

Joshua Forman, founder of the city of Syracuse, was born at Pleasant Valley, Dutchess co., N.Y., Sept. 6, 1777, son of Joseph and Hannah Forman. Young Joshua having displayed a strong tendency to study, received a good preliminary education, and in 1793, entered Union College, in Schenectady, where he was graduated with honor. On leaving college he began to study law in an office in Poughkeepsie for two years, when he established himself in the city of New York, and completed his law studies in the office of Samuel Miles Hopkins. Soon after his admission to the bar, he was married to Margaret, daughter of Boyd Alexander, M.P. for Glasgow, Scotland. In the year 1800 Mr. Forman settled in Onondaga Hollow, where he began the practice of law, in which he was uniformly successful, becoming popular throughout the county. In 1807 Mr. Forman was elected to the legislature, where he became prominent as the projector of the Erie Canal. In 1813 he was appointed judge of the Onondaga county common pleas court, a position which he held, with dignity and credit to himself for the next ten years. In the meantime he had, in 1807, erected the first grist-mill on the Oswego river, this resulting in facilitating the settlement of that section of the state. In 1808 he founded the celebrated Plaster Co. at Camillus.. In 1821 Judge Forman succeeded in obtaining the passage of a law, in pursuance of which Onondaga Lake was lowered about two feet, by which means the marshes in the neighborhood were drained, and the surrounding lands improved. In 1822 he began salt manufacture in which he introduced the making of solar salt. Judge Forman was practically the founder of Syracuse. In 1818 he laid out the city of Syracuse, and removed there in the following year, remaining until he had laid the foundation for a flourishing town. In 1826 he removed to a point near New Brunswick, N.J., where he opened and worked a copper mine. Soon after he was summoned by Gov. Martin Van Buren to Albany, to draw up the safety fund act, which had become necessary, for the purpose of regulating the banking system of the state, at this time exceedingly defective. In 1829, in company with others, Judge Forman bought from the state of North Carolina land in Rutherfordton, N.C., and in adjoining counties, and took up his residence at the village of Rutherfordton, where he made great improvements. He died at this village, Aug. 4, 1848, his remains being removed to Oakwood cemetery, Syracuse.

inauguration of Gov. McIntire, Ex-Gov. Waite continued to reside in Denver, and is now engaged in lecturing. He was married in 1851, to Frances E., daughter of Robert Russell, Russelburg, Pa. They had three children. After the death of his wife, which occurred Nov. 7, 1880, he was married, Jan. 8, 1885, to her cousin, Mrs. Celia Maltby, and they have one son, Frank H. Waite.

McINTIRE, Albert Washington, sixteenth governor of Colorado (1895—), was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., Jan. 15, 1853, son of Joseph Philips and Isabella A. (Wills) McIntire. His grandfather, Thomas McIntire, was born in Wilmington, Del., and with his brothers was engaged in the transportation business in Maryland. Their property was destroyed at the time the British burned Washington, while he was serving as an officer of volunteers during the war of 1812. His maternal grandfather was states attorney in Pennsylvania. Both his paternal great-grandfathers fought as patriots in the war of the American revolution. His first American paternal ancestor came from Ayreshire, Scotland, about 1745. His maternal ancestors came from Belfast, Ireland, in 1790, and from England earlier. He prepared for college at Newell's Institute in Pittsburgh, entered Yale in 1869, was graduated in 1873 in the academic department,

and in the law school in 1875, being admitted to the bar the same year. He practiced law in Pittsburgh until December, 1876, when he removed to Denver, Col. In 1880 he located in San Luis Valley, where he established a stock ranch, which now comprises 4,000 acres of rich land, stocked with a large herd of high-grade cattle. In 1883 he was unanimously elected county judge of Conejos county, being named by both the Democratic and Republican parties, and held the position for three years. He refused re-election, and continued in the practice of law until 1891, when he was appointed by Gov. Routt, judge of the twelfth judicial district. In September, 1894, he was named by acclamation as the Republican candidate for governor of Colorado, and was elected by 19,708 plurality, over Gov. Waite. He was married July 16, 1873, to Florence, daughter of William Sydney Johnson of New York city. Gov. McIntire is an accomplished linguist, reading or speaking German, Spanish, French, Latin, and Greek. His studies have also been in the direction of science, and his library contains the latest standard scientific works.

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GOODRICH, Alfred Bailey, Protestant Episcopal clergyman, was born at Rocky Hill, Hartford co., Conn., March 22, 1828. He was educated at Trinity College, Hartford, and Berkeley Divinity School, and was ordained deacon in 1853 by Bishop Brownell, of Connecticut, and priest in 1854 by Bishop Williams. He officiated for a few months at St. Peter's Church, Plymouth, Conn., and for five years at Millville, Mass. While there he founded the Society for the Increase of the Ministry, a general society of the Episcopal church for the education of young men for the ministry. In August, 1859, he became rector of Calvary Church, Utica, N. Y., and has held that position ever since. During his rectorship the parish has grown steadily in membership and prosperity, and is at present one of the strongest churches in the city. In 1867 Hamilton College made him D. D. He was secretary of the undivided diocese of western New York two years, and has held the same office in the diocese of central New York since its organization in 1868. He is a member of its standing committee. For ten years he was president of the second missionary district of the same diocese, and was one of its representatives in the centennial convention of the Episcopal church in Philadelphia, 1883. He is a member of the federate council of the five dioceses of New York state, and of the general missionary council of the Episcopal church. He is author of a service and tune book for Sunday-schools, and, in connection with Dr. Gilbert, organist of Trinity Chapel, New York, of a hymnal for choirs and congregations, both extensively used. He has been a contributor to many periodicals and religious publications. On Dec. 27, 1847, he married Elizabeth A. Meigs of Hartford, Conn.



Albert W. McIntire



A. B. Goodrich

DAB

Forman

Forman

owned a large estate. Attacked by apoplexy while there, he recovered somewhat, and sailed from New Orleans for New York. The vessel was captured by a British privateer in the Gulf and taken to the Bahamas, during which voyage Forman died.

[*Docs. Relating to the Revolutionary Hist. of the State of N. J.*, I (1901), IV (1914); Anne S. Dandridge, *Forman General*. (1903); Jared Sparks, ed., *The Writings of Geo. Washington* (12 vols., 1834-37); *Proc. of a General Court-Martial, Held . . . for the Trial of Maj.-Gen. Lee* (1778); Wm. S. Stryker, *The Battle of Monmouth* (1927); F. Ellis, *Hist. of Monmouth County, N. J.* (1885); *Somerset County Hist. Quart.*, Oct. 1917.]
F. E. R.

FORMAN, JOSHUA (Sept. 6, 1777-Aug. 4, 1848), early advocate of the Erie Canal, author of the New York Safety Fund plan, was born at Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, N. Y., to which place his parents Joseph and Hannah (Ward) Forman, both natives of New Jersey, had removed from New York City. After graduating from Union College in 1798, he studied law in Poughkeepsie and New York, but in 1800 removed to Onondaga County, then almost a wilderness. He practised law at the village of Onondaga Hollow until 1819, when he removed to the present site of Syracuse, of which he has been officially recognized as the founder. Since land titles at that time were in a state of almost hopeless confusion, and litigation was consequently brisk, lawyers could prosper in apparently insignificant hamlets. In 1813 Forman was appointed the first judge of the court of common pleas in the county and served ten years. He was an able business man, as well as a good citizen, and was interested in many enterprises in the county. He built a tavern and grist-mills, organized a company to work the gypsum deposits near by, and greatly improved the methods of manufacturing salt. He was active in establishing public institutions, and while living in Syracuse procured the passage of an act to lower the level of Lake Onondaga, making it possible to drain the adjacent swamps, and thereby greatly improving health conditions in the vicinity.

Transportation was a vital question in a region where roads were often quagmires, and there was much talk of building canals to connect the various settlements, but no comprehensive plan was proposed. In 1807 Forman, though a Federalist in a Republican county, was elected to the Assembly, and in 1808 introduced and carried a resolution to appoint a joint committee to consider "the propriety of exploring and causing an accurate survey to be made of the most eligible and direct route for a canal, to open a communication between the Tidewaters of the Hudson River and Lake Erie" (*Publications of the Buffalo His-*

torical Society, II, 28). This was the beginning of legislative action which finally resulted in the construction of the Erie Canal. In his later years Forman was inclined to claim the credit of originating the idea, but it is clear that some months previously Jesse Hawley had published a series of articles advocating the measure in the *Genesee Messenger*. However, Forman constantly advocated building the canal, and in 1825, as president of the village of Syracuse, represented the town and the county at the opening celebration.

He frequently speculated in land, and at one time controlled the heart of the present city of Syracuse, which he laid out into lots. Due to his investments his affairs became involved, and about 1826 he removed to New Brunswick, N. J., to work a copper-mine. He continued to take keen interest in his native state, especially in the banking situation, which was then quite unsatisfactory. On the election of Martin Van Buren to the governorship, Forman offered him a plan to insure the redemption of bank-notes by requiring all banks to contribute to a guarantee fund. He had gained the germ of the idea from reading of a somewhat similar plan of mutual guarantee of indebtedness in practise among the Hong merchants of China. Van Buren, after consultation with his financial advisers, approved, and sent a special message to the legislature enclosing the plan (Jan. 26, 1829), together with a full explanation by Forman. With considerable modification the plan was enacted into law as the Safety Fund Act, and became an important landmark in the financial history of the state (*Journal of the Assembly*, 1829).

The same year Forman, who had previously purchased an immense tract of wild land in North Carolina, removed to the village of Rutherfordton in that state. He spent the remainder of his life there, engaged in disposing of his lands and in various business enterprises until a stroke of paralysis reduced his activities. He was highly esteemed by his neighbors and associates (J. H. Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851*, 1851, p. 399). His first wife was Margaret Alexander of Glasgow, Scotland, who died just before his removal to North Carolina. Later he married Sarah Garrett of Warm Springs, Tenn. He was a man of wide information and high character. Though said to be a good lawyer, he was essentially a promoter and builder. His boundless faith in the development of the United States sometimes caused him to be regarded as visionary, but his early advocacy of the Erie Canal, his faith in Syracuse, and the idea of the Safety Fund are solid contributions to the public welfare.

[A sketch by J. V. H. Clark in *Onondaga*, vol. II (1849), was reprinted by Forman's son-in-law, Gen. E. S. Leavenworth, in *Geneal. of the Leavenworth Family* (1873). The latter corrected a common error in the date of Forman's death, but did not mention his second wife, who appears in *The Forman Geneal.* (1903), by Anne S. Dandridge and in a sketch by E. E. Dickinson in the *Mag. of Am. Hist.*, June 1882. His connection with the Erie Canal is discussed at length in *Buffalo Hist. Soc. Pubs.*, vol. II (1880), and in David Hosack's *Memoir of De Witt Clinton* (1829). For his connection with the Safety Fund see John Jay Knox, *A Hist. of Banking in the U. S.* (rev. ed. 1900).]

H. T.

FORMAN, JUSTUS MILES (Nov. 1, 1875–May 7, 1915), author, was born in Le Roy, N. Y., the son of Jonathan Miles and Mary (Cole) Foreman. His father, who was born in 1804, had by a former marriage four children, the youngest of whom was born in 1838. Justus was the only child of his mother. The first of the family in America was William Foreman, who came from England to Maryland about 1675. William's grandson, John, while returning from an expedition in one of the British colonial wars, married and settled in New England. Justus spent most of his boyhood in Minnesota, the home of one of his half-brothers. There he attended the Minneapolis schools, and was a student for one year at the state university. He entered Yale in the fall of 1895, was graduated in 1898, and studied art in Paris until 1901. While abroad he began writing the numerous stories which appeared then and later in various American magazines. In 1902 he published a novel, *The Garden of Lies*, the first of a series of romances which appeared at the rate of about one a year for the remaining years of his life. His writings were uniformly tense and full of action, and they dealt in general with European and American characters who were both rich and aristocratic. They were extremely popular in France and England as well as in America, but the interest with which they were received seems likely to become less and less comprehensible.

Forman found great enjoyment in traveling, and was as much in England and France as in New York. Between times he visited Greece, Turkey, Africa, Australia, and the Orient. The East infatuated him, and he adorned his house with mysterious silken hangings and bronze statues of Buddha. As time went on it seemed to him that a divan more effectively than a chair inspired his genius. In 1904–05, a play in which he had collaborated, based on his *Garden of Lies*, was successfully produced in London. His next attempt at drama, *The Hyphen*, written, according to gossip, in nine days, was put on in New York in the spring of 1915. It dealt in a sensational manner with a theme then much in the public mind—that of divided or hyphenated po-

litical allegiance, particularly as in the case of German-Americans. In early May he set out for Europe on the *Lusitania* as a war correspondent for the *New York Times*. He was never heard of after the boat was sunk.

[Yale Coll. *Triennial Record of the Class of 1898* (1902), *Class of Ninety-Eight Statistics* (1910); E. E. Farman, *Foreman, Farman, Forman Geneal.* (1911); *Who's Who in America*, 1914–15; *N. Y. Times*, Apr. 25, May 8, 1915.]

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FORNEY, JOHN WIEN (Sept. 30, 1817–Dec. 9, 1881), Philadelphia journalist, was born at Lancaster, Pa., of German descent, the son of Peter and Margaret (Wien) Forney. His brief schooling was terminated when at thirteen he went to work in a store. Three years later he became an apprentice in the printing-office of the Lancaster *Journal*. When he was twenty he became editor and part owner of a dying newspaper, the Lancaster *Intelligencer*, and in two years brought it to sufficient prosperity to enable him to unite it with the *Journal* and to marry Elizabeth Mathilda Reitzel in 1840. As a Democratic editor Forney attached himself at the outset of his career to the political fortunes of James Buchanan, whose presidential ambitions he made the means of his own advance locally and nationally. When Buchanan became secretary of state in 1845, President Polk appointed Forney deputy surveyor of the port of Philadelphia. This plum enabled its recipient to sell out at Lancaster and remove to Philadelphia, where in partnership with A. Boyd Hamilton he became editor and proprietor of the *Pennsylvanian*.

After the defeat of the Democrats in 1848, he sought election as clerk of the House of Representatives, but in spite of Buchanan's aid he failed to secure the position until 1851. He rendered active service in the campaign of 1852 and then became an editorial writer for the Washington *Daily Union*, the paper that enjoyed the executive patronage. In 1854 he was admitted to partnership in this paper and aided his partner A. O. P. Nicholson in obtaining the lucrative printing contracts of the House of Representatives. Meantime, he had become involved in a journalistic feud with a Virginia newspaper rival, Beverly Tucker of the Washington *Sentinel*, in which the powerful Virginia Democrats sided with Tucker. Forney resented also what he considered Southern persecution of his friend Gov. Reeder in his Kansas difficulties. Finally, his friendship for Buchanan when Pierce was seeking renomination made his situation more than ever impossible, so in 1856 he relinquished his share in the *Union*, after presiding over the House of Representatives most successfully dur-

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Collins Block blaze a deadly killer

One day, Feb. 3, 1939, to this day profoundly affects the Syracuse Fire Department.

Eight firefighters died that day, and a city block was left in ruin.

The fire came on the heels of a blizzard that paralyzed the city. The blaze started at about 3 a.m., when problems developed in the heating system of the Collins Block, 231 E. Genesee St.

Most of the fire was extinguished rather quickly. Tragedy struck when eight firefighters entered the building to douse the remaining flames in the five-story structure.

The men had been in the building only a short time when it collapsed, entombing them under tons of burning and smoldering debris.

Outside, their colleagues and 8,000 horrified spectators stood helpless amid the thick smoke and streams of water.

"It was a horrible, horrible experience. You don't forget it," said the late Betty McKeever in a 1989 interview.

McKeever's first husband,



Photo by Carl Single/Courtesy of Onondaga Historical Association

Firemen fight flames from the Collins Block fire in 1939.

James Diamond, was among those killed in the collapse. She learned of his death when a reporter knocked on her door in the early morning of Feb. 3. She died May 29, 1993.

More than 100 residents volunteered to look for the bodies. Throughout the search, water was continuously poured on the charred and smoking wreckage.

"Hunt Bodies of Eight Firemen in Collins Block Wreckage," said the front page headline of the Feb. 3 Syracuse

Journal.

The body of the first victim was not recovered for two days. The next day, Assistant Fire Chief Charles Boynton, suffered a fatal heart attack. Today, he is considered to be one of the victims of the fire.

The fire has become part of the city fire department's lore, and the story of the fire and the men who died is passed on to new recruits when they join the department.

— John Doherty

Salt tax

Salt, from page 37

Almost as soon as the canal was finished, its success was so obvious that the state Legislature approved three other big projects:

■ The Oswego Canal to connect the canal with Oswego.

■ As part of Oswego Canal construction, Onondaga Lake's water level was lowered in order to make it join the Seneca River without locks.

■ The swamps around Syracuse were drained. A citizens' board was allowed to confiscate the land of anyone who did not drain their land when ordered.

Robert W. Andrews

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PLEASE CREDIT

- amplify

FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY

1777 Sep 6	Born in Pleasant Valley, Dutchess Co., N. Y. Son of Joseph & Hannah.	L Gen; Clark
1793	Entered Union College (Note: not yet "College" - RNW)	- Clark
1798	GRAD from Union College "with honor" Studied law with Peter W. Radcliffe of Poughkeepsie	- Larabee 1/2 Clark
?	Completed law studies in New York C. ty office of Samuel Miles Hopkins	Clark
1800	M. Margaret Alexander, dau. of Hon. Boyd Alexander, M.P., of Glasgow, Scotland	L Gen; Clark
1800 Spring	Removed to Onondaga Hollow and opened law office	Clark
1802 Feb 26	Letter to James Watson Esq, State Street, New York. Had waited 5 weeks at Troy for snow to bring family to Onondaga. Have since "removed bag & baggage to Onondaga." Reported on Collections. Land agency desired. (Onondaga) furnace "is this day began to blow." (Note: Watson was wealthy patron of Samuel Miles Hopkins - RNW)	MSS - OHA
1802	Dau., Caroline (Mrs. Mather Williams) born	L Gen
1803	William H. Sabine becomes his law partner	Clark 2:69ff, 130
1805 May	Son, Boyd Alexander born	L Gen
1806	Active in establishment of "The First Onondaga Religious Society" at Onondaga Hill	Clark
1807	Leased reservation lands at Oswego Falls (Fulton) for mills	Clark

*Created hotel?
- Clark &
Donna Mon
62 "Yavern" - Brue: cart*

FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 2

*Check Otis papers
& Cortland records in
the whorter.*

Called up

1807	Elected to Assembly (by hi majority) on "Canal ticket" (Note: "Canal ticket" conflicts with J. F.'s statement to Hosack - RHW)	Clark; Bruce 1:268, 269, 405
1807 May 27	Dau., Mary Elizabeth born	L. Gen
1808 Feb 4	Introduces resolution in Assembly authorizing survey of route for canal. (He was "first mover" for canal - Weed)	Canal Laws 1:7
1808 (?)	Memorial to legislature signed by Onondaga Hollow neighbors. But neither they nor residents of Salina whom J. F. later tried to interest would actively agitate to have canal brought through their villages. Disappointed, J. F. proceeded to advocate the straight route and a new town (Syracuse). (Note: J. F.'s 'disappointment' is questionable since he must have known the route could be selected solely from engineering view point - RHW)	Wall 1:71 Bruce 1:404 ff
1808	Founded Plaster Company in Camillus, holding 200 of 1000 \$50 shares.	Clark 2:694, 316
1808 Jun 15	Appointed Lieutenant in Capt. Elisha Alvord's new company of Grenadiers	Cof A 2:1011
1808 Oct 7	Col. Earl's regiment Deed to Nicholas Mickles. (Note: use of "baron & femme" here is basis for story J. F. claimed nobility.)	? Bruce 1:205 Deeds
1809 Jan	Called on President Jefferson with William Kirkpatrick	Hosack
1809	Dau., Margaret Ann born	L. Gen
1809	Forman & Brackett built grist mill and saw mill at Oswego Falls. Shown on map	Clark 1:387 - Tompkins 1:194

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 3

1809 May 31	Appointed Captain of new company in John Ellis' Regiment, Isaac Hall's brigade	C of A 2:1101
1809 ?	Thurlow Weed lived with Judge Forman at Onondaga Hollow (Note: Weed says he lived with Jasper Hopper - RNW)	L Gen: 247 - weed 1:
1809 Oct 17	Active in establishment of Onondaga Hollow Religious Society, subscribing for 20 of 193 shares of \$4825 Building Fund.	Clark; Slocum
1809 Nov 8	Trustee on the first Board ^{of the} "United Church of Onondaga Hollow and Salina"	Slocum
1811 Feb 11	Appointed Captain in Lt. Col. Thaddeus M. Wood's regiment	C of A 2:1192
1811 Mar 21	Elected County Judge	Bruce 1:331
1811	Thurlow Weed caught a salmon at Rueben Wood's mill dam. Sold it to J. F., "subsequently the inventor and father of Syracuse."	Weed 1:195
1811	Defeated as candidate for assemblyman	- Bruce 1:270
1812 Aug 15	Subscribed \$500 to building fund and \$750 to endowment of Onondaga Academy	Slocum
1812	Order for cannon balls obtained by J. F. from Secretary of War caused early (October) opening of Onondaga Furnace	Weed 1:25
1813 Jan 2	"A large quantity of cannon ball... were manufactured by Furman, at Onondaga, and transported to the Niagara frontier."	Tompkins 3:222
1813 Mar 18	Dau., Helen born	L Gen

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FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 5

	1815 Sep	Son, Joseph born	L Gen
	1816 Feb 23	His memorial to Legislature on Canal approved by citizens meeting at Court House <i>Over 3000 in County signed</i>	Clark 2:59
<i>"Relating to"</i>	1816 Mar 15	Sundry memorials from Onondaga County favoring Canal read to Legislature	Bruce 11:21 Canal Laws 1:121
	1816	Forman, Wilson & Company bought Walton Tract	L Gen
	1816 May 14	Advt: Ebenezer Wilson, Jr. & Company consisting of Joshua Forman, Ebenezer Wilson Jr., and John B. Creed, will conduct business of E. Wilson & Company, dissolved. (Note: partnership had store at Onondaga Hollow)	Onondaga Reg. May 15, 1816
<i>Get other dates</i>	1816 May 15	Third article of J. F.'s series, "Great Western Canal," signed "X". (Note: appears to contain much from Rees' Encyclopedia)	Onondaga Reg.
	1816 May 24	Hannah Ward Forman (Mrs. Joseph) died	L Gen
	1816 Nov 20	J. F. letter to Canal Commissioners reporting costs of three mill canals he had built	Canal Laws 4:316
	1817-1820	Received \$25 for building towing path across Salina side cut and \$48 for removing stone	Canal Laws 2:426
	1817 (about)	Named village Corinth	Bruce 1:407
	1817	J. F.'s articles signed "X" published in Onondaga Record in defense of canal. (Note: see 5/15/1816 - HW)	Clark
	1818 Jul 1	Advt: Richard R. Lansing Esq. of Utica substituted for Joshua Forman as agent for Nicholas Fish	Onondaga Reg. Sept. 30, 1818 <i>Earlier appearance (P)</i>

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FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 6

*is this old
description carried
into 1818?*

1818 Sep 30	John Van Pelt has moved into former E. Wilson, Jun & Company store	Onondaga Reg. Sept. 30, 1818
1818 Oct 26	Several properties - including the Walton Tract, "at a place commonly called the four corners," intact except for three parcels totalling one acre - sold by sheriff under fieri facias writs against J. F. and Forman, Creed and Wilson. Daniel Kellogg and William F. Sabine the highest bidders paid \$10915 and retained J. F. as agent to develop the property. (Note: Sabine was J. F.'s brother-in-law. Of financial conditions at this time, Samuel Miles Hopkins wrote that his properties, valued at \$74000 in 1817, sold two years later for \$25000.".. the utter disappearance of money.. was.. (explained later as) the necessary result of operations to restore a vitiated currency.")	Deeds V:310 Bruce 1:406 SMH 36,37
1818-1819	Brother, Owen Forman and John Wilkinson laid out and mapped Walton Tract	L. Gen
1819	J. F. moved to Syracuse	Clark; Bruce 1:406,407
1820 Jan 7	David S. Bates, engineer surveying route for Oswego Canal, recommends lowering Onondaga Lake 2.23' to level of Seneca River by cutting canal 4 feet deep & 53 or 54 chains long to replace outlet 14 inches deep & 58 chains long. Canal estimated at \$5991 would save dam, lock, etc., costing \$8514. Lowering lake would also reclaim lands around margin of lake, keep fresh water out of salt springs, and render Salina more healthy.	Canal Laws 1:491, 499
1820 Feb 21	Bates report submitted to Assembly by Canal Commissioners. Read 2/23/1820	Canal Laws 1:489

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JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 7

- 1820 Apr 15 Agreement with Benjamin Wright, canal commissioner, permits J. F. to build dry dock & waste weir Surplus Waters 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 40, 72, 51, 81
- 1820 Jun 6 DeWitt Clinton wrote: "...Syracuse, opposite to Salina..where Judge Forman, a gentleman of great intelligence and activity, is erecting a town." Hibernicus 18
- 1820 Sep 1 Administered oaths to veterans applying for pensions Bruce 1:146
- 1821 Received \$125 as canal collector Canal Laws 2:453
- 1821 Obtained passage of a law "drawn by his own hand," authorizing the lowering of Onondaga Lake. (Note: In listing the incidental benefits of lowering the lake, Clark does not state that Forman acted to secure these humanitarian results. Later writers have read this meaning into his account. The lowering appears to have been solely a matter of expediency in the construction of the Oswego Canal. - RNW) Clark
- 1822 Feb 28 J. F. named one of 7 comm'rs in Act authorizing the drainage of swamps and marshes. (Note: The marshes in and around Syracuse were surveyed, drainage ditches were laid out and property owners were obliged either to dig them or pay for them. The lowering of Onondaga Lake has often been mistakenly credited with the "drying out" of Syracuse. It was draining the swamps & marshes which actually achieved that result. Salina, and Liverpool on the Lake were the beneficiaries of the lowering of the lake. RNW) Bruce 1:225, 410
Canal Laws
? — 1:499
- 1822 Visited Salina with Governor Clinton and proposed extension of Salina Canal to communicate with Onondaga Lake for the purpose of supplying water for power at the Salt Springs pump house. (Note: the date would seem to refer to the accomplishment rather than the visit) Clark

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ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 8

1822	Procured passage of law authorizing bounty on solar salt. Visited New Bedford with Isaiah Townsend to study solar evaporation. Appointed agent of the Syracuse Company and erected equipment for coarse salt manufacture	Clark; Cheney 2:698, 105 158, 159
1822	Received \$917.65 as canal collector and for excavation and labor	Canal Laws 2:172
1823	Kellogg, Sabine, and J. F. contract with Thomas Spencer and David Johnson to build dry dock	Bruce 1:439
1823	Received \$400 as canal collector; \$18 for stationery	Canal Laws 2:207, 487
1824 Jan 15	Father, Joseph Forman died	L Gen
1824 Feb 14	Active in establishment of "First Presbyterian Society in Syracuse." A trustee on first board.	Clark; Bruce 1:513, 514 2:296
1824 Apr 6	Elected one of four poundmasters in town of Salina	Cheney 137
1824	Dau., Mary Elizabeth marries Hiram Hyde	L Gen
1824	Received \$450 as canal collector	Canal Laws 2:502
1825 Apr 13	Village of Syracuse incorporated	
1825 Apr 20	Act passed empowering commissioners to lease surplus waters of Canal	Canal Laws 2:407
1825 May 3	Elected trustee and president of Syracuse Village	Clark 2:201 Bruce 1:412
1825 Jun 9	Greeted La Fayette	Bruce 1:415
1825 Aug 10	Bid of John Forman and (Herman) Van Buren for waters at 6-foot lock submitted in handwriting of Joshua F. (then an employee of James & Co.)	Surplus Waters 77

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FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE
ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 9

1825 Oct 27	In Rochester at celebration greeting first through boat on Erie Canal	Clark
Oct 29	"Seneca Chief" etc arrived in Syr at 2 p.m.	Memoir 303
1825 Nov 1	Rushed back to Syracuse for canal celebration. Made speech greeting address Clinton and party and proceeded to New York City with them	Clark
	— Kassar; Warner Baldwin with J.F.	Memoir 169
1825	Built new residence	Bruce 1:423
1825	Bought first fire engine for village \$935.	Bruce 1:415, 413
[1825 - error L Gen]	married	
1829 July 1 (check)	Dau. Margaret Ann born Matthew W. Davis born	L Gen Syr Gazette (F.M.J.H.)
1826	Removed to New Jersey near New Brunswick where he reopened and worked a copper mine. "Circumstances required his removal from the scene of his usefulness, and the theatre of his labors." - Clark. "Having asked for an office, the income of which he needed, as his own affairs had become complicated through his attention to the interests of other people than his own, the coveted appointment was refused, and it is said that he left the town he founded, and had fostered to his own detriment, with a saddened heart." - Dickinson.	Clark
1828	Hiram Herien Hyde dies	L Gen
1828 Jul 16	Margaret Alexander Forman (Mrs. Joshua) died at Ten-mile Run near New Brunswick, New Jersey	L Gen
1828 Oct 13	Wrote Hosack from Franklin, New Jersey explaining his early interest in and work for Erie Canal	Hosack 342-355
1829 Jan 26	Gov. Van Buren forwards to Legislature Joshua Forman's letter of 1/21/1829 outlining his "Safety Fund Plan" for state banking law	Knox 398-413

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JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 10

1829 Mar 18	Assembly passed "Judge Paige's" bill establishing the "Safety Fund." Based on J. F.'s suggestions but omitting some of best. No credit given Forman. Became law 4/2/1829	Knox
1829-1830	Bought 300,000 acres in Rutherfordton County from State of North Carolina	Clark
	Sons, Boyd Alexander and Joseph moved with J. F. to North Carolina	L Gen
1830 (about)	Daughter, Helen married Elisha Whitney of Foughkeepsie	L Gen
1831	Presented ^{silver} pitcher and goblets on visit to Syracuse	Clark
1831 Dec 7	^{Letter to} Wrote brother, Samuel. Was contemplating marriage. Daughter, Mary was with Samuel at Onondaga	MSS - OHA
1833 Jun 21	Daughter, Mrs. Margaret Elizabeth Hyde married Elias W. Leavenworth	L Gen
?	Married Sarah Garrett of Warm Springs, Tennessee "a lady of high social position and great wealth."	D. A. B. Dickinson
1845	Mrs. E. W. Leavenworth visited J. F. in North Carolina. He was in feeble health. Gave her 1831 testimonial pitcher and goblets	Clark
1845	Trustees bought house J. F. built at Onondaga from Joseph and William Sabine for female department of Onondaga Academy. William H. Sabine had bought it when J. F. moved to Syracuse (1819) and lived there until his death in 1842	Slocum
1846 Oct 2(?)	Visited Syracuse. Given Public dinner by P. N. Rust at Syracuse House. Unable to speak distinctly because of paralytical shock	Clark

*Bel late
of account*

PLEASE CREDIT

JOSHUA FORMAN - CHRONOLOGY - 11

1849 Aug 4

J. F. died at Rutherfordton, North Carolina. (Note: The error "1843" which appears three times in Leavenworth's Genealogy is corrected in the author's hand in his own copy.)
 "An active intelligent and enterprising citizen." - Wheeler.
 "He was a man of wide information and high character. Though said to be a good lawyer, he was essentially a promoter and builder..(and made) solid contributions to the public welfare."

~~Wheeler~~
D. A. S.

Wheeler
7399

DAB 6:529

1855 Jan(?)

Margaret Ann Davis died at Columbia, South Carolina, buried at Rutherfordton, North Carolina

L Gen

1872 Spring

J. F. remains ^{were} moved from Rutherfordton to Oakwood.

L Gen

1798

FORMAN, JOSHUA

At a meeting held in Onondaga Hollow, now known as Onondaga Valley, August 15, 1812, "subscription papers w were prepared for establishing an academy for the instruction of youth (intended to be a rival of Hamilton College) to be located not than 100 rods from the Seneca turnpike road. The subscriptions were in shares of \$25 each, and were payable to John Adams and Joshua Forman, in three yearly installments, and not to be binding unless \$4,000 was subscribed for the purpose."

The sum of \$4,000 was subscribed at the meeting, Joshua Forman heading the ~~list~~ paper with \$500. A similar paper pledged the subscriber to contribute to a fund for the endowment of the academy, the aggregate to be not less than \$3,000.....Joshua Forman headed the list with \$750.

Among the 22 trustees was Joshua Forman.

Early Landmarks of Syracuse
Gurney S. Strong
The Times Pub. Co.,
Syracuse 1894.

This book contains the biographical sketch in Clark's Onondaga pp. 311-332, in which a portrait of Forman faces page 311.

Forman, Joshua (Sept. 6, 1777 - Aug. 4, 1848). Class of 1798.

Philomathean Society. Lawyer and developer.

Born in Pleasant Valley, in Dutchess County, N.Y.

After graduating from Union in the second graduating class, Forman studied law in Poughkeepsie and New York City, and married Margaret Alexander, a visitor from Scotland whose father was the Member of Parliament for Glasgow. In 1800 went into practice in the village of Onondoga Hollow (later Onondoga Valley), a few miles southwest of the present center of Syracuse.) In 1803 he was joined in partnership by his brother-in-law, William H. Sabine.

Onondoga Hollow (1800-1819)

Built a hotel there. With Dr. David Lansing, founded the Onondoga Academy (1812), which was intended to be a rival to Hamilton College, and still existed in 1860, and the Onondoga Valley Presbyterian Church. (1809)

*opened 1815 - Brown
Academy school
and received
to be a high
school in 1925*

1807 Elected to the Assembly (how long did he serve? Perhaps only one term)

Elected on the "Canal Ticket." He had been among the people actively interested in a canal, and had made a special study of canals, their costs and advantages, and was an effective spokesman for the cause at a time when it had few followers.

1807: built a grist mill at Oswego Falls, the first grist mill on the Oswego River.

1808: formed the Plaster Company at Camillus, to work the gypsum beds nearby.

Feb. 4, 1808 introduced in the Assembly a resolution which was the first tangible step in the long sequence of events which led eventually to the legislation committing the state to undertake the canal. (Although the resolution, and the effective speech supporting it, were his, it is not true, as he was later apparently wont to suggest, that he originated the idea of the Erie Canal.) He continued to work actively for the cause, and was one of the chief dignitaries in the ceremonies opening the canal in 1825.

led eventually to the building of the Erie Canal, an idea which he did not, however, originate, though he sometimes took full credit. He saw it as important to the salt industry, in which he was engaged, and others. While waiting for New York to act, Forman and another legislature tried in 1809 to sell the idea to President Jefferson, who thought it might be feasible - a century hence.

During the War of 1812, furnished a substitute.

1813: elected first judge of the court of common pleas in the county; served until 1823

1816: "As early as when the route of the canal was definitely settled, in 1816, Judge Forman purchased the Walton Tract of two hundred and fifty acres, embracing all the central parts of what is now the city and through which the canal had been located.

1817: The section of the Erie Canal passing through Syracuse was begun in 1817, and by 1820 the first packet boat reached Syracuse.

Syracuse (1819-1826)

Forman has been called the founder of Syracuse, but Thurlow Weed perhaps chose an apter word when he said Forman "invented Syracuse."

1819: In the spring of 1819 the tract was surveyed and laid out in lots, and in the fall of that year Forman moved there with his family.

1819 Moved from the Onondaga Valley to Syracuse in 1819. City had two frame houses, a hotel, and several log or plank and slab cabins occupied by laborers on the Erie Canal. Forman's house was at what is now the intersection of Clinton and Water Streets. Recognized as the founder of the city. Stayed there 10 years. When he came,

Engaged in land speculation, and at one time "controlled the heart of the present city of Syracuse, which he laid out into lots."

1822: Wrote and procured passage of an act on Feb. 16, 1822 to lower the level of Onondaga Lake by two feet, which made it possible to drain much of the marshland covering the present site of Syracuse, and reduce the death rate from typhoid and malaria.

1822: Procured passage of a law authorizing the erection of works for the production of salt by solar evaporation. (**why should that require a law?**). He and Isaiah Townsend went to Massachusetts where they studied the salt manufacturing by solar evaporation, and brought back a man with experience therein, and set up two companies, one at Onondaga and one at Syracuse.

another source: Greatly improved the methods of manufacturing salt.

Another source: introduced the solar process of making salt.

1824: leader in the erection of the First Presbyterian Church of Syracuse.

1825 is President of the village of Syracuse

Left, according to "Contemporary Biography of New York, v. 2 (1888), because he had been so unselfish in working for the general good that he had made little money.

New Jersey (1826-1829)

1826, because his affairs have become "involved," moves to New Brunswick, New Jersey (his parents' native state) in response to an invitation to work a copper mine.

1828 he proposed to N.Y. Gov. Martin Van Buren to require the state's banks to contribute to a mutual insurance fund - an idea Forman had gotten in reading about a similar arrangement among Chinese merchants. Van Buren forwarded it to the legislature, together with Forman's explanation, and it became law (the Safety Fund Act) in 1829. It was "an important landmark in the financial history of the state (and nation?)

North Carolina (1829-1847)

1829 Following the death of his first wife July 1828, moved to Rutherfordton, North Carolina, where he had previously bought a very large tract of land (300,000) from the state, with partners, and spent the remaining 19 years of his life selling land and "developing the mining and other resources" of the tract. He also established there a printing press, a newspaper and a stage line, "and was the leading citizen of that part of the state" - Forman genealogy. He remarried there.

Returned to Syracuse in 1831 on a visit, where he was guest of honor at a public reception at which a silver loving cup was presented to him as the founder and greatest benefactor of the village. He was again honored by a public dinner in Syracuse in 1846. There is [was?] a Forman Park there, and a monument to his memory.

Buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse.

The Forman genealogy, by Anne Spottswood Dandridge (1913) (and the DAB) say his second wife was Miss Sarah Garrett, of Warm Springs, Tennessee. Contemporary biography of New York says it was Mrs. Nelson, a Virginia lady.

queries:

What is Onondaga Valley now? ✓

How long did the Onondaga Academy last?

How long was Forman in the Assembly?

Is there still a Forman Park? Where? ✓

Is there still a monument to him? Where? ✓

Created by E. G. + H. 2500 + A. Linnard
Jan 16, 1839

Check:

Is there a history of salt manufacture?

article by Dickinson, E.E. - Magazine of American history, June 1882.

Buffalo Historical Society Publications, v. 2, (1880)

Clark, Joshua - Onondaga. 2 vols. see vol. 2, chapt. xiv, p. 69 (the same sketch is reprinted in Strong, Gurney S. - Early landmarks of Syracuse, p. 311-332. Also reprinted, with corrections, in Leavenworth, E.S.) Genealogy of the Leavenworth family (1873)

Wheeler, J.H. - Historical sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851, p. 399.

Knox, John Jay - A history of banking in the United States. Rev. ed. 1900.

Sudith Haven

Founder of the city of Syracuse and for many years recognized as one of the leading men of the State in different capacities, was born at Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, New York, 1777. His parents, Joseph and Hannah Forman, resided in New York City previous to the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, soon after which event they removed to Pleasant Valley. In the fall of 1793, when he was seventeen years old, he had so prepared himself that he entered Union College, at Schenectady, from which he graduated with honor. Having completed his collegiate course the young man entered the law office of Peter Radcliffe, of Poughkeepsie, where he remained two years. He then went to New York and finished his law studies in the office of Samuel Miles Hopkins, soon after which he was married to Margaret Alexander, daughter of the Hon. Boyd Alexander, M.P. for Glasgow, Scotland. Early in the year 1800, Mr. Forman removed to the little village of Onondaga Hollow, in Onondaga County, where he opened a law office and here was at once manifested that public spirit and zeal for the general good of the community which characterized his whole after life. He secured the removal thither of his father's family, from Troy, and located at different points on the west side, his father, his three brothers and two brothers-in-law, and built a large hotel and a fine residence for himself.. With the aid of Dr. David Lansing, he secured the erection of the Presbyterian Church and the Onondaga Academy. It was during Mr. Forman's residence in this quiet village that events occurred leading directly to what proved to be the most important work of his life - a prominent share in originating and promoting the scheme of building a canal direct from the Hudson River to Lake Erie. For a number of years prior to 1807 there had been much discussion as to the feasibility of a canal across the State, to connect the Hudson with either Lake Erie or Lake Ontario. It was partially as a result of his part in this discussion that Joshua Forman was triumphantly elected to the Assembly of 1807-8, on what was called the "Canal Ticket." During the campaign, and before, Mr. Forman made himself thoroughly conversant with the cost of building and maintaining, expense of operation, income and size of all important canals of the world. After he reached Albany it was finally agreed among the few members who were converts to the plan, that the canal project, as outlined by Mr. Forman, was of immense importance demanding prompt and vigorous action. As the first move in this work, Mr. Forman drew up the famous resolution which was the first tangible, practicable act in the long sequence that finally led to the completion of the then stupendous undertaking. When the Resolution was offered in the House expressions of surprise and ridicule were prevalent. They were but the beginning of years of opposition and doleful predictions. The reception of the resolution by the House served only to fire the young member with a determination to further arm himself for a future effort to prove that his scheme was anything but Utopian. This resulted in a speech by Mr. Forman, when the resolution was finally called up, that not only astounded the members with its array of facts and figures in favor of the proposed canal, but held their undivided attention by its interesting style and matter, and secured their favor by its clear exposé of the great advantages that must accrue to the Empire State if the resolution passed. And it did pass; but Mr. Forman himself admitted that it was adopted in a large measure on the ground "that it could do no harm and might do some good." The Senate concurred and the result was the appropriation of six hundred dollars only for causing a survey to be made. We cannot further trace the work of Mr. Forman in support of the canal; but it continued unabated, unflinching, undismayed, until the enterprise was finished and the mingling of the waters of Lake Erie and the Hudson River was made the occasion of enthusiastic rejoicings throughout the State, in which great fête and the ceremonies preceding it he was a prominent and invited guest. As President of Syracuse he delivered the address of welcome to Governor Clinton and suite, and committees who made a trip of celebration over the canal soon after its completion. For further particulars of this portion of Mr. Forman's life work, the reader is referred to Hosack's Memoir of De Witt Clinton. The Erie Canal was begun July 4th, 1817, and was finished in 1825. Between these two dates Mr. Forman was by no means idle in other directions than in supporting the great work of which he was the parent. In the year 1813 his legal acquirements and

1798,

Joshua Forman (continued)

his well known integrity resulted in his appointment as First Judge of Onondaga County Common Pleas. This position he filled with honor and ability for ten years. In the year 1807, before he was sent to the Assembly, Mr. Forman leased from the Surveyor-General a portion of the reservation lands at Oswego Falls, whereon he erected a grist mill in the wilderness. This was the first mill erected on the Oswego River in modern times. There was not then a horse owned between Oswego and Salina and the mill greatly promoted the settlement of that region. In 1808 he founded the Plaster Company of Camillus, intended to more effectually work the beds in that town, which company was very successful. In 1813 Judge Forman built the grist mill at Onondaga Hollow, then one of the best in the country, and the extensive raceway leading to it. Perhaps the next work in importance, attributable to Judge Forman, especially when viewed in the light of its after results, was the founding of the city of Syracuse. (Thurlow Weed once wrote that Judge Forman "invented Syracuse.") It was another evidence of the breadth of his views and his sound judgment that he should be able to predict that, with proper action on his part, a great and flourishing city would spring up in a locality that was little more than a swamp and jungle. As early as when the route of the canal was definitely settled, in 1816, Judge Forman purchased the Walton Tract of two hundred and fifty acres, embracing all the central parts of what is now the city and through which the canal had been located. In the fall of the year 1819 Judge Forman removed with his family from his pleasant village home to what is now Syracuse, but what was then without even a permanent name; a mere clearing just south of and near to the canal. In the spring of 1819 the Walton tract was surveyed and laid out in village lots; there were then but two or three frame houses in the place. The force of Judge Forman's enterprise and his wisdom and foresight in the efforts made by him during the succeeding seven years can but be imperfectly understood by any one not conversant with the obstacles that he encountered. But he set himself to work amid his most disheartening surroundings; with what wisdom and prophetic foresight it is now easy to understand. Improvements were rapidly projected, lots were sold and every possible inducement held out to settlers by the founder; and his efforts were rewarded with success. In the year 1821 Judge Forman secured the passage of a law, which was drawn by his own hand, authorizing the lowering of Onondaga Lake, which was subsequently accomplished, to the extent of about two feet. The main object of this important measure was to improve the low lands about the lake, which had been the cause of much sickness and consequent delay to settlement. This object was secured and its beneficent results continue to this day. In the following year, 1822, Judge Forman procured the passage of a law authorizing the erection of works for the production of salt by solar evaporation. With his customary energy and thoroughness, he at once journeyed to New Bedford, Mass., in company with Isaiah Townsend, of Albany, where he made himself thoroughly acquainted with the details of salt manufacturing, as carried on by solar evaporation, on Cape Cod. Stephen Smith was induced to return with the Judge and his companion, he being experienced in solar salt manufacture. Two companies had been formed, the Onondaga Company, of which Mr. Smith was appointed agent, Judge Forman holding a similar position in the Syracuse Company. To secure power to be used in raising the brine at the principal salt spring, instead of pumping by hand, as formerly, Judge Forman conceived the plan of continuing what was called the Salina Canal down to the lake, passing the spring on its way from which could be derived adequate power. This plan of raising the brine by water power was carried out the next year, under the direction of Judge Forman, leading directly to the future extensive salt industry. In the year 1824, Judge Forman drew the subscription paper, secured and collected the subscriptions, let the contract, and supervised the erection of the First Presbyterian Church of Syracuse. The time was now at hand when Judge Forman was to leave the village he had founded for a distant home. He had seen the place grow from a mere four corners to one of the most promising villages, and destined to be a most thriving city. The great highway of navigation of which he was the first active projector was finished and its beneficent influence was already beginning to be felt throughout the State. At this time (1825) so unselfish had been his labors,

so prodigal had been his use of time and means for the general good of the community, rather than for his own personal financial prosperity, that it is little wonder that his accumulated store of the world's goods was not great. Therefore when he received from a company in New York a remunerative offer to superintend the opening of a copper mine near New Brunswick, N. J., he felt in view of all his circumstances that it was best for him to accept it which he did. In the following year (1826) he removed his family to the scene of his work in New Jersey. At this time his wife had become a hopeless invalid and her demise was not unlooked for. She died at Ten Mile Run, near New Brunswick, in July 1828, deeply mourned by her husband and all who had the good fortune to be numbered among her friends. Judge Forman had been but a short time absent from his former home when the State of New York suffered a severe financial revulsion and her affairs, chiefly through her defective banking system, became sadly deranged. Prompt reform was demanded by the public. In this crisis Judge Forman came forward with a plan of relief which, upon a special invitation from Governor Van Buren, He submitted to the Legislature, visiting Albany for the purpose. The plan was so evidently a good one that it was most favorably received. At Governor Van Buren's request, Judge Forman then drew up what was called the Safety Fund Act, which was calculated to give character to the currency in circulation and to protect its holders. This plan operated well for many years and the Safety Fund Banks of this State sustained themselves under some of the severest and heaviest revulsions which the monied institutions of the country have ever experienced. In the years 1829-30 Judge Forman, in company with others, bought up of the North Carolina State Government about three hundred thousand acres of the wild or "refuse" lands of the State and the Judge removed to Rutherfordton County. He took up his residence in Rutherfordton village and there was immediately projected by him numerous improvements for the general benefit of the place. The mining and other resources of the large tracts of land purchased were successfully developed under Judge Forman's administration and many sales of tracts were made by him, constituting his principal business. On the Fourth of August, 1849, he died at Rutherfordton, N. C. He left a second wife, who was a Virginia lady, a Mrs. Nelson at the time of the marriage. At the request of his daughter, Mrs. E. W. Leavenworth, the remains of Judge Forman were brought North and now repose in the beautiful grounds of Oakwood" at Syracuse.

Information from "Contemporary Biography of New York," Vol. II, 1882.

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THIS CLIPPING FROM *WCSLAF*

SYRACUSE, N. Y. 9748

HERALD Forman

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1798

FEB 17 1932

City Raised From Swamp 110 Years Ago

Legislature of 1822 Voted for Lowering of On- ondaga Lake

Forman Was Sponsor Syracuse at That Time Consisted of Two Houses and Hotel

By ROY E. FAIRMAN

The Herald's Routing Reporter

Yesterday was the 110th anniversary of the start of the movement which transformed Syracuse from a miasmatic swamp into one of the healthiest communities in the United States.

On Feb. 15, 1822, the New York State Legislature, through the initiative of Joshua Forman, pioneer settler, enacted a law which authorized the lowering of Onondaga Lake and the draining of the marshland covering much of the site of the present city of Syracuse.

When Joshua Forman, principal factor in the Erie Canal movement, removed from Onondaga Valley to Syracuse in 1819, the village had only two frame houses besides the hotel, which stood on the present site of the Empire Hotel. Log houses and plank and slab cabins were scattered over the dry portion of the clearing. They were occupied mainly by laborers on the canal work. The clearing extended north and south between what are now Willow and Fayette Streets and east and west between Franklin and Warren Streets.

Mr. Forman moved to a house at what is now the intersection of Clinton and Water Streets. His pasture extended back of his house and east to Salina Street. Part of it was a pine grove. Another pasture of 20 acres was across Salina Street from the Forman acreage, a pair of bars leading to this lot being almost exactly where the Salina Street entrance of the Onondaga County Savings Bank now is.

What is now Fayette Park and vicinity was a shooting ground for partridges and rabbits, and in the low places mud turtles and swamp rattlesnakes abounded. The little settlement was approached by grid-iron or corduroy roads, and in the spring the water was so deep that travelers between Onondaga Valley and Salina were obliged to detour over the highlands east of Syracuse and use the rude roads which had been cut to transport wood to the salt boiling works at Salina, now the north section of Syracuse.

Malaria and typhoid thrived during the summer season, and the death rate among the canal workers was high. Mr. Forman, who had great faith in the future of the young village, realized that it would never grow until the site was made healthful. Accordingly, he obtained the passage of the law making drainage of the swamp possible.

Under the act, commissioners of the land office were to draw a map of the swamp and marsh with designated ditches and drains with estimated cost. The Onondaga County judges were to appoint three free holders to assess the amount of money necessary on the owners of the land in proportion to the benefits accruing. Landowners might construct the drainage ditches on their own land, but in the event they did not do this, the ditches were to be dug and the cost assessed against the owners. Onondaga Lake was lowered two feet, which enabled it to take the drainage of the Syracuse swamp.

Owners of the land complained loudly of what they termed a too arbitrary law, but history has revealed that Mr. Forman's plan was the only possible one which would have obtained the desired results and he is recognized as the founder and benefactor of Syracuse.

When the drainage project was completed late in 1822 and the place became healthful, a portion of the Onondaga Reservation, including much of the present city, was sold. Land in the present exclusive James Street section sold for from \$18 to \$30 an acre while that east of what is now Fayette Park went for \$6. Gen. Amos Granger bought several lots in the swamp near where Beach Street and Erie Boulevard now intersect, and drained them. He paid \$10 an acre.

Subsequently, when General Leavenworth, son-in-law of Joshua Forman, was president of the village of Syracuse, a dam across Onondaga Creek at West Genesee Street was removed and a big mill pond which covered the area now embracing the State Armory, D. L. & W. passenger station and adjacent grounds, was drained. Earth from Prospect Hill was used to fill in the depression.

Joshua Forman was born in Pleasant Valley in the Hudson River region, in 1777. He was graduated from Union College in 1797 and moved to Onondaga Valley to practice law in 1800. In 1807 he was elected to the Assembly on a canal ticket and from that time until the Erie Canal was completed in 1825, worked incessantly for its success.

He was active in many other fields. He was one of the founders of the Onondaga Valley Presbyterian Church and of Onondaga Valley Academy and was one of the first board of trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Syracuse. He was one of the first judges of Onondaga County.

When Judge Forman, who lived in North Carolina during the late years of his life, visited Syracuse in 1831, he was guest of honor at a public reception at which a silver loving cup was presented to him as the founder and greatest benefactor of the village which has since expanded into one of the most beautiful and most healthful cities in the East.

JOSHUA FORMAN

The ancestry of this distinguished man has been certainly traced, it would seem, no further than his father, Joseph Forman, who was born probably in New Jersey, according to the statement of Hon. Elias W. Leavenworth in the Leavenworth Genealogy, on July, 1752. Mr. Leavenworth believed him to have been related to General David Forman, and Miss or Mrs. Ellen E. Dickinson, who wrote the article on Judge Joshua Forman in the Magazine of American History, vol. 8, held the same belief. However, a definite statement of what the supposed relationship was, is not furnished by either writer. The material for the present sketch has been obtained from both accounts.

Joseph Forman, the father of Joshua, was a merchant in New York City at the breaking out of the Revolutionary War. He then retired to Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, N. Y., where his eldest son Joshua was born, September 6, 1777. Near the close of the eighteenth century he removed to Troy, New York, where he was a member of the firm of Forman & Tracy, and was a deacon in the Presbyterian Church. He removed to Onondaga Hollow after his distinguished son had gone there, and there he is buried.

Joshua Forman, as has just been stated, was born in 1777 in Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, N. Y. He was educated at Union College at Schenectady, N. Y., where he graduated with honor, and studied law at Poughkeepsie and New York City. Soon after completing his professional studies he married Margaret Alexander. She was the daughter of Boyd Alexander, M. P., for Glasgow, and was on a visit to this country at that time. Their meeting is said to have been under romantic circumstances but the particulars are not given by the narrator.

In 1800 Joshua Forman removed from New York City to the promising village of Onondaga Valley, then called Onondaga Hollow, and his father and brothers and sisters also removed thither. A law partnership was formed with William H. Sabine, his brother-in-law, in 1803. The business prospered, and the firm became widely known in the State. On the organization of the Court of Common Pleas in 1813, Joshua Forman was appointed judge, and served ten years in that capacity. Having been elected to the State Assembly in 1807, he became impressed with the importance of constructing a canal to connect Lake Erie with the sea, and introduced the resolution looking to the construction of the canal, directing a survey to be made of the most eligible and direct route. The measure was long looked upon as visionary, but, as all know, was eventually carried out to the great benefit of the State and City of New York. In November, 1825, when the canal had at last been completed, and Governor Clinton and his suite were making their first passage through the canal, Judge Forman was selected to make the address to the Governor at Syracuse, and the Governor in his speech made reference to Judge Forman's connection with the inception of the great work.

As a member of the committee from Syracuse, Judge Forman also attended the ceremonies of mingling the waters of Lake Erie with the ocean at Sandy Hook.

In 1819 Judge Forman founded the City of Syracuse. There were previous to his coming but two frame houses on the site. He removed there and was the means of its becoming a growing and prosperous city. There is in Syracuse a small park called "Forman Park" in honor of the founder, and a monument has been erected to his memory in the same city.

In 1826 he removed to New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he was interested in a copper mine. Shortly after his removal to New Jersey the banking laws of New York were seen to be defective, and on Governor Van Buren's invitation Judge Forman presented to the legislative committee of New York a plan which he had formed and at the Governor's request drew up the "Safety Fund Banking Act", which most successfully accomplished the objects for which it was designed. During the Civil War period the United States government employed the idea of this act in establishing national banks.

In 1830 he removed to Rutherfordton, North Carolina, where he had purchased an extensive tract of land--some 300,000 acres--and there passed the remainder of his life. He established there a newspaper, a printing press, and a stage line, and was the leading citizen of that part of the State. His first wife having died in New Jersey, he married Miss Sarah Garrett of Warm Springs, Tennessee. In 1831 he visited Syracuse, and was presented by the citizens with a silver pitcher and goblets, suitably inscribed. He visited Syracuse again in 1846, and a public dinner was given in his honor. A few years after this visit, he died (1848) at Rutherfordton, and was buried at Syracuse in the Oakwood cemetery.

Joshua Forman was an eloquent speaker, an able lawyer, and a most useful and public spirited citizen. Of a social and happy disposition, well informed, and possessed of the ability to impart his knowledge to others, he had, as Mr. J. V. H. Clark (the author of Clark's Onondaga) justly remarks, a mind of no ordinary cast.

Mr. Clark's book has been freely drawn upon by Mr. Leavenworth, and also by G. S. Strong--(Early Landmarks of Syracuse published 1894).

Joshua Forman had six children, among them two sons, Boyd Alexander Forman, who died, leaving a son; and Joseph Forman, who had a son, Joshua, born 1855.

FROM The Forman Genealogy
Anne Spottswood Dandridge
The Forman-Bassett-Hatch Co.
Cleveland, Ohio, 1913.

1798

JOSHUA FORMAN

DIED: At New-Brunswick, in New-Jersey, on the 18th
inst. Mrs. Margaret P. Forman, wife of Joshua
Forman, Esq., formerly of Syracuse.

Albany Argus
July 29, 1828.

1798.

JOSHUA FORMAN.

Died: Near New Brunswick, N. J. on
the 15th inst., Mrs Margaret P. For-
man, wife of Joshua Forman, esq.,
formerly of Syracuse.-
Albany Argus, July 29, 1828.

Alumni Notes

1798

The Syracuse Herald of Feb. 17 presents a long article on JOSHUA FORMAN and his connection with the city of Syracuse. To summarize: Mr. Forman moved to the Onondaga Valley to practice law in 1800. In 1807 he was elected to the Assembly on a canal ticket and worked continually for the Erie Canal. When he removed to Syracuse in 1819, the village had a hotel and two frame houses, while log houses were scattered over the dry portion of the clearing. Through Mr. Forman's influence, the legislature enacted a law in 1822, authorizing the lowering of Onondaga Lake and drainage of the marshland. Under the act, the site which is now occupied by Syracuse was made healthful; and Mr. Forman is now recognized as the founder and benefactor of Syracuse.

uam.
Apr.
1932



Joshua Forman
Union College. Class 1798

From History Syracuse Preface
Pub. Feb. 1938

JOSHUA FORMAN, 1798, was a member of the Philomathean Society.

Philomathean Catalogue 1830.

1798 Joshua Forman

Helen Sophia Forman, daughter of Joshua and Margaret Ann (Alexander) Forman, was born in Syracuse, March 30, 1814. Married Elisha Miller Whitney, born Esopus, N. Y., September 18, 1806; a merchant.; on August 18, 1831 by Rev. D. Dyer, Episcopal. They settled in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., and, in 1874, were living at 318 Main St., where he was engaged in the carper trade.

Whitney Family of Connecticut
vol.1. Pt. 1,
S. Whitney Phoenix
Privately printed
New York 1878

Son of Joseph and Hannah Forman, who, previous to the Revolution, resided in the city of New York, was born at Pleasant Valley, Dutchess Co., N. Y., 6 September, 1777; graduate at Union College in 1798; studied law with Peter W. Radcliffe, of Poughkeepsie, and Samuel Miles Hopkins, of New York; married Margaret Ann Alexander, who was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, 25 December 1783, daughter of Hon. Boyd Alexander, M. P. for Glasgow, Scotland. They settled, in 1800, in Onondaga Hollow, N. Y., and he took the lead in all that tended to develop the value of that part of the State. He was the founder of Syracuse, and the leader in the first legislative action in relation to the Erie Canal. He died at Rutherford, S. C., 4 August 1849.

Whitney Family
Vol. 1 p. 357
S. Whitney Phoenix
N. Y. 1878

It was probably the general discussion of this great theme, more than the result of any one influence, which led to the crystallization of the movement, when on February 4, 1808, Joshua Forman, a member of the New York Legislature from Onondaga County, offered the following:

"Whereas the President of the United States by his message to Congress, delivered at their meeting in October last, did recommend that the surplus money in the treasury, over and above such sums as could be applied to the extinguishment of the national debt, be appropriated to the great national objects of opening canals and making turnpike roads. And whereas the State of New York, holding the first commercial rank in the United States, possesses within herself the best route of communication between the Atlantic and western waters, by means of a canal, between the tide waters of the Hudson river and Lake Erie,--through which the wealth and trade of that large portion of the United States bordering on the upper lakes, would forever flow to our great commercial emporium. And whereas the legislatures of our sister States, have made great exertions to secure to their own States the trade of that wide extended country, west of the Alleghanies, under natural advantages vastly inferior to those of this State, And whereas it is highly important that these advantages should as speedily as possible be improved, both to preserve and increase the commerce and increase the commerce and national importance of this State: Resolved, (if the honorable the Senate concurs herein) that a joint committee be appointed to take into consideration the prosperity of exploring, and causing an accurate survey to be made of the most eligible and direct route for a canal to open a communication between the tide waters of the Hudson river and Lake Erie; to the end that Congress may be enabled to appropriate such sums as may be necessary to the accomplishment of that great national object."

In the general appropriation bill now passed the sum of \$600 was allotted to a survey of this proposed canal and the work was done by James Geddes, whose report, at a later day, became important.

Mr. Forman's bill passed, but amounted to nothing.

The Great American Canals
pp. 50-51
Archer Butler Hulbert
The Arthur H. Clark Co.,
Cleveland, Ohio
1904



The
Onondaga Historical Association,
Syracuse, N. Y.

311 MONTGOMERY STREET

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Historian
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Feb 12-1927

Dear Mr Bent

For reference

If you will refer you find to
Joshua V H Clark's book on Onondaga a Reminiscence
of earlier and later times - 2 Vols. found in all libraries
you will find in Vol II Chapter XIV Paying with
portrait a very complete history of Joshua Forman
of Union 1799

Yours truly
Onondaga Historical Association

I am mailing to you
Copy of Syracuse Centennial
See further under Chap 16

CCF
as of
Frank

Patterson, Lot

9
1

Records show one Lot

Lot Patterson

Pvt. in Capt. Leonard Kellogg's Co.,
Detached Riflemen (Moseley's) N.Y. Militia

Commencement of service: July 6, 1812

Expiration of service : Oct. 28, 1812

"Prisoner to the enemy -- on parole"

Substitute for Joshua Forman. See card for
him.

'98

War of 1812 Record

UCSL of 1798 forman - J - 00036

Forman, Joshua

From: Poughkeepsie , N.Y.

Last residence: Rutherford, N.C.

Records show one

Joshua Forman

Pvt. Detached Riflemen (Moseley's) N.Y. Militia

Furnished a substitute in person of Lot
Patterson--see card for him.

Joshua Harmon A.B. 1798

Jashua Forman

F.B.
1798