

A RAILROAD STATION CALLED LAKE VIEW

(research done by Donald Spittler)

One of the most frequently asked questions by Lake View residents is "Where did Lake View get its name?" I asked the same question when I was a boy and none of the older folks knew the answer. My answer to this question is somewhat speculative, but I feel the following data and conclusions lend strong credence to my answer.

Ebenezer Walden was one of the first of the prominent citizens of Buffalo in the early 1800s to recognize the amenities of the Lake Erie shore, and he acquired vast holdings in the Lake View area. One of his acquisitions was the western portion of Lot 44; Township Nine; Range 8 of the Holland Land Survey. (see Map of 1866 Lake View at <http://seiz2day.com/lakeviewny/LVmaps2.htm>).

This purchase is recorded in Liber 5, Page 320, dated December 30, 1837. The grantors were principals of the Holland Land Company with offices in Amsterdam, Kingdom of the United Netherlands through Peter Van Hall, Attorney. The parcel included 272 acres for the consideration of \$1410. Much of the present hamlet of Lake View falls within this tract. Sixteen Years later, on November 15, 1853, Walden and his wife Susan deeded a strip of land across the above purchase to the Buffalo and State Line Railroad. The deed, recorded in Liber 144, page 564, refers to the track which is already located and fenced on the above date.

Photo of Ebenezer Walden (source: Buffalo Architecture and History) ▶



During this era Walden developed a grandiose estate on the lake shore and called it "Lake View". His original mansion, which was located in the vicinity of the Smith & Foster Estate (the property now enclosed with a red brick wall), was destroyed by fire and the author has not been able to determine if the re-built structure is still standing.

▶ *Ebenezer Walden's home on Lake Erie (source: Hamburg Historical Society)*

After the death of Walden in 1857, his estate was occupied and administered by his daughter Catherine and her husband, General Albert J. Myer. Since the Waldens were very prominent citizens of Buffalo, they frequently entertained. The unimproved road from Buffalo to the lake shore area made it difficult for their peers to reach "Lake View" via horse and carriage. With the coming of the railroad, this obstacle was

eliminated, but a railroad station in the vicinity was needed. Persons with strong influence can cause things to happen, and in this case it was Albert J. and Catherine W. Myer. In Liber 280, page 318 of deeds, dated August 15, 1867, we find the Myers conveying by quit-claim deed to the Buffalo and Erie Railroad the following:

A strip of land of uniform width for the whole length and 58 feet, 4 inches wide adjacent to the southeasterly line of and parallel with the Buffalo and Erie Railroad, and extending the whole length of Lot 44, containing 6 acres, subject to two roadways to be made, each 66 feet wide and distant 170 feet from the east and west extremities of the station buildings AS NOW PLANNED, and to other highways as exist. Consideration for this conveyance is that the railroad erect and establish within six (6) months from the date hereof AND FOREVER MAINTAIN THE NECESSARY BUILDINGS FOR A RAILROAD PASSENGER STATION. No other use of the land is permitted and the railroad must use it for a passenger and freight station, and trains from both directions must stop daily at regular and fixed intervals. The railroad cannot erect a hotel, eating house or saloon without the permission of the Myers. If the railroad ever abandons the station or neglects to occupy for railway purposes, the premises reverts in fee to the party of the first part or their legal representatives, and they shall have the right of immediate possession.

NOTE: In a following deed recorded in Liber 336, page 198, dated November 8, 1872, the Myers conveyed additional acres to the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad for additional trackage. In this deed, it refers to the station as now erected. Therefore we know that the station was built between August 15, 1867 and November 8, 1872. It was probably closer to the earlier date due to the six month requirement for construction as stated in the above deed.

Every railroad station must have a name, and in 1867 the hamlet we now call Lake View did not exist; it was all woods. Since the Myers were instrumental in getting the station erected, for want of a name what could have been more appropriate than the name of their estate, "Lake View"? To further support the Walden influence on the name of Lake View, in 1868 James Walden, son of Ebenezer and brother of Catherine Myer, was appointed the first postmaster in the post office called "Lake View". The post office was located in a small, frame building between the Lake View Hotel and the Buffalo, New York and Philadelphia Railway (Now Norfolk and Western). At that time the property on which it stood belonged to the Myer family.

See photos of Lake View railroad stations at <http://seiz2day.com/lakeviewny/lakeviewphotos.htm>.