

'2 WILLIES'

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On the backside of this circa 1887 photo is written: Master Wm. Dawson "2 Willies." I also find the mark of a rubber stamp stating: Arthur F. Harris — Albion, NY. The 1887-1888 Orleans County Directory lists such a person as living on Clarendon Street, noting that he is a mason. Cemetery records from Mt. Albion show that William T. Dawson was born in 1883 son of Thomas who is also listed in the 1888 Directory living on East State Street as a quarryman.

Truly this is a cute picture which was probably taken by Harris, who by chance had one of the first Kodak cameras. This is certainly an early "snap shot." In carefully looking over the picture it shows us a lot about the time frame in which it was taken.

My guess is that it is in the village because of close neighboring buildings. Obviously it was taken during the winter with snow on the ground. Hence the "2 Willies" are out for a jaunt.

William Dawson is seated in a miniature sleigh, covered with a fur robe while holding the reins of the goat. Dogs and goats were often hitched up to little cars, wagons or sleigh



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to the delight of children. My guess is this was more often done for recreation rather than for utilitarian measure.

The photo shows us a side view of a house with two chimneys. With modern central heating

we've gotten somewhat away from chimneys. Back in the 1880's there were many more chimneys because of stoves in almost every room.

In back of the goat's head we also note an outhouse. It's hard to believe but before sewage systems, every village residence had an outhouse. I also notice a vent on the roof of the residence which could account for a privy located in the back wing. The outdoor privy being used

for the summer and the indoor privy was used more in cold weather months.

A clothes line is seen strung on poles here in the backyard. Clothes dryers were an invention yet to come about when the picture was taken. Indeed clothes lines are a vanishing tradition in today's world.

In all, our cute picture is representative of a much more simplistic way of life when children got outside and played in the snow.