

## **GENERATIONS OF ALLENS HOLD TO OLD VALUES & HOMESTEAD 08/15/00**

I was visiting with my sister on the phone awhile back and she reminded me that her daughter Pam was the fourth generation to live in our old homestead. It is in Phoenix, NY, next to the old New York Central Railroad tracks on what is now called Spring Street. When we were growing up there in the 30s and 40s, it was called McKoon Street. I was disappointed to learn the name had been changed.

My great-grandfather Franklin Allen built the house in 1889 with a mortgage of \$582. He borrowed the money from a deacon of the Congregational Church, Mr. B. W. Candee. He had to pay back \$50 a year in two installments and it was paid off in 1896.

Great-grampa Allen was born in 1844 in Maumee, OH, and Great-grandma Allen was born in 1854 in Mohawk. Grampa Allen came here via the canal where he drove mules on the towpath. They had 14 children, of which only seven lived to reach maturity. They raised my father from an infant and shortly after he married my mom and I was born, they moved in to help take care of the grandparents.

One of my sons, who was my dad's uncle, never married and stayed with the grandparents to help support them. His name was Mart and I was born on his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, so now you know how I came by my nom de plume. I was followed by two brothers, Clifford and Andrew, and a sister, Adelia. Adelia was named after our Great-grandmother Allen.

Grandma Allen died in 1931, when I was just shy of my fourth birthday, so I have little recollection of her. Grandpa Allen lived until November 11, 1942, so I have vivid memories of him. He was almost halfway to his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday when he died peacefully at home in his own bed. I was 15 at the time and had no idea of how fortunate I was to have known him so intimately.

We never had the close loving association I have tried to foster with my grandchildren, but he was from the old school where children were to be seen and not heard.

He was a kind old man who had been an avid outdoorsman. I remember an old Sharps single-shot target rifle that my father told me he had won many a turkey with at

turkey shoots. He talked with me at length about his youth and how times were when he was growing up. I never realized it at the time, but he passed something on down to me through my Uncle Mart and dad and that was respect and discipline, two things that are sadly lacking in this world today.

My mom and dad shared the home we were all raised in until it ultimately was brought by my sister's oldest daughter, Pam. She has restored and modernized it and I am sure the earlier generations that lived in it would be proud of what she has done. Although she never knew Great-grampa and Great-grandma Allen or Uncle Mart, much of what she has done they were responsible for. The examples they set and their values are still filtering on down.

I am a person whose motto is, "The further the trip, the bigger the disappointment." Yet I am vitally interested in world events and people and cultures in distant lands. The Travel channel on direct TV, along with the Discovery Channel gives me all that from my easy chair in my own home. I am spared all of the inevitable drawbacks inherent with every trip I have ever been on.

I have been struck by the relative youth of our country when compared to European or Far Eastern lands. I guess what I am trying to say is that I was made more cognizant of the fact when my sister mentioned four generations of our family have now lived in our old homestead.

Come to think of it, that is a little unusual in the fast-paced world we live in today, but not a big deal by any means when compared with other climes and periods. But now that I think of it, it's a start and I am happy and proud to have been a part of it.