

Greene County Gleanings

by Raymond Beecher

Coxsackie recollections as far back as 60 years ago are the forte' of Grant W. Van Loan who grew up on South River Street but now resides in the Fort Plain area. Fortunately, Grant is putting these down on paper and sending the sheets to me. In this column I share some of his local history segments with you, adding some clarification where necessary for the reader who may not be that well acquainted with the Coxsackie landings.

"Last night I was going through some of the Greene County Historical Journals and a Captain Clough was mentioned. As a small boy I remember an old captain who used to sit on the porch of Eva Youman's home at the lower junction of Church and South River streets during the warmer weather. It seems he fell from the upper deck of one of the day or night boats and in hitting the lower deck landed on his head; he never recovered mentally from that accident. He was a tall, thin man with a moustache and I think he smoked a pipe. Eva Youmans was related to the Cloughs who lived two doors up Church Street. Dad [Grant Van Loan] as you know as a young man was a crew member of the On-teora. The Trojan and other night boats used to tie up at the Knickerbocker [ice company] dock next to our house.

"Also, I can vaguely remember going with my dad to visit Reed Adams then living down below the turn to Four Mile Point [Farview, by Sleepy Hollow entrance off route 385]. It seems Reed used to raise hound dogs and was a hunter, as was dad. Dad also used to visit someone who flew a plane from that area. I think he had a vegetable stand out in front of his house and the field was to the south of it. Millie Carrington lived up from the Cloughs, about four or five houses, when I was growing up [and she still does].

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"Dad and I also visited D. Greene who owned the lighthouse area and from whom dad bought his Grumman canoe, Greene used trolling for stripers in the channel opposite his home. Dad, for all his intimate knowledge of the Hudson, never knew till then that one could troll for stripers. In later years we'd fish them on receding tides off the ends of the islands and up by the falls in Stockport Creek. Harrison Bracket, who lived above the cliffs there on the north side enlightened us on the skills of striper fishing, he having gone from bass rods to light saltwater gear since some stripers were so large and heavy. Since then I happened across a book which showed stripers on a radar screen photo. It was astounding to see such great numbers of them at that time; this was probably in the '70s."

In the final paragraph of the letter Grant W. Van Loan made some local history inquiries.