

ABRAH continued 3

Abram always kept diaries through the years which portray the growth of the community, the building of the house and other activities of interest to the family and community, as well as 'sayings' and 'poems'. These diaries are still kept by the Lee descendants, and Marjorie recalled one item which brings back memories of her great-grandfather John. It was entitled "Saving for a Home". It was about a couple who saved for a home, worked hard and after her death he married again, as did John. The poem began by: 'We won't use butter anymore, we'll spread our bread with lard', followed by other means of saving, until:

'Well, Belinda, you did nobly, dear,
You lived a frugal life,
And now you lie beneath a stone
Marked "Sacred to my Wife",
And while your weary body rests
Beneath the cold grey stone,
My second wife and I reside
In the paid-for home.'

The original barn was burned down, and the present one built when the front part of the house was



built -- in the early 1870's. There was a horse stall in the rear for company horses, and the remainder of the lower part was used for storage of buggies and democrats in summer. In winter these were put upstairs and the sleighs, cutters and buffalo robes brought down for the winter.

Abram Lee had the first commercial grapery on the mountain. The vines had originally been brought from Switzerland, and were likely Concord. The grapes were sold to E. D. Smith's of Winona for jam and jelly. There was no winery then.

Abram was also known for his fine herd of Jersey cattle, the original stock having been purchased from Bull's of Brampton, but unfortunately many of them were found to be infected with tuberculosis during the provincial T. B. testing, and had to be destroyed. Abram had the first Babcock butter tester in the district. This was for his own herd. He was instrumental in starting the Vinemount Creamery -- which has long since passed from existence; the first insurance company in the area; and he gathered together interested folk to build the first church in the community. He grew and