

Darwin Rush Barker

By Douglas H. Shepard, 2013

Darwin R. Barker was born to Leverett and Desire (Barker) Barker on 9 September 1820 at the old home behind today's 21 East Main Street. He grew up in the brick home built by his father in May 1821, now the Darwin R. Barker Historical Museum. He attended the Fredonia Academy for an unusual 26 terms beginning when he was 9 years old in 1830 and running through 1839.

He later moved to Versailles, NY, where he worked for Eber M. Pettit. On 24 June 1846 he married Pettit's daughter (she was then living in the Pettit's old home area of Pompey NY) Helen E. Pettit. In February 1862 he bought land on the west side of Central Avenue (then called the Dunkirk Plank Rd.) and built a house there during the Summer of 1863. His plan was to have his daughter Dora attend the Fredonia Academy. The family was still living there when he died on 22 July 1885. The modern number of the house was 278 Central Avenue. It was demolished by 1960.