

The location of **Lay's** Tavern.
By Douglas H. Shepard, 2013

Downs, p.414 says that **Lay's** Tavern was a well-known place of entertainment near the Lake shore in what is now the city of Dunkirk in 1813, and was at one time plundered by the sailors and men from an English vessel. That is not true, although the error is understandable. In 1843 Samuel A. **Brown** lectured on local history. He noted that in 1813 the British rifled "**Lay's** house, this side of Buffalo." Later the goods were returned, put ashore at Dunkirk. E. F. **Warren's** *Sketches* of 1846, pp.55-56 said that goods were "plundered from **Lay** tavern, long known as a house of entertainment near the lake shore, between Cattaraugus Creek and Buffalo."

The *Centennial History*,(1904) p 91 described it as "**Lay's** Tavern near the lake shore in Erie County." **Downs**, p.451, said "**Lay's** Tavern west of Buffalo, near the lake" and, on p.414, that the tavern was in Dunkirk. (These were separate articles probably written by different people.) Apparently the fact that the British returned **Lay's** goods at the convenient Dunkirk location led someone to assume that the tavern was there as well. Where *exactly* the tavern stood, is still not clear. Property deeds might answer the question.