

ing with no indications of hospitality. After supper we crossed the street to Benjamin Ewing's store. Father had given me a boy's ax and suggested if I wanted some pocket money, I might sell the ax to Mr. Ewing; I did, receiving 62½ cents for it. This was my first business transaction, and also the first money that I had to call my own. I felt richer then than at any other time in my life since, and Mr. Ewing was my hero. Father sold several dozen axes here and more to a Mr. Farr, at Evansburg, where we took dinner the next day, arriving at Meadville late in the evening and putting up at the Barton House. One of Mr. Barton's sons—Link Barton—afterwards learned edge tool making with father. We spent the evening at Mr. McFarland's store, where the remainder of the axes were disposed of, father receiving in payment part money and the balance in groceries. This store was so vividly pictured in my memory that when entering it sixty years later, everything seemed as familiar as though I had been there every day during that time. On this trip father bought a set of green windsor chairs, that were very aristocratic for the times; they are still doing service.

Another impressive recollection is of the infant school taught by Miss Betsey Cowles, in the old school house that stood on the ground where Rankin's drug store now stands. The same building is occupied by R. K. Hulse as a dwelling house. Our first lesson was in astronomy and the solar system was marked out on the floor with chalk. Jediah Burnham represented the sun; my sister Sarah, the earth; Essington Gibson, a comet; I represented Mercury; I do not recollect who represented the moon and other planets. As we followed the lines marked for each one, it conveyed to our minds a good idea of the solar system. For a fuller and more interesting description see "Miss Gilbert's Career," by Dr. Holland. Miss Cowles also taught us the multiplication table by singing it to the tune of Yankee Doodle. Miss Maria Webber was our next teacher, whom we all loved and obeyed; she was followed by a Mr. Brown, who was a tyrant, disliked and disobeyed when possible without fear of punishment, which was not often. Then came Mr. Morse another tyrant; but not long after this a new school house was built on top of the hill, as you go to Hamilton Bros' mill from the west. Uncle Rufus Parker was my first teacher in the new house. I was named for him and received a drab colored beaver hat for that honor. Next came Dwight King, now Rev. Dwight King; Benjamin Allen Jr., and others. My opportunities for acquiring an education were limited and those I did have were not all well improved. My labor was necessary to aid in supporting my mother and sisters. Like all the Parkers, I excelled in arithmetic and geography; could repeat pages of history after reading it twice, but alas, my memory has fled. I was "the best boy in school" under some teachers and a very bad boy under others. The house in which I now reside—1897—was built in 1831-32 and my uncle Elon superintended the work. I was five years old at the time and had made great calculations on seeing it raised; but mother being afraid I might get hurt sent me to school that day as usual. I have never been more disappointed in my life than when I returned from school and saw the building standing to its full height before me; to say I was out of patience would be putting it mildly. Father had intended to finish the house from top to bottom before moving into it, but was prevented by a fire in the dry house. His lumber, as well as considerable of the lumber designed for the C. and P. church was consumed.

New lumber had to be sawed and seasoned. It was late in December when we