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THE TARBOX HOUSE

Believed to be the only six-sided house in all of Western New York, the Tarbox-Baun house is located on the Lake Shore Road in the Township of Yates. It was built by Godfrey Tarbox (1791-1874) who took up land in Yates from the Holland Land Company in 1830. The house is in the style of Creek Revival with such prominent and typical features as wide corner pilasters and frieze windows in the upper story. Multi-sided houses of this vintage were the influence of the American architect Orson Fowler. His theory of design was that more inside space could be had with less outside exposure by using basic shapes such as hexagons and octogons as opposed to irregular forms. Thereby, a six-sided house would conceivably be easier to heat with less exterior exposure cound up-keep. Not a bad philosophy at all, even for contemporary times. And so what if you have a 3-cornered dining room! The Tarbox house originally had on the ground floor three six-sided rooms with closets or cupboards occupying the left-over triangles where partitions came together. Each of the six exterior sides are about 22 feet in length.

It is said that Godfrey Tarbox was an exceptional mathematician and a student of astronomy. This perhaps, explains why the house originally had a large six-sided cupola where Godfrey could have used his telescope.

This house is just one of many local historic sites which have recently been written into a book authored by Miss Irene M. Gibson and published by the Orleans Chapter DAR and the Orleans County Historical Association. Entitled Historic Sites in Orleans County, New York it is a must in every home library for individuals interested in local folklore, architecture or genealogy. Mr. Thomas D'Andrea of Gaines Basin Road, Albion is clerk of sales promotion and the books are also on sale at three county libraries including Swan, Lee-Whedon and Holley Community.