

BLENDON TOWNSHIP.

This township is south of Allendale, north of Zeeland, west of Georgetown and east of Olive, and the center of the township is about eighteen miles southeast of Grand Haven. Its principal production has been lumber, the Blendon Lumber Company owning most of the land, and running their logs and lumber to Grand River by railroad, and tramways. This interest is now declining. The population is now about 800. There are about 2,500 acres under cultivation, producing over 20,000 bushels of grain and between 700 and 800 tons of hay. There are over 100 acres in orchard, which produced in 1873, \$1,200 in orchard products, and now produces much more. The soil is sandy loam, and well adapted for agricultural purposes and fruit culture. The lumber interest has retarded the settlement and development of the township, but with its decline, it will be more rapidly developed in agriculture.

As this town lies so far from the earliest and most important highway, although surveyed in 1833, it had by the United States census in 1874 only 639 inhabitants, and in the last census of 1880 it has 785 inhabitants. Its census has varied from 85 in 1854, 381 in 1860, down to 276 in 1864, up to 718 in 1870, to 639 in 1874, and 785 in 1880. The township is very little developed, and was set off from Allendale in 1854. It has several "iron strap" railroads extending a few miles into pineries, and lumbering is the chief interest, but is becoming less and less. There are two post offices, one of which is Blendon in the northeast. An immense swamp runs through the center.

The first town meeting was held April 3, 1854, when the following officers were chosen: A. H. Vredenburg, Supervisor; J. R. Hall, Clerk; W. S. Woodruff, Treasurer. The following have acted as

SUPERVISORS:

A. H. Vredenburg, 1855-6; W. G. Gravis, 1857-68; C. L. Storrs, 1858-9-60-1-2-3-4; S. S. Gilbert, 1865; W. C. Scott, 1866-7-9-70-1-3-4; A. Forbes, 1872; C. E. Storrs, 1875; Jesse P. R. Hall, 1876-7-8-9-80-81.

CLERKS:

J. R. Hall, 1855-6; S. E. Benham, 1857-9-60; S. W. Sherburn, 1858-65; W. C. Scott, 1861-3; E. Thayer, 1862; C. Sherburn, 1864; C. E. Storrs, 1866; W. E. Keyes, 1867-8-9; J. P. R. Hall, 1870-1-2-4; P. L. Jewett, 1873-5-6; O. W. Sherburn, 1877-8-9-80-81.

TREASURERS.

W. S. Woodruff, 1855-6-8-9; C. S. Storrs, 1857; N. Culver, 1860-1; W. G. Gravis, 1862-3-4-5-6-7; James Sullivan, 1868; M. B. Payne, 1869; R. Suffers, 1870; A. Forbes, 1871; A. Tuokbury, 1872-3-4; W. C. Scott, 1875; G. Ohlman, 1876-7; A. Fahrnow, 1878-9; Henry Havikhorst, 1880-1.

Votes polled in 1881, 108.

There are five school districts, teachers' wages average, male, \$35 per month; female, \$24. Number of scholars on whom public money is received, 322.

There are four church organizations, Wesleyan, Dutch Reformed, True Dutch Reformed, and German Dutch Reformed.

There are several township ditches communicating with Rush and Pigeon Creeks, to drain swamps.

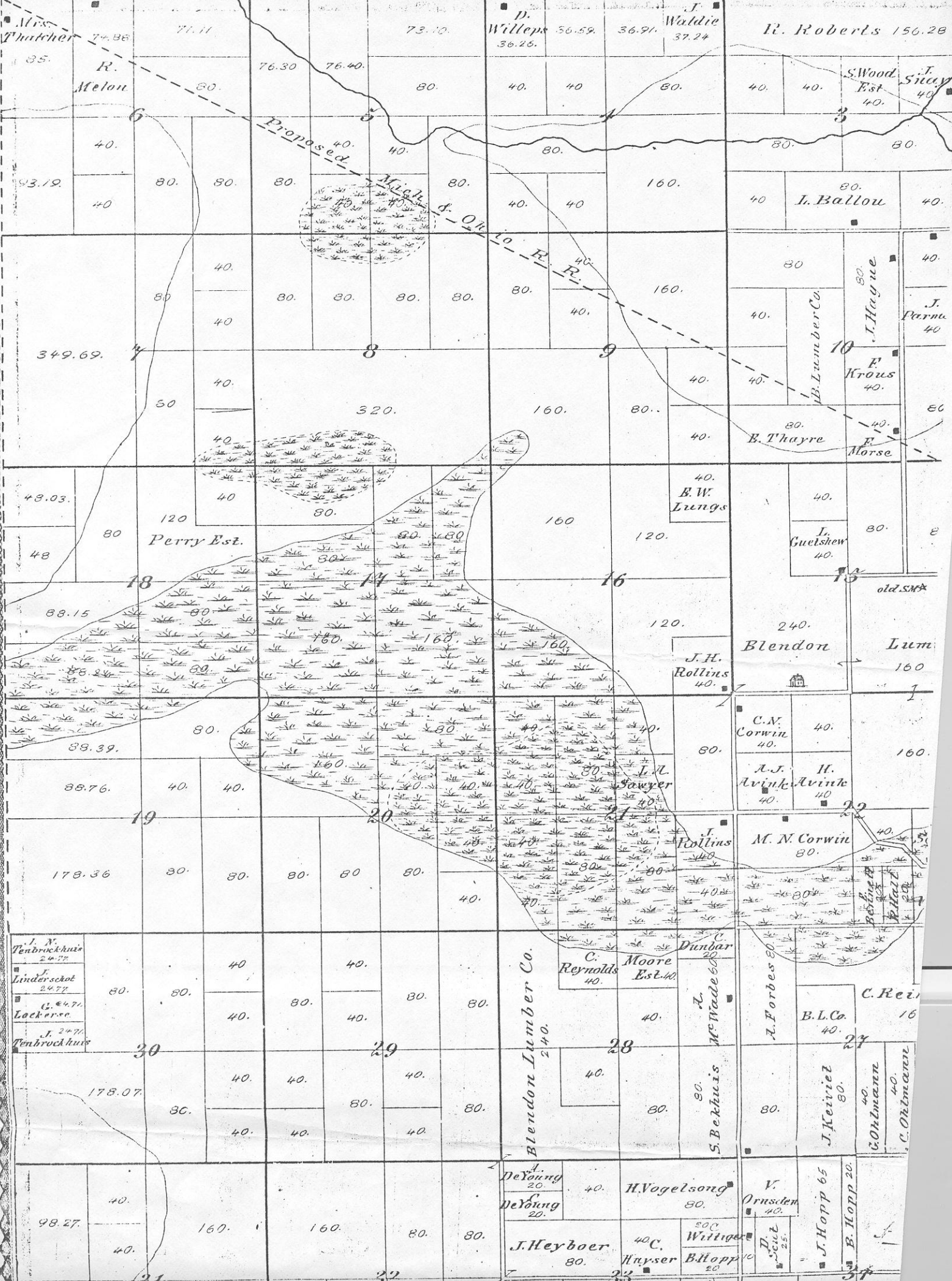
EARLY ADVENTURE.

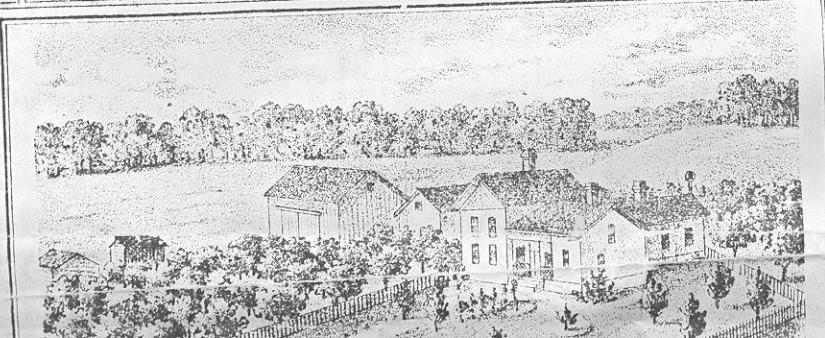
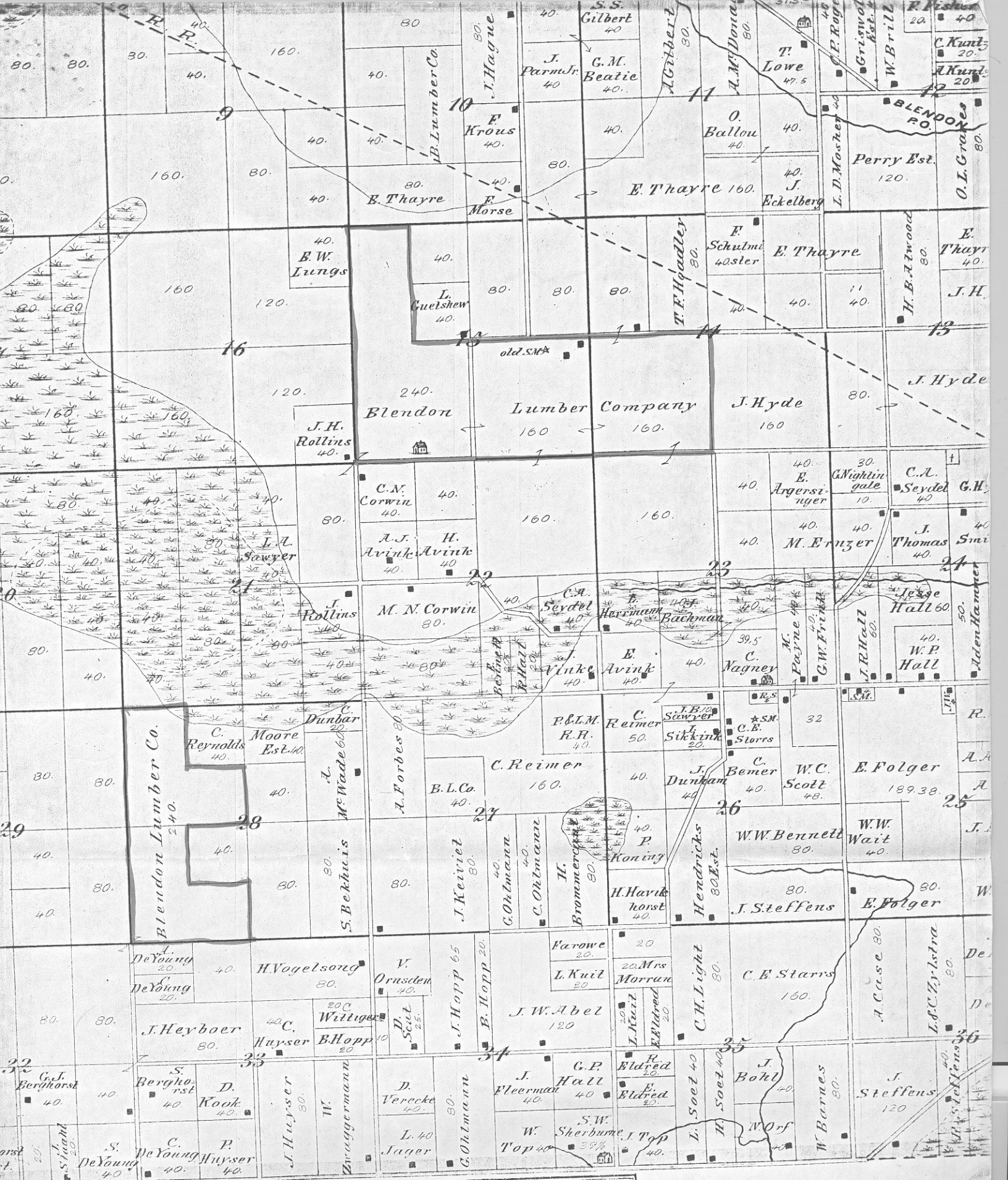
One of the first to penetrate into the wilds of Blendon Township, at an early day, before any crop had been raised in Kent or Ottawa, when nearly everything had to be transported from Buffalo or Cleveland, was John Ball, of Grand Rapids, in that year of speculation, 1836. After describing in graphic language the hardships of his journey to Grand Rapids, he says that in company with Mr. Anderson he rode to Grandville before breakfast, which he got from Chas. Oaks, and secured some more provisions from a Mr. Ketchum, who was building a mill near where Jenison's planing mill stands. All they got was some flour and beef, and after waiting until a loaf was baked, they took their course in a vague quest of pine lands, and at dark they arrived at what is now the south of Blendon, camping on a branch of the Black River. During the night they heard the tramping of deer and the howling of wolves. In the morning, not finding what they were looking for, they were about to start for home, when they came upon fine pine, and in the excitement forgot about their food and lay down at night supperless, so as to have something for breakfast. On waking in the morning they found their blankets covered with snow, and being still in the pines they continued their explorations. They finally struck the river, expecting some road out but found none. Some Indians whom they met declined their offer of three dollars to guide them to Grandville. So, trudging wearily over bluffs and through swamps until dark, they lay down by a fire kindled by their last match, next morning at 9 o'clock arriving in Grandville. A short time after he explored the lands more minutely and entered forty-one eighty-acre lots in his own name, on which the Blendon Company, years after, lumbered. But the speculation proved a worthless one for Mr. Ball.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

JOHN R. HALL was born in England November 12, 1819; settled in Chenango County, N. Y., in 1836, and in Blendon Township, Ottawa County, in 1851. Was the first Township Clerk, and has been a Justice of the Peace for years. Married, September 22, 1844, Maria Fairchilds, who was born at Kinderhook, N. Y., Oct. 9, 1817; two children, Jesse P. R., born Feb. 16, 1847, and who is the present Supervisor of Blendon Township, and Mrs. Julia Sears, born March 2, 1852. Jesse P. R. Hall was married November 13, 1866, to Charlotte Abbot, who was born in Grandville, Kent County, March 6, 1848.

TOWN 6 N





The first settler in Blendon was Booth Kinney, who settled on Dec. 12, 1845, now dead. Afterwards a family by the name of Woodruff, Milton, and Henry settled on the same section. This town settled very slow. Stoore S. Wyman built a mill in south-east part of the town somewhere about 1850. The town was organized in 1856.

H. Belden and Co.
Lakeside Building
Chicago, Illinois

1. Saw and Shingle mill
2. Employed 4 persons
3. \$1,500 capital invested.
4. \$4,500 value of products.

(Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of
Ottawa and Kent-1876)

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Blendon Township

This township was surveyed in the year 1833, but for various reasons was not regarded as a desirable portion of the county. It lies back from the river, the earliest and most important highway, and is south of Allendale, west of Georgetown, north of Zeeland and west of Olive. The center of the township is about 18 miles south-east from the county seat.

This is one of the last and least developed townships in the county. It was not set off from Allendale until 1854 and has today but 639 inhabitants. Its chief product so far has been lumber, and a few years since two or three railroads might be seen extending from the river ten or 12 miles into the pineries, and the maps represent the "Blendon Lumber Co.", as the owner of a large portion of the township. It is said that the first locomotive used upon the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad, after becoming superannuated, was retired to the "strap-iron" road in Blendon and Allendale townships.

The lumber interests are on the decline, and there was but one saw mill within the limits of the township in 1874. Some attention is being paid to agriculture, and there are already about 2500 acres of improved land producing nearly 20,000 bushels of grain and 700 tons of hay. There are 100 acres in orchard; there was produced in 1873 over \$1,200 worth of orchard and garden products. There are two post

offices, but no business centers in the township.

The History of Ottawa County
Doubleday-Hunt-Dolan Co.
Kalamazoo, Michigan