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Dr. Ben Howes: a well known veterinarian

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The following article is taken from the Albion Midlander published in February 1934. It is an interview with Dr. Ben Howes (1858-1946), a well known veterinarian from Carlton. He was a "character" and much beloved by all who knew him. Note in the picture, he is feeding the horse out of his hat.

The interview elaborates on his collection of antiques. The sad commentary to all of this is the fact that once Ben died his collection was dispersed and local history was lost.

Dr. Ben Howes

"We know of no man, old or young, who gets any more 'kick' out of life than Dr. Benjamin Howes, prominent Orleans County veterinarian.

"Doc," formerly connected with the Bureau of Animal Industry, U.S. Department of Agriculture, is an ardent baseball fan, cross country motorist, antique collector and horseman supreme. No parade in Orleans County is ever complete without him mounted on his splendid horse, Sandy. Just recently we saw a news reel movie of this rider and his horse cavorting up the streets of Rochester to the plaudits of the crowd in the N.R.A.

impressive tales of hardships, courage and unending toil.

"There is, for instance, a plow made entirely of wood except for an iron point, which belonged to the family of Mrs. George Lloyd and was used in 1817 to plow out the Gaines Basin Road.

"Another interesting piece of pioneer farm equipment is a drag, crudely fashioned from the crotch of a tree which with its points of iron dragged the fields of Martin Bertsch's forbears and was donated by him to the collection.

"There is also a wooden washboard given by Walter Bonsall which recalls the crude arrangements and lack of facilities with which the woman folk performed their laundry work.

"The wooden shovel, hay fork, grain cradle, grain flail and fanning mill suggest a

time when planting and harvesting a crop involved much more physical labor than is required today.

Old Time Rigs

"In the conveyance section of his collection there is a two-wheeled ox-cart, presented by Harry M. Nesbitt with huge 5 1/2 foot wheels, which probably hauled many a log from the primeval forests.

"An old cart, reminding one of a heavy jinrikisha, which carried Dr. Hiram W. Lewis on his daily visits to patients, and the large pickle-dish sleigh which was in the family of Miss Lolah Barreille, served well many years before the elimination of wind resistance and drafts occupied designers' minds.

"These implements and many others which cannot be chronicled in a short article, show the ingenuity



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parade.

Collector of Antiques

"Doc" is especially noted in the antique field for he has, undoubtedly, one of the best collections of wooden pioneer implements and utensils that can be found anywhere in Western New York, and the interesting part about them is that most of them have been obtained right here in Orleans County. Some of these 'Doc' has purchased, but many have been donated to his collection by the residents whose ancestors used them in wresting their land grants from the virgin forests.

"A visit to Doctor Howes' home in Carlton is most interesting and instructive. One can't help but believe that if these implements could talk they could tell

of our farming ancestors who made their own implements and with the aid of these crude tools set about the Herculean task of developing fruitful farming land from the wilderness. After examining these implements, our admiration for those pioneer fathers grows. How petty are our depressions and inconveniences in comparison with their privations and hardships.

All of Historical Interest

"In assembling this interesting group of antique implements, Dr. Howes is contributing greatly to the historical background of Orleans County.

"There is a personal touch behind every one of these relics," says "Doc," "I know where they came from and every one had its part in moulding the destinies of this county."