1879

Early Settlers of Sweden: Fifty Years Ago, Brockport in 1829

Stanley Soules

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THE EARLY SETTLERS OF SWEDEN

FIFTY YEARS AGO
(BROCKPORT IN 1829)

CLARKSON IN OLDEN TIMES

A selection of articles printed in the
BROCKPORT REPUBLIC
Brockport, Monroe County, New York

Transcribed and compiled by
Stanley D. Soules
December 1983
- Preface -

Fifty years after settlement began in the town of Sweden, Editor Beach published in the Brockport Republic, in 1857, an historical account of the pioneer occupation of the land.

When Brockport's fiftieth anniversary of incorporation occurred in 1879, he printed five articles on the appearance of the village in 1829. In an additional essay, he described also the nearby village of Clarkson in early times.

These interesting stories of local history, written over a century ago, are collected here. An index of names is provided at the end of the text.

The microfilm files of the Brockport Republic are located in the Reference Division, Drake Memorial Library, State University of New York College at Brockport.

S. D. S.

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THE EARLY SETTLERS OF SWEDEN

In the original survey of the Triangular Tract, Sweden was designated Township No. Three, and its present limits correspond with that township. What is known as the Lake Road passing through the center of the town, was cut out and bridged from Leroy to the Lake previous to the survey of the tract. A road had been opened at an earlier date from Avon to Leroy, thus furnishing a way of access to it. The prices of lands first sold in the township varied from $1.75 to $2.50 per acre. In the course of a few years, the price was advanced to $3 and subsequently to $5.

Some improvements had been commenced in 1806; the first settlements were begun, however, early in 1807, by Nathaniel Poole and Walter Palmer, who moved in with their families in the winter of that year. Poole took up and located upon what is known as the widow Nelson place, on the east side of the Lake road - erected a house and commenced a clearing. Walter Palmer settled farther north, on the west side of the road, on what was afterwards called the Alvord place; but he ultimately moved away from the town.

Samuel Bishop settled a little later, in the season of 1807, on the east side of the Lake road upon the Moses Chamberlain place, having visited and selected it in December 1806. In 1816 he removed to the farm, ever since occupied by him, near the Bishop schoolhouse, and is now the oldest resident in the town.

A man by the name of Hopkins, and Isaiah White and Stephen Johnson also moved into the town during the year 1807. Hopkins built the first house on the site of Brockport, but did not stay there many years. Isaiah White settled on the James Jackson place. Johnson took up and lived some time on the Joseph Randall farm; planted a nursery, and subsequently set out the first orchard in town, and furnished trees to most of the other early settlers for theirs.

John Reed settled in the south part of the
town in 1808, and was afterward the first supervisor of Sweden.

Johnson Beedle settled and kept a tavern upon the hill, on the east side of the Lake Road, just south of Sweden Centre, in 1808 or early in 1809. Edward Parks bought out Jedidiah Freeman, and settled upon the farm subsequently occupied by him, in 1809, or the year before.

Deacon Rice settled upon the place since known as Wilkie's Corner, in the same year.

James Stickney and Amos Stickney came in from Oneida county in the summer of 1809. Reuben Stickney, Jr., and Lewis Gardner had preceded them in the same year, and settled temporarily on the widow Nelson place, which Reuben purchased from Poole.

Reuben Stickney, Sen., a soldier of the Revolution, and father of the others, with his son Israel, moved on in the summer of 1810, and ultimately located where his son Amos now resides.

In 1809 Reuben Moon began the Moon settlement in the east part of the town. Zenas Case, Sen., father of Elder Zenas Case, Jr., settled in the same neighborhood a year later. Also, Stephen Clark, Isaac Steves, and David Doty, Sampson Howard, Alanson Howard and Mr. Luther settled there later still.

James Scott, a very respectable colored man, settled with his family a little south of the Moon settlement, next to Ogden, in the fall of 1809, and was the first settler in that part of the town.

The settlement of the Fourth Section was commenced in the spring of 1809. Among the principal settlers were Elijah Steward, who was the first town clerk, Walter Steward, Uriah L. James, William James, and Simeon Palmer, who located on the place subsequently occupied by his son Humphrey Palmer, and Joshua B. Adams. Benjamin S. Sheldon settled in the neighborhood a year or two later.

In or about the year 1809, William B. Worden, Aaron Hill, and Moses J. Hill settled upon the south side of the town line, on the road now leading from Wilkie's Corner, west to Holley.

Joseph Hutchinson settled upon the road leading east from Samuel H. Davis's, about the year 1810.
In or about 1810 or 1811, Joseph Luce and Oramel Butler commenced the settlement in the south-east part of the town. A year or two after, Moses Pike began a clearing on the farm now occupied by Frederick P. Root, which he subsequently sold to Aaron Root. Timothy Tyler started a clearing in 1810 on the adjoining farm, afterward cleared up and occupied by Dudley Root; and the following year moved to the place on the east side of the Lake road, where he lived till he died recently, at an advanced age.

Rowland Saunders came in the following year, and settled upon the Lake road, where he now resides.

Edmund H. Raleigh settled the same year on the place which Zenas Beedle now occupies, and was the first and the best hatter in the town.

Levi Paige and Ezra Brown settled about 1811 or 1812, at West Sweden; and Abijah Capen located a mile west of the Lake road about the same time. Of the earlier settlers of Sweden there were quite a number not here named; but no great progress had been made in settling or clearing up the town when the war of 1812 broke out. By that event, leading as it did to continual alarms of the inhabitants and frequent requisitions upon them to aid in the defense of the frontier, where many rendered patriotic service, some were killed and others wounded, further settlements were retarded, and those already made in a measure broken up. Before the close of the war, many had left, some temporarily, and others not to return.

With the return of peace commenced a new era in the history of the town. Some impression had been made before, on the forest, dense and tall, which originally covered it; but still it spread unbroken over by far the greater portion of its surface; and the work of clearing it up and permanently settling upon, reclaiming and improving the lands, was for the most part yet to be accomplished. And for some time after, settlers were much straitened in their means of living; particularly in the inclement season of 1816, and with their families subjected to numerous and great privations and hardships, sometimes in want even
of sufficient food for their comfortable subsist-
ence.

Sweden was, with several town since erected, or-
originally included in the town of Murray, and em-
braced by the county of Genesee. When first or-
ganized as a town by the name of Sweden, it includ-
ed Clarendon within its limits. Its political and 
municipal existence commenced, as appears by the 
town records, in 1814. Clarendon was separated 
from it at a later period. The first town meeting 
was held April 4th, 1814. By a census of the town, 
including Clarendon, taken in November of that 
year, the whole number of inhabitants in both towns 
appears to have been 849; the number of heads of 
families 149; and the number of freeholders, worth 
$250 each, only 5. Very little of the land had 
then been deeded, and it was with great difficulty, 
and not without some shifts, that freeholders enough 
could be found or made to fill the town offices, for 
some time after.

After the close of the war, a tide of emigration 
began to rush in; the population of the town was 
soon rapidly augmented; and the new settlers were 
generally of a more substantial class, and better 
off than a majority of their predecessors. Of the 
older settlers, a large proportion sold out their 
canton, and little improvements, to the new comers, 
and were superseded by more permanent inhabitants -
as usually happens in all new settlements. There 
is room in this short sketch to notice only the 
more prominent of the latter, who came prior to 
1818.

Robert Staples came from Vermont in the early 
part of 1816, and shortly after bought the farm, 
previously articulated whereon he now resides, on the 
south-west part of the town; and has since cleared 
it up and made the improvements upon it. The access 
to it from the Lake road was then from Sweden Centre, 
by a way imperfectly cut out, in many places cordu-
royed with logs and timber, and every where hardly 
passable. And this was a specimen of all the other 
roads - few in number - in the town at that time. 
Of their rudeness, and the wilderness of the coun-
try bordering on them then, it is difficult now 
for those who did not see them, to form an adequate 
conception. William Warn, Asa Babcock, Benjamin
Babcock, Oliver Spencer and Edmund Spencer, Philip King and William King, had settled in the westerly part of the town some earlier than Robert Staples. James White came the same year he did. Chauncey Staples, Chester White and John White, located there a year or two after.

Levi Pond settled there in the early part of 1817, bought out a previous occupant, and with Erastus Lawrence, who came in 1818, cleared the farm now occupied by Lafayette Steves. Mr. Pond remained on the place several years, after which he sold out to Mr. Lawrence and removed first to the Beach Ridge, on the west side of the Lake road, and subsequently from thence to Brockport, where he has since resided.

In the central part of the town, a little to the west of the Lake road, Peleg Thomas, Sen., and Alanson Thomas had settled during or previous to the war, and Alanson had a mill for grinding corn and grain on the farm now occupied by Chester Roberts. Dr. Daniel Avery and Steward Bennett settled in the same neighborhood in 1816.

In the south part of the town, next to Bergen, Silas Parker, Sen., and his son Silas, and Epaphas Merrill settled in 1816 and 1817. A little farther north, to the west of the Lake road, Moses Stickney located in 1815, and still resides, at an advanced age. But little progress was made in the further settlement of that part of the town till a much later period. James Hart settled in that neighborhood in 1816, but afterwards moved out to the Lake road, where he still resides.

Upon the Lake road, in the south part of the town, William Terry, Joshua Whalley, John R. Landon, Julius Comstock, Ansel Comstock, Charles Treat, and his son Charles, Jr., Samuel V. Way, James Phillips, and Shubael Phillips, located in 1816 and 1817.

In the central part of the town to the south of Beach Ridge, Mark Jenny, Calvin Gibbs, Artemas Lyman, Walter Phelps, Abel Root, Elder Brackett, and Seth Spooner, settled in the same years. North of the Beach Ridge, and south of Brockport, Elder Bigelow, Royal Barlow, Isaac Palmer, and James Jackson, located in 1815, '16 and '17.
Dudley Root, William Root, and Aaron Root, came originally from Connecticut; they moved into the Root settlement, in the easterly part of the town, in 1817; William buying out Consider Bachelder, and Dudley some other temporary claimants; and with Timothy Perkins in the same neighborhood, Stephen Batrnick, who located a little west of them, and Samuel Bishop, before named, a little to the south, were the only settlers then remaining in that locality. Very little clearing had been done at this time in that part of the town; there were no framed homes, and but one barn. The approach to the settlement was by a road of the most primitive kind, turning east from the Lake road at John Reed's and then north to Bishop's, from which the underbrush only had been cut out, the trees being left standing, and without bridges or cross ways. South of Bishop's, Calvin J. Whitcher, with his father, settled as early as 1816. Bela Butler, Daniel Butler, and Nathaniel Bangs located in the same neighborhood about the same time.

To the east of the Lake road, in the central and north part of the town, Elisha Locke, and his sons, Joseph Lewis, Elon Lee, now of Union, Thaddeus Stone, John Powers, Isaiah Chase, Samuel C. Bentley, John Beedle, Abel Gifford, Joseph Randall, David Morgan, Samuel Morgan, Zadock Hurd, William Salisbury, Sel­den Tenant, Reuben Allen, Sen., father of Philemon Allen, Sylvester Pease, John Howes, Deacon Niles, Sisson Taylor, and his brother, Thomas Cooley and his sons, Job Phelps, Lieutenant Crippen, Peter Sutphen, Mr. Shumway, Eli Gallup, John Clark, Mr. Bronson and Daniel Freeman, located in 1816 and 1817. On the town line road, north of the canal, Joseph Preston and Thomas Bowen settled during the same years. And David More, Benjamin Remington, Elisha Brace, Lyonel Udell, Samuel Chadsey and William Sheldon, settled in those years upon the Fourth Section.

Joshua Field, one of the founders of the village of Brockport, came to Bergen in Genesee county, in 1809; in 1813 removed to the village of Clarkson, and in 1822 settled in Brockport, where, except at short intervals, he has resided since, and in its infancy contributed materially to its growth.

The Erie canal was finished as far as Brock-
port in 1823, but no farther west till two years after. In anticipation of the benefits to be derived from the construction of the canal, the village had been surveyed and laid out before it became the terminus of navigation, and the first impulse was thereby given to its growth and prosperity. The site of the village, on the west side of the Lake road, was purchased by Hiel Brockway of John Phelps, soon after the surveys for the location of the canal were finished. That part of the site lying on the east side of the Lake road originally belonged, partly to Rufus Hammond and partly to a man by the name of Knight, and was subsequently purchased by Jas. Seymour, Abel Baldwin and Myron Holley.

The settlement of the village, as such, was commenced in 1822. Among the first settlers, were Hiel Brockway, its principal founder, from whom it takes its name, James Seymour, George Allen, Joshua Field, Thomas R. Roby, Ralph W. Goold, Luke Webster, John G. Davis, and Charles Richardson, who was the first merchant. He built the first store, which is still standing on the east side of Main street, north of the canal, and is used for a cooper's shop. John G. Davis and James Seymour opened stores about the same time, and George Allen and Roby and Goold soon after. The first frame house erected in Brockport has been moved back from Main street, and now stands in the rear of the old Collins block. The first public house in the village was opened by Jesse Barber. James Seymour kept the first store house; Jeremiah Cogswell and Daniel Freeman the second.

The first Methodist clergyman was Martin Adgate; the first Baptist John R. Dodge, and the first Presbyterian Mr. Barnes. Francis Storms was the first lawyer, Daniel Burroughs, Jr., the next. Andrew Mellican was the first physician; Dr. Davis Carpenter, who located there in 1825, the second; and John B. Ellicott the third. Roderick R. Steward was the first carpenter, and William Mead the first blacksmith. The buildings on the east side of Main street, from the cabinet shop to the canal, were erected at various early periods, principally by Silas Hardy, Elisha Brace, Joshua Field, James Seymour, George Allen, and Daniel Collins. On the
opposite side of the street, except Roby & Goold's store erected by them, and the adjacent buildings, the original erections have been destroyed by fires down to the canal, and now the better ones have taken their places.

Of the early settlers of Sweden, before named, who came before 1818, Walter Palmer, Samuel Bishop, James Stickney, Amos Stickney, Israel Stickney, Moses Stickney, Joshua B. Adams, Walter Steward, Uriah L. James, Sampson Howard, Aaron Hill, Moses J. Hill, Joseph Hutchinson, Oramel Butler, Rowland Saunders, Edmund H. Raleigh, Robert Staples, Oliver Spencer, William King, Chauncey Staples, Levi Pond, Alanson Thomas, John White, James Hart, John R. Landon, Julius Comstock, Ansel Comstock, Charles Treat, Jr., Samuel V. Way, James Phillips, Royal Barlow, Isaac Palmer, James Jackson, Consider Bachelder, Dudley Root, William Root, Timothy Perkins, Calvin J. Whitcher, Thaddeus Stone, Bela Butler, Joseph Lewis, Elon Lee, John Beedle, Joseph Randall, David Morgan, Samuel Morgan, Selden Tenant, Peter Sutphen, Eli Gallup, Lyonel Udell, and Samuel Chadsey; though not all now residents of the town, are known to be still living - the remnant of a veteran band of sturdy pioneers, whose courage and enterprise, hardships, industry and perseverance in reclaiming a wilderness from its state of nature, and converting it into one of the most flourishing agricultural townships in western New York, are worthy of commemoration.

The foregoing list of their names and sketch of their history, has been compiled from the united recollections of Samuel Bishop, Dudley Root, James Stickney, Rowland Saunders, Robert Staples, Levi Pond, and Joshua Field, who met for that purpose in Brockport May 22d, 1856, at the office of J. Fuller, he acting as their amanuensis. [The Brockport Republican, June 5, 1857, page 1, columns 2-6.]
FIFTY YEARS AGO

On Saturday of this week, the 26th inst., our village incorporation will be fifty years old. There has been some talk of celebrating the event, and in view of the hitherto unwritten history which might have been developed it is a regretable fact that a celebration has not been arranged for. There would have been but little trouble in getting up a celebration, as there is an abundance of good will, but none have seemed to desire to lead in the matter and perform the necessary work. Under the circumstances we have assumed the task of presenting some interesting facts of history connected with the founding and incorporation of the village, and what is not presented in this article will be given in others that are to follow. None can doubt that fifty years have produced most wonderous changes - a change of population from 1,000 to about 3,500, and corresponding changes in the increase of buildings and the growth of business. The Brockport of today bears but a slight resemblance to the Brockport of fifty years ago. The people too have changed. The most of those active fifty years ago have found resting places in the village cemetery, a single line or the marble tablet recording the end of their earthly career. Yet there are many here who lived in Brockport fifty years ago. The most of them were children and recollect but little of its early history. There are perhaps a score of persons who were of mature years and residents of this village when it was incorporated in 1829, and to some of these we are indebted for the principal facts of history which we are to present. Of the men engaged in business here fifty years ago who now reside here we have the names of William H. Seymour, E. H. Graves, George F. Barnett, Austin Harmon, Andrew Johnson and Martin Coats. If there are others we shall be pleased to mention them in a future article.

The town of Sweden, of which Brockport is a part, was settled about the year 1812. The building of this village was commenced in the year 1821. In the year 1823 the canal was completed from the east
to this village, and this village was its western terminus during that year and the succeeding one. That created a large amount of business here, and under its impulse the new village thrived. During the temporary stoppage of the canal here the teaming to and from the village was immense, merchandise and grain being carted long distances to make the canal available. The village, which in reality dated back to 1821, was not incorporated until 1829, at which its corporate existence commenced. The old village records are destroyed or lost, and the information regarding the inauguration of a village government is very meagre.

The exact population of the village when incorporated is not known. H. P. Norton, Esq., who came here in 1831 - two years after the incorporation - gives the population in 1828 at about one thousand. At that time there were about fifteen stores and three hotels. There were five or six stores at which a variety of goods were kept - dry goods, groceries, hardware, &c. - which did the principal business. There were also three shoe stores and one or two hat stores. The chief merchants were James & W. H. Seymour, Roby & Goold, E. H. Graves, Levi Taylor and Hastings R. Bender. Of the location of the stores we shall have something to say in a future number.

The buildings now standing on the business portion of Main street that were standing fifty years ago, though somewhat remodeled since, are the residence of Mr. L. J. Pease, the building of Mr. Ewer, the store of Mr. Randall and restaurant north, the Harmon building on Main street, the Cornes wood building on the corner of Main and Water streets, the Latta building, and the Collins Block, (the brick block on the east side of Main street near the canal). The other portions of Main street have at one time or another either been burned over, or the buildings have been torn down to make room for better ones. The wood buildings on the corner of Main and Water streets, now a part of the Thomas Cornes estate, seem to have had a charmed existence, as they have withstood fires and all other elements. This is the only wood building in the business portion of Main street. Brick were used extensively in
the construction of the first buildings erected, and were made in this vicinity. At that time they cost $3 per thousand, and at that price were usually paid for in trade. Timber grown here was plenty, and lumber made from it cost only the labor of manufacture.

The Methodists built the first church in Brockport, and theirs was the only church edifice in the village at the time of its incorporation. There were probably other religious societies, but they had no church buildings. The old Methodist church was located on Market street, where it had been converted into stores and was burned two or three years ago.

In 1829 the principal manufactory was a foundry located on lots east of the present Episcopal church, where ordinary casting was done. There were also a wagon shop, two blacksmith shops, and a cabinet store. Of these and the lawyers and physicians we shall have something more to say hereafter.

The first newspaper published in Brockport was the Brockport Recorder, by Abiathar M. Harris. We have sample copies of all the several newspapers published here except the one by Mr. John H. Denio. We should be pleased to obtain more samples of papers published before 1850. The earliest number of the Recorder in our possession is dated August 18, 1830; but as that is 136 of the issue, it indicates that the paper was started Jan. 1, 1828 - about fifteen months before the incorporation of the village. Earlier numbers would doubtless throw some light on the "lost history" of the first village organization. We hope to obtain that history for the interest of our readers, and that a complete history of the village may be established. [The Brockport Republic, April 24, 1879, page 3, column 4.]

* * *

Second Article

Since our last issue we have obtained a copy of the "Brockport Recorder and Clarkson Advertiser" issued in December, 1829 - the year the village was incorporated, but several months after the incorporation. We have also examined a copy of a map
of the west half of the village, the original of which was made for Hiel Brockway, after whom the village was named. This map was made before the village was incorporated, but at what date is not noted. This map is very valuable in showing original boundaries, and may be consulted with profit in determining some street lines. It is quite evident that some of the streets appearing on the map were never opened, and some that were opened were not of the width as laid out. As an illustration, the west end of Holley street was laid out the same width as Monroe street, but the latter is now about a rod the widest. Perry street angled from Erie to the north-west, and after crossing the canal was continued in the same course, and is put down as Jones street. Next to the canal on the north side was Canal street, which intersected Jones street, (at least on paper) near the north end of the present Perry street bridge. The canal was enlarged many years after the village was incorporated. The land taken for the enlargement where the Main street bridge crosses was nearly all taken from the south side of the old canal. In 1829 buildings on the south side of the canal and west side of Main street were located further north than at present, and there was a street still north of the buildings. The street running west from the back end of the present American Hotel, in 1829, extended through to Main street, leaving a store and a warehouse between it and the canal dock or street. This was a narrow street, like that at present west of the hotel. It appears on the Brockway map unnamed, but we learn from an advertisement in the Recorder that it was called Merchant street. King street, though appearing on the Brockway map, was not opened until after 1839. No street running east and west is shown on the map south of College street. North street was laid out from College south to the line of the present railroad track, and at an early day was but a farm lane.

It will have been noticed that the title of the newspaper published in 1829 included Clarkson with Brockport. There are some Clarkson advertisements in it. Clarkson had a newspaper of its own in 1835. - The Jeffersonian - published by J. O. Balch. Clarkson was an earlier village than Brock-
port, when the Ridge Road was the chief thoroughfare from the east to the west, before the canal was constructed. We may eventually give an article or two on the earlier history of Clarkson.

When Brockport was incorporated in 1829 there was but one canal bridge, that at Main street. The Mechanic street bridge was built a few years later. The Perry street bridge, as most of our readers know, is a modern structure. When the canal was enlarged new and larger bridges were substituted for the old ones.

The grade of some of the streets has been materially changed since 1829. When the Baker house was built, on the corner of Main and State streets, the basement door threshold was one or two steps higher than the street. The street has been raised very much since. The residence of A. P. Butts, Esq. was built on a hill about level with the front door, which extended across the street to the brick school house (the only school house in the village at the time) and where the old Baptist church school, and around up by the Davis Carpenter residence, making a hill on Erie street. A little north of Erie street there was a valley, as somewhat indicated by the Brainard lot. These hills where they crossed the streets have been cut down, leaving quite elevated the Butts and Carpenter dwellings. There was a low place in the street opposite the residences of D. S. Morgan and Francis Haight, and travel in 1829 was maintained by a corduroy road. The basement of Dr. Chamberlin's house was above the street when it was built, a step or two up, instead of steps down, being necessary to get into it. That shows how much filling up there has been done near the intersection of Main and Monroe streets.

For the better information of our readers we present a diagram of the business portion of Main street as it appeared in 1829, together with the names of those doing business or residing in the locality described. Fifty years is a long time to remember who was engaged in business, and it is not improbable that some errors are made in names, and perhaps in location. In the main we believe it is correct.
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<td>Davis Carpenter, res.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robt. McCullock, cab.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vacant</td>
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</table>
James R. Durand and Silas Smith occupied the same store - Durand as barber and Smith as tailor.

EAST SIDE

Beginning at the north is the Eastern Hotel, which was burned several years ago. Crossing the canal we come to the "green store," (thus named because of its color) a frame building which was moved several years ago and is now occupied as a dwelling on Spring street. Before the railroad was built it was considered the best business stand in the village. The Collins Block consisted of three stores. Who occupied them is not remembered. They are now standing. Where the Minot Block stands was a vacant space. Richmond Tuttle carried on harness making in the Latta store. George Allen (father of G. H.) kept a general store in the Cornes" wood building. James Bronson occupied part of the Harmon block as a hat store, and the other part was occupied by Peletiah Rogers as a shoe store. James and W. H. Seymour occupied the store on the corner formerly occupied by Mr. W. L. King. Hastings R. Bender kept a general assortment of goods in the building where Mr. Gettys restaurant is, and D. Burrows, Jr. resided in the south part of the same building. From the Randall building south to about where Baker's gallery is the land was unoccupied, unless there was a blacksmith shop, as was indicated by the advertisement of a merchant across the street, who was "opposite the blacksmith shop." Dr. John B. Elliott had a drug store and dwelling adjoining. Luke Webster resided in the Baker building on the corner, and where the Episcopal church and parsonage stands were the residences as shown in diagram. Robert McCulloch carried on the cabinet making business in the Butt's house.

WEST SIDE

On the north side of the canal Chas. Baker kept a grocery store. South of the canal Brace and Wilkie kept general merchandise, and a warehouse west of their store. Crossing the Merchant street, of 1829, we come to the store of Calvin Walker, dealer in general goods. George Fielding kept a store next to the corner. The corner was occupied by James Love, a jeweller. On the corner where Mr.
Pease's store is David M. Bristol kept a hotel, and probably occupied with stables some of the ground marked "not known," as it was all occupied. Abijah Cagwin kept a shoe store. Harris & Greenleaf sold books. Carpenter & Brockway sold drugs. Edwin H. Munger kept a hotel and occupied all the land to Roby & Goold's store, being across King street to the south side of the National Bank lot. Roby & Goold advertised "dry goods, groceries, crockery, glass and hardware." Francis Hillman owned but did not occupy the next building. E. H. Graves kept general merchandise. Miss Sarah Mather kept a millinery store. The other buildings and lots are explained by the diagram. [The Brockport Republic, May 1, 1879, page 3, columns 3 and 4.]

* * *

Third Article

In proportion to population the lawyers of this section were not so numerous fifty years ago as at present. Brockport of 1829 with a population of about one thousand had but one lawyer - D. Burrows, Jr. - whose office and residence were shown in the diagram published a week ago. At that time Clarkson had two lawyers - Col. S. B. Jewett and William Groves. A little later there was an increase at Brockport, H. P. Norton and E. B. Holmes opening offices. Henry R. Selden also became a partner of Col. Jewett at Clarkson.

There are evidences to-day of the perverseness of human nature fifty years ago. It so happened that Main street was the principal dividing line in the ownership of the real estate within the village limits. Parties having real estate to sell did not agree as to the running of the streets, and none of the streets pass in straight lines across Main street. State and Erie streets are pretty near in line, but there is a jog of a few feet at Main street - just enough to mark the disagreement that prevailed. Strictly speaking Main street has no "four corners," and excepting the two streets mentioned there is not an approximation to unity. Away from Main street there are several four corners, though a look at the map will disclose the fact that there has been notable lack of regularity in the laying out of streets.
generally. Many of the present streets have been laid out and opened since the village was incorporated, and others have been extended.

Here is the "Brockport Price Current," as given in the Recorder fifty years ago:

<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>Flour, barrel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wheat, bushel</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oats, bushel</td>
<td>.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corn, do</td>
<td>.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef, fresh cwt.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pork, do do</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes, bushel</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter, pound</td>
<td>.10 to .12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lard, do</td>
<td>.06 to .07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs, dozen</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cider, barrel</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
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</table>

And here are the prices of James R. Durand, the only barber in Brockport, fifty years ago.

The terms were for three months, payable one half in advance:

- Those shaving once a week: $1.00
- Three times a week: 1.50
- Every day: 2.00

A little figuring shows that those shaved once a week paid an average of about eight cents, those twice a week just six cents, those three times a week about four and one-half cents, and those every day a fraction over two cents.

Wines and liquors were advertised for sale, and the "Young Men's Temperance Society" held stated meetings - showing that fifty years ago the liquor question was the subject of discussion, as at present. The society mentioned had about sixty members.

In a previous article we mentioned the fact that most of the brick used in this village at the time of the first brick buildings were erected, and which was prior to the incorporation, were made in this vicinity. They were made at three places. The nearest point was on the "Barlow farm," (now owned by John Hartshorn,) about a mile south of the village. On this farm they were made by different parties, at one time by Royal Barlow. They were made at Clarkson village, a short distance north-east of the Corners, by Hop-
kins Rowell. They were also made at Redman's Corners upon the farm where Hiram Redman recently died. Several buildings at Clarkson were constructed out of the brick made in that town. The quality of the bricks appear to have been excellent, as they have always withstood the elements, and are now as perfect as when first made. [The Brockport Republic, May 8, 1879, page 3, column 3.]

* * *

Fourth Article

The land in this section was purchased about the year 1800 from the government and was known as the "triangular tract." The first settlement was made in the town of Sweden (then Murray) in 1811 or 1812, and about that time two buildings were erected where the village of Brockport now stands. These were erected as settler's residences, the same as buildings in other localities, and were not built to start a village. The first building erected was a frame structure, which stood about where Mr. Raymond's grain buying office is, from where it was removed to back of the present Collector's office building, and where it was burned a few years ago. It was owned by Dea. Rufus Hammond, who at that time owned the land east of Main street, then but a public road. When the canal was built it passed through what had been Dea. Hammond's garden, leaving his barn on the north side, which building formed a part of the canal stables burned several years ago. The next building erected was a log house, which stood about where Peck's block now stands. These were the only buildings for a time. The first brick store erected was by James Seymour, and the second by John G. Davis, of Batavia, which was located a short distance south of where the canal runs, on the west side of Main street. At about the time the canal was being built all the travel to and from Brockport was by the road leading north and south – from LeRoy and Batavia on the south, and Clarkson and the Ridge road on the north. There were no roads leading directly east or west.

In a previous article we gave a list of the buildings standing in the business portion of Main street in 1829. We now give the other buildings
now standing that stood fifty years ago. Next to the canal on the north side and on the west side of Main street is the building that in 1829 was occupied by Charles Baker as a general store. The two houses next north of that, now owned respectively by Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Mead, were built prior to 1829. On the other side of Main street the house owned and occupied by Mrs. C. Carpenter was then standing. The Kingsbury house was built a little later. Parts of the houses owned by C. C. Cornes and C. M. Winslow were standing fifty years ago. The "Farmers' Home," kept by Andrew Johnson, and which has been replaced by the Getty House, was a leading hotel in 1829. The "Whiting house" in the same neighborhood was then standing. Also the Raleigh brick house next to Dr. Huntley's. And further south a part of the John Needham house, which has been re-built. The Collins house near the railroad depot is over fifty years old. The Taylor and Gardner residences, on the corners of Mechanic and State streets, were built prior to 1829. The house owned by L. J. Pease, on the corner of Mechanic and South streets, stood on the Van Epps lot fifty years ago. The Roswell Smith house on Spring street has over half a century of history. Part of the Dingman house on State street was standing in 1829. The rear part of D. S. Morgan & Co.'s office was a dwelling house fifty years ago. The front parts of the Harrison and Harmon houses were then standing. On Water street the house owned by Mrs. Chadsey was built and occupied by Chauncey Martin before the village was incorporated. The brick house now owned by the Thomas Cornes heirs was built by Francis Hillhouse about the same time. The building opposite the gas works, now owned by Isaac Palmer, was built over fifty years ago, the frame for which was got out in the woods of that period a few rods west. The house owned by Mrs. Veasie, nearly opposite Whiteside, Barnett & Co.'s, was built by James Lighthall before Brockport became a village. The foregoing, we believe, comprise all the dwelling houses now standing that were standing fifty years ago. Several of the old structures have been demolished within a few years to make way for the "march of improvement."
The first brick building erected was a dwelling house for Hiel Brockway, which stood about where the west end of the Whitney store stands. It was changed into the Munger hotel, and disappeared in a conflagration on a Sunday that swept off all the buildings on the west side of Main street between King and Clinton streets. The next Sunday a fire swept the buildings between Clinton street and the canal. In those days there was no fire department.

When the village was named a public meeting was held. Mr. Hiel Brockway was much interested in having it named partly after him, and his wish was acceded to. The village name gets its "Brock" from Brockway, and its "port" from the canal. At the conclusion of the meeting the crowd was handsomely refreshed with the refreshments popular at that time, at the hotel of Sylvester Alvord (familiarly called "Spec Alvord," from his propensity to engage in speculations,) situated where the store of Mr. Pease is located.

The first boat that arrived at Brockport by canal was in the fall of 1823, and it was a scow. The occasion was one of much excitement, and nearly all the people turned out. The arrival of the boat was hailed by firing a salute and general rejoicing. [The Brockport Republic, May 22, 1879, page 3, column 3.]

* * *

Concluding Article

In presenting our readers with a series of articles under the above caption, it has been our purpose to put into tangible and lasting form the history of Brockport before and at the time of the village incorporation in 1829. The Republic has been published for nearly twenty-three years, and it is now consulted nearly every week to ascertain various facts recorded in its columns during the period of its existence. We had hoped to place in its columns not only for the benefit of its numerous readers, but to preserve the record, a full account of the early history of the village. We have succeeded in giving a list of the first buildings erected, the first streets laid out, the names
of the first persons who engaged in business, and many other facts forming a very complete record of the early times. In but a single respect have we failed in getting the information sought, and that as to the first village officers. The village records being destroyed, there remained two possible methods of supplying the desired knowledge—the columns of the Recorder published at the time, and the records of the Secretary of State. The latter has yielded no information. Mr. Harris who published the Recorder married a widow Robinson having sons. These sons are engaged in publishing the Green Bay (Wis.) Advocate. Mr. A. C. Robinson writes us: "Our full and complete file of the Recorder was destroyed by fire, and we have not a single copy left." Mr. Harris, who published the Recorder was drowned several years ago at Buffalo. We do not yet abandon the expectation of getting the facts desired; but see no way of obtaining them except from the Recorder of April, 1829, which we hope to find in the possession of some individual who laid it away for preservation.

In the sketches thus far published there have occurred some errors in names. In our list of the buildings now standing that stood in 1829 there are several omissions. It is a fact complimentary to the early builders that the buildings were built so strong and enduring.

In a previous issue we gave a diagram of the business portion of Main street as it appeared in 1829. We now give briefly the subsequent history of those engaged in business at that time. Charles Baker died here. Frederick Wilkie died here. Calvin Walker died here. George Fielding went to Ohio, and whether living or dead, is not known. Daniel M. Bristol went to Illinois and died there. Abijah Cagwin now lives at Jolliet, Ill. Francis Hillhouse died here. Robert Love moved to Wisconsin and died there. Abiathar Stevenson died here. James R. Durand moved to Sweden, and what became of him is not known. Silas Smith lives at Medina, N. Y. Daniel Collins moved to Indiana and died there. Richmond Tuttle also moved to and died in Indiana. George Allen died here. James Bronson died here. Peletiah Rogers removed to Illinois.

The first burial place in Brockport was where the Baptist church stands. What remained of the bones were removed when the present church was built, to the village cemetery.

At the time of the village incorporation there was a distillery a short distance south of the village. It was at first owned and operated by Elder Bigelow, who later became the property of Mr. Smith. There was not much money at the time, and certain things had an exchange value. Thus a gallon of whiskey (valued at fifty cents) equaled a cord of wood, a bushel of corn, &c. The value of the wood was only the cost of cutting.

It is stated as an incident of the early times, and which well illustrates the wildness of a primitive period, that a wolf was caught in a trap a little west of the present gas works, and that deer and other game were plenty in the immediate vicinity. [The Brockport Republic, June 12, 1879, page 3, column 4.]
Clarkson Corner is spoken of as a village, though the place never had a village incorporation. What is called Clarkson village has a population of four or five hundred, and which has not been materially changed for a long period of years. The population was nearly as great forty or fifty years ago as now. The completion of the Erie canal diverted business to Brockport, and Clarkson has nearly stood still in point of population, while it has lost largely in business. Sixty years ago the extent of its business was much greater than at present. But for the construction of the canal Clarkson would undoubtedly to-day be the principal village of this section. The diversion of business and stoppage of growth was no fault of the people who had cast their lot in what was a pleasant location, and promised to be a thrifty place. Like some other of the Ridge road villages, it has been the "victim of unfortunate circumstances." Yet it is now a pretty village, with broad streets, and many tasty residences. Its business interests, too, are considerable, though less than in olden times.

Clarkson was settled in or about the year 1811, when there were three houses standing, one of which was occupied by Dea. Joel Palmer, a log building which stood where Russell Palmer now resides. In six or seven years the place had grown considerably. In 1816 the buildings erected were a part of Mr. Lemuel Haskell's house; the store of Gustavus Clark, built in 1815, and now the dwelling house owned by M. O. Randall. On the south-east corner was a log tavern kept by a man named Stevens. On the south-west corner was a frame dwelling house and blacksmith shop, which was removed at a later period, and is now occupied by David Rogers as a residence. The Matthew A. Patterson house was standing, and occupied by David Forsyth. A house stood where the parsonage stands, and was occupied by Dr. Nathaniel Rowell. Also a house forming a part of that occupied by Mrs. Shepherd, which was built and resided in by Dr. Ezekiel Harmon. A frame
dwelling house stood where Clark Allen lives, and was occupied by Jonathan Cobb. At the same time, 1816, Stewart & Fields had a store which stood where Mr. Rockwell's house stands. It was moved and turned into a school house, and was subsequently changed into a dwelling, and is now owned and occupied by J. H. Bovee. A school house had been erected previous to 1816, which stood nearly opposite the present residence of A. Pinney. At that time Dr. Baldwin kept a hotel in a frame building where Mr. Bellinger lives, which was afterward moved and is now the residence of Mrs. Andrews.

The Vosburg hotel, brick building, was built in 1817. James Seymour built a potashery about where the Raymond mill is situated in 1817.

Dr. Nathaniel Rowell was the first physician in Clarkson, but not the first in the section. Dr. Owen was the first physician, and he resided in a log house located a few rods south of John Reed's house and opposite the Garrison place. The Garrison house was built in 1818 for Joshua Field, and the same year the house now owned by Dea. Wilcox was built for Witter Stewart. The firm of Field & Stewart, doing business at Clarkson, was composed of three gentlemen.

The first lawyer in Clarkson was Francis Stormes, who located in 1817. Next came William Groves, and later Col. S. B. Jewett.

The Presbyterian church was built in 1825 and dedicated in the spring of 1826. Rev. William James was the first minister who preached in the new church. Rev. John F. Bliss had preached previously as a missionary, holding services in the school house. The academy was built in 1834.

Brick making was begun in 1815 by a man named Hamm. Dr. Rowell a little later commenced the business. The business of brick making was abandoned when fuel got dear. Wood at an early day brought six shillings per cord, whitewood $10 per thousand, and hemlock lumber $5 per thousand. The principal currency of the period was "black salts," made by boiling the lye of wood ashes, which brought from $3 to $4 per cwt. at the potashery, where they were made into potash, and sent to New York in payment for goods. At that time it cost from $4 to $5 per
cwt. to transport goods between Clarkson and New York.

The first purchaser of most of the land in Clarkson was a man named Sayre. As showing the value of real estate at an early date it may be stated that Dea. Palmer paid $15 an acre for his land, and Capt. Allen in 1825 paid $25 an acre for his farm.

It is probably understood by most of our readers that the early period of which we write, all the section embraced by the present town of Sweden, Clarkson and Hamlin was then the town of Murray. The voting of the town was done at Redman's Corners.

We remarked in an article on the Brockport of fifty years ago that the first Brockport newspaper was called "The Brockport Recorder and Clarkson Advertiser." That was in 1829. At an early date this newspaper business began to be precarious in Brockport, (illustrated since by a score or more of failures) and the Recorder and the Clarkson Advertiser failed. In 1835 a paper was started at Clarkson called "The Jeffersonian," which had a brief existence. It was located in a part of Dr. Baldwin's building. It was published by J. O. Balch. We have number 11 of the issue, dated August 26, 1835, showing that it had been started about the first of June that year. In this paper appears the advertisements of the following Brockport parties: Greenleaf & Hyde, seeds and trees; A. Bigelow, general goods; L. Joslin, boots and shoes; Elliott & Ellis, drugs and medicines; Josiah Shaw, dry goods and groceries; Smith & McKnight, tailors; J. Harrison, hats; Albert Arms, furniture; D. Carpenter, drugs and medicines; W. R. Vail, dry goods, groceries, etc. The Clarkson advertisers were: F. Bellinger, tailoring, at shop previously occupied by Silas Smith; G. Tabor, several farms; Clarkson Academy, of which Charles Furman was President, and H. R. Selden, Secretary; G. Clark, who was postmaster, insurance; and John Lansing, boots and shoes. [The Brockport Republic, May 29, 1879, page 3, column 4.]
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