

the Cha2. Vick Academy, southwest of is a great pleasure for me to have my old, highly esteemed teacher located in Jimcoe for the rest of his days, where I can frequently meet and associate with him.

Since then the section has had many different teachers. The first three after Mr. Nichol being Jesse Ryerson, Harry Hayne and Mr. Carter. In the winter of 1876-77 there were on the school roll ninety-four names, but an epidemic of diphtheria took eighteen of these. The village physician also died of this disease. So great is the change since that time, I am told there are now but eleven children of school age in the section. In the year 1860 smallpox came to the village, brought from Cleveland, and resulted in the death of a fine young man named Edward Raymond, the captain of the schooner Rebecca Foster. He was to have been married to Melissa Underhill on that trip in. She bravely undertook to nurse him, but was stricken with the same disease and very narrowly escaped death. Her companion, Rebecca Foster, also was very sick with it.

#### The Various Mills at Port Ryerse

As I have written, the first saw and grist mills were built, and in use some time previous to 1812. Either this saw mill, erected by my grand father, was spared by the Americans or another one built shortly after 1812. The community could not do without one. It just comes to me, as I am writing, that my father told me he built one shortly after that date. The next grist mill was built by my father in 1849, and shortly after that date, some time in the fifties, a plaster mill was added to it, the building of which I can just remember. In the early days land plaster was considered a necessity for clover and meadows. It was brought to Pt. Ryerse by the vessel load and dumped on the side of the street, close to the mill. The source of the supply for this article in the rock state was the mines near by the Grand River. Previous to the erection of this plaster mill, farmers would drive all the way to the Grand River in the winter time for their supply. But little is now heard of land plaster, which shows how ideas change. The saw mill that was

dismantled when the grist mill was built no doubt was used to cut the lumber needed for the two new mills. In 1860 there was a fine lot of lumber at our place that was sawn in the old mill, among which were basswood planks four feet across.

In connection with the fine pine and other forests of early days in Norfolk County, I have a letter written a few years ago by Mr. Geo. Hotchkiss, who for many years was secretary of the Northwestern Lumbermen's Association, with headquarters at Evanston, Illinois, and who was on business at Port Dover in the early fifties. He says the very finest pine he ever saw grown on this earth he saw in Norfolk County. Prices were not very high then for first-class stuff, for my brother William bought clear stuff pine at four dollars per thousand in the early fifties. My own purchases for bill stuff in 1869 were at six dollars per thousand feet, and good stuff it was. With the building of the Air Line and Canada Southern Railroads in 1872 the price advanced to \$10.00, and remained quite steady at that price as late as 1890. My father's mills were lost by being set on fire in the spring of 1860, and the unfortunate part of it was there was no insurance on the buildings, so he could not rebuild.

On February 26th, 1869, my father sold the mill privilege to Mr. Edward Harris, of London, who with Mr. John Fotts, built a fine up-to-date mill for that time, with five run of stone and a sixth turbine to run the rest of the machinery. This was leased to Mr. John Shaw of Normandale for ten or more years, and who conducted during that time a very successful business. This mill stood there till one day in August, 1890, between twelve and one o'clock, when fire broke out on the third floor, though there had been no fire in the mill for many weeks, and thus Port Ryerse was deprived of the last industry of any account that brought people there. It was a case of spontaneous combustion, perhaps. Truly the several mills on this site have had a most unfortunate history.

#### Home of Elder George J. Ryerse

My father's house was on the hill west of the village, and south of the