

# The New Depot of the S. G. & C. Railroad, at Corning.

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The depot of the Fall Brook Coal Company, operators of the Syracuse, Geneva & Corning, and the Corning, Cowanesque & Antrim Railroads, just completed at Corning, is one of the most elegant structures of the kind in the State. It is built of brick, 63x67 feet, and is three stories high. The architect is A. J. Warner, of Rochester, the contractors, Walker & Lathrop, of Corning. Geo. E. Bartlett, for 19 years in the employ of the Company, is superintendent of the building on the part of the Company. L. H. Brown, of Corning, was foreman for the contractors. The interior of the depot is handsomely finished in white pine and black walnut. It is heated by steam and furnished with all the modern improvements for the comfort and convenience of the traveler, and the employees. On the ground floor, a spacious hall opens on the Dickinson House square. The first room to the south of this hall belongs to the Magee Estate, and will be used for meetings of room is the Freight and the American Express Office. In this office are found, V. P. Myrtle, Station and Express Agent; J. L. Demarest, Freight Forwarding Clerk; E. H. Howell, Freight Receiving Clerk; C. B. Chandler, Coal Clerk; A. A. Tremans, Express Clerk; W. A. Scofield, Yard Master. There is a capacious vault in this office, built from the cellar up to the second floor. This vault is furnished with Yale Time Locks, and is thoroughly burglar proof. Next is the office of W. E. A. Gorton, Car Accountant, whose clerks are Chas. S. Hungerford and J. B. Terbell; and R. A. Houghtaling, Car Tracer. North of the hall, towards the east, is the office of Superintendent A. H. Gorton. Adjacent to the Telegraph office, G. R. Brown, General Telegraph Superintendent of the Company; John Lynahan, day operator, and Thomas McAvoy, night operator. The office is fitted up with entirely new instruments. West of this, are the Gentlemen's and Ladies' Waiting Rooms, spacious and comfortable. The second floor is devoted to the offices of the Company. The names of the offices and occupants are: John Lang, Treasurer of the Company; John Lewis, Book-keeper; John Lang, Jr., Auditor; C. A. Robbins, Auditor's Clerk; Wm. J. White, Book-keeper for the Company; F. Henry Perry, Telegraph Operator for the Company; President Geo. J. Magee's private office, (which is connected with all the offices in the building by electric bells); Morris Run Coal Mining Co., Daniel Beach, Treasurer; Lyman Robinson, Book-keeper; Samuel Denton, Coal Clerk; and L. P. Miller, Amanuensis and Stenographer to General Magee; Office of H. Horning, General Freight and Passenger Agent; Andrew Beers, General Purchasing Agent; Frank Osborne, Clerk. The offices of the second floor are furnished with Brussels carpet, marble mantles, elegant desks, and are truly palatial. The third floor of the depot will be used as a supply and store room. The depot is supplied with telephones. Contiguous to the depot, on the west, is a freight house of brick, 34x128 feet, Thos. Kennedy and Martin Doherty, freight agents, beside several assistants. Also a freight shed and baggage room, of wood, 120 feet long, having an iron roof. The baggage men are John Wallace and M. D. Litts. In the freight house are rooms for the Engineers and train men. The enormous increase of freight business since awarding the contract for the building, will probably necessitate an extension before long. The entire cost of the depot and buildings named has not been estimated, but it will probably be nearly forty thousand dollars.

The railroad from Corning to Blossburg was opened in the fall of 1839, or spring of 1840. The depot was built in 1840, Nelson L. Somers, then a hardware merchant, being the contractor. Mr. Somers first came here from Morris, Otsego county, in the fall of 1836, the "city of Corning" existing on paper. The Corning Company had let the contract for building a hotel, the Corning House, (where now stands the Dickinson House,) and also for a three story block of four stores on Tioga Avenue, nearly opposite the Ware house. These buildings were of wood. Mr. Somers staid but a few days, but he came here again in the summer of 1847, with Col. H. W. Bostwick, of Morris, who had been for some years a partner of Sylvester Smith, in the lumbering property, now known as the Gang Mills, a mile south of Painted Post. They had a store of goods for their employees. Mr. Somers purchased the goods and removed them to Corning, occupying the east store in the block on Tioga Avenue. He continued there till he sold out his stock, and then removed to a brick building, erected on the Hotel square, on the rear of the building now occupied by Walker & Lathrop's hardware store. It was a double building, and the north part was occupied by a dry goods merchant, whose name we do not recall. In the spring of 1838, Mr. Somers went to Otsego and was married, and returning to Corning with his wife, they engaged board at the Corning House, then just finished and opened for business. The rear part had been occupied the previous winter as a boarding house, by Jonas Hodgskins. In the summer of 1838, Mr. Somers took a contract to build a brick residence on Walnut street, for Thomas A. Johnson, then a lawyer in Knoxville, and also built a brick dwelling for himself, on the adjacent lot on the north, where he now resides. In 1839, or early in 1840, Mr. Somers contracted to build a depot, machine shop, and engine house for the "Blossburg" Railroad Company. It was finished in the summer of 1840, and was of wood, two stories high, standing on the north side of the alley between Market St. and Tioga Avenue, the east end fronting the Hotel square, and extending nearly half the distance to Walnut street. It was sixty-six feet wide by two hundred and fifty-two feet in length. It nearly covered the width of the lots. In front on the Hotel square was a passenger room. The room for freight was adjacent. Offices were in the second story. Contiguous to the

freight room was the room for the locomotive engines, and beyond that was the repair shop. On the north front there was no second floor, and the roof covered, and the side enclosed, the railroad track. This was the first depot of the railroad. In a forenoon in May, 1850, a spark from an engine set fire to the roof, and the progress of the flames was so rapid, that the entire building was soon on fire, and communicated to the Corning House; and within two hours the entire business portion of Corning, save a wagon shop and a blacksmith shop on Market street, west of Walnut street, was consumed. The fire extended to Erie Avenue, burning the dwellings on its north side. It crossed Walnut street on the west and Cedar street on the east. A large quantity of lumber on the river bank was burned, and much more would have been consumed, but for the arrival of firemen from Elmira, who had been summoned by telegraph. There were seventy-six buildings destroyed. The village had probably a population of fifteen hundred people. The Blossburg depot was soon rebuilt, but only as a one story station house and passengers, and insignificant appearance, made it a topic of remark by strangers, but no citizen deigned to their criticism. It was therefore an occasion for congratulation when in March, 1850, the work was begun on a new depot; and the contrast between that and the one that had stood for a generation is so great that it is not singular that there should be general rejoicing at its completion. The Fall Brook Company have done far better than was anticipated, erecting a building capacious, substantial and ornamental; one that will be a continual evidence of the public spirit of the Company, and a conspicuous ornament to the village of Corning. Gen. George J. Magee, the President of the Fall Brook Coal Company, was called to assume weighty responsibilities, while yet young. The death of his brother, Duncan S. Magee, who was a remarkably sagacious and brilliant business man, and the death of his father, Hon. John Magee, who was eminent for business talent and enterprise, placed him in an official position that required extraordinary abilities to ensure success. He has justified the belief that he would maintain the high reputation of his name in meeting the heavy task imposed by the extent of the business developing upon him. His sagacity and energy led to the construction of a railroad into the wilderness at Antrim, thus extending his own road from the State line, and opening new and exhaustless mines of coal. To him, chiefly, is it due that the route has a northern connection; that a first-class railroad was constructed from Corning to Geneva, thus reaching Syracuse, and subsequently making a direct connection between Geneva and Lyons, so that there are now three daily passenger trains running from Corning, to strike the four-tracked N. Y. Central at Lyons. When Corning was founded in 1836 it was on the basis of making it a northern terminus for a railroad to the Blossburg coal mines. For a long series of years trains ran daily from Corning to Blossburg, and the business interests of the villages on the Tioga river, and especially at Blossburg, were somewhat identified with Corning. The construction of the Elmira & State Line Railroad some years ago, considerably diminished this intimacy; but the building of a railroad from Lawrenceville to Antrim, by General Magee, compensated for this loss; and the direct opening of a railroad to Central New York, largely by his influence and financial risk, has given the village of Corning a great advantage as a location for manufacturing industries or business operations. It is therefore a pleasant duty to give expression to the prevalent feeling in this village, by thus recognizing the vast importance of the benefits occurring from the rare business enterprise of Gen. Magee. It is true that he has done his work in the interest of the Fall Brook Coal Company, of which he is the principal partner; but he has not done it selfishly. His increasing business has been on a basis that makes its indirect benefits to reach the communities where it is transacted, to incite others to strive for prosperity in their affairs; to induce enterprise in any legitimate field of effort, to benefit the public in all directions, while making his railroad and mining enterprises a great success. Such a man, of intelligence, of public spirit, of pluck, of tenacity of purpose, is worthy of rare eulogy.

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