

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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THE FAMOUS WATERPORT PLOW

A century ago Waterport was known far and wide for its plows. As a background to this, here is what we find in Landmarks of Orleans County, N.Y. by Isaac Signor (1894):

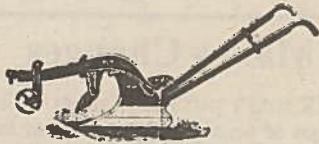
"Waterport — This is the largest business place in Carlton, is pleasantly situated at the junction of Otter and Oak Orchard Creeks, and contains a post office, two general stores, a hardware store, a drug store, a notion store, one hotel and livery, a jewelry shop, two black-smiths, a meat market, a harness shop, one cooperage, a foundry and agricultural implement manufactory, a warehouse and coal yard, one grist mill, a saw mill, one church, a union school (of which Prof. A.W. Behrend is principal), a physician, and a population of about 250. The present postmaster, Albert M. Ives, was appointed September 11, 1893; he succeeded R.W. Harris. The station on the R. W. & O. Railroad is located on the opposite side of Oak Orchard Creek about half a mile north. The flouring mill of Woods & Lum, situated near the railroad, was built by Robert Rackham, who finally sold it to Nelson Clark. Upon the death of the latter it became the property of his sons, Lyman and Oliver Clark, who sold it to A.W. Woods and George F. Lum in the spring of 1889. The mill is run by water power and has a capacity of 100 barrels of flour every twenty-four hours.

"The Waterport Agricultural Works were established in 1873 by Robinson & Wilder. P.D. Anderson subsequently acquired the interest of Mr. Wilder and a year afterward became sole owner. In 1886 he sold the business to D.D. Bromley, who, on January 1, 1894, took his son in as a partner, under the firm name of D.D. Bromley & Son. They do general foundry work and manufacture all kinds of agricultural implements."

In the chapter "Family Sketches," also from Landmarks of Orleans County we can find this account:

"Bromley, Daniel D., was born in Attica, Wyoming County ... October 28, 1836 ... Our subject attended the common schools of Darien, Genesee County, and later the Alexander Academy, where he completed his studies at the age of nineteen. His boyhood days were spent on the farm. After working a farm on shares for five years he bought the Warren Farm of 166 acres which he still owns, and in 1887 purchased the Waterport Foundry, which he has since conducted, manufacturing the Waterport chilled plow, cultivators, harrows, etc. Mr. Bromley is a Democrat and a member of East Carlton Lodge No. 187, I.O.G.T. On October 23, 1866, he married Adelpia Warren, born in Carlton September 24, 1849, daughter of Reuben Warren, whose father Silas settled in Carlton in an early day clearing the place now owned by Daniel D."

Just recently the great grandson of Daniel D. Bromley, Mr. Thomas W. Bromley of Glenmont, N.Y. kindly sent me some archival material for historical purposes. Included in the packet was the photo of the Waterport Foundry, showing the name "P.D. Anderson" painted in the gable over



D. D. BROMLEY & SON, Waterport, N. Y.

Manufacturers of

CHILLED PLOWS, ROLLERS, DRAGS,

DOUBLE AND SINGLE CULTIVATORS,

Shovel Plows, Bag Trucks, Bob and Cutter Shoes, Rocker and Bolster Plates, Window Weights, etc.

Job Work Done Promptly and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

PLOWS A SPECIALTY.

"Agr'l. Works." Also, relative to the business, was the advertising shown here printed on the back-side of an envelope. Clearly, we note the engraving of the plow for which the foundry became noted. The plows must have had the name "D.D. Bromley" cast into them as well as the word "chilled." "Chilled" in the foundry business means to harden the surface of metal by sudden cooling. We can assume that the photo was taken prior to 1887 because of Anderson's name and that the advertising is 1894 or after, because it is "D.D. Bromley & Sons."

This foundry or Agricultural Works was located on the east side of Main Street in Waterport, east of the present bridge over Lake Alice. When this reservoir was created by A.L. Swett in the late teens, over fifty parcels of land were procured to be flooded. The old foundry was one of these, the foundation of which still exists under water. Other businesses mentioned such as the grist mill and saw mill were also located in what is now Lake Alice. We are speaking here of the time frame before a bridge was located at the foot of Main Street in Waterport leading straight across the creek. At this time, the street or road went down a long incline, crossed Oak Orchard Creek (River) and then went up diagonally on the north embankment.

Indeed, Waterport was a flourishing community one hundred years ago.