

## The Sky Is Falling

The first indication something was wrong was when a fireman at the Central Fire Station at Main and Pearl Streets heard airplane engines sputtering and noticed the glow of a plane's tail light swooping low over the city. The second was when the plane's escape hatch slammed into Eagle Street. As fire trucks took off to pursue the dying plane across the river, phones began ringing at the Police Headquarters.

It was Wednesday night, 9:45pm, October 13, 1943.

Three aboard the US Army Air Forces aircraft, First Lieutenant Charles Thompson of Schenectady, New York, Sergeant Joseph A. Bragdon of York Village, Maine, and Sergeant Albert Finarelli of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, all parachuted safely to open ground in the vicinity of the Fifth Ward School. Captain (and pilot) John F. Pope, of Montgomery, Alabama, was the last to bail-out at 500 feet, and came down on a roof on Dewitt Street.

He was found on the street slightly dazed, carrying his parachute. No worse otherwise for his descent, except for the loss of the "50 mission crush" hat he had worn in England, Ireland, Scotland, Gibraltar, and North Africa during 108 combat missions.

The Amsterdam Evening Recorder said of the aviator, "He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with several oak leaf clusters, but it remained for Amsterdam to hold the distinction of being the first place over which he bailed out of a plane."

Co-pilot Charles Thompson was also a decorated combat veteran who had flown in North Africa where he was shot down behind German lines, walking back 45 miles with his crew.

Fifth Ward School second-grader Peter Marcuscio and his friend Robert Selbert found Captain Pope's hat and returned it to him. Later that month he sent them both miniature versions of his pilot's wings as a thank you.

The plane, a UC-78 "Bobcat," was on a routine flight from Rome (New York) Air Depot and Schenectady, returning from the latter cruising at 3,000 feet when both engines failed. After the crew hit the silk, the plane continued on for approximately one-half mile beyond the Amsterdam Armory before burying its nose and useless engines into farmland near what today is Thruway Exchange 27.

No one was injured on the ground, and police and members of Company G, New York Guard (the home-guard force at the Amsterdam Armory which took over for Company G, 105th Infantry when it was called into federal service), secured the crash site until Eastern Defense Command personnel took charge of the wreckage.

The UC-78 was one of a number of military versions of the civilian Cessna T-50 light transport introduced in 1939. C-78 and UC-78 models were used as small transports and utility aircraft; AT-8 and AT-17 variants were used as advanced trainers in transitioning student pilots to multi-engine bombers. Sometimes also called "Bamboo Bombers," several thousand were produced during the war, the last one being surplused out of service in 1949.

Amsterdammers of a certain age will recall this plane as the original "Songbird" on the radio/TV adventure show Sky King.

Portions of this article are based on information developed by Bob Cudmore, Bob Going, and Tony Solomon.

*~R. H. von Hasseln*



**US Army Air Forces UC-78 "Bobcat" in 1943 national markings and olive drab over neutral gray camouflage. (RvH)**

## Queen Anne Chapel

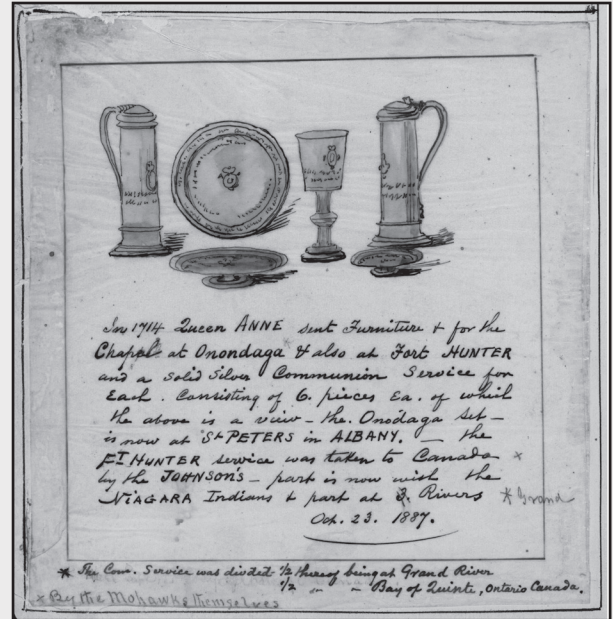
As St. Ann's Church celebrates its 300th Anniversary this year, it is fitting to reflect upon its colorful beginnings.

... "There came to England (1708) an important delegation from the province of New York consisting of Peter Schuyler, then Mayor of Albany, and Colonel Nicholson, one of Her Majesty's officers in America and five Mohawk sachems. Their mission was to urge the need of more generous measures on the part of the home government for the defence of the province against the French and their allied Indians.

"The arrival of the sachems, in their barbaric costume, occasioned great observation throughout the kingdom. Crowds followed them in the streets, and small pictures of them were widely sold.

At an audience given them by Queen Anne, among other requests, they prayed that Her Majesty should build them a fort and erect a church at their castle at the junction of the Schoharie and Mohawk rivers, called Tiononderoga. This she promised to do and in 1710 when Governor Hunter arrived in New York, he saw that these orders were carried out. . . . (The chapel) It was built of limestone, was twenty-four feet square, and had a belfry at Fort Hunter.

... Queen Anne sent furniture, prayer books and a communion set for the chapel. It appears that the communion service sent to the Mohawks was buried at Fort Hunter during the Revolution, and remained there some years until the Mohawks became settled near Brantford (1785), and the Bay of Quite; then a party was sent back, resurrected the plate, and brought it back to Canada. For a period of twenty-two years prior to July, 1897, the plate was safely kept by Mrs. J. M. Hill, the grand-daughter of the celebrated chief, Capt. Joseph Brant, whose mother was the original custodian." ~From W. Max Reid's *The Mohawk Valley*



A drawing of the Communion Service of the Queen Anne Chapel. (NYSA)

### The Port Jackson Church

With the support of Trinity Church, New York, an Episcopal church was erected in 1835 at Port Jackson, and maintained with the assistance of funds derived from the sale of Queen Anne Chapel glebe farms. St. Ann's was built of brick with a frontage of what is now Centre Street. The church seems to have had a hard struggle for existence and during the rectorship of Rev. A.N. Littlejohn the edifice was sold in 1849 to St. Mary's Catholic congregation, who occupied the structure until 1869.

The present St. Ann's on Division Street considers itself a sister church to the Brantford Church in Canada. The old Queen Anne Communion plate is brought out annually on the occasion of the visits of each congregation. The Amsterdam contingent travels to Canada every two years, and the Canadian delegation returns the visits.

**ALEXANDER NELLIS,**  
Blacksmithing, Horseshoeing and General  
JOBING

Promptly attended to in a First Class  
Manner.

Canal Street,

PORT JACKSON.



An ad which appeared in the Amsterdam Village Directory, 1880-81. (MCHA)

## Santos Construction Corporation

*Emanuel F. and Isabel Ramos Santos, both from Spain, were married in Saratoga Springs where they resided until moving to Amsterdam's South Side. Their home on Jewett Street was busy with six sons and one daughter.*

*Santos Construction Corporation was founded by Emanuel F. Santos on April 26, 1946, after his sons returned from serving in World War II. At the same time, those involved were his sons Peter E. Santos, Benjamin G. Santos, Frank A. Santos. His daughter, Matilda Santos Rosello, was also part of the company. Another son, Emanuel T. Santos (Moose) remained in the Air Force and then joined the firm. The youngest son, William Santos, became involved with the company after he served in the Korean War. Sylvester (Bebb) F. Santos pursued other endeavors before passing away in 1958.*

*The garage, shop and office are located on Gilliland Avenue with additional space on Erie Blvd. which once housed the old Agway.*

*Although the founders have passed away, the company is still in business after 65 years.*

*~Diane Santos*



**Santos Construction family members circa 1960's.  
(DS)**

## The Liggero Bowling Team

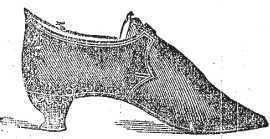


**The Liggero Brothers who operated Port Petroleum Corporation, L to R: Freddie, Ernest, Albert. John, Lawrence and Patrick . (DO)**

*During the fifties and sixties, Wil-ton Bowling Alley on Main Street would hold an all-brothers bowling tournament. The only requirement to take part in the contest was that each team would be made up of brothers. At that time there were plenty of siblings in competition: Bubniaks, LaBates, Malickis, Sandys and Lazarous to name a few. In 1968 the Constantine brothers won the tournament, that included Paul, Mingo, Pat, Dominick, and Frank. That year Eddie Sandy took individual high total honors.*



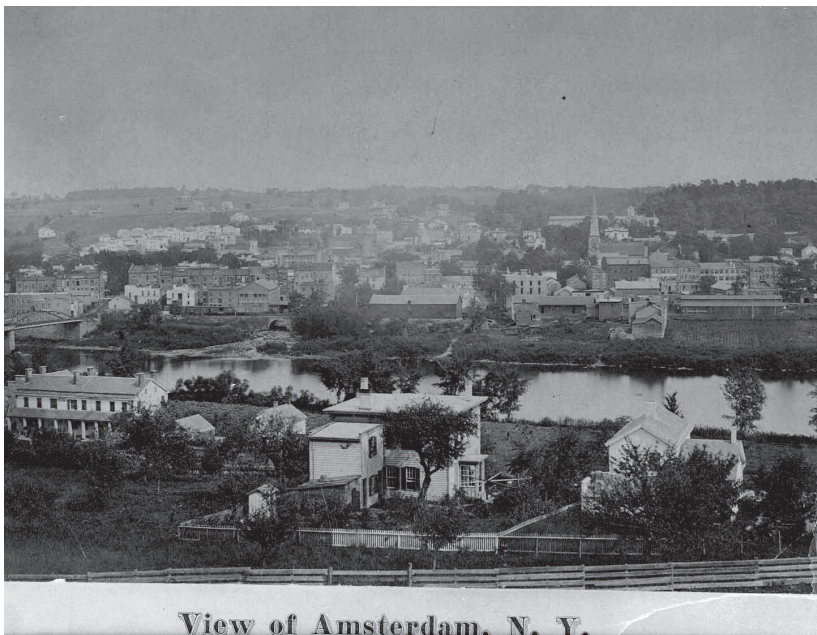
**The South Side Veterans are honored in this beautiful memorial park on Bridge Street. (DD)**



**NELSON HALL,**  
CUSTOM  
**BOOT AND SHOE MAKER,**  
12 Bridge Street,  
Over W. H. Pettengill's Store, AMSTERDAM, N. Y.  
Repairing promptly attended to.

**An ad which appeared in the Amsterdam Village Directory, 1880-81. (MCHA)**





An old postcard shows a view of Port Jackson. (WEM)



The Armory served as a popular backdrop for social gatherings as it did for these young men in 1942. (DO)

## Nadler Brothers

*The exhilarating view of the Valley, an impeccably groomed farm (barn and home) and a decorative windmill would welcome drivers as they descended Route 30 south in the mid-twentieth century. The tawny-coated herd of Jersey cows grazing on 600 acres caught the eye. It was the Nadler Farm.*

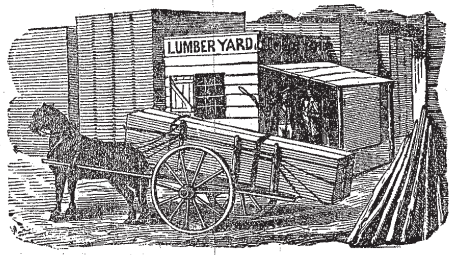
*In 1903 Dan and Joe Nadler each bought a small milk route. They earned the reputation that built the dairy a mile south of the river. They incorporated everything that came along to improve their quality, sanitation and service. Nadler Bros. Dairy was the first in its market to pasteurize, the first to homogenize, the first to provide Vitamin D milk and to provide the double sanitary Sealright protection of their product.*

## Lawrence Shuler

*In 1769 German named Lawrence Shuler, formerly a resident of Catskill, located upon a fertile farm of 300 acres, now one mile east of Minaville. He raised a family of 16 children. He donated lands to the Reformed Dutch Church as well as for a school house.*

*Today a drive up Bulls Head Road reveals an historic marker across the street from a recently preserved cemetery.*

### J. D. FOSTER & CO., LUMBER YARD,



Canal St., Port Jackson,  
Manufacturers of and Wholesale  
Dealers in Lumber, Timber,  
Shingles, Sash, Blinds,  
Doors, Brackets,  
FLOUR, FEED & PLASTER.  
Mills at Fultonville and  
Gloversville, N. Y.  
All orders left at Port Jack-  
son Yard will receive prompt  
attention by  
I. D. BARKHUFF.  
A. H. BURTON.

J. D. FOSTER, J. W. GREEN.

Ad which appeared in the *Amsterdam Village Directory*, 1880-81. (MCHA)



As seen from the north side of the Mohawk River, the Carbonelli Building was a formidable structure. (PT)



After School, Amsterdam, New York, by James Collier (1913-1992), October, 1941, for the US Farm Security Bureau.

**There is a history to all men's lives,  
Figuring the nature of the times deceased,  
The which observed, a man may prophesy,  
With a near aim, of the main chance of things  
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds  
And weak beginning lie intreasured.**

*William Shakespeare  
Henry IV, Part 2*

**The past is a source of knowledge, and the future is a  
source of hope. Love of the past implies faith in the future.**

*Stephen Ambrose*