

Mills of Macedonia,

Since the day when Adam and Eve were driven from the garden, and the command was uttered, "In the sweat of thy brow, shalt thou eat bread, until thou return to the ground" man has been obliged in some measure, to prepare the food necessary for his sustenance. Nature brings forth the needed materials, but for man's use, they are not in a condition the most palatable, or the most conducive to his physical needs.

The structure of animals, seems to have been better devised, for the comminuting process of coarse materials, whereby the life sustaining properties may be absorbed.

Various have been the devices used by man, for making finer the whole kernels which nature produces for his needs. The pulverizing process is usually accomplished by placing the kernels, between two surfaces each of which is greater in hardness, than the grain itself, and by the application of external force, causing the grain to be broken or ground into some minute particles.

In my research for the origin of grist or grain mills of Macedonia, I find that exact dates, are matters hard to obtain

Mr O. Turner, who published a history of the Phelps and Furham purchase, in 1807 is perhaps, as nearly accurate, as almost any authority now to be found. In that work, he makes the first mill of this section, built in the summer and fall of 1789, at Jerusalem, Yates, Co 30 to 40 miles distant;

He also says in speaking of Palmyra,

"Jonah Howell, erected the first mill a mile east of the village on the Vienna road" that this was followed by one, erected by "Gen Swift, on the site now occupied by the Goddard mill" and which has long been known as the yellow mill, one mile west of Palmyra.

In the reminiscences of Ebenezer Spear, who emigrated from Mass, in 1790, and settled a little north and west of the yellow mill, Turner makes Spear to say, In 1794 or 95, Abram and Jacob Smith built mills in Farmington, on the Genesee creek, previous to which, we used to go to Jerusalem. The first corn carried to mill from Palmyra, was by Noah Porter, He went to Jerusalem, with an ox team in 90, carrying corn for all the settlers, taking 10 days in going and returning, ^{to the settlement} His return was hailed with great joy, for pounding corn was hard work"

It would surley these facts, that there was no grist mill built within the limits of Macedonia, until after 1795, and probably not until some years later; it would also seem to be a fact, according to Turner, that the Goddard mill, was the first erected, and that by Gen. Swift.

Conversing with Isaac Barnhart, now living at the "Huddle" in the North East-part of the town, and who was born in 1815, he disputed Turner, by saying that an uncle of his, Christian Barnhart, first built a mill on the Goddard site, but when he can not say, — it was sold to one Patrick Boyle, and by him to Goddard. Since the mill has had various owners, it is still at work grinding grain, the wheel turned by the water of the Ganargua; the present owners, are A. J. and G. D. Downing.

Barnhart also said, that Isaac Esto built and operated a grist mill, in the North East part of the town, on Red creek, previous to 1815, the building has long since disappeared. Isaac Barnhart, Sr. built and operated, in early years, what is now known as the "Huddle" mill. The property passed from Barnhart, to Ami Smith, to

Goddard, to Billings, to Craggs, whose heirs now own and operate it. It has been re-built or re-modded twice.

Burner says that "Jacob Ganett was an early settler, and founder of the mills at Macedon". It was first erected near the dam, which is from 80 to 100 rods westerly, from its present location. In what year it was first built I have been unable to learn. Peter Reed who came to Macedon, in 1824, says he can well remember, when the mill stood on its first site, and that it was standing there as late as 1828. - That soon after, Sunderland Patterson, who had disposed of the mill in Farmington, directly south of Wayneport, purchased the Ganett mill, took the frame down, re-moved and re-built, on its present site.

Peter Arnold of Walworth, born in 1820 says that he distinctly remembers, that when a boy 9, years old, going from the George Glover place, on horse back, to the Macedon mill, with a quist, and of being told by the millers that his was the first quist to be ground, after the completion of the works.

So I conclude, that during the summer of 1829, the macedon mill was placed in its present position, by Sunderland Patterson. Since that day it has had a goodly number of owners and occupants. The present proprietors are Jacob S. Biddlecom and son.

There was a grist^{mill} built, and operated on the Ganargua, near the crossing of the highway, which is just east of the lower lower lock, on the Erie canal. It was once known as the Rod Mill, and at one time was occupied by James Rice, and later became the property of W. B. Riggs. I have no knowledge, as to the time of its erection, or by whom.

It was destroyed by fire, some years since, and was never re-built.

Some time previous to 1824, a grist or grain mill was built on the Ganargua at the crossing of the highway leading to New Salem. It was once known as the Thrasher Mill. Daniel Thrasher, now living in Town, and 75 years of age, says that he once heard Asa B. Smith say, that his (Smith's) father erected the structure in 1800. It has had various owners, and but a few years since was destroyed by fire.

being then in possession of G. P. Kaiser
the present Post Master of Macedon.

This so far as I know, enumerates the
buildings which have been erected in
town, expressly for grinding grain.

In the later years, the ingenuity of man
has invented a multiplicity of modes, for
the purpose, the power applied for performing
the labor, being from various sources. Many
of the farmers, of the present day, are grind-
ing, feed. for their own use, at their homes,
using, horses, wind, steam &c, as the motive
power.

Of the mills for sawing lumber, there has
been a great number, in town, I think that
at the intersection of every highway with
the Ganargua, there has been at some period
in the past, a saw mill erected, and in the
earlier days, when standing timber was
more plentiful, were usually busy, in the
winter and spring, months, converting logs
into lumber, But as their usefulness was
past they have been allowed to decay, some
were destroyed by fire, and others died of
old age, excepting only the one situated at
Macedon, which is still in working order, ^{and}
usually saws a few logs each Spring.

At various other places in town, there were once saw mills, almost wherever in early times, water in sufficient quantity could be stored, to turn the mill wheel.

At least two such structures have done business, on the small stream, known as "Trap Brook" in the southern part of the town, and emptying into the Ganargua west of Macedon village. Two or more mills have existed, in the north east part of the town getting their motive power, from the waters of Red Creek, which flows into the Ganargua from the north. There are those still living who remember a saw mill, doing business which stood but a few rods west of the ^{residence}

of Charles Plumb. The power was generated by water, flowing through the hollow just east of the George Glover house.

In latter years, saw mills, or machinery for sawing logs, has been so modified in style, that the apparatus was easily moved from place to place, as it became desirable to convert a patch of timber into lumber generally using the Thrashing Engines for ^{power},

These were connected with the grain and saw mills, at least three separate mills for the manufacture of woollen stuffs.

One at the high way leading to New Salem, one, at the S. W. Lapham place, and one at Macedon. Wool from the sheep, was carded into rolls, and after being spun into yarn and woven into cloth, was taken to the mill again, and fulled thus giving them, the cognomen, of Fulling Mills. There was at the Lapham place a mill, or factory for the manufacture of hats, from fur, and felt. The business was carried on by John Colvin.

The early method of grinding grain, was by passing it, between, two stones, whose surfaces were horizontal to each other; one of them usually stationary, the other revolving with greater or less rapidity. Their surfaces were chiseled into various facets, making sharp edges, to come in contact with the grain, thus breaking or grinding it. After being ground, the mass, was passed through long revolving sieves or bolts, separating the finer from the coarser parts.

Great improvements, have been made in late years, in the matter of pulverizing the kernels. At the present time the finest and whitest flour is made, by what is known as the Roller System. In place of the old mill stones, the grain is now passed between

rollers or cylinders of iron or steel, which have been made exceedingly hard, and having their surfaces, corrugated or sharpened; the bolting or sifting is also greatly improved, by better machinery, enabling the miller to make a better article. Most of the mills of the country now doing business, have the improved machinery,

The above article was written for the M. C. H. Society, and read before it, at the home of B. M. Hance Nov 11th 1895.

Wm. C. Packard