

Daskam House on Broad Street from Rear Yard



Back in the seventies and early eighties, the townspeople of Stamford living in the vicinity of Broad St. almost adopted a Japanese custom by celebrating yearly the blossoming of a wisteria vine. This vine grew on the easterly side of the house then occupied by James Daskam. The house is still standing, now within the shadow of one of the prominent bank buildings and is shown in the artist's drawing.

From the backyard of this old homestead, one may still see sections of this vine and the exact spot where the gnarled trunk springs from the ground. Even in earlier days it reached the roof top and, in June, it adorned the house with drooping violet sprays of wisteria in full blossom. Then undoubtedly its annual display was more spectacular;

for the vine had the full play of sun, there being at that time no porch on the Daskam house.

It is said, indeed, that when the porch was built, there was a general deep concern on the part of the townsfolk lest this beautiful growth be too shaded or possibly destroyed. This was not the case, however. When the time came for building on the porch, it was so constructed that the main trunk and branches of the wisteria had free play through the new woodwork and the vine with its fragrant purple blossoms grew intact.

According to old tales, people watched in advance for this vine to bloom and there was great excitement when the days came at last when it was in full flower. The writer has also been told that the well-known authoress, Josephine Dodge Daskam, a

daughter of Sawyer Daskam, afterward abandoned her house next door and did much of her writing on the porch of the James Daskam house so that she might enjoy this same beautiful wisteria. Miss Daskam, who married Seldon Bacon in 1903, was a graduate of Smith College and first attracted her reading public by her book entitled "Smith College Stories."

In those years Broad St., where both the James Daskam and the Sawyer Daskam house still stand, was a typical residential neighborhood. It had its attractive homes and its New England elms drooping over a dirt road. It is from the backyard of the little Daskam house as it is shown in the sketch above, that one may still recall an earlier period.

—Whitman Bailey