

district attorney of Cattaraugus county in the fall of 1871, served three years, and was re-elected and served another term. Mr. McVey was elected surrogate in 1873 and in 1874 moved to Franklinville. In 1875 Mr. Scott was elected county judge and Mr. Laidlaw continued to practice law alone for a time afterwards. Later, S. R. McNair, who had read law with him, was taken into partnership, and this partnership still continues. Mr. Laidlaw was elected to the Fiftieth Congress in the fall of 1886. The House was Democratic, and he was appointed the fifteenth member of the Claims Committee by Speaker Carlisle. He was elected to the Fifty-first Congress in 1888 and was appointed chairman of the Committee on Claims by Speaker Reed. This was a very important committee, having to deal with all kinds of claims presented against the government, many of them involving large amounts of money and requiring the examination of intricate questions of law. Upon the expiration of his service in Congress Mr. Laidlaw resumed the practice of his profession at Ellicottville, where he now resides.

John C. Spencer practiced law in Allegany about a year, 1866 and 1867, but it is not known whence he came to this county or where he went.

Harper H. Phelps practiced in Olean some time prior to 1865, and for a time was a partner with William P. Angel. At a great fire which occurred in Olean in January, 1866, Mr. Phelps lost his life in attempting to rescue his law library.

Commodore P. Vedder was born February 23, 1838, on a farm in the town of Ellicottville. His parents were Dutch and his ancestors fought in the Revolutionary war and the War of 1812. He lived in a log house on a fifty-acre farm until he was fourteen years of age. He was then employed by a butcher in Great Valley at \$2.50 per month. In 1854 he was a driver on the Erie canal. In the spring of 1855 he went from Great Valley to Cincinnati down the Allegheny river on a raft. From Cincinnati he went to Cleveland, Ohio, and shipped as a sailor before the mast on the brig *Alert*, bound for Chicago. He followed sailing as a living until the close of navigation in 1859. In the third year of his sea-faring life he was promoted to the position of mate, and was captain of the vessel in 1858 and 1859. After leaving the lakes he took a course in Springville Academy and finished in 1861. He began the study of law with Judge David H. Bolles in 1861 and taught school during the winters of 1859, 1860, 1861, and 1862. In August, 1862, he enlisted as a private in the 154th N. Y. Vols. and was successively promoted to lieutenant and captain in that regiment. At the battle of Chancellorsville he was taken prisoner and for two weeks endured the horrors of Libby prison. He was paroled, and while under parole was detailed by the secretary of war to take charge of the camp of paroled prisoners near Alexandria, Va. In the fall of 1863 he was transferred with his regiment to the Army of the Cumberland near Chattanooga. He participated in the battles of Chancellorsville, Wauhatchie, Lookout Valley, Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge, Rocky Face Ridge, and the siege of Sa-

vannah, and was on the celebrated march of Sherman from Chattanooga to Knoxville, Tenn., for the relief of General Burnside. He was also with General Sherman in his famous march from Atlanta to the sea and through the Carolinas. He was discharged in June, 1865, by reason of the close of the war. At the battle of Rocky Face Ridge, May 8, 1864, he was wounded, but refused a furlough after leaving the hospital, and was appointed by President Lincoln and the secretary of war to examine applicants for commissions in colored regiments, with headquarters at Chattanooga. At the battle of Lookout Mountain he was breveted major in the United States or regular army "for gallant and meritorious conduct." He was promoted to be lieutenant-colonel of volunteers "for bravery in battle" in the campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta.

After the war he resumed the study of law and in the winter of 1865-66 he attended the Albany Law School, and was admitted to the bar at Buffalo, May 7, 1866. In May, 1867, he was admitted to practice in the District Court of the United States for the Northern District of New York. In 1867 he was appointed register in bankruptcy and resigned that position in 1875 to enter the State Senate. From 1872 to 1875 inclusive he was a member of the Assembly. In 1872, as member of the Judiciary Committee, he assisted in investigating the unjust judges of the city of New York, to wit: Cardozo, McCunn, and Barnard. He was chairman of the committee to draft articles of impeachment against Judge Barnard and was appointed one of the managers on the trial of that official before the High Court of Impeachment for maladministration in office. In 1869 he was appointed United States assessor of internal revenue and held the office until the next congressional succession. He was elected to the Senate in 1875 and served in that body during the sessions of 1876 and 1877. In 1880 he was appointed State assessor by Governor Cornell and held that office until his successor was appointed in 1883. In 1884 he was again elected to the State Senate and was re-elected three successive terms thereafter. He was chairman of the Committee on Taxation and Retrenchment during the last eight years he was in the Senate. Mr. Vedder drafted and introduced the bill to tax gifts, legacies, and collateral inheritances, which became a law in 1885. He drafted and introduced a bill taxing corporations for the privilege of organizing, which became a law in 1886; also the bill amending the collateral inheritance act of 1885, which amended act became a law in 1891, under which the succession, by death, of personal property of \$10,000 or more is taxed one per cent. He is now a member of the Holland Society and the Lawyers' Club. He is president of the New York and New Jersey Ice Lines of New York, president of the State Bank of Norwood, N. Y., president of the Elko Milling, Mining, and Manufacturing Company of Randolph, is a member of the G. A. R., and has an office in the city of New York. In 1867 he formed a partnership with William Manley, of Ellicottville, which continued some time. In 1869 he entered

into partnership with the late Judge Kenschlaer Lamb, which continued until Judge Lamb's death in November, 1871. In 1876 a partnership was formed between Mr. Vedder and George M. Rider under the name of Vedder & Rider, which continued until 1884. Mr. Vedder afterwards formed a partnership with James O. Clark, of Ellicottville. In 1862 Mr. Vedder married Bettie E. Squires, of Springville, and had one child, a son, who died in February, 1882. His wife died in 1884. In 1892 he was married to Mrs. Genevieve A. Wheeler, of Chicago, Ill.

Joseph R. Jewell is a son of Jerome B. Jewell, of Machias, and was admitted to the bar about 1867. He pursued his legal studies with Cary & Bolles at Olean and soon after his admission to the bar located at Little Valley as a member of the firm of Cary, Bolles & Jewell. He remained at Little Valley until the fall of 1873, when he went to Olean and there joined his partner, Mr. Cary, in a general practice. Judge Bolles had retired from the firm about three years before. Mr. Jewell remained in partnership with Mr. Cary until the spring of 1883, when he withdrew from the firm and entered into partnership with his brother, M. B. Jewell, under the firm name of J. R. & M. B. Jewell. This firm continued until the winter of 1892-93, when it was dissolved. Since that time Mr. Jewell has practiced alone at Olean. He owns a farm about two miles north of the city. Mr. Jewell married Julia E. Lamper, of Conewango.

William E. McDuffie was born about 1844 in the town of New Albion. He attended the common schools until about fourteen years old, when he went to Oberlin College for a time. He then went to Springville, N. Y., and attended the academy there a short time. After that he went to Buffalo and began the study of law in the office of Mr. Day and was admitted to the bar in Buffalo in 1867. He afterwards located and practiced in Otto in this county. He married Miss Addie McMillen, of Springville, and went to Magnolia, Iowa, to engage in the practice of law. He died at Council Bluffs about 1868, at the age of twenty-five years. He is described as a young man of unusual ability and one who gave great promise of a successful career at the bar.

William P. Spargur practiced in Little Valley a short time about 1868. He then removed to Wellsville, N. Y., where he now resides.

Arunah Ward was born in Reading, Steuben county, September 30, 1820, and is a son of Charles and Lydia Kingo Ward. His parents came to Great Valley from Vermont in 1821 and settled in an unbroken wood lot. They traveled from Steuben county with an ox-team. While clearing a small plat of ground and erecting a log cabin they lived in the only school house in the town. They remained until 1846, when they removed to Wisconsin. Mr. Ward's mother died in 1848, and his father returned to this county and died in 1850. Arunah Ward was raised on the homestead, where he spent his boyhood at hard labor, attending the common schools in winter. He afterwards attended Springville Academy two terms, and at once began teaching district