

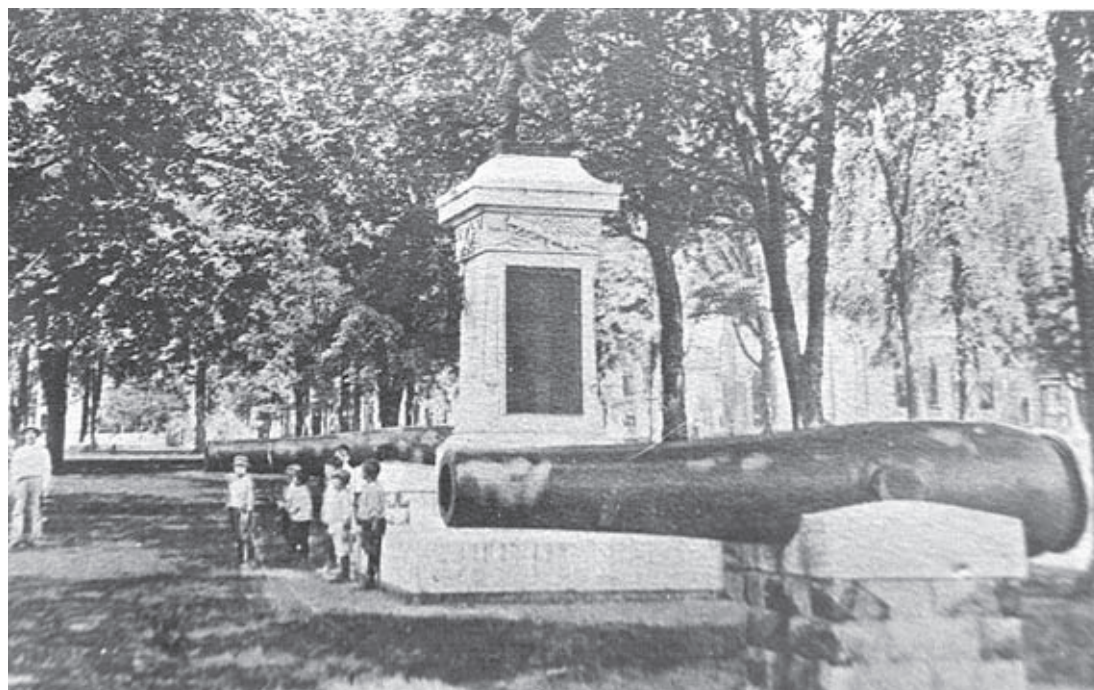
# Trigon Park's Cannons

by Lynne Belluscio

In 1906 when the Soldier's Monument was erected on Trigon Park, the monument committee secured two Civil War cannons to flank the monument. The twelve foot cannons weighed 16,000 pounds apiece and were cast by the Cyrus Alger Company of Boston, which began operation during the War of 1812.

The two cannons that were shipped to LeRoy were cast during the Civil War for Fort Independence in Boston Harbor, but were never used. They were known as "Rodman" guns and had a 10 inch bore. Thomas Jackson Rodman was an ordnance officer and developed a new type of cannon that became popular during the Civil War.

The two LeRoy cannons were secured through the efforts of Congressman Wadsworth of Geneseo. They remained on guard until the middle of the 1920s. At that time a LeRoy "beautification" committee was formed, comprised of Schuyler Wells, John Lapp, Edward Perkins, Frank LaBounty and Elbert Townsend. They decided to raze the dilapidated band stand in Trigon Park and to bury the cannons. It was reported that the committee felt that it was inappropriate for the cannons to be aimed at the Baptist Church. An undated newspaper article notes



that "One day saw the razing of the band stand in the park, which had been a thorn in the side of a few persons since its erection a few years ago.

Another day found Village employees at work digging two large holes beside the cannons. Into these graves went the cannons." The committee had apparently tried to sell the two cannons to junk men but were refused because of the expense of moving them. The newspaper reported: "Evidently it was a case of the historic conflicting with art and beauty and the cannons, which

had flanked the monument for twenty or so years with their noses pointed toward the First Baptist Church in East Main Street, were obliged to sink into oblivion."

But this was not the end of the cannon story, because in May 1942, LeRoy, in an effort to make its quota for the World War II scrap drive, decided to dig up the cannons. It was estimated that they would make 30,000 hand grenades. The article in the *Gazette* headlined "Metal converted to Bombs, Bullets and Hand Grenades".

The Village called the Pavilion Gas Company with a metal detector to find the cannons and they figured they would have to cut the cannons in half to lift them out of the ground, but Dewitt Trucking Company came over with a 34 ton steam shovel and lifted the cannons out whole and placed them on a truck and they were taken to Buffalo. LeRoy surpassed its scrap quota and donated 50 ton of metal to the war effort. The cannons appear in this photograph and on several postcards of Trigon Park.

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