



## Geneva “Celebrities”

### **Elizabeth Blackwell and Geneva Medical School, 493-501 South Main**

From 1843 to 1872 the Geneva Medical College stood on this spot. In 1847 it became the first medical school in the United States to admit a woman when Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910) arrived for lectures. After two years of work, she graduated first in her class. Blackwell continued to fight for opportunities to learn and practice medicine, founding a clinic and a medical school for women doctors in New York City in order to open up more opportunities for women in medicine. The school left Geneva in 1872 to become part of Syracuse University, and the building that housed it burned down in 1877.

### **Sarah Bradford, Bradford House (629 South Main Street)**

Sarah Hopkins (1818-1913) came to Geneva with her family around 1832. In 1839 she married lawyer John Bradford. The couple eventually settled in a house on South Main Street (currently HWS Office of Admissions) and raised six children. After her husband’s death in 1861, Bradford opened Mrs. Bradford’s School for Young Ladies and Little Girls in her home. She ran the school for seven years.

Bradford was also a writer. She is most known for writing the first history of Geneva which appeared in the 1862 and 1863 *Brigham’s Geneva, Seneca Falls, and Waterloo Directory and Business Advertiser* and the first biography of Harriet Tubman (*Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 1869).

### **Dr. William Brooks, Dr. William Brooks House and Smith Observatory (620 Castle Street)**

At the age of 14 William Brooks (1844-1921) built his first telescope, at 17 he delivered his first astronomical lecture, and at 37 he discovered his first comet. Brooks was a photographer living with his family in Phelps when William Smith offered to build him a home and observatory in Geneva. Brooks accepted the offer. Between 1887 and 1906 he discovered 14 new comets in his observatory on Castle Street. In all Brooks discovered 27 comets. He also taught astronomy at Hobart from 1900 to 1921.

### **Glenwood Cemetery**

Dove Family – The obelisk commemorates the burial place of the parents and a brother of painter Arthur Dove (1880-1946), who is regarded as the first modernist painter in America. Arthur’s father William had a brick yard and built many buildings in Geneva, including Belhurst, Baptist Church, North Presbyterian, the Dove Block and Elks Club.

Charles Folger (1818-1884) came to Geneva with his parents in 1830. After graduating from Hobart in 1836 and studying law, he established himself as a judge and political figure. By 1880 he was the chief justice of the New York State Court of Appeals. A year later he turned down President James Garfield’s invitation to become the United States Attorney General. He did, however, become the Secretary of Treasury under President Chester Arthur. Under Folger’s leadership the national debt was reduced by \$300 million dollars. Folger died on September 4, 1884 in Geneva. His funeral was attended by President Arthur and most of his cabinet, Governor Grover Cleveland, and four United States Supreme Court Justices.

While a medical student at the University of Buffalo, Chauncy Grove drove the ambulance that took President William McKinley to the hospital after he was assassinated. Grove later settled in Geneva where he established a medical practice and served as the Geneva Health Officer

After a basketball injury to his lip effected his playing of the clarinet and saxophone, Scott LaFaro (1936-1961) began playing the bass. After one year at Ithaca College LaFaro began playing professionally, touring and recording with jazz greats such as Stan Kenton and Chet Baker. He appeared on dozens of album in six years, including the jazz classic *Sunday at the Village Vanguard* with the Bill Evan Trio. He influenced many bassists with his melodic style that interacted with lead instruments rather than just keeping the beat

Francis Marion Tuttle (1839-1910) grew up in the cobblestone house on the corner of Pre-Emption and 5&20 (now the Cobblestone Restaurant). He was hearing impaired and as a child attended a school for the deaf in New York City. At school he studied art and met his wife Eunice Henner, also hearing impaired. In the mid-1860s he began a career as a painter. He specialized in landscapes, portraits and Biblical scenes.

### **Johnston House and Drain Tile Museum, 3523 East Lake Road**

The Johnston House was home to John Johnston (1791-1880) and his family from 1821 to 1877. Johnston was a Scottish immigrant who revolutionized American agriculture by being the first in the United States to use drain tiles and by advocating from improved farming methods. When people often asked Johnston to what he owed his success as a farmer, Johnston said he did not know if it was credit or dung.

Built and opened in 1999 the Drain Tile Museum displays a collection drain tiles donated to the Geneva Historical Society by Mike Weaver, a civil engineer who researched and wrote about the history of tile drainage and Johnston's connection to it. The collection represents 2,000 years of drainage history.

### **Elizabeth Smith Miller and Anne Miller, Lochland (1065 Lochland Road)**

In 1869 Elizabeth Smith Miller (1822-1911) and her family moved to Geneva, where Lochland would be the family home for over 40 years. Beginning in the mid-1890s Elizabeth and her daughter Anne (1856-1912) worked together advocating for women rights and leading the suffrage movement in Ontario County. With other community members, the Millers established the Geneva Political Equality Club in 1897. The Club became a forum for women and men to discuss current events and to educate the public about issues related to women's rights. Eventually the Club would become the largest in the state. In addition, the Millers used their connections to bring state suffrage conventions to Geneva and well-known suffragists to speak in Geneva including Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt and Emmeline Pankhurst.

### **Elizabeth Ricord, 395, 397, and 387 South Main Street**

Together these three buildings housed Elizabeth Ricord's Geneva Female Seminary in the 1830s. In 1829 Ricord (1788-1865) was separated from her husband and living in Geneva. To support herself and her four sons, she opened the Geneva Female Seminary. She was part of a growing group of women who believed that women should receive an education equal to that of men and the primary purpose of her seminary was to train teachers. With that in mind she designed a

much more rigorous curriculum than what was offered at the majority of female seminaries. Besides sewing very few domestic subjects were offered. The core subjects were spelling reading, geography, arithmetic, history (ancient and modern), science (astronomy, botany, geology, natural history, geology and chemistry), mental philosophy, moral philosophy, natural philosophy and composition. For an additional fee classes in Latin, Greek, Italian French, music, drawing and painting were also offered.

Ricord was also the first woman to write a textbook about psychology for women. *Elements of the Philosophy of Mind, Applied to the Development of Thought and Feeling* was based on her lectures notes on “mental philosophy.”

### **Washington Street Cemetery, corner of Madison and Washington Streets**

George Bland (1819-1886) was one of the many African-American householders who owned land in the neighborhood of West and High Streets. As a leader for the fight for equality in Geneva, he was involved in organizing several Emancipation Celebrations held in Geneva during the 1870s. Usually held in early August to commemorate when England freed slaves in the West Indies, the celebrations may have included prayer, parades, reading of important documents (Emancipation Proclamation and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment) songs, sports completions, food and an evening dance.

There are 63 Civil War veterans buried in the cemetery including seven members of the United States Colored Troops. In 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation authorized the recruitment of African American soldiers. Between 1863 and 1865, 180,000 free blacks and former enslaved workers joined 175 Union Army Colored Troop regiments. One of those soldiers was Glen Alvin Brown. Brown’s parents came to Geneva from Maryland in the 1840s. Brown joined the 8<sup>th</sup> US Colored Infantry and probably saw action in Florida and Virginia. After the war, Brown, like his father, was a hackman (a carriage driver).

Gideon Lee made his fortune as a leather merchant in New York City. He was the last appointed mayor of New York City (serving from 1833-1834) and a member of the House of Representatives from 1835-1837. In 1839 he came to Geneva and purchased a portion of the White Springs farm.

Former New York Senator and United States Congressman Eliakim Sherrill (1813-1863) moved to Geneva in 1860 with the idea of retiring. Instead, in 1862 he found himself recruiting and organizing the 126<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry. The regiment consisted of men from Ontario, Seneca and Yates Counties. Sherrill died on July 4, 1863 after being mortally wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg. His body was returned to Geneva on July 10, 1863 and over 10,000 over people attended his funeral.

Born in Massachusetts, General Joseph Swift (1783-1865) became the first graduate of West Point in 1802. He went on to become the Chief Engineer for the United States while at the same time holding the position of Superintendent of West Point. Swift settled in Geneva in 1829 and eventually settled at 815 South Main Street.