

YEAR BOOK
OF THE
Sandusky County
Pioneer and Historical Association

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1913
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Contains the Proceedings of the Forty-first Annual and
Reunion Meetings, August 2 and 30; Historical Address
of Dr. G. Frederick Wright; Historical Paper by
Basil Meek; and Biographical Sketches of
Deceased Pioneers by I. H. Burgoon

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PREPARED BY BASIL MEEK, SECRETARY
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Tuesday morning, February 15th, the venerable **U. B. Lemmon** passed from earth. His illness dated from the 31st of December, 1886. On the night previous he had attended the camp fire of the McPherson Guard, at Armory Hall, contracting a cold there, and on the 31st imprudent exposure to a violent snow and wind storm was the means of prostrating him with catarrhal pneumonia. From this, after a sharp sickness, he had measurably recovered and was able to move about the house, when Brights' disease of the kidneys showed itself, some three weeks since, and from the ravages of this medical skill could not avail to rescue him. Two days prior to death, blood poisoning supervened, a state of coma succeeded the painful suffering he had been undergoing, the strong constitution succumbed at last, and death closed the scene. His resident sons and daughters, with others of the family, who had been in constant, tender watching with him throughout the fatal sickness, were at his bedside when the end came.

Uriah Blake Lemmon was a remarkable man in many respects. No stronger type of the sturdy, aggressive pioneer of half a century or more ago has lived in this community. He was born **March 16, 1808**, at **Livonia, Livingston county, N. Y.** His father, **James Lemmon**, was of Irish origin, though born in **Northumberland county, Pa., July 17, 1779**. The mother, **Rebecca Blake**, was of nearly the same age with her husband, and is said to have been of Welsh descent. On the 30th of April, 1827, Uriah started for Ohio, accompanied by his younger brothers **Matthew** and **Eli**. They came by wagon; the father with the remainder of the family waiting for the opening of navigation on Lake Erie. The family at this time consisted of five sons, two daughters and one adopted daughter. A memorandum in the handwriting of Uriah now before us, says that when he made this journey the roads were bad and bridges gone, and most of the rivers had to be forded. In fording the Chattaraugus he was obliged to jump into water waist deep and take the floodwood away from the wagon. It cost him just eleven dollars to make the trip to **Sandusky county**, where they arrived May 10th. His father and family got through later in the same month, and had much sickness during the summer, the eldest daughter dying. The father purchased a tract of eighty acres in the south part of Townsend township, where **Matthew Lemmon** now lives.

In 1834 **Uriah B. Lemmon** was married to **Miss Emily McIntyre**. At about this time he went on foot to Bucyrus, where the United States

land office was, and there entered forty acres in section 35, Townsend township, and eighty acres adjoining it in York, but the latter tract overrun in surveying, so that he actually got one hundred and twenty-seven acres of land. On this tract he built himself a log cabin with puncheon floor¹, and a rough frame barn; moved into the cabin with his bride, and began life in earnest. The house was without a hearth, except the bare ground, and his first bedstead was formed by boring holes in the logs at one side, sticking pieces of timber therein and interlacing these with strips of bark. Later he put in a hearth of stones, and constructed an independent bedstead.

At this period, says the written memorandum referred to, there were as many Indians as whites here. Once a year the Indians went to Malden, Canada, to draw money from the British government, and usually brought some of this money back with them, which helped the finances of the community. Mr. Lemmon had picked up the trade of carpenter and joiner after coming to Ohio. In 1830 he worked in Sandusky, then a small town, at carpentering; in 1831 he did some work at Norwalk, and in 1832 went to Lower Sandusky, now Fremont, to work for **Judge Howland**; while there he boarded with **Chauncey Roberts**, at what was later known as the Kessler House, now the passenger depot of the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad. All this work, it will be noted, was prior to his marriage.

The log house above described remained his home for fourteen years, which were marked by the hardest kind of labor. A natural genius for mechanical work stood him well in hand. Besides carpentering, he made all the shoes worn by himself and children, ten of whom were born to him. A shoemaker's bench was part of the furniture of the house, an occasional hide take to a tannery in Seneca county, furnishing leather. As the children grew older, and went to school, breaking and tearing their shoes as youngsters are likely to do to the end of time, at night when they were in bed the father would bring forth his shoe bench and cobble the shoes, ready for service again next morning. He had a workshop for carpentering, or any other sort of mechanical work necessary to be done. There are a number of old houses yet standing in Townsend and York townships on which Mr. Lemmon worked in these early days as a carpenter.

In 1848 Mr. Lemmon bought a farm of eighty acres near Cooperstown, on the north ridge in Townsend, and in 1850 built thereon a frame dwelling, a large mansion for that time, and moved into it in the fall of that year. Here the

wife of his youth and mother of his children died, July 12, 1860. In the spring of 1861 he bought a farm of **Samuel Shutts**,² in York township, now owned by **Randall Sparks**, and moved there with his children. Here he remained until the spring of 1866, when he left his sons **Cyrus A.**, and **M. B. Lemmon** to manage the farm and himself came to Clyde. His first place of residence here was the house now occupied by the widow of the late **Henry Nichols**. But he only remained in town for the spring and summer, returning in the fall to his farm. The ensuing winter he was greatly afflicted with rheumatic fever, and became crippled in the right leg. From that time until the day he died this limb required daily bandaging, a fact which will be new and surprising to scores of people who knew him.

Unable from his lameness to do farm work, in the spring of 1867 Mr. Lemmon came again to Clyde, living for a time with his son **John M. Lemmon**, Esq. In 1870 he married to Mrs. **Dorcas Ferguson**, who died three years later; and in 1874 Miss **Sarah Hoyt**, the widow who survives him, became his wife. His home during this time was at the corner of Church and Duane streets, until his property was cut in two by the building of the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway, when he sold it and bought the place on Maple street where he died.

No man in Clyde was better known or more respected than "**Uncle Uriah**," as he was familiarly called. His was essentially a strong positive character. Whatever he believed, or whatever he did, was with all his might. The farm on North Ridge which he bought in 1848 was owned by a man in Licking county. One night in the old log cabin home—this incident is told by one of his sons, who overheard the talk of the parents—Mr. Lemmon and his wife discussed long and earnestly the question of going in debt for part of the payment, or not making the purchase. It was decided to buy the farm. Next morning the good wife had gotten her husband's breakfast, hours before daylight, and he had walked to Prout's Station in Erie county, twelve or fifteen miles distant, in time for an early train on the old Mansfield & Sandusky City strap rail to Mansfield, whence he walked to Newark, sixty miles further on, and returned on the fourth day the contract of purchase in his pocket.

Politically, Mr. Lemmon was an old line Whig prior to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854; at the formation of the Republican party he became a zealous Republican, and remained steadfast therein until death. In the civil war his patriotism was intense; indeed it is probable that

physical disability alone kept him out of the ranks of the younger men who did the fighting, although he was then past the military age. To him disloyalty to the Union Cause was a crime beyond excuse of palliation; nor was there any abatement while he lived in his anger and contempt for disloyalists and skulkers.

Mr. Lemmon was a just and true man in his family and personal relations. He was proud of his children and kind to them. His sense of duty was very strong, his integrity beyond question. The hard knocks of a life of labor had brought him a competence, so that his declining years were free from pecuniary care. His parents died some time in the fifties; their other sons have all passed way save **Matthew Lemmon**, of Townsend, aged seventy; one daughter, Mrs. **Ann Bullard**, is yet living in Pleasant Lake, Ind. Uriah was older than either of these—seventy-eight years, ten months and twenty-nine days being the precise score.

Surviving sones of Mr. Lemmon are **W. H. Lemmon**, of Fremont, Ind.; Hon. **John M. Lemmon** and **M. B. Lemmon**, Esq., of Clyde, and **C. A. Lemmon**, of Durango, Colorado. Mrs. **Rebecca Gardener**, widow of the late **C. C. Gardener**, and Mrs. **Lizzie Hock**, widow of the late **Howard Hock**, are the surviving daughters. One daughter, **Sarah A.**, Wife of **Monroe Thorpe**, of Grundy county, IA., died within the year past. There are twenty-seven grandchildren in all.

The funeral obsequies of Mr. Lemmon are in progress at the Methodist Episcopal church as we go to press. Monticello Lodge of Masons, of which deceased was a member since 1865, is in charge; religious services and discourse by **Rev. R. J. Smith**, of the Presbyterian church. There is a very large turnout of masons and citizens generally, testifying the universal respect of the community for the deceased and his family. Interment of the remains will be made in McPherson cemetery.

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References

1. Puncheon floor – a floor made from heavy, broad pieces of roughly dressed timber with one side hewed flat.
2. UB Lemmon's mother-in-law was Sarah Shutts McIntyre. At the time of this transcription (April, 1998), Sarah's ancestry has not been traced. It is possible that Samuel Shutts is a relative of Emily Amanda McIntyre Lemmon.

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