

KIRKLAND TOWN LIBRARY



Rebecca

1914 - New York City

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Clinton Teachers Association

Rebecca

Clinton, N.Y. in the 1910s

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Clinton was a small, rural community where about 1,250 people lived. There were many farms outside the village but most people resided on the same streets that surround the Village Green today. There was a knitting mill near the Oriskany Creek, an iron ore mine on Brimfield Street and the springs in nearby Franklin Springs produced popular mineral water and soft drinks. A family living here in 1914 could buy groceries, shoes, medicine, jewelry in the local shops and even go to the silent movies. There were six churches and a public library, the same library we use today. A favorite summer activity was swimming in the Oriskany Creek.

School

Rebecca and her brothers and sisters attended a large public school in the City with many other children. Some of them were immigrants who had arrived in the United States from countries such as Germany, Ireland, Poland, or Italy. By 1914, children from the village of Clinton and nearby farms all attended the Clinton Union School and Academy on Marvin Street. Teachers in the large brick building taught grades 1-12 and boys and girls used separate entrances. At Rebecca's school, there was no playground, so the

teachers sometimes took the children to the roof for recess. Students at the school on Marvin Street were lucky to be able to play games like hopscotch, baseball and volleyball in the grassy yard next to the building.



Miss Moore's Second Grade Class, 1913; Clinton Historical Society



Clinton Union School and Academy on Marvin Street, 1893; Clinton Historical Society

Entertainment

A favorite family activity in Clinton was to attend the events at the Scollard Opera House on the Village Green. It was a community center where school graduation, musicals, recitals, and movies were presented. The first movies would have been silent films, with only organ music being played. By the late 1920s, you could watch a “talkie” for 15 cents, or 10 cents for a child. Movies changed each week and sometimes more than 100 people would fill the hall to watch an exciting film.



Scollard Opera House and F.J. Root & Bros. Drug and Grocery Store on West Park Row n.d.; Clinton Historical Society

Shopping

Rebecca's father owned a shoe store where she sometimes helped her father and even sold some of her sewing projects. Clinton's shoe store was owned by George Burdick. He sold shoes for children and adults and the average pair of children's shoes cost about \$ 1.75.



*George Burdick's Shoe Store, Mill's Block, West Park Row; circa 1915;
Clinton Historical Society*

Sylvan Beach

Life in New York City was exciting with many things to do. Rebecca had wonderful memories of spending the day at an amusement park on Coney Island. A child in Clinton could have a similar experience at nearby Sylvan Beach, which was even called “The Coney Island of Central New York!”.



<http://sylvanbeachny.com/about/history-of-sylvan-beach/>

The family might have driven or even taken the train from Clinton to the station on Oneida Lake, about 30 miles away. There was a “rollie coaster,” a carousel, rides called “Cave of the Winds” and “Ocean Wave.” There was even a high diving platform where daring men and women could dive into Oneida Lake.

Traveling

Rebecca lived in the City, but if she wanted to visit Clinton, she could have taken the train from New York and disembarked in Clinton at the passenger terminal on Kirkland Avenue. As many as nine trains arrived every day. Some passengers came to shop, or visit friends and family, others to work.



*Ontario & Western Railroad Passenger Station, Kirkland Avenue circa 1900;
Clinton Historical Society*

Suggested Reading

Juvenile Fiction

Beyond the Western Sea Book
One: The Escape From Home by
Avi (J Fic Avi)

Beyond the Western Sea Book
Two: Lord Kirkle's Money by Avi
(J Fic Avi)

Dreams in the Golden Country:
the Diary of Zipporah Feldmen by
Kathryn Lasky (J Fic Las, Dear
America Series)

An American Spring: Sofia's Im-
migrant Diary, Book Three By
Kathryn Lasky (J Fic Las, America
Series)

Home at Last: Sofia's Immigrant Di-
ary, Book Two By Kathryn Lasky (J
Fic Las, My America Series)

Hope In My Heart Sofia's Immi-
grant Diary, Book One by Kathryn
Lasky (J Fic Las, My America
Series)

The Journal of Finn Reardon:
a Newsie by Susan Campbell
Bartoletti (J Fic Bar, My Name is
America Series)

Under Copp's Hill by Katherine
Ayres (J Fic Ayr, American Girl
History Mysteries)

Voyage of the Great Titanic: the
Diary of Margaret Ann Brady by
Ellen Emerson White (J Fic Whi,
Dear America Series)

Nonfiction

Emma's Poem: the Voice of the
Statue of Liberty by Linda Glaser
(J 811 Gla)

Journey to Ellis Island: How My
Father Came to America by Carol
Bierman (J 974.71 Bie)

Young Adult

Letters From Rifka by Karen Hesse
(YA Hes)

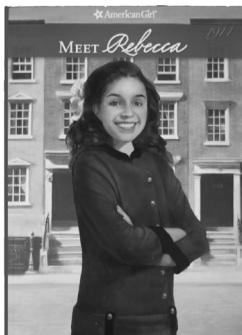
Easy

Peppe the Lamplighter by Elisa
Barton (E Bar)

Rebecca's Accessories



Hat



Book



Shawl and pin



Pajamas

Thank you to **Clinton Teachers Association** for sponsoring

Rebecca

To learn how you can sponsor a doll or its accessories contact Anne Debraggio, Director of Kirkland Town Library, at: adebraggio@midyork.org.

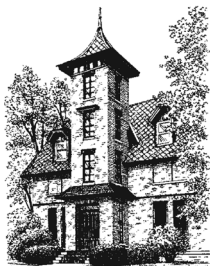
To learn more about the program visit <http://kirklandtownlibrary.org/americangirldolls/>



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