



Grover Cleveland

A Walking Tour of Grover Cleveland's Fayetteville (Tour 5)

Fayetteville Free Library

7. Cleveland Park. Located on Chapel Street between Clinton and Orchard Streets. This little area was originally a reservoir for the Ledyard Dyke. After it was filled in it became Clinton Park. It was here that President Grover Cleveland addressed a crowd estimated to be 4000 people on the very hot afternoon of July 14, 1887.

When it became known that Grover Cleveland would be passing through the area, the village fathers managed to persuade him to return to his childhood home. Notices were sent out and a pavilion was built in the park. Cleveland told the crowd how glad he was to be there and he recounted some exploits of his youth. Then he and his wife shook hands with those in attendance. It is estimated that they shook 44 hands per minute.

The Cleveland party arrived in Fayetteville around noon after a two-hour carriage ride from Cazenovia. They went to the Hoyt home on Elm Street to refresh themselves. The festivities in the park began at one o'clock. The Cleverlands went back to the Hoyt home for dinner and then were on their way to Manlius at 3 p.m.

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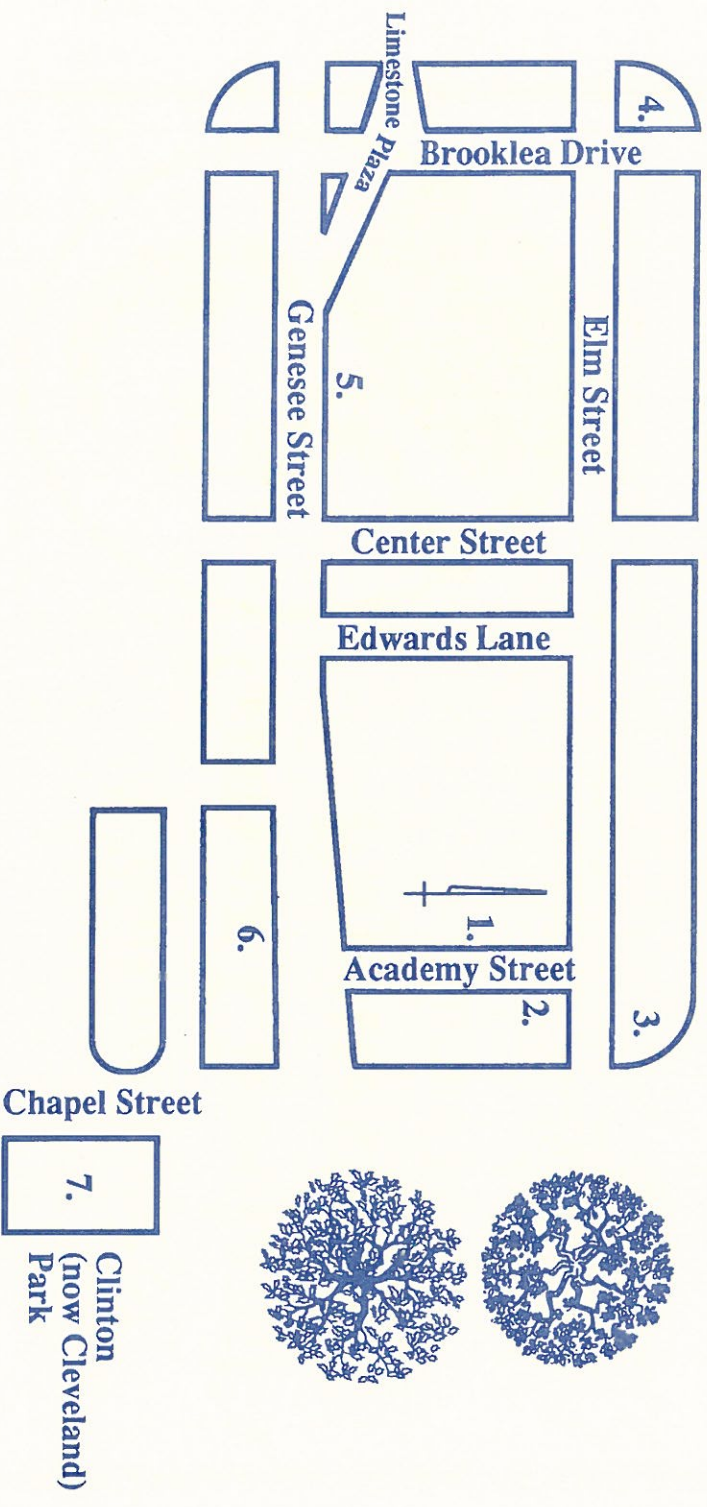
After he left Fayetteville in 1854, Grover returned briefly to his family in Holland Patent. He then went to New York City where he spent a year as an assistant teacher at the Institution for the Blind. He moved to Buffalo where he read for the law and was admitted to the Buffalo bar in 1859. Active in Buffalo politics, Cleveland was elected mayor of the city in 1881, ousting the corrupt political "ring" that had gained control.

Cleveland came to the attention of the New York State Democratic party which urged him to run for governor in 1883. In 1885 he was elected the 22nd President of the United States. In 1893 he became the 24th President of the United States.

Grover Cleveland was noted for his integrity. He believed that holding public office was a public trust. These years, in the late 19th century, were noted for their political corruption. It was the heyday of Tammany Hall, Boss Tweed, rapacious industrialists and many others of their ilk. As President, Cleveland reduced the size of the Federal government, firing many who were political appointees doing little, if any, work. He endorsed the concept of Civil Service and reduced government spending. In 1887 there was a national budget surplus which was returned to the states.

On June 2, 1886, Cleveland married Frances Folsom in the White House. Frances, a very popular First Lady, was the cousin of Fayetteville resident Charles R. Folsom. The Cleverlands had five children. Ruth, their first-born, had the Baby Ruth candy bar named after her. To introduce the bar in 1920, the Curtiss Candy Company chartered an airplane and parachuted candy bars over Pittsburgh which caused a major traffic jam when people rushed for the free candy.

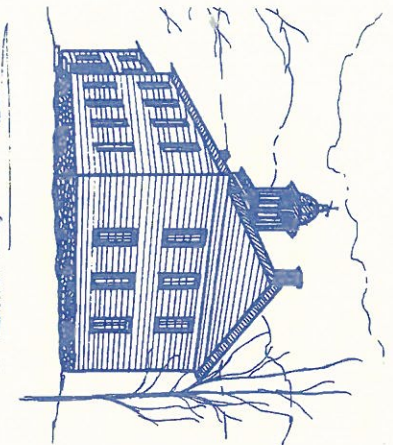
Cleveland died June 24, 1908 and is buried in Princeton, New Jersey.



1. **109 Academy Street.** Home of the Richard Cleveland family 1841-1850. This modest Greek Revival-style house was built c.1841 by John McVicar as a manse for the Presbyterian church. The unusually high basement was used as a church meeting room and as a pastor's study.

Stephen Grover Cleveland (1837-1908) was the fifth of nine children.

2. **402 Elm Street.** Site of the Fayetteville Academy. Built in 1829 as the Methodist



church, it became a school in 1839 when the congregation moved to Genesee Street. Grover attended school here.

His oldest sister, Anna, later taught here.

As the son of a clergyman, Grover was expected to enter one of the professions. He completed his secondary education in Clinton, NY after his family moved there in 1850. The death of his father in 1852 changed his plans to attend Hamilton College.

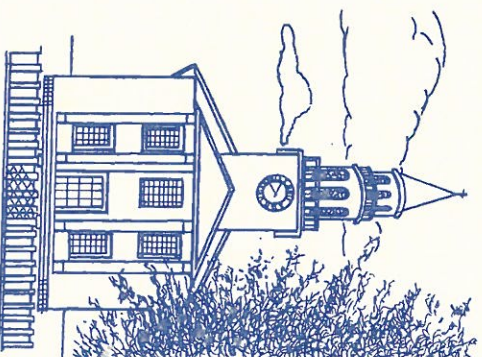
3. **421 Elm Street.** Home of Grover's older sister, Mary. Built c.1820-1825, this house has been modified many times and is a mixture of architectural styles. Mary was married to W. E. Hoyt, a bank teller. She served as her brother's hostess while he was governor of New York and after he became President. Grover stopped here in 1887 when he returned to Fayetteville for an official visit.

4. **100 Limestone Plaza.** This building, of a moderately federal style, was built in 1831 by John McVicar. It was one of the first commercial structures in the lower village and backed up to the feeder canal.

Grover returned to Fayetteville in 1852 to work in McVicar's store. His father had died and the family was in danger of becoming destitute. Grover lived on the top floor of the building with another boy. The room had no heat, light, or water. The boys took their meals either with the McVicar family or at a boarding house located nearby on Mill Street. Grover's chores included having the store ready for customers before McVicar arrived at 7 a.m. He was responsible for shoveling snow, building up the fires or sweeping out the building. For this he was paid \$50 the first year and \$100 the second year.

5. **111 East Genesee Street.** This building was built by McVicar c.1825. The Greek Revival detailing was added c.1830. Presently it is the home of the Fayetteville Free Library which purchased the building from the McVicar family in 1922. McVicar's business interests included the development of the feeder canal and Ledyard Dyke, the Fayetteville Bank, manufacturing, and real estate development. The Library owns a sled that is reputed to have been used by Grover when he was working in McVicar's general store.

6. **310 East Genesee Street.**



Site of the Presbyterian church where Richard Cleveland was pastor and John McVicar was deacon. The building, built in 1830, was the first church building in the village. After it opened, all the denominations in the village met here. The building was dismantled in 1858 and the present building was erected.