

Caple's Tavern

(a.k.a. Twelve Corners Apothecary)

1832 Monroe Avenue occupies a unique position in Brighton's collection of nineteenth century brick buildings. It is the only one that was designed for commercial purposes. All of the others were residences. Because it was a public building, it was the site of town meetings and social events not associated with the brick residential buildings in Brighton.

Edward Caple emigrated from England, opened a butcher shop in Rochester's Central Market, then moved to Brighton in 1848 to buy and operate a tavern on the main road from Rochester to Pittsford. Located near the Twelve Corners, Edward Caple catered to travelers, land speculators, brick buyers, workers, and nearby residents. The tavern was a hub of activity that continued until his death in 1889.

Edward Caple obtained a tavern license from the Brighton Board of Excise in May of 1849 for \$25.00. In October of that year the Brighton Town Board met at Caple's Tavern. It was the habit of the board to hold meetings in taverns in east, west, and central Brighton on an alternate basis.

A nineteenth century tavern was more than a place to obtain liquid refreshment; it more closely resembled a bed-and-breakfast of the modern era. In addition to public rooms for meetings and dining, it offered overnight accommodations for travelers and even long-term stays when necessary. According to an account of the Caleb Martin family of Pittsford, his daughter, Annis Martin, went to live at Caple's tavern after her father's death in 1866. The settlement of the Caleb Martin's estate by an out-of-town sister excluded Annis from the family home in Pittsford.

By the time that the *Monroe County Business Directory* was published in 1869, Edward Caple had prospered to the point of sponsoring the publication. Not only is his name printed in bold type as the proprietor of the Farmers' Home Hotel, the hotel had a separate listing, also in bold type.

Edward Caple's daughters, Ann and Sarah, married local men. Ann married Daniel MacFarlan who owned land on the north side of Elmwood Avenue now known as the MacFarlan Farm neighborhood. Sarah married John Irving whose farm included what is now Irving Road on the south side of Elmwood Avenue.

Not only is Caple's Tavern the only surviving nineteenth century brick building in the area between Cobb's Hill and the Twelve Corners, an area that for over seventy-five years was totally devoted to brick making, it is the last remnant of that industry that was so important to the development and prosperity of the town. It is an "anchor building" in that it links Brighton's main commercial corridor of the twenty-first century to the town's manufacturing era in the nineteenth century.

1832 Monroe Avenue merited designation as a Brighton town landmark because of its long-standing connection to the cultural, political, economic, architectural, and social history of Brighton. Over 170 years after its construction, it is still a contributing structure to the streetscape of the Twelve Corners.