

This Week in Saratoga County History

A Summer Vacation Suggestion

Submitted by Russ VanDervoort, August 19 2021

Russ Vandervoort in the Waterford Town Historian and leader of the Waterford Canal and Towpath Society and can be reached at russvandervoort@gmail.com.



For those researching the history of writing instruments, copies of The American Stationer (later, The American Stationer & Office Manager) are an invaluable resource. Many of the issues have been digitized and are available through Google Books. The following was published in the American Stationer on May 1, 1890 under Communications.

A Summer Vacation Suggestion

To the Editor of The Stationer

As the heated term of the year draws near I presume that any number of stationer clerks are asking themselves as to how, when and where they shall spend their vacations. I want to give them a bit of advice regarding a summer outing.

Everyone knows there is no equal to exercise for a good "walk." My advice is to shoulder your knapsack and take a two weeks tramp. I speak from personal experience. My brother and I took such a walk last summer. Taking train from New York to Albany, we made that last named city our starting point.

With fishing tackle and 15 pounds of baggage in our knapsacks, we left Albany on Monday morning and, taking the road leading to Waterford, we made Stillwater for dinner and White Sulphur Springs for supper, (The White Sulphur Spring Hotel^l was a hotel located on the *east* (that is, south) end of Saratoga Lake) a days walk of 27 miles .After tea we enjoyed the bites of the fish and the mosquitos on Saratoga Lake for an hour or so and then turned in for as sweet a night's sleep as I ever enjoyed.

The next morning after a good breakfast, we started for Glens Falls, another "stint" of 27 miles. Our way took us along the shores of Saratoga Lake for 3 miles, thence up through Union Avenue, Saratoga Village, till we came opposite the racecourse, where we struck off around the base of Mt. McGregor, as fine a bit of country walking as I ever saw. A fine road, well shaded, with romantic scenery, lent delight to the walker. We made Glens Falls for supper, having taken dinner at Dow's Corners on the way. As the muscles of our legs had been exercised by walking, so were those of our jaws by the mastication of a so-called steak at our dining place. Had they called it a "shingle" instead of a steak, they would have been nearer the mark.

On Wednesday morning we left the Falls for Lake George, 12 miles away. We did that last stretch in a heavy rain, but with waterproof coats and lighted pipes we did not mind it. We put up with mine host Seelye, at Joshua's Rock, Dunham Bay, and spent a week of fishing and boating - mostly boating - and started back home on Friday, walking as far as Schuylerville, where we struck up with a friendly canal boat captain, with whom we took Passage from Schuylerville to West Waterford, arriving at our destination at 4 o'clock on Monday morning. We slept on deck with our knapsacks as pillows and our pipes for company, and listened to the choice vocabulary of the drivers, who can outswear any Mississippi pirate. Stretching our somewhat weakened limbs, we slid off down the towpath for Albany, getting there in time for breakfast, having walked 104 miles in twenty-two hours walking time and having had a glorious time, and all for the modest sum of \$15 per man for the two weeks.

If there is any stationery man in the country who is fagged out and doesn't know what to do this summer let him throw over his doctor and spend a couple of weeks in the open air, living on country fare, and I will guarantee that by so doing he will double his abilities as a salesman and deserve an advance of salary.