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Compiled by:

Geoffrey Hubbs

Diane Snyder

Joseph D'Entrone

N. Y.

2nd Printing

Introduction

This booklet was written from two local history projects done by Diane Snyder and Geoffrey Hubbs with Joseph D'Entrone. This project was done as a term paper for seventh grade social studies and these two were written on the history of Taborton, N.Y. Since Taborton is not a defined area, we shall deal with the area on the map on page one of this booklet. We've tried to include everything we could on the history of this area. We especially want to thank Mr. George Dobert for help on the charcoal burners. Miss Heenan in the junior high school assigned the project and helped us with the first printing. Mrs. Helen Dingman helped us with the second printing. The original projects will be in the library of the new school when it opens and will be on display for the public. We thank everyone who helped us with our projects.

Geoffrey Hubbs

and

Diane Snyder

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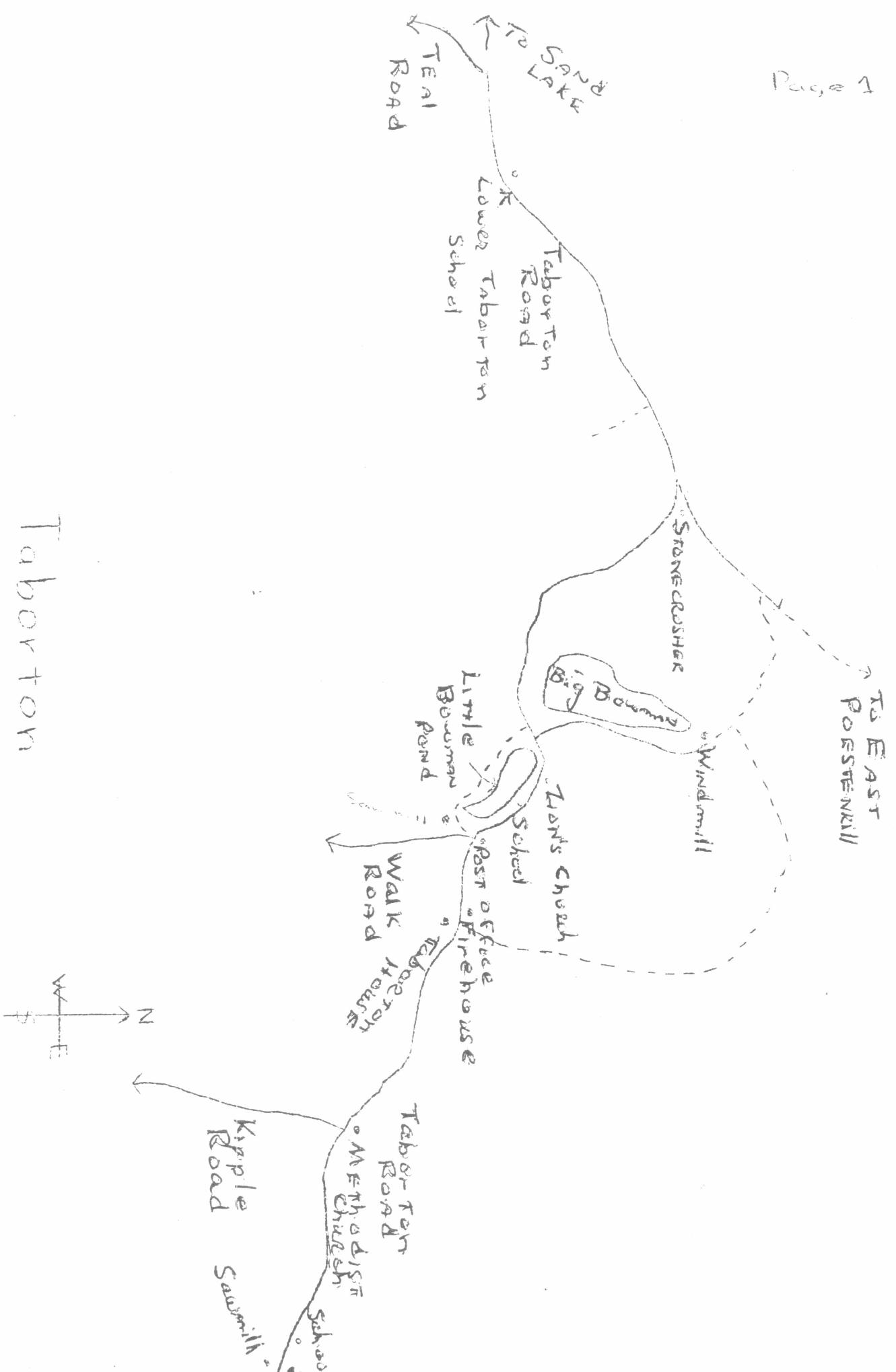
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Taborton



The settlement or community of Taborton is located in the hills of the Taconic Range, about twenty miles east of the Hudson River. Taborton is located in the Town of Sand Lake, and for our project, some of it was in the Town of Berlin, also. The community is located around the two Bouman Ponds. Taborton Road or Rensselaer County Highway 21 runs through the area. Taborton proper is the area by the two ponds, and has an elevation of 1427 feet. The summit of the mountain is the Gipfel or Kipple, which means top of the hill in German. At 1850 feet, the Gipfel is the area's highest peak. Taborton is largely woods, and only the areas near the main roads are settled. The land is very rocky, giving evidence of a glacier. Cranberry Vly Creek runs into Little Bouman Pond at the east end and runs through swamps above the ponds. Roads from Taborton lead to Berlin, Sand Lake, East Poestenkill, and Glass Lake.

Founding and Early Settlers

The earliest inhabitants of this area were the Stockbridge Indians. They had a small hunting village here and were peaceful Indians, unlike the Iroquois. The village was here during the period of the Revolutionary War and legends tell of two Hessians that escaped the Battle of Saratoga and hid in the Indian village. They were said to have settled here at the conclusion of the war. In 1800, Timothy Boweiman lived in the lot where the church is, and had twenty acres of land cleared. Daniel Bouman was one of the original settlers and in 1827, he rented the same land where the church is. The area was first called Bouman's Woods, and the two ponds were named after him. Gideon Butts picked up a shipload of Hessians and promised them lots of land if they helped clear it. In 1810, Stephen VanRensselaer rented land to the tenant farmers in Bouman's Woods. VanRensselaer paid little attention to Taborton and Taborton was not involved in the Anti-Rent Wars. Later, Taborton was called East Sand Lake and Georgetown. Around 1910, Rev. George Kern of Zion's Church was said to have named this area Taborton from a passage in the Bible. Taborton means "promised land" and was named for Mt. Tabor. The Gipfel is now called the Kipple and so is the nearby road from mispronunciation of the name.

The majority of Taborton's residents in the late 1800's were German and there was a great influx of German immigrants here during the period of World War 1. Most of the immigrants settled as farmers and charcoal burners. In 1804, the Eastern Turnpike or Post Road was built between Glass Lake and Berlin. Taborton Road was not paved until the 30's and the pavement ended about a mile from Sand Lake. The rest was later paved in small spurts and is repaved occasionally. Power lines came here with telephones around 1940. Taborton formed its own fire district a few years ago and formed a volunteer fire company also. A fire house with kitchen facilities has been built, and they have a pumper. The Taborton House has always been a tavern and restaurant and is northeast of the Bowman Ponds. It has been owned by Henry Gundrum, Peter Stock, Frederick Momrow, Mary Momrow, A.J. Lefler, Carl Reid, A.R. Wallis, and Wendall Stockholm, who is the present owner. There is a windmill at the north end of Big Bowman, which is at least 25 years old. It was used to pump water for a camp on the lake. The Taconic State Parkway was supposed to come through Taborton, east of Little Bowman. Funds for the highway were low and construction stopped south of the Capital District. This modern turnpike might have brought new business to a dying community.

Joe Wagner

Joseph Wagner was probably Taborton's oldest resident. He was born in Syria, which is now Lebanon around 1858. Around 1888 he came to Taborton and came under the charge of the Goodermotes in Berlin. He worked for the family and inherited a house and wagon from them. For years and years he peddled household furnishings, kitchen utensils, cutlery, and dressmaking sundries. He was known as "Joe the Peddler" and was named Wagner from the wagon he drove. His route covered a radius of some fifteen miles from his home. He lived in the Town of Berlin in a small house until he died on March 3, 1964 after an illness. He never knew his real age, though he was around 106 when he died. In later years, he couldn't read and was also deaf. Joe Wagner was the oldest person in Taborton and lived here a great deal of his life.

In the 1880's (around 1879) a fourth class Post Office came to Taborton. It was called the Lake View Post Office, Taborton, N.Y. and was in the home of Conrad Malkmas on Little Bouman. Mr. and Mrs. George Carr live in the home now, and Conrad Malkmas was Mrs. Carr's father. The Post Office was first run by Rev. Ewald of Zion's Church. Mr. Malkmas took over the Post Office, though his wife did most of the work. Later, his daughter, Minnie Malkmas took over the Post Office and ran it until it closed in 1944. The mailman brought up the mail from Sand Lake on horseback to the house and dropped the mail in a slot by the door. Mr. Malkmas built an addition onto the house for the Post Office where the mail was picked up by the residents. The twenty-one mailboxes and a mail slot are still there today, and it looks much as it did before. There was also a small store there, and they still sell candy and cignetts. The Taborton Post Office merged with Sand Lake in 1944 and Taborton is now served by Sand Lake's delivery.

Schools

Taborton did much in the late 1800's and early 1900's to educate its children. There were three one room schoolhouses on the hill. One was the Lower Taborton School, the Little Red Schoolhouse, or the Miller Hill School; District #9. These were all names for the school that is about a mile and a half from Sand Lake and it is now a summer camp. The second was the Taborton School, on the shores of Little Bouman. This was built in 1847 and resembled a little red barn. Rev. Egli of Zion's Church taught here and Miss Ruth Ann Geiser was the last teacher. The last school was just over the Town of Berlin line on Timber's property. The shell of the Upper Taborton School is all that remains. All of the schools started around 1850, and all closed when the central school opened in Sand Lake around 1930. Many of the people in Taborton can remember going to one of the three schools on the mountain. Now Taborton is serviced by the Averill Park Central School District. The people of Taborton did the most they could for their children by trying to provide an education for them. The three schoolhouses are an example of the education they tried to give their children.

There were
21 mail boxes or slots also
old candy & Agoutts
The Post Office closed in 1944 & Taborton was
served by Sand Lake's delivery

2 schools
There were 3 one room school houses
on the hill 1 to 8 grades were taught
The lower Taborton school was Miller Hall - 1930
No 9

The 2nd was Taborton school on Little Bowman
Pres Egli of Zion Church taught here once
The other school was just over the line
of Berlin on Timbers Property
All of the schools started around 1850 and
closed when Central school opened in 1930

There have been two churches in Taborton in its history. One is the present Zion's Evangelical and Reformed Church and the second was the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church was on Taborton Road, near the intersection of Kipple Road. The structure was torn down in the early 1900's after the church had poor attendances. The cemetery is still on the church grounds, which are off the road, and in the woods.

The Zion's Church is located near Little Bowman Pond with the parish hall, parsonage, and wagon or storage sheds. Here is a detailed account of its history:

On May of 1800, Timothy Bowman lived on the lot and had twenty acres of land cleared. In May, 1827, it was leased for two years to Daniel Bowman and the rent was two loads of beech or maple wood. In 1844, William P. Van Rensselaer and his wife sold the two lots to Richard Knowlson, Gideon Butts, and George Horton (they formed the lumber company) for a sum of \$900. George Horton and his wife bought the land completely and sold it to trustees of the Evangelical Protestant Church of Sand Lake for \$150. The land was to be used only for a meetinghouse for a church. Horton also sold (in 1866) an acre of land to the German Evangelical Protestant Church Cemetery Association for a burial grounds on the property. In January of 1852, Rev. G. Bochert of Columbia County visited this area and invited German-speaking residents to worship in the small log meetinghouse near Little Bowman. The first few services were poorly attended, but the congregation grew rapidly and a meeting was held every two weeks. Seventy people attended the first service on Easter Sunday and six dollars was collected for necessary items. In 1878, Rev. F.H. Sydow became pastor, but resigned in one year. In 1882, a bell and organ were purchased and later extensive repairs made. In 1883, the church joined the Evangelical Synod of North America. The cemetery was also laid in plots. The next ministers were: Rev. George Vetter, Pastor M. Goffner, Rev. J.G. Biegert, Pastor F. Ewald, Rev. Schmidt, Pastor Fleck, and Rev. Neumeister. In 1903, the wagon sheds were constructed, and Rev. George Kern came to the church in October 1907. Many improvements were made and he was said to have named Taborton. The first English services were conducted in 1908, before this, they were in German. In August 1917 Rev. J. Schoettle started the Young People's League and English services were held frequently. In 1919, Rev. Oscar Ezli, a young minister just out of the seminary, came to Taborton as its pastor. He was also pastor

of the church in East Poodunkill and West Poodunkill. The parish hall was built in 1921 and many improvements were made. Rev. Egli died when he was attending a synod meeting in New York. He was succeeded by Rev. E. Henzel of Albany and he was succeeded by Rev. Fuhrmann. The present minister is Rev. Ralph Heller. *Then Boden* *Weyfield* *1938 Frances Outbley*

The Taborton Picnic, for the Sunday School, has been held almost every year since English services began. At first it was just a picnic but now it is more of a fair. Zion's Church was founded here in 1852, and is now the only church on the mountain, except the Old Dutch Church in the Town of Berlin.

The Ku Klux Klan was in Taborton in the '30's and they burned crosses near Little Bowman. They were against the Catholics and some immigration groups. For years the church has been the center of life in Taborton. Almost everyone went to church and the activities it sponsored.

Charcoal Burning

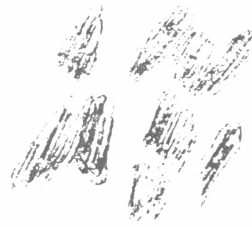
Charcoal burning has been very important in Taborton since the period before the Civil War. The industry started in Germany and was also found in England and Scandinavia. At first, the charcoal was used mostly for the Burden Iron Works. For this reason, the charcoal burners came to Taborton. It was used in homes in the city, hotels, and local homes for heating. It was used before the cheaper coals and oils were discovered. Now the charcoal is just compressed soot and is used only for picnic and cookout fires. The "briquets" are not as good as full wood charcoal. In charcoal burning, the wood is only partially charred or burned so it will light easily. It is later used as fuel for the fire. Charcoal burning was the main source of income on the mountain and the peak of the industry was during the Civil War. The men sold it in Albany or Troy when they went to the city on Sunday night. They would pay the hotel bill and everything else in charcoal and little money was exchanged. The rest was sold in the streets or door to door.

Charcoal burning was an art passed down from father to son. First, a site must be picked, cleared, and leveled. This will be for the kiln or pit where the wood is actually changed to charcoal. Next, wood of all diameters is cut in to three to four foot lengths and stacked up-right on the site. (The kiln is also called a pit, because a pit was

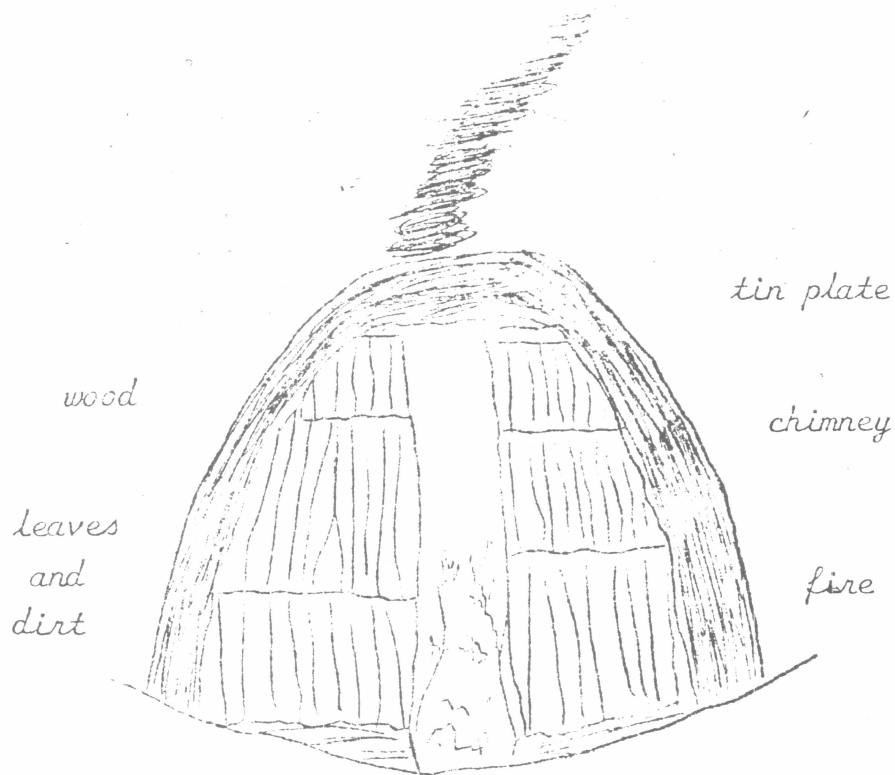
dig instead of a mound or kiln being built.) The wood was cut in winter when other farm work was at a standstill. Hardwoods such as beech, birch, maple, or oak make the best charcoal. (Mr. George Dobert on the Kipple uses the method described here, and said that soft wood makes weak charcoal that does not burn well.) Green wood cannot be used and is dangerous to burn. Few charcoal burners would try to pass green wood as good charcoal. The stacked wood is covered with hay and ferns, and then sod and dirt. This keeps too much air from getting into the fire and causing the wood to burn rapidly. If it does, the whole kiln might catch on fire, though more dirt piled on top will stop the fire. The finished kiln is twenty feet in diameter and about ten feet high. There is a ladder to get to the top of the kiln when it has to be cipped or more dirt has to be added. The fire is lighted with dry kindling or old charcoal. It must be watched constantly for two or three weeks. The wood can not

catch on fire, for if it does the whole product is reduced to ashes. (People in Sand Lake remember seeing a blaze on the mountain and hearing someone remark, "There goes a charcoal pit." In the end, only 1/5 of the original wood is useful charcoal. The charcoal is then put in sacks to be sold. Mr. Dobert and Chris Snyder are the only charcoal burners in Taborton. When they close down their pits, charcoal burning will disappear from the hills.)

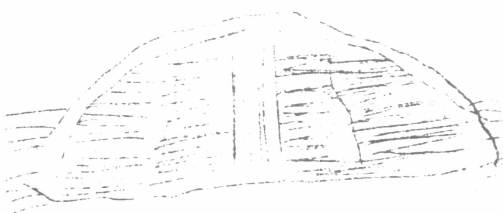
The charcoal used to cost 5¢ a bushel to make and sold for 20¢. After the Civil War, the price went up to 50¢ and \$1 a bushel. One Hundred Bushels made up the wagon load which they took to town on Sunday night. The charcoal comes in every size and shape, just the way the wood was cut. The charcoal burners also cut 'firewood' and Christmas trees when they got the wood. Mr. Dobert draws his wood in a wooden sled and a team of horses. Still, he has a chain saw to cut the larger logs. The art of charcoal burning has been in Taborton for over one hundred years, and will soon disappear from these hills.



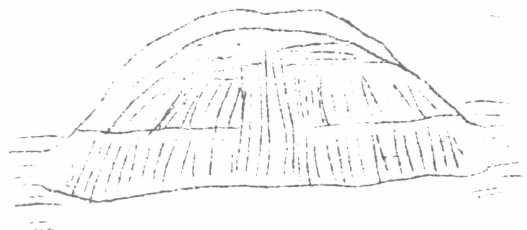
Irregularly-shaped Charcoal



Advanced Charcoal Kiln



Lying Kiln



Standing Kiln

Farming and Agriculture

Farming was ~~the~~ most important occupation in Taborton, besides charcoal burning. The main crop was wild blueberries or huckleberries. The farmers planted corn, wheat, and other grains and they had their own vegetable gardens. Apples and other fruits were grow occasionally, and cranberries used to grow in abundance near Cranberry Vly Creek. After a few floods, the cranberries died off. Now blueberries are the most important wild crop, though the drought has cut off the crop in the past few years. Blueberries were often called huckleberries by the people on the mountain, though huckleberries have only one seed. The families used to pick blueberries all through the summer. The berries were sold at small roadside stands (the price now is 50¢ a quart) and the rest were used for jam, pies, and were canned. The soil in Taborton was never very fertile and is very rocky. The farmers had a hard time planting crops, and they still have to spread large quantities of lime on the land. There were no large farms in Taborton, and most of the products were for personal use. They provided themselves and neighbors with food and also made their living on the farm. Up to fifty chickens were kept for meals and eggs. The cows were used only for milk and an occasional meal with meat. Some families had sheep or a goat and maybe a team of oxen to pull a sled or wagon. The families had a few horses and pigs. The families raised the pigs for pork which they kept in brine. They made their own bread products from the wheat they grew or bought.

Occupations and Sources of Income

Since there were many small businesses and occupations in Taborton, we will list them like this:

- Firewood was cut by the farmers for himself, his neighbors, and to sell in the city.

- Many people had icehouses on their property. They cut ice off of the lake and picked it in sawdust in the buildings. They used the ice in their ice chests until refrigerators came about.

- Ferns were picked in the fall and packed by pickers. They were then sold to florists for floral decorations. Andrew Snyder had one such business and hired fern pickers. They would put 25 ferns together and tie them up. They were paid 50 cents to \$1 for 1000 picked ferns or 40

bunches. The fern packers kept them in storage and sold them to various florists in the city. Mrs. Wilster Momrow still picks ferns for a florist in Albany. Princess pine and other small greens were also picked for the florists.

- Gold thread, a three-leaved plant was gathered and the roots ground for a bitter tonic, a mouthwash, and a gargle. The children used to pick these and were another source of family income.

Lumbering and Sawmills

Lumbering was the most important industry in Taborton and came with the first settlers. George Horton, Gideon Butts, and Richard Knowlson formed a lumber company in the 1820's. There were four main sawmills in Taborton:

- One sawmill was in the Town of Berlin where D'Entrones live now. The owner lived in the house where D'Entrones live and there was a tavern and inn across the road. A "railroad" (road for rails or logs) ran to Berlin from the sawmill. There was a horse-drawn train that carried logs from Spring Lake to the mill.

- Another sawmill, a steam-powered one, was across from the Taborton School, in back of Nellie Dobert's house.

- There was a third sawmill on the eastern end of Little Bowman Pond and had a rectangular blade (saw) that cut up and down. Mr. N. Lindeman owns the property now.

- The last sawmill was on Lindeman Road and was run by Anthony Valenti. He owned his home on the property and cut the wood from his own land. He would also buy logs from other people and sawed lumber for many of the buildings in Taborton.

The forests of Taborton are still being used for lumber today, but the sawmills are no longer a part of the mountain.

Miscellaneous

The following are some facts which we forgot or that didn't fit anywhere else:

- There was a stonecrushing operation near Eastern Turnpike. It was here in the 1930's and crushed stones from stonewalls and fields. The farmers brought them to the crusher and the stones were used on the roads.

- Maple syrup was collected for syrup and sugar. Some people still collect the syrup today and boil it down. Mrs. Manning near Big Bouman does this every year just as the pioneers did for their sugar and candy.

- Little Bouman had two dance pavilions; one was on the shores of the pond across from Carl's house (a camp is now there) and the other was where Taborton Road and Walk Road meet. Fred Houser's band used to play here; On Saturday night the community residents danced, and on Wednesday nights it was reserved for boarders.

- The people went to work on the roads for the money they owed the town.

- The families, in caravans of wagons, went to Albany or Troy almost every Sunday night to sell their charcoal, eggs, lumber, and other goods, and to buy what they needed. They came back on Monday afternoon.

- Some of the members of the church in 1883 (when the services were in German) were:

Lindeman	Meyer	Wagner	Lopp
Dise	Schrumpf	Conrad	Hoffman
Gundrum	Brown		

Almost 700 people are buried in the cemetery at Zion's Church.

- Two icemen and active church members in the 1900's were Charles Hoffman and Addam Schuman.

Conclusion

Taborton is no longer a busy community as it has been in the past. The people who can remember Taborton as it was are few and as time goes by, fewer people will remember what Taborton was like years ago. The charcoal burners are almost extinct and the icehouses have disappeared. The sawmills are no longer here and little lumbering is done. The blueberry pickers are a rare sight and little farming is done. The Post Office has closed, there is only one church, the schools are no longer in use, and the dance pavilion is gone. Many of the things that made up old Taborton have gone, while modern times have moved into the mountains. Taborton is losing its past business and importance and only a look back in local history can tell what Taborton was like fifty, one hundred, and one hundred fifty years ago.

Compiled from:

A History of Taborton; Local History

June 6, 1966 Project

By Geoffrey Hubbs
and Joseph
D'Entrone

Taborton; Local History Project

June 6, 1966

by Diane Snyder

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Mr. George Dobert

Mr. and Mrs. George Carr

Mrs. Walter Momrow

Mrs. George Herman

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Momrow

Mrs. Florence Hill

Mrs. Gedney

Mrs. Nellie Dobert

Mrs. George Dobert

Mrs. Laura Hefner

Allie Lefler

Mrs. Lottie Manning

Mrs. Dorothy Snyder

Mr. John Wilford

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Geoffrey Hubbs

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Diane Snyder