

A HISTORY  
OF THE VILLAGE OF  
GREEN ISLAND

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BY

SAMUEL N. HUTCHINSON

PUBLISHED BY THE TROY RECORD

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## PREFACE

Some months ago Samuel N. Hutchinson came into The Troy Record office, bringing with him a manuscript relating to Green Island. It consisted of a recital of his own memories of the village in which he had resided for 67 years. He had prepared the memoirs some years before.

Realizing that such a manuscript would be invaluable to residents of Green Island and to students of local history in future generations, the editor proposed to Mr. Hutchinson that he bring the story up to date, add to it certain items which would give it the form of a brief history of the village and permit its publication in *The Record*. This Mr. Hutchinson agreed to do; and this pamphlet is the result of that conference.

There is no living man who could produce any such compendium of Green Island information as can Mr. Hutchinson. Born in Princeton, N. J., he came to the island in childhood and has resided there practically all his life. From the beginning he was a factor in community life. Twenty-two years ago he was elected to the Board of Education and two years later became President of the Board. During the World War he was Chairman of Liberty and Victory Loan drives, of Red Cross drive and practically all the varied local efforts to forward the work of the nation.

Although Mr. Hutchinson never held political office he ran for Village President in 1912. He was active in the Gilbert Hose Company more than a generation ago. One of his chief interests has been the First Presbyterian Church of which he has been a trustee since 1901 and president of the board for eleven years. Since 1905 he has also been senior elder and was for a long time Superintendent of the Sunday School.

Mr. Hutchinson was the Superintendent of the factory of John Leggett & Son for almost a lifetime; and his chief other connection with the City of Troy has been his Masonic connections. He is Past Master of Apollo Lodge, No. 13, F. & A. M.

It is the opinion of *The Troy Record* that Mr. Hutchinson, in putting on paper his recollections of early Green Island, has made a unique contribution to local history. His life, stretching over practically the entire period from the early beginnings of the place to its present corporate existence, offered the opportunity which rarely comes to a community for a reasonably consecutive story of its development. His willingness to set down the facts and the accuracy of his memory have joined in giving to the public a valuable document which *The Record* is glad to distribute to citizens of the community.

THE TROY RECORD

June 25, 1934.

# HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF GREEN ISLAND

## CHAPTER I

One cannot but feel that the splendid record Green Island has made by its steadfastness, loyalty and generosity is due largely to those fathers and mothers whose steady, hard-working, honest lives are a priceless legacy to this generation.

Green Island included within its boundaries the small island lying east of it and called Fish Island, now Center Island, and also a small island just east of the northerly portion of Green Island known as the gully, and called Jan Gownsen Island. These three islands, Fish Island, Green Island and Jan Gownsen Island, together with a small strip of land just west of it, were considered as one plot and called the Bower Turkee or Turkee Farm of Green Island, being the name used in the conveyance by Van Rensselaer to Schuyler. This whole plot was part of the Manor Rensselaerwycke. Green Island was originally owned by Col. Killaeen Van Rensselaer, the patroon, and was conveyed by Van Rensselaer to Col. Peter Schuyler May 10, 1708. The conveyance also mentioned the fact that Maria, the wife of Peter Schuyler, was the sister of Killaeen Van Rensselaer, and that a tenth of all crops raised on the farm was to be delivered to Van Rensselaer each year.

On the eighth day of June, 1713, Green Island was sold to and became the property of Hendrick Oothout, a carpenter of Albany, the price being eight hundred and fifty pounds.

We have now come to a period in the history of Green Island that is of great interest to the people of the village, and about which there have been many reports and much speculation as to how the

Tibbits family came into possession of practically all of the island. The following facts are taken from records filed in the County Clerk's office in Albany. Green Island remained in the possession of the Oothout heirs until early in eighteen hundred, when George Tibbits bought 262 of the 387 acres constituting the island. This tract was situated at the northern end of the island, this being the first Tibbits transaction in the area.

On September 28, 1833, the Oothout heirs sold to Daniel Cady of Johnstown, "All that certain part of Green Island, situated in the County of Albany, and bounded on the east by the Hudson River, on the north by that part of said Island belonging to George Tibbits, Esq., and on the west by the southern branch of the Mohawk River, containing one hundred and twenty-five acres, more or less." The consideration was ten thousand dollars.

On June 20, 1834, Daniel Cady and Margaret C., his wife, sold to Elisha Tibbits, for the consideration of \$17,000, the same parcel of land as conveyed by the Oothout heirs to Cady, with the exception of twenty acres conveyed to the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad September 1, 1835, thus proving the ownership of the whole of Green Island by the Tibbits family.

On September 25, 1834, was recorded a "release of rents reserved," for the consideration of \$750. This cancelled that part of the Killaeen Van Rensselaer-Peter Schuyler deed relating to the payment of one-tenth of the crops.

The surveying and laying out of the land into building lots must have begun soon after the purchase by Tibbits, Albany Avenue being the first thoroughfare that

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was opened, leading from the Troy bridge to the then called West Troy bridge. This is very evident, as there seems to have been many transactions in the Tibbits family, as, for example, the conveying by the will of LeGrand Cannon to his wife, Mary B. Cannon, dated 1851, of 190 lots located north of the railroad plot of 15 acres; also the deed of Thomas M. Tibbits and

wife to LeGrand B. Cannon conveying fifty-nine and one-half lots for a consideration of \$8,250. There are many other transactions which are matters of record which show quite a remarkable number of changes brought about by the sons and daughters of the Tibbits family marrying into other families and so bringing other names into these transactions.

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### CHAPTER II

The southern portion of Green Island, that part lying south of the Troy bridge, was wild and uncultivated, with clusters of trees growing about, making it an ideal spot for picnic parties, many of which came each summer from Troy and West Troy. It was also a favorite camping ground for numbers of Indian tribes, particularly members of the St. Francis tribe from Canada, who came here each summer. Running along about where the D. and H. freight house now stands was quite a knoll or ridge, extending from what is now Albany Avenue to the river, and running south a little beyond the freight house. This knoll was about ten feet high at its highest point. These St. Francis Indians always camped near this ridge, no one being able to say just when they went. It was also invariably noticed that after their departure the earth on and about the ridge in various places had been disturbed.

The reason for this was not known until some years later, when the Troy bridge was constructed. Then quite a considerable portion of the gravel of which the ridge was composed was used by the bridge builders for filling purposes. During the removal of this gravel a number of skeletons were discov-

ered, together with a number of brass buttons and silver coins. These were so badly corroded that it was impossible to decipher the markings. It was very generally believed that during the French and Indian War a battle had been fought near the place, and that the dead were buried on that ridge, and that these Indians were digging up the remains of their people and taking them back to their own burying-grounds.

Green Island was well-known to the Indians, and the great number of flint arrow-heads found is good evidence that they camped on the island in large numbers. They seemed to prefer certain parts for their camping grounds, one part being north of Tibbits Avenue, between the D. and H. tracks, and extending north to the old Powers Farm House. All of this became part of the Ford property. Hundreds of arrow-heads have been found along this tract of land, most of them imperfect. It is possible that these Indians came to this part with the idea of making their arrow-heads, and that during the process the ones spoiled were thrown away and only the perfect ones kept.

It needs but little imagination to picture the Indians living along the

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banks of these great rivers, the Hudson and the Mohawk, bounded as they were by magnificent forests, both of which provided fish and game beyond all their needs, nor is it to be wondered at that Green Island, with its clean gravelly shores, high banks and level lands, protected by the surrounding waters of the Hudson and the Mohawk, should have appealed to

them.

Few of us realize that we are living in one of the most romantic and picturesque regions in our country, being as we are at the threshold of the great Adirondack district, and its vast stretch of virgin forests, all combining to make it one of the most beautiful and sublime examples of God's great power in nature.

### CHAPTER III

Green Island's industrial history dates from the year 1835 and from that time until the present it has been associated with enterprises which have been of more than ordinary interest and importance. I believe it can be truthfully said that Albany and Green Island are the birthplaces of the greatest industry the world has ever known. Few of us appreciate the wonderful development of the railroad, how it has grown with leaps and bounds to its present gigantic proportions, all within the memory of persons who are living today. One finds it hard to believe, not only as to the growth of the railroad, but also as to the effect it had on the industrial, financial and social affairs of the world, for it is the railroad which has made it possible to develop and make use of the great resources of our country, and just as the year 1934 will mark a new era in the twentieth century, just so did the year 1831 mark the beginning of a new era of the nineteenth century.

The first railroad built was from what is now West Albany to the top of the hill at Schenectady, a distance of 12 miles. The first train was run July 25, 1831. The next year a gravity road was built at each end of the line and the

cars allowed to run by gravity into the city, being drawn up the hill by cables wound around large drums which were operated by stationary engines. This custom was continued for several years when the road was extended at both ends and the trains were drawn by locomotives directly into the cities of Albany and Schenectady.

The second road was built from Schenectady to Saratoga Springs, being completed in 1834 and the third was the Rensselaer and Saratoga running from Troy to Saratoga Springs. This road was completed and the first train run on October 6, 1835. At first the trains ran only to Ballston Spa, connecting there with the Schenectady and Saratoga Railroad thus laying the foundation of the great Delaware and Hudson system.

Green Island at once became a railroad center, in fact it developed into one of the greatest railroad centers of the world. To understand just how this came about we only have to study the conditions existing at that time. The Albany and Schenectady Railroad completed building the Troy and Schenectady Railroad in 1843. This was the connecting link between a number of roads which were being built, one from Schenectady to

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Utica, one from Utica to Syracuse, and so to Buffalo.

These roads in 1853 finally came under one management which was called the New York Central Railroad Company. Green Island had been the terminal for the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad from the time it was completed. It now became the principal eastern terminal of the New York Central lines on account of the Troy bridge which made it possible for all through freight as well as passenger traffic to reach New York without change. This, of course, was also true of western freight and passenger travel. The Troy and Greenbush Railroad was built in 1845. This road was taken over by the New York Central when it built its line in 1851. The New York Central and Hudson River Railroad were consolidated in 1869 under the name of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad and became one of the greatest

railroads of the world.

The only bridge crossing the Hudson River at the time the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad was constructed was at Waterford. The bridge was built in 1804. It was the original plan of the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad to cross the river at that point, but the village officials of Lansingburg refused to allow the company to run its trains through the village so other plans had to be adopted. This was done by applying to the State Legislature for permission to build in connection with the road trestles, approaches, and so forth. This request was granted, notwithstanding the strong protest of Albany, which had been trying to obtain a bridge charter ever since 1814. A bridge was not built at Albany until 1866 owing largely to the opposition from Troy, together with the ferry interests in Albany.

### CHAPTER IV

The Troy bridge, or long bridge, as it was called, was built by the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad to run its train to and from Troy to Saratoga. It was completed in 1835. It was one of the great bridges of its time, being one continuous bridge from Troy to Green Island. It was 1,600 feet long with a draw on the Troy side, sixty feet long and equipped with a device which made it possible for two men to open and close it.

The bridge was built on eight massive stone piers. It was closed on both north and south sides except for an opening at Center Island which was about six feet wide and was for the use of working men employed in the Starbuck Ma-

chine Shop. Some 1,700,000 feet of lumber were used in the construction of the bridge. The south side was used for teaming, next to that the railroad tracks over which the trains were drawn by horses and running along the tracks, protected by a railing, was the foot passage. One can imagine how dark it must have been on the bridge even at midday.

Horses were used to draw the trains over the bridge and down River Street to the old Troy House, where the Hotel Troy now stands. The freight station was situated where the Manufacturers' Bank was before it entered its present commodious building. The custom of drawing the trains as well as

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switching in the yards with horses was continued until 1854 when an addition was built on the north side of the bridge after which trains were taken across by locomotives.

On Saturday, May 10, 1862, at noon, sparks from a locomotive set fire to the bridge on the Troy side. This was the origin of the most destructive and devastating fire that ever occurred in the city. The bridge was rebuilt at once but only as far as Center Island, as the fire did not burn beyond that point. It was of wood, but larger and more modern than the old one. The passage was on the south side and not inclosed. It had a roof and an inclosed railing about four feet high. In the early days the bridge on the Green Island side was used for a round house, the engines being run into the bridge to protect them from the weather. The bridge on the Green Island side was replaced with an iron one in

1879 and the one on the Troy side in 1884.

The Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad Company after completing the Troy and Green Island bridge, built the bridge crossing the lower Mohawk from Green Island to then West Troy, thus opening up the first thoroughfare in the village now known as Albany Avenue.

There remains no question of law as to whether this street belongs to the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad as it is part of one of the four plots sold by Cady to the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad and in the deed is a requirement that they build and maintain the bridge. The survey was made by Sidney A. Beers both for the bridges and the railroad, blazing with an axe the route to be taken through the woods which extended from the lower end of the Island to and through Powers' Grove. This became Cannon Street.

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### CHAPTER V

The first map of Green Island was made by Sidney A. Beers in August, 1833. A new and corrected map was made by William Roberts in September, 1848. The canal, as was also the dam from Troy to Green Island, was completed in 1823. The dam was built to operate the lock which was located on the Troy side. It also furnished power for a number of manufacturing concerns in Troy and both the saw mill and Crampton and Belden's sash and blind factory in Green Island.

The present generation can little realize the great changes that have taken place on and about the Hudson River from the year 1840 to recent years. The river front of

Troy, West Troy and Green Island was a scene of great activity from the time of the opening of navigation, when the great numbers of canal boats would tie up at the side cut at West Troy until the rush to get out of the canal before freezing time. Things were kept moving.

One could look out over the river at any time of the day and see either the John S. Ide, the MacAlister or the John Oliver and the Groux, all little side-wheel steam tugboats moving up or down the river with canal boats in tow and numberless little tugboats running about and perchance a big side-wheel tugboat from New York slowly making its way over to the



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side cut, where the tow would be broken up, some of the boats going through the Erie Canal, while others would be bound for Champlain. These were everyday sights but now and then, when crossing the bridge, looking, as one usually does, down the river, a sloop or a great two-masted schooner could be seen with all sails set silently making its way to the landing in Troy and few indeed who did not stop and watch with that peculiar feeling which a great ship seems to inspire.

And the river above the dam was changed. When the saw mill was in operation great rafts were floated down the river every spring. Some would shoot the dam and proceed down the river, but most of them would tie up on the Green Island side near the gully to be sawed up in the mill for building purposes.

This was also the swimming place for men and boys of Green Island. The rafts, extending along the shore for hundreds of feet and well out into deep water, made a bathing place that has never been equaled in this section.

The dam raised the water for a considerable distance in both the Hudson and the Mohawk Rivers, so helping to carry out the improvements to the Erie Canal as in the laws of 1849, chapter 27. The State Basin, known as the Mohawk Basin, was constructed and it became part of the canal system of the state. Originally this was a shallow stream of water not navigable by boats, through which a portion of the waters of the Mohawk effected a junction with those of the Hudson. It was called the South Sprout of the Mohawk River.

The basin was formed by building a pier at the south end and a dyke at the north end. The pier was really a dam and in connection with it a lock was built which allowed boats to pass either way. The dyke at the north end had an opening through which a portion of the Mohawk waters could flow. By this arrangement the water was increased from a depth of two or three feet to 15 or 16 feet at the south end and to four or five feet at the north end. Withal this basin was of considerable value to Green Island.

## CHAPTER VI

The first industry to be established in Green Island was the saw mill, which was built by George Tibbits in 1836. Mr. Tibbits did not run the mill himself but leased it to various persons. One of the first to lease the mill was a Mr. Crowner. He was followed by Stephen Viele, who ran it until about 1845 when it was leased to Elisha Morse of Waterford who, with his sons, Joshua and Charles, operated to its full capacity very successfully for about fifty years. Under this management it became one of

the great saw mills of its time.

Many persons living in our village a few years ago could remember it, but more especially it will be recalled by the men who were boys in the sixties and seventies, for it was an institution of great interest to the average boy, there being about it a certain trace of mystery to which was added a real bit of danger, making it a place which attracted men as well as boys.

But no one can understand this quite as well as he who had

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seen the veteran Sawyer, Chris Slingerland, with his gang of men, hook onto a log of oak or chestnut, some of them three feet or more through, great sticks of timber at least thirty feet long, and watch them draw it up the inclined runway which extended down to the water, and their business-like way of getting hold of it with their log-hooks, rolling it on the movable carriage, then measuring off the cuts to be made and the clamping down, all preparatory to the great moment for which we had been waiting.

Then Chris would take hold of the lever by which the carriage was controlled and slowly start the whole thing toward the great saw at the other end, which seemed to be singing itself asleep. But as the log is pressed slowly but surely against it, it begins to whine and buzz, the noise ever increasing as the pressure and speed are increased until it becomes a maddened demon as it bites into the heart of the great log with the sound of a million bumble bees on a hot summer day. Then, when the cut was made, the carriage rushed back at top speed, the process to be repeated until the log was completely sawed into boards.

How it all brings back boyhood days, the fragrance of the newly sawed wood, the clean sweet smell of hemlock and spruce, and with memories naturally comes the recollection of the early life of the boys and girls of Green Island.

Some fifty or sixty years ago it was, above all, an outdoor life for the girls as well as the boys. Every boy had his fishing tackle, many of them had boats and a goodly number had guns. The principal game was, of course, baseball so that, altogether, the boys were kept

fairly busy. We did not have "the movies" to go to nor did we have bath rooms in our homes. As for "the movies," by the time a boy had finished his chores and eaten his supper, he was ready for bed and as for the bath rooms, all I can say is that the Green Island boys did not need them, particularly in the summer, for you were just as likely to find him in the water as out. When we remember that the lad always shed his shoes about the time the robins came all he had to do before going into the house was to pump a little water from the cistern—just enough to take off the worst of the dirt so mother would not scold too much—he did not have to bother taking off shoes and stockings every day. More than one boy has failed to be the first "in" by having to fool around with shoe strings.

Then in the winter came the skating, ice boating and sledding. Skating, not on the rink, but from the dam to the Waterford bridge on the Hudson and on the basin or on the canal to Albany and back. The ice boats were really great boats, beautiful in workmanship and wonderful for their speed. One could stand on the river bank and see scores of these boats looking like great birds with their white sails. Nothing like it is seen on the river today. Withal, the life of the boys of Green Island in those early days was a free yet innocent and wholesome one well calculated to develop honest, upright, self-reliant men.

I have digressed to this great length for two reasons. One is that the boys I have been speaking of were many of them the men of Green Island in the past and a few of the present. I have a second reason. It is to correct the idea which some people profess to be-

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lieve—that Green Island is good enough to live in only as long as one has to. And right here in our history is the proper place to dispel any such notion, for here we encounter the individuals, and names will be used. Many of these names are familiar to us, as they have been associated with Green Island affairs for many years, their

owners having taken an active part in village, school, town or county matters as well as church and social doings in our village. They have lived and died here, and their sons and daughters are following in their footsteps. It behooves us to remember that Green Island is and will be just exactly what we make it.

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### CHAPTER VII

The second industry to be established in Green Island was the foundry which was located at the head of Hudson Avenue. It fronted on George Street, and was built in 1836, shortly after the saw mill was completed. The foundry changed hands quite a number of times during the first ten years. It was first owned by Seabury & Ives, who operated the foundry for about one year, when John Morrison and William Manning became interested in the company.

In 1838 Seabury & Ives retired from the firm, and Austin Granger was taken into partnership, each member owning one-third interest. Granger held his interest for a short time only, the firm becoming Morrison & Manning. This firm made a stove called "The Troy Airtight Stove," which was used very extensively, and was the means of making Mr. Morrison a rich man. Morrison & Manning did business until 1848, when they sold out to Alexander Morrison, son of John Morrison, and Thomas M. Tibbits, who conducted the business until January 1st, 1854, when it was sold to Edmund Filley, Lucien Newbury, Jay H. Filley and Marcus L. Filley.

In February, 1859, Newbury and Jay Filley sold their interest to Marcus L. Filley. Under the management of the latter this foundry

developed into one of the greatest stove foundries in the country. One specialty of Mr. Filley's foundry was wood-burning stoves for the trade of the South and the Far West, where wood was used exclusively as fuel. An interesting development of this part of the business was brought out during the Civil War, when all relations of the South with the North had been cut off, emphasizing the fact that so many were using the Marcus L. Filley cook stove, which had been manufactured particularly for this trade.

And it is quite interesting to note that as soon as peace was declared, Mr. Filley got in touch with his former customers, realizing that they would need help; so, sending tools and materials, was able to give them valuable assistance in re-establishing themselves. This, of course, had to be done on credit, Mr. Filley taking his chances of being reimbursed. It is noteworthy that in a few years these debts were entirely paid. Mr. Filley also manufactured a coal-burning cook stove which was used very extensively throughout the whole country. Altogether, it can be said that this foundry was of very great material value to Green Island, particularly in those early days. Marcus L. Filley died January 16, 1893.

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Owing to this and other reasons, the manufacture of stoves in this foundry was discontinued.

The upper end of Green Island was, in those days, a very busy place, the foundry employing about 150 men, and the saw-mill about 25 men. This accounts for the building up of this section of the island at that early day. John Morrison built the house just north of the foundry, living here until he sold his interest in the foundry, when he moved to Troy, buying and living in the house just south of the then Security Trust Company and later owned by Mayor Burns. After this, James Morrison, brother of John, who was

foreman of the foundry, lived in the Morrison homestead, William and James Morrison of Green Island being born there. Alexander Morrison built and lived in the house at the corner of Hudson Avenue and Bleeker Street, later owned by William Harter. Christopher Slingerland and his family moved here from Michigan, making the journey by wagon. They lived in the house at the corner of Hudson Avenue and Tibbits Avenue.

The next article will refer to other industries and affairs relating to the upper end of Green Island.

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### CHAPTER VIII

I thought it might be of interest to make some mention of the houses in this part of our village along about 1848. The following are in addition to those referred to heretofore. The "farmhouse," as it was called, was over near where the D. & H. roundhouse had its site. It was built by the Tibbits people and was one of the oldest houses on the Island. It was rented to a Mr. Percival, who ran the farm and who was the first milkman on the Island. He also carried milk to then West Troy. Later a Mr. Swatling took over the farm, also peddling milk.

Percival built a store on the corner of George Street and Tibbits Avenue for his son. The business was afterwards bought by Patrick Canfield, who ran it for quite a number of years. The Percival farmhouse was sold some years ago to Mr. Clifford, who moved over to James Street.

Another old structure was the black house, as it was called, which

stood on the north side of Tibbits Avenue facing what later was designated George Street. This house was moved down from Powers' Grove and was the first of quite a remarkable number of house-movings on the island. In fact, it seemed to be a fad in those early days for a man to buy his lot and then look around for a house. When he found one that suited him, both in price and otherwise, he bought it and moved it on his lot, moving it perhaps half a mile or more. But a little thing like that did not trouble him. He did not have to bother about building a house anyway.

Another old house at the head of Tibbits Avenue, near the boat-house, was the Ellery Crandall house. Crandall was the ferryman of those days. He had a large skiff in which he carried the people over and back. His wife, too, would do her part in this work by guiding her husband across the river in thick foggy weather. This she did

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by slapping a board against the fence at regular intervals. I suppose she would give a slap, then count ten, give another slap, and so on, thus by the sound guiding him back and forth.

Crandall worked on the road as well. Each householder was supposed to pay 75 cents for this work. In connection with this a story is told about Crandall who, while working on Albany Avenue, asked a woman for his 75 cents. She politely told him she had no intentions of paying him the 75 cents or any other amount, saying she had moved into the country on purpose to be rid of taxes. Crandall told her that everyone paid him 75 cents but she persisted in refusing to pay, so Crandall walked into the house and took a clock which was standing on the mantel and walked out with it. Now a

clock in those days was quite an expensive article and every family did not have one, so the woman, rather than lose her clock, paid the price.

Another manufacturing establishment in this part of the village at that time was the scale works of Sampson & Tibbits. It was located at the dam, was built by Tibbits, and the manufacture of scales was conducted for a number of years. Quite a number of these scales were in use for many years, even some up to the present time. Later Mr. Tibbits retired from the concern and the business was discontinued. The building stood empty until 1867 when it was rented by Crampton & Belden. There were perhaps half a dozen other houses scattered around, all in sight of the foundry.

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## CHAPTER IX

There was very little going back and forth from the upper end of the Island to the lower end and vice versa, particularly after dark. Many of the men who worked in the foundry lived in North Troy, crossing the ice in winter and by boat in summer. It is hard for the people of today to realize how really lonely and wild Green Island was in those early days. One can get some idea of it when talking with the older inhabitants.

Mrs. Martin Furey, born in Troy in 1840 and coming to Green Island with her parents in 1848, had a wonderful knowledge relating to Green Island's early days. Having a remarkable memory, she was able to give a clear and concise description of conditions and many of the circumstances and happenings which leave no doubt

as to their reliability. And one must indeed be impressed with the great changes.

When a young girl and returning from school, Mrs. Furey called to see a girl friend just in time to see a man trying to throw the girl's uncle downstairs. Their cries frightened the man away. Later this man was prowling about and following Alexander Morrison, the foundryman. Again Morrison as he was returning from Troy on horseback, came suddenly upon the same man hiding in a lumber pile on Hudson Avenue, and Morrison, drawing a revolver, threatened to shoot the fellow if he ever caught him about again.

Altogether the man had spread terror among the people and with very good reason for a few weeks later he murdered the farmer for

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whom he worked and the farmer's wife, for which crime he was convicted and hanged in Troy.

Again Mrs. Furey told how she and her mother, while on their way to West Troy, now Watervliet, to church, saw, as they approached Albany Avenue, people gathered about a house and as they drew near they could tell by the look of horror and fear on the faces that something out of the ordinary had happened. As they came to the house a man who knew them took them in and there on the floor lay a young woman stabbed to death and nearby lay a man, although dead, who had killed her. He had committed the crime be-

cause she would not leave her home and live with him.

Mrs. Furey also told about the little Quinn girl who used to carry dinner to her father who worked on the bridge. One day the draw was open and she climbed down, thinking she could get across. The men, not knowing she was there, closed the draw and killed her.

And it is not a bit strange that almost invariably will come the remark, "Ah, but those were the good old days." But after all, when one stops to think about it, perhaps it is not so strange after all, for it was the time of their youth, the golden time of life.

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### CHAPTER X

Another incident of about 1849 was of three men living in the village going to California to make their fortune. One had left a wife and a little child behind and before going half way he decided he must return. This he did, arriving home late at night. Of course his wife did not expect him and after replying to his knock, she refused to admit him, but finally he convinced her who he was and that he had come back.

The other two went on, finally reaching California. In about two years another one of the party returned and that one was William Torrance. Shortly after his return he, with two others named Russell and De Coff, built a wooden shop on Hudson Avenue, where the Methodist Church was erected later, and started to make malleable iron. He had previously worked in the John Morrison foundry. A few months later his shop burned down. Mr. Torrance at once rebuilt and became the sole owner.

This was in 1852, the beginning of the Green Island Malleable Iron Works which became one of the greatest foundries of its kind in the country, employing one hundred men or more. In 1857 J. W. Merriam became associated with Mr. Torrance, the firm name being Torrance & Merriam. In 1861 J. Lawrence was taken into partnership, changing the name to Torrance, Merriam and Co. The business continued under this name until 1886. William Torrance died in 1871 and his oldest son, William, succeeded him in the business, the firm name not changing. In 1886 the company was reorganized, under the name of Torrance and Co., Green Island Malleable and Grey Iron Works. This company later moved to Voorheesville.

With the establishing of the Torrance foundry and the moving here of the Eaton and Gilbert Car Works in 1853 came the rapid development of this part of the Island. Previous to that time the

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only works on the lower end of the Island were the Rensselaer and Saratoga car shops which were started about 1842, but in a very small way.

With the coming of the Eaton and Gilbert Car Works, which had been established for over twenty years and with a reputation which extended throughout the United States and Mexico as builders of stage coaches, together with its strong financial standing, came the sure and steady growth of Green Island.

The Eaton & Gilbert Company was organized by Orasmus Eaton and Uiril Gilbert in 1830. They were located on Sixth Street, Troy, where the Union Station now stands. At first they manufactured stage coaches. The first railroad coaches were built in 1841 and very shortly afterward they commenced the building of freight cars. In 1852 the shops were burned and the concern came to Green Island in 1853, having sold its Troy site to the Union Railroad Company.

### CHAPTER XI

In order that we may keep the proper sequence, it will be necessary to go back to about 1842. As has been said in the previous article, Green Island was divided into two quite distinct parts, the lower and the upper sections. The upper part was the first to be developed for two reasons. The Tibbits bought all the upper part of Green Island in 1796, nearly forty years before Elisha Tibbits bought the lower part.

The second reason is that with the completion of the State Dam came a great water power. There are few people in Green Island who have the least idea of the promising future the Tibbits had planned for Green Island through the development of this water power. The sawmill the foundry and the scale works were just the beginning of a great system of manufacturing establishments which were to be operated by water power.

It was the plan to have the canal extend down Hudson Avenue as far as the water works, there to empty into the Hudson River. The canal was started and partly finished as

far as Arch Street, but owing to the unwillingness of the State government to come to any agreement with the Tibbits people regarding water power, after many bickerings and many delays, they finally became discouraged and gave up the whole project. This was in 1838.

But for this Green Island would have developed more rapidly and very likely would have rivaled Cohoes in the mill industry as it would have been possible to have built on both sides of the canal, thus providing many splendid mill sites. All this, of course, would not only have increased the value of the Tibbits holdings, but it would also have been of great benefit to the people of Green Island.

But the failure of these plans retarded the development of this section of Green Island for a number of years and it also changed the trend of building. The Hudson Avenue section was the expected manufacturing portion, so the people wishing to build homes on the Island bought on the west side, which accounts for the building so early on Paine Street below Mar-

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ket Street. All this part of the village at the time was covered with brush and berry bushes.

Mrs. Amos Forcey, mother of Frank Forcey, loved to tell of coming over from Troy every week to visit her aunt, Mrs. Messer, who lived on Paine Street. After crossing the bridge she had to follow a path to get over to Paine Street. She recalled the many times she had been berrying where the park came later; also along George Street. This was about 1848 and 1849.

There was on Paine Street, be-

sides the Messer house, the Moreau house, the Taft house, the Taylor house, the Winnie house, the Miller house and the Spain house. It was in this last mentioned house that the much thought of Larry Spain was born. There is no reason to doubt that the first houses that were built on Green Island were on Albany Avenue, as that was the first thoroughfare to be opened connecting, as it did, the Troy and West Troy bridges, thus making a direct route to and from those places. And so it was natural that people should settle along Albany Avenue first.

### CHAPTER XII

It has been conceded that Mathew Hyde was the first resident of Green Island, moving from West Troy about 1841, having built a house just south of McGrath's corner on Albany Avenue. In the next year five or six houses were built, all in this section, making altogether a dozen houses on the Island to which is to be added a school house and a restaurant with a bowling alley attached. This included the Powers and Percival farm houses and three houses near the dam.

Among the oldest houses on Albany Avenue were the Loomis house, the James Glass house, the Lamber house, the Cushing house, also two houses owned by John L. Ayres, father of John L. and Mary Ayres of this village. Mr. Ayres was the first man to make a specialty of selling oysters, having a large trade in Troy and Green Island. One of the Ayres houses was the murder house, as it was called on account of the murder and suicide referred to in a former article. This house was moved to George Street, then later

to Upper Paine Street, near Arch Street. The other Ayres house was also moved to Hudson Avenue near Swan Street. It was owned by Joseph Hayes.

Another old building below the bridge was the "flat iron house." It was a restaurant and was conducted by Mr. Hamer. There was a bowling alley located at No. 1 Hudson Avenue where the Fred Uhl house had its site. The building was moved from West Troy and a few years later it was moved back to West Troy.

The Corey house was counted among the old buildings. It formerly stood on the east side of Hudson Avenue. A good many years later it was moved to another site.

The first hotel was erected in 1850. It faced the western approach of the Troy bridge at Albany Avenue and Washington Street and was called the Green Island Hotel. It was conducted by John Goodell and was known throughout all this section as a great house for entertaining. In 1864 the hotel was taken over by the N. Y. C. R. R. and was converted into a railroad



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station. Mr. Goodell lived to be a very old man, having lived under the administrations of every President of the United States during his life.

Mr. Lansing was the first regular wood and coal dealer in Green Island. His daughter, Miss Libbie Lansing, had a clear remembrance of the early days of Green Island, recalling the happenings of the fifties and sixties of the last century, such as the murder and suicide, the great piles of lumber brought down the canal and piled in the lumber yards, and the building of many of the houses; also the

great flood of 1857 when she and her mother and sisters were taken from the second story windows in boats.

She also told of going to the private school conducted by the Doolittles in a little house with a high stoop on Hudson Avenue. She told, too, of attending a church sociable one night in the Dodge house, located on the corner of George Street and Hamilton Street, when the news came that Lee had surrendered, the excitement and rejoicing making it a night never to be forgotten.

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### CHAPTER XIII

The first schoolhouse was located about where Swan and George Streets are. Mr. Doolittle was the school teacher. The children from the lower end of the island brought their dinners, as it was too far for them to go home. George Street was not cut through so they had to come by the way of the river road. A few years later Mr. Davis erected a building which was used for a schoolhouse. It was located on George Street near Hamilton Street. Mrs. Dodge was the teacher in the school. Later this building was sold and moved over on Hudson Avenue. Dr. Steenburg built a drug store on the lot. The Dodge house, at the corner of George and Hamilton Streets, was built by the R. & S. R. R. Co. for Mrs. Dodge, whose husband was killed on the road. It was built in 1851.

Two-thirds of the people who had lived any great number of years on the Island went to school to Mrs. Dodge. She was a very refined and well-educated woman and was held in the greatest respect. Near the south corner of George

and Hamilton Streets was a little house built in 1850 by Mr. Elliot, father of Captain Elliot, who some years later, moved to the house and built and conducted the hotel which he called the Elliot Hotel.

The Easton & Gilbert Car Works which moved to Green Island in 1853 was the greatest industry that Green Island had for many years. When running to its full capacity, upwards of eight hundred men were employed. It covered an area of about 12 acres and was equipped with the best machinery, both for working wood and metal. It also had its own foundry. Uri Gilbert, who was the real master and head of the great industry, was a fine example of the aristocratic employer of the old school. Head of the greatest establishment of its kind in the world, spare in figure, of medium height, dignified and courteous, he fitted well in the business which bore his name. His presence alone inspired confidence and respect.

The name Gilbert on either a stage coach or a railroad coach

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was a guarantee of all that was best in material and workmanship. These are no idle words, but absolute facts.

The Gilbert Car Works was known all over the world, not alone for its size and the excellence of its work, but also for its initiative, as, for example, it built the first eight-wheel passenger coach. The cars were run on the Troy and Schenectady Railroad in 1856. This company also built the first sleeping car as well as the first drawing room car.

It also built the first electric cars and these cars were run on the second electric road ever built. It ran from Albany to Schenectady. They were built for the Thompson Howds Company of Lynn, Mass. Very few people know that the Gil-

bert Car Company built for the Compressed Air Company of Toledo, O., the car which it expected would take the place of the horse car, and there was the Patti car or cars, for there were three cars together, a drawing room car, a dining car and a sleeping car. These cars cost \$60,000. They were finished in rosewood and were of Egyptian style of architecture. Even the screwheads were gold-plated.

The car built for Don Pedro, then emperor of Brazil, was another wonderful car. It was the first one to be built with a dome top. In fact there is so much to be written about the Gilbert Car Works that it would make this article too long. So reference will be made to this great industry in my next communication

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### CHAPTER XIV

Any history of Green Island from the year 1853 that does not devote a considerable portion to the Eaton and Gilbert Car Works will certainly be very unsatisfactory and incomplete. The relationship between this great company and the railroad industry was so close that they became practically one. So it was the logical thing for the Car Works to locate on Green Island, where the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad, the third railroad built in the world, would practically run through its works. This proved of great advantage to each company, particularly in the early days. The R. & S. repair shops, which were started about 1840, had gradually increased until, by the time the Eaton & Gilbert Car Works moved to the village, the repair shops had become well established so that Green Island became a very busy place, showing a

healthy and steady increase in population.

In 1849 there were about 300 people in Green Island. By 1853 this number had been increased to 800 and in 1855, when the first official census was taken, the population was 1,324; in 1860, 1,600; in 1865, 2,104. The great majority of these newcomers had been or became associated with the Gilbert Car Works either as executives or as workmen and just as the cars they built were no ordinary cars, so many of these men were no ordinary workmen, but specialists, designing and building many special cars for special service like the Patti car which was designed as a home for the great singer and it was that and more. It was a palace on wheels. This car, as well as the Don Pedro car, was mentioned in a recent issue.

There are many other cars just

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as worthy of notice, as, for example, the White Mountain observation cars. They were the first observation cars ever built. They were shaped like a dumb-bell. The ball at one end was fitted for sleeping apartments and the other for a dining room, while the center was the observation part fitted with wonderful plate-glass windows running along the sides making it possible for the rider to look out of both sides of the car. The interior was finished in olive green, the windows and woodwork were very beautifully decorated, the decorations representing snow, frost and icicles done in silver.

The first drawing-room cars ever run in Europe were built at the Gilbert Car Works. There were twelve cars, two trains of six cars each. They were built for the Great Eastern Railroad in Great Britain. They were built in sections and shipped in that way. Percy Fenton of Green Island was sent over with them to superintend the setting up. And so one could continue indefinitely, if space permitted, about cars built by this company. They were works of art. There was more put on an ordinary day-coach in those days than is now put on drawing-room cars. All the woodwork was hand finished, sandpapered, scraped, pumic-stoned, and rubbed down with oil before being varnished. Mahogany, rosewood, black walnut, California red-wood, basswood, lignum-vitae, and ebony were used, not the veneer, but the solid woods. From the wheels to the ventilators on the roofs, they were the subject of careful study and design.

The interiors were wonderful for their beauty and effect, the deep rich coloring of the woods and the upholstery being softened and

subdued by delicate and shadowing tints which produced a harmony of coloring that was exquisite beyond belief. Nothing like it is seen today. And as we look back over the years we can better realize that these men were masters of their craft, wood workers, metal workers, upholsterers and painters.

Among these painters were men who became prominent in the profession of art, such as James Hart, the landscape painter, and his brother, William Hart, painter of animals. Also David Lithgow, artist and designer, whose work is well known. Mr. Lithgow lives in Green Island. He painted the great curtain in Proctor's New Theater in Troy. He is also creator of the wonderful Indian groups in the State Educational Building in Albany.

Many of the men connected with the Gilbert Car Works, either as workmen or as head of departments, took a great interest in the affairs of Green Island, such men as Joseph Hynes who, together with Edward Dwyer, had the contract for roofing cars for the Gilberts. No man worked harder or did more for the interest of Green Island than Mr. Hynes. Martin Eaton was another man, as was B. F. Manier, Mr. Fields and John Deal, not to overlook Frank H. Deal who served the village so long and faithfully as its attorney, ever striving with untiring zeal in the interests of Green Island. John Thompson was another employe of the Gilbert Car Works, having been connected with the painting department. William Feathe, former president of the Manufacturers' Bank of Troy, is another who was connected with the Gilbert Car Works, as was William Jarvis.

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Green Island in 1853 had several active manufacturing concerns. They were the saw mill, the Filley foundry, the Torrance foundry, the Eagle foundry, the Rensselaer and Saratoga repair shops and the Gilbert Car Works, all of which employed men. This, of course, brought about quite a demand for labor. Many new families moved to Green Island and the population increased rapidly. This, as in all newly settled communities, created new conditions together with new problems such as a better form of

government, new school facilities, and better streets.

On April 5, 1853, the Village of Green Island was incorporated and a charter was granted on June 18, 1853, the first village election was held. The following trustees were elected: Stephen Vieie, Jacob Yates, Robert Bogardus, Warren Groat and Alexander Morrison. This gave to Green Island the right and the power under the laws of New York State to govern its affairs and to solve its own problems which it proceeded to do.

### CHAPTER XV

In writing the history of a town like Green Island there is apt to be written much that is perhaps of no very great importance or value, but which might be looked upon rather in the light of memories. Of course this is true to some extent in this as in all such narratives. But, however, there is a close relationship existing between the custom and happenings of a people and the history of the place in which they live, the traits and character of its people being reflected in its history, and Green Island is in no way different in this respect. Its people have certain traits and characteristics which have entered largely into history. Religion is a trait of the Green Island people, and has been from the early days. This accounts for the organizing of the village's churches so early in its history and is shown in other ways as well.

A few of our older people may still recall the meetings which were held above the dam Sunday afternoon during the months of July and August. In those early days there were logs all along the green, as it was called, reaching

from the sawmill up to where the boathouse was established. Most of these logs had been squared and they made splendid seats as they were not piled up but just laid on the ground, one or two logs deep. It was the gathering place for many of the people of the Island on summer evenings. And here along the river bank on the peaceful Sabbath evenings the people would gather together, sitting around on the logs and engaging in a twilight service of song and perhaps a speaker or two. There would be men, women and children, regardless to which church they might by chance belong or whether they belonged to any church or not.

As we look over the history of the churches in our village, we must be impressed with the fact that God, in His goodness and wisdom, has given to each of our churches, just in the time of their greatest need, men of great devotion and earnestness. Such men as Dr. Crocker and Rev. J. J. Henning of the Presbyterian Church, Revs. Livingston and Eaton of the Methodist Church, Dr. Chapman,

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the pastor, Mr. Adler of the Episcopal Church, and Rev. William Connelly of the Roman Catholic Church, who came to the Island in the vigor of his youth, taking up the work as left by Rev. John McMenony, and proceeded to lay the foundation for the strong and well organized parish of today.

In spite of the speed with which the world is going and the trend of our young people away from organized religion, the churches of Green Island function splendidly, giving the gospel, through the various rituals of the denominations, to the people Sunday after Sunday. The congregations are maintained and the relationship be-

tween them becomes closer every year. Denominationalism has not been strong in Green Island. The members of the different churches fellowship freely and realize that their cause is one, no matter by what road they are striving to approach their goal.

The large part played by the churches in the life of the village demands a brief chapter of this history for each one of them. There are four churches in Green Island, the Presbyterian, the Methodist Episcopal, the Protestant Episcopal and the Roman Catholic. For a time the St. Peter's Armenian Apostolic Church also worshiped on the island, but now it has its own edifice in Troy.

### CHAPTER XVI

Many of the people who had come to Green Island were from nearby towns, a goodly number of whom were connected with and still attend the churches of their home towns. But there was quite a number coming from more distant places who could not attend their old church, so the question of places of worship was agitated as early as 1852, but did not take definite form until 1853 when the Presbyterians decided they would make an effort to build a church. They applied to the Second Street Presbyterian Church of Troy.

This church, together with the Second Presbyterian Church, also of Troy, decided they would help the little band of Green Island people in their efforts to have a church of their own. So a committee was appointed, Rev. Dr. Blatchford, Stephen Viele and James Remmington from the Second Street Church and Gordon Grant and Homer Merriam from the Second Church. This committee raised

\$1,200 with which they bought the plot where the church now stands and erected a small building, which was called the little white church. The building was commenced November 25, 1853, and was completed in February, 1854, and was dedicated February 28, 1854.

The first elders were James Remmington, George Beach and Stephen Viele and the first board of trustees were William F. Adams, Joseph D. Hardin, Frederick Kane, William H. Lansing and James Torrance. Mr. Adams was elected president; Mr. Hardin, clerk; James Torrance, treasurer; Mr. Lansing, collector. Christopher Slingerland was the first sexton. The total membership of the church numbered just 17. A regular pastor was not called until June 22, 1854, when Rev. William E. Jones accepted the call and became the first pastor. Before this ministers from Troy preached and conducted services.

The Presbyterians worshiped in

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this building until the year 1865, when it was sold to Peter Toner, who removed it and the present church was built, the architect being Mark F. Cummings of Troy; Kelly & Broderick, masons; H. Rock, carpenter, and S. D. Pierce, superintendent of erection. The original cost was \$10,000, but later quite an addition was built on the rear of the building and other changes made, which increased the cost quite considerably.

A few years later Mr. Bailey of Waterford, father-in-law of Dr. Bush, former pastor, presented the church with a fine Beach pipe organ, which was used about forty years when it was replaced by a beautiful Moeller organ. One-half of the cost of the new organ was given by Andrew Carnegie.

Eventually electric lights were installed in the church. Five beautiful chandeliers were placed. These changes added to its beauty and comfort. The plot on which the church now stands is the original plot. It was not until about 1910 that the lots and house on the corner of Clinton Street were acquired. The house which was

standing on the lot was built and owned by Stephen Viele. In 1908 this house was sold and moved to Paine Street and the present parsonage was built at a cost of \$6,000.

When the approaching completion of the Ford Motor Company plant made probable notable expansions in Green Island, the church decided to prepare for them. It extended its property substantially, laying the plans for institutional work and larger membership. Although the hopes of the congregation did not materialize the property was thus greatly improved. It is now a complete plant, large enough for any development in the community and adequate for any type of work which might properly come under the aegis of a church. The present value of the church property reaches close to \$100,000. The church is united in its labors, harmony exists and a unity of purpose inspires the people to persist in their efforts to make the Christian religion a mighty factor in the lives of the people of the community. The present pastor is Rev. M. Harmer Patton.

## CHAPTER XVII

The Green Island Methodist Episcopal Church, together with the North Troy, now Grace Methodist Church, was organized May 11, 1853, the two societies being governed by one church. Rev. B. M. Hall was presiding elder; Rev. J. L. Cook, pastor; Henry Davis and Joshua Colburn class leaders and Robert Bogardus, Charles A. Crawford and Elisha B. Winne stewards. There were 35 members in all, 18 of them belonging to the Green Island society. The first meetings were held in the house

of David Thompson, near the corner of Hudson Avenue and Market Street. The house, which is still standing is one of the first houses built on Hudson Avenue. This whole corner from George Street to Hudson Avenue was owned by Mr. Thompson, who used to work for the Eaton & Gilbert Co. before they moved to Green Island.

His daughter tells about how they used to hang out a lantern on dark nights so Mr. Thompson could find his way along the path. The first meetings were conducted

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by members from the North Second Street Church. The house soon proved to be too small so they were granted permission to hold their meetings in the little red school house located at George and Swan Streets.

In the meantime a lot had been purchased from Mr. Davis and the erection of a church commenced. This church, which was built of brick, together with the lot cost about \$4,000. It was completed in 1854 and was dedicated May 9, 1854, by Rev. J. B. Wakely of New York. In the summer of 1863 a parsonage was built and the debt of some \$2,000 was paid, all of which was accomplished largely through the efforts of the then pastor, Rev. J. W. Belknap.

In the fall of 1875 the front wall of the church was taken down, the side walls extended a distance of six feet and a new and much handsomer front built. This added to the comfort and convenience of

the church. The interior was painted and a new organ installed. Altogether the improvements cost about \$2,200, all of which was raised at the rededication which was held on February 3, 1876, Rev. B. I. Ives having charge of the services. In 1896 \$250 was deposited as a sinking fund for a new church and in 1897 the church was incorporated under the laws of New York State.

In the year 1909 the opportunity for which the people of the church had been waiting came. The Torrance foundry moved from the village and the building was torn down and the site offered for sale. Located on the east side of Hudson Avenue between Clinton and Center Streets, it made a most desirable spot. A portion of the plot was bought and a church which is a credit to the people and an ornament to the village was built at a cost of \$25,000. The pastor today is Rev. Fred C. Bennett.

## CHAPTER XVIII

St. Joseph's parish was organized in June, 1887. Before this time our Roman Catholic residents had been attending services either in Troy or what was then West Troy, but had been looking forward to the time when they should have their own church in which to worship. Like the other churches in our village it was the outgrowth of a small beginning—a few of the people getting together and organizing. John Hurley acted as secretary at the first meeting, and the following were present: John Dwyer, Peter Toner, Patrick Dwyer, M. McGrath, John Bolan, Thomas Quinn, T. Cornelius, P. Keating, C. Warnock, John Daley, P. Cahill, Patrick Canfield, Daniel Donovan,

Michael Keeler, Edward Hooley, Anthony Coffey, Mrs. Levins, Dennis Real, William Conroy, Patrick Grady, Richard Murray, Michael Keating, Louis Germain, Thomas Hynes, Martin Furey, Richard Leonard, John McDonough, John Broderick, Joseph Hynes and John Lavin.

There had been several informal meetings held before this, usually in the Gilbert Car Works at the noon hour, at one of which it was decided to hold the meeting referred to, at which a committee was appointed to secure a site and ask the bishop to help in their efforts to establish a parish.

This the bishop did by sending Rev. Daniel O'Connell, assistant

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priest at St. Patrick's Church in what was then known as West Troy. For the first six months meetings were held in Union Hall, located at the southwest corner of George and Market Streets. The first mass was said in this hall. After six months the services were held in Leonard's Hall at the corner of George and Center Streets. Meanwhile several sites were considered, and finally the one on which St. Joseph's stood later was selected. The first church was built under the pastorate of Rev. John McMenomy, Joseph Hynes and John O'Keefe were the first trustees and incorporators.

The first church had been completed under the pastorate of Father McMenomy, and in it the congregation worshiped for nineteen years, but from the very first Rev. Father William Connelly, as well as the trustees, laid their plans for a church which they considered more worthy of their parish, and under the leadership of Father Connelly they worked for the accomplishment of their purpose. The first step was taken when the lots on the corner of George and Swan Streets were purchased for \$9,000.

These lots had been owned by Marcus L. Filley, Sr., who had planned to build a residence on the Island, but for some reason he had changed his mind and sold the property to St. Joseph's Church. The house which stood on this lot was built by Mr. Viele, who operated the sawmill, and was one of the first houses built on Hudson Avenue. Father Connolly lived for a number of years in this house. When the church was built it was sold and moved. Mr. Viele also built the house on the corner of Hudson Avenue and Clinton Street which was bought by the Presby-

terian Church. The minister lived in this building until the new parsonage was built. This house was also sold and moved to Paine Street.

Father Connolly was a great lover of music, had a fine musical education himself, and devoted much of his time to drilling the young people and in that way interesting them in the musical part of the services. This he accomplished so well that the musical part of the services became very successful. Father Connolly's crowning work is the present beautiful church and parsonage, the cornerstone of which was laid June 22, 1890. Its original cost was about \$40,000. Mark Cummings of Troy was the architect, Lemmon and Roberts were the carpenters and John McGowan, a trustee of the church, the mason.

In later years the church has undergone renovation. Beautiful groups of oil paintings were added. This together with the electric lighting, designed to conform with the architecture of the church, lends a subdued effect and produces an atmosphere not only of beauty but also of peacefulness and reverence, and to all this must be added the beautiful altars built of marble.

The center altar was given as a memorial to Father Connolly. The devoted priest had given twenty-six years of his life to St. Joseph's Church. He was not only loved and respected by the people of his own parish, but by all the people of our village who knew him. He died in October, 1897. St. Joseph's parish has since undergone progressive changes. With hundreds of families connected with its congregation it is wielding tremendous influences for good. The present pastor is Rev. Austin J. Corbett.



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### CHAPTER XIX

St. Mark's Episcopal Church was organized November 23, 1865. The first services were held in the upper rooms of the Uri Gilbert carriage house, which was located on the southeast corner of George and Clinton Streets. The following were the organizers: Rev. Edgar T. Chapman, William C. Buell, John I. Thompson, Augustus Viele, M. D., William E. Gilbert, Thomas Smith, Hugh Stevenson, George H. Stevenson, Thomas Nimmo, William Livingston, Charles Burgess, Amos Webb, Thomas H. Richardson, Christopher Lintner, Hugh C. Neil, William Moore, John Watson, Nathaniel McFeeters, William H. Thornton, LeRoy Lane, M. D., and James Ford. At the meeting Messrs. Buell and Thompson were elected wardens and Messrs. Viele, Gilbert, Smith, H. Stevenson, Nimmo, Livingston and Marcus L. Filley, Sr., vestrymen.

These officials elected Rev. E. T. Chapman, rector. Services were held in the carriage house until the new church was completed December 12, 1867. In 1866 two lots were purchased on Hudson Avenue, at the head of Clinton Street, adjoining two lots which had been previously given to the church, the cornerstone of which was laid July 18, 1866. Messrs. Chapman, Thompson, Buell and Uri Gilbert were the building committee, Emlyn Leitell the architect and Otis G. Clark the builder.

The design of St. Mark's Church was taken from the celebrated Gothic architect, Upjohn, designer of St. Peter's Church in Albany. This beautiful little edifice is greatly admired by everyone. Its original cost was about \$17,000. In 1871 a splendid pipe organ was installed by Steer & Turner at a cost of \$1,700. This was a great addition

to the musical part of the service, and was highly appreciated. In 1880 quite an addition was built on the southeast corner of the chapel, costing about \$2,200. In 1883 a stone dock was built along the rear of the church property, which cost \$1,600, and which added a space forty-five feet wide and 120 feet long, all of which was filled in and made into a beautiful lawn and garden.

In 1884 Uri Gilbert, at a cost of \$5,500, gave to St. Mark's the beautiful rectory, which connects with the church at the southeast end. This was the crowning gift of Mr. Gilbert, who, from the very beginning of St. Mark's parish, had been its most generous supporter, giving not only of his money, but also of his time and counsel and who, at the time of his death, June, 1888, was serving the church as one of its wardens.

Many improvements have been made to the church, such as new windows, electric lights, steam heating and many other things which have not only added to the comfort of the people, but have shown their zeal for and their faithfulness to the church. The present valuation of the property is \$60,000.

St. Mark's has been blessed with rectors who have been unusually earnest and devoted in their work. The first was Mr. Chapman, who served the parish seven years. His was the work of the organizer, and to it he gave the best efforts of his life. How well he succeeded, St. Mark's stands today as a testimony. The second was Rev. R. J. Adler. He gave 28 years of his life to St. Mark's parish. He was the soul of devotion to his church and his people. He gave not only himself, but his money as well, how much no one will ever know. His

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work among his people was one of love, and by his request, when his work was done on earth, he was laid to rest in the shadow of the church he had served so long and so well.

A coincidence is that Richard Leonard and William C. Buell were the wardens when Mr. Chap-

man, in 1872, gave up his work at St. Mark's, and Richard Leonard and Uri Gilbert were the wardens who engaged Mr. Adler in 1874. Mr. Leonard was the father of Trustee Fred Leonard and Alfred Leonard. The latter was long a vestryman of St. Mark's. Mr. Adler died in 1902. The present rector is Rev. Herman J. Smith.

### CHAPTER XX

Green Island, like many of our villages and small towns, has suffered from fire at different times. The first fire in the island of any consequence was in 1864, when the Eaton-Gilbert Car Works were destroyed. This was not only the first big fire, but was the most costly Green Island ever suffered in its history. The main building was of brick and three stories high, extending from Clinton Street to Center Street on George. In it were built all the passenger coaches, the upholstery work all being done in the upper story of the building, and the painting and varnishing.

After the big shop, as it was called, was rebuilt it was only one story high. It extended from Clinton Street to Center Street. In it were built all the best coaches and all the finer work was done there. The paint and varnishing as well as the lettering were also done in the shop. After the fire the works were divided into sections—the freight car works and the horse car works.

The Torrance, Merriam & Co., foundry was burned to the ground, Feb. 18, 1875. Box 73 was pulled at 7 a. m. Gilbert Hose Company No. 1 worked for five hours to extinguish the blaze. Fred F. Buell, one of the charter members of the

gallant company, was second assistant captain at the time. The day was so cold that the firemen were impeded in the performance of their duty.

At a meeting Nov. 13, 1873, William E. Gilbert Hose Company of Green Island was organized with the following members: H. P. Bennett, Fred F. Buell, John J. Bolin, Ranson F. Cole, James Donnelly, Joseph Egan, Claude Gould, Elmer E. Rewick, William A. Torrance, William M. Torrance, Lyman P. Wood, John B. Warnock.

The following officers were elected at the first meeting of the company: Captain, H. P. Bennett; First Assistant Captain, Ranson F. Cole; Second Assistant Captain, Joseph Egan; President, Claude Gould; Vice President, William A. Torrance; Recording Secretary, Fred F. Buell; Financial Secretary, John J. Bolin; Treasurer, Lyman P. Wood.

The first home of the organization was a small frame building situated on George Street a short distance north of the police station. Its equipment was a "jumper" and 500 feet of hose loaned by the Washington Volunteer Steamer Company of Troy.

Gilbert Hose Company attended its first fire December 31, 1783, when it worked valiantly for three

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hours under the direction of Captain Bennett on a fire in the lumber yard of George W. Oliver on River Street, Troy. Its first run on the island was made April 20, 1874, when flames in a barn owned by John Bolins, on George Street, were extinguished.

On different occasions the company was called for aid to out-of-town fires. With the Ranken Steamer Company of Troy it went to Saratoga in October, 1874, to aid in extinguishing a fire in the Grand Hotel. The following month it combated a fire in the woods at Round Lake. October 16, 1878, it assisted the Troy Fire Department during 18 hours in conquering a serious fire in the Knowlson and Bonesteel lumber yard. After using its early quarters for some years the company, on the death of Mr. Gilbert, purchased the building from the Gilbert estate.

At the fiftieth anniversary of the organization a banquet was held at the Hampton Hotel in Albany. J. F. Wehmeyer was one of the speakers. Frank H. Deal also was heard. His reference to the service of the organization was instructive indeed. Thomas H. Kaye, president of the company, offered an address of welcome. Village President Daniel A. Coffey spoke entertainingly. The officers of the organization at the time were, Captain, George Bragle; Assistant Captain, George A. Luther; Chairman of Committee, Henry Farmer, President, Thomas H. Kay; Vice President, Harry Inglis; Assistant Chief, James Keith; Recording Secretary, J. Fred Wehmeyer; Financial Secretary, James A. Scott; Treasurer, Albert C. Belden. Arthur Bennett was the driver. Lawrence Spain had filled the same po-

sition many years before.

The officers of the Gilbert Hose Company are as follows: Captain, Henry S. Kennon; First Assistant Captain, William B. Gilbert; Secretary, Ernest Zoebel; President, Richard W. Thompson; Vice President, Harold Leonard; Financial Secretary, James Scott; Recording Secretary, A. H. Cruikshank; Directors, George Rennie, Alexander Sickles, A. H. Cruikshank, John F. Wehmeyer.

Under the direction of Chief John Berghamer, the Green Island Fire Department has offered assurance of splendid protection against any attack of a destructive element. McGowan Hose Company, No. 2, has long contributed splendid service in safeguarding life and property and in conjunction with Gilbert Hose Company has brought assurance to residents of the island that the destructive fires of the past are not likely to be experienced in the present or the future. Following are the officers of the organization: Captain, Francis M. Carlo; First Assistant Captain, Thomas J. Carter; Second Assistant Captain, August Weinand; President, N. J. O'Brien; Vice President, Charles Gainor; Financial Secretary, Gilbert J. Hebert; Recording Secretary and Treasurer, John J. Heffern; Trustees, Charles Heidger, Harry Gallenschutz.

In conclusion I wish to say, the citizens of Green Island always have been patriotic and progressive. During the World War every measure in the interests of the government's plans went over the top. To be a dweller of the community is a privilege which is worth treasuring. May the brilliant past of the village be reflected in its future.

THE END.