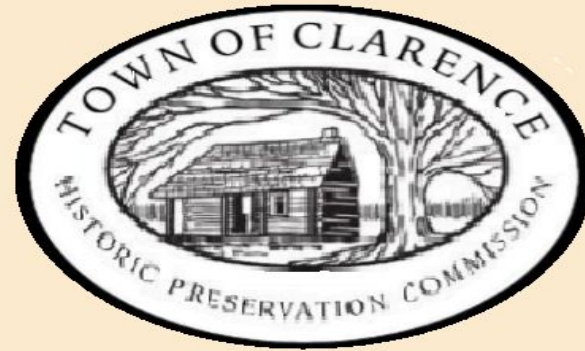


**TOWN OF CLARENCE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**



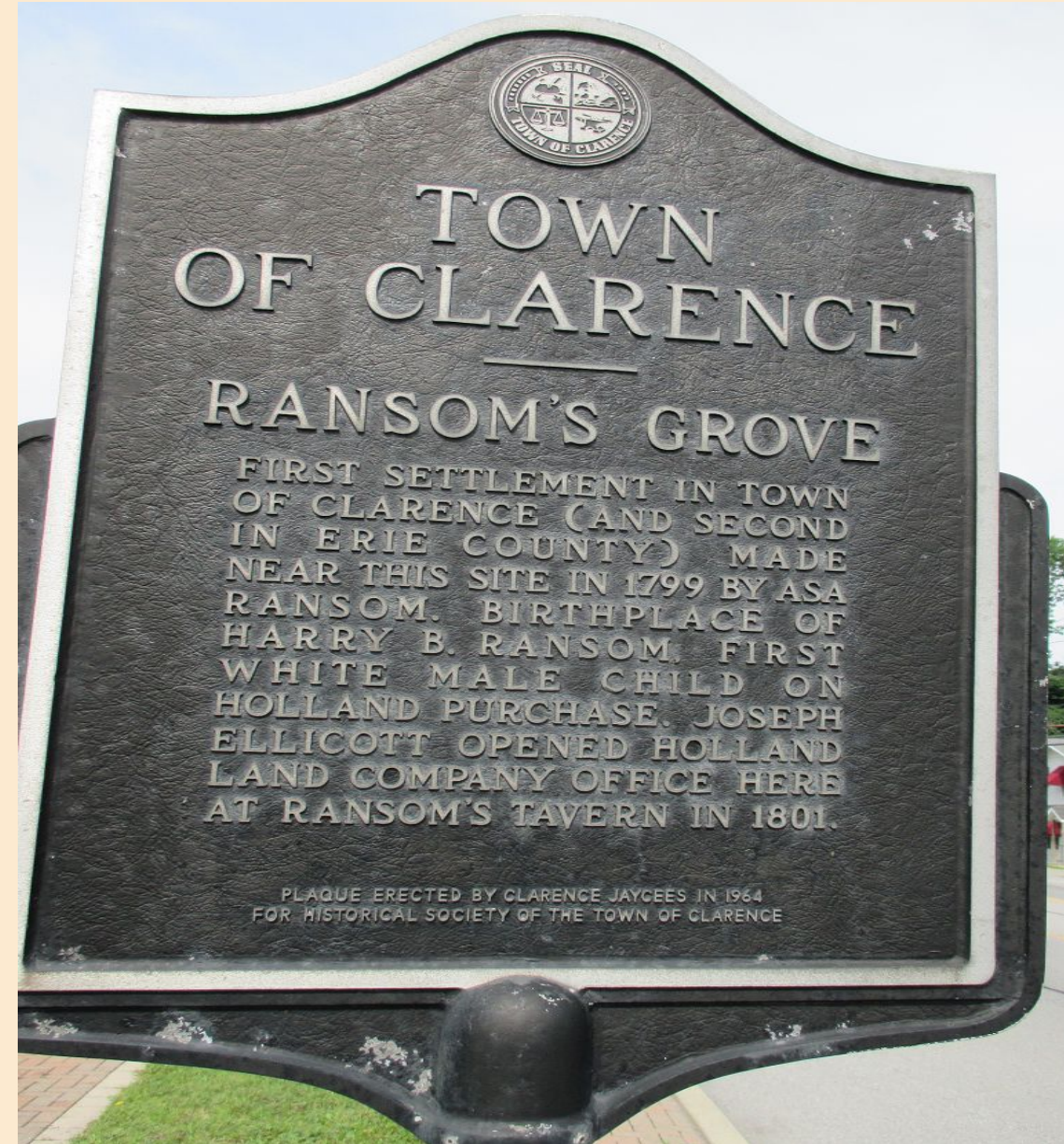
Summary of Preliminary Findings
of the History of

10594 MAIN STREET

APRIL 12, 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - 10594 MAIN STREET

- **Historical Marker directly across the street.**
- **Clarence – Oldest Town in Erie County.**
- **Heart of the Hollow on Ransom Creek.**
- **Very few original structures from the early pioneer village are left. This is one of them.**
- **Dates from 1800 to 1820 (likely closer to 1800).**
- **It is likely one of the oldest structures left in Erie County.**
- **Built with wide planks likely cut at Asa Ransom's sawmill.**
- **Was directly across the street from the village blacksmith shop dating to 1803.**
- **Was the home of several village blacksmiths.**
- **Associated with the early economy of village life in Clarence's very beginning.**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - 10594 MAIN STREET

- **Twin chimney modified Federal or Adam's style popular before 1820.**
- **Solid hand-hewn beam and peg construction similar to homes built around 1800.**
- **Likely built at time when Thomas Jefferson was president.**
- **Buffalo was likely still known as "New Amsterdam" at the time and was part Clarence.**
- **Asa Ransom's Tavern would have been visible from the window.**
- **Joseph Ellicott – First Holland Land Company Office in Ransom's Tavern.**
- **Likely sheltered refugees and injured soldiers fleeing the burning of Buffalo during the War of 1812.**



JOSEPH ELLICOTT MORRIS PURCHASE MAP -- 1800



PUBLIC LAWS

OF THE

STATE OF NEW-YORK,

PASSED AT THE THIRTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE

C H A P. II.

AN ACT to divide the Town of Clarence, in the County of Niagara.

Passed February 8, 1810.

BE it enacted by the People of the State of New-York, represented in Senate and Assembly, That from and after the first Tuesday of March next, all that part of the town of Clarence, in the county of Niagara, bounded by a certain meridian line distinguished on Ellicott's map, and commonly known by the name of the west transit line, including all that part of the aforesaid town of Clarence which lies west of the aforesaid transit line, shall be and is hereby erected into a separate town by the name of Buffaloe; and the first town meeting in the said town of Buffaloe, shall be holden at the dwelling house of Elias Ransom, in the said town of Buffaloe; and that all the remaining part of the town of Clarence shall be and remain a separate town by the name of Clarence; and that the next town meeting in the said town of Clarence, shall be held at the house of Asa Ransom, in the said town.

SUMMER OF 1813



THE PORT OF BUFFALO IN 1813.

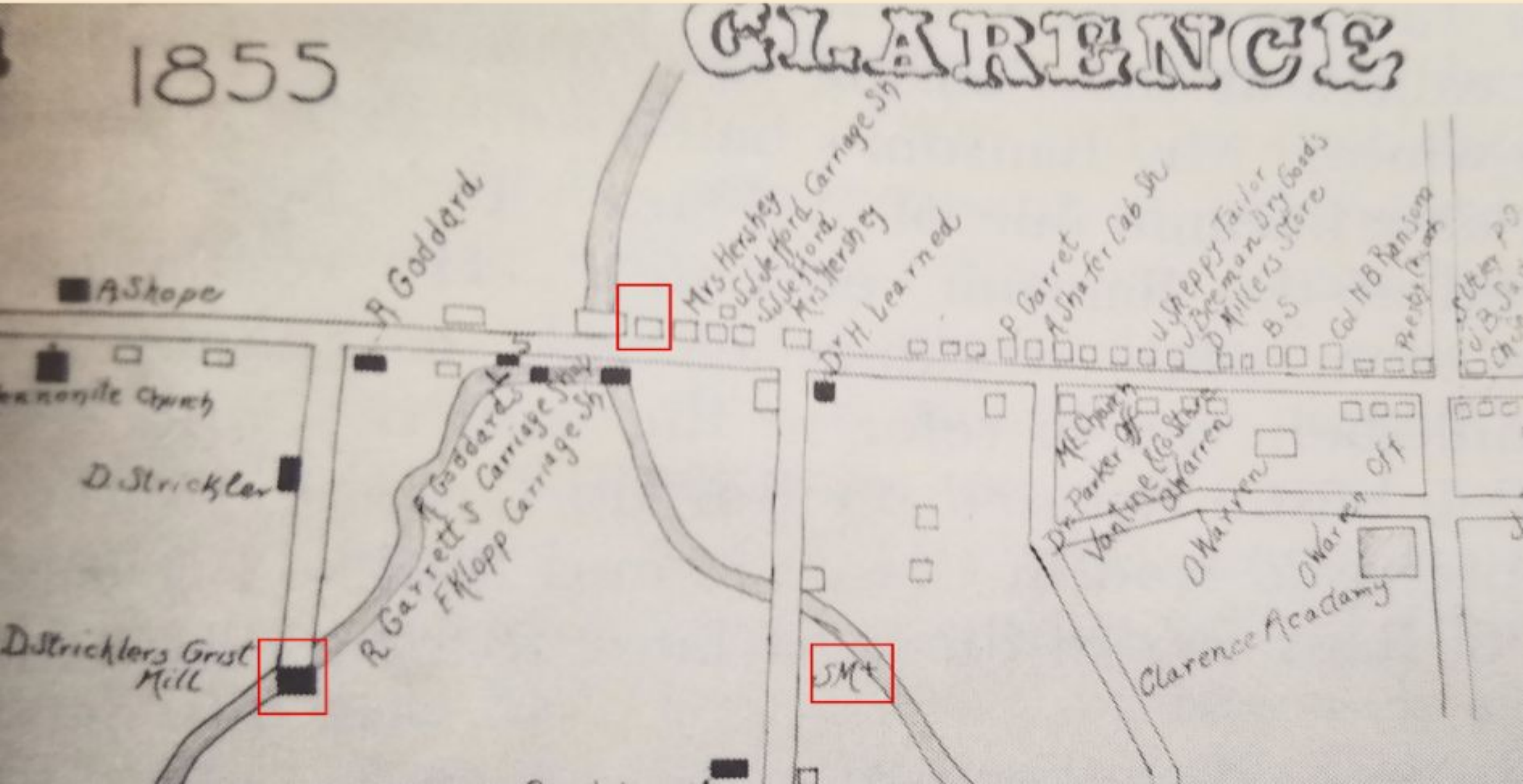
DECEMBER OF 1813



Burning of Buffalo.

4268

MAP OF CLARENCE HOLLOW - 1855











1907: John Zimmerman, Blacksmith

The blacksmith was a mighty important member of the early community. In addition to shoeing horses, he made and repaired tools, household equipment and farm implements. Across the road was the Zimmerman blacksmith shop. The wagons were used in the construction of macadam roads. The long townspeople rejoiced and bade farewell to 100 years of poor roads.



Early 1900s: houses near the bridge Left to Right:
John Zimmerman, Thomas Sinsel, John Foote



1958: The home above is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. R.K. Beard. It is the only building left where the old blacksmith shop was located.



10594 Main



Home Built in 1800





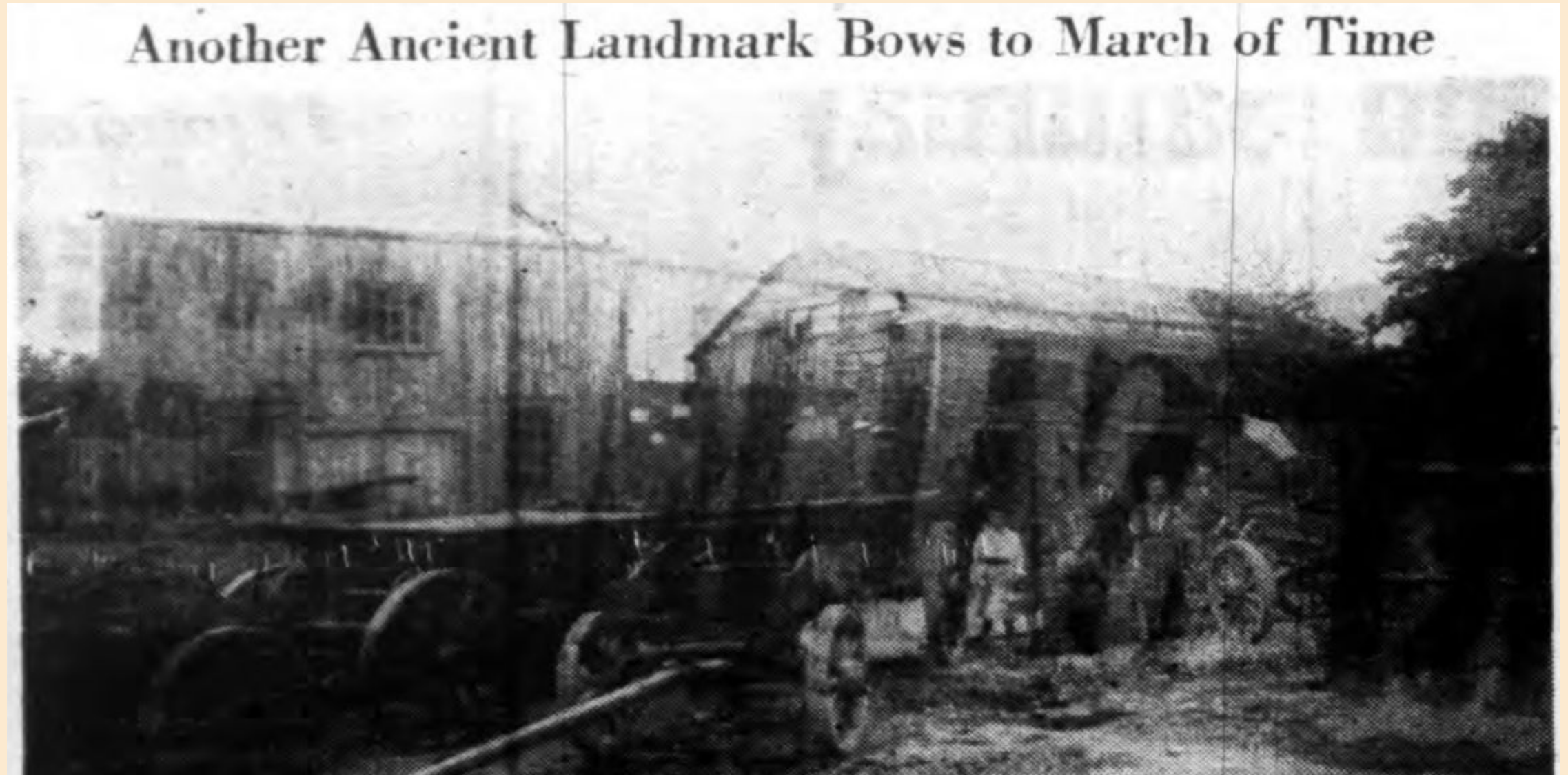
10594 Main



Home Built in 1800



CLARENCE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FAILURE - 1946



Clarence's old blacksmith shop, built while the site of Buffalo still was being surveyed, was demolished last week to make way for a modern structure. This photo was taken in 1905 when the late John C. Zimmerman, one of the last of the smiths, held sway.

Only Hitching Post Left At Site of Famed Smithy

*Wrecking Crew Demolishes Clarence Shop,
Erected When Buffalo Was Only a Prairie*

The wreckers' hammers were busy again last week and another of the county's old landmarks vanished. Only the hitching post remains to mark the site of the blacksmith shop in Main St., Clarence, which was erected 143 years ago in a small clearing of the primitive pine and oak forest.

When Mr. and Mrs. John Hand of Clarence, present owners of the property, first made plans to have the building razed, they contemplated leaving the historic old forge for "atmosphere," but because of complications, that, too, was demolished.

The shop was built just two years after the Holland Land Co. made its first sale of property to Christopher Sadler in 1801. This tract was about a mile west of Clarence Hollow.

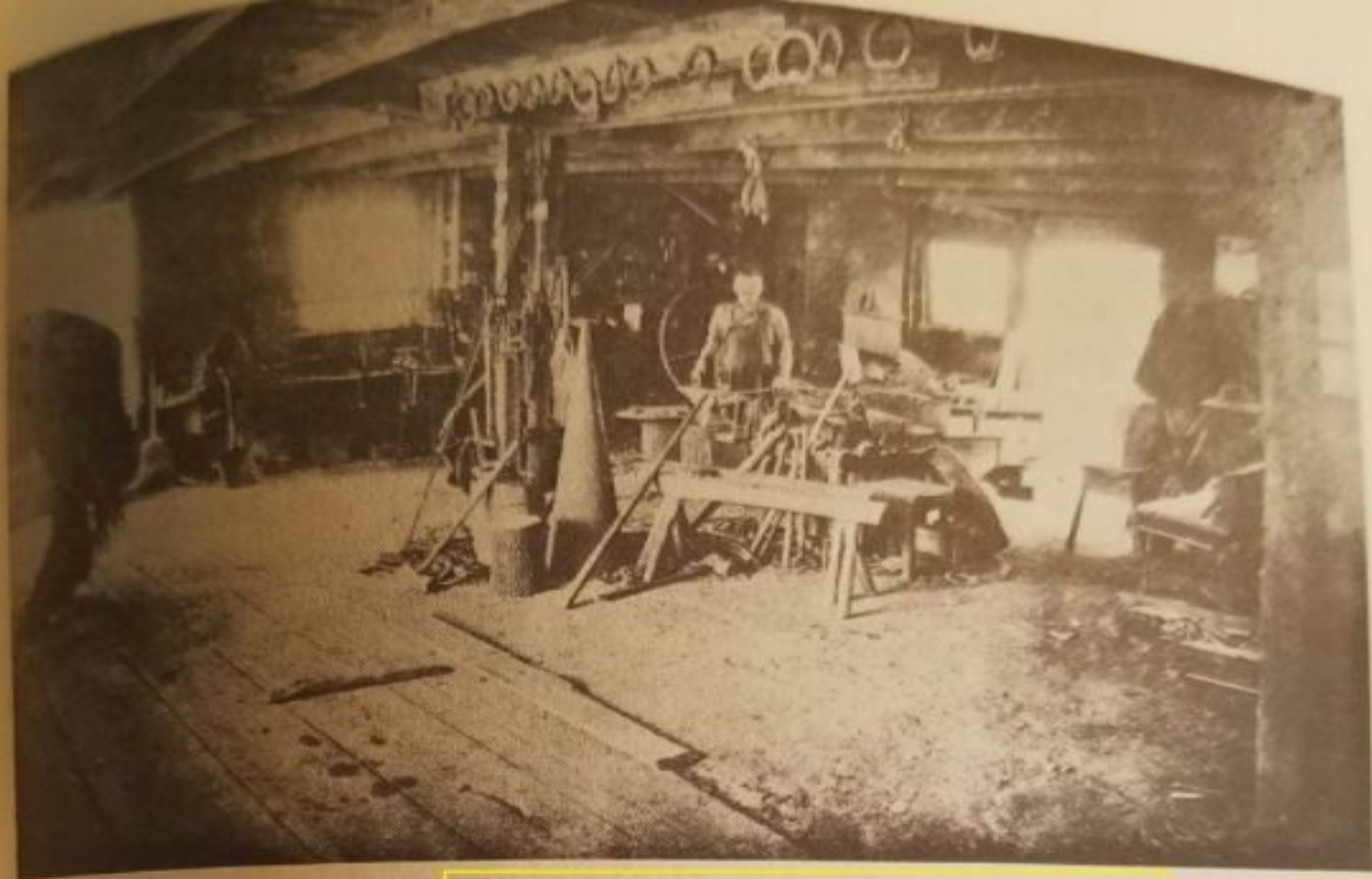
By 1803, Clarence Hollow boasted 17 "settler" families and Asa Ransom, who had built a tavern there in 1799 already was a man of prominence. In fact, the creek beside the blacksmith shop bore his name.

Much of the heavy work of clearing the fields of timber and planting grain was done by oxen, although a few of the more prosperous settlers owned horses. The name of Erie County's first smith

is not definitely known, but he is credited with spending more of his time making wagons than shoeing horses.

Probably no other building in this section has had such continuous use for the same purpose. From 1803 to 1941, the forge blazed and the striking anvils could be heard down the village street. Smiths who wielded the tongs included Fred Winagle, Peter Folley, Thomas Grey, Ernest Wenner and last, but not least, John C. Zimmerman.

Zimmerman learned his trade at the age of 16, working for John Tuttle in the Town of Newstead and then for Thomas Grey in the old "smithy" in Clarence. Answering the call of the West, he set out for Alpena, S. D., in 1883, but remained there only three years and returned to buy the old shop in Clarence from Ernest Wenner.



Interior of the **JOHN ZIMMERMAN BLACKSMITH SHOP** on Main Street near Ransom Creek. Believed to have been built by John Guise before the War of 1812.

Horses were brought from miles away to be shod under the expert handling of Zimmerman, who not only had a reputation for fine work, but "a way with horses." With Erhardt Schles, a wagon-maker who lived across the street, Zimmerman turned out scores of fine custom-built wagons and sleighs, some of which still are in use on farms around the village.

Part of the ceiling of the shop was hinged so that when lowered to the first floor, it formed a ramp up which the vehicles were drawn for painting in a dust-free atmosphere.

Then came progress. Wagons

and sleighs were made on the assembly line. Horses gave way to tractors. The few remaining smiths, in order to grab off what trade there was, equipped trucks with forges and went to the horses, rather than having the horses brought to them.

But Zimmerman, getting older, did not give up his post before the forge in the old blacksmith shop. His fame as a craftsman had spread so widely that he was kept busy turning out special jobs. Many of these were for Buffalonians who wanted fine hand-wrought hinges, chains and other forge products. Commuters were buying up the historic old homes in and around Clarence and res-

toration of old ironwork was important to them.

Zimmerman died in 1941 and with his passing the old blacksmith shop was stilled for the first time in more than a century. So sure was his family that the day of the smith was gone forever that all of his 200 hand-wrought tools were given to the scrap drive at the beginning of the war.



(no search vs grants)

9-16-1901

10-23-1901

①

-to-

L 927 NP 380

\$ 900.00-

John C. Zimmerman

Conveys ^{the east part of} prem
etal



WILLIAMSVILLE, THURSDAY, AUGUST 19TH.

Local Department.

Clarence Clusterings.

From our Regular Correspondent.

CLARENCE, Aug. 18th, 1880.

Miss Sophia Bickers started for Philadelphia last Monday morning.

Mr. Humbert is remodeling the Mallor place.

Miss Emma Ballou and Mills Case are here from New Jersey, for a vacation.

Mr. John Zimmerman has bought the black smith shop of Mr. Thomas Grey.

Mr. Chas. Ritterbaugh has been home to visit his mother.

Mrs. Dr. Lusk and her boy are here on a visit.

PRISCILLA.

Asa Ransom

Warranty Deed

To

Dated August 22 1816

Christopher M. Harvey

Acknowledged August 27 1816

Recorded October 21 1816 in

Liber 4 of Deeds at page 8

Consideration \$250.00

Conveys premises et al.

Christopher Harvey was the Portia Ransom's husband (Asa's son-in-law). They were married in 1815.

No. 41. ASA RANSOM 6 [13] 5 (*Elias*¹ 5, *James*¹ 4, *Robert*³ 3, *Joshua* 2, *Robert*¹ 1), b. Dec. 2, 1765, at Colchester, Conn.; m. Keziah Keyes Oct. 12, 1794, at Sheffield, Mass.; d. at Ransom's Grove, Clarence, Erie Co., N. Y., May 11, 1825; Keziah d. June 13, 1837, at same place.

CHILDREN.

299. 1. PORTIA (107), b. Dec. 20, 1795, at Geneva, N. Y.; m. Christopher Miner Harvey ———, 1815, at Clarence, N. Y.; Christopher M. d. Dec. 23, 1856, at Clarence, N. Y.; Portia d. Aug. 28, 1833, same place.

300. 2. SOPHIA (108), b. Feb. 27, 1798, at Buffalo, N. Y.; m. Fred Bull Merrill Dec. 31, 1815; d. Feb. 1,

10

Jacob G. Erb and
Catherine his wife

to

Catherine Hershey

NO FURTHER SEARCH VS
GRANTORS SUBSEQUENT TO
DECEMBER 31 1840

on said road 20 links to S. Aldrich's land: thence north on
said Aldrich's east line 5 chains: thence west parallel with

W Deed dated November 16 1840
recorded in liber 60 of Deeds
page 415 December 31 1840

Conveys the following described
premises:- Beginning at the southwest
corner of the village lot now owned
and occupied by the heirs of Peter
Hershey Esq., deceased on the north
side of the Buffalo Road: thence west

1855

CLARENCE

■ A Stop

B Goddard

W. H. Henshey
W. H. Henshey Carriage Sh
W. H. Henshey
W. H. Henshey

D. H. Learned

P. Garret
A. Shafter, Cab Dr

W. S. Taylor
W. S. Taylor
W. S. Taylor
W. S. Taylor

W. S. Taylor
W. S. Taylor

Temple Quay

D. Strickland

A. Goddard's
A. Goddard's Carriage Sh
A. Goddard's Carriage Sh

McChesney
Dr. Parker
V. H. Parker
V. H. Parker

O. Warren
O. Warren
O. Warren
Academy



P. HERSHEY WAS
born *November*
BORN. OCTOBER
the. 22. i. N. the. year
OF. OUR. LORD 1798

CATHARINE =
= HERSHEY. WAS. BORN.
OCTOBER. the. 3. i. N. the
YEAR. OF. OUR. LORD. 1803

AND WERE MARRIED
IN the. TOWN. OF. SPARTA. LEV. CO

NOVEMBER

the 21

1822

By

May 18 1822
Died from 6th 1822
Phy. 1822
Died 1822



CATHERINE (DRIESBACK) HERSHEY

OKO'S STUDIO

Gramma Hershey

J. H. S. TONAWANDA

Betsey Prince,
Eliza Prince,
William Prince,
Mary Prince and
George Prince

To

Catharine Hershy

Warranty Deed

Dated September 1 1850

Acknowledged September 7 1850

Recorded December 2 1850 in

Liber 115 of Deeds at page 441

Consideration \$30.00

Conveys the west 4 feet
of premises et al. (Signed and
acknowledged Betsey Prince, Maria E.
Prince, Wm. H. Prince, M. I. Prince
and George C. Prince.)

Catharine Hershey

To

James Grey and
Thomas Grey

Warranty Deed

Dated April 1 1864

Acknowledged May 2 1864

Recorded September 1 1880 in

Liber 411 of Deeds at page 206

Consideration \$500.00

Conveys the west 4 feet
of premises et al.

Henry Vantine and Catherine Hershey Vantine (daughter) purchased one of the lots in 1854, probably to live next to Catherine Hershey after Peter Hershey's passing in 1851.

Sidney Aldrich and
Lydia Ann his wife
NO SEARCH VS GRANTORS

to

Henry K. Vantine

W Deed dated April 5 1854

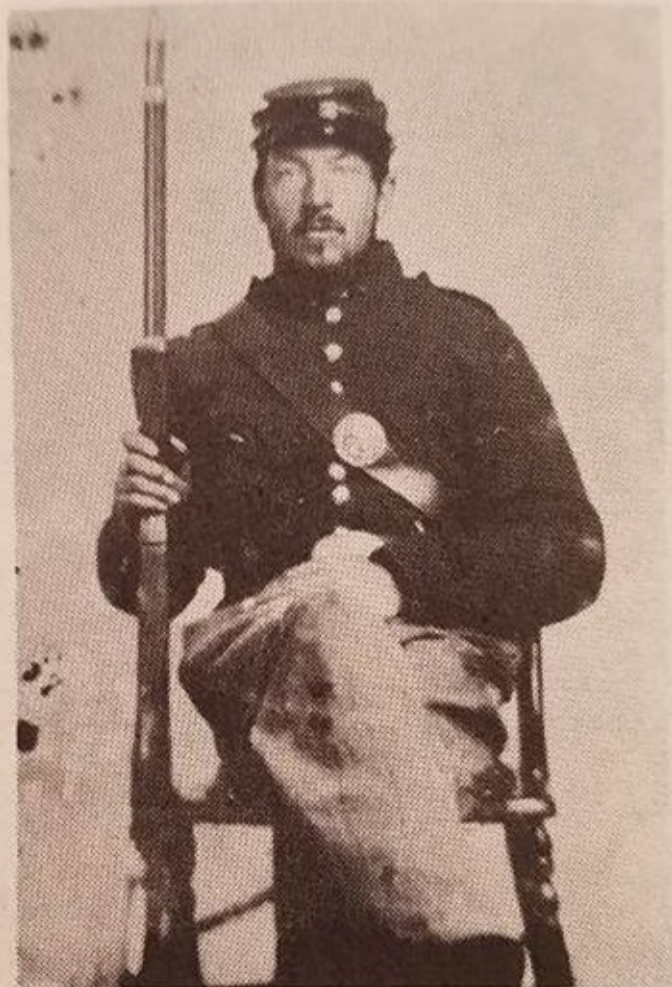
recorded in liber 141 of Deeds
page 142 April 18 1854

Conveys the following described
premises:- Beginning at a post
standing in the north bounds of
the Buffalo Road at the southwest

and occupied
by Mrs. Catherine Hersey and running
westerly on the bounds of said road

79 links to the land now owned by
Frederick Wineagle: thence north

along the east line of Frederick Wineagle and Jacob W. Smith
land 5 chains to a post: thence east parallel with the Buffalo
Road 79 links to a post: thence south 5 chains to the place
of beginning, containing 63 square perches more or less.



WILDER VANTINE

1835-1862

Killed at Antietam in 1862
(Picture from an old tin-type)

Circa-1861.

9

Henry K. Vantine
to
David Vantine

W Deed dated April 1 1868
recorded in liber 269 of Deeds
page 373 April 15 1868

Conveys the following described premises:- Beginning at a post in the north bounds of the Old Buffalo Road at the southwest corner of land owned by Catherine Hershey and thence west along the north bounds of said Buffalo Road 79 links to land now owned by Grey's (Blacksmith): thence northerly along the easterly line of said Grey's and Windnagle's land 5 chains to a post: thence easterly parallel with said Buffalo Road 79 links to a post: thence southerly 5 chains to the place of beginning, be the same more or less.

12

David Vantine and
Elener his wife
to
Thomas Sinsel

W Deed dated March 13 1871
acknowledged March 13 1871
recorded in liber 328 of Deeds
page 519 April 11 1879
Conveys the following described
premises:- Beginning at a post
in the north bounds of the Old
Buffalo Road at the southwest
corner of land owned by Catherine

Hershey and thence westerly along the north bounds of said
Buffalo Road 79 links to land now owned by Gray's and occupied
as Blacksmith lot: thence northerly along the east line of said
Gray's and George K. Vantine's land 5 chains to a post: thence
easterly parallel with said Buffalo Road 79 links to Catherine
Hershey's land: thence southerly 5 chains to the place of
beginning.

16

Thomas Grey and
Elizabeth his wife,

to

Thomas Sinsel

NO FURTHER SEARCH VS
GRANTORS SUBSEQUENT TO
SEPTEMBER 1 1880

W Deed dated April 7 1880
recorded in liber 411 of Deeds
page 208 September 1 1880
Conveys part of Lot N^o 13, Section 2,
Township 12, Range 6, described as
follows:- Beginning at a post in
the north bounds of the Buffalo Road
at the southeast corner of land now
owned and occupied by Thomas Sinsel:
thence northerly along said Sinsel's



WILLIAMSVILLE, THURSDAY, AUGUST 19TH.

Local Department.

Clarence Clusterings.

From our Regular Correspondent.

CLARENCE, Aug. 18th 1880.

Miss Sophia Bickers started for Philadelphia last Monday morning.

Mr. Humbert is remodeling the Mallor place.

Miss Emma Ballou and Mills Case are here from New Jersey, for a vacation.

Mr. John Zimmerman has bought the black smith shop of Mr. Thomas Grey.

Mr. Chas. Ritterbaugh has been home to visit his mother.

Mrs. Dr. Lusk and her boy are here on a visit.

PRISCILLA.



THE SINSEL TANNERY

which stood on the east side of Ransom Road near Ransom Creek, about where the railroad now crosses. The later Republic Light, Heat and Power Company building no longer stands.



WILLIAMSVILLE, THURSDAY, JANUARY 25TH.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AT
WILLIAMSVILLE, N. Y.

Clarence Clusterings.

From Our Regular Correspondent.

CLARENCE, Jan. 24, 1883.

1883

Our old friend Mr. **Thomas Grey**, who for some time past has been residing in Millgrove, has bought the hotel property of Mrs. Sadler and in all probability will return to our village.

HERALD.



When Thomas Gray was born in 1840 in England, his father, James, was 37 and his mother, Jane, was 38. He had one daughter with Elizabeth Grey in 1874. He died in 1890 at the age of 50.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON.

Application Number..... 3326 H.

REGISTRATION DISTRICT

Pepla

1840. BIRTH in the Sub-district of Bow and Bromley in the County of Middlesex

Form A 302 (8.10.03) Dtd 4/7/12 40a 8/76 11w 000-96

Columns—	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10*
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name, and surname of father	Name, surname, and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
13.	Twenty fourth of June 1840 at Bow Lane Bromley.	Thomas	Boy	James Gray	Jane Gray formerly Ogle	Smith	Jane Gray Mother Bow Lane Bromley	Fifteenth of July 1840	J. Dunstan Registrar	—

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 22nd day of November 1977.

*See note overleaf.

This certificate is issued in pursuance of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953.

Section 34 provides that any certified copy of an entry purporting to be sealed or stamped with the seal of the General Register Office shall be received as evidence of the birth or death to which it relates without any further or other proof of the entry, and no copy purporting to have been given in the said Office shall be of any force or effect unless it is sealed or stamped as aforesaid.

CAUTION—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) utters a falsified certificate, as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution.

BC 958491



S 221

1861
AGE 21

Residence

Thomas Gray lived in Bromley, Middlesex, England, in 1861.

Relationship: Son

1861 • Bromley St Leonard, Middlesex, England

Lives with mother, Jane Gray 58
Thomas Gray 20. Occupation: Blacksmith.

1865
AGE 25

Residence

Thomas Gray lived in Clarence, New York, in 1865.

Relation to Head: Son

1865 • Clarence, Erie, New York, USA

Father, James, is also a Blacksmith. Born in England. Naturalized and owner of land.

1890
AGE 50

Gravemarker-Thomas and Elizabeth Grey

Grave marker of Thomas Grey (Gray) 1840 to 1890 and his wife Elizabeth 1837 to 1927. Photo courtesy of John C. a great great grandson.



Age 50 — Death 13 Nov 1890 • Akron Newstead, Erie County, New York – Ledgelawn Cemetery

SUMMARY - 10594 MAIN STREET

- Likely one of the oldest remaining structures in Erie County.
- One of the last standing pioneer structures left in the Hollow. Located on Ransom Creek, the very heart of the original pioneer village.
- Associated with historic 1803 blacksmith shop which was located across the street.
- Was the “blacksmith residence” for several village blacksmiths.
- Played an important role in the early village economy, as well as with assisting pioneers passing through to head farther West.
- Likely existed before “Buffalo” was even called “Buffalo”.
- Likely built with planks cut at Asa Ransom’s sawmill.
- Likely sheltered refugees and injured soldiers fleeing the burning of Buffalo during the War of 1812.

