

H. Steuber & Son

by Lynne Belluscio

On Friday, Terry asked me if I had seen the posting for the Estate Sale at the Stockdale house at 42 East Main Street. No I hadn't, but I looked over her shoulder at the computer and saw the "H. Steuber" signs in the barn. H. Steuber was Henry Steuber and his son Lewis lived in the Stockdale house, so it made sense that the signs were in that barn. Although the prices of the signs were rather steep, I decided that it would be a shame for those signs to leave LeRoy, so the Historical Society bought both of them.

The long one is 16 feet long and I hope there will be room for it above the bookcases in the library. The other shorter one, I hope will fit in the lower hallway in the Academic Building. In the meantime, I am searching through all our photographs to see if I can find these signs on buildings.



Henry Steuber

Henry Steuber was born in Germany on June 5, 1828. His biography mentioned that "he received such an education as the common schools of Germany afforded, and served his apprenticeship as a cabinetmaker."

In 1849 he sailed for the United States. The voyage took two and a half months and he settled in Hamilton, in Madison County, NY. He came to LeRoy shortly after and worked for A.C. Burpee. (Will have to do a little research about A.C. Burpee.) Henry's brother George came from Germany in 1852. The two brothers went into the furniture and undertaking business. As was the custom at that time, furniture makers also made coffins and were often listed as undertakers.

In 1859, they opened a second shop in Batavia, but it was destroyed by fire in 1862. (This date may be inaccurate since the Steuber brothers, Henry and George, are listed in the 1869-67 Genesee Country Directory. Their cabinet and undertaking store in Batavia was listed at 74 Main Street.)

They continued their business in LeRoy, but fire destroyed that building in 1868. Undaunted, they rebuilt the LeRoy store located at 50 Main Street. (This building is the site of the Hobbyhorse). At some point the Steubers sold out to R. Miller, who in turn sold to Joy & Williams. Henry Steuber worked for Joy & Williams for two years and then formed a partnership with A.F. Drake which continued until 1872.

In 1888, Henry Steuber moved to the store on the corner of Mill and Main Street. He partnered with his son Frank until Frank died in 1891. Then he partnered with his son Lewis and the business was known as H. Steuber & Son. The large sign can be seen on the building in the photograph of the corner of Mill and Main Streets (where Penuel Christian Fellowship is located today.)

Henry's brother George, who had gone into business for himself, lived on Clay Street and retired in 1900. He died in 1905. Henry died the year before in May 1904. Henry's son, Lewis, continued the business on the corner of Mill Street and in 1943 he established LeRoy's first funeral home in the



Steuber building (with 5 windows) now the Hobby Horse.



The large Steuber & Son sign can be clearly seen in this c. 1909 Seyffer photograph showing the Steuber store on the corner of Main and Mill Street. The photograph was taken after 1909 when the cement bridge was installed and before Main St. was paved.

former home of Thomas Larkin on Trigon Park. Most funerals, up to this time would have been held in family homes, with the deceased being laid out in the front parlor, but this tradition faded, and funeral homes became the norm.

The Steuber Funeral Home eventually became Steuber and Steinmetz. When that funeral home closed, Gary Steinmetz donated the Steuber business records to the Historical Society. They are an invaluable source of information about the deaths of people in LeRoy.



Staircase in the Steuber Store on the corner of Mill & Main. 1940 LeRoy Book (staircase torn out).



Two Steuber signs now at the Historical Society.