

## DANIEL B. HARRINGTON.

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Daniel Brown Harrington, capitalist and real estate operator, was born at Sodus, Ontario county, New York, April 23d, 1807, son of Jeremiah Harrington and Mercy Baker, both descended from the old Puritan stock of Massachusetts.

The name of Harrington was borne upon the muster rolls of the old revolutionary army of "76."

Jeremiah was a farmer by occupation, and fond of a new country and the excitement incident to out-door sports, hunting, fishing, etc., and up to the time of his coming of age (1795) resided in the state of Rhode Island.

He then made a visit to an older brother who resided at Butternuts, Otsego county, New York, which section of country being at that early date wild and unsettled, afforded him ample indulgence for his passion, the forests abounding in deer, beaver, and other game.

Here Jeremiah met and married Mercy Baker, and soon after removed to Sodus Point, purchasing a tract of farm land half-way between that place and Lyons. A year or two later Capt. Helm, of Virginia, arrived there, bringing with him 47 negroes, and entered a large tract of land near Sodus Point. His overseer was not accustomed to clearing land, and Jeremiah was engaged to oversee the clearing and the erection of log cabins for these negro slaves. The scheme proved a failure, it not being a good corn country, and the negroes were taken back to Virginia.

This locality, while it had peculiar attractions at that time for the huntsman, the woods being well stocked with the greatest variety of game, as the panther, deer, and bear, and the salmon and trout abounding in the clear water courses, yet the long winters and deep snow induced Jeremiah to seek a less severe climate, and after a thorough exploring tour through the west and southwest he decided to settle in Ohio.

Starting in July, 1811, from Sodus Point in a small schooner, the *British Queen*, they reached the mouth of the Niagara river, where, after reshipping their goods by teams to a point above the Falls, they again embarked in a batteau or open boat, and reaching Buffalo, were obliged to wait for good weather.

Coasting along as far as Erie, it became necessary to land in order to cook some food. A land breeze springing up, their boat drifted out to sea and it was with great difficulty recovered.

On arriving off Cleveland they attempted to make a harbor, but owing to bad weather were unable to land, and proceeded to Rocky River, where they abandoned the batteau, and with the aid of a skiff transferred their effects to a schooner. The last load being left in the skiff over night, broke loose from

the schooner, and drifting out to sea, was lost. Included in this skiff load was a trunk containing all their books.

After this long, perilous, and tedious journey by water, they arrived off Sandusky, and at the mouth of Sandusky Bay encountered a severe storm, in which their little bark was nearly wrecked. Proceeding up Sandusky river twenty-six miles, they made a landing at the site of the present town of Fremont. Here Jeremiah built himself a log cabin, going to Dayton for stock.

Soon after, the war of 1812 broke out and the country was filled with hostile Indians. The government erected Fort Stevenson, establishing a military post there for the protection of the settlement. This fort was located about half a mile from Jeremiah's farm. At this time, the kidnapping of white children was practiced by the Indians quite extensively, and Detroit was a rendezvous for the ransom of these, as also of the earlier settler's children whose parents had been slain in the Indian raids.

After Hull's surrender at Detroit the women and children were sent away in wagons for safety, to the central portion of the state, everything in the way of household furniture being sacrificed to the Indians or for lack of transportation.

During this trip which was necessarily accompanied by much hardship and exposure Mrs. Harrington died.

At the maturity of the crops this season the inhabitants formed in squads for protection in gathering them, and were repeatedly obliged to abandon the attempt, fleeing for their lives with the Indians in close pursuit, several of their party being killed and wounded.

The "Tawas" "Senecas" and "Wyandottes" were the tribes who, prior to Hull's surrender, had been friendly, but were encouraged by the English to commence hostilities.

During this period and for sometime subsequent to the death of Mrs. Harrington the three children (of whom the subject of this sketch was the oldest) were at Radner near Delaware, Ohio.

Marrying again in 1813 Jeremiah removed to Delaware, where he continued farming. It was near this point, where the troops marching north, passed, and the prisoners captured at Perry's victory on their way to Chillicothe for safe keeping. Among the earliest recollections of Daniel the subject of our sketch, are those of seeing the troops as they encamped in the open timber near his father's home.

In the fall of 1816 Jeremiah removed to the town of Delaware, occupying one half of a house, into the other half of which soon after, removed the parents of Rutherford B. Hayes. In 1817 the family became scattered, owing to the death of the step mother, and Daniel went to live with Paul E. Butler,—his father being then engaged in buying furs and trapping in the marshes of Lake Erie. In the winter of 1818 Daniel attended school at Sandusky in Fort Stevenson Barracks, and the boys found no difficulty in supplying themselves from the embankments of this fort with lead for shot and slugs with which to shoot duck as well as for lead pencils, of their own manufacture. These were the relics of the brave Croghan and his little band, who with their small six pounders loaded with leaden balls, so gallantly defended the fort against superior numbers and repelled the British foe and their Indian allies.

In the spring of 1819 a little company of venturesome pioneers, of whom Jeremiah Harrington was the leader, started for Saginaw Bay, on a fur trad-



ing expedition, and after much persuasion, Daniel—then a mere boy of 12—was allowed to accompany them.

They constructed their own boat (an open batteau) at lower Sandusky, naming it the "Saginaw Hunter," and started in April, stopping first at Monroe, and then at Detroit, where Daniel well remembers seeing the naked chimneys standing on the Canadian side, as monuments of the destruction caused by the war of 1812 and 1814.

As they passed the beautiful islands of the Detroit river, its waters teeming with fish, its banks lined with the forests just leafing out and as yet undisturbed by the woodman's ax, a view was presented as of a beautiful mirror in a frame of green. The scene was one of peculiar grandeur and produced an impression on the minds of our pioneer voyagers never to be forgotten.

Landing at James Abbot's dock, foot of Woodward avenue, they remained several days. Mr. Harrington, Sr., called upon General Cass, then governor of the territory, and was by him advised to wait until fall before proceeding on their journey, as a treaty was about to be made with the Indians, which would secure to them better chances of friendly treatment.

The steamer "Walk-in-the-Water," the first to ply on the western lakes, was inspected by the party as she lay at Wing's dock, above Woodward avenue. At this time there were less than half a dozen brick houses in Detroit; Gov. Hull's which stood on the present site of the Biddle House, being the most imposing structure of all.

Leaving Detroit, our party proceeded up slowly, touching at Port Duchain, Bunce's dock, and thence to the mouth of Black river. The settlement at Port Huron then consisted of two houses, one of them occupied by Anselm Petit. They found the wild pigeon here in great numbers, and had good use of their guns. In exploring the river banks they found, some three miles from its mouth, a number of Indian fields, which Messrs. Harrington and Murray proceeded to plant. These fields were since known as the Saulsbury place, and latterly as the Scoville place, and the summer was passed here very pleasantly, hunting, fishing, cultivating their crops, and visiting the Bunce family.

Before continuing their journey in the fall they constructed a large skiff at Bunce's dock to accompany the "Saginaw Hunter," which latter boat had been loaded too heavy to encounter rough weather. They left Black river about October 1, 1819, for Saginaw Bay. When the winds were unfavorable, they were compelled to go in shore, beach their boats, and wait for fair or calm weather. This and also frequent sickness among the members of their crew, were the main causes of detention, and after a weary month's voyage, they finally reached the mouth of the Saginaw river, near where Bay City is now located, October 30. Passing up to Crow Island they were met by a fleet of Indian canoes, in the foremost of which was the chief, Kish-a-Kon-ko, and Antoine Campau, who was employed by his brother as trader in the fur business. The first salutation from the chief was: "Puckagu! puckagu!" But after a parley, they were allowed to come up to headquarters and talk over the matter. Concessions were made and permission was given the party to settle ten miles south of the mouth of the river, where they built a trading house in which to pass the winter.

Finding the surrounding country filled with every variety of game, they made good use of their trained hunting dogs, and met with great success. This naturally created much jealousy among the Indians, who endeavored by

every means to frighten the white intruders away, but by showing a bold front and then appeasing them with a feast, no further trouble was experienced, and they remained undisturbed through the winter. At this time there were but two buildings at Saginaw—the trading house of Antoine Campau and the ruins of Peter Reilly's house, one of the earlier Indian traders.

In April, 1820, the party prepared to return to Ohio, and as young Daniel, by learning the Indian language and making himself familiar with their ways and customs, had attracted the favorable notice of one of the Indian leaders who was childless, they came in a body and requested of the father, Jeremiah, that his boy be left with them until the return of the party in the fall, which request it was not deemed prudent to accede to. After a voyage of three weeks they arrived at Fremont, Ohio, with their cargo of furs, but, owing to the depreciation of values caused by the reaction of the war, their trip was not a success financially.

In the fall of the same year (1820) Mr. Jeremiah Harrington, accompanied by Mrs. H. (his third wife) and Daniel, started with a company of five others on a second trip to Saginaw Bay. This trip was made in an open boat which they had constructed for the voyage at Sandusky, a much larger one than the "Saginaw Hunter," and named the "Speed." Nothing of special interest occurred on this voyage until after leaving Bunce's dock to proceed north, when sickness prevailed to such an extent among the crew that they were compelled to break up after returning to Fort Gratiot, from which place, on recruiting their health all the party except the Harrington family went back to Ohio, one of the party dying on the voyage.

Fort Gratiot then contained a garrison of twenty men in command of Lieut. J. Watson Webb, who was afterward editor of *The Courier and Enquirer*, New York, and subsequently United States minister to Brazil. He provided quarters for the Harrington family in the barracks, where they remained a month.

In the spring of 1822 Jeremiah removed to a farm five miles from the mouth of the Black river, where he continued to reside until his death, which occurred March 30, 1853.

In 1824 Daniel went with his father in charge of a raft of timber to Detroit, and thence to Delaware, Ohio, bringing back with him his younger brother, E. B., making the trip from Sandusky to Detroit in the steamer *Superior* (the second one running on the lakes), and by sail-boat thence to Black river.

\*E. B. H. remained two years, when, becoming dissatisfied with the country, he ran away in company with another boy, bringing up at Jamestown, N. Y., where he found a home with a cabinet-maker and learned the trade.

During the winter of 1826-27 Daniel attended school at Cottrellville, having for his schoolmates the late Capt. E. B. Ward and his sister, so familiarly known as "Aunt Emily."

In the fall of 1828 Daniel was employed as clerk in the store of Messrs. Bunce and Duryea at Fort Gratiot; the fort being then garrisoned by two companies of troops commanded by Maj. Thompson and Capt. Beal, Dr. Zina Pitcher being the surgeon of the Post. Twelve dollars per month and board were the wages Daniel received for these services. In the spring of 1829 he returned home to assist his father and take charge of his rafts.

These raft trips to Detroit consumed about a month going and coming.

\*Ebenezer Burke Harrington was afterwards a prominent lawyer in Detroit, where he died in 1844. C. M. B.



After various changes during the following three years, we find the subject of our sketch in 1832 a dry goods clerk in the employ of E. Waterbury on Jefferson avenue, Detroit, near the site of the present "Mich. Exchange" Hotel. The breaking out of the Black Hawk war found him enrolled in the State militia for service, and joining a party of volunteers composed principally of the old city guard of Detroit, he marched with them to Saline, Mich., at which place they were ordered back, owing to the sudden termination of the war. On the appearance of the cholera during this summer (1832) there was a perfect stampede from Detroit, everybody leaving who could get away. Mr. Waterbury closed his store and in company with his clerk Daniel, started for Stony Creek by way of Mount Clemens. When nearing the latter place they were met by a quarantine guard who drove them back, and they were obliged to take the Pontiac road. While on this trip they dined at the wayside farm house, and so fearful were the people of the contagion that they were left in full possession of the house after their dinner had been prepared. After the cholera had been banished by cold weather and frosts, Daniel, in company with Joseph B. Comstock, bought out Mr. Waterbury's store at Stony Creek and removed it to Hersy's Mills (a better point for trade), and continued there a year.

In 1833 Mr. Harrington returned again to Black River, which in the meantime had grown to be quite a settlement, and went into the employ of Jonathan Burtch, who had a general store, doing a good business on both sides of the St. Clair, and during the year he purchased the business and conducted it in his own name, selling out in the spring of 1835 to Willard Orvis of Monroe.

In June, 1835, he made a visit to his brother, E. B. H., at Whitestown, N. Y., where he was engaged in the study of the law with Judge Fortune C. White.

Through the acquaintance thus made with Judge White, Daniel formed with him a partnership for the improvement of the mouth of the Black river, and in July, 1835, they bought eighty acres with a river front of 300 feet and a half-mile front on what is now known as Military street, Port Huron.

Mr. Harrington became the active partner in this investment, and had the town laid out and platted in what was then known as the township of Desmond, taking the plan of alleys between streets from the similar plan in Philadelphia. In order to enable him to straighten Military street, he afterward purchased forty acres on the south of his eighty-acre tract, known as the Carlyle farm.

From 1835 to 1848 Mr. H. continued his partnership with Judge White in projecting improvements and operating in real estate.

In 1837 the village was given its name—Port Huron, which name was afterward adopted for the township.

January 20, 1840, he married Miss Sarah E. Luce, of Pittsfield, Mass., whose parents came to Michigan in 1836.

In 1845 Mr. Harrington built a mill on the property which he had purchased years before when in the employ of Mr. Burtch as clerk.

In 1847 he purchased north of his mill property 2,400 acres of pine lands.

In 1848 he dissolved partnership with Judge White, and has since been engaged in lumbering and dealing extensively in real estate, having in 1853 purchased a tract of 3,000 acres on the shores of Lake Huron, on which are now located extensive mills.

In 1856, owing to the prevalence of sickness, Mr. H. removed his family to

Saratoga, N. Y., remaining there six years, though still retaining his business interests in the west.

In 1862 he returned to Port Huron, and has since resided on the original homestead.

In 1874 he constructed under his own personal supervision one of the finest halls in the State, known as the City Opera House. It is a model of taste and elegance, and a credit to its builder and the city.

Constantly occupied as the subject of our sketch has been for so many years, in projecting public improvements and engaging in large real estate transactions, he has never sought official position, but was chosen in 1847 to represent his district in the State legislature, and in 1852 to a seat in the State senate. He was also postmaster of Port Huron under the latter four years of Jackson's administration, and held the same office under Van Buren.

He was president of the First National bank of Port Huron for two years after its organization, and at the present writing is president of the Port Huron savings bank.

Of his seven children (six of whom survive) the eldest, Charles F. (born Sept., 1842), chose the profession of law, has been twice elected prosecuting attorney of St. Clair county, and also to a seat in the legislature in 1876.

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*Note.*—Daniel B. Harrington, the subject of the foregoing sketch, which was written by himself, died July 7, 1878, being at that time vice-president of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan for St. Clair county.