

Sullivan County in the Eighties
By Fred A. Van Orden, Kauneonga Lake, N.Y.

The time that the poem refers to is in the 1880's

I lived in Sullivan County in the eighties long ago
Where the Delaware, the Neversink and Mongaup Rivers flow
When Tanneries and grist mills were busy on their banks
And up and down saw mills were sawing boards and planks
When many covered bridges were spanning their streams
Built of rugged planks, timbers and heavy wooden beams
When the Eighty-eight blizzard covered things deep in snow
I remember Sullivan County in the Eighties long ago

I lived in Sullivan County in the Eighties long ago
When the best mode of travel was by Horse and Tallyho
When Horses mules and oxen did the heavy hauling jobs
Hitched to stone boats, Wagons or heavy logging Bobs
When lights were by candles and lamp lights by oil
And wood was used for heat to make the kettle boil
When fire places burned with a warm and cheerful glow
I remember Sullivan County in the eighties long ago

I lived in Sullivan County in the eighties long ago
When we had pleasure fishing with friends we got to know
When the Beaverville, Willowemoc and ten mile river streams
Were swarming with fish and were fisherman's fondest dreams
When ponds, Lakes and streams were full of bass and trout
And anglers who were fishing were pleased to pull them out
And ice fishing was very good where ever you wished to go
I remember Sullivan County in the eighties long ago

I lived in Sullivan County in the eighties long ago
When grain was cut by cradle and scythes used to mow
When fanning mills cleaned grain threshed with wooden flails
When farms had many fences built of stone and wooden rails
When streams turned water wheels that gave the needed power
To turn stones to grind grain to rye and buckwheat flour
When hay was drying in the fields piled neatly row on row
I remember Sullivan County in the eighties long ago

I lived in Sullivan County in the eighties long ago
When farm work was done by hand with shovel fork and ho
When bread, pies, cakes and puddings were oven baked at home
On wood stove baking ovens and ovens made of stone
When fresh buttermilk was cooling on the cellar shelves

And was free to every one who wished to help themselves
When pancakes raised in batter pots made the syrup flow
I remember Sullivan County in the eighties long ago

I lived in Sullivan County in the eighties long ago
When seeds were broadcast when land was right to sow
When cream churned to butter was shaped in golden rolls
While being worked with ladies and washed in wooded bow
When spinning wheels being used to spin wool into yarn
And fringe mittens, socks and scarves were knit on every farm
When Leggings, felt boots and rubbers were worn in heavy snow
I remember Sullivan County in the eighties long ago