



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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Obituary for a House

Unlike my other stories, this one concerns a house that doesn't exist anymore. Up until March 2006, if you turned off Main Avenue in Wynantskill onto the West Sand Lake Road and crossed the Wynantskill Creek, you came upon a rather ram shackled house on the west side of the street which was about to be torn down. This had been the Koon residence and in its day, oh what a house it was! In Sylvester's History of Greenbush (reprint of which is for sale at the Town Clerk's Office), there is a picture of the Alfred and Delia Koon residence showing a Federal style house on a tree lined property with barns in the rear and a picket fence running the width of the road frontage-an immaculate property.

It was probably built circa 1820-1830 by local Justice Henry Koon, one of Wynantskill's early prominent citizens. At one time the Koon family owned land running all the way to Troy. The homestead farmhouse still exists-it's the white house on the corner of Whiteview and Brookside. Henry's son Alfred moved from the homestead to the house I'm describing in 1857, shortly after his youngest son was born. This was a proper "estate" for the well-to-do Koon. His wife Delia was a daughter of Frederick Sharpe. These two families owned much of present day Wynantskill.

The children also married well: daughter Mary wed Peter White (and they lived in the homestead farm); Annie married Sylvester Lape; Delia became Mrs. Clark Lape and Flora wed Sidney Hidley.

After Alfred's death in 1872, his son Alfred ran the farm for his mother. An 1898 history describes the farm as "...fertile and carefully tilled. Its buildings are large and commodious and in perfect repair." Over the years the farm evolved from strictly a diary farm to more of a general farm as the Koon descendants engaged in market gardening.

By the 1920's, things were changing in Wynantskill. The big farms were being sold and broken up into building lots. In 1926, the N.P. Dodge & Co. bought the "Allie Koon farm" and sold over 300 lots in a few days for \$89 to \$289 per lot (fifty feet wide and about 125 feet deep). This is the Belmont subdivision.

The actual Koon residence survived another 80 years. However Wynantskill folks can attest to its gradual decline. In 2006 it finally gave up the ghost. Today there are several new housing units where the Koon home stood. If you drive by, pay your respects to what once was one of the finest residences in the area. R.I.P. 1820-2006.

I'd like to do a story on two politicians of recent times – Jim Herbert and Jim Gratton. Can anyone help me out with some anecdotes? 283-6384.