



8

Destination Caroline



11



12

12 St. Thomas Episcopal Church – This Victorian Gothic style church was built in 1894, three years after the Episcopal Society of Slaterville was organized. The bell from the “Garriston Society of the Methodist-Episcopal Church of Slaterville” was taken from the Methodist-Episcopal Church and placed in this elaborate multistage bell tower belfry in 1957. The church has been active since it opened. The building, renovated in 2005, is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. **H**

13 Town Hall – Constructed in 1869, this building was the Slaterville School and originally had finials on each corner, a cupola, and shutters. The first eight grades and two years of high school were taught here. After consolidation with the Ithaca City School District in 1957, the school was closed. The building has since been used as a Masonic Hall, a community center, and finally the Town Hall. It was completely renovated in 1976 with volunteer labor. The Town Court and Community Library are located on the main floor along with the



court and town clerk’s offices. On the second floor are the code enforcement, supervisors, and historian’s offices. This building is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*.

14 Besemer Station – Willis and Josiah Besemer built a station in 1875 to be used by the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad. The remains of the water tower can be seen in the trees, north of the Historical Marker, and on the western side of Besemer Hill Rd. The station was an active passenger and freight depot until it was closed in July 1935. The B&B is across Besemer Rd and to the east of the station site. **H**



Annual Events and Festivals

For more information, call 607-539-9928.

Farmers’ Market, Brooktondale Community Center (Sat, 10–1, ten months of the year). Local art work, produce, and food.

May – Brooktondale Community Center Used Book Sale.

Oct – Apple Festival, Brooktondale Community Center.

Nov – Christmas Country Store, Brooktondale Community Church.

Bed & Breakfasts **L**

Besemer Station Inn, 2024 Slaterville Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850. 607-539-6319.

Brookton Hollow Farm, 18 Banks Rd, Brooktondale, NY 14817. 607- 273-5725.

Thomas Farm, 136 Thomas Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850. 607-539-7477.

Specialty Shops **S**

Amber Accents, featuring Slaterville water ambered glass, 2685 Slaterville Rd, Slaterville Springs, NY 14881-0052. Open only by appointment. Call 607-539-6755.

Country Store, 2149 Slaterville Rd. E-mail: tedsobel@mac.com. Website: www.homepage.mac.com/tedsobel. Postcards of Brooktondale and local art and crafts. Open Fri, Sat, Sun.

Jo-Le Fabrics, 260 Central Chapel Rd, Brooktondale. 607-539-7994. Open Thurs–Sat, 12-5. Bargain fabrics, trims, notions.

Recreational Areas **L**

Shindagin Hollow State Forest

Potato Hill State Forest

Cemeteries **C**

Rev. Garrett Mandeville Dutch Reformed, Rt 79, across from Caroline School.

Roe, Brooktondale Rd, between Rt 79 and Besemer Rd.

Yates, Harford Rd, at Rt 79.

Charles Mulks, Rt 79, W of Slaterville Springs.

Caroline Centre, Buffalo and Taft Rds.

Speedsville, Speedville Commons, see #8.

Quick, Lounsbery and Landon Rds.

Morris Chapel, Middaugh Rd, near Coddington Rd.

Caroline Grove, Rt 79, W of Caroline hamlet.

Central Chapel, Central Chapel Rd.

Lane, White Church Rd, N of Coddington Rd intersection.

Cooper, White Church Rd, W of #4.

There are also 9 small, unmaintained family plots in the town.

Historical Markers **H**

Besemer’s Station – see #14.

Old Genung Farm – north side of Rt 79, east of #14.

Camping Ground – north side of Rt 79, west of cemetery.

Dutch Reformed Church Site – north side of Rt 79, east of cemetery.

Slave Burying Ground – west side of Ellis Hollow Rd, ½ mile north of Rt 79.

1st Town Meeting – south side of Rt 79, west of #13.

Quick Homestead – west side of Central Chapel Rd, north of #5.

Settler’s Cabin – south side of Rt 79, west of #13.

Slaterville Magnetic Mineral Springs – south side of Rt 79, near #12.

East Boundary – north side of Rt 79, east of Harford Rd intersection, at rest area.

The “600” – south side of Harford Rd, at Six Hundred Rd.

Speed Blockhouse – south side of Rt 79, east of Slaterville Springs.

Old Tobey Tavern – south side of Rt 79, east of Speed Hill Rd intersection.

West Owego Creek – north side of Rt 79, parking area at Tioga–Tompkins County line.

Home of Nathaniel Tobey – north side of Rt 79, west of #11.

Spring Farm – see #10.

Cabin Site – south side of Rt 79, east of #11.

Old Rich Tavern – see #11.

Blair Homestead – south side of Smith Rd.

Deer Licks – north side of Valley Rd, west of town highway department barns.

The Old Mill – north side of Valley Rd, west of the Lounsbery Bridge.

Railroad Trestle – north side of Brooktondale Rd, west of #2.

Six Mile Creek – south side of Brooktondale Rd, west of Middaugh Rd intersection.

CCC Camp – south side of Harford Rd.

Speedsville Commons – see # 8.

Cantine Mansion – see #3.

For more information – Town Hall, 2670 Slaterville Rd (Box 136, Slaterville Springs NY 14881), 607-539-6400, www.townofcaroline.org; Barbara Kone, Town of Caroline Historian, 607-539-6464, carolinehistorian@yahoo.com; Patricia Brhel, Town of Caroline Deputy Historian, 607-539-9928.

Credits

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Text by Barbara Kone, Town of Caroline Historian. Photographs and map references by Patricia Brhel, Town of Caroline Deputy Historian

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TOWN OF CAROLINE

The Town of Caroline was organized in 1811 from the Town of Spencer, Tioga County, and was added to Tompkins County in 1822. This rural area was developed because of its farmland and waterpower. On Six Mile Creek in the early days, as many as 23 mill sites were in operation. The mineral properties of the water brought tourists to the area, and Victorian-era “water ambered glass” can still be purchased. An ancient Indian “Warriors Trail” to Owego crossed the creek near today’s Middaugh Road **H**, six miles from the Cascadilla Creek crossing in Ithaca, giving Six Mile Creek its name. A fall line divides the watershed within the town: Six Mile Creek on one side empties into Cayuga Lake and then north into the St. Lawrence River, while West Owego Creek on the other flows into the Susquehanna River, proceeding to Chesapeake Bay. Caroline has five principal communities and numerous smaller settlements with notable historical homes and sites. Crossing the town is a principal road of the county, the old Catskill Turnpike, NYS Rt 79 today.

1 Roe House – One of the beautiful Federal buildings in the town, this house has an unusual fan light above the front door. William Roe bought 400 acres in this area and settled in 1800. When Roe built this house c. 1810, there was still uncleared wilderness between the “Roe Settlement” and “Cantine’s Settlement” (Brooktondale). He also built other houses, several mills, and a barrel factory. Three outstanding Greek Revival houses in the town are the Thomas-Bull House at 2962 Slaterville Rd; the William Mott House, 570 Valley Rd, Brooktondale; and the house at 16 Buffalo Rd.



2 Brooktondale Store – William Gale had a tin shop on this site for a few years before the Civil War. Then brothers Frank, Charles, and Fred Mulks operated the store well into the 1920s. The Post Office was at the back with its own door, and while Fred Mulks



operated the store, he also served as postmaster. A plaster mill once stood on the site of the present store’s parking lot. The store has recently been remodeled.

3 Cantine Mansion and Mill Site – The Cantine Mansion was the first frame house in the town, built by Gen. John Cantine in 1804 on the site of a log cabin. The first Masonic Lodge established in the county met in the attic. The house retains much of its Federal simplicity, despite structural changes and additions. The mill, originally on the north side



of the creek, was rebuilt in 1834 on the creek’s south bank. When Frank Cornell owned the mill in the 1840s, he built a “covered bridge” or covered pony trestle here. Local artist May Tobey sketched the bridge in 1879. The mill was burned for a highway expansion in 1964, and the remains of the bridge were removed. **H**

4 Veteran’s Monument – This Honor Roll was built in 1944 by the townspeople and staff of the community newspaper, *Brooktondale Bugler*, to honor those who served in World War II. Wings were later added to honor Korean and Vietnam veterans. A baseball diamond behind the monument was dedicated as Herman VanDeMark Field in the 1940s. Games were played here from the early 1920s into the 1980s.

5 The Narrows – ‘76 Road follows the Boice Creek closely and since the walls of the gorge were so close, this area was called the Narrows. The road was widened in the 1960s.

6 Caroline Center – “City Lot” at Caroline Center was the second site of the Post Office operated by John J. Speed. It was moved from here to Jenkville, which changed its name to Speedsville on the condition that Speed no longer be postmaster. At one time Caroline Center boasted a harnessmaker, boot and shoemaker, cabinet shop, Baptist and Methodist-Episcopal churches and parsonages, school, two stores, doctor’s office, and the office of “C J Rounseville – Blacksmith, Auctioneer, Counsellor-at-Law and Conveyancer.”

7 St. John’s Episcopal Church – This church, organized and built in Richford, Tioga County, in 1835, was moved to Speedsville in 1842. According to local legend, the bell rang all

the way. The church has a sanctuary seating 60–75 people, and a small vestry. The miniature stained glass window in the chancel was installed in 1885. The original chandelier, with ten oil lamps, was wired for electricity in the late 1940s when the church was redecorated and an electric organ was installed. This building is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*.



8 Speedsville Commons & Gazebo – Established in 1858 on land donated by Leonard Legg and John Stearns and planted with 45 sugar maple trees, this public park was incorporated several years later. George Washington Osburn built the first gazebo to honor the first white settler, Laban Jenks. In September 1998 the park was devastated by a severe windstorm. A year later another storm destroyed the gazebo and remaining original trees. Thirty new trees were then planted, and in 2000 the gazebo was rebuilt and the park landscaped. **H**



9 Rawson Hollow Tavern – According to early town records, manager Lyman Rawson was fined for selling “Spirits” without a license. Known as “old Rawson,” he had his business there until his death in 1826. The house was renovated in the 1990s with much of the original structure kept intact, including the “spring dance floor” upstairs.

10 Spring Farm – Dr. Joseph Speed of Virginia, with his family and slaves (he was one of a small group who brought their slaves to the county), arrived here in 1805 and built this home. One of his slaves, Peter Webb, earned the money to buy his and his wife’s freedom, bought a farm of his own, and later purchased this property, which is now owned by his descendants. Today some of the land is rented to a local dairy farmer, who grows corn, grain, and hay. **H**

11 Old Rich Tavern – “Captain” David Rich, settler from Vermont in 1795, first built his log cabin and then put up a small tavern c.1810 to serve travelers on the Catskill Turnpike, which ran through his farm. There was a tollgate at the tavern. After 1812 he built this larger tavern, which remained in his family for more than 100 years. It is a private home today, recently purchased by a descendant. **H**