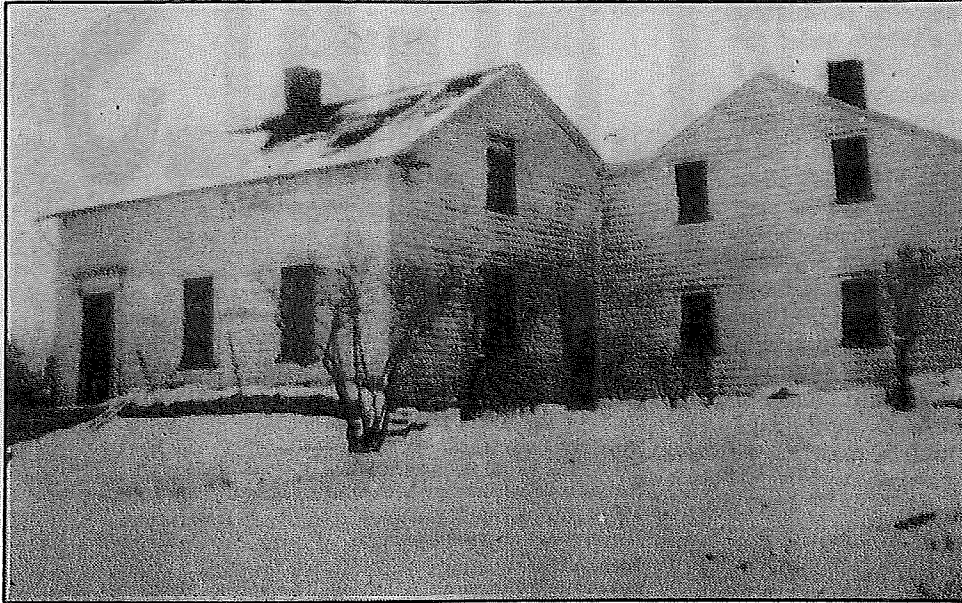


## Clarkson Chronicles



The David Forsyth home in Clarkson looked like two houses joined diagonally. David Forsyth is credited with land clearing in the four corners area. His house was used as a "garrison," offering protection to early settlers against Indian attack.

### Clarkson's Forsyth-Patterson house

by Hazel Kleinbach, Historian

Until a few years ago, this house stood on the south side of Ridge Road, a few hundred yards west of the Clarkson four corners. It was a wooden frame house, built in two parts; from the road, it looked like two houses of about the same size joined together, diagonally in a curious way. David Forsyth, an early pioneer, in the early 1800s cleared the land from the corner and west of his land. It has been written that the first part of the building probably was built before the War of 1812.

During the war, this place was called a "garrison house." A story has been told that an old blacksmith had lived and worked in the Clarkson area. This place was a gathering place where the people of the neighborhood could rally, when they feared an Indian attack. People did fear them, all along the Ridge, especially during the second winter of the war.

One might suppose that any of the old brick houses that are in Clarkson now, would have offered a better protection than a frame house, but there were

before the war. These "garrison houses" usually had a high palisade of logs set upright in the ground close together. Such a stockade was built around the Forsyth house, as many logs were unearthed when Rochester Gas and Electric Co. was putting pipes into the house around the late 50s or early 60s, according to the late Peter Coene who was residing in the dwelling at that time.

David Forsyth came to Clarkson in 1810 and he was the first to clear the land of trees, from the corners one half mile west on the Ridge Road. At the first Clarkson Town meeting, held in 1826, he was elected "poundmaster." In 1848, he removed to Michigan, having sold out to Matthew A. Patterson, who came from Columbia County to Clarkson in 1846. He was a direct descendant of Elder Brewster of Plymouth Colony, who came over on the Mayflower. The house remained in the Patterson family, then the Gordon's took possession. It was burned in 1971, in a mutual aid exercise for the firemen of Brockport.