

Building A Pioneer Home¹

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When a boy of sixteen, my grandfather came with his parents to the territory of Indiana. He lived seventy years on the farm his father hewed from the wilderness, until I was sixteen years old. He had one older brother and eight younger brothers and sisters. Besides my grandfather, I remember three of these; and of them, the oldest sister was buried at the same time as he, while the youngest of his brothers was buried on my twenty-first birthday. Many others of the first settlers in our neighborhood lived there until I was nearly grown. All of them were willing to reminisce of their childhood and youth—often more willing to talk than we children were to listen. So my lack of greater and more accurate knowledge of what the early settlers did and how they lived is chiefly due to the inattention and faulty memory of a boy.

Before there were any permanent settlements in southeastern Indiana, the settlement of Ohio and Kentucky had been slowly advancing westward for a number of years as a result of constant encroachments on the hunting grounds of the Indians, followed by their acts of retaliation and then by battles with the western militia which drove the Red Men still further back. After the Battle of the Fallen Timbers, General Anthony Wayne compelled the defeated chieftains to sign a treaty at Greenville, Ohio, in 1795, which opened to white settlers the territory of southwestern Ohio and a triangular strip in what is now Indiana. This triangle embraced all the land between the Ohio-Indiana state line and a line which forms the western boundary of Dearborn and Ohio counties and which extends from opposite the Kentucky River northeastward to the Ohio boundary. The triangle included the sites of Vevay, Moores Hill, Brookville, Liberty, Richmond, Lawrenceburg, Aurora, and Rising Sun.

After that battle but before the treaty, while the tribes were still claiming everything west of the Great Miami River under a previous treaty, two men, who had crossed the river to shoot wild hogs on the western side and had camped there

¹ Readers will be interested in a previous article by Judge Ewbank, "A Real Pioneer," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXVIII (June, 1942), 143-64.—Ed.

for the night, were murdered, presumably by Indians. It should be said to the Red Men's credit, however, that they did not violate treaties once they entered into them. While trading parties were constantly crossing this ceded strip for many years, going to and returning from Cincinnati where they sold their furs and purchased supplies, nobody feared or even thought very much about the Indians after Wayne's treaty was made. Sons of the settlers would play with the Indian boys at ball, running, wrestling, or shooting at a mark with no more quarrelling and less ill will than often attended contests between white boys from rival neighborhoods.

So when my ancestors reached Lawrenceburg and learned that earlier arrivals already had taken up the public lands for half a dozen miles back into the wilderness along the small stream that empties into the Ohio River there from the northwest, they did not hesitate to go a mile beyond the last settler to locate their claim. At first hilltops were purchased only as parts of farms that extended from the valleys where the supply of water was less uncertain before wells and cisterns were dug, and not all of the hilltops were appropriated that far back.

Although these settlers had gone deepest into the woods in that direction, they were only a mile beyond a neighbor who had come in as a hunter and trapper half a dozen years before. When the land was opened for settlement, he had entered his half section of 320 acres on which his cabin stood and had stayed to clear ground, list himself as a future purchaser, and to plant crops.

Another mile down the creek was Cambridge, a settlement of New Englanders who had come four or five years before to take up land on a government warrant for service in the Revolution. They had acquired a tract which extended across the valley and out on the hills at either side and embraced what was regarded as the head of navigation on the creek. This was the point to which the water of the Ohio River, backing into the creek in times of flood, would make it deep enough for flatboats, keelboats, and light bateaus loaded there to be floated to the river. This put the settlers in close touch with civilization, as typified by small clusters of log huts at Lawrenceburg, where the inhabitants were beginning to specialize a little in the work that each should do. This New England settlement built an academy and was called

Cambridge until high waters backing in from the river floods made it a ghost town. Here they had built a mill, a blacksmith shop, and a wagon-making shop. They had brought in a small colony of workmen which included tanners, shoemakers, and weavers. By force of necessity, all of these lived partly by hunting and fishing; and each had his own garden and patches of corn, wheat, and oats cultivated among the stumps and fire-scorched tree trunks in the creek bottoms.

It was late autumn in the year 1811 when my ancestors reached their new home. They had scarcely arrived when the Battle of Tippecanoe was fought 150 miles to the northwest. The Massacre of Pigeon's Roost, which occurred approximately seventy-five miles southwest, and the War of 1812 soon followed. No doubt these poor strangers, who had but recently left the quiet countryside of Yorkshire and until a few weeks previous had been since living among the farms and towns of New York and New Jersey that then had been settled more than two hundred years, wished themselves back where they came from. But Tippecanoe and Pigeon's Roost were far away through trackless woods, and there did not exist any quicker means of coming from either place than on foot or horseback. One could only thread through the dense forest with its tangled undergrowth, or follow the windings of some path made by wild animals, such as buffalo, elk, and deer, in their migrations, or plod along the rocky bed of a crooked stream. These paths, widened by the ax of an occasional hunter, supplemented the creek bed as a substitute for roads. Carts made with the wheels of wagons in which the family had crossed the mountains could pick their way up and down the creek to a nearby settlement with light loads.

The Indians having been defeated and chased away toward Canada and the militia already patrolling the back country, the most immediate dangers were the rigors of approaching winter and the lack of any place to plant grain or vegetables when winter should be past. Temporary shelter was found in an abandoned cabin, such as squatters intent only on hunting and trapping had built here and there along the streams and near the springs. Until wells or cisterns should be provided, settlers, squatters, and travellers alike must depend for water on the surface supply; so all the first homes were built close to streams or by flowing springs. The accommodations which this cabin afforded were supplemented

by temporary shelters of poles and rails roofed with wild grass, in front of which fires in the open air consumed great heaps of logs. If the cold became very severe, all could crowd into the one room and half-floored loft of the cabin.

Besides this one log cabin in reasonable repair, there were the tumbled remains of two more that once had stood on the creek bank within the mile-long tract which the settlers were purchasing. Each squatter who had built a cabin had killed the large trees, cut down the smaller ones, and dug out the bushes from a small patch of ground in which to plant corn and vegetables while he lived there. During that first winter, at intervals between hunting and fishing for food, the men and boys of this family worked long and hard at reopening and enlarging these small clearings in preparation for spring planting. Putting in crops without plows, harrows, or planters where the stumps, large and small, almost covered the ground was no light task. Wherever the sun could shine through an opening in the trees on a few square feet of soil, holes for planting seeds were dug among the roots and stumps with a hoe.

By utilizing old clearings and working long hours every day to enlarge them, preparation was made before spring was far advanced for planting a few small patches around which the indispensable fences were constructed to keep out foraging animals, wild and tame. Fences, instead of being purchased at a lumberyard in the form of sawed posts and rolls of wire with bags of staples, were made in one of three ways. Posts could be split with axes and wedges from the logs of trees that had been chopped down, cut into rail lengths after the limbs and brush were removed, split to fence rail size, and then carried, dragged, or hauled to where they were to be used. Or a sort of fence might be constructed by chopping into the sides of a succession of small trees along the line of the intended fence so that each would fall upon and partly against the one before it; and then from the tops of this succession of felled trees and other brush, a barrier was woven that few animals would push through, especially if faced with brush from thorn trees. Or fences could be built of the native stone, as were thousands of yards of fence on this farm, by picking up stones from the hillsides, moving them to where the fence was wanted, and then building them

without mortar into a wall about five feet high and almost two feet thick.

Observing family worship morning and evening when they gathered for breakfast and supper, with grace before and after each meal, was as much a part of the daily routine as tramping the woods with dog and gun to supply meat, setting lines to catch fish, clearing the ground of trees and brush for planting crops, turning the spinning wheel to make thread, or working the loom to weave cloth. Everyone was expected to be diligent in all these matters from daylight until dark except the very small children, who might be indulged in morning naps. Some of the neighbors had come from farther south and had an expression for this as working "from kin to kaint," that is, working from the time they "kin" see until, because of the gathering darkness, they "kaint" see.

After food, their most urgent need was for shelter. All were resolved not to pass another winter without better quarters than a squatter's cabin and open-faced lean-tos. A site for their intended home had been selected farther down the creek on the east bank. This was near the center of the square mile of forest they were purchasing about one-half mile south of the squatter's cabin, and the rocky bed of the creek made a pathway through the dense growth of trees and underbrush from one to the other.

As soon as their few patches of corn and vegetables had been planted, the father and four older boys, aged fourteen to nineteen years, with only axes for tools, began preparations for building a house. Timber grew so thick that trees with straight trunks of nearly equal size, eighteen or twenty feet long, were readily found and felled. The logs trimmed of branches were dragged and rolled to the chosen site of the home close to a spring flowing into the creek. Not many weeks passed until great piles of logs stacked at the four sides of a rectangle cleared of brush and stumps showed preparations for a raising. This term, applied to the process of piling up logs as the walls of a house or barn, designated a supreme effort of all the men for miles around to help their neighbor on the great day and a gathering of their wives and daughters to prepare and serve a bounteous dinner of whatever food the wilderness afforded and perhaps to sandwich in some quilting. But it also meant gaiety and merry-making after the logs walls were up and the dinner eaten.

The most distinguished persons at a raising were the corner men. One at each of the four corners of the building, they were responsible for the strength and solidity as well as the symmetry of the structure. With no tool but an ax, no measure but his eye, no plummet but a stone or chip hung by a string or piece of bark, and no scaffold but a pole laid across the corner which he was to supervise, each corner man, moving higher as the building was erected, cut a notch on one side of each log for a "saddle" to rest on the log below and shaped a "seat" exactly to fit it on the upper side of that log. His work as to form, distance from the end of the log, and depth of cut must exactly correspond with the work of the other three corner men; and each log must be set exactly above the one below so that the dozen or more logs on each of the four sides would rise to the same height and the ends would meet in four symmetrical corners, all perpendicular and each at a perfect right angle.

Each log was lifted by a group of men to the height of their shoulders when pike poles tipped with pointed bits of iron were set under it, with which many men lifted it to the top of the log wall already erected, for delivery to the corner men. Two of them, each standing on his improvised scaffold, would receive it from the pike poles, determine how it would best fit at his corner, roll it over and, with his ax, cut a notch for a saddle and trim the log below into shape for the seat. Together they would roll the log into place as part of the wooden wall, straighten each corner with an improvised plumb bob, and receive another log pushed up by the men on the ground. The corner man's reputation and future employment in this capacity depended on his work's resulting in a perfect corner, as tested by the practiced eye of his fellows and by the plummet and measurements, all of which tests would be applied immediately after the walls were up.

Smaller logs, each shorter than the one below, were put across each end where the roof was to begin, as supports for the roof and as end walls for the loft. They carried the building up from the eaves to the gable where a ridgepole was fastened. Having achieved a triumph as architects without measurements or drawings of either plan or detail, and builders without tools, the corner men were expected to climax the entertainment by standing on their heads on the ridgepole.

A call to dinner followed the ridgepole performance. This was long before total abstinence had been thought of in England or backwoods America. It was half a century before any serious attempt was made in America to tax the manufacture and sale of spirits except for the shortlived undertaking to collect an excise tax in the Atlantic states, which provoked the Whisky Rebellion. Whisky and brandy could be and were made at little stills in every neighborhood and were sold for a few cents a gallon or the equivalent in trade. Even the most rigid moralists then insisted that drinking should stop just short of drunkenness. Thomas Jefferson was urging the manufacture and sale of beer as a temperance measure to combat the excessive use of alcohol. But the whisky jug must circulate at a raising or many of the neighbors would go home.

The practice of beginning the work before sunrise and getting the logs in place before noon was in some degree a safety measure, for the more often the bottle had been passed, the less certain were the drinkers' movements in lifting logs above their heads on pike poles; and accidents, even fatal ones, which were blamed on strong drink were not unknown. As tea and coffee could not be obtained and whisky was plentiful and cheap, a toddy—or homebrewed beer among the more sedate—was often drunk at the dinner table; and few families were without a jug of whisky, whether used sparingly or freely. The long contest to stop the use of whisky at raisings, in the harvest field, and other places where working for each other was combined with feasting and merrymaking began in that neighborhood soon afterward and raged with much acrimony until the Civil War. At this time, however, neither liquor nor slavery had become the controversial questions they were later.

The new settlers did not lack food, although they had arrived so recently on Tanners Creek that they had not produced or harvested any crops. The lack of markets or stores within many miles, of roads except bridle trails along the creek beds or footpaths worn by animals, of means of travel except by foot or horseback, of money with which to buy, or of anything for sale if one had money did not prevent their having an abundance.

The unbroken forest, though sometimes an implacable enemy, was to them a generous friend. Herds of deer and

occasionally a few elk, many bears, myriads of squirrels and other small game, and even wild hogs which had strayed from older settlements and wandered in the woods for many porcine generations insured abundance. Fish were even more numerous. Sweet acorns which they called chinquapins, nuts and roots, wild plums and berries, and many kinds of wild plants provided a substitute for bread, fruit, and vegetables. Cows, which the settlers had brought with them or purchased from earlier inhabitants, pastured in the unfenced woods. Neighbors who had come only a short time before had plenty of maple syrup, smaller quantities of maple sugar, and a little cornmeal that they were willing to divide. So there were provisions of a kind in plenty. When seasoned by the hunger that followed honest toil in the open air, the dinner produced by the wives and daughters of all the assembled party was a feast indeed.

Salt was sadly lacking. Most of the little they had was found at the bottom of a kettle after it had been kept boiling many hours with water from some little salt spring or salt lick such as the wild animals frequented. After boiling away a kettleful of the water, a few grains of salt were nearly all their meager supply. Some salt could be purchased at prohibitive prices in Cincinnati, having been carried by pack horses across the mountains or perhaps brought up the river from Shawnee town, beyond the mouth of the Wabash, on a keelboat. These boats came upstream by the slow process of carrying a rope up the river and tying it to a tree, turning by hand a windlass on the boat until it was drawn up to that tree, when the rope would be unwound and carried forward to repeat the process more than a dozen times in a mile.

Such luxuries as salt fish and New Orleans molasses were also lacking. Tea, coffee, and chocolate were unknown; but infusions of roots, herbs, and grains, like drinks made of sassafras roots, the buds and leaves of spicewood, or of roasted barley, supplied their place.

Canning food as we know it had not been discovered; and even if it had been, it would have been impossible to manufacture or bring to this wilderness tin cans, glass jars, or even stone jugs which came into use a hundred years ago.

The only respite a backwoods settler had from his diet of unsalted or poorly salted fresh game or fish, maple syrup, cornmeal, and substitutes for grains he had known in his

European or Atlantic Coast home was to float a flatboat down the creek and down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers more than a thousand miles to New Orleans. Many floated timber in the form of staves and hoop poles to make barrels for West India sugar and hogsheads for tobacco, and took along the corn, hogs, pickled pork, and other farm products of their own and of their neighbors. To avoid spending most of their gains for a return passage, they often walked back home. My paternal grandfather, having found the market at New Orleans unsatisfactory, once crossed to Havana and sold his cargo, returned to Florida, and walked home from there through what was then a trackless forest for most of the way. He carried the proceeds of his sale in gold coin sewed into a belt around his waist and, being so completely off the beaten track, felt little fear that he would be suspected of having enough money to pay for robbing him.

As an alternative to floating with the river current to the Gulf of Mexico, perhaps one might walk to the Atlantic Coast nearly as far away in another direction. Men from Tanners Creek did walk to the coast and back; one of my great-grandfathers did. There was no relief from hitchhiking, for most of one's fellow travelers were also afoot or were driving oxen that drew heavy loads at a pace much slower than one could walk. A horse might be ridden, but a horse must be fed; and feed was scarce and expensive when there was no money for any use but buying land from the government and far too little for that use. Even if enough furs, then almost the only medium of exchange, were taken along to pay the way of a traveler and two horses, the second horse with a packsaddle to carry the furs was almost essential.

But I have wandered far from the raising of this new house. Some raisings were followed by dancing. Some people would bring horses to such a gathering and, betting on the favorite, would race them through any opening in the woods that was sufficiently clear of underbrush. This, however, never occurred on section seventeen in the valley of Tanners Creek. There the festivities which followed a hearty dinner after the logs were in place began with singing a hymn and offering an extemporaneous prayer.

The older folks, however, soon had their devotions to themselves. Athletic sports, foot races, jumping, tree climbing or shinning up, throwing the bar, and kindred sports at-

tracted the crowd, where all might look on even if few could excel. Real athletes were among them, though their colleges were only the primeval forest with the homely teachings of frontier parents. An eighty-year-old man who had been one of these youths boasted that, when half grown, with a running start he could clear a bar held higher than his head.

We may be inclined to suspect that dining alfresco, singing hymns, engaging in athletic sports, and watching from the side lines were not all that entertained the young people at a raising or similar gathering. Possibly they found time to discuss other subjects that still hold the attention of boys and girls. At any rate, in a few years all the four daughters and five of the sons were married and living in homes of their own, built in like manner of the logs cut from their new farms in the deep woods. The other son had been killed by a falling tree. These nine who married presented their parents with a total of ninety grandchildren, nor was this an unusual family in those early days.

The logs being in place, dinner eaten, and a little time given to play, the guests started for home with the approach of sundown. The nearest neighbor lived a mile away, and most of them much farther. Everybody—men, women, and children—had come on foot except some ill and infirm person who might have been indulged with a horse. To thread their way along an unmarked trail through an unbroken forest, the man and his wife, with perhaps a baby in arms and other children not much larger, needed daylight. Panthers and other wild animals were said to be more dangerous after dark, and in any case it is much easier to get lost in the woods when it is dark than when the sun is shining. So the lengthening shadows were accepted by the guests as a warning to start for home.

After the raising was completed, many days of hard work were required of the family to complete the home. Floors of puncheons, or thick slabs split like rough boards from huge logs, were to be provided both below and in the loft. An outside chimney had to be built at each end with fireplaces which would burn cordwood four feet long, the standard length. The logs of the outside walls must be cut for an opening large enough to allow each fireplace to open at full width into the room. Doors and windows must also

be cut and the severed ends of the logs secured to hold the wooden walls in place.

All this cutting was done with axes, for axmen of that day could cut a surface almost as smooth and straight across a log as if it had been sawed—and the settlers had no saws. Before long the nearby mill had saws and saw pits where two men, one standing on a platform and the other in a pit below, would pull a saw up and down to cut boards from which shutters, doors, and benches were fashioned. The blacksmiths brought wrought iron down the river from Pennsylvania, which, by hammering and working, was made so ductile that the smith could on his anvil pound out a nail of any desired length and with a head the size of a thumb nail. Such a nail might be driven through three inches of wood and clinched on the other side by bending it over and hammering it down. This way of making nails was so slow and laborious that a mere handful represented the value of an acre of wild land.

This family had the rare good fortune to own an auger as well as axes, so they could bore holes and drive pins to fasten braces in place. By this means they not only secured the sawed ends of the logs at all of the openings, but they even contrived wooden hinges for their doors and shutters. These shutters and doors were made of puncheons as wide as the opening to be closed, for in that primitive forest there were plenty of trees four or five feet across the stump. These slabs swung on improvised hinges and were fastened shut at night by a wooden bar laid across behind.

As the settlers prospered, however, they obtained doors of sawed planks fastened together with nails. One of these doors used in the outside kitchen and dining room built near the log structure is yet in use as a kitchen door of the stone house which succeeded the log cabin. At first there was no glass in the windows, and the choice was between shutters which, when closed, kept out all the daylight and air as well as the cold, or an oiled cloth or paper which let in some cold and little light, or the unchecked weather that might blow in with the shutters open. Window casings and sashes were supplied later by local carpenters. Glass windows for the home and those yet in use in the chapel were constructed with a few very small window panes which were floated down

the river from Pittsburgh, then already fifty years old and beginning to be a manufacturing center.

The open woodfire furnished almost the only light they had after the short autumn twilight; for this was many years before the source of kerosene was discovered in the Ohio Valley, and the market for whale oil was a thousand miles away. Until they produced their own tallow, they could not enjoy even the luxury of dim light from a tallow dip made by repeatedly dipping a wick into melted grease.

Putting on the roof was not a light task. Piles of clapboards or shakes split and rived from oak logs, three or four feet long, six or eight inches wide, and approximately one-half inch in thickness, were prepared as well as long poles split down the middle in order to have one side flat. These shakes were laid on like shingles. As each row was in place, they were fastened down with the flattened weight poles laid lengthwise of the building and tied down at each end with green bark to hold on the roof.

Another task to be done was chinking the spaces between the logs, for there were always spaces left between even the smoothest logs. Since no lath or plaster was available to close these cracks, it had to be done by driving in wedges of wood or stone and then applying paster or mud in trying, never with complete success, to make the chinking airtight. When the work must be done hastily, as in the case of this family getting ready for a winter of which the early frosts were already beginning to chill the air, the chinking must be of wood with clay mud until spring.

But closing the cracks between the logs did not complete the work. After getting the walls up, the roof on, the doors and windows hung, and the cracks chinked, the tasks of the family in completing its new home had only just begun. Four rooms, substantially eighteen by twenty feet, were to be furnished in addition to the outside kitchen. The one room of a trapper's cabin in which they camped while preparing to build their own house was only poorly furnished by the small stock of household goods which they had dragged five hundred miles across the country, floated another five hundred down the river, and had brought into the wilderness beyond where beaten footpaths extended.

Dining room furniture was the most pressing additional need. The dining room was capable of many uses. When

neither the outside kitchen nor the great outdoors was used for that purpose, it was the living room as well as kitchen. Three times a day the appetites of ten growing children must be satisfied. The children and many visitors sometimes tested the capacity of even a room of this size; for hospitality was not only a cardinal virtue, but an absolute necessity in a new country without places of public entertainment, where settlers were constantly arriving either to purchase the wild lands and open farms for themselves or passing through to locations farther west. So the dining table had to be a large one with other tables in reserve. For a table they split from a large log a slab about four feet wide and three or four inches thick and dressed the surface to a semblance of smoothness. Short, stout pegs served as legs. Extension tables might come into the homes of grandchildren or great-grandchildren, but the only method available for increasing their table space, which was planned for the parents and ten children with possible maids and workmen or visitors, was to multiply the number of tables or to set the one table a second time. Benches of a kind were made by setting up sections of split logs on similar pegs, and these were used also for the family and friends to sit about the fire in the kitchen-dining-living room, subject to interruption when cooking was to be done there.

Waiting until the older persons were served and the tables were reset was one of the hardships of childhood. Many tales were told of the hired man or perhaps the preacher or other guest whose fondness for some scarce article of food, such as early peas, new potatoes, or young squirrel, would induce him to take helping after helping until none was left for the little ones. What they thought of him as they watched through a crevice in the log wall and what they said where their elders could not hear was far from complimentary. Even then, selfish and inconsiderate persons with big appetites sometimes visited in Indiana.

Food was cooked in, upon, and before the great fire of logs heaped against a backlog which, being too large for carrying, was dragged and rolled into place. It always burned brightly in cold weather and never wholly died out. Fire was saved from day to day by carefully covering the live embers with ashes at night. If allowed to go out, it could be rekindled only with sparks from a flint and steel struck into a box of

tinder and carefully nursed to a blaze. The alternative was to use burning coals borrowed from a neighbor and carried perhaps a mile through the woods, tended carefully to prevent its going out on the way. If sticks were ever rubbed together until they ignited, I never heard it mentioned.

Under the logs were beds of glowing red coals, almost hot enough to burst into flames, and quantities of ashes. Eggs and potatoes were roasted in the ashes under the coals. Other vegetables and meat or fish were wrapped in damp leaves or cornhusks and buried with burning coals heaped over them. They emerged cooked to a turn after the fashion of a clam-bake or barbecue. The heavy iron pot with a thick lip, familiarly called a Dutch oven, was an important utensil for cooking in every backwoods home. When it was set upon a bed of burning coals and the lid covered with more coals, no oven could be more efficient.

The outside kitchen, built soon after the new house, had its own fireplace and room for all the family to dine unless crowded out by guests or workmen. It had an immense oven built of native stone and clay for use in general baking. A fire would burn on the floor of this oven until it was thoroughly heated, when the wood, coals, and ashes were raked out and replaced with a week's supply of bread and pies for the family and its visitors. During religious festivals, such as the quarterly church conferences or camp meetings in the nearby woods, the crowds which came taxed the oven's capacity for days at a time. The test whether or not this oven was hot enough to remove the fire and put in the baking was made by the hands and faces of the cooks. Thermometers did not reach the remote frontier until later.

This method of cooking with an oven of stone or brick which gradually cooled while its contents were baking had advantages which kept it in use by some bakers long after cookstoves with ovens were introduced, even down to the time that ovens came to be electrically controlled. Taking out the ashes and burning embers and disposing of them was always inconvenient. Gradual disappearance of the supply of firewood, the manufacture for commercial sale of such articles as lard, hominy, and soap, which once were made by every household in its own backyard, and the growing supply of cookstoves with ovens led to the disuse of the stone or brick oven. Such an oven, built against the side of the house, has

been reproduced by Eli Lilly where it formerly stood at his place south of Noblesville where William Conner once had an Indian agency. The oven built into the end of the stone house which succeeded the log house we have been describing, though long unused and badly wrecked, may still be seen.

Of the other rooms built at that time, the one on the ground floor was to be occupied by the parents and shared by two or three of the very little folks who slept in a trundle bed. One loft was assigned to the older girls and the maids who helped with the spinning, weaving, and other indoor work by which the family was provided with everything we now buy at clothing stores, dry goods stores, and milliners. All work of that kind was done by hand, as the first sewing machine had not yet been invented. The other loft was a bedroom for the sons and for the men hired not only to help clear the land and plant and harvest crops entirely without machinery and almost without anything that a victory garden now requires as implements, but also to manufacture on the farm nearly everything that we now purchase from our tailors, shoe merchants, harness shops, and hardware stores.

Labor was in such demand that, as the new settlers arrived from the states farther east and from Europe, these lofts, each as large as four ordinary bedrooms of today, were usually full and sometimes overflowing, even when crowds of visitors were not being entertained. When the quarterly conferences and other festivals brought visitors on horseback or on foot from as far away as fifty or sixty miles, the whole family, including the hired men and maids, was expected to vacate their beds. The women and girls slept on pallets spread on the floors of all the rooms except that a bedstead might be set up for the use of some ill or infirm visitor. The men and boys, including the male portion of fifty or more guests who might not improbably be apportioned to the "class leader," which office the father of this family held until his death, slept in the barns or out under the trees. Food and lodging were so plentiful and inexpensive that they were freely shared.

The few chairs that had been brought with them were taken to the mother's room at the far end of the house, where an open fire always burned in cold or cool weather before which her guests usually were entertained except at mealtime. The mother, less than forty-five years old when

this house was built and who lived to be almost twice that age, seems always to have been regarded as an aged woman; perhaps she so considered herself, and it may be that her husband's being fifteen years older helped the delusion. Wearing the cap she had donned when she was married, she always dressed in the same plain clothes, without ruffle or ornament, which she had worn from the time she joined John Wesley's church as a young maiden back in Yorkshire.

Small groups met for prayer meetings and class meetings in her room. Larger meetings filled the house if the weather was too bad to go outdoors. But when the weather was fine, even though cold, they sang, prayed, and preached under the trees, sitting on logs, stumps, benches, or the ground or standing in the background as fancy moved them.

Substitutes for mattresses were made of homespun bags or ticks stuffed with wild grass, but it was not long until straw was obtained for this purpose. Bedsteads of split logs were succeeded by furniture floated in from Cincinnati. In these a strong cord wound back and forth over pegs driven into the head, foot, and each side rail was a substitute for the springs which later generations think so essential. Just when corded bedsteads of walnut and cherry wood came into the house I cannot say. Many years later, when springs began to be thought necessary, all the old corded bedsteads, less than a dozen in number, were thrown out, with the edict that they become stove wood. Admiring the wild cherry wood and thinking that he was saving something for himself, one of the great-grandsons chose some and put them into the loft above the woodhouse. But what chance has a mere man in household matters? Years afterward, when styles again changed, the old furniture in the loft was discovered and, being refinished and supplied with springs, became the prized possessions of great-great-granddaughters.

Trundle beds have been mentioned. Many of this generation probably have neither slept in one nor seen one. A trundle bed had corner posts which lifted it just high enough that it would not touch the floor but left it low enough that, when not in use, it might be pushed under one of the beds having high posts and canopies, for which purpose it was fitted with small wheels, like casters, that our forebears called trundles. It was on the same principle as the folding bed later so popular. Two beds, when not in use, occupied

only the space of one. Many trundle beds were in use in the country districts of southern Indiana until after the Civil War, called the War Between the States. But this is a digression. We were building and furnishing a house in an unbroken wilderness in Indiana territory.

Heating the rooms so well furnished with outside openings was another question in winter. While the burning logs in the fireplace might temper the cold a little more with the shutters closed, the rooms never were really warm on a cold day. Heavy underclothing was worn in the house as well as outdoors, and a shoulder shawl was a prized possession. Jokers would assert that a man, having taken off his shoes in a log house to warm his feet, had frozen his heels in front of a blazing fire. However gross the exaggeration, there was a hint of truth in the jest.

The house being roofed, enclosed, chinked, and hastily furnished with improvised benches, tables, and bedsteads so as to be habitable, the process of providing materials and obtaining help was repeated in part to procure a barn with stables for the domestic animals. Logs were again cut and piled, the neighbors rallied, a building erected, and all the incidents of a community dinner of food gleaned from the wilderness and general merrymaking were repeated with the added convenience of a new house and its fireplace for shelter and warmth against the winter which was then upon them. The barn, though not so large as the house, also had a loft, roof, doors, and openings for windows in the loft. The earth served as a floor for the stables, but the loft must be floored with puncheons and a ladder replaced the stairway. Afterward other barns were built of massive timber frames, squared and hewn with axes and adz, enclosed with sawed weatherboarding fastened on with iron nails, and having doors and shutters of sawed planks hung on metal hinges with hooks and staples to fasten them shut or open. The old log barn remained, however, to give shelter to the horses, cows, and pigs and to contain fodder, hay, and grain with which to feed the animals.

On the night I was born, a bolt of lightning struck this old barn stocked with hay and straw and burned it to the ground. The north end of another building partly enclosed with boards and used as a corncrib was near enough that the boards caught fire, and that building was saved only by

climbing up and throwing water on the burning boards, aided by a deluge of rain which fell at the opportune moment. As it was, the boards were charred half through, and have remained in that condition to the present time. More than forty years later I heard persons asking about the fire which they thought had recently threatened the building, and a younger generation may be repeating the same question.

I know I owe an apology for injecting myself, a mere product of yesterday, into this tale of long ago only because one of the log buildings put up for a pioneer family after their first year in the woods was reserved for a holocaust at the time of my arrival on Tanners Creek; but it may help someone to realize better that this is not a tale of fabled antiquity but relates what happened right here within our own state to people who were known and are remembered by many friends and acquaintances.

The stone chapel, built by this family and their neighbors ten years later at the spot on their farm where the squatter's cabin stood which sheltered them until their own house was built, was constructed in compliance with the views and practices of churches built in Europe in that age, without any means of heating. Now it is provided with a furnace and is still in use as a church and Sunday School room, as well as a cemetery chapel. And the stone house, which great-grandfather substituted after a score of years for the log structure so hastily erected, has been handed down by succeeding generations for more than one hundred years and still is the home of his great-grandchildren not so old as others of their generation, who in turn have great-grandchildren of their own.