

The Fourth Decade

Overview

There were five events that had particular importance for the residents of Batavia in the fourth decade. These included multiple fires in the downtown area, an end to the Holland Land Company and its replacement by a new entity, the Land Office War, the arrival of the first railroad, and the Panic of 1837.

Fires

Four significant fires occurred in the 1830s: March 4, 1833, April 19, 1833, May 30, 1834, and November 8, 1837. Together, these fires produced massive destruction in the downtown area. There is more information about these unfortunate conflagrations in the following section titled, "Disasters."

Land companies

Another significant event of the 1830s was closing out of the Holland Land Company operations in Western New York. The company had begun sales of land on The Purchase in 1800 with the appointment of Joseph Ellicott as the resident land agent. Thirty-five years later, there was still unsold land. Nevertheless, a decision was made that it was time to cease operations. Beginning in late 1835, the unsold land and outstanding mortgages and contracts were sold to other investors. Among those investors were Trumbull Cary and George Washington Lay of Batavia, along with their friend, William Seward, future Secretary of State in Abraham Lincoln's cabinet. These three men acquired all of the outstanding mortgages and contracts and unsold land in Chautauqua County. (Walter Stahr, *Seward* [New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012] pp. 48-49)

Land office war

Cary and Lay, before being joined by Seward, sought to impose new terms on the settlers who still owed on their mortgages or contracts. The settlers strenuously objected to these changes; and on February 6, 1836, a mob destroyed the Mayville Land Office in Chautauqua County in the opening salvo of what was called, "The Land Office War." On May 13, 1836, a similar mob descended on Batavia, entering from the south along present-day Walnut Street,

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and seeking to destroy the Land Office here. In this case, the attackers were met by armed force and without a shot being fired, they were driven from the Village. However, dissidents continued to agitate elsewhere in Western New York until eventually the Governor issued a proclamation opposing their efforts. This apparently ended the matter, at least in terms of violent resistance. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 48-54; William Seaver 2, *Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 112-115) There is more information about the Land Office War as it affected Batavia in the following section titled, "War, impact of war."

Railroads

When the Erie Canal was built north of Batavia rather than passing through the community, transportation here remained limited to the ways common to the first three decades: travel on foot or by horseback or in vehicles drawn by horses or oxen. (Recall that travel via the Creek was essentially non-existent.) Then, in 1837, the first train arrived in Batavia on track laid from Rochester. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 66-67) This was a truly historic event. Batavians could now travel at speeds thought impossible just a few years before. For the first time, building materials, food, machinery, fuel, and other products could be shipped in and out of Batavia with relative ease and at a relatively low cost. This event marked the beginning of a network of rail lines that helped to eventually turn Batavia into a community of factories. There is more information about the first railroad in the following section titled, "Transportation."

Panic of 1837

The year 1837 also marked a very negative turn of events, the "Panic of 1837." This nationwide economic collapse should be called the "Panic of 1837, '38, '39, '40, '41, '42, and '43" because it lasted at least that long. It involved a period of severe economic distress. Banks collapsed, businesses failed, and thousands of workers lost their jobs. Unemployment may have been as high as 25% in some areas. Out of 850 banks in the United States, 343 closed entirely and 62 failed partially. Many individual states defaulted on their bonds. The causes were probably due to multiple factors, both domestic and foreign. ("Panic of 1837," *Wikipedia*, online, accessed 26 January 2014) The effects were felt in Batavia as elsewhere, but it seems they were not borne equally by all residents. Further comments in this regard will appear later in this chapter.

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Population

This overview ends as did those of earlier chapters with an estimate of Batavia's population. As already noted twice before, Beers asserted that there were 1,400 people living in the Village in 1825 (Frederick W. Beers, *Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee County, N.Y. 1788-1890* [Syracuse, N.Y.: J. W. Vose, Publisher, 1890] p. 183). And, as also indicated twice before, the 1860 Federal census, the first one to separate the Village of Batavia from the Town of Batavia, reported a population of 2,560 individuals ("Genesee Community Information," *Richmond Memorial Library*, online, accessed 3 January 2014). So, assuming a steady growth over that 35-year intervening period, perhaps the population of the Village had reached around 1,900 by 1840.

1: Infrastructure

As with the previous decade, there is little to note during the years 1831-1840 in regards to infrastructure. Streets remained unpaved, there were no public sewers, and there was no public water system.

2: Transportation

In the late 1820s or early 1830s, various applications were made to the State for railroad charters in this region. However, as the result of opposition from towns along the Erie Canal, several such proposals were defeated until, finally, an application for a railroad from Rochester to Batavia was passed by the State legislature on April 24, 1832. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 66-67) James Brisbane became the railroad company's principal incorporator and largest shareholder (Larry Barnes, *The Brisbanes of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: self-published, 2009] p. 5).

The incorporated railroad, known as the Tonawanda Railroad Company, had a total length of a fraction less than 32 miles. The average ascent was 12 ft. per mile and required two heavy embankments and two deep cuts east of Batavia. The total cost, including depots, was about \$375,000. The first train of cars arrived in Batavia on May 4, 1837. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 66-67) The engine of the first train was described as essentially nothing more than a wood-burning boiler on wheels. There was no cab and the engineer stood right out in the weather. (*The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 25 June 1948)

The placement of the tracks in Batavia for this railroad established a precedence for the location of local rail service that remained in place until the 1950s. The rails came right through

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central Batavia to a station on the northeast corner of Ellicott and Jackson streets. The track then continued a short distance farther to the bank of the Creek at the west end of the (grist?) mill. The fare for the trip between Batavia and Rochester was \$1.50 in 1837. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 66-67)

Prior to the arrival of the railroad, the only means of public conveyance was by stagecoach. For example, a stagecoach service existed in 1835 that took one to Rochester from Batavia via Albion and Brockport, a trip lasting eight hours. (“Past and Present,” *The Daily News, Batavia, N.Y., 30 December 1950*) It’s almost impossible to overstate the advantages provided by rail travel over such horse-drawn conveyances in terms of speed and the ability to transport heavy loads. Those advantages would come to serve Batavia exceedingly well.

3: Housing

As the population grew in the fourth decade, the amount of housing continued to grow as well just as had been the case in earlier years. Back in the chapter on 1811 to 1820, the reader may recall remarks made by Safford North in which he commented on the circumstances that led East Main Street to be filled with handsome residences (Safford E. North, *Descriptive and Biographical Record of Genesee County, New York* [Boston: Boston History Company, 1899] p. 274). One example of such a “handsome residence” was the home erected by Col. William Davis ca. 1839.

William Davis, like many early Batavians, invested in land, seeking to “buy low” and “sell high.” In the course of his efforts, he apparently did quite well, at least for many years. As a consequence, in 1836, he purchased land on the north side of East Main Street between present-day Summit and Ross streets. Then, about 1839, he built a fine home on that location. This structure later became the central part of the mansion owned by Dean and Mary Richmond, a mansion generally regarded as the finest residence ever to exist in Batavia. (From deeds and other documents submitted by the City Historian to the William G. Pomeroy Foundation in 2013 as part of an application for an historic marker.)

Davis became an apparent victim of the Panic of 1837 as land lost value. From all indications, he held onto his fine home on East Main Street as best he could. However, when he died in 1842, his wife was forced into bankruptcy and she lost the building to creditors. Not long afterwards, widow Emiline Davis and her children moved from the area. The home was eventually acquired by the Richmonds in 1854 and, over a period of several years, was significantly enlarged. More information will be provided about this development in a later

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chapter. (From documents submitted by the City Historian to the William G. Pomeroy Foundation in 2013 as part of an application for an historic marker.)

In terms of housing for the public, the most impressive example to date appeared in 1835 with the erection of the American Hotel. Located on the north side of Main Street, it was a 3-story building that cost over \$20,000. As such, it was the most expensive building in the Village. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 75)

4: Energy sources

As in previous decades, the energy sources available to Batavians in the years 1831-1840 continued to include wood for heating and cooking and candles for illumination. As noted in the preceding chapter, by then steam power may also have been employed, using wood-fired boilers, but the author has not discovered any references to this development. However, with the arrival of the steam railroad engine in the 1830s, it seems even more likely that steam-power would also have been employed for other uses.

The arrival of the railroad may also have introduced another energy source: coal. Coal was not found locally and, before the railroad, transporting it to Batavia would have been too costly and difficult to entertain using it. However, the railroad changed the picture in this regard. Later in the century, coal became a major energy source in Batavia. However, how early coal became available is not known. Conceivably, its first use may have occurred in this decade.

There is also a question regarding to what extent the Creek and water power continued to play a role during the fourth decade. William Seaver wrote that the first dam was torn down in 1833 and a new one constructed (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 29). It would seem that taking the time and spending the money to build a new dam would only have occurred if it served an economic function. An aesthetic or recreational role seems unlikely. Hence, it seems that water power must have continued to serve as an energy source in the 1830s, perhaps still powering the grist mill.

5: Communication

The first practical telegraphs began to appear late in the 1830s. Despite the fact that the earliest applications tended to appear in the operation of railroads and despite the fact that the

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first railroad to reach Batavia became operational in 1837, it still seems unlikely that telegraph service appeared in Batavia before the next decade. Therefore, Batavians in the years 1831-1840 were probably still restricted to the traditional means of communication: 1) oral exchanges face-to-face, or 2) the written word put down either by hand or by means of a printing press. However, there would have been a gain in speed of transmission made possible through the more rapid travel and transport made possible by rail.

In contrast to the previous decade, the newspapers available to Batavians apparently remained relatively stable. One new publication emerged in 1840. On June 18th, William Seaver and Peter Lawrence began publication of a newspaper called, "Batavia Times and Farmers' and Mechanics' Journal. (Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 24)

6: County, Village, City boundaries

Apparently no recorded changes occurred in County or Village boundaries during the fourth decade.

7: Government/governing structure

Apparently no recorded changes occurred in the government or governing structure during the fourth decade.

8: Crime, crime control, and law enforcement

Early in 1831, work began on a new jail authorized by the County Board of Supervisors to replace the one in the Genesee County Court House. Located at the northwest corner of present-day Court and Ellicott streets, it was constructed for around \$3,000. William Seaver described it as an unsightly building, ill adapted to its purpose, with escape comparatively easy. Advertisements of a "jail break" were issued about every six months and after only 19 years of service, a new jail was necessary. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 47)

9: Retail establishments/other commercial enterprises

Ironically, a partial extent of retail establishments and other commercial enterprises in the 1830s can be grasped by looking at the list of such places that were destroyed by fire. They included:

- 1 blacksmith shop
- 5 law offices
- 6 tailor shops
- 1 cabinet shop
- 1 tin factory
- 6 groceries
- 1 milliner's shop
- 1 barber shop
- 2 jewelry stores
- 1 hatter
- 1 gunsmith shop
- 1 saddler's shop
- 1 shoe shop
- 1 dry goods store
- 1 book store
- 1 book bindery
- 1 watch maker
- 1 tin and sheet iron manufacturer
- 1 baker's shop
- 1 drug store
- 5 taverns/tavern houses

As can be seen in perusing this list, by the 1830s there was quite a variety of businesses.

10: Factories/industries

In the last decade, the beginning of breweries and malt houses was noted. Such operations continued into this decade and beyond. Similarly, James Cochran's foundry where he cast bells also continued to operate. New to the fourth decade were warehouses such as a produce warehouse erected by John L. Dorrance in 1837 on Ellicott Street. Soon after, E. B. Seymour built another warehouse, that one on Jackson Street. William Seaver attributed the erection of warehouses directly to the construction of the Tonawanda Railroad. (William Seaver 2, A

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Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 68) There may also have been other factories or industries that first appeared in the years 1831-1840, but they apparently have gone unrecorded.

11: Banking/financial services

As noted in the last chapter, the first bank west of the Genesee River, “Bank of Genesee,” was opened in 1829. As also noted, during the first two years of its existence, it operated out of the west wing of Trumbull Cary’s home on East Main Street. In January of 1831, the Directors appropriated \$5,000 (later increased to \$6,000) to erect a bank building. The chosen location was on the northeast corner of present-day Bank and East Main streets, a building lot purchased three months earlier. When the structure was completed, the main entrance was on Bank Street while an East Main Street entrance served the living quarters that were set aside for either the cashier and his family or another member of the banking concern. This building still exists in 2015. While banks elsewhere collapsed during the Panic of 1837, Bank of Genesee successfully weathered the financial storm. (Larry Barnes, *The Cary Family of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: self-published, 2012] pp. 22-23)

Late in the fourth decade, the Bank of Genesee was joined by another bank, the Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Genesee. The latter was organized in November of 1838 and began business January 1, 1839 with a capitalization of \$100,000. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 81)

12: Education

Although public schools were well established by the fourth decade, private schools were still quite common. Beers listed the following: Miss H. H. North and R. Hogue, Jr. in 1831; Miss Burnham in 1832-33; Mrs. Ford and H. H. Smead in 1833; E. C. Porter and Lester Cross in 1835; E. A. Hopkins and C. W. Wilson in 1836-37; and S. E. Hollister in 1840. (Frederick W. Beers, *Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee County, N.Y. 1788-1890* [Syracuse, N.Y.: J. W. Vose & Co., Publisher, 1890] p. 182) In reviewing this list, it appears that none of the private school operations was long-lasting.

13: Religion

The “Baptist Society of Batavia Village” was organized on November 19, 1835 at a meeting held in the Genesee County Court House. The first Trustees were Richard Covell, Jr., John

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Dorman, William Blossom, William D. Popple, and Calvin Foster. The next year, a church building was erected on the west side of Jackson Street, on a lot donated by William D. Popple, roughly opposite the present-day entrance to Jackson Square. Thomas McCulley was the mason and Thomas J. Hoyt the carpenter. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 96-98)

The reader will recall that the first Episcopal Church, begun in 1816, remained unfinished until 1822. However, a final completion of that structure did not end building problems for the Episcopalians. By 1835, this building had become so defective there was a desire to replace it with one safer and more substantial. Consequently, a new church built of stone was erected on the same site and the bricks from the first building were used to construct a parsonage immediately to the west. David E. Evans, the Holland Land Company resident land agent at that time, reportedly donated chandeliers manufactured in New York City, a subscription of \$1,500, and land for the parsonage. Trinity Church of New York City also donated \$1,000. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 33-34) As the reader will discover in the next chapter, this still didn't end building problems for the Episcopalians.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the "First Free Will Baptist Church" was organized in 1830. However, between 1832 and 1837, it had problems, especially with its leadership, and only occasional services were held. Finally, in 1838, the congregation reorganized and, a year later, the Baptists purchased for their use the former First Methodist Episcopal Church building at West Main and North Lyon streets. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 93-94)

When the congregation of the "First Methodist Episcopal Church" sold its building to the Baptists, it was without a regular church building for the balance of the decade. It met first in a structure known as the "Nixon Building" (probably a commercial building downtown) and then in a district school house. (Frederick W. Beers, *Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee County, N.Y. 1788-1890* [Syracuse, N.Y.: J. W. Vose & Co., Publisher,, 1890] p. 222) An eventual construction of a new church building will be described in the next chapter.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints traces its origins to Palmyra, New York and the year 1830. Ruth McEvoy stated that services were held in Batavia beginning in the 1830s. However, no further information is available. (Ruth M. McEvoy, *History of the City of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: Hodgins Printing Co., Inc., 1993] p. 126)

14: Libraries/archives/museums

According to Beers, school libraries were established in 1835. He also said that every district received its “proportionate quota” for its library, but didn’t explain exactly what that meant. The term may have referred to funding. On the other hand, perhaps it referred to the mandated minimum size of the library’s collection. (Frederick W. Beers, *Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee County, N.Y. 1788-1890* [Syracuse, N.Y.: J. W. Vose & Co., Publisher, 1890] p. 94)

Following the 1826 demise of the library association that had been established in 1804 and the brief life of the “Batavia Forum” established in 1827, another effort was made to provide library services for the public. In 1839, William Seaver organized the “Batavia Circulating Library.” Membership cost \$4.00 per year or 50 cents per month. Books that were kept over five weeks were considered “purchased.” (“A Cycle of Praise” [Batavia, N.Y.: St. James Episcopal Church, 1965], no pagination)

15: Cemeteries

Apparently the care for the Batavia Cemetery was minimal at best. Frederick Beers said that the appearance became “forbidding.” However, in 1840, a fence was erected to protect the graves and shrubbery from the “invasion of animals.” (Frederick W. Beers, *Gazetteer and Biographical Record of Genesee County, N.Y. 1788-1890* [Syracuse, N.Y.: J. W. Vose, Publisher, 1890] p. 187)

16: Firefighting

In September of 1832, the Village Trustees again tried their hand at purchasing a pump for the fire department. Referred to as a Red Jacket goose neck engine, the pump was acquired from a John Anderson for \$600. Evidently it worked better than the Triton purchased three years earlier. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 119)

In March of 1833, the fire department was reorganized and increased in size. A hook and ladder company was established. The office of Chief Engineer was also created. (William Seaver 2, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 119)

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The reader may recall that one provision of the 1823 charter was the requirement that residents of the Village assist in fighting a fire when requested to do so. A fine could be imposed for refusing to help. In light of this provision, an observation by William Seaver following the fire of 1837 is particularly interesting: “It was a disgraceful sight to see some of our own citizens stand with their cloaks comfortably wrapped around them, viewing the ravages before them, without offering to lift a finger, while others, not residents of the Village, without a cent at stake, were laboring hard either to extinguish the fire or save the property of those endangered. Such men should be marked and remembered.” (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 49) It appears that Batavia hasn’t always been the home of good neighbors, as a later City slogan asserted.

17: Healthcare

On June 27, 1832, the Village Trustees established a Board of Health. The individuals appointed to the Board were William Seaver, Henry Tisdale, George W. Lay, Frederick Follett, and Daniel H. Chandler. Two days later, the Board met in the office of Daniel Chandler and selected William Seaver as President and Frederick Follett as Secretary. Also at this meeting, the Board resolved to publish rules and regulations designed to “prevent introduction of infections or contagious disease of any kind” into the Village “by the prompt removal of all nuisances therein.” (From a copy of the original act and minutes stored in the vault of Batavia City Hall.)

Later in the year, on August 22nd, the Board took action against two such nuisances, a slaughter house and a yard in the rear of a livery stable. It appears that the slaughter house was shut down. (From records stored in the vault of Batavia City Hall.)

The year 1832 also was marked by a cholera epidemic. Cholera is an infection of the intestines caused primarily by consuming drinking water and food that have been contaminated by human feces. The symptoms include diarrhea and vomiting. Dehydration can become so severe that death ensues.

In August of 1832, the Board of Health directed Dr. John Cotes to go to Rochester for the purpose of learning about cholera, its treatment, etc. and then to return with a report of his findings. A sum of money was set aside to reimburse Cotes’ expenses. Then, in November, the Board of Health purchased from Gilbert Seward, at a cost of \$108, a house, garden, and wood for the purpose of setting up a hospital for cholera victims. (From records stored in the vault of Batavia City Hall.) This building, located on the west side of Liberty Street, was the first hospital

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in the Village. ("Past and Present," *The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 18 February 1928) The building apparently reverted to other uses after the cholera epidemic passed.

18: Care of the handicapped, aged, poor, and young

No recorded changes have been found in the care of the handicapped, aged, poor, and young occurred during the fourth decade.

19: Disasters

Four significant fires occurred in the 1830s. The first of these was discovered about 2 a.m. the night of March 4, 1833. It started in a building occupied by a billiard recess (parlor?) on the south side of Main Street near Jackson. The building immediately west, the location of a saddler, was also burned. So, too, were two smaller buildings immediately east, one a law office and the other a shoe shop. The fire was finally halted by tearing down two smaller buildings west of those that were consumed by the flames. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 45)

The next fire occurred barely more than a month later on April 19, 1833. It also started in the middle of the night. The fire originated in a small wooden building on the north side of Main Street roughly opposite Court Street. It proceeded eastward to the intersection of State Street (no longer existing) and westward some distance as well. The buildings destroyed included a tavern house at the corner of Main and State streets; an unoccupied building fitted up for a grocery; a small building used as a tailor shop; a building occupied by a grocer; a building housing a dry goods store, book store, and book bindery; a building occupied by a watchmaker, a jeweler, and a tin and sheet iron manufacturer; a small building used as a grocery and baker's shop; and a two-story building housing a tailor shop, a lawyer, a drug store, a grocery, and an apartment. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 45-46.)

About a year later, the worst fire of all broke out about 5 p.m. on May 30, 1834. It was a hot day, everything was exceedingly dry, and there was a strong wind from the southwest. The fire began in some combustible materials near barns and stables connected to the Eagle Tavern, the latter at the southeast corner of Main and Court streets. Burning shingles were driven by the wind great distances and landed on roofs as far east as Liberty Street. Soon almost every roof on the north side of Main Street was more or less on fire. The fire extended south along Court Street from Main to Ellicott, a short distance east on Ellicott, and along the south side of Main Street from the Eagle Tavern at the corner of Main and Court to near the corner of Main and

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Jackson streets. Great numbers of men fighting the fire downtown were obliged to leave the immediate scene in order to protect their own property as the whole Village seemed threatened by the burning shingles that blew in the wind. Seaver described the small stream of water pumped by the fire engine on the inferno as about equal to a pewter syringe squirting water on Mt. Aetna. Perhaps total destruction was prevented from occurring when, after about 30 minutes, the wind shifted to the northeast. Altogether, about 25 buildings were destroyed. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 46-48.)

The fire of May 1834 wiped out a major part of downtown Batavia. The structures burned included B. Humphrey's Eagle Tavern; a tavern house occupied by H. Rowe; Taggart and Smith's law office; Jones and Leach's tailor shop; a law office and dwelling house owned by T. Fitch; a building occupied by a Mr. Buxton as a cabinet shop, Gilbert and Seward as a tin factory, and T. Cole as a tailor's shop; a dwelling house owned by a Mrs. Hewitt; a dwelling house occupied by Richard Smith; Allen and Chandler's law office; a dwelling house occupied by Mr. Ottoway and William Fursman; a small building occupied as a grocery; a small building occupied as a dwelling; two dwellings owned by H. and E. C. Kimberly; barns and sheds owned by A. Hosmer; and two dwelling houses owned by Jesse Wood. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 46-48)

The last significant fire of the decade occurred on November 8, 1837. It was on the north side of Main Street and burned a block of buildings. The fire started between 6 and 7 p.m. Fortunately, the evening was calm and fire fighters were able to stop the fire as it burned eastward by tearing down a building in its path. The losses included a building housing an apartment, a milliner's shop, and a tailor's shop; a barber shop; a jewelry store; another tailor's shop; a building housing a grocery and provision store; and a building occupied by a hat shop and a gunsmith shop. (William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] p. 48)

20: Entertainment and recreation

The year 1840 marked the first County Fair. It was housed in a building on Creek Road south of the Village. The facilities included a half-mile track. ("Site of First Fair Held in Genesee County," *The Daily News*, Batavia, N.Y., 15, July 1939)

21: War/impact of war

A general discussion of the Land Office War of 1836 was presented in the overview section of this chapter. Following is a more detailed account of what occurred in Batavia on May 14, 1836.

Word was received that an armed mob of 700 to 1000 men was marching north on the road from Attica toward Batavia. Bells throughout the Village were rung to sound an alarm. Upon sounding of the alarm, muskets were obtained from the arsenal in sufficient number to arm every citizen. A box of 1000 musket balls was taken to the Land Office and another box to the Court House where Sheriff Nathan Townsend had his headquarters. About 50 men were stationed inside the Land Office building. Then William Seaver, David Evans, William Davis, and Trumbull Cary rode toward Attica to scout out the invading mob. After determining that the mob was only four miles away and advancing rapidly, the men quickly returned to Batavia to prepare a defense. Soon the mob reached the present-day intersection of Walnut and South Main streets where it halted.

At this point, Isaac (?) Verplanck rode out to meet the dissidents and inquire as to their intentions. They answered, "to right themselves." When Verplanck asked what they meant by that, he was told that it was "none of his business." Verplanck then informed the mob that if they performed any "outrages" on either private or public property, they would be fired upon. Spokesmen for the mob then requested a meeting with David Evans, the resident land agent. Upon being so informed, Evans sent word back that he wasn't going to engage in any communication with an armed mob.

After receiving Evans' reply, the mob marched across the bridge and gathered in front of the Land Office. Four of them approached the building and again asked to speak with David Evans. Evans once more refused to talk with them. As this exchange was taking place, Sheriff Townsend suddenly appeared on the scene together with 120 men armed with muskets and fixed bayonets. The Sheriff approached the mob and informed them that if they attempted to destroy any building in the Village, his men would fire a full volley into them. When some tried to argue the legality of such an action, Townsend cut them off, assured them that he (Townsend) would give the order to fire, legal or not, and advised the mob to be off and very quickly at that.

With that warning, the mob moved west on West Main Street before stopping again. After a boisterous debate about how to respond, it broke up with some 40 or so individuals continuing on west and most of the rest walking back past the Land Office and south across the bridge

over the Creek. A small number of other men who lingered about the Village were soon arrested and jailed. So ended the War.

(All of the material in this section is from William Seaver 1, *A Historic Sketch of the Village of Batavia* [Batavia, N.Y.: William Seaver & Son, 1849] pp. 48-54.)

22: Families/persons of special note

One of early Batavia's most prominent and influential citizens was a Polish immigrant who, as a teenager traveling without his family, arrived in Batavia in either 1833 or 1834. That individual was Major Henry Glowacki, born in 1816 into a prominent Polish family at a time when Poland was occupied by Russian and Austrian armies.

Major Glowacki earned his military title through attending military school and joining the Polish army. After participating in a losing revolt against the Russian forces of Czar Nicholas, Henry fled to Austria. Later, he was among a contingent of Polish exiles to whom the U.S. Congress offered land in Illinois. Purportedly, he was on his way to Illinois to inspect that land when he stopped overnight in Batavia and met David Evans. Even though Glowacki spoke little or no English at that point, Evans offered him a job at the Land Office as a scribe (in effect as a human copy machine).

Henry Glowacki soon became proficient in English although reportedly he never lost a strong accent. After only two years reading law under the supervision of his future father-in-law, Heman Redfield, he was admitted to the bar. Later Glowacki, entered into a partnership with Joshua L. Brown for several years, then with his son-in-law, Leroy Parker. Henry Glowacki was especially notable for his community service. He was a Village Trustee, served as President on the Board of Education for School District No. 2, served as a Trustee of the New York State Institution for the Blind, was Chairman of the Genesee County Democratic Committee, served on the party's State Committee, and was a delegate to the Democratic Party national conventions in five different years. Glowacki also invested heavily in property in the Village, acquiring considerable amounts of land. For a teenager who didn't know the language and who arrived without family connections, Henry Glowacki's subsequent life was a remarkable story.

(All of the material in this section is from Larry Barnes, *A Polish Revolutionary in Batavia, His Wife and Descendants, and a House Divided* [Batavia, N.Y.: self-published, 2008].)

1831-1840

23: Private clubs, social organizations/service organizations/non-profit groups providing services

The author has found no recorded changes in this area during the fourth decade.

24: Sex/sexual services/sexual entertainment

There is nothing new to report from this decade.

25: Urban Renewal

Out of sheer necessity and as the result of four major fires, the downtown area of Batavia was largely rebuilt in the period from 1831 to 1840.