

Amos Osborn's History of Sangerfield (1886)

The following is the text of a speech given by Amos Osborn (b. 1811), resident historian, lawyer and Renaissance man, of Waterville, to the Oneida County Historical Society, as published in The Waterville Times on October 1, 1886. A brief biography of Mr. Osborn appears at the end of the article.

SANGERFIELD'S HISTORY AN INTERESTING PAPER BY THE HON. AMOS O. OSBORN

**The People of Sangerfield, Its Industries and Development.
Delivered Before the Oneida Historical Society, September 27, 1886.**

The first meeting of the Oneida Historical Society for the autumn was held Monday evening in Library Hall, Utica. The society was called to order by Vice-President Ellis H. Roberts, who introduced Amos O. Osborn of Waterville as the historian of the Town of Sangerfield. Mr. Roberts said that the history of Sangerfield was of great interest as forming an important link in a connected history of the state, and thought that any efforts to gather up the threads of the history of our towns should be greatly appreciated. He felt indebted to Mr. Osborn for the labor he had done, and took pleasure in introducing him. Mr. Osborn spoke as follows:

In the year 1788 the Oneida Indians conveyed the twenty towns on the Unadilla river to the State of New York. A common name for this tract was afterwards "Clinton's Purchase". In the year 1789, township No. 20 was surveyed by the state for Michael Myers of Herkimer, Jedediah Sanger of New Hartford, and John I. Morgan. Its town and county name from February 15, 1791, to April 10, 1792 was Whitestown, Herkimer county. From April 10, 1792, until March 5, 1795, it was Paris, Herkimer county. From March 5, 1795, to March 15, 1798, it was Sangerfield, Herkimer county and from March 15, 1798 to April 4, 1804, when it was annexed to Oneida county, it was Sangerfield, Chenango county. The letters patent from the people of the state to Mr. Morgan contained this clause: "Excepting and reserving to ourselves all gold and silver mines, and five acres of every one hundred acres of said tract of land for highways". The deeds of the proprietors to the settlers contained the following: "Subject only to the reservations and restrictions in the original letters patent"; that is to say, they did not convey to the settlers any gold or silver mines nor five percent of the land, but in every instance that has come to the writer's knowledge they have never failed to take pay for all the acres, including the five for the highways, described in their conveyances; although always particular to subject the land to these conditions. In this way they received pay for about 950 acres at the rate of \$2.50 per acre, which they never owned, but which the state generously intended for the use of its citizens. And this state property is, and has been for nearly a century, annually taxed for state, county and town purposes. As left by the act of March 24, 1797, the town, consisting of 73 lots of the 100 comprising the township, 27 of which were set off to Bridgewater, is fairly in the Chenango Valley. A

small part is watered by three branches of Oriskany Creek, two of which rise in the town of Marshall, flow southerly into Sangerfield, then westerly through Waterville, where they unite, then northerly into the main creek at Deansville. The other is the Tenny brook in the west part of the town, Lots 67 and 73, inclusive, in the east part of the town, are watered by the west branch of the Unadilla.

The first settlement began in 1792, and with the exception of 1793, continued very rapidly for several years. The names of the settlers in 1792, were Asahel Bellows, a Mr. Clark, (given name unknown), Sylvanus Dyer, Nathaniel Ford, Bazaliel and Nathan Guerny, (father and son), Minnierva Hale, Henry Knowlton, Zerah Phelps, Phineas Owen and Jonathan Stratton. Of these, only Mr. Hale, the elder Gurney, Knowlton, Phelps and Owen are known to have families. Mr. Stratton probably had none, and Mr. Dyer certainly had not, for on the 30th of October, a year and four months afterward, he married Hannah, the eldest daughter of David Norton, who, according to his diary, was the guest of Mr. Dyer on the 5th, 6th, and 7th of June, and of Mr. Stratton on the 4th and 8th. Both of these probably kept bachelor's hall.

Of these settlers of 1792, I do not afterwards find the name of Asahel Bellows, nor of Mr. Clark, who early in May of this year had the misfortune to lose a leg by the falling of a tree. Sylvanus Dyer had quite a family. He was a merchant, tavern-keeper, farmer and for nearly twenty years a useful citizen. Some part of his life was spent in Cazenovia. He died a resident of the town of Marshall near Waterville, Jan. 9, 1843, aged 78 years, leaving descendants in Oswego county and at the west, but none in Sangerfield. Nathaniel Ford was one of the party that surveyed the township in 1789. He died January 14, 1855, aged 86 years. His successor was his nephew, Horace F. Locke.

In 1801 Nathan Gurney sold out to Ichabod Stafford and removed from the town. Phineas Owen at the same time also sold to Mr. Stafford but remained in the town till his death, leaving a family. Minnierva Hale died on the farm occupied by him, January 28, 1840, aged 76 years. He was father of a large family and left many descendants, only one of whom of the same name, A. Jerome Hale of Waterville remains.

The Knowltons sold out early in the century to Christopher Young and Isaac Jeffers. Benjamin died here in 1809, aged 81 years and Henry removed from the town. Zerah Phelps sold his farm early in the century to Jonathan Hubbard and moved to Batavia, Genesee county. Jonathan Stratton's name does not appear on the town records after 1801. I have no means of learning anything of the growth and thrift of the town for the three years that it was part of Paris, as none of the assessment rolls of those years are preserved in the Paris town clerk's office, nor are any there earlier than 1832.

EARLY POLITICIANS

The following electioneering notice was published in the Utica Patriot, dated April 18, 1803:

ELECTIONEERING NOMINATIONS.- At a meeting of a large proportion of the inhabitants of the town of Sangerfield convened at the house of Ebenezer Hale, (now Sangerfield Exchange), for the purpose of nominating a suitable person to represent this county in the general assembly, the following resolutions were adopted: Resolved, that Lodwick Hewitt be chairman and Robert Benedict be secretary. Resolved, that this meeting be adjourned till Thursday, the 7th of April inst., at 2 o'clock P.M., and this notifications be put up in different parts of the town, and general information be given. Thursday, 7th. After opening the meeting pursuant to adjournment, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted: Resolved, that the chairman and secretary, with the following persons, viz.:

Daniel Brown, Amos Muzzy, Ichabod Stafford, Elias Montgomery, Minnierva Hale, Isaac Terry Jr., Benjamin White, Seth Peck, Sherman Bartholomew, and Stephen Preston, be a committee to promote the election of the candidate. Resolved, that the aforesaid committee cause this meeting to be published in the Patriot.

LODWOCK HEWITT, Chairman.

ROBERT BENEDICT, Secretary.

There is also published on another page of the same paper, a precisely similar notice of the democratic party in town with a different electioneering committee, among whose names are Nathaniel Ford, Seeley Jewell, Stephen Wightman, Ralph Patrick, Thomas Stephens and William Page. These were nearly all the democrats at that time in town. Justice Tower was father of Horace D. and Henry Tower. He lost his life in April of the year succeeding on his mill dam during a freshet. He was supervisor at that time. Daniel Brown was a merchant trading in a two-story building where the Episcopal church now stands. Amos Muzzy was postmaster of the town, having been appointed December 1800. Ichabod Stafford was father of the late Aaron Stafford. Elias Montgomery was father of the late Richard and Bradford C. Montgomery, keeping a tavern west of the centre in a house afterward destroyed by fire. A daughter of his, Mrs. Sophia Corwin of Clifton Park, Saratoga county, is still living. Benjamin White, one of the first two settlers in Waterville, lived in the house built by him and now owned by A.O. Osborn. Isaac Terry, a justice of the peace dwelling in the village, was father of Edmund and Orrin Terry. Sherman Bartholomew was the chief physician in the village, and father of Dr. Darwin, Rush, Mrs. Eliza Bacon and Mrs. Almira Owen. He was brother of the late Mrs. Henry Hearsy. He lost his life at Sackett's Harbor in the war of 1812. He gave the name of Waterville to the village. Stephen Preston was the present Medina's grandfather residing at the Centre. Lodwick Hewitt was brother of the late Sherman Hewitt, and Robert Benedict the father of the late physician to the state lunatic asylum at Utica, and grandfather of Mrs. William T. Gibson. He then lived in the house next west of the Berrill factory. Stephen Wightman was father of Eber and Ira Wightman, and Ralph Patrick father of Erastus and of Mrs. Aseneth Miller, still living in Sangerfield. Thomas Stephens, father of Thomas R. Stevens, a life-long resident of Waterville, and William Page, schoolmaster, surveyor and farmer, was father of Lansford, Putnam, Henry and Hull Page.

TURNPIKE COMPANIES

On the 30th day of March, 1801, an act was passed by the state legislature to open and improve a certain road from the dwelling house of Benj. Wilson, in the town of Oxford, Chenango county, in the nearest and most direct route that "circumstances would admit of," thru' the towns of Norwich, Sherburne, Hamilton, Sangerfield and Paris, to intersect the Genesee turnpike, near the house of Jedediah Sanger in Whitestown. Three thousand shares were subscribed for at \$20 each, making a capital of \$60,000. Amos Muzzy of the Huddle, was one of the two directors in the town, and David Norton at the Centre the other - both tavern keepers. It was at first expected that the road when it reached Sangerfield, would run through the Centre on the east side of the swamp because it was really the nearest, most direct and level route through it; but Mr. Montgomery, an active and energetic settler of much wealth and influence, lived and had a tavern on the road starting from the east part of the Huddle and running westerly two or three miles out of the way, which was already made. This passed by the village stores, was handy to the taverns of Messrs. Muzzy and himself, and although leaving David Norton out in the cold, would be on the whole very fine for the stronger parties

concerned in the new turnpike. Of course these circumstances and the superior influence and power behind, clearly admitting of no other route, the road was opened and gates erected on the longer, hillier and poorer one. It had been used only a year or two as a turnpike, when the entire line was thrown up and surrendered to the town as a failure. Nobody would travel on it and David Norton was pleased. It is still often referred to in conveyances describing land on its line, as the "Oxford and Chenango turnpike, formerly so called".

But a really important element in the prosperity of the town from 1808 to the opening of the Erie canal in 1825, and a success, was the Cherry Valley Turnpike. This was chartered in 1803 as the "Third Great Western Turnpike Co." Its first organization was made at a meeting in Sangerfield, at the house of Ebenezer Hale, November 16, of the same year, when the electors chose John Lincklaen president, Samuel Sidney Breese secretary, and James Green treasurer. November 14, 1804, another meeting was held at Mr. Hale's in Sangerfield, when the first election of directors was held. Among the persons chosen were Aaron Morse and Oliver Norton of Sangerfield. At a meeting held in Cazenovia, April 9, 1805, it was voted that stockholders might pay the greater part of their subscriptions in labor in constructing the road; also that additional stock should be issued, already increased to \$95,000, and at a meeting 4th February, 1806, \$15,000 of stock was appropriated, to be expended under the direction of John Diel, Benjamin Gilbert, grandfather of B.D. Gilbert, of the Utica Herald office, and Calvin Smith, in making the first ten miles of the road west from Cherry Valley, which appears to have been the first section completed. At a meeting held in the house of Uri Beach, in Sangerfield, August 6, 1810, it was voted that wagons with tires more than six inches broad might pass free of toll. Many of our older inhabitants yet remember when there was a public house at every mile or two on the road; and it was said that the odor of tar, a bucket of which was carried under every wagon, could be perceived all along the road to Albany. Among the inn-keepers on the turnpike in Sangerfield were Theron Norton, Elias Montgomery, Samuel Duncan, David Norton, Uri Beach, Ebenezer Hale and Christopher Young. The charter was finally given up, and the road abandoned in 1856, when after a century of varying prosperity it ceased to be valuable. Its greatest season of prosperity was in 1815, and least in 1852.

SCHOOLS

The first school house in the town of Sangerfield was built of logs, and stood across the road west of the dwelling of Dr. Preston at the Center. The next was a frame building on the west side of the road, halfway from Daniel Livermore's to the Centre green. The first school bill I have been able to find reads as follows:

This is the number of the scholars:

John Williams, Three
 Samuel Stevens, Five
 John J. Phillips, Four
 John Thomson, One

JOHN WILLIAMS,
 JOHN THOMSON, MARY THOMSON
 Trustees. Instructor.

Sangerfield, July the 6th, 1795

The district or neighborhood in which the school was taught must been on the road leading from Nathaniel Ford's southeasterly to Brookfield.

The first school at the Centre was taught by Hannah Norton, afterwards Mrs. Sylvanus Dyer. The first regular school bill, and for that time a formal document in plain handwriting, reads as follows:

"A return of schooling kept in Sangerfield, in the County of Herkimer, which began the 28th of December, 1795, and continued till March the 19th, A.D. 1796. Wages 6 dollars and two-thirds per month.

DANIEL A. BRAINARD, Instructor

Then follow the names of the pupils and the number of days they respectively attended. They were the children from about 18 families - two from what is now Waterville. Seven of the children were from the Davis and Oliver Norton families. This school teacher was grandfather of I.D. Brainard of Waterville. The school at the Center was taught more than once by Oliver C. Seabury, father of Heber, Micah and Ahinam, a man then well known in this and adjoining towns as a surveyor and teacher. He surveyed and plotted the village of Waterville. His residence was on the west side of the road on the hill north of the Conger settlement, now Stockwell. The first school-house in Waterville was on the ground now occupied by Mrs. Barton's residence. It remained there until 1815, when the two story brick building was erected, which was taken down in 1872 to give place to the present union school edifice.

For some years, until the need of more room to accommodate the increasing numbers made it necessary to occupy the whole building for common school purposes, the upper story was reserved for a select school or academy. Its first teacher was the late Rev. Ely Burchard. He was succeeded by Philo Gridley, afterwards judge, and by Abner Cook, who became an eminent lawyer in Otsego county. A lady teacher in 1826 or thereabouts was a Miss Bryant, who was so near-sighted that she could not see the paper billets pass from the boys in the adjoining room through the board partition to the girls in her own, and was in consequence very popular with her pupils. Miss Bryant came into the village from Massachusetts with the family of Daniel Putnam, the Baptist minister, in 1824. She married in Brooklyn and died there.

Among the teachers last occupying the second story was the late Simeon H. Calhoun, who spent most of his life as a missionary in Syria. When teaching here in 1830, he was not a professor of religion, but was an earnest, good man full of humor and story telling. He was a graduate of Williams college. He died five or six years since in Buffalo after a life of good works and great usefulness.

Another later teacher was Lewis N. Wood, an ardent student of nature, who first measured the dip of the corniferous limestone in Eastman's quarry in 1834 and is alluded to by the state geologist, Vanuxem, as a "school teacher in the neighborhood, his name unknown." Mr. Wood settled in Geneva, Wis., and was a noted and skillful physician.

One of the useful district teachers was Mason Southworth, the son of a clergyman, at that time in Bridgewater, and a brother of the late H.O. Southworth of Rome. He was an excellent teacher, always devising and adopting something new and good in school methods. He removed to Michigan, near Kalamazoo, where he was a popular and influential citizen.

The late Abner Livermore, who taught in the Huddle, Waterville district, gives the following account of his experience: I went from Tarrytown, where I lived, to the Center, in the spring of 1806, intending to take the Center school, but Oliver Cromwell Seabury out-generalled me. He got, and that summer I took a school in Whitestown, (Middle Settlement). General Oliver Collins was one of the trustees. I again hoped for the winter school at the Center, but did not get it, and finally took one at the Huddle. This proved the most numerous, crowded and unmanageable school I ever tried, and at the end of the first quarter I got the trustees to give the teaching to another man. He gave out before spring. It was too tough for him. Mr Livermore died at the residence of his son Fidus, in Jackson, Michigan, January 26, 1857, aged 79 years.

The town residents who have been among teachers and citizens of note, are Josiah Bacon, William P. Cleveland, H.H. Eastman, O.B. Gridley, Philander B. Haven, E.H. Lamb, John Monroe, Amos Osborn sen., William Osborn, jr., William Page, sen., Reuben Tower, sen., Charlemagne Tower, and Orrin Terry. This list of school teachers is quite notable in the line of abundant means, not to say much wealth. The writer hereof taught school in this town from December 1, 1828, to March 1, 1829, and received his pay in boarding round and \$27 in money, that is to say nine dollars a month and board. Although the educational results were very likely of no greater account than the pay, yet this curious experience of life has always been pleasant to recall. This subject would be incomplete without mentioning among other things that when the district school library law of 1847 went into effect, the controlling member of the village board of trustees invested our new library money in text books for poor children; and how he was obliged by the secretary of state to exchange them for general reading books, and could do so only by taking at market prices, such old shelf books as Mr. Tracey, the book merchant of Utica, had on his upper shelves; and how in another school district of the town, the ruling trustee was determined to use the library money for teachers' wages, saying that "no legislature could be such fools as to tax the district to buy books that folks couldn't read."

RELICS

Quite a number of relics bearing on the race character of its prehistoric occupants, whether the Oneidas or their predecessors, have been found in Sangerfield. The attractions for hunting and fishing were probably as great as in the neighboring towns; and arrowheads made of our corniferous flint and other implements have quite often been discovered. An instrument similar to the archaeological celt, deerskiner, was found on the farm of Daniel Livermore. It was made of a hard, greenish graystone, with imbedded grains of what appears to be hornblende, and in material and shape is very like similar instruments in the state collection at Albany. A curious instrument, finely polished, about fifteen inches long, half the length prism-shaped, and the other half like a two-edged knife blade, thickened in the middle and tapering ovally to dull edges, made of the same kind of stone, was found in a garden near the hop extract works, Waterville. A heavy granite pestle or pounder for the use of strong-armed persons in pounding - perhaps for making ooktehaw or root bread - was plowed up on the west side of the swamp. Such an instrument would most likely be used by permanent dwellers; but one can easily imagine that an Indian woman, fatigued and travel worn, or about to remove, had thrown it away or left it behind for more necessary burdens. Another implement, found near the brick and tile yard of P.B. Haven, was doubtless a hatchet. The upper half had been broken from the lower, or cutting part

at the eye, or hole, evenly bored for a handle. This is made of light-colored granite. But most of the relics found in the earlier years of the town were collected by the late Dr. G.L. Haven, and removed by him to Chicago.

THE ONEIDA PATH

The Oneida Path was a sort of highroad, and as Indians always travel in single file, was scarcely more than 12 or 15 inches wide, and deeply trodden. It was the only path used between the settlements at Oneida and their friends, the Oneidas and Tuscaroras on the Susquehanna. It passed entirely through Sangerfield (township), entering about three miles east of the northwest corner, and leaving it about a mile north of the southeast corner, crossed the Unadilla near Leonardsville, and thence pursued a pretty distinct course to Otsego lake. It must have been this path that General Washington traversed when returning from his visit to the Oneidas in October, 1783. In his letter written to the Marquis de Chattelux, after his return, he says: "I proceeded up the Mohawk river to Fort Schuler, formerly Fort Stanwix, crossed over to Wood creek, which empties into Oneida lake, and affords the water communication with lake Ontario. I then traversed the country to the head of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, viewed the Lake Otsego and the portage between that lake and Canajoharie."

As there was every reason why he should prefer a route known to be direct and feasible, there can be no doubt that he took this path. It is also according to the evidence of an Indian taken in Albany early in its settlement, in an inquiry before the Dutch justices, as to the location of the Susquehanna "a day and a half journey" from Oneida to the kill, which falls into that river, and this kill being the Unadilla and the crossing near Leonardsville, the distance between that place and Oneida, on the line of the path, would be then as now about 30 miles, and between Oneida, and this town just a day's journey or 20 miles. Washington's first day's travel would therefore end in Sangerfield; and as there was near this path on the land afterwards taken up by Nathaniel Ford, a spring of water and near by an Indian shanty used by the Indians on like occasions, it is reasonably certain that the General and his party stayed over night at this place. This path had been a well worn trail more than a hundred years before the settlement of this town; and although the Indians soon afterwards ceased to use it, parts of it were distinctly visible as late as the year 1849 when the late Aaron Stafford, who had known it as a boy, pointed out to the writer 40 or 50 rods of it in the woods north of the dead pond.

WATERVILLE

The village of Waterville is on Sangerfield town lot, Nos. 39 and 40, and on part of lots Nos. 153, 154, 156 and 158 of the Brothertown tract in Marshall, and one mile north of Sangerfield Center. It has a free northern exposure along the line of the Oriskany, is 607 feet above Clinton, 781 above Utica, 1,200 above the ocean, only 182 lower than Mt. Prospect state station in Kirkland, and by careful leveling made in September, 1883, 691 feet below Tassel Hill state survey station, no 29. Its latitude is approximately 42 degrees and fifty-five minutes north. It is on the drift due to its geological situation, its depth averaging 30 feet, and it rests entirely on the corniferous limestone. The water in the wells and its many springs all have a flow from the south over the rock outcrop northerly, and is of uniform temperature from year to year, being quite steadily at 48 degrees F. in August and 47 degrees F. in February, which is a little warmer than is due to its annual mean temperature. The James Young well on lot No. 62, is three degrees colder than the village water, and the Bangs well near the Tenny brook is through 70 feet of drift and the deepest in town. It is upon the abundance of these springs that its factory privileges rely for their power, the more copious of them rising about 30 rods

south of the factory dam on the westerly branch of the Oriskany. A lesser power is made by the easterly branch; and it is this advantage that gave the village its first impulse in the improvement it has since steadily maintained. The great swamps, or as the Indians called it "Skanawis," through which runs the Chenango river, containing originally nearly or quite 5,000 acres, was a mine of undeveloped wealth in its white pine (*pinus strobus*) and white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) timber, and this was ready for use as soon as the mills were ready to saw it. There were four or five smaller swamps in town ready to furnish the same kind of lumber. Mr. Norton's diary mentioning two, one on lot 38 and another on lot 27. There was also one on lot No. 39, another on lot No. 40, and another on lot No. 51, all very near this water power. The pine was all manufactured into lumber in the town, most of the mills being owned in the village. Many of those on the smaller streams running into the Chenango were owned by citizens outside. The late Horace D. Tower once told me that when a boy he could hear in a still, clear night the ringing of fourteen saw mills. Whatever there was of its growing wealth, aside from the rapid increase in the value of the land, can nearly all be traced to its lumber. Many farmers living in the adjoining towns bought a few acres in the Skanawis for its building and fencing timber; and one of my earliest recollections is, that in winter pine logs, cedar rails and posts were in great numbers carried every day from swamps through the village. The activity thus made and its lumbering generally increased by its distilleries, gave the place a very lively and busy appearance for nearly half a century, and brought into it much travel and trade. It also had the advantage of two carding and cloth-dressing shops, the two former quite necessary to the needs of the early settlers in using their wool for clothing. There were two in the hollow, one owned by William Osborn, the other by Isaac Sheldon. The wool was carded and made into rolls, taken home to be spun and woven into flannel, then returned to the same shop for fulling and dressing into cloth. Our older citizens will remember that this kind of cloth was all that the thriftiest families indulged in for their winter's wear; and red or brown pressed flannel for the women and butternut colored cloth for the men, were the common kinds worn both on week days and Sundays.

EARTHENWARE

An industry peculiar to these early settlements, now confined to large towns, was pottery. There were two manufactories in the neighborhood, one at Waterville and one at the Center. The first was carried on by Jabez Hancock, a native of Wilbraham, Mass., on the farm now owned by William Osborn, and did a thriving business in making milk pans, and smaller domestic ware. This kind of milk pan continued to be used by the good housewife long after the introduction of tin, because it was supposed to be of pure material.

In the year 1827, while at school at Paris Hill, I boarded in the family of the late Judge McNeil, first town clerk of the town of Paris. S. Wells Williams and Owen Clark, Utica boys, were my room mates and fellow-boarders. The judge's wife was a pattern of thrift, neatness and good sense, and for those days had a large dairy. She was a strong advocate of these earthen pans, saying that she "would never set her milk in tin so long as she could get earthen: no one could make her believe the tin was not poisonous."

This vessel was about the size of our ordinary milk pans, considerably deeper and thicker, and when full of milk, required a strong arm to lift it from the shelf. It was glazed and easily cleansed and certainly carried the idea of wholesomeness. Its color was a dark, reddish brown, and of course would not easily show dirt, which perhaps was an element of popularity, and it had to be carefully handled for fear of breaking. It would be curious to see how an expert in aesthetic pottery could adapt expression of fitness to need, better than this old time utensil. They are rarely seen nowadays, but one

occasionally survives as a repository of garden seed packages, red peppers, and the like, on upper pantry shelves.

The Center pottery was 20 or 30 rods west of the Warren Kellogg farm and was owned by Ephraim Leach. One of his daughters, Eliza, became the wife of Levi Sanderson, afterwards one of the first settlers and a wealthy citizen of Galesburg, Ill., a town settled chiefly by Oneida county people. Besides Obadiah and Ephraim, there were on the assessment roll of 1807 Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Jonathan. Only one of the five Leachs, Obadiah, spent a long life in town and none of the name now remain.

The manufacture of brick in Waterville was begun soon after 1806 by Elias Haven of Barre, Mass., and afterward continued in his family, from father to son, at the Center. The business has developed into extensive tile making as well as brick by P.B. Haven & Son, and has become an important town industry.

DISTILLERIES

The late Amos Osborn began the distilling business in the village in 1802. The inducements as to locality were the quantity, convenience and temperature of the spring water, the cheapness of good building material, nearness of mills for grinding grain, and the excellent quality of the neighboring farms. His still cost him in Albany at Spencer Stafford's store on the 14th day of August, 1802, \$392, and he began work with nine bushels of grain per day, distilling from each, nine to ten quarts of highwines, never running over twelve bushels nor securing a greater yield until 1813, when finding himself able to go into a business more to his choice, he purchased three farms paying for the one always occupied by himself, \$30 per acre, part in whiskey at nine shillings a gallon and for another nine gallons of gin per acre. He then sold his distillery and went into farming. In the course of the next 50 years this distillery was succeeded by six others, besides two at Forge Hollow two miles north of this, and two at the center, five of which were in full operation at one time, running 600 bushels of grain per day, and distilling from 12 to 15 quarts from each bushel. The firms in this business have been William Osborn, Sr., Palmer & Kempster, Park & Tower, Reuben Tower, Stanton Park, Hubbard & Walker, Reuben Tower & Sons, Hubbard, Terry & Co. (a firm composed of Marinus Hubbard, Edmund Terry, Charles Wilkinson and Dewitt C. Tower), Bacon & Tower and Grover Wilbur & Co.

The commercial revulsion of 1857 and the United States war tax drove them all out of existence. In 1828, Reuben Tower commenced distilling cider, purchasing large quantities from the farmers and paying four and five shillings per barrel. In 1840, Charlemagne and Julius Tower began to distill potatoes, contracting in several instances for their delivery at ten cents per bushel. At first, quite a profitable business was expected to grow out of this enterprise, but it proved disastrous from the liability of the tubers to decay, large quantities having been lost from this cause. Amos Osborn, Reuben Tower's Sons, Grover Wilbur & Co. and Bacon & Tower made not only pure rectified whisky, but brandy and gin. It used to be said that in the days of these distilleries the mania a potu about here was unknown, and that it was only after the imperfect rectifying by their successors that this delirium appeared. The alcohol and pure spirits made by Reuben Tower's Sons and Grover Wilbur & Co. always commanded the highest price in market.

All these distilleries fattened large numbers of cattle and hogs, and it was often the case that their profits for a whole year were derived from only this branch of the business. The quality of the beef was

excellent. It was very tender and high flavored and much in demand in the cities where sold. Their success also in the growth and improvement of the animal while feeding, was extraordinary. In one notable instance a steer calf, bought by Erastus Jeffers of his father-in-law, Samuel Clark, was owned and fatted by the firm of Tower & Jeffers, and in September of the year 1838, at the age of four years and six months, was taken to New York and sold. It weighed when placed on the boat at Deansville, 3,775 pounds. His measure alive from button to rump was nine feet; girth, 10 feet; height, five feet nine inches. This animal was not only a very fat one, but was faultless in every particular. He was bought by a company of butchers at Bull's Head, New York City, for \$1,250, and after being dressed, his hide was stuffed and kept at their headquarters as a curiosity. On every great public display or celebration by the citizens for many years afterwards, this animal was paraded as the "Waterville ox." It is still preserved by the butchers' hide and melting association of that city. In Bagg's history of the pioneers of Utica, mention is made of extraordinary animals exhibited at the Oneida county fair at Whitestown, in 1822. One was a hog that weighed nine hundred pounds. This was a porker raised and fatted at the distillery of Reuben Tower.

LEATHER AND BOOTS AND SHOES

First and most continuously prosperous industry in the town is that of tanning, which was begun in the south part of the town in 1796, by John Williams, a son of Ezekiel Williams of New Hartford. In 1801, he removed the business to Waterville, where he enlarged it on property bought from Benjamin White. He remained here increasing and improving the business with great profit, until 1821, when he formed a partnership with Chauncey Buell, to connect with it the manufacture of boots and shoes, and to make a market chiefly in the western country. In the year of 1826, after accumulating a handsome property, Mr. Williams sold out his entire interest to Mr. Buell and Elihu Newberry, and they managed the concern together, selling at wholesale and retail. In 1832, Mr. Buell bought out Mr. Newberry's interests, and after continuing the business alone for a few years formed a partnership with Norval C. Bacon. About 1840, Mr. Buell became again proprietor of the whole, and carried it on until he associated with him his sons Edward and Samuel. They made a speciality of a boot and shoe for heavy work in lumbering and prairie farming, beginning in Delaware County, New York, and extending through the timbered and prairie states of the west. The firm was afterwards increased by Samuel w. Goodwin purchasing an interest in the concern, and this was prosperous during its term. For many years the manufacture has included all the finer quality of boots and shoes suited to nearly all markets, and the labor has been done by men and women.

In 1883, the Buells built a new tanning establishment greatly enlarging their business, and the entire plant, with the increased labor needed for all the work, has added much to the activity and population of the village.

Mr. Chauncey Buell, after a long life of industry and success in business, setting a noble example as citizen and Christian, died at Waterville, Feb. 11, 1885, aged 89 years.

INVENTIONS

Quite early in the century when the bark used in tanning was ground under heavy stone wheels revolving around an upright shaft, Edward Trask, taking hint from the little spice grinder in every kitchen, invented a conical cast-iron bark mill, and it was soon introduced into the tanneries every where in the country. Its manufacture in the village immediately followed; and although since

changed and very much improved, successively by Richard Montgomery, Green & Montgomery and B.A. Beardsley, it has continued a business to the present time. In March, 1832, Oliver C. Harris taking his idea from the Trask bark mill, invented a machine for grinding paint, which had before been done by moving round in a kettle of paint the half of an iron ball having a balancing handle. The Harris mill does the same work very rapidly in one operation. Its manufacture is continued by J.A. Berrill & Sons, the machine being improved by their patent to prevent the paint from flying off when at high speed; and it is now a very important industry in Waterville, employing many hands and distributing the machines all over the world.

In August, 1860, Lewis W. Harris, a brother of Oliver C., observing the cumbrous and slow way of pressing hops into bales by means of ropes and screws, invented a very simple and easily worked lever press, which went immediately into general use; and its manufacture has since been another business in the village. L.W. Harris also invented a double grinding coffee mill, the principle like the Montgomery bark mill. With this hand mill, not only is coffee ground but corn easily made into meal.

HOPS

In 1821, Benjamin Wimble, an Englishman, planted the first hop yard in Sangerfield on land of Jotham Tower, in the west part of Waterville. The enterprise in this town was wholly due to the fact that, with trifling cost, the swamp could supply the poles and the distilleries the fertilizers. It was then believed that the business, all other things being favorable, could not profitably be carried on without abundantly enriching the soil. And these were the causes that in after years, placed the town so much in advance of all its neighbors in hop growing. Mr. Wimble's yard consisted of only four acres. The vines were planted six feet apart and four poles were set in each hill. The cultivation was excellent. The poles were lined across the whole field, and the curve at the top of each, turning outwardly for the double purpose of letting the sun to the hills and shading the space between, presented an attractive appearance and was a general curiosity at the time. Wimble did not succeed in the business. At first it was very promising, but he had borrowed the capital, and low prices following in two or three years it proved disastrous. His success, however, in making a large crop had been complete. The yield was very large and favorably remembered. In 1834 Gurdon Avery of Hamilton, Madison county, bought land near the village of Marshall, and again began the cultivation. He had considerably increased his acreage, when Charles D. Palmer began another yard and continued setting out until he had twenty acres. The business was so successful-such large yields-in one case 3,900 pounds on an acre, that it grew rapidly, until most of the farms around the village and the swamp had hop fields in cultivation. It was thought when the distilleries ceased running the business would no longer be profitable, but it remained remunerative, small yields being better than any other kind of business, and it was now undertaken with the view of manuring from the farm alone, and some of our richest hop growers have made their money without other sources of fertilization. There is no enterprise among farmers depending so much for productions as upon good cultivation, nor in a season of low prices is there any so completely dependent upon mere luck for profit. A very large yield of well cured hops is often worse than no yield, and a very large yield with the price greater than ever known before will be equally bad without judgment to realize it. Growers with every element of good management in ordinary farming are at such times often the prey of extreme indecision and are morally powerless to act in any direction. These instances are repeated year after year with no improvement. Sangerfield is full of such cases. I have known a hop grower with 12,000 pounds decline to sell until he could get a dollar a pound, then refuse a dollar and six cents and finally after the opportunity was lost, chase the price down till it reached 20 cents, then frantically catch it better than nothing. Another with 10,000 pounds has refused to sell at 60 cents, preferring to wait until the "p'ise was on the p'int of turning,"

fancying that he had always done so and succeeded, and find himself, when the season had passed with his hops on hand and no demand for them. One grower in town always sells when they are ready for market, "because he can not sleep until they are sold." Another, with five successive crops on hand has never had the moral power to part with them at any price. Another, after being in the business three years, disgusted with the results, has sold out to a neighbor and that neighbor has cleared enough from the same hop yard the first year to pay the whole cost of land, poles and tillage. The dealers in the town have, as rule, been very fortunate, though mere temporary speculators often have not been. One instance in 1882 was an important exception, the speculator clearing \$60,000. But another quite as notable was the loss of \$30,000. From this small four acre yield of Benjamin Wimble, in 1822, the business has increased until the present time, when nearly every farm in town has its hop yard. This industry has given rise to another quite new and of marked character and success - the hop extract business - which as yet is confined to this village. The lupuline of the hop, which is its valuable product or principle, if left in the strobile and stored, in any way yet known, rapidly loses its strength, and in two or three years becomes nearly worthless. This process chemically extracts this element, reducing the weight to a twelfth of the pressed hops, and is preserved in cans pure for an indefinite time.

New experiences in hop growing are annually arising and upon them depend extremes never before known or anticipated. This is the case the current year, when the entire crop of the state is quite destroyed by the hop aphid, or some disease that depends upon the presence of this insect or is its constant attendant. Two varieties of the hop, the "Palmer seedling" and "Humphrey" having a wide cultivation in this country, have been originated by Waterville cultivators, one by Charles D. Palmer, and the other by Mrs. Humphrey. The Palmer is a very early tho' not a very productive variety, and the Humphrey is a late but more vigorous and prolific one. Both are popular for special objects.

NEARNESS TO PLACES OF GEOLOGICAL INTEREST

The vicinity of Waterville to localities of interest in geology and paleontology is quite marked. A walk of twenty minutes from the village will take one to the coal seams of the Marcellus shale and its abundant associated fossils. Continuing up the little creek where these appear one soon arrives at the plant beds of this period 40 feet higher, and half an hour more will bring one to two ravines heading under the south side of Tassel hill, where the water falls over the hard rocks of the lower Hamilton filled with the curtain furoid with which is there associated the Leiorhynchus limitals, supposed to make the limit of the Marcellus.

Professor Dana in his manual says; that "the Marcellus shale in central New York rarely exceeds fifty feet in thickness," but from this point down to the coal seam, which is within ten feet of the corniferous limestones it is at least 350 feet normally measured.

An afternoon ramble to the Greenslit quarries on the railroad where here begins to rise on the dip of the corniferous limestone to the highest summit level, 1,420 feet above tide, will furnish a good study of many of its brachiopods, cephalopods and crustaceans; notably also many relics of the earliest American vertebrate fishes.

Four miles west at Oriskany Falls, the entire New York series, except the Canada Galli and Schoharie Grits from the Marcellas down to the bottom of the Lower Helderberg, here a mere seam of the Tentaculite limestone, are to be seen at almost one view; and four miles south on the hill near the Cherry Valley turnpike, 400 feet higher, are hundreds of boulders of many tons each in weight of the

corniferous limestone, Oriskany sandstone and Upper Pentamerus, which have been moved by the ice to this ridge from the village ledges. One more trip two miles north of Waterville, down the east branch of the Oriskany creek, reaches the Upper Onondaga salt group of Prof. Hall, usually termed the waterline, noted as a locality of the fossil crustacean, known as the Eurypterus, and where the earliest air-breathing scorpion yet found in America was discovered. This representative of ancient insect or spider life, until quite recently believed to have no representative earlier than those in the carboniferous rocks, which are ages more recent in the earth's history, is a fine specimen, and may be even older than either of the two found in Sweden and Scotland.

A railroad ride of half an hour will set a visitor down on the reddish gray ledges of the Medina sandstone at the entrance of Rogers glen ("Swift creek" of Vanuxem) from where he may leisurely examine all the New York groups above to the Salina.

It is fair to say, however, that many neighborhoods in the south part of the county share in these advantages; and indeed the whole county, from its extreme northeast corner, includes all the known rocks from where on the third day of creation, the dry land of scripture first appeared, thro' nearly or quite half the American series of the earth's crust; thus furnishing a record of the Almighty's work in the beginning, of easy reference and examination to any person interested in physical research or the "spiritual elements of geological history."

A vote of thanks to Mr. Osborn was moved by Justice M. M. Jones and was carried unanimously. Professor Sawyer expressed his strong approval of the lecture and said that its importance would be much greater fifty years from now.

(Note: Mr. Osborn is credited with researching and writing the History of the Town of Sangerfield For "Annals of Oneida County," published by Pomroy Jones in 1851.)

The following information is from the book "Our County and its People - a Descriptive Work on Oneida County, New York as edited by Daniel E. Wager and published by the Boston History Company, 1896. These excerpts are for inclusion into the research archives of the Waterville Historical Society.

AMOS O. OSBORN.

Amos O. Osborn was born December 12, 1811, and is sixth in descent from his English ancestor Richard, who came from England to Hingham, Mass., in 1635 and went from there to New Haven, Conn., in 1639 where he became a free planter and shared in the division of land in 1643.

His father, Amos Osborn, born November 30, 1764, was a native of Trumbull, Fairfield county, Conn. He came to Waterville in 1802, where he engaged in distilling, and in 1810 purchased the farm, part of lot 39, where he and his son have ever since lived, of Benjamin White, who in turn had bought it of Col. Marinus Willet, one of the original proprietors. He was a man of industry and integrity, which with frugal living and wise management of affairs brought him a handsome competence later in life. He married Rosanna, a daughter of Benjamin Swetland, a soldier of the Revolution. Of the six children born to them Amos O., the fourth, is the only one now living. He received his early education in Waterville and at the private school of Rev. Ely Burchard at Paris Hill. Later he went to Hamilton,

which had already become a noted school centre, and after fitting there, was for two years a member of the class of 1836 of Yale College. After leaving college he studied law with his brother-in-law, the Hon. Levi D. Carpenter, of Waterville, and with Judge Joshua Spencer of Utica. In the fall of 1837 he was admitted to the bar, and soon after opened an office for the practice of his profession in Westfield, Chautauqua county, N.Y. After two years he returned to Waterville to engage in the same profession.

Mr. Osborn was a Whig in politics and has always been an ardent supporter of the Republican party. In the years 1845 and 1846 he was elected supervisor and for thirteen years was a justice of the peace while his party in Sangerfield was greatly in the minority. He also represented his district and was a useful member of the two-session Assembly in 1853. For forty-five years he was a director in the Bank of Waterville. In 1840 he was one of the original incorporators of Grace church, Waterville, and for fifty-three years has been its senior warden and a most liberal supporter. In 1853 he with his father-in-law, Deacon Joseph Moss of New Berlin, Chenango County, N.Y., built at their own expense its rectory.

It was by his suggestion and effort that the Waterville Cemetery Association was formed and it has been greatly by his aid that it has since become one of the finest village burial grounds in the State. Mr. Osborn has been its president and chairman of its executive committee ever since its incorporation.

The diary kept during the ninety days at sea of a journey to Australia in 1855 and 1856, at which time he circumnavigated the globe, and the notes of places visited both in Australia, on the Continent and in this country, show his quick habit of observation and the readiness with which he grasped and made use of points of special interest.

Throughout all his life Mr. Osborn has been a student in literature and the sciences and a man of extensive research and learning. His large and well selected library, chiefly of books of reference and works on science, shows his ardent love of nature which has ever found in tree or flower, bird, insect or rock, something to study and admire, so that his life, seemingly one of leisure, has been a very busy and a very happy one. He has been much interested in geology and his studies and discoveries in that line have been of special interest and value to science. His collection of fossils is extensive and especially full from the series of rocks in his own neighborhood. He has also devoted much time and attention to the historical study of his own town. He prepared the chapter on the town of Sangerfield in Judge Jones's Annals of Oneida county, and has in preparation a fuller history, not yet published, in which are genealogical notices of over three hundred of the early settlers of the town which he has studied and arranged with great care. While thus untiring in self-development he has been greatly interested in the advancement of Sangerfield, especially earnest in his views of right and law that should govern corporations and municipalities as well as individuals. His genial smile and cordial manner, his generous aid in case of need, his quick response of sympathy in joy or sorrow, his unvarying interest in the welfare of the public as well as its individual members, his public spirit always manifest in everything promising progress or improvement, have won for him the respect and esteem of the public in the community which gave him birth and which has strengthened and grown with his advancing years.

He is a life member of the American Museum of Natural History of the State of New York; a life member of the New York Agricultural Society; a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; a life member and fellow of the Geological Society of America and a life member and councilor of the Oneida Historical Society.

Mr. Osborn married for his first wife on May 23, 1838, Harriet N., youngest daughter of the late Joseph Moss and Rhoda Griffith of New Berlin, Chenango county, N.Y. She died March 27, 1861. Four daughters were born to them. Rosanna, who died in early childhood; Rosalie, wife of the artist Albert Bierstadt; Mary, wife of Charles C. Hall of New York, and Esther, the only one now living, the wife of William G. Mayer of the U.S. Navy, and later a leading lawyer in Cincinnati, Ohio. On July 1, 1863, Mr. Osborn married for his second wife Adaline, youngest daughter of the late Ellis Morse and Adaline Bagg of Eaton, Madison County, N.Y.

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