

“ ‘Culture’ Came to Lockport in 1850.” *Lockport Free Press*. “Old Canal Days” Special, 15 June 1978.

‘Culture’ came to Lockport in 1850

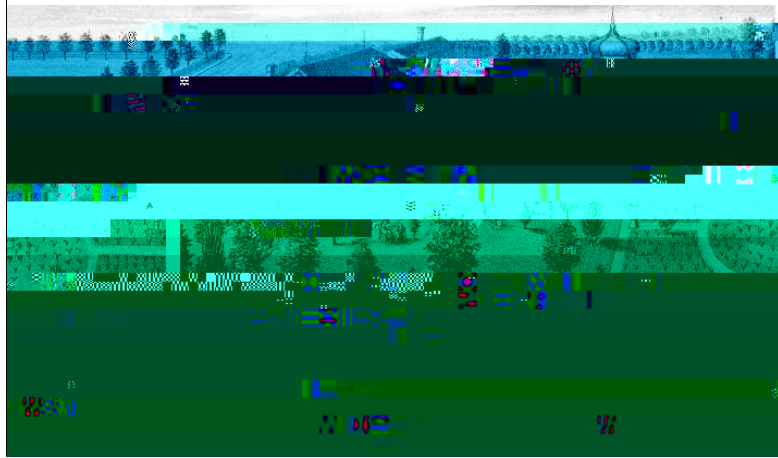
This is the latest in a series on the history of Lockport by John Lamb, a resident of Lockport and professor of history at Lewis University. He is president of the Illinois Canal Society.

During the decade of the 1850s, Lockport grew and prospered. Traffic on the canal was on the increase and in that decade, Lockport was incorporated.

What was the village like at that time?

In early October of 1850, it was visited by Sir Arthur Cunyngham, an English Army officer on leave from his regiment in Canada. Shooting snipe was Cunyngham’s sport and in the area west of the Des Plaines River now known as the “Lockport Prairie,” he bagged 40 pair in three hours. The bird still nests there but has become rare thanks to such marksmen as Cunyngham.

He wrote abo



The culture and status of the Early Lockport community are clearly illustrated in this drawing of one of the area estates. (Illustrated Atlas of Will County 1873)

confess that the extraordinary labor of the leader on this occasion (furious beating of the air with hand or fiddle bow) distressed us and others remarked the same.”

“But we were absolutely shocked at the bad taste of the gentleman when, in his closing speech to the assembly, he arose, made his bow and then deliberately took his tobacco box from his pocket and crammed his cheek full of ‘fine cut ‘ and ejected a quantity of brown saliva over the quality below before making a speech.

“If music elevates and refines, it ought to work to make a change in the habits of the president of the Philharmonic Association.”

After such a blast Bartlett shook the dust of Lockport from his artistic feet and took the

Western Philharmonic Association with him. But nothing was lost when the musical citizens of the town formed their own group the next week and elected a certain Dr. Larned their president.

Dr. Larned was a physician learned in the latest scientific concepts of his art. He was an Allepathic Practitioner much interested in electro-biology. In that line, he had acquired and was eager to use the “Electro - psychodynamic” treatment. This, it seems, had worked all sorts of miraculous cures for a wide range of nervous diseases. It had shocked the bejabbers out of “deafness, rheumatism, paralysis, stammering, weak and defective eyes, sick and nervous headache, neuralgia, epilepsy, palpitations of the heart, spinal and all other nervous afflictions.”

At his office—“the first door south of the Methodist Church,”-cures were to be had for mental derangement or insanity. Also treated by the doctor were am