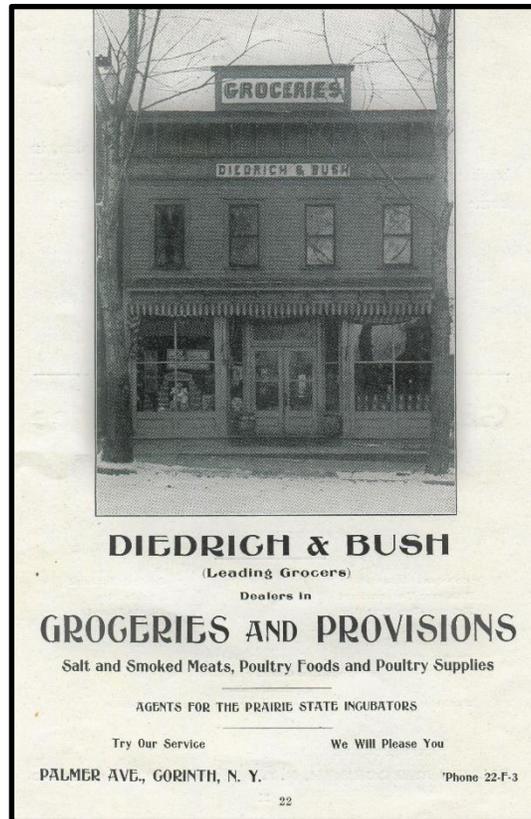


This Week in Saratoga County History

Poultry Entrepreneur of Corinth

Submitted by Rachel Clothier September 2, 2021

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Diedrich & Bush 1913

Source: Corinth Museum

A century ago, Corinth was home to some of the top Rhode Island Red chickens in the state. Backyard hens have become popular in recent years but poultry breeding was a big business in our region in the earlier 1900s.

Charles August Diedrich was born in 1877 to German immigrants, who came to Corinth in the last half of the nineteenth century. He married Agnes Judge and opened a grocery store in Corinth in the fall of 1900. Less than a year later he took his brother-in-law, Clifford Bush, as a partner. The Diedrich and Bush Grocery store was located on Palmer Avenue where the current Dollar General now stands.

The progressive grocery store later took orders and made deliveries by automobile, a first in this community. In 1906 they were “dealers in groceries and provisions, fruit, candy, tobacco and cigars, also hardware, tinware, drugs and patent medicines.” Seven years later they advertised the store as “leading grocers, dealers in grocery and provisions, salt and smoked meats, poultry foods and poultry supplies.” They were also agents for Prairie State egg incubators. This increased emphasis on their poultry line of goods corresponded directly with Mr. Diedrich’s second endeavor – the Adirondack Poultry Yards. This part of the business was located at his home on the corner of Sixth and Pine Streets, a few blocks from the store. Here he worked to breed some of the finest stock of Rhode Island Red chickens in the area and eventually the state.

All across the region the Adirondack Poultry Yards had displays of their fowl – at the Saratoga County Fair, the Washington County Fair held in Hudson Falls, the Mohawk Valley Poultry Show in Schenectady and the Fort Orange Poultry Show in Albany. Each time Charles Diedrich and his Rhode Island Reds brought home numerous ribbons and cash prizes. In 1913 at the Saratoga Armory Show he had the biggest class of birds in the poultry exposition. An exhibit of the birds won top honors at the state fair and he even showed poultry at Madison Square Garden in 1915. A year later the poultry show in New York City was promoted as an “American billion-dollar industry” and visited by thousands who witnessed the Adirondack Poultry Yards receive numerous ribbons.

Tragedy hit the Adirondack Poultry Yards in the early spring of 1920. Fire broke out at about 5 a.m., possibly from a defective brooder, a device used to keep young chicks warm. Forty pure bred chickens and thirty large fowl died in the fire. It was reported that all of these fowl had won prizes at the state fair the previous year and many of them were valued at more than \$100 each. Mr. Diedrich had no insurance on his poultry business.

Soon he was back in business and shipping eggs to be incubated and hatched throughout the United States. Ironically, he even displayed pet foxes at the Saratoga County Fair in 1921. The last mention in the newspapers of the Adirondack Poultry Yards was in 1925. After nearly 50 years of business Charles Dietrich and Clifford Bush were ready for retirement closing the store in the summer of 1946. Their innovative and entrepreneurial ideas made their store a favorite for shoppers in the area. Mr. Diedrich’s poultry endeavors were recognized throughout the state and beyond.

Sources: numerous newspaper articles and local advertising brochures