

The Quarterly JOURNAL

A Publication of the Greene County Historical Society, Inc.

U. S. Route 9-W

Coxsackie, N. Y. 12051

Vol. 3, Issue 2

★

Summer, 1979

WE HAVE DONE IT! INDEED WE HAVE!

With the check of \$2,423 in hand from IBM, our Fund Chairman, Wilbur Cross, Executive Vice President, Catskill Savings Bank, announced the capital fund drive was "OVER THE TOP". Miss Carol Keinath, an employee of International Business Machines and a member of this Society, with the cooperation of President Rubén García, applied for that final assistance under the IBM Community Services Program. It was the final push needed to raise \$31,500.

This Society had faced the problem of a capital fund drive of substantial proportions to finance the urgently needed preservation work on the Bronck National Historic Landmark buildings for several years, ever since the rapid deterioration of the north brick wall of the 1738 structure. Applications to more than 100 private foundations were unsuccessful. There was nothing left to do but to raise the money ourselves. AND THIS WE HAVE DONE! With this \$31,500, combined with \$25,000 in the Society's building reserve, and matched by \$56,500 of federal preservation funds administered by NYS Division of Historic Preservation, over \$113,000 will be expended in 1979 by the Society for preservation.

Nineteen scaled measured drawings reflecting the various elevational views, the floor plans, the subsurface land structure and the deteriorated fabric of the buildings have been printed in the preliminary report and approved by both state and federal officials who rate the Bronck Houses as among the rarest of the nation's architectural treasures. Test boring site work results are being studied.

Early in March President García notified John Mesick, architectural historian, that the money was now assured and contracts could be let for the season's work. Among the priorities will be an archaeological study of the subsurface surrounding these pre-Revolutionary buildings. Looking over workmen's shoulders will be Senior Scientist Paul Huey, Division of Historic Preservation, NYS Department of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Huey is rated the top expert on 17th century Dutch sites in New York.

In the opinion of many Friends of Bronck House Museum, no other project could have more fittingly celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the founding of this Society than this effort to preserve this part of the region's historical heritage.

□□□□

JAMES REID AND HIS KNUCKLEDUSTERS

—Charles M. Grimes

As a serious collector of antique derringers and oddities, I gain a great deal of satisfaction and relaxation not only from searching out rare old handguns but also in delving into the past of the gunmakers themselves. Some of the rarest, oddest and most unusual guns were made along Cauterskill Creek about four miles up a winding road from Catskill, New York.



James Reid, Sr., in his later years.

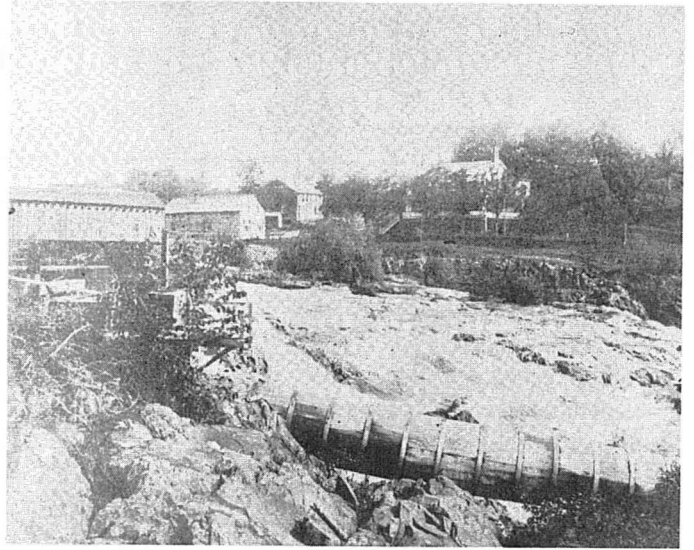
James Reid, Sr., was born on April 9, 1827, in Belfast, Ireland. He had been in the woolen mill business with his father. As a young man, he migrated to Scotland, where he met his bride-to-be. His first child, Annie Jane, was born there and the second, James Reid, Jr., arrived about a month after the Reids sailed into New York harbor in mid February of 1857. They settled down in Jersey City, New Jersey. Reid's wife died, and he married Margaret Patterson in 1861. It is not known what Reid did for a living during his first five years in America, but New York City records indicate he had a gun shop in that city from 1862-64.

(continued on page 2)

JAMES REID — from page 1

For the sake of Annie's health, in late 1864 or early 1865, Mr. Reid moved his family to the Catskill area since it was thought the mountain air would be beneficial. He purchased the fine home near Cauterskill Creek which is still standing.

He soon began construction of a sturdy brick building for his gun factory immediately across the creek from his home. He also built an attached frame gristmill, and reportedly erected nineteen houses for his employees. He was obviously well off financially. It is not known where he acquired his wealth since the conventional revolvers manufactured at his shop in New York were made in very limited numbers. He was supposedly worth about \$150,000 upon his removal to Catskill.



The Reid Homestead as seen across the Cauterskill Creek from the gun factory.



The Reid Guns. While over 9,000 of the small .22 caliber knuckledusters marked "My Friend" were manufactured, very limited numbers of the other pistols were made. The term "knuckleduster" was applied because the gun could be firmly grasped in the fist with the little finger protruding through the hole in the handle if one needed to use it to weight his fist in the event of a fight or lack of bullets.

Reid received patent rights on his famous knuckleduster pistol on December 26, 1865, but it is doubtful that he began his Catskill production before the 1869 expiration of a Smith and Wesson patent on a bored-through cylinder. He would have been in obvious violation of the patent if he had begun producing sooner. Ironically though, his New York revolvers were nearly all in violation of this patent; many of his guns did not carry his name and were marketed by dealers other than himself. Smith and Wesson was known to have filed many lawsuits against infringers of their most important patent, but James Reid obviously slipped through. Reid Jr., as a teenager, assisted his father in the gun production side of the business both as a machinist and as an engraver. By the age of 25, James Jr. had married,

had left his father's employment and had moved to Athens, New York to ply his mechanical ingenuity in a partnership in the Hagan and Reid Company which manufactured the Trojan Nail and Tack Puller.

While in Catskill, James Sr. and Margaret became the proud parents of six other children, three boys and three girls. Four other children had been born but died in infancy. James Sr. was a very trusting man and was known to have loaned sums of money to many friends. Some of the loans approached \$10,000 without security! One man purportedly reneged on a large loan; this blow, along with the depression of 1883-84, with its slackening of gun sales as attested to by the reduction of his gun prices in catalogues of that day, led to his financial failure.

Reid left Catskill in 1884 with little more than a "grip and no money" reported his grandson some years later. He removed to Watervliet, New York, where he worked in the U.S. arsenal until his death from dilatation of the heart on May 28, 1898. James Jr. took his son, Charles, to visit the old man the night before he died, and it is reported that James Sr. retained his thick Irish brogue to the end.

During the summer of 1973, this writer, his wife Darline, and son Larry, routed their summer vacation into New York State for the purpose of pursuing the Reid story. In 1949 Mr. Samuel Smith, a prominent gun collector and retired Markeson, Wisconsin, banker, through great efforts located James Reid Sr.'s grandson, Charles, then in his mid 60's, living in Rochester, New York. Charles Reid had provided the basic information on the Reid story.

Our first stop was the Old Rural Cemetery in Albany, New York, where the Reid family plot is located. The director pulled out the old dusty records which indicated sixteen graves and a marker. After

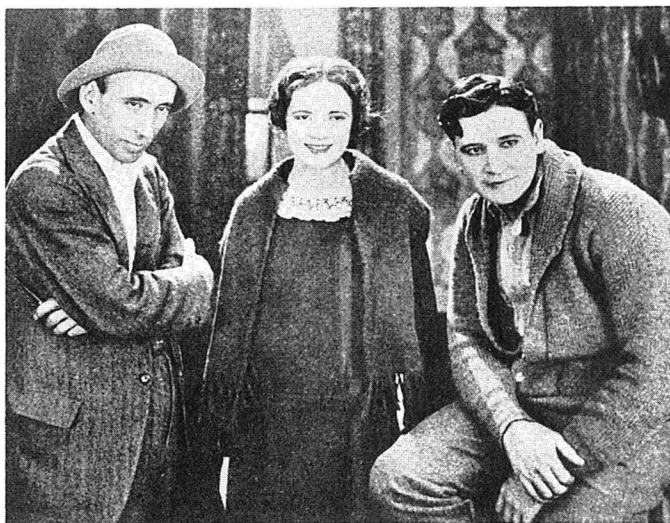
(continued on page 7)

SCENES FROM "ICEBOUND" FILMED AT LEEDS IN 1924

—Rubén García

Rudolph Valentino, Gloria Swanson, Pola Negri, Mae Murray, Richard Dix, Lois Wilson, Lon Chaney, Mary Pickford. Douglas Fairbanks! These are some of the glamorous stars of the Silent Silver Screen of Hollywood in the early 1920's—adored and pampered by their millions of fans. The era of sound (the talkies) was still to come in 1928.

Imagine the excitement when in January, 1924, William de Mille, brother of Cecil B. de Mille, brought his Paramount Pictures company of actors and technicians to Leeds to film scenes for his latest movie "Icebound". Based on a Pulitzer Prize play by Owen Davis, it starred Richard Dix and Lois Wilson in the leading roles.



Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

William deMille, Lois Wilson, and Richard Dix in "Icebound," 1924.

The story of "Icebound" revolved around a snowcovered New England house and surroundings, so Mr. de Mille and his assistant, Wilfred Buckland, headed up the Catskills in search of a house that would offer a suitable location. The house they chose was the Newkirk Homestead, a Colonial-Greek Revival house on Sandy Plains Road in Leeds.

They had planned a shooting schedule of only about five days in Leeds during which they would shoot all the snow-laden exterior shots. The interior scenes would be shot in the Long Island studio, so they photographed the Leeds house inside and out in order to duplicate the interior on the movie set and thus they would also match the exterior shots. De Mille had taken much pains to show lots of snow and ice through the windows of the interior scenes that were shot in the studio — duplicate of the Newkirk Homestead, so it was necessary to await a heavy snowfall in order to shoot the exterior shots in Leeds.

All the interior shots taken, they now impatiently awaited the necessary snowfall. Once the interior shots had been completed, they were irrevocably tied to Leeds and the Newkirk house, so all they could do was to wait, and wait they did. The crews and actors stood by as the costs of an inactive crew mounted.

Finally, the snow fell and de Mille's troupe was in Leeds waiting for the predicted "violent storm" to subside. The storm dropped a mere foot of snow but the countryside looked icebound enough. The cameras were rolling the next day and they took their quota of shots.

The second day was fair and warmer; the snow had shrunk to a bare six inches and at day's end they still had forty-four shots to take.

The third day it was like a spring day, but by working feverishly all day, they made sure that the camera didn't catch the patches of mud that were showing through the snow. As the day progressed without even a lunch break, the camera, actors and crew worked at a more furious pace. For the last few scenes there was almost no snow left and the entire troupe had to carry what snow there was in buckets, shovels, and dustpans to spread on the ground so that no bare spots showed in the scenes. The warmly dressed actors sweltered and perspired as their roles called for them to act cold and shivering. Extra care had to be taken to prevent the camera from catching the large drops of perspiration on the actors' faces. At last the final shot was taken. They had done 5 days' work in a heroic three days and had beaten the January thaw.

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art



Interior Studio Scene—Note Woodwork and Wallpaper as copied from Newkirk house.

(continued on page 10)

The Ritz Grocery Store

Near the turn of the present century, Ferdinand and Ellen Matilda Ritz migrated across the Hudson River from Columbia County where he had been superintendent of a cotton mill. They were now to engage in the retail grocery business. Their first store was rented from Michael Dolan in the Opera House block on South River Street. From 1897 to 1909, Ferdinand and Ellen Matilda built up a substantial retail trade. They sold good products at fair prices. Augustus, their son, also became part of the grocery's operation.

House deliveries were an additional service to customers; the spotlessly clean wagon served as a good advertisement.

All three Ritz brothers – Ferdinand, George, and Albert, had musical talent. They quickly formed a marching band which carried their family name. It was to appear at numerous functions both at Coxsackie and elsewhere in Greene and adjacent counties. George Ritz operated a shoe store in the Dolan block; Albert worked for the American Valve Co. Their sister, Clara Ritz Scully, left several Coxsackie descendants.

Twelve years after establishing their grocery store at Reed's Landing, Ferdinand died; his wife, Ellen Matilda, then ran the store under the name E. M. Ritz. She died in 1923; both Ferdinand and Ellen Matilda are buried in Stuyvesant Falls.

Captions for photos on pages 4 and 5.

*Page 4 - Upper—
Ritz Grocery Store, Dolan Block, Coxsackie—Ferdinand Ritz (left).*

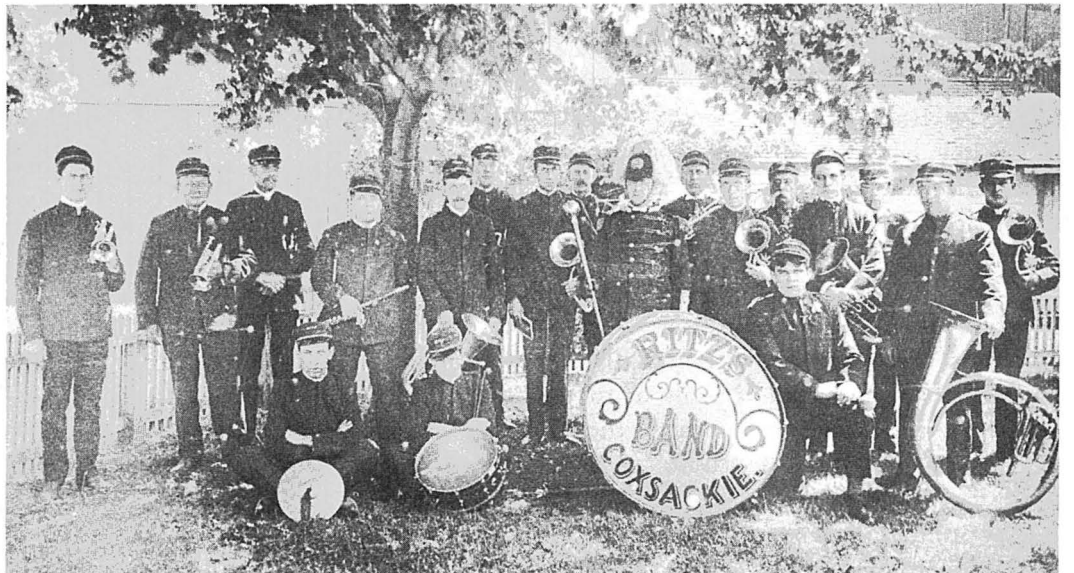
*Middle—
Ritz Grocery Store about 1900; Dolan Block, Coxsackie*

*Lower—
The band sponsored by the Ritz Brothers, Coxsackie*

*Page 5 - Upper—
Ritz Grocery Store Delivery Wagon; unidentified store clerk, Dolan Block, Coxsackie*

*Middle—
A. J. Ritz with assistant store clerk Daniel Monohan, Sr., in store at Reed Street, Coxsackie, New York*

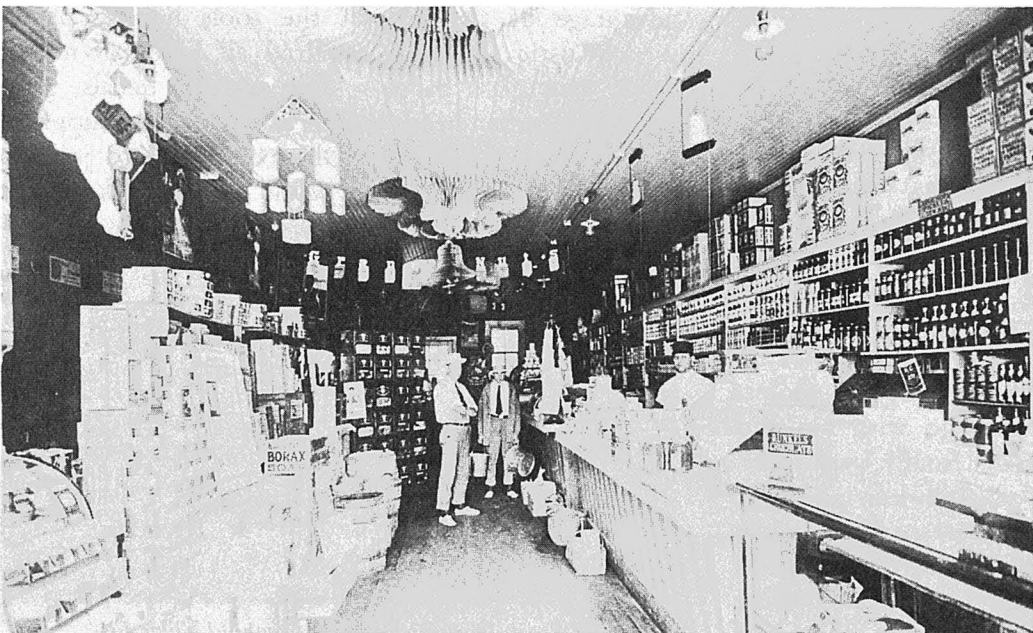
*Lower—
Ritz Grocery Store; second location; north side of Reed Street, Coxsackie*



At Reed's Landing, Coxsackie

Augustus Ritz relocated the store on Reed Street in the Washbon Meat Market on the present site of Vermilyea Hardware. Here James Dolan (now a retired insurance agent) was employed as a clerk from 1916 until he entered the armed forces. His successors were first, Arthur J. Palmer and next Daniel Monohan, Sr. In its last years, from 1921 until its closing, the store operated out of a block which now houses the Town of Coxsackie offices (west section). Augustus Ritz continued to run the store until his death; his second wife, Gertrude Miller, gradually sold out the stock and then closed the store in the early 1930's. Perry Jones clerked at the store in its final months.

It might be of interest to local historians to know that the Ritz Shoe Store later moved into the Fitzpatrick block on Reed Street, now owned by the State Telephone Company. R. H. Van Bergen's *Ye Olden Times* also had this shoe store in later years at 226 Mansion Street, West Coxsackie in the old Delamater-Scribner Drug Store.

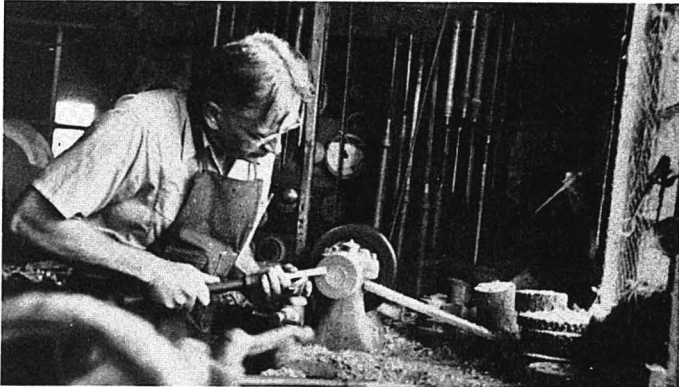


— Editor's Comments: The photographs are from the Ritz Memorial Collection, the gift of Eulalia Scully Weiss. Daniel Monohan, Sr., and James Dolan were helpful in supplying additional information, as was Mark Scully.

"THE BEST RUSTIC SOUVENIRS ON THE ROAD" WAS LESTER STORY'S GOAL

Editor's Interview, Nov. 1, 1978

"I always wanted to be a wood turner, and one day over sixty years ago I walked down to Edgar Palmer's wood turning shop west of the four corners in Freehold village and asked him to take me on as a learner. Since five or six young men had earlier failed to show aptitude for the trade, Mr. Palmer was determined not to train any more. But somehow I must have convinced him and he said he would give me a chance." This was the beginning of craftsman Lester H. Story's career as told to me one sunny fall afternoon when I went to interview him.



Lester H. Story at the lathe

"Well, I guess I pleased Mr. Palmer since I worked for him five or six years. I remember he once put me to work making small wooden match boxes. Thinking I would learn slowly, he put me on piece work wages at two cents the box. That day I made 250 and earned five dollars, a lot of money at that time. The next day he said he couldn't afford that and would have to pay me the regular rate of forty cents the hour. I worked for him about five years when my cousin, Clinton Story, and I bought him out. That partnership lasted three or four years, then we split up and I went up on the Story farm east of Freehold on the Gayhead Road and started my own wood turning shop in our old tenant house.

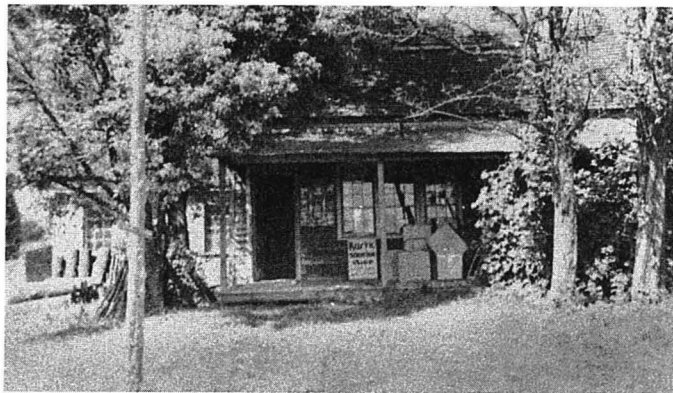
"For many years I did not supply the Catskill Mountain trade – I had agreed to that when I sold out the village shop to my partner, Clinton Story. But I did develop numerous contacts with souvenir shops in the Adirondacks and into New England as far north as Maine. I would travel these areas in the fall, a beautiful time of the year up there, taking orders from stock samples I carried in my Chevrolet. Sometimes my wife, Eva, would go with me and sometimes I would go by myself. Usually I was away from home a week at a time. I generally carried about one hundred different items to interest buyers. Early in my career I set the policy of seeking out one good souvenir retailer in a community and dealing exclusively with him. Many came to trust me and, if

they were busy when I called, frequently let me check their inventory on hand and use my judgment as to replacement orders. One time I remember I discouraged a woman from ordering too much stock – I didn't want dusty Story products on her counters for another year.

"I never got around to print a sales catalogue but in addition to my stock samples, I had photographs with descriptive labels. Each item was numbered on the bottom for easy control. Prices were set at so much the dozen. The sumac crucifixes were good sellers – I made them in three sizes. Usually I would move about three thousand a year. Prices changed a lot over the years. Once I got eight dollars each for large floor size smoking stands which contained eight parts – now they sell for twenty-five dollars or more.

"After getting the orders for the following summer season, I would return to Freehold and begin to turn out the wood souvenirs. Mostly I used ash and some sassafras and sumac. At first I bought the wood from the local farmers and sawmills but later I began to cut my own as I wanted more of the bark left on. The wood would season eight or nine months before use. I avoided maple since its bark was too smooth for my purposes. Chisels and gouges came mostly from Buck Brothers and D. R. Burton – I think some were made in England. Good tools were important. I had to improvise tools and equipment when none were available. With purchased tool steel, and at my forge and anvil, I formed needed turning hooks in various sizes, shaping and tempering them to hold a good cutting edge. I supplied the tools for the men who worked for me but I required each man to use the same set each day – there were minor but important differences in the weight, balance and sharpened edges and each man had to learn to take advantage of the feel of the tools he was using.

"Rustic souvenirs required all kinds of metal, paper and glass parts – deer statues, decals, glass ash trays, Indian heads and metal chains. My suppliers ranged from the Indiana Glass Company to jobbers in New York City. When World War II broke out, I



Story Workshop east of Freehold Village

trudging several hours back and forth across the entire Masonic area in the sweltering heat of a summer day, not a single Reid was to be found! What a disappointment. We had to move on. One final stop back at the cemetery office determined that we had been misinformed and there were no markers on the family plot. As a conciliatory gesture, the director provided us with a detailed sheet on each person buried in the plot. Each sheet gave the name, place of birth, place of death, date of death, cause of death, last known residence and other helpful information. This puzzle would have to be pieced together later. We tucked away this prized data and were off for Catskill. An interesting footnote is that the Reids were buried only about 100 feet away from the magnificent crypt of President Chester A. Arthur.

The name "Reid" and "Knuckleduster" meant nothing to the officers at the Catskill police station, but a picture of the old gun factory taken in 1949 by Mr. Smith did, and we were soon winding up the narrow blacktop road toward it as the sun was slipping behind a mountain. My heart was beating wildly as Larry and I walked into that old creaky building. At one point, my foot penetrated the flooring to the knee. That old monument was truly a shrine to me. After removing a loosened brick for my gunroom, we were off to our motel. The owner of it gave me the name of a local school teacher who supposedly knew something about the Reid past.

The lady quickly referred me to her sister, who was not only more knowledgeable than she, but who lived in the old Reid home across from the gun factory! The sister, Mrs. Simpkins, agreed to talk to me so I quickly tucked my family in after a hurried



The author's son, Larry, standing in front of the Reid gun factory.

supper and scurried back to the old gun factory and across the metal bridge which had replaced the old covered one in 1919. Mrs. Simpkins showed me the old property records which indicated that James Reid Sr. had deeded the property to her great grandfather, James Bird, in 1883. Mrs. Simpkins thought that I should talk with her Uncle, Jack Packer, who was 83 and lived down the road; he had known some of the Reid children in his youth. It was late at night when I found Jack and his wife, Florence, but they were still up and most willing to share a lot of information about the Reids with me. It was midnight when I got back to the motel and everyone was sound asleep. I tossed and turned the whole night through.

The next day we were off for New York City where we located the spot where the first gun factory would have stood at 167-171 East 26th Street. Naturally the old buildings had long ago been replaced by other structures, but with a little imagination, I allowed myself to peer out of the second story window and hear the clamor of the Civil War draft riots in the streets below, as had Reid's employees so many years ago.

As we returned to Denver where I had to prepare for the fall opening of the elementary school where I was principal, I knew I had my job cut out for me. Was Charles T. Reid still alive? Were there any other living relatives? What had happened to the factory and family records? Little did I know then that I was in for more than two years of letter writing and dead ends. City directories, libraries, microfilms, bureau of vital statistics, and assistance from private researchers were of little help. I still could not find out whether Charles was living or not. A chance recollection in a letter from Sam Smith provided my first break. He thought he remembered the last place of employment where Charles Reid had worked as a security guard when he had met with him back in 1949. A call to the personnel director confirmed this and a penciled notation at the bottom of his record said, "Masonic Home — Utica, N. Y." The meaning was unknown. A letter to the Superintendent of that institution paid off. Charles had lived his last years there. Their records indicated he had a daughter who resided in Florida, and there was a phone number, but it was twelve years old! I vividly recall my trembling fingers as I dialed that number and asked the "Hello" if she could by chance be the great granddaughter of James Reid Sr. Her reply was "Yes", and not only that, but she had much of the information and pictures I had been searching for. Doris Reid Tischer filled in numerous gaps that had existed in the Reid story and I was happy to pay the fifteen dollar phone bill I ran up that night.

(continued on page 9)

knew metal items would be very scarce so I stocked up on deer figures, etc. The price was low then, only a few cents each. I guess I still have boxes of metal deer ornaments in their original packing in the building out back. I'll use them yet!

"We never varnished the bark on the souvenir but left it in its natural state — only the turned wood received that finish. My wife was good at brush varnishing and we put one good coat on a solid base. We never sprayed as it would get in the bark. At times during the winter months I had six or seven local men helping to fill next season's orders but I lost all but one to World War II. First off the lettering was done by hand but eventually we went to rubber stamps.

"My last shop was in the Village of Cairo on Main Street opposite the Walters Hotel. Just a few days ago I moved my shop equipment out here. I still want to make small pieces, primarily as a hobby. While in Cairo I did develop a Catskill Mountain trade. Some of my good customers were Point Lookout, Lerner Brothers in Catskill, Breunig's in Leeds and Rip's Lookout Point. I began the Catskill trade about 1935 or '36.

"I made a lot of friends among the retailers, a few are still in business and if I travel through the area, I stop and say 'Hello'. Once I got an emergency call from one at a distance; he badly needed more souvenir merchandise for the Columbus Day weekend. The car was packed and off I went, reaching his shop on the Mohawk Trail in Massachusetts just as a busload of tourists was coming in. I told him I would unpack the souvenirs and sell them for him (I knew his prices) if his wife would tend to the cash register. Well in a few minutes we sold a large portion of the stock I just brought. It was good will!



Story's souvenir wood products

"For three or four years I tried my best to sell to a big store in Saranac Lake but I couldn't get anywhere with the owner. But one day he was traveling and stopped in a souvenir shop at Watkins Glen and noticed the rustic products on sale. This led to an inquiry as to the maker. Later he told me in plain language that he wouldn't have been at all surprised if I had told him where to go when he placed a large order for the Story line of wood souvenirs. But I took his order and we became good friends.

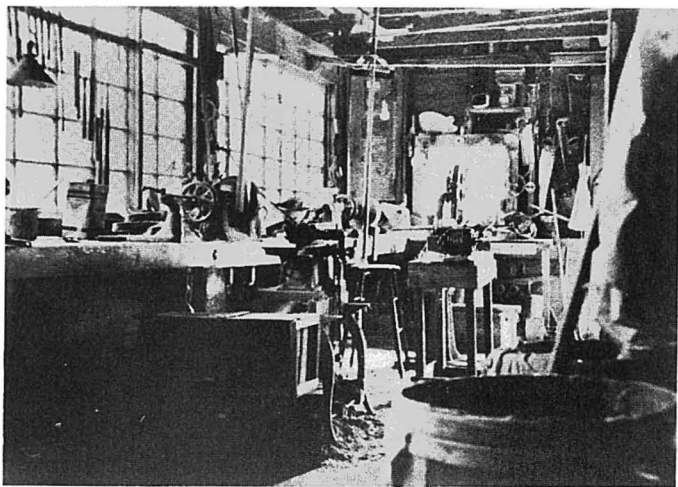
"Looking back on it all, I guess we made a reasonable living. I never got stuck with an account save once when a man went bankrupt. I got ten cents on a dollar but luckily it was a small account. Occasionally I would turn out custom work at the shop — newel posts for a church in Connecticut, two very special table lamps for a lodge at Polar Caves, New Hampshire and four bedposts for a local man's son who was a doctor. That was the worst job I ever tackled and I had to ask four dollars the post when finished. But when they came to pay me they said they thought three dollars each was enough. I took it but I knew I would never do such a job again for them.

"I frequently experimented with new designs, even looking through the Sears Roebuck catalogue for ideas. Sometimes the parts I turned out in my shop would put together well and I would have a new stock item; other times they were useless.

"My grandson at Middleburgh is somewhat interested in wood turning. They learn some of it in shop at the school. When I get my shop in back set up, maybe I can show him a few things about the trade."

— Capsuling sixty years of wood turning experience into a short interview is not the easiest task, but Lester Story, with an occasional assist from his wife, Eva, had the answers to my questions. When we rose to leave, he quietly showed me a framed assortment of dry flies for fishing — beautiful creations of his. Leaving the house and entering the car, I said to my wife, "there's one of the few true craftsmen left."

□ □ □ □



Turning mill shop operated by Lester H. Story

VEDDER MEMORIAL LIBRARY NOTES

□◇ The acquisition of a 20 x 17 inch broadside by the Albany firm of Webster and Skinner, listing the faculty and students of Greenville Academy for the academic year 1817-1818, brings to light the earliest printed item from this pioneer school. It is a most desirable addition to the Scott M. and Elgirtha I. Ellis Collection.

□◇ An important collection of early papers, deeds, and letters, has been donated to the Vedder Library by Mrs. Trudy Griffiths of Port Allegany, Pa., in memory of her mother, the late Beulah Rapp. Mrs. Rapp's mother was Anna Newkirk Hunter, daughter of Elsie Salisbury (1819-1906) and Abraham Hasbrouck Newkirk (1804-1881). The portrait of Elsie Salisbury by Ammi Phillips was donated to the Society some years ago by Mrs. Beulah Rapp, who lived and was married at the Newkirk Homestead in Leeds. The Homestead is part of the Catskill (Salisbury-Van Bergen) and Jan Bronck patents of the late 1600's. Abraham H. Newkirk acquired the property from the estate of Martin G. Schuneman, son of Johannes Schuneman, famous Dominie of the Dutch Reformed Church at old Katskill (now Leeds).

□◇ As a winter project of some years' duration, extracts of historical material have been made from Greene County newspapers. This past winter saw the completion of another volume – the *Examiner*, 1894-1896.

□◇ Mr. Sidney Phoenix Thomes of Florida continues to correspond following his on-site visit to Greene County last summer. Together, we are accumulating a substantial body of information concerning historic Klinkenberg, the present Oaklander residence at Four Mile Point, Coxsackie. In the late 1600's it was a home for the Phoenix family.

□◇ The Coursen – Haines Photograph Collection of glass negative plates, acquired by the Society last year, has been reproduced on perma-life photographic paper by Sydney Thomson of the Bronck House Research Group. It substantially enhances the pictorial collection relating to the Cairo and vicinity area.

□◇ The Antique Trader's *Annual of Articles on Antiques* Volume VIII has been catalogued for reader use. These volumes contain reprints from the weekly publication and are a convenient, informative source of information on antiques and historical topics.

□◇ Another useful project has been the completion of work on Robert H. Van Bergen's *Ye Olden Times*. To supplement the existing index, this editor has extracted all short entries of persons, places, and events and typed them on file cards with appropriate headings.

JAMES REID – from page 7

I quickly concluded that we might be able to meet her in person for a real visit in about two months. When she suggested that she might be willing to part with the family pictures and James Reid's mahogany jewel box with his name inset in the lid, a visit seemed inevitable! The door was now open on the lineage from James Reid's second child, but what of his first born, Annie Jane? The cemetery record had notated on the information sheet: "moved to Seymour, Conn." Seymour cemetery records indicated no such person buried there. One of the Seymour town officials took an interest in my search and placed a small article in the local paper.

Payday again and what a shocker! I received a long distance call in my office. The voice on the other end of the line said, "Mr. Grimes, I live in England and am on my way back there this evening, but I am calling you from North Haven, Conn. I read the newspaper article on your research and thought you would be interested in knowing that James Reid Sr.'s great, great, great grandson was born a few days ago in Rose Memorial Hospital in your city, Denver." He had to be kidding! Two of my own children had been born in that hospital. It was true: Roger Dickey, the caller, was indeed the great, great grandson of Annie Reid Wilson, and she was buried in



The author holding the great, great, great grandson of the gunmaker James Reid Sr.
(continued on page 10)

the Seymour Cemetery. Roger had married a Denver Girl, Gayle Sawyer, and they wanted their first born to arrive in her city. His wife and new baby were going to stay on for a few weeks with her parents. Needless to say, I called her right away and was able to supply her with family information of which they were unaware and to link the two family branches together.

It was one of the most exciting times of my life to actually hold James Reid's great, great, great grandson, Alexander Reid Dickey, in my arm!

In July of 1975, we had a most memorable visit with Doris Reid Tischer in Florida and are happy to possess the prized jewelry box and family pictures. Unfortunately, a silver paperweight with James Reid Sr.'s name on it had been disposed of by Mrs. Tischer just a few months before our visit. Her father, Charles, had also inherited a collection of family guns from his father. The guns were mounted in a large glass case about six feet in height and three feet in width; the lower part of the case had pull-out drawers where James Jr. had kept his fine measuring tools and instruments. During some marital strife in the early 1930's Charles sold the entire collection and would never tell his wife or daughter to whom he sold it. This author has made several attempts to locate this prize but to no avail. Maybe someday! Also, no information or leads have turned up regarding the six Reid children born in Catskill. Possibly this article might reach someone who has knowledge of Alexander (Sandy), Robert (Bob), Edward (Ned), Margaret (Daisy), Marion (Molly), or Rebecca (Ray), or the whereabouts of the missing family guns and case.

Editor's Comment:—

The author would appreciate hearing from anyone possessing additional information or a Reid pistol; in turn he would be pleased to provide technical data on the Reid guns if such interest is expressed. Please communicate with him at 3510 West Union Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110. He states that all correspondence will be promptly answered.

□□□□

ICEBOUND — from page 3

But the old man weather had the last laugh, after all. Several days after they had returned to New York City, a real blizzard fell, with mountainous drifts and impassable roads — just the conditions they had awaited so long.

In his 1939 book "Hollywood Saga", William de Mille recalled the "Icebound" incident as an example of a movie-maker having to work quickly and under pressure.

The *Catskill Examiner* of January 31, 1924, carried an article telling of the personal appearance of Richard Dix, Lois Wilson, and William de Mille on the

stage of the Community Theatre preceding a Chicago Stock Company performance of the play "Her Temporary Husband". This is of historical interest, since the silent films surely put an end to the touring stock companies and vaudeville, just the way television and radio have replaced the movie in popularity.



Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

Richard Dix in dialogue with supporting cast member

—*Author's Note:* For years I have been hunting for a print of "Icebound", but without success. The early movies were printed on a highly flammable nitrate film and the original negative disintegrated after a few years. Not many motion picture companies were interested then in reprinting their old negatives in the more modern and durable process. Thus, many early film masterpieces have been irretrievably lost. While unsuccessfully tracking down the print of "Icebound", I did meet Lois Wilson, now a gracious and lovely lady of 83 years, whose steeltrap mind remembers every detail of "Icebound". Outstanding in her reminiscence is the lovely old lady at a nearby farmhouse who invited the exhausted actors in for a cup of hot tea. Upon investigation, the lovely old lady turned out to be Mrs. Wilkinson who occupied the farm tenant house belonging to the Newkirk Homestead. □□□□

Greene County Historical Society
Raymond Beecher, Editor
R. D.
COXSACKIE, NEW YORK 12051

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
CATSKILL, N. Y. 12414
PERMIT NO. 91