

EARLY REMINISCENCES

Our illustration shows an early pioneer upon his newly acquired land before a crude log house which he has built. The roof of this log cabin is made of peeled elm bark and his scanty window is of oiled paper. The floor consists of logs split in half while the door is of hewed plank. In the foreground the pioneer is shown with his ax at work. A pair of oxen, a cow and three sheep are eating fine twigs or shoots off the tree which the pioneer man has cut down. This source of food was known as browse. This is the reason the pioneers preferred oxen over horses because horses would not eat browse. In front of the cabin a pioneer woman is seen feeding some chickens and small pigs.

Pioneer settlers lived on bear and deer meat. Local streams were also sometimes the source of fish. Wild plums, grapes and various berries were also used as a source of food for early inhabitants of this area.

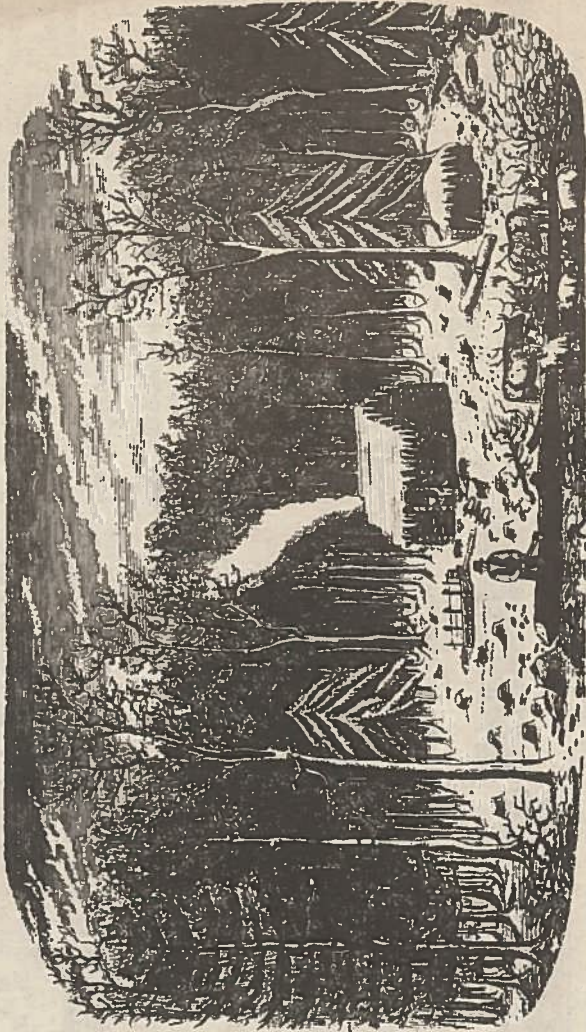
The chief source of income for the first

settlers was the sale of black salts and pot-ash made by burning great piles of wood and leaching the ashes.

Once a clearing was made, such as we see being done in our illustration, a pioneer could then plant wheat which would have been harvested with a sickle and threshed with a flail or simply tread upon, using oxen to thrash it out. If a man was taken sick his neighbors for miles around would come together to do his work and harvest crops or even clear his land.

Before the Erie Canal was opened in 1825, the main east west route was the Ridge Road. This was surveyed out as a highway in 1798 by the Holland Land Company. In 1814 the N.Y. State Legislature

appropriated \$5,000 for improving the road. By 1816 the Coe Brothers of Canandaigua had established a stage coach line from there to Lewiston along the Ridge Road. At first, one passenger coach was run per day each way but soon the number was



increased to six. Six horses were used to pull the coaches which could carry up to twenty people. Innumerable taverns, every few miles, were built along the Ridge Road to accommodate the needs of these early travelers.

The tasks before the early settlers were formidable. Men and women of these early years were rugged in spirit, strong in arm and stout in heart. They conquered the wilderness out of toil and endurance and made it blossom into success.