

*The Bark Covered House* by William Nowlin  
Excerpt Four -- Loneliness

“After we came to Michigan mother’s health ... improved. She soon began to like her new home and became more cheerful and happy. I told her we had...a beautiful place; far better than the rocks and hills we left, and I often **renewed** my promise that if she and I lived and I grew to be a man, we would go back, visit her friends and see again the land of her (birth).

To cheer her still more we received a letter from Mr. G. Purdy of (New) York State, telling us that he was coming to Michigan in the fall, with his wife (mother’s beloved sister, Abbie)....

Asa Blare...bought forty acres of government land joining us on the east, built him a house, went to Ohio, married and brought his wife back with him.

Now we had neighbors on the east of us, and Mr. Henry Travis...came, bought land joining Mr. Pardee on the west, built and settled with a large family. About the same time, many families from the East come and settled along the creek, for miles west of us.

Now we were on the **border of civilization.**”

**Vocabulary:** renewed = to say something again; border = a line separating one area from another; civilization = an place where educated people live comfortable lives and obey a system of laws.

Questions to think about and answer:

1. When did mother’s health begin to improve?
2. Where did her son, William, promise he would take his mother some day?
3. What did the letter from Mr. Purdy say?
4. Who was Mr. Purdy married to?
5. How did Mr. Purdy’s letter make mother feel?
6. Where did Asa Blare find a wife?
7. How many acres of land did Asa Blare buy?
8. Where did many families from the East settle?
9. What does William mean when he writes “Now we were on the border of civilization?”
10. Would you like living in Michigan if you had no neighbors for miles around?