

The village and farm lots, from Chippewa street to Cold Spring, and all beyond, were mostly covered with native forests.

What I have stated as to the primitive condition and scenery of Black Rock and Buffalo, is more fully applicable to all the south shore, and ports of Lake Erie at that time. We were living almost literally in a wilderness; and so were we situated, when the people of this frontier were informed that a steamboat was to be built to run on our lakes.

THE STEAMBOATS.

The first steamboat which navigated the waters of Lake Erie was constructed at the village of Black Rock, near the foot of Auburn street, about opposite the head of Squaw Island, and was launched on the 28th day of May, 1818. She was named the *Walk-in-the-water*, and was of two hundred forty tons burden. The boat was completed, and started on her first trip to Detroit, August 25th, the same season. At this time there was no harbor at Buffalo. Vessels were compelled to lie off in the lake, or under Bird Island at anchor, while receiving and discharging their cargoes, or while waiting for a favorable wind to sail up the lake.

Her engines were not of sufficient power to propel her up the rapids into the lake. In order to accomplish this it was necessary to apply that long-used, and quite primitive propelling power called the "horn (or horned) breeze." I well remember how sometimes when I was fishing at Sandytown the boat would come paddling along with the assistance of some ten or fifteen yoke of oxen, under the command of our industrious and enterprising townsman, the late Captain Sheldon Thompson, with his long ox-whip in hand to urge and guide them.

That craft was quite a new thing, the invention having only lately been brought out, and put into practical and profitable use.

The first commander was Captain Job Fish. This Captain Fish had been an engineer for Fulton, Livingston & Co., on the