

A Look at an Old Garlock Farm

A short time ago I purchased a colored pencil drawing of the farm dwelling and outbuildings of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Garlock located near Marshville, New York. The drawing was executed on October 8, 1894 by Fritz G. Vogt, an itinerant German artist who traveled from place to place in our area to ply his trade. Because of Vogt's artistry the old Garlock farm became frozen in time. Actually it was one of several Garlock farms in the immediate area which were established one by one as the male members of the families grew to maturity and required a place to raise their new families. The drawing depicts a cluster of farm buildings that were indicative of a self sufficient way of life which dominated much of our middle Mohawk Valley as the 19th Century came to a close. On the day the drawing was made Nathan Garlock was 42 years old and in only two days he would celebrate wedding anniversary. Possibly the drawing would become an anniversary present for his wife as it is known that a similar drawing had been done of his wife's parent's farm.

On the barn in bold letters are P. Garlock and the date 1884a remaining tribute to the patriarch of the previous generations. Peter Garlock, Nathan's father who had been born on the farm a very short distance to the East on January 7, 1817. Peter had lived his entire life on these connected farms. He had passed away 8 years before the drawing was executed, on February 11, 1886. In 1892 when the "History of

Montgomery County" was written by Washington Frothingham, Nathan had 212 acres of land devoted to dairying and grain production. The farm remained to a great extent self sufficient. Nathan survived until 1938.

The last Garlock to live on and work the old farm was Voorhees Garlock, only son of Nathan and Luella Winne Garlock. Voorhees was born August 16, 1891. He had two sisters, Gertrude born in 1881 and Matie in 1884. Voorhees never married so the days as a Garlock was to end not so long in the future. Voorhees was three years old when the Vogt drawing was made.

By the time Voorhees took the operation of the farm over much of agriculture was changing. The power on the farm was yet as it had been for many years, horse power. The horse drawn grain reaper and binder had long since replaced the grain cradle that was used in Peter's day. Soon the automobile and truck would forever replace the horse and buggy. With electricity came the milking machine. The tractor was not far behind. The day of mechanization had reached the old Garlock Farm.

By the 1940's I knew Voorhees Garlock as my Grandfather Benjamin Garlock had known Voorhees and his father Nathan before him. Grandfather was a distant relative of this branch of the Garlocks. I had begun to collect old firearms and other types of Americana. Luckily Voorhees seemed to take a liking to me. His family, as was true of many of

the then existing older families had accumulated the outmoded, worn out and cast off possessions of the generations. Voorhees told how his grandfather Peter had been in "General Training" as the militia had been referred to in the mid 1800's. All able bodied males were required to serve even though it often was for no more than a day or two a year. I was given Peter's uniform buttons, sword belt buckle and saddle holsters. As time passed more things came my way such as a muzzle loading rifle made at Johnstown, a civil war musket and long handle frying pan once used in the fireplace at the ancient Seebers farm next door. I also received the wool spinning wheel and yarn winder that had for years been stored over the wagon house. By the mid 1940's I worked for a year or so during the summer months at the Voorhees Garlock farm being paid as I remember \$1.50 a day. By that time his close relatives had passed away. The occupants of the old farmhouse were Voorhees, his housekeeper Minne Kocher and her mother, both close cousins of his, and the hired man Guy Hoffman. Hired men and sometimes girls to help do the housework were always a necessity on the farm.

The team of horse were still used even though a tractor was also used. The day of the field combine had not yet come to the farm. Fields of wheat and oats were still cut with a reaper and binder, the bundles set up in the field to dry and then drawn to the barn to be thrashed. The thrashing machine that was always stored on the barn floor was hauled just outside

the barn to do the thrashing. All of the grain was hoisted to the second floor of the wagon house where it was warm and dry for storage. Loose hay was loaded on a wagon with a hay loader, drawn to the barn and hoisted to the mow by ropes and hay fork. The horses were used to pull the rope that drew the hay to the peak of the barn and then convey it back over the mow until it was dumped at a desired location.

All of the buildings were filled to overflowing with those things no longer used that would sometime in the future become the stock in trade for antique dealers.

The Vogt drawing stirred many happy memories. Those of cherries and raspberries that I picked so "Min" could bake the pies I enjoyed so much. The one nice friendly black and brown dog "Buisy" and the not so friendly black and white companion "Gyps". Could the rooster in the yard near the wagon house be the same one that often flew at me as I crossed its domain years after the drawing was made? Voorhees one day told me to dump a pail of water on the rooster. It did cool his desire to fight. There was a long lane that led much of the way to the other end of the farm nearly a half mile away. Part way there was a small dam where bullheads could sometime be caught. You could look over to the East and see where a relative, William Garlock once lived. It was interesting to note that William made two trips to California to prospect for Gold. Some local people called him "California Bill" even up to the time of his death when my mother was

young. A right turn part way up the lane led to a piece of woods that enabled the family to cut some lumber and all the needed firewood for each successive generation.

The Nathan Garlock farm remains, but not in Garlock hands. There are no cows or horses. The buildings are stripped of their interesting ago old contents. The acres are rented to a local farmer to produce crops. Machinery unknown to past generations till the fields and gather the harvest. However, luckily a quaint drawing still exists to depict how the farm of "Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Garlock" looked on October 8, 1894.

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February 24, 2000