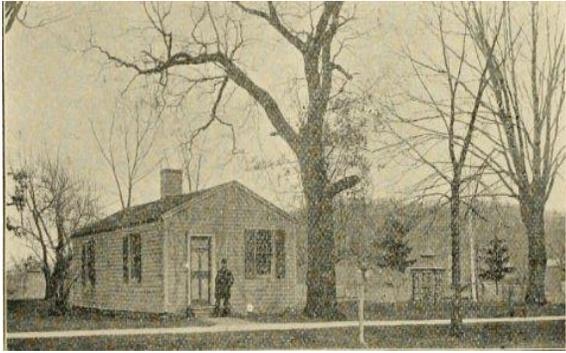


Second Home: The Eno Law Office



Eno Law Office, 1894

In 1814, Stephen Eno had built a small law office on his property for \$300. This law office is reputed to be one of the oldest free-standing law offices left in New York State. It was here that Stephen Eno established his personal library of law books.

By 1867 we know the town library was sharing space in the Eno Law Office with the Enos' personal law library, and in 1868 Stephen Eno's grandson, Frank Eno, became the librarian, the same year he was admitted to the bar.

This was a tumultuous time in the life of the library. A 1935 opinion piece in *The Pine Plains Register-Herald* referred to the year 1867 as “The Difficulties in 1867”, reprinting an appeal from the editor that had been published in August of that year in *The Pine Plains Herald*. The problem was a lack of funding. Subscribers were not paying their dues, and the library was not bringing in enough new subscribers to keep it going. It seems that the .50 annual dues were a hardship for many, even among some leaders of the community. Allowing for inflation this would be \$14.50 in 2018.

One has only to see “forfeited” written on page after page of subscribers' accounts in Stephen Eno's record book from the library's earlier years to know that there was a serious problem, and that it had been there for some time. Finally, in 1870, the unthinkable happened. The library closed. Over 600 books were carefully packed away in boxes, perhaps permanently.



Frank Eno and Family, ca. 1895

There is a tradition that the deputy postmaster, Henry Parker, was the “custodian of the books” for a time, so it seems likely that while the library was closed the boxes were stored in the post office a few doors down from the Eno Law Office. This is also a fair assumption given that the post office is where the library was located when it re-opened in 1874.

Meanwhile, the Eno Law Office continued to be used by the Eno family of lawyers. Frank Eno, who became one of the leading citizens of Pine Plains, amassed a personal law library that had a reputation for being one of the finest in the area.