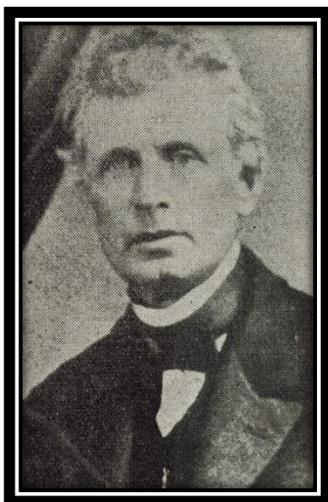


# STARKEY SEMINARY

In the spring of 1839 the Starkey Seminary was born in the minds of a group of Christian Church denomination ministers that gathered for a conference in Rock Stream. It was decided that it was their Christian duty to start a school, the philosophy of which would be to provide an education for boys and girls who might not otherwise get one because of financial means. 1839 there were no high schools, and only 4 colleges in the entire state of New York.

A finance committee of nine was appointed and it was agreed that the member of the committee securing the highest amount of pledges would designate the location of the new school.

The Reverend Ezra Marvin, Pastor of the Christian Church groups of Rock Stream and Dundee, began a vigorous campaign to raise funds. Reverend Marvin did not have the



advantage of a thorough education, and was very conscious of how important a good education was.

He believed it was his duty, not only to his church, but also the coming generations, to do what he could towards helping them with to better educational advantages.

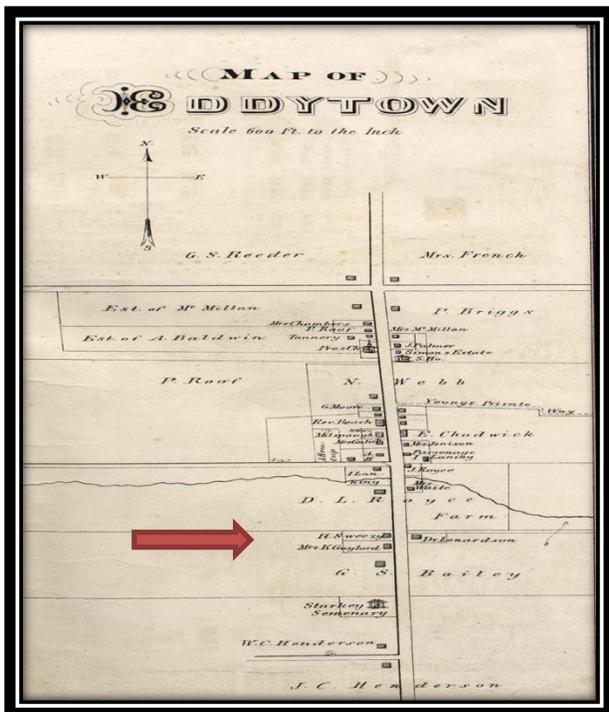
He appeared at the Honeoye Conference in October of 1839 with pledges amounting about \$3000; None of the other Committee members had raised any funds at all; so Ezra Marvin choose Eddytown as the site of the new school and since Eddytown was located in the town of Starkey, the school was named Starkey Seminary.

From the time of the Honeoye Conference in 1839 until 1842, the management of the construction and opening of the school was left in the hands of the original committee of nine men. The committee appointed Reverend Marvin as Finance Agent and sent him out to raise the additional \$4000 needed to build the school they envisioned. By the end of 1841 Rev. Marvin had acquired enough subscriptions for the committee to contract the erection of the building. This was not an easy feat; there were no men of means interested in the project. The appeal had to be made to the common people. The scheme to offer scholarships was adopted. Many, who would not otherwise subscribe, did so. Fifty dollars would secure a scholarship for a limited time, one hundred dollars for a longer period and so on. Subscriptions were like a promissory note. People would promise to give money to the school in return for an education for their children; however, the board of trustees found the subscriptions were very difficult to collect. This set the school up for financial failure from the very beginning.

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By the fall of 1842, the first building was completed. It was located along the main north-south road through Eddytown about one and one-half blocks south of the present Lakemont Post Office on the west side of the road.

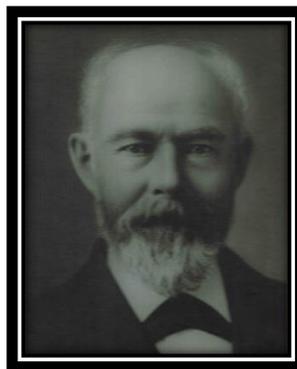


The school opened with 142 students, most being scholarship students.

The first head of the school was Professor Charles Morgridge with Miss Rosetta Ballou serving as Preceptress. Professor Morgridge was followed by Abram Miller. He only served 22 weeks of the 1844-1845 term and that was without a preceptress.

Professor Thomas Turner took over in April 1845 assisted by his wife. The Turners were so well liked, that when they left in 1847 to create the Dundee Select School, many of the Seminary students went with them.

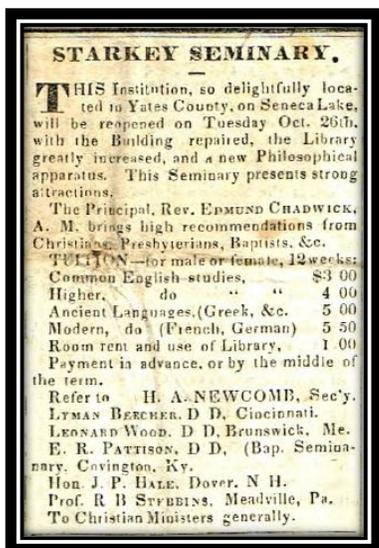
The next leader of the Starkey Seminary was Professor Edmund Chadwick.



When Professor Chadwick arrived at Starkey, the school was on the brink of dissolution and said to be only a step above common schools. The interior plaster was peeling off the walls; the land around the school was still littered with construction debris. Professor Chadwick, knowing the value of appearances, had the grounds cleared, graded and trees planted; as well as having the plaster re-done.

At the beginning of the 1847-1848 school year, only four students appeared for registration. Since the restoration was not complete, he sent them home and told them to return in two

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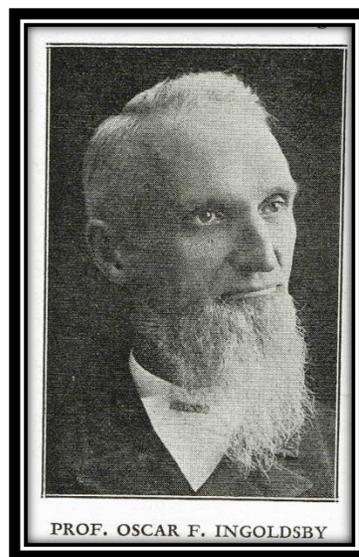


weeks. When they returned they brought nine more students with them. Student registration steadily increased. Before the end of 1848, the school was state chartered and under the jurisdiction of the Regents of the State of New York.

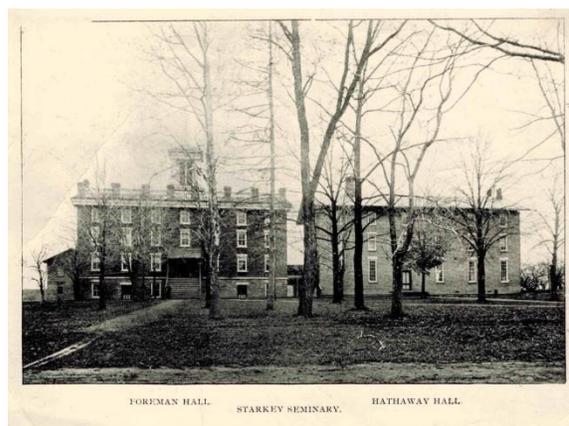
In 1849 the catalogue of the Starkey Seminary listed 106 male and 83 female students. This created a housing shortage. Professor Chadwick had already ordered a frame building to be built at the rear of the school building. This was to be used for dining purposes, and shortly after was forced to purchase a building in the center of Eddytown to be used as a dormitory.

From 1850-1860 student registration continued to increase as did the quality of the school. The State of New York was sending teachers-to-be to Starkey for their normal school training.

Professor Chadwick left the Starkey Seminary in 1861 to head up the Dundee Academy. He was replaced by Professor Oscar Ingoldsby,



who had worked under Professor Chadwick for five years. Professor Ingoldsby, assisted by his wife, continued where Chadwick left off. The schools attendance increased so much that by 1865 the erection of a "Ladies Hall" became necessary. Professor Ingoldsby raised the funds in six weeks, and Hathaway Hall was ready for the fall of 1866.



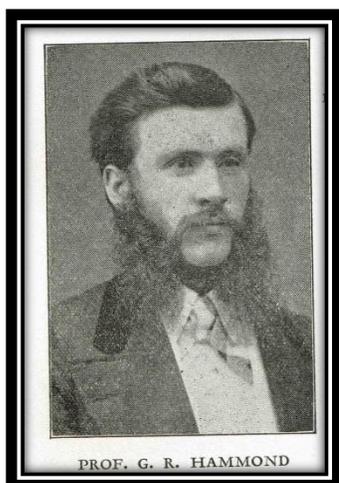
Despite doubling the capacity of the school, it was still difficult to accommodate the number of boys and girls requesting admittance. In 1872 Professor Ingoldsby was forced by failing health to retire to the less stressful occupation of ministry.

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By 1874 Starkey graduates had begun to have an impact on society. Twelve Starkey graduates had become medical doctors, 18 others had become lawyers, 35 had gone into ministry and 43 had become teachers.

Professor Ingoldsby was followed by Professor Benjamin McHenry 1873-1877 and Professor Robert Evans. In 1878 the school was again in need of a strong leader and Professor Ingoldsby was asked to return and served until 1885.

Professor Ingoldsby was replaced by Professor Gilbert Hammond Phd. a Starkey Seminary Graduate.



Dr. Hammond dreamed of turning Starkey Seminary into Starkey College. At this time the trustees had already decided to enlarge the curriculum. The plan for a college became entangled with a plan to join with the Free Baptist to gain additional support for the proposed new college. The Free Baptists didn't like the idea of a College in Eddytown, and brought up the subject of relocation. Both Watkins and Penn Yan wanted a new college. Watkins entered a bid of \$25,000 if the college would locate there. Penn Yan countered with bid of \$25,000. When sentiment began to swing to Penn Yan, they upped their bid to

\$50,000 and Watkins faded from the scene. The discussion of creating a college and relocation raged back and forth. Finally in 1888 a referendum was held, and it was almost unanimously decided the school would remain in Eddytown and the plan for a college was abandoned and destroyed any reason to join with the Free Baptists. Reverend George Harvey Ball resigned from the Board of Trustees and two years later Keuka College opened.

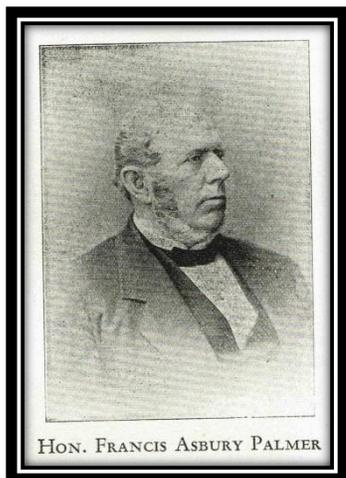
Dr. Hammond continued leading the Starkey Seminary until 1891 when he resigned to spend time studying schools and systems abroad. For the next few years Starkey had three new leaders in rapid succession. Reverend Alva Morrill took over from 1891-1894. He was followed by Professor Frank Carney and Professor Coreaell Wilcox.

1894-1896 were critical years for the school. After decades of financial struggles and no solution in sight, the Trustees asked Dr. Hammond to return. It was about this time Francis Asbury Palmer began to serve on the board of Trustees. Mr. Palmer a banker and philanthropist, quickly assessed the situation and decided he would rescue the school, if Dr. Martyn Summerbell, then Chaplain of Bates College in Lewiston Maine, would become its president. Dr. Summerbell accepted and took over during the 1898-1899 school year. It was during this time the school was accredited as an academy.



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Through the generosity of the Francis Palmer, the seminary's debts were paid off, and



Foreman and Hathaway Halls were refurbished. The school was still bursting at the seams; it had out grown all of its buildings. At this time they began to search out a location for new school buildings. A location about one mile north east of the original location of the school and at the crest of a bluff overlooking Seneca Lake was chosen. With Francis Palmer supplying much of the needed funding; the president's home and a new school building (named Palmer Hall) was built.



Mr. Palmer had acquired 125 acres of land for school use. Starkey Seminary moved all of its operations to Palmer Hall and the doors were opened for registration September 4, 1900. In 1902 the name of the school was changed to Palmer Institute-Starkey Seminary after Mr.

Palmer donated \$100,000 to the Starkey Seminary Endowment Fund.

In the years that followed, the quality of education continued to improve, as did the athletic teams, particularly football. In both 1907 and 1908, the Starkey Teams were the Eastern New York State schoolboy football champions. The territory consisted of eastern New York, western Massachusetts, and northern Pennsylvania. They played against such teams as Elmira and Binghamton high schools, Alfred University Freshman, Penn State Freshman, and Hobart College Varsity teams.

With the beginning of World War 1 the school registration suffered. Both teachers and students, male and female, went off to serve their country. The end of World War 1 the school again was filled to capacity.

Through the history of the school, they did not possess a proper gymnasium. There was a very small one in the basement of Palmer Hall. Basketball was played in a refurbished barn. For years this bothered Dr. Summerbell, he thought sports and activities were very important. This was remedied in 1926 when Mr. W. T. Corwith, a Trustee of the School, and brother to Mrs. Summerbell, bequeathed \$50,000 to the school for building a gymnasium and dormitory.



# STARKEY SEMINARY

1929 Brought the stock market crash and Starkey's Endowment Fund was wiped out. But even in death Francis Palmer came to the rescue of the Starkey Seminary. In 1897 Mr. Palmer had created an endowment fund with a purpose to assist churches, missions, schools and associations. This fund moved in to partially replace the revenue from the original Endowment Fund of the School.

Another change that was taking a toll on the Seminary was the declining trend of co-educational schools. Schools were moving in a direction of all-male and all-female institutions. Dr. Summerbell, now in his 80's, became less and less able to combat the trend. At the end of the 1934-1935 school year, at the age of 88, Dr. Summerbell retired after 37 years. The school continued for one more year under the leadership of James Long, a long time teacher and Harry Brate, Secretary of the Board of Trustees. They were unable to recruit a strong leader and with continued financial troubles, the Board of Trustees closed the school at the end of the 1935-1936 school year.

The school remained empty for three years before it was reopened in September 1939 as the Lakemont Academy for Boys. It was a preparatory school for boys ages 13-19 until 1970 when it went through a forced sale by the Watertown Savings Bank, which held the mortgage on the school. It was just starting to get on its feet after two devastating fires; the first in 1962 which destroyed the Presidents home, and the second in January of 1968 which destroyed Palmer Hall.



The school reopened in 1972 as a religious school by the Glen Springs Academy and they closed in 1974. The school remained vacant until it was purchased by Gates Community Chapel and opened as Freedom Village USA.