

Wevertown

The earliest recorded settlers in 1795 in this hamlet were the Andrus Wever family, who settled on what is known as the Kenwell farm property presently owned by Rudd Vanvoorhis. When a tannery was built, more settlers came, and Wevertown became a village.

The tannery was in operation between 1833 and 1885. Built by two men from Massachusetts, it created employment for men and a market for bark and farm produce. Products could be taken to Glens Falls by horse and wagon and hides brought back for tanning.

Philip Moston purchased the property and in 1888 started building a dam and sawmill. In 1913 the Moston business was purchased by T. C. Murphy and it became known as T. C. Murphy Lumber Company. At Timothy Murphy's death in 1925, his son, James Murphy, managed the mill and established a retail lumber and building supply store. Mr. Murphy sold the business to George Van Voorhis in August 1962. After his death in 1982, Rudd Van Voorhis, his son, operated the business.

The village school was built about 1837 and was called the Factory school. It closed in 1952 and was purchased by the lumber company. Across from the schoolhouse was a harness shop and the tannery scales. East of the tannery buildings was a carpenter shop.

While the tannery was in operation there were two hotels in Wevertown. One was built sometime before 1860 on the site of Murphy's employee's parking lot while about the same time another hotel was built on the corners of Route 8 and Route 28. This hotel building burned in 1919.

John Hodgson was the first postmaster when the post office was established in 1859, and he was succeeded by Mr. Noble who also ran a general merchandise store. In 1882 an upstairs was added, and the I. O. O. F. lodge met there.

In 1879 the Wevertown Methodist Church was first organized. Before the church was built services were held for many years the former home of Rudd VanVoorhis.

The first church of any kind in the town of Johnsbury was the Dutch Reformed Church erected in Wevertown in 1822 near the cemetery fronting Route 28. As the group was unable to find a pastor, some joined other religious groups or moved away. In 1835 the Baptists finished the building and occupied it until it was abandoned and torn down in the 1870s.

Gilchrist built at his own expense the first suspension bridge across the Hudson River, uniting the towns of Chester and Johnsbury. The bridge opened with a picnic on September 8, 1871. The abutments and cables from this first suspension bridge, built before bridge at Riverside, are all that remain of the bridge.

It was in the 1870s that four men each put up \$100 to start a Catholic church. Before they had a building of their own, Wevertown Catholics gathered in the home of William Dillon when a priest would come from St. Mary's in Glens Falls to say Mass and perform marriages and baptisms. Mr. Dillon, John Anderson, Sr., Michael Breen and another unidentified man were the benefactors who put up the money, and Electa Waddell for \$10 deeded the lot where the church was built in the shadow of Mill Mountain near the intersection of Today's Routes 8 and 28.

How or why St. Charles Borromeo was selected as patron saint of the Wevertown Catholic Church will probably never be known. Charles of Borromeo was Cardinal of Milan and performed heroic work during the plague epidemic in the mid-1500s. Father Roger Ward was made pastor of St. James in North Creek in 1887 and Wevertown and Chestertown became mission churches.

Calvary Bible Church was built by members of its congregation and the first service held March 5, 1978. Previously, under the leadership of Rev. M. A. Butler, several area couples met for home Bible studies beginning in 1975. Regular church services were later held in the former North Creek Fire House. Rev. Wayne Schoonmaker has been the pastor since July 1981.

It is believed that the first bank in northern Warren County was started in Wevertown when in 1845 a bank charter was granted to the Warren County Bank of Johnsbury. Linus B. Barnes, who owned the tannery at the time, was

the banker and it is believed the bank was in the tannery office. The bank closed in 1860 when Barnes sold the tannery to the Humphreys.

The Wevertown Volunteer Fire Company was organized May 16, 1949, following a meeting of 15 Wevertown citizens at the home of Lester Monroe. The firehouse was erected in 1951 with two stalls for trucks and a large cellar for meetings. An addition was built in 1985 to add another truck and provide a meeting room in the original building.