# Capen Family—Town of Sweden, NY

**Benjamin F. Capen** came to this area in 1818 from Scipio, New York, and cleared a large section in the southwestern part of the town and engaged in farming. His first wife died early and he remarried to **Phoebe Fitch** of Salem, New York.

His son, **Franklin F. Capen**, was born on June 15, 1835, attended the common schools and the Collegiate Institute, completing his studies at the Lima Seminary. He returned to the farm and married **DeEtte Baker** of Bridgewater. In 1882 he engaged in the sale of agricultural implements, fertilizers, harness, etc. Five years later he organized a shoe factory which was merged into the Moore-Shafer Shoe Manufacturing Company and **Mr. Capen** served as its president from 1889 until his death.

When **Franklin F. Capen** became Supervisor in 1870, he was the youngest member ever elected to the Board of Supervisors. Later he was elected President of the village for four successive terms. During his administration, the Brockport Water Works was established. He was a charter member and first master of the Brockport Grange, one of its chief supporters, and chairman of the Executive Committee of the State Grange for about twelve years.

In 1892 **Mr. Capen** organized another big concern, the Brockport Piano Company, and also served as president of this company from its beginning until his death. The "Capen" piano was a quality instrument and many of them still exist.

His death occurred on September 27, 1898 at his home in the village. He was survived by his wife, the former **DeEtte Baker** of Bridgewater. Their three children died before him, a son and daughter aged eight and twelve respectively. **Emma**, their other daughter, married **Manley Shafer**. The late **Frank Shafer** was their son and their daughter was **Victoria**.

The old, attractive Capen homestead on the Beadle Road, is now owned by **Webster Chapman**, where he and his son and their families reside. While no descendents of **Benjamin** or **Franklin Capen** remain, their names are perpetuated in CAPEN ROAD and CAPEN HOSE COMPANY, the latter being organized when **F. F. Capen** was village President.

[Town of Sweden Sesqui-centennial booklet; 1964; p.72, 74]

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