

MEDINA BUGLE

A Publication of the Medina Historical Society

Fall/Winter 2016

President's Message

With the Holiday's just around the corner I would like to thank all our members for their support during 2016. Once again it was an exciting year and I look forward to planning our 2017 season.

Please mark your calendars for November 28th at 7:00 pm for our annual Holiday party at the Museum. We will be sharing Holiday stories and good cheer with cookies and punch.

Also the Historical Society's 2017 calendar is on sale (\$10.00) at the English Rose tea shoppe and will be available during the Olde Tyme Christmas celebration on Saturday Nov 26th at the Museum. Please stop by and see our Holiday decorations and pick up the calendar.

I would like to extend Holiday greetings to all and once again thank you for keeping history alive in our Historic Village of Medina NY.

Regards,

Reinhard Rogowski

President

MEDINA HITCHING POST DAYS

By Russell J. Waldo

Originally Published on December 10, 1952

Editor's Note: This article refers to 445 Main Street, the current location of Woodroe Realty.

Workmen who helped dig the Erie Canal erected a small cabin upon the site of this week's story (Kutner's) and lived in it during the days of canal building. One of these men, Tully by name,

remained after the canal was finished and worked whenever he could find a job in Medina and among the newly settled farmers. He did not ask for cash payment but accepted food stuff from the farm which he could use during the winter. He was satisfied with payment in any form from those in the little village on the canal. Often he would earn a little money from the canallers. He continued this for about two years, according to John Parson. Later he became a stage driver along the Ridge Road.

That is the account of the building of the small cabin upon approximately the back part of the lot now occupied by the Kutner Store. There seemed no transfer of the small parcel of land from the Holland Land Co. other than the transfer of the larger lot to Otis Turner. Tully did much work for Turner and he allowed the cabin to stand unmolested.

It was about 1830 that James Cox came along the canal with his pack of jewelry and watch repairing tools and made a deal with Turner for occupying the cabin. He was the first watch repair man in Medina and watches were big watches in those days with heavy double cases. He repaired clocks and jewelry of the more fortunate settlers and occasionally sent out for a watch for a customer.

Cox built additional rooms upon the cabin and when he left Medina, according to Andrew Ellicott and retold by Chandler Ellicott, Turner leased it to a new settler whose wife fitted up rooms for newcomers. She became known as "Mother White" and "Chan" added that she was known by no other name as long as she was in Medina. Her husband, unable to earn any sort of an income in Medina, took a job on the canal as driver until they left for

parts unknown to the east. After this occupancy, Ellicott told of its being used as a home for newcomers until they could build a home for themselves.

Late in the forties one of the firm of Swan, Ives and Whalen, purchased the plot and built a substantial two floor frame structure upon it. This was occupied by a tailor who lived upon the second floor. Ellicott had clothing made there and the only recorded name was "Jackson". An old copy of the "Bucktail" reported a Jonathan Jackson doing tailor work in Medina in 1838 above Swan, Ives and Whalen. This could have been the same Jackson.

This building burned about 1856 according to Myron Newell's fire account and a two story frame building was erected on the site soon afterwards. Among the first occupants of the building, which had come under the ownership of E. S. Whalen, was W. S. Skinner who was found at the location in a Tribune advertisement. He planned the addition of a third floor to the building which he purchased as a home for his family.

The 1869 directory listed Mr. Skinner at this number, 58 Shelby Street. He was shown as a dealer in boots and shoes as well as selling custom and ready made shoes, rubbers, gloves, mittens and trunks.

It was about this time that Mr. Skinner demolished the two story frame structure and built a brick block of three stories. The family lived in this home for several years moving to a new home upon West Center Street. When again noted in the Tribune issues he was advertising, in addition to boots and shoes, a line of groceries. Shoemaking was natural for him as his father before him was a cobbler much in demand. There will be more about him later.

An account of an un-welcomed visitor in the Skinner store has been handed down by Frank Kearney. Mr. Skinner was accustomed to working late at night. He was a very particular shoemaker

and insisted on finishing the work of his apprentice, Charlie. It was Halloween night. Skinner had decided to stay at the store and in that manner prevent pranks of the kids. The kids were eager to play a joke on him and waited patiently for him to leave. Their patience wore rapidly as the night wore on. It was decided to open the rear door quietly and holding a skunk "tail up" let it loose in the store. After turning the skunk loose they closed the door.

Skinner, hearing the strange sound in the backroom went out with a lamp to learn what was going on. He soon discovered that he had a visitor. He could not see it, but he knew by the scent that it was there nevertheless and hastened to open the back door so that the un-welcomed visitor could be coaxed out peacefully. Mr. Skunk was as eager to get out as Mr. Skinner was to have him out and with one leap he was on the ground putting as much distance between himself and the Skinner Block as he could and as quickly as possible.

Mr. Skinner quickly put his lights out and closed the store. The boys thought he had left for home. Mr. Skinner slipped quietly around the corner of the next store down Center Street and turning quickly up the alley back of Shelby Street, found four boys back of his store laughing at their prank. He herded them around Shelby Street and into the back room of the store. He then closed the door and made as if he was leaving telling them that he hoped they would enjoy the remainder of the evening. He did not keep them there long, however, and after assurance from them that they would come down every morning and carry the boxes from the back room to the vacant space back of the store and return them to the store at night, he allowed them to go home for the night. Kearney would not divulge the names for publication or the year although he suggested that it might have been in the seventies. At the time, 1935, he added that two were then still living.

Dr. Brownell, a dentist was located upon the second floor of this building at one time during the '70's and '80's.

The fire of February 1871 barely scorched this building beyond the roof according to the Tribune account of the fire and after the roof was repaired the building was as good as new except for some broken glass due to the intense heat.

During the summer of 1871, Mr. Skinner was replacing the small flag stones of the walk with larger stones but lacked enough stone to finish the job. Some cement was mixed with sand and the unstoned space filled in temporarily. The Tribune said of this,

"They should have left the stone out until one could have been cut, as cement will not last long enough to pay for putting it in place".

As far as records which can be found, this was the first cement sidewalk put down in Medina although this was replaced by flagstone later.

Miss Susie Cleveland Alcorn, at about this time, operated a shop upon the second floor of the building. She dealt in "hoop skirts, all kinds of hair work and fancy goods". She purchased the business from Mrs. Jennie Bowen about 1880.

Abell and Sherwood were advertised on the second floor at this number in 1879 indication that Dr. Brownell the dentist had left the stand and this had been taken over by the legal profession.

The same year Landauer and Marshall were advertising from this location. This was Jacob Landauer and John Marshall. Jacob had started in the dry goods business the next door to the south. There will be details of this in the next Main Street Story. When this location had been secured, Marshall had joined Landauer as a partner. They continued in this location for many years.

In 1882, J. Bilton was advertised as a tailor above Landauer and Marshall. This was in the rear rooms

indicating that Miss Bates had taken location elsewhere.

In November 1884, Landauer and Marshall advertised that their store would close at noon on Thanksgiving and the next year they advertised their store would be closed all day on Thanksgiving.

Landauer Brothers of Albion, Samuel, Jessie and Louis, leased the Skinner Block and made preparations for opening a store. This indicated the approximate time that Jacob Landauer and John Marshall had sold to the Albion brothers. A paragraph in the Register noted that the brothers were adding electric lights to their store.

Among the employees of Landauer Brothers in 1903, were the following clerks:

LeVan Ellicott, 612 Genesee Street; John Fish, 111 Pleasant Street; Lena Flattery, 232 Eagle Street; Alice Lott, 512 S. Academy Street; Margaret McElwee, 212 Catherine Street; Margaret O'Connell, 212 West Avenue; Rose Platts, 108 Starr Street and Sarah Smith, 219 East Center Street.

The next occupant of the location was the Metropolitan 5 and 10 Cent Store with Frank S. LeVan as manager. He purchased the stock in 1923 and continued under the name of F. S. LeVan Co. until the coming of G. C. Murphy. He sold out to them in 1927.



Officers 2016

President: Reinhard Rogowski
Vice President/Treasurer: Craig Lacy
Secretary: Shane Sia
Membership: Gail Miller
Newsletter: Gail Culver

Board

Cindy Robinson
Georgia Thomas
Catherine Cooper