

This is where our Solomon and Joseph lived in the early 1800's, but many of these Coxes and Bakers and Dixons are not ours, but relatives.

Kelly and Kelley in Liberty Twp Posted by: chris alexander Date: December 09, 2001
HISTORY of LIBERTY TWP.

This township was included in Jefferson until the winter of 1832-33, when Dr. Joseph Baker circulated a petition asking for a division of the township and the establishment of a new one. During the winter, Liberty Township was erected from parts of original townships seven and eight, and comprising twenty- four full sections of the latter, and fourteen sections from the former, three of them being fractions.

The first justice of the peace was Josiah Drummond, who was elected in Jefferson Twp., before its dismemberment, but living within the newly formed township of Liberty, he served his term there. The first justice elected under the new organization was Alexander Graham. Elections have been held at Londonderry since the organization of the township. The officers for 1879 were Joseph Thomas, Tilghman Peterman and Simon R. Dixon, trustees; George Ratcliff, treasurer; Elisha Humphrey, clerk; Samuel B. Erskin and Patrick Murphy, justices of the peace; Robert Thacker and James M. Argenbright, constables.

On the farms belonging to Thomas Orr and Milton Jones, in the northwestern part of the township, was a few years since quite a large earthwork, enclosing some fifteen acres of land. It was located near the bank of the Scioto River, and in form, was an octagon, with a gap at each corner. Near by was another earthwork on the bank of the river. This was built in a circular form and contained about twenty acres, with a lane or gap reaching to the water's edge. On the farm of Daniel Harness, was a square work, enclosing about eight acres and with a small mound in the center. On the farm of Edward Harness, was another mound the base of which were found buried a number of human skeletons. Near this mound was another earthworks, containing some ten acres within its walls and with a long lane or outlet extending to some distance from the main work. Besides these there are several mounds in other parts of the township.

This country was the home of many varieties of wild animals and game, the bear, deer and wild turkey. Young bears, fawns and foxes were frequently made pets. Thomas Jones Sr., raised a pet deer from a fawn, which was allowed to roam about the vicinity of his place with a bell attached to her neck. In her rambles she would attract the attention of a large antlered buck, who would follow her to the house, when the dogs would be turned loose to hunt him down, the doe taking as much interest in the capture of her admirer as did the hunters. She was afterwards, shot by mistake, having been allowed to wander abroad without her bell. Many bear were killed and those who became accustomed to the meat preferred it to any other kind. Wild turkey were very plentiful and a short time would suffice for the hunter to return well laden with the spoils of the chase.

Two considerable streams flow through Liberty Township, Salt Creek in the eastern part and Walnut Creek west of the center, both flowing from north to south. In the northeast part of the township, Cranberry Run flows into Blue Lick, which empties into Salt Creek. Dry Run passes through the western part of the township and the Scioto River forms its western boundary. Mulgy Run flows near Londonderry station and empties into Salt Creek in the southeast corner of the township. Besides these there are a good many brooklets and un-named runs that flow down from the hills and help form the larger creeks.

The original timber was white oak, black oak, walnut, wild cherry, beech, sugar maple, elm, ash, poplar, hackberry, butternut and buckeye. There still remains some valuable timber among the hills, through it has been culled and the better part removed.

In the northern and eastern part, Liberty township is hilly, with rich valleys. The central and western part is good land and has fine farms. There are several high hills, among them Rattlesnake Knob and Point Lookout.

In this township is located what has, from the earliest settlement of the country, been known as the "high bank prairie", on which the early settlers raised their first crop. Across and farther up the Scioto River is the "station prairie" also settled by the first comers. The lands bordering on the river were very rich, but had their drawbacks which caused many to remove to the hills in pursuit of health. The prevailing disease was ague, which attacked all alike, and was so severe at times that every member of a family would be down at the same time, with no one to provide drink for the sick, In such cases, buckets would be filled in the morning, by those most able to walk to the spring, and placed where each could help themselves. At some seasons of the year the roads were almost impassable and when it was so that travel could be attempted, there were many sick, else there would have been a general stampede for their old homes by the settlers. As it was, they were compelled to remain, until in time the country became settled and the prevailing disease and its cause in a measure removed.

Among the first who came were James Kilgore and family, who settled on the "high banks", in 1798, or perhaps, before that date, and built a cabin near where Horace Crookham now lives, where he raised his first crop of corn. He afterwards bought the upper trail of the "high bank" prairie," which he divided with a Mr. Holton and where both died. This land is now owned by Milton James and Thomas Orr.

Following Kilgore were Thomas and Zebulon Orr, who located on the "high bank" in 1798 or 1799, and there raised a crop of corn. They afterwards moved to Springfield township, where they died, leaving families whose descendants now reside in various parts of the country. Thomas and Zebulon Orr Jr., live in this township.

About the same time Robert Corken, Benjamin Kerns, Amos Taylor and others, settled in this vicinity, where they remained until the sale of the lands in 1802 and finding themselves outwitted in the purchase of the land on which they had located, they moved to the hills, where they again made homes.

About the same time the government sold no smaller tracts than a section and many of the settlers clubbed together to purchase the section on which they had located, but on the day of the sale, when these lands were sold, the crier, instead of naming them the "high bank" lands offered them as the lands lying at the mouth of Indian Creek and they were bought by Benjamin Kerns, Felix Renick and Joseph Harness, except the upper fractional section, which was bought by James Kilgore and Holton.

This made a scattering of the pioneers then settled along the bank, some of whom fell back to the flats or second bottoms. It was their settled conviction that bribery was used in the sale of the "high bank" lands and later circumstances pointed to the man who was suspected of being the guilty party.

On obtaining possession of the corn land on the "high bank" after the sale, one of the purchasers claimed rent for the lands used previous to the sale and all paid except Thomas Orr, who was sued by Benjamin Kerns and was upheld in his refusal to pay for the use of Congress lands.

Another prominent man and early settler was Abraham Claypool, who came from Randolph County, Virginia and settled on the "high bank prairie" in 1799. After the land sales of 1802, when he was disappointed in not being able to purchase the tract on which he had made some improvements, he entered section seventeen, on Walnut Creek, where he made a permanent location and passed the remainder of his life. He cleared much of the land and died at his home at the age of eighty-three, leaving his property to his nine children, Solomon, Jacob, Newton, Wilson, Abel, Isaac, Ann, Sarah and Maria. The last two are the only survivors of his children, and now reside in Chillicothe, although they own three-fourths of the original section. The other daughter, Ann, died on the property. The sons all settled in the west, where they died. The remaining one-fourth of the section is now owned by Abel Claypool Jr., son of Abel Claypool, who died in Fountain County, Indiana.

Abraham Claypool, when a young man, was elected to the Virginia legislature, in which he served four years. He was elected a member of the first general assembly of Ohio and served some eight or ten years and was once a candidate for congress against General McArthur, receiving a creditable support.

When a young man he served under "Mad" Anthony Wayne in his campaign against the Indians and remained in the service until the close of the war by the treaty of Greenville. In 1804, Thomas Jones and family, consisting of his wife and seven children, arrived in this township and settled on Walnut Creek. He, with Alexander McClintick and Samuel Hoshauer, entered into an agreement, by which they were to enter section eight at the land office and divide it into three equal parts, by lines running east and west. Mr. Jones took the north part, Hoshauer the center and McClintick the south part.

The children of Thomas Jones were William, Henry, Thomas, Mary, Rebecca, Benjamin, Jeremiah, Caleb, Joshua, Samuel, and Jacob, all of whom married and remained in the vicinity, becoming farmers, who opened up the country to its present prosperous condition. They all lived and died here with the exception of Rebecca and William, who died in Missouri, and Jacob, Samuel and Joshua who still survive and live in the township. Samuel raised a family of seven sons and one daughter, one of whom, Samuel, died in the army. James lives in Missouri and the others remain in the vicinity. Of Henry

Jones' children, three yet remain in the vicinity, Simpson, Henry and Milton, all men in advanced life. Thomas, son of Joshua Jones Sr., and Finley, son of Thomas Jones, also reside in the township. Besides the above mentioned, there are many other descendants of Thomas Jones Sr., in the vicinity.

Mr. Jones, the head of the family, when they came, was by occupation a shoemaker, and worked at his bench in his house, until an old man, His son, William followed in his footsteps and also worked at his trade during most of his lifetime, besides managing his farm. The others all became farmers and by their industry, cleared the land and made the country what it is. William bought section fifteen about 1810 and in 1825, built a brick house on his property, the same now occupied by Corwin Jones. He left this property to his second son and went to the west, where he died.

Alexander McClintick built a grist mill on Walnut Creek, on his land, very soon after his settlement. With it was connected a distillery, for in those days it was no disgrace for a Presbyterian, or a member of any church, to make whiskey, which was used more commonly then, than is cider at the present time. This mill and distillery were run by McClintick during his life and for a time after his death by his family. It afterwards passed into other hands and is long since one of the things of the past. No vestige of it now remains.

Quite an excitement was caused in a very early day, by an attempt made by some one to destroy the still. This was run by a young man who lived with the McClintick family. One evening, while he was at supper, seven loud reports were heard in the direction of the still house. All hurried there and found that some evil disposed person, with the head of an axe, had burst in every one of the seven copper kettles. An indignation meeting was at once called, to which all the settlers were summoned and directed to each bring his axe, in order to ascertain which would fit the holes in the kettles. All axes in the neighborhood were tried, but the guilty person was not discovered. Such was the indignation of the settlers that summary punishment would have been meted out to the perpetrator had he been found out. It was an attack on one of the industries of the little community and for a time demoralized the corn market.

Samuel Hoshauer cleared and cultivated his land and raised a family, all of whom went west. His land is now owned by Benjamin Drummond.

Caleb O'Dell settled on section seven, west of McClintick's at about the same time. Here he had a small still, which was in operation eight or ten years.

Elisha Rawles was a very early settler on the south half of section seven, on which he built a hewed log house and barn, both of which had shingled roofs. The patent for this land was granted in 1813 and gives the location of the land as in township number eight, range twenty. This original patent is now in the possession of Samuel Jones, who owns the property. Rawles sold it to Jacob Hoshauer and removed to near Sandusky.

John Carr entered the north half of the same section, seven, but never lived on the land, He sold to Daniel Dollahon, who made some improvements and afterwards sold it to Samuel and Simpson Jones, the present owners.

Peter Day, from Pennsylvania, with Hugh McKee, entered section six very early. The Malones and Alexanders were squatters on the same land. Day was a hard drinker, and died from the effect of his intemperate habits. McKee also died in the neighborhood, very

suddenly. He worked on Saturday and died Sunday. He was the owner of a small, white horse, which was a great favorite with him and before he died, said he wanted his horse to draw him up the hill, His body was prepared for the grave, placed on a small sled to which the horse was attached and according to his desire was thus conveyed up the hill as far as the horse could go and was carried the remainder of the distance to his grave. Webster Thomas settled on section five, about 1800. He was a native of New Jersey and remained during his life on the land. Some of his descendants are now living in the vicinity.

William Schooley came about the same time and settled on section eighteen, which was given his wife by her father, Thomas Bowens, who settled on the section below Schooley. Here he life and died. Schooley also died on his property, which remained in the possession of his son until recently, when he went west, where he died.

Andrew Kelley settled on fractional section number eleven, at the State dam, about 1800. His wife died there in 1801 and was buried on the land, but since then her remains have been removed and deposited in the burial grounds at Schooley's station. He afterwards removed to section nine, where he remained and spent the rest of his life. He was the father of sixteen children, of whom seven are now living. Two of them, Mrs. Harriet Waleman and Mrs. Orlenda Long, reside in the township. Mr. Kelley planted an orchard from seed procured from apples shipped to Chillicothe soon after his settlement. Some of the old trees are now standing. He was a farmer during his life and an early justice of the peace in the county.

Thomas and James Kelley also came about 1800. Both settled in the west part of the township, where they died early. Some of their descendants remain in the vicinity.

Joseph Harness bought sections nine and ten and fractional section eleven on the "high banks", at the first land sales. He had something over twelve hundred acres. He came to this country from Hardy County, Virginia, in about 1798 and settled on the land he afterwards bought. Here he remained during his life and at his death, left his property to his children, of whom he had five, as follows: Eliza (Mrs. James Vause), Mary (Mrs. George Moore), of Mason County, Virginia, Edwin J., who died leaving no family and Rebecca (Mrs. Charles F. Beal). Of their descendants, Joseph I. Vause, Mary Harness and Rachael Harness, live in the township. Two others, Edwin W. and James M. Vause, live in Coles County, Illinois.

George Harness, brother of Joseph, entered the sections adjoining and farther down the river, where he owned some sixteen hundred acres of land. He never settled on the land, which was occupied by tenants for many years, until 1842 and 1846, when C. E. Harness and his brother, Daniel Harness, came into possession of the property on which they now live.

John Hixon and family were among the earliest settlers in the eastern part of the township, locating in about 1802, on one-half of section twenty-three. The section was entered by Griffith Pierce, who gave one-half to his son-in-law, Hixon and one-half to his son, Samuel Pierce, who came from Virginia with Hixon.

About a year later, Samuel, Jesse and Joseph Dixon came from Chatham County, North Carolina and located in what is now Liberty Township. Samuel had one hundred acres in section fourteen and the whole of section twenty-four.

Jesse Dixon settled on section eleven and Joseph on section thirteen, of which he finally owned three-fourths. He built a saw and grist mill on Salt Creek, which he put in operation in 1807. He ran this mill until 1825, when he died and the property passed into the hands of his sons, Abel and Joseph, who continued the business many years. In about 1870, it was sold to John Holland and after a year, Joseph Dixon bought it again and again sold it, to Robert Kidnocker, who now owns the property. The mill building is the same, with some additions, as the original.

Enoch Cox bought a portion of section eleven, for his son, Nathan Cox, who settled on it about the same time as the Dixon's.

Joseph Cox settled on section fourteen about 1802. He had a wife, but raised no family. Both died on their property.

John Francis came in 1801 and settled in the south part of the township for a time, but afterwards removed to what is now Vinton County.

Daniel, George and Jonathan Dixon settled on section ten in 1800. When the land was sold each of the brothers bought one-fourth, the remainder being purchased by Nicholas Cox. Daniel Dixon died, of cholera, in 1832 and left a family of seven children, all of whom settled in the vicinity, but have since scattered. George Dixon Jr., his son, was born here, in 1808 and remains in the township, living on section eleven. Elias lives on section ten and two sisters, Tamar and Nancy, the latter of whom married Jacob Calver, live on section sixteen.

John, Charles and James Davis, brothers, were early settlers, about 1800, on the Harness land, near the Scioto River, where they remained many years. They afterward removed to the south part of this and into Pike County, where their descendants now own valuable farms.

Webster Thomas came from New Jersey, in 1806, with his family. They settled on section eight, where they lived and where Mr. Thomas died, His son James lived on the land until 1869, when he moved to Londonderry and died at the house of Rev. Joseph Thomas, his son. James Thomas's first wife died on the farm, in 1844, leaving nine children. He afterwards married Mrs. Elizabeth Harlow, by whom he had three children. Abraham Hiner located on the banks of Walnut Creek, on section eight, about 1806 or 1808, where he established a tannery. This he kept in operation fifteen or twenty years, when he died. His family consisted of two daughters, both of whom married and passed their lives in the vicinity.

John May came into the country early and entered section one, in the western part of the township. This he sold to John Steely, in 1816. Steely remained but a short time and the property passed into other hands.

John Cox came with his father's family and settled in Liberty township about 1808 to 1809. He has lived for many years in the northeast corner of the township.

George Day and family settled in Liberty township at some time about the year 1805 to 1808. They came here from Botetourt County, Virginia and on their arrival settled on section eighteen, a part of which Mr. Day owned. The section was entered by Thomas Bowens, who sold Mr. Day one hundred and ten acres. In 1813 he sold the land and went to Indiana where he remained until 1814, when he returned and after a few years, died. He was by trade a tailor and worked in his house. Of his family of seven children, Mrs.

Margaret Gates lives in Harrison township and William Day, in Londonderry. The latter followed the business of a gun-smith, in the village from 1831 to 1860. For eighteen years he was a justice of the peace in the township.

James and Adam Stewart, natives of Ireland, settled on section fifteen about 1810, where they afterwards died, leaving families. Two daughters of Adam Stewart live in Londonderry.

Lemeul Kilbourn came from New York state very early and located in Chillicothe for a time. In about 1810 he removed to section thirteen in the eastern part of Liberty township, where he remained some years. He finally removed to Jefferson township, where he died.

Joshua Jones emigrated from New Jersey to Ohio in 1814 and settled on section sixteen, where he made a home and remained until 1841, when he removed to Londonderry village. Both himself and his wife died there. His wife was a widow Williamson, who had four children previous to her marriage with Mr. Jones. Two of them removed to Marion County. One daughter died in Liberty and one son now lives in Londonderry. A son by her second husband, Levi Jones, now lives on section twelve, where with William Day, he owns a farm.

John Wesley Williamson came to Ohio in 1814, when nine years old, with his step-father, Joshua Jones and remained with him on section sixteen for some years. He then followed herding cattle on the Indian reservation near Upper Sandusky for several years. In 1836 he opened a hotel in Londonderry, in which he remained until 1848, when he removed to his present residence, on the opposite side of the street. His wife was Willey Higley. She died in the village, leaving one child, Jane, who married Austin Motter, since deceased. She now lives with her father, Mr. Williamson.

William Kelly settled in Lancaster, hence he came from Frederick County, Virginia in 1802. In about 1807 he came to Ross County and located in Liberty township, where he entered land in section nine. There he made a home and raised his family of ten children, five sons and five daughters. Of these children, five are now living, Nancy, Dorcas, Julia, Ezra and Dr. D. H. Kelly, all of whom remain on the original section, where Mr. Kelly had a farm of one hundred and sixty acres. He was by occupation a cooper and had a shop on his land in which he worked until an old man. He lived to be seventy-six and his wife eighty-six years of age. Four of his sons learned his trade, two of whom worked at the business many years. The other, John, learned shoemaking and tanning, which he followed many years. He was also a harness maker for a few years, besides managing his farm. He had a tannery on the farm of his uncle, Andrew Kelly, about 1835, which he kept in operation until 1840. He died on his farm. Ezra and D. H. Kelly worked with their father in the shop for a time, when Ezra read medicine and practiced on summer in Illinois. He was also a school teacher some fifteen winters.

Jacob Peterman, from Botetourt County, Virginia, settled in Liberty township in 1812, locating on the "high banks", where he opened a blacksmith shop, and worked at his trade during the most of his life. In old age, he moved to the house of his son Daniel and Mary (Mrs. Cutwright), died in the township. Daniel is the only one of the children who now lives in the township.

Morris Humphrey settled on section eleven, where he rented land in 1825. He came from Loudoun County, Virginia and after remaining on this land a few years, he married Mary Ann Dixon, who inherited the farm. Some years later, they sold the property and spent a short time in Jackson County, They then returned to Liberty township and Mr. Humphrey died. Some of his children are now living in the vicinity, one son Elisha, in Londonderry. Thomas Corken and family came from Chillicothe, where he was raised and settled on section fifteen, in 1828 or 1830. He married Rebecca Jones and raised a family of ten children. His daughter, Eliza Jane married Robert Hanna, who purchased the farm. Mr. Corken then removed to Nodaway County, Missouri, where he lives with his son, Samuel, aged eighty-eight years. Mrs. Hanna died in 1875, leaving her husband and a family of children, who still occupy their home.

Joseph Dixon Jr., was born on section thirteen, in 1814 and remained there during his life, dying in 1874. His wife was Winnie Walker, whose father, John Walker, came from Virginia in 1824. They raised ten children, of whom all but two, that are living, reside in the township. Simon R. Dixon, their third child, married Mary R. Jones, in 1860 and resides a half mile south of Londonderry.

Joseph Wilkins and family removed from New Jersey to Virginia and from there to Ohio in 1805. He first settled in Columbiana County, where he remained until 1815, when he again removed and located in Liberty Township, Ross County. He bought a quarter section of land on the west side of Walnut Creek, where he remained some ten years, when he went to Highland County. The land which he purchased was entered by Mr. Fleming, who forfeited his title after making one payment.

Jacob Mace came from Hardy County, Virginia and settled on what was then known as Evan's prairie, near Yellow Bud in 1798. John Jackson, Mr. Davenport, Samuel Smith and Mr. Baker, with their families, came at the same time. Baker, Jackson and Davenport died there. Mr. Mace removed to within four miles of Chillicothe and settled in Union township, where the former died some years since. Jacob remained there until 1833, when he went to Pike County, In 1842 he removed to his present home in Liberty Township. One sister, Mrs. Nancy Mouser, in Pickaway County and a brother (Morgan) in Missouri, are all that now remain of the children of Jacob Mace Sr.

Two railroads run through Liberty township from east to west. The Marietta & Cincinnati was commenced in about 1851, and was completed through the township in 1852 or 1853 and through its entire length about 1860. Two passenger stations are situated in this township, one called Schooley's station and the other Londonderry station.

Besides the above mentioned road, the Dayton & South-Eastern, a narrow gauge road, was also completed through the township in 1879.

The present business in the township is represented by an elevator at Schooley's station, a new steam saw and grist-mill and carding machine at Londonderry, a tannery at Londonderry station, a saw-mill in the south part of the township, besides the usual number of blacksmith, wagon and repair shops.

A tannery was started a short distance north of Londonderry, in about 1832, by John Dailey, who afterwards removed it to the village, where it remained until about 1848, when he died. It was then continued some three years by William Graves, who then sold

it to Beck & Barnett. They operated it two years and closed up the business. Beck then formed a partnership with Mr. Walker and erected a building near Londonderry station, about the time the railroad was in process of construction and established a new tannery. This they continued until 1864, when Walker sold to Beck, who managed it about a year and sold to Henry Du Bois, who has since controlled it. He does a large business and buys stock in different part of the country.

The first brick house in the township was built by James Kilgore, soon after 1804 and is now owned and occupied by Milton Jones. This house is located in the northwest corner of the township. The barn on the place is the same built by Mr. Kilgore, in 1804 and is made of peeled hickory logs. It has since been weather-boarded and would not now be recognized as a log barn that has withstood the storms and tempests of seventy-six years. A very early school was taught in the east part of the township, by William Slaughter, in about 1806 or 1807. Another early teacher was John A. Dalley. The building used as a school house was built of logs, with a large fireplace occupying one end of the building. Light was furnished by sawing out a log on one or both sides, then tacking strips of wood across the opening, which was then covered and greased paper. After using for a time, another fireplace was built at the other end of the building, but not being constructed on strictly scientific principles, after being used for a week, it held fire long enough to destroy the building. This was situated on section fifteen.

The next school-house was built on section fourteen, on the road southeast of Londonderry. John A. Dalley, who was the teacher when the first school-house burned, became teacher in this during the remainder of the winter. The next teacher was Joseph Stretch, a carpenter, who worked at his trade most of the time and taught school during the winter. He was the architect and builder of most of the barns in this part of the township.

In the west part of the township a school was taught on land belonging to Mr. Rawles, in section seven, about 1818. The teacher was an old man by the name of Greenlee. A little later a school-house was built east of Walnut Creek, on land now owned by Misses E. and E. Kelly.

James Kilgore kept the first tavern at his house in the west part of the township. This he opened very soon after his settlement and continued during his life. He also had a grist-mill near the point where the railroad crosses the Scioto River. This he also kept in operation until his death, from cholera, in about 1832.

Felix Renick, who located near Kilgore, became a prominent man among the early settlers, He was one of the first associate judges of Ross County and was besides a well-known surveyor. He laid out the road from Chillicothe to Athens, through Liberty township, in the fall of 1812.

Amos Kilburn had a fulling-mill on Salt Creek, soon after 1810. His son and son-in-law, about the same time, put in machinery for a dish-mill and worked at manufacturing wooden bowls some four or five years, when they gave up the business.

Jacob Dixon started a distillery on Salt Creek in an early day. Abraham Wakeman had one on section fourteen, about 1825. This was kept in operation until 1834 or 1835, when it was given up.

Stephen Wakeman was an early settler from New York State. In about 1830 he built a grist-mill, saw-mill and still-house, on section seventeen on the bank of Walnut Creek, which contributed the motive power. When the creek was up, the mill would work slowly, but it was never a good mill, though it was kept in operation some twenty years. The first carding machine was brought into the township in 1820 by William Clayton. This machine was located on a little run near Londonderry station and was kept in operation seven or eight years.

Another carding machine was brought into the country by Abel and Joseph Dixon, in about 1830 or 1835. This machine is still kept in operation at Elisha Humphrey's saw-mill.

Jacob Dixon also had a carding machine on Salt Creek, in the south part of the township, which was long since given up.

William Clayton had a grist-mill which he kept in operation a few years, at the same time he was running a carding machine.

John Nichols had a distillery on the dame run, but it was not kept in operation long.

Isaac Hegley had a distillery on William Kelly's farm about 1810 or 1812. This still was in operation a few years when it was discontinued. It was revived and again run some two years, when it was given up.

First mills used by many of the early settlers, were called Armstrong's mills and were of very simple construction. A solid stump was cut square on the top and a fire built in the center, which, in a short time, burned a cavity into the wood.. This was scraped so as to remove the coal, when it was used as a mortar, in which to pound the corn. Sieves was made of deer hide, from which the hair was cleared and while the hide was still green it was stretched over a hoop. When dry, small holes were punched or burned in it by a knitting needle or other fine wire, then it was ready for use. The meal or flour was not as fine as that used at the present day, nor was all the bran removed, but with this coarse diet the early settlers were not troubled with dyspepsia and its many ills.

Joseph Dixon brought with him a large coffee mill and before building his mill on Salt Creek, used to grind corn and wheat for the use of his family. Simon Ratcliff, who lived with Mr. Dixon, worked at grinding in this mill during the daytime and Mr. Dixon during the evening. It kept one of them busy most of the time to provide flour for the use of the family.

Joseph Cox, Samuel Dixon and Joseph Dixon planted nurseries soon after their settlement, from which sprang many of the early orchards of the township

Alexander McClintick fitted up a chamber in his house, on the west side of Walnut Creek, about 1804, which was used as a place of meeting for the Presbyterian's. This same room, built of hewed logs and since weather-boarded, is included in the west part of the house now owned and occupied by Simpson Jones. A church was organized in this room as early as 1804 or 1806, the first members being Alexander McClintick, his wife and other members of his family. After a time accessions were had to the membership from among some of the young people in the neighborhood.. The first preacher was Dr. Wilson, of Chillicothe. This church was kept up some ten or fifteen years, until the death of the old people, since which time no organization has been in existence.

Liberty church was built as a free church, in the west part of the village of Londonderry, on land now occupied by James Stevens, in about 1832. Early meetings were held at farm houses and in barns for a number of years before the church was erected. An organization was effected about 1820, by Enoch Harvey. Among the first members were Enoch Harvey, Joseph Baker, Noah Clark, James Mitchell, Christian Huddle, William Schooley, with there wives and others. Joseph Barker was the local preacher. Ministers also came in from other places, among them Barton Stone, from Kentucky and other prominent men. The church building, a frame, was burned in 1862, since which time the organization has died out. Meetings were held for a time at a free church which was built near Schoooley's Station at about the same date, but at which no regular services are now sustained, although the church is free for use by any denomination.

Londonderry Methodist Episcopal Church was organized about 1820 or 1821. Previous to that time traveling preachers of the Methodist church passed through the country and held meetings at every convenient place. William Jones kept open house to all these early preachers and, as was the custom in those days, set out a pitcher of whiskey in the morning, of which the preachers partook, as an appetizer, as well as to ward off attacks of ague and other malarial diseases. The church was organized in a school house, about 1830. This was a frame building and was occupied as such until about 1856, when it was sold and torn down and the present comfortable brick church built in its stead.. Among the early members were William Jones and wife, Josiah and Robert Drummond with their wives, Amos T. Mendenhall and wife, John Rains, Benjamin Drummond and wife, Mrs. Sarah Wesson, James Mendenhall and John, his brother, Thomas Corken and one wife and many others. The present membership of the church is about forty. A Sabbath-school of about one hundred members is also sustained, under the superintendence of E. J. Young.

The lot on which the church was built, was obtained from Adam Stewart and Sarah, his wife, by John Rains, Amos Mendenhall, James King, Josiah Drummond and Benjamin Drummond, who served as trustees.

Concord Methodist Episcopal Church was organized about 1825, in which year the church lot was deeded for that purpose by Leonard Weaver. Meetings had been held in private houses for some years previous to this date and the organization was effected at some time before the church was built. The early members were Samuel King and family, John Climer and family, Caleb O'Dell and family, Thomas Orr and family, Benjamin Drummond and family and others. The first church erected, a small frame building, a short distance south of the old one, which is occasionally used for temperance and other meetings. A large Sabbath-school is sustained, with Jacob Whetstone as superintendent and Simpson Jones assistant.

Friends Church

The church at Londonderry was organized in about 1865, by Gersham Perdue and John Henry Douglas, the latter being the preacher. Among the first members were Hiram

Dixon and wife, Jacob Jones and wife, Mason Jones and several others. An organization was effected in the Methodist Episcopal church, which was used three or four years. In about 1869 a church was built in the west part of the village. Before the building was completed some thirty or forty members joined the congregation. No regular preacher ministers to the church, though Thomas Kelly and Taylor Moore are preachers who belong to the congregation. Regular meetings are held each Sabbath, whether a preacher be present or not. This congregation belongs to Fairfield quarter. A Sabbath-school of some fifty members is sustained, under the superintendence of Simon R. Dixon. A cemetery was opened on the church lot in 1868, the first burial being Mrs. Reed, in 1869. Since that time many persons have been buried here and others removed from other places. This ground is called Londonderry Cemetery.

Graveyards

Among the first in the township was the ground at Schooley's station, which was opened soon after 1800. There was another, three quarters of a mile north of Londonderry, the first burial in which was William Cox, in 1808. Another ground is situated near the Friends Church in Londonderry. Concord Church, west of Rattlesnake Knob, also has a ground. There is a family burial ground on the Claypool land, besides several others in other parts of the township.

Londonderry

The village of Londonderry was laid out about 1831, by Adam Stewart and Nathan Cox; Stewart laying off the south part and Cox the north. The latter sold all his property after a time and removed to Stark County, Illinois. Stewart was an Irishman, from near Londonderry, after which he named the village.

The first store in the place was kept by Ebenezer Guy, in 1832. He remained but a short time and during the same year Simon Ratcliff opened a store, which he sold to Nathan Cox after a time. Cox received Abel Dixon as a partner and remained in business here in 1812. Since that time the following firms and business houses have been in operation in the place: Dr. Alexander Gordon, J. Weston, Henninger & Creal, Joseph Grubb, Samuel Griffin, who was in business, from about 1835, some forty years; Rowell & Day, John D. Carr, Austin Motter, Dr. Drummond, William Baker, Abraham Boblitt, Cox & Gordon, White & Comstock, Cushing, Wood & Co., S. G. Griffin, Bramble & Reynolds, Humphrey Bros., Walker & Griffin, James Rittenour, P. G. Griffin & Co., and at present Ratcliff Bros., John Walker and William Francis.

The first physician to locate in the township was Dr. James Moore, who came to Londonderry about 1832 and remained some four or five years. Dr. Josiah Drummond came about this time and was followed by Dr. Shawk, Dr. N. E. Jones, Dr. John T. Jones and the present physicians, Dr. Thomas Farabee and Dr. J. M. Wiltshire.

There are also in Londonderry, four blacksmith shops, presided over by Joseph Foust, S. S. Walker, Kilbourn and Lemuel Meeker; one hotel, managed by Mrs. C. Rains; grist-

mill of John Boblett; planing-mill of Henry D. Dixon and wagon shops of Joseph Headley, shoemaker, and Dr. John M. Wiltshire and Dr. Thomas Farabee.

The first hotel in Londonderry was kept by Benjamin Barnett, who came from Maryland in an early day and in about 1829, built a hotel in the village, which he managed several years, until the death of his wife, after which he removed to Kingston. John W.

Williamson also kept a hotel in the village some six years, when he retired from the business.

Liberty township had no post office until 1832 or 1833, when an office was opened in the village of Londonderry and was named Gillespieville, from James Gillespie, who became the first officer and served several years. The office was at that time kept in the house now occupied by William Day esq., who succeeded Mr. Gillespie in the charge of the office. Since then the office has been administered by William S. Myrick, J. W. Williamson, Levi Jones, Dr. J. M. Shawk, Dr. N. E. Jones, John D. Carr, William Day, H. D. Calver, Andrew G. Morrison, Jacob Beck, Philip Griffin, W. B. Francis, T. H. Griffin, Thomas Ratcliff and the present postmaster, George Ratcliff.

Another office was established at Schooley's station, on the Marietta and Cincinnati railroad, about 1816, of which John Schooley was the postmaster, as well as agent for the railroad. He was succeeded by Benjamin Harness and he by Henry Harness.

Vigo post office was established at Londonderry station at about the same time as the one at Schooley's station and under the charge of Jacob Beck. Since then there have been several changes, the present postmaster being E. P. Climer, who also has a general merchandise store.

A regular mail route was established in about 1832. Jacob Minton was the first carrier; he traveled on horseback. A few years later a line of stages was put on the road from Chillicothe to Athens and was continued until 1855, or about that time, when the Marietta railroad was completed.

Chillicothe Gazette 1954

Old-timer knows Londonderry; eighty year old Clifford J. Ratcliff is the oldest surviving member of one of the pioneer families of Londonderry and like many oldsters, he has found new interest and pleasure in digging up data from the past, much of which otherwise would be lost with the advent of new generations.

During a visit to the Gazette, Mr. Ratcliff passed along some nuggets of fact compiled from the family Bible and personal research. For instance, he reminds that Londonderry was laid out in 1831 by Adam Steward. It was a part of Liberty Township and had no post office until 1832. The post office first went by the name of Gillespieville. Jacob Minton established the first mail route in December 1832. Until 1855, when the Marietta & Cincinnati Railroad (B. & O.) was established, mail to the village was carried by a stage line running from Chillicothe to Athens. Some of the earliest settlers were Jesse and Joseph Dixon who came from North Carolina in 1801; John Francis and Joseph Cox settled there in 1802 and George Day in 1805. John W. Williamson opened a hotel there in 1836. His daughter, Jane, married Austin Motter.

The Ratcliff's, who claim descent from a Scotch nobleman and friend of Oliver Cromwell, came to Ross County in 1804. John Ratcliff settled on a quarter section in Liberty township. His grandson's, George, John, William, Thomas and Jeremiah, all were born on the Salt Creek section, later called Maple-vale. Jeremiah purchased 200 acres of the section in 1837, later sold this to his son, William, who became the father of Clifford J., born in 1880, and Louise, born in 1883. This farm was inherited by Clifford J. in 1918. The first general store in Londonderry was opened in 1832 by Simon Ratcliff, another descendant of John Ratcliff and was followed by the opening of another general store by Jeremiah. In the interim five generations of Ratcliff's George, John, Jerry, Howard, Riley, Ted, Earnest and Clark D. have operated stores there, Clark in 1954, completing the transition from the old-style country establishment to a modern super-mart. The village, Mr. Ratcliff proudly reminds, still has its post office, along with two churches, the Methodist dates back to 1820, the Friends to 1865; a grade school, four stores, a slaughter house, four stations, two garages, a doctor and a root and fur buyer.

Thanks to Danny A. Siliven for contributing this piece obtained during his research of the Walker Family