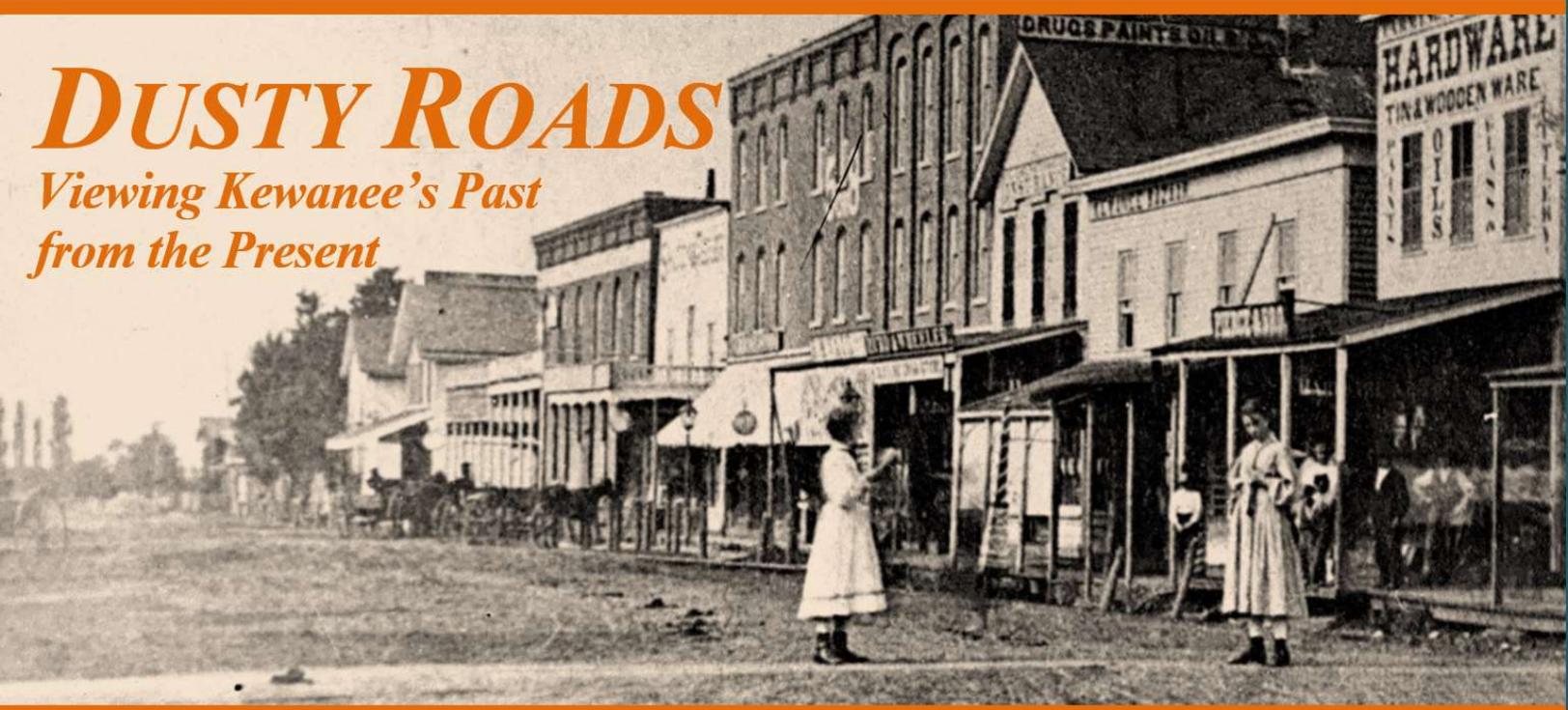


DUSTY ROADS

Viewing Kewanee's Past
from the Present



by Dean Karau

November 2019

One of Wethersfield's First Physicians

Elbert Pinney Left for Texas, Fought for the Confederacy, and Finally Moved to California

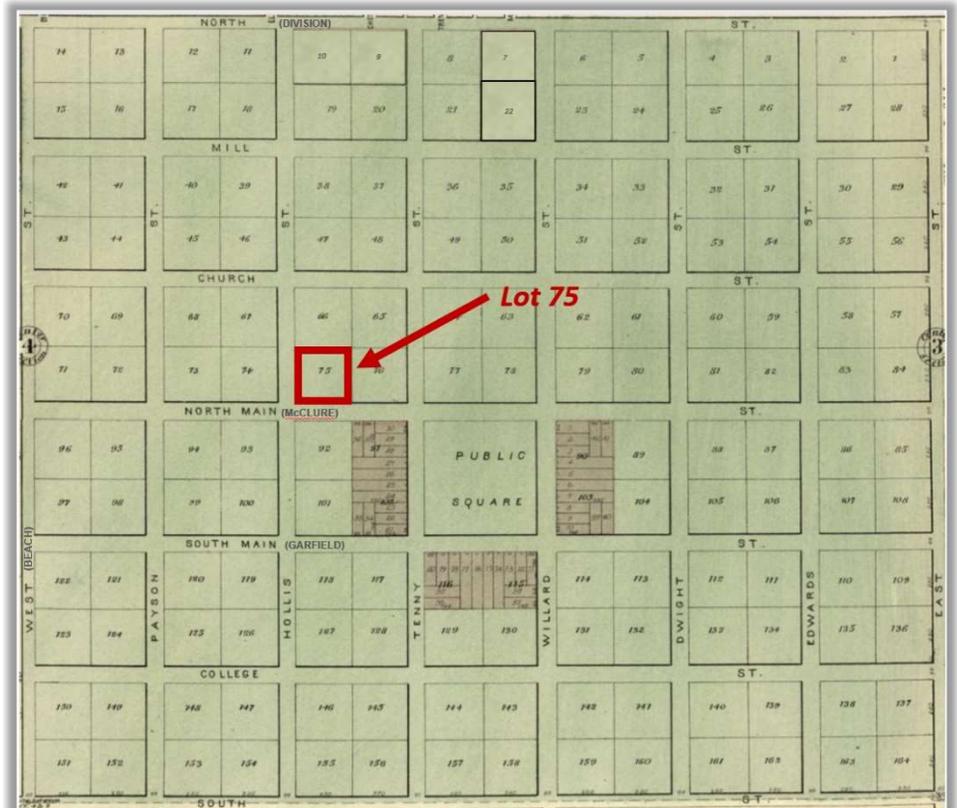
Elbert Pinney was born on January 29, 1826, in Coldbrook, Connecticut. His parents later moved to Erie County, Pennsylvania, where, at an early age, he decided he wanted to practice medicine.

At eighteen, Elbert began his medical studies in the office of one of the leading physicians in the area. He then attended medical lectures at an Ohio college, graduating in 1848.

The summer before his graduation, Elbert lived in Henry County, Illinois. When he received his degree, he moved to Wethersfield, which had been founded only 12 years earlier, to build a medical practice.

In March 1849, Dr. Pinney married Harriet Young, whose family had left Ohio for Whiteside County in Illinois in 1837, becoming one of the first settler families in that county.

Later that year, Dr. Pinney and his wife purchased from Morris Ellerwood the two-and-one-half acre Lot



Map of Village of Wethersfield

But in 1887, Dr. Pinney and his family moved to Sierra Madre, California, where he bought 35 acres of land at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, over-looking Los Angeles fifteen miles away.

The doctor hired renowned architects to design a new house and hotel implementing a dramatic Queen Anne style.



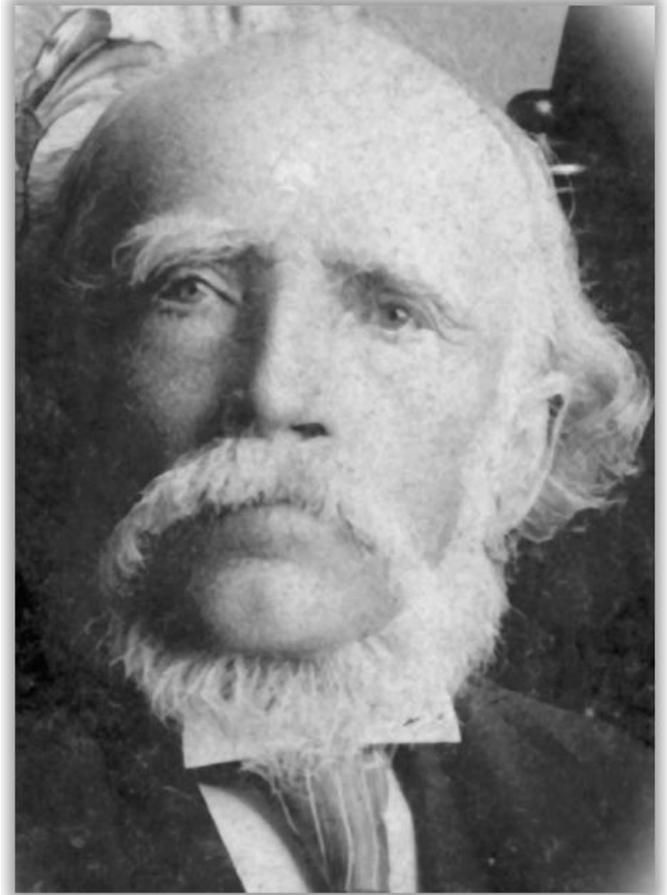
The Pinney House

The Sierra Vista Hotel opened with 20 rooms and a “fine view of the beautiful San Gabriel Valley, extending from one end of the valley to the other and from the mountains to the sea, presenting a picture grand, inspiring and never tiring, revealing to the observer new beauties each day.” (Films and commercials used the Pinney House/Hotel as a setting over the years.)

After moving to California, Dr. Pinney became well-

known for his skill not only as a doctor, but also for his groves of oranges. He gave “scientific attention to the raising of oranges and made a business success of it.”

Elbert Pinney died on March 17, 1914, 67 years after he first set foot in the tiny village of Wethersfield. As one of the village’s first physicians, he spanned the beginning of the end of the Wethersfield Colony and the founding of Kewanee.



Dr. Elbert Pinney



Dean Karau is a Kewanee native who moved away when he was 12 years old. Now retired, he continues to enjoy the outdoors, genealogy and history. He returns regularly to Kewanee to explore his roots and the history of Kewanee and Henry County.