

Landmarks

Webster says that the word landmark is derived from the two words land and mark, and defines it first, "as a mark to designate the boundary of land; any mark or fixed object (as a marked tree, a stone, a ditch or a heap of stones) by which the limits of a farm, a town, or any other portion of territory may be known and preserved" and quotes an example from Deut. XIX-14. "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbors land mark,

Second, termed nautical, "any elevated object on land, that serves to guide the seaman,

Let us first consider the township of Macedon. By whom it was first surveyed as a township, I am unable to state, as it is but a portion subdivided in 1823, from a greater portion called Palmyra, and that of itself but a small part of what was known as the 'Phelps^{2d} Gorham Purchase', granted to the purchasers by the legislature of Massachusetts in 1788. It is a well established fact that the early workmen, were not very accurate in their measurements, frequently giving

to various plots of land, what has been some times termed 'Quaker measure' that is, heaped up, shaken down and running over, or in other words, the surveys were large, making an overplus, of what it represented.

The township is popularly supposed to contain six miles square, or thirty six square miles of Free America. The south east corner is situated about two miles directly south of the dwelling house, known as the old 'David Aldrich' place, near Delwara village, and I am unable to learn whether it has any special marks; Thence going westward in a straight line, six miles, to a spot about one half mile west of Young's Mill, to a rough stone set as a mark a little off the highway, leading from the South Perington Church, to the said mill; thence north on the line between the two counties of Wayne and Monroe, to a point a few rods south of the residence of Artemus Merrifield in Fairfield. As the corner is in the center of the highway, if there be a mark, it is necessarily a buried one; thence East until you reach the north east corner of the farm, known as the.

Benjamin Blaker place, and thence south to the place of beginning, crossing the Erie canal, at what is known as the Change bridge, near the said David Aldrich place. The township is subdivided into seventy two parallelograms, containing 320 acres each, and measuring from the north to the south lines, one mile, and from the east to the west lines, one half mile. These several portions, are termed town-lots, and are numbered, commencing with No 1, in the South East corner of the town, going westward one half mile, you arrive at No 2, and continuing the journey to the South West corner of the town, you reach No 12, making the South tier of lots; then numbering eastward until No 24, will be found in the East tier and the second tier from the south, and thus going forth and back, until No 72 will be found in the extreme North East corner of the town. Each intersection, or crossing of the lines, would thus become the corner of four different lots, and each should have a permanent mark, and I presume has. I have seen, and know of several. For instance, near the top of the.

Ramsdell and Packard hill, stands a growing beech tree, which as far as my memory dates back, has been admitted to be the corner of Lots, 37 and 38, 59 and 60

At the four corners east of Cyrus Packard, a goodly sized boulder, planted in nearly the center of the two highways marks the corner, here at the center, is a stone in the crossing of the travelled tracks, but what maybe its dimensions, I am unable to say, at the center of the township, situated a little south of the N. Y. C. Rail way, and near the path which leads to the Conly place, the authorities of the town, intended to place, a few years since, a marble post; but I find on inspection, they failed to do so. By what authority, or at whose suggestion, townships were divided into town lots, I do not know, but certainly it is a very simple, yet very comprehensive ^{method}, of sub-division, for knowing the ^{number} of the lot, on which any stated object is placed, it can easily be traced out; one has only to remember, when they have travelled ^{East} East or West one half mile, the number of the lot has been changed, or if they have gone ^{North} North or South one mile, the same thing occurs.

We might stretch, or add to Webster's definition, by saying that any object, of special note, that serves to lead or guide man on his way, or tends to bring up reminiscences of the past, should be counted in the category of land marks.

This country has been, and still is full of objects serving that purpose. In early times, when huge forests of timber covered nearly the entire space of the 'Genesee Country' and before highways had even been staked out, something like the following directions, may have supposed to have been given, to one desirous of finding, a given point there in. 'You will find a well defined path to a given point; then follow up, the bank of the creek until you come to an extremely tall White wood tree, which stands on a knoll, on the right bank, and has been blazed on the north side of it, showing that you must keep to the right of it; The trail will then lead you over the hill, past a spring that issues from under a rock, on its eastern side; descending the western slope, you will find a black ash swamp, that you must pass around bearing to the left, until you have gained

The other side, when you will meet with a camp of friendly Indians, who will by signs, direct you on to the big tree.

By such as these, and similar marks did the fore fathers, of some of the present population of Macedonia, find their way westward, from the older states bordering on the sea, and after settlers had become numerous enough to be termed neighbors their routes to and from each others dwellings, were marked by objects of more or less note. Coming down to the time when the forests in great measure had been felled and reduced to that condition, that would insure to the products of the soil, in future was to yield to man, rich elements for their growth, there were left standing many of the Monarchs, which became objects of almost universal notice. I remember a tall and stately maple, which two huge men could scarcely span, with out stretched arms, standing at the top of Frank Ramsdells hill, and which was plainly visible, from almost anywhere. When on the return from Rochester, where people from this vicinity often meet, for various purposes, and perhaps weary with the tedious ride home ward,

for several miles away, the Old Maple loomed high above surrounding objects and as the traveller saw its familiar form, it begat a more contented feeling, because he felt nearer home, I will remember in the winter of 52 and 53, while Teaching School at Egypt, N.Y. often at the close of the days work, and some times very tired I have stood and gazed at the Old Maple, which was plainly in view from the School house and felt rested and revived by the sight.

How long after that winter, the tree was standing, I do not now recollect, but think it fell in a natural way, that is weakened by age, and thrown down by the winds.

The habitations of men, become special marks of the period in which they are erected. After the era of the log house, of which but few specimens, are left in this vicinity. (I can recall but two, the one north of the center, long since vacated by human beings, and the one owned by Gideon Baker, now used as a work shop.) The builders evidently brought their ideas of architecture with them from the East, and why should they not? For ^{coming} from homes where they had been reared.

Anything which would tend to make the
 their wilderness seem more like home,
 would certainly add to their pleasure and
 comfort. There are still standing, and ten-
 anted, several of the frame houses, which
 were erected nearly a century ago.

Notably the one where J. W. Arnold now
 resides, also the family of Bartimus Jackson,
 and the house known as the residence of
 Israel Delano, and in their exterior
 appearance, have never been changed
 except by the hand of time. A general
 description of the interior of one ^{would}
 suffice for all. Built up, in nearly the
 center of the dwelling, you will find a
 huge brick chimney, nearly square at
 its base, and with an opening or fire place
 on each of its four sides. A door on the
 front side of the house, or next the high way,
 usually leads you into a small sized
 room, termed then, the entry, and the
 opening on that side the chimney, was
 generally larger, and used as a place for
 curing meat, by the use of smoke. Passing
 from the entry to the living room, thence
 on to the kitchen, and from there to the best
room, and making your exit through the

Entry again, you will have passed entirely around the chimney, in your explorations. There were other exits, for various purposes. The peculiar construction, being but one story in height, brought the lower part of the roof, very close to the floor of the attic or chamber, but in the central portion, gave ample accommodations for sleeping apartments. One of these old dwelling places, is full of memories to me. How often do I remember, standing between my Grand parents knees, before the open, glowing fire of beech or maple logs, and listened to his words of instruction or tales of pleasure, or again of the enjoyment, of a lunch of apples, or potatoes, freshly roasted in the hot embers on the hearth.

Other dwellings of the period, have been remodelled, retaining only a portion of their original architecture, but having some features left, which still show that they are marks, reminding one of the past.

The domicile of Inuvroo Carman, though conforming in many respects, to the prevailing customs of the present time, yet its one story height, and the pitch of its roof, tells the tale of its early erection, and thus

becomes a mark, reminding the beholder of the early settlement of this section.

In due time the ideas of the people seem to have been changed, somewhat, in regard to the shape of their dwellings, evidently thinking they could increase the amount of room under the same roof, for we can still see many of the old fashioned two story houses, and they were so nearly similar in their appearance, and also in their interior arrangements, that that particular style of building might be termed the second period. The change in some respects was quite radical.

In place of the old square chimney, centrally located, was found a broad hall, from side to side of the frame, and containing the flight of steps, leading to the chambers. On either side of the hall were rooms of similar dimensions. At the back side, of the main frame, was usually another and smaller one, and joined to it, for culinary, and other purposes, and opening into the rear end of the afore said hall. The chimneys were placed at each end of the building, and were of much smaller dimensions, therefore occupying much less

space, and were supplied with fire places, on both the first and second floors, The posts being double the original height allowed more commodious and pleasant Chambers, The roof being laid at a flatter pitch, and with additions about the gables and eaves, for ornamentation made the dwellings of that period, differ widely in appearance, from those that had recently preceded them, The house built and occupied, and wherein occurred the death of Jonathan Ramsdell, known as the 'Quaker preacher' and which James Duggan now occupies, is a fair specimen of the architecture of that time.

Though many of the dwellings of that period have been greatly changed, and beautified, yet in most of them can be found some mark or feature, carrying the minds of elderly people backward.

The barns of the early period had a great similarity in their construction, both as to size and interior arrangements, being usually 30 X 40 feet on the ground, with posts 14 to 16 feet high, and with a plain roof on either side, at an angle of one fourth or

greater pitch, without cornice or other ornamentation, covered or sided with rough boards of the kind most convenient for the builder. The interior arrangements were generally a threshing floor, 14 x 30 feet, placed nearly in the center of the building and with doors through the side of the barn at each end, for easy access and exit.

On one side of the floor was the bay, for holding fodder, etc and on the opposite was placed the stable for animals, with usually a small part partitioned off as granary.

The greater share of these buildings have been torn down, remodelled, or rebuilt, in most cases altering their outward appearance so greatly, that even the original builders and owners, would not recognize them. Quite recently the structure standing in the field of Benj. Blaker, east of the center, and in which observers have detected no variable crop, for a long time, has been levelled; perhaps to be again rebuilt in some more convenient spot and form, but to those who have been long accustomed to the sight, it is a land mark removed.

The barns of Isaac Salaman, on what was once known as the Thomas Fritz place, and earlier as the Levi Shumway place, were razed and rebuilt in the summer of 1892. They were originally of the first pattern, and showed the date of erection, by the numerals 1826, cut in the gable. By additions, its dimensions have been greatly increased, being now 110X30 feet on the ground plan; increase in height being produced by material - by changing the form and construction of its roof, being now of the style known as the gambrel, or hipped roof; sided with dressed lumber, and painted a dark red color, with white trimmings.

The whole structure stands on a wall of masonry, forming a basement of sufficient height for the convenience of animals, and surmounted with a cupola, for ventilation, and admittance of light.

The barn on the Bartholomew Packard place was erected in 1799, and except for a lean-to added later, has been changed but slightly, and is still in use for the ordinary purposes of storage and shelter.

The Churches of the town, are they not all land marks? Should we not miss them from their accustomed places were they destroyed, or removed? Are they not guides to men? Who is there, that has not recollections of the past, either fond or sad brought to mind by the sight of the Churches?

The present building of the Baptist Soc. of Macedon, was undoubtedly the first erected in the town. It was built in the early part of the century, and stood on the site now occupied by the school house, which stands opposite the brick house known as the Kent residence, about two miles west of Palmyra village, and where the settlers from long distances regularly met in their public devotions, and near to the spot where they buried their friends and neighbors. As the territory about Macedon village became more thickly settled, it was considered to be the best location, and thereupon in the summer of 1836, it was taken down, removed and rebuilt on its present site, and I think without any change in structure. But since then it has had a thorough remodeling, in its interior, and with ornaments.

added out side, more in consonance with mind of the present generation

The Old Friends meeting house, standing on the north east corner, here at the center, I can well remember, when its form differed greatly from its present one. It was originally a two story structure, having beside its lower floor, which was not greatly varied in its rebuilding, a gallery on three of its sides, provided with seating capacity for a goodly concourse of people. As the worshippers became fewer in number, it was thought best to reduce its cubic space, and while endeavoring to make it less in height, by chipping from the lower ends of its posts, it suddenly fell in a heap of ruins, and was then re-built in its present shape. Dissensions arising between members of that branch of the church, in 1827, a portion of them with drew, from the others, and soon there after the Old house known as the Orthodox house was built. It was of plain construction according, with the, then views of the Soc, and was used as a place of public worship until the Autumn of 1868. During that summer, the present house was built.

the frame being raised. July 18th; the builder was Peter Elebash, and on Sunday Nov, 22nd the first public meeting was held, Jacob Bell of Rochester, speaking to the congregation. The old house was sold to J. N. Brownell, and removed by him to the north side of the street; now occupied by Arsel Clark, and used as a barn.

The Methodist Society, erected a house of worship, previous to the year 1825, on the premises now owned by J. W. Colburn, the building stood a little east of his ^{present} residence, and was lacking in ornamentation with out and within. It was used as a Church until the present building was completed, and which stands on the same street about 20 rods east of the old one. The present one was completed in 1847, and was re-modelled in 1881 assuming its present form. The old structure, was purchased by S. V. R Mallory, and was removed from its place Oct 24th, 1850, and became a portion of the present residence of Mrs. Henry Pillow.

In 1858, the Catholics of Macedon and surrounding country, built a house of worship, at the eastern extremity of the

village on main street. Some years later additions were made to the building. Rev. William Casey, resident of Palmyra first ministered to the spiritual wants of the congregation. M. A. F. Holmes, now residing in Macedon is the present ^{Pastor}.

The Universalist Society of the town in 1872, erected a neat and commodious Church, on a site donated by Lyman Bickford, and nearly opposite his present residence. The material of which it was built, was wood, and was but one story in height. The Church was dedicated in May 1873. Rev. Harvey Boughton was the first resident Pastor, and continued as such for ten years. About five years ago, the building was lifted up, a brick basement was built, of sufficient height to afford pleasant rooms; the whole interior was re-modelled, and in March 1889, it was re-dedicated. The Rev. C. L. Paddock is the present Pastor.

If these inanimate objects, are marks to lead and guide, what might not be said of the men who blazed the trails, builded the houses, and erected the Churches. Had they no characteristics worthy of notice

and emulation? This township has contained a vast army of men, and women too, without whose aid and guidance, the people would now be the losers,

But I forbear to speak names, lest I should do them injustice.

The coursing of these thoughts, has produced a flood of recollections, many of them reaching, the other side of half a century, and reminding me, that we, ^{ought} all to so shape our actions, that they may be proper guides to those who follow us, and begit in us and them, a fond hope of Eternal Rest.

The above article, was written for the M. C. H. Society, and read before it, at the residence of Frank B. Hicks, Apr. 9, 1894.

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