

John Parsons 1809-1899

3/28/03

John Parsons was born in New York City to an English sea captain and a mother of Scotch heritage. In early life he was trained as a coppersmith. In 1830 he moved to Bath, N.Y., and in 1832 married Elizabeth Cogswell of Dansville, N.Y.

In late March of that same year, the newly wed couple moved to Medina where they spent the rest of their lives. Here he followed the trade of a tinsmith with his shop, which he purchased in 1849, being located on Main Street. In 1869 a bad fire destroyed several buildings including his. People in the village raised \$700 as a result to help in recovering from this loss. In 1839 he and his wife built their own home at 218 Pearl St. where he lived for more than 60 years.

Mr. Parsons had been a Presbyterian but in later life became a member of the



Methodist church in Medina. He was an advocate for the temperance movement

and in October 1867 formed "The Children's and Youth's Union Temperance Society of Medina." In 1889 he gave up his leadership with his record showing 755 young people having signed an oath to refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages.

Parsons was among the founding members of the first fire company formed in Medina in 1832, serving as foreman. He and his wife had two children, John C, who died during the Civil War and Mary, who lived at the family home for many years. Mrs. Parsons died in 1888.

In 1858 and 1859, Parsons gave two lectures on the early history of Medina. These are preserved in his own handwriting and may be seen on microfilm at the Lee-Whedon Library. They are the best portrayal of life as it was in the early days of Medina. Both handwritten lectures go into great detail about places of business, events, people and daily life.