

By 1837, the village stretched out a mile long from east to west with two rows of log houses fronting the street ten to forty rods apart and one frame house. The log houses features floors split out of white ash, roofed with peeled bass-wood bark, a ladder through a hole in one corner to go upstairs, a trapdoor in the floor for a cellar, a huge fireplace made of stone and clay, and a chimney of sticks plastered with mud on the inside. Before candles could be made a strip of cotton flannel put in an open dish of lard and resting on the edge of it was used to furnish the light.

Dr. Kedzie bought his first gallon of kerosene for \$1.50 and a lamp with a chimney for \$3.00 in the fifties.

Sawby or Saaba, the Chief of the local Indians the Pottawamies was a frequent visitor to the area.

Before a store was opened in 1853, and until he moved away, which was for about the first 10 years of the village's life, Norton's Blacksmith Shop was the place for general discussion. The Whigs were Barber, Dickinson, Griswold, Fairfield, Squier, Mears and McCotter. The Democrats were Martin, Robinson, Norton, Brown-ing and Fuller. The solitary member of the Abolitionist movement was Willard Davis, though one of the best educated and best read man in town he was a political outcast until Armstrong and Hopkins moved in and Dr. Kedzie came in 1852. Soon with the organization of the Republican Party in 1854 all Whigs, Free-soil Democrats and Abolitionists united under the Republican Party.

Vermontville originally contained the area from which several nearby townships were later formed. (Chester in 1839, Sunfield in 1842 and Roxand in 1843.)

In 1843 the Chapel was built for a school and church and in 1846 an Academical Association was formed. This is now standing on the northwest corner of the public square. Rev. W. U. Benedict the new Congregational Minister was the Superintendent with scholars from various parts of Eaton County and from Battle Creek,

The present Congregational church was built in 1862 and the Methodist church (United) was moved to the Public Square in 1877.

This history was prepared ~~for~~ the Vermontville Historical Society which was founded in February of 1966 to preserve the history of the area and this Academy, which was opened to the public for the first time as a Museum on Maple Syrup Festival Day, 1967.

State Historical Landmarkers
the First Congregational church and the
Chapel, Academy, museum, June 7, 1970
National Register Church 1971 - Chapel 1972
Opera House, State - April 1978