

History

The saga of 287 Summit Street continues

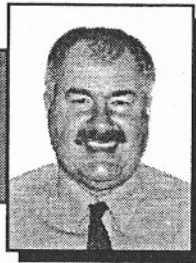
Part two of two

Dan Haggerty and his family live in a fine Victorian house at 287 Summit St. Dan is a well-known community activist, and is continuing a tradition began by one of the previous occupants of the house. Charles Nelson Daniels, one of Willimantic's leading citizens, had lived at 287 Summit St. between 1888 and 1903.

In 1903, Sen. Orville H. Platt of Connecticut appointed him United States trade and industry consul at Sheffield, in Yorkshire, England. Daniels relocated to Sheffield and lived there for eight years. In 1911, he was appointed American consul at Sherbrooke, Canada.

Daniels died on Dec. 17, 1916, at his daughter's house in Southbridge, Mass. He had originally suffered a heart attack at Sherbrooke in June 1915. Daniels had recurrent heart trouble, and moved to his daughter's house in May 1916.

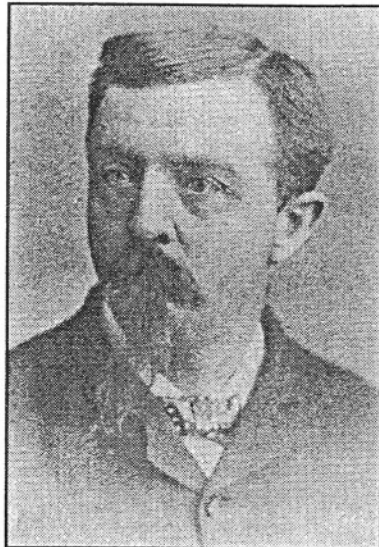
Robert Lansing, the secretary of state, reluctantly accepted his resignation from the American consular service. Daniels was a



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prominent mason, and a past master of Windham's Eastern Star Lodge, a member of the Trinity Chapter of the St. John's Commandery, and a charter member of the Sphinx Temple, Mystic Shrine, in Hartford, a charter member of the Obwebetuck Lodge, International Order of Oddfellows; a member of the Willimantic Council Royal Arcanum and the Willimantic Lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen.

Daniels sold 287 Summit St. to Merrill H. Jones on March 29, 1911. Bertha Mowry, a "housekeeper," the widow of a local real estate agent, Samuel G. Mowry, occupied 287 until 1917, when Jones and his family moved in. Merrill H. Jones was born at Worcester, Mass., on March 5,



Charles Daniels, Willimantic's former postmaster

1860. He came to Willimantic in 1884, and established a well-known livery stable.

Jones supplied the horses that pulled President Theodore Roosevelt's carriage through Willimantic during his 1902 visit to the city.

Jones later worked for the city of Willimantic, and was in charge

of the installation of sidewalks. He was president and treasurer of the Jones Auto Trucking Co., and ran a local taxi service.

In 1919, his extensive garage and livery stables at 44-46 Union St. were gutted by fire, and 11 automobiles and several carriages were destroyed.

Despite the losses, Jones continued to be one of the city's most successful businessmen and real estate dealers.

He also headed the contracting firm of Merrill H. Jones & Sons. He died at 287 Summit St., on Dec. 18, 1934. After her husband's death, Anna Jones disposed of his extensive real estate holdings in Willimantic and Windham.

She sold 287 Summit St. on Aug. 18, 1938 to the Willimantic Building and Loan Association and moved to New Haven.

The house remained vacant until 1940, when John P. Mahoney, the manager of the Metropolitan Life Assurance Co. (915 Main St.), moved in. Shortly afterwards, George H. Sypher, a chauffeur at American Thread,

took over the rental and lived there until 1956.

Sypher was born in Willimantic in 1885, and was employed at American Thread from March 4, 1907, until his retirement on Jan. 6, 1956.

Once retired, Sypher moved to 121 Bridge St. He died there on Oct. 10, 1962. He was survived by his wife, Julia (Robinson) Sypher, and six daughters; Mary Sypher, Mrs. Laura Cone, Mrs. Marion Elliot, Mrs. Phyllis Martineau, Mrs. Amy Lada, and Mrs. Olive Breault, all of Willimantic.

Subsequent occupants of 287 Summit St. were Charles Barons, a material handler at Brand Rex (1962), Rossario Lessard (1964), Leonard Desjardin, a laboratory technician at Windham Community Memorial Hospital (1966-1974) and Robert W. Meshanic, a dean at Eastern Connecticut State College.

Next Christmas, when you visit the Haggerty house to view the light show, consider the rich social history of 287 Summit St.

Log onto threadcity.com to discover more interesting facts about Willimantic's rich history.

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