

BUTLER TOWNSHIP  
Branch County, Michigan  
Sections 19 thru 36

March 19, 1976

Another day must not go by without putting down on paper for posterity the thoughts of Emmett Locke, a life time resident of Section 28, Butler Township, Branch County, Michigan, now seventy-six years young.

It was indeed a privilege and a delightful pleasure to lend a helping hand to Mr. Locke in preparing the enclosed detailed map.

Included in this short resume of Sections 19 through 36, or the south one-half of Butler Township are some of the trials and tribulations of the early settlers of this region, which have been passed down from generation to generation.

There were two post offices in this small area, one at Faxon and the other at South Butler. The Faxon postoffice was on the northwest corner of the presently named Bidwell and Quincy Grange Roads. The postmistress was Mrs. Ambrose David, nee Jennie Faxon. This postoffice served the few inhabitants of this wooded area in the early years. About three-fourths of a mile east of the Faxon postoffice, below Wilmarth's Hill, Hog Creek passes under the Bogue Bridge with Knowlesville nestled in the valley. Situated there was a blacksmith shop and the Knowlesville sawmill run by the swiftly flowing Hog Creek, where Lindsey road made a right angle and met Craft Road. The mill race and portions of the dam remain visible today. In 1881 Gilbert Clizbe and family lived on the hill west of Knowlesville but soon moved and Horace Wilmarth purchased the farm and for many, many years it has been known as Wilmarth's Hill.

The South Butler postoffice was located on the South Butler Road, one and one-half miles east of Quincy Grange Road serving the settlers in that area. Letters were a luxury in pioneer times.

Travel was by wagon trail in the early days, one trail originated one-half mile west of the Faxon postoffice, on the Charley Locke farm, the father of Emmett Locke, and followed the wooded high ground across a small creek on the Locke farm, where remains of the stone crossing are visible today, through the Speaker property, crossing Dean Road, the Ferguson forty, passing three early settlers homes on the trail and on west through Girard Township and into Girard for supplies. Aged apple trees still stand where one house was located on this wagon trail of yester year.

One mile north of the Faxon postoffice, Dayburg Road intersects before one sees Hog Creek flowing through Dayburg bridge.

In 1848 a half acre site was conveyed to the First Baptist Church of Butler for a meeting house and burial ground which is west of the present church. The original church became inadequate and a quarter acre of land was purchased on the east, the present Dayburg Baptist Church being built on that site in 1898. The church is a very flourishing worship center today and after accepting the gift of one-half acre of land on the east of the present church from Don Farwell in 1975 a large addition is in the progress of being built today.

Originally the Dayburg burial ground was adjacent to the Church but due to the high water level, in 1862 was moved one-half mile north, in a quiet and serene setting on a hill overlooking the creek.

About one-half mile west of the church lies fifty acres in Section 29 now belonging to Cecil and Ruth Farwell. On this property is a grave site of one of the early woodsmen. No stone marked the grave but his comrades planted four hard maple trees, one at each corner of the grave, as a living memorial.

On August 16, 1845 Rhinees Day sold a small plot to School District #4 in the northwest corner of Section 29, but no record can be located as to whether a school house was built on this site. In 1860 Matthew M. & Orpha Fox gave a one-half acre site to Dist. #4, located one mile west of the Dayburg Church in Section 19, but no record of holding school is available until 1867 when Ira G. Lampman was the winter school teacher with boys and young men attending school, and Jennie Dubois was the summer school teacher with the girls and young ladies attending. After serving the district for nearly one hundred years (until October 1960) the schoolhouse was sold and moved from the premises with the land reverting back to the present owners of the property, David and Marie Daniels. However, thirteen beautiful hard maple trees remain to grace the location where three generations of the area learned reading, writing, and arithmetic.

North of the schoolhouse, the faithful, winding Hog Creek continues to flow under the ~~Billie-Holmes-bridge~~. The creek meanders west to Hilton's bridge on Taylor road, continues flowing in a westerly direction into the Coldwater river and eventually reaching the St. Joseph river.

Traveling across Billie Holmes bridge north to East Girard road, you come to the boundary line of these southern sections of Butler Township. As one turned east, in days of yore, to visit the Dean Blacksmith Shop, it was necessary to ascend the Tom Dean hill. The blacksmith shop has disappeared along with many fond memories but the Tom Dean Hill remains.

The Indians stored grain in caves along the high banks of Hog Creek, two caves were located Southeast of the Billie Holmes Bridge and two more were located southeast of the Dayburg Bridge. Many Indian artifacts were found by the early settlers.

One wonders today why the creek was so named, but early settlers have the following explanation.

A north Butler settler was herding his beechnut and acorn fattened hogs to the recently built railroad at Quincy for shipment to market, arriving at the river where the Lempman bridge now stands the hogs refused to cross, taking each hog by the tail, with the aid of a buggy whip, he forced them across the river, one by one. Another settler and his wife were traveling by horse and buggy into Quincy, saw the farmer forcing his hogs through the creek, but continued on to Quincy. Upon return at night the settler was still forcing hogs through the river, thus became the name Hog Creek.

In 1840 charcoal made from the plentiful hardwood forests of oak, beech, hickory and hard maple was used in an iron ore smelting plant located in Section 35.

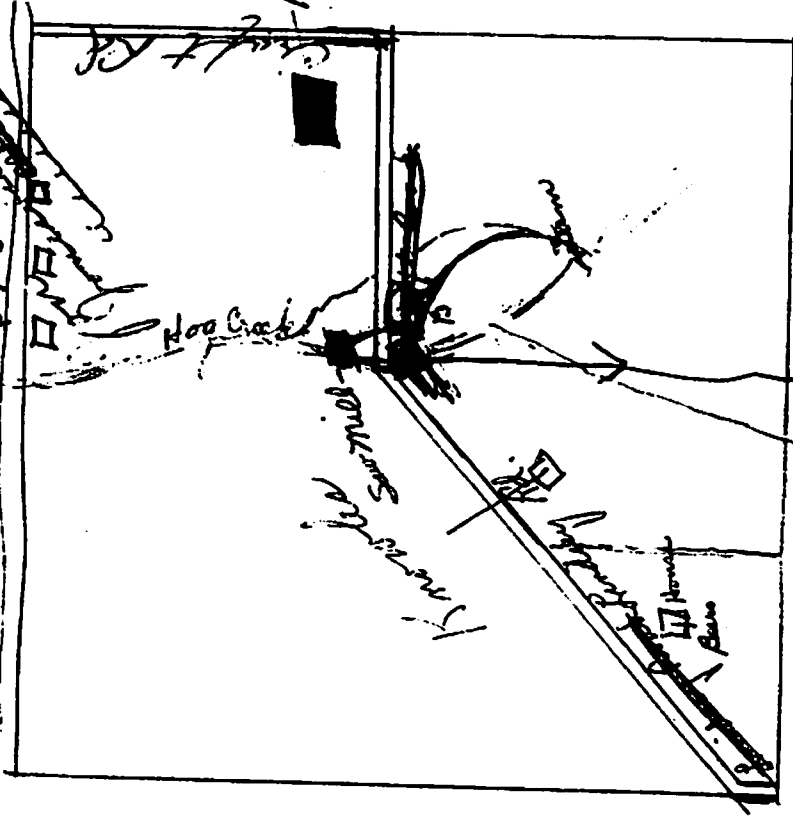
The Butler Township area was originally covered with heavy timber, and as the land was cleared, drained, and cultivated, small patches were fenced and farmed, pasturing the unfenced areas.

Traveling through this area today one views well groomed farm homes and very productive farm ground. This small area has also produced many fine citizens who are scattered throughout the country in various walks of life of which any community could be proud.

The short resume of Sections 19 through 36 was written by Marie Daniels with material furnished by Emmett Locke, both residents of Butler Township.



~~Big Creek  
Knowles Saw Mill  
Hog Creek~~



Knowles Saw Mill Shop

Knowles Saw Mill

Hog Creek



Quartz  
near S. Little Stone

Charcoal made from oak, hickory,  
sycamore & hard maple was used in  
an iron ore smelting plant located  
in Section 35 of Butler Twp. in 1840.

Railroad came in 1850  
before railroad.

Hunted wild turkeys  
in Perry market & swamps.

Save for Doug Bracey  
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