

COBBLESTONE on CHARLES MILLS FARM - Site
HISTORY SHEET
General Information

Name of Structure: Cobblestone house on Charles Mills Farm, "stone cottage"

Address: 1301 W Genesee Rd (aka River Rd, Plainville-Baldwinsville Rd)
(NE Route 370 at Fenner Rd - field crops)

Parcel ID: (313689) 032.-92-23.1

Atlas: 1874: "M.U. Kelley"; Lot 75

When Built & Mason: Unknown

When Razed: About 1950¹

Why Razed: Site turned to cultivation

Original Owner: Unknown

Subsequently: Uriah M. Kelly, Charles S. Mills & heirs

Original Use: Unknown, Possibly a make-shift schoolhouse

Subsequently: Tenanted out to farm laborers

Photos Exist: No

Description: "Small, ramshackle structure" — Cecil Reeves
"small cobblestone cottage of very coarse stones" — Dorothy Wells
Pease (1941 Inventory)

OVERVIEW

This small "stone cottage" without indoor water was occasionally used as a vacation house in the early 1900s; in later years it was tenanted out to laborers on the Charles Mills farm. The farm remained in the Mills family until mid-20th century. The farmer who bought it promptly tore down the cobblestone and turned the site to crops. Cecil Reeves ultimately bought the property where the long gone cobblestone once sat, a part of today's 1000-acre Reeves Farms, and he spoke to me about it.

¹ Per interview with 93-year old Cecil Reeves on 6/5/2017

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DOCUMENTATION - TIMELINE

First, bygone days history

The 1852 wall map shows this corner with symbols for pine trees and no structures. The 1859 wall map shows two structures. The one nearest the corner—the cobblestone—is labeled “Lampson”². The 1874 atlas shows these same structures and the cobblestone is labeled “M. Donohue” and the other is labeled “M. U. Kelley” (Uriah M. Kelly). Both are listed in 1868-69 Gazetteer—Kelley, Uriah M. lot 75. farmer 75 acres; Donohue, Michael (Baldwinsville) lot 76, farmer 25.

Note that the cobblestone building was on lot 75 and Donohue is a farmer on lot 76. It is possible that Donohue was leasing a field on the Kelley farm or working on the farm and consequently was indicated on the 1874 map.

In the winter of 1812-13 James L. Voorhees³ came to Lysander and settled in “a wilderness covered with thick pine forest”. Wild land was cheap and he bought large tracts of it. As soon as he’d cleared a piece of land he’d build a house and barns and sell it, becoming very wealthy. The name “J. L. Voorhees” is labeled on many properties in the southwest section of the town on these 1850s wall maps.

Charles Keller⁴ compiled a detailed history of the farms in this area and submitted it to the town historian for publishing in the 3/2/1950 edition of the Baldwinsville Messenger. He wrote: “I was informed by Harvey Dunham that before the present school house was built, the first few scholars in our district walked to what is known as the River Road, Baldwinsville to Plainville, to the stone house on the Mills farm, which was the first school house in that locality. This building was known as the ‘Stone Jug’.”

² There is a John H. Lampson who is associated with lot #60, but otherwise no references to “Lampson” have been found in the town of Lysander. Unknown what his relationship to the property may be.

³ About Col. James Voorhees: [Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1893 Jan - 1895 Dec Grayscale - 0826.pdf](#) (7/25/1895) and [The Way It Used To Be \(Grace Lynch\) Fulton Ny - 0005.pdf](#) (undated) and [Baldwinsville NY Messenger 1947 Jan - 1948 Dec Grayscale - 0693.pdf](#) (4/1/1948)

⁴ Charles Keller Submits History of Farms In School District West of Mud Lake [Baldwinsville NY Messenger 1950 Jan - 1950 Dec Grayscale - 0116.pdf](#) (3/20/1950)

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[Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1881 Jan- 1882 Dec Grayscale - 0994.pdf](#)
(11/23/1882)

"Mr. U. M. Kelly, of Plainville, has sold his farm to Mr. Charles Mills."

Note: U.M. Kelly is brother of Belle Kelly Mills (ie brother-in-law of Charles S. Mills).
It is unknown when or circumstances of which Uriah Kelly became owner.

[Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1881 Jan- 1882 Dec Grayscale - 0998.pdf](#)
(11/23/1882)

"Uriah Kelly has sold Maple Grove farm to Charles Mills and purchased a farm of A.K. Clark near Baldwinsville."

[Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1912 Jan - 1913 Dec Grayscale - 0274.pdf](#)
(7/11/1912)

Mrs. Floyd Mills Painfully Injured — Mrs. Floyd Mills suffered a painful and serious accident Monday afternoon ... at a cottage on the Charles Mills farm on the Plainville road, about four miles west of Baldwinsville. Dr. and Mrs. Mills and their children have been spending the summer on their father's farm, occupying the stone cottage west of the farmhouse. Monday afternoon Mrs. Mills was picking cherries when a limb of the tree broke and she fell to the ground ..."

[Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1926 Jan - 1927 Dec Grayscale - 0260.pdf](#)
(7/1/1926)

"June Weddings ... Mr. and Mrs. Staeck will reside, for the summer, in the stone cottage on the Mills farm."

More recent history

Cecil Reeves shared a first-hand account of his experience relative to this cobblestone cottage from 60+ earlier. He suggested I also speak with Sharon Canino, great-granddaughter of the original Mills owner, who was just a little girl back then but may have some memory of it. I spoke with her the next day on 6/6/2017.

The Charles Mills farm was located on what was called Plainville-Baldwinsville Rd in the early years; it has undergone several name changes since that time. The cobblestone cottage was between the Mills house and the corner with Fenner Rd. Cecil Reeves, as a young farmer, worked on the Mills farm between 1946 and 1948 and he lived in the Mills residence. Charles Mills' son, Floyd, was a dentist and lived in the city. When his father died, Dr. Mills rented out

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the Mills farmhouse and also tenanted out the cobblestone house. The latter had no inside water and the occupants were permitted to use water from the Mills' house next door. Mr. Reeves thought it strange but the Mills family always allowed it, so he just let the tenants come and go as needed for water. He described it as a ramshackle structure that was falling down and was promptly bulldozed when it was sold to a farmer in the late 1940s or early 50s.

Sharon nee Mills Canino is great-granddaughter of Charles S. Mills. As a tween⁵ she lived in the Mills residence in the late 1950s. She remembers the cobblestone cottage as a very small shack in really bad shape, no more than 500 or 600 square feet. Mrs. Canino's memory of the cobblestone is from that time when she lived in the Mills residence in the mid-late 1950s. This suggests the cobblestone may have been razed in the late 1950s or early 60s, about a decade later than Mr. Reeves' recollection. Either way, it was torn down and put to crops when a farmer purchased the land from Del Mills. Eventually the site was acquired by Cecil Reeves and is part of the 5-generation Reeves Family Farms.

Supporting Documentation

[Baldwinsville NY Gazette Farmers Journal 1944 Jan - 1945 Dec Grayscale - 0710.pdf](#)
(5/17/1945)

"Mrs Isabelle Kelly Mills ... observed her 93rd birthday yesterday, Wednesday, May 16. She observed the anniversary at the home of her grandson, Del Mills, the original Charles S. Mills farm, that of her husband, on the River road. Her son is the late Dr. F.L. Mills."

[Baldwinsville NY Messenger 1959 Jan - 1959 Dec Grayscale - 0724.pdf](#) (9/17/1959)

"Mr. and Mrs. Del Mills and daughter, Sharon, have moved from their former home on Plainville-Baldwinsville Rd to their newly built home on Fenner Rd."

Note: Sharon Canino lived there in the interval between 1955 and 1959.

⁵ tween: Kids between 8 and 12 are called "**tweens**" because they are in between children and teenagers.