

of the fruit of the land." The Committee was asked in part - to consider, in selecting a location, as a "first consideration a healthy place with good water, . . . a rich and fertile soil well-watered, interspersed with wood and prairie if practicable . . . consider the country around - is there a prospect of its being speedily settled? . . . is it where produce can be got to market? . . . let it be near some navigable water, not compel one hundred fifty souls to make a journey of one hundred and fifty miles over intolerable roads and get homesick before they see the place."

After leaving Vermont the Committee made their way to Michigan by stage and lake boat, landing at Detroit. From there they again took the stage--an open wagon--with the United States Land Office at Kalamazoo as their destination. The roads were terrible and progress very slow.

Investigation of the country round Kalamazoo proved unsuccessful so, engaging a guide, they made a further exploring tour into the country round Grand Rapids, and what is now called Barry County. However, no location could be found filling the specifications--"a tract of government land of the quality and quantity needed, in a solid body unbroken by swamps or marshes and free from "cat holes". After a discouraged return to Battle Creek, Mr. Church met Col. Barnes of Gull Prairie who had helped survey Eaton County. He said they might find in "town 3 North of range 6 West", the amount of land needed, and an investigation at the Land Office indicated a virgin tract still held by the government with the exception of one parcel. No other site proving to be open, the entire Committee explored the township and were satisfied it was a favorable location, and on May 27, 1836 the amount of land desired was purchased from the government and upon Section 21, the village of Vermontville was platted--"one mile and 40 rods long East and West by 1/2 mile North and South" divided into 36 lots, farm lots being located around the village in every direction.

This plan of settlement made near-neighbors of the Colonists, and from the beginning they enjoyed the benefits of school, church and social life in the new town named for their native state.

While in many ways this little group of pioneers was self-sustaining as to the various trades, the nearest postoffice, trading point, grist mill, etc. was Bellevue, fourteen miles away, and much purchasing was done at Marshall, twenty-eight miles distant. The nearest saw mill was at Kalamo.

The Marshall and Ionia road passed through Vermontville and became the first weekly mail route in Western Eaton County. In 1840 a postoffice was established in the village and Dr. Dewey Robinson appointed postmaster.

In connection with the platting of the village, a Public Square at the center was set aside in perpetuity by the trustees who accomplished this by deeding one-thirtysecond of this land to each Colonist.