

## THE PASSING OF THE OLD TOWN.

BY LUCIUS E. GOULD.<sup>1</sup>

NOTE:—The old frame building at the corner of Exchange and Water streets, is being torn down. This fact inspires Mr. Gould to write the following reminiscent article.—Editor of the Evening Argus.

During the years from 1847 to 1850 there were but four or five stores in the village of Owosso.

The ones that were standing at that time and which should be mentioned were the old brown store which stood on the Murray & Terbush corner for so many years, the Gould & Fish building, which occupied a place on the southwest corner of Washington and Exchange streets, where now stands the banking house of the Citizens' Savings Bank. This store was kept by T. D. Dewey. Directly across the street from the Gould & Fish building stood the then new and somewhat untried one of D. Lyon Thorpe, which in after years became well known, not only to the citizens of Owosso but to all the county, while on the south side of Exchange street stood the Tillitson and the Fletcher stores. These two small buildings are still standing and as we look out of the window while we write we can see them, but not in their old time glory of our boyhood days, when Indians as well as white hunters crowded to their doors.

<sup>1</sup> For biography see Vol. 32, p. 247, and obituary Vol. 34, p. 773.

But the store to which we wish particularly to call your attention is that erected by Charles M. Moses in 1850, built on the northeast corner of Exchange and Water streets. The sign over the door "Groceries & Provisions" has been covered up for many years by that of a blacksmith shop.

In 1850, as soon as Mr. T. D. Dewey and John Stewart had formed the well known firm of Dewey & Stewart, and commenced to build the grist-mill at the foot of Exchange, Mr. Moses came to town and selected a site for his new enterprise as near to the new mill as possible. At first he only built the front portion of the little store, but it was large enough to catch the trade of the mill, and very soon it was the most important place in the village.

When the writer was old enough to get around among the boys and men of the town another room had been added to the building. I remember that on the 3d day of July, 1853, my grandfather had given me an English shilling to buy fire-crackers. The only place in town which kept fire-crackers was the Moses store.

I thought it necessary to take one or two boys along to assist me in making the important selection. Those who went with me were my cousin Stafford Gould and Charles Williams. When we arrived at the store we found a large crowd, but Mr. Hiram Lewis soon found time to wait on me. There was only one box of fire-crackers for the whole village.

For several years the postoffice was kept in this store. One time, in about the year 1854, my father sent me to the postoffice for his mail, where I received a Harper's Magazine. I have that number now at my home in a bound volume, which I prize highly. We still have the "Harpers" with us today, but Oh, how it has changed. The old store is about to be torn down, and when the time comes for the removal of the Tilotson and Fletcher buildings as well as Marve Secord's blacksmith shop, which stands on the west side of South Washington street not one single business place of the old village will be left to us.

#### STORY OF AN ANTIQUE SPOON PLOWED UP NEAR OLD SHIAWASSEE EXCHANGE.

The inhabitants who reside along the Shiawassee river near where the town of Shiawassee touches corners with Antrim, Burns and Vernon have within the last forty years found on their farms many curious and strange relics of by-gone days. For here was once situated not only the Shiawassee Exchange, but southward from that place, on the river, was located the Indian reservation with the trading post of Whitmore Knaggs

and the Indian village of Ketchewandaugoning. Arrow and spear heads, stone and copper hatchets, guns, knives and old time cooking utensils and scraps of iron have been plowed up from the fields along the river, where once lived not only the Indians, but the French trader. But it was reserved for Lewis Heath to make perhaps the most interesting find of them all. About twenty years ago, while plowing on his father's farm, he found a large silver spoon of strange and antique pattern.

We first heard a portion of the story from Mrs. John Martin, of Bancroft, who told us that the spoon was now in the possession of Mr. James Heath. Through the kindness of Mr. Kimball Phillips, who loaned us a beautiful horse and a fine buggy from the stables of Phillips and Britten, and William Barnard, who is now living in Bancroft, who kindly offered his services as driver, we found Mr. Heath at home on his farm, about two miles east of Bancroft, on the river. He has resided in Michigan about forty-five years, and is well and favorably known in this county.

After a pleasant visit we told him our errand. Mr. Heath at once brought the spoon and showed it to us. It is of the large table variety and weighs some fifteen or sixteen ounces. It is made from silver without alloy. The shank, or that portion of the handle nearest to the bowl is nearly a quarter of an inch in thickness, and in form is nearly square. There was no mark or letters on it, but upon the back of the shank was stamped a small trade mark.

Mr. Heath stated that it was found by his son Lewis, who, for the first time, was plowing some new land. Quite large trees and bushes were cleared from the place on which the spoon was plowed up and no house or building of any kind was near. The exact place where it was plowed up by Lewis is about one rod from the bank of the river on the south half of sections twenty-five of the township of Shiawassee and about one hundred rods north of the Shiawassee Exchange. Mr. Heath thinks it must have been buried in the ground six or seven inches deep. His house is on the west, while the spoon was found on the east side of the river. He also said that the spoon remained with his family sixteen or seventeen years; that it was very black and discolored and they could not determine its metal. About three or four years ago he took it to Mr. H. P. Shane, the jeweler, at Bancroft, who pronounced it to be the best of silver. He then left it with him to send away to be repaired and burnished.

After we had returned to Bancroft we at once visited Mr. Shane and he kindly told his connection with the story. He said "when Mr. Heath brought the spoon to me it was very black and one side of the bowl was

very thin from long use. So badly was it worn that some of the metal was broken off and gone. The spoon must have been very old when it went into the ground, for it must have taken seventy-five or eighty years to have worn it to the condition it was in when I found it, caused by the scraping of it on dishes or pans.

"It was made by hand. There were no shops for the manufacture of spoons at that time. It was made with a hammer, out of silver which I judge to be finer than sterling.

"I at once sent the spoon to Wendell & Co., of Chicago, who in time returned it to me burnished and repaired. The silversmiths in repairing the bowl fashioned it after a modern spoon. So now Mr. Heath has a beautiful spoon of white shining silver."

Now, who left it in that strange and lonesome place so long? Was it buried there for safe keeping, or was it lost by some of the many families who once lived in the old Shiawassee Exchange? You will remember that A. L. and B. O. Williams built the Exchange. Did some of their people leave it there? Or did some French trader once own it?

This farm of Mr. Heath was once owned by the late William Parrish. Mrs. Lucy Parrish now resides in the state of New York. Perhaps she can give us some light on the ownership of the spoon. But who can tell?

#### PIONEERS OF OWOSSO.

An Interesting Story by L. E. Gould, as Heard by Him From the Lips of the Pioneers.

Mrs. Daniel Foote, whose maiden name was Mary L. Howell, has been a resident of Owosso for sixty-five years. She is the daughter of Simon and Elizabeth Howell, deceased. In the year 1838 her parents removed from Gambier, Ohio, to Owosso, bringing with them four children, viz.: Simon, William, Jane and Mary, the subject of this sketch, who was at that time a year and a half old.

The first school Mary attended was taught by Mrs. Henry Crooks in a portion of a double log-house that stood on the east side of Water, not far from Exchange street.

The second school was taught by Miss Julia Hammond in the second story of the store owned by Gould and Fish, which stood on the southwest corner of Washington and Exchange streets. Miss Hammond has for years been known as Mrs. John N. Ingersoll, of Corunna. After this, Mary completed her education by attending the public school in the schoolhouse that once stood on the southeast corner of Washington

and William streets, where the Lutheran church now stands. Here the teachers were Mr. Blood, who was succeeded by Caroline Barnes. Miss Barnes was followed by Miss Drusilla Cook, whose fame as a teacher will remain long in the land; with her Mary finished her school life.

In all the interesting incidents which are peculiar to a pioneer life Mrs. Foote was closely associated with her mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Howell, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Crooks, and who was born in the county of Wiltshire, England. The place of her nativity was only thirty miles from the home of Simon Howell, who in due time was not only the accepted lover but married the fair Betsey. At the time of their marriage Elizabeth was eighteen and Simon twenty-three years of age. The romantic incident which Mrs. Foote related to the writer was this: "Mother was a bride of two months only when she sailed with father for America."

They sailed in 1827 and landed at the City of New York, where they resided for two years. In about the year 1830 they removed to Gambier, Ohio, where Mr. Howell had purchased land from the college, which was then located at that place.

He was somewhat of a restless nature and after remaining in Gambier for several years he and his family removed to Owosso, a place he had heard a great deal about. Mr. and Mrs. Howell arrived at Owosso with their family in 1838. This was about the time the government was gathering the Indians together in and about Owosso preparatory to removing them to Indian reservations in the west. Mrs. Howell has often told her children how the Indian chief Wasso was captured and imprisoned in a house not far from where she and her husband and children were then staying. All night long the neighborhood was kept awake by the noise and screams of the enraged chieftain.

Mr. Howell was a carpenter and joiner and when he arrived at the new village he found himself in great demand. Daniel Ball was then building his mill, and he at once set him at work. From that time on for many years he was a busy man, and many of the old-time buildings in the county were erected by him. Now that the old court-house in Corunna is about to give place to a new structure it may not be out of place to state that the window-sash and doors in the building were made by him.

For a short time after arriving in Owosso he found a home for his family in a boarding-house that was located on the line of the mill-race that was then being dug to furnish water-power for the mills, that were then in process of erection. In good time the Howell family found

a home in a double log-house that once stood on Race street, southeast of the former site of L. E. Woodard's planing mill.

It is of interest, for in this log-house Samuel Warren taught several terms of school, the first in Owosso.

When Mr. Howell arrived in Owosso most of the inhabitants were living in log-houses along the line of the race, the course of which extended from the gate house at a point on the mill-pond only a few rods east of the buildings on Mr. Sturtevant's lumber yard to a point on the west end of Exchange street, where it discharged its waters through the mills to the river.

Only one or two streets were cleared. The stumps were yet standing on South Washington street. Oliver was open for a short distance from Washington street in front of the houses occupied by A. L. and B. O. Williams. While Main street, west from the river, was only a cart track across lands owned by Elias Comstock. Mr. Comstock was then offering for sale his land on what is now West Main street, at \$25 a lot. Mr. Howell purchased four lots from him on the south side of the street and paid for them in work. His first home at this place was in a log-house that stood on the southeast corner of Main and Howell streets. While living in this home he and his boys were busy, when they could be spared from other work, in building a comfortable frame-house, then much needed by his large and growing family. This was the home of the Howell family for many years. It stood on the southwest corner of Main and Howell streets, where it was for years one of the landmarks of the town until torn down only five or six years ago.

Mrs. Howell was a woman of great executive ability. While rearing a large family of children and caring for her home, she was the nurse and benefactor of the community. She was ready to help all who needed her assistance. At times physicians were very scarce in the county and her services were in great demand. Especially was this true when the epidemic known to the early settlers as the spotted fever raged in this county. The disease was so violent and so fatal that many people of this community died from it, and others from want of proper care. Mrs. Howell was very successful in her treatment of this dreaded disease. During the epidemic she was ready to leave her home and go wherever her services were needed. More than one messenger came after her in the night and carried her to some lonely cabin in the woods of Bennington, where she would fight the fever to the best of her ability and often times with good success. Mrs. Howell, like many another pioneer woman, was brave and courageous. Before going to her self-appointed tasks she

made her husband and children promise that in case she herself should take the fever that they should come after her and bring her home, where they could treat her according to her own directions. This they promised to do. Whenever she was absent her home was kept in readiness for this dreaded event. At one time, when she was six miles away in the country, she felt the first symptoms of the fever. Her husband was sent for. True to his promise, he brought his sick and delirious wife to her home in Owosso, where he and his family treated her, with hot applications in the manner she had directed, and were happily rewarded for their labor. Soon the marks of the disease made their appearance on her skin and she became rational, and in a short time was in a fair way to a speedy recovery. This is only one of the many incidents that go to make up the history of Mrs. Howell's pioneer life in Owosso.

The many Indians that were in and about Owosso in those days were peaceable except when they were intoxicated. Then they were quarrelsome and dangerous. Mrs. Foote relates that the first chief that she knew was Shako. At that time he was said to be 106 years old. His camp was on the river not far from the north end of Cedar street. In fact Cedar street of today is on the Indian trail, which led from the river to the marshes that were to the south and west of the village of Owosso. One time an Indian came to the house and Mrs. Howell bargained with him for some cranberries or "skigomin" as the Indians called them. The Indian was to have a hen in exchange for his berries. Mrs. Howell was to have the hen cooked and ready for him to eat when he should return from Corunna. When the Indian came he found his hen cooked and ready for him. But after eating it he was dissatisfied with his bargain and began to threaten her. At last he seized Mrs. Howell by her hair and cried "Sho-moke-mon-mon-squa," white man's squaw, will come tonight and get your scalp. Mrs. Howell's two oldest sons, Simon and William, were present and they drove the drunken Indian from the house. Mr. Howell was not at home, but the boys prepared to give the Indian a warm reception should he return. They carried into the house the axe and pitchfork and got their knives ready for a fight; but no Indian came to disturb that household that night.

At another time while the family were still living in the log-house, on the corner of Howell and Main streets, an Indian known by the name of "Jim Jackson" came to the door and wanted to come in. Mrs. Howell and her daughter Mary were alone. The Indian was drunk and ugly and just as Mrs. Howell was about to close the door in his face, he drew a long dirk knife and stabbed her in the breast, but thanks to the old-

fashioned corset, thick with whalebones, she was saved. Mrs. Howell then seized a mop handle and struck the Indian across the head and knocked him down. As he was a dangerous Indian, she did not let him get up, but whenever he attempted to rise she would strike him again on the head and in that way she kept him down until some squaws came along, who were only too glad to take him away.

There were born to Mr. and Mrs. Howell, in Owosso, four children, making eight sons and daughters in all. Six are living today and are residents of Owosso. They are Simon, William, John, Mary L., Anne and Eliza. These affectionate sons and daughters are proudly keeping green their parents' memory, especially that of their brave and devoted mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Crooks Howell.

#### SAW MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

#### Judge Josiah Turner Has a Distinct Recollection of the Gallant French Nobleman.

During a pleasant call at the residence of Judge Turner last Saturday afternoon that gentleman related to me the following incident of his boyhood, which took place in his native town, New Haven, Vermont. "I saw Lafayette when I was a boy of twelve. I don't know as I ever told anybody of it before."

This conversation was called up by my stating to him that there was a pioneer residing in West Owosso who came into the county at a very early date, that of 1829, and that his name was Marquis de Lafayette Colf. "In those days," said the judge, "Lafayette was very popular in this country and it was customary, both before and after his last visit, for people to name children for him.

"In 1824, at the time I saw Lafayette, he was the distinguished guest of the nation. He was invited to visit the United States by President Monroe. Lafayette traveled the whole country over, visiting each of the twenty-four states and the principal cities. In our part of the country he journeyed from town to town by carriage. The people gathered at the wayside to see the famous man as he passed along. Our village of New Haven, like most Vermont towns, was very small, and the distinguished visitor did not stop there, but we were all very glad to get a good view of him as he rode by. When his carriage, containing several other people, proceeded along the highway, he was pointed out to me. It is now seventy-nine years since that occasion, but I still see him, just as he was, seated in his carriage among his friends on that far-off day.

His erect, manly figure, holds a clear, distinct place in my memory even unto this time."

After the judge had related to me the Lafayette incident, I then told him Mr. John Dewey had a famous bear story that he was going to tell me the next time he came to town. Then said the judge, "I have one. Haven't I ever told you my bear story?" He kindly related to me the following: "It was in the year 1849, while I was on my way from Howell to Owosso with a few accounts to collect. In those early times there were no banks to do the collecting for the merchants, as now-a-days, but the merchants sent them to attorneys who would go out through the country collecting. As soon as I had enough notes and accounts in my hands to pay me for making the trip, I started on horseback from Howell in the direction of Owosso. In due time I arrived in the vicinity of Knagg's bridge. When I was about two or three miles east of the bridge I discovered that my horse was nervous and excited from some noise in the bushes by the roadside. This noise soon increased to such an extent that I was unable to get him over the road. When I looked behind me I saw a wagon coming up which contained a man and a woman and about the same time three large bears came out of the bushes into the road. They went along the highway for a short distance when they separated, two crossed over the road and went up a tree while the third one climbed a tree near. Just then the wagon came along. The man was greatly excited over the bears, and exclaimed several times: 'Oh, if I only had my gun here.' Then he explained to me that the bears would not come down from the tree so long as any one stood under it, and wanted me to keep the bears up the tree while he went to the nearest house for a gun. I told him that I would go for a gun, I being on horseback. It was finally settled that I should go and if I found one I would return or send some one with it to him, but if I could not find one within a reasonable time, I was to go on my way. With this understanding I left them. I did not find a gun at the first house I came to, but after a while I came to a house where there was a gun, but it was broken and could not be repaired. There being no other houses near I was obliged to give up all further search. I rode to Shiawassee town and afterwards to Owosso, where I presented my accounts and claims.

"On my return home I stopped at Knagg's place, where I learned that the man whom I left with the bears, (I do not know his name) got tired of waiting for me after a long time and went away eastward to a house and procured a gun, returned and shot two of the bears. While he was

gone, his wife, armed with a club, stayed in the woods and kept the bears up the trees.

"My bear story is a good one, but it has always reminded me of the old story of 'How Betsey and I Killed the Bear.'"

"THE RAMSHORN."

Story of the Building and Early Operations of That Famous Railroad,  
and Some of its First Employees.

Those who now ride over the Michigan Central railroad from Owosso to Lansing, in handsome modern coaches which run swiftly over a smooth, straight track, little dream of the hardships encountered and the obstacles that were overcome by the company and its employees in building and operating the first road between these towns. It was wholly an Owosso enterprise. The first name of this road was the Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay railroad, and the road when completed from Owosso to Lansing, had about thirty miles of track.

The officers were Judge Amos Gould, Alfred L. Williams, of Owosso, George C. Monroe, of Jonesville, and Alvin N. Hart, of Lansing. These men gave their time and money to the enterprise. It is not of them, however, I now wish to write, but of their employees, who were all Owosso men, many of whom have passed away. David Gould was superintendent and general manager; George W. Collier, master mechanic; David See and Joseph Rhodes, William Howell and James Youngs, engineers; Daniel and John Sullivan, firemen; Ebenezer Gould, baggagemaster; John Bell and a Mr. Palmer were carpenters who worked in the round house, and William H. Byerly was brakeman and later became conductor.

The general offices of the road were in the parlors of the banking house of D. Gould & Co., afterwards the First National Bank of Owosso. The men who there found employment were Robert G. Higham and Ames L. Williams. The latter held several important offices, both here and on the road. J. W. Mann was also connected with the building of the road.

The first passenger conductor was William Norris, the father of Mrs. A. M. Hume. Edgar P. and George Byerly were express messengers on the trains. Mr. Gill McClintock was the first station agent at Laingsburg, and Mr. E. A. Todd the first at Bath. He afterward became passenger conductor and still later, when the road became a part of the

Jackson, Lansing and Saginaw, was appointed conductor, which position he held for many years, and was succeeded by his brother Albert Todd.

The Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay was the first railway to reach Lansing from any direction.

Many fanciful names were given to it, in ridicule. One of the first was "Almighty Long and Tremendous Bad Railroad." But the name that remained as long as the company lasted was the "Ramshorn Railroad," a term which clung to it and almost entirely superseded its original title.

Its first locomotive was the pioneer engine running into Owosso, the same one that was used to lay the iron on the Detroit & Milwaukee track. The first name of this engine was the "Black Swan," but this name was painted out and it was designated as "No. 1." The men named it "Peggy," and also "Short and Dirty," and indeed it was very short, and at times extremely dirty. It had only one set of drive wheels and the boiler was one of the style that was called "Teakettle." Another engine was "The Empire," and then came "The Stranger," which blew up while crossing the "Big Marsh." Such was the limited rolling stock with which the company had to do business.

But the employees made the road "go," to do which they gave heroic efforts. They took as much interest in the work as if the road was their own personal property, and very soon the "Ramshorn Railroad" became famous throughout the State. I here give you the story of Albert Todd, that you may judge for yourself of the hardships that some of the employees went through:

"I went to work for the Amboy, Lansing and Traverse Bay railroad Company about the year 1860. My brother, Edwin A., was then station agent at Bath, and I went there to relieve him.

"The station building was a log shanty and one end of it had been used for a stable while the other had been occupied as an Irishman's boarding-house. It stood upon the high bank while the track was far below in the cut.

"At Bath the passengers took the stage for Lansing, distant about seven miles, and termination of the road.

"After a few months a board shanty was built, and the freight was handled from that. A short distance from the station was my boarding-house, kept by Ned Baker, a one-armed man. His wife was noted for making fine pies. Everybody would stop there for Mrs. Baker's huckleberry pies. I stayed in Bath for something over a year. My next sta-

tion was the "Deep Cut," which was two miles and a half this side of Lansing, where the road again stopped for several months. Our trains were mixed, being made up of both freight and passenger cars. From Bath the train would be "backed ahead" to my station and would leave the freight cars and then run back to Bath where it would stay all night. In the morning they would get the freight cars and passengers and would leave about 9 a. m. for Owosso. One night when the train of three or four cars was left at my station some boys let the brakes off and the cars started and went half-way to Bath, where they stopped on the Chandler Marsh.

"I did all the station work and all of the billing, but the trainmen would help me to load and unload freight. In the winter of 1862-3 no trains came to my station for nearly a week, on account of the snow-storms. One night Simon Stack, the section boss, Richard Haly, now living in Owosso, and myself, took a hand-car about dark and started for Owosso. We worked along through the snow-drifts until we came to the marsh. Here, without knowing it, we shoved our car off the track. It was a bitter cold night. We jumped down into the snow-drifts and after awhile got our car back on the track and started for Laingsburg, where we arrived about 11 o'clock at night. We found a comparatively clean track until we got to a deep cut called 'Pike's Peak.' Here we abandoned our car and started out on foot. Dick Haley went back to Laingsburg, Simon Stack and myself came on to Owosso, but we left the railroad and took to the wagon-road. While going along I became so sleepy, tired and cold that I lay down in the road. Mr. Stack, fearing lest I should freeze, kicked and cuffed me until I roused up and we again started for Owosso. We got into town between four and five in the morning. The locomotive was broken, but they repaired and put on a snow-plow and with the additional help of shovels the road was opened on the next day but one. I went back on the first train to my station.

"From the 'Deep Cut' my next station was North Lansing. The road was finished to that place in 1861, but I stayed but a short time when I was relieved by Orville Goodhue.

"I came back to Owosso and worked for both the Detroit and Milwaukee and the Ramshorn. While in that office I picked up telegraphy and when the Western Union extended its wires to Lansing I took charge of that office and station. This 'wire' I have spoken of was the first telegraph line into Lansing from any direction and installed by District Superintendent Bemis, of the Western Union. He gave me an outfit of

paper relay machine. There I received a dispatch from Detroit, the first message ever received by wire in Lansing. It was a dispatch for Governor Blair and the legislature.

"I felt very proud to receive that message from Detroit."

Before I begin my next story of the building of the Old Ramshorn railroad, I desire to state that the name of the first regular conductor, the father of Mrs. A. M. Hume, was Willard and not William Norris.

He was kind to all the boys, and frequently gave us a free ride on his train. I do not know how I came to forget his name, but it slipped from my memory in the forty years or more that have passed since I rode on his train. I also wish to state that the roundhouse of the Ramshorn is still standing and is situated a few rods south and east of the Junction house in Owosso.

In the prosperous days of the road not only the locomotives were built over and repaired, but also their new freight cars. At one time the carpenters of the railway built a new passenger car which answered the purposes of the road very well indeed.

William Howell not only worked on the construction of the track but became fireman for David Gould and afterwards was given a locomotive, a position he kept until the end. David Gould, the general manager of the road, ran one of the locomotives himself.

Mr. Howell says he came from St. Charles in 1855, and went to work for David Gould reconstructing the old mill. I do not mean the one now standing just north of the west end of Exchange street, built by the firm of Dewey and Stewart, but the "old, old," one that was erected by Daniel Ball in 1838, on the same site. This was not only the largest frame building ever constructed in Owosso, but it was old-fashioned in every way. The entire front of the building was open to the weather. A person standing out in the mill-yard would have a view of the entire inside. This open space in front was fully protected from the weather by a great hood which the roof came down to meet in one grand sweep, and the whole made as picturesque a mill as one would want to look at.

"Dave, your uncle, came to Owosso in 1855, and began to build over the old mill. He took out the old up today and down tomorrow machinery that Daniel Ball had brought from New York, and put in its place the first Mully sawing machine ever in Owosso, and one of the first in the State. We worked in that old mill about two years.

"The men who worked with me were Ed. Perkins, David Bugby and William Griswold. We kept the mill going night and day. The work was so divided that my stint came on in the forepart of the night. We

slept in the mill and the last work we did was to saw the timbers for the new steam mill built by David Gould. This building is now occupied by Pond's marble works. This new mill contained the first machinery ever operated by steam in the county.

"As soon as the steam mill started I went to work in it. George Grant was head sawyer and his brother helped him. We worked in the mill until we were engaged on the Ramshorn, at some place about half way between the Detroit and Milwaukee depot and the roundhouse, in the fall of 1857. A large crowd, for Owosso at that time, was present.

"Judge Gould made a speech and told about the prospect for the road and the advantages Owosso would gain from it. Bill Landers, who had charge of the construction of the track, placed a spike and Judge Gould drove it home amid great cheering.

"At that time only the first switch was put in. The work of building the road did not begin in earnest until in the spring of 1858. I worked on the construction of the track until the road was finished to Bath, then came back to Owosso and worked in the roundhouse. I was there about six months and was then sent to take charge of the first section of the road that was completed, which went half way to Laingsburg. I went back into the round house at Owosso and helped build over our old engine, 'Old Peggy.' We put links on her, which improved her greatly. Then I went to firing on 'the Stranger' for David Gould.

"On that terrible cold New Year's day, so well remembered by the people of Owosso, we started out with Peggy. The weather was so cold that we got out of water and filled the tender from a hole in the marsh. We bailed Peggy's tender full three times from one hole before we could get into Laingsburg.

"We carried staves, six rods, to fire with. We arrived in Laingsburg the next morning about seven o'clock. We had our breakfast and started for Bath, but did not reach there until five o'clock in the afternoon, and found three passengers and some freight for Owosso. As soon as we loaded up we started back for Owosso. We did not arrive in town until two o'clock in the morning. David Gould was running the engine, I was fireman, and a man by the name of Curtis was conductor. Mr. Landers and John Hyman were with us.

"At the time of the explosion of the Stranger the train was about half way across the Chandler marsh and running south with Edwin A. Todd as conductor, David See engineer, and George Baldwin fireman. Daniel Sullivan, who was on his way from Owosso to Lansing, was riding on the tender. David Gould and I took an engine and went up from Owosso

to the wreck. We found the boiler blown to pieces and the frame of the engine broken. After a long search we found the bell of the engine thirty-five rods from the wreck. On the second day after that we went up with the Empire and brought the Stranger, or what was left of her, to the roundhouse. We built her over and I went to firing her for David Gould, who ran her about a month, then he set James Youngs running her and I fired for him until he was laid off and then the engine was given to me, and John Sullivan was my fireman. I kept the Stranger until the road changed hands, when I went to Saginaw to run a stationary engine. Afterwards I came back to Owosso and worked for Randolph Stewart in his machine shop. After the death of Mr. Stewart, my partners and I took the shop and we kept it running for twenty-eight years.

"Daniel Sullivan was only fifteen years of age when he began work for the Ramshorn as night watchman in the engine house at North Lansing in the year 1864. Daniel was in the habit of going to Owosso to visit his people, and would manage to make these trips at a time when they would not interfere with his night work at Lansing.

"One day in March, 1864, he had made his usual journey to Owosso and was returning to Lansing, but was destined not to finish that trip. He was riding on the tender of the Stranger, or No. 2, as she was sometimes called.

"It was night and the train had reached the center of the Chandler marsh when the engine blew up. It seemed to shoot forward into the air before the noise and the crash of the explosion came. At first there was a great light and then all was darkness. The explosion broke all the windows in the coach and put out all the lights. Mr. Sullivan says that when the shock came he was sitting down on the left hand side of the cab. After the explosion he was found back in the tender on the wood and unconscious. In a little while he recovered enough to walk back to the coach. His face was scalded and was so hot that when a handkerchief dipped in ice water was placed on it the heat would instantly dry it. He was badly hurt, as the scar which he carries on his face today shows. No one else was seriously injured.

"As soon as the lamps were lighted and order was somewhat restored, Conductor Todd went to Lansing on foot, some six miles off, secured the section men and returned to the train on a hand-car, bringing with him a doctor, who sewed up Mr. Sullivan's face and then he was taken to Owosso where he was cared for by Dr. Bagg.

"Daniel claims that the Lansing doctor did a bad job; that he sewed up

his face without taking out the glass, but thanks to the kind care of Dr. Bagg, after three months or more, Daniel recovered and went back on the road and worked for the company a little over a year."

SHON-E-KAY-ZHICK.

Or Little Jim Fitcher Afterwards Known as "Chief Jim."

Corunna, September 4.—At the afternoon session of the pioneer meeting yesterday, Mr. William J. Parks, of Durand, related the story of the stealing of his little brother, Peter Parks, by the Indians, which created a great sensation. It was the history of "Little Jim" Fitcher, who was well known to the early settlers of Owosso. Mr. Parks was much surprised to learn that there were a number of people in the audience who knew his brother.

Mr. Mead Smith, of Durand, said that the boy at one time was brought to his father's house by "Old Chief Jim Fitcher," and described the scene where his mother, Mrs. Smith, when she saw the brown-haired, blue-eyed boy, declared that the child had been stolen by the Indians from some white family. He told his story so forcefully that the audience was not only moved with sympathy for the lost boy, but eagerly listened to the speaker, who grew eloquent as he talked of his mother and "Little Jim" Fitcher.

The writer, too, had seen "Little Jim" Fitcher in Owosso many times early in the fifties.

In the story of the Owosso Schools Fifty Years Ago, heretofore published, the writer told how "Little Jim" Fitcher visited the school from time to time, for the purpose of selling the boys his famous bows and arrows. It was while engaged on this story of the Owosso schools, that he learned from Amos Williams, William Howell and Ebenezer Gould that "Little Jim" Fitcher was a white boy, and was stolen by the Indians, but from what family they did not know. Who were the parents of "Little Jim" Fitcher, was one of the great unsolved mysteries of pioneer days.

Quite recently Mrs. Foote, who was well acquainted with "Little Jim" Fitcher, told some interesting facts about him and the girl, Charlotte Fitcher, who in the early days was supposed to be his sister. Mrs. Foote talked about the marriage of Charlotte to Charles Gage, of Corunna, and that she, at one time, lived neighbor to them. Mrs. Foote was well acquainted with the fact that both Charlotte and "Little Jim" were stolen by the Indians, but from whom she never knew.

The story of Mr. William J. Parks solves the mystery as to "Little Jim" Fitcher, but the question as to who were the parents of Charlotte Fitcher still remains unanswered.

Rochester colony, of Clinton county, was settled in 1836 by thirteen families from Rochester, New York. One of the original families that made that famous settlement was named Parks, and consisted of Silas L. Parks and his wife, Betsey Elizabeth, and their children, among whom was William J. and his little brother Peter.

Of the stealing by the Indians of his little brother, William has this to say: "Shortly after the founding of Rochester Colony our family was living in a cabin that was situated on one of the Indian trails that led up to the settlement. At the time my brother Peter was lost my mother had gone down the trail several miles to visit and care for a sick neighbor. Although my father was asleep in an upper room of the cabin, my mother, before going away, placed little Peter under my care. She bade us a loving farewell, and then went down the trail on her errand of mercy. But, alas, on her return home there was no loving, little Peter to welcome her.

"In some way unaccountable to us all he had slipped out of the house into the woods, and we afterward learned that he made the attempt to follow his mother. As soon as we realized that Peter was surely lost, a careful search was not only made of the premises, but of the forest for many miles around.

"Near the margin of a small stream, on the trail to the house visited by his mother, his tracks were seen, but here ended all traces of him. Although we came to the conclusion that Peter had been stolen by the Indians, we not only searched the stream for his body, but we hunted the woods in our vicinity for nearly a year, and the search did not end here. For more than five years, when father would hear of an Indian camp that was said to contain a white boy, it was visited and thoroughly searched, but without avail.

"In after years we learned that little Peter was really stolen by the Indians; that he was taken by the squaw of Old Chief Fitcher, who was an adept at child stealing. It was said that Peter was carried to a far-off Indian camp, where he was kept for awhile, and then brought back to the near neighborhood of our home. This was what puzzled my father, and the faithful men who assisted in the search for the lost boy. While they were carefully searching the camp of distant tribes, little Peter was either in the counties of Shiawassee or Saginaw. None of us discovered his whereabouts until the year 1876.

"While Old Chief was alive my brother Peter was known by the Indians far and wide as "Little Jim" Fitcher. When the Old Chief died, "Little Jim" succeeded to the chieftainship of the remnant of the Fitcher tribe. He was then called 'Chief Jim.'"

While William J. Parks and his family were residing in the township of New Haven, Chief Jim came over from Indiantown and visited his brother. He brought with him an Indian. He came to talk with his brother about the possibility of his getting a portion of his father's estate. But he never made a claim when he found he would have to abandon his tribal relation and declare under the name of Peter Parks. Like the brave, honest man that he was, he decided to remain with his poor Indian friends until the end.

He made his home at Indiantown which is situated just east and north of Chesaning. At times he also resided at the settlement on the Flint river, which perhaps is fifteen or twenty miles east. At Indiantown Chief Jim not only established a home, but he built a small church on his own land in which at times he preached to his Indian brethren, of the Methodist faith.

In the year 1855 or thereabouts Little Jim Fitcher was in and about Owosso a great many times. The writer well remembers seeing him in those early days. It was the custom of the merchants of what is now West Exchange street, in order to keep the Indians near their stores to put up on a stick pieces of money for the Indian boys to shoot at with their bows and arrows. If a young Indian hit the money fair and square, he took it for his reward. It was usually an old-fashioned copper cent.

Little Jim Fitcher was so excellent a shot that when he presented himself before the target, he was made to get back several hundred feet. The writer has seen him hit a penny on a stick standing in the street in front where the Argus office now is and shooting nearly to Washington street. To our mind in those days Little Jim was the ideal Indian boy. More than once has he drawn his bow and shot over the heads of the little Indian boys who were allowed to stand nearer to the mark and in front of his line. He was a manly boy; he usually wore an old felt hat, the crown of which was adorned with a long black feather. He was the friend of all the boys of those times, and the Owosso boys were proud of him. His Indian name was Shon-e-kay-zhick. From a bright, brave boy he grew into a noble man. He preached the word of God with fear, and gained many converts by his untiring efforts.

Old Chief Jim Fitcher was not a Chippewa Indian, but a halfbreed, and was from one of the Canadian tribes. His name was Fitcher, which

in time was easily corrupted into the word Fisher. The name "Jim" he must have received from his father, who, as Mrs. Foote informs us, was an Englishman. At any rate his wife was a squaw who belonged to one of the Saginaw bands of Chippewa Indians.

Until Old Chief Jim's band settled in and around Owosso no child stealing was known to have taken place in all this part of Michigan. Whenever Fitcher was accused of child-stealing he would lay it to his squaw.

For many years "Little Jim" Fitcher thought the girl Charlotte his sister, and he always treated her as such and was always kind to her. Although Charlotte Fitcher was married to Charles Gage she soon became tired of her home and abandoned her husband and returned to friends at Indiantown.

Mr. Parks informs us that Little Jim Fitcher died about three years ago, surrounded by his Indian friends, whom he never deserted.

#### OWOSSO IN 1856.

##### Reminiscences of John W. Thorne.

My home was in Madison county in the state of New York. I graduated at the Yeats Polytechnic institute. Then in the fall of 1856 in September I came to Michigan. At that time the cars on the Detroit and Milwaukee railroad were only running as far as Owosso. The first train into Owosso arrived the preceding fourth of July. When I landed here the depot was located where it now is, but was surrounded by woods, and it gave me the impression that I was in the wilderness.

I came here to visit my uncle, Major A. Smith. After leaving the depot I went down to Ament's hotel which was then in charge of S. J. Harding and Ben Taylor. I inquired for my uncle and was told to go to the livery-stable which stood on Washington street about where Moses Keyte's harness shop is now located and there I would find a man who knew everybody in the whole country. That man was George Jones, who told me that my uncle was living on the west bank of the Shiawassee river near the Carson schoolhouse. He told me to go west as far as Burrell Chipman's farm, then take the first road running north. When I got well on my way I met Charlie Collier, a man well known to all the old settlers, who was then living on the north road, on a farm which is now owned and occupied by S. J. Harding. He stopped his team and invited me to ride as far as his place, which I was glad to do.

He very soon found out that I was right from the east, and commenced to tell me bear stories to frighten me.

He told me that his wife went to the spring one night for a pail of water when a bear raised up at her from the opposite side of a big log. It was her custom when she went to the spring to take the ax with her. Now just as the bear raised up Mrs. Collier struck him over the head and killed him. By this time it was quite dark and he was telling this to scare me. He also said that a man on the big marsh was badly clawed up. He told me that bears were so plenty that I might see one before I got to the place where my uncle lived. When we arrived at his house he very kindly offered to go down to my uncle's house with me. I concluded he was trying to frighten me, and thanked him and told him it was not any worse for me to go down alone than it was for him to come back alone.

At that time the road was only a track through the woods. The bushes grew very close to the roadside. By this time it had grown quite dark and I was on the alert for danger. Every twig that I broke with my feet as I walked made a noise that frightened me, and oh, how glad I was to hear the welcome voices of my uncle and his family. The next morning Collier came down there and told my uncle that he could not scare me out and he guessed I would do to live in Michigan.

At that time wild turkey and deer were quite plentiful on the west side of the river. Occasionally the howling of the wolves could be heard. It was during this year that the wolves destroyed a flock of sheep for Judge Gould on his farm less than a mile east of the village.

That winter I taught school in the Goss schoolhouse for twenty-six dollars a month and boarded around. I took my pay in town orders which I sold to David Ingersoll at a discount of twenty per cent. The year following that I taught school in St. Charles. The pioneer history of Saginaw county gives me the credit of being the first male teacher in St. Charles.

The fall that I came to Owosso the great Michigan fires occurred. I fought fire a good many days to help the farmers save the buildings and fences from the flames. The smoke was so dense that it was impossible to see any great distance without a lantern. It was no uncommon thing to see people in the village of Owosso going about with lighted lanterns in the day time. Many people did not dare to go far away from home for fear of getting lost. The smoke settled down on the river and killed the fish by the thousands. I saw the fish leap two

or three feet out of the water on the land where they would die of suffocation. The Indians gathered up large basketfuls of these fish and undertook to sell them in Owosso but the people did not care to buy them.

The last two nights of August and the first night in September there were three hard frosts. Corn was just in the milk at that time and the frost cut it so that there was no good corn in the country. This frost also ruined the potato crop.

The Ament hotel and the building back of D. Lyon Thorpe & Co.'s store on Exchange street were the only brick buildings in Owosso when I came. The public school was in a frame building on the corner of Washington and Williams streets where the Lutheran church now stands. At that time David Gould and E. A. Todd were operating a steam saw mill where Pond's marble shop is now located. This was the pioneer steam power of the county.

Whiting Tillotson was running a store on West Exchange street in a building which is still standing, and it was no uncommon sight to see the Indians come into his store with packs of furs and in the season great baskets of cranberries. Nine-tenths of the teams that you would see on the street would be ox-teams. Horses and carriages were owned by the very few.

The two principal stores in town were D. Lyon Thorpe & Co., and C. M. Moses. This was before the coming of Osburn & Sons. I well remember of getting my mail at the postoffice in that little store kept by C. M. Moses.

The winter I came to Owosso we had ten weeks of nice sleighing. One night while I was on my way from school to my uncle's, a bear followed me from a place near William Sawyer's farm to the Carson schoolhouse. The next morning when I went back to my school I saw the tracks of the bear. Fresh snow had fallen and they were very plain and no one else had been over the road. When I arrived at the schoolhouse I met two hunters. I told them about the bear and the tracks I had seen. They found the tracks, crossed the river to the east and killed the bear at a point near where Dr. McCormick's farm now is.

#### YE OLD TIME MAIL CARRIER.

#### Carrying the Mails in the 1850's.

One morning in the year 1851, when I was about seven years old, Door Tillotson came to our house and asked my mother if I could

go over to his house and see him fly his new kite that afternoon.

My parents were then living in a pretty house situated on West Williams street, on the lot now occupied by the residence of Mr. J. C. Osborn. Dorr Tillotson's home was on East Exchange street, where he lived with his mother and brothers for many years. The house was situated on the land now covered by the dwelling house and other buildings owned by Mrs. Joseph Amos.

My mother let me go and, if I remember rightly, several other boys from our neighborhood went along with us to see the sport. We went down the hill about where Mr. Broad's house now stands, until we came to a well-beaten path which led eastward and on the side of the hill. I remember going by several springs of clear cold water, which then flowed from this hillside. We arrived at the sawmill and from there went over to Exchange street, where we soon found ourselves at Dorr's home. So far as I can now remember, that was my first appearance on Exchange street. The kite was a success and flew well. It was of the old-fashioned kind, such as the pioneer boys used to make fifty years ago. After this time I was a constant and regular visitor at the Tillotson house for many years. In those early days there were but three houses on Exchange east of Park street. On the north side of the street was the Tillotson house, while on the south stood the Daniel Gould house and one built and occupied by "the Maxwells." This has been the homestead of the Retan family for a great many years.

At that early date, on the southwest corner of Park and Exchange street was situated the pretty home of Dwight Dimmick. Even at that early date it was nicely shaded with trees, one of which, as I shall always remember, was a large and beautiful butternut tree. The next building to the west, on the south side of Exchange street, was the store of D. Lyon Thorpe. This brings us to the corner of Washington street. On the southwest corner of Washington and Exchange streets was the old frame store built for the firm of Gould & Fish. Still further to the west stands the Tillotson store which is known today as Sloan's Home bakery. The next and only building on the south side of Exchange street was Luther Comstock and Miner Chipman's carpenter shop. This building is still standing not far from Water street. The first building west of the Tillotson house was the Ingersoll tavern, which stood on land now occupied by the late opera-house block.

Here we cross Washington street and continue west until we come to the residence of Erastus Barnes standing on the corner of Exchange

and Ball streets. If you will look into one of the windows of the east wing of Mr. Barnes's house you can read the sign which gave to him his name, "Tailor Barnes." Looking to the west across Ball street we see a log-house which stood then on land now occupied by the Argus office. Continuing on Exchange street west, we come to C. M. Moses' store. This building is still standing on the northeast corner of Exchange and Water streets. At the west end of Exchange street stood the grist-mill of Dewey and Stewart, but the old mill building was not as large as the one that burned a few years ago. The store of C. M. Moses, fifty years ago or more, was one of the busiest places in all the town. Here Mr. Moses made a fortune, but its golden days have long since passed away. The other day in going by the old place I looked up over the doorway and read these words, "Groceries and Provisions." There is a good story told of Mr. Moses when he first built this store. It was in the spring of the year when Jack Wood came into the store and after a few words of pleasant conversation asked Mr. Moses if he had ever seen any of the wild onions that grew here in Michigan. Mr. Moses, who had lately moved here from New York, said he never had. Jack remarked, "I brought along a few. I did not know but you might want to taste them." So one of the onions, or rather leeks, was prepared for Mr. Moses. "Why," said he, "they do taste like onions don't they." "Yes," said Jack, as he brought forward his "leeky" butter which in due time he sold to Mr. Moses at a good price.

At the time of which we write the postoffice was located in the southwest corner of Mr. Moses store, and as the rest of this story has to do with carrying the mail in and out of Owosso fifty years ago, we will let Ebenezer Gould, of Owosso, the hero of this old time mail-bag, tell his own story.

"My father's name was Daniel Gould and my mother's name was Angeline Hammond Gould. I was born in Owosso, on Exchange street, in the Tillotson house on the 22d day of November, 1837. I have the honor of being the first white child born in Owosso. The Tillotson house was the first frame dwelling put up in Owosso. It was built by my father and owned by him for a while. The woodwork with which the house is finished is of oak and was sawed from the log by hand with a whipsaw. When the livery-stable building was put up by the late Joseph Amos, the old house was moved to the east end of Main street, where it now stands.

"I began to carry the mail to Chesaning in 1847, when I was but ten years old. I only went to Chesaning on Saturday, which did not hinder

me from going to school the rest of the week, in the old schoolhouse that once stood on the southeast corner of Washington and Williams streets.

"I began to carry the mail regularly in 1849 from Owosso to Lyons. I was not of age, and I was afraid that they would object, but I passed a good examination and was allowed to continue my work.

"W. S. Ament, my uncle, who was the landlord of the Ament tavern, then had the government contract for carrying the mail. This tavern, built and owned by Mr. Ament, is the same building now known as the New National hotel. In those days it was only two stories high. I rode horseback and I had the choice of twelve ponies which Mr. Ament furnished for my use.

"On Mondays I used to start for Lyons on what was known as the south route, and return on Wednesday night. Then on Thursday morning, I would start and go on horseback to Lyons by the west route. I used to ride an Indian pony. Four days in the week I rode thirty-six and on two, forty miles daily.

"We got our mail at C. M. Moses' store, on the corner of Water and Exchange streets. I left Owosso at 6 o'clock in the morning. My first change of mail on the south route was at George Slocum's; my next was at the Hughes' settlement, where I used to stay all night; the next morning I went to Lyons; there my first stop was at Hill's postoffice, where I rode out to Lyons, the end of my route. Then on my return I rode to my first postoffice, where I stayed all night; then on Wednesday I returned home to Owosso. On Thursday morning I was again ready to start for Lyons on my west route. My first change of mail was at Middlebury postoffice, then again at Rochester colony, from there to Benedict Plains, where I stayed all night, and in the morning I rode on to Fish Creek, and from there into Lyons. Then I returned to Benedict Plains, from there home.

"The people along the route would hand me mail to post at the nearest office. They used to give me a penny for each letter or paper I mailed for them. This was hardly "Rural Free Delivery" but it was a good thing for me, as I made more from posting letters than for carrying the mail at five dollars per month.

"One time, when my uncle and my namesake, Col. Ebenezer Gould, of Fifth Michigan Cavalry fame, was on his way home from Traverse City, where he had been engaged on a government survey for the building of a State road, he sent word to Mr. Ament to send me with a horse and wagon to Lyons so he could ride home. On our return we had

gone as far as Greenbush when our wagon broke down and we had to walk to Rochester colony, where I got a one-horse wagon and brought my uncle home. He had then been away from Owosso surveying in the great north woods for nearly a year.

"When I was sixteen years of age I began to drive stage for Mr. Ament. I used to drive from Owosso to Flint and sometimes to Howell. Here my passengers caught the stage to Pontiac. I also drove my stage to Lansing. It took me all day to drive to Flint. One of my routes was through the Miller settlement, and sometimes through the Irish and Priest settlements.

"One dark night while I was carrying the mail, on my return from Lyons, I was chased by wolves between Fish Creek and Benedict Plains. I was in a strip of woods eight miles long with the wolves very close to me. I could hear them howling on all sides. My pony was frightened but he kept up a good smart gallop. We were nearing the house of William Hubble, which was built of logs and stood near where Maple Rapids is now located. This was my stopping place for the night. We were coming along at a great rate, wolves and horse all in a bunch. Just at this point young Mr. Hubble came out to meet me. I assure you I was glad when the flashing of the light from the lantern which he carried frightened the wolves away and they skulked back into the woods.

"At another time I was stopped nearly an hour by a bear in the road, which frightened my horse, but after awhile the bear walked off and allowed me to pursue my journey in peace."

#### THE SHIAWASSEE EXCHANGE.

##### Or the Story of Bradley Martin's Golden Voiced Violin.

It was in the year 1858 that I saw the old Shiawassee Exchange for the first time. My father had taken me with him from Owosso to Vernon, where we spent the entire day, he trying a lawsuit, and I having a good time. But now we were on our way home, as I supposed, when my father made the remark that we must be getting near the river. It was then I discovered we were not going in the direction of home, but were wearing off to the southwest instead. We were among the hills, going up and down, and when we had arrived upon the top of a high hill my father startled me by exclaiming, "What kind of a star do you make that out to be?" pointing at the same time with his whip towards the west to a large star with a tail to it. I was startled and could

not tell. All this was in August in 1858, and little did we dream that the star would grow in size and length until the whole western horizon was filled with its flame and glory. I have since learned that this star was Donati's comet.

We turned to the left and drove down the hill and came to the river, where we saw above the rising mists and across the stream a large frame building. At this time it was quite dark but my father knew where to drive, and we forded the stream in safety. I do not remember how we got from the river to the Grand River road. It seems to me at this date that we were but a short time in going from the old Exchange to my uncle Martin's.

The Old Shiawassee Exchange stood near the Shiawassee river, and on the south part of the southeast fractional quarter of section twenty-five in town six, north of range 3 east, and contained seventy-three acres of land more or less. It was owned by the United States government till 1831, and then sold to A. L. Williams. Lemuel Brown, 1838, undivided one half; A. L. & B. O. Williams undivided one half, 1838; B. O. Williams 1838, all; A. L. Williams 1840, all; Anthony Sugdeon, agt., 1845, all; Joseph Grace 1855, all; George Royce, 1864, all; Mary Rogers, 1865; Rochus Elsesar 1869, all.

The reader will notice the name of Joseph Grace who owned and occupied the Exchange about eleven years. It is to him we are indebted for a picture of the old building.

The first to occupy this house was Mrs. Wealthy Jackson whose father and mother were Levi and Esther Rowe.

#### THE FIRST SHERIFF OF SHIAWASSEE COUNTY.

After a careful examination of records we find that in the year 1837, the same year that Levi Rowe came to Michigan, the organization of the county was effected under authority of an act of the legislature, approved March 13, 1837, which provided that the county of Shiawassee be and the same is hereby organized for county purposes, and the inhabitants thereof shall be entitled to the rights and privileges to which, by law, the inhabitants of other counties of this State are entitled. Under this act a special election was held in May, 1837, resulting in the election of Levi Rowe as sheriff. In 1838 Elisha Brewster was elected, defeating Rowe by a few votes.

At the first term of court held in the county Levi Rowe was appointed crier for the term. We find the name of Elisha Brewster among those who were summoned to act as one of the grand jury. So

that he could not have been sheriff at that time. Mr. Rowe held court but once and did not receive much pay therefrom. But he was sheriff under the law before Brewster. Hon. Josiah Turner says that a few years ago he was called upon to deliver a pioneer address in Livingston county and that he looked the matter up and found an old record which proved to him that Levi Rowe, and not Elisha Brewster, was the first sheriff of Shiawassee.

Mrs. Jackson tells this story: "I was nine years old when I came to Michigan, from Oswego county, New York, in 1837. We traveled by the canal to Reedsport, New York; from there we crossed the lakes to Detroit in the steamer United States. Father left mother and six of us children at Franklin, twenty-five miles from Detroit, while he came on to Shiawassee county and built a house for us to live in. We were *en route* for Ionia, but were told that prices were so high there that father decided to stop in Fremont. Father's land joined that taken up by the Jacksons. We lived there two years and then moved to the Shiawassee Exchange in 1839. It was the oldest piece of settled land in the county. We went there for the purpose of entertaining travelers and carrying on the farm, and lived there six years.

"The Exchange was a two-story building. Under each gable was painted in large letters, "Shiawassee Exchange." The ballroom occupied all of one floor except a bedroom. When the ballroom was in use the bed was removed and this room was used for an office. Balls were held from one to three times a year. Fourth of July, Christmas, New Year, etc. Lemuel Brown's wedding was held in this ball room. All the well-known people of the county were invited, but there was no dancing. There was a little stage for the musicians at the east end of the hall and a fireplace in the bedroom. A New Year's ball at the Old Exchange was the greatest social event that took place within a radius of forty miles. People came from Byron, Corunna, Owosso, Hartwellville and sometimes even from Argentine and Ionia. Among the guests, on one occasion, were Thompson Hartwell and niece, afterwards Mrs. Edward Ament.

"The same evening Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Martin, with many well-known people whose names I cannot now recall, came as guests to see the dancing. According to the usual custom the company assembled about 5 o'clock in the afternoon and had supper before the dancing began. They danced until midnight and often far into the wee sma' hours. Most of the ladies were dressed in white and every gentleman came with his pumps in his overcoat pocket. The favorite contra

dances were 'Money Musk,' 'Virginia Reel,' 'McDonald's Reel,' etc."

Mrs. Jackson knew John Knaggs and his wife Phyllis. She went to school in Shiawassee town to Andrew Parsons, who was governor of Michigan in 1853-54.

Justice Levi Rowe, father of Mrs. Jackson, often held court in the Shiawassee Exchange. The township elections were held there several times. Mrs. Jackson says, "I have seen the Bradley Martin violin. He used to loan it on special occasions to the Jacksons. It was lighter colored than others. It was so well known about the county that the Bradley Martin violin was a household word."

Mrs. Wealthy Jackson is the widow of Andrew Jackson who died during the time of the civil war. She now resides in Ypsilanti with her daughter, Miss Della Jackson, a teacher in the State normal school. Mrs. Jackson's other children are Mrs. Julia Sargent, of Owosso; Andrew Jackson, of Fenton, and C. R. Jackson, of East Tawas.

## Chapter II.

Mrs. Lucinda Shears, of Newburg, says: "I first saw the Shiawassee Exchange in the fall of 1836. I arrived there with my mother and sister when the frame building was in process of construction. I remember the log store which was across the road from the frame building. I think that Williams kept that store at that time, and the double log-house stood near there where the men lived while the frame building was going up.

"In the winter of 1837 I went from Newburg with a big load of young people to Rufus Rathburn's, near the schoolhouse at Union Plains, where we attended a dance. It was early morning when we started for home. We stopped at Bradley Martin's, and stayed long enough to get warm and were served with champagne, which was a novelty. I noticed that Mr. Martin's house was warmed with fireplaces, which were built of sticks with a hearth plastered with mud.

"My sister Harriet Seymour was along, as well as Caroline Baker, William Sly, William Newbury, one of the Tinklepaugh girls and Sally Baker. This was a private dancing party, and the first real dance I attended was in the Old Exchange. Mr. Underwood was the dancing master. When I first went up to the dance-hall just at the top of the stairs there was a small room in which was a fireplace. I saw the musicians on a platform in one corner of the room. We had supper about 12 o'clock and we all had a nice time. The 'hard winter,' I think

that was in 1842, I was living across the road here on my father's farm. My father drove his cattle to the wood and cut down basswood trees for them to browse on, to keep them from starving. My father at one time went to Pontiac to mill. He took grain for all of our neighbors, and stayed ten days. My mother sifted wheat bran and made stirred cake, and I wish I had some of it now. John Beach boarded at my father's, and went to the same school I did. Mrs. Shears was a daughter of Sidney Seymour. I have heard the Jacksons play for dances at the Exchange on the Bradley Martin violin."

Norman A. Harder says: "I am sixty-six years old. I was born in Newburg. My father, Nicholas P. Harder, came to Newburg in 1836. He moved from Sullivan county, New York, and drove through from Detroit to Newburg, and lived for a while with Sidney Seymour, the father of Mrs. Shears and Mrs. Snell. They all lived together until father bought twenty acres of land from Seymour. My father was the only doctor at this point. He built one of the first frame houses in the village, which is still standing. I went to school in a schoolhouse that stood on grandfather's land, right where Mr. Ripley's house now is in Newburg. My school teacher was Ruey Lyman. Afterwards, in 1848, I went to school in Corunna to a man named Wilson. At that time my father was county treasurer for two years. I have known Bradley Martin a great many years.

"I have seen the log building at Knaggs Post a great many times. The first time I went to the Exchange was with my father, when Levi Rowe lived there. There was a double log-house on the south side of the road; afterwards Sidney Seymour lived there. I recollect the time because I saw an old squaw there. The Seymours had a great many apples, and this old squaw would eat only rotten apples on account of her teeth.

"The upper part of the Exchange was a hall, with a big fireplace in the west end.

"The first postoffice I remember was at Shiawassee, kept by Ryon Chase.

"My father once owned eighty acres of land on the west, and the Tinklepaugh farm of seventy-eight acres and sixty-five acres on the east side of the road in Newburg which has always been my home. On the Swan farm at Newburg which I now own there was an apple tree that was taken from the old Indian orchard. It stood alone a great many years and always used to hang full of small red apples."

Mrs. Reuben H. B. Morris says: "My maiden name was Hannah M.

Harder. I was born in the town of Rockland, Sullivan county, New York. I came with my father, Dr. Harder, to Newburg in 1836, and crossed the Shiawassee river at Knaggs' Post. We had started for Grand Rapids, but when we reached Blood's tavern, on account of bad roads, we returned to Newburg, and took possession of the Sidney Seymour farm. When we crossed the river at Knaggs I saw John Knaggs' house and the Beaubien's was not far away. I afterwards went to school with Antoine and John Knaggs, the son of the older John. The school was in Cornelia Mills' new log-house. When I first saw the Shiawassee Exchange, Levi Rowe was living in it. I went there to visit Wealthy Rowe and her sister. Wealthy showed me the ballroom, which was warmed with fireplaces. I knew Morris Richard and Tower Jackson, and have heard them play on their violins at the dances in the evening. I knew Kate Drake, Bradley Martin, Mary, Anne and Irene Beach. Old Fisher's squaw once came to me and wanted some wheat flour to make cake for her papoose to carry to school at the log-house on the reservation where Lucinda Lyman taught."

Mrs. Edward B. Tubbs of Owosso writes: "My father and mother were John and Sarah Redson. My mother, who was Scotch, was educated in Albany, New York, from where grandfather came to Detroit early in the thirties. My grandfather's name was Francis Young and at one time he lived at or near the Exchange, where mother and father were married. At one time grandfather kept a store in a log-house about a quarter of a mile from the river near the Exchange. My father and mother lived there but a short time before they removed to Corunna, where they kept the old Corunna house, which was famous in the old days. I knew about the Bradley Martin violin, and heard my people speak of it. My father would take my Aunt Mary Young, who was afterwards Mrs. Dallis Morton, to the dances held in the Exchange at Wheeler's tavern, Corunna and Byron."

Mr. George Smith of Vernon says: "My parents, Thomas and Melinda Smith, with eight children, came to Michigan in 1847, from Jefferson, New York, when I was fourteen years old. We came to Detroit by propeller and from there by rail to Pontiac, where we hired teams to take us to Vernon.

"We reached Shiawassee county about a mile east of Byron, and stayed over night there. Then we came to the town line between Burns and Vernon, where we stopped with the widow of Sanford Smith. When my father went into Vernon on section 33 there was a log-house which he fixed up and we moved into it. Some of our family still live

on the old farm. When the family were settled all the cash my father had was five dollars. He paid \$1,000 for the place, which contained one hundred acres of improved land, with a large apple orchard. We arrived in July and the peaches were beginning to ripen. We gathered 200 bushels. We had to give them away to get rid of them. Our place was three miles from the old Shiawassee Exchange. We had heard about this and of money made there. My father and two brothers and Enos Wright went with me to visit the place. We crossed the Shiawassee river at the old ford near the Exchange. Not far away from the Exchange I saw a small log-house in which C. W. Miller was keeping store. We went into it, where we saw calico, sugar, pipes and tobacco. In the Exchange was a postoffice kept by George Seymour's father. Most of the second story of the building was in one room. The beds for the tavern were around the room, and when they gave a dance they took them out. There was a platform at one end for the music. We had been in the habit of dancing in a little log-house with one room and we went up there to see the hall for we wanted for once to see a room that was big enough to dance in. The building was warmed by fireplaces. I have been there a great many times when they were dancing. The Jacksons used to play there often. The young people of my neighborhood in Vernon would meet me somewhere in the Lovejoy district and hire me to take them across the river. If it were summer both boys and girls would pull off their shoes and stockings and wade over the river. But if it were in cold weather they would cross in a canoe. The wagon I used at one time was the only one within five miles of our place. Once I took over Sarah, Eliza and William Miller, Nelson and Sarah Smith, Julia and Eleanor Tew, Harmon Smedley, Eliza Harrington, Thomas, Betsy, Anne and Mary Dowell.

### Chapter III.

"To perfect that wonder—the locomotive—has perhaps not required the expenditure of more mental strength and application than to perfect the wonder of music—the violin."—W. E. Gladstone.

It was almost night. The summer sun had shed its last rays upon the hills round about the cottage; yet it was not dark, for the mountains which shut in this valley glowed with a brightness that reminded one of the coming of a new day. Seated at the door of the cottage was a young lad, waiting and watching for the coming of his mother. It

was the luminous after-glow, shining from the distant mountains that enabled the lad to look across the valley into its farthest rocky recesses for the form he loved so well. The boy was so busy watching the pink and white, the red and the gold colors of the sky that he did not at first see the approach of his mother, but he heard the voice. She was singing in a rich soprano. She knew well who was waiting for her at the distant cottage door, so she sang with the repose that gave to her listener not only rest, but peace and quiet to his soul.

That little lad never forgot his mother's voice. As he grew up the voice grew with him. In time he became a maker of violins, and lived in Paris, and then afterwards in Merecourt, France. Although he never made many violins, he tried always to so construct them that when they were skilfully played he could hear his mother's voice again as it sounded to him across the valley when, as a boy, he sat by her cottage door. This lad, grown to manhood, was F. Breton, the violin maker. Prior to the year 1608 the violin was not regarded as a solo instrument, nor was it considered to be even of importance in orchestral work. Its use was confined solely to support and accompany the soprano voice.

Merecourt, situated in French Lorraine, is a city on the Madon river, in the foot hills of the Vosges mountains and contains a population of 5,480. They make lace, embroidery and stringed musical instruments. Merecourt, together with Mark Neukirchen in the Kingdom of Saxony, supply the trade with nine-tenths of the violins now made. The Merecourt fiddles have a decided advantage in quality and price. Although inferior to the violin of the Cremonal period, excellent instruments are still made there.

Antonio Stradivari, of Cremona, began his best work in 1667. From that time he improved his style, till he reached the climax. He was born in Cremona in 1644, and died in 1737. He gave to the violin of today not only its sweet tone, but to all violin makers a model which has been known for two hundred years as the "Grand pattern." Stradivari was the king of luthiers, and his fame is as wide as the civilized world. F. Breton made violins in Merecourt and used the flat Stradivari pattern.

The wood which Breton used in the construction of his violin came to him from various sources. The fair forests which shaded the western slopes of the Swiss mountains grew the maple for the back of his violins, while the deal or pine was found nearer home. At that time pine was to be found in small quantities growing in the valleys of the Vosges mountains. Yet, whenever his uncle came from Italy for a visit,

bringing with him for his nephew choice bits of wood which had been seasoning for years, they were eagerly seized upon by Breton and used to advantage in his instruments.

It is now more than one hundred years since our violin was made. Merecourt in those early days, with its lace making and its violin trade, was a busy town. The workmen were not at that period gathered together in factories, working for one master, but each maker worked for himself, and in most cases owned his house. These were tall, high-gabled affairs, and the shop was up under the roof, while the rest of the building was used for living purposes.

In some such place as I have described F. Breton, in his day, must have worked. His bench was placed near a window, through which the wind was blowing continually. From the rafters and beams were hung many pieces of maple and pine wood which he would watch with great care. Almost daily one could see him on his ladder up among his blocks feeling off them. This he had done so many years that he could tell with his hands the different densities of the wood by the feeling, just as blind people can tell certain colors.

Over and around the workbench were hung a number of unfinished violins, some only waiting for the varnish, while others were not ready for that important final touch. Here was an unfinished back, there was the pine top of some future fiddle waiting to have its sound-holes cut, while its more fortunate neighbor not only has sound-holes, but is placed in a frame that temporarily holds it nicely adjusted to a neck, back and side, so that the maker may test it, and if it be not right he may cut a bit of the wood away to make it suit his fancy. Up against the wall, or hung from the rafters, are various parts of old violins.

These, together with the new, swung to and fro in the wind, and they are never silent. Each violin and each piece has its own voice and sings in its own separate key. Their music is at times sweet, but always wild and wierd. The old-time violin maker heard many wonderful and strange words and songs from his unfinished instruments.

F. Breton for many years made violins, and whenever in his work he came across a piece of wood that contained the sound of his mother's voice, he laid it aside. At first he made only cheap violins, but as the years went on he became very skilful in the execution of his work, and at last there came a time when he was quite ready to begin the great work of his life, that of making a violin upon which, when skilfully played, he could hear his mother's voice, which was ever dear to him, and was always singing to him from a great distance, yet he could

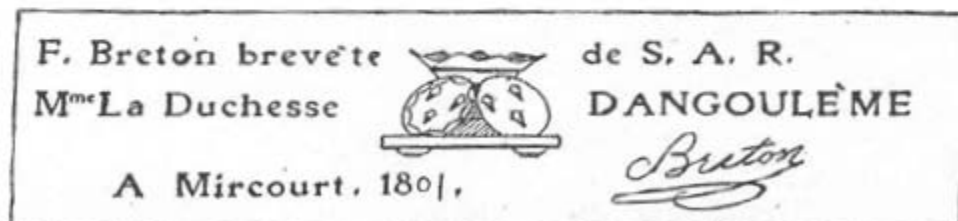
hear it as in the days of old, when he was seated at his mother's cottage door.

The violin was made, and in time varnished with that wonderful yellow varnish that in his years of probation Breton learned to make so well.

When it was completed it was sent to Paris, where it was placed on exhibition in one of the leading music shops. As good fortune would have it, the violin had not been there many days before royalty appeared in the shop in the person of Madame La Duchesse D'Angoulême, who at that moment was in search of a violin which was to be used in a new rendering of the old Greek play "Antigone." This play was to be produced in honor of the Duchesse. She was then in search of a violin for a theater actor who was to take one of the parts in the play.

When Madame La Duchesse D'Angoulême heard not only the resonant but the sweet, clear tones of the violin, she was charmed with it, and demanded to know the name of the maker. The shopkeeper explained that it was a new instrument which he had just received from Mirecourt, and he believed that the maker was without fame and without a patron. "Send him to me," cried the Duchesse, "and I will be his patron." And so it came about, all in good time, that Breton came to Paris and appeared before the Duchesse, who gave him her permission to use her name on his violin labels. Breton lost no time in having one printed. A facsimile of this interesting label is here given with the translation as follows:

F. Breton, patroned by her Royal highness, Madame the Duchesse of Angoulême, Breton, Mirecourt, 1801.



Facsimile of label on F. Breton's famous violin.

We have reason to believe that the violin of which we have written is the only one bearing the label of the Duchesse that has reached this side of the Atlantic and we believe it to be the original one. Lyon and Healy, of Chicago, famed for their musical instruments as well as for

their knowledge of violin lore, have this to say about the maker and his label:

"We judge from the label that this must be an exceptionally fine specimen, and if chance offered we should be delighted to have a look at it. We always supposed that this maker must have turned out some instruments which were far in advance of those which ordinarily bear his name."

#### Chapter IV.

Marie Therese Charlotte, Duchesse of Angoulême, was born at Versailles, December 19th, 1778. She was the daughter of Louis XVI of France and his queen, Marie Antoinette. At the age of twenty-one the princess was married to her cousin, the Duke of Angoulême, who at that time was serving in the army of the Prince of Condé.

Napoleon I said of the Duchesse of Angoulême, "She is the only man in her family," and in truth she seemed to have possessed a very bright mind, together with a brave and generous heart. She was not wanting, either, in the energy of character of her famous grandmother, Maria Theresa, queen of the Hungarians.

Historians of the period all agree that had the Duchesse of Angoulême been queen of France, instead of being a princess without influence, Napoleon would have hesitated in taking the step of leaving the Isle of Elba to return to France.

In about the year 1826, the theater actor, whom we have heretofore seen, was the owner of the violin in order to better his fortunes, removed from Paris to New York, bringing the instrument with him. He was very skilful in performing upon the golden-voiced fiddle, which for several years brought him both fame and money. But there came a time when the theater actor, not having the good Duchesse of Angoulême to patronize him, found himself without money. In the year 1836, as the story goes, we find that for a small sum of money he left his fiddle at one of the music stores in the city of New York. About this time Bradley Martin visited this store, and the pledge placed upon the violin having expired, he purchased it.

There are three stories about Bradley Martin's buying the violin. As all three are good ones we give them to the reader just as we heard them.

In the year 1836, Bradley Martin, whose home was in Central New York, had been up to Albany making such purchases as he thought

necessary to take with him to Michigan. Just as his purchases were about completed, several of his young men friends gathered around him and began to talk. One said: "Bradley, what are you going to take to Michigan with you?" "Why," said Bradley, "I have bought some carpenter tools, a shoemaker's kit, some dishes and a fine lot of good books." "Oh! is that all? I tell you what, you must buy you a fiddle to keep from getting lonesome."

Then another said, "you must buy a good violin; I know where one is now in pawn in New York city." "Let us go and get it," said Bradley. On the morrow they all went down the river to New York city, where Bradley Martin bought the golden-voiced violin.

Mrs. Helen Beach Tillotson, of New York, says that the violin was purchased by Gov. Troop, of New York, for his nephew, Bradley Martin, who brought it to Michigan in 1836.

Miss Ellen Kimball, of Owosso, says Mr. Martin told her a friend of his took him into a shop in New York, where he purchased the violin to take West with him. She remembers the instrument very well with its yellow back made of curly maple. She says: "I can now recall a good many dances which I attended where the Jacksons furnished the music. Morris and Richard Jackson, at that time, owned only one violin between them, and they used to loan this of Mr. Martin. At one time I attended a leap-year party given in the old Corunna house. The names of ten girls were printed on the invitations and all ended in "ie" and I was very proud to see my name in print.

"I can remember Libbie and Jennie Barnes, Libbie Stewart, Mollie and Sarah Williams, Nellie Kimball and my sister Libbie Kimball. Margaret Kimberly from Corunna and Hattie Ferry and Lucy Dennis, from Byron, were there. I met Mr. James B. Wheeler there for the first time. The music at this ball was furnished by the Jackson's, and Bradley Martin's violin was used."

Last summer when the violin came into my possession for a short time I showed it to Miss Mabel Ferry, for I was quite anxious to hear what she might say about its beautiful form and golden voice. I found her quite busy with her pupils, and while waiting, took the violin out of its case that I might have it all ready. Miss Ferry surprised me by saying: "You have a sweet-toned violin there. See this long, slender neck, and look at this scroll, see how thin and delicately it is carved. Yes, I knew you had a sweet-toned violin the moment I saw it." All this time she had been adjusting the strings to the violin, but had not yet made a sound upon it. Then using her own bow she played upon

the instrument, trying it at that time for its resonant qualities, which seemed to be excellent. She stopped playing and said, "This violin has been repaired. Some one has had the top off." Then she showed me a couple of spots not far from the base of the instrument, saying, as she did so: "Some one who was a smoker has owned this violin. See where he has set it on fire and filled the burned places with wax."

She also said, "This has been to dances." I answered, "Yes, to a great many dances."

At that time I was greatly surprised at what she told me, but afterwards learned that dance music is played invariably upon the middle or lower register of the finger board of the violin, and that the strings being pressed in two or three places for many years wear a place for the fingers to fit into on the board.

The next morning I took the violin back to its present owner, Mr. Charles Jackson, and asked him these questions before I told him of Miss Ferry's story. "How did those black spots come on the violin?" He said: "When I got it from your uncle Bradley there was only one spot there, and he said that when he bought it in New York they told him at the music store that its former owner, a theater actor, was a smoker and that it had caught fire from the sparks from his pipe.

"The other spot was caused by my own carelessness. At one time, many years ago, I was playing for a dance in Gould's hall. I went out with the rest of the musicians to get something to eat and left the violin, and when I came back some of the boys had gotten the old fiddle out of its box and in some way had punched a small hole in it just at its base. This I mended as best I could with wax."

I again took the violin to Miss Ferry, who played on it "The Cradle Song." It was very sweet, and its plaintive notes seemed to reach the heart. Miss Ferry then said, "That is the kind of music which should be selected for your violin."

Miss Ellen Kimball says: "At one time when I was visiting at Uncle Martin's with my mother, the violin was brought out and while we were talking about it Mr. Riley Crawford, a Methodist circuit rider, who was also a guest, came in. He at once caught sight of the violin and took it up as if he had found a treasure and began to play dance music 'opera rell,' 'money musk,' etc. My mother rather joked him about a Methodist minister playing dance tunes, when he replied, 'Oh, but those are good and we cannot afford to let the devil have all the good tunes.'"

## Chapter V.

You will remember that in my last chapter I told you how Miss Mabel Ferry had stated to me that our violin had been repaired and that some one had taken off the top. I do not know how Miss Ferry gained her knowledge of this matter, for upon a careful examination of the old fiddle I found no misplaced varnish nor any undue amount of glue anywhere upon its surface. But Charles Jackson informed me that in about the year 1884 he had sent it to Mr. A. O. Revenaugh, of Jackson, to be repaired for "wolf notes." In a letter written at the time Mr. Revenaugh gives Mr. Jackson the following bit of information: "The sound post was nearly punched through the top, so I let in a piece on the inside. The post had been moved around so much and was too long. The post should just stand up when the violin is unstrung. It is all right now so just let it alone and give it a fair chance. I think it is fine."

At another time Mr. Revenaugh said: "When I had the top off I noticed at some period in its eventful history that its bass bar had been changed." Here then was the solution of one of the mysteries that had clustered around the old fiddle for years. We knew from whom it received its golden voice, but where did it get its strength to stand the strain when the strings are screwed up to modern pitch; for you must know that the original bass bars put in by the Italian master as well as those bass bars that were placed in violins at the period when ours were made have all become too weak for the modern high pitch. The bass or sound bar which is one of the great nervous regulators of the fiddle is a bar of soft, fine, even-grained pine about ten inches long, which extends along the top of the fiddle in a slightly oblique direction underneath the left foot of the bridge. It is glued the whole length, to the top of the fiddle. The old time bass bar was short and flat in distinction to the modern one we have just described.

When Lyon and Healy, of Chicago, wrote me about Breton's violin they mentioned the fact that his instrument should be adjusted in order that they might meet the requirements for modern pitch and tone.

"Yes," said Mrs. Adelaide H. Parkill, "those were good times. I attended my first ball in the county at the Shiawassee Exchange about the year 1843, going with Mr. Andrew Jackson. My brother Norman was there also.

"The old landmarks are passing away. The Shiawassee Exchange

is gone and the Phillips' house or Beaches' tavern, as I used to know it when I was but a young girl, is burned. And the people who lived in them and made them so jolly and gay are gone. Those were good old days. It is true we went to balls and dances but they meant more to us and we made more of them than they do now a days. Oh, for the good old days. In those times traveling tailors made clothes for the men. My brother, Horace, made shoes. We always had to give up the warmest corner at the old fireplace to him for his shoemakers' bench. But then we did not mind that very much, for when he got his leather ready to pound with his hammer upon his lapstone he would whistle with his tapping until we were all quite merry. Horace made music when he whistled and we all loved to hear him.

"I was greatly interested in the dresses worn by the ladies. They were of an old pattern, and must have been made for their mothers or grandmothers. The Tilson girls were there from Hog Island. One wore a blue and the other a black silk. I shall never forget those dresses and just how they looked.

"We began in the middle of the afternoon, dancing contra dances and reels and then we always wound up with a grand march.

"I was well acquainted with Wealthy Rowe and I saw Mr. Charles Jackson there as a little boy. Morris and Richard furnished the music. Years afterwards when I was in Corunna I went to the building that was erected for a car shop, but which was then used for a furniture factory, to get some picture molding, where I saw Mr. Morris Jackson. He said to a fellow workman, 'I know that lady. I have fiddled for her to dance lots of times.' About fifteen years ago when the doctor and I were attending the pioneer picnic at Byron it began to rain and we hurried over to town and went into one of the hotels. I knew the place. We were in the old tavern in which I attended a dance many years ago."

In the forties Byron was still the largest town in the county. It is true it had lost its chances of becoming the county seat for in the arrangement of the towns of the new county it found itself twenty miles from the center, whereas the first map made Byron the center. The country was new and Byron was looking for other and better things.

There was the capital for instance which was about to be removed from Detroit to the interior of the State and why should not she try to get that? So she was thoroughly aroused to the occasion. A new tavern was built with a bar, sitting, dining and above all an immense ball room, and it was upon the occasion of the dedicatory ball that oc-

curred the story which we have to tell. Of course the services of Morris and Richard Jackson were hastily secured. But this was to be no ordinary ball, so the committee in charge sent away to Pontiac for a musician. It was known that he was to bring with him a real violin and not a common everyday fiddle. This fact was widely advertised and the whole community was waiting in happy expectation of the event.

Early on the first day of the ball Morris Jackson rode into Byron at an early hour. But upon his arrival at the tavern he was surprised to learn of the coming of the Pontiac musician with his violin. Mr. Jackson was not afraid for himself for he was an accomplished violinist, but he had brought with him his one fiddle only and he knew that would not do, while the Bradley Martin violin just at that moment was in its bag hanging on the wall of Mr. Martin's house, eight miles away. He was a man of resources and something must be done. His brother Richard, or as he was familiarly known in the county "Dick" would not arrive in Byron for two hours, and he must be consulted. So he composed his soul, and went away with the rest to watch for the stage, which was to bring to town the strange musician and his violin.

Reader, did you ever see the stage drive into Byron or Owosso? If you have not then you have lost a great event, one which will not repeat itself. When the stage approached the town and arrived at a certain point on the main street, then all was life and horses, driver and passengers were eager to reach their destination.

While the horses dashed along up the main street the driver blew on a long tin horn right merrily. Just at the right point, opposite the tavern, the lead horses swung around in a grand curve and drew gracefully up in front of the tavern with a sudden stop.

The travelers got out and with them the dreaded violinist and his fiddle. Just at this time Dick Jackson arrived and Morris hastened to him with the news. Then said Morris: "Get on my horse and ride to Bradley's and tell him what we have met here, and that we must have his fiddle. Don't stop there but come back at once and be sure and bring the fiddle." Thus it was that faithful Dick, tired as he was, and without dinner, went galloping along the roads and through the woods to Knaggs' bridge.

Morris Jackson waited with patience and after dinner the violinist from Pontiac brought out his instrument and began to tune up, and get ready for the three o'clock dance. Mr. Jackson said: "You have

a good fiddle there." "Yes," said the stranger, "I can drown out any three fiddles you have got in the county." "Oh! is that so? Let me see it." And Mr. Jackson took it and found that while the violin was loud, it was not resonant and did not possess that charming quality of sweet tones which made the Bradley Martin violin so famous among its many friends.

It was three o'clock and it was time to call on the first dance, but Dick with the violin had not arrived. Morris Jackson then tuned up his own fiddle, occupying all the time but keeping his eye on the door for his brother, whom, he knew, was sure to come. Just as they were forming for the Virginia Reel and but a moment or two before it was time for the music to begin, Dick Jackson came into the room and went over to his brother and placed the old fiddle in his hands. It took but the twinkle of an eye for Morris to have it out of its bag, and as he was beginning to thrum its strings, the violinist from Pontiac, held the dance for a moment and said: "What have you there? Where did you get that fiddle?" Morris said: "It is one we have here in the county." "Oh," said the violinist and began the music.

Above the noise from the swaying of the feet, above the scraping of the second fiddles, above all the music that then and there gave forth its joyful melody, the Bradley Martin violin could be heard, rich, clear and sweet.

Some of the friends gathered in the rear of the room and heard its wonderful qualities and one went forward at the proper time and informed Morris Jackson of the violin's great victory.

## Chapter VI.

One evening last summer I brought home the old violin, took it out of its case and placed it upon the table with my books. There I left it for the time.

I had just returned from Newburg where I had been gathering facts for this story, but where I met a gentleman who told me a wolf story, and I was very anxious to retain all the facts he had given me. I arranged my material and began writing. Strange as you may think it, I found it difficult to write about the wolf, with the violin in the room. I had written: "Not far from the bridge in Newburg, on the north side of the road, on a high bank overlooking the river, in days now gone, there stood the cabin home of Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Chalker,"—just at this moment I looked up from my writing as if to catch a

view of the cabin as it stood on the hill overlooking the river, and I caught sight of the old fiddle. There, under the gas-light, its golden varnish was wonderfully bright. For a while it was not the wolf story I was thinking about, but my thoughts were all on the violin. I even took it in my hands and as I turned it over, I thought of its history and of the wonderful story it could tell of Napoleon Bonaparte and of the royal family of France, of whom Madame, the Duchesse of Angoulême was a member. "Ah, yes, old violin, if you could but talk how many romances as well as tragedies you could relate of those famous people and their country." Here I stopped and resumed the wolf story.

"Mrs. C. D. Chalker, whose name was Caroline, was the daughter of Hosea Baker. It was when she was first married that she lived in the lonely cabin that once stood on the high hill which overlooks the Shiawassee river. At one time while her husband was away from home, up the river looking after some timber, Caroline found a wolf in a trap not far from the cabin door. Was she frightened? No! The daughter of Hosea Baker smiled at the thought of fear. She bravely carried the wolf, trap and all, into the cabin where she securely fastened the animal in one of the rooms, and then waited for the coming of her husband. Night came, but Mr. Chalker did not. She built a fire in the fireplace and then waited. But as night deepened that captured wolf began to howl. Then to make things more dreary and dismal, it began to rain. In the distance another wolf answered the captive's howl. This bark or yelp was answered by the captured wolf, and the cabin in its lonesome place was soon surrounded by many howling wolves. They attacked the door, but Mrs. Chalker was equal to the occasion. She seized the axe and with many a well directed blow, managed to keep them from the door. All night long she watched, waited and fought the wild wolves, for the pack did not leave the cabin door until morning light broke."

It was nearly midnight when I ceased writing my wolf story. It had excited me, and as I listened I heard a strange, weird noise. At first I thought it came through the open window, but no, it was nearer me than that. I was not afraid, but it was a most dismal sound to hear. It was like the howling of the wolves, but not nearly so loud. It was low and distant in its sound, and at times I could scarcely hear it. It ceased altogether and then began again. It was then I heard the clear distinct sound of the thrumming of a fiddle. I arose from my seat in great haste and went to the violin. I took it in my hands, but I heard no sound from it whatever. I laid it down again, this time

not far from the window. I took a seat across the room from the fiddle, and as I was about to make myself comfortable in an easy arm chair, I surely heard the violin say these words: "Ketchewondogoning." "Knaggs Post," "That is where I loved to stay." I quickly settled myself down into the easy chair and listened. This is the story heard from the old fiddle:

"I do not know how I got to Knaggs' Post, but when I came to a river I stopped for a long time. At last I heard a loud voice saying, 'Mr. Martin, if you do not want that fiddle of yours wet you had better take it out of the box and carry it across the river.' I had never heard the word 'fiddle' applied to myself before, and I cannot tell you how shocked I was. The noise of opening the box greatly alarmed me too, but Mr. Martin soon had me out. I was securely tied up in my bag. Those horrible violin-cases did not come into fashion until many years after this time. That is the reason why I came to be tied up so snugly in a violin bag. Mr. Martin carefully tucked me up under his arm and then mounting his horse rode down the bank and across the river. When we reached the other side there was quite a crowd of men waiting to give us welcome, but I soon found out that the welcome was all for Mr. Martin and not for me, and was obliged to keep out of sight in my bag. But as soon as we had crossed the river we went down the stream until we came to the post. There Mr. Martin dismounted and went inside, where he at once hid me under his blankets. This I did not like very well, but I could not help myself, so there in the dark I quietly bided my time.

"That same night I heard one of the men ask Mr. Martin about his violin, only the man called me a 'fiddle.' But I was soon overjoyed to hear Mr. Martin say that after supper he would play for them. That evening, while the fires were burning brightly, I was taken out from under the blankets where I had been concealed for so long.

"I was not familiar with the tunes Mr. Martin played, but I know that they were all simple airs. Oh, how I longed for my old master to come and play one of the choice selections he brought with him from Paris. I know that I was vain, but I wanted even those men to hear my beautiful voice. But, no, Mr. Martin said that was enough, and back I went under my blankets, where I stayed this time a great while. At last I was taken out and carried through the woods to a log-house which Mr. Martin had built in a beautiful place in the woods on the side of a hill. I, still in my bag, was placed high on the wall of a pretty room in which there were many books and pictures. This charm-

ing place I thought was to be my home. It is true that it was for many years, but in the end, you shall hear, I was doomed to wander here and there over the face of the earth like a gypsy.

"For several years Mr. Martin, as a bachelor, lived in this house. Many people, often ladies, came to see his beautiful grounds. Sometimes Mr. Martin would invite his guests into his house, where he would entertain them by showing them his books and pictures. Then if they stayed to luncheon, invariably he would take me down from the wall and would play gay tunes for them to dance. These little dancing parties took place in front of the house under the old log porch. On those days I was fairly wild with happiness.

"On one occasion Mr. Martin took me with him to the public meeting held at Ketchewondogoning. We met in a large log-house, where the fire was built upon the ground in the center of the room. The smoke from the flame escaped to the outside through a great square hole in the roof. The people, as they came in, formed in a great circle around the fire. They had met to see the Indians hold their green corn dance.

"I was so placed that I could hear everything, and I was having a good time, when a gentleman was introduced to Mr. Martin, who at once took me out of my bag and placed me in the stranger's hands and bade him play. I may as well say that this gentleman was Mr. Morris Jackson. And how he did play! At last my beautiful voice was heard in this new land.

"The crowd was wild with delight. There were a number of ladies and girls in the room who came forward to have a look at me and I was pleased. I distinctly heard some one speak French words and as I looked up I saw before me a tall and graceful girl. She was very pretty as I saw her that day. Her name was Angelique Bolieu, and the people about her were urging her to sing. Ah, said she to Mr. Jackson, your violin sounds to me like a wild, sweet voice from France. Mr. Jackson then played a piece with which she was familiar and she sang for us in a clear, high soprano voice. I was delighted with her.

"The singer had no more than finished when I caught sight of a face I knew to be that of a lady. She was not far from me and I could see her well. Now I have always been quite proud of my own good looks. There is my delicate scroll head, and my long and slender neck, both of which all admire, but when I saw this lady I blushed with confusion. She was fair, with blue eyes, and her hair was a lovely blonde. Then she stood so tall and straight with an air about her that was

elegant. I heard her call her sister Irene, as she went away. It was then I wanted to be put into my bag and taken home, but no, that very night I was loaned to Morris Jackson who carried me away into the woods to a dancing party in a log-house.

"I have now lived in this county sixty-seven years and have heard and seen strange things. I have heard many people wonder why it was that Bradley Martin remained in Antrim at the home on the hill-side. Was there a mystery about it? Yes, the greatest of all mysteries. If Bradley Martin had gone away from the log-house on the hill-side he would have left behind him that blonde hair, those blue eyes and that elegant form, 'The beauteous being who unto his youth was given.'"