

FREDONIA

HISTORIC

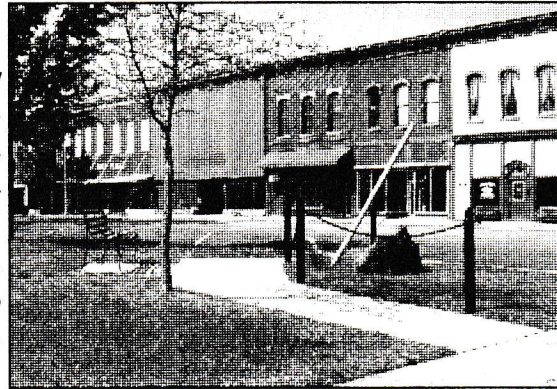


SQUARE

EST. 1868

*Forgotten gems in a square setting...
walk around, look up and look back in time.*

The buildings on the Fredonia square have witnessed many things over their lifetimes. Most were built before electricity and water, before paved streets and concrete sidewalks. Thriving industries at the start of the 20th century fueled the economy and merchants were quick to respond by opening more stores. Many of the buildings used both the first and second stories for retail space. Other upper floors were used as office space for the many attorneys, realtors and medical professionals who chose Fredonia as their home.



2003

This walking tour of the historic Fredonia square is laid out starting at the southeast corner and proceeding clockwise around the square.



2003

Much of the information for this guide has been obtained from old newspapers, directories, and publications at the library and historical society. Exact locations were difficult in some cases because early addressing systems around the square were adjusted over the years to make way for different configurations in buildings. Some businesses have had different locations on the square at various times. The listings of businesses that have been in each building

is far from complete. Many of the earliest as well as some of the recent occupants are missing. Those listed should give a picture of the life of each building through the various businesses that have been established there. As the purpose of this book is to reflect on the changing ground-floor spaces, many of the professional people who occupied the many upstairs offices are not detailed.

Special thanks to the Wilson County Historical Society for the use of their materials to produce many of the images in this book. Some of the picture quality is less than perfect, but is included since the content is so rare. Thanks also to the Fredonia Public Library and to the many helpful Fredonia residents who made this book possible.

We hope you will enjoy your tour and surely will be able to write in a few places that we have overlooked.

Follow the slider at the top of each page to navigate your way around the square.

Our tour of the square begins at the southeast corner of 7th and Madison Streets, which was known as East Mound Street and Ohio when the town was laid out in 1868.

The large building on the outer southeast corner of the Fredonia square has always been an active place. After early buildings on this site burned in 1889, this building was built in 1898 and operated as Otto's Flour Mill. The electric mill was powered by electricity generated by the Mill Dam.



1908 or later

on Fall River had been destroyed by an earlier fire. Around the turn of the century, the third floor was said to have been used as a skating rink, a popular activity of the day. The fire that cleared the way for this building also killed a 9-year old boy and led to the development of an improved volunteer fire department and enforced building standards for the business district. Efforts to water down a gasoline storage tank at the rear of the building proved successful and those efforts kept the fire from spreading to the 1872 Stone House located south of this building.

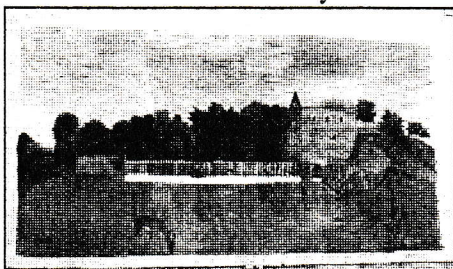
Some of the enterprises housed in this double building over the years have been

- Otto's Flour Mill
- Martin Matthews Grocery & Feed
- Iola Wholesale Grocery
- Viles Grocery
- Self Service Grocery
- Harlan's Hardware

The left half of the building housed the Fredonia Herald in their early days and the upper floors provided an early home to the Kansas Bank Note Company, Burke Printing, Kennedy Printing, and others. The small one-story building to the east was the longtime home to the Wilson County Citizen.



2003



2003

As you head west, pause at the corner and look south to see the large mural of the Mill Dam, painted by a local artist on the west wall of the building.



Walking west across seventh street, you will find Fredonia's second three-story building. Like the neighboring Gold Dust Hotel, it was completed in 1885, just months after the hotel opened. The building was built by Capt. S. J. Bartlett. The third floor has been owned by the Masons since the building was built and they still hold meetings there. The second floor was used for offices and even a dance hall. It now has been converted into apartments.

Some of the occupants of the ground floor space over the years have been

East Side

- Fredonia Bank ((Predecessor to State Bank)
- G.S. Clark
- Paulen Mercantile Co.
- Don R. Smith's
- Midwest Office Supply
- Hampson-Settle Insurance
- Settle Insurance
- Wilson County Hair Co.

c. 1886

West Side

- Bartlett's Grocery
- G.S. Clark's Loans
- G.S. Clark's Realty
- Hudson's Clothing Store
- Don R. Smith's
- Thomas Jewelry
- Rice Jewelry
- Back Porch Baskets & Gifts



The next two buildings to the west were the site of a pair of two story buildings that were consumed by fire in 1982. The one on the left was built just before the three story neighbor, about 1885. Fire destroyed the second floor and the first floor was rebuilt. The store on the right was of stone construction and, along with other buildings in the middle of this block, was built sometime around 1880. A brick front was later added to make it blend with the newer 1885 buildings to the east.

c. 1899

Among the occupants have been

East Side

- Sholes & Hunt Furniture (Dr. Flack upstairs)
- Shearer & Crum
- Shearer & Moore
- Butin Bros. Drug Store
- Wiggins Drug Store
- Fredonia Pharmacy

West Side

- JW Paulen
- Wolever Hardware
- Gambles
- Coast to Coast
- The Lace Hen
- Fredonia Computer

At the peak of JW Paulen's business in 1910, his store occupied all three of these buildings all the way to the corner, including the 2nd floors of these two buildings. The store covered 16,000 square feet.

The next section of buildings might appear to be more modern than most, but they are actually some of the oldest on the square. They were given a new brick facelift in the 1960's in an attempt to modernize the square and to catch up with the new courthouse that had just been built.

When fire wiped out this half of the block in the 1880's, the town fathers rallied by offering free loads of rock to any business that would use it to rebuild. The walls of these brick-front buildings are made of rock.

The four storefronts have included

624 Madison

- Kuhnke Bakery & Confectionary
- Brown's
- Silver Moon Café
- Silver Moon Recreation Parlor
- Cozy Café
- Rick's Restaurant
- Mode-O-Day
- Barb's

622 Madison The rear of this lot housed a post office in 1886.

- C.H. Blair's Meat Market
- City Meat Market
- Miller Bros. Meats
- Miller & Son's Meats
- Cox Variety
- Dryer Shoe Store
- Fink Abstract Co.

620 Madison

- J. W. Defever's
- SG Clark Groceries
- BW Reed's
- A&P Tea Co.
- Kensinger's Shoes, Hosiery & Lingerie
- B & G Grocery
- Hampson Law Office
- Chenoweth Law Office

618 Madison

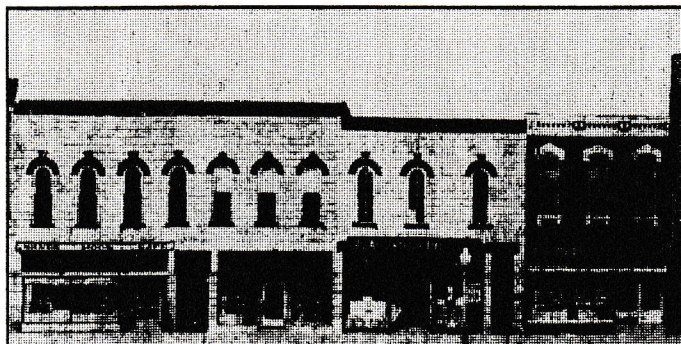
- P.G. Pinney Mercantile
- Raney's Drug Store
- WE Morgan Billiard Parlor
- South Side Pool Hall
- Central Market
- Ewalt's Clothing
- Swartz Clothing
- Fitz's Clothing
- RA Wells for Men
- Country Closet
- The Antiques Store



1957 night view of Cozy on left, Swartz on right.



SG Clark Groceries, South side, c. 1880



1938 view of storefronts before having new brick fronts installed in the early 1960's.

The three-story building in the middle of the block is something of a newcomer. Believed to have been built in the 1920's, the top floor housed the cement plant offices for many years.

This was one of several homes to Butin Drug Store. They started on the west side, moved here and then eventually moved to their final location half a block to the east. Since then, it has been City Drug, under several owners.



1938

Early occupants of this site were

Left Side

- H.F. Pinney Hardware & Grocery
- Butin Bros. Drug Store
- City Drug Store

Right Side

- H.F. Pinney Hardware & Grocery
- Cantrall & Wolever Hardware
- Butin Jewelry
- Help Yourself Grocery
- Union Gas
- Lender's Loan
- City Drug Store

A bottling plant located behind the Pinney Hardware and Grocery building produced pop in bottles labeled "PINNEY FREDONIA KANS". The building burned in 1920.



The old soda fountain was removed many years ago. Wilson Sprague, pictured, was a pharmacist here.

The next building west is a stone structure dating back to 1885. Over the years it has been home to

- McKee-Stevens Jewelry Co
- Frater Bros. Jewelry and Optometrist
- Ogden's Jewelry
- Modern Miss

Fink Abstract had offices upstairs for many years.



2003

The next building west is a brick structure built around 1905 and known for many years as Bennett's 5 and 10.

When you get to the corner, take a short walk to the south and you can see the back part of this building with the restored "Bennett's" sign painted on the side.

Over the years, this building has housed
 Blankinship's Clothing
 C.W. Bennett's Variety Store
 Barbara's
 Glad Rags
 Wilson County Abstract Co.



2003



1938

The next building west was built in 1912 and was known for many years as the J.C. Penney building. Penney's came to town around 1929 and remodeled two storefronts to make the building that most people remember. When the location was a vacant lot around the turn of the 20th century, auctions were held here every week. Those auctions would move to the northwest corner as buildings were added.

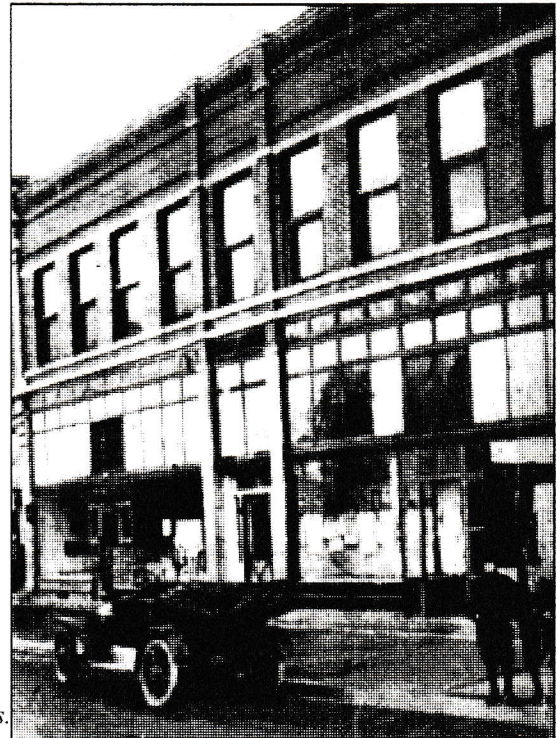


1938

This location was the early site of
 Col. Sheet's farm auctions
 St. James Hotel

The building currently houses Madison Street Mall.

Early occupants were
 F. Estal Steinmetz Hat Shop
 Marshall's 5 and 10 cent Store
 Swartz Grocery
 J.C. Penney Co.



c. 1920 view of the storefronts before becoming J.C. Penney's.

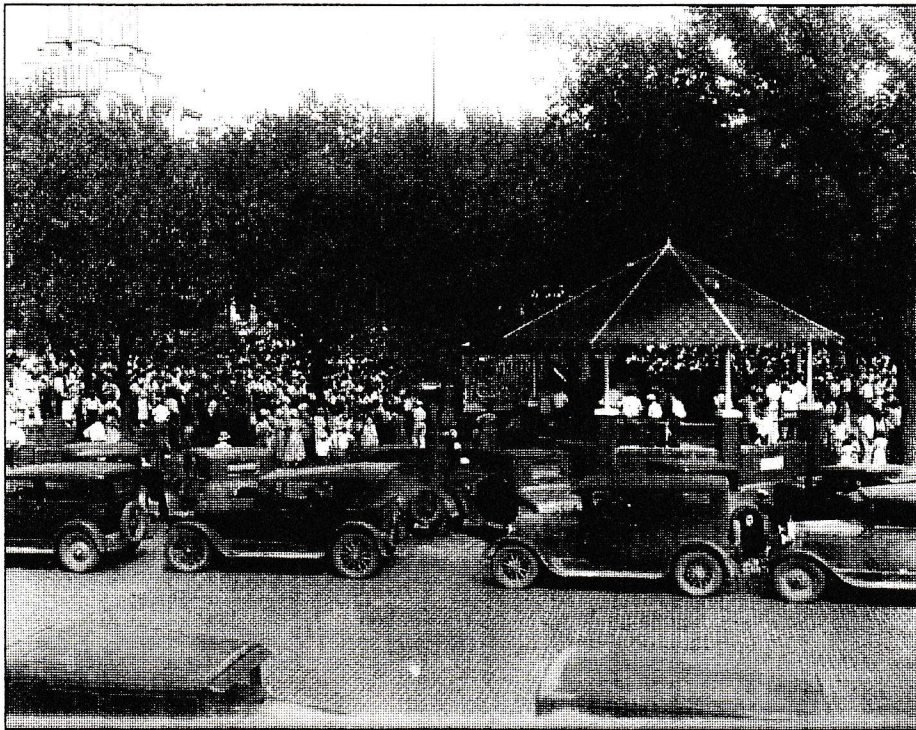
c. 1920

The last building on this side of the square is one of the most elaborate. Built in 1889 as the First National Bank of Fredonia, it would become the State Bank in 1894. Dr. Raymond J. Beal had offices here for many years.

The Modern Beauty Shop was located in the rear. It is currently home to George's Barber Shop.



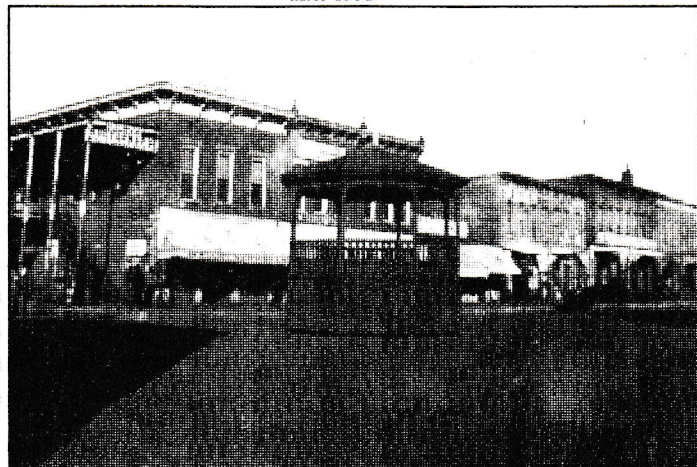
c. 1895



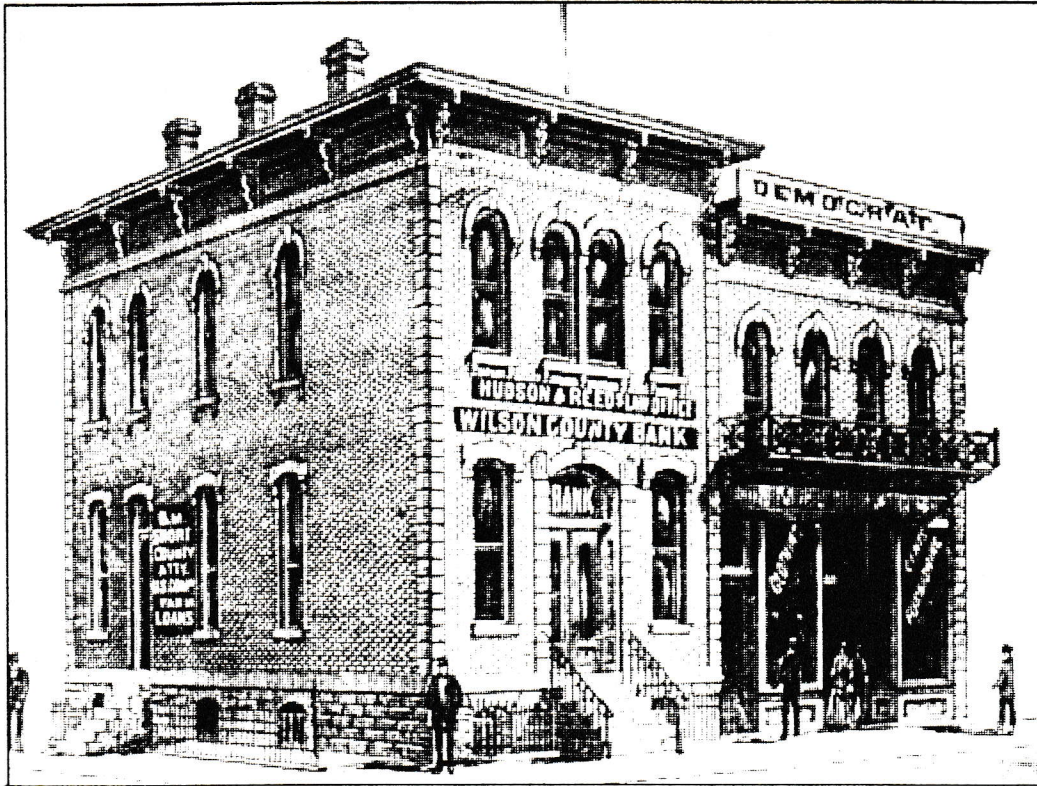
Directly north across the street sits the bandstand erected by the WPA in 1932. It has long been the center of community events on the square.

after 1932

Long before that bandstand was in place, there was a wooden bandstand in the middle of this intersection. It lasted until the early 1900's, about the same time that cars became a common sight on the square. The west side of the square is shown in the background.



c. 1895



Crossing 6th street west on Madison, you come to the southwest corner of the square, formerly known as Main Street and Ohio. In 1879, nearly six years before the Gold Dust Hotel opened, this 2-story building, or at least the front half of it, was constructed. It was the stately new home to the Wilson County Bank,

which 57 years later would become First National Bank in Fredonia. The sturdy building gave a new sense of permanence to the square. It was the bank's third home in less than 8 years. Previous buildings were mostly made of wood or stone when this building was built. Over the years the back half was added, the front remodeled extensively, moving the entrance further west and adding additional windows in the east wall. Eventually, three banks would anchor this intersection and become known as the "bank corner," a reference that lasted long after the banks relocated.

First National Bank remained in this building until 1962, when they moved two blocks east.

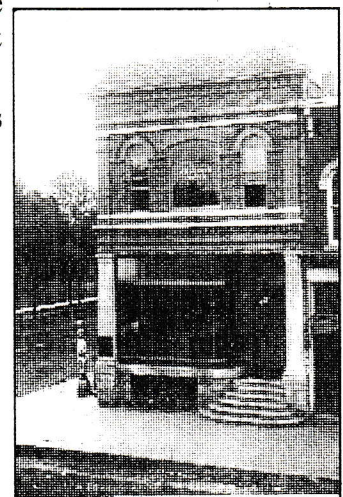
Since that time, the building has been home to the Fredonia Chamber of Commerce and the Credit Bureau of Fredonia, as well as Hull Enterprises.

The upper floors housed the offices of Fredonia Portland Cement for several years before they moved to the new third floor of the Pratt Building in the next block east.

The basement of this building housed the Basement Barbershop and later shared the space with the Modern Beauty Shop. In the early years, hotel residents and townspeople alike came here for baths at the Beecham Barbershop and later the Burke & Stewart Barber Shop.

The adjacent building to the west was from the same time period and has housed

- The Fredonia Democrat
- Millinery Shop
- Idle Hour Pool Hall
- Short & Beal Grocery
- Jumbo Clothing Store
- Brady's News Stand
- Ben Franklin Store
- Ogden's Dry Goods
- Ogden's News and Sundries
- Susan's Sundries
- Hull Enterprises



The vacant lots to the west once housed the Hudson Opera House. Built in 1888, it was an ornate building that housed storefronts and offices in addition to a 400 seat theater. It was the site of traveling shows



several times each month. It also hosted early high school graduations before the high school and auditorium were completed. The area was labeled the "opera block" and is still known by that term today. This block was home to Fredonia's first telephone system at the turn of the 20th century. The building finally was torn down when the rear wall and roof collapsed in 1990.

c. 1890

The first floor housed many different businesses over the years. Among them were

City Drug Store & P.J. Thomas, Jeweler
Ward's Catalog Store

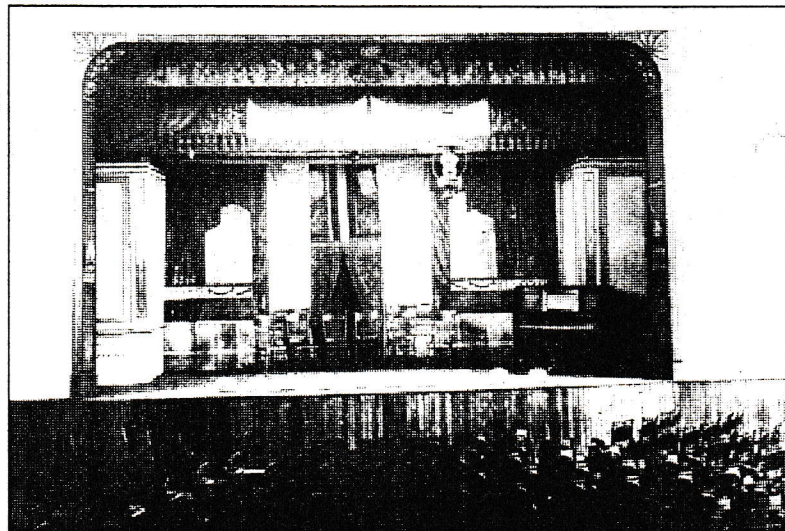
Globe Trading Company
The Fashion/Estal Steinmetz Hats

Case and Garland Co.
Case and Hudson Grocery
F.M. Brockway Implements & Hardware
Hefner's Hardware
Harlan's Hardware

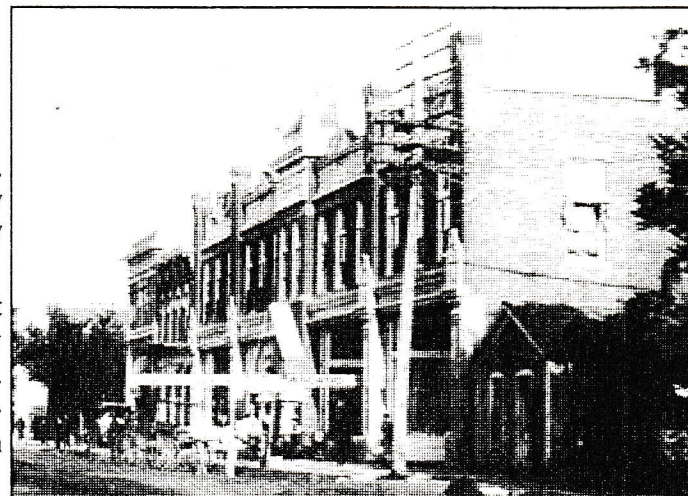
The Garland Grocery
Horseshoe Café
J&S Art Glass Supply
Finishing Touch

Many offices were housed upstairs, including Dr. A. C. Flack. As buildings were being built, many of the early doctors and lawyers would move many times.

The small building that remains standing at the west end of the lot also has very early roots. It has housed even another of Dr. A.C. Flack's offices, Our Way Café, Wood's Liquor Store, Harmon's Shoe Repair, Helen Whinery Real Estate, Plymesser Insurance.



c. 1890



c. 1899

Progressing north across Madison at 6th, we arrive at what could be called the birthplace of Fredonia. On this site, Dr. J.J. Barrett built a small wooden building in 1868 and the rest really is history. That

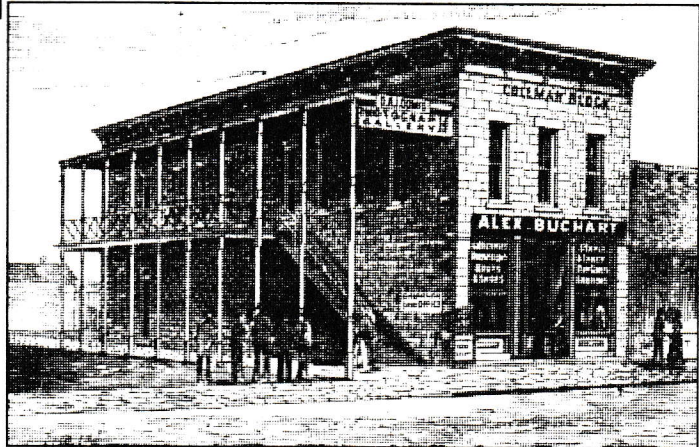


Before 1880

original building would become Troxell's Store and later Mariner's Store. Within a few years that building would fall victim to fire and be replaced by 1880 with a building made of blue limestone built as the Farmers and Traders Bank. The stonework on the building was done by Charles Coleman and the building was known as the Coleman Building. Under the granite and steel facing of the present building is that original building. It and the building next to it were remodeled in 1960. Later the third building was added to the current configuration.

For many of its early years, the building had an elaborate balcony along the south side. It was the entryway for 2nd floor offices and photography studios.

This set of buildings currently house A-Lert Construction Services, a division of Centurion Industries.



c.1880

Some of the many occupants over the years have been

Left Section

- Hunt & Fox Dry Goods
- Farmers & Traders Bank
- Buchart Grocery & Dry Goods
- Case Pharmacy
- Short & Beal Grocery & Feed
- The Citizen's State Bank
- State Bank of Fredonia

Among the photographers upstairs:
 D.A. Loomis Photography
 A.F. Cartwright Photography
 Forney Photography

Middle Section

- Case News Depot
- The Bootery
- State Bank of Fredonia



1938

Right Section

- Lowers and Ritchey
- West Side Billiard Hall & Ritchey's Barber Shop
- Ewalt Clothing Co.
- Hudson's Clothing
- Green's
- The Toggery
- Carley's Clothing
- Connie's



Major fires changed the face of the square. The early fire that destroyed some of the pioneer buildings on this block was followed just 15 years later with another fire that wiped out the entire north half of the block in 1886. All of those buildings were replaced with the large two-story brick buildings from the center of the block north.

Streets around the square were nothing like they are today. Before they were paved with brick in 1910-1915, they were a series of mud and dust, with rock thrown in over some areas. To control the clouds created by the traffic, they eventually hired a man to go around the square and spray water on the streets, to help settle the dust. Another early problem was the smell. Since most every store offered delivery, they kept their horses and delivery wagons in stables behind the stores. Some of the large stores had as many as 6 delivery wagons. Needless to say, the summers brought very unpleasant odors. Several enterprising men finally started delivery services and most of the stables left the square.



Before the next building west was remodeled as a theater, it was a storefront that looked very different. Built in the early 1900's it has housed a number of different businesses. Among them

- Grand Leader Dept. Store
- Hess & Kisor Grand Leader
- Kisor Dept. Store & West Side Meat Market
- Koch's Food Store
- Cook's Dept. Store
- Fredonia Cinema

1938

The next set of buildings are older than their neighboring buildings to the north. The only survivor to fires that wiped out the north end of the block in 1886 and buildings to the south in 1880, it was the early home to Butin Drug Store. The Butins had started in a smaller wood-frame building to the south and expanded to this stone building.

The right side of the building is remembered by most as a bakery, started by Gaede's in 1904.

The rear of this property is also the site of the first courthouse, a small wooden building that was replaced in 1870, after only 2 years.

Among the businesses these buildings have housed over the years have been

Left Side

- Butin Drug Store
- Milady's Shop
- Rice Jewelry
- Gooseberry Garden

Right Side

- Shannon Hardware
- Gaede Bakery
- Gaede-Cantrall Bakery
- Gaede-Fulghum Bakery
- Fulghum-Wilson Bakery
- Spudnut Donuts
- Larry Marshall Auction & Realty



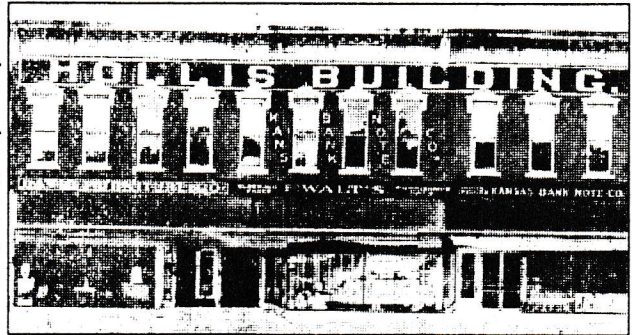
c. 1900



c. 1910

Shown above is W. C. "Rocky" Cantrall, a partner in the Gaede Bakery for a short time. Besides making deliveries, the wagon would stop at local industries, much like modern catering trucks. Cantrall would later become president of State Bank.

The next set of buildings begins the section of the block that was replaced in 1886 and 1887 after fire destroyed this entire half block to the north. This began the newer series of brick building where all had a similar style and design. The first group of these buildings once housed an enormous store. The Hubbell Brothers built up a large business of implements, hardware, dry goods and groceries. At their peak, they used upper and lower floors of the three storefronts in this section. They were innovators in the area by having departments and staffing them with department heads. This site was the approximate home to one of Fredonia's large early hotels, the Western Hotel. The hotel's wooden construction made it an easy victim to fire. Some of the merchants over the years have been



1938

Left Side

Hubbell Bros. Dept. Store
 Maupin Dept. Store
 David Furniture Store
 The Lighthouse
 Framing on the Square

Middle Section

D.P. Fryer & Co., Grocery
 Hubbell's Ready to Wear
 Ewalt Clothing Store
 Western Auto
 Midwest Hearing Aids

Right Side

Karbe Grocery
 Brook Grocery
 The Grange Store
 Foodtown
 Jones Bros. Foods
 Max's Food Spot
 Bob's Market
 Western Auto
 Christian Thrift Store

The upper floors housed the Kansas Bank Note Company at one time. There were also many square dances held here in later years.

The next building to the north has had the brick covered over by a metal front, but was originally similar in style to the others on this block. The high ceiling and large balcony over the front of the building gave the store a very grand appearance. Among the occupants have been

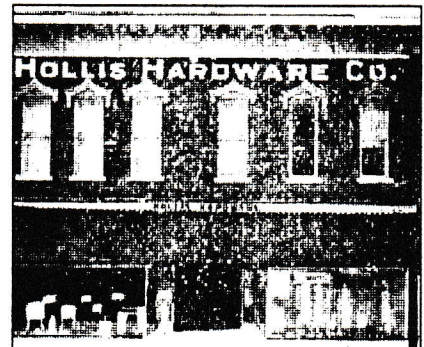


14

c. 1898

Hollis & Singleton Hardware
 Singleton Supply
 Singleton & Wilson Undertakers
 Cantrall & Wolever Hardware
 Hollis Hardware
 Coast to Coast

In the early years, implements were housed on the second floor. A large elevator transported things up and down.



1938

That brings us to the last 5 buildings on the north end of this block. Known for many years as the Rex-all corner, this section hosted a variety of shops and services. Two of the upper floors housed mortuaries, right next door to each other.

Several well known Fredonia names started business in this section.



c. 1887



1935

Some of the first building's occupants were
 Popular Priced Bootery
 Fredonia Candy Company
 Williams Insurance
 The New Café & Log Cabin Tea Room upstairs
 Eplee's Firestone
 Spohn's Firestone
 Dr. Sommers, D.C.

The next two buildings are used today as a restaurant and bakery. Occupants have been

Left Side

F.L. Scott's Bakery
 Chapman's Bakery
 Bennett's Racket Store with Fulghum's Bakery in rear
 C.W. Bennett's
 Cason's Mortuary
 Sears Catalog Store
 Annetta's

Right Side

Schloesser's Mortuary and Furniture
 Davis Paint Store
 Senior Citizen's Center
 Annetta's

The final two buildings on the corner have housed

Left Side

Bailey & Sheets Furniture/Mortuary
 F. Schloesser & Sons
 D.P. Fryer Grocery
 Teen Town
 Modern Miss
 Donaldson Shoe Store
 Union Gas

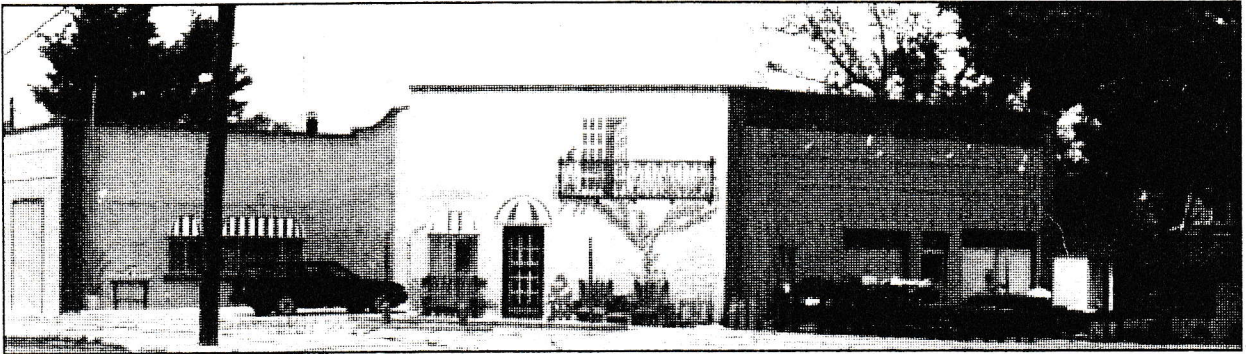
Right Side

Pierce Bros. Drug Store
 Pierce & Coleman Drug Store
 Pierce, Robbins & Pierce Drugs
 Rexall Store
 Frost Drug Store
 Union Gas
 SRS Office



c. 1970

A building at the rear of this property was the early home to the Phoenix Hose Company, before moving to their current fire department building in 1901.



2003

Crossing north across Monroe Street on 6th, we arrive at the northwest corner of the square. This corner was slow to be developed in the early years. With the Blue Front Livery Stable just down the street to the west, it was used for animals for some time. As the vacant lots on the south side of the square were developed, Col. Sheets moved his weekly farm auctions to this area.

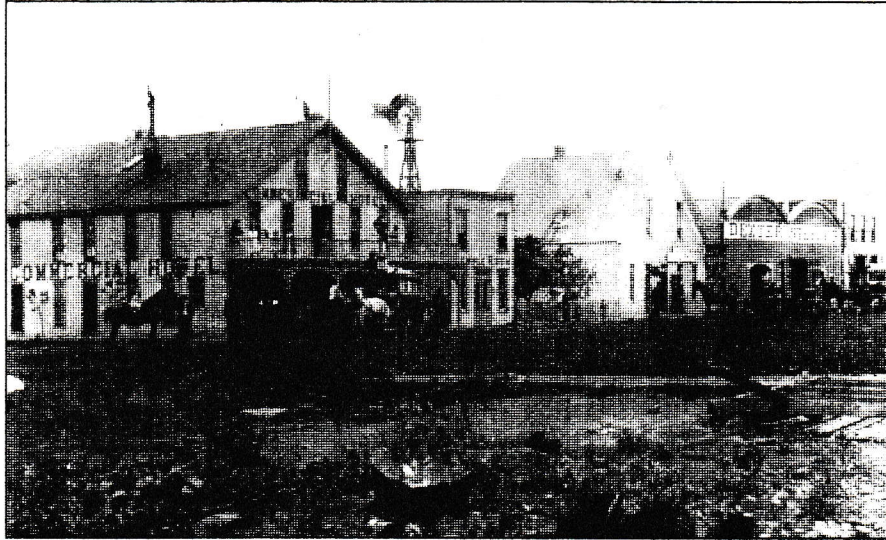
The corner was also the early home to the Blume Skating Rink and the Dubinsky Bros. 10 and 20 cent tent shows.

More recent uses have been

- Peden's Wilcox Service Station
- Cox Service Station
- North end was Dairy Queen
- North end was The Lighthouse
- Flowers & Nice Things



Heading east on Monroe Street across 6th, we arrive a a large section of vacant lots. Located on the corner that was once known as Main & Market stood the Commercial Hotel. A fire in 1886 wiped out the entire block of buildings except the hotel.



The east side of the building caught fire but the hotel was saved. All of the other wooden structures on the block and one stone building were destroyed. Two years later, fire finally claimed the Commercial Hotel.

Pictured is a view of the west end of the north side of the square taken from the burned out west side of the square. The remains of the Pierce Bros. Drug Store are in the foreground.

1886



c. 1880

The above photo of the east end of the north side of the Fredonia square shows many of the buildings that were lost in the 1886 fire. The building on the left with the twin front seems to be the same building as the Dexter Stables in the top photo.

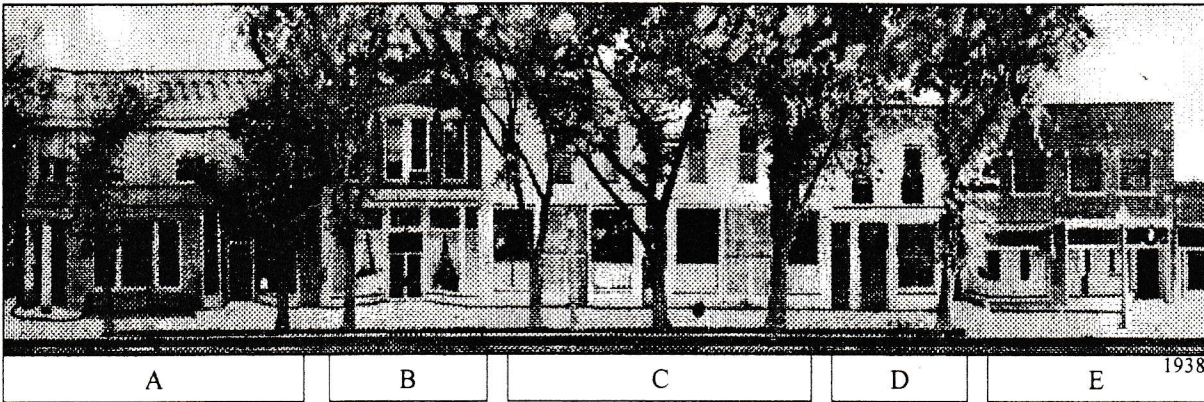
At the far right in the above photograph is the stone building with the angled entrance that once stood on the northeast corner of the square. It was demolished in 1955.

The 1888 fire nearly caught part of the rebuilt block of brick buildings on fire. The building on the left in this photograph stood next to the hotel and was saved. The buildings in the right half of this photograph are the section of two-story buildings at the other end of this block.

A fire in 1991 destroyed the left half of this block.



c. 1890



The picture above shows the buildings that used to stand on these empty lots. The building on the left ("A") was known as the Long Building. It was built about 1904 by the Long Brothers who had many business dealings including real estate. The upper floor held offices, including the first home to the Portland Cement Co. in 1906. A fire in 1991 destroyed most of these buildings and damaged the others beyond repair.

A

Former site of
National Hotel built in 1869, later renamed Commercial
Wm. Horton's Commercial Hotel (burned 1888)

Long Building:

U.S. Post Office (1906-1935)
Holladay State Bank
Citizen's State Bank
Blood's Tire Hospital
R.R. Elder Motor Supply
Cozy Café
Lee's Tap Room
Ed's TV
North Side Tap Room
Bottoms Up Tavern

B

Former site of
Commercial Hotel's Sample Room (burned 1886)
Carpenter Shop
Wilson Art & Undertaking
Reagan's Carpets
Velma's Restaurant
Saddleback Café

C

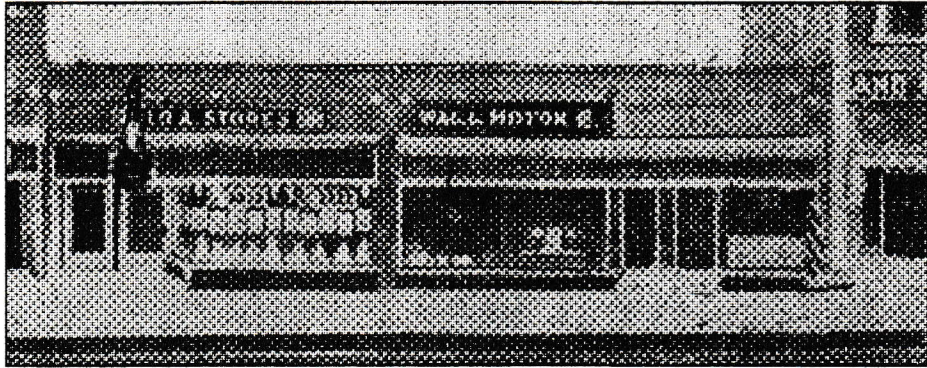
Former site of
Dr. Cormack's office/residence/windmill (burned 1886)
Kennedy Printing Co.
Dr. Lynn Beal
Dr. Helmlinger, Chiropractor
Dave Clark Law Office

D

Stiver's Building (burned 1886)
Dr. Davies, DDS
Dr. Trimmell, DDS
Dr. Weller, DDS

E

Dr. A. Mary Hayden, MD
Dr. Davies, DDS (last office)



The one-story section of buildings in the middle of the block were built in the early 1900's. Originally part of the site of Dexter's Livery that burned in 1886, it was slower to develop than the neighbors on each side who rebuilt immediately.

Occupants have included

Left Side

- Site of Dr. Wiley's office (burned 1886)
- Chapman Buick Co.
- Ritchey Motor Co.
- Wells-Koch Grocery
- Neumann's IGA
- Fredonia Produce
- Doane's Furniture

Right Side

- Site of Dexter Livery Stable (burned 1886)
- A.J. Goodwin
- Fredonia Variety
- Wall Motor Co.
- Doane's Furniture
- Pefley's Barber Shop
- Jack's Barber Shop



Old Wrigley advertising sign discovered when neighboring building was torn down has been restored.





Looking up above the one-story buildings to the west wall of the neighboring taller building, you will notice the very faint remains of a "Fredonia Produce" sign. The produce company was located in the west half of the two-story building at the turn of the century. J.Q. Smith, who later would go into the music business and eventually the furniture business, made his start in wholesale poultry. With the chickens and eggs in the left side of this building, he opened his music business in the right half, selling many pianos for the large homes that were being built.

Occupants of the double building have included

Left Side

- Fredonia Produce Co.
- Smith Music and Furniture Co.
- R.L. Smith Furniture Co.
- Schroder Furniture & Plumbing
- Lake Country Books
- Jane Wiltse-Pringle, CPA

Right Side

- Approximate site of Pierce & Bros. Drugs
(burned 1886)
- Smith Music Company
- R.L. Smith Furniture Co.
- Schroder Furniture & Plumbing
- Lake Country Books



Continuing east to the center section of two-story buildings, we come to what was known as the Blass Building. Along with the buildings on either side, it was built about 1887. At the turn of the century the upper floor was the home of the Fredonia Business College. The college was associated with a school in Tyler, Texas and attracted students from several states. A stairway between this building and the one to the west took students to the immense room on the second floor. Most of the classes were conducted by one teacher, Ella Sheedy, who traveled around the floor teaching various subjects. It operated for about 30 years.

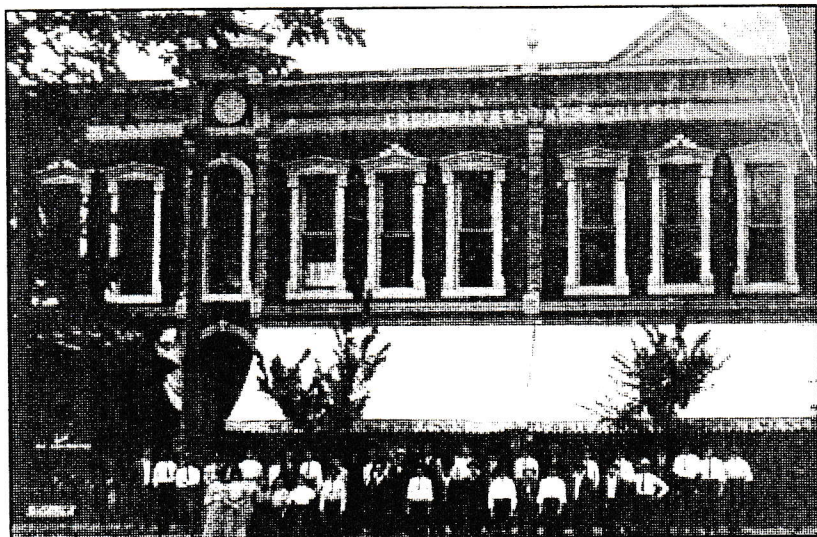
First floor occupants included

Left Side

- Atheson Implements
- Western Auto Associate Store
- The Fashion
- Mullen Grocery
- Hedrick's Launderama

Right Side

- Atheson Implements
- Glenciff Dairy
- Brinegar Restaurant
- Bon Ton Beauty Shop



1908



Second floor classroom of the Fredonia Business College about 1910.

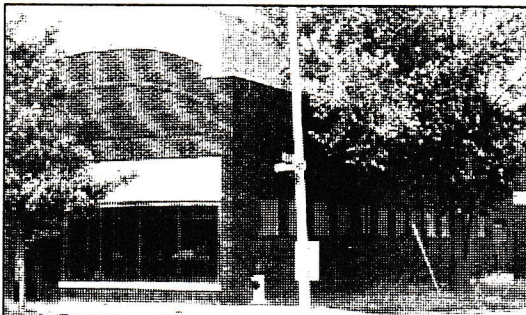
c. 1910

The last of the two-story buildings was built on the site of Burge's barn and Livery Stable that was destroyed in the 1886 fire. Housed in this building for the majority of the last century was the Burke Printing Company. It now houses H & R Block.

The second floor was used as a skating rink for some time.

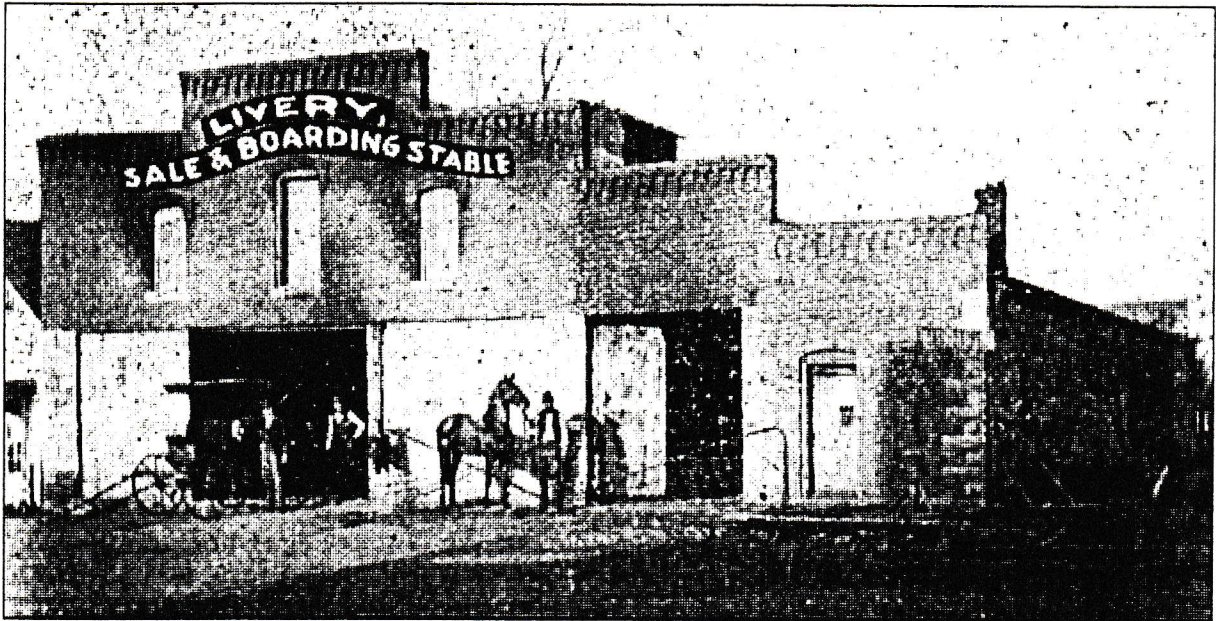


2003



2003

The last building on the block is the Herald building. Once home to a daily newspaper, it has remained vacant for years.



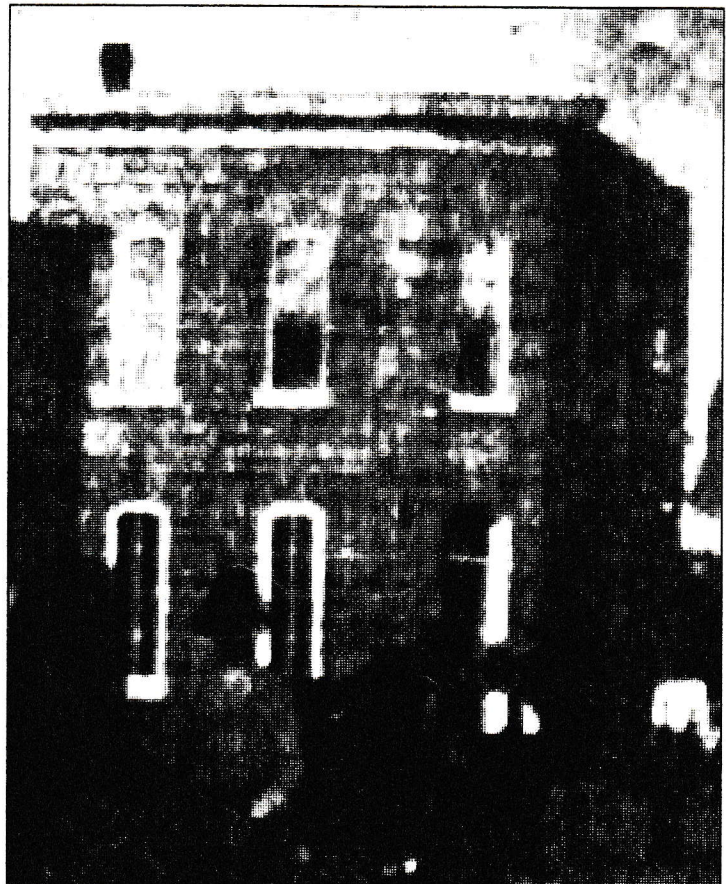
Crossing 7th Street on Monroe, we arrive at the Northeast corner of the square, once known as East Mound and Market. The present funeral home has been the site of

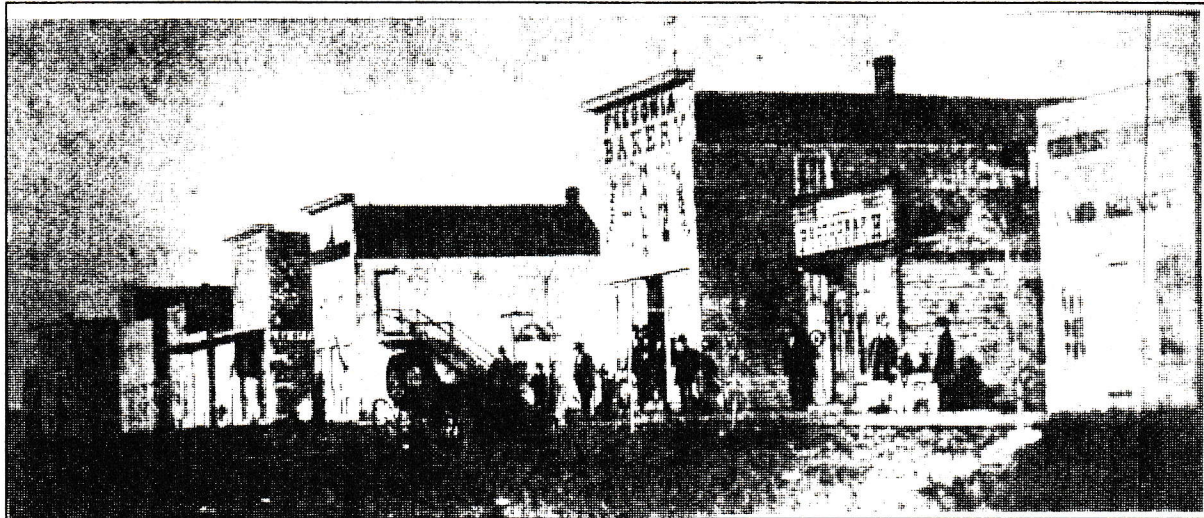
- Stone Barn Livery
- Dr. Crowley, Veterinarian
- Fredonia Garage
- Wilson Funeral Home
- Wilson-Dunham Funeral Home
- Dunham Funeral Home
- Dunham-Timmons Funeral Home
- Knickerbocker-Timmons Funeral Home
- Timmons Funeral Home

The manicured grass lawn on the corner was the former site of a stone building that was built in 1873. The building was demolished and buried in 1955. The old sandstone building had been home to

- R.M. Foster & Co. Bank
- Peffer Printing Office
- The Alliance Herald
- Hobson Art Studio
- Garst-Hampson Music Co.
- Ryde Bakery in back

In an article in the Herald in 1955, they said the building "has housed law offices, real estate offices, a piano store, bakery, furniture and awning shop, paint store, coal and wood store, sign painting shop, and grocery store."





Crossing Monroe Street at 7th, we arrive at the north end of the east side of the square. The above picture shows this side sometime in the 1870's. The dark image at the far left is the stone building that was across the street on the northeast corner. The fifth building from the right appears to be the stone building that today houses the Fredonia Fire Department. The building to the right of that building would likely be the Forest Hotel. The second building from the right appears to be D.A. Loomis' early photography studio. Here about 1879, he later moved to the Coleman building on the west side of the square.

The 3 buildings at the north end of this block have changed over the years. When the corner office was

remodeled by Dr. Rindt, the second floor was removed, leaving this trio of buildings. The corner site was the original home of the Planters Hotel. These buildings are believed to have gone up in the early 1900's.



Some of the businesses included

1938

Left Side

- Mikesell's Grocery Store
- Dr. Rindt's Offices
- Galichia Medical Offices
- Starbuck Family Chiropractic

Middle

- Spohn Produce
- Wallpaper & Paint
- Schroder Plumbing
- Lorentz Law Office
- Lorentz & McClellan Law Office
- Snodgrass, Dunlap & Co.

Right Side

- City Shoe Shop
- Tom's TV
- Marie's Fabric Shop
- Dr. Cleverley's Office



Proceeding south to the first set of two-story buildings, we find a building slightly younger than the one-story neighbors to the north. Believed to have been built about 1910, the second floor was used as the Odd Fellows Lodge. Some of the occupants have been

- Shannon Implement Co.
- Spradling Fruit Co.
- Doane's 2nd Hand Store (left half)
- Fredonia Transfer Co. (right half)
- Koch Feed Store
- Bill's Feed Store
- Fredonia Drapery
- G&S Plumbing

While the new high school was being built, some classes were held on the second floor.

The building with the roll up doors house the Fredonia Fire Department. This building housed Kuhnke's Drug Store in 1886. In 1901, the city bought the building and moved the fire department to the left side and the city hall offices to the right side. In later years, the building was extended to the alley for use as the city workshop and eventually the ambulance barn. The rear portion of the building houses the Fredonia Police Department.



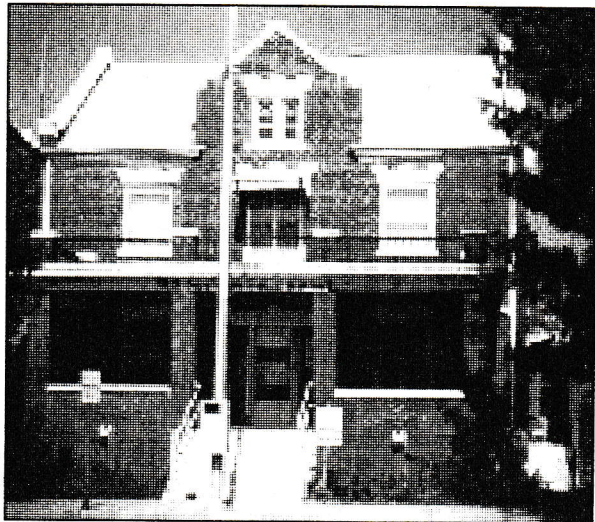
A fire in 1941 destroyed many early city records but the building was saved.



If you look closely at the area under the second floor window, you can see where the upstairs doorway in the picture above used to be.



The stone staircase on the right side of the building is a rare testament to the stone masons of the day. The entire staircase is supported only by the wall and the lower steps.



The brick structure in the center of the block was built in 1915 as the Sheriff's residence and county jail. The sheriff would also serve as the jailer. He had an office in the residence, his wife would cook and feed the prisoners and answer the phone calls. The jail was replaced in 1975 and the building was given to the Wilson County Historical Society as a home for their museum, which had outgrown their space in the courthouse.

Some of the earliest maps indicate a calaboose or jail on this property. It was also the site of the second courthouse in 1870. The wooden building that was built here was donated to the county. It was later moved onto the west side of the courtyard where a second wing was built, serving the county until a brick structure would be built in 1886.

The vacant area south of the museum has gone unchanged for over 50 years. It had been the site of the Forest Hotel, the last of the old wooden hotels on the square. It later became the site of Richardson's Transfer Co. and had a small barbershop built on the north side.



1938



2003

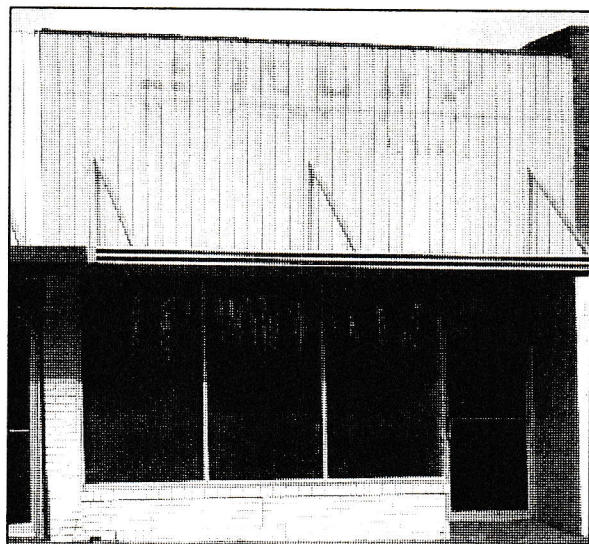
The next narrow building to the south has been serving up meals longer than anyone on the square. The elbow-to-elbow dining has been known by many names, including

- Georgia's Lunch
- Ray's Grill
- Jack's Grill
- Bob's Grill
- Yellowjacket Grill

The building south of the Grill served Fredonia as an electrical business for many years. The building narrowly survived a fire that claimed a pair of buildings to the south in the 1990's.

Among the businesses locating here are

- Loether Brothers Electric
- Murphy Electric
- Wilson County Abstract
- The Cedar Chest



2003

The newer building just north of the hotel houses the *Wilson County Citizen*. The used brick on the front wall was taken from the buildings that used to be on this site. The newspaper is nearly as old as the town, being established in the county in 1870.

The wooden letters on the sign are from the old Citizen office and were made in 1884. (See photo on page 4)



2003

A fire in 1991 destroyed the two buildings shown in the picture below. The left building was built as Cunningham's New Theatre in 1910, later becoming the White Way, the Kansan, and eventually Fredonia Theater. Upstairs were apartments and the Tea Room restaurant at one time in the 1930's



1938

The one-story building to the right of the theater was said to have been built in the late 1800's as a recreation parlor for hotel patrons.

It was also home to

- Hudson's Billiard Hall
- Miller Bros. Market
- East Side Café
- Klassy Kleaners
- Golden Cream Bakery



Kansan Box Office

c.1940

The last building along the outside of the square is the Gold Dust Hotel. Opened in 1885, it was a very popular destination, preferred over larger hotels in Parsons or Chanute, mainly because of the distance to the railroad tracks. Open windows on summer nights made noisy trains a constant complaint. The Gold Dust was the only major hotel of its class to be located so far from the busy depots. Horse-drawn taxi services provided efficient transportation to and from the trains.

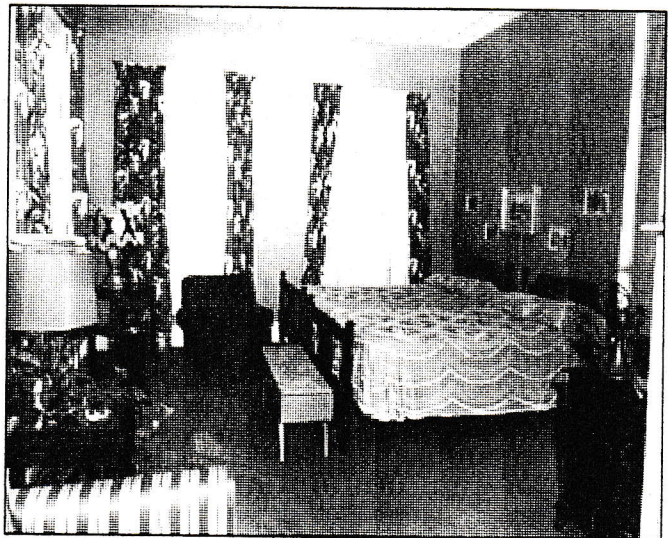


c. 1995



c. 1909

The hotel operated under the Gold Dust name for many years. It was changed to the Cunningham Hotel briefly in the 1920's. In 1946, Mrs. Farris purchased the building that she had been managing for 11 years. Sometime during this time, it was renamed the Farris Hotel. In 1965 it was renamed the Gold Dust Hotel and Apartments and kept that name until the building finally closed.



Second floor, southwest corner room

c. 1946



First floor lobby during Farris Hotel period.

In 1986, a group of citizens came together with plans to save the deteriorating building. Gold Dust, Inc., a non-profit corporation, was formed and bought the hotel and began restoration efforts through donations and fund-raising projects.

The restored lobby is leased to the Fredonia Chamber of Commerce for their offices and the Gold Dust Quilters occupies a room on the first floor for their weekly sessions. Other restored rooms on the first floor are rented out for meetings.

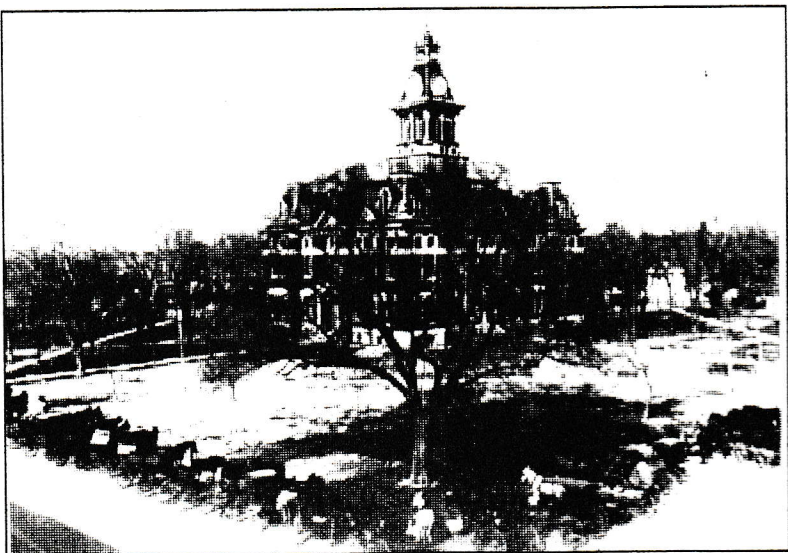
Hopes are that the closed upper floors can also someday be restored and put to some new use.



In the center of the downtown square is the Wilson County courthouse. Pictured above is the new building opened in 1961 with the 1886 building towering over it from behind. The courtyard was flat and the old courthouse sat down as low as the present parking lot. The building was taller than anything on the square and the tower soared well above the building.

Over the years, much of the ornate design from the roof and tower had been removed. The county had outgrown the drafty, leaky building. One account recalled rainy days bringing out so many buckets and pans to catch leaks that you could hardly walk through the building.

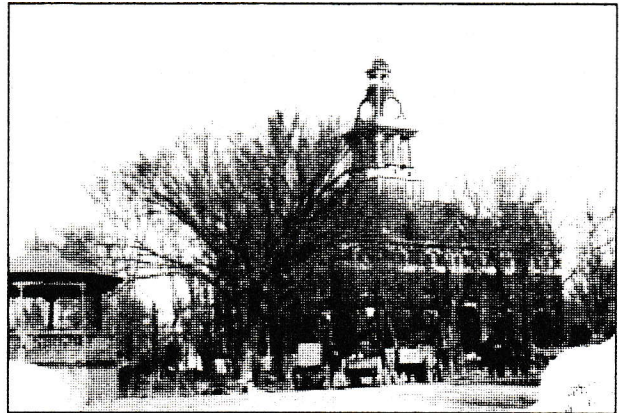
Many people remember the large elm trees that covered the grounds. Most of these died of disease many years ago. In the early days, animals and horses roamed the grounds freely. Several fencing attempts were tried, including one of barbed wire, but none lasted long. The final solution was heavy chain strung between metal posts that would double as hitching posts. These proved especially helpful during the period of time when horses and automobiles shared the square. Horses were tied on the inside of the square around the courthouse and automobiles were parked on the outside of the square in front of the businesses.





The early photo at left is from about 1890 shows some of the primitive board sidewalks that were used to keep out of the muddy streets.

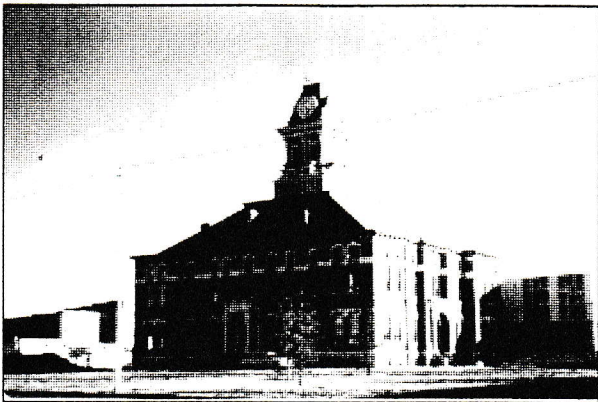
Below is a later view from the bank corner, just before the wooden bandstand was removed and the brick paving began.



c.1907

At left is a final view before demolition, with the new building peeking out from behind.

Below is a winter scene of the building the way it appeared in the final years. Gone are most of the turrets and roof adornments from the past.

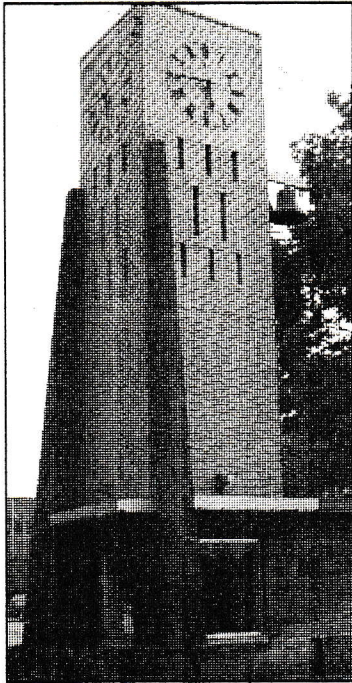


c.1890

1961



1958



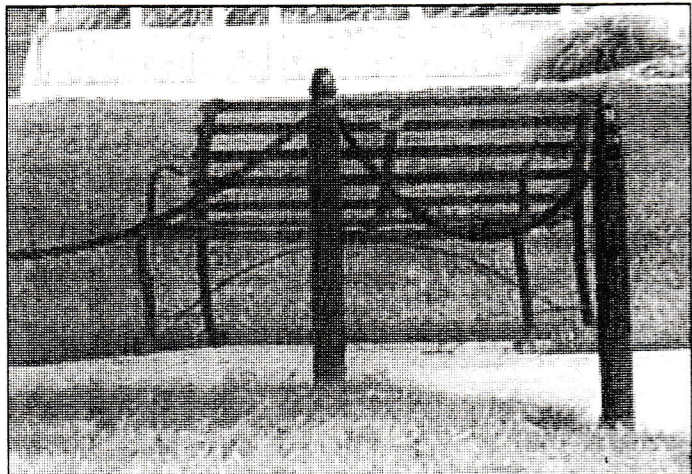
One of the historic treasures saved from the old courthouse was the clock. Gus Charlen, a private individual who had grown up looking at the clock, purchased the clockworks with borrowed money. He then gave it to the local Business and Professional Women who raised money for a proper building to house it. In 1965, the clock was dedicated in the new building on the north side of the courtyard, where it continues to chime every hour.

Back when the original courthouse was built, it did not include a clock. The local community raised money and purchased the clock which was installed later.

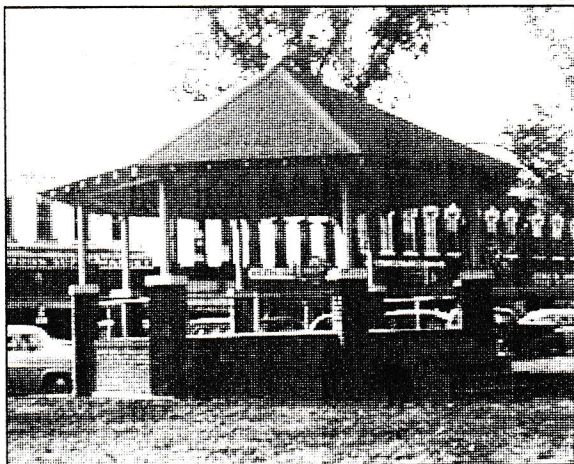
While waiting for the clock to be delivered from Philadelphia, the businesses on the south and the west sides of the square began to argue over which way the clock would face. According to a story recounted by early jeweler Mr. Thomas, it was decided a ballgame would be held to settle the question. The south and the west split into teams and the south side was victorious in the ballgame. It wasn't until after the clock finally arrived from Philadelphia that the man, who had been sent along to supervise the installation, informed them of the four-sided mechanism.

The building on the northeast corner of the courtyard was the former law enforcement center. It now houses county offices.

The benches that are scattered around the courtyard were sold before the old courthouse was demolished. They had been in private yards and scrap heaps in and out of Fredonia. An effort in the 1990's managed to recover a number of them and return them to the courtyard through private donations. Many of the benches and the replica streetlights surrounding the courtyard were funded as memorials to past Fredonia residents.



The search for benches also recovered some of the original hitching posts and chain. Sections now adorn each corner of the courtyard.



The bandstand on the southwest corner, built in 1932 by the WPA, sat roofless for many years after a crane tried to remove the entire roof structure in one piece. The crane toppled and the roof was demolished. A fund raising effort in 1996 allowed replacement of the roof, using old photographs at the museum as the guide for reconstruction.

THE STONE BARN,
Northeast corner Public Square.
P. H. MATTHEWS, Proprietor.

Gaede-Fulghum Bakery

CITY DRUG STORE

Ben B. Baldrige

Hess & Kisor,
PETERS SHOES

C. J. BUTIN & BRO
DEALERS IN
Drugs,  Books

And Stationery,
WEST SIDE SQUARE

OGDEN NEWS & SUNDRY

MONTGOMERY WARD
 SALES AGENCY

SETTLE INSURANCE AGENCY
FIRE CASUALTY AND LIFE INSURANCE
 SERVICE SINCE 1923

THE BOOTERY

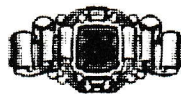
Wiggans Drugs
"WHERE PHARMACY IS A TRADITION"

The Home of Good Shoes for the Entire Family

Wilson County Citizen.

THE FREDONIA NEWS STAND

J. L. BRADY, Prop.



LOETHER BROS. ELECTRIC

BLANKINSHIP'S
OUTFITTERS FOR MEN AND BOYS
 FREDONIA, KANSAS

DON R. SMITH
THE WOMAN'S STORE

CITY DRUG STORE

Fredonia, Kans.

W. F. Sprague

Cook's
The Woman's Store

Hess & Kisor,
PETERS SHOES

THE White Way

FROM THE
Photographic Studio
D. A. LOOMIS.

GRAND LEADER

"Be a Hubbell Customer"

MILADY'S SHOP

Hubbell Dry Goods Co.

Zetta Shea

Bertha Markle

D. P. FRYER & CO.

Two Phones 481 and 520

Carley's

Wilson Art and Undertaking Co.

First Door East of Post Office

WOLEVER
HARDWARE & FURNITURE
 Fredonia, Kansas

Singleton
Supply Co.

The Fredonia Herald
 Daily and Weekly
 All the News, Every Time



THOMAS *Jewelers*

THE CASE PHARMACY



SELF SERVICE
GROCERY STORES
"WHERE EVERYBODY SAVES"

Fredonia Area Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 449
Fredonia, KS 66736
© 2003