



Chalet Edelweiss

9 Blueberry Circle • Hampstead, N.H. 03841

Phone: 603 329-5573

Greetings: I remember that my grandfather was Cyrus and my great grandfather was Daniel. I may have reversed them. The blacksmith shop had stood at West Cumberland since before the revolution. It had burned and been rebuilt several times. No one knew the age of the family house but I should guess it to be 1890 to 1900. I have no recollection at age 5 that would make me think it was very new. The house next door where Aunt Ann and Uncle Nat lived was apparently 100 years old. I think they were Morrills. The road which branched off at the shop and ended somewhere near the Black Strap road had a Shaw farm on it which began on the left side of the road going up Morrissons Hill. There was once a brook of some size flowing through that field. This had been dammed and a small pond made. A fairly large blacksmith shop stood there and the water turned a wheel which operated a trip hammed. Inside this shop were made two tined pitchforks and square hand forged nails. After this building burned the pond was stocked with trout and people drove out from Portland to catch fish and pay for what they caught by the pound. I knew this as the Win Shaw place and supposed he was a first cousin. The Shaw genealogy I owned placed the Shaw family in Scotland. The Shaws were part of the McKenzie Clan and their small clan was called the McIntosh. The name Shaw means in Scottish a small copse of trees in an open glade. It is a standard word. Among the Shaws who came to Maine, one was a very successful lumber baron and built the Greenville Library and has a mountain named for him near Moosehead Lake. I have seen the mountain.

I believe that another Win Shaw was principal of a school in

Westbrook
Maine

The blacksmith shop stood under a large tree across the road from my grandfathers house. A similar building had sat there since the middle seventeen hundreds always owned by a Shaw.

The building was much like a barn except it had no upper lofts.

It had a double sliding door which pulled back to open nearly all the front. The two halves ran on overhead rails and worked easily. As one entered the large chimney and forge stood on the right. The forge itself was an open box about 3x4 ft. made of brick and filled with rubble and ashes to within two inches of the top. A metal pipe entered it low down and this conveyed the air from the old fashioned bellows up under the charcoal fire. The fire also contained some semi soft coal which I think was called Kanal. It burned quickly with a white hot interior.

The bellows was probably 4 or 5 feet high and was fastened upright against the side of the chimney which was as wide as the forge.

The anvil stood on a large block of oak just at the left of the forge and had different holes to put in special cutting instruments. Just beyond the forge was a half hogshead of water, black and scummed when a shoe or other forged metal was finished it was thrown into the tub with a lot of hissing and gurgling.

Beyond the tub stood a device which I now suppose to have been a drill press to bore holes through metal.

As one entered the opposite side was heavily planked and showed the marks of steel caulks in the planks. This was where the horses were hitched and the shoeing done. My grandfather was a short man as I am but also like me large around but not fat. I remember seeing him holding the foot of a large horse while the horse laid down on him and he jabbed the horse in the soft belly to make him stand up straight.

Often three horses would be tied up here. Directly behind stood a large frame with a roller covered with canvas. This was really a stall for an ox to be tire into to be shod. The canvas strip went under the steers belly and he was lifted off his feet and all four feet tied securely. They fought and bellowed.

Throughout the shop there were piles of discarded iron and new rods, straps and bars. steel tires for wagons hung from the rafters and hundreds of horseshoes were strung on rods within reach. I could not imagine the various needs of all the horses. Standing against the outside of the building would be two large wheels waiting to be retired or a part of a wagon.

I never heard it but I am certain grandmother hated all of it. More especially a husband who was always covered with coal dust.

My family lived in Cumberland Center and Often on Sunday morning father would hitch old dick to the open buggy and take me with him to visit the home he had left in West Cumberland. My Grandmother never said much but she seemed to me to be bony and spare and unhappy and my father was often not too welcome nor I. Now that I am old and the beneficiary of Uncle Sam I feel a lot about the last years of my grandparents.

I dimly remember that the end of my grandfather was quite speedy About grandmother I remember nothing