

The all important cow

C.W. LATTIN

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Orleans County historian

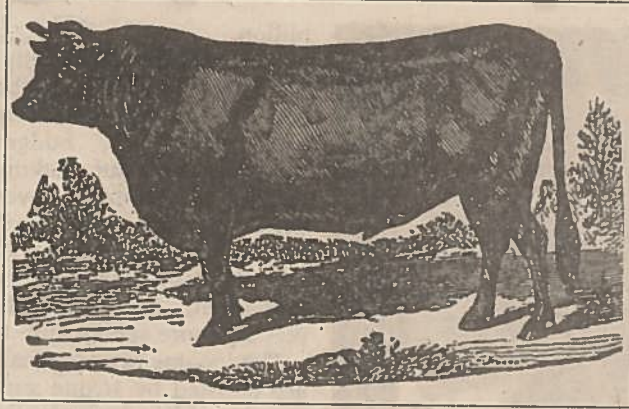
Having a cow in early pioneer settlement times about 200 years ago meant survival.

In "Pioneer history of Orleans County," Arad Thomas wrote that pioneer Jeremiah Brown of Ridgeway pointed out a great truth, that a cow is mightier than the gun. Jeremiah exchanged his gun for a cow and called it, "the best trade I ever made except when I got my wife."

Pioneer David Gould of Murray drove all the way to Victor in 1817 to get a load of corn so his cattle wouldn't starve. Another pioneer, Robert Clark of Kendall, also in 1817 recalled that, "As we had a cow we lived quite well."

These bovines not only fed the early pioneers they also got them here.

Adin Manley of Kendall, in an account of his family's trip from Massachusetts in



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1817, indicated they came in a huge covered wagon drawn by three yoke of oxen over "Mountains covered with ice and snow, sliding with yawing gulf's below, crossing streams of ice and floundering through

snow drifts with a constant headwind blowing in our faces for twenty two days."

The first settlers here preferred oxen over horses, as there was more natural food for them to browse which horses would not eat. Oxen were less

excitable than horses and would not become anxious or flustered in snow drifts.

Of course cows served as a source of milk, providing dairy products in the wilderness when other food sources were lean.