



BISHOP THOMAS A. MORRIS, after whom the Village of Mount Morris was named, was a senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church and was born in Virginia about 1794. He began his ministerial work in the Ohio Conference in 1816 and traveled extensively in several of the western states for nearly twenty years, experiencing many privations and adventures which were incident to the early Methodist ministry in the west. In 1834 he was appointed editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* at Cincinnati and in 1836 was ordained a bishop. He was small of stature, noticeably rotund, and with a physiognomy grave but not severe. He lived to be about 80 years of age and died in Springfield, Ohio. It is not known whether he was ever in Mount Morris but it is quite possible that he was, during the early Rock River Seminary days.

because it was in honor of Bishop Morris as well."

John McFarland built one of the first houses in the village and John Ankney, who had settled at Elkhorn Grove soon after the Blackhawk War, moved to Mount Morris in order to educate his children, and built a house in town. Dr. James J. Beatty, who came from Mary-

land, was the first physician. He died on the plains, while en route for California, in 1851.

The first birth in the village was that of John R. Petrie, son of F. G. Petrie, about 1840. The first burial in the cemetery was a little daughter of Nathaniel Swingley.

LAYING OUT OF THE VILLAGE

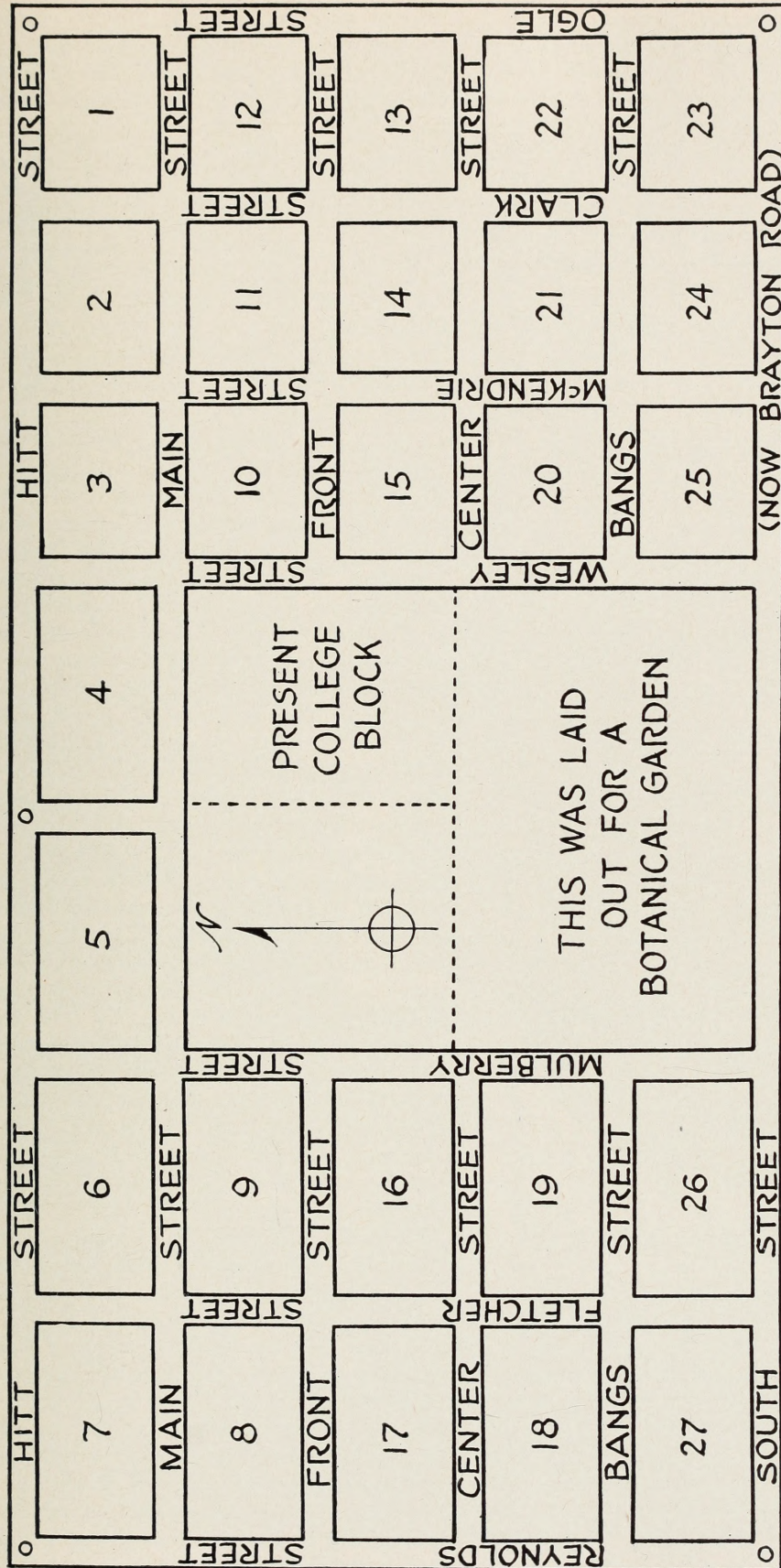
THE Village of Mount Morris was officially laid out in 1841 by the trustees of Rock River Seminary who owned the entire tract of land on which the village now stands. The Seminary reserved eight blocks for its purposes and laid out 27 blocks containing 310 lots. The south half of the space reserved for the Seminary was to be laid out as a Botanical Garden but later this was cut up into blocks and is now known as the Botanical Addition.

For many years the two blocks immediately west of the present campus were not laid out and a wooden fence surrounded the entire four blocks comprising the seminary property. The two west blocks were eventually laid out in lots and these two blocks are known as the Seminary Addition to the village. The original layout of the village as surveyed by Rock River Seminary is shown on the opposite page. This layout is recorded at Oregon as follows:

"Daniel F. Hitt, Deputy Surveyor for Ogle County, Illinois, certifies that he was employed by the Trustees of the Rock River Seminary to survey and lay out said town and that he commenced on April 5, 1841, and surveyed and laid out the said town, commencing at the quarter-section corner on the East boundary of Section 27, Township 24, Range 9 East of the 4th P.M., and run due east at a variation of 8° East 864 feet and there set a post and stone for the extreme northeast corner of said town, and thence run due south 1520 feet and there set a post and stone for the extreme southeast corner of said town, and thence run due west 3366 feet, and there set a post and stone for the extreme southwest corner of said town, and thence run due north 1520 feet and there set a post and stone for the ex-

treme northwest corner of said town, and from thence run due east 2502 feet to the place of beginning, and then subdivided all the within plat of ground into blocks, lots, streets and public grounds, making 27 blocks and 310 lots, all of equal size except the lots in the second and third tiers of blocks, which only differ from the rest by being five feet shorter North and South; and 14 streets, all of which are 66 feet wide except the most northern one, which is

JOHN ANKNEY, early pioneer of Ogle County and a resident of Mount Morris in the early fifties, was born in Somerset County, Pa., Sept. 15, 1787, a son of Peter and Mary M. (Kimmel) Ankney. He came to Illinois in 1818 and settled in Jackson County, where he lived until 1827, when he located at Galena. In December, 1829, with some others, he was appointed to lay out a road from Galena to Dixon's Ferry, and it was during this work that he made a claim near Buffalo Grove (now Polo). On his return after finishing the survey, he discovered that Isaac Chambers had selected the same spot for his home, so Mr. Ankney went about a half mile west, on the north side of Buffalo Creek, and made a second claim. In January, 1830, Mr. Ankney and his two eldest sons, Harrison B. and Oliver R., built a cabin on the claim and the rest of the family came to the new home in April of the following spring. The first wedding ever celebrated in that vicinity was the marriage of Mr. Ankney's only daughter to S. M. Journey, early in 1832. In 1849, Mr. Ankney moved to Mount Morris where he built a house, and in March, 1849, was appointed postmaster, which position he held until his death, June 15, 1853. He apparently was engaged in business, as the Mount Morris Gazette in January, 1851, carried his advertisement headed "Horse Farrier," stating that he had a well-selected stock of horse medicines on hand. Nothing more is known of his family except that he had another son, T. C. Ankney, who was in the grocery business in the early fifties, doing business as Ankney's Auction and Commission Store.

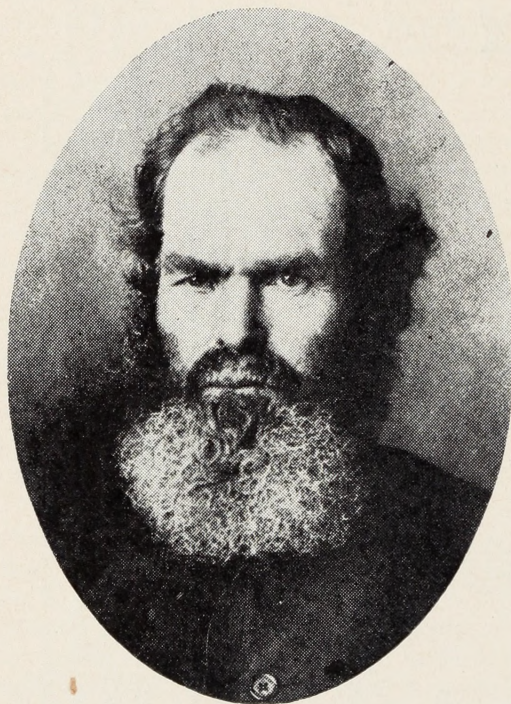


the two blocks to the west of the present campus were reserved for campus purposes. These six blocks were later laid out in lots and sold. The survey was made by D. Fletcher Hitt and it was discovered years afterward that he used a chain which was nearly a foot too long.

THE ORIGINAL VILLAGE of Mount Morris was laid out as above in 1839. The land all belonged to Rock River Seminary and ample space was reserved for the future growth of the institution. The four blocks to the south were laid out for a botanical garden and

only 10 feet wide and it runs east and west along the quarter-section line, and three public squares; the most central one is the square in which the Seminary stands and is 990 feet east and west and 574 feet wide north and south, and one lying immediately along the south side of the last described square (or Seminary square) is the same length and is 594 feet wide north and south and is reserved for a Botanical Garden.

"S. M. Hitt, Martin Reynolds, John Sharp, Thos. S. Hitt, John Wallace and Lander S. Walker, Trustees of the Rock River Seminary, acknowledge the said plat to be their act and deed, and that they have caused the same to be re-



MICHAEL E. MILLER came to Mount Morris from Maryland in 1842 with his parents when he was but a year old. Most of his life was spent cultivating his farm west of town. He also owned and operated the Mount Morris Creamery for several years and later had a general store in the Seibert Block. He died June 12, 1906, at the age of 65 years. In January, 1866, he married Elizabeth Welty, and to them were born fourteen children. Three died in infancy, the others being Mrs. Mary Neiman, Mrs. Grace Davenport, Mrs. Ida Potter, Oliver L., George M., Mrs. Bertha Bennett, Mrs. Daisy Newcomer, Mrs. Carrie Keplinger, Daniel L., Mrs. Anna Hanes and Susan V.

served and laid out as therein represented, the streets for public use and the lots for the Trustees of Mount Morris for the use of Mount Morris Seminary."

It appears that the original survey and plat of the Village was not properly recorded and in 1875 the Village Board of Trustees employed A. Q. Allen to make a new survey which brought out the interesting fact that the chain used for the original survey was too long. The record of this re-survey as it was officially filed with the Recorder of Deeds is as follows:

"A. Q. Allen, County Surveyor of Ogle County, certifies that at the request and by the authority of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation of Mount Morris, he made a re-survey of the Original Town of Mount Morris (there appearing no plat upon record of the same) and having ascertained, both by observation and personal examination of the chain by which the original survey was made, that it was 8/10 of a foot too long, he made the survey to correspond with said measurement and marked on the plat the exact size of the lots, blocks, streets and alleys in feet and tenths of a foot, and that the plat made by him is a correct representation of the plan and location of said town as made by Fletcher Hitt in the original survey of said town, and that he found the old original stones still standing; that said town is situated, as shown by said plat, partly on the South East $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 27 and partly on the South West $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 26, Township 24 North, Range 9 East of the 4th P.M., and that this survey was made to correspond as near as practicable with the original survey thereof.

"Samuel Lookabaugh, President, and Samuel Mumma, Secretary, certify that said survey and plat was made in accordance with an order of the Board of Trustees of the corporation of Mount Morris, inasmuch as there appeared no plat of record of the original survey; said order was passed for the express purpose of perpetuating said survey and the more fully to confirm the titles to the lots in said town, and to conform more fully to the law in such cases made and provided."

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THIS PICTURE of the well-known William Watts family was taken about the year 1890. The father and mother are seated in the center. They were married in 1849. Mr. Watts came to Mount Morris in 1837 and Mrs. Watts, who was Anna Amelia Ankney, came with her widowed mother in 1837. The others in the family are as follows: Seated at left, Fred Watts and Fanny Felker Watts; seated at right, Martha Avey Watts and Thomas Watts;

three children in center. Willis, Alvin and Ada Fahrney; back row, left to right, Earl Watts, Grace Watts Baker, Oliver S. Watts, Mollie Watts, James L. Watts, Martha Watts, Ella McNett Watts, Ella Watts Fahrney, William Watts, Albert Fahrney, Victoria Weller Watts, Albertus Watts. The picture in the frame is of John Watts who died before the picture was taken.



THIS GROUP OF OLD MEN were among the earliest settlers in this locality. They all came in about 1837, 100 years ago. From left to right, Michael Bovey, Michael Brantner, Benj. Swingley, Henry Sharer and Frederick Drexler. All have been dead for many years.

Chapter 2

EARLY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

DURING the hundred years since the founding of Mount Morris, hundreds of business enterprises have been established and conducted for various periods of time. In the early days nearly every store carried a general line of merchandise including dry goods, clothing, hardware, groceries, drugs, etc., but as the years went by more stores were established and these various lines of merchandise were carried separately. Naturally many of the business enterprises were short-lived or kept changing hands, while a few were conducted for many years by the same men.

As far as can be learned, the first store in Mount Morris was opened in October, 1841, by Daniel Brayton and his son, Frederick. This was a general store in an addition on the west side of a small house which they erected that summer located just west of the present Wishard Building. The senior Brayton was a Methodist minister and occasionally preached in the old Seminary chapel. On page 41 is shown a reproduction of the first ad ever inserted in a newspaper in Ogle County and shows the great variety of merchandise carried in this store. After the death of Daniel Brayton, the business continued in the Brayton family, first by Frederick B. Brayton and then for many years by his son, A. W. Brayton. Thus the first store established stayed in the same family through the entire early history of the village.

The second store of any importance was a general store opened several years after that of the Braytons by Samuel Brents. This store was located in a small brick building which stood on the northeast corner of Wesley Ave. and Front St., which was later replaced by the

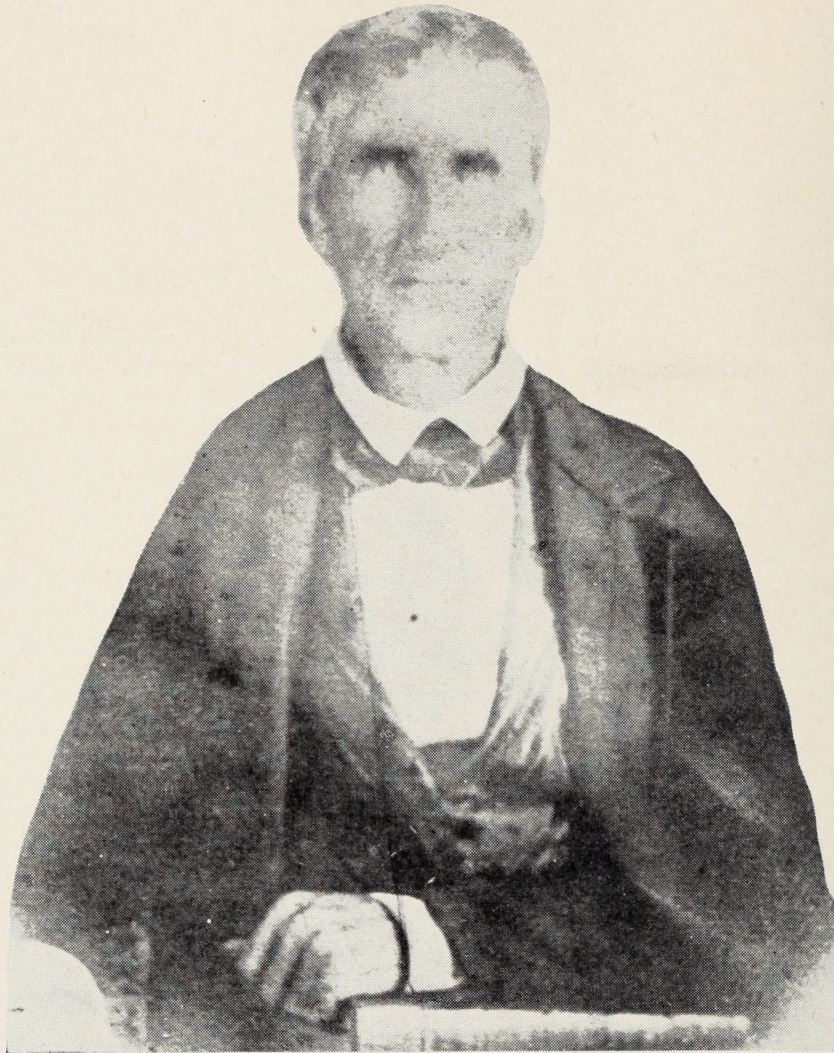
large brick building known as the Seibert Block.

From the time of its founding in 1839, the village gradually increased in size until in 1855 it became a prominent trading point and seemed destined to become the largest town in Ogle County, but during that year the Illinois Central Railroad was built from Freeport to Dixon and the new town of Polo attracted some of the business which Mount Morris had formerly enjoyed. The village continued to grow nevertheless.

In 1866, after the close of the war, there appears to have been a considerable increase in business in Mount Morris and numerous new stores were opened.

The first bank in Mount Morris was established in 1877 by Charles Newcomer and Isaac Rice and continued for nearly twenty years when it was consolidated with the Citizens Bank.

The hotel business dates back almost to the founding of the village. Daniel Brayton kept a public house from the time of the establishment of his store in 1841. The first regular tavern was erected by James Clark several years later. This was an old brick building which stood on the corner of Wesley Ave. and Main St., now occupied by the Wishard Building. In 1851, W. S. Blair opened Blair's Hotel in the brick house on the corner of McKendrie Ave. and Bangs St., and this hotel continued in operation until about the year 1880. In 1854, Johnathan Mumma built the old hotel on the present site of the Kable Inn, which was known as the "Eldorado House." It was purchased in 1858 by J. M. Webb and continued for many years as Webb's Hotel. This building was torn down in 1894 and the front part of the

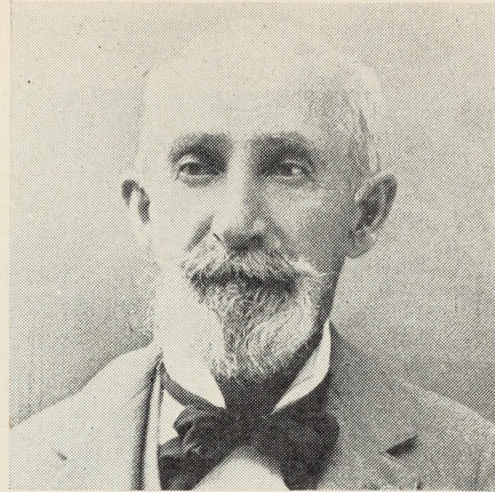


REV. DANIEL BRAYTON was a Methodist minister for many years in New York State and came west with his family by way of the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, arriving in Mount Morris in 1841. With his son, F. B. Brayton, he opened the first store in Mount Morris in October, 1841. It was a general store and was located in an addition on the west side of a small house which they erected that summer at about the present location of Schmucker's Restaurant on Main St. At about this same time, Rev. Brayton's wife, whose maiden name was Ann Wing, operated the hotel in the old brick building which stood on the corner now occupied by the Wishard Bldg. It is said that the hotel was often crowded with land seekers

who stopped in Mount Morris on their way to Dixon where the land office was then located. Transportation in those days was very slow by team and wagon over very poor roads, and there was consequently a rush to get started early from the hotel. Mrs. Brayton frequently worked until 12 o'clock at night, spent three or four hours in a rocking chair and went to work again in the hotel at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning in order to get the land seekers started on their way. Rev. Brayton died June 30, 1851. The date of his wife's death is not available. There were four children in the family: Frederick B., George, Mary (Mrs. Nathan Judson), and Elizabeth.

present hotel erected by Chas. Rohrer.

When the Chicago & Iowa Railroad was put through Mount Morris in 1871, a remarkable business boom followed. Elevators were built and the stock and grain buying business flourished. Robert R. Hitt and Emily Hitt laid off the Railroad Addition to the Village in 1872. Maurice Hitt thought that the building of the railroad north of the business section of the village would draw all new mercantile structures in that direction and consequently he erected a store building a few rods south of the depot on the site now occupied by the Kable plant. This supposition proved a mis-



GEORGE BRAYTON, brother of F. B. Brayton, conducted a tailor shop in Mount Morris for about 15 years in the early days. His advertisement in the Mount Morris Gazette of Jan. 9, 1851, states that he was located one door south of F. B. Brayton's Drug and Dry Goods Store on Wesley Ave. Mr. Brayton later moved to Minneapolis, where he died.

D. BRAYTON & SON,

HAVE now fully opened their store at MT. MORRIS, where they have, and design to keep constantly on hand,

ALL THINGS NEEDED IN A COUNTRY STORE; SUCH AS


CLOTHS,

of different qualities and various colors, for Ladies' and Gentlemen's wear, for Summer and for Winter.

ALSO, —

GROCERIES, PROVISIONS, FRUITS, CROKERY, TIN WARE, BOOKS AND STATIONERY, PAINTS, CARPENTER'S TOOLS, LUMBER, &c.

Which they offer *LOW FOR CASH*

 Those who wish to make a little money go a great way; and country and traveling merchants wishing to purchase to sell again, will please turn their attention this way. *Country produce taken in small quantities.*

January 15, 1842.

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THE ABOVE advertisement of D. Brayton & Son is unique in the fact that it advertises the first store started in Mount Morris is 1842. It appeared in the Rock River Register which was the first newspaper published in Mount Morris and also in Ogle County. The owners of this store were Rev. Daniel Brayton and Frederick B. Brayton, grandfather and father of A. W. Brayton.

take and the building was moved southward to the business portion of the village. This building was later used by A. W. Brayton for many years and is still standing.

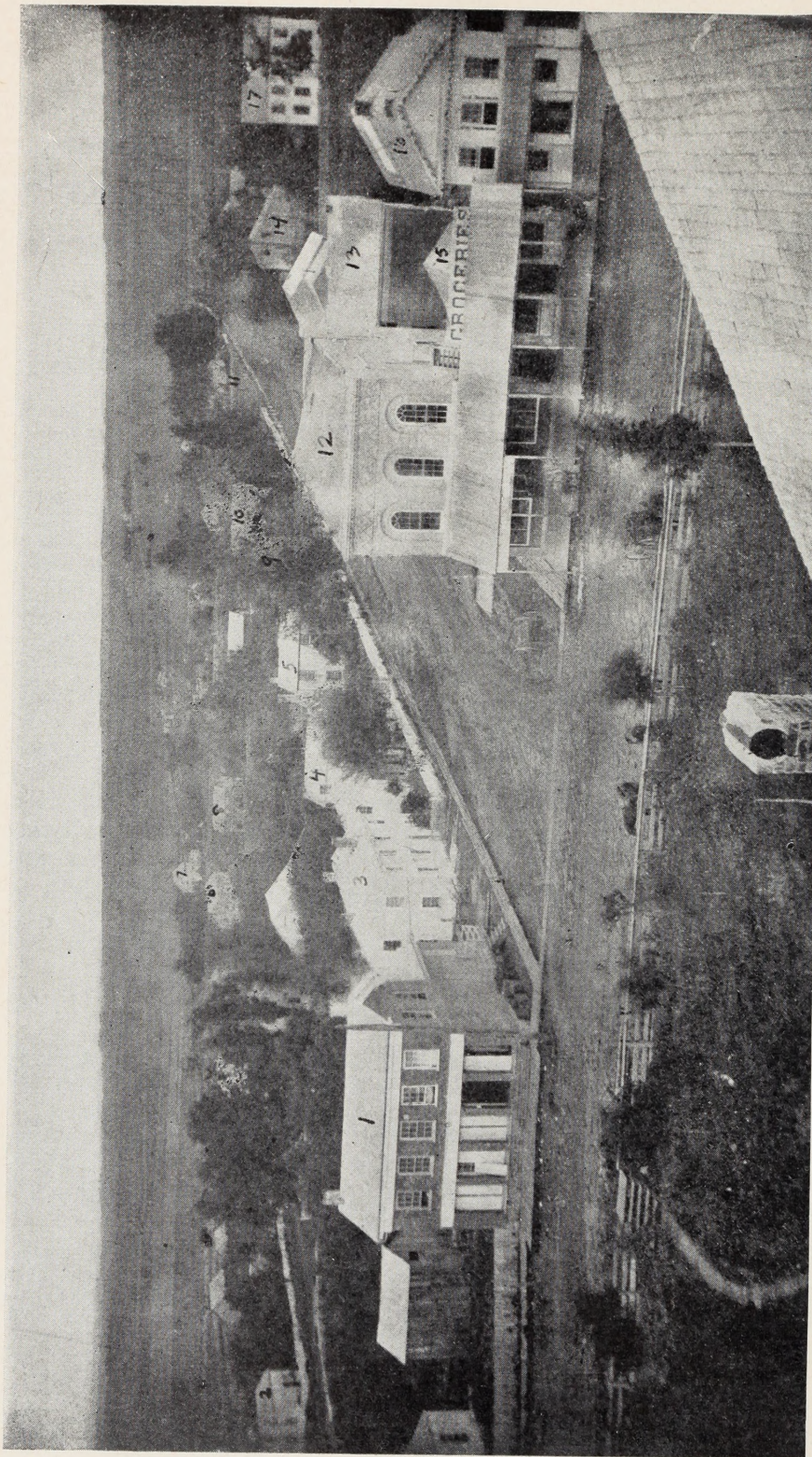
Shortly after the building of the railroad through Mount Morris, a large number of substantial brick structures were erected. The Seibert Building, a two-story brick structure with an opera house above and three business rooms below, was commenced in April, 1873, and was completed in March of the following year.

In 1874, another large two-story building, costing \$12,000.00, was erected by Henry Sharer, John Sprecher and J. H. Nye. It is located on the southeast corner of Wesley Ave. and Main St. This building also contained three store rooms on the first floor. The present Masonic Building was built by Sprecher & Clevidence in 1876 and the brick building just south of it was built by Cyrus Alden in 1875.

During the early nineties, another period of prosperity overtook the village as the result of which more than seventy-five new residences, two college buildings, the Old Folks' Home, five or six store buildings and the old bank

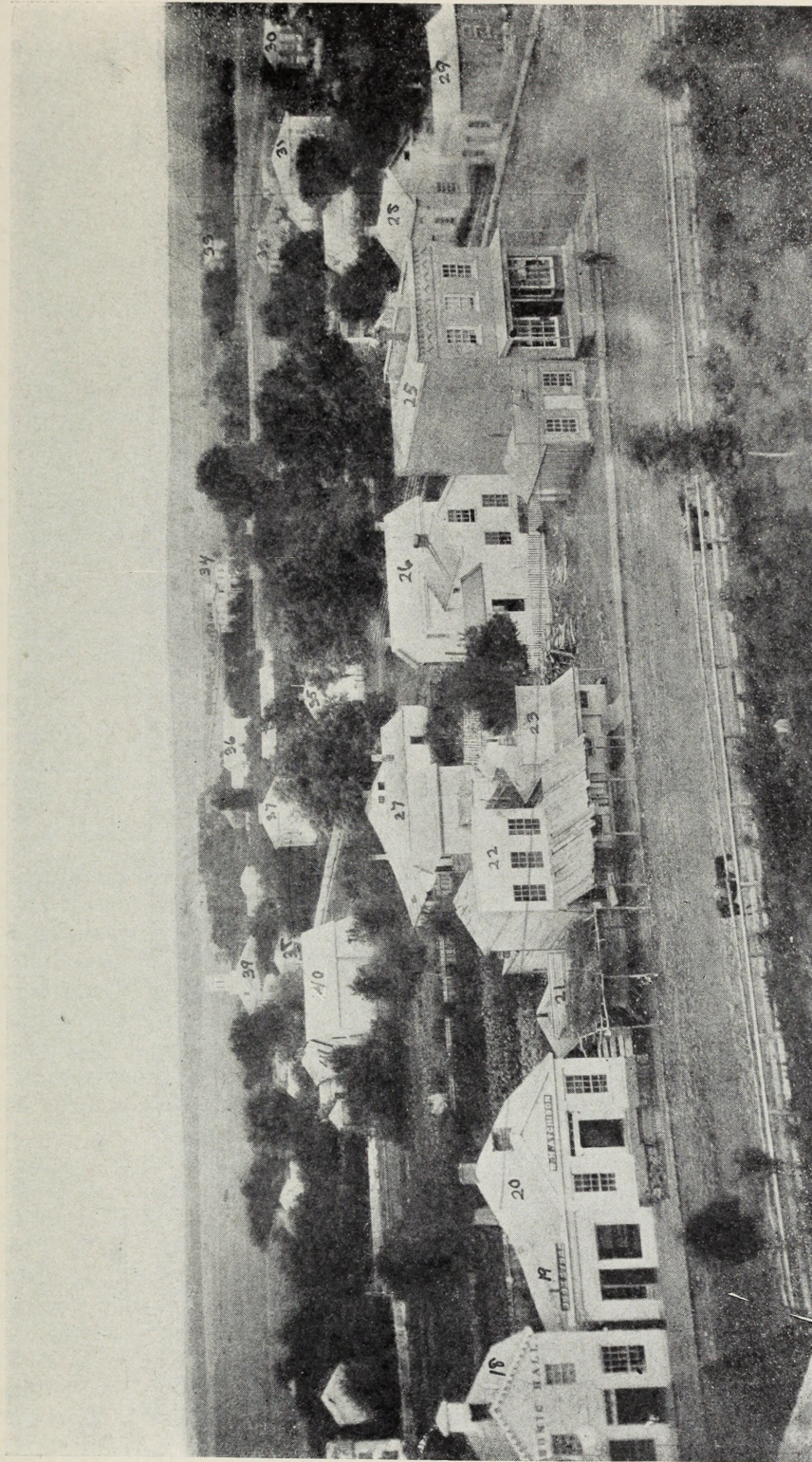
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THIS BIRDS-EYE VIEW of Mount Morris was taken about 1870 from the top of "Old Sandstone." No. 12 is the only building now standing. It was built by Brayton & Baker for their store, and is now occupied by the Hough Hardware Co. The two-story brick building, No. 1, was built between 1842 and 1845, but at first was only one story high. In this building Wood & Petrie kept their general store at an early day, and later Lookabaugh & Middour

were engaged in business there. The building was torn down in 1873 to make room for the present building, known as the Seibert Block, now owned by J. H. Ritson. No. 16 was built by Brayton & Baker. After standing there for a number of years, it was moved to the northeast end of town and used for a residence until torn down by N. E. Buser for his new residence.



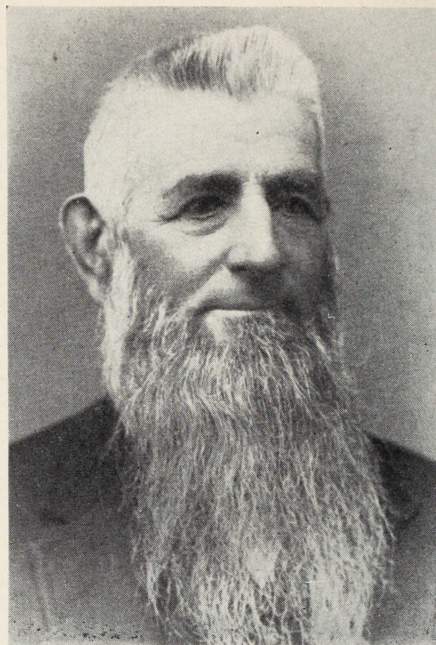
THIS BIRD'S-EYE VIEW of the south business block of Mount Morris was taken from the top of Old Sandstone about the year 1870. The only building now standing is No. 25, which was built in 1857 by Joseph S. Nye and used as a hardware store by him for about ten years. Since then it has had many occupants, mostly as a grocery store. No. 18 is the old Masonic Building, which was built about 1848, and used as a Masonic Hall from that time until 1876, when the present Masonic Block was erected. In this old

building, many of the old-timers were given their degrees in Masonry. No. 19 was occupied by Samuel Knoodle as a bookstore. No. 20 was the Sons of Temperance Building. No. 21 was Peyton Skinner's shoe shop. No. 22 was the property of Edward Davis and housed the postoffice at one time. It was torn down in 1899 to make room for H. E. Newcomer's new brick building. No. 23 was the office of Dr. G. B. Stephens.

building, together with various other structures of more or less importance, were erected. During 1894, more buildings were put up in Mount Morris than all the other Ogle County towns combined.

The next building boom in Mount Morris commenced after the Kable plant began to grow rapidly in its new location at the north end of town. This building boom has never let up since that time except for several years during the depression of 1932-1935.

Robert Newcomer in 1920 opened up the Hitt Addition in the northwest corner of town and Joseph Young later opened up an addition to the west of the Hitt Addition. Then in 1930 Kable Brothers Company laid out the Kable



PETER FUNK, an early settler of Mount Morris, died Sept. 11, 1902, aged nearly 85 years. He was born at Beaver Creek, Md., Jan. 18, 1818, and came to Mount Morris in 1845. He conducted a blacksmith shop as early as 1851 and later opened the first livery stable in Mount Morris in 1852. He married Sarah A. Horner, who died in 1851. He was married again in 1852 to Isabella Heller, to whom were born seven children.



UPTON MILLER, for many years a prominent business man of Mount Morris, died April 8, 1903, aged 75 years. He was born in Washington County, Md., March 21, 1828. He was the only undertaker in Mount Morris for nearly thirty years, and officiated at hundreds of funerals of Mount Morris people. He also built most of the coffins with his own hands. Mr. Miller came to Mount Morris in 1857, and was continuously in business for nearly fifty years, being followed by his son, Wm. H. Miller. He married Maria Louise Davis in 1849, and they had six children: William H., Cyrus, Eliza J., John D., Mary E., and Thomas M. Mrs. Miller died in 1885, and in 1887 he was again married to Catherine (Koontz) Newcomer.

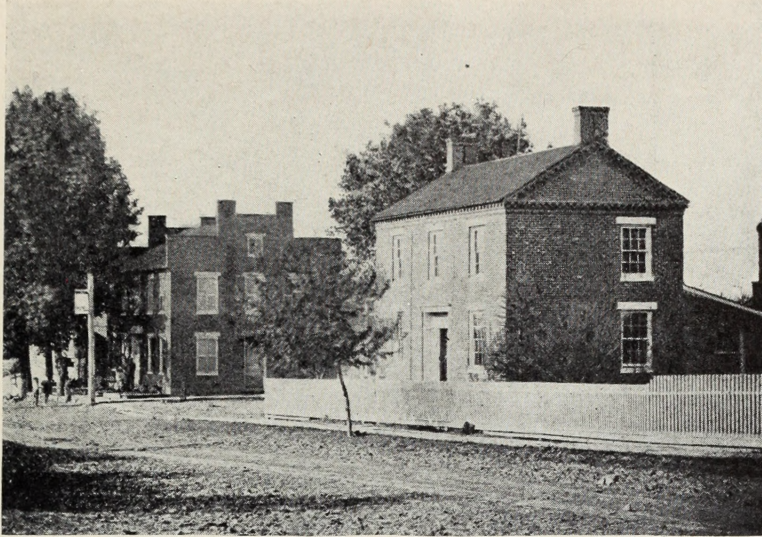
Addition directly west of the plant. During this period, many new houses have been built in these three new additions. The fact of the matter is that building of new residences has lagged considerably behind the actual needs required by the growth of the Kable plant and many employes have been compelled to find living quarters in Oregon and other nearby towns.

Chapman Brothers History of Ogle County, published in 1886, gave the following list of business firms in Mount Morris at that time:

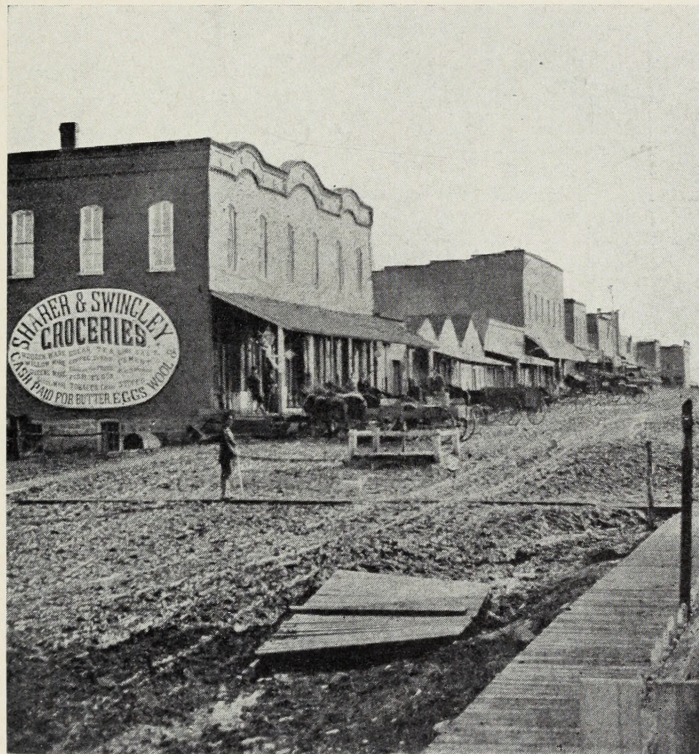
"The business and material interests of Mount Morris have always been of a substantial character, and this is true with the fall of 1885, as well as in all its past history. At that time the general merchandise was controlled by Sprecher & Clevidence and George Windle, who both carried good stocks of all goods usually found in stores of this kind. D. N. Wingert was a dealer in dry goods,

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THIS PICTURE was taken about 1873 and shows Blair's Hotel at the left. This hotel was opened by W. S. Blair in the spring of 1851 and contained sixteen rooms for guests. It was used for a hotel for over thirty years. In later years, it was remodeled for a residence by Dr. G. B. McCosh and now occupied by Dr. J. H. Ritson. The brick house at the right was occupied for many years as a residence by Samuel Knodle, and is still standing.

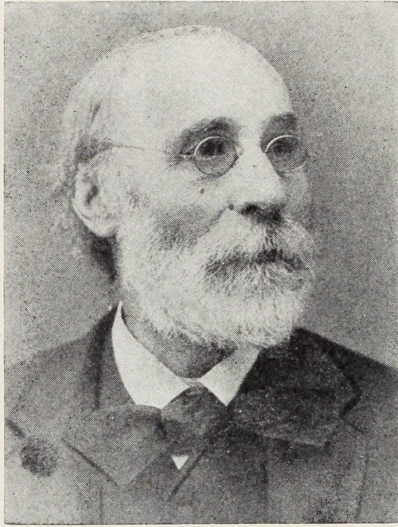


THIS IS THE WAY the business section of Mount Morris looked in 1876, looking south from the corner now occupied by the Wishard Building. Note the old town pump in the center of the intersection and the muddy condition of the street; also the large sign of Sharer & Swingley, who at that time were in the grocery business.

and in a separate room carried a fine stock of groceries. In addition to Mr. Wingert, the grocery trade was controlled by Holly C. Clark (who also carried a line of boots), Newcomer Bros., and A. R. Binkley; Armstrong & Price were clever dealers in hardware and carried a large stock. A. W. Brayton, as successor of the first firm ever in trade in Mount Morris, carried a fine line of drugs, books and stationery. Peyton Skinner and Henry Gebhardt were boot and shoe makers. The furniture trade was in the hands of Wm. Miller, who was also undertaker. A. R.

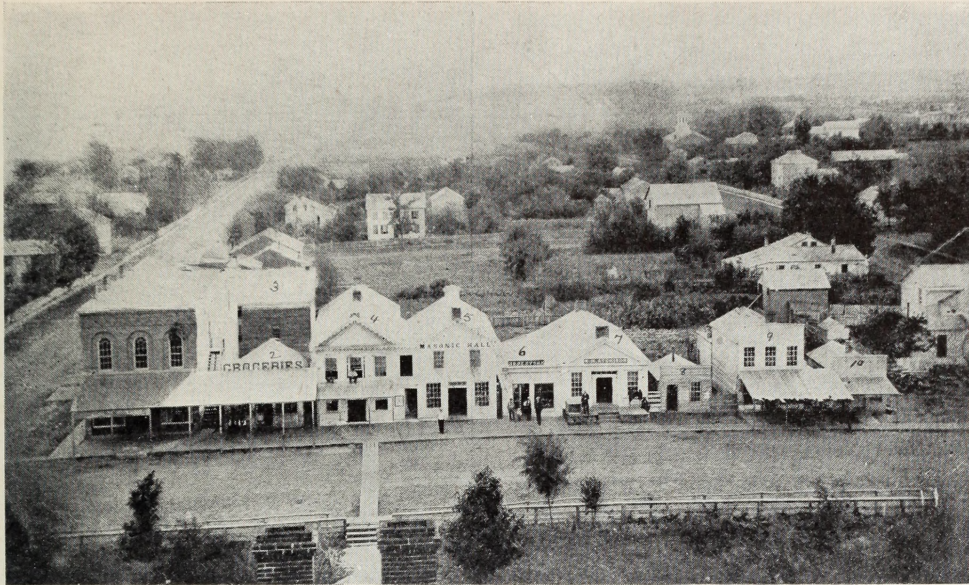


MRS. SARAH J. COGGINS came to Mount Morris in 1845 and for over 50 years was engaged in the dressmaking and millinery business. In 1847, she married Thos. J. Coggins. Their son, Chas. T. Coggins, established the Mount Morris Index in 1890. Mrs. Coggins passed away May 6, 1911 at the age of 82 years.



SAMUEL KNODLE was a prominent figure in the business circles of Mount Morris for many years. He was the son of Samuel and Jane Knodle and was born at Fairplay, Md., Aug. 4, 1820. He died Feb. 10, 1907, at the age of 87 years. For nearly 50 years he was continuously in business in Mount Morris, the greater part of the time in the jewelry business, and several times in the printing business. He taught school in the east, and came to Mount Morris in 1856, intending to teach school here, but instead opened a jewelry shop in the Eldorado House, conducted by Jonathan Mumma, and continued in that business until he retired in 1900. He filled many public offices in Mount Morris, including township clerk, village clerk, township collector, and member and president of the village board of trustees. Mr. Knodle married Ellen Dick in 1843, and they had nine children, five of whom died quite young. The others were Ernest, Edwin, Mrs. G. E. Coffman and Mrs. Jennie Walker. Mr. and Mrs. Knodle celebrated their golden wedding anniversary Jan. 12, 1893.

Binkley and H. E. Binkley each had restaurants where the hungry were fed. E. O. Startzman was the baker of the town. Mrs. Susie Sharer and Mrs. Sarah Coggins were milliners. Sprecher & Clevidence were dealers in grain, and also were engaged in the stock trade, together with Samuel Mumma. Wm. H. Jackson carried on the creamery business quite extensively, distributing quite a large amount of money among the farmers in the vicinity. Jacob Fager was in the jewelry business, and Joseph Thomas in the harness trade, each of whom had a good trade. Joseph Hosking was the photographer. Newcomer & Mumma supplied the people with fresh meat. The banking business was conducted by Newcomer & Rice, men of experience and reliable in every respect. W. D. Rathbun was the livery-man. The lumber trade was in the hands of the Minnesota Lumber Co., represented here by Chas. Buck. The wagon makers were Benj. Tracy, Jacob Knodle, Alferd Doward. The blacksmiths were Calvin Potter, Peter Valentine, Nicho-

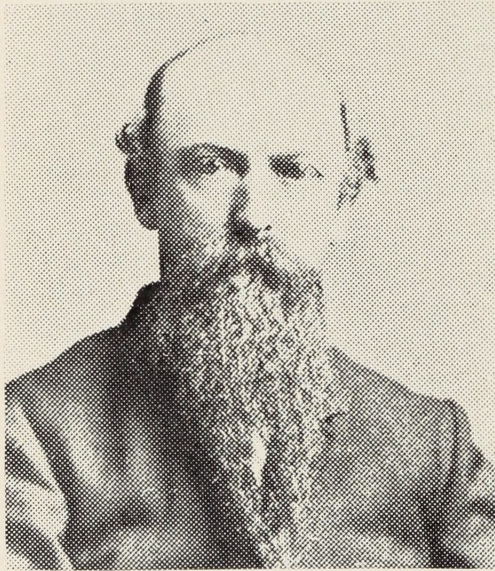


THIS BIRD'S-EYE VIEW of the south business block of Mount Morris was taken about 1870, looking east from the top of "Old Sandstone." The brick building to the left is the only one now standing. The Methodist church had not yet been built.

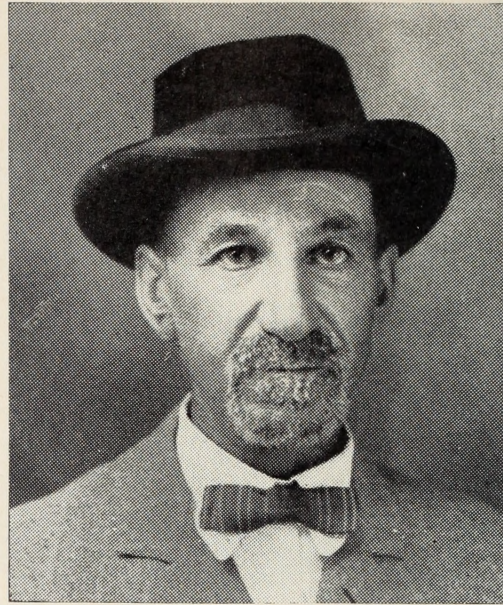


THIS picture was taken in 1900 and shows in the foreground a rag-tag parade on the Fourth of July. Note the old brick building at the right which stood on the corner now occupied by the Wishard Building. This old house was used as a hotel in the early days. The frame building at the left was used for many years by the Brethren Publishing House but was occupied by the Index office when this picture was taken.

las Koontz. The barbers were Joseph Patterson and Boone Washington. The medical profession was ably represented by Drs. David Newcomer, Wm. P. Speaker, Geo. B. McCosh and Joseph I. Mershon. The legal profession and the office of Justice of the Peace were represented by John Weller and Daniel Fager. As an architect and builder, N. E. Buser represented the profession. Benj.



JOHN SPRECHER, a prominent Mount Morris merchant for fifty years, was born in Washington County, Md., Sept. 22, 1832, the son of Philip and Catherine (Houke) Sprecher, and came to Mount Morris with his parents in 1839. He married Lydia Palmer in 1857; their children are George, John, Ella, Frank, Fred, Mae, Charles, Catherine, and Wentworth. During the first seven years of his marriage he engaged in farming, then opened a general dry goods store in Mount Morris in 1866 in partnership with H. H. Clevidence in a building on the corner of Center and Wesley Streets. In 1876, Mr. Sprecher erected the building now known as the Masonic Building, and the firm of Sprecher & Clevidence occupied these spacious quarters until its dissolution in 1891, when L. C. Stanley of Chippewa Falls, Wis., bought the business. Mr. Sprecher re-entered the dry goods business in 1893 and continued in it under the firm name of John Sprecher & Co. until his death April 29, 1911, at the age of 79 years. His wife died Dec. 20, 1919, aged 81 years. The firm of John Sprecher & Co. continues under the competent management and supervision of Catherine Sprecher Miller, assisted by her brothers, Charles C. and Wentworth W. Sprecher.



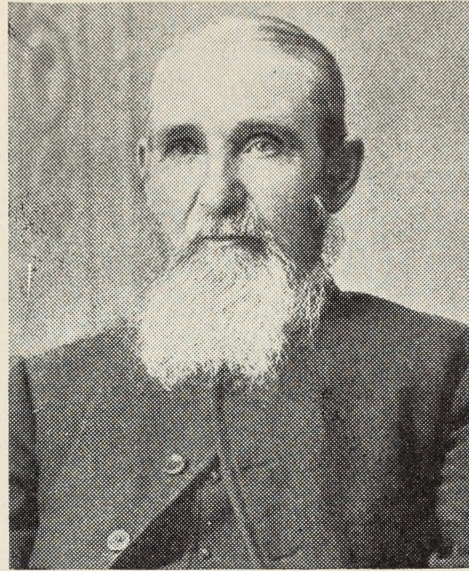
HENRY H. CLEVIDENCE, prominent business man, died Jan. 26, 1901, aged 65 years. He was born in Washington County, Md., Jan. 18, 1836. He came to Mount Morris when 25 years of age and for nearly 40 years was engaged in business in Mount Morris, first in the mercantile business for 25 years with John Sprecher and later in the farm machinery and grain business. He served the town as supervisor, as town clerk, as village trustee and for two years as president of the village board. He married Sophia E. Middlekauff, and they had eleven children. Those well known in Mount Morris were Mrs. Clara Wingert, Howard, Arthur, Bert and Earl.

Seibert was the owner of a fine hall and an opera house."

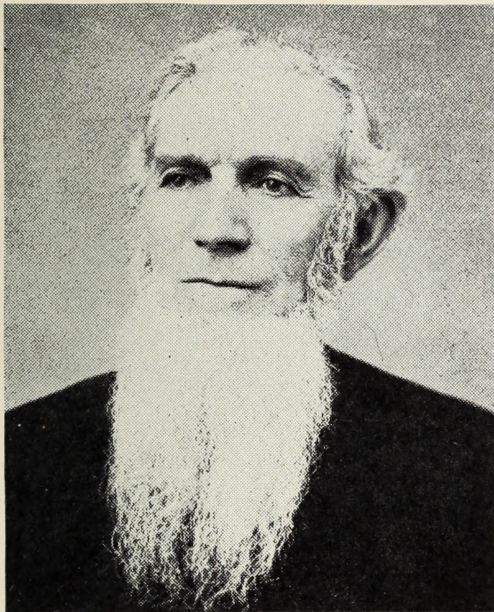
It is impossible to compile a complete list of all business and professional men who have conducted business enterprises during the 100 years since the founding of the village, for the reason that no newspaper files except a few scattered copies are available prior to 1896. All available files and county histories have been searched and the list made as complete as possible. The business men and firms listed in this chapter do not include any who were in business at the time this book was published, as they are included in the chapter, "Mount Morris of Today."

ELIAS BAKER was one of the important men in the early days of Mount

Morris and was connected with many of the early business enterprises. He was a native of Boonsboro, Md., where he was born June 11, 1817. He learned the carpenter trade and came to Mount Morris in 1838. In partnership with James B. McCoy, he built a one-story machine shop in 1844 on the corner now occupied by the Methodist Church, where they engaged in the manufacture of traveling threshing machines. From 1850 to 1856, Mr. Baker was engaged in the mercantile business with F. B. Brayton and also in the publishing of the Mount Morris Gazette. He served three terms as supervisor of Mount Morris Township and in 1852 was elected Sheriff of Ogle County. He later engaged in farming for eight years near Mount Morris and in 1868, he moved to Polo where he engaged in the lumber and grain business. He died in Polo in 1885. Mr. Baker was married in Mount Morris in 1848 to Mary M. Swingley, daughter of Michael Swingley, and they had two children, Frank H. and Vernie (Mrs. James W. Allaben).



EMANUEL NEWCOMER was born March 11, 1829, near Hagerstown, Md., and died Oct. 5, 1928, lacking less than six months of being 100 years old. At the age of 15, he drove with a party from Maryland to Mount Morris, the trip requiring 42 days. For 84 years he lived in or near Mount Morris with the exception of four years in Missouri and five years in Tennessee, from 1883 to 1892. In the early eighties he owned a grocery business in Mount Morris. In 1853, he was married to Isabel Knock, and ten children were born to them, only two of whom survived him, Mrs. Martha Miller and Parnell Newcomer. Mr. Newcomer was active in the Church of the Brethren, having been elected to the ministry in 1869 and ordained to the eldership in 1888.



DANIEL L. WINGERT died January 6, 1913, aged 92 years. He was born at Clearspring, Md., Oct. 26, 1820, and moved with his parents to Winchester, Ohio, when he was eleven years old. He came to Illinois in 1846, locating at Franklin Grove, where he purchased a farm. In 1875 he came to Mount Morris and engaged in the grocery business for twenty years, known as D. L. Wingert & Co. He was a plasterer and stone mason by trade. He married Nancy Foreman Oct. 26, 1843, and they had three children, two of whom survived him, Marcus D. Wingert and Mrs. Alice Trostle. Mrs. Wingert died in 1886, and he was married again in 1890 to Mrs. Catherine Butterbaugh, who died in 1900.

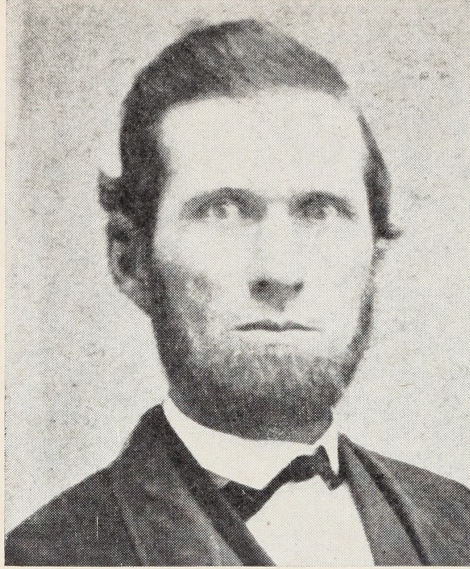
GEORGE FOUKE died April 19, 1900, aged 95½ years, after living in Mount Morris for 55 years. He was born in Shepherdstown, Va., Sept. 29, 1804. He was a shoemaker by trade and came to Mount Morris in 1846. Before coming west he married Elizabeth Harmison who died in 1888, after which he lived with his adopted daughter, Mrs. H. J. Farwell.

WILLIAM J. FOUKE was born April 6, 1828, at Shepherdstown, Va., and came to Ogle County in 1846. He was a shoemaker by trade. He served during the Civil War in Co. H, 34th Illinois Infantry. In 1865, he married Sarah Sheets and they had five children. He died Nov. 28, 1900, aged nearly 73 years.

ORVILLE N. ADAMS of Galena opened a general store in Mount Morris about 1850, known as the Adams Cheap Store, and after several years he took in Prof. D. J. Pinckney as a partner. After a year the partnership was dissolved, and Mr. Adams departed to other fields.

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DR. JOHN McCOSH, father of the well-known Mount Morris family of that name, was of Scotch ancestry. He was a graduate of the Philadelphia Medical College and practiced for some years before coming to Mount Morris in 1864, and he continued his practice here until his death in 1883, aged 60 years. He married Elizabeth Snowberger and they had nine children as follows: James, David S., John, Winfield Scott, George B., Benjamin and Sarah (twins), Susan (Mrs. Chas. Sharer) and Lucia (Mrs. Milo Maltbie).

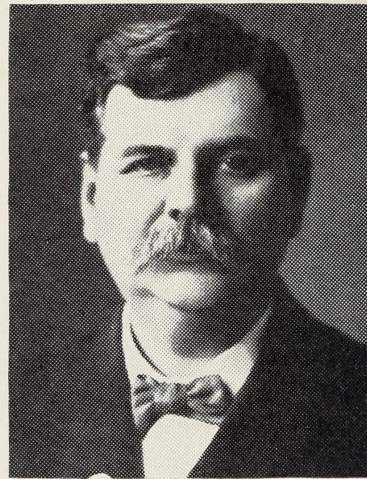
SAMUEL BRENTS opened the second store of any importance in Mount Morris in 1843. It was a general store and was located in a small brick building which stood on the northeast corner of Wesley and Front St., which was later replaced by the large brick building known as the Seibert Block. Mr. Brents sold out to S. M. Hitt and F. G. Petrie.

DR. JAMES J. BEATTY was the first physician in Mount Morris, locating here in the early forties. He had an extensive practice and covered considerable territory on horseback. He was once caught in a prairie fire and both horse and rider were terribly burned. Dr. Beatty recovered but the horse died. A few years later he started for the California gold fields but was taken sick and died on the prairie.

JAMES CLARK built the first hotel in Mount Morris in the early forties. This was a brick building which stood on the corner of Wesley and Main Sts., where the Wishard Building now stands. After running this tavern for a short time, under the name of the "New York House," he returned to his farm at Washington Grove and rented his tavern to Mr. Brayton.

WILLIAM S. BLAIR, who was proprietor of the Blair Hotel in Mount Morris in the early fifties, was born in Crawford County, Pa., May 31, 1816, and came to Ogle County in 1837. He opened the hotel in the spring of 1851 in the brick building on the corner of McKendrie and Bangs St., and continued to operate it until about 1880. The Mount Morris Gazette of July 3, 1851, contained the following notice: "This house has been recently erected and opened by the proprietor, Mr. Wm. Blair, in Mount Morris with a view to the accommodation of the traveling public, where he is at all times prepared to minister to the wants of those who may favor him with their patronage. His table will be supplied with the best the market affords and the other arrangements of the house shall be such as will give satisfaction to all. He can also offer good stabling with a good supply of oats, corn and hay for horses." In 1838, Mr. Blair married Jeannette Locke Blair and they had four children: Mercy A., Samuel R., Mary H., and Florence W. (Mrs. Geo. B. McCosh). Mr. Blair passed away in 1890.

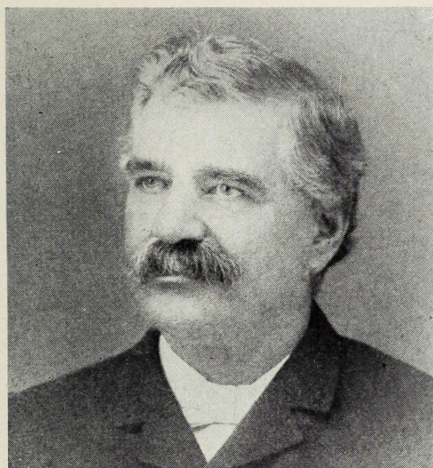
S. N. BEAUBEIN conducted a harness and saddle business in Mount Morris in 1851, in the house formerly occupied by W. S. Blair. He was also prepared to do carriage trimming.



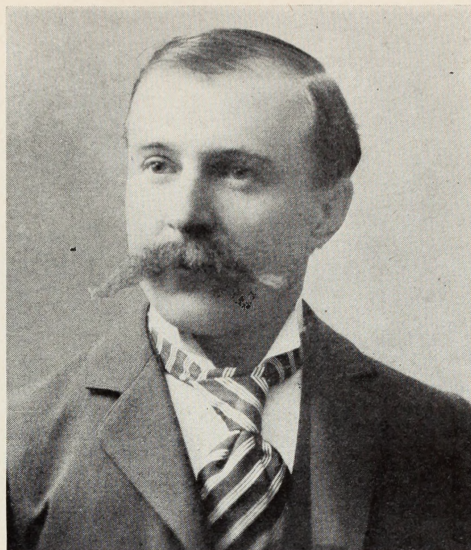
DR. WILLIAM T. SPEAKER was one of the early physicians in Mount Morris. He was born in Leaf River Township, June 12, 1851, and was the son of Noah and Catherine (Garvin) Speaker. He attended Rock River Seminary and graduated from the Chicago Medical College in 1878. He practiced in Mount Morris from 1878 to 1887 and then moved to Manson, Iowa, where he died May 2, 1918. Dr. Speaker married Inez E. Beecher in 1878, and they had four children as follows: Clifford B., married May Marquart; Faith, married Chas. I. Jackson; Ethel, married Louis M. Potter; Lelia, married Chester W. Duncan.

BRAYTON & BAKER, consisting of a partnership of F. B. Brayton and Elias Baker, conducted a general store in the fifties and handled a general line of dry goods, hardware, groceries, drugs, paints, etc. They were extensive advertisers in the early Mount Morris newspapers. The Dec. 1, 1858, issue of the *Independent Watchman* announced the dissolution of the firm.

DR. BENJ. G. STEPHENS, one of the earliest practicing physicians in Mount Morris, was born in Cornwall, England, June 22, 1827, and located in Mount Morris in 1841. He was a graduate of Rush Medical College in 1850 and located in Mount Morris to begin his practice. His office was over Wood & Petrie's store. He was very prominent in civic affairs; was connected with the early Mount Morris newspapers, and served as president of the village board of trustees in the seventies. In 1870, he married Florence Hoverland, and they had four children: Fanny, Mary E., George and Hugh. Dr. Stephens died in 1879 and for many years Mrs. Stephens was a teacher in the public school. She passed away in 1930.



DR. DAVID NEWCOMER was a prominent physician in Mount Morris for nearly 30 years. He was the son of Daniel and Barbara (Stone) Newcomer and was born July 26, 1830, near Greencastle, Pa. He graduated from the Jefferson Medical College in 1859, and began the practice of medicine at Upton, Pa., until 1862, when he joined the army in the Civil War as surgeon of the 26th Pennsylvania Infantry. After the war he located for six years at Martinsburg, W. Va., and came to Mount Morris in 1871, where he practiced medicine for nearly thirty years. He married Mary Shelly Funk in 1851, and they had six children: Mary K. (Mrs. W. W. Solenberger), Barbara A. (Mrs. J. W. Thomas), David W., Harry C. and two children that died in infancy. Dr. Newcomer died Oct. 19, 1900, aged 70 years.



DR. J. B. MOATS, son of John W. and Rebecca Moats, was born in Mount Morris Township, Oct. 2, 1863, and died in Kansas City in February, 1934, aged 70 years. He graduated from the dental department of Iowa State University in 1891, and began the practice of dentistry in Mount Morris and continued for a number of years until he moved to Kansas City. He married Grace Swingley, daughter of Benj. Swingley. Two sons, Ollie and Fred, were born. The mother died in 1897, and Mr. Moats was again married in 1899 to Isadore Rinehart.

WOOD & PETRIE, a partnership of Enoch Wood and Frederick G. Petrie, conducted a general store in Mount Morris in the early fifties. They handled dry goods, hardware, groceries and books. The *Mount Morris Gazette* of July 3, 1851, announced the dissolution of the firm and that the business would be continued by Enoch Wood at the old stand.

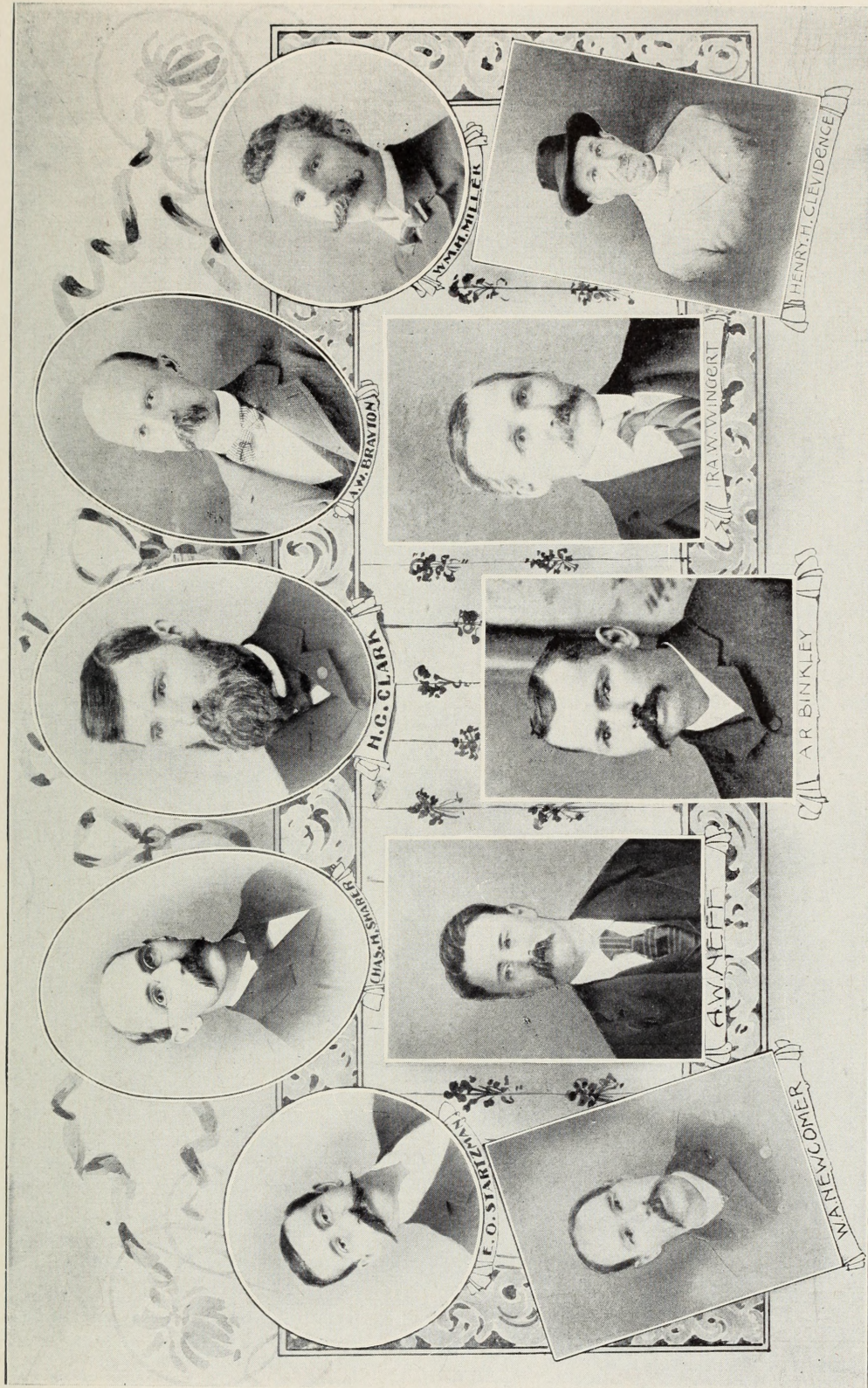
HENRY FROST announced in the *Mount Morris Gazette* of July 3, 1851, that he had selected Mount Morris as his future residence and that he was prepared to make pumps of the very best kind upon the shortest notice.

J. K. FROST announced in the July 3, 1851, issue of the *Mount Morris Gazette* that he had opened a new grocery store in the room formerly occupied by Clark & Misner where he was constantly receiving from Peru groceries of every description.

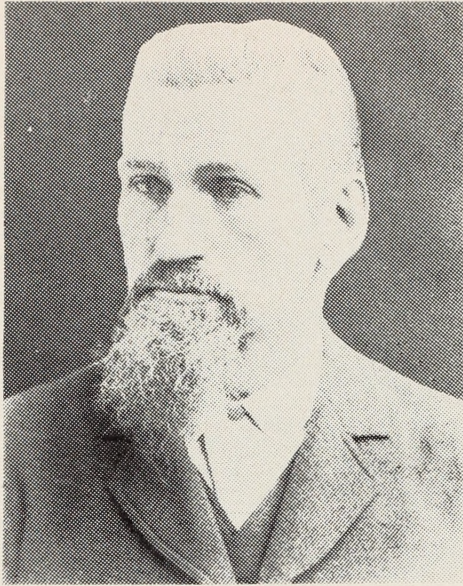
JOHN GRAHAM informed the citizens of Mount Morris in the *Mount Morris Gazette* of July 3, 1851, that he had opened a shop on Main Street, next door to his residence, where he was prepared to manufacture chairs of various descriptions and of the best and most substantial materials.



GROUP OF MEN who were in business in Mount Morris in 1900. Of this group, all have passed away (in 1937) except Fred Frederickson and J. D. Miller.



GROUP OF MOUNT MORRIS BUSINESS MEN who were prominent in the affairs of the village about the year 1900. All of these men have passed away.



JOHN R. DEPPEN was born at Reading, Pa., March 17, 1831, and died Feb. 17, 1908, aged nearly 77 years. He lived in Mount Morris for a number of years and in about 1880 built the town's first opera house, where he also opened a grocery store and bakery. This building later became the furniture establishment of Wm. H. Miller, and is now used for band quarters. Mrs. Deppen died in 1907. They had one son, Geo. W. Deppen.

WM. LITTLE & SON advertised in 1851 that they had secured a large supply of seasoned lumber and were prepared to carry on a wagon-making business; also that they had a blacksmith shop in connection with their business. They were located on East Main St. Mr. Little moved his family to Mount Morris from Columbus City, Iowa, in 1846.

DR. E. W. MYERS inserted a business card in the Mount Morris Gazette of 1851 in which he stated "Having selected Mount Morris as my future residence, would respectfully tender my professional services to the citizens of Mount Morris and the adjacent country." His office was at his residence on Main St.

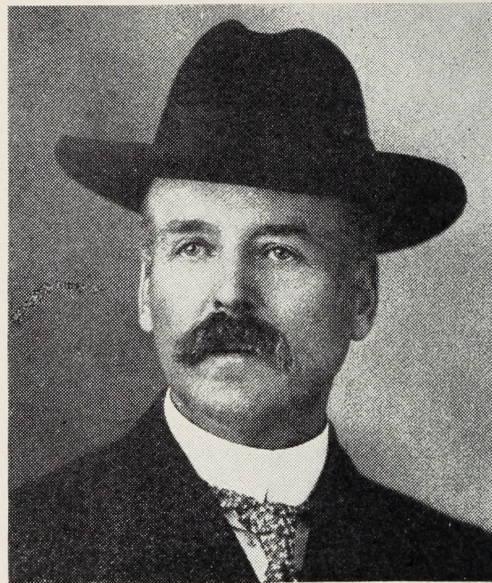
WOOD, PETRIE & BRYANT advertised stoves, and all kinds of tin, copper and sheet iron ware in the Mount Morris Gazette in January, 1851.

DR. ISENHART advertised in July, 1852, that he could be found at his residence in Mount Morris and was prepared to perform all needful operations in the line of dentistry.

PETRIE & FARWELL (Frederick G. Petrie and H. J. Farwell) advertised in July, 1852, that they were receiving new goods in their store formerly occupied by Wood & Petrie. They carried dry goods, hardware, clothing, paints and groceries.

BRAYTON, BAKER & PETRIE rented an old sawmill located on Pine Creek in 1853 about a mile below the dam, and fitted it up for the manufacture of linseed oil. This work they continued for about two years, turning out about two barrels of oil per day. Later they erected a new mill south of town on the farm of Jacob Hilger. This was a large two-story structure with a stone basement. A sawmill was added, which was operated by a steam engine. This enterprise was operated for about 20 years under the supervision of Jacob Hilger. During this time, Ernest W. Brayton, son of F. B. Brayton, a lad of about 10 years, was killed by coming in contact with the rapidly-revolving saw. The business later became unprofitable and the building was moved to Oregon.

J. D. HAYS & CO. advertised the Mount Morris Machine Shop in June, 1857, and were ready to do machine work in wood, iron or leather and general repair work. Many years later "Uncle Jimmie" Hays had a little shop back of his old home, just north of the Lutheran Church.



SAMUEL P. MUMMA died October 17, 1912, aged 68 years. He was the son of Daniel S. and Naomi Mumma, and was born in Pine Creek Township, October 4, 1844. He attended the country school and Rock River Seminary. On leaving the farm in 1871, Mr. Mumma opened the first meat market in Mount Morris, and continued in that business for nine years, then sold out and devoted the rest of his life to the grain and stock business, part of the time in partnership with Henry H. Clevidence. On Feb. 22, 1870, he was united in marriage to Louisa Swingley, and they had four children, Willis, Edgar, Mrs. Oliver Watts and Mrs. Clinton Miller.

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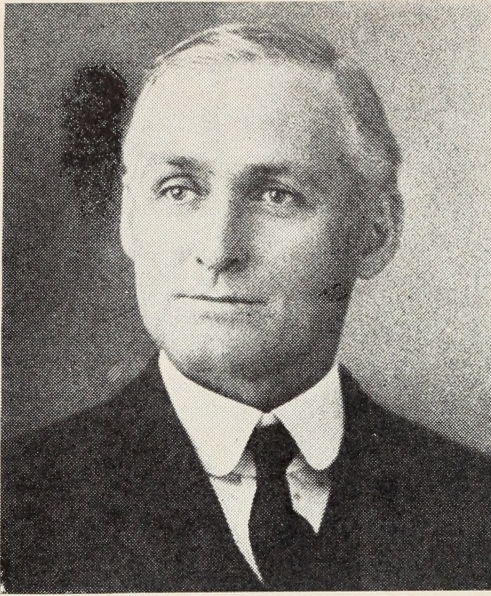
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HOTEL ROHRER as it appeared shortly after it was built in 1894 by Chas. Rohrer. Note the town pump in the foreground and the unpaved street. The shed-like building and house to the west were the office and home of John Weller.



THIS PICTURE of the good old horse and buggy days was taken in 1895 before the advent of the auto, looking south on Wesley Ave. Note the many horse-drawn vehicles at the right and the old plank sidewalk in front of the stores.



IRA W. WINGERT died February 20, 1912, aged 53 years. He was born June 12, 1859, near Franklin Grove. He came to Mount Morris in the fall of 1881 and clerked for three years in Daniel Wingert's grocery. Then he worked for four years in a similar capacity for H. C. Clark and later entered into partnership with Mr. Clark in the lumber and coal business as Clark & Wingert. A. E. Clevidence later took Mr. Clark's place in the partnership and the firm name was changed to Wingert & Clevidence, which continued until the death of Mr. Wingert in 1912. On October 15, 1885, he married Clara Clevidence, and one daughter, Maurine, was born to them.

WILLIAM HEDGES advertised in the Mount Morris Gazette in January, 1851, that he was prepared to carry on the coopering business in all its branches, making and repairing meat tubs, water buckets, lard kegs, barrel churns, etc. He also advertised the Mount Morris Nursery, located a half mile south of town.

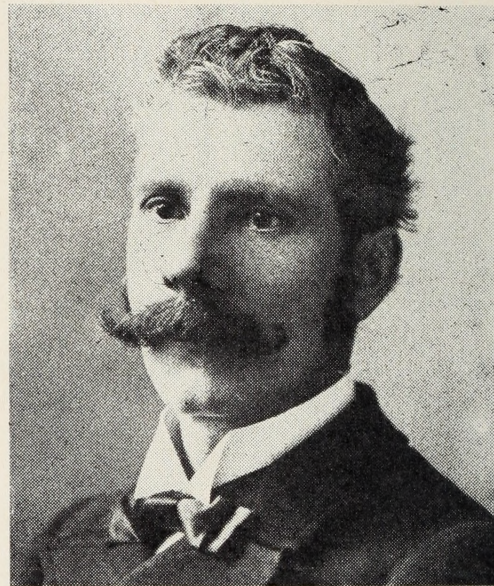
PEYTON SKINNER died June 2, 1897, aged nearly 82 years. He was born in Loudin County, Va., August 3, 1815, and came to Mount Morris in April, 1854. He was one of Mount Morris's pioneer business men and conducted a boot and shoe shop here from 1854 until two years prior to his death. In 1837, he married Miss Leander Fletcher, and four sons and eight daughters were born to them. Only two children survived the father, F. F. Skinner and Mrs. Eugene King. Mr. Skinner was a member of the Methodist Church and of the Masonic fraternity.

EDWARD DAVIS conducted a confectionery business in 1856, largely patronized by students of Rock River Seminary.

ATCHISON & CLEMS conducted a clothing store in Mount Morris in 1856, but no information is available as to the individuals connected with this firm.

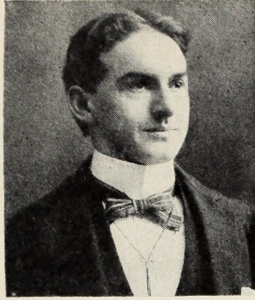
D. S. AND S. H. COFFMAN, who purchased the general store of Petrie & Farwell, advertised in 1857 a full line of dry goods, shoes, clothing, hardware and groceries.

JONATHAN MUMMA built the first hotel on the site of the present Kable Inn in the year 1854. He named it the Eldorado House and he kept boarders, principally students of Rock River Seminary, until 1858. He also opened a store in a room in the same building at the same time. He sold the hotel to J. M. Webb and the store to Potter & Webb.



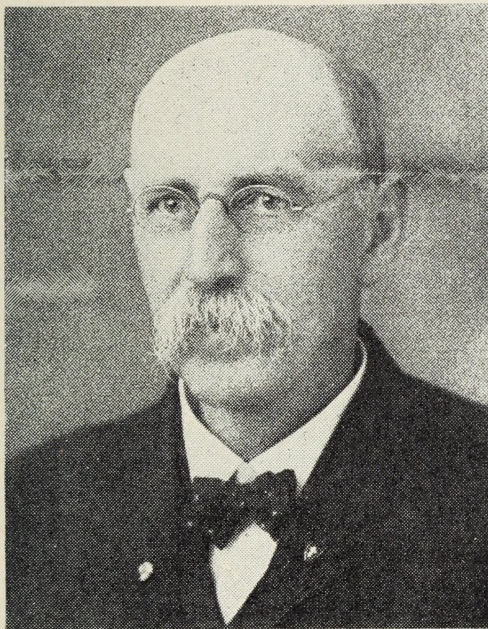
WILLIAM H. MILLER, son of Upton and Maria (Davis) Miller, was born in Washington County, Md., July 23, 1850, and died in Mount Morris, August 22, 1927, aged 77 years. He was the oldest of six children and the family came to Mount Morris in 1857. He attended the schools of Mount Morris, including Rock River Seminary. He worked with his father in the furniture and undertaking business and took a special course in embalming. The father retired in 1892 and the subject of this sketch continued the business until the time of his death. For many years he was the only undertaker in Mount Morris and had charge of hundreds of funerals of Mount Morris people. He was secretary of the local Odd Fellows lodge for over 25 years, and served the community for many years as town clerk, village treasurer and school treasurer. In 1878, he married Mary Ellen Wallace, and they had three children. Mrs. Maude Crawford, Mrs. Edith Alter, and Mrs. Florence Saunders. The mother died in 1924 and the three children have also passed away.

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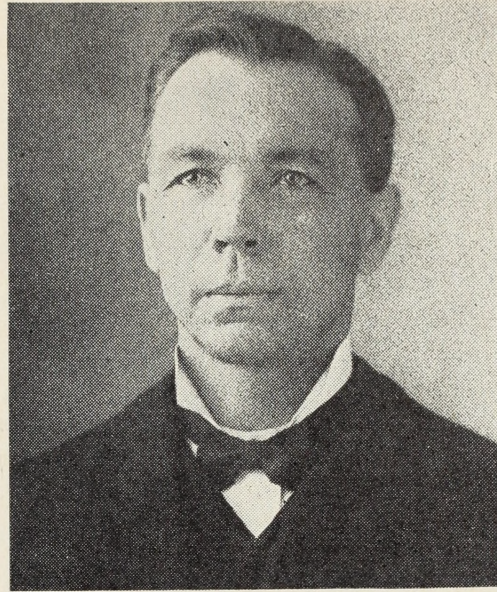


WALTER WOLFE was in the bakery and confectionery business in Mount Morris for several years beginning in 1899. He later moved to Oklahoma where he was killed in a railroad accident in 1916.

DR. J. NEWCOMER, physician and surgeon, inserted his business card in the Northwestern Republican of June 13, 1857, stating that he was located on Main Street in the office formerly occupied by Dr. Stephens.



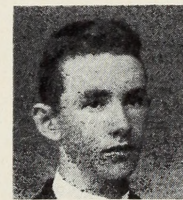
ARTHUR M. NEWCOMER died August 21, 1914, aged 66 years. He was the son of Andrew and Eliza Newcomer and was born in Mount Morris April 3, 1848. He spent his entire life in Mount Morris and died in the same block in which he was born. He attended our public school and Rock River Seminary. He worked at his trade of plasterer for about 15 years and for many years, beginning in 1885, was in the grocery business in Mount Morris with his brother, William. He held a number of offices in Mount Morris, including tax collector, justice of the peace, village clerk, member of the village board of trustees, and member of the board of education. In 1875, Mr. Newcomer married Laura J. Shank, and they had two children, Howard and Edna.



GREGOR THOMPSON was born in Denmark, July 17, 1860, and died in Mount Morris, Jan. 7, 1935, aged 74½ years. He came to America from Denmark when 21 years of age and located in Mount Morris in 1887. For a period of nearly 40 years, he conducted a tailoring establishment, and in 1893 he erected the building at the northeast corner of Wesley Ave. and Main St. He was a talented musician and was a prominent member of the local Masonic lodge. In 1916, he married Miss Mary Thomas, and they had two children, Harriet and a son who died in infancy.

H. I. LITTLE & CO. advertised in 1857 that they were prepared to manufacture buggies and wagons for one or two horses and for one or two seats on short notice. They were also prepared to do all kinds of blacksmithing and horseshoeing. This was a partnership between H. I. Little, Wm. Little and J. A. Knodle.

H. F. & A. NEWCOMER advertised in 1857 that they had on hand a full line of furniture in their store a few doors east of Brayton & Baker's on Front Street. They also stated: "We are also prepared to make coffins at the shortest notice and attend with hearse."



GEORGE TOMS conducted a barber shop in Mount Morris for a period including 1900, after which he located elsewhere. He was the son of John Toms, a resident of Mount Morris.

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