

The Quarterly JOURNAL

A Publication of the Greene County Historical Society, Inc.

U. S. Route 9-W

Coxsackie, N. Y. 12051

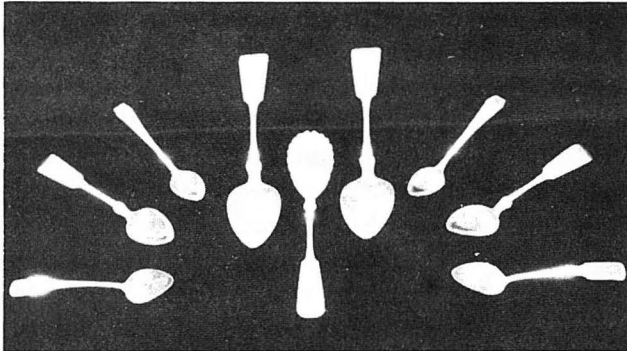
Vol. 4, Issue 1

★

Spring, 1980

WILLARD SILVERSMITHS OF CATSKILL

— Shelby Kriele
Bronk Museum Curator



Willard Silver • Bronk Museum Collections
gift of Mrs. Jane Porter, and Mrs. Marion Britt

V
a
l
K
r
i
e
l
e
P
h
o
t
o

The newspaper advertisement in the *Catskill Recorder* of Monday, June 16, 1806, begins "Horace Willard Clock and Watch Maker, Silversmith and Jeweller Nearly Opposite the Hotel". The 25-year-old Horace Willard who placed the advertisement was a newcomer to Catskill Landing, having moved there in 1802 from his birthplace in Lenox, Massachusetts. He was related to the Willard clock makers of New England fame and certainly served an apprenticeship before arriving at Catskill. Once in his new location, Horace wasted no time in establishing a business which would become a part of the Catskill community for the next eighty-three years. The first Willard store was on the present site of the First Reformed Church parsonage.

By the time of the American Revolution Greene County, like many other flourishing rural areas, could boast a respectable collection of skilled craftsmen. Blacksmiths, coopers, carpenters, and shoemakers had long supplied the districts with items essential for survival. As the years passed people could be less concerned with these grim realities, prosperity allowing families some measure of disposable income — improving communications fostered the desire for fashionable, but nonessential, goods of all sorts. In the best spirit of American enterprise a new group of craftsmen made their way into rural communities to make the luxury items that people were increasingly interested in purchasing. Silversmiths ranked among this second group of craftsmen, so when Horace Willard arrived in Catskill he found a group of prospective customers eager to buy the sort of luxury items which he would offer for sale.

[continued on page 2]

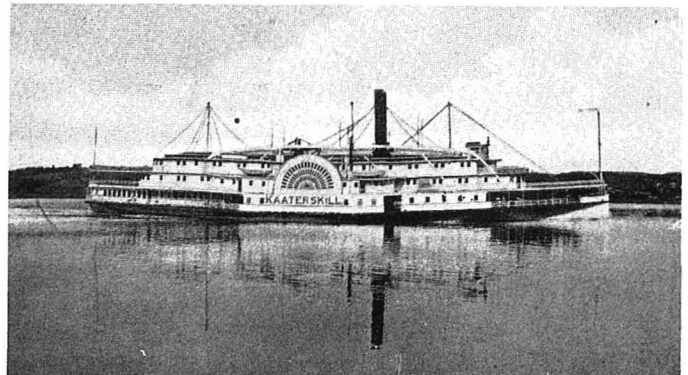
THE KAATERSKILL COMES DOWN THE WAYS AT ATHENS

—Raymond Beecher

The Hudson River shoreline was crowded at Van Loan and Magee's shipyard the last Wednesday of March, 1882. In addition to most of the residents of Athens, more than one thousand guests had been transported from Catskill on the *Walter Brett*. Preparations for the launching of the *Kaaterskill* were proceeding on tight schedule. At 10:30 the red flag with large white letters spelling *Kaaterskill*, was hoisted. The shipyard workers were busy strengthening the ways; 600 pounds of tallow were spread thereon.

The honor of christening the newly constructed vessel was given to Miss Grace Donahue, daughter of Captain William Donahue of Catskill. As Miss Donahue broke the traditional bottle over the port bow, naming the vessel the *Kaaterskill*, cheers went up from the assembled crowd of well-wishers. Next the workmen began the task of knocking out the chocks; slowly she began to move and as momentum increased, slid down the ways and out into the Hudson, almost over against the Middle Ground. She floated at the exact line calculated by Van Loan and Magee. The ferryboat, *George H. Power*, and the tug, *Grace*, took the hull in tow; she was soon tied up at the shipyard dock. President G. M. Snyder, Treasurer Donahue, Secretary Hughes as well as directors W. L. Snyder, C. N. Snyder and Lewis Wolfe could now relax.

The contract for this new vessel had been a matter of concern for the New York, Catskill and Athens Steamboat Company; it was a large investment for a small corporation. But they had placed their faith in Van Loan and Magee and it appeared to be a faith well-placed. That Athens firm had previously earned an excellent reputation for the *Minnie Cornell*,



[continued on page 10]

WILLARD SILVER [continued from page 1]

From the beginning Horace Willard followed two solid business practices; first, he offered a wide range of items and services to his prospective customers, and second he believed strongly in advertising what he had to offer. In the advertisement of June, 1806, Horace offered his patrons such items as "gold jewels", watches, bosom pins, finger rings "in the newest and most elegant fashion", ladies' plain and ornamental hair combs, silverplated candlesticks, morocco leather pocketbooks, playing cards, gentlemen's pocket pistols, and most important of all, the staple product of the rural silversmith, silver tablespoons, teaspoons, sugar tongs, and salt spoons.



V
a
l
K
r
i
e
l
e
p
h
o
t
o

Willard Silver Tools • Bronck Museum Collections
Gift of Mr. Edward Vogel

Horace apparently offered silver of his own making from the beginning of his business. Examples of work bearing the Willard mark consist mostly of a wide variety of spoons. If the Willards produced any other types of silver flat or holloware, few examples have come to light. Spoons like those made by Willard were shaped from thin flat ribbons of rolled silver. Pieces cut from the long ribbons first underwent a series of operations which formed the spoon handle. The spoon was then ready for the shaping of the bowl referred to as "striking up". This procedure required the use of a punch and set. The set was a piece of lead which contained a depression the size and shape of the spoon bowl; the punch, of polished steel, was shaped to fit the depression in the set. The flat spoon was placed between the set and punch, the punch was then given several sharp blows with a heavy sledge, giving the bowl of the spoon its characteristic shape. After the bowl had been "struck up" all that remained in the production of a silver spoon was the final smoothing of sharp edges, and burnishing which removed all scratches from the surface of the silver leaving it with a flawless shine. A good craftsman could produce a dozen teaspoons or six tablespoons in a day's work.

Silversmiths sold their finished spoons according to the weight of the individual spoon. They also bought damaged or worn coins by weight at a price slightly higher than the coin's face value. Old, damaged, or out-of-style spoons were often traded for new spoons. These coins and worn-out silver pieces were the source of much of the silver for new items which the rural silversmith produced. Horace Willard followed this practice; his advertisements in the *Catskill Recorder* during the 1820's frequently mention his desire to buy old silver and gold.

By 1837 Horace had formed a partnership with his 26-year-old son, Charles Simon Willard. An advertisement appearing in the *Catskill Recorder* for May 23, 1838, under the new heading of Horace Willard and Son lists items of silver work, including such oddities as silver toothpicks and earpicks. In this advertisement the Willards also offered pieces of silver plate, as well as watches, jewelry of many kinds, and "military goods" described as "suitable for the various uniform companies in accordance with the late orders." The firm of Horace Willard and Son continued until the death of the senior partner in October, 1846. After the death of his father, Charles S. Willard took control of what was now a thriving business.

In 1851, the firm now under the name of its sole owner, Charles S. Willard, marked the beginning of the new decade by starting construction of a new store, with residence above, at the corner of Main Street and Willard's Alley in the heart of Catskill's business district. Charles' advertisements continue to make mention of the fact that he is a silversmith and clock maker. The listing of silver items offered for sale now includes a variety of spoons to cater to the more elaborate needs of the mid-Victorian hostess. Spoons for dessert, cream, sugar, and mustard were added to the table, tea, and salt spoons which the Willards had produced for many years. At this time silver plated pieces of many types begin to take a more prominent place in the advertisements.

Charles was well established in his new building by February of 1861 when he took out an advertisement in the *Catskill Recorder and Democrat* which is perhaps a reflection of the insecure times at the outbreak of the Civil War. Listed among many items of silver work "warranted to be as good as dollars" the reader comes across silver coffin plates.

As the 1870's approached, the onslaught of machine-made silver coupled with the availability of the less expensive silver plate was bringing to an end the era of handcrafted silver. Silversmiths, finding a declining market for their silver, were forced out of business. Charles' advertisements from the early 1870's

[continued on page 10]

HIGH FALLS, TOWN OF CATSKILL

—Elsie and Barbara Van Orden

The little community of High Falls, or Great Falls as it was once known, is located just north of the Greene—Ulster County line in the Cauterskill Creek. At one time the neighborhood had its own school, church, store, post office, a number of mills, and several flourishing industries, as well as farms. Early residents included Myers, Lashers, Cherritrees, Bears and Smiths. To learn more of these original white settlers we must turn back to European history and the Huguenot—Palatine migrations.

The Huguenots were Protestants around whom political and religious quarrels centered in France. When Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, he sent tens of thousands fleeing to the German Protestant state called the Palatinate, located in the fertile Rhine Valley. Eventually many of them encamped on Queen Anne's London doorstep, she being sympathetic to their plight and also having strong Germanic blood ties.

By the winter of 1708-09, at least 13,000 of the Huguenot—Palatine refugees were living on the Queen's bounty. The English government proposed to send many of these refugees to America. Such a transportation of families would serve two purposes: one, provide workers for the production of naval stores for the royal navy and, two, provide buffer settlements against the French in Canada. The Hudson Valley was the section of the New World selected.

The first colony of refugees was established at what is now Newburgh, and in 1710 another was begun in the West Camp neighborhood. The latter consisted of three little settlements — Georgetown, Elizabethtown and Newtown, all situated about a mile apart on the west side of the Hudson River on what was then known as the Fullerton Patent.

A Lutheran pastor, the Reverend Joshua Kochertal, ministered to these Palatines and to those on the east side of the river. Though the colonists were plagued with problems of survival and were eventually abandoned by the English crown when the naval stores experiment failed, some Palatine settlers managed to acquire land and found large, enduring families. Not all left the Hudson Valley for the Schoharie area.

Niclas and Magdalena Trombauer and their three small children were among the West Camp pioneers of 1710. In England they had been listed as Roman Catholics but in this country they became associated first with the Lutheran congregation and later with the Dutch Reformed Church at Katsbaan. Daniel and Anna Fiere, founders of the Fiero family in America, were among their neighbors.



Photos courtesy Mabel Conine

Spelling of the family name Trumpbour varied widely until the accepted version became Trumpbour. The Palatines were never given title to the land at West Camp, so Trumpbour and several other families purchased acreage at Kingston Commons, southwest of Sawyer's Creek. In 1735 Niclas bought a farm in Katsbaan, west of the Old King's Road and near the church. His direct descendants still farm in the area today and also live in a 1732 stone house. They have recently applied for National Historic Register status for this structure.

Niclas and Magdalena had nine children — four sons and five daughters. Their son, Johannes, married Christina Fiero and settled on the homestead. He and Johannes Wynkoop petitioned the New York colonial government in 1761 for a grant of more than 10,000 acres, north of the Ulster County line, as recompense for surveying the county line. Their petition met with a delay of at least ten years, evidence of early governmental "red tape". In 1788 the present county line was permanently established. When the Revolution commenced, some of the Trumpbours sided with the Tories, but by 1777 all had aligned with the Patriots' cause.

Though women had few property rights two centuries ago, loving fathers often deeded large farms to their daughters; dower rights were also frequently mentioned in ancient wills and deeds. The Trumpbours took wives from surrounding families, including Dedericks, Van Ordens, Fieros, and Saxes. Andries Trumpbour, youngest son of the original settler, had seven daughters and three sons by his two marriages. A family legend has it that each daughter received the gift of a stone house, several of these structures still being inhabited today. Andries Trumpbour also placed heavy responsibility on his oldest daughter, Elizabeth, when he made his will. She was to inherit his homestead farm and was to be responsible for the up-bringing of all the younger children. Why Andries named her thus is a mystery, perhaps because he liked her young husband, Mattice Clearwater. There were older sons available to provide family leadership but the father bought them lands of their own and entrusted twenty-year-old Elizabeth with holding the younger family together.

[continued on page 4]

HIGH FALLS *[continued from page 3]*

Before 1800 the Asbury region was known as Trumbour's Corners. When the Methodist Church was built in 1807, it was named for the first Methodist bishop in America, Francis Asbury who visited the site during the church's construction. The renaming never suited the Trumbours; their descendants have named the family homestead "Trumbour's Corner Farms".

Zachariah Trumbour, a son of Johannes, was a miller, operating sawmill and gristmills above High Falls. He married Sarah Person, daughter of another old milling family, and they had three daughters.

In 1813 a family of Connecticut Yankees entered the picture. Old Captain Samuel Smith had originally come up the Hudson in 1779, looking for a spot with good water power where his young son, Comfort, could settle. Comfort Smith must already have had milling in his blood, though it took another generation for him to buy property and settle in this area. It would have been hard to locate a more likely spot for building all manner of mills than the Cauterskill Creek area with its superb water power.

Comfort Smith and his three grown sons — George, Rufus and Rowland — all became landowners around High Falls. Comfort purchased a parcel including the Great Falls and Cauterskill Cove in 1815 from the Lasher family. They built a homestead on part of this land which was in Ulster County. The rest was in Greene County. They constructed a sawmill on one side of the stream and a gristmill and fulling mill on the other. The area immediately below the falls became known as Smith's Mills.

In later years George Smith, a surveyor and mapmaker, moved on to the Ohio territory. Rowland married Margaret Trumbour; all that remains of his family are gravestones for the parents and eight young children in Katsbaan churchyard. They lived in a frame house which once served as a roadside inn and is now occupied by the younger generation of the Bill Trumbour family. Unfortunately this old house was drastically modernized early in this century, its historic interest obliterated.

Rufus Smith, the third brother, wasted no time in courting and marrying a neighbor, Christina Trumbour, who was the daughter of Zachariah, the miller. When this couple attended church in Katsbaan, they followed the local custom of stacking their gun outside the door while one person kept watch during services. Foot warmers kept the ladies from freezing in the unheated church during the winter months.

Rufus and Christina named their firstborn son Zachariah Trumbour Smith; like his namesake, he became a miller. He inherited his grandfather's mills and property, passing them down to his sons, Orville



High Falls

and Charles. These sons could, in later years, recall the time when Indians still camped in back of the family barn. Today, one of Zachariah's old mills is owned by a sixth-generation son, David Smith of Boston.

The second son of Rufus and Christina was called Comfort Kendall Smith in honor of the other grandfather. There were also two daughters, Lanah and Catherine, named for Trumbour women. Like many other early families, Smiths used the same name repeatedly, causing great confusion for genealogists and other researchers.

The daughters and their parents moved to another family property at Smith's Landing (now Cementon) when Catherine was still an infant. Lanah married Elijah Crawford and Catherine grew up to become Mrs. William Massino. Comfort, much older than his sisters, stayed on the original homestead at High Falls.

Comfort married Margaret Haswell and they lived during the heyday period of the little community. Their son, Rufus, kept a detailed diary during 1865, so we know that social activities kept the young people busy every night. Singing schools, church donations, prayer meetings and private parties were frequent. On summer nights everyone congregated to swim in Uncle Zack's millpond, followed by storytelling, singing and much sparking. If things got dull in the neighborhood, the boys drove to the clove (Palenville) where there was a tavern. One night Rufus arrived home at the shocking hour of four a. m.

J.
H.
V
a
n
G
e
l
d
e
r

P
h
o
t
o

[continued on page 9]

DIGRESSIONS ON THE JOURNAL OF LOVISA KING – Part III
–Mary Vedder Kamenoff

Editor's Note:

In this issue we follow major and minor events which influenced the lives of the King family. Glimpses of life in Cairo – the problems of housekeeping, religious observances, the growth of the temperance movement and family visits are found in Lovisa King's cryptic journal entries. The explanatory material developed by her great granddaughter, Mary Vedder Kamenoff, adds substantially to the readers' understanding of these nineteenth century eras.

Margaret

In 1852 Margaret had married Dr. Wheeler, who had been Dr. King's assistant in Cairo. Caroline's diary noted that Dr. Wheeler lived in the King household, was a lively addition to it, and played the violin. Margaret's notebook reported:

Dr. Wheeler first came to Cairo in 1848. Graduated in 1849. Went to Brewerton in Sept. 1850. Dr. Wheeler died of hernia March 23, 1858. Was sick only a week. Was in perfect agony about ten hours previous to his death. Dr. VanSlyke and Earl there all night.



Margaret King Peloubet (1829-1903)

Lovisa alluded to a visit made by Dr. Wheeler and Margaret May 31, 1855. He attended Rose's wedding to Edwin Gilbert in 1856, but mostly Margaret came home without him. Lovisa wrote:

1858. March 23. Dr. Wheeler died. Injured himself shoveling ice a week before but no one thought him dangerous until the night he died. Caroline and Gilbert left there the morning before he died, not apprehending any danger. We had not heard of his sickness until we received the dispatch announcing his death, about noon. I left in the stage that P.M. for Catskill, took the cars at nine in the eve. Arrived in Syracuse at five in the morn, at the publick house met LaRoy [at school in Rochester] and Cousin

Elizabeth. We hired a conveyance and went on to Brewerton together. Found the whole community mourning at their sudden bereavement and poor Margaret almost inconsolable. Funeral next day, Thursday, 25th, sermon by The Rev. Mr. Hibbard. Text Job 9:12.

April 1. Margaret and I went to Syracuse, (spent the night at Mrs. Hinman's.) 2d went on to Rochester. Edwin met us at the depot, found Rose very miserable. Margaret left Monday morn, 5th, for her sad and lonely home. No Dr. to meet and welcome her as usual. Sarah Hinman returned with her to spend a few weeks.

May 28. Edwin started for Brewerton to help, and came home with Margaret, for the poor child was about discouraged, trying to get ready alone.

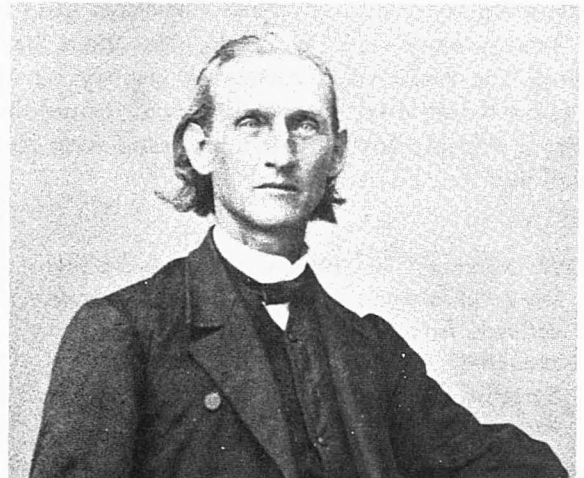
June 1. She left Brewerton and her pleasant home, never expecting to live there again, arrived home about 8 in the eve and we were very glad to welcome her to her former home.

For a number of years the minister of the Cairo Presbyterian Church had been Mr. Sanford Roe. Lovisa wrote:

1860. March 24, Saturday. Mr. Roe's folks all came here and staid till the next Thursday, 29th, when they left for Jamestown. We all felt very very sorry to part with them. They had been here eight years and the church and congregation were very much attached to them, but such is life.

The date Mr. Alexander Olympus Peloubet moved to Cairo to follow Mr. Roe was not remarked. Lovisa wrote:

1860. Aug. 24. Mrs. Peloubet died very suddenly indeed, was taken to New Jersey next day for burial, an irreparable loss to her husband and a great one to our whole society.



The Reverend Mr. Alexander Olympus Peloubet
of Cairo

[continued on page 6]

Margaret's notebook:

Mr. Roe left Cairo the spring of 1860 for Jamestown. Regretted very much to have him leave. A minister, Mr. Peloubet, came down as a candidate and was liked very much. The church gave him a call. He was soon injured by the running away of a horse and could not preach in some time. We liked his family. Mrs. Peloubet a lovely woman and devoted Christian.

Lovisa wrote:

1861. Jan. 1. Had turkey dinner, a few neighbors in.

Margaret wrote of the same occasion:

We had a few in to help eat New Year's turkey, Mr. Peloubet, Howard and Susy [Peloubet children], Thomas Cornwall and wife, Mrs. Buck, Mary and Christine.

Incidentally, Margaret also noted that there were fourteen deaths in Cairo that winter.

Mr. Peloubet was installed as minister on April 24, according to Lovisa. Her next mention of him was:

1861. Oct. 2. Margaret was married to Mr. Peloubet by the Rev. Mr. Boing of Durham, at about 3 o'clock in the P.M. Started immediately for N.Y., made no wedding.

Any further record kept by Margaret has been lost. Lovisa wrote:

1865. May 10. Margaret moved to Mecklenburg, Schuyler Co.

Mr. Peloubet was pronounced Pell' yew bet and Rose Palen always so designated him, never as "uncle." He was the author of a Bible concordance and of annual Sunday school teaching guides, which Margaret used handily as Christmas gifts to her young niece and nephews. He must have deemed the tools of a carpenter worthy of his cloth, for Rose inherited and employed for holding music, a delicate little mahogany stand with four turned legs that he had made.

Lovisa wrote:

1897. March 8. Mr. Peloubet died, after a few weeks of sickness in which he was a great sufferer, from a throat difficulty, was buried the 10th. Rose and her husband went from Syracuse to attend the funeral. R. staid a few days.

Margaret continued to live in Mecklenburg until her death August 7, 1903, eight months after Lovisa's. She left her comfortable fortune to the church of which Alexander Olympus had been the minister,

sundry missions, and her stepson, to the astonishment of Frank, Walter, and Rose Palen, who had been known to be the principal beneficiaries under a previous will.



Levi and Lovisa King's daughter and granddaughter, Caroline King (1828-1895) and Rose (1862-1933) — photo taken in 1865.

Hired Girls

Without electricity, furnace, running water, or plumbing indoors, housework was a repetitive catalogue of manual minutiae. The duties encompassed among other things building and keeping a fire in the kitchen stove and cooking on it; drawing water from the well and heating it on the stove; scrubbing clothes on a washboard, wringing and hanging them in the yard to dry and ironing them with sad irons heated on the stove; making candles even after kerosene was in use because Dr. King believed the brightness of kerosene lighting ruinous to eyesight; filling and trimming kerosene lamps and washing lamp chimneys; putting up sitting room and parlor stoves in the fall and taking them down in the spring, with attendant chores of carrying wood or coal and emptying ashes; thorough spring and fall housecleaning including taking up and beating carpets, in addition to the daily onslaught with broom and dustrag; preserving meat at butchering time and canning fruits and vegetables in the summer for winter use; skimming cream from milk and churning butter when the family kept a cow, as the Kings sometimes did; making soap from lye and the fat rendered at butchering; and extending hospitality to visitors, who often descended without warning, particularly at the time of the Greene County Fair, and sometimes stayed and stayed. With all these activities, and Lovisa kept track of them in her journal, the hired girl was an invaluable aid to the smooth functioning of the household.

What arrangements she made to cover her chores in her absences she did not explain, until

1833. Sept. 17. Mother came down with Eliza Edwards to work for me.

[continued on page 7]

Lovisa had then been married seven years and had borne four of her nine children. The hired girls were referred to by their first names without designation and are hard to keep track of.

The Palens in Sullivan County trained "green girls" from Ireland (letter to Caroline from sister-in-law Helen Palen, 1878). Caroline had employed three sisters at a time, one of them a deaf mute, and Rose had learned not only to communicate in sign language but also to break into a lovely lilting brogue when she was in the mood.

Lovisa hired local women who became part of the family. (There were few class distinctions in a village at a time when a woman's opportunities for employment were so limited and the untimely death of a breadwinning father or husband so likely.) Rose's journal helps in sorting them out. When one girl came Rose mentioned that she was "colored;" she stayed five years and left to be married, and nowhere in either journal is there any other reference to her race or any hint of any form of discrimination.

Lovisa wrote:

1864. Aug. 17. Maggie Johnson was married to Benjamin Thorn. She had lived with us seven years. Mr. Peloubet married them here at eight in the morn and they started immediately for Chicago.

Maggie returned to visit:

1869. July 24. Ben and Maggie and baby came, left 26th.

1870. July 29. Maggie Thorn came to dinner.

Family crises took their toll:

1866. June 22. Dr. took Helen home for a visit, found her mother sick. July 11 she died and that deprived me of a girl as she was obliged to stay home, being the oldest child.

1873. Dec. 5. Anna left for Claverack, had lived with us over 7 years.

No cause was given. After Anna there was Matilda and Josie and then Alida, first mentioned November 3, 1879, as having gone "over the mountain."

1880. May 3. I came home in stage [from the funeral of a niece, Lovisa Tremain]. Next day commenced housecleaning. Alida had cleaned office whilst I was gone and Cal's room, with Rose to help.

Rose wrote May 21, 1881, "Lida left tonight with all her things," but she was back working on June 7. September 10 she was working at a boarding house (Rose's journal) and another girl was engaged, but Lida came back to work September 26. This time she stayed until October 30, 1882, when she left to be

married. Rose attended the wedding. Lida's husband died eleven years later leaving her with three children, after which she came to help out when needed and sometimes stayed overnight with Grandma King when she was left alone.

At least twenty-one different girls are mentioned. Lovisa noted sometimes that she was without a girl but when she had one she referred to her only casually. An exception was

1894. Mar. 16. Jennie scalded my foot with coffee.

Mar. 24. Foot got worse, did not go outdoors for four weeks.

She wrote:

1895. Oct. 21. Rose came from Syracuse, commenced housecleaning as soon as she returned. Mary and Rose did all, took up parlor carpet.

This was her first reference to Mary. Rose wrote August 6, 1895, "Grandma's 87th birthday. That A.M. Jennie received telegram, her mother very ill, so we got her off on 9.45 train and we don't expect her to work for us again. Had opportunity that week to hire a very good woman, Mrs. Mary Webber." Mary Webber came August 13 and Rose wrote, "Grandma says she is best help she ever had in the house." In her journal Grandma indulged herself in no such praise, but on February 27, 1900, she wrote to her granddaughter-in-law Gertrude Palen, "What a providence it was my getting Mary when I did." Mary worked faithfully until Grandma died and the Cairo home was broken up in December of 1902.

Travel

Family visits were frequent, often protracted, sometimes accomplished by circuitous routes. Occasionally the host vouchsafed the transportation that returned the visitor home. Lovisa wrote:

1859. Oct. 19. Margaret started for Fallsburg, LaRoy took her to Catskill, from there she took the boat to Rondout, thence by stage to Ellenville. Friday, 21st, Mr. Pomeroy [Gilbert Palen's brother-in-law] sent her to Fallsburg, took Caroline quite by surprise.

Dec. 21. Margaret came home, Phebe Palen with her. Gilbert sent his team with them.

Margaret's notebook:

Fall of '59 I went to Sullivan in Oct., remained until week before Christmas. Gilbert sent Johnny home with Phebe & myself. Terrible cold weather during holidays. Edwin Gilbert came Christmas, remained a fortnight.

Sometimes a trip was high adventure. Their grandmother wrote:

1867. July 12. Frank and Walter came from Sullivan alone in their own carriage, aged 13 and 11 years.

The trip entailed at least one night on the road.

On occasion a visit developed complications. In July of 1893 Frank Palen's wife Ella and her four children came, and on July 11 went with Rose to the Mountain House. Lovisa's journal:

1893. July 13. Leslie came down with measles.

Next day Ella and the other children left for Middletown for fear they would all be sick here.

July 19. Rose and Leslie went to Middletown.

Horses ran away, cutters upset in snowbanks, wagons overturned fording creeks, but these events evoked little comment. Horses were taken for granted, although in 1849 Caroline wrote of a trip with Mary E. Palen and her brother Gilbert "comfortably situated in a covered carriage drawn by two beautiful sorrel horses." Dr. King's steeds were utilitarian providers of transportation and only rarely provoked commentary.



Dr. Levi King in his later years (1799-1878)

1855. Sept. 25. Margaret and I took Katy for and went to Oakhill, returned next morning, had a nice time.

Oct. 4. I took Caroline and Margaret and Katy for and started for Windham but it was no go with Katy without her colt so we came home to tea.

September 16, 1857, "old black" conveyed the family to Oak Hill for a wedding. August 18, 1864, Lovisa drove "old Doll" to Freehold. Fanny was driven in the 1870's but sold to a neighbor after the doctor's death in 1878, after which Lovisa hired Fanny for family visits. The horse was not named on April 7, 1869, when

Dr. broke his leg whilst jumping from his wagon when the horse was running, was over the creek 5 miles from home, brought home the next day

nor who set the fracture nor how long it took to heal.

Temperance

Levi King and Lyman Tremain were both strong supporters of the temperance movement that swept the country in the 1800's. Lovisa expressed no moral judgment, only mentioning the housing of temperance lecturers when they stopped over in Cairo. She noted:

1854. Sept. 26. The Doctor took the cars for Auburn to attend a temperance convention. . . . Came home Oct. 3.

Rose's journal detailed many meetings held, organizations formed, speakers heard, "pledges" signed, and backsliders prayed for.

An ameliorating draught of liquor during a painful procedure was not granted the doctor's patients, although a bottle kept on hand for medicinal use was not unknown even among the godly.

Rose wrote in March of 1877, when she was fourteen, that she had a toothache. On April 1st she supposed she would have to have it out. Next day:

Tooth did not ache this morn much. Josie Waldron was in here and Dr. Will Stevens [general practitioner] passed & Mother hailed him and he came here & they all left me but Josie and he pulled it. Oh, it is a dreadful thing to have a tooth pulled. It bled a great deal this P.M. so stuffed it with cotton.

No anodyne. However, Dr. King did experiment with hypnosis in the family circle but not in his practice, and Rose could relate amazing instances of telepathy and clairvoyance on the part of the doctor's favorite subject under hypnosis.

After Grandma King died, Rose recorded on December 21, 1902, that the Cairo house had been sold with a proviso in the deed that no liquor license would ever be granted on that plot of ground.

[To be completed in Summer 1980 issue.]

□ □ □ □ □

Copies of the soft bound, 110 page book *Resorts of the Catskills* are still available at a cost of \$9.81 which includes postage and taxes. Checks may be made payable to the Pieter Bronck Trading Post and addressed to The Greene County Historical Society, c/o S. A. Kriele, 45 Lafayette Avenue, Coxsackie, New York 12051. Proceeds will benefit Bronck Museum.

HIGH FALLS [continued from page 4]

On Sundays the residents could attend church services at the falls, or at Asbury, Katsbaan, West Camp, or at one of the Saugerties churches. The local church was a Methodist Episcopal congregation, a branch of the Palenville and Kiskatom churches. Average attendance was 75 at High Falls. The church was used regularly between 1850 and about 1930, then used to store grain and finally abandoned; it burned in 1978.

One Sunday in June, two of the Smith boys and others from High Falls hiked to the river and rowed across to Germantown, just to attend services there. Rufus was diverted by the antics of one chorister who crouched behind the melodeon and entertained during the sermon by picking imaginary varmints from his head, scratching his knees and ears, and other monkeyshines, unbeknownst to the minister. The boys then came back to Uncle Billy Massino's for dinner and afterward proceeded home.

Some of the ministers, including those at Asbury and at Katsbaan, were called "copperheads" because they weren't ardent enough in supporting the northern cause during the Civil War. Telegraph messages brought war news as far as Saugerties and the reports circulated quickly among the rural people. Rufus was jubilant when he heard that the murderer Booth had been captured, calling him a "fiendish, cowardly traitor".

The High Falls school, which Beers' *History of Greene County* lists as Catskill District #20, was built around 1855. There were 44 pupils studying in its one room in 1882, under the direction of a single teacher who received a wage of five dollars the week. Matilda Everitt was Rufus' last teacher there. Her people owned a blacksmith shop and farm on the Quarryville Road. One winter day the school's stovepipe fell down, driving everyone outside until the soot had settled. Some of the older boys repaired the pipe with a hoop skirt spring. Another cold day the teacher was late, arriving by sleigh after the children had already pushed L. Myers through a window to unlock the door and get a fire started.

The Green Schoolhouse on Old King's Road near Relyeas was once known as East High Falls school, and was built before the one at the falls. Rufus calls this the Brewer School, where he attended prayer meetings on Sunday nights.

In 1901 a new schoolhouse was built at High Falls. But gradually attendance at both districts in the area dwindled as population decreased. There were only 16 children enrolled at High Falls in 1901-02, among them Hattie Myers and Sid Smith. A few lucky children rode to school on bicycles with enormous front wheels. At about the same time

Green Schoolhouse had only two pupils for a period of two years — Ella Dederick and Ella Palmer. The teacher boarded with Palmers and walked cross-lots to educate the little girls. Dedericks provided a horse and wagon for their children's school transportation.

Mabel Beare Conine's mother was among the last High Falls teachers; she was the only teacher some country scholars ever studied under, among them being Ernest "Pete" Sterritt. Those who went on to high school in Catskill boarded in town during the week and were transported by their parents until the 1930's when a bus ran down from Palenville.

One morning when the bus stopped for little Jim Sterritt, the driver noticed flames coming through the siding of the house. The family was inside, putting up their Christmas tree, unaware of any emergency. The older boys and the driver helped carry everything out of the house, including the ice box and china closet, without upsetting a thing. Even the pictures were taken down from the walls, and light bulbs from their sockets, since it looked as though the house would be lost. Fortunately the neighbors were good firemen and eventually everything was returned to its proper place.

When Rufus Smith was still attending High Falls school, he was already courting another local teacher, Margaret Minkler, who would become his wife a few years later. The young teachers were included in all the teenagers' parties, which was natural since they were generally still teenagers themselves. Margaret was sixteen when she earned a second-class certificate, entitling her to teach in any country school for a period of one year. Susan Snell, who became Stella Potts' and Merle Plusch's mother, taught at the Green School, Asbury, Remsen, and elsewhere, after a summer's training class taught by the Kiskatom minister. She too started at the age of sixteen. It was not unusual for teachers to complete high school and college after years of teaching. Susan once toiled her way home amid snowdrifts, walking atop stone fences to find her way. There were no snow days, but when the teacher was ill, school was cancelled, with missed time made up on Saturdays and holidays.

When school attendance became compulsory, the town supervisors appointed a truant officer to cover all Town of Catskill schools outside the village. Pete Craft was attendance officer until his death in 1929, followed by his widow until 1937, and then their daughter, Stella, until 1974.

(Part II of the Van Ordens' High Falls article will be published in the Summer issue of The Journal)

* * * * *
* **HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 1980 DUES?** *
* * * * *

THE KAATERSKILL [continued from page 1]

New Brunswick, Belle Horton, and the City of Catskill. Van Loan's skill as a draughtsman and Lewis Wolfe's superintendence would now produce one of the most admired and used of the local river boats. The keel had been laid at Van Loan and Magee's yard in November; the owners would now look forward to the vessel's trial run in June.

The *Kaaterskill's* engine keelsons were four feet high and eighteen inches thick, of yellow pine, with six tons of iron bolts being used in the engine keelsons and frame. The New York firm, W. & A. Fletcher would provide the #100 engine, a 63-inch cylinder with a 12-foot stroke, as well as the two boilers.

Following the final work at the Athens site, the *Kaaterskill* would be towed to New York (foot of 13th Street) where the boilers would be installed and work completed on the upper structure. Captain James Stead was to supervise the fitting and furnishing of the *Kaaterskill*. The superstructure and other joiners' work was the responsibility of John E. Hoffmire. It being planned to use the *Kaaterskill* for night runs, 115 staterooms would be built in a double tier with a stylish stateroom hall, two stories in height.

On that March day following the launching, short speeches were made to those present. The first, by Seaman Miller of New York, traced the history of this Hudson River transportation company, beginning with its founding on April 25, 1877, when the articles of agreement were signed by Messers H. O. Nichols, William H. Morton, George M. Snyder, Edwin Snyder and Weston L. Snyder. The name they adopted was the New York and Athens Transportation Company; it had a capitalization of \$25,000. The *Escort* and the *Charlotte Vanderbilt* were the first boats to be utilized on their upriver — New York run. Gradually these two boats were reconstructed to accommodate the increased demand for space.

This company, on March 4, 1878, absorbed the Black and Donahue Company of Catskill, in the process acquiring the steamer *Andrew Harder*. Since additional capital was needed, new shares of stock were sold. The name was also changed to the New York, Catskill and Athens Steamboat Company. The directors, impressed with the growing use of passenger and light freight services on the Hudson River, were now ready to purchase the *Walter Brett*. In the spring of 1879, Captain H. O. Nichols and William H. Morton sold their interests, taking as part payment, the *Andrew Harder*. The company next contracted for the building of the *City of Catskill*, which went into service in 1880. Now it was the *Kaaterskill's* turn.

(Editor's Note: *The Recorder* [March 31, 1882] furnished the background for this article.)

WILLARD SILVER [continued from page 2]

reflect this trend; all mention of silversmithing has been dropped and in its place heavy emphasis is given to jewelry, watches, and musical goods. The diversity of his stock coupled with his reputation in the community allowed Charles to continue in business until his death in January, 1885. No member of the Willard family came forth to continue the business and it was sold to Henry Wilcox, a Willard employee, who continued the business as a jewelry store. [Dr. Charles E. Willard, grandson of the founder of the store, was a medical practitioner in Catskill for many years.]

Perhaps the success of the Willards' business was ultimately dependent on good merchandising and supplying the customer with whatever he wanted, whether it was extract of heliotrope or pocket pistols, but it was their handmade silver that had distinguished their business from its beginning. Only by looking at a piece of Willard silver is it possible to appreciate the skill of the Willards and it is with these pieces of handcrafted silver that the Willards made their most lasting contribution to the character of life in nineteenth century Greene County.

□ □ □ □

TWO IMPORTANT DATES — MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The annual Historic Homes Tour, so highly praised in past years, is scheduled for Saturday, June 14, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets may be purchased prior to May 31 at the discount price of \$4.50 each by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope together with check made payable to the Greene County Historical Society, R. D., Coxsackie, N.Y. 12051. After May 31 the tickets are \$5.00 each. Get a group of friends together, view some of our architectural treasures, see attractive interiors, and also break the normal routine with a June ride into the countryside.

The yearly meeting of the Society will be held at Bronck Museum on Sunday, June 22 at 2:30 p.m. In addition to a short business meeting, a special slide program is being arranged. Bring your folding chairs.

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
