

Welcome to Meigs County, Ohio

History & Genealogy

The Pioneer History of Meigs County

by Stillman Carter Larkin

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It appears from old account books that salt rated as high as \$2 per bushel in Rutland township as late as 1820. The first salt water seen on Leading creek was a small pond of reddish water, which in dry weather cattle would visit for a drink, the place being near the channel of the creek, about a quarter of a mile below the old Denny mill, in a bend of Leading creek. In 1820 several of the neighbors brought in their kettles and set them on a kind of furnace and made of that water one bushel of salt. After which a company was formed consisting of **Benjamin Stout, Caleb Gardner, Thomas Shepherd and Michael Aleshire**, who bored a well and erected a furnace and commenced making salt in 1822, when **Benjamin Stout** bought out the other parties.

In 1822 **Abijah Hubbell (ME# 452)** and his son, **Jabez Hubbell, and Barsley Hubbell** bored a salt well above the **Stout** well and a furnace set for making salt in 1824.

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George Downing was born in Waterville, Me., April 25th, 1801.

George Downing married **Harriet Chase**. He was a blacksmith by trade, also a surveyor, and served many years as a justice of the peace. In 1826 an independent company of militia was organized with **Jesse Hubbell (ME# 1195)** for captain, **George Downing** as lieutenant and **Oliver Grant** ensign. After seven years, the officers having served out the time of their commission, the company disbanded. He was a large, well proportioned man, of great strength. He was supposed to be the strongest man in southern Ohio. Many stories were told of remarkable feats of lifting great weights and other exhibitions of strength. He died July 12th, 1878, aged seventy-seven years and three months. **Mrs. Downing** died March 10th, 1890.