

Luellen Ladbury

By Myrtle Bemis (Porterville)

Luellen Ladbury was born April 25, 1825, at Inkbury, Westershire, England. He was the younger son of a wealthy man. But the English law of inheritance threw him on his own resources. He was with Sir Charles Mordant for twelve years. Before coming to America he was gamekeeper at Warwick castle. When the property changed hands the old servants were discharged, and he came to America in 1858. After a voyage of twelve days and three hours he, with his family, arrived at Blenham, North Oxford, Canada, where they lived for five years. Then they moved to Michigan, where they lived eighteen years.

In the early spring of 1879 Hubbel Pierce, a neighbor came to see the land in Dakota. He wrote back that wild peas grew here--a fact which Mr. Ladbury considered a sign that the land was fertile. In July of that year he came to see for himself. He returned to Michigan, and in the spring of 1881, after selling his goods at auction, left for Dakota, where he arrived April 9, 1881.

The first house was a shanty banked with sod, while the stable was made of logs. Rumors of blizzards and hard winters had come to them while in Michigan. Accordingly a large supply of fuel was prepared. The winter of 1881-1882 fulfilled all prophecies, and in order to keep warm, the family burned part of the sod with which the house was banked. Mr. Ladbury says that the use of peat in England gave him the idea.

When Mr. Ladbury came he brought horses and some machinery with him. He bought a wire binder at Valley City for \$325. This he had used only a short time when it was destroyed in a runaway. He then bought a twine binder, for which he paid \$200. The Ladbury family lived on the farm until 1906, when the farm was sold and they moved to Cooperstown.

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