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Spring, 1979

THE SOCIETY'S FIRST YEAR—1929

Dr. Alexander Flick, State Historian, was the keynote speaker at the preliminary organizational meeting of individuals interested in forming a Greene County Historical Society; the session was held at the court house in Catskill on January 24, 1929. Introduced by County Historian, Jessie Van Vechten Vedder, Dr. Flick had words of advice for the fledgling organization. He stressed the importance of New York history, the need for preserving the same, and the current effort of the state to duly recognize sites of special historical interest. Following his appropriate remarks, Judge Edwin C. Hallenbeck of Coxsackie entertained the audience with reminiscences of earlier days in Greene County.

On motion of Andrew D. Peloubet of Athens, Orin Queal Flint, also of that village, was named Temporary Chairman; William S. Borthwick of Cornwallville became the Temporary Secretary. Again, it was Mr. Peloubet's motion, unanimously approved, which authorized the formation of the Greene County Historical Society. Mrs. Vedder, Mr. Borthwick and Mr. Peloubet were then given the task of drafting the rules and regulations which would govern the society's future operations.

The second meeting, also held at the court house, was called for February 7, 1929. On that date the constitution and by-laws were formally adopted. All persons joining before April 5 were to be considered charter members; the dues were set at \$1.50 regular and \$5.00 sustaining. The affairs of the newly created Greene County Historical Society were entrusted to the following officers:

President	Orin Q. Flint	Athens
1st Vice President	J. Frank Lackey	Tannersville
2nd Vice President	Edwin C. Hallenbeck	Coxsackie
Secretary	William S. Borthwick	Cornwallville
Asst. Secretary	Jessie V. V. Vedder	Catskill-Leeds
Historian	Jessie V. V. Vedder	Catskill-Leeds
Treasurer	Harry B. Morris	Catskill

Leonard Bronk Lampman of Coxsackie and John Hayes of Hensonville were elected to membership on the Executive Committee. President Flint designated Andrew D. Peloubet as Membership Committee chairman, Chester F. Craigie as Publicity chairman, while other chairmen included J. Lewis Patrie for Incorporation, Mrs. Samuel C. Hopkins for Membership Certificates and Robert Jones for Research.

President Flint, at the next regular business

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SMITH'S LANDING—NOW CEMENTON

—Elsie and Barbara Van Orden

Smith's Landing located in the southeast corner of Greene County lies between the Hudson River and the limestone ridge known as the Kalkberg. When the Province of New York was first divided into counties (1683), Albany County extended from Sawyer's (Saugerties) Creek to Saratoga and included much of Greene County. In 1788 the dividing line between Albany and Ulster Counties was established as running westerly from the northern tip or tiny Wanton Island in the Hudson River to the head of Kaater's Creek.

The town of Catskill was annexed to Ulster County in 1798. In 1800 the county of Greene was legally organized and it took another sixty-five years to establish all the present day township borders.

One of the first white settlers in the area was Jacob Lockermans. He and his two brothers came from Holland and were among the early settlers of New Netherlands. Jacob moved up river; in 1664 he was one of the commissioners to negotiate a peace between the Mohawks and the northern Indians. In 1686 Lockermans bought the land bearing his name from the Indian proprietors; nine years later his title was confirmed by a patent from the colonial governor.

When Jacob Lockermans died, his daughter, Caterina, who married Wessels TenBroeck of Albany, inherited the property. Caterina and Wessels, by joint will dated 1723, left these patent lands to their five children. One daughter, Anna Katrina, married Anthony Van Schaick. Gosen Van Schaick, probably their son, was active in local Revolutionary War affairs.



Local house saloon

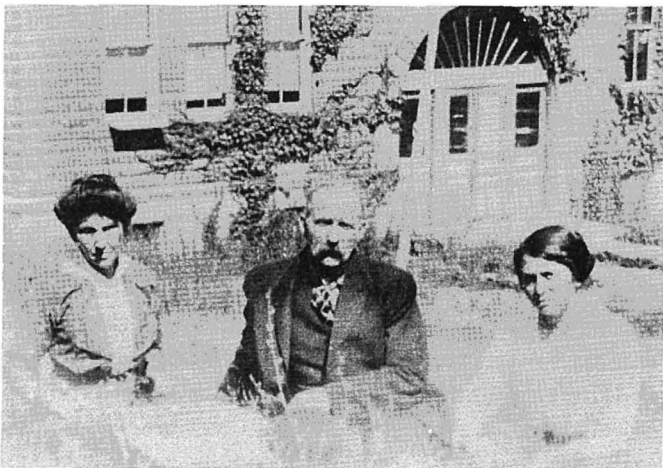
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Smith's Landing *[continued from page 1]*

The Musiers were another prominent family at Smith's Landing by 1786. Their family cemetery near the river, located by the writers' family, contains six stones in a still readable condition.

Rufus Smith, for whom Smith's Landing was named, was born in Connecticut on October 30, 1782. He came to Greene County with at least three family members—his father, Comfort Smith, and his brothers, George and Rowland, all of whom became property owners in the area of Great Falls (High Falls) and the Cauterskill Clove.

Rufus Smith married Christina Trumpbour; they became heavy property owners. In 1822 Rufus purchased land, including a dock on the Hudson River, from the Musier family. Rufus and Christina, with their infant daughter, Catherine, moved to Smith's Landing in 1835. They lived in a large brick house near the dock until his death in 1859.



*Dewey Rhinehart's father, mother and sister
in front of Alsen school.*

Strangely enough, while the other early families, including the Trumpbours, the Musiers and the Gardners all had private burying grounds which still exist, none can be found for the Smiths. This would seem to justify the placement of their remains in the Asbury Methodist Church cemetery. There is a tombstone in the Asbury cemetery for Rufus Smith and the dates on it read "1782-1859."

Smith's Landing was an agricultural area until the late 1800's. The soil was fertile and the boat landing made water transportation accessible and inexpensive. Hay was the biggest cash crop, much being shipped to New York by barge or sloop. Every farm made potash or pearl ash to keep the soil productive. Wild berries and currants were abundant and women would pick many pails full. The men grew corn, rye, wheat, and potatoes in sod. Every farm had a tobacco patch for smoking, chewing and snuff. Virginia tobacco was better but home-grown was free. Every

farm had its flock of sheep and a plot of flax, the source of winter and summer clothing and linens.

Pigs and beef cattle were fattened for November butchering. In May a barrel each of shad and of herring were salted down. Streams were full of fish for eating fresh, and wild game was plentiful. Common poultry included chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys.

While the British controlled New York City during the Revolutionary War, limiting up river traffic, Persen's store at Kaatsban transported its merchandise inland from Philadelphia by way of the Delaware valley, Port Jervis, and the Rondout. Settlers also went to Boston with oxen for supplies. Since the Van Ordens to the north went to the church in Katsbaan, it seems probable that many of the Smith's Landing people also shopped in Katsbaan. Their needs were limited to spices, tea, salt, a box or two of snuff and special garments. Everything else was raised or acquired by barter.

The men trapped for fur-bearing animals. The first sloop up the Hudson in springtime always brought John Jacob Astor on his annual purchasing trip. Men came from all over the mountains with their pelts; the cash was welcomed.

After New Years, a succession of visits commenced. With one member of the family being left at home to care for the stock, the rest went off to visit relatives, frequently staying for several days. This social activity continued during the nonactive farm months until the maple sugaring began. Spinning and quilting bees were common and there was a weekly singing school during the colder months. We have great-great-grandpa Rufus Smith's diary written during the Civil War. How he loved to sing and gad! He could sing, and probably court a pretty girl at a different school almost every night of the week.



New Cementon School

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Smith's Landing

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In 1813 there were fifteen schools in the township of Catskill. Terms were generally for six months; attendance was not compulsory. The Smith's Landing school had twenty children, out of 38 eligibles; their ages ranged from five years to fifteen. The older residents today remember attending school at a two-room building on Overbaugh property west of the railroad tracks; it had no playground or ballfield.

The original settlement at the Landing was right on the river's edge. A brick building housed the general store and post office, the latter established in 1872. William Massino was the first postmaster. After the building of the West Shore Railroad in 1882, the mail, with its Smith's Landing postmark, was taken up to the track and hung on a hook on a pole, to be picked up by the passing mail cars.

The coming of the railroad caused an uproar. The people thought it would follow the river, as it does on the east bank, but it didn't. Each landowner was forced to sell a right-of-way, with strip often taken from his best farmland. The railroad fenced both sides of the track, but it was a nuisance to open and close the gates each time one crossed. When cattle got loose, they always seemed to head for the tracks. In Smith's Landing a number of houses were moved to make way for the railroad. Lilac bushes on the west side of 9-W in Cementon are today's reminders of these long-ago homesteads.

Before the turn of the century, the few scholars who went on to high school rode a boat in good weather and took the train in winter. They left the Landing at 7:30 a.m. for the hour's ride to Catskill. Bill Johnson remembers having just nine minutes each afternoon to get from school to Catskill Point to catch the boat home. It cost fifty cents a week. Once the pilot got visiting with the cabin boy and went aground on the mud flats. He blew the whistle until a smaller boat came from Germantown and rescued the passengers. At 2 a.m. the next morning, the tide came in high enough to float the stranded vessel.

Election Day was a big holiday and everyone went to Catskill to vote. Smith's Landing people voted at the brick firehouse on Broome Street hill. Wet weather was Democrat weather, dry was Republican. Even in horse and buggy days, the political parties sent conveyances to take the old or infirm to the polls. When Hoover won and his supporters started a victory parade from Catskill southward, unhappy Democrats stoned the cars from the second overpass.

In 1841 blue stone was discovered in the foothills west of the limestone ridge. Quarrying of blue stone became an important local industry. Stone was cut into squares or rectangles suitable for sidewalks,

and was transported in wagons drawn by horses down the winding lanes to the river shore. Blue stone was shipped from Catskill, Malden, Saugerties and Kingston, as well as from Smith's Landing. When the river was frozen, flagstones were stacked upright along the docks, and in spring were loaded on barges for shipment to New York. Stone quarrying was a million-dollar business in its heyday. Incidentally, the stone for the Brooklyn Bridge was quarried on the Worth Rouse farm between Leeds and Athens, before 1883.

Fishing provided work, food and cash for men in this area. In spring, after the ice disappeared and while the tide was out, fishermen would don their hip boots and go out on the mud flats to stomp down or remove water lilies, bogs and weeds, thus cleaning up the area; this was to protect their nets. The Embought Bay and the shoreline up and down the river were staked out to indicate each individual's territory. The men usually respected each other's boundaries. Two types of net were used: a set net for carp, and a haul seine for smaller fish. Separate fishing licenses were required for each.

Early in the season, in May, the haul seine was used, placed in the stern of a net boat and run in an oval position at high tide. One end was pulled up toward shore to catch fish within its confines. Small fish such as herring, bullheads and eels were caught in this manner; they were sold locally. Perhaps some readers may remember Miney Easlund and his peddler's wagon. The bullheads and eels could be stored in a fish car for two or three weeks, but the scaly fish had to be sold at once.

In June the set nets were used for carp. The set net was longer—1500 to 2000 feet. It was rowed out in a circular fashion and the fish were picked up when the tide receded. Men stood in the mud and shallow water and lifted out each carp which weighed anywhere from five to thirty pounds and placed them in fish cars. Smaller fish were released.

The fish car was a wooden box, 14 x 8 x 2 feet, shaped like a scow at the front, so that it could be towed easily. The whole thing was slatted with 1-inch cracks to allow the free flow of water. It had a cover to keep the fish in. Each held half a ton of carp. For years they sold for 25 cents the pound.

The men had to work quickly to fill the fish cars because of the rapidly outgoing tide. When full, the fish cars were towed to the edge of the little channel and anchored. Two or three times a week the fish boat would come down the river, weighing and collecting fish as it went by. The carp were placed in dry wells and shipped to New York.

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Smith's Landing

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In 1888 the County Board of Supervisors passed an act to protect fish in the Embought Bay, apparently restricting some types of fishing, probably with haul seines. Forty-seven fishermen of the Embought Bay and Smith's Landing signed a petition asking the Legislature to repeal the act, which they did.

When trucks became available, the fish were no longer carried by boat. Fish cars were moored along the shore and unloaded onto tank trucks. The fish were kept alive, first in water and later in cracked ice. Trucks left here about nightfall and traveled while the air was cooler.

As the river became polluted, the fish were held along the shore in fresh water for about six weeks and fed cracked corn to remove impurities. After awhile this became impractical—it meant the death of this local fishing industry.

Every farm in this area had its orchard, raising different varieties of apples, pears, plums and cherries. The Evening Line steamer stopped at every landing to pick up freight; a farmer could ship one barrel or a whole load of fruit. Farmers came from across the river by barge to ship their fruit from Smith's Landing because at this point the channel hugs the western shore.

Small fruit such as strawberries, currants, and grapes were shipped in the same manner. Sheep, calves, poultry—any type of surplus livestock, tub butter, pot cheese, and eggs were some of the things sent on the Storm King. It was a common sight to see a flock of sheep herded down the main road to holding pens at the Landing. There was a large scale on the dock where teams hauled loads to be weighed.

The boat also unloaded freight ordered by local residents. The West Camp church organ was delivered this way, as was one of the first cars in Smith's Landing, a Stanley Steamer. The demise of the Evening Line in the early years of the Great Depression ended this era of river transportation.

For a number of years after the Civil War, horses from New York City spent their summer vacations in the country. The horses' hooves became sore from contact with miles of cobblestones, so they were shipped to Smith's Landing to recuperate. After a few months in lush green pasture with fresh air and sunshine, the horses returned to the rigors of life in the city.

The harvesting and storing of ice from the river was another local industry. There were eight ice houses in the Smith's Landing section: Pat Dougherty's, Friendship, West Camp, National (burned at midnight 1895), Jersey (burned 1906), Little Consumers, Big Consumers, and another owned

by Pat Dougherty in the cove at Alsen. Dougherty dyked the bay so that he could harvest several crops of ice each year. After the first batch was harvested, he opened the water gates so the high tide would flood in for a second crop. In a cold winter, he could cut the same ice field several times.

Working on the ice fields was a source of employment for many men from a wide area. The larger ice firms owned their own horses, while the smaller ones hired local farmers and their teams. Cedar trees were used for markers on the fields. Not marking a field was a "hanging crime" as many people traveled on the river ice in those years.

Ice harvesting commenced when the ice was about a foot thick. If it didn't freeze fast enough, men tapped holes in the ice with spudding bars. The water came up through the holes and froze on the top. This was of lower quality than natural ice.

Children were hired to lead horses pulling the ice markers, and to pick up the diamonds (horse manure) that fell on the ice. When Dewey Rhinehart was nine years old (about 1908), he went to the school trustee and asked for permission to leave school for six weeks to work on the ice. His father was earning nine dollars the week and had seven mouths to feed. One of Dewey's jobs was to keep the canals open at night. The cold was so intense when he went out at 3 a.m. on one occasion that the water froze as soon as he opened a channel. The boss sent him home, so he didn't get paid for that night, and he froze his ears and fingers to boot.

Horses working on the ice always had a choke-rope around their necks, so that if they fell into the water, the driver could pull on the rope. This cut off the horse's breath, making him buoyant, and kept his head above water until he could be pulled out by hooking onto other horses. Some horses and men drowned, regardless of these precautions. They always kept a jug of whiskey handy for anyone who fell in and needed warming in a hurry. Working on the ice fields was cold, dangerous work. Many men died on the fields or in the ice houses, or were seriously injured.

The ice was marked in both directions, 3 feet by 4 feet, and then plowed the long way. Men hand-sawed it the short way. After the ice plow had cut to a 10-inch depth, a man with a spudding bar severed it the rest of the way through. Cakes of ice were floated into the channel by the use of ice pikes. Steam engines were used to hoist the ice up into the houses, where it was packed 10 to 12 inches from the siding. This space was filled with sawdust for insulation. Fine hay such as swale grass or slough grass was used as a covering.

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Smith's Landing

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Around Memorial Day they started shipping ice to New York in covered barges, the same barges used to ship hay. The ice business "went up the flue" when refrigeration arrived. For a while some ice houses were used to grow mushrooms but many burned—all are gone now.

There were two brickyards in the area—the Cementon yard near the Landing, and Brusaw's at Alsen. Brick was shipped by barge. Several negro families lived near the brickyards and worked in them. A number of French Canadians worked in both the brickyards and the ice houses. Times were difficult in Canada and when word got around that there was work on the Hudson River, many crossed the border.

The Frenchmen stayed in this area for several years and married local girls. When the brickyards closed in the 1880's, the Canadians and their families moved back to Canada. A few years ago, the John Engelins visited her aunt's family in Canada. They learned that the Frenchman had forbidden his wife to teach their five children English upon their return to Canada. The grandchildren are now learning English in school and all wish they had had a bilingual family.

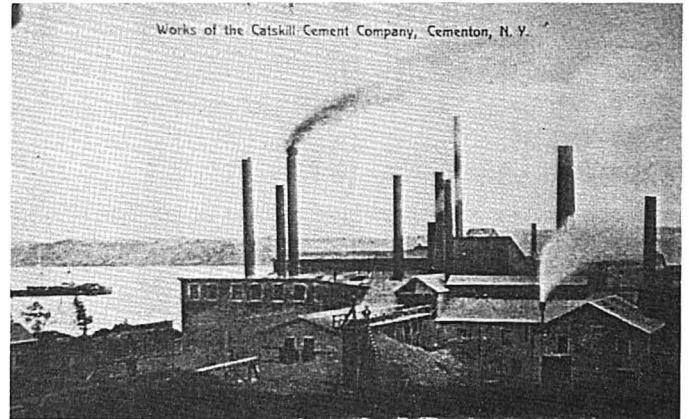
Population increased slowly as a few new families settled in the Landing. Peter Johnson, a Swede, came there in the 1880's and was the patriarch of the present Johnson family. He fathered seven sons before he died in an ice house accident.

The pastoral life of Smith's Landing came to an end around the turn of this century with the development of the cement mills. The Catskill Cement plant, which is now the Alpha Portland, was the first, incorporated in 1899. The Alsen plant, now Lehigh, started in 1902 and was owned by a German firm. The Acme, in turn, became the Seaboard, North American, Marquette, and is now owned by Gulf Western; it was completed in 1919.

When the first plant was built, laborers were apparently local people. There were a few skilled Germans at the Alsen once it opened. The 1906 census lists one large grocery and general store, and two hotels with bars. Herman C. Cowan, superintendent of the Catskill Cement Company, is credited or blamed, for changing the name of the Post Office from Smith's Landing to Cementon. For a time both post offices were used, one at the Landing and the other at the present site on 9-W. The old-timers resisted change, but finally had to submit to "progress."

Slowly at first, and then more rapidly, the population increased. The Alpha plant brought men from Pennsylvania to work and the local men worried about their jobs. When quarries in Rosendale closed,

some of the men brought their families here. But there was work for many men. Irishmen came to do construction work. Later Germans, Poles, Austrians, Italians, Russians and Yugoslavs arrived. Some Turks worked at Alsen. Since the early workers were single men, a number of families operated boarding houses. Dewey Rhinehart remembers his mother serving corn on the cob. One of the Irishmen handed her back the empty cob and asked her, "please to put some more beans on the stick."



All the cement plants built lodgings to house their men, many of them nothing more than shacks. There were dormitories, similar to two-story chicken coops, near each one of the three plants. Some were on stilts along the river shore.

These men spoke little English. Some of the older natives remember the foreigners as wild, hard-drinking, pugnacious men, screaming and shooting throughout the night. One morning the *Catskill Daily Mail* headline proclaimed "War Again in Cementon." Nearly every house in Cementon had a bullet hole in it. Sometimes they would call the sheriff, and he admitted taking his time getting there. Once, while a baseball game was in progress, the sheriff came across a hill, chasing a fugitive and shooting at him. Weddings were lively events, lasting two or three days. Joe Riley, a Catskill cop, would come down to police the affair and usually was "under the influence" before the celebration ended.

F. A. Galt, in *Dear Old Greene County*, lists two Cementon murders around 1910, as well as numerous accidental deaths. There were fourteen saloons in town.

The first Mr. Krstovich, a Yugoslav, was an influential and respected man, though he came to America as a penniless youth who spoke no English. He learned to read and write, and became a prosperous businessman; he helped many of his fellow countrymen. On one occasion he hosted a lamb roast for his Croatian brethren and used 26 lambs. For years he ran the store at Alsen and helped many laborers with paperwork and legalities before they could cope with the English language. [continued on page 7]

Smith's Landing

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John Bulich, Sr., left his father's farm in Croatia (now Yugoslavia) where they grew tobacco, at the age of thirteen and worked his way to New York by way of France. He found various jobs as a ship-builder in New Jersey, a construction worker on the Ashokan Dam, and a bootlegger. This last occupation ended when he met and married a good woman. He settled at Alsen and rented a farm after he began work at the cement plant. When times were hard, he shared the wood and crops from his farm with the rest of the community.

John had no formal education, but he became a skilled millwright who was consulted by engineers at Alpha when they rebuilt the plant and set up new machinery. Soon after he came here, while at work in the quarry, several members of the local Ku Klux Klan threatened him and told him to leave. He knew that he couldn't fight them all, so he belted one over the head with his shovel and the others had to carry the fallen hero away. They never bothered him again! While he was raising a large family, John saved the cash to buy a farm on the Embought and later founded the Bulich Mushroom Company.

Work in the cement plants was hard and the men were poorly paid. At first the limestone had to be mined by hand, using sledge hammers and drills. When the hole was two or three feet deep, a charge of dynamite was inserted. This was dangerous work and we heard of numerous injuries; the 1917 census lists a number of widows. It must have been difficult for these women alone, in a strange land with a strange language and the wage earner gone. Sometimes they received a little money from the cement company, often not.

These immigrants came from hardy stock and somehow they survived. They gave each other financial help when possible; they were supportive of each other. We heard of a family that made it through one winter on flour and water pancakes, and of another having to borrow a dress in which to bury a little daughter. Single men were accepted into families and lived there until they died. A Roman Catholic Church was formed as soon as there were enough people to support it, and the building of St. Mary's was completed in 1923.

Women were employed to mend torn cement bags. They worked out-of-doors at home. The cement company provided heavy thread for sewing the sturdy cotton bags. It was dusty work and the women wore heavy aprons and kerchiefs to protect themselves from the cement dust embedded in the bags. Eventually the plants got special machines to mend the bags with twine, putting an end to the women's jobs.

After the men had worked and saved some money, they sent for their wives or sweethearts, married the latter, and established homes. Mr. Daley saved for seven years to pay for his wife's transportation and for a place to live. Some of the men had mail order brides. In the first generation there was little intermarriage with local people.

The 1917 census indicates this was the heyday of the hamlet. There were from 1200 to 1500 residents in the area. Skilled workers and proprietors of small businesses were still local persons. The town had plenty of small businessmen: butchers, a fish peddler, shoemakers, coopers, seamstresses, and two barbers. These were all gone ten years later. A new school was built, containing five classrooms; well over a hundred students were enrolled.

Night school classes began to help the newcomers learn English. A community of houses had grown up around Alsen with its schoolhouse and a commissary at the Acme. The Alsen plant even had its own railroad depot and a post office for a time.

Several peddlers came through town regularly. A fish peddler, butter and cheese man, a bookseller, and a wagon from Amrod's store in Saugerties all



Meat Peddler on his route

helped supply the needs of residents. Farmers like Grandfathers Van Orden and Smith found a ready market for pigs and loads of cabbage, as well as for their homemade cider.

Older residents still remember the Armenian woman named Nora Fonteyn who spoke little English and came periodically with a bundle of clothes tied up in a sheet. Her husband was still in Europe and not allowed to emigrate owing to illness. Nora would spread out the bundle on the ground, and the children and women gathered around to look and to try on the clothing. A few who could afford it bought a new garment. A minor drawback was that all the dresses or shirts would be exactly the same style when the children compared them in school the next day. The lady traveled by horse and wagon and later by bus, spanning a period of at least forty years.

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Smith's Landing

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When gypsies occasionally came through the town, housewives locked up their chickens and looked to having their fortunes told. Hoboes followed the railroad and some kind housewives habitually gave them homemade bread and butter, much to the disgust of unsympathetic husbands.

Although residents of Smith's Landing had little money in this period, they enjoyed the closeness of families and neighbors. A group of women often walked together down the road to the West Camp Ladies' Aid. There were community dances with people coming from a distance. Quite a bit of courting went on back and forth across the Hudson. Young people in need of pocket money rowed across early in the morning, and picked strawberries all day for a cent and a half a quart, then rowed home in time for supper.

A Larkin Club was a popular social event for the ladies. They met for supper at one another's houses and took turns studying and ordering merchandise from the Larkin catalogue. This company sold items like coffee, tea, spices, baking powder and flavorings. The hostess for the evening received credit for items purchased by her guests. These credits were saved and exchanged for premiums. Remember the Larkin desks? The Gardner girls' mother saved up her coupons for a porch swing.

The sight of the first automobile to pass through the area was a never-to-be-forgotten experience, especially for little girls like Stella Craft (Potts). History now records that Dora Ennis, who married Wendell Siley, had the honor of handling it. She drove his car, still in mourning; with her long black veil streaming behind, she must have been an awesome sight. The car, by the way, had no steering wheel.

Pastor Kempner of the Lutheran Church owned one of the first automobiles, a Stanley Steamer, which was delivered on the night boat.

A large wooden building, called the Alpha Clubhouse, was constructed on the hill west of the cement plant. It was a boarding house for workmen, and community dances were held in the double parlors downstairs. It had a large container for storing water in the attic, possibly rainwater. In later years it became a residence for some of the company foremen.

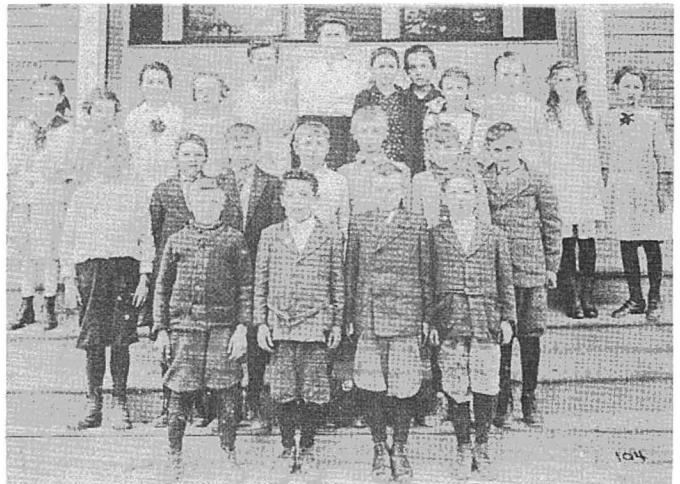
The young people enjoyed active sports. For years Cementon had a winning baseball team that fought regularly against neighboring towns. When the Hudson was dredged in the 1930's to deepen the channel, a sandy beach was created at the end of Alpha Road. Several people would congregate there to swim on a warm day.

By 1928 the population had decreased. Hotels and bars disappeared as more of the immigrants established homes; prohibition sent the ginmills underground. The automobile enabled many families to move to Catskill or Saugerties and commute to work, and also took women to the glass factory and the knitting mills in Catskill. Few Anglo-Saxons were left of the earlier settlers of Smith's Landing; the Croatians predominated, with a few Italians, Germans and Poles. Jobs at the cement plants were getting more sophisticated. Some horse power was still used, but mechanization was underway.

Electricity appeared about 1925, telephones a few years earlier. The inhabitants of houses owned by the Alpha received free electricity and water. Later, when the river became polluted and a quarry accidentally filled with spring water, the pumping was reversed from the quarry down to plant and homes. Farming was on the way out; virtually all the residents depended on the cement plants for their livelihoods.

The stock market crash and the Great Depression caused hardship here as everywhere else. All the plants closed down. The people were able to survive because every family had a large garden. Many raised chickens and a pig or two. Sometimes the men could find a farmer willing to pay fifty cents a day and dinner, for a few days' work. These people were used to hardship and hard work.

The plants re-opened, one at a time, around 1934, first on a part-time basis. In 1940 preparations for war increased the demand for cement. The community sent its share of men to war, a number dying in service. The first-generation immigrants were very patriotic; they were proud of American citizenship. The women had a Red Cross club where they knitted and sewed for the soldiers.



Class at the New Cementon School
(Woman Teacher in center)

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VEDDER MEMORIAL LIBRARY NOTES

Our good friends, Mrs. Dorothy Darling and Mr. Ray Van Valkenburgh of Daytona Beach, Florida, have secured for the library the bound Supplement to Volumes I and II, *The Van Valkenburgh Family in America*. This series is an impressive piece of genealogical work.

In sorting out family things, Floyd Coons of Climax remembered us with two large photo cards, one being a fine view of the entire front of the Grant House, the other a group of Cossackie ladies; both photographs are the work of "Fred Clark, Kodak Place, Catskill." Also included in the gift is the Cossackie High School directory of 1912-13.

To be known as the Reed Adams Memorial, the Roswell Reed correspondence written primarily to his son-in-law, H. C. Adams, has been given by Mrs. Frances Adams (Mrs. Reed Adams) of Ely Street, Cossackie. The manuscripts will be most helpful in studying the life of that important Cossackie individual, Roswell Reed.

A Bronck Museum neighbor, Leo Vermann, gave this librarian the privilege of sorting through a large assemblage of regional material including books, photographs, ledgers and the personal papers of Jehoiakim Collier. The selections are already catalogued; a number relate to Bronck persons and relatives.

Three Goslee brothers, Milton Brainard, Harvey Reginald and Frederick Howard, and their sister, Helen Goslee Weidman, have committed their five-generation collection of family papers to this society's keeping. These are of prime importance in documenting life in the Jewett Heights section.

The Yearbook staff of the Catskill High School each year deposits a copy of their publication in the Vedder Memorial Library. It is much appreciated.

The Society has recently acquired a major collection of negatives (glass plates), the work of Courson the photographer, of Cairo. The scenes, events, persons and buildings depict life in that section of Greene County from the late 1890's to World War I.

The Emma Titus friendship album and a Howland scrapbook were among several items received from Mabel P. Smith of Catskill, Society historian.

Reginald H. Goslee has presented us with the useful reference volume: *Preserving Your Past; A Painless Guide to Writing Your Autobiography and Family History*.

Harold E. Sterne's *Catalogue of Nineteenth Century Printing Presses* concerns itself with more than 350 machines popular in this country. Among these are to be found the A. B. Newbury machines.

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CURATOR'S CORNER

—Shelby Kriele

In the closing months of 1978 Bronck Museum has again benefited from the generosity of various members of the Greene County community. Mrs. J. Miller Woodhull of New Baltimore has made a gift of several items of Victorian costume, including two gentlemen's frock coats. Thomas Barron of Catskill has added to the museum's collection of materials related to the Greene County resort industry with his gift of two hotel silver forks used at the Summit Hill House and the Prospect Park Hotel. The "Attic Specials Committee" of the Grace Methodist Church, Ravena, has contributed a very curious knitting machine. Manufactured in the first years of this century, the machine was designed to produce knit stockings, mittens, and caps in a fraction of the time required to produce the same items by hand. Mrs. Lucille Abramson, a summer resident of the Tannersville area, has given a small watercolor landscape of Haines Falls. This gift was made in memory of Bella and Morris Simiansky.

During the coming summer season there will again be a series of mini-exhibits in the Hyphen Hallway at Bronck House. These exhibits are especially designed to feature items from the Bronck Museum collections which the public seldom has an opportunity to view. The mini-exhibits currently planned are: "Ruffles and Flourishes", a collection of lady's and gentleman's accessories; "A Fine Cup of Tea", items related to the preparation and serving of tea; and "Edges", a grouping of crocheted, knitted and tatted lace. In addition to these exhibits there is the possibility that Bronck Museum may be able to secure *The Urban Wilderness: Resorts of the Catskills*, an exhibit currently being offered by the Gallery Association of New York. Bronck Museum has cooperated with the Gallery Association on this exhibit which is of special interest to Greene County.

Bronck Museum collections and Greene County history have been the subjects of recent inquiries. The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center at Williamsburg, Virginia, has contacted Bronck Museum for background information on three charming mid-nineteenth century watercolor portraits of members of the Bedell family of Stanton Hill. The portraits of Ann, Stephen and Martha T. Bedell are believed to have been painted by their sister, Prudence. These watercolors will be included in a forthcoming portrait catalog to be published by the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center. The Hermitage Museum in Ho Ho Kus, New Jersey, has made inquiry concerning a number of mulberry Biblical tiles in the holdings at Bronck Museum, the gift of William V. B. Van Dyck. They are trying to link these tiles to early ceramic production in Rotterdam, Netherlands.

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Society's First Year

[continued from page 1]

meeting of the society, after listening to committee reports, remarked: "The reports bespeak for us, not alone as a successful effort to bring the organization into being and to present it to the public as a going organization whose purposes are bound to accomplish wonderful good, but it is a happy augury of good things to come. Think of it—without any particular effort, a handful of citizens of Greene County who assembled here scarcely more than three months ago have brought into being this organization"

The first recorded gift to the Greene County Historical Society came from Mrs. Samuel C. Hopkins—a Declaration of Trust from Martin Van Bergen to Garret Van Bergen and Vincent Mathews bearing the date of April 13, 1741. Miss Katharine Day of Leeds and New York City, a descendant of the Salisburys, by written communication urged the Society to make every possible effort to preserve the wrought iron figures and letters of the recently burned Salisbury-Van Deusen house at Leeds. [They are now at Bronck House Museum and are classified as among the rarest of the colonial ironwork produced in New York.]

Action to influence the state in naming the Catskill Creek crossing the "Uncle Sam Bridge" was first suggested by Harry B. Morris. He stressed the fact that the county records indicated Samuel Wilson had purchased the property on West Bridge Street in 1817, his brother buying the adjoining plot. Edwin C. Hallenbeck announced the gift of the Van Dyck Bronk-Silvester law papers, one which now forms an important segment of the Society's manuscript holdings.

The first annual meeting was held at the court house on November 13, 1929, at which time George H. Chadwick was elected the second president. The banquet at the Baptist Church followed, the printed program carrying the view of the Bronck Homestead. The Hon. G. D. B. Hasbrouck of Kingston, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Appellate Division, 3rd District, gave the historical address. The speaker acknowledged his ties to Greene County, as he had studied law under William Schuneman Kenyon, a man born in Catskill and the grandson of William Schuneman.

Now, in 1979 in celebration of this golden anniversary, the Society honors its pioneers. Their efforts have yielded a rich harvest. It certainly influenced Leonard Bronk Lampman to provide a permanent Society headquarters at Bronck House. Will those celebrating the centennial in the year 2029 also recall our efforts with gratitude?—We think so!

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Smith's Landing

[continued from page 8]

Cementon school closed after the Catskill School District centralized around 1968. For years the high school students from Cementon had been ostracized by many of their Catskill peers. Perhaps unfairly, the girls were considered "fast" and were called "cement bags". The boys were thought to be rowdies and were nicknamed "honkeys" and "polacks". Times have changed; the children starting kindergarten in Catskill now are readily accepted by their fellow classmates.

Some of the Cementonites still work in the cement plants, but others are employed in nearby towns. The Cementon Sportmen's Club and the Roman Catholic Church are centers of community activity. At present there are about 200 registered voters and the population has stabilized. As older residents pass on, each year sees a few new babies.

For a community rich in history, one reflecting the many economic and social changes of the nation at large, it is interesting to contemplate its future. No one has a crystal ball; these authors hope that this interesting little community isn't turned into a ghost town by a nuclear power plant.

Editor's Comment: Few families are as well qualified to tell the history of a local community than are the Van Ordens of the Embought, close neighbors to Smith's Landing. Elsie Van Orden, who prepared this article for the Catskill Monday Club, is to be commended for thus preserving the unrecorded history of this hamlet. The account of the Indian tribes and the great battle on either Wanton or Rogers Islands may be found in other publications such as *Greene County, New York: '76 Bicentennial Overview*, and is therefore not included herein.

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