

# *Perinton 1812-1987*

*A Colorful Past  
A Vibrant Today  
An Exciting Future*

*Town of Perinton, New York, Souvenir Booklet*



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*A Colorful Past  
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A Booklet Commemorating  
The Celebration Of  
The Town of Perinton's  
175th Anniversary  
in 1987

By John S. Wolfe and Susan Roberts, Perinton Town Historian  
1987

Presented by *The Perinton-Fairport Post* and Wolfe Publications

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# Perinton History

MANY TIMES IN THE CELEBRATION of town, state, or national anniversaries, the time before the actual date of incorporation is ignored.

For Perinton, 175 years old in 1987, the little-known twists of history shed light on the makeup of the town we know today.

Take a trip back to when the roads were not paved and the hamlets of Egypt, Perintonville, Antioch, and Fullam's Basin were the local "residential" areas.

Fairport, the village that today lends its name to the school district and the post office, was not created until about 1827.

The 6-mile-square town of Perinton has been a part of many political entities.

The Iroquois came here, it is believed, in the 16th century from west of the Mississippi River.

They split into five tribes, and the Senecas claimed the area that is now Perinton.

In 1628, King Charles I of England included the land in a charter he offered to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He did not know anything about the area, but it was within the boundaries of land he gave that headed due west from modern-day Massachusetts, all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

It was in 1687 that the Marquis de Denonville claimed this area for France, after defeating the Senecas at Ganondagan. The treaty of Ryswick, in 1697, divided the land between France and England, amusing in that neither knew much, or seemed to care much, about the area.

The Iroquois, meanwhile, claimed the land that would be Perinton and fought for it.

In 1772, the area was included in Albany County, which included most of New York from Albany westward. It was divided that year, and our area became part of Tryon, in recognition of the last royal governor of New York, Sir William Tryon.

Tryon was not admired after the Revolutionary War, and the county was renamed Montgomery County, for Colonial Gen. Richard Montgomery, who died at the Battle of Quebec.

Still, the Iroquois claimed the land, and maps of this era designate this part of the state as Indian lands.

In 1786, the commonwealth of Massachusetts, in an agreement with the state of New York, received the right to sell the land left over from the Massachusetts Bay Colony charter, while New York retained sovereignty over the land.

Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham purchased six million acres of western New York from Massachusetts in 1788 for \$1 million.

The pair hired Judge William Walker to be their land agent. Walker's brother, Caleb, and a cousin, Glover Perrin, surveyed some of the land.

Judge Walker purchased for himself the 36 square miles that now make up the town of Perinton.

In 1789, Glover Perrin and his wife, Johanna, became the area's first white settlers when they constructed a log cabin at a site that is today on Ayrault Rd., just east of Martha Brown School.



The Erie Canal break of 1908 stands out in Perinton's history, as individuals attempted to salvage items and limit destruction.

In 1791, several relatives of the Perrins had built houses along today's Moseley Rd., and the first roads connected their cabins.

By 1800, the area had 11 families. By 1810, there were several saw- and gristmills, and established were the hamlets of Egypt (Route 31 at Mason Rd.), Perinton Center (Ayrault Rd. at Turk Hill Rd.) Hartwell's (soon to be Bushnell's) Basin at Route 96 and Marsh Rd., Fullam's Basin, and Antioch (Route 31 at Moseley Rd.).

Each had several homes, and a tavern, a store, or a mill.

The area's name changed to Ontario County and the town of Northfield, then to the town of Boyle. In 1810, part of Boyle became Penfield, and two years later another part became Perrinton.

In the northern part of the town was Perrintonville, a hamlet of seven log cabins, a block house, and a frame house. Perrintonville would become the village of Fairport in 1827, after several Erie Canal travelers who stopped for the night described the hamlet as a "fair port."

It was hoped that the canal would come through Egypt, but DeWitt Clinton, a visitor to the town in 1810, decided to follow his first plan and go to the north. That decision laid the groundwork for the surge of economic growth in Fairport.

The town of Perinton was incorporated May 26, 1812.

Letters mailed to the town often were addressed Perrinton or Perrington.

The Perrins always felt the town should be called Perrin Town.

The town thrived as a farm community, with many homesteads marked out across the land.

For a period, Perinton produced more potatoes than any other town in New York.

Residents also shipped corn, wheat, and dairy products.

By 1853, railroads came through Fairport, which, because of the traffic on the canal, had taken the lead in industry. At one time, 22 trains stopped here daily, carrying many residents to work or to shop in Rochester.

The next 100 years in the town saw Fairport continue to grow, becoming incorporated in 1867, while much of Perinton stayed the same.

The rural, farming heritage continued throughout much of the 20th century.

It was the introduction of the expressway system in the 1950s that signaled a new future for Perinton.

Within minutes of jobs in Rochester, many individuals sought the peacefulness and spaciousness that Perinton offered.

The largest surge in home building occurred in the 1960s, when the town's population doubled from 15,000 to 30,000.

Today, the town is still primarily a residential area, with the population estimated at 42,000.

Interestingly, the old hamlets, Egypt, Bushnell's Basin, and Antioch, have regained much of their former importance, with business ventures in the millions of dollars.

As one walks through Perinton's fields, climbs its hills, and praises its beauty, one does well to remember that the land has looked like this for thousands of years, and to ignore that is to ignore one's heritage.



A look at the Bushnell's Basin canal break of 1908, looking east at the Marsh Rd. bridge.

(Opposite) A train comes through Fairport at the turn of the century.



# Egypt — Stagecoach Stop

EARLY PERINTON RESIDENTS of Egypt could find some comfort in a line from Genesis XLII:

“Now when Jacob saw there was corn in Egypt ... he said ... ‘Get you down thither and buy for us ... that we may live and not die.’”

The weather of Upstate New York has always affected residents’ lives. Whether it was rain, snow, cold, or clouds, individuals either adapted or died.

The first village in Perinton was called, appropriately, Egypt. While the Perrins were building homes in the Moseley Rd.-Ayrault Rd. area, Cyrus Packard and Deacon Ramsdell were clearing large tracts of land and farming the beautiful valley in eastern Perinton around 1800.

The elements during the first two decades of the 1800s tested the reserve of Upstate New York farmers.

In 1809, it rained every day in June, and the corn did not grow.

In 1810, there was a heavy frost in July, and the corn did not grow.

In 1816, there were blizzards in June, ice storms in July, frosts every month of the year, and the corn did not grow.

To lose corn meant to lose the staple crop of the period. A shortage meant famine and near disaster for settlers.

There was one area of the state where corn did grow during those tough years: Egypt.

When word got out that Egypt had corn, buyers and speculators came from all over to purchase the crops. Egypt thrived.

Packard, the town’s first supervisor, operated a tavern on the Pittsford-Palmyra stagecoach route. Ramsdell was an active Quaker and abolitionist. Each had success cultivating the land.

The stage road made Egypt Perinton’s first important business center.

By 1820, Egypt had three taverns: Packard’s, Loud’s, and Staples’. Loud’s Tavern was also where the town justice held court. Town meetings were often held in Packard’s tavern.

Egypt also boasted a stage depot, a post office, two general stores, a gristmill, a blacksmith shop, a tannery, and a sawmill.

With the opening of the Erie Canal, much of the town’s commerce moved from Egypt to the canal hamlets, including Fairport.

The taverns and churches continued, however, for the community. The Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1825, remained a church until 1890. It was then purchased by Oliver Loud’s son, Cullen, and converted into a dance hall. The building burned down in 1922.



This scene of early Egypt and Pittsford-Palmyra Rd. was used for many years in a post card for the town.

Egypt gained some attention at the turn of the century, when Frank Monihan and John Martindale started the Egypt Canning Co.

Located on Pittsford-Palmyra Rd., the factory was the natural next step to the partners' small produce plant. Monihan and Martindale employed men and women to pit cherries and plums and pack beans in cans.

They soon expanded with vinegar and sauerkraut lines. Within 10 years, automation was introduced, to increase production.

Stephen Comstock joined the company in 1916, and the company eventually became known as the Comstock Canning Co. The company did wonders for the Egypt economy, hiring residents and purchasing farmers' goods. It pumped an estimated \$300,000 a year into the local economy during the 1950s.

The company continued to operate, although it became a division of Borden and, later, Curtice-Burns. Migrant workers played a role in the production, which climbed to 200 tons of raw beans a day during peak season.

In 1982, as a result of reorganization in the Comstock company, the Egypt plant was closed.

Egypt now lies in the next patch of suburban development. New commercial areas have gone up to the west in the last 20 years along the old Pittsford-Palmyra stage route.

Already plans are being made to bring development to Egypt without erasing its past as Perinton's first village.

# *Bushnell's Basin — Canal Hamlet*

THE HISTORY OF BUSHNELL'S BASIN probably begins in 1812, the year that Ketchum Rd. (the predecessor of Pittsford-Victor Rd., Route 96) was laid out. The road allowed stagecoach travel from Canandaigua to Rochester, by way of Victor.

This became a major transportation route, so naturally the settlement near where the route crosses Irondequoit Creek would become a stopping point. In addition to the farms of the area, inns, barns, and shops were started to serve travelers.

A Mr. Pardee was a large landowner in the area. In 1820, when he heard the Erie Canal was due to come through his property, he decided to sell.

Oliver Hartwell was the first taker.

The canal designers brought the waterway through the lowlands of Perinton. They encountered a serious problem, however, when they came to Irondequoit Creek valley. They considered building a wooden trestle to carry the canal over the valley to Pittsford but found this was impossible.

They decided to create a dirt embankment, which took several years to finish. Barrow men carried dirt from nearby hills and fields to construct the embankment, which was 65 feet high, with a stone culvert at its base that allowed the creek to pass through.

Three drumlins, formed thousands of years earlier by glaciers, provided natural piers between which the em-

bankment was built. The dirt was reinforced by more than 900 log piles.

During the construction, barges from the east had to be unloaded in the area, which became Hartwell's Basin. From there, goods were transferred by wagon to Pittsford to resume the journey westward.

Hartwell, who had opened a general store, a warehouse, and a boat yard, prospered.

In 1823, William Bushnell, postmaster of Victor, organized the real estate firm of Bushnell, Lyman, and Willmath and Co. The company bought out Oliver Hartwell's land claim, and Bushnell expanded the properties and introduced a line of canal boats.

The success in the area continued when the Great Embankment was opened. Farmers and traders journeyed to the Basin, which had become a major transfer point.

In 1825, residents of Hartwell's Basin honored the area's largest property owner by changing the name to Bushnell's Basin, even though Bushnell never did make his home there.

One of the buildings of early Perinton still stands in the Basin — Richardson's Canal House.

It was built in 1818 as a tavern and continued in that capacity for 100 years. During Prohibition, in 1920, the building was divided into four apartments, staying like that until it was abandoned, in 1970. In 1979, it was restored and reopened as Richardson's Canal House restaurant.

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quality."*



Richardson's Canal House, a four-star restaurant, occupies the former Exchange Hotel, built in 1818 in Hartwell's Basin, which later became Bushnell's Basin.

Another building in the area gives a glimpse of the Basin's past to today's drivers on Route 96.

In 1831, a congregation led by two leading citizens, Charles Dickinson and Cyrus Leonard, built the Independent Congregational Church, otherwise known as "The White Church." It has since been a Methodist church, an Episcopal

church, and a community church, and is now home to a jewelry store.

For many years, it was the Basin's community center. Susan B. Anthony once lectured there.

Another interesting element of Bushnell's Basin history is the contribution of Daniel Curtiss Rand.

Rand moved to the Basin in 1853 to establish a compound of several mills to manufacture blasting powder. He sought a location large enough so that an explosion at one mill would not set off the others. He found the location southwest of the Basin.

Until 1910, Rand manufactured blasting powder that was used for mining and clearing land and was shipped to New York, Pennsylvania, and Canada. He had about 175 acres of land, on which he built the 25-room family home, called Oakridge, and many tenant houses, mills, storehouses, and workshops.

In 1910, two of Rand's sons moved the mill to Uniontown, Pa., to be closer to customers. The company was later bought by DuPont. In 1930, Monroe County purchased the Rand property and an additional 120 acres, creating Powder Mills Park.

It has remained much the way it was in the 19th century.

The Basin, on the other hand, has changed. No longer a transfer point for canal barges, the Basin has achieved some success as a quaint canal village. It has also seen the birth of an office park industry in its beautiful back yard to the south.

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# Fairport — Industrial Leader

IN EARLY PERINTON in the northern part of town there was a low, marshy area near Thomas Creek known for infecting visitors with a fever.

The first settler, Peter Ripley, built a cabin in about 1810.

When the Erie Canal supervisors began placing the route, they instinctively followed lowlands. With the draining of the wetlands in north Perinton, the swampy area became a natural shipping point along the Erie Canal.

For more than a mile the canal's path was straight, a perfect stopping point for the canal's early barge captains. It was all the more attractive for a stop because of the great bend directly west of the area, which took great attention and care to navigate.

By 1822, there were seven log houses, one block house and one frame house in the hamlet.

The talk of the times conveyed to travelers that the area in north Perinton was a "fair port," and so the village of Fairport, N. Y., was born.

In 1827, when the name of the hamlet was changed from Perrintonville to Fairport, and the canal was thriving, the political and economic center moved from Egypt to Fairport.

Recognizing the boom before it occurred, Cyrenus Mallett moved his popular Mallett's Tavern from Egypt to Fairport, along the north side of the canal, west of N. Main St. Town meetings were soon held in Fairport. Theron Rudd Pritchard followed Mallett to Fairport, and the post office soon also moved.

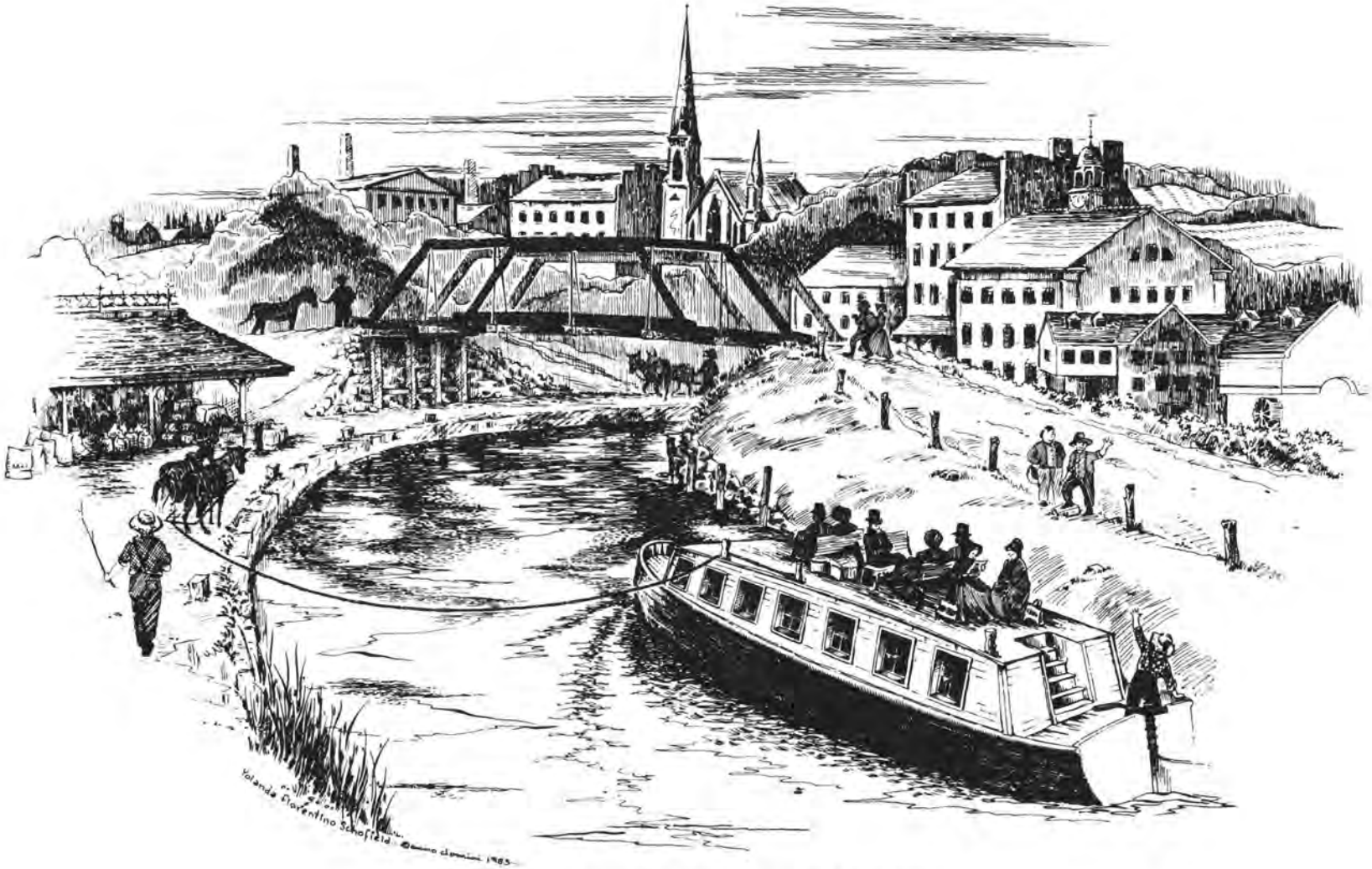
If one could back to that Fairport, he or she would see warehouse after warehouse along the canal. The buildings were filled with potatoes, potatoes and more potatoes, in addition to grain and apples, among other foodstuffs.

For a period, Perinton is believed to have produced more potatoes than any other town in the country. One of the memorable names in that respect was Bulman. The Bulman brothers, who lived near Moseley and Garnsey roads at the turn of the century, achieved notoriety as the "Potato Kings of Perinton."

It is hard to imagine such commercial hustle and bustle along the canal, but for the first half of the century, the waterway was Fairport's Main St.

Ship after ship, barge after barge, crowded the canal, stopping in the village to load goods. Then the journey continued on, either to the West or back to the East.

*This page sponsored by the village of Fairport — "A nice place to visit, a better place to live."*



Packett's Landing As It Might Have Been in 1835  
In The Village Of Fairport

Canal life in Fairport continued on strongly until the 1950s, when railroads began cutting into canal commerce. Fairport, during the same time, entered a rather celebratory and prominent era in industrialization.

The DeLand Chemical Co. was the key to the period. Daniel DeLand refined the skill of leaching potash, saleratus and soda from hardwood ashes for chemicals.

The process was integral in a growing America and DeLand made Fairport a recognizable name.

The village, which was incorporated in 1867, thrived as DeLand and his children reinvested the monies from his success into Fairport.

Many of Fairport's most beautiful homes were built during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Victorian architecture is noticeable throughout the village.

Along with saw and grist mills, another industry — although short-lived — did come to Fairport. A mulberry grove was planted at Fairport's Four Corners, S. Main St. and Church St., to support silk worms. Accordingly, a silk factory was next door. It did not last long.

The A.H. Cobb Preserving Co. was another company whose home in the late nineteenth century was Fairport.

Amos Cobb recognized the spoilage that ruined canned fruits and vegetables. Cobb and some colleagues created a can that could be sealed without solder. They set up a factory west of N. Main St., north of the New York Central railroad tracks, and introduced the Sanitary Can Co.

Sanitary Can Co., Fairport, N. Y.



This post card of the Sanitary Can Co. at the turn of the century reflects the prominence of the forerunner to American Can Co. and the gratitude of Fairport residents for its success.

*This page sponsored by H.P. Neun Company, manufacturers of corrugated and set-up boxes for 107 years.*



This was the view from S. Main St. looking north across the old bridge over the Erie Canal.

In 1909, it became American Can Co., which for the last 79 years has remained Fairport's largest industry.

The industry that chose Fairport as its headquarters helped fuel Fairport's independent tradition, a persona that has been maintained throughout this century.

Because it was the political and economic center of Perinton, many of the town's organizations were based in Fairport.

The Perinton Town Hall was on S. Main St. until 1980.

The school system has maintained the Fairport name since its formation in 1951, when all of Perinton's schools were centralized.

Much has changed in Fairport over the past 30 years. The industrialization that made Fairport so prominent has dissipated, although the National American Can Co. continues to be a crucial part of the local economy.

Substantial changes have been made to the look of Fairport since the village's centennial in 1967. Urban renewal projects have torn down much of S. Main St., where the Village Landing and Packett's Landing now stand.

To the north, there has been development. New buildings include the new H.P. Neun box factory, and the old box factory, which is being rehabilitated into shops, offices and apartments at its site on the north side of the Erie Canal.

Other projects are being considered to take advantage of the potential tourist dollars related to a unique, attractive canal village.

Whatever future materializes for Fairport, it can be expected that it will be distinct and profitable.

*This page sponsored by Fairport's newest neighbor, The Box Factory, comprising retail, office, and luxury apartment space.*

# The Erie Canal

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE today, with the predominance of automobiles and highways, that the Erie Canal, "Clinton's Ditch" to early skeptics, was the "Main St." of young Perinton.

For the first 10 years of the town's existence, the main area of trade was Egypt, N.Y. Taverns and stores were common, as were scheduled coaches.

But by 1822, stretches of Gov. DeWitt Clinton's grand dream were open, including one from Little Falls to Bushnell's Basin and another from Pittsford to Rochester.

The individuals who plotted the path of the canal — they were not trained engineers — instinctively directed its route through lowlands. To the north of Egypt was a yellow-cedar swamp, with large areas of quicksand. No one lived there because of the possibility of contracting Genesee fever, or typhoid.

As the canal was constructed, the marshes were drained and the quicksand disappeared.

Several prominent businessmen saw the possibilities of the canal's long, straight stretch in the former marsh area and constructed docks. Others built loading docks and warehouses.

Perinton and Penfield farmers, taking advantage of the new method of transportation, used major north-south roads to bring wares to the canal.

Naturally, blacksmith shops, liveries, stores, and taverns sprang up along the canal to serve the increasing commerce.

Several of the hamlets in Perinton were Perintonville, soon to become Fairport, at what is today the location of the Main St. bridge; Knapp's Bridge, to the east at Lyndon Rd.; Peter's Bridge, to the east at Turk Hill Rd.; and Fullam Town, to the west at the W. Church St. bridge. Competition was fierce, and the hamlet with the best location and terrain — Fairport — won.

With most of the town economy based around the potential of the canal, it was no surprise that Fairport soon overshadowed Egypt and Perinton Center.

Like a "Main St.," the Erie Canal was the scene of much of the town's activity. Barges and boats, horses and wagons, were responsible for the daily events in Fairport.

Similarly, there was hustle in Bushnell's Basin, Perinton's westernmost hamlet and the transfer point for all barge captains.

Before the construction of the Great Embankment over Irondequoit Creek, barges had to be unloaded at Bushnell's Basin, their goods placed on wagons, and the wagons driven to Pittsford. At Pittsford, the goods were be reloaded onto barges and floated to Rochester.



The steamer Jessie regularly made passenger trips between Fairport and Rochester in the early 1900s.

When the Great Embankment opened, the Basin continued in its importance because it was a transfer station for goods coming from Victor and the south to the canal.

Traffic on the Erie Canal increased as the canal was widened and deepened. It was the method of choice to move goods cheaply.

The introduction, and subsequent preference for, railroads in the 1860s significantly reduced the number of merchants using the canal. Fairport still fared well, however, because the railroad line traveled just north of the canal and a station was constructed in Fairport.

The final blow to canal traffic came in the 1950s with the increased development of highways and tractor-trailers.

In 1987, Perinton's 175th year, the number of barges that pass through the town is less than one a day.

Interestingly, as use of the canal by barges declined, the number of recreational boaters increased annually.

Development along the canal — homes, offices, shops, and restaurants — has also focused new attention, and new possibilities, on the Erie Canal in Fairport and Bushnell's Basin.

The future of the waterway lies in its uniqueness and in community and state recognition of that fact.

# Pittsford-Palmyra Rd.

ONE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT features of the town of Perinton was, and still is, Pittsford-Palmyra Rd. (Route 31).

The four-lane highway of today covers a trail that 200 years ago was used by Seneca Indians and animals. Fur trappers also followed this path that was known as early as 1800 as Mud Creek Rd. The road ran from Palmyra through Northfield (today's Perinton) to the Genesee River.

New York's state officials surveyed the road in 1803 as a possible stagecoach route; in 1805, it was designated a state road.

In 1806, the state improved the road, laying logs across it to form a firm dry surface, called a "corduroy road," for traveling coaches. The roads were bumpy at first, but that was an acceptable alternative, considering that a hard rain or thaw would have turned dirt paths into muddy marshes.

Legislation was passed in 1807 regulating turnpike and state road construction. The roads were expected to be 22 feet wide and have a 28-foot-wide good foundation.

Toll rates were established and were collected every 10 miles. One could expect to pay 6 cents per horse, 12.5 cents per wagon with two horses, 25 cents per stagecoach, 8 cents for 20 sheep or hogs, and 20 cents for 20 cows, horses, or mules.

Doctors, soldiers, and individuals going to church or going to vote did not have to pay a toll.

Coachmen stopped frequently to change or water their horses. For example, a coach heading east from Rochester made its first stop in Egypt, three hours and 12 miles into the journey.

In Egypt there were three inns: the Staples Inn, Oliver Loud's Tavern, and Cyrus Packard's Tavern. Each had a tap-room, a dining room, guest rooms, and a livery stable. A blacksmith was also available. Guests could stop for a brief rest, or stay overnight and catch another coach the next day.

It is believed that 40,000 passengers a year traveled on the stagecoach lines through New York state, many of them continuing west to new lives.

After the opening of the Erie Canal, in 1825, coach travel dropped off. For travelers, the canal was faster, smoother, and cleaner. During the period, many coach lines stopped service.

Pittsford-Palmyra Rd., however, maintained its importance, joining small eastern communities with the city of Rochester.

The invention of the automobile, and the increase in bus and truck traffic, placed greater importance on the former coach roads. Route 31 became, in the 20th century, a major component in the spread of suburban communities.

*This page sponsored by Dick Steamer Mobil Marts, serving Perinton quickly and conveniently since 1969.*



This was E. Main St. in Egypt, otherwise known as Pittsford-Palmyra Rd.

# Railroads

LIKE THE STAGECOACH routes and the Erie Canal, the railroads had a dramatic effect on Perinton and the village of Fairport.

The first rails were laid by Irish immigrants in 1853, the year nine small railroads were consolidated to form the New York Central. The railroad precipitated the town's shift from an agricultural base to an industrial one, and undermined the canal as the first choice for transportation of goods.

Trains coming into the village were loaded, and unloaded, with many of Fairport's industrial goods. In what must have been a strange twist of the evolving town, the loading of Fairport products on trains occurred within sight of loading docks of the Erie Canal, just to the south.

Until 1874, trains had wood-burning engines. One of the often-forgotten sidelights of the early railroads was the unexpected rash of fires caused by live sparks flying from the engine stacks into fields and onto trees and buildings. The switch to coal-powered steam engines in 1874 lessened, but did not eliminate, the danger of fire.

Railroads boomed in the post-Civil War years. The number of tracks through the town increased with the laying, in 1882, of the West Shore tracks by Italian immigrants.

The first mail trains on the Fairport route started service in 1875. Bags of mail were tossed from the moving trains to waiting postal officials (and inevitably a few bags fell beneath the train wheels or broke apart as they hit the ground — some of the letters and parcels were never found).

During the peak years, more than 3,000 passenger tickets a month were sold at the Fairport station. Traffic was so heavy that railroad companies needed two depots — one for passengers and another for freight.

Like the railroads' effect on canal travel, the introduction of cars, trucks, buses, and airplanes in the 20th century forced a cutback in train schedules and a consolidation of services.

Today, Amtrak and Conrail continue to offer passenger and freight service. There is no longer a Fairport stop, but the trains continue to run through the town regularly, the whistles still blow, and the clicking of the wheels can still be heard.

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The Fairport station on N. Main St. was depicted in post cards.



This gentleman and the two girls are waiting for the next train to Rochester at the Egypt train station.

# Perinton Personalities

## The Perrins

THE TOWN OF PERINTON was named for the area's first white settlers, the Perrins.

Glover Perrin and his cousin, Caleb Walker, first came to survey 36 square miles of land here. Glover liked what he saw and decided to settle in the area. He built a log cabin on what is today Ayrault Rd., just east of Martha Brown School.

In 1790, he brought his wife from Rehoboth, Mass. For almost two years, they were the only white settlers in the area.

Glover Perrin's brother, Jesse, and Jesse's wife, Abigail, came to the area in 1791. The number of Perrins kept growing.

Huldah Perrin and her husband, Abner Wight, then arrived. Then Edward Perrin and his wife, Lydia, Ezra Perrin, Jacob and Elizabeth Perrin, Asa and Rebecca Perrin, and Daniel and Nancy Perrin arrived. They all settled near Glover, many of them on today's Moseley Rd.

The town of Perinton was established by the state in 1812.

Needless to say, the family was active in town affairs. The First Congregational Church first met in Jesse's house. Jesse was a commissioner of highways, a fence-viewer, a pathmaster, and overseer of the poor.

Glover was assessor, school commissioner, and constable. Asa was an overseer of highways, a school commissioner, and a fence-viewer. Edward was an overseer of highways, and both he and Ezra were jurors.

As the name of the surveyor of the area, "Perrin" appeared on many early maps. The Perrins wanted the town to be called Perrin Town or Perrin's Town, because so many Perrins lived there.

The New York State Legislature chose a slightly different version, however, and the law creating the town called it Perrinton.

Even so, in official documents and personal papers, the town was variously referred to as Perrinton, Perinton, and Perrington. "Perrington" disappeared first, although that pronunciation existed among town residents through the mid-20th century.

The generation that followed the first Perrins moved westward. Many settled in Ohio and Michigan. There are many Perrin Streets scattered throughout the Midwest. There is a Perintown, Ohio, named after the Perrin family.

The last Perrin in Perinton was James Perrin, a cooper and canal boatman. He lived in Fairport until 1872. Fairport's Perrin St. was named for him.

*This page sponsored by Perinton's office park pioneer, the Powder Mill Office Park.*



This historical marker on Ayrault Rd. near Martha Brown school marks the area of the town's first home.

*This page sponsored by Neil Hirsch Enterprises, Inc., adding to Perinton's development with quality homes and planned communities such as Eagle Vale.*

# Milton Budlong

ONE OF THE PROMINENT NAMES in early Perinton was Budlong.

Milton Budlong was born in 1801 in Schuyler, N.Y., the son of a hardworking family. Without much formal education, he worked on the family farm until he was 16, when he traveled to Perinton to work as a woodcutter for his uncle.

Three years later, after a trip to Schuyler and a return to Perinton, Budlong married Clarissa Shumway, who would be his wife of 32 years. They had eight children, two of whom died in childhood.

In 1822, Budlong bought 25 acres and began farming. The next year, he bought an additional 80 acres. In 1830, with the financial support of his friend, Ralph Lister, he entered the cattle trade.

By 1834, he had made his first cattle drive to the Albany livestock market. In 1840, he sold 600 head of cattle at that

market. Records indicate that in 1850, he was worth \$10,000, a respectable sum in an age of 2-cents-per-acre taxes.

He was to own 670 acres in Perinton and 415 acres in Rush, while also leasing 1,500 acres.

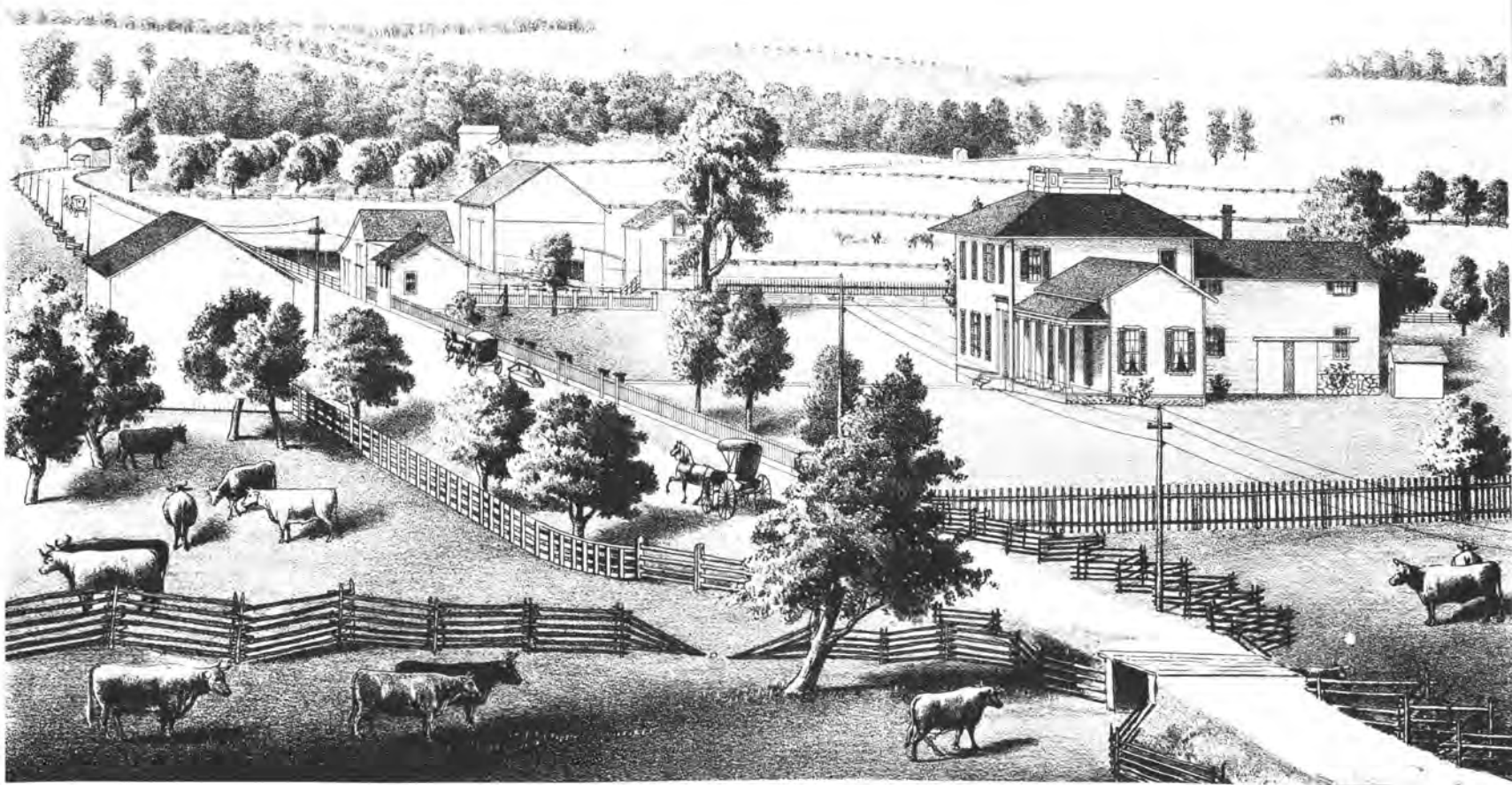
He was believed to be selling \$20,000 worth of cattle each year.

The Budlongs' farm was on Budlong Rd., today's Perinton Parkway. In the 1877 "History of Monroe County," a drawing of the farm shows a large farmhouse and many barns and sheds. One tenant house is all that remains today.

The Budlongs were founding members of the Free-Will Baptist Church. Milton Budlong was an overseer of highways, a fence-viewer, and a juror.

Milton Budlong died in 1880 at the age of 79. He was predeceased by Clarissa, who died in 1852. They are buried in Greenvale cemetery.

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The Budlong homestead in North Perinton was widely known in the 19th century.

# Oliver Loud

AN INTRIGUING CHARACTER in Perinton's history was Oliver Loud, tavern keeper and amateur astronomer of Egypt N.Y.

Oliver Loud was born in Weymouth, Mass., in 1780. Around 1800, Loud, like so many of that day, headed west to the frontier, land of opportunity. He was given a suit and \$100 by his father.

By 1805, he had made it to Palmyra, courted Charlotte Bateman, and married. A year later, the newlyweds moved to Perinton and started a family that would include seven children.

By 1812, the main road through Egypt, which would become Pittsford-Palmyra Rd. (Route 31) in later years, had developed into a major route to Rochester and further west. An opportunist, Oliver Loud built a two-story tavern, decorating it with much of the flavor of his New England roots.

The tavern was a stopover point for coaches en route to Rochesterville or to the East. Loud offered travelers food and drink, and, if they wished, a bed for the night.

The building additionally served as a place for town meetings.

In later years, Loud opened a small store and a sawmill. History also notes that Loud was an amateur astronomer and offered weather reports to his neighbors.

He also published several almanacs.

Oliver Loud died in 1829.

One of his sons, William Plunkett Loud, lived in Egypt for his entire life, from 1819 to 1918.

The building that was Oliver Loud's tavern still stands, although not at its original site. Abandoned for several years, it was purchased in 1985 and moved to Richardson's Canal Village in Bushnell's Basin. It is now operated as a country inn, named, appropriately enough, Oliver Loud's Inn.



Oliver Loud's Tavern, constructed in Egypt in about 1812, was falling into ruin in 1986 before it was moved to Bushnell's Basin and restored as a country inn.

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with new sites and new homes for 35 years.*

# William Ellsworth

ANOTHER OF PERINTON'S LONGSTANDING family names is Ellsworth.

William Pratt Ellsworth traveled to Perinton in 1821 from Florida, N. Y., to join his former neighbors, James Hannan and Lovejoy Cady.

He married Irene Cady and worked for Hannan.

After six years, the Ellsworths moved to Ridgeway, N. Y., near Oak Orchard, but William Ellsworth contracted malaria, and the couple was forced to return to Perinton in 1832. He purchased property in Perinton Center, near today's intersection of Turk Hill and Ayrault roads and began clearing the land.

He worked hard cultivating the land, and in the off-season removed stumps and stones from the fields.

In time, he started a cheese factory and a cider mill on the farm. In addition, he made plank-fence sections and fence caps for zigzag fences.

He also had a tannery.

In 1840, he opened a loan association known as Ellsworth's Bank and was respected for lending neighbors money at a low interest rate. He also provided a safe place in which to keep papers, deeds, and notes.



William Ellsworth

Ellsworth's farm looked like a community by itself because of many of his holdings, which included the farmhouse, barns, sheds, the cider mill, the cheese factory, bee houses, and poultry houses.

Ellsworth's grandson, Lincoln Byron Ellsworth, later ran one of the farms, Maple Grove Farm. Lincoln was skilled with machinery and built one of the town's first steam engines. Eventually, he moved to Rochester, opened a bicycle shop, and showed developments and inventions at New York City trade shows. He returned to the family farm in 1906 and lived there until his death, in 1941.

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# Andrew Lincoln

IN 1816, 32-YEAR-OLD Andrew Lincoln moved to Perinton and started work as a builder and carpenter.

Within two years, Lincoln had enough money to purchase a farm and invest in water rights along Irondequoit Creek. In 1821, Lincoln and partner Samuel Rich of Penfield built a gristmill on the west side of the creek, south of today's Linden Rd. The mill pond covered 26 acres of what is now Spring Lake Park.

The pair's mill was the largest in the area. It had three runs of stone, two for processing grain into flour, and one for custom grinding. Lincoln bought out Rich in 1836, and in 1847 moved the mill to the north side of Linden Rd. and built a larger stone mill.

The mill race ran along Irondequoit Creek and under Linden Rd. to the mill wheel. The mill pond was enlarged to 50 acres. The new operation had four mill stones and two overshot wheels. The business expanded so rapidly that Lincoln employed four full-time millers and several salesmen to market the flour throughout New England.

Lincoln's business continued to grow. He soon built a sawmill and manufactured furniture. He was a partner in a tannery. He owned, in addition to the mill property, about 350 acres. When he died in 1866, he was considered one of the most prosperous millers in the country.



The Lincoln Mill stood near today's Linden Ave. and Spring Lake Park.

Lincoln left the mill to his oldest son, Andrew D. Lincoln. Soon after, the mill was sold to W.H. Woodhull, who kept the gristmill in operation until 1877.

The mill dam was destroyed in 1916 by high water levels and an ice jam. The stone building was torn down in 1920, after a fire. Its stones were used to build a house on Fairport Rd.

*This page sponsored by Ted Collins Tree & Landscape, a leader in tree care, lawn care, plant care, and landscape design and construction.*

# William Bushnell

ONE OF PERINTON'S NOTABLE figures never even lived in Perinton.

William Bushnell, who lends his name to Bushnell's Basin, maintained his home during the first half of the 19th century in Victor, to the southeast.

He moved to Bloomfield from Sheffield, Mass., in 1817. Soon after, he moved to Victor because he saw a larger potential for growth.

Bushnell would later serve as postmaster of Victor for 20 years. But in 1817, at the age of 41, he rode two hours on horseback each way to earn his living at a job at his brother's store in Charlotte. His determination paid off, and in 1820 he opened his own store in Victor.

Within three years, he had accumulated enough money to establish the real estate firm of Bushnell, Lyman, and Willmath and Co. One of the firm's first endeavors was to buy out Oliver Hartwell's land holdings in Hartwell's Basin. The company expanded the holdings and added a line of canal boats.

In 1825, residents of Hartwell's Basin recognized Bushnell as the area's largest landowner and wealthiest citizen by changing the name of the village to Bushnell's Basin.



William Bushnell

There had been a rapid growth in the area, with new stores, taverns, and warehouses. The Basin had become a key transfer point for shippers, because canal boats could not pass Irondequoit Creek until the Great Embankment to the west was constructed.

Bushnell retired in 1828 at the age of 52. He continued to own canal boats, his shipping firm, and a distillery.

He died in 1846 at the age of 69.

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Rochester area since 1920.*

# James Hannan

JAMES HANNAN MOVED to Perinton in 1810, settling on 80 acres in the center of town near the present-day intersection of Moseley Rd. and Route 31. The area has been called, at various times, Antioch, Doud's Corners, and Hannan's Corners.

Hannan began clearing the land. In 1811, he married Lucretia Packard, a local teacher, whose father, Cyrus Packard, would become the town's first supervisor. The Hannans built a log cabin and began farming.

Through the years, James Hannan was an active official in the town. He served as pathmaster, fence-viewer, and overseer of highways. During the war of 1812 he was a Minuteman, serving on the Niagara frontier.

The Hannans had 10 children. Five died during childhood.

Only one son, Jesse Briggs Hannan, who was born when his mother was 43 and his father was 47, lived to adulthood. He ran the Hannan farm and took care of his parents. He was active politically, serving as town supervisor and as chairman of the board of supervisors.

Jesse Hannan married at the age of 53. He and his wife had two children, a daughter, Stella, and a son, Jesse. Jesse, Sr., was killed in a freak accident with a horse shortly before his son was born.

Jesse's widow turned the farm over to tenants and moved to Fairport to raise her children.

In 1905, at age 17, Jesse Hannan moved his mother and sister back to the Hannan farm. He was a success, and in 1908, he eloped with Lucille Parce, daughter of Walter

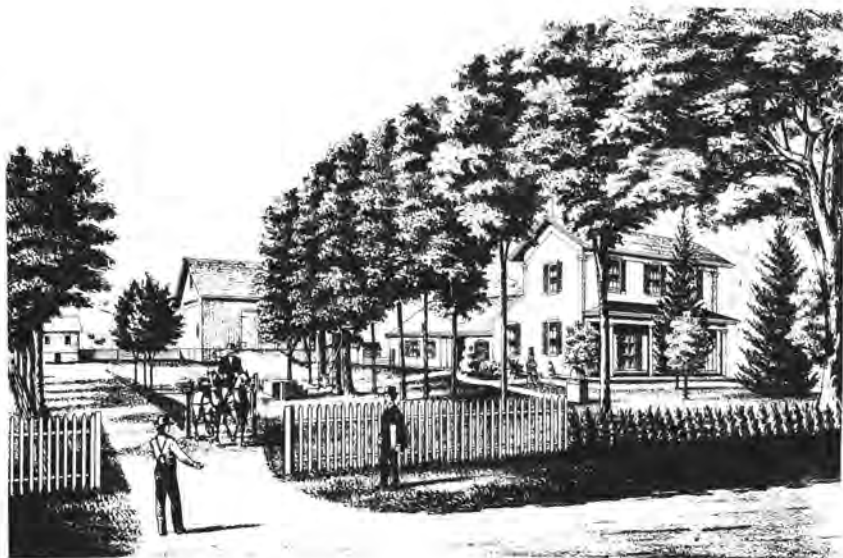


James Hannan



Lucretia Hannan

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The Hannan homestead was a part of Antioch, the hamlet at today's intersection of Routes 250 and 31, for more than 150 years.

Parce, the founder of East Rochester. They lived at the Hannan homestead.

Jesse Hannan followed in the political footsteps of his father and grandfather. He was town supervisor from 1924 to 1935. During his terms, the town adopted a zoning ordinance, established the first water district, and initiated a working agreement with Monroe County for highway maintenance.

In 1935, he was elected Monroe County treasurer, and from 1936 to 1953, he served as county director of social welfare. All the while still running the farm. He died in 1961.

Hannan's sons, Parce and Jesse, attended Cornell College of Agriculture. Parce joined work on the farm in 1932, Jesse in 1955. Both Parce and Jesse became well-known in area farming circles. Parce was involved in the Masons, the Grange, and the Monroe County Farm Bureau. Jesse was a member of the Monroe County Dairy Committee and the Farm Bureau, and he was a director of the Monroe County Extension Service.

Hannan's daughter, Marguerite, is a well-known ceramist whose work is sold in area galleries. She is married to former town attorney Robert Antell. They live near Powder Mill Park.

Parce and Jesse Hannan no longer live in Perinton. They sold their farm in the late 1960s. Their land has been developed into Perinton Hills mall, Blackwatch Office Park, and the Blackwatch Estates and Southern Hills subdivisions.

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# Daniel DeLand

IT IS HARD TO LIVE in Perinton and not be aware of the prominence of the DeLand family. There is the DeLand mansion at 99 S. Main St., Fairport; Minerva DeLand School; and DeLand streets.

The DeLand family operated the prosperous DeLand Chemical Co. on Fairport's north side for more than 40 years.

Daniel DeLand, son of Levi DeLand Sr., who had a farm east of Fairport, was an adventurous spirit. After leaving home for a stint in ocean commerce, he returned to central New York to become a canal-boat captain. Then, a year later, in 1848, he married Minerva Parce and moved to Wisconsin, where their first son, Levi Justus, was born.

Several years later, the Daniel DeLands returned to New York, staying with Minerva's parents in Norwich. Daniel became an apprentice to Minerva's father, Justus Parce, and learned the process of manufacturing potash and saleratus.

It was in 1852 that the DeLands returned to Perinton and opened a "mom and pop" business called D.B. DeLand & Co.

It was just that. Daniel DeLand would drive his lumber wagon from farm to farm collecting hardwood ashes. Then he would supervise the leaching process himself, while his wife and a helper packaged the finished chemicals in the pantry.



Henry DeLand



Daniel DeLand

Needless to say, the demand for potassium and sodium compounds for agricultural and manufacturing needs was great during this era, and the company grew rapidly.

The company's factory was located along the canal on the east side of Fairport's N. Main St. There were a number of buildings and a docking area for transports.

Minerva's brother, Joseph Yale Parce, joined the business in 1859 as factory manager and resident inventor. His joined-arm crane streamlined the handling process of the company.

By 1872, the DeLands had invested \$250,000 in the company. They employed more than 100 people in the factory

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and many more as salesmen and packagers. Their influence was so profound that the Rochester *Union & Advertiser* wrote in 1872: "*Fairport, a thriving village of 2,000, owes, if not its actual existence, at least its increase and prosperity to one large industry, that of D.B. DeLand & Co., manufacturers of saleratus, soda, cream of tartar, and superior baking powder.*"

In 1872, Daniel DeLand, known as Judge DeLand after being appointed town justice in 1858, died of a fall down an elevator shaft.

His brother, Henry, and son, Levi, took over the business.

Henry DeLand had joined his brother's company in 1854 as a salesman at the age of 19.

Henry, who had taught school for a time, quickly became the company's best salesman. He later was the company's general manager, supervising a small army of salesmen who sold DeLand products across the country.

In 1864, Henry married Sarah Parce, fourth daughter of Justus Parce and sister of Minerva Parce DeLand.

After Daniel's death, in 1872, Henry added the responsibilities of president to his duties, while continuing as general manager.

He still traveled around the country selling DeLand products. In 1874, sales amounted to about \$517,000.

Whereas Daniel DeLand had built a home and planted an elaborate garden at the corner of N. Main St. and Whitney

Rd., Henry built his home in 1875 at the corner of S. Main St. and Church St., Fairport's Four Corners.

The 34-room house, now the Green Lantern Inn, was constructed for \$50,000, making it the costliest private residence in the town.

One of the DeLand family's interests was the First Baptist Church, where Henry was head of the Sunday school for many years and his wife was founder of the Women's Missionary Society. Henry contributed \$12,000 to the building fund for the church.

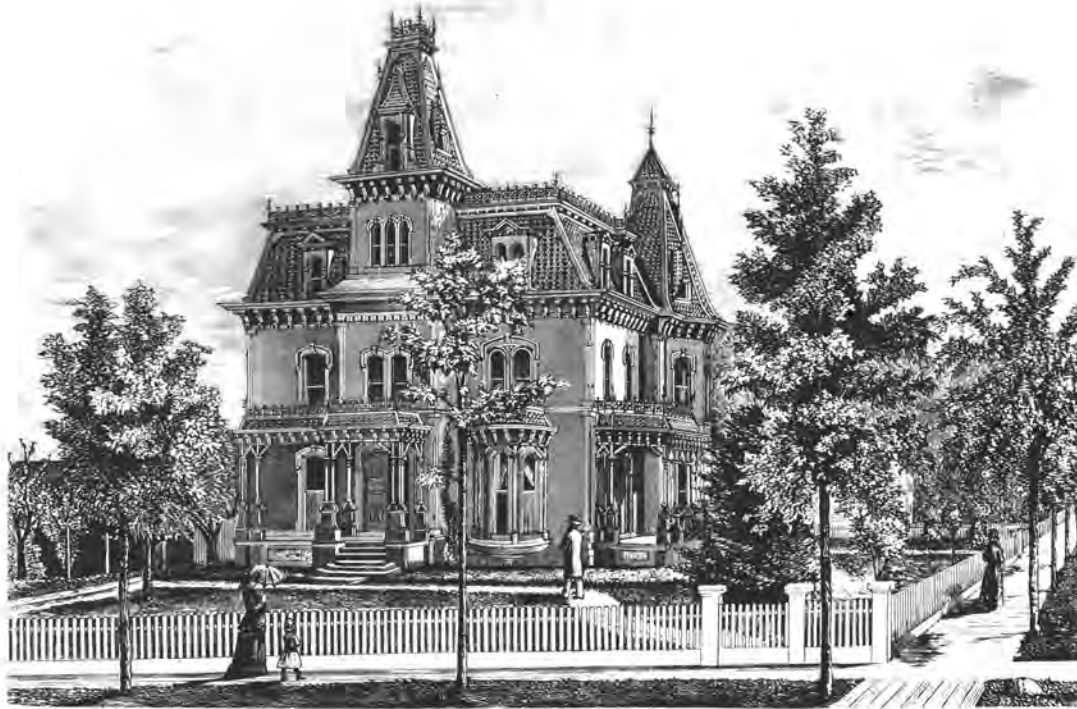
In 1876, Henry DeLand founded the town of DeLand in northern Florida. In 1881, after selling his shares in the company to his nephew, Levi, Henry DeLand and his family moved to Florida.

He urged others to invest in his community, guaranteeing their investments.

A severe frost in 1896 destroyed thousands of orange-tree groves. Henry DeLand made good on his word and reimbursed all of the investors. He then sold all of his holdings and moved back to Fairport, where he worked as general manager for the Monroe County Chemical Works.

Henry DeLand died in 1908.

Levi DeLand, Daniel DeLand's son, took a larger role in the company after his father's death, in 1872. Nine years later, he purchased Henry DeLand's shares in the business and became president of the company, then called DeLand Chemical Co.



The DeLand mansion at Fairport's Four Corners has come to represent the village over the years.

The DeLand family was always involved in the community. Levi founded the DeLand Hose Co. and the town band. He also set up Perinton's first electric lighting system, along Fairport's N. Main St., from the DeLand plant just north of the Erie Canal to Whitney Rd.

His brick home on the northeast corner of N. Main St. and Whitney Rd. was noted for its architecture, its 600 acres of fruit and nut trees, and an orchard of dwarf apple trees. The house was sold to the First Baptist Church after Levi's death in 1904.

In the late 1880s, competition from Arm & Hammer diminished DeLand Chemical Co.'s share of the saleratus market. Levi DeLand struggled to keep the company going into the 1890s, but a disastrous fire in 1893 destroyed the N. Main St. factory.

The fire, coupled with the rising costs of raw materials and an economic recession in the 1890s, effectively ended the reign of the DeLand Chemical Co., the "Saleratus King."

# Hidden Perinton

## The Oxbow

HIDDEN TO THE WEST of Minerva DeLand School is a part of Perinton with an interesting history.

It is the Oxbow, a tiny community that at one time was a resort area and at other times a wild and woolly town of tough characters.

Maps of the original Erie Canal show it heading in a backward C directly south of Fullam's Basin, the area that includes today's Perinton Park. The canal then returned to its straight southerly path.

It must be remembered that all builders of the canal were not engineers. They determined the route according to the suitability of the soil, rock formations, and land grade. For this reason, the early canal sometimes resembled a twisted pretzel.

By the time the canal was enlarged, in 1836, the builders had learned a few things. The route from Fullam's Basin to today's Ayrault Rd. was straightened. The eastward C was left intact and the space between the canal and the C was filled with water, thus creating the Oxbow.

The Oxbow saw its first canal break on Nov. 29, 1864. The culprit? A muskrat that had burrowed a hole through the towpath berm on the west side. The force of water expanded the hole, and many miles of canal, from Montezuma to Rochester, was emptied.

In 1871, muskrats again struck, this time at night. No one was injured, but local history tells of the canal boat Blue Bird that was carried three-quarters of a mile on a spill of

water, final coming to rest 19 feet above the ground in an elm tree.

The reconstruction was noted for its periods of labor unrest. The laborers hired to rebuild the canal demanded that they be paid before payday. Fights broke out, and the 59th Regiment of the New York state militia was called in to quell the disturbances. The militia remained until the repair was completed.

With the construction of the New York State Barge Canal, from 1905 to 1918, the Oxbow gained attention as a resort town. The area was the scene of parties and picnics involving Fairport and Rochester yachtsmen who built boathouses in the Oxbow.

By the 1920s, the boathouses had become Summer cottages, and by the 1930s and '40s, they were permanent residences. The land was still owned by the state but was available to the residents through leases.

By the 1950s and '60s, there were 54 cottages on the Oxbow, and many were taking advantage of the area's peacefulness. The area was still used for swimming and fishing, some of which went on from the cottages' front doors.

In the 1980s, the residents no longer were allowed to sell their property. They have lifetime use of their property, but once the owners leave their cottages, the houses are torn down, and the land returns to New York state.

(Opposite) The Oxbow had the reputation years ago as Perinton's resort area.



# Lake Lacoma

TUCKED BESIDE BUSHNELL'S BASIN, beyond a wooded area at the end of several dirt roads, is Lake Lacoma.

The idyllic pond, in almost an Adirondack setting, is located a couple of hundred yards west of Pittsford-Victor Rd. (Route 96).

It was until the 1970s (when there was added development), and is still to some extent, a retreat for solitude.

Perhaps the name most associated with Lake Lacoma is John Roth.

Roth moved to the area in 1927. Two years later, he bought another strip of land and increased his acreage to about 16.

His home became an unofficial wildlife sanctuary. He planted thousands of trees, fed the small woodland animals and birds, and put out salt licks for the deer. Because his land was just north of Powder Mills Park, wildlife had a quiet reserve in which to wander.

It is believed that George Eastman spent many Sunday afternoons at the Roth homestead, relaxing on a swing by the lake.

After the death of his wife, in 1935, and the destruction of his home by fire, in 1939, Roth became more committed to environmental conservation.

He replaced his home with a log cabin, in which he lived year-round. He devoted himself to caring for the animals, protecting them when need be.

This went on throughout his life. The Pinecrest subdivision to the south was added before the end of the 1950s. In the 1970s, the west was developed, and the homes were thoughtfully located among the trees rather than in a standard subdivision formation.

The lake still attracts animals and boasts lush plant life.

Although John Roth died in 1966, and his compound was dismantled, Lake Lacoma and its wildlife live in his legacy.

(Opposite) Unbeknownst to many, Lake Lacoma sits serenely within 100 yards of Route 96 in Bushnell's Basin.

*This page sponsored by The Lodge at Woodcliff, Rochester's first resort and conference hotel.*



# Crystal Springs

INDIAN AND PIONEER FOLK medicine had long held that water from mineral springs was therapeutic. Inspired by the commercial successes of European spas, spa therapy and hydrotherapy burst on the American scene in the 1830s. Entrepreneurs hurried during the period to build hotels, bathhouses, and recreational facilities around mineral springs. It was the beginning of Saratoga Springs, Richfield Springs, and Warm Springs as tourist attractions.

Perinton had its representative in this phenomenon: Crystal Rock Mineral Spring Water.

Crystal Springs, or Peddie Springs, as it was first called, was discovered in 1885 by Dr. John Peddie, a Baptist minister. Within four years, water from the springs was being sold by the bottle and the barrel. By 1890, the company was incorporated as Crystal Rock Mineral Spring Water, Walter Parce & Co., Prop. Shares sold for \$100 each.

Peddie Springs was not developed as a tourist resort. Although the site did have a pond for boating and canoeing, a

pavilion, and a picnic grove, only local residents enjoyed the beauty of the spot. The rest of the 17-acre site was used for the bottling plant, a warehouse, and a shipping facility.

The popular spring water was promoted as a way "to renew vital secretions, reverse sluggish transpiration, revitalize a body and mind exhausted by depredation of disease and excitement, clear the complexion, and relieve nervous disability, indigestion, and dyspepsia." It did, or more correctly, the course of treatment did.

By the late 1890s, the popularity of spas and mineral water was fading. Most of the spas closed. Saratoga Springs, White Sulphur Springs, and Warm Springs are among the few that survived.

Walter Parce and his fellow investors took to promoting Despatch (today's East Rochester), a new planned community west of Fairport.

Peddie Springs was forgotten, and it soon disappeared.



Two ladies enjoy a quiet afternoon in the early 1890s at Crystal Springs, home to Perinton's bid in the mineral-water rage of that period.



# Purple Hills of Perinton

Ho, for the hills so blue and fair,  
Where ox-eyed meadows lie  
Away up in the purple air  
Like green isles of the sky;  
And buoyant winds of cloudland blow  
From our ethereal drifts of snow.

There waits a vision of the plow!  
Above the world we hear  
The mellow lowing of the cow  
And joy of Chanticleer,  
Or calmly watch the browsing sheep  
Around the billowy hillsides creep,

From out the stillness, far away,  
The church bells faintly ring,  
But sweeter is the Sabbath day  
Where choirs of wild birds sing.  
Away! to rove and rest upon  
The purple hills of Perinton.

— Thomas Thackeray Swineburne, 1924





A map of Perinton, 1987.

Designed and created by Butternut Press, Fishers, New York

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