

this section. These wagons contained all sorts of supplies that were sold to the farmers for cash or traded for eggs, chickens, turkeys, feathers, butter, and even bacon. In fact these peddlers would take anything that they could dispose of in the Eastern markets, in exchange for their goods. The pack peddlers also followed the country roads and were merchants in their small way. In the early history of the settlements of this section the pack peddlers were mostly Irishmen or Scotchmen. The tramp artisan was also a means of transportation, but he only carried small supplies with which repairs of tinware, etc., were made. Pack-horses and donkeys were not infrequently seen on the highway.”

GEORGE S. COTTMAN.

EARLY WAGON TRANSPORTATION.

[From an interview with William McFarland, of Indianapolis, who, during the thirties, hauled merchandise from the Ohio river markets.]

THE old-time teamsters were proud of their calling and of their teams, and by way of expressing their pride, frequently put bows over the hames hung with small bells, and with a number of these bows, aggregating perhaps a score and a half of bells to a team, they lumbered through the mud to a perpetual *melange* of melody. In addition they sometimes put over the hames broad housings or shoulder protectors of bear-skin dressed with the hair on, and a horse thus equipped was as vain as a rustic dandy. It was an unwritten law of the road that if a man stalled, and another teamster could haul him out with the same number of horses, the latter was entitled to the bells and housings of the weaker team. The driver never occupied a seat on the wagon, but always rode the “near” horse, and armed with a long “blacksnake” whip, tipped with a silken lash that cracked viciously, managed the pulling power of his team with a skill that approached a fine art.

Bad roads were the bane of those days, and the varying condition of these had much to do with the size of the load that

could be hauled and the time occupied in the trip. Under favorable conditions ten days to and from Madison or Lawrenceburg, and twelve days for the Cincinnati trip were counted on; but sometimes it took almost twice that long, and in the latter cases the profits of the business were meager. The tariff was about \$2.00 to \$2.50 a hundred weight, and with fair roads thirty hundred weight could be hauled with four horses.

Tavern keeping in those days was an important business, and houses of entertainment were strung all along the roads. Like the hostleries of to-day, some of them were good and some not so good, and the sagacious teamster on a thoroughfare not familiar to him, began looking out about stopping time, for two signs—a wagon-yard liberally littered with hay and a fat house dog. The former would indicate that the place was well patronized by wagoners, and the inference from the latter was that where there were plenty of scraps for the dog there would also be plenty of food for the guests.

These taverns were provided with large yards for wagons and swine, and within the house guests could be accommodated variously. The upstairs, perhaps, would be partitioned off into small bedrooms, where the fastidious guests could have privacy by paying for it, but a large general room on the ground floor, where the less particular traveler could stretch out on the floor, wrapped in his blanket, usually served the teamsters. In this apartment, perhaps, would be a miniature barroom, consisting of a deep closet with liquor on its shelves. Another feature, also, would be the saddle closet somewhere about the room where the riding paraphernalia was safely kept.

This mode of transportation continued and grew until the '50's, when the introduction and rapid development of railroads caused a swift decadence and the big-topped "Conestoga" and the jangling bells passed into history.

G. S. C.