



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

Jim Greenfield Town Historian 283-6384

Historical Potpourri

From time to time, I've gathered interesting articles from old newspapers, so I thought I'd do a "story" on these stories.

Several weeks ago, I did an article on Thomas Twiss, Indian Agent and former Wynantskill resident who lived in the mid 1800's. His home was on Main Avenue in Wynantskill (Where Hannan's Waste Disposal is). Miss Twiss was Thomas' daughter.

From the Albany Evening Journal Sep 16, 1877:

" On Friday night four masked burglars vandalized the Twiss Mansion in Wynantskill, who awakened Miss Twiss and presenting revolvers to her head, threatened death in case she made an outcry.

" She was bound, and one of the scoundrels was left to guard her, while the others proceeded to the room of a relative of Miss Twiss, the only other occupant of the house where they treated her in a similar manner. After searching her and placing a guard with a cocked revolver in his hand at her side, the robbers returned to the room of Miss Twiss and by threats, compelled her to reveal the whereabouts of her pocketbook, supposing it contained a large sum of money.

" They were chagrined to find only \$25 in the purse which of course they appropriated and then proceeded to ransack the house from cellar to garrets. The value of all they accrued however did not amount to \$50. In addition to the money, they took a few trinkets and valued mementoes of the dead. The ladies were then released uninjured by thoroughly frightened and thieves departed." Note: Miss Twiss survived the ordeal and lived another thirty years.

The second story "A Strange Affair" appeared in the July 8, 1868 Syracuse Daily Courier. The tollgate referred to was just east of Wynantskill on Rt. 66.

"Several weeks ago a man drove rapidly through the gate on the Sand Lake turnpike at Wynantskill, and shouting that he had not the time to stop, threw his pocketbook at the astounded and indignant gate keeper.

"The keeper of the gate picked up the pocketbook with fear and trembling and suspecting that it was an infernal machine, did not dare open it until Saturday last. Then he found seven dollars in genuine greenbacks. That is probably the largest toll ever taken at the gate, and the whole affair is a great mystery.

"The man who lost the pocketbook is evidently a thief or else has a Government contract. Nobody else could afford to pay gate tolls so lavishly."

I'm working on stories of the Excelsior House at Snyders Lake. Any memories to share? Also a story on the Geerhold-Rehm VFW. Anyone have the records? 283-6384.