

This was copied from a piece written in the June 25, 1925 Dansville Express, concerning the house that sits on South Main on the corner of Sahrle and Main Street, bottom of the Wayland Hill.

Reminiscences of the White School House



I am sitting at my desk "thinking of the days gone by," and the old land marks of our village interest me, the flouring mill, the saw mills, the paper mills, their products exceeding all other industries, having vanished. "Time touched them and they perished." The water that flowed over their big wheels is tumbling down through the hills uninterrupted.

The land mark uppermost in my mind is what is left of the "White School House" in upper Main Street, where I spent so many of my boyhood happy hours.

At the school meeting Ed. Readshaw offered a resolution that the trustees repair the building using his judgment as to what was needed and tax the district to cover the cost. Mr. Hugh McCurdy seconded the resolution and it was carried.

The gable end of the old building faced the road with an outer and inner door. Close by the inner door was a box stove, the pipe running up to near the ceiling and along the length of the schoolroom, entering the chimney over the blackboard. Three rows of benches on the sides, each one step above the other, faced the floor. The building was in very bad condition. The trustee turned it around, placing it on a new foundation. In doing this it gave way in bad shape, leaving but little except the frame for repairs. As the work proceeded, there was much dissatisfaction among the taxpayers. The cost mounting up enormously. Joe Leiter, whose tax was around 80 cents was not in sympathy with the work, for reason (perhaps) that he had an altercation with one of the teachers, Mr. Kennedy, and in the last round of the squabble, he was seen backing through the doors and landing on his back in the gutter, with hat in the road. Above is George Dippy's version of the encounter, as seen when passing by. Joe was honest, and witty, he had an amusing impediment in his speech and all the sports enjoyed hearing him talk. He said "The Trustee may fitts the stool house, but, when he comes around

with the taxed rool we'll fixed him. Another story of Joe's wit was when he drove up in front of Ruben Whitman's office at the lumber yard. The school boys asked him "Joe how many horses have you got?" he answered, "thirteen." Mr. Whitman, overhearing the reply, said "Joe, it can't be possible you are feeding thirteen horses; now I would like to know just how many horses you have got." "Well Mr. Whitman," said Joe, "these boys when they ask foolish question, I'll tell you the truth, its none of your d---- business."

Note:--The above story is kindly loaned to the writer by "Doc Geary, the owner.

The cost of the work was entered on the tax roll and the collector, Mr. Andrew Sahrle, after a canvass, returned the roll, short about \$500 of refused payments, mostly non-resident taxes was to draw on the county treasurer for amount of work or costs charged to the town, with an additional percent against the property. The delinquents had filed their complaints with Judge Van Derlip, who was a trustee of the Welch estate. This tax around \$75.00 was also refuse. The trustee went to the bank to draw on the county treasurer with his vouchers, and was refused, with the statement that "there was going to be a mixed up in it." Judge Van Derlip happened in and said the complaints were the reason for his refusal and if the trustee would go with him to his office and answer them it would do him no harm, and might settle the matter. He went. The first question was that the resolution was not legal, as the trustee was not limited to the amount, and it would be carried against the district, quoting the case where a collector had sold a yoke of oxen for such tax and the verdict was against the district. His answer was that his pamphlet of the school law said the case was appealed and the decision reversed. In what book was this appeal given? His book said the fifth of Lansing. He found the book at Judge Faulkner's office. The met question, "You moved the building' that was not repairs." Answer: "the back of the building formed a connection with the farmer's fence and he had plowed down the hill until there was danger of the furrows rolling through the back windows." He had a letter from the superintendent of public instruction at Albany saying that if necessary to repairs, move it. Next question: "You put on an addition not authorized." Answer: "Yes, and that was a splendid improvement as it allowed a larger schoolroom, there have been as high as 85 scholars on the teacher's roll, that entry addition belongs to me. I have a statement of all it cost, down to the last pound of nails. If the district don't want to pay for it, I will tear it off." "That's all," said he Judge, and, he turned and wrote him a check for the Welch estate taxes, over \$75. This broke the combination; all delinquents visited Mr. Sahrle and settled up. The trustee was proud of the job. I spent three weeks of my time, furnished the horse chestnuts, and maple trees, and planted them, making no charges. The matter was talked over at the school meeting that followed and, against his wishes, he was re-elected with instructions to put in new school desks and other furniture, paint the building, making a cost of \$300 more.

"All's well that ends well." Mr. Leiter was reconciled; his frequent calls were enjoyed. He lived to be 100 years old, he had some practice doctoring sick cows with old time remedies. Mr. Witter was a veterinarian, in competition. Mr. Witter got word that Joe said he was a d---d fool, and did nt know nothing about doctoring cows. Witter met Mr. Leiter in a blacksmith shop, repeated the sentence, and asked Joe what he meant. "Well Mr. Witter," said Joe, "I did not say you did not know nothin' about doctoring cows. I said you wast a good doctor far ast you knew, and that was d---d little."

The writer has picked up this information, and, as the school records have gone with the district, they would doubtless reveal the names of the trustees in those years of long ago.