

Of course every cabin had to be provided with a well or spring from which water for drinking, cooking and washing purposes could be drawn. Springs were not very numerous and they were confined to hills and gulleys and along the banks of the lakes, rivers and small streams. Places where springs could be secured were few and far between, and therefore the water supply mostly came from dug wells, and these were supplied almost entirely with surface water. A five or six square foot hole would be dug in as low ground as could be found near the cabin, to a depth generally of from twelve to twenty-five or thirty feet, or until the first surface vein of water would be struck, when the digging would cease and a barrel or square box would be sunk in the bottom, into which notches would be

or auger holes would be bored into it to allow the water to seep in the gravel or sand, or, more frequently, blue clay. This "hole in ground" was boarded up with heavy boards split out of red oak logs, prevent the well from caving in. Generally the water was drawn by means of a wooden or tin bucket, to which a rope would be tied, or if the well wasn't too deep a long, slim pole with a hook and fastener at the lower end would be used. These were generally only for temporary use. When deeper wells would be dug, and better water would be found, the well sweep and the "old oaken bucket," about which so much has been said and written, would be erected. These "sweeps" were made by erecting a large post in the ground, say twelve or fifteen feet. A long pole, heavy at the butt end and tapering until it was quite small at the top end was fastened into the top of the erect pole, in a socket cut for the purpose, through which a two-inch auger hole was bored and a hard, seasoned hickory pin was inserted. To the top end was fastened a small pole or a rope or chain of a length about the depth of the well, to the lower end of which the bucket would be attached. The lower end of the sweep rested on the ground. When water was needed to be drawn the bucket was put over the top of the curbing and let down to the bottom of the well by pulling the top of the sweep down. A sinker, a stone or piece of iron, was attached to the bail of the bucket, which turned the top of the bucket sideways, when the water would run in and fill it, when it would be pulled up to the top and emptied into the bucket or other vessel at hand used for, that purpose.

This mode of procuring water was almost universal, for the reason that there were no pumps to be had here at that time. Up to 1840, and probably to 1850, there was not a pump in the county. The Indians who were here before that time had no dug wells and got their water from the lakes, rivers, branches, creeks and ponds, wherever they might happen to be located.

Tinware was very scarce for a number of years and tin cups for drinking or other purposes were hard to get. As a consequence other devices were resorted to, many of which were quite unique. Many will remember the small gourd cut and cleaned out in the shape of a dipper, with a long crooked handle, that used to hang on a bush near the spring, or a peg at the well, out of which the thirsty was always welcome to drink and refresh himself. It was not uncommon to see the shell of a turnip that had been scraped out used for drinking purposes. Many will remember, too, of having seen wooden cups and bowls cut out of soft wood by experts with jack-knives that were useful, if not very ornamental. It was not uncommon for the male portion of the inhabitants when very thirsty to lie down on the ground and drink out of the creeks, springs, etc. They sometimes turned up the rims of their hats, dipped them in the water, and drank in that way; and frequently the large leaves of the pawpaw bushes in their season would be plucked off and made into a ladle shape, which made an excellent substitute for a dipper to drink out of. The lack of good water in the early times was the greatest drawback the first settlers had to contend with. The only pure water and the only water fit to drink was the water obtained from springs, but these were very rare and but a very small percentage of the people had access to them.

As a general rule the water obtained from wells was "surface water," full of malaria, and during the summer months, when it was drunk in larger quantities than at any other season of the year, it was sure to bring on ague, bilious fever, typhoid fever, flux and other summer complaints, often to an alarming extent, and frequently it was not an uncommon thing for entire families to be prostrated with some of these diseases at the same time.

The ague was the most prevalent of the different varieties of malarial diseases, and it came on every day, every other day, every three days, every seven, fourteen and twenty-one days, and was known as the "chills and fever," "fever'n ager," "shakes" and the like. To the newcomer it was a holy terror, but it was no respecter of persons. It attacked old and young alike. In the fall of the year, after all had gone through the summer's siege of this hated disease, nearly everybody looked pale and sallow like they had been frostbitten. It came on with a chill, which usually developed into a shake that would make one's teeth chatter so that the sound could be heard for some distance about the cabin. The shaker covered himself with blankets and comforters, no matter how hot the weather was, and he shook and shook and shook until his bones fairly rattled. In an hour or two the chill went off and then came on the fever, followed by a thirst for water that could not be quenched. After two or three hours the fever passed off and the patient began to recuperate sufficiently to get up and walk about. But oh, how miserable he did feel! In many cases it was impossible to get rid of it and it had to be endured until frost came and killed the malaria that produced it.

The year 1850, when the entire population of the county was only about 5,000, more deaths occurred than during any year before or since on the basis of population. From the census report which was made on the first of June of that year the total number of deaths from the diseases named was set down at 133. That was June 1. It is quite probable that a great many more deaths occurred during July, August, September and October, so that it is fair to estimate that not less than 300 souls were removed by death caused by malaria, generated through impure water during that year! A note by the census taker stated that "this year has been remarkable for the unusual number of deaths. A very fatal disease known here as typhoid fever has prevailed to an alarming extent in the center of the county and spread in all directions, reaching to the extreme parts of the county. The flux, bilious and scarlet fever have also been prevalent."

The physicians here at that time were not very well read and were scantily supplied with medicines which were supposed to be specifics for these diseases and half the time not knowing what the real ailment of the patient was, probably a large per cent died for lack of proper medical knowledge and attention.

In those days most of the doctors considered "bleeding" necessary to get the patient's system in proper condition to receive medical treatment. When he arrived he looked wise, felt the patient's pulse, examined the tongue, shook his head to indicate that it was a dangerous case and that bleeding was necessary! The clothing was removed from the patient's arm, a string' tied tightly around it above the elbow to stop the circulation, a bowl or pan was procured to catch the blood, the doctor took his lance,

ripped open the vein, and the blood spurted out two or three feet high. Sometimes half a bowl full would be drawn from the patient before the flow could be stopped. The next thing was to administer a dose of calomel and jalap. As a general thing this would take his insides out and salivate so his gums and teeth would be permanently ruined: If the patient recovered under this treatment the physician was considered the best in the country , " and his praises were sounded far and wide. If he died, his death was attributed to the inscrutable interposition of Divine Providence!

Driven Wells.

During the Civil war, or perhaps a little later, driven wells were invented, that is, procuring water through hollow pipes driven into the ground to a considerable depth, far enough, at least, to go below the surface water . As pure water could be procured through these wells they became at once very popular. Well drivers became numerous, every neighborhood having one or more. Whenever a resident wanted a well on his premises he employed one of these well drivers to put one down for him. It happened that these driven wells had been patented, that is, the "process" had been, patented by the United States patent office, and as these well drivers did not have permission from the patentees to use their process every well driven into the ground was liable to pay a royalty, which was fixed at \$10 by the United States district court. About 1879 the owners of Green's patent, having secured the names of all owners of driven wells, sent them notices that they were indebted to the patentees for infringement of their patent in the well driven on their premises in the sum of \$10 and unless it was paid within a reasonable time a suit would be brought against them in the United States district court to recover the amount. As might be expected, this created great excitement among the people owning driven wells, as they had paid the well drivers for putting down the wells and they supposed that was all there was of it. The excitement increased as it extended to every township in the county and finally resulted in the organization of an Anti-Driven Well Association to resist the payment of the royalty demanded. It was a Plymouth organization, but quite a number of members belonged to it from various localities throughout the county. A legal opinion as to the probability of successfully resisting the payment of the royalty was secured from the law firm of Baker, Hord & Hendricks, of Indianapolis, to the effect that similar cases had been brought against the patentee and in every case his patent had been sustained, giving him the lawful right to collect royalty on all infringers. At the same time the agent of the patentee, fearing a long siege of litigation, proposed that he would compromise with the members of the association for \$5 on each well, half the amount originally asked. The legal opinion, together with this proposition, was made to the association at a called meeting, and in view of the uncertainty of succeeding in the courts, the proposition was accepted, each of the members paying \$5 for each well, and the association disbanded. For a considerable time it created quite a bitter feeling among those who wanted to fight it out and those who favored compromising. Finally most of those having wells paid up and the matter was dropped. While the royalty collected from the people was not far removed from highway robbery, yet the wells did more to improve the health of the community by furnishing pure water and driving out malaria than anything that ever occurred.