

A new fire engine, the steamer L. P. Dayton (named for Lewis P. Dayton, Mayor of Buffalo 1874-1875), constructed by the Amoskeag Manufacturing Co., of Manchester, New Hampshire and placed into service on June 2, 1875, was the first engine housed at the new firehouse. The steamer Dayton did not stay there very long and by 1878 the steamer General Rogers (named for General William F. Rogers, Mayor of Buffalo 1868-1869) was stationed at Engine House #2.

The new fire house boasted several mechanical features which were considered advancements in their day. The building was heated by a Peter Martin Patent Moist Air Furnace manufactured by Hauck & Garono Hardware Dealers at 505 Main Street. Besides heating the house, the furnace also provided hot tap water for the bathroom on the second floor. The bathroom with its hot and cold running water was specifically cited as “one of the noticeably excellent features of the building.” An electrical stall door opener was another new technological innovation introduced in the building. William Wait, the first engineer at Engine House #2, invented a way to utilize steam from the building furnace and direct it to the fire engine to keep it ready at all times without having to keep the steamer engine fired.<sup>126</sup>



**Early photo of combined Hook & Ladder #9, Engine #2, circa 1900. *The Buffalo Fire Historical Society.***

The new engine house was staffed by some of the first paid firemen in Buffalo. At that time the Buffalo’s firemen consisted of paid staff supplemented by volunteer fire companies. The inaugural staff at Engine House #2 also included Engineer William B. Lewis, Stoker Cornelius O’Brian, Driver and Steamer Walter S. Harris, Driver and Hose Cart Attendant James P. Winspear and Firemen Eugene Jarvis, Allen J. Maxon and Henry Metzger.

As the years went by and the surrounding residential area grew in popularity, a need arose to house a ladder at the site. In 1896 Louis P. J. Eckel and Alan J. Ackerman of the architectural firm Eckel & Ackerman were commissioned to design a \$20,000 addition to the building<sup>127</sup> and on July 1, 1897 Hook and Ladder #9 was based at the Jersey Street site. By that time Engine House #2 was well known for its fine horses and on November 14, 1898 firemen there set a record when they executed a three horse hitch in the “astonishing” time of six seconds.<sup>128</sup>

Although there are many beautiful fire houses in Buffalo, Engine House #2 is unique. The three-story brick Second Empire building is an excellent example of the style that was so popular during the 1870s. Its highly pitched mansard roof still retains its hexagonal slate tile and is pleasantly interrupted by dormers with pedimented windows. The second story windows on the building’s Jersey Street facade are decorated with stone lintels and pediment-like stone heads in a carved foliate pattern. The second story also has a series of nine brick pilasters capped by stone with

a scroll and foliate pattern. The first floor originally had highly ornamental entrance doors with stone decorations that were similar to the adornments crowning the second story windows. On the Plymouth Avenue facade the first floor windows are of the round arched variety while the second story features segmental arched windows. The interior of the building retains its tin ceiling and marble slab bathrooms. When built, the first floor featured high wainscoting of alternate ash and black walnut.<sup>129</sup> Many of the design features of the interior clearly show its original considerations for the interdependency between the firemen and their horses.

January 8, 1917 remains a day of infamy for the fire house, for that sorry evening a roaring blaze thoroughly gutted the station house. The unit's pride and joy, a shiny-new American LaFrance gasoline pumper (one of Buffalo's first fire trucks), fell right through the floor and into the basement. The horses of the "old fashioned" No. 11 Steamer, the unit fighting the fire, must have had a good long laugh when it did.

The last major change to the building seems to have occurred when the firehouse was being restored after the fire. At that time, the ornamental entrance doors on Jersey Street were removed and larger doors installed as a concession to the advent of gasoline engines when the meaning of "horsepower" changed to only indicate a relative index.<sup>130</sup> With the opening of the fire house in 1997 at Elmwood Avenue and Virginia Street, the chapter of Jersey Street Engine House #2's history as a fire house was closed. The old building served Buffalo's west side community well during its 122 active and continual years as an engine house. The Jersey St. Firehouse #2/Hook and Ladder #9 building was designated a Buffalo Local Historic Landmark in 1998 through the efforts of the Kleinhans Community Association and the Preservation Coalition of Erie County.



**Hook and Ladder #9, circa 1900. *The Buffalo Fire Historical Society.***

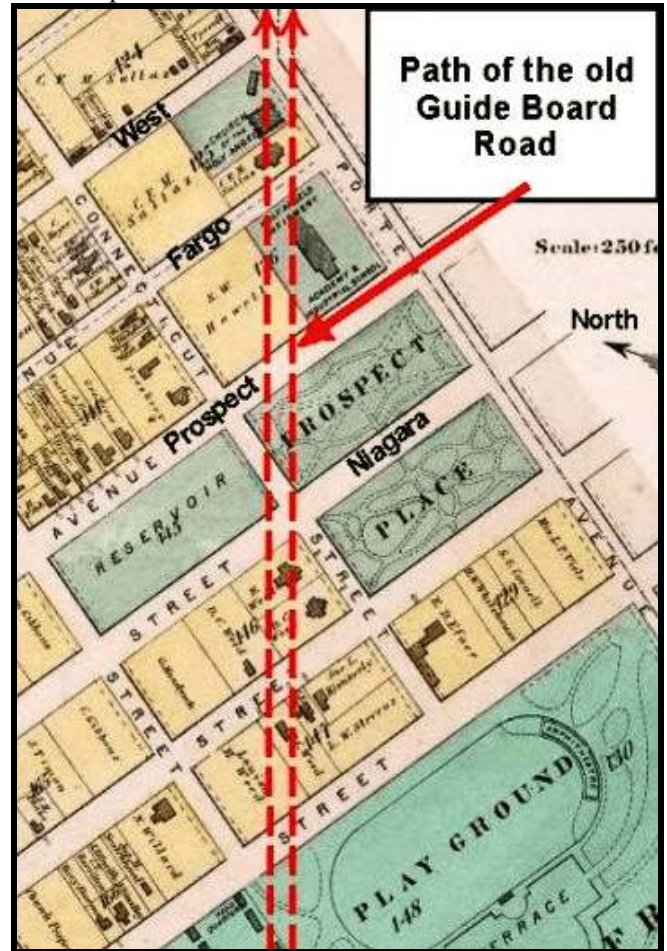
On the small strip of Plymouth Ave. between Jersey St. and Porter Ave. Catherine and Elizabeth Hoffman built a two-family wood-frame house at **152 Plymouth Ave.** in 1903. They apparently built it for income. One flat was rented for many years to Edwin Lodge, a salesman and the other to Loretta Coons. By 1930, the house was lived in by Howard Hoehn. In 1936 the house was purchased by Anthony and Lucy Thomas who had six children, five of whom survived to adulthood. Anthony died about 1940, but Lucy continued to live at **152 Plymouth Avenue**, raising her children (the youngest of whom was only about two months old), taking care of her mother and providing a home for her children and grandchildren. She passed away at the age of 95 on May 9, 1994. The house was purchased that year by Fr. Tom Ribits and the Oblates of Saint Francis who began the process of restoring the home. It is now known as Salesian Studios.

The last house on Plymouth Ave. before Porter Ave. is an unusually constructed ceramic/terra cotta tile and stucco-covered Arts & Crafts style house at **154 Plymouth Ave.**, built in 1921 by Walter W. Myers, prominent civil engineer, as his own home. Myers was a very bright and ambitious young man. Born about 1877, he graduated from Buffalo's Central High School and then went to New York City where he received a degree in civil engineering from New York University after passing a series of examinations at the age of 20. At just 22 years of age, he began working for the George C. Diehl surveying company. Myers gained prominence when he was given the important task of surveying the grounds of the Pan American Exposition. Myers then worked from 1904-1910 as an engineer in charge of construction for the International Railway Company (streetcars). From 1910 until his retirement Myers worked as general superintendent of the Rock Asphalt Construction Company and was responsible for paving many of Buffalo's streets.

Myers married Katherine Becker and they had three children: a son, Henry B. Myers and two daughters, Marjorie L. Myers and Mrs. Marion E. Moir. Walter Myers was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal church. He was a member of their choir and was well known for his singing ability. He was only 57 years old when he died in 1934 at **154 Plymouth Avenue**. His funeral was held at the home on Sept. 24.<sup>131</sup>



*The Man Who Stayed for "One More Shot." Job Hoisington as portrayed in a Dec. 20, 1942 Courier Express article when the U.S. was engaged in World War II. Hoisington was called an "inspiration to modern Americans."*



Guide Board Road, in use since Revolutionary times, ran between Main St. and the Niagara River. Today the street is known as North St. and Porter Avenue. At West Ave., Guide Board Rd. was closed in 1829 when York St., part of the "new" Black Rock grid street system, was opened and intersected Guide Board Road at a 45 degree turn (York St., from West Ave. to the Niagara River is now also Porter Avenue). The old route of Guide Board Rd. (shown in this 1872 Hopkins Atlas) was used by the British used when they burned Buffalo. Shown is the point where the old path connects with present Porter Ave. at West Avenue.



On Dec. 13, 1813 at what is now Porter near Plymouth Avenue, Job Hoisington single-handedly held back the British and their Native American allies, allowing the American militia and Buffalo residents to escape as the British invaded the villages of Black Rock and Buffalo, burning them to the ground. *Illustration by Don Mayer.*

### *The Bravery of Job Hoisington*

The intersection of Plymouth and Porter Avenues is significant because of an event that took place there long before homes and buildings dotted the edges of the streets. A portion of Porter Avenue, along with North Street, was once called the "Guide Board Road" and was a primary thoroughfare from Main Street to the Niagara River, in use since Revolutionary times. So it is no surprise that the road was a strategic thoroughfare during the War of 1812. During the course of the war, several battles took place in its general vicinity, but none so tragically dramatic as the burning of the villages of Black Rock and Buffalo on December 30, 1813 and January 1, 1814. One Buffalonian, Job Hoisington (8/10/1762 - 12/30/1813), became a folk-hero because of his bravery and self-sacrifice.

Job was born in Southington, near Farmington, Connecticut to a family of farmers. After the end of the Revolutionary War, Job, along with several members of his family, moved to Panton Vermont and later to Vergennes Vermont. While living in Panton, he married his wife, Sarah Elizabeth Knapp (1776 - 1850) on December 13, 1792.

Job had more than an ordinary education for his day. He excelled in mathematics and was a man of energy and perseverance, possessing endurance and intelligence, and was both resolute and patriotic. At just five feet and two inches tall, he was quite broad and heavy bodied.

Job was a master mason, carpenter and builder, employing many men. Job worked in all kinds of construction, erecting buildings, mills and bridges. He was exceedingly fond of tea and would take it with him to work, enjoying it while his men indulged in beer or strong drink. He was also active in public affairs and was Captain of the Militia at Vergennes for twenty years.

For reasons not completely clear, Job moved to Buffalo in late 1810 or the spring of 1811 and sent for his family to move to Buffalo from Vermont in autumn 1811. Job's wife, Sarah, along with their six living children (the couple had nine, but three had died in infancy), joined Job in Buffalo. In February 1812, Sarah Hoisington became one of the 29 original founding members of Buffalo's First Presbyterian Church.<sup>132</sup> After the family moved to Buffalo, Job and Sarah had one more child, a son named William Henry, born there on April 10, 1813.

While in Buffalo, Job continued to work as a carpenter and built the first ferry to cross Buffalo Creek. During the winter of 1812-1813, Job built mills for William Hodge Sr., one of Buffalo's leading citizens. The Hoisington family lived in a log house on lot 35 owned by Hodge (located at the northwest corner of Main and Seneca Streets). Later that winter, the available carpentry work turned gruesome: Hodge and Job made nearly 300 pine coffins for the American soldiers who died at Flint Hill of disease.

When the War of 1812 came to Buffalo, Job didn't shy away from it, even though he was about 50 years old. An expert marksman, he joined the ranks of the U.S. Army Buffalo militia (the "Buffalonians") headed by Captain William Hull.<sup>133</sup> Job was among those who took part in the First Battle of Black Rock (July 11, 1813) when the regular American forces, supplemented with Buffalo militia and the Seneca tribe of Native Americans, successfully drove off the British invasion of the village of Black Rock.

Later in the year, as times grew more desperate, Job and his family moved two miles to the north to Cold Spring (perhaps where Hodge also owned property at Main and Utica Streets). Early in the morning on Thursday, December 30, 1813, "gallant Job Hoisington," as he was called, heard the news that the British had landed below Squaw Island and were marching along the Niagara River near the Grand Battery (at the juncture of the Niagara River and the Scajaquada Creek) toward Buffalo. When the alarm was given, Job Hoisington called all his children around him, gave them each a kiss and an affectionate parting as he left with his musket to defend the country against the British and their Native American allies from Canada.

Job's family (his wife and their seven children), left their home on foot that cold morning. Job's wife Sarah, a wiry, small and energetic woman, rolled out a barrel of flour from her house along with a barrel of pork, a feather bed and a few other things. She hid them under a brush heap, covering them with snow. Sarah then left the house with her four youngest children and walked along Main Street toward Williamsville. Job and Sarah's three oldest children (Harriet, Almema and Henry Richard) were picked up by American soldiers on horseback who were fleeing the invasion. They carried the children 15-20 miles to the town of Clarence, and took one child many miles further, into Genesee County and left the child with strangers.

While keeping an eye on her three youngest children (Eliza, Sam and Mary Jane), Sarah carried her baby, William Henry (who was eight months old and partially blind), as they walked the nine miles to Ellicott Creek where they stayed at the house of an acquaintance. For several days, Sarah Hoisington did not know where her three oldest children were, or even if they were alive.

When Job felt that his family was well on the way to safety, he joined up with his militia company, led by Lieutenant John Seeley, a carpenter who lived at the corner of Auburn and Niagara Streets in Black Rock. First, the militia helped families depart in teams and they then headed to the front.

The British and their Native Americans allies marched south along the Niagara River until they approached Guide Board Road (between the current Connecticut and Vermont Streets<sup>134</sup>) and then headed east toward Main Street. When the U.S. forces met them, they initially stood their ground well. Yet when over 2,000 of the new army recruits broke and fled, only a few hundred were left to face as many Native Americans, allies of the British, and over 1,000 disciplined British troops. For a brief period what was left of the army and militia contested the field, but seeing that they were flanked, they retreated along the Guide Board Road eastward.

But on what is now Porter Avenue near the intersection of Plymouth Avenue, Job Hoisington lingered, withdrew a little, stopped, and said, "I will have one more shot at them," and started to go back. His companions urged him to go on with them, but they could not convince him. That was the last time that anyone had seen Job Hoisington alive.

When Job's wife Sarah returned to her Buffalo home, she found it burned to the ground. Only its cellar remained as did the barrel of pork, flour and other items which she had hid, buried in the snow before she escaped. To survive the remainder of the harsh winter, she boarded over her home's cellar, built an oven, and supported her family by baking and making beer for soldiers.

Sometime thereafter (some accounts say ten days, while other accounts say later during the spring), Job Hoisington's fate was finally learned as his mutilated remains were discovered when the warm spring breezes and rays of sunshine melted the snowy shroud under which he was covered. He was found beside a log not far from the former site of Frederick Gridley's mansion at 404 Porter Ave., the grounds of which were bounded by Porter Avenue, York Street and Plymouth Avenue. (Gridley, along with William G. Fargo, were responsible for changing Twelfth Street's name to Plymouth Avenue during the 1870s.)

It was Job's wife Sarah who had to identify him as several bodies were found in the vicinity. They were all stripped of most of their clothing, mutilated and frozen out of shape. She was able to recognize Job only by his name marked on his undershirt. Sarah's identification of Job revealed his fate at the battle: a bullet had perforated, and three tomahawks had cleft, his skull and neck. His scalp was torn from his bleeding head as a trophy of savage conquest and token of British inhumanity. His faithful rifle lay empty by his side, and no doubt his death was avenged before it occurred.

Protecting his family and comrades, Job Hoisington died a warrior's death, but he was not allowed to rest in the peace he had earned. In the spring of 1814 his remains were interred at the Cold Spring Burying Ground at the intersection of Delaware Avenue and Ferry Street, and there they remained for approximately 35 years. About 1850 most of the bones of those buried at the cemetery were exhumed, placed in boxes, and moved to a secluded place in the then-new Forest Lawn Cemetery. Among the relics, the skull of the mighty marksman was at once recognized by the injuries it had received, and many who noticed it still remembered and loved Job. Although his remains were moved to Forest Lawn, Hoisington's skull never made the journey. Someone made off with it during the move. To this day, his skull has never been found.<sup>135</sup>

After the battle, while life was difficult for widow Sarah and her children, they persevered. Her seven living children ranged in age from 18 years to nine months. From the federal government, she received \$25 for her losses and another \$20 from a concerned local committee. She also received a compensation of \$4 per month because of Job's death.<sup>136</sup> Ironically, the First Presbyterian Church (that Sarah helped to found in 1812), moved to Symphony Circle in the late 1880s, a short distance from where her husband was killed in battle.

The Hoisington family remained in Buffalo for about a decade after Job's death. In August 1824 Sarah remarried Asahel Munger, Sr., a widower carpenter from Lockport, NY. Munger died three years later after the couple relocated to Bethlehem, Ohio. By 1833, Sarah moved to Oberlin, Ohio so that her youngest son, William Henry, could attend college. Sarah died in Oberlin on April 18, 1850.

Job and Sarah's oldest (living) child, Harriet (born 1795), married Luke Draper in spring or summer, 1813. They lived in Evans (Erie County), and in 1818 moved to Springfield, Pennsylvania.

The second (living) child Almena (born 1797), apparently went to live with her sister Harriet. She died 1826 at Springfield, unmarried.

Several of the Hoisingtons' children became ministers. Their oldest son, Henry Richard (born 1801), was initially educated for the ministry by the people of Buffalo's First Presbyterian Church. He worked in Buffalo in a dry-goods store and later became a printer. He then moved east to Utica and later to New York City. He prepared for college at Bloomfield Academy in New Jersey, worked his way through Williams College (by printing and teaching) and graduated in 1828, Phi Beta Kappa. He then attended Auburn Theological Seminary, graduating in 1831. He initially preached at the First Presbyterian Church in Aurora, and helped his youngest brother William Henry to prepare for Oberlin College, by taking him into his home and tutoring him until he started at Oberlin. In

1833 Henry Richard and his wife, Nancy Lyman Hoisington, sailed as missionaries to Ceylon. Reverend Hoisington was an instructor and later principal of Battacotta Seminary, and published several books on Hindu science, religion, and philosophy, after having learned Tamil and been instructed by Tamil religious elders. His ill health dictated that he return permanently to the United States, where he lectured at Williams College, preached at the Congregational Church in Williamstown, Mass., and later was called to the Congregational Church at Centerbrook, Connecticut. There he was stricken in 1858 while preaching in the pulpit, and died soon after. He is buried at Central Burial Ground, Essex, Connecticut.

Another missionary child was Sarah Elizabeth ("Eliza," born 1804), who in 1825 married her step-brother Asahel Mujnger Jr. in Lockport, NY. In 1839 Sarah and Asahel (who was an Oberlin student and a carpenter) set off to be missionaries to Native Americans in the Oregon Territory. After many weeks of journeying across the plains and mountains they arrived at the mission of Rev. Whitman at Waiilatpu where they worked for about a year. Later they went to the mission in Salem, Oregon, where Asahel died. Sarah later remarried a prominent English pioneer settler in Oregon, Henry Buxton. She died in Forest Grove, Oregon, and is buried there with her second husband, Henry Buxton.

Samuel Turner (born 1807), the second living son of Job and Sarah, age six when his father died, presumably lived in Buffalo with his mother and brothers and sisters until adulthood. In 1834 he married Hannah Jacobs, and their first two children, Amanda and William, were born "near Niagara Falls" (1835 and 1838 respectively). Next came three daughters and a son, born in Lorraine County or in Oberlin, Ohio. The family then moved to Wisconsin, where the next child was born at Farmington. Samuel's first wife Hannah died in 1854, and in 1859 he remarried Mary Johnson and had two more children, the last one born at Lodi, Wisconsin in 1864. Samuel became a prominent farmer in Wisconsin.

Mary Jane (born 1813), the next of Job's children after Samuel, was unmarried and lived with her brother Samuel in her later years.

Although the Hoisingtons' youngest son William Henry (their only child born in Buffalo) had defective sight, he too became a well-known minister. At the age of seventeen he was amusing himself with the lens of his mother's spectacles, when for the first time he saw the form of the letters of the alphabet. A stranger, noticing his condition, gave him a magnifying glass, by the aid of which he soon learned to read. Securing some books from his brother, Henry Richard, who was a student at Williams College, he applied himself so assiduously, that at the end of three months he wrote a letter to his brother in Latin. On account of its educational advantages, Mrs. Hoisington moved to Oberlin, Ohio soon after the college was founded. In 1833, William moved there and studied, then taught for nine years. With a view to making the ministry his life work, he studied theology and was ordained. In 1845 he married Rachel Coleman, and was a preacher, first in Ohio; he later became a traveling lecturer on many topics such as Egypt, astronomy, and political economy. He traveled throughout the west, as far as Oregon, and lived for a time in Wisconsin where his wife Rachel died. He then remarried Lauretta Cutler of Ohio, a former nurse to the Union Army. He served as Unitarian Minister in Wisconsin (where his brother lived) and later in South Dakota. He apparently had spent time in Chicago, for after his death in 1899 (at Rochelle, Illinois) his body was taken to Graceland Cemetery in Chicago, cremated and his ashes scattered under a large tree north of the chapel, at the deceased's express desire. He died at age 86.<sup>137</sup>

Job Hoisington is indeed legendary. In 1814 his bravery inspired Elder Turner<sup>138</sup> to write the following poem about him:

**On the Death of a Mr. Job Hoisington,**  
*Who fell in the Battle at Black Rock, on the 30<sup>th</sup> Dec., 1813;*

**A POEM,**  
By Elder A. TURNER.

1  
A Melancholy fate,  
    To you I will relate,  
And give to you a short detail  
    Of a poor widow's fate.

2  
'Twas on the thirtieth day  
    Of December the last,  
Alarm was made, and cannons they  
    Did roar and play so fast.

3

'Twas down at the Black Rock,  
The battle first began;  
The people they began to flock,  
And to the country ran.

4

From Buffalo they flee,  
And make a rapid flight;  
Male and female we now do see,  
Crying, "a horrid sight."

5

'Twas "escape for thy life,  
No time to look behind;"  
The husband, children and the wife,  
No more can either find.

6

British and Indians all,  
The massacre began;  
Arrows of death, the leaden balls,  
Forbid our troops to stand.

7

Widows and orphans were,  
Made in a moment's time;  
Children and mothers, all despair,  
Their fathers, husbands, find.

8

How many garments were,  
Stained with purple gore ?  
While blood and carnage do declare,  
The battle it was sore.

9

But honor did redound  
To the brave SEELYE'S name,  
Who did command and stand his ground,  
With candor and with fame.

10

While others did retreat,  
And balls like hail did fly;  
This hero scorned to be beat,  
Had rather fight or die.

11

But the alarming part,  
Of all the tragedy;  
Broke the kind mother's tender heart,  
To hear her children cry.

12

My pa'! They will him kill,  
We ne'er shall see him more;  
O, no! my children, all be still,  
It soon will be all o'er.

13

But when the battle's done,  
I look for the return,  
Of my dear husband, HOISINGTON,  
But I am left to mourn.

14

Whether alive he be,  
Or in the battle fell;  
Or yet a pris'ner carried away,  
I surely cannot tell.

15

Upon suspense I wait,  
For ten long days or more;  
I now am brought to know my fate,  
My HOISINGTON'S no more !

16

In death's cold hand he's found,  
Wrapt up in purple gore;  
His head and body scar'd with wounds,  
The tomahawk had tore.

17

And still for to increase,  
And irritate my pain;  
Three of my children in great haste,  
Carried by light horsemen,

18

Forty or fifty miles,  
Unto Batavia's coast;  
Scattered they were, I knew not where,  
Or whether they were lost.

19

After ten days or more,  
I found they were all safe;  
Which seemed to heal my wound or sore,  
And gave my soul relief.

20

And now to God with all  
That I do here possess,  
I give away to him, and call  
For gratitude and grace.



That this bereaving stroke,  
 Be sanctified to me;  
 That my hard heart of stone be broke,  
 And from this world may flee.

And rise triumphant high,  
 Far hence away to soar,  
 Above the regions of the sky,  
 Where wars shall be no more.

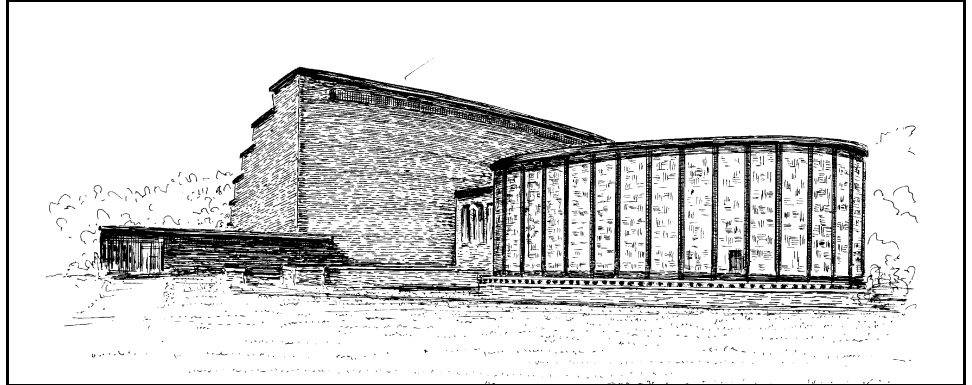
### ***Kleinhans Music Hall***

Adjacent to the homes located on the east side of Plymouth Avenue between Pennsylvania Street and Jersey Street is found a striking scene of pastoral beauty contrasted with sculptural architecture, the marriage of the artistic expression of America's greatest landscape design team and one of the twentieth century's premier international architectural firms. At the intersection of Richmond Avenue, Pennsylvania Street, Porter Avenue, North Street and Wadsworth Street is found Symphony Circle, a circular greenspace and an integral component of Buffalo's parkway system, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in 1868 and built in 1874. Crowning the parkland is Kleinhans Music Hall, appearing from afar to be a sculpture of a violin or cello. The hall was designed in 1938 and built 1939-1940 by the renowned architectural firm Eliel & Eero Saarinen in association with the Buffalo-based architectural firm Franklyn J. & William A. Kidd.

The music hall was built for, and is home to, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, one of Buffalo's cultural gems. The building that was constructed for them is one of Buffalo's *great* buildings, a treasure of international importance. While Kleinhans Music Hall was built nearly 100 years after Historic Plymouth Avenue and its surrounding streets first began to be settled, the building and the activities that have taken place within are so significant that the neighborhood now takes its identity from its proximity to Kleinhans Music Hall. Even Symphony Circle, the land surrounding the hall, was so named in 1958 because of Kleinhans, displacing "The Circle," as originally named by Frederick Law Olmsted.

In 1934, Edward L. Kleinhans, proprietor of The Kleinhans Company, a gentlemen's clothing store, passed away and left a provision in his will that the bulk of his estate should be used for the construction of a new music hall to be given to Buffalo in perpetuity. Kleinhans' wife, Mary Seaton, died a few months later and the process of constructing a music hall officially began.

In 1934, Edward L. Kleinhans, proprietor of The Kleinhans Company, a gentlemen's clothing store, passed away and left a provision in his will that the bulk of his estate should be used for the construction of a new music hall to be given to Buffalo in perpetuity. Kleinhans' wife, Mary Seaton, died a few months later and the process of constructing a music hall officially began.



**Kleinhans Music Hall, illustration by Lawrence D. McIntyre.**



**Kleinhans Music Hall and First Presbyterian Church, showing the relationship between Plymouth Avenue homes and these landmark buildings. Painted by Ross J. Drago from his garden at 101 Plymouth Avenue, circa 1955.**

Several years passed before the estate was liquidated and by 1938, the music hall committee was aggressively searching for a low-cost site for the new music hall. Heirs to the estate of Mrs. Trueman Avery, who had lived in her Newport-like palatial mansion situated on three and one-half acres on Symphony Circle, offered the mansion to the building committee for a nominal amount. The music hall committee was impressed with the park-like beauty of Symphony Circle and selected the site over all other proposed locations.

The building committee was able to recruit Eliel and his son Eero Saarinen (the Michigan-based internationally famous Finnish architects) to design the music hall, working in association with Buffalo architects Kidd & Kidd, who supervised construction. The music hall was built between 1939-1940 in a Modern style with International and Arts & Crafts style influences. The Saarinens studied Symphony Circle at great length with the intent to have the hall be an organic design that complemented Symphony Circle.

Named by Edward Kleinhans as a memorial to his wife, Mary Seaton Kleinhans and his mother, Mary Livingston Kleinhans, Kleinhans Music Hall outlived the company that provided the fortune to create it: the Kleinhans Co. announced its demise in 1992.

Kleinhans Music Hall was one of the first important American commissions on which Eliel and Eero collaborated. It was also one of the few such buildings erected during the Depression years, constructed not only with Edward and Mary Kleinhans' funds, but also with a matching grant from the federal Public Works Administration.

The building was designed to contain two significant halls: a Mankato-limestone faced chamber music hall/multipurpose space that seats about 800 (the so-called Mary Seaton Room) and a rough rose-colored brick faced main auditorium that seats approximately 2,900 people. These two halls are joined by a wide lobby with entrances on two sides of the building, facing both Pennsylvania Street and Porter Avenue.

The curving shapes of the exterior, which faithfully reflect interior spaces, look forward to Eero's later architecture, while the clean lines, rich woods and careful craftsmanship, evident on the interior, hearken back to the elder Saarinen's devotion to Arts & Crafts ideals.

The Saarinens' concert hall quickly gained renown for its acoustical excellence and became a place of pilgrimage for architects and acoustical engineers from all over the world. Many post-Wold War II concert halls show its influence.

Both Symphony Circle and Kleinhans Music Hall have been restored in recent years. Kleinhans Music Hall has completed a \$12 million restoration. Perhaps the most impressive feature of the restoration was the original reflecting pool that was designed to surround the Mary Seaton Room. It was recreated in September 2001 after being filled in and turned into a lawn during the 1960s.

At the same time that Kleinhans Music Hall was being restored, a ten-year initiative was begun in 1992 to restore Symphony Circle to Olmsted and Vaux's original design. It too was capped off by a dramatic restoration in 2002 with a \$500,000 re-creation of the original center island and its ornamental light standard.

Symphony Circle and Porter Avenue, as part of Olmsted & Vaux's Buffalo parkway system, were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. In 1980, Kleinhans Music Hall was listed on the National Register of Historic Places by virtue of being a contributing structure within the Allentown Historic Preservation District. In 1989, Kleinhans Music Hall was designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service, the highest distinction given to a building in the U.S.

After being designated a National Historic Landmark, Kleinhans Music Hall's accolades continued to grow. In an article published in 1998, the *New York Times* said that "Of all the buildings that have gone up in Buffalo in the last 75 years, the most influential by far is the Kleinhans Music Hall..."<sup>139</sup> In 2006, *Buffalo News* art and architecture critic Richard Huntington said that Kleinhans Music Hall "sits on the earth with an incredibly light touch. Simple curved forms, step-down geometry and a long, low porch join in effortless harmony. The outside telegraphs precisely what is within; the only surprise is the greater freedom of the sweeping curves. The hall itself, famous for its marvelous acoustics, is like some giant, flaring musical instrument constructed of the finest crafted wood. Sight and sound are perfectly matched in this extraordinary building."<sup>140</sup>

While Symphony Circle and Kleinhans Music Hall have



**The Kleinhans Music Hall dominates the background of Victorian-era homes found on the east side of Plymouth Avenue between Pennsylvania Street and Jersey Street.**