

BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
UNIQUE SITE NO.	<u>03347</u> <u>03347.0000 32</u>
QUAD	_____
SERIES	_____
NEG. NO.	_____

YOUR NAME: Philip S. FEINBERG DATE: 12/2/82
 YOUR ADDRESS: 25 BROADWAY S.L. 12983 TELEPHONE: 891-2020
 ORGANIZATION (if any): S. Curtis Hayes Inc.

Historic Saranac Lake

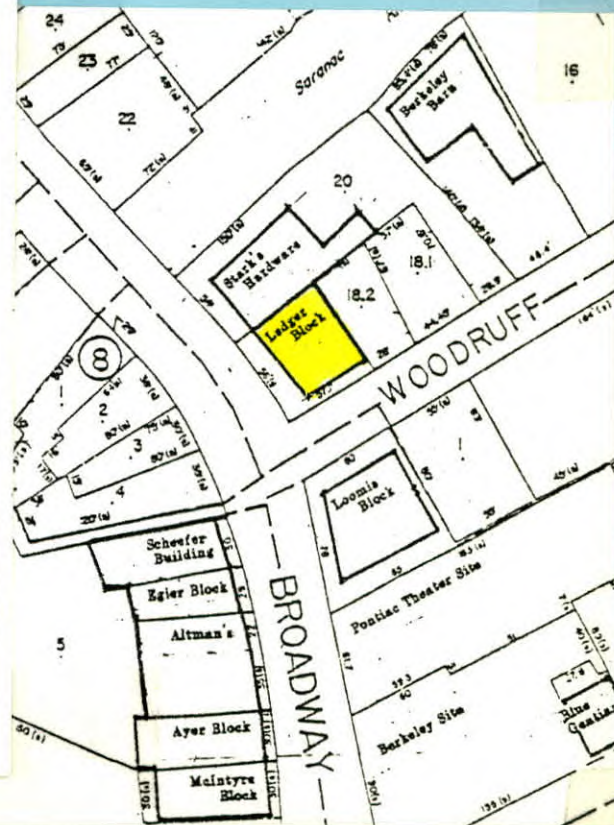
IDENTIFICATION

- BUILDING NAME(S): Ledger Block
- COUNTY: FRANKLIN TOWN/CITY: Harrietstown VILLAGE: SARANAC LAKE
- STREET LOCATION: 25 BROADWAY Now 20-22 Broadway
- OWNERSHIP: a. public b. private
- PRESENT OWNER: Philip & Wayne FEINBERG ADDRESS: Glenwood, Saranac Lake, N.Y.
- USE: Original: APT & meat Present: same
- ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes No
Interior accessible: Explain TENANTS USE

DESCRIPTION

- BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard b. stone c. brick d. board and batten
e. cobblestone f. shingles g. stucco other: _____
- STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints
b. wood frame with light members
c. masonry load bearing walls
d. metal (explain) _____
e. other _____
- CONDITION: a. excellent b. good c. fair d. deteriorated
- INTEGRITY: a. original site b. moved if so, when? _____
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):

OVER 75 YRS PRESENT STRUCTURE OF 8 APARTMENTS AND 3 STORES - PREVIOUSLY WAS A BARN LOCATION



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known b. zoning c. roads
 d. developers e. deterioration
 f. other: _____
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY: *NONE*
 a. barn b. carriage house c. garage
 d. privy e. shed f. greenhouse
 g. shop h. gardens
 i. landscape features: _____
 j. other: _____
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
 a. open land b. woodland
 c. scattered buildings
 d. densely built-up e. commercial
 f. industrial g. residential
 h. other: _____

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
 (Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

In the Berkeley Square Historic District.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: between 1895 and 1905

ARCHITECT: UNKNOWN

BUILDER: Known as Ledger Block Probably William Ledger.

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

SEE ATTACHED.

21. SOURCES: Franklin County Clerk's records, Malone, N.Y.

22. THEME: Pioneer Health Resort

LEDGER BLOCK

A little more than a year before William Loomis purchased the lot for his building, R. Eugene Woodruff sold the lot on the other corner of Woodruff Street and Broadway to William Ledger, a local feed merchant. Date of transfer was April 13, 1895. The price was \$2500 -- quite high for the time.

It can only be assumed that the Ledger Block was erected shortly after the purchase of the land upon which it stands. This was the normal pattern throughout the District in those decades of hectic development. The Block is composed of a pair of buildings joined at a central common wall. Both were in existence c.1905 when photographs show the Burt & Goodspeed Millinery in the southern building (23 Broadway) and Everett's men's shop in the northern building (25 Broadway). Everett's would later move to 45 Broadway where it would remain until going out of business in the mid-1970's.

Sometime around the end of WWI, a man whom we shall call Mr. H. came to Saranac Lake where his brother was curing from tuberculosis. In May, 1930, Ruth B. Ledger, the only heir of William and Mary Ledger, sold the Ledger Block to Mr. H. and his brother.

Mr. H. has been called a grand man, a generous man, a gentle soul, and a good tailor. The testimonies are convincing. One cannot doubt that he was all of these. But there is something more. Those numerous people who remember Mr. H. and who (except for his descendants) had personal contact with him remember him as "the bootlegger". He was not just "a" bootlegger. There were more than a few of those in the area. He was "the" bootlegger -- "the only one", as one friend put it, "who never got caught".

But "caught" is probably not the correct word. "Arrested" would be more accurate a description of what never happened to Mr. H. Getting caught implies being a fugitive or at least having something to hide. Neither condition applied to Mr. H. In fact, one person remembers that Mr. H. never locked the door on the little barn where he kept his stock. It is an especially vivid memory because, after weeks of resisting temptation, some friends of this then youngster stole as many bottles of whiskey as their plus-fours would hold to take to the dance in St. Rose's Parish Hall at Alderbrook.

The subject of Prohibition in Saranac Lake and the village's response to it is a subject worthy of a separate study in itself. Suffice it to say that Prohibition was not taken very seriously here. Those who did take it seriously hated it. According to the man's son, one prominent merchant "hated Prohibition so much that he'd bail out every bootlegger that he'd heard got arrested and not take bond."

Most of the arrests were made by the New York State Troopers. The village police tended to look the other way unless someone were particularly blatant or troublesome. Those adjectives did not apply to Mr. H.

About the village's attitude toward prohibition, it must be remembered that Saranac Lake was right on a prime smuggling route from Canada to Albany and New York City. There were some big time operators (the best known being Dutch Schultz) using the place as a way-station and lots of small time operators emulating them. Furthermore, there was a considerable market for illicit beverages.

The many hotels in and near the village were responsible for a really tremendous amount of business for those who dealt in liquor. Add to this the thirst of the well-to-do at their camps as well as the thirst of the village working-man -- not to mention the thirst of the patient feeling the return of vitality -- and top it off with the thirst of any town in the midst of a boom and the result was a nearly unquenchable demand for the bootlegger's product and a trenchant unwillingness on the part of just about everyone to uphold the law or cooperate with the enforcers of the law.

During most of Prohibition, Mr. H. ran a tailor shop on Broadway out near the Firehouse. It was legitimate, but it was also his front. After he and his brother bought the Ledger Block, he moved his business to 25 Broadway (the northern building of the Block). There, one could "go in and buy a suit or a quart".

The price of a suit is forgotten. A quart of Teacher's Highland Creme was \$9.50.

Curiously, the Ledger Block was repossessed by Ruth Ledger (then living in St. John's Convent, New York City) for \$11,000 in a foreclosure action in Feb., 1939. In Sept., 1940, she sold it to Patsy Lario and Jerry Cavallo, owners of the Belvedere, a Bloomingdale Avenue restaurant and bar that had once been a stagecoach stop. The Ledger Block remained the property of various Larios and Cavallos until Joseph P. and Edna Ann Cavallo sold it to Philip S. Feinberg in May, 1979. Feinberg, a nephew of Isadore Feinberg (see Egler Block), is president of S. Curtis Hayes Real Estate and Insurance which he moved into 23 Broadway in 1966.

The current occupant of 25 Broadway is the Pyrofax Gas Company. There is a small barber shop on the Woodruff Street side (20¢ for a haircut from Mr. Premo in the 1930's). The rest of the building is apartments. George Toupin and his wife Gertrude (see Harrietstown Town Hall and Ayer Block) were tenants in one of these apartments in 1915.

The Ledger Block has been thoroughly altered over the years and almost no original exterior features are visible.

Phil Gallos

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