

Bethinking of Old Orleans

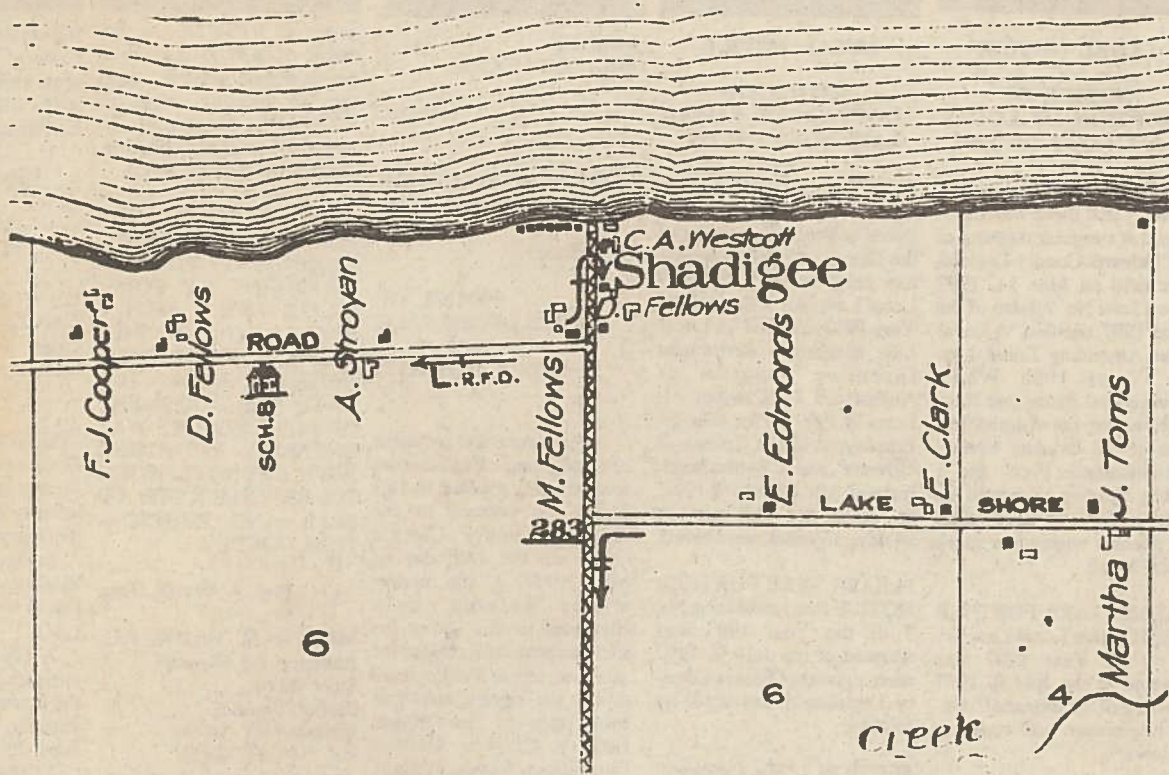
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SHADIGEE



In December 1926 the Lyndonville Enterprise reported on how the name Shadigee came about. It seems, according to legend, that a passenger on a boat asked the captain "Where are we going." He replied, "Oh, to Shadigee". Hence, it has been called Shadigee ever since.

Now the site of the Lyndonville water treatment plant and a summer resort of cottages, Shadigee is a quiet place located on the Lake Ontario shore in the Town of Yates. However, in the mid-19th century Shadigee was more of a hub of commercial activity.

Around 1850 a 275-foot pier was built out into the lake mainly for shipping purposes. It was erected by a stock company composed of farmers. A warehouse was built to store lumber, grain and fruit while awaiting to be shipped. Even previous to the pier an early warehouse had been built here in 1828 for the same purpose. The 1852 county map very prominently shows a warehouse on the shoreline at Shadigee. Many buyers came from Boston and other points to buy local produce. From Shadigee it would have been shipped to Oswego and then on up the St. Lawrence River and on to Boston. This suggests our climate and terrain was superior for raising wheat as compared to New England states.

In 1856 Erastus Spalding purchased the warehouse from the stock company and shipped close to 50,000 bushels of grain in a single season which had been raised by Town of Yates farmers. Indeed, it was not only the Erie Canal but Lake Ontario which was used for shipping purposes. This again goes to show what a huge grain producing region we were back in the mid-19th century.

With the building of the R.W.O. Railroad which opened in 1876, shipping on Lake Ontario diminished. Eventually the pier became badly deteriorated and was washed away.

Shadigee was also noted years ago for its hotel. The first structure was moved from the McClew farm and David McClew was the first proprietor. In 1864 Elbridge Thayer bought the place and remained there about ten years. The hotel became noted for fine food as Mrs. Thayer was a good cook. The Lyndonville Enterprise also reports the following: "In 1871, Mr. Thayer's son-in-law, Harry Moore, rented the hotel for one year, and during this time occurred the noted murder of the Highland brothers, which originated on July 5 when Mr. Moore's employees were celebrating the holiday, and on the 16th there was a dance given at the hotel and the Highland brothers came for the purpose of cleaning them up. They were both shot by Will Allen, a science doctor. He shot in self defense, but was convicted and sentenced to two years." In 1874 the hotel was sold to Silas Hopkins of New York. He remodeled the building which became a favorite spot for boarders and city people, especially during the fair weather months.

Our 1913 Yates map shows the hotel as being owned by Charles A. Westcott. In 1924 he sold it to a Mr. Rosenkranz from Buffalo. But in December 1925 this landmark was completely destroyed by fire. As the map indicates it would have been located about where the water treatment plant is now situated. Note on the map the number of cottages on the lake just west of the Lyndonville Road.