

**EARLY DAYS IN LANSING**  
**INTERESTING LETTER FROM AN EARLY SETTLE HERE**  
**HOW INDIANS MADE A CANOE**  
**Lansing Journal 11/16/1905**

They Preferred Whiskey to Cash – L.S. Meech resided in Lansing In 1843

L.S. Meech, who resides near Mason, and is 85 years of age, writes a most interesting letter to the Journal, regarding incidents in his pioneer life in Lansing. The letter follows:

“I believe I am the only person now living, who was at the head of a family in Lansing when I settled there in 1843, on section 7. I went to Eaton Rapids for my winter supplies and borrowed a canoe with which to make the trip. The dug out was 44\* feet long, three feet wide and made of a black walnut log. In it., I brought down a thousand brick, two barrels of flour and almost 200 pounds of other supplies, aside from two helpers.# The canoe was made by four Indians, whose names were Boskazick, Wopsigon, Kaka Nausway and Negeck. They were offered either \$20 in cash or 20 gallons of whiskey for making it, and decided to take the whiskey. They drank a gallon each day, and finished the canoe the same day they received their last gallon of whiskey. Then the owner told them to put the canoe in the river and they said “too much bish (water).” The owner replied: “You said it was nishi shin (very good) whiskey. They declared however, that he had put a gallon on water in the barrel every time he took out a gallon whiskey for them, and it would not burn when they drank it. They were told to go away, the settler declaring he would put the dugout in the river himself, to which they replied that if he did, the moon would shine through it, and he was obliged finally to give them 10 more gallons of whiskey out of another barrel.

“In 1845 I was a member of the township board and election was held for two days. The first day it was held at the home of Justus Gilkey, which was north of the present city, and the second day the board met at the junction of the two rivers and received the ballots on a white wood stump. We received 19 votes the first day and one on eth second. In those days Lansing and Delhi were one township.”

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\* I have only found one other reference, in Snohomish County, Washington to a 44 foot canoe that could carry 4700 pounds of goods.

# A brick weighs between 9-12 pounds, or what man can lift easily with one hand. Quite a load, almost double the capacity of the above mentioned canoe.