

## Attempts to change the name or status of McKownville

Failed petition to rename and incorporate it in 1917 - as Village of Witbeck  
clipping from Altamont Enterprise 30 March 1917, page 1

### VILLAGE OF WITBECK?

**Petition for Incorporation of New Village Near Witbeck's Hotel in Town of Guilderland Held Faulty by County Judge George Addington.**

For several years the residents of that part of the country surrounding Witbeck's hotel on the western turnpike, near Albany, have looked upon that section as the village of Witbeck's. Last week they learned that it was not a village at all, in spite of the fact that the Witbeck family would like to have it made so. Last week County Judge Addington reversed a decision made by Supervisor F. J. Van Wormer in which he said the petition signed by several residents, and requesting that a village be made of the Witbeck section, was not faulty. Attorneys Dugan and Bookstein, retained by some residents who did not want the village of Witbeck's created, contended that the petition was faulty in that \$50 was not deposited at the time of the filing of the proposition, and further that the petition did not cite the word "adult." Judge Addington ruled their contention was right.

The title of the case was "The Matter of the Incorporation of the Village of Witbeck's, Out of Part of the Town of Guilderland." For months a hot fight had been waged by those in favor of the proposition and those who opposed it. The opponents declared that the entire proceedings was begun by Benjamin Witbeck for his father who conducts the Witbeck hotel. They further claimed that it was a scheme to have a space of country set aside to be ruled over by the various members of the Witbeck family of whom there are many in the vicinity.

According to law the proposition must first go before the supervisor of the district who in this case was F. J. Van Wormer. This hearing was held several weeks ago and from all accounts it was a lively session. Attorneys Bookstein and Dugan appeared as did several of the residents who were against incorporating the village. The lawyers set forth their arguments but the supervisor could not see them and decided that the petition was not faulty. The Witbeck clan was jubilant. The attorneys immediately appealed. When the matter came up before Judge Addington the Witbecks were represented by Attorney John J. Haggerty. The judge, in a written opinion decided that the petition was faulty and that the village could not be incorporated unless another petition was secured.

The real battle has just begun, it is said. The Witbecks will have to begin all over, and according to several residents it is doubtful whether or not they can get sufficient signers, as some of those who signed the first petition have gone over to the other side. They realize, the opponents claim, that a village will mean increased taxation and a rearrangement of the school system.

If the supporters of the village succeed in getting a petition that is not faulty and the matter is passed upon by the supervisor, it will have to go before the voters of the district. The opponents declare that they will win in the end, but the other side is just as confident of victory.

## **Village of Witbeck?**

### **Petition for Incorporation of New Village Near Witbeck's Hotel in Town of Guilderland Held Faulty by County Judge George Addington**

For several years the residents of that part of the country surrounding Witbeck's hotel on the western turnpike, near Albany, have looked upon that section as the village of Witbeck's. Last week they learned that it was not a village at all, in spite of the fact that the Witbeck family would like to have it made so. Last week County Judge George Addington reversed a decision made by Supervisor F.J. Van Wormer in which he said the petition signed by several residents, and requesting that a village be made of the Witbeck section, was not faulty. Attorneys Dugan and Bookstein, retained by some residents who did not want the village of Witbeck's created, contended that the petition was faulty in that \$50 was not deposited at the time of filing of the proposition, and further that the petition did not cite the word "adult". Judge Addington ruled their contention was right.

The title of the case was "The Matter of the Incorporation of the Village of Witbeck's, Out of Part of the Town of Guilderland". For months a hot fight had been waged by those in favor of the proposition and those who opposed it. The opponents declared that the entire proceedings was begun by Benjamin Witbeck for his father who conducts the Witbeck hotel. They further claimed that it was a scheme to have a space of country set aside to be ruled over by the various members of the Witbeck family of whom there are many in the vicinity.

According to law the proposition must first go before the supervisor of the district who in this case was F.J. Van Wormer. This hearing was held several weeks ago and from all accounts it was a lively session. Attorneys Bookstein and Dugan appeared as did several of the residents who were against incorporating the village. The lawyers set forth their arguments but the supervisor could not see them and decided that the petition was not faulty. The Witbeck clan was jubilant. The attorneys immediately appealed. When the matter came up before Judge Addington the Witbecks were represented by Attorney John J. Haggerty. The judge, in a written opinion decided that the petition was faulty and that the village could not be incorporated unless another petition was secured.

The real battle has just begun, it is said. The Witbecks will have to begin all over, and according to several residents it is doubtful whether or not they can get sufficient signers, as some of those who signed the first petition have gone over to the other side. They realize, the opponents claim, that a village will mean increased taxation and a rearrangement of the school system.

If the supporters of the village succeed in getting a petition that is not faulty and the matter is passed upon by the supervisor, it will have to go before the voters of the district. The opponents declare that they will win in the end, but the other side is just as confident of victory.