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. Tiitt, builder of the New York & Eric and the Tiitt; 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 Carily 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
THE FIRST BANK IN BUFFALO.

Clarence; Jonas Williams and Benjamin Caryl, of Williamsville; Isaac Kibbe, of Hamburg; Martin Prendergast, of Chautauqua county; Samuel Russell and Chauncey Loomis (exact residence unknown), and Ebenezer F. Norton, Jonas Harrison, Ebenezer Walden and John G. Camp, of Buffalo. On Tuesday, July 16, 1816, the directors elected Isaac Kibbe president of the bank, and Isaac Q. Leake, cashier.

This may be said to have been the first financial movement of a public nature that occurred in the village of Buffalo. The Bank of Niagara was chartered for sixteen years; it continued to do a satisfactory business until July, 1818, at which time and during the following month, it suffered "a vexatious run;" but it withstood the onslaught. In January, 1819, Benjamin Ellicott, Jonas Williams and William Peacock, of the Board of Directors elected late in the preceding year, resigned and Charles Townsend, Oliver Forward and S. Wilkeson were elected to fill the vacancies. The Niagara Bank was located in a brick building fronting on Washington street, on the corner of North Division street.

In the Buffalo Patriot of March, 23, 1819, was printed an editorial in which the editor expressed himself as "happy to learn that the opposition [to the bank] which has so long existed, has ceased and the directors are adopting measures to resume business." Further reverses also attended the institution during that summer, as indicated by the following notice which appeared in the Emporium of August 12, 1826:

"Bank of Niagara.—Notwithstanding the reverses of fortune which this institution has had to encounter, we have ever been its friends. Under such circumstances it is a matter of gratulation to us that its bills are redeemed in specie, 'counted and well told.' We understand that the direction of the bank is to be exclusively in the hands of the president, C. Van Antwerp, late sheriff of Albany, and William Williams, cashier, (late teller of the bank.)"

The lack of support and confidence in the bank, as indicated by the above quotation, was followed by a more prosperous period. Mr. Van Antwerp acquired a majority of the stock, came on to Buffalo and so directed the affairs of the institution as to inspire confidence in it, and it continued in business until the expiration of its charter.

During the last half of the year 1826, the subject of a second bank in Buffalo was discussed and a commission was appointed to ascertain what amount of cash would be necessary to properly facilitate business. A meeting was held on the 16th of December to hear the report of this commission; this consideration of the subject was prompted by a growing desire on the part of the citizens of the place to have a branch of the U. S. Bank established in Buffalo. Nothing came of the agitation, however, until the latter part of 1829; on the 15th of September, of that year, a committee of the directors of the U. S. Bank made a report in favor of the project, which report was confirmed and the following Board of Directors appointed: William B. Rochester, Charles Townsend, R. B. Hea-
cock, Joseph Stocking, Albert H. Tracy, Sheldon Thompson, David Burt, Wm. A. Bird, Augustus Porter, David E. Evans, Wm. Peacock, James Wadsworth and Lyman A. Spalding. Wm. B. Rochester was made president of the bank. The first meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Monday, October 26, 1829, at which John R. Carpenter was appointed cashier, Joseph Salter, teller, and Charles Taintor, clerk. H. B. Potter was soon after added to the Board of Directors. The bank was on the northeast corner of South Division and Main streets.

On the 16th day of May, 1830, subscription books were opened for three days at the Eagle tavern, for the establishment of the Bank of Buffalo. James McKnight, David E. Evans, I. T. Hatch, Benjamin Rathbun, G H. Goodrich, S. G. Austin and Pierre A. Barker were named as the bank commissioners. The capital of the bank was fixed at $200,000, and $1,654,250 were subscribed. The distribution of the shares created some dissatisfaction and opposition, the result of which was the granting of an injunction by Judge Gardner, vice-Chancellor, stopping further proceedings in the matter. This injunction was removed by mutual consent, a few days before it was to have been argued, and the following Board of Directors of the new bank were elected:—

Guy H. Goodrich, Hiram Pratt, Benjamin Rathbun, Major A. Andrews, Joseph Stocking, George Burt, William Ketchum, Henry Hamilton, Henry Root, George B. Webster, Noah P. Sprague, Stephen G. Austin, and Russell Haywood. Guy H. Goodrich was elected president; Hiram Pratt, cashier, and S. G. Austin, teller. This bank began business on Tuesday, September 6, 1831.

In the disastrous financial revulsion and panic that swept the entire country in 1835-'36, Buffalo suffered as severely as most places similar in size and character, and much more so than many. The inhabitants had raised themselves and their city to a high financial and speculative altitude, and the fall was proportionately destructive in its effects; the city recovered from the horrors of the cholera epidemic of 1832, and from destructive fire, only to plunge into an abyss of financial ruin.

Early in the year 1836 the speculative fever which had been gaining headway during the two preceding years, rose to its highest pitch. The city had increased in population from 8,653 in 1830, to 12,661 in 1835, which fact aided in strengthening confidence in the minds of citizens, that the rapid advance in prices of real estate and the general inflation in all other directions, was founded upon substantial and permanent groundwork.

It has been estimated that during the period of speculation, more than 25,000 conveyances of land were made here, a large proportion of which were for city property; and that the entire amount involved in the transactions was nearly or quite $25,000,000; several single purchases amounting to $100,000 and some to $200,000. The buildings erected in the city during 1835 and 1836 were estimated to have cost $2,830,000.
That was a time when "to be sane was seeming madness, when to be mad was common sanity." The year 1836 dawned with prospects of brilliant promise, with dazzling visions of easily-acquired wealth and all the pleasures and blessings that are usually attributed to its influence; it closed under a cloud of almost universal bankruptcy. We need not here attempt to speak of the causes of the great revulsion; they have often been discussed and all persons of intelligence have their own opinion on the subject; it is sufficient to say that they had their origin in the very financial foundation of the government, as developed in the policy of President Jackson and in antagonism to that policy by the United States Bank and its connections. But whatever the cause of that era of splendid anticipations and lamentable disappointments, the tide swept over the land and Buffalo felt its effects to as great a degree, perhaps, as any other section of the country; its position at that time rendered such a result certain. But a few years before she had put on the garb of a city, and she was just beginning to realize the benefits flowing from her growing commerce, as stimulated by the construction of the Erie canal, while her growth during the preceding five years had been rapid. These facts, with the plenitude of an expanded currency, were sufficient to turn Buffalo into a hot-bed of wild speculation and extravagant anticipation. While the tide was rising, banks multiplied and their managers who had thus become able to control large resources in depreciated currency, engaged heavily in real estate and other speculations, bought liberally of luxuries and thus aided in turning the heads of their more conservative neighbors. Prices of lands and goods of all kinds were greatly advanced, money was plenty, easily got and as readily spent. Usurious rates of interest prevailed, money commanding from three to five per cent. a month, with an unusual demand at those figures. This apparent anomaly is explained by the fact that many persons were led into borrowing money at enormous rates of interest, in the hope that with the same large profits that were being made by their neighbors, might also be realized by them; thus almost the entire community was drawn into the whirlpool. It was a general carnival for the usurers; everybody wanted money and there was little thought of what was to be paid for its use. Broker's offices multiplied and many of the smaller fry conducted a profitable business on the street.

The crash that followed was precipitated by the issue of President Jackson's "specie circular," which required all payments for public lands, which had been eagerly located and absorbed throughout the west, to be made in specie. This circular seemed to suddenly awaken men to their senses; they began to realize that there were some things in the universe, (one of which was the solid ground) that could not be purchased at depreciated prices with a depreciated currency; their extravagant anticipations received a death blow, and the lofty, glittering castles, founded
only upon credit, fell to the ground. Banks contracted around the victims, a general suspension of specific payments followed and general panic prevailed everywhere. All through the year 1837, the general depreciation in value in everything that had a value, inaugurated an era of "hard times" from which recovery was a slow process.* As the tide of speculation reached its climax in the city of Buffalo, so the reaction here was greatest. Fortunes disappeared more rapidly than they had been acquired; mortgages were foreclosed on all sides, and land that had been eagerly sought at thirty or forty dollars per foot, would scarcely bring as much per acre. Land is known in the city, which sold early in 1835 at $2 a foot—about $500 an acre. It was sold and resold in parcels during the excitement, until twelve months after it sold at the rate of $10,000 an acre. In 1865 the same land was worth but $18 a foot.

One of the principal moving spirits in the rising tide of speculation in Buffalo in those days, one who for a brief period rode high on the wave of apparent prosperity, only to go down overwhelmed in his own ruin and disgrace, was Benjamin Rathbun. The following account of his career in this city is from Johnson's History of Erie county:—

"Having begun as a hotel-keeper previous to 1825, he had eminently succeeded in that vocation, and had made the name of 'Rathbun's Eagle' synonymous with comfort and good cheer. When the flush times came on he plunged into business and speculation with a boldness and an apparent success which made him the envy of thousands. He built the American hotel. He built and managed a grand store on the east side of Main street. He entered into contracts of every description and gave employment to thousands of workmen. He bought and sold land, not only in Buffalo, but throughout the whole section of the country. His ideas were of the grandest kind. He laid the foundation of an immense hotel and exchange opposite 'the churches,' which was designed to occupy the whole square between Main, North Division, South Division and Washington streets. The rotunda was to be two hundred and sixty feet high.

"Although prices began to drag in the summer of 1836, yet Rathbun still urged forward his gigantic projects. He bought land and laid out a grand city at Niagara Falls, and advertised an auction of lots to come off on the 2d of August, to extend as many days as might be necessary. On the appointed day a great number of bidders from all parts of the compass were present. During the forenoon the bidding was spirited and sales were numerous. At the dinner table Rathbun sat opposite Mr. G. R. Babcock, the junior member of the law firm of Potter & Babcock who, like almost everybody else, combined the land business with that of their regular profession.

"I observe, Mr. Babcock,' said Rathbun, 'that you made no bids this forenoon.'

* With the general crash, prices of Buffalo real estate fell from a figure which they did not again reach in thirty years—in some instances have not reached yet. In 1862 Mr. G. H. Salisbury compared the prices of fifty unimproved lots on thirty-seven different city streets, as they were sold in 1836, with their estimated value in the year first named, and found that the transfer price of 1836 was more than double the value of the same property in 1862.
"'No,' replied the young man, 'the lots were not in what I thought the most desirable locality.'

"'Ah, well,' replied the great speculator, 'come with me after dinner and show me some lots you would like to buy, and I will have them put up.'

Accordingly, after dinner the two strolled out over the ground of the future city, and Rathbun appeared to be in the best of spirits. He chatted, laughed, told stories, discoursed of his plans, and seemed to look forward to a future as prosperous as his past was supposed to have been. As they returned to the hotel, Mr. Babcock observed a carriage at the door. Some one called to Mr. Rathbun to hurry up. He did so, entered the carriage with one or two others and drove off toward Buffalo.

"Yet, while he was thus jesting with his companions and talking of his future achievements, he knew that his forgeries to a large amount had been discovered, that the country was flooded with his forged paper, and that the gentlemen with whom he rode off had got everything arranged for him to make an assignment of all his property. On his arrival at Buffalo he was arrested. The forgeries had been discovered in Philadelphia by David E. Evans, whose name Rathbun had forgend as endorser on notes to a large amount, which he had deposited as security in a bank in that city. Returning to Buffalo, Evans confronted Rathbun, who confessed that this was but a tithe of the spurious paper he had set afloat. An assignment was arranged, but in the mean time Rathbun allowed the sale at the Falls to take place, and kept up appearances to the very last.

"The arrest of Rathbun hastened, so far as Buffalo and vicinity was concerned, the financial catastrophe impending over the whole country. Work was stopped on all his numerous enterprises. The workmen clamored for their pay and almost broke out in mob violence. The assignees paid them off, though it required nearly all the assets of the estate. The millionaires of the day turned pale with consternation. If Rathbun had failed who was safe? His forgeries amounted to more than a million dollars. It was found that he had been committing them for several years, taking up the old notes as they became due, with money obtained by means of new notes, also forged.

"His brother, Col. Lyman Rathbun, and his nephew, Rathbun Allen, were implicated with him, and the latter turned State's evidence. He was the one who actually wrote the forged names, under the direction of his uncle."

Rathbun's trial opened at Batavia on the 29th of March, 1837; he was found guilty and sentenced to State prison for a term of five years. After serving his time he tried his old business of hotel keeping in different localities, the last of which was a boarding house in New York city, where he finally died at the age of about eighty years.

The panic did not come upon Buffalo entirely without warning. During the year 1835, or earlier, men of foresight and financial sagacity saw the approaching storm, and fortunate were those whose affairs were so well in hand that they were enabled to safely weather it. On the evening of May 3, 1837, a "panic meeting" was held in the city, of which John Lay was chairman. The meeting was addressed by Millard Fillmore and others and resolutions were adopted, but it does not
appear that any especial good resulted. Another meeting was held on Thursday, March 22, 1837, to get an expression of the citizens for or against a general banking law. A committee of eight was named, comprising P. A. Barker, S. C. Hawley, M. Fillmore, H. R. Smith, Ebenezer Johnson, E. VanBuren, Wm. Ketchum and Moses Baker, to draw a series of resolutions, and the subject was ably and thoroughly discussed; more extended banking facilities were demanded, as the only means for the future successful transaction of business.

The banks of Buffalo had, it appears, caught the general infection to some extent, and their methods and condition was brought to the notice of the State banking authorities. On Saturday, May 6, 1837, the banks were served with injunctions by the Chancellor, at the instance of the Bank Commissioners. This action was looked upon in Buffalo as an act of great injustice, as the banks were considered solvent. Partiality was charged against the Commissioners by many citizens, who anticipated still more serious impairment of credit in the city on account of the action of the Chancellor. To quiet this feeling the Commissioners publicly stated that the banks were not proceeded against on account of fears of their insolvency; the fact was, complaints had been made that the banks had violated their charters in their methods of business. In order to partially restore confidence, the Chancellor issued a circular stating that the notes of the Buffalo banks would be received at the offices of all collectors of State revenues.

The first movement that promised substantial relief in the crisis, was the resumption of specie payments in New York city, which was announced about the middle of May, 1837, and was followed by similar action in this city. In June the injunctions against the banks were removed. In 1838 the banking law was passed, which exerted a powerful influence in restoring confidence and facilitating business.

Following the tardy recovery from the financial crash described above, was inaugurated an era of prosperity for the city of Buffalo, which was not interrupted until 1857. During the twelve or fifteen years preceding that date, the commerce of the growing West poured its profitable business into the city, giving it a wide reputation for prospective growth and thus attracting to its population accessions which insured that growth. The surrounding country had reached a position of tolerable independence; the farming community had in most cases wholly or in large part paid for their lands; plank roads extended from Buffalo and its ready market, directly to the doors of the farms and over them were drawn the products which were turned into money in the city. But, as has so often been the case, this very tide of prosperity brought its own destruction; business of all kinds gradually became excessively overdone; railroads and other great undertakings were recklessly projected in all parts of the country; the banks in many States
inflated the currency beyond necessity or prudence, and another crash followed. The climax was reached in the fall of 1857 and was precipitated by the suspension of specie payments in New York. The money market had become more and more stringent and it is believed by those most competent to judge, that if the New York banks had postponed their suspension a little longer, the failures in Buffalo would have been much more numerous than they were. As it was, two or three banks succumbed and prices of real estate sank to a mere tithe of what they had been. In the language of one of our oldest bankers, “It seemed as if the whole town was not worth a dollar.”

But the crash of 1857, serious as it was, was less injurious by far, in its results, and recovery was much more rapid, than was the case in 1836-’7. In the second revulsion, speculation and inflation had not been carried to such an extent as before, and, as the people were generally possessed of more means, and were more firmly established in different branches of trade and manufactures, the city was better able to withstand the effects of the crisis; still, the “hard times” continued through 1858-’9, only to be overwhelmed in the excitement of approaching war.

Since that epoch, financial affairs in Buffalo do not need especial review. There was another dark period in 1873-’74, ending like its predecessors, in a general depreciation of values, failures and stringency in all financial affairs; but compared with the earlier crises referred to, it was unimportant. During the last ten years, nothing has occurred here to obstruct the machinery of business in any of its various details. A good deal of local uneasiness was occasioned in 1875, by the discovery of a loss to the city treasury of about $150,000, through the malfeasance of a city official; but aside from that, a general feeling of financial security has prevailed and prosperity has reigned.

Banking Interests.

The banking interest of Buffalo is at the present time in a condition that is eminently satisfactory to the business public of the city, giving ample facilities for the financial requirements of the community and inspiring confidence in its stability. The gross amount of capital invested in the banking houses of the city exceeds $3,000,000.

When the panic of 1836 swept over Buffalo, there were but two banks in existence here; these were the United States Branch Bank, established in 1829, of which William B. Rochester was president, and the Bank of Buffalo, which was established in 1831. The following is a brief sketch of the banks now in existence.

Bank of Attica.—Of the banks now doing business in Buffalo, the Bank of Attica is the oldest, dating from its first organization. It was established in 1836, in the village of Attica, N. Y., and was removed to Buffalo six years later, chiefly upon the recommendation of Mr. E. G.
Spaulding, who was the son-in-law of Mr. G. B. Rich, the proprietor of the bank at that time; the institution was first located in Spaulding's Exchange, where it remained until 1861. The bank was reorganized and incorporated under the banking laws of the State in 1850, with a capital of $160,000; this amount was necessarily increased June 1, 1856, to $200,000, and, to accommodate a greatly augmented business, was again increased October 24, 1856, to $250,000, at which time a surplus fund of $80,000 was created. The first officers of the bank after its incorporation of 1850, were:—Gaius B. Rich, President; Directors, G. B. Rich, Andrew J. Rich, John S. Ganson, Horace White, Hamilton White. The inspectors of this election were E. G. Spaulding, John S. Ganson, Alexander W. Harvey. G. B. Rich resigned the presidency of the bank in 1852, on account of ill health, and his son, the late A. J. Rich, succeeded to the office. The present officers of the bank are:—G. B. Rich, President; F. L. Danforth, Cashier; J. W. Smith, Assistant Cashier. Directors:—E. G. Spaulding, P. P. Pratt, George S. Hazard, F. L. Danforth and G. B. Rich. The latter named gentleman is grandson of the founder of the bank and was made its president in 1880.

The Manufacturers' and Traders' Bank.—This is the leading financial institution in Buffalo in point of capital, which is $900,000. The bank was incorporated under the State laws, on the 24th of March, 1856, and has remained a State bank since. It was opened for business on the 29th of August, 1856, with a capital of 200,000. The bank was organized with the especial purpose of giving the manufacturers and tradesmen of the city more extensive and liberal banking facilities than they had before enjoyed; its success from the outset was extraordinary and the demands made upon its capital were so heavy, that in 1859 it was increased to $300,000, which was again raised in 1870 to $500,000, making it the largest bank in the State outside of New York city. The average deposits in this bank amount to $2,400,545.31, and its earnings $193,808.57, while its entire resources are $3,503,333.88. This bank has never suspended specie payments. Its first president was Henry Martin, and its first vice-president was Pascal P. Pratt, both of whom have filled their offices ever since. The first officers were:—Henry Martin, President; Pascal P. Pratt, Vice-President; D. F. Frazell, Cashier. Directors:—G. R. Wilson, Sidney Shepard, M. P. Bush, Stephen V. R. Watson, P. P. Pratt, Bronson C. Rumsey, F. H. Root, Alexander H. Anderson, William H. Glenny, Wells D. Walbridge, George Truscott and John Wilkeson. Mr. Wilkeson resigned May 9, 1856, when Mr. Martin was elected in his place, and at the same time was made president. The bank was first located at No. 2 East Swan street, whence it was moved to 273 Main street, in December, 1856. In 1861 it removed to No. 22 West Seneca street. In April, 1880, it occupied the handsome iron building on the corner of Main and West Seneca streets. The bank holds its elegant
offices under a twenty year's lease. The present officers are:—
Henry Martin, President; Pascal P. Pratt, Vice-President; James
H. Madison, Cashier; Henry Conover, Assistant Cashier. The pres-
et Directors are as follows:—Henry Martin, Pascal P. Pratt, Sher-
man S. Jewett, Francis H. Root, William H. Gleny, Bronson C. Rum-
sey, Gibson T. Williams, Myron P. Bush, Richard Bulymore, John D.
Hill, George B. Hayes, Franklin D. Locke, James H. Madison.

The Marine Bank of Buffalo.—This bank was organized on the 8th
of July, 1850, by the following named gentlemen:—George Palmer and
James M. Ganson, of Buffalo, James S. Wadsworth, of Genesee, J. P.
Beckman, of Kinderhook, John Arnot, of Elmira, John Mayer and Con-
stant Cook, of Bath, and William P. Grimm, of Medina; these gen-
tlemen were the only stockholders and they were all made directors.
George Palmer was elected President and James M. Ganson, Cashier.
The bank has had six presidents—George Palmer, fourteen years; Ever-
ard Palmer, two years; Charles Ensign, one year; Jewett M. Richmond,
two years; Myron P. Bush, eleven years, and S. M. Clement, who was
elected December 31, 1879. In the year 1853 the capital was increased
from $170,000 to $255,000, and again in 1854 to $300,000; in 1859 it was
reduced to $200,000, which it has since remained. Previous to 1855 the
bank was located at 79 Main street; it was removed thence to 112 Main
street, and then to its present offices, 220 Main street. The present
officers are S. M. Clement, President; J. M. Richmond, Vice-President;
W. K. Allen, Cashier. Directors—S. M. Clement, J. M. Richmond,
Sherman S. Jewett, J. M. Hutchinson, Alonzo Richmond, G. T. Williams,
B. C. Rumsey, John W. Bush.

White's Bank of Buffalo.—This bank was organized on the 4th of
April, 1853, by George C. White and William Williams, who had con-
stituted the private banking firm of White & Williams for many years
previous. These two gentlemen were the first board of directors; Mr.
White was the first president of the bank and Mr. Williams the first
cashier. The capital stock paid in was $100,000, which was increased
to $200,000 on the 1st of March, 1854. The succeeding board of direc-
tors consisted of George C. White, William Williams, John M. Hutch-
inson, Fred K. Gridley, Mathew Johnson, Dr. Josiah Barnes and James
M. Smith. The successive presidents of this bank have been George C.
White, Rufus C. Palmer, John B. Griffin, James D. Sawyer, and James
D. Warren, the present incumbent. Following are the present officers
and directors:—James D. Warren, President; Rufus L. Howard, Vice-
President; Elisha T. Smith, Cashier. Directors—James D. Warren,
Stephen O. Barnum, Jacob F. Schoellkopf, Rufus L. Howard, Nelson K.
Hopkins, Elisha T. Smith, George P. Sawyer. The bank is located at
16 West Seneca street.
The Third National Bank.—This institution was organized February 14, 1865, with a cash capital of $250,000; it began business the following month. The first president was A. T. Blackmar, who was succeeded in 1869 by Abraham Altman and he on August 25, 1881, by the present incumbent, Charles A. Sweet. The first board of directors was composed of A. T. Blackmar, Robert G. Stewart, Thomas Chester, Abraham Altman, Henry Cone, Horace Utley, D. H. Winans, Nathan C. Simons, and Edson G. Shoemaker. The first cashier was Elisha T. Smith; he was succeeded September 1, 1876, by Samuel A. Provoost, Jr.; December 23, 1881, he was succeeded by the present incumbent. The present officials of the bank are as follows:—Charles A. Sweet, President; Jacob F. Schoellkopf, Vice-President; B. B. Hamilton, Cashier. Directors—Jacob F. Schoellkopf, Pascal P. Pratt, Emanuel Levi, L. L. Lewis, Jacob Dold, Charles G. Curtiss, Robert Keating, John D. Hill, Charles A. Sweet. The bank is located at 275 Main street.

The Farmers' and Mechanics' National Bank.—This is one of the oldest financial institutions in Buffalo. It was established in Batavia about 1840 and was removed to this city under a special act of the Legislature in 1852, at which time E. G. Spaulding was elected its president. He has filled the office ever since. John S. Ganson was the first president. Previous to May 28, 1864, this was a State bank; on that date it was organized as a National bank, the second in Buffalo. The first board of trustees were E. G. Spaulding, Rufus L. King, John S. Ganson, William R. Gwinn, H. Pompey. The capital of the bank was $100,000, which has since been increased to $200,000. Cornelius R. Ganson was the first cashier of the bank; he was succeeded by Edward Pierson when the institution was made a National bank, in 1864; at that time the trustees were E. G. Spaulding, Samuel F. Pratt, Edward Pierson, S. K. Worthington, Philip Dorschheimer, H. M. Kinne. H. G. Nolton was assistant cashier, and was elected cashier January 10, 1865. On the 8th of January, 1867, Franklin Sidway was made assistant cashier; S. F. Pratt was elected vice-president on the 12th of January, 1869. January 14, 1873, Mr. Sidway was elected vice-president, and S. S. Spaulding was made assistant cashier. June 26, 1873, H. G. Nolton tendered his resignation as cashier, to take effect July 1st. January 13, 1874, at the annual election, E. G. Spaulding was elected president; Franklin Sidway, cashier; S. S. Spaulding, assistant cashier. January 12, 1875, E. R. Spaulding was added to the bank officials as assistant cashier. These gentlemen last named formed the board of directors of the bank and have remained as such until the present time. The institution is located in Spaulding's Exchange; it does a heavy business and enjoys the confidence of the business community.

The Merchants' Bank of Buffalo.—This bank was incorporated May 3, 1881, and opened for business on the 9th of the same month, with a cap-
The Banks of Buffalo.

Capital of $300,000. The first officers were—Alfred P. Wright, President; James R. Smith, Vice-President; J. W. Bridgman, Cashier; Henry S. Sprague, Assistant Cashier. Directors—Alfred P. Wright, James R. Smith, John B. Manning, Charles W. McCune, Washington Bullard, J. F. Schoellkopf, Robert B. Adam, William H. Walker, William H. Gratwick, J. Firmenich and J. R. Stewart. This Board still remains, with the exception of Messrs. Firmenich, Stewart and Bullard, who are replaced by George W. Miller and George Urban, Jr. W. H. D. Barr is now Assistant Cashier. This is a State bank; it made its first dividend of four per cent. in January, 1883, and another of the same per cent. in July.

Bank of Commerce.—This institution was incorporated under the State laws of 1873, beginning business July 28th the same year, with a capital of $200,000. The first officers of this bank were—R. G. Stewart, President; Thomas Thornton, Vice-President; H. G. Nolton, Cashier. Directors—George H. Preston, E. T. Evans, N. C. Scoville, James R. Smith, John White, John M. Gilbert and H. G. Nolton. In 1875, Thomas Thornton was elected President; H. G. Nolton, Vice-President; and E. W. Hayes, Cashier. The present Board of Directors are—Thomas Thornton, James R. Smith, W. H. Gratwick, E. L. Hedstrom, N. C. Scoville, John White, H. G. Nolton, E. R. Jewett, E. W. Hayes. This bank has accumulated a large surplus fund and paid dividends of ten per cent. per annum since its organization. It is located at 188 Main street.

The Bank of Buffalo.—This institution was incorporated January 25, 1873, and opened for business on the 26th of May following; its capital was $300,000; it has since remained the same. The first officers were—Sherman S. Jewett, President; George B. Gates, Vice-President; Albert L. Bennett, Cashier. The first Board of Directors comprised Sherman S. Jewett, Francis H. Root, Gibson T. Williams, George B. Gates, P. P. Pratt, Sherman S. Rogers and Edward Stevenson. The present officers of the bank are Sherman S. Jewett, President; Josiah Jewett, Vice-President; William C. Cornwell, Cashier. The Directors remain the same as above given, except the substitution of Josiah Jewett for George B. Gates. The bank is located at 236 and 238 Main street.

The German Bank of Buffalo.—This bank was organized under the State laws in May, 1871, with a capital of $100,000. The incorporators of the bank were F. Augustus Georger, Philip Becker, J. F. Schoellkopf, Jacob Dold, Philip Houck, Rudolph Hoffeld and Francis Brunck. The first cashier was S. W. Warren. The only changes that have taken place in this management are the withdrawal of Philip Becker and Francis Brunck, who were succeeded by John Hauenstein and Albert Ziegele. The present bank officers are F. Augustus Georger, President; Philip Houck, Vice-President; Eugene A. Georger, Cashier. The bank occupies commodious offices in the German Insurance Building, corner of Main and Lafayette streets.
The German American Bank.—This institution was organized May 10, 1882, and began business at 424 Main street, corner of Court, on the 22d of the same month, with a capital of $100,000, which is fully paid in. Its business has rapidly increased and now reaches half a million dollars. The officers of the bank are Henry Hellriegel, President; Alexander Martin, Vice-President; Henry W. Burt, Cashier. Directors—Henry Hellriegel, Charles Greiner, John P. Diehl, Alexander Martin, L. L. Lewis, John Schaefer, Francis Handel, Joseph Timmerman, Henry Breitweiser.

Erie County Savings Bank.—This institution was incorporated April 10, 1854, and opened for business September 1, of the same year. It then occupied a small part of a store owned by William C. White, on the corner of North Division and Main streets. The first officers of the bank were William A. Bird, President; Gibson T. Williams, Vice-President; Stephen V. R. Watson, Second Vice-President; Cyrus T. Lee, Secretary and Treasurer. Mr. Bird held the office of president up to the time of his death in August, 1878, at which time James C. Harrison, (then vice-president) was made president; John Allen, Jr., was at the same time made first vice-president and Dexter P. Rumsey, second vice-president. The original trustees were William A. Bird, Gibson T. Williams, Stephen V. R. Watson, Henry Roop, Stephen W. Howell, Richard Bullymore, Jacob Kretzner, Michael Danner, William C. Sherwood, William Wilkeson, Augustus George, James Wadsworth, Noah P. Sprague, C. J. Wells, Myron P. Bush, James C. Harrison, Noah H. Gardner, William Fiske, John R. Evans, Bradford A. Manchester. In June, 1857, the bank removed to the corner of Main and Erie streets, in what was known as the old Buffalo banking building; at that time the deposits amounted to about $600,000. In 1865 the site for a new building was secured on the corner of Court and Main streets, and the handsome and substantial stone structure, the first floor of which the bank now occupies, was erected; it was finished and occupied August 1, 1867. The amount of deposits on the first of April, 1883, was $11,165,166.17. The present officers and trustees are as follows:—Gibson T. Williams, President; John Allen, Jr., Vice-President; Cyrus P. Lee, Secretary and Treasurer. Trustees—John Allen, Jr., Dexter P. Rumsey, Gibson T. Williams, William C. Sherwood, Alexander Brush, Henry M. Kent, George W. Townsend, F. Augustus George, Ethan H. Howard, George Howard, Cyrus P. Lee, Alonzo Richmond, David R. Morse, Alfred P. Wright.

The Buffalo Savings Bank.—This bank was chartered May 9, 1846 and began business on the 6th of July of the same year, in the stone building on the corner of Main and Erie streets. Following are the names of its first officers and trustees:—Charles Townsend, President; Francis J. Handel, Vice-President; Nathan K. Hall, Attorney; Robert Pomeroy, Secretary. Trustees—Albert H. Tracy, Millard Fillmore,
Yours Truly

Gibson P. Williams
The Banks of Buffalo.

John L. Kimberly, Noah H. Gardner, Francis J. Handel, Frederick Dellenbaugh, Jacob Seibold, Elijah D. Efner, Russell H. Heywood, Warren Bryant, Daniel Bowen, Isaac Sherman, William Tweedy, Hiram P. Thayer, Benjamin Caryl, Charles Townsend, Francis C. Brunck, and Ernst G. Grey. In July, 1851, a lot twenty-three feet front on Main street, thirty-eight feet south of Court, was purchased and a building erected for the bank; the structure was destroyed by fire in January, 1865, when the lot on the corner of Washington and Lafayette streets was purchased and the building now occupied by the bank erected; it was completed about May 1st, 1867. The succession of presidents of this bank since the death of Charles Townsend, in September, 1847, is as follows:—Russell H. Heywood, Albert H. Tracy, Elijah D. Efner, Edward L. Stevenson, E. G. Grey, Warren Bryant. A resolution was passed by the Board of Trustees in February, 1854, limiting accounts in the bank to $1,000; in July, 1868, this amount was increased to $3,000. The amount of deposits on the 1st of April, 1883, was $8,290,184.94. The present officers and trustees are as follows:—Warren Bryant, President; E. G. Grey, First Vice-President; E. L. Stevenson, Second Vice-President; John U. Wayland, Secretary; C. D. Marshall, Attorney. Trustees—Warren Bryant, E. L. Stevenson, J. W. A. Meyer, C. Rodenback, O. H. Marshall, Edward Bennett, John L. Kimberly, Jr., Ernst G. Grey, Silas Kingsley, John D. Hill, Francis H. Root, Henry Hellriegel, John P. Diehl, William H. Glenny, Jr., Edward P. Beals.

The Western Savings Bank, of Buffalo.—This institution was incorporated on the 4th of July, 1851, with the following officers and trustees:—Dean Richmond, President; George W. Tifft, First Vice-President; James Hollister, Second Vice-President; Heman B. Potter, Attorney. Trustees:—Geo. Palmer, Seth C. Hawley, Elijah Ford, Henry K. Smith, Rufus C. Palmer, John R. Lee, Lucius H. Pratt, Israel T. Hatch, Geo. C. White, Wm. O. Brown, Philip Beyer, F. H. Tows, L. L. Hodges, Henry Martin, Gaius B. Rich, Geo. W. Tifft, Nelson K. Hopkins; James L. Barton, Secretary and Treasurer. In 1872, the building now occupied by the bank on the corner of Main and Court streets was erected at a cost of $120,000; it is owned by the bank. The amount of deposits on the 1st of April, 1883, was $2,899,690.20. Following are the names of the present officers and trustees:—Joel Wheeler, President; Geo. Urban, First Vice-President; Philip Houck, Second Vice-President; W. H. Beyer, Secretary and Treasurer. Trustees:—Philip Beyer, Geo. Urban, Philip Houck, J. Weppner, Jacob Scheu, Gerhard Lang, N. Ottenot, L. L. Hodges, H. Stillman, Geo. Fisher, M. Mesmer, H. C. Persch, W. C. Bryant, Joel Wheeler, Wm. H. Abell.

The National Savings Bank.—This bank was organized in 1867, with the following officials:—Stephen G. Austin, President; Daniel C. Beard, Vice-President; Edward S. Dann, Secretary and Treasurer;

The Buffalo Loan, Trust and Safe Deposit Company.—This institution was chartered May 12, 1881, and began active business January 14, 1883. Its paid up capital is $137,000, which it has authority to increase to $2,000,000. It is the only trust company in the city, and has on deposit $318,000. The officers are: R. V. Pierce, President; Geo. Urban, Jr., First Vice-President; James H. DeGraff, Second Vice-President; C. E. Clark, Secretary. Trustees:—Ray V. Pierce, George Urban, Jr., James H. DeGraff, George H. VanVleck, John A. Miller, Thomas Lothrop, Daniel E. Bailey, W. C. Russell, John Esser, James A. Roberts, H. G. Nolton, Joseph Timmerman, August Beck, Jacob Uebelhoer, Louis Pfeiffer, Philip Bachert, Adam J. Benzing.

Since the financial revulsion of 1836, the following list of banking institutions were established in Buffalo, but closed their business after periods varying from one to ten years, about in the order in which they are given:—

Merchants' Exchange Bank, the United States Bank, Erie County Bank of Buffalo, The Bank of America, Bank of Commerce (1839), Mechanics' Bank of Buffalo, The Western Agency Bank, the Merchants' Bank, Farmers' and Drovers' Bank, Commercial Bank of Buffalo, The State Bank of New York, the Union Bank, the Phoenix Bank, The Patchen Bank, Oliver Lee & Co.'s Bank, The Exchange Bank of Buffalo, The Pratt Bank, The Bank of Lake Erie, Walter Joy's Bank of Buffalo, the Hollister Bank, the Merchants' Bank of Erie County, the Buffalo City Bank, the Sacketts Harbor Bank, the Buffalo Trust Company, the Queen City Bank, the New York and Erie Bank, the International Bank, the Clinton Bank, the Emigrant Savings Bank, E. S. Rich's Bank of
ADVANTAGES OF BUFFALO AS A MANUFACTURING CENTER.

Exchange, the Mechanics' Savings Bank of Buffalo, the Security Savings Bank, the City Bank of Buffalo, the Commercial Bank of Buffalo, the First National Bank.

SAVING AND AID ASSOCIATIONS.

About the year 1866 was inaugurated in Buffalo what are known as saving and aid associations. These have rapidly multiplied, until there are now about sixty of them in the city; they are all based on a similar plan, though differing more or less in details. Their principal objects are to assist the poorer class of people in securing homes; this is accomplished by the members paying into the associations a small weekly sum, thus accumulating a fund which is devoted to the purchase of real estate, the erection of buildings and making other improvements; or to aid the members, by the use of the accumulations, in the purchase of homes, and further, to accumulate a fund to be returned to the members who do not desire to make real estate investments. Many of these associations have been converted into Land Associations, of which there are now eight in the city, owning at least three hundred acres of land within the city limits; their general plans and purposes are similar to those of the aid associations. Nearly all of these associations are made up of Germans, and they have accomplished much good.

CHAPTER IX.

MANUFACTURING AND WHOLESALE INTERESTS OF BUFFALO.


As a location for the rapid and profitable development of general manufacturing interests, the city of Buffalo possesses advantages vastly superior to most cities. Previous to about the year 1835, or less than thirty years ago, Buffalo was essentially a maritime city; the railroad system westward had not then reached a position where it could materially affect the lake commerce, and almost all the products of the growing West were wafted down the waters of the great inland seas and, of necessity, were emptied directly upon the wharves of Buffalo,