

# WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 79

\_\_\_October 1878 – A. A. Gregg is to build a brick residence opposite W. W. Fellows. (Ashton A. Gregg established the Commercial Bank. Fellows had built the large brick which still stands on the south corner of Fellows and Frey Avenues. It appears that Gregg never built the house.)

\_\_\_November 1878 – Ned Jones will begin the publishing of a local newspaper.

\_\_\_1879- The local Opera House is known as Gregg's Opera House. (This building still stands on the northwest corner of Main and Walnut Streets. This building was built by Capt. Alex Swanston in 1869. It has held numerous businesses, the West Jefferson Building & Loan, a 5&10 store, Edwards Locker and grocery Store, and currently (2023) an antique shop.)

\_\_\_January 5, 1879 – Harry Lamb had a telephone connecting his residence and Store.

\_\_\_February 19, 1879 – The West Jefferson Shakespearean Club met at Mayor Fellows Monday evening last week and elected officers. President, Prof. Hutchenson, V. P., Miss Linda Mason, Treasurer, Miss Belle Fellows, Critic, Eugene Fellows.

\_\_\_June 25, 1879 – Two young men were arrested last night for fast and reckless driving on our streets, and they appeared before Mayor Booth and were fined \$26.00. (They must have been driving buggies.)

\_\_\_July 11, 1879 – Jimmy Garrabrant was drowned last week while bathing in Little Darby Creek. (Jimmy was 7 years old and is buried in Hampton Cemetery.)

\_\_\_July 30, 1879 – George Miller will burn 300,000 bricks this season. George makes good bricks and sells them at a low figure.

\_\_\_August 13, 1879 – The south end of Jefferson is erecting 6 brick houses this spring. (These would be the brick houses on Center and Chester Streets.)

\_\_\_September 3, 1879 – The iron bridge on Blair Pike will be completed today. ( I have seen Little Darby flood and almost come up to the bottom of that bridge. In 2012 the county erected a covered bridge over the Creek. It was at this location that Nehemiah Gates erected a grist mill in 1814. At that time the Blair Road was part of the State Road that ran from Franklinton to Springfield. In 1817 the mill was bought by John Mills who added a saw mill and sawed the first lumber in Jefferson Township. The mill pond is still visible today.)

\_\_\_September 24, 1879 – The steeple on the Catholic Church will be completed in two or three weeks. (In 1866 Ed Buck donated land for an edifice to be built. In 1867 the foundation was laid and the cornerstone was laid on May 19, 1867. In 1879 a tower and belfry were added at a height of 91'. The bell weighed 1,234 pounds.)