— HISTORY —

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

BELLEVILLE & HENDERSON DISTRICTS

TOWNS OF: ADAMS, ELLISBURG & HENDERSON

COUNTY OF JEFFERSON

STATE OF NEW YORK

1824 — 2012

BELL TOWER

— 1845 —

CONSTRUCTED BY MEMBERS OF VILLAGE CHURCHES IN BELLEVILLE, AS A CENTRAL CALLING SOURCE FOR EMERGENCIES, CHURCH, FIRE CALLS & SCHOOL

BACK IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS... WHEN?

Williams Park established and donated to the Union Academy by Frederick Williams 1901

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continually used by the educational system and public to this day

3

VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

LOCATIONS OF BELL TOWER

#1 - Original location of Bell Tower 1845 - 1857
#2 - Location of Bell Tower 1857 - 1934 Bell cracked in a move. A new bell placed in tower in 1861.
#3 - 1934 to present os the location of Bell Tower

UNION LITERARY SOCIETY — 1826 - 1861
UNION ACADEMY OF BLLEVILLE — 1861 - 1931
BELLEVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT — 1931 - 1984

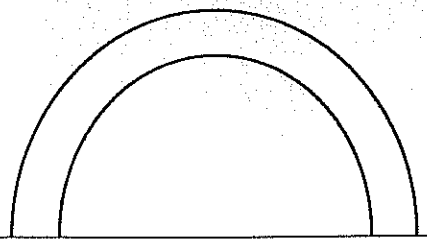
Both structures destroyed by fire at 8:30 a.m. on January 29, 1923

Stone Structure Years used 1826 to 1923

Wooden Structure Used 1924 to 1984 Bus Garage Today

1 2

Early manual labor education system of 1826



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BELLEVILLE HENDERSON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 1984 - ,,

Locker Rooms & Cafeteria Gymnasium - Classrooms with Entry Festival 1955-84

Today Bus Garage & Storage Rooms

Brick Structure Used 1924 to 1984 Bus Garage Today

Elementary Wing Used 1934 - 1984 Bus Garage Today

SUCCESS OF OLD UNION

"Success is not reached at a single bound,
but we build the ladder by which we rise
from the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
and mount in the summit round by round."

Old Union has gained success by round by round from the Union Literary Society of 1824, to the construction of this new building in 1924.

Union Academy had its origin of the select school started by Joshua Bradley in 1824 at Mathers Mills. About two years later he named this institution the Union Literary Society by which name this institution was know until 1861.

Giles Hall gave a six acre lot "to be forever used for school purposes." On this site the building was erected. The stone building was formally dedicated January 1st., 1829.

In equal rank with the old founders are those men who influenced the success of old Union with their endowments and dissolutions.

The school was closed two years while the loyal supporters labored to regain it... by raising the money to pay off the mortgage. Among the foremost and best known of these donors was Norris Shepardson, farmer poet who made many public gifts besides those to the Academy. Other endowments came from the Charles Mathers, Shepardson's and James. A. Garfield.

The facilities too, have supplied a number of rounds to the Academy's ladder of success. It has been the teachers who have inspired the students. The building with all the magnificence and glory would not have inspired them without the teachers whose influence and friendships have meant so much to the "Children of Old Union."

Professors Avery and Easton were the first Principals of Union Academy. The most loved of all the professors however, was J. Dunbar Houghton, who taught here thirteen years. Mr. Gaylord and Dr. Galpin were also among the loved and influential men.

In the late eighteen eighties Mr. Higgs founded the Gladstone Society and literary advancement with training in parliamentary rule. This society became so successful in the art of debating that its name has been changed to the Gladstone Debating Club. At about the same time Miss Blanchard founded the Sibylline Society for the same purpose.

In Old Union's success the students have played a prominent part. It is they who have represented her to the world. Those students have migrated to all parts of our country and even to foreign nations. They are the ones who have spread her influence and added to her fame. And those who have remained in the community have also helped her name, for

most of the prosperous farmers of this vicinity were educated at Union Academy.

When the Civil War broke out it was difficult to keep school in session because so many of the students left to go to war. Jack Barney, an old student of Union Academy, went as their captain. Many of the men from here received honors. Barney was promoted from Captain to Major. Teachers Buckley and Odekirk both became Captains.

A number of the students of Union Academy have been exceptionally successful. In being successful themselves, they have added to their Alma Mate's success. Hiram Barney became superintendent of schools in Ohio and introduced the Union school system to the state. George Peck, author of "Peck's Bad Boy," was Governor of Wisconsin. He became Governor and was once a United States Senator from that state. At the close of the Spanish American War he helped to negotiate the treaty with Spain.

The facility of Old Union taught a great philanthropist, Charles N. Crittenton, the founder of the Florence Crittenton Missions, lived in this community until he was a man. Then he went to New York City.

A great divine had his early education at this school. Rev. Charles G. Finney, the great Evangelist, probably received his first inspiration for the divine work from Jeddah Burchard. It is said that the Salvation Army was a result of the inspiration which his sermons gave. As its president Finney did much to enhance the prosperity of Oberlin College, Ohio during the forty years he was affiliated with it.

Daniel Burnham, a renounced architect was also educated at Union Academy, his early home was in Henderson. He designed many of the beautiful buildings of this country and some of those in other countries. He planned the grounds and buildings for the World's Exposition at Chicago in 1892. It was Burnham who planned for the beautifying of Washington, established the American School of Architecture at Rome, Italy and planned reconstruction of San Francisco after the earthquake and fire in 1905.

With the success of its founding, the success of students and its success through failures, it can well be said that Old Union was successful. In the spirit with which its friends rebuilt Old Union, I think there is substantial hope that we may expect Old Union's future to be as brilliant as her past.

These friends have built a new 'Old Union'. And again Union Academy is emerging from a trying and discouraging misfortune. So we may hope to see her rise above this new obstacle as she has risen above those others to a higher and more glorious success.

UNION ACADEMY AT BELLEVILLE

by Charles M. Snyder

Dr. Charles M. Snyder, author of this history of the Union Academy, was Chairman of the Department of History at State University College at Oswego, NY.

"When the wolf's howl had hardly died away." [1]

In the 19th century the nation was dotted with hundreds of academies, where some millions of teenage boys and girls obtained their secondary education. Possibly none of them was situated in a more unlikely place than Union Academy at Belleville, in the town of Ellisburg, Jefferson County, State of New York.

During the first quarter of the century the region was just emerging from the frontier. It was isolated from main lines of travel, and was accessible only by primitive tracks. Belleville's population never exceeded four hundred, and in the entire region only Watertown and Oswego grew into small cities. Perhaps its greatest asset was a strip of fertile soil extending about ten miles north and south and five, east and west, and a mill seat on the north fork of Sandy Creek; or possibly, it was its New England stock with a tradition of hard work and a commitment to education.

For a few years education facilities were limited to an elementary school in private homes. Then, in 1824, Joshua Bradley appeared in the (Belleville) village.

Joshua Bradley was born in Randolph, Massachusetts, in 1775 and was bound-out to a shoemaker for seven years at fourteen, his place in life seemed circumscribed by his humble birth. But the young apprentice underwent a conversion to Christianity, and seeking an understanding of God's Word, obtained his master's consent to engage a tutor and to pay for it by doing extra work at the last. He mounted a Latin grammar before his seat, *"that I might get a lesson daily,"* [2] and when he had completed his apprenticeship at twenty one he made a pair of shoes a day to finance a secondary education. At twenty-four he entered Brown University, and upon his graduation two years later obtained a license to preach.

He began a career of teaching and preaching in 1799 at Pawtucket, Rhode Island. But the restlessness which had taken him from his bench continued to agitate him, and he moved successively to Connecticut, Vermont and New York. According to his own record in nine years he preached *"1,619 sermons, was instrumental in changing a theatre into a meeting house in Albany, formed an Educational Society in Ellisburg (at Belleville), Jefferson County, delivered many lectures on various occasions, had many revivals under my ministry, and aided in the founding a number of churches in the western part of the state,"* [3] *He subsequently beat a trail through western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, and returning to Pennsylvania, continued his pilgrimage into present day West Virginia and Virginia. In 1849 he founded an academy at Lansingburg, New York and while this appears to have been his last school, he continued to preach from the home of his son in St. Paul, Minnesota, until his death at eighty-three. In all he delivered 7,198 sermons, founded eight academies and sired nine children, the youngest when he was sixty-*

seven. [4] Belleville was thus only a monetary halt in his grand tour, but it was not without lasting results. He first opened a secondary school in the upper floor of a house in the village, and then circulated a subscription list for a much more ambitious project, a Manuel Labor School with all the advantages of an academy and a source of revenue which would remunerate the stockholders, undoubtedly patterning it after his personal experience as an apprentice and student.

Finding the public unreceptive to a manual labor scheme, however, he shifted his goal to a more traditional academy, and made his way from door to door and farm to farm. A century later a principal of the Academy lauded the New England pioneers for their zeal for education, but added, *"The real wonder is that Joshua Bradley, while the wolf's howl was still a nightly occurrence, while the settlers were hardly settled .... succeeded in arousing among those farm families the belief that they could support there and then a school of higher learning."* [5]

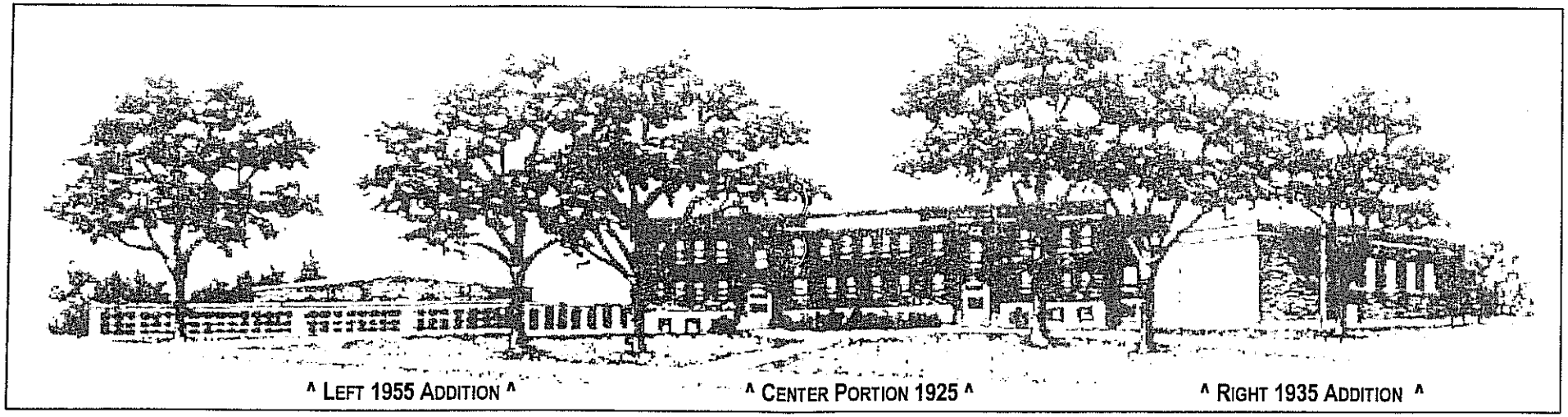
On April 16, 1826, Bradley obtained a charter for the Union Literary Society with a board of twenty-four trustees. He also received a gift of six acres of land from Giles Hall, of Belleville, for a campus. Nevertheless, for several year the school eked out a precarious existence, occupying at least three different sites. But by 1829 gifts of lumber, stone, nails and money — most contributions were smaller than ten dollars — and the labor of dozens of local people made possible the erection of a two-story stone building.

By this time Bradley had moved on to western Pennsylvania, and the responsibility for shaping and financing the infant institution fell to Principal Charles Avery, a recent graduate of Hamilton College. One of his successes was said to have been Bonaparte, late King of Spain, at this time owner of thousands of acres of wild land in the North country. Another, was the formal recognition of the Academy by the Board of Regents of New York State.

In what may have been the school's first publicity, a Watertown paper reported in 1830: *"A few farmers and others in the vicinity of Belleville have established an Academy at that place highly creditable to themselves and useful to the county. An institution of this kind has been needed, and parents had been, until lately, compiled to send their sons to Lowville (40 miles), Fairfield (140 miles), or more distant institutions for instruction."* [6]

Unfortunately, Avery remained for but two years, and his departure left the Academy's future in doubt. Attendance, which fluctuated from 30 to 53 during the first decade, was too small to be efficient, and rapid turn-over of principals there were six during the first ten year was an additional liability.

During the panic of 1837 a mortgager put a padlock on the building; and an absence of records for several years suggests that operations may have been suspended. But Calvin and Pricilla Clarke, a local farmer and businessman, advanced funds to repossess the building, and the Rev. Jedediah Burchard headed a subscription campaign which freed the institution from debt. Classes were again in session by 1840, and attendance averaged about 93 in the 1840's and 214 in the



^ LEFT 1955 ADDITION ^ ^ CENTER PORTION 1925 ^ ^ RIGHT 1935 ADDITION ^

1850's.

Despite this substantial growth the academy remained local in character. And while trustees were not averse to admissions from more distant points, they obtained few acceptances. Thus, year after year the student body was drawn from a radius of ten or twelve miles, and neither the building of the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad in 1855 with a connecting Belleville stage at Adams (*which a catalogue reassured prospective students was free of charge the first and last weeks of each terms*) [7] nor the acquisition of dormitories changed the distribution significantly. In 1875, for example, among the eighty young men and eighty young women enrolled, two lived beyond Jefferson and Oswego counties, and only three others lived more than twenty miles from Belleville.

While such a preponderance of local student suggest provincialism, there is an opposite side of the coin. Few communities provided so many of their youth with a secondary education or enjoyed the advantages incidental to such as a high proportion of secondary school graduates among their population. [9]

The employment of principals and teachers from institutions beyond the locale must have broadened the horizons of the students. Union College seems to have supplied the largest number. Also represented were Hamilton College, Madison University, and late in the century, Vassar College. The acquisition of dormitories changed the distribution significantly.

Meanwhile, a *modus vivendi* evolved, which gave the institution life and substance. An incipient Union spirit was undoubtedly strengthened in 1856 with the erection of a spacious, three storied, frame structure, providing dormitories for sixty boys and girls, and a auditorium, reading room and parlors, and a office and residence for the principal and his family. The older building continued to house most of the classrooms, the library-chapel and dining room.

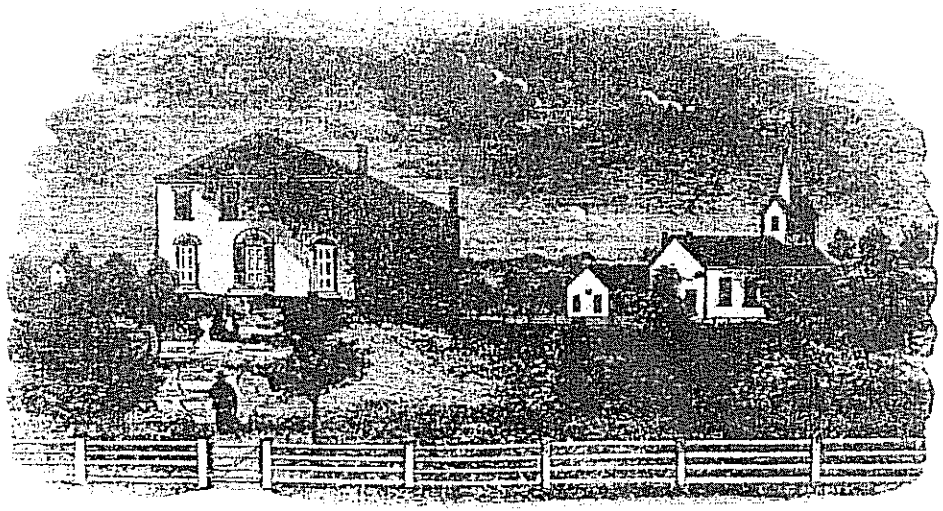
Students were admitted in September for the first of four annual terms, and completed their work in June. School was then recessed through the summer, freeing many from farm families to assist with the seasonal labor.

In the decade of the 1870s; a student had the choice of three departments: Academic, Music and Teaching. Academic majors, who made up the largest group, received instruction in Greek, Latin, German and French grammar and literature and in a broad spectrum of courses in mathematics and science in addition to mental and moral philosophy and English literature. The musical course emphasized competence on the piano, music appreciation and vocal music. The teachers' class included instruction in all branches taught in "our best district schools," and the "best methods" of teaching them. Members of this department paid no tuition. All students participated in weekly exercises in declamation and composition.

In the pursuit of "more thorough scholarship" and "a higher standard of culture," "young ladies and gentlemen" recited in the same classes and ate at the same tables, and were permitted to mingle in the parlor or upon the "front grounds" in the presence of their teachers. But private meetings at any time or place were "deprecated by parents and teachers." A study bell required students to be in their rooms, and a retiring bell was the signal to extinguish lights. [10]

Profane language and games of chance were prohibited; also the use of tobacco and indigence in intoxicating liquors and frequenting places where they were sold. Students were expected to attend public worship on the Sabbath at a place designated by their parents and to participate in a weekly bible class on campus. Irreverence at church, amusements and visits of pleasure and noise in rooms on the Sabbath were forbidden. Unfortunately, existing records do not comment upon student responses to these institutional standards.

In an obvious effort to avoid misconduct, a by-law required applicants to furnish certificates of moral character, if they were unknown to the faculty or one or more members of the Board of Trustees.



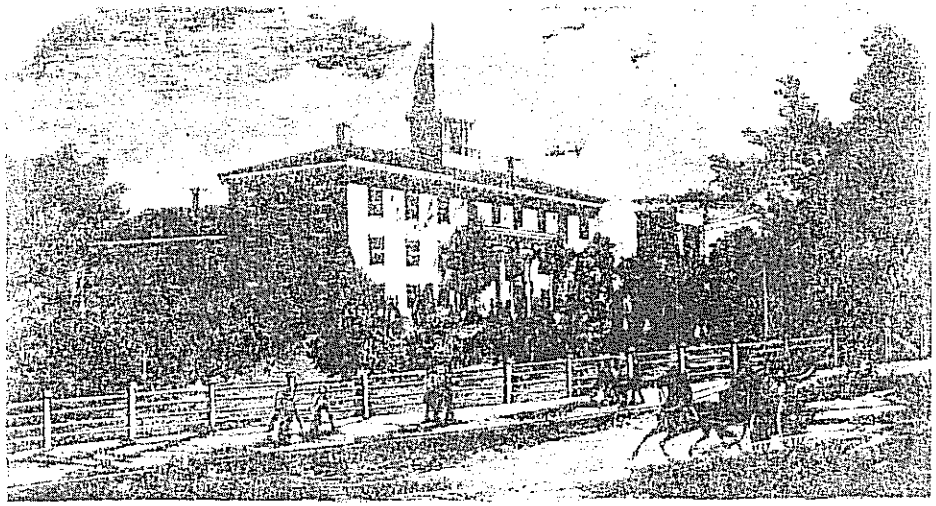
UNION LITERARY SOCIETY 1826-1861 >< BUILDING 1826 - 1918

The erection of the Bell Tower about 1845 was a gift from the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in the village. Rather surprisingly, the little structure came to symbolize the school and its traditions.

While there was no "golden ere" in the life of the school the decade of 1850's was one of growth and progress. Much of the impetus stemmed from the dynamic leadership of **Principal J. Dunbar Houghton**, a graduate of the Academy and the son of an earlier principal. Houghton proposed the construction of a second building, and submitted his resignation when the trustees delayed. His action was persuasive, the board reconsidered, and Houghton remained at the helm. When funds were lacking to complete the third floor, he advance $1,000, accepting future room rentals as security, and the new quarters were occupied in the fall of 1857. In 1861 Houghton initiated the renaming of the institution as Union Academy, Belleville. He also doubled the library and strengthened the laboratory sciences. He retired in 1864 after thirteen constructive years.

The Civil War is one of the most cherished chapters in the history of the Academy. When President Lincoln called for 75,000 militia on April 15, 1861, just after the firing on Fort Sumter, a local lawyer-farmer, Andrew Jackson Barney, an alumnus of the Academy and a graduate of Ballston Spa Law School, organized a company of infantry, designated as Company K of the 24th Infantry, out of Oswego County, New York State Volunteers. The Barneys' were a well-known family in the region. Three of them were among the original trustees of the academy. H. H. Barney was a principal during the early years, and Daniel Barney and his son, Lowery, were prominent physicians in Henderson, eight miles north-west of Belleville.

Captain "Jack" Barney and his recruits, including Lieutenant John P. Buckley, a professor of Greek and Latin at the Academy, and a sprinkling of alumni and students, departed on May 9 via the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad.



UNION ACADEMY - 1861 >< BUILDING 1855 - 1918

They were mustered into the service at Elmira on May 17 and dispatched to Washington a few weeks later.

Entering the war at the outset and having closer identification with the Academy than subsequent units, the company was a source of local pride, and its' movements were carefully followed. In the Confederate victory at the Second Battle of Bull Run, "Stone Wall" Jackson's brilliant turning of the Union right flank caught the 24th Regiment in a withering cross-fire. While directing his troops Barney (now a major) was shot down from his horse, mortally wounded, and was left behind Southern lines when Union forces retreated.

Ten years earlier, while Thomas (Stonewall) Jackson was in New York City during a respite from his duties as instructor of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, he was introduced to Dr. Lowery Barney at the home of a mutual friend. In the course of their conversation Jackson told Barney of his struggle against dyspepsia, and Barney offered him his professional advice. Jackson so favorable impressed that he accompanied Barney to Henderson, where he was his patient and guest for six weeks. Barney's therapy was a combination of exercise (hiking) with a simple diet (largely buttermilk), and Jackson seems to have returned to his duties re-strengthened. He and Dr. Barney remained close friends and correspondents until the Civil War. [11]

According to Belleville tradition Jackson visited the Academy during his stay at Henderson and became acquainted with Andrew Jackson Barney. The tradition continues, that as Jackson toured the field after the battle at Bull Run, his attention was called to Major Barney's body. Recognizing it, he ordered that it be embalmed and returned to Union lines for burial. Documentation of Jackson's intervention was supplied by Dr. J. B. Murdoch, surgeon of the 24th Regiment, who wrote to Barney's widow that as Jackson stood over her husband's prostrate form, he said,

"This was a brave man; take care of him." [13]

The body was brought home to Belleville, and the funeral on September 23, 1862, for Barney and Lieutenant Buckley, who fell in the same battle, became an outpouring of mourners never witnessed before in the area, and totaling, according to contemporary estimates, from three to seven thousand. Interment was in Woodside Cemetery (Mixer) with a 3 mile long escort to the grave. It remains the Academy's best remembered incident.

The momentum generated by Principal Houghton continued through the 1860's, but in the lean 1870's the Academy's future was again clouded. From an all-time high of 342 students in 1886, attendance in the 1870's averaged fewer the 150, and by 1875 the institution was sinking under a burden of debt.

But again, Union found a resourceful leader in Norris M. Shepardson, President of the Board of Trustees. At what might have been a simple commemoration of the Academy's fiftieth anniversary Shepardson put the future on the line. Did the institution deserve perpetuation? If the answer were an affirmative, how might it be saved and strengthened to withstand the vicissitudes of the years ahead: in anticipation of this confrontation Shepardson issued an appeal to alumni and former members of the faculty to participate in an open discussion at the spring commencement. And, hopeful that his question would be answered affirmatively, he proposed and endowment as a memorial to the martyred Jack Barney and the other heroes of the Civil War, a *Book of Memory*, where names worthy of remembrance might be recorded (when accompanied by pledges of $100). ***"To those who believe that a living name among their fellow men (friends, children, parents) is better than a marble column in a lonely cemetery,"*** he wrote in the preface, ***"can here have a place ... to perpetuate the memory of those who were worthy of an immortality of well-doing:"*** and paraphrasing the Apostle Paul, he concluded, ***"Those whose heart yearn for 'whatsoever thing are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever thing are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,' can here lavish all their affections, and know that they have been worthily bestowed."*** [13]

Keynoting the opening session, Professor N. L. Andrews of Madison (Colgate) University hailed the contributions of academies to the education of the nation's youth, underscoring their joint function as terminal instruction for career in business, agriculture and home making, and as preparation for the professions. General studies in the academies preserved the classical student from mere pedantry and a narrowness and confect fatal to true culture sometimes characteristic of the classical high school, and by close association of the two groups under the same roof, avoided the alienation of the cultivated few from the lesser educated many. [14] Other spokesman endorsed the values of co-education and the "immensurable value" of Union to the region it served.

At a second meeting, chaired by the venerable Charles Avery, the trustees made their move for an endowment. In the course of discussion Avery alluded to .

the survival of Madison University. From the narrow point of the hour glass Madison's endowment had carried them into the broad ocean of established success. To live, he insisted, Union must do likewise. ***"Your alma mater is waiting for a new dress. Give her calico or silk as you please."*** [15]

Proponents argued that the decision was either endowment or abandonment. Without an endowment the academy could not compete with the normal schools of the state and the strong union schools in the cities and larger towns which were tax supported and tuition free. They urged that the answer be endowment, and offered a resolution calling for the sum of $50,000. After a lengthy discussion the resolution was adopted unanimously, and on the day following, the committee reported pledges of $7,075; ($2,700 of which was contributed by initial subscribers to the *Book of Memory*. Thus the answer was a silk dress!

The endowment campaign was continued thought the years which followed, and received a substantial boost in 1890 when students of Henry Gaylord, a beloved teacher, contributed substantially in his name. The $50,000 became a reality, and the academy received a new lease on life.

The decade of the 1890's is remembered as the era of Charles J. Galpin, an exceptional teacher (1885-1891) and principal (1891-1900).

A glance at the offerings at this time indicated that students had a choice of eight majors: Classical, Latin, German, French, English, Music, Art and Reading, and those preparing for teaching might take the Normal Course, requiring two periods daily during the senior year, *"to inspire proper self-confidence, develop the discrimination, giving ease of expression, as well as to acquaint with approved methods of teaching certain subjects."* [17] Similarly, students preparing for business might add a year's instruction in commercial subjects. The major in Reading was designed for those who preferred or required individual study; and though its' curriculum was prescribed, the student progressed according to his ability and application.

The quality of the work at this time is suggested by the fact that graduates of the Classical and Latin courses were admitted on the principal's certificate without examination at Brown University, Colgate University, Hamilton College, Lafayette College, Rochester University, Union College and Vassar College.

Galpin, who was later an economist in the United States Department of Agriculture, saw the need for instruction in agriculture, and, despite opposition from those who believed that it was out of place in an Academy, obtained gifts to provide land and equipment, and an endowment of $10,000 to initiate it. The Mather School of Agriculture opened in 1901, one of the first of its kind at the secondary level in the nation. It preceded the Smith-Hughes Act by 16 years.

During this period the library and laboratories were enlarged and a literary journal, *the Academia*, was published monthly by two student associations, the Ladies *Sibylline Society* and the gentlemen's *Gladstone Debating Club*, and two scholarship funds; the *Frederick Williams* and the *Eunice E. Shepardson*, were providing tuition for deserving students.

Also, during Galpins' tenure, the campus was enlarged by the addition of Williams Park, a reforested track adjacent to th Academy grounds. Frederick Williams, an alumnus and member of the trustees, was one of the school's stoutest supporters for a half-century.

From the turn of the century, however, academies yielded to public high schools, Union Academy was increasingly on the defensive. In 1902 it was made tuition free by the acceptance of a school tax, thereby becoming quasi-public in character. The transition undoubtedly enabled it to live on through World War I and the advent of the automobile.

Then tragedy struck suddenly at 8:30 a.m. on January 29, 1923, when a fire was discovered in the main building which soon spread to the older stone structure as well. Local fire fighting equipment was inadequate, and bad roads delayed help from Adams a full hour, with the result that both buildings were totally destroyed including the furnishings of the agricultural, music and recently established home making departments. Lost also, were the students' books and the relics of earlier years. Only the contents of the principal's office, including the 2 copies of the *Book of Memory*, and the little Bell Tower were saved. [18]

The Board of Trustees met at noon, and by evening the Catholic Church was accepted as a temporary study hall, the Baptist Church, as a primary department, and a business block of C. M. Overton, for classrooms. Desks and chairs and other furnishings were borrowed from families in the community; a kitchen shower served to replenish the home making department; local craftsmen improvised partitions and blackboards, and farmers donated the use of horses and wagons. Four days after the fire classes were again in session.

But even such heroics could not restore the loss. The village was too small to form a taxable unit for a high school, and the only solution appeared to be a restoration of Union Academy.

Thus Union's friends were again called upon for help. At a mass meeting in February a decision was made to rebuild and initiate a drive for funds.

"We must have Old Union," the committee's appeal read. ***"The only way to do this for you and me, and every one of us is to give and give. You are not being asked to give for an intangible or far away cause. You are being asked to keep alive Old Union with her glorious traditions. Without your help these will go forever!"*** [19]

Sums as small as five dollars, it was emphasized, were acceptable; and as an additional incentive, every donor's name was recorded in the *Book of Memory*.

As before, enthusiastic villagers and farmers added their labor to the cause. Volunteers cleared the site, and by the time cold weather halted the work the foundation of the new structure was in place. Meanwhile, hundreds of gifts poured in, only two of which were as large as $5,000; and by the summer of 1924, $80,000 was subscribed — four-fifths of the goal. [20]

On October 4, 1924 hundreds assembled to witness the dedication of the new building, a rectangular, two-storied edifice of red tapestry brick with granite trimmings, and hear former Principal, C. J. Galpin, deliver the dedicatory address. Galpin eulogized rural society and the spirit of self-sacrifice and cooperation which produced Union Academy and had now restored it.

Then following June 24, 1925, the Academy staged a gala pageant as a belated celebration of its centennial. As evening settled upon Williams Park it was "brilliantly illuminated" by four one thousand watt lights which gave the setting the aspect of daylight, (and) a large Westinghouse amplifier, the first to be used in this section of the state, lent volume — so that the voices could be heard from all parts of the grounds. [21]

Before 2,500 observers a replica of Joshua Bradley returned to convince the pioneer families that they could support a school of higher learning. Calvin Clarke reappeared to pay off the mortgage, and the familiar roles of a host of other prominent figures, played in many instances by descendants, were reenacted. During the funeral cortège of Jack Barney the historic bell in the Bell Tower was tolled, and at its conclusion, lights were dimmed and the bugler sounded taps.

Affection for the Union Academy of the past and dedication to rebuild it, however, could not withstand the pressures of the twentieth century. The village and adjacent countryside required a centralized school for all of the children, and Union Academy could not provide this new system in education.

The result, when centralization came in 1931, proved to be an accommodation rather than a surrender. The Belleville Central School District was created, but the Union Academy Board of Trustees continued to owned the building and campus, the bus garage, a twenty-three acre experimental farm, a wood lot and a cemetery. The Belleville Central School, in turn, leased these facilities for one dollar per year. Meanwhile, income from the endowment (now close to $100,000) provided "extras," such as the electrification of the clock in the Bell Tower, the enrichment of the library, the enlargement and improvement of the campus, and of greater significance, providing scholarships for all to further an education.

In the 1980s talks returned for school consolations with Belleville and Henderson Central Schools resulting in a merger of the two school districts. Thus — there was established the new "Belleville Henderson Central School District".

This new district felt the need for ownership of the buildings and grounds. In October of 1982. The Union Academy Board Trustees endorsed the transfer and had president, Maurice L. Herron, endorsed deeds transferring the aforementioned buildings and grounds to the Belleville Henderson Central School District. The Bell Tower and Williams Park continues in possession of the Union Academy Board of Trustees.

Construction of a new educational facility was proposed for all classes and functions. It was built on the former Fair Grounds site at Belleville which is located between County Route 75 and NY State 289, just north of the village. The Henderson facility was later sold and converted into a senior housing center. The Union Academy facility was converted into the school bus garage for the district. Numerous classrooms were kept for storage of supplies and mechanics offices. The former bus garage on NY 289 was sold to house a local business.

In 2012 the Agricultural Department witnessed the construction of facilities to broaden instructional facilities for Agriculture plus other additional specialized in-

structional classrooms.

For more than eighty years now the Academy and Central School Districts relationship has been harmonious. Possibly the remnants of old Union Academy spirit and the presence of some of its sons and daughter on the Board of Education of the Union Academy Board and the Belleville and Henderson Central School Districts have helped to keep it this way.

REFERENCES:

1 "Old Union," by Norris M. Shepardson, *Catalogue of Union Academy*, 1875.
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CLOSING REMARKS

This booklet was researched, compiled and published by Maurice L. Herron, a UAB Trustee and graduate of Class of 1953 from Belleville Central School; former president of Union Academy Board of Trustees, from 1980 to 1996, and author of a booklet, 'Reflections From the Bell Tower,' an first person account as told by the Bell Tower noting what it has witnessed over the years since its' inception in 1845.

Copies of both publication have been presented to each Trustees at the October 12, 2011 and October 10, 2012 Annual Meetings and/or mailed to absent members of the Union Academy Board.