

WALLING TAVERN COBBLESTONE BARN (Site)
HISTORY SHEET
General Information

Name of Structure: William Walling (Tavern) Cobblestone Barn

Address: 7851 Ridge Rd (43°13'19.0"N 77°00'42.7"W)

Parcel ID: (544289) 70117-00-601425

Atlas: 1853: "M Walling"; 1858: "E Rogers"; 1874: "S Dennis";
1904: "W Reynolds"

When Built / Mason: 1834

When Razed: ~1908

Why: ?, New barn built, farther back on lot, about the same time

Original Owner: William Walling

Subsequently: Spencer Dennis; his sister Rhoda Reynolds; Charles Whiting
(presumed to have torn it down and replaced with frame barn)

Original Use: Barn and perhaps stable for tavern visitors' horses

Subsequently: Same

Pictures: Two (of house with barn in background)

Description:

The barn's double-wide door faced the house; its left door jamb was aligned with the gable peak; it had a wooden lintel. High in the gable was a 6-over-6 paned window below which, centered across the width (without regard to the barn door below it), were 2 openings about the size of the gable window. They had narrow wooden lintels and sills, and instead of window panes those openings were boarded up. The field cobbles and masonry on the barn were similar to that of the tavern. The photos do not show the detail of the barn's long side facing the road although it appears there were two door-like openings. Quoins similar to those on the tavern were used on the barn; it appears cobbles were set 3/Q.

A later photograph, taken from approximately the same perspective (from the front left (west) corner of the tavern with the barn in the background) shows a modification to the upper level of the barn. A large rectangular area in the center from the peak down to the top of the windows in the middle section just above the barn door, was cut out extending from the right upper corner of the left window to not quite the left upper corner of the right window and was replaced with wood. The gable window was now gone, but in the middle of the new wooden area was a small 6-paned window.

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Synopsis

According to the date stone above the door of the extant (2022) "Walling Tavern", William Walling built the cobblestone house in 1834. It was designed to be used as a tavern and inn along the busy east-west stagecoach route between Oswego and Rochester. After William Walling died in 1849, the business was run for awhile by a Mr Ackerman¹. At some point thereafter the business was closed and the building was marginally changed to serve as a 2-family house. It was variously rented out / abandoned. By 1886 William and Rhoda Reynolds occupied it, at that time being owned by Rhoda's brother Spencer Dennis. Rhoda inherited it after his death in 1894, and she sold it to Charles Whiting in 1908. Charles Whiting made extensive exterior changes to the house and erected a new frame barn.

In addition to the "Walling Tavern" the property had a 2-story barn—the main subject of this history sheet.

References

Some background about the Tavern on the Stagecoach Route

Rochester NY Democrat Chronicle 1929 - 8317.pdf (Sunday, 8/25/1929)

"Stage Coach Once Rattled to Door of Turnpike House Where Weary Travelers Rested or Made Merry—Remodeled, It Shelters 20th Century Family

Wallington, Aug. 24. - The days of stagecoaches and quaint-looking taverns where many years ago travelers along the main turnpike between Eastern and Western New York made merry over the flowing bowl as the village fiddler played 'Money Musk', 'Pop Goes the Weasel', and other old-time airs are recalled in an old cobblestone house standing close to the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks here.

The Wallington Tavern, for as such it was known in stagecoach days, was built entirely of cobblestones in 1834 by William Walling, the village's honored sage. Shortly afterward the tavern became known as the halfway house between Oswego and Rochester. Here coach

¹ Sodus NY Wayne County Alliance 1887-1893 - 1021.pdf (Wed, 4/17/1895)

"Wallington — Gavitt Ackerman vacated the stone tavern Saturday. Wm Reynolds expects to come there the coming week."

South Sodus Cemetery

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37514256/saxon-barton_gavitt-ackerman (1860-1934)

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/37514539/merry-may-dennis> (1865-1936)

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horses either rested or were exchanged and passengers whiled away the hours in rollicking pastime.

Yule Parties Merry

Stories of merry holiday parties, especially around Christmas time, are still narrated and it is said that the jovial landlord spared neither the best of his wine cellar nor the most appetizing which his larder afforded to give his guests a welcome which would insure their early return.

Many years ago a traveler stopped at the tavern to rest and refresh himself, according to a story which is still told in this village. He entered the tavern through swinging doors over which appeared the boldly painted sign: 'Beer'.

After he had remained in the taproom for some time, he was struck with a blunt instrument by another guest and killed. The motive may have been robbery or revenge. That point has never been made clear in the narrative. After he was killed the body was taken to strip of woods near the village, a shallow grave dug and the body thrown into it. Years later, his remains were accidentally unearthed, but his identity never was established definitely.

Above the present front of the once old tavern, now an attractive dwelling owned and occupied by Charles E. Whiting, the marble stone sign bearing the words 'William Walling, 1834', is still plainly visible. Walling conducted the tavern, which he later called the Wallington Hotel, for many years, and its ownership subsequently changed several times until the Town of Sodus went dry under the local option law and eventually Gabriel [sic] Ackerman, the last proprietor, barred the doors.

New Family Home

With the coming of the automobile and interurban bus lines, this famous old landmark has been converted into an attractive and comfortable home by its present owner. There are other cobblestone buildings in this vicinity. Some of them are old, while a few of them existed when a war between the United States and Mexico never was dreamed of by early residents of the northern tier of Wayne County. The passing of the stagecoach has left many reminders of those romantic days in this section, but the old Walling Tavern will probably be known a long time hence as the popular rendezvous of weary but fun-loving travelers close to a century ago between the 'Lake City' and the 'Flower City.' "

"Arms' Crossroads—Wallington" © 1982, by The Wallington Cobblestone Schoolhouse Restoration Committee (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0190NLNT4?tag=homeinfx-20>) chronicles the transitions, both in use and ownership (particularly in the 2nd half of the 19th century), in interesting detail. Grace Reynolds Riggs Wrates, at the age of 98 in 1981, was interviewed and provided her first-hand insights of these many transitions. The only mention of the cobblestone barn: "Leon Clark, neighbor across the road, can point out the remains of the foundation of the old stone barn east of the house where horses were housed during the stage-coach days."

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See those details at: <http://townofsodushistoricalsociety.org/hamlets/wallington/1800s/walling-tavern-1834-page/>

Some background about the people who owned, worked, or lived there

Lyons NY Western Argus 1849-1852 - 0091.pdf (5/30/1849)

"In Sodus, on Saturday morning last, Mr William Walling, for many years the proprietor of the stone tavern, aged — years."

Newark NY Arcadian Weekly Gazette 1888-1888 - 0403.pdf (4/13/1887)

"Wallington Grange, which meets every Saturday evening in a hall in the old Walling stone tavern, now has 80 members, and is steadily increasing in numbers."

Wolcott NY Lake Shore News 1908-1913 - 0089.pdf (7/30/1908)

"Important real estate transaction ... this week. William Reynolds has sold the "Stone Tavern" property at Wallington, reserving the tenant house and part of the farm lands, to Charles Whiting, for \$2,500. Possession will be given the first of next March."

Wolcott NY Lake Shore News 1908-1913 - 0269.pdf (7/1/1909)

"The change in the old stone tavern made by Charles Whiting, who has remodeled it into a modern dwelling, is one of the most noticeable improvements in town."

Lyons NY Republican 1912-1912 - 0389.pdf (11/29/1912)

"Traveling Passing Agent Ernest W Lane of New York Central Lines was a recent visitor in town. Mr Lane's mother was Miss Kate Walling before her marriage. She was born in the "Old Stone Tavern," now occupied as a residence by Charles E Whiting. It was in honor of her father that Wallington was so named."

Where they rest

Brick Church Cemetery

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/113281020/william-walling> (? - 5/25/1849)

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/94681655/catharine-walling>, wife (? - 2/8/1868)

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/83394483/william-edwin-reynolds> (1859-1932)

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/83396675/rhoda-belle-reynolds>,

his wife Rhoda Belle Dennis Reynolds (12/12/1861 - 12/22/1943)