



Samuel Augustine Ohio Gunsmith



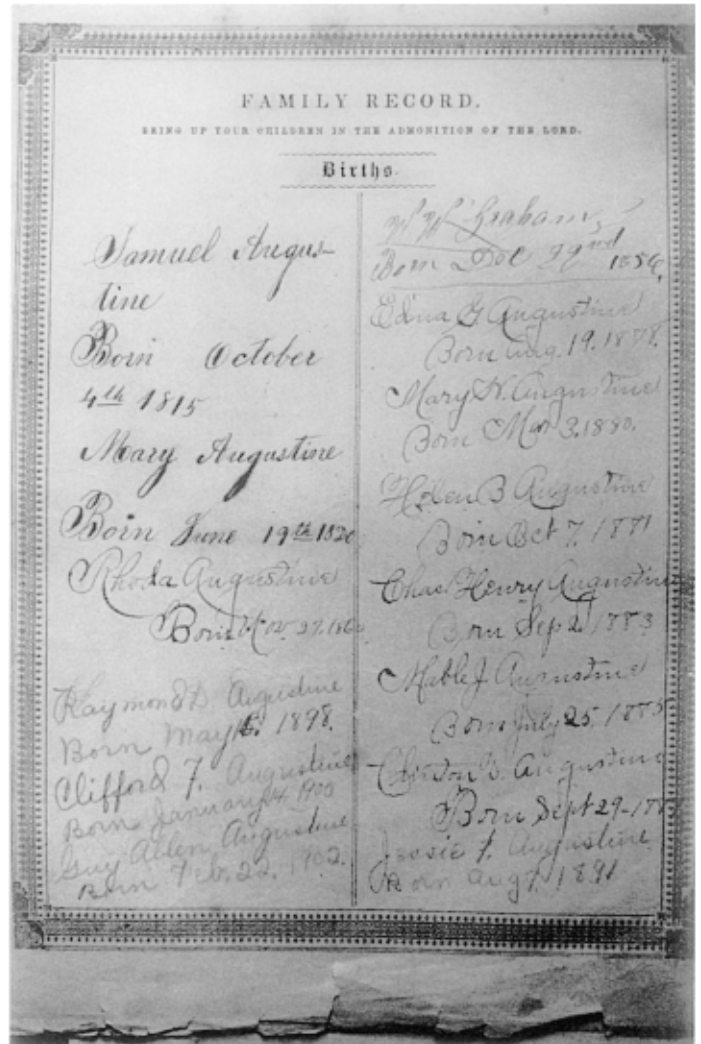
By Clint Augustine

Young Journeyman moves to Athens

It is very easy for me to begin writing about Samuel Augustine. I was stuck in the family tree search for several years on Samuel, and so with all the hunting around I did for clues, I began to get a pretty good picture of the life of my great-great grandfather.

Samuel's family Bible is still in the family. It is an 1854 edition and lists his wife and children, but not his ancestors. It was added to over the years by other family members, listing their children, marriages, and deaths, etc. The entries for Samuel's family were presumably made by Samuel or one of his children. His wife, Mary (Mathena) could not write, as seen in some of his deeds, where she signed with her (X) mark.

Very little is known about Samuel before the age of twenty-four, when his marriage to Mary Mathena (Matheny) is recorded on January 2, 1839. She was born 19 June 1820 in Athens, and would leave Samuel a widower on 16 November 1889. Mary was the daughter of John Matheny (died 1863), and Rebecca Benjamin (1798-1867, daughter of Nathan Benjamin (b.1771 Lycoming, Pa., d.1857) and Mary Nulton (d.1836 Athens, Ohio). Nathan Benjamin was the son of David Benjamin (d.1778 Lycoming, Pa.) and Elizabeth Brown (b.1734, d.1835 (not a typo) at Granville, Ohio), daughter of Daniel Brown. David Benjamin and Daniel Brown had



Augustine Family Bible

been killed together in an Indian attack.

We can only guess at this time about such things as how Samuel spent his youth, from whom did he learn to make guns, the extent of his education, etc. The United States had only been at rest from it's second war

with Great Britain less than a year when Samuel was born on October 4, 1815. He must have heard stories from that war from his father, Henrich, among others, who had gone off to fight in the War of 1812, and also the first-hand accounts of the War of The Revolution from both of his grandfathers, Georg Augenstein and John Snook (Shnok/Snoeg). Both had served in The Revolution in Maryland. Georg Augenstein settled in the "Northwest Territory" (Ohio) near Unity and East Palestine, in Columbiana County in 1801, having come with his family from near Hagerstown and Frederick, Maryland. His land on Section 24 was adjacent to Pennsylvania.

Samuel was no doubt exposed to the German language as a youth, and probably spoke it as well. His grandfather was alive until Samuel was nearly nine years old, and records indicate that most of the extended family still used the "Pennsylvania Dutch" in signing documents. It has been recalled by one family member, Mrs. Forrest (Betty Augustine) Stallsmith that her grandfather, Jonas Augustine (born 1855), spoke German in the home until his death in 1947 in Columbiana County. Nearly all of the early Augustine's in Ohio were farmers, and had a great interest in buying land, sometimes parcelling it off at a profit and acquiring more. Their farms were typically in the range of two hundred to four hundred acres, with some larger. The size of the families was larger than today, eight children or more being common. My great uncle, Charles Henry Augustine, used to tell his children about Samuel's yearly visit to his family. He would get up early and go off alone on horseback for the long ride back to Columbiana County. The Columbiana and Athens

branches of the family had lost contact since Samuel's death, until I looked them up in 1994. Samuels's son Dodridge, my great grandfather, had passed along, in error, that Samuel had come from the Pennsylvania Dutch country, and gave his father's birthplace as Pennsylvania on the 1880 and later census reports. It is entirely possible, even likely, that Samuel's ancestors did come from Pennsylvania, though not yet confirmed.

From whom Samuel learned "the art and mysteries of a gunsmith" can only be argued at this point. There were several gunsmiths in the area of Columbiana, Mahoning and Stark counties in the very early 1800's who would appear to be the most likely possibilities; among them:

Andrew Pettit - (-1854)
Salem, Hanoverton
Samuel Davis - Salem about
1804
Job Rossel, Sr. - arrived
Columbiana 1802 (a year
after Samuel's grandfather)
David Small - active 1792-
1848 New Lisbon
A. C. Swaidner - active 1830-
1870 Salem
John White - New Lisbon til
1829 (one-time partner of
David Small)
Henry Walter - active 1800-
1824 Elkrun Twp.
William Furney - repaired guns
1815 (Samuel's uncle Abraham
married Elizabeth Forney)
Solomon Knappenberger -
(1798 -) Mahoning County

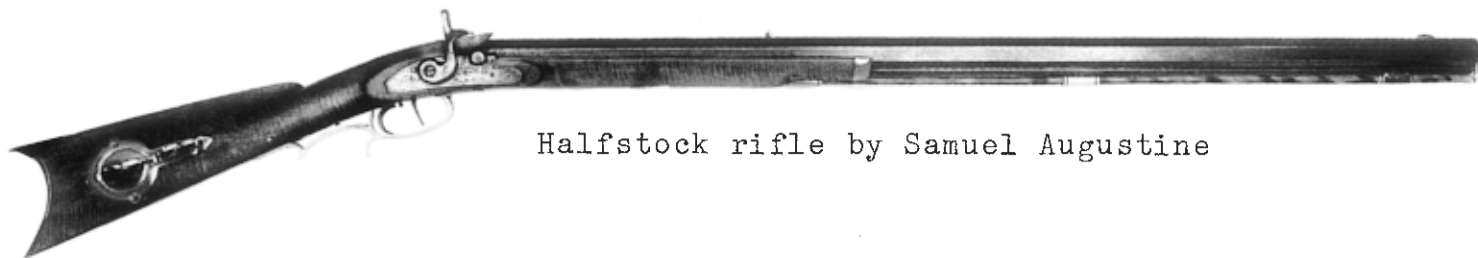
Other gunsmiths in the area who may have apprenticed under the same master as Samuel were: Abe Hartley, William Johnson, and Alexander Noble.

Another gunsmith, Daniel Bell, of Stark County, employed a feature quite similar to Samuel's in the ornamentation of the lock plate screw on the left side of

the rifle. It is best described as an upside-down teardrop of brass through which the lock-plate screw is inserted. However Bell's point toward the barrel, whereas Samuel's point toward the shooter. At least that is the case on the guns in my possession.

Why Samuel came to Athens County from Columbiana is another question with no answer at this time. He probably arrived in Athens in late 1838. The earliest record there is his marriage, on January 2, and also a deed in 1839. A route down the Ohio River seems likely, although he could have traveled by canal - down the Hocking Valley Canal, via the Sandy and Beaver Canal to the Ohio and Erie Canal, or possibly even straight overland. He reported on the 1840 census that he was engaged in manufacturing, which would indicate that he was already at work making guns. Daughter Lydia was born 31 July 1841 and would later marry Henry S. Hibbard. Son Henry was born 6 August 1846, followed by another daughter, Emily (Emma) on 21 September 1848, and son Dodridge (my great grandfather) was born on 7 January 1854. In 1850 Samuel's assets were only \$600. In 1855 he became a trustee for Dover Township, and by 1860 his assets had grown to \$13,750. He reported that year that he had \$400 invested, employed two hands at \$1.25 per ten hour day and for the year ending 30 June, he bought 22 gun locks at \$27.50, 22 gun barrels at \$49.50, sheet brass, etc. at \$15. For the same period he made 22 guns and rifles valued at \$392 (\$17.82 a piece) and other items and repairs at \$670. Note the above: "guns and rifles". I have a W. W. Marston pistol manufactured 1850-1860 which is fitted with an "S. Augustine" inscribed, rifled, screw barrel, which I like to think may have been





Halfstock rifle by Samuel Augustine

Samuel's personal gun. Since he was not widely known as a pistol maker, he may have bought this pistol and used his own barrel by choice. It is a single action pistol of less than the typical .31 caliber Marston's, and has a bar hammer and walnut grips. Several Marston models may be seen in "Flayderman's Guide to Antique American Firearms", 5th edition. The "S. Augustine" pistol may be seen in "The Kentucky Pistol", by Roy Chandler and Jim Whisker. There have also been reports of Augustine made shotguns, besides the known half-stock and full-stock rifles. My grandfather, Raymond Augustine, told me when I was younger that Samuel had made and/or repaired guns for Jesse James (and also for the Ford Gang, with relatives now living near Lancaster, Ohio). In checking back on the dates and travels of Jesse James, it is possible; but it's also possible that grandpa was just exciting the imagination of his grandson.

Samuel's son Henry, named after Samuel's father, died of measles and pneumonia in the Civil War, at Decatur Jct., Alabama on March 6, 1864 at the age of seventeen. He was five feet seven inches tall, with blue eyes and dark complexion. His remains were removed to Corinth National Cemetery in Mississippi in 1867. He entered the war as a musician in the 63rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry and served only twenty two days. There



Home of Samuel Augustine (1815-1894)

was no policy or procedure for notifying next of kin of a soldier's death during the Civil War. Those concerned had to rely on newspaper lists, which were published from time to time, or were notified by a comrade or friend of the soldier, sometimes weeks after the event occurred. A moving remembrance of him covers two pages in the Bible. The consent form which Samuel signed in 1864 gives a pretty good comparison of his signature to the script signature on the barrels of the guns he produced. Samuel became a trustee again in 1868. By then he had lost one son to the war and daughter Lydia had married. Daughter Emma would remain at home most of her life, and my great grandfather, Dodridge was a young man of fourteen. That same year Samuel conveyed land from his property

known as the Sugar Creek Graveyard to the trustees and their successors. It has become the Augustine Cemetery, and the final resting place for Samuel and Mary and many of their descendents. In the years following he made guns and farmed his nearly four hundred acres. In 1880 he included a housekeeper, nineteen year old Mary J. Wilson, on his census report. And then in 1886 he conveyed part of his land for a county road for \$300 and a "five board fence". Samuel's beloved Mary died of "paralysis" three years later. Her obituary, from The Athens Messenger, reads as follows:

friend she was true and faithful and by her repeated deeds of charity endeared herself in a remarkable degree to the poor and unfortunate with whom she came in contact. She suffered terrible the last four years of her life, which she bore with Christian fortitude, often expressing herself as being resigned to the will of Providence and ready to pass from life at the appointment of the Lord. Her end was painless and peaceful, realizing we believe the beautiful promise of our Savior."

Samuel did not continue in good health. In May of 1890 The Athens Messenger reported that he was "improving after his late serious illness, but is very feeble yet". Two years later he conveyed seventy acres to daughter Emma. On January 12, 1894 Samuel died. His obituary stated:

"Samuel Augustine died at his home on Sugar Creek in Dover Township on Friday of last week, aged 79 years. Mr. Augustine was a well known gunsmith and in addition to his trade followed the occupation of a farmer. He was a good neighbor, honest and upright in his dealings,

"The subject of this memoir, was born June 19th, 1820 and passed away November 16th, 1889, being in her 70th year. On January 2nd, 1839, she was married to Samuel Augustine who survives her. She was the mother of four children, three of whom are in life. She was born and spent her whole life in Athens County, Ohio. In early youth she united with the M. E. Church with which she kept a continuous connection during the rest of her life. In all the relations of life, as wife, mother, neighbor, and

CONSENT IN CASE OF MINOR.

I, Samuel Augustine Do CERTIFY, That I am
 the Father of Henry Augustine; that the
 said Henry Augustine is Seventeen years of age; and I
 do hereby freely give my CONSENT to his volunteering as a Soldier in the ARMY OF THE UNITED
 STATES for the period of THREE YEARS.

GIVEN at Athens Ohio
 the 12th day of February 1864

Witness:

George S. Watters

S. Augustine

(A. G. O. No. 74)

Recruit Officer



Fullstock rifle by Samuel Augustine

and highly respected wherever he was known. His funeral took place on Sunday and was largely attended by his old neighbors and friends."

Son Dodridge gave Samuel ten grandchildren. Emma died in 1903, unmarried. The last part of her obituary stated:

"The deceased was the daughter of the late Samuel Augustine who, as a gunsmith, had become famous in this part of the country." Samuel's home still stands, long unoccupied, near Sugar Creek. He is at rest in an unmarked grave at Augustine Cemetery.

I have two of Samuel's rifles, one full-stock and one half-stock. The full-stock appears much older than the half-stock, and I believe it to be one of Samuel's very early guns. Both bear the inscription "S. Augustine", and employ a German silver blade front sight, and a patch box. The patch box extends to the butt plate on the full-stock. Both have "scrolled" trigger guards and are percussion models with double set triggers. The barrels on both guns are secured to the stock with pins through the barrel lugs with no escutcheon used. Neither features ornamentation on the furniture. The half-stock patchbox has simple "sawtooth" engraving around its edges, and a "starburst" in the middle and front, and is pleasing in its economy. If there is a trademark, aside from the script signature on the barrel, it appears to be the inverted brass "teardrop" beneath the lock plate screw on the left side of both guns. The woodwork on the rear stocks is similar. The full-stock has a thinner grip and slightly longer cheek, with the top of its butt plate also being slightly longer. It has a forend cap made of brass, while

the one on the half-stock is pewter. Gunsmith Bill Reynolds has described the full-stock as "elegant". It has received minor restoration work to the forend stock by Cecil Brooks, arguably the greatest living blackpowder gunsmith, who had owned the gun for years. It has a 41 3/4 inch barrel bored to .40 caliber and an overall length of 58 inches. It weighs roughly ten and a half pounds. On the lock is stamped the initials "L.M.". Being unfamiliar with this lock, I can't say if the initials are those of the lock maker or the person who received the gun. I do know that the man who recruited Samuel's son in the Civil War was Lt. Loring Matheny, a relative of Samuel's wife.

The half-stock is completely original and in excellent condition, with only minor cracking at the patchbox and butt plate. A fairly common Dayton lock with pheasants stamped on the face was used in its manufacture. Its ramrod appears to be original and has five notches aft. It has a 35 1/8 inch barrel of .36 caliber and an overall length of 51 inches. It weighs about ten pounds. It has a lightly finished maple stock and a fairly broad, brass flash guard around the nipple. I can say that both guns shoot very well.

I have come to admire Samuel Augustine a great deal. He was a gunsmith and a farmer who was reared in a time when character, industry, and godliness played an important role in the family. He was a man who lead a solid life and built for himself a good reputation. He prospered, and left some fine examples of his art.

Excerpted from "THE AUGUSTINE FAMILY IN OHIO", by Clint Augustine



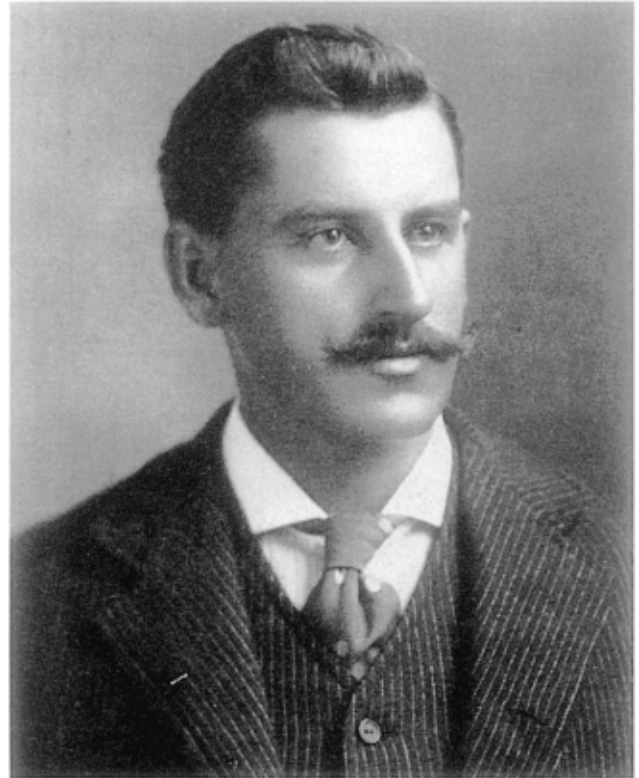
Entries From The J.C. Vincent Pocket Diary For 1865



By William Reynolds

In the year 1865 when this Journal was recorded, John Caleb Vincent was living east of present day Vincent, Ohio with his parents at a location referred to as Rocky Point. He was twenty-four years old and one year away from marrying his sweetheart, Rose Barlett.

The diary covers everyday activities in Caleb's life from weather reports (which I have excluded), to temperance meetings, courtship events, spinning wheel and gun manufacturing and clock repair. It is without question one of the most revealing references to daily and community life of this exemplary gunsmith.



John Caleb Vincent pictured in his late 20's or early 30's.

This book belongs to me - it do.

J. C. Vincent

Monday 2

Repaired clock for Wm. Woodford.

Friday 6

In shop all day as usual. Mr. Cuninghame and Martin C_____ recd' their guns both of which had been made to order.

M. C. paid for his \$19.75. and C paid for his \$22.00.

Thomas Bisckenridge recd' his clock. Charges 1.00.

This ends the first week of Jan 65.

Sunday 8

Went to Uncle E's (Henry Earl Vincent) arriving at eleven o'clock departing at 5. O. B. & _____ played on one flute.

Nellie, Osmer & myself sang the Temperance anthem.

Monday 9

In the shop again as usual. S. F. Hall present.

Tues January 10.

In the shop all day. Temperance meeting in the evening.

Thursday 12

In the shop from morn till night & undisturbed by living soul.

Friday 13

Finished two rifles for Jake Moore. Went to Marietta on the evening train.

Rep. clock for G. M. Morris.

Sat 14
 Returned from Marietta and went to work.
 Rep. clock for Jno. Coughlin.
 Rep. clock for A. Waterson.

Sunday 15
 Remained at home all day.
 Wrote my editorial for the "Herald." Went to Uncle E's in the evening. Did not claim the parting K _____ (this is the first mention to the courtship between J. C. and Rose Bartlett. Later referred to as Cousin E.)

Monday 16
 In the shop today commenced a gun for Mr. Hoon.

Tuesday 17
 Commenced gun for E. C. Mck.
 At the Temp. meeting in the even. Got along reading the Herald better than I expected. Sung one song Temp. Banner.
 Exchanged _____ with Cousin E.

Wed. 18
 In the shop all day.

Thursday 19
 At work as usual.
 Snow has fallen to the depth of three inches.
 Making pretty good sleighing.

Saturday 21
 Repd. clock for "Simpy".

Sunday 22
 At home all day. Made my editorial for the Herald.

Tuesday 24
 In the shop all day. Finished rifles for WS Hoss and E. H. McKain.
 Cous. E. and E. Witlington took supper with us then we went to the Temp meeting together. Went home with Cous. E. We kissed and parted.

Wed. 25
 In the shop in the morn. Went to Barlow in the aft. Bought a vest for \$4.25. Sent a gun this eve. to Chas. H. Wyatt New England. Charge \$2.50.
 Cold!! Cold!! all day and indications of being colder this evening.

Thurs 26
 In the shop.
 Rec'd clock for Lt. Col. Kinkead. ch. 1.00 (p.\$2.50 signed for a book "The Rare Bud")

Sat 28.
 Commenced a gun for Mr. Froth.

Mon 30
 Commenced gun for Cyrus Jeffries.

Tues 31
 In the shop in the morning until until 9 o'clock then helped Levi clean wheat. Am going to the Temperance meeting. Went to the temperance meeting. Went (home with Rosie).

Wed Feb 1
 At work caught cold today some how.

Mon. 6.
 At work in the shop. Darkies came to chop wood for us today. Went to Barlow in the evening and gave seventy dol. (\$70.00) to aid in clearing the Lt. from the draft. Forty dollars of which I took from my own funds.

Tues 7
 In the shop. Will finish guns for Jeffries and Froth.
 Temperance meeting tonight. Am going, went, Rosie was there came in a sleigh.
 Sorry.

Wed 8
 Engaged all day in repg gun for Pastor from New England.

Thurs 9

At work as usual
Repaired clock for Mr. Hill.

Fri. 10

At work. Commenced repairing
gun for Mr. Proctor.

Sat 11

Commenced repairing gun for
Jordan Sweeney.

Recd gun that was made for A.
Lynch. C. H. McKain sent for
his gun. Sent the money \$22.00.
Recd check for Neil McKay.

Sunday Feb. 12.

Got up this morning. Fixed
up to go down to the Glendale
schoolhouse to a singing school.
O. B. came along a little after
9 o'clock and we started. Went
through every bodys dooryard
arriving at the schoolhouse a
few minutes past 10 o'clock. Find-
ing it vacant we went to Mr.
S. D. Ellenwoods. Took dinner,
started home a few minutes
after 4.

Arrived at Mr. Bartletts
about 5. dep. 640.

Arrived home safe at 7:39.

Mon 13

Went to work this morning.
Did a good days work.
Shot a rabbit "I did"

Tues 14

In the shop all day. Went to
the temperance meeting in the
evening. Rosie was there. Saw
her home had a very pleasant
trip indeed.

Wed 15

In the shop all day. Finished
repairing guns for A. Proctor
and Jordon Sweeney.

Do not feel any worse for the
trip up the hill last night.

Thurs 16

At work but not very hard.
Waiting for gun barrels to arrive
from Pittsburgh. The barrels
came this evening.

Fri 17

At work. Commenced a gun for
 Varner.

Sat 18

At work as usual. Commenced
a gun for Wm. Campbell. O. B.
came over this fore noon. I
helped him cut some wood for
the singing school the first
of which will be next Monday
evening.

Sun 19

At home all day. Mr. Huchins
came over about 3 o'clock and
brought several numbers of the
N. Y. in which is con-
tained a good story.

Mon 20

At work in the shop. Recd.
guns for Jenkins. Am going to
sing tonight. Failed to raise
money enough this evening for
singing school.

Tues 21

At work as usual. Went to
the tem. meeting. It was a
perfect "bore".

Wed 22

At work as usual forgetting
that this day should have been
spent as a holiday - Washington's
Birthday-Heard of the evacua-
tion for Charleston SC and the
forts and their by the Union
forces.

Sold gun to J. C. Calvert.
\$24.00

Thurs 23

In the shop by "jing". Fon
Wilson was here today. We
repaired gun for him. There is
a dance at Tom Flemings tonight.
I not go.

Fri 24

Amon Frost came for his and
C Jeffries guns for which he
paid \$45.00.

Sat 25

In the shop all day. Jordon



Shop of John and Caleb Vincent
at Rocky Point. Caleb and
youngest son, Herman Lyle,
pictured in doorway.

Sweeney got his gun. -recpt.-
for which he paid \$17.60.

Sun 26

At home all day and busily
engaged in reading a story
entitled "Self Made" or "Out of
the Depth" by Mrs. Southworth.

Mon 27

In the shop as usual. Jim's
shot guns for Wm. Campbell and
D. Jarner. Wm. S. Hoon got his
gun for which he paid \$14.00.
The price being 16.00. Received
clock for Paid in Full.

Tues 28

Made a rifle "Sett" for G. B.
Hitchcock price \$3.00 (probably
a set rigger) Temperance
meeting night expect to have a
gay time. A crowded house, a
pretty good time. Rosie was
there but _____ disappointed.

Wed March 1

At work in the fore noon at
school. In the after noon Mr.

Adams, Mr. Pugh and Ella came
up and tried rifles.

Singing postponed until
Friday evening next.

Thurs March 2.

Commenced gun for Hugh
Breckenridge. Sold gun to Wm.
Campbell for which he paid
\$10.00 full charge him \$22.00.

Friday 3

At work as usual. Sold gun
to David Varner for which he
paid \$23.35 full charge.
School closed today.

Sat 4

In the shop. Repaired clocks
for Neil Mc_____ Andrew McFarland.
Sold a rifle "sett" to C. B.
Hitchcock.

Sun 5

At home all day reading that
famous story "Self Made".
Uncle and Aunt _____ were here.

Mon 6

In the shop all day. There will be a temperance meeting this evening. _____ with the expectation of hearing a lecture by Rev. Mr. Thomas. We had a very good lecture. "She" was not there, very sorry.

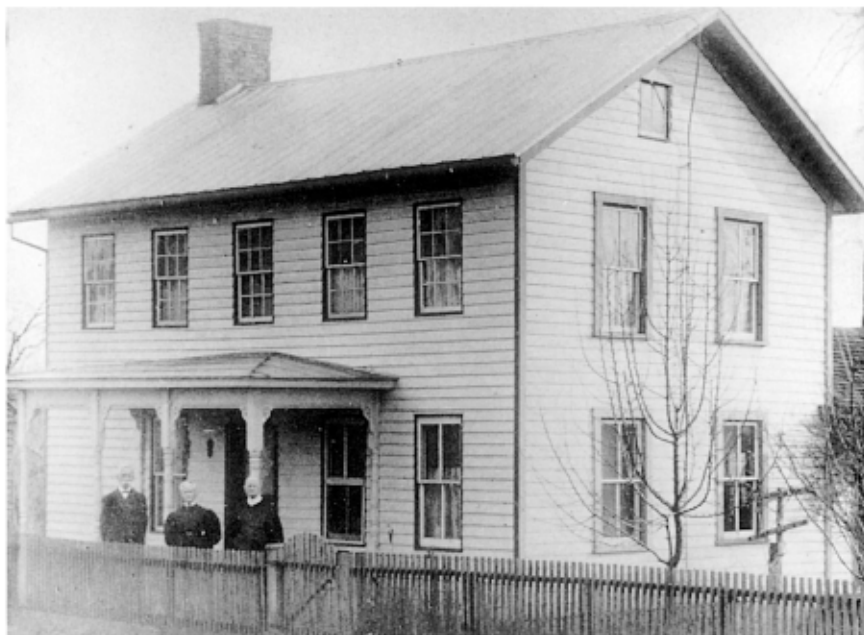
Tues 7

In the shop all day. C. B. came along and said there would be no singing school until 15th.

To be continued.

The transcriber wishes to thank two very good friends who have been very helpful in my quest for more knowledge about the Vincents, James Laflin (a direct decedent of Caleb) and antiquarian, William Dorsey.

Copyright 1995



Home of John and Elizabeth Dustin Vincent at Rocky Point. Picture taken mid-1870's. Caleb pictured on Left, his mother on the right, unknown person in the middle.