

Grove L. **Heaton** (1820 – 1890) and his accounts of Early Hanover  
By Douglas H. Shepard, 2014

In the last decade of his life, Grove L. **Heaton** wrote at least twenty stories about the pioneer days in early Hanover. Those stories are transcribed herein as FC 1 through FC 15, and as SCN1 through SCN5. Also included as FC16 is **Heaton's** letter explaining his involvement in the Underground Railroad. The transcriptions are preceded by background information regarding **Heaton**, his family, and the various publications which featured his writings. In the transcriptions, most of **Heaton's** spelling, punctuation, and syntax have been preserved. Where changes were required for clarity, they are noted by brackets. In many cases, paragraph separation has been added for readability.

### Background Information

Grove L. **Heaton** was born in 1820 in Camillus NY to Luther and Roxy (**Seaver**) **Heaton**. The family moved to Hanover in the first week of June 1824, where they had been preceded by Luther's brothers Nehemiah and Cyrus. Luther **Heaton** trained as a carriage maker, kept a general store for a time, went into the lake shipping industry, and then returned to carriage making. The family seems to have resided in Buffalo while he was active in the lake shipping business; the Buffalo City Directory for 1832 lists Luther as a wagon maker residing on Franklin Street. Luther's wife died in April 1832, probably of cholera, and soon after he lost an infant son and an eight-year old boy. Luther took what was left of his family back to Silver Creek, and on 16 December 1832 he married Roxana **Badger** of Buffalo.

Hence, Grove **Heaton** spent much of his childhood in the Silver Creek and Hanover area. When he was eighteen, he clerked in Oliver **Lee's** store, then being managed by William **VanDuzer**. In the following year, Grove's father Luther inherited some property in Eden Valley NY. In the summer of 1840, Luther moved there, where he died on 15 March 1842. Years later, when Grove **Heaton** was running for Chautauqua County Clerk, a brief biographical sketch in the *Silver Creek Local* of 22 September 1882 stated that Grove had "emigrated to the vicinity of Cleveland, Ohio late in 1843." He was married at some time in the late 1840s, and the 1850 census shows him living in Detroit with his wife, Sophia, 27, and their daughter, Frances, 2.

Grove was working in the shipping industry at that time of his life, and in an 1886 letter to the *Fredonia Censor*, he described some of his involvement with the Underground Railroad. The *Censor* had published Eber M. **Pettit's Sketches in the History of the Underground Railroad** in 1879. Shortly after **Pettit** died in 1885, the *Censor* advertised that some copies of the *Sketches* were still available. This led F. A. **Redington** to write to the *Censor* about his own brief experiences with the Underground Railroad, and **Redington's** letter in turn led Grove **Heaton** to write about his own experiences. (See transcription FC16 herein.) **Heaton's** letter appeared in the *Censor* of 17 March 1886. He explained that his involvement in transporting African American refugees to Canada began "soon after we engaged in our position as clerk of one of Capt. **Ward's** steamers in the spring of 1852." **Heaton** continued, "During the summers of 1852 and 1853, there was hardly a week that we did not have a greater or less number of refugees escaping from slavery to their land of freedom.... On one occasion in the summer of 1854, we had no less than thirty individuals escaping from bondage."

Grove **Heaton** remained with Capt. E. B. **Ward** until the fall of 1858, when he relocated to Cleveland and became a freight agent for railroad and shipping lines. After President **Lincoln** sent out an appeal for more enlistments in August 1862, **Heaton** resigned his position with the railroad. He enlisted on 10 October 1862 as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant and was promoted several times. After seeing some heavy fighting, he was posted to New Orleans. Unfortunately, while he was on duty there his horse fell on him, severely crippling him. At the same time he contracted malaria, resulting in a lingering illness from which he suffered badly until his death. He was discharged in 1866 and was employed for a time in selling off government land in Mississippi. In 1870 he and his family were in Burlington NJ, where he clerked in an oil store. By 1880 the family was back in western New York.

It was then, apparently, that he began writing his stories. He referred to them as "chapters," concise sketches of the earliest settlers in Hanover and some memorable incidents of those early days. For some reason the sketches appeared first in the *Censor* rather than in a Silver Creek newspaper. (See transcriptions FC1 through FC15 herein.) They began with the issue of 23 January 1884 and continued sporadically until the fifteenth and final sketch on 24 September 1884. It is possible that the *Censor's* endorsement of **Heaton's** candidacy in 1882 caused **Heaton** to feel some obligation to Willard **McKinstry**, the *Censor's* editor and publisher. On the other hand, the series appeared with no fanfare, and with

no announcement to its readers that an important series was about to begin. Indeed, there was not even any mention of the author's name.

Fortunately, there were clues to the author's name. The earliest ascription was a passing reference in the *Censor* of 19 March 1884 to "the Hanover history on our first page. The writer, Maj. **Heaton**. . . ." A month later, the *Silver Creek Local* of 18 April 1884 was more explicit, saying, "The *Fredonia Censor* is publishing a very interesting history of the early days of Hanover. It comes from the pen of our esteemed fellow townsman, Grove L. **Heaton**."

The series was later reprinted in the *North Chautauqua News* (formerly the *Silver Creek Local*), beginning with the issue of 27 February 1885. The head note to the first article in the *News* gave its source as "G. L. **Heaton** in the *Fredonia Censor*." However, either **Heaton** or the editors had changed the sequence of chapters. For example, the first article in the *News* had actually been the second in the *Censor*. The original fifteen *Censor* chapters were also subdivided, so that the material appeared in 35 individual articles in the *News*, the last one on 11 December 1885.

It is not entirely clear whether **Heaton** wrote any more about Hanover history. He continued to suffer from his service-related injuries and the attacks of malaria to such an extent that the *Buffalo Courier* of 3 May 1889 reported that he had attempted to commit suicide. "Under the influence of pain he has been rendered temporarily insane at times," said the article. His release from pain came with his death on 11 September 1890.

Much later, **Heaton's** stories appeared again. (See transcriptions SCN1 through SCN3 herein.) The *Silver Creek News* of 8 June 1916 noted that the Silver Creek Historical Society was preparing a series of articles to appear in future issues. The exact wording is significant. The articles were "from material now available, dealing with the early history of Hanover, and adjacent territory." In other words, they were to be from originals previously unknown or not available for publication. Ultimately, the new series contained only three new articles, the first in the issue of 15 June 1916, the second in the 22 June 1916 issue, and the third in that of 6 July 1916.

The opening paragraph of the 15 June 1916 article reads in part, "Among the manuscripts of a [*sic*] unpublished history of Silver Creek written by the late Major Grove L. **Heaton**, father of Mrs. Chas. N. **Howes**, is found the following which was written between 1880 and 1885, and is here printed as written." It suggests that it was Mrs. **Howes** who made the work available, perhaps only after some friendly persuasion. What is particularly interesting about this 15 June 1916 article is that it describes some of the earliest forms of entertainment available to Hanover's pioneers, the same incidents that appeared in **Heaton's** *Censor* chapter of 23 April 1884, but in a form that seems to be an earlier draft.

Other aspects of the 1916 articles further indicate that they may have been earlier drafts of **Heaton's** *Censor* series. For example, one of the notable aspects of **Heaton's** earlier writings was his formal style, always referring to himself with the editorial "we," and when writing about his father, always referring to him distantly as "Mr. **Heaton**." However, that was not the case in the 1916 series. The *Censor* version had said, "The first entertainment of a dramatic nature came off early in the month of November, 1827. There came to the tavern one day about noon (they had remained over at Fredonia the night before and given an exhibition there) a gentleman, his wife and daughter." The 15 June 1916 version said, "When evening came, the writer, in charge of his father, went and had the first view of a dramatic entertainment of his life and the impressions were so great that he will remember all the principal points during his life."

The story of 22 June 1916 is an earlier and shorter version of the *Censor's* of 9 April 1884. However, the 1916 article included two paragraphs explaining how the Holland Land Company's system of granting land contracts worked, and how the class of men called "land sharks" operated.

The story of 6 July 1916 is a version of another part of the *Censor's* of 23 April 1884. The 1884 version describes how the circus came to town. Their main act involved an apparently drunken man who insisted that he could ride the circus horse. The drunkard fought with the clown and the ringmaster, then finally getting his way, he sped around the circle, discarding his rags and appearing in splendid acrobat's regalia. In the 1884 story, **Heaton** described some sailors trying to help the clown and ringmaster and then being abashed when they realized how they had been fooled. In the 1916 version, it is a drunken sailor who fights with the clown and ringmaster, while it is two young men from Smiths Mills who attempt to help and end up abashed.

Although the editors of the *News* ended their third article in 1916 with a plea for more articles about Hanover's history, no **Heaton** or **Heaton**-related material appeared again until 1924. (See transcriptions SCN4 through SCN5 herein.) However, one of the members of the Silver Creek Historical Society in 1916 had been Forestville resident Roscoe B.

**Martin.** He apparently continued searching for historical material after the three **Heaton** pieces appeared that year. By 1924 he had a regular “retrospective” column in the *News*

That year, the issue of 15 May announced, “Readers interested in the early history of Hanover, Silver Creek and immediate surrounding country, will be glad to know that *THE NEWS* reprints this week the first of a series of articles that appeared under this heading [*Hanover History*] in the *North Chautauqua News* of Silver Creek, Feb. 27, 1885, George M. **Bailey**, Editor and Publisher. These articles were written by Major G. L. **Heaton** of Silver Creek, one of our best known early citizens, and are entirely original, the material all having been drawn from original sources and written when many of the first settlers were living and the matters fresh in their memory. Silver Creek and Hanover will always be under heavy obligation to Major **Heaton** for having collected, written and published this historical material. The articles originally appeared weekly for a considerable time and cover many phases of the early history. Mr. Roscoe B. **Martin**, who has supplied them to us, has some of Major Heaton’s manuscripts which were not included in the series. A few of these appeared some years ago in the *News* and others will appear from time to time in connection with this series.”

What **Martin** supplied were copies from the *North Chautauqua News* of 1885 of the 35 articles derived from the 15 *Censor* stories of 1884. The 1924 reprints appeared weekly from 15 May of that year through 8 January 1925. At the end of the reprinted 35 articles, **Martin** added two more. In the issue of 5 February 1925, he presented an account of the burning of the Steamship George Washington from an incomplete manuscript written by **Heaton** that had not been included in the original *Censor* series. This was followed on 12 February 1925 with an account of the hanging of the **Thayer** brothers from another unpublished manuscript by **Heaton**.

**Martin** assigned numbers to the **Heaton** articles. Numbers 1 through 35 had been in the *North Chautauqua News* (and previously in the *Censor*) and therefore appear only once in the following transcriptions. Numbers 36, 37 and 38 had been in the *Silver Creek News* of 1916 and therefore appear only once in the following transcriptions. Numbers 39 and 40 were printed for the first time in 1924 and 1925, and are transcribed in the following. Although **Martin** continued gathering and publishing material related to local history, and although he continued his numbering scheme, the material after Martin’s Number 40 came from sources other than **Heaton**.

### The Heaton Stories

FC1

*The Fredonia Censor* 23 January 1884, Reminiscences of Early Life in Hanover, By An Old Resident Of Silver Creek.

In the spring of 1827 a Mr. George **Carr**, an enterprising young man who had been engage[d] for some time in selling clock[s] for a clock company at Bristol, Conn., made his way as far west as Silver Creek. On his first arrival here he had no intention of remaining more than a few days. On his starting out from Bristol he intended to proceed to Cleveland, O., and make that place his headquarters for a time, but he met with greater success than he anticipated in the sale of his goods in this village (It could hardly be called a village at that time) and vicinity.

The longer he stayed and the better he became acquainted with the community the greater was his sale of clocks. Previous to the introduction of clocks in this vicinity it was but seldom that a time-piece of any description was found in a family. A watch even of the most common kind was an article that none but those who were regarded as being rich or well to do in the world felt able to indulge in. Nearly every housewife had what she termed a noon-mark. This was made from the shadow cast from a door-post or window frame. At 12 o’clock noon a mark had been made upon the floor or wall and thereafter whenever the shadow of the object started from reached that mark it was regarded as being noon or midday.

Mr. **Carr’s** clocks, although of the old style or pattern of wood clocks, an article now almost entirely obsolete, soon gained the reputation of being excellent time-keepers. For the benefit of those who were in moderate circumstances only, Mr. **Carr** sold these clocks at the moderate price of sixteen dollars and when the person was not known to be wholly responsible, by obtaining the signature of a party of whose ability to pay there was not a doubt, Mr. **Carr** gave from three to six months time, and in some instances, when seven per cent. [*sic*] interest was added, one year’s time. The sale of clocks was so great and he was so well pleased with the community, he decided to make this place his home for a while.

Early the next year (1828) Mr. **Carr** concluded to try the sale of clocks in Canada, and he arranged to join with him in this venture a young man by the name of **Gregory**, who resided with his father near Hanover Center. They started about the first of May, each fitted out with, for that period, a very comfortable one horse establishment. They intended to remain away several months and perhaps a year, but they found great difficulty in getting their goods from Connecticut to them in Canada. They disposed of their stock and returned here about the middle of August.

They brought back with them three more horses than they took away. In settling up and dividing the profits of the expedition they had some trouble which caused **Gregory** to have some very bitter feelings towards **Carr**, but in the settlement it was arranged that **Carr** should retain the three extra horses they had received in payment for clocks. Two or three days after the settlement, **Gregory** slipped away to Buffalo entirely unknown to **Carr**. A day or two following this, on an afternoon two or three hours before nightfall, a couple of strangers rode on horseback into town and on dismounting at the tavern kept by Jas. **Harris**, they gave a few directions regarding the immediate care of their animals and without entering the house or making a word of inquiry, they proceeded directly to the stable of **Carr**, which they found closed, but it required but a few minutes for them to force it open. They took possession of the three horses in the name of the government of the United States as being illegally smuggled from the British Provinces into the United States.

They brought them to the inn where they had left their own animals a short time before. They called for a place where the horses could be securely locked up, but were informed by the host that he had no place but the public stable connected with the house, which was situated directly across the street from the house, in plain view, so that it would be difficult for a person to enter or leave it in the daytime without being observed. They finally consented that the three horses should be put into the stable providing it should be securely locked and the key remain in their possession, and in no case should any traveler's or other horses be admitted or watered or fed or any one enter the stable except in their presence or company.

The seizure created some little excitement. Every man in the village was a friend of **Carr**, and all were willing to render him any aid in their power, but all knew very well that it would be the high [*sic*] of folly to make any forcible demonstration. **Carr** walked leisurely about the hotel, and showed no appearance of excitement or anxiety. As there was no appearance of any great excitement or indications that any unusual event had occurred, the customhouse officers, after examining the stable and finding all safe and secure, took a social drink with the landlord and with the key in their possession at rather a late hour retired for the night, observing that they wished to get an early start for Buffalo next morning.

But they were destined to a sad disappointment. On repairing to the stable the next morning, they found it securely locked and every way as they left it the night before, but the three horses they had seized were missing. Their anger and rage can better be imagined than described. They raved like mad men. The principal speaker claimed to be a regularly appointed deputy collector and the other his assistant. The leader alleged that unless the horses were returned to them immediately he would have nearly every man in the village in state prison in thirty days. As soon as they became convinced that the horses had been taken out of town, they made an examination of every house to ascertain who were missing, but to their great surprise and disappointment, every man was either at home or satisfactorily accounted for. They not only started out themselves, but sent out scouts on every road leading out of town. None of them brought any intelligence of the missing animals.

After spending a couple of days in fruitless search, they started on their return to Buffalo, but thinking they might take some of the villagers by surprise and catch them napping and thereby gain some information, after five or six hours they very suddenly appeared again but they had no better success than previously. These officials visited Silver Creek several times during the following two months, but never gained any intelligence as to who spirited away the horses or where they were taken to. It also became quite a mystery to the people of the village. As yet none other than those who took part in the affair (and there were but three of them) had any idea whatever of who had taken them away or where they were taken to. It ultimately proved that not even **Carr** had any correct information about the matter.

Some ten years afterwards the whole mystery leaked out and became public. There were three young men who were personal friends of **Carr**, who met within an hour after the seizure of the horses, and they resolved to rescue them if possible. They resolved not to let any person whatever, not even **Carr**, know anything of their intentions or doings, and they immediately set themselves at work upon the job. They first obtained a dozen small bags about the size of a shot-bag, in each of which they put a quart or so of sawdust. At that period there were not as many skeleton keys or adepts

in picking locks as at present, but these men understood perfectly the arrangements of the stable that contained the smuggled horses. On the back end of the building there were double doors hooked on the inside to a perpendicular stanchion. Above these doors was an open window. It required but a short time for the parties to obtain a ladder, by the aid of which one of them ascended to the window, came down and opened the back doors, and then it required but a few moments to place the feet of each horse in the little bags which were made secure above the ankle joint. This was done to prevent the horses from making any noise by the clatter of their feet as they were led away.

Two of the party quietly led the horses a hundred rods or so until they crossed the Walnut creek bridge on the Fredonia road. There they waited until the third one re-locked the doors, ascended to the loft, and went down the ladder, which he took to the place where they found it. Thus he left the stable in the same condition he found it, with the exception of there being three horses less in it. After depositing the ladder the third one joined his companions, who were waiting for him a short distance beyond the bridge. Then each one mounted a horse, and rode up the Fredonia road until they came to the Deacon **Andrus** place. Then they took a road that led them westward by Hezekiah **Fink's** place into the north woods of Sheridan. When about two miles from this village they came to a thick growth of young hemlocks which were so dense that it was almost impossible to get the animals inside of the thicket, but after they had them there securely tied with good strong ropes they had secured for the purpose, they were as completely hid from view of any person coming within fifty feet of them as though they were boxed up.

It was now becoming quite light and they realized the importance of their getting back to the village before their absence was known. Also that it was not advisable for them to be seen in that direction so early in the morning. They were able to make their way unobserved through the woods and crossed the creek nearly half a mile below the bridge and each got to his home by the back way. One of them had not been in his room more than ten minutes when the custom house officer called on his circuit of inquiry as to his whereabouts but as he had in all appearances just risen from his bed and was then making his toilet, he had no trouble in convincing the employe [*sic*] of the revenue department that he had been sleeping soundly all night and had not even heard that the horses were missing.

These young men felt that they had done their friend **Carr** a great favor in rescuing his property from a seizure when he had committed no moral wrong. Notwithstanding they felt that they had the horses in a secure place, the [*sic*] knew very well that they must have both food and water conveyed to them and all this must be done cautiously, for the revenue officers were still here and they had also succeeded in engaging two or three spies. The amusing part of the matter was, they applied to and engaged one of the three young men who spirited the animals away to act as a spy or detective.

About half a mile from where these horses were hid was a large barn well filled with good hay harvested a few months previous belonging to the late Jonathan **Keith**. This barn was situated near the center of a large meadow which was almost entirely surrounded by a dense forest. These men conceived the idea of feeding their horses from Mr. **Keith's** hay and to do it securely they usually two of them went by different routes and met at the barn just before nightfall. There each would fill a large bag or sack with hay without making a litter to be followed by. They had also a bucket, which they kept hid when not used, to water the horses. They managed in this way for some two weeks, when they took Mr. **Carr** into their secret. Shortly after this a friend of **Carr's** came here from Mayville. He reached here about 10 o'clock at night and before midnight he with an assistant had the three horses well on their way toward Warren, Pa., where they were disposed of to good advantage. It [*sic*] not probable that the custom house officers ever knew what became of their stolen horses.

FC2

*The Fredonia Censor* 6 February 1884, Early Hanover History.

The first settlement of the part of the town of Hanover where the village of Silver Creek now stands, was made by David **Dickinson**, Abel **Cleveland** and John E. **Howard**, who came here with their families from Berkshire Co., Massachusetts, about the year 1802 or 1803. **Dickinson** and **Cleveland** purchased some 300 acres of the Holland Land Company, and **Howard** articed from the same company about 320 acres lying southwest of the land purchased by **Dickinson** and **Cleveland**. The latter tract was on the north-east side of Silver Creek, bounded on the northeast by Lake Erie. All three of these parties at once commenced to erect log houses for their families. **Howard's** log shanty was erected on the south

bank of the creek near where Howard street now crosses the creek. **Dickinson** and **Cleveland** erected theirs on the north side of the creek a little further down and near where the present Newberry street now runs.

As soon as their families could be made comfortable, the three men engaged in cutting off the timber and clearing up a place for planting corn and other vegetables for their subsistence. At that period there was no mill within many miles of them. Both **Dickinson** and **Cleveland** had worked a little at the milling business in Massachusetts before they left there. They very soon conceived the idea of erecting mills both for the purpose of cutting out timber and converting Indian corn into meal. They knew very well that with the material and tools they had, their construction must be of the most crude nature. They first erected a saw mill, with which they managed to cut out lumber enough to construct the other portion of their mill.

Their first process of converting corn into meal was done by pounding in place of grinding. This was done by making a mortar from a large maple tree or log sawed off some four or five feet long. A cavity was made in one end by boring, burning and cutting. This mortar when completed was placed on end and from a peck to a half bushel of shelled corn was put in to it at a time and it was so arranged that when their water wheel was started the pestle worked up and down with force enough to mash the corn and convert it into meal.

However, previous to their getting this machine in operation, Mr. Howard and his eldest boy, Jay, then a lad of 13 years of age, had built a skiff or light row boat from some basswood boards cut out in **Dickinson and Cleveland's** saw mill and with **Dickinson** started with some ten bushels of corn they purchased at Batavia while on their way to their new home, for mill [*sic*] at Chippewa, a small place about 20 miles down the Niagara River. At that time this mill at Chippewa, if not the nearest was the most accessible for they could get to that by water, but this trip to mill came near being disastrous to the young colony.

At the time they left home they expected [to] be able to make the trip in five or six days, but on account of wind storms they encountered, both on their way down and returning, they were greatly delayed. On the evening of the first day they reached the mouth of Eighteen Mile Creek, where they determined to go into camp for the night. They had scarcely got their camp fire well started and their boat securely taken care of, when a terrific thunder storm accompanied by a severe gale of wind came up. They were compelled to remain there thirty six hours, before they could proceed; they finally reached Chippewa, and then at the end of twenty-four hours had their ten bushels of corn ground into meal, and were ready to start on their way back. They again encountered a rain storm at Buffalo and came near losing their meal by getting it wet. They were again compelled to remain over thirty-six hours, at Buffalo, but improved the time by making some purchases of necessary supplies at a small log store or Indian traders that then stood near the site of the present Mansion House.

The prices that goods sold for at that time would astonish the merchants of to day [*sic*]. Ordinary brown sugar was regarded cheap at twenty-five to thirty cents a pound. A very common grade of Bohea Tea could be had at 1.50 per pound. Common factory shirting was then termed sold at 35 cts to 40 cts while calicoes brought from 40 cts to 50 cts a yard.

It was the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> of September they left Buffalo hoping they would have good weather and be able to reach home before daylight the next day. They had not proceeded but a few miles before the wind commenced blowing from the South West and increased to that extent that when a short distance above Hamburg, they deemed it for their safety to make for the shore. By keeping a good look out they discover[ed] a place where they thought it would be safe to attempt a landing. This was accomplished and after carrying their meal and other stores to a safe dry spot on shore they drew their boat up and prepared to wait until the wind decreased so that it would be safe for them to proceed. The wind died away with the sun, but the sea did not run down so that it [*sic*] advisable to start until near daylight next morning.

Notwithstanding they had considerable head [w]ind, they were able to continue on their journey all the next day, and reached the mouth of Silver Creek soon after sunrise on the twelfth day after leaving home. **Cleveland** who had remained at home to look after the welfare of the women and children, was glad enough to welcome them back. He had become seriously excited over their long absence, and had fears that they and their cargo had been swamped and would

never be heard of again. Soon after **Dickinson & Cleveland** had their mortar in operation, they dug from what is now known as Oak Hill a couple of boulders which they succeeded in working into a mill stone, that answered a very good purpose for grinding corn.

As soon as it became a settled fact that there was to be war between the United States and Great Britain, **Dickinson and Cleveland** sold their property and returned to Massachusetts. They did not care to remain so near the lines. **Howard** improved all of his spare time in cutting down the large hemlock trees which were found of immense size all over the ground where the village now stands, and cutting them into logs which he hauled to **Dickinson and Cleveland's** mill and had them sawed into two inch planks. With these he constructed the first frame house built in the town of Hanover.

This building would hardly be termed a frame house at this period. It was erected on the ground where the Eureka Smut works now stand. The site offered an opportunity of a basement or lower story which could be entered from the East side of the building. The plank[s] were set perpendicular and pinned with one and a fourth inch wooden pins at the bottom to hewn sills and at the top to plates that supported the rafters. The roof was composed of staves riven from hemlock and ash trees. They were held to their places by long poles or saplings running longitudinal with the building. These were also joined to the rafters. The floors were made of rough boards which were held down by wooden pins. There were probably not 20 lbs. of nails used in the construction of the entire building. In the spring of 1805 Mr. **Howard** opened this house as an inn or house of entertainment for the accommodation of travelers, and continued it as such until the summer of 1828, when the property passed into the hands of the late **Oliver Lee**. For many years previous and after the War of 1812 with Great Britain, **Howard's** Tavern was one of the most popular stopping places for travelers and emigrants between Buffalo and Erie, Pa.

Soon after the close of the war there was a large emigration from the New England states to northern Ohio, then known as New Connecticut, and later as the Western Reserve. At the commencement of the colony here there was but little more than a bridle path from Buffalo west. In fact loaded teams were compelled to make much of the distance along the edge of the lake, sometimes in the water until it nearly came into their wagon boxes, and during heavy storms in the spring and fall they were compelled to lay over until the storms abated. About the year 1812 the Holland Land Company had caused a road to be surveyed from a point in the town of Hamburg about eight miles west of Buffalo through to the Pennsylvania state line.

The eight miles from Hamburg [*sic*] into Buffalo had to be made along the beach of the lake through the sand and it was regarded as a good days work for a heavy loaded team to make the distance to the beach, as it was termed. The country for some distance back from the Lake was low and swampy to that extent that it was regarded as almost impossible to construct a traveled road through it and it was not until 1832 or 1833 that a charter was obtained from the State for the purpose of building a turnpike through this swamp. It was nearly a year after the survey by the Holland Land Company before much if anything was accomplished cutting the road through.

At the time there were but very few settlers between this village and Buffalo and it was no great object to those few to do any more labour upon the roads than they were compelled to do or were well paid for doing. It was no unusual thing for heavy emigrant teams to be three or four days making the distance from Buffalo to Silver Creek. They usually traveled in company of four or five or six teams together and often were compelled to double their teams and haul one wagon a mile or so over a bad portion of the road then go back for another, and in this way make half the distance from Buffalo Creek here, and it was not unusual for teams to remain two nights in succession at the same place, that is they would not get so far in a day but they would return to the place where they had spent the night before for entertainment.

Emigrants from New England to the Western Reserve felt when they reached this point that the principal part of their trouble and hardships were over and on reaching here they would often spend two or three days with Mr. **Howard** recuperating their animals and repairing their wagons. In those early years there was many a joke got off at the expense of the almost bottomless roads through the Cattaraugus swamp. It was said that on one occasion a company of three or four foot travelers were picking their way along the so called road two or three miles east of Cattaraugus Creek, when they came to a large expanse of mud [?] water eight or ten rods in length, near the middle of which they saw a man's head with mouth and chin barely above water. One of the party sang out to him and asked him what he was doing there

and why he did not come out. The man replied that he thought he would come out all right after a while as he had a good horse under him.

But to lay joking aside some of the mud holes that it was impossible to avoid were that depth that the water would come into the wagon boxes. A year or so after John E. **Howard** opened his house of entertainment a Mr. W.G. **Sidney** opened a similar place at near [sic] the mouth of Cattaraugus creek and established a ferry across the creek which was of great advantage to travellers. **Sidney** did not keep his place but about a year. John **Mack** with his family of two sons James E. and John **Mack, Jr.** came from New Hampshire and purchased all **Sidney's** interest in the property. About this time the year 1805 there were several families settled in the northern part of the town. Among them Benj. **Kenyon**, Charles **Avery**. A son of the latter is still living, and resides at Niagara Falls, and from whom we have obtained much information. Two or three years later came Henry **Ruben**, Nathan and Samuel **Nevins**, all of whom came from Western Massachusetts.

As near as we can ascertain Samuel **Nevins** was the first male school teacher this section of the town had. A school was established in the summer of 1812 and the winter following. **Nevins** was employed to teach it. In 1809 Artemus **Clothier** and Norman **Spink**, two young men found their way here and engaged in cutting timber and clearing land for John E. **Howard** and Mr. **Spink** informed us but a few months before his death, which we believe occurred in 1872, that during the first six months they were here they worked for Mr. **Howard** for \$1 per month and board, and through the winter they were into the woods with their axes and ready to commence work as soon as it was light enough to do so. The following spring each of them took a contract from Mr. **Howard** to clear the land suitable for the first crop at a stated price per acre and the ashes accruing from the burning timber was also to be theirs.

Mr. **Spink** informed us that during the winter it was his custom to chop through the day and just before nightfall, gather a quantity of dry bark or other dry material and start a large fire. He would then build a house or shelter of hemlock boughs, would then continue to chop by the aid of the light of his brush fire until he felt the need of rest, would then replenish his fire with brush and logs so that it would continue through the night and retire to his bough house and bed of hemlock leaves. He also informed us that his food through the winter consisted principally of cold roast or boiled pork and cold corn bread and occasionally a potato or two roasted in the fire of one of his log piles. **Spink** and **Clothier** followed this land-clearing until they had money sufficient to locate and article a farm each for themselves.

The present generation have but a faint idea of the endurance and hardships their predecessors went through in clearing up the country they now enjoy. In the fall of 1811 **Clothier** returned to Berkshire Co. Mass. and spent the winter and was married there the next spring and very soon afterward started on his wedding tour back to Chautauqua Co. This was made with one horse his wife riding on horse back with all their worldly effects tied up in a bundle and placed on the back of the horse behind the rider; and **Clothier** walking along side with his rifle on his shoulder. At times they would exchange places with each other for the purpose of resting. At that time it was no great task for a young healthy woman to walk off eight or ten miles. In this way they proceeded from near Pittsfield, Massachusetts to this county.

Mr. **Spink** also went back to Massachusetts, married and returned here. Both these men continued to reside here for the remainder of their lives and both have died within the past ten or twelve years. They lived to see the town of Hanover come up from a coarse [?] uninhabited wilderness to be fully and completely settled and cleared up to be one of the richest towns in the county.

FC3

*The Fredonia Censor* 20 February 1884, More Early History of the Town of Hanover

Dr. Jacob **Burgess** was one of the first physicians to settle in the town of Hanover. He came here from Western Massachusetts in the fall of 1811 and settled on a lot of about twenty acres, which is now about the center of the village of Silver Creek. Dr. **Burgess** was a person of fine attainments and great natural abilities. He was a self-made man, having been the architect of his own education and acquirements. He was well versed in the languages and a scientist in the truest sense of the word. He at once took rank as one of the most eminent physicians in the county. Having fully graduated and practiced for some two years before he left his native State, he was prepared to at once enter upon the practice of his profession here. He was in the prime of early manhood, which enabled him to stand all the fatigues of pioneer life and the hardships imposed upon him by his profession.



In the commencement of his practice here he resolved to respond to all calls as far it was in his power to do, whether there was a probability of his ever being recompensed for it or not. Calls soon came pouring in upon him from a large circuit of country, so that he was often compelled to ride a distance of twelve or fifteen miles, and sometimes more. In the then sparsely settled condition of the country, the roads, especially in spring and fall, were almost impassable, except for persons on foot or on horseback. It was not unusual for the Doctor to be from twenty-four to thirty-six hours from home at a time attending to the requirements of his patients. When his attention was not required by the sick, he was superintending the clearing-up and in other ways improving his homestead.

He was much devoted to his profession and was a close student. When at home his evenings were entirely spent with his books. It was often the case that he did not retire to rest until after 12 o'clock at night, his time until that hour being devoted entirely to study. He had a theory that the human body did not require more than six or eight hours' rest, in accordance with the amount of mental and physical labor performed, and that all time more than that spent in bed was uselessly wasted. The Doctor was also an early riser. Unless he had been out late at night attending to professional calls, it was seldom that 6 o'clock in the morning found him in bed.

At the time Dr. **Burgess** settled here he had no family but a wife. In the month of April 181[?], their first daughter was born, who is now the wife of Warren **Montgomery**, esq. In the latter part of the year 1814, another daughter was born, who is now Mrs. Samuel **Scoville**. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1817, a son was added to the family. All three of these persons are still living and are residents of Silver Creek. The son is the Rev. Chalon **Burgess**, and is pastor of the Presbyterian church of this village. It is not often in America (it has sometimes occurred in Great Britain) that a clergyman can be settled over a church, and remain its pastor for a number of years in succession in the place of his nativity, and that, too, when he has nearly passed the time allotted to man, three score and ten years. It is believed that the Rev. Mr. **Burgess** and his two sisters are the eldest native-born citizens of the town of Hanover.

Dr. Burgess continued to reside here until his death, which occurred in April 1855, at the age of eighty-one years. His wife survived him five years.

Jacob **Morrison** was the first tanner this part of Hanover had. He came here from Williamsville (east of Buffalo, N.Y.) in 1813. He commenced operations on the ground adjoining the mills of **Dickinson & Cleveland**. He at first had but three or four vats. These were sunk in the earth out-of-doors, without covering except rough boards that were laid over them to keep out the rain. Mr. **Morrison** did the currying portion of his business in the basement of **Dickinson & Cleveland's** mills. A few years afterwards he moved his works to the upper portion of the village, along near the mill-race now belonging to G. L. **Weeks**, esq. In 1827 Mr. **Morrison** lost his wife, and about a year afterwards moved to Forestville.

Nehemiah **Heaton**, Thomas **Kidder**, Elijah **Holt** and Isaac **Gage** left the town of Jamaica, county of Windham, State of Vermont, in the month of December, 1814, for the town of Hanover. All of these parties, except Isaac **Gage**, had families and brought them with them. Mr. **Heaton** also brought a young man by the name of John **Johnson** with him, who was engaged to work at a certain price per month for not a less period than one year. Elijah **Holt** had visited the town of Hanover the summer previous and then became acquainted with the water power now owned by **Wilson** and Joseph **Andrus**. On his return to Vermont, he gave such a glowing account of the country generally and this water power in particular that he induced **Kidder** (who was his brother-in-law) and **Heaton** to dispose of their farms and come to this county.

Isaac **Gage** was a brother-in-law of **Heaton's**, being a brother of his (**Heaton's**) wife. **Heaton** and **Kidder** at once purchased the water power jointly, and **Kidder** articed the farm now owned by Joseph **Andrus**. **Heaton** was possessed of some \$5,000, with which he decided to improve the water power and erect both grist and saw mills. **Kidder** was to be a joint owner in the operation. They employed all the help that could be obtained, among them quite a number of Indians from the Cattaraugus reservation, who at that time were willing to work when they felt [left?] some of their money at the end of the week. As much of the work had to be done in the water in constructing the dam, the Indians did better than white men would have been willing to do, notwithstanding the water was quite cold, it being the last of winter. The Indians did not object to work in it providing they were furnished with plenty of rations of whisky.

**Heaton & Kidder** not only succeeded in getting their dam well advanced, but they also got all the timber on the ground for their mills before the breaking up of winter. With plenty of help, which they easily obtained as they paid cash for everything, they had their dam up and their buildings ready to be enclosed on the first day of June, 1815. A short time after this they had their saw mill running, cutting out lumber for the completion of their buildings. They purchased the

two millstones, worked out of granite by **Dickinson & Cleveland**, which they intended to use for while for grinding corn. They also purchased and utilized all other parts of the **Dickinson & Cleveland** mills that were of any advantage to them. They were compelled to go to Buffalo, which was then just getting started again from its conflagration cause by the British and Indians, for all the most important parts of their machinery and for a set of burr mill-stones, which they succeeded in obtaining after waiting more than two months for them to be drawn from Albany to Buffalo by teams. They were able to start their grist mill and grind wheat on the first day of December, a little less than a year from the day they started from Vermont—on the fourteenth day of December.

Up to that time the winter had been very open, and there had no ice formed in the lake. **Heaton** took his man, John **Johnson**, and another young man by the name of **Williams**, whom he also had in his employ, and with a yawl-boat started for Buffalo. They left the mouth of Silver Creek soon as it was light enough for them to see clearly, expecting, if they had good weather, to reach Buffalo by nightfall. **Johnson** and **Williams** each applied themselves to rowing the boat, while **Heaton** sat in the stern steering. About an hour after leaving, and when about off the mouth of Cattaraugus Creek there came up one of those sudden windstorms accompanied with snow, that this climate is noted for. The first gust of wind took **Heaton's** hat into the lake, and on his making a sudden spring to recover it, he lost his balance and went into the lake head foremost. When he arose to the surface, he was out of reach of the boat or anything to assist himself with.

He probably realized his situation, and sung out to the men in the boat to throw him an oar. In the excitement of the moment both men threw their oars, neither of which came within Mr. **Heaton's** reach. After throwing both oars, the men were left in the boat perfectly powerless to assist their employer, who in a short time disappeared beneath the angry waves. Mr. **Heaton** was an expert swimmer, but being encumbered with a heavy overcoat with a large cape, or series of capes, such as they wore in those days, and the water being very cold, he was only able to support himself above water a short time. The wind and snow was increasing fearfully, and the men, **Johnson** and **Williams**, were in the boat entirely helpless and at the mercy of the waves. The boat drifted to the shore, reaching the beach about a mile below Cattaraugus Creek. The men were enabled to land with no further injury to themselves than a thorough wetting. Their lot was very different from that of their employer. He who had left his home in the prime of manhood, so full of life, and hope, and [?] was then a lifeless corpse at the bottom of Lake Erie. The two men returned home the same evening, and when the sad intelligence was spread among the community it cast a great gloom over them all.

Although Mr. **Heaton** had been a resident here but about a year, he had become generally known through this section of the county, and was looked upon as one of the most enterprising and valuable citizens in the county. The friends immediately offered a reward for the recovery of the body, but it was not until the first week in June following, when a party of four of the Indians from the Cattaraugus reservation, who had assisted in building the dam, were on their way to the mouth of Eighteen-mile Creek on a fishing expedition, while walking along the beach, a short distance from above Sturgeon Point, they discovered the body partly covered in the sand. They recognized the body at once; and, while two of them came here to notify the friends, the other two remained watching the body until their companions with others returned.

What speaks well for the honesty of the Indians, Mr. H. was on his way to Buffalo to settle up for the machinery and supplies they had purchased through the past summer for their mills, and had a large sum of money, which was in bank-bills, with him. The money was in a package in the breast pocket of the inside coat. When the friends reached the body, they found the coats—both coats—snugly buttoned as they were at the time he was drowned, and the money had not been disturbed. The coats had burst open along the back by the bloating of the body.

Two days before the finding of the remains of Mr. H., his wife died, but had not yet been interred. The funerals of the two were held at the same time, and their remains lay side by side in Hanover Center cemetery.

Cyrus **Heaton**, a brother of Nehemiah, left Jamaica, Vermont with his family, in the early part of the summer of 1815, but did not reach here until after the dead body of his brother had been found. He with Mr. Asa **Gage**, who was a brother of Nehemiah **Heaton's** wife, were appointed administrators of the estate of Mr. H.—he having left one son, about seven years of age, and an adopted daughter of five years. Mr. Asa **Gage**, who was so long and favorably known as a resident of this village, was a native of Jamaica, Vermont, but had left there ten years previous to his brother-in-law, Mr. **Heaton**, and his brother, Isaac **Gage**, and came to West Winfield, Herkimer county, this State, where he was married to Miss Nancy **Brace** in 1807. After receiving the intelligence of the drowning of Mr. **Heaton**, he decided to emigrate to this place.

This locality was known at that time as Fayette. It is not positively known from what source it received that name or at how early a period the name was given. But this fact is known, that Mr. **Heaton** named his mills, immediately after their completion, or as soon as they were able to grind wheat, the *Fayette Mills*. The village went by that name until about 1828 or 1829. However, previous to that time, the Post office Department at Washington had declined to name the post office here "Fayette," for the reason that there was one already established by that name in Seneca county, this State.

Mr. Asa **Gage** purchased, very soon after reaching here, a farm of about seventy acres, which extended down to Main street of the village. As soon as circumstances would permit he caused a very comfortable frame house to be erected near the junction of Main street and the road going to Forestville, and which, we believe, is now owned and occupied by Mr. Henry **Knight**. He also had a blacksmith shop erected on the bank of Walnut Creek, or between the Forestville road and the creek. Mr. **Gage** carried on the blacksmithing business there for many years. He continued to reside here until he died in January 1848. During all this time he bore the reputation of being as upright, honorable and conscientiously honest a man as there was in the county of Chautauqua. It is believed by those who knew him best that there was never a dollar went into his pocket that was in any way dishonorably obtained by him.

Cyrus **Heaton** continued to reside here until 1832 when he removed to Forestville; and in 1836, on account of the death of his wife's father, he returned to Vermont.

FC4

*The Fredonia Censor* 5 March 1884, Early History of Hanover—Continued

About a year after the drowning of Mr. **Heaton**, the administrators and Mr. **Kidder** sold the Fayette Mills to Platt and Levi **Rogers** who came here from Dutchess county this State in the summer of 1816. Platt **Rogers**, the eldest of the two brothers, was a millwright by trade, while his younger brother Levi had had some experience in running a mill, but about three years of his life had been spent in a store in Dutchess Co. They bought the property on very favorable terms. A greater portion of the purchase money did not come due for some years. Their milling business consisted almost wholly in grinding for the farmers. This was enough to keep their two run of stones busy a large portion of the time. However, Pratt **Rogers** became discontented and thought he ought to be accumulating money faster than he was. In 1827 he disposed of his interest in the Fayette Mills to his brother Levi, and emigrated to Crawford county Pa. Previous to this Levi had become ambitious and he and a person by the name of **Cummings** had engaged in a small mercantile business succeeding Stephen **Clark** who was the first merchant in this portion of Hanover.

**Clark** was another Vermonter who came here in 1817 and started a small store. The building in which he commenced business is still standing and is probably the oldest building in the village of Silver Creek. It is located at the extreme west end of the village, west of Walnut Creek, and a short distance east of where the big walnut tree grew. At that time it was supposed that whatever village grew up here would be in that locality. Until the late Oliver **Lee** came here in 1828 it was the point of business. Stephen **Clark** also established a small distillery, which was on the opposite side of the street a short distance below his store. **Clark** only operated his distillery three or four years and the building, which was not a very pretentious one, was demolished about 1826 or 1827.

**Rogers** and **Cumming's** venture in the mercantile business did not prove very successful and they were succeeded about 1824 by Ezra **Comis** who ran the business one or two years, when he discovered that his financial condition was such that he would not be able to replenish his stock without assistance. He conceived the idea of of [*sic*] organizing what he termed "the Farmers' Store." This was done by Mr. **Comis** going to the most responsible farmers in the town of Hanover and portions of Sheridan and soliciting them to subscribe or take stock to any amount from \$25 up to \$500, with the understanding that all stockholders were to first have all goods they desired for themselves and families at a trifle above cost in New York, and were to share in the profits. They were also allowed to purchase goods against the amount of capital or stock paid in. In this way Mr. **Comis** succeeded in raising between four and five thousand dollars. With that amount he went to New York and laid in a fresh stock of goods. But the Farmers' Store did not prove a popular institution. Most of the stockholders were anxious to purchase goods and it was not long before jealousies worked in among them especially when the stock became reduced, so that each one could not get every thing they desired. When the time came to replenish again very few if any were ready to subscribe the second time and Mr. **Comis** and the Farmers' Store were compelled to succumb and soon were among the things that were.

Levi **Rogers** continued to run the Fayette Mills, and in 1828 married a daughter of Wheaton **Mason**, who came here a year or so previous, from Elicottville, Cattaraugus county, this state, and for a short time engaged in the grocery business. The profits of the milling business did not meet Mr. **Rogers'** expectation. The indebtedness on the mill property was about maturing and he saw no way by which he could meet it. Unless he was able to do so or give further reliable security there was a probability of foreclosure of mortgage and of his losing all he had paid. He communicated with his father who at that time resided in Dutchess county but closed out his property there and in 1830 came here. Soon afterwards he negotiated for the indebtedness against the Fayette Mills and soon became the owner of them but allowed his son to run and manage them as he had previously been doing for more than ten years.

Levi **Rogers** was a wholesouled, good hearted, social gentleman. He was a good friend but a bitter enemy. He was fond of a practical joke and often perpetrated them on his best friends. He was fond of telling the old story (and sometimes applied it to himself) of what the fool knew and what he did not know. When the fool was asked what he knew, he replied that he knew millers always had fat hogs, and what he did not know was on whose grain they were fatted. Mr. **Rogers** continued to run the mills as he had done for many years until his life was ended by drowning in the mill pond, in or about the year 1848.

The last few years of Ezra **Comis'** early manhood was spent at Hanover Center. Soon after he reached his majority, he aspired to a public position. He ran for and was elected a constable. The story was told of him (we do not vouch for the truth of it) that among the first official business that he was called upon to perform was to make a levy on some live stock, cattle and hogs. He was told by our friend Levi **Rogers**, who had known him well from his boyhood, that in order to have his levy legal he must touch each creature with the execution. This he had no trouble in doing with the cattle but when he came to levy on the hogs he found them running at large in a ten acre field.

The story went that young **Comis** was seen with his coat off hanging on the fence, and he chasing the hogs over the field, endeavoring to touch them with the legal document, but finally gave up and made his return on the back of the execution, that as far as the hogs were concerned it was impossible to make the levy. However, after this he served one or two terms as justice of the peace, in this town, with credit to himself and friends. After the failure and closing up of the Farmers' Store he emigrated to Michigan and a short time afterwards was elected to the State Senate in which he served with distinction and was strongly talked of as a candidate for Governor when he was attacked with malarial fever and died in the year 1835 or 1836, still a young man.

Doctor Calvin **Wood** and his brother Benjamin were early settlers in this part of Hanover. We are unable to ascertain definitely from what part of New England they came but we find Dr. **Wood** here as early as 1818 or 1819 practicing medicine and as an inn keeper. The doctor was somewhat of a peculiar genius. He was not regarded as being exceedingly bright or energetic in his profession and there were but few that would employ him unless it was in case of an emergency or when no other physician could be obtained. He had better success as an inn keeper than practicing medicine, for the reason that his wife was a stirring, energetic, persevering woman and a good housekeeper and it was her aim to have everything in order and she had the reputation of setting an excellent table before her guests.

She had a serious affection of one side of her face which would as often as once a minute draw that side of her face into fearful contortions that were painful to look upon. On one occasion a foot traveler called at their inn and enquired if he could have dinner. Mrs. **Wood** was the only person about the house at the time. She did not understand the inquiry and while she stood waiting for him to repeat it, her face went through one of its contortions. The stranger turned upon his heel and almost flew from the premises and on going to the next hotel which was but a short distance away asked the landlady while he was eating if there was not a crazy woman in the next house above. Said he called there for dinner but saw no one there but a woman who appeared to be crazy, at any rate when asked if he could have some dinner she stood and made fearful faces at him.

Doctor **Wood** kept the house directly opposite the farmers' store for several years. It was then the most prominent house here. In 1829 or 1830 Doctor **Wood** emigrated to Crawford Co., Penn. Benj. **Wood** was a farmer and jobber. He was ever ready to take a contract for moving large and heavy buildings or any other difficult work. He resided for many years about midway between this village and Irving.

Nathan **Wattles** was another of the early settlers of this portion of Hanover. He came here from western Massachusetts, and married the oldest daughter of John E. **Howard**. He built or Mr. **Howard** had built for him the house now owned and occupied by Melvin **Montgomery**, although since that time (1818) the house has been remodeled two or three

times. About a year after, the **Howard** property passed into the hands of the late Oliver **Lee**. Mr. **Wattles** left here and went to Buffalo, engaged in the butchering business and died there of cholera in 1832. We believe a son of Mr. **Wattles** is still living and at Kalamazoo, Mich.

Jonathan **Keith** was another pioneer settler of northern Hanover. Although a native of Vermont, he had resided several years in Canada previous to coming to Chautauqua county. Mr. **Keith** was a blacksmith by trade and soon after settling here in 1822 he erected a dwelling house and blacksmith shop, just east of Walnut Creek on Main street. Mr. **Keith** carried on the business of blacksmithing there for several years. He had however purchased a farm from the Holland Land Company which was located a mile or mile and a half west of the village. This farm received considerable of his attention. He was quite a horse fancier and paid considerable attention to raising horses.

He had a large barn erected on his farm, which he used for housing his hay and sheltering his young horses. Although a great lover of a good horse and paying much attention to raising them, we do not know that he ever engaged in sporting with them, but often bought, sold and exchanged horses to that extent that he was looked upon by many as a professional horse jockey. In the spring of 1834 he purchased from Oliver **Lee** the Silver Creek House property, and assumed control of it the same spring. As a hotel keeper Mr. **Keith** was a success. Under his management the Silver Creek House soon became well known and one of the most popular hotels and eating places for stage passengers between Buffalo and Cleveland.

One cause of his great success as a hotel keeper was having a wife well adapted to the business. Mrs. K was an excellent housekeeper and during all the time she was mistress of the Silver Creek House, unless she was prevented from doing so by sickness, she gave the affairs of the house her daily personal attention. Mr. **Keith** continued to own and reside in the Silver Creek House until his death, which occurred about the year 1859 or 1860.

We find Reuben **Edmonds** located in this section of Hanover as early as 1816. He first settled on a lot about a mile east of Hanover Center, where there was a small water power on Silver Creek. The first three or four years of his time after settling here was spent in cutting off the timber and clearing up a farm. About 1820 or 1821 he commenced to improve his water power by erecting a saw mill and a crude sort of a mill for grinding corn. His first effort at converting corn into meal was on the same principle of **Dickinson & Cleveland's**, namely, pounding or mashing in a mortar. A year or two after he succeeded in working out a couple of mill stones from hard heads or granite found in the hill-side a short distance from his mill.

Some time previous to that he had purchased the property here in the north part of the village formerly owned by **Dickinson & Cleveland**. In the spring of 1824 he commenced the erection of a house on this property which was located on what is now known as Newbury street. As soon as this building was sufficiently inclosed [*sic*] to shelter his family he moved them into it. Mr. **Edmonds** allowed this building to remain in that unfinished condition during the eight or ten years he owned it. Many times they were compelled to resort to expedients to keep themselves comfortable from the inclemency of the weather.

Mr. E. was a person of considerable native genius. Notwithstanding he was exceedingly illiterate and almost wholly uneducated, he served at an early day as a justice of the peace and at one time was a candidate for supervisor and came within a few votes of being elected. By close industry, hard work and perseverance [*sic*], he succeeded in accumulating considerable property and was able to place his family in a far more comfortable condition than they lived. He had a large family of children whom he allowed to grow up in ignorance, not affording them the most ordinary advantages for an education. In the early winter of 1832 he joined the Mormons and in the spring of 1833 he with his family emigrated to Kirkland, Ohio.

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*The Fredonia Censor* 12 March 1884, Early History of Hanover, Continued.

Abel **Case** reached the town of Hanover from the State of Vermont in November, 1815. On Mr. **Case's** arrival here he took his family to the tavern of John E. **Howard**, "that being the only public house or place of entertainment in this section of Hanover. Mr. **Case** was an entire stranger and had no place in view until he took a good look all over the town. This required three or four weeks," his family during this time were making their home with Mr. **Howard**. He finally selected a lot about 2 ½ miles west of this village on the main traveled road west, or the Fredonia road as it is now

known. As soon as he had determined upon this lot and had it secured from the Holland Land Company he and his step son, a lad of 17 years, "Ebenezer R. **Avery** by name," commenced to erect a log shanty to shelter them through the winter. This they accomplished and were comfortably settled a day or two before Christmas.

As we have mentioned in a previous chapter the winter of 1815 and 1816 was quite mild and open until near the first of February. As soon as the family were comfortably settled Mr. **Case** and his son young **Avery** engaged in cutting into sawlogs and hauling to the road-side the large pine and hemlock trees they found growing on their lot preparatory to bringing them to the new mill here, erected by **Heaton & Kidder**. About the first of February there came a foot of snow and soon the roads that had been almost impassable became good and young **Avery** commenced to haul sawlogs to this mill, making two trips a day for nearly two weeks in succession. This was done with a yoke of oxen that had hauled all their worldly affects [*sic*] and the female portion of the family from Bennington county, Vermont, to the town of Hanover. Mr. **Avery** informed us some years afterwards that it was his custom to be up, have his breakfast and team well fed ready to start as soon as it was light enough to do so. In this way they succeeded in getting lumber enough to build them a very comfortable frame house the second summer they were here. They also progressed as rapidly as could be expected in clearing up their farm.

Mr. **Case** continued to reside in the place he had chosen for a home for more than forty years and died there in 1836, aged near 80 year. Mr. **Case** was a person of genial nature social and fond of society and all kind of amusements. At the time he settled here his neighbors were few and far between. There were two or three **Stebbins** families that had settled about a mile and a half west of his place at what since has been called Kensington. A year or two after he located a couple of families by name of **Gleason** settled about a mile east of him. It was amusing to hear Mr. **Case** give a description of their modes of enjoyment and meetings for social intercourse as well as occasionally meetings for religious instruction.

By appointment the **Gleasons** would come to his house before nightfall. If in the winter when there was snow on the ground he would yoke his oxen to his wood sled, fill the box with clean straw, then with bed blankets or comforters for robes they would all hands pile into the sled, seating themselves on the bottom or other ways as they could most comfortably do so, then start their ox team for the **Stebbins** or some other neighbor not too far away where they would spend the evening in social enjoyment. About 12 or 1 o'clock at night they would end off with a supper of chicken pie or chicken cooked in all the different modes a good house wife could imagine.

In our boyhood we remember of hearing Mr. **Case** speak of these social gatherings and tell how they were not only kept up through one winter but winter after winter for several years until after the country became so thickly settled neighbors were not so far away. In regard to religious meetings Mr. **Case** stated that he did not think there was religious service held oftener than once in four to six weeks for the first six or seven years after he settled here, then it was generally held on a Sunday, a.m. or p.m.—but one service in a day—at some private house, and usually all would attend for a distance of four or five miles.

In the spring of 1820 Mr. Ebenezer R. **Avery**, then a young man of 22 was married to a young lady of Sheridan (we have mislaid the name). In 1822 a son was born whom we shall speak of hereafter. In 1825 Mr. **Avery** moved to Buffalo and engaged in the manufacture of soap and candles. This business proved quite remunerative. He also purchased some property on Delaware Avenue a short distance above Niagara street. This property enhanced in value quite rapidly and during the great real estate speculation of 1836 Mr. **Avery** was offered what he then regarded as a high price for his property, which he sold and returned to Silver Creek, where he purchased the farm of Jay **Howard** about one mile east of this village on the Buffalo road.

He also purchased about 40 acres on the opposite side of the road from his **Howard** farm. On the latter purchase he erected quite a pretentious house for that period. Farming soon became irksome and not suiting the taste of Mr. **Avery**, he decided to give it up. In the spring of 1839 he came into the village Silver Creek and purchased property and first erected the home where W. W. **Huntley** now resides and the store building owned by the late H. N. **Farnham**, located on the corner of Main and Dunkirk streets. The following Autumn Mr. **Avery** put in a general stock of goods and opened up as merchant.

He continued in this until 1845. Having become satisfied he was not adding to his property he disposed of all his property here and returned to Buffalo, but for the last few years has made his home in Lockport, where two years ago he was still living a hale and hearty old gentleman of near 84 years of age. His son, Hamilton **Avery**, who was born near

the east line of Sheridan in 1822 left here in 1845 and settled in Nashville, Tennessee. About a year afterwards he married a niece [sic] of President **Polk**. Some two years after his marriage he left Nashville and settled in Memphis, Tenn., where he died in 1860.

Manning **Case**, a younger brother of Abel, came from Vermont with Cyrus **Heaton** and Stephen **Clark** in the early part of the summer of 1816. It is asserted by some that Manning **Case** erected the first store building and brought the first stock of goods to the Northern part of Hanover. From the best information we can obtain we are led to believe that Manning **Case** superintended or erected the building under contract and after it was stocked with goods assisted Stephen **Clark** in his store in the capacity of clerk. Mr. **Case** remained here but a few years. He finally settled in Buffalo and became quite wealthy.

Harry **Jones** was another early settler in this locality. We learn of his being here as early as 1820. At our earliest recollection in 1825 he was residing on a small farm about half or three-fourths of a mile west of this village in a house he had erected himself. This was built after the John E. **Howard** system. The sills, beams, plates, rafters being hewn from trees, and two inch hemlock planed, pinned at bottom and top with wooden pins, constituted the boarding. The cracks were battened with strips of inch boards.

Among the first improvements after the completion of his house Mr. **Jones** set out a small but choice apple orchard, which was in bearing at an early period and was a source of great benefit both to Mr. **Jones** and all his neighbors for he was generous to a fault. No person ever came to his house for fruit and was sent away empty handed if the fruit was about his premises, further more he would have felt insulted had a person insisted on paying for it. At that period when the country was new and more sparsely settled people appeared to be more generous, liberal and kind to each other, and were at all times ready to divide, especially with new comers.

Mr. **Jones** was a shoemaker by trade and followed that business for several years. At that period it was customary for the farmer to take his hides and pelts to the tanner to be tanned on shares, the article to be equally divided when finished. The farmer would then employ the shoemaker to come to his home in the fall of the year and make up shoes for the whole family; this some times required from one to two weeks according to the number to be provided for. Mr. **Jones** followed this business of shoemaking among farmer for several years.

He disposed of his property where he resided to Jonathan **Keith** and in 1829 bought property and moved to Smith's Mills in this town. In 1834 he returned to this village and remained here until 1843, when he emigrated to Michigan. Mr. **Jones** was twice married. His first wife left him two daughters and one son. The youngest of those daughters we believe is Mrs. Devillo **White** of Fredonia. Mr. **Jones'** second wife was the sister of Samuel **Williams** Esq. of Sheridan, who was also one of our early settlers in this portion of Hanover.

He was born in Western Pennsylvania in the month of April, 1819. His parents emigrated to the town of Hanover when he was but two years of age. They first settled on the farm of Harry **Jones** where they resided about one year. Mr. **Williams** Sr. then purchased a small place near Hanover Centre where he and his family resided another year, subsequently he purchased a farm near Smith Mills where the family resided many years.

Samuel **Williams**, the subject of this sketch, as above stated is now, and has been for quite a number of years a resident of Sheridan, and has become noted for making the nicest and whitest maple sugar made in the United States. He is one of the few who has a relic of the big black walnut tree, the largest tree ever found East of the Rocky mountains, (a full description of which we shall give in our next chapter). When Mr. **Williams** was quite a young man or rather nothing more than a lad he obtained a portion of one of the limbs. This he took to a chair manufacturer and had a rolling pin turned which he presented to his mother with the understanding that at her demise it should become his. It is now in the possession of his family and Mr. W. informs us is a relic he prizes much.

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*The Fredonia Censor* 19 March 1884, Early History of Hanover, Continued.

Luther **Heaton**, a younger brother of Nehemiah and Cyrus **Heaton**, left Vermont in September, 1816, for Chautauqua county. On his arrival at Camillus, Onondaga county, this state, he stayed to visit a sister residing there and before he was ready to resume his journey, he was taken with a serious sickness which kept him confined to his room for six weeks. On his recovery he was offered a position at his trade, carriage making. This he concluded to accept and remain

at Camillus until spring if not longer. When spring came he was offered great inducement to remain longer, which was an equal interest in his employer's business. Their business was prosperous and on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of December, 1818, Luther **Heaton** was married to Roxy, daughter of Luther **Seaver**, of one of the old and highly respectable families formerly of the Mohawk Valley. The grandfather of Mrs. H. was one of the first settlers of Montgomery county, this state.

In the spring of 1824 Luther **Heaton** disposed of his interest in the carriage business at Camillus to his partner and with his family reached the town of Hanover the first week in June of that year (1824). He at once purchased the village lot where **Bartlett** is now erecting a dwelling house, from Asa **Gage**. He immediately commenced to erect a building that would answer for a residence for his family, and a portion of it for the time being to be used for a carriage shop. He succeeded in getting this building, which had a frontage on the street of thirty-six feet by twenty deep and an addition on the rear, up and enclosed ready for a residence for his family before cold weather set in the fall.

Mr. H. brought from Onondaga county with him the castings for a half dozen iron ploughs, the first iron ploughs bro't into the town of Hanover, and we think the first brought into Chautauqua county. Previous to the introduction of the cast-iron plough farmers used what was termed a wooden mold-board, with a wrought iron point made by any ordinary blacksmith. During the winter of 1824 and 1825 Mr. **Heaton** worked at wagon making and wooding these plough irons, using one end of his building for a shop.

We would here state that this building is still in existence. About a year after its erection the property passed out of the hands of Mr. **Heaton**. The building was purchased by Mr. James **Harris**, who settled here about that time, and he moved it to the opposite or north side of Main street and some distance down the street. There additions were made to it and it was occupied as a tavern for many years, first by James **Harris** who was succeeded in the fall of 1829 by **Paddleford & Morgan**, quite noted hotel keepers from Batavia, this state. They only kept the house about one and a half years. In the spring of 1831 the property passed into the hands of Baruch **Phelps**, who came here from Evans, Erie county. About 1836 or 1837 **Phelps** sold the property to Asa **Whitney** who came here from near Rochester. Mr. **Whitney** kept this house for many years and in his hands it became quite a popular place for those who traveled by their own conveyance.

We are unable to state to whom and at what time the property passed out of the hands of Mr. **Whitney**. However the main part of the building was again moved to the opposite side of Main street and some distance down the street, and is now occupied as a tenement house. Outwardly it has about the same appearance with the same small windows of 7 x 9 glass that it had when Luther **Heaton** erected it, sixty years ago.

In the spring of 1825 Mr. **Heaton** imagined he could accumulate property faster in a mercantile way than he could at wagon and carriage work. As soon as the roads became passable that spring, he went to Buffalo and purchased a stock of groceries from the late William **Williams**, who was so long an favorably known as a wholesale dealer in groceries, drugs and medicines, by all Chautauqua county merchants of fifty or sixty years ago. Previous to the purchase of these goods Mr. H. had rented and fitted up a small one-story building that stood directly opposite the street that led from Main street to the Fayette mills, near where Amos **Wright** now resides. It was also nearly directly across the street from where the big black walnut tree then lay, it having been blown down in April 1822. Three two horse wagons with teams brought Mr. **Heaton's** stock of goods from Buffalo here, and in the first week of June 1825, Mr. H. with John K. **Lothridge** as clerk, then a youth of 17 or 18 year of age, opened up the first regular grocery store started in the town of Hanover. Permit us here to state that Mr. John K. **Lothridge**, from whom we received much of this information, died some four or five years since at Battle Creek, Michigan.

We must also diverge from our biography of Mr. **Heaton** and give a history of the Big Black Walnut Tree, which was without doubt by far the largest tree that has ever been found east of the Rocky Mountains. **Young's History of Chautauqua Co.** underrates this tree as to size. A section of thirteen feet of this tree was cut off and after the bark was taken from it was measured with a cord or small rope and found to be 31 feet in circumference, and after all the decayed wood was hewn and cut away it left a shell of very uniform thickness of about four inches and it was over 10 feet in diameter. This tree grew partly in the highway, or rather when the highway was surveyed the line took in about one-half the tree, the other half standing on the Fayette mill property.

When the administrators of Nehemiah **Heaton's** estate and Mr. Thomas **Kidder** sold the Fayette mill property to **Platt** and Levi **Rogers** they reserved all their rights and interest in the big black walnut with the privilege of its standing or if it fell down remaining until they were ready to remove it. Very soon after Mr. **Heaton** got his grocery store under way, he



conceived the idea of utilizing a portion of this tree as an annex to his grocery. Up to that time the tree lay just as it fell when blown down some three years previous. There had not been a move made to improve it or remove it as far as any one knew any talk about it. Luther **Heaton** obtained from Mr. **Kidder** and the administrators the right and privilege of cutting off a portion of it and using it as previously stated. If at any time they had an opportunity of disposing of it at a suitable price he was to surrender it by their paying him the expense of his improvements after deducting a reasonable compensation for rent [?]

Mr. **Heaton** employed Mr. Hezekiah **Fisk**, the father of Mr. Russel **Fisk**, now residing in Forestville, to superintend the cutting of the tree and making all necessary improvements. When this section was cut off free from the roots and the other portion of the body, it required four yokes of oxen and the assistance of about a dozen oxen (?) to roll it out into the street where it could be conveniently worked around. It was after this was accomplished that the bark was taken off and the decayed wood was hewn and cut away. This required the services of three or four men 4 or 5 days and when completed Mr. Gilham **Heaton**, "another member of the brotherhood of **Heatons**" who just then rode up on horseback got off his horse and led the animal through the shell, then mounted the horse and rode him through by laying his head down along side the horses neck. It was said the horse was quite a large one.

The next operation was to cut a doorway through. This was done by sawing or cutting out a strip thirty inches wide and eight feet high. When the shell was up this door was hung with some strap hinges made by Asa **Gage** from large bar iron and firmly bolted with three-fourth inch bolts running through the wood. This shell was found to be knotty and curly, almost as hard as lignum vitae. When these improvements were complete the shell was rolled across the street to a spot that had been prepared for it alongside the grocery building and placed up on end with the door fronting the street. This again required the assistance of about the same number of men that it would to raise a large barn.

After it was in position the next move was to put on a roof and put down a floor. Mr. **Heaton** also had a seat put inside commencing at one side of the door and running around to the other side which gave a seating capacity of the entire shell except the doorway. It has been stated that twenty full grown persons were comfortably seated in this shell at one time. Mr. H. had a round table made which was some four feet across the top and placed in the center of the shell. At that early period it was the custom for nearly all merchants and grocery keepers as well as taverns and inns to sell liquor and Mr. H. among the others practiced that, but during the time he was running this grocery an incident occurred which we shall speak of hereafter that caused him to become one of the most ultra total abstinence men of that or any other age.

Mr. **Heaton** kept several bottles of liquor, a pitcher of water, crackers and cheese and other edibles on the round table. At that time there were large numbers daily of foot travelers, many times as high as twenty to twenty-five, also large numbers of teams, people moving west, nearly all of whom gave the big black walnut tree a call and took a drink or sat down and rested from their long walk. From this it acquired the title of a grocery being kept in a tree.

Mr. H. had not had the tree in occupancy but a short time before it was whispered that other[s] aspired to become its owners. It was also stated that the highway commissioners laid claim to it or a portion of it. Finally two people, one by the name of **Roberts**, residing near Fredonia, the other **Stearns**, residing in Hanover, purchased the interest of the town in the shell for a nominal sum and were about to take legal steps to gain possession of it when the other parties interested thought advisable to avoid a long and perhaps expensive litigation and disposed of their interest to the other parties. But Mr. **Heaton** was a loser in the operation of nearly the whole amount of the expense he had been at in fitting it up. Had not Mr. H. taken the matter in hand and had that portion of the tree cut off and fitted up it is probable that it would have remained where it lay until it was burned up to get it out the way as was done with a large portion of the remainder.

Mr. **Heaton** gave the purchasers of the tree possession of it the first week of September 1825. They immediately set themselves to work to get it to Buffalo. They arranged with (one informant was not quite sure but felt positive) Walter **Smith**, a merchant of Dunkirk, who was the owner of a small schooner known as the Dunkirk Packet, to tow the shell to Buffalo. The size prohibited it from being taken on board any vessel on the lake at that time. The new owner employed Mr. Hezekiah **Fisk** to superintend taking the shell to the lake and launching it. Mr. **Fisk** had a sort of carriage of trucks constructed by sawing off the ends of the largest sugar maple logs he could find. These were eight or ten inches through. They were trimmed into truck wheels with axles long enough so the shell could lay between the wheels. This truck was complete and the shell loaded upon it ready to be started on a Saturday noon.

The schooner in the meantime had come from Dunkirk and lay off the mouth of Silver Creek at anchor waiting. They hitched two strings of five yoke of oxen in each to the trucks and in the first start the reach gave way and the forward trucks pulled from under the load. This required rolling off the shell and repairing the trucks which took until late Saturday night. Very early on Sunday morning they made a new start and this time were more successful. They hauled it down through Main street of this village. The writer, although then a young boy of five years of age, remembers well of being called up early that Sunday morning to take a last look of the big black walnut, as it passed his father's residence. They crossed Silver Creek at what is now known as Howard Street Crossing (that was long previous to the opening of Dunkirk street) then down through Newbury street to the lake where it was launched into Lake Erie and the vessel succeeded in making fast to it and got under way the same afternoon.

They were fortunate in having good weather and reached Buffalo the next a.m. The proprietors had a rough board shanty erected near where **Pratt & Co's** Hardware store is now situated, and as soon as they could do so they got their White Elephant (for such it proved to be to them) on shore and inside the shanty ready for exhibition. Up to this time their expenses had been far greater than they anticipated and it was said their funds ran short before their tree was taken on shore and they were compelled to borrow and pledge their property for security. It was not long after they were ready for exhibition before bad wet weather came on which continued nearly all that fall and their receipts did but little more than meet their daily expenses.

Our informant was unable to state positively but was of the opinion that late in the fall the owners abandoned the tree and let it go into the hands of the parties from whom they borrowed money. This much is certain, the next Spring the tree had new owners who as soon as the canal opened made preparations to take it to New York. When they came to take measurement they found they would be unable to get it into an open canal boat even and have it pass under many of the bridges between Buffalo and Albany; they were compelled to resort to sawing it longitudinally into two parts and placing them into an open boat. On arrival at New York they were taken out and set up in a rough board shanty in the vicinity of where the City Hall now stands. The two parts were held together by strips of bar iron riveted or bolted through the timber. They were put together quite neatly so that a person that did not know would not imagine that they ever were separate parts.

The proprietors had some other minor attractions but the tree itself drew immense crowds and the receipts in New York were as much greater than expected as they were less in Buffalo. It soon became the great attraction of the city and was visited by not only all the prominent officials of the city but by the Governor and other prominent men of the state. It was sold three times during its stay in New York. The proprietors of the museum paying \$1,500 for it and in the winter or late in the fall of 1827 sold it for \$2,000 to go to London. It was exhibited at four or five different points in London during the first three years it was there but was finally purchased by a museum company, who were compelled to take out a part of the wall or side of their building in order to get it inside and there it remained until the building with the tree in it was destroyed by fire some 20 or 25 years ago, which was the end of the Big Black Walnut from the town of Hanover.

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*The Fredonia Censor* 2 April 1884, Early History of Hanover, Continued

A short time after Mr. **Heaton** lost the annex to his grocery store, an incident occurred that caused him to become one of the most ultra temperance men of that period, and he continued so through the remainder of his life. On a Saturday afternoon two weeks from the day the big tree was started, a party of ten or twelve Indians from the Cattaraugus reservation appeared at the grocery and laid in a pretty heavy stock of liquor.

But here let us state that the Indians of sixty years ago were a different people from those residing on the Cattaraugus reservation to-day. At that early period there were many of them who could not be regarded more than half civilized. They had no comfortable homes or habits of industry. They spent their time in hunting and fishing, by which they gained their food. When there was no game to hunt or fish to be caught the men made ax handles and their women baskets. The latter were generally exchanged for food and old clothes while the men exchanged their products for whiskey. However, the Indians at that time even were not all of that class. There were then some good industrious hard working men among them who had good cultivated farms and good cattle and horses with comfortable dwellings. Among this

latter class were the **Jemmisons** and **Halftowns**, also one known as Little Jake, who had a good well cultivated farm and a dwelling house that many white persons would have been proud to have been owner of.

This party who visited Mr. H's grocery were of the former class. After they had obtained all the whiskey they could get they started just before night fall for the reservation but proceeded no farther than Oak Hill just east of the village, and at the time covered with a dense wilderness which came down to the road-side. Here this party decided to go into camp for the night and at once commenced to make preparations by starting a large fire and gathering wood and logs to keep up the fire through the night. After imbibing freely it is supposed they dropped off into that deep sleep which usually overtakes those who are thoroughly under the influence of intoxicating liquors. Some time during the night one of their number by either falling or rolling over got into the fire. On account of his condition from imbibing too much fire water or some other cause he was unable to get out and there he lay until his companions were awakened by his cries and rescued him.

This Indian was burned about the head, shoulders and back almost beyond description. The next morning, which was Sunday, soon after daylight the whole party with their burned companion carried by five or six others in a large wool blanket, appeared at the residence of Mr. **Heaton** and asked to have something done for their burned friend. It was impossible for Mr. H. to take the Indian into his residence or give him shelter, but he immediately went for Doctor **Burgess** who came and did all in his power to alleviate the unfortunate man's suffering. There was not much probability that the Indian could live more than a day or two at farthest [sic] but the Doctor determined to do all he could to save his life.

The Doctor had in process of erection an addition to his dwelling house. In this there were two rooms which were fully enclosed but other ways unfinished. One of them had a chimney and fireplace so the room could be made comfortable if the weather became cold. It was arranged that this Indian with three or four of his companions, who were to remain and care for him should be assigned to those two rooms and everything done to make the sufferer as comfortable as possible. For nearly three months this burned Indian was an occupant of that room before he was well enough to return to the reservation. Doctor Burgess during the time attended him professionally and as humanely as though the sufferer were a white man of the higher order instead of a poor dissipated Indian. The Doctor said it was a human being he was attending, that was all it was necessary for him to know. The Indian finally recovered, but ever after was known by the name of And Iron. Whether or not he received this name from being burned we are unable to state.

This accident had the effect of revolutionizing Mr. **Heaton's** liquor traffic. He remarked that notwithstanding the Indians were but partially civilized they were enough so that they knew that the person who sold them the whiskey should be held responsible for the effects of it. The next morning (Monday) Mr. H. went to his place of business and among his first acts was to turn the last drop of his liquor upon the ground. He had fully resolved that he would never be held responsible for another affair of that kind, and as he never indulged in the use of it himself he had no use for the stuff.

The loss of the shell of the big walnut tree and the accident to the Indian had a discouraging affect [sic] upon Mr. **Heaton**, so that his mercantile ambition had become cooled off. During the following winter he closed out his entire stock and gave up the business. The Messrs. **Kipps**, ship carpenters and vessel owners of Buffalo, had advertised a schooner known as the *Fayette Packet* for sale. Mr. **Heaton** went to Buffalo in the early spring of 1826 and negotiated with the owners for this schooner, hoping to retrieve his fortune and regain some of the money he had lost in merchandising and other ventures.

Mr. H. employed an experienced and well known Captain by the name of **Burch**, who had had several years experience in sailing out of New Bedford, Mass., previous to coming to the Lakes. At that time there were no large cargoes of grain from the west and the principal business was coasting between Buffalo, Erie, Cleveland, Sandusky and the mouth of Maumee river, then called Manhattan, near where the city of Toledo now stands. Mr. **Heaton** went on board the *Fayette Packet* in the capacity of super-cargo. They left Buffalo on their first trip the first week in May with a small cargo of merchandise for Erie, Penn. There they obtained a cargo of lumber and staves for Buffalo. They continued the coasting trade, between Buffalo and Sandusky with varied success.

About the middle of August found them in Sandusky with freights dull and no very favorable prospects of their immediately being any better. Mr. **Heaton** took the *Fayette Packet* over to **Kelley's** Island (at that time it was known as **Cunningham's** Island) and purchased a cargo of lime stone and sailed for Cleveland, where he sold his cargo to a Mr. **Clark** with the understanding that it was to be paid for on their next trip, which they expected would be from four to six

weeks, but as Mr. H. was never in Cleveland again that debt has not become due and is still unpaid. However, Mr. **Heaton** learned the next spring that during that winter Mr. **Clark** failed in business and was unable to pay, for that reason he thought it folly to spend money in going there to try to collect it.

After discharging their cargo they returned to **Cunningham's** Island and purchased another cargo of limestone for Buffalo. When this was taken on board they went over to the city of Sandusky and took on a deck load of watermelons for Buffalo, with the owner as passenger. Also an enterprising yankee [*sic*] from Connecticut had been spending the summer near Fremont, Ohio, (then called Upper Sandusky) and had captured or purchased two young bears about two thirds or three fourths grown which he was anxious to take back to Connecticut with him. He negotiated for a passage for himself and young wild animals which he had in a large wooden cage. In addition each bear had a strap about his neck with a small trace chain attached to it.

A short time before leaving Sandusky two others, an old man and his son, who had spent the winter previous in hunting in the big black or Maumee swamp and the summer at work on a farm near Sandusky, engaged passage for Buffalo. The vessel got under way just before nightfall and was favored with a fine breeze off the land through the night, after sunrise the next morning a light breeze springing up from the south and west, which continued until next sundown. During the latter part of the day the Yankee and the old hunter and his son got into a discussion over some trifling matter and continued until all three of the parties became greatly excited and hot and angry words passed between them until Captain **Burch** felt it his duty to interfere. He succeeded in quelling the excitement and stopping the angry words but had no influence over their feelings.

About sundown all hands were called below to supper. The passengers all responded to the call excepting the younger one of the two hunters. It was noticed that he did not come below until the others were nearly through their meal. The cage of the two young bears had been placed close to and just forward the foremast. During the day the bear had been let out the cage with chains made fast to one of the slats which was nothing more than part of an oak stave nailed to a strip of white wood plank. The bears were thus enabled to walk about the deck to the extent of the length of their chains.

When the owner came up from supper he discovered his cubs loose and making their supper on watermelons. He made a start rather excitedly to secure them, when both cubs sprang for the foremast and commenced rapidly to ascend. The Yankee was quick enough to catch hold of the chain of one, which he compelled to come down. The other continued his upward course until he reached the cross-trees. There he seated himself, holding on with one arm of forepaw around the mast-head. The wind had died away and the vessel lay almost motionless, so that the bear was about as comfortable there as he would have been in a tree top. All efforts either of persuasion or compulsion did not appear to have any effect towards bringing him to the deck. No one cared to go up to force him down. There he sat as complacent and serene as though he had been sent up there for a lookout.

It was becoming dark and Capt. **Burch** said to the owner, if the animal did not come down through the night, on their reaching Buffalo the next morning he would lasso him and hitch a tackle to him and lower him down. It became evident to all that while the others were at supper and the men were in the forecastle or lounging aft, the young hunter out of revenge had pried off the slat and let the bears loose, but he denied all knowledge of it. Capt. **Burch** afterward said that if it had not been for fear of drowning the man he would have liked to throw him overboard to punish him for his ugliness.

Soon after the sun disappeared in the west, dark and angry-looking clouds made their appearance there, and as darkness came on it soon became evident that they were to have some rough weather. Then Capt. **Burch** regretted that he had not made an effort to bring down Bruin before it became too dark to attempt it. However the Captain thought that a heavy rain or the wind and rolling of the vessel might convince the young sailor that his safety depended upon his returning to the deck and resuming his place in his cage. As time passed the darkness increased and the distant thunder and lightning far to the rear of them, but which was rapidly approaching nearer and nearer, indicated what they might soon expect. All hands were called and fore sail and flying jib were taken in, a double reef was taken in the main sail, and standing jib and everything made taut and snug, ready for the gale when it struck them, which it was not long in doing.

In a short time they were scudding before the gale at the rate of ten miles an hour. Neither was it long before there was a heavy sea running and as it came directly after them the vessel rolled fearfully. A close watch was kept for a while to see if Bruin did not come down, but nothing was seen of him, and in the intense darkness they were unable to

determine whether he was at his post or not. The vessel took on board considerable water, and some of the deck load of melons were washed overboard. The cage with the other bear in it had been placed upon some blocks and chained to the foremast. Soon after midnight the gale commenced to die away and the sea to run down, but there was still enough sea to make it quite unpleasant for the landsmen.

They made Buffalo harbor about daylight next morning. As soon as it was light enough to see, all eyes were turned upward to the mast-head, but there was no bear there. He had either blown or rolled off into the lake. Captain **Burch** was of the opinion that the bear was rolled into the lake at the time the gale first struck the vessel, as then she was almost thrown upon her beam's end but as quickly righted. As soon as the vessel came near enough to the wharf for them to do so, the old hunter and his son jumped ashore and were not long in getting out of sight.

As was expected the Yankee mourned greatly for his lost cub. He not only set great store by him but in his estimation, bears, especially twin bears, were of great value in Connecticut where he was going. He had anticipated getting a large sum for the two, but one alone was of little value. He found some shyster of a lawyer in Buffalo who told him the schooner was liable for the value of his animal for two reasons: a passenger had let him loose, and the Captain had neglected to secure the bear when he could do so.

Rather than have the schooner libeled, which the fellow threatened doing, and to save expense, even if successful in litigation, Mr. **Heaton** refunded the Yankee his passage money and paid him \$30. With this the Yankee took his remaining cub and started on a canal boat for Albany. After this event the Fayette Packet made two trips to Erie and one to Ashtabula that fall. Each time her cargo down was staves and lumber. She was laid up in Buffalo early in the season and when the crew and all debts were paid off it was found the Fayette Packet had a small amount on the credit side of the ledger, but not enough to pay the risk and services of her super-cargo, so the investment was not regarded as a good one. Mr. **Heaton** had an opportunity of disposing of her at a small advance on what he paid the Messrs. **Kipps** for her, and so early the next spring the Fayette Packet became the property of other parties.

In the spring of 1827 Mr. **Heaton** resumed the carriage and wagon making business, which he continued until the fall of 1828, when he contracted with Oliver **Lee** to quarry the stone for sinking the piers for the wharf Mr. **Lee** at that time commenced building. In this contract Mr. H. was enabled to give employment to twelve or fifteen men through the winter until late the next spring. He had however kept one man and an apprentice employed in his wagon shop attending to the repairs, so that in the spring of 1829 he was enabled to resume the business himself.

In the spring of 1830 he engaged with Capt. Bushnell **Andrews**, a carpenter of this village, to go to Buffalo and jointly engage in the building and contracting business. Among the many buildings they erected was one for the **Whiting** Clock Company, which was located on Niagara street near where the **Clarke** Manufacturing Company is now situated. Some years afterward this building was destroyed by fire.

In April, 1832, Mr. **Heaton** lost his wife who left him with six small children, the youngest but a few weeks old. This one and another son aged eight years survived their mother but a few months. Soon after this the cholera became epidemic in Buffalo. He returned to Silver Creek and resumed his old business of wagon and carriage making, which he continued for some years. During this time several young men learned the business of him. Among them was Edmund **Clark**, who is still here in the business which he has continued for 50 years past. A half century is a long time for a man to remain in one business in the same village where he learned his trade. In 1839 Mr. **Heaton** came in possession of some real estate at Eden Valley, Erie Co., this state. He moved there in the summer of 1840, and died there March 15, 1842, aged only 45 years and 6 months.

FC8

*The Fredonia Censor* 4-9-1884, Early History of Hanover, Continued.

Captain Bushnel **Andrews**, a native of the town of Stillwater, Saratoga county, this state, emigrated to Chautauqua county and settled in the town of Hanover early in the spring of 1822. Capt. **Andrews** had been married but a short time when he came here. He was a carpenter and joiner by trade (**Young's** History of Chautauqua Co. puts him down as a captain of a lake vessel. This is a mistake. He received his title of captain from being a commander of a military company). He at once engaged in the building business and first had charge of directing a building which was intended

for a dwelling but was afterwards used for a store for a short time. It stood on the ground where Mr. Sol. **Taylor** now resides, but was destroyed by fire some years since.

Capt. **Andrews** also had charge of the construction of the house for Luther **Heaton**; also when that building was sold to Jas. **Harris** and moved to the opposite side of the street, he had charge of its removal, and the construction of the additions which were necessary to make it suitable for a hotel or tavern, as all public houses or places of entertainment were called at that period. He also superintended the construction of the large barns that were put up in connection with this house. In the winter of 1828 or early spring of 1829 Capt. **Andrews** purchased from the late Oliver **Lee** the lot on which H. J. **Newton** now resides, and built a small but neat dwelling house intending it for his own residence for some time, but in the spring of 1830 when he determined to go to Buffalo and engage in the building business with Luther **Heaton**, he disposed of this property to Major C. C. **Swift**.

Among the many buildings erected in Buffalo by Luther **Heaton** and Capt. **Andrews**, was quite a large one on Niagara St. for the **Whiting** Clock Co. which was afterwards destroyed by fire. They also did the carpenter work on the stone cottage for Dr. Ebenezer **Johnson**, situated on Delaware St. above Mohawk. At the time of erection and for some years afterwards, this was quite a noted building. This building was also destroyed by fire some years afterwards. As stated in a previous chapter, Mr. **Heaton** lost his wife in April, 1832, and the summer following returned to this village. Capt. **Andrews** remained in Buffalo some five or six years, when he emigrated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which was then just commencing to boom.

Capt. **Andrews** had been connected with a military company for a long time previous to his leaving Saratoga Co. He had a great love and ambition for military display. He was rather large in stature and of a fine form and made a splendid looking officer. In the winter of 1825 he commenced to organize a military company here. He succeeded in getting a roll of 35 names. Several of them however resided in the adjacent country. They met quite a number of times during the winter for drill. Early the next spring they determined to uniform and make their first public parade on the coming Fourth of July. They decided to call themselves The Washington Guards. Capt. **Andrews** was chosen their Commander, with Alanson **Tower** and Samuel **Convis** [?] as First and Second Lieutenants.

Their uniform consisted of a leather, bell-crowned cap, such as were worn by the regular army of that period; their coats were of blue cloth, with small standing collar, of the swallow-tail pattern, and with large gilt buttons, and white epaulets on the shoulder. Their caps were trimmed with a large white feather with red top, and also displayed a large amount of white cotton braid and cord, and a large tin shield with an eagle stamped on it. Their pants were of white drilling (bleached) with about eight inches of black bombazine around the bottom. There were six or eight of their number who had been unable to obtain their full uniform, but had extemporized a blue cloth coat of the swallow-tail cut and an ordinary bell-crowned fur hat, such as was worn in those days, with the feather and tin shield attached. The white pants and other parts of the uniform were easily obtained.

Their guns were bright and new, and with the other equipments furnished by the state came direct from the armory or arsenal. At this time (the spring of 1826) James **Harris** had purchased the **Heaton** buildings and had then moved on to the ground and was busily engaged in converting them into a tavern. As soon as it was settled that the coming Fourth of July should be celebrated here by a public parade of the Washington Guards, the young people also determined to have an independent ball at the New Tavern as it was called. In order to insure its full completion in time for this event, it became necessary to double the force of workmen on the house, also to keep them at work late nights as far as practicable.

As the day came near, the news went all over the surrounding vicinity that there was to be a grand celebration on the Fourth of July at Fayette, as the place was then called. With the citizens there was one drawback. They had no artillery. There was none nearer than Fredonia, and even if *they* had a gun it was supposed they would require it for their own celebration and therefore would not care to lend it. The idea of celebrating the Fourth of July without artillery to awaken the people Independence morning was preposterous.

The old adage that necessity is the mother of invention, proved true here. The night previous to the Fourth, four or five of the young men of the village supplied themselves with powder and other materials and shortly after midnight went to the blacksmith shops of Asa **Gage** and Jonathan **Keith**. From the former they took two anvils and from the latter one. These they took to the middle of the street at the east end of Walnut creek bridge. Each anvil contained a hole about 1

$\frac{3}{4}$  or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches square and 6 or 8 inches deep. Into each of these they put from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of fine-rifle powder, then drove in firmly a plug with a priming hole through the center, made from hard wood.

As the first indications of day made their appearance these young men commenced to fire their artillery, which they continued for some time at intervals of about three or four minutes. It was necessarily slow for for [*sic*] it required time to load their pieces. The report was fully equal to that of an eight or ten-pound cannon, and as it vibrated over the hills and echoed through the valleys in the early morning, the people came pouring out of their houses as though a bombardment like that against Ft. Sumpter was being poured upon the village. It was not long before Independence day and Bunker Hill were brought to memory and the day was ushered in with joy and gladness.

About 8 o'clock the people from the surrounding country, dressed in their best holiday attire, came pouring into town. Most of them came for a day of enjoyment, while others had speculation in their mind's eye and came with their wagons loaded with gingerbread, sweet cake, pies and spruce beer. These sought favorable positions in the fence corners and other places along the street. The Washington Guards had been warned to appear armed and equipped as the law directs at the house of James **Harris** at 9 o'clock a.m. of that day. Soon after that hour they commenced to arrive and at 10 o'clock precisely the line was formed with right resting to the east. Immediately afterwards the orderly sergeant approached the parlor of the hotel and informed Capt. **Andrews** that his command awaited his pleasure. Followed by his Lieutenants, the Captain proceeded to the head of the company and while they stood with present arms he marched down in front and back in the rear, viewing and inspecting each man as critically as though he was reviewing the army of Napoleon Bonaparte.

On arriving at his proper position he gave the necessary commands, but when his company attempted to form into two platoons by wheeling, it would have brought a smile upon the face of a West Pointer. However, by pushing, hauling and shoving, the men were finally got into position. They then marched up street and down street three or four times, preceded by fife and drums. After manouvering [*sic*] about the streets for a couple of hours, they proceeded to an open field[,] which is now the public square, where they practiced the manual of arms for a while. Then they commenced firing, first by company, then by platoon, then at will, to the full and entire satisfaction of the small boy and his female companion, who were out in full force. After they were through firing the Washington Guards marched back to their rendezvous and were dismissed.

Toward nightfall the young men who had been hard at work in the corn field or hay field for the past ten days or two weeks for the purpose of obtaining funds to defray the expense of this independence ball, commenced to make their appearance, accompanied by their girls, decked out in white cambric dresses trimmed with pink or blue satin ribbon with small dainty slippers on their feet and white cotton gloves on their hands. As darkness made its appearance the ball room of Jas. **Harris** was illuminated with two tallow candles to each window, stuck into a socket attached to a tin reflector. It must be remembered that this was a period before the advent of the Chinese fire cracker or torpedo or before the introduction of the Roman candle and fiery serpent or before that invention of the Evil One, the *toy pistol*. Their fireworks consisted of squibs made by dampening a small amount of powder and filling a goose quill first by a layer of damp powder, then of dry, until the quill was full.

Soon after dark music from a cracked violin and squeaking clarionet [*sic*] struck up, and the dancers commenced while the firing of muskets and goose quill squibs was going on in the street. The dance continued until about 12 o'clock, when an adjournment for refreshments was announced. Each young man selected his Jerusha, and proceeded to the dining room, where they sat down to an ample supper of roast pig, chicken pie, and other edibles of like nature. After supper the company returned to the ball room and resumed the dance, which was kept up until daylight did appear. Thus ended the first celebration of Independence day in this village.

The organization of the Washington Guards was kept up for many years. Capt. **Andrews** was succeeded in command by Capt. W. D. **Talcott**, who came here in 1833 from Connecticut. During the command of Capt. **Talcott**, this company was invited and took part in the celebration and erecting the Log Cabin in Fredonia in August, 1840. Some years afterwards Capt. W. D. **Talcott** was succeeded in command by his son Chauncey, who was in command and took the company to the front during the late war at the call of the President for one-hundred-day men. Since the close of the late war the organization of Washington Guards has been allowed to drop out of existence.

Elisha **Seymour**, whose wife was a sister of Capt. **Andrews**, also a native of Saratoga Co., came here at the time with **Andrews**. **Seymour** was a farmer and very soon after his arrival here articted from the Holland Land Co. a farm on the

lake shore just west of the village, which Mr. John **Dalrymple** now owns. This lot was an entire wilderness and **Seymour** was compelled to find shelter for his wife and two children until he could cut off the timber and clear a space for a house. To accomplish this as soon as possible he worked early and late, often spending the entire night on the place, chopping by the light of brush fires until he was compelled to suspend work for the need of rest. As soon as he had a couple of acres cleared off by the help of his brother-in-law **Andrews** he built himself a very comfortable frame house and small barn and set the remainder of his cleared land to fruit trees, principally apple. He continued to chop and clear away the timber as fast as he could do so, occasionally employing help, until he had 15 or 20 acres suitable for cultivation, on which he raised wheat and corn for the support of his family.

Previous to leaving Saratoga Co. he disposed of his property there and held a bond and mortgage for the payment of most of the purchase money. At the time he articed his place here he expected the money due him in Saratoga Co. to meet the payments here. For that reason he took a short article. By doing so he could save considerable money on the purchase. In the early summer of 1827 a family by the name of **Johnson**, consisting of man and wife and four children – two grown up sons and two daughters, -- came here from the southern part of the county and settled in the village. They did not appear to have any occupation and the old gentleman and sons spent their time in looking over the country. After they had been here three or four months the old gentleman and his oldest son quietly with their team left town one morning, no one taking interest enough to inquire to where they had gone.

After three or four days they as quietly returned as they went. Next morning their household effects or the principal part of them were loaded into their wagon and the whole family started for some place, no one knew where. They passed down through Main and Newbury streets to the lake, where they crossed the creek in the edge of the lake, then followed the shore to the high bank and appeared in front of **Seymour's** house. All hands at once set themselves at work in putting **Seymour's** household goods out of doors and theirs inside the house. **Seymour** was off some distance from the house chopping. His wife and two children were there alone. Mrs. S. protested and asked for an explanation, but the new comers did not stop to give any, but said to her, if she kept out of their way she would not get hurt.

She put her two young children in a safe place and started to acquaint her husband of what was taking place. He returned with her but found the **Johnsons** in full possession of his house with all his effects piled up promiscuously in the field. When he asked them for an explanation they told him they were the legal owners of the property, that they had obtained peaceable possession, and they intended to retain it. They said further that his article had expired nearly a year previous, and that he had failed to renew it or make any payments on the property. Therefore he had lost all right and title to it. They said they then held an article for the farm which they had obtained from the Holland Land Co. by making a first payment and paying the interest on **Seymour's** contract. In this way they gained advantage of all the improvements that had been made on the property by **Seymour**.

After **Seymour** found that he was dispossessed of his home and his wife and children turned out of doors, his heart nearly sank within him. He immediately came over to the village to consult with his brother-in-law **Andrews** who at once returned with **Seymour** and not withstanding the **Johnsons** had made good preparation for defense during the absence of **Seymour** by securing five or six well trimmed clubs which they had in handy position should they be required. **Andrews** and **Seymour** immediately set themselves at work to throw **Johnson's** goods out of doors and put **Seymour's** back in the house. **Andrews** was a large powerful man, full of energy and perseverance, and when the **Johnsons** attempted to interfere he laid one sprawling on the right hand and another on the left. He afterwards said he would have succeeded in putting the whole family with all their effects out of doors and keeping them there had not the woman interfered and brought the clubs that had been prepared into requisition and belabored him soundly while he was piling their men folks up out of doors. He could not muster courage sufficient to strike a woman.

The affair resulted in the **Johnsons** keeping possession of the property, and **Seymour**, who had worked hard and industriously for four or five years in clearing the land and making improvements, did not get a cent for them, but the **Johnsons** commenced a suit against him and **Andrews** for an assault by employing Judge **Mullett** of Fredonia. They obtained a judgment for one hundred dollars. Then **Seymour** turned in and commenced a suit against the **Johnsons** for illegal proceedings in obtaining possession of the property. This time Judge **Mullett** was **Seymour's** attorney and he obtained a judgment against the **Johnsons** for a hundred dollars.

So one hundred dollars offset the other and the men had their experience for the expense and costs. The locality was known for many years as Bloody Point. **Seymour** once more found shelter for his family here in the village for three or four months and after receiving his money from Saratoga Co. he left here for the far west. He said he would go far



beyond the dominion and influence of the Holland Land Co. He brought up in Wisconsin where the city of Madison now is. That country was then known as the North-western Territory, and was regarded as being farther away and less accessible than Australia now is. By the great rise in property **Seymour** became very wealthy.

FC9

*The Fredonia Censor* 23 April 1884, Early History of Hanover, Continued.

Among the greatest privations the early settlers of this portion of Hanover had to endure was a lack of amusements, social gatherings and places of entertainments [*sic*]. Even the old-fashioned spelling school was often turned into a social gathering and highly enjoyed. It was no unusual thing for the older scholars of our school to go three or four miles away to attend a spelling match with a neighboring school. The apple parings or paring bees were another place where the younger portion of the community met for enjoyment and pleasure, and at times some of the older members of society favored these places with their presence and appeared to enjoy them highly.

Next in the scale of amusements was the public ball which was held at some tavern or other public place that was convenient. These balls were usually held on Christmas or New Years eve or evening, or on the evening of the Fourth. The latter were usually called Independence balls. We gave a description of one of them in a previous chapter. We must here relate an incident that caused quite a ripple of excitement for the time being at the expense of one of our worthy citizens. The young people were making preparations for a Christmas ball at the house of James **Harris** on Christmas following their Independence ball of July 4, 1826. The matter had been talked over for some time and preparations were being made for a grand affair.

At the time there were no regular religious meetings held excepting Sunday evening when all the religious community and those religiously inclined met at the school house for prayer meeting. On the Sunday evening previous to the Christmas eve when this ball was to be held, one of the worthy brothers who was noted for his long exhortations, generally addressed to the younger portion of the community, arose and commenced to exhort the young people to refrain from attending the Christmas ball. He held out the argument that there was no real enjoyment—that the pleasures claimed to be had at a ball were transitory and void. After talking a few moments he became deeply warmed up to his subject and exclaimed, "My young friends, I presume I have attended more than a hundred Christmas balls in my younger days and never yet received any real or lasting enjoyment from it." He had in his excitement forgotten that Christmas comes but once a year and he was yet far from being an old man. However he was truly a good man and if he did not have the pleasure of living to enjoy a hundred Christmases he came near to it. His life was spared and he continued to reside here until a few years since, when he was gathered to his fathers, past the age of ninety years.

The first entertainment of a dramatic nature came off early in the month of November, 1827. There came to the tavern one day about noon (they had remained over at Fredonia the night before and given an exhibition there) a gentleman, his wife and daughter. The young lady was apparently 18 or 20 years of age. They were traveling by their own conveyance, which consisted of a pair of worn out horses with a covered but somewhat dilapidated vehicle, with harness to match. Shortly before reaching here their carriage broke down so that it became necessary for them to remain over a day or two for repairs. The gentleman announced that he had been manager of a theater in Philadelphia, Pa., and was then on his way to Albany, this state, to take the management of one there. He also stated that his daughter was an actress of great merit and drew large houses whenever she appeared.

Very soon after noon the gentleman started out with his hands filled with small bills which he distributed liberally at every house, announcing that there would be a dramatic entertainment in the ball room of **Harris'** Tavern that evening. "Price of admission 25 cts., children half price." When the hour came for the performance to commence they had an audience of 30 or 35 persons. Their stage scenery was of the most simple and cheap order. In fact all they had pertaining to it was a coarse cheap oil painting on canvass, representing a lake scene in Switzerland, which was about the size of an ordinary bedspread. This was hung up across the ball room about ten or twelve feet from the end, the audience occupying the largest portion of the room. For a dressing room they occupied a sleeping room that opened into the ball room. However we do not think that a dressing room was required, for there was not much change of wearing apparel.

Mr. **Harris** employed a man for hostler who was the owner of an old cracked violin, on which he could play a few ordinary dancing tunes. This individual was employed and constituted the orchestra. Mr. **Harris'** son was also employed to shove the drop curtain back and forth to one side of the room whenever it was required. We are unable to give the

name of the play, but remember distinctly some of the characters represented. The three members of the family, namely the man, his wife and daughter, took part. The young lady endeavored to represent two characters, that of a very dissipated young man, also that of a young lady with whom the young man was deeply in love. The man and wife were represented as the parents of the young lady, who were deeply grieved to think their daughter would entertain any affection for such an inebriate.

As the young lady represented the two, both could not appear on the stage at the same time, but it required but a moment to metamorphose one to the other. It was done by putting on and off an old, well jammed or mashed plug hat and an overcoat belonging to the landlord with large side pockets, in which were plainly visible two black junk bottles from which the young man improved frequent opportunities of imbibing when he was not observed by the old people. At the same time he was protesting every few moments that if the parents would only allow their daughter to marry him he would never drink another drop. The old people had no confidence in his protestations, but after his departure or exit the young lady would come in and inquire if her lover had been there and when told that he had but shortly left, and the condition he was in, her grief was intense, and it so affected one or two of the female portion of the audience, that they could not restrain their tears. The scene finally closed by the parents telling the young man to go away to sea and if he returned at the end of two years a sober and better man and with a certain sum of money, he could have their daughter. They were compelled to remain over the second night before their carriage was repaired, but did not receive sufficient encouragement to attempt another entertainment.

A few months previous to this dramatic affair, we think it was in September, there came along a broken down menagerie, in those days called a caravan. They had been exhibiting in south-western Pennsylvania and Ohio and were on their way east to winter and recuperate. They had but a few animals, among them a white and brown camel, a zebra, a poor old lion, one or two tigers, and a few minor animals. They stopped over with James **Harris** and spread their tent in a field back of his barn and exhibited one afternoon. This was our first show of wild animals.

Early in June of 1833 or 1834 Samuel **Nichols**, the great circus man of that period, favored us with a visit with his circus and exhibited on the square in front of the Silver Creek House. This was purely a circus. It was before the time of consolidating menageries and circuses. They had been on the road but a short time; consequently all their equipments and trappings were bright and new. Their actors and employes [*sic*] were gentlemanly and respectful. Their horses were in fine condition, well trained and made a fine appearance. The village and surrounding country had been well billed for three or four weeks previous to their coming. The day was an exceedingly fine one and notwithstanding they gave but one performance and that in the evening, the people came in from the country in vast numbers.

This was the first circus to appear here and the first that many ever witnessed, so that when night came, their vast tent was filled to overflowing. Everything passed off in apple pie order until they came to an act where a pretended drunken man enters the ring and insists on riding. This was carried out to perfection. A very attractive young lady had rode around the ring three or four times when an exceedingly loaferish-looking fellow entered the ring from among the audience, and had an altercation with the ring-master and clown (apparently he was very drunk). He insisted upon being permitted to ride. He stated that he could do it as well as the young lady who had left the horse a few moments before. The ring master declined to let him try, telling him that in his condition he would fall from the horse and break his neck.

At the time there were two or three schooners lying at the pier, the men of which were all at the circus. After the ring master and clown had argued with the apparently much inebriated man for a few moments, and insisted upon his leaving the ring, which he declined to do, two of the sailors jumped into the ring and instantly throwing off their coats were about to clinch the man and throw him out. The ring master saw they were in earnest and unless nipped in the bud there might be trouble. He and the clown placed themselves between the sailors and the pretended drunken man and thanked them for their kind offer of assistance, but told them they could manage the fellow, that he was so anxious to ride they believed they would let him do it, but they had given him sufficient warning so if he fell off and broke his neck there would be no one to blame but himself. The sailors said they would just as soon throw the fellow outside the tent as not, and if the ring master needed any of their assistance they were ready. After thanking them again for their kind offer, he insisted upon their taking their places among the audience.

In the meantime the fellow had made three or four attempts at mounting the horse. With the clown's assistance he succeeded in getting up on the horse's back but each time would go clear over on to the ground on the opposite side, but would crawl under the horse's belly to his former position, the horse standing perfectly quiet all the time. Finally after the sailors had got clear of the ring the fellow became seated on the horse which immediately started on a run.

After going around the ring in a reeling condition, in which he came near falling off the horse two or three times, he sprang upon his feet, standing upon the horse's back, which was going at the top of its speed. The fellow commenced to throw off the old clothes which he continued to do until he came out in the usual dress of the riders. Then such a shout went up at the expense of the two sailors that it appeared as though it could have been heard a mile or more away. When the sailors saw they had been victims of their own ignorance, they felt cheap enough and were compelled to put up with the derision and jeers of their companions.

The next great show that visited the town of Hanover exhibited at Forestville, we think in June, either 1835 or 1836. This was advertised to be the most immense, gigantic and greatest menagerie with the largest number of wild animals that had ever traveled. Among the many attractions were 128 gray horses. These were used for transporting their animals and paraphernalia. There were no incidents worthy of mention at this exhibition, only as the time arrived for the man to go into the cage with the lions, which also contained a leopard and small tiger, the audience were driven back to the opposite side of the tent and two or three strong ropes made fast fronting them to keep them back some distance from the cage.

The manager then mounted a chair and said to the audience that a day or two before, while the man was in the cage going through the exercises with the lion, he was set upon by the leopard or tiger, whichever it was that occupied the cage with the lion. The animal caught the man in the back of the neck with its jaws and bit him tremendously and the man's life was only saved by the promptness of the employes [*sic*]. Should anything of the kind occur that day, while the man was in the cage, he asked the audience to remain perfectly cool and quiet—that the man's life would depend upon their doing so, for if there should be any great noise or excitement the animals could not be restrained.

While the manager was talking some ten or twelve men, employes [*sic*], came in from an adjoining tent armed with long round iron bars sharpened at one end, others with long clubs, and two of them had guns, and took position in front of the wagon containing the cage. As soon as the manager was through with his speech the man who was to go in with the wild animals, made his appearance with the back of his head and neck bandaged, with large blood spots showing through the bandage. After giving the ferocious little animal a good sound beating with the iron bars, the two men with guns already cocked and pointed into the cage, the man entered and went through the exercise with the lion by opening the lion's mouth with his hands and placing his head and face in it. As this man placed his head with that bloody bandage between the lion's jaws we are sure that vast audience stood with hushed breath, not even the slightest noise could be heard, and every individual breathed freer when the man was safely out of the cage. It was reported, we do not know whether there was any truth in the report or not, that a month or six weeks after they were here, while exhibiting near Cincinnati, the man was again attacked by the same animal and bitten so badly he died. This company exhibited at Fredonia the following day.

The next public entertainment we had in the village of Silver Creek, came off in the early spring of 1835. It was of dramatic nature and composed entirely of home talent. Mr. William **Brannon** who was our leading tailor at the time had in his employ a couple of journeymen who had traveled over a large portion of the globe. Although they had never met until they became fellow workmen for **Brannon** they became bosom companions. They each professed to possess dramatic talent and had a love and ambition for the excitement of the stage. They commenced in the early winter to talk the matter up with the different young men of the village, and to select from among the young people, those who were willing to take part in the affair and assign to them such characters as they thought each one most competent to represent.

One of these tailors who was the leader in the affair was known by the cognomen of Tim Twist, but real name was **Fuller**, name of the other was **Stewart**. We believe they were both natives of the Green Isle. As previously stated these knights of the needle commenced in the early winter to talk the matter up. **Brannon's** tailor shop was a place of resort for many of the young men of the village, and these two jou[e]rs used to delight in telling of the many dramatic affairs in which they had taken part and in giving exhibitions of their dramatic skill by rehearsing portions of Shakespeare and other poets.

It was finally determined that if a suitable room could be obtained to make a trial. They conferred with Mr. Jonathan **Keith**, proprietor of the Silver Creek House, and found that they could have the ball room of that house for rehearsals and for public exhibition. They then made their selection of persons who were to take part in the performance and assigned to each one the different characters they were to represent.

The play selected was Damon and Pithias, **Fuller** and **Stewart** took the leading parts. Next came Mr. B. Wilber **Cotton**, then a resident of Silver Creek, but previous to that time and many years since has been a resident of Fredonia. Mr. Amos **Wight** who is still a resident with us came next, John **Roll**, who died two or three years after, and a Mr. **Slosson**, a school teacher here at the time, with two or three others whose names have passed from our memory, constituted the male portion. The ladies were represented by Miss Mary **Trask**, Mrs. Persis **Holmes**, Miss Lydia Ann **Mason**, Miss Eliza Ann **Gates**, Misses Roxana and Susan **Williams**. This company met once a week for some time for rehearsal and it would have made the genius of Romance tear every hair from his historic head could he have been present to witness the wild fury of those two stage struck tailors. Passion was rent into more pieces than they could sew together during their natural lives.

The long looked for time came after a while for a public exhibition, and for three nights our citizens and those living in the vicinity, as well as several from Forestville and Fredonia (for the fame of this heroic band had gone out and spread over the country) were held spell bound by the thrilling performance. The price of admission was put at 12 ½ cents, thinking that much would pay the current expenses. The hall was not large enough to accommodate more than half that applied for admittance each night. Among the audience we noticed Captain **Grosvenor**, at the the [sic] time United States Collector of this port, who had probably had opportunities of witnessing some of the best dramatic talent in America. At times during the most tragic part of the piece he was so convulsed with laughter that we feared instantaneous apoplexy.

Notwithstanding the large crowd that attended each night, the affair was not a success pecuniarily. There were a great many dead heads and some whome [sic] one would least suspect or for a moment suppose they would accept a free pass to an entertainment of the kind. The stray shillings that came in were far from being sufficient to pay for the tinsel and burned cork used in decorating the performers, but the affair afforded not only to all the young people of the village but many of the older ones a scene of vast enjoyment. The performers generally regarded the amusement as amply paying them for the time, expense and trouble they were at.

The ardent disciples **Fuller** and **Stewart** were so elated over their fancied success they were determined to abandon the goose and needles in disgust and try to find larger fields for the exercise of their dramatic talent. We are sorry to add that it is feared they were not successful. A few years after **Stewart** was captured while participating in the Canadian rebellion and tried by a Court Martial and sentenced to VanDieman's Land for a term of years, while **Fuller** through disappointment and what he thought was a lack of appreciation of true dramatic talent took to drink and when we last heard from him he and whisky were boon companions and whisky was fast getting the advantage. Quite a number of the others who took part in this performance are still living and the ladies especially are highly respected among the community in which each resides. We here would acknowledge our indebtedness to our worthy citizen Amos **Wight** esq. for his kindness in refreshing our memory regarding many of the incidents of this dramatic entertainment of almost fifty years ago.

FC10

*The Fredonia Censor* 7 May 1884, Early History of Hanover, Continued.

Mr. William **Brannon**, a young man, "a native of Ireland," found his way to this locality in the summer of 1826. Mr. B. was a tailor by occupation and as there was a good opening for one here at that time he decided to remain for a while. Mr. B. was a gentleman by nature and education, but had one pernicious habit, and for a time it was feared by those who endeavored to encourage him in doing right, it would lead him to the lowest pit of degradation and woe. When he came here he had been accustomed to have his periodical spells of intoxication. He had not been here but a short time before it was ascertained that he was a splendid workman, and just the man the citizens would be glad to have settle here permanently providing he would leave off his bad habits so that he could be relied upon, and for this reason all the better class of citizens of the village and vicinity felt like encouraging and patronizing him.

After he had been here a few months during which time he had two or three of his periodical sprees which usually lasted him from a week to ten days at a time, he found a number of the best people were sincere in their protestations of friendship and their desire to have him leave off the bad habit; he finally determined to do so and became a sober temperate citizen. As time advanced his friends felt greatly encouraged, and his customers increased and work poured in upon him until he was compelled to employ two or three women in addition to a journeyman.

Things had gone along in this way for nearly a year and all supposed that **Brannon** was wholly reformed, when in an unguarded moment from some cause he was tempted to take one drink; after that one drink was taken it was but a few moments before he wanted another; that was taken, then he was lost to all realization of his condition and of his previous pledge. He continued in this debauch for a week or ten days before he came to himself. After he had sobered down and straightened up once more he appeared to realize the deep disgrace he had brought upon himself, and appeared to feel that his friends had lost confidence in him. But he made another resolve to let all that would intoxicate entirely alone.

However it was not more than two months before he fell again and again was in an inebriate condition for a week or ten days. After he sobered up the second time his friends did not say much to him or go near him, in fact they had lost confidence and felt that it was beyond the power or influence of man to fully reform him. During the next three or four months he had about the same number of spells of intoxication. During the time his journeyman had left him, also one of the young women had left and gone to her home.

He had a coat for one of our leading citizens partly finished which was needed very much, as it was intended for a wedding coat. On this account the person got Mr. B. to a room where he watched over him and took care of him until he was capable of going to his shop and resuming his business. This gentleman was very anxious to have his coat completed by a certain period and knew very well that should the maker get another taste of liquor before it was completed it would be a long time before he got it, and for this reason he remained in the shop with Mr. B. through the day and required him to take his meals at the same table and occupy the same room at night.

During the time the gentleman had frequent conversations with **Brannon** in regard to his pernicious habits. B. appeared to realize his condition and feel the great disgrace it had brought upon him and appeared to realize what his future would be be [*sic*] if he continued in the practice. Finally his friend said to him if he would make one more attempt at reformation and not drink a drop of intoxicating liquor for a year he would make him a handsome present. At this juncture a Miss **Williams**, a young lady of 22 or 23 years of age who had been in his employ for some time, spoke up and said, "yes, if you will remain sober and not drink a drop of intoxicating liquors for a year, I will marry you." Mr. B. instantly replied that he would accept both propositions.

At once a pledge, a species of contract was drawn up to which all parties signed, and which was duly witnessed, and we are happy to state that Mr. **Brannon** scrupulously kept the pledge, not only for the year but for many years. Up to our last acquaintance with him in 1842 we do not think that he had even been in the least under the influence of liquor. Soon after the expiration of the year Miss **Williams** became Mrs. **Brannon**. From this period his business again commenced to increase and it was not long before he was accumulating property.

Within a year he purchased from Oliver **Lee** esq. the lot and soon afterward erected the dwelling house which at the time was regarded one of the best in the village, and has been the residence of the late H. N. **Farnham** for a number of years past. During the time they (**Brannon** and wife) resided here they had born unto to them, five children, three sons and two daughters; the daughters were the oldest. The family remained here until the spring of 1849 when they removed to Calumet, Wis. In the spring of 1850 they changed to Portage, Wis. At Portage their eldest son Samuel S. who was born at Silver Creek, February 2d, 1835, was apprenticed to the printing business and became roller boy in the office of the River Times.

We learn from the Wisconsin State Register of April 10, 1880, the following of this Silver Creek boy: In the summer of 1853 he made the over land journey on foot to California, where soon after his arrival there he found employment in a printing office at Downerville. In 1856 he returned to Portage, Wis. In 1860 he was elected marshal of the city of Madison Wis. In 1861 was elected Alderman of the 2d Ward. In 1871 he was elected Mayor of the city of Madison and re-elected in 1872. In 1864 he, in company with a Mr. A. J. **Turner**, under the firm name of **Brannon & Turner**, purchased The Wisconsin State Register, which they continued to publish until 1878, when his health failing him the office was disposed of to John T. **Clark**.

After the disposal of his printing business, he planned a trip to Colorado where he spent several months and so far regained his health, he thought it safe to return to Wisconsin. In the spring of 1879 he was appointed Post Master at the city of Madison. For a few months his health appeared to improve and his friends all hoped that there were many years of health and happiness in store for him, but that disease which had taken off his father and sisters and two brothers had fastened itself upon him and on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, 1880, he crossed the River to his eternal home, leaving a widow and

four children and his aged mother. We have given greater space to this biography than we should have done had not Samuel S. **Brannon** been a Silver Creek boy and his parents brought together under such peculiar circumstances. He grew up a worthy example for others young men to follow.

Doctor Jeremiah **Ellsworth** came from Otsego county this State and settled in this village in 1827 or 1828. Doctor **Ellsworth** was a person of more than ordinary abilities in his profession. We believe he was not a graduate of any of the higher grades of Colleges but had been favored with with [sic] more than an ordinary education. He possessed some marked traits of character and at all times evinced a nobleness that is always admired by the high-minded good citizen.

Dr. **Ellsworth** engaged in the practice of his profession very soon after settling here. Hanover was rapidly filling up with settlers [sic] from the East and the calls for medical treatment were increasing to that extent that it taxed the endurance of Dr. **Burgess** so much that he was not able to respond to all of them, therefore he gladly welcomed Dr. **Ellsworth**, so that the two often rode and counseled together. Notwithstanding Dr. **Ellsworth** had an increasing and generally successful practice with a prospect of its becoming quite lucrative, it soon became evident that his profession was not pleasing and agreeable to him and that he would prefer a business that did not require him to ride into the country and keep him so much away from his young family.

In the spring of 1831 he purchased from Oliver **Lee** the lot on the corner of Main and Dunkirk streets where the Hanford Block now stands and erected a store building with a dwelling house attached. His family occupied the apartment for dwelling purposes while in the early summer of 1832 and '33, he purchased a small stock of goods principally groceries and drugs and medicines. This business however did not require but a small portion of his time, as he had an able clerk or assistant, so he was able to keep up a part of his practice responding to calls near by.

Also he had not been here but a short time before it became known that he had given his attention somewhat to law, and had to a limited extent practiced before a justice of the peace. We are happy to state that at this time there is not one fourth of the amount of litigation here before a Justice of the Peace that there was fifty to sixty years ago. At that time there was hardly a week that there was not one, two or some times three contested suits before the justice, and it was often the case that Dr. **Ellsworth** was retained either by plaintiff or defendant and was usually quite successful and he became popular as an advocate before a justice court.

He continued to run his store until the spring of 1836, though for the last year or so previous to that time he had not replenished his stock but slightly so that it had become greatly reduced. In the early spring of 1836, Dr. **Ellsworth** disposed of this property to Mr. Charles H. **Lockwood** of Rochester, N.Y. who came here about the first of May that year and opened quite a prominent grocery and family supply store. Dr. **Ellsworth** then purchased the lot on which Mrs. **Jackson** now resides and had a neat, comfortable dwelling erected for his family and a small building near it for an office into which he moved the remnant of his drugs and medicines. The Doctor continued to reside here until 1848, when he moved to Ellington, and from there he went to Corry, Penn., where he died some three or four years ago.

Albert G. and Amos **Dow** were two young men (brothers) that came from Eillicottville, Cattaraugus county, and settled in this portion of Hanover about the year 1827. The Messrs. **Dows** were both shoemakers and were about the first to establish a regular business and keep even the smallest amount of stock on hand. Although they were both quite young, we believe that A.G. was not over 20 or 21 while his brother Amos was not more than 17 or 18 years of age, they came well recommended and the course they pursued during all the time they resided here showed that the parties were justified in making the recommend. They were soon favored with all the work they could attend to and we believe for a time continued the business together.

In the fall of 1828 Albert G. **Dow** was married to a daughter of Wheaton **Mason** who was also a former resident of Ellicottville. At the town election in the spring of 1831 or 1832 Albert G. was elected constable and was re-elected three or four times successively. He also served three or four years as collector of taxes. He was elected a justice of the peace in the spring of 1836, which position he held for four years and could have been re-elected if he would have accepted it, but his business matters required his attention so that he had no time to devote to the affairs of the public. He had in the fall of 1839 negotiated with Mr. George D. **Farnham** for a one-half interest in the store and tin-ware business and became an equal and active partner on the first day of January 1840. The firm of **Farnham & Dow** occupied the same building that George **Shofner** & Son now occupy in the same business.

Mr. **Dow** continued in this business until September, 1845, when he disposed of his interest and went to Randolph, Cattaraugus Co. and engaged in banking. We believe he is still a resident and engaged in the same business (banking) in Randolph. Some eight or ten years ago he was elected, by a large majority to the State Senate, which position he filled to the entire satisfaction of a large majority of his constituents. He was earnestly urged to accept the position for a second term but his business would not permit it. Many of Mr. **Dow's** personal friends in this section of Chautauqua Co. have been quite anxious for him to become a candidate for Member of Congress. Had he been willing to have done so he undoubtedly could have had the nomination and most assuredly would have been elected for this congressional district is strongly Republican to which school of politics he belongs. He has also a large number of personal friends among the opposition who would support him in preference to their own party.

Mr. **Dow** can be regarded as one of the noble men of the country. He is reliable in all the better elements of life. He is always to be found on the right side of the leading questions of the day. He has been strictly temperate and always advocated true temperance principles, but he has never been fanatical in the least. He is a person of high sense of morality, integrity and virtue and all the good principles that have a tendency to elevate human nature. It is to be regretted that this world does not possess more like him.

Amos **Dow** continued the boot and shoe business for some years after his brother had abandoned it. In addition to the shoe business he took an interest in a tannery here and furnished the capital for conducting that business. In 1838 he was married to Miss Eliza Ann **Gates**, a daughter of Abiather **Gates**, Esq. Up to this time (1838) this village had never been favored with a [*sic*] anything pertaining to a public or private library. Quite a number of the better class of citizens were well supplied with books but did not care to loan them, as in many instances books lent are books lost. Most of the young people were fond of reading, especially books of a romantic nature. However there were quite a number of earnest students of history and other good solid reading matter. The matter of making an effort to establish a small village library of good standard works had been talked over for some time. Still no effort was made to set the thing going.

Through the influence of Amos **Dow**, in the fall of 1839 a meeting of the citizens was called, but not over a dozen or fifteen responded, but these few resolved to make an effort and see what could be done. An article was drawn up in the form of a constitution of a library association in which all who wished to become members of the association could do so by subscribing to the constitution and paying over \$2.50 which would constitute the signer one share holder and when one hundred shares were taken a meeting of share holders was to convene and adopt by-laws and elect officers. Amos **Dow** volunteered to circulate the paper and was successful in getting the hundred names with the money all paid in on the evening of the second day of his efforts. Many citizens took two and several as high as four shares each.

On the meeting of stockholders Amos **Dow** was appointed president of the association, also volunteered to act as librarian and donate a place in his residence for a case for keeping books. A committee of three which was composed of W. D. **Talcott**, Amos **Dow** and Doctor **Ellsworth** went to Buffalo to select the books. However, previous to the purchase of the books quite a number of additional names were obtained so the committee had about \$350 to invest in books. The books were purchased and all numbered ready for distribution in less than three weeks from the day the first meeting was held. All of this was due to the energy and perseverance of Amos **Dow**.

Mr. **Dow** disposed of his interest in the tannery in the autumn of 1845 and engaged in the mercantile business with Winfield S. **Shaw**, esq., now of Buffalo. They commenced business with an entire new stock of goods and had quite a successful trade. Mr. **Dow** at the same time continued the manufacture of boots and shoes. The copartnership with Mr. **Shaw** ended in 1848. For a short time Mr. **Dow** run [*sic*] the mercantile business along but finding his business required more attention than [*sic*] it was possible for him to give it, he took into company with him a Mr. **McMontgomery**. The business relation with **McMontgomery** continued until the spring of 1854, when Mr. **Dow** disposed of all his business interests at Silver Creek and moved to Randolph where his brother resided, and we believe has been engaged in the same business as that of his brother. Amos **Dow** like his brother Albert was a man of sterling integrity and we cannot help but believe that it is very unfortunate for this village that both could not deem it for their interest to remain here.

John and Holam **Vail** were natives of Otsego county, this state. At an early day their father with his family emigrated to Alexander, Genesee county, where he engaged in millwright work. He had been a person of large property, but through indorsing for others and an unfortunate contract in building a mill, he had lost nearly all he had. He was regarded as being a first class workman in every respect at the millwright business, and found no difficulty in obtaining employment in his new location. Both his sons, John and Holam, worked with him for three or four years after settling at Alexander, but after a while John became restless and left the parental roof. He found his way to **Sackett's** Harbor on Lake Ontario, where he engaged as a ship carpenter through the winter, sailing on Lake Ontario through the season of navigation. He continued this for several years, until he was quite competent at ship building, and capable of commanding a vessel.

During the time he was at **Sackett's** Harbor he became acquainted with Miss Panama **Fuller**, daughter of Capt. **Fuller**, who commanded a government schooner during the war that had closed a few years previous to that period. Holam **Vail** continued to reside at Alexander and was employed at mill-wright work with his father. While there he became acquainted with Mary **Buxton** and married her in the fall of 1823. Early the next spring he concluded to find a location where his services would be in greater demand or where he could branch out for himself.

Early in April he found his way to this locality, his wife coming in June following. His first employment was in repairing the Fayette Mills for Platt & Levi **Rogers**. Shortly after this he purchased the site and water power where G. L. **Weeks'** grist mill now stands and engaged in building for himself a sawmill. At that time there was a large amount of all the different varieties of timber especially whitewood, black walnut, cherry and oak, and a good demand for sawed lumber. In the spring of 1826 he had his mill in complete running order.

His brother had come from the lower lake and settled here the fall before, and finally talked Holam into building a schooner. This was commenced the first week in May, 1826, and was launched the last of September of the same year. This vessel was called the Victory and was the first that was ever built here. She was for that period a medium sized vessel (about 125 tons burden,) but now would be regarded as little more than a yacht. The ship yard was located on the east bank of the creek near where Charles **Hammon** now resides. There were several vessels built on the same ground subsequently, all of which were launched into the creek. A channel had to be excavated to let them into the lake.

Although the Victory was launched the last week in September, she was not fully fitted out until the next spring. In building the Victory, Mr. V. had been compelled to get into debt to a considerable extent, and in order to fit out his schooner completely he was obliged to place a mortgage upon it, hoping that if he met with good success he would in a couple of years be able to liquidate and settle up. But fortune frowned upon him, as it had done to several other of this locality who had attempted to accumulate property by the aid of a sailing vessel. After two seasons of varied success, neither of which was very encouraging, Mr. **Vail** was compelled to succumb, and the schooner Victory, which had cost him considerable money and a large amount of hard labor, became the property of other parties.

Mr. **Vail** was not left entirely penniless, for he still had his sawmill. Although it was somewhat encumbered, it proved a source of considerable profit to him. There was a good demand for lumber, and the surrounding country supplied him with plenty of logs for sawing. When his time was not required at his mill, he found plenty of employment at mill-wright work at prices that were quite remunerative. It was but three or four years after the loss of his schooner Victory before he was in quite comfortable circumstances again.

In the summer of 1834 he met with quite a serious accident, which for a time caused great apprehension that he might be deprived of his eye-sight and become totally blind. In addition to mill-wright work he sometimes worked as a machinist and at the time specified he was engaged in constructing a turning lathe for Luther **Heaton** and while on some part of this work a small bit of steel about the shape of a flax seed, but not quite so large, flew from the shaft on which he was at work and lodged in the center of his eyeball. There was no physician here that had instruments suitable for extracting it, nor could one be found in Fredonia or Westfield that dared to attempt it. Soon inflammation set in and it became so painful that his attending physician was compelled keep him under the influence of powerful narcotics for some time. The eyeball finally decayed and ran out. The sight, from sympathy, of the other eye was sensibly affected for some time.

Also his general health was seriously impaired for some time, but during the following winter he recuperated so that early the next spring (1835) he purchased from Lyman **Howard**, esq., the lot and erected the dwelling house where Mrs. Maria **Mixer** now resides. At that time this was one of the largest and most pretentious dwelling houses in the village. The large square columns in front, and the general appearance of the house has always attracted the notice of the



passer by. Soon after the completion of this home he commenced to erect a building nearly adjoining his sawmill for the manufacture of shoe pegs.

Mr. James **Howard** had come here a few years previous from Warsaw, Wyoming Co., N.Y., and purchased from Mr. J. M. **Wilson** the wool-carding and cloth-dressing establishment. In making this purchase Mr. **Howard** became the owner of the first privilege of the water and in order to run the new enterprise successfully it was necessary to have more power. To obtain this he [**Vail**] formed a limited copartnership with Mr. **Howard**. They soon had their peg factory in operation, employing ten or twelve men.

But once more fortune cast her shadow over Mr. **Vail's** enterprise. His building took fire and with all their tools and machinery was consumed, without a dollar of insurance. Many of his best friends thought this was a blow from which he would be unable to rise, but a man of his energy and perseverance could not be kept down. Before the remains of his building had ceased smouldering, he had timber upon the ground for another, and this time decided to increase the size of the building so that it could be used for other manufacturing purposes if required, and before the building was fully inclosed [*sic*] it was decided to turn it into a flouring mill.

To complete this he was compelled to raise money on his homestead, also mortgage his mill property for the security of payment for milling machinery. In a few months he had his mill complete and in running order, but this like nearly every other enterprise in which he engaged did not prove a success. The mill was a good one and did good work, but there were two requisites in which there was a failure. First, there was a lack of water power, and second, a lack of custom. Other localities could purchase wheat and manufacture flour and ship it here at a less cost than it could be done for here.

Still Mr. **Vail** struggled along for three or four years, but finally was compelled to dispose of his homestead, which was purchased by Harvey **Mixer**, esq., of Buffalo for a home for his parents and sister, Miss Maria, who still resides there. This last event appeared to have a more discouraging effect upon Mr. **Vail** than any of his former troubles. At the time he erected the house he hoped that it would be his home for the remainder of his life. Two or three years after the disposal of his home he succeeded in finding a customer for the mill property at a price something above the mortgage. Soon after this he gathered the remnants of his property together and went to Mayville, this county, where he engaged with two or three others in building a steamboat for Chautauqua Lake. This boat we believe was burned the second season after it was built. His next move was to Columbus, Warren Co. Pa., where he engaged quite extensively in the lumber business, at which he continued until he died, in 1857, aged 54 years. There were but few men known in this section of country who would equal Mr. **Vail** in accumulating money by their own industry and perseverance. He was peculiarly fortunate in this respect, but equally unfortunate in engaging in enterprises with other parties that proved disastrous, and in a short time all his hard earned accumulations would be swept away.

Capt. John **Vail** continued to reside here. His summers were spent almost wholly upon the lake, as master of a vessel. He was a part owner of two or three vessels that were built here under his directions. About this time (1835) he conceived the idea of building a small steamboat here to be placed on the route between Barcelona, the lake port for Westfield, and Buffalo, touching at Dunkirk and this place. He was assisted in this enterprise by the Hon. W. F. F. **Taylor** of Buffalo. The hull of the Taylor was built during the last of the winter and the summer of 1835 on the east bank of the creek where the Lake Shore railroad now crosses the creek. She was towed to Buffalo, where her boilers and machinery were put in, and she was otherwise fitted out, but did not commence running until the spring of 1836, and only continued on the route two seasons. Her engine was of high pressure and not sufficient power, and therefore was too slow and proved a failure. In the spring of 1838 she was taken to Lake Michigan to run between Chicago and New Buffalo, where she was lost by going on to the beach and breaking up in a gale of wind in the fall of '38.

Capt. John **Vail's** next enterprise was purchasing the hull of the steamer Barcelona, which was built to run on the route between the port of that name and Buffalo, but like the Taylor proved too slow and otherwise unsuitable. She was dismantled. Capt. John converted the hull to a sailing vessel and ran it one or two seasons in the lumber trade quite successfully when he disposed of it at a handsome profit above cost to parties in Detroit.

We believe that for the next two or three years he was engaged in sailing vessels for other parties, when in 1844 or 1845 he purchased the hull of the old steamboat Constitution, which had been dismantled on account of her being regarded as unseaworthy, but Capt. **Vail** succeeded in having the hull partially rebuilt and in purchasing an old engine that had been taken from another steamer. When this was in position, the old steamboat, Constitution, which had withstood so

many hard gales of wind and storm was once more placed in commission. This investment did not prove a paying one, and we believe it was not long before the boat was turned over to the creditors of Capt. **Vail**.

The next we hear of him was about 1850 or 1851. He was engaged in commanding a steamboat on the Sacramento river, California, with headquarters at Sacramento, where he died three or four years after. Capt. John **Vail** was one of those who had a warm heart for his friends but was exceedingly harsh with his enemies. He was also one who passed through many of the vicissitudes of fortune.

Lyman **Howard**, a nephew of John E. **Howard**, came from Massachusetts to the town of Hanover in the summer of 1817. He first located at Smith's Mills, and worked nearly a year and a half at blacksmithing, which was his occupation. In December 1818, he was married to a young lady whose parents resided near there. In the spring of 1819, he went to Lockport and engaged to a contractor who was doing work on the canal, to sharpen and manufacture drills that were used in drilling and quarrying the rocks for the canal bed.

Mr. **Howard** continued at this work for two years and a half, when he returned to this place with his wife in the fall of 1821. He at once purchased a plot of about 80 acres that had previously been articulated from the Holland Land Company, and considerable improvements made upon it. The Main street of the village passes nearly through the center of this tract. The Simeon **Howes** and Norman **Babcock** property is a portion of this tract. It also extended across Walnut Creek to the top of the high ridge of hills, west of the village. This portion of the property is now owned by Major C. C. **Swift**. Mr. **Howard** at once contracted for the erection of a small house for his family, and worked for a while for Asa **Gage** at blacksmithing.

In the summer of 1825, he had a front built to his house of sufficient capacity to make it a very comfortable tavern, and he opened it as such, late that winter or early the next spring. This house was located on the spot where Mr. Augustus **Day** now resides, but the location was not regarded as a popular one, and during the fifteen or twenty years that it was kept as a house of entertainment it had more different proprietors than all the other public houses in the town of Hanover during the same period. Mr. **Howard** kept the house 4 or 5 years when he rented it to a Mr. S. **Holmes** who kept it two or three years. Deacon **Munger** was the next to try his fortune there. He was succeeded by Silas **Hosmer**, and he by Doctor **Herriman**, who was likewise succeeded by Barach **Phelps**, and for the following six or eight years this house had a new landlord nearly every year.

Notwithstanding Mr. **Howard** was a very industrious hard working man, he found considerable time for study and was the possessor of a large amount of scientific knowledge. For many years he was fully impressed with the idea that there were large deposits of bituminous coal along the banks of Walnut Creek. He was so sanguine of this, that in the summer of 1826, he was at the expense of sending to Pittsburg, Pa. for an expert to come here and make an examination, but unfortunately for Mr. H. the expert did not find sufficient indications of coal to warrant an attempt at mining. The man admitted that the black stone in the bed of Walnut Creek below where **Week's** dam now is, was strong indication of Cannel coal but until coal became much more valuable than it was at that time, (it is of less value now on account of the facilities for obtaining it), it would not pay to mine it unless it was found in much larger quantities than appearance indicated.

A year or two after this Mr. **Howard** found a mineral substance, in the form of cobble stone in a ravine on the hillside which he felt quite sure was a rich deposit of Iron Ore. He sent some half a dozen of these lumps weighing about 50 pounds to Buffalo for examination, but it was decided that the sample did not contain sufficient quantity of iron to pay for working, so that the blast furnace, the rolling mills, the nail works and other great industries that were to grow up along the banks of Walnut Creek after the development of these iron mines, appeared in visions only. However no one knows to a certainty but the high ridge of hills along Walnut Creek may contain large deposits of mineral wealth which may at some day in the future be worked and large industries and fortunes grow out of it.

Mr. **Howard** was destined to another disappointment. There came here in the early summer of 1827, a gentleman who claimed to come from North Adams, Mass., with whom Mr. H. had a slight acquaintance. This man had been reared to the business of cotton manufacturing and professed to be quite an expert at it. He also stated that he was looking for some point in the West, (at that time this portion of the State of New York in Massachusetts was regarded as being almost at the western end of the world,) for establishing a cotton factory. This gentleman was introduced and vouched for by Mr. **Howard** and all the better class of citizens greeted him very cordially and socially, and paid him much respect and attention.

Finally after passing up and down the creek nearly a dozen times in the space of three or four weeks, accompanied by three or four of those who felt a deep interest in the project, he lit upon the site near the banks of the creek on Mr. **Howard's** meadow land that he thought would be just the point. Some 8 or 10 acres of this was promised to be donated to the company. Also Mr. **Howard** and several others had promised to take stock to the full amount of their abilities. All the leading preliminaries were arranged and settled. The Yankee was to return to North Adams where he was sure of having all the balance of stock taken at once, and to make arrangements for machinery &c., when he was to return here and commence the erection of suitable buildings.

What appeared a little mysterious to the citizens, this man did not care to have much said regarding the matter, to outsiders. He wished to have everything conducted in a secret way. Said he did not care to have the public know anything of it until they were ready to commence work with his twenty-five or thirty experienced workmen that he was to bring from Massachusetts with him. He tarried here and did not appear very anxious to depart; even after all arrangements were made he gave out that he was expecting a remittance from home, and could not leave until he secured that.

Finally after he had spent some two months here, he suddenly became anxious to return East. He claimed that he had received a letter informing him of the sickness of his family, also that a remittance in the shape of a certificate of deposit had been sent him by mail which had never reached him, consequently must have gone astray, therefore it was necessary for him to return home as early as possible. He asked Mr. **Howard** to loan him a hundred dollars, saying he would send a certificate of deposit for that as soon as he reached North Adams, and would settle for his board bill on his return here. Mr. H. had that confidence in the man that he let him have all the money he had in his possession and took his horse and went over to Smith's Mills and borrowed the balance, some \$50 of a friend there.

The stranger did not care to have it known that he borrowed money here, for he did not wish to have it known that he was in such close circumstances. As soon as he got his hundred dollars he took his departure, Mr. H. hiring one of the citizens who had a conveyance to take the man to Buffalo. When he left he promised to be back here in four to six weeks, ready to commence operations. After two or three weeks had passed after the departure of the man, our friend Mr. **Howard** commenced to watch the Post Office anxiously for the promised certificate of deposit, but four, five and six weeks had gone by, and not a word from North Adams.

Finally after waiting about eight weeks Mr. H. wrote to the Post Master at North Adams, making enquiries if such a person was there, (naming him) and if so, if he was in usual good health. Mr. H. had persuaded himself to fully believe that the man was suffering with a severe sickness and unable to write or attend to business. In due course of mail he received a reply from the Post Master stating that the person enquired about formerly resided there, but that he had left there under a cloud between two days more than a year before and as far as that writer was informed, no one in North Adams had heard from him since.

That the man was a sharper and dead beat of the first water our friend Mr. H. was loth [*sic*] to believe for some time, but finally was compelled to admit that he had been a victim of misplaced confidence. But he kept the matter of loaning the man the hundred dollars very quiet, and to only two or three of his most personal friends did he mention it, and with them placed an injunction that it should not be spoken of or made public, and before the next spring the matter of a cotton factory had ceased to be talked about. The fact was all those who took any interest in the matter felt deeply chagrined over the way they had been taken in and hushed it up as soon as possible. Mr. **Howard** continued to reside here until December 1839, when he died with consumption. His wife survived him and died in this village in 1854. Their son, Allen G. **Howard**, who was born here in 1827, is now a highly respected citizen of Hornellsville.

FC12

*The Fredonia Censor 30 July 1884, Early History of Hanover, And Biographical Sketches Of Early Settlers -- Resumed.*

Oliver **Lee** was born in or near the city of New London, Conn., in 1792. When not over 19 or 20 years of age he became impressed with the idea of obtaining a home where land was less expensive than about his native town. At that period the mail stage was the only mode of public conveyance and for those who were on long journeys was quite expensive. Young Mr. **Lee** had decided on having a look at the western part of this state, also of the country through which he passed. With this in view and his wearing apparel in a pack upon his back, he started on foot and walked the entire distance from his native place up through the state of Connecticut. Crossing the Hudson river at Albany, he then walked

through this state to the town of Orange, Genesee Co., where he purchased a farm or tract of wild land and at once set out with energy and determination to clear himself a homestead and build a comfortable habitation.

While engaged at this the order came for all able bodied men of specified ages to immediately report in person to the General commanding the United States forces at Black Rock for the defense of the frontier. Oliver **Lee** was one of the first in the vicinity where he resided to respond to this call. He with three or four others started the same evening after receiving the notice and at the close of the second day reported at headquarters at Black Rock. He was at once placed on guard duty, in which service he continued for some weeks. About this time the expedition against Fort Erie, across Niagara river, was being planned, but it was well known to all the officers of the army that they could not compel the militia which had been called out to the defense of the frontier to go into the enemy's country, but they thought the men had sufficient pride and patriotism so that when called upon they would not hesitate.

When the night came for this expedition to the move the militia were formed in line and told what was expected of them and from their patriotism it was hoped they would all volunteer to join the expedition. When the order was given for volunteers to step two paces to the front Oliver **Lee** was one of the first and most prompt to move. The way this heroic band crossed the Niagara river and assaulted the stronghold of the British in Fort Erie has many years since passed into history and is well known to every schoolboy. Oliver **Lee** went with them and was in the midst of the hottest part of the contest but was fortunate in not receiving any serious injury and in returning to this side of the lines.

After this he remained at Black Rock on duty for some time until the militia were discharged, when he returned to his home in Genesee county; where he resumed the clearing of his land. As soon as he had fifteen or twenty acres cleared suitable for raising grain he gave his attention to building a small, comfortable house. When this was completed he returned to New London and shortly afterward was married to Miss Eliza **Downer**, a native of the same county. Not long after their marriage this young couple started with all their worldly effects in an ordinary farm wagon, hauled by an ox team, for their new home in the far off western part of the state of New York.

Very soon after settling on his farm Mr. **Lee** commenced to take rank with the first men in the county. By hard work, industry and economy, he commenced to accumulate property. He was soon appointed deputy sheriff, which position he filled with honor and credit. He was also a hotel keeper in Warsaw, Wyoming county, for a short time. About 1822 he commenced the mercantile business in the town of Sheldon in the same county. Two years after he moved his family and stock of goods to Westfield, this county, where he continued the business.

In the fall of 1827 he sent a stock of goods to Silver Creek. At that time there was no regular store here, it being very soon after the failure of Ezra **Convis'** Farmer's Store. He employed John M. **Cummings** to take charge and occupied the same building that had a short time previous been occupied by **Rogers & Cummings**. Early in the spring of 1828 Mr. **Lee** had purchased the property of John E. **Howard**, which consisted of over 350 acres. In June of the same year he moved his family here, occupying the house which **Howard** had kept as a tavern so long.

Mr. **Lee** had not been here over a week before he commenced arrangements for putting up a brick building for a store. A place was selected for making the brick, and work commenced at once. Everything progressed as rapidly as could be expected, so that in less than three months from the time the first brick was moulded [*sic*] the walls for a building large enough for two stores were up nearly ready for the roof, when a heavy wind storm from the west came up during the night time and laid the front wall level with the ground. Mr. **Lee** was in New York at the time for goods to replenish his stock and fill up his new building. He had employed Mr. Jacob Burns of Westfield to take charge and superintend the construction of this new building. With his energy and perseverance it was not long before Mr. **B.** had the walls up again and roof on so that before cold weather set in they had the store fully completed and stocked with the largest and best assortment of goods that up to that time had ever been brought to the town of Hanover.

The same fall Mr. **Lee** arranged with Maj. C. C. **Swift** of Batavia to come here and take an equal interest in the mercantile business with him. The arrangement was for Maj. **Swift** to have a general supervision of the store while Mr. **Lee** devoted his attention to outside interests. Major **Swift** was a young man in the prime of early manhood. He had been fully educated to the mercantile business and understood it in all its various branches, so that the senior member of the firm had full confidence in entrusting that portion of his interest to him.

Although the name of the post-office here had been changed to Silver Creek in 1825, the village had continued to go by the name of Fayette; but soon after Mr. **Lee** settled here he consulted with some of the leading citizens and it was

decided that the village should be called Silver Creek as well as the postoffice. Also the present Main street as it now runs had not been opened. At the point where Mr. Augustus **Day** now resides the street turned towards the lake and ran through where Mrs. **Young** now resides, thence through the present park into what is now Howard street. Mr. **Lee** had been here but a few weeks before he arranged to have Main street opened from the point where it diverged down past where the Silver Creek House is now located and past the works lately erected by **McNeil & Spaulding**.

He also arranged with the town authorities for building a bridge across Silver creek at the east end of Main street and a road was cut through the steep bank of the east side of the creek. This bridge was kept up by the town for many years and all travel crossed the creek there. At that time there was not a single building with the exception of the John E. **Howard** house standing east of the Day property. As we have stated in a previous article, what little business there was transacted here was done in the vicinity of the crossing of Walnut creek. The locality each side of the creek was regarded as the business center but after Oliver **Lee** commenced in the summer and autumn of 1828 it became evident that he was about to make an effort to bring the business to his locality.

He had Dunkirk street surveyed out and opened to the west line of his property, which was some distance beyond the crossing of the Lake Shore railroad. He also had Jackson street opened to the lake. The flats through which both these streets pass were covered with immense large black walnut and oak trees, and to show how little value was placed upon black walnut lumber at that time we have only to state that these trees were cut down and burned up to get them out of the way.

Mr. **Lee** was a sagacious and far-seeing person as regarding business operations. He at once saw the great advantage a harbor or pier where boats could stop, discharge and take on freight and passengers, would be to the village that was just then starting. Nature had done considerable to assist in this project by forming quite a bay with a high bluff extending some distance into the lake on the west side. An examination was made but it was ascertained that piles could not be driven on account of the smooth rock bottom of the lake. It was determined to build a pier by forming cribs of timber and filling them with stone and sinking them. Contracts were immediately let for the delivery of a large amount of square hewn timber and for quarrying an almost unlimited amount of stone from the high bank or bluff on the west side of the bay. Men were also set at work preparing the timber and getting the cribs ready to put together. Nearly everything seemed to favor the project.

Soon after the 1<sup>st</sup> of December there came good sleighing, which was of great advantage in hauling the timber. Also ice formed in the lake quite early, and long before Christmas it had become of sufficient strength so that men and teams could work upon it with perfect safety. A point was selected, about 350 feet from the shore, where the water was of sufficient depth to float the largest sail vessels or steamboats of the day. Some twelve or fifteen teams were employed in hauling stone on the ice and fifty or more men were kept constantly employed in framing and putting the cribs into position and sinking them. This work was continued until after the middle of March next spring, before the workmen were compelled to stop by the breaking up of the ice in the lake. They succeeded in sinking cribs for about 150 feet of pier running toward the shore, with an L portion of about 75 feet on the outer end running down the lake. This was all planked over and notwithstanding communication with the shore had to be made with a small boat, business very soon commenced.

The steamboat Pioneer, which was then running regularly between Barcelona and Buffalo, commenced to stop here for freight and passengers. The next winter work on the pier was resumed and continued until communication was made with the land so that teams loaded with wood, lumber and farm products, could be driven to the outer end. Also at the land end a large building was put up for storing goods and products received or for shipment. The locality fast assumed a business appearance. Several buildings were erected for family uses and th[r]ee or four years after the pier was started, a hotel was erected for the accommodation of those coming here or going from here by boat.

The village also became quite a point for the purchase of lumber brought from the south-east towns of this county and from portions of Cattaraugus county. This lumber was nearly all bought for an eastern market and most of it went to New England states, consequently was shipped from here by water. It was no unusual affair for two or three of the largest size of sailing vessels to be lying at our pier at the same time, taking in cargoes of lumber or discharging cargoes of grain, which at that time frequently came here by the vessel load.

The business increased so rapidly and became so great that Mr. **Lee** was compelled to put an addition to the pier. This was done by extending the principal part 75 or 100 feet farther into the lake, then adding on another L portion, which

formed a slip where vessels could lie and discharge or receive freight in all weather. Through the influence of Mr. **Lee** about the year 1833 or 1834 government made an appropriation for the erection of a building for a beacon light at the outer end of the pier, and the year following an appropriation was made for the erection of a lighthouse on the outer end of the point. Both these lights were sustained by the government for quite a number of years, and we believe the one on the point was not abandoned until after the Lake Shore railroad commenced running through to Erie.

There are but a few people of today who realize [*sic*] the great revolution railroads have created in travel and traffic, but even fifty years ago travel by lake steamers, especially in the spring, was immense. At that period there was no railroad running west of Utica in this state. The canal was the great artery through which the travel passed up through the state to Buffalo. There it was changed to lake steamers. Whenever steamers were prevented by ice from leaving Buffalo until after the opening of the canal, that city soon became full to overflowing with strangers, all anxiously waiting to proceed on their journey westward.

There were three or four spring seasons between 1835 and 1840 when Buffalo bay became packed with ice so that it completely blockaded that harbor until long after the opening of the canal. At each of these periods boats from western ports came as far as this place where they remained, two or three days or long enough to pick up a number of passengers for their trip west. As soon as it was known in Buffalo that there were boats here waiting for passengers the crowd would start. Animals that could hardly travel and vehicles of every description were brought into requisition for the purpose of conveying passengers and baggage from Buffalo here.

All prices were charged, from three dollars to ten dollars a person, in accordance with style of conveyance and the person's amount of ready cash. Some individuals who had remained in Buffalo until their funds were nearly exhausted were compelled to make the distance on foot and often those who had paid a high price for conveyance were compelled to walk a large portion of the way or be left alongside the road. They were compelled to be content with having their baggage brought through safely. As soon as one crowd got away from Buffalo their places were usually taken by newcomers. This tide of excitement and travel was kept up for two or three weeks. During the time it made business lively here at this end of the route.

Since the completion of the railroad through to the west there has been no such delay to travel. Now it does not require many more hours than it did at that time days to go from Albany to Chicago. Mr. **Lee** engaged in several enterprises outside of the mercantile line, all of which were an advantage to the village as well as to the surrounding farmers. One business which has now become entirely obsolete in this section of the country was the purchase of the wood ashes coming from the clearing up of the land and made by families, and converting them into pot or pearl ashes, which were shipped to New York and were regarded as near a cash article as any product of the country. At this age it might appear that the ashes resulting from burning the timber from 15 or 20 acres of land would be a small matter but half a century ago it was quite an item to the young farmer who had just commenced to clear up a new farm. They often made their ashes pay for the sugar, tea and many other necessaries their families required during during [*sic*] the year.

To show that there were frauds and deceits practiced at that time as well as now, though perhaps on a much smaller scale, we must relate a trifling fraud perpetrated upon Mr. **Lee's** ashery. At that time there was an old log house in quite a dilapidated condition standing some distance back from the road a short distance below where Mrs. Dr. **Ward** now resides. This house was occupied by an elderly widow woman and her son, a lad of 14 or 15 years of age. This house had what was known to the early settlers as a Dutch chimney or fire-place, which was nothing more than a hole in the roof for the smoke to pass out and some stone piled up at one end where a fire could be built of logs and wood from ten to twelve feet long. A short distance from this building there had been an ashery some ten or twelve years previous and near by there lay large piles of ashes that were leached and thrown out years before and were perfectly worthless for using again.

Not long after Mr. **Lee** had his ashery going, this old woman's son appeared at the store with a ticket from the superintendent for a couple of bushels of ashes he had delivered at the ashery. This ticket was good for 38 cents in goods at the store. This was taken in snuff and tea. In a day or two the young man appeared at the ashery again with two or three bushels more of ashes. This was also traded out at the store and before the end of the week he came again with a still larger amount. It soon became evident that there was something wrong. The young man had already delivered more ashes than twenty cords of wood would make and it was a pretty sure thing that they had not burned one-tenth part of that amount.

The man who had charge of Mr. **Lee's** ashery set to work to investigate and found the lad was digging down into the piles of old ashes and getting those that showed least the effects of the winds and storms and placing them in their old Dutch fire-place with a large fire burning over them for ten or twelve hours and during the time stirring them thoroughly, they had all the appearance of fresh burned ashes. As soon as this discovery was made, the goose that laid the golden egg for this old woman and her son was strangled. This was a small fraud but was a complete one.

Mr. **Lee** also established a distillery, which business was carried on at that period in all sections of our country. The product of this institution was what was known as high wines and was shipped to New York for a market, where it stood next to pot or pearl ashes as a cash product. This distillery made a market for all the surplus product of grain grown by the farmers of this section. In fact, this section did not furnish one-half the grain consumed by the distillery, when it was running at its full capacity, and Mr. **Lee** had several cargoes brought here from the west by sail vessel during a season of navigation. The distillery also made a market for a large number of hogs and cattle. These were bought of the farmers and fed upon the slops from the distillery until suitable for pork or beef, when they were driven east to market. Mr. **Lee** also engaged quite extensively in the commerce of the lakes and in vessel building, some account of which we will give in our next article.

FC13

*The Fredonia Censor* 13 August 1884, Early History of Hanover, And Biographical Sketches Of Early Settlers -- Resumed.

As stated in our preceding chapter Oliver **Lee** was engaged quite extensively in the commerce of the Lakes and in ship building, which industry was carried on quite largely for several years. Between the years of 1828 and 1844, there were some fourteen or fifteen different sail and steam craft built and put afloat at this [p]ort]. As stated in a previous chapter Holom and John **Vail** were the pioneers in vessel building here and the schooner Victory was the first sail craft that floated from our Creek. From the best information we are able to obtain, we are quite sure that Mr. **Lee** was a part owner of the schooner Liberty as early as 1826 or 1827 which was previous to his coming to Silver Creek. The Liberty was a schooner of about 125 tons burden and was at the time mentioned commanded by Captain Jack **Spears** a sharp, enterprising social, wholesouled, first-class seaman. The Liberty was engaged in the coasting trade between Buffalo and Ashtabula, Ohio.

At that time these coasting schooners were the principal medium by which all merchants near the lake shore obtained their goods from the canal which ended at Buffalo. Captain **Spears** being well known to all the principal merchants along the lakes and being very popular with them, his vessel was very successful in getting both up and down freights where other equally as good vessels had to remain for days and weeks waiting for a cargo. For this reason the Liberty was making money for her owners while other vessels were running their [sic] in debt. Mr. **Lee** was a stock holder or part owner of several different vessels that was [sic] built here, he furnishing a large amount of the capital to build them.

Within a short time after Mr. **Lee** erected his store building the principal business centered in that locality. Dwelling houses and buildings for business purposes were erected and all things indicated that that point was to be the leading part of the town. A hotel was very much needed to accommodate not only the traveling public but all who came here to transact business with the **Lee** interest. In the summer of 1830 Mr. **Lee** arranged for building the Silver Creek House which was very soon afterwards commenced and was completed and occupied by Mr. **Yale** in the spring of 1832, who kept the house two or three years when it was purchased by Jonathan **Keith** who was its proprietor for many years and during a large part of the time it was what was known in those days as a Stage House and was one of the leading hotels between Buffalo and Erie.

In October 1832 Mr. **Lee** disposed of his interest in the mercantile business of **Lee & Swift** to Col. John **Barbour** and the business was continued under the firm name of **Swift & Barbour**. Mr. **Lee** was then enabled to devote his entire attention to his other interests which had become quite large and extensive. In the Autumn of 1833 he decided to engage in trade again. He was owner of an unoccupied store building adjoining the one occupied by **Swift** and **Barbour**. He also arranged with Mr. William **Van Duzer** who had been doing business at what was known at that time as Dibble's Bay, some ten or twelve miles east on the Lake Shore; to come here and take charge of his new enterprise. Mr. **Van Duzer** had formerly been a merchant and was a person of considerable business experience and regarded by all who knew him as being a very upright and reliable business man. About the first of November 1833 the new store was opened and ready for business. It became evident in the start that this venture would prove a success.

About that time there was a large amount of lumber from the south east towns of this county and from portions of Cattaraugus County being hauled here for a market. There were several parties here paying cash for lumber most of which went to New England. Many of the parties who came here with lumber left half or three-fourths [*sic*] of their receipts for it with the merchants for goods. At that time we had no rail road connection with Buffalo so that every woman that was in need of a calico dress or two or three spools of thread and a paper of pins could not very conveniently go to Buffalo to shop. Then four or five general stores were better supported and had a larger trade than one or two now have. Hence the system of doing business at that period was quite different from the present. Then every farmer and every man of any business who was regarded as any responsible was allowed to run a bill at the stores. It is a well known fact that many people are prone to purchase articles they do not require or could get along without when they can be bought on time. They do not appear to appreciate that a pay day is coming at some future period and may come when they are least prepared for it.

Mr. **Lee** was always liberal in giving credit to his customers. He generally gave them to understand that at the end of six months or at least once a year that their account must be settled up, and then if they were unable to pay and the party was responsible, a note on interest was taken. When customers paid no attention to the notice that their accounts must be settled, the accounts were generally placed in the hands of a collector. From this fact some of this class endeavored to create the impression that Mr. **Lee** was severe on those who were not in condition to pay, when in fact all he required was for them to live up to their agreement or the conditions under which they obtained credit. It is a fact that cannot be denied that it would be far better for all parties if the system of credit was entirely wiped out and all parties were compelled to pay for what they purchase on the receipt of the goods.

During the years 1838 and 1839 the question of banking facilities was discussed here to considerable extent. At that time there was but one bank in the county, which was the Chautauqua County Bank located at Jamestown. The Legislature of this state had a year or two previous enacted a new law in regard to banking on a different system from the former Safety Fund system. Mr. **Lee** decided that it would not only be advantageous to himself but to other business men in the village to have a bank of issue here. In the summer of 1839 he arranged for establishing the bank of Silver Creek with a nominal capital of \$100,000 with Oliver **Lee** as President and Chancy **Smith** as Cashier. Very soon after the organization the bank commenced to do business and had an exceeding successful career from its birth until its affairs were wound up about 1876.

This pace was altogether too limited for Mr. **Lee's** business abilities; about the year 1841 or 1842 he opened a Banking Office in the city of Buffalo where he continued to do a successful Banking business. In 1844 he with a few other parties established Oliver **Lee** & Co.'s Bank of Buffalo with Oliver **Lee** as President. About this time he resigned as president of the Bank of Silver Creek and George W. **Tew** Esq., who had been Cashier for the Bank for several years, was appointed in his place. Major C. C. **Swift** was at the same time elected Cashier to fill the vacancy made by the promotion of Mr. **Tew**. Mr. **Lee** continued the mercantile business here with Mr. **Van Duzer** as general Superintendent and manager until the summer of 1840 when his oldest son Charles H. **Lee** became of age; he then made him an equal partner and the business was continued under the firm name of Oliver **Lee** & Son, Mr. **Van Duzer** continuing in the employ of the new firm.

Our friend Charlie, as he was familiarly known by all, he having been raised here from boyhood, at once took his place behind the counter and gave the business that his father had so successfully established his personal and entire attention. He demonstrated at once that he was going to follow in the footsteps of his successful progenitor as far as accumulating property. His pleasant face and genial nature as well as the popularity of his assistant Mr. **Van Duzer**, which had long be established, brought the new firm many new customers.

We must here relate an incident that occurred late in the fall of 1841, in which our friend Charlie was one of the principal actors, that at the time created considerable amusement among those who were cognizant of the fact. Among their customers was a person whom we will call a Mr. Blank that resided some four or five miles from this village, near where the village of Farnham in Erie Co. now is. This person had been in the habit of visiting the store quite often and at times remaining quite late in the evening. He had often asked for credit for a short time for small amounts but each every time had been refused, for Mr. **Van Duzer** had known him formerly and had no confidence in his honesty or ability to pay.

The time in question was on a Saturday afternoon about the middle of November. Mr. Blank came to the village and lounged around in and out of the store all the afternoon but finally late in the evening he came into the store and seated himself alongside of the stove. This was situated some thirty or forty feet back from the front door, near the middle of



the store, with but little space or room each side of the stove between that and the counters for people to pass back and forth. On the west side of the counter was a row of kegs of nails on top of which was a box cover. These were used for seats by parties who wished to sit and chat and warm themselves but when occupied there was no room for another person to pass between those seated and the stove. The night was quite cold for the time of the year and the evening had slipped away. Their cash had been balanced, the books up to that evening had been all posted up, and Mr. **Van Duzer** had retired to the society of his family, still Mr. Blank lingered seated there on one of the nail kegs along side of a good warm stove. Finally Charlie observed that it was getting late and he must see if the back doors were all secure &c.

At the back end of the building was a room where all rough articles were kept and it was into this room where Charlie had to go to ascertain if the outside door was locked. It was quite dark in the back room but the light burning in the store proper, gave him a view through the doorway of all that was going on there. As he returned from locking the outside door he saw Mr. Blank step to the back end of the counter on the side of the room where he was seated where there was a large wooden bowl filled with rolls of butter, and deliberately take off his hat which was a fur one of the large bell crown Uncle Sam pattern that were sometimes worn by antiquated people of that age, and put a roll of butter into it, then place it on his head again. Then Mr. Blank very silently and quietly resumed his seat again along side of the stove.

Our friend Charlie immediately determined upon his plan of action. He carelessly walked back into the store as though he had not seen anything wrong and going to the front of the stove on the opposite side from where Blank was seated observed that it was going to be a very cold night, opened the stove door and filled it with dry wood, then seated himself alongside of Blank between him and the front door of the building so that he knew his customer could not get past him to get out unless he went around on the opposite side of the stove.

As Charlie seated himself he slapped Blank quite familiarly on the knee and said, "I must tell you the scrape I got into when I lived in Westfield." Then he commenced to relate an imaginary [*sic*] story which he knew would detain Blank until the atmosphere in his immediate vicinity would be somewhat heated. In a short time Charlie again observed that it was going to be a cold night and he was afraid the potatoes in the back end of the store would freeze and got up and filled the stove a second time with dry wood, this time using several box covers that were handy. As he was about to reseat himself Blank rose up and said that it was getting late and he must be going, but Charlie was quick enough to step into the passage way and stopped him saying, "no, I cannot let you go until you hear the remainder of my story, and crowded him back into his seat.

In a short time it began to get quite warm and Blank endeavored to get away but there was no seat futher [*sic*] from the stove that he could get. Soon the perspiration started and he out with his red bandanna and mopped the sides of his face at the same time observing, "you keep it awful hot here." Charlie replied by saying he was afraid their potatoes would freeze before Monday morning and again replenished the stove with dry wood.

Soon a greasy substance began to trickle down the sides of the face of Mr. B. -- then out came the red bandana again and the face took another good mopping. Still it grew warmer and warmer and the greasy perspiration ran almost in streams down the man's face and trickled in large drops all over his coat collar from the ends of his long, unkempt hair. His bandana had been used until it had become perfectly saturated with melted butter and greasy perspiration.

As our friend was about to replenish the stove the fourth time Mr. Blank made a break. As he went out the front door his persecutor said to him, "Look here Mr. Blank, the next time you attempt to steal butter try and procure something better than your hat to carry it home in." In his long walk home over the rough roads that cold November night Mr. Blank had an opportunity for reflection and undoubtedly became a wiser if not a better man. He was never seen at the store of Olive Lee & Son again, and within six or eight weeks afterwards left the town of Brant with his family for some point in the far west, no doubt hoping to find some place where he could steal butter under more favorable circumstances.

The firm of Oliver **Lee** & Son was continued until the spring of 1844 when Oliver **Lee** transferred all of his interest in the business to his second son, James H. **Lee**. From that time the business was conducted under the firm name of C.H. & J.H. **Lee** until in the spring or summer of 1845 they associated with themselves Noah D. **Snow**, Esq, who had been a partner of their father in the distilling business for some years previous.

Colonel **Snow** continued an active partner in this firm until the fall of 1849 when he was elected sheriff of this county. From this event it became necessary to make a dissolution. However C.H & J.H. **Lee** continued the business until the spring of 1856 when they disposed of their entire stock of good[s] to Ephraim R. **Ballard** of this village who continued the business as their successor. About this time Charles H. Lee was elected one of the directors of the Buffalo and State Line Railroad. He was afterwards elected vice-president of the road and on the death of Mr. **Richmond**, the president, was some time acting president of the same. At the next election of directors the position of president was tendered him but on account of ill health he felt it his duty to himself to decline the honor which if accepted would necessarily impose upon him much mental labor and confinement. He has always continued to make this village his home and is now a resident—a retired capitalist.

After the establishing of Oliver **Lee** & Co.'s Bank in Buffalo and his assuming the presidency of it this with other large interests he had through the state took him away from home so much that it could hardly be claimed that he was resident of Silver Creek, although his family continued to reside here until the summer of 1844, when Mr. **Lee**, deciding that it would be more conducive to his comfort and beneficial to his younger children, transferred them to that city.

His interest in that part of the state took him to Albany quite frequently, the modes of travel at that time being very different from the present day. Then they had no luxurious parlor or sleeping cars, in fact there was no continuous line of railroad like the Great Central of to-day, consequently a continuous journey through to Albany was tiresome and quite fatiguing.

In the early part of the summer of 1846 soon after reaching Albany Mr. **Lee** was taken seriously ill but with the attention of a good physician he was soon about again and in a few days was able to return to his home in Buffalo but was stricken down again a few days afterwards and died very suddenly on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1846. His remains were brought to this village and interred here. Very soon afterwards the family returned to their homestead here which continued to be the home of Mrs. **Lee** the remainder of her life, her demise taking place in the summer of 1882.

Mrs. **Lee** was one of the noble women of the country. Although an invalid and a great sufferer for a number of years during the latter part of her life, she was ever ready to assist in acts of charity and help the needy. The Presbyterian church of this village received much assistance and many noble gifts from her.

From 1830 to the time of his death Oliver **Lee** was one of the most prominent and leading business men in the state. From his first start to the close of his business career he was successful in all his principal undertakings. He was honorable in his deal and ever ready to pay the full amount of his indebtedness. It is believed that there was never a time during his long business experience that he was not ready to pay one hundred cents on the dollar of any indebtedness due against him. This village was greatly indebted to him for its start and growth from 1828 to 1844 or from the time he came here until he left.

It is not at all probable that there would ever have been a harbor or a pier built here had not Mr. **Lee** settled here. Without a pier there never would have been any lake commerce which gave the place the start it received about 1835 and 1836. And had that growth not occurred at that time it is not probable that the manufacturing interest would have settled here that did some years later, which makes it to-day one of the most enterprising, lively and smartest villages in Western New York.—In our opinion Oliver **Lee** should have great credit for it.

FC14

*The Fredonia Censor* 27 August 1884, Early History of Hanover, And Biographical Sketches Of Early Settlers—Resumed.

Mr. Charles **Huntley**, familiarly known as "Joe **Huntley**," came from Leon, Cattaraugus Co. and settled in this village in the Spring of 1829. Mr. **Huntley** was a native of Massachusetts, a ship carpenter by occupation, having worked several years at that business near Newburgh and other places along the Hudson river previous to his coming to the western part of the State. Very soon after Mr. **Huntley** settled here, he was employed by Capt. John **Vail** to work on a vessel that Capt. **Vail** then had on the stocks.

It required but a short time for Mr. **Huntley** to show his employers that he was better versed in ship building than any other of the many men they had in their employ, one or two of whom claimed to be boss builders of large experience. It is believed that from that time on Mr. **Huntley** assisted in building every vessel that was set afloat here, of many of which he had full control or a general superintendence, from the laying of the keel, until the vessel was ready for her

cargo. Among these was the schooner Lumberman, built for Oliver **Lee** and Capt. John **Vail**, also the steamboat W. F. P. **Taylor**, for John **Vail**, Oliver **Lee** and other parties. He had charge of rebuilding the schooner Napoleon, which was afterwards rechristened the Alps, for Capt. Ferdinand **Owen**. Previous to this he superintended building the schooner Savannah, for Oliver **Lee** and Capt. **Vail**. Soon after the completion of the Alps he built a lumber scow, schooner rigged, for Capt. Esau **Owen**. The next was the schooner scow Etna, for Dr. **Ellsworth** and Chauncy **Lamphere**.

He was the principal ship carpenter on the brig Osceola and schooner Sarah Bugbee. His next was the Commodore Chauncy, for Dr. **Ellsworth** & Chauncy **Lamphere**. He rebuilt the lake canal boat Oceanna, and and [sic] converted it into a schooner for himself and Capt. Myron **Gage**. His next was a large scow schooner, the Mountaineer. His last vessel was a small sloop, the Ocean, for Messrs. **Hammond** and **Gale**, a couple of men who came here early in the summer of 1842, from Boston, Mass., for the purpose of locating the wreck of the steamer Erie, which was burned off this village in the month of August 1841.

Mr. **Huntley** was an exceedingly industrious and hard working man; he was a person who did not mingle much with the outside world but spent his spare time at home reading scientific works, especially those he could obtain relative to the art of ship building. After the industry of shipbuilding declined so that he was left without an occupation he turned his attention to millwright work. In this he became very proficient, and for a time was engaged in rebuilding some mills in the southern portion of this county and in western Pennsylvania. He continued to reside in this village until about 1855, when he emigrated to Wisconsin, where he still resides, a hale, hearty old man of over 70 years of age.

His son, W. W. **Huntley** Esq., one of the most enterprising and prominent citizens of this village, was born here in 1831. He has always resided here and for a long time was at the head of the firm of **Huntley, Holcomb & Heine**. Mr. **Huntley** was the inventor and originator of the Bran Duster and Middlings Purifier, two machines that were at one time manufactured by that firm quite extensively. About the year 1857 or 1858, Simeon **Howes** Esq. of this village bought out the Cogswell Patent Bran Duster and contracted with Ezekiel **Montgomery** & Sons of Silver Creek to build the machines for him. At the time Mr. William W. **Huntley** was in the employ of the Messrs. **Montgomerys** as a mechanic and was put to work on the Bran Dusters.

As these machines were completed, they were put up in mills in the surrounding country. It was not long before they began to show imperfections and complaints were made of them and their working. Mr. **Huntley** being a mechanic by nature and possessing large inventive abilities soon discovered where the fault rested and the opportunities for improving the machine. At the time he was in quite limited circumstances, and had nothing but his own genius and labor to rely upon. For this reason he was compelled to work under many difficulties and great disadvantages. He was compelled to devote regular hours for labor for the subsistence of his family, and could only devote the over time of nights and mornings to the improvement of the machine.

At that time Mr. Alpheus **Babcock** was building a few Smut Machines which he was placing in mills as opportunity offered. Mr. **Huntley** arranged with Mr. B. to join him in the Bran Duster business and also to furnish some material aid; this enabled Mr. **Huntley** to devote more time and attention to his machine. In 1862, they had so far improved and completed the machine that they could with confidence go to a mill owner and say to him that they would put one of the Bran Dusters into his mill, and if it did not operate [sic] to his entire satisfaction they would take it away and pay for all trouble and expense. They also made the offer of putting a machine in a mill and taking the extra amount of flour made in six months in payment for the machine. In this way they were successful in getting their Bran Duster into mills where the original machine did not give satisfaction, and was condemned.

About this time other manufacturers of rival Bran Dusters saw the success that **Huntley & Babcock** were meeting with; became jealous and commenced a suit for infringement on their patents, when in fact they were the pirates. They had also been compelled to operate under many disadvantages. They had no conveniences for making their castings and doing some other iron work which necessitated purchasing from other parties at a greater expense, and it also made them dependent to a certain extent upon others. About 1870 or 1871, Mr. Alpheus **Babcock** had decided to devote his entire time and energies to the manufacture of the Eureka Smut machine, in which he had become interested with Mr. Simeon **Howes** some time previous.

For this reason he decided to dispose of his interest in the Bran Duster business, and found a customer in Mr. Frank **Swift**. In the meantime Mr. **Huntley** had been at work energetically and industriously. He had purchased from C. H. **Lee** Esq. The present site of the Excelsior Works and had succeeded in putting up a building for a shop and getting it inclosed

[sic]. About that time he was taken down with serious sickness brought on by overwork and great anxiety. This came near closing up his accounts with this world. From possessing a strong constitution he weathered the sickness, and after a time fully regained his health, when he again devoted all his energies and strength to the completion of his shop and building his machines which were becoming more popular every day, and the demand was rapidly increasing for them.

The suits for infringements that had been commenced against him had been decided in his favor. Although the suits had been very expensive it was gratifying to him to know that the parties who had purchased his machines and were using them could not be imposed upon by having Sharpers come around and demand a royalty. About the year 1872, Mr. **Huntley** first conceived the idea of a Middlings Purifier, a machine that is fast coming into use all over the civilized world wherever flour is manufactured from wheat. Mr. **Huntley** devoted much time to perfecting this machine and in endeavoring to have it as near correct as possible before it was put in competition with other machines that were being used for similar purposes.

He had been very particular in designating all points upon which they claimed improvements and for which they obtained patents, all of which were granted without a single objection that was sustained. At the same time, it was not long after their Middlings Purifier began to be used, that other manufacturers found they were looked upon with much favor by the milling public, and showed their jealousy by commencing suits for infringement of patent. However, the suits were every one decided in the favor of Mr. H. and his partners. Still it was quite annoying and somewhat expensive to have the suits to content [sic] with, and as they were a young firm with no surplus capital, it embarrassed them for a short time.

Late In the autumn of 1872, Mr. Frank **Swift** disposed of his interest in both the Bran Duster and Middlings Purifier to Mr. A. P. **Holcomb**, and transferred to him all claim and interest he might have in any and all improvements. A few months after, Mr. August **Heine**, who had been engaged here in the hardware business, bought a one-third interest in the works. From that time the firm became **Huntley, Holcomb & Heine** and continued as such until the summer of 1882 when Mr. **Huntley** disposed of his entire interest including all the patents and improvements in the works, to his partners, for which he received a handsome sum, sufficient if properly managed to place him in easy, comfortable circumstances, all the remainder of his life.

W. W. **Huntley** is worthy of all he has received. Notwithstanding his father was an energetic, hard working, industrious man, his circumstances were such that his son was thrown upon his own resources at an early period in life with nothing but his acquirements and what nature had done for him to assist him. His circumstances and record through life show that he has made good use of his abilities, and the care that he is taking of his aged parents by providing them with a good home and surrounding them with all the comforts of life, is a sure indication that he possesses all the nobler instincts of our nature.

**WILLIAM VANDUZER.** Mr. William **VanDuzer**, who came here in the fall of 1833 as a superintendent of the interests of Olive **Lee**, was a native of Newburgh-on-the-Hudson, where he was born in the month of February, 1798. Our first information of him was of his being a merchant about the year 1826 in the town of Evans, at a place known at that time as Dibble's Bay, some ten miles east of this place. Mr. **Van Duzer** met with the same misfortune that hundreds of other merchants of that period met with. He was entirely too liberal in giving credit and trusting out his goods. When it became necessary for him to replenish his stock he was unable to make collections, which embarrassed him to that extent that he was not able to liquidate his indebtedness and was compelled to suspend business.

But it was said that the next three or four years of his life were entirely devoted to paying up the claims against him. This he accomplished to the last dollar, and that too by paying dollar for dollar with interest. This had been accomplished but a short time before his settling in Silver Creek. Very soon after he came here he commenced to take rank with the first people of the village. His reputation for being an exceedingly honest, upright man had preceded him. He evinced a great interest in our schools and for the welfare of the village generally. He became very popular in the store of Mr. **Lee** and was highly respected by all who had occasion to do business with him. He was a person of the most uniform and even temper that it has been our lot to become acquainted with.

To illustrate this we must relate a little incident that occurred about the year 1838 or 1839. As he sat alone in the store one evening reading a newspaper, a stranger came in. After a glance at the man it occurred to Mr. **VanDuzer** that he was one of those who were bringing lumber from Cattaraugus county, and as these people frequently did come in to purchase a bill of goods during the evening so as to be ready for an early start the next morning, on the man's coming

into the store Mr. V. arose, laid his paper aside, passed the compliments of the evening with the stranger, and asked if he could do anything for him.

After a few moments of hesitation the stranger inquired if they had any *good* port wine, something that he knew to be *pure*. Mr. V. replied that they had some that he thought to be good, but could not say that it was strictly pure, and after a few moments asked the man if he would like to examine it. The stranger replied that he would. Mr. **Van Duzer** supposed of course the man wanted one or two gallons. He stepped into the back room and obtained a lantern such as they used for going into the cellar in the night time, then procured a large glass or tumbler such as was in use at that time, then asked the man to step down cellar with him, where at the extreme back end their wines and liquors were kept. He drew the glass about two-thirds full and handed it to the man to sample.

After taking a swallow or two of it the stranger inquired the price or said he "How do you sell this?" Mr. **VanDuzer** answered him that they were getting \$8 a gallon for that wine. The man then put the glass to his lips the second time and drained every drop of the wine and handed the glass back, saying, "I guess that is pretty good. You may draw me a sixpence worth of it." At the same time he handed out an old-fashioned silver sixpence. Mr. V. could not help but look at him with perfect astonishment. At first he thought the man intended to insult him, but after looking at him sharply for a moment he saw the man was in earnest. Mr. V. asked him if he brought anything to put the wine in. The man said he had not, that he could drink that much. Mr. **VanDuzer** said to him that they had no license for retailing liquors and for that reason he would have to excuse them. Mr. **VanDuzer** learned a few days after that his customer for port wine was a stranger who had come here only a few days previous. He was a carpenter and joiner and resided here for some years. After a while he evinced quite an appetite for wines and liquors when he could drink them at other people's expense.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1833, Mr. William **VanDuzer** was appointed postmaster at this village, succeeding Dr. Jeremiah **Ellsworth**. Mr. **VanDuzer** had then not been here more than five or six weeks. This fact shows the confidence that the community placed in him. He retained the office until the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, 1841, when he was succeeded by Judge Elisha **Ward**. That was a period when it cost all the way from six and one-fourth cents to twenty-five cents, according to the distance, to send a letter over the United States. Probably more mail matter comes to the postoffice of this village now each day than came in a month at that time.

During the first one or two years of Mr. **VanDuzer's** administration as postmaster the office was kept at the store of Oliver **Lee**, but after a while it was thought advisable for Mr. V. to devote a room of his dwelling house to the purpose and to make his wife his assistant, who by the way was an exceedingly competent lady. Here permit us to relate another slight anecdote which rests in the comparison of the postmaster of this village with the king of England. The change of postoffice from **Lee's** store to Mr. **VanDuzer's** residence, when his wife became postmistress, was a short time after the crowning of Victoria queen of England. Some seven or eight miles from this village there lived an old man at that time nearly 80 years of age, by the name of Solomon **Rathbun**, who had the honor of being one of those who had devoted nearly seven years of the early part of his life to assisting to gain the independence of this nation.

Uncle Sol, as he was called by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance, had some queer peculiarities and was somewhat eccentric. Among his peculiar notions was one that a woman's sphere was in the household looking after the care of her family. That it was not her province to have anything to do with what he termed men's work. The old revolutioner was a pensioner and had come to that age when he did not come to the village oftener than three or four times a year—then usually for his pension, which we believe was obtained for him by Major C. C. Swift. Whenever he came to the village about the first place he went to was the postoffice, to obtain his mail if any for him or any of his neighbors.

The first time he came here after Mrs. **VanDuzer** had assumed control of the office, the old man was quite indignant to think that he had to apply to a woman for his mail matter. As soon as he had received it he came to the store where the writer was a clerk at the time. Taking a seat the old man sat some time apparently in deep meditation, when all at once he started up, saying: "I declare! The king of England is a woman; the postmaster of Silver Creek is a woman, and I declare I am *feared* the women will rise to the presidency of the United States yet." We assured the old man that we did not think there was any danger, but he shook his head and replied, "If they do, all our seven years struggle was in vain."

Mr. **VanDuzer** continued in the employ of Oliver **Lee** and Oliver **Lee & Son** as assistant manager and superintendent of their business until his death, which occurred on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1842. He was still a young man—aged but 44 years. He was mourned over and missed not only by his bereaved wife and children but by the entire community. His

wife survived him many years and the manner in which she acquitted herself of the great responsibility left resting upon her shoulders in rearing and educating her children, demonstrates the fact that she was a person of much more than ordinary abilities and acquirements. Well might her children rise up and call her blessed.

FC 15

*The Fredonia Censor* 24 September 1884, Early History of Hanover, And Biographical Sketches Of Early Settlers—Resumed.

We mentioned in a previous chapter that Mr. Jacob **Bump** had charge of the erection of the Store, and soon afterwards the Silver Creek House for Oliver **Lee**. Mr. **Bump** came from Westfield, this county, in the early summer of 1828. He was a practical bricklayer, a firstclass mechanic, who understood his business to perfection. He was an exceedingly rapid workman and when he was once placed in charge of a job of work, the owner could feel assured that it would be well and quickly done. But he, like many other first-class mechanics, had one pernicious habit. He would have his periodical spells of intoxication. During these sprees all business was neglected, and he gave his whole time to spreeing and debauching.

No one appeared to realize this failing more than did Mr. Bum[p] himself when he was in a sober condition, and hundreds were the times that he resolved that he would never touch or taste the stuff again, but when the time came around, even the sight of it in a decanter in the Bar of a Hotel, was too much for him; he could not resist it. On one occasion in the fall of 1832 he had been at work building a chimney in a two story house that had a short time before been erected on the ground where **Campbell's** bakery now stands.

**Bump** had the chimney finished a few inches above the top of the roof, when for want of material to finish with he was compelled to suspend work a day or two, and before all was in readiness, he started on one of his spells of intoxication. A week or ten days had passed, and still there was no sign of his straightening up. It was getting late in the fall, it was then past the middle of November, and the owner was afraid winter would set in before **Bump** would be able to complete the chimney. He had had three or four conversations with him, urging him to sober up and finish his job; then if he chose (as far as the man was concerned) he could remain on his spree all winter.

**Bump** finally promised him that drunk or sober he would be on hand the next morning to complete the chimney. Sure enough the next morning between 8 and 9 o'clock he made his appearance, saying he was ready for the work. It had rained or sleeted the early part of the night before, and turned cold and frozen quite hard towards morning, and was then spitting snow considerably. **Bump** was still so much under the influence of liquor that he could hardly walk straight, but insisted on at once going on the roof of the building to complete the job. The roof, ladder, and staging were covered with ice, so that a perfectly sober man, even, could not stand upright upon the roof for a moment. **Bump** was told this, but all to no purpose, he had come there to complete that chimney and he was going to do it then and there.

There were two or three standing around endeavoring to convince him of his foolishness, when, before they were aware of what he was doing, he was half way up the ladder going as fast as he knew how towards the top of the building. One of the strongest of those standing around also sprang for the ladder and followed **Bump**, hoping to overtake him at the staging and be able to show him the impracticability of his proceeding and persuade him to return. But **Bump** was too quick for him, he succeeded in getting on the roof, and by clinging to the cleets [*sic*] he crawled along to the ridgepole, but the moment that he made the effort to stand erect his feet came out from under him, and he came sliding down the roof at lightning speed.

Fortunately for **Bump** the man had reached the top of the ladder and as he came off the roof the man caught him by the coat collar, and it was also fortunate that the man was strong and powerful enough to hold him until help ascended to assist in getting him down, but for a minute or two (the man said it seemed like ten minutes to him) **Bump** hung between the heavens and the earth, some twenty-five or thirty feet above the ground, with rocks and timber strewn around, which he would have come in contact with had he come down. It had the effect of frightening **Bump** so much that it completely sobered him and when he came to realize the narrow chance he ran of losing his life, he then resolved in earnest, that he would never drink anything more that would intoxicate.

It is uncertain, however, whether he would have kept that resolve or not had not other circumstances occurred to assist him in doing so. Not long after this event, the great Mormon revival of 1833 set in here. **Bump** was one of the first

converts, and from the first took a prominent and active part in all their meetings. Early in the spring of 1832 he disposed of his property and with his family, and several other families, started for Kirtland, Grange Co., Ohio, then the great Mormon Mecca.

**Bump** and his colony from Chaut. Co. were among the early Mormon settlers there, and he had managed to gain the confidence of a majority of the community, and he at once evinced disposition to make good use, in his own behalf, of that confidence. Then it was arranged and settled to erect the great Mormon Temple at Kirtland. Jacob **Bump** was chosen Master Builder. Also when it was decided to establish the Mormon Bank of Kirtland, he was chosen President, and his oldest son Cashier. The Bank, however, had but a short existence. If reports were correct, about all the capital they ever had was the money they paid for having their paper printed in New York. They had a large amount of bills representing a million or so of money struck off, succeeded in getting several thousand dollars into circulation, principally through the West, before the bubble burst, and it was found there was not a dollar to redeem the paper with.

After four or five years we believe dissensions sprang up among the Mormons at Kirtland, and a part of them went farther west to some point in Missouri, but if our memory is correct, **Bump** remained at Kirtland and died there a few years after the rupture. There is no doubt but it was his connection with the Mormons that caused **Bump** to refrain from drinking to excess. If so, Mormonism, in its early stages, was the cause of promoting a little good.

Mr. Baruch **Phelps** came from Evans, Erie Co. in the Fall of 1831 and purchased the Tavern Stand with the small farm with it that had a short time previous been owned and kept by James **Harris**. The property included the lot where Mr. Sol. **Taylor** now resides, and a large orchard adjoining the property of the late Dr. **Burgess**. Within the last few years, streets have been opened through this property, lots have been surveyed and laid out, and a large number of dwellings erected upon it. So that it is now quite valuable. Mr. **Phelps** was a member of the Presbyterian church in Evans before he came to Silver Creek. At that time we often met with members of religious organizations who did not deem it at all harmful to sell intoxicating liquors and occasionally we found one who thought it no harm to drink it. It was also generally believed that a Tavern, or Hotel, could not be kept or sustained, without selling liquors. Mr. **Phelps** was one of the latter class although he had conscientious scruples regarding the business, and would not sell to any one but travelers.

The Tavern business was not agreeable to him. In the Spring of 1833 he had an opportunity of renting his Stand to **Sunderland & Hosmer** of Westfield, who took possession on the first day of May. This gave Mr. P. an opportunity of devoting all his time to farming. Very soon after taking possession of the house **Sunderland & Hosmer** made an application for a license. The law of this state at that time said that no person should keep a Tavern or Inn without a license. The Board of Excise decided that a tavern in that part of the village was not needed and refused to grant a license.

However, Messrs. **Sunderland & Hosmer** hung out a sign which read "Entertainment" and went ahead, but it was but a short time before parties who were interested endeavored to close them up with an injunction but **Sunderland & Hosmer** were successful in employing Judge **Mullett** of Fredonia who had no trouble in getting the injunction set aside on the ground of unconstitutionality. However these parties did not care to keep more than one year. They did not acquire the large amount of money that perhaps they anticipated they would do before they went there, but the principal cause of their not continuing was an incompatibility of temper between **Sunderland** and Mrs. **Hosmer**. They could not agree to work together.

In the spring of 1834 **Sunderland** returned to Westfield and **Hosmer** engaged in chair building. The public house was rented and kept by a Mr. **Brownell**. In the spring of 1835 Mr. **Phelps** had an opportunity of disposing of the property to Mr. Asa **Whitney**, who came here from Rochester. After **Phelps** disposed of this property he purchased a farm about a mile south-east of the village. None of the leading or traveled roads went near this property, nor was there any comfortable dwelling house upon it so **Phelps** kept his family in the village and worked the farm to the best advantage possible.

The farm contained quite a large sugar bush. He arranged during the second or third season he owned the property to make a quantity of sugar should the season prove a favorable one. He had built a temporary but comfortable sugar house and obtained a large quantity of buckets etc., etc. The season was about one-half or two-thirds over, and they had made but little sugar yet but had quite a quantity of syrup stored away in the sugar house. Mr. **Phelps** being a leading church member did not himself or allow any one in his employ to do any work about his place on the Sabbath even if a

large amount of sap ran away on that day. When Saturday night came everything was closed up and made as secure as possible and Mr. P. and his employe [*sic*] returned to their homes here in the village.

There were a half dozen or so of young men in town who were well posted upon Mr. P.'s arrangements. They thought it would be a good joke on him and amusement for them and at the same time give them all the new sugar they could eat, to go to his camp after dark Sunday evening and start his fires and convert his syrup or a part of it into new sugar. To avoid all danger of detection they decided not to go until after eight or nine o'clock and as there was no house within a half a mile or so they lost all fear or thoughts of being disturbed. To facilitate their proceedings they did not hesitate to take some lumber and other valuable property to start their fires and hasten along their sugaring, neither were they sparing of the syrup or the way they used the camp utensils.

Apparently all was passing finely and they were having a glorious time and probably it would have been a mystery to the owner who his visitors were had not his man for some cause taken a walk that evening towards the sugar bush. As soon as he came within sight of the locality he saw through the trees a bright light which he felt sure must be near their boiling place. As he drew near he could plainly see the figures of men moving around the fire. His first thought was to pounce upon them and make inquiries as to their rights in proceeding as they were doing. He concluded to go slow and cautious, and by keeping one side so the light of the fire did not reflect upon him he was able to get up to a large tree that stood but a few feet from the sugar house.

He soon found there were no less than six of the young men. He was near enough to hear all their conversation and as he knew them all he was able to take their names. He remained in his secluded spot for some time or until he had gained all the information he thought necessary, when he stole away unseen as quietly and unobserved as he reached there and came to the village, went direct to Mr. **Phelps'** house and informed him of all that had been going on. Mr. P. thought it best not to wait until daylight next morning to ascertain the amount of plunder and damage, but with his man immediately went to his camp.

He found the parties had finished their sugaring and left, but they had left a large fire under his kettles and quite a quantity of sugar in one which was then being burned to the kettle. Two other kettles were also being badly damaged by the fire. After doing all they could to save any further damage by fire Mr. **Phelps** and his man returned to their homes. It was then near morning but Mr. P. concluded to let the matter rest until people were starting out for the day, when he called upon Judge Elisha **Ward**, who was a Justice of the Peace, and gave him an account of their doings. He informed Judge **Ward** that he did not care to commence criminal proceedings against the young men if they were disposed to settle up and pay the damage that had been done to him.

He was also of the opinion that they should be made to pay pretty roundly. As one of the number expressed it they had had a royal good time and Mr. P. thought they should pay for it. After considering the matter for a short time the Judge thought he had better first without issuing a warrant for their arrest send a constable around to each one of the young men and inform them that if they did not care to take a trip to Mayville and lie in jail for a time they had better come around to his office immediately and settle up a little matter with Mr. **Phelps**. It is needless to say the whole party were completely taken by surprise, but not one of them hesitated in making his appearance, so that in less than one hour the whole party were at Judge **Ward's** office. Mr. **Phelps** let them off by their paying him \$5 each and whatever costs the Judge might have. They gladly accepted the proposition and those who were not able to pay the amount upon the spot gave security to pay in a few days.

Judge **Ward** gave them a good lecture and told them they had been let off very lightly and it was to be hoped they would let this be a good lesson and and [*sic*] never be caught in another affair of the kind—that it might end in sending them to the penitentiary. The matter was all settled and well hushed up before a dozen people in the village knew of it. Not long after this two of the party who were journeyman tailors left the village. The others remained some time, but ever after or as long as they remained in this village their conduct was every way proper and honorable.

Some two years after **Phelps** sold his tavern stand to Asa **Whitney**, he had an aching to get back into the business again. He finally rented the Lyman **Howard** place which was sometimes known as the Center House and kept this, we believe, two years as a temperance house, but the business did not come up to his expectation. He gave up hotel-keeping and returned to Evans.



*The Fredonia Censor* 17 March 1886, On The Underground, Recollections of an Old Conductor, From Shore to Shore, Tricking the Slave Catchers.

Messrs. Editors. — An article appeared in the *Censor* some weeks ago from the pen of F. A. **Redington**, Esq., relative to anti-slavery days and the Underground Ry. That brings to our recollection many of the stirring incidents of those times. From the spring of 1852, until the fall of 1858, the writer was in the employ of the late Capt. E. B. **Ward**, the great steam boat owner of Detroit, as clerk on one of his steamers, forming the regular line between Cleveland and Detroit. From the opening of navigation until it closed at the setting in of winter, these boats run with almost as great regularity as a train of cars. They were for a long time the only connecting line between the South Shore railroads and the Michigan Central and were regarded as a railroad line. The line has always been a good paying one, and is kept up to the present period and is the only regular line on lake Erie that has for near thirty years past supported two large first class side wheel steamers. At the time spoken of, these boats, or at least one of them, formed a very important link in the Underground railroad. Capt. E. B. **Ward** was a radical on the question of slavery. Whenever the subject was broached in his hearing he did not hesitate to let his views be known. We have often heard him remark that if there was a human being on earth that he despised, that he had utter contempt for, it was the person who bought and sold human chattels. He was always ready to contribute liberally to any measure for the amelioration of that oppressed class. He was also one of the foremost ones in aiding those who had escaped from bondage and made their way to their haven of liberty — Canada. It is a well known fact that soon after the Dred Scott decision, there were secret organizations formed all along the Ohio river from Portsmouth to Pittsburgh, and in fact all through Ohio, for the purpose of aiding and helping all those fugitives from slavery who were fortunate to escape and succeeded in crossing the Ohio river from Virginia and Kentucky, on their way to Canada.

These organizations were wonderfully successful in helping the poor refugee through the state of Ohio, and never lost sight of him until he was landed in the colored man's land of freedom. It was the secret working of this anti-slavery band that gave the name of the Underground Railroad. Cleveland was regarded as one of the principal stations of the route and all who were fortunate enough to reach there felt quite sure that the principal difficulties of their journey were over. A large number of the native [?] workers of the organization at that point were colored men; although there were many of the anglo-saxon race that were sympathizers and contributed very largely of their means to pay all the incidental expenses of running the U.G.R.R. and keeping it in working order. Soon after we engaged in our position as clerk of one of Capt. **Ward's** steamers in the spring of 1852, while the boat was lying at the dock in Cleveland, we were approached by quite an elderly and venerable colored man who asked if Mr. **Williams** had been on board the boat within a short time. We inquired what **Williams** he referred to. It if was Joseph **Williams**, the Supt. of the U. G. Ry. The old man answered, "'zactly sir, he is de superintendant and I is de president of dat institution." We replied that Mr. **Williams** had not yet favored us with a call. However, while we were in conversation the superintendent came up and presented us with a note from our employer stating that we should pass free from Cleveland to Detroit, all refugees or fugitives from slavery who should be brought to the boat by either of the individuals then present. After remarking that we should always gladly obey the instructions of the owners or proprietors of the line, Mr. **Williams** stated that he had never known my status on the question of slavery, but in order to have the cause in which they were engaged go on successfully, it was important that a person filling the position that I occupied on board the boat should be a sympathizer with them, or at least should not be opposed to them.

I replied that although I had never taken any active part in the cause of anti-slavery, it had my sympathy and I would gladly see the shackles knocked from every man in America, and that they could rely upon my assisting them in every way in my power that would not bring me amenable to the law. It was not long after this conversation before travel set in upon the Underground Railroad. During the summers of 1852 and 1853, there was hardly a week that we did not have a greater or less number of refugees escaping from slavery to their land of freedom. These were mostly from the border states of Virginia (now Western Virginia,) Kentucky and Tennessee and what surprised us most was the numbers in which they traveled. It was often the case that Mr. **Williams** would bring us ten or twelve at a [sic] time and sometimes this number constituted a whole family. On one occasion in the summer of 1854, we had no less than thirty individuals escaping from bondage to the dominion of Great Britian [sic], where they could enjoy the inalienable rights endowed by their Creator. Among this thirty was one family of twelve persons, the head of which was a venerable, white haired patriarch of sixty years, and the youngest an infant but little over one year of age. After the boat was under way, so that the old man should have no fear of being molested, curiosity prompted us to question him how he could manage to

travel so far with so many children and not be apprehended. The old man informed us that his former home had been in Kentucky, about seventy-five miles above Newport, and only about a mile back from the Ohio river; that his old Massa usually went to Newport and Cincinnati once during each summer which would keep him away from one to two weeks. On this occasion old Massa and their only son, a young man of twenty years, accompanied them. The party left home on a Saturday morning. Before they had gone an hour the old man began his preparations for leaving. He went to the Ohio river and procured two boats with which he knew he could take his whole family over at one trip. In the meantime his wife was baking all the corn meal they had in their quarters, and all he could find in old Massa's house into hoe cake. She also cooked by boiling and frying all the bacon they could lay their hands upon. This, with two or three fowls they cooked, constituted their stock of provisions for a week. It was about 12 o'clock at night when they were securely across the Ohio, ready to take up their march. The old man had formed his plans before starting to take the stars for his guide and avoid all greatly traveled roads. Soon after daylight the next morning they discovered a barn some distance from the road near a track of woods. The old man determined that this was just the place for them to rest through the day, providing there was no person about. He concluded they had not traveled more than twelve or fifteen miles and were not over ten miles from the river, and knew very well that the locality was not a very safe one for runaway niggers (as they were termed) if discovered. Leaving his family securely hid in a clump of bushes, a short distance back from the road, he started to reconnoiter the barn. He found everything favorable, not a living creature of any description around and a large mow of clean, dry hay. It was not long before he had his family well covered with the hay, fast asleep, while he took a secure place for a look out. The day passed and they were not interfered with. In fact, the old man said he did not see but one individual all day. About 10 o'clock in the morning a man went by on horse back, that he took to be a Methodist minister going somewhere to preach. As soon as the sun was behind the hills in the west, and the stars began to glimmer, he marshaled his little band and started again northward. He arranged with his wife for him to take the next to the youngest child (a little girl two and a half years old) and keep some eighty rods or so in the advance, and if he should be interfered with so that he thought their safety was in jeopardy he would give a certain signal by which the others could secrete themselves. The night passed without any one troubling them. Daylight, Monday morning, brought them to a large woods, or a tract of timber land; there they remained securely through the day, and again at night fall they started towards the land of liberty. They had gone but a short distance before they fell in with a man of their own color. This proved a fortunate circumstance to them. He at once informed them that he would pilot them to the house of an old Quaker preacher who was a true friend to all who were fleeing from slavery. After a walk of about two hours or more, or about 12 o'clock at night, they came to a large unpretentious farm house and were told to seat themselves in the yard while their friend went to the house and awakened the Quaker and informed him who were there. It was but a short time before the preacher made his appearance and assured them of his friendship and willingness to aid them all in his power. He said to them that his wife had already commenced to get them a good warm meal, then turning to the colored man who brought them there said, "Jonas, you fill the wagon with good clean straw, hitch up the black and brown mares and take these people on their way towards freedom." He gave Jonas the route to take and ended by informing him to whom he should deliver us. Soon after sunrise the next morning we reached the residence of another Quaker who took us in and cared for us through the day and very soon after dark were again on our way. This mode of travel was continued until they reached a little town about seventy-five miles from Cleveland, when about 12 o'clock at night, they were put into a car attached to a freight train, and were taken into Cleveland before daylight the next morning. Mr. **Williams** and two of their color, met them at the cars and conducted them to a rendezvous of safety, when they found several others likewise, waiting for an opportunity to flee to Canada.

We inquired of the old man why he took to [sic] great a risk in getting away with his whole family; if he was ill treated or misused. He replied by saying, that old Massa was very kind and good, and treated them well until about ten years previous when he commenced drinking too much and oft times came home not himself; in other words, came home under the influence of whiskey. This had been growing upon him until there was hardly a week that he did not come home drunk, and when in that condition, if anything went wrong or did not please him, his fury and rage knew no bounds. He was liable to strike one of his people (he owned eight other slaves besides this family) with a club or any article he could lay his hands upon. The immediate cause of this family leaving, the old man said was, old Massa went away on a Thursday morning a few weeks previous and did not return until Saturday evening, when he was very badly intoxicated. Sunday morning he came to our cabin, which was near by the homestead, and asked for that girl, pointing to a young and rather delicate looking girl of probably about 12 or 13 years of age, and asked her why she did not work in the field hoeing corn with the other people the two days previous. She replied that she was sick and not able to work. The child's mother corroborated her story and said she was so sick she was compelled to lay in bed nearly all one day. Old Massa said it was a lie, he knew better, the girl was lazy, that he would teach her that she could not play off in that

way as soon as his back was turned. He grabbed hold of her and took her out to the barn where he tied her to a post and whipped her until the blood run down her back nearly to her feet; her back still shows more than twenty marks of the lash. "I then resolved," added the old man, "that the first opportunity that presented itself I would take all my family and make an effort, even at the risk of my own life, to reach a country where a man can protect his own children, even if they are of African decent [sic], against the brutality of an unprincipled licentious drunken white man." We remarked to him that providing no accident happened, that soon after sunrise next morning, he would be safely landed in Canada, where the lash and club of the slave holder had no jurisdiction, and where a man has control over his own children regardless of their color or condition.

The next incident in connection with the U.G.R.R. worthy of note, occurred in the early part of September 1856. On the day in question, Mr. **Williams** came to us soon after 12 o'clock at noon under a great excitement and stated that they had their men at the rendezvous who came in the night before. Two of them were brothers belonging to a near neighbor, all three were from near Lexington, Ky. That the detectives were already looking for them, and he was just in receipt of a dispatch which indicated that the man who claimed to be the owner of the brothers had left Cincinnati that morning, and would be in Cleveland about 3 o'clock p.m. of that day; also that there were detectives looking for the fugitives, and watching every move of his, hoping thereby to ascertain the place of rendezvous. He expressed great fear and thought it would be next to impossible to get the three men on board the boat even after the night had set in as the detectives would have one or two of their number watching the boat until she left her dock at 9 o'clock in the evening. After several plans were talked over we took the captain of the steamer into our confidence (who by the by was not a sympathizer in the cause, but knowing very well that his employer was an ardent worker, we felt sure that he dare not betray us.) He at once suggested a plan that worked successfully; which was for the fugitives to remain secreted until 8:30 o'clock, which would be but a half an hour before the time for the boat to leave. Then for them to be brought by a round about way to the opposite side of the river, from where the boat was lying, where there were some large piles of lumber which shaded the river, and for another person to secure and have a yawl boat at the place in readiness when at a given signal from the steamer with a lantern, all hands were to quietly step into the yawl boat and pull to the after gangway of the steamer on the opposite side from the dock, where they could easily slip into the aft steerage cabin which contained a state room that had been used a number of times previous by those who were fleeing from slavery to seek a land of freedom under a foreign power. We were quite sure that if we once had these men safely on board the boat, and the boat underway, the United States Marshals could not get them off, at least before we reached Detroit. The lines were cast loose before the men stepped on board so that it was but a moment before the boat was under way. As we passed a schooner a short distance below, a man with satchel in hand, jumped on board of our boat. We recognized him as being one that had been hanging around the dock with the U.S. Marshal for an hour or two before night fall. We also saw him in close conversation with one of the Irish firemen whom we knew would betray us in a moment if he could. When he came to the office to pay for his passage we inquired his name and place of residence. To the latter he replied Lexington, Kentucky. If we had any doubts before of his being the owner of these men and the one endeavoring to recapture them they were then all driven away and our hearts sank within us. For a time we could think of nothing but the arrest of these poor fellows as soon as we landed at Detroit and their being taken back to servitude in chains and irons. We knew that there was always one or two police officers and generally a deputy U.S. marshal on the dock when we reached Detroit and it was a question whether we could keep these men hid any length of time. Also knew the Kentuckian would probably have the ship searched if he could not find his prey without it. We finally retired for the night endeavoring to concoct some plan to checkmate the slave owner. We finally dropped to sleep and were awakened a couple of hours or so after, by some one tapping lightly on our office window. (Our sleeping room was directly back of the office) On opening the office window we saw the older one of the two brothers who was a man of at least three-fourths white blood, and of more than ordinary intelligence, especially for one who had been reared in servitude. As soon as we saw who it was we invited him into our office and closed the door. He informed us that their owner had been shown their hiding place in the cabin below by the Irish fireman, that the Kentuckian appeared to take great pleasure in telling them that he now had them as surely as though they were back on their native soil; that he telegraphed the U. S. Marshal at Detroit before leaving Cleveland to be at the dock on the arrival of the boat prepared to take them in charge. That they would be taken back to Kentucky in irons, and when once there they could make their calculations to receive one hundred lashes on their bare backs. After hearing his entire story we told the man to go back to his hiding pace and to remain there until called for by us; that we would endeavor to think of some way to thwart this fellow who appeared to be so anxious to inflict personal punishment upon them.

It so happened that Capt. E. B. **Ward**, the owner of the boat, was on board that night. He had been to Washington and returned Via Cleveland, consequently was there on his way home. Immediately after the man left us we formed our plan of action and only waited to have an interview with Capt. **Ward** to have it carried out. Soon after sunrise he came upon deck from his stateroom. We went directly to him and informed him of all the circumstances of the case. Without a word farther than saying I think we can thwart this slave holder's plans, he sent a boy, (an attaché of the boat) for the captain in command to come to him at once. We were then in the British Channel of the Detroit River and about 10 miles below that city. At the rate we were running would be there in from a half to three fourths of an hour. As soon as the master of the steamer reported himself, Capt. **Ward** directed him to run the boat to as near the channel bank as it would be safe for him to do so, stop his engine and let go his small anchor, to lower away a small boat with two good oarsmen in it and bring it to the after gang way on the land side. As soon as this was complete he directed us to have the men brought up from below and placed in the yawl, also directed us to give each of the men a dollar so that they should not be turned loose without means to obtain a breakfast. When the yawl was about halfway from the steamer the Kentuckian came out of his stateroom. He immediately took in the situation of affairs. About the same time he was seen by the fugitives who were rapidly getting out of his reach but they could not go without giving him a parting word. The elder one sang out to him "Good by Massa, when yous gets back to Lexington tells them all we is safe in Canada." As soon as this man could find utterance he belched forth in language that would astonish the most depraved. No furious wild animal ever rared or tore around more wildly than he did. He was entirely frantic with rage. But all his swearing did him no good. On arrival at Detroit he sought legal counsel but whether he received any encouragement that he could sustain a claim against the boat for the loss of his property we never learned. We never heard anything further from him.

G.L.H., Silver Creek, N.Y., March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1886.

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*The Silver Creek News*, 15 June 1916, Stories Of Early Days, Silver Creek Historical Society

Among the manuscripts of a [sic] unpublished history of Silver Creek written by the late Major Grove L. **Heaton**, father of Mrs. Chas. N. **Howes**, is found the following which was written between 1880 and 1885, and is here printed as written. Mr. **Heaton**, as is well-known, did more than anyone else towards preserving the early history of our village.

"In the early days of the village of Silver Creek the citizens were not entirely deprived of amusements. Balls were frequently held, especially on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and on Christmas, and the incoming of the New Year which were usually well patronized by the younger members of society.

"The story was told of one of the earlier residents of the village who was a good pious member of the Methodist Denomination, when on Christmas about 1826, the young folks had been making preparations for a Christmas Ball and during this time the members of the denomination had been for a couple of weeks or more holding nightly prayer meetings. On the occasion of one of these meetings the good brother referred to, felt [sic] his duty to warn the young people of the fallacy of attending places of amusements of this character, he became somewhat excited in his exhortation and did not stop to consider what he was saying, but broke out and said 'My young friends, I presume I have attended more than a hundred Christmas Balls and never in my life received any real comfort from doing so.' He was then a man of some 35 or 40 years of age, but he did not stop to consider that Christmas Balls come but once a year.

"Aside from public dancing parties there was not much amusement, only an occasional social gathering at the home of some well-known citizen. Early in the spring of 1826, Silver Creek enjoyed the first dramatic entertainment ever presented in the village. The occasion was for one night only. On the occasion mentioned there came to the inn, kept at that time by James **Harris**, a gentleman with his wife and daughter. They were traveling by their own conveyance, of a pair of worn out horses and a delapidated [sic] vehicle that had once passed by the name of carriage. They were traveling from Pittsburgh, Pa., to Albany, N.Y., and arrived here about noon, having come from Fredonia only that day. Very soon after reaching here, the gentleman scattered hand bills through the village, we think he left one at each house, announcing that on that evening there would be an exhibition in the ball room of Mr. James **Harris'** tavern.

"When evening came, the writer in charge of his father, went and had the first view of a dramatic entertainment of his life and the impressions were so great that he will remember all the principal points during his life. There were but three of the party, the gentleman and his wife were middle aged people and their daughter was probably 18 or 20 years of

age. They had evidently been connected with a theater in Pittsburgh and were on their way to join some company in Albany, and they stopped at places along the way to play to gain money for their traveling expenses. On this occasion the piece selected was something of the nature of Ten Nights in a Bar Room. I remember very well of the young lady taking the part of two characters. [O]ne was a young man who was a great inebriate, wore a large overcoat and carried a black glass bottle in one pocket from which he frequently imbibed. The affair passed off very nicely for one of the description, the house was well filled, probably a majority of the male inhabitants of the village were there.

“The second dramatic performance for Silver Creek came off in the spring of 1835. Our friend William **Brannon**, who was the leading tailor of the village at that time, had a couple of journeymen tailors in his employ who had traveled over a large portion of the globe. Although they had not met until they became fellow workmen in **Brannon’s** shop in the village of Silver Creek, they both professed to possess considerable dramatic talent. During the winter they had talked over their experiences in matter of a theatrical nature. One of them was known by the cognomen of Tim Twist, his real name was Fuller [sic]; the name of the other was **Stewart**. We are indebted to our friend and fellow citizen, Amos **Wight**, Esq., for the following account of the exhibition these gentlemen succeeded in inaugurating [sic] here:

“ ‘These Knights of the Needle had been talking all through the preceding winter of the many dramatic entertainments in which they had, at different times and in different places, been engaged. **Brannon’s** tailor shop was a place of general resort, especially through the evenings, for many of the young men of the village. After canvassing and talking the matter over for some time, **Stewart** and **Fuller**, the Journeymen tailors, determined to make an effort and see what sort of a performance they could produce. They consulted Jonathan **Keith**, Mine Host of the Silver Creek House, and found they could obtain his ballroom both for private rehearsals, and when they were ready for a public exhibition. They then set themselves at work to form a dramatic club. The material for such an organization at that early period was not very promising, but after a good deal of labor in examining candidates, they settled upon the following who were then all residents of Silver Creek: **Stewart** and **Fuller** took the leading characters; then came W. B. **Cotton**, for a long time afterwards a resident of Fredonia; Amos **Wight**, John **Roll**, and a person by the name of **Slosson** who was a school teacher in this vicinity. The ladies who took part in the performance were Miss Mary **Trask**, Miss Persis **Holmes**, Miss Lydia Ann **Mason**, Miss Elizabeth Ann **Gates**, Misses Roxan and Susan **Williams**.

“ ‘The piece chosen was Damon and Pythias. This courageous band met once a week for some time for rehearsals and it would have made the genions [sic] of romance tear every hair from his historic head could he have been permitted to have seen and heard the wild fury of those two stage struck tailors. Passion was rent into more pieces than they would have been able to sew together during their natural lives.

“ ‘The time came after a while for a public exhibition, and for three nights our citizens, with those living adjoining the village, were held spell bound by this thrilling performance. The price of admittance was put at 12 1/2 , only thinking that that much would pay the current expenses. The hall was not large enough to accommodate more than half that applied for admission each night. Among the audience we noticed Captain **Grover**, at that time our Customs House Officer, who probably had had opportunities of witnessing some of the best dramatic talent in America, and at times during the most tragic parts of the piece he was so convulsed with laughter that we feared instantaneous epoplexy [sic]. Notwithstanding, the house was well filled all three of the nights, the performance was not a success so far as paying was concerned. There were a great many deadheads and the stray shillings that came in hardly paid for the tinsel and burned cork employed in decorating the performers, but it gave the boys and girls a chance to enjoy themselves. The performers generally regarded the amusement they had in the matter was pay enough for them, but the ardent disciples, **Stewart & Fuller**, were so elated over their fancied success that they determined to abandon the goose and needles in disgust and find a larger field for the exercise of their dramatic talent. But we are sorry to add it is feared that they were not successful. A few years after, **Stewart** was captured while participating in the Canadian Rebellion and was sentenced to Van Deman’s Land for a term of years, while **Fuller**, through disappointment and what he thought was a lack of appreciation of true dramatic talent, took to drink and when we last heard from him, he and whiskey were in joint accord and his partner was fast getting the best of him.

“ ‘Of those who are known to be living who participated in this entertainment are Wilbur B. **Cotton**, now residing in Fredonia; Amos **Wight** of Silver Creek; Mr. **Slosson** of Nashville; Miss Eliza Ann **Gates** is the wife of Amos **Dow** of Randolph; Lydia Ann **Mason** is the wife of Albert G. **Dow** of Randolph; Miss Mary **Trask** is the wife of Alva **Montgomery** and resides in Buffalo. Miss Persis **Holmes** left here many years ago and so far as regards her, we are unable to say whether she is alive or not.

“ ‘Before closing we must state that Mr. **Keith** made no charge for the use of his hall or ballroom. When spoken to in regard to it he replaid [*sic*] that he was already well paid in seeing the dramatic art flourish in our midst and the amusement he secured from viewing the performance. Since that time we have no knowledge of any regular dramatic entertainment being performed here by home talent. There have been varied exhibitions in school houses and churches and we are frequently entertained by travelling bands or combination troupes [*sic*] that come here to favor us with their performances, but we venture to say that in no single instance has any company given an exhibition that gave more real amusement and genuine satisfaction and pleasure than the one gotten up and performed by home talent under the auspices, superintendance and direction of the journeymen tailors.’ ”

SCN 2

*The Silver Creek News* 22 June 1916, Stories Of Early Days, Silver Creek Historical Society, Side Lights On Local History, From the Manuscripts of the Late Major Grove L. **Heaton**—Written between 1880 and 1885.

About the year 1828, an affair occurred here that created considerable excitement for the time being. A man by the name of **Seymour** had articed from the Holland Land Company and settled on the farm on which John **Dalrymple** now lives. **Seymour** was the brother-in-law of Captain Bushnell **Andrews**. He was quite poor so far as this worlds goods were concerned, but was hard working, industrious and energetic. It took nearly every dollar he had to get his article.

Here, let me explain that it was the custom of the Holland Land Company, who were the owners of the principal part of the land in Chautauqua County in its wild state, to, on application for a certain tract of land by the parties paying a small amount of money of about a dollar an acre, give them an article for a deed in case the parties paid the balance with interest within a certain period. If they failed to make the payments within the period stated, they forfeited what they had paid and their article had expired, and according to the rules of the company no matter how great improvements there had been made on the property it was again subject to be articed.

About that time, there was a class of men who were called “land sharks,” that frequented the land office at Mayville, and by paying a fee to the clerks could get a list of tracts of land on which the articles had expired. They would then go and examine the tract and if the improvements that had been made were enough so it was an object, they would re-article it and take possession, and if they did not care to hold the property permanently, they would offer their article and improvements for sale. The “land sharks” as they were called, were looked upon as no better than pirates.

**Seymour** had been intending to renew his article, but he was careless and let it expire, not thinking that anyone would take advantage and pirate him or steal his improvements from him. He had erected a comfortable house and cleared a number of acres, and had just got in condition to live comfortably. Among his other improvements he had set out an orchard and built a small barn.

About this time there was a family by the name of **Johnson** that consisted of an elderly man and his wife and two grown up sons and daughters. He lived very quietly without any apparent business for some time. Finally, the old gentleman slipped off to Mayville, and on his return, loaded up his household goods and with his family made his appearance at the **Seymour** homestead and at once the whole family commenced to set the **Seymour’s** household goods out of doors and theirs inside the house. **Seymour’s** wife expostulated at these proceedings, but found it did no good, so placing her two children in a safe place, started to inform her husband, who was some ways from the house chopping. **Seymour** returned with his wife and found the **Johnsons** in peaceful possession of his home and all his furniture piled up out of doors. The **Johnsons** at once informed Mr. **Seymour** that they had legal title to the property, that his article had expired and they had taken an article on it and were in peaceful possession, and that there was nothing left for him to do but pack up his goods and get away as soon as possible.

Mr. **Seymour** informed them that he did not propose to be robbed of his improvements in that way without making some effort to resent it, and at once came over to the village and reported the matter to his brother-in-law Captain **Andrews**, who returned with him. During **Seymour’s** absence the **Johnsons** had prepared for a conflict by cutting and trimming several good size clubs, and placing them where they would be convenient to get in case they were required. After **Seymour** had returned with **Andrews**, they did not stop long to argue the question, but commenced to throw **Johnson’s** things out doors and place theirs back in the house. This did not last long until the clubs were brought into requisition and the fracas commenced. It was said that **Andrews** and **Seymour** had two or three of the **Johnsons** on the floor at a time, but the women portion took a hand and used the clubs as though they were accustomed to the business.

It resulted in the **Johnsons** keeping possession of the property, but a suit was begun by both parties and ended in each party obtaining a judgment against the other of \$100.00. From this affair, that locality received the name of "Bloody Point," which it retained many years. **Seymour** had the sympathy of the entire community, but it was decided he had an [sic] legal redress excepting for his household goods being roughly handled in being put out of doors. The **Johnsons** got a farm, on which had been large improvements, on the same terms, price and conditions as though there had never been a stick cut and **Seymour** lost every dollar eh [sic] had paid and did not receive a cent for the improvements he had made which had required many a long hard days work in chopping.

This is the second of a series of articles dealing with local history, which will appear in the Silver Creek News from time to time, prepared by the Silver Creek Historical Society.

SCN 3

*The Silver Creek News* 6 July 1916, Stories Of Early Days, Silver Creek Historical Society, Side Lights From Local History, From the Manuscripts of the Late Major Grove L. Heaton, Written Between 1880 and 1885.

The first circus company that paid a visit to Silver Creek came here in June 1833. It was under the management of Samuel **Nichols** of the far-famed **Nichols** Brothers. That was a period before they combined menageries and circuses together and this was a nothing more than a circus company without any animals or even the usual annex or side show. They gave but one performance and that was in the evening.

This was the first opportunity that many of the citizens of this village had ever had for witnessing a performance of this character. The natives from the surrounding country, together with a large sprinkling of the genuine native Americans from the reservation, were on hand so that when their performance was ready to commence, their tent was well filled.

It was exceedingly amusing to listen to the expressions of surprise and admiration that came from some of the people from the interior as they witnessed the feats of the wonderful clown. I remember hearing one woman make the inquiry of her liege lord and master as to what the circus company would do for another clown when that one died. The reply was that he did not know unless they sent to the old country for one.

The wonderful act of the drunken sailor who pushed his way into the ring and commenced a colloquy with the clown and ring-master and insisted that he could ride as well as any of them was a part of the performance. The ringmaster insisted that he could not and that he must leave the ring, which he of course refused to do. Finally a couple of chaps from back of Smiths Mills thought it was an outrage to have a drunken sailor, just off one of the schooners in the harbor, interfere and they jumped into the ring and volunteered to throw the fellow over the top wall of the tent if he did not behave himself and let the performance go on. The clown thanked them for their kind offer but told them he guessed he could manage the chap without having any great disturbance, that it would be better to let him try to have a ride even if he fell off or was thrown off and nearly broke his neck than get up a row and have a great muss as the clown said he was afraid there would be for he saw quite a number of other sailors in the crowd.

The two chaps finally returned and took their places in the audience and the clown consented the sailor should have a ride. The sailor then made two or three attempts to get on the horse, but he was so drunk—apparently—that each time he would go clear over the horse. After several attempts he became seated and away the horse went. He had not gone more than twice around the ring before the fellow was on his feet and commenced to strip off his clothing. After divesting himself of three or four coats, a half a dozen vests and pulling a feather pillow from the front of his pants and got down to his regular costume, one woman who was extremely modest, thought the man was about to become nude and nearly fainted.

The most amusing part of it was to see the two chaps who offered their services to put the drunken sailor out of the ring. They would have sold themselves for half a dollar. They were heard to remark afterwards that they were never before so much taken in their lives.

This is the third of a series of articles dealing with local history which will appear in the Silver Creek News from time to time, prepared by the Silver Creek Historical Society. If the older residents will co-operate in furnishing information concerning the days gone by, and the younger residents assist in taking down such information, a considerable addition

can be made to our available 'local history.' It is each ones [sic] duty to do his bit, a duty each one owes to both his ancestors and his descendants.

SCN 4

*The Silver Creek News* 5 February 1925, Hanover History, *The burning of the Steamer George Washington, An uncompleted manuscript by Major Heaton, written about 1880, This forms number 39 of the series of historical articles which are appearing weekly in the News, Furnished by Roscoe B. Martin, Forestville, N.Y.*

On Saturday morning, the 30<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1838, there occurred one of the most thrilling events the citizens of our village were ever brought to witness. Between two and three o'clock on that bright summer morning, a man went riding through the streets on horse-back at the top of the animals' speed, crying: "Fire! Fire! A steamboat is on Fire." The citizens were aroused and turned out, only stopping to throw whatever clothing was convenient, over them, and in throngs repaired to the lake at the foot of Jackson street. There they could plainly see a steamboat on fire in one solid mass of flame from stem to stern. She was not more than three or four miles from shore and about the same distance up the lake, about opposite of the Chapin bay.

What was most painful, the lake was dotted all around the burning boat with the heads of the luckless passengers or crew, who had been aroused from their slumbers on the discovery of their floating dwelling place being on fire. And as they were left to a choice of being burned alive or drowning, they chose the latter. We could also plainly hear their cries and appeals for help.

Fortunately, the lake was as smooth as a mirror. In the bright morning sun there was not a ripple to break the appearance of an almost boundless mirror. Among those who first reached the lake after the alarm was given was our citizen, Charles H. **Lee**, Esq., then quite a young man, full of ambition and energy. He, with some other person to assist him, sprang into the first boat that was available and pushed off to the rescue.

As soon as the steamboat was discovered to be on fire, she was headed for the shore, but had not proceeded far in that direction before her machinery was stopped and very soon she became motionless. The passengers and crew threw overboard chairs, stools, and wrenched off doors or any article that would support a person in the water, to help save life.

A few miles ahead of the steamer on fire, which proved to be a new boat, the *George Washington*, on her first round trip, was the steamer *North America*. She was at once put about and came to the assistance of those on the burning steamer. But before she could render much assistance, the unfortunate people had reached the shore by the aid of small boats or the chairs, stools, etc.

Many of those who were saved were fearfully burned, and lay here for several weeks before they were so far recovered that they could return to their homes or resume their journey. After the steamer had burned to near its water line, it was decided to hitch the *North America* to it, and tow it alongside the dock at this village and scuttle it.

For this purpose, the *North America* backed up as near the burning steamer as it was safe to do so on account of the intense heat, when Mr. Charles **Lee** took a line in his boat from the *North America* and backed up to the head of the rudder. Through this means they were able to make fast to the burning hull and tow it ashore. It was brought alongside the west side of the pier as close to the shore as possible, where it was scuttled and sunk. Many of the citizens spent much time in obtaining relics from the burning mass.

It was estimated that there were some 50 lives lost by the burning of the *Washington*. There were twelve or thirteen bodies picked up the same morning of the burning of the boat and on the following day, Sunday, a funeral was held in the orchard of Oliver **Lee**, near where the present residence of Mr. **Carrier** now is. The thirteen dead bodies in plain pine coffins were placed in a row and services held over them by the Reverend O. C. **Beardsley**, assisted by one or two other clergymen. The occasion was a very solemn and sad one. Although the subjects were all strangers, the entire community turned out to the funeral.

Many of the rescued remained in this neighborhood for some days; some in the hope of finding the remains of lost friends, others hoping to find baggage containing valuables they asserted were thrown into the lake.



Among the stories that were set afloat was one that" . . . Here Major **Heaton** broke off with his story. Probably he intended telling something of the alleged robbery of many of the bodies that came ashore. Or, perhaps, the then current story about the grave in Glenwood Cemetery containing one of the victims. When a near relative came to Silver Creek, as quickly as possible after the accident, he had the body disinterred to make a positive identification. When the coffin was reached, it was found that the victims [*sic*] suspenders were protruding from underneath the cover. This was not the case at the funeral and interment, when everything was in proper order. It was plainly evident that the grave had been opened, the body searched for valuables, and then hurriedly [*sic*] put back and reinterred, leaving the suspenders sticking out from under the cover as mute evidence of the affair.

Everybody who remembers Charles H. **Lee's** office, will recall the stool he used at his big desk in the front window. Its top was covered with sheepskin. Mr. **Lee** gave this stool daily use for about 65 years, from the time of the fire until his death. On the underside of the top was inscribed the date of the fire, the fact that it was the Pilot's stool on the Washington, and that it was presented to him by one of the engineers of the boat named **Brock**.

Who can tell the location of the graves of these thirteen people? Time seems to have effaced this information, but surely some of our older readers will remember hearing about it as it was the kind of occurrence that would long be talked about. Perhaps it was in the land now occupied by the S. **Howes** Company's lumber yards, at the junction of the two creeks; that is the best I have been able to figure out and that is mostly a guess.

SCN 5

*The Silver Creek News* 12 February 1925, Hanover History, *An unpublished manuscript of Major Heaton, This is number 40 of a series of historical articles dealing with Silver Creek and vicinity, furnished by Roscoe B. Martin, Forestville, N.Y.*

On the 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1825, there occurred in Buffalo an event which will ever be remembered by those who witnessed it or who were living at the time and were old enough to remember passing events. Three brothers by the name of **Thayer** were hung on the day named, in Buffalo, all from the same structure and dropped at the same time. The crime for which they were executed was for the murder of a man by the name of **Love** in the early part of the winter previous.

**Love** was an Englishman by birth; a batchelor [*sic*], and during the summer time for two or three years previous had followed the lakes and at the close of navigation in the fall worked his way out to the town of Boston, some eighteen miles from Buffalo, where the **Thayers** resided. The three brothers and their father, we believe, resided near on farms; the two older sons had families, the younger resided with his father. **Love** had made his home with one of the families during the winter, for two or three winters, and he had loaned some of the **Thayer** family money at different times, and also held notes against some of the individuals in that vicinity.

On this occasion, he had come to the **Thayers** early in December and not long afterwards he was missing and the **Thayers** gave out that he had gone west and that he had left some notes with one of the **Thayer** brothers to collect and had also left a horse and bridle with them. After a short time a suspicion was aroused that all was not right and a search was made if our memory serves us correctly, the body of **Love** was found in the woods covered with brush. The father and his three sons were arrested for the crime and we believe one of the sons eventually made a confession that saved their aged father.

It appeared from the confession that the three brothers had been butchering hogs at the house of one of the older brothers and on that day they concocted the plan and soon after dark in the evening while **Love** sat by the fire apparently sleeping, one of the brothers shot him through the head with a rifle from the outside of the house, through a window. The three then conveyed the body to the woods and hid it under the brush. As stated they were tried, and to save their poor old father, one of them made a confession and on conviction were sentenced to be executed on the day named. The event of the execution of three brothers at the same time caused a great excitement all through the state and at the same time caused a great excitement all through the state [*sic*] and at that time all executions in the state were public. These circumstances had a tendency to draw together a great concourse of people.

At that period, there were no steamboats coasting between Erie and Buffalo but a small schooner owned, we believe, at Barcelona or Erie, advertised to take passengers from Barcelona (which was the lake port for Westfield), Dunkirk and Silver Creek. It was announced that the vessel would leave this place on the morning previous to the execution, and

expected to reach Buffalo that evening in time for all passengers to find lodging places, as they had no accommodations [sic] for sleeping passengers on board the boat. It was also announced that all passengers must provide themselves with rations as they would not be able to feed them on board the boat.

As is oft the case at such times, instead of the vessel leaving here at about 10 o'clock, a.m., it did not reach here until near the middle of the afternoon. The only mode for their getting on board the schooner was for the vessel to "come-to" in the bay and passengers going on board in a small boat.

There were some twenty or twenty-five persons that went in the party from this village. After they were under way, the winds proved to be light and also from a contrary direction than was desired; consequently they did not reach Buffalo until after the hanging was over and those who went by that conveyance and were to great discomfiture and trouble expecting to witness a human execution, were disappointed.

They remained in Buffalo until the morning after the hanging, when the vessel with its passengers started for a return. They were again annoyed by contrary winds, and the indications were for a stormy windy night. The schooner was under Point Albino on the Canadian shore for a harbor. Quite a number of passengers went on shore here and obtained lodgings at a Canada farm house. They got under way again next morning, but the Silver Creek party who took refuge in the farm house the night before found that during their absence their commissary [sic] stores had disappeared and they were left to fast for the remainder of the trip. The schooner succeeded in making a point opposite the mouth of Cattaraugus Creek, when the wind all died away again, and left them there near night, motionless.

Several of the number insisted upon being put ashore there and obtained conveyance from Mr. **Moore** and came to their homes. In this party who came on shore we believe [sic] was Mrs. **Rann**, wife of Alfred F. **Rann** and one or two other ladies who immediately repaired to Mr. **Rann's** inn and prepared a good healthy meal for their half famished companions who they knew would soon follow them. By their manning a small boat with several good strong men, with a line attached to the schooner, they succeeded after three or four hours in warping or towing the schooner near enough so her Silver Creek passengers could be landed at the foot of "Puddin' Bank."

Thus ended the first and only expedition of Silver Creek people to witness a public execution. It is exceedingly gratifying to know that not many years after this affair that the idea of public executions of human beings became so repugnant that by an act of the legislature they have since been prohibited.

Among the party who went from Silver Creek in that expedition, there is one still living among us who probably is the only person of all the number who went from here that is still living. Although she did not witness the hanging, and I presume that she does not in the least regret that she did not see it, she well remembers all the circumstances connected with it, although at the time she was a wife and a mother, and it occurred over 55 years ago. This lady has resided nearly all this time here in the village of Silver Creek and since that time she has seen hundreds upon hundreds that have come into the world since then, grown up into manhood and womanhood and to fill the sphere allotted to them by the Great Creator, and has seen them pass away and all things that knew them once will know them no more forever.