

Francis Weese, the Fiddler

Extract from The Settlement of Upper Canada, Wm Canniff, 1869. PP 239. Section subtitled "Primitive Weddings"

"We have some interesting information from an old lady who settled in Ameliasburgh, and who still lives [1869]. Getting married at the beginning of the present century was a great event. The Carrying Place was the usual place of resort. They placed in a lumber waggon, a number of chairs, and each gallant was supposed to support his partner upon his knee, and thus economise room. *Bitters* were indulged in, but no fighting was allowed. If one began that, he was put out. Keeping good natured was a point of duty insisted upon. No old persons went to the wedding, but they joined in the dance, when the youngsters got back. A wedding without a dance was considered an insipid affair; and it was generally kept up two or three successive nights in different places. *Frances Weese's was a half-way house between McMan's Corners, (Rednersville) , and the Carrying Place. Weese was a distinguished player upon the fiddle, and the wedding parties often stayed with him the first night.*

'A yoke of steers, a cow, three or four sheep, with a bed, table, two dozen chairs, was regarded a very decent setting out for the bride. And if the groom was heir to 50 or 100 acres of land, with a little cleared, he was thought to have the worldly "gear", to constitute a first-rate match.'

Notes from L. Sinclair: Francis was the son of John Weese Sr , U.E. L., originally of Herkimer Co. NY and Julianna Hogel, the first permanent settlers of Ameliasburgh Twp.*** PLEASE NOTE... This is NOT JOHN WHART WEESE, born in Vermont, a permanent settler of Ernestown who married Mary Reiss and who has, in an PANDEMIC OF MISINFORMATION, BEEN BADLY CONFUSED with this John of Ameliasburgh.

-"Dempsey's Corners" later called "Albury" was/is half-way between Rednersville and Carrying Place on the Rednersville Road (Prince Edward County Road 3) in Ameliasburgh Township. The Weese lands were on lot 88 and lot 89 Con 1 Ameliasburgh, near Albury.

- The "old lady who settled in Ameliasburgh, and who still lives" could have been one of any number of old settlers. Many of the original settlers, though enduring extreme hardship in the earliest years of settlement, lived to a very great age and can be found on the 1851 census and some, on the 1861 census.

-Francis was, according to tradition, a very skilled storyteller as well.