



Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

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Recollections of Kaats Corners Road

By Steve Parisi

November 11 (Armistice Day) 1946: I was seven years old when my family - mother, step-father, sister and I - moved into the former Will Daggett property on Kaats Corners Road. We had been living since June in the High Street, Thurman, schoolhouse. The Emerson National Bank had been reluctant, but finally agreed, to provide a mortgage on a property without running water or electricity to a seasonal worker. (Step-



father), George Lounsbury was a stone mason employed at Sun Canyon Ranch. Kaats Corners was the name given to the intersection of the old Route 418 and what is now known as Hickory Hill Road (also listed on some tax maps as West River Road). A tavern of some infamy had sat at that intersection - the building, then the private residence of Frank and Charlotte (Beadnell) Swinton, was still there into the sixties, when Sit'n Bull Ranch bought and demolished it to

make room for their barn. I remember the ornate backbar still positioned against one wall of their bedroom.

Will Daggett had operated both a successful vegetable farm and a summer boarding house on our newly acquired property until 1926, when he sold it to a family named Boucher for their summer home - their winter address was on Chester Street in Glens Falls! Only a few remnants of Daggett's entrepreneurship - foundations of a greenhouse and several barns, the rusted pipes and caved-in reservoir of a gravity feed water supply, and a weather-beaten sign that read "Pebble Brook Farm" remained.

But what a great house! Built in 1905 when the Delaware and Hudson Railroad built its spur, and great railroad trestle across the Hudson, into Warrensburgh, the house was a considerable "cut-above" the mid-1800s farmhouse it replaced. It sat on 32 acres of fields and woodlot along the Hudson River. .

Front-gable style with a kitchen wing at the rear, it was a full two stories (eight foot ceilings downstairs, seven foot upstairs). A fine front stairway led from entry-hall-and-parlor to four upstairs guest bedrooms. A narrow, reverse, back stairway connected the kitchen with a sloped-ceiling bedroom above.

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Logging in the Adirondacks

By Ed Kreinheder

For two centuries logging has been one of the chief industries of the Adirondacks. Glens Falls was the center where millions of logs were impounded each year by the "Big Boom". Here they were identified by the owners' marks applied to the end by marking hammers, separated, and conveyed to the saw mills.

The Big Boom consisted of heavy squared timbers bolted together in rafts. The rafts were joined end to end by chains with logs in between to act as friction rollers. The ends were chained to heavy structures on either shore and structures up stream to break ice and stem the flow of logs. In 1859 with a half million logs against it, the chain broke from pressure caused by the river overflowing from heavy rains and melting snow. Half a million logs were scattered down the river as far as Troy.



The most important logs in the Adirondacks at that time were the white pine and spruce, many of which were from old first growth stands, trees three to four feet diameter and 150 feet in height, also a few giants six feet on the stump and 250 feet tall. Many of these (con't - page 4)

From the President

The Warrensburgh Historical Society is an organization that benefits all members of the town. The very existence of such an organization allows for the preservation of information and artifacts for the generations yet to come. As human society evolves, it becomes more and more apparent that we as a people learn from our history. As we learn, we move forward into the population better prepared for life's adventures, knowing that people from our community's past, have had to deal with situations that we must also overcome.

As the President of the Warrensburgh Historical Society, I would like to thank Delbert Chambers, who will continue as a Board member, to help the Society grow and move forward as he did as President. Delbert, has been very helpful with getting myself "onboard" with Society business, and pointing me in the right direction. I would also like to thank Caron Akeley, who in her own amazing way, seems to keep the Society together through thick and thin.

In an effort to bring the Warrensburgh Historical Society into the progressive community-supported organization I think it could become, I will be pushing for more involvement between the Historical Society and our educational institutions. This will include speakers and programs that will hopefully involve the school and people from our own membership, who, until recently, have been silently waiting to be utilized. I would like to thank everyone for their support of myself and the Board of Directors, and I would like to invite the membership to put forth any ideas and or information that might bring forward our historic town and its history.

Tony Fidd
E-mail - AMF@capital.net

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NOTICE

The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study, therefore, the Warrensburgh Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein

Calendar of Events

Board of Directors Meetings

Tues., April 4, 2000

Tues., May 2, 2000

Tues., June 6, 2000

Warren County 4th Annual History Day

Sat. - March 25

Lake Luzerne

For info call

696-3143

Amy Godine

"Lost & Found - Ethnic Enclaves in the Adirondacks"

Free Program

Tuesday - April 18

Richard's Library

7:00 PM

Refreshments

Sponsored by New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program

We welcome comments, corrections, articles, pictures and reminiscences.

Send submissions to :

Warrensburgh
Historical Society
Post Office Box 441
Warrensburgh, NY 12885

Quarterly Deadlines

February 1

May 1

August 1

November 1

Warrensburgh Historical Society
Quarterly
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Antique Soup

By Caron Akeley

Iron Doorstops And Bookends

Often, when seen out of their usual, familiar places, either in front of a door bracing it open or holding up a line of books on a desk or table, people mistake doorstops for bookends and vice versa.

Although doorstops were made and used from the earliest part of the 19th century, the ones we are most familiar with today are the iron ones that were so popular in the late 19th century into the early 20th century. These later doorstops became more widely available as factories developed better and faster iron casting techniques. They came in all types of shapes ranging from various kinds of animals



Photo by Caron Akeley

such as cats and dogs of different breeds, human figures in different costume, ships under full sale, baskets of flowers, houses and cottages, storybook characters and just about anything else you can think of. Some are 3-dimensional, such as many of the animal ones and others have a flat back to fit snugly against the door bottom.

I can well remember as a little girl the doorstop that held my bedroom door open against the summer breezes. She was a very lovely little lady in colonial hoopskirted outfit made of solid iron. She seemed to weigh a ton!

Although most were iron, occasionally you come across a variation made from brass or wood...anything that could hold a door open against a good strong breeze. Most of the iron ones were painted with a very colorful enamel finish and that original colorful finish is very important today to people who collect old doorstops.

Bookends, although usually smaller in size than doorstops, often appear in very similar designs. Made from the same heavy materials, whether iron, brass or bronze, they almost always have a "flat" back and quite frequently a backwards facing flange that slides under the last book in the row to anchor the group in place. Of course, bookends also always came in pairs, whereas doorstops did not.

Over the years many doorstops were pushed into service to hold books in place and many single heavy bookends were to be found holding open doors. Look around the house and see if you still have any of these helpers from the past, perhaps doing duty in each other's jobs.

Recollections (con't)

(I suspect Mr. Daggett came into sufficient money to build this fine house by selling a piece of his property to the railroad, although I could find no evidence of this in a cursory look at old deeds.)

Curiously, the front of the house was the furthest from the road!

The back, kitchen end of the house was the visitor's first approach. There was logic in this, however. The front porch, parlor and guest rooms faced the river and Sugarloaf Mountain beyond.

Each end of the main part of the house had a brick chimney starting just under the bedroom ceilings. Stove pipes from wood stoves on the first floor passed through the downstairs ceiling and provided ample heat to three of the bedrooms. (The rear chimney served two stoves, the kitchen range and the dining room pot-belly.) The house was partially furnished, and I wish I still had some of the furnishings that were there. I remember several "fainting" couches,

and a wonderful three-paneled oak-framed screen. There was a small cast iron stove shaped, I think, like an Italian Gothic cathedral. There were several iron, brass and wooden beds, and some old basin and pitcher sets. Curiously, the house had a full "modern" bathroom, apparently from the time when the water system still functioned. (We flushed the toilet with a bucket of water retrieved from the nearby brook, from which we also fetched our drinking water.)

Kerosene lamps provided illumination, and I don't remember having a problem reading or doing my homework. A big battery radio gave us morning news and evening entertainment, although it always seemed as though the commercials came through loud and clear while the programming faded! In summer Mom went to town every other day for a block of ice for the icebox. (Do I remember correctly that there was a feed store that sold ice on Warren Street, under the name of Crandall?)

So went an anachronistic childhood in the late forties, not unlike that of many kids living outside the edge of the soon-to-be burgeoning postwar economy. Several years later New York Power & Light (now Niagara Mohawk) brought the electric line in, presumably under the federal rural electrification program, and I could dream of one day owning an electric train!

June 7, 1967: Word came to Mom, now living half the year in Brooklyn, that the house, a "seasonal" dwelling now and vacant, had burned to the ground. Only memories remain, but they are great memories for us and the numerous friends and family members who shared our good times and bad.

There is a lot more to tell about those times on Kaats Corners Road. Almost every sentence calls for more explanation. What about our neighbors at the time, and what about Will Daggett's boarding house, and my family's venture in the same business? I hope to share my recollections of these and other stories as time permits. And I would welcome any recollections of readers and especially corrections or embellishments on my own recollections.

[Steve Parisi and his wife Sandi operate

a bed & breakfast in another house on the above described property, continuing the hospitality tradition established back around 1905 by Will Daggett. Steve can be reached at Country Road Lodge, 115 Hickory Hill Road, Warrensburg, NY 12885. (518)623-2207 or FAX at (518) 623-4363 or via e-mail at parisibb@netheaven.com]

Logging (con't)

came from Warrensburgh, floated down the Schroon to the Hudson. It has been claimed that the first river drive in the north took place on the Schroon.

Hemlock was also cut and stripped of the bark for the tanning mills. The logs, left to rot or used in the local sawmills for cheap construction lumber, also could be floated when stripped. The white pine was the prime lumber of the Adirondacks. (Hardwoods were not cut to any extent until later and moved by rails as the logs wouldn't float). Many fine houses were built entirely of the white pine - clapboards, exterior trim and architectural details, such as ornate entrances, window frames and sash, interior doorways mantles, paneling and carvings. Hemlock two-by-fours and boards could be bought for five cents a piece. Howard Mason in his "Backward Glances of Glens Falls" tells of a man who decided to build a house for ten dollars but when finished cost him fif-



teen. He remarked "things always end up



River Drivers, Sleeping Tents and Portable Shanty. Most of the men including the one in black, kneeling on the right, are holding peavies. From US Bureau of Forestry's Bulletin34

costing more than you figure nowadays.

In the early days trees were felled and cut to length with a single bitted ax. Double bitted axes and crosscut saws were not used until later in the 19th century.

Old timers thought a double bitted ax was dangerous to use and didn't like the "hang of it." Also an ax with a flat end was needed to drive a wooden wedge or a "glut".

Poplar and spruce pulp wood was always felled with an ax and cut to length with a bucksaw even as late as 1950. One man could fell a sixteen inch tree with an ax as fast as two men with a crosscut saw.

Ben Franklin, who was fond of experiments, once timed an axeman falling an 18 inch pine tree in two minutes.

Logs in Glens Falls in the early days were measured in

units of "Markets". A market containing a standard measure of 200 board feet. Old timers often spoke of a large log as being a "market" log which would be 13 feet by 19 inches diameter and contain 200 board feet measure. Logs were al-

the small end. Logs in those days were cut thirteen feet long rather than the 12 foot four inches as now. I once asked a sawmill man why and he said because they build many 13 foot buildings. I assume it was because of the bumping and water end checking caused in the river driving.

In the 19th century oxen were usually favored in the woods to horses. Horses were considered too flighty and nervous in rough going and apt to injure themselves and break harnesses. A good harness was very expensive in pioneer days and an ox could be raised from a calf, more cheaply than a horse. A yoke could be made with an ax and a draw shave and a couple light chains were all that was needed. I have seen oxen used as late as 1960 in rough places in the mountains. (Horses were much faster in the woods but not as good as oxen in deep mud or snow or a steady pull.)

There are still many three and four foot pine stumps around Harrisburg lake in Stony Creek. In 1950 an old man told me they were cut seventy five years previously then, so they would be 125 years old now and quite punky on the outside, but the roots are still perfectly sound.

In the 19th century it is on record that a white pine tree, perfectly sound and 250 feet tall, was blown over in a gale at Dartmouth College. They were noble trees.