



## The Medina Manufacturing Co.

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**A**lbert L. Swett, who was first engaged as a shipping clerk with the Bignall Manufacturing Co., started his own foundry business in 1873. In 1880, he formed a partnership with William H. Samson and built at that time a foundry on the east side of Glenwood Avenue (then called Rock Street). This was known as the Medina Manufacturing Co., but was commonly referred to as Samson and Swett.

The oval cut which accompanies this story is taken from the company's 1887 catalogue. It shows the large complex of buildings and yard surrounding this foundry.

We note in this picture electrical wires suspended from a tower at far left to the front building. It seems the power for this operation was obtained from a turbine water wheel installed below a dam on Oak Orchard Creek east of the plant. This was the start of what later developed into the A.L. Swett Electric Light and Power Co.

At the time, the raw materials such as foundry sand and pig iron were shipped in by boat on the Erie Canal. The Medina Manufacturing Co. produced barrel headers, blacksmith's drills, barn door hangers/hooks and pulls, hitching weights, chain pumps, mauls, tire benders, wagon shoes, tackle blocks and soil pipe to mention a few items.

As to prices, here are some examples. The double sheave block sold for \$1.80. Barn door hangers with a 4-inch roller were 90 cents a pair. The barrel header or screw press was advertised for \$25.00 per dozen.

In 1890, Mr. Samson withdrew from the company and it then became known as the A.L. Swett Iron Works.

In 1898, Mr. Swett sold his foundry interests on the east side of Glenwood Avenue to the Central Foundry Co. of New York City. He then proceeded to construct a new foundry and machine shop building across the street under the name A.L. Swett Iron Works. This

continued in business until 1961, when it was purchased by the Ontario Corp. It operated until 1965.

The first foundry operation in Medina was established in 1840 by Simeon Bathgate and sons.

Other foundries that were later established in Medina include: the Bignall Manufacturing Co., which began in 1850; Ives and Son, which made iron products and papier-mache; the Medina Foundry, organized by Michael J. Slack and Orin Butts in 1900; and the Medina Iron and Brass Co., established by Carl Breed and Frank Ernst Sr.

Indeed, Medina once had a number of flourishing foundry businesses during the 19th century.

Albion also had the Hiram Curtis Foundry, which made agricultural equipment, and a foundry operated by Norman Bedell, which made stoves. The Waterport Agricultural Works produced plows, cultivators and other cast farm implements.