

The Quarterly JOURNAL

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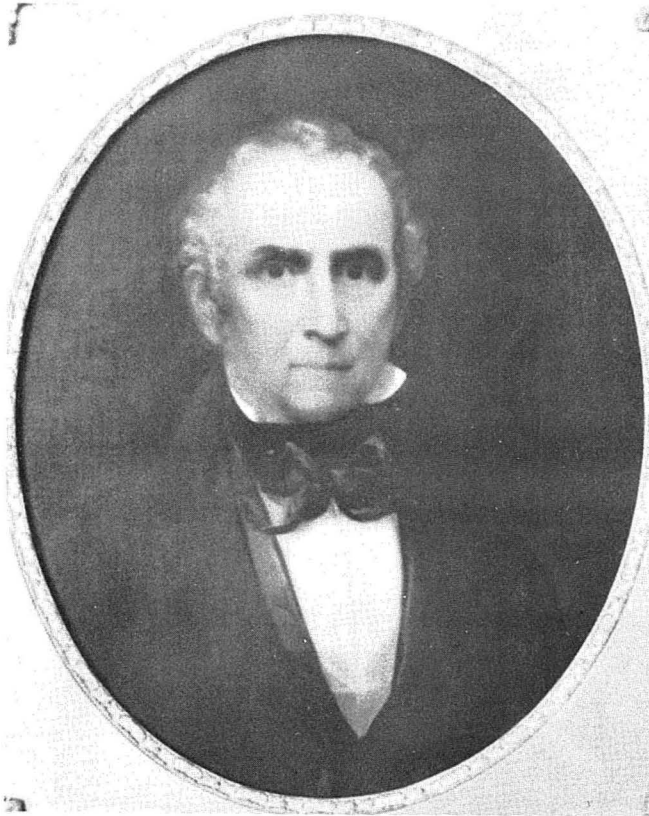
U. S. Route 9-W

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Vol. 5, Issue 2

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Summer, 1981



Portrait (oil on canvas), Captain Joseph Allen
Mary and Helen Becker Collection

Val Kriele Photo

JOSEPH ALLEN — CATSKILL'S RETIRED SEA CAPTAIN

—Raymond Beecher

"Often when beating up the British Channel, I have been obliged, however inconvenient, to 'douse my peak' [dip the ship's flag] to every English vessel in the channel; today, I have doused an Englishman, peak, hull and all." These were the remarks of Captain Joseph Allen (1752-1842) as recorded by James Pinckney in *Sketches of Catskill* (Harmony Lodge Papers, No. 1). They relate to the eruption of ill feeling between Allen and the purchaser of his Jefferson Heights property, one William Pullan, an Englishman.

This retired sea captain, one of Catskill's more colorful individuals, was a Yankee transplant from the state of Rhode Island. Those driving through Jefferson Heights today will see his first Catskill home with its NYS historical marker, now the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence B. Moon. Older residents may recall his later house on Jefferson Hill.

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A CERTAIN SMALL HOUSE

—Esther H. Dunn

A certain small house located on the Platte Clove road, just beyond the Catholic church, is the oldest within our mountain top. "Our mountain top" means the region of Haines Falls, Tannersville, Platte Clove, Elka Park — lands lying within Great Lot #25 of the old Hardenbergh Patent. In the Catskill Mountains of course.

It was early owned and lived in by a certain William Miller. Likely he built the house. A document among Kingston papers establishes that he officially secured the land September 1, 1793, (in sub-lot No. 11). Likely construction started soon after. In that house he and his wife Margaret raised ten children. Two first babies, sons, had died at ages two and five.

The house was sturdily built, suited to our cold and rough region. Basically it had two very large rooms, a full loft overhead, large stone fireplaces at each end.

In addition to its record of survival, it stands a monument to a vanished first settlement within the dark, fearful forests which were rarely entered by man — and the province of the bear, panther, wolf and smaller animals. Under cover of dense boughs the dropping streams were of surprising force. Fish were often there in large numbers. The dankness in particular in this territory was not inviting to man.

Yet between the years 1790 and 1800 some sixty families moved into the area. A few came later. The enticement was from newspaper advertisements across the Hudson offering "Cheap lands to the west . . .," this at a time of unrest due to the



The William Miller house before 20th century renovations
Esther H. Dunn Collection

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A CERTAIN SMALL HOUSE *(continued from page 1)*

Revolution and frequent displacement of tenant farmers living on Loyalist property. The settlement was a calculated real estate venture. Not for income from rents, but to open the land to future values. Accordingly the rents for 7-year and 3-life leases were almost nothing, the terms very easy. The quality of the trees, and fine water power, were great assets. James Desbrosses, patentee, was owner of Great Lot #25 and more.

The incoming settlers did open up the region. They built homes, fences, roads, mill dams. They learned to live with the brutality of the land and weather. If they worked endlessly they also enjoyed life. Such was the nature of the self-reliant American settler. A school had been quickly established, church services held. These people had large families. Among early names are: Townsend, Bloomer, Griffen, Brewer, Hains, McGregor, Smith, Boyd, Miller.

In the early 1830's, with three or four exceptions, the settlers picked up and left. Just that. No reason given. No explaining letters. Some went to Michigan, a few to Ohio. The incoming day of the tanneries to the Catskills, promising profits was no deterrent.

Almost no evidence of the settlement shows today. But two or three local men can spot the signs. They have a sixth sense about mountain land, and have educated eyes. A small piece of metal on the ground, to them, is likely the shoe of an ox. Their oldest found coin dates only to 1825. That may mean money was not in common use high within our mountains.

Very little information exists about the personal lives of the settlers. The majority came from Connecticut, southern Dutchess County and Westchester County. Most were of English descent. They were knowing of the conflicts and ways of the world. Theirs had been war times.

Of William Miller, however, he whose house still stands on the Platte Clove road, there is somewhat to tell. By family record he was born in Portsmouth, England. On August 14, 1763. It was inevitable the boy should know of ships and far places. Portsmouth had one of the finest harbors in the world and was home to the British Navy. It contained dockyards, storehouses, shipbuilding yards, blacksmith shops for iron and anchor work. It was known too for its very beautiful girls with pink cheeks, to whom incoming ships' officers brought fabulous silks and other gifts, their husbands not demurring.

Fragments of his life at sea are told in about these words, which if not precise do suggest much: he was a marine in His Majesty King George's service

and appointed Master-of-the-Arms in the *Rhinoceron* in 1782, his step-father Captain Waters, commander . . . he crossed the ocean nine times . . . he was on the *Nestol*, a British frigate, in the Revolutionary War. (If the *Nestol* was the *Nestor* of official record, she was a vessel of 28 guns, a French privateer captured by the British in 1781.) He was also in Charleston, South Carolina, after the city was burned by the British; was present at the surrender of Lord Cornwallis (October 19, 1781).

The following year found William Miller in New York City, with a discharge from the British service and obtaining a license to exhort in the Methodist Church . . . then going on to Nova Scotia where he had a china shop. And there in Nova Scotia he met Margaret Brundage, an orphan girl with an orphan brother, and he married her, on August 20, 1786. She was then just short of sixteen years of age. A grand-daughter in later years, describing her to a still younger descendant, said, ". . . she was a little black-eyed woman real smart to work." Likely she was adorable. Why these two young people came to our fearful lands is not told.

Most of this information comes from Miller descendants, gathered over the years at a family focal point in Michigan. It was there William Miller went from our mountain lands, with part of his family in 1833 – to Bruce Township, Macomb County. There he and his wife Margaret lived, on their farm and with a son and his family, to the end of very long lives.

Whoever built the Miller house on the Platte Clove road, built well – whether a man knowing of ships and the sea or a woodsman. Strong and bitter winds came from the west and north. The snows stayed late. The summer growing season was little more than two months long. A house needed to be snug.

This one was built low. It conforms to the ground with the ease of a mother hen sitting on her chicks. To the west and north at a comfortable distance, a sudden high-rising bank of land forms a buffer for the little house where it stands in open sunshine, looking toward the mountains. Its stone chimney on the west side breaks the insistent winds, holds the warmth indoors. The ceiling is low. The roof top is low – the rafters spaced wide. This is a frame house, the easier to build because there was a sawmill within the community.

Indoors, the large fireplace was an opening of extraordinary breadth with a large wood beam fitted tightly across at the top. It is there to give support to the heavy stones of the chimney above. Toward the same purpose, shorter beams (with 4-inch front face) are interspaced at the sides within the fireplace.

(Continued on Page 10)

CAPTAIN ALLEN *(continued from page 1)*

Allen descendants maintain an interest in Greene County's history and its Greene County Historical Society; the Katharine M. Decker Memorial Collection at Bronck Museum contains numerous Allen family items, the gift of Irving M. King, Sr.

These Allens were of English stock, descendants of John Allen of Suffolk, England — a Roundhead who migrated to this country in 1633 in the ship *Elizabeth Ann*. This first generation American married Elizabeth Bacon in the year 1650 and, adhering to the Quaker faith, soon found it expedient to remove to Newport, Rhode Island, a colony noted for its religious tolerance. Here John and Elizabeth reared a family of four daughters and two sons. The line of descent from John (1) and Elizabeth who are buried in the Old Clifton Burying Ground, Newport, Rhode Island, appears to be John (2), Samuel (3) married to Mary Coggleshall in 1745, with issue of three sons: Rowland in 1746, Noel in 1749 and Joseph (4) in 1752. Joseph would be a great grandson. The earliest known family document which survives is a deed of gift for twelve acres of land from John (2) "of Middletown in the County of Newport in the Colony of Rhode Island & Providence plantation in New England," to son Samuel.

Our Captain Joseph Allen began a sailor's career at an early age aboard New England merchant vessels. At the outbreak of the American Revolution he joined that quasi-official naval group known as the American Privateers, the beginnings of the United States Navy. With the use of small sailing vessels and whaleboats these men sallied forth from shallow, protected waters to raid and otherwise harass English shipping. When captured, and many including Allen were, they could expect little sympathy from the British navy. According to Katherine M. Decker, Joseph Allen started irritating the British by smuggling in and out of Newport, first using a large rowboat and then a sail boat similar to the Cape Cod cat boat. He amassed a considerable sum before the British made it a point to capture him.

In the year 1778 Allen served aboard the privateer *Dolphin*, a vessel of Rhode Island registry commanded by Samuel Nickerson. According to John F. Millar in his volume *American Ships of the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods* this ship was one of several wily Benjamin Franklin secured and outfitted in French ports with the design of promoting open warfare between France and Great Britain. Actually the *Dolphin* was a Folkstone or Dunkirk cutter rebuilt with a raised quarterdeck and quarter galleries; it had a square-tuck stern and carried 10 carriage guns and 12 swivels. It fell into Franklin's hands by action of the British Secret

Service who hoped it could be later captured on the high seas while carrying Franklin's secret dispatches to America. But Franklin sent his reports otherwise and used the *Dolphin* as a privateer to raid English shipping off the coast of Ireland. And raid she did! It is alleged that with the help of other American vessels she captured some 20 English merchantmen, but failed in an effort to apprehend the Irish linen fleet. An oil painting of the *Dolphin* survives on the revolving part of the dial of a tall case clock made in Dublin about 1777. If the artist's work is accurate, the *Dolphin* measured 62' 10"; it flew a red and white striped flag.

By 1781 Allen ranked as Lieutenant and Prize Officer of the *Desire*, a sailing vessel of 60 tons burthen. The first time Allen fell into British hands, he was incarcerated aboard the notorious prison ship *The Jersey* anchored in Wallabout Bay, Brooklyn. By arousing the interest of one of his military guards for the potential of an Allen family reward, Joseph succeeded in escaping in the company of his enemy. After Allen's second capture, he was housed in prisoner facilities at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

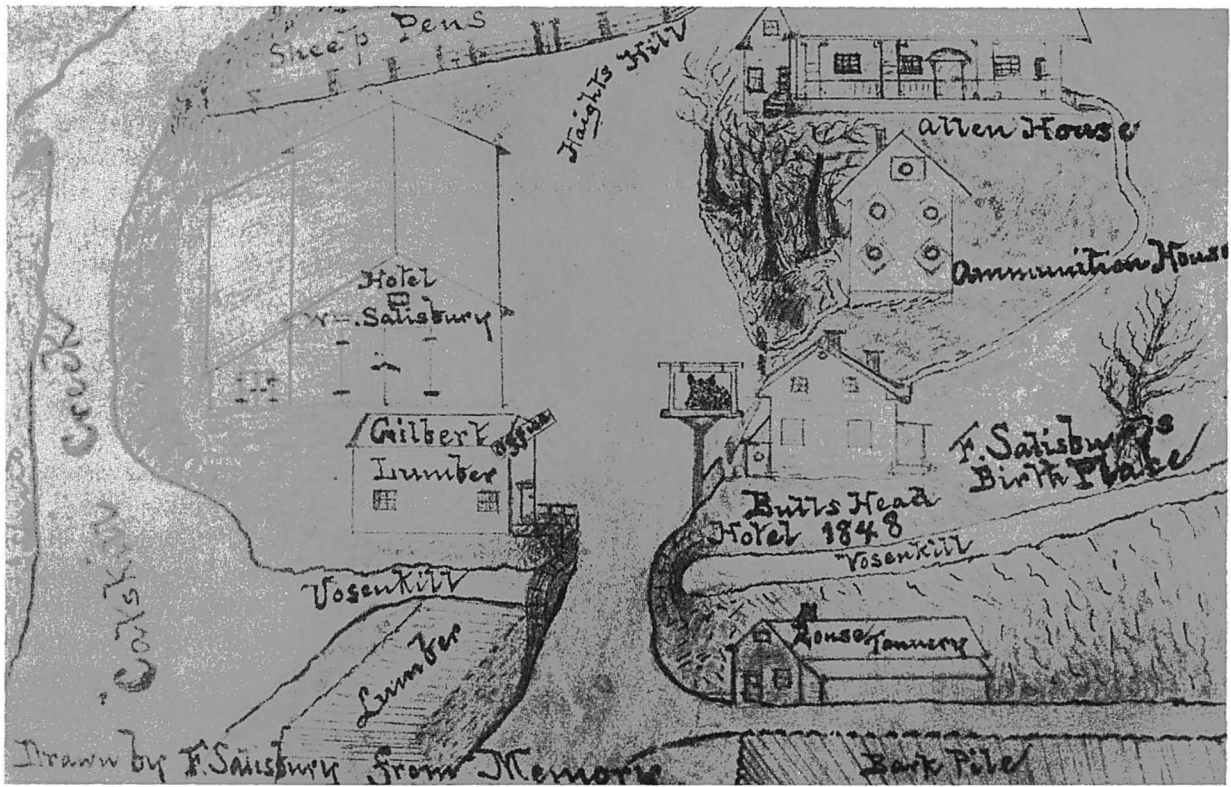
During this same Revolutionary struggle, the Allens were among the many Newport and vicinity families who suffered the loss of real and personal property at the hands of British raiding parties. Allen would remember this when events brought on the War of 1812.

After the signing of the treaty of peace at Paris, Joseph Allen continued his sea career, rising in command to master of vessels and eventually as master and owner. It is known he sailed in the aforementioned brig *Desire*, as captain and owner, to France in the spring of 1787, and at Cape Francis delivered a cargo valued at 6347 livres, 10 sous, paying a duty of 348 livres. In 1794 he was master of the *Supply* and in 1795 sailed on the *Commerce*. A direct descendant, Irving M. King Sr. of Brewster, Massachusetts retains in his possession Joseph Allen's 1794 ship's commission worded in Spanish, English and French; it is signed by President Washington (with U. S. seal); Richard Varick, Mayor of NYC; Edward Randolph; and countersigned by John Lamb, Customs Director. It specifies the sloop *Supply*, "60 Tonnes" Joseph Allen captain and owner.

By 1797 this sailor was in command of the *Dispatch*; by 1810, perhaps earlier, he had accumulated enough capital to own the *Swift*. This 128 ton sailing vessel had a graceful female figurehead. A Captain Joseph Allen is also known to have commanded the ship *Russell* in the year 1811 but it is uncertain if this was our Joseph Allen.

In the years between the end of the American

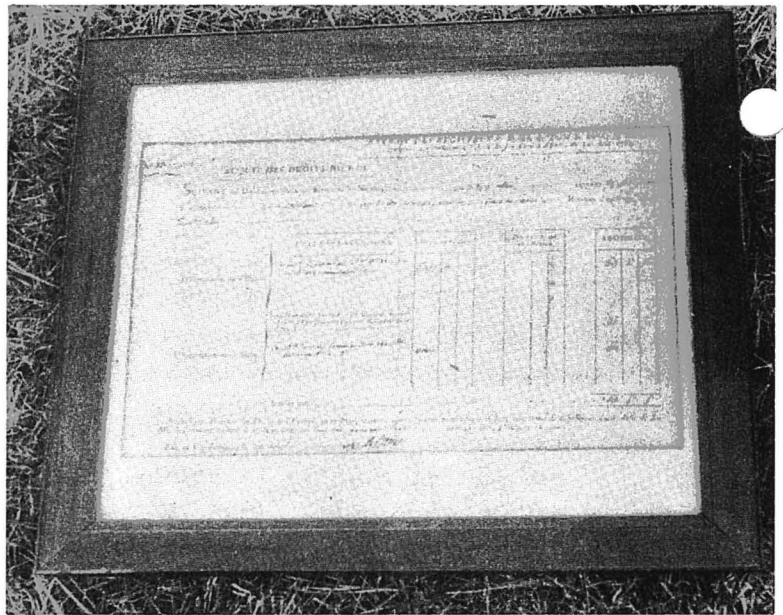
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Jefferson Heights, Catskill



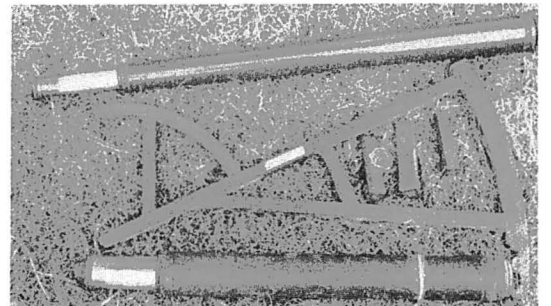
Allen Coin Silverware & Decanter



Desire Cargo Entry at Cap Francois [Cape Francis] 1781



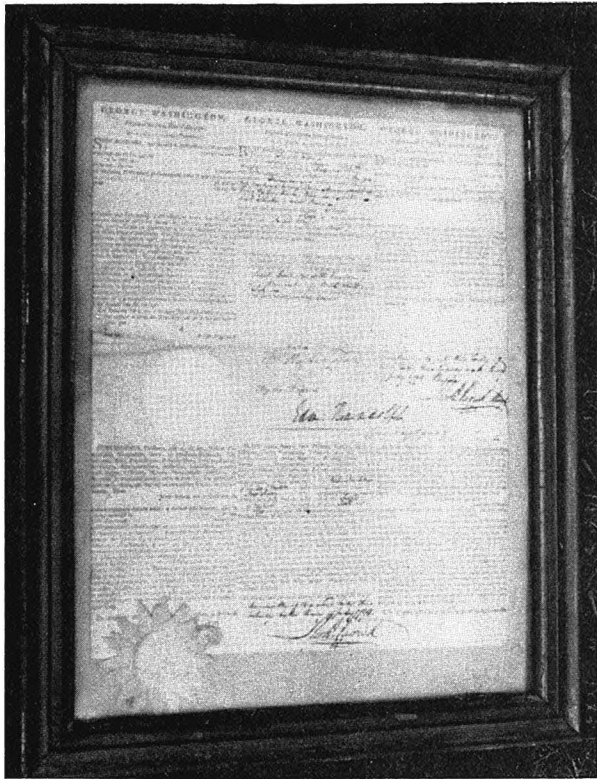
Receipt Book – 1812 entry



Navigational Instruments used by Captain Joseph Allen
"Made by Benjamin King Newport Rhode Island 1761"



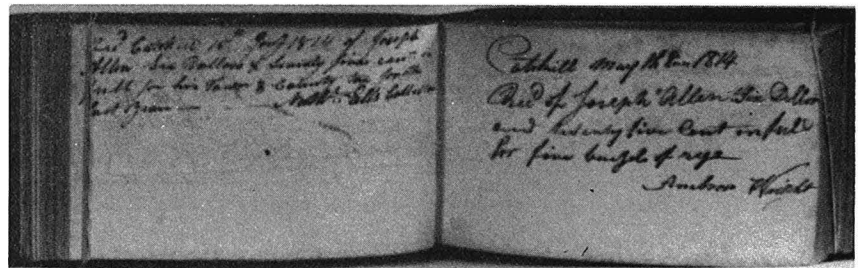
Now Residence Mr. & Mrs. Clarence B. Moon



*Allen's Ship Commission
signed by President Washington and others*



*Allen Property on Jefferson Hill
House upper right in photo*



Allen Receipt Book – 1814 entry

CAPTAIN ALLEN (continued from page 3)

Revolution and the outbreak of the War of 1812, Allen's sea time was spent mainly in the West Indian trade, although he did sail to both England and France. While on the former run, his ship was seized by Spanish authorities, Allen being incarcerated for several months in the ancient prison at Saint Augustine. Tropical diseases were other crew hazards of the time. At Havana, on one trip, Allen lost a major portion of his crew, including his son, Thomas, to yellow fever. One ship was also lost by fire.

We gain a modicum of information for the Newport years from Captain Allen's 4 x 6½ inch leather bound receipt book noted in the inside front cover as having been "purchased at New York in the year 1794."

Individuals were willing to entrust produce and manufactured goods to this ship captain; he in turn acted as agent for them, selling the goods to best advantage. There are several entries for such settlements labeled in the receipt book "adventures." One crew member's name survives in wage payments — Henry Fowler, Jr., for a 1799 trip to the Caribbean.

The Allens, in 1793, rented a house at Newport from Elizabeth Goldring, paying eleven dollars the year rental. In 1799 he paid \$3.90 for "town, state and watch taxes assessed." However, by 1801 the Allen family removed to the nearby community of Jamestown situated on Conanicut Island in the bay. At this location they rented from Joseph Knowles, heating and cooking with cordwood purchased of Joseph Nichols. To feed a growing family, Joseph bought his wife, Mary, a tin-oven, to supplement fireplace cooking; the price was \$1.50, paid to Hannah Reynolds.

The possibility of operating a ferryboat from Jamestown to the mainland appealed to Allen as a secondary source of income. On February 8, 1803, he had George Southwick sign a receipt as follows: "Recd. of Joseph Allen the Sum of Three Hundred and Eight[y] Three Dollars in full for one ferry Boat built at Newport, measuring 15 ton and 35 feet built by me." And on March 24, 1804, we note Allen paid Henry Fowler, Jr., forty dollars for tending the ferry.

While in Rhode Island, the Allens kept a dairy cow; a riding horse was also used for transportation. It is interesting to note that whenever Allen paid any taxes, he had the "tax gatherer" sign the receipt book. We can trace these payments from Newport to Jamestown, back to Newport and then on to Catskill.

By late 1804 the Allens had removed once again, back to Newport. They must have purchased their own house, as a notation indicates John Pitman was paid \$35 for work completed on their residence. Town taxes on this property in 1809 were \$2.10. That same year Allen bought ten loads of dirt fill

from the Thurston cellar excavation in Broad Street. Masonry work was also completed.

The Brig *Dispatch* receives mention in the receipt book from 1804 to 1809 for sundry repairs made by Job Austin (carpentry) and by John Earl and John Thompson. Gerrit Holmes appears to have caulked the vessel, taking 9½ days.

The earliest Catskill entry in the receipt book is dated October 14, 1811; it relates to the purchase of a bay horse for \$38. A month later Allen was paying Nathan Elliott \$11.62½ for two quarters of beef for family sustenance. Family tradition indicates Allen first came to the Hudson Valley, and to the city of Hudson, seeking a safer harbor just prior to the outbreak of the War of 1812. From past experience he had reason to fear the British. Allen scouted the area for a possible relocation and finally settled on a tract of land, 108½ acres, one mile inland from the village of Catskill. Until the completion of his handsome 1814 federal brick residence on this tract of land along the Susquehannah Turnpike, the Allens rented quarters in the old stone house on the Catskill Creek, once the residence of Madame Dies. Family tradition also reports the Allens, together with their furniture and other personal property, came to Catskill by sailing vessel.

There are several Catskill entries for the purchase of substantial quantities of lumber from Ambrose Wright. Since Allen's residence was of brick, it may be the lumber was either for part of the framing or else for outbuildings.

Two of Allen's children were enrolled in the district school; a fee of \$5 the quarter was paid, once to Gerret Van Bergen and the other time to Teunis Van Vechten. By this time the Allens had strayed from the Quaker faith and were attending St. Luke's Episcopal Church. In 1825 Joseph paid \$6 for pew rent to F. A. Laraway.

Rather than purchase milk, as at Rhode Island, the Allens had their own cow. The first one purchased from Jeremiah Searls was for \$20. A few years later Thomas Moon would sell them "two red heffers" for \$26.

The entry paying James (Van) Valkenburgh \$40.17 for balance due him in 1814 may well relate to the building of the Allen house at Jefferson Heights. That year the town and county tax was \$6.75. By 1816, the "tax gatherer," Egbert Bogardus, collected a larger sum — \$16.96. This would be logical in view of the completion of the brick house.

Several sons and daughters were born of the union of Joseph Allen and Mary Taggart while living in Rhode Island. Some removed to Catskill with their parents but others remained in the Rhode Island location. Son Noel Allen was the forebear of Mary

CAPTAIN ALLEN (continued from page 6)

and Helen Becker, present day Catskillians. Daughter Sarah married Samuel DuBois; their daughter, Mary Allen DuBois, married the artist Benjamin B. G. Stone. Irving M. King and children of Cape Cod are descendants of Sarah and Benjamin's son Joseph.

By the year 1815, only a short while after settling in his brick home at Jefferson Heights, Joseph Allen either tired of farming or else found it financially unrewarding. In 1816 he advertised his house and acreage for sale. The Catskill *Recorder* printed his paid advertisement:

For Sale

The subscriber offers For Sale his valuable FARM containing one hundred eight and a half acres of land, situate in the village of Jefferson, one mile from Catskill and less than two miles from the North [Hudson] River, on the great western turnpike [Susquehannah] leading from Catskill. On said Farm is a Brick House, 45 feet by 28, and several other buildings — a young orchard, etc. For pleasantness the situation is exceeded by none, and is a grand stand for a Store or Tavern. It will be sold at a bargain if applied for soon.

Catskill, August 15, 1815 Joseph Allen

But the buyers were scarce and finally in May of the year 1822, we find Allen distributing broadsides with the same information. This may have attracted a buyer on March 31, 1823, one William Pullan "of the City of New York, Merchant." The price agreed upon was \$5,225. A parchment deed of transfer signed by Joseph and Mary Allen is in the Katharine M. Decker Memorial Collection at Bronck Museum.

Following the sale of their Jefferson Heights property, the Allens removed closer to the village of Catskill, purchasing the Samuel Haight house and acreage by the Vosenkill. The property covered 47 acres on both sides of that small stream, also including frontage on Catskill Creek, Goat Island, and meadow land on the west side. Buildings included Haight's home, the tavern stand and other structures. Allen soon sold off 10 acres upon the hill east of the Vosenkill to Andrew Brosnaham and gave a 14-year lease, with privilege of renewal, for a 60 x 90 foot lot also on the east side, to May and Gillum.

Joseph Allen continued to consume his capital and on August 21, 1827, mortgaged his real estate for \$2,100; his son, Samuel of Newport, was the mortgagee. In May of 1830 Allen borrowed another \$700 from the same source. At the time of Joseph Allen's death, a balance of \$4,230.13, representing principal and interest, was due Joseph's son Samuel. To clear title the mortgage was foreclosed on August 8, 1842 with a public sale at the hotel of William Van

Bergen; John Adams was the auctioneer. The high bidder was mortgagee Samuel Allen; the price, \$5,000. Samuel then leased much of the acreage and buildings except the family residence, to William Salisbury, Jr., for a rental of \$300 the year; Samuel DuBois acted as agent for his brother-in-law Samuel. By quit-claim deed dated February 18, 1853, Samuel transferred title to part of this Allen-Haight acreage and the house to his three sisters — Eliza T. Allen, Catharine A. Cooke and Amelia A. Allen. It was to be their home for the remainder of their lives.

The Joseph Allens and their children remaining at Newport kept up an exchange of correspondence and some visitation during the parents' lifetimes. One surviving letter from son Andrew Allen is dated August 22, 1814. In it Andrew indicates some uncertainty whether he should remain there in business or remove to Catskill:

Newport Aug^t 22^d 1814

Dear Mother

I Received your affectionate Letter by the hands of Brother Sam^l acquainting me that you could not advise me Respecting my Coming up to your place to Live for fear my coming may turn out contrary to your wishes. Although It was your heart wish for me to come, I assure you Dear Mother It is my wish to do what you think Is for the best or will turn out For the best for myself & family. I am confident whatever you advise will be for the best or to the best of your opinion. Therefore I think I shall continue awhile longer in Newport or until I can form some correct Idea whether the English Intend to come In here or not untill I can see there Is no prospect of Peace Between this Country and Great Brittain I am doing a little business, as much as I can Expect for the Times.

This war has made great alteration in Newport all the shipping is Removed, and most all the young men belonging here are Either gone Into the Army or the Navy. The Drums & fifes are constantly going to Enlist Soldiers and Seamen With Rendezvous upon the Long Wharf which you may well suppose is not very agreeable to one like myself who is Rather inclined to Retirement I am feard this letter will wear your patience when you come to Read it.

Your affectionate Son
Andrew V. Allen

Daughter Mary (1785—?) remained at Newport, married to Job Townsend. Marcy Allen (1787-1855) married to Samuel Carr, also remained at that place. Noel Allen, the oldest son, born May 12, 1780, at Middletown, Rhode Island, married Elizabeth Goetchius of Catskill in the year 1812. Samuel

(Continued on Page 9)

THE ROWENA MEMORIAL SCHOOL FEUD

—Raymond Beecher

Passersby frequently take a quick glance at this unique stone structure while driving through Palenville; the building has captured the interest and affection of the hamlet's residents who are now trying to preserve it since its closing by the Catskill School District. But it was not always thus. There was a time back in 1901 when many thought the edifice would never be completed; that that part already constructed by George W. Holdridge would be razed. The *New York Herald* summarized the situation with the headline "Palenville \$50,000 school house a cause of bitter strife in Community." Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence's good intentions had presumably backfired!

This prosperous merchant of New York City, Mr. L. W. Lawrence and his wife, Rowena, were steady summer sojourners at the Winchelsea House in the hamlet. (One wonders if he was a descendant of the Lawrences of Lawrenceville in that vicinity.) During these years Mr. Lawrence became a close friend to the Upper School Principal, O. F. Payne. And it was these two men who conceived the idea of combining the Upper and the Lower School Districts to improve the quality of education offered at Palenville. The proposal was finally approved by the elected trustees and construction commenced. The only two stipulations in the Lawrence gift were that the completed school building should bear his wife's name, Rowena, and that he should control the selection of the principal. The Holdridge quarries furnished the stone, even to the polished pieces in the dome. George W. Holdridge was well qualified to handle the contract; his record of building included many of Catskill's important late nineteenth and early twentieth century public structures.

Midway during the construction opposition to the entire idea began to surface with such comments as: "The edifice is an ornament for a larger town;" "The children of Palenville do not exceed 40 in all and this building with its three classrooms and large lecture hall can easily accommodate 200;" "How are we going to support this thing?"

Mr. Lawrence sought to reassure the Palenville taxpayers that the operating expenses of the Rowena Memorial School would not be larger than the Upper and Lower Districts' budgets combined. But many residents continued to show skepticism as to the practicality of the building. Much of the opposition was leveled against Mr. Payne. The school trustees were divided and turned to the State Superintendent of Schools who soon sent his representative down for a first-hand report. Dr. Holcomb, a relative of Payne, went off the board but the called-for special election to fill that vacancy brought on Calvin



Goodwin, a pro Payneite; Goodwin broke the school board deadlock. By a majority of one vote, the building construction proceeded.

The *New York Herald* then reported: "The taxpayers are waiting for the new tax rate; originally it was 1% and now probably 2%; the building may well be torn down." The *Examiner* in its issue of August 16, 1902, would report: "Some trying to point out it is not really a Lawrence for or against feeling but rather a pro or anti Payne question; taxpayers worried about the cost; we think the school will be endowed and a burden raised from the shoulders of the taxpayers."

As the building reached completion, the opposition finally capitulated. Palenville received its unique structure, one worthy of current nomination to the national catalogue of historic buildings. The school served the hamlet well, even after its absorption into the Catskill School System. One wonders today whether donor Lawrence may have felt he had opened a Pandora's Box when such a local tempest erupted eighty years ago.

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Visiting Schedule for 1981 Season

Bronck Museum guided tour season runs from June 30 to September 6. Mrs. Bertha Bogert will again act as tour docent, supplemented by Mrs. Frances Adams and Mrs. Ellen Whitbeck on Sunday afternoons. The weekday hours (Tuesday - Saturday) are from 10 - 12 a.m. and from 1 - 5 p.m.; Sundays 2 - 6 p.m. Groups should make special arrangements in advance. With these days of gasoline costs, why not enjoy one of the region's premier historic sites.

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CAPTAIN ALLEN *(continued from page 7)*

married Damaris Carr at Newport; he lived until 1855. Ann D. Allen married Peter Osterhoudt of Catskill; they later removed to Schoharie. Catharine Allen married Terhand K. Cooke of Catskill. Daughters Amelia and Eliza remained spinsters. As mentioned earlier, Sarah Allen married Catskill's Samuel DuBois; her twin sister was Ruth Allen Lawyer of Schoharie County.

As an interesting sidelight to the Allen period of residence at Catskill, it is to be noted they had a "front seat" view from their home on Haight's Hill when ground was broken on October 27, 1831 for the Canajoharie and Catskill Rail Road, "the first shovel full of dirt was lifted on the lot west of Captain Allen's house."

Joseph Allen's will was drawn up on February 14, 1828 and was witnessed by Jacob Van Orden, Abraham Van Vechten and Robert Dordon. It was a simple, concise document, leaving his estate to his wife and subsequently to his surviving children. Son Samuel was named executor but when the time came, declined to serve. Samuel DuBois of Catskill, husband of Sarah Allen, served in his stead. Captain Joseph had departed this world on Jan. 29, 1842, reaching the venerable age of ninety years; his wife, Mary, predeceased him by three years. The Allens of Catskill are buried in the family plot in Thompson Street cemetery.

Several other Allen family manuscripts survive in the Katharine M. Decker collection, also the gift of her son, Irving M. King. One is a printed circular letter dated at Catskill, June 25, 1814. It invites the receiver, "Capt. Joseph Allen, Jefferson" to help celebrate the approaching anniversary of the Nation's Independence. The Committee of Arrangements is listed as G. Van Bergen, J. Collier, J. Van Valkenburgh, G. Reynolds and M. Crosswell. A letter written by Captain Nathaniel C. Mayo, of Alexandria, Virginia, dated May 9, 1817, indicates plans for a Catskill visit to Captain Allen after Captain Mayo completes a pending sail trip (of three months' duration) to Liverpool. An indenture dated 1787 at Middletown, Rhode Island, involves the sale of a plot of land of 1 3/4 acres for 48 silver Spanish milled dollars.

The Rhode Island Historical Society holds a letter from Joseph Allen to Mr. David Lopez covering Allen's payment of "two two thousand pounds I leave the Depreciation [of the currency] to your Judgment entirely; & will shortly wait on you & adjust the affair." In the front office of the Newport Historical Society is to be found an oil portrait of Captain Joseph Allen which bears a strong resemblance to his descendant, Irving M. King, Sr. Another oil portrait of Joseph is at Catskill in the home of the Mesdames Becker. □ □ □ □ □

VEDDER LIBRARY NOTES

□◇ Utilizing the resources of several genealogical libraries throughout the country, Mrs. Mildred Edes MacKown of West Hartford, Connecticut has researched and compiled a typescript notebook of Vandenberg's. Entitled *Direct Descendants of Richard Janse Van den Bergh of the Town of Cocksackie, Greene County, New York*. This volume is an excellent reference tool for public use. A copy has been deposited at the Vedder Memorial Library.

□◇ On a visit to this area, Mrs. Joseph Dec of Martinsville, New Jersey donated the autograph book of Cora Huyck of Catskill. It contains many village names from the 1880's.

□◇ James P. Nardo of Catskill has deposited two interesting photographs of that village – Catskill Fire Company, A. M. Osborn Hose Co. #2 (Winner of the cup at Athens, 1926) and Basketball Champions, A. M. Osborn Hose Company, Catskill Mt. League.

□◇ Four stock certificates relating to Cornwallville and East Durham corporations are the gift of Gilbert Smith of Worcester, New York.

□◇ The National Trust Library's *Annotated List of Periodicals on Historic Preservation and Related Subjects in the Northeastern Region* lists this society's *Quarterly Journal*.

□◇ And from Mrs. John Bagley of Catskill has come more material – published items relating to Judge Emory Chase. One pamphlet was hitherto unknown to us.

□◇ We are always pleased to assist younger historians researching topics of regional or national interest. It is an added pleasure to see the finalized publication. Mr. Clifford Beede of Catskill has, by the utilization of local collections, by interviews with persons who attended that school, and by other research, brought together a well illustrated publication. Entitled *The Old High School: Catskill Free Academy and Grammar School 1868-1935*, a copy is now on the Vedder Library shelves.

□◇ A particularly fine turnpike map, a Tolley survey of 1812, gives us the location of a number of residences along the Athens route. It is a part of the extensive Pulver – Stiefel gift.

□◇ The Manuscripts Section, Library of Congress, is actively seeking registration of recent Vedder Library additions for its National Union Catalogue. The Charles A. and Charles A. W. Beach Collection is being processed for that purpose.

□◇ The firm of Murphy, Murphy-Miazga Cultural Resource Services, Cocksackie, should have been given credit for the archaeological photos in the Spring Issue of this Journal.

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A CERTAIN SMALL HOUSE *(Continued from page 2)*

They are in good shape, honorably blackened by use. The wood may be black cherry. It is this fireplace that was used for cooking through many generations. Its earthen floor has been raised by the present owner to correct smoking.

The sister chimney, across the house on the east side, has unfortunately yielded to nature. It is in the smaller of the two large rooms of the house, the bedroom. Here, just past its doorway a removable square is cut in the floor. It's the opening into a cold cellar, which is stone lined. Full cellars could not be dug in subsoil of hardpan and red clay as hard as ours.

Structurally few changes have been made in the house. Years ago it was widened across the back and the roof lowered to match. Siding has been put on, painted white. Outdoor buildings have long since disappeared.

The house has always been privately owned, lived in, and loved. As it is today.

Editor's Note: Much of the information in this article is drawn from the deeply researched and documented records concerned with the early history of the Haines Falls, Tannersville and Platte Clove region by Jennie Haines Dunn (Mrs. Cleveland A. Dunn of Scarsdale, N.Y. and Haines Falls, N.Y.); her mss. are owned by the New York Historical Association, Cooperstown, N.Y. □ □ □ □ □

MANUSCRIPT POLICY

To preserve Greene County's history is one of the goals of this society; its *Quarterly Journal* is a means to that end. Manuscripts are sought relating to the history of the various townships of the County. Items need not be of world-shaking import; we seek, rather, to record for the use of future generations information about people, events, and artifacts that could be lost when our generation is gone. Editorial assistance will be provided if desired. Topics may be related to any time period, including the twentieth century. Material for publication in the *Quarterly Journal* is solicited in accordance with the following conditions:

1. The Society has no funds to purchase articles.
2. The material must be original and written in acceptable English style, preferably typewritten and double-spaced.
3. The name, address, and telephone number of the author must be given.
4. The Editor's advisory board reserves the right to accept or reject material submitted.
5. Authors should be prepared to cite sources from which their information was obtained.
6. Photographs will be returned after being copied.

Articles or requests for further information may be submitted to The Editor at the address below.

THIS AND THAT — NEWS FOR JOURNAL READERS

The flyer enclosed in this issue of the *Quarterly Journal* concerns the Society's Fifth Annual Tour of Old Homes. Reuben Garcia and his group of industrious volunteers have succeeded in arranging what promises to be a day of enjoyable experiences — viewing nineteenth century architecture in the Durham and Oak Hill sections of the county, studying antique collections and family heirlooms, and observing the spectacular scenery. Why not organize a car party for Saturday, June 13.

The annual meeting of the Greene County Historical Society is called for Sunday, June 28 at 2 p.m. The members will meet in the Antiquarium. Please bring your own folding chairs. Take this opportunity to see the newly conserved fabric of the 1663 and the 1738 houses.

Back issues of the *Quarterly Journal* are in demand. They may be ordered from the Society at \$2.50 the year for members and \$3.50 for non-members, plus postage and handling of 50 cents.

For the past few years the Pieter Bronck Trading Post on the museum grounds has been supervised by Mrs. Kay Newbury and staffed by several dedicated volunteers. Unfortunately due to a health problem Kay will not be functioning in that supervisory capacity this season. However the trading post will be open afternoons during the months of July and August. A major spring sale is planned. Watch for newspaper advertisements. Do you have any merchandise to give for this good will operation? We can arrange for a pickup if necessary. Volunteers are always needed.

Friends of Olana, Inc., Box 199, Hudson, N.Y., 12534 is sponsoring an estate tour on Saturday, June 27. Tickets, including transportation and box lunches, are set at \$35 the person. Reservations must be made by May 15 with check payable to Friends of Olana, Inc. Sites to be visited include The Mill, Teviotdale, Tivoli Estate, Rokeby and Edgewater.

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