

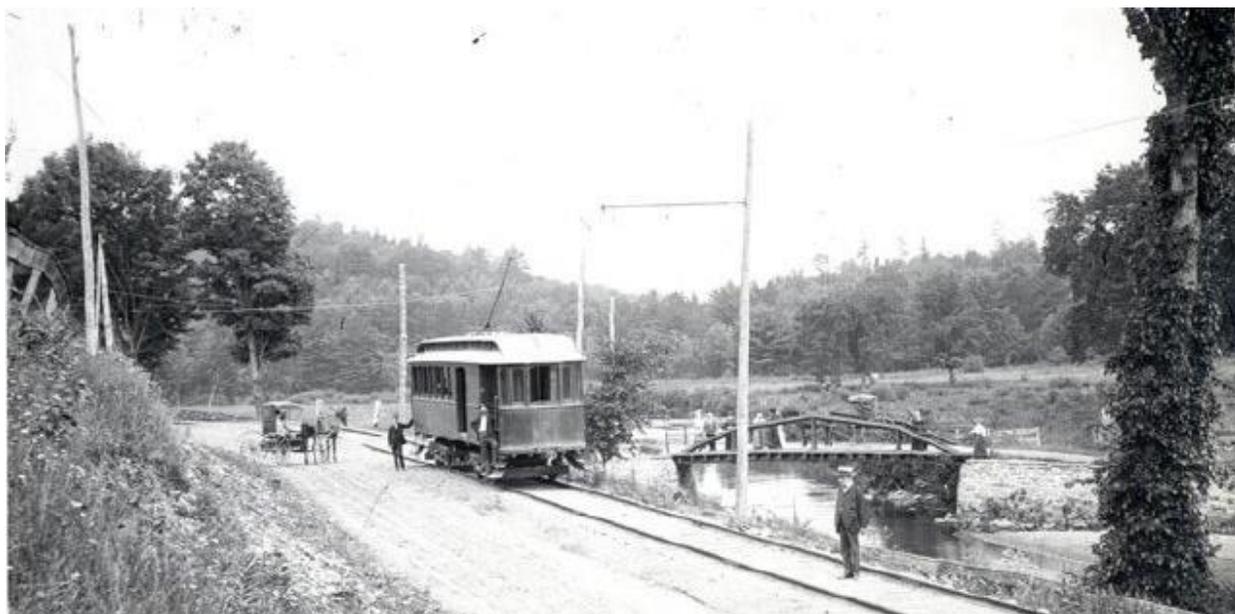
This Week in Saratoga County History-

The Ballston Terminal Railroad

Submitted by Karen Staulters August 6, 2020

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To share your ideas for future articles in this series, please contact Jim Richmond at saratogacohistoryroundtable@gmail.com



The A.N. Chandler car of the Ballston Terminal Railroad ??

The Ballston Terminal Railroad opened on August 6, 1898. At 4:05 PM, the “George West” car made its inaugural run from the Village of Ballston Spa to the Pioneer Mill in West Milton. This was a six mile trip. On the return trip to Ballston Spa, the trolley stopped at the Power House in Factory Village to allow the company to review the machinery. Then everyone boarded again to arrive back at Middlebrook Avenue at 5:10 PM. The total round trip took one hour and five minutes.

Construction had begun on June 2, 1896 and it took a little more than two years to complete the line. This was an electric trolley system which required miles of electric poles and 4700 pounds of feed wire to power it. It was mainly built to move products from the 12 mills along the

Kayaderosseras Creek to the Village of Ballston Spa to connect with the D & H Railroad to further transport goods. By October of that same year, seven more miles of tracks were added to serve the mills at Rock City Falls.

Since rural West Milton and Rock City Falls had only a few roads, the railroad became an integral part of transportation for these outlying communities. Not only did the railroad transport goods, it also carried workers to the mills and people to the Village of Ballston Spa for shopping, church services and schooling. The nearest High School was in Ballston Spa and students used the trolley to travel back and forth. The children dubbed it the "P.P.and J" which stood for the "Push, Pull and Jerk". It also had two other nicknames: "Skipper" and "Toonerville Trolley".

In 1902, the railroad laid another three miles of tracks to reach Middle Grove. The total cost of building the railroad from Ballston Spa to Middle Grove was \$582,000. It ran a total of six cars: 1) Freight Locomotive #1, 2) "A.N. Chandler", 3) "George West", 4) Open Car #4, 5) Combo Car #10 and 6) the Plow car and served a total of 25 mills in its heyday. A.N. Chandler was from Philadelphia and as one of the first investors in the railroad, became one of the Directors. Since George West owned many of the mills along the Kayaderosseras Creek, one of the cars was appropriately named after him as well.

The Power House and Car barn were located in Factory Village at the corner of Maple Avenue and North Line Road. It was here that all the electricity was generated to power the trolley cars. The Power House was converted into the Saratoga Heating and Air Conditioning Company in 1998 and later into apartments.

On December 31, 1904 the Eastern New York Railroad purchased the line for \$175,000. This company continued to have financial difficulties and on July 31, 1918, Edward M. Brown purchased it. The new corporation was called the Kaydeross Railroad Corporation. It continued to operate the railroad until June 17, 1929 when it had its last run. The railroad had large debts and no money for desperately needed repairs. At this time there were only two mills that were still using the railroad, the other mills having closed. Also, people were using cars and bus services, limiting the railroad's passenger traffic. Two bus services has begun in Ballston Spa in 1926, two years before the railroad was shut down. Although it was no longer in operation, the Kaydeross Railroad Corporation was not legally dissolved until March 1, 1960.