

CITY OF NORWICH FOUNDER'S DAY

The Formula Years

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Part One

The now City of Norwich may look back with pride at the history of a company which has become known through the development of an ointment that has been used worldwide for the treatment of burns. When the Village of Norwich was incorporated April 17, 1816, this company was not in existence; however this ointment would eventually make the name of Norwich a household name was first introduced to America by Dr. Samuel Jeffery, who had been given the formula for this ointment by Sir Astley Cooper in 1827. First known as "Cooper Alum Ointment" this top secret formula would eventually be refined to the product known today as "Unguentine."

In January of 1885 the train from New York brought to Norwich a tall stranger dressed in black who would eventually forever change the name of Norwich as during his stay here he would be responsible for a business today which was recognized as one of American's leading pharmaceutical companies. As just an ordinary passenger departing the train, there was no fanfare to greet him, no bands, no speakers, and upon his sudden departure, he left as he came, totally unnoticed. This gentleman, Lafayette F. Moore, was neither a pharmacist or physician, but a Baptist minister. As a pastor of a Baptist church on Long Island, Rev.

Moore had been described as an eloquent and dedicated minister, but his feelings were that he was not doing enough for his family in the material way. A change of his future life work may have been the outcome of a meeting with his brother who had retired from a small pill-making company in Manhattan. Upon his retirement the brother had brought with him two pieces of equipment – a pill cutter and a gelatin coating machine which he proceeded to give to Rev. Moore. After a short time Rev. Moore made the hard decision to try a business career, related to his family that he would send for them later when established, boarded the train for Norwich, taking the two pieces of equipment and a few clothes.

Why the upstate Village of Norwich may have been as a result of the conversation that he had previously with the pastor of the Marcy Avenue Baptist Church in Brooklyn, whose son, Dr. Reuben Jeffrey had moved to Norwich following his marriage to the daughter of Isaac Newton, one of the community's prominent families. Upon arrival, Rev. Moore secured a room over a cooper shop on Mitchell Street and immediately began to manufacture a small line of pills with his crude equipment under the name of "L. F. Moore, Pill Manufacturer."

The need for supplies to manufacture his pills resulted in his frequent visits to the Corner Drug Store (then

owned by T.D. Miller) where from his meager working capital he became acquainted with Oscar G. Bell, a pharmacist employed at the store. During the time of purchasing supplies, Moore and Bell would chat as Bell filled the orders for quinine, gelatin or other ingredients. Moore would then grope his pockets for the necessary money to pay for supplies then hurry back to his room to compound another supply of pills. This operation of manufacturing was laborious, but he enjoyed the work. Upon completion he would count the pills to containers and proudly label using the name written above.

Stacking the small packages neatly in a basket, carefully locking the door of his room, he would set out to sell his product spending the afternoon walking the surrounding countryside and calling on local physicians in the area. As these selling trips became more and more frequent, the sprightly step of the slender man dressed in black became a familiar sight to people in and around Norwich.

However Moore's ambition was greater than his working capital. In the interim he had sent for his wife and eighteen year old son – upon their arrival he had moved to a larger apartment and his debts continued to grow. By this time he had obtained credit from T. D. Miller and Oscar Bell had informed Mr. Miller that he would be responsible for Moore's debts.

March 1, 1886 would be a date with destiny for Lafayette Moore as he accidentally met Dr. Reuben Jeffrey, the minister's son whom he had known previously while living in Brooklyn. Dr. Jeffrey beamed from ear to ear when he saw Moore coming down the street with his basket over his arm. The two men exchanged greetings, clasped hands, and looking Moore over carefully, he recalled the evenings in Brooklyn when Moore had come to visit his father at the rectory of Marcy Avenue. Since those long ago days, Jeffrey had attended college, earned his degree in medicine and following his marriage had left his practice in Brooklyn.

Lafayette Moore proceeded to inform Dr. Jeffrey of his new business enterprise and invited him to look at his operation in his apartment in the Burr Block. However upon approaching the entrance to the building, they were confronted by Mr. Burr, landlord, who courteously requested \$3 from Moore for a month's rent. Moore did not have the sum and turned to Dr. Jeffrey and asked him for a loan. Dr. Jeffrey told him to wait there and he would go uptown and secure the money. Dr. Jeffrey later wrote, "I did not know just where to borrow the money (I lacked the experience in that line then that made me famous in later years) so I called on T.D. Miller."

Dr. Jeffrey found Miller at the Corner Drug Store and asked for a loan. Miller explained that making loans



"was contrary to the constitution and by-laws of his drug shop." As Dr. Jeffrey began to leave, Miller's curiosity was aroused and he asked the visitor why he wanted the money. After explaining the description of Moore's business, Dr. Jeffrey offered Miller a "one-eighth" business interest in the "Company" in exchange for the proposed loan of three dollars. With a broad grin, Miller pulled a wad of green bills from his pocket of apron, counted out three, proceeded and gave them to Dr. Jeffrey. With this very informal business transaction, the "Company" had its first stockholder. Dr. Jeffrey would comment in later years, if it had not been for this kind act, the company never would have existed.

Again Moore was in the pill business, manufacturing more pills each day, but not being what we know as an astute business man, managed to spend the profits before paying his indebtedness. How many times has that happened to business, not only in locally, but nationwide? Having reached a \$200 credit with T.D. Miller, Oscar Bell became worried. While going over the ledgers, Miller found Moore's indebtedness and quickly asked Bell to pay

the debt as he promised to do. With a wife and two small children, Bell was unsure of just how he was to pay this outstanding bill from his meager salary at the drug store. Obtaining a loan from his wife's uncle who lived in a nearby town, he proceeded to make full payment to Miller. Informing Moore of this business transaction the next morning, this resulted in a partnership the labels now reading "Moore and Bell - Pill Manufacturers, Norwich, N.Y."

With the formation of the new partnership, business and events ran smoothly for a while, the firm beginning to prosper in a small way. However with limited credit and capital progress was slow and Moore became dissatisfied, which grew steadily and abruptly one day he pulled up stakes and left town.

It was later learned that Moore moved to Clinton, New York, entered into negotiations with W.M. Bristol and Mr. Myers which ended with the formation of Clinton Pharmaceutical Company, which is today the internationally known Bristol-Myers Company. Employed only a short time by this new company, Moore left and a few years later passed away some-

where in the Catskill Mountains.

With the departure of Moore, he left behind outstanding bills and the financial affairs of Bell were in somewhat of a serious state. However with Oscar Bell's determination it was to see him through this crisis. Explaining his state of affairs to Dr. Jeffrey and asking him for a loan of \$200, he would leave his position with Miller at the Drug Store and enter the business alone. It is understandable that Dr. Jeffrey was sympathetic towards Bell and Dr. Jeffrey went to his father-in-law, Isaac S. Newton, and secured the loan.

With this new working capital, Oscar Bell was in business alone for himself, and with much fortitude and determination this new business gradually began to prosper. It was written above that being astute at business Bell sought and obtained new investors until in 1890 with three other associates formally incorporated on March 31, 1890 — "The Norwich Pharmacal Company" with the word Pharmacal having been previously coined by Bell.

Editor's Note: Part II of this two-part series will appear in Friday's Evening Sun.

Attention all artists: Oxford Village Bicentennial Logo contest

By **JEANIE PETERSEN**
Correspondent

OXFORD – The Village of Oxford is celebrating its Bicentennial this year. There will be many entertaining events to remember as well as printed items that will be cherished mementos (perhaps collectibles) for years to come. This historic event needs a piece of "identity ware," or a logo, to go with the name, the Village of Oxford Bicentennial. The Village of Oxford invites area artists, of all ages, to enter a logo contest.

A logo is an image used to create a memorable, recognizable impression.

You can contrast size, color, fonts, and textures - to create visual interest. For inspiration, you could search the web for logo design ideas, government seals, as well as under images: "bicentennial logo." The Oxford Library may also be a good source for helpful reference materials/ideas.

Objective: To create a logo for the Village of Oxford Bicentennial (and get some recognition and earn some renown in the process). The design will be used for banners, shirts, etc.

General Info: This contest is open to all ages. School students are particularly encouraged to enter. Color is preferred; size should be adjustable, and it definite-

ly must be reproducible. Submissions of a qualifying nature will be passed on to the Village government's Board of Trustees who will be the judges. The logos will be judged for historical appropriateness, creativity, originality, aesthetics, use of space and color. It should be graphic and not be too complicated or confusing. Circle-based "seal" logos are probably the most common style, but there is no rule that says they must be round.

Theme: There are a great many symbols that could be representative of the Village's two hundred years of incorporation. Here are some suggestions: transportation- ox cart/horse/wagon, canal

boat and mules, train; farming; landmark architecture- the (former) bank building, schools, library, WRC Home, firehouse, any of the many historic homes (East and West sides); bluestone; the Chenango River; early settlers; famous individuals: Theodore Burr, Benjamin Hovey, Lt. Gov. John Tracy, Henry Mygatt; etc. A visit to the Oxford Historical Society museum, open Thursdays, 1-3 PM, may also be educational and inspirational.

Submissions: Send scanned, full sized logos to vxgxford@stny.rr.com or drop them off in the Oxford Village Hall. Please include contact information: your name, age if under 21, your email address, your (postal) mailing address,

and phone number.

Rules: Entries must be received by May 15, 2008.

The entry must be your original design, and not a copy that may be subject to copyright laws.

All the rights to the accepted logo will become the possession of the Village of Oxford. The winning logo will be surrendered to and copyrighted by the Village of Oxford. The final decision regarding choice of logo rests with the Village Board of Oxford.

Info contacts, Village Board members: Joe Spence or Dale Leach by way of the Village Hall 843-2512 ; or email vxgxford@stny.rr.com.

Bainbridge business a leader in solar-based energy products

BAINBRIDGE – Silicon Solar Inc stole the show at the recent Tri-Town Business Expo held in Sidney on April 5. Silicon Solar is a local company based in Bainbridge, and a world leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of affordable, industry-leading solar energy products.

Silicon Solar featured their SunMaxx Solar Hot Water Systems at the show. At their booth inside the Expo, Silicon Solar had a small demo unit of their SRCC Certified SunMaxx Evacuated Tube Solar Collectors, as well as a number of books and informational pamphlets relating to the uses of Solar Hot Water in Upstate New York.

Outside, in the parking lot, the Silicon Solar Team hooked up an entire Thermosyphon Solar Hot Water System, an afford-



Holly Palmer, Matt Brown, Mike Farrell at Silicon Solar's exhibit at the Tri-Town Business Expo in Sidney April 5.

able, simple to install, all inclusive Solar Hot Water System, which is the perfect choice for Upstate New York residents to save money on their hot water and home heating bills.

The day of the Expo was less than ideal for a demonstration of the effectiveness of Solar Energy in Upstate New York, which actually worked out well considering the SunMaxx Thermosyphon System was producing water at nearly 110 degrees. This is a remarkable demonstration of the performance of SunMaxx Solar Hot Water Systems in cloudy Northeast conditions.

SunMaxx Solar Hot Water Team Members Todd Paternoster, Francesco Speziale and Matthew Brown were at the Expo showing local residents how well SunMaxx Solar Hot Water Systems operate in

the local climate, and providing customers with on-site system sizing and cost-benefit analyses.

Jen Lyczko of Silicon Solar was also at the Expo demonstrating some of Silicon Solar's hundreds of other Solar Energy Products, including Solar Garden Lights, Solar Water Fountains, Solar Real Estate Sign Lights and more.

Anyone interested in learning how Silicon Solar and a SunMaxx Solar Hot Water System can save them hundreds or thousands of dollars a year in hot water and heating costs are urged to call Silicon Solar today. You can reach them at 1-888-SOLAR-11. You can also find them online at www.siliconsolar.com or at their office: 2917 State Hwy 7, Bainbridge, NY (on Route 7 between Sidney and Bainbridge).

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All ads in by noon, Monday through Friday. Office hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., 29 Lackawanna Avenue, Norwich.



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