CROGHAN TOWNSHIP

Croghan, the 12th township established in Lewis County, was formed from Watson and Diana on April 5, 1841. This township was named in honor of George Croghan, a native of Ohio who played a significant role in the battle of Tippecanoe and the sieges of Fort Meigs and Fort Stephenson during the War of 1812.

European families mainly from France, Germany and Switzerland comprised a great deal of the populace in 1848-49. Various religious denominations were represented, residing on approximately 17,301 acres. Livestock and crops were the main source of livelihood for these settlers.

Belfort, one of the earliest settlements, was populated after P. Somerville Stewart, an agent of LeRay's, moved there from Carthage, NY in 1830. Stewart built a sawmill on Beaver River, a store, and later a gristmill, all of which attracted settlers. A post office was established and around 1860 William H. Pier built a large tannery. Belfort had a small Catholic Church, St. Vincent de Paul, believed to be the oldest church this side of the Mohawk Valley.

St. Stephens, a Catholic church, was erected in 1847 with sermons preached on alternate Sundays in French and German. Professions and businesses such as blacksmithing, boot and shoemaking, butchers, carpenters, cheese factories, dressmaking, drug stores, furniture making, undertaking and various others helped to industrialize and progress the area.

Formerly known as Rohr's Mills, Beaver Falls, also located on Beaver River, was the site of the ancient Castorville. W.C. Lefever owned a tannery, which in 1860 produced 16,000 sides of sole leather. A gang sawmill was built on the New Bremen side and an Evangelical church was established on December 1, 1854. Beaver Falls soon developed into a manufacturing hamlet with an extensive tannery, lumber mills and a pulp mill. The "Prussian Settlement" had a post office named "Naumberg" and two small chapels.

George Croghan Medal