

# THE QUARTERLY

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



LAYING OUT A TOWN.—AFTER HARRY FENN.

January 1971

# THE QUARTERLY

Official Publication Of The St. Lawrence County Historical Association

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**COVER SKETCH**

Laying out a town was the primary work in our county. The surveyor and his instruments were important. A display is now at the History Center in Canton. See story of our first feminine landowner, page five.

## summary history

# Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills

BY ROBERT B. SHAW

The home of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills, more precisely known as the W.H. Comstock proprietary medicine factory, stood for over 90 years in the small riverside village of Morristown, in St. Lawrence County, on the extreme northern border of New York State. For three generations village life was closely identified with the pill factory, the munificence of Mr. Comstock provided many local benefits, including the first primitive electric utility service, and pills, elixirs and almanacks poured out from this remote location to cover half of the world.

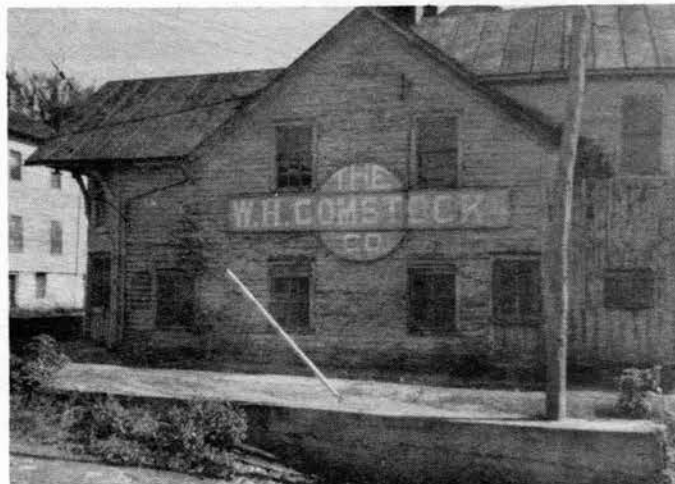
However, this business did not begin in Morristown. Rather, it was established some 30 years earlier in New York City - then still a small metropolis of two and three-story buildings not extending further north than the present 42nd Street. One or two years prior to 1833 Edwin Comstock, a native of Otsego County, moved to the City and established a patent medicine business. Prior to his death in 1837, Edwin employed his brother, Lucius S. Comstock (born in 1805). Lucius, who appears to have been both a lawyer and a medical doctor as well as a druggist, then took another brother, Albert, into partnership with him, while the firm engaged two more brothers, John Carlton (born 1818) and George Wells (born 1820) as clerks.

This business was to be torn, however, by recurring dissensions among the brothers. The partnership between Lucius and Albert was terminated in 1841, Lucius was next in business with his mother-in-law for a few years, until he formed a new partnership, Comstock & Co., with John Carlton, in 1846. The new firm again employed George Wells as a clerk, as also a nephew, William Henry Comstock, a son of Edwin. William Henry (born in 1830) was eventually to become the founder of the plant at Morristown and the sole head of the enterprise for over 50 years.

In 1849 the brothers quarreled, and J. Carlton and George Wells formed a new firm, Comstock and Brother, taking young William Henry with them as their clerk. The new firm manufactured and sold most of the same medicines as the old firm - and a dispute inevitably arose as to the rights to the medicines and to orders coming through the mail. Lucius even went so far as to have his brothers and nephew arrested for taking his mail from the post office - a case that was discussed prominently in the newspapers although finally dismissed in the courts. Civil litigation between the erstwhile partners was not concluded without fisticuffs, during which "the Dr." - Lucius - received a black eye.

Brother John Carlton Comstock, originator of many of the medicines, died during 1853, and a successor partnership, also known as Comstock and Brother, was formed, consisting of George Wells Comstock, William Henry and Baldwin L. Judson. At sometime during 1855 this firm was approached by Andrew J. White, of Buffalo, who represented himself as sole proprietor of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills, already being manufactured by A.B. Moore and Co., in Buffalo. Although it subsequently became clear that White's claim to this medicine was extremely dubious, the Comstocks swallowed his story, made an agreement with him, and proceeded to manufacture and distribute these pills.

Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills had actually been originated in Buffalo a few years prior to this time by one A.B. Moore; Moore was the closest approximation to a real Dr. Morse, although subsequently a fictional character of that name and a romantic history were concocted to provide a myth about the Indian origin of the pills. Dr. Morse was represented as an extremely talented young medical practitioner, who spent many years in travel in remote parts of the world until he finally wrested the secret of these pills from the Indians of our western plains. Then, he returned home just in time to discover his aged father on his death bed and effect a miraculous cure - and thereafter he graciously conferred the secret of the pills upon the public, through the agency of the Comstock company. (A companion product, Judson's Moun-



tain Herb Pills, owed a remarkably similar origin, the secret having been obtained from an Aztec Chief by the accomplished Dr. Cunard, who returned home just in time to heal his dying mother.)

A complicated struggle for control of the Indian Root Pills then ensued; Moore at first manufactured them in opposition to the Comstocks, then he came to New York City and briefly joined the Comstocks until, in 1859, he and White decamped on New Year's Day, taking as many of the Comstocks' records, plates and labels as they could with them. Again complicated legal maneuvers, charges and counter-charges, criminal and civil actions ensued, until finally, in March 1861, White and Moore relinquished all claims to Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills to the Comstocks.

This should have been the end of litigation, and one would hope that the three remaining partners might henceforth work together amicably - but such was not to be the case, for we find that a new dispute broke out in 1866. The precise issue is not clear, but the outcome was that William H. Comstock broke off from the others, moved his plant to St. Lawrence County, and continued the business as a sole proprietor. George Comstock, thereafter operated some kind of a machinery business in New York City, up until his death in 1889. Lucius, who had previously severed relations with his brothers, resumed a legal career, interrupted by his service as a surgeon during the Civil War, and deserves at least a footnote in U.S. political history as foreman of the grand jury that indicted Boss Tweed in 1872. White established his own patent medicine business, that was still in existence up into the early years of the present century. Baldwin L. Judson, although he apparently collaborated with William Henry in the move to Morristown and bequeathed his name to several of the medicines, somehow unaccountably disappeared and was heard from no more.

William Henry Comstock, now at age 37 the sole owner of the business, concentrated all operations in the remote riverside village of Morristown. The reasons for this relocation may be surmised. By this time the plant in lower Manhattan must have become extremely cramped for the mixing of pills, bottling of elixirs and keeping of records. The bulk of retail business was being done in our "West" - the present "Middle West" and in "Canada West" the present province of Ontario. William Henry had already been traveling extensively in Canada West, established many contacts there, took over a small drug firm in Brockville, Ontario, and had married a Canadian girl in 1864. Thus, it was natural to establish the new factory at Morristown, directly across the river from Brockville. At this time a public ferry crossed the river, docking on the American side almost at the doorstep of the pill factory. A plant of approximately equal size was built in the heart of Brockville, and thereafter the Comstock enterprise possessed a kind of dual nationality. Mr. Comstock

## DR. MORSE'S ROOT PILLS (Continued from Page 3)

resided in Brockville and assumed Canadian citizenship - although when it was necessary for legal purposes he did not hesitate to avow himself a resident of Morristown and citizen of the United States even years later, after he had served terms both as mayor of Brockville and a member of the Canadian parliament.

The Indian Root Pill Factory at Morristown probably reached its peak of prosperity in the 80's and 90's - although volume remained heavy until well into the 1920's, long after the passage of the first Food and Drug Act. Although the business (on the American side) apparently never hired more than 40 or 50 persons, and probably grossed not much more than \$100,000 in its best years, this was enough, in its rural setting, to make its proprietor a very substantial citizen. Mr. Comstock built a large hotel adjacent to the Morristown

plant, provided the first local electric and water service, and donated a public hall to the village. On the Canadian side he was equally prominent as a public figure and philanthropist. Although he lived well into the automobile age he always preferred his carriage and fine horses, and his large steam yacht was also a familiar sight in the upper reaches of the St. Lawrence River.

Mr. Comstock - later to be known as "Old Bill" - married for a second time in 1893, and sired a son in 1897, when he was 67 years old - an impressive testimony to the efficacy of his own virility medicines. He remained in active charge of the business until his death in 1919, at the age of 89; this was the same callow youth who had been arrested on a charge of pilfering Lucius' mail, in the primitive New York City of 1851. He was immediately succeeded by his



THE COMSTOCK INN, toward the Main Street in Morristown from the Comstock Company buildings on the waterfront. The railroad right of way of 36 feet split the property, running at the very door of the Inn.



THE MESSAGE on the reverse of this picture post card says "In one end of the long dark colored building with the flagpole is Frank's office. Behind this is our new hotel. The white steeple is the Presbyterian church and the belfry near it (right rear) is the High School. Thought you might like this good view of part of Morristown."

(Continued on Page 21)



# Madame de Staël

## Our First Lady Landowner

BY EUGENE HATCH

There have been several notable owners of St. Lawrence county land, among them Gouverneur Morris, our able statesman who drafted the American Constitution. Another was Judge Cooper, founder of Cooper Falls, and father of the famed author James Fenimore Cooper, while LeRay de Chaumont was owner of a vast tract in this and Jefferson Counties. Each of these men had a part in the affairs of the most striking of all of the county's property owners, Madame de Staël, the woman phenomenon of her age, the confidante of kings, and a writer of renown throughout Europe.

Born Ann Louise Germaine Necker in Coppet, Switzerland, on April 22, 1766, her father was Jacques Necker, an ambitious millionaire banker, a man regarded as strictly honest and of sound business judgment. If it was noticed that he showed a certain dullness in social company, that could be overlooked in the deliberate and profound mind he was reputed to have. The state treasury of France was sinking into an alarming condition of debt, and in 1776 the new King, Louis XVI, named Jacques Necker as Director General of France. Necker set out to bring the finances out of the red.

The Neckers moved to Paris and Madame Necker encouraged the philosophers and intellectuals to gather in her salon. In France, the art of conversation had reached perfection and the favored salons, or formal drawing rooms, were the meeting places for the exchange of ideas among the writers, the thinkers and political figures. Young Germaine, at twelve, was allowed to be present at her mother's well attended gatherings, and she drank in eagerly the talk around her.

In 1786 when Germaine was twenty, she was married to Baron de Staël Holstein, the Ambassador from Sweden to Paris and she made the Necker salon the center of the new political ideas of the French liberal party which favored the proposed new constitution. Germaine as a young girl had listened well and now she was developing into one of the brilliant talkers of her age.

Into the Necker salon in 1789 came the new American agent, Gouverneur Morris, an imposing figure, well over six feet tall, polished and fluent in speech. His diary records his impression of his visit. He wrote that Madame de Staël was a woman of sense, but added, "She resembles a chambermaid."

In fact, Germaine was not beautiful. Her complexion was swarthy, her nose prominent and her figure thick set. On her head she set a large, multicolored turban. It was her eyes, everyone agreed, that were magnificent and deeply expressive. Visitors were charmed by her attractive, natural manner and as she conversed, one forgot beauty of face, fascinated by her powers of speech. "She did not talk incessantly," says a biographer, "although she talked much. Her remarkable talent was in helping and inspiring others to form their own ideas. It is said that at times her hearers were completely under her spell."

Perhaps Morris was drawn by this magnetic personality of hers, for he became a frequent visitor at her salon. Later he acknowledged in his diary that she was "a woman of wonderful wit and above prejudices of every kind" and he confessed, "I feel very stupid in this group," an unusual and remarkable admission from that polished, self-assured American.

### CLARE PURCHASE

On one visit in October 1794, Monsieur Necker asked to see Morris privately and the latter writes, "I find that LeRay de Chaumont has been dealing with him." This entry probably refers to the beginning of M. Necker's great land purchase from LeRay, owner of 220,000 acres. LeRay was attempting to cash in on his immense North Country landholdings. Eventually M. Necker purchased as a speculative



venture 23,000 acres in St. Lawrence County. Part was a half of the present township of Clare, the remainder in Fitzwilliam, now Hermon.

In France there was much sympathy for the American cause in our Revolution of 1776. France entertained a lasting resentment of England, who had beaten her decisively thirteen years before in the Seven Years' War when she had lost Canada. Largely due to Benjamin Franklin's efforts, France signed in 1777 an alliance, agreeing to aid American independence.

Jacques Necker was unable to make much improvement in France's finances and in 1781 he resigned. He was recalled six years later but most of his reforms were turned down by the French nobility and the country drifted into revolution. He died in retirement in 1804, leaving his fortune and his St. Lawrence county lands to Germaine.

Gouverneur Morris who had been recalled to America late in 1794, now wrote to Germaine that her affairs were in good hands. This was in reference to Judge Cooper's management of her St. Lawrence County lands. He added "... the region in which your land is situated is more and more sought by New England colonizers, whom we call Yankees and who are indeed the best."

Madame de Staël is not to be classed with the "emigrees", the French gentry who favored Napoleon, and who bought estates of M. LeRay in Jefferson county, although she may

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# STONE WIND MILLS

## on the St. Lawrence

BY JACK BROWN  
Mallorytown, Ontario

Windmills for grinding grain never enjoyed much success in our area. Of the five that were built, only one was used commercially for a period of years. Even it is remembered best as the scene of a military engagement.

Two stood at Cornwall. The three best known windmills were located at Prescott, Morristown, New York on the Southern side of the River, and Maitland, in Ontario.

There were no sites along the river at Cornwall where a watermill could be constructed because shoving ice in winter would have destroyed any building that might have been put up. Consequently two windmills were erected. The first one was built west of town near the bank of the river on lot fifteen. It was constructed about 1800 but it fell into decay or was destroyed, for only the floor made of large flagstones was to be seen by 1840. The second windmill was built east of the town, on lot five in the first concession. Its usefulness as a mill ended before 1830, and in 1839 it was converted into a blockhouse. An oldtime historian said it was still standing in 1890 but no trace of it exists today.



A lack of water-power prompted Hugh McConnell to erect a windmill on the hill above Morristown village in 1825. McConnell was one of the Scottish settlers and had been a miller in his own country where windmills were numerous. The mill was finished and operated a short time, but was abandoned soon after the owner's death in 1826. He was drowned in the summer of that year while crossing the St. Lawrence in a small boat. The circular stone tower still stands. Gates Curtis said it was the only mill of its kind along the American side of the river. The Morristown mill, not as tall as the Canadian windmills because its situation on the high promontory let it catch the prevailing winds, is 25 feet in diameter at the base, and the sandstone walls reach a height of 35 feet above ground. Atop this was a wooden structure from which the arms and sails were supported. There were six windows and one large door in the bodywall of the mill. Many years ago the machinery was removed and a roof was built over the top. Then for a time the building was used as a jail. But for as long as oldtimers can remember, the mill has presented a weatherworn appearance.

In 1941, after the Civilian Defense Office organized the

ground observer corps, the village board accepted the offer of Charles Chapman, and under the supervision of Leonard Phillips, a Morristown contractor, the old mill was transformed into an observation post. One of the old windows was blocked in, and a circular room with seven windows and a door was built at the top to command a view in all directions. Under a chief observer, more than 160 men and women carried out a continuous vigil in what became known as Morristown Air Warning Post No. 69C. Since the war, the old mill has been at rest. In 1963 a New York State historical marker was erected at the site, and a local Girl Scout Troop has landscaped the grounds.



The mill at Maitland was built on the point by George Longley after the property was deeded to him by George Anderson in 1825. Construction was completed in 1828. The mill consisted of a stone tower 35 feet in diameter at the base, and 76 feet high. The stone structure was surmounted by a wooden beehive-shaped dome to which the arms of the windmill were fixed. Windows and doors were arranged in four vertical columns with 26 windows altogether. Two doors were built at the ground level and four at higher levels. The stone wall of the tower was forty inches thick. The Maitland mill never worked very well unless the wind blew from Morristown. Longley was determined to have a mill so he sent to England and imported the first steam engine in Upper Canada. More buildings were erected and a flour mill operated. The business grew until it was one of the largest mills west of the Ottawa River. By this time, steamboats had come into general use, and large wharfs were built with warehouses at the dockside.

Years later the old mill was operated as a distillery. There were vats of rye whiskey on each of its nine floors. However, the distillers objected to paying revenue taxes, and legend says that they devised various ways, including a secret pipeline into the river, to foil their adversaries. But in 1867 the federal government nabbed the owners for back payment of \$47,899 in duties. The court decreed that the distiller should pay tax of 30¢ a gallon on 159,664 gallons. It was the fourteenth and final suit against the distillery, and meant the ruin of Mr. Halliday's industry. Although he claimed that the extra whiskey had not been produced, those who knew about the distillery operations said he kept two sets of

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# early TAVERNS & ROADS



BY KATE L. HUMPHREY

New York state seems to have been destined for importance by its many valleys and plains, and by their arrangement, such as the Hudson valley leading northward from the fine natural harbor at New York and connecting with the Champlain valley which goes directly into south eastern Canada; the Mohawk valley connecting with the Hudson near Albany and going straight westward to join the rich Ontario plain next to the Great Lakes.

For hundreds of years the Indians had used these natural routes for their trails, and really had made a rough sketch of the network of our finest highways of today. Some of the intermediate steps between their trails and our superhighways were more or less hardened paths for man or horse, then paths wide enough for two people, an opening permitting passage of a cart, and then a roadway for wagons and stage coaches.

These roads were gradually straightened and improved, but at first, they wound about with little regard for shortening the distance between two points. In time, people learned better how to cope with such obstacles as rivers, steep hills, swamps, huge rocks, deep sand and mud to the hubs of the wheels. Building roads seems to have been the chief concern of the town officers of Amsterdam in 1794, as it is the only business recorded in that year by the town clerk. There was little of ease or comfort for passengers, and we wonder at the hardihood of travelers, for vehicles were little better than the roads.

One improvement was the corduroy road, especially over marshy places. It was made by laying logs crosswise and close together in the freshly cleared roadway. Later, they were improved by being covered with earth.

Some roads came to be laid out by state or federal surveyors. Then as people settled in more remote areas, they had to provide their own roads leading out to the highway. The chief money expenditure came to be the building of bridges. Early in the 18th century, a system of "working the roads" was developed, by which each man was to work a certain number of days per year on the highway as a tax or pay a certain amount of money. This plan persisted for a long time, but it was never very successful and the ways of transportation remained poor.

The lowly oxen should certainly be mentioned for the important part they played in moving people and their belongings over the all but impassable early roadways. Many of our first settlers in northern New York came here from Vermont behind these slow but dependable animals.

## THE TURNPIKE COMPANIES

Then came the turnpike era. These roads were built by private companies. On the completion of a section, every ten miles or so, a gate or heavy pole called a pike, was placed across it. After a toll was paid by wagon or horseback rider, the pike was swung to one side and the traveler proceeded on his way.

Over these comparatively wonderful highways went the stage coaches, carrying chiefly mail and passengers. Streams of gaily painted wagons loaded with people and merchandise bound for western points passed across our state more easily now. In 1830, all of the important villages in northern New York were connected by stage coach lines. Most turnpikes were built and used during the first half of the 19th century, as 1850 had seen the advent of the railroads which took over more and more of the transportation, so the stage coaches gradually faded out of the picture.

Mail was delivered by the stage driver some what as the rural carriers of today. The usual number of horses used was four. A journey was slow and uncomfortable, and it



Historic Red Brick Tavern  
11 West Main St.  
Gouverneur, N. Y.

took so long to travel from one place to another that stages often left in the dead of night. For instance, the Utica stage left Watertown at 2 a.m. and by leaving Watertown early in the morning, one could reach Canton in the evening.

One of the two most important early roadways crossing northern New York was the old stage route which joined Ogdensburg and Plattsburgh and passing through these villages; Canton, Potsdam, Parishville, Hopkinton, Nicholville, Bangor, Malone, Burke, Chateaugay and Ellenburg. A mail service on this road was established by John Thompson of Malone about 1830, in a very small way. He carried the mail on foot, requiring a week each way. After a time, he rode horse back. But as population and business increased in the towns along his route, he found it necessary to expand his enterprise, and began a flourishing stage coach business. The fare between Ogdensburg and Plattsburgh was five dollars. Later the competition of the railroads became too much, and in 1856 the stage coach was abandoned. However, the route was still important for trade between the villages. Short runs of local stage coaches persisted even after the turn of this century.

Another road crossing northern New York from east to west was made chiefly for military reasons, connecting Plattsburgh and Sackets Harbor. It was called the Old Military Road or the St. Lawrence Turnpike or the Russell Turnpike. It was started about 1809 and was much used during the War of 1812 for the moving of soldiers and supplies. The village of Russell was chosen for the construction of an arsenal built immediately preceding 1812. This site in the County of St. Lawrence was selected since it was on the Turnpike, and also because it was far enough from the Canadian border to be more safe from invasion. Another so called military Road crossed the Adirondacks and had Russell as its terminus.

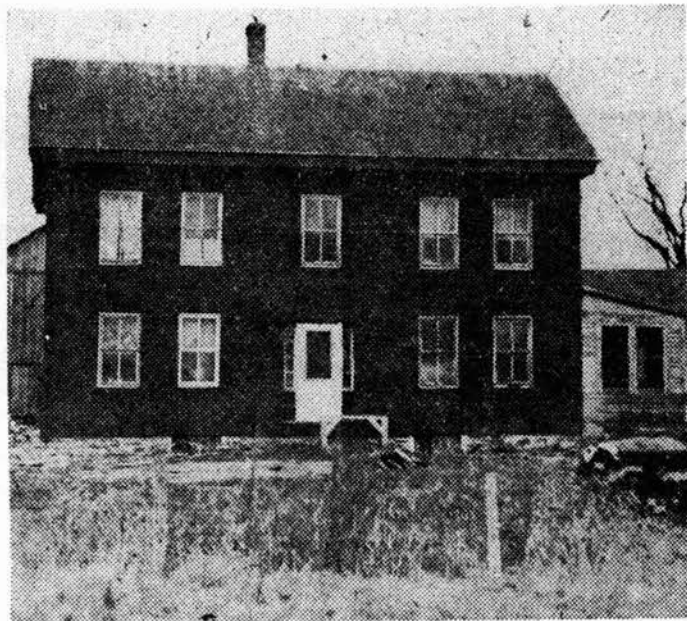
The Great River road, important in its time, is rather interesting. It started from the village of St. Regis, crossed the Raquette then the Grass river, and when it reached the St. Lawrence, followed it on up to Ogdensburg. First it was an Indian trail, and then was used for many years as a lumber road. It has long since ceased to be.

A road, shorter than many, led from the long east-west old stage route to Ft. Covington, then a trading center much

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## Once Hotel on Stage Route



larger than Malone, and a receiving place for the products of the asheries, which were then sent from there on to Montreal. Ft. Covington also saw much war activity in 1812-14.

There were many other short roads, many of them leading directly to the St. Lawrence upon which most trade depended. One of these was the Market road. Its route led through Stockholm, Norfolk, and Louisville, a comparatively straight line to the river. This was abandoned when the railroad came to Potsdam.

### NEEDED REFRESHMENT

Along these highways and others not mentioned, taverns seemed to have abounded. Not so many of them were built for the one purpose of catering to the public. But in the first 20 years of the 1800's in some localities, it is said that nearly every farmer when he built his log or stone house, on completion, hung out his sign as "Smiths Tavern." When a traveler stopped, he slept in the second room, or perhaps on a not too clean floor. Food was none too plentiful or attractive, and cleanliness was not always thought necessary. At one time there was said to be about 40 of these semi-public places in the vicinity of Massena.

The regular taverns were more attractive and were a blessing indeed to wayfarers who arrived by horseback or more often by stage coach. One nearby example was French's Tavern, or Half-way House, Midway between Canton and Potsdam. The farm on which it stands was purchased in 1803 by David French. The present two-story frame house was erected in 1815, and was enlarged to become a Tavern in 1819. It continued as a public house for 35 years. It was the scene of many social gatherings of young people from Potsdam and Canton. A large room on the second floor, the entire east end of the house, was the ball-room with its floor of wide smooth boards. Underneath this was the bar-room. The stage stopped here to change horses and to leave mail. The old house is in fairly good condition and much of the original furniture was in use by the occupants 20 years ago. They represented the sixth generation of the French family to live in the house.

The picturesque Red Brick Tavern in Gouverneur was successor to a building on the same site constructed for a home in 1818 by John Brown, the first merchant in Gouverneur. Its next owner enlarged it for a hotel for which it was used for a short time. A later owner disposed of it

to Peter Van Buren in 1831. Mr. Van Buren ran it until it was destroyed by fire in 1848, which he rebuilt and was long-familiar as the Red Brick Tavern. This structure was never used as an Inn or Tavern until after the death of Mr. Van Buren's daughter in 1928. It was then bought by Mrs. Collins who converted it into an exceedingly well known place to dine, and carried it on for about 14 years. After the death of Mrs. Collins, it came into the possession of Mrs. Hazel Hudson who ran it as a Tourist home. Seaker and Graves purchased it, taking down the Historic building, using the lot for parking.

A farm house standing until recently between Richville and DeKalb Junction was once a Tavern called "Old Northerner." An old plank road passed the place which was located at the forks in the road.

In Malone the Foote Tavern was built in 1807 and carried on until 1813. In 1813-14 it was used as a hospital during the war. In 1892 the original house was moved to Franklin street and its site used for the Armory at the corner of Main and Webster Streets. Appleton Foote, the pioneer inn keeper, built the stone bridge across the Salmon river in the village of Malone.

Chateaugay and its vicinity seems to have had its full share of taverns. One, the old Union House still entertained guests 30 years ago or so, serving delicious foods most lavishly. Mr. Duckett, the proprietor, loved to tell interested listeners about the old registers of the place. Two of the names in one of them were James Monroe and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

And there is the Brick Hotel at Evans Mills, an early tavern made famous by the poker game played by John Van Buren and George Parish, the pawn reputedly being the beautiful but unconventional Ameriga Vespucci.

Following are some of Potsdam's early public houses; Fuller's Hotel in the early 19th century, the old American Hotel raised in 1813, The St. Lawrence Hotel at the corner of Market and Main streets, Knapps Hotel, the original building now occupied by the Albion Hotel, was built by M.V.B. Ives. Additions have been made to it.

The use of taverns for military purposes has been mentioned, but it probably should be emphasized that these useful buildings were social centers also and were centers for news and excitement.

(The preceding excerpt was from a paper prepared for the Nihanewate Chapter D.A.R. by the late Miss Kate Humphrey of Brushton.)



## Social Hop,



AT THE

### Oak Island House,

### CHIPPEWA BAY.

### FRIDAY EVENING JAN. 22 D 1875.

YOUR COMPANY IS RESPECTFULLY  
REQUESTED.

TO K.L.H. 8200

A.A. Buss, Proprietor

Good music in attendance.



Handbill and program of winter fun in Hammond.

As we go to press word reaches us of the publication of a new Lewis County History, 1880-1965, (563 pages). Contact Lewis County Historian at Lowville, 13367 for information.



# The Trout Lake Story

BY LEAH M. NOBLE  
Edwards Town Historian

In the southern corner of St. Lawrence Co., in the Town of Hermon lies a miniature gem of a lake--Trout Lake. What it lacks in size, it makes up very generously in its clear spring water and picturesque setting. It is about 1 3/4 miles long and 1/2 mile wide, with a maximum depth of 90 feet. Nestled between low banks on the west side, and steep, rocky banks on the east, Trout Lake wends its way leisurely northward as if it were reluctant to leave the peaceful surroundings. At long last, it surrenders to the narrow confines of Tanner Creek, then Elm Creek and eventually into the St. Lawrence River by way of the Grass River.

According to tradition, Trout Lake lay unseen and unexplored until about 1860, when Ezek Earl, a distant relative of Earl Bancroft, wandered lakeward in search of wolves. Without warning he was amazed to see before him the glassy sheet of water dotted with about a dozen islands.

The virgin timber attracted lumber men and in 1880, John Gardner--father of Brayton and Asa--was granted a 99 year lease of the land from the foot of the lake towards Fowler. Later he sold his rights to Dan Barnett and Moore of Potsdam. John Gardner erected a sawmill at the outlet of the lake about two miles from his farm, now owned by Morrills at Podunk. About that time the Anthony Lumber Co. of Gouverneur was lumbering extensively at the foot of the lake. At one time 12 to 15 teams were used to haul the logs and lumber to Bigelow for rail shipment. A.S. Colton Co. operated a logging camp at the head of the lake with Jack Donahue as camp boss. The lumberjack's pay was then \$20 a month and board. If they did not work on rainy days, they lost that pay.

Poor management forced a Mr. Barber of Hermon, into bankruptcy and the Potsdam Company took over his interest.

Disaster struck in the form of a cyclone, May 14, 1884 which curtailed some of the Anthony's activities, when many thousand feet of logs were jammed into Shanty Bay. This storm also destroyed a pontoon bridge across to the island.

More permanent roads followed the logging roads from Hermon and about 1890 a road was built from Edwards to the foot of the lake. Where it joined the Porter Hill Road a school house was built in 1902. For a number of years a very active church group held services there, with Rev. Mr. Lee as minister.

## TOURISM BEGINS

So many pleasure seekers were attracted to this area that Asa Gardner built the Gardner Hotel which had a grand opening June 15, 1882. Later it was owned and operated by Mr. Ackerman and known as the Ackerman Hotel. The hotel was built back from the road in the "Huddle" on the land now occupied by the Aurelio cottage. On the lake shore, adjoining this property was built the Pavilion for out-door enjoyment, picnics and band concerts. Fire destroyed both the hotel and pavilion and a home across the road and the woods nearby on May 20, 1903.

For several years picnickers from Edwards used a logging road which came out to Chub Lake (now named Cedar Lake). By 1899, \$2,000 was appropriated by the Town of Edwards to construct a road to the head of the lake about 3 miles. Part of the way the road went through a swamp, which was covered with logs and ever after known as the "corduroy," about 1/4 mile in length. At the far end of the corduroy on the left was a farm house and barn. Around the bend closer to the Lake, was the Morrow farm house and barn on the left. Today all is overgrown with brush and foliage. Back of the Morrow home are big rocks known locally as the "Bread Rocks." On the farther side of the swamp at the head of the Lake was a logging camp which Earl Bancroft bought in the early 1900's and remodelled it into a home, used for about 25 years by the Bancrofts as a cottage. After that it was used as a restaurant and at present, is the home of Mrs. Grannis.

Ice cutting to fill ice houses in surrounding communities



Fishing at Trout Lake. Anna and Bennett Jones.

was a lucrative business for several years, especially for Newt McCollum of Edwards.

Around 1900, there was great activity in building at the lake. Bill Grant from Edwards built a number of cottages for Earl Bancroft about a mile to the north on the lake. A logging camp had been where the Manzolati home now stands.

One of the first cottages was built for Mr. and Mrs. Bullis from Canton. Their daughter married Mr. McMillan, who was an official in the Syracuse China Co. That cottage with its excellent beach, is now owned by Jack Graham.

## PICTURESQUE PLINY

About 1890, Asa Gardner's son, Pliny built a home on the site of the Green cottage. Soon after building his home, Plin purchased a steamboat and charged 25¢ for a ride around the lake. It is not known where the boat came from but some conjecture that it was one owned by Bill Grant, who had run a steamboat on the Oswegatchie about 1873. It is regrettable that when Plin wrote his book "American History" - he merely copied, instead of putting down Trout Lake lore which was second nature to him. Many are the salty stories told about Plin, but they would fill a book themselves.

Plin's father, Asa, was a Commissioner to Alaska and is buried there.

Several years before Plin had his steamboat, Mr. Anthony in 1896 ran a steamboat on the lake and also took passengers around the lake, giving particular attention to the children. Miss Elsie Evans of the Trout Lake area and a teacher in N.Y.C. was very active building and selling real estate at the lake and for a while she spent her summers there from 1930-1940. Her cottage is on the west side of the road and is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Hance.

When the road from Edwards was completed the lake was made more accessible and a daily stage carried many happy people to and from the lake. A Mr. Tonk Lanphear, a big bearlike man, drove a stage and pleased the riders with his dry wit. Mr. Hi (Hiram) Hall owned a livery stable on the west corner across from Sacred Heart Church and took parties to the lake summer or winter and also rented outfits to those who wanted to do their own driving. Ice boat racing was very popular and often the hotel was filled to capacity. The Edwards Record newspaper printed weekly notices of the attractions which awaited lovers of outdoors and the N.Y.C.R.R. offered special trips to Trout Lake via Edwards.

Since 1900 the lake population has grown, especially in the last 5 years - from a few dozen cottages to over 100. Some of the cottages are all-year round homes. Summer after summer, the Flints, Grimshaws, Herseys, Spauldings, all teachers in N.Y.C. relaxed and enjoyed the solitude and fishing at the lake. The Trout Lake Association (1955-1965) aimed to promote good fellowship and to maintain a high standard of safety for all cottagers and visitors to enjoy.

Trout Lake Story

About 1950, Heinz Brodauf purchased a large piece of land in the northeast corner of the lake and cut it up into numerous lake-front lots, nearly all of which are the sites of very pleasant and modern cottages.

# Deed.

Warranty.

Bert Cole

to

*Edu*

The White Plume

Dated June 9, 1915. 19

State of New York.

St. Lawrence County, ss.

Recorded on the 13

day of July 1915, at

4 o'clock P.M., in Book No.

1879 of Deeds, at page 72.

and examined.

*W. H. Haines*

Clerk.

Fortunately through the years there have been very few accidents or near-accidents on the lake. In July 1965, Mrs. Dorothy McCollum lost her life in a boat collision.

From time to time fire has done a great deal of damage to the woods as well as cottages. The "fire fall" across from the Manzolati home has been burned over several times. About 1955, the home of "Hidie" Evans, owned by Warren and Anna Cousins, burned and left quite a vacant spot across from the Reed cottage. Two cottages (Reardon's) near the lake shore, east of Reed's, burned in 1960.

About 1969, Mr. and Mrs. Bacon of Canton, built a Marina at the head of the lake and after running it for a couple of years, they sold it to Robert Simons, from Cranberry Lake, who employed Benny Gagnon to run it for him.

At one time, about 70 years ago, there was considerable talk of piping the water of Trout Lake to supplement the drinking water supply already afforded by wells, but details made it prohibitive and the project was abandoned.

In 1962 the State purchased the Bancroft-Todd farm, consisting of 900 acres, planning some time in the future to develop the woodland and land bordering Trout Lake into a State Park. This project would benefit many who do not own property at the lake and would be a very desirable place for swimming instruction. In the past this farm was known as the Land of the White Plume. The east side of the lake is quite rocky but several cottages have been built there and at times the Boy Scouts have camped near the shore.



A picnic a "few" years ago. From left to right, Ruby Scott (Jenkins); William Scott (Sheriff, St. Lawrence Co., who recently retired); Doris Jones (Hadlock); Grace Scott (Morgan).

Several wooded islands add to the charm of the lake - Carpenter Island, now Adams; Griffin; Bell Isle; J.S. Brown Island (Jordan Is.) now Graham and others. At one time there was a bridge from the Pavilion to Carpenter Island. (See photos in Quarterly, Jan. 1968)

### FLORA

The bed of the lake is nearly funnel shaped branching out into shallow water and terminating in various delightful beaches. Sail boats, canoes, rowboats, motorboats accompanied by water skiers are often seen swinging in and out of the islands. In the numerous quiet bays white and yellow pond lilies lift their beautiful heads proudly skyward. Pickerel weed, cardinal flower, and cattails add to the varied beauty of the shore line. For years patches of blueberries and wild strawberries have brought delight to avid pickers, and have added to the jelly and jam shelves. All sorts of wild flowers march up and down in the nearby woods - rare lady slippers, ghostly Indian pipes, pitcher plant, may apple just to name a few.



Old Sam knows the way home from Trout Lake to Bigelow. Doris Jones (Hadlock) at the reins, about 1910.

Since 1958, Rollin Brown has been operating a "Ham" radio station in their home at the head of the lake. He has had very interesting communications from many places in U.S.A. and Canada, His call number is WA2DFW.

### AND FAUNA

It is hoped that the frequent restocking of trout will add greater sport to fishing. Large and small mouth bass, perch, rock bass, smelt, sunfish, and bullheads are quite plentiful. A few years ago beavers took up housekeeping at the foot of the lake and did considerable damage until they were trapped and released farther away in the Adirondacks.

During migration flocks of Canada geese and ducks are seen as they wing their way northward. The silence of the evening is broken by the call of the whip-poor-will, thrush, or owl as he gossips with his mate some distance away. Until recently the beautiful loon was a common sight as he played hide-and-seek in the water but either because of its careless nesting habits - easy prey to predators - or thoughtless hunters their appearance is getting to be a rarity.

## Heyday in Russell

# Pearls Of Great Price

Researched by Jan Barnes and Herbert Judd  
Edited by Mary H. Biondi

One of the brief though lucrative enterprises which seized the imagination of residents of our county was the pearl fishing one.

The first gem was found in the summer of 1892 by Mack C. Rowe, the spruce gum manufacturer of Russell. While fishing for trout in Frost Brook, a small tributary of the Grass River, about a mile out of the village he ran out of bait. When he opened one of the fresh water clams from the bottom of the creek, intending to bait his hook with the juicy morsel, he was amazed as a perfect pink pearl as big as a pea fell out. He pocketed the gem, and in a few weeks had a report from a New York City expert that it was a perfect pearl and was offered a good price for it.

With this word, Mr. Rowe abandoned his spruce gum business and put his business ability behind pearl fishing. He went about it systematically, by hiring several men and boys. He invented a viewer--a glass-bottomed wooden box about 12"x 14". It was watertight at the bottom and open at the top, so that when it was lowered through the surface of the shallow water, one could quickly see the necks of the bivalves pushing up through the sand.

To get the clams out of the extremely cold water, Mr. Rowe made a long handled spud of bamboo or other light-weight wood. It was 6-8 feet long, with two pieces of steel connected to a spring, holding them together. The fishers could then clamp onto the clams in deep water and bring them to the surface. They dressed in hip boots for this cold and wet job.

They opened them immediately in a great pile on the banks of the creek. Finally local residents complained of the odor of the decaying clams and town officials required the gatherers to carry the unopened clams to their homes for search.

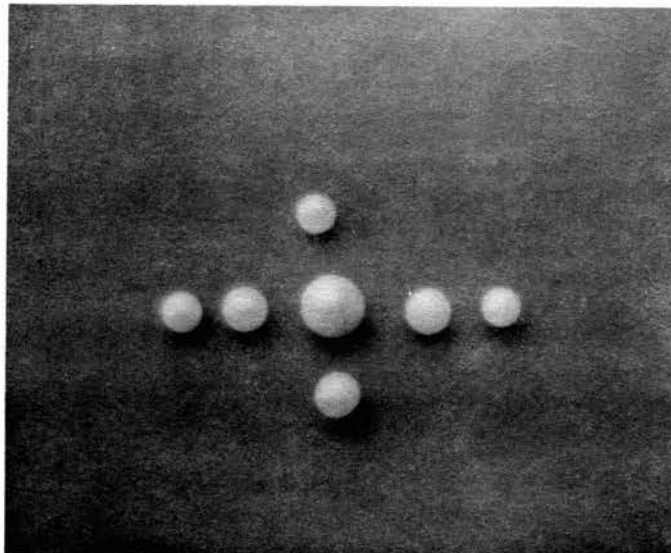
The men transported them in large burlap bags with handy straps for slinging over their shoulders. Mr. Rowe supervised the opening of each shell, thoroughly searching for pearls of all sizes. Sometimes they slaughtered huge quantities of clams before any pearls were discovered. They never thought of eating the clams themselves.

Mr. Rowe's success attracted others and soon nearly every man and boy in Russell was spending leisure moments in the hunt. Frost Brook soon became barren of clams and they turned their attention to Plum Creek, which in two years was entirely denuded of clams. They then transferred their search to the nearby Grass River.

Four to eight men were employed regularly by Rowe, at \$1 to \$1.50 a day by 1894 and they found some fine gems. Charles Hepburn, Jr., O.B. Doolittle, P.G. Carr, Avery Towne, Willard Howland and John and Albert Gibbs followed the "Pearl King's" successful venture.

Most of the pearls were sold to Tiffany and Company and to A.S. Gardiner & Co., New York diamond merchants. Scores were found 1/8" in diameter which brought \$10-\$15, and many from 1/4" to 1/2", \$30 - \$60. The largest perfect pearl, taken by Mr. Rowe, measured 3/4" and weighed 68 grains. It was of perfect pink luster and worth "a small fortune," as reported at the time. The most valuable one sold by Rowe brought \$1400. The next largest on record was found by Charles Hepburn, Jr. and was 5/8" in diameter ("larger than a robin's egg") and weighing 58 grains. One of the lovely pearls was sold to Charles A. Kellogg, the county district attorney, in 1900 or so. Mr. Kellogg had the gem set into a ring for his wife.

Pearl bearing mollusks were always found in swift water, in rapids or just below them, with stony or gravelly bottom. Most of Plum Creek runs now through state land where one can fish but parts of it are on privately owned property. As a fisherman wets his fly these days, he hardly ever thinks of the days when pearl fishing was "big business" in Russell and along the Grass.



PEARLS OWNED BY HERBERT JUDD, CANTON, and taken from Grannis Brook, somewhere between Boyden Brook and Cray's Mills by the James family about 1890. Tiffany & Co. bought some. These are perfect. The picture is only slightly enlarged.

Until the creeks and river were entirely denuded, one could see almost any day from ten to forty boys and men, in rubber suits or boots, with boxes strapped to their faces, wading up river against the current, nipping at the protruding necks of unsuspecting clams, like some other-world creatures.

## Pearls <sup>IN</sup> THE MOUTH.



### BEAUTY AND FRAGRANCE

Are communicated to the mouth by

## SOZODONT,

*which renders the teeth pearly white, the gums rosy, and the breath sweet. By those who have used it, it is regarded as an indispensable adjunct of the toilet. It thoroughly removes tartar from the teeth without injuring the enamel.*



# Star Lake

## Queen Of The Adirondacks

... By ...

Rev. C. Shaw

Far, far, away from the cities' din,  
The cities filth, and the cities' sin;  
In the northern part of the Empire State,  
Where the snow falls early and lingers late,  
Where the Ice King comes from his northern zone—  
When flowers have withered, and birds have flown,  
And binds the rivers and lakes and springs  
With his icy chains and his frosty rings:  
There lieth a mighty wilderness,  
A picture of primitive loveliness.

In solemn grandeur its mountains rise,  
Till their mist veiled tops seem to touch the skies.  
In summer time, when the days are bright,  
A blue haze covers each misty height—  
To lovers of beauty a glorious sight.  
Far over the valleys that lie between,  
A vision of emerald bloom is seen,  
Broken here and there, by the silver sheen  
Of shimmering lakes; where the wild deer play  
On their pebbly shores, at the close of day.

Here numerous rivers have their source,  
And from here they start on their seaward course,  
Deepening and widening, till far below:  
They charm eye and ear with their murmuring flow.  
On the northern side of his wilderness,  
Where nature and art now hold sacred tryst;  
Lies a body of water, as calm and blue,  
As the sky above; and its outlines true  
Of a beautiful star, has served to make  
A name for this water: we call it, Star Lake.

Inclosed by the forest, its holy calm  
Is rivaled alone, by its healing balm.  
As we ripple its waters with paddle or oars,  
Or sit, or stand on its quiet shores;  
Gazing afar, at its fair outlines  
As the hours go by, and the day declines,  
And the stars come out for their nightly show,  
And mirror themselves in the depths below:  
We heed them not, for a vision appears;  
And the veil is drawn from the long dark years.

Now, I take my pen and briefly trace,  
Some scenes, in the lives of a vanished race.  
Though they paddle no more o'er waters blue,  
Or to wooded shore moor their light canoe,  
Or listen again to the wind harp's wail—  
The Great Spirit's voice in the fitful gale—  
They have left their record of hopes and fears,  
Of pride and passion, of smiles and tears:  
And the Red men's history, we may know,  
Though the actors lived in the long ago.

Still the forest lay, in its virgin pride,  
A world by itself—a world, so wide,  
So beautiful, wonderful, rich and grand—  
To the hunter or settler, the promised land.



Here the tall pines grew in their native grace,  
And the spruce and hemlock found a place;  
The beech, and maple, and cherry, and ash,  
And birch, and balsam, would bring the cash,  
When made into paper or lumber; and so,  
The pride of the forest must be laid low.

Then the hills were rich with shining ore,  
So the rocks must be blasted, and rent and tore;  
And mills be builded upon the streams  
And active life take the place of dreams.  
Afar, in the distance, the Iron Horse blew  
His trumpet of warning; the clearings grew;  
And farms, and buildings, and centers of trade,  
Were signs of progress the white men made—  
Signs, fulfilling from day to day,  
As the old scenes faded and passed away.

Then the people came from the cities' din,  
The cities filth, and the cities' sin,  
And they saw our beautiful lakelet here,  
Bordered with evergreens far and near;  
Inhaled the fragrance of fir and pine,  
Drank copious draughts of nature's wine;  
And they made their camps on its sunny shores,  
And tarried, and rested on idle oars;  
And some of them, lifting their hearts in prayer,  
Thanked God for a picture, so pure and fair.

Here, the Indian lover with heart as true,  
As the Great North Star, in the changeless blue,  
To the Indian maid told his sweet love tale,  
By the campfire's glow, or the moonlight pale.  
Here, the Indian hunter went in and out,  
Shot the panting deer, caught the agile trout.  
Build his tall tapee by the lakelet's side,

## Poetical Portraits

As a rough rude home for his dusky bride;  
Brought in the feathers of duck and goose,  
For a nice soft bed for his young papoose

Here the Indian warrior trained to strife,  
Knowing not the value of human life;  
With his tomahawk and scalping knife:  
Made the forest ring, with his fearful yell,  
And scenes, that rivaled the white man's hell.  
But his star of destiny rose and fell;  
For time rolled on; and the white man came,  
And the Indian left his wilds and game;  
And the bones of his Fathers, at Fates behest,  
For new strange scenes in the far, far west.

Some came, in the strength of youth and prime,  
For fun and frolic and real good time,  
To explore the region, and see the sights,  
And paddle for deer in the foggy nights,  
To climb the mountains, so grand and tall:  
And wish, it may be, that they owned them all.  
Some came, with fevered and sunken cheeks,  
To camp by the lake for a few short weeks,  
To drink pure water, and breath pure air,  
And find relief from their anxious care.

Then they all went back to the towns again  
With a homesick feeling, akin to pain.  
And vowed; when another year rolled round,  
To return to the Star Lake camping ground.  
And they came again as they prophesied,  
And built them cottages, side by side.  
Some being wealthy, discreet, and wise,  
Erected hotels of enormous size,  
For thousands of people were fully awake,  
And anxious for quarters, up there, at Star Lake.

And still they are coming, and still they go:  
While steam whistles shriek in the vales below,  
And railtrains travel with rush and roar,  
Round steep sharp curves, where the speed is slower,  
Till the whistle blows, and the brakes are down,  
At Oswegatchie, the Side Hill Town.  
Here an elegant 'bus, the passengers take  
For a two miles ride to great Star Lake.  
And the train moves on, and we soon see signs  
Of what they are doing at Benson Mines.

Still onward, and soon the conductor calls:  
"All passengers out! This is Newton Falls."  
Here they make paper of finest degree.  
And here, they make money, abundant and free.  
Now reader, in closing, I wish you success;  
And pray the All Father your portion to bless:  
But should life's burdens prove heavy to bear,  
And bow down your spirit with weakness and care;  
Come up to Star Lake, for this sparkling gem  
Has always a balm for the spirits of men.

## Memories Are The Lasting Things

BY ABIGAIL COLE

The whole world is changing -  
Nothing remains the same;  
The pretty girl - the sprightly youth -  
Become wrinkled, slow and lame.

Even the trees! With the years  
Have grown - or have disappeared, -  
From the familiar landscape  
That memory holds dear.

Roads are changed to fit the cars -  
Autos - like time - go fast!  
We ride out into the future -  
Tomorrow - today is past,  
Time - fire - weather -  
Changing agents all are they;  
Dearest things, in their path  
Are not allowed to stay.  
Gone are the maple and the swing -  
Mother - father - cat - chickens - all  
Home all gone! Only memories are left!  
From years past I can recall:  
The comfort of Mamma's arms;  
Summer - Papa put up my swing;  
Winter - snow melting - sap boiling -  
I hear folks say, "It is spring."  
School days - play days -  
High school - college - the best yet -  
Can it be that balding grey head  
Belongs to the handsome boy I met!  
Children grow up - have children -  
Grandchildren - great-grand-children -  
Frolicsome ways become sedate;  
What youth calls an early hour,  
Old folks think of as very late,  
Memories are the lasting things!  
The most enduring things we know,  
Though we change and times change,  
Treasured ever, with us they go.



The following are some of the old English proverbs regarding the month of January:

If the grass grows in Janiveer,  
It grows the worse for't all the year.

A January spring  
Is worth naething.

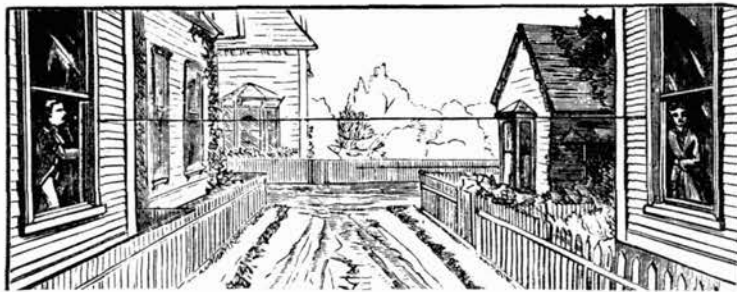
Under water, dearth;  
Under snow, bread.

March in Janiveer,  
January in March I fear.

If January calends be summerly gay,  
'Twill be winterly weather till the calends of May.

The blackest month in all the year  
Is the month of Janiveer.

These are comforting proverbs to the people of this country who have to keep digging to get their heads above the snow.



## Communications in Nicholville

BY ANNA M. COLE  
Town of Lawrence Historian

My first impression of a telephone was an innovation which was really no telephone at all by today's standards. It was attached to my grandmother Day's kitchen wall on upper Church Street on the Port Kent Road.

In appearance it resembled a small open wooden bowl into which we spoke. This was attached by wire to a slender pole outside the house and then on by other slender poles to my Aunt Carrie Merrill's house down the street a short distance where another 'talk box' as we shall call it, lacking its real name, was installed. A few more poles on private properties down the street back of the houses and the third instrument was in service at my father's, Doctor Matthews' home. This device really worked for our three families, a total distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile or a little less.

I remember being greatly intrigued with this speaking device and years later searching in my grandmother's huge garret for this antique relic without luck. If any one of my readers can produce the name and origin of this early means of communication I shall appreciate it.

About this time or perhaps a little later Cordon Babcock who lived and had a small store 'Under the Hill' (as we called the settlement in the valley between the Nicholville and Hopkinton hills) was experimenting with telegraphy and became a proficient operator. Laura Wilson, Ethel and Harold Hilliard, the latter two being Cordon's cousins, also at various times worked with Morse Code. Babcock operated the telegraph office for the Great Northeastern Telegraph Company, a Canadian Company.

Over the telegraph Harold Hilliard received the news of President McKinley's assassination in 1901. The office was discontinued in 1902.

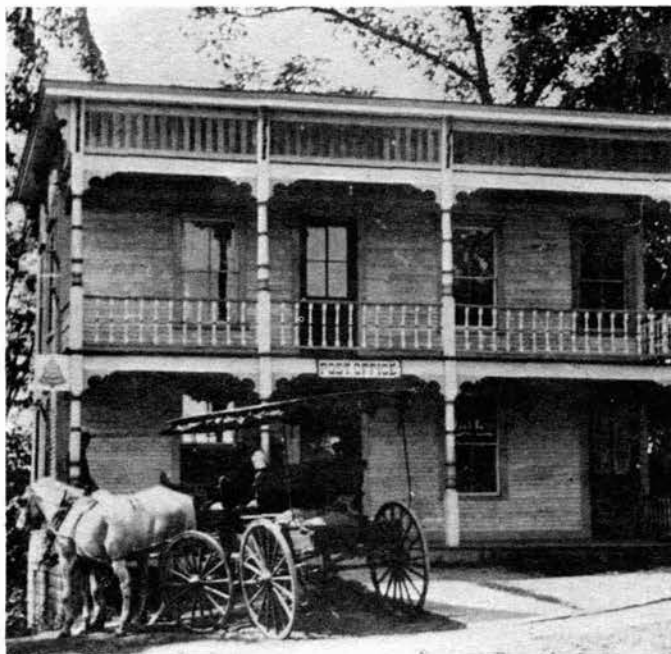
Cordon Babcock continued with telephone work and in the Nicholville news notes for 1904 this item appears - "Since the putting in of the telephone over a year ago there has been but one instrument in town and that one is the public telephone at the Post Office. During the past week several private instruments have been placed in connection with the Central; namely, J.H. Knowlton has two, one at his house and another at his office; P.W. Smith, Kendrick and Reed, Doctor W.E. Fortune, O.J. Fortune."

In September 1907: "Mr. Babcock has 40 customers for telephone line with Adirondack Home Telephone giving his patrons direct connection with some 300 phones in Northern New York."

July 13, 1910: "Mr. Babcock buys of Adirondack Telephone Company its rundown exchange at Winthrop and Brasher Falls. This makes 8 villages now served by Nicholville Home Telephone Company besides many phones installed among farmers along its lines. He owns the line and has done practically all the installing."

By April of 1969, after several enlargements, the Nicholville Telephone Company, Inc., is housed in a practically new fine building with dial system installed, located on Water Street, Nicholville and operated by R.S. Chambers of Nicholville and Potsdam.

Our mail was transported by means of a stage which was a heavy, unwieldy two-seated vehicle with space in back for mail bags, luggage etc. Carrying passengers as well, it was drawn by two horses and driven for years by Bert



Blanchard of Fort Jackson and later by Matt Kimpton of that same place. This mail which was left by the train at North Lawrence was brought from there to our Nicholville Post Office where Olin Fortune, Postmaster for many years, sorted it and put in into numbered boxes with glass fronts. While he was so occupied some of the young fry surreptitiously eyed each letter's address as it slid into the box and soon became acquainted with each family's mail and sometimes with the sender's address as well.

A few of our more affluent citizens had lock boxes which set them apart from the general run. The contents of these were more difficult to read from the front.







## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

As happens to even the best of us, grandparenthood has been thrust upon us. It made us give pause, or "gave one to think," as the French put it.

What is a grandparent today? How has the role changed in this ever-changing world? A convenient baby sitter? A dweller in a neat little apartment where children visit quietly for short periods--when grandparents can be caught at home? A neat trim smartly dressed modern guy or gal who may be busy working five days at an interesting job; or playing cards, jogging, traveling all over the lot with other "senior citizens"--when suppers and dances are not being held?

Ah, yes, times have changed. It wasn't so long ago that grandparents were fixed features in our lives. They lived just "over the river and through the wood," and we visited them for long periods in the summers, and vacation times and holidays would not be complete without a visit. Laps were ample and cushiony, rocking chairs wide and accommodating to little climbers. Baking cookie smells wafted from warm kitchens, where grandma held forth, and extra treats were always stashed on pantry shelves or in cool dark cellars for the having. Barrels of apples to dip into were country treats, too.

Grandma's house always seemed one of pleasure to the young, of bountiful repasts and soft feather beds. Chores shared with grandpa seemed like games, the myriad animals to be petted and fed were fun, exploring occupied long hours. There was no boredom at grandparents' house.

The trip there and back was an adventure, too, no matter how short or long. Sometimes we were allowed to travel alone, met safely at the depot on the other end.

Grandparenthood may weigh heavily upon this spirit, but everyone assures us it is a grand treat, a special state of enjoyment without great responsibility. But we can't help envisioning the traditional grandma--and feeling not quite able to measure up.

M.H.B.



### LEE MERRILL MARTIN

We lost a stalwart member of this organization Sept. 18, 1970 in the death of Lee Martin. Lee was the first officially appointed town historian in this county when the law became effective in 1919, and had retained that post for nearly half a century. He was one of the founders of this Historical Association, and only a small handful of those foresighted persons are left.

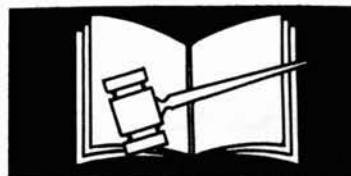
Harland Horton used to reminisce that he and Nina Smithers and Lee really were the burr under the saddle in getting this race going.

Lee was an enthusiastic Mason, a Shriner and held other high offices in the Order and its associated bodies. He held offices in the Order of the Eastern Star as well. He was a past Grange master, and was a member of the Lisbon Sportsmens Club.

Lee was born in the town of Lisbon, attended school there as well as Potsdam Normal. He was a Harvard graduate, and attended his 60th class reunion in June, having completed the course in 1910 after only three years' study.

An elder and clerk of the session of the United Presbyterian Church, Lee Martin was an active member all his life. The first Mrs. Martin whom he married in 1917 died in 1959. Lee remarried, and he lost Anna Martin in 1967.

We shall miss Lee Martin at our meetings.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Among papers of the late Richard C. Ellsworth in the archives of St. Lawrence University repose letters and guide-sheets about tours of historic sites in our county.

The trips, I'm sure, were the ancestor of the summer tours which our Society regularly conducts. It may be interesting for a moment to look back over those early excursions planned and carried out by Dick Ellsworth.

The first one seems to have been in 1937. The sites visited were Clark's Crossing, Norwood (site of Union Settlement, an early 19th century cooperative community); St. Paul's Church, Waddington; General Wilkinson's encampment near Waddington in the War of 1812; the Remington Memorial, Father Picquet monument, and old Van Rensselaer estate in Ogdensburg; and remnants of old iron industry at Rossie and burial place of a Bonaparte in Oxbow.

It may be mentioned now that Walter Guest Kellogg, author of "Parish's Fancy," had been invited to address the group at the Remington Memorial. But Mr. Kellogg didn't show up, and Dick Ellsworth mentions rather acidly in a subsequent letter, "I am sorry, of course, that we did not meet but realize that people do sometimes forget."

The 1938 and 1940 tours were substantially the same, except that the Ogden mansion on Crapser's Island was included. (What a loss today, that this mansion was unnecessarily demolished during the building of the Seaway!)

Here the record in the Tours file leaps to 1954. By now Dick Ellsworth has joined his fathers in Evergreen Cemetery, and tours are beginning as sponsored by the freshly-growing Historical Association. (Mr. Ellsworth had pitched his tours under the Summer Session program of St. Lawrence's Department of History.)

An excursion planned for June 12 of 1954 is an intensive journey about DePeyster. This includes the Meeting House Rock and the former home of the Civil War's General N.H. Curtis.

By today, 1970, the Society's tours have expanded so that practically all of our historic sites get covered within the space of a decade or so. Upwards of 100 members and guests always come out.

What is pleasant for me to reflect on, and others of Dick Ellsworth's friends, is the role that his tours and writings and infectious historian's-interest played in this build-up of general interest. He died too early to be a guiding light of the Association. But many of us remember his unquenching enthusiasm, and we surely count him as one of the North Country's finest spirits, in deed and in memory.

As is hinted above, most of us consider the tours a wonderful part of our program. But we must work at other matters too. Among these are: more regular meetings of our directors (monthly?); several informational programs through the winter months, and varying these in different county centers (we started this in December, and shall carry on); a program of service exhibits to be shown in schools.

A word about this last, Exhibits like these need not be ambitious. We need some volunteers to give some time to these. Could our local historians play a role here? Could Georgianna Wranesh of Gouverneur and Richville be a stimulus here, benefiting from the Cooperstown seminar she attended last summer?

Another word about these matters of program: more state and federal funds seem certain to become available for historical and cultural programs such as ours. To qualify and be awarded these, we must do much more than sponsor tours.

Your officers will have ideas and plans. We need the help of all of you, and the special help of those with special skills and interests, to put some of them into execution.

Lets go about it!

*Edward J. Blackburn*



# Annual Meeting

October 10

The annual meeting was a success (in spite of competition from the opening of the World Series and Indian summer) and a fine luncheon by the Fowler Elementary School PTA was topped by the cutting of a large cake shaped like the town with villages delineated in color.

Nelson Winters gave a great talk on the talc industry and played a recording of a play about it, given some time ago on radio.

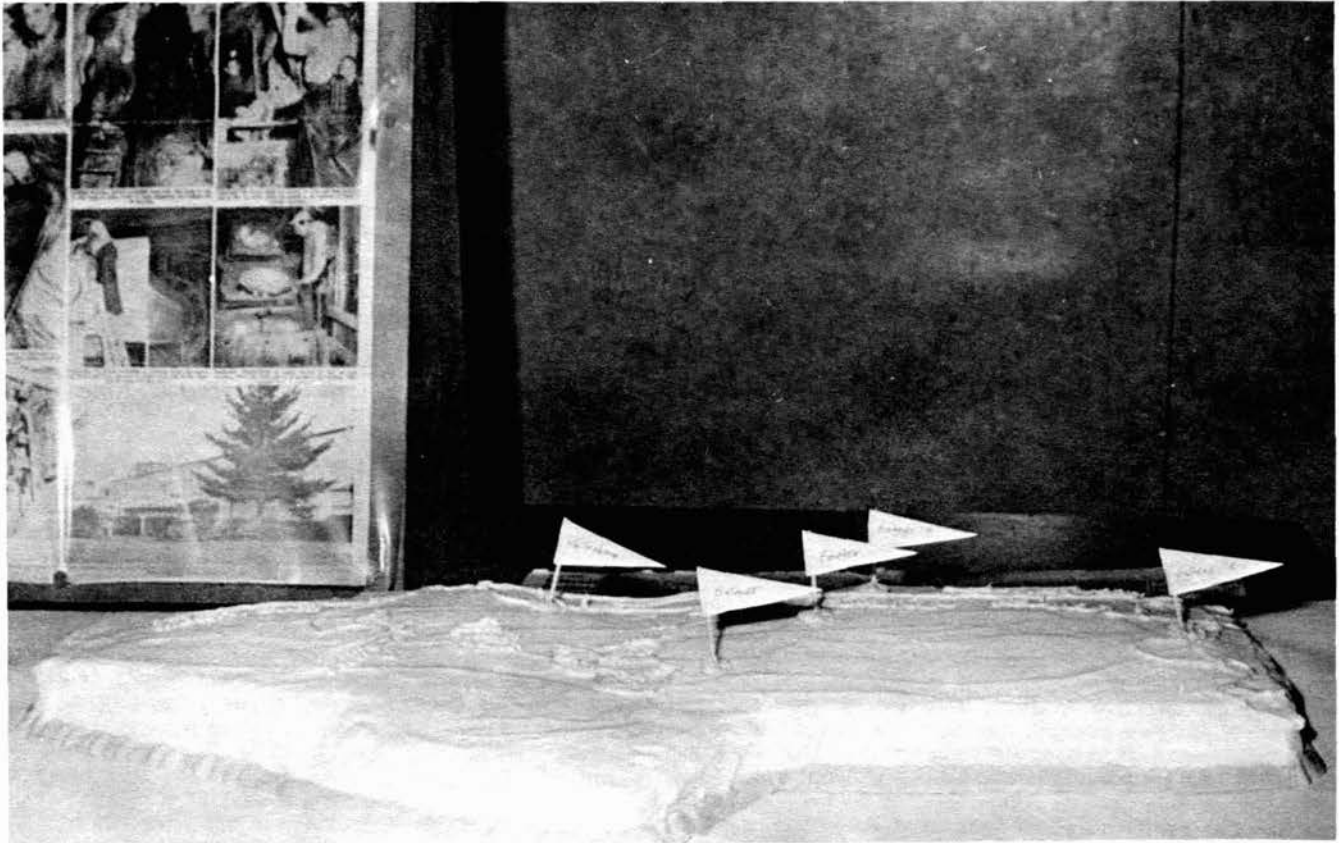
Our officers are seen lined up and photographed for posterity, and listed in full on page 2.

Tours and programs for the entire year are now being planned - if you or your town want to be host to one, get in touch with any officer on this list.

Every member really go out and get one new member this year!



Clifton Gates, supervisor of Fowler; Edward Blankman, speaker Nelson Winters, Mr. and Mrs. Mark Balmat at Annual Meeting.



Cake made by PTA of Fowler Elementary School completes display. It was cut and devoured moments later by members at annual meeting.



NEEDED. Volunteers for clipping news items and sorting. In groups or singly, please contact County Historian, History Center, Canton or by mail to Box 43, Canton.



Before leaving town -- leave forwarding money with Post Master.

**Notice**

**HOURS AT THE HISTORY CENTER  
COUNTY BUILDING, CANTON**

**Monday and Thursday**

**9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**

## FROM THE COUNTY'S



# CRACKER BARREL

Highlights of 1970

### TOWNS

BRASHER (Mae Murray)

CANTON (Edith Costa)

CLARE (Iris Fry)

CLIFTON (Clara McKenney)

COLTON (Lorena Reed)

The completion of our new water and sewer project is in sight. The water storage tank, pumping station and disposal plant will be finished very soon. Some connections will be made, with the remainder to be finished in the spring.

DEKALB (F.F.E. Walrath)

New York State is building a new highway between DeKalb Junction and Hermon which is expected to be finished in 1971 under contract with the Bongioanni Construction Company. Route 11 has been widened and repaired between DeKalb Junction and East DeKalb.

EDWARDS (Leah Noble)

All historical items have been moved to the new Historical Center, made possible by the Lions Club; but the sorting and arranging are so slow that Open House will probably be delayed until next year.

FINE (Catherine Brownell)

FOWLER (Isabelle Hance)

Fowler acted as host for the annual meeting of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association October 10.

GOVERNEUR (Harold Storie)

The town historian furnished a large amount of the information used by members of the Historical Association in preparing 50 tapes for radio broadcast in addition to participating in the programs. He also furnished items and artifacts used in displays in the First National Bank. A number of inquiries regarding the genealogies of Gouverneur families were answered.

HAMMOND (Maxine Rutherford)

HERMON (Helen LeBlanc)

On August 22 I attended "Collector's Choice Day" at Parishville and on September 19 joined the Mohawk Tour and visited the lacrosse factory. I have attended two workshops at Canton and the Fowler annual meeting. I went to Upper Canada Village on my own. I have done several genealogy letters and looked up cemetery records for a number of people.

HOPKINTON (Ferne Conklin)

LAWRENCE (Anna Cole)

LISBON (Doreen Martin)

LOUISVILLE (Lorraine Bandy)

We opened our Louisville Historical Center on Mother's Day and have registered over 400 visitors as of November, 1970. Three new show cases and more artifacts have been added.

MACOMB (Willis Kittle)

MADRID (Florence M. Fisher)

MASSENA (Marie Eldon-Browne)

From March 16 to 24 all day lectures were held at the Junior High School at the request of Mr. Murray, the Principal. They were held in room 115, allowing us six tables for the display of artifacts.

A collection of 25 scrapbooks was given the Center by Mrs. Theron James, George Street, and were the work of her late husband, Mr. James.

The results of the great rainstorm-flood of July 11 in our Center have at last been cleared away.

MORRISTOWN (Ella Mae Phillips)

A celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Morristown is in the making for 1971. With the aid of the Morristown-Brier Hill Chamber of Commerce, firemen and other organizations will take an active part. The dedication of the town museum will be held.

The story of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pill, which appeared originally in the Ogdensburg Advance, will be published in book form.

NORFOLK (Edith Van Kennen)

PARISHVILLE (Norene Forrest)

My six months as historian have been interesting. I've answered phone calls and several letters; loaned pictures; visited three cemeteries for information; worked on scrapbooks and was able to attend the fall workshop in Canton and tour to Hogansburg in September.

Our town has a public library, temporarily in the dining room of the town hall, which is open three afternoons and one evening, beginning last August.

PIERCEFIELD (Beulah B. Dorothy)

I have worked on cemetery records, started the story of the supervisors of the town of Piercefield and attended the fall workshop in October.

PIERREPONT (Millard Hundley)

I have attended the workshop meetings at Canton, the Open House and luncheon of the Parishville Historical Society, and on October 10, the annual meeting at Fowler.

PITCAIRN (Edna Hosmer)

Our town is growing. Eleven trailers have moved in as permanent homes and three beautiful new ranch-type houses have been built. A riding stable and greenhouse have been added to our business establishments. The complete restoration of Durham Cemetery has been carried out by Howard Clark.

POTSDAM (Susan Lyman)

The town historian and her deputy attended a one-week seminar in Cooperstown in July. Copies of the cemetery census have been given the County Historian.

ROSSIE (Frances Gardner)

RUSSELL (Jeanette Barnes)

I have received many letters requesting information from my cemetery files. This required a lot of research, but I did answer all the letters. I attended both spring and fall workshops and found them very interesting.

I was very happy to be asked to read the story I wrote, "The Pack Peddler", at the fall workshop, and think those attending enjoyed it.

On June 27 I attended the DeGrasse Methodist Church celebration. A beautiful parade and delicious dinner were enjoyed by the large crowd attending.

STOCKHOLM (Hazel Chapman)

Three bridges are being rebuilt in our town. The Rutland Railroad station has been torn down to make way for a new bank in Winthrop.

WADDINGTON (Dorothy Hill)

The second annual snowmobile races will be held here this winter.

Monsignor George W. Whittaker, pastor of St. Mary's Church, was recently honored by Pope Paul VI. He was named Prelate of Honor.

### CITIES AND VILLAGES

GOVERNEUR (Nelson Winters) See Gouverneur Historical Association.

MORRISTOWN (Ella Mae Phillips)

NORWOOD (Susan Lyman)

I researched and wrote for publication numerous brief historical articles dealing with the village, people and schools.

OGDENSBURG (Elizabeth Baxter)

On January 1, 1970, the new city charter was dedicated. August 18 marked the observance of the centennial of the Ogdensburg Post Office building, and on November 22 the

(Continued on Page 18)

### CRACKER BARREL (Continued from Page 17)

new Health Center at A. Barton Hepburn Hospital was dedicated.

**RICHVILLE** (Gregoriana Wranesh) See Richville Museum.  
**WADDINGTON** (Dorothy Hill)

#### MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

##### GOVERNUR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Harold Storie, Paul Smith and Nelson Winters have taped over 50 programs for Station WIGS dealing with Gouverneur in the past. Eugenia Huntress and Helen Lynde have assisted with some of the programs, which have been presented twice weekly, sponsored by the Bank of Gouverneur. As of December 1, ten new tapes are ready.

The programs have been well received and especially enjoyed by older residents who well remember "Gouverneur as it was." Titles of the programs include: The Streets of Gouverneur, Theaters, Early Schools, The Chautauqua, Circuses, Winter and Spring Sports and Abandoned Town Roads.

##### NORWOOD MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Six hundred thirty-five persons visited the Norwood Museum during the first year of operation. Special exhibits were prepared for GIRL Scouts and school children.

A folk music concert by New York State Historian Bill McNeil brought 120 people out on a stormy winter night. About 40 persons attended the annual meeting. The museum continues to attract towns-people and students.

A preliminary committee for the 1972 Centennial has been named.

##### PARISHVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AND MUSEUM

Our Historical Association will meet again in March, 1971.

We have had a nice summer. The first graders of our school visited our museum and we served rolls and made butter for them in one of our old churns! Our visitor's list is long this year.

On November 11 we closed to the public until May, 1971. Come and see us then.

##### MACOMB HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AND MUSEUM

We held an annual Senior Teachers and Senior Citizens Evening, which is always very well attended, on October 20. Miss Christenson and her fifth grade class from Gouverneur Central School visited our museum.

##### RICHVILLE BUILDING

The Open House observed in conjunction with Old Home Week in August attracted some 50 people to the afternoon program at the museum.

We have a number of new gifts, including a floor loom and a set of blacksmith's tools.

One of the exhibits prepared by the Gouverneur Marble Village Yorkers Club, entitled "Heritage and Environment Determine Social History," won a certificate of merit at the state Yorker Convention at Rochester. The Yorker Club has also prepared an exhibit called "A Trip to the Columbian Exposition" and hopes to carry out a project on cheese-making in northern New York. The club has visited Upper Canada Village, sent representatives to a district meeting in Lisbon, and is planning a dance in January to raise money for delegates to the state convention in Utica.

We very much need volunteers for work at the museum in the spring.

##### POTSDAM PUBLIC MUSEUM

The Potsdam Museum celebrated its 30th Birthday Oct. 24 with a Birthday Gala. Highlight of the affair was a visit by Ross E. Taggart, senior curator of the Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City. Mr. Taggart gave a seminar on "English History as Reflected in English Pottery" in the afternoon and also talked at the Birthday Buffet held that evening in the Civic Center Auditorium. The evening program also included a fashion show of museum costumes dating from 1890 to 1970 modeled by 31 girls from Agonian Sorority and the community and a talk on the Bi-centennial of the American Revolution by Mary Biondi, who is a member of the New York State Commission on the Bicentennial. The evening ended with an hour concert of "music of the '40's" by four faculty members at the Crane Department of Music, State University College of Potsdam, and dancing was enjoyed by all.

Out of town guests included Mrs. Clifford Allen, Massena, curator of the Parishville, Potsdam Museum from 1953 to 1964; Miss Doris Rowland, Parishville, the first curator of the museum; Mr. Rene Rivard, Regional Supervisor, Canadian Historic Site, Cornwall, Ontario, Canada; C. Walter Smallman, Fort Covington, Franklin County Historian; and Edward Tattershall, President of the Franklin County Historical and Museum Society.

The Potsdam Museum was founded in 1940 to house a portion of the famous Burnap Collection of English Pottery given to the village by Potsdam natives Frank and Harriet Burnap. The majority of the collection is owned by the Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, under Mr. Taggart's direction. In honor of the Potsdam Museum's 30th birthday, a special exhibit of 30 early pieces of pottery from the Nelson Gallery's Burnap collection have been loaned to the Potsdam Museum for a year. This enlarges the Potsdam museum's collection to include all varieties of English Pottery dating from 1650 through 1870.

The museum is also expanding its educational programs through receipt of a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts. Funds will include extension of the museum's teachers boxes and class visits in a wider area of the county during the school year and establishment of a one week craft workshop for teenagers next summer. The craft workshops include six past crafts and six present crafts and will run for one week. It is open to St. Lawrence County residents who have completed 7th grade or who graduated from high school in 1971. Past crafts include spinning flax, working with a woodsman's tool, household arts of grandmother's day, care and repair of antique furniture, Indian crafts, and detecting local history down memory lane. Present crafts include pottery, batik, drawing and painting, creative printing, and glass blowing. Classes will be limited to 10 students each and Registration forms will be available after February 1.

Special exhibits at the museum in Winter, 1971, include "Paintings by Paul Jtineant" through January 9, "Sewing a Fine Seam" January 11 through February 6; Famous Americans Near and Far, February 8 through March 5, and "Vernon Mauk's Art," opening March 7.

The public is cordially invited to visit the museum, which is located at the Potsdam Civic Center, with entrance from the Civic Center Parking Lot on Elm St. Admission is free. Museum hours are Monday, 7-9 p.m., Tuesday 10 a.m.-12 noon, 2-4 p.m.; Thursday, 1-5 p.m.; Friday, 3-5 p.m. and Saturday, 1-3 p.m.



New officers elected in October include: standing, Howard Smith, vice president; Steve Ragan, secretary; Edward Blankman, president; Donald Blount, treasurer. Seated are Mildred Fleetham, membership and Mary H. Biondi, historian.



## STONE WIND MILLS (Continued from Page 6)

books -- one to show the government officers and the other for his own use. Then over the years the tower fell into decay. A few years ago it was struck by lightning. But in 1967 the wall was repointed and the stonework at the top was repaired to prevent deterioration of Maitland's old landmark.



The Prescott windmill is 28 feet in diameter at the base, and the stone walls are 58 feet high. There are four columns

of four windows each, and two additional small ones at the top. The mill has only one door which is at the ground level. It was erected in 1822 by a West India merchant named Hughes to serve the growing number of farmers in Grenville County. Later he sold the mill to George Stephenson, a miller from Port Hope. He was the owner at the time of the Battle of the Windmill. In the words of Croil, whose history of Dundas was written in 1861:

"Its prominent position, large dimensions, and glittering tin dome, render it conspicuous at a considerable distance. It is of circular form, massively constructed of stone; its walls are three and a half feet in thickness and eighty feet high, and its interior divided into several stories, the small windows of which admirably served the purpose of loop-holes. Around it stood a number of stone houses, and nearly all the fences in the neighbourhood were of the same material."

During the fighting, the arms and sails were badly riddled. The damaged remains were noted in the journal of a traveller the following summer. In 1872 the federal government purchased the tower from Bernard Kean who for many years had lived there and owned the mill. The building has been converted into a lighthouse and today serves as an aid to navigation.

The five stone windmills were of another age. They were built together, and abandoned together, but three shells still remind us that they did exist.

## MADAME DE STAËL (Continued from Page 5)

have known Madame de Feriet. That lady, it is said, always wore around her neck a locket containing a miniature of Madame de Staël.

In fact, Germaine did not get on with Napoleon, although she counted his brothers Joseph and Lucien as her friends. She had met him several times but he usually managed to avoid her. He seemed to regard her as a meddler, and a woman meddler, at that, in his schemes to rule France.

## THE AUTHORESS

Germaine has somehow found time to write, an achievement as remarkable as her conversations. Plays, long critical essays on literature and politics flowed from her pen, and all were eagerly read throughout Europe. Her novel, "Corrine" written in 1807 was immensely popular and reads surprisingly well today. The heroine is Germaine, herself, idealized.

Not without reason Napoleon viewed most of Germaine's writings as covert criticism of himself. From 1800 on she was concerned by his growing one-man rule over France. She was spied upon and reports led him to order her to live not less than forty leagues (about 120 miles) from Paris. When she sent her son Auguste to plead with him to permit her to return to the capital, Napoleon bluntly refused. "Women should stick to knitting," he told him.

It was then that Germaine's thoughts turned to her American possessions. She believed in the country's future. She had no doubt, she had once written, that America should inherit the civilization of Europe. In 1807 she wrote to a friend, "My son will, I believe, go to America next year, and perhaps we all shall go. If this Old World of ours is to be nothing but a single man, what is the use of staying here?"

She wrote Gouverneur Morris that she intended to increase her American holdings. Auguste could take charge of them and become an American citizen. Auguste was the eldest of her three sons. There was a daughter Albertine, also, but none of her children was born of her marriage to Baron de Staël.

Morris replied giving her a warm welcome to visit his

palatial New Jersey estate, Morrisana, then she could travel to her lands. In the previous year he had written Germaine, "It has occurred to me that you would do well to purchase the remainder of the township of Clare. It lies next to that of Ballybean (Russell) which is rapidly increasing in population. Now, such a provision for a son is of more value than thrice the amount of money. The one directs to industry its enervating power. It would perhaps be possible to purchase the remainder of Clare at the rate of \$1 per acre. It certainly would not be necessary to go higher than \$2."

It may be said, in fairness to Gouverneur Morris, that he did not promote the sale of American lands indiscriminately. While in Paris he had received numerous inquiries about buying land but he thought it would hardly do to bear the responsibility of exciting French citizens to abandon their country. "Purchasers here," he wrote, "are for the most part ignorant of geography. They naturally expect super highways and see magnificent bargains on every stream."

Germaine announced to friends in 1809 her plans to sail for America and the next year she was granted a passport for herself and Auguste. She had been ordered to leave France.

She never embarked for America. Her health was poor, she was afraid of winter crossing and it was a vast distance from the world she knew. Instead she traveled from one European capital to another, welcomed by statesmen and by the world of literature. She aided energetically the plans for the coalition of nations forming to defeat Emperor Napoleon. Not for nothing was she called the "conscience of Europe." She visited Czar Alexander and used her powerful influence to urge Sweden to join the coalition. This event was decisive to Napoleon's defeat and exile. A witicism went around Europe that there were three great powers: England, Russia and Madame de Staël.

Germaine was back in her beloved Paris in 1814, but her health was failing and her dynamic energy was slowing down. Among the visitors at her salon was George Ticknor of Boston. Speaking of America she told him, "You are the vanguard of the human race. You are the world's future."

Germaine de Staël, the tempestuous lover, the powerful

(Continued on Page 21)

# Our members write

October 6, 1970

Editor of the "Quarterly",

I have just put in the afternoon reading the October "Quarterly", which is sure good reading. Sorry I cannot attend the annual meeting.

The poem of "When Pa Joined the masons" is a real "Corker." And personally I've been a mason for 68 years, so I have a real understanding of masonry. As a mason I have officiated at nearly 75 masonic funerals, in this and surrounding towns.

The article on Grant C. Madill is very good, he was a real outstanding citizen, as well as an expert surgeon. I find all the articles good reading.

When I was Station Agent for the New York Central Railroad at Emeryville from July 1st, 1893 to June 1st, 1896, I became acquainted with "Arley" Balmat, who owned a store in Emeryville near the Railroad station.

"Arley" Balmat was the son of Dave Balmat who owned a farm in Fowler, whom I met several times at his son's store. I understood that he was hand drilling rock on his farm prospecting for silver, but years later sold his farm to the St. Joseph Lead Company, and that place now is known as "Balmat, N.Y." The company produces zinc ore and zinc concentrates, and has sunk an 18-foot diameter shaft to a depth of 3250 feet, to tap a huge vein of zinc ore, that will be processed by the new mill which is under construction, to be completed in about two years.

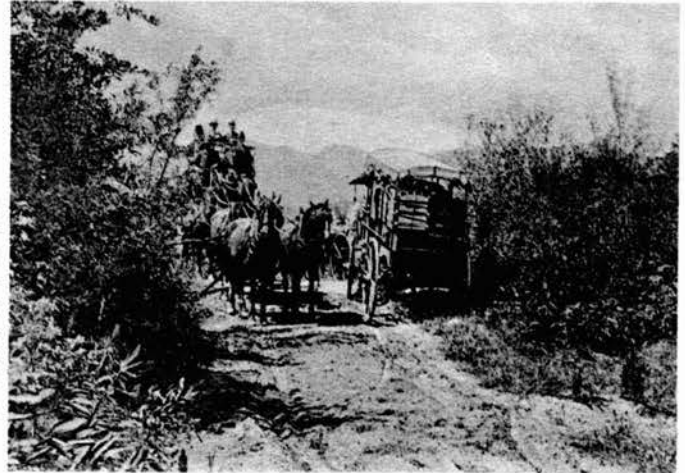
Time changes all things, and will continue to change, we continue to adjust ourselves to continual changes.

Signing off now, with my best regards and wishes to you,  
Sincerely,  
Mott Meldrim

. . . I remember well a story my father told about Helen Hinsdale Rich. When she was in the West, she stopped off at Minneapolis and looked up his uncle, O.C. Merriman, a well-known lawyer there. His family had come from Somerville, adjoining Spragueville. Helen talked "Uncle O.C." into inviting some of his friends to his home for an evening of her poetry readings. Afterward she brought in a pile of her books and urged the company to buy them. "Uncle O.C." was so ashamed he went out to the barn and stayed until it was over . . .

Margaret Gleason

## Recalling



NO RESCUE SQUAD. For the Stage to Blue Mountain Lake from North Creek. This is the spot where a famous hold-up occurred. (Post card loaned by Professor Robert B. Shaw.)

Announcing

# Water Over The Dam

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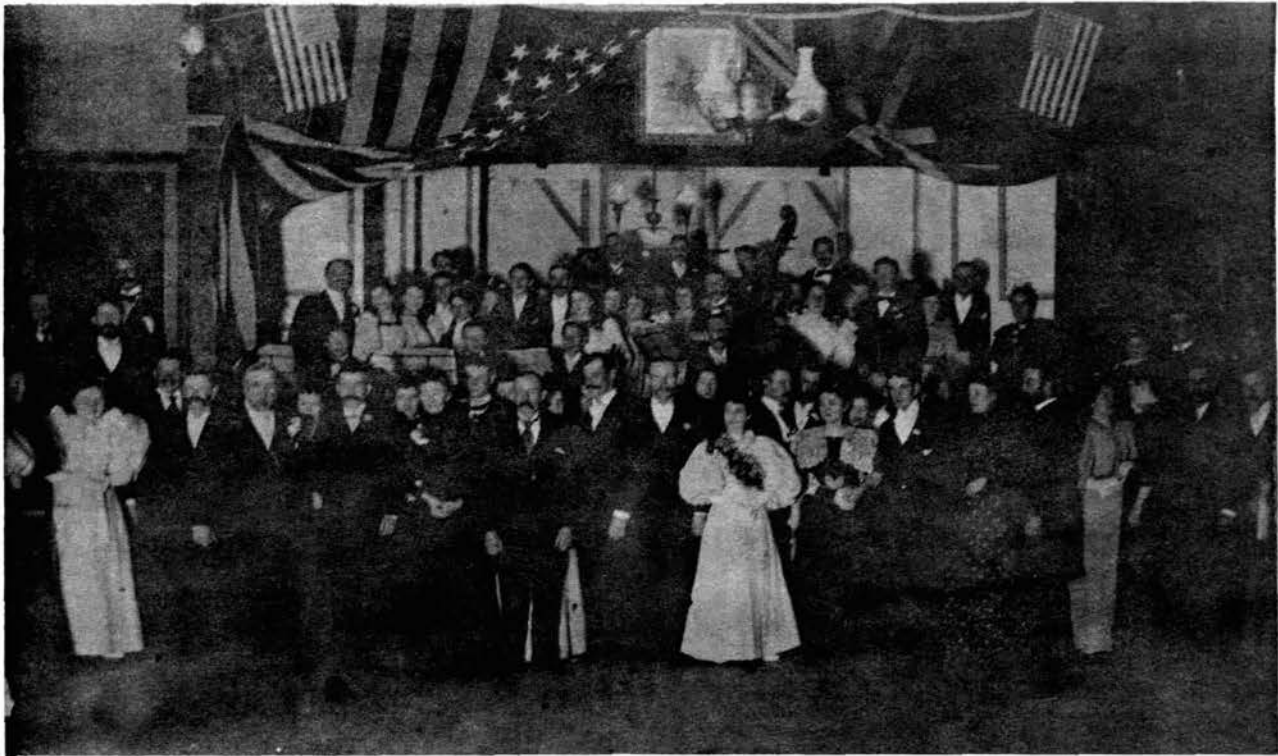
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EMPLOYEES WERE like one big family at the W.H. Comstock Co. This photo was taken at a Leap Year party given in the Chapman Hall by the 'boss,' whose portrait was hung overhead.

son, "Young Bill," who had just returned from military service with the Canadian forces in World War I.

"Young Bill," in his turn, remained in full charge of the family enterprise until his death in 1959. Already before his accession the character of the business had changed drastically; although total volume held nearly steady, domestic orders had dropped sharply, to be largely replaced by heavy shipments to Latin America and the Orient. The familiar old label of the Indian on horseback was now being produced in a dozen different languages with almanachs and circulars similarly varied. For many years, after abandoning newspaper advertising about the time of the Civil War, the company's main promotional methods consisted of fliers and almanachs. The almanachs poured out of Morristown in the millions of copies each year, the total distribution throughout the company's history probably exceeding a billion.

Finally, in the 1930's even foreign sales began to falter, and activity in the two factory buildings straddling the branch railroad was visibly reduced. Although the company modernized its labels and its promotional practices - the myth about the origin of the Indian Root Pills was no longer repeated and the ingredients of this once "secret" mixture were now printed on the label - and an Army contract to manufacture foot powder was held during World War II - it proved impossible to arrest the inevitable decline. According to Stuart Holbrook, in his "The Golden Age of Quackery," the three main factors in the decline of the patent medicine business were (1) the Pure Food and Drug Acts; (2) the automobile, and (3) higher standards of public education. Although the effects of these were delayed, all of them were strongly in evidence by the 1920's when "young Bill" had assumed control of the company.

After World War II the Morristown plant operated on hardly more than a standby basis. Foreign orders were still fairly substantial as recently as 1950, but the domestic business had almost vanished - and apparently consisted mostly of filling trifling orders from old faithful customers who could no longer obtain these remedies from druggists. At the end employment consisted only of three persons, who were engaged only in maintenance work and filling such orders as came in without solicitations. The final decision to abandon operations

was forced by the death of William Henry Comstock, Jr., on May 5, 1959. Like his father before him "Young Bill" had been a prominent figure in civic activities and sporting circles, and also served a term as mayor of Brockville. During the period of liquidation the presidency of the firm (it had been incorporated in 1902) was briefly assumed by Mrs. Comstock, who was thus a successor to her father-in-law, who had entered the business 113 years earlier. Thus, the long career of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills was at last brought to a close. The Canadian factory in the heart of Brockville, where the community had grown up around it from a village to a flourishing small city - was torn down. The Morristown buildings still stand, untenanted and forlorn. The hotel burned down in 1925 and was never replaced; the straggling railroad that for many years carried the pill factory traffic survived it by only a year or two, and the international ferry that formerly docked right beside the factory has also vanished from the scene. Even the main highway from Ogdensburg to the Thousand Islands area has now been straightened and rerouted around the community - so that now only the straying or misguided traveler enters the village, to have his curiosity piqued by the few decaying remnants of the former home of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills.

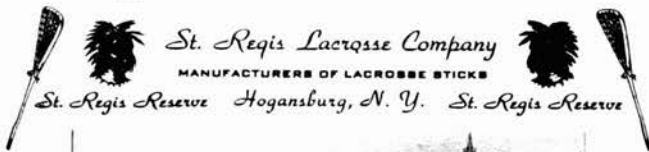
#### MADAME DE STAËL (Continued from Page 19)

advocate of political moderation, and the gifted author died on July 14, 1817. It was the anniversary of that notable day for the people of France, the storming of the Bastille, a fitting end.

The following were consulted in the preparation of this article: Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris, 2 vols (In St. Lawrence University and Richville Libraries); Gouverneur Morris, Witness of Two Revolutions, by Walther; The Extraordinary Mr. Morris, by Swigger; Mistress to an Age, by Herold; Tales of the Adirondack Foothills by Thomas; The Legends and Traditions of a Northern County by Cooper; deeds and records in the History Center and Court House, Canton.



# September Tour



St. Regis on the St. Lawrence

## Brief History of St. Regis Indian Reservation

THE founding of the Indian Settlement at St. Regis is quite romantic. For many years before they located at St. Regis there was a settlement at Caughanawaga, Que., which is located on the south shores of the St. Lawrence river opposite to Montreal.

At one time the chief of the Caughanawagas on a foraging expedition against the New England colonies, seized and carried away a white boy named Peter Tarbell. This boy was taken into the chief's household where he was raised as a member of his family. As he grew up he learned woodcraft and developed great skill as a hunter and warrior. Eventually he married the chief's daughter and the members of the tribe seeing that he was likely to become chief, grew jealous of him and finally demanded that he be expelled from the tribe. The wise old chief, wishing to avoid dissention among his people suggested to his son-in-law that it might be better if he sought another hunting ground.

Peter Tarbell, accompanied by his wife and family and a few friends, thereupon proceeded up the St. Lawrence in their canoes, looking for a favorable place to establish a new home. After paddling for several days they came upon a beautiful wooded point adjacent to the mouth of a small river. It was in the fall season and the woods were filled with partridges. The whole scene was so attractive the party landed and erected their tents and called the point "AK WES ASNE," which means the flutter of the partridge and is still the Indian name for St. Regis.

Here the Jesuit Missioner, Father Gordon, found the tribe in 1752, on the feast of St. John Francis Regis. He called the place "St. Regis," established a mission and built a wooden church at that time. The church was later burned and was replaced by the present stone structure in 1793.

The descendants of Peter Tarbell have always been prominent in Indian affairs, and there are still many families that bear the name of Tarbell. Such names as "Laughing," "Chubb," "Curlyhead," "Hill," "Swamp," "Bigtree," are all nicknames for branches of the Tarbell family.

## HISTORY OF LACROSSE

Lacrosse is French for "crosier."

When white men came to North America they found Indians playing a game called "baggataway," a rough sport in which hundreds of warriors would take part.

Canadians adapted the game to their desires and in 1839 formed a Montreal Lacrosse Club. In 1867, the same year that Canada became a nation, the Canadian Parliament made Lacrosse the national sport.

A year later the Mohawk Club of Troy, N. Y., brought the game to American playing fields. It spread throughout the East and found its place in many cities. Baltimore, Maryland has always been an enthusiastic city for this great game. There the public high schools, private schools, two Catholic high schools (Calvert Hall and Loyola), Loyola College, Navy, university of Maryland, and Johns Hopkins University all play a fast brand of Lacrosse.

It is the major sport at Johns Hopkins and has been played there for 78 straight years.

Lacrosse has the speed of hockey, the precision of basketball and the physical contact of football.

Teams of 10 men each -- a goaltender, three attackers, three defenders and three midfielders -- try to get a hard rubber ball (a little smaller than a baseball) into the oppositions six-foot-wide net.

Each man carries a stick with a small net on the end, with which he throws or carries the ball. Only the goalie can touch the ball with his hand.

Helmets, wire face-masks, shoulder and hip pads, and thick gloves protect the players from blows from the stick and the ball.

Games are four quarters of 15 minutes each. A face-off at the center of a field 110 yards long is held after each goal and at the start of each quarter.

It's a rough, tiring game that demands teamwork and individual skill.

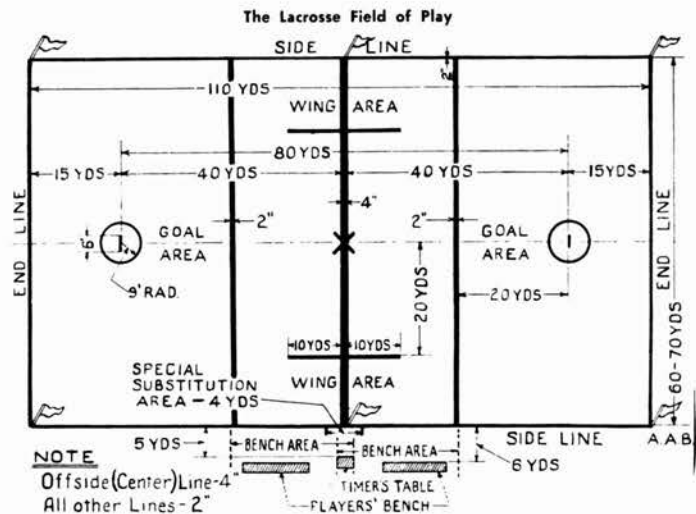
Lacrosse is a game that challenges the skill, sportsmanship and physical fitness of anyone that plays. It is also a real "FUN" game.

Wholesalers and retailers of Indian Crafts.

## Box and Field Rules Compared

A few of the more interesting differences between box and field - just enough for a rough sketch of these two faces of lacrosse

- The box is roughly half the size of the field playing area, enclosed by a wall, and floored with wood, concrete or dirt. There are six men to a side in box lacrosse, ten in field.
- The box goal is 4-ft square vs. the 6-ft square field goal. The box player handles a 6-oz ball with a crosse that may be no longer than 46 in. but as narrow as 5 in. The field ball is 5-5 1/4 oz. and the crosse may be as long as 72 in. but no narrower than 7 in.
- The Canadian game may be divided into three 20-min periods, or 15-min quarters as in U.S. field lacrosse.
- The box face off may be executed kneeling, or standing with the crosse drawn between the legs, but in either case, it must be a straight draw. Trapping is not permitted.
- In Canadian lacrosse, if a player with an open shot on goal is fouled, the penalty may be a free shot on goal. If the shot is missed, the offender must serve time in the penalty box.
- In Canadian boxla, a body block may only be thrown on the ball carrier, not on any player within 5 yd of a loose ball.
- The illegality of the crosse check in Canada seems to hinge on a qualifying phrase that speaks of "dangerous force" or "hurtful result."



## MANUFACTURE OF THE LACROSSE STICK

Hickory is the only wood used in the manufacture of first grade lacrosse sticks at the present time. The hickory logs are hand picked in the woods and then brought to the factory for processing. Only the butt end of the tree is used. Each log has to be as straight as possible and clear of knots. The logs are split by hand into pie shapes and the butt end (to be head of lacrosse stick) is then partially prepared by hand and taken outside to air dry for about four weeks. The wood is then tested for moisture content and when the moisture content is exactly right the butt of the stick is steamed and bent over a block to form the head of the lacrosse stick which is secured by a wire this called clamp. The stick is then air dried for about twelve months. After this time of drying the wood is again steamed and the backbend is put into the stick. The stick is then put into a rack until the backbend is set. This generally takes about two or three days. The stick is then brought to the stick maker and carved with great skill to the finishing product. Holes are drilled into the head of the stick preparing it for stringing. After the sanding process it is dipped in lacquer and given to the stringers for completion. Each stick is checked for quality several times during the manufacture. The St. Regis Lacrosse Co. wishes to extend a cordial welcome to anyone interested in visiting the factory.

## HISTORY OF THE ST. REGIS LACROSSE CO. INC.

Business started in 1964 by Ed. and Don. Lantry with the assistance of the W. H. Brine Co. of Boston Mass. The St. Regis Lacrosse company was started in the village of Hogsburg, New York which, is situated in the middle of the St. Regis Reservation and therefore the most logical place for such an industry. The Indians are naturally skilled with their hands and therefore adapt themselves easily to woodworking and weaving. This business gives them work to do close to their homes.

Our aim is to produce the best possible quality stick at a fair price and our constantly increasing business testifies of the success of our efforts.

# researchers

Names and stories of the spring river drives of the Adirondacks, including especially any of men who lost their lives, are needed for an article being completed by Leslie Rist, Newcomb, N.Y. 12852.

The old Madill School in the second ward in Ogdensburg is threatened by "progress." Why would this not do for a city museum and office for a historian? There must be many items to show school classes, which do not fit into the displays in the Remington Memorial. Whatever happened to the collection of Indian artifacts the library housed until renovation? Some were given by the late Carl Olds, and some were loaned by the former children of the Pierces Corners school at Macomb. They should be suitably cared for if no longer on display, until the city has a place for them -- or the county has some place.

The Madill family purchased a number of copies of the Quarterly as well as many former patients and friends after the article by Valerie Pike on Dr. Grant C. Madill (Oct. 1970). Ditto the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Brushton. We do thank you for enjoying these articles, and 'spreading the word' about us.

## Notice

Massena Public Library (Glenn St.) has added to its St. Lawrence County Federal Census collection (of 1830-1880) the 1810, 1820 and Franklin County 1830, 1850 and 1860. They also have copies of 1865 NY State Census for some of our towns, much of our cemetery census and vital statistics from History Center on loan microfilm.

The public and historians are invited to use these for research.

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# OYSTER SUPPER, & ICE CREAM FESTIVAL, AT THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Hammond,

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**A cordial invitation is extended to all.**

**TICKETS, 75CTS.**

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Copies of back issues of the Quarterly are still available.

Have you gotten a new member this year? Or given a gift membership?

Wanted: any book of poems of Margaret or Lucretia Davidson; Helen H. Rich or Mary Fackrell (who d. 1897). Loan or purchase.

Varick Sanford is looking for copies of Everts and Holcomb (1878) History of St. Lawrence County in whole and good condition, to purchase. Address him 276 Thompson Blvd., Watertown, N.Y. 13601.

Jay Dodds, Box 81, Heuvelton, 13654, is looking for a copy of "Centennial History of Gouverneur" 1905. If you have one to sell, write Mr. Dodds.

Note: In 1971 Dr. Shaw will have available a book telling the entire story (with many illustrations from our archives) of Dr. Morse. Watch for an announcement of publication.

Copies of Dr. Houghs "History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties" reprint sponsored by our Association are still available at \$15.00. Write Box 8, Canton. Index for this will be printed as a service to our members and those who purchased a copy - hopefully in early spring. For those who own antique copies, the index may be purchased at nominal cost.

Grover Hatch, Russell, has one volume of Evert's, and one volume of Curtis' History of St. Lawrence County for sale.

Several gifts of back issues have recently come our way from estates of deceased members. We thank alert historians for sending them on to us.

Recent acquisitions reflect the fact that people are thinking about our History Center in Canton when moving into a new house, or finding secret drawers in desks purchased at auction. Keep up the good work -- we've made some recent researchers mighty happy with records acquired this way. (Wedding certificates, diaries, maps, old deeds, account books, identified pictures, those scrapbooks full of obituaries and poems and personal clippings are now all grist for our research mill.)

DISAPPEARED from table in History Center, Reference book "Bottle Bonanza" (\$4.00). If found, please return any Mon. or Thurs.

VOLUNTEERS needed at the History Center, or at home, to help index--cemetery census records, scrapbooks, county histories and vital statistics. Good long - winter - evening work and a real service.

## FIRST CLASS MAILING

For an additional \$1.00 per year for postage and special treatment, you may receive your Quarterly by FIRST CLASS MAIL, which is forwardable, if you have different winter and summer addresses. We cannot change addresses on our bulk rate mailing labels every few months.

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