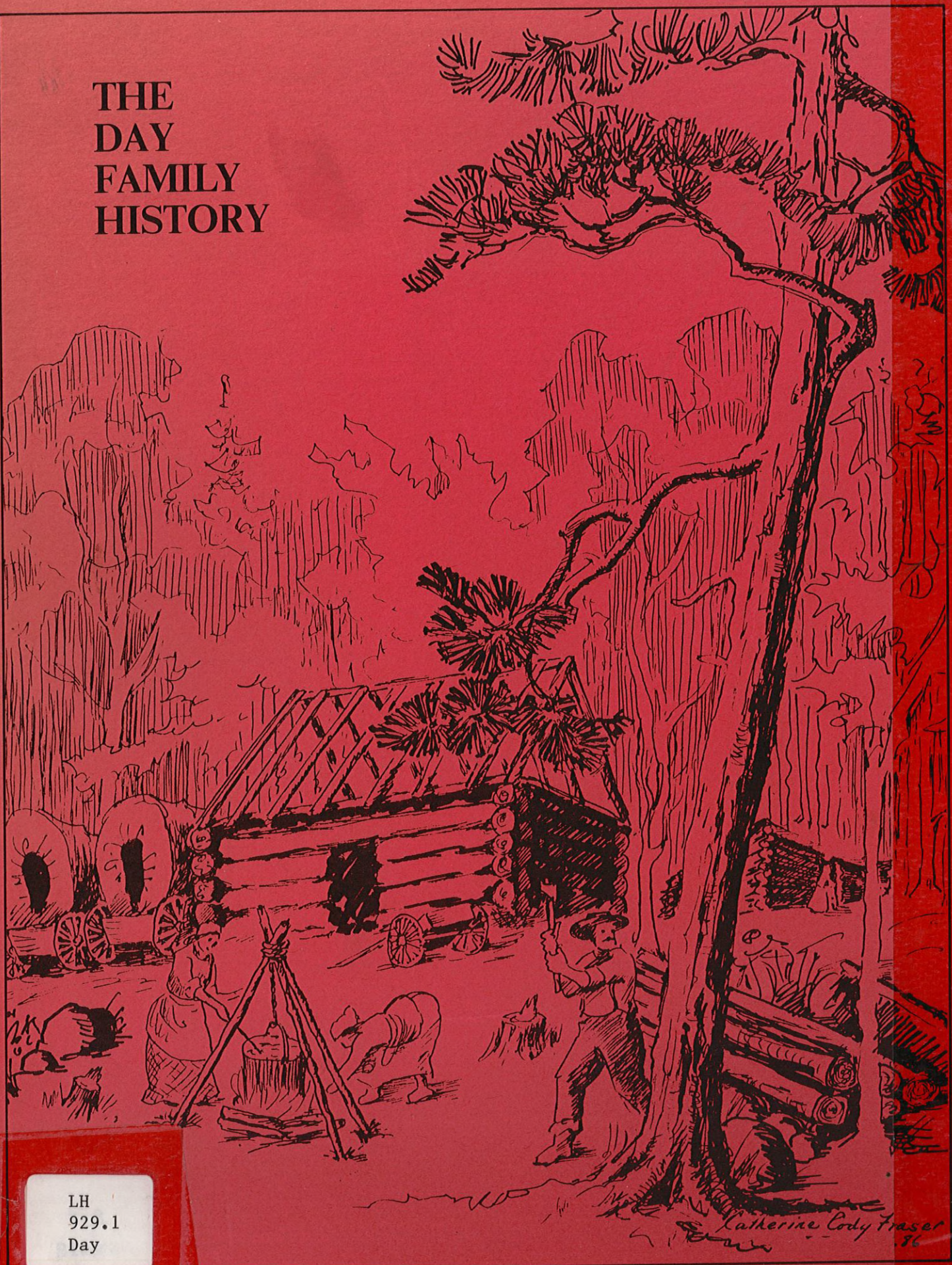


THE DAY FAMILY HISTORY



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In preparing the historical content of this book, our greatest debt is to the late Ted Day and his wife Phyllis. Upon the death of Ted, the Day family records he had accumulated over the years were passed on to Russell Lindley. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Russell for providing stewardship of the records and for updating them since 1977.

The accomplishments of the Historical Committee, which was formed in 1984 for the purpose of publishing this book, have come as a result of a great deal of work done by previous committees. It is impossible to acknowledge all of those who have contributed in some measure to the collection of historical data, but some, more than others, have given many hours of their time and effort.

The work of the committee which was responsible for the publication of the booklet entitled "100th Anniversary, Day Family Reunion", must be acknowledged, Harry Day, Earle Lindley, Clarence Black and Edward Day. Arthur Day, for many years assisted in the accumulation and recording of births, deaths and marriages, and helped with the binders which were used to catalogue the information.

The present committee worked as a team, each member contributing a part to the overall success of the venture. Significant research work was done by Alta and Sigmund Runyon. Their contribution allowed us to expand the family horizon in the first and second generations and also it allowed us to understand more fully the origin of Joseph Day and his family.

Daniel Ruttenbur Jr. contributed a tremendous amount of work, some of which we were not able to include in this book but which will nevertheless be important to future publications. We thank Daniel for his contribution and encourage his commitment to family history.

We appreciate the time taken by Mr. Sam Cook, a good friend and printer, who has led us through this project.

We would especially like to thank Mrs. Catherine Cody Fraser who has contributed her artistic talent to the book by designing and sketching the front cover.





*Joseph Day and Mary Mowry Day.
Parents of Elmer Day.*





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Introduction

It appears that Joseph Day was born April 16, 1756 in Walpole, Massachusetts. His father's name was Joseph Day and his mother was Abigail Colburn. Joseph's great-grandfather, Ralph Day, was born in England and had emigrated to the colonies, settling in Dedham, Massachusetts.

Much study has yet to be done in order to substantiate and clearly understand the Day family lineage up to the birth of Joseph Day in 1756. It remains for future family researchers to unlock the secrets of the past and shed light on the Day Family history prior to the mid-eighteenth century.

Joseph's birth in 1756 provides the point of departure for this history of the Day family.

The earliest known evidence which tells us where Joseph Day and his family originated, comes from the New York State census records. The 1790 census shows Joseph and his wife living in German Flats, Herkimer County, New York. The village of Herkimer, which is the County seat, is located just east of Utica, New York, on the main transportation route from Albany to Syracuse.

Ten years later, the census of 1800 shows that Joseph and his wife had moved to Oneida County which is about 30 km west of Herkimer and has Utica as its County seat.

In 1810, the census shows Joseph, his wife Mary and eight children living in Ontario County, New York. The family had moved approximately 150 km west from the Utica area into a County which has the town of Canadaigua as its County seat and the Finger Lakes as its most impressive geographic feature.

These records would seem to indicate that the early Days were somewhat nomadic in their lifestyle. It is important, however, before drawing such a conclusion to understand that all of the land in west-central New York State had been given to loyal soldiers after the war of independence in 1776, or had otherwise been taken up by "land agents". Joseph Day may not have owned property in any of the locations where the census records identify him. The Erie Barge Canal which was opened in 1825 from Syracuse to Buffalo, provided great stimulus to travel, business enterprise and the continual westward movement of settlers. Joseph and Mary were typical of many families of the times.



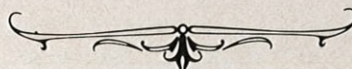


DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter One

John Day

John Day was born January 17th, 1825, just four years after his grandfather Joseph, his father Elmer, his two uncles Dexter and Jonathan, and an aunt arrived in Nissouri to start a new life. At the age of 21, John Day married Eliza Jane Congdon who was 18 and they farmed 50 acres on the west half of lot four Conc. 9. Immediate neighbors on the eighth line were Jacob Day, William Day and the Sherlocks. Behind John's farm on the ninth line, Ele Day and Dexter Day each farmed a 50 acre parcel. John Day wrote "Memories of a Pioneer" which is appended to this book. John Day and his wife are both buried in the 7th Line Cemetery.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Two

Cynthia Day Sherlock

Cynthia Day was born March 16th, 1827. She was married at the age of 16 to James Sherlock. The Sherlocks farmed across the road from Elmer Day's home place. James and Cynthia Sherlock had 11 children, seven girls and four boys. Cynthia died in 1898 at age 71. Her husband, James Sherlock lived to the grand old age of 94.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Three

Riley Day

Riley Day was born March 26, 1830. He was twice married. His first wife, Cornelia Cigswell died at age 25, the mother of two small children. Riley's second wife was Margaret Miller. She was 20 years old when she married Riley and they had 10 children. Riley farmed on the 7th line, just above the Horseman Sideroad on lot 6. Riley and both his wives are buried in the 7th line cemetery.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Four

Fidelia Day Cody

Fidelia Day was born January 19th, 1833. At age 24, she married Harrison Smith Cody and they had seven children, four boys and three girls. Fidelia's first child, a boy, was born on Feb. 14th, 1858 and was named John Valentine Cody. Fidelia lived to the age of 68 and is buried in the Embro Cemetery.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Five

Ezra Day

Ezra Day was born September 5th, 1837. He married Dolena McKay and they had eight children, six girls and two boys. There is little information here about the first boy, Alvin, except that he is buried in Indianapolis. Ezra Day died at the age of 72 and is buried in the Ingersoll Rural cemetery.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Six

Israel Day

Israel Day was born June 12th, 1839. He married Elizabeth McIntosh and they had seven children. Israel farmed in East Nissouri Township just west of Kintore at the ninth line. He died in 1916 at the age of 77 and is buried next to Elizabeth in the Kintore cemetery.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Seven

Russell Day

Russell Day was born October 18, 1841, twenty years after his father Elmer and his grandfather Joseph came to Nissouri Township to start a new life. Russell married Jane Miller who was born August 28, 1943 and they had six children. Their first two children, George and William Walter died as infants. James Elmer, their third child married Ethel Dunn and they had no family. Edmund Arthur was their fourth child and is the father of Edward Day, to whom the publishing of this book is dedicated.

Russell and Jane Day's youngest two children were girls, Ann Eliza and Edith Jane. Ann Eliza married a Sutherland first and her second marriage was to a Caddey. Edith Jane married Charles Jackson Lindley.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Eight

Ele Day

Ele Day was born July 10, 1844. At age 22 he married Mary O'Brien and they had four children. Ele farmed on the ninth line of East Nissouri. He died at age 59 and is buried in the 7th line cemetery. Mary lived for 24 years after Ele died, passing away at age 81 in 1927. She too is buried in the 7th line cemetery.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Nine

Dexter Day

Dexter Day was born February 4th, 1849 and was married three times. His first wife's name was Hepsy Morehouse and they had one child, a girl. His second wife's name was Margaret Cook and they had four children. Dexter married for the third time at age 53. His third wife's name was Minnie Murray. Dexter is buried with his second and third wives in the North Embro Cemetery. His first wife is buried in a small Day Family cemetery just west of Thamesford along Highway 2.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Ten

The Reunion

There are many traditions which hold a family together. In the Day family, perhaps the single most important tradition is the annual reunion. Every family member who has attended one of these reunions has a special memory of good times, good food or good fellowship. The family has come a long way since Joseph and Mary Day moved across New York State in the eighteenth century. Half of their family stayed in New York, half came to Ontario and then on to Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa. The reunion is unique in many ways. Okal Day describes it in the following way.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Eleven

The Second Generation

Joseph Day arrived in Canada in 1821. He brought with him four of his eight children. The other four remained in New York State. The concerns and deliberations which must have preceded such a family breakup will certainly never be fully understood. Chapter 11 presents the statistical information gathered for the most part by Alta and Sigmund Runyon, as it relates to the sons and daughters of Joseph and Mary Day. There is no reliable information available for their eldest son Joseph Jr., or their daughter Asenith.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Twelve

The Rutenburs

Betsy Day was a sister of the four children who accompanied Joseph Day to Nissouri Township. She had married Daniel Rutenbur in Walworth, New York Dec. 15, 1814, seven years before the emigration to Canada.

Betsy and Daniel had three children and were expecting a fourth when the Day family went off to Canada to start a new life.

Daniel Rutenbur Jr. describes the Rutenbur history in Chapter 12.





DAY FAMILY HISTORY

Chapter Thirteen

Jonathan Day

Jonathan Day was one of the four children who came to Canada with his father Joseph in 1821. He was born in 1801 in New York State and married Polly McCarty. They had seven sons, some born in New York and some in Nissouri Township. Jonathan settled in Michigan with his family and is buried in the Pt. Sanilac Cemetery.

Alta and Sigmund Runyon have gathered the following statistics of Jonathan's family.





Memories of a Pioneer

An interesting Article by John Day of Thamesford
“ONLY ONE WHITE SHIRT”

A family gathering was held last January at the old homestead of the children of Elmer and Asenith Day, seven boys and two girls were present and advantage was taken of the occasion to recall to mind the scenes of their childhood days, the fond recollections of their parents who have passed away, at a good old age. Father's birthday was on January 25, and had he lived to that date, he would have reached the ninety-four mark. The mother of the family would have been ninety-three on the fifth of September. It was after partaking of an excellent dinner that we began to talk of the trials our forefathers and mothers had to endure.

Grandfather, Joseph Day, came into Canada in the year 1821, bringing three boys and one girl with him, and leaving three girls and one boy in New York State. They were the oldest, and afraid to come for fear of being killed by the Indians. Father was the youngest boy, at the age of 18 when his father came into Canada. First he moved in with a team, and cut his way through the woods to what is now Thamesford. There were no bridges in this section in those days, so it was necessary for them to ford the river. Father has told me that he carried what he could across on the horse's back, and cut their way on one mile west of Thamesford to Lot 1, in the Ninth Concession of East Nissouri. The wolves were very thick at that time and howled dismally about the house. On one occasion father made a small trap, baited it with a piece of meat, and caught an old wolf by one of its front paws. The wolf dragged the trap, and my father, his brother, D.B. Day, and a man named Cass, with three dogs made pursuit for the wolf, and caught up to it, one mile from where it started. After a big tussle, the man with the dogs worried the animal and caught it alive. They muzzled the wolf, tied his legs together, ran a pole through between his legs and carried him home. They untied his legs and tied a log chain to him. Father took hold of one end of the chain, and letting the wolf go, it made for the woods, father hanging on to the chain. When the wolf had gone as far as he wanted to go, he pulled up the chain, and the wolf turned and made a spring for his throat. Father doubled his fist and gave him a plumper on the head.

Another incident which occurred the same year was this: There was to be a wedding at Grandfather's, the favored man being a Mr. Cass. Cotton was dear at that time and Cass had no starched shirt with which to grace the occasion. In the township there was only one that would qualify for a wedding ceremony. It was "let out" on these occasions, and before Cass' marriage day came, it was brought to grandfather's log house to be done up. They put the shirt over the fireplace to boil and wash for the wedding next day. The members of the household went to fiddling and dancing and forgot all about the shirt until they smelt the cotton burning. The shirt was burned and the marriage had to be performed in the every-day article.

In the year 1822 my father returned to New York State and was married to Asenith Fowler. They were both working at the same place at the time they were married. They saw the magistrate passing by on horse back. Mother was at the spinning wheel at the time and father at farm work. Father went in and said: "What hinders us from being married?" She said nothing, but silence is consent, so the magistrate was called in and the two were made one.



Speaking of myself, I was born in the year 1825, and one sister in the year 1827. Father and mother moved into Canada in the year 1829. Mother has often told me that she brought along clothes to bury me on the road, but I am alive yet. I was 72 years of age on the 17th of June. The family moved into Canada with one horse and one horse-wagon. When they got here they lived in a shanty on grandfather's place. His brother, Jonathan, had taken up Lot 4 in the Ninth Concession of East Nissouri, one mile from Thamesford. He traded his horse and wagon to his brother for the north east half, even up. Father then went to work on the place to clear a spot to build the house. He moved into it in the year 1830, and lived in it about twenty years. The children were all born in it except the youngest, whose birthplace was in the frame house in which we held our family gathering. Father and mother ended their days on the old homestead. Father and four or five neighbors built a small log school-house, in the woods, one mile north of where Thamesford now stands. They had no lumber to make seats, but cut down basewood trees, split them in halves, turned them over and bored holes in the rounding side, put legs into them and made seats for us to sit on, and then writing desks had to be arranged. They managed to get a piece of board large enough for two or three to sit on and write at one time. When all was completed, they procured a teacher by the name of Howard, who lived on Lot 7, in the Seventh Concession of West Nissouri. He used to come from there everyday and teach the school. This was the first school that my sister and I went to. The next teacher we had was Jacob D. Allan. He taught for about \$10 a month and his board. The book which we used was one which was called Webster's Spelling Book, and consisted of the A, B and C in first part, and spelling and reading. This school was burned down and larger one subsequently built. A new teacher had to be procured and a Frenchman, living where Thorndale is now situated, was recommended. One of the questions asked him was: "Can you teach grammar?" He did not understand and they then asked him, "Are you a grammarian?" To this he replied: "No, I am a Frenchman." He was not engaged.

Here are the names of five good elders who came and preached to us in the old log schoolhouse from Sunday to Sunday: Elder Vining, who lived near where Thorndale is, Elder Baily who lived near Dreeney's Corners, Elder Brown who lived near Medina, Elder Harriss of Zoro who lived near Embro, Elder Turner who lived on the Governor's Road, east of Campbell's Corners.

There were three places at which we used to attend worship: One in the Vining Settlement, one in the Burn's Settlement, and one north of Thamesford. About 1838, a sect in our neighborhood, calling themselves Millwrights, created a commotion by prophesying that the world would come to an end on the 6th day of April. There were about three feet of snow on the level and they predicted that it would turn to grass and burn up the world. Some were foolish enough to believe it. If they had any stock that was fat enough for beef, they killed it and asked their neighbors in to help eat it up. The craze actually ruined some of the people in Nissouri.

Not long after this a circumstance occurred which caused me to believe that the world was actually coming to an end. The stars commenced to fall like large flakes of snow. They started to fall some time about midnight and continued to fall thick and fast till daylight. They seemed to come about six feet from the ground and disappear. It was a meteorological disturbance.

Mother used to weave for the country people round about, and there are some of the old apple treses and one pear that is bearing fruit yet, of which she paid for by weaving for one old Mr. German, who lived two miles north of where Medina now stands, as near as I can remember. The trees are 65 years old. There was not a spot of land cleared large enough to set out an orchard as they should be. Father fenced off a piece of ground about two rods square close to the house, and set the trees into it, until he had a piece of land cleared large enough to set them out as an orchard should be. In those days fish were plenty and we could catch a mess of them whenever we wanted to. I remember well one night after school catching forty speckled trout in one haul with my hands in the creek that crosses the old farm. We used to catch barrels of suckers, salt them down, and they would last us till they came again, the next spring. I have seen father feed them to the cows in the spring.





I will tell you now what my father's farm implements consisted of: An axe which was good, and better than they are at this present time; a hoe, with iron enough in it to make half a dozen of such hoes as they use now; a pitch fork after the same sort; a sickle for cutting grain; a scythe for mowing; a hand rake to rake and bind the hay also. He had a cradle for cutting the grain, if he wanted to get along with it farther than he would with the sickle. His harrow was in the shape of an A, which we called a crotched harrow, and which consisted of tough elm poles, halved together at the front, and fastened securely each side, extending back six feet along with a piece pinned across the centre to keep it in shape, with about eleven teeth made of inch and a half irons driven through it. We would harrow about one acre a day.

I remember the Mackenzie rebellion well. It was in the year 1837. He started to get up companies in Norwich, held meetings there, told them that he could take Canada and made writings. Several men signed them as volunteers and kept the writings in an old valise, so that the government could not find them. They buried the valise on the farm on which my wife was living at that time. She was only about eight years old. The authorities expected they were on this man's farm, somewhere. They went there and told him that if he would tell them where it was, they would not harm him. He told them where they could find it buried in a field. Mackenzie made his escape out of the country and they went and found the valise. Seven men's names were signed on the papers. The men were arrested, and taken to the London jail. Lish Hall of Ingersoll had so much to say that they were going to take him also. They went to get him, but he was sick at the time and not able to take. They guarded the house with guns for several days and nights. He knew if they took him, he would share the same fate of the seven men they had taken. Father and I were in Ingersoll the day that Hall, dressed in his wife's clothes, came out and went down to the spring to get a pail of water. When he did not return in sufficient time they expected that it was he who had gone, so they rushed in the room and found that he had been taken. The searchers expected to find him at Dennis Horseman's, one mile from where we lived. They made a diligent search for him even running the bayonets down through the hay. They did not find him, however, as Mr. Hall got into Michigan and saved his life. The seven men they had taken to London had their trial, were found guilty of rebelling against their country, and condemned to be hung on a certain day in the winter. They were brought out and hanged in the same yard in which the jail now stands. Their friends, knowing the day that they were to be hung, drove to London to get their dead bodies. They got them and proceeded home.

On one occasion I was nearly killed by a bear. I was seeing a young lady home, who had come to visit us. I had got within forty rods of my home, when a bear crossed my path. I ran and it chased me. I reached home before it caught me, however. We fired at the animal through the window but did not kill it.

After talking over all that I have written and a great deal more, and hoping that if we all never meet together on the old homestead again, we shall all prepare ourselves to meet our father and mother in a better land, who have gone on before, and form a happy family as we used to be in the old home years ago, we all shook hands and left for our several places of abode, the farthest one living away from home now being in the city of London. I will now sign my name in behalf of my brothers and sisters.

JOHN DAY, Thamesford.
1864





Appendix III

The Days have their Day

The Nissouri Nudger

Evelyn, Ont., July 15, 1911

On Friday, June 30, at the home of Mr. Elmir Cody, Cody's Corners, the annual reunion of the Day family took place. Members of this family to the number of about 150 gathered from Detroit, Toronto, Port Huron, Chatham, London, Ingersoll, Woodstock, Brantford, Hamilton, Orangeville and New York. Shaking hands and greetings occupied the forenoon. About 12 o'clock the happy party was summoned to the orchard, where a long table was spread with the very best that Ontario produces, and here they all sat down and prepared themselves for the strenuous work of the afternoon - the sports - which were under the management of Messrs. Ernie, Samuel, Arthur and Fred Day, and James Ferguson, Mrs. F. Matheson, Miss Connor and Mrs. A. McKinnon. The several events were amusing, and it was noteworthy that the single young men and women won all the contests, the married people not getting so much as a look in. This was unusual. Altogether the gathering this year was as happy and pleasing as any of the many that have been held. To Mr. and Mrs. Cody and their family is due in a great measure the success of this year's gathering. They worked indefatigably for some weeks planning to give everyone a good time, and they succeeded. Next year the picnic will be held at the home of Mr. Hugh Day.

