

## T H E Q U A R T E R L Y

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### MYSTERY MASTER OF THE VIOLIN

by

David F. Lane

At 2 o'clock in the morning of January 19, 1881, there died in the Jefferson County almshouse on the outskirts of Watertown, New York, a man wrapped in a dark veil of mystery so thick that it has never been penetrated during the eighty ensuing years. Neither was it penetrated during his known lifetime.

Penniless, a veritable vagabond who wandered from place to place, pitied, admired, a man without friends, he would long since have been completely forgotten if that were all. But it was not, for he was a human paradox.

Unkempt, personally unattractive, he was unfortunately a victim of a peculiar mental complex which rendered him so moody and, taciturn to such an inarticulate degree that he disclosed nothing as to the identity of his parents, the place of his birth and only contradictory fragments of his early life. Yet it is said that he could speak several languages fluently.

Despite the cheap and slovenly clothing which covered his body his marvelous talent, antithetically, stands forever illumined and lustrous in the white samite of Musical genius which ranked him with Paganini, Ole Bull and others of the world's greatest violin virtuosi.

This man was Nick Goodall, whose fame America's noted novelist Irving Bacheller helped to revive posthumously in that best-seller of 1900, "Eben Holden, a Tale of the North Country." And because of that Nick Goodall's ashes today repose in a modestly marked grave in Watertown's old Arsenal Street cemetery, while his plain, unembellished but fine-toned violin is a prized relic in the museum of the Jefferson County Historical Society in Watertown.

Nick Goodall was probably not much more than thirty when the sombre shadow of Death began to hover over him and, weakened physically and mentally, he was committed to the Jefferson County almshouse where, during approximately a year's stay, his condition gradually declined and the time came when he removed the bridge and strings from his precious fiddle, shut it in its black case and placed it under his bed.



At 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the day following his death his funeral was held. Rev. Albert D. Danker, rector of Grace Episcopal church, officiated, and had it not been for the late Charles G. Lewis and other sympathetic musicians in Watertown who raised a small fund, it is likely that his body would have been consigned to the potter's field.

It is said that hundreds including the old City Band, at some of whose concerts he had played, joined the funeral cortege. And at 4:30 his casket was placed in the city vault by the old cemetery at the rear of Trinity Episcopal church which then stood on the north side of Watertown's Court street a short distance below the site of the present city hall.

As for his violin, it was raffled by the Jefferson county board of supervisors and won by Supervisor Fred G. Croissant of the town of LeRay. From him it was obtained by Charles D. Bingham, mayor of Watertown at a later date. After "Eben Holden" came from the presses in the summer of 1900 Mr. Bingham gave the instrument to Mr. Bacheller, who placed it in a glass case and had it in his home as a cherished memento. It is said that Mr. Bingham was instrumental in 1903 in having the ashes of Nick Goodall transferred from a remote and barren corner of the Arsenal Street cemetery to a more desirable location in the same cemetery, and in having the modest monument erected which now marks the gifted violinist's present resting place.

Dead at 32, Nick Goodall who, with his magic bow, had charmed audiences in Boston, New York, Salem, Elmira and in Washington, D.C., was even believed by Mr. Bacheller to have been in Ford's Theatre that tragic night of April 14, 1865, when John Wilkes Booth shot President Lincoln as he and Mrs. Lincoln sat in their box awaiting the final act of "Our American Cousin," in which Edward A. Sothorn and Laura Keane starred, for in the orchestra conducted by William Wuthers, Nick's father was first violinist.

Nick, a lad of 16 at the time, naturally would have attended the performance for that reason as well as for the reason that President and Mrs. Lincoln, before whom he had played and captivated with his wonderful music, were to attend the performance, Mr. Bacheller theorized.

He further theorized that the tragedy so shocked the two sensitive Goodalls that the father died not long afterward but, before death, placed Nick in some nearby asylum only to ultimately be released to roam the country mentally disturbed, but with mind never divested of that miraculous ability to enchant with music of such beauteous quality as to be beyond adequate description. However, his mentality, wrecked in other respects, forever foreclosed him from the ambitious continental tour which his father, as his impresario, is said to have planned for him and which would have made his name great up and down and across the land.

Instead, the balance of his life was down to the very bottom of the depth of pathetic contrast and during his last few weeks he not only became listless but oblivious to everything around him.

A. W. Wheelock, superintendent of the almshouse, is credited with having related that during the close of Nick's life an elderly, well-dressed stranger registered at the Hotel Woodruff one day and enquired where Nick Goodall could be found. Upon being directed, he came to the county house but Nick, with face buried in his hands, seemed utterly unaware of his presence and insensible to his words. Informed that the precious violin was underneath the bed, the stranger removed it, strung it up, tightened and rosined the bow and began to play.



NICK AND HIS BELOVED FIDDLE

This instrument is now in the Jefferson County Historical Society's collection in Watertown.

ing immense audiences which would have accorded him the acclaim and the wealth that have been lavished upon an Elman, a Heifetz, or a Menuin, present day masters of the violin.

One reported attempt to harness him for a concert to be organized for a recital in a city of about 15,000 population turned into the usual failure. That was when Milan Lewis dressed him up with an appropriate black suit and top hat, advertised the affair, sold tickets and collected an audience. Nick's performance delivered all of the melodic beauty of which his magic ability was capable. But, as had so often happened before when the beauty was so great that it overwhelmed him, he began saying "Jesus Christ, ain't that beautiful!" Shocked by his blasphemous ejaculation, women and many of the pious men in the audience hastily left the hall. That ended plans for any further efforts to produce more recitals.

In "Eben Holden" Irving Bacheller recounted a parallel situation. It will be recalled that one summer day Elder Whitmarsh went to the home of David and Elizabeth Brower at Faraway to announce the forthcoming strawberry festival at the White Church. "I've had a wonderful experience," says the elder. "I've discovered a great genius - a wandering fiddler, and I shall try to bring him to play for me." "A fiddler! Why, elder, you astound me!" says Mrs. Brower.

"Nothing but sacred music," he countered, lifting his hand. "I heard him play all the grand things today - 'Rock of Ages,' 'Nearer My God to Thee,' 'The Marseillaise', 'Home, Sweet Home.' Lifted me off my feet! I've heard the great masters in New York and London, but no greater player than this man."

That overcame the protests of Mrs. Brower. The festival arrived. Nick came with his fiddle. He sat silent. The elder announced him, but he made no move or

"Nick, don't you remember this? Don't you remember how we used to play it together?" he said. At the first of the lovely strains Nick roused up. And when the piece was partly finished the stranger passed the instrument over to Nick, who finished it and followed with a number of other selections so beautifully that the stranger was so touched that he wept, and departed without disclosing his identity. He was never heard from again. Superintendent Wheelock conjectured that the stranger was Nick's father, for Nick had said that when he was a boy in knee-breeches he and his father often played duets.

At the age of eight, a child prodigy, he had made a continental tour. But dominated by some undiagnosed mental hex during the fifteen years before his passing from this worldly scene Nick had wandered from place to place, shabbily dressed, wearing a strip of red flannel like a stock about his neck and another strip around one wrist, but caressing his beloved violin and the black case in which he carried it with all the love a fond parent might bestow upon his child.

But for the mental complex which made him impregnable against management or control he could have toured the world in recitals attract-

sign of response. Again the elder announced sacred music. Finally Nick thumbed the strings, bent his ear down, drew his bow across - a great chord swelled out, but it wasn't from a hymn. It was from "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and some of his hearers left. He continued with "Champagne Charlie," "Up In a Balloon," "The Devil's Trill," "Pop Goes the Weasel," "Rock Me to Sleep Mother," "Rock of Ages," "Home, Sweet Home."

"But for his sullen temper that broke into wild, unmeaning profanity at times, Nick Goodall would have made fame and fortune," remarks Bacheller, and adds that he came out, went into the little churchyard under the moon, began playing 'Come Ye Disconsolate Where'er Ye Languish.'

"Loud, impassioned chords rose into the moonlit sky and sank to a faint whisper of melody, when we could hear the gossip of the birds in the belfry and under the eaves; trembling tones of supplication, wailing notes of longing and regret swept through the silent avenues of the churchyard, with their elegance. For the first time we heard the music of Handel, of Mendelssohn, of Paganini, and felt its power, then knowing neither name nor theme. Hour by hour he played on for the mere joy of it. When we shook hands with the elder and tiptoed to the buggy he was still playing."

Nick Goodall played only when the spirit moved him. He cared not whether he had an audience or whether he was sitting alone with his back to a big tree at the edge of a wood playing for his own pleasure because lovely music was the soul of him and for the enchantment of the birds. But no end of pleading or threatening would stir the muse when he was not in the mood.

However there was one occasion when a threat - rather cruel threat - did drive him. It was when the late Silas J. Snell secured him for the Davis Sewing Machine band concert at Washington Hall in Watertown. Came time for Nick to play and he stood backstage looking out a window stubbornly refusing response to all entreaties. Finally Snell called another member of the band and they began talking within ear-shot of Nick about a 200 foot shaft outside the building. And when Snell threatened to shoot him and hurl his body down the shaft, Nick dropped on his knees and begged for his life. The ruse worked. He went out and the result was music of a beauty his audience had never heard before.

But his mastery was not confined to the violin. He could play a piano as well and it is recounted that one afternoon when he was scheduled to play a program he saw a piano in the room, laid his violin on the floor, turned to the pianoforte and completely overwhelmed his audience.

Said The Watertown Times the morning that Nick Goodall died: "The eccentric and wonderful violinist known throughout the United States as Nick Goodall, breathed his last and his soul fled from this world of trouble and woe." \* \* \* "He was a great artist." \* \* \* "No one can imagine the delight with which lovers of good music have sat listening." \* \* \* "We think he deserved a place among the list of great violinists who have passed away."

Irving Bacheller said: "Patrick Gilmore and Thomas F. Ryan of the Mendelssohn Quintet in Boston - both eminent musicians - wrote of his playing with great enthusiasm."

The New York Graphic in a substantial article published some time after Nick Goodall's death commented on this unkempt artist with the red flannel rag around his neck and his feet encased in leather laced walking shoes, whom strangers often took for a tramp, one who could stay for days in one place and then mysteriously

vanish. "Yet he was one of the few men on this planet worth waiting for. When at the flood of his inspiration, violin at shoulder, he was a fool transformed. The divinity of music poured her ideas through his poor brain the more freely inasmuch as he had no perceptions of his own in the way. His playing had soul - that quality which so evades analysis, and yet is to great music what imagination is to poetry.

"In the death of this friendless vagabond a great artist passed away, who at least from a professional point of view, was worth to rank with the great violinists of other days, and to shake hands in the shadowy world with Ole Bull and Paganini."

Another article said: "The listeners soon realized that no ordinary being stood before them. Fired with the wonderful spirit of his music which possessed him, the player seemed to forget everything but his instrument. And such music! Those who listened were spellbound. Perfect quiet reigned, and every ear was intent on catching the delicate, fairylike waves of melody which were wafted from the player's magic touch. On and on he played utterly oblivious of all around him except the violin he loved. He seemed to be inspired by some divine spirit.

"Sound almost Heavenly flowed until the air was filled with melody. The tones were now sad, tender and sweet, then spirited and brilliant. At last the strains died away and the spell was broken."

Yet this was the man who appeared to love the natural beauties of the North Country wandering for years among the communities of Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties, always welcomed by the tavernkeepers who fed him because he always drew a crowd of patrons to them when he suddenly turned up at their hostelries in the warm months. In the winter months he may have sought haven in some poorhouse.

Many stories circulated regarding the cause of his mental condition. One was that his father shut him in a room and compelled him to practice ten to twelve hours a day without food, or rest. Another was that his father "beat his brains out."

The meagre information obtained from him about himself and his family was that when he played as a boy the women used to kiss him. That his father was the conductor of the Julian orchestra in London. He said that his father was the handsomest man in London, and that wherever he promenaded the ladies were the thickest and the prettiest, but it is nowhere recorded that he ever told the name of his father or gave a description of his home.

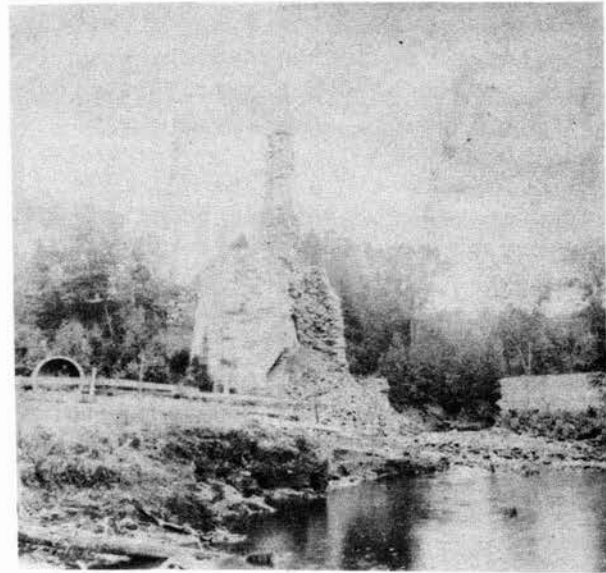
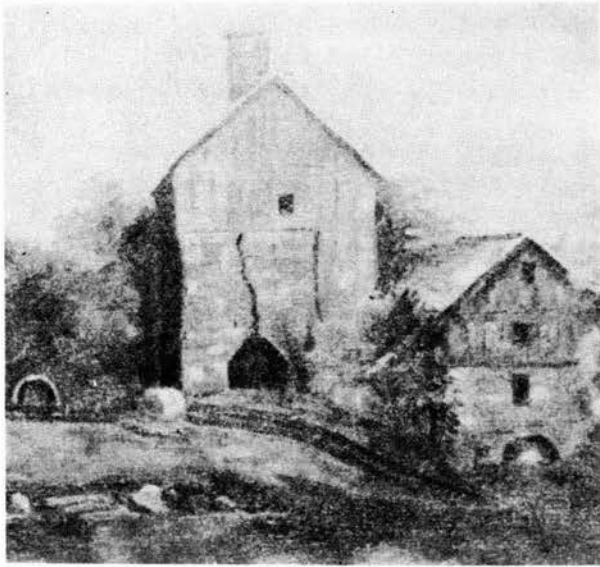
One thing is certain. He must have been born with a great talent for music which, through the exhaustive practicing in his youth developed an unsurpassed technique bringing out an incomparable sense of interpretation of the great works of Shubert, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Brahms, Bach, Paganini, Liszt and the other great masters which were so indelibly engraved upon his brain that he never forgot them and subconsciously played them with perfection throughout the balance of his short life.

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#### A NORFOLK ANNIVERSARY

On July 30th 1960, at the Norwood-Norfolk Central School, there will be an evening Historical Program commemorating the 150th anniversary of the settlement of the Town of Norfolk, sponsored by Mrs. Nina Smithers, County Historian and Mrs. Ralph Wing, Town Historian of the Town of Norfolk.

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#### THAT WHICH ONCE WAS AND WHICH IS NO MORE

The old iron furnace and grist mill at left, taken from an old Cross family painting, and ruins as they were about 1910 per a photograph owned by Elbridge Hurlbut, of Heuvelton, N. Y.

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#### OUR MOST NOTABLE GHOST TOWN - COOPER'S FALLS

by  
ATWOOD MANLEY

In making Cooper's Falls our mecca on May 21st, an impressive fact was brought into focus - here is a place of unusual interest. The Cooper's Falls Tour was not an historical anniversary. It was a quest. Where else in this broad domain of the North Country can be found a more notable example of that which once was, and which is now no more? Of ghost towns, St. Lawrence County has its share, its Brasher Iron Works and its Clarksboro, which was the former settlement of the old Clifton Iron works of 1869. Neither of these, however, can match what Cooper's Falls offers in the way of a fascinating past. The name of Cooper, itself, gives character and background. Here where the Oswegatchie flows unmolested through scenic beauty, almost in solitude, one of our most ambitious pioneer settlements was started a century and a half ago, in 1803. Here where nodding wild columbine and wild phlox greeted us, where the wood thrush raised its song, a village once came into being and prospered for over half a century. So realistic was Judge William Cooper's dream that with the approach of the Civil War, during its progress, immediately thereafter, and on until the fateful panic of 1873, a teeming industrial development took place. From log huts and crude beginnings the village of Cooper's Falls grew and bid fair to become permanent. For a time it thrived lustily and then withered away. So it was that on May 21st our valiant one hundred, more or less, plodded and scrambled amid overgrown former cellar holes, up and down grassy glades still roughly marking once busy streets, that we might better envision former clapboard homes, prospering stores, a hotel, smithies, and numerous industrial units. Braving briars and brambles, scrambling up and down escarpments, and panting with suppressed excitement and partial exhaustion, our members sought to draw aside the shrouds and to reconstruct that which has been almost entirely erased.



**Judge William Cooper**

Today a gaunt metal shaft rears a ghostly arm above the waters of the old raceway basin. Its other end, so we were told, is anchored to the river bottom by one of the huge stones which ground the corn and wheat in Cooper's mill. Where a stone arch once spanned the raceway, the waters of the Oswegatchie churn swiftly. Only a moldering fragment of the old grist mill wall still stands, screened by box alders. High up we stood on the old ramp where a centery ago toiling teams sweated mighty loads of iron ore to the towering maw of the blast furnace. The forty-foot chimney which some of us can still recall is no more. Below remains only the brown stone base of the furnace and its growing mound of rubble, screened by brush and undergrowth. Nearby one can still find mounds of furnace charcoal beneath weeds and sod. Where Cooper first threw a dam across the Oswegatchie the water runs swift and white, its channel blasted deeper in late years. Unconquered, the river sweeps around the end of the lower "island" and on toward Black Lake, the old iron bridge which once spanned the river there at pine tree point

having collapsed in the '70's. Aside from occasional picnic parties and mooing cows the site of this former village lives largely in solitary memory, its few remaining ruins swathed in sod and silt, or rank-growing undergrowth.

What then, does this spot hold for the historian, to say nothing of the uninformed who now daily pass the intersection of the Old Canton Road with Highway Rte. No. 87 in the Town of DeKalb?

Let us go back to the year 1803, and the person of Judge William Cooper. Cooper and his wife, Elizabeth Fenimore, were both of English stock. Their forefathers came to America before the Revolution. The Coopers settled at Byberry, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, the Fenimores at Burlington, New Jersey, just across the Delaware. William Cooper, at the age of thirty-two, became interested in New York State wilderness lands. In 1886 he purchased 29,350 acres of the former Croghan Tract, Otsego County. There, at the foot of the Lake, he founded the village of Cooperstown. Cooperstown has since become famous not only as the home of the Judge, but more so as that of his illustrious son, J. Fenimore Cooper, author of the Leather-stocking Tales. It is today one of the great historical centres in America, the headquarters of the New York State Historical Association.

Judge Cooper's first venture in wilderness lands whetted his land-thirsty appetite. He was but one of many so afflicted. In Morristown, New Jersey, lived the wealthy industrialist, Samuel Ogden, an associate of Alexander Macomb, William Constable and, of course, Daniel McCormick, in their vast land speculations in northern New York -- and a friend of the Coopers. In February, 1803, William Cooper purchased of Samuel Ogden, Town No. 7 of the so-called Ten Towns in St. Lawrence County. This was and is DeKalb. Hough's History informs us that Alexander Macomb conveyed to Samuel Ogden "in trust for himself, Gen. Henry Knox, Robert Morris and Gouverneur Morris, four of his associates, ... the four townships of Hague, Cambray, Oswegatchie and DeKalb" for 3,200 pounds sterling, or roughly \$16,000. This was as of 1792. Eleven years later Judge William Cooper is found taking title to the entire Town of DeKalb, 64,000 acres more or less, at a price of \$62,720. Within three months, that is on or about May 1803, he is credited with selling 56,886 of those acres for \$112,226. In other words he quickly netted a profit of \$49,506 and still retained 7,114 acres of his original purchase. One



Among Those Present on May 21st

L. to R: County Historian Nina Smithers; Mrs. Arthur Bill (Stacey-Ritchie-Cross families); Mrs. Albridge Hurlbut; Howard Cross (Cross-Cooper family), and Mrs. Cross; Emory Smithers; Louise Chandler (Stacey descendant); Elbridge Hurlbut, descendant James and Abner Brees.

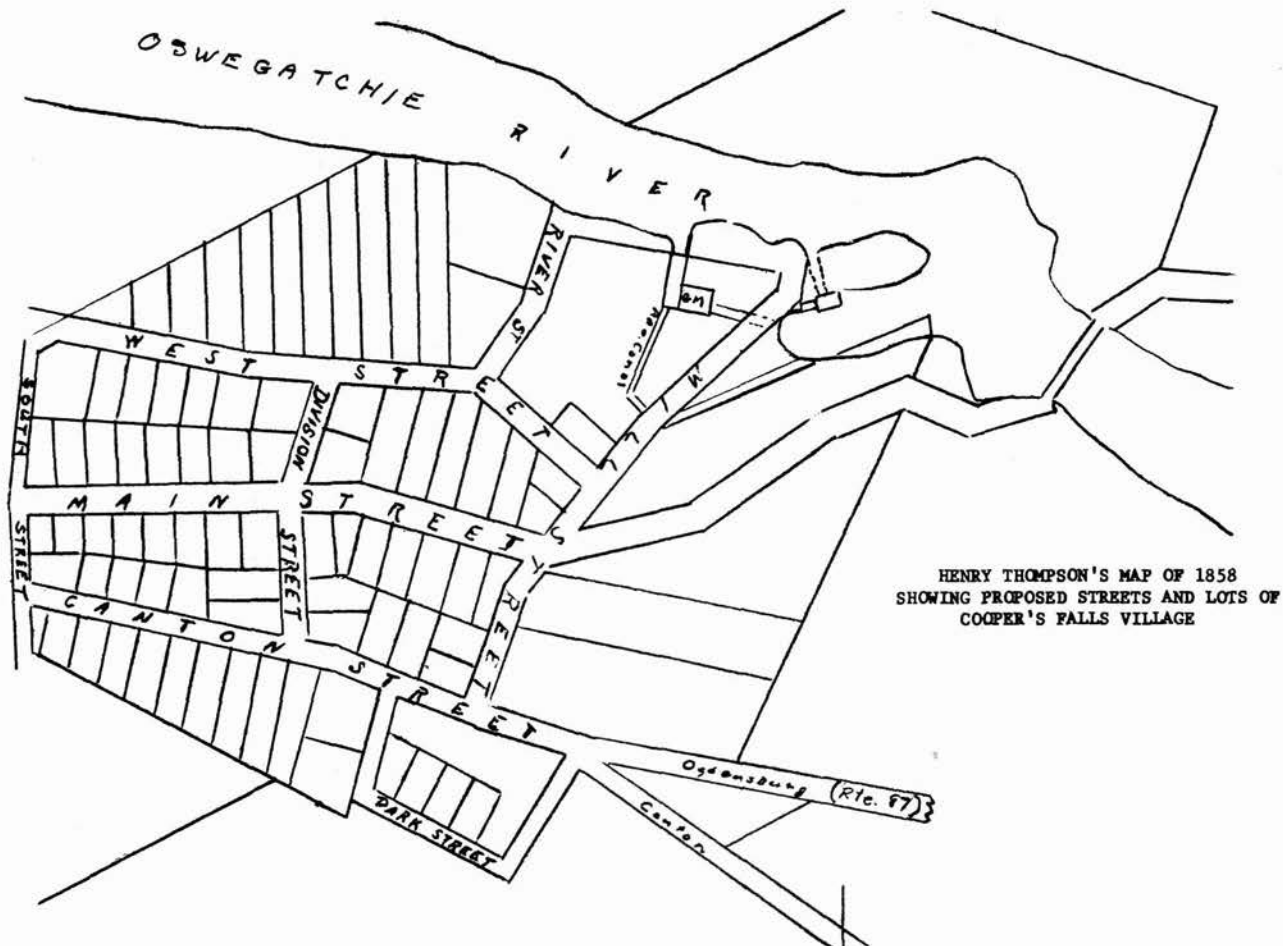
of our former historians tells us "that eventually Judge Cooper's land titles proved defective, and much litigation ensued, with many harsh words directed to the proprietor." \*

Judge Cooper, was by intuition both a buyer and a builder. He not only sought to make money by speculation, but seemed impelled to initiate the settlement of such lands, most notably in Otsego county and here at Cooper's Falls in St. Lawrence County. His coming into this northern tier in 1803, accompanied by thirty-three neighbors from Cooperstown whom he had interested in purchasing land, is an oft-told story. It is the story of prodigious effort by pioneers breaking through the forest. The larger party came north by horse, oxen and on foot over crude roads, Indian trails and toward the last by hewing their own way from Vrooman's Settlement and Bristols Tavern near OxBow. Three others came by boat via the Mohawk, Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence and up the Oswegatchie. The falls in the Oswegatchie offered ample water power to commend a settlement at this point. Most settlements were made at such places, the geography providing the dual advantages of a crossing and water power, a prime requisite for sawmills, grist mills and other industrial necessities.

Cooper's Falls thus came into being. It is to be remembered that Judge Cooper's personal influence did not last long. He came with his party in 1803. He died in 1809, the result of a bodily attack made on his person in Albany while leaving a meeting of the Federalist party of which he was an active and uncompromising advocate. By his brother, James, and his friends who had come north with him, the longer task of settlement was continued. The settling of DeKalb and Cooper's Falls by the Judge was but part of a busy, active life during those last six years.

A record copied from Judge Cooper's account book No. 3, owned by the New York State Historical Association, contains this: "A memorandum of the total expenses of completing the following work: For erecting a stone dam across the river in 16 feet of water; For blowing a canal 6 perchs in length, 14 feet deep, 18 feet deep at top and 6 feet at the bottom through solid rock; For blowing half the width of the foundation of the grist mill and saw mill, 10 feet deep out of solid rock; For filling up the other half of the foundation and 30 feet beyond the gristmill in 12 feet of water, with 2630 loads of stone; For erecting the gristmill with two runs of stone and all appendages; For erecting the sawmill with additional wheels to draw with a great chain of 100 feet in length, boats logs and etc into the mill; For erecting a dwelling house, a good frame barn, clearing and fencing 25 acres of





HENRY THOMPSON'S MAP OF 1858  
SHOWING PROPOSED STREETS AND LOTS OF  
COOPER'S FALLS VILLAGE

land around the mills; For the loss sustained by the first saw mill being undermined and over set by a freshet; Provisions and mise, expenses. See Ames Comely's account of particular items: Amount \$9,049.00

"Of this sum John R. Murray and William Ogden must pay me 1/6 or \$1,503.16; Lloyd S. Danberry 1/20 or \$452.45. The other partners not being interested in the reserved lands, mills or town plot."

Descendants of some of those hardy pioneers who came with Judge Cooper in 1803 were present on May 21st, as well as descendants of others who came later. There are here in St. Lawrence County today, blood relatives of the Cooper family, descendants of Emory Cross who married Jane Cooper, a third cousin of the famous novelist, J. Fenimore Cooper. There are descendants of Isaac Stacey, and others of Cooper's original settlers. Even those people are unable to provide the much-desired historical documentation from family records to prove how the village and the community of Cooper's Falls grew and prospered during its first half century, from 1803 to 1854. Alas, the details are lacking. From 1854 on we have recorded data. From 1854 until 1873, or thereabouts, Cooper's Falls enjoyed its heyday of greatest success. This was its period of prosperity. There was every evidence that here was a community destined to grow and to become an important centre of business and industrial activity in this county. We have the original map drafted in 1858 by Henry Thompson to show the plans for the future expansion of the Village of Cooper's Falls. There exists pictorial testimony of many of the buildings which came into being during this and the earlier period. Our County Atlas of 1865 has this as a substantial community. There are those still living who either recall some of the old buildings, or from their parents and grandparents were told in detail of those bygone days. Melvin Fletcher, for example, states that he recalls his grandmother telling of the huge horse barns once located at the Falls, barns

in which "120 horses, or 120 teams, I cannot recall which," were stabled. These were the horses which drew the ore from the Tate Ore Beds in East DeKalb (Town of Hermon) to the blast furnace located beside the raceway. "It required seven days to fire and reduce the ore" Elbridge Hurlbut told us on May 21st. His grandfather, Abner Brees, was among those so engaged.

It was in 1848 that the "DeKalb Works of Cooper's Falls" was organized and in 1854 its papers of incorporation states that this was "the formation of a manufacturing mining mechanical and chemical company". Its capital stock was \$20,000 divided into one thousand shares at \$20 each. "The term of existence of said Company shall be fifty years." "The number of trustees who shall manage the concerns of the said Company for the first year shall be three and their names are Orin M. Fisk and James Brees of the Town of DeKalb in the County of St. Lawrence aforesaid and William C. H. Waddell of the City and County and State of New York." The purposes of this corporation were almost carte blanc: to improve the plot of grounds designed to be owned by the company at Cooper's Falls and the water power upon the same, the erection of a "Mechanical Manufacturing Mining and Chemical Works" thereon, the prosecuting of such works, the leasing, selling, mortgaging, or contracting to sell lots or plots for such purposes or for stores or dwelling houses, etc., etc. including the merchandising of products produced, or otherwise procured. Four years later, in 1858, we find Henry Thompson drafting the map of this contemplated village as reproduced herewith.

In 1863 the DeKalb Works was apparently succeeded by a new corporation, the Cooper's Falls Iron Company. This concern was promoted by a group of four men and one woman. Two of the men were residents of DeKalb, two from New York City. The lady was Elizabeth S. Sterling, wife of Alexander P. Sterling, of Antwerp, Jefferson County. Papers of incorporation were filed and recorded in the St. Lawrence County Clerk's Office as of September 30, 1864. The purpose of said Company was to engage in the mining, manufacture and sale of iron ore and all matters concerned therewith. It was capitalized at \$20,000 with 200 shares of stock at \$100 par value. Also, there was authorized an additional issue of 4800 shares of other stock at the par value of \$100. This latter stock is of especial interest. Like the old DeKalb Works, the new concern was to exist for a term of fifty years, its promoters were unfortunately unduly optimistic as events proved. Operations were to be principally carried on in the Town of DeKalb, but the ore came from the northerly part of Hermon. There were to be four trustees the first year and they were: James M. Ryder and John W. Lowden of New York City, Adolphus S. Lynde and Orville Strong, both of DeKalb. Adolphus Lynde was then only thirty-two years of age. In time, he would become one of the county's foremost citizens, an assemblyman, a state senator, a banker, agriculturalist, merchant and extensive lumber operator, and a resident of Hermon and finally of Canton.

If any person believes that the present generation alone has enjoyed an abundance of business acumen let them be better advised. The trustees of the Cooper's Falls Iron Works were well versed in the possibilities inherent in such a venture. The capital stock of \$20,000 was identical in amount with that of the former DeKalb Works. In fact, the papers of incorporation of the new firm were somewhat identical with those of that other concern, with one important exception. This exception reflects that the "best made plans of mice and men may gang aft alee." Had time and chance played otherwise these parties might easily have reaped a fortune. To better appreciate what was involved one must turn to those 4800 additional shares of stock. Then one must refer to the official county record of deeds. There it is found how the Cooper's Falls Iron Company as one party purchased or acquired from four individuals a controlling interest in the Tate Ore Beds located near East DeKalb in the Town of Hermon, and a complete interest in a certain strategic lot in the Village of Cooper's Falls whereon stood the blast

furnace industry. The four transactions were as follows: To Orville Strong the Corporation paid \$60,000 for his 2/16ths interest in said Ore Bed and said lot; to Adolphus S. Lynde it paid \$90,000 for his 3/16ths like interests, to Elizabeth Sterling, wife of Alexander Sterling, it paid \$90,000 for her 3/16ths like interests, and to James M. Ryder of New York City it paid \$240,000 for his 8/16ths like interests. In other words by these purchases the Cooper's Falls Iron Company acquired title to the Tate Ore Bed, together with full title to Lot 73 in the Village of Cooper's Falls. How much actual cash exchanged hands is problematical. It is to be noted that the total of these four purchases amounted to exactly \$480,000, which in turn was precisely the total of the special issue of stock under the papers of incorporation. It is therefore probably that these shares of stock were used as the medium of exchange to cover this transaction. Had the Iron Company prospered one can appreciate the extent to which Messrs. Strong, Lynde, Ryder and Mrs. Sterling would have benefitted. Alas, with the close of the Civil War, the subsequent drop in demand for iron, and then the panic of 1873, their entire investment, or much thereof, was apparently wiped out. This proved a death-knell to a most promising village. What, with the remoteness of the railroad which might just as well have been routed through Old DeKalb and Cooper's Falls, and the fickleness of the nation's economy, Cooper's Falls was the loser. Homes and business places were abandoned. The postoffice was closed. The Iron Works shut down. Keys turned in doors. Decay set in. As the years rolled by the deserted village sank deeper and deeper into utter ruin. Today it is almost entirely obliterated save for the remnants of the old furnace and the grist mill wall. To the many who have and still enjoy the scenic beauty of this spot as a picnic ground - and to others who will do so in the future - memory's gaze must suffice, a reminder of that which once was and now is no more.

Here in the splendor of its own solitude Cooper's Falls harks back to the days of Judge Cooper, to his famous son, the novelist who is said to have spent at least parts of two summers there, to the good folks who came to settle the first hamlet and remained and whose descendants in numbers were present on May 21st to help us put together the picture of the past. Otsego County has its Cooperstown, and St. Lawrence County its Cooper's Falls. Both stem from the same ancestral source. One is an historical mecca, the other only a ghost town.

\*"Cooper's Falls and William Cooper" by the late Richard C. Ellsworth.

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COMING EVENTS YET IN STORE

Two historical events of interest to our Society members yet remain on our 1960 summer program, the Russell Turnpike meeting and the dedication of the new International Bridge between Ogdensburg and Prescott. The Russell Turnpike tour and meeting is scheduled for August 27th, the Bridge ceremony is tentatively scheduled for some time early in September although the anniversary date of the Battle of Isle Royal (Chimney Island) will be on August 25th and it is that point which possesses much interest in connection with the Bridge. Unfortunately it is not possible to furnish more than the date for the Turnpike meeting. As to the Tour, as to the time and place of meeting and luncheon, if one is held, our members must await press notices or a special mailing by our never-failing secretary. In fact, the details of both of these events are not now available. Mr. David Lane of Watertown is preparing the paper for the Turnpike meeting and has already devoted much time to that task.

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## STONE HOUSE DAY--SLEEPY HOLLOW--DR. CATER

Society Enjoys Its Most Attended Tour at Morristown  
By  
Malcolm Booth

More people than ever before turned out on June 11 at the Association's Morristown meeting, when Dr. Harold Dean Cater, former Morristown resident who is now Executive Director of Sleepy Hollow Restorations in the lower Hudson Valley, was the guest speaker at the Stone House Day. Attending Dr. Cater's talk were an estimated 200 persons, as compared with 168 who toured four of Morristown's stone houses in the morning, and 152 who attended the luncheon. The turnout was so large that those who came without reservations had to eat downtown in a restaurant!

Dr. Cater's talk was entitled, "The Story of Sleepy Hollow Restorations and What It Means to Restore Historic Houses." He graphically illustrated the subject, in which he is one of the leading national authorities, with the help of colored slide pictures. Using the VanCortlandt Manor as an example, Dr. Cater showed the progress in restoring the old home, located at Croton Landing, from the time of its purchase by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in 1954 to the present time. Restoration of the house, occupied by Lieutenant-Governor Pierre VanCortlandt during the Revolutionary War, is now complete. Sleepy Hollow Restorations also administers two other restorations, Philipsburg Manor, which is closed to the public, and Washington Irving's home at Sunnyside, where only a few more things remain to be done.

Sleepy Hollow is made unique among the historic places in the eastern part of the United States by the Dutch influence found along the lower Hudson. As an indication of the scope of the group's work, he explained that the research program alone is composed of its director, four full-time employees in Tarrytown, where Sleepy Hollow Restorations has its headquarters, two full-time employees in London, England, and one part-time employee in Holland.

To illustrate the difficulties faced by those who restore old buildings, he cited the problem of deciding the period of time that Philipsburg Manor should represent when it was restored, and answered his own question by saying that it was eventually decided to restore it to the period that the most evidence could be discovered about it. VanCortlandt Manor consists of 86,000 acres adjoining Philipsburg Manor on the north. The king created manors for three reasons: as a reward, to create an arrangement to encourage settlement, and to provide for better land management.

During the Revolutionary War, most of the manor holders remained loyal to King George III, and their lands were confiscated by the new State of New York. VanCortlandt, however, was prominent, through his service as Lieutenant-Governor, in the Revolutionary cause. Nevertheless, his holdings were seriously damaged, as they were located in the no-man's land between the American and British troops during most of the war. When the British occupied the manor house, they ransacked the building of most of its possessions, even carrying the doors away! Later, after Pierre VanCortlandt had rebuilt the manor around the turn of the century, the family sold off the manor lands piecemeal in order to obtain funds until, when Mr. Rockefeller bought the property in 1954, only 175 acres remained, of which 148 acres was under water.

Dr. Cater, the son of Mrs. Chelson S. Wright of Morristown, is a graduate of Morristown High School, Class of 1927. He received his bachelor's degree from Syracuse University in 1933, and his doctorate, with a specialty in American history, from Columbia University in 1946. After his graduation from college, he taught history at Clayton High School, and then at Mamaroneck High School from 1936 to 1946.

After World War II, he served with the historical division of the War Department's special staff, working on the army's history of the war. From 1948 to 1955, Dr. Cater was director of the Minnesota Historical Society, giving particular attention to the development of museum and education programs. He was also in charge of the research on the Lewis and Clark papers. Dr. Cater has been executive director of Sleepy Hollow Restorations since Oct. 1, 1955. He has been listed in Who's Who since 1947, and is also listed in Who Knows and What, Who's Who in the Midwest, and Directory of American Scholars. Dr. Cater is the author of Modern Study Guide for American History, and also edited and compiled a collection of published letters, entitled Henry Adams and His Friends, published in 1947.

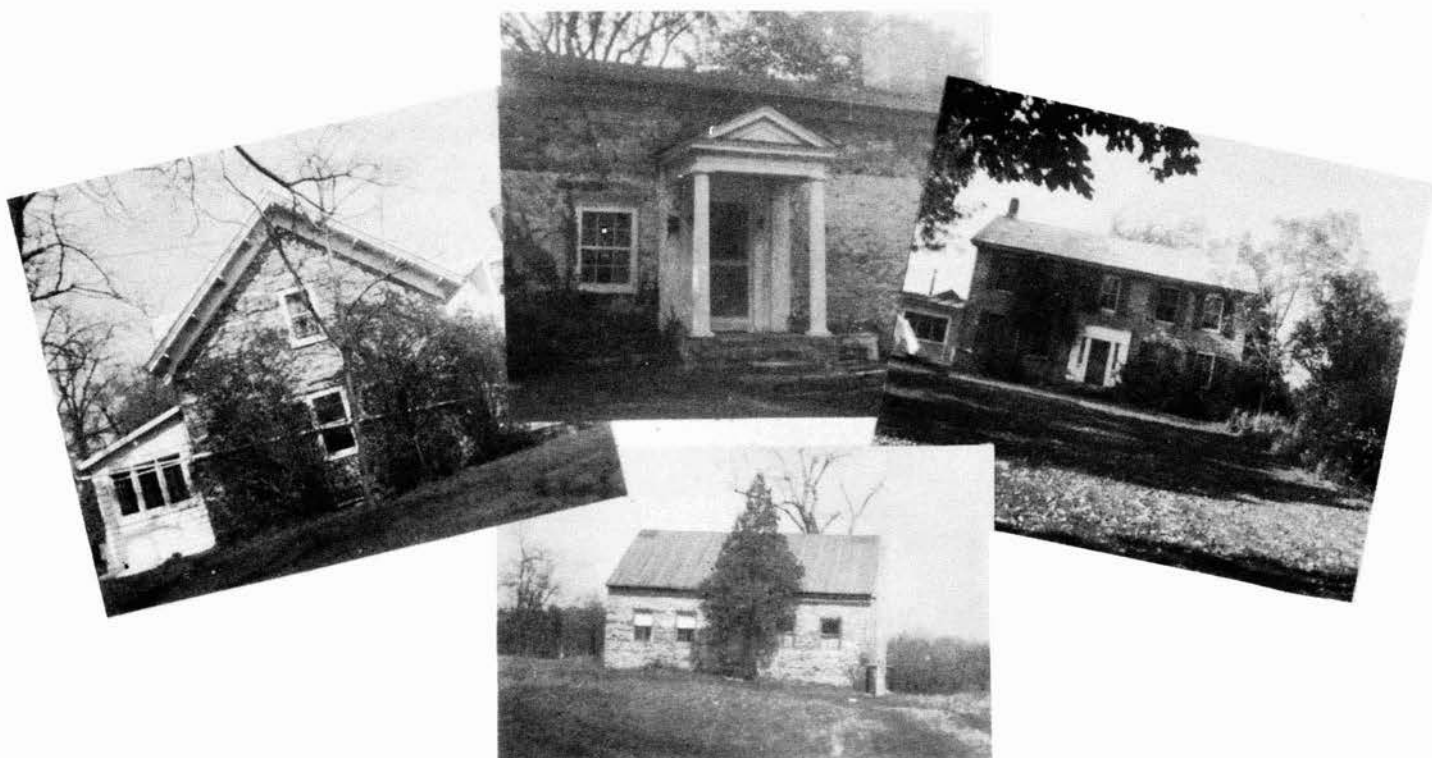
During the morning, the group toured four stone houses in a tour arranged by Mrs. Doris B. Planty, Morristown town historian, a Trustee of the Association, and co-chairman of the day's program. The first house visited was Mrs. Planty's own home, where coffee and doughnuts were served. The house was built by Col. David Ford shortly after the Town of Morristown was formed from Oswegatchie on May 27, 1822. The farm has one mile of river front. It was built of sandstone, or field stone, and has walls 22 inches thick, with inset windows, and the original stone step is still in use. Inside the stone walls is a brick wall, which, in early days, served the same purpose that air conditioning now serves. The house, which also has a wide board cornice with brackets, was sold by Colonel Ford to Richard B. Chapman, one of the four Chapmans who lived at Morristown, who hired help to operate it. The property was purchased by Charles and Sarah Brown, parents of the present owner, in 1902.

The next house visited was that of Mrs. F. B. Bjornlund, a lineal descendant of Augustas Chapman, the original 1825 owner. Built of native stone, the Bjornlund home is a split-level house with 30-inch walls. As one walks into an entry-way, one is greeted by two sets of stairs, one down to the living-room, the other up to the bedrooms, undoubtedly one of the earliest Northern New York examples of a split-level house. The Bjornlund house was one of the buildings of "Cedar Cliff on the St. Lawrence," a summer cavalry camp owned and operated by Barton Cruikshank in 1910. Other owners have been James Olds, Henry H. Suplee, and Dr. Paul N. Hudson.

After a glimpse at the Olds gristmill, the new Jacques Cartier State Park, and the famous Red Brick tavern at Brier Hill, the tour continued to the Ingham church and the John Ingham stone house, located near the Hammond-Morristown town line. The house was built of native stone in 1835 by John Ingham on land he had purchased in 1823. This house is unique for having steel beams, the first used in the area. The house is the only one included in the 1878 history of St. Lawrence County published by Everts and Holcomb. The descendants of John Ingham held an observance in 1935 honoring the centennial of the house. John Patterson, who still lives on the property, was the husband of the late descendant of John Ingham. New owners of the house are Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Felt.

Located on the Four Rod Road, a stone house of cottage style owned recently by the late Mrs. Lydia Downey was originally a part of the tract owned by Gouverneur Morris. Built of native stone, the seven-room house numbers among its first owners Sarah Goodwin, who came into possession of the house about 1810. Other owners of the house have been Robert Long, John Smith, and Mrs. Downey, who was born there in 1871 and died in 1958. The house was recently purchased by George Newby of Morristown, who is carrying out an extensive restoration.

Mrs. Adrian Harvey provided organ music while a ham dinner was served at the Morristown Central School by members of the school band, and then a short business meeting was held with Mrs. Ethel C. Olds of Waddington, Vice-President of the Historical Association, presiding. During the business meeting, Mrs. Virgie B.



Upper Left: Doris Planty home, built by David Ford; Upper right: Doorway, F. B. Bjorlund home, built in 1825 by Augustus Chapman; Lower left: Built in 1835 by John Ingham, now owned by Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Felt; Lower right: Owned by late Lydia Downey, now by George Newby, built prior to 1810 on Gouverneur Morris Tract.

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Simons of Rossie announced the nominations for the Annual Awards Program of the American Association for State and Local History which have been made by the Association. A resolution calling for the preservation of the Silas Wright home at Canton was introduced by Lawrence G. Bovard of Ogdensburg, and, after seconding by Fred J. Johnson of Potsdam, was passed unanimously.

Then Mrs. Olds turned the meeting over to Malcolm A. Booth of Edwardsville, secretary of the Association, and the other co-chairman of the day's program, who began the program by introducing the two county historians present, Mrs. Nina W. Smithers of DePeyster and J. Reese Price of Watertown.

Mr. Booth summarized Dr. Cater's career before introducing the speaker's mother, Mrs. Wright, and then calling upon Mrs. Elizabeth Hickok Wright of Morristown Center to speak in behalf of the Class of 1927 of which Dr. Cater was a member. Miss Elsie Willard of Ogdensburg, Dr. Cater's history teacher, spoke in behalf of the faculty of that time. James V. Hughes, principal, congratulated the group on its attendance, and reminded them of the importance they, and Dr. Cater, are doing. Mr. Booth then read a letter from a member of the 1927 Board of Education, Jess M. Barney of Morristown.

Clarence C. Smith of Brier Hill, Supervisor of the Town of Morristown, then complimented Mrs. Planty on her work in organizing the event, and Mr. Booth read a letter from Dr. Louis C. Jones, Director of the New York State Historical Association,

which said, in part:

"Dr. Cater is, of course, one of the distinguished leaders in the field of historical society work and historic preservation and New York state can be proud of his outstanding career and it seems to me that St. Lawrence county should be especially proud for the work being done at Sleepy Hollow Restorations is of nationwide importance."

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The Secretary Says . . .

by Malcolm A. Booth, Secretary

Our membership at the time of the mailing on May 24 was 634.

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Winners of the Yorker Club contest sponsored by the St. Lawrence County Historical Association were:

Senior high school division, first prize: Foote's Followers, Canton  
Junior high school division, first prize: Lisbon Yorkers, Lisbon  
Senior high school division, second prize: Marble City club, Gouverneur  
Junior high school division, second prize: Foote's Followers, Canton

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Malcolm A. Booth, Secretary of the Association, spoke on the Battle of the Windmill, fought at Prescott, Ontario, in 1838 at a meeting of the Cub Scouts of Pack 54, Canton, on April 8. The Pack reenacted the battle in an impressive ceremony attended by 1,200 persons at the Scout-o-rama in Canton on May 14, and also held a picnic at the Windmill on June 16.

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Mrs. James H. Wilber of Albany, formerly of Rossie, represented the St. Lawrence County Historical Association at the 90th annual convocation of the University of the State of New York in Albany on May 19.

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Nominations for the Annual Awards Program of the American Association for State and Local History, made by a committee composed of Mrs. Virgie B. Simons, Miles Greene, and Fred J. Johnson, which met at Canton on May 14, are:

D, Junior historical societies - Lisbon Yorker Club.

F, Class 2, daily newspapers, less than 300,000 population - Ogdensburg Journal and Advance-News.

F, Class 3, weekly newspapers - Gouverneur Tribune-Press.

G, Individuals - Mrs. Nina W. Smithers, DePeyster.

G. Atwood Manley, Canton.

Carlton B. Olds, Waddington.

H, Private, non-historical organizations - Potsdam Museum.

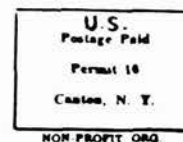
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Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian, has informed us that no more money is available for the small historic markers we are familiar with. Instead, large markers will be made available at rest areas on state highways, at public campsites, etc.

St. Lawrence County Historical Association  
P. O. Box 251  
CANTON, NEW YORK



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The project of marking the Russell Turnpike with name signs has run into two snags. First, no markers will be allowed on the state highways, and, secondly, the cost of lumber for the entire project would be about \$130, and no funds can be found. Eliminating the markers which could not be placed on county highways, where it is permissible, the cost for the lumber will be about \$90. The Boy Scout Committee, which is in charge of the project, would appreciate any suggestions.

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One of the most interesting things about the Cooper's Falls Tour was the number of ancestors present who came from the original pioneer party of thirty-four which Judge Cooper brought with him from the Otsego country. Then, too, and even more interesting, was the fact that we have up here a goodly number of Cooper family descendants, the branch of the family which has come down from Jane Cooper, third cousin of J. Fenimore Cooper, and her husband, Emory Cross. The Cross family are well known in the Cooper's Falls, DeKalb and Rensselaer Falls section. So, what with these good folks, and the descendants of the Stacy and Brees families our Cooper's Falls meeting had more than just local color to enjoy. THE QUARTERLY hopes to have available in its October issue the Family Tree of June Cooper's branch of the Cooper family.

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#### PEARLS IN THE GRANNIS BROOK!

Yes, that is what the man said! Back in the 1850's, looking for pearls was a profitable part-time job indulged in by the members of the Janes family.

The Janes' were pioneers in the Crary Mills section and found that nature had left them an endowment in the Grannis Brook as it meandered through the pleasant acres of their farm. Frederick Harrison Janes, of Richmond, California, has a gold ring made by Tiffany of New York in which is mounted one of these pearls. Herbert Judd, executor of the estate of the late Miss Jessie Janes, last of her family on the farm, has found papers which indicated the sale of these pearls to Tiffany's during the late years of the 19th century.

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N.W.S.

Found-Pair earrings on table following Morristown luncheon-meeting.  
Inquire of Miss Nina Smithers, County Historian.