

A SCRAP OF HISTORY.

Genealogy of Francis Vandervoort and Hannah Acker.

The history of the early settlers of Canada furnishes numerous striking illustrations of heroism and endurance, possibly only equalled or excelled by the records of the Pilgrim Fathers. The United Empire Loyalists showed to the world what they could do and endure for patriotism, but there are unrecorded, isolated cases which show that the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, the U. E. Loyalists, did not exhaust all the pluck from New England when they forsook their all at the close of the Rebellion rather than declare allegiance to the New Republic. This sketch, though brief and incomplete, aims to record one of those isolated cases referred to. The hero and heroine, for such they really were, were Francis Vandervoort and his estimable wife Hannah Acker. These two formed the tree from which has reached out a multitude of branches. The lesson taught by them cannot be too deeply imprinted in the memories of their descendants. None will go astray from following in their footprints.

In the year 1802, we find our hero and heroine residents of Dutchess County, New York State; a County on the Hudson River, south of Albany, of which Poughkepsie is the chief city. Their family consisted of eight children, seven sons and one daughter, the eldest 16 years of age, the youngest not three months old. Prompted solely by a desire to advance the interests of their sons, these people, the stock from which the Vandervoorts are descended, faced the vicissitudes of a journey to Canada. In those days a trip to Canada was a more gigantic undertaking than a trip to Europe at this day. There were no railways nor fast plying steamers. Their means of conveyance was a small open boat. This frail craft contained the family of ten persons and all their worldly effects. Who can measure the fountain of their faith as they embarked on the Mohawk River on that morning in April, their boat their only shelter, their destination they hardly knew where? The heroic little band paddled the streams by day and slept under their boat by night, until they reached the shores of Lake Ontario, at the mouth of Oswego River, where the city of Oswego now stands. From there they followed the south shore eastward, passed Sacket's Harbor, and Cape Vincent, and paddled on until they reached the friendly shelter of the Thousand Islands. Here they crossed to the Canadian shore, passed Kingston, and followed the north-shore of the Bay of Quinte, until they passed the mouth of Meyers' Creek, (now River Moira), and finally pushed the little craft into a little brook known as White's Creek. The spot they landed upon became the home of the pilgrims for a few years. At the time that Francis Vandervoort undertook to hew out a home for himself and family in the then Canadian wilderness, all that he possessed was his wife, family, and eighteen dollars in cash. He finally located on lot 17 in the 2nd Concession of Sidney, and lived to see all the family settled on farms within a few miles of the old homestead.

During the disturbance of 1812, the subject of this sketch, together with his five sons, James, Samuel, Peter, George and David, the youngest but 15 years of age, did duty in the Hastings Militia, the father holding a Lieutenant's Commission.

Mrs. Vandervoort was a devout christian woman, strongly attached to her family, as is shown by her willingness to undertake so long a journey at so inclement a season of the year, as the months of April and May. Her only motive in adopting such a course, was, as has been noted, that the prospects of her sons might be bettered. She sadly missed the means of grace to which she had been accustomed in New York State, and which she so heartily enjoyed under the ministration of the memorable, the late Rev. Freeborn Garrison. After settling permanently on the 2nd Concession, she, with two or three other pious ladies, would walk through the wood and congregate at Mr. Gilbert's house for service. Ministers became informed of their custom and finally made an Appointment, and held regular services there. Her example is indeed worthy of imitation.

To Mr. and Mrs. Vandervoort were born eight children, who with their descendants, make up the following record:—

Francis Vandervoort, born Dec. 5th, 1763; died April 20th, 1836.

Hannah Acker, born Sept. 7th, 1765; died April 2nd, 1850. Married Nov. 8th, 1784, in Dutchess County, New York.

James Vandervoort, their son, was born Sept. 13th, 1787; died March 4th, 1877. His descendants now living number 94.

Samuel Vandervoort, born July 19th, 1789; died April 26th, 1870. Descendants, 39.

Peter Vandervoort, born June 9th, 1791; died Aug. 5th, 1846. Descendants, 102.

George Vandervoort, born March 22nd, 1793; died Jan. 10th, 1870. Descendants, 46.

Catharine Vandervoort, born May 22nd, 1795; died Nov. 10th, 1870. Descendants, 68.

David Vandervoort, born July 12th, 1797; died Oct. 1st, 1882. Descendants 12.

John Vandervoort, born Feb. 2nd, 1800; died Jan 26th, 1879. Descendants 48.

William Vandervoort, born March 16th, 1802. Descendants, now living, number 28. He is the only survivor of the family, and was the infant in arms at the time of the family exodus from New York State. It was he who gathered the statistics used in this record.