

North Castle History

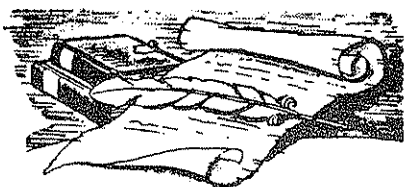


The Brundage Blacksmith Shop around 1880 when it was on the east side of the Danbury Post Road

The North Castle Historical Society

Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members and Friends of The North Castle Historical Society,

April 6, 1981 marked the 10th Anniversary of the First Annual Meeting of The North Castle Historical Society.

We have come a long way in 10 years, achieving extraordinary success in a remarkably short time. Our annual publication "North Castle History" is a masterpiece of vivid local history that will endure for decades; our historic Smith's Tavern provides us with a magnificent headquarters and museum; our numerous educational programs enhance the curriculum in many area schools; our annual Antiques Show is well known throughout the northeastern United States, and our Annual Community Garage Sale is an event that brings out the whole town.

All of these efforts could not be accomplished without the help of many people: foresighted and effective officers and trustees, loyal and helpful members, generous corporations, and an enthusiastic and supportive community.

What an auspicious decade we've had! And the rewarding efforts and fun are not over. In addition to our present fund drive to restore Smith's Tavern, plans are underway to return the old Brundage Blacksmith Shop to the Tavern property, and the Armonk Lion's Club has generously pledged up to \$10,000 out of this year's Fol-de-Rol receipts to effectuate its transfer and restoration. More monies will be needed for this as well as the restoration of Smith's Tavern.

As we begin the second decade of our existence I call upon all of you, including the children, to participate actively with us so that we may fulfill our primary goal -- to preserve and perpetuate our heritage for future generations.

Sincerely,

Orestes J. Mihalý, Sr.



THE BRUNDAGE BLACKSMITH SHOP

by Doris Finch Watson

Richard N. Lander

Barbara S. Massi

"The Village Blacksmith," written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in the Nineteenth Century, begins: "Under a spreading chestnut-tree the village smithy stands . . ." The words reflect an era when the local blacksmith shop was an essential part of every hamlet, village and town across the land. With his anvil, hammer and forge the blacksmith played a vital role in the growth, independence and prosperity of our young nation as he helped to "shape" America's future.

— The Blacksmith and His Art —

The story of the Brundage Blacksmith Shop is only one chapter in the saga of the American blacksmith. To many people, the old-time blacksmith was a burly man who spent his working day shoeing horses. Actually, he was a jack-of-all-iron-trades and as important to colonial endurance as he was to the well-being of the horse.¹

Far beyond his work as a farrier, the blacksmith spent his long working day forging — or hammering — red-hot iron into a great variety of tools and household items including: axes and adzes, hoes, sickles, scythes, plow blades, kettles, weathervanes, andirons, wheel parts, nails, latches and beautiful wrought iron gates and hinges. Ladies sometimes requested special flower stands, kitchen utensils and fireplace implements. The blacksmith not only fashioned pieces, he was also called upon to repair anything made of iron. Many artifacts fashioned long ago remain today as testimony to the blacksmith's skill.

— Blacksmith Shops in North Castle —

Old maps² and records of the mid-1800's indicate that there were several blacksmith shops in the Town of North Castle.

In Banksville, blacksmith and wheelwright Henry Sension had two shops across the street from where today's LaCremailere Restaurant is located.³ At the other end of North Castle, in the Village of Kensico (now under the Kensico Reservoir), stood the Benjamin F. Carpenter Blacksmith Shop and along side it his wheelwright (wagon) shop.⁴ In the central part of the township the blacksmith shops included one at Sands' Mills on Cox Avenue where Benjamin Creemer rented his shop from J.B. Carpenter;⁵ another, across and just below Smith's Tavern, was the James Edward Stivers Shop, predecessor of the Brundage Blacksmith Shop. On the Danbury Post Road (now Route 22), quite a distance west of where Middle Patent Road joins it, stood a shop believed to have been operated by Hiram Remington. William H. Creemer (brother of Benjamin, above), who arrived in North Castle about 1850, also spent some time as a smithy on his

farm at the corner of the present Creemer and Green Valley Roads.⁶ There were others in North Castle over the years, but the most enduring and best remembered was the Brundage Blacksmith Shop.

— The History of the Brundage Shop —

The origins of the Brundage Blacksmith Shop are lost and shrouded in the mists of the past, and it is unfortunate that no trace or tradition has come down to us of the builder's name or the date of its erection. A study of early maps, deeds, and family recollections, however, reveals that its original location was on the southeast corner of the Danbury Post Road where it turned south toward Connecticut and White Plains (see map).

Adding to the mystery of the shop's origin is a dated stone which seems to have remained with the shop through the years. It is a diamond-shaped piece of hard granite, with the year 1829 carved across it. Traces of mortar on the back attest to the fact that at one time it was fastened to another stone — leading to the speculation that it was once a corner stone. One can only guess where it might have stood.

We do know that in 1851 the blacksmith shop was being operated by James Edward Stivers on property owned by the Brundage family. Stivers also owned and operated a wheelwright shop across the street on his own property on the southwest corner of the Danbury Post Road.

It seems evident that Stivers operated both shops until his death on February 17, 1870, at which time Maurice Brundage, who was probably Stivers' apprentice, became the proprietor at the young age of eighteen.

In 1875 Maurice bought three acres with a small house⁸ and the wheelwright shop from the family of J.E. Stivers. To this little house he took his bride and began raising a family. In 1888 he purchased a larger house and



Maurice Brundage



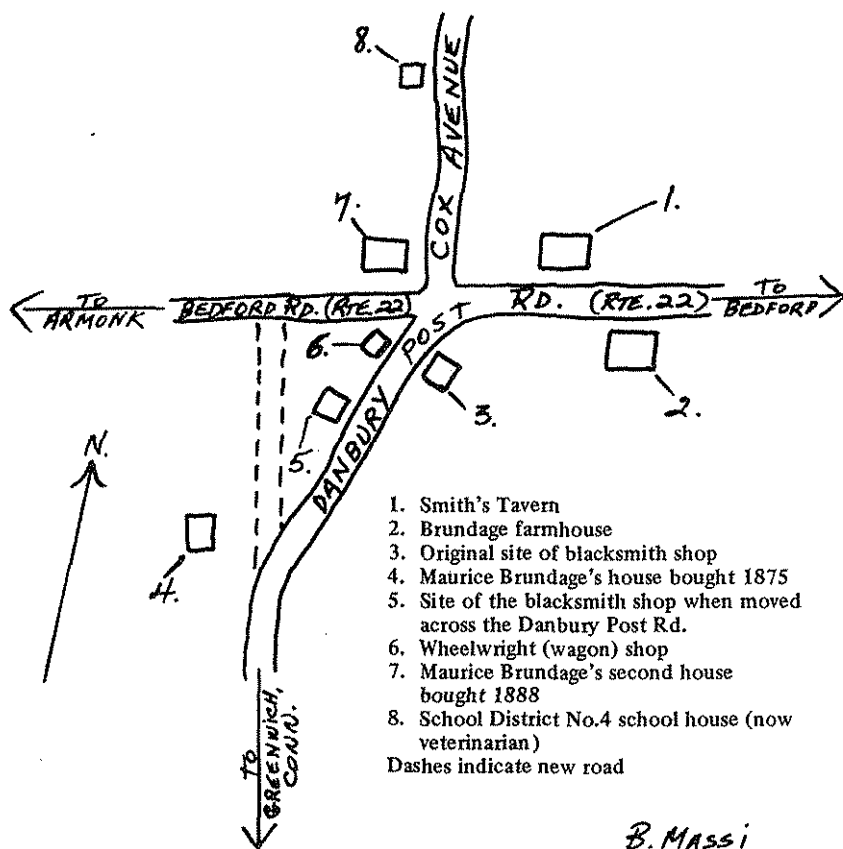
Lizzie Clark Brundage

eighteen acres⁹ across Bedford Road (Route 22) and moved his family there, still retaining ownership of the smaller house and three acres. At some point — apparently after the death of his father, Harrison Brundage in 1891 — he moved the blacksmith shop across the street to his three acre parcel.

Maurice operated the blacksmith shop until his death in 1905 after which his sons Harry Maurice, and James Chester, who had apprenticed to their father, continued to run the shop. Although "Chester" eventually left the business, Harry operated the shop until his death in 1954.

A year later the shop and two of the three acres were sold to Benjamin Marx, a local pharmacist, who rented the building to various businesses until 1965 after which it was taken down.

(For a more detailed history of the Brundage Blacksmith Shop, see Documentary Account and Family Genealogies in the Addendum following this article.)



North Castle, N. Y. Jan. 21st 1876

My George Larnwood

To W. W. Brundage, Dr.

HORSE-SHOEING & JOBBING.

Terms Cash.

1876

This early invoice, dated 1876 for work

done from 1874, corroborates that

Maurice Brundage owned the black-

smith shop after the death of J. E.

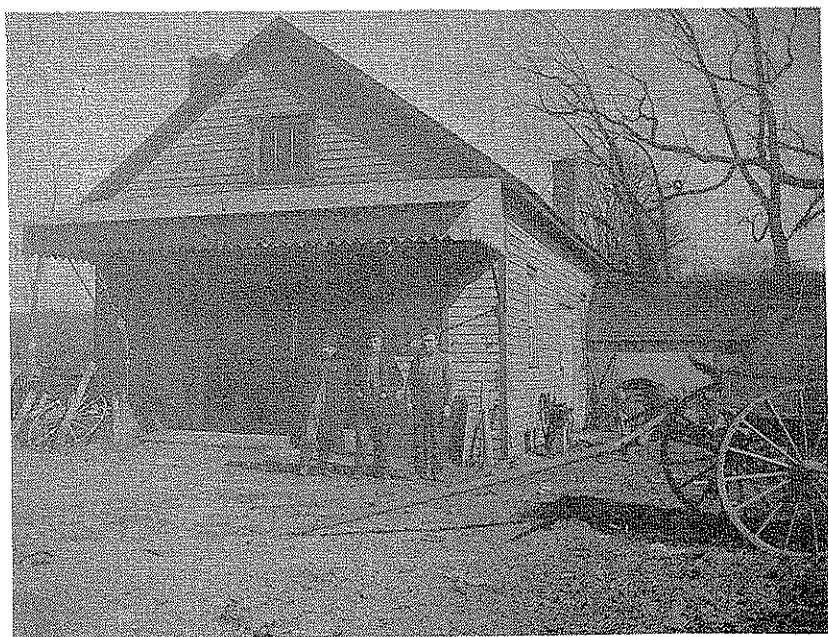
Stivers.

Invoice has been reduced approximately 35% to fit picture area.

Nov 3 rd To 1 New Type 28.00	92.00
4 th " Mending 2.00	25.00
Dec 8 th " 1 New Type	05.00
Jan 9 th " 2 " " " "	75.00
Feb 10 th " 2 " " " "	40.00
Mar 10 th " 2 " " " "	15.00
Apr 10 th " 2 " " " "	08.00
May 10 th " 2 " " " "	06.00
	\$4.49

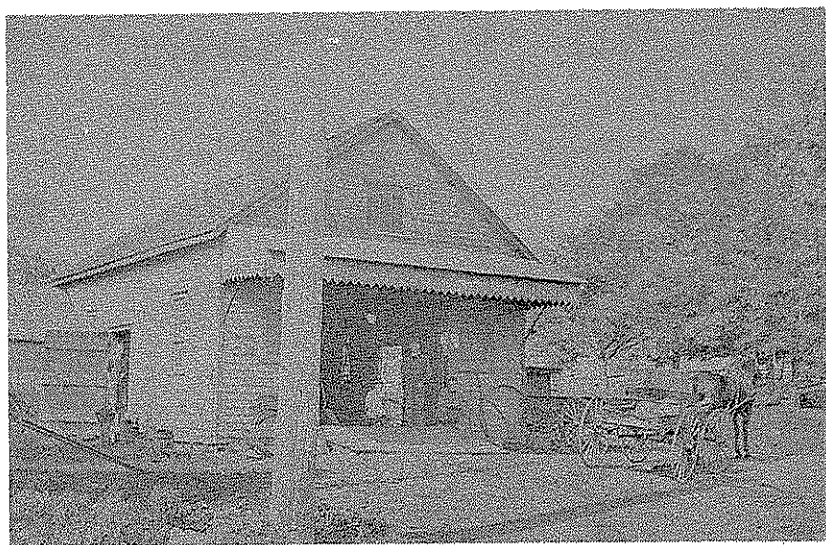
Rec'd Payment

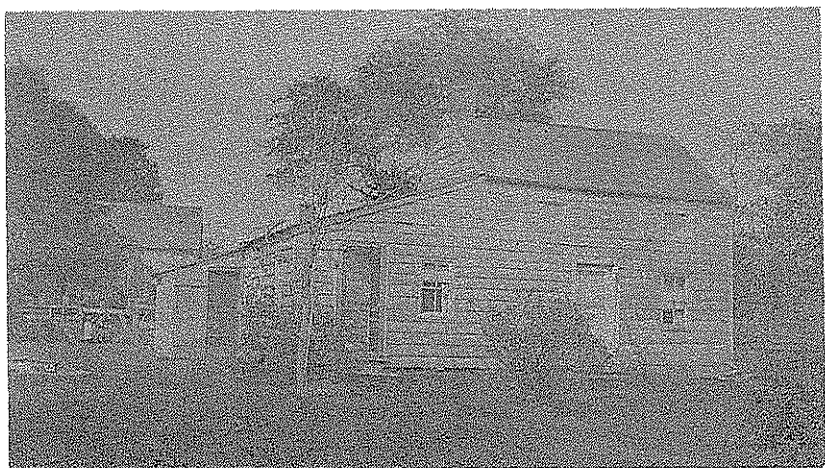
W. W. Brundage



Brundage Blacksmith Shop on first site on east side of the Danbury Post Rd. Pictured are Maurice Brundage and sons, Chester and Harry. Taken around the turn of the Century.

Brundage Blacksmith Shop after it was moved to the west side of the Danbury Post Rd.

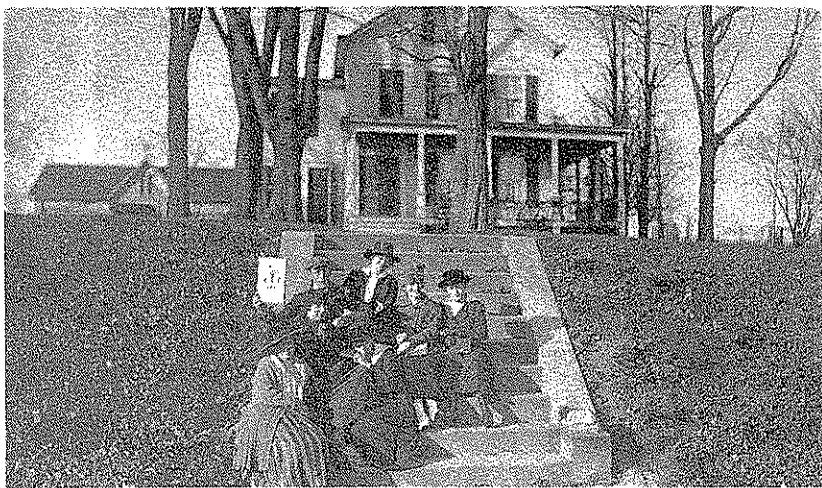




Maurice Brundage's first house bought in 1875.

Maurice Brundage's second house bought 1888. Picture, c. 1889, shows Harry Brundage at about age 10 with his grandmother Clark on left and his mother, Lizzie.





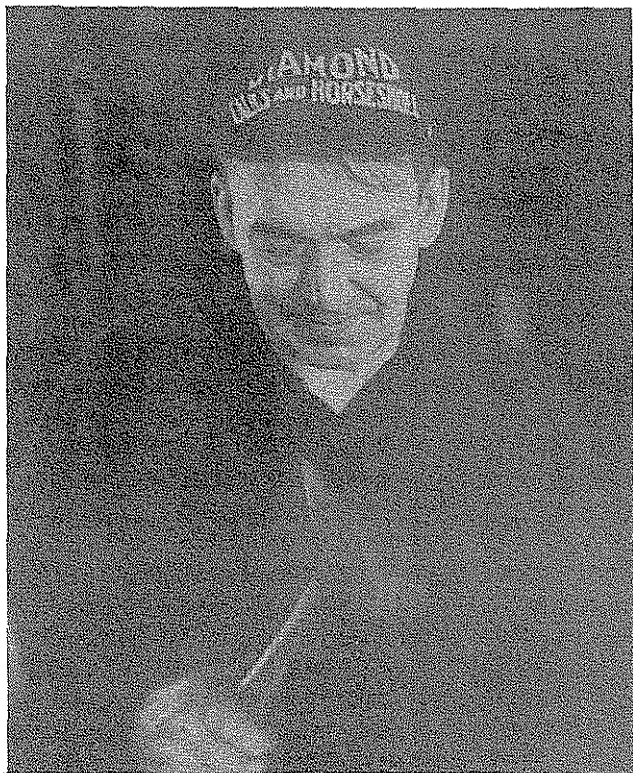
Maurice Brundage's second house taken around 1918. The embankment was created when Bedford Road was lowered and widened. L-R first row: Kathryn Ryan Hopkins, Louise Armstrong Fish; second row: Mabel Johnson Cully, Martha Jane Rodgers Lander, Adah Brundage; third row: Tom Pratt and Lulu MacDonald. Photo believed to have been taken by Herbert L. Nichols.

— The Last North Castle Blacksmith —

Harry Brundage lived all his life in North Castle, starting as a smithy at the age of fifteen under the guidance of his father, Maurice, and earning an apprentice's wage of one dollar a week. His father owned and operated the blacksmith shop but died while Harry was a young man. As the eldest son, Harry carried on the family business.

Harry continued to operate the shop, crossing the Bedford Road each morning and returning to his house¹⁰ for lunch, then retracing his steps to the end of the work day at approximately 4:30 p.m. As the years rolled away and horses became fewer and fewer he continued repairing and sharpening tools, and mending all manner of iron parts. In order to supplement the decrease in horseshoeing he also made and sold beautiful wrought iron work: andirons, fire sets, flower stands, etc. Many of these works of art proudly adorn the fireplaces and homes of numerous North Castle families.

The shop was a gathering place for young and old — the local youngsters lingering to watch Harry work while he narrated stories of bygone times and people. His unique world attracted reporters, painters and photographers who were drawn to the ancient shop and the friendly, kind man who, in the midst of the bustle of the Twentieth Century, devotedly carried on his now almost obsolete craft.



Harry M. Brundage

To enter the wide front doors of Harry's picturesque old barnlike structure was to enter a world of bygone days. The flickering forge stood on its narrow metal legs against the old brick chimney in the corner; the wooden-handled shovel which fed the forge rested against the wall. The much-used anvil and bellows stood ready; on the workbench were the blacksmith's hammers and tongs, while assorted tools and other articles hung from random nails on the walls. And there was the clutter . . . items awaiting repair; pieces of finished work waiting to be picked up, and the assortment of things about which Harry Brundage said, "*Wal . . . I'll get to that . . .*" There was the heating stove for cold winter days, and the well-worn overstuffed chair of the 1920's. Not far from the anvil rested the wooden cooling tub, and on the floor the iron scraps mingled with layers of coal dust. The cubbyhole in the rear housed Harry's timeworn desk, where his day book and records were kept.

On bright days the nine-over-six windows allowed the sunlight to stream in, dancing off of Harry's familiar peaked cap. Smoke often curled from his pipe as he fed the smoldering forge or hammered the heated metal. The creases on his kindly face deepened with the years like the weathered siding on his ancient building. Harry and his shop were as one.

— Reminiscences—

Many residents who lived in North Castle prior to 1954 remember Harry M. Brundage and his blacksmith shop with warmth, devotion and a nostalgic smile. Almost everyone who knew him has some special remembrance which adds to the portrait of his character. Following are some glimpses of the man who held a special place in the hearts of so many who knew him. One recollection comes from the Honorable James D. Hopkins,¹¹ who refers to Harry Brundage as:

"A Kindly Man of Iron"

"Harry was not a big man, perhaps five feet seven inches in height and a hundred fifty pounds in weight. He had a dry and mischievous sense of humor, and he delighted in telling droll and tall stories, always without a smile, until his listener looked his doubts, at which Harry would chuckle to break the spell. The blacksmith shop cultivated story telling, because the customers waited their turn, much like a barber shop, and so it was the center for the exchange of news and anecdotes.

"The blacksmith shop was, too, a place for children. It had a natural attraction because of the horses — and sometimes oxen which had to be shod — along with the dim interior out of which the smoldering fire, coaxed by the bellows, sprang suddenly into flame, and the iron horseshoes and rods, shining with red and white heat, showed like strange gleaming jewels in the darkness. The schoolhouse of District #4 was only a short distance away — where the veterinarian's hospital now stands on Cox Avenue — and so, each afternoon when school was out the children passing by were accustomed to peer in the shop, and Harry would talk to them, and perhaps, if business was slow, fashion a ring with his hammer and anvil from a horseshoe nail.

"It was a way of life that belonged to the nineteenth century. When the automobile came to dominate the highways, the art of blacksmithing declined. But Harry stubbornly refused to give up his trade. He turned to making wrought iron objects, and though he was not as busy as before, he was busy enough. He had a model A Ford which he bought in 1928, and he was still operating it in 1954 at the time of his death. As a matter of fact, Adah, his sister, continued to drive it for several years thereafter.

"He lived across the street from the shop in a house perhaps a hundred years old on the site of the present furniture store. His father had died when Harry was young, and as the oldest son, he maintained the house for his mother and sister. Neither Harry nor Adah became married. Adah taught piano, and sometimes while my sister¹² was taking lessons, as a young boy I would go with her and read the magazines which Harry had piled on a table in the kitchen — Argosy, and Blue Book and Collier's. It was the day of the serial and Argosy especially ran wonderful ones — "Tarzan" or the Martian stories by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Harry kept them all and loaned them generously.

"He was a man without an enemy and with many friends. He was a

friendly magician to children and tender to the horses and oxen. When he died in 1954, there was no one to take his place. He was the last of his craft, and perhaps the last of his kind. But he left in all who knew him an indelible memory of an unusual and kindly man whose life carried the making of a legend."

Another warm remembrance comes from Mrs. R. Eugene Curry:¹³

"When our son, Renny, was building his car for the Soap Box Derby, he needed two holes made in each axle. At his father's suggestion he took them to Harry Brundage and asked if Harry could help him.

"... 'Wal, I guess so, if you pump the bellows for me,' was the answer. When the job was finished, Renny said, 'How much will that be, Mr. Brundage? Of course I did some of the work with the bellows.'

"... 'Wal, let's see,' said Harry, pulling the piece of chalk from behind his ear . . . 'Let me think — there was one hole on the left front axle, (drawing a circle on the side of the anvil) and another one on the right side . . . ' (again drawing a circle at the right, and then below the first circles he drew corresponding marks for the rear axle, and drew a line below them.) 'Now you see when you add them up, you get nothing owing!'

"... 'Gee, thanks' — and the business was concluded."

R. Eugene Curry¹⁴ adds to his wife's story, saying:

"Very soon after moving to North Castle in 1929 we became acquainted with Harry Brundage and many others of his family. He and his sister lived directly across from the shop, where the Yellow Furniture Barn now is. Brother Chester lived next door to the shop in the historic old house still standing.

"Harry loved to make up designs in fireplace tools, candle holders, household artifacts. Many neighbors ordered these articles. One was a set of andirons from buggy axles, with the large bolt at the end standing at the top of each. One, a poker for the fireplace, open horseshoe with sharpened ends and a closed horseshoe at the top of the handle, which had a nice twist in the shank all worked up on the forge and anvil.

"Two majestic black Newfoundland dogs came down from the T. Darrington Semple place, a mile up Route 22, to lie at the door, enjoying it all with us. When evening came, they would get up and walk home.

"The old ox-cramp was in a small shed adjoining. This had parallel poles, wide straps under to lift the ox from the ground, being unable to stand on three legs, as a horse can. This was saved when Doc. Marx gave it to me to be preserved, and I gave it to the Ceraks, where it now is."

Another heartwarming look at Harry Brundage comes from Mrs. Tharald Farquhar¹⁵ of Banksville, who says:

"When I was about seven or eight, I went with my brother Eagen, to Mr. Brundage's Blacksmith shop. When my brother was ready to leave, it

was suggested that I wait at the shop until he returned, and Mr. Brundage promised to buy me an ice cream cone. It all sounded fine until my brother had left and was starting up the hill in front of Smith's Tavern. I let out a long and continuous scream until he turned the horse and buggy around and returned for me.

"Over thirty years later I was walking with my husband at the old Armonk Airport, and we came upon Harry Brundage. As we talked, I recalled the story to him. He took me by the arm and marched me over to the ice cream stand. He ordered a cone and placed it firmly in my hand, instructing me to 'eat it all.' He stood there — thirty years later — and watched me devour the cone . . . with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye."

2 new & 2 Toed	1.10
29/11 Habit Co	
Toed & shoes	1.50
Albert Hattbury	
4 new & 4 Toed	2.25
2 new & 2 Toed	1.10
2 Toed shoes	.50
L.D. Tompkins	
8 new shoes	3.00

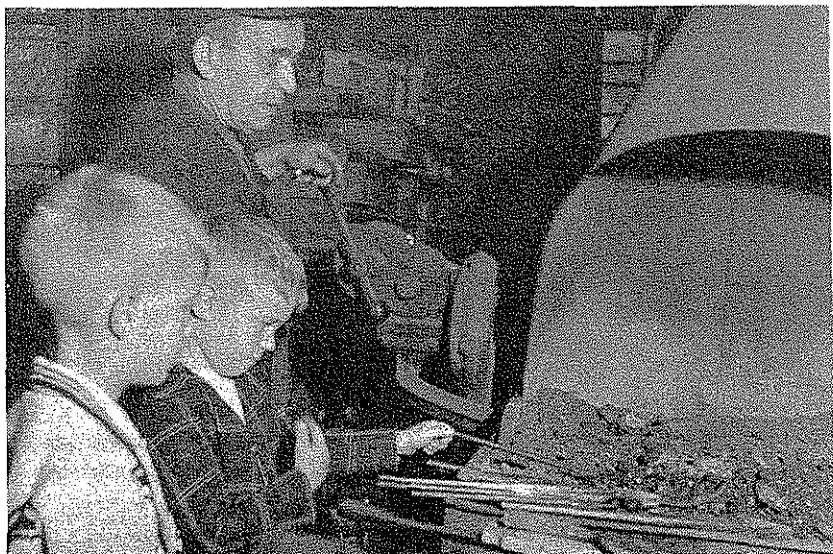
— The End of an Era —

For 60 years Harry worked in the blacksmith shop. On November 29, 1954, at age seventy-five, he followed his daily routine and once again walked from his house, across Bedford Road to his blacksmith shop, opened up, and turned to his work as usual. Visitors came in as he worked, little knowing what was to come. This was his final day, for a heart attack snuffed out his life in the very spot he might have chosen: beside his forge and anvil, amid his tools and the artifacts of his trade. His work was done. He was laid to rest in the family plot in Oakwood Cemetery.⁶

At the end, recognition came which he had never sought: his obituary appeared in *The New York Times* and *The New York Herald Tribune*, as well as in other papers. We are fortunate to be left with photographs of him at work, pictures, sketches and paintings of his shop, the endearments of those who knew him, and his numerous artifacts which give testimony to his lasting skill and love of his craft. In a changing world, these are a legacy for now and for the future.

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“A  
Kindly Man  
of  
Iron”





And the children lingered... Photo taken by George Grant showing his son Jeffrey and friend, the Anderson boy with Harry.

### — Epilogue —

Although no longer in its former location in Armonk, the Brundage Blacksmith Shop still exists. On December 2, 1965 Benjamin Marx and his wife, Lillian, who had taken ownership of the property and shop in 1955, presented the old structure to Albert Cerak,<sup>17</sup> then President of The Battle of White Plains Monument Committee, who expressed the Committee's hope that someday it would be part of a colonial village, where visitors and particularly school children would visit and learn the importance of the blacksmith in our early villages.

The old building was carefully dismantled, and its parts numbered and removed from the property. It was trucked away from the spot where it had stood for so many years. Later it was painstakingly reassembled on the property of the late Albert Cerak and his brother Paul.

On February 20, 1980, Mr. Paul Cerak and Mrs. Doris Finch Watson, then President of The North Castle Historical Society, signed an agreement whereby Mr. Cerak agreed to the removal of the shop from his property to the Society's property. Speaking as current President of The Battle of White Plains Monument Committee, Stephen Holden, Jr., agreed to the relocation, expressing great pleasure that the old shop would be returned to Armonk. On March 16, 1981, the Armonk Lions Club officially offered their financial support to the Society "expressly for the purpose of relocating the building"<sup>18</sup> on the site of Smith's Tavern — diagonally across the road from where it stood so long ago.

# FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Blacksmith*, by Leonard Everett Fisher, page 7, pub. 1976.
2. Sidney and Neff wall map of 1851; Beers Atlas, 1867, map of No. Castle.
3. Henry Sension (1800-1892) lived in Banksville on top of the hill above the present day LaCremailere Restaurant. He operated both the blacksmith shop and a wheelwright shop (just north of the blacksmith shop). The two shops were on the west side of the road leading to Bedford and were across from where the present Round House Road meets Banksville-Bedford Road in Banksville.
4. Benjamin F. Carpenter owned next door to E. Odell's store and post office, and his blacksmith shop and wagon shop were located across the street. The Village of Kensico was destroyed to make way for the Kensico Reservoir (see article by Joseph Miller in *North Castle History*, Vol. 2, published by The North Castle Historical Society, 1975). Benjamin F. Carpenter is listed on the 1867 "Beers Atlas" (North Castle map) in its Business Directory which reads: "Benjamin F. Carpenter, Blacksmith and Horse Tamer and Keeps an Advertising Register."
5. The blacksmith shop at Sands' Mills was located to the east of the Wampus Brook where old Cox Avenue turned to the west. It was one of several places in the general area of Sands' Mills owned by J.B. Carpenter, who manufactured and distributed yarns.
6. William H. Creemer (1829-1900) is best remembered for his many years as Town Clerk of North Castle. See article "William H. Creemer" by Richard N. Lander, in *North Castle/New Castle Colonial History and Minutes of Town Meetings 1736-1791*, published jointly in 1975 by the towns of North Castle and New Castle.
7. William J. Paine was born 1872 and died 1948. Both his home, on the hill behind the shop, and his shop building, near the road, are still standing.
8. This is the little red house now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. William Bates. It faces south on the present North Greenwich Road, on the right as you drive south. Maurice Brundage purchased this house in 1875, lived there with his young bride, and began raising his family there.
9. As acreage was bought or sold over the years the size of this parcel varied. When Maurice Brundage purchased it from Hanford White in 1883 it was 18 acres. J.B. Stivers had originally purchased it as 20½ acres; ½ acre was conveyed to School District No. 4 (now Dr. Duberman's veterinary property), and another 2 acres was conveyed to William Brundage, Jr. (now part of St. Patrick's Church property).
10. In 1880, Harry's father, Maurice, bought the former James Edward Stivers house, on the Northwest corner, from Hanford White. Maurice moved his growing family to this larger house. Although the smaller house remained Maurice's, his in-laws, Mr. and Mrs. James Clark, occupied it until their deaths. When his son Chester married he also lived in the small house where he remained until he died.
11. The Honorable James D. Hopkins is a life-long resident of Armonk, and his ancestors go back to the early days of North Castle. He is Associate Justice, Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department, Supreme Court, State of New York. He is a former Supervisor of the Town of North Castle and former County Executive of Westchester County.
12. Judge Hopkins' sister is Mrs. Marguerite Hopkins Lewis (wife of the late Samuel J. Lewis) and well-known to North Castle residents as the Secretary in the North Castle Police Department. She is a Trustee and former Secretary of The North Castle Historical Society.
13. Mrs. R. Eugene Curry (Margery M.) has been a resident of North Castle since 1929. She and her husband, who raised their family of four in their home on



- Mead Road, have been active in many town organizations and community groups.
14. R. Eugene Curry is a former Town Councilman, a Founder and former Trustee of The North Castle Historical Society, former President of The Middle Patent Rural Cemetery, Trustee of Middle Patent Church, a Founder of The Banksville Community House, Chairman of the Mianus Gorge and serves on many committees and organizations.
  15. Mrs. Farquhar was Marion "Mary" Zygmunt, who was born in Banksville to Mr. and Mrs. George Zygmunt, Sr., and she and her husband live on Banksville Avenue. Both are very active in a variety of community organizations.
  16. The death certificate indicts Harry Brundage died on Nov. 29, 1954 at 9:50 a.m., in Armonk. The cause: Coronary Thrombosis; physician was Dr. Leonard Haynes; burial: Dec. 1st in Oakwood Cemetery, Lexington Avenue, Mt. Kisco, N.Y.
  17. The late Albert Cerak was for many years the curator of the Miller House, Washington's Headquarters, on Virginia Road in North White Plains, and was well-known for his love of early artifacts and old buildings. He taught thousands of children about life in the colonial period of our history during his many years at the Miller House. Mr. Paul Cerak has continued to care for their extensive collection of American artifacts, which they acquired over a period of many years.
  18. Notice of the pledge came in a letter dated Mar. 26, 1981 from the Armonk Lions Club President, James Oesterle. The agreement accepting the offer was signed on April 2, 1981 by the Society's then President, Doris Finch Watson.

## ADDENDUM

### — A Documentary Account —

#### (A detailed history of the Brundage Blacksmith Shop)

A look at the earliest map of Westchester County (Sidney & Neff-1851 wall map) shows the shop on the southeast corner of the Danbury Post Road and designated as "BSS [blacksmith shop] E. Stivers" and the same location and the legend J.E. Stivers appears on Beers' 1867 Atlas, showing the Town of North Castle.

Also on the southeast side of the Danbury Post Road was the homestead farm of David Brundage, containing 116 acres. David arrived in North Castle from Stanwich, Connecticut approximately 1816 and in January of that year purchased the farm from the heirs of Thomas Hopkins, who died in 1812. David, a prominent citizen, resided on the property until his death, April 10, 1839.

By his will David devised his farm to his two younger sons, William and Harrison Brundage. (His oldest son Allen already possessed a large farm further east on the Post Road, at Creemer Road.)

William Brundage (a bachelor) died April 18, 1853 and his co-owner, Harrison Brundage, purchased from his other brothers and sisters William's half share of the farm. In this deed, dated May 2, 1853,<sup>1</sup> as a reservation to brother Allen (for some now unknown reason) is the first reference to the blacksmith shop:

*"Within the above described boundaries there is to be reserved ten acres of wood land more or less belonging to Allen Brundage and not included in the sum total of one hundred sixteen acres above mentioned, also the ground on which stands the blacksmith shop belonging to James E. Stivers." (Underscoring added.)*

Less than a year later on March 28, 1854,<sup>2</sup> Allen Brundage conveys the blacksmith shop to brother Harrison Brundage with the following description:

*"All that certain piece of land lying in the Town of North Castle now occupied by James E. Stivers for smith work and bounded as follows: North and West by the highway leading from Portchester to Bedford and East and South by land formerly belonging to William and Harrison Brundage."*

Harrison Brundage lived on the farm his entire life and died there February 12, 1891. All during his lifetime the shop stood on the southeast corner of the Danbury Post Road and had two known proprietors: James E. Stivers and Maurice W. Brundage (the youngest son of Harrison Brundage).

At the settlement of the Harrison Brundage estate the children of the deceased conveyed the homestead farm to their brother Thomas P. Brundage. By this deed dated August 3, 1897<sup>3</sup> we can place the exact location of the blacksmith shop, for the description of the 126 acre farm begins as follows:

*"Beginning at the northwest corner of a blacksmith shop on the premises hereby conveyed . . ."*

and closes with the following words:

*" . . . thence westerly with said highway to the said northwest corner of the blacksmith shop being the point and place of beginning . . ."*

Sometime around the turn of the century the shop was moved across the Danbury Post Road to the west side, slightly south of its former location, approximately 100 to 125 feet south of the southwest corner of Route 22 to the site where we remember it. The exact date of its removal is impossible to trace. Harry Brundage, son of Maurice, at one time reminisced about its removal but the date is not known. Donald Clark Brundage (born May 7, 1918), grandson of Maurice and nephew of Harry, relates that within his memory the shop was always on the west side of the street and believes the moving of the building was "a long time before my birth." Queried as to time he states, "at least twenty years before," which places the date at approximately 1898. This is very probable because the Harrison Brundage heirs conveyed the east side of the street to Thomas P. Brundage in August 1897 and perhaps brother Maurice moved the shop shortly thereafter to his own property on the west side.

The history of the property on the west side of the street has been traced for the purposes of this article. It consisted of two parcels: the one on which the shop last stood being three acres on the southwest corner of the

present Route 22 and the Danbury Post Road (now Saveway Drug property), and the other, consisting of eighteen acres, where a house, first owned by Stivers, then by Hanford White and later Maurice W. Brundage, stood (see Footnote 9 in previous section). This house was located across the street on the corner of Route 22 and Cox Avenue (presently Yellow Barn property). Both of these parcels belonged to James E. Stivers, the man cited in the Brundage 1853 and 1854 deeds as operating the blacksmith shop.<sup>4</sup>

James Stivers (father of James E.) came from the King Street neighborhood of Greenwich, Connecticut, purchasing the two parcels mentioned above — from Allen Brundage, February 20, 1830. Within two years he died and his widow and children conveyed the property to his son James Edward Stivers on August 18, 1832. The early maps of North Castle, recited previously, show the property belonging to J.E. Stivers, and on the southwest corner of the roads *opposite the blacksmith shop* was a wheelwright shop owned and operated by Stivers.

Stivers died February 17, 1870 and in his will he devised his property to his namesake, James Edward McCracken, "*the son of my adopted daughter Sarah Elizabeth McCracken. . .*"

Mr. McCracken conveyed the property in two parcels: the north parcel to Hanford White,<sup>5</sup> and the southerly three acres with a small house and the wheelwright shop to Maurice W. Brundage,<sup>6</sup> the date being May 18, 1875.

We cannot know for sure whether Maurice Brundage, the youngest son of Harrison Brundage, was Stivers' apprentice, but probably so. The supposition makes sense. He was probably the local farm boy who was never far from the shop, who began by "helping" Mr. Stivers and became more and more proficient, and apprenticed to his friend and neighbor. Probably after Mr. Stivers' death it became "his shop," and as the land and buildings were his father's he began his business on his home property. No written instrument can be found of record or not of record from his father or his brothers and sisters giving or selling him the shop. It must have just always been considered his shop. With the sale of his father's property he simply moved it across the street to his own three acres which contained the small house and the wheelwright shop.<sup>7</sup>

Maurice Brundage operated the shop from young manhood until his death on September 25, 1905. The shop was taken over by his sons Harry Maurice, and James Chester, aged twenty six and twenty four respectively.

Both Harry and Chester had apprenticed from boyhood to their father and they simply continued to operate the family business.<sup>8</sup> The brothers worked together in the shop for about 20 years until Chester gave up blacksmithing to enter the painting and decorating business. He remained in this trade for the rest of his working days. Harry continued blacksmithing<sup>9</sup> until his death of November 29, 1954. Nearly a year later, on September 15, 1955 the surviving Brundage heirs, his brother J. Chester and his sister Adah, sold the shop and two acres to the Pierpont Chemical Corporation<sup>10</sup> (Ben-

jamin Marx, a local pharmacist), Chester Brundage keeping the one acre (of the original three) on which his house stood.

For some years "Doc" Marx rented the shop, first to the Niebuhr Fence Company (1955-60), then to Fred Pember for the Armonk Flea Market (1961-65), after which it was taken down. (See Epilogue in previous section.)

#### FAMILY GENEALOGIES

##### — The Stivers Family —

In the early 1800's James Stivers (Sr.) lived on King Street on the North Castle-Greenwich town line. When he purchased property in North Castle in February, 1830 he is described in the deed as being from Greenwich. At his death in 1832 he left a widow and five children among whom was James Edward Stivers (1805-1870), the blacksmith. James Edward and his wife, Cornelia Ann (1811-1871), had no children but adopted a daughter Sarah Elizabeth, later the wife of Thomas W. McCracken. Their son, James Edward McCracken, was Stivers' heir.

##### — The Brundage Family —

David Brundage (1768-1839) came to North Castle in 1816. He married Elizabeth Lockwood (1772-1857) and they had eight children, the youngest of whom was Harrison (1816-1891). Harrison married Mary E. Purdy (1815-1875) and they had six children, the youngest of whom was Maurice W. (1852-1905). Maurice married Lizzie Clark (1856-1933). He was the first of the well-known Brundage blacksmiths. They had four children: Harry Maurice (1879-1954), James Chester (1881-1964), Edwin (1883-1934) and Adah (1891-1977). Only James Chester married. His wife was Mabel Hunter. They had one child, Donald Clark Brundage.

For additional information regarding this family see *David Brundage and his Descendants, 1961*.

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. Liber 236 of Deeds page 45.
2. Liber 263 of Deeds page 450.
3. Liber 1501 of Deeds page 201.
4. Liber 40 of Deeds page 201; Liber 47 of Deeds page 282; Liber 95 of Deeds page 353.
5. McCracken to White Liber 930 of Deeds page 334. Recorded 3/29/1877, and White to Brundage Liber 1150 of Deeds page 322. Recorded 11/8/1888.
6. Liber 893 of Deeds page 470.
7. The wheelwright (or wagon) shop is not to be confused with the blacksmith shop. It always stood on the Stivers, later Brundage, property on the west side of the Danbury Post Road, where it turned southward, on the corner directly opposite the original site of the blacksmith shop. (When the blacksmith shop was moved diagonally across the road the wagon shop stood north of it.)  
Donald Brundage, son of Chester Brundage, remembers it well and recalls that it was painted red. His family tore it down approximately 1930. We have found no photo of the structure.
8. The third brother, Edwin, while probably having some blacksmithing experience, was for many years a carriage and later an auto body painter. The Brundages erected on Bedford Road (Route 22), a short distance north and west of the shop, an extra large one-car garage in which "Ed" painted auto bodies on the Brundage premises. (This garage has been moved and stands today on the former farm of the late Walter R. Wohlfeil on Byram Lake Road.)
9. Occasionally Harry hired assistants to help in the shop. Among these were:

George Sackett, an old seaman, who slept in the shop for several years during the 1930's and in return helped with chores such as splitting logs and carrying coal; and in the late 30's and early 40's, Dennis O'Shea, a farrier, worked at the front forge (which Harry's brother, Chester, had used into the 20's), while Harry was at work at his own forge in the rear of the shop. Mr. O'Shea also went out to various farms and stables to shoe the horses.

10. Liber 5504 of Deeds page 417.

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We are grateful to Donald C. Brundage for his time, family recollections and use of many photographs, paintings and artifacts.

We thank those whose recollections are used: Hon. James D. Hopkins, Mr. and Mrs. R. Eugene Curry and Mrs. Tharald Farquhar.

Also, we thank Lindsay Welling and Phoebe Watson for photography work.

We wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. William Bates for presenting the Society with the Brundage Blacksmith shop "Day Book" of 1912-1913.

Thanks to Mrs. Marguerite Lewis for her help in securing materials.

Credit must be given to the late John Goss and the late George Grant for their

photographs.

Special thanks to John Schnoor, Robert Pippet and Michael Gressel with regard to the 1829 granite marker.

Thanks, also, to those unknowns, who long ago had the foresight to take the photographs that appear in this booklet.

We appreciate Harold Schaller's artwork used at the beginning of this article.

The many helpful comments from those who recall the Brundage Blacksmith Shop are gratefully acknowledged.

### — A Look to the Future —

As of this writing, a committee and an architect are working with a map of the Society's property to determine the most appropriate site for the relocation of the old Brundage Blacksmith Shop.

The gracious donations of Harry's anvil, bellows and forge, as well as many of his artifacts and other smithy's tools, will enable the Society to place them once again within the walls of Harry's shop.

The Society is looking forward to the day when the wide front doors of the shop will once again swing open so that we may step back in time to observe — in an authentic setting — the captivating domain of an old-time "smithy."

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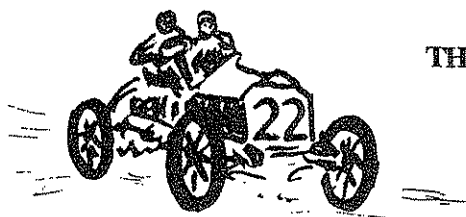
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## THE BRIARCLIFF INTERNATIONAL

### AUTOMOBILE RACE

by Helen Manner

The date was Friday, April 24, 1908, and the long-awaited Briarcliff Automobile Race, the first Westchester auto race and the first international stock car race in America, was about to begin. Twenty-two automobiles, owned by various companies and well-to-do people, were entered. Five countries were represented.

A technical committee examined the cars to determine their eligibility as stock cars. The requirements stated that they had to be regulation models, and that the entering firm had to have built a minimum of ten cars of that type. All of the cars entered in the race were deemed acceptable.

#### - Statistics of the Cars -

| No. | Make           | Driver            | Horse Power | Wheel Base | Country |
|-----|----------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|---------|
| 1.  | Bianchi        | * Felix Prosan    | 40          | 119        | Italy   |
| 2.  | Fiat           | Emmanuel Cedrino  | 60          | 117        | Italy   |
| 3.  | Apperson       | Herbert Lytle     | 50          | 106        | America |
| 4.  | Isotta         | Louis Strang      | 50          | 118        | Italy   |
| 5.  | Stearns        | Frank Leland      | 30          | 120        | America |
| 6.  | Fiat           | E.H. Parker       | 60          | 117        | Italy   |
| 7.  | Lozier         | Harry Michener    |             | 124        | America |
| 8.  | Stearns        | Guy Vaughn        | 30          | 120        | America |
| 9.  | Lozier         | Ralph Mulford     |             | 124        | America |
| 10. | Maja           | Daniel Murphy     | 35          | 118        | Austria |
| 11. | Isotta         | Al Poole          | 50          | 118        | Italy   |
| 12. | Thomas         | Montague Roberts  | 60          | 112        | America |
| 13. | Stearns        | Barney Oldfield   | 30          | 120        | America |
| 14. | Renault        | M.J. Bernin       | 35-45       | 112        | France  |
| 15. | Panhard        | George Robertson  | 50          | 118        | France  |
| 16. | Hol-Tan        | W.H. Hilliard     | 40          | 108        | America |
| 17. | Allen-Kingston | * Arthur Campbell | 40-45       | 118        | America |
| 18. | Renault        | Julien Bloch      | 35-45       | 112        | France  |
| 19. | Isotta         | H.M. Harding      | 50          | 118        | Italy   |
| 20. | Benz           | L.J. Bergdoll     | 60          | 118        | Germany |
| 21. | Simplex        | J. Seymour        | 50          | 124        | America |
| 22. | Simplex        | W. Watson         | 50          | 124        | America |

The entry fee was \$1,000 per car. All cars entered had four speeds except the Isottas, which had three speeds. The Loziers and the Renaults were shaft driven, the rest were chain driven. Above is the lineup as published prior to the race.

\*Paul Sartori drove the Bianchi instead of Felix Prosan, and Ralph DePalma drove the Allen-Kingston instead of Campbell.

The cars were quartered in White Plains, Briarcliff, East View, Pleasantville, Valhalla and Buckouts Crossing. The drivers were permitted to practice on the course for several weeks before the race.

### **- The Course and its Hazards -**

The route of the race, approximately thirty-two miles long, went from the starting line in Briarcliff to Millwood, Kitchawan, Pines Bridge, Mount Kisco, Wampus Lake, Armonk, Kensico, Valhalla, East View, Hawthorne and back to Briarcliff. It would be traversed eight times for a total of two hundred fifty eight miles. This circuit was rated as the roughest and most perilous on which a road race had ever been held. It was estimated that 40 mph might be a high average speed although several drivers stated that they felt 45 mph could be the winning speed. The drivers themselves speculated that possibly six cars might finish the race with the rest succumbing to accidents or breakdowns. After several practice runs, Barney Oldfield was quoted in The New York Times as saying:

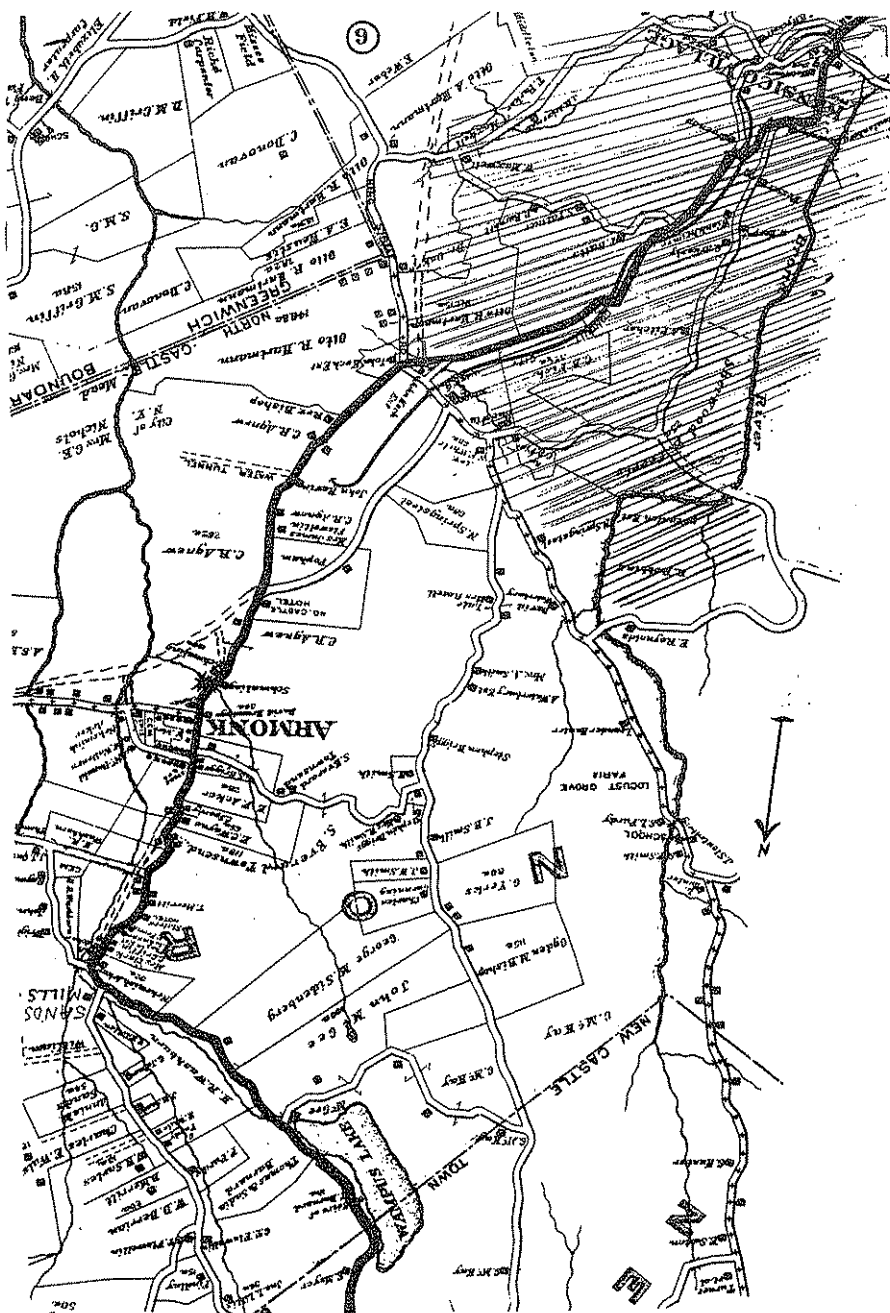
*"I hardly think from what I can judge now that the average speed in the stock car race will exceed thirty-five to thirty-eight miles per hour. It is a course that will surely test the ability of a car for all around work. The fact that there are hills, sharp turns, narrow stretches and other hazardous conditions of road bed will demonstrate the ability of stock cars to meet all conditions of travel. The race will also be a thorough test of driving judgment and capability."*

Grandstands affording good views were strategically placed along the route, but many chose to forego comfort for the thrill of watching from what were considered the "danger points" along the course. These included numerous bad S curves along Kensico Reservoir,<sup>1</sup> and the eight mile stretch from Pines Bridge to Mount Kisco, where only frail wooden fences might prevent a skidding car from plunging into the Croton Reservoir. Trees, rocks and telephone poles presented further dangers to racers who might swing too wide on the turns. At one point on this same section a rise of about ten feet dipped so suddenly that cars approaching at high speed would be catapulted into the air to land with a bone-jarring thud on the roadbed below. The road between Valhalla and East View was considered the worst part of the course due to muddy, rutted roadbeds, steep inclines and a narrow, winding road. This same section also contained the dreaded and respected S and L shaped descent curves from Valhalla, where those dubbed the "S and L" men took up positions in high anticipation of witnessing the worst spills of the race. The best location for watching high speed racing was on the stretch from East View, up past Pleasantville and Briarcliff, past Echo Lake and Merritt Corners to Kitchawan. At one point in this part of the race it was estimated that cars could attain 70 mph but only for about one mile. One of the few places on the course where cars could safely pass each other was on the straight section of road leading from Mount Kisco to Armonk (now called Bishop's Flat).

The most elaborate plans ever attempted for any road race were being implemented by Race Chairman Robert Lee Morrell and his committee: S.R. Stevens, Alfred Reeves, E.T. Birdsall and C.R. Mabley. The roads to be used



Section of E. Belcher Hyde North Castle map from 1908 Atlas. Shaded area has been added to show Kensico Reservoir, and dashes to indicate new roads. Road has been darkened to show route of the race. Star shows where the Allen-Kingston crashed.



for the race were to be closed for a period of ten hours.

Sheriff Lane of Westchester County swore in two hundred deputies to man six ambulance stations situated in Armonk, Valhalla, East View, Hawthorne, Millwood and Mount Kisco.

### - Legalities Were a Road Block -

Many legal entanglements had to be resolved before the event could proceed as planned. Major of these was the demand by State Engineer Skene that \$200 per mile cash be put up to cover possible damage to the roads. The Attorney General's office advised against accepting a bond, so Chairman Morrell gave his personal check for \$3,000 to be supplemented by \$1,500 more before the race. This satisfied Engineer Skene. The village of Greenburgh demanded a \$100,000 deposit against accident damage in their town, and insurance in that amount was secured from Lloyd's of London. Mount Kisco warned all drivers that they would be arrested if they exceeded 20 mph on a designated stretch beginning about two miles before the racers reached Mount Kisco and continuing to the far end of the village, a distance of five miles. Motorcycle escorts were provided to accompany drivers for the restricted miles. Initially, there were not enough patrolmen available, so the drivers were admonished to *pace themselves* and were checked at the outer limits of the control and were obliged to wait the correct number of minutes if they had not adhered to the ruling.

### - The Crowds Gather -

The towns along the route were all in a carnival mood and local enthusiasm and commercial energy ran high. Many farmers had hastily erected seating stands for the convenience of those willing to pay to watch the race in relative comfort, and refreshment booths to satisfy (for a price) the thirst and hunger of the spectators. Briarcliff Lodge, located at the starting and finishing line, was a *beehive of activity*. Tourists from Baltimore, Boston, Springfield, New Haven, Hartford and other New England cities rolled up in the afternoon of the day preceding the race, while a big delegation from Chicago and Cleveland, traveling in special cars, added to the overflow in the evening. The accepted rate for a cot or bunk in a room with three or four other lodgers was \$10.

Valhalla presented one of the gayest sights on the course, but even the quiet little town of Armonk caught the festive mood and displayed bunting on the post office and village store. A bevy of girls worked industriously in an Armonk church (probably Armonk Methodist Church) preparing sandwiches and other refreshments, the proceeds going to augment the missionary fund. One enterprising Armonk farmer placed six green arm chairs in a row on his lawn with a sign advising passersby, "chairs are to let."

A score of Sales Booths, with hundreds of extra tires to sell to racers and tourists alike, were established at various points around the course, and trees and telephone poles bore advertisements for automobiles, motor oil, cigarettes and everything else imaginable. A large rock on a hill along Wampus Lake proclaimed in painted white letters, "Scatter seeds of kindness." One visitor reportedly remarked, "*That's a good motto for 364 days in the year, but the inhabitants are giving a mighty big object lesson that their*

*motto for the race day is 'Scatter all the coin you can before you get away'. Surely all the villages along the route benefited financially from the race.'*" Even space to park cars along the circuit had to be rented.

Practice time on the track brought out not only the racers and spectators but also automobile owners who wanted to take a turn around the course to see what the drivers would face and who wanted the satisfaction of being able to say they had toured the course of the Briarcliff Auto Race. This activity on the dirt course kept road crews busy with repairs. Dry weather the week of the race helped make conditions on the route as good as possible on the day of the race.

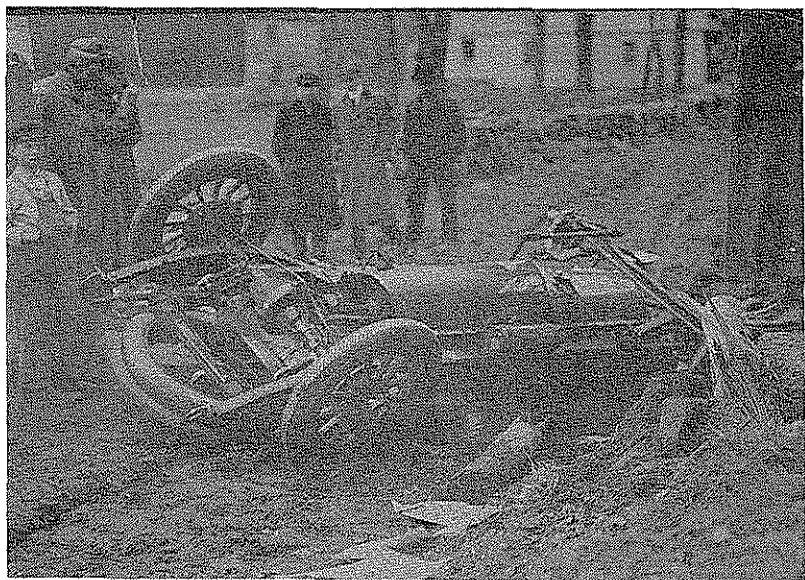
### - Accidents -

There were many minor mishaps during the practice runs and several of a more serious nature. The most spectacular of these occurred on April 21, three days before the race, when Arthur Campbell, who apparently had his vision obscured by a cloud of dust from a car in front of him, struck the railing of a small bridge just south of the Armonk Methodist Church. The car catapulted into the stream hurling Campbell out and into a pile of rocks, fracturing his jaw and knocking his teeth loose. His riding mechanic, Ralph DePalma, landed in the creek with the car on top of him and had to be extricated.

Dr. George Clark, who had come from his home nearby to treat them at the scene, took them to his home where they were thoroughly checked and mended. They rested until they recovered from the shock and then left together in a touring car. The wrecked Allen-Kingston car lay forlornly in the stream, the steering wheel broken, the steering post and gear damaged beyond repair and the seats smashed. It was hauled out of the brook later in the day and taken to a White Plains garage for repairs in hopes it would be ready for the race. Another car was immediately made ready as a backup in case the wrecked car could not be repaired in time. At the time of the accident Campbell insisted that he would be able to drive in the race. However, his injuries would not permit it and Ralph DePalma was asked by the owner to take his place. It is not determined whether the car he drove was the original Allen-Kingston.

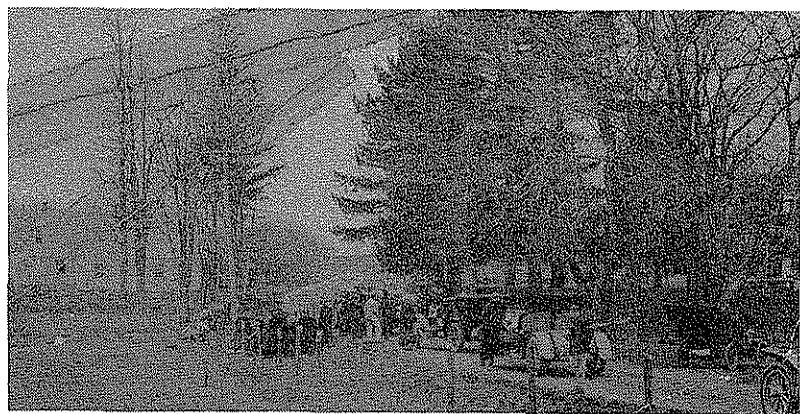
### - Day of the Race -

The race had been given much publicity in The New York Times as well as local newspapers, and thousands were expected to attend. Grand Central advertised that special trains would begin leaving the terminal for various points on the course at 1:15 a.m. and leave every 15 minutes thereafter. However, poor service was afforded by these special trains which left on time but, inexplicably, took upwards of three hours to make the run instead of the usual time of just over an hour. Consequently, those who left New York shortly after 1:00, expecting to reach the course early to secure the positions they had selected, did not arrive until just before the start. This led to much confusion with tempers flaring and many people milling around with no idea of how to reach their destination. Those who arrived on the "early" trains were soon joined by those from the later trains with resultant mayhem. Crowds jammed the road in front of the grandstand, making it extremely



While practicing for the race, driver Al Campbell was injured in this crash on April 21, 1908; his mechanic, Ralph DePalma, took his place in the race. The site is a few feet south of the present Armonk Texaco Station on Main Street (then called the White Plains Rd.) Photo from collection of the late Dr. Clark.

Accident scene looking south showing practice-run cars backed up due to accident. In the background is the Schmaling house rented by George Lovelett, Sr.



difficult for the racing cars to pass the judges' stand. A hurried call was sent out for marshalls, and two hundred of the citizen soldiery, armed with canes and official insignia, answered the call. The clearing of the crowd began in no lighthanded manner and several brawls ensued which proved to be easily handled. The throngs were quickly subdued and the roadway was cleared for the racers, with only a twenty minute delay.

### - The Race Begins -

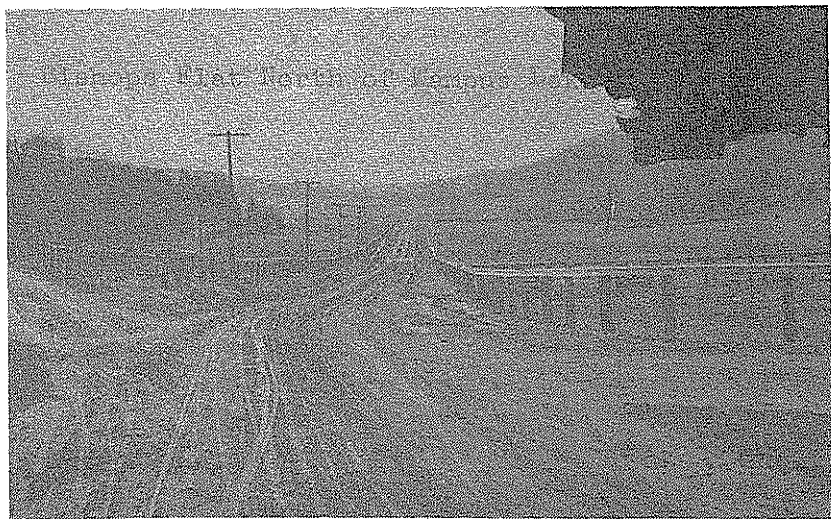
Sartori, driving the first car, pulled away from the starting line at 5:08 a.m. to be followed by cheers and calls of "Good Luck" as they began the grueling race. After the twenty-second car sputtered away out of sight up the hill around the first turn in the road the crowd settled back to speculate on the possible winner. *More than a few of the opinions were backed by wagers and good natured arguments as to the relative merits of each car and driver.* Indeed, some had come to the race as much for the thrill of betting as for the thrill of watching the event.

### - Security -

Members of several crack New York regiments, including those of the 13th Regiment of Brooklyn, were deployed along the course at every important point to exercise complete control during the contest. Their very presence was presumed to have a good moral effect on the event as well as offering protection to the spectators, although actual policing of the course was done by several hundred paid policemen stationed near all groups and wherever trouble was likely to occur. So, even though many thousands lined the course, the crowd never got out of hand. The marshalls along the route flashed red flags to oncoming drivers to signal safety on blind turns and yellow to warn drivers to slow down because of danger ahead.

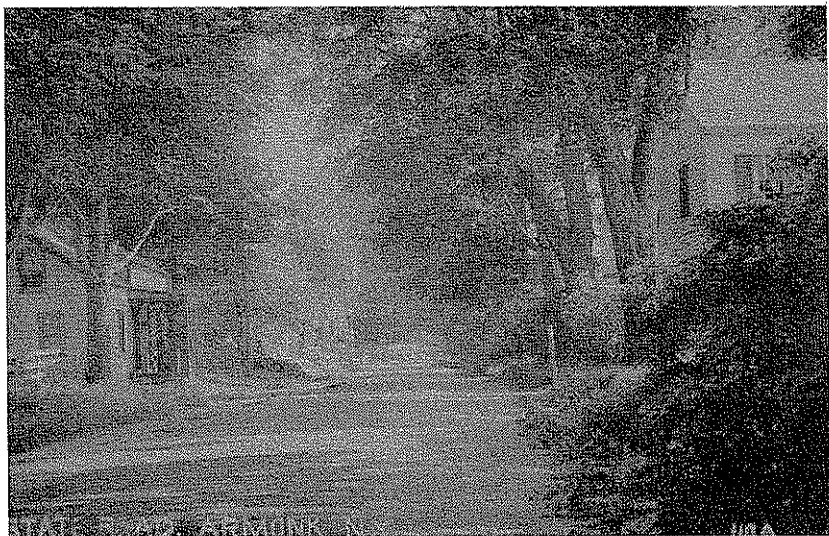
### - The News Travels Too -

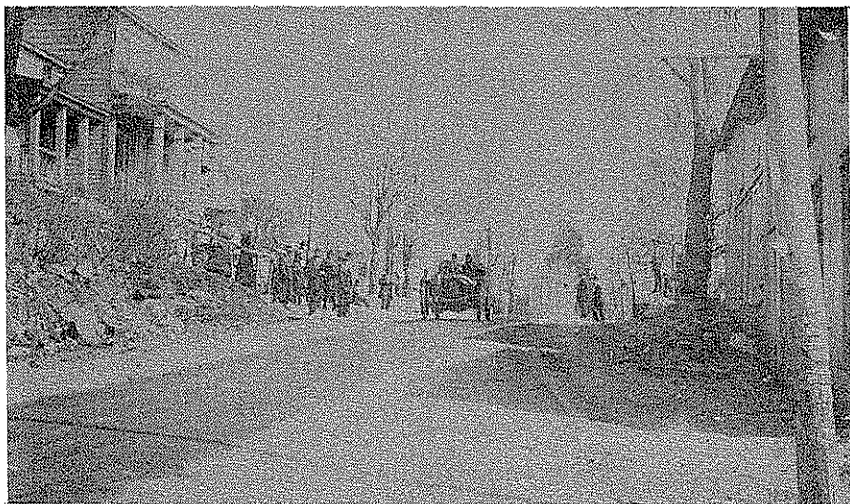
A wireless Marconi system, set up through the courtesy of The Lozier Company, which had a wireless station in its headquarters in Briarcliff, enabled The New York Times to give the throngs in Times Square a complete account of events within minutes of their occurrence.<sup>2</sup> Wireless experts had spent the preceding night arranging telephone and wireless connections from designated points on the course to the Lozier headquarters. The system worked perfectly, with very little interference. Bulletins commenced at 5:00 a.m. when the cars were lining up to start and ended after sixty bulletins had been posted- the last proclaiming the winning car, driver and time. Soon after all the cars were on their way progress reports began crackling in on the wireless. The reports were not too clear at first and combined with the incessant ringing of the telephone caused some confusion as to the lead car. Thus, when the report came to Briarcliff that two cars had passed East View, the crowds went wild to see who would come over the rise first. They strained to see if it would be Sartori in the gray Bianchi but instead, caught a flash of red. "Cedrino" roared the crowd. But it wasn't Cedrino! It was Strang, who had forged his way past the three who started before him and taken the lead despite the narrow road and twisting turns and hollows. A mighty yell greeted Strang as he hurtled past the grandstand for a round of 39 minutes and 42



The route of the race showing Bishop's Flat looking North. The cars would be coming towards the photographer from Mt. Kisco.

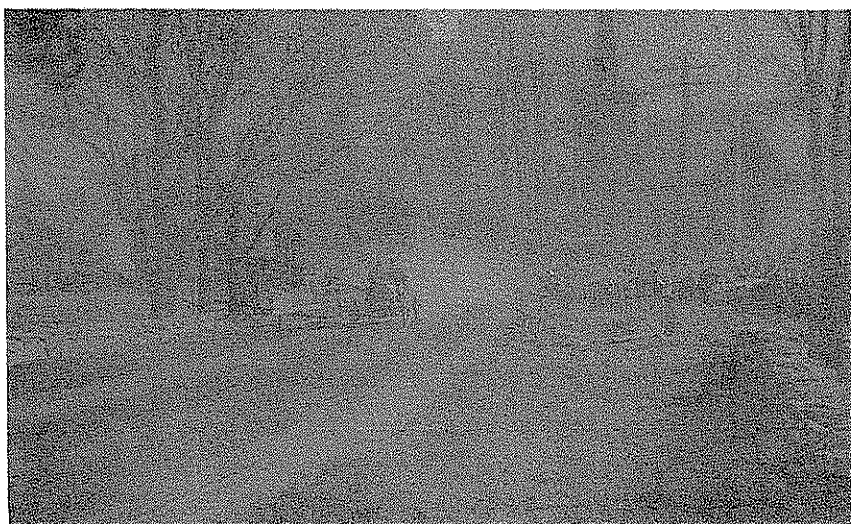
Looking North along route of the race near where the A&P driveway is today.





Main Street, approaching corner of Maple Avenue and Whippoorwill Road E. Today Citibank is located to the extreme left, probably out of the picture.

Just south of The Armonk Methodist Church, race car goes over small bridge where the famous accident occurred (on the right of the picture).







Car No. 22 coming down the road, near where Schultz' Cider Mill is today.

seconds, actual time, a pace of about 46 mph. This was considered "*some going*" for such a car on this type of course, and the announcement of time brought another cheer from the crowd.

Within seconds another car came 'round the curve. It was Sartori. Suddenly, there was a loud report, the car gyrated wildly but was guided safely to a halt at the side of the road by a firm hand at the wheel. Sartori and his mechanic jumped out to mend a blowout in the rear wheel. During the five minutes it took to make the repairs, Cedrino, Leland, Parker and Vaughn flashed by the disabled car. Scarcely was Sartori off again, with cheers ringing in his ears, than Michener and his Lozier duplicated his performance in *precisely the same spot*. Michener took four minutes to make the change and then was away again. There were many similar incidents on that same turn before the race was over, but the crowd never tired of the show. H.M. Harding changed his tire in just three minutes, the best time at this particular place.

An exciting jockeying for position occurred near old St. Mark's Church in Mount Kisco<sup>3</sup> when an Isotta driven by Al Poole breasted the Maja driven by Murphy for a distance of 500 yards. The Isotta pulled ahead to cheers.

Barney Oldfield was one of the favorites and consequently received a rousing ovation on each round and acknowledged it by his typical salute complete with omnipresent cigar, unlit and tilted skyward at a jaunty angle. At one point during the race the Hol-Tan was ahead of Oldfield entering a narrow stretch of the course. Oldfield called out to pass and Hilliard obliged, hugging the side of the road. There was barely room to squeeze through but Oldfield made the plunge without a quiver of an eyelash. His daredevil attitude in many such instances reinforced his popularity with his fans.



### - More Mishaps -

Watson, on his first round in the Simplex car #22, apparently tried to make up time on a stretch approaching an abrupt "L" turn, near the station in Eastview, and in rounding it, hit a tree with his left front wheel. Two tires exploded and the car flipped over, throwing Watson and his mechanic clear. Fortunately, neither man was hurt but the car had a broken steering wheel and smashed seats, as well as the demolished wheel and two flat tires. The men gamely set about making repairs, but by the time they were back in the race most of the others were half through their eight laps. Even so they made a good showing, finishing ahead of four cars which had much better luck. Soon after the Watson accident had been reported, a call came for a repair car to come and fix a bridge. This proved to be a minor thing requiring only the substitution of a plank.

The "S and L" men, determined to see some action, urged drivers to "hit it up" as they came into the steep curves. Their disappointment was reflected in hoots of derision as driver after driver exercised caution by gearing down and applying brakes. Daniel Murphy did recklessly "hit it up." He negotiated the S with a series of skids that won enthusiastic applause, but when he tried the same approach on the L turn, according to one newspaper, "his lineal impetus was too much for his lateral intentions" and he went into the ditch on three wheels. Car #10, the Maja, was out of the race on the fourth lap.

### - The Conclusion -

The race was officially declared over at 12:20 p.m. when the immense crowd lining the course began to get restless and started moving onto the track preparatory to leaving. At this time five cars had completed the eight laps and the judges decreed that nothing could be gained by continuing the contest.

Louis Strang, driving the Isotta-Frascini, took the lead on the first lap and never relinquished it, thus winning the first American stock car race and the Briarcliff Trophy. His victory was attributed to a combination of skillful driving, smooth running motor and well constructed machine. Strang was praised for his handling of the automobile and the excellent judgment he displayed on the potentially dangerous sections of the track. Where speed was possible, Strang let out his Italian racing motor to its full capacity on every round, driving at a hair-raising pace. He made four laps of the eight in 38 minutes and a fraction each, an indication that he was the master of his car and that the car itself was as mechanically perfect as engineering ingenuity could devise. At the conclusion of the race, the Isotta was declared to be in as perfect running condition as it had been at the start of the arduous test. Its engine was running smoothly and the car spun over the rough roads with an ease which suggested luxurious country touring.

John H Tyson, owner of the winning car, gave Strang credit for the triumph although he claimed to have spent \$25,000 to win the trophy. Strang received \$1,000 plus a \$5,000 bonus from Mr. Tyson. Marcus, his mechanic, got \$500 plus a bonus. Strang had spent five weeks at Briarcliff preparing for the race, using Mr. Tyson's six-cylinder Ford in the preliminary practice. The

Isotta was taken over the course only twice before the race, after which it was locked in Mr. Tyson's garage in White Plains, under guard night and day.

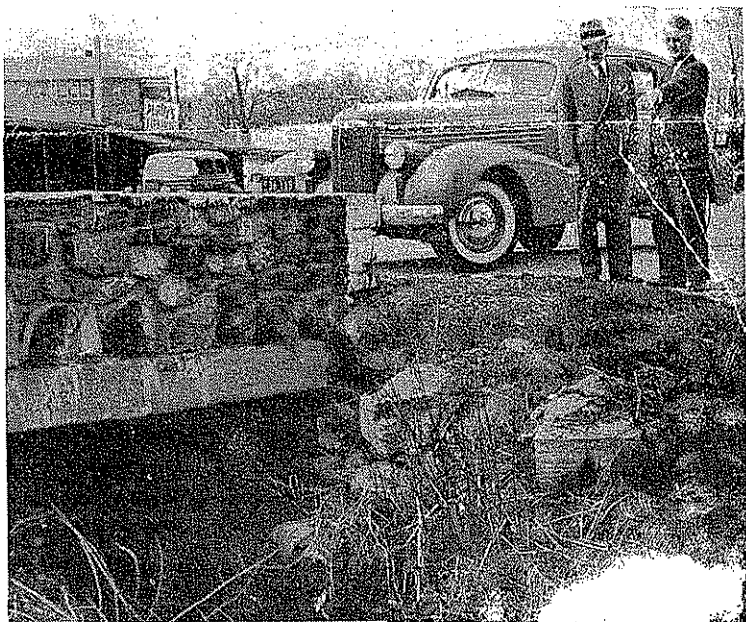
Cedrino, who finished the first round in thirteenth place, made steady progress, finally gaining second place in the seventh lap. He had the distinction of achieving the two fastest rounds in the race: 36 minutes, 48 seconds for his eighth lap and 37 minutes, 16 seconds for his seventh lap.

The race, which justified the claims of the Committee that this was the best possible test for cars which were to be driven on American roads, was the topic of many discussions all over the world for many months after the event took place.

### - Epilogue -

On April 21, 1938 -- 30 years after the accident in Armonk -- Ralph De Palma returned to the route of the race. He stopped in Armonk at the home of Dr. Clark and together they revisited the scene of the famous accident and reflected on the event which had occurred so many years before. Although the Briarcliff race was his first, Ralph DePalma went on to become an internationally famous race driver winning 2,257 races -- 98% of those he entered. *No driver had ever matched that record.*

### Racing Career of Ralph DePalma Started on This Spot



Dr. George Clark, right, and Ralph DePalma examine site of Armonk crash thirty years later. Accident took place just south of present Texaco Station on the east side of Main Street, where the brook flows under the road. Note Whippoorwill School in left background. Photo from North Castle Sun of April 28, 1938.

THE WINNERS  
AND  
OFFICIAL TIMES FOR THE RACE

Won by Louis Strang, driving a 50 H.P. Isotta-Frascini car owned by J. H. Tyson; time, 5 hours, 14 minutes, 13 and one fifth seconds; average speed, 46 mph.

Second-Emmanuel Cedrino, driving a 60 H.P. Fiat car, owned by the Fiat Company; time, 5 hours, 21 minutes, 5 and two fifths seconds; average speed, 45 mph.

Third-Guy Vaughn, driving a 30 H.P. Stearns car, owned by Wyckoff, Church and Partridge; time, 5 hours, 28 minutes, 20 and two fifths seconds ; average speed, 44 mph.

Fourth-Herbert Lytle, driving a 50 H.P. Apperson car, owned by Apperson Brothers; time, 5 hours, 39 minutes 15 and two fifths seconds; average speed, 42¾ mph.

Fifth-Paul Sartori,<sup>4</sup> driving a 50 H.P. Bianchi car, owned by Percy Owen; time, 5 hours, 53 minutes, 45 and three fifths seconds; average speed, 40 mph.

The official times exclude the ten minute control at Mount Kisco on each round.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Kensico Reservoir at the time was a small reservoir built in 1885. It lay just south of the crossroads in the Village of Kensico, and was fed by the Bronx River and Bear Gutter Creek. The construction of the present reservoir began in 1913 and was completed in 1917.
2. Notices at that time were posted on bulletin boards for all to read.
3. St. Marks' Church was located at that time just south of the present Northern Westchester Hospital Center. The cemetery is still there.
4. An interesting aftermath of the race was the arrest of Paul Sartori for speeding on Riverside Drive at 115th St. in New York City, at dusk, on his way home from the race. Policeman Moser clocked him at 21 mph and took him to the West 125th St. Station House. A crowd of curiosity seekers had followed the pair to the station where Lt. Mehan, on desk duty, asked for \$100 bail. Sartori did not have that much money and was being led to the rear room for detention when an automobile enthusiast, Arlington C. Hall of 124 W. 80th St. paid the bail.

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