



Glenfield & Western Railroad

“The ol’ Gee Whiz”

The Age of Transport

1853 – Grading for the Ogdensburg, Clayton & Rome RR commences and they conduct rock blasts through Houseville and Glenfield

1855 – Black River Canal was completed making transport of goods and people easier for Lewis County farms and industries. With the completion of a more economical way of transport, the Upstate forests become the center of the logging and lumber industries, which led to supporting businesses like sawmills, pulp and paper factories, tanneries, and furniture manufacturing.

1855 – Town of Highmarket was established from the Town of West Turin with a population of about 1,100.

1870 – Utica and Black River Railroad was completed giving train line access to Southern Lewis County. Alongside speedy transport of people, goods floated on the canal to the train line, and could now be shipped faster and in larger quantities.



CHAPTER 1: The Beginning

Land Purchase

Hood, Gale, and Company from Grand Rapids, Michigan came to New York in 1882 looking for new timberlands to expand their operations. They settled on a 14,500 acre tract in the town of Highmarket and purchased at least some of the land from McVicar, Allen, and Co.

They first built a large dining hall, a company store, and a boarding house in preparation for a sawmill that would be built shortly after.



Boiler
being
hailed
through
C-ville



Michigan Mills; a “boomtown”

In 1886, the company built a large sawmill in the western section of the town of Highmarket, which was named Michigan Mills. They also built drying sheds.

Product was transported by teams and wagons or sleighs, 18 miles from Michigan Mills to the company's veneer finishing plant in Port Leyden. Products included chair backs, seats, and other types of furniture.

The company employed about 50 men to build the mill, which doubled after the mill opened.

By March of 1887, the mill was cutting about 20,000 board feet of lumber per day and by August of the same year, they were cutting double that, about 50,000 board feet per day.

Michigan Mills:

100' x 70'

Equipped with band saw

Produced hardwood veneer

Believed
to be the
original
mill at
Michigan
Mills



The Tug Hill challenge, and the proposed solution

The long haul of delivering materials and goods over terribly slow roads was beginning to become costly so Hood, Gale, and Co. approached the people of Boonville with a proposition: to run a railroad from the mill to Boonville via West Leyden, which would cost no more than \$100,000 and Hood and Gale would finance 1/3 of the project if the citizens would finance the other 2/3.

Boonville held little interest, but businessmen in Rome were indeed interested. They took the mill railroad idea and created a much larger project called the Rome and Carthage Railroad.

Meetings were held about the proposed stops:

Rome - Lee Center - Point Rock - Highmarket - Constableville - Turin - Martinsburg - west of Lowville - Copenhagen - Carthage

Railroad or Bust

Many people were excited by this proposal. It was estimated that the railroad would cost \$500,000 but over forty years would return over \$40,000,000.

At the third meeting held February 10th, 1887, it had to be adjourned to be moved to a larger space to fit all of the attendants. Excitement was building.

However only a few months later, on May 5th, the Constableville correspondent for the *Boonville Herald* wrote “Where are the surveyors? Did they get lost?”

Soon after, Hood, Gale, and Co. reported that they would have to shut down the mill if the railroad was not constructed.

CHAPTER 2: “22”

Port Leyden; the shipping point

Michigan Mills waited patiently for the railroad to materialize, and in the meantime sought to improve the mill through other means. A telegraph wire was run from the mill to Port Leyden to increase communication.

However in 1889, a disastrous fire believed to have started in the veneer-finishing plant destroyed much of Port Leyden. The company removed all the tools and equipment to their mill in Kinzua, Pennsylvania.

Hood, Gale, and Co. would run for another couple of years, but the loss of the finishing plant along with the costly and slow transportation of goods proved too much for the company and in 1892, they removed equipment from the mills, and sold their land holdings.

A VILLAGE SWEEPED BY FIRE.

MANY STORES AND DWELLINGS AT PORT LEYDEN DESTROYED.

WATERTOWN, N. Y., Oct. 25.—Much of the business portion of Port Leyden, Lewis County, was destroyed by fire early this morning. The Douglass House, the Opera House, eight stores, the Post Office, and several dwellings were destroyed. Fifteen families lost their homes and many of their possessions. The flames spread so rapidly that the people had little time to save anything. Some commercial travelers who were spending the night at the hotel lost their sample trunks, escaping with scant clothing.

The losses in part are as follows: W. F. Hayes, dwelling, store, and billiard room, \$1,500; Charles Stone, slight loss; J. W. Ager, two stores \$4,500, insurance \$2,500; Williams Brothers, merchandise, about \$11,000, partially insured; Williams & Peebles, carriages, &c., \$300 above the insurance; D. D. Douglass, two dwellings, is the heaviest loser; Opera House block, containing seven stores and the Post Office, \$4,000, insurance \$2,000; Thomas Jones, liveryman, stable and one horse; Peter Beck, three stores and stock of boots and shoes, loss \$3,500 above insurance; J. Carney, merchandise; D. M. Coe, undertaking goods and furniture; E. D. Spencer, druggist and grocer; John Schroeder, merchandise, \$2,500 to \$3,000; E. J. Lane, furniture and livery stable, insurance \$1,700; Schnell & Hubbard, livery stable; Mrs. Ella Ash, livery stable, \$2,000, insurance \$300; Christian Schraffard, house, contents, and barn, no insurance; W. H. Hill, law office and library; the Rev. Father O'Connor, household goods; E. R. Baxter, contents of Douglass House, of which he was proprietor; Wood, Gales & Co., stock of veneering, chair seats, &c., \$500.

These are only partial figures. Telegraphic and telephonic communication is almost entirely destroyed. All the town records are burned. Other losers are A. J. Kenyon, photographer; Mrs. H. L. Hoag, millinery; Giddings & Brown, dry goods and groceries; William Schultz, law office; C. Stafford, residence, and Robert Ash, residence.

Page, Fairchild, and Co. Takes Over

Hood and Gale sold their land holdings to another Michigan based company, but only for a short time. Then in 1892 the land was sold to Page, Fairchild and Company out of Oswego, NY.

The new company retrofitted the veneer mill in Michigan Mills to saw dimension lumber and soon the community had a company store, a boarding house, and a few residences. What was then known as Michigan Mills was renamed as “Page,” after the new ownership.

After a short time, a new sawmill was built about 5 miles northeast of Michigan Mills on Lot 22 in the town of Highmarket. Simply enough, the new mill was called “22.”

The Beginnings of Page

Page & Fairchild were also not immune to the costly nature of moving timber lengthy distances and so in 1900, they built a wooden tram road with horse drawn carts between both of the mills and up past Page for four miles into the town of Martinsburg.

The tram road ended at a hamlet called Number 6, as it was located on lot No. 6 in the town of Martinsburg, better known as Maple Ridge. Most of the route was downhill making the full lumber carts easier to transport. Once carts reached No. 6, they had to be unloaded and reloaded onto wagons or sleighs to get the lumber down to a location in East Martinsburg (currently Marks Farms) to then be unloaded and reloaded a third time into railroad cars for shipment on the Utica and Black River Railroad.

Lewis County Map of Highmarket lot numbers



Map of timberlands showing tram road



Map
showing
the
community
of Page

1906



The Layout of Page

1919



No
terrain is
too tough



The Tram Road between Page and "22"

(Courtesy of Otto Wasmuth)

Through
thick
and
thin...
brush



Ladies on the Tram road



Family
in their
Sunday
Best on
the
Tram
road



Hauling lumber on the Tram Road



Hauling Lumber on the Tram Road

(Courtesy of Otto Wasmuth)

Front
angle of
mill at
“No. 22”



Rear
angle of
the mill
at "No.
22"



Employees of the mill



Tailing the saw at the mill



Tailing the Saw

(Maynard Johnson Collection)

The Glenfield & Western Railroad Company

Even with the measures taken to alleviate costs, Page, Fairchild, and Co. realized the necessity for a railroad up to Tug Hill.

In 1900, Glenfield and Western Railroad company was formed by Page, Fairchild & Co. and the Carthage Pulp and Sulfite Company, with a capital stock of \$295,000 and chartered by the State to build a standard gauge railroad for the purpose of hauling forest products, general commodities and passengers to and from Glenfield to the township of Highmarket.

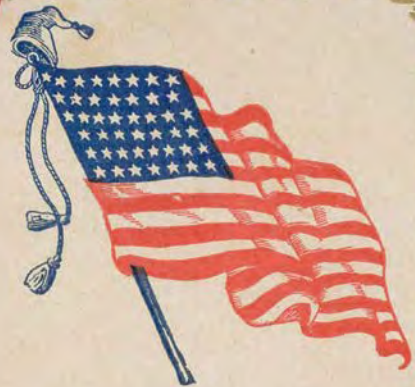
After the railroad had been decided on, the sawmill at Michigan Mills was moved to the new hamlet, 22, where it was combined with the new and larger mill. As more people moved to 22 to work in the saw mills, they began calling the new settlement Page which created considerable confusion. When the post office moved from the old Page(Michigan Mills) to the new Page(22), the old area reverted to its name of Michigan Mills and faded in population over time.

The Community of Page

The Boarding House at Page, possibly later known as the Grove or Forest Hotel







SOUVENIR

DISTRICT No. 9
PAGE, NEW YORK.

1901-1902.

Teachers,
1st Term, ANDREW S. KLETT,
2nd Term, LEO S. POWELL.

GEO. LOOMIS, Trustee.



Names of Pupils.

Harold Plunkett

Ned Plunkett

Richard English

James English

Aneas Harbutle

Thomas Cawley

William Cawley

Edna Harbutle

Agnes Ruthledge

Mary English

Margrett English

Kate Cunningham Mary Cawley

Claude Cunningham



Arthur Cunningham

A vintage black and white photograph of a two-story wooden building, possibly a schoolhouse or a large residence. The building features a prominent porch on the left side and a man standing in front of the main entrance. The architecture is simple, with horizontal siding and a gabled roof. The man is wearing a dark suit and a hat. The background shows a clear sky and some distant trees.

“Store, Post Office,
company office and
(upstairs) home of the
Babcocks”

31

CHAPTER 3: Railroad Construction Begins

NYT
Article
confirms
G&W

Will Build a Fifteen-Mile Railroad.

ALBANY, Aug. 6.—The Glenfield and Western Railroad Company was incorporated to-day to operate a steam railroad of standard gauge, fifteen miles long, from Glenfield to the northeast corner of the Bennett Tract, in Lewis County. The capital is \$150,000, and the Directors are: Alan-son S. Page, David P. Fairchild, David B. Page, and Theodore A. Page of Oswego; Charles E. Campbell and Clarence W. Campbell of New York, James A. Outters-son, Mark S. Wilder, and Frank P. Wilder of Carthage, and Cadwell B. Benson of Minetto.

The Ogdensburg, Clayton and Rome; Gone but not lost

Planners, Surveyors, and Engineers began looking at the best route for the proposed railroad and decided it would take the path through the rock cuts of the never completed Ogdensburg, Clayton & Rome Railroad.

Competition from the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg on the western side of the hill made it so the railroad in the Black River Valley never materialized.

The unforgiving Tug Hill winters proved to be a major challenge as the snowdrifts would fill in the rock cuts even with 1,190 feet of six foot high snow fencing to prevent that very outcome.

Laboring on Tug Hill

1901 – Construction began as hundreds of men, mostly Italian immigrants were hired to work the railbed. Many of them had worked on other railroads and canals before. Unfortunately, they had not experienced a Tug Hill winter or the black flies and mosquitos which were relentless. Many of these workers would leave due to the unforgiving conditions. The Glenfield & Western Railroad reached Page in 1901 and eventually reached “Monteola” in 1907.

The Rock Cuts



Lou Babcock on his
motor car driving
through the rock cut



Rock Cut G. & W. R.R.
Page, N.Y.

A. AGENS, LOWVILLE, N. Y.

POST CARD



CORRESPONDENCE HERE

Lowville N.Y.
Sept 2 1908

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

Mr & E. J. Phelps
Glenfield
N.Y.

E. J.

Lowville, September
2, 1908 to Mr. and
Mrs. E.J.(?) Phelps

More Rock Cuts



Rock Cut & Bridges Near Houseville

(Maynard Johnson Collection)³⁸

Rock cut 1,000 feet long,
located near Houseville
Road



POST CARD

▲ A Z O ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
Z STAMP Z
O HERE O
▲ A Z O ▲

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

Just below Houseville
Louie Babcock

Evelyn L. Wasmuth

Just below Houseville
Louie Babcock
Evelyn L. Wasmuth

The Railroad Takes Shape

Main office and shops of the G&W were located in Glenfield and there it interchanged with the Utica and Black River railroad, part of the New York Central System. An engine house, thirty-two by sixty-five feet was constructed in 1901 to house the locomotive and do repair work. The G&W did not have a turntable so trains turned on “Y’s” at the end of the line. Other supporting buildings were also built such as a sand shed, coal shed, a freight house, and a water tank.

August 1st, 1901 – Newspaper *Journal and Republican* writes, “The construction of a standard gauge railroad, 15 miles in length, by Page, Fairchild & Co., the Dexter Sulphite & Paper Company, and the Carthage Sulphite Co. is apparently an assured fact. It is estimated that the Railroad will cost \$75,000 to \$100,000. Page, Fairchild and Co. own 30,000 acres while the Sulphite companies owns 20,000 acres, making an aggregate of 80 sq. miles. One thousand four hundred tons of 60 pound steel rails have been purchased, which is an average of 90 tons per mile. Civil engineer Ward of Utica will complete the survey and staking out the road today. Only two heavy grades have been encountered.”

E.D. Bennett was hired as the contractor to build the railroad itself.

Original blueprints for the Glenfield and Western Railroad



Orientation of
the map is
upside down.



Original blueprints for the Glenfield and Western Railroad



Orientation of
the map is
upside down

Original blueprints for the Glenfield and Western Railroad



Orientation of
the map is
upside down



Railroad Specs

By 1902, the railroad was 19.55 miles long with over 100 curves, less than half the length of the railroad was straight.

Steepest grade was 277 ft. elevation rise to the mile and was noted as the railroad with the most curves and the steepest railroad in NYS by an Official Railroad Inspection Report in 1903.

At that point, the railroad had 30 bridges, 13 cattle passes, 43 culverts, and 15 retaining or diversion walls

Rails were 60 pounds to the yard and there were 2,600 ties per mile

CHAPTER 4: Buildings and Rolling Stock

Unexpected turn

1902 – Things seemed to be running well for the Railroad and for Page, Fairchild and Co. However, in November of 1902, the company for unknown reasons decided to sell the forestland holdings, including their interest in the G&W railroad to the Gould Paper Company of Lyons Falls. The transaction was reported to be the largest real estate transaction in Lewis County history at the time. Page reserved the 100 foot ROW of the railroad and the Dexter Pulp and Paper Co. retained their ownership in the railroad as they still had large tracts of woodlands.

TRANSFER OF TIMBER LAND.

Tract and Personal Property in Lewis County Sold for \$250,000.

Special to The New York Times.

UTICA, Nov. 24.—There has been filed in the Lewis County Clerk's office a deed conveying from Page, Fairchild & Co., lumber dealers, of Oswego, to the Gould Paper Company of Lyons Falls and Charles W. Pratt of Boonville, a tract of timber land in High Market and Osceola, Lewis County, consisting of over 30,000 acres of woodland, one of the finest timber tracts in the State.

The sale includes the personal property upon the tract except manufactured lumber and some logs, and one-half interest in the Glenfield and Western Railroad, which runs from Glenfield on the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad to the Page, Fairchild & Co.'s timber tract.

The Gould Paper Company purchases a three-quarter interest, and Mr. Pratt one-quarter. The purchase price is said to be about \$250,000.

The New York Times

Published: November 25, 1902
Copyright © The New York Times

G&W Rolling Stock

The G&W had a geared Heisler called “22.” They also bought a 2-6-0 engine number 70 but it proved to be too long to handle the curves of the railroad, even after trying to install extra rails on the back wheels to carry the engine around the curves. I assume it looked similar to training wheels on a bike.

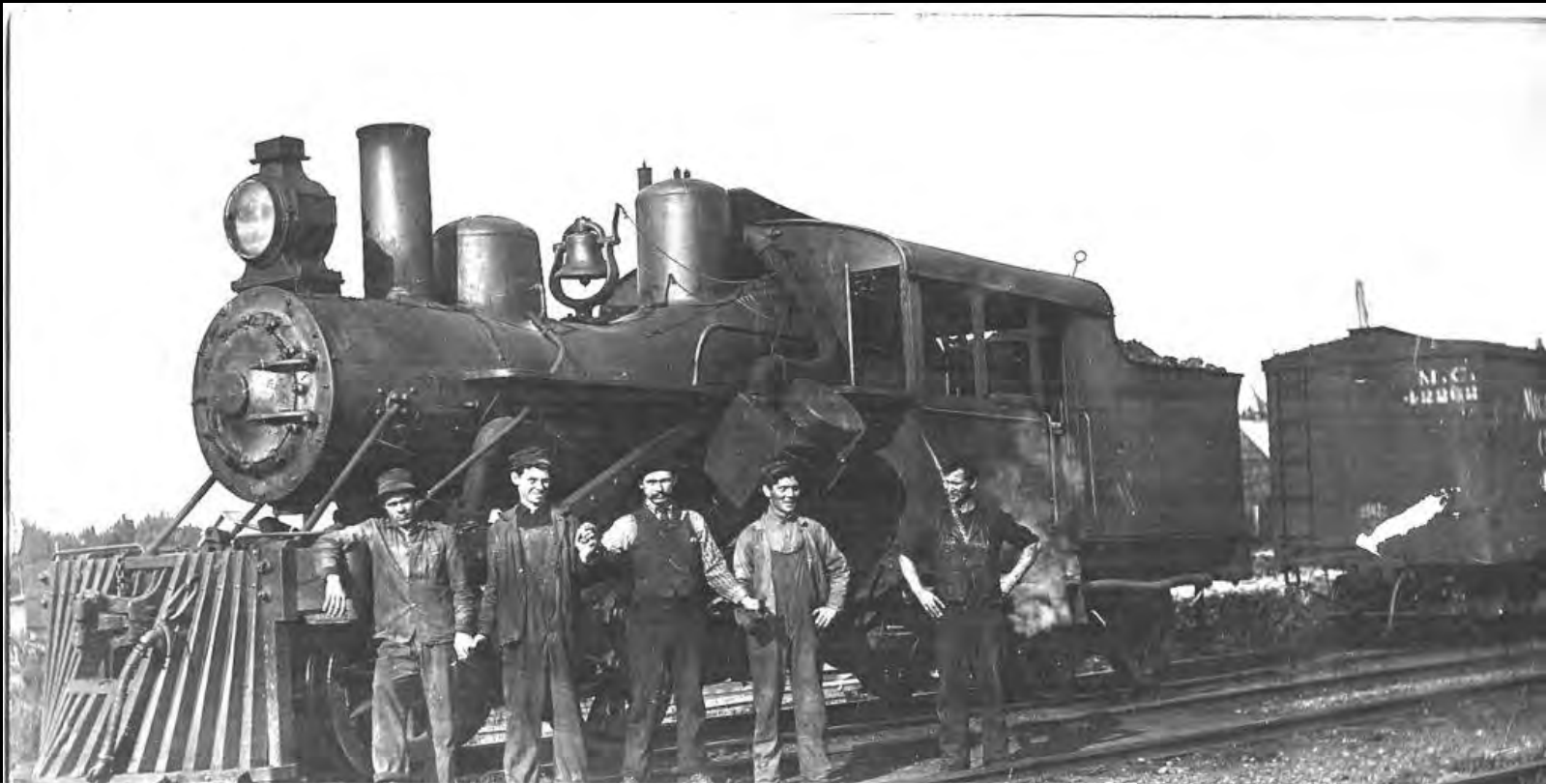
The report of rolling stock said the line had six flat cars; three push cars and three Sheffield motorcars.

It also had a Ford Model T that had been equipped with flanged wheels at the company shops to run on the rails. They called it the “Jitney” and in today’s terminology, it would be called a “high-rail” or a “speeder.”

Glenfield & Western; a unique railroad

1909 – G&W ordered a rod-type locomotive specially designed for the line from the American Locomotive Company in Schenectady. The Engine had a 4-6-0 wheel arrangement with 50-inch drive wheels, 18 x 26 inch cylinders and weighed 123,000 pounds. This new engine was assigned number 75 which would later become the second staple engine on the G&W line alongside No. 22.

No. 22 Heisler Engine



Left to right: Brakeman Jesse Rinkenberg, Brakeman Mord Johnson, Conductor Frank Bates, Fireman Henry Salsburg, Engineer Charlie Graves



Center is the conductor,
second from right is the
fireman, nearest the cab is
the engineer, the other two
are brakemen

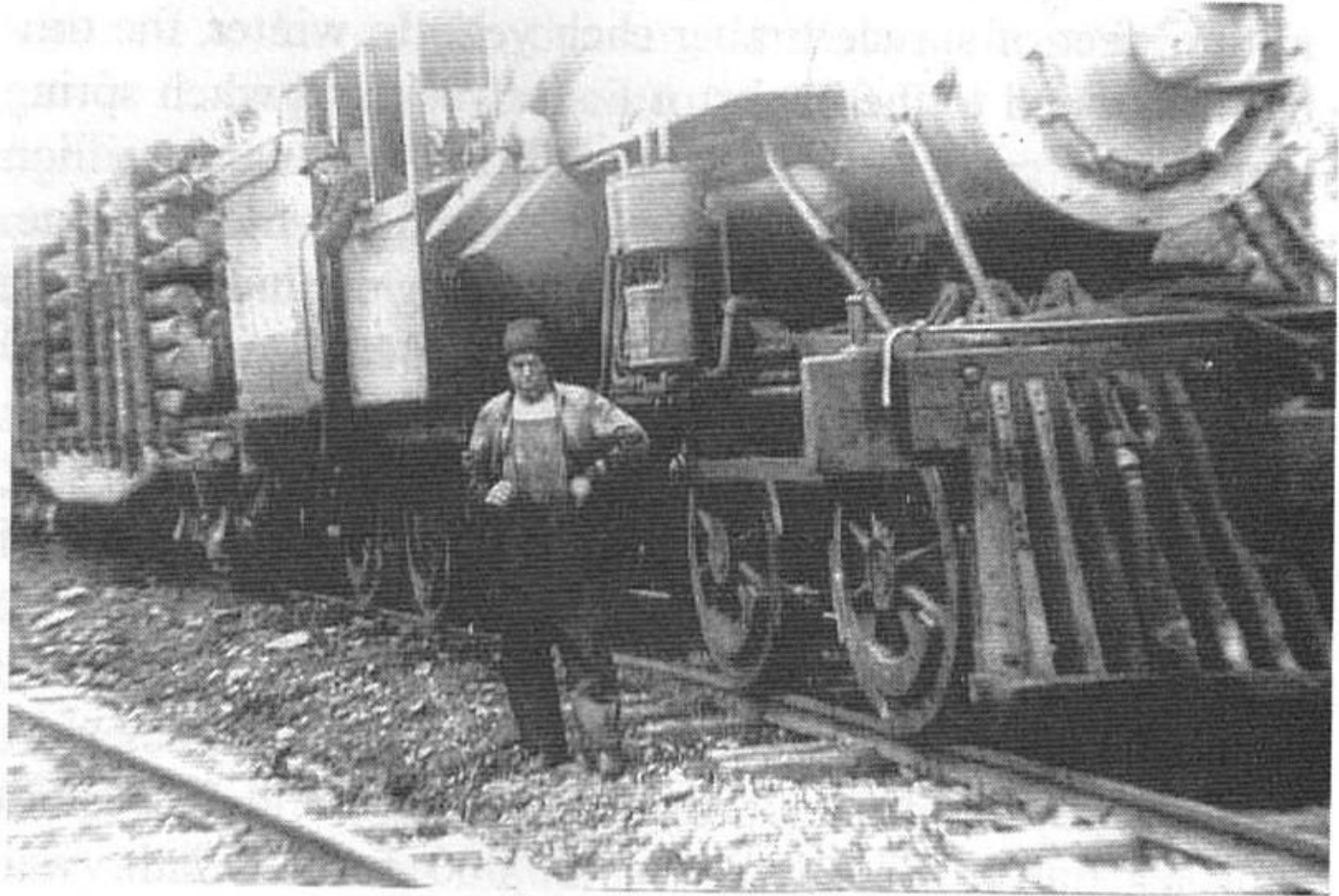


Engine No. 22
Page, N.Y.



August 11, 1908
Mary Wasmuth to Miss
Lydia C. Wick, Port Leyden
Jokes about page being the
“big town”

No. 22 with a Load of Logs



Number 22 with Load of Logs

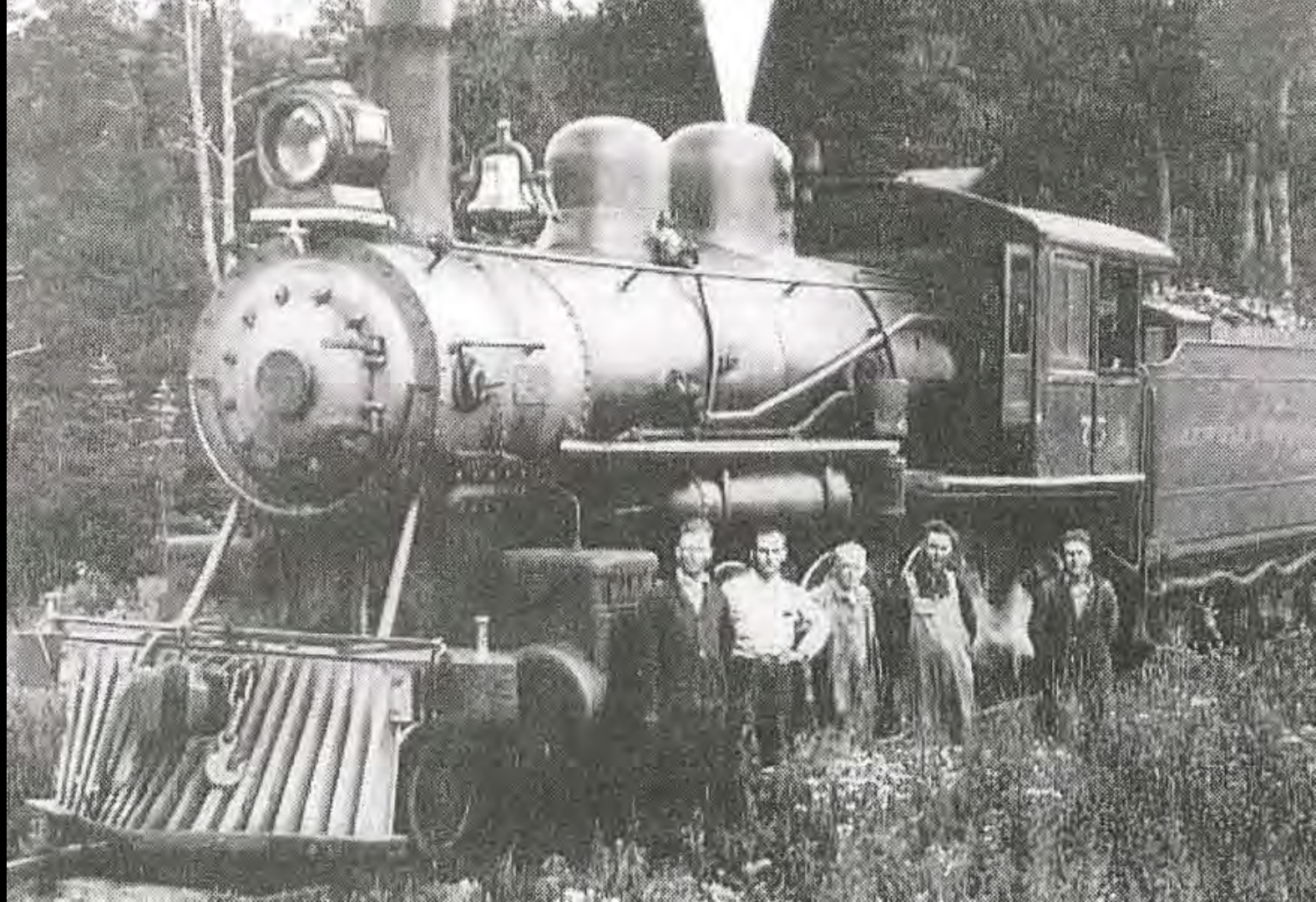
Engine
No. 22
and
No. 75



No. 75
and the
coal car



Engine No. 75 and the Crew



Flat cars
loaded
with logs
and the
passenger
car



Lou
Babcock
and his
motor car
or
“speeder”
in Page



L.E. Babcock
Motor Car
Page, N.Y.

“Lou Babcock on his motorcar”



POST CARD

▲ ▲ = ○ ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
= STAMP =
○ HERE ○
▲ ▲ = ○ ▲

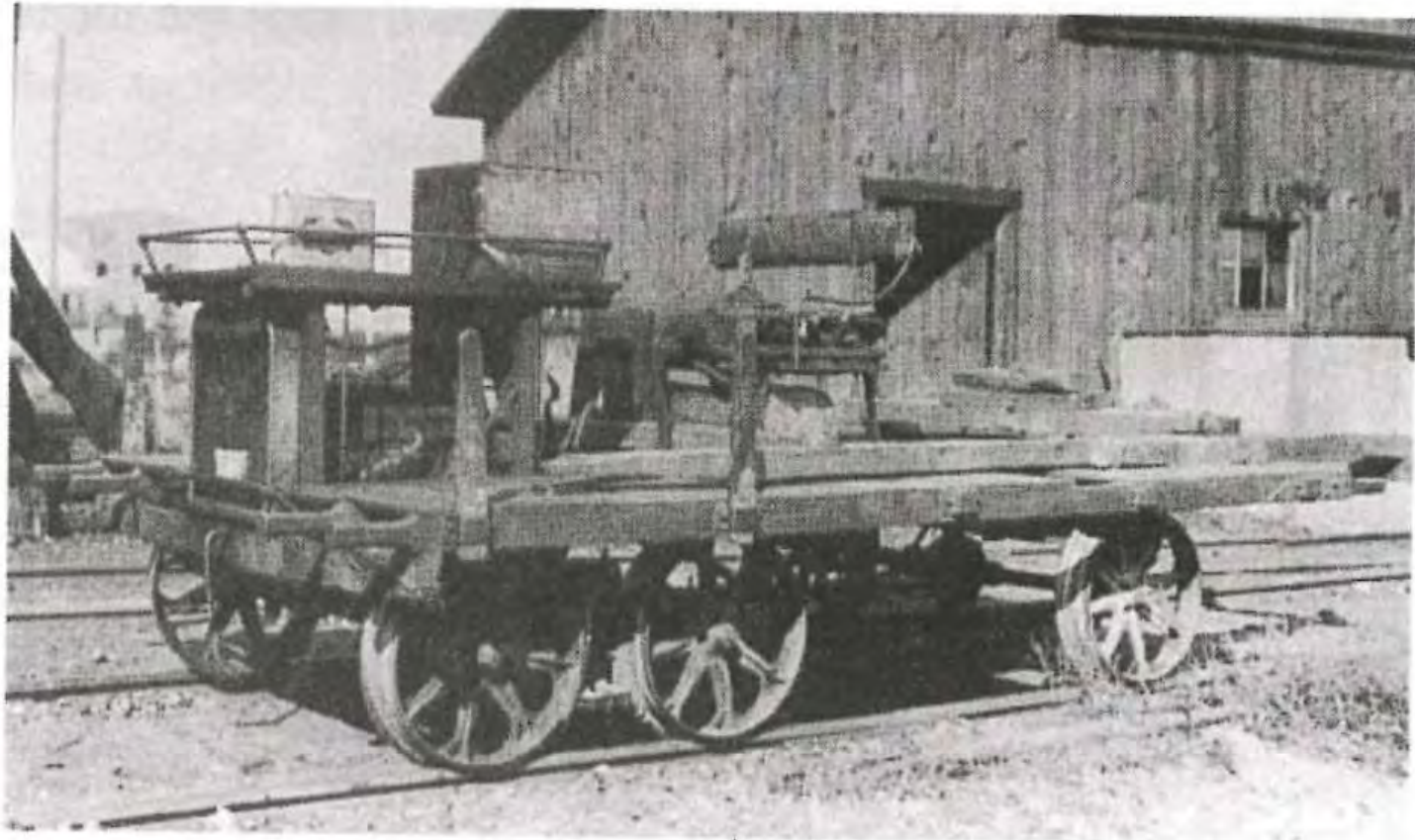
CORRESPONDENCE HERE

Lou Babcock on his motor scooter

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

Evelyn W. Markham

“The Jitney”



Ford Converted to Rail Car

(Maynard Johnson Collection)⁵⁸

How NOT to cold start a Ford Model T

There's a story that the company ordered two Ford Model T's from a local dealer and had them shipped up to Page on two flat cars. However, just at that time, a cold blast came in and turned the hill bitterly cold. When the workers went to start the two cars, neither of them would turn over, so they resorted to a fairly common practice in the early days of the automobile, start a wood fire in a pan and slide it underneath the engine to warm it up. Many cars were destroyed by this practice, and that was the case for both cars shipped up to Page.



Russell Snowplow at Switch

The Snow Plow at Page



POST CARD

▲ ▲ Z O ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
Z STAMP Z
O HERE O
▲ ▲ Z O ▲

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

*The Snowplow
on the R.R. at Page
(circa 1905-06)*

*Evelyn L. Wasmuth
Evelyn Markham*

“This is the way it looked on the tram road this winter.”



“Your ever-dear letter received and I will answer before long. Am very busy with school, and studying, and homework.”

“With best wishes for a peaceful Easter, I remain yours, lovingly, Polly.”

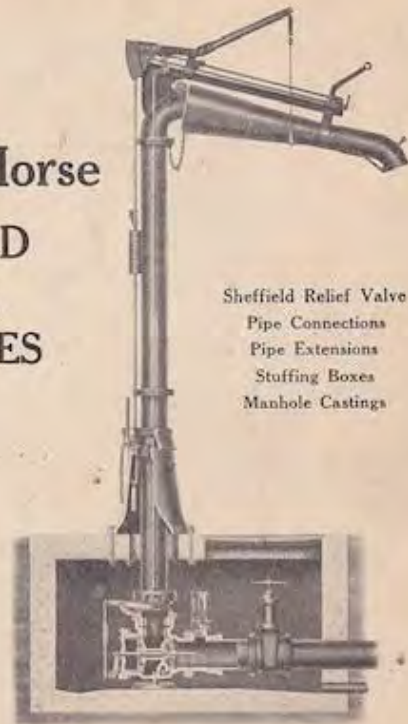
Water
Tower
and
water
pump
used to
fill the
water
tower



REPAIR PRICE LIST NO. 9518C

Fairbanks-Morse
SHEFFIELD
WATER
STANDPIPES

Sheffield Relief Valve
Pipe Connections
Pipe Extensions
Stuffing Boxes
Manhole Castings



Fairbanks, Morse & Co.

INCORPORATED
CHICAGO

Copyright, August, 1905, by Fairbanks, Morse & Co.

Price One Dollar

Rife
Hydraulic
Ram
used to fill
the water
towers



CHAPTER 5: Stops Along the Way

The mill at Page



A very
busy
place
to be



Page — Mill Pond, Mill and Boarding House

Log train in Page as well
at the "Y" which was a
cheaper alternative to a
turntable



"Dear friend, your postal rec'd and
very glad to hear from you. I think
Doris ad. will(?) be Page as I
expect her home this week"



LOG TRAIN

PAGE N. Y.

Engine No.
22 and it's
crew
believed to
be in Page



Believed to be Gulf Head Station



Possibly
the old
Houseville
depot?



Railroad Station in Glenfield



R. R. Station, Glenfield, N. Y.

Pub. by J. H. House.

Local News about the Railroad

March 31st, 1904 – *Journal and Republican* – “Owing to the great depths of snow, no trains have been over the Glenfield and Western this past winter. Gangs of men are engaged in shoveling out the Rock Cuts and are expected to have the trains running again next Monday.”

1906 – Railroad was extended 5 miles west, which was 2 miles west of fish creek, and spur lines were added off the main track

1907 – “The Gould Paper Company cuts between eight and nine million feet of spruce timber each year. In winter, the timber is skidded to the banks of Fish Creek and when spring comes, they carry the logs to the railroad. About two million feet are cut into lumber in the two-band saws at the Page mill. The cutting is done in camps, there being six in the woods, giving employment to about 300 men. Between 50 and 60 are employed at the sawmill.”

Track out to the
mill pond



Another setback

In 1907 – “The Gould Paper Company sustained a loss of \$30,000 to \$35,000 Monday night by the destruction of their sawmill at Page, upon which there was no insurance. Fortunately, the wind was in the west and the flames were carried away from the lumber piles. A Glenfield & Western railroad flat car, loaded with 30,000 feet of lath, was destroyed. The mill was a frame structure 45 x 120 feet and two stories high.”



Saw mill Ruins
Page, N.Y.

View
from
the
tram
road
after
the mill
burnt



MILL POND.

PAGE N.Y.

CHAPTER 6: Glensdale to Glenfield

Glensdale

Before there was a railroad stop in present day Glenfield, a hamlet known as Glensdale was the business and social center of the area at the time. Glensdale sits about a mile northwest of current day Glenfield. With the introduction of “Glendale station” as a stop on the Utica and Black River Railroad in 1868, which was located in modern day Glenfield, people and business moved from Glensdale to the area around the railroad station, which led to a community in that area.

Glensdale becomes Glenfield

As Glensdale's population and businesses moved to the new railroad community, the new post office there changed its name from Glendale to Glenfield to avoid confusion with other post offices in the state.

A feed mill, general stores, homes, and churches all were constructed as Glenfield grew. Lumber, hides destined for tanneries, and potatoes were exported on the canal and the railroad.

Glenfield

At the time the G&W offices were set to be built in Glenfield, it was a small but growing hamlet and a stop along the Utica and Black River Railroad. G&W's rails would connect to the broader system of the Utica and Black River Railroad to allow for products to be shipped farther out of the area.

Not long after, Glenfield and Western built numerous buildings in Glenfield including a coal shed and freight house. Worker's housing was also soon to follow as the workforce to build the railroad assembled in Glenfield.

Engine House for G&W in Glenfield



G. and W. Engine House, Glenfield, N. Y.

Worker's housing in Glenfield



Worker's Housing

(Maynard Johnson Collection)

Glenfield Square



Train going through Glenfield



A view of Main Street in Glenfield



A VIEW ON MAIN ST GLENFIELD, N.Y.

Whitmore's Ox team



Whitmore's Ox Team, Glenfield, N. Y.

Glenfield mill grows in size and scope

1918 – Dexter Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company had harvested most of their softwood on their Tug Hill holdings. However, there were still a considerable amount of hardwood trees so the company decided to saw them into lumber. A large sawmill known as the Monteola Hardwood Company, reported to be one of the largest sawmills in the State at the time, was recently constructed in Glenfield. Technically, it was two sawmills next to each other each equipped with a band saw, re-saw, edger, slasher, trimmer, and a planer. The logs were shipped down off the hill via G&W and dumped off the cars into a hot pond which melted any snow and ice on the logs and washed any dirt off them. The saw operated through spring, summer, and fall, but during the rough winter months when the trains couldn't operate, the low supply of logs was not enough to satisfy the appetite of the giant mill.

CHAPTER 7: Accidents and Mishaps

The world famous Tug Hill Winter

Snow was a major problem for the railroad, just as it is for us today. A Russell snow plow was pushed by the locomotive to clear the snow. In the event, that was unsuccessful, areas like the rock cuts were shoveled by hand to clear the snow.



Hard working loggers



R. S.
MADE FROM
ANY PHOTO
AT REMSEN
N. Y.

EACH-SERIES
POST CARD

GENUINE HAND-FINISHED
PHOTOGRAPH

STAMP
HERE
ONE
CENT

THIS SPACE FOR MESSAGE

THIS SPACE FOR ADDRESS ONLY

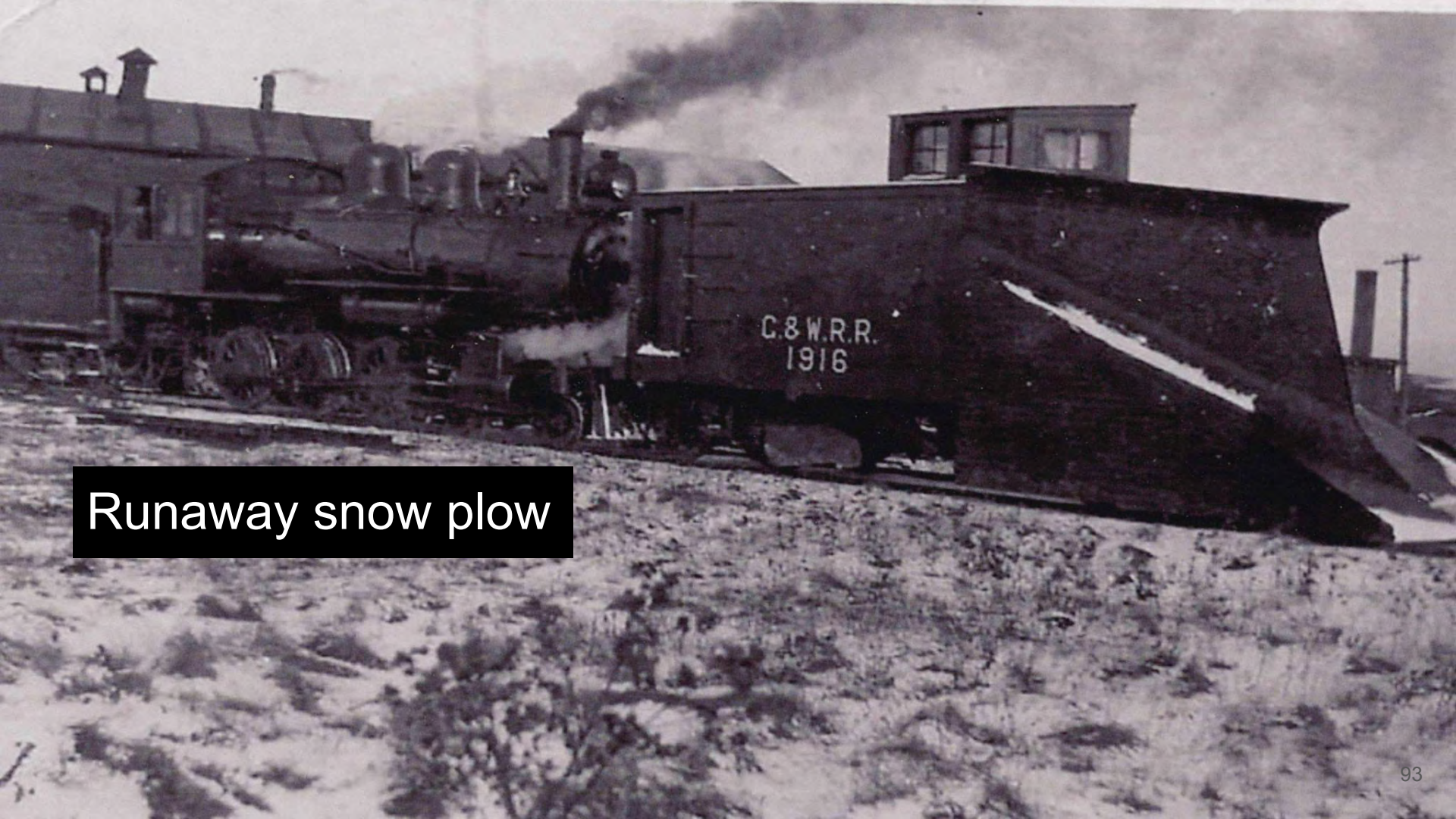
Hattie I.
Wasmuth
Evelyn Markham

Hattie (?) Wasmuth
Evelyn Markham

Runaway snow plow

From "The Glenfield and Western Railroad" by Brian Mumford and Frederick Schneider.

One of the most serious situations the railroad ever faced ended in the serious injury of a man, the destruction of the engine house and severe damage to the Russell snow plow, but by the grace of God did not end up worse. One day, after the plow train had made its way west to clear the tracks, it turned around to head back down to Glenfield. Because all the snow had been cleared on the way up, the plow operator who sat in a cab atop the plow car pulled in the wings and raised the flanges used to clear snow in between the tracks. Then the plow car operator departed from the cabin. Everything was going routinely until the train slowed near Morgan Gulf to properly maneuver the 5.1% grade through the area. Then for an unknown reason, the plow car, without an operator to deploy the brakes, decoupled from the locomotive and was free to begin speeding down the tracks towards numerous crossings and eventually the village of Glenfield. The engineer of the locomotive made as much speed as he could to try to catch up but there was no use as the plow was much faster. The crew expected, and likely hoped, to see the plow car on its side after rounding some of the curves but the plow even at very high speeds, managed to stay on the tracks. The engineer stopped the locomotive in Houseville and as fast as he could called down to Glenfield to warn them of the incoming danger. He didn't expect for it to stay on the rails but warned them just in case. When the operator in Glenfield actually received the message, the only words the engineer in Houseville heard were, "Lookout for it? Hell, it's already here!" The plow had made it all the way to the end of the tracks, blowing past the station in Glenfield and slamming into the engine house at a high speed. Warren Johnson, a mechanic, was working in the engine house at the time. By some miracle, he survived the crash but sustained major injuries, preventing him from returning to work. Later, Johnson would eventually die from complications of injuries suffered from the accident. The snowplow and engine were repaired and the engine house rebuilt, and all returned to service. The fate of the Russell snow plow is unknown but it's thought that it was sold off at the time of dissolution.



Runaway snow plow

Mystery of the broken shovels

One spring Leslie Johnson, the road superintendent reasoned that the men could move the snow more quickly if they had larger shovels with longer handles. He found some that met his requirements and when the men arrived the next morning, they were handed out to them. The men were not fond of the new equipment, and they immediately started complaining. They worked hard for the day while Mr. Johnson, it can be assumed, supervised the men, removing snow from the tracks. The next day, the men still tired from yesterday arrived at work still groaning about the new equipment. Upon their arrival, they observed all the handles of the new shovels had been sawed off, making them unusable. The culprit was never revealed, and the men boarded the train happy to have their old shovels back.

Mystery of the broken shovels



Shoveling out the Snow Plow

(Maynard Johnson Collection)



The wreck at Bardo's Crossing

The railroad, while primarily a logging railroad, did also accommodate passengers, typically through a single passenger car attached on the end of the train. Many people used this route to get up and down the hill, making it much faster for transportation. From Glenfield to Houseville was 25-cents; Monteola to Gulfhead was 40 cents; and from Glenfield to Page was 50 cents.

August 23rd, 1917 – The only recorded fatality on the G&W happened in the late summer of 1917. A train consisting of ten cars loaded with logs with a caboose car carrying passengers was heading eastbound down the hill through Bardo's crossing near Houseville. Henry Bardo, for whom the crossing was named heard a loud crash while hitching up a team to get a load of grain and hurried over to the crossing to investigate. Amos Levins was at the controls along with his fireman, James Gregory. When the train went through the crossing, the last two log cars derailed along with the caboose. The loose logs flew in all directions, some of which crushed the caboose car. Six individuals were riding in the passenger car. They were Mord Johnson-the conductor, Frank Bates- trainman, and four passengers: Edward Darling, George Smithling, Marvin King, and Hiram Swan. Johnson and Bates were veterans of many derailments and sensed something was wrong. Bates was able to jump off the train in time and Johnson braced himself for the tipping of the carriage. When it came to rest, he was shaken but unhurt. King had facial cuts and contusions but was able to get out of the wreckage, as did Smithling. Swan was knocked unconscious and had broken ribs, but when he regained consciousness, he was able to crawl out and roll onto the ground away from the wreck. Edward Darling, was too injured to get himself out of the wreckage. Bardo finally arrived at the wreck and met with Frank Bates who had sent for a doctor. The locomotive was unhitched and sped to Glenfield where it picked up Dr. Clarence I. Dodge and his wife Ethel, who was a nurse, and sped back up to the scene of the crash. Unfortunately, they arrived too late and Edward Darling succumbed to his injuries. Darling was 25 years old and a native of Osceola who was on his way to the Lewis County Draft Board. He and his wife were employed as cooks at Charlie Ward's camp. The cause of the log cars derailment was never determined and still remains a mystery.



Fatal Wreck at Bardo's Crossing

(Maynard Johnson Collection)



Aftermath of the Fatal Wreck at Bardo's Crossing

(Maynard Johnson Collection)

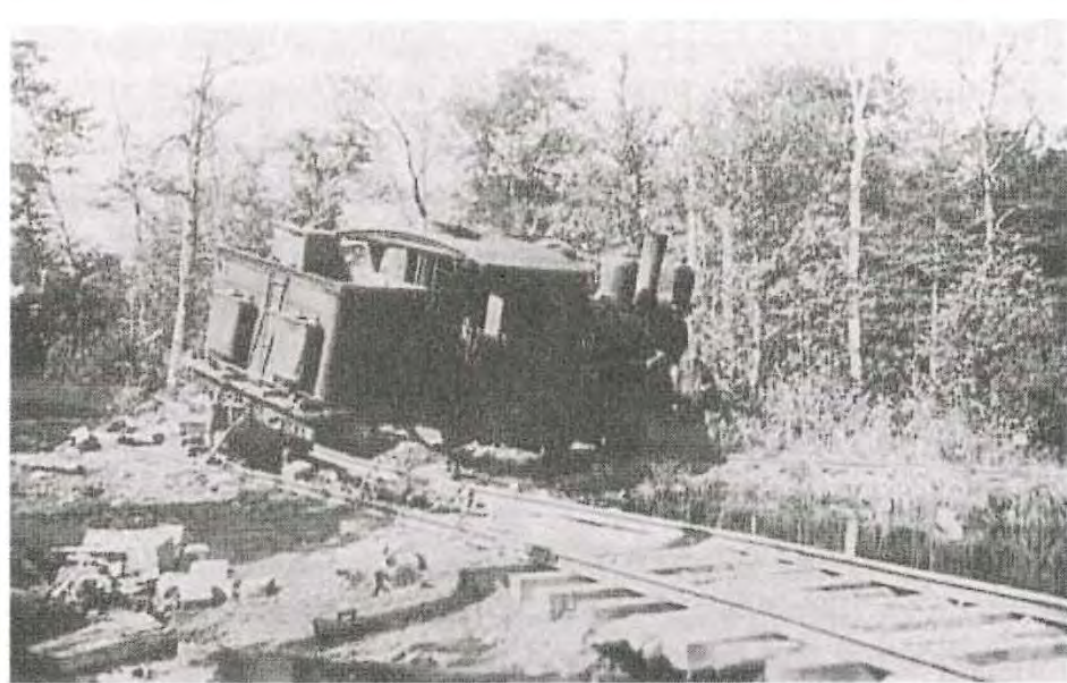


Repairing Tracks at Bardo's Crossing

(Maynard Johnson Collection)

The everyday life of operating a railroad

Late 1920's – Train derailments weren't uncommon but most on the G&W railroad were minor and easily addressed. However, one derailment of No. 75 was close to a disaster. While pushing log cars to Glenfield, all the log cars passed over the rails without a problem, but when No. 75 passed over one of the ties, it sank and the locomotive fell off the tracks. It sank into the marshy muck, about a quarter of it buried in the jelly like mud at a dangerous 45-degree angle. Worried the locomotive would tip over and likely be a total loss, all manpower was diverted to prevent the engine from tipping. For two weeks, by jacking and blocking it with help from the mighty No. 22, they moved it over, inch by inch, until it was re-railed.



Engine 22 Derailed on Switch

Fatalities in the mill at Page

Thomas Cunningham - May 14th, 1903

Was making a routine adjustment to the saw carriage in the pit beneath the sawmill when for an unknown reason, the carriage suddenly shot forward and pinned him against the wall of the pit. He died almost instantly from his injuries. He was survived by his wife and five children.

Alexander Dunn - 1904

Millwright adjusting the tension on a thirty two inch belt that ran from the steam engine to the drive pulley on the main shaft. Adjustments were often made when the mill was running but the mechanics were very careful. However, Dunn either slipped, misstepped, or just lost his balance and accidentally fell onto the unguarded belt. Before anyone could react to save him he was dragged around the pulley and killed.

CHAPTER 8: People of the Times

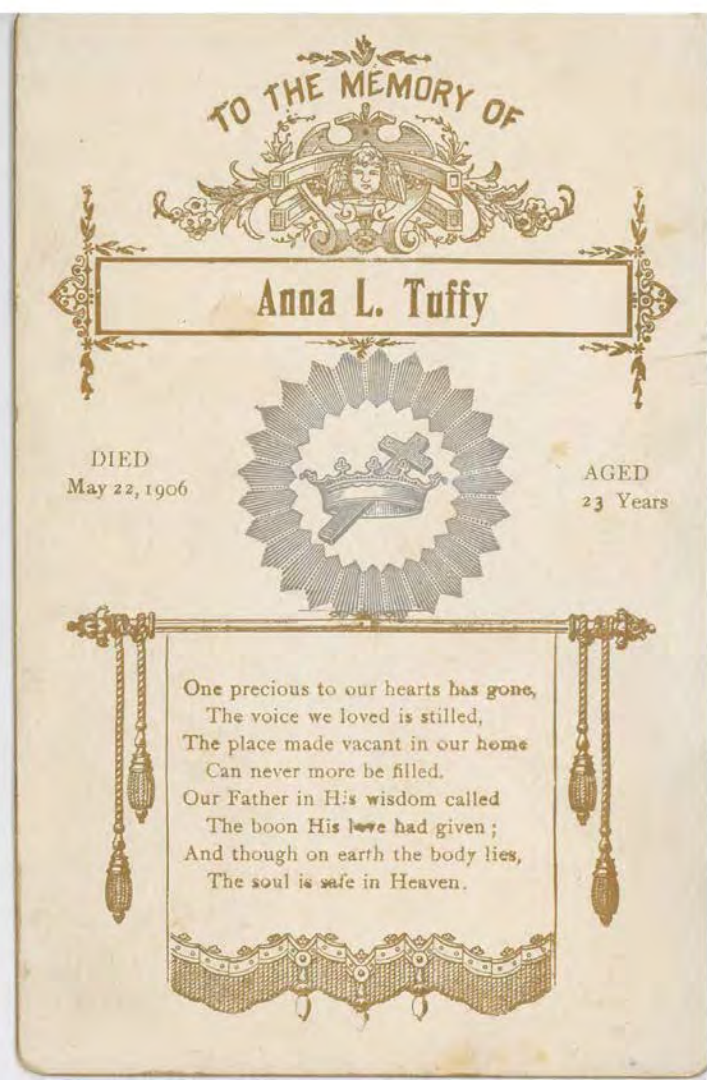




X Aunt Anna Tupper



Started teaching on March 16th, 1905



School at Page



School at
Page, Mary
Wasmuth,
1908

School at Page

Mary Wasmuth,
1908.

cher

Bessie Jacques House
First row Hobart Wasmuth
Avon Brothers, Frances Kaine
Leslie Wasmuth.
I also saw Fay Eastman. M. Wasmuth
Otto W., Mrs. J. House, Harry & Foster
Kaine

June of 1909,
The Wasmuths
at the Mill pond,
Page



POST CARD

▲ ▲ Z O ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
Z STAMP Z
O HERE O
▲ ▲ Z O ▲

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

June, 1909

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

The Wassmuths
At the mill pond,
Page

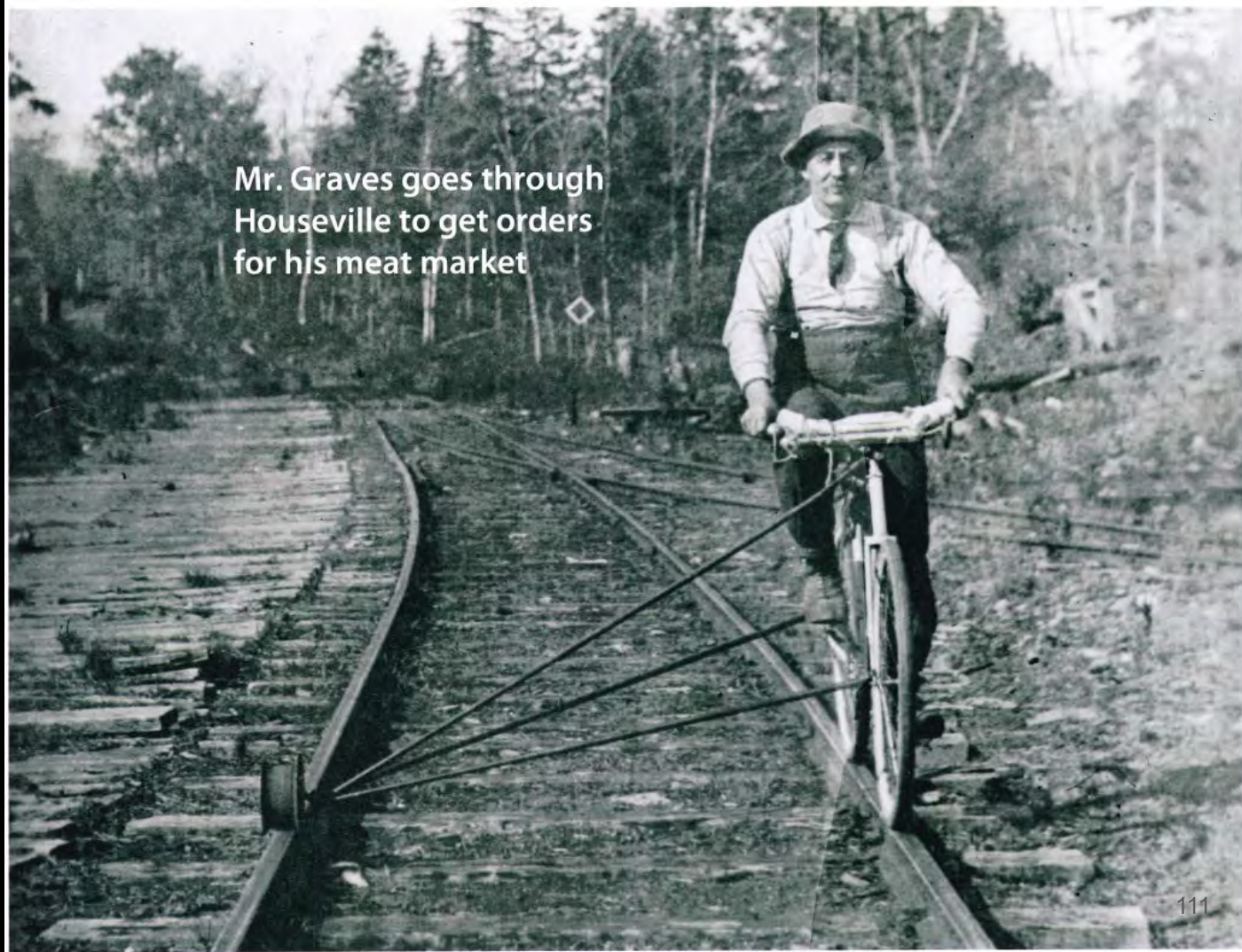
Wasmuth family photo



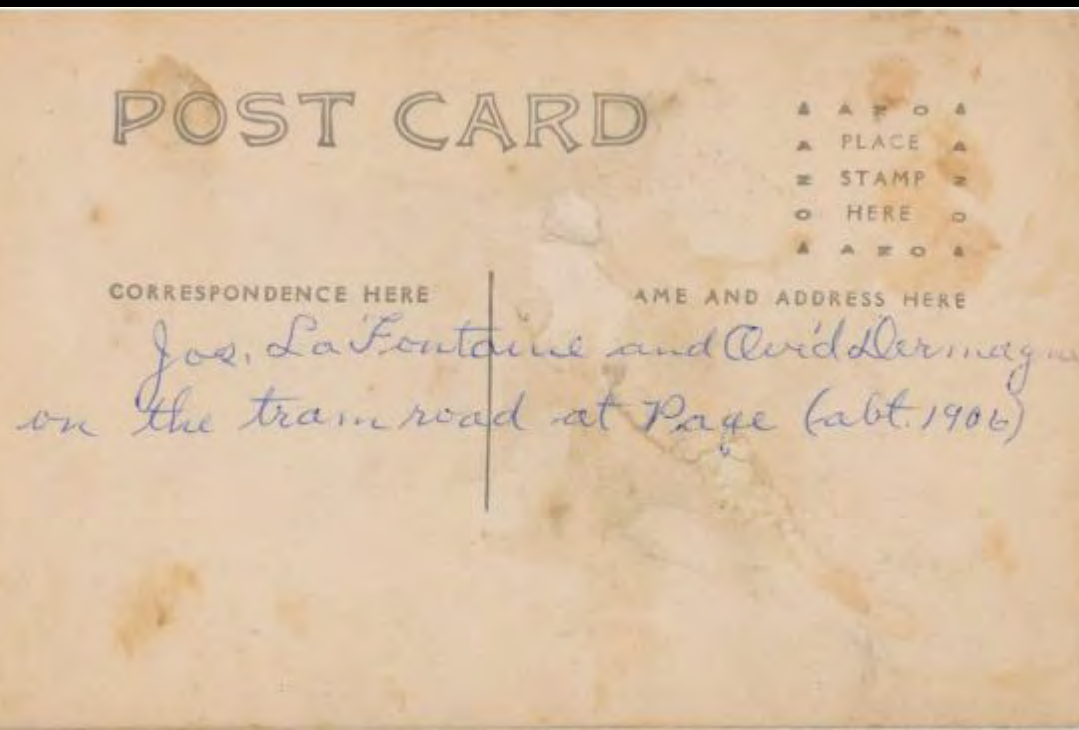
Photo of the Wasmuth Family
Page, New York; date unknown

#	Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Age at Death
1	Hobart Erastus Wasmuth	3/22/1897	3/24/1981	84
2	Mary Louise Wasmuth Miller	5/29/1892	12/30/1987	95
3	Lee Everett Wasmuth	10/6/1903	4/2/1966	63
4	Otto Kendrick Wasmuth	8/2/1894	3/3/1986	92
5	Ellis Baldwin Wasmuth	1/9/1905	11/2/1980	75
6	Hattie Irene Worden Wasmuth	4/4/1865	04/26/1858	93
7	Walton Leslie Wasmuth	3/4/1900	8/7/1919	19
8	Evelyn Lucinda Wasmuth Markham	7/10/1887	12/8/1981	94
9	John Carl Theodore Wasmuth	1/27/1854	8/7/1918	64

Mr. Graves
goes through
Houseville to
get orders for
his meat
market on a
bicycle



Joe LaFontaine and Avid(?)
Derinagne(?) on the tram Road at
Page 1906



“The coach, loads of pulp, T. Wasmuth standing by lumber”



The Loomis
boys fishing off
the tram road

POST CARD

▲ A Z O ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
Z STAMP Z
O HERE O
▲ A Z O ▲

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

*The Loomis boys, Meade and Alanson
at Page Pond
1908(?)*



“The Loomis boys,
Meade and Alanson
at page Pond,
1908(?)”

“Lou Babcock, Frank Brothers, Ernest Langbert, getting ice on the abandoned mill pond”



POST CARD

▲ ▲ ▲ ▲
▲ PLACE ▲
▲ STAMP ▲
○ HERE ○
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

March (1908?)
Lou Babcock
Frank Brothers
Ernest Langbert
Cutting ice on the
abandoned mill pond
Ice 36" thick

NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

Evelyn L. Wasmuth
Evelyn Markham

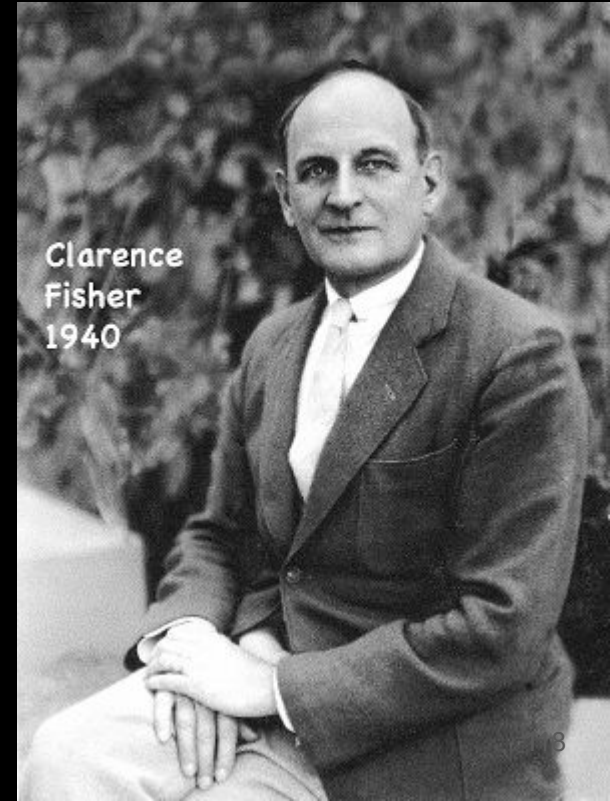
1908 - "Dear girl, do you remember one day that this was taken? Many, thanks for the letters. Yours, Hattie"
- Miss Velma Jones, Glenfield N.Y.



CHAPTER 9: The Demise of the G&W RR

Another New Owner

Keystone Wood Chemical & Lumber Corporation, headquartered in Olean, NY, operated mills in Binghamton, Pennsylvania and for a brief time, Tupper Lake. While searching for an expansion, they heard of the Monteola Hardwood Mill in Glenfield. They thought the mill was just what they were looking for but the 25,000 acres of forestland to accompany it would not be sufficient. That's when they were introduced to Assemblyman Clarence L. Fisher of Lyons Falls. Fisher owned 100,000 acres of forestland near Brantingham Lake, which the prospective buyers thought would be perfect. A deal in which Fisher would retain ownership of the land and be paid for the timber on the land was reached. Keystone would not have to tie up any of their capital in land ownership and they could count on enough timber being supplied to their new chemical plant and mill. This additional 100,000 acres east of the Black River would lead to the later constructed Glenfield & Eastern Railroad. And so, Keystone purchased the timberlands and the Monteola sawmill in Glenfield.



Clarence
Fisher
1940

Largest Transaction in Lewis County History

May 19th, 1927 – “The Keystone Wood Chemical and Lumber Corporation of Olean is negotiating for the purchase of the Monteola Hardwood Mills, Inc. of Glenfield, half interest of the Glenfield & Western Railroad, and 20,000 acres of timber land owned by the Dexter Sulphite Pulp and Paper Co. The sale of the property and the developments planned by the Keystone Co. are transactions involving money reaching into the millions of dollars. The deal will be the biggest transaction in Lewis County in years and expected to be completed in a few days. The erection of six large buildings for the Keystone plant and the construction of about sixty houses are only a few of the changes to be made. When the plant is completed it will be the largest chemical plant of its kind in the world.”

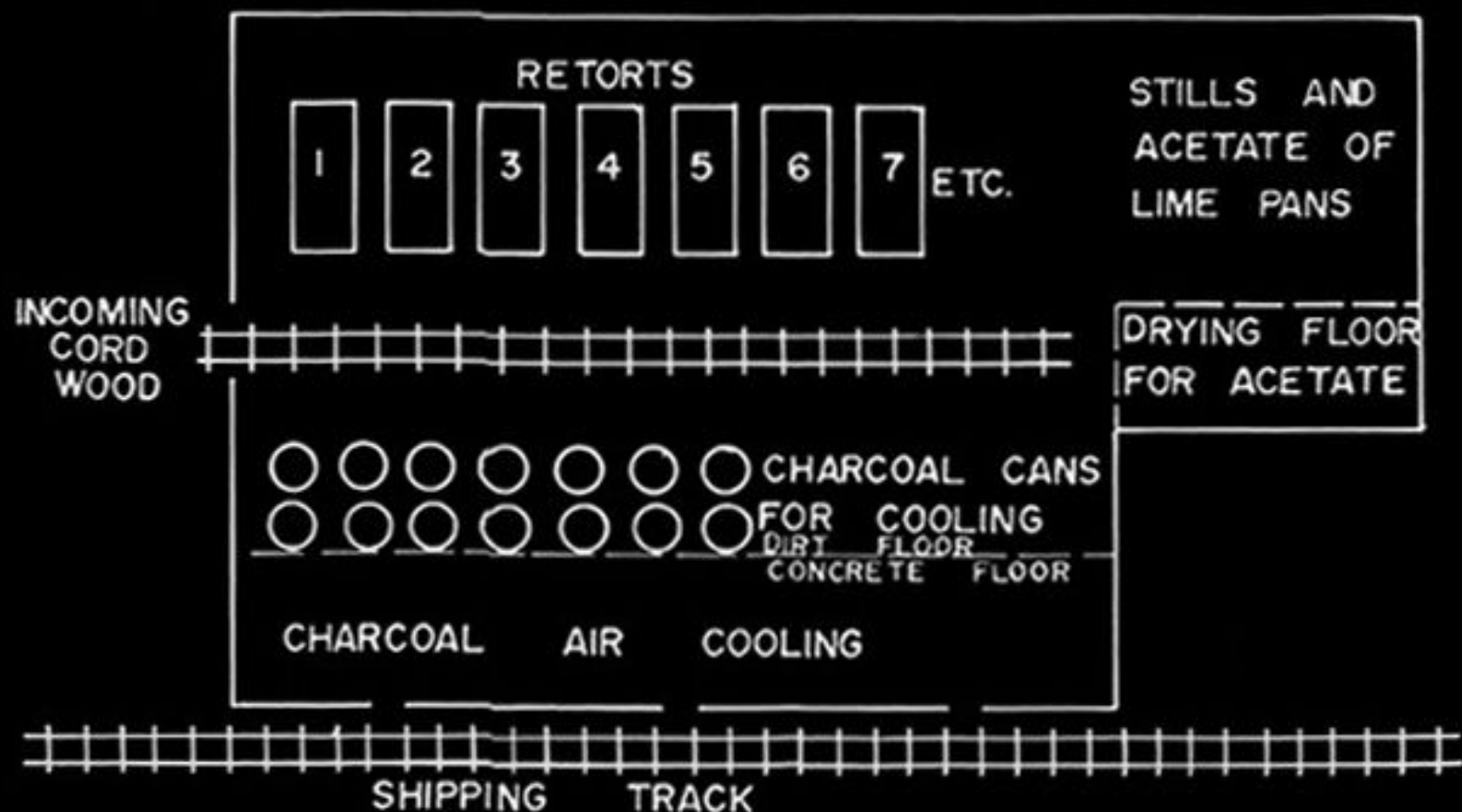
A new chemical plant and bigger mill

Keystone was told by an underwriter they could issue bonds if they tore down the mill and built a new one. A deal was to be made with a construction company to build the new mill, however there were no construction companies in Glenfield. Keystone formed a construction company and made a contract between the two companies of \$2,000,000.

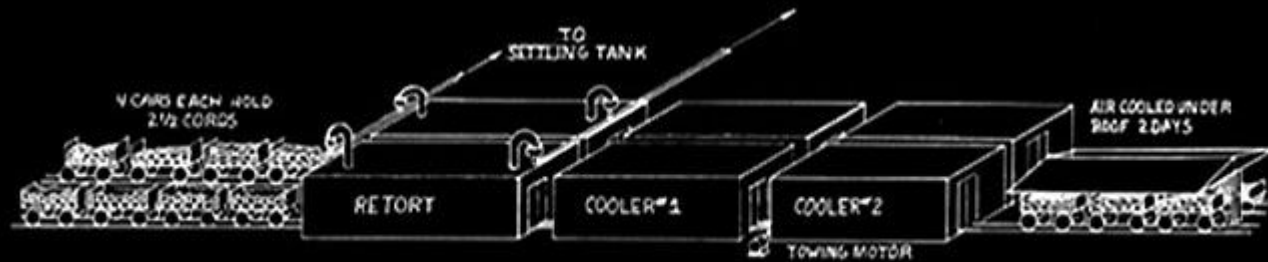
THE WOOD CHEMICAL PROCESS

In the heating of the wood, an interesting change takes place. At about 400 degrees an exothermic reaction occurs which raises the temperature to 600 degrees with no additional heat necessary. The smoke or vapor is poisonous and contains more than one hundred different chemicals - most of which are traces and not economical to recover. However, as plants became larger, it became feasible to recover a greater number of the chemicals. Normally only methanol and acetate of lime were produced, but at Glenfield, NY methyl acetone and butyric acid were also refined. Although the price for a cord of wood remained constant at \$5.00, prices for the finished products varied considerably. The typical output from a cord of wood was ten gallons of methanol, 200 pounds of acetate of lime (calcium acetate), and fifty bushels of charcoal (1000 pounds). The direct acetic acid process makes one hundred pounds of 98% acetic acid per cord. The acetic acid was the most valuable product. During World War I, price controls allowed the prices to reach \$0.50 per gallon for the alcohol, \$0.10 per bushel for charcoal, and \$0.05 per pound for the calcium acetate. After price controls were removed, alcohol prices soared and profits were tremendous.

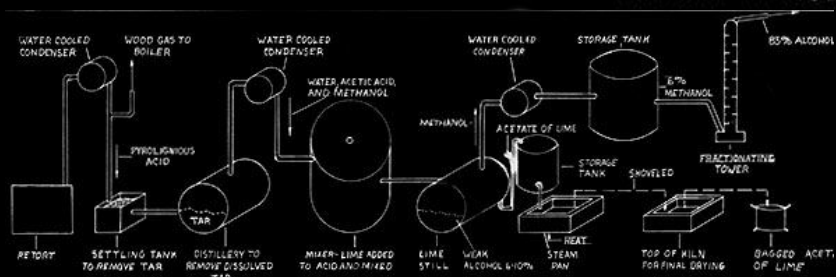
One of the reasons for the increase in methanol price was Prohibition. Some individuals making grain alcohol from molasses continued to sell to bootleggers. These manufacturers had to prove that they were denaturizing their grain alcohol. They would buy a tank car of methanol (8,000 gallons) which would denature 80,000 gallons of grain alcohol. They would pay for the methanol and dump it into the sewer. One of them up in New England forgot to empty the Quinn tank car and returned it still loaded. The Quinns wired the consignee as to what they wanted done with their methanol, and they advised to ship it back and invoice them for another 8,000 gallons.



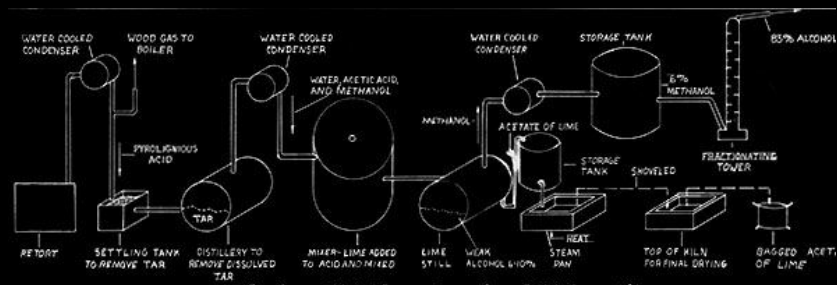
Floor plan for early acid factories, prior to the invention of the jumbo retort.
The retort side of the factory was always longer than the cooling side.



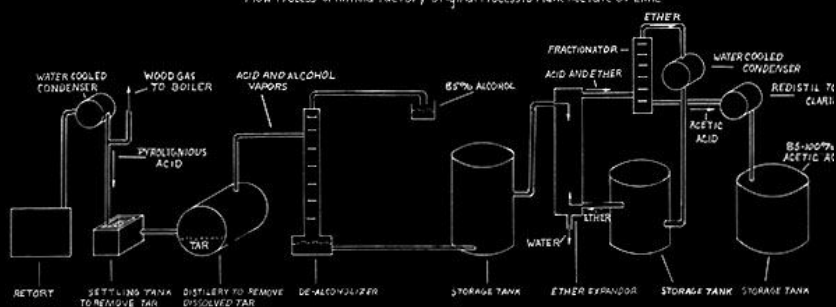
RETORT PROCESS



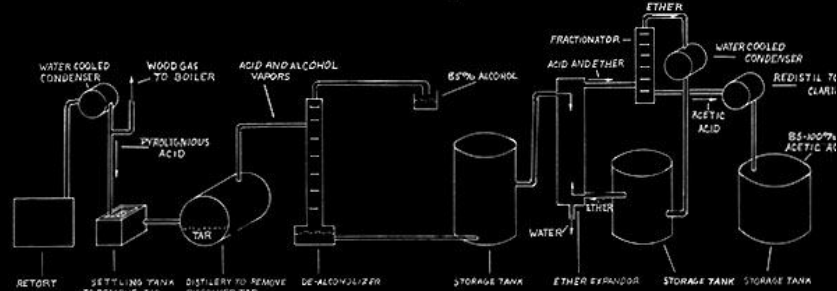
Flow Process of An Acid Factory-Original Process To Make Acetate Of Lime



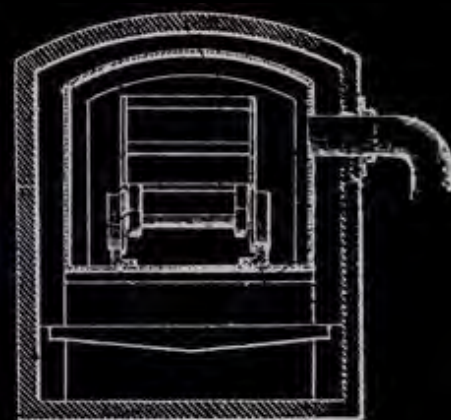
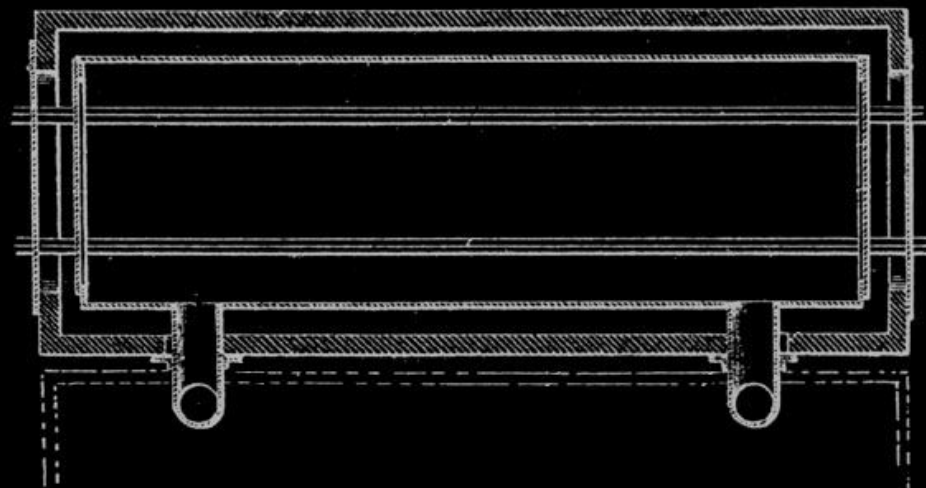
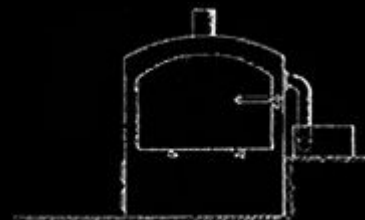
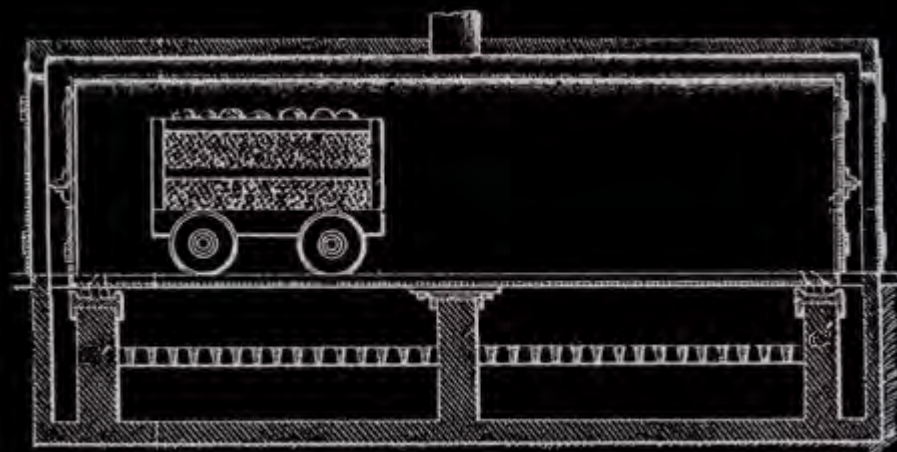
Flow Process of An Acid Factory-Original Process To Make Acetate Of Lime



Revised Process To Make Acetic Acid



Revised Process To Make Acetic Acid



Glenfield; the new boomtown

1927-28 - Twenty-two retorts, 40 company houses, and other accessory buildings were disassembled and shipped to Glenfield where they were then reassembled. The houses, including a company store, and boarding house created a new section of the hamlet that came to be known as Penny Avenue. Monteola did not own enough land on one side of the NY Central Railroad track to build the new sawmill so the sawmill, acid plant, still house, steam plant, and power house were built on the one side of the tracks and then the pre-driers, retorts, coolers and charcoal shipping docks were built on the other side. A structure was built over the railroad for a conveyor, electric wiring, pipes to carry pyroligneous acid and wood gas from the retorts to the still house. The new plant included a boiler house, a power house, saw mill, retort distilling house 75 x 210 feet in area, pre-dryers, and a 1100 foot long conveyor.

Chemical storage tanks, warehouses and an office building were also part of the new complex. The operation employed hundreds of people on the railroad and at the mill complex. The boiler room was enlarged from four boilers to eight, and the new 175-foot chimney could be seen for miles.

The Village of Glenfield?

July, 1929 – A report shows that 46 carloads of lumber, 106 carloads of charcoal, six carloads of acetic acid, three carloads of methanol, and one carload of acetone were shipped from Glenfield. Glenfield was officially a boom town. An additional train ran to take students from Glenfield to Lowville academy, many employees commuted by rail from home to work at Glenfield, and real estate values increased rapidly. However, the growth did not come without problems. One of the major issues was the school system became heavily strained. With 300 additional students expected to start school, Glenfield desperately needed to hire teachers. A new schoolhouse was constructed and a vote to create Union-free School District passed. There was talk of incorporating Glenfield as a Village to help with street lighting and fire protection but that never happened.



KEYSTONE CHEMICAL CO. MILL. GLENFIELD, N.Y.

“Cutting edge” technology in the new sawmill

When the new mill was in full operation, ten to thirty hopper rail cars were brought to Glenfield every day to fuel the boilers and the 22 charcoal retorts. All the machinery except the steam powered shotgun carriages on the saws was driven by 440-volt electric motors. A 780-kilowatt steam turbine generator supplied electricity to the whole plant. Lighting was 220-volt bulbs which discouraged any workers from “borrowing” the bulbs to use in their homes which typically had 115-volt receptacles.

The abrupt end

On September 20th, 1929, Keystone Wood Chemical and Lumber Company declared bankruptcy in U.S. district court in Buffalo. Higher construction expenses, the rough winter, and a shrinking market for freshly sawn-hardwood were all contributing factors. It was stated that Keystone had assets of \$1,991,202 and liabilities of \$4,239,692, and was already having difficulties meeting its current expense obligations. Martin Quinn and R.G. Brownell were appointed as receivers to run the company, but after petitions came in from some people in New York who were upset their “political” friends had not been appointed to receive the business, two new appointees were chosen. The two new appointees were Mr. Gokey of Tupper Lake and H.G. Cornwall of Glenfield, neither of whom had a drop of experience running a sawmill or a chemical plant. The judge did appoint Russ Brownell as general manager, but he only knew how to run the sawmill side, not the chemical plant. Quinn was then hired by Brownell and when talking about the two new appointed leaders, he was quoted as saying “Brownell hired me to operate the whole corporation, but various elements ran to the different receivers to buck me. They never did understand what they were responsible for; wrong decisions were constantly made. It was a lost cause.”

Failed revival and the slow fade to a memory

Everything came to a screeching halt a month later on Black Thursday, October 24th 1929, when the largest sell-off on Wall Street took place and ushered in the Great Depression. Keystone was unable to borrow money, and the bottom of their lumber and chemical markets began to fall out as buyers dried up so they halted operations. One last ditch attempt in 1930 to run the mill lasted two years before failing again and the mill was put up for sale. No one had money to buy the mill so the company began the liquidation process. Mortgages were foreclosed, the equipment was sold as junk or scrap, company houses were torn down, the real estate taxes were not paid and so the land the railroad sat on was publicly auctioned off. The Gould Paper Company was the successful bidder. By the fall of 1935, the Keystone Lumber Company was merely a memory.

The Final Blow

Dow Jones Industrial Average (Jan to Dec, 1929)

400

350

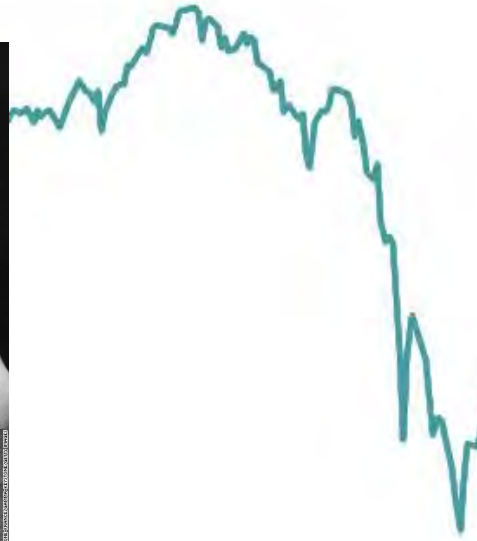
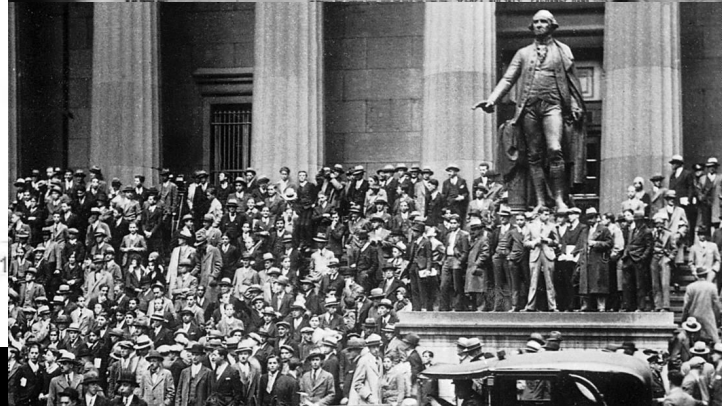
300

250

200

150

1/2/1



8/2/1929 9/2/1929 10/2/1929 11/2/1929



Pulling the rail ties in the 1930's



CHAPTER 10: After the G&W

Logging
on the
railbed



Logging
on the
railbed



Logging
on the
railbed



Logging on the railbed



Woodland roads are hard and passable to heavy trucks.



Getman's log skidder moves easily over the very light snow cover.

Gate along the railbed



Logging on the railbed



Traffic Jam



Brandybrook
club riding
trails
including
G&W railbed



Three
wheelers on
the flooded
causeway



Hunting
on Tug
Hill via
the
G&W
rail bed



East Branch of Fish Creek Conservation Easement

The road is
the old G&W
railroad bed



The Cistern at Page

REPAIR PRICE LIST NO. 9518C

Fairbanks-Morse

SHEFFIELD
WATER
STANDPIPES

Sheffield Relief Valve
Pipe Connections
Pipe Extensions
Stuffing Boxes
Manhole Castings



Fairbanks, Morse & Co.

INCORPORATED
CHICAGO

Copyright, Revised 1935, by Fairbanks, Morse & Co.

Price One Dollar



Inside of the Cistern



Concrete
Dam in
Page,
used to
control
water
level of
the mill
pond



Rail
found
near
the site
of the
mill



Well found
in Page,
looks to
be a rail
tie thrown
in



The Mill Pond and Brandybrook Hunting Club



The Mill Pond



Swamp
that the
tram road
would've
been built
upon



Views from the the railroad bed and Page



Railbed next to House Creek



Grading of the railbed



Abutments
still in
place with
timbers still
bolted in



Timber tie bolts on bridge



Abutments
still in
place
along
Morgan
Gulf Road



Engraved
part of
abutment

“AUG 4”,
could not
find year



Then



Rock Cut G. & W. R.R.
Page, N.Y.

Now

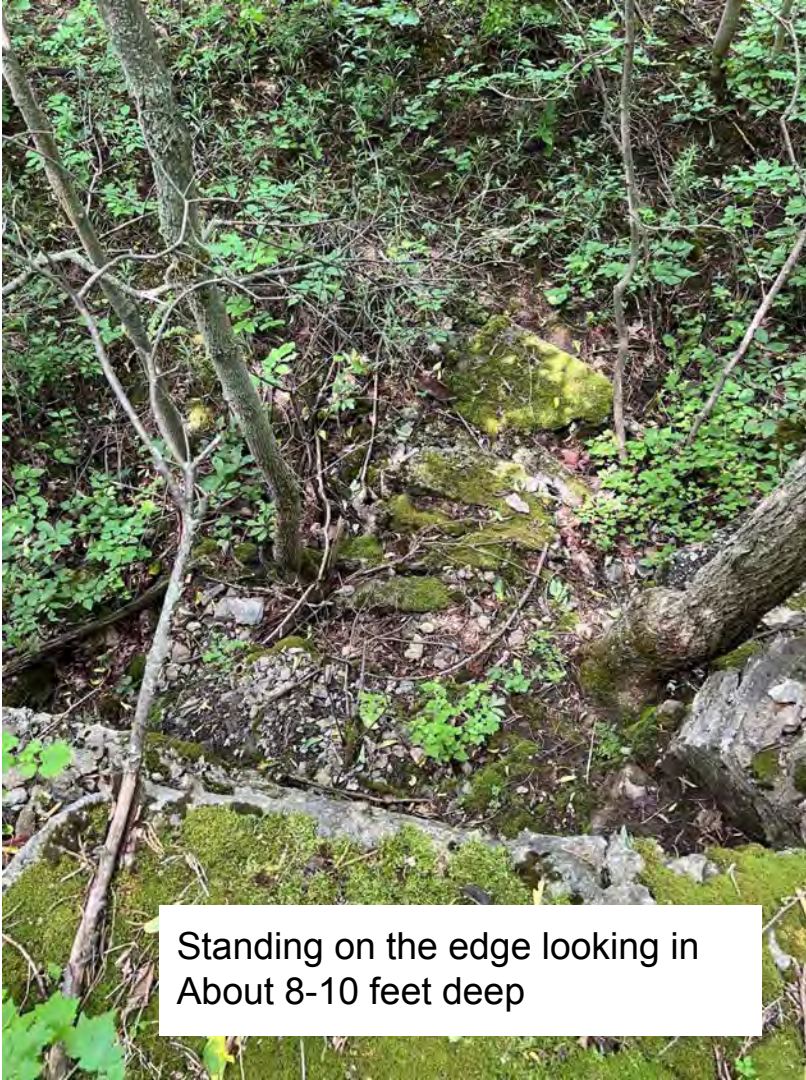


Then



Rock Cut & Bridges Near Houseville

Now



Standing on the edge looking in
About 8-10 feet deep



Shows the width of the rock cut
About 25-30 feet across

Former
superintendent's
house for
Keystone Wood
Chemical Co.



The Glenfield & Western was a truly unique railroad, built out of necessity through some of the roughest terrain in the State. The railroad symbolizes the toughness and spirit of the people of Tug Hill. Whether you worked in the mill, or worked in the boarding house, evidently you had to be tough. Though the railroad is long gone, the impact of the Glenfield & Western, the perseverance through hard times, and the daring nature of those who decided to forge a living on Tug Hill, still remains.

Lastly, thank you to the families who helped us by offering information and family photos to be used in this presentation. We hope this presentation accurately reflects the work and hardships faced during everyday life of these Tug Hill families.

Thank you!

