in the city of Buffalo; and when said building shall have been obtained or erected they shall have power to lease the same or parts thereof and to receive the rents and profits arising from said rents and apply the same as the board of trustees shall direct."

In the by-laws of the organization the objects are further stated to be to provide and regulate a suitable room or rooms for the Merchants' Exchange in the city of Buffalo; to inculcate just and equitable principles in trade; to establish and maintain uniformity in commercial usages; to acquire, preserve, and disseminate valuable business information; and to adjust controversies and misunderstandings between its members.

On the 2d of July, 1883, the following were elected trustees for the year ending the second Wednesday in January, 1884:—


On July 16th, at the first meeting, the following officers were elected:—

James N. Scatchard, President; Eric L. Hedstrom, Vice-President; Charles A. Sweet, Treasurer; William Thurstone, Secretary.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ELEVATORS OF BUFFALO.


It is a high honor to the city of Buffalo that on her wharves was erected the first steam storage and transfer elevator in the world. In the light of the intimate connection existing between her present extensive elevator system and her large lake and commercial interests, this fact becomes one of significant importance. When in the year 1841 the shipment of grain through Buffalo from the West had reached nearly 2,000,000 bushels, having quadrupled during the preceding five years, it began to be apparent to observing men who foresaw the immense grain producing capacity of the vast western territory, that even the heavy shipment
of 1841 would prove insignificant beside that of single years in the not distant future. It at the same time became apparent that greatly increased facilities would soon be required at Buffalo for the accommodation of the future grain shipments through the city. The 2,000,000 bushels handled in 1841 was not received and trans-shipped without many delays and other vexations, owing chiefly to the slow methods then employed of lifting grain from the holds of vessels in barrels with a tackle, weighing it with a hopper and scales swung over the hatchways of the craft and then carrying it into the warehouses on men's shoulders. Only ten to fifteen bushels were thus weighed at once and a day's work with a full complement of hands, did not exceed 1,800 to 2,000 bushels; even this small quantity could be handled only in fair weather, while in foul weather the harbor was often filled with numerous craft, awaiting a change in the skies.*

It was this condition of affairs relative to the storage and trans-shipment of grain in Buffalo that led Joseph Dart, who was then in business in the city, to determine in 1841 on attempting the use of steam power in the work by applying it to the well known elevator and conveyor principle invented by Oliver Evans more than fifty years previous to that time. Mr. Dart, in the face of numerous obstacles and predictions of failure, accordingly began the erection of an elevator building in the autumn of 1842, on the banks of Buffalo creek at its junction with the Evans ship canal, where now stands the imposing Bennett elevator.† Mr. Dart's experiment was a pronounced success from the outset. Within a month from the time his elevator was put in operation, one of the leading forwarders of the port who had previously predicted that forwarders would not pay the high charges demanded for steam elevating, offered Mr. Dart double his regular rates for accommodation in an emergency. The great saving in time that is now so well understood and appreciated, was apparent at once and the consequent benefits could not be disguised. As evidence of the economy in time, even when using Mr. Dart's modest establishment, he relates that the schooner John B.

*Mr. Levi Allen, the oldest lake captain now living in Buffalo, relates that when he commanded the vessel named the United States, in 1828-29, he brought down a cargo of wheat of 6,000 bushels; this was then considered a heavy cargo. It was unloaded by the old method and four or five days were required to do the work. The United States was one hundred and thirteen tons and was then looked upon as a large vessel.

† Mahlon Kingman, then a forwarding merchant of Buffalo, attempted a few years earlier than Mr. Dart inaugurated his enterprise to operate an elevator by horse power; but his plans were not successful. The venerable William Wells, who has been identified with the elevator interest since its first inception, was in the employ of Mr. Dart when he built the first elevator. Mr. Kingman told Mr. Wells and Mr. Dart that the steam elevator would not succeed and that "Irishmen's backs were the cheapest elevators." Mr. Lewis F. Allen and a Mr. Lord also built an elevator at Black Rock in 1840, which ran by water power; it had two marine legs, one of which was on the river side and one in the harbor; the machinery in this elevator was designed by Mr. Robert Dunbar, proprietor of the Eagle Iron works, and was made by Jewett & Root.
Skinner, loaded with 4,000 bushels of wheat, came into port early one afternoon soon after his elevator was put in operation, was discharged and received ballast of salt, leaving the same evening; she made her trip to Milan, Ohio, brought down a second cargo and discharged it and on her return to Milan she went out in company with vessels which came in with her on her first trip and which had just succeeded in getting their cargoes unloaded by the old methods.

Joseph Dart’s elevator when compared with many of the stately and capacious structures of to-day was an insignificant affair; its capacity was only 55,000 bushels, but it was doubled three years after it was built and another marine leg was added; it had a slip under it for boats. The machinery in this elevator was designed by Robert Dunbar, who has done similar work for a large proportion of the elevators of Buffalo; it was made by Jewett & Root. The original Dart Elevator was burned, a fate that has befallen many of its successors. The first vessel unloaded by Mr. Dart’s elevator, was the schooner Philadelphia, Captain Charles Rogers; she was loaded with 4,515 bushels of wheat consigned to H. M. Kinne and George Davis. The first cargo of corn unloaded by the elevator was from the South America, Captain A. Bradley, 3,145 bushels, June 22, 1843. Dart’s elevator unloaded during the first year of its existence 229,260 bushels of grain.

In the early years of the steam elevator, it was currently believed that about eight hundred bushels a day was all the grain that could be raised from a vessel and correctly weighed. Mr. Dart’s elevator was at first built with the buckets holding about two quarts each and set twenty-eight inches apart. With that arrangement he raised 1,000 bushels an hour. A little later he placed his buckets twenty-two inches apart, and still later sixteen inches, until he reached a capacity of 1,800 to 2,000 bushels an hour. But even these latter figures look insignificant when contrasted with those representing the transfer capacity of some of the great elevators of to-day. The interested visitor may now stand beside such a magnificent structure as the Connecting Terminal Railroad Elevator, for example, and see a vessel moored at the wharf loaded with 60,000 bushels of wheat. Her hatchways are opened, the “legs” of the two towers (one of which is movable for a distance of eighteen feet) are dropped upon the great mass of grain in the hold of the vessel, the machinery is started, and the buckets, holding twelve quarts each, dip with marvellous rapidity down into the wheat and rush on upward into the building, each carrying its load, and in from four to five hours the entire cargo is safely stored in the bins—a cargo which, by the old method of “Irishmen’s backs,” would have required three or four weeks to discharge. Into the capacious bins in such an elevator as the one mentioned, about 1,000,000 bushels of grain can be stored, and over

* Joseph Dart died September 27, 1879, aged eighty years.
19,000 bushels have been elevated into it in one hour, while at the same
time two or three canal boats and three trains of cars can be simultane-
ously loaded. These and accompanying figures show the magnitude
of the elevating business in Buffalo, without which the shipment eastward
of the immense crops of western grain, would be almost impossible.

The success of elevating grain by steam produced the usual effect
of active competition. The grain receipts at the Buffalo port increased
with astonishing rapidity, as the reader has already learned, from the
time when Joseph Dart unloaded the first vessel by steam. This made
busy times and profitable work for elevators and they rapidly multiplied;
faster, perhaps, than the immediate prospect warranted. As the number
of elevators increased their owners came into direct competition with
each other. As far as advantages to the forwarder were concerned,
one elevator owner could offer very little over another, for there is noth-
ing in the process of elevating grain that improves the cargo wherein
one owner might excel another. As a consequence, the elevator that
handled grain at the lowest rates, even by a very small sum on a large
shipment, could secure the business. This state of things could not con-
tinue; men engaged in the business saw that in spite of the fact that it
cost a large sum of money to build an elevator and that therefore their
number might not soon exceed the requirements of commerce, still a ruini-
ous competition was almost sure to be the final result. This led to the
formation in the year 1859 of the Western Elevating Company, an organi-
ization that has existed ever since that time, controlling and directing almost
the entire elevating interest of the port with a large measure of success, as
well as of satisfaction to elevator owners. The venerable Wm. Wells was
the first President of this company,* which office he held three years;
he was succeeded by P. B. Sternberg, and he by James C. Harrison.
In the year 1866, William H. Abell was given the office and a year later
A. G. Williams took it. He occupied the position two years when Mr.
Abell was again made President and has held the office ever since. The
harmonious existence of this company during so many years is the best
evidence that it has been beneficial to elevator owners.

The entire elevating interest of this port is now substantially in the
control of the Western Elevating Company, and such has been the case
during its existence; when new elevators have been erected, such
arrangements have been made with their owners as to induce them to
place their elevating property in the hands of the company. It is but

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* Mr. Wells is the oldest male resident of Buffalo who was born in the city and has ever since lived here. His father, Joseph Wells, settled in Buffalo in 1802. His first son born here was the late Aldrich Wells, who was the first white male child born in Buffalo; his birth occurred in August, 1802. William Wells was born in 1806. When he was a young man he was in the employ of Joseph Dart and aided in building the first steam elevator. Since that time he has been prominently identified with the business. Chandler J. Wells, who lives in Buffalo at this time, is another son of Joseph Wells and has also long been largely interested in the elevating business.
natural, perhaps, that such a policy, no matter how liberally and impartially carried out, should give rise to charges by those interested that the Western Elevating Company is a monopoly and imimical to shippers and the best interests of the commerce of the city. It has been argued that the storage and trans-shipment of the grain received at the port could be accomplished with a much smaller number of elevators than have been built and consequently at lower rates. This is, on the other hand, disputed, from the fact that on some occasions the receipts vary a million bushels within twenty-four hours and that breaks occur in the canal, preventing eastward shipments and demanding enormous storage capacity. This agitation and controversy* led to an attempt in the winter of 1882–83, to regulate and control the elevating business by law; the act that was introduced failed of passage in the Senate. As matter of history relative to the present profits of the elevating business, even when skillfully conducted by a powerful company, the following figures are pertinent:

According to the figures for the year 1882, the receipts of grain were about 52,000,000 bushels; for handling and storing this the elevators received $560,000, as follows:

- For elevating and five days' storage: $455,000
- For steam shoveling: 65,000
- For additional storage: 40,000

Total expenses: $500,000

Taxes, certified to by the comptroller: $81,500
Insurance: 60,000
Repairs, labor, fuel, etc.: 270,000
Paid for dredging: 5,000

Total expenses: $416,500

This statement leaves a balance of $143,500 with which to pay the interest on over $7,000,000 investment. There are other features of the elevating business that have contributed to this agitation and attempted legislation, but it would be out of place to discuss them here.

The item of $60,000 charged up to insurance in the above statement indicates that elevator owners are compelled to pay the insurance companies heavy rates. But if this is true, the losses to the companies by the burning of elevator buildings have been enormous.

*Much has been said and written against these Buffalo elevators, but the fact that they furnish such excellent facilities to carriers and shippers, insuring quick dispatch and freedom from costly delays, is an advantage that can be scarcely over-estimated. These elevators are owned by private individuals, excepting that the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad corporation owns two of the largest, and the New York & Western Railroad one. Several of these elevators have machinery attached, whereby 60,000 to 70,000 bushels of wet or damaged grain can be dried every twenty-four hours. —William Thurstone’s Pamphlet on the Commerce of Buffalo.
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The grain products of the great west are handled at Buffalo more largely than at any other point on the lakes. In 1880 the Western Elevating Company handled about 99,000,000 bushels; in 1881 about 49,000,000 bushels, and in 1882 50,934,922 bushels. Now, when it is remembered that the fickle winds may any day bring into the harbor a whole fleet of grain-laden craft, or a break in the canal to the eastward may detain large consignments in port for days together, then the inestimable usefulness and paramount necessity of the present vast elevating and storage system becomes apparent. Three and one-half million bushels of grain can be received and transferred in one day, by the combined elevators of Buffalo, at the present time.

The following statement gives the names of all of the elevators that have ever been built in Buffalo, the dates when they were erected, when burned and re-built, and their capacity, as far as it has been possible to obtain them:

**Dart Elevator**, capacity 50,000 bushels, built 1842-'43; enlarged 1846; first machinery put in by G. W. Schwartz; machinery put in the second leg by Jewett & Root; designed by Robert Dunbar; burned about 1862-'63.

**Evans**, built from old ware-houses in 1847; machinery put in by R. Dunbar; burned in 1863 and rebuilt, the machinery put in by B. Clark; again burned in 1864 and rebuilt, the machinery put in by John Stutz and made at the Eagle Iron Works; now owned by the C. W. Evans and the George W. Tiiff estate. Storage capacity, 300,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 97,000 bushels.

**Watson**, built in 1862; designed by R. Dunbar, and machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works; owned by Mrs. Watson and Dr. Cary. Storage capacity, 600,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 288,000.

**Merchant's (tower)** built in 1862; designed and machinery put in by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark; made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 30,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

**Reed**, built in 1847; burned and rebuilt in 1859-'62; machinery designed by R. Dunbar, and made by G. W. Tiiff & Co. Storage capacity, 200,000; transfer capacity, 96,000. Again burned August 25, 1874.

**Wilkeson**, built in 1861; burned September 9, 1862 and rebuilt in 1863; designed by R. Dunbar and machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark. Storage capacity, 280,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

**Bennett**, (formerly Dart) built in 1864; machinery designed by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark, made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by Brad. Clark. Storage capacity, 600,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

**Coburn**, built in 1861; burned September 9, 1862, and rebuilt as the **C. J. Wells**, in 1863; machinery designed and put in by R. Dunbar and
Brad. Clark, and made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 350,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

_Richmond_, built in 1863; designed by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark, and machinery put in by Clark; made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 280,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

_Hatch_, built in 1848; burned and rebuilt as the _Marine_. Storage capacity, 150,000 bushels.

_Lyon_, built in 1881; machinery made at Eagle Iron Works and put in by Mr. Hamble. Storage capacity, 100,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels. First built as the Main Street elevator and burned in 1865; rebuilt as the _Hazard_ in 1867.

_Excelsior_, designed and built by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark in 1862. Storage capacity, 30,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels; burned in 1876.

_Sturgeon_, built in 1862; burned July 30, 1866 and rebuilt in 1867; designed by R. Dunbar and machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark. Storage capacity, 300,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 100,000 bushels. _Fulton_ (tower) built at the same time by the same parties.

_Marine_, first built as the _Hatch_, by R. Dunbar; burned and afterwards rebuilt in 1881; designed by R. Dunbar, machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by Paul Kingston. Storage capacity, 150,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000.

_City Elevator_, first built by O. Bugbee in 1846, and machinery put in by R. Dunbar; burned November 8, 1859, and rebuilt; machinery by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark; again burned in 1863 and rebuilt; machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by B. Clark. Storage capacity, 600,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 130,000 bushels.

_Swiftsure_, first Kingman's, built about 1840; afterwards Sterling's, built in 1847; rebuilt in 1862; machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by G. Milsom. Storage capacity, 200,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

_Sternberg_ (A) first built by Smith Brothers; machinery put in by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark in 1847; burned and rebuilt in 1862, by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark. _Sternberg_ (B) built in 1861 by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark; machinery all made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 350,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels. Burned in 1883.

_Commercial_ built in 1879, machinery put in by John Stutz, and made at the Howard Iron Works; burned February 3, 1882.

_Wheeler_, (formerly Wells) built in 1861; machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works and put in by Brad. Clark. Storage capacity, 200,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 72,000 bushels.

_Niagara_ (A) built in 1867; designed by Mr. Johnston; machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works. _Niagara_ (B) built in 1881 on the site of
THE ELEVATORS OF BUFFALO.

the New York & Erie elevator, which was built in 1862; the machinery made by Tift & Co., and put in by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark. The machinery of Niagara (A) was put in by Brigham Clark and made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, (A) 800,000 bushels; of Niagara (B) 1,200,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 130,000 bushels each.

Tift, (formerly Plympton), designed by Mr. Johnston and built in 1868; machinery made by Tift & Co. Storage capacity, 350,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

Hollister, built in 1847; burned May 22, 1858; machinery put in by Abram Schwartz.

Erie Basin, machinery put in by Brad. Clark, made at Tift & Company's. Storage capacity, 200,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

Exchange, built in 1863; machinery put in by Brad. Clark, and made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 250,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

Erie, built in 1879; burned August 23, 1882, and rebuilt in 1883; machinery made at the Howard Iron Works. Storage capacity, 650,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 130,000 bushels.

Empire, built in 1861; machinery put in by Brad. Clark, and made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity was 200,000 bushels, and transfer capacity 96,000 bushels; since burned.

Ohio Basin, (Pig's-foot) built in 1863-64; designed by R. Dunbar, and machinery put in by John Stutz; built by G. W. Tift; burned in 1866-67.

Buffalo, built in 1846, by H. M. Kinne; storage capacity, 125,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels; burned about 1870.

Connecting Terminal Railroad Company Elevator, built in 1882; designed by R. Dunbar, and machinery put in by Brigham Clark; made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 1,000,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 250,000 bushels.

Union, machinery put in by Brad. Clark, and made at the Eagle Iron Works. Storage capacity, 90,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 70,000 bushels.

Coatsworth, (transfer) built in 1863; machinery made at the Eagle Iron Works, and put in by R. Dunbar and Brad. Clark. Storage capacity, 40,000 bushels; transfer capacity, 96,000 bushels.

In addition to these, there have been burned the Corn Dock elevator, September 17, 1865; the Grain Dock, in 1861; the Wadsworth, June 14, 1878; the Excelsior, (tower) and the Hazard elevator; the Kinne & Wadham, (Buffalo) and the Rust & Co.; the American Giant (floater) was destroyed by storm in 1882.

Besides the elevators mentioned in the foregoing list, there are now in operation here the Brown, storage capacity 250,000 bushels; the C.
J. Wells, capacity 350,000 bushels; the National Mills, capacity 100,000 bushels; the William Wells, (formerly Williams) capacity 200,000 bushels; and Schreck's, capacity 100,000 bushels. There are also the following named transfer towers: the Chicago, capacity 20,000 bushels; the Fulton, capacity 30,000 bushels; the Northwest, capacity 40,000 bushels; the Horton, and the Kellogg & McDougall, capacity 70,000 bushels. There are also the following named floaters: the Free Trade, Free Canal, Marquette, Ira Y. Munn, Niagara, and the Buffalo.

Prominent among the men who have been conspicuous in Buffalo in connection with the building of elevators, it will be proper to mention the names of H. M. Kinne, who built the third elevator in the harbor, (the Buffalo) and later built the first Wilkeson and the first Sturges; I. T. Hatch, who built the Hatch and the first Marine; George W. Tifft, builder of the New York & Eric and the Tifft; Dean Richmond, John Wilkeson, D. S. Bennett, William and C. J. Wells, and Captain Hazard.

CHAPTER VIII.

FINANCIAL INTERESTS OF BUFFALO.


In the Buffalo Gazette of November 23, 1815, appeared the announcement that Jonas Harrison, Ebenezer Walden, Augustus Porter, Charles Townsend, S. H. Salisbury, Jonas Williams, Samuel Tupper, Benjamin Caryll and Oliver Forward would apply to the Legislature at its next session, for an act of incorporation of a bank in the village of Buffalo. This bank was organized in July of the following year (1816) and named the Bank of Niagara; it was the first Bank in Erie county. The capital of the bank was fixed at what was then a very large sum—five hundred thousand dollars, but the amount to be paid in on each share of one hundred dollars, was only six dollars and twenty-five cents. The directors were from a wide range of country; they were—Augustus Porter, of Niagara Falls; James Brisbane, of Batavia; A. S. Clarke, of