

## THE PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF GENERAL CHAUNCEY EGGLESTON

### INTRODUCTION

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General Chauncey Eggleston, one of the first settlers of Aurora, Ohio, was a descendant of the first settler of this name, Begat, or Bigot, Eggleston, who came to Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1630 and was a first settler of Windsor, Connecticut, in 1635. Here he died September 1, 1674. His youngest son, Benjamin (2), born December 18, 1653, married Hannah Osborn Shadock, daughter of John Osborn and probably the widow of Elias Shadock, March 6, 1678, and died in 1729. Benjamin (3), the only son of Benjamin (2), was born in May, 1687, and died October 30, 1732; his wife was Mary Dibble. Up to this time the family had lived in Windsor or East Windsor; the son of Benjamin (3) and Mary, however, Biggett (4) Eggleston, removed to Murrayfield, Massachusetts, taking up new land. Biggett (4) was born March 17, 1724, and married Mary Corning of Enfield November 7, 1745. His second son, Benjamin (5) Eggleston, born January 2, 1747-8, before his parents left East Windsor, was the father of General Chauncey Eggleston.

Murrayfield, where Biggett Eggleston and his son Benjamin settled, no longer exists as such. The northwest corner of it, where the Egglestons first lived, be-

came in 1783 a part of the new town of Middlefield. It is in the ragged upland region of western Massachusetts, in the midst of the Berkshire Hills, now full of deserted farms, but at that time a territory into which pioneers were eagerly pushing from both Connecticut and Massachusetts. The admirable *History of the Town of Middlefield, Massachusetts*, by Edward Church Smith and Philip Mack Smith (privately printed, 1924) tells the story of its prosperity and later decay. Crowded conditions at home, Indian wars, considerations of land titles, and religious dissension all seem to have brought about the original influx of settlers, just prior to the Revolution; and the hardness of the life there, contrasted with the attractions of the newly accessible West, was the reason why many of them moved on, after the war, to New York and Ohio. The Egglestons were among the first regular inhabitants. The Murrayfield valuation list of 1768 contains Biggett's name and Benjamin is listed among the taxpayers of 1769; Benjamin, however, seems actually to have been the first to occupy his lot, in 1770, and his father came two years later. That Benjamin was a man of some prominence is shown by the fact that when Middlefield was incorporated he was selected to assemble the first town meeting.

These "Reminiscences" tell sufficiently the fortunes of the family as they journeyed in 1807 from Middlefield to Ohio. It will, however, not be out of place to set down some account of the individuals concerned. The children of Benjamin (5) Eggleston and his wife, Mary Gordon, probably the daughter of Samuel and Margaret (Henry) Gordon, whom he married October 9, 1774, were the following:

2. Benjamin (6), born September 29, 1775
3. ii. Martin (6), born April 11, 1777
4. iii. Joseph (6), born July 6, 1779
  - iv. Betsy (6), born December 29, 1781
  - v. Moses (6), born February 16, 1784
  - vi. Achsah (6), baptized November 4, 1792
6. vii. Chauncey (6), born August 27, 1786
  - viii. Susanna (6)
  - ix. Harriet (6).

Benjamin (5) died June 1, 1832, in Aurora, and his wife Mary died December 19, 1817. He had been a Minute Man on the occasion of the Lexington alarm.

2. Benjamin (6) died in 1855; he married Phoebe Finch (1782-1844). He was the author of a history of the Revolution. Children:

- i. Benjamin; married
- ii. Hiansel; married
- iii. William Henry, 1808-1869; married in 1830 Calista Parker (1809-1891); farmer at Aurora, Ohio
- iv. Monroe; married
- v. Mariette; married Louis Nettleton.

3. Martin (6) married Mary Kilborn (intention dated September 27, 1802); he settled in Bainbridge, Ohio, and had the following children:

- i. An infant child who died April 27, 1803 (Middlefield records)
- ii. Joseph K. (7), of Bainbridge; died 1890; married Lucy Buckley
- iii. Myron (7), who died at Chardon, Ohio; married Sally Little

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- iv. Harvey (7), died at Bainbridge, Ohio
- v. Lucy (7), married John Little, brother of Sally; lived many years at Munsón, Ohio.
- 4. Joseph (6) married (1) Parla Leonard of Washington, Massachusetts, May 27, 1807, and (2) Anna (Mack) Clark. He removed to Aurora, Ohio, with the rest of the family and died there November 26, 1872; his wife died November 27, 1857. Children:
  - i. Sidney (7), of Aurora, Ohio
  - ii. Milton (7), of Aurora, Ohio.
- 5. Moses (6) married Sally Taylor; he also removed with the rest of the family to Aurora, Ohio, and died there August 6, 1866. Children:
  - i. General Nelson (7), born October 3, 1811; graduated Hudson College 1831; admitted to the bar 1834; a farmer and landowner, and general in the Ohio militia; married Caroline Lacy, daughter of Isaac Lacy, Jr., January 29, 1835; lived at Aurora
  - ii. Wealtha (7), married Simeon D. Kelley and lived in Tuscola, Illinois
  - iii. A child who died young.
- 6. General Chauncey (6), of Aurora, Ohio, (author of the "Reminiscences"), married Eunice Kent in 1810; he died November, 1873, and she April 19, 1873. Children:
  - i. Orson, born January 12, 1813; died October 31, 1842; married Adeline Ward in 1841
  - ii. Eliza, born December 19, 1814; married William Hurd in 1834
  - iii. Minerva, born May 25, 1817; died October 4, 1832, unmarried

- iv. Chauncey, Jr., born May 24, 1819, died November, 1875, in Michigan; married Mary Hurd in 1838
- v. Norman, born March 8, 1821, died November 21, 1850; married Cynthia McFarlan in 1842
- vi. Carolina, born December 18, 1824; married (1) Lathrop Smith and (2) in 1854 John Sharp
- vii. Clinton, born July 14, 1827; died at Chagrin Falls, Ohio, in 1914; married (1) Abigail Hickox, who died in 1865, and (2) Mary E. Parker
- viii. Zeno Kent, born April 19, 1829, died December 2, 1899; married in 1852 or 1853 Olivia May, daughter of Jude May; removed to Chagrin Falls in 1869
- ix. Emily C., born October 9, 1831; died July 12, 1858; married Lyman E. Kent October 7, 1856, Bainbridge, Ohio
- x. Eunice, born February 23, 1835, died April 19, 1875; married Erastus Jackson in 1859.

General Eggleston's "Reminiscences" were written in his old age, for the benefit of his grandchildren. By those who knew him he is said to have been quiet, competent, and genuinely religious. These and other qualities will, however, be amply evident from the "Reminiscences" themselves.

Rev. Frank Otto Eggleston, of Park Ridge, New Jersey (grandson of General Eggleston), furnished me the manuscript of the "Reminiscences" printed here. This was a copy, made by him, in 1913, from the origi-

nal. Mr. Eggleston also loaned me two sheets of General Eggleston's original draft; he remarks that he does not know what became of the earlier pages. These two sheets have of course been used, for the part of the text involved (the latter part of the narrative of the War of 1812, and General Eggleston's first farming operations). A few corrections have been adopted from a second copy made later by Rev. F. O. Eggleston, but in general his 1913 version, supplemented by the brief section of the original manuscript, has been faithfully followed, although I have not thought it necessary to preserve mis-spellings nor the original punctuation. A few words (bracketed) have been inserted for the sake of clearness.

THE PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF GENERAL  
CHAUNCEY EGGLESTON

I have always supposed that I was born at Middlefield, County of Hampshire, State of Massachusetts, in the year A. D. 1786, August 27.

I can remember when I was six or seven years old my father's family all had the measles about the same time. I had four brothers and one sister older than myself, and three sisters younger than myself.

When I was a boy I went to school about three months in a year until I was fourteen years old. I got so that I could read and write, and cipher some, say to the rule of three. Children in those days had small opportunities to learn compared with what they now have. A few months in a year until they were old enough to earn something, and then their school days ended. Farm work constantly and johnny-cake and

coarse living made them strong, and a good deal of common sense put into active practice made them about as learned as people nowadays.

The most I remember of those early days was my love for going in swimming once a week and playing with our great cosset sheep. He was ever ready to attack us. We would hide away among the brakes, and when he discovered us we had to flee for our lives and mount a large rock as large as a small house. This rock had a narrow path up one side of it, and the sheep would follow us up, and when he got in the narrow path near the top we would push him down or off. He would fall eight or ten feet. This was fun for George and Brainard Spencer,<sup>1</sup> brother Moses, and myself. Once in a while we would get knocked over but we would get up and try it over again.

We had a sugar place of about two hundred trees and we used troughs. Brother Moses and I used to sugar when we were twelve or fourteen years old. Snow sometimes three feet deep. We gathered our sap on snowshoes, or when the snow was frozen to a crust, so that it would bear up. We used to make so much sugar that it was talked about through the town.

My oldest brother Benjamin was a merchant and went into trade in a place called Petersburg in the state of New York in the Casanova [Cazenovia?] country,

<sup>1</sup>George and Brainard Spencer were brothers, the sons of John and Susannah (White) Spencer, from East Haddam, Connecticut, who settled in Middlefield after the Revolution, in which John was a soldier. George was born October 6, 1787, and Brainard, July 2, 1785, both in Middlefield. The Spencer family moved to Aurora, Ohio, in 1812. In Middlefield they were close neighbors of Benjamin Eggleston. Their sister Anna married Epaphroditus Loveland in 1803; he also came to Aurora and is mentioned later.

about thirty miles southwest from Utica. The country about there was very new; a timbered country and few inhabitants. One way from his store there was no clearing and no house for six miles, and road just passable leading from Petersburg to Utica. The first inhabitants were the tribe of Stockbridge Indians. Adjoining them toward Utica was the Oneida tribe of Indians, and adjoining them the Brothertown Indians. They were quite civilized, dressed like white folks, farmed it for a living, and had cattle and horses, wagons and plows. I rode in a wagon with one of the Brothertown Indians when I was traveling from Utica to Schenectady, say twenty miles. He talked good English and kept sober. He had a bottle of rum and drank some, and to make his horses show off he two or three times took hold of their ears and poured a quantity into each ear. He said it made them feel lively.

The Stockbridge tribe were considerably civilized, generally dressed like the whites, and farmed it some. Our government had bought land of them, and had bought them a good sawmill and grist-mill and built them a good meeting-house and placed among them a good preacher, named Sergants. I went from the store with two or three others twice on Sunday to their meetings. Men and women sang in the gallery and our company said they never heard such beautiful voices. All went off as respectably as in any common congregation.

The Oneidas wore blankets and were Indians; still lived mostly by hunting.

I went to live with my brother when I was about fifteen years old. I had a small hunting shotgun that I took along to kill bears and wolves and deer, as there

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were many of those animals in the far west where I was going. I started alone on a journey of about one hundred and sixty miles.

I got a ride from Albany about fifty miles. It was in winter, good sleighing. I then went on foot and alone through the thick woods with my little gun ready if beasts attacked me, but none dared venture, so I arrived safe and sound at my brother's. He had a good frame building two storeys high, and lived in one part, and had a good room done off for a regular store, dry goods, groceries, etc. He dealt much with the Indians, bought their furs—otter skins, mink and martin, and some beaver. He sold them powder and lead, blankets, etc. They used to come in hunting parties, ten or twelve Indians and some squaws with their papooses confined by bandages, flat on their backs to a board. A strap was fastened to the board and the board placed on the squaw's back and the strap over her head; they could carry their offspring wherever they pleased.

When they had a drinking frolic, they would choose one to drink nothing at all; not a drop would he touch, but must keep sober to keep the drunken [Indians] from fighting and killing each other. They generally behaved well and were peacable. Some of them hunted squirrels and partridges with bows and arrows. Their bows were of tough hickory, well shaved, and a good deer-skin string. Their arrows for shooting squirrels and small game had a thick lump on the forward end; those arrows that were to kill large game were made sharp at the point and had a flint or iron point and feathers attached to the hind end to make them sail true through the air. I bought a bow of an Indian and learned to shoot an arrow

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with them at a mark. The first time I went out to try my skill at game I killed five chip-squirrels in two or three hours. I could shoot as straight as most of them. I shot ducks and one deer with my little gun.

It was a time when pot and pearl ash were made in large quantities, that I lived with my brother. He bought ashes and I worked six months alone and made both pot and pearl ash. To make pearl ash out of ashes, we put the ashes in tubs and add water, hot or cold, until we get out lye or strength out of the ashes; [and] that is boiled down until it becomes what is called black sutt [soot?]. It is then shoveled into an oven. I will describe the oven. It should be, say, eight feet square, after being built up three feet high and eight feet square with a narrow space near one edge or one side, with grates arranged to put in wood and build a fire. It must have a good smooth top of brick well laid so as to be level as a house floor. It is then built up oven-fashion, a wall the thickness of the length of a brick, say sixteen or eighteen inches; a door [is] left at one end to shovel in and stir the sutt. Then a low arch is flung across from side to side, the ends both walled up to the arch to support it, the door [being] in the middle of the end wall. The black sutt is spread over the fine dry wood and a fire built in the place prepared for it. The blaze will pass over the whole arch. The sutt is kept stirred up and the fire kept up until the whole inside of the oven [is] red hot, sutt and all. They are then let cool and taken out and boiled down into sutt again and burned over in the oven [the] same as before, let cool, and then it is pearl ash as white as chalk. It is used for bleaching clothes and the like, barreled and

sent to Europe by the ton. Potash is made by putting six or eight inches of good lime over the bottoms of large tubs and then filling the tubs with ashes; then put on water until you get your lye; then boil it down until it gets thick in large potash kettles. Then drive the fire with fine dry wood and it will melt after a while and stand in the kettle just like melted lead. It generally has to get kettle and all red hot before it is all melted. When it gets cold it is [as] hard as stone. It is barreled and used to be sent to other countries for bleaching and making soap, and so forth. Ashes saved when land is being cleared and house ashes have brought millions of dollars into our country.

I lived with my brother nearly two years; then he gave up the trading and returned to Massachusetts. I went back soon after he did and lived with my parents and worked on the farm about one year, and then went with my father and mother to Hebron, in Connecticut, to Uncle Strong, who married my mother's sister. He was a blacksmith by trade; generally kept three apprentices. He made grass scythes, hoes, and did general blacksmithing. They were smart folks and lived in a pleasant place. He worked hard and made money. Sent one son to college. I lived with him somewhat over one year, and concluded I had rather live nearer my parents and old' neighbors.

Hebron was sixty miles from Middlefield, so I thought I would go back to Middlefield and serve out my apprenticeship with Captain Emmons<sup>2</sup> in Middle-

<sup>2</sup> "Captain Emmons" was Ebenezer Emmons born, in East Haddam, Connecticut, April 23, 1766, where he died in 1835. He came to Middlefield about 1790 and was living there at the time in question.

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field. He did not work himself, but he had three apprentices while I was there. We did common blacksmithing. We used in the winter to begin work at four o'clock in the morning; wade through snow waist-deep to get to the shop in the dark fifteen or twenty rods from the house. It was the fashion in those days for apprentices to work five evenings in a week. We went around some on visits and some to singing school in the evening, and had to work mornings to make it up. I had sixty cents a week and clothed myself, and was allowed to work one week in haying for someone who would hire me, and that was my spending money for a year.

I was sick while at Captain Emmons' with the canker rash. His family had it; one of his boys died with it, and we all came near dying. That was the most severe sickness that I ever had. Since then I have never been sick to be laid up or unable to attend to work except twice, both [times] in haying. The first time I was not able to work for one week, the last time not near so long. I have been lame once by a small cut on the knee-joint, while sugaring in Auburn, Ohio, the other time by a lameness caused by a swelling on my foot that confined me to the house [for] two or three months. Once I had a felon on my finger and that laid me up [for] a month or more.

My father's family,<sup>3</sup> consisting of four sisters, two brothers, and myself, concluded to sell out and move to New Connecticut, as it was then called. Father was not rich and we had to economize in every way we could

<sup>3</sup> Apparently the two eldest sons, Benjamin and Martin, were not members of this party, although they also migrated to Ohio.

to live and get prepared to make the great journey of six hundred miles, much of the way over awful roads, with our large family, eight of us in all. We got leather and I cut and made a whole set of double harness, made the hames, and ironed whiffletrees, neck-yoke and all. I borrowed a broken anvil and cut out of two tanned sheepskins a small bellows, and in an old stable I fixed up my tools and ironed a new wagon. All the iron work we needed to fit us for our journey I did.

I was now in my twenty-first year. I did such shoeing [of] horses and oxen and all things else that we needed. Esq. Jeremiah Root and Samuel Taylor<sup>4</sup> and their large families were to accompany us through the whole journey. All things were made ready and on the 7th of June, 1807, the line of march was taken up and after forty-two days of diligent travel, over rivers, mountains, and through swamps and mire we all arrived safe at our journey's end. None of the company was sick on the road. We camped on our own beds spread on the floor and cooked and ate our own food generally on the way.

Once on the Alleghany mountains our oxen were sick and lame from eating rye. We could get nothing else to feed and it fell into their limbs and they could hardly walk or stand. I was left with them to bring on if they ever got so as to travel. We drove a horse

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<sup>4</sup> Samuel Taylor, who moved to Aurora with the Egglestons, was the son of Samuel and Martha (Lamb) Taylor; born in Springfield, Massachusetts, June 4, 1769, died in Aurora, March 10, 1813; married Sarah Jagger of Becket, Mass. Apparently Samuel and Sarah Taylor had seven children at the time they journeyed to Aurora. An exciting story is told of the narrow escape of Mrs. Martha (Lamb) Taylor from the Indians at Pittsfield, where the elder Samuel was one of the earliest residents.

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hitched before them to help draw the load. I was left on the Alleghanies some thirty miles from Pittsburgh. As fast as I could after the oxen could travel I went on.

Our company were to stop two or three days at Pittsburgh to rest and wash clothes and there I expected to overtake them and I did. I found some places so cut up with the great six-horse Pennsylvania teams that it seemed impossible to drive over them without upsetting my load. Once I stopped my team and went ahead ten or twelve rods to view the road and it looked so dreadful that I burst out crying, rather childish for a boy twenty years old, but there I was alone, with few houses along the road, and it brings tears to my eyes now while I am writing it. I finally got along without upsetting and found the company at Pittsburgh as I had expected, somewhat washed up and rested.

We then started on our one hundred and ten mile journey through bush and swamp and up and down some of the worst hills or mountains that could be passed over by man or beast. But by constant perseverance and knowing no thought of discouragement, we moved on slowly and got, after a number of days, four miles west of Warren, where all stayed over night, and as the twenty-six miles west of Warren that we then had to travel was an almost unbroken forest, beech woods, beech root, and beech mud, no bridges and almost no road, it was thought best to send me on twenty-six miles and have Captain Perkins<sup>b</sup> take his yoke of oxen and help the company through. I started early the next

<sup>b</sup> "Captain Perkins" was another settler of Aurora who had come from Middlefield, Mass. Phineas Perkins was born in Enfield, Ct., May 26, 1752, had lived in Southwick, Mass., and in 1799 bought land in Middlefield.

morning with my rifle on my shoulder to kill bears, wolves, etc. I made the twenty-six miles in the forenoon and arrived at old Esq. Sheldon's just as they were sitting down to dinner. They were overjoyed to think that Aurora was going to have such an addition to the number of its inhabitants. They gave me a dinner, of course. I then just called in at Gamaliel Kent's, the next house, and he was highly pleased to hear of their coming.

The next place was Captain Perkins's. He was ready early next morning to go to meet them with his team, and in due time all the company were in Aurora. All the Taylors, Egglestons, and Roots that have lived in Aurora since July, 1807, can date back to that time as their starting point.

After a time I obtained an anvil and vise and made me a good bellows of elk-hide, which is good yet after having been used sixty years, more or less. So with the anvil and vise I made my hammers and other tools, built me a shop and worked at blacksmithing, as people wanted, but still did most at farming, clearing land, and the like.

I made sugar in 1808 from about two hundred and sixty trees, boiled sap in two kettles set on an arch, and gathered with a sap-yoke and by hand. I made about eight hundred pounds of sugar. We then lived where I now live in Aurora, in a rough log house covered with bark, with a split plank floor. We then had no sawmill in this part of the country. We had altogether in our family \$20 in money to buy anything with. We had to work or die, but we were willing to work and did so, early and late.

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Esq. Sheldon got my anvil and vise in Pittsburgh and I paid him in blacksmithing. We had to go to Garrettsville to mill. Our family was large, father, mother, and four sisters and considerable help. It took two days to go with a horse load of grain and get it ground. I was the first that ever went from Aurora to Garrettsville and back in a day. It was a half dozen years after we had come here before we secured a grist-mill in Aurora.

In 1808, Esq. Sheldon built a sawmill where Mr. Howard's now is; we then could get boards. We had plenty of good whitewood trees for saw logs. We could get them sawed into boards for four dollars a thousand. We went on in 1808 and built our east barn, got boards and shingles and got it inclosed well that year. We got nails at Warren. In 1809 Esq. Sheldon built him a frame house of good size, the first frame house in town. He could not get brick to build his chimney, and I had worked some at brickmaking in the east. He urged me very hard to make brick and agreed [that] if I would go and make them near his house he would give me six dollars a thousand and board me and tread the mortar. (This was done with oxen as in ancient threshing; the cattle were driven around and around in the soft clay.)

I finally went and made twelve or fourteen thousand brick, and he got me glass and nails from Pittsburgh to use in building the two-storey house where we now live. In 1809 I made sugar from five or six hundred trees; hauled a part of the sap, after it was gathered into store troughs, in two barrels with a horse. Worked some at farming, blacksmithing, etc. While working at



Esq. Sheldon's the carpenter and joiner that did his work agreed with me to build said white house and enclose it for \$200; and only two years after we got to Aurora, without any money when we came here, I ventured to go ahead and build said house.

The price of the joiner and carpenter work, without lathing, was \$400. I paid some in sugar and about \$100 in common grass scythes which I made, and some in grain, and after about two years it was done from top to bottom in good workman-like manner. We lathed it and got enough limestone over near Esq. Sheldon's and burned them near my house, on a great stone heap, to plaster the whole house, and it was a good convenient house for two families. My father's family consisted of father, mother, Betsy, Susan, Achsah, and Harriet. They were all willing to work but little work could be obtained to make profit in those days. Very few wanted to hire. Our nearest store was at Warren, thirty miles through mud and brooks, with perhaps four [or] five houses on the road, a dark, gloomy wilderness with bears and wolves prowling and howling.

To Pittsburgh, one hundred and ten miles of the same gloom, which was our nearest cheese market. It was called worth three or four cents a pound to carry or fetch from Pittsburgh. Cleveland had, say, half a dozen houses.

We used to go to the center of Aurora to meetings. Generally the women would travel barefoot, two or three miles, and carry their shoes and stockings in their hands. We had some preaching and some deacons' meetings. Read a printed sermon and had good singing.

I used to hunt deer and turkey. I have sometimes

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killed three or four deer a day when the first snow in the fall came, and sometimes two or three turkeys out of one flock. Bears were not very plenty, but were plenty enough to kill a hog now and then. We had one killed by a large bear. We got a large double-spring bear-trap and set it by the dead hog, and within a few hours it caught the bear, who made off with the trap. We could follow his tracks and overtook him, say, a mile from where he was caught. The trap was a powerful one and he made rather slow work where he had to go through a thick alder swamp, and about the time he got through we overtook him. We had two rifles and soon made a dead bear of him. We pulled off bark and harnessed four or five of our company and drew him through the wilderness, to let the women and children and hogs see what had come upon them. The hogs were more scared than the rest. They raised their bristles and grunted and fled and did not return to our house for two or three weeks. I went out hunting one day and shot a large wolf and a turkey, which made a good load to draw home on the snow. I never spent much time hunting. A deer is a wild animal and only good hunting when it snows.

After the country became more settled and the inhabitants became more numerous we had no big hunts. There were no inhabitants in Streetsborough for a long time after I came to Aurora; the land was not for sale. Aurora on one side, Hudson on the west, Kent on the south, and Shalersville on the east. And as there was much game in Streetsborough it was concluded to surround the town and drive the game to the center and slaughter as far as possible. Notice was given to each

and every town, and each town chose a committee to meet on a certain day at the center of Streetsborough and arrange all matters relative to said hunt. I was chosen for Aurora and the committee met as was agreed; a day, etc.; all would help, old and young, guns or no guns, all would help drive the game in. We were placed on the town lines. We had men and boys enough to go around the town, five miles square, by placing them twenty or thirty yards apart, and after we were all placed I was to give the word as loud as I could holler, "All ready!" The first on my right was to repeat it, and so it was to go from one to another clear around the town. Then we would know that all were ready.

The word "All ready" came around, and then I gave the word "Forward march!" and we came in regular on all sides and drove in at one of the hunts and killed at the center ninety-four deer. We surrounded the town of Freedom and killed among other things twenty-three bears. At a later day we surrounded swamps to kill wolves. I was always chosen leader. We would track in wolves on the snow into a swamp, and if the wolf or wolves had not gone out the alarm was given and the town would fly to arms and meet at a suitable place and choose a leader. We would then form two lines of two abreast and march still—no noise allowed—until we came to the swamp. The two leaders, or the two at the head of the line, would then part, one to the right and one to the left, and go ahead. When the two lines had parted the two rear men would halt when as far apart as was intended to place them; the next rear men would do the same, and when the two leading ones came round within a number of rods of each other the swamp would

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be surrounded. Then the word "Halt!" would be given, and if the swamp was large the word would be given by the captain to march toward the center of the swamp. When within a proper distance of the center of the swamp they would halt and kill the game, if possible. Sometimes two or three wolves, when there were several, would run through the line and escape. We killed so [many] that for forty or fifty years back very few sheep have been killed by them in this part of the country. I always, from a small boy, liked to hunt. Back in the east I killed two partridges with a pistol and rabbits sometimes. I could shoot as close as anyone in Aurora, but I never spent much time hunting.

Whisky was in early times thought to be necessary as our breath to keep society alive. No raising, no training of the militia was, no fashionable gathering could be had without it. Our cupboards and stands must have their well-filled decanters and drinking glasses, or we were behind the times; and as there were few distillers in this new country and counting this business profitable, as we all supposed, as whisky was worth seventy-five cents a gallon and one bushel of corn would make three gallons and the still slop would fatten many hogs, I concluded to go into the business on a small scale. I built a still-house and spent all my energies for about two years at the business and made nothing. The men I employed made little more than enough to pay for the grain they used, so I gave it up, a wiser and a better man than when I commenced.

We had a military company formed at Aurora about the year 1810 with say thirty men of war. Ebenezer Harmon was chosen captain, Joseph Eggleston lieu-

tenant, Eber Kennedy ensign, and myself orderly or first sergeant. I had to keep the roll of the company, and on days of training to parade the company and add the names of all newcomers on our muster roll, etc. In 1812 war was declared by our government against Great Britain. We were poorly prepared for war, our discipline was naught, and our arms but few and poor; some good rifles and good shooters, but we were farmers and our war arms, what there were, wholly unfit for a battle; a great wilderness around us. It was eighteen miles from Aurora to Newburg without a house.

Thousands of Indian warriors joined our enemies, who were fully acquainted with this part of the country, so we were in sore distress—our weak militia poorly armed and poorly disciplined, with the God of battles to help us as our sole dependence. When our weak militia company was called away, none but the old folks and mothers and girls were left to take care of themselves and fight the savages if they came as they were expected to do. We had word that Detroit was captured by the British and the Indians, which was true. Then word came that the whole British force, after taking all Hull's army, was coming down the south shore of Lake Erie and would soon be at Cleveland, and two thousand savages to spread over the country and murder and destroy it. Our company was called together to prepare and be in readiness to start at a moment's notice for Cleveland. After meeting and arranging matters two or three times we received word from the colonel that we must be in Cleveland by six o'clock, as the enemy would be there by that time. This was Sunday morning. We were notified Saturday night to meet as a company early Sun-

day morning, and we had met and paraded when a messenger from the colonel came ordering fifteen of the company to be in Cleveland by six P. M. that day, and as many more as would volunteer. That was a dark time. Our captain called for volunteers; say thirty-five men, poorly armed, most of them heads of families, just come into the woods, no one to leave behind to guard the old or the young that were left behind. All those armed for war were to go and leave their homes, wives, and families and what little property they had, wholly unprotected; and it was said that two thousand Indians were just at hand, and they were better acquainted with this country than ourselves, as they had roamed over it for bear, deer, and elk.

What should men do in our situation? I had a young wife, had been married two years, and an old father and mother and four sisters living with me. Could we volunteer to leave them and start that same Sunday, and go through eighteen miles of dark woods to meet such a formidable foe—two thousand Indians and six hundred British regular soldiers, with tomahawks and scalping knives? We were placed in one rank, thirty-five of us, and the order was read that fifteen must go and as many more as would volunteer. All volunteered to go except two young men who had no families. All the rest stood facing death, strange as it may seem. We were dismissed to go home and get our dinners and bid our families farewell and meet in all haste on the west line of Aurora, on the road to Cleveland, to start as a company for Cleveland. We knew not who should feed us that night, nor had we a word of promise that we should have any military force to help us destroy that host we ex-

pected. We were the American army, bold and courageous. We went home and bid adieu to family and friends, left them and shouldered our rifles and hastened to our place of meeting to start as a company, and on arriving found that new word had been sent that Hull had surrendered, that the supposed army was our own soldiers, and that they were on their way home on parole. Then, shouting and firing off guns, we all went back to our families, thankful to God for our disappointment.

A few days later we were ordered as a company to go to Hudson and join some other companies, and from there to Cleveland. We went, and while at Hudson Hull's men, that were taken at Detroit, went along. They stopped and talked with us some time—told us that Hull was a coward, and how he surrendered up two thousand good soldiers without firing a gun. We finally went on to Cleveland and drew our rations of one pound of meat and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  pounds of bread and [a] half pint of whisky to each soldier. Our officers drew two or three rations each. We were camped out this side of Cleveland, say half a mile. I was orderly sergeant and had to draw the rations. We lay there in tents furnished us by [the] government [and] had to cook our meat as we could. After a few days we were sent home to defend our frontier from savages, as there were no inhabitants west of us and Hudson nearer than Huron. We finally furnished five or six from Aurora and about as many from Hudson and some from Mantua and Tallmadge and made out a company of rangers who guarded the frontier to prevent savages from coming through the wilderness and murdering and robbing the scattered inhab-



itants. This company was commanded by Captain McArthur.

The rest of our battalion was left as muster men to go to their homes and be ready to march at a minute's warning. We were called out as a company a short time after and went to Boston [Ohio], and camped there three or four days, and then all of our battalion were dismissed to go home but one company that went through the wilderness to Huron and joined General Perkins who was camped there with two or three thousand soldiers to prevent the enemy from coming to Cleveland. We were not called on after that. The war continued, say, two years, after Perry's victory on the lake in capturing all the British fleet. General Harrison was sent with a large army across to Canada and took and destroyed all the warlike forces the British had in that quarter, and killed old Tecumseh, the great Indian chief, and scattered his two thousand Indians to the four winds and soon the war was ended.

After the war was over the prices of property held up and wheat was near two dollars a bushel, and I concluded to get in a big field of wheat and hired twenty acres cleared in one job on rough ground on lot 23. Porter McConoug[hey] and Mr. McCarty of Bainbridge took the job to chop and clear and fence for fourteen dollars per acre. I concluded to clear twelve acres more by hiring some and doing what I could myself. We commenced both jobs about the first of May, to chop and pile the brush, and by the first of July we had the whole thirty-two acres chopped and brush piled, fit for burning and going to logging. I had two good yoke of oxen and we went to logging, and Mr. McConoughey and McCarty



continued to log and work on their piece through July, and had it all cleared and ready for sowing by the middle of August. I had considerable haying to do, and got all my haying and harvesting done and my twelve acres cleared and fenced and ready for sowing about the middle of August. We commenced sowing and harrowing with two teams, and early in the month of September we had it all sown and harrowed in. About the twentieth of September was called good season to sow wheat, but early sown was always considered much surer to be a good crop.

I raised sixteen calves that year, and the wheat grew up, say about six inches high, and I turned the calves onto the wheat early and left them until snow came so deep that they could not feed. They grew wonderfully. One to see them when turned on and when taken off would not take them to be the same calves. I had a good fair crop of wheat, and when it was fit to cut the next year I engaged different hands to help harvest it. I worked considerably at blacksmithing and [the] hands agreed to help me harvest at any time. When we called the field white for the harvest, we gave notice, and a company of twenty-three good reapers were on hand, sickles in hand, and they had the thirty-two acres reaped and bound on the third day before night. We got it into one large barn by filling it about full. We did our threshing in the winter with horses treading out the grain. One span would thresh twenty-five bushels in a day, keeping the straw well stirred under their feet. We cleaned up in fanning mills. We had about five hundred and eighty bushels. I got some of it floured and sent to Cleveland. My calves never lost their growth, lived on

straw the second winter, and continued to grow. I sold say half the wheat to folks about home.

In 1816 we commenced to make arrangements to build a meeting-house in Aurora. It was finally agreed to build the brick house as it was first built, and so we went ahead with it. In 1817 a superintending committee was chosen and I was the first one chosen. Robert Bissell<sup>o</sup> and Brainard Spencer were the other members of the committee. We agreed with Esq. Carlton, of Mantua, and Martin Eggleston and Justin Parrish to make brick near the burying-ground. They started in the spring of 1817 to make them. The season was uncommonly wet, and they only got enough to raise the walls that year up to the gallery. The next year, 1818, the walls were finished and the house inclosed. It was not finished so as to be dedicated, I think, until 1821. I had to be at a great deal of trouble to get it paid for, and I think I paid about \$700 in all before all the debts were settled.

I was on a committee since to tear out the gallery and put in slips, etc., which cost, say, \$700 — shingling it over, and all. It now wants repairing considerably.

I commenced building the mills in Bainbridge in 1820 in company with Sanford Baldwin, and was at great expense in building a long dam and sawmill and gristmill with two run of stone, in the wilderness near a mile from any house. I bought Mr. Baldwin out soon after we commenced building, and had all on my hands, but finally succeeded in getting them finished in a year or two, and we did a good business for many years in saw-

<sup>o</sup>Robert Bissell. Another Middlefield man. He was the son of Israel and Hannah Bissell, born in 1770, and died January 20, 1833, in Aurora.

ing and grinding, and a great benefit they were to the public in this wilderness country. For fifty years past much sawing and lumbering has been done there, and grinding grain and making cider and planing boards, etc. (Cheese boxes were made there). Much of this was done by Mr. Fuller who still manages the mills. I got new burrstones and repaired the mill several times; built two stone dams. All the expense the mills were to me I have thought would amount to \$7000. I sold my half of the mills about 1860 to Mr. Fuller for \$600. I do not know but what they earned and what they sold for would about pay for the cost of building.

I was one of three that built a stone dam and sawmill in Slab City (Aurora Station), and sold my share of it to Eliakim Baldwin.

About the year 1830, I bought in Auburn two hundred acres for a sugar-bush and paid two dollars per acre, and two or three years later I bought one hundred acres of Franklin Snow — which had about twenty-five acres cleared on it and into grass — at six dollars per acre. I hired a large sugar-house of logs made, and we sugared in it two or three years. It was very uncomfortable to live in the cold and smoke, so I concluded to build two houses, so that there are now three, one to sugar in and the other two to live in when sugaring. In 1837 we made from about 2600 buckets sixty barrels of sugar, which sold for near \$1100 at about eight cents a pound. I paid over \$600 for making. We used the place for sugaring for say thirty years. I then sold it to Zeno, my son, for \$30 per acre. I have bought the Ben place and the Carolina place, and sold sixty acres to Mr. Leadwell and sixty acres to Zeno and his wife. I now, March

15, 1871, have in all Auburn about 233 acres. We have kept cows mostly, and made some sugar, etc.

About the year 1835 I bought the Root farm at \$10 per acre, and had to let out to several, Mr. Saxton, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Parr, and Samuel Hurd. We had on both places ninety cows when Mr. Parr and sons took it, and he was to pay me \$10 per cow rent. They took it for three years and did poorly for themselves and me, and went away four or five hundred dollars in debt. Finally Clinton wanted a farm and I gave him one hundred acres and sold him the rest of the Root farm, 160 acres, and he has owned it since.

I once sold the Bainbridge mill and gave Chauncy \$1000 out of the price, and bought the land, nearly 100 acres, where Zeno has lived, and gave it to him for his own. Since then I have bought the Ben and Carolina places and have not cared to buy any more.

I once bought fifty acres of Thomas Hughes and thirty acres of Mr. Dickinson and sold them a long time ago to Mr. Winchell and Carolina, and I bought the Deacon Parker place for forty dollars per acre and sold it to Mr. Bissell, who now owns it.

I could mention other things that would be of interest, but will only say that time has passed on and I now find myself an old man and infirm, and shall soon follow the great multitude that I have known while I live, that are now mouldering in the grave. "Vanity of vanity, all is vanity."

In the year 1849 I bought the tavern stand at Chagrin Falls of Mr. Bosworth and paid him \$2000 for it, and Chauncy went into it and took the whole charge of it as a hotel and livery stable. He kept six or eight horses

and ran a hack three times a week to Cleveland to carry passengers. He did well in so doing for two years. I then agreed with George Harmon to build a new tavern house, the same size as the one that now stands on the same foundation; I was to give \$2000 and he to do the whole work and furnish all materials and board himself and hands. There was a good barn nearly one hundred feet long, and quite a good tavern house which we were obliged to move off, say, at \$50 expense, which was done, and the new house framed, raised, inclosed and almost finished, all lathed and partly plastered, the old house moved back and still used as a tavern; had all of the bedding and furniture in it. Fire was set to the barn, where there were nine horses, a hack, and a number of carriages and harnesses, and it was near midnight and was not discovered until the barn was all in flames and the horses and almost everything perished and was consumed. The new house and the old one took fire from it and all was ruins. Scarcely anything was saved. This was about the year 1851. Chauncy finally concluded to get a house [and] run the hack to Cleveland, and we finally concluded to rebuild the house and a new barn one hundred feet long and thirty-six feet wide, the same house and barn that is now owned by Mr. Pope (1871), a good house and a good barn.

Esq. Coles, who then lived at the Falls, and Mr. Lampson undertook the whole of the job at \$4500, and were to complete them and do off the saloon, etc. They built it in the year 1853, I think, made good finished work of it all, and Esq. Coles said that it cost him about \$5600 to go through with it. He wanted me to give him ten or twelve hundred dollars more than he agreed to do

it for. We left it to Lyman Fowls, Mr. Poole, and Jeremiah Root, and after hearing witnesses they held Esq. Coles to his written contract that we had signed, which had governed the building of the house and barn. I gave him fifty or sixty dollars that I had overpaid him and he seemed satisfied. Chauncey kept the tavern for a number of years., We let it out to Mr. Burnett for one year for \$500 and after that we let it out to several others, and finally sold out to Mr. Pope and a part of the land to Mr. Washburn and company, for near \$6000, so that [we were] cleared from owning any real estate at Chagrin Falls. The loss occasioned by the fire was considered about \$5000. The people at the Falls signed \$1000 that they would give me if I would go on and rebuild. They finally did give me about \$500 and that is all of the help I got.

I once bought, with half a dozen other Aurora boys, one hundred and twenty acres of land on the other branch of the Chagrin and a great water power, but it did not get started to go ahead as we expected, and we finally sold it for half what we gave. It lies there unused, the water wasting, a great pity to have it so, but so it is. Esq. Blakesly thinks now he will go there and I hope he will.

I paid toward a railroad to go through Chagrin Falls \$3300 cash. I have let out for a number of years our home farm and what I own in Auburn. We have generally had about thirty cows in Auburn and thirty or thirty-five cows at home. The rent on the Auburn place was two hundred pounds of cheese to the cow. One year Mr. Wait took the place and sold it for about twenty cents per pound. We had thirty-two cows; the

rent, besides the boxes and all other expenses, amounted to over a thousand. That was about the time I paid the railroad debt and I did not feel it much. I have paid my children that now live five or six thousand dollars to help them through the world, have paid near \$500 to the American Bible Society, say \$150 to help buy land for the poor at Cleveland under Mr. Watterton, some to the New York Children's Home. I paid six or seven hundred dollars toward Hudson College, the last payment of one hundred dollars cash, and I am, if I wish, to have a scholarship for that, if I choose to send one. Nobody wants it as a gift as I know of. I have lost in all I presume cattle and sheep more than one hundred head. All losses for sixty years would amount to \$25,000. Still we have lived and never drove for a debt, never sued.

We have always believed with Solomon that there was nothing better for a man than that he should eat, drink, and enjoy life. We have not went hungry nor naked. We have been sick and afflicted as a family more or less. Five of our children have died from consumption; they were returned to the ground from whence they were taken and their spirits have gone to God who gave them, and thanks be to God that we were not left to mourn without hope. None of them feared God, and God Most High grant that all of our children that yet live may become Christian, confess Christ before men, and finally be confessed by Him before the Father, when the scenes of life end with them.

I have almost always owed large sums of money for land, and borrowed money, but always have been able to pay when it has been wanted by those to whom the

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sums were due. The paying up for the Root farm was not wholly done, I think was not, under fourteen years from the time it was bought, but it was paid along at all times as soon as they wanted it. I borrowed \$2500 of Thomas Smith to help rebuild the tavern at the Falls, to run ten years, and he would not take any of it until it was due. I never had any trouble in raising some to pay all claims against me, although some have been large, especially the railroad \$3300 all at once.

I came into Aurora in 1807. We did not do any town business then, but after two or three years were organized as a town and held town meetings and chose town officers, a justice of the peace, trustees, constable, etc. We were also set off as a military company, and we chose Ebenezer Harmon captain, Joseph Eggleston lieutenant, and Eber Kennedy ensign. I was chosen orderly sergeant, to make out and keep the muster roll. All of the said officers held their offices for several years. When Captain Harmon was promoted to major, Joseph Eggleston and Mr. Kennedy resigned and I was chosen captain of said company. I served as captain for two or three years and was then chosen lieutenant colonel, held that office a few months and was chosen colonel. I served as colonel for two or three years, was then chosen general of our brigade, and served three or four years and gave up all my authority as a military man. I was probably at \$300 to \$400 expense in military equipment—one pair of brass pistols, bought at Pittsburgh, \$24, one sword \$18, coat, hat, etc., one saddle with leopard skin housings, holsters, etc.; besides, treating with whiskey made a big bill. Sometimes gave ten or twelve dollars for a grand studhorse to ride on parade.



The civil offices that I have held?—first, constable two or three times, sometimes overseer of the poor, supervisor of highways, township trustee, justice of the peace, one term, and two years a senator in the Ohio Legislature. All of those offices ended in 1833, thirty-seven years ago. Since then, for the most part, I have enjoyed good health and labored all I have been able to do.

I have outlived all that were senators with me in 1832 and 1833, and there is scarcely an officer or soldier that I served with in the military line from 1812 to 1825 that I can hear of that yet lives. A short period will number me with them that have had their day on earth and are among the dead and forgotten.

I joined the Congregational Church in Aurora about 1810. Rev. Seward was our priest for thirty-one years. I have always paid as much to support him as any one. For more than thirty years, almost every Sunday, I was among the singers in the gallery and used the bass viol to help the singing. For some years I led the singing, naming the tune and giving the pitch and going ahead, singers following. I was almost always to meeting Sabbath day from the time I was eighteen years old and with the singers until I was eighty years old. Our ten children were all baptized by Mr. Seward and I was always glad to bring them to Christ Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and bless them, and God grant that his blessing, even the pardon of all their sins, may be vouchsafed to them all and that in age they may all be converted and become as little children and be received as his chosen ones. May God by his Spirit stir them all to lay hold on eternal life. I hope and pray

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that none of them may so love this wicked, perishing world, where moth and rust corrupt and where thieves break in and steal, as to set their affections upon it, but will be God's humble, faithful servants and worshippers while you live, when you die, and forever. May we all meet in heaven, and join that innumerable company of angels that are doing God's work and singing God's praise forever. Oh, let all be wise and choose that good part that shall never be taken away from us. We are all sinners and we must repent and believe in Christ Jesus as our Saviour, that God's mercy alone saves us.

I will say a little more about sugaring in early times. We had about eleven hundred trees, mostly along the high ground between our houses and Mr. Loveland's,<sup>7</sup> and I got buckets and also troughs for them all, and we had three small store troughs placed among them and was going to gather the sap with a sap yoke and pails into them and draw it in two barrels with a horse from them to our boiling-place near our dwelling place. I had never heard of sap being gathered in barrels but thought to try it. It worked well, and the next year I took three barrels on a sled and drew them with oxen around the bush, the first sap ever drawn together with a team that was ever heard of. After a few years we used a stone-boat and it soon became the fashion to gather sap with teams and barrels.

We tapped all our trees by chopping a box with an axe, two or three blows with a slant, so that the sap

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<sup>7</sup> Epaphroditus Loveland, son of Epaphroditus and Eunice (Bascom) Loveland born at Hebron, Ct., June 1, 1783, died at Aurora, August 4, 1865. He had lived for a time in Middlefield, Massachusetts, and came to Ohio later than the Egglestons.

would all run out of the box at one end, and we then drove in two or three inches below a gouge and drove in a spout fifteen or twenty inches long and near two inches wide, slanted down to carry the sap into buckets which set on the ground or on blocks. This was the way everybody tapped their trees in those days. After a while it was the fashion to tap with a gouge, drive it in sideways, first one way and then turn it the other way, and take out a chip and put in a spout the same as when boxed with an axe. Next I concluded to try boring with an auger and hang the bucket on an iron spike drove into the tree a little below. I tried about two hundred trees one year, and the spike cost considerable and broke off in the tree, many of them, and I concluded to try hanging on the spout that was to carry the sap into the bucket. After trying several trees with large buckets I concluded that it was the best way that trees could be tapped and I made spouts from elder, 3300 spouts in one winter. All had a notch to hold the bucket. The fashion of hanging buckets on the spout is now almost universal.

I was the first one that used an arch to boil on. We used to hang up kettles on their bails and make fires around them. For twenty years I used to tap about eleven hundred trees and generally made about three thousand pounds. Afterwards we used on the Root farm and at Auburn 3300 trees and boiled in potash kettles on the Root farm and in those half round sheet-iron boilers that I made and got made, until I got flat-bottomed pans. The one at Auburn is capable of boiling 125 barrels in twenty-four hours. It is five feet wide and sixteen feet long with partings (within) two

feet of each other and a gate to shut when pleased to do it. I had two log sugar-houses burned up in sugar time one on the Root farm at a loss of \$200.

I built in 1831 the brick house in which we live, and did most of the joiner and carpenter work. I built about 1808 the chimneys of our white house and made the brick out of clay dug out of the cellar that was under the kitchen part. I made them in the road between the blacksmith shop and the house. I made about thirty thousand in all and sold some for ovens, etc. I used, when our sugar trees began to die out east of the house and young hickories sprouted up, to trim them up and let them grow thinking that some day they would be wanted for wood and timber, and they continued to grow until there were about three thousand. There were used five or six years ago enough to make axe handles and other handles that sold for not less than \$1800. I had one-third of it for the timber standing. The tops were used for wood. We girdled a piece where we are now making sugar in early times and a new growth has come up so that more than a thousand sugar trees may soon be large enough to be used for sugaring and will make a beautiful sugar camp for some one, not for me.

I have been to Pittsburgh two or three times with loads of cheese; started from home Monday morning and would be at home Saturday night that same week, 110 miles with awful roads. Once I went with a sleigh and happened to have plenty of snow and cold until I got home. I went one day with a cutter and horse to Cleveland to get sheet iron to make another sap-boiler like those round ones. We had six of them and wanted one more large one to boil in. I started from Aurora

at twelve P. M. and had gone sleighing, got to Cleveland in a short time, went into two or three houses and finally found good sheet-iron and bought over four hundred pounds at 37 cents per pound. I then went over to look up Corwin Eggleston and waded about in the snow-drifts awhile, did my business with him, and went back to Cleveland. I fed my horses and took a meal of victuals and started home with my iron and reached there at eight P. M., just twelve hours from home. I made the iron into a large boiler that now stands back of the white house. I did this in my shop, making all the holes by driving a punch through with a sledge-hammer. The others were all drilled by hand, and every hole in the large boiler was driven with one or two strokes of the sledge-hammer, which saved a heap of work.



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