

## Important Places – The First Hundred Years

### Hamlet - Bakers Mills

The Bakers Mills area was referred to as Number Eleven (same as the mountain) until a post office was established in 1879. Then the hamlet was named Bakers Mills after John P. Baker, who was born at the Glen in 1826. He came to the area in 1869 and bought the Hitchcock mill on Edwards Hill Road. Baker added more buildings so that there was a grist mill and a saw mill hence the name "Bakers Mills".

The Oregon tannery (Fox Lair) was built in 1877 by Stephen Griffin, and was one of the larger tanneries in the Adirondacks. Shaw & Co. were the last owners of the tannery in Oregon.

The Folley Hotel was located at the corner of Rt. 8 and Bateman Rd. There was also the Crotch Boarding House at Siamese Pond Trailhead and the Dennis Waddell House on Rt. 8.

The Richard Hudnut estate at Fox Lair located north-east of the ruined tannery. The 270-foot long main house was three stories high with a huge double staircase and a veranda across the front. There were forty servants on staff, a full golf course along the valley, and a host of barns for carriages and animals.

After Richard Hudnut's death, the estate was given to the New York City Police Athletic League for a camp, then finally to the state itself. The buildings were all burned so the land could become part of the forest preserve.

The first church to meet in Bakers Mills that we know of, was a sister church of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Johnsbury. On June 20, 1882, a group of people met and organized the 2nd Wesleyan Church of Johnsbury. In 1884, the two churches joined, sharing the same pastor. The second church which was built in 1891 and has since been renamed the Wesleyan Church still remains in use today, although it has been renovated and added upon.

The church on the corner of Barney Hill Rd. and Rt. 8 which is the Pentecostal Holiness church. Built by Will Merrill for his wife the church was non-denominational in the beginning. The church was bought by Luke Rist in the early 1900's and called "The Church of the Gospel workers", in 1912; it became the Pentecostal Holiness Church. The church is closed and the building is condemned.

There was a schoolhouse at the junction of Goodman & Barney Hill roads. That place was a hamlet called "Morehouse". The Morehouse School was in school district # 7 and was opened March 17, 1822. There was also a school at the end of Bartman Road hence the name Bartman District which burned about 1954.

The first post Office in Bakers Mills may have been opened in 1879, with Geo Hodgkins as Postmaster. There was also a post office in the community of Oregon, which opened in July of 1878 with Henry Straight as Postmaster.

### **Hamlet - Johnsburg**

The first clearing in the Town of Johnsburg took place about 1790 on Elm Hill, located one mile south of Johnsburg Corners, now known as the hamlet of Johnsburg by John Thurman. John then cleared land on Beaver Brook (Now called Mill Creek) and erected a grist mill and saw mill on the falls of the brook. Then about 1794 he opened a store and distillery. Johnsburg's first school, circa 1814 was called The Square Roofed School and stood on the west corner of Goodman and Park roads. A new school house was built about 1875 near the east end of Bates Cemetery, called Johnsburg Village School. Now used as a private home. This district was set off from district No. 3 on May 1, 1818 and was always called The Elm Hill School. 1822 Dist. #5 which was located on the land opposite the Hodgson Street turn and a frame school was built. This was used for many years as a home and was torn down some time ago.

Established February 8, 1823 was the first post office in Johnsburg by Dr. Martin Gillet, who was also our first physician.

David Noble of Ireland was a local preacher and founder of Methodism in our area. He built a log home near Beaver Brook from which he conducted the first Methodist meetings. Around 1838 the construction on the Methodist Episcopal Church began. This lot was located next to the cemetery on which the presently named United Methodist Church stands and was donated by Mrs. Catherine Dunn who owned the Dunn Mansion which was erected around 1845 next door. The church was completed by John Hodgson and was dedicated on June 6, 1843.

Two of the industries in Johnsburg were the paint bed mine and graphite mill. The paint bed mine was located at the foot of Crane Mountain which was discovered by D M Haley in the fall of 1893. A corporation called the Glen Mining Company was formed and the mine opened in 1894. Most of the paint, which was called "Johnsburg Red" was shipped in a powder form. The mine building burned on January 22, 1896 and that was the end of the mining business.

The graphite mill which once existed at the interior of Collignon Road off Hudson Street started May 4, 1899. In Feb of the following year the company sustained a heavy loss in a flood. Then on May 17, 1932 the abandoned buildings burned during a forest fire.

### **Hamlet – North Creek**

The first logs to be cut in this vicinity, had to be floated down both the 'North Creek' stream and the Hudson River. Enough logs being in sight to insure several years' operation, these camps assumed a semi permanency. The first wooden buildings were erected as shelters for the workmen and horses probably between 1840 and 1850. These buildings formed the nucleus of what has become the village of North Creek as we now know it.

The logging camp became an 'embryo village' when a tannery was built by Milton Sawyer and Wheeler Mead in 1852. Over the years there were several partnership changes and the tannery itself had to be rebuilt several times. When the supply of trees needed for the industry became scarce in the 1890s, the tannery closed.

The tannery was one factor which attracted Dr. Thomas Durant, promoter of the Union Pacific Railroad, to the area in 1871.

The railroad, along with the garnet mines, broadened the economic base of North Creek. In the 1800s and early 1900s, logging provided a living for men as they took from the forests, logs, pulp, and stove wood. There was also an excelsior mill and bolt/handle mill founded by Dr. Lee Somerville in 1905 which was dismantled in the late 1920s.

A scenic feature of old North Creek created by a succession of dams on the creek for logging and the tannery was the Mill Pond or 'Silver Lake'.

John McInerny erected what is said to be North Creek's first hotel in 1871. Doing business as "The American" in 1872 and located on the site of today's Copperfield Inn, there was also a large barn where guests would be able to keep their horses. When the hotel burned to the ground in 1903 it was rebuilt on the same site in 1920.

The Straight House was built on the site of the present bank about 1876. Railroad workers stayed there as well as lumbermen and others coming to town for supplies. The Straight House caught fire from one of the wood stoves in the winter of 1919 and burned to the ground along with the Methodist parsonage next door to it.

The Adirondack Hotel stood where the Baroudi block was later built, across the street from Swain's Funeral Home and Arbuckle's Barber Shop, and was built by Mr. Lyons sometime before 1885. It, too, burned down from a chimney fire in 1916.

South of the Alpine Motel location was Wade's Hotel built in 1923 by Charles S. Wade next to his store. There were a succession of owners and at the time it burned in 1965 it was owned and operated by Pete Farrell.

In 1843 the Baptists began meeting in the North Creek school house located near the railroad station. For several years the Baptists used the Old Dutch Reformed church building in Wevertown. This had been started in 1822 and was the first church in the Town of Johnsburg. In 1853 the first church built in North Creek was the Baptist church adjacent to the Union Cemetery.

The first Catholic Church, built on the site of the ST. James cemetery, was erected in 1875. This church burned in 1915 and the present church was built soon after.

The North Creek Methodist Episcopal church, now the North Creek United Methodist church, was built in 1879. The exterior remains pretty much the same as it was originally except for the remodeled steeple which had been struck by lightning in the early 1920s.

The building destined to be St. Christopher's Episcopal Mission arrived in North Creek on a flat-car in the dead of winter, January 1948, and was erected by members of the congregation. St. Christopher's is served by the members of Barry House at Brant Lake.

The story goes that in 1910 Frank Husselback, representing a group of local businessmen, walked into Arbuckle's Barber Shop on Main Street near Swain's Funeral Home and asked if he would be interested in selling his shop. The building was purchased that day and was soon in business as the North Creek National Bank. Within a year, the bank building was moved to a lot just south of Braley & Noxon's hardware store. The bank carried on business there for seventeen years until 1927 when the present building was constructed where Bissells' Garage had burned some years before - across from today's Methodist Church.

Another family business in North Creek began when two neighbors, William H. Noxon and Alfred R. Braley, got together in 1888, and started the hardware store on Main Street in North Creek known as Braley and Noxon. Originally it was located south of its present location at the four corners where Route 28N was extended from the corners to the by-pass. Today's building on the corner of Main Street and Circle Avenue was built in 1895 by these two men. The original building had a flat roof and only a first story porch. Around the turn of the century the owners decided a flat roof was not for this country in the winter, and the four-sided slate roof was added, along with a second-story front porch. The interior of the store was walled with wooden wainscoting.

A millinery shop occupied the front half of the south side of the building in its early history, but as the hardware business grew, it expanded to occupy the entire first floor. Upstairs there was a dentist's office and possibly an attorney's office.

With Mr. Braley's passing around 1930, Mr. Noxon and his son, C. Ernest Noxon, purchased Braley's share. The business continued in this way until William Noxon died in 1937. Ernest Noxon and his sisters, Grace, Ruth, and Mary, assumed ownership until 1988, one hundred years from its founding.

The store then was owned and run by the family of William Noxon's granddaughter, Norma Noxon Rawson. She is the daughter of C. Ernest and Elinor Eldridge Noxon. Her husband, Carroll Rawson, managed the store, while the eldest son, Bill Rawson, orders stock, clerks and does the bookkeeping. Daughter Mary Rawson Cooper also worked there. In Oct 31, 2003 the store was sold to the present owners Richard and Agnes Green from Putney County.

William R. Waddell was well known in the area and one of the leading merchants in North Creek. In 1901 he bought property near the railroad tracks. The buildings housed his horses which were used to pull stage coaches to Indian Lake and Blue Mountain. He also bought and

sold cattle and lambs in conjunction with his slaughter house located in back of where the Tri-County Nursing Home is today.

Waddell was also a partner in the Riverside-Schroon Lake stage line. When motor cars and Stanley Steamers came on the market around 1910, he was one of the first to use them on his stage lines and other businesses.

In 1915 the North Creek Electric Company began operations, distributing power generated at a hydroelectric plant three miles northwest of the hamlet. The plant capacity of 200 kilowatts was an average size for generating stations of the area, but the service which depended on a single plant was not reliable. Cost was high and seasonal variations in available water for hydro generation, as in North Creek, meant extremely erratic service. This resulted in the consolidation of several small companies into a large interconnected power system and eventually the Adirondack Power and Light Corporation, a predecessor company to Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation.

### **Hamlet - North River**

Early occupations were farming, lumbering and there was a Cheese factory by 1850 also with a grist mill in 1896.

At one time there were Methodist, Baptist, Union and Jehovah's Witnesses in North River.

The Methodist Church was established first in 1843 and services were held in the log school house. In 1847 a neat little church was built and is still an active church in excellent condition.

At one time the residents were interested in building a Union Church. The frame was up but a strong gale blew much of it down. Many thought this was an act of God and switched their money and labor to the Methodists Society.

When the Union Church failed to materialize in 1882, the Baptists built a church on the site of the present firehouse. It had a successful congregation for fifty years and functioned side by side with the Methodists. The Baptist Church closed in 1933.

In 1927-28 Kingdom Hall was built on Shields Road on Christian Hill by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Will Eldridge, drove the four-horse and six- horse Concord stage coaches for thirty-six years. He was destined to hold the reins when the Great Stage Coach Robbery of the East occurred on the morning of August 14, 1901.

In the 1860s Simon Towne emigrated from Quebec to North River and began a grocery business. The first store burned to the ground but was rebuilt-thus Towne Grocery has been in operation for more than 100 years.

Dunlap's Blacksmith Shop opened about 1917 on the north side of Thirteenth Lake Road, across from Towne's store. This later became the North River Garage.

Ernest J. Ameden moved to the North Country from Scarsdale. He was an excellent photographer and, in addition to running a store and post office, made a living making postcards and taking studio pictures of local people. His pictures still hang in North River homes.

There was a store on Christian Hill, run by Shields, overlooking the brook. The only current business on Christian Hill is the Highlands Bed and Breakfast on Thirteenth Lake Road.

There were several hotels along the Hudson River for people to stay overnight when passing through on the stage; each had a bar. The first was built by Jones Ordway, probably in the late 1840s or early 1850s, it burned around 1908. The second hotel was built shortly before the Civil War by Lyman Roblee. The Roblee hotel was sold in 1896 to Elmer Dunlap who ran it until it was destroyed by fire a few years later.

The North River Hotel was built about the time of the Civil War by William D. Wakeley. The North River Hotel burned in 1897 and was rebuilt by George Ordway, and burned again. It was rebuilt by William Lynch and later run by Henry Worden. At one time it had a barber shop run by Howard Farrington, whom everyone called "Searsy."

Charles and Alice Hooper Tibbetts opened the Log House, now called Garnet Hill Lodge, in the 1930s as a summer and winter vacation resort. They operated a ski tow with an open slope and had two trails for their guests." The lodge still operates with a greatly expanded cross-country skiing operation.

Searsy and Willet Randall developed the "Dan Patch" beagle, a superb hunting dog, with some kennels near the river. The Patch beagle is still raised by Mike Capozzi at the old Lee Raymond place on Cleveland Road.

The first post office in North River opened October 4, 1854 with Schuyler Fuller as Postmaster. He was followed by Lincoln M. Root who was appointed February 22, 1856. The post office was discontinued from August 5, 1857 until April 23, 1860 and again from January 13, 1875 until April 19, 1875. Except for these two lapses, the post office has served the people of North River for over one hundred thirty-nine years.

The first school was a one room building on Cleveland Road. Frankie LaPrairie was the teacher. The next school was a little red building on School House Road and in 1900 a two-room school opened on the site.

## **Hamlet - Riparius**

Riparius is a small hamlet lying along the Hudson River between Loon Lake and Wevertown. Originally called Riverside, the name was changed by the Post Office Department in 1886 to avoid confusion with a Riverside in another part of the state. Riparius in Latin means "belonging to a river bank."

Riverside was formerly called Folsom Landing, named for Jonathan Folsom, who owned land on both sides of the river, When the settlers first came through this territory Folsom established a ferry across the river as a short cut from Chester, saving a detour of many miles. In 1863 the Adirondack Railway Company was formed with the plan to extend the line north of Saratoga. In 1865 tracks had been laid north to Hadley, extended to Thurman in 1869, and reached Riverside in 1870. The present station was built in 1919.

The camp ground on the east side of the river was organized in 1871-1872. It was built as a meeting place where ministers could preach. A tabernacle was built which was a small platform with a roof over it. This was used as an altar for the ministers. In 1908 the tabernacle was enlarged so people could sit under cover. Methodist ministers would gather for a week in July and preach sermons.

After many years of fording the river, a strong interest developed for the construction of a bridge over the river. Constructions of a one-lane suspension bridge with wooden towers at each end in 1872 at a cost of \$15,000, and operated it as a toll bridge. Toll rates were three cents to walk across, five cents to lead a horse, fifteen cents for a team, thirty cents for a tally-ho. Known as the Fulsom Landing Central Bridge, Warren County purchased the original bridge in 1919 and replaced it with the present one which is 309 feet long.

The first school meeting in Riparius was held on April 13, 1894, where those present voted to build a school house. Seymour Armstrong donated the land and \$500 was raised to construct and equip the schoolhouse to be completed by August 1894. Before this, children attended school in Wevertown or the Millington district about three miles north of Route 8 on the River Road.

The first post office, established February 24, 1886, was in the D&H Railroad station. After many moves and several postmasters the office now resides next to the Riparius firehouse.

The Methodist Church was built in 1900 on the west side of the river near the railroad tracks. When the bridge over the Hudson was replaced in 1919 it was moved to the east side, its present site.

The original grain store built in 1893 below the railroad station operated until it burned in 1930 and was rebuilt the same year. Downriver, too, a small factory that made bowling pins also burned down.

Socony Oil Company established their plant at Riparius about 1892. In the beginning their products were delivered by mules, then by horse and wagon, and trucks when they came into

use. The name was changed from Standard Oil Company to Socony Vacuum Oil Company in 1933. At the present time the buildings are no longer in use.

A bottling works was built near Stanley Brook close to the railroad tracks. The bottling works delivered by mules at first and later by horse and wagon. That took three days for a round trip as far north as Blue Mountain Lake, a distance of thirty-seven miles. As things progressed, the horse and wagon was again replaced by trucks.

Shares of creamery stock were sold in 1917 to 1919 to build a creamery. It was built near the railroad tracks, and was to take care of the farmers' surplus cream, but the business failed because the farmers felt they weren't paid enough for their cream and there wasn't enough cream to run the creamery full time.

A late summer fire in 1947 in the southern part of this hamlet spurred the community into realizing a fire department was necessary. A meeting was held to discuss organizing a fire department and the department held its first annual meeting May 14, 1948. The firehouse was completed in 1954 and stands improved today as a monument to the energy and united efforts of the citizens of Riparius.

The original Riverside Hotel was located where Osterhout's house now stands. After it burned the new hotel was built closer to the railroad station. During prohibition the hotel made an excellent hiding place for rum runners on their way from Canada to places south. The deteriorating building was taken down in the 1960s.

### **Hamlet - Wevertown**

The earliest recorded settlers in 1795 in this hamlet were the Andrus Wever family, who settled on what is known as the Kenwell farm property presently owned by Rudd Vanvoorhis. When a tannery was built, more settlers came, and Wevertown became a village.

The tannery was in operation between 1833 and 1885. Built by two men from Massachusetts, it created employment for men and a market for bark and farm produce. Products could be taken to Glens Falls by horse and wagon and hides brought back for tanning.

Philip Moston purchased the property and in 1888 started building a dam and sawmill. In 1913 the Moston business was purchased by T. C. Murphy and it became known as T. C. Murphy Lumber Company. At Timothy Murphy's death in 1925, his son, James Murphy, managed the mill and established a retail lumber and building supply store. Mr. Murphy sold the business to George Van Voorhis in August 1962. After his death in 1982, Rudd Van Voorhis, his son, operated the business.

The village school was built about 1837 and was called the Factory school. It closed in 1952 and was purchased by the lumber company. Across from the schoolhouse was a harness shop and the tannery scales. East of the tannery buildings was a carpenter shop.

While the tannery was in operation there were two hotels in Wevertown. One was built sometime before 1860 on the site of Murphy's employee's parking lot while about the same time another hotel was built on the corners of Route 8 and Route 28. This hotel building burned in 1919.

John Hodgson was the first postmaster when the post office was established in 1859, and he was succeeded by Mr. Noble who also ran a general merchandise store. In 1882 an upstairs was added and the I. O. O. F. lodge met there.

In 1879 the Wevertown Methodist Church was first organized. Before the church was built services were held for many years the former home of Rudd VanVoorhis.

The first church of any kind in the town of Johnsburg was the Dutch Reformed Church erected in Wevertown in 1822 near the cemetery fronting Route 28. As the group was unable to find a pastor, some joined other religious groups or moved away. In 1835 the Baptists finished the building and occupied it until it was abandoned and torn down in the 1870s.

Gilchrist built at his own expense the first suspension bridge across the Hudson River, uniting the towns of Chester and Johnsburg. The bridge opened with a picnic on September 8, 1871. The abutments and cables from this first suspension bridge, built before bridge at Riverside, are all that remain of the bridge.

It was in the 1870s that four men each put up \$100 to start a Catholic church. Before they had a building of their own, Wevertown Catholics gathered in the home of William Dillon when a priest would come from St. Mary's in Glens Falls to say Mass, and perform marriages and baptisms. Mr. Dillon, John Anderson, Sr., Michael Breen and another unidentified man were the benefactors who put up the money, and Electa Waddell for \$10 deeded the lot where the church was built in the shadow of Mill Mountain near the intersection of Today's Routes 8 and 28. How or why St. Charles Borromeo was selected as patron saint of the Wevertown Catholic Church will probably never be known. Charles of Borromeo was Cardinal of Milan and performed heroic work during the plague epidemic in the mid 1500s. Father Roger Ward was made pastor of St. James in North Creek in 1887 and Wevertown and Chestertown became mission churches.

Calvary Bible Church was built by members of its congregation and the first service held March 5, 1978. Previously, under the leadership of Rev. M. A. Butler, several area couples met for home Bible studies beginning in 1975. Regular church services were later held in the former North Creek Fire House. Rev. Wayne Schoonmaker has been the pastor since July 1981.

It is believed that the first bank in northern Warren County was started in Wevertown when in 1845 a bank charter was granted to the Warren County Bank Of Johnsburg. Linus B. Barnes, who owned the tannery at the time, was the banker and it is believed the bank was in the tannery office. The bank closed in 1860 when Barnes sold the tannery to the Humphreys.

The Wevertown Volunteer Fire Company was organized May 16, 1949, following a meeting of 15 Wevertown citizens at the home of Lester Monroe. The firehouse was erected in 1951 with two stalls for trucks and a large cellar for meetings. An addition was built in 1985 to add another truck and provide a meeting room in the original building.

### **Hamlet - Sodom**

Sodom was named by Samuel Morehouse who came to this place in 1800 and lived on the corner of Sodom Cross Road and Peaceful Valley Road. He named it Sodom Corners because he had lived at a place with the same name in Fredericksburg (now known as Patterson) New York in Putnam County, where he was also born in 1764.

A school district was formed in 1819, but proof that it was the cut stone building standing today was never found. The present owner put the date on the schoolhouse. It was located at the junction of the Peaceful Valley and Sodom roads.

The Sodom Union Church, also near the crossroads, was dedicated July 11, 1895 by the Rev. Jay Somerville. Rev. Daisy Allen reopened it as the Sodom Community Church on April 15, 1951.

A post master could have an office in her home, so there were several locations depending on who was postmaster at the time. A rural delivery out of the North Creek Post Office was started about 1934 – 1935. There was a Post Office in Sodom, which opened March 5, 1896 with Mary Morehouse as postmaster. The year of its closing is unknown.

### **Hamlet - The Glen**

Crossing the Hudson River on Route 28 you enter the Town of Johnsbury at The Glen which is a Scottish word meaning a narrow valley or depression between mountains or hills.

The first bridge across the Hudson at The Glen was a wooden covered, single bridge which joined the Towns of Chester, Johnsbury, Thurman and Warrensburg in 1816. This covered bridge was swept away on January 22, 1903 and was replaced in 1959 with the present 360 foot span.

The closes school for the children living at The Glen in the Town of Johnsbury was approximately halfway between Wevertown and The Glen , about opposite of the junction of Rt. 28 and Harrington Rd. The first building was made of logs and a new frame school was built in 1898. This was first known as the Sheffield District, but from about 1850 on was always referred to as the Anderson District. The building was used for many years as a private home, and burned Jan. 22, 1976.

The Glen post office was established in 1844; Christian Whitaker became the first postmaster. With the retirement of Florence Goodman on March 31, 1966, The Glen post office closed.

The Tannery which brought settlers to the area used the Glen Creek for power.

Tourists could get off at the railroad stop at The Glen and stay at the Grove Hotel which was owned by John and Nora McPhillips. The Grove Hotel burned in the 1960's.

### **Hamlet - Garnet Lake**

As late as the 1850s, no regular road entered the Garnet Lake area other than from the Town of Thurman. Hence the residents, particularly those nearest to Mill Creek Pond, identified more with the Town of Thurman than with the Town of Johnsbury. By 1875, however, the road we know today as Garnet Lake Road had been established.

School District #18 (changed to become District #11 on December 28, 1868) Located on the Garnet Lake road, not far from the town line between Johnsbury and Thurman in the Buckskin Valley area. Usually called the Reynolds dist., also Mill Creek and Garnet Lake School. Now used as a camp.

The school in District #13 (also known as the Putnam District) was located in the building which today belongs to the Garnet Lake Volunteer Fire Company. On October 17, 1953, the District 13 School was closed.

On February 8, 1862, the First Wesleyan Church of Johnsbury was incorporated. This church was located within the confines of the present day Mill Creek or Wesleyan Cemetery at the intersection of Garnet Lake Road and Hudson Street. A leading force in establishing the Wesleyan Methodist Church was in response to a perceived lack of commitment to the abolishment of slavery by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Church fell into disuse and in 1964 was torn down and the lumber used to erect an addition to the Wesleyan Church in Bakers Mills. The Church building was erected about 1859.

A Post Office was established at Garnet and John Grogan was appointed Postmaster on May 7, 1891, followed by Charles Kenyon on April 6, 1904. The last Postmaster of Garnet was Dorothy Russell. After the office was closed, mail was delivered by a Highway Contract Route from the Johnsbury Post Office, as is the practice today.

Perhaps one of the best known businesses in the Garnet Lake area was the Putnam Dairy Farm of Enos Putnam, later run by the Bateman family. Mr. Putnam also had a small store, as did numerous other individuals at various times.

Today's Garnet Lake Lodge was first established as a hotel and boarding house for summer visitors. It is presently operated by the Parker family and opens only during the summer months. The area around Garnet Lake itself is today primarily a summer colony with numerous camps and cottages.