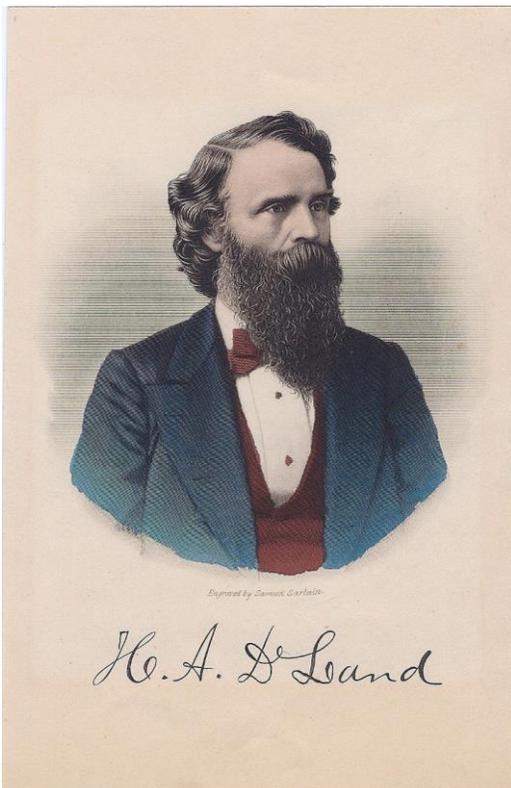


Henry DeLand's Other Fairport House

By Bill Poray, Perinton Town Historian

By all accounts, Henry DeLand was a remarkable man. After his brother Daniel died in an encounter with an elevator shaft at the DeLand factory in 1872, Henry took over the business. Formerly the company's top salesman, Henry and Daniel's son Levi grew the company's sales and profits to new heights. The canal side factory, located where the Box Factory building resides today, primarily manufactured baking soda, sometimes called "saleratus" in those days.



Henry A. DeLand, for whom the city of DeLand, Florida is named. The DeLand family is responsible for much of the early success of Fairport, as the DeLand factory was largest employer for many years.

Prior to his death, Daniel DeLand and his wife Minerva Parce DeLand commissioned the design of a monumental house by architect John Rochester Thomas. After Daniel's death, Henry went forth with the construction of the 34 room French Chateau mansion. Built on the prominent corner of Main and Church Streets, the home was described by the Fairport Herald as "one of the most beautiful private dwellings in Western New York."

Henry DeLand and his wife Sarah Parce DeLand began visiting central Florida in the 1870s, and soon recognized an opportunity to create a new business venture, and a city as well. He is credited with being the driving force in the creation of the city of DeLand, incorporated in 1876. He invested his own money, built schools, and the city, from the ground up. DeLand spent time in both Fairport and Florida, until 1881, when he divested his interests in the DeLand Company

and made the Florida city bearing his name his primary home. The foundation for it all were extensive holdings in orange groves. And all was lost for Henry DeLand and his investors during Florida's historic freeze of 1894 / 1895, when temperatures fell to 11 degrees. DeLand had convinced people to invest in the new Florida community, and its orange groves. The great freeze wiped out those investments, and Henry DeLand committed himself to make things right for those that had put their hard earned money in DeLand, Florida and the orange groves.



Henry DeLand spent his final years in this house at 31 Woodlawn Avenue.

Henry DeLand returned to Fairport, where he spent his remaining years working to reimburse his Floridian investors impacted by the great freeze. The old DeLand factory, still under control of the family, had burned to the ground in 1893, was rebuilt, but business was never the same and the company closed in 1903. DeLand went to work for Fairport's Monroe County Chemical Company, once again making baking powder, among other products. He sold his Fairport mansion and moved into a modest house at 31 Woodlawn Avenue on a quarter-acre lot that at one time might have been more suited for one of his factory hands. He died in 1908, no longer a wealthy man, but held in the highest esteem, both in Fairport and DeLand, Florida.

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