



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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A Story of a House on Hidley Road

Wes Allen, a resident of Hidley Road in North Greenbush died last fall. I didn't know him but people who did tell me that he and his wife Jennie would sell vegetables, pumpkins corn stalks and other goods from their home.

I have often driven along Hidley Road and wondered whether there was any connection between Wes Allen and the Hidley family who populated the area beginning in the late 1700's. In reading his obituary, it seems that he did have a connection with the Hidley family. Wes' mother Myrtle Allen was a Hidley by birth.

I've traced the family back to Johannes Heidle who emigrated from Germany and settled in Greenbush by 1769. He leased a 211 acre farm from the Van Rensselaer extensive land holdings on what is now Hidley Road. He had three sons who eventually divided the land between them. Through tracing deeds, I believe his son Michael lived in what was to be Wes Allen's house.

Michael Hidley (1773-1856) was the grandfather of the famous local artist Joseph Henry Hidley who did several landscapes of area scenes (mostly Poestenkill) and also did a portrait of his aged grandfather. No doubt the artist visited Michael at the Allen/Hidley house.

The house itself was probably built in the late 1700's and was occupied by Michael and his young family. The floor plan and interior structure indicate the house was built in stages: the first stage was a modest home for a young

family, the second stage probably around 1830 when Michael's son John was starting a family and later additions were added by future generations.

In the early 1900's, Myrtle Hidley married Harrison Allen, a farmer and general contractor from Sand Lake and they became the owners of the house. This is where Wes Allen spent his life.

Lately I've spent hours climbing around the attic and fighting cobwebs in the basement trying to learn more about the architecture of this house and through this try to imagine how the families might have lived. I obtained some family pictures, some were family portraits, some of Allen family gatherings, and some unidentified houses, probably in the area.

I didn't know Wes Allen, but I wish I could have talked with him about his heritage. If only the ghosts could tell their story.