

**EARLY HISTORY OF LENA WEE COUNTY
AND OF THE CITY OF ADRIAN FROM
THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE
COUNTY. HISTORICAL ORATION
DELIVERED AT ADRIAN, JULY 4, 1876**

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Early History of Lenawee County and of the City of Adrian from the First Settlement of the County. Historical Oration Delivered at Adrian, July 4, 1876 by Alfred L. Millard

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ALFRED L. MILLARD

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By Alfred L. Millard.

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ADRIAN, MICH.:
TIMES AND EXPOSITOR STEAM PRINT.
1876.

 THE following discourse was prepared and delivered at Adrian at a celebration of the Nation's Centennial Anniversary, in pursuance of the following recommendation of Congress and of the Governor, and is published under a resolution of the Common Council of the City of Adrian:

STATE OF MICHIGAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
LANSING, May 16, 1876. }

To the People of the State of Michigan :

I have received notice from the office of the Department of State, at Washington, of the passage by Congress of the following joint resolution:

“Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it be, and is hereby recommended by the Senate and House of Representatives to the people of the several States, that they assemble in their several counties or towns on the approaching Centennial anniversary of our National Independence, and that they cause to be delivered on such a day an historical sketch of said county or town from its foundation, and that a copy of said sketch may be filed, in print or in manuscript, in the Clerk's office of said county, and an additional copy, in print or manuscript, be filed in the office of the Librarian of Congress, to the intent that a complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first centennial of their existence.”

Approved March 13th, 1876.

I earnestly hope that in the celebration of the anniversary of our national independence in this State, the recommendation may be universally regarded. Our record is yet new and familiar to us, our development and growth is a history of continued prosperity, and it is eminently proper, in this Centennial year, while recalling with gratitude the beneficence of Divine Providence in His dealings with us, that we should put upon record, for those who are to come after us, the history of a State that in forty years has grown to be an empire with a million and a half of people—educated in public schools—blessed in a common prosperity—and united as citizens by a common patriotism.

In addition to the request of Congress that copies of the sketches be filed in the Library of Congress, and the county records, I suggest that copies be sent to the State Library at Lansing.

By the Governor,

E. G. HOLDEN, Secretary of State.

JOHN J. BAGLEY.

ORATION.



FELLOW CITIZENS: For the last ninety-nine years our countrymen have been wont to celebrate this day—to hail its annual return with demonstrations of rejoicing, with the ringing of bells, with bonfires and illuminations, and the roar of artillery, with gatherings of the people, processions and orations, and with songs of thanksgiving and praise.

We meet to-day as we have so often before, to observe the day in the time-honored way. But the *one hundredth anniversary*—the very words suggest a high distinction, a wide difference between this and its predecessors. It tells us that our experiment of self-government is no longer an experiment, but a success; sets the seal of stability and permanence on our institutions, and our Republic, and proves that our union and government are not ephemeral, as was in the beginning prophesied by their enemies and feared even by their friends.

There is reason, in view of this, that in the annual discourse which is usual on the occasion, we should depart somewhat from the beaten track.

The Congress of the United States has recommended that the discourse on this Centennial anniversary should be a historical sketch of the county or town from its formation.

This recommendation has been supported by the President, and the Executive of our own State, and a compliance with it, if general, will be both appropriate and useful.

To this duty which has been assigned to me, that of the historian rather than the orator, I now address myself for the brief half hour allotted, assured that however inadequately and imperfectly it may be performed, the subject and the facts cannot fail to interest the citizens at least of our own county, and will not, I trust, be entirely without interest to our fellow citizens from other counties who join with us to-day. And in behalf too of those who shall come after us, it is well, while the witnesses and actors in the earlier scenes and struggles incident to the settlement of a new country are a portion of them still living, to secure from their lips and res-

ene from the oblivion which a few years more would otherwise throw over them, an authentic history of those early times.

Our history is not a long one. He who sketches it has not to go back to a remote antiquity. Our beautiful and cherished county, with its population to-day of 47,000, its central city of 10,000, its 26 townships and wards, and in each of these townships its highly cultivated and productive farms, its numerous and populous and thriving villages, its schools and college, its churches, railroads, and telegraphs, and its abundant evidences of wealth and comfort and refinement on every hand, what was it at the beginning of 1824? An unbroken wilderness. Not a white inhabitant within its bounds. But as it then was, all in its native beauty, untouched by the hand of civilization, unmarred by cultivation, a fairer, more beautiful and attractive region, the sun ne'er shone on. A portion of it, most of the northern, and a part of the southern portion, consisting of "openings," as they were called in the language of the country—sparsely timbered with tall and beautiful oaks, and for the most part, in consequence of the annual fires passing over it, free from underbrush,—the ground carpeted with a profusion of wild flowers,—the whole like a beautiful park, through which, without track or path, the immigrant could drive with his horses or oxen and wagon, for miles in any direction—the remainder a dense forest of various kinds of trees; the surface undulating, well watered by the Raisin, the Tiffin, and a multitude of smaller streams, and gemmed here and there, especially in the northern portion, with beautiful small, clear lakes—it is no wonder that the earlier settlers were enchanted with the scene, and in their letters to their friends, spoke in glowing terms of its beauty and its loveliness.

But the time had come when this fair region was no longer to be left to the wild men and wild beasts of the forest, hitherto its sole possessors.

By a treaty concluded at Detroit on the 17th of November, 1807, between the United States and the Ottawa, Chippewa, Wyandotte and Pottawatomic nations of Indians, the Indians ceded to the United States a large tract of country in northern Ohio and southeastern Michigan, including the present county of Lenawee; and by another treaty concluded at Chicago, on the 29th of August, 1821, between the United States and the Ottawa, Chippewa and Pottawatomic tribes, the Indian title to another extensive tract in Michigan, west of the tract first mentioned, and extending to Lake Michigan, was also extinguished, and the territory in both cases acquired by the United States by fair purchase.

In the summer of 1823, Musgrove Evans, of Brownsville, Jefferson Co.,

N. Y., came into the territory to explore, with a view to settlement, and found his way to the site of the present village of Tecumseh. The tract had before this been surveyed and put into market by the United States. Mr. Evans, impressed with the beauty of the country, and the advantages of that particular locality, particularly the hydraulic power afforded by the river Raisin and Evans creek at that point, determined to settle and lay out a village there, and to secure and improve this water power. Returning to his home in New York, he enlisted in his enterprise, his brother-in-law, Joseph W. Brown, of the same place, afterwards Gen. Brown, now of Cleveland, O., who subsequently played a prominent part in the affairs of the Territory and State, both civil and military, and who still survives in a hale and green old age, to see and rejoice over the wonderful development and advance in all the elements of prosperity and greatness of this new county and commonwealth, in which, while yet in the unbroken solitude of its wilderness he made his home, and to the development and growth of which he devoted the prime of his manhood, and in no small degree contributed.

Mr. Evans returned in the spring of 1824, with Mr. Brown and some ten or twelve others, coming from Buffalo in a schooner, and landing at Detroit, where for the time being he left his family. From thence with packs on their backs containing provisions and such necessaries as were required for their journey, they made their way on foot through the forest to the place previously selected by Evans, where the village of Tecumseh now stands.

In his first visit to the territory, the fall previous, Evans had met with Austin E. Wing, of Monroe, who had been for several years a resident of the territory—a man of intelligence and influence, who afterwards for several years represented the territory of Michigan in Congress as its delegate. It was through his advice and representations of its advantages, that Evans had his attention turned to the Valley of the Raisin, and especially to the water power at the junction of Evans creek with the Raisin.

On the arrival of Evans and Brown, in the spring of 1824, a co-partnership was formed between these three, Wing, Evans and Brown, and they became jointly interested in the enterprise of founding a village, and improving the water power at the point before mentioned. In anticipation of this, and before the return of Evans, Wing had taken up at the Land office, at Detroit, the west part of section 27, and the east part of section 28, which included the water power in that portion of Tecumseh now known as Browns-ville; and subsequently after the arrival of Evans and Brown, they took up the north half of section 34, of the same township.