

**Lewiston
History
Mysteries**

Sparrow Sage Saves Kidnapped Wife — Becomes Lewiston Legend

He had an unusual name, but Sparrow Sage made his mark on local history. He was born in Middleton, Connecticut in 1781 and bought land from the Holland Land Company in

Lewiston in 1804 on what is now Ridge Road. He was one of the earliest settlers in Niagara County. Sparrow had an older brother, Asahel, who also migrated to Lewiston.

In his later years, Sparrow got caught up in the “Millerism” cult, which predicted the end of the world on April 24, 1843. The day came and went and nothing happened. Despite a late start, Sparrow finally tilled some land and planted a crop that year, which turned out to be bountiful.

You can't tell from the all exterior renovations and additions, but about half of Sage's original log home and tavern have remained intact in the interior. It is located on Ridge Road, right next door to the Hillview Cafe. It is the oldest structure in Lewiston and one of the oldest in Niagara County.



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Placemats written and designed by volunteer, Lee Simonson.

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— USA Today & Rand McNally**

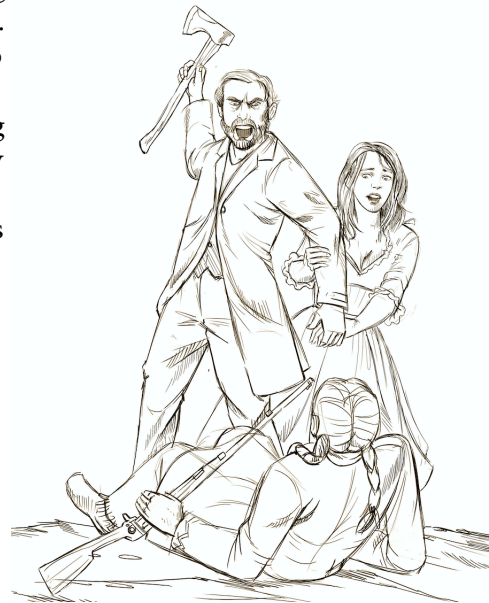
The Year is 1814 and One of Lewiston's Earliest Settlers Takes the Law Into His Own Hands

When Sparrow Sage came to Lewiston from Connecticut in 1804 he was 23 years old. An ambitious and enterprising young man, he acquired some property on Ridge Road to farm.

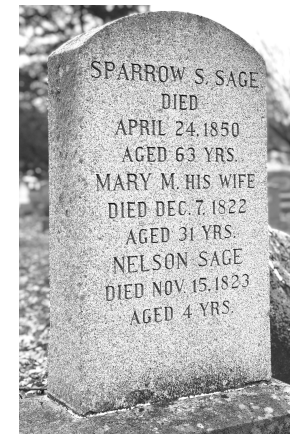
He also built a log home for his family and made it large enough to run a tavern in the front. His family was one of dozens that were run out of town, barely escaping with their lives, during the British invasion in December 1813. Everything in Lewiston was burned to the ground — except that is, Sage's home and tavern and another building in the Village. When the British army and its native allies came upon the Sage tavern — and its supply of spirits and liquor — they decided it was better to enjoy the comfort and refreshments the tavern offered, rather than torching the place.

When Sage returned to his homestead the next summer with his family, he restocked his inventory and was back in business. He also continued to clear his property and resumed farming.

One day, when Sage was out tending his farm chopping trees, a First Nations native visited the tavern and started imbibing — a little too much. Sage's wife, Mary, was tending bar with a young female friend and they attempted to try to send the patron along his way but that only enraged him. The native forcibly took the two women and started heading back to Fort Niagara. (The Indian was no doubt a British ally and probably from Canada, since the British controlled and occupied the fort since the previous December.) The young woman managed to escape and ran back to tell Sage what happened. Sage, with axe in hand, immediately chased down the culprit and a vicious fight ensued. The Native used his unloaded rifle as a club to defend himself but he was no match against Sage's strength, tenacity and long axe. Sage killed the kidnapper, saved his wife from a fate unknown, and became a Lewiston legend.



In 1814, Lewiston pioneer, Sparrow Sage, rescued his kidnapped wife.



After Sage Saga, Sparrow and Wife Continued Tavern Business

Sparrow and Mary continued to be taverners until Mary died in 1822. Sadly, their 4-year-old son died the following year. Sparrow died on April 24, 1850, and most of the family was buried on the Ridge Road property. The graves were later moved to the Village cemetery next to the Presbyterian Church.

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