



THE SLINGERLAND PRINTING COMPANY - THEN AND NOW

The Slingerland Printing Company was established in 1879 by Cornelius H. Slingerland at its present location on the Albany, Rensselaerville, and Schoharie Plank Road, now known as New Scotland Avenue in the hamlet of Slingerlands. Conveniently located near the Delaware and Hudson Railroad line, the company specialized in printing for the railroad, including timetables and other railroad forms. Posters, election forms, and items like paper, envelopes and twine rounded out the business.

Sometime prior to his death in 1910, Cornelius Slingerland incorporated his business as Slingerland Printing Company. Upon his death, ownership transferred to his daughter Mary Andrews and her husband Dr. Clarence Mullen. Andrew C. Couse, the general manager of the plant received a one percent interest at that time. In 1935, the company was sold to the Burland Printing Company which kept the Slingerland name. By 1946, the building had been converted to apartments.

Currently, the building and grounds are undergoing a major renovation and rehabilitation into 18 units. Many historic details are being retained, including the distinctive, advertising paint on the New Scotland Avenue side of the building.



The Slingerlands Printing Company, circa 1930



Slingerland Printing Company Employees, 1909

The Albany, Rensselaerville, and Schoharie Plank Road

Throughout the 1800's road development was a private undertaking. The state legislature established laws regulating the formation of corporations to develop and maintain turnpikes and later plank roads. The Albany to Schoharie Plank Road, the modern day New Scotland Avenue, was the result of a corporation purchasing the necessary land, constructing the road and then collecting the tolls. A plank road was just that, wood planks were laid over a dirt road to provide a smooth ride. The days of the plank roads were limited. Maintenance proved costly as the wood began deteriorating after a few years. Legislated in 1847, they were gone by 1860.

Other toll roads in Bethlehem include The Albany and Bethlehem Turnpike, The Albany and Delaware Turnpike, the Green County and Albany Turnpike, the South Bethlehem Plank Road and the Albany and Clarksville Plank Road. Can you guess what these roads are called today?

All of these turnpikes and plank roads featured tollgates where fares were collected. Typical fares were five cents for a one horse rig and ten cents for a team or load. Some people didn't have to pay, including those going to religious meetings, funerals, and town meetings. Even with these exceptions, people still tried to avoid paying the toll by "shunpiking" or driving around the toll.



Slingerlands Tollgate Looking West with Slingerlands Printing Company to Left. The Slingerlands Tollgate, located on New Scotland Avenue, was demolished in 1908



Slingerlands Tollgate Looking East with Slingerlands Printing Company to Right



The Slingerland Printing Company Today