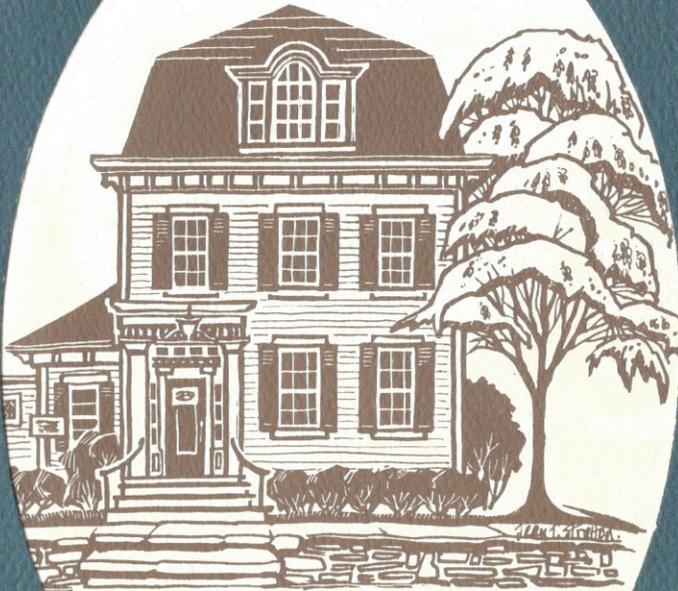


Lewiston



Lewiston Public Library

A Self-Guided Tour

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Robert Baker

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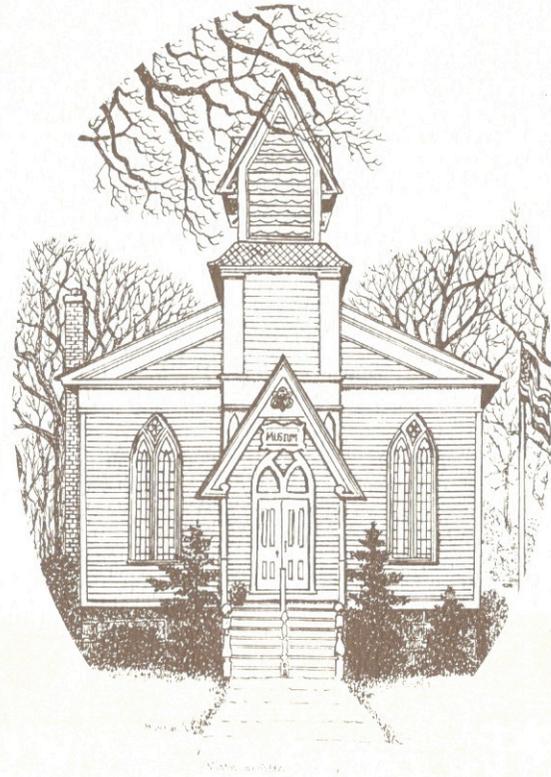
Robert W. Hill

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Nona McQuay

Harry Phillips

Betty Phippen - Lewiston Historical Museum



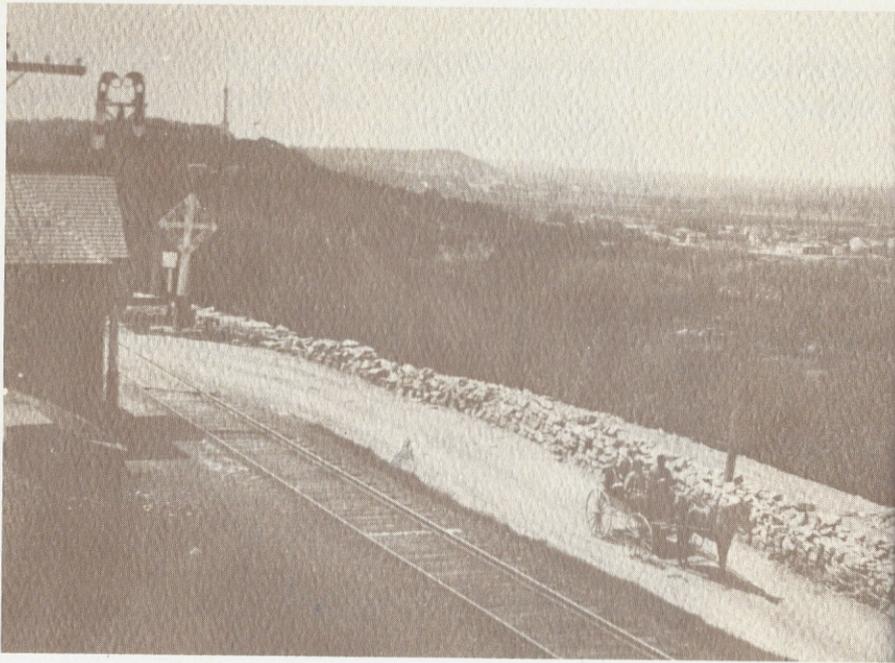
"There is no town in the country richer in picturesque scenery and historical interest than Lewiston."

The above quote from Sanford's History of Niagara County, 1878 echos the sentiments of the authors of this book. It was with much love and affection for Lewiston that we compiled it. Read it, enjoy it, and if you try a little you can visualize the pioneers, the Indians, the men in tall hats, women in long dresses and perhaps you may even here the clop, clop, clop of horses hooves.

Janet Domzella

Barbara Hill

Kenneth Tracey



LEWISTON A SELF-GUIDED TOUR

BARBARA I. HILL
JANET M. DOMZELLA
KENNETH TRACEY

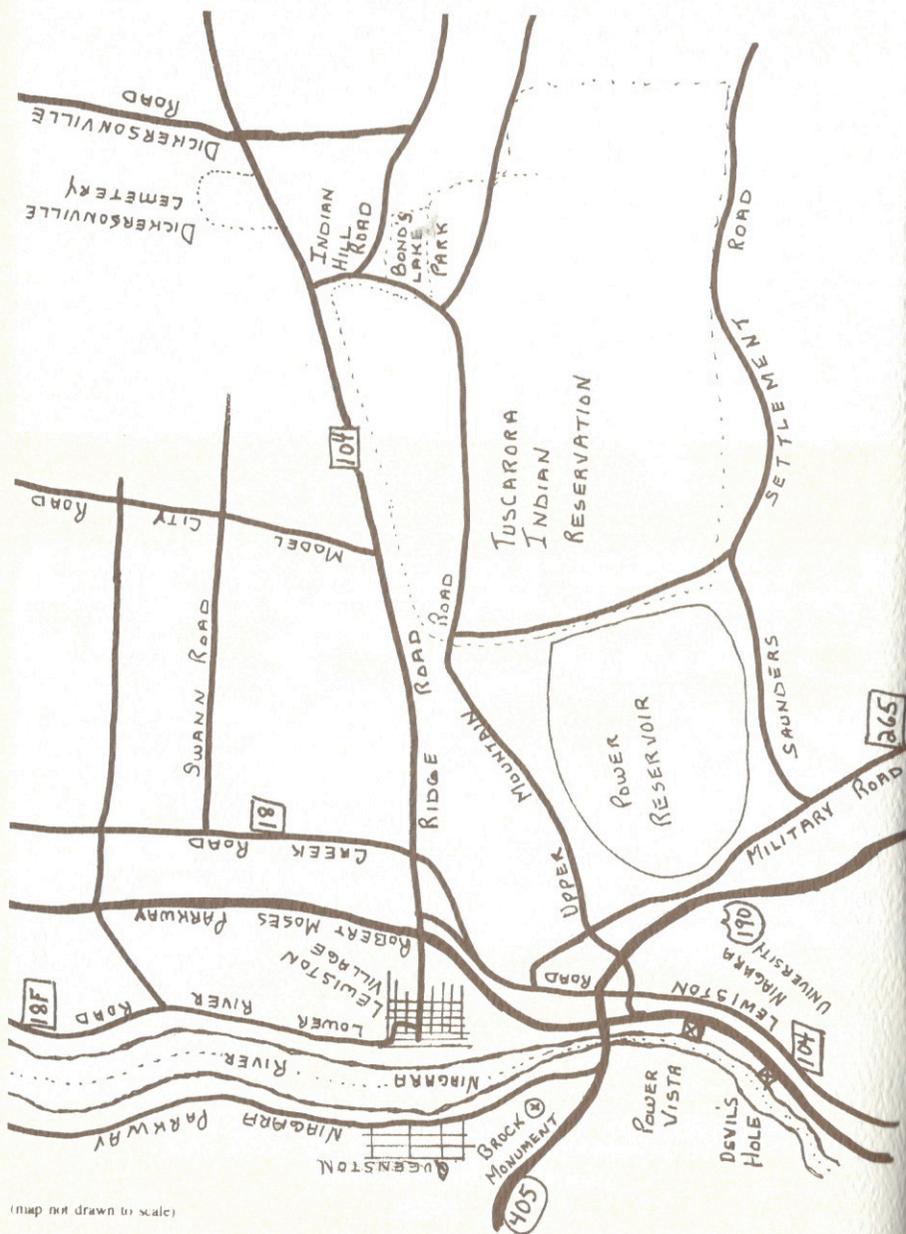
*Best wishes
from
Barbara Hill*



LOG HUTS OR BARRACKS AT QUEENSTOWN, 1793.
(From a Drawing by Mrs. Sincoe.)

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Lewiston, NY
c. 1986

Town of Lewiston



(map not drawn to scale)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THOSE WERE THE DAYS (A brief History)	1
SAILING SHIPS AND SEALING WAX (The Waterfront)	5
WATER STREET	12
CENTER STREET	13
SOUTH FIFTH STREET	30
PLAIN STREET	31
NIAGARA STREET	36
CAYUGA STREET	37
SOUTH FOURTH STREET	40
ONONDAGA STREET	41
LOWER RIVER ROAD (Route 18 F)	42
RIDGE ROAD (Route 104)	46

Village of Lewiston



(map not drawn to scale)

Those were the days...

The site of the village of Lewiston has been important since people below the falls of the Niagara River began to exchange merchandise with people above the falls. Situated at the head of the navigable portion of the lower Niagara River it was designed by Nature to be a place of commercial importance. A narrow steep-banked inlet provided the only protected landing place on the shore at the foot of the mountain.



Center Street At First Street long ago.

By the time the first French explorer, Etienne Brule, arrived in 1615, the Five Nation Indian Alliance had been established for some time. Each of the tribes Mohawk, Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida and Cayuga had its designated duties. The Seneca were the protectors of the land and waterway rights of the Niagara River, Lake Erie and Ontario from the white man.

Father Louis Hennepin and a group of ship builders landed here in Dec. 1678. They built a small chapel and a fortified cabin in which to store their supplies. In 1721, Chabert Joncaire was given permission to build the first trading post on the same site at the Old Landing. Artpark now occupies this site. Remains of the inlet can still be seen on the shoreline.

The French held the land and maintained the trading post and employed the Indians as transporters over the portage to a place upstream from the falls where the river was again safely navigable. As trade increased, fur pelts came from the west in great quantities and from the east came the supplies for the military posts and trading stations. In 1754 French soldiers cut the first narrow road from the landing to the top of the escarpment to accommodate the increase in the amount of goods being transported over the portage. A series of capstans and booms was installed to help the oxen pull the wagons up the steep zigzag road and to slow their descent. In 1757 the Seneca complained to the French Governor that their rights of control of the portage and their privileges were being violated.

In 1763 at the conclusion of the French and Indian Wars, the British controlled North America and the portage. They improved the road and built several stockades along the route where troops were stationed for the protection of the wagon trains. In 1764 Capt. Montessor of the Royal Engineers began to construct a 400 ft. tramway which was the first of its kind in this country. The cars were counterbalanced for easier operation up the steep incline. The Seneca lost their control of the portage and their main means of livelihood. This portage was to remain British territory and Britain's major trade route in North America until 1796.

In 1765 the Seneca ambushed a wagon train that was transporting goods along the portage. After killing and scalping the troops accompanying the wagon train, the Indians drove the oxen and carts over the cliff to destruction on the rocks far below. A contingent of soldiers sent to their aid was also ambushed and murdered. Only two men from the wagon train and a few from the relief column lived to tell of the terrible massacre at the place on the river road known as "Devil's Hole" since that time.

The British did not retaliate against the Seneca. However a subsequent council meeting between the British and the Six Nation League after the incident, resulted in the Seneca being required to deed a strip of land a mile wide along each side of the river to Britain. This land became known as the Mile Reserve.

In 1775, Joseph Brant, the war chief of the Mohawk tribe and a Loyalist, settled with his tribe along Ridge Rd. He built his home and a chapel at the intersection of Ridge and Creek Roads. A church bell, received by the Mohawk from Queen Anne in 1712, hung in a tree nearby. The Queen had also presented the tribe with a sterling silver Communion Service which had been buried for safekeeping during the Revolutionary War. In 1784 Rev. John Stuart, a Church of England priest, visited Brant and returned to him the Communion Service.

During and after the Revolutionary War, many United Empire Loyalists from the Eastern states came to Lewiston to cross the river over to Queenston. At the instruction of Gov. Simcoe of Upper Canada, a ferry service was started between the two towns in 1791. So great was the traffic waiting to cross the river that wagons were reported to be lined up for three miles out Ridge Rd.

In 1796 there were still only a few Indian and Loyalist squatters as permanent residents in Lewiston. The Seneca still claimed ownership title to the Mile Reserve land along the river. Without clear title, the land could not be sold and except for the few squatters, people wanting to settle moved on.

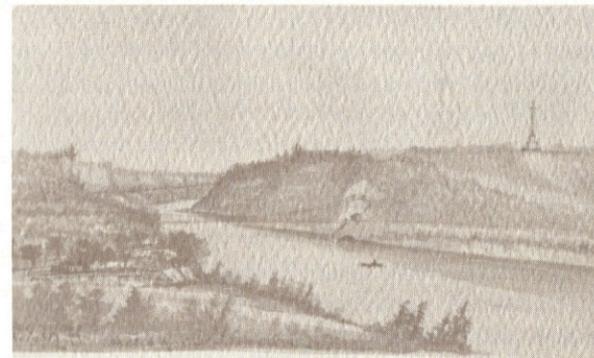
The Jay Treaty of 1796 between Britain and the U.S. set the border between the two countries midway across the Niagara River. The land titles were cleared to the dismay of the Seneca. None of their land claims were considered valid. The Indian and Loyalist squatters were given land grants in Canada. Chief Joseph Brant moved his people to the Six Nations Indian reserve in Brantford, Ontario. The 1712 Queen Anne Communion Service is still in safekeeping at the Anglican Church on the reserve.

In a transaction known as the "Holland Land Purchase," Robert Morris bought from the State of New York three million acres of land extending east from the Niagara River. By 1798 N.Y. State surveyors began the work of surveying and dividing the Mile Reserve. The site for a mile square village was chosen and named Lewis Town in honor of the Governor, Morgan Lewis. The survey of the streets and building lots was completed by 1805. The original plan extended east from the shore for ten blocks, numbered from one through nine. The cross streets were named for the Six Nations Indians, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk to the north of Center St. and Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora to the south. A large town Common was reserved between Fourth and Seventh Sts. and Cayuga and Onondaga Sts. This area contained most of the high land in the village.

In 1810 the State Legislature granted the petition of the Village requesting the division of this land for building lots. Plain and Ridge Streets were added to the street plan. However it was 1815 before these lots were available for sale.

During the War of 1812-14, Lewiston was the staging area for the Battle of Queenston Heights across the river. Cannon installed on the lawns of Barton Hill were aimed at the village of Queenston. Troops were quartered on Major Barton's property as well. General Brock, the British commander, was killed on the Heights during the battle on October 13, 1812. A greatly respected leader by both armies, his tall monument stands overlooking the two towns.

Brock Monument and view of Queenston



*QUEENSTON Heights & Brock's Monument and
LEWISTON & Queenston Suspension Bridge and
HEINSPAIN ROCK under Bridge.*

In early December of 1813, General McClure, the American General, ordered that the occupied town of Newark, then the capital of Upper Canada (now Niagara-on-the-Lake) and Fort George be burned. The residents, mostly women and children, who were ordered to leave the town before it was burned, were left homeless during a bitter cold winter. The able bodied men had joined the British troops who had retreated to Burlington when the town was captured. Retaliation was swift and savage.

On the night of December 19, 1813, a large troop of British soldiers and their Indian allies landed at Fort Niagara, and another landed at Lewiston. Warned by a scout of the attack, the Tuscarora Indians rushed from their settlement on the escarpment to aide the small militia left in the village. Greatly outnumbered, the Tuscarora and the villagers fought to protect the women and children trying to flee along Ridge Rd. Many of the homeless were taken to the Tuscarora village and given shelter. At the conclusion of the retaliatory action, Fort Niagara had been captured by the British, and every building had been burned in Youngstown, along River Rd, Lewiston and out Ridge Rd. past Dickersonville. Only the stone exterior walls of one building in Lewiston remained standing.

Excerpt of Isaac Cooke's Account

"When they took the guard by surprise killing him, (Miles Gillet)" (in his early teens)" and making prisoners of the others this caused a general stampede. Dr. Alvard in attempting to escape was shot by the Indians and butchered. They took the Gillet family prisoners and"... "killed a little boy (aged six or seven) and scalped him." (Jarvis Gillet)

The British remained in control of the Fort until the end of the war. Small war parties from Fort Niagara attacked and harassed the few remaining inhabitants on several occasions. The Fort was returned to the Americans in 1814 and peace returned to the area. Gradually the villagers began to return to start the slow process of rebuilding their homes and businesses.

The homes and buildings featured in this brochure date from the rebuilding of Lewiston, begun in 1815, to the mid 1800's.

Please remember that the homes listed in the brochure are private property and not open to the public. They are loved and lived in by families today as they were 150 years ago.

We hope you will enjoy your visit to our community. As you pass along the old streets, pause a moment and reflect on the stories that could be told if the stones could speak.....

"Sailing ships and sealing wax, cabbages and kings"



Water front view C. 1890. The house at the far right was moved from the waterfront to 145 South Fourth Street after the 1909 ice jam.

Lewiston Landing was a natural place for early traders and merchants to set up business from the time of the development of the first primitive portage in the early 1700's. As trade increased at Lewiston, more docking facilities and storehouses were built along the shore. The unprotected shoreline however was vulnerable to the huge ice flows on the river during the spring break-up. The risk of destruction was considered to be part of the price of carrying on the rewarding transport business.

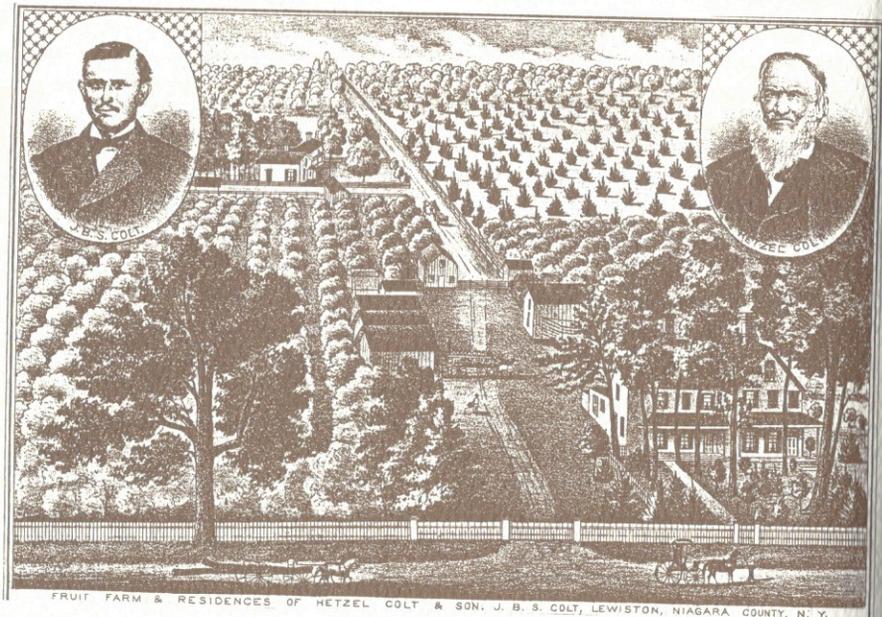
The real development of the waterfront and associated businesses was due primarily to the efforts of Benjamin Barton and Peter Porter. In 1806 their firm Porter, Barton and Co., (founded 1805), obtained from the State of New York the lease on the landings at Lewiston and Fort Schlosser. The lease stipulated that they should "erect docks and storehouses at Schlosser and Lewiston and surrender them to the state at the termination of the lease without compensation". The profits from the monopoly of the carrying business would be many times the cost of the loss of the facilities involved. The firm had also obtained the military contracts for the transportation of all supplies, munitions and clothing to the posts on the Great Lakes. In co-operation with another transport firm Porter, Barton and Co. controlled virtually all of the shipping on the Great Lakes.

In 1806 an ice jam destroyed the docks and warehouses as well as a tannery and a sawmill on the waterfront. These structures were expanded during the speedy rebuilding. The waterfront was destroyed again in Dec. 1813 when Lewiston was burned during the War of 1812-1814. Rebuilt in 1815, it was again destroyed by



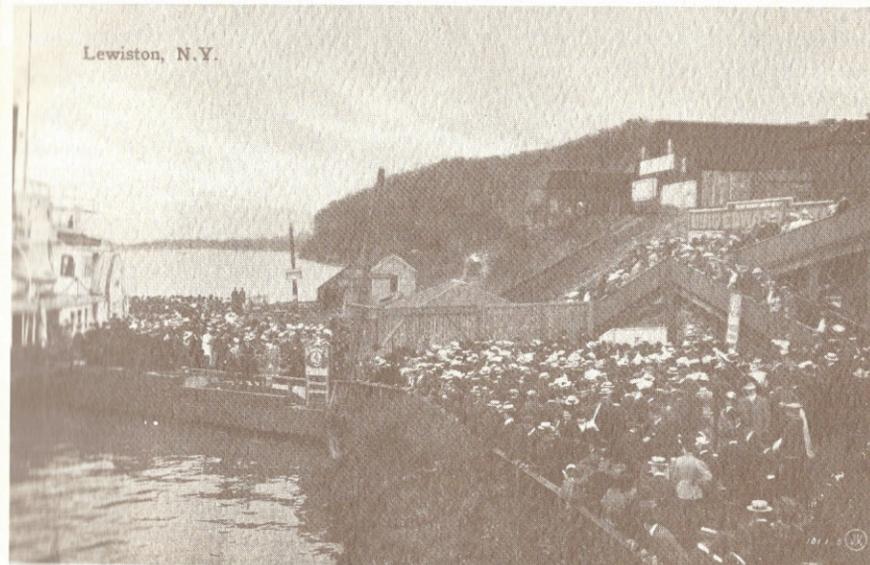
Waterfront late 1800's

an ice jam in 1819. Again the waterfront was rebuilt to accommodate the many steamers, packet boats and lake schooners that landed at Lewiston carrying passengers and freight goods of all kinds. In 1821 when Porter and Barton's lease expired, the docks and warehouses reverted to the State. With the opening of the Erie and Welland canals in 1825, freight could be transported more quickly and cheaply between the lakes. The very profitable transfer trade began to decline. The mills, tanneries and factories on the waterfront continued to flourish for some time. Ice jams in 1844 and 1894 eventually destroyed unused structures downriver from the Landing.



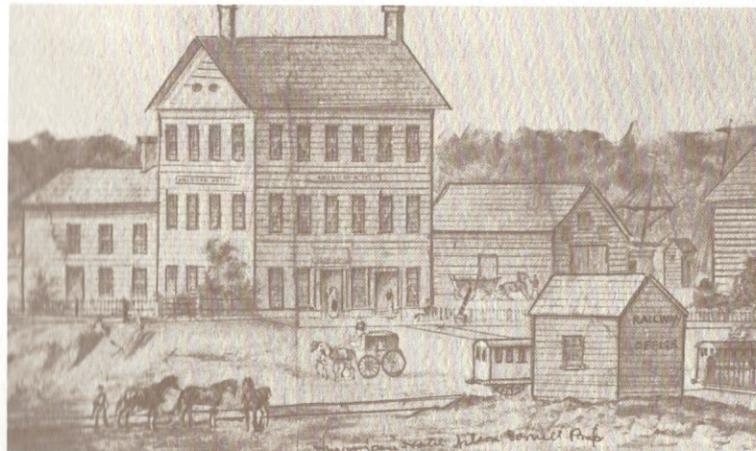
Hetzel Colt farm, Lewiston C. 1875

As the transfer trade declined, businesses related to agriculture and tourism became the base of Lewiston's economy. The farms vineyards and orchards of the Niagara region were as well known then for the high quality of their produce as they are today. From the collection and storage warehouses in Lewiston, produce was shipped by water and rail to many markets in N. Y. State, throughout the U. S. and Canada.



Steamer Corona dock 1913

Lewiston continued to be a main transfer point on the Great Lakes for tourists and travelers. To accommodate these people, hotels were built on the waterfront as well as inland. Records survive concerning the Nelson Cornell family, and Philip Fitz. Mr. Cornell's first venture, the Steamship Hotel, stood on the shore at the N. W. corner of Water and Center Sts.



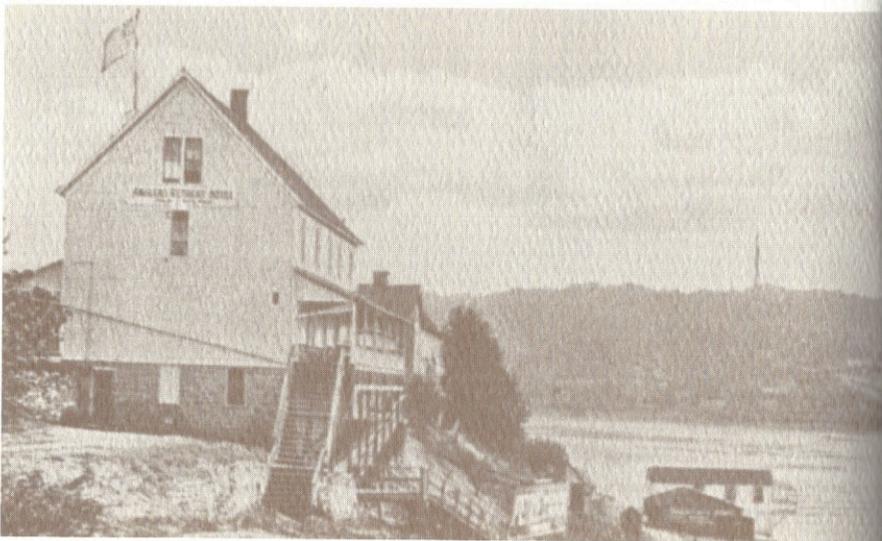
American Hotel and R.R. station C. 1840 owned by Nelson Cornell

When this hotel burned in 1849, he built the American Hotel on the same site. The American survived until 1895 when it too was destroyed by fire. The Steamer Cibola was docked at the wharf below the hotel when fire broke out on board. Despite efforts of the crew and bystanders, the fire was soon raging out of control. It is said that Cornell himself frantically chopped at the mooring lines to free the blazing ship from the wharf. Unfortunately all efforts were in vain. The wharf, ramps, and his hotel were all destroyed. The undaunted Mr. Cornell rebuilt again on the same site, his third and last hotel the Cornell House. This very popular establishment was a waterfront landmark until it burned in the late 1920's or early 1930's.



Cornell House in the early 1900's

In the meantime, Philip Pitz built the Angler's Retreat in 1871. This hotel, now the Riverside Inn, was very popular with the many fishermen who came to Lewiston.



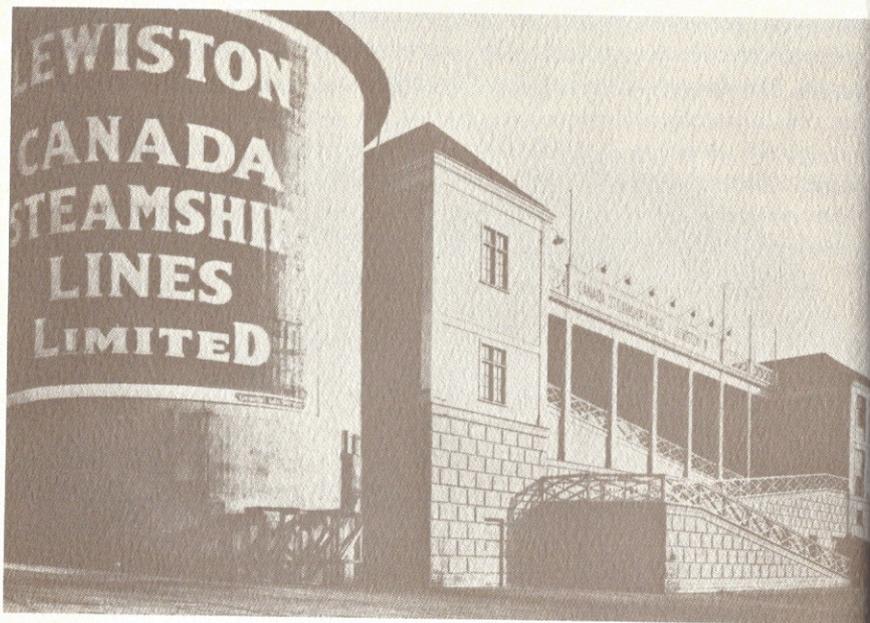
These two hotels are featured in postcards dated April 20, 1909, showing the great ice jam that reached a height of 64' above water level. Although a great tourist attraction, the damage it caused was tremendous.



Angler's Retreat Hotel 1909, showing ice jam 64' high.

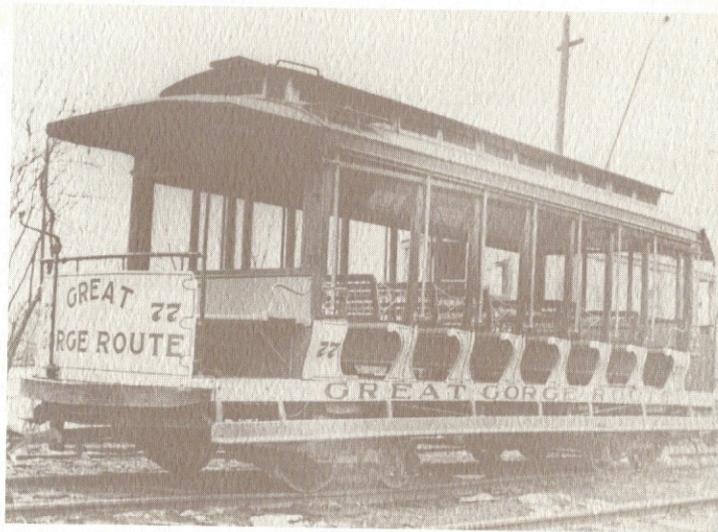


Cornell House 1909, Showing ice jam 64' high.



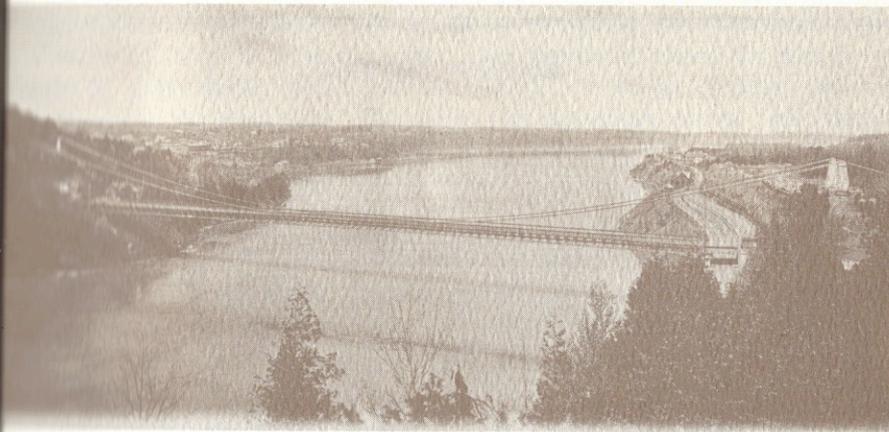
Canada Steam Ship Lines dock 1927

The Canada Steamship Lines in the late 1800's erected a large wharf on the shore below the hotels. The passenger facilities were enlarged to become an imposing terminal to accommodate the many thousands of people who annually arrived from Canada and the Eastern U.S. Postcards of the 1929 ice jam show the dock area piled high with ice and debris. The ice jam of 1938 completely destroyed all the large steamer docking facilities, which were never rebuilt. At the launch ramp only the coal tower remains from the terminal.



Canada Steam Ship Lines dock 1927

The Lewiston-Rochester stage coach line was inaugurated in 1816 with as many as eight stages arriving in Lewiston daily. The first run of the Lewiston Railroad Company was in 1837. Horse drawn cars were used on a route that connected with the Lockport Niagara Falls R.R. at the junction about two and a half miles from the landing. It is reported that from April 1 to Dec. 1, 1850, 46,493 passengers travelled the route. From the steamboat landing at the American Hotel the line ran south along the river to Tuscarora St. where it turned up Fourth St. to Center St., then east to Portage Rd. where it ran north of Ridge Rd. to the terminal. Later the line was converted to steam engines and the line ran out Fifth St. to Youngstown. Another early railroad, the Strap R.R., used the gorge route, stopping at the hotels. In 1874 the Lake Ontario Shore division of the Rome Watertown Ogdensburg R.R. provided service to Lewiston. In the latter 1800's the Lewiston and Niagara Falls branch of the New York Central and Hudson River R.R. ran along the gorge route to the waterfront. Both these railroads had their terminals on Water St. The Niagara Falls and Lewiston R.R., known as the Great Gorge Route, thrilled many thousands of tourists as they travelled in open-sided cars beside the river. This railroad also followed the Center St. and Fifth St. route from the waterfront. During the summer months trains ran every fifteen minutes and every hour during the winter.



Lewiston-Queenston Bridge C. 1900

The traffic between Queenston and Lewiston had increased to the point where the ferry service, started in 1791, could no longer handle the volume of traffic. Construction of a suspension bridge at the foot of Fourth St. on the shore was started in 1849 and the bridge was opened in 1851. In the winter of 1861 some of the guy wires were released from the side of the gorge to prevent damage to the bridge by the ice flow, and were never re-attached. During a January gale in 1864 the bridge swayed back and forth in the wind so violently that the wood decking broke up and fell into the river below. The rusting skeleton of the bridge hung useless, swaying and creaking in the wind for thirty-three years. Then in 1896 construction was begun on a new suspension bridge which was declared open with great fanfare in 1897. About 1963 the present bridge was opened and the suspension bridge was removed. The support towers for the cables are still visible on the gorge wall at Artpark and across the river on the cliff at Queenston.

For one hundred years the "Landing" at Lewiston was the most important shipping port in North America. Use your imagination to recreate the sight of the tall ships, the crowded landings, and the smells of fresh caught fish, tar, and barrels of molasses.

Destructive Ice Jams

1806, 1819, 1844, 1894, 1909, 1925, 1938, port closed.

Water Street

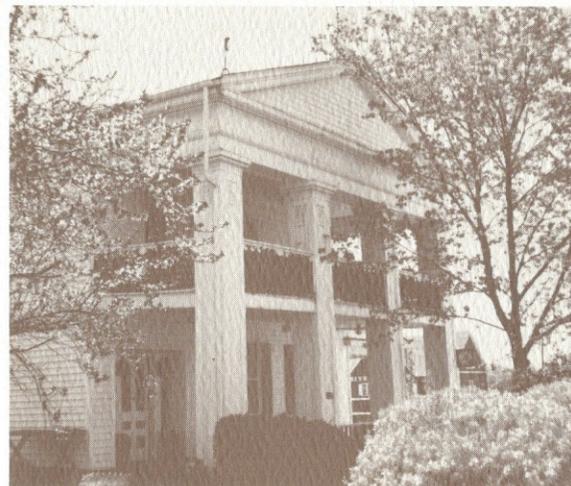


Pitts' Anglers' Retreat, Lewiston. N. Y.

115 S. Water Street 1871 Philip Pitz

Originally called the Angler's Retreat Hotel, this building survived three massive ice jams that reached the height of the first floor.

Center Street



65 S. Center Street C. 1840 Nelson Cornell

Cornell, followed by his son Hiram, was an enterprising merchant, hotel keeper and owner of one of the stage coach lines. Over the years his home has been known as the St. Elmo Hotel, Wilson Inn, Ma Jump's, the Bucket of Blood and now rejuvenated as the Rathskeller. The tavern was supposedly named "Ma Jumps" because "Ma" had to jump to grab the coins tossed on the bar before Pa could pocket them for his own use.



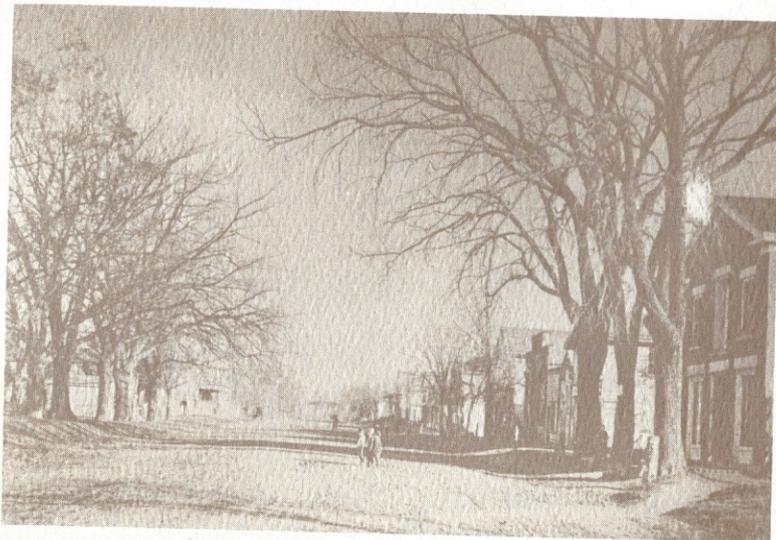
Center at Third Sts. "Fairbanks" C. 1815 Joshua Fairbanks

Harriet Van Cleve who inherited the house from her grandfather Joshua, lived here with her husband James Van Cleve. After a long career as Captain of several lake ships, Capt. Van Cleve retired here in 1861 to write his three volume history of the Great Lakes ships, and a history of Lewiston.

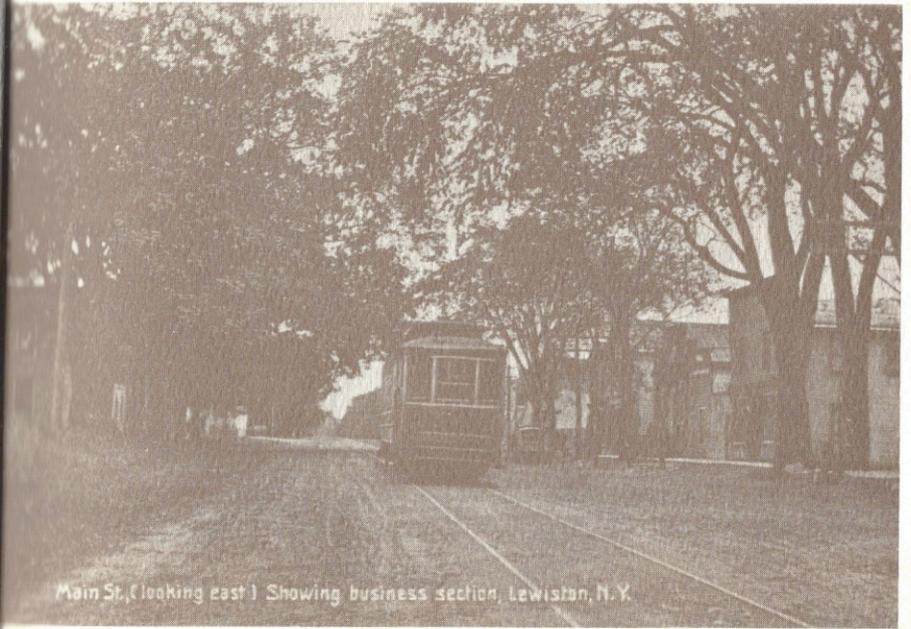


210 Center Street "Barton Hill" 1815 Benjamin Barton

Major Barton built his first home here in 1807 when his firm, Porter, Barton and Co. acquired the exclusive lease on the portage and landings at Lewiston and For Schlosser, at Buffalo. During the War of 1812-1814, troops were camped on the grounds and cannon were installed on the west lawn facing Queenston. The estate was burned during the raid on Lewiston on Dec. 19, 1813. In 1814 he was quartermaster of General Porter's brigade of volunteers. Later he received a commission from President Madison as Deputy Quarter-Master-General, U.S.A. He built the present home in 1815 when he returned after the war.



In this late 1800's photo, the Lewiston Academy is in the center background. The pillars of the Frontier House can be seen at the left.



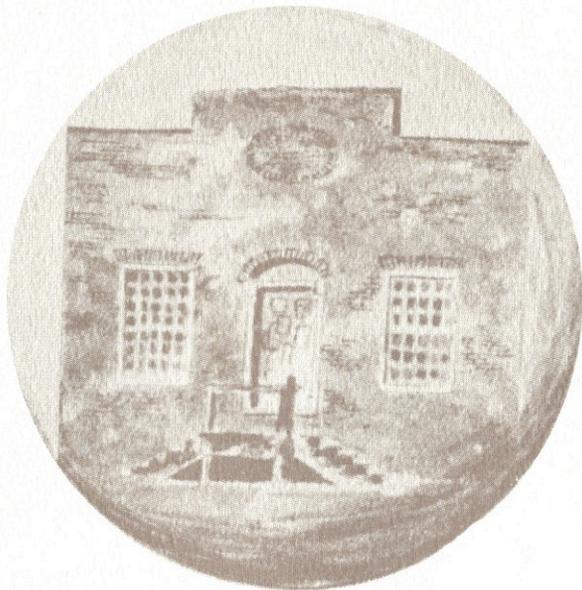
Main St. (looking east) Showing business section, Lewiston, N.Y.

In the same view in 1913 the Great Gorge Route track and car is in the foreground.



413 Center Street 1854 Moses and Abraham Bairsto

The Bairsto brothers were very respected prominent businessmen, active in village matters.



425 Center Street C. 1838 Amos Tryon

Built as a store in the late 1800's, it was used as the Court House and Town Hall. Note the steps in the early picture.



433 Center Street C. 1869 John Flemming

Flemming built a tannery on Seneca St. about 1850 and lived next door at number 435. This general store was his "retirement" business.



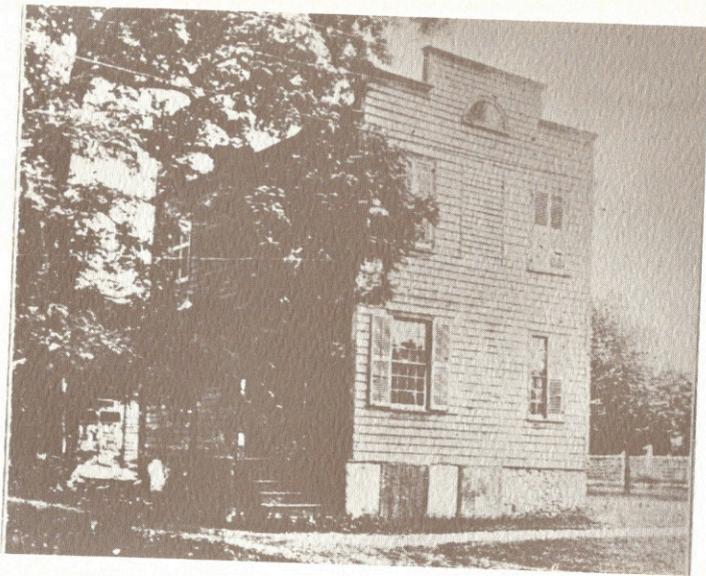
441 Center Street C. 1858 O.P. Scovell

This grocery store later housed the Post Office and a law office on the second floor. Note the large door over the front door where bulk merchandise, raised by block and tackle could be brought in. The building to the right erected some years earlier, was the tailor shop of Josiah Tryon. He and his wife Mary were said to be leaders in the Underground Railroad in Lewiston. In those days aiding a runaway slave was a very serious criminal offense punishable by imprisonment, a large fine, and confiscation of all personal and commercial property. The names of those who were active this cause were never recorded for that reason. However it is recorded that the choir from Hampton Institute travelled to Lewiston to sing at Josiah Tryon's funeral in 1886. This tribute is considered to be proof of the good works for which he was known.



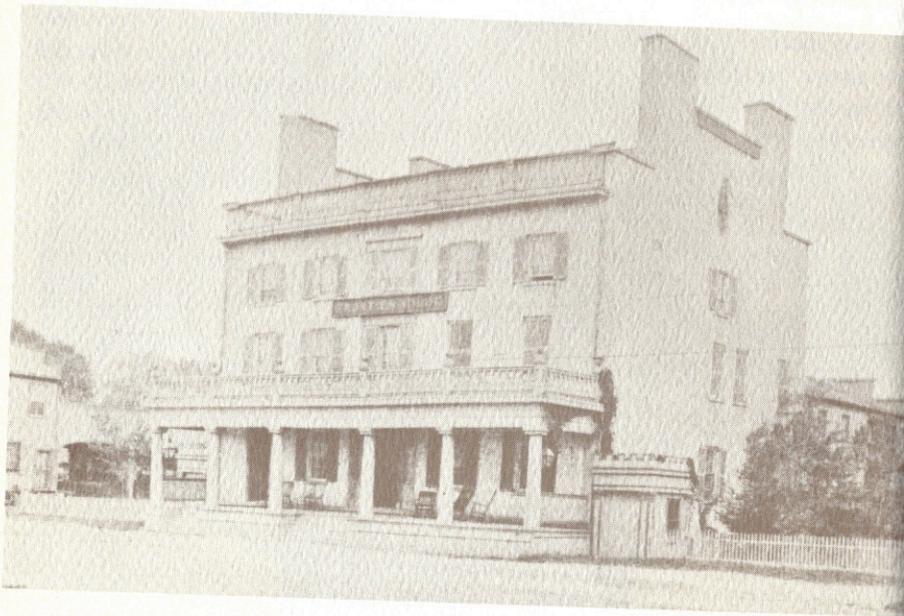
457 Center Street prior to 1850

The first telephone office was housed in this building.



Site of Customs House 1824

The Customs House stood on the left of the Frontier House. From 1811 to 1863 Lewiston was the Port of Entry for the Niagara Customs District. Later this was the Post Office.



This photograph is attributed to Mathew Brady, the famous Civil War photographer.

460 Center Street Frontier House Hotel 1824-25

Built by Joshua Fairbanks, Benjamin Barton and Samuel his son.

Mr. Fairbanks' daughter married Samuel Barton to join the two families by marriage as well as business. Eight stage coaches a day stopped here when Lewiston was the center of the "Great Overland Route" across the continent. Constructed of stone from the Bay of Quinte, at the north-east end of Lake Ontario, it took 18 men 18 months to build the 30" thick solid stone walls. The guest list of this hotel, reputed to be the finest in Western New York, includes the names: Governor DeWitt Clinton; Edward, Prince of Wales; James Fenimore Cooper; Charles Dickens; Jenny Lind; President McKinley; Henry Clay and John L. Sullivan. This hotel was the scene of many splendid parties and balls.



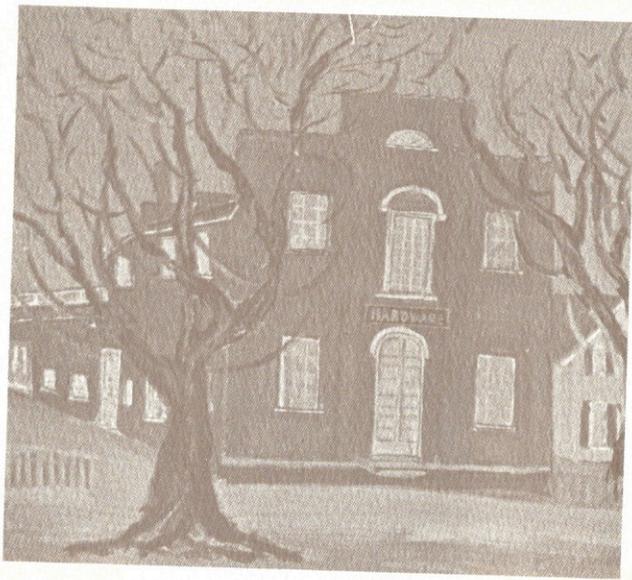
467 Center Street C. 1838 Benjamin Cornell

Cornell used this building for a store. Much later it was a bowling alley. During 1901 - 1908 it housed the Library.

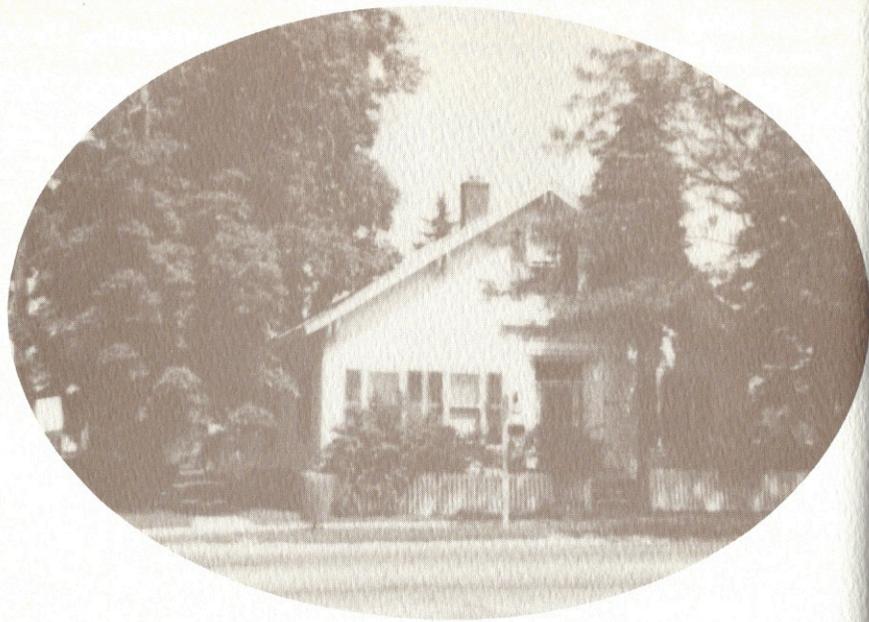


476 Center Street 1816

The records of this building, one of the oldest unaltered buildings in Lewiston, have been lost.



479 Center Street 1838 Calvin Hotchkiss
Klaussen painting. One of the several buildings in Lewiston owned and operated by Calvin Hotchkiss.



500 Center Street 1845 Dr. Edward Smith
Dr. Edward Smith was born in 1821 at 703 Center St., the son of Dr. Willard Smith, the second doctor in Lewiston. He had his home and office in this building during his lifelong practise in Lewiston. Near the fence notice the carriage steps that once were placed beside the street.



505, 515, 535 Center Street 1815 to 1820 William Hotchkiss



505 Center Street, the "Long House", was built by Judge Hotchkiss in 1815 when he returned after the War of 1812-14.

The original hand hewn beams and hand-crafted square nails can be seen in the entrance hall. The chestnut floors were made from trees growing on the property.

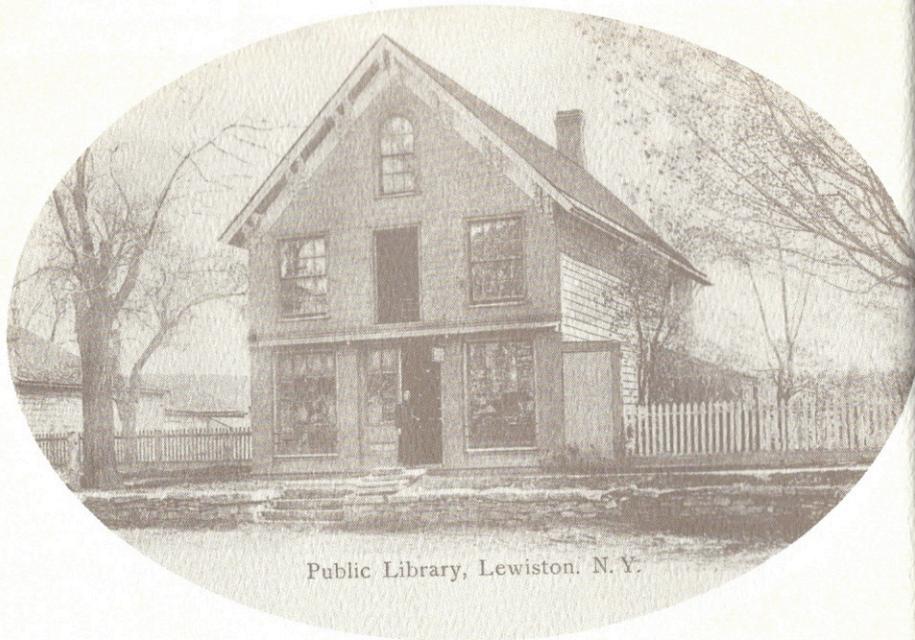
The Center Street entrance has hand made woodwork around the doorway. Delicate tracings of flowers and leaves are found in the glass sidelights on either side of the door. The entrance hall and stairway, with beautiful scrollwork carving on the bannister, is lit by the original chandelier.

The Lewiston Public Library was created in 1901 by the Lewiston Men's Club, when they sponsored a party and charged an admission "price" of two books. These books became the library's first collection. President-elect Theodore Roosevelt sent an autographed copy of his work on Oliver Cromwell, a 16th century English ruler, which is still in the library's collection.

The library has been located in various buildings on Center Street. In 1962 the Board of Trustees purchased the present building and renovated it to meet the needs of the library. The grounds are planted and maintained by the Lewiston Garden Club.

515 Center Street C. 1818

Built as Hotchkiss' law office this cottage is called the "Short House".



535 Center Street C. 1820

Judge Hotchkiss built this store which his brother Calvin Hotchkiss managed. This building was the second home of the Library from 1908 to the 1960's.



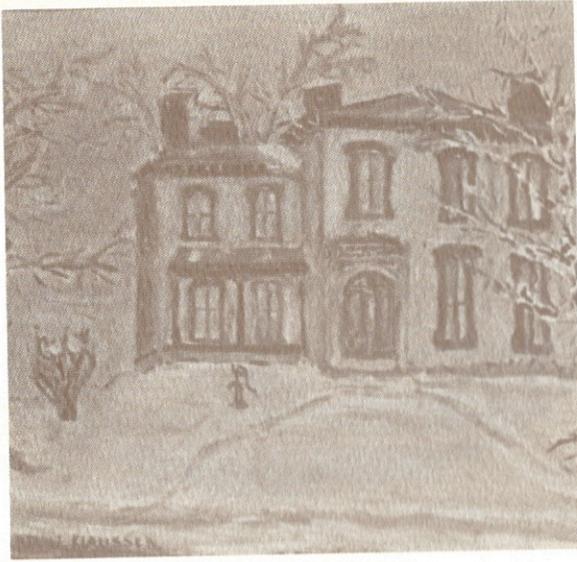
605 Center Street C. 1870

For many years this was the manse for the First Presbyterian Church. Mature elm trees surrounded the home before the blight in the 1950's.



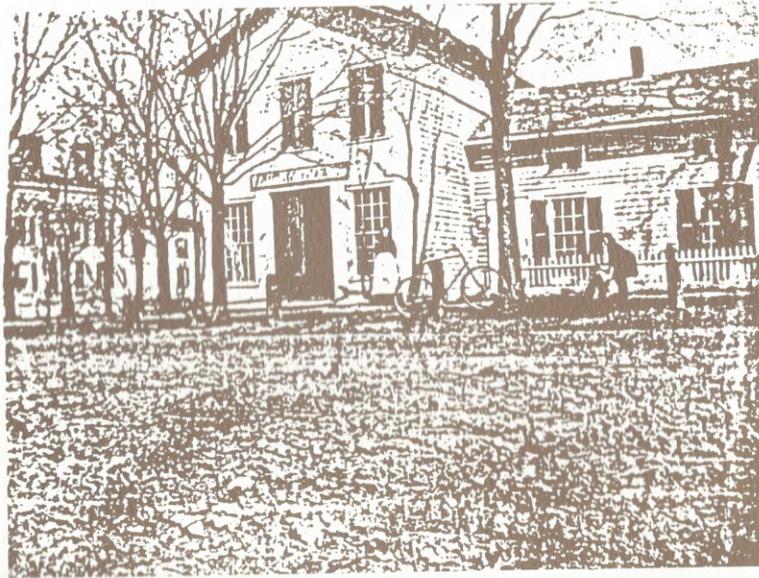
620 Center Street 1834 Sherbourne Piper Esq.

Mr. Piper and his wife Martha Godwin came from Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H. in 1833 and built "Lewiston Manor". He was a teacher at the Lewiston Academy, and the only practising lawyer in Lewiston at that time. Later in his career he became a State senator. The house is now the Rectory of St. Peter's Church, and is called "Hennepin Hall".



625 Center Street 1820 Thomas Kelsey

The Kelsey Tavern was chosen in 1825 as the most desirable place for General Lafayette, hero of the Revolutionary War to stay on his tour of this area. While here he met his former aide Nicholas Cusick, who had been his Indian guide. Many balls were given at the Tavern by prominent townspeople.



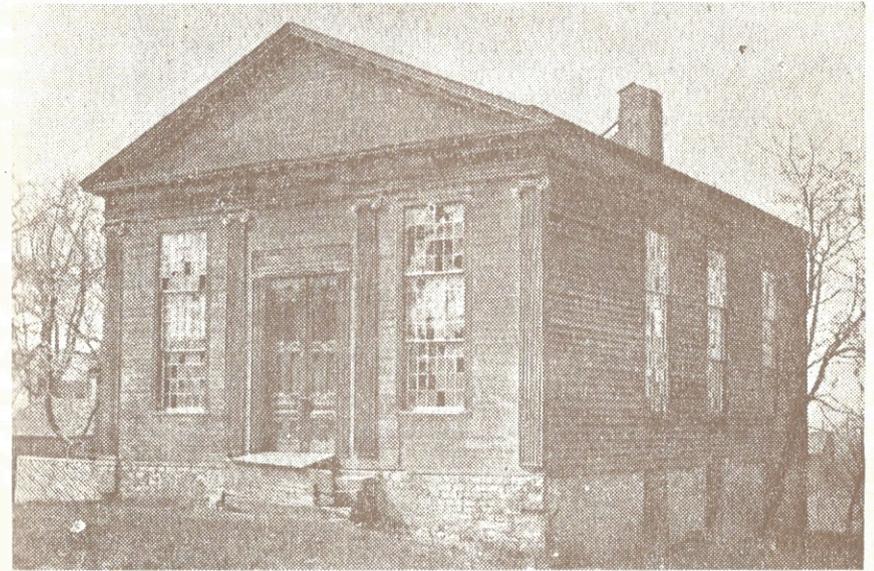
700 Center Street C. 1830 Dr. Gideon Frisbee

Built as his home and office the wing on the right was later a drug store and Post Office.



703 Center Street 1820 Dr. Willard Smith

Dr. Smith, who came here in 1810, returned to Lewiston after the War and built this house a few years later. Bjarne Klaussen, whose paintings are in this book, lived in this house in the 1950's. He donated his collection of paintings of Lewiston to the Library where they are on display.



712 Center Street C. 1837

Built originally as a Universalist Church where regular services were held for several years. In the mid 1800's the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches also shared the Church. Around 1900 it became the Social Hall and roller skating rink. Later the building was converted to apartments.



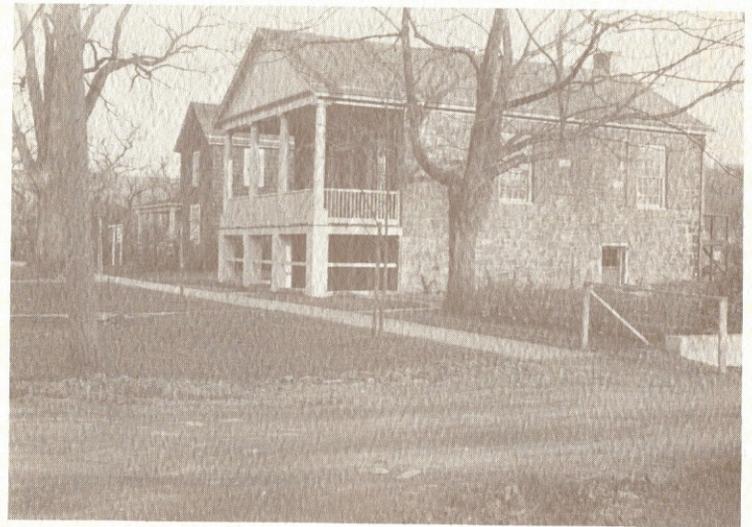
736 Center Street "Moss Hall" 1832 Joseph Hewitt

In this interesting building were held dinners, lecture series, and dancing classes for young adults. The Colonial Ball, a costume affair, was an annual event attended by all the prominent residents. The West annex was added in the 1920's. The first floor became the telephone office in 1926. The I.O.O.F. has held meetings in this building since 1872.



742 Center Street

The stone house behind this store is a mystery house. The name of the builder and the year the house was built are unknown. A cornerstone is inscribed "J B F 1811" but no records exist of a person in Lewiston with those initials.



755 Center Street 1820 Bates Cooke

Bates Cooke, the son of Lemuel Cooke, was a lawyer, congressman and later comptroller of the State of New York. He built this Greek Revival building to replace the frame one burned in 1813. His office was on the raised first floor, the lower level was used for storage. The building became a tavern after his death in 1841 and for many years was called the "First and Last Chance Saloon". Bjarne Klaussen bought the building in 1954 for his art gallery and restored the exterior to its original appearance.

800 Center Street Site of Hustler's Tavern

Thomas Hustler is listed among the tavern keepers in 1800. He rebuilt soon after the burning of Lewiston in 1813. Catharine Hustler is credited with the invention of the cocktail when she stirred a gin mixture with the tail feather of a cock. The Hustlers were immortalized in "The Spy" as Betty Flannigan and Sergeant Hollister. James Fenimore Cooper stayed at the Tavern in 1821 while writing the book. Thomas died in 1822 aged 68 and Catharine in 1832 aged 70. Both were buried in the Village Cemetery. The epitaph on Catharine Hustler's stone reads;

*"Traveller, as you are passing by -
As you are now, so once was i -
As i am now, so you must be;
Prepare for death and follow me."*



810 Center Street C. 1818 Jacob Townsend

Jacob Townsend's home is now one of Lewiston's popular restaurants.



855 Center Street now Academy Park 1824-25

This is the site of Lewiston Academy which opened in 1825 due to the efforts of prominent local men. It became one of the best private schools in Western New

York. As well as classrooms the four storey building had a large library, excellently equipped Chemistry laboratories on the top floor, endowed by the Lewiston Masonic Lodge, and an observatory on the roof. Most of the staff came from Dartmouth College, in N.H. Also teaching there were the poet Saxe and the scientist Odonathus Hill. The 150 students came from Canada and Western New York. In 1826 the State Legislature granted a petition from Lewiston residents requesting the proceeds of the Queenston - Lewiston ferry be paid to the School. The Academy prospered until the Canadian students withdrew during the 1837-38 MacKenzie Rebellion, and unstable economic conditions locally further decreased enrollment. In 1851 when the bridge between Queenston and Lewiston opened, the ferry service was terminated. Unable to continue without its main financial support, the Academy was forced to close. Reopened briefly in 1855, and again in 1867, the building remained vacant until it was demolished in the 1930s. In place of the Academy we now have the ball diamond and a large park where many of the annual summertime fairs are held. The original cornerstone, which was laid with full Masonic honors, stands on a pedestal in the N.E. corner of the park.



870 Center Street C. 1824

Nothing is really known of this house.

South Fifth Street



155 South Fifth Street 1817 Rev. David Smith

Reverend Smith was appointed the first minister of the Presbyterian Church on Aug. 25, 1817, and built the south section of the present house. He also continued to serve as clerk of the session for two years. A very active fund raiser, he served on the building committees of both the church and the Academy. In 1826 he became the first principal of the Academy, and also taught there. He resigned his position with the church in 1828 and left Lewiston in 1829.



South Fifth Street Presbyterian Church 1826-35

The First Presbyterian Society was formed in 1817. In 1826 the building committee was formed and the cornerstone was laid in 1830, and the building completed in 1835. The rear addition is dated 1953. Permission to move Fifth Street had to be obtained before the side addition could be built in 1965. Josiah Tryon, reported to have been active in the Underground Railroad, was a deacon and an Elder in the church for many years. It is said that the cellars of the church were used as a "station" by Josiah and others in their roles as "conductors".

South Fifth Street Village Cemetery

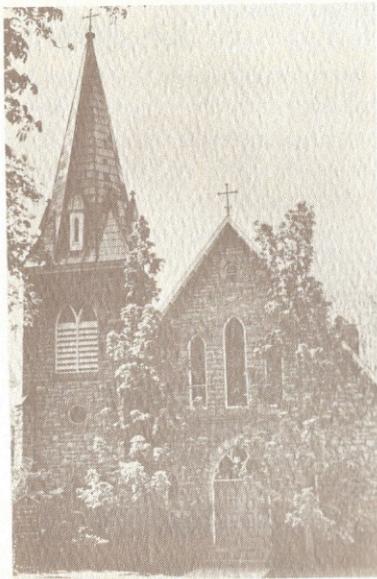
Some of those who built the homes and buildings we mention in the brochure are buried here. Others here played a part in Village history. Some of the people buried here are: Dr. Joseph Alvard, the first physician here; the young Gillet brothers, Jarvis and Miles, who were killed during the attack on Lewiston, Dec. 1813; Captain George Nelson, who died in the battle of Queenston Heights, Oct. 1813; Major Benjamin Barton, trader, financier, and participant in the Revolutionary War, 1842; and Judge Horatio Stowe, a beloved gentleman, 1859. Many of the victims of the cholera and typhoid epidemics in the 1800's were members of the long wagon trains waiting to cross the river. Their identities were unknown and many were interred in unmarked mass trench graves. Life was not easy in those days. Josiah and Mary Tryon are placed beside the road that passes down the center of the cemetery. Almost undecipherable now is the poignant inscription commemorating Macey Boswell, who lived at 480 Cayuga Street. The cemetery grounds are maintained by the Village of Lewiston.

Plain Street



400 Plain Street 1852 George Worden

Note the cupola on the roof. The veranda was added in 1880. The Kelly family lived here from 1895-1961 and it is still known as the Kelly House.



403 Plain Street St. Peters Church 1901

The congregation had shared space in the Universalist Church until 1848 when they again returned to saying mass in private homes. In 1851 the first wood church was constructed by the parishioner's own labor. In 1901, under the supervision of Father Henry Dolan, the stone was cut at the Hotchkiss quarry near the foot of South Fourth Street and transported to the site. Father Dolan and the twenty families in the church built this beautiful church with their own labor. It remained the parish church until 1970 when the new church was built.



430 Plain Street 1830 Calvin Hotchkiss

This lovely home is one of the many properties owned by Mr. Hotchkiss. The style is Greek Revival.



442 Plain Street 1828 Josiah Tryon

The addition at the rear is the original part of the home. In an extension behind that was a cooperage where wood barrels and casks were made and repaired. It is not known if Josiah Tryon ever lived here.



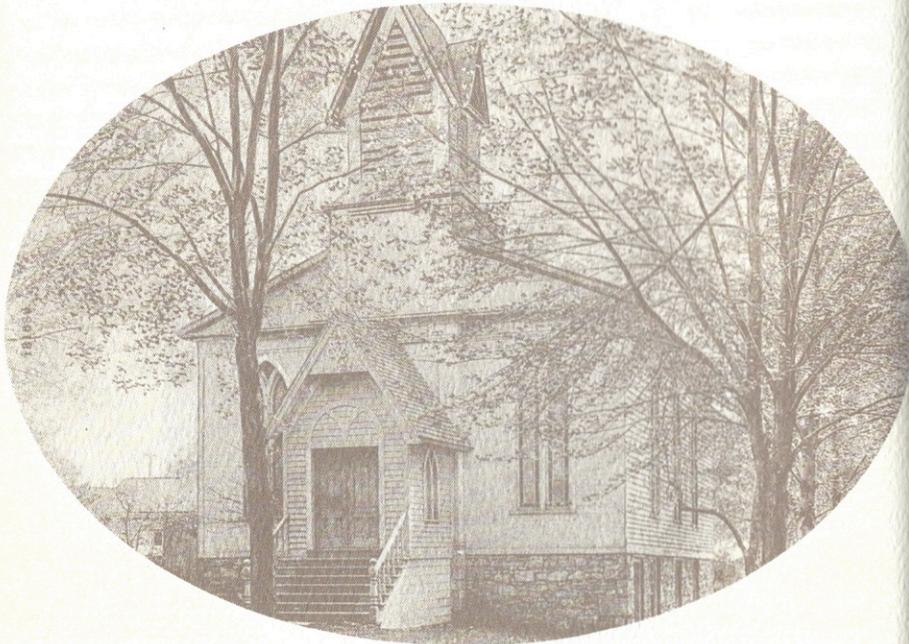
445 Plain Street 1861 James Fleming

This charming home was changed little over the years.



451 Plain Street 1829 Leonard Shephard

This home originally stood on Center Street and was moved to this location by sliding it down the slope on skids in winter. Note the lovely garden.



465 Plain Street St. Paul's Episcopal Church 1835-36

The Reverend David Smith and followers from the Presbyterian Church, many prominent Lewistonians among them, formed the Episcopal Church in 1826. The

building was erected in 1835-36. Records from 1837 and 1841 state that the minister officiated at burials listed as "child of a stranger" and "a Stranger". The word "stranger" was used by those in the Underground Railroad in place of "slave" to conceal their identity from the general public. It would indicate that the minister, Rev. Rufus Harris, was an active participant.

The church was a very popular place to be married and Jenny Lind was said to have been a witness at the marriage of her maid here.

The Church is now owned by and occupied by the Historical Museum.

During June, July and August the Museum is open on Wednesday through Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. On the first weekend in December the Museum is open for the Christmas Walk.

The gardens are planted and maintained by the Lewiston Garden Club.



466 Plain Street C. 1840

There are not confirmed records of this charming home.



481 Plain Street pre 1820 James Going

This is the only square front house in Lewiston. It is said that the lower level at the rear was used as a tavern. The original center section has post and beam construction common in the late 1700's.

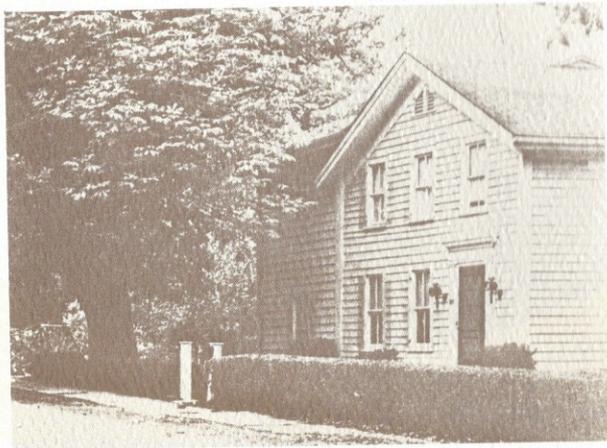
Niagara Street



Niagara Street "Oak Hill" 1834 Seymore Scovell

Niagara Street appears to be illogical in the balanced street plan of Lewiston. However there is a reason for the street. Seymore Scovell, a convivial and very wealthy gentleman, built a magnificent estate called "Oak Hill" on the south side of Tuscarora Street in 1834. The estate was the scene of many festive parties and dinners. This narrow road was cut for him on a direct line between his home and the Frontier House on Center Street where he was a frequent customer.

Joseph O. Kesselring, who knew the mansion, is said to have based the set design for his play "Arsenic and Old Lace" on it. The characterization of the two sisters was supposedly based on the very old mother and her elderly daughter, gentle recluses, who lived in the crumbling old house in the early 1900's amid tattered relics of the previous century. The house and the remaining buildings were demolished in 1969 after being gutted by a fire.



355 Niagara Street 1839 William Platt

The side wing is a later addition.



330 Niagara Street 1841 J.P. Wright

Notice the interesting architectural details.

175 Niagara Street C. 1824

This house originally stood on Center Street

Cayuga Street



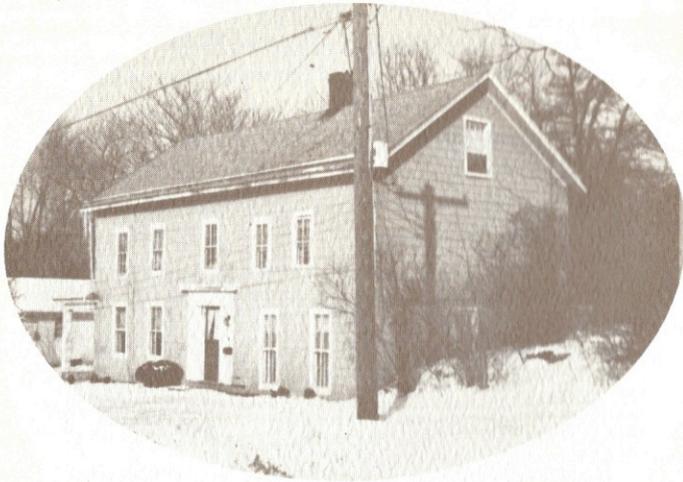
401 Cayuga Street C. 1838 Dr. Darius Shaw

Dr. Shaw married one of Samuel Barton's sisters. Samuel's daughter Harriett and her husband James Van Cleve lived here before moving into "Fairbanks", the house she inherited from her maternal grandfather Joshua Fairbanks. Capt. Van Cleve was instrumental in introducing the propeller on the lake ships.



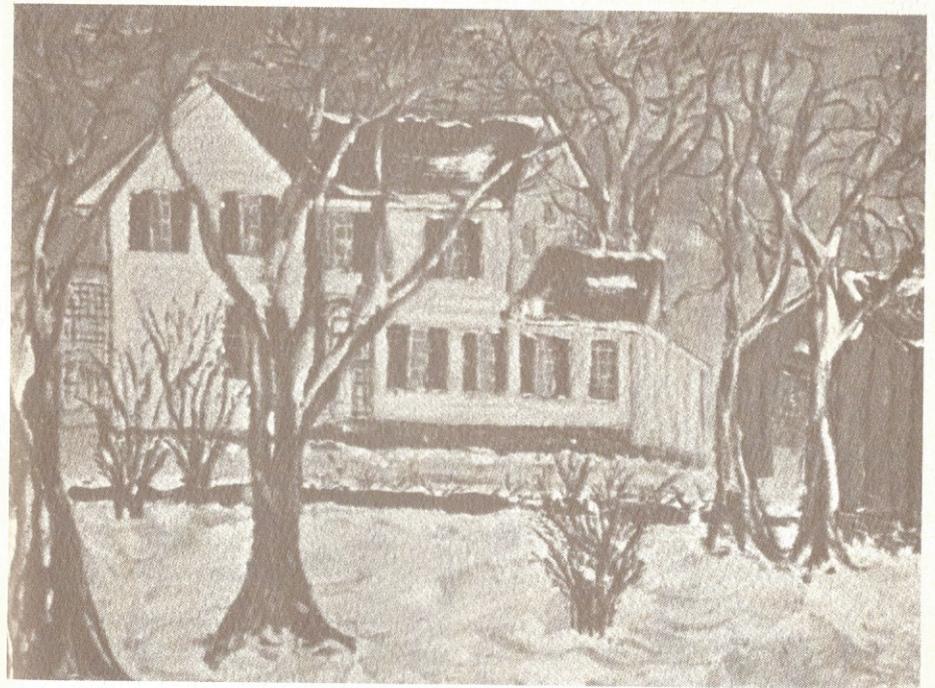
475 Cayuga Street C. 1840 Alexander Lane

This house was built as a summer boarding home for young ladies. The east wing is the original part of the house and has a cistern in the basement. Each section has a staircase to its own second floor.



480 Cayuga Street C. 1841 George Rector

This house is a combination of two buildings built by George Rector, a manager of the Frontier House. Note in the picture, the difference in the windows on each side of the house. Mrs. Sherbourne Piper owned one of the houses. One of these houses was said to be the home of the gypsy, Macey Boswell. The story is told that each spring her husband would bid her farewell when she left to rejoin her gypsy band. Every fall she would return from her wanderings with the band. During the winter months she was reported to be a "good and dutiful wife". Her stone in the Village Cemetery reads - "Farewell, Macey! Wife of Lawrence Boswell."



715 Cayuga Street 1818 Lathrop Cooke

This house was moved from the lot on Center Street on the left of 703. Mr. Cooke was the customs collector, sheriff, and a magistrate for more than thirty years. As a young man his leg was badly injured on Oct. 13, 1813 while acting as a river guide during the Battle of Queenston Heights and amputated in early Dec. Excerpt from the account written by his brother Isaac, of the Dec. 19, 1813 raid on Lewiston. "Father and me (Isaac) got the ox teams to the door" of 832 Ridge Rd. "and a few things were thrown in. Bates took Lathrop in his arms and put him on the sleigh, his leg had been amputated only 2 weeks. Father drove the first sleigh on which was the invalid and Bates the other. After us came the British hell hounds." "...overtaking us at the place where the Indian (Upper Mountain) road intersected the Ridge Road." "One rode around the sleigh, striking a full blow with a sword at Lathrop's head but his horse jumped and he missed him. Bates caught a gun from his sleigh, and running north about 4 rods (22 yards), took aim at one of them as he sat on his horse, fired and shot him through the neck. Lathrop said to Father 'Bates has killed that Indian'. He came down head foremost at that instant. Two of the Indians fired at Bates with rifles, missing him, he then ran down the hill coming to me (Isaac). A party of Tuscaroras going up the Indian hill hearing the firing on the road below wheeled about, firing and whooping, which frightened the British Indians," "...leaving five dead. After they left, Father called to Bates to come back, we started the teams going as fast as we could fearing the Indians would overtake us again." "The women and children by riding and walking got as far as Forsyth's (now Warren's Corners) where we came up with them. They having been told that the Indians overtook us and we were all murdered." They travelled for several more hours until 8 p.m. before stopping for the night. "Lathrop suffered much pain with

his leg and great deal with a sore on the small of his back occasioned by constantly lying on his back. We had a tedious journey of three days to Geneseo (the home of the Wadsworth's). Where we found true and generous friends."

Lathrop survived this ordeal in a time before there were antibiotics or pain medication. He died in July of 1855, after a full and very active life.

South Fourth Street

145 South Fourth Street C. 1845

This house originally built on the river bank, was moved in 1909 after the ice jam reached the height of the house.



175 South Fourth Street C. 1838 Guy Reynolds

This beautiful house is an example of gracious living in the 1800's. The front section was added in the 1860's.

250 South Fourth Street C. 1838 William Parkinson

Parkinson was a master carpenter whose fine craftsmanship is apparent in this house.

North Fourth Street



300 Onondaga Street C. 1834 John Lasher

This interesting home is included in this section since it is visible from N. Fourth Street. The square tower was added at a later date.

205 North Fourth C. 1828

The builder of this home is not known.



245 North Fourth Street 1839 Moses Bairsto

This house was separated from the one to the right before being moved to this site in 1904, from the north side of Plain St. near S. Fourth.

Lower River Road



435 N. Second at Lower River Road 1848 Harotio Stowe
De Chantel Hall

The building and grounds are now Church property and are not open to the public.

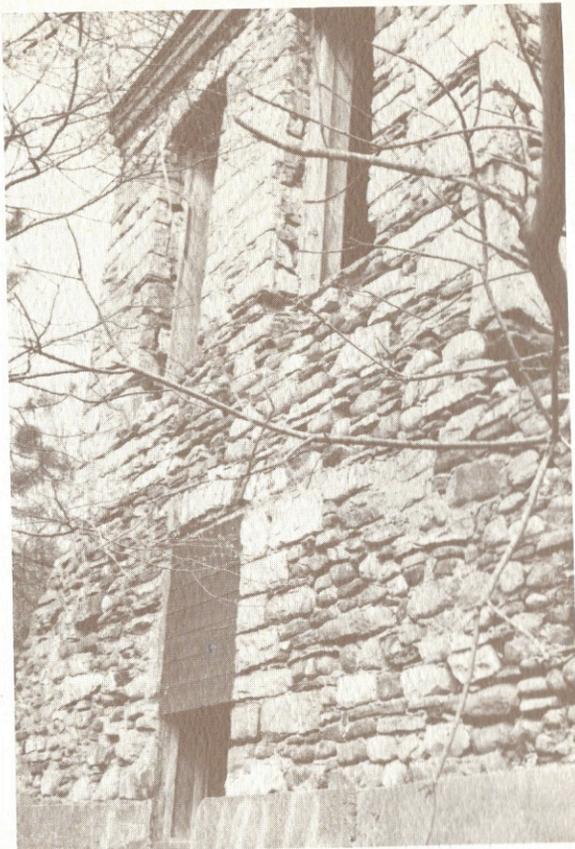
A life long dream of the Honorable Horatio J. Stowe, the house was built for his wife Anna. "Stowe House" was one of the finest on the river. The main section with its beautiful door, has a later addition on each side.

There were barns, stables, several outbuildings, a bake oven, a large water tower on the grounds. The gardens were renowned for their beauty and design. Orchards and vegetable gardens completed the orderly and self sufficient estate. Judge Stowe, the legal advisor to the Tuscarora tribe, had always refused to accept payment from them. One day a line of wagons loaded with wood arrived at the estate with the explanation from the Chief that he had "harangued the tribe to gratitude. They reward you with this wood and much thankfulness." Judge Stowe had only ten years to enjoy his beautiful property. He died in 1859 and was buried in the Village Cemetery.

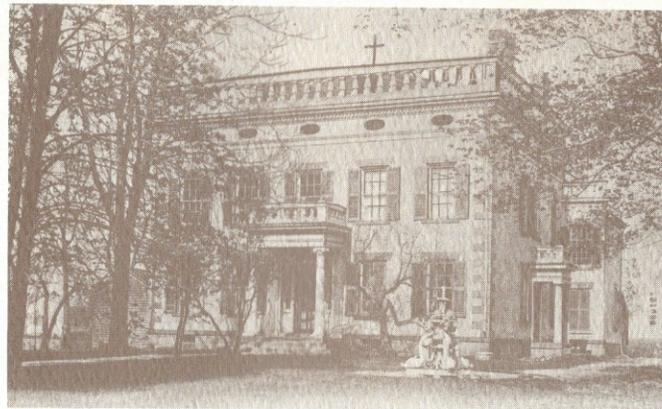


4772 Lower River Road C. 1830 Amos Tryon
"Tryon's Folly"

The house cannot be seen from the road. A much better view of the house and cellars can be seen from across the river. Amos Tryon built a stone house at the edge of the river bank with several interconnecting basements descending the bank, and a wharf on the shore. Doorways in these cellars, one of which contains a well, provided access to the steep bank. The building may have been designed to contain Tryon's business, he was a principal in his father-in-law's firm Porter Barton and Co., as well as his residence. His wife Sally Barton Tryon, refused to move from their home on the N.E. corner of Center St. at Fourth, and the house remained vacant. It became known as Tryon's Only Folly'. After Tryon's death in 1874 his heirs lived in the house until it was destroyed in a fire in 1900. In 1915 when new owners were building the present house, a secret room was discovered in one of the basements. According to local legend "Tryon's Folly" was said to have been used as a terminal by the Underground Railroad. Josiah Tryon could have taken advantage of his brother's absence on frequent business trips to secrete people in the hidden room in the empty house. From there they could have been safely transported across the river to Canada. Josiah's work with the Underground Railroad is known.



"Ghost Chamber at the "Haunted House"



**Stella Niagara School, Lower River Road Thomas More Hall
"The Meadows" C. 1830 Calvin Hotchkiss**

This property is now owned by the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity who conduct the Stella Niagara School and Center of Renewal. Except for the Pottery Shop housed in this 1830 building it is not open to the public. The large square red home was built by Calvin Hotchkiss as his retirement home. It was situated on a farm containing several hundred acres of prime land. Calvin, a bachelor, was a very industrious and careful businessman, as well as an excellent farmer. One year he was asked by the town assessor to list his assets. Mr. Hotchkiss replied "A ram, a goat, and a black cat." He was taxed for \$5,000.00. The next time he was assessed for his property, the same question was asked, and the same answer was given. His taxes increased by \$5,000.00, a very large sum in those days. When he died in this house in 1866, his estate was reported to be valued at \$500,000.00.



4130 Lower River Road, "Grand View" 18040 Reuben Boughton

Reuben Boughton and his wife Maria Barton Boughton built a beautiful home on this site in 1840. The property is now owned by the N.Y. State Department of Parks and Recreation. The home unfortunately burned in Sept. 1986.

Ridge Road



751 Ridge Road C. 1835 for Caleb Raymond

This house was later owned by Mr. S. Powell. Caleb Raymond was one of the first blacksmiths in Lewiston. The original one story west wing was built by a stone mason who had worked on the Erie Canal. The walls were later raised to allow for the eyebrow windows and larger second floor. The Federal style front section was added at a later date.

755 Ridge Road C. 1835 for Mr. L.K. Scovell

Built by a stone mason who had worked on the Erie Canal.



832 Ridge Rd. 1820 Captain Lemuel Cooke

This home is built on the site of the Mohawk chief Joseph Brant's home and Anglican chapel. After Cooke completed his service in the army at Fort Niagara, he ran the ferry between Youngstown and Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake). In 1802 Lemuel Cooke and his family including sons Lathrop, Bates and Isaac came to Lewiston. They settled on the site of Joncaire's trading post, at the "Old Landing". Until 1805 he ran the Lewiston Queenston ferry. In 1803 Cooke bought this property. Since it was prime land and already developed a higher price was asked for this land by the Holland Land Company. His home was burned in the raid, Dec. 19, 1813. Lemuel Cooke built the present house in 1820. Part of his son Isaac's account of the raid is in the description of 715 Cayuga Street.

953 Ridge Road C. 1835 for Mr. S. S. Hopkins

Built by a stone mason who had worked on the Erie Canal.



975 Ridge Road Hickory College 1842-45

Hickory College was built as a public school. The parents of students paid a fee, either in money or firewood, to send their children to school. The school was in continuous use until 1953 when the Lewiston-Porter Central Schools were built.



2571 Lower Mountain Road 1836 Jacob Houstater

A short side trip on Lower Mountain Road leads to this homestead in the Bond's Lake Recreation Area. The home is now the office of the Niagara County Parks Department.



1277 Ridge Road 1840 John Latta

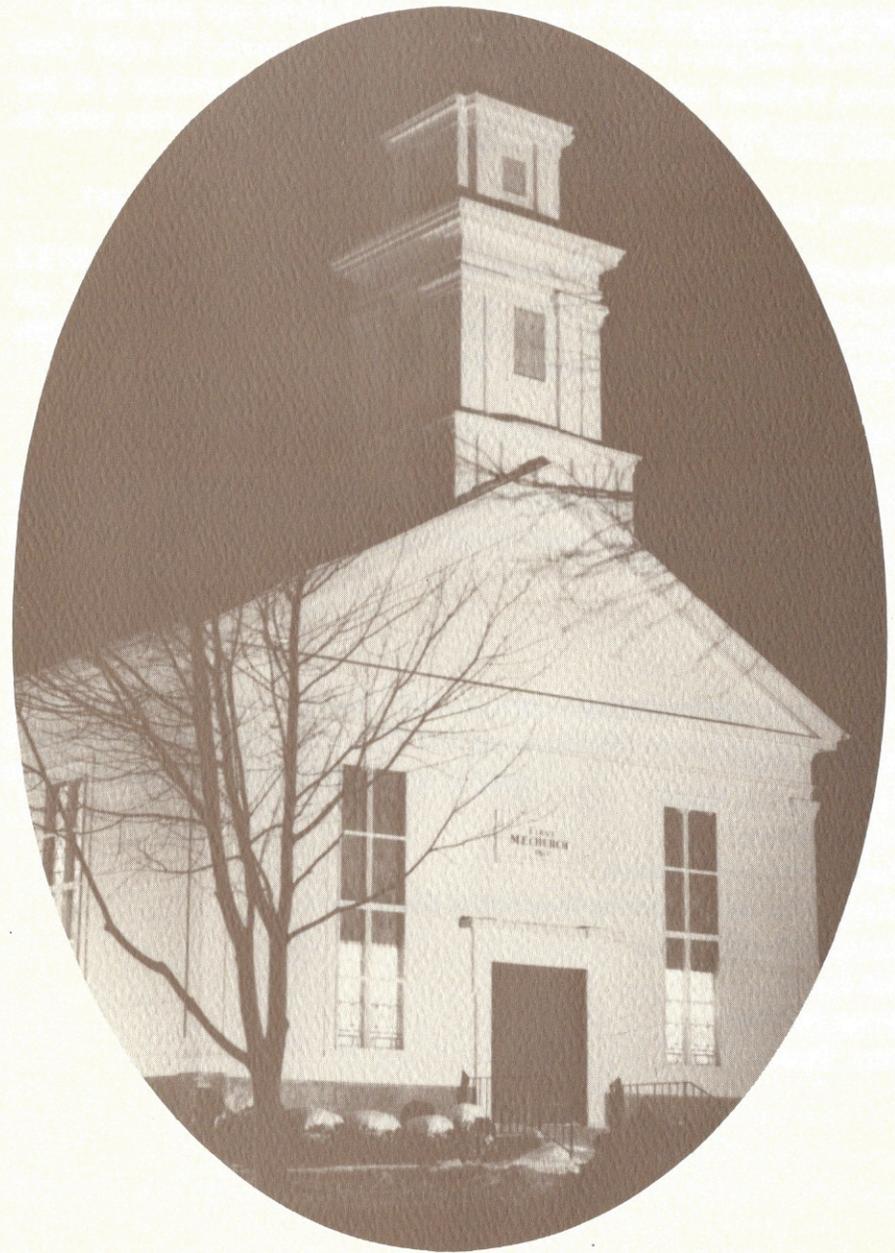
John Latta came to Lewiston about 1807 and built the first tannery in the village, which was burned in the raid. He returned in 1815 and rebuilt his business and later this house.



Dickersonville Cemetery

The cemetery is located 2.3 miles east of Model City Rd., or ½ mile west of Dickersonville Rd.

Col. Alexander Dickerson, 1790-1858, is one of the early settlers to be buried here. Achish Poole who came in 1811; Hannah Mills, — to 1811, came here in the 1790's; Lt. John Farley 1822; and Edward P. Peiroe, Co. E, 8th N.Y.D.A, who died during the Civil War are some of the people buried here. The cemetery was designated an historic site in 1978 by the Historic preservation Commission of the Town of Lewiston. It was rededicated on Nov. 11, 1984. The grounds are maintained by the Town of Lewiston Department of Recreation.



Dickersonville United Methodist Church 1853

The church and a few houses are all that remain of the once thriving community. Col. Dickerson settled here before 1820 and built a tavern. He persuaded other settlers and merchants to join him. Eventually the community contained a school, a store and Post Office, several shops and a number of homes. The enterprising residents had raised the money by 1853 to build this classic church.

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Lewiston Historic Museum

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Lewiston Historic Museum

Town of Lewiston, Historic Preservation Commission

Lewiston Public Library

Bill Myers

Frank Nateriani

Mrs. Simcoe

This book was written to answer some of the questions about the early days of Lewiston. It is not intended to be a complete history, nor is it intended to be all inclusive. We hope it has satisfied some of your curiosity and piqued your interest for further information.

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