

WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 88

____April 28, 1891 – A PROPOSITION – We the Sun Vapor Street Light Co., an incorporated company of Canton, Ohio, hereby agree to furnish to the Village of Jefferson, forty or more number 3 Broadway gasoline lamps at a cost of \$5.00 each FOB Canton, and one painter torch at \$4.00. Payment is to be made in cash with the exception of \$100.00 for which we, the Sun Vapor Street Light Co. accept a deferred order payable September 1, 1891. (The proposition was accepted by the Village Council)

____July 1, 1891 – Pioneer Gaines P. Simpkins of West Jefferson, dies. (Gaines Simpkins was the son of John W. Simpkins. Gaines was born in June of 1815 in London. He was a harness and saddle maker. His father John had settled prior to 1812 in Franklinton and opened a Hatter Shop. During the War of 1812, Gen. William Henry Harrison had stopped at his shop on the way to Marietta. He used John's shop for a barracks and made him a Commissary. In 1834 he moved to Jefferson and here he bought a lot in the wilds of nature and cleared and grubbed it and erected a cabin which later was the site of the American House on Main St. On April 26, 1834, he was elected President of the Council (Mayor) of Jefferson. He died in 1861 and is buried at the Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

____July 15, 1891 – *The Observer*, the local newspaper has suspended publication.

____February 10, 1892 – Pioneer E. Z. Arnett died in West Jefferson. (Ezekiel Arnett was appointed Street Supervisor at the same organizational meeting of Jefferson in 1834 as John W. Simpkins was elected President. He was a charter member of the Methodist Church started here in 1833.)

____Some of the businesses in town in the 1890s were: W. H. Pence, undertaker; Reed&Stottles, bakery; James Bunton, Blacksmith; James Gillivan & Sons, Hardware; Martin Kuehner & Son, Boots & Shoes; Zack Taylor, Druggist; The Commercial Bank, Dr. Jewett, M.D. in the Gregg Block near the Mantle House; John Yeager, Grocery.

____Gasoline for the street lamps was bought from the Standard Oil Company. Two barrels cost \$7.35 in 1892.

____June 28, 1892 – An ordinance for the erection of a town hall in the Village of Jefferson, and to levy a special tax to issue bonds of the said Village, therefore, to dispose of the old buildings on the Public Square was passed.

____July 15 and 26, 1892 – The sale of the bonds was published in *The London Enterprise* and *Madison County Democrat*.