

PIONEER WOMEN OF DOVER, CUYAHOGA COUNTY.

1799—1850.

All hail! the pioneer women of Dover—those brave, courageous women, who were no less pilgrims than their Puritan mothers. All honor to the sires whose courage gave us so fair a heritage,

"Yet ye were to those hearts of oak
The secret of their might,
Ye nerved the arm that hurled the stroke
In tempest or in fight."

As early as 1799 Joseph Cahoon visited Southern Ohio, writing to his wife, still in the East, in rhyme his impressions of this new country, but not till eleven years later did he make the journey which gave him the distinction of being the first settler of Dover. Upon their departure from Vergennes, Vt., the villagers gathered upon the green, the minister commended them to divine care, and with a covered wagon drawn by four horses with saddle horse behind, the westward course was taken by Joseph Cahoon, his wife, Lydia Kenyon Cahoon, the eldest daughter Mary, the bride of George Sexton, two other daughters and five sons.

It is the same story you have ever been told of the trackless forest, the unbridged streams, the campfire with iron kettle to supply meals, and milk in a jug suspended from the reach where the butter was churned, as the days came and went. It was a fair October morning, the tenth of that golden month, when the wagon halted close to the shore, where a busy little brook coursed through the ravine, to join the lake, with wooded banks on either side. An ideal spot now; how entrancingly beautiful it must have been to tired travelers!

"I pray you, hear my song of a nest,
For it is not long."

And there it was soon bullded, close under the sheltering bank, and stood with open door for many a pilgrim who came later and went still farther west.

Mr. Cahoon was a miller, and his first work was to construct mills, as the

nearest one at that time was in Newburg, sixteen miles away. Mrs. Cahoon was ever spoken of with the greatest tenderness by her children, who admired her gentle ways and dainty personality as much as her accomplished horsemanship and ability as a housewife.

Upon the afternoon of October 10, 1810, Asahel Porter with his wife, Rebecca Johnson, two little daughters, and Mrs. Porter's brother, Leverett, came to settle

HALF A MILE WEST.

The sad story of Mrs. Porter's death four years later cast a shadow over the community that was lasting. While coming from Cleveland the row-boat in which the trip was made overturned at Rocky River. Mrs. Porter and her infant son were drowned. The bodies were recovered, and rest in the Lakeside Cemetery, the first burial place in the town.

The little Catharine Porter, who as a maiden of three years came into Dover upon its natal day, married Ransom Foote, lived a short distance west of her father's farm many useful years, devoted to her family and church, honored by a large acquaintance, and when full of years, her loved form was garlanded by the gentle hands of her great-grandchildren, and laid beside the husband taken from her in his prime. Her daughters are a living testimonial of her worth.

In 1811 James and Barnabas Hall, with their wives, also Martha Hall, wife of Nathan Bassett, came to occupy 2,100 acres of land purchased before leaving Lee, Mass. Mrs. Bassett's daughter, Vesta, was the first white baby born in Dover. Lydia, Mrs. John Porter, was born in 1814, living all her life in Dover, where her daughter, Mrs. Griffin, still resides. Mrs. Bassett's other daughters were Lucy, Harriet, Nancy, and Martha. The latter became Mrs. W. W. Aldrich, a careful, attentive mother of a large family.

Mrs. Hannah Hall, upon returning

September 28, 1812, from a visit to a sick neighbor, found a heap of ruins upon the site of her log house. The Indians, attracted by the pewter dishes, had taken them and subsequently burned the house. Undaunted by this calamity, Mrs. Hall established her kitchen in a hollow sycamore stub, from which she served refreshments at the building of the new house, having fresh white ash chips for plates, using the handleless knives and forks raked from the ruins.

When sickness or sorrow came to a home Mrs. Hall was sure to enter, to relieve, and to assist. She, like most of those noble women, lived more than her three score and ten years.

Of this same family, at a later date, Nancy Hall, wife of David Ingersoll, a descendant of Jonathan Edwards, and worthy of the honor, came to brighten all associated with her. She survived her seven children and her grandchildren, and with a mind clear and interesting went about doing good when eighty years had made her beautiful.

Charles Hall married Lucy Seymour, of Ashtabula, settling near his brother's in 1821. They both have passed away, leaving two sons, Reuben and Ziba, prominent residents of their native town.

In July, 1811, Jonathan and Rachel Taylor Smith, with their eleven children, came from Ashfield, Mass., securing twelve hundred acres of land, settling upon the North Ridge. The nearest grist mill was at Columbia, and one day, when their meal was exhausted, Mr. Smith took grain there to be ground. The children went to bed hungry, and when after dark the father returned, Mrs. Smith prepared corn cakes, putting them before the fire to bake. The hungry children gathered about the hearth and picked off the crust as soon as formed, eating three Johnny cakes in this manner. Mrs. Smith had five daughters. Mrs. George Standen resides in Dover, a member of the family who gave valuable aid to this history.

A similar instance is related of Mrs. Nehemiah Porter, who, when her husband had gone upon a two days' trip on foot to mill, made her half teacupful of corn meal into gruel for the children, simply tying a handkerchief about her waist to appease hunger till his return.

From Lee, Mass., came Jedediah Crocker, with his wife, Sarah Gifford, and their five daughters. He descended from the Crocker family that emigrated to Cape Cod soon after

THE PILGRIMS LANDED.

He entered the Revolutionary service when sixteen years of age, continuing till peace was declared. Mrs. Crocker lived with her son Sylvanus upon the homestead after her widowhood, and passed away when ninety-two years of age.

Miss Betsey Crocker was the first teacher in the first log school house in district II. on the lake shore. Her sister Philena, afterwards Mrs. Wells Porter, assumed the same useful vocation when but fourteen years old. Mrs. Betsey Foote Crocker also had five daughters.

It is related of Mary Crocker Whit-tlessey that upon returning from her bridal trip, seventy years ago, she brought from the East pear seeds from which grew trees producing delicious fruit even to the present time. It must have been a merry gathering of old friends in new homes when a little company of Ashfield, Mass., neighbors established themselves in this new settlement.

Jesse Lilly, with his wife, Hannah Gloyd, made the journey from Ashfield in the spring of 1815, being six weeks on the way. While coming an ox died, so the faithful cow was substituted, and thus the trip was completed. Mrs. Lilly possessed wonderful self-reliance. On one occasion while her husband was away for the night, she heard the wolves howling near, and, fearful lest they pay her humble home a visit, where blankets did duty for doors and windows, she set to work to protect herself and children. She took a chest which had been used as a wagon seat to the unfloored loft, where it just reached from one joist to another. In it she placed her two oldest children, and with her baby on her lap, she sat beside them through the night. Mrs. Lilly had nine daughters and two sons, one of the latter serving in the Mexican and civil wars. Her daughter, Fannie Lilly Beebe, was an extraordinary woman.

Mehitable Vincent, daughter of a Revolutionary soldier, wife of Albinus Lilly, nobly and patiently endured the privations incident to pioneer life. Her husband was a carpenter, and upon preparing to raise a barn frame for Mr. Clark Smith, took a vote as to whether liquor should be used. The vote was a negative one, probably the first vote for temperance in Dover. Not long after this, while crossing a mill dam in a log canoe, Mr. Lilly was drowned, leaving his wife with nine children. She assumed the care of the farm, and took in weaving to help de-

fray the expenses of the family. Other sorrows came to her, but with fortitude and resignation she accepted all.

Mrs. Acsha Beardsley, Mrs. Matilda Hall, Mrs. Rose Dillenbeck, and Mrs. Elizabeth Stocking are worthy daughters who love her memory.

Mary Howes, wife of Luther Lilly, was a direct descendant of Thomas Howes, who landed upon Cape Cod in 1637. Her grandfather and father served in the Revolution. She came from Ashfield, bringing with her those Puritan traits of love for education and religion. She gave a son to the civil war, thus maintaining the heroic characteristics of her ancestors.

Mrs. Bethuel Lilly, daughter of a Revolutionary father, Mrs. Alta Mira Lilly, daughter of Major Toby, of Hawley, Mass., and Roxana Sears, wife of Austin Lilly, came from Ashfield, Mass., all of whom had families, some still being residents of Dover.

In July, 1814, the first marriage occurred in the town. Leverett Johnson first saw the fair Abigail Cahoon as she gathered nuts, when he came into "the forest primeval." A mutual feeling of tenderest affection was experienced, which culminated in the happiest manner. The wedding gown was made from six yards of pink cambric. As no minister was near, Justice Reed, from Black River, came to officiate. Her home ever after was a mile west of Dover Center, where free-hearted hospitality reigned. Her gentleness and kindness made her lovable. Of her five daughters, Abigail, Mrs. C. P. Goss, whose intellectual

ABILITY AND WIT

characterized her, and Paulina, who lovingly cared for her mother, deserve special mention.

Amos Cahoon stopped when on the way from Vermont with Mr. Williams, the famous Newburg miller, soon after married "Polly," the miller's pretty daughter, living many years in a log house east of Cahoon Creek. Their daughter, Martha, married Henry Windsor, and Ruth, who taught in the log school house, and after it burned in her grandfather's mill, was Mrs. Porter Smith. The other three daughters live in Wisconsin.

Joseph and Jane Fisher Stocking, with five children, came from Lee, Mass., settling upon what is known as the Stocking farm, near Dover Center. Their early housekeeping was somewhat primitive and amusing. The dining table was the family chest, around which pumpkins were placed for chairs.

Mrs. Stocking was "Aunt Jenny" to

all her friends. Her quiet life, full of devotion to her family, ended when eighty-three years were completed. Her daughter, Mrs. Sophronia Scranton, lives upon the old place, and delights to tell the stories of those happy days when life was young. The eighty-one years since she came have wrought marvelous changes, and it is a long time in which to gather memory treasures to glorify the sunset days.

Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Marshall Chadwick, and Miss Martha Stocking were Mrs. Scranton's sisters.

Hannah Ingraham Beach married Amos R. Sperry, an early innkeeper, in 1818. She lived to greet her numerous family upon her one hundredth birthday.

In 1822 Mr. Chipman Smith, with his wife, Rebeckah Porter Smith, settled upon the place now occupied by the youngest daughter, Mrs. Henry Johnson, a part of the original house being still occupied. Mr. Smith was a blacksmith, his first shop being a fence corner with a bark roof. Afterwards more commodious quarters were assigned it in the log house where Mrs. Smith used to strike the iron of which shoes were made, point the nails, and blow bellows, her hours extending from 4 a. m. to 9 p. m., as occasion demanded.

Besides, she entertained the customers, to which every meal was served while they waited. Her hospitality was one of her many virtues. She was equally skillful as a dressmaker and tailoress, having made the first suits of boys' clothes worn by L. H. Johnson and Hon. J. M. Cooley. At weddings fifty years ago the guests were regaled with her loaf cake and mince pies. Linen spun and woven by her prior to her marriage is highly prized by her family. Her daughter, Catharine, Mrs. Clark Williams, has contributed largely to the history of the pioneer women, whose worth she fully appreciates. Mrs. James Porter and Mrs. Dr. J. M. Lathrop are also daughters of Mrs. Smith.

A worthy, faithful, energetic Christian woman of early days was Elizabeth Tryon, who came from New York soon after her marriage to William Sadler, a soldier in the war of 1812. When the Lake Shore Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1827 she contributed largely, giving the lot and much of the building material, being one of the five charter members. The others were Rev. Eliphalet Johnson, his gifted wife, Margaret, their daughter, Rebecca, and niece, Catharine Porter Foote.

All her life long Mrs. Sadler cherished the church she helped to build,

the membership of which revere her memory. Mrs. Ann Eliza Lilly Sadler, her son's wife, is an enthusiastic worker in the same church.

Sarah Johnson, wife of Deacon Reuben Osborn, extended a beneficial influence to all about her. Her only son, Selden, married Nancy Rupie, a member of one of Euclid's old families. Upon the original farm of Deacon Osborn is a colony of his descendants to the third and fourth generation. The hospitable homestead is still inviting and attractive.

Mrs. Joseph (Graves) Porter's family was numerous and useful. Her son, Leonard G. Porter, so long interested in every good work, left as a legacy to Dover, and as a memorial to his family name, the Porter Library.

Mrs. Ebenezer Porter had two daughters, Mrs. John Wilson and Mrs. Josiah Hurst, who were delightful ladies. Mrs. Hurst was a graduate from Oberlin College at an early day. Her culture and dignity, combined with her charming kindness, made her a power among her associates.

Mrs. Sylvanus Phinney and her daughter Lucy, Mrs. Edwin Phinney, Mrs. Calvin (Martin) Phinney and her beautiful daughter, Angeannette Osborn, had each her own place in the building of the present.

Upon Coe Ridge, in the south part of Dover, with part of his father's first frame house built within his own, lives Andrew Coe, who married Mercy Bancroft. He is son of Judge Asher Coe, who settled upon 900 acres of land in 1823. They came from Middlefield, Conn. Mrs. Coe was a quiet woman, even tempered.

WITH STRONG CONVICTIONS

ardently adhered to. Her daughter Sina was Mrs. N. H. Austin, while Miss Lucetta is still an honored resident at the homestead.

Matilda Owen, wife of Esquire Eli Clemens, came from Rhode Island in 1830. Her eldest daughter, Caroline, married Dennis Johnson, and Mary became Mrs. Jared B. Lane. She was a successful teacher in Cleveland for many years. Enjoying the advantages of extensive home and foreign travel and having many personal attractions, she was a delight to her many friends.

Mrs. Joseph Brown (nee, Mary Winsor), from Smithfield, R. I., was a descendant of Lord Edward Winsor, also of Roger Williams. Her home was a charming location by the lake, where a long, useful life was passed. Her daughters who came with her were Lucina, Nancy, Mary, Rachel, and Elizabeth. Of these Mary, Mrs. John

Clemens, is the oldest one living. She is an honored matron, alive to the active present, still linking it to the past, the mother of cultured daughters.

Mrs. Aaron Aldrich was a sister of Mrs. Brown, living where the beautiful Erie spread a fair scene before her. She was mother of a large family. Julia Aldrich was a teacher in Dover, and married Rev. James Goodrich, of the Baptist Church.

Mrs. Henry Aldrich, daughter of Mrs. Louisa Foote Stevens, resides at the homestead. The name of Aldrich is a familiar one in Dover.

Another family prominent in the Baptist Church was that of Deacon Jesse Atwell, who lived on the North Ridge. One of his daughters taught in a school-house used for service upon the Sabbath. It was so tidy and attractive to the young preacher that he made Miss Atwell his wife. Through her efforts largely, he fitted himself for better work, and when fame came to him, she acquired the title of Mrs. Bishop William L. Harris.

Lydia Smith Cooley, with her husband and five children, from Hawley, Mass., became residents of Dover in 1818. Her three daughters were Lydia, Rosamond, and Esther, the latter marrying Dr. J. M. Lathrop. Miss Rosamond lived a beautiful life in her father's home, being one of the sweet singers of Dover.

Mrs. Clark Smith was "Aunt Huldah" to two generations, and her work on earth was so worthy that her years were many, and her memory precious.

Mrs. Abraham Ward is one of the elderly matrons of to-day, while her husband's mother was active in the past.

Catharine, daughter of Rev. Mr. Keys, became Mrs. Dr. Marius Moore. She was a lady of fine presence, and lived at Dover Center, where her friends were legion.

After a journey of ten weeks from the Isle of Man, Mrs. Margaret Clague and daughter Ruth walked from Cleveland, in 1837, to the farm now occupied by her children, which was ever afterward her happy home.

Mrs. Melinda Oviatt was an intellectual lady. Her daughters, Louisa, Mary, Caroline, and Laura, were all teachers. Her son, Luther M. Oviatt, was superintendent of Cleveland schools, afterward librarian of the Public Library.

Mrs. Benjamin Reed, later Mrs. Colonel B. Mastick, was an excellent mother, very successful in the management of business, greatly respected throughout a useful life. Mrs. L. H. Johnson is her eldest daughter.

In 1818 Joseph Cahoon built a frame house upon the hill west of his log cabin, which, remodeled, still stands. To this home, in 1842, his son, Joel P. Cahoon, brought his wife, Margaret Dickson Van Allen, and their six children. The journey from Cincinnati was made with a two-seated top carriage, the first in Dover. Mrs. Cahoon was a native of Washington, D. C., being four years old when the British invaded that city, burned the Capitol, and took her father prisoner. She had seen Dolly Madison as mistress of the White House and clasped the hand of Lafayette when he was the nation's guest, in 1824. She conformed herself to the mode of life so different from all she had enjoyed, giving all her energy to improve in education and culture her new home. Patriotism, devotion to religion, hospitality, and cheerfulness were a part of her life. She originated the Cahoon pioneer celebration, which commemorates the anniversary days since Dover passed its fiftieth milestone. The gentle Lydia, to whose place she succeeded, was

fondly cherished, and when her eighty-four beautiful years had passed she left as mistress of the sacred home the first daughter born to her within its walls.

The number of excellent women who once lived in Dover is so great that it is with reluctance we stay the pen. If any look in vain for a cherished name among this group of Dover's jewels let it be remembered this is but a page in the volume which should be written, and that the many unite to make the beautiful whole.

My greeting to the living is one of cheer, of congratulation upon the rich inheritance which is ours, for

"We need not go abroad for stones
To build our monumental glory."

IDA M. CAHOON,

Chairman and Historian.

Dover committee—Miss Martha W. Cahoon, Miss Catharine P. Foote, Mrs. Catharine Smith Williams, Mrs. Harriet Porter Griffin, Miss Florence Coe, Mrs. Clara Hall Cooley.

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