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Memories of the Village of Old Gilboa

Ivan J. Hallock

Gilboa once was a thriving little town. It had a large creamery, a large feed store operated by Lewis Bros., two black-smith shops, and later, as automobiles came, two garages (one owned and run by I. C. Wyckoff and son Clinton, the other by Frank Lewis). There were also the Davis and Palmer and G. I. Wyckoff general stores, a clothing store run by Bulson Bros. (a branch of their Middleburgh store), a meat market run by Luther (Lute) Ellis, “Pete” Shutts’ music store, a hardware and plumbing store first operated by Sidney Thomas and later by Charles Clark, who now lives on Grandview Drive, Cobleskill.

There were two large hotels. The one in the lower part of the village was owned and operated by “Pop” Peters who came from New York City; the other, in the upper village, was run by Lou O’Brien and his son, Charles. I forgot to mention another store run by George in the upper part of town.

In the horse and buggy days, Gilboa had two livery stables—one run by I. C. Wyckoff and later by Marsell Aldrich, and the other by Pratt Selleck. There was a school, of course; three churches (Presbyterian, Methodist and Old School Baptist), a large Grange Hall in which yours truly played for dances with Moore’s Orchestra of Guinea (they called us “The Guinea boys”). We played there every Friday night for some time, the hall would be full, and all seemed to have a good time.

Medical needs were supplied by two doctors—E. S. Persons and E. E. Billings. There were two barber shops, one owned by Hobart (Hob) Paulsey, the other by Fred Siebel.

The community also had a jewelry store, a watch and clock repair shop, a movie theater, photographer’s studio, a funeral director, a weekly newspaper, “The Gilboa Monitor,” owned and edited by George L. Fuller, and the central office of the Pierce and Peaslie Telephone line.

There was a large wood structure called the “old Arcade,” which was used as a tenement to house several families. Way on the west end of town there was a gristmill, sawmill and stone quarry. Where these were located was called the Mill Pond.

Written in 1972, this piece recalls the village of Gilboa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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March 4, 2010

