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Wilson Bridge Road



A LINWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTRY

Linworth Historical Society Newsletter

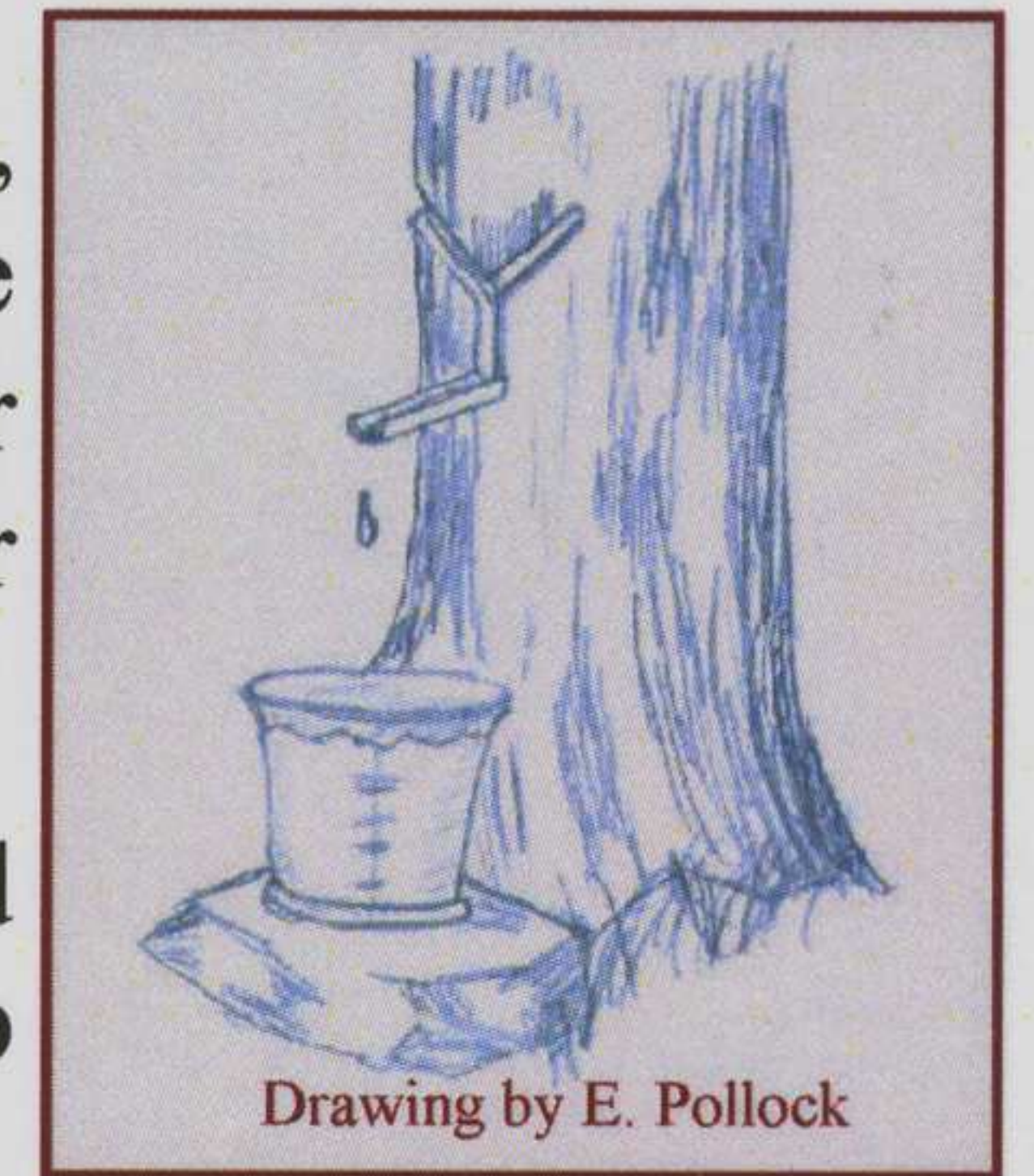
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“Sugarmaking” — Indian Style

The return of the crows to the maple groves meant to the Indians the beginning of sugar making. This happened in early Spring and was looked forward to by the Wyandots.

Early settler, Joseph Thompson, for many years had protected the burial site of Chief Leatherlips. Thompson stayed in contact with members of Leatherlips’ tribe well into the 1830’s to 1840’s. He allowed them to camp and make sugar in his woods along the Scioto River—now Riverside Drive and Bright Road.

When the time came, “sugaring off”, as it was sometimes called, continued day and night. Maple trees were selected and taps were placed on the south side near the base of the tree. Another method, a “Y” was cut through the bark with a U shaped tap or spile placed at the bottom of the “Y”.



Sap was collected in containers and brought to large suspended iron kettles. Boiling continued through the night with the sap turning to syrup. Those in charge of the boiling, usually women, took great care at this point. As the syrup began to granulate, it was poured into wooden troughs where the molten sugar was stirred with wooden paddles until the process was complete. As the sugar cooked, it was formed into small cakes or packed into baskets for transportation.

The picture to the right is a picture of Don Rose sharing memories of his youth with Grandson Mitchell Olson—2008.



Don Rose says, “This woods was on the property where I lived from the time of my birth until I was 16. It was part of our yard, so we mowed the grass and kept it cleared out. Several times a friend and I stretched jungle hammocks between these big trees and slept overnight. At the time I had no idea it had been an Indian encampment.”



In the picture to the left Jim Thompson and Mitchell Olson look over the meadow, where in the Spring many years ago, Jim’s great, great grandfather, Joseph Thompson, welcomed the Wyandot’s return.



Artist Dick Hoke

Indian Sugar Camp 1850c.

In early spring Bill Moose journeyed with his parents to the woods owned by Joseph Thompson, long time friend of the Wyandot Indians. Maple trees were tapped, sap collected and boiled down to sugar.

Joseph died in 1862, age 74. Soon after, the “sugar making” came to an end and the Wyandot sugar camps were closed for good.

Years later when “Indian Bill” returned to the woods and set up camp near his favorite tree, he was always met by Joseph’s great grandchildren to hear him tell more Indian stories.



Margaret at the Thompson homestead on Bright Road.

“It’s a far cry from the days when Indians camped in the forest on Dad’s farm north of Dublin. The spot where the Indians camped to make sugar every spring is now just a peaceful meadow.” 1927

Margaret Friend Thompson 1833-1929
Daughter-in-Law of Joseph Thompson

The mission of Linworth United Methodist Church is to make disciples for Jesus Christ by creating community, growing in Christ, serving the world.