Jones. Alva Clark's shop stood on the bank of the spring run, nearly opposite to where the Pfuntner house is now.
11. John Reed. In Obadiah Sartwell's log house at Coudersport, just south of the site now occupied by Mrs. Heck's house.
12. John Peet. Now Julius S. Colcord.
13. John Earl. Site now a part of the tannery property.
14. Henry Dingman. Mill at the mouth of Dingman Run.
15. Leonard Taggart. J. M. Harris place.
16. Squire Taggart. White House, W. S. Gates.
17. Nathan Turner. Stephen Sherwood place, now belonging to Dave Trautman, just below Mina.
18. Russell Reed. Now Francis Reed.
19. John Lyman. Now the Van Kuren farm adjoining the John Lyman cemetery. The old John Lyman house burned in 1912, and a tenant house belonging to Mr. Van Kuren now occupies the site.
20. Burrell Lyman. The old Burrell Lyman house stood at the east end of what is now the village of Roulet, and was torn down by Hollis Lyman, great grandson of Burrell Lyman, in 1903. A new house was erected on the site.
21. Isaac Lyman Jr., son of Major Lyman. In Roulet. I have not learned the exact site.
22. Three families of Streeters, owners of sawmill. In Roulet, exact site uncertain.
23. John K. Burt. His place adjoined that of his father, Benjamin Burt, at Burtville, whom Mrs. Ross seems to have forgotten or confused with his son. John K. Burt was only fourteen years old at this time.
24. The Colemans. In McKean County.
25. Mr. Lillibridge (Lodowick Lillibridge), In McKean County.

Mrs. Ross certainly misses a few names in the above list. Reuben Card, and possibly one or two others who lived near Roulet at that time are not mentioned. She does not mention Reuben Clark; he seems to have been the only resident on the river road above Coudersport at this time, the Nelson Clark family having been absent in Connecticut from 1824 to 1829. She names the settlers on Ayres Hill as follows: Jacob Vanatter, William Ayres, Nathan Hinkle, George Ayres, Joshua Jackson, and one vacant house. She omits from this list Jonathan Edgcomb, but this must be a slip in memory, as other accounts state positively that he located on Ayres Hill in 1821. She mentions Thomas Bellows and Almon Woodcock as living in North Hollow. Almon Woodcock then lived on the Pfuntner farm at Lymansville and Thomas Bellows on the Harold Holcomb place. The Rossman family moved in about this time or soon after, locating on the place adjoining on the north, now a part of the Holcomb farm. Mrs. Ross says that in 1828 there were but three families in Coudersport; her stepfather, John L. Cartee, Timothy Ives, and Nathan Hinkle (possibly she means Michael Hinkle, who then lived on what is now the Court House Square). The following quotation is from Mrs. Ross' reminiscences given to Dr. Mattison in his history of Potter County, about 1887:—

“John L. Cartee, my stepfather, came to Potter County from Massachusetts in June, 1824, for the purpose of selecting a house, locating the same year in Coudersport, where he bought for \$16 a village square, whereon the jail now stands. Here, in the fall of the same year, he commenced to build a house, but scarcity of lumber and cold weather compelled him to discontinue operations. The county commissioners had cleared three or four squares, which they leased to Mr. Cartee, who sowed them to wheat. In the spring of 1825 he moved his family, consisting of a wife, stepdaughter, and little son, together with two hired men, and on May 10, they reached Coudersport, a desolate looking place, no house or building of any kind, except a small commissioners office, which had been erected the year before. [This was the building that had been Obadiah Sartwell's blacksmith shop.]

“On what is now called the south side, the Keatings had a few acres cleared with a barn erected thereon, and apart from this clearing the place was a dense wilderness, our nearest neighbor being nearly a mile west of us. The Eulalia Keating farm, as it was called until recently, is a body of land on the south bank of the Allegheny river; a portion of the village known as the South Side and containing nearly one-half the population of the whole town, is built on this farm, and on lands belonging to the Ross estate on the eastern part of this division of the village.

"Ere we reached Coudersport, we stopped for a short time at Lymansville, a thriving village founded by Isaac Lyman, who located at the place in 1809. . . . Isaac Lyman had then the best house in the county, and John Keating and his general agent, John King, used to make it their stopping-place on their annual visits, and the county elections were held there for a long time. In September, 1825, the elections were held at the house of John L. Cartee, and in 1826 and many years thereafter, John Keating and his agent made Mr. Cartee's house their headquarters in this section,

"But to return to my original narrative of the Cartee family. We had a late dinner with Cephas Nelson (son-in-law of Isaac Lyman), who had been in the county about eight years, and we reached Coudersport late in the afternoon, and set about arranging for our first night in our wilderness home, which at that time consisted of a cluster of board tents erected in the course of a few hours, and a shanty built the previous fall. There were plenty of boards and shingles on hand, but scantling, joists and rafters had to be hewed out of logs and small timber. In ten days we moved into the addition erected by the side of the large frame. We had to cook out of doors; but Mrs. Cartee, being a Yankee woman, could not get along without an oven, so soon after, a stone oven was built, and then a fireplace, although there was neither brick nor lime nearer than a distance of from forty to sixty miles.

"Mr. Cartee soon set about making arrangements for erecting a grist-mill. He succeeded in constructing a dam across the Allegheny river, and in 1826 he erected a frame building for the mill. In the fall of the same year a flood carried away the dam, and the mill was never completed. One of the millstones brought from Jersey Shore for the proposed industry is now in Mrs. Ross' grounds. Mr. Cartee was public spirited, but trying to do more than he could accomplish, he became discouraged and dissatisfied with the country, so in 1838 or 1840 he went West, only occasionally revisiting the scenes of his pioneer labor; he died in the far West about 1863."

In the foregoing quotation it will be noticed that Mrs. Ross mentions the fact that the county commissioners had had a tract of land cleared in what was to be the county seat. An act of the legislature in 1822 authorized them to clear the county court sites of timber and brush, the land cleared not to exceed 30 acres in area. John Dingman, Leonard Taggart, and either Harley or Peter Knickerbocker took a job of clearing this land, becoming security for each other. They chopped it and burned