

## KINSMAN

The Alpha Omega Chapter, Alpha Delta State, of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, an honorary women educators' group, in cooperation with the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, presents a brief history of Kinsman and its schools.

Kinsman Township is situated in the northeast corner of Trumbull County, adjoining the Ashtabula County line on the north, the Pennsylvania line on the east. Vernon borders Kinsman on the south and Gustavus on the west.

The surface of the township is, in general, quite level. Much of the soil is of superior quality, especially the bottom lands along the Pymatuning stream. A great deal of the soil is a sandy loam.

The first settlers found Kinsman covered with a heavy growth of timber except for a tract of about one thousand acres in the center of the township. This central tract had no trees and the settlers named it "the prairie." In the south part of the township was a grove of white pines of about twenty-five acres, probably the largest grove of its kind in the Western Reserve. An early historian wrote "Kinsman is probably the most picturesque township in Trumbull County."

There were many indications that Kinsman was, at some early date, an Indian resort. When the land was first plowed by the white settlers, there was evidence of soil darkened by charcoal where the Indians had built their camp fires. There have been many flint arrow-heads and stones axes found in this area, along with fortifications on the high grounds and dancing circles on the flats.

Kinsman township was drawn in 1798 as a standard township and assigned to John Kinsman who owned two-thirds stock and Uriah Tracy and Joseph Coit who together owned the remaining third. The land contained in the draft had been owned jointly by Kinsman and Major Joseph Perkins. These men had owned most of the Western Reserve but were dividing their interests so each could concentrate on developing and improving certain areas. Kinsman received this township for what is now the Akron area. He later purchased the interests of Coit and Tracy. (The latter having become a U.S. Senator from Connecticut hadn't the time or inclination to help develop the township.)

Surveying was begun and completed in 1799. It then took Kinsman two years to decide where to locate. In 1801 he finally made a springtime journey to Youngstown with Calvin Pease, Simon Perkins, George Tod, John S. Edwards, Josiah Pelton, Turhand and Jared Kirtland, and his hired hand, Ebenezer Reeve. Reeve was paid \$20.00 per month by Kinsman to begin improvements in the township and was promised land in the new township in exchange for his Connecticut home – if he decided to remain. When they reached Youngstown the party separated. Some went to Warren, Pelton to Gustavus, and Kinsman, Reeve, and others to Kinsman.

The township's first improvements were two log cabins. One just partially built before Kinsman and Reeve returned to Connecticut, in the fall of 1801. John

Cummings and John and Issaac Mathews were left behind to clear the land. On the return journey, Kinsman made a contract with three Youngstown families to settle in Kinsman. David Randall purchased 202 - 1/2 acres of land for \$405.00. Martin Tidd bought 106 acres for \$212.00. The third family was that of James Hill, who was Tidd's son-in-law. This group left Youngstown in the spring of 1802, bound for Kinsman with two teams and wagons. You can imagine what competition there must have been between the two family parties, as to which would actually arrive first on Kinsman soil. Poor David Randall ... his wagon broke down near what is now Vernon. His family lost the race to become Kinsman's first official settlers.

Later that year, back to Kinsman came Ebenezer Reeve with his two daughters, Deborah and Hanna. Reeve had 800 acres of land, a result of his bargain with John Kinsman. When Hanna saw her new home, she nearly fainted. "I have heard about going to the ends of the world," she said, "but I think we have gotten there."

Hanna didn't know how much pioneer spirit she really possessed. But the next few years showed the tough woodsmen of Kinsman that a refined bookish young lady could not only survive in this wilderness, but flourish.

John Andrews taught school in Connecticut for several years – then moved to the Western Reserve in August of 1804. He settled on 200 acres in Gustavus, worked the land, and also conducted religious meetings.

One day, in the gathering of young men, John heard the name, Hanna Reeves, mentioned, with the comment, "too much dictionary," added by one of the men who obviously felt as though "book learnin' " had to take a back seat in the rigorous frontier. "After all, a woman who's readin' and writin' can't be seein' to the needs of her man and family in these woods."

To John Andrews, the schoolteacher, a woman who was too much dictionary sounded like a precious commodity in the Western Reserve. He found, courted, and married Hanna Reeve. His father-in-law, Ebenezer, gave them 100 acres in Kinsman, upon which they eventually built a farmhouse, ashery, and general store. John Andrews was a fair man, but firm and at times kind of skimpy. A woman who once traded at his store left a well-written testimony of his cheapness. She went in one day to sell him some butter. As he paid her, he said, "I'll have to owe you one cent," to which she replied, "I'll just take this mending needle." John then rather testily pointed out that the needle cost two cents. Well, the lady won ... she broke the needle in half and gave him the useless pointed end, declaring, "We're even."

Hannah Reeve Andrews' personality was a welcome contrast to John's. She was fun-loving, vivacious, generous and kind to everyone. She stood between John and their six children when necessary, and was a tactful, sympathetic force in all his dealings. Her four daughters learned cheese-making, weaving, quilting, gardening, storekeeping, brewing, baking and straw-cutting from Hanna. She was a fine frontier wife and mother. However, her most important contribution to those four girls and two boys was in education. If she and John agreed on anything, it was the importance of providing those children with the best educational opportunities available.

In addition to parental instruction the four oldest children, all girls, received instruction from Mr. Buell, an old gentleman, who clerked in John's store. John bought them a set of 12 inch globes in Pittsburgh at a cost of \$60.00. Mr. Buell gave them instruction in astronomy and geography. They also attended the district school taught by Miss Irene Hickox. Hanna Reeve Andrews offered assistance and patronage so "Miss Irene" could go east and spend a year at the academy in Litchfield, Connecticut – so she might help the girls with their advanced studies.

During her absence, John Andrews (undoubtedly at his wife's urging) arranged for his two older girls to spend the summer at the Girls academy in Steubenville. One of them, Caroline, said, "We saw something of the world associated with those who could teach by example and were furnished with schoolbooks which in after years were carefully studied." The next year "Miss Irene" returned. As a result of her advanced studies, she now attracted students from New Lisbon, Ashtabula, Austintown, Parkman, Warren, and Weathersfield. She continued to teach in Kinsman for a year and a half and then went to Warren.

Later, in 1831, a new girl's school was established in Kinsman. It was housed in the new tavern house. All four Andrews sisters were enrolled. The new school and teacher (were) a delight. Soon, though, the tavern was leased. The school had to find new quarters. John and Hanna Andrews offered their home and eventually rooms were added for boarders. The girls were now old enough to help with the teaching. Hannah Reeve Andrews' hospitality was tested to the fullest. Schoolroom, dining room, chambers, and basement were all full.

Ten years later (in 1841), the Kinsman Academy was incorporated. Built in 1842 on land donated by John Kinsman, at cash cost of \$50.00, the Academy served the town of surrounding communities for many years. Once again Hanna Reeve Andrews was in the fore. She convinced the miserly John that he should donate the timber for the academy and made provisions about the town so the workers might be paid in credits – as cash funds amounted to only \$50.00. Total cost, including those credits for building the academy, was approximately \$1,500.00.

The daughters of Hannah Reeves Andrews continued to serve as teachers in various Western Reserve school districts for years to come.

Today, in the middle of the Kinsman Cemetery, the original site of the Kinsman Academy, is a memorial with two bells from the old Academy – bells that surely must ring for early Kinsman educators Hannah Reeves Andrews and her four schoolteachers.

*The script by Betty Birrell, narration by Gene Roberts. These programs were prepared by the Delta Kappa Gamma Society in cooperation with the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation to promote a better understanding of the history of the townships of Trumbull County with a focus on early education and the role of the woman educator.*