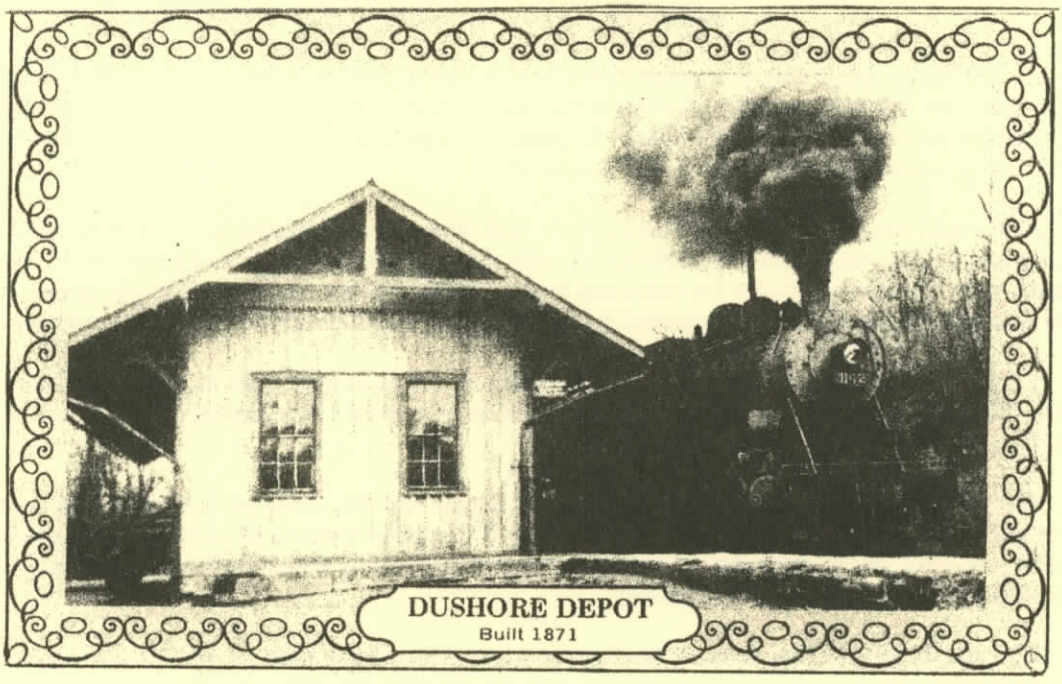


DICK'S LEGENDS

SMALL TOWN MEMORIES IN THE 20's, 30's, and 40's

Dick Holcombe, age 86, tells how it was in the Furniture and Undertaking Business in the Northern Pennsylvania town of Dushore, during the depression and the post World War Two years.

PREFACE

At age 86, it seems sort of strange that a person would want to write a book. I have written historical items for the local, weekly paper for a number of years. One day I was in a bookstore and I noticed a book entitled, "How to Write a Book". I opened the book and on the first page it read, quote "If your friends say, you ought to write a book, don't write it".

I have had encouragement from many people, both friends and strangers, but what really got me enthused about writing was an episode involving my wife; she was making a credit card purchase at a large department store. The clerk looked at her name and inquired if she was any relation to Dick Holcombe; the guy who writes for the Sully. My wife answered in the affirmative and the clerk treated her as a celebrity.

I came in to this world October 2, 1915, the youngest of five children born to V.B. and R. Jennie Holcombe. The settings for most of the text, is situated in the small {750 people} town of Dushore, Sullivan County, Pennsylvania.

From early childhood, mechanical things, from a simple tool, to a locomotive, have always been a source of almost unmanageable fascination. In the late 1920's I started building home radios, I often think when sitting in front of my computer, of my earlier experience with a crystal radio and later on, with vacuum tubes-- how far things have progressed.

The year 1898 found my father in the Furniture and Undertaking business. He was also active in the social activities of the town and in particular the Fire Co. He also served on the town council and was a member of the State Legislature from 1920 to 1932. My mother was a former schoolteacher and the best mother a person could have ever had.

The life styles of the late 1920's, the contrast in social and economic conditions of the time, and the plight of almost everyone during the great depression, will in part, be remembered. Along with many other fathers with families, I found myself in the service. My contribution to the war effort, was as a B 17 gunnery instructor. Picking up the pieces at the war's end, and raising a family during the post war years, are covered. Few of the stories are without humor, albeit things that were serious then, may seem humorous today.

One day in 1994 while visiting my son, I started playing with my granddaughter's Tandy Home Computer. The keyboard was familiar, because I had for many years used a typewriter. I had always been hampered in my writing because of my bad spelling, so the spell checker opened new horizons for my writing.

I purchased a new Computer in 1995. I attended five basic computer-training sessions, and thus entered a new phase of my life. Several articles in this book are written before Microsoft Windows, so the format of the text may vary. At 86, I feel the occasional flawed grammar and spelling, can be attributed to my philosophy of using my remaining time, to create new stories rather than laboring over trivialities in my past writings.

In writing about events that occurred 75 years ago, the validity of the subject matter may come under scrutiny. This scrapbook is the best I can do, and if anyone older than I have some corrections, they are too late.

The Mosier Hill

There was quite a lot of activity going on at the Dushore Fire House. The date was April 26, 1926 and I was 12 ears old. My father was treasurer and my oldest brother "Si" was secretary of the Fire Co. so I knew about the demonstrations that were to take place that afternoon.

The Fire Co. Had purchased a used 'Cole" Fire truck from South Williamsport the year before and it had proven unsatisfactory. The body, chemical tanks, and accessories of the Cole were satisfactory so the idea was to purchase a new chassis and transfer the Cole body to a new truck chassis.

There were three car dealers in town at that time; Chevrolet, Dodge and Ford. The trucks demonstrated differed in size and appointments, and allowances had to be made to allow for the type body that each truck carried, so it would represent the load of the Cole truck body. A report of the truck Demonstration Committee was a follows;

REPORT OF THE TRUCK
DEMONSTRATION COMMITTEE

The truck demonstration was held this afternoon beginning about 1; 30 three trucks competed in the demonstration. The trucks that participated were;

[1] 1-ton Chevrolet Truck having wheel base of 128 inches, Tires-Uniform 30' X 5', Capacity maximum load -3000# not including body allowance of 1000#. Price $526.00 Delivered

[2] 1 1\2- ton Dodge truck, Wheel base of 140 inches Tires 34"x5" and 36"x 6" inches, Load 4500# not including body allowance of 1000#. Price $1310.00 Delivered.

[3] 1-ton Ford-equipped with Ruxel Gear Complete. Wheelbase 119 inches Tires 30" x 31\2" - 30" x 5" Capacity 3000# not including body allowance of 1000#. Price $577.00 Delivered.

The first truck demonstrated was the Chevrolet Truck driven by A.R.Meehan The load on the truck consisted of 4 barrels of oil weighing 1883#, 6 men weighing 960# and a truck body weighing 1000#, making a total of 3843#, The trip was taken from the town bridge, to W, P,Mosier' residence. The truck was unable to pass the Miner residence on the motor's own power.

Factors to be given consideration were:

The Dushore Fire House in the early 40's. The 1927 Sanford Pumper, on the left and the new American LaFrance Ford, on the right. The trucks were stored with the Sanford at The rear of the building and the Ford in front. The space in the right front of the building was Elwood Kunes Barber Shop. Leo Marcey succeeded Kunes and latter the Library occupied the building. The Sullivan Review now owns the building and has retained much of the original charm of the building.

1] This was the first truck to go up the hill, and it was therefore necessary for the truck to make the first track

[2] The motor in the truck was new, having been driven only about 200 miles.

The second truck was the Dodge driven by Leo Sick. The load was the same as for the first truck and was driven from the bridge to the Mosier Residence The truck reached the top of the hill with some difficulty near Miner's residence.

Factors to be considered:

[1] The truck had been used for several thousand miles.

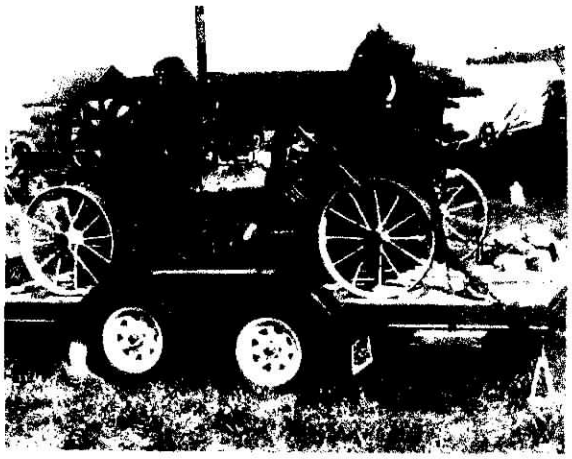
[2] The truck has 36' X 6" tires on the rear wheels, and therefore it was necessary for the truck to make practically its own track.

The third truck was the Ford driven by Jos. Marshal the load was the same as the other trucks except the body allowance was 150# heavier than the other two trucks. The truck made the same trip and reached the top with only a slight hesitation near the Miner residence

Factors to be considered:

[1] The truck had been in use for some time and was equipped with a very low gear ratio

The demonstration would not be complete without mention of the trial given our present truck, after the three trucks, before described, had exhibited there ability to handle the fire situation in Dushore Borough. It was only fitting and proper that our fully equipped Cole 6 Truck be entered into the contest. Howard Messersmith acted as Chauffeur, and even with the technical assistance of several of our local auto mechanics, the truck was unable to get as far as the Walsh residence on the Mosier hill. This poor demonstration of the truck may in itself not be unusual, but it serves as an indication of the imperative need of a better truck for the fire Co. The committee was not appointed to make any recommendations as to what truck to buy, but in view of the results of today's demonstration, we wish to express the opinion of the committee in stating, that the Fire Co. should " not be to hasty" in selecting a truck, and in order to secure a truck which would be absolutely suitable for the maximum load and road condition of the Dushore Borough, a further investigation be made and a truck secured which would meet our local needs. The "not to hasty" recommendations of the demonstration committee were evidently ignored, because a special meeting was called that night and ballots were cast as follows: First ballot Chevrolet, 14, Dodge 12, Ford 7. Second ballot. Chevrolet 18, Dodge 10, Ford 12. Third ballot Chevrolet 17 Ford 22. The Ford was purchased and the body from the Cole was installed and the truck put in service. With the purchase of a new Sanford pumper in 1927 the Ford became excess and was sold to the town of Monroeton. All of the streets in Dushore, were dirt at the time of the demonstration; I am a little puzzled at the meaning of the word "track". No mention of snow—could there have been a rain that hardened the dust or could the zeal of the demonstration committee fantasize the word, to impress the diligence of their observations. After 74 years, I wonder if the members of the original truck committee could imagine, that the Dushore Fire Co. would have a truck weighing 15 tons negotiating the Mosier hill and going past the Miner residence without a bit of hesitation.



At a recent antique machinery show I photographed this typical rock crusher outfit of the nineteen twenties. The rock crusher that I remember, the position of the engine and the crusher were reversed. These outfits were made in very large sizes and could be adjusted to crush stones to an assortment of sizes.

Hit and Miss

It must have been summer because I was out of school. I was watching a road improvement project on Water Street. Upon a sturdy wagon there was mounted a good size hit and miss engine and a rock crusher. Field stone from nearby, were hauled to the site and crushed to make road ballast. However there was something wrong-- it was quiet, other than some choice word describing the situation. Ordinarily an operation like this, the din of the engine and the rattle of the crusher were deafening. Evidently the engine would not start.

There were several men working on the project along with the teams of horses and their drivers. This was quite a job to be held up by one cranky engine. A nearby dentist joined the onlookers and conferred with the foreman. The dentist then went into his office and brought out a small can of ether. Many engines at that time had a priming cup. It was a small funnel with a valve and a pipe to the combustion chamber. To start the engine cold, one would open the valve and pour a little gas into the priming cup, then close the valve, and this would prime the engine and it would aid starting. So, they poured some

ether in the cup and closed the valve. A robust member of the crew grasped the flywheel and gave a mighty pull. The explosion that followed was like a cannon. It is lucky that no one was hurt because the cylinder head was blown fifty feet away

Of all of mans attempts to produce rotating energy, probably the "Hit and Miss" Gasoline engine was the most numerous and the most frustrating. They began to appear in a practical form in the late nineteen hundreds. This was the general time in American History when our young nation was taking advantage of the tremendous opportunities for a better life, by exploiting our national resources and utilizing the inventiveness of our conglomerate society. The simplicity of design and availability of construction material made it possible for almost any foundry and machine shop, to get into the gas engine business. Pennsylvania alone had over fifty gas engine builders.

Many, but not all gas engine manufactures had previously built steam engines. The general manufacturing requirements were similar. The big difference from a manufacturing standpoint was gas engines did not require a steam boiler. For farm equipment manufactures who had built horse drawn equipment for years, the hit and miss was a natural. Ground driven machines such as a binder were one of the first examples of the use of an engine to supplement the power of the horse.

A typical engine manufactured from the general period of 1917 to 1937 was an engine from one and one half horsepower to ten-horse power. They weighed from three hundred pounds for the smallest, to a ton and one half for the ten horse; they were generally cooled by water in a hopper surrounding the cylinder. There speed was usually in the range of 350 to 500 rpm. For ignition the earlier models used a low-tension system with power supplied from a battery or a small generator. The low tension units had no spark plug but a device called an "igniter' which consisted of two contacts in the combustion chamber. When ignition was called for the contacts would momentarily close and open thus creating a spark. Latter a spark plug was used and was supplied with currant from a magneto or coil. Gasoline was supplied by gravity , a small pump or by suction via a needle valve in the carburetor. The intake valve was lightly spring loaded and was opened by the suction on the intake stroke. The exhaust valve was mechanically opened by various mechanical means. The ignition system generally takes the blame for the starting problems, but whatever the starting problems were, they were real. I have friends who bet there engine will start the first pull, but in my case, I have never had an engine that wasn't temperamental firing up.

Now here is where the "hit and miss" comes in. A mechanical speed governor was either gear driven from the crankshaft or an integral part of the flywheel. When the engine was started, a rod or other mechanical linkage allowed the exhaust valve and ignition device to function normally. When the desired speed was attained the governor caused the exhaust valve to stay open, and ignition to stop, thus causing the engine to coast until speed diminished enough for the exhaust valve and ignition to be activated again by the governor The huge flywheels created enough inertia to carry the rotation for the period of time required by the load..

One of the most fascinating things to watch is an engine of ten-horse power or larger operating with no load. A typical engine of this size could have flywheels that weighed three hundred pounds each. The crankshaft, connecting rod and piston would probably weigh another two hundred - so all told you would be observing, eight hundred pounds of rotating and reciprocating iron. I f the governor was set to close at 400 RPM and held the exhaust valve open until the engine coasted to 375 RPM, the engine might rotate for half a minute without firing. This is the unique feature of the hit and miss--it had only one speed, wide open until speed was attained and then coast. Some where along the line somebody figured out, that you could connect mechanical linkage from the governor to a butterfly valve in the carburetor and have infinite control of the speed by throttling the gas to the desired RPM and get a much smoother operation. The method was called "volume governing" This method of speed control is in use today on practically all-internal combustion engines

Life has certain occasions that stand out above all others--some of the occasions are trivial but remembered. One such occasion occurred a long time ago when I observed a International Harvester 12 hp portable. The

operator was a boy, probably around 14 years old. With deft precision he adjusted the gas supply and the igniter, then purposefully rocked the colossal flywheels, followed by robust poll. There were several muted explosions and the flywheels picked up speed--then silence. The wheels slowed to the point where you would hold your breath-- surely they would stop. Then the explosion came and the wheels would again pick up speed.

I attend many antique machinery shows a year. My first priority is to find one of these ancient giants running idle I am just as transfixed now as I was many years ago when I had my first opportunity to see and hear that great old International Hit an Miss.

THE DENTIST LOOKS UP

To be a dentist or a veterinarian was a decision that a young man in up state rural Pennsylvania had to decide. He should have chosen dentistry because the first week of Veterinary School he was kicked by a horse and wound up with a peg leg. That episode seemed to write finish to his veterinarian career. The profession of dentistry seemed to be his new choice, and he became a dentist.

The tools of the dental profession had become quite sophisticated including a drill operated by foot power, similar to a sewing machine. And requiring one foot to operate. There was one problem however, and that was, he had to stand on his peg leg, and pump the drill pedal with his good leg. Now standing on one peg leg created an unstable condition, so to be steady he had to lean on the dental chair.

Now, not withstanding the above-mentioned handicaps, he had the unfortunate possession of a horrible disposition and a vile temper. Add all the conditions up, and an eight year old was not exactly at ease in the chair.

In lieu of modern electric lights it was common practice at the time for a professional person such as a dentist to have a skylight above the area where he did his work. This is where I, as an eight year old, entered the picture and warily took my seat on the chair. I had a good view of the sky above and as I was settling down to my fate, there appeared an airplane flying overhead. Now in the nineteen twenties an airplane flying overhead was quite an unusual event and I began to sputter and make noises much to the consternation of the doctor. Finally with a few unmentionable exclamations he followed my pointing to the skylight, and saw the cause of the interruption. We then went outside and with half the town watching; we saw the plane disappear from view.

If one thinks of dental torture now, think about the low RPM drill, no nova cane, unstable footing, and adverse Doctor, Patient atmosphere—count your blessings.

A LEGITIMATE COMPLAINT

An interesting letter from a lady in New Albany, concerning a sewing machine she bought from my father in 1909. Quote.

New Albany, Pa.
July 3rd .09

Mr Holcombe

I have only one bobbin, and I think there is five more, is there not for the machine "Dutchess" which I purchased of you, and only one needle and had the misfortune to break that. I would be pleased to have you send me them, if convenient by mail and oblige.

Name withheld

Dads reply:

Dear Madam:
Replying from yours of the 3rd I am enclosing needles and bobbins as requested and trust same will be satisfactory.
Yours truly V.B.Holcombe.

The sewing machine was probably the first real complicated home appliance that any retail merchant had to sell. I had many years in the appliance business and I sure had a lot of complaints, but I cannot remember of a single complaint that was addressed in such a conciliatory manner

Liquid Fuel

When I was growing up in the 1920's, Mr. C.A.Bahr of Dushore operated a store on West Main St., and he manufactured leather harnesses and he was the agent for Atlantic petroleum products. There was a hand operated gas pump in front of his building and I have been told it was the first gas pump in the area. Mr. Bahr was also the agent for the Atlantic Refining Co.

The Atlantic refining Co. had a standard pattern for there local delivery trucks, the chassis was manufactured by the White Co. and had a four cylinder gas engine. I am not sure of the age of the truck but it must have been before 1920, because it had hard rubber tires. There was no self starter and Mr. Bahr was adept at making it start on the first pull of the crank. Any truck at that time was a conversation piece among truck enthusiasts and the conversation indicated that the reason the truck started so easy was because it had two roller bearing on the crank shaft.

Besides the 1927 Sanford fire truck the White was the only special service truck that I remember. Another reason for my vivid remembrance of the truck, it had to pass our house to reach it's supply tanks, and Mr. Bahr"s store was in sight of our house.

The truck tank had three compartments, one for gasoline, and one for kerosene, and one for motor oil. A rack on the side of the truck held special cans that were used to measure the amount of product delivered.

There were few gas stations in the county at that time, and there gas was probably sold by the truck tank compartment load. Motor oil was sold in bulk and their was plenty of it used. A common phrase when evaluating the performance of an engine was "how many quarts does it use in a thousand miles". It was commonplace for an engine in good shape to use two or three quarts of oil in a thousand miles.

Kerosene was a big commodity in the twenties. Many farms relied on kerosene lamps for illumination, and quite a few tractors used kerosene for fuel. There was some dubious uses of kerosene for skin disorders and various animal ailments.

My most vivid memory of the gas truck must have hapened in 1926. The Dushore High School was situated on one of the highest spots in Dushore. The Samuel Cole residence was just across the road from the school. One of the kids shouted "the Cole house is on fire". Without regards to the teachers protests, every one rushed down the steps and to the scene of the fire.

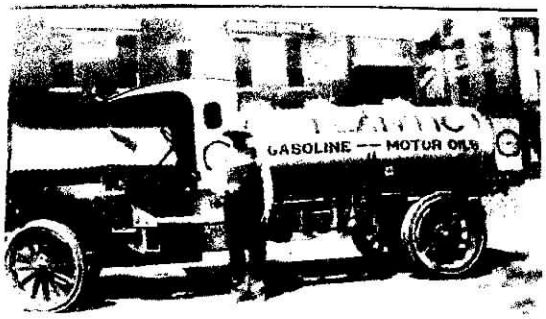
Meanwhile, at the fire house, frantic efforts were bieng made to start the 1919 Cole Fire truck, but to no avail. In the nick of time, who comes along but Clate Bahr and his gas truck. A chain was quickly attached to the fire truck and away they went up the hill to the nearest fire hydrant. Hoses were quickly laid and the house was saved.

There are probably fewer gas stations in the county today than there were in the 1920's. I wonder, if Mr. Bahr was in business today, could his White tank truck supply the demand-?

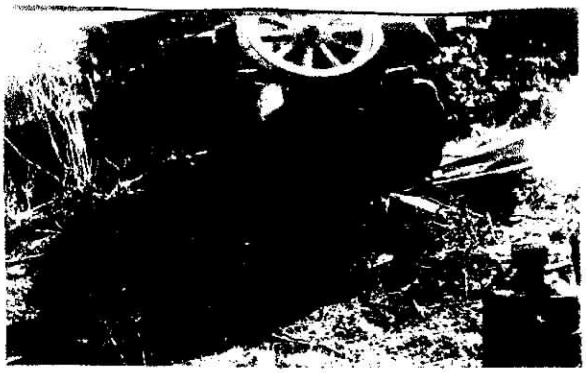
A special thanks to Mrs. T.A,Stabrylla, a grandaughter of Mr. Bahr, for the loan of the above pictures.

Dick Holcombe 6/14/01 571

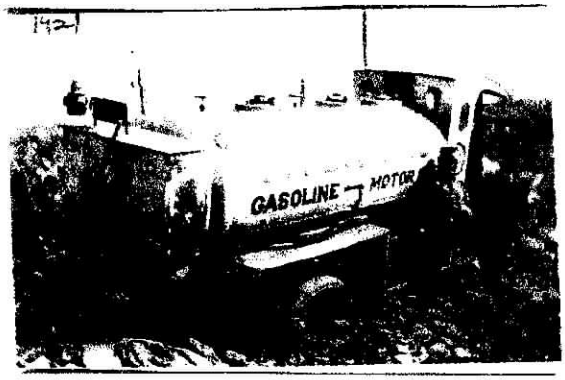
The first gas pump, note the rail road trestle in the back ground, United States Tires, sales, service depot. I am not sure of the pose of the lady in the picture, perhaps she was powdering her nose.



Mr. Bahr posing with his delivery truck. The buildings in the rear was the Gazette & Herald newspaper now Pam's Restaurant, Charlie Krul's barber shop, and the Hotel Obert. Note the wooden wheels, hard rubber tires and no windshield cab.

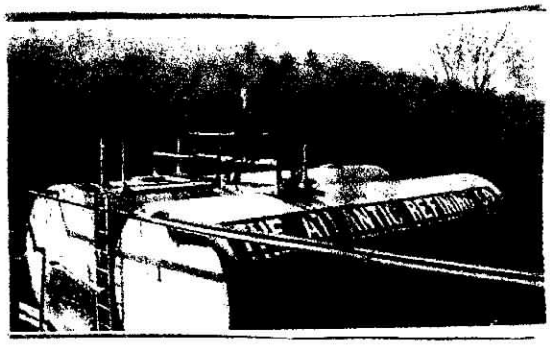


Bad luck at Cherry Mills Sept. 19, 1924. Note the special 10 gal. can in the foreground. I wonder if any gas, kerosene, or motor oil polluted the Loyalsock creek.



1921 Bernice hill. Mr. McMahon with team pulled truck out [notation on back of photo] Note shovel and chains on tires. Mr. Bahr seems composed and is probably waiting for the team of horses.

They must have salvaged the truck because this photo was dated 1924. Two years latter the old White came to the rescue of the Dushore Fire Co. by towing the inoperative fire truck to the scene of a fire. Pictures by Mrs. T.A. Stabrylla



The foundations of the above tanks are plainly visible below the old rail road grade to the north of the Dushore Station. The pipes shown led under the rail road tracks and were coupled to tank rail road tank cars on the tracks. There were no pumps used in the transfer of liquid fuels. Gravity filed the bulk tanks and the truck tanks. I wonder who the man is standing on top of the tanks.

BRIDGES BY THE FOOT

The year was 1904, the Dushore Borough Council was in session at the town municipal building on Railroad street in Dushore. It was a special meeting because the timber bridge spanning the Little Loyalsock creek near Center Street had collapsed under a load of lumber being hauled from Forksville to the Dushore Railroad station This meeting occurred some twenty years before I was born so I am going out on a limb to even guess what took place, I am using my imagination as to what followed:

The Borough president called the meeting to order and explained the urgent need for the replacement of the bridge because the temporary ford of the creek was inconvenient and dangerous. A council member suggested that the Owego Bridge Co. Catalog be consulted.

At that general time in history the United States and its amalgamation, of first generation immigrants, were producing an industrial base that overshadowed the best efforts of there fatherlands. The Industrial revolution, created in turn, made available untold commodities for public use. Probably the most significant change was the production of steel. Wrought iron had always been the main structural metal but with the introduction of the Bessemer converting process, the Steel Mills in Pittsburgh and Bethlehem were spewing out millions of tons of good quality, low cost steel.

Taking advantage of this abundant commodity, several companies began manufacturing prefabricated steel bridges. In practical terms, if a community needed a bridge to span a thirty foot creek they would build a stone abutment and order a bridge thirty feet long and as wide and as strong as there needs required. The bridge would be shipped by railroad partly assembled and then transported to the bridge site and erected by bolting the parts together.

The over simplification of the above statement tells part of the story, but in reality the engineering of early steel bridges was quite complicated. There was no significant bridge traffic at that time, other than horse and wagons. The engineering problem was not the dead weight of the horse and wagon, but the rhythm created by the walking, or trotting of the horse. The effect created is somewhat the same as jumping up and down on a diving board; each jump simulates the step of the horse. If, by coincident a team of horses weighing one ton each, would bring there hoofs down the same time quite an additional strain would be created other than there dead weight.

The above problems were what faced the Dushore Council at their special meeting. The streambed had to be crossed at an angle and that meant a more complicated structure than the Council could pick out from the catalog. It was decided to contact The Owego Bridge Co. and have a representative call. In a few days an "expert" arrived and the bridge deal was closed.

I am going out on a limb again, to write, what I think happened next, but here goes. The train arrived at the Dushore Station. The flat cars, loaded with the bridge were spotted next to the long platform at the north siding. There were two main trusses about 55 feet long and 6 feet high and weighing about two tons each. A horse was used to skid the trusses from the flat car to the roadway where they were jacked up to rest on a special wagon, usually used for hauling long logs. The front set of wheels with a swivel for steering was chained to the front of the truss and a ridged set of wheels were chained to the rear of the truss thus making the truss a part of the wagon. The floor girders and associated steel members were transported by conventional means. At the bridge site, a gin pole [a gin pole is a pole supported by ropes so that it can carry a load higher than the ground level] was erected and swung the main trusses and supporting members to there appropriate positions where they were bolted {sometimes riveted] together. Local lumber made up the bridge floor and the bridge was ready for use.

The place where I was born was about fifty feet from the Loyal sock creek .I have observed the creek when it was so docile it seemed not to exist and other times the roar and fury of its flow was frightening. Ice jams and floating logs were an annual event and the old bridge took them in stride. After nearly a hundred years of overloading, and general wear and tear the old bridge will have to give up and be replaced.

With the endless regulations that exist today such as weight limits, traffic flow, environmental concerns, right of ways and small town financing, I bet that the members of the Dushore Council wish they had a solution that was as simple as there predecessor in 1904

Dick Holcombe
1/2/00

DECORATION DAY

Memorial day as I remember it began sometime around the year of 1925. At that same time my oldest brother, Si. Holcombe was in the R.O.T.C at State College and somehow he had acquired a bugle. He was also assistant scoutmaster of the newly formed Boy Scout Troop in Dushore. With Si's tutoring I was able to emit sounds from the bugle that might be called taps.

Less than a decade had passed since to carnage of world war one had come to an end and the veterans from that war were numerous and carried the wounds both mentally and physically of that ghastly slaughter. There was also a feeling of patriotism—a feeling that they were home and a feeling of deep sorrow for their comrades that were buried in Flanders field. There were also many who were home but they carried the high price of Victory in the form of every conceivable physical injury. There were many other causalities from mustard gas, shell chock and infection.

For many years my Father was a member of the Decoration Day Committee—I guess that is how I became the Decoration Day bugler. The general program as I remember it in the mid twenty's was as follows; At about nine in the morning a gathering of the people would take place at the bridge on Main Street. [There was no Monument at that time] The assemblage would proceed by car to the following Cemeteries: Thrashers, St. Johns Wilmot, Colley cemetery, Bahrs Hill and back to Dushore. At each Cemetery a short prayer would be read by the chaplain, The Firing squad would fire there weapons and I would emit noises from the bugle.

Upon returning to Dushore there was generally a parade consisting of the Dushore Band, Boy Scouts, three Civil War Veterans, two Spanish American Veterans and many World War One Veterans. There were speeches, some were inspiring and many were dull but the general rhetoric was the same as we hear to day—we gather to honor our heroic dead.

After the proceedings at the bridge in Dushore there was a recess for lunch. An Oyster dinner was served at the Grange Hall [My wife Ann who is my dictionary, thesaurus, spell checker and defense council notified me that there couldn't have been an oyster dinner because the month of May did not contained the letter "R"] Anyway they served an appropriate meal for the general public and the three Hotels and several restaurants were able to feed the considerable crowd that had assembled for the Memorial services. Prohibition was in effect at that time, thus causing some difficulty for those needing the comfort of a memorial libation. After the noon recess the Memorial entourage proceeded to St. Basil's cemetery and repeated the graveside services that had taken place in the morning.

The distance between cemeteries, the dirt roads, the vintage of the cars, created a very tight schedule. The only flexible part of the program was the Memorial prayer. The American Legion had a short prayer that was used at all of the services and I heard it so often that I knew it almost by heart. Later, At the Veterans Day Celebration this year I quoted part of the prayer to our Post Chaplain, She checked her Chaplains Hand Book and there was the old prayer that I remembered from long ago

Many other Memorial Services were held throughout the County. When the storm clouds of World War Two began to appear in the late thirty's the attendance at the Memorial Day Service began to increase and reached its peak with the conclusion of World War Two. The American Legion Post in Dushore regained its Charter and assumed the responsibility of conducting the Memorial Day Services. For the Dushore Area.

Many of us who served in World War Two felt honored as we stood at attention at our first Memorial Day Service since returning home. Little did we realize the toll that would be taken of our family and friends in the wars that would soon erupt in Korea, Vietnam and many smaller wars?

My Grandfather survived the battle of Gettysburg and I am the proud owner of the rifle that he carried there. I never knew my grandfather but I remember those three elderly civil War Veterans, probably they were about the same age as I am now, standing at attention and listened to that old prayer– *Man who is born of woman, springeth up like a flower and is cut down*

Dick Holcombe
5\6\00
758

THE ADZ MAN

It was sometime in the mid- nineteen twenties! The six-oclock train had just unloaded quite a number of passengers at the Dushore station, and they were walking down Railroad Street to town. The front porch of our house overlooked Railroad St., and in the summer it was a sort of gathering place for people to sit and watch the parade of people and conveyances that had met the train.

There was one person who was different, he had a large bag over his shoulder and he was black. It was the first time that I had ever seen a black person, and along with the other people on the porch his appearance opened up a lot of speculation concerning his presence in Dushore.

There were three butcher shops in Dushore and they all had large butcher-block tables used for the cutting of meat. There were no electric band saws at that time, to cut meat, so the butcher used a hand meat saw, but for many of the jobs he used a heavy cleaver. The cleaver not only cut the meat and bones but it took a toll on the wooden butcher block, and this resulted in an uneven surface.

I was down on Main St. the next morning and noticed more than normal activity at one of the butcher shops, so I investigated. Low and behold, the colored man who had come to town on last nights train was standing barefooted on the butcher block and deftly swinging an adz. The tool must have been very sharp because he had to cut the wood on the end grain. Along with several other people we watched in fascination as he skillfully shaped the block to a uniform smooth surface.

I never saw the man again, but I imagine he contacted the other two butcher shops in Dushore and the several shops in Mildred and Lopez. The plight of black people in general was not an everyday topic in the rural town of Dushore in the nineteen twenties. We had heard horror stories about there general miss-treatment in the southern states. Whatever stereotype I might have had in my young mind concerning black people vanished when I observed the skill and artistry of his work refurbishing the butcher block.

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PS: Many people especially the young, have never seen a butcher-block meat-cutting table. They were usually made of hard maple with the planks standing upright they were different sizes but the ones I remember were about four feet square and 18 inches thick and weighed several hundred pounds. There are two examples locally, in existence that I know of, and they are at Katies Country Store south of Muncy Valley and one at the Dushore Hotel in Dushore. Rich Sevensky proprietor of the Dushore Hotel gave me some interesting facts about the maple butcher blocks: About thirty years ago they were condemned by the health people as being unsanitary and replaced by a synthetic block that was supposed to be germ proof. It was found that the plastic cutting boards became scarred and harbored germs to a greater extent than the maple butcher blocks.

It took 24 steps from the sidewalk, to get to the first floor, of the house where I was born. At the rear of the house a cellar way opened to a set of steps. All of the coal for the furnace had to be carried from the coal trucks, to the cellar by hand. Mowing the grass, with a push reel mower, was a problem. The porch provided a grandstand view of people walking down the sidewalk after the arrival of the 6 o'clock train. The pint-sized front yard was the only level piece of ground on the whole property.

STARTING OUT YOUNG

Before the consolidation of the individual school districts of the County, there was held an annual event at the Fair Grounds at Forksville called 'field day". This event brought together the young athletes of the County to participate in competitive athletic activities.

I never had the inclination to play basketball or baseball, but I could run. Some of my friends persuaded me to enter the running broad jump contest. I remember running down the track and jumping as high as I could, then hitting the sawdust and tumbling end over end. The officials would measure the distance and call out the results. There was a tall lanky boy from Estella that followed me and he came down the track and jumped—he became air borne and came down standing up. The officials measured the distance and called out the results --. I don't remember the number of feet, but he jumped half again farther than I did. The little inclination I had for sports vanished with this humiliation

My lack of enthusiasm for sports was overshadowed by my interest in cars, trucks. tractors, trains or any device with wheels. My pride and joy was the 5 year old Sanford Fire truck that was housed within sight of where I lived.

There were three official fire truck drivers, they were all business men and their job was to drive the truck to the fire and connect the pumper to the water supply and provide proper water pressure for the people handling the hose. The truck was rated by the Underwriters to pump 500 Gallons of Water a minute at 150 Pounds pressure. There was a booster hose reel, tank, 1000 ft 2 ½ fire hose and two ladders. There was a lot of small fire appliances—pike poles, axes, extinguishers but no first aid kit. The truck had no muffler and the big six cylinder Continental engine made a lot of noise, there also was a large bronze bell and six volt siren!

One of the drivers was a special friend of mine and he went out of his way to show me how to operate the pump, he even let me drive the truck. Whenever the fire whistle would blow I would run to the firehouse and have the doors open and the engine started before the regular drivers arrived.

One summer day the fire whistle blew and I went to the firehouse, opened the doors and started the engine. People began gathering around the fire house but no driver?. Soon the president of the Fire Co. Came puffing up and said "where in hell is the driver" I said," I don't know" " he said " can you drive it"? I said " yes," he said," get going to the fire".

The fire was in a residence about 2 miles north of Dushore off swamp road. There was a small pond there that had been built to supply water for the Rail Road water tower. The pond was also a favorite swimming hole and I knew the lay of the land. I pulled the truck to the side where the water was deepest.. Many hands were available to hook up the suction hose and connect to the fire hose. I put the pump in gear and presto—all kinds of water. About that time one of the regular drivers arrived [not my favorite] and I was reduced to an uninvited spectator.

In a few years the great depression caught up with our community, we, as members of the fire co. had a hard time holding things together. I became chief truck driver, and as, the Sanford was the only fire truck in Sullivan County, and part of southern Bradford county, it was called into service many times.

It gives me a good feeling when I see the superb equipment at the firehouse. It gives me an even greater good feeling when I see the dedicated people—they're superb training and their willingness to give their time and skills to saving life and property.

It will require several chapters to tell the many stories since 1931. Some are humorous, some are sad, but they all depict the evolution of a small town Fire Co.

PS .The house was saved —Who knows—sometimes a bit of frivolous action by a teenager works out for the best.

Dick Holcombe
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The Fire Alarms

Notifying the public of a fire has been a problem that has been approached from many angles, for hundreds of years. Incessant Ringing of church bells was probably the most common way of conveying to the public, that a fire was occurring. With the advent of the steam engine, the high-pressure steam in the boiler provided a sound in the form of a steam whistle. This sound was loud and could be controlled in blasts, to indicate the whereabouts of the fire,

The first steam whistle designated specialy for fire service was installed on the Dushore Light Plant. The whistle was designed with a slide, which would go up and down on the barrel of the whistle, and the tone would change from a high shriek to a low moan, in seconds. On its first trial a fireman exclaimed, " I heard it, and got dressed before I was awake". This proved to be a good arrangement until the Light plant closed. I can find no record of what happened to the above whistle. The fire alarm was then moved to the Harrington Dairy building, using a conventional whistle. A problem arose however, where steam pressure was reduced during slack times and thus no signal.

In 1929 a Stearling electric fire siren was installed on the creamery building and a direct connection with the telephone operator opted for an ideal alarm system. The siren was plagued with problems from the start. It would freeze in winter and would not reach full speed for long length of time. One of the advertised advantages of the electric siren was that coded signals, could be sounded, and firemen could determine the general area of the fire location from the code of the signal.

At a Fire Co. meeting on July 31st 1929 a motion was made, quote " that the alarm is not to be sounded for out of town fires except in an emergency or by order of the foreman or some other official" Another quote at the same meeting.[I can state some names because one of them was my father] quote" Motion by Harold Thomas and second by V.B.Holcombe that Ned Smith fix the electric siren and make all necessary changes or give the dam thing away" [motion carried] . An April windstorm blew down the tower supporting the siren and its short career came to an end.

The fire whistle saga continued with member Gene Foley securing a huge steam whistle that had been used on a tug boat in New York harbor. It was five feet tall and weighed fifty pounds. It had a two and one half inch steam line, and required the equivalent of 50-horse power of steam to operate. It has been heard as far as ten miles a way. During World War two and through the cold war it was used as an air raid siren. Later an electric siren was acquired and is still in service today.

I vaguely remember the whistle on the light plant. The fuss over the first siren was short and holds little memory. The big whistle held reign for quite a few years and I can still hear its deep moan and the chill it sent up my back every time I heard it sound.

WHO NEEDS A FIRE TRUCK

The small town of Dushore, like so many other small towns in the country, had the universal problem of controlling and extinguishing fires. Practically every community, by the turn of the century, had a shop or a factory that was powered by a steam engine. The steam engine required large amounts of steam and that meant boiling many gallons of water. To supply the water needed to operate the boiler, the boiler house was usually located near a stream or a pond. The shop or factory usually had a steam water pump and hose for in house fire protection. The steam boiler also had a steam whistle that was used for a fire alarm. In several instances neighbors for their individual protection would purchase several hundred feet of fire hose. Fire protection for the general public was desperatly needed.

The Dushore Fire Co. No 1 was founded in 1892 and chartered in 1908. The early fire apparatus consisted of a four-wheeled wagon of light construction that had mounted thereon several ladders, axes, pike poles and many buckets. Later with the completion of the water system in Dushore 500 feet of 2 1/2 inch cotton jacked fire hose and several nozzles was added. The apparatus was housed in the borough building on Railroad St.

Here is what happened when the fire whistle would sound. The firemen would quickly assemble at the fire house. They would grasp the

long tongue of the wagon and several would push from in back and proceed to the fire. If the fire was within 500 feet of a fire hydrant a substantial stream was available from the hose. If the fire was beyond 500 feet bucket brigades was the only answer. If the fire was at the last hydrant on Churchill Street I imagine the firemen were so exhausted from pulling and pushing the fire wagon that they had to catch there breath before hooking up the hose. I assume there were occasions where a passing team of horses was commandeered to pull the fire wagon.

For the next 16 years the above method of providing fire protection was in effect. Gasoline driven trucks were becoming available and Chemical booster systems using soda and acid for propellant were the norm. There was available a 1916 Cole "car truck" that was being sold by the South Williamsport Fire Co. for the sum of $500. The Cole was purchased and had a troubled and short history of service with the Fire Co.

My association with the fire Co. has always been in the drivers' seat of a gas driven truck. The 1927 Sanford Pumper that I operated for many years was primitive compared to the modern Fire trucks now in service. The Sanford was however a far cry from the people [my father included] that had to pull and push their fire wagon to the fire.

THE COLE FIRE TRUCK

While doing some research for information on the first Fire Truck in Dushore, I came upon some interesting information. According to the minutes of March 4, 1924 a committee was appointed to look into the purchase of a chemical fire truck. (at that time the propellant for a booster tank on a fire truck consisted of soda, sulfuric acid and water. By combining the soda and acid a gas was formed and immediately built up pressure forcing the water out the hose. It was a one shot deal, once the witches brew was mixed, it had to be used completely, there was no shut off valves on the hose.) A committee consisting of Luis Connally, Leo Sick, T.J.Litzelman, P.F.Finan and John Hileman were appointed to investigate an apparatus that was for sale at South Williamsport.

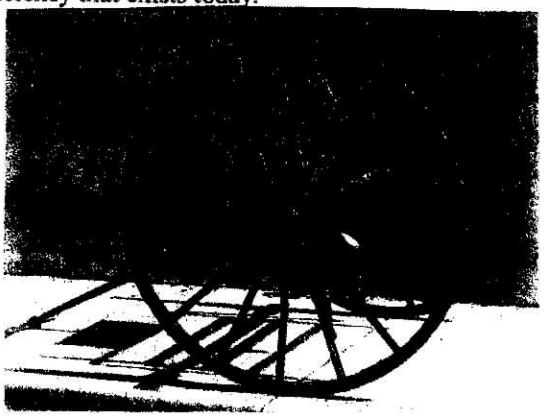
The purchase price of $480.00 was agreed on and the truck was delivered on May 20 1924. The specifications of the truck are sketchy, but to the best of what was in the minutes, and my memory are as follows: The make was Cole car truck, hard rubber rear tires, chemical tank, 200 ft hose. The only remark from the acceptance test was "The starter did not work well when starting " I spent a great deal of time at the fire house and my recolection of the truck was as follows: Cole 8, right hand drive, no windshield, hard rubber rear tires, Hand pump for priming when starting and obvious corrosion around the chemical tank from inavertantly spilled acid. The truck also carried Axes, Ladders, Pike Poles and small equipment.

At that time the fire whistle was in the Dushore Electric Light Plant . I was attending school and I looked out the window and the house across the street belonging to Sam Cole was on fire. Quickly the whistle began to blow, the crew gathered at the fire house and the "Cole" wouldn't start. (The fire house was in the building now occupied by the Sullivan Review) Fortunately Clayton Bahr came along with his four cylinder Atlantic gas truck and pulled the "Cole" to the scene of the fire.

I had a ring side seat from the second floor of the school building and could observe the organized confusion that ensued with the arrival af the Fire Company. While the hose was being laid to the nearest hydrant (Dushore water pressure was about 90 lbs at the hydrant being used) a great effort was being made to remove the contents of the house. I remember one particular incident in the frenzy to remove the building contents. was throwing a sewing machine out the up stairs window and carefully carrying pillows and blankets down the stairs. It took about six men to hold the fire hose and the flames were extinguished. The damage done by the fire was extensive, but the house was saved and stands today.

Evidently the tenure of the "Cole Eight" was limited. The Body and equipment was transferred to a model T with a ruxel rear end and that truck operated until 1927 when a new Sanford pumper was purchased.

When I think back after a lifetime of association with the Fire Co. it is hard to realize how things have progressed to the high degree of sophistication and efficiency that exists today.



Fire Hose was wrapped around the reel in the center of the cart. A tongue and drag rope pulled by men was the means of propulsion.

-- THE LEAD ACID BATTERY--

Around the time of the Civil War the lead acid battery was invented and was used primarily to power telegraph sounders. During World War 1, batteries of huge proportions were used to power submarines. The basic chemistry of the lead acid battery hasn't changed much since its invention.

The invention of the "self starter" for cranking automobile engines brought about a demand for portable, high output batteries that could be mass-produced at an affordable cost. Most of the batteries used for stationary applications were contained in glass jars. As glass was not practical for mobile installations a suitable substitute had to be found. Certain species of wood was resistant to the action of acid and a material called hard rubber was introduced as the principal material for constructing the vessel that contained the battery.

An inherent characteristic of a lead acid battery is that each cell generates two volts and as six volts were needed to produce the proper amount of currant, the battery case had to contain three compartments. Some of the hard rubber containers were encased in a wood box that would provide some protection against vibration and would allow clamps to hold the battery securely to the auto.

From the time that batteries were first used in a practical manner and continuing up into the nineteen twenties, batteries were so constructed that they could be rebuilt. Most communities had a battery shop and there were specialists who plied there trade rebuilding and selling batteries.

My first acquaintance, with a battery shop was located on the second floor of a building next to my father's furniture store. What circumstances, that would prompt a person to have a battery shop on a second floor, with no means of access other than a narrow flight of stairs, defies reason. Never the less the shop was there and the proprietor was named "Lew".

When a battery was brought in for repair, it was generally tested for specific gravity and each cell was tested for voltage and amperage. If one cell was at fault it was repaired and the battery put in service. If the entire battery was defective it would be completely rebuilt and for all practical purposes it would be as good as new.

The acid was contained in large glass jugs and had to be handled with extreme caution. Rubber aprons and rubber gloves were the working attire. Wool seemed to be acid resistant but a drop of acid on cotton meant an immediate hole. After the lead connectors had been molded in place and the battery sealed it was placed on a rack for charging. Lew had two chargers, one was an electric motor that drove a generator, the other was a "tungar"charger that used a primitive form of the vacuum tube to provide direct currant for charging.

The advent of more stable materials for use in the construction of a battery and the general improvement in the battery itself soon put an end to the battery shop as it was once known . I wonder if the next time you turn the key on in your new car and the engine springs to life, that the basic ingredients in the battery under the hood are the same as "Lew"used to fix batteries in the twenties.

THANK GOODNESS FOR THE CRANK

A standard accessory that came with a car purchased up to the nineteen thirties was a hand crank. This piece of bent iron came in quite a few sizes and shapes, generally one end had a socket that was used to tighten or loosen wheel nuts or bolts, the other end would engage the crank shaft during the process of engine starting. The older cars (pre nineteen twenty} had the crank mounted permanently to the front of the car, just below the radiator and positioned so that it could engage with matching pins on the crank shaft. Many cars and trucks at that time were equipped with "self starters", a battery powered motor that would engage the car engine and give it a whirl so that internal combustion would take place and the engine would start. Probably the most common orthopedic disorder of the time was the treatment of broken arms from an engine "kicking" during the sometimes-arduous procedure of cold starting a car. Engines at that time usually turned in a clock wise direction facing the engine and the person cranking had to push down and then lift up and hope the thing would catch. If you were left handed this sometimes presented a problem because of the proximity of fenders and sometimes a bumper. Quite a few operators were robust enough to "spin" the crank and the danger of "kicking" lessened. A new car usually presented more of a problem for the operator because the compression was greater. An old worn car with low compression almost always had to be Spun" to get it started.

In the nineteen thirties I became aquatinted with a permanently mounted hand crank attached to the front end of a 1927 Sanford fire truck. The engine was a 6B Continental flat head, and had twin ignition {magneto and coil}. The depression precluded the replacement of the battery and as long as there was an alternate method of starting, the crank was the way to go. The magneto had an automatic spark retarding device and that made the cranking procedure safer and more reliable, I don't remember, of it not starting on the first turn.

Batteries at that time were almost always 6 volts, requiring large battery cables and huge switches mounted in the floorboards. It seemed that if you pushed the starter button with your foot and the engine would not start you would keep pushing and hoping.

I imagine most people while starting there cars today by just turning a key, have no idea of the ritual it was in the twenties, but what would you do with a modern car with no battery.

THE LONESOME RAINEY NIGHT

It was a dark and rainy early evening, some time in 1934, when a call came from the Connell Mines at Bernice that as a result of a mine accident an ambulance was needed. At that time there was no public Ambulance service and by virtue of owning a hearse an undertaker was called upon to provide makeshift ambulance service. The great depression was in full swing and the economic problems that confronted all of the country was evident in the "next to nothing" safety procedures employed in the mining industry. During that general period, with the mines in receivership, desperate attempts to recoup some of the valuable coal were accomplished by the process of robbing pillars. These pillars were coal that was not mined but was left standing at required intervals to support the roof. The process of removing the pillars, was to start digging them away until the roof started caving in and then run!. Obviously this was a very dangerous situation but it only reflected the economic desperation of the times.

This is the general situation that I, at the age of nineteen found myself in when I backed the hearse in to the area where the wounded miners lay. Without any delay the injured men were loaded in the hearse, one on the cot and one on the floor. I don't know if there had been a doctor in attendance, but the men seemed to be sedated. I inquired who would accompany me to the Sayre Hospital and was told to get going, no one would ride along. After what seemed to be forever we arrived at the old Robert Packer hospital and without delay the men were taken into the emergency room. After some time I recovered the cot and prepared to start home. I inquired about the men's condition and could find out nothing.

Recently my scanner indicated that there had been a accident on Overton Road several miles from Dushore. After a safe time I drove to the site of the accident and had the opportunity of witnessing a rescue operation that in my opinion was classic. A person had been entrapped in the cab of a pickup truck. There were indications of leg fractures and other injuries. With enviable skill and team work, the Dushore Fire and Ambulance crew cut portions of the vehicle away and removed the person from the wreck and transported him to a field nearby where he was transferred to Guthrie One.

The contrast between the almost medieval situation that existed 65 years ago and the excellent accomplishment that I witnessed during the above mentioned rescue operation, is hard to comprehend.

During the many years that I have been privileged to be a member of the Fire Co. I have witnessed many changes. The only tangible. Condition that has never changed is the need for money. I can think of no more rewarding gift, both from the giver and the recipient, than a memorial bequest. There are few act of charity, where the funds would go directly to the saving of life and provide comfort to the suffering.

This tidy view of the former Conell Coal Breaker reflects its appearance in the thirties. It is a far cry from the appearance which would have been portrayed at the turn of the century. Lines of railroad cars and mine cars, on a network of tracks would have dominated the picture. The dangerous job of salvaging coal represented the economic condition whereby hi risk was necessary for financial survival.

THE DUSHORE LIGHT PLANT

When a couple has been married for over 60 years, a large amount of books, pamphlets and reading matter accumulates. My wife presented me with a copy of the "Dushore Centennial" 1859-1959. I was a member of the General Committee for the Centennial and I was quite familiar with its contents. However in leafing through the book on page 13, I found a picture of the Dushore Electric Company Plant.

The house where we lived was located on the west side of the Little Loyalsock creek and about fifty feet from the creek. On my way to the Dushore Public school I had to cross the Sock and then cross Mill St. and then go up a flight of steps that were about 100 feet long to Light plant building. I think I stopped at the plant every day I went to school, in the nineteen twenties until the plant closed.

This brings us back to the picture in the Centennial Book. *No Smoke Stack.* My vivid recollection of the engine room as you came in the front door was a huge Corliss Patent reciprocating steam engine coupled to an integral generator. On the left side of the room was a Westinghouse turbine generator that was small compared to the big Corliss but it had twice the generating capacity. A door on the left of the room led to the boiler room, where firemen shoveled coal from the Bernice mines, into the boiler firebox. A special steam whistle designed for fire alarm service was attached to the boiler and was the method used to alert the populace in the event of a fire. The whistle was unique in that it had a slide that would move up and down and change the pitch of the sound from a screeching high to a low moan.

Back in 1906 when Mr. John Black built the plant there were a number of manufacturers building gasoline powered light plants. Allis Chalmers built a gas-powered plant in 1910 that developed 1500 horsepower. I have a vague recollection of someone saying that the first generators, used in Dushore were gas powered.

The Centennial Article further states that the first generator was of 100 KW, the next 125 KW and the next 300 KW. At our house we had lights, [40 watt max.] washing machine, electric iron and later a toaster. Radios were battery powered.. That first 100KW would not go very far with today's home heating and cooling.

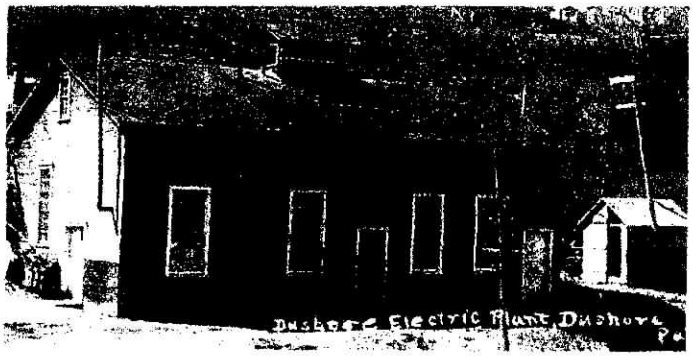
I recently visited the site and the old foundation and footings for the engines are still visible. There was one large footing that I don't remember and I wonder if it might have been the foundation for the gasoline engine.

PS:

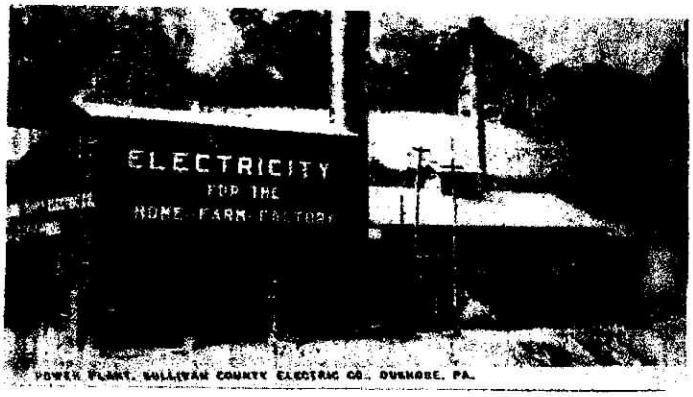
Shortly after the turn of the century, there were hundreds of companies throughout the United States engaged in the building of gasoline engines. Steam driven electric generators had been around for a few years, but they were not practical for home lighting use. The fascination for electric lights prompted many of the gas engine manufactures to capitalize on the burgeoning market for home light plants. As a result many engine builders would couple a generator and some primitive control equipment and presto, you had lights. The electric power volume was measured in number of lights, [no wattage given] it was inevitable that a more meaningful unit of energy would be necessary and the Kilowatt Hour unit was established.

The gas engine manufactures, were not all, concerned about home light plants. Many factories and municipalities used gas engine powered equipment for the electrical needs. Many other heavy machinery firms in building custom gas engines for Industry joined the above named Allis Chalmers Co.. Look at the specs for this monster: 5000 HP, the flywheels weighed 85 tons and were 20 feet in diameter, the crank shaft diameter 32 in., Each of the four cylinders used a 42in bore and a 72 in. stroke, intake and exhaust valves 15 in. in diameter, all this at 85 RPM.

If anyone remembers the sound of the old whistle or has any historical data concerning the plant, I would appreciate hearing from you..



A gasoline engine powered the generator in the first electric plant in Dushore . This picture was taken after 1906. I wonder where the gasoline storage tank was located.



This is the light plant; I visited on my way to school. The building that housed the huge boiler and coal storage space dwarfs the original building. The large Corless steam engine and the Westinghouse turbine were housed in the original building.

THE 'UPS AND DOWNS' OF GOING TO SCHOOL

The town of Dushore lies in the valley and hillside carved out by the Little Loyal Sock Creek and Mill Run. The rout of the State Line and Sullivan Rail Road necessitated the building of a long and high timber trestle that spanned the valley and the eastern end of main st. On a high knoll within a few hundred feet of the trestle a large Victorian house had been erected, and that is where I was born.

The rout to school started when I descended about forty steps to the level of the creek, thence along a plank fastened to the trestle abutments, then up a steep path and crossing Mill St. From there I climbed a long set of steps that terminated at the Dushore Electric Light Plant. Coal from the Bernice mines was used to fire the steam boilers that supplied steam to a huge Corless steam engine and a Westinghouse turbine generator. In the early nineteen hundredths when the plant was first opened it ran only in the evening, but by the nineteen twenties it ran night and day. The engineer and boss of the operation was named "Walt" and he took great pride in his domain, he also liked the me and went out of his way to explain the operation of the engines, generators and boilers.

The path from the light plant led steeply upwards to the school and after attending the morning session noon finally arrived and as there was no school lunch I reversed course down and up to our house.

I have often thought about plotting the rout to school on a topographical map and ascertain whether I traveled farther on a vertical plane than I did on a horizontal plane to receive my "higher" education.

The school, prior to 1933. An auditorium was added to the left front side of the old building. I was in the first class to graduate from the new auditorium. In 1953 as commander the Dushore American Legion, I had the honor of presenting the essay awards to the last class, that graduated from the school before it was closed.

This picture is one of the earliest views of the railroad trestle.

THE RAIL ROAD TRESTLE AT DUSHORE

The Sullvan and Erie Rail road was opened in 1870, with the purpose of hauling coal from the Bernice Coal mines to Towanda, where connections could be made with the Pennsylvania and New York R.R. [a subsidiary of the Lehigh Valley R.R.] and then to markets throughout the East. The Sullivan and Erie R.R. failed and were sold in foreclosure to the Pennsylvania and New York R.R. in 1874.

The original trestle built by the defunct Sullivan and Erie R. R. was rebuilt by it new owners and in general form remained through its operational life. The general railroad construction practices at that time was to start the roadbed grading and as soon as a level section was completed, rails would be put in place. This practice provided men and materials to the construction site, and other than dirt fill, most of the materials used in construction were hauled in on flat cars.

The frenzy to build Rail Roads during the 1870's created a demand for railroad construction companies and there was to some extent a standardization of construction practices. The large stone block used in bridge abutments and trestle foundations, were cut to general size and delivered on flat cars, were they were put in place by a railroad derrick. An interesting observation can be made by inspecting some of the original cut stones that were removed from the Dushore trestle foundations and now form a wall to the east of the Dushore Hotel---There is not much rsembalance to local rocks. Stories have been told that the prisoners at Sing Sing prison, quarried stones for the railroad companies.

The frightful carnage of the Civil War was a few years past, the industrial revolution was bringing to the northeastern states an unprecedented outpouring of manufactured goods and the war-ravaged south was a prime market. The South did have an abundance of yellow pine lumber. And the railroads rather than haul empty cars back north, would haul southern pine at a very reduced rate. The cost of harvesting the logs was trivial by northern standards. This unique situation made available a supply of logs that could be used for utility poles and framing construction. The southern mills could also saw the logs to size and coat them with tar. This glut of southern pine lasted well into the nineteen twenties and caused considerable competition with local lumber manufactures who scorned it's use. One Sullivan County lumberman described southern pine-- " hell, yellow pine is not a lumber it is a weed"

There is a good chance the Dushore trestle was built from southern pine. The upright timbers were massive and the diagonal bracing was extensive. The tracks had a gentle curve over the entire length. The cross ties extended about six feet on each side of the rails and there were several platforms supporting wooden barrels containing salt water [to prevent freezing], to be used in case of fire. As all of the locomotives were steam the fireman had to be very careful about dropping hot coals on the tar covered pine timbers. The rails were exceptionally heavy and a set of inner guardrails was installed to prevent derailing. Despite the best construction techniques, on October 28, 1896 several cars derailed and fell to the bank on the north side of the trestle. The cause of the derailment was unknown. My father at that time was boarding at the hotel Obert [now the Dushore Hotel] I wonder if he might have been in the Hotel at that time. A second derailment occurred in 1918, when during a switching operation several cars derailed on the east side of the trestle.

I was born in a large Victorian house on the north side of the Little Loyal Sock creek. The trestle that crossed the creek was about 400 feet from our house .The Dushore Public school that I attended was perched near the top of the hill on the opposite side of the creek. If I followed the line of least resistance, I would cross the creek via the stone abutments that supported the trestle, and then to the Dushore Light Plant and then to School. By the time I was growing up the timbers had lost most of the outside coating of tar and on quite a few occasions we would climb the diagonal timbers to the top, much to the consternation of my mother who might be looking at the time.

Quite often the passenger train coming from Wilks Barre or Williamsport would be slowed or stopped on the trestle, giving the passengers a birds eye view of Main St. Dushore. The speed limit on the trestle was slow, but the trains heading towards Bernice would "full throttle" as soon as the engine cleared the trestle in anticipation of the steep grade ahead. The trestle was used as a support for banners depicting social events, and a Halloween prank was to shoot a carbide cannon

down Main Street. Forth of July fire works often originated from the top of the trestle. Young couples would test their fear of height by walking from one end to the other.

With competition from trucks and the depletion of the coal and lumber revenues, the Bowmans Creek branch of the L.V.R.R fell into decline. Many attempts to close the branch were denied by the I.C.C.but finally the last train left for Towanda.

A few years after the rails were torn up, a contract to dismantle the trestle was awarded to Roscoe Burgess of Forksville. A log loader operated by Vernon Broshart was positioned at the north end of the trestle.[near Agway] . I was standing alongside the loader and Vernon was pulling one of the large timbers up the bank when the cable broke. The backlash from the cable missed me by inches. It would be ironical after a lifetime of crawling; climbing and walking on that old structure I would be injured during its demise.

The timbers were stockpiled at the Burgess property and many of the smaller, [6in x 12in x 16ft] were used for local building projects. Fate must have destined the larger timbers for a role in bridge construction. Many were hauled to the Wilkes-Barra area to make temporary bridges as a result of a disastrous flood.

The roadway beneath the bridge was always a bottleneck. A short time after it was torn down, extensive excavating of the south bank was made and the extension of Cherry St. Eliminated thus making the roadway as it is today.

The elimination of Dushore's most dominant land mark is now just a memory, but just ask anyone who lived in Dushore while it was still standing and I am sure you will hear some tall stories.

Passenger train on the tressling.

Passengers get a birds eye view of Dushore as a train is stopped on the trestle. The heyday of passenger service was in the early nineteen twenties. The open-air toilet flushing facilities necessitated the locking the rest room doors when the train approached Dushore from the south.

A switching operation is responsible for this mess in 1918. An engine was pushing several boxcars when they derailed on the north side of the trestle. The engine remained on the tracks.

STEAM

A boy growing up in the nineteen twenties would be subject by circumstance rather than choice, the wonders of steam power. Almost every town, had some kind of a steam boiler, it may have been used to pasteurize milk, provide power for a saw mill, plaining mill, feed mill, coal mine breaker, blacksmith shop, machine shop, foundry, electric light plant, pump water, plow fields drill wells and pull trains. Most of the steam engines used in rural communities were of a non-condensing type and were simple in construction. The boilers were of riveted steel construction containing many steel flues, which were surrounded by water. The heat from the fire passed through the tubes and boiled the water to make steam. Coal could be used to fire all of the boilers but sawmills used mainly waste wood for fuel.

The process of manufacturing small [up to 50 horse power] steam engines was not to complicated and many small foundry and machine shops build engines for local trade. However, The Troy Engine and Machine Co. of Troy Pa. made many fine engines for industry and general use. I had the pleasure of working on and operating several quite large Troy, upright engines that were driving ammonia compressors that were used in the refrigeration system of the Harrington Dairy in Dushore, Pa.

The flexibility of steam power provided a source of power that made it ideal for many applications. The dairy industry for example: When the weather got hot, open up the throttle and speed up the refrigeration compressor and maintain an even temperature in the cooler. [Try that with electric power] The steam traction engine was another example of the flexibility of steam. The real example of the flexibility of steam power was in the Rail Road Engine. Even before the turn of the century there were locomotives puling trains at a low speed of several miles an hour and then accelerating to 100 miles an hour in minutes.

Sometimes I get carried away when it comes to discussing the merits of external combustion power. I had the experience of having a young friend of mine ask, "What is a reciprocating steam engine" So, I had the pleasure of explaining to my young friend the somewhat simple principals of ordinary reciprocating steam engines. For many years, the steam whistle started the workday off and also signaled the end of the day. It was not uncommon while driving through the western end of Sullivan Co. to see the smoke from several sawmills at once.

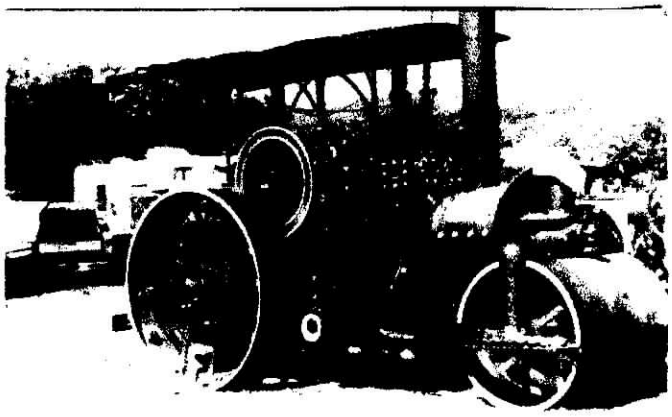
To further emphasize the roll of the steam engine, all one has to do is look at any home or barn, or any wooden structure that was built before 1940 and the lumber would have been sawed with steam engines. A few diesel-powered mills came into existence around that time and the Rural Electrification Act came in around 1937 and some mills converted to electric power.

Steam power is kept alive and well in the form of steam traction engine. [See photo elsewhere] These powerful and ponderous machines were used for plowing and any other heavy-duty draw bar requirements. The steam tractor was used extensively for belt power and was the forerunner of the modern tractor. The nearest thing to a steam traction engine that I remember was the boiler and running gear of a unit that was converted from a conventional traction engine to a well drilling rig. The late Zac Cole who was the local well driller at the time used this machine

Mr. Fred Passeri of Columbia Cross Roads owns and operates a wonderfully restored 1918, Case 50 Traction Engine. There are several drawbacks to owning these wonderful machines other than their size and weight. Mr. Passeri spent thousands of dollars having the boiler rebuilt in order to have an inspection certificate so that he can operate the machine in accordance to law regulating pressure vessels.

The evolution of steam power was fraught with problems and many a life was lost, due mainly to boiler explosions. Horse drawn steam engines mounted on a riveted wrought iron boiler were beginning to appear after the civil war and were used extensively up to the nineteen twenties. By walking through most any cemetery mute evidence will be inscribed on the headstones. I observed one that read "killed by a boiler explosion on the Lehigh Valley Railroad 1914".

My school days ended in 1933, History at that time did not cover current topics such as steam engines. To day, I wonder, when a young boy asks me," what is a reciprocating steam engine" does it tell us that our school history program is missing, something important out of the past. I guess when thinking about a steam engine one thinks of a snorting monster like a locomotive or a traction engine but while sitting here typing this article, my computer is powered by a steam engine at some coal fired or nuclear powered facility.



This is the machine that started the phrase "steam roller" A typical steamroller would weigh from 8 t0 10 tons. They made possible the construction of macadam roads and played a great part in road building until the twenties when they were replaced with gas and diesel power. If sometimes you feel you got "steam rolled" into a situation, you can blame it on the above monster.

DONKEY + HORSE = MULE

The above equation seems a little odd when one considers the biological reproductive process in general. This process produced an animal that seemed to be at the top of the list for hauling coal cars in the coal mining industry.

My first association with the beast was quite abrupt, and happened at a most inopportune time. (My father was engaged in the Furniture and Undertaking business and a shiny Model "A" Ford sedan was our principal funeral car). I was delivering flowers to the church in preparation for the burial service that was to follow . While rounding a sharp curve in the Village of Murray Town, I observed, five Mules standing in the road and with the frantic reaction that followed I and the model"A" landed in the ditch. One of the virtues of a model "A" was they could crawl out of almost any situation that occurred and my attempts to drive out of the ditch would have been successful but the mules were in the way. In this case the legendary stubbornness of the mule prevailed for about ten minutes. My horn blowing attracted some neighbors who came to my rescue with rocks and sticks drove the mules away.

A the time this incident occurred the great depression was in full force. The number of mules engaged in the mining operation at the several mines in the area was enormous and with the financial squeeze placed on the mine operators the mule was the firs. commodity to be eliminated. I am not quite sure how the mine operators formally disposed of there mule inventory but I do know that for quite a few yeas the mule hazard while driving through coal mining towns was very real.

Farmers with there teams of horses would bring a load of props (wood poles used to support the roof of the mines) to the mines in exchange for coal. This sometimes presented a problem because there was a number of male donkeys or jacks interspersed among the mules. If the farmer had a mare in his team that had family plans, the love call would summon the jack and some times chaos would result. I have heard horror stories of how a 600 pound jack would try to mate with a 1600 pound mare and the result was the jack grabbing the mare by the throat and throwing her to the ground so there size differences would be equalized.

For us who remember the legendary mine mule the experience has been humorous and sometimes frustrating but in the overall picture the mule provided a service that in a small way helped to make America Great.

The above picture illustrates the job that the mine mule had to perform. There were many interconnecting tunnels whereby the mules would bring the cars to a point where several cars could be hooked together and pulled to the surface. When the mines closed there was no use for the mules or the cars. The mules were turned loose but I imagine there are a lot of coal cars still in the mines.

WIND POWER

While attending the opening of "Alice's Chicken Coop" at Forksville, between the many fine antique items on display, a small tabletop radio caught my eye. My curiosity was triggered because it was a Zenith and looked vaguely familiar. I turned the radio around to view the chassis and low and behold there was the 6-volt battery leads to connect the set to a 6-volt car battery.

It was way back about 1934 that the Zenith Radio Co and the Windcharger Co. teamed up to promote the sale of a 6 volt battery powered radio and the battery would be charged by a small wind mill. For people who lived beyond the power lines at that time, dry cell batteries supplied radio service. The dry cell batteries were non rechargeable and expensive. When one turned on the radio at that time, you listened to your program and then turned the set off.

This Windcharger system worked out quite well and as Zenith dealer we sold quite a few outfits from our store in Dushore. The Wind charger consisted of an angle iron frame about 6ft. high, a 6-volt generator driven by a wood propeller. The unit was mounted on the highest spot on the house and 2 no. 14 wires carried the current to the location of the battery. An electrical cutout and an amp meter were mounted in a small control panel near the battery. In a normal wind the generator would put out 15 amps, or 90 watts.

Part of our sales pitch was, that in periods where the radio was not in use the power generated would provide electric lights. We sold 6 volt light bulbs with standard sockets in 25 and 50-watt sizes.

I had one customer who had a large farm and he strung wires over the milking area with a bulb near each cow. He would turn the light on at the cow he was milking and then turn it off and repeat the process at the next cow. The system was much more convenient and safer than a kerosene lantern

The depression was in full swing and a dealer had to give a real value to stay in business. I am guessing about the price of the radio wind charger outfit but I think the price of the radio was $49.50, Wind Charger $19.50 and I installed the setup free.

Another event occurred one winter day while I was installing a wind charger on the top of a farmhouse. I had placed a ladder to the gable of the roof and as there was snow on the ground I had the farmer steady the ladder while I ascended. I was just going to step from the ladder to the roof, when the farmer decided to go to the barn! I remember going by the attic window, the second floor window and hitting a pile of snow about 6 ft. high, that had been miraculously shoveled from the house entrance. I crawled out of the snow without a bump but the farmer, realizing what happened almost had a heart attack. We put the ladder back and I completed the installation.

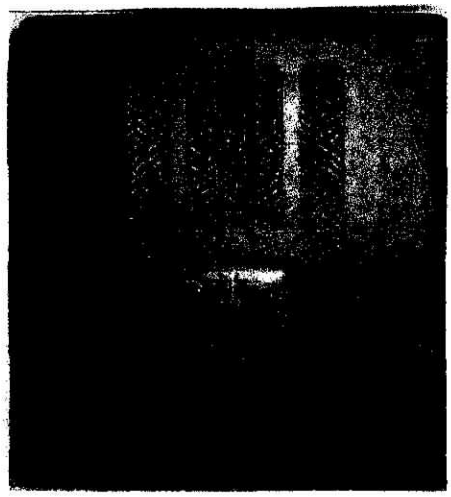
Sixty-Five years ago we were the gurus of retail electronics, our chief problem-solving tool was a tube tester and a battery tester.

Another classic example of a tabletop radio is displayed at the Chicken Coop. It is a Philco superheterodyne. The superheterodyne circuit was a breakthrough in giving greater radio reception, and that model was our best seller

Computer chips, electronic jargon are taken for granted today, there mysteries are no more indefinable than visualizing the power of the wind, bring Kate Smith singing:" When the Moon Comes Over The Mountain" or Lowell Thomas saying:"so long until tomorrow".

I imagine the farmer milking his cow in the light of a 25-watt bulb had some kind thoughts for the little propeller-spinning overhead.

Dick Holcombe 7/7/01 663



This little radio provided radio reception beyond the power lines. It operated from a 6-volt car battery.

THE MILL POND AT DUSHORE

I imagine, at the first glance our early settlers had, when they took their first look at the Loyal Sock creek, a notion would cross their mind that here was a source of power. Water had been used for power as far back as the Romans and many examples of waterpower were in use before the settlement of the Loyal Sock water shed. Most of the early waterpower was developed by water wheels. Water wheels came in many forms and sizes and could be built of wood and tailored to the supply of water and the amount of power that had to be generated. Most locations favored a place where there was a fall in the creek that would be as great as the diameter of the wheel. This requirement was for overshot wheels. A properly designed overshot wheel could reach proportions of from 60 to 80 percent efficiency. There were many advantages and disadvantages to waterpower. In the summer time when the streams were low the power of the mill was limited. In the spring and during flood periods there was ample power but the possibility of the contraption being washed out was very great

The Industrial revolution brought in the use of water turbines. A typical example of a turbine can be found at the Lewis property near the Village of Hillsgrove. For many, many, years, this plant has generated electric power for household use and commercial demand. It is a typical example of how the power of water can generate electricity, dependability, economically and with a minimum initial investment

Following up the Sock it is recorded that mills were at Forksville, Cherry Mills, Ringdale and probably other places. Near the headwaters of the Little Loyalsock , the Obert family operated a turbine mill at Dushore. Now, the flow of water in the Little Loyal sock in the summer time quite often is reduced to a trickle. [The house where the author was born was within 100 feet of the creek. First hand experience] this means the pond had to be built to store water during the evening and that stored water would operate the mill in the day time. The mill was large and could produce all kinds of grain flour and other milled products.

This brings us to the Obert Pond. I am not sure of the total acreage but in the nineteen twenties it covered the area from the present dam to near the area below the Lutheran Church and over to the slope that goes up to William St. There was a steel truss bridge that was replaced in the early thirties by the bridge that is now being replaced. I remembered some of the older boys diving off the top of the old truss bridge. Quite a few rowboats were tied up along the shore and several of my friends and I constructed a raft out of old oil drums from A.R.Meehan's Garage that was located in the area just south of the dam. An Ice elevator was permanently located in the area directly adjoining Mill St. and every winter Ice was harvested by the Harrington Dairy Co. Just to the East of the bridge was an opening to the large steel pipe that supplied water to the mill that was located down Mill St. There was a channel running from this opening out to the middle of the pond. Every so often the pond had to be drained and this channel deepened and cleared of debris. I well remember people wading out through the mud and picking up carp that were huge. I have a brother who carried the dorsal marks on his chest after trying to pin down a huge carp.

The pond was a beautiful site. Willow trees ringed it and as one crossed the bridge it seamed as though it was a mile long. Other than its beauty it had other recreational uses. In the wintertime it attracted many skaters. There is no doubt that it provided flood control because often times it was in a lower state and could store up waters from a flash flood. Likely the most important use of the pond other than generating power was water for fire protection. Sometime in the thirties when the Feed mill burned on Carpenter St. [Area now occupied by Agway] I drove the Sanford Fire truck to the pond and pumped water to the fire for five hours. On several other occasions water was pumped for fire protection.

My wife and I lived and raised our family in a house overlooking the pond. Perhaps the fond memories have prompted me to write this article. I am not sure of the ownership of the pond site but it seems to me, that if it could be purchased and restored to its original state it would be a great addition to the community.

View from the front porch of our house sometime in the early 60's. The large dark area in the foreground is earth washed in from the small creek that drains the watershed, from the Bernice hill area. The Lutheran Church is faintly visible in the background. It is hard to realize that in ones lifetime, nature could undo mans efforts to control water. I remember when the depth of the water thought the pond was substantial. A few of the willow trees still stand. No other landmarks indicating the existence of the pond are visible.

THE ENGINES. CARS AND TRACKS

Shortly after the Civil War ended, the United States found itself engaged in a railroad building program that lasted in to the nineteen twenties. The frenzy to build a railroad could be compared to the situation today, in relation to the Internet merchandising business. Many railroads were started without proper engineering and market surveys and ended up in bankruptcy. Mute evidence of this folly can be seen on the road from Monroeton to Canton. Large cuts through the rocks but no tracks!

Various entrepreneurs eyed the vast virgin forests and coal deposits found in certain areas of Sullivan County. The railroad had been completed from Athens to Towanda 1869, so why not build a railroad from Towanda to Bernice where the main coal deposits lay. The Sullivan and Erie rail road built the first rail road from Bernice to Monroeton . The venture failed and a subsidiary of the Lehigh Valley Rail road, the Pennsylvania & New York, took over control. The name of the new PA&NY branch was the State Line and Sullivan Rail Road. The road was completely rebuilt, replacing wooden bridges and installing new 58-lb steel rails. Later the railroad was extended to Lopez, Rickets, Harveys Lake and Wilks Barre. A short time later the Williamsport and North Branch rail road was completed from Halls Station [The present site of the Lycoming Mall]. to Sattersfield where it met the State Line and Sullivan. The market for Bernice semi-anthracite coal was for the most part, used in domestic heating and cooking and the populous New England states provided a large market. The Erie railroad had connections to service the New England states and had a terminal at Waverly N.Y. where it met the Lehigh Valley. There was a bottle neck however, the Erie's tracks were broad gauge [6 ft.] compared to The Lehigh Valley which was standard gauge [4ft 8 ½ in.] Building a platform where the Lehigh coal cars could be pushed over the Erie cars solved the problem, and the coal dumped by gravity into the cars below. Later standard gauge tracks were laid to Buffalo and the bottleneck eliminated. By the early 1880's one could go from Dushore to Williamsport, Wilkes Barre, Towanda and points North. The above destinations had connections with other rail roads to any place in the country..

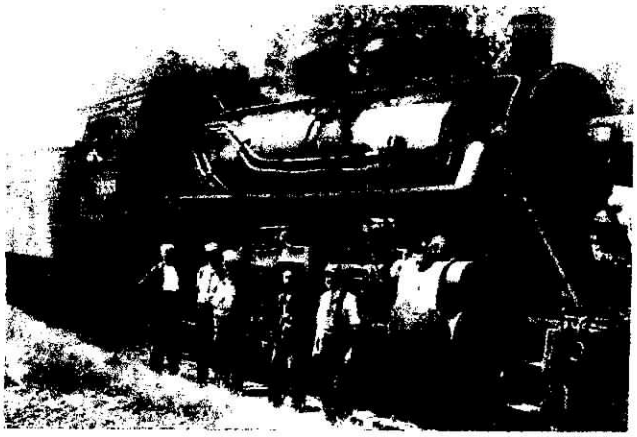
Most branch lines that fed main line operations. were furnished with hand me downs from the main line operations. In the early days of the Lehigh Valley, each division had its own pet engines and there was little standardization of engine types. This method of choosing motive power was soon standardized. In my time the main engine used on the trains that ran through Dushore, were built at the Sayre shops. They were ten-wheeler's and could be used on both freight and passenger service. There were quite a few of them built and they were numbered 1100 and up. Many of them were built the year I was born—1915. They stayed in service until the Diesel area. Occasionally a larger engine would be used on special trains. There were a few occasions, that passenger trains were routed over the Bowmans Creek Branch to Wilkes Barre due to problems on the main line. The passenger cars were also hand me downs. From main line service. The coaches were plain with little creature comforts other than quite comfortable seats, Steam heat from the engine, air conditioning by opening a window and toilets with an open air flush. [the toilet doors were locked just before reaching the station and the Dushore trestle]]. Shortly after world war one when passenger traffic was at its peak, there would sometimes be three coaches and the bagage car. There were special trains that ran excursions to Harveys Lake, and many other points of interest. Occasionally there would be a Pullman Car mixed in with the regular cars. The freight cars were standard on main line and branch lines. Many of the regular freight cars were still partly made of wood but all steel cars soon replaced them. The coal cars were numerious and followed the standard pattern of the time, where by the bottom of the car had doors that could be opened and the contents of the car be unloaded quickly by gravity. Logs and lumber were chained to flat cars. Tractors, automobiles, farm machinery, the door for the vault at the First National Bank, The Bell at St Basils, pre fabricated bridges or almost any thing, that would fit on a flat car could be hauled. I remember my father receiving a nice new hearse that arrived on a flat car. The mad rush to build railroads peaked around 1916, when over 250,000 miles of track were in existence. From that time on there was a general decline in railroad traffic, only revitalized by two world wars. The branch lines passenger

service was the first facet of railroading to be discontinued. The great depression wrote finish on many branch lines entirely.

From the time that the earliest settlers braved there way to Sullivan Co. and eked out a meager living, by farming and small lumber operations, life was very much dependent on self sufficiency. With the arrival of the railroad in the early eighteen seventy's and the exploitation of the coal and lumber resources, life changed dramatically. Almost overnight manufactured good were available that could not have been brought in by horse and wagon.

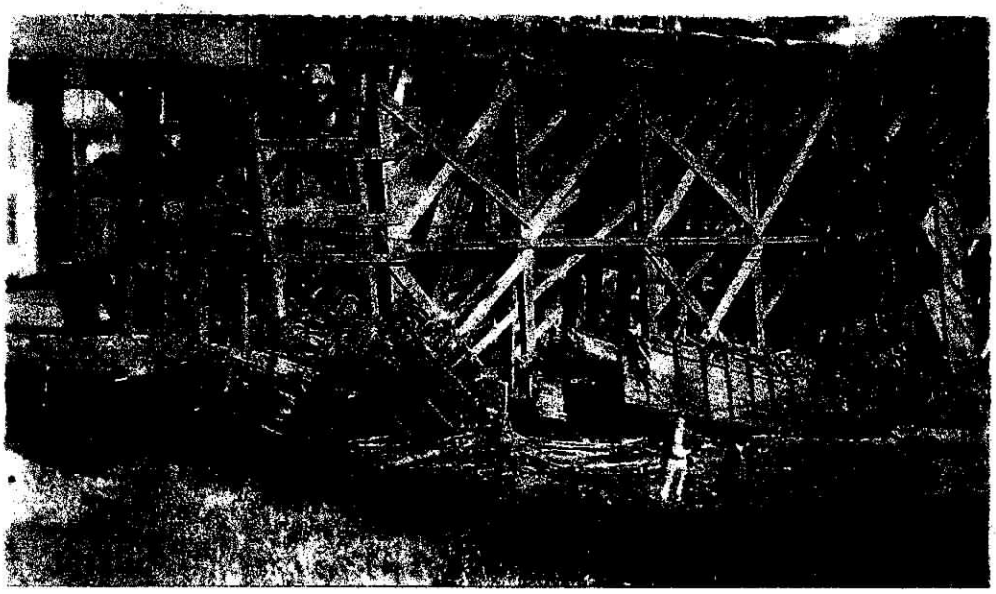
Old railroad grades abound through the County. The people who remember when there were gleaming ribbons of steel, laid on these grades are getting fewer. I wonder if there would be any interest in arranging a fall afternoon whereby we could trace the path of the mighty ten wheelers and pretend we were heading for Harveys Lake for a fall outing.

Dick Holcombe 977



Last steam engine over the line—at the Dushore Station.

The 1100 series engines were built at Sayre and over thirty were built. Their wheel arrangement was 4-6-0 or ten wheelers. They were used mostly in branch line service, although they could step out and maintain speeds required for main line service. There construction was in the general time period as my early years. An eleven hundred series engine almost always pulled the trains traveling through Dushore. They were finally replaced by diesels.



Evidently these wooden boxcars were empty. There fragile construction is evident in the picture. All steel boxcars soon replaced the wooden cars. The steel coal car at the right appears to be intact. There seems to be little damage to the trestle. I was three years old when the accident occurred, the house where we lived, is faintly visible in the back ground

THE DUSHORE RAIL ROAD STATION

A person who grew up in the nineteen twenties and thirties would have a first hand appreciation of the importance of the rail road station In my case the business that my family was in depended entirely on the rail road to supply the merchandise that we sold. Probably no other structure affected the every day life in Dushore as much as the station. Thanks to the efforts of Dr, Tom Shoemaker and family, the station has been preserved in its operational condition. It is the way I remember it in the twenties and thirties. One can visit this piece of history on weekends, where it has been put to practical use as a store for local crafts and artists. On a siding next to the station a "wreck masters car" is on display and is used as the Rail Road Emporium.

The exact date of the station is unclear but from its general architectural design it reflects the influence of the Lehigh Valley railroad's pattern of small stations. For all practical purposes the Lehigh Valley railroad, through its several subsidiaries, controlled the Dushore Branch. This would place its construction time around 1874.

The station Agent controlled the general operational activity of the station. He was the boss and all final decisions would have to be made by him. There were several other employees including the clerk telegraph operator,. Freight roustabouts, and the section boss and his crew. The section crew had several handcars and maintained the road bed and rails between several designated points.

A typical day would begin at seven in the morning, with people backing their trucks and wagons to the various platforms, and picking up the freight that had been dropped off the previous day. People, who wanted to ship merchandise, would unload the wares on the platform and there the items would be weighed and a "bill of lading" would be prepared. A chart used by the railroad employee would determine the cost of the shipment.

Later on in the day people would begin to arrive to meet the train arriving from Wilkes Barre. Some would buy tickets for points north and others would greet passengers from as near as Sattersfield, to people, who by various rail road connections, could be arriving from any place in the country. The train was usually pulled by a Sayre built 1100 series engine, and consisted of a baggage car and two coaches. The baggage car would be unloaded on high wheeled wagons, and would contain the U.S.Mail, Rail Way Express goods, and personal items of the passangers. The Hotel Obert and the Carroll Hotel had horse drawn passenger wagons that met all passenger trains. Later various forms of autos were used to transport prospective customers.

The 6 o'clock train arriving from Towanda, where connections had been made with the famous Lehigh Valley Black Diamond, would be the pinnacle of the day. A parade of people would walk down railroad street and our house, whose front porch faced that street, was a vantage point to see who arrived on the train.

There were other more somber occasions that took place at the station. Many veterans who had been wounded in world war one, and had languished in military hospitals, but finally paid the price were transported with a full military burial contingent. Civilian burial arrangements were also controlled by the trains time table. If the train was late the waiting room became a mourners haven.

The classic Niagara Falls Honeymoon was a natural for newly weds using the Dushore Station. Board the north bound train and with a short stop at Towanda, transfer to the Black Diamond. Have a great meal in the Dining Car and soon arrive in Buffalo. There, special arrangement were made, to accommodate newly weds and a tour of Niagara Falls

The passenger business that occurred at the station was important but from earnings stand point the freight and express revenues were greater. To the north of the station there was a long siding with several connections to the main line. There were platforms that were level with a freight car floor, so that heavy freight could be unloaded on rollers, or in the case of tractors or autos, they could be driven off. I remember watching the process of unloading Fordson tractors. Henry Ford was so sure his Fordson tractors were perfect, that they were sometimes loaded by crane onto flat cars without being tested to see if they would start. The firm of Carroll and Ballentine were the Fordson Dealers at the time and their crew would attempt to start one of the machines via the crank. If by luck they could get one of the machines, started they could pull the remaining tractors off the flat car and start them by towing. Many carloads of lumber were shipped from Dushore. Along the siding there were wooden

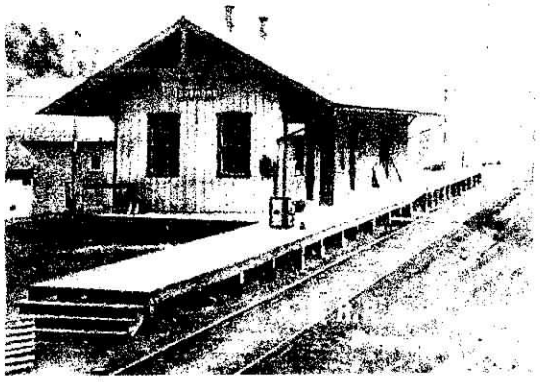
pens that were so constructed to accommodate almost any species of livestock. I remember flocks of sheep being driven up Rail Road Street and thence to the pens awaiting shipment in a special car for that purpose. Cattle and Horses were received and shipped via this arrangement. During the twenties and thirties the game commission obtained white tailed deer from Michigan. They were shipped in cattle cars and the train would be stopped along the way and some of the deer released. The remaining deer were held in the cattle pens and were delivered to various parts of the County in cattle trucks..

The Railway Express Agency was an independent Corporation. By special arrangements with the Rail Road Companies they had agents and offices in thousands of stations throughout the Country. There purpose was to ship and receive smaller items of freight and produce. In smaller stations the rail road agent was the Express agent. Larger stations had a special department for express business. There service was phenomenal, mainly because their goods were carried in the baggage car of fast passenger trains. Such perishable items as oysters were shipped to local merchants. I had coonhounds shipped by express. The size of the items to be shipped was limited but generally much larger than UPS handles today. One morning about nine I called the Bigelow Sanford Carpet Co. in Philadelphia and ordered a 12 ft. rug.. The next afternoon the station agent called, and said I Had a rug there, come up and get it. it was so long it was a nuisance.

One of the most important services of the Station was the telegraph. The instrument was used mainly to control the operation of trains between stations. For other than railroad use, for a small fee, one could send a message to almost any place in the Country, and receive a prompt answer. The telegraph was soon outmoded by the telephone. I wish I would have recorded some of the activities that I observed at the Dushore Station. The eccentricities of the station personnel and there reaction to certain customers were sometimes a riot. The large coal bucket that sat besides the office-heating stove was an unerring target for the agent's chewing tobacco habit. The discussion of freight rates, damaged goods, lost merchandise and late trains sometimes tried the patience of the agent, [he had a sharp temper to begin with].

Perhaps one of the most important areas of the station was the waiting room. The nature of train connections invariably meant long waits . For instance if a person from Laporte wanted to go to Lopez he would board the W.& NB and proceed to Sattersfield. There he would wait for the LV train to Wilkes Barre, sometimes several hours later. He would also have the option of going on to Dushore, and spend the several hours shopping or having a good meal at one of the several restaurants, then boarding the LV train to Wilkes Barre and getting off at Lopez. This little extra timing would cost a few more pennies in fare but might provide the comfort of inside toilet facilities and much less monotony.

The little rail road station probably contributed as much, to development of this great country as any other single building .In Dushore, Its a part of history that is alive and well and I hope that it will be preserved in the future in the same pristine form as the Shoemakers have made it today.



In my adolescent years the Dushore Station was a hub of activity. The building was very long in comparison to its width. Over half of it's 2000 sq. ft. of floor space was devoted to freight. The time table board mounted on the side of the building lists "east bound and west bound" actually the east would be generally south and the west bound would be north. For a person who has not actually witnessed the activity caused by the arrival of the scheduled passenger train, the activity on the long platform was organized and efficient. In a few minutes as many as 100 passengers could get on or off the train. Mail, perishable food, milk, express items {Equivalent to UPS today} were handled with dispatch.

The Sanford Pumper

In the early 1920's the mission of Dushore Fire Co. No.1. Was to extinguish fires in the Dushore Area. The 1000 ft of hose carried on the Cole truck and later on the Ford model T truck would reach most of the residents in the town. Many of the privately owned water company fire hydrants were so insufficiently supplied with water that their flow was ineffective. There was also a need for fire protection in nearby areas. The need for a Fire Truck that would pump water became evident.

There was a large pond at the northeastern part of town and two streams ran through the business section of the town. A pumper could utilize the pond and streams and could boost the pressure from the hydrants.

Besides the name brand truck manufactures there were many small companies that bought component parts and assembled these parts for specialized service such as fire trucks. There was also a standardization of fire truck specifications. One such type was called the triple combination, it contained: a pump, booster tank, and a good supply of hose.

One of the great mysteries of evolution is what makes a fireman tick. Besides the idea of protecting life and property there seems to be a progressive indistinct that drives a fire company to improve there ability to do there job. The purchase of an Underwriters approved pumper would also reduce their fire insurance rates.

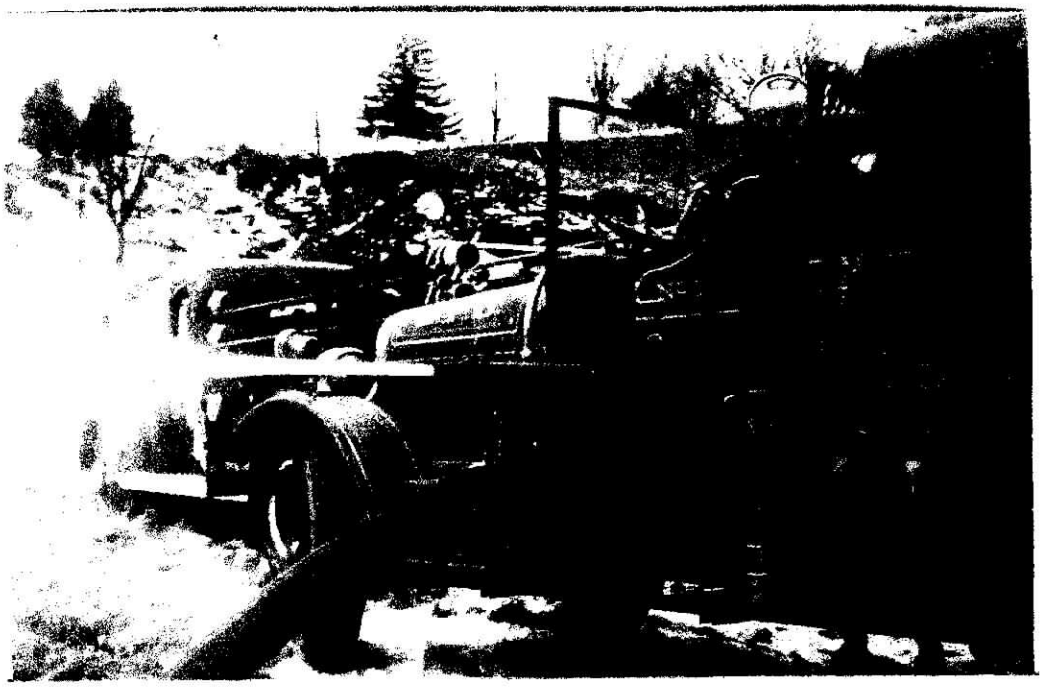
The Hahn Co. of Allentown demonstrated a 400 GPM pumper at Oberts pond on 3/2/27. The specification of the truck was as follows: engine 6B Continental 3 3/4 x5 and the pump was a Northern Rotary. The pumping test report indicated the Following: Lift 12 ft, weather snow, 364 GPM at 131 PSI, 517 GPM at 122 PSI and 262 GPM at 275 PSI. The truck was moved to the town square and coupled to a fire hydrant with the following results. 310 GPM at 125 PSI and 374 GPM at 120 PSI. The poor showing when the truck was pumping from the hydrant indicated the inadequacies of the water system and not the pumper.

The Hahn truck carried the standard load of equipment including hose, pike poles, ladders, rope and small tools. The prices of the trucks varied from $4200.00 to 7750.00 according to the capacity of the pump, size of the booster and the make and size of the engine. There would be an allowance of $800.00 for the Model T. On a special meeting on March 5, the White Co. made the following offer: a completely rebuilt 400 GPM for the price of $5875.00. The equipment included two 35 gal chemical tanks Northern or Hale pump on a 2 1/2 ton chassis. They would make a $200.00 donation to the Fire Co. and Dushore would keep the Ford. The Larabee truck Co. also provided the following specification for there truck: 72 HP 6B Continental engine 165 in wheel base, 6 in. Chassis frame, 7 cross members 34x7 pneumatic tires, Timkin axles 3 1/2 to 5 ton chassis Hale pump, 75 Gal copper booster tank. Hose body guarantee whole job 3 years, whole job 15 years, semiannual inspection, no money down on contract, and repairman inside of 12 hours. $4600.00 delivered with mechanic for 5 days. $4800.00 and we keep our apparatus. A motion was made to buy the Larabee and unanimously carried.

Thing seemed to turnaround fast at that special meeting because there was another motion to appoint a committee to buy a fire truck and the motion to buy the Larabee was ignored. Evidently there was some parliamentary maneuvering where by the truck committee made a deal with the Sanford Motor Truck Co. A contract was signed with the Sanford Co. The Specifications for the Sanford as follows; 250 ft booster hose, 150 gal. booster tank, mechanic for 5 days, 30 ft. suction hose, Underwriters test, painted red, 72 HP 6B Continental engine 500 GPM Watrious pump. And delivery inside 60 days. No trade allowance for the Ford.

At the August 2 1927 meeting a letter from the Sanford Co. stated that the delivery date for the truck would be held up for the following reasons: Installing a heavier frame, a larger radiator, changing position of the gasoline tank, and the paint was not dry. The proposed delivery date would be August 8,1927.

With the purchase of the new Sanford truck, a new era was opened up for the residents of Dushore and the surrounding area. Fire insurance premiums were reduced; many people built ponds or dams in small streams accessible to the pumper. For 15 years the Sanford was the only pumper in Sullivan County and southern Bradford County. Few, fellow firemen are still surviving the exploits of the Sanford. The memories of mine, and my aging cohorts are about all the records that are available today



Pumping practice around 1943. The scene is at Hoffa's creek near where the Senior citizens gazebo now stands. The new Ford American LaFrance is just ahead in the picture. Note the homemade windshield, soda acid extinguisher, kerosene lanterns, and tiny 6-volt siren on the fender. The fancy hand holds on the side of the driver's seat and the curved handhold in front of the windshield were used by firemen while standing on the running board The truck was bright red and the gold leaf lettering and decorating was extensive.

By the middle fifties most fire equipment manufactures were building fire trucks much the same way as they had been building them for years. Heavy boilerplate hose bodies, excessive frame construction and mid-ship mount pumps. This meant slow going for the hills surrounding Dushore. With the construction of the new firehouse in 1955 it was decided to build a fire truck of our own design. With all local labor a new truck was designed and built using aluminum, plywood, and a front mount pump. The results were that we had a truck that could negotiate the Satersfield hill fully loaded at 50 MPH. The above picture shown the original body on a second-generation chassis.

ICE HARVEST

When we open the door of our refrigerator and retrieve a cold snack or as many ice cubes as we need, it is hard to believe how complicated and dangerious the quest for proper refrigeration was, in the early part of the last century. Cold cellars, springhouses and well water were the main source of refrigeration other than ice. This left the vast majority of the citizenry of our young nation entirely dependent on ice.

Where large quantities of ice were to be harvested, a large force of men and equipment including horses would be assembled and the task began. Men with hand saws would make the first cut, then horse drawn plow would score the area to be harvested and the process would began. A steam or gas powered permanent ice elevator was located at the area of the pond where the ice would be loaded on sleds or trucks. Men with pike poles would guide long sections of ice to the elevator and there men with "spuds' would cut the ice to blocks. The endless chain elevator would bring the blocks to a loading platform and there to the trucks and sleds later on gas powered saws replaced the horse and the handsaw. If the weather was below zero, the channels would freeze and constant clearing was required. I have heard horror stories of men and horses falling into the water. In the few times that I worked on the ice there were no problems.

The greatest worry for an ice harvester was the cooperation of the weather. Ice 14 inches thick was ideal but waiting until it froze that thick could be a gamble. By the end of January, ice would be cut regardless of its thickness, sometimes as thin as 6 inches. There have been occasions that the ice was so thin it had to be harvested from several ponds. This created an ice famine.

The harvesting of the ice was only part of the story; the ice house where the ice would be stored for the next year was a permanent and special built structure. There were no windows and the main access to the building was a vertical opening about 4 feet wide extending from the top of the gable to the floor. Outside this opening was an elevator that would bring the cakes, starting on the bottom tier to a chute inside the building where the cakes would be arranged layer upon layer until the building was filled. As the avers built up boards were placed in the opening starting at the bottom and when the structure was filled the only access was a ladder on the outside of the building to the top layer. Quite a few men were required to arrange the ice in layers because the building was 120 feet long

There was a platform outside the building where the ice would be unloaded from the trucks. A chute was connected that would direct the cakes to the elevator Two men stood besides the chute and would arrange the cakes on the carriage so they would be in the proper position for unloading when the carriage reached the proper level. I was operator of the gasoline-powered hoist and when the carriage was almost to the top the cable parted and the carriage came down. There were two men stationed near, both received injuries.

It is hard to describe the many operations associated with the ice harvest. In modern years the closest thing to the "gone by days" is the harvesting ice for the toboggan slide at Eagles Mere. There are indications that that historic operation may also become history.

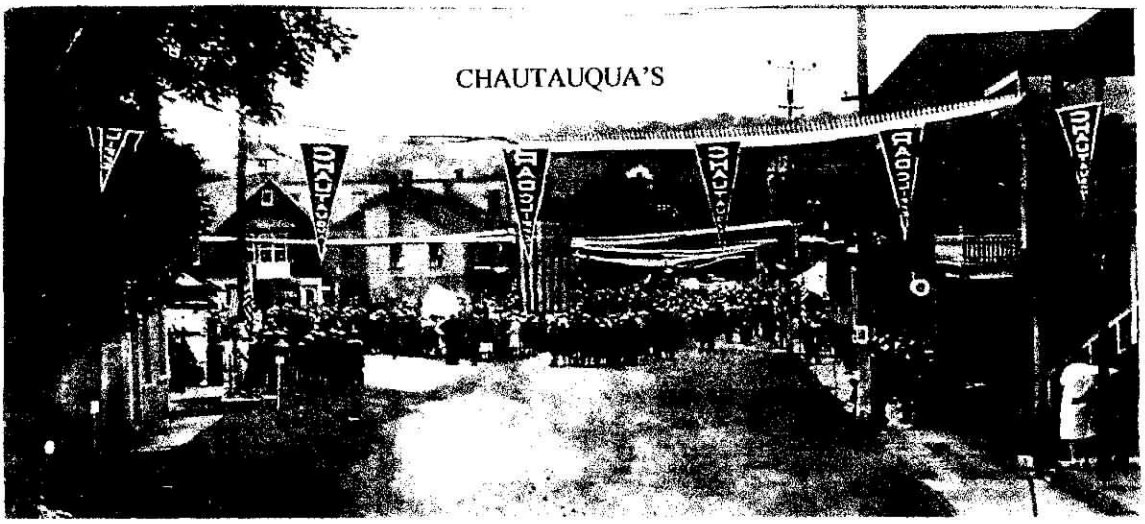
Few people realize the scope of the ice operation at the Harrington facility in Dushore. If the ice house was filed with 12 in thick cakes of ice and those cakes were laid end to end, they would make an ice sidewalk from Dushore to Lopez, The metropolitan areas required quantities of ice that would make the local project seem minuscule. Up state New York had ice-harvesting operations that were enormous.

The development of mechanical refrigeration systems soon put to rest the natural ice harvesting operation. To the elite, an ice house was a status symbol with all the architectural, Victorian, gingerbread of the time, To the ordinary family the ice house was as almost as necessary as the out house. Few of either of the structures remains. Like the steam engine, hit and miss engine, model T, and castor oil, natural ice played a great part in the development of our great nation.

Dick Holcombe
3/3/00
771

A lot of activity around the turn of the century! The permanent ice elevator in scene here is being driven by a steam engine. Later on power was supplied by a hit and miss gas engine and lastly by a farm tractor. Bobsleds as pictured, would haul the ice to various ice houses, and the large icehouse at the Harrington Creamery. The process could go on for a week or longer, depending on the thickness of the ice. I imagine the steam boiler was a good place to warm your hands when necessary.

The Ice House as it stands today. Electric household refrigerators had long replaced ice for household use. Milk was still bottled in glass, and the Harrington Co. had a contract to supply two railroad refrigerator cars of bottled milk, to their distribution point in Newark N.J. In hot weather many tons of ice was required for each car to provide safe temperature for the trip to Newark. With the advent of paper milk containers, milk was shipped by truck tankers in bulk and packaged at Newark



Looking west from the end of main St. in Dushore. Note the Fire House – no monument then. The picture must have been taken after 1908 because that was the time that the power poles were installed. Note the banners across Main st., promoting the Chautauqua's festivity. The service may have been held at the town bridge but I imagine the people were forming for a parade to the ball field. There was an alley between the old Reeser building and the old Post Office that the parade would have to squeeze through to get to the ballpark. Some of the banners spell Radcliff which might have been offshoot of the movement. Photo T.A.Stabryllia collection.

The Chautauqua's movement originated in 1874 on the shores of Chautauqua's Lake in southwestern New York State. It originally had religious overtones but later became a discussion forum for a wide range of topics including politics, religion, science, and literature

By the early 1900's traveling tent shows begin touring in the summer months thru out the United States. Local chapters were organized and made preparations for the erection of the large tent and other arrangements that had to be made for a large turnout, According to one estimate one out of three Americans participated is some form of Chautauqua activity during the period 1904-1920. President Theodore Roosevelt described the Chautauqua's movement as "The Most American place in America. "

During the lumber boom in Sullivan County, owners of lumbering operations would make arrangements for their employees to attend the meetings. One Lumber owner provided flat cars with temporary seats to accommodate passengers and provided transportation to Eagles Mere for the 1904 Chautauqua meeting.

Usually there was a parade from the town bridge to the large tent that had been erected on the ball field [now Dushore park]. I was too young to understand the significance of all the activity but I remember the tent and the extra ordinary movement that was taking place. By the 1930s the mobility of the American people provided diversified social activity and the large-scale Chautauqua's movement came to a close.

Home Entertainment During the Depression

By the early 1930's the effects of the great depression was taking its toll on the general economy. Our own upholstered furniture manufacturing business was forced to close. Radios were not in universal use yet, and the best home entertainment was the Victrola. We had an inventory of 6 thousand records, many in foreign language. When new record came out we would place an ad in the Sullivan Review with the title, artist and record number. Many of the new releases, were sorrowful ballads, depicting the plight off the times,. The following is a copy of how we did business in 1932.

Mr V.B.Holcombe March 21st 1932
Dushore Pa.

Dear Friend Vell Say! Can you send me by post or by Star Rout the two following records at once?

3238A Twenty One Years
3125A Gangsters Warning

Send bill of same and I will send M.O. to you

Awaiting your favor
I am Yours Very Truly
[Name withheld]

P.S. In case you have them not on hand can you order them for me and send them down soon.

STEAM BOILER EXPLOSION

The recent explosion of an antique steam traction engine in Ohio, killing 4 people and injuring several more has brought to mind the history of the steam engine. The early eighteen hundred found steam used to produce rotative energy for boats and railroad engines. By the time of the Civil war steam was becoming of age on both land and water. By the late eighteen hundred steel had been developed to a degree where by steam boilers were capable of greater internal pressure than their earlier counterparts and often boilers operated at pressures of 150 lbs. per inch.

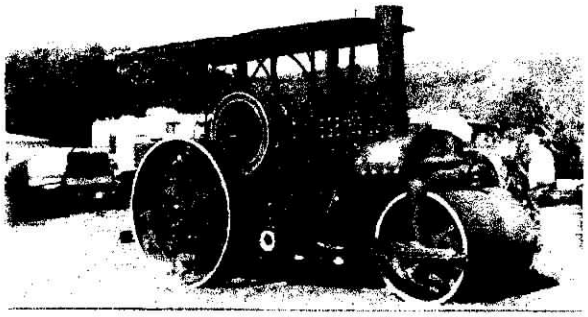
The limits of safe operation of a boiler was controlled by manipulating the amount of fuel burned in relation to the amount of steam needed to run the engine. As the steam requirements varied, often the boiler generated more steam than was required and was released in the atmosphere via a relief valve [pop valve]. As the amount of power produced by a steam engine, is directly related to the pressure of the steam entering the engine, often the relief valve was compromised by imprudent adjustment, thus causing steam pressures greater than the boiler was designed to handle

History books are full of disasters caused by boiler explosions. On a visit to St.Basils cemetery several years ago I spotted a grave marker that indicated death had been caused by a boiler explosion. The greatest examples of mans disregard for safety was in steam boat races where hundred's of lives have been lost in a single explosion. By 1910 there were many steam engines, both stationary and portable in use. Nationwide, it was estimated that over 600-boiler explosions occurred that year. By the turn of the century, Insurance Companies were insuring steam boilers under conditions, stipulating an inspection of the boiler, by an Insurance Co. representative. The inspector had a test kit, where by the pressure gauge on the boiler could be checked for accuracy, and adjusted or replaced if necessary. The boiler would be examined inside and out and the relief valve adjusted and sealed.

By late nineteen hundred all boilers in public service were required by law to be insured and the operating pressures controlled by sealed relief valves. With all the precautions and safe guards there were still boiler explosions, silent evidence of this can be found in many cemeteries thought the country.

At the end of production one manufacturer had built over 35,000 traction engines. Many of these magnificent machines are still in safe operating condition, impeccably restored, officially inspected, and in many cases as good as new. I hope that this unfortunate accident in Ohio will not dampen the enthusiasm that has been displayed for these machines of the past.

The fascination that one has when watching one of these tractors chugging quietly along, overshadows their gross deficiencies, enormous water consumption, 6 percent efficiency, and a slow top speed.



The Steam Roller was basically a traction engine fitted with heavy flat wheels. If improperly operated an explosion of enormous proportions could take place. If sometimes you feel you got "Steam Rolled " into a situation you can blame it on the above monster.

DIED AT HIS POST

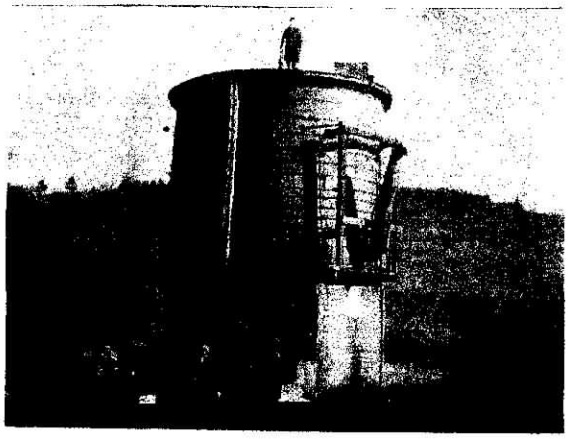
By an Explosion, While Firing Engine Near Wylausing on L.V.R.R. Nov. 2,1899. Aged 30 years & 20 Days. May He Rest in Peace

The Rail Road Water Tank

A popular pastime in the 1920's was walking the railroad tracks. Sometimes one could observe single couples or a group of people strolling along and timing their steps to fit the spacing of the railroad ties. People with health problems who had to limit their walks to level terrain, found the tracks a convenient place to walk.

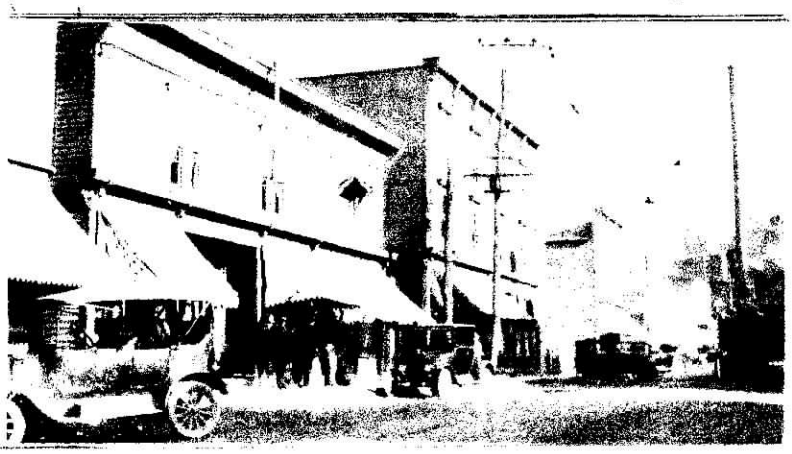
Few people realize that steam locomotives required tremendous amounts of water. The Northern Pacific R.R. had some of the largest engines ever built, and they would consume 90,000 pounds of water and 22,000 pounds of coal in one hour. The engines of the Lehigh Valley RR, that passed through Dushore were tiny by comparison. There was a water tank positioned along the tracks at intervals convenient to a supply of water. The Dushore tank was about a mile north of the Station and was fed by a pond built by the railroad. The dam was high enough to fill the tank via a pipe by gravity.

I imagine it was irritating for passengers on the train going to Dushore, having to stop almost in sight of the station and wait while the engine took on water. The wait would be very short, however, because the engineer would stop the tender under the water spout, and the fireman would pull the spout down to a large opening, in the water tank of the tender, and the tank would be full in minutes.



The Dushore Water tank in the twenties, note daredevil on top of the tank.!
Photo courtesy T.A.Stabrillia

The guy on top must have pulled the valve rope. Note water gushing out of the tank. By the angle of the hats of the spectators they seemed to be intent on watching this waterfall.!
Photo courtesy T.A.Stabrillia



Main St. Dushore, in the early twenties. Note the Light plant smoke stack in the background. The 3 stories building in picture was J.D.Reesers Dept. store, and the First National Bank. The two stories building in the foreground contained a jewelry store, clothing store and the post office. This building was moved to site of Pump and Pantry to make way for rt. 220

ALTERNATE POWER

My wife Ann is a direct descendant of one of Sullivan County's earliest settlers, Powell Bird. He and several other hardy souls followed the creek, that is now known as the Loyalsock, and settled in an area that is generally known as Forks Township This expedition took place in the late seventeen hundreds. They must have been impressed by the potential for waterpower by the fast flowing waters of the Loyalsock.

Some time later several water-powered mills were constructed along its course all the way to Dushore. The mills were generally gristmills, and saw mills, and at Forksville a woolen mill. The mills were overshot water wheels, and their general construction was basically of wood with iron fastenings and shafts to convey the power to the mills. The water wheels were very efficient, their main drawback, from a mechanical standpoint was their slow speed of rotation. The use of the water wheel was determined by the flow of the water. Logs had to be stocked so they could use the power of the spring high water flow, and I suppose there were times when more perishable commodities such as grain and wool could be affected by unseasonable water conditions, and this could create a problem. After the Civil War many of the mills supplemented their waterpower by steam engines.

With Elisions invention of the electric dynamo, waterpower took on a new chore—the generation of Electricity. The water wheel in its classic form was not suitable for electric generation because of its slow rotation. There was however the invention of the water turbine that could turn fast enough to generate electricity. The disadvantage of the turbine was the flow of water had to come from a greater height than the conventional water wheel.

There was a turbine generating plant at Muncy Valley that operated at very high water pressure. The water came from Hunters Lake to a collecting pond above Muncy Valley, and thence via wooden and iron pipe to the generator located at the foot of the mountain. This plant supplied Muncy Valley and Eagles Mere with power for many years. The Lewis Family operated a low-pressure turbine for many years at their facility near Hillsgrove. This generator is still in operation and relies on the flow of water from the Loyalsock Creek. At Dushore there was a medium pressure turbine that provided power for the Obert Grist mill. The Water supply was from a six-acre pond that was situated to the west of Rt. 87 in Dushore, and was fed by the Little Loyalsock creek. There was also a turbine at Lincoln Falls.

The above examples of seasonable waterpower clearly indicate that every minute that the creek flows, power is being wasted. About thirty years ago when I was a Sullivan County Commissioner, the U.S. Choir of Engineers made a survey of the Loyalsock creek, with the purpose of exploring its flood protection potentials, and secondary, possible power generation. In as much as there is no big dam in the sock, I guess there survey was negative.

The above application of water power is in it's most primitive form. The general construction of modern water turbines is similar to the earlier examples, but in a refined manner, that provides efficient and automatic operation exceeding there earlier generation capabilities. Lets look at the potential of the Loyalsock Creek. The elevation at Lopez where the Loyalsock Creek starts is around 1740 ft. above sea level, the stream flows about 25 miles to Hilsgrove where it is 875 ft above sea level That means the water drops 865 ft. In selected sections of the creek where the drop is greatest, small dams could be erected and pipes could carry the water down stream to a point where a suitable pressure would be created for the generation of electricity.

There are probably many reasons why the above suggestions, would not to be brought to a reality. The maze of Environmental regulations, the idea of 'smaller wont work', conflicting ideas among government agencies, and the uncertain potential for monetary profit

There are a few of us left who remember when you could get 5 gal. Gas for a dollar and electricity for 9/10 of a cent a kilowatt. By today's standards the above listed water powered generating plants were primitive. and seasonal, but think of the money that has literally gone over the dam because no one has taken advantage of the lessons learned by these early and profitable operations

We all know that sometimes in the summer the flow of water in the sock is too little to generate much power. During that time power would be supplied to local users through the power grid from alternate sources as it is now. The dams would be just high enough to provide

a practical pressure for power generation and they would depend on the flow of the stream and not a large impoundment.

I seem to find myself feeling troubled and uncertain when I read about the power situation in California. Has our great Constitution provided too much leeway, to the people making decisions, in matters that concern our very existence? —Light, heat and water.

It is also troubling when I think of our dependence of oil from an area of the world ruled by dictators such as Husain, Gadaffee and sheiks that adjust the price of oil to suite there excessive life styles. Water power has been tried and proven in our County and in many other mountainous locations through out the country.

Our dependence on foreign oil has left us in a very uncertain position with regards to our energy needs. I would suggest to the people in the department of energy to make a realistic survey of our mountain streams and place in operation several pilot plants to obtain a practical, feasibility study. I remember the controverisity about Nuclear power, when the Three Mill Island Nuclear power plants were being considered. Emotions ran high between the "fore", and the "against", Nuclear power. I remember the "fore" people had a slogan --- "Nuclear power, or freeze to death in the dark"!

PS: Some years ago my late brother Vell Holcombe built a scale model of an overshot water wheel. The wheel now graces our front yard, powered by water, piped in from a small stream that runs by our house. The wheel runs 24 hours a day and powers an assortment of seasonal novelties. The wheel can be seen in operation at 1 Cemetery St. Dushore.Pa. 18614

THE XERVAK

At our store in Dushore we sold many new electric appliances, we also sold radios. The Crosley Co. had been manufacturing radios for quite some time and they branched out into small cars and refrigerators. They were one of the first electric refrigerator manufactures to have shelves on the door and they named it the shelvador.

There have been many so-called cures for baldness in men, but the Crosley xervac was supposed to do the job. We received literature from the company exploiting the scientific nature of the machine and there sales pitch was convincing.

The scientific claims of the device was that by placing an air tight hood on the mans head, and creating a partial vacuum at designated intervals the roots of the hair would be stimulated and the vacuum would inhibit growth. This idea was a natural for Crosley because they had small compressor, used in there refrigerators that could produce the vacuum, and they had the machinery to make the cabinet.

At the time my hair was getting quite thin, and for anyone who has experienced early baldness it is a troubling situation. Of all the revered Medical Doctors in the world Dushore was privileged to have that person in the form of Dr. Saul. The good Dr. besides being our family physician was a friend and occasional social associate, we also had one thing in common - baldness.. It was on one of these occasions I showed the Doctor the literature explaining the Exervac. He stated the theory was sound but until it had been proven he could not make any professional recommendations, he said however he would like to try the therapy out personally.

Crosley had advertised the machine, so we made arrangements with a local barber to install a machine in his shop. I don't remember the business deal we had with the barber but I think we split the usage fee. There was some talk at the time that the barber should provide the service free because he would have the extra business when all the bald people grew hair.

From the stand point of growing hair the idea was a flop and our store wound up taking the machine back. The other day while rooting around in a building I use for storage I spotted this little white cabinet and I dug it out and there was the xervac. The helmet was missing and I plugged it In but the compressor was stuck.

I wonder if there is anyone left that had the opportunity of sitting in a chair and having the helmet placed on your head. Adjust the knob for the amount of vacuum you could tolerate and wonder if maybe the machine was really going to work?

In the early forty's there was a home permanent product on the market called "Tony". The advertisements of the product showed two beautiful young twin girls with absolutely gorgeous hair does. The one twin had a professionally done permanent and the other had a "Tony" The purpose of the add was to show that the home permanent was as good as the professional. The ad was shown in many magazines in the country, and it was almost a family name.

Dr Saul was attending one of our family, and the bed room mirror reflected both of our bald heads. Dr Saul looked up at my wife Ann and with a twinkle in his eye said, "Which twin has the "Tony"

The Xervac Machine that was supposed to promote hair growth. A ¼ HP motor powered the refrigerator compressor and there were several valves driven from a gearbox. The machine was very well built and if it worked it would have lasted forever.

THE RAYMOND HOTEL

Over a decade had passed since the stock market crash triggered the event that I remember as the great depression. The ferocity of this economic disaster was not felt in the rural areas as greatly as its impact was on the people in the more metropolitan areas, however there was a curtailment of public spending by every municipality. Volunteer Fire Companies who relied on benefits and contributions were sorely pressed. In the mid thirties as an economy measure, the fire was allowed to go out in the Dushore firehouse, and the water drained from the booster and the truck radiator. This unwise action was soon changed and the coal stove was kept hot.

By the late thirties the war clouds in Europe were boding evil, creating a social uneasiness in all walks of life. The general economy was picking up and that uncontrollable nature of a volunteer fireman urged him to go on to greater things—fighting fire.

In the year 1938 the Pennsylvania Department for Public instruction sponsored a series of training sessions for firemen. There were six sessions held at Towanda and Sayre and the courses were tailored to give the volunteer fireman a working knowledge of the Fundamentals of Fire Fighting. I and two other members of the Dushore Co. took further training and became Instructors.

At that time Dushore Fire Co was the only Fire Company in the County with an underwriters approved fire truck. For many years EaglesMere had an organized Fire Co, The water supply for fire protection was seasonable and there was a great need for better fire protection. Several other communities had organizations dedicated to fire protection.

The first fire school for the area was held in 1939 at the Dushore Fire House. People from Lopez, Bernice, Laporte, Eagles Mere,, Forksville and New Albany attended. There was considerable enthusiasm for the project and a plan was devised where the class would go to each of the towns and view the exposures and plan the best way to utilize the Dushore Pumper.

We made two trips to Eagles Mere, one to view the exposures and one with the Sanford Pumper to test the flow of water at the Water tank at the Crestmont Hotel. The source of water at the tank was ample but the distribution system was uncertain. Our fire truck carried 1200 ft of 2 ½ in. fire hose and with the nearness of the lake, to the proximity of many buildings, limited streams of water could be available if the pumper could be driven to the lake.

On May 31, 1941 the fire whistle summoned the Dushore Fire Co personnel to the firehouse. The fire was at the Raymond Hotel in Eagles Mere. About 15 members were present and they quickly departed for Eagles Mere in their Cars. I started the 1927 Sanford pumper and took off on one of the longest and loneliest trips of my life. The 8 tons of dead weight of the truck, and the response of the 72 HP, weary Continental engine was barely adequate, to climb the hills between Dushore and Eagles Mere. I remember grinding up the hill just outside of Eagles Mere and I could see the smoke in the distance.

As I proceeded down the street in front of the Raymond it was evident that the building was almost completely involved in flames. Responding to the fire school plan, I was directed to proceed to the beach and then follow the shore of the lake to a point nearest the fire. Many hands were there and dragged the 1200 feet of hose up the hill and through the woods to the fire. A rowboat was provided to support the suction hose of the pumper so it would not be fouled with sand. Despite our trucks age it was ideally suited to the task of pumping water under the conditions that existed. Our fire hose at that time was double jacket cotton fire hose with a safe operating pressure was 150 PSI.

In a short time I was told to start pumping and I held a pressure of 150 pounds. Considering the elevation of the Raymond above the lake level and the friction loss of the 1200 feet of hose, the volume of water delivered to the fire would be nominal. I found out later that a pumper from Picture Rocks was at the scene and we were relaying water to their truck, and they providing the ultimate pressure for the fire streams. For the next several hours I watched the gauges of the old pumper and adjusted the throttle to maintain a constant pressure. The signal was finally given to stop pumping. With plenty of help, the Dushore crew gathered up our hose, and I backtracked our course coming in, and wound up in front of what was left of the Raymond. That was when I got my first real look at the magnitude of the fire. .

When a large building such as the Raymond is engulfed in flames one worries about the nearby buildings. The effort of the Eagled Mere firemen in saving the exposures was miraculous. Few people realize that the greatest danger to near by buildings is after the main structure has been consumed. The heat

absorbed by the surrounding buildings makes them vulnerable to ignition long after the principal fire has receded.

It is hard to realize that one aging fire truck was the only piece of underwriters approved fire fighting apparatus to protect an area of over 500 square miles, the training of the fireman had to be a decisive factor in achieving any degree of success in combating the bane of fire.

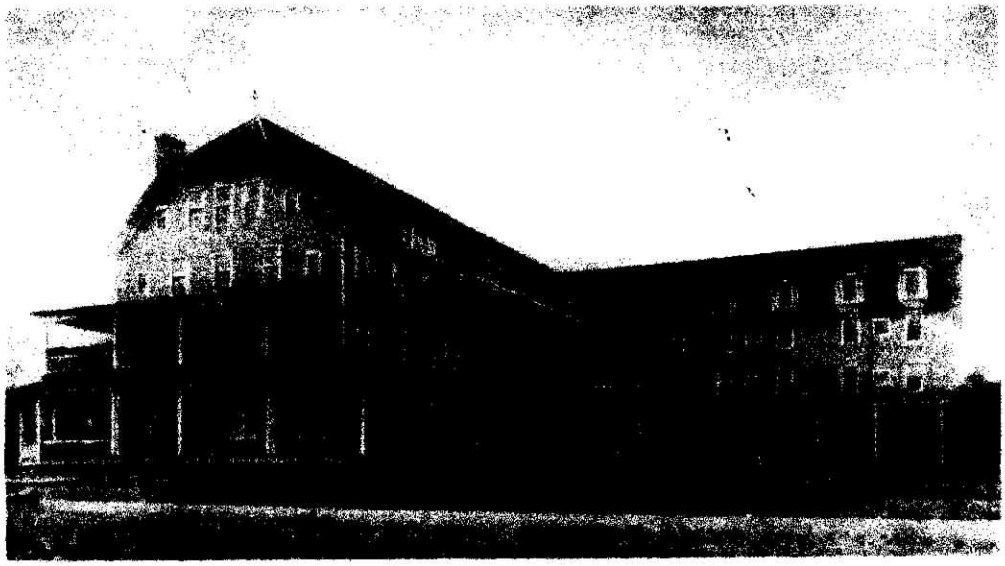
Today, that same 500 square miles is protected by 20 or more modern pieces of fire apparatus. The personnel, that man the present equipment are highly trained in fire fighting and rescue operations. The tankers can shuttle oceans of water to almost any place, thus reducing the dependency on municipal water systems.

The museum at Eagles Mere has a fine collection of snapshots of the Raymond fire. It is the only time in my many yeas of fire fighting, that I have been involved in the fire fighting process without seeing the fire. After looking at the pictures at the museum, I have a better idea of what took place that day.

The lessons learned at fire school, may have saved some property that spring day the Raymond burned. I doubt if anyone knew that Dushore was there—the truck was out of sight. It's hard to tell by looking at a fire stream where it is coming from.

Dick Holcombe
7/15/01
1173

This photo taken after 1942 illustrates a pumping situation almost identical with the set up at the Raymond fire. The location was Kasts Pond, Dushore. Bob McDonald is attaching the suction hose to the pump, assisted by Dick Holcombe. The new 1942 American La France pumper is in the background. The new truck handled the fire-fighting job faster, and with many creature comforts—Heated cab, windshield with wiper, 100 HP engine. Two speed rear end powerful siren.



THE BED SPRING

My wife Ann has quite a file of old correspondence that was written over the years when my Father had the Furniture and Undertaking business in Dushore. She showed me a letter from the proprietor of the Sonestown Hotel that was dated in 1908. The letter read " Bring me down a bed spring the next time you come down. If you are not coming soon send it by train'

The Williamsport and North Branch Rail Road [WNB] passed through Sonestown to it's north terminal at Sattersfield. From Sattersfield it ran on Lehigh Valley {LV] tracks through Dushore to Towanda. The WNB ran a daily train consisting of a passenger car and a baggage car and any other cars where they could get some revenue. "Ship by train" might be a little more complicated than one might expect. First after delivering the bed spring to the station a "Bill of Lading" would be prepared with the cost of the freight listed and if it was prepaid or collect. If it was shipped by freight it would have to be loaded on a freight car at Dushore and shipped to Sattersfield and then transferred to the W.NB to go to Sonestown.. If by luck the WNB conductor would allow an article as bulky as a bedspring to be carried in the baggage car the shipment would be simplified.

I have heard of occasions where shipments would be handled on a courtesy basis by mutual agreement between the Station Agent and the train conductor. My observations at the Dushore Station would indicate the station agent's disposition would preclude any compromises.

My father had a wagon that was especially built to carry light bulky loads. It had springs and a platform that would accommodate furniture and the loads were all tied with rope and covered with a canvas. A typical trip would leave Dushore early in the morning and go to Laporte, Nordmont, Sonestown, and Muncy Valley.

Like so many other short line Rail Roads the WNB gave up the ghost and service was discontinued August 1st 1937.The great depression was in full swing and the closing of WNB was just another indication of hard times to come. There was one bright spot in 1937, and that was June 15th when I married the girl that dug up the letter that started this article.

POLITICS DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Contrary to some thoughts of people who only knew of the great depression as a time of gloom, soup kitchens and despair, life in most rural communities continued as they had in the past but for some necessary revisions in life style, frivolous luxuries, and an occasional Bank failure.

Evidentially the urge for survival was more prevalent at that time, possibly because there were people still around that rembered the civil war and the awesome carnage caused by the recent, world war one.

Welfare as we know it today was non-existent. Political subdivision such as Townships and Boroughs had "poor boards" and some mandatory but trivial welfare regulations. Federal aid was lavished more on the cities than it was in the rural sector.

The calendar was not changed by the depression and elections had to be held and candidates had to be found. Each political subdivision had its own school district and own school board and there main concern was finding enough money to meet daily expenses. If the schoolhouse roof leaked, usually a member of the school board got a ladder and fixed the leak.

If a person had aspirations for the office of town council he {women never apply} would be expected to be of sound health, strong back and proficient in the art of ditch digging, road grading and shoveling snow. A Town Councilman was almost always a member of the Fire Co. so the duties of each organization were often carried on by the same person. At that time the Fire Co had a committee called the Fire Board who's purpose was to coordinate the fire fighting effectiveness of the water system with the fire fighting requirements of the fire department. This situation created a joint responsibility of the two organizations and in the event of a water main break, both organizations grabbed picks and shovels and repaired the leak. It was not until after World War Two that back hoes became available to small municipalities.

There seemed to exist a feeling of cooperative survival, and as there was no financial reward for local public office, a feeling of community pride, compassion for the less fortunate and hope for better times ahead kept thing going.

In my younger years I had no political ambitions, but as a member of the fireboard I became aquatinted with the pick and shovel and felt the satisfaction of providing a little help towards holding things together in spite of the great depression.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NINETIES

The "gay nineties " found Sullivan County Pennsylvania at the peak of its population growth and had a great demand for Schoolteachers. The town of Dushore that was located in Cherry Township had a rather large Catholic community. There was a convent that was used for a school and housed the Sisters that taught there. They had a course that would prepare a prospective teacher to qualify for a teaching certificate. The County superintendent of schools would then conduct a written test and the prospective teacher would have to qualify to secure a teaching job

On September 22, 1894, my mother then 18 received her "Teachers Provisional Certificate". The general text of the certificate is as follows: *Good for one year only*. IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED THAT; Jennie Cook is a person of good moral character, and has passed an examination in the following Branches with the annexed results. The Subjects were as follows: Orthography, Reading, Writing, Mental Arithmetic, Written Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, U.S.History, Physiology and Hygiene, Theory of Teaching, and Practice of Teaching

The method of scoring the results of the examination was as follows: No 1, signifies Very Good, No. 2, Good, No. 3, Middling. My mother averaged 1,73 with her best subject being Writing and her worst being Written Arithmetic. She had no subjects in the "Middling Class

The nineties experienced a great influx of immigrants to the section of the County where my mother taught. Many of the immigrant children had very little experience with the English language. I can imagine the problems that existed in a one-room schoolhouse with half of the students fluent in English and the other half struggling to be understood. This also presented a problem for the teacher that was not covered in the teacher's course at St. Basils Convent.

Over the next few years my mother taught at the following places, Rickets, Lopez and a lumber camp called Seamons. With the transportation situation at that time it was expedient to bring the teacher to the students. Later High schools were built at Lopez and Bernice and the students transferred there.

Today there are only two Schools in the County. The main School at Laporte and an elementary school at Bernice. Through out the County there are only ghost towns that once were the home of saw mills that could cut 200,000 feet of lumber a day. My mother lived to see the consolidation of the schools in the county, I wonder if she had any reservations or thoughts when she remembered the hardships and the methods that were used to educate our children in the nineties.

Sometime after 1894 My Mother taught School at Rickets. The Trexler and Turrell Lumber Co. owned the town. Most of the company owned homes, were with out running water, and had no electricity. The houses rented for $2.50 a month. There was a company store, Lutheran Church and a School. There were several private dwellings that were more comfortable than the Company Houses. I am not sure where my mother boarded, while teaching at Rickets.

DUSHORE FIRE CO. MEMORIES

There is little information available concerning the activities of the Fire Co. during the very early days of Dushore's development. I have found some evidence of organized fire fighting efforts going back as far as the Civil War. About the only practical fire fighting techniques at that time consisted of the ringing of church and school bells, and the sounding of the whistles on any steam boilers in the neighborhood, to alert the people of the fire. The creeks and wells were the only source of water and the method of delivering the water to the fire was by bucket brigade. Pails, ropes, axes and ladders were probably stored in some convenient location.

One of the first major fires to test the mettle of the Fire Co. was on March 10 1898, about 8;30 o'clock in the evening. Fire broke out in the large grist mill of L.S.Burch and Co. [now site of McMahon plumbing shop]. A report on the fire was printed in the Sullivan Gazette as follows; "When first discovered the fire had not gained much headway but it went through the mill in a few minutes, and communicated with the saw mill near-by and in about half an hour both mills were a mass of flames. The heat was so intense that it soon set the foundry [Kaufman Shoe building] and some nearby lumber piles on fire. Two streams from the hose and a large bucket brigade soon put the fire on the south side out, also the Wells residence on the west side. A very light breeze was blowing from the south and carried millions of live sparks which were dropping on the buildings on Headley Avenue across the creek. It seemed that several residences were doomed but the bucket brigade and a short hose saved the buildings, and the flames were confined to the two mills.""

Quick work by the fireman at the foundry across the street is related in a subsequent article in the Sullivan Review as follows: " When the grist mill was burning and it was seen that the saw mill was doomed John Farrell, an employee in Eberhardt's foundry, descended into the foundries boiler room and pulled the weight from the bar of the safety valve, making sure that the boiler would not explode. At the foundry he filled the arch under the boiler with fuel, put on the inspirator, [injector] and turned every steam cock wide open. This flooded the interior of the foundry with steam and kept the flames out. Making it comparatively easy to save the building. This was an exhibition of cool-headedness, which is very much to be commended. When one knows what ought to be done, and then does it, he is worth a dozen men who wait to be told"

The water works at that time was privately owned and there were many complaints about the quality of the water and the water pressure. One quote from the Gazette "Inability to elevate water to a reasonable height, or throw sufficient number of streams". Another quote from the Review "If the present water-works is not sufficient as many claim, it should be put in proper shape at once and sufficient hose secured. A few cranks should not be allowed to stand in the way of proper fire protection"

The efforts to correct the many shortcomings of the water-works and the fire co. were not helped by the intense rivalry between the two newspapers. Quote from the Gazette following the fire." The editor of the Review who has been kicking about putting in the water works, was the first Monday evening to grumble on account of the delay in attaching the hose to the water plant, which he has-been condemning in the strongest terms and had the cheek to ask, that one of the streams of water which was being applied to the buildings in immediate danger, should be turned on the roof of his own residence, which was not in the path of the sparks at all.". A reply from the Review was as follows " The above statement is untrue in every particular, and we believe it to be a willful falsehood, deliberately perpetrated with a malicious purpose. We consider that the provocation justifies much stronger language, but we prefer to use these columns to tell the news, rather than to carry on a controversy that cannot interest the general public".

The aftermath of the great fire probably stirred community interest in a better water supply and no doubt pointed out some shortcomings of the fire Co. The problems of the water works continued until my time and were finally taken over by the Borough. There are still several fire hydrants in service bearing the name of the "Frost Foundry, Towanda Pa."

How they ran it in 1895

In reviewing a copy of the 1895 by-laws of Dushore Fire Co. No.1, I came upon some interesting trivia that described the way Fire Co. business was conducted at that time. Some of the highlights are as follows; the applicant for membership must be at least 16 years of age and not a member of any other Fire Co. in the Borough. Fees; an entrance fee of $ 1.50. Annual sum of $2.00 payable in quarterly installment's in advance. The officers were as follows, ; President, Vice President , Secretary, Financial secretary, and Treasurer, Foreman [now the Chief] first assistant foreman, second assistant foreman, four pipemen and a member of the fire board. The duties of the Foreman were the same as the duty of the Chief in today's Fire Departments. The duty of the Pipemen was to take charge of the pipe [hose], taking precedence in order of rank, and subject only to the officers in command of the Company.

The Fire police must have been appointed, there is no reference to Fire Police in the election process. Their duties were similar to the Fire Police in today's department. There may have been some occasions, where the Fire Police exceeded there authority, because in Article XII 'Order at fires" quote—"To avoid confusion at a fire or turn-out of the department, every member shall obey the orders of the Foreman in preference to the Fire Police"

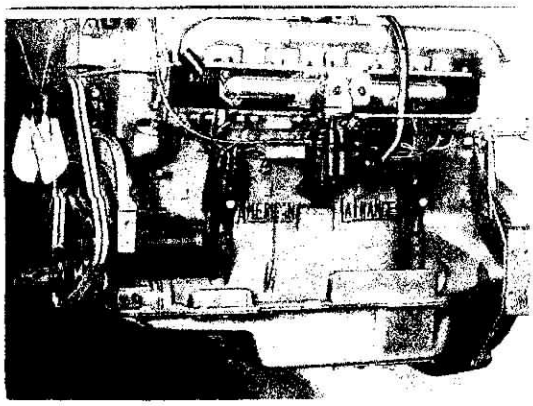
A few excerpts from Article XIV "Duties of Members" Each member shall repair immediately to the apparatus, and it shall be the place of every member to man the drag rope, except the foreman. [The apparatus consisted of a wagon loaded with hose, ladders, buckets and accessories] The apparatus was pulled by manpower on the drag rope. Within 30 days after receiving notice of election the member must provide himself with a uniform similar to the one worn by the Company.

Article XV. Fines and Penalties; Non attendance at fires, fifty cents. Non attendance at meetings,10 cents. Fines for improper conduct may be imposed by the officer in charge subject to appeal by two-thirds of the members. A member being in arrears of dues or fines for six months shall be stricken from the rolls. He may be re-instated by full payment of dues and fines and a two-thirds vote of the membership

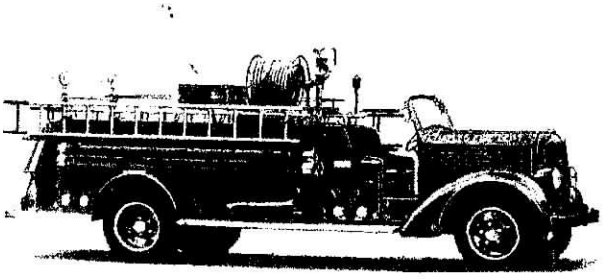
My association with the Fire Co. started out during the days of the great Depression, and a six cylinder Continental Engine in the Sanford truck, eliminated the drag rope. I remember the rules of order were about the same, and I don't remember any fines being issued. The biggest problem was getting manpower, hose and equipment. —Even coal for the heating stove. By today's standards the efforts of the hardy people that manned the drag rope seems primitive beyond imagination—it all had to start sometime and look at what we have to day!

Dick Holcombe
2/10/01 500

PS' has anyone pressed there uniform lately?



My father graduated from Elmira Business School in 1892. He said the American LaFrance Co. was manufacturing Steam and Horse drawn equipment at that time, and was one of Elmira's largest employers. The above V 12 Gasoline engine represented the ultimate power for Fire Apparatus in the late 30's.



A typical 1935 triple combination, pumper. It could pump water from draft, or hydrant. Haul hose and ladders, and carried several hundred gallons of water in the booster tank .

THE WILY RACCOON

In my teens I was afflicted with a malady that under certain conditions could be life threatening. This was an uncontrollable desire to hunt Raccoon, hereinafter called Coons. The affliction was so great that I often was driven to climb tall trees in pitch dark, with only a flashlight to show the way. To further the problem I always had my 38 Colt revolver hung on my waist. The purpose of the climb was to locate the coon, which the hounds had treed, and shake the branches with enough vigor as to dislodge the critter, and cause him to fall to the ground. Most often the shaking was ineffective and the 38 Colt was used with limited success.

The above affliction was caused partly by association, with two more mature coon hunters. Their vast experience in the training of dogs, anticipating the eccentricities of coons, and creating an atmosphere of success, even in the light of very unfavorable circumstances, were very helpful to me as a novice.

In the mid thirties the coon population was classified as a game animal, and regulations and season dates were in force. The great depression was in full swing and quite a few people supplemented their meager income by hunting coons for the economic value of their hides.

It was in 1937 that my bride found herself entrapped in this singular environment. For a lesser person this could have been a marital disaster, but for a gal who was the youngest of ten brothers and sisters, she took it in stride, and even became a party to the dilemma.

Good coon dogs were hard to come by, usually a breed of common hounds such as blue ticks or red bone were a favorite, they were open trailers and barked while following the track.. Many mongrel breeds were fine hunters but usually they were silent trailers, and only barked when the coon was treed.

A good friend of mine who was considerable my senior in years was afflicted by the coon hunting affliction. Neither of us at that time had a dog, and out of desperation we answered an ad in the paper from an individual in Arkansas. " Best coon hounds in the world, free trial for two weeks, you pay the shipping. I f the dog is satisfactory send us ten dollars, if not send the dog back prepaid ". We decided to take a chance and ordered the dog. In a few days the Railway Express agent called, and said that an animal had arrived addressed to us.

After placing a collar on the dog with our home address, we ventured into the woods and almost instantly the dog began to bark. We felt some elation at how fast the hound picked up a track. The sound of the barking gradually died out and soon stopped altogether. We waited for several hours and no dog showed up so we came home. The next morning about seven o'clock I received a phone call from a friend of mine in the Village of Colley. He stated that a hound with my name on his collar had come to his farm, and he had him penned up. In due time we retrieved the dog, fed and watered him, placed him in his cage, paid the express charge and sent him back to Arkansas.

Word soon got around to the coon hunting community about our experience with the southern hound. It seemed that the deer are not near as plentiful in the south, and our experimental animal picked up a hot deer track and away he went. Over the years we experimented with other southern hounds with a success rate of one out of four.

There was a sort of comradeship that developed between coon hunters, and often times groups of five or more hunters, would get together along with their dogs. The sound of a half dozen dogs following a hot track was a great experience. A good part of the time hunting coon is spent waiting for the dogs. This time leaves open the opportunity for the assembled hunters to recite there experiences with hunting, and more importantly the qualifications of their dogs. Many breeds of dogs have pedigrees and papers to show their qualifications. One hunter had an experience with a pair of blue ticks, with, papers depicting their qualifications, they seemed to be a fine pair of dogs, but on trying them out in the woods they just would not hunt! I can't quote the terminology that my friend used about the importance of papers but in essence, in his opinion, the paper's value amounted to low-grade toilet paper. The one question that always came up was the awesome fighting power of a coon. I have seen a 15-pound coon hold at bay and inflict damage on a dog three times its size. One theory expressed concerning a coons immunity from harm, from larger dogs, was that a coon could turn around three times in his own hide.

My wife had endured all of the above escapades without a word of dissent, however, while reading the paper she spotted an add for a red bone coonhound for sale in the town of West Burlington. We piled the kids into the car and proceeded to the address given. And there was a sight that had a great impact on our lives for many years. The long eared medium sized hound instantly became a part of the family. The dogs name was Queenie.

As a coonhound, Queenie was mediocre, but as a charmer and friend to the kids and especially my wife Ann, the dog was tops. Over the years coons became an unprotected animal, and could be hunted any time of the year. There were many episodes of my family and there friends, going forth in the forest in quest of coon, but rarely successful. There was only one restriction however; Ann could not go along because Queenie would stay with the group to protect her.

Occasionally a person of maybe fifty years will approach me and say, " you don't remember me do you, you took me coon hunting when I was ten, I was a friend of your daughter "Margie". Queenie has been long gone, but she has left pleasant indelible memories. . Once in a while I get a ghostly feeling that she is scratching at the door waiting to get in.

Ann and the ever-present Queenie, watching over one of our neighbor's brood. I had a dog when I was growing up, but I think that Queenie impacted my adult life, more than my dog did in my adolescent years.

A GRIM REMINDER

The recent passing of Father Polinsky brought back some memories, of the fear-inspiring disease, that plagued the country in the twenties and thirties. Polio! Father and several of my contemporary friends were affected by this malady, including the late Gerald Cain. The horrifying aspect of the disease was, there was no way to guard against infection. I remember in 1938 when our first daughter was born, Ann and I studied every piece of medical information that we could find and the best advice was, to stay away from crowds and practice absolute personal cleanliness.

Smallpox was another of the dreadful diseases that plagued the human race. Unlike polio there was a vaccination that could be administered that could control the disease. Vaccination became mandatory for kids entering school and continues in a more sophisticated form to this day.

My preliminary vaccination was administered on the 3 day of Sept., 1921 by Doctor M.E.Herrman M.D., on the left arm, by inoculation with anti-smallpox virus into an abrasion of the skin. A small celluloid cup was adhesive taped over the said abrasion and on a return visit to the Doctor on Sept., 13 1921, the Certificate stated that the Doctor had found " a typical lesion or a cicatrix indicating a successful vaccination"

The certificate was presented to the school officials and entered on the school records. The certificate was then kept by the family for future reference.

In the eighty years since that vaccination, I have seen Polio, and many other dreadful sicknesses brought under control, but I can never forget the horrifying helplessness' that prevailed with the mention of Polio.

The Big Snow plow

The big snow of 1936 caused a lot of problems for the Highway Department. Snow caused uncompromising problems for the Rail Roads. There was a snow drift in a rock cut, a short distance north of Sattersfield, that had a history of filling full of snow, and requiring a railroad snow plow,to open for travel. The train came to Dushore every day and then backed all the way to Towanda .

I was at the Station about a week after the snow came and the station agent said "Dick you better get your camera, they are coming from Sayre with two engines and a plow." I drove up the Satterfield hill to a friend's driveway, and parked my car. I put on snowshoes, traveled over a field to the area of the snow filled rock cut. The snow was so deep that I sat on the cross arm of a telegraph pole and waited for the train to arrive. It was a bright sunny day and I could see black smoke from the engines as they made their way around the Horseshoe and gradually picked up speed for the penetration of the big drift.

The Snowplow was similar to a boxcar with a huge steel vee plow mounted on the front. There were two engines in back of the plow and two cabooses in back of the engines. The caboose's carried a large group of men whose duty it was, to shovel the plow out, if it got stuck in the snow. They had plenty of shoveling to do that day.

It was a once in a lifetime experience as I watched the plow, pushed by the snorting, fire-breathing engines hit the drift and the snow flew like an explosion. There was momentary silence, then, the engines attempted to back out but to no avail. The men got out of the cabooses and started to dig. The second engine was un-coupled and backed down the track. The first engine [134] was freed and finally the plow was shoveled free. The engines and cabooses were again coupled to the plow and backed down the track about a quarter of a mile. With black smoke flying they came charging back and hit the drift the second time—this time they made it and with whistles blowing continued toward Sattersfield

At that time I developed my own pictures—I couldn't wait to get to the dark room—wouldn't it have been easy for me to jot down the date?. I am still guilty of the sin of "not" dating pictures.

The engine backing down the track so that the crew, carried in the caboose could shovel out the plow.

On the second attempt, the plow is emerging from the cut.

Many people have no idea of the weight and power that it took to penetrate the snowdrift in the cut near Satersfield. The total weight of the snowplow, two engines, two tenders, and two cabooses' was about 250 tons. The total length of the plow, engines, tenders and caboose's would be approximately 230 feet. Now I am guessing that the speed of the train when it hit the drift to be about thirty miles an hour and it penetrated the drift about 180 feet. The engines were at full power and I imagine they were sanding the rails.

The inertial energy expended would be almost the same as stopping six 40-ton trucks going 30 miles an hour in 180 feet. The Lehigh Valley Steam Engines used in this operation were built at Sayre. There were 35 built and they were used in branch line service. Their drive wheels were 63 inches in diameter and the steam pressure was 190 lb. In the many years that I watched the trains, the 1100 series locomotives were the daily workhorse, and continued until replaced by diesels.

SNOW IN THE THIRTY'S

There were several heavy snowstorms in the thirties. I think the below photo was taken in 1936. The snowplow was mounted on a Cletrack tractor and I think it was gasoline powered although Cletrac started making diesel tractors in 1933. The machine was stationed at Penn Dot., In Laporte and it took three days to reach Dushore. The cab was home made and could accommodate several people. Snow is extremely hard on a bulldozer because it builds up on the sprockets and idlers and causes excessive tightness of the track chains. The long delay in traveling from Laporte to Dushore was caused more by operational conditions than actual speed of travel. The machine opened up main Street and then headed north to the Bradford county line.

The Great Depression was in full swing and the snow removal budget for the highway Department was limited. There were several Walters four-wheel drive trucks that were quite well suited for snow work but they had chronic problems with axles breaking. There was a standing rule "never leave the garage with a Walters without two spare axles under the seat"

Our store was on Main Street, and looking out from the inside, the view was plain white. My job, along with my two brothers, was climbing up the three sets of steps and then through a trap door to the flat roof. It took all day to clear the snow. The power line was only about six feet from the store roof and much to our surprise nothing happened when a shovel full of snow fell on the wires.

The train made it to Dushore from Towanda but could go no further. With the modern snow handling equipment we have today, a snowstorm of that magnitude would have taxed, even our new equipment, but everyone seemed to take it for granted and in a few days it was just a passing memory.

The Cletrack, straining, to widen Main Street, heading west. Very few sidewalks were shoveled and the narrow path that the bulldozer made was the only corridor for travel for several days. There were still quite a few horses on farms, and they were used to cope with the snow, much the same as they did for countless years.

Gravity on your side

My main hobby since childhood had been mechanics. Recently I purchased a golf cart that was minus an engine. I tried several hydrostatic transmissions from lawn tractors, and I finally settled down to a Model A Ford transmission and an 18-horse power engine. On one of my test runs I wound up in the parking lot of St.Basils church. I was visiting with one of the workmen who was engaged in the church restoration, and he was marveling at the size of some of the individual stones in the church wall. I told him that oxen hauled the stones five miles from where they were quarried.

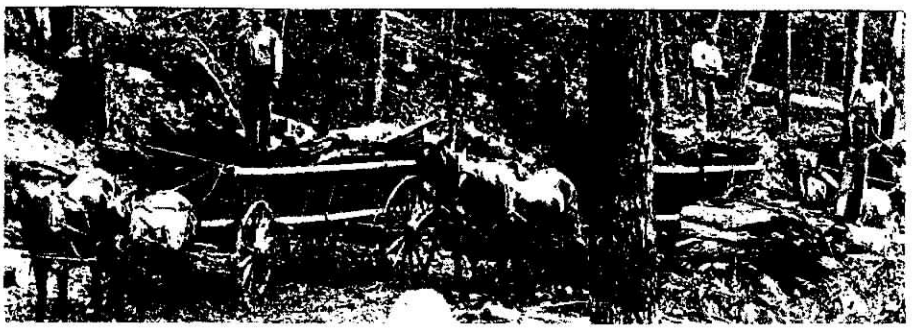
The centennial celebration of the founding of St.Basils church was held in 1938. My wife and I were newly weds and I remember helping build an outside altar just to the north of the present parking lot. Father John J. King was pastor of St.Basils at that time. A native son of the parish, Father Francis E. Tourscher then located at Villanovia Pa., Prepared a fine history and it was printed in a booklet that was distributed at the celebration.

There has been some confusion about the place that the building stones for St.Basils church were quarried. Father Tourscher in his book quotes Father Kaier; " The people played no unimportant part in the construction. We were two winters hauling the materials. The stone a light gray granite was quarried on what is still known as "Ringer Hill" on the old Michael Shevlin clearing about four miles away." The sand was brought from the confluence of Birch Creek and the south branch of the Loyalsock [Ringdale]. The lime was brought from the kilns near Montoursville probably forty miles away". He further states that the farmers who owned horses hauled the lime from Montoursville and the rest of the building material were hauled by oxen.

While hunting deer in the middle nineteen thirties with the late Leo Tourscher, [a nephew of Father Touscher] we came upon some ruins along a sandstone cliff that Leo stated was the place where the stones for St.Basils church were quarried. That place would be about five miles from Dushore and the stones were sandstone .

By just looking at the stones in the church one paints a mental picture of snorting oxen and drivers cracking a bullwhip, and some unholy-holy verbal expressions trying to get the loads moving faster. The truth of the matter was that the situation was just reversed. The location of the quarry lies about 2100 ft. above sea level. The low point in the trip to Dushore is about 1430 ft. above sea level, the only ascending grade would be in Dushore, and that would be less than 100 vertical feet to the church building site. I reviewed the probable route from the quarry to Dushore on some maps dating back to about 1870. There were few ascending grades, so I came to the conclusion that the greatest energy was expended pulling the empty sleds from Dushore back up the grade to the quarry site. The biggest job the driver had would be making sure that the breaking systems on the sleds were in good order. I imagine the last one hundred feet of elevation to the Church level required some of the above methods of persuasion.

When one looks at the church standing on the high hill it is hard to believe that hauling all of those stones was mostly down hill. To approach the problem from a scientific point of view one horse can produce 33,000 foot pounds of energy per minute. My chart does not list the power of an ox. But from what I have heard the old timers say they could out pull a horse. I wonder if my 18 horsepower golf cart could replace 18 horses or maybe 12 oxen!



About the same time, that the hearty souls from St.Basil's, were hauling stones for the church, other workers were hauling Hemlock bark to the Tanneries .

The green Hemlocks

Are there any hemlocks that are not green? The answer is no!. For the early settlers "green hemlocks", meant that the bark of the tree was full of sap, and that sap contained tannic acid, a principal element in the tanning, and processing of animal hides in to usable leather. The demand for leather during the post-Civil War years was enormous. There was a great demand for leather belting to power the thousands of looms, machine tools, farm machines, and the tiny round belt on grandma's sewing machine.

The hemlock tree, like all other trees "wakes up" in the spring and the sap begins to flow and the tree becomes alive. There was period from May until July [give or take a few weeks] that the bark could be removed from the tree with relative ease. The demand became so great that there was almost a frenzy to fall trees and peal their bark during that season.

By the fall of the year the woods was strewn with de-barked hemlock trees and they were then transported to the sawmill, where they were sawed into lumber. This created a situation where a large percentage of the lumber produced was full of moisture. For a framing timber, hemlock was unsurpassed, it's dimension stability upon drying was good, the nails used in fastening the lumber in place, were oxidized by the tannic acid contained in the wood, and had much better holding power than nails in other soft woods.

By late 1860 there were many small tanneries throughout the county. There were three tanneries in Dushore, one located at the site of St. Basil's school. By the late eighteen eighty's there were large tanneries located throughout the County. Stories have been told that the tannery at Thorndale processed a half million Buffalo hides sent in from the West. One tanner advertised that he would tan hides from sheep, cattle, horses, and dogs. I wonder why he did not advertise bear, deer, and other wild animals?

Plans for a new Catholic Church in Dushore were being prepared in 1866. Father Kaier, the pastor, was from Germany and he had a keen ability to evaluate construction design. The story goes that he was not sure of the design of the roof structure, so he sent to Germany for plans. The present, complex arch- structure, built of Hemlock is the result

Along with the hemlock bottom chord timbers of the roof truss, an iron rod, 1 ¼ in diameter and about 30 ft. long, was put in place and tightened with nuts, thus providing tensional support for the arch. During the recent remodeling it was found that the nuts were loose and the hemlock lower chord timbers carried the tensional load.

The moral of the story is that the hemlock was "green" and when it dried out, it shrunk about an 1/8 Th. of an inch and relieved all of the tension on the iron rods.

Father Kaier probably had visited several of the magnificent churches in Germany that had cathedral ceilings. I imagine he opted to use an enclosed ceiling at St. Basils for reason of heating and the displaying of fresco paintings that seemed to be the norm in the eighteen sixties. I had seen the arch structure on several occasions from the attic space above the ceiling. Today amid the scaffolding and construction activity I got my first glance of the "opened up" church. The enormity of the timbers and what I could see of the painting of the high ceiling left me with a feeling of reverence. In the 85 years that have passed since I was baptized in that great building I have witnessed several renovations. I could never have predicted that our church, which has always been an outstanding structure, could be transformed into such a venerable and distinctive house of worship.

Who would ever think that "green" hemlock timber-- almost a by- product of the tanning industry, would end up in such a lofty place in the annals of Church history?

The 12 in. x 12 in. timber in photo is the only hand-hewn beam in the church. The timber spans the 50 ft. width of the structure. There were probably no sawmills in the area that could saw a 50 ft. timber but there were plenty of men who could square the log with an adz.

THE BELL AT St. BASILS

One morning around 1970, I received a call from the pastor of St.Basil's, and he said that the bell was making a grinding noise when it was rung. I went up to the church and attempted to climb the rickety ladder system that provided access to the bell platform. With considerable trepidation, I finally made it all the way up. From a mechanical standpoint I was appalled at the condition of the main support bearings. Evidently the frightful condition of the ladder system precluded any attempts to lubricate the bearings, which consisted of somewhat primitive roller bearing assembly. The wear was so great that the main shaft had worn through the bearing base and was resting on the bearing support. With the assistance of Elwood Toothaker, we jacked the bell up and fitted new sealed ball bearings to the shafts and for all practical purposes the bearing system was as good as new. The bell clapper, which resembles a cannon ball and is supported by a large wrought iron bar, had pounded a depression in the soft bell metal. We rotated the bell and this caused no harm. The rope that extends some fifty feet down to the choir loft is attached to a large wooden wheel. Which is in turn attached to the bell shaft. The wheel will require regular examination and with proper maintenance it should last a long time. A large bolt that holds the bell to the bell yoke will require tightening when required. About that time a donation was made to the church, with the special intention, that a new sound system be installed .As it requires quite a lot of physical effort to ring the bell, its use was precluded by recorded chimes.. In subsequent years repairs were made to the bell tower and the four small steeples that adorned the corners of the tower were removed. The bell rope was taken off and the bell abandoned.

Some time ago my sister, Pauline Holcombe, researched the bell history with the Company that cast it. The McShane Bell Co. Of Baltimore, Md. Information taken from book "D" 1/29/72. The specks are as follows;

NAME OF CHURCH: ST. BASIL'S CHURCH DUSHORE PA.
ORDERED BY: REVEREND J.A.ENRIGHT
WEIGHT OF BELL: 2800 LB.
DATE ORDERED: DECEMBER 13, 1889
INSCRIPTION: 'A CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM THE LADIES OF ST.BASILS '
MOUNTINGS: COMPLETE
FREIGHT ALLOWED: R. RD. STATION
TERMS; CASH
DATE SHIPPED DECEMBER 24, 1889
COST OF BELL AT TIME PURCHASED IN 1889; $617.31
THE BELL AT TODAY'S PRICE [1/29/71] $ 8400.00
THE BELL IS MANUFACTURED FROM GENUINE BELL METAL.

With the arrival of Father Harris, and after sweating out the mad scramble of holding summer mass in two counties it was inevitable that his fear of height would be overcome by curiosity and he ventured to the bell tower. As soon as his feet hit the ground he called me up and said "Dick,we got to have that bell ringing", so we found the old rope and cut a few holes in the plaster and now the bell is operational

I hope that funds could be made available for the purpose of making a suitable ladder system so that a person other than a trapeze artist could examine the bell and the most vulnerable part of the church, the bell tower and steeple. I would also like to see a firewall erected in the bell tower to prevent the belfry becoming a chimney in case of fire.

Bell metal consists of copper and tin. I calculated that the copper could be melted down and sold to the mint to make, 11098778 pennies, the tin could be sold to the Campbell Soup Co. and make 12300 tin soup cans
Dick Holcombe
10\29\98

PS;

I the bell tower is some fifty feet above the church floor. I made one trip all the way up to inspect my work of 27 years ago. Our new and athletic pastor made at least 20 trips up and sawed some boards that was interfering with the operation of the toll bell, he hauled the one inch hay rope all the way up and threaded it around the seven foot bell wheel and anchored it like a pro. Thanks Father Harris!

I think, I was the last person to pull the bell rope and produce authentic sounds that the bell was designed to create. The bell is now motionless, and responds only to the striking of a brass electrically operated hammer.

Always there

From the time that I was old enough to look outside, and recognize objects, St. Basils church was the foremost object to come into view. Three doors of our house opened facing the church, and the dining room table afforded a mealtime view of the building. The great bell was plainly visible, and the first one of us kids to see the wheel turn, would exclaim, "the bells ringing". The extensive renovations that have just been completed, will make certain that the people of St. Basil's church will have a majestic place of worship for many years in the future.

Over the many years that I have been associated with St. Basil's, I have heard a lot of tales about its construction, and some of the methods and problems, associated with building a structure of that size. My wife Ann, and I have had different opinions regarding the definition of the "front of the church". My theory is that when you enter a building through it's principal doorway, that is the front of the church. Ann says, when you sit in the pews and face the altar, that is the front of the church, For the purpose of defining the following construction stories we will consider the front of the church, to be the front of the church.

Many others and I have thought that the church rests on bedrock. During the present renovations it was necessary to uncover some of the foundation at the back of the building, and low and behold, no bedrock. The walls of the church vary from 24 to 30 inches. The cut sandstone that was quarried on Ringer Hill represents only about half of the total wall thickness. Fieldstones of every description make up the balance of the wall. Some of the interior walls that have not been covered can be viewed from the bell tower. There are all color and sizes of stones including a few bricks on the interior of the bell tower.

I made some ball park measurements of the church and came up with a few statistics that might be interesting: There was 680 tons of quarried stone and 800 tons of field stones used in the church walls. How many tons a team of oxen could haul on a sled is a matter of guesswork. Lets say each sled was loaded with 4 tons of stone; they would have had to make 170 trips, or a total of 2040 miles. One of the main jobs of farmers at that time was picking stones from their fields. If these "men of the soil" had an obligation to the church, it might be to their advantage to pick fieldstone and deliver said stones to the church site, thus killing two birds with one stone.

Plans for the new church were being prepared in 1866. Father Kaier was from Germany and had a keen ability to evaluate construction design. The story goes that he was not sure of the design of the roof structure so he sent to Germany for plans. The present complex arch-structure, built of Hemlock is the result

There were several sawmills in the area that could saw 35-foot long timbers. The arch timbers are made up of 4 by 12 in planks. These planks are fastened together with ¾ in bolts and large iron washers.. Evidently there was no saw mill that could saw the 50 ft beam that supports the choir loft, so that log was hand hewn. Father Harris has wisely opted to leave the beam exposed thus lending a first hand example of the very old nature of the building.

The building of scaffolding probably was one of the greatest challenges facing the carpenters and masons. Quite often in the process of constructing a building of masonry, timbers that were to be used in the roof could be used for scaffold timbers for the sidewalls. Whatever timbers were used on the outside of the building, they had to be substantial. I measured several stones in the wall that would weigh 700 pounds. The uprights of the scaffolding would extend well above the height of the finished wall. A rope block and tackle attached to the uprights would haul the stones to the desired height, and then the workmen would man handle the stones into place. Power to pull the rope could come from men, or the use of a man powered winch. The scaffolding at the **front** of the church would have to be very substantial. The masonry reaching up to the bell platform was 54 feet. Hoisting of the stones in that area would have to be done in stages by stopping the assent at intervals and placing planks under the load until it was appropriate to move the load higher, then start the pull again. The scaffolding for the interior of the church was more extensive but of a lighter pattern. The truss timbers could be handled with light rope tackle. Once the timbers were in place the task of boring the holes with a brace and bit required a lot of manpower. The fact that the members of the truss were bolted must have given the workers a sense of satisfaction and safety. The bolting of truss members was way ahead of its time, especially when uncured timber was used. Mute evidence

of the tightness of the joints is indicated in the lack of tension found on the iron tension members of the truss when they were examined, and the tensioning nuts could be turned by hand.

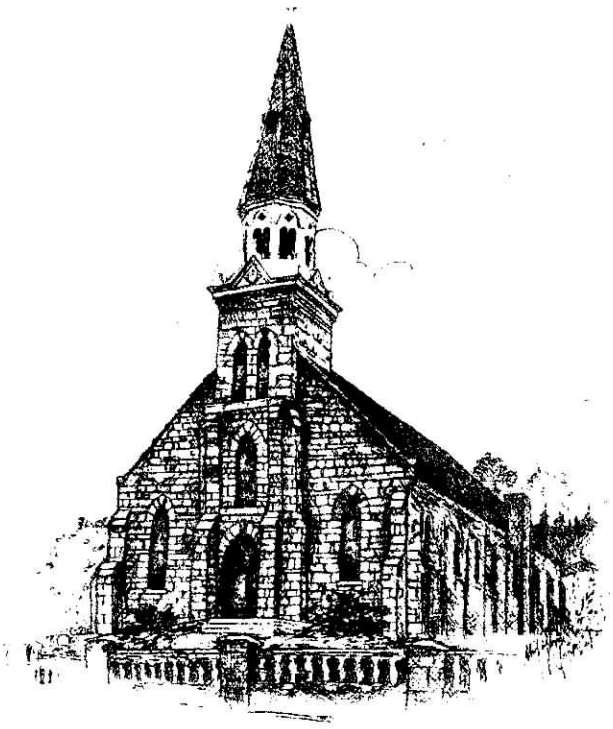
The mixture of sand, lime and water were the principal elements of the mortar used in the setting of the stones. When one examines a portion of an interior wall, the use of mortar was almost excessive. A mixture of sand, lime, animal hair and water made up the plaster formula that covered the walls and ceiling. Hemlock lath nailed to the studs supported the plaster. Evidently the plaster caused some problems and for safety's sake was covered by a new fad, called a steel ceiling. The number of trips that were made to Ringdale for sand, and to Muncy for lime must have been many. I imagine the local tanneries supplied the animal hair for the plaster.

Heating of the church in its early years is uncertain. I imagine it was done with stoves. My early memory of the heating system was a huge hot air furnace located in the middle of the church and a large register in the center isle. Coal was used for fuel and a large coal bin was located in the cellar and could be filled via chute from the outside. Disposal of the coal ashes was a problem, I remember large piles of ashes besides the cellar way.

Thinking back to the mid 1920's I remember some horses and wagons in town. Recently I have been involved in the construction of the new parking lot and the subject came up?. Where did they park the horse and buggies in the early days of the church? Some of the parishioners lived as far as 15 miles away and horse transportation would be essential. There was a mysterious settlement known as the "Commons" located in Cherry Township. A booklet entitled "Pioneering with Sullivan County Pioneers" was published in 1953. This was the comment that was made concerning the Commons. Quote " Their sons walked to work in the Laporte tannery. These family groups, in early Spring, Summer and late Fall, walked barefoot to the Dushore line, washed their feet at a watering trough and donned their shoes to attend Mass at St. Basil's Church" I am sure there were many members of the congregation who were not as hardy as the stout souls from the Commons and buggies must have been aplenty.

The late Gerald Cain and I were the last class to take religious instructions at St. Basil's convent. The new school was being built at that time and I spent many hours watching the stone cutters shaping the stones for the new school building. There were many construction tools that were available to the builders of the school that were not available to the builders of the church 55 years earlier. Namely, trucks to haul the stone, air compressors to drill the holes and improved steel for their tools. The average stone in the school building is much smaller than the stones in the church.

St Basils was the only Catholic Church in the area for a short time. I wonder if history might record at a future time, the existence of St. Basil's as the only Catholic church in an area much larger than the area it originally covered.



The above sketch showing the railing around the Prayer Garden. With all the renovations the great old Church has retained its graceful and solid look. Our forefathers, and Father Kaier would be proud that the fruits of there labors has been preserved, and the edifice will be a symbol of Gods presence for years to come.

Motor Boats on Lake Mokoma

My first experience with Lake Mokoma was in the early 1920's, when my father rented a house on Muncy St in Laporte. The next year dad acquired an interest in the "Beach View" cottage on Fountain Avenue overlooking the lake. At that time there were no large trees along the west side of the lake and a clear view could be obtained of the lake from the east side of Laporte. The cottage was constructed in 1911 in one of the several land schemes that had occurred over the years during the lake's development. For many years the "Beach View" was the only residence in the general; area of the beach.

The storm that breached the dam in 1926 changed "Beach View" to view of mud and stumps. There was a pool of water at the upper part of the former lake and a deeper pool adjacent to the dam. We continued to stay at the cottage for several weeks in the following summers. The pool near the dam was the most popular spot, I remember fishing from the roof of the former excursion boat that had been abandoned along the shore.

The dam was extensively rebuilt, many of the stumps removed, and refilled in 1931. This gave new life to Lake Mokoma. This "new life" would be seriously hampered by the event of the great depression.

The several development efforts over the years presented a problem whereby land ownership, who controlled the lake, and the rights of property owners were in question. The period of the late 1930's found control and use of the lake in somewhat of a dilemma. There were several new, quite opulent cottages constructed along the lakefront and motorboats began churning, the light amber waters of the lake. By 1938 there were two inboard motorboats of 100-horse power, a friend of mine bought a Pen Yan Boat propelled by an Evenrude 22 HP speed twin. And there were many motorboats of various sizes.

My earliest memory of a motorboat on lake Mokoma was an airboat driven by a world war one-liberty airplane engine of 400 HP.The owner of this monster was Frank Godwin, a noted newspaper cartoonist and a syndicated illustrator of the comic strip "connie". A houseboat was anchored a short distance from the present boat storage area and the airboat was tethered to the houseboat. I was tooyoung to know all of the ramifications of this waterborn arrangement but there were many rumors of loud parties and indications that the 18th amendment was being violated. Evidently the menu consisted of clams because the shallow areas near the houseboat anchorage were covered with clamshells for many years.

A cottage owner at the lower end of the lake had purchased a 14 ft. Centuary hydroplane. It was made of 3/8 in.mahogany and was made for speed. After several years of high-speed operation on the lake he had the misfortune of hitting a rock and splintering a portion of the hull. I acquired the boat and made some seaworthy, but not cosmetic repairs, to the fragile hull and put the boat in the water. I had a purchased a 15 year old Callie outboard of 16 HP. The engine was designed for racing and it made a fine match with the Centuary hull. I used a mixture of white gas, lacquer thinner and Maytag Multi Motor oil for fuel. By today's environmental standards it was a disaster, the oil slick in the wake could be seen for a hundred feet and the blue smoke that erupted from the underwater exhaust could be seen across the lake. Starting the engine was a nightmare- I have often said that I have spent more time starting an outboard than I did running them.

It must have been the summer of 1938 and I was pulling my wife on an aqua plane offshore from the beach. We were traveling about 35 MPH and the motor struck a floating plank. The motor kicked up and the boat and the aquaplane stopped-- my wife came flying over the water and landed a short distance from the boat. I helped her aboard and paddled the boat to shore. After installing a new shear pin, I paddled out on the lake to see if the motor was OK. I attempted to start the engine and after many pulls on the starter rope it started, I was caught off balance and tumbled over the motor into the lake. I came up and could see the boat running in a large circle. I started swimming towards shore, the boat came uncomfortably close but it finally wound up on the beach.

I learned to swim, and spent the summers of my adolescent years at the lake. Most of the events that took place were happy, but on several occasions, I with many others had the unhappy task of dragging and diving for drowning victims.

World War two came along and I was stationed at Amarillo, Texas. A letter arrived from my wife stating that Mac Mathe would like to purchase the Callie motor. I replied OK and Ann made a deal thus ending my boating association with Lake Mokoma.

Ann Holcombe gives a demonstration on the proper way to ride an aquaplane. Picture was taken at Lake Mokoma in 1937, [note bathing cap and one piece swim suit the aquaplane was the forerunner of water skies. The one in the picture was made of ¼ in. plywood and was hollow. It was buoyant enough to carry the average person, and a novice could lie down until speed was attained, and then stand up. By shifting ones weight from side to side, the path of the board would turn left, or right. The hydroplane was traveling about 35 MPH. Notice the absence of any appreciable wake.

A winter view of "Beach View" cottage as it appeared in 1991. The building was built in 1911 and for many years was the only cottage near the beach. Every summer of my younger years, was spent at the Beach View. Up until 1930 there was no electricity or inside plumbing at the cottage. I wired the place in 1931 and sweated out the report from the electrical inspector. There have been many improvements over the years, the last renovations have been extensive the original 1911 charm has been preserved to the last detail.

The Tamarack Water Pipe

When one thinks of water, it seems to be a normal thing, to turn on the faucet and there it is. For practical use, all water must be piped from its source to the place where it is to be used. Manufactured wood pipe, wrapped with metal strapping was in common use for municipal water systems until the 1930's. Laporte, Eaglesmere and the Hydroelectric Plant at Muncy Valley used some form of manufactured wood pipe.

One of Dushore's earliest settlers owned a large spring on the hill west of Dushore [Overton Road]. He had a Tannery at the site where St Basils School now stands. The process of tanning leather required a large amount of water. The pipe that was used to supply this water was unique, and I had a first hand experience in observing this bit of man's resourcefulness.

My friend Bob Obert owned the spring, and had built a pond that was fed by the spring. He told me that he had uncovered some wood pipe while excavating for the pond, and it appeared that the pipe ran through my property. While doing some excavating, I dug up some of the ancient pipe, and I was intrigued by what I found.

The outside diameter of the wood pipe varied from 6 to 9 inches and a hole bored through the center was 1 3/4 inches in diameter. The longest log was 16 feet. And several of the logs were random lengths.

The logs had many small knots indicating that small branches had grown, but there was no bark to identify the species of the wood. In examining a cross section, the growth rings were so close together that I had to use a magnifying glass to count them. The growth rings of one 6-inch log indicated it was 100 years old. I contacted our county agent and he sent a sample to the Forestry Department at State College and they determined the wood species was Eastern Larch or Tamarack.

The post Civil War area brought many new powered tools to the market, and one of them was a large wood lathe. By placing the log in the lathe, and attaching a boring bar attachment, with the boring bit stationary, long straight holes could be bored through the logs, thus creating a water pipe.

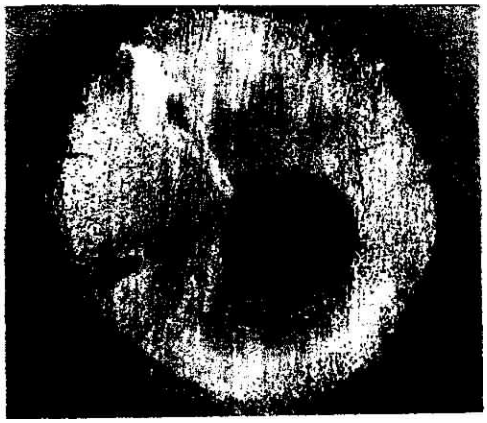
The joints were simply a funnel shaped end to one log, and a matching short taper on the other log, constituted the joint. The grade was constant for about ¼ mile, and no provision was made to shut off the water. Any excess water not used went to the creek.

The nearest place to Dushore that had wood working facilities capable of manufacturing these pipes was Williamsport or Towanda, Pa. I am puzzled about the time they were manufactured but I would guess between 1860 and 1870.

If some of our woodworking friends want to experiment, try boring a ¼ in. hole through 18 in. of broom handle.

The pieces of pipe that I dug up have been stored outside, and to look at them, they look as though they would fall apart, but cut through with a chain saw and they were sound and hard.

This log was origonaly 16 ft. in length. It looks rotten but a little way under the loose outside shell the wood is very hard.



The above photo shows a cross section of a 6-inch diameter log, The tree must have been a bit crooked as indicated by the off center position of the hole. Note the knot, indicating a small limb had started early, in the trees growth.

The Fordson Tractor

It was probably sometime in 1925, on one of my Dailey trips to the Rail Road Station that I noticed some extra activity at the heavy freight platform of the railroad siding. A flat car containing 5 Fordson tractors was spotted besides the dock and a man was cranking one of the tractors.

It was rumored that Henry Ford, had so much confidence in the perfection of his tractors that he loaded them on a flat car with a crane for delivery, before they were test started. Out of the five tractors on the flat car, if by luck, one could be started with the crank, it could be used to pull the remaining tractors from the flat car, and tow them for starting. Evidently the starting process was successful because a parade of gray tractors with red wheels came down the street, the cleats on there wheels chewing the dirt street, and there exhaust echoing from the tall buildings on Main Street. Their destination was the building now occupied by the Sullivan County Library.

The Library building at that time was used for a stable and a car and tractor maintenance shop. Heavy timbers were placed under the first floor ceiling and 4-inch pipe post were placed every 8 feet to support the second floor. A ramp was constructed from the parking lot, to an opening on the second floor, and the Fordsons were driven up the ramp to the second floor for storage. [Evidence of the opening for the ramp is visible from the second floor of the Library].

During my teen years the Fordson was the predominant tractor in the Dushore area. There was an occasional, John Deer, Huber, International and others but only Fordson had a Dushore Dealer.

The Fordson played an important part in tractor development in the period from 1918 to 1928. Thousands of Fordsons were furnished to the war effort of World War One.

The Fordson predominated for several years after the war, by producing 34,00 units in 1918 or 25 percent of the 132,700 tractors produced by 142 companies. Fordson, production increased by 100% for the next two years. The post war depression was being to be felt in 1921 and the low priced Fordson represented about 50% of total tractor production. In 1923 and 1925 over 100,000 units were produced each year or 60 or 75 percent of the tractors produced by all companies. After 1925 with the introduction of a general-purpose tractor, led by the International Farmall, production of the Fordson decreased, and its manufacture was finally discontinued in 1928.

Perhaps one of the unique situations concerning the Fordson was the total control of it destinies were held by one man, Henry Ford! Mr. Ford had the money and the clout to exercise his decisions, so he moved the Fordson Operation to Cork, Ireland. The Irish Fordson was a much-improved tractor. The power was increased, a high-tension ignition system replaced the flywheel magneto, and a water pump was added. The power train was improved, springs mounted on the front end, fenders standard equipment, lighting generator and brakes.

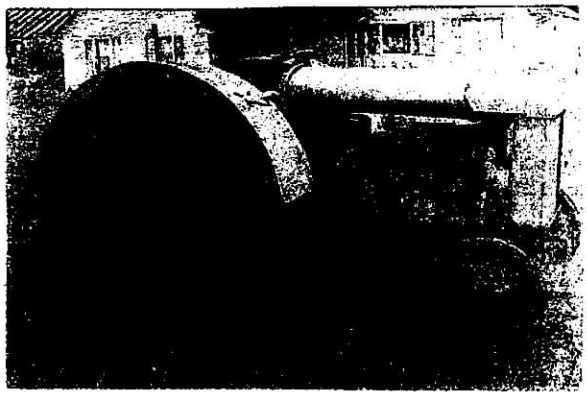
Whether Mr. Ford had anything to do with it or not, Fordson tractors were imported to the United States, duty free, under Paragraph 1604 of the Tariff Act. His improved Irish tractor sold quite well but competition from the all-purpose tractor finally put an end to the Fordson in its classic form. Of all the people that I have talked to, who have operated Fordsons over the years, most of their comments have been profoundly negative. Following are some of Fordsons shortcomings: Hard starting. Little or no brakes, extremely hot seat, generated from friction of the worm gear drive, troublesome low-tension flywheel ignition, front end rearing up causing the tractor to tip over backwards and hard steering.

During the Fordsons life span there were competitive tractors that had many features that were superior to the Fordson. On one occasion, when sales were slow, Mr. Ford cut the price of the Fordson by 40 percent. This action caused chaos in the tractor market and big trouble for his competitors.

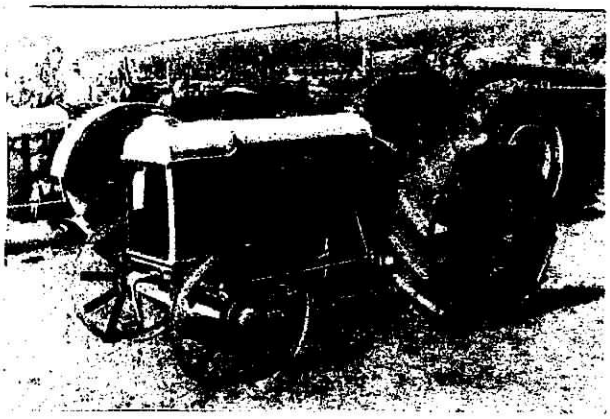
Henry Fords short-lived Fordson, of which over 200,00 were built, did change the look, of the run of the mill farm tractor. The two-piece cast iron frame bolted together in the middle is still common practice in the manufacture of Farm tractors. The price, made the machine available to people who could not afford other makes, and with all its drawbacks it could still replace several teams of horses and required feeding only when it worked.

The vague memories that I have of the Fordson in action, brings to mind the contrast with the machines of today. What sticks in my mind more than the mechanical features of the machines is the way the Fordson was brought to market—Henry Ford's determination that his way was the best, his inexhaustible source of money, and the timing of the post world war one demand for farm tractors.

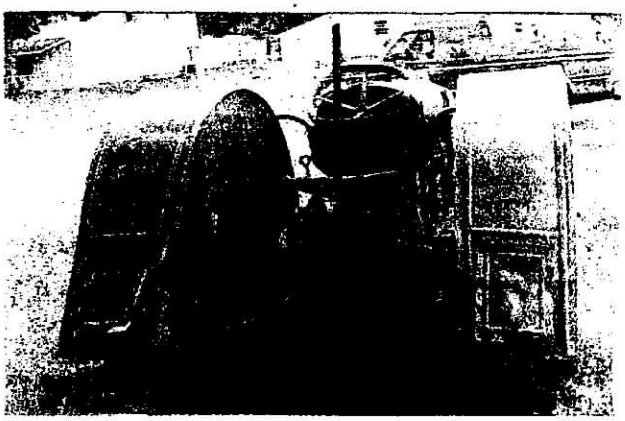
It was sometime in 1939 that I received a phone call from the Ford Dealer, my friend Charlie Fitzpatrick. He said, "Dick, come over I have something, you ought to see". I hurried to the Ford Garage and there was the 9N. It had a plow attached to the 3-point hitch and it could be raised and lowered with a fingertip. Many of the small tractors at that time were high-wheeled machines of the Farm-all type. Its arrival soon collected quite a crowd.



A nice front yard ornament, the front wheels had been adapted for rubber tires as an accessory but the tires are long gone. The tractor could be run on gasoline, or after being started with gas, could be switched over to kerosene. An iron tank at the rear of the engine contained water. The air for the carburetor was drawn through the tank and picked up "vapor' which gave greater power while using kerosene.



Note the crank on this restored Fordson. From many years of observing old tractors I have had more people tell me that the problem of "starting" was the greatest drawback of the Fordson. Many of the early tractors were produced without fenders. I imagine history could recall some gory incidents, whereby the operator accidentally came in contact with one of the wheels.



This rear view of the sweptback fenders shows the toolboxes and the robust fender supports. The massive worm gear differential generated a lot of heat. The proximity of the iron driver's seat to the hot differential caused much discomfort for the driver. The drawbar location may have been the cause of many accidents caused by the front end rearing up and tipping over backwards.

THE MAYTAG GAS WASHER

By the turn of the century mechanical power had been applied to clothes washing machines in various forms. Many farms utilized their hit and miss engines, to power wooden tub washers. The first machine that we had was a wood tub washer that was driven by the force of the town water. It worked well but it consumed a lot of water [no water meters at that time]. The next washer we had was a large revolving tub machine enclosed in a large cabinet. My Mother used this machine until a Bendix Automatic Washer replaced it.

By the 1930"s several manufactures were building clothes washers, with an agitator located in the center of a tub, and a powered wringer attached to the machine. That was about the time we began selling Maytag washers, and several other brands of a lower price.

The machines powered by electric motors were quite service free, but the gasoline powered washers, had by comparison, much to be desired. Maytag had several competitors who used Brigs and Stratton and Lawson four-cycle engines. They started more easily and had little smoke in the exhaust. Maytag on the other hand used a 2-cycle engine, where oil was mixed with the gas and a Smoky exhaust was the result. The single cylinder Maytag had been used in various forms for many years, and its unpredictable cold weather starting, excessive vibration and general cantankerous nature was causing loss of sales from competitive washers using Briggs and Stratton engines.

In 1937 Maytag came out with a two cylinder opposed engine. By comparison with the single cylinder engine, it was years ahead. We used to demonstrate the lack of vibration, by standing a nickel on edge, on the washer lid while running. The washers, powered by the new engine were used for many years, and are yet in demand by several religious groups who frown on the use of electrical power.

The development of the gas-powered washer coincided with the development of gas powered farm machinery. Many of the farm machines had to be greased and oiled every few hours, manure was often handled by hand, and mud was a constant problem. So, for the farm wife the eccentricities of a gas engine, was far overshadowed by the alternative.

During the depression many sales were made by home demonstration. My oldest brother was demonstrating a gas Maytag. He had placed the flexible exhaust pipe with its heat shield through a window of the farm kitchen. The demonstration was going well when suddenly the exhaust pipe had jiggled out of its heat sleeve and was searing the paint on the windowsill. The problem was corrected and the washer was sold. In cold weather the Maytag engines were at there worst. Often times the washer was kept inside over night and then started and wheeled outside to the porch.

In cold weather, most users provided some form of environment, which provided some heat. The Square tub Maytag held 18 gallons of water and in many cases the water had to be heated on the kitchen stove. The washing sequence was generally, the white things first, followed by the colored items, and then the overalls. By the time the work clothes hit the water it was not very warm, so more soap and some new preparation called detergent was added. The end results were satisfactory according to ones point of view.

It was in 1938 and a customer came in the store and inquired about a gas washer. We had a gleaming model E Maytag {square tub aluminum] on the floor. I rolled the machine out on the back loading dock of the store, and filled the tank with gas. I kicked and kicked the starting pedal but the engine would not start. Despite, as much mumblings as I could do, to try and convince them, that this was an unusual circumstance, the customer walked out the door. I went out to the porch again and looked at that miserable little silent engine. I decided to give it another kick, and bang! It started.

Probably no other household appliance was as important for the farm family before electrification, than the gas washer. By the late 30's rural electrification brought electric power to the homes where we had sold gas washers. In quite a few cases we sold the owner electric motors to replace the gas engines. Many of the engines preformed light power tasks around the farm and many were junked.

The Maytag Co. had available several accessories that could be used on the washing machine. By removing the tub agitator, a churn could be placed inside the tub, and butter could be churned. By removing the wringer a meat grinding attachment could be put in use and the laborious chore of sausage grinding put to an end. There were several other accessories available to Maytag users.

Merchandizing washers or any other commodity during the depression was a real problem for the Merchant, mainly because of the lack of jobs and money. A customer from Eagles Mere wrote this appealing letter:

V.B.Holcombe Eagles Mere Pa.
Dushore. Pa. Sept.22 1931
Dear Sir;

I thought I would drop you a line to ask how much you hold your gasoline washers at, and if you would set one in this fall for me, if I have work all winter so I can pay you. Or if you can wait till next summer if I don't have work this winter so I can pay you. My wife is so she cannot stand to do her washing by hand, so I have to have some body to do it.

This is the reason why I ask you if you would set one in if they are not to high price. Write and leave me know by return mail how much they are, and if you will deal.

Yours truly
[Name withheld]
PS; here is $10.00 for on the old bill of which I owe you.

I am not sure how Dad handled this situation. Compassion for a customer had its limits. I wonder how the appliance department of a modern store would handle a situation like this.

I attend several antique machinery shows each year and there are invariably Maytag engines sputtering and smoking on display. I generally walk right on by.

This older model shows a meat grinder in place of the wringer. Several versions, over the years provided reliable and convenient meat grinding capabilities. The churn [on the ground to the right in the picture] was placed inside the tub in place of the agitator. Sometimes ice water was placed in the washtub to provide cooling around the churning container. During the late 30's and early 40's rotary ironing machines [mangles] were popular. A mangle attachment was available, for the washer, but about that time, no press garments became available, and the rotary pressing machine became history.

The above picture shows an older version Maytag. Note the flexible exhaust pipe. A metal sleeve was attached to the exhaust pipe when operated through a window, preventing fire. The cast aluminum square tub of this model created a more vigorous washing action than the round tub models of competition. It was also claimed that the aluminum, held the heat longer than the copper, and porcelain washers of competitors. The drive mechanism of the models we sold was extremely service free. The lower wringer roll was harder than the upper roll and this provided better water extraction. A convenient safety device was provided at the top of the wringer that would release the pressure on the rubber rolls, in case an errant finger followed the clothes in the extraction process. There were many wringer accidents resulting in pinched and sometimes broken fingers. By definition the wringer was dangerous and several manufactures made great effort to build an accident free wringer. Evidently the phrase "run through the wringer" was derived from some unpleasant experiences with a washing machine clothes wringer.

The 38 Colt

The period of the early twenties was a sad time for the deer population in many sections of Pennsylvania. Poor judgment in deer management, and the practice of hunting deer with dogs, reduced the deer herd almost to extinction. My father hunted in Pennsylvania over thirty years before bagging a buck. As a member of the State Legislature my father was active in the program, where by, The Pa. Game commission would purchase deer from the state of Michigan, and reintroduced them to Pa. I remember, in the late twenties, watching deer being un-loaded from rail road cattle cars, to pens at the Dushore Rail road siding. Sportsmen would haul the deer in cattle trucks, and wagons to various parts of the County. The train would also stop at intervals along the way and release several deer.

My earliest experience in hunting deer was in the early thirties. Generally I hunted with a group's of at least ten men and sometimes twice that many. We put on drives, and had watchers at designated places, hoping the deer would be driven within range of their guns. One very cold morning I was the lower driver on the side of a steep hill. The drive was about over and I noticed a deer standing partly hidden by some hemlock trees about 100 feet in front of me. I could not see his head but as I pulled dad's 30-30 Winchester up to a ready position. I could see one large antler through the hemlock bows. I fired and I could see the buck shudder but he did not go down. By that time his head was in plain view and I begin to shake. Then the deer went down to his front knees and gently fell over. I walked up with the Winchester at ready but the deer was motionless. He died with one shot. By that time several of my fellow hunters were gathering around, and everyone was elated at my good fortune. By the time we had dressed the deer, and dragged him up the hill to the car, I began to recover from shock, and realize that I had shot a trophy deer.

When we arrived in town, we took the deer to the butcher shop and had him weighed. We then hung him up on a tree in the front yard of our house. The deer weighed 195 lb. Dressed, 22 points over 2 in. long and a total of 44 legal points. The back of the base of his horns looked like a comb. His hide was scarred and one hoof was turned at an angle. He had a notch in his ear. The game protector at the time was a friend of my fathers, and he was also the first game protector in the County. He had been instrumental in the Michigan restocking program. He determined by the notch in the deer's ear, that he was one of the animals imported from Michigan. He also theorized that the many scars on the deer hide were from fighting. Stepping in a bear trap might have caused the crippled foot. A taxidermist in Williamsport ran a contest for a deer with the most points. I received a free mount $15.00.

My two brothers and I had all used my fathers 30-30 Winchester. But it soon was evident that one gun would not suffice, for three boys plus dad. The solution to the situation was that we could each pick out a gun of our liking, as long as it was second hand, and not too expensive. Si, my oldest brother, opted for a 306 Winchester Model 54, My brother Vell decided on a 30-40 Krag, that had been made into a sporting rifle. My selection was a 30-30 Winchester Model 54 bolt action, with a Liman peep sight.

It was probably 1935 while hunting on R inger Hill that an instance occurred that changed my hunting habits for the rest of my hunting days. The weather was cold and there was about 6 in. of snow on the ground. I was one of the several drivers, who were attempting to drive some deer towards the watchers, and a buck came in to view. I fired and the deer went down, in the excitement of trying to run closer to the animal, I fell down and rolled end over end. When I regained my feet I pulled the rifle up, and lo and behold the peep sight was full of snow. By the time I had the sight clear the deer was out of sight.

In thinking back, at the frustration that I experienced, while trying to clear the snow from the rifle sight, the idea came to me, why not have a revolver as a back up gun. I talked it over with my fellow hunters, and my brothers, they were skeptical. I had a friend who was a world War 1 veteran, and a member of the Towanda Pistol Club. I talked revolvers with him and he invited me to his farm and we shot his 38-Colt revolver. I fell in love with that gun and I still am.

We were in the Undertaking business and my brother Si was active in the area Undertakers association. One of the members of the association was a fellow hunter and Si and he were talking hunting. Somehow in the conversation Si brought up the idea of hunting deer with a pistol. The fellow said that he didn't think much of hunting deer with a pistol, but he had a new Colt 38. He had acquired the gun in settling the estate, of a fellow who had bought it new, and fired one shot--through his head. Si bought the gun for $15.00 and brought it home. I am not sure how I became the sole owner, but it became one of my prized positions, and still is.

Over the years I joined the Towanda pistol club and enjoyed several years of being the low man on the pistol team. In hunting coon I probably hit once out of every thirty shots. I brought down two deer with the 38 and numerous other critters. A few months back I decided I would see how the old gun fired. I set up a target and placed the gun in my right hand, low and behold my right arm would not comfortably come up to my old firing position. I tried to hold it two handed like they do on TV but I missed the target. I finally rigged a rest, and bang! Bull's eye. Gun safety has always been uppermost in my mind in handling guns. I participated in gun safety classes for the Boy Scouts. On several occasions while assisting in the undertaking business I have had the unpleasant task of witnessing, the sad results of improper gun handling..

The factory grips of the old gun, never properly fit my hand, in a manner that was comfortable. One night at the hunting camp, I decided to carve a set of temporary grips to my own design. I obtained a piece of pine and with a sharp knife I whittled out a set of experimental grips. I fastened them on temporarily, with some tape and a nail. The pine grips fit perfectly and I never got around to make a fancy pair.

In the many trips that my family and I have taken over the years, the old gun usually found its way into the suitcase. On several occasions where the only lodging available had a questionable look, Ann would say "I hope you have the 38" After almost seventy years; the old gun is still near, in a secure and handy place. Its very presence provides a sense of security.

The Officers Model 38 Colt. 7-1/2 inch barrel, 38 special. Triggers pull 2 ¾ pounds. Note the homemade pine grips.

The Trip To Syracuse

The Continental Motor Co. started building gasoline engines in Muskegon Mi. in 1901. Their engines were used in many cars and trucks. In 1927 the four fire trucks that were considered for purchase by the Dushore Fire Co. had 6-B Continental engines. My father had a hearse and a Hupmobile Car with Continental engines.

The 6-B Continental engine in the Sanford Fire truck, which had been purchased by the Dushore fire Co. in 1927,was showing the signs of wear. By the late 1920's, many of the truck engines were assembled on production lines; by today standards the tolerances were haphazard. The engines were tested and shipped to the truck manufacturer. It was standard practice in starting a cold engine, to run it slow until it warmed up. All engines had a manual choke, which would bring raw gas to the combustion chamber, and aid starting and running, until the engine warmed up.

After 13 years of fire service, and starting a cold engine, full speed with the choke out, the old 6-B was producing a lot less than its original 72 HP. The Watrious gear pump was also in need of major repair.

Arrangements were made with the Sanford Co in Syracuse N.Y. to bring the truck to there factory, and have a rebuilt engine installed and the pump overhauled. A night crew would do the work and the truck would be ready for the return trip the following day.

The hose, ladders and other appliances from the Sanford were loaded on one of our furniture trucks. The furniture truck was too high to fit in the firehouse, so until the Sanford returned, our barn [Library] was the firehouse. The water was drained from the booster tank.

It was sometime in May 1940, the late Gerard Murray and I, as chief truck driver started out early in the morning for Syracuse. The truck was somewhat more nimble without the normal load of water and hose, but the best speed on a level straight road was 35 MPH. Ordinarily the radiator water was supplemented by water in the booster tank but as the booster was drained it was necessary to stop, several times for cooling water. The homemade windshield, with no windshield wiper, was the only protection from the elements. We were thankful that the weather was OK. There were no interstate roads at that time and we chose a route avoiding Binghamton and Cortland.

After about 7 hours of driving we arrived at the factory. The Sanford people started to work on the truck and Gerard and I proceeded to the Hotel. I remember we had a few libations and a good meal. About 7 o'clock the next morning we went back to the Sanford factory. The engine had been installed but work on the pump was still in progress. About ten in the morning the work was completed and after an uneventful trip we arrived in Dushore.

The expenses of the trip were as follows; Rebuild pump and install factory-rebuilt engine $472.22. Gas, oil, Hotel, and meals, $28.22.

The new engine had a lot more power and the pump was as good as new. Shortly after returning home, the Fire Co. answered a call to Bernice. The truck was spotted on the Birch creek bridge, 3 sections of suction hose were attached to the pump, and water was lifted a vertical rise of 22 feet. At that time, for fire underwriter's approval, a pump would be required to lift only 16 feet.

An addition was made to the rear of the truck room in 1942, to accommodate two trucks. The brand new American-LaFrance Ford, was placed in front and the Sanford, in the new addition to the rear of the building. This arrangement continued until after World War 2.

The final resting place of the Sanford is in doubt. A committee was appointed to dispose of the truck. Arrangements were made to donate the Sanford to a group from Lopez who would use the pumper for fire protection for that village.

The Blood Mobile in the 50's

If a person needed blood, prior to the coming of the Blood Mobile, they would seek out a person with the same blood type and have a transfusion. Many times in a blood emergency, a group of people wishing to donate blood, would go to the Sayre Hospital, and be turned down because they had the wrong blood type.

Our family was in the Undertaking business and our hearse was substituted for an ambulance. As an ambulance is often associated with the need for blood we began to compile a list of blood donors, their blood types, and their availability. This list was kept in the safe at our store and many people would call about blood types. I personally have made the trip to the hospital several times, and on two occasions I gave blood, by direct transfusion.

The Red Cross Blood program in Sullivan County was associated with the Bradford County Red Cross Office. The venerable Rita McDonald was in charge of that chapter and was instrumental in the forming of the, "Sullivan County Blood Bank Association".

The practice of collecting and storing blood by a central organization, and then making that blood available to the general public, had great appeal. This was made possible by the Bloodmobile. Various places were used to collect blood, including the Lutheran Church Basement, Dushore High School, American Legion, and Saint Basils Auditorium.

Meeting of various churches, social, school, and business organizations were held throughout the county, and a campaign of education for prospective donors was highly advertised.

The general response to the program was great. Many people who had received transfusions the old way were very enthusiastic and provided great individual support. Early in the program I found myself chairman of the recruiting agenda. One day I stopped at local bar, and the bartender suggested that a recruiting contest be held between local bars. The idea was, that a donor would bring a donor pledge card to the Blood mobile, and a notation on the card, would indicate the sponsoring bar. Competition between the bars became quite intensive and sometimes the condition of the donor was

questionable. On one occasion I was explaining the program to a group at a local bar and one enthusiastic, potential doer exclaimed, "Pint, hell I'll give a fifth".

It is very hard to write a synopsis of an event such as the blood program with out mentioning names. So many people worked so hard, that even mentioning the group leaders, would require a long list of names and surely someone would inadvertently be omitted. The fruits of their labors are reflected in the following 1958 report.

Sullivan Co.	222 donors
or 178 percent over quota.	
Monroe Co.	1177 donors
or 135 percent over quota.	
Wyoming Co.	199 donors
or 53 percent under quota	
Mt.Carmel	400 donors
or 36 percent under quota	

I have not been active in the blood program for a number of years. From the news releases it seems, the need for blood is as great as it was in the 1950's. As a person who has given blood through direct transfusion and several gallons through the bloodmobile I have a happy feeling that the blood will be there, in case I, or members of my family have the need for a transfusion.

Dick Holcombe 9/13/01

PS:

How much the bars contributed to recruiting potential blood donors is a mater of question. In the late fifties, Dushore and the surrounding area had 9 bars. Today Dushore has more Banks than Bars, perhaps we should have a contest between banks, it would change the atmosphere from a sobering to a wealthy experience.

The invasion of France on June 6, 1944, often called D-day, was still fresh in the memories of many people. The above pamphlet coining the D-Day phrase was made available to many prospective donors. The pamphlet contained the following answers;.

WHO... can give blood?
WHAT... is done with blood?
WHEN...is blood needed?
WHY ...must blood be donated?
HOW... often may you give blood?
WHERE...can blood be donated?

Kate Hurley, Dr. Saul, Red Cross Nurse, and Dick Holcombe are part of the Blood Mobile Crew at St.Basils sometimes in the earley 40's.

The Running Deer

The horrors of world war two were a decade past. New businesses were starting up and old ones were being revitalized. Baby boomers were arriving on schedule and a general feeling of happiness seemed to prevail. There was however the threat of the cold war. The Government was urging the construction of fallout shelters and published volumes on the dangers of nuclear contamination.

In this setting of general optimism, the Pennsylvania Game Commission decided to have a Deer season for Archers. There were several bow and arrow people in the community who had utilized this ancient sport in the past and now they, with their wooden bows, were the experts in the archery field. Almost over night, targets attached to hay bales appeared back yards. The deer population of the county was burgeoning and the novelty of bagging a deer with a bow and arrow appealed to many people.

Many of us in the community were in business and had an ulterior motive in promoting archery in the County. We had the deer; we had the beautiful fields and forests. - how can we persuade people to come to Sullivan County to hunt ?. My brother Vell Holcombe had for some time practiced the fine art of archery, He was dissatisfied with conventional targets and invented a three dimension target made from Styrofoam and rubberized burlap. The targets were made in all sizes from chipmunks to black bears and their unique construction and 3D shape gave the Festival a head start. The Festival was held at the Sulivan Co Fair Grounds.

It was in the spring of 1956 that plans had progressed to the point where the proposed Bow Hunters Festival needed some moving ,targets. My brother Vell had perfected the three-dimensional, burlap, Styrofoam standing targets and he commissioned me to come up with a motorized target. I welded a rim on some old hay rake wheels and suspended them about 75 ft. apart. I strung an endless cable from wheel to wheel and powered the outfit with an electric drill. A Styrofoam deer was hung on the wire and with power from the drill the target made its way back and forth between the wheels. Needless to say it presented a very easy target to hit.

With over 500 registered shooters the first year, it seemed that the festival would be a success. Vell demanded, that I come up with a more challenging target, the running deer target, much as it is today was the result.

With no capital funds to invest in mechanical devices, I rearranged the insides of an ancient Hydromantic car transmission, and the prime mover of the running deer, was born. There were many hours of machining, testing, and hoping the device would work, and with numerous growing pains, the machine that "runs" the running deer was born. For the next 44 Years. with no internal changes, the old transmission hauled the deer back and forth over the track, and with luck should operate long into the future. The track has been lengthened and many improvements have been made but the basic concept of the running deer remains the same.

The general enthusiasm for the festival was running high after the second year and it was decided to go one better and release a wild buffalo in addition to the wild boars. An article in the November `1958 issue of the Eastern Bow hunter entitled "Galloping Deer Targets and A Wild Buffalo" attracted Nation Wide attention.

On November 16, 1958 my brother Vell received a letter from the National Rifle Association:

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Publishers of THE AMERICAN RIFLEMAN

1600 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W. • Washington 6, D. C. District 7-3412

November 13, 1958

Mr. Vell C. Holcombe
Dushore, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Holcombe:

I recently read the article "Galloping Deer Targets And A Wild Buffalo" in the November issue of The Eastern Bow Hunter and was quite interested in the construction of your mechanized running deer target.

A similar match is conducted with rifles in which a paper deer silhouette is mechanically motivated across a short opening. This match is so highly regarded that is is also part of the shooting program of past World Championships and Olympic competitions.

The Range Plans Section of The National Rifle Association is now in the process of compiling a Running Deer Range Construction booklet so that more rifle clubs in the United States can construct such ranges.

The running deer mechanism used at the Pennsylvania Bow Hunters' Festival looks like it could be easily adapted to holding a paper silhouette for the purpose of rifle competition. Therefore, would it be possible to get some close-up photographs and/or drawings with a parts list of your mechanical running deer?

If the photographs and construction information shows that your mechanical running deer arrangement could be adapted for rifle competition, the material could be made into a nice short article for THE AMERICAN RIFLEMAN for which you will be paid the regular space rate.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

John J. Grubar
Assistant Managing Editor
THE AMERICAN RIFLEMAN

I replied to the above letter to the best of my ability and described the operation of the transmission and related controls as well as I could. Evidently my rhetoric must have scared Mr. Grubar because in a following letter he replied that he thought the device would be beyond the ability, of the average rifle club.

The fact that the prestigious NRA had even recognized our running deer target, somewhat elevated our ego.

The third year of the festival the running deer was moved to its present location. The track was 75 ft. long and straw was used for protecting the operator. The track was gradually lengthened and improvements were made to the operation in general. After 8 years the wearisome chore of loading the track and power unit in my truck, and hauling it

to Dushore, then storing it in the upstairs of my barn was becoming impracticable. A prefabricated garage 12 ft. x 24 ft. was purchased and erected on power poles so that it could be moved if the Fair association required the space. The mound in front of the track was built and sand hauled for the backstop. Run-ff water from a rainstorm was a problem and there was one year the deer ran with water over the tracks. One of the major problems was inadequate electric power. Many motors were burned out and quite a few shut down's took place, until the entire Fair ground was rewired. Finally a new two-story building was built to house the running deer and provide a control room for the running deer operation on the second floor. Much needed storage space was provided for the storage of targets and other equipment required by the entire festival. With the acquisition of the new building we were able to place the power unit in a permanent position. A new compound cable setup was installed and more precise control of the target was achieved. The mechanism that turned the deer around at the end of the track was improved.

About ten years ago we moved the power unit to my shop and I spent part of the winter rebuilding the power unit from ground up. An automatic device that turned the deer around at the end of the track was perfected, the slow speed gearbox was relocated, a new channel iron frame to support the entire unit was provided and a 3 HP motor was installed. A new power panel was located on the unit and switching and reversing relays were installed. A few years later a back up transmission was perfected and stands available in case the old hydromantic fails

The hardest part of writing this history is the omission of the names of people who were so great a part, in the success of the operation. There were so many people involved that it would be impossible to name even the principal folks that worked so hard to bring success to this endeavor.

I must make one exception to the rule of mentioning names, and that is my wife Ann., She gave me encouragement when I had mechanical problems. She organized the first breakfast and was active in coordinating the Queen contest, and many other activities I would not be active, in the operation of the running deer today, if it was not for her support.

It would be interesting to know how many trips that I have made in the 45 years of the festival. I have never missed a day and I imagine I would have traveled in excess if 7000 miles between Dushore and Forksville.

Just before we were closing the operation for this year a young couple approached me and said they had been coming to the festival for 10 years. We visited a few minutes and the young lady said " Mr. Holcombe did you ever think of how much pleasure and fun you have created, for so many people with your Running Deer"

That remark made it all worthwhile.

The very beginning!. The control handle was mounted about 8 feet from the power unit so that the hay bales would protect the operator. The members of the staff looking on were My Brother Vell, Wimpey Stefather, and Leo Sick. A half-inch manila rope was used prior to the steel cable, when the rope got wet the movement of the target was very slow.

Looks familiar-- retrieving arrows 43 years ago. One reporter from a national magazine on that earliest shoot, made the first calculation of the number of arrows fired at a single target, and came up with the figure of 32,000 arrows in one day. We have had counting devices on the machinery on several occasions. There are indications that arrows shot over the years number in the millions

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