

VOLUME 5TH
OF
HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS
OF
C. C. BRONSON
OF
TALLMADGE
MISCELLANIOUS

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COPIED BY C. C. BRONSON FROM THE CLEVELAND HERALD

VOL. 38 NO 15th APRIL 10TH, 1850

SKETCHES OF PIONEER HISTORY

The first General Election and Township Meetings held on the Reserve

After the organization of Trumbull County in July 1800 by Governor St. Clair - the Governor by his writ dated Sept. 22nd of that year and directed to David Abbot, sheriff of said county, and commanding him, the said sheriff - "That on the second Tuesday of October, he cause an election be held for the purpose of electing one person to represent the county in the Territorial Legislature". All elections at that time by the existing laws were to be held at the respective county seats of the respective counties in the territory. Of course the election was held at Warren, the seat of Justice for Trumbull county. The manner of conducting the election was after the English mode. That is the Sheriff of the county assembled the electors by proclamation, he presiding at the election and receiving the votes electors orally, or viva voce. It will readily be conceded that in a county embracing as Trumbull then did so large a Territory that but a minority of the electors would come to the election. The number conceived at that election was small: forty two was the amount of the poll. Out of this number Gen Edward Paine received 38 votes, of course he was the member elect. Gen Paine took seat in the Territorial Legislature in 1801. Immediately after the organization of Trumbull County, at the first Court of Quarter Sessions in August, the county was organized into eight townships. The townships were named Youngstown, Warren, Hudson, Vernon, Richfield, Middlefield, Painesville and Cleveland. Before the next general election Trumbull County was divided into two elections districts. The four northern townships Richfield, Middlefield, Painesville and Cleveland constituted the north district. The place for holding the election was fixed at a place known in pioneer days as Perkins Camp. This place was considered as the most central in the newly organized district. It was in the south part of Concord, known as the Company or old Girdled Road, which was laid and partially cleared out by the Connecticut Land Company. The road was started from Cleveland and was laid on the same ground with but slight variation as that travelled from that city to Willoughby. From Willoughby, through the town of Mentor, Concord, LeRoy and Thompson across the south east corner of Madison, through Harpersfield to and crossed Grand River at what was known as Austins Mills in Austinburg. From that place the road run north easterly to Pennsylvania Line, intersecting said line at Lexington, Pa. This road when laid out was intended to constitute the great leading thoroughfare from the Reserve to the Eastern States. East of Willoughby, but a few detached parts of the road are now travelled, nor has it been for more than forty years. A short distance east of the present road leading from Painesville to Chardon where it crosses the trace of the company road in Concord the Connecticut Land Company laid and also par-

tially cut out another leading southeasterly to Warren. It was where this latter road was started from the first named Company Road, that at a verry early day a few families had settled and built their cabins in close neighborhood. The name of one of the settlers at this was Richard Gilford. This little settlement was known as Perkins Camp and as before stated was designated as the place where the elections of the newly organized district should be held. From the United States census of 1800 it was ascertained that that part of the North West Territory constituting the present state of Ohio, contained over forty two thousand people; and as the population of the Territory was rapidly increasing, measures were taken in 1801 to know the will in refference to calling at convention to frame a state government. The qualified electors and every man assumed to be a qualified if he had not sojourned in the Territory a month were empowered to meet at their respective townships and declare their sentiments for against going into State Government. The electors of Painesville Township met at the house of Ebenezer Merry, who then resided in the Marsh Settlement in the north part of Mentor. This was in Oct. 1801. At this meeting the electors attended almost to a man. Sheriff Abbot presided at the meeting. When called upon to vote which was done viva voce every person present excepting two declared for a convention . The two dissensients were Jesse Phelps (in aftertimes when Geauga County was organized was appointed one of the Judges) and Charles Parker (after Geauga County was organized was elected first Sheriff) the oposition of these gentleman to go into state government arose from no particular political bias or predilection for Phelps was a decided Federalist and Parker as decided a Jeffersonian Republican. But the oposition was manifested from simply a careful consideration of the value of dollars and cents. "The Governor, Secretary and Supreme Judges of the Territory were now paid out of the United States Treasury and if we go into State Government we shall have to pay their salaries from our own pocketts". Such were their reasons. This was the first meeting for the transaction of public business ever held in Painesville. At the same time and place a Millitary Election was held for a choice of officers to command the first and only company of Militia in the then Township of Painesville, which at that time covered more territory than Lake County does at this day. Edwin Paine, Jr. was chosen Capt., Charles Parker, Lieutenant and Ebenezer Merry Ensign.

At the session of the Territorial Legislature commencing the first Monday of December, 1801, a law received the sanction of the Governor authorizing the people in the different townships in the territory to convene on the first Monday of April in each year and elect their township officers. The electors when assembled to be not less than fifteen in number, to choose a moderator to preside in the meeting and then proceed by ballot to elect their township officers. An attempt was made at the same session of the legislature to constitute each township an election district for the purpose of electing representatives to the legislature. This project Govenor St. Clair strenuously

oposed; the consequence was it had to be abandoned as the Governor had an unqualified veto upon all bills passed by the legislature. I well recollect the conversation of Gen Paine on this subject after his return from the Legislature. He spoke of the Governors acknowledgement and abilities, of his great experience and of his undoubted integrity. The Governor was a Scotchman by birth, and had been bred to arms. His military education had a tendency to make him inflexible when he made up his mind as to what was best. Towards the latter part of the time he held office in the Territory, my recollections are that he was extremely unpopular, especially among the Jeffersonian Republicans. Before the passage of the law conferring on townships the privilege of electing all needful township officers, such officers were appointed by the General Court of Quarter Sessions. The first township meetings held under the new law was first Monday in April 1802. The first township meeting for Painesville was held at the house of Ebenezer Merry who had removed a short time before from Marsh Settlement and now resided in that part of Mentor on the road or path leading from the Oak opening, the present Village of Painesville to Chagrin now Willoughby. At that session of the Legislature before mentioned, a measure had been brought forward and in part matured to divide the Territory into two parts and form two Territorial Governments. I have it impressed on my memory that the Serota River was to have been the dividing line. But when presented to Congress, that project met with no favor from that body, and a law was passed on the 30th of April 1802 authorizing the call of a convention to form a state constitution. The time set to elect delegates to the convention was the second Teusday in October 1802 and the electors were required to meet at the several places of holding their district elections: and this was the time also for holding the biennial elections for a representative to the Territorial Legislature. Trumbull County was to be represented in the convention by two delegates. By proclamation of the Sheriff the electors of the southern election district met at Warren, and the electors of the northern district at Perkins Camp. At this latter place a verry general attendance took place. From the extremes of the district that is from Mesopotamia in the south east Coneaut in the east, and Cleveland in the west. The electors had some distance to travel and from the newness of the paths, for the public highways in those early times were but paths and having not unfrequently to follow blazed trees, lopped bushes and to skip over logs, and go around the fallen tree tops. The journeyings in fact, substantial labor. Notwithstanding this, I well recollect many citizens attending the election from those distant places, particurly from Cleveland. The poll was opened in the open air, in the yard in front of Gilfords Cabin. Sheriff Abbot as had heretofore been the custom, took his seat to preside at the election and receive the votes from the electors. But as Abbot was one of the candidates before the people as a delegate to the convention, several leading men then present objected to this course, prefering to have three gentlemen chosen to preside as Judges of Election the Judges to select two persons as clerks, the clerks keeping separate poll books. The Sheriff contended that it was his privilege and his duty to preside

at the election. I perfectly recollect the question being put to the Sheriff by Col John Stark Edwards a highly respectable lawyer well known in pioneer days that as there was but one Sheriff in the county, and as there were two election districts in the county both their polls opening at the same day; who should preside at the election held in the Southern District? The Sheriff made answer it would be his deputy. This was promptly denied as being the proper course. The finale was the Sheriff requested the people for and against his receiving the votes to divide right and left. This was done and the Sheriff found himself in the minority. Three gentlemen were nominated as Judges of Election, Solomon Griswold Esq. of Windsor and Maj. Amos Spafford of Cleveland being two of them. The name of the other not now recollected.

The Judges selected two gentlemen as Clerks: Col Eleazar Paine of Painesville and Dr. Orestes K. Hawley of Austinburg were the two selected. This was the last of any Sheriffs attempting to preside at any popular election. There were several candidates for seats in the convention. Col Samuel Huntington and David Abbot Esq. were chosen as the two delegates from Trumbull County. Both of the delegates were of the Jefferson School of Politics. Abbot was somewhat talented; but a singular genius radical in all his political opinions and is common with such men made many warm friends and some bitter opponents. Huntington on the contrary, although belonging to the Jefferson School was rather conservative. Aaron Wheeler Esq. was chosen at the election as the member from Trumbull, to the Territorial Legislature but he never took his seat as the new constitution for State Government went into operation shortly after. This was the last election held under the authority of the Territorial Government. The delegates to the convention met at Chillicothe the first of November. After organizing, but before proceeding to business that body requested Gov. St. Clair to deliver them an address. To this the Governor assented and his address strongly urged the convention not at that time to go into State Government, giving as a reason the objectionable nature of the propositions of the Federal Government allowing the Territory to assume State Government. Notwithstanding the Governors objections the convention proceeded to form a constitution which was signed by all the members of the convention. From that date of the constitution the labors of the convention appear to have been brought to a close on the 29th of November. As the legislature under the new constitution were to meet the first Teusday in March, following, at Chillicothe the convention requested the Governor to issue his proclamation to indefinitely postpone the meeting of the Territorial Legislature which was to assemble at Chillicothe the first Monday in December. This the Governor complied with. The legislature did not meet. Gen Paine, whose term of service had not yet expired started on his journey to Chillicothe, but on his way met the Governors proclamation and returned back. The first election under the new State Constitution for the election of Governor, Members of the General Assembly, Sheriff, Coroner and etc was held at the respective election districts in the state on the second Teusday of January, 1803. The electors of the northern district in Trumbull County met at Perkins Camp. At this election, the

people of the State of Ohio selected as their first Governor the president of the late convention Edward Tiffin, Esq. Tiffin was a man of good talents and a good speaker, it was understood at the time that he could preach occasionally. He was by birth an Englishman. This election being held in mid winter, many of the electors from the extremes of the district were absent from home attending the election there four and five days. From the roughness and bad state of the roads and paths at that season of the year, most if not all the electors preferred making the journey on foot. Many of the electors reached the place of the election in the evening preceding especially those from the extremes ends of the district. On the morning of the election at early dawn might be noticed a lengthend line of pedestrians wending their way to election from the various cabins in the north part of Painesville where most of them had collected and staid the night before. In this train I well remember the presence of that distinguished old pioneer, the Rev. Father Badger, and right merry and jovial was he as he trudged along on foot. The meeting was organized by choosing Solomon Griswold, of Windsor, Eliphalet Austin of Austinburg and John Walworth of Painesville, judges of election; and they made choice of Tim Hawley of Morgan and Abraham Tappan of Painesville as clerks. From the two election districts of Trumbull Col. Samuel Huntington to the senate and Aaron Wheeler and Ephraim Quimby were elected representatives. Huntington at that time resided at Cleveland; Wheeler at Harpersfield, Quimby at Warren. These gentlemen were the first that were elected under State Authority to the Legislature and this was the last election held at Perkins Camp. after this period, every organized township constituted an election district.

Unionville, O. March 28th, 1850 Pioneer
Copy of an editorial in the same paper.

PIONEER HISTORY

We copy an interesting article prepared by a Western Reserve pioneer for the Painesville Telegraph. The reminiscences of the early history of the State and particularly of the Lake Section possess an additional interest at this time from the fact the people are about to exchange the old for the new Constitution - We wish more of the Pioneers would place on record their experience and knowledge of early events in Ohio. Copied by C. C. Bronson April 16th, 1864.

SURVEY OF THE CONNECTICUT LAND COMPANYS LAND WEST OF THE CUYAHOGA RIVER BY ABRAHAM TAPPAN

When the Connecticut Land Company made the purchase of the Western Reserve of the State of Connecticut in the year 1795, that purchase embraced both sides of the Cuyahoga River - but by Waynes Treaty with the Indians, held at Greenville in that year, only from that part of the Company's land lying east of the Cuyahoga River and the Portage Path between that river

and the Tuscarawas had the Indian title been extinguished. This land, that is, the company's land east of said River was surveyed into townships and other subdivisions made in the years 1796 and 1797. And immediately offered in market for sale. Settlements were soon made in many of the townships east of the Cuyahoga whilst to the west of that river, the company's land, owing to the Indian Claim upon it remained unsurveyed, consequently unoccupied. Owing to various causes, a treaty for the extinguishment of the Indian title to the company's west of the Cuyahoga, and also the sufferers; or Fire Land was not held untill June 1805. Cleveland was designated as the place for holding the treaty. The Indians residing in western New York, having some claim to the land sent a deputation of not far from thirty of their number to attend the treaty at Cleveland. The Indians to the west having claims to the land in question were invited to attend in council at Cleveland. The Indians from the State of New York arrived at Cleveland in June, accompanied by Jasper Parrish their interpreter. The Treaty was to be held under the auspices of the United States Government. Commissioners from the different parties interested in the treaty were promptly and in season at the contemplated treaty ground. On the part of the General Government, Col. Jewett was the Commissioner, a verry large muscular man. On the part of the Connecticut Land Company, Gen Henry Champion appeared as Commissioner. Gen Champion was also of more than common size, and a man of good sense. Roger M. Sherman appeared as Commissioner on the part of the Sufferers; or Fire Land Company. For some cause the Indians living to the west and interested in the subject matter of the treaty refused to meet the Commissioners in council at Cleveland. And if we except the deputation from New York, few or no Indians appeared at that place. After staying a few days at Cleveland, and being well assured that the Indians would not meet them in treaty there, the commissioners proceeded westward and after some delay, and a show of great reluctance on the part of the Indians, they finally succeeded in meeting them in council. The treaty was held at the Ogonty place near Sandusky City. At their treaty the Indians relinquished their claims to all lands belonging to the Western Reserve west of the Cuyahoga River as they had done ten years before to the company's land east of that river. It is said by those that attended this treaty that the Indians in parting with and making sale of the above lands to the whites, did so with much reluctance and after the treaty was signed many of them wept. On the day that the treaty was brought to a close, the specie, in payment of the purchase money arrived on the treaty ground. The specie came from Pittsburgh and was conveyed by way of Warren, Cleveland and the lake shore to the place where wanted. The treasure was entrusted to the care of Leyman Potter, Esq. of Warren, who attended by the following persons as escort: Josiah W. Brown, John Lane, James Staunton, Jonathan Church and Lorenzo Carter and another person by the name of Clark. All resolute men and well armed. The money and other property as presents to the Indians was distributed to them., the next day after the signing

of the treaty. The evening of the last day of the treaty, a barrel of whiskey was dealt out to the Indians. The consequent results of such a proceeding were all experienced at that time. It is hoped that in this day of temperance pledges and other kindred appliances, no such practice will prevail in the future. After the conclusion and adjournment of the treaty council, the commissioner and agent of the Connecticut Land Company, Gen Champion returned to Painesville and was the guest of his friend agent Capt. Abraham Skinner. Gen Champion was the owner of several tracts of land in the vicinity of Painesville. He yet owned the larger part of the south half of equalizing lot No. 3 the north part had been sold to Gen Paine and to some other persons. I had been employed in the summer and autumn of 1804 by Capt Skinner as agent of Gen Champion in surveying some of these lands, when Gen Champion came on to the Western Reserve in May 1805 to attend the Indian Treaty, I was further employed by him to survey some other of his lands. After his return from the Indian Treaty I was employed to lay out the village plat of Painesville, which last survey I made in July and August of that year. As the Indian title to the land west of the Cuyahoghs had been extinguished the Connecticut Land Company could survey and put into market that part of their purchase, as soon as the treaty should be ratified by the government at Washington, which was confidently expected would be done in the course of the following winter. Gen Champion whilst at Painesville expressed a willingness to receive any proposals for surveying the new purchase into townships and such other and such other divisions as would be necessary and lay them before the directors of the company on his return to Connecticut. The directors were to meet immediately after the general's return. I had spoken to Anson Sessions to join me and endeavor to obtain a contract for surveying the new purchase the coming season. Mr. Sessions was not a surveyor, but he was a man in the prime of life and possessing energy of character, and a great perseverance in business he undertook, would make him a safe and trust worthy partner. We accordingly made the following proposals to be laid before the directors.

Painesville, August 20th, 1805

To Gen Champion

We will survey the land belonging to the Connecticut Land Company west of the Cuyahoga River at the rate of _____ dollars _____ cents per mile. We will survey it into townships, and make other subdivisions as shall be directed by the Company. We will plainly blaze and accurately chain the lines: will map and return field book etc. We will begin and finish the survey next season. For the purpose of furnishing provisions and other necessaries for said survey to receive _____ dollars in hand at the commencement of the survey. Remainder at close. For the well and faithful performance of such survey we will bind ourselves in bonds with sufficient security.

Abr'm Tappan
Anson Sessions

Other proposals were made by different persons to obtain the contract. But ours were accepted by the Directors and Ephraim Root Esq. of Connecticut was appointed agent and attorney by the Directors to close a contract with us agreeable to our proposals. Mr. Root came on to Warren in November, in fulfillment of his appointment. But I was absent at the time on a visit to my friends in Onondaga County, N. Y. Articles of agreement however were made dated November 19th and signed by Anson Sessions; but in consequence of my absence Judge Walworth then attending court at Warren obligated himself in writing that at my return from the east I would also sign the contract. I returned to Painesville in Feb. 1806 and signed the articles of agreement the 20th of that month. A clause had been inserted in the articles of agreement that if the Indian Treaty should not be ratified in season by the general Government, and the survey postponed for a time in consequence of the nonratification that the company should not be subject to damages on the subject of the treaty being ratified, Gen Champion writes as follows

Colchester, Feb. 1st, 1806

Mr. Abraham Tappan Dear Sir our treaty with the Indians is ratified by Congress. The south line will be first measured and the southwest corner established. I saw Mr. Gallatin, the Secretary of the Treasury, who has the care of measuring the outlines of the Reserve, he says he shall send a man to measure the south line and as soon as that is begun and got five miles, you can begin to measure. I hope you will begin early in the spring and finish in season. But it is some uncertain and we must wait the movements of Mr. Gallatin. I stated to him the necessity of the measuring being done early in the year. When our directors and the agent of the Sufferers meet, which I expect will be this week, we shall unite in writing to him, to urge his early attention to the measuring business. I am sir, your humble servant

Henry Champion

After my return from the east in Feb. we were engaged in active preparation to commence the survey as early as the season would permit. I went to Pittsburgh early in April to procure necessary articles, which at that early period could not be procured on the Reserve. Grain was not plenty in the country. But we were fortunate in purchasing a supply of wheat from Judge Walworth at Painesville. For 100 bushels of wheat we gave one hundred and twenty five dollars. This we took by water to Chagrin Mills and got it manufactured into flour. Our supply of pork we obtained at Cleveland; price twenty dollars per barrel. Turhand Kirtland Esq. of Poland was the local agent of the Connecticut Company on the Reserve. We received a letter on the subject of the survey dated March 2nd, 1806 in which he says: "I received a letter from Gen Champion informing me that he had been to the seat of government - that Mr. Gallatin had

agreed to send a surveyor in the spring to run the south line, and that you may begin to run the east line as soon as they have got west the width of one town, and so continue on; and that he expects the Fire Land will be measured off by the time you have run the Meridian line to that part". The south line of the Reserve, as surveyed in 1796 by Seth Pease, measuring from the Pennsylvania line ended at the Tuscarawas River, a distance of sixty four miles was yet to be run, making the whole distance, to the south west corner of the Reserve, 120 miles. From the south west corner a line was to be run to the Lake, parallel to the west line of Pennsylvania. The running of these lines was to be done by a surveyor, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington. The surveyor selected by the Treasurer was Seth Pease, then a principal clerk in the Post Office Department at Washington and who ten years before had run the eastern section of the south line to the Tuscarawas. From the west side of the Reserve, five hundred thousand acres of land were to be measured off by the surveyor of the Fire Land Company. Almon Ruggles Esq. was the surveyor of that company. The balance of the Reserve, from the east line of the Fire Land to the Cuyahoga River was comprised in our contract for surveying amounting to some eight hundred and thirty thousand acres. We had agreed to meet in Cleveland on the 15th of May together with our men, chain carriers, pack horses and their drivers. Capt. James A. Harper of Harpersfield was engaged as surveyor. The names of the men employed were James Arbuckle, Ira Wright, Augustus Staughton, Guy Carlton, John Ross, Samuel Parker, Mr. McMahan and William McMahan, and a young man by the name of Hewit, and an Englishman, a worthless fellow whom we soon discharged. Also for a short time an active half breed Indian who took charge of a verry vicious Indian horse, hired as a pack horse. The horse had once belonged to the noted Indian Chief Ogonotz. As before stated, our party assembled at Cleveland on the 15th of May and our boat with flour, tents, and other necessary articles came into the river on the same day. We were prepared to send out two surveying parties immediately. But the surveyor designated by the United States Government to run and mark the south line had not yet arrived. We had notified Judge Kirtland at what time we should be at Cleveland to commence the survey. He accordingly met us at that place on the day of our arrival. As it could not be known the precise time when the government would commence running the south line, Judge Kirtland proposed that our surveying parties should commence and should measure off their own meridians, taking care to commence as far south that when the south line was run it be sure to cross our ranges. The government surveyor did not commence running the south line untill the 24th of June at which time we had nearly finished our meridians. Two days after our arrival in Cleveland, that is on the 18th of May, our surveyor Cept. Harper with his complement of hands commenced running that of the eleventh range lying west of the Cuyahoga River and the Portage path. He began on the west bank of the river and ran south. May the 18th I started with my party of hands to take the traverse of the Portage path between the Cuyahoga and the Tuscarawas - that part of the Tuscarawas to the north of the of the south line

