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FOREWORD

This paper is an attempt to put on record a segment of the history of Lakeview, New York. This community, like so many of its contemporaries, cloaks its past in facade of modern suburbia. Once the facade is ripped away some very interesting incidents unfold which have given this community it's history.

Only through the foresight of a man residing in North Evans, New York, has this historical paper been possible. Mr. Leland A. Hazard began many years ago to collect all the available material concerning North Evans, Lakeview and surrounding areas. Without his collection much of the history of these areas would have been lost to posterity. His cooperation with this author was outstanding and I will long remember the many pleasant hours I spent in his company researching his materials and discussing the many interesting points which helped bridge the gaps.

I would also like to express my thanks to the many residents of Lakeview who have helped me. I have talked to many people but to list them individually may result in an omission. Suffice it to say many thanks again for your cooperation.

May I conclude by stating that this paper in no way exhausts the topic and I hope that no person, group or organization feels slighted because a cursory treatment has been afforded them. Limits of time and ability make this paper merely a beginning for the local historian of the future who cares to develop the topic more fully.

Raymond V. Healy, BS. MS. ED.

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Located in the southwestern corner of the Hamburg Township, Erie County, New York, is one of the many rustic communities of which the Township is comprised. The growing pains experienced by this community in its youth have embellished it with an interesting and colorful history. Wealth, poverty, land speculation, people of unusual backgrounds and international repute, and a creek that helped launch a well known family fortune were all part of it's kaleidoscopic past.

In general, Lakeview is located approximately fifteen miles south of Buffalo, New York. The community is framed by Eighteen Mile Creek on the south, Pleasant Avenue on the north, Lake Erie on the west and the village of Hamburg on the east. With minor variations these are the boundaries used by most organizations in the community.¹

Much of the area is still comprised of woods and open fields, although the impetus of suburbia has reduced this pastoral acreage considerably. The area is topographically a slope with a high point along Eighteen Mile Creek where the bluff stands over 100 feet above the water. The elevation decreases as the land stretches northwest and westward to the shores of Lake Erie. The land, although arable, has a shale base and farming has never been very lucrative.²

1-Constitution, Lakeview Little League Incorporated, Box 21, Lakeview, New York

2-Statement, Leland A. Hazard, North Evans, New York Personal interview, October 16, 1965.

This paper will be restricted primarily to Lakeview proper, the ecumen of the community.¹ It was here the community began, grew, and developed; today it continues to be the heart of the community. The Congregational Church and the Catholic Church, two schools, the firehall, two stores and a hotel are all located here along with numerous houses clustered together giving the community all the appearances of a small rural village.

The men who first came to this area were predominately Pennsylvanians and New Englanders.² Lured by the cheap land being sold by the Holland Land Company and a chance to make a better living they settled the wilderness. Some were able to overcome the many obstacles presented by this primitive environment, but others migrated to the more civilized environs of Buffalo to seek their livelihood.

The first settlers came up Eighteen Mile Creek, which has its source in the foothills of the Alleghany Mountains and empties into Lake Erie. They followed the flatlands along the creek bottom until they found a plot of land that suited them. Once they selected a piece of property they then had to secure ownership from the Holland Land Company from it's agent Joseph Ellicott.³

¹See Apendix A.

²Douglas, Harry S.; Horton, John Theodore; Williams, Edward T. A History of Northwestern New York. 3 vols. Lewis Publishing Company, Inc. N.Y. 1947, Vol. 1, p. 24.

³Tyrrell, William G. We New Yorkers. Oxford Book Company, 1963, p. 115.

The earliest of these pioneers was Joel Harvey who arrived in 1804 and erected a tavern in 1806 on the Lake Shore Road where it crossed Eighteen Mile Creek.¹ A few years later (1808 - 1809) Ebenezer Ingersoll, Aaron Salisbury and Aaron Cash settled near the mouth of the creek.² A few miles before the mouth of the creek, where New York State Route 20 now crosses the creek, a homestead was founded by Ebenezer Ames who traveled by oxcart from Royalton, Vermont, with his wife Chloe and some of their children.³ They walked along the beach of Lake Erie from Buffalo to the mouth of Eighteen Mile Creek. They proceeded up the creek to a bluff overlooking the creek.⁴ After a time Ebenezer had to walk back to Vermont to obtain money owed to him. He left his wife and children to carry on until he returned.⁵ Records indicate that Ebenezer paid the sum of twenty two cents tax on 140 acres of land in 1807 to agent Joseph Ellicott.⁶ The homestead still remains in the family.⁷

¹Horton, Vol. 1, p. 27.

²Ibid.

³Diary of Jesse Ames, Ebenezer's grandson. Collection of Leland A. Hazard.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Holland Land Company's Papers; Reports of Joseph Ellicott. Vol. 1, p. 347. Buffalo Historical Society, 1937.

⁷Statement, Allen Ames, great-grandson of Ebenezer Ames, Lakeview, New York, Personal Interview, October 12, 1965.

Settlement in the area progressed slowly as a result of problems with the Indians over disputed lands. An agreement effected by the Ogden Company in 1826 with the Indians cleared the way for the company to exercise their preemption rights sold to them in 1810 by the Holland Land Co.¹ These rights had to do with land surveyed by Ellicott for Indian Reservations.² The relinquishing of territorial rights by the Indians opened the way for increased settlement in the area.³

By 1940 an economic base for a community was established along Eighteen Mile Creek in the form of a tannery and grist mill built by Hiram Jones.⁴ This pioneer industry was established on the south bank of the creek opposite what is today Lakeview. The community that grew up around this tannery was named North Evans. The farmers who lived on the north side of the creek supplied the tannery with hides and hemlock bark and used the grist mill to grind their grain.⁵

Great impetus was given to the area when Jacob Schoellkopf acquired control of the tannery in 1853 - 1854 and improved the complex to include a sawmill.⁶ He operated this industry successfully for twenty years.⁷ Lillian Stewart, daughter of Professor Elliott Stewart of Lakeview, told how she

¹Horton, Vol. 1, p. 73.

²Ibid.

³White, Truman C. Our Country and Its People. Vol. 1. History of Erie County 1891. p. 337.

⁴Statement. Leland A. Hazard, North Evans, New York. (He has a charcoal drawing of this tannery in his collection.) Personal interview, November 25, 1965.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Douglas, Harry S. Vol III. p. 66.

⁷Ibid.

remembered seeing Mr. Schoellkopf working in the tannery attired in an old leather coat, leather boots and an old hat. He used to work with the men despite the fact he was the owner.¹ This tannery provided the economic base for North Evans until the 1920's when the once inexhaustible supply of hemlock in the area became depleted.² It is interesting to note that presently about one-half mile from Eighteen Mile Creek on the Old Lake Shore Road is the hugh estate of Jacob Schoellkopf IV.

The North Evans Congregational Church, built in 1834,³ supplied the religious needs of the people of what was later Lakeview until they established their own church in 1892.⁴ The children of Lakeview had to cross the creek to attend school in North Evans. The cemetary in North Evans was the common burial ground for people on both side of the creek. Chester Ames (1811 - 1899) and Charles Ames (1885 - 1916), both descendants of Ebenezer Ames are buried here.⁵

The economic, religious and educational umbilical cord that connected the people north of the creek with the community south of the creek soon was severed by the railroad built in 1852 through the Holland Land Company Survey lots 42, 44, 45.

¹Statement. Leland A. Hazard.

²Statement. Leland A. Hazard.

³Pamphlet on the history of the North Evans Congregational Church. The Leland A. Hazard Collection.

⁴Pamphlet on the history of the Lakeview Congregational Church. The Leland A. Hazard Collection.

⁵Tombstones in North Evans Cemetary verify this. Personal visit to cemetary November 16, 1965.

46 and 47.¹ This was known as the Buffalo and State Line Railroad.² but by 1866 it was changed to the Buffalo and Erie Railroad.³ In February 1868 a post office was established in the Lakeview Station which indicates that between 1866 and 1868 a station named Lakeview was built where Lakeview Road crosses the tracks.⁴ The first postmaster of Lakeview was James Walden who held that position until April 12, 1872.⁵ This station and postoffice were the embryo of the village which developed here.

The hamlet itself developed mainly in lot 44, township 9, eighth range of the Holland Land Company's Survey.⁶ A vast portion of this land was purchased in 1837 by Ebenezer Walden, a prominent Buffalo attorney and mayor of Buffalo in 1838.

He obtained 272 acres, practically all of lot 44, for \$1,410.⁷

Walden built what is now the Lakeview Hotel in 1880.⁸ What is presently Lakeview Road between Lake Erie and the railroad tracks was known as Walden Road. This made the railroad accessible to the Walden home on the lake.⁹

¹See Appendix A.

²Douglas, Harry S. Vol I. p. 100.

³See Appendix A.

⁴Petri, Pitt. The Postal History Of Western New York. Privately printed, 1960. p. 57.

⁵Ibid.

⁶See Appendix A.

⁷Deed, Liber 5. p. 320. Erie County Clerk, Buffalo, New York.

⁸Ibid. Liber 280. p. 318

⁹Statement of Donald Spittler, Lakeview, New York December 30, 1965.

The proximity of this new railroad community called Lakeview to Lake Erie made it an attractive area in the summer months. During the 1880's when Buffalo was experiencing it's "gilded Age", many wealthy residents of the city sought their summer recreation and relaxation beyond the confines of the city. It was only natural that Lakeview received the attention of a wealthy group of lawyers who sought a location for a summer resort colony. These men organized themselves according to the Laws of New York State and drew up a constitution establishing the Idlewood Association.¹ This organization was social in function with an admission fee of \$100. An annual fee of \$20 was adopted and the first officers of the organization were as follows: Charles Daniels, President; James B. Stafford, Vice President; Albert Riegel, Secretary; Alfred Southwick, Treasurer and Jacob Stern, Attorney.² The first fifty-five members to enroll were entitled to purchase one lot within the plot of land the association purchased.³ This land was a plot located at the mouth of Eighteen Mile Creek and Lake Erie. It's beauty is aptly

¹Constitution of the Idlewood Association Filed with J. L. Slater, Commissioner of Deeds, Buffalo, New York, dated September 15, 1887. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

described below.

To the hither shore as it swerves to the South-west toward the Village of Angola in the town of Evans the picturesque Eighteen Mile Creek cuts its sinuous way through a deep gorge. Hard by the creek on a high bluff overlooking the lake a summer colony established itself in the early 80's at a place which its sponsors called Idlewood. The colony, controlled by a kind of syndicate to exclude interlopers seems to have been a favorite place of resort for certain members of the bar and their families.¹

The Erie County Bar Association was first organized here at Idlewood in the summer of 1886 in the house of Franklin D. Locke.²

The tone of exclusiveness, elegant living and social consciousness as established by this colony set the pace for the other residents of the estates that later were built between the Lake Shore Road and Lake Erie. These people, because of socio-economic factors, isolated themselves from the Lakeview Community, although they depended on Lakeview for many services. This isolation and disassociation still exists today to some extent even though the Lake Shore Road is essentially a part of Lakeview. It is within the fire district, the church boundaries, school district and the postal district of Lakeview. Another factor that set these people apart from the Lakeview people was the fact that many were summer residents with their permanent homes in Buffalo. Only with improved transportation facilities did these people eventually become permanent residents of the area.

¹Horton, Vol.1. p. 301.

²Ibid.

The male members of the Idlewood Association talked the railroad into building a station about a mile south of the Lakeview Station as a convenience for them. This was on the bluff where the railroad crossed the Eighteen Mile Creek gorge.¹ This became known as the Idlewood Station and the immediate area was later referred to as Idlewood. This is not to be confused with the Idlewood Association's property located at the mouth of the creek. Later electric trolley tracks were laid which facilitated travel to and from Buffalo. They terminated at the Idlewood Station.²

A unique feature of the Idlewood Colony was a stipulation that members could not take meals in their home, but rather they had to dine in a community dining hall.³ This seems to have been a reemphasis of the social goals of the organization.

The descendants of the members of the association failed to perpetuate it and the property fell into bankruptcy. In 1945 Mr. Irish purchased the property from the Erie County Savings Bank of Buffalo and the property is still owned by him.⁴

The village around the Lakeview Station continued to grow and develop. By 1890 two more railroad lines paralleled the original one. These, the New York Central and St. Louis

¹See Appendix B.

²See Appendix B.

³A photo of the first dining hall at Idlewood can be found in the Leland A. Hazard Collection.

⁴A personal telephone conversation with Mr. Irish, Lakeview, New York. November 20, 1965.

Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad brought economic prosperity to Lakeview. A hotel and rather large store were located on Lakeview Road a short distance from the station. The store, operated by F. W. Cook, carried a variety of goods to meet the needs of the community. Lumber, cement and lime in addition to foodstuffs were all part of the merchandise.¹ The establishment of Lakeview as a "section" by the railroads created a large number of jobs. Each "section gang" comprised of twelve men and a foreman maintained the tracks north and south of Lakeview.² Station agents and teletype operators added to the work force.

The economic boost given the community by the railroads did not hinder the farm economy. The area was still very rural and numerous farms were located here. One farm in particular was outstanding because it was operated on an experimental basis and became nationally know. The owner of this farm, Mr. Elliott Stewart, was an unusual man. By the time of his death, he had won international fame in the field of agriculture. His accomplishments in scientific farming were noted in an agricultural periodical in 1890.

¹ Advertisement. Hamburg Independant, December 22, 1888

² Statement. Leland A. Hazard. Personal Interview November 25, 1965.

He rose step by step till he became one of the first practical and scientific farmers in the U.S.A... Mr. Stewart's careful researches and investigations have made him an expert in the science of stock feeding whose opinions are sought the world over.¹

Elliott Stewart was educated at Cazenovia Seminary where he prepared for the legal profession. He practiced law in Buffalo from 1846 until 1853 when chronic asthma forced him to leave his profession and pursue one more conducive to good health. He purchased a large plot of land where Eighteen Mile Creek meets Lake Erie.² On this land he developed a farm along scientific lines which soon quadrupled the agricultural production of the property.³ By 1875 his fame won him a non-resident professorship of Agriculture in Cornell University.⁴

Professor Stewart's experiments in feeding and care of livestock became internationally known through his many writings in agricultural magazines. From November 1872 until March 1876 he was editor of the Buffalo Livestock Journal, and when it was merged with the Chicago National Livestock Journal he became an associate editor.⁵ In 1885 he published a book.

¹Article. Farm Journal 1890. Leland A. Hazard Collection

²See Appendix A

³Newspaper obituary. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Newspaper obituary. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

Feeding Animals,¹ which became widely read both in the United States and abroad. Other evidences of his widely accepted articles can be found. In January 1882 he received \$3.75 for an article published in the Rural New Yorker.²

Professor Stewart was closely associated with many farmers' organizations prevalent in the last century. He served on the executive committee for the first annual meeting of the New York State Farmers Alliance in 1877.³ Stewart and his wife founded the Evans Farmers Social Club, a local organization.⁴

This unusual man, in poor health as he was, was also very creative. One of his inventions became the basis for an income for his son John. This was a "self cleaning stable" which facilitated cleanliness of the cow and the barn. An advertisement claimed this "self cleaning stable" would effect a saving of \$2 per cow per year.⁵ In reality, the invention

¹ Stewart Elliott, Feeding Animals, Library of Congress 1890

² Letter dated January 10, 1882 addressed to E. W. Stewart from the Rural New Yorker. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

³ Rural New Yorker. May 25, 1877. Leland A. Hazard collection.

⁴ Newspaper obituary of Mrs. Marion Stewart. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

⁵ Advertisement slinger. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

was simple in form. The cow stood on a grill which covered an enclosed trough. The manure would fall through the grill and collect in the trough from whence it could be removed to the fields. These contraptions were made on the Stewart farm and sold throughout the country,¹

Professor Stewart's most unique project was his octagon barn² which he constructed on his farm to replace four barns destroyed by fire in 1874.³ His explanation of the advantages of this eight-sided barn seemed logical. He claimed, "this form encloses the greatest space within the shortest line of outside wall".⁴ The Professor pointed out that whereas his four barns covered a total of 7,000 square feet, his octagon barn covered only 5,350 square feet. The latter however had a greater capacity because it had outside posts 28' high while the rectangular barns had posts only 16' to 20' high.⁵ The roof of this barn was self supporting and its basement accommodations for livestock were impressive.⁶

Ill health forced the Professor to spend most of his time away from the fields. Most of his ideas and inventions were put into practice by his son John. His daughter Lillian wrote

¹Advertisement slinger. Leland A. Hazard Collection

²Photo. Leland A. Hazard Collection

³Livestock Journal. January 1876. Leland A. Hazard collection.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶See Appendix C.

most of his correspondence. On one occasion an article she wrote for her father was published erroneously in her name and as evidenced by the following letter it must have created some embarrassing moments for Miss Stewart. This letter was from the publisher of a periodical of the time entitled Farm & Home. The letter reads:

Phelps Publishing Co.
Springfield, Massachusetts
October 20, 1887

Miss Lillian J. Stewart
Lakeview, New York

Dear Miss:

Your article was prepared for the press by one of my assistants, who seems to have overlooked your intentions with regard to signature. We always mean to respect the wishes of our contributors in this regard. In your case, however, I can assure you that the article is nothing to be ashamed of, and you can well afford to endure the banter of your friends in view of the good sense and gospel truth that your article attained.

Hoping that you may favor us with further contributions, either under your own name or a pseudonym, as you prefer, I am,

Yours very truly
Edward H. Phelps¹

The contents of the article referred to in the letter must have been earthy in nature and consequently Miss Stewart suffered accordingly.

The time-consuming writings, experimentation and participation in various farm groups did not prevent Professor Stewart from being involved in community affairs. Papers in-

¹Original letter. Leland A. Hazard Collection.

dicates that he was a trustee of School District No. 6 in 1861.¹ There is also evidence of his being a member of the school board in 1870.² He held the position of Postmaster of Lakeview from April 12, 1872 to July 9, 1885.³

As Stewart grew older and his health became progressively worse, he became more and more dependant on his daughter. In the last year of his life he turned complete financial control over to her. This was made evident by a note sent to his bank dated October 17, 1894.⁴

Lakeview, Erie County
October 17, 1894

To Cashier,
American Exchange Bank

I authorize my daughter Lillian J. Stewart to sign my name to draw upon any money I may have there now or in the future.

E. W. Stewart

The Professor passed away on October 26, 1894

By the early 1890's the Lakeview community was relatively small with its economy based on farming and railroads. Summer residents added some activity in the summer months, but in general it was still a typical, sleepy, rural community. Little did Lakeview realize that plans were underway which would directly effect the community and awaken it with a jolt. By the end of 1892 forces were at work which, if successful, would change drastically the social, economic and physical structure of this hamlet.