

Greene County Gleanings

by Raymond Beecher

FAIR SEASON/PART TWO — The Greene County Agricultural Fair for the year 1888 was set for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 29-31. It appears to have been a daytime event. That year, Captain James Stead of Catskill would serve as president of the Agricultural Society. There were six vice presidents to provide more geographical representation, namely, John Morehouse, F. Becker, Harmon Van Woert, Addison Steele, Theodore Coonley, and Oliver Bourke. Two men from Cairo township, they being O.T. Schermerhorn and William C. Adams, were serving as secretary and as treasurer, respectively. The marshal's position was filled by George H. Lyons.

By early spring at the latest, the 13 superintendents for the various Fair departments had to be recruited, advertising in the Fair booklet secured, the program finalized, including the name of the main speaker, and the layout turned over to the printer as soon as possible. The booklets were distributed months prior to the event to encourage participants in exhibitions and the races. In 1888, the 40-page booklet contract was awarded to *The Examiner's* print shop.

Solicitation of advertising that year appears to have been limited to Cairo and Catskill; the advertisements ranged in size from full page to quarter size. The most prominent, full page one was taken by Sage's Carriage Repository, corner of Main and William Streets, Catskill. S.B. Sage was his large stock of vehicles: Village Carts, Stylish Rovers, Nobby Buggies, Business

Family Extension-Top Carriages, Buckboards, Platform Wagons, as well as light and heavy Lumber Wagons." Sidelines for this firm included single and double harnesses, horse blankets, sheets, halters, horse collars and whips. "Harness made to order, and Repairing done promptly."

The hotels at Catskill and at Cairo were stressing their superior accommodations and meals both for the general public and for any Fair officials who needed to be housed and fed for three days. J.H. Pierson's Exchange House and Restaurant at 258 Main Street, Catskill, was operating on "the European Plan, with meals at all hours, regular dinner 25 cents." At the Landing, R.P. Barker's Union House was "where trains and stages for all parts of the Mountain District start." Its advertisement stressed the quality of its accommodations for tourists, including first-class livery and an outdoor pavilion. In competition at the Landing was the Palmer House, "first-class in every respect." Their well-equipped livery employed only "careful drivers."

Further up Main Street, The Windsor, formerly Gunn's Hotel, at the corner of Main and Bronson, was being managed by W.D. Hahn. His advertisement stressed their

central location where "all the Western Stages start." Gay's Commercial Hotel was the only advertiser to use an illustration of the building, an eye-catcher; at 329 Main Street, Gay and Son were charging \$2 the day. As an inducement to drummers (salesmen) to occupy rooms, the Gays stressed the availability of a "Large Sample Room" in which goods could be displayed and orders taken. W.B. Phillips was promoting his Irving House with "rooms newly refurnished, papered and painted throughout."

For those Fairgoers and officials desiring to be housed nearer the Cairo Fairgrounds, the Walter Brothers Hotel was stressing it could accommodate 100 guests at reasonable charges. The new Fair View House, completely rebuilt and refurnished, with first-class livery attached, was the domain of D.W. Jennings. A small advertisement with limited information was placed by Cairo's Club House, George Person Jr., proprietor. Undoubtedly there were other rooms available on a more informal basis. Not all families could afford to give up three days to Fair attendance and thus had no need of overnight accommodations.

(To be continued)

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