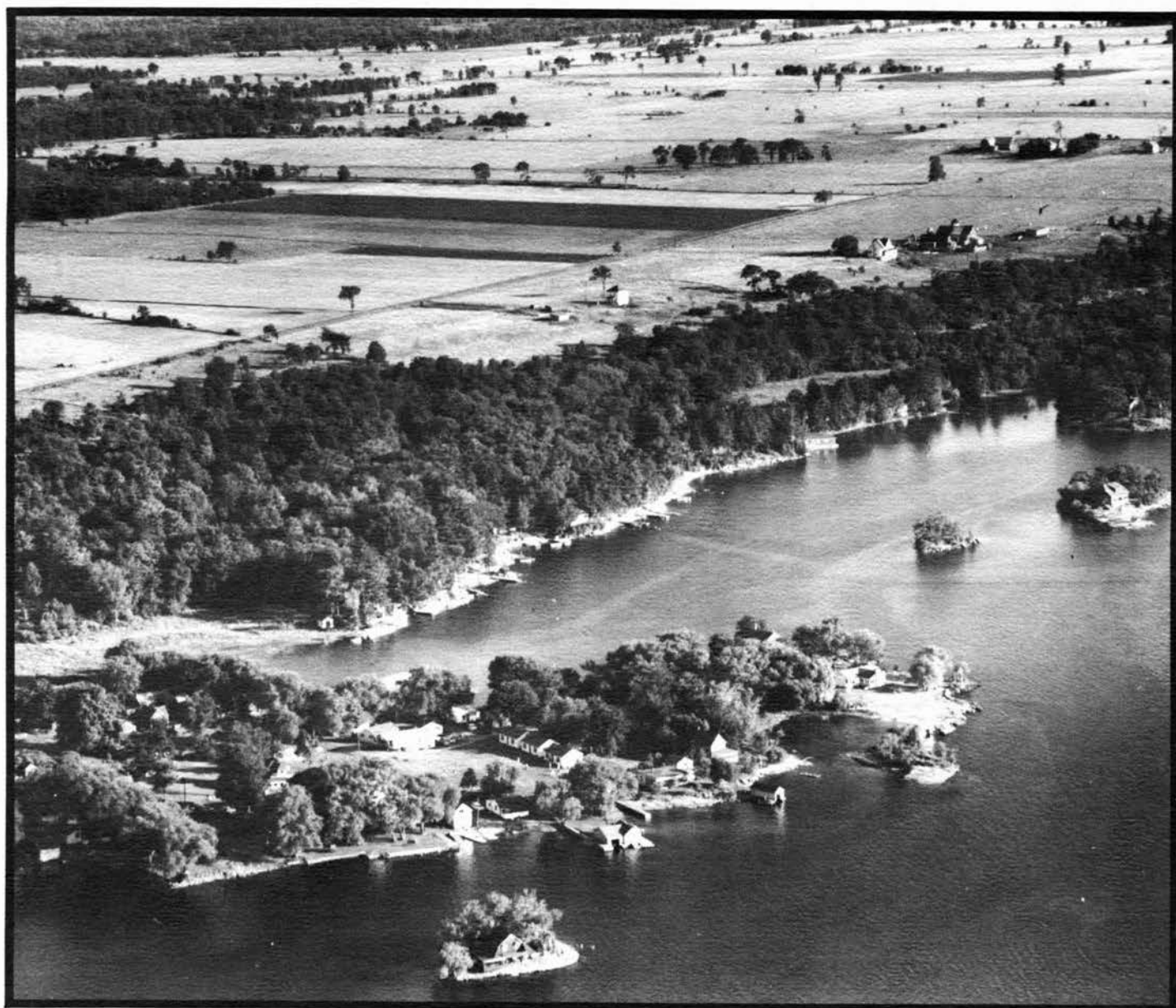


THE
QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association

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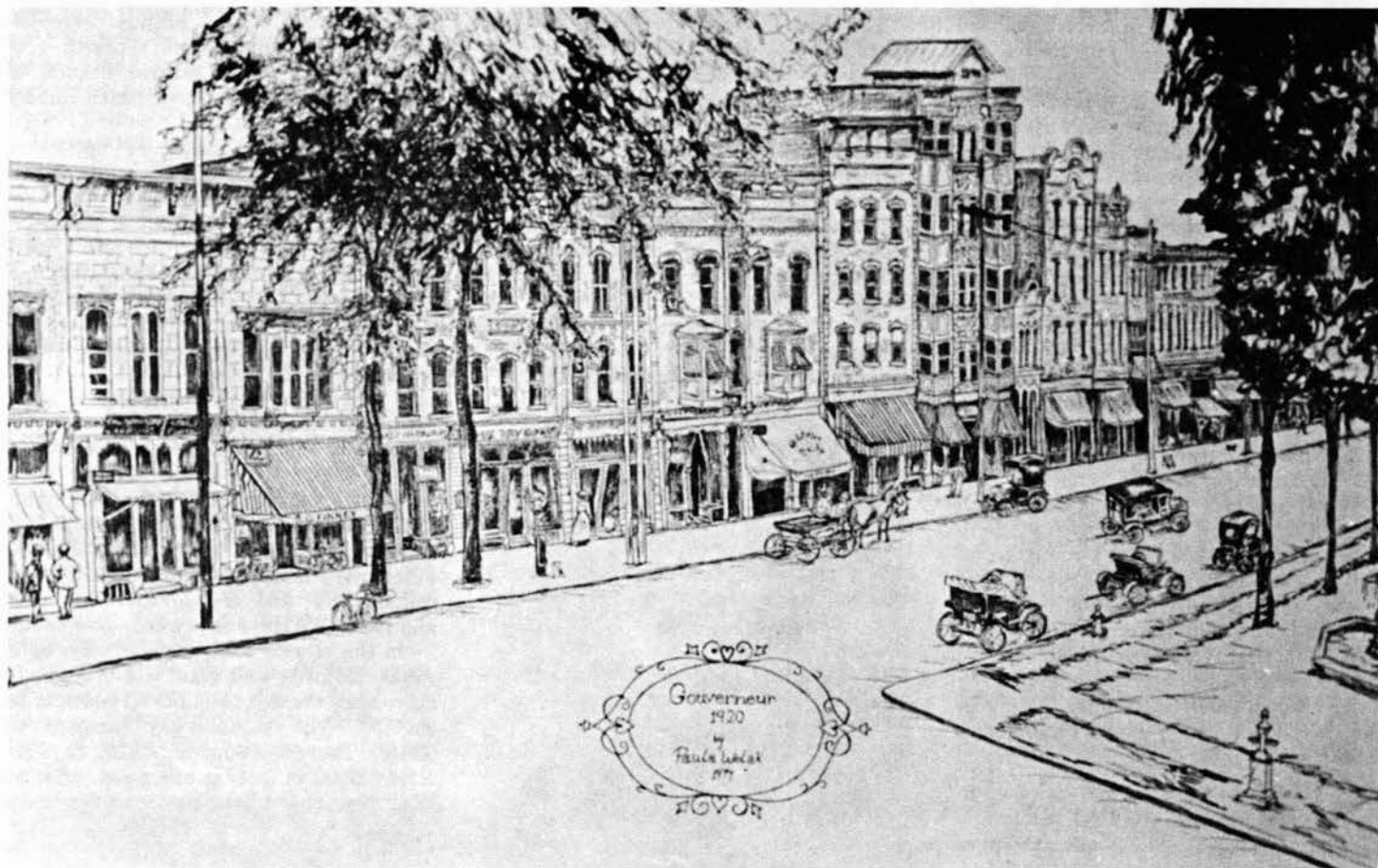
Editor: Varick A. Chittenden

Cover: Dramatic aerial view of Oak Point made by the late Dwight Church in the 1950's. Cabins in center were built by Merton Livingston of Hammond for the Presbytery. Island at lower center was Dr. Pomeroy's summer office/home, now called ZITKA. Mr. Consall's bridge, built to his warehouse there, collapsed about 1844. The Inn property is opposite on the mainland. Ships docked along that frontage.

Billings property is partially shown at extreme left. Ferguson property on the Point, shared for many years by Sisson and Hadlocks, is now owned by Sisson heirs and Francis Musselman.

Two islands upriver are Snake and Gilmour-Sauer Islands. Point at extreme right, once a hideaway for a group of men from Ogdensburg, is owned by Morley Reed, called "The Acre."

Along the River Road in background are the Brooks' home; the farms of Schermerhorn and Savage (formerly Daniels and Rodger) and District #4 School. See story beginning on page 10 for more on Oak Point. (Photo courtesy of the History Center Archives).



The Main Street in Gouverneur in 1920 [photo from a drawing by Paula Wolack]. The original B.O. Kinney store is at the left of the picture, with the striped awning. The first enlargement took in the store to the left of Kinney's. (Photo courtesy of Kinney Drugs).

Seventy-Five Years 'Near You'

by Margaret Nulty

From the days of B.O. Kinney as a young man fresh out of pharmacy school, buying a drug business in Gouverneur, to now, with the familiar orange-and-blue signs of Kinney Drugs in many communities, an institution of North Country life has flourished. Our author tells the fascinating story, based on interviews and exact and complete company records and scrapbooks.

The Kinney Drug store in Gouverneur, the parent store of the chain of twenty-one in northern New York and western Vermont, is celebrating the 75th anniversary of its birth rather like an aging dowager — by spreading sideways and having its face lifted. There are scaffolding and workmen on the sidewalk outside and a good deal of confusion inside. Hard conditions for a seventy-five-year-old, but with Kinney's it is all a sign of a strong heart, good circulation and sound growth.

In 1903, when Burt Orrin Kinney opened his drug store, Main Street was not paved, the park was wide, shaded by young elm trees, and with a horse trough at its west end; in fact horses were still

far more numerous on the street than the early automobile. Gouverneur was in its most prosperous period, surrounded by working dairy farms for which numerous cheese factories supplied income. The lumber and marble businesses were very profitable and talc was beginning to develop. There were many local plants — feed mills, iron works, tanneries, a furniture factory, a carriage works — everything needed to sustain a busy town.

Burt Kinney was born in Gouverneur in 1873. He attended local schools, graduating from the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary. A slight man, he is reputed to have been a very good athlete — an excellent baseball player and a

fancy skater, in both of which sports he took an interest throughout his life. He worked for a short time in the furniture factory, then became a drug store clerk, first in the Draper store and later in Dewey and Perrin.

In those days a clerk in a drug store was paid \$8.00 a week, with hopes of reaching \$10.00. A part time boy received \$3.00, a pharmacist as much as \$25.00 or \$30.00. A week meant sixty or more hours, beginning at, or even before, the 7 a.m. store opening when farmers came to town with their milk and painters came in for supplies for their day's work, and ending when the last customer left, which, on Saturday nights, was quite late.

Burt Kinney, as a clerk, arrived before 7 a.m. to mop the floor and fill the ice box with ice. He learned how to use a mortar and pestle and lots of elbow grease, since materials were bought in a raw state and had to be ground and mixed in the store. He also helped at the soda fountain where the ice cream and even the carbonated water were prepared on the premises. He so disliked this job that he was a long time deciding to open a fountain in his own store.

Intelligent, pleasant and a hard worker, he impressed his employer, who urged him to enter the Albany School of Pharmacy and who helped him financially to do so. Twenty-six years old and married, he entered pharmacy school in 1899, graduating in 1901 from the two-year course which taught a pharmacist all there was to know about prescriptions in those days. By 1903 he felt ready to go into business for himself.

With the limited amount of capital he could borrow, he bought the drug business from Dewey and rented, for \$760 a year, the store he later purchased. The new store opened September 30, 1903, the *Gouverneur Free Press* reporting it thus:

A.W. Dewey of this place has sold his drug business to Burt Kinney who at present is a clerk in the Draper Drug store. Mr. Kinney is one of the best known drug clerks in town, and has a large clientele of customers.

Until 1875 Gouverneur's Main Street had been a collection of wooden buildings of various ages, sizes and degrees of disrepair. Between 1875 and 1885 a series of disastrous fires wiped out all of them, a section at a time. Rebuilding had been done with a great deal of civic pride. The building in which Burt Kinney located his store, constructed after the fire of May 1877, by G.L. VanNamee, showed the care and expense businessmen went to to create a fine new Main Street. The outside was, and is, brick. The diamond patterned floor was Gouverneur marble, the inside woodwork fine cherry, and all the cabinets and drawers running the length of the two long sides, solid walnut. These, in the purchase agreement, were valued at \$600. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Kinney have one of them, refinished, in the front hall of their modern home.

No present day shopping center has such grace and quality, but the present day shopping center, stark as it is, has some conveniences the elegant VanNamee block lacked. The whole store was only twenty-five feet wide and was heated in cold weather by a single stove. It had running water but no hot water and no electricity. When it was wired for electricity in 1909, long wires were dropped through the ceiling with incandescent bulbs on the ends. This improvement cost \$15.00 a month.

The first inventory, totaling \$6,009, contains some items still popular in drug stores and some no longer in demand — at least not from drug stores. Few customers today, hardly any at all, would ask for skunk oil, beaver oil, or bear oil, nor for medicinal teas. They would look elsewhere for salt petre, linseed meal, resin and plaster of paris. These things came in bulk, shipped in by train, and were carted to the store in horse drawn drays. Those in powdered form had to be measured out in ounces for the customers, a labor practice that would not win favor in the modern accounting office.



Burt Orrin Kinney
(Photo courtesy of Kinney Drugs).

The most common early prescriptions from doctors were for cascara, castor oil, and strychnine tablets. There were dozens of patent medicines, a few still sold, such as Scott's Emulsion, Sloan's Liniment and Castoria. Many of the patent medicines had a large alcohol content which contributed to the patient's feeling of well being whether anything was cured or not. Such drugs as morphine, opium and laudanum could be sold over the counter until 1919 when the Harrison Narcotic Act imposed the first restrictions. Nevertheless, there was very little trouble with misuse of drugs in those days. Druggists were often asked by customers to recommend remedies for their ailments.

We sometimes bemoan the fact that drugstores are no longer just drugstores, but they never were. The five hundred or so prescriptions per month at an average price of thirty-five to seventy cents would not have kept a store in business. The early inventories list wall paper at thirty cents to \$1.00 a roll, paint at \$1.00 a gallon, window shades with picture molding. Since cigarette smoking was an

affectation, only two brands were offered, Sweet Caporals and Turkish Trophies, compared to several brands of three to six cent cigars, of which Robert Burns was a favorite.

Cosmetics were simple — bottles of perfume at fifty cents, and boxes of face powder and of talcum powder (perhaps some hair dye discreetly out of sight?)

The only candy at first was rock candy. Chocolate bars and bulk candies came a little later. The first bars sold by Kinney's were Peters (non milk) and Cailler's (milk). The delicious Oxheart chocolate creams from the Oswego factory that only recently succumbed to an arsonist came in tubs and were still selling for thirty-nine cents a pound as late as 1938.

Popular articles for the always important Christmas trade were deluxe stationery in boxes, ivory toilet articles, automatic pencils, and books — hard cover romances for fifty and seventy-five cents and Horatio Algers for twenty-five cents.

On the store's first business day, as is usual, curiosity and good will brought in customers enough to build up receipts to \$157.90. The second day plunged to \$36.40. There were no more \$100 days for a long time; in fact, at one point, after all bills and the mortgage payment were taken care of, the working capital was down to less than \$500. Many purchases were charged, even in amounts of less than \$1.00. In time business grew, receipts rose and profits appeared.

Kinney's connection with Rexall, continued today, though under different terms, was formed in 1903 soon after Rexall itself was organized in Boston as a manufacturing and distributing agent, not only for drugs, but for a full line of merchandise. Kinney's was among the first fifty stores, and the very first in this area, to join.

The famous One Cent sales, at which a customer was offered a second box, tube or bottle of whatever he bought, at the price of one cent, were Rexall sales, not the local store's. What Rexall did was reduce the price to the local dealer so that the bargain to the customer was still profitable. This practice finally ran afoul of fair trade laws and is no longer legal, unfortunately. They were wonderful sales. The store sold hundreds of tubes of tooth paste, cans of talcum powder and whatever else was offered. Surprisingly the early sales disposed of a ton of coffee in a week and a good many cases of olives, not usually carried in the store. The recent stocking of food does have a precedent.

By the end of the first twenty years Burt Kinney (inevitably known as B.O.), had a solidly established, profitable and popular business. He was in his store seven days a week, pleasant to his customers and considerate of their needs. His "clientage" trusted and valued him as they continued to do throughout his life.

In 1919 Harold Kinney came home to work with his father following graduation from Cornell, a brief stint in the army and a few years of work for the Solvay Corporation.

Times were changing after World War I, and the younger man was anxious to move with them. The elder Kinney was always cooperative, but the vision and impetus for expansion came from Harold.

A magazine article cannot cover the details of the ensuing fifty years of growth and change. Nor can it, to the author's regret, give credit by name to all the individual Kinney employees whose interest and skill made that growth possible. Long and proud careers have been built in Kinney's.

Two general lines can be highlighted: 1) the creation of the chain of twenty-one stores and 2) some of the alterations and adaptations in the business of running a drug store which, though described for the Gouverneur store, the one actually celebrating its 75th anniversary, are fairly typical of all.

The first of the chain, itself fifty years old, was acquired in 1928 in downtown Massena. The stock market crash and the years of depression delayed any further

purchases until the Adams store was acquired in 1937 and, in quick succession, Potsdam 1939, Carthage 1940 and Pulaski 1944 — all downtown locations. World War II with its disruption of men and supplies intervened. When that was over the new craze for shopping centers presented opportunities for rapid expansion in new buildings with the advantage of parking space. Stores were opened in centers in Massena, three in Watertown, in Potsdam, Malone, Canton, Ogdensburg, Plattsburgh, Lowville and across the state border in Barre, Essex Junction and St. Albans, Vermont.

Three more downtown stores were added. In 1957 the VanSlyke and Curtis drug store in Gouverneur was purchased by Kinney's after the death of Mr. VanSlyke. Mr. Curtis continued to run it until his retirement, upon which it was renamed K. Discount, with a limited stock, and finally phased out. One was opened in Malone and the latest member of the chain in Camden, N.Y. in 1978.

To service this expansion a wholesale subsidiary was established, known first as Sterling, then as Whalen and finally as Kinney Wholesale. It purchased the large quantities of supplies needed for the

chain and also sold to most of the small drug stores in the five counties of northern New York. The demands of the Kinney stores alone finally became enough to handle, so the outside sales were discontinued. In 1965 the big warehouse on the east edge of Gouverneur, twice enlarged to its present 70,000 square feet, was built. From this "Near You" location any Kinney store can be served at short notice with almost anything its customers need.

Expansion combined with the new laws produced by depression and war — Social Security, Wages and Hours, income tax and all the safety and drug regulations — required a vastly increased staff in accounting, advertising, insurance, real estate, personnel, taxation, etc., etc. It was a long way back to the individual druggist adding up his handwritten account book to meet a \$10 payroll and a \$15 light bill.

After the purchase of the first store in Massena, the B.O. Kinney Corporation was formed to supervise the chain as a whole and to determine general policy. Each store has a manager responsible for the day by day operation within the limits of responsibility to the Board of



The B.O. Kinney store in 1911. (Photo courtesy of Harold Kinney).



A Rexall one cent sale in the early days. (Photo courtesy of Harold Kinney).

Directors of the corporation. Employees are given the opportunity to acquire stock in the corporation, and may give it, for instance, to their children, but the stock is not public.

Meanwhile the home store was growing in size; this present addition is the third enlargement. In 1930 the Wallace jewelry store on the west side of the Kinney building (left in the picture) was incorporated into the original twenty-five feet by knocking out a wall. Mr. Wallace, his jewelry and watch repair, were left intact along the west wall, forming a new department in Kinney's. The store remained this size for thirty years.

Wallace's jewelry did not use all the length of the west wall and there, at the back, Mr. Kinney was finally persuaded to locate a soda fountain and lunch area. The first freezer of ice cream, maple walnut, was made by two young men, not long out of high school, who had never been told either by their mothers or by their physics teachers that solids dropped into liquids will sink to the bottom. They came out with a thick layer of walnuts topped by a pillar of ice cream.

The two-and-a-half gallon freezer was used until 1946 when an addition was built on the back of the building to house machinery capable of producing a large

quantity of delicious ice cream in many flavors for the soda fountains and the takeout trade in all the stores—eventually 75,000 gallons a year. In 1965 this building was half destroyed by an explosion of ammonia gas, rebuilt, then soon after torn down when the fountains fell victim to high costs, labor and machinery problems. They are sadly missed.

In some ways the general operation of drug stores did not change a great deal in those decades. However, the trend toward making a drug store (or any other kind for that matter) into a department store kept gaining momentum year by year.

Although the store had some Ansco products, cameras did not become a really important department until Harold Kinney, on his way to take his place in the store, stopped in Rochester to confer with the Kodak company, which at that time placed its products with dealers only by franchise. This started a long and increasingly valuable association as picture taking became a great American passion.

However profitable, cameras were not as demanding of shelf space as some other things. School books, for instance, were stocked as long as students had to buy their own. At Kinney's they could



A view of the interior of the Kinney warehouse in Gouverneur where thousands of articles are shelved and catalogued for delivery to the twenty-one stores. (Photo courtesy of Kinney Drugs).



Harold D. Kinney
(Photo courtesy of Kinney Drugs).

turn in one year's supply if not too bedraggled for new ones in next year's subjects. As electrical appliances were invented they began to appear on the drug store shelves in all sizes from toothbrushes to outdoor grills. Gifts, dishes, blankets and now even food, reputedly introduced as an accommodation during the blizzard of 1977, are all space eaters.

By 1960 the hardware store on the east side of the Kinney building (right in the picture) had to be added to the frontage. The present addition is the other half of the same building.

The schoolbooks have disappeared as have the paint and wall paper, but other things have grown immensely with increasing trade and changes in demand. Cosmetics, for instance, include a lot of

things no lady would have looked at in 1903. Hallmark cards, an old friend, now crowd on the shelves with other brands. Candy is a big item, though there are not many of the three and five pound boxes of fine chocolates there used to be. Children's toys, especially in the Christmas season, have become such a space problem that the present addition is earmarked for them. The new space will also improve the office accommodations upstairs and provide better and freer movement of traffic downstairs.

Managing, stocking and selling in the twenty plus departments in the present store require more training for employees, a need met by inservice training. The cosmetic manufacturers hold schools several times a year to explain their products and teach their proper use; Kodak holds workshops; pharmacists attend seminars. Each clerk must be knowledgeable in his own field and sufficiently familiar with all to aid customers.

In addition to opportunities to acquire stock, employees have a profit sharing bonus plan and, since 1943, a contributory pension plan, including life insurance, the first in the country for a drug chain.

The really dramatic changes have come in the last two decades in the dispensing of drugs. So much more is known about the effects of drugs and the new ones are so powerful and so dangerous that restrictions have had to be imposed in the interests of safety. Almost everything today has to be prescribed by a doctor. There is little a clerk can sell a customer from the shelf. All drugs and containers come packaged and sterilized — no mixing and compounding.

It took from 1903 to 1959 for all the stores combined to sell one million prescriptions. Until 1966 it took three or four years to add each additional million. Since 1966 the increase has been just

about a million a year, reaching twelve million for the chain in 1978. Whenever a new million mark is reached each individual store celebrates it by giving a gift prescription to a lucky customer.

The most prescribed items in any drug store today are tranquilizers, birth control pills and antibiotics. The average cost of a prescription is still said to be about \$5.00, though some are well over that. The most expensive are the chemicals for chemotherapy sold to doctors and county nurses for administration to non-hospitalized patients.

Senior citizens receive a discount. Also a careful record of each customer's prescription history, known as the Patient Profile, is kept so that the pharmacist can check for timing of drugs, prescriptions from different doctors that might, taken in combination, be harmful, or other pertinent information. A pharmacist requires five years of intensive training to master what he must know about the half million drugs on the market. The laboratory and central supply for all prescription items for all stores has been developed into one of the best in the state.

Is anything still shipped in by the carload? Yes! Are you ready? Pampers. Charcoal. Rock Salt. Birdseed. Toys.

Viewed in perspective the Kinney Drug chain is a business entity not commonly found in the modern world. It has been built up by a father and a son, men of ability and integrity, different in outlook and temperament, who must have had their disagreements now and then, but whose talents complimented each other's to great advantage. It remains based in a village that has never grown above six thousand in population and is contained within an area lightly populated and remarkably homogeneous in terrain, occupations, income and type of resident. Its stock is owned almost entirely in the area by persons who have had a personal part in creating its value, and its employees are mostly native to the North Country, including managers and directors.

The corporation has never come under the control of a national chain, a conglomerate, nor an outside financial institution. Its well-known "NEAR YOU" advertising slogan has more than geographic significance, for each Kinney store is still a local store where people know each other and decisions are made for local convenience in offices upstairs over the store, not in Chicago or New York.

Both Kinneys were active and influential in village affairs, and were honored for it; both attended personally to their stores as long as they were physically able. At the same time they had the intelligence and the grace to create an organization that can function without them.

(continued on page 23)



The Kinney Drug Store, with the familiar Rexall sign, as it appeared for thirty years. The 1960 and the 1977 expansions have taken in the two stores in the building to the right. (Photo courtesy of Kinney Drugs).



Some Good, Old-Fashioned July Days



Edited by Norene Forrest

The pages of several diaries of Byron G. Parker, a young man of Parishville in the early 1880's, reveal, among many other things, the excitement of celebration and travel for a Northern New Yorker as he and some friends observed Independence Day. These selections were edited and submitted by the late Norene Forrest, dedicated and loyal historian of the Town of Parishville.

Thursday, July 4, 1878

One hundred and second anniversary of the liberty of the American people! Pretty warm. There was a picnic over to Allens Falls today. Edward Everett and I were talking of taking a double team and going over together but we did not really understand each other and we concluded to dissolve. I went over. I sent down and got some fire crackers and took some powder and done it up in paper and wet the paper in kerosene; did that up in paper, wet in kerosene and so on until I had a roll as big as my fist. I put it on top of a pole and set it on fire. It would burn for about 10 minutes and then explode.



Friday, July 4, 1879

Very windy. The Fourth was celebrated in Parishville. I went up on the barn to fix my windmill. I grabbed a cleat, it came off and I fell. I struck on my right side partly and on my head partly. It made me senseless. I did not hurt anywhere only on my right arm, my side and the side of my face.



Saturday, July 4, 1880

I went to meeting (church) today. Cy, Owen and I went to the grocery. We bought a pound of candy and peanuts.



Monday, July 4, 1881

(Previous page — telegram at Potsdam stating the President had died from effects of his wounds.) The Fourth was not very generally celebrated around here, nearest I know of is Nicholville. The reports today are that the President is not dead but in a very critical situation. (I find no further reference to the President)

Monday, July 3, 1882

Cool, showery. Father and I went down to Potsdam today. He brought home some rolls he had carded and left some more wool. I bought a derby hat for \$1.50 and a tie for .25. Went to the depot and got a timetable. George came over and stayed over night with me so we could start together in the morning.



Tuesday, July 4. The Glorious Fourth.

Cool, clear and pleasant. I got up at half past two and fed the horses and Mother got breakfast for us. We had concluded since we made our arrangements Saturday night to take both of our horses but Nell was so lame this morning that we couldn't use her so I went up and told Cy but their horses were all turned out except Sid and they must have him at home so I came back and George went down to the Center to get a horse; while he was gone Rell came down and said Cy would take Sid before the "boss" was up if we couldn't do any better. Soon George came back and said he couldn't get a horse anywhere so I went up to Cy's again but the "boss" was up by that time and Cy couldn't take a horse so we went down to Alt's and got one there. We led him up here in less than no time and harnessed at the same rate and were started at half past four. George, Rell, Cy and I started from here and we took in Mike Roach as we went along. We overtook Rate Bicknell and Frank Spear in a buggy and when we got to Potsdam we found a lot more of the boys among whom were Hen Champney, Roll Benson, Albey Gates and George Connor. We arrived at the Albion House at about 5:20 where we put out our team and waited until train time, then went over to the depot.

There was a large crowd there and it was almost impossible to get to the ticket window but we all got aboard about the time given on the timetable but we were behind time most of the rest of the way arriving at Ogdensburg about 10:00 instead of 9:00 when we were due. Miss Chapman was aboard the train. She had a fellow with her but I got acquainted with her some on the way out and met her several times at the Berg and on the way home.

Our crowd was not together on the cars so we agreed to meet at the Semore House where Cy, Mike, Rell and I went as soon as we arrived in the city. There was a big crowd there and apparently little chance of getting anything to eat so we waited a little while but the other boys didn't come so we went to the steam ferry where boats run every half hour and crossed over to Prescott. The boat we crossed on was a medium sized screw propeller and gets up considerable speed. The water there is deep green and quite clear. The river as I am informed is about 1¼ miles in width. When we arrived at Prescott there was a hack waiting near the dock which we engaged to take us to a "good" hotel. I don't know the name of the House to which he drove us but it certainly was a good one and they furnished us a first class breakfast in short order. Roll Benson came over and took breakfast with us. When we were through eating we stayed at the hotel a little while, then went out on the street.

Prescott had a very different appearance from a U.S. city. The main streets are as wide as ours but they are not as clean. The buildings are mostly low and uninviting in their external appearance but inside they are as clean and light as our stores. Liquor is plentiful and cheap. We all took a little and some of the boys took a good deal. I bought a cane and a eucree deck at Prescott then Alt and I crossed to the Berg on the noon boat, stayed around the city a while, then went up to the fair ground. The attractions consisted of hurdle races, races between

horses and Indians, some bicycle races and a balloon ascension which proved a flat failure. I saw John Armstrong on the grounds. He works on a boat that runs between Ogdensburg and somewhere else, I have forgotten where. Ora Cardinel was there too with three girls who I should judge were not very respectable. He is clerking in Canton and the girls were from there. Miss Chapman was on the ground too.

We waited to see the balloon go up until about six o'clock (when after making two ineffectual attempts to rise they hauled it down and let the gas escape) and then went down to the Semore House and took supper. Rell, George and Mike came over the river on the next boat after we did and expected Cy and the others to come on the same boat. After waiting for them a while they did not come so they went back after them. They found Roll Benson on the dock heaving up Canada whiskey and beef stake. When they got to the hotel where we took breakfast they found Cy stretched out on a settee and Rate Bicknell just able to sit up. When they got strait they came over to the Berg and were all at the Semore House when we got there.

After supper we went out to the street to see the military parade. When we got back to the hotel Jim Cox was there dead drunk. Tom Usher was taking care of him. They took him out into the air and partly revived up then took him up to George Erwin's room and put him to bed. We went out onto the street again until it was time for the fireworks. Amongst the places which we visited was the new City Hall. It is the largest and most expensive building I have ever seen. It is constructed of grey stone and the partitions are of brick. There are two towers in front, one 6 and the other 7 stories high I think, or one is 5 and one is 6. The main building is four stories.

The fireworks were advertised on the program to begin at 8:30 and we were on hand on time. They were on the east bank of the Oswegatchie River below the iron bridge, and the people took their places on the opposite side. We stayed about half of three quarters of an hour until we had seen enough and then started for the depot. We stopped at a little saloon and got some ginger ale and lemonade and then went on. We got onto the cars and got a seat before the rush. The train (a special) started at 11:30 and arrived at DeKalb Junction in time for us to wait about an hour or more for the train which took us to Potsdam.

We were very hungry when we got to DeKalb and tried hard to get something to eat but there was a dance at the hotel and they wouldn't let us have anything to eat and at the other the clerk was so cross he wouldn't. We arrived at Pots-

dam without any further delay, got our horses and started for Parishville Center and got here just about milking time.



Wednesday, July 5. Warm. I helped milk, carried the milk to the factory and then went to bed. I was so sleepy that I fell asleep milking so came near falling off the stool. I wasn't long getting to sleep when I got to bed. I slept until five o'clock and got up much refreshed.

Editor's Note: July 4th, 1883, notes include: Attended the Potsdam fire works at the fair grounds. We got a grandstand seat where we had a first rate view. They were tip-top, much better than the Berg last year.



Wednesday, July 18, 1883. Cool, lowry and pleasant. I got up between two and three and got started as early as possible for Potsdam where I arrived just in time to leave the horse at the Matteson House, get Nettie and take the 6:15 train for Ogdensburg to witness the Ross-Hanlon boat race which is to be rowed today. We arrived at Ogdensburg between 8:00 and 9:00. The place looks quite familiar and I found no difficulty finding my way from the depot to the Semore House and then to the steam ferry to Prescott where we arrived just late for the boat but there would be another in about an hour which we waited for in one of the dingiest and nastiest waiting rooms in the city. There were a couple of nobby females from Canton who helped to entertain with their loud and boastful conversation at this place.

The water was so rough as to prevent the boat race but not enough to effect the ferry boat and it was a very pleasant trip across. We landed at the R.R. depot at nearly the opposite end of the city from where I landed when I was there last Fourth so when we came up on the main street I was completely bewildered but soon began to see places that looked familiar but they all had changed sides of the street. We got an abominable breakfast at the Daniels House then, after resting a while, started out to do Prescott.

Prescott is very pretty and well laid out city not as large as Ogdensburg. There are two principal business streets running near to and parallel with the river. There are six or seven good churches the most imposing of which belongs to the Roman Catholic but no other very prominent public buildings except the fort which stands on an eminence surrounded by a stockade and moat down river from the city and on a line with the main street.

There was a game of "LaCross" in an open field this afternoon which we went out to see. It is different from any game I ever saw before being played by two parties of men with a ball and rackets. It is more interesting and exciting than baseball and a great deal harder work for the players.

Gamblers and small swindlers of all descriptions swarmed in broad day light on the main street, many in front of the Daniels House where from a second story window as many as a half a dozen could be seen plying their trade at the same time. At one time when I was on the street alone I was met by a very smooth tongued man, apparently a gentleman who after a little fine talk wished to take me down on a side street to see Hanlons skull but I didn't take the bait readily.

After resting a while after the LaCross match we went back to Ogdensburg and looked the city over considerable. It is a nice place with a great many fine residences. We went down to the northern depot and waited there until a steamer came in and the Windsor House bus came down to meet it. We rode up to the house where we waited until after supper and then went to the depot to catch a train which left between six and seven but the water had got smooth enough so the boat race could proceed so the train was not going to start till after it was over. We went down on the dock where we couldn't get much of a view of the race but we had a good view of the river and the boats on it. Most every craft from a canoe to a "line side wheeler" were crowded together upon the river while a grandstand erected opposite the race ground was crowded full.

When the contestants came near the turning stakes every steamboat on the river set up a most tremendous whistling which continued until they were fairly started back only to begin again reinforced by several locomotive whistles and guns from the fort at Prescott when they neared the point of starting. Soon after the race was over the train started and we arrived in Potsdam before ten o'clock and got home about twelve.

Hanlon was the winner of the race by about 30 seconds.





Relatives and friends gathered at Dr. Daniel C. Ferguson's cottage on the Point before 1912; now site of Sisson cottage. (Photo courtesy of author).

A Relaxing Haven on the Great St. Lawrence: Memories of the Summer Community of Oak Point

by Mary Hadlock Smallman

The focal point of an old summer community is now gone. Oak Point, near Hammond, has witnessed many changes over the years, but many of the long-established families there still retain summer places. Our author, prompted by the recent razing of the old inn there, reflects on some past times and more recent changes for her family and friends there.

Another institution is gone from the scene. The Inn at Oak Point in the town of Hammond has been razed after more than a century.

Thousands of Northern New Yorkers today recall attending summer camps for young people held by the Presbytery of Northern New York* each year for three decades, the years when the youth of Camp Laurent used it, and the years the Association for Retarded Children held day camps there.

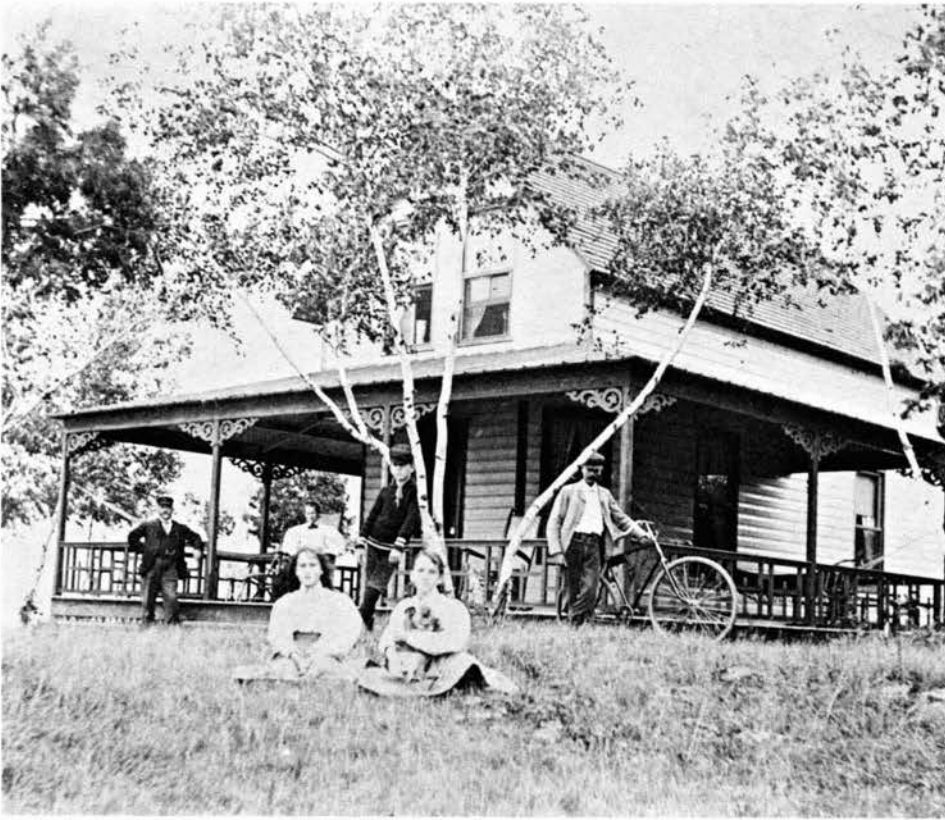
As years went on the Presbytery added several adjacent homes and cottages, had three "bunkhouses" built for added accommodations and bought an old boat house for a craft building. In the final days the Inn became the Club Oak Point owned by a group of associates from New Jersey. They were basically families who had attended "family camping" started for Presbyterian families of the churches represented by the young people to bring added income for the

upkeep of the Inn. At last the Inn, the hub of the Point for so many decades, has been leveled, a victim of changing times and state mandate.

The individual cottages have been sold mostly to adjacent land owners, and the once-humming "compound" — baseball diamond, footrace and July Fourth activity gathering place for group activities for over 40 years — is quiet.

A Pioneer Hamlet

Historically several families have been



Cottage on Ferguson Point later known as Wintergreen. Moved twice, it is now located next to Lone Pine. Family believed to be the Franklins of Hammond. (Photo courtesy of author).

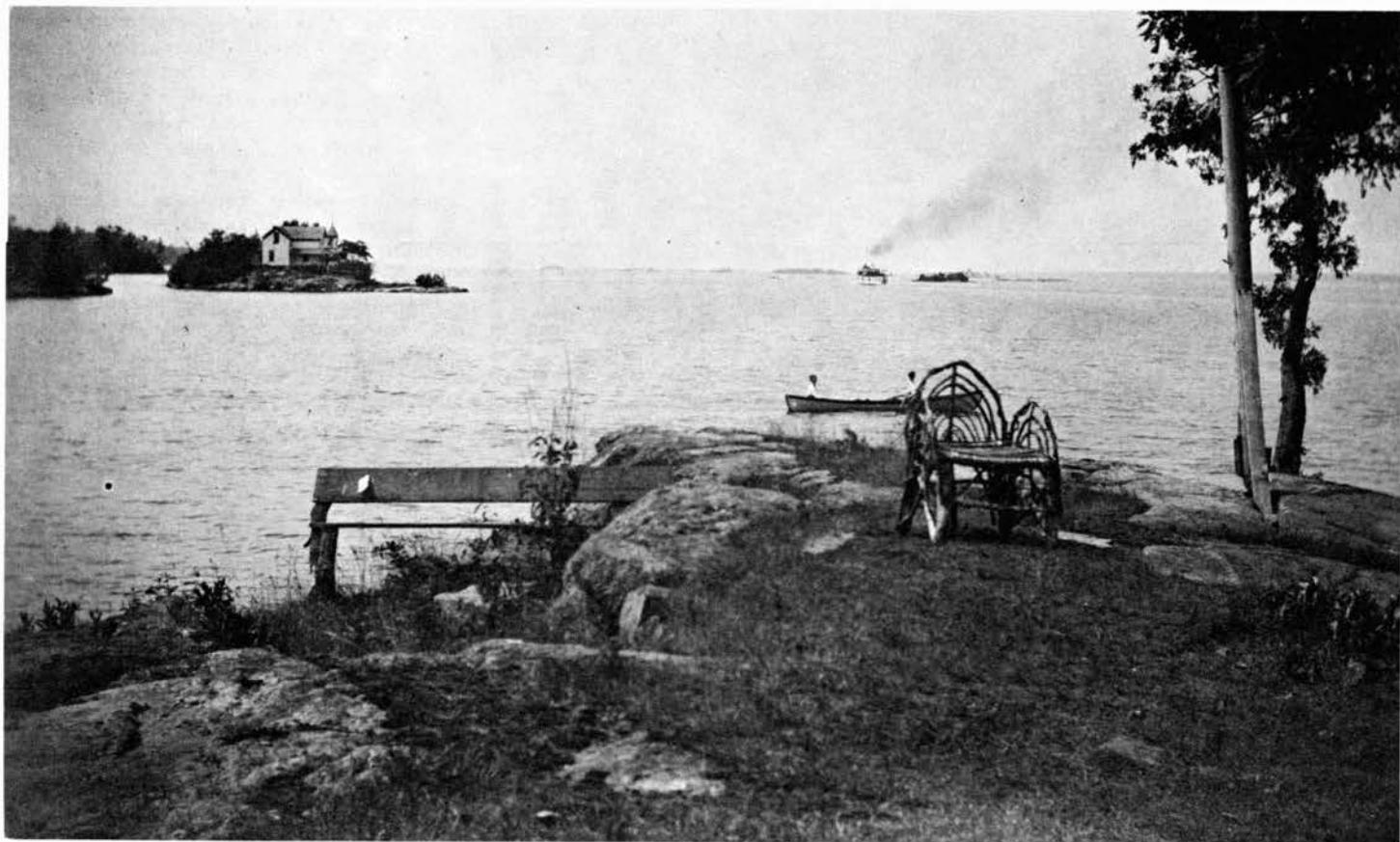
active at Oak Point. Summer romances and even winter isolation decreed that these families become intertwined. The Brooks, Billings and Perry families are still there, some the same, some with new surnames. The later Duke family is still represented year 'round, as well as summer Coopers, Fergusons and Sissons.

James H. Brooks married Artemesia Billings and two of their children married two of Richard and Emily (Lyon) Perry's. Both families became large land holders at Oak Point, along with the Billings family, Joseph Perry, who died as a young man in an epidemic of typhoid in 1893, married Minnie H. Brooks; Alice Perry married Wm. Carey Brooks, their children becoming double cousins. Even their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren today are loyal Oak Pointers. The elder Brookses had two other children, James Carson Brooks and Mott Billings Brooks.

It came to pass that Wm. C. (known always as "Ked") Brooks and his wife Allie owned the summer place later known as The Willows. It catered to local and transient visitors for meals and lodging. It was also their home before 1900, called simply "Summer Home." The Original wooden water pipes and the enormous cistern in the top story were bared to the world in the recent dismantling of the home. About 70 years ago additions were made — plainly visible



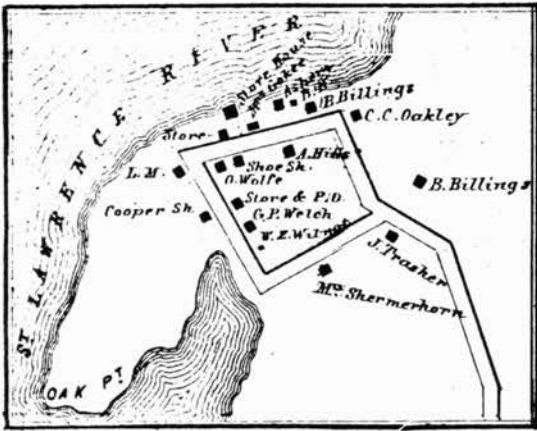
View of the gardens and lawn tennis court next to the Inn in the 1920's. (Photo courtesy of author).



View upriver from lawn of the Reverend Dr. Daniel A. Ferguson's cottage. Now this view belongs to the family of the late Walter Sisson of Potsdam. (Photo courtesy of author).



Swimming in the bay at Oak Point 75 years ago showed styles in bathing suits and water wings. (Photo courtesy of author).



Oak Point from Beers Atlas [1865]. Mrs. Gokey then owned the Inn. Mrs. Schermerhorn's home still intact; Thrasher's home and gardens now owned by Preston. Lone Pine belonged to Wilmot.



The Island Belle docking at the Custom House and store in early 1900's. The stop was an important one along the river. (Photo courtesy of History Center Archives).

recently — with an extension and a replacing of the fireplace along with an additional story and attic. The screened large dining porch toward the St. Lawrence, was added much later.

A few years ago we found a few recipes going back to the Alice and Ked days and included them in a family cookbook. Written on a letterhead with Oak Point Inn insignia, they were specialties of the house. They became an institution at the Point.

Today the grandsons George and Philip Carey Brooks live near Oak Point on the River Road, and grandchildren of Joseph and Minnie who lived in the home opposite the Inn own the island (Zitka) in front of the Inn property. Other descendants of Richard and Emily Perry own much of Oak Point as well as Burns Billings' grandson, Donn A. Billings, who calls his cottage complex Oak Point Resort.

The Inn at Oak Point may be gone; the Joe Perry house, shoemaker Andrus Hicks' home, the old Billings and Tilton homesteads may have changed hands; the Dake home, once a tavern important to travelers, descended to great grandchildren; the lovely stone Schermerhorn home now appreciated by a retired school teacher and the early (1834) Greek revival home (now called Lone Pine) owned by the Billings, then Brooks, then Hadlock families, now the summer retreat of a minister and his family with even THE lone pine missing — result of overzealous town highway crews. Although we whose ancestors built Oak Point regret some changes, and recall hearing of the businesses and activity of the several stores, the Customs House, ashery and even distillery, we cannot help being wistful for the days when Oak Point had a bridge crossing to the island,

Allie and Ked Brooks' Oak Point Inn Suet Pudding

- 1 cup molasses
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup suet, chopped fine
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3 1/2 cups flour
- 1 cup chopped raisins
- 1 heaping tsp. soda, mixed with molasses
- 1/2 tsp. each of cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg

Mix and sift dry ingredients. Add molasses and milk to suet. Combine mixtures and raisins. Turn into buttered mold, cover and steam four hours. (Serve with Hand Made Sauce).

Oak Point Inn Hand Made Sauce

- 1/2 cup butter
 - 1 cup powdered sugar
 - 1 egg
 - 2 tbs. wine
- Cream butter, add sugar, and egg

which has been beaten foamy. Heat over hot water, beating continually.

Allie's sister Hattie (Harriet Melissa Perry) added her own pet recipe:

Hattie Perry's Suet Pudding

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1 cup grated carrot | 1 cup currants |
| 1 cup grated potato | 1 cup raisins |
| 1 cup sugar | 1 egg |
| 1 cup ground suet | 1 tsp. soda |
| 1 1/2 cups flour | 1 tsp. salt |

Put into cans and steam 2 1/2 hours.

Oak Point Inn Cottage Pudding

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1 egg | 1 cup milk |
| 1/2 cup butter | 2 1/4 cups flour |
| 3/4 cups sugar | 3 tsp. baking powder |
- 1/2 tsp. salt

Serve with lemon sauce: Juice of one lemon and one egg, 1 cup sugar mixed with 1 tsp. cornstarch, one pint of boiling water and butter the size of a walnut. Boil together.



Oak Point on the Saint Lawrence

Cool porch of the Inn with its rockers and willows. Store was later moved to a site on Schermerhorn Bay. Tour boat dock was between the two. (Photo courtesy of History Center Archives).

later to become the summer home and office of Dr. Pomeroy of Ogdensburg; the toot and chime of the tourist boats stopping at the big wharf of the Inn, which also delivered supplies to the stores and furnishings to the homes (even a grand piano to Dr. Pomeroy!); for the garden parties with candle-lighted Japanese lanterns at the Reverend Dr. D.A. Ferguson's home on the point of The Point; for the excitement of the search-light evening tours of the boats which were so familiar to those along the river; for days when everyone scooted about in a St. Lawrence skiff; when ice cream and strawberry "sociables" were high entertainment and later when Mr. Billings ran a "dance hall" way down river on the edge of his property — now recycled into several cottages there; for the show-places of A.D. Giffin and Dr. Kimball, then Dr. Archibold's gardens; for large trees brought as whips across from Canada 120 years ago; for the friendly ferry which plied past Cross Over Light-house** Island to Canada — which one could ride for 25 cents or two for 37½ cents — or in groups of more than 3 for 12½ cents each — or send animals across in a scow very reasonably.

The days of the family of many children who came over each day from Cross Over to attend #4 Oak Point District School, a stone building still standing, and of the gracious and active life of the Oak Point community are gone, along with the Inn.

Yet probably Oak Point overall has changed as little as any summer community in its 150 years or so. Its one summer store, its community building built on the gospel lot for worship purposes and the adjacent small cemetery, its substantial



The Inn at Oak Point in its days as summer camp of the St. Lawrence Presbytery. Thousands of county young people spent happy days here during its nearly 40 years. Even the big willow in gone. (Photo courtesy of author).

full season homes along with later large cottages have changed little. A quiet community now, a relaxing haven on the great St. Lawrence.

*The St. Lawrence Presbytery and the Champlain Presbytery combined to form the Presbytery of Northern New York.

**Active from 1848-1941.

☆☆☆☆ ☆☆☆☆

About the Author

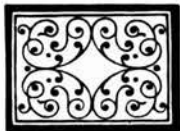
Mary Smallman is hardly a stranger to these pages. As editor of *The Quarterly* for many years and County Historian for more, her list of contributions has been endless.



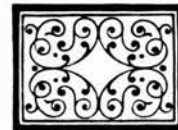
The dreary auction went on in spite of rain and cold. Early spring of 1978. (Photo courtesy of author).



Final days of the Inn at Oak Point. (Photo courtesy of author).



The G & O or the E & B or the B & B or . . . ?



by Nelson B. Winters

The stories of short line railroads interest many, especially since they first opened up opportunities for commerce and mass passenger service for villages and hamlets that otherwise were remote from each other and from industrial centers. The G & O is no exception in its history; it IS an exception in that it still is in business.

Eighty-five years ago on April 13, 1892 the Gouverneur & Oswegatchie (G & O) Railroad was chartered as a subsidiary branch line of what was then the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg R.R. under lease to the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad. It was to be 14.2 miles between Gouverneur and Edwards. For many years it was referred to facetiously as the E & B or Edwards and back.

The line was capitalized at \$350,000 divided into shares of \$100 each. The first directors were: Chauncey M. Depew, H.

Walter Webb, Edward V.M. Rossiter, Frank H. Loomis, John M. Toucey, Theodore Voorhees, Charles F. Cox, Ira A. Place, and Horace C. Duval.

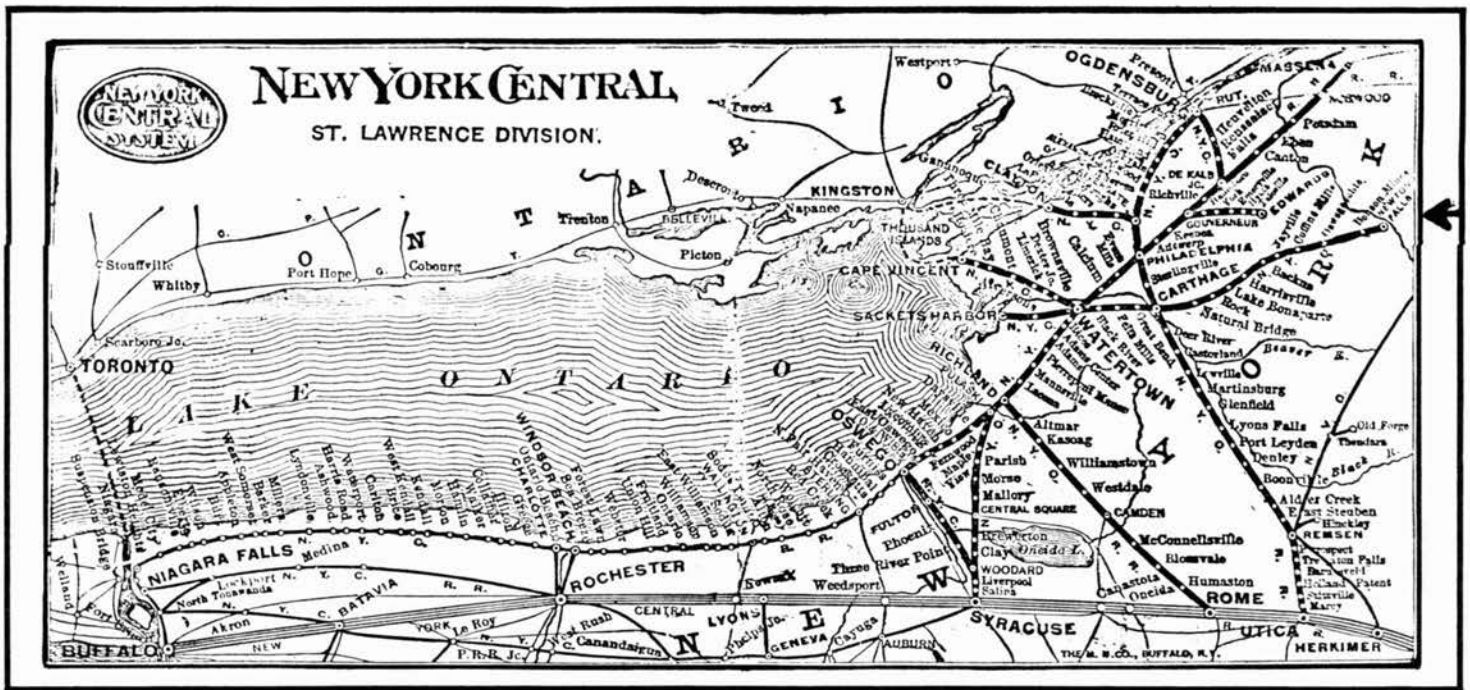
Construction began in June of 1892 under general contractor Moffat, Hodgkin, & Clark. Sub-contractors included S.V.R. Hendrick of Richville, J.D. Welch of Coeymans Junction, Darwin & Dugon of Owego, and P.J. Doherty of New York. Bridges had to be built, stations erected, mine and mill sidings constructed, and a Y or turnaround facilities at Edwards. Kinderhook and Hudson loco-

motive #3 handled the work train as rails were laid from Gouverneur toward Edwards.

Finally, all was in readiness and according to the *Northern Tribune* of August 2, 1893 the first regular run was made on the previous day. It was a passenger train which pulled out of Gouverneur station at 10:36 a.m. with conductor Archie Dixon in charge. The remainder of the crew consisted of Van C. Bockus, engineer; Frank Bresee, fireman; Allen Jarvis, trainman; Fred Baird, trainman; and W.A. Miller, expressman.



N.Y.C. & H.R. locomotive #2029 with combination train #995 [passenger and freight] near Talcville westbound to Gouverneur from Edwards. Talc ore on flat cars destined to Hailesboro mills, early 1900. Passenger-baggage-express-mail car on rear. (Photo courtesy of author).



Engine 316 was at the head of coaches 486, 1387, and 201 all filled to capacity, with 50 or more unable to go for lack of accommodations. There were intermediate stations at Hailesboro, Emeryville, Talleville, and Dodgeville, a non-agency station. A non-agency station was established at York Crossing in 1894. By 1921 Dodgeville had been phased out and Hyatt became a station stop.

The decision to build the line by the New York Central, which in 1891 had leased the properties of the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg (R.W.&O.), came after a visit to Gouverneur by Chauncey Depew, president of the Central, and other high officials. They saw a large potential freight tonnage from the area talc mines, which up to that time was hauled to Gouverneur by team and wagon. There was some opposition to the railroad because it was feared unemployment would be created. Lumber, pulp, and bark showed great promise. By 1912 hay, limestone, cheese, livestock, zinc, and maple syrup were being transported—all of this in addition to inbound freight.

The *Northern Tribune* account continues with the information that the trains over the road would be mixed—that is, freight and passenger together. The schedule indicated that trains would leave Edwards and 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. and from Gouverneur at 10:20 a.m. and 5:50 p.m., in each case connecting with passenger trains on the main line in Gouverneur. Crews would lay over in Edwards. About four months later this was changed and runs reversed to make Gouverneur the terminal. Later on until 1921 there were 3 daily (2 on Sunday) round trips, one a combination.

As time went on two things happened—the automobile became the accepted way of travel so passenger business on the G

& O declined. The talc mines expanded and zinc came into the picture, resulting in greater freight tonnage. In 1929 a five mile spur was constructed from Emeryville to the new zinc mill at Balmat.

A newspaper interview in 1935 with engineer Van C. Bockus of the inaugural run brought out this incident that occurred during the height of the passenger service. Ringling Bros. circus came to Gouverneur. The train started out as usual from Gouverneur that morning and upon arriving at each of the stations enroute to Edwards the crew witnessed with fear and apprehension that the platforms and the spaces on every side of

the stations were filled with what might be termed seething mobs of village and rural folks, all intent on journeying to Gouverneur on the return run of the train to witness the afternoon circus performance.

On the return trip the anxious waiters swarmed over the train like flies, and the coaches were soon filled to overflowing with passengers clinging on the outside. The train crew could not control the circus-crazy passengers, so the train proceeded at a slow pace to Gouverneur. It was found necessary to make a second round trip to pick up all who wanted to attend the circus.



Same train taking time out for photographer. Conductor James E. Murphy on extreme right. Engineer Van C. Bockus in center of group on left, early 1900's. (Photo courtesy of author).

Selected clippings from a Gouverneur newspaper about the G & O. (Courtesy of author).

July 19, 1893

Way up on the G. & O. railroad is a camp of Polanders who have a female cook. Thursday two of the Polanders who were rivals for the woman's favor became jealous of each other and with the assistance of a knife and hatchet held a rather lively discussion. Neither one was badly injured.

Last week a number of Italians and Polanders employed on the new Gouverneur and Oswegatchie railroad struck. On a rainy day the workmen had an idea that their pay should go on though they did not work. The Central took a different view of the matter and gave the strikers a choice of going back to work at once or leaving the job for good. An agreement was finally reached whereby the men shall receive a half days pay for a rainy day in case they work three hours, and the strikers went back to their work Saturday after being out two days and a half.

July 26, 1893

The first passenger train over the Gouverneur & Edwards railroad is expected to make the trip on Tuesday next. The cars properly lettered have arrived on the ground. Of course, ye editor expects to be in at the christening.

August 2, 1893

EDWARDS.

July 31.—The great eventful day is drawing nigh; to-morrow morning the first regular passenger train will pass over the G. & O. railroad. At 7 a. m. and 2 p. m. each day a passenger train will leave Edwards returning again at 12:20 and 6:45 p. m. The band will leave here on the 7 a. m. train to-morrow and return with the excursion train at 12:20. Quite a number of citizens of Gouverneur and Edwards will join in the excursion.

NORTHERN TRIBUNE.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1893.

THE NEW RAILROAD

Formally Opened Yesterday — A Few Points Regarding It.

'Tis done. Edwards is happy. The hands of the depot clock pointed to

exactly 10:36 when Archie Dixon, robed in a brand new uniform, shouted, "all aboard," and the first train from here on the new G. & O. started on its journey. The train consisted of engine No. 316 and coaches Nos. 486, 1387 and 201. These were crowded to their fullest capacity, as many as fifty persons being unable to go on account of lack of accommodations.

Nearly two hundred tickets were sold from this point, 113 to Edwards alone. Harry Rodgers sold the first one. Del Althouse refused to buy a railroad ticket until he had taken out an accident policy of \$5000. Eight others followed suit. Archie Dixon is the conductor of the new line; W. A. Miller, of DeKalb Junction, is the baggage man and express agent.

About sixty came down from Edwards to go back on the excursion. Among these was the Edwards Citizens' band, who discoursed music on our streets for an hour and a half before train time. They were a pleasant surprise to our townspeople and met with a warm reception. It is but justice to them to say that they play a fine grade of music and play it well. Edwards may well be proud of them. The members of the band are E. C. Brayton, leader; Frank McKee, Forest McKee, Edgar Brayton, Henry Grant, Chas. Brown, Jas. McFerran, Fred Donaldson, Abby Clark and Wm. Gardner.

The observation engine, Ontario, was of course on hand to wake the echoes with its musical whistle. The party consisted of Supt. Russell, Freight Agent Wilson, Train-master Crowley, Road-master Shultz and Mr. Adams and sister. N. S. Peterson was the engineer, and Henry Gosman the fireman.

The new railroad from this place to Edwards was formally opened to the public yesterday. It was one year ago last June that the contract was let by the New York Central to the contractors, Moffett, Hodgkins & Clark, for the construction of the road. Early in July, 1892, the ground was broken and work commenced in earnest.

About December 1st the grading was completed, with the exception, perhaps, of about three miles, from Talcville to Edwards. The bridges were all erected excepting two, one at Dodgeville and the other at Talcville. As soon as the frost went out of the ground in the following spring the two bridges were built, the grad-

ing completed and the work of ballasting the road commenced. The ballast that was being used was found not to be suitable, and arrangements were made with Moffett, Hodgkins & Clarke by which the New York Central company got the contract back into its own hands for doing that part of the work. A gravel pit was then found on S. F. Hartley's farm, a mile from this place, near the main track of the R., W. & O. railroad, which was purchased by the New York Central company. The gravel was found to be of a superior quality, and a much better article than the ballast which was being used. This transaction, of course, necessitated considerable delay and prevented the completion of the work until the present time.

The country which it will open up abounds in minerals, talc being found there in great quantities. It will, we trust, be the means of bringing capitalists to that vicinity and the development of new water powers along the Oswegatchie river.

The first time-card for this new road has just been issued and is a supplement to time card No. 8, of the R., W. & O. railroad. The trains for the present that will run over the road will be mixed; that is freight and accommodation together. Train 94 will leave Edwards at 7 a. m., arriving at Gouverneur at 8, connecting with the passenger train going south on the R., W. & O. track. No. 99 will leave Gouverneur at 10:20 a. m., or upon the arrival of passenger train No. 9, and arrive at Edwards at 12:20 p. m. Returning train No. 98 will leave Edwards at 2 p. m. and arrive at Gouverneur Junction at 4:50, connecting with passenger train No. 8, moving south on the R., W. & O. Train No. 91 will leave Gouverneur Junction at 5:50 p. m., or upon the arrival of passenger train No. 1 on the R., W. & O. road from the south, and arrive at Edwards at 6:45. There will be established at all the stations excepting Dodgeville an office of the American express company. This arrangement is considered excellent and one which will be of great accommodation to the people in that vicinity, who have never known the benefits to be derived from having a railroad run through their towns.



In the meantime, the Watertown office was notified, and extra passenger coaches were brought to Gouverneur. On the return trip that night the train carried 8 coaches loaded to capacity. Legend has it that the trains would stop anywhere to pick up passengers — even taking parties of berry pickers and dropping them off at a good berry patch in the morning and picking them up at night on the return run to Gouverneur. Finally, in January 1933 the Public Service Commission allowed the railroad to discontinue passenger service, which had been handled at a loss for several years.

Since then there have been two special excursions over the Edwards line, one in May 1952 on the occasion of the Sesquicentennial of St. Lawrence County when 843 excursionists and one regular passenger made the trip and again in May 1955 when Gouverneur observed its own Sesquicentennial. On that occasion 1000 passengers, many of them children, were accommodated. It would have exceeded that figure except for the fact the size of the train was limited to the length of the siding at Edwards, where the locomotive had to be uncoupled and run around the coaches to the other end.

According to railroad officials the Edwards line has always been a profitable one in terms of revenue per ton mile, even in the depths of the 1931-35 depression. Currently, six days a week, 20-25 cars of milled talc and zinc move to Gouverneur for shipment to many parts of the United States. The loads vary in weight between 50 and 100 tons each. Steam locomotives were replaced by diesels in 1948.

It is interesting and significant to note that when the government-operated Conrail took over the bankrupt Penn Central a very intensive analysis of all branch lines was made to determine which ones were operating at a loss and showed no potential for improvement of earnings. The G & O, except for about 5 miles between Emeryville and Edwards, qualified for Conrail service. The expense of covering that short portion was shared between the New York State D.O.T. and the railroad until it was scheduled for abandonment in December 1977.

All the old passenger stations on the G & O have long since disappeared except for the one in Edwards, which now houses a feed business. All freight billing is done at Gouverneur but the original shipping points are still used, principally Emeryville, which in 1957 was the last station closed, and Hailesboro.

One can walk along the tracks and find date spikes in the crossties indicating they were relaid starting about 1919. There is a speed limit of 10 miles per hour so if one were a jogger, he could get to Edwards faster than the train. In view of the nature of the chief products shipped over the G & O it is quite



Engine #2196 at the pulp mill at Emeryville. (Photo courtesy of author).

probable that trucks will never completely take over, so the 85-year-old E & B (or B & B [Balmat & Back]) should keep going for many more years.

A railroad consists not only of tracks, cars, locomotives, and stations. It is also composed of a continuous flow of dedicated employees: to name a few in connection with the G & O, station agents like Mott Meldrim, S.E. Bowler, Mr. Booth, L.D. Fenner, Charlie Scurrah, Lester Drumb, Joe McGuinness, Bob Planty, Don McAdam; conductors like Archie Dixon, Charlie Stowell, Jim Murphy, Frank Grimshaw, Clarence Stearns, Tom Gray, L.J. Carroll, Herb Stevenson,

Bill Gruneisen; brakemen like Allen Jarvis, James Oakes, Fred Baird, Wally Jones, J.A. Kaine, P. Gebo, C.J. Girard; baggagemen like W.A. Miller; engineers like Van Bockus, Rav Slate, Con and Jack McCormick, Jim Flynn, George Parody, Frank Madden, J. Pecori, R.W. Cerow; firemen like Joseph Carkey, Frank Breesee, Frank St. Mary, Hank Leahy, Lee Tremlett, Everett Coates, "Brick" Bristol, M.O. Halloran; and track foremen like Dan Sullivan, Roy Stevens, Patsy Laverghetta, George Morrow, and Philip Spadaccini.

Some of the steam locomotives (1892-1948) which saw service on the G & O



Loading talc ore on flat cars at Talcville mine for delivery to mills at Hailesboro, early 1900. (Photo courtesy of author).

were:

Kinderhook & Hudson (handled work train during construction and probably owned by Moffat, Hodgkin & Clark), #3; N.Y.C. & H.R.R. (hailed first regular train), #316, Class C-9; N.Y.C. & H.R.R., #2196, Class F-5; N.Y.C. & H.R.R., #988, Class C-11; N.Y.C., #2025, Class F-7; N.Y.C., #1672, Class Ec.; N.Y.C., #1673, Class Ec.; N.Y.C., #1755, Class Ec.; N.Y.C., #1918, Class Eid.

The last trip (freight) between Emeryville, Talcville, and Edwards was made on December 22, 1977 with the following crew members: Conductor, E.W. "Bill" Gruneisen; Brakemen, J.A. Kaine and C.J. Girard; Engineer, R.W. Cerow; and Fireman, M.O. Halloran.

Although the principal stations on the line were constructed to accommodate telegraph service, the equipment was never installed. Communications were by Bell telephone.



Station at Talcville. Individuals not identified. (Photo courtesy of author).

Gouverneur & Oswegatchie Railroad Newsmaking Dates Over the Years 1892-1977

April 12, 1892: Certificate of Incorporation filed with Secretary of State.

August 1, 1893: First regular train over the line.

November 20, 1893: Terminal changed from Edwards to Gouverneur.

September 1908: Rumors that passenger section of mixed train will be abolished.

May 1909: R.R. officials' proposal to change time schedule of evening train #996 brings protest from Gouverneur Chamber of Commerce.

December 1915: First fatal accident on line — man driving horse and bobsled killed at mine crossing near Talcville.

November 1917: Edwards people protest proposed removal of evening train.

December 1917: Evening passenger train remains in schedule except on Sunday. Engineer Van C. Bockus bids off the G & O to take Gouverneur yard shifter — had travelled 625,040 miles between Gouverneur and Edwards since 1893.

June 1921: Morning passenger train combined with freight — Edwards residents complain about mail service.

March 1923: Two loaded freight cars wrecked while #3 talc mill in Hailesboro was being shifted.

August 1924: Brakeman thrown from top of freight car at #5 mill in Hailesboro and severely injured.

August 1925: Three ore cars derailed and loads spilled at #2½ talc mine in Talcville.

January 1926: R.R. proposes to make Talcville a non-agency station. Strong opposition from shippers forces withdrawal of petition.

July 1929: Work started on a 5 miles spur from Emeryville to Balmat.

February 1930: Freight service expanded to accommodate increased business at mines and mills — Gouverneur yard shifter involved.

April 1931: P.S.C. hearing re-protest over discontinuing evening train — mail service main problem.

August 1932: P.S.C. allows railroad to drop evening train — Star Route established for mail.

November 1932: Hearing reopened by P.S.C. re passenger train elimination.

January 1933: P.S.C. allows suspension of last passenger service — the morning train.

May 1942: Rear end collision with fast freight on Oswegatchie bridge in Gouverneur.

June 1948: Steam locomotives replaced by diesels.

August 1948: Two sidings in Hailesboro to abandoned talc mills eliminated.

May 1952: First passenger train over line in 19 years — special St. Lawrence County Sesquicentennial excursion carries 843 passengers to Edwards and back.

May 1955: Special Gouverneur Sesquicentennial excursion transports nearly 1000 people on round trip to Edwards.

August 1957: Mott Meldrim, agent at Edwards, retires at 87 years of age and with more than 64 years of railroad service, since 1893 on G & O.

March 1966: Rail shipment of talc ore from mines to mills since 1893 ceases — trucks take over.

September 1972: Zinc shipper placing in service its own 80 car fleet of covered gondolas for shipment of concentrates formerly handled in railroad owned box cars.

December 1977: Section of line from Emeryville to Hyatt, Talcville, and Edwards abandoned effective December 31; last train on December 22.

Some of the Larger Shippers, Past & Present Served by the G & O (*talc, #zinc)

*Adirondack Pulp Co.; *Agalite Fibre Co.; *Asbestos Pulp Co.; American Talc Co.; Clark Mill Co.; Columbian Talc Co.; Edwards Milk Plant; Emeryville Pulp Mill; Gouverneur Limestone Co.; Gouverneur Talc Co.; #Hyatt Ore Co.; International Talc Co.; W.H. Loomis Talc

Corp.; *Natural Dam Pulp Co.; New York Zinc Co.; #Northern Ore Co.; Ontario Talc Co.; Reynolds Talc Co.; #St. Joe Minerals Corp.; *St. Lawrence Pulp Co.; Union Talc Co.; United State Talc Co.; #Universal Exploration Co.; and Woodcock Lumber Co.

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About the Author

Nelson B. Winters is the historian for the Village of Gouverneur and a railroad history buff himself. He has contributed to *The Quarterly* in the past.



Dr. Allen Splete, president of SLCHA, at the dedication service. (Photo courtesy of Sen. Barclay).

We DID Give a Party . . . and Everybody DID Come

*The weekend of March 11-12, 1978 marked one of the most important events in the history of the Association. The dedication of the Silas Wright House and Museum was an overwhelming success and made the last several years of intensive labor and frustration all worthwhile. The ceremony, held in the adjacent Unitarian Universalist Church, featured remarks to an overflow crowd by Association President Allen Splete, Director John Baule, County Historian Mary Smallman, St. Lawrence County Legislative Board Chairman Bennett Abrams, Canton Mayor Ruth Blankman, State Assemblyman David Martin, State Senator H. Douglas Barclay, and U.S. Representative Robert McEwen. All of these remarks stressed appreciation for past achievements and the hope that the Historical Association will continue to grow and improve. The large attendance was especially gratifying because it verified our belief in the public support and interest in our museum. Total visitation for the weekend numbered about 750 and included people from throughout the North Country. Here we present a few photographs of the dedication service and the receptions at the museum. We are especially indebted to Martha Smith of Canton for her complete coverage of the events and to the St. Lawrence Plaindealer and Sen. Doug Barclay's staff for their photographs. The text of Dr. Splete's dedication address and a newspaper account of all the activities appear in the April issue of **The Quarterly**.*



The "speakers' rostrum" at the Unitarian Universalist Church. From left to right: Sen. Barclay, Assemblyman Martin, Mayor Blankman, John Baule, and Congressman McEwen speaking. Dr. Splete, County Legislative Chairman Abrams, and Mary Smallman. (Photo courtesy of Sen. Barclay).



John Baule being presented a watercolor painting by Lucretia Romey of the restored Wright House by Varick Chittenden, a gift from the trustees for his dedicated service. (Photo courtesy of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer).



Auxiliary members Barbara Audet and Barbara Veitch tending the refreshment table. (Photo courtesy of Martha Smith).



Some of the many guests of the weekend, here in the front parlor. (Photo courtesy of Martha Smith).



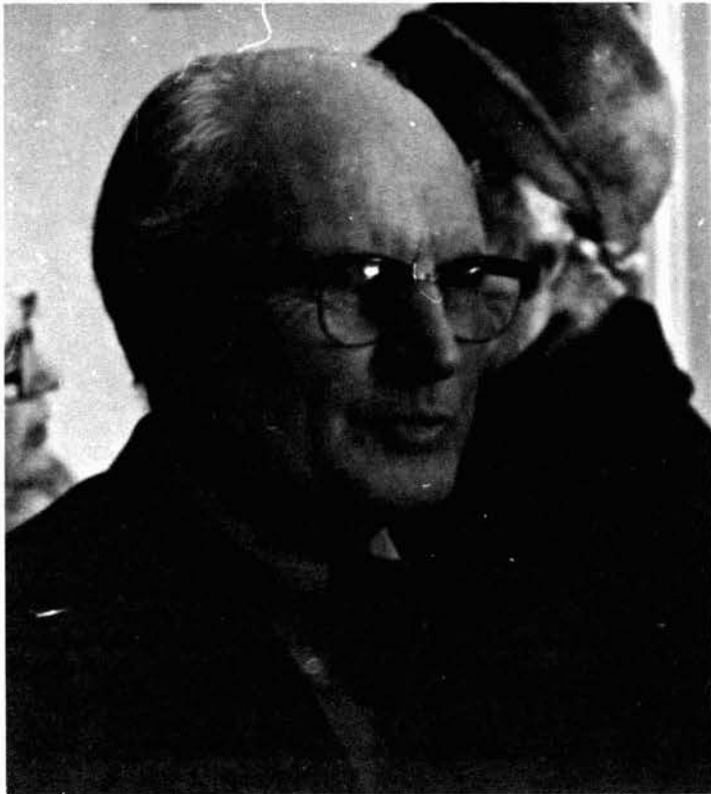
Marilyn Barlow, secretary for SLCHA, receives a gift of appreciation from Dr. Splete. (Photo courtesy of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer).



Trustees Varick Chittenden, Michael Duskas, and Louis Greenblatt in the dining room. (Photo courtesy of Martha Smith).



A young visitor in the second floor exhibit gallery. (Photo courtesy of Martha Smith).



Edward Blankman looking in on the festivities from the front hall. (Photo courtesy of Martha Smith).



Mrs. Ina Storrs. (Photo courtesy of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer).

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

While doing some research via micro-film in the Ogdensburg Public Library, an item from the Ogdensburg Journal, October 26, 1882, caught my attention. It was told by William A. Dart of Potsdam to a correspondent of the New York Post and was titled "An Anecdote About Silas Wright." Mr. Dart said that after being admitted to the bar at Sandy Hill, N.Y. Silas Wright in 1816 left for Buffalo. There he called upon Judge Spencer who informed him that there were only 38 lawyers in Buffalo and that he was sure they would be glad to have Mr. Wright join their circle. However, Silas Wright deemed it wiser to return to his home state of Vermont. On the way he stopped in the woods at Canton where Medad

Moody talked him into staying to do some legal work for the settlers. As we know, he eventually married Mr. Moody's daughter Clarissa and became well known in local, county, state and national politics.

Mr. Dart said that he knew Silas Wright well and that they "stumped" this county many times together.

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association under the direction of John Baule and with the able help of Marilyn Barlow and other volunteers are doing wonders with the restoration of the former Gov. Silas Wright house in Canton. Visitors are welcome to view the progress being made.

Sincerely,
Mary Ruth Beaman

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PLEASE NOTE:
1978 SLCHA Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 21
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Waddington

Speaker: Sr. Mary Christine Taylor
Academic Dean, Mater Dei College
Religious History of Northern New York
Details in September Newsletter

continued from page 7

B.O. Kinney died in 1966 at the age of ninety-two. Harold Kinney, though confined to his home by ill health, still takes an active interest in the progress of the company.

Whatever Kinney stores engender in employment, wealth, health and well being, benefits one extended to the neighborhood — the North Country.

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About the Author

Margaret Nulty has served several terms as trustee for SLCHA and has, since her retirement from high school history teaching, authored a book on Murray Isle and articles.

The cost of publications and other operating expenses of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association are partially subsidized by this advertising support.

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Contact: SLCHA, P.O. Box 8, Canton, N.Y. 13617
(315) 386-2780



Summer Calendar of Events



*The following is a partial listing of summer events which may
be of interest to our members and friends.*

July 13-15: **Potsdam Festival** — arts and crafts show, ice cream social, antique car rally, etc.
July 14-15: **10th Annual Country Festival** at Stone Church, Oswegatchie. Ice cream social, flea market, Bar-B-Q, etc.
July 15-16: **100th Anniversary of Star Lake** — parade, dance, etc.
July 23: **Gravestone Rubbing Workshop** — Potsdam Museum
July 29: **Oxbow Historical Association Old Home Day** — craft and antique show, dinner, etc.
July 29: **SLCHA Summer Tour to Malone**
July 29: **Ogdensburg Seaway Festival**
July 30: **Old Home Day** at Richville
August 4-6: **Crafts Fair** at Northern New York Agricultural and Historical Society, Stone Mills.

August 19: Parishville Historical Association sponsors a **Historical Day**.
August 23: **SLCHA Summer Tour to Lake Placid**
September 7-8: Canton Garden Club's **Annual Flower Show** will be held at the Silas Wright House and Museum.
September 11: **Regional Conference of Historical Agencies** exhibit design workshop at the Silas Wright House and Museum.
September 30: **Festival of North Country Folklife** sponsored by the Center for the Study of North Country Folklife on the Canton ATC campus. Watch for more details.
October 14-15: **SLCHA Overnight Tour to Vermont**
October 21: **SLCHA Annual Meeting**, Waddington, N.Y. Watch for further details.