Ray Tuttle Local History Columns

Ray Tuttle

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Ray Tuttle

Ray Tuttle (1905-1983,) the author of the columns in the following document, worked as a deputy sheriff and fingerprinting expert for Monroe County, was active in politics, including serving a term as a state senator, and was a keen local historian. The Brockport Republic newspaper, which can be searched online at nyshistoricnewspapers.org, has many mentions of him.

His education seems to have included attending the old Normal school’s campus school, which in his era went all the way through 12\textsuperscript{th} grade.

In addition to his “day job” in local law enforcement, he is frequently mentioned as taking part in the local entertainments popular in those years. One of his talents was doing a ventriloquist routine!

He is mentioned as captain of the newly established fire police unit in Brockport in the 1940s.

In politics he was a local Democratic Party officer and in the early 1950s he was the state senator for the 51\textsuperscript{st} district, which covered western parts of Monroe County.

He seems to have been a Clarkson resident. He and his wife were often mentioned in the in the “Clarkson” column of the local newspaper, often in connection with the Clarkson Community Church, where they were active members.

His columns on local history, of which the following scanned manuscript copies are drawn, were written over many years; his first such seems to have run in the Brockport Republic in March 1940, but they continued off and on for decades.
Local History Columns by Ray Tuttle

These are digitized versions of original manuscripts of his columns, from the collections of the Western Monroe Historical Society at the Morgan Manning House. The columns were not dated, or organized in any particular way. For convenience sake they have been sorted as follows.

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The Batavia Preserving & Canning Company
by
Ray Tuttle

After the devastating Johnson-Harvester fire of 1882 part of the building remained. It was nine years after that the Hudson Canning Company remodeled the building and converted it into one of the largest canning factories in Western New York.

Incorporated as the Batavia Preserving & Canning Company in 1891, the new industry began canning every type of fruit and vegetables employing between 200 and 300 women during the summer and fall season.

In 1908 the Batavia Company closed the factory but reopened during the spring of 1909.

Business increased at the canning plant so additional buildings were added.

The canning factory prospered up until the start of World War I closing its doors never to reopen.

The buildings at the corner of Main & Liberty Streets were converted into a garage and gas station.

It was during the June-time harvest that town folks could take a 14 quart pail to the factory and get it half-filled with fresh thrashed peas for ten cents.

During the summer the Thursday night band concerts by the Brockport band under the direction of Louie Heinrich were often held on the lawn of the canning factory on North Main.

The Batavia Preserving & Canning Company which prospered for some 25 years was one of the many industries that vanished from the village scene.
The Brockport Gas Light Company
by
Ray Tuttle

Back before we dreamed of an energy shortage the village of Brockport was manufacturing its own gas at the corner of Erie and Perry streets. Back before oil and gas furnaces appeared upon the scene, the village was lighted by gas lamps and the product of coal became a thriving industry.

The Brockport Gas Light Company started back during the 1850's. Coal was trucked from the railroad and fed into the large gas furnaces. The gas was burned off and piped into the homes throughout the village. Before electric came into being street lighting depended upon manufactured gas. The village employed a lamp lighter who made his rounds each evening making the village streets a little pleasanter place to travel.

After the gas was burned off from the coal, coke was sold to village residents for three dollars a ton. In fact, a great many villagers burned coke instead of coal. They claimed it made a hotter fire.

The latter part of the 19th century electricity came into being and home owners switched to the more modern method of lighting. Gas was on its way out. Village streets installed electric lights and the lamp lighter looked for new employment.

The gas company struggled along until the 1930's, when it folded up its tent and passed into oblivion.

With energy shortages today, the Brockport Gas Light Co. would be doing a thriving business. However, man has never been able to control his own destiny.
The Ice House

by

Ray Tuttle

One of the most important industries of the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries was ice manufacturing. When the temperature hit the 90 degree mark during summer months, the ice house was the popular rendezvous in the community.

Back before the electric refrigerator, Brockport supported at least eight ice manufacturers. The operators of the ice emporiums James East, Charles Lawton, Will Winslow, James Gallagher, George Stanley, Donna Duffy, John Corbett and Oliver Dushan kept groceries, restaurants, Saloons and meat markets, also the ice boxes about town well supplied.

During winter months the owners of the ice houses depended upon the old-fashioned cold winter to freeze the ice to its proper thickness before cutting. The ice would then be hauled to the ice house and packed in sawdust. Of course an "open winter" created a problem for local business establishments.

Up until the early 1920's the ice wagon was a popular sight on village streets. Deliveries were made at least twice a week, and an ice card was placed in a front window indicating the amount to be delivered.

One of the joys of boyhood days was to follow the ice wagon and grab a small piece of ice to chew on during the "hot spell". Whether or not the ice was pure was of no concern. No one in our memory ever became ill.

Ice cutting during winter months was an art. Huge saws were used to cut through a foot of the frozen water with the cakes weighing from 50 to 100 lbs. The cakes were then loaded on stone-boats and transported to the ice house. It took several men to accomplish the
winter chore.

Usually the owner of the ice house also owned the ice pond and many of the ponds were supplied with water from the canal. Today we are worried about pollution, but at the turn of the century the canal was the most polluted stream of water in the state. All the waste from canal boats, from residents living along the banks and from the populace in general used the canal for a "dumping ground". It was no uncommon sight to see a dead animal floating down stream. It was the ice from this water that kept food cool during summer months.

In fact, the canal was the only place where a youngster could swim. The Park Avenue and West bridges attracted many high-divers during summer months.

Time marched on and during the 1920's and '30's the electric refrigerator began to appear. Those who could afford took the ice-card from the window and the ice man's popularity began to wane. It wasn't too many moons when the ice houses passed into oblivion and the men who depended upon their livelyhood cutting ice had to seek other employment.

With the passing of the ice house era, the ponds were taken over by the ice skaters of the community and the electric refrigerator brought joy both to the young and old.
Of all inventions that have benefitted mankind, none can compare in usefulness with the reaper. It has done more to revolutionize the farming industry throughout the world than any other piece of machinery, for without it the problems of harvesting grain and preparing it for market would be considered as "acute".

The invention of the reaper has been a principle factor in helping to build these United States into the great nation it is today. Down through the ages Brockport has been given credit for this "King of the "Farm Country" " invention.

The idea of the reaper was formulated in the mind of a young man named Cyrus Hall McCormick, who was born at Walnut Grove, West Virginia in 1809. Young McCormick's father was a farmer who had invented numerous labor-saving devices for farm work. In 1831 Cyrus, then 22 years of age, took up the problems of farm machinery inventions and after careful study constructed a harvesting machine which was successfully employed in the late harvest of 1831.

In 1831 young McCormick went to Washington to patent his new discovery. He remained in Washington for sometime and during the year 1844 he met Elias B. Holmes of Brockport, then a member of Congress. Mr. Holmes told McCormick of the iron foundries here. McCormick became interested and started out for Brockport on horseback, arriving safely with his patents.

In Brockport, McCormick set up shop in a building north of the canal, which was part of the Globe Iron Works, owned by Bachus, Burroughs & Company. Several changes were made and after several weeks of ceaseless labor McCormick put together his rudely constructed reaper and carted it to the Frederick P. Root farm on Root Road in East Sweden where it received its first demonstration. It was on this farm that the first grain was harvested by machine in the world.
So well did it succeed that the Bachus firm arranged with McCormick to manufacture 100 machines to be completed by the harvest of '46. The year arrived and the 100 reapers were ready for market, but something went wrong and the reapers were returned to the Bachus firm. They had failed to give satisfaction.

However, another concern was making considerable progress in the manufacture of stoves and farm implements on the corner of Market Street and Park Avenue. It was known as the Seymour and Roby Company. William Seymour, the senior partner, was a brother of James Seymour, the General Store proprietor on the Ridge. Business had hardly begun, when Dayton S. Morgan, a young man of enterprise and ability, purchased Mr. Roby's interest and the firm became Seymour and Morgan. Mr. Seymour had been favorably known in the business affairs of Brockport since 1822.

While in Brockport working on his invention, McCormick became close friends with both Seymour and Morgan, who in turn became much interested in the reaper. During the year 1846, the same year that the Bachus and Burroughs firm started manufacture of the reaper, the Seymour firm built and sold one hundred reapers. They were the first 100 successful harvesting machines known to have been manufactured in the world. A plaque can now be seen at the corner of Park Avenue and Market Streets telling of this fact.

During the next three years necessary improvements were made and in 1849 the Seymour firm constructed an improved machine, called the "New Yorker". At the same time, Mr. Seymour had invented and patented some valuable improvements in automatic raking known as the "Quadrant Platform", of which no subsequent invention had been able to supersede. In 1852 a self-raking reaper was built by the Seymour firm and another by Palmer and Williams, another local firm. These were the first self-
raking reapers manufactured in the world.

The patents of the reapers were subsequently consolidated into one machine, each firm holding specified interests. Patents were renewed by the Act of Congress in 1866, so that every manufacturer of reapers had to pay royalty to the Seymour firm. In 1853, George H. Allen became a partner.

In 1873-74 a new reaper with combined important improvements was built. It was named the "Triumph," said to have been one of the greatest reapers ever manufactured. Thousands of these reapers were placed on the market each year.

The Seymour, Morgan & Allen Company remained in business until the year 1904, when the entire plant was destroyed by fire.

During all these years the Bashus & Burroughs firm was also manufacturing farm implements. After 1846, Mr. Bashus retired and the firm was changed to Fitch, Barry & Company, who after a few years, were succeeded by Silliman, Bowman and Company. In 1851 the firm again changed to Ganson, Huntley & Company, and considerable business was done in the manufacturing of reapers.

In 1868 the Huntley firm passed into the hands of Samuel Johnson, an inventor, and Byron E. Huntley, a former partner, who started the manufacture of the Johnson Harvester. In 1870 a stock company was formed with a capital of $300,000 and named the Johnson Harvester Company. This concern manufactured thousands of harvesters, shipping them to all corners of the world. The Johnson Harvester Company remained in business until 1882, when it too was destroyed by fire.

So ends the story of Cyrus McCormick and the men who labored to develop farming as a science, in pursuit of which all wealth has been attained.
After McCormick saw his dream realized, he moved to Chicago in 1847 where he continued to manufacture his reaper. He died in Chicago May 13, 1884.

Yes, the manufacture of the reaper was instrumental in giving hundreds of persons employment down through the years but many other outstanding products were invented and manufactured here including the famous bean planter, invented by William Bradford. It still bears his name. It was said that Broekport at one time was considered the bean center of the world. Then there was the Genesee plow invented by Luther Gordon and the corn drill invented and manufactured by Whiteside, Barnett & Allen.

Down on the Ridge near the General Store, George Baldwin Selden, designed one of the early automobiles, obtaining what was known as the Selden Patent which enabled Selden to receive a royalty from all the manufacturers of motor cars for several years.

One of the first automatic telephones ever made was found in Quebec by the Bell Telephone Company. It bore a brass plate dated September 16, 1883. Below the plate was the name of Will Hough, Broekport, N.Y. None of the old timers remembered the gentlemen.

Then Frederik Root invented and patented a grain separator and cleaner which was extensively used. He also invented a hand cultivator. A.D. Daily invented a combination suspidor and footstool. All one had to do was press a button—Presto—footstool; Presto—suspidor.

Alonzo Hinman, grandfather of A.V. Fowler, was the inventor of the stove reservoir. However, Mr. Hinman invited a stove salesman to view it and the salesman stole the idea.

Speaking of firsts, William Roberts, local business man, ran a produce market on Queen Street. During the year 1885 he shipped the first beans, eighty bushels in all, to the State of Michigan. The beans
were for planting purposes. Up until that time no beans had been raised in Michigan.

The Ultra shoe, known throughout the world, was manufactured in Brockport for many years. The firm known as the Moore-Shafer Shoe Company started in 1882 and went through the process of liquidation in 1927.


No village in Western New York experienced a greater era of manufacturing as did Brockport. After the turn of the century saw the ushering in of the railroads, the automobile and the airplane. Canal travel became too slow for modern thinking and industries along its banks began to retrogress and of course fires took its toll. There was new thinking for a new day.

The village today is among the lucky along Erie waters. We have within our boarders the General Electric Co., The 3 M Co., The Quaker Maid and Owens Illinois. Also the State University no doubt is tops as far as employment is concerned.
All of us, I am sure, get bored with being civilized, at
having modern conveniences and at times finding little to do.

We then begin thinking of the good old days when modern
conveniences were yet in the making and life seemed a little less complicated.
We wondered how folks fought off boredom without radio, television and
the automobile -- the answer no doubt was the corner saloon.

The Smithsonian Institute in Washington, a few years
back, proposed building an old saloon, which was in evidence prior to 1919,
so that future generations could have a glimpse of how the male populace
spent many a long evening.

As a lad, who was born in Brockport, and reared among
the cobblestones of Main Street, my newspaper beat was the nine saloons that
dominated the business section of the village.

The old Union & Advertiser (later the Times-Union) sold
for a penny, but the inmates of the saloons usually compensated the newsboy
with an extra shilling or two.

A saloon was a saloon until some spoiler put the first
carpet on the floor and the music box that sounded like Sausa's band began
to play "Alice Blue Gown".

The floor of the saloon was covered with sawdust which
smelled of deliciously spilled stale beer. In front were the swinging doors
and in back the family entrance, where kids came in with pails to rush the
growler for the old man.

The back entrance was also used by a few of the "gals
about town", who were not permitted to drink at the bar. A special seating
arrangement was provided for them. That is how the saying arose "buy the
girls in the back room a drink". No one in the old saloon was permitted to
drink under 21. Youth of America had to wait until their twenty-first
birthday to quench a thirst.

The five cent beer also included a free lunch with
an assortment of cheese, cold cuts, pickles and rye bread.

On the bar of a wintery evening was a bottle of
mulligan. This was a concoction of vinegar and hot red peppers. You sloshed
it into the suds of the beer. It gave you the feeling of warmth.
Saloons #2

Whiskey was dispensed from barrels. Bottled liquor could be purchased at the local grocery. The saloon always had "hard cider on tap".

The business of the community was transacted at the local saloon. Many big deals transpired over a glass of Bartholmay. As the evening hours progressed, and John Barleycorn began to take hold, a quartet from those left standing would render "Sweet Adaline" or "Down by the Old Mill Stream".

Back during the days of the old saloon psychiatrists were yet to be heard from, so the bartender had to bring solace to the troubled. The "crying jag" sought comfort and the "broken hearts" were mended by the man, who not only dispensed the nickel beer, but had to know the problems of the community.

The heroes of the old saloon were of course the athletes. Many a bet was made and many an argument settled setting on a bar stool. Usually the bartender held the money.

The old saloon was certainly an institution in itself. I don't know whether or not the Smithsonian Institute built the old saloon for its Museum of History and Technology. I do know the old saloon was a harbor, where the man-about-town could relax and settle the problems of the day, and get away from the "henpecking" old woman for a spell.
The Beginning

It was the year 1817 and a small handful of folks dwelled a mile south of the Ridge Road or about twenty minutes walk from that important little hamlet of Murray Corners, better known to us as Clarkson, for in that day the entire town of Clarkson was part of the vast section of land known as Murray.

Folks weren't too well known in that small colony south of the Ridge. There were the Brockway's, the Phelps', the Palmer's and the Hammond's. Names that carried very little significance. The important folks lived on the Ridge. Yes, there were the Seymours, who operated the general store; Dr. Abel Baldwin, Isaac Allen, Eli Blodgett, James Sayers and a host of others. For in 1817 the Ridge was the main highway connecting Canandaigua and the Falls.

The Seymour General Store was the congregating place for town folks. There, all important news events of the times were hashed and rehashed. No doubt the War of 1812 had been fought over and over again around the pot-bellied stove. But this morning, in the year of 1817, excitement prevailed at the General Store. The word had spread like fire that a waterway was to be built through the State. Why couldn't it follow the Ridge but no, it was to be constructed far to the south. A meeting was immediately called by prominent citizens and James Seymour, politically influential, was named chairman.

Mr. Seymour immediately set his political influence into motion and he was instrumental in getting the canal built as near the Ridge as possible, but it was to travel a mile south. So wise men at the General Store came to the conclusion, that wherever the canal crossed
the Lake Road, there would be the center of travel. Yes, the hamlet on the Ridge had seen its day. The future for keen thinking men extended a mile south.

Construction on the great waterway was started in 1817 and within five years the great ditch was completed. A little hamlet on the Genesee river, twenty miles to the east, was made the western terminus, later to be known as Rochester.

Folks along the Ridge soon started trekking south and settling along the canal. Men of wealth and foresight began to purchase land. Heil Brookway purchased from John Phelps land west of the Lake Road for $1.3 per acre. James Seymour sold his General Store and purchased from Rufus Hammond land east of the Lake Road for $7 per acre. Other portions of land were purchased by Dr. Abel Baldwin, Myron Holley, Joshua Fields, Luke Webster, John G. Davis and Charles Richardson.

Building along the Towpath was started in 1821, the year that saw James Seymour named as Monroe County's first Sheriff. He was appointed by the Board of Supervisors again in 1823. It was during his second term as Sheriff that he was instrumental in getting the western terminus of the canal extended twenty miles west to the hamlet later to be known as Brockport.

Considerable rivalry developed between the eastern and western portions of the town. It has been said that the folks from the east didn't speak to the folks from the west. In fact, when the various streets were planned, they didn't meet at the Lake Road. State and Erie Streets are the only two built opposite each other in the village.

Nothing of importance happened in the little canal hamlet, south of the Ridge until 1829, when a group of citizens gathered and decided that the hamlet should have a name. So with Heil Brookway
the outstanding personality it was soon decided to name the fast growing community Brockwayport. Sometime later the "way" was dropped and it became just Brockport.

On April 6, 1829 Brockport was incorporated as a village. The early records of the village have been lost and the first officers of the community are not known. From time to time the village government has been revised and various forms of government tried out, but it wasn't until 1852 that village government was placed in the hands of five trustees. In 1872 a new charter was adopted calling for a Mayor and four trustees. The same charter being in force today.

Following the incorporation, factories began to build along the canal. Hell Brockway began to build packet boats on Clinton Street. In fact the village was known as the packet boat center of the world. Soon rafts laden with logs were floated down the lakes and the canal all the way from Michigan to plenish the many saw-mills along the towpath. Distilleries, foundries, shoe factories, piano works began to appear along the banks of the waterway, that moved pioneers from the Ridge to a point one mile south.

Brockway was a pioneer in bringing industry to the village. He not only encouraged manufacturing but was instrumental in bringing the State Normal School to the village. Mr. Brockway erected many buildings. Among them being the old Jay Bailey home at the corner of Utica and Erie Streets; the James Adams home on Erie Street, which was torn down a decade ago to make way for the Telephone Exchange; the old Welch home at the corner of Erie and Main, now a gas station; the Dr. John L. Hazen home on Main Street. It is also believed Mr. Brockway built The Uplands on Holley Street. Brockway died August 19, 1842. The following eulogy is found in High Street cemetery: "To
the Memory of Hiel Brockway, aged 67 years 4 months and 8 days. Founder of the Village of Brockport, whose name is thus perpetuated, distinguished alike for his business talents, his enterprise and his public spirit prompt and honorable in the discharge of all his obligations. In him the public has lost a valuable citizen; the village a benefactor; whose place cannot be filled, whose loss cannot be estimated."

Brockway's death did not discourage manufacturing as other pioneers took up the cause. A new day was in the making and the responsibility fell upon the shoulders of the General Store proprietor and his younger brother, William Seymour, who carried on in heroic style.

James built the first dwelling house on the corner of State and Park Avenue. Libby Taylor lived there for years. He also built the first block on Main Street and the first canal basin. It was said, that while managing his general store on the Ridge, he sold intoxicants, but a revival converted him, so that he became very religious. In fact he was offered a directorship in the New York Central Railroad but refused because they ran trains on Sunday.

James moved to Rochester where he became president of the old National Bank. It was opened in 1846 and he moved on into Michigan, where he was instrumental in making Lansing the State Capitol. He died in Michigan.

William carried on and lived to the ripe old age of 101. He had a son James, who died in the 1930's bequeathing the Seymour home to the village to be used as a Public Library.

Pioneers died but the village grew in leaps and bounds until the turn of the century, when twenty-one manufacturing plants dominated village soil. Many nationally known products bore the Brockport label. Thus, with the construction of the canal, began an era of manufacturing, that carried the village from the little hamlet south of the Ridge to
that place in the sun made possible by the keen thinking men who saw visions of a great community.
The Hamlet With Many Names

by

Ray Tuttle

From Ladd's Corners to McCall's Corners to East Clarkson to Garland - that is the history of the little hamlet located at the intersection of the Ridge and Sweden-Walker Roads.

Old timers called the hamlet Ladd's Corners after James Ladd popular store owner. In fact, the Sweden-Walker Road for many years was known as the Ladd road. Later the settlement was called McCall Corners after Henry McCall, a prominent citizen. But, at the turn of the 19th century, the stage coach stopped with passengers and mail at East Clarkson.

The post office department complained that mail for East Clarkson was getting mixed with mail for Clarkson Corners and West Clarkson, so a contest was held. A box for suggestions was placed in James Ladd's general store. There were many names offered but the most popular name submitted was Garland. It so happened to be the month of June and Garland symbolized the "wreath of roses".

Garland for many years was the center of Methodism. The Garland Methodist Church was organized as a Bethel Methodist Episcopal on Jan. 8, 1825. Services were held in the school house on the east side of the road. Rev. Benajah Williams was the first pastor. The church was rebuilt in 1869. Two miles north of Garland a second society of the Methodist Episcopal church was organized in 1848. In 1860 the church was split into two factions. They met in the same church but different hours. On Jan. 25, 1861 one group called themselves the First Free Methodists pulled up stakes and moved across the road and built their own edifice. Both churches closed during the 1920's. The buildings were razed.
Industrialize the little hamlet of Garland for many years was the home of the Smithfield Canning Company. It was named after W.A. Smith, who conceived the idea of canning in his kitchen.

About the year 1914 Smith built a wooden structure on the Ridge and thus started canning applesauce, cherries and sweet corn. During the seasonal pack approximately 75 men and women were employed, and during the off season a skeleton force was carried for labeling and shipping.

The depression of 1929 brought hard times to the canning industry. The plant closed its doors and moved machinery to the Smithfield plant in Hilton.

Mr. Smith, the owner, resided in Lyndonville. Harold Deshon was vice-president and sales manager. At the time of the closing Harold Lum was president. The building was razed during the 1930's.

Garland made the headlines back in 1920 when a feud arose between the proprietor of the Garland Hotel J. Austin Flannigan and the Rev. Frederick D. Raymond, pastor of the Garland Methodist church.

It was the year following the signing of the 18th amendment making it illegal to sell intoxicants in the United States. Several of the town folks would sit around the well attempting to quench a thirst and occasionally bring out a hidden supply from the cellar. Appearing upon the scene was none other than the Rev. Raymond who laid down the rule for the hamlet that no alcohol be drank or possessed in the community. In fact, he told the hotel proprietor to rid himself of all his alcohol possessions.

Each time the Rev. saw Mr. Flannigan he asked him if he had disposed of his hidden supply of juice. The feud ended one day
when Mr. Flannigan was changing the oil in his car. The Rev. approached and started the same old argument. Mr. Flannigan took the pail of drained oil and poured it down the Rev.'s neck.

Rev. Raymond sued Mr. Flannigan for $2,000. Trial was held before Judge Gillette. Abram Jones, a Rochester attorney, appeared for the plaintiff. Morgan and Pallace, Brockport attorneys, appeared for the defendant. Disposition is not known. It is believed the case was settled out of court.

Today the Garland Hotel is one of the most popular eating establishment along the Ridge.

One of the most popular inns along the Ridge back during stage coach days was the Houston Tavern. During the early part of the 19th century in connection with the inn was a sawmill, a tannery, a copper shop and a cobbler's shop. The tavern was owned by Isaac Houston. After his death his widow Polly carried on for many years.

Driving through Garland one would be lead to believe that it was the snowmobile center of western New York. Snowmobiles line both side of the road.

The Greenridge Trailor Park has brought many new faces to the community and one wouldn't have to travel far to get a hair cut or a permanent wave. A new business to town is the Montrallo Fruit Farm Market open year around.

And of course the little hamlet would not be complete without the "Garland of roses" which can be seen at the McCagg Floral Shop.
Redman's Corners
by
Ray Tuttle

Two miles west of Clarkson Corners on the Ridge lies the little hamlet of Redman's Corners. One would have to look twice and then would not realize he had passed through the quaint little community. Better known as West Clarkson at the turn of the century, the little hamlet had its own post office and was a popular stopping off place for the stage coach.

Early settlers at West Clarkson were John Redman and Horatio Ball. Redman ran an Inn on the northwest corner and Ball the northeast corner. John Redman died in 1829 at the age of 47. His widow Polly carried on until 1858. During the 1850's the Ball tavern was destroyed by fire and Horatio moved westward in Orleans County, where he operated the Five Mile House for many years. His son Harvey Ball was one of the best dulcimer players in the state. The ball square-set trio played dances throughout western New York. Prior coming to Redman's Corners, Horatio Ball ran the tavern in Shelby, N.Y. His son Harvey was born there in 1837.

In later years the little settlement on the Ridge was changed to Redman's Corners. No doubt named after the popular inn owner John Redman. In fact, the road crossing the Ridge and extending from the Lake several miles to the south was believed to be named after the popular inn operator.

About a mile south on the Redman Road was a dry-house operated by Faye Smith where apples were dried and shipped to France for the making of Champagne. In those days there was no refrigeration, so fruit had to be dried to preserve it.

Also on the Redman Road south of the Ridge James Crowley operated a blacksmith shop for many years.

During the late 1960's the Rev. Lee Harris converted the
remains of the old dry-house and started the Macedonia Baptist church. It burned on March 28, 1970. A more modern edifice was built and dedicated in June 1973.

During World War II the hamlet of Redman's Corners was given a scare when a big B-29 bomber out of Niagara Falls on a training mission accidentally dropped a guided missile on the Maxwell farm south of the corners. Natives believed there had been a plane crash, but soon learned that the missile had imbedded itself 10 feet into the ground and shattered. It was a lucky thing for the natives that the missile was not loaded or Redman's Corners would have passed into oblivion. The Army officials invaded the Maxwell farm to inspect the damage.

The only business at the Borner's garage is the Andrew Rayburn garage. For the past 50 years Andy has been servicing automobiles in western New York.

For many years Frank Cook and his two sons Joe and Dick, who lived in the old Redman inn, supplied the village of Brockport with fresh vegetables. Today the building is vacant and up for sale. It is one of the last remaining landmarks in the town.

George Bates ran the hotel during the early 1900's. He sold the building to Frank Cook about 1908, who converted it into a dwelling house.

At the present time Redman's Corners has growing pains. Several duplexes have been built and many more are planned. The country air is attracting city folk and the trek seems to be westward.

Long live the little hamlets of America - may they never become over populated.
The Fourth Of July

by

Ray Tuttle

With the nation preparing to celebrate its bicentennial in 1976, the 4th of July both this year and next will be a birthday long to be remembered.

However, every 4th of July years ago was a day of grand celebration. It was one of the lovelist days of our youth - a mid-summer holiday we hated to see go -- a day full of activity from early morning until late at night -- from horse racing to band concerts to street dances to fireworks -- the one day of the year -- the Fourth of July.

As soon as school was dismissed in June our thoughts turned to making a few dollars to buy sparklers, cannon crackers, and sky rockets. We dug horseradish, ground it, and sold it for five cents per glass - we picked strawberries for a cent a quart and tackled every odd job in the neighborhood, even to peddling newspapers.

The Fourth of July was a day of remembrance - a day set aside to honor the signing of the Declaration of Independence - a day commemorating our freedom - a day to let down one's hair. The Liberty Bell with its gong sounding throughout the land imbedded us with the feeling that we were glad we were Americans.

Days before the Fourth, Main Street was festooned with flags and bunting and several stores displayed large stocks of fireworks, and on the morning of the Fourth, the entire selection was moved to the sidewalk. Our favorite fireworks merchants were Tom Lynch, Frank Curvin, Ed Conners.

Usually the Capen Hose sponsored a fireworks tent near the hose house.

Main Street resembled the Battle of the Bulge. Cannon crackers and torpedoes were set off at will - it was hardly safe to venture down the avenue. One Fourth of July a lighted cracker was thrown into Frank Curvin's display and a huge explosion occurred. Occasionally a Roman candle was shot down Main Street and usually some unlucky fellow bit the dust. Every 4th claimed its victims and the following day
many a hand was minus a finger. A few fingers years ago couldn't compare with hundreds killed and maimed on our highways today.

During the Fourth of July afternoon horse races attracted hundreds of sport lovers from all sections of Western New York. From the 17 pace to the 24 trot to the free-for-all, and with the band playing "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles", entertainment soared to great heights. It was one of the most enjoyable afternoons of the year. Then, during the late 1920's, the fair grounds was leased to an auto racing association and "old dobbin" remained in the stable. Auto racing was featured for several Fourth and then came 1932 and the depression and all sports seemed to vanish with the scarcity of the dollar.

One Fourth, during an auto race, a business man from Rochester stepped in front of a speeding car and was killed instantly. Several thousand spectators looked on in horror.

In the evening a street dance or a silent movie at the Strand or Globe kept us busy until darkness set in. We then hurried home for the evening's display of Roman candles, sparklers, and pinwheels. Every other house in the village sponsored its own fireworks extravaganza.

Prior to World War I many villages sponsored the annual Fourth of July band concert and parade, but Brockport played host for many years to the Redpath Chautauqua. Some of the finest talent in the land spent the 4th in town - Warren G. Harding, William Jennings Bryan, Mabel Willowment, and Charles Ross Taggart. The campus at the Norman school was a popular spot on Independence Day.

But time marched on and the minds of men changed. There was new thinking for a new day and the automobile created new ideas and new entertainment and somehow gasoline and fireworks didn't mix. Gradually the nicest day of the year slipped from our midst. We didn't realize it was passing into oblivion. The old were too busy treating their arthritis and the young lost interest - they never experienced the 4th of old, so how could they know.

Today, the birthday of our independence - a day of tranquility - of peace and quiet - a day for dreaming when cannon crackers and sky rockets dominated Main Street.

Backward Oh backward Oh time on its way, Make me a boy again just for this day.
The Heyday

As we glance back through the years, our thoughts are of the better days. Days when our hearts were light—when gaiety and laughter reigned supreme—when mother and dad seemed to get more kick out of little things than we do today—when you could have more fun for fifty cents than we can today for fifty dollars—back before canned music and radio were ushered in—when vaudeville, medicine shows, band concerts, street dances, county fairs—and picnics at the lake were something we planned for days. No wonder they called them the "Gay Days". Gay indeed they were. There isn't a one of us who wouldn't like to live a few of them over.

When grandma spoke of the "Gay Nineties" she recalled the Opera House, the Concert Hall and the Music Hall, but her memories dwelled on that institution the "Opera House". No village was without one—its praises have never been sung. For that's where they held all the dances and fights—old maids would knit there on Tuesday nights, next day you'd see burlesque with girls dressed in tights. Everything happened at the "Opera House". Its praises have never been sung.

Usually the owner of the "Opera House" was the mayor of the village and sometimes filled the capacity of janitor. As in the case of the local situation, the "Opera House" was owned by George Ward. He, too, was the Mayor, janitor, sold tickets and sometimes ushered. As grandma would say, he was "the man about town".

To get on with the story, "Ward's Opera House" was known by every showman in this section of the country. In fact shows played here that came directly from New York City and Chicago. To make it sound more fantastic, there were productions organized here that went on to great fame in the field of entertainment.

James Seynour, local thespian, organized a group of talented artists who presented the greatest operettas of the day. Among them
were such celebrities as Margaret Harrison, Mrs. Thomas Wilcox, Sue and Sarah Margan, Gene Telafair and sisters, Billy Evart, Jim Adams, Bert Ward and Gifford Morgan. They presented "Iolanthe", said to have been a colorful production. Their artistic ability spread far and wide.

Then there were the popular plays of the day such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin", which first played here in 1854, with little Eva and Simon Lagree, and the parade before the show. "Human Hearts" that required a dozen handkerchiefs to see it through. Guy Brothers Minstrels; the Marks Dramatic Company of Canada with Maybelle Marks as heroine; Walter E. Perkins in "The Man From Mexico" and melodramas such as "The Fast Mail" and "The Mid-night Alarm" that made you hang onto your seats.

Minstrel shows were very much in order. In fact the best played "Ward's Opera House". No doubt you will recall Al Fields, Happy Cal Wagner, Dupreaz and Benedict, Billy McCann, New Orleans Minstrels with the renowned triple-tongued "Hi" Henry at the cornet.

When "East Lynn" came to town, seats had to be reserved days in advance. On the day of the show, the "East Lynn" band would march to the piano factory or to the Seymour-Morgan Iron Works, where a few selections would be rendered--for there was to be a hot time in the old town that night.

A fellow named Shakespeare couldn't have done any better than the troupes that presented "As You Like It" or "Romeo and Juliet". Usually during the February blizzard, the Opera House played "A Mid-Summer Night's Dream.

A night long to be remembered was when George T. Clark's female minstrels came to town. Several of the local cut-ups secured front seats and between the first and second acts they trekked to a near by fruit store and purchased a goodly supply. When the curtain went
up for the second act, the cast was showered with everything from tomatoes to "cowardly eggs"—the kind that hit you and run. A riot resulted.

Long before motion pictures, a troupe came into town headed by McGill and Strong. They presented a show produced on mirrors and called "Mirrors of Ireland." It starred the renowned Saddie McGill. Theatrical productions were not the only events staged at the "Opera House." Great wrestling matches were booked with such local boys as Fred Banker and Harley Tuttle taking on all comers. Churches held bazaars, there were colorful dances, medicine shows and what have you.

From the early '70's the "Opera House" was the bright spot in the village along with the "Concert Hall" located on the third floor over Ed Germaine's Hotel. Both places were similar in their presentations.

Everything went fine at "Ward's Opera House." It kept up with the times by finally showing the Village's first movies, and one night in May 1911, fire broke out in the rear of the building. Firemen fought to save the structure and finally succeeded but after considerable damage had been done. The fire put an end to all social activity in the building. It chastened "Father Time" in bringing about the exit of the stage and the ushering in of the motion pictures that revolutionized the entertainment world.

The Winslow Music Hall was a little different when it came to entertainment, although it presented some of the most colorful dances ever held in the village. The so-called "400" held Easter and Christmas dances with the most luxurious gowns on display—for in those days, canes, high hats and cut-away coats made the formal dress complete. Cabs were numbered, so when the lady fair and her escort left the hall, the cab was waiting to carry them to their destination.
The center of attraction was the hula-hula girl who did her dance over mirrors on the corner of Main and King Streets until one of the village cut-ups invited a member of the local clergy to view her performance. As a result, the show was closed by police.

Business places were crowded. Extra clerks had to be hired to handle the trade. Dobson's Drugstore had to close its doors every half hour to let the cash register cool off.

L.G. Gordon, local shoe dealer and Mayor of the village, headed the program committee. He was backed by such celebrities as John Welch, H.H. Angevine, W.B. Conklin, George Benson, F.S. LeVan, George Bloomfield, Edward Harrison, and Louis B. Shay. Headquarters were located on the third floor over Greenough's Hardware Store.

The police force consisting of Giles Hoyt and "Mike" Murphy had their hands full locking up visitors who overestimated their capacity. Fire Chief Fred Schlosser with his Assistants, "Art" Thayer and Frank Gleason remained on duty 24 hours a day to take care of each and every blaze.

Weeks prior to the celebration were given over to advertising and raising the sum of $3,000 to sponsor this eventful week. Among the list of contributors were the names of Ed Tighe, Doctor A.M. McConnell, William Glynn and a host of others.

The churches started off the week with special services in the morning. In the afternoon a sacred concert was presented by the augmented choirs of the various denominations.

Monday was "Children's Day" with over 1500 youngsters taking part in the afternoon parade. Tuesday, July 4th a grand military and civic parade was held in the morning. There were concerts and sports in the afternoon and fireworks in the evening. The Hon. Francis Cullen of Watertown gave the Independence Day address with the National Guard of Rochester adding the "military touch."

Wednesday was "Athletic Day" with sports and band concerts galore. Thursday was "Firemen's Day." A huge parade was held in the afternoon with 60 local and visiting companies in the line of march. Friday was "Fraternal Day" with a grand parade of societies and lodges
in full dress from cities and towns in Western New York.

Saturday was "Rochester Day". The old R.L. and B. trolley ran excursions to the village. There was an industrial parade in the afternoon with the grand finale of the evening given over to speakers and fireworks.

The streets were brightly decorated with all the colors of the rainbow, homes were decorated to the Nth degree and even the old Merchant's Delivery wagons carried a certain amount of glamour.

Stores put on special pre-"Old Home Week" sales. F.J. Bahl's featured a couple of Victrolas in his new music store. Fred Shafer had a novel window with one hen and sixty chickens on display. Frank Curvin served from 50 to 100 dinners daily and Brennan and Adams were displaying a new discovery better known as the vacuum cleaner.

There were benefit parties, dances and bits of entertainment to raise money. The Lyric Theater presented a special show with the funds to be turned over to the cause. James Conley attempted to sponsor a reunion of all clerks who had worked at Owens Grocery. The only drawback to the plan was the fact that he couldn't find a hall big enough to hold the gang.

H.E. Hamil, local Ford dealer was displaying a five passenger touring car, 221 horse power, complete with top, lamp, windshield, speedometer and magneto for the low cost of $780. One with a Torpedo body could be had for $725 complete.

The Brockport Gas Light Company placed a 450 candle power arc in front of its office on State Street. But the Electric Company went them one better and installed a high power Tungsten light in front of Johnnie Kinsella's cafe.

There were several places in town where one could get good 4%, including the State Bank of Commerce.
All in all a grand time was had by everyone and the "Old Home Week" of 1911 went down in history as a week long to be remembered.

An old home week was attempted in 1940 in connection with the Western New York Firemen's Convention but very few old-timers returned to the village.

The village has had its share of good times and merriment. Each year the old and the young would save a few dollars to spend at the Monroe County Fair, for that was an annual event. Everyone went to the Fair. Farmers would come in for the day with a basket full of jell sandwiches and dill pickles. In fact all the new fashions and styles were introduced at the Fair. Mother spent days making pickles and mince meat to exhibit, while dad fattened the pig. The Fair continued until 1932, when it gave way to more modern entertainment. Older folks lost interest while the young ones were too busy.

The Fairgrounds also were the home of the Brockport Freezers. This organization of stars originated from the old "twilight league" of the late 20's. The Shoe Factory, Cold Storage, Business Men and the Quaker Maid played to thousands of fans. In fact, interest soured until the stars of the league were massed into one of the best ball teams ever to don Brockport uniforms with "Mel" Corbett as manager. Everyone will remember George Kruger, "Chick" Palmer, Nihiser, Bradshaw, "Whitey" Anderson, "Ty" Yardley, Ken Barkley, Izzy Stein, George Sage, Ray Nichols, "Dutch" Schultz, Paul Bailing, "Slim" Elliott, Shatzer, Henahan, and Ed Winegard. Then there were the always razzed umpires, Charlie Page, Art Thayer, a guy named Corcoran and many others until the local boys couldn't handle the situation, so Rochester umpires were imported.

The Freezers rose to be Western New York Champs and even journeyed to Syracuse to meet the champs of that section. Considerable money was realized from the games and plans were laid for a better
diamond, and one thing leading to another, the village park was born, with its rose garden, with its soft ball layout, tennis courts, skating rink, scout cabin, and a playground for the youngsters.

No era ever produced the interest and good sportsmanship as did the Freezer years.

Annual events were enjoyed by everyone but weekly entertainment appealed to the young. It was the dances at the Normal and the summer resort hops that drew the crowds. Some of the grandest memories of a few years back were the summer night dances at Sea Breeze, Windsor Beach, Manitou, especially the two weeks the Colony Club were there, and last but not least, Troutberg each Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday night. In fact, the Decoration Day dance at Troutberg was the social event of the season. Practically every resort from Olcott to Sodus sponsored the Saturday night dance, but again interest changed—the night club took over and the resort dance passed into oblivion.

Along with dancing, the home talent productions during winter months were much in the go. Practically every organization—Parent Teachers, Odd Fellows, Grange, Masons and Capen Hose put on an annual affair with such celebrities as George Doane, Jr., Charlie Page, Ken Raleigh, Hal Conklin, Bill Remington, Rans Smith, Rose Raleigh Schmidt, Charlie Bryant and a host of other thespians. There were as many as two home talent shows a week—everyone was in the acting business.

Speaking of acting, the village was blessed with the appearance of the Redpath Chautauqua each summer during the early '20's, with its fine plays, light opera and the best in oratory. In fact, the country's greatest came to town with such dignitaries as William Jennings Bryan, Warren G. Harding, Mabel Willowbrandt, Charles Ross Taggert, J.K. Murray, and Dr. A. Ray Petty. The tent pitched on the
Normal School campus was usually filled to capacity.

Going back to basketball days, our memories recall the grand Normal teams from 1916 to 1921 when the championship usually came to Brockport. From '16 to '20 such players as Bill Dunn, Carl Hiler, "Murph" Ellis, "Dunk" Lawler, and then the 20's with "Todd" Udell, "Bing" Engel, Howard Hawkins, "Dip" Murray, and Roy Nellis. Dances followed each game so that the Friday night date was at the game.

A memorable night was when the Rochester Catholic High School invaded the town. Crowds waited in line for hours begging tickets. A real game it was with the Normals coming out on top 21 to 19.

Many more moments of memorable pleasure could be recorded. One could go on and on telling of days and nights we'd all love to live over. You had your day and I had mine, and I sometimes wonder if the Lord said to us, "Go back and pick out ten nights in your life you'd like to live over" - I believe it would take considerable thought as there were so many.

Let the joys of the past live on.
Holidays may come and holidays may go but none can compare with the holidays of yesteryear when hearts were young and gay and the memories they carried will be cherished on and on even into eternity.

Everyone has his favorite holiday but the one in our file of memories was Memorial Day, especially during the roaring 20's. It was a holiday planned weeks in advance - it was a day for young and old - we hated to see the day end. It was a day of remembrances and pleasure.

The morning was similar to all Memorial Days. There was the parade, but parades were a little more colorful with the Civil War veterans, World War 1 heroes, civic and fraternal groups. World War II was yet in the making. The Raleigh Drum and Bugle Corps and the Brockport Band marched the long procession through village streets to the High Street cemetery. As many as seventy-five veterans from World War 1 and a dozen of the last of the boys in blue scintillated the day memorializing their comrades. Edward Fitzgerald, veteran of the War of '98, was usually the marshall for the day.

In 1892, by an act of Congress, the day known for years as Decoration Day was changed to Memorial Day.

Following the ceremonies at the cemetery everyone gathered in the auditorium at the Normal School for the annual Memorial Day observance. Usually a prominent personality delivered the address.

In the afternoon the bright spot was the Monroe County Fair grounds where horse racing was the order of the day. Racing fans trekked into Brockport from miles around to watch fellows like Jim Stanley, Charley Lawton, Al Colton, Art Haslip, George Thayer, and Fred Gott furnish the excitement. There was the 2:18 pace, the 2:30 trot, and the free-for-all. The Brockport band furnished the music for the afternoon's entertainment. They were days when sporting blood flowed a little swifter along Erie Waters.
Following the racing events the young hurried home to brush up for the social event of the season - the Memorial Day dance at Troutburg. Dates for the dance were made months in advance, for the "burg" was the country club of Brockport. From this day on until the closing on Labor Day the Ridge to the County Line Road were well traveled highways. For those without transportation there was always a buddy’s back seat available in a buddy’s car. But this night was the night of all nights.

Campbell’s Society Band or Sammy Mannings Trumpeters usually furnished the music with the "Dark Town Strutter’s Ball" or "Whispering" guiding the couples on the dance floor of the Ontario Inn’s pavilion. At 1 A.M. the band played "Home Sweet Home" and the drowsy couples were homeward bound - yes, it was a grand "hop" in the "burg" that night.

For a great many years the Memorial Day dance at Troutburg was a grand occasion and with the new generation, the repeal of prohibition, and the era of canned music, thoughts turned from the lakeside resorts and the dance passed into oblivion. At one time every summer resort along the lake had its weekly "hop".

From 1929 on were the depression years and the pleasure resorts were the farthest from everyone's mind. Dance halls along the lake passed into decay never to be revived. It was a losing cause.

But the days and nights spent at Troutburg were never forgotten. One of the great thrills was to walk to the Devil's Nose - the spot along the lake that haunted and beaconed lovers to their trysting place on the shores of Ontario. Like a ghost in the night, many a ship captain believed that the rocky ledge had risen up out of the water to trap his ship, for the Devil's Nose extended out in the water some 150 feet.

Yes, it wasn't too many years ago that lovers from Brockport would walk up the winding trail, hand in hand, that led to one of the
grands spots along the lake and there indulge in their reveries and build their air castles undisturbed.

Many a promise has been made and many a heart broken at the Memorial Day dance and at the Devil's Nose and no doubt many a lover sang that familiar tune, "But, you forgot to remember".

Memories of Troutburg are like the stars - they are inaccessible. The ghost of the lovers that haunt that cherished summer resort no doubt walk the shores each night waiting for some familiar face to return and once again, with youthful heart, enjoy the moments of yesteryears.

Today, Troutburg and the Devil's Nose have been taken over by religious groups - it's only a dream of the past. But, the memories of those Memorial Days of old will be imbedded in the sands of time, and, if history repeats itself, perhaps some day the Ridge and the County Line Roads will again be a well traveled highway.

Long live Memorial Days when life was a little less complicated! Today, after a short parade, you could shoot a cannon up Main Street and an afternoon with nothing to do but visit a shopping center. Memorial Day nights - peace and tranquility.
The Interurban Trolley
by
Ray Tuttle

Underneath the macadam of Erie and State Streets lies the history of a trolley line that serviced towns and villages between Rochester and Buffalo.

In 1931, when the R.L. & B. line ceased operation, the tracks were covered and 23 years of a colorful era passed into oblivion. The Rochester, Lockport and Buffalo big trolleys clattered over city streets and across the fertile countryside - they were a friendly sight to behold.

The trolley line began in 1908 as the Buffalo-Lockport Railway, but reorganized in 1919 as the Rochester, Lockport & Buffalo line. The last big car ran on April 30, 1931. Like the other inter-urban lines of the region, the R.L. & B. was a victim of the automobile and changing times. The era of "rolling thunder" was a relatively short one.

Before it began service, the line encountered several difficulties, including legal action. Village of Spencerport residents not wanting the "juggernauts" thundering through their community delayed the first work train by ripping up the rails. Youths threw sticks and stones at the train so that its crew waited west of town until darkness fell before it made the return trip to Rochester. Then, with all lights out, it ran through the village at high speed.

In Brockport the trolley company made application to build the line through the village, but State St. folks protested. However, the injunction expired on May 27 and there was no court on Saturday. Memorial Day fell on Monday, so the trolley company started work Friday night and by 4 P.M. Monday tracks through the village were completed. The law stated that a car had to run over the tracks to make it binding, so a hand car was pushed through the village and the R.L. & B. had won its fight.

Although the first rails were laid in Sept. 1906, the first
The Trolley #2

train to carry passengers did not run from Rochester to Lockport until Sept. 4, 1908. Its debut was made a gala occasion all along the line. Running time from Rochester to Lockport was one hour and 40 minutes for "limiteds" and two hours and 15 minutes for "locals".

The line owned its tracks from Rochester to Lockport, a distance of 54 miles, but used the right of way of the International Railway to Buffalo, Niagara Falls and Olcott Beach. The line occasional ran a "Toronto Special" to Olcott Beach where passengers would change to Toronto bound steamboats.

In 1910 there were 58 stops between Rochester and Lockport. In 1924 these were reduced to 40. Street stops in Medina, Albion, Spencerport and Brockport were not counted.

Students attending Brockport High from as far west as the county line and as far east as Adams Basin depended upon the trolley for their education. Normal school students commuted from Rochester and as far west as Medina.

It was a grand and glorious feeling to drain the radiator the first of November, jack up the tin-lizzy, and ride the trolley the rest of the winter. With a shortage of anti-freeze predicted, the old trolley line again would come in handy.

Fares were originally two cents a mile and this was raised to 2½ cents in 1918 and to 2 3/4 in 1919. The fare from Brockport to Albion was 26 cents; from the county line to Albion 20 cents. Cars ran every hour on the hour from 5 A.M. to 1 A.M. the next morning.

When the line was abandoned in 1931, all but three of the cars were burned for scrap iron. The three were sold to interested persons.

So ends 23 years of faithful service. The trolleys were a friendly lot. The village has never been the same since. If, the trolley line was operating today, we could thumb our nose at the gasoline stations and wouldn't that be a grand feeling?
Streets & Transportation

Every visitor to the village has spoken of our beautiful streets embellished with stately maples. Brockport for years has been proud of its towering trees and well kept homes, for no park in western New York carries the dignity and color - to the natives it is "the garden spot of America".

Since its incorporation village streets have been maintained, so that carriages, bicycles, and the motor car could travel at ease without the least inconvenience.

The early streets were laid out east and west from the main highway, the Lake Road. The eastern as well as the western streets were named after the many dignitaries of the day. For example Clinton Street was named after the father of the canal, Dewitt Clinton, and Erie Street after the ditch.

Fayette was originally Lafayette, the French general who stopped off at Brockport on his journey up the canal. Holley Street after Myron Holley, the gentleman who helped build the canal while Monroe after President Monroe. Brockway Place, of course after the founder of the village. Fair Street during the 1860's was the scene of the Monroe County fair. Market extended to State Street from there it was Mechanics Street, better known today as Park Avenue.

Spring Street was blessed with many springs and High Street was the highest part of town. Union Street, seven feet wider at the east end, was originally Brownings Cow Path. It was an alley for State Street and South Street as was King Street used to dump ashes from Clinton and Erie Streets. Utica was Utica to College Street from there south it was North Street. It was
said the Heil Brockway had relatives in Utica, N.Y., therefore the name. West Avenue was Clarkson Street named after General Mathew Clarkson of the war of 1812, and last but not least the Ridge was known as the Canawangus Road. We also have a King and Queen St.

Gordon Street memorialized the Gordon family, Adams Street the J.W. Adams family, Maxon street the R. Maxom family, Perry Street the A. Perry family, Chappell the Chappell family and so on. Smith street after the Smith family (which one)?

Brockport has a Slaughter and Quarry Street. Two of the oldest streets in the village. They lie at the foot of Lyman Street. College of course was named after the place of learning and Beach Street after Horatio Beach, publisher of the Republican Democrat. How the rest came into being is not known.

If a stranger came into town and asked the location of Holmes Street, Bailey Ave, Richmond Street, Broad Street, Rochester or Wausau Place - one would perhaps say "you got me mister", but Brockport had all of these.

Today we have a Crestview, a Brookdale, Idlewood, Carolin, Glendale, a Gary Drive, a Washington Street, Beverly Drive, Keable Tract, Coleman Creek, Kimberley Drive and a host of others. I doubt if I know where any of them are. Every time we look up there is a new street.
The corner of Utica and Erie streets was called "Knobs Hill" back in the '70's cause that where the society dwelled and the corner of Utica and Maxon was called "dutchtown". Of course below the canal was always referred to as "Muckland".

The early travel on the highways saw a stage route established in 1810. It traveled up the Ridge to Clarkson and through Brockport to LeRoy. The settlers themselves repaired and built the roads rather than pay road tax. North of Brockport, however, the road was maintained by a chartered company. It was called the Clarkson-Brockport Plank Road company. The late Harry Whipple had eight shares of this stock dated Jan. 14, 1854. The stock was originally owned by Nath Fisk. The company had offices in Clarkson with a capital stock of $30,000. It sold for $50 per share. Simon B. Jewett was secretary of the company.

Brockport played an important part in the development of comfortable means of travel as it numbered among its industry a carriage and buggy works and was the home of the Rochester Wheel works.

Then there was the bicycle area had its speed demons with the Brockport fair offering bicycle races on single wheels, tandem and up to eight seated wheels. Yachting was also a popular sport with the Brockport Yacht Club furnishing the entertainment.

In 1825 the railroad was built which brought new life to the community. Travel increased on the Falls Road until it reached its peak about 1900. Fifteen to twenty passenger trains a day traveled the rails with twelve coaches to a train on Sundays and holidays. A big crowd always gathered at the depot to see the trains come in.
In 1909 the R.L. & B. trolley lines proposed a road through the village, but town folks served an injunction against its construction. However, the injunction was not legal on Sundays so the trolley company, with a large crew, labored all day and finally succeeded in completing the road. The trolley lived twenty-two years and gave way to the bus.

The first auto appeared on village streets in 1902 with William Seymour, a 100 year old man, at the wheel. From then on "old dobbin", the railroad and the bicycle began to disappear and the motor car came into its "heyday".
Early railroading in Western New York changed the course of civilization. It meant doom to the stage coaches and the taverns along the Ridge and the canal with its sturdy bank was to pass into a state of torpidity.

The first railroad constructed in Western New York was built by the Lockport and Niagara Falls Company in 1835. The track consisted of oak "mudsills" 2½ inches by 12 inches, laid lengthwise of the road, with ties resting across them, and upon the ties four by six inch timbers, on which were spiked bands or scraps of iron. These irons had a tendency to work loose at the ends and turn up, forming "snakeheads", which caught on the bottom of the cars throwing the train off the track.

The first railroad cars were small affairs with four wheels accommodating from 16 to 24 persons. The cars had from two to three compartments with seats running across, stage coach fashion.

In 1835 a meeting was held in Lockport to consider the construction of a railroad from Batavia to Buffalo, but the road never materialized.

The next railroad undertaking was a horse car line which would run from Medina to Akron. The year was 1836 and it was to be sponsored by the Medina and Darien Railroad company. It operated only for a short time because of financial difficulties. The very same year the community of Medina took measures to build a line from that village to the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek, but that too never materialized.

The Niagara Falls branch of the New York Central was begun as the Lockport and Niagara Falls Road, organized April 24, 1834 with $175,000 capital. On December 10, 1850 a company of New York capitalists purchased the Lockport and Niagara Falls Road and set about improving that portion of the road and extending to Rochester via Medina, Albion and Brockport, at a cost of $225,000.
The first directors were Joseph B. Varnum and Edward Whitehouse of New York City, Watts Sherman of Albany, Freeman Clarke, Silas Smith and A. Boody of Rochester, Alexis Ward and Roswell Burrows of Albion and Elias B. Holmes of Brockport. Mr. Varnum was elected president; Mr. Ward, vice president and Mr. Clarke treasurer.

By June 25, 1852 the line was completed. The directors and a few dignitaries rode over the new line and western New York was on the eve of a new transformation. Regular train began running on June 30.

The first train between Rochester and Lockport was drawn by an engine called the "Niagara". It made 50 miles per hour part of the way. The new road and other smaller lines in western New York were consolidated on May 7, 1853 to form the New York Central Lines.

The branch from Lockport Junction to Tonawanda was built by the Lockport and Niagara Falls Company in 1852 and began operations in 1853.

In 1870 the Lake Ontario Shore Railroad Company was organized at Oswego. The proposed road was to be the future trunk line from Boston to the west. The town of Kendall gave its bonds for $60,000; Yates, $100,000; Somerset, $90,000; Wilson, $117,000; Newfane, $68,000; and Lewiston, $152,000.

Litigation over the town bonds checked their sale and crippled the company, so that it could not complete the road. During May 1874, the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Company assumed the undertaking. The road was then graded, but it was a year before the line was finished.

The road through Orleans and Niagara Counties was graded by Hunter & Company of Sterling Valley. During the latter part of July 1875 the track was laid twenty miles west of the Genesee River. During the spring of 1876 the road was completed through to Lewiston. The first train ran over the "Hojack", as it was later known, on June 12, 1876. The cost of the road was $20,000 per mile. Today one freight a day
travels each way over this lake shore road, once the pride of the fruit belt.

During the early part of the 20th century a group of citizens from Rochester and Buffalo made a study of an electric railroad to cover western New York villages. During the year 1906 plans got underway to build a road from Rochester to Buffalo. Construction was started in May 1907. The road was to be built through Brockport. The Rochester, Lockport & Buffalo Company made application to build the line through the village and litigation proceedings followed. Several Brockport citizens protested. However, the injunction expired on May 27 and there was no court on Saturday. Decoration Day fell on Monday, so the trolley company began work Friday night and by 4 P.M. Monday the track through the village was completed. The law stated that a car had to be run over the tracks to make it binding, so a hand car was pushed through the village and the R. L. & B. had won its fight.

The same year tracks were built through Holley and within a few weeks the electric road was completed. Trolleys were run every hour from 5:30 A.M. to 1 A.M. the following morning. The road was very prosperous for 24 years and during the spring of 1931 the automobile came into its own and the Buffalo, Lockport & Rochester Trolley Company called it a day. The tracks have been torn up or covered over and the only remains of that once colorful trolley line is the ghost like power house at the east end of the village.

The Falls Branch of the New York Central ran as many as 17 passenger trains a day over the road, one every two hours. There were nine east and eight west. One of the great thrills of the townfolks was to journey to the depot to see the trains come in. Today one track has disappeared and the depot is a lumber storage, but I doubt if any old timer walks to the Park Avenue crossing to see a freight pass through, the only remains of a once colorful era.
The trains are still with us but for how long - only the future can decide. Folks are becoming more motor minded, and with the jets moving in, the coming years are problematical. But, whatever happens memories of those colorful railroad years will be imbedded in the sands of time. It was grand to live when travel was a little slower and somewhat safer.
A Breach of Promise

by

Ray Tuttle

Back before the turn of the century, the gossip of the day usually hinged around a "breach of promise suit". It caused many a tongue to wag over the backyard fence. Today a "breach of promise suit" is a phrase that has been removed from our vocabulary and "divorce proceedings" added.

When a gal was jilted at the altar it became a criminal offence. Back during the 1870's a Brockport maiden was "left standing" and a lawsuit that attracted nation-wide attention resulted.

The parties in the case were Miss Alice Braman of Brockport and Charles Boss of Smyrna, Chenango County. Miss Braman was the daughter of Dr. A.N. Braman and was preceptress of the primary department at the Normal School. She was also a Sunday school teacher and organist at the Baptist Church.

After his graduation Boss became principal of the Union School at Cobbleskill, N.Y. Miss Braman was 27 and Boss 28 years of age.

In 1872 Mr. Boss became a pupil at Brockport Normal and about that time became acquainted with Miss Braman. He graduated in 1876. After a year and a half of courtship they became engaged to marry.

After graduation they kept up a regular correspondence and Boss visited her occasionally. Then one day Boss wrote Miss Braman that she held second place in his affections and desired to be released from his engagement.

Miss Braman's father wrote Boss that his daughter's affections could not be trifled with in that way and the matter could not be allowed to rest.

Boss obtained a lawyer named Ray and sent him to
Dr. Braman to effect a settlement. Dr. Braman informed Lawyer Ray that only Boss could make a settlement.

Nothing more was done concerning the case, when to Boss's surprise, Miss Braman began a suit for $10,000 damage and caused Boss to be arrested on a criminal charge, to which he was subject under the law relating to breach of promise. Boss was released on $3,000 bail.

The consensus of opinion of the day believed that a young man has no right to retain a young lady's affection for years during the best period of her life and then forsake her. Folks held that it is wrong and an offence that should be punished.

Miss Braman obtained the services of Attorney J.D. Decker of Brockport to represent her and Mr. Boss hired the Baker brothers also of Brockport to represent him.

There was no disposition as to the settlement. The many newspaper reports of the case failed to say whether or not Miss Braman received a settlement. However, the "breach of promise suit" no doubt taught many a young man not to trifle with a young maiden's heart.

Today, breach of promise is no longer a criminal offence. It is purely a civil action and usually referred to attorneys who specialize in matrimonial cases. Breach of promise suits have become a rarity in the United States.
Washington Irving, a few years ago, wrote about a famous character, Rip Van Winkle. He trekked into the hills and there he slept for twenty years. When he awoke the entire social and scenic conditions he once knew had changed. The story of Rip was a fabulous one, but the little town of Clarkson went Irving one better and produced a real live character, who closed his eyes and slept five years.

Today we read of encephalitis, better known as sleeping sickness, throughout the south. A year or two ago Florida had several cases and this year Texas has been confronted with the epidemic.

The Clarkson case was played up by newspapers from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Pictures of the undisturbed rest appeared on the front pages and interest concerning the young man was a household byword. People from all sections of the state came to Clarkson to learn of the strange case. Doctors traveled thousands of miles to render their advice, but the lad slept on.

The phenomenon may seem strange to folks living today, but it actually happened. In my scrapbook is a clipping of one of the strangest cases in history.

The year was 1848 and the day June 19th. The young lad, Cornelius Vroman, then seventeen, was living with his father and two brothers on the Moses Jennings farm, Sweden-Walker Rd. The mother had died some years previous. Young Vroman was born in Schoharie County. He was hard working, temperate, and trustworthy. On this day he complained of feeling ill, so the father summoned Dr. John S. Cole.

Dr. Cole said the boy was suffering from a stomach disorder and prescribed a treatment. The illness continued for the day and it became impossible to rouse him from his slumber. Each morning he would sleep longer and within a few days the strange lethargy swept over him.

For five years young Vroman slept on. It was said at the time that every six weeks he would rally, but acted as though he was the inhabitant of another planet. He was fed intravenously.

Nearing the close of the five year drowse, he was removed to a Rochester hospital where the best medical advice in the nation was conscripted. Doctors wondered how a person could live on month after month with a small amount of nourishment and without losing a great amount of weight, but the lad slept on.

Then came the spring of 1853 and the news that the sleeping youth was rallying was told to the nation. Newspapers stated that young Vroman was opening his eyes and that a small amount of nourishment was being administered. It consisted of bread and milk. With the regaining of strength he began recalling incidents that occurred before the strange sleep crept over him, but remembered nothing during the past five slumber years.
Early records state that the lad fully recovered. What he did from then on or of his whereabouts was never recorded. Perhaps P. T. Barnum signed him up or maybe he made a fortune traveling the vaudeville circuit displaying his wares. Today he might sign with a sleeping tablet company selling the product. No matter what happened, Cornelius Vroman placed the sleeping little hamlet of Clarkson in the headlines for five years.
The Elephant and the Mules

by

Ray Tuttle, Clarkson Historian

A few weeks ago the bones of a huge mastodon, believed to be 10,000 years old, was unearthed in a celery field in Wayne County. The scientific analysis of the bones disclosed the age, size and personality of the elephant like beast.

Some day, in the distant future, scientists and archeologists will trek to Brockport to diagnose a similar discovery. It so happened that back during the 1880's a circus visited the village and while here a prize elephant died. The huge animal was skinned, loaded on a stone-boat, and moved to the foot of Lyman Street where a deep hole was dug and the animal buried.

The story of the elephant was related by Giles Hoyt, a former chief of police of the village of Brockport. The chief said he was about twenty at the time. The chief died during the 1940's.

No doubt some day the bones of the huge animal will be uncovered and considerable excitement will prevail. It is hoped that scientists will not claim the bones to be that of a prehistoric beast.

Back in the days when mules and horses pulled canal boats from one end of the state to the other, burying grounds for the dead animals were designated along the towpath of Clinton's ditch. When a mule or horse died the animal was transported to the nearest mule cemetery.

One mule cemetery was located between Park Avenue bridge and the Sweden-Walker Road in a section called the Black Hills. It was an elevated section on the north side of the towpath. Approximately some
twenty animals are buried there.

Someday, years from now, the bones of the mule cemetery will be uncovered and again the natives will speculate as to its origin and historians will be called upon to solve the mystery.
Many, many years ago body snatching from cemeteries was quite an art. Large sums of money were paid by doctors and medical schools and it came to the point where the snatchers found it easier and more profitable to murder than to dig up bodies from the cold ground.

More than a century ago, there lived in Edinburgh a brilliant professor of anatomy named Dr. Knox. Like most anatomists of the day, he lacked enough corpses for his demonstrations. Like his colleagues, he was forced to buy them from body snatchers. Two snatchers named Burke and Hire, decided it was easier to murder their "victims" than to dig them up. They were caught and brought to trial. Dr. Knox escaped prosecution, but his name became a curse among the poor. He was ostracized and finally fled from his native city.

A great many others were caught and convicted of this heinous atrocity.

Back at the turn of the 19th century there was considerable body snatching from cemeteries in New York state. The most outstanding in this area occurred in the town of Clarkson. A farmer, who lived on the Redman Rd. north of the Ridge, was haunted for weeks with this body snatching experience. His son fell causing a sharp instrument to pierce his temple. A Clarkson doctor was summoned and administered first aid. The doctor informed the mother not to heal the wound by applying a salve, but to leave the cut open. However, all mothers being alike she took the doctoring into her own hands. She secured an ointment and applied it to the wound with the result that the wound healed and the lad died. He
was buried in West Clarkson cemetery on the Ridge.

A few days passed and the grieved couple visited their son's grave. To their surprise the body had been dug up and it lay on top of the ground. An autopsy had been performed. Again the lad was buried.

Each day the father would visit the grave to see if everything was alright. However, one morning he made a trip to the cemetery and found the grave had been opened, but this time the body was missing.

Authorities were summoned and an extensive search made of the surrounding countryside. The lad's body could not be found. After several days of walking through fields and scouring every barn, the lad's remains was found at the rear of the old inn at Redman's Corners.

This time the father took the body and buried it on his farm. Steel bars were placed over the grave making sure the atrocity would never occur again. It never did.

Much has been written concerning the body snatchers of old and many murders have been committed when corpses became scarce, but this type of crime has been considered one of the lowest in the annals of mankind. Recently there has been grave tampering in Monroe County. It is indeed a heinous atrocity.
The Night Prayer Was Answered

By

Ray Tuttle

Back in 1910 John Barleycorn was quite a popular fellow in Brockport. The intoxicating liquid flowed a little more swiftly than the sepia waters of the barge canal. Back in 1910 there were eight saloons on Main St. and three hotels at the depot.

Also back in 1910 the spirits of alcohol and the spirits of religion began to clash. At the time the Baptist Church was holding prayer meetings on Wednesday nights in homes throughout the village. This Wednesday night the prayer meeting was at the home of Deacon Palmer on Park Avenue.

Not far from the Deacon's home was one of the hotels at the depot the Heinrich House. It was a popular rendezvous for the men about town who would gather each evening and partake of the "brown October ale". Quite often there were those who would over estimate their capacity and stagger down Park Avenue past the Deacon's house.

The prayer meeting this night at the Deacon's was well attended and the theme was temperance. There was quite a discussion on the evils of drink and the Deacon was asked to pray for guidance. The Deacon rose to his feet - "Lord, do something about that hotel at the depot. If, you can't close it up, burn it down". The prayer meeting that night ended and folks left for home with the feeling their prayers would be answered.

It was shortly after midnight and the mournful sounds of the old fire bell at the village building began to toll. Where was the fire? They soon learned that the Heinrich House was on fire.

The Baptist minister, who attended the prayer meeting
that night, was one of the spectators at the fire. Deacon Palmer saw the minister and hurried to his side - tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Reverend, we will have to be careful what we pray for in the near future". Yes, that night back in 1910 the hotel at the depot burned to the ground.

Within two years the other two hotels at the depot, the Lark Inn and the Brockport Hotel, were destroyed by fire. Whether or not more prayer meetings resulted in the conflagrations is not known.

However, it was memorable night back in 1910 when pray was answered in Brockport.
The Stage Coach Tavern Robbery

By
Ray Tuttle

Today in our modern world holdups and robberies are commonplace. We somehow take them for granted. Not so in olden days for highway stickups were few and far between. However, it wasn't so in the town of Clarkson, for one of the history making crimes of the middle 19th century occurred in a little tavern on the Ridge.

The inn was operated and owned by one Isaac Houston and his wife Polly and was a relay and rest station on the old Lewiston-to-Canandaigua stage coach line east of the hamlet of Garland.

The tavern, besides serving as a stage stop, doubled as a community gathering center for the folks living in East Clarkson. The tavern consisted of the main house which was built in 1823. A few yards to the east stood a second structure which housed the bar and a dance hall. This building was originally a tannery, but was converted as more folks used it as a community center.

Across the road was the carriage shed where a change of team was stabled for the stage coaches. It was the property of the stage coach line, but was tended by Isaac Houston.

It was the customary Saturday night at the Houston Tavern. Crowds had gathered for the evenings frolic and the fireplaces were spreading their warmth on a cold bleak night in the fall of 1860.

Outside in the wind-swept darkness, six mounted men reigned up behind the carriage shed. Unobserved by the revellers the men turned all the horses in the shed loose and scattered them through the countryside.

The bandits then moved to the tavern proper, placed bandanas over their faces. The 100 or so dancers and bar patrons
suddenly found themselves gazing into drawn revolvers. Everything of value was taken from the victims - gold and silver coins, paper money, and jewelry. It was estimated the bandits realized over $1,000 in loot.

The robbers then dashed to their horses and fled through the fields north toward Lake Ontario.

By the time the victims rounded up their scattered horses and a posse organized it was daybreak. An all night snow had obliterated the bandit's tracks.

None of the six robbers were ever identified or apprehended. Back in 1860 police departments were few and far between. A robbery of this type would undoubtedly go unsolved today.

The tavern stands today with a historical plaque in front. It was converted into living quarters many years ago. In its day the Houston Tavern was one of the most colorful stage coach inns on the Ridge.
Men become famous but women sometimes attempt and achieve that isle of greatness. There was one young woman who started out, but her dreams perished along the wayside. She was none other than Emma Tripp Hunt, known to the folks about as "Calico Jack". Emma attempted to build a castle of dreams on Colby Road in East Sweden but like most dreams it
never materialized.

The Hunts' had great plans and considered building a castle that would be a show place for Western New York. Construction was started in the year 1860 by Emma's mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Hunt.

Thousands of dollars were spent on the window casings and woodwork, which was of the finest black walnut. The front windows were of plate glass. Approximately $20,000 was spent on the Castle but finances ran low and the building was never completed. In fact money ran short before the front steps were constructed, making it impossible to use the front door.

There were twelve rooms including two large ball rooms. It was in these ball rooms that "Calico" entertained her many friends. The most luxurious parties and dances attracted folks from all corners of Western New York. She just couldn't be outdone in the world of entertainment.

The cupola, in the top of the castle, was used by "Calico" to watch the hired men on the farm. She would sit for hours watching them at work. She would tell them every move they made at mealtime.

When "Calico" came to town, she drove a cream colored horse with a pure white mane and tail. She placed a small boy in the bottom of the buggy to hold the horse's tail over the dashboard. About her neck and shoulders she wore a seal skin sack, said to have been worth thousands of dollars. She was known as "Calico Jack and her seal skin sack". When among friends she would light cigars with ten dollar bills.

"Calico" had a mania for buying. She never refused a peddler who came to her door. Because of this wild spending, "Calico" went broke and her dreams of finishing the Castle went asunder. She was forced to leave the mansion and give the surplus merchandise as part payment for her many debts.

Forced from the castle, "Calico" picked up her few belongings
and went to Rochester, where she found employment as a private detective. Her last job was that of a char-woman in the New York Central depot. She died in Rochester well into her eighties.

So ends the tale of the Castle of dreams and the dreamer, "Galico Jack".

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The Passing of the House Out Back
by
Ray Tuttle

When memory keeps me comfort
And moves me to smile or tears,
A weather beaten object looms
Through the haze of years;
Behind the house and barn it stood
A hundred yards or more,
And hurrying feet a path had made
Straight to its sagging door.

That, be assured, was an excerpt from the pen of James Whitcomb Riley. The rest of the poem is stored back there in the hall closet of my brain and chances of recovering it are as remote as remembering the gal who jilted me years ago.

There was some controversy recently about setting one of these replicas in front of a museum, so the younger generation could see life in the country years ago. I see no objection to preserving a model for antiquity, although that would be the wrong location. It was almost a required structure on all early homesteads, but there was a world of difference in their construction and upkeep.

Before "Chick" Sales time, there were artists who were very meticulous in constructing an outhouse. That was his trade. The seats were perfectly round, which seems more logical, according to human anatomy, than the square ones found in a few structures. They were placed at a proper height to assume a comfortable position while fulfilling the mission and perusing any reading material at hand. The round cut out of the board was fitted with a handle, making a neat covering for the aperture between uses.

The "outhouse specialist" would offset a lower seat with a smaller opening, which was most conducive to the peace of mind for the little ones, many of whom were loath to mount the higher perch with its imminent danger of falling through. No doubt this reluctance accounts for the large amount of castor oil dispensed in those days.
"Finishing Material" was as varied as the structures. Some carefully cut a newspaper into 4 x 4 inch squares, impaling them in a convenient position on a nail. Thus, one could select the number needed. This certainly conserved paper, but, you couldn't get a dime's worth of good out of a continued story. Others awarded the old catalogue for this purpose as soon as a new issue came out. I don't remember exactly how it worked out as to supply and demand, coming out even or odd. I do recall that the slick, colored pages were the last to go and used only in desperation, nothing else be available.

The corn cob suspended by a string was popular in some sections of the country, but not practical. The Sears-Roebuck catalogue had its place among the more wealthy. When you would arrive at the harness section it was time to get a new catalogue.

There were two seaters, three seaters and the larger sizes depending upon the physical structure and the number in the family. The cost depended upon the number of holes and the type of wood used.

Napoleon once said, it was very easy to be brave at noontime when the sun was shining, or in the presence of a large crowd, but the real test of a man's courage was at two o'clock in the morning when there was no one around. Napoleon was partly right -- the true meaning of bravery was to dress at 2 A.M., when the thermometer read below zero, grab the lantern and the catalogue and start to the little house behind the barn.

There was no separate division for "steers" and "heifers" or "pointers" or "setters" found over the entrance of our modern plumbing establishments. One office served the multitude. With "women's lib" just around the corner, we might return to the one office set-up and wouldn't that be ducky.

It was always polite and always conventional to "harumph" a few bars or make other loud noises to herald your approach should the door be closed. If, there was no lock on the door, the occupant had to have a singing voice warning oncomers to wait their turn.

The very worst breach of etiquette was to take an abundance of reading material and make your stay, in the little house behind the barn, a place of rest and relaxation.

The little house with the moon out in the door was an institution in itself.
Saturday Night
by
Ray Tuttle

Saturday night in the old town was truly a great spectacle — almost an institution not so many years ago. It has its memories — it was the one night when spirits ran high and both town and country folks trekked to Main St. to shop and gossip — for it was their night.

All week long folks planned on coming downtown, for Saturday night in Brockport was carnival night. Hot dog stands along with the popcorn machines dominated street corners and the bright lights from the marquee of the Strand and Globe made the evening one of joy and contentment.

Back before the auto, horses were tied to the hitching posts along the cobblestone pavements of Main Street. Barber shops were crowded, for in those days shaves were a dime — hair cuts a quarter. And, if you were at all prominent, you possessed your own shaving mug in your own private cubby-hole, for one of the chores of the agriculturist was his shave on Saturday night.

Stores remained open until at least 11 P.M. — especially the grocery where you could purchase New Orleans molasses by the jug, and, for those who dared not venture into a saloon, the grocery sold whiskey and gin for forty cents per pint. There was always a free sample of cheese.

The great spectacle was the gathering on street corners with discussions about the crops, politics, and the weather and on summer nights the medicine shows at the corner of Main and Market with their cure-all products. Usually before the get-well-quick was introduced, songs, sleight of hand and the Indian rope trick was presented.

Then, there were the feed stores Perry Shafer, Henry Bushnell, and Fred Gillispie, where the folks gathered to talk over the
tariff problem, the price of oats, and the damage the last wind did to the silo. Taxes were not mentioned because they were the farthest from the free thinker's mind. A small real estate tax was all they had to worry about.

Saturday night usually saw excursion boats dock near the Main St. bridge with groups from Rochester, who came to the sticks to have a little fun and relax with the sod-busters. After a few "Bartholomays" and a look about town they embarked for home.

Summer nights always brought to town the gospel groups from Rochester with the corner of Main and King St. being the saw-dust trail. Many a sinner gave up the bottle and changed his way of living listening to the street corner evangelist.

Main St. was also the boulevard for agriculturists with baskets of eggs and produce enroute to the grocery to trade for needs of the household, for in those days the barter system was practiced by the many.

Then along about midnight, the folks who overestimated their capacity, would venture from the saloons and some real pugilistic officer encounters ensued with Giles Hoyt usually declared the winner. The more peaceful and the entertainment seekers would take in a movie or be satisfied with a ten-cent banana split. Some would sit in the buggy and watch the characters go by.

And then there was the Saturday night choir rehearsal at the Methodist Church. At times the drones of the choir would drown out the clatter of horses' hoofs.

Before folks left for home the Saturday night purchase of meat for the Sunday dinner was a must - T-bones at fifteen cents per pound, loins at a dime, and usually the butcher would throw in a pound of liver for the cat - or, if you paid your bill, he might throw in an extra porterhouse for good measure.
Saturday Night #3

Oh! Saturday night - It's only a dream of the past. Today smelly automobiles dominating Main St. with plenty of space to park - graceries can now be purchased at the far end of town - with no samples of cheese and molasses in pint bottles - feed stores moved to food and drug stores - street corners minus the the hot dog, pop corn and medicine shows - gospel singers supplanted by sounds from the juke-box from our co-educational saloons - yachts dominating Erie waters - T-bones at $2.50 a pound and liver on the exclusive list - the saw-dust trail now the trail of the confused - shopping now a week's chore - midnight and slumber - Saturday night and tranquility.
If, Charles was killed in action his body was never found, but, if he lived to tell the story, no doubt he met some other gal and took off for parts unknown.

It was during the turn of the century that "Lib" died of a broken heart. A romance of only a few months ended into long nights of waiting and hoping. The spark in her heart and the light in the south window never went out.

-30-
Once upon a time, many years ago, a newly married couple, Charles & Elizabeth Taylor resided on the southwest corner of Park Avenue and State Streets.

In fact, it was during Civil War days and the happy couple were looking forward to a fruitful life in the canal port town.

Suddenly life changed for the Taylors. The war between the states had paramounted into a large loss of life. The Union forces were in dire need of manpower, so Abe Lincoln sent out a call for volunteers.

It was in August 1862 that Charles Taylor heard the beckoned call, left his bride of a few months, and enlisted in Co. A, 140 infantry and immediately sent to the front. Elizabeth Taylor, better known to Brockport folks as "Lib", kept the home fires burning during her husband's absence.

The couple corresponded for a short time and one day sad news hit the village. Charles Taylor had been fatally wounded during the Battle of the Wilderness.

The story of Charles and "Lib" Taylor does not end here for the body of Charles Taylor was never found. Government agencies were called upon to make an investigation. His movements were traced but to no avail. The battle in which he was supposed to lose his life had no record of his death.

The widow "Lib" Taylor believed Charles to be alive and until her death kept a light burning in the south window of her home. So ends the story of Charles and "Lib" Taylor. Her faith that Charles was alive never waned. The light burned for many years.
The Underground Railroad
by
Ray Tuttle

Back in the early 1860's, shortly after President Lincoln freed the slaves, there was a continual influx of smuggled slaves from the south to the north.

The large plantation owners in the south believed that the law, prohibiting slavery, would be repealed and with thousands of dollars invested in the slave market, it was to his advantage to find safe keeping for his large hordes of black cargo until proper legislation could be enacted.

Large shipments of slaves headed north. They would travel in groups of ten to fifteen, with one white man as overseer. He was commonly known as a slave runner. Severe punishment was netted out to the slave runner if caught, so ample precaution had to be taken to evade the law.

A certain route was mapped out for the trip. It was so planned that a stop-off place could be reached within a few hours. The trip had to be made at night so each slave wagon would begin each night's journey at midnight arriving at its destination about 5 A.M.

The vehicle used was of the covered wagon type drawn by two horses.

The route mapped out for the slave wagon was known throughout the countryside as the "The Underground Railroad".

The slave runner received a certain remuneration for his efforts. If, the trip was successful, a bonus was awaiting him on his return home.

The most chosen route from the south brought the "Underground Railroad" through the town of Sweden. After leaving the Buffalo Road at Churchville, the route carried the slave wagon
down the McIntosh to the Reed Road. From the Reed to the Root Road and on to the Beadle Road, where the hideout or depot for this section was located.

The keeper of the depot was none other than the Rev. John Beadle, who was or had been pastor of a Sweden church. It was in the cellar of his home the slaves were housed and fed. The Rev. would be paid by the slave runner for his hospitality. When the dark set in the slave wagon would again be on its way.

Leaving the Beadle Road, the "Underground Railroad" proceeded westward to the Redman Road on north through Clarkson and Hamlin to the lake, where a boat lay in waiting to transport the slaves to ports in Canada.

After disposing of his black cargo, the slave runner would return to a southern plantation where another load would be in waiting for the trip north.

There were many routes established throughout New York State carrying southern slaves to the shores of Lake Ontario. Slave running during the 1860's was a profitable occupation. After the Civil War many slaves remained in Canada while the majority returned to the states. Their freedom had been proclaimed.
The Draft
by Ray Tuttle

Once again from the Pentagon the words conscription and draft have shattered the atmosphere. These two words are no stranger to the American vocabulary. Let us journey back to World War I when the first draft of American youth was put into effect. World War II followed some 24 years and again the draft was the pass-word of the day. Let us hop the magic carpet and fly back to World War I when the word "draft" was at the beginning and end of every sentence.

June 5, 1917 was an exciting day in Brockport. It was the day all male citizens between the ages of 21 and 30 register for the draft.

Of course many living the Brockport today weren't even born then. But, that momentous day some 63 years ago, it was the first national military draft since the Civil War.

If on that "R Day" of 1917 you were living in Monroe County, you lined up with your fellow conscripts in one of the designated registering locations and answered a lot of questions from officials. The local Normal School was chosen as official draft headquarters of Sweden, Clarkson and Hamlin.

The draft of 1917 was a proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson, putting into effect the Selective Service Act which he signed May 18, 1917. The president marshalled the manpower of the nation against the German Kaiser.

The wheels of the conscription machinery, which before the guns were silent on Nov. 11, 1918, had called up more than 10,000 men from Monroe County. The National Guard units and enlistments brought the total local Monroe County contribution to the armed services to nearly 20,000.

In May Gov. Charles S. Whitman named a County registration board. Election inspectors were picked for each city ward and town. The machinery used in general elections was adopted for "R Day".

Some radical and religious groups opposed the draft, but there was no trouble at polling places.

In Monroe County some 27,000 men enrolled, not
including aliens and enemy aliens. Nearly half claimed exemptions for various reasons.

Eight draft boards were set up in the city and three in the towns to handle the complex Selective Service system. Serial numbers were assigned each registrant and the drawing of numbers at Washington to determine the order of call to service was anxiously awaited.

On July 20, 1917 a historic scene was enacted in the Senate Office Building in Washington. From a bowl filled with capsules, each containing a number, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, blindfolded, drew the first capsule. It contained number 258. Eight men in Monroe County held that number. Official records show that at least four of them saw service.

As the numbers drawn were forwarded to the village, the Dobson Drug Store posted them in the window. Large crowds of young men milled about the store from morning until night waiting for their number to appear.

In Brockport it is not known whether or not local men possessed unlucky 258. However three local boys were the first to be drafted from the village, Howard Brule, Howard Bulmore and Francis Burch. Before the war ended some 165 men were drafted from the towns of Sweden, Clarkson and Hamlin.

Then came the physical examination which showed a startling number of rejections. Physical standards later were lowered in some respects.

The word "Slacker" came into the language. There was a sudden rush of draftees to the Marriage License Bureau, to jobs in shipyards and other "indispensable" work and some "floaters" just disappeared. Some religious groups were assigned to non-military duties.

The once popular song, "I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be A Soldier" was drowned out by the rousing chorus of "Over There".

Large crowds gathered at the New York Central depot on
Park Avenue to meet the troop trains that carried the draftees to Camp Dix. There were few dry eyes as the men boarded the train with shouts of "good luck" and "may God be with you".

In Monroe County some 500 men who left to fight the Kaiser in 1917 did not return. Three Brockport boys Charles Harsch, Edward Seaman and Arthur Crisp were among that group.

The war of 1917 was a war to end all wars, but time marched on and many more men have answered the call of duty and many did not return.

Perhaps someday the peace-loving people of the world will be able to control the multitudes and the problems of the universe can be settled without bloodshed.
THE WAR YEARS

After the war of '98, the village settled down to an era of peace and prosperity. About the only outstanding event was the "Old Home Week" of 1911 when the village was in its heyday. 1912 brought the election of Woodrow Wilson and the village began the Democratic administration with an attitude of "We'll see". But, within two years the folks didn't see for they heard guns rumbling across the water. Germany had marched on Belgium and France. Yes, the war was "over there" - it wasn't our war.

Then came 1916 and Wilson again went into the White House with the slogan "he kept us out of war". We got through 1916, but 1917 was not so lucky. It was April and a declaration of war against Germany echoed from Washington. The youth of the town began their trek to the colors. War songs such as "Keep the Home Fires Burning" and "a Long, Long trail" was the theme of the day. Everyone was singing "Till We Meet Again" as the draft picked the flower of youth to work for Uncle Sam.

The three B's, Howard Brule, Howard Bulmore, and Francis Burch were the first drafted from this section, before many moons 165 boys from Clarkson, Sweden, and Hamlin had been called. Of the many called three boys never returned. They were Charles Harsh, Arthur Crisp, and Edward Seaman.

Charlie was working at the shoe factory at the time. He cast aside his apron and tools, boarded a street car and went to Rochester, where he enlisted on May 1, 1917. He was nineteen at the time. From Rochester he went to Columbus Barracks in Ohio. On June 12, 1917, Charlie began his long journey overseas. On Jan. 18, 1918, he was promoted to class private. On May 29th he was sent to the front at Cantigny, France,
where he was mortally wounded. Charlie was the first Brockport boy to fall in Flander's Field. When the news of Charlie's death reached town it caused great sorrow for the war had struck home. Charlie's body was brought to town and a large funeral was conducted in the Baptist church.

The second boy, Arthur Crisp was born in Williston, England. He went to Camp Dix where he was assigned to Co. 11, 3rd Training Battalion, 153 depot brigade. He was later transferred to Co. C, 310 Infantry. "Art" left for France on May 2, 1918. It was at Thiaucourt on Sept. 20 that he lost his life. He was buried at Thiaucourt.

The last of the trio, Edward Seaman, was born in Clarkson. On his 23rd birthday he left for Camp Dix. He was assigned to Bat. O, 308th Field Artillery on May 9, 1918. On May 27th he left for France. Fifty-seven days before the Armistice was signed on Sept. 15th "Ed" fell at St. Mihiel, France. "Ed's" body was returned to Hamlin where it was laid to rest in Lakeside Cemetery.

There were many who received the Purple Heart; Charles Page, Emerson Reed, Milford Barrus, Earl Wilcox, Waldo Brennan, William VanStone, and George Walters. Several were gassed.

Four Brockport boys died in camp of the flu, Ira and Leicester Cooley, Thomas "Steamer" Palmer, and Myron Whitlock.

Speaking of the flu, it was said at the time, that more people died of this dreadful disease than were killed in the war. Schools and public meeting places were closed for five weeks. In fact, if you were journey downtown, a mask covering the nose and mouth had to be worn.

The war did not bring ceiling prices. Sugar sold for 32 cents per pound with only a half pound be allotted at a time.
The war years - 3

butter 41.50 and eggs 25 cents a piece. Oleomargine was introduced as a substitute for butter. There was no wheat so Covert's bakery made bread from corn flour. One day a week was set aside as meatless and heatless. Everyone was Hooverizing.

One of the feature attractions was the Home Guard show each Thursday evening on Main Street. They would drill from 7 to 9 with Dr. John Hazen as Commander-in-chief. A vulnerable spot was the stop gate on the canal. Soldiers guarded each one.

When a new class of recruits were to leave for camp, schools closed, so a big crowd could be at the station to bid the boys good-by. The village was experiencing a new kind of day.

One of the most outstanding young men to enlist was John Hyland, who left the village in 1917 as a private. He remained in the army after the war and World War II won him chevrons of a Lieut. Colonel.

And there was the big man of the army, 4 foot 11 inch Harry Coleman. Harry enlisted ten days after war was declared. He was the smallest man to serve in the army during World War I. He weighed 90 pounds. A short time after the war Ripley of "Believe It or Not" fame featured Harry in his daily feature. Harry served eleven months in France. He died on Feb. 22, 1952 thirty-three years to the day he returned from France. He was 59.

Then one day, Nov. 7, 1918 a flash came out of the sky that the war had ended and the village, on that eventful Thursday, participated in one of the most colorful celebrations. But, the next day it was learned that the announcement was false and the village went back to work. However, peace was in the making, so the following Monday, Nov. 11 an official announcement was made that the Armistice had been signed, and for the second time a big celebration was in order. A grand time was had by all.
The war years-4

A few weeks after the Armistice boys began to come home, hoping it would be the last time America would be engaged in a foreign squabble. Again the village settled down to peace time living.

From 1919 to 1921 the country relaxed. Colorful shows on Broadway introduced such song hits as "Margie", "Alice Blue Gown", "The Love Nest", and "Tell me Little Gypsy" folks danced their cares away. The Normal school presented four big dances a year; the Christmas, Easter Monday, Color Day and the June Ball. Big bands dominated the spotlight.

Then came another tragic year, 1925. Newspaper headlines announced that the submarine S-51 had collided with a steamer, "The City of Rome", and was lying at the bottom of the ocean off the New England coast. A Brockport boy Rodney H. Dobson, brother of Harold Dobson, commanded the ill-fated ship. The sub was not raised until the spring of 1926, but Commander Dobson's body was not recovered. It was said that he was in the conning tower when the collision occurred. Memorial services were conducted at St. Luke's Church. The Veterans of Foreign Wars honored Commander Dobson by naming their post after him.

From 1925 to 1928 the depression crept up on us gradually and then came the stock crash of 1929. Banks closed and the village hit the skids. Jobs were scarce and there was considerable unrest all over the world. A guy by the name of Hitler was doing considerable popping-off in Germany. In 1938 Hitler marched on Austria. We didn't get concerned until Sept. 1, 1939 when Poland was invaded. Europe again was at war.

Everyone believed that this time it wasn't our war but then came Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 and again the U.S. was at war. Some 300 boys fell to the draft while others enlisted. Civilian protective organizations were placed in charge of civilian defense.
The war years-5

Black outs were in effect and the customary rationing was placed in practice.

The war had only been raging a short time, when word came that a Brockport boy, James Dunn, had been fatally injured in a plane crash in England. From then on the casualty list soared and thirty-three boys from Clarkson, Hamlin, and Sweden had died in service. A long list of the fallen saddened the hearts of the friends and families. The list included: George Bennett, Army; Edward Doty, coast guard; Richard Redman, Army; Leas Wallace, Navy; Elmer Knab, Army; Donald Duff, Marines; Floyd VanOrden, Army; Herbert Stanford, Army; Charles Gartley, Army; Samuel Breslawski, Army; William Gamble, Army; William Mallo, Army; Eugene Moran, Army; Orrin Pencylean, Marines; Donald Simmons, Marines; Charles East, Army; Robert Cary, Army; Delbert Fleming, Army; Herbert Gillespie, Army; Richard Good, Army; Allen Guyette, Army; John Hazen, Army; William O'Brien, Army; Joseph Reed, Army; James Reddick, Army; Paul Matthews, Army; Richard Merritt, Army; Henry Rose, Army; Howard Shattuck, Army; Laurence O'Coin, Army; Kenneth Nelson, Army; Robert Jenkins, Army; Arthur Jenkins, Army.

The wounded were too numerous to mention. Practically every week some boy from this section became eligible for the Purple Heart. Newspapers devoted a full page each day naming the casualties. Churches held memorial services and every day of the war held a melancholy atmosphere.

The Purple Heart was pinned on many a youth. Sgt. Henry Carges was wounded twice. Others wounded included Francis McCauley, George Wadhams, Longin Foltman, Vito Flow, Walter Banker, Howard Fritz, William Riley, George Perry, Norman Staffen, Charles Eldred, Burton Elwell and Gerald Stickney.

Several were reported missing but later found to be safe. They were Eugene Van Houton, John Holzermer, Kenneth Kemp, Joseph Allen and Edward Ferris.
Several former Brockport boys lost their lives in the war:
Lt. Donald McCracken of Buffalo, Edward Schutt of Syracuse, Colvin Cook of Rochester, and Donald Lawler of Michigan wired friends here that his son had been killed in action.

Then on May 6, 1945, Mr. Hitler threw in the sponge and all efforts were pointed toward Japan, and the atomic bomb brought a quick close to the European conflict. It was on August 14, 1945, at 7:15 when the final word came. The village again celebrated, but it was not like that of 1918. Folks felt more like praying than cheering.

Within a few weeks after the war ended boys began to return home and it was again believed that war would be no more, but in 1950 troops were again sent to Korea and another casualty list appeared. The first Brockport boy to lose his life in this conflict was Herbert Baker who was killed in action on June 21, 1951.

During the late 1950's and '60's we have not had a real shooting war, but boys are still being killed and wounded in the Cold War skirmishes around the world.

For the past fifty years the village has experienced both war and depression. From 1919 to 1928 were the gay, joyous years. They were about as close to Heaven as some us will ever get.