

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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Lyndonville was first called Lyndon, taking its name from Lyndon, Vermont. The suffix "ville" was added when the village applied for a post office, and authorities wanted to distinguish Lyndon from Linden in Genesee County.

Around 1550 A.D. there was an Indian village a mile west of Shelby Center, now known as the Shelby Fort. A State Historic Marker once located there read: "Neuter Fort Occupied in 14th Century by Neuter Indians. Only Double Palisaded Fort in New York State. Destroyed by Iroquois 1650". This site has been dug by relic hunters since the 1860's. A quantity of human bones used to be found there proving the existence of cannibalism. Human flesh was probably eaten in the belief that qualities such as strength or bravery would be passed on to the recipient. Studies of remains and burials strongly suggest many had been victims, killed deliberately by the Shelby Fort inhabitants.

In February 1934 temperatures plummeted to an all time low of -40 degrees in Orleans County. As a result, many, if not most of the apple orchards were ruined in the area because of the severe cold which caused the trees to literally explode.

The Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad Line (Hojack) opened in 1876 through the Towns of Kendall, Carlton and Yates. The first railroad trestle at Waterport was built of light weight iron trusses and planks. The first train to cross that trestle was driven by Mrs. John Ross who said the railroad construction crew could board at her nearby house if they would let her drive the first engine across the new bridge. The present abandoned railroad trestle there was erected in the 1890's of steel girders. The photo included with this article shows the original railroad trestle over the Oak Orchard River.

On October 9, 1825 a small sloop with fifty-three Norwegian immigrants from Stavanger, Norway arrived in New York Harbor. They were bound for the northeastern part of Orleans County where land had been bought for them by Cleng Peerson, their agent. Upon arriving in what is now Kendall, they cleared land and began to establish farms in the area known today as Norway Road. This was the first Norwegian settlement in the United States, but in 1833 Peerson set out to seek more favorable lands in Illinois taking his followers with him.

In 1971 when the Village of Medina sought to annex forty-one acres of land, Mrs. Martha Goetsch owned about fourteen acres in the Town of Shelby, which she had consented to sell for the development of a mobile home park. The other property included in the annexation was owned by non-residents of Shelby. According to state law, a majority of the present property owners within the area must give their approval for such a transfer. Because of this legal stipulation, it was necessary for the Town of Shelby to hold a special referendum with four election inspectors just in order for Mrs. Goetsch to vote. Her vote was "yes" and the mobile home park became a reality. It's interesting how often we hear it said "One vote doesn't count". In this case, it surely did.