



Our walls can talk.
Hear what they're saying.

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Onondaga Historical Assoc.
Onondaga Historical Association
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Syracuse NY 13202-2164



ur walls can talk. Hear what they say.



f these walls could talk ...

You've heard that expression a hundred times, but there's never an answer.

Until now.

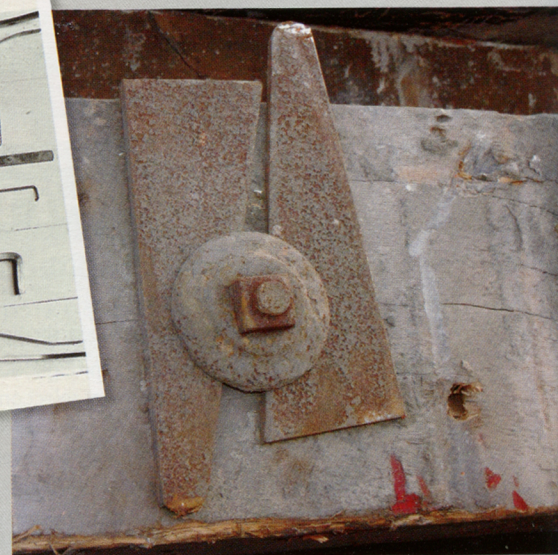
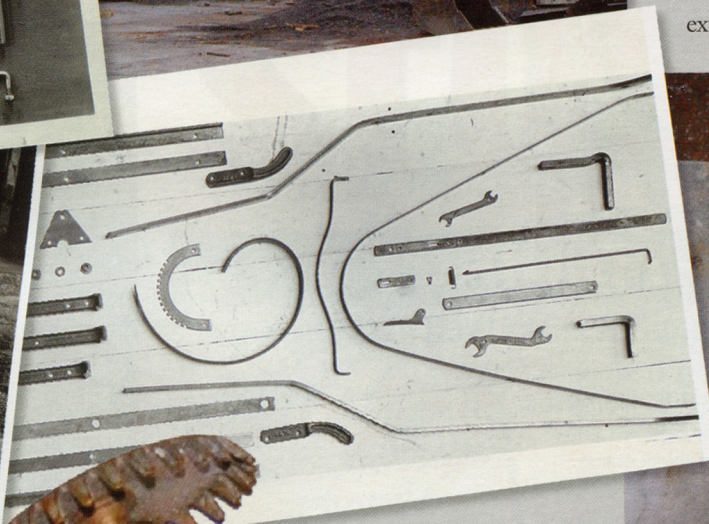
WCNY's new Broadcast and Education Center is being built in the former Case Supply Building in downtown Syracuse. When construction workers were "deconstructing" buildings that will be replaced or renovated, they found several photos that were encased in a third-floor room in one of the buildings along Wyoming Street, said Jon Zemotel, project superintendent from the Hueber-Breuer Construction Co.

The photos tell the story of the Syracuse Chilled Plow Co., which moved into the block in 1878 and became a national producer of agricultural implements. The company used a unique chilling process to make harder and more durable tools such as the horse-drawn plow, which was the backbone of America's agricultural economy in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

By the 1890s, the company employed 225 workers and contained floor space equal to five acres. In 1910, it was producing 100,000 agricultural implements a year that were shipped all over the world. The company slogan – "The sun never sets on a Syracuse Plow" – reflected the company's worldwide appeal.

In 1911, the Deere Co. of Illinois, maker of the famous John Deere brand, purchased the Chilled Plow's five acres of buildings. The Deere Co. closed the plant in 1955.

The photos you see on these pages – one is dated Aug. 9, 1923 – were found in the walls and provide examples of the extraordinary craftsmanship that



occurred within those walls. Looking at the photos, it's easy to imagine the buildings filled with workers who toiled daily to make superior implements that were helping churn agricultural economies across the world.

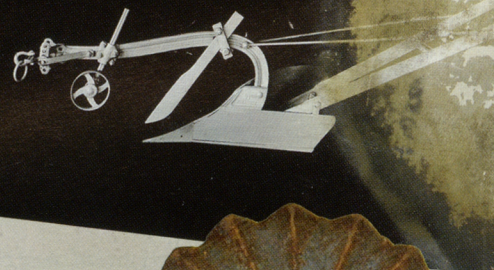
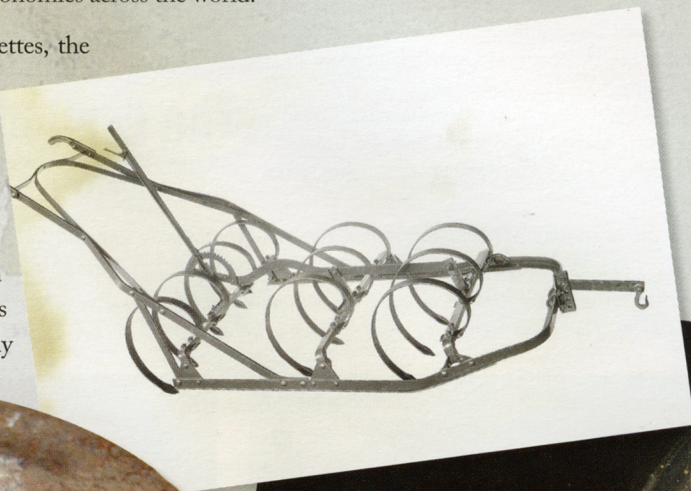
Incidentally, everything else you see on these pages (the decorative rosettes, the thick wooden washer, the sprinkler head, etc.) also came from the Case Supply Building. We at CNY Connected would like to say thanks to all of the workers at the site who have given WCNY access to these artifacts and information about what they discovered.

Otey Marshall, a Hueber-Breuer Vice President who's in charge of the WCNY project, said construction workers also found an unopened safe in one of the rooms. Paul Zemotel, assistant project superintendent (and Jon's father), said the safe was discovered in a room that was more structurally sound than the others because it was encased in concrete and had fire doors. There are plans to exhibit the safe at WCNY's new facility, which is scheduled to open in October 2012.

What's in the safe? We don't know yet, but this much is certain: It has another story to tell.

To learn about the "deconstruction" of the Case Supply Building and how the materials are being recycled throughout the community, please turn to page 28.

Information about the Syracuse Chilled Plow Co. from the Onondaga Historical Association's "Leaving a Legacy - A History of Syracuse's Near West Side."



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