

### **139,001 Book 139 Old pre America History History of our Settlers Prior to settling in Michigan**

For most of today's families this area of history is mostly unknown. Many have discouraged me from bothering to look into this but I say why not. This is going to be a general look at very old history and even ancient history. Because today's families know so little this fills a need for knowledge that is missing. People often do not have time to do research on this. So when we run across something about this old time I have at least in this history series have created a place to record it. There is still much of our recent history that needs to be written down which is far more an important task but still it is good to fill in the very old history when some of it is discovered rather than to let it be lost.

The two major problems with history is that it is often not recorded and second that people fail to learn from it.

Another salient fact about this older history is that rather than being the history of one family it is the history of thousands of families. And not just one surname but thousands of surnames.

Our oldest family the Groesbecks were very prominent even wealthy compared to many others. They were often the first to do things. They owned huge areas of our area and their deeds go back to the 1700s under the French when they bought a large area of land on Lake St Clair shoreline.

But is it little known that they came from Albany New York as did many settlers here.

Daniel Stewart my own grandfather had letters in his attic from Galloway NY near Albany NY. When I decided in 2016 to do a research trip to find what I could about our settlers I found Able Warren's (the man who our township was named after) farm within walking distance of my great grandfather's farm near York, New York. But also discovered that many of the families named in my Uncle Dan Stewart's farmers diaries, written in Michigan were also there in the York, New York area and also in the Albany, New York area. So many families have a history of settling in the Eastern US then moving to the frontier for better unused land. And the frontier kept moving westward.

Many families settled in the Detroit Michigan area after taking the Erie canal then a boat to Detroit, then north to Macomb County. Some of them came from the New York area and some almost directly from Scotland (such as the Stewarts) or Ireland (as the Ryan Families), and especially many came from Prussia (Germany) as the Grobbels and Rinkes) did.

Most of our settlers came from European stock. And where did they come from? Sure Germand, Scotland, England, Ireland, Netherlands, France etc. But where did they come from? Turns out if you look back a several hundred years earlier they came from tribes. In fact everyone's ancestors came from tribes.

There were many tribes and tribe federations often named after their location or language. Some are: Celts, Huns, Franks, Vandals, Saxons, Visigoths (Goths), Scots (from Northern Ireland) and Picts (from Scotland), Jutes, Germani, Tungri, Cimbri and Teutones. Aduatuci, "Goths" "Vandals" Gepids Rugians, Sciri Burgundians, Alans, Northmen, Norsemen or Vikings. and more.

What these ancestors had in common was: lived in tribes, sometimes they were nomads which were bands of families, who hunted and gathered their food rather than farmed; they roamed in search of resources and some learned to fight and plunder in order to survive. They lived this life from around 20,000 years before present time until they gradually became civilized and unified enough to farm and raise livestock then they were absorbed into civilized Europe about 500–1500 before present.

We do not know much because they had no written language. Knowledge was transferred by example and word of mouth including stories told over campfires. It appears that they moved a lot so did not stay in cities. They were fierce fighters against others including the Romans.

So what was daily life like if you lived in that time. Well since there was no electricity or anything modern They slept in temporary shelters or homes made of natural materials and housed thached with straw to weatherproof them against rain and wind.

All cooking was done over an open fire most of the time outside but sometimes in the center of the hut. Clay pots, hollowed out stones and various wraps were used before metal pots were finally created. Everything was made from scratch meaning whatever you could find out in the woods during the day. Much of the time it was feast or famine. Most of the day was used in hunting for food or preparing food, making tools or clothing. Everyone had jobs to do even children. Everything depended on the weather. There were no bathrooms or showers, or tubs. The woods or a designated spot was the bathroom. There was no toilet paper toilet seats. It was squat outside without privacy regardless of the weather. In the winter a clay pot could be pressed into service for inside use.

Fear was a given day and night. There was no scientific knowledge only superstition. No one knew what beasts and monsters roamed the night darkness. There was no medical knowledge, good medicine or doctors, or 9-11 or hospitals. No pain killers or antibiotics. If you broke your leg or had a bad cut or sore you died. There were no eye doctors, glasses jor trained midwives. Many women died in childbirth. Many children died before age 5. Women and children were often made to do much of the work and women for the most part had no rights.

There was also fear of attack from other savages both day and night. Thousands of good innocent people were butchered to death or made to be slaves.

Clothing was all made by hand from natural materials such as plants, hydes, fur, and wool. The beds were straw mats. And because most people slept on the floor of the hut you shared the living quarters with mice, rate and hundreds of insects, tics, mosquitoes and lice.

Despite all of this struggle and misery there moments of happiness, singing, music and dancing. Would you want to trade with them?

The groups of tribes in Europe had many names but the biggest and longest lasting were the Celts. Contrary to popular legend they were not barbarians as the Roman victors named them.

They had a relatively civilized culture. They had been around for over 1,000 years and longer if you count the pre Celtic groups. And they lasted in Ireland and Scotland up to the times of the British Empire. They influenced the culture all over Europe and especially in Scotland and Ireland. Their area included Scotland all the way to Asia minor. Although they sacked Rome in 390 they did conquer the Romans. It took the Romans many years to eventually beat them. They ended up influencing Roman culture.

They were civilized at a tribe federation level. Although the individual tribes had skirmishes they pretty much got along. This allowed them to have agriculture and raise livestock. They were some of the best metal workers in history through the Bronze and Iron ages. And they had many skilled craftsmen and traded goods around the world. This could not be accomplished if they were uncivilized barbarians. Yes the tribes practiced warfare and had to go off and defend themselves or sometimes attack others with their swords and this was as is all warfare barbaric. If you look at history one sad fact of mankind it the constant warfare.

These people lived in round houses made of stone or wood and clay filled walls with roofs thatched with straw. These houses were weather proof against the elements. They usually had a fire pit in the center but when possible cooking was done outside because of the smoke. Their clothing was finely made often with many colors. Clothing was shirts and trousers, tunics, cloaks, robes. They had outer robes and shoes. Warriors sometimes had armor and helmets others chose to go into battle naked. Women wore dresses tunics and wraps, robes with much variation sometimes sandals. Both sexes sometimes wore head pieces and jewelry particularly Torcs which were arm rings.

The tribes looked after the children so if a warier was killed or a mother died the children were taken care of. Marriage was by agreement and if they chose to do so they could have more than one

husband or wife. But the senior wife or husband had more say. Everything was by agreement with the interests of the children paramount. They also had trial marriages which lasted a year and a day called handfasting. They had strict property rules so everyone was treated fairly. Divorce was also by agreement and there property rules for this outcome.

Most of this material is paraphrased from "A Dark History: Celts The History and Legacy of One of The Oldest Cultures in Europe. Author Martin J Dougherty. This is the best book on the Celts I have seen. It also includes many fine illustrations.

Mr Dougherty goes on to state that the Celts were a hospitable people. Guests were well treated but expected to act with respect.

By the firelight there were songs and music sometimes poems or telling of tales. Mr Dougherty also has an interesting section on Celtic law. He states that Celtic law also required everyone who owned property to give hospitality to anyone who needed it. Subject to a reciprocal agreement. There were laws against crude gestures and satirizing someone or even speaking ill of the dead. Ways were even provided to undo harm caused by a damaging satire. There were laws for compensating victims. In several ways their laws were better than ours today. And all settled without having to pay a high priced attorney.

Celtic music is perhaps best preserved in the older music of Scotland and Ireland. Instruments used were animal horns, sheep ribs played like spoons, drums like the bodhran (pronounced bow-ran), a circular frame drum. Usually made from treated goatskin stretched over a round wooden frame and a crossbrace in the back, the bodhran makes delicious-sounding tones. flutes, pipes (hollow tubes or wood or bone), whistles that resemble recorders and flutes and stringed harps, There were box like stringed instruments all home made. There were also hand crafted reed instruments with and with our a bladder bag (known today as bag pipes) although they took many forms. Of course if one listens to Celtic music there are instruments that have been added in just the last few hundred years such as the fiddle, and concertina (an accordion like instrument usually with six sides and bellows).

Go to You Tube and do a search for Celtic music and you will find many examples.