

Historical House in Castile. They had four sons: John (Robert's father), Peter, Joseph, and Arnold. John married Betsey Milliman. They had eight children. In 1805, Robert's father, John Purchase Whaley, brought all his family and the aged grandmother Tamson from Massachusetts to Avon. Caleb Jeffers Whaley was one of Robert's brothers. He had a son Robert, who was the grandfather of Arnold Whaley of Lima, New York. In 1958, Arnold was of great assistance in the research done on the Whaley family.

Janet McKay Whaley, Castile's first settler, was Scotch. In 1793, when Janet was eleven years old, Janet, her aged mother, and two brothers came to the Genesee Country and settled about where Groveland is today. At that time, there were in the whole Genesee Country a total of nine hundred sixty nine people, according to the first census in 1790. And there were six million acres in the Genesee Country. At first the howling of the wolves at night and the scream of the panther and the long lonely stretches of forest terrified her. But she soon had so much to do she didn't have time to be afraid. She learned to cook for her three hungry brothers. Her mother died soon after they arrived. She learned to spin the thread and make the cloth for her brothers' clothes and for her own. One brother, Robert taught school at Williamsburg, New York, in one of the abandoned houses which the ill-fated German settlers had deserted.

Janet's brother, John, was a carpenter and millwright, and his services were much in demand. They stayed in Groveland ten years, and now Janet was a capable and comely young woman. They were going to Caledonia to live. Charles Williamson had just brought some Scotch settlers there. John had saved his money, thrifty Scot that he was, and with his brother's help and what the family had besides, he could now pay \$2,000 for Charles Williamson's grist mill and 200 acres of land which included the Springs, the Outlet, and the site of Mumford.

Almost at once they met Robert Whaley. Soon Robert Whaley was associated with John McKay and his mill, for Robert Whaley was also a millright and a carpenter. Robert's father and two of his uncles had been carpenters, and it was the natural thing for Robert to be brought up knowing how to use tools. John McKay liked Robert and took him home to meet his sister. After they became acquainted, they fell in love and were married. With the restless urge that drove young people to new frontiers, Robert and Janet and Janet's youngest brother, Daniel, decided to go on into the Genesee Country that had not yet been settled.

#### THE FIRST YEAR

It wasn't cheap land that Robert Whaley had in mind. He was a millright and a good one. He had heard about Mary Jemison's Reservation. He knew that part of it had some fine timber. He had heard that other men from Caledonia and Avon and Canandaigua had cut timber and sent it down the river to the new settlements that were being built. But the logs were crushed and almost useless by the time they reached their destination. Robert had a better idea. He would build a mill, saw the logs into boards, fasten the boards together, and put them on rafts until they reached their destination. He would have to take machinery for the mill with him. Janet's brother Daniel said he would put the mill machinery on a raft and

pole it up the Genesee until they came to Wolf Creek. Janet and Robert could go with all their belongings by ox cart. And so it was agreed. Robert and Janet were to follow the new road from Leicester until they reached Lot 38. They would stop there and build a cabin. Robert would then walk the four miles to where Wolf Creek emptied into the Genesee River. He would meet Daniel, who had brought the mill machinery, and there they would build the mill, on the site where there was an abundance of water power.

The road was much worse than even they had expected, and it took longer. They stopped at Lot 38. You will see a gold and blue marker there today. They built the log cabin as quickly as they could, and of course Janet helped. Then Robert walked the four miles to Wolf Creek's mouth and found that Daniel had reached there safely. Together they built the mill and installed the machinery.

Each morning while they were installing the machinery and making arrangements to buy timber from Mary Jemison, Janet was left alone at the cabin. She busied herself trying to make the log cabin seem like a home. She tried to dig up a little plot of ground in the back so that she might have a garden.

That first summer scarcely any traveler came down the road. One lad, twelve years old, had come from Centerville to Pike. He had been chased by wolves and had had a rough time. He apparently was bound for Leicester. A doctor from Pike let the boy ride on his horse part of the time. They arrived at Whaley's late in the afternoon and stayed there over night. So far as we know, this was the beginning of Whaley's Tavern. It never was a tavern as we understand taverns. It was a stopping place on a lonely road where they fed you and let you stay all night if you needed to. You paid what you could—as little as a shilling for a meal.

The fall of 1808 found the Whaleys busy making the many preparations for winter which were necessary in this pioneer country. They would need to go to Leicester to get supplies enough to last several months. There was plenty of game nearby, deer were abundant, and the streams were full of fish. There were pigeons and ducks and other small game. But you had to hunt and kill and dress them. There was wild fruit down by the river where the mill stood. Wild strawberries, gooseberries, plums, mandrakes, apples, peaches, and cherries were in abundance. Mary Jemison was generous. She not only shared both wild and cultivated fruits, she even told them where to find the best places to pick.

Janet never forgot the first winter. Snow was deep, and it would frequently take an hour to shovel a path to the shed where the oxen were kept. Work at the mill was suspended, for it was impossible to get there through the deep snow even with snow shoes. They all worked very hard during the year 1809. The following year proved to be an eventful one, for on September 10, 1810 a son, Mordecai, was born to Robert and Janet Whaley. The mother probably had no doctor or even a midwife to attend her. Few pioneer women did. But Mordecai survived and lived to be fifty-one years of age. He was buried in Mumford Rural Cemetery.

#### EVENTS OF 1811

There was a great deal to talk about in the year 1811. Daniel McKay was thinking of leaving them. A large pile of logs, which he

and Robert had gotten ready to saw, were set on fire. By whom? No one knew. Another topic of conversation was the barn which Robert was building across the road from the tavern. It seemed necessary to have some place for teams to rest and feed. More often now travelers were coming from the North, going Olean way or coming up from the South to hit the Buffalo Trail.

There was exciting news, too, from the Gardeau Reservation. July 1, John Jemison killed his brother Thomas on his mother's doorstep. The same year, Mary Jemison's husband, Chief Hiokato, died at the age of one hundred and three years. His war club, tomahawk, scalping knife, powder flask, flint, a small cake, and a cup were buried with him, and he had been dressed in his best clothing. According to Indian tradition, he was buried in a sitting posture with his rifle in his hand. Tradition says the grave was opened and the rifle taken.

#### WAR CLOUDS GATHER

On June 28, 1812, an exhausted express rider nearly fell from his horse at Batavia. When he could get his breath, he read the President's Proclamation. Congress had declared war on Great Britain. Militia in all the States were being called out. Fifty thousand volunteers were needed. Taxes were being levied. They pressed for more news, but he was up and away to Fort Niagara.

What would this do to the Genesee Country? What would it do to the backwoods settlements like Whaleys. What would it do to the wives and children. These vigorous men would defend their homes and the land, which they had with backbreaking toil wrested from the wilderness. But what would happen while they were away? Would their wives be safe from men like Indian Allen, who had three wives already and wouldn't hesitate to take another if he wanted her. Or suppose. . . . But why suppose! Fears piled up. There was a job to be done, and they must do it.

Now all was bustle and confusion. Batavia and Genesee were no longer quiet country villages, but military centers. Everywhere was heard the rolling of drums, the shrill tones of the fife, and the rattle of the wheels of baggage wagons. Rumors were flying everywhere. They reached Whaley's Tavern. They heard that General William Wadsworth was going to head a company of volunteers. Good! They knew and trusted Old Bill, as he was affectionately called, although he wasn't old. But the next rumor said that Stephen Van Rensselaer of Albany would be over Bill. That didn't suit at all. And why so many old men in charge? Men like Henry Dearborn of Massachusetts, who they heard would be commander in chief and William Hull in charge of Michigan territory and the fort at Detroit. What if he couldn't hold it? That would bring the Northwest Indians at our backs and Great Britain never hesitated to use the Indians against the settlers. Indeed, in spite of the Treaty of Peace in 1783, they knew that the British constantly kept the western Indians in turmoil, inciting them against the settlers.

The settlers also knew the war would be unpopular in New England. Many of these Genesee Country men had been New Englanders and still had relatives there. They heard that Boston had hung her flags at half mast. "James Madison has declared war," they said. "Let him carry it on."

Robert Whaley heard that his brother, Caleb Jeffres Whaley, had enlisted under Bill Wadsworth. Should he enlist, too? There would be another little one soon and still no neighbors within miles. No, he couldn't leave yet. Daniel had left them, disgusted and discouraged and had gone on down Olean way.

It was in May 1812 that Mary Jemison's son, John, threatened Robert Whaley with his scalping knife. Robert went home, only to learn later that John had killed a second brother, Jesse. Robert wondered whether he could have prevented the killing if he had stayed. Remembering how John's face looked, crazed and evil with drink, he realized there was nothing he could have done. Indian Allen had been bringing in more liquor for the Indians, accepting ginseng roots in return.

William Hull lost Detroit and all of the Michigan territory in August of 1812. The Genesee Country men were furious. "Hull sent all his baggage, hospital supplies, and plans across the river ahead of his men in his attempt to capture Canada, the big Goon", said the men in the taverns, "and of course they were captured".

The news along the Niagara River was bad. The British held Newark, Fort George, Queenstown, Chippewa, and Fort Erie on the west side of the river. The Americans held Niagara, Lewiston, Fort Schlosser, Black Rock, and Buffalo on the eastern side. If we could take Queenstown, it would be a foothold in Canada. Bill Wadsworth was in that battle. They took Queenstown and held on bravely for awhile. When British reinforcements arrived, they could neither resist or retreat any longer. They had to surrender. The failure of our men to support Wadsworth was a bitter pill for Genesee Country men to swallow. Caleb Jeffres Whaley received a gunshot wound from which he never fully recovered and which eventually caused his death.

Isaac Brock, the British general was killed in this action. Wadsworth and others who had been taken prisoner were ordered to attend the funeral, after which they were paraded through the streets as trophies of victory. The prisoners were exchanged eventually.

The war waged on. Newark and York were burned by the Americans. Buffalo and Black Rock were burned on the American side. But Perry's victory on Lake Erie put new heart into our army. Castile's neighbor, the village of Perry, was named for Commodore Perry, the hero of that battle.

Fortunately for the Americans, there were victories on the seas, where the Americans gave a good account of themselves. But by 1814, England had practically defeated Napoleon, although the battle of Waterloo had not yet been fought. Now she could give her attention to the war over here. It was rumored that fourteen thousand of Wellington's veteran troops were on their way to the States. There was the story that the City of Washington was burned in retaliation for the burning of Toronto. It was a black picture.

Genesee County had its immediate problems. This county alone had been assessed \$4,008 in taxes. Allegany County was asked for \$470. No one had money to pay this tax.

The roads in Genesee County had been crowded with people fleeing from Niagara County, particularly from Buffalo and Black Rock. There were parents without their children and children without their parents, clinging to anyone they could find. The blow was so sudden and so swift that these refugees had been crushed by it.

They had neither food, clothing, or shelter. The inhabitants of Canandaigua made a generous contribution. New York City sent \$3,000 and the State legislature appropriated \$50,000 for "the relief of the indigent sufferers of the Counties of Genesee and Niagara. There was still a lot of fighting to be done before peace could come.

At last the long war was over. Peace had been arranged at Ghent on Christmas Eve, but neither we nor the British knew it, and the Battle of New Orleans went on until January 8, 1815. More than 2,000 soldiers lost their lives unnecessarily because there was no communication across the ocean at this time.

The darkness of despair settled down over the Whaleys in the year of 1815. They had come to this country seven years ago. In that time, only Grinnel Stannard lived on Lot 39 to the west, Albert Langdon lived on Lot 31 toward Perry Lemuel Eldridge lived on 26, and Sam Harris on 17. Farther south on the Allegany Road, which was still known as the Olean-to-Leicester road, the Poste family had come in 1813 and settled on lots 63 and 72. This was the entire populace at this time.

The mill which the Whaleys had started was not paying off. There was no demand for lumber. The war had temporarily halted the forming of new settlements. The few people who stopped at Whaleys on the way to Olean were mostly refugees, who were fleeing from towns devastated by war. Many of them did not have the six cents that Janet asked for a night's lodging. She often fed them for nothing from her scanty stores. The new baby came and was named Jeremiah, after his grandfather. The barn that Robert had just built was burned, possibly by tramps, for there were many.

Now the Whaleys lived in the Town of Perry, as this township was formed from Leicester in 1814 and extended south to the Allegany County line. The Town of Leicester originally extended for sixty miles, and Castile was in this township for twelve years. The town was to remain in Genesee County until 1841.

Robert did not dare leave the mill entirely alone, so he let Lemuel Eldridge have the cabin and took Janet and the family with him. One night a settler going to bed late observed the sky was lit up. Fire! But where? The Whaley Tavern! Two men from LeRoy who had come to buy lumber and were staying at the Tavern were fatally burned. This was a terrible blow to the Whaleys. However, Robert rebuilt his home, this time with boards which he sawed at the mill.

#### A MOST UNUSUAL YEAR, 1816.

January of 1816 was mild, so mild that people allowed their fires to go out. A severe cold snap came in February. March was normal. But spring did not come in April as usual. May was a bitter disappointment. Buds came out, but so did the frost. In one night it left all vegetation in a blackened waste. Corn was killed, and ice one-half inch thick formed on the creeks. In June, frost, ice, and snow were common. Every green thing was killed, including all of the fruit. In one day, snow fell to the depth of nine inches. In the spring of 1817, farmers were compelled to use 1815 corn for seed. At that, it was \$5.00 a bushel.

September of 1816 came in bright and warm, and for two weeks people basked in the warmth and sunshine. But on the 16th, ice formed

a quarter of an inch thick. October and November were very cold. December was the warmest month of the year. No vegetables had been raised. Flour was \$13 a barrel. At the Castile Historical House there is a collection of almanacs beginning with 1816. From these it is evident that the weather of this year was not confined to this region but was general throughout the mid-Atlantic states.

What a year to pick for a birthday! Yet, 1816 was the year when Castile Village was born.

#### SETTLERS COME TO CASTILE

On the nineteenth day of July, 1816, the Ziba Hurds came in an ox cart from Vermont with their three children, Eliza, nine Norman, eight and Hannah, two. They stopped on the Allegany Road where Raymond Bowles owns. It used to be called the Ira True farm. At that time there was a vacant log cabin on the place, for Lemuel Eldridge, who had owned it, had moved down into the Whaley Tavern. Robert and his family were living at the Mill.

#### FIRST SCHOOL IN CASTILE

It was characteristic of these pioneers that they should start building a schoolhouse almost before they built their own homes, in spite of discouraging weather. They were here to stay and took the weather in stride. They built the school halfway down the road that ran west from the Tavern about forty rods from the corner. Ann Bennett was selected as the first teacher.

Norman Hurd went to the "raising" and told in detail how they did it. All the men in the neighborhood helped to cut the logs and put up the building and make the crude furniture.

The first religious meeting was held in this schoolhouse that had just been built, and the gathering was neither Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Christian in denomination. There was no minister present. Mr. Hurd read from Watts sermons, which he had brought from Vermont. Mr. Stanard led in prayer, and they all sang. Norman said the singing was good. We wonder whether they sang "Faith of Our Fathers."

#### ZIBA HURD PLANS TO REMAIN

These meetings were held until cold weather came and Ziba went back to Vermont after much-needed supplies. In 1853, Mr. Barnes and I went to Tinmouth, Vermont, to see the place where Ziba Hurd came from. There was nothing there except a little old church that looked to be a hundred fifty years old. Not a person around for miles. As we climbed up and up over the stony roads and into the mountains, we didn't wonder that they came to New York. But before he went, Mr. Hurd made the trip to Canandaigua and bought 400 acres of land consisting of Lots 50, 51, and part of Lot 54. John Grieg was the agent for the English landowner, John Hornby, who in turn had bought it from Robert Morris. One of the London associates, William Pultney, had died in 1805 and his daughter, the Countess of Bath (for whom Bath was named), died in 1808, so now the firm consisted of Hornby and Calquhoun. Mr. Hurd paid \$1476 for this land, and the deed was delivered on May 19, 1830, showing that it was all paid for at that time.

Before he went back to Vermont, Ziba Hurd was to clear a piece of land in what was to be the Village of Castile. No Indians or other settlers had ever touched an axe to it. It was a deep, dense forest primeval. He hired two men, James Whitman and Simon Young, to clear ten acres between Main and Buffalo Streets. This area was chosen because a branch of Wolf Creek ran through it, and there was also a good spring. These two men lived in a shack made of elm bark while they were doing the job. It was sowed to winter wheat that fall. In addition to the ten acres which Whitman cleared, Ziba had cleared the land included in that site that has been known for years as the VanArsdale place. At the present time, it is owned by Douglass and Sally VanArsdale Bliss. On this land, Ziba proposed to build a home. He erected a leanto log shanty on the other side of the street to live in while he built his home.

Having done this, he went back to Vermont, leaving his wife and three children in the new raw Genesee Country. When he returned in the spring, he brought with him two yoke of oxen, two cows, two potash kettles, one double wagon, and several hundred yards of "fulled" cloth. (According to an 1826 dictionary, "fulled" cloth means cleansed cloth. Fullers earth was a kind of marl or clay used in the cleansing, and a fulling mill was the one where hammers beat the cloth until it was cleansed.) Of course, Ziba could hardly come alone with all that cavalcade, so his brother-in-law, Jonathan Gilbert, and his mother, Lucinda Hurd, came back with him. Ziba and Sally were thirty years old, having been born in 1786, while the mother was fifty.

#### THE GREAT SLIDE

The following account of the Great Slide was told to William Pryor Letchworth by Charles Strong in 1871. Mr. Strong owned this land on the Genesee River for many years. The river at that place came strong against the bank and then went to the other side of the valley, forming an eddy.

It was on the night of June 18, 1817. Some men came down the river with a raft of logs and, leaving the raft in the eddy, where they thought it would be safe, went to Mary Jemison's to spend the night. About ten o'clock they heard a terrible rumble, which they were unable to account for. They found later that seven or eight acres of the highbank, two hundred feet high with trees growing on it, had broken off and slid into the river. The broken surface of the hill and the debris of the slide were spread out in irregular hillocks in the river, covering fifteen or twenty acres. This turned the stream across the flats above the slide and around to the east bank. The raft of logs had disappeared forever. There was a large tree, said Mr. Strong, twelve feet in circumference, which was not uprooted but took enough earth with it so that it kept right on growing in its new location. In later years, when the land was plowed over, he found stems of trees forty feet long embedded in the soil. Strong said the slide was sixty rods from Polly Jemison's house.

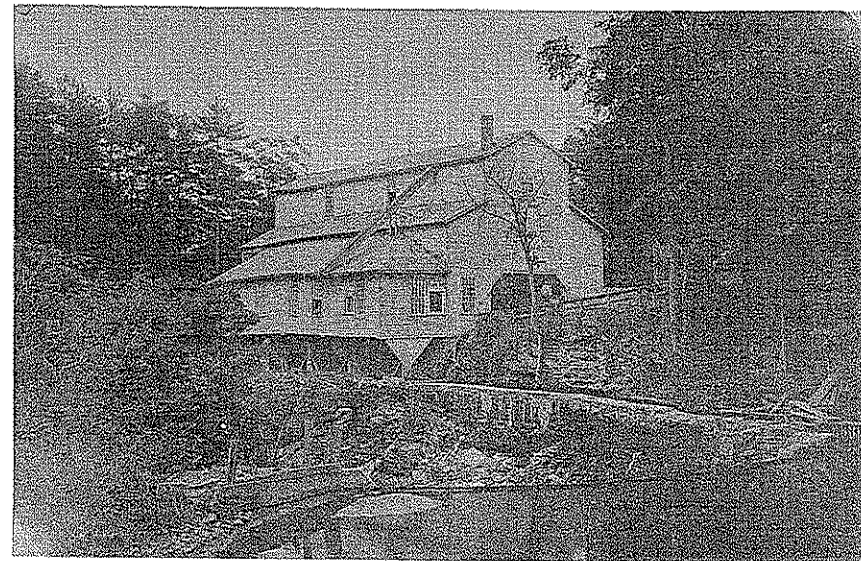
The next morning, says another source, Greenleaf Clark and his son, Edward, and Samuel True, with his son Ira, came from Perry to hoe corn on Mary Jemison's flats, which they had rented. In after years, Ira stated that he had run ahead of the others and jumped on the great mass of bluish clay exposed by the slide. He said the air smelled so strong of sulphur, they could hardly breathe. Charles

Strong had this clay examined thinking it might make good pottery, but nothing came of it. Ira True was the grandfather of Francis Lois True, Rochester, a former Castilian.

#### THE EARLIEST MILLS OF CASTILE

Almost the first thing Mr. Hurd did in the spring of 1817, besides starting to build a home, was to build an ashery so he could manufacture potash. This was the only article for which he could get cash. When the ashes had been collected, they were placed in conical boxes, leaches, or tubs. Water was poured in the top and allowed to leach through the ashes and to pass through a layer of straw at the bottom to escape by a hole into large iron kettles or similar vessels. This contained a considerable amount of lye. The solution was said to have been strong enough to float an egg. It was recommended that the same solution might again be leached through the same ashes to obtain desired strength. Once the lye was ready, if black salts were to be made, the solution was boiled in huge kettles until evaporation into soluble form. In this condition, the salts were usually sold to persons who made a business of converting them into potash, or the farmer might finish the process himself.

To convert to potash, the salts were placed in a kettle and subjected to red heat for one or two hours, when most of the combustible matter was consumed. The residue, when cold, was broken up, packed into tight casks, and sent to eastern markets, where it went into chemicals and fertilizers. Local coopers often produced these hard wood casks. Sometimes the farmer sold to the local ashery or to a trader the ashes at eight or ten cents a bushel. Black salts sold from \$3 to \$4 a hundredweight. Probably Ziba Hurd took his black salts to Moscow (now Leicester) and sold them for \$70 a ton.



*Hopkins Mill, the first mill ever built in Castile, 1818 to 1935*

## ZIBA HURD'S OTHER ENTERPRISES

Early in the spring of 1817, Ziba Hurd started making maple sugar, using the two potash kettles to boil the syrup. He put in flax and spring wheat, and vegetables on the land he had cleared. From the quarry he drew stones for the basement of his new house. He had the lumber sawed at Daniel Bannister's mill on East Park Road (where Hopkin's Mill Pond was later). Daniel had built his mill that very year. He had come from East Gainesville, then called Bannister's Settlement, where he had bought Lot No. 5 in 1807. Daniel W. Bannister again comes into our story in 1824.

## OTHER INDUSTRIES

A saw mill was started at the corner of Main and West Park Road. The dam which was built for this mill started back of the first house south of the Library and covered seven or eight acres.

## A CARDING AND CLOTH DRESSING MILL

A place to live something to eat and clothes!

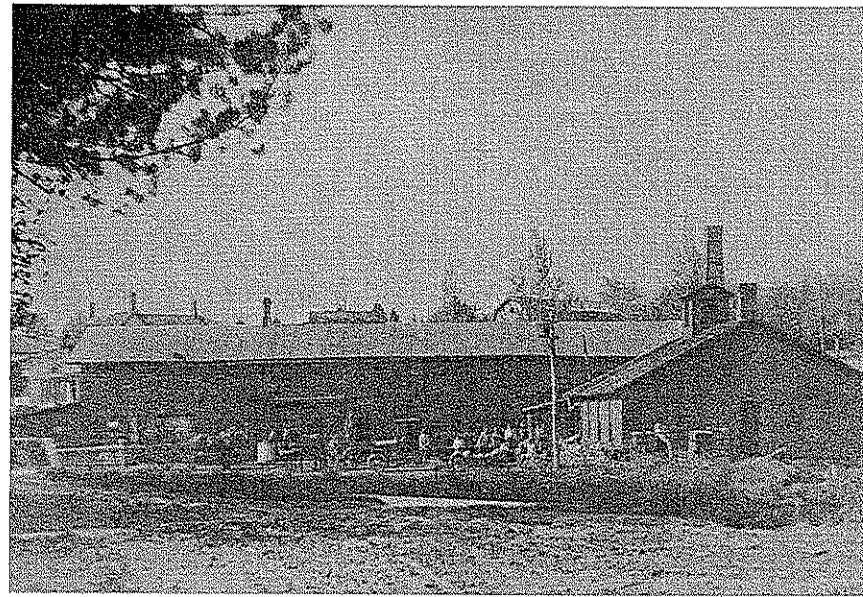
Material was often made from flax, which could be sown and processed locally. The land on the east side of Main Street (51 North Main) where the Town Clerk's office and funeral home are now, was sown to flax for many years. In the fall it would be pulled and threshed for the seed and spread in a clean place to rot. As only the fiber part of the bark was used, the process was necessary to separate the fiber from the woody part. As soon as the outside would crumble, it was taken up and laid away in a dry place until spring. When March came, the small bundles would be broken up fine by beating them against an upright board until all was smooth. A swinging knife with a two-foot long handle was used.

When the flax was fine and smooth, it was ready for the women. Their first business was to hetchel it and pull out all the loose stuff. That was called tow, and what remained in the hand was flax. Hetcheling made it more pliable and fine. The flax was then spun into warp on a small wheel run by foot power, and the tow was spun on a large wheel at which the person would stand and step back and forth, winding it on a spindle while turning the wheel by hand. This formed the filling of the cloth. The work was done for sixpence a run. Twelve runs was considered a week's work, which would make six shillings a week. Mrs. Little, Mrs. Burlingham, and two or three from the Shalor family could weave.

The cloth which was woven from these threads was called tow cloth. Those who wanted something better would color the threads and weave them into stripes or check. The men's everyday wear were tow shirts. The cloth had to be fulled and made up into clothing. Fullled cloth means cleansed cloth, according to a 1826 dictionary. Fullers earth was a kind of marl or clay used in the cleansing, and a fulling mill was one where hammers beat the cloth until it was cleansed.

## THE PLOW WORKS

In 1821 the manufacture of plows had already started in Castile. Harry and Ziba Martin made the first iron plows not far from where later the Castile Chilled Steele Plow Works was located. Before that,



*The Plow Works, one of Castile's major industries from 1821 to the Civil War*

wooden plows were used. Of course wooden plow tips had never been satisfactory, so an iron plow point had to be attached. The iron was melted in kettles using charcoal for fuel. The molten iron was then poured into a mold. The molds were wooden boxes about six feet long and a foot wide. They were half-filled with sand, and a pattern was placed on the sand. Then the mold was filled to the top with sand. After the wooden pattern had made a firm print, it was carefully removed, and the liquid was poured into a hole that was in the far end of the mold. When it was cool you had a plow point or a sleigh shoe, or whatever the pattern called for.

I have seen this done many times when I was four or five years old, for my father had a homemade foundry connected with his wagon shop, and he made his own sleigh shoes and other things.

The plow business was at its height in Castile about 1855. Then larger industries in LeRoy and Syracuse took over, and the small plow works vanished.

## A GRIST MILL IN CASTILE

If you had to make flour by pounding wheat in a hollowed-out tree trunk, as they did in the early 1800's, you would welcome the new grist mill which Elihu Burr started on Wolf Creek in 1818. It was located on Water Street, which had been previously known as Factory Street and now changed to Glen Iris Road, between the Gebauer and James VanArsdale residences. The grist mill was in operation for a hundred years and more. It was owned by George F. Pierce in 1844 and later by Socrates Hopkins, who came to Castile about 1851.

Once an overshot mill wheel turned the cogs, which in turn whirled two pair of mill stones. To avoid freshet disasters, a water turbine was installed in a pit about 30 feet below the first floor. The race led to it through a square shaft. The turbine shaft connected to

bevel gears which meshed with a twelve-foot cog wheel, whose shaft turned the two pair of millstones. These gears were of iron with oak teeth driven into slots in the circumference. Fourteen-inch-square oak beams supported the floors. The flow of water having proved to be unreliable, electricity was run to the mill about 1921, and the turbine was left to rust. Even electricity could not save the mill, which which was torn down in the late 1930's. When our family came to Castile in 1927, I remember watching them grinding and recall how delicious the whole wheat flour was.

#### THE VILLAGE OF CASTILE IN 1821

Up to now the village was known as Wolf Creek. But in 1821 it received a name, a post office, and a chief magistrate. Tradition states that Sally Gilbert Hurd chose the name of Castile for the village because she liked the story of the largest of the Spanish kingdoms, Castile, and the brave, aggressive people who lived there. The Spanish Queen, Isabella, famous for her sponsorship of Columbus in the discovery of America, was married to Ferdinand, of Aargon, a section bordering on Castile. Evidently Mrs. Hurd thought her husband and the other hard-working people who were trying to wrest a home from the wilderness were like the brave people of Castile, Spain. So the village became Castile, with a long "i" instead of Casteel, as it should have been pronounced.

#### ZIBA HURD A FIRST CITIZEN

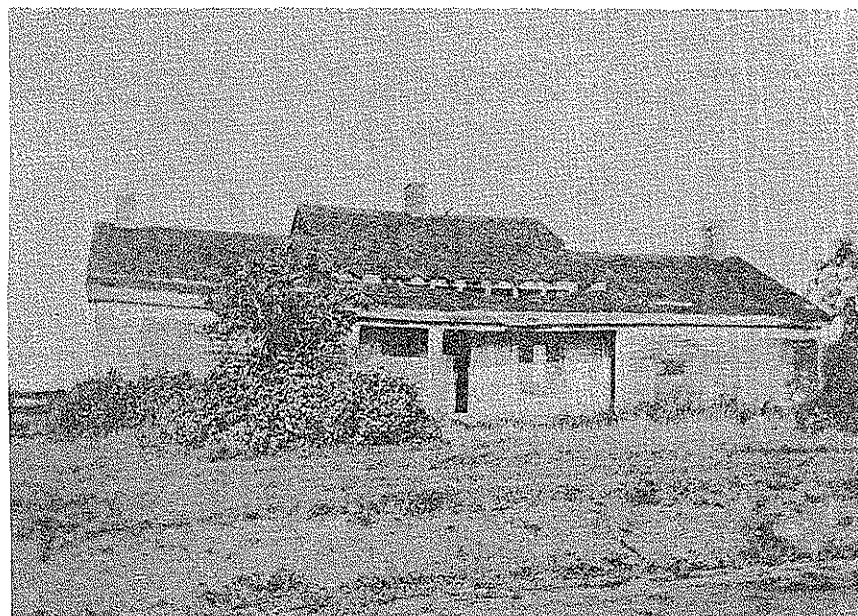
Ziba Hurd became Castile's first postmaster: August 17, 1821 to September 12, 1829. This fact made a difference in many ways. The Wyoming County History says Ziba Hurd was also the first supervisor of the village, and Tilly Gilbert was the first town clerk.

Because of these added responsibilities, Ziba sold his potash plant to Lucas Janes, who also established a tannery in the same location, at 4 South Main Street, where Mrs. Norton lives, the first house south of the four corners.

There was a short-lived whiskey still near the same location, and a second still in the village was run by Gard and Mallory. This, too, didn't last

Ziba had raised four hundred bushels of wheat, which he could sell for twenty-five cents a bushel or six quarts of whiskey. There was no demand for the wheat, but the village was full of lumbermen who wanted whiskey. Even so, Ziba Hurd refused to make whiskey.

He campaigned vigorously for the building of the Erie Canal and his interest was such that he named a street Clinton Street (later to be known as West Park Road). It is hard to understand the opposition to the canal project, but after the War of 1812 it was all but impossible to combat the inaction of the legislature and the prejudice of the people. Objections were many: it was a wild scheme it could never be done: it would bankrupt the State the southern counties would not help pay for what would not benefit them. The project needed a man to put life into it, a man to give time and energy, to argue and to labor, to persuade legislators and farmers, to risk popularity and fortune. It needed a great man and one ready to give his greatness to the success of a life's work. Such a man was DeWitt Clinton. The canal was called Clinton's Big Ditch and Clinton's Folly. Clinton succeeded because men like Ziba Hurd could look into the future and lend him their support.



Whaley Tavern

#### SAD, SAD NEWS

All the Allegany Road was shocked and sad when they heard of the sudden death of Robert Whaley on February 3, 1818. He was only 36, and he and Janet had been here not quite ten years. Eight of those years they had no neighbors nearer than Pike or Leicester. Years of travail, of hard back-breaking toil, discouragement, and painful effort. And now, when at last it seemed as though their dreams were coming true, a heart attack had snuffed out his young life without a moment's warning.

If Janet had followed the easier course, she would have taken her two little boys and gone back to her friends and relatives in Caledonia. No doubt they urged her to do so. But after the first few months of shock and grief, she decided to do what she knew Robert would want her to do—stay and carry on. The fall before, when the Cotringer Tract had been put on the market, he had bought Lot 38. Janet decided to stay until that was paid for. Here at Historical House, we have the deed to that lot when she finally sold it, thirty years later.

There was a little cemetery in Perry, the site of the present library, and there they laid her husband under a common slate stone bearing the following inscription:

ROBERT WHALEY  
died  
February 3, 1818  
aged 36

Prepare my friends to follow me  
As I am now, so must you be;  
For sudden was the stroke of death  
And in an instant, stopped my breath.

That very year Janet started a cemetery on the Allegany Road on land that once was the Jasper Daley farm. Some say twenty or thirty people are buried there, some say more. But there is nothing to show that there were any graves there. Janet herself is buried in Mumford Rural Cemetery, Town of Wheatland. She lived eighty-two years and five months.

#### THE FIRST SCHOOL IN CASTILE VILLAGE

At the four corners where East and West Mill streets cross Main Street, on the right-hand corner of the lot just east of the Grange Hall, stood the first school house in District 1. This was built in 1819 and was called "The Brown School House."

There was a huddle of log houses in the village at this time and two or three frame houses. The first teacher of the brown school house was Elder Reid, and the second teacher was Alonzo B. Rose. George Carey, a great, great grandfather of Caroline Sutherland Gregg of the Middle Reservation Road, was another teacher. Stephen Gifford, Emmeline Townsend, and a Mr. C. Brown were others. In 1834, the Brown School House burned, and a new school was built the next year on the corner of East Mill and Main streets. This school was called "The Red School House."

The Red School House had two rooms with an entry between. But in less than five years, the center of the village seemed to be uptown, where it has since remained. Feeling that a school was needed in the upper part of town, the Red School House was sawed in two and one-half was moved to the top of the hill, about where the old Methodist Church sheds used to stand.

This school was numbered 19, for in those few years, eighteen school districts had sprung up all over the township. The reason for this rapid growth was the fact that eleven thousand acres in the Town of Castile belonging to the famous Indian captive, Mary Jemison, was put on the market in 1823 and 1831.

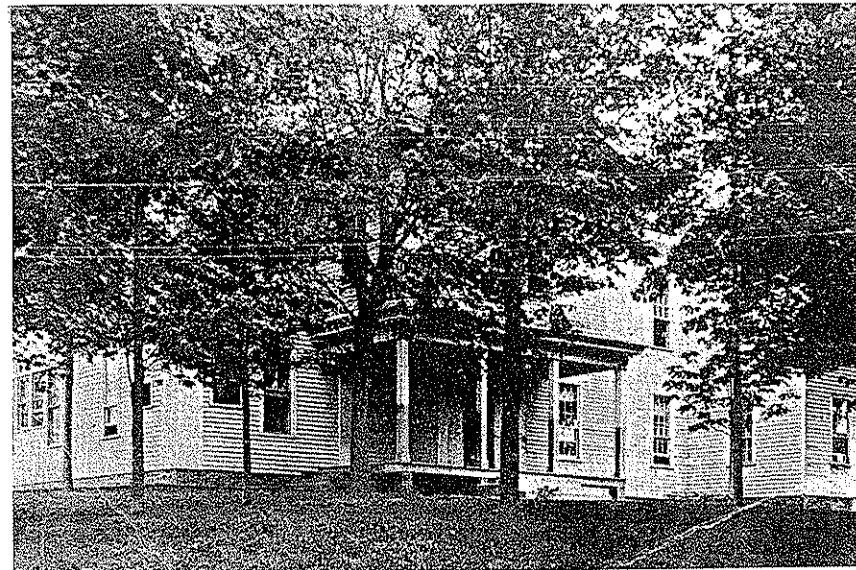
The Red School was still District 1, and each of these village schools had from forty to sixty pupils. Some of the teachers of the Red School were Moses Smith, David Martin, Charles D. Bennett, Mary Hoagland, and Emmeline Noxon. Abial Cook was the last teacher in 1844.

District 19 became so crowded that a site was purchased where the Castile Elementary School now stands on Washington Street, and in 1845 a one-story building was erected. Because it was painted white, it was called the White School House.

For the next eleven years, to the White School House, or District 19, there came a succession of teachers. In 1845, H.P. Dana taught in the summer and A.L. Cook in the winter. In 1846, A.L. Cook taught in the summer and Charles D. Bennett in the winter. In 1847, Mary G. Hoagland taught in the summer and Julius A. Rawson had the winter session. In 1848, it was Julius Rawson and M.S. Ferry. In 1852, Betsey E. Smith and Franklin Doake taught in 1853, Lucy Salisbury and Ira B. Halstead. Out in one of the rural schools, Mrs. Henry J. Fuller taught for \$1.50 a week. In 1854, Louise Howard and W.H. Beagle supplied and Mr. Beagle received \$30 a month. This was the beginning of a raise in salaries. Mr. Beagle's assistant was paid \$1.00 a week. In 1855, Phebe Hill and E.G. Richardson were the teachers and in 1856, Sarah H. Judson and George Quick.



*The old Castile Union School. This school was built in 1857 by William Calkins on the site of the White School House. The first principal was Shipman Griffith. It became a Union school in 1864 and a Regents school October 31, 1873.*



*The 1857 building, which was constructed on simple colonial lines, was in 1887 enlarged by the addition of a wing. An extension and porch were added in 1892.*

That winter, while George Quick was teaching, the White School House burned. Districts 19 and 1 were now united. A new school was built. This was the Castile Union Free Academy, built in 1857. An addition was put on in 1892 which took away the simple colonial look of the building. But room was urgently needed. In 1913 the entire school was torn down and replaced by the brick building which is in use today as the Castile Elementary School.

We relate here two other events which took place in the first quarter of the 1800's.

#### MARY JEMISON TELLS HER STORY

On November 29, 1823, a few people met at the Whaley Tavern on the Olean to Leicester Road, now Route 39, the Allegany Road. Daniel Bannister apparently arranged this meeting. From what little we can learn about him, he was a person who thought about all the things that should be done, then proceeded to do them. It was no easy task to persuade Mary Jemison to spend three days telling her life story. It was also difficult to find a man who could and would write it up, and still more difficult to find a publisher. Daniel Bannister arranged for all of that. And on that eventful day, a best-seller was born that has lasted nearly one-hundred fifty years. It has run through thirty editions, some having two or three printings. And those early editions will cost you plenty, if indeed you can find one.

Dr. James Everett Seaver was the man who was chosen to write Mary's story. But why a doctor? Dr. Seaver received his medical training in Vermont, although he was born in Massachusetts. His family moved to Hebron, New York, where he married Margaret McCall. After his marriage, they moved to Pembroke, where he started his practice. But he had chronic rheumatism (arthritis, perhaps) and was forced to give up his practice. From then on, he did the thing he liked to do—write both prose and poetry. His best-known contribution was "The Life of Mary Jemison." J.D. Bemis of Canandaigua was the head of the firm which published the book. The first copies sold for thirty-eight cents. At the present time, there are fewer than a dozen known copies of the first edition. Wyoming County Historian Harry Douglass has one, and Castile Historical House has another.

#### CASTILE GOES DRY

A second event of this quarter century was the starting of the temperance movement. And it wasn't the women who started it. It was a few far-sighted men.

Whiskey was cheap. Men bought it by the barrel. Even ministers took a glass before they started their sermon. They drank it straight. There were three stills in the village and twelve others between Castile and the mouth of Wolf Creek, as well as six taverns in the village. If there had been a market for the grain the farmers grew, they wouldn't have made it into whiskey. Wheat sold for 25¢ to 31¢ a bushel and corn for about 12¢. Markets were miles away over rough roads that frequently were impassable.

In 1825 the Erie Canal was built. That changed everything. It had been started in 1817 and took eight years to build. Ziba Hurd

was a strong Clinton man, for he could see the value of the canal. Up to now one ton of freight from Buffalo to Albany had cost from ninety to one-hundred twenty-five dollars. Now it would be only \$30, and later as little as \$5. Castile men could take their wheat to York, transfer it to the Genesee River, and put it on the Canal. Now they could get their famous Genesee wheat to market.

So temperance began to take hold. The women helped a great deal, for often they and the children were the ones who suffered most from intemperance. Susan B. Anthony was five years old at this time, and generally speaking, the women weren't generally speaking. They were listening and working in their quiet but effective ways.

#### CASTILE BUILDS ITS FIRST CHURCH

The temperance movement went hand in hand with a strong religious movement, and so in Castile Village, the first church building was started in 1825 and finished in 1827. The building is still standing and is used at the present time as the Grange Hall. There had been a strong Baptist movement, with the congregations meeting in various places. Since 1819 there was an active group of the Christian denomination, and another of Methodists. Ziba Hurd and many of the first settlers were Congregational in their background. These groups were meeting in schoolhouses. You will recall that the first church meeting in the village was on the street between the two Balmas' farms. There is scarcely a trace of this street today, but it was the only route that went directly to Silver Springs at that time.

Because people of that period were not inclined to accept another's religious background, it was hard for them to worship together. Strangely, this first church built in the Village of Castile was neither Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Christian, or Congregational. The meeting was called by Ziba Hurd to see whether they should fix a place in his factory to worship or build a church. They decided on the church. The story is in a book called "A History of the United Community Church", which was published in Castile in 1963. It also covers the story of the various religious movements such as the Millerites and the Second Coming and how they affected places in the Genesee Country like Castile.



## Chapter III

### Castile 1826-1850

In which we see Castile in its adolescence. It's roots have been firmly planted and now, as it grows, it blossoms with cultural activities. A new citizen, Dr. Jabez Greene, will be a climax to the period.

#### POPULATION, THEN AND NOW

The population figure for the Township of Castile in 1970 is 3006. In 1960, it was 2609; in 1804, 2833; and in 1850, 2446. In 1855,

In 1855, the Village of Castile had 682 inhabitants. After that, it usually was just under 1000. But in 1970, it was 1393. There are at the present time many people living in the village who work in Rochester or Buffalo. Others who lived here in their youth have come back to make a place for themselves because they like it. As shopping facilities in nearby towns improve, some local businesses are discontinued. But the residents who continue to live in Castile like it because it is home—a quiet, conservative, friendly community.

Population figures do not interest me as much as they do some. But we put them in because they are thought of in connection with growth. They are, of course, but there are many other factors that influence the change in population figures, as we shall soon see.

#### ZIBA HURD'S LATER YEARS

In January 1841, Sally Gilbert Hurd died, leaving her husband, Ziba Hurd, and five children, two of whom were born in Castile. She was fifty-five years old, and she should have had another twenty years. True, she had lived in the first frame house built in Castile. It did not, however, look the way it does now. The original house at 36 North Main Street was the north side next to the Schroeder Apartments. The very year she died, Ziba married again, this time to Mary Center. Was it because he was so very lonely?

Sarah Snyder, who knew him well, wrote about his kind, benevolent face. She said he was much respected and loved by the people. He showed much interest in all the settlers. Sarah said, also, that Laura, Ziba's daughter, was a friend of her mother and used to come to stay with them when they had to stay alone. She said that Ziba liked people and used to enjoy telling of his many adventures.

In 1841, the year his wife died and the year he married again, he built the upright to his house. He spent a great deal of time and money, and it was beautifully done. But then a curtain falls over his life, and for eleven years we hear absolutely nothing—until April 14, 1854, when he hanged himself in his son-in-law's barn. But why? We can only suspect it may have been ill health. Several other men of that time who were well known did the same thing.

The family was so shocked and hurt by the event that soon there was a general exodus to the West, which in those days meant Wisconsin, or Ohio, or Illinois. Ziba's son, Norman, left Castile the year that his father married the second time and didn't return for twenty years. It was Hannah Hurd that married Ansom Howard. Ansom made hats and had a place on the east side of Main Street, about opposite the Post Office. It was in his barn that they found Ziba. In 1870, the youngest of the Hurd family, Jonathan, also committed suicide by hanging. He was only 46.

#### CASTILE'S SOCIAL LIFE

They had something in those times we don't have now. Perhaps we should. They combined recreation with study! They had singing schools! There is nothing to compare with them at the present time. Some seventy-five years ago, I attended a singing school. I have never forgotten it, for it was the most amazing affair I have ever heard or seen. It was conducted by a man who had lived in the time when they were popular, and he knew exactly how it was done. He had taken a group of musically inclined people and trained them for weeks previous to the event. The Singing School lasted two hours. The first hour was spent in learning how to read music at sight and how to sing in perfect time (not one-eighth of a beat off), and how to keep the pitch exactly right. Tuning forks were used.

The second hour consisted of a concert in which the members participated. Just before this second hour began, there were refreshments and much visiting. The talk was about the next sleigh ride or the next church social. At the end of a three-month's course, there was a grand concert at which were sung oratorios, portions of the Messiah, solos, quartets, duets.

George F. Pierce, who came to Castile in 1834 and had bought the Grist Mill that Elihu Burr had started and had rebuilt, organized this particular Singing School. He also played the clarinet and apparently had received a good musical training course in Brooklyn, Connecticut, where he had lived. Charles Tallman was the best tenor in Western New York. Sarah Wells, Miss Chase, and Miss Lucas often sang.

The Grist Mill and town paper were both called "The Castilian".

#### PRIVATE SCHOOL

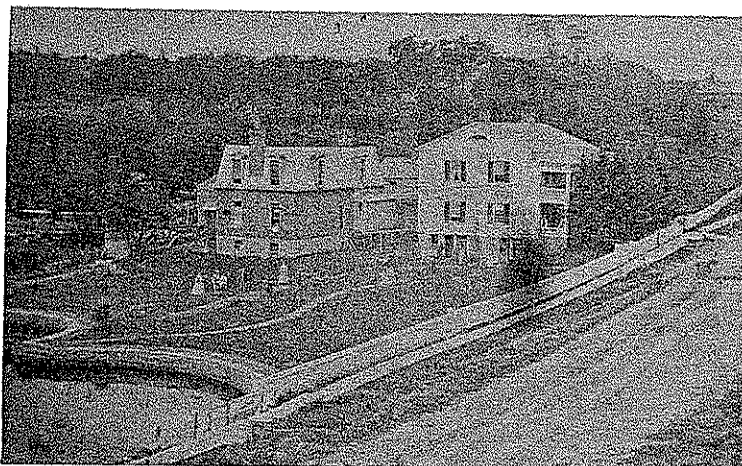
The most famous of these private in Castile was the one run by Davis W. Smith, who was born in Brookline, Vermont. At the age of twenty, he entered a law office in Albany. He was admitted to the bar in two years. In 1838, he came to the "far west", Castile, in Genesee County. Do you remember where the old Castilian Building was? The building where his school was located was removed when the Castilian Building was erected. He was self taught. But he had a brilliant inquiring mind that absorbed everything.

There were many men and women in Castile who had to stop school at the age of fifteen and go to work. Wm. Pryor Letchworth did that. They were hungry for more knowledge. And it was these men and women that Davis W. Smith taught in his school. A few years under his instruction was equivalent to a college education. I have heard that men like Giles Davis, the banker, went in the evening to his classes.

## WATER CURE

In 1849, a man came to town who influenced the course of Castile's history for a hundred years. It was Dr. Jabez Greene, who started the Water Cure. The news was greeted with ribald laughter in all six of the township's taverns. A "Water Cure", by Golly, isn't it enough that you can't get a drink of whiskey, legally that is, anywhere in town. And now we are to have a water cure. And what will they cure with water? Water is something you take a bath in, once in the winter and two or three times in the summer. They say he has bought General Landon's Tavern. Too bad! Everyone liked John D. Landon, who had come from Massachusetts to Castile in 1821.

A writer of his time said of John Landon, "He was intuitively a scholar and a gentlemen." He had rebuilt a building that Sylvester Dreby had started. That part (the wooden part) of the Castile Nursing Home is still there. He had married Eliza Dodge, who soon died. John was only fifty, but he died just five years later.



*Castile Sanitarium building, originally a hotel. Early photo by A.J.White.*

But what did Dr. Jabez Greene expect to use his water cure for? They soon found out. They heard about "warm baths, cold baths, tepid baths, shallow baths, sitting baths, douches, etc." The packing bath consisted of wrapping the patient in wet sheets and, after a time, a rub down. As for the douche, the patient went to a separate building, where water taken from a cold, clear spring was carried to reservoirs on top of the building to be let down upon the patient "with a vengeance equal to that of a fire engine".

Dr. Greene had also installed Indian-rubber balls, grace hoops, and a melodeon. He served good food, but no tea or coffee. The rates were \$5.00 a week for board and treatment, fifty cents for packs and towels per week, assistant's help was extra. The story went that his daughter, Cordelia, was in the first stages of consumption. If his Water Cure was so all-fired good, why didn't he try it on her? He did. Cordelia was his first patient. It took a year of good hard work but she was cured. And so the first half century of the 1800's had come and gone!

## Chapter IV

### Castile 1851 - 1890

In which we chronicle the affect of the flow of extraordinary national events on Castile. Foremost is the Civil War and it's aftermath. Important to Castile is the emergence of the modern woman as epitomized by Dr. Cordelia Greene. Lastly is the record of Castile's reaction to the Philadelphia Centennial and the Chautauqua Movement.

#### THE CRAFT OF WAGON MAKING

There were no lawyers in town. But there were four churches: Baptist, Christian, Methodist, and Presbyterian. In addition, there was an industry in Castile which interested me greatly.

Before 1850, the William H. Conklin Wagon and Carriage Establishment came to Castile. It employed from twenty-five to thirty men. Sarah Snyder, writing at that time, said "they did excellent and beautiful work. The young men who worked for this concern were gentlemanly and were invited to the best places." A Mr. Mabie had a fine tenor voice and helped in the town entertainments. Was it his daughters or sisters that the two Tallman brothers married? Charles and Gileo married Esther Mabie and her sister. And a Mr. Fox was good in theatricals and often helped in that capacity.

But I was interested in the wagons, cutters, and buggies they made. For in my early youth, I spent many happy hours in just that kind of wagon establishment. I know how cutters are made, how the sleigh shoes were made in the foundry, how the medalions were painted on the cutter, how the cushions were made from dark blue broadcloth, fine material designed to last a lifetime. I have seen the eight or ten-inch needles used in sewing the buttons on the cushions. I have seen the spokes fashioned with loving care for the wagons, the rims put on, whole painted a bright beautiful red. I have heard my father say, "There goes a wagon I made thirty years ago. It has stood up pretty well". Pride in a job well and carefully done!

#### CIVIL WAR

And just as everything was going so well, the long dark shadow of the Civil War began to darken the horizon. I have at different times made several lists of Castile men who fought in that war. For years I have taken out one that didn't belong to Castile or put in one that should have been included. I am hoping that the genealogical lists that are being brought in to the Historical House in 1972 will finally settle this question. It seems simple, but the reason for the confusion is that some Castile men enlisted in other towns, and men from other towns enlisted in Castile. Even the lists in the