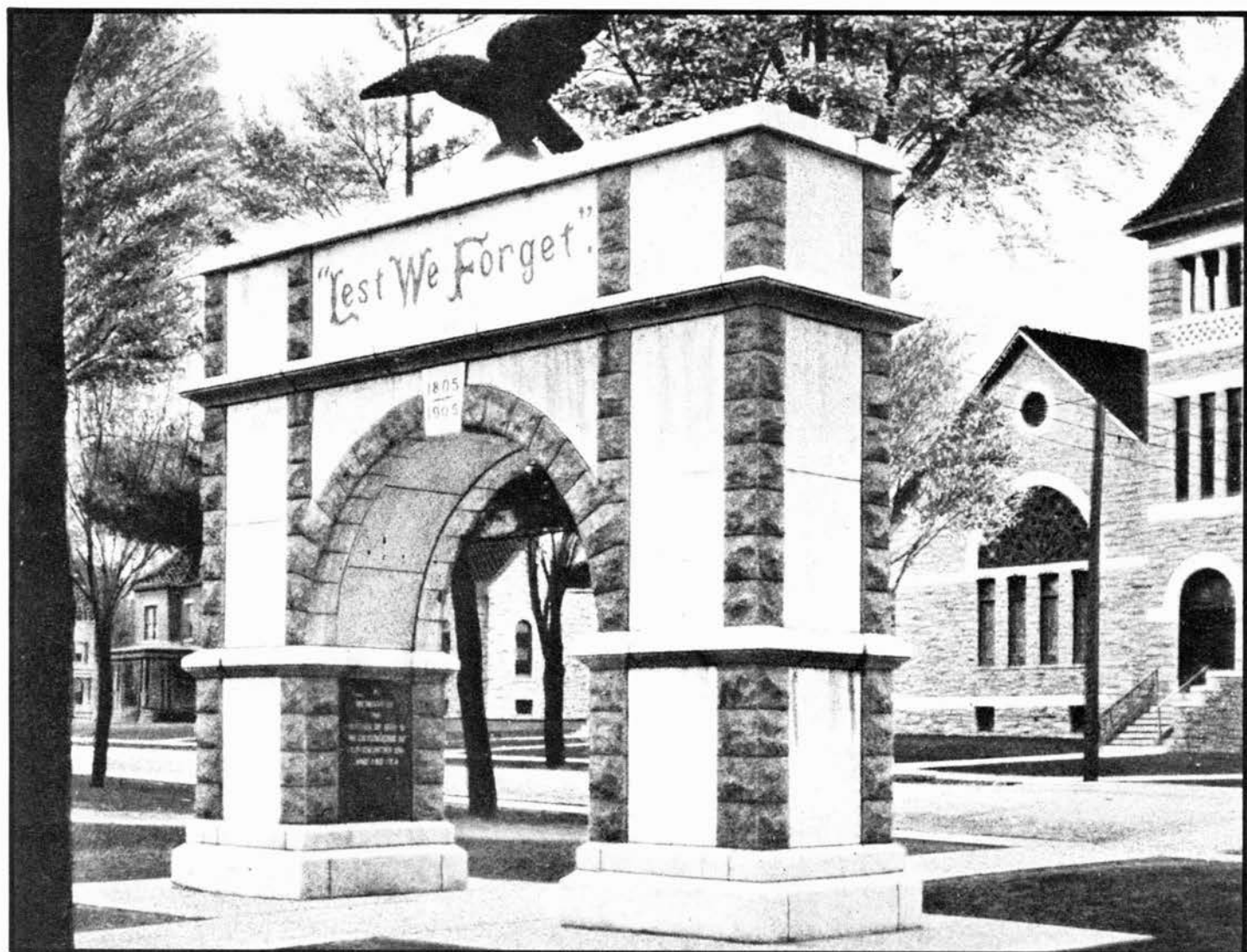


THE QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association

October 1980



Commemorative Issue

OUR TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

THE QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association

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Editor: Varick A. Chittenden

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the New York State Council on the Arts.*

Cover: A postcard view of the Memorial Arch in the park on Main Street, Gouverneur, with the Presbyterian Church and several other buildings behind, all built of Gouverneur marble. See the article on marble by Alan Tuttle, beginning on page 17. (Courtesy of the History Center Archives)

SLCHA WRITING COMPETITION FIRST PLACE AWARD WINNER—*SCHOOL CATEGORY*

A logging boom on the Grass River. The cribs built of logs and stones kept the booms from drifting to shore. (Photo courtesy of the author, from the History Center Archives)

Lumbering on the Grass

by Peter H. Vrooman

Much has been written before about the logging industry and the life of the woodsmen in America. But little has been recorded about the same along the banks of the Grass River. Here the author—an eighth grader at the Canton Middle School—recreates with thoroughness and clarity this interesting aspect of our County's past.

Introduction

In this account of the lumber industry in St. Lawrence County, primarily on the Grass River, I will try to recount the lives and duties of lumberjacks and rivermen in the 1890's and early 1900's. The area in which this lumbering took

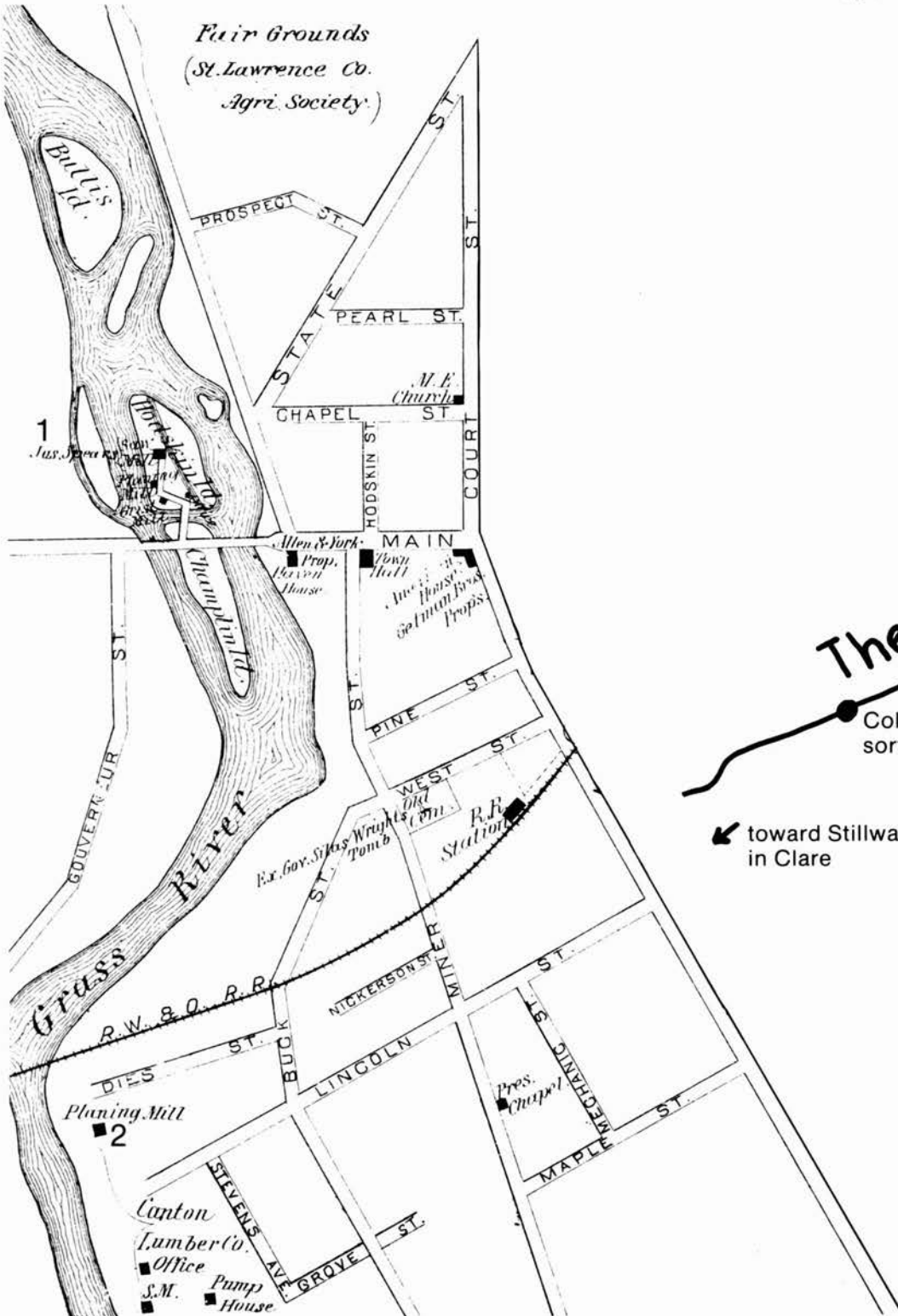
place was in the town of Clare, where A.B. Hepburn had vast holdings of land. The time of year was the early winter after the timber had been felled until the end of the river drives in mid-spring. The river drive started from the North Branch of the Grass River in Clare to the Canton Lumber Company in Canton and

further down the Main Branch of the Grass River toward other sawmills in the county. With the forests maturing and growing back and the current rebirth of the lumber industry, I think it is necessary to recall the lives and duties of the Adirondack lumberjacks and rivermen.

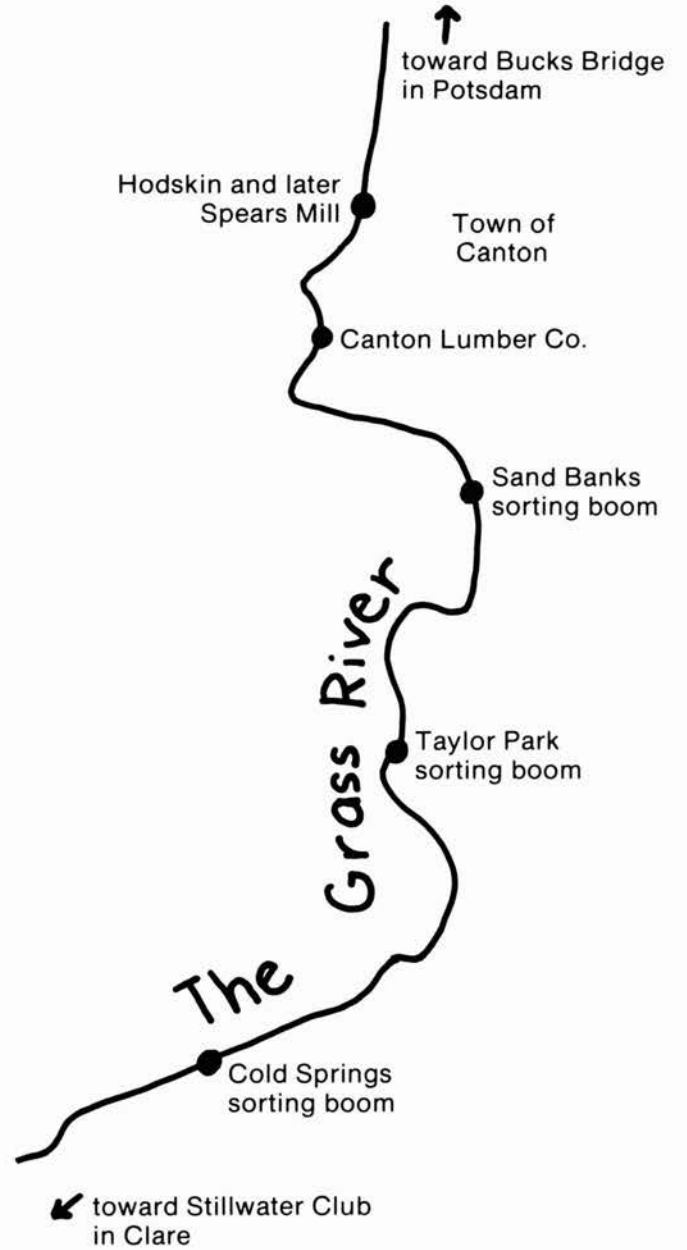
VILLAGE OF Canton

Scale 40 rods to one inch

1—Mill owned by Hodskin and later Spears



2—Mill owned by Harmon and Rice and A.B. Hepburn



Maps of the Grass River and of the Village of Canton, with significant logging operations indicated. (Courtesy of the author)

Hauling Logs

By the time the first snow had fallen, all the trees had been felled and piled on skidways. Skidways were crude loading stands,¹ situated in the midst of cutting areas, and always built on slopes so that when the sleds came in the winter to be loaded, they would be below the level of the skidway. Roads led from all the skidways and these roads met at a main hauling road that led to the river. It took careful planning in the fall to arrange these roads and skidways. Each skidway was measured or "scaled" to find the amount of lumber that could be derived out of the logs.

In the Adirondacks logs were bought and sold by means of a Standard Rule. A standard log was considered thirteen feet long and nineteen inches in diameter at the small end. Any size bigger or smaller was measured in this way: the ratio of the square of the diameter of the given log to the square of a standard log. For example, the square of a log with a twenty-one inch diameter is 441 divided by the square of the standard 361 equals the equivalent of 1.22 standard logs. In this way lumber was bought and sold.²

Each lumber company had its own mark that it stamped on the ends of the 13 ft. logs, if it floated its logs down a waterway. This was done with an ax that had the symbol on it. They registered these in certain townships. Here are some marks used on the Grass River:

The lumber camp usually consisted of a bunkhouse, cookhouse (and eating place), barn, blacksmith's shop, and sometimes an office with a place where the men could buy tobacco and clothing. There were fifteen to forty lumberjacks at a camp, depending on the size of the job. The food was of good quality and in great quantity. The average fare for dinner was steak, pot roast, salt pork, potatoes, two or three vegetables, baked beans, bread, pie, cake, doughnuts and cookies and boiled eggs. In one camp 400 eggs were consumed at one sitting by 40 men.³ For breakfast, flapjacks, bread, coffee, and tea were served. At breakfast

there was no talking, only eating, for there was work to be done. The cook's word was law and everyone obeyed him. Without a good cook, the men wouldn't work, so the lumber companies made sure they hired a capable one.

The teamsters were awakened by the bull cook, whose job it was to keep the bunkhouse in order and to wake the men at 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. on cold winter mornings. They fed their teams of horses and hitched up their sleds. The rest of the lumberjacks soon followed, for the first one out was usually the first one back in the evening. Each teamster had a specific amount of runs he had to make, depending upon how far he had to haul the logs.

When a team got to the designated skidway that it was to start hauling from, men rolled logs off the skidway onto the sleds by means of a plank ramp. A tool called the peavey was used in this process. Its moveable clasp holds the log, while its point pushes it. This tool was widely used in the hauling of logs and in the river drive which will be explained later.

The average number of logs on a sled was about 20-30 but sometimes men tried to make a "record load" of logs. Such loads contained upwards of 80 logs. The big skidways sometimes had 40 loads of logs in them. Horses were used for hauling the sleds and in a good strong team each horse would weigh about 2000 pounds.

The blacksmith's job was to shoe the horses, sharpen the peaveys, fix the sleds, and innumerable other jobs. He was a valuable member in a lumber camp. In the fall he also sharpened the crosscut saws used to cut the timber.

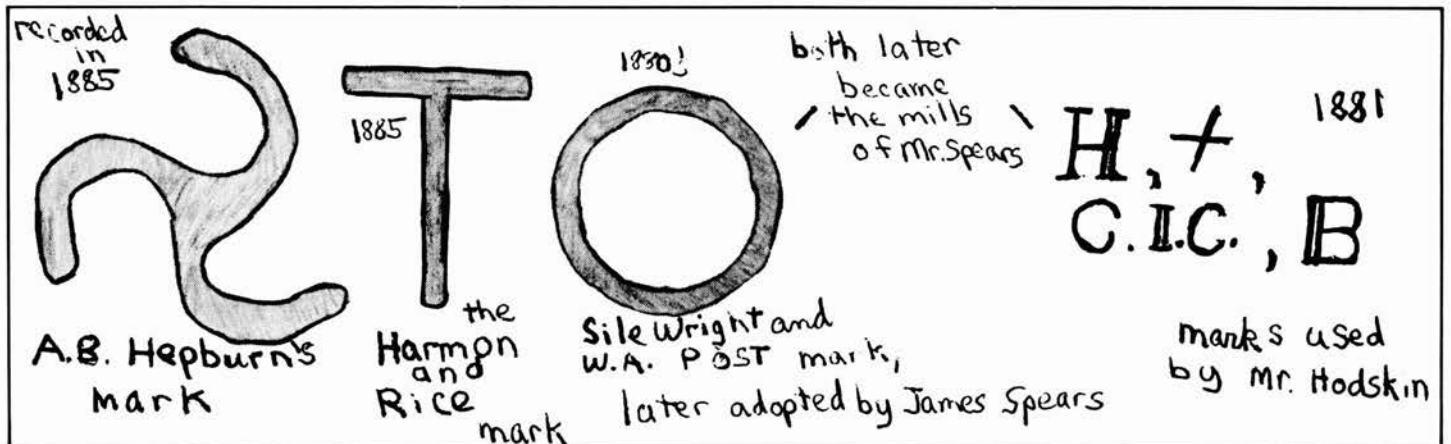
The roads to the river were entirely downhill and when the weather was cold enough, a sprinkler sled would be put to work on the road. It was a big wooden box with two spouts in the back of it which let out streams of water. Each sprinkler sled had a capacity of up to sixty barrels of water which would cover ¼ to ¾'s of a mile of road.⁴ This was done

to make the hauling of the wood easier. A man called a "road monkey" followed behind the sprinkler sled and smoothed out any ruts or uneven surfaces in the road. He also put sand, marsh hay or dirt on the very steep grades of a hill. Many accidents resulted from careless maneuvers on a curving hill or faulty road surfaces, causing the deaths of both men and horses. At the end of the winter these ice roads could be several feet thick.

Once the team reached the river, they would unload the logs either on the ice itself or on the banks where they could be rolled into the river when the spring thaw came. A.B. Hepburn's timber was cut and banked on either side of a wing dam. This structure was constructed of logs and rocks and was in the shape of a wide "U". It backed up the water behind it and when the water was let out, it would carry the logs behind it and in front of it on towards the sawmills. The increased water level carried the logs over rocks and shallows which hindered the movement of the masses of logs.

Some roads had two trucks, one for coming down with the logs and another for going back for more while others had turn-offs so that the returning teams could get out of the way of the teams coming down.

When the men finished their twelve or fifteen hour days, they would hurry back to the camp, put the horses in the barn and go to the bunkhouse until dinner was served. In the bunkhouse they would hang up their cold, wet mackinaw shirts and socks and sit by the big stove which the bull cook had stoked. A big problem in the camps was bed bugs and lice. Cedar was used whenever possible in the making of bunks because it repelled the bugs. During their leisure time before and after dinner, the lumbermen played cards. One former Canton lumberjack recalled seeing \$6,000 of hard-earned wages on the table during a poker game. The men earned anywhere from 25-30 dollars a month. Good cooks earned \$30 or more.⁵ On



Log marks or "brands" used by local lumber companies in the heydays of the Grass. (Courtesy of the author)

Sundays men shaved, cleaned their clothes and rested. Also, a travelling minister or preacher called a "sky pilot" sometimes came to camp.

When all the hauling had been done, the men were paid and things were readied for the spring log drive. Some men sent their money to their homes in the area where they worked as farmers in late spring and summer. Others bought new clothes and some just had a good time. One villager as a boy remembered when hundreds of lumberjacks from the camps in the area gathered in Canton, where they drank, fought and got ready for the log drive.

The Log Drive

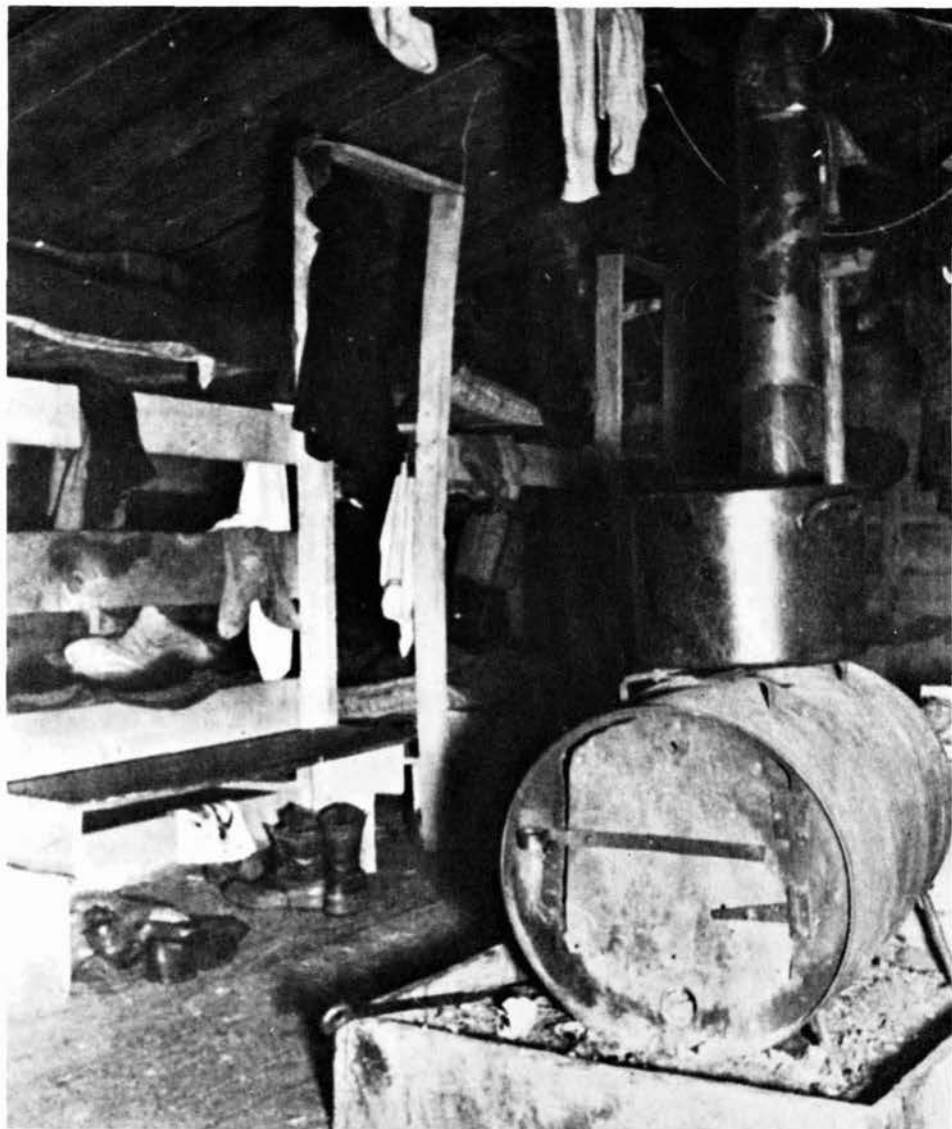
In early spring, when the ice on the rivers and streams started to melt, it was time for the log drive. A.B. Hepburn hired two hundred men to drive his logs down four miles of the North Branch of the Grass River. The men were mostly French Canadian professional drivers and Indians from the St. Regis reservation in Hogansburg. Men who worked in the log hauling job also participated in the drive. The logs were driven down to the Canton Lumber Company, which Hepburn owned cooperatively with a firm called Harmon and Rice on the Main Branch of the Grass.

When the water started flowing and the logs behind the wing dam started moving, the sluiceways or "gates" were opened and the water and logs would come rushing out. Meanwhile, the men stationed on the rollbanks in front of the dam would roll the logs down the steep inclination of the bank and into the raging river below. Hepburn alone had 9,000,000 feet of lumber in the river each season. One year on the South Branch of the Grass River, the 13 mile stretch from DeGrasse to Russell was clogged full of logs the whole distance. The North Branch was likewise full of logs.

There were two main categories of men who worked on the drive. The first group positioned themselves on rocks, sand bars or the mouths of coves which might hinder the flow of logs. These men were equipped with peaveys or long pike poles which were used to reach logs farther away.

Other men tailed the logs and cleared the shores of any logs that might have been lodged on the bank. These men were expert balancers who jumped from log to log. They wore spiked or "calked" Croghan shoes (top quality stiff boots made in Glens Falls, N.Y.) which gave good traction on the slippery logs. Men who couldn't ride the single logs rode a "cooter," which was two logs roped together.

Sometimes logs did get lodged on a rock or sand bar and the thousands of logs behind it would pile up, forming a jam. In these cases the foreman would ask for volunteers to "break the jam" or



Inside of a bunkhouse in an Adirondack lumber camp. (From Floy Hyde's Adirondack Forests, Fields and Mines, courtesy of the author)

dislodge the key log. This could be approached either by crossing on the logs and dislodging the key log with a pike pole or if that didn't work, by dynamiting it. In both cases the man had to be sure to get out fast or else he might fall into the water to probable death. If he couldn't get back he would try to "ride her out" by straddling a log and riding it to still water. In cases where the jam was in the middle of a wide section of the river, bateaux or jamboats were employed. These were shallow boats resembling narrow rowboats with three occupants: the bowsman, oarsman and the sternsman. The bowsman and sternsman were responsible for breaking the jam while the oarsman held the boat until they came back and then rowed them to safety. Bateaux had other jobs, such as transporting food to the men and rescuing men who went under in a dangerous area. On the drive if they were in calm water and a man fell in, every other riverman would jump in the

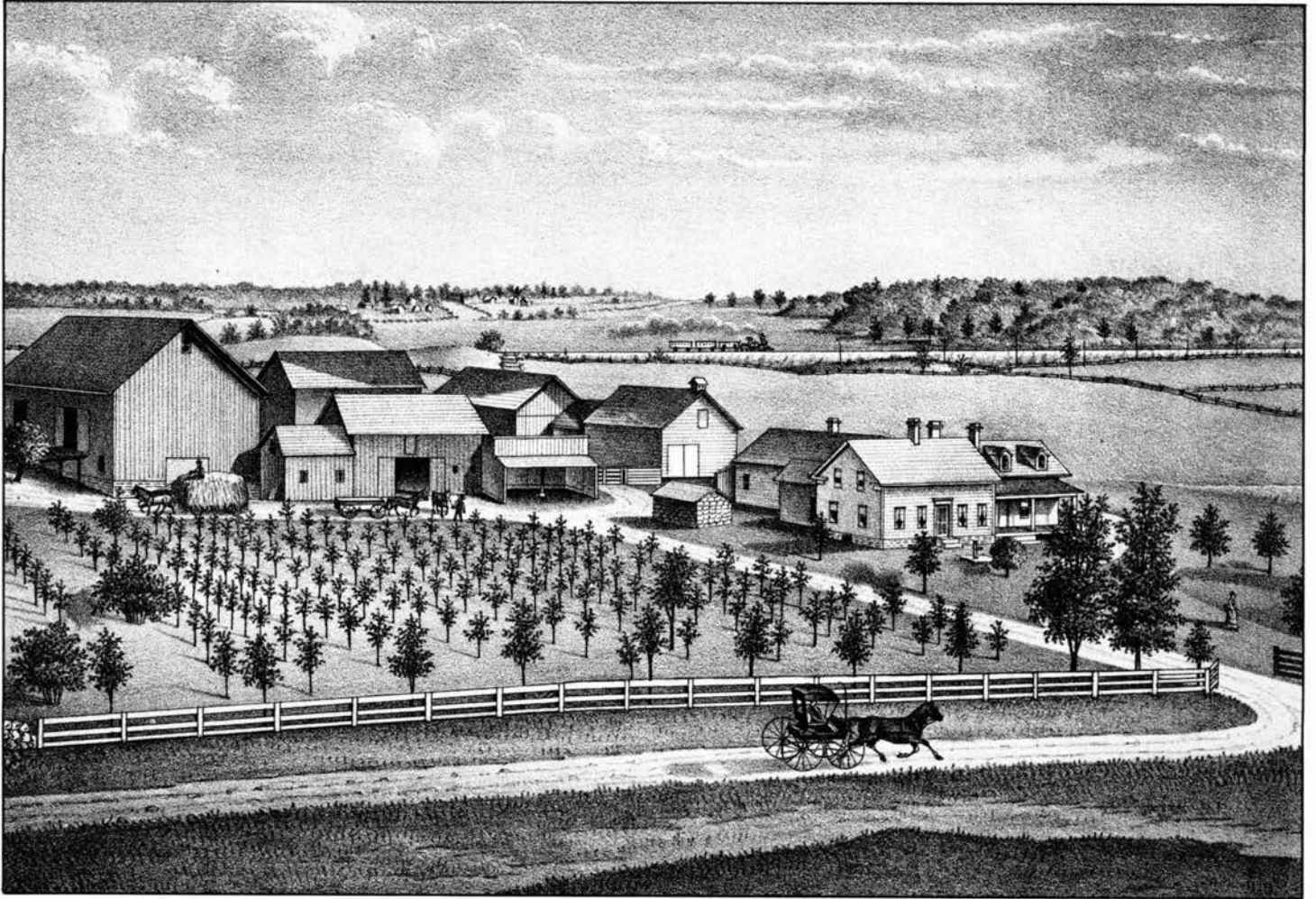
water within the second! They were a hard-working, but good-humored group of men. Jams caused many deaths and many spots on the Grass and other rivers were named after these heroic rivermen. Pelky Falls on the Grass is one such place.

The average riverman earned about \$1.50 a day with exceptional log drivers earning more. The boatmen were paid more with the bowsman and sternsman earning \$2.00 The oarsman earned \$3.00 a day since the bowsman and sternsman's lives depended on his skill. In extremely hazardous areas wages for the oarsman of \$4.00 or more weren't uncommon.⁶

Since the men worked fourteen hours or more a day, seven days a week, they were naturally hungry. In areas where the water was swift, the men would work most of the night. The cook followed the drive on the bank of the river with his helpers bringing the gear. He

(continued on page 22)

SLCHA WRITING COMPETITION THIRD PLACE AWARD WINNER—ADULT CATEGORY



The S.W. Hemenway farm—complete with apple orchards—in the town of DeKalb, as it appeared in the Evert's history of St. Lawrence County in 1878. (Courtesy of the History Center Archives)

Backyard Orchards: Past and Future

by John W. Van de Water

A familiar sight on farms and even in villages until the 1930's was the apple orchard, full of antique varieties hardy enough to survive even our climate. Here the author laments their passing but also expresses hope for their return.

In 1863 Henry Foote, President of the Saint Lawrence County Agricultural Society, said in an address:

"Philosophers may study the true, the beautiful and the good in all departments of nature and art; but the farmer must do it adapting the tasteful with the useful in the laying out of yards and lots, in the disposition of shade, orchards, gardens, and buildings, and so, while he studies the tasteful, he enhances the value of his estate. All these things act and re-act in their effects upon himself

and his family and render home *sweet home* indeed. So surround your farm houses and buildings with shade and shrubbery, with fruit trees, vines and flowers, and make home handsome, as well as happy, and as life advances hold daily converse with the garden, the orchard and the delightful things of nature planted by your labor, trained by your hand and cultivated by your taste, and above all things, do not in age abandon these simple delights, these old familiar friends, to tread the busy

haunts of men, to retire to villages to rust away in bar rooms and country stores, for your hearts will live to long once more for its old associations, and to learn that

There is pleasure in the pathless woods

There is a rapture in the lonely shore."

How I should like to have known this Henry Foote and to have been able to listen to him as he addressed the farmers of St. Lawrence County back in 1863! But at least I do feel fortunate to know

his descendant, the Henry Foote of today. What a thrill for the current Henry to be able to go to the Canton library now and read the wisdom of his ancestor. It is an enviable heritage.

In another part of his address President Foote said:

"We are paying large sums annually for fruit to our western neighbors; and it is suggested for your consideration if, in the matter of apples, our farmers might not profitably supply their own domestic markets. If there be a broken hilltop or eminence on a farm, crown it with an orchard. It will be beautiful to the eye, fragrant to the senses, and profit to the pocket . . . It will prove gold in the market, and better than gold to the health of the family. When the orchard is planted, let it be trimmed judiciously—the limbs made to grow free of each other, and outward from the center, not cross-wise, and the head made to balance or grow equally in all directions. Some farmers seem to think their cows and oxen have more taste in such matter than themselves and so turn their cattle in to do this dainty business of trimming by browsing. I have failed to see much fruit follow these operations. The operators trim too closely. It would be better pastured by pigs, which have both wisdom and patience to wait for the fruit."

Evidently his cohorts listened carefully, because the book *Rural New York* by Cornell Professor Elmer Pippin, published by Macmillan in 1921, has a map showing St. Lawrence County with approximately 25,000 acres in apple orchards in 1910. The dots indicating orchards on the map appear mostly along the St. Lawrence River.

According to Jeanine Anderson, writing in the *St. Lawrence Plaindealer* of November 1, 1978, Atwood Manley of Canton recalls the time when "almost every farmer had an apple orchard out back." Manley is quoted as saying "George Cray used to pack apples in barrels and send them to Boston." Cray's grandson, Mahlon Bullis, remembers hitching up the horses to take barrels of Snowapples and Russets to market.

What happened to the old orchards? Bill MacKently, successor to Fred Ashworth as propagator of local apple varieties, thinks the deep freeze that hit the North Country in December of 1933, wiping out most of the trees, was the main culprit. Old time residents will recall that winter when successive nights of fifty below zero readings sent frost down five feet to break water mains and close schools and in general raise havoc in these parts. I can come close to claiming the distinction of "local resident" as I was a junior at St. Lawrence University at the time. I remember the occasion most fondly as it pro-



An ancient apple tree. (From *The Apples of New York*, Volume I, Albany, 1905)

vided me with an extra long Christmas vacation.

Is the pendulum swinging to create a situation where a backyard orchard again makes sense? Several factors make it appear that this may be true and our area that was once nearly self-sufficient in apples may be so again. The prospect is stimulating and Henry Foote's vision of farm eminences "crowned with orchards, beautiful to the eye, fragrant to the senses, and profitable to the pocket" may be refilled.

"Profitable to the pocket" may be one of the prime factors. It requires little imagination, when one considers the trend of inflation and current costs of energy and transportation, to envision importing apples at \$15 per bushel in years soon to come. When that time comes, the economic aspect will have become more persuasive.

Another factor is the introduction by the New York State Experiment Station at Geneva of varieties resistant to diseases and hardy in cold temperatures. New varieties like Prima, Priscilla, Empire and Liberty, grown on dwarf stock, will begin bearing in two or three years from planting and will produce large apples of excellent quality. These apples are crosses of old varieties. Only those crosses that prove superior in hardiness, disease resistance, and fruit quality are retained for propagation and sale to the public.

In addition to newly developed varieties many nurseries are now featuring some of the hardy old standbys like Russet and Snow. Russet has long been the cider maker's favorite.

Many of the new kinds can be grown

without chemical sprays. Resistance to apple scab, the bane of many apples, especially the MacIntosh types, makes this possible. Sanitation in the orchard, the use of traps for codling moth, the practice of encouraging natural predators, good pruning, liberal use of organic mulches, and sensible cultural practices can go a long way toward producing excellent fruit.

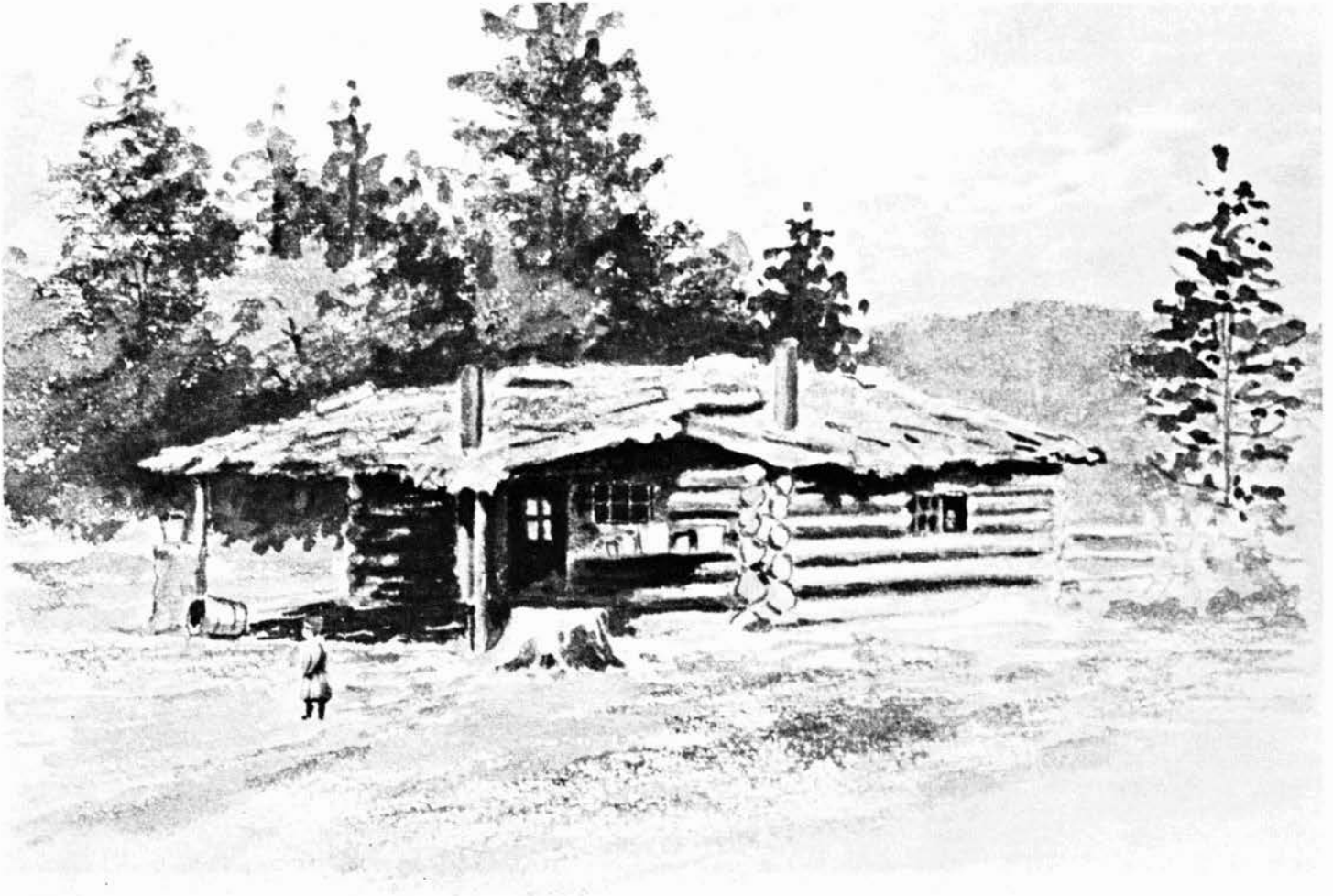
Still another factor is a changing attitude on the part of many people. No longer does every family shopper insist on cosmetically perfect fruit. Some shoppers have become convinced that a fruit with a slight blemish may be a better buy for the family than a perfect looking fruit that has been sprayed repeatedly with toxic chemicals. Commercial orchardists may spray fruit as often as fifteen times a year.

But if one feels he must spray, the dwarf trees now available will make it easy, thus avoiding a huge investment in large machines and spray rigs.

Several homeowners in St. Lawrence County have already begun setting out backyard orchards of the new varieties. Who knows? Perhaps in another ten years our eminences may once again be crowned with the glory that is the blossoming orchard in spring and the fruited orchard at harvest.

About the Author

John W. Van de Water is a retired educator who is a lifelong confirmed organic farmer. He has raised vegetables and fruit, including apples, for years. He is the author of the recent chronicle of farm life, *Chichee's Trunk*, soon to be reviewed in *The Quarterly*.



Log Cabin at Cranberry Lake, by Charles Ehricke, completed August 16, 1891, watercolor on paper.
(Photo courtesy of the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery, St. Lawrence University)

Charles Ehricke in Northern New York

Part One

by Paul D. Schweizer

Charles Ehricke—a name not widely known in American art circles—produced a large quantity of fascinating paintings in his lifetime. Especially interesting to our readers may be the ninety-eight watercolors recently given by his family to St. Lawrence University. Most are scenes of the North Country, some created while he was travelling here with Frederic Remington. In the first of a two part series, the author reconstructs his research and his findings about another important North Country artist.

Who was Charles Ehricke? This was the question which confronted me in the summer of 1978 when ninety-eight watercolor paintings by this one man were brought to my office at the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery at St. Lawrence University. A cursory glance at these works quickened my pulse for it was clear from their rich luminescence that they had never been damaged by any prolonged exposure to the sun and were as fresh as the day each was painted. Even more intriguing was the fact that

many of them had been carefully dated and identified by the artist and that a significant number of them depicted scenes in the countryside around Canton! This prompted me to contact Atwood Manley—the ultimate authority in most matters relating to the North Country—who examined the watercolors with even more enthusiasm than mine and pointed out that as a boy growing up in Canton he could recall many of the scenes represented in these works.

In the two years since Atwood and I

first discussed these watercolors I have enjoyed the help and enthusiasm of several individuals and institutions who have aided me in my efforts to learn more about Charles Ehricke and his visits to the North Country. Certainly the most valuable assistance has come from Charles Ehricke's son Karl, who initially gave these watercolors to St. Lawrence University at the suggestion of his friends Kent and Bette Faulkner. I have had the pleasure of meeting and talking personally with Karl Ehricke at

his home in West Orange, New Jersey, this past summer and it was shortly after this that he presented to St. Lawrence University his father's sketchbooks, scrapbook and autograph book, as well as photographs, family correspondence, and other materials which contributed a great deal towards supplementing whatever information about Charles Ehricke could be gleaned from the watercolors themselves. In my work on Ehricke at St. Lawrence University I have received valuable assistance from the University Historian Ed Blankman, who brought to my attention the diary of the Adirondack guide Bill Rasbeck, now on deposit in the rare book room of the Owen D. Young Library. This diary provided valuable information about Ehricke's 1889 visit to Cranberry Lake at which time he may have met the artist Frederic Remington. During the next several years Ehricke and Remington oftentimes were together in Canton and Cranberry Lake. Indeed their friendship sheds further light on a topic which was first discussed by Atwood Manley in his 1961 book on *Frederic Remington's North Country Associations*.

I have also been assisted by two St. Lawrence University students, Joanne Newmann, who first organized the ninety-eight watercolors into a chronological sequence, and by Mimi Carter, who spent long hours reading Canton's newspaper, the *Plaindealer*, which yielded much valuable information about Ehricke's comings and goings in Canton between the summer of 1889, when he first fell in love with the spectacular beauty of the St. Lawrence River Valley, and the winter of 1895 when he married one of Canton's fair daughters. The delicate task of removing many of the watercolors from the cardboard mounts upon which they had been affixed earlier in this century was undertaken with much success by the Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, a job that provided an unexpected reward in that inscriptions were found on the backs of several of the works. Mildred Dillenbeck of the Remington Memorial in Ogdensburg gave me information regarding Frederic Remington that was pertinent to this initial investigation into the question of Charles Ehricke's years in Canton, a topic which I was encouraged to pursue by John Baule when he first invited me to prepare a talk for the St. Lawrence County Historical Association on the occasion of the opening of an exhibition at the Silas Wright House in Canton in the spring of this year entitled *Nineteenth Century St. Lawrence County Artists*.

Born of Prussian parents in the German section of South Albany in 1862, Charles Ehricke was the youngest child of a family of two brothers and a sister



Bill Rasbeck, July 30, 1889, pencil on paper.

Bill Rasbeck, July 30, 1889, pencil on paper. (Photo courtesy of the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery)

all of whom were involved in music and art. In the case of Charles these two fields were tipped in favor of music, which was his first love. An obituary in the *Knickerbocker News* of Albany dated June 24, 1953 noted that Ehricke's interest in this field began when, as a boy, "he admired a violin hanging on a wall and was given it by the owner." Whatever training he received on this instrument as a young man in Albany was supplemented by the trip he made to Europe in the fall of 1881, where he remained for the next two years. It was during this extended *Wanderjahr* that Ehricke studied in Paris with the celebrated teacher and virtuoso violinist Hubert Leonard and in Munich at the Koenigl-Bayer Musikschule, where he received a diploma in July of 1883. He made another trip to Europe in 1886-87 at which time he renewed his acquaintance with Leonard and, after he returned from his trip, he continued to correspond with his old violin master until this gentleman's death in 1890. In his autograph book

Ehricke carefully preserved two letters Leonard sent to him at his home at 69 Hamilton Street in Albany. According to Karl Ehricke it was at this address that his father gave the private violin lessons which supplemented the income he earned as the music instructor at the Albany Academy for girls. Ehricke's accomplishments with the violin were not limited to teaching, however, and by this date he had achieved considerable recognition as a virtuoso. In a letter from France dated January, 1899, Leonard congratulated Ehricke for the "portrait" which appeared in a recent issue of the *Journal of Music*, New York, which Ehricke had proudly sent to him.

A biographical sketch of Ehricke which appeared in the *Violin World*, New York, sometime before December of 1895 when it was reprinted in the *Canton Plaindealer* at the time of his marriage, provides further information about Ehricke's training in Europe and his professional interests and accomplishments. "While in Paris Ehricke

was in daily intercourse with violinists of European reputation, such as Camilli, Sivori, Paul Viardot and Henry Marsick. Charles Ehricke made his first appearance upon his return in 1889 as soloist at a concert given by the Theo Thomas Orchestra, on which occasion he played with great success the G minor Concerto of Max Bruch. During the musical season that is now nearing its end, he founded the Albany String Quartet, which has met with unusual success. Ehricke is a brilliant violinist, who captures his audience by the excellent interpretation he gives to every composition he plays and by his brilliant sonorous tone. He is the fortunate possessor of two perfect solo violins—one a Lorenzo Storioni and the other a reproduction of Adolph Brodsky's famous Joseph Guarnerins del Jesu which August Gemunder and Sons made for him two years ago. He has also a collection of autographs of renowned violinists, his latest acquisition being that of 'Ysaye.' In addition to the two solo violins mentioned in this passage, Ehricke collected old musical instruments and in the later years of his life amused himself by building violins and violin bows with wood purchased in Europe. One example of his skill is this hobby is now owned by St. Lawrence University.

In the realm of art Charles Ehricke's

taste was conservative. Although he studied in Paris during the decade that the impressionists and postimpressionists were drawing considerable attention themselves with their radical departures from the standards of conventional French painting, there is no indication that Ehricke took much interest in these developments. His taste in art would have been formed in large measure by his older brother Nicholas and by his cousin John Tolle, both of whom worked for the Albany lithograph firm of Weed, Parsons, and Company. Ehricke would also have been influenced by his uncle John F. Engel, a professional portraitist and landscape painter who first came to Albany with his parents around 1852. At the time of Ehricke's birth a decade later, Engel was in Germany studying art but he returned to the United States around 1870, where he remained for several years before returning to Bernkastel on the Moselle where he remained for the rest of his life. While Engel was in the United States in the early 1870's he worked as an illustrator. One rare example of his talent in this medium has been preserved by the Ehricke family and shows Engel as a competent but sentimental mid-Victorian illustrator of a short poem by John Hay entitled "Little-Breeches," published in New York in 1871.

Karl Ehricke has suggested that it

was probably during his father's first trip to Europe that he was able to demonstrate for his uncle the drawing skills he would have acquired under the tutelage of his brother and cousin in the United States. There must have been a great deal of contact between Bernkastel and Albany even before this date, however, for Karl Ehricke owns an impressive collection of family portraits by Engel in his home in West Orange. Several of them are executed in a dark Rembrandt-esque tonality which is typical of German painting from the middle of the nineteenth century. Whatever lessons Ehricke might have learned from his uncle would have been supplemented by the careful study of the works of the Old Masters which would have been available to him in the museums throughout Europe. In his scrapbook of sketches there are numerous studies of paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck and others as well as landscape vistas of the Alps and picturesque views of cities in Germany which reveal the hand of an accomplished draughtsman. When Ehricke visited Bernkastel again in the fall of 1887 his uncle made a wash drawing in his autograph book of a mountain climber dressed in lederhosen which he labeled "Edelweiss". The carefully delineated detail of this small sketch and its cool grey and blue washes are stylistic characteristics which were soon to



Canton Fair Grounds, July 21, 1891, watercolor on paper. (Photo courtesy of the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery)



Landscape Near Canton, *July 28, 1891, watercolor on paper.* (Photo courtesy of the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery)



Stony Point Camp, East Bay, Cranberry Lake, *August, 1891, watercolor on paper.* (Photo courtesy of the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery)

appear in Ehrlicke's own watercolors.

Among the ninety-eight watercolors in the Brush Gallery collection are scenes of the New England coastline above Boston, the Mohawk Valley, Vermont, and one of the countryside outside of Indianapolis, Indiana. The remaining works depict scenes in and around Canton and Cranberry Lake in the years 1890 through 1893. Although we know that Ehrlicke was also in this area during 1889, 1894 and 1895 he either did not paint at all during these years or more likely, the works he painted during these years are not longer extant. Furthermore, because Ehrlicke rarely gave any of his watercolors away and appears to have had no interest in exhibiting them, it is fair to conclude that these watercolors represent the efforts of a man who painted for no other audience than himself. Hence they can be regarded as highly personal works which, like a diary, provide an intimate glance into the emotions of a talented amateur artist who came to love the beauty of northern New York.

Another intriguing aspect of Ehrlicke's North Country watercolors is that several of them document that he painted side by side with Frederic Remington on several occasions. But in recognizing this fact a whole host of unanswerable questions arise. For example, how and when did Ehrlicke first meet Remington? Was it in Albany around 1880 when the young Remington was living in that city with his uncle while he was lovesick over Eva Caten and waiting for his maturity so he could collect his patrimony? Remington lived in Albany for about three years before heading west, and if this was when the two men met, it must have taken place prior to Ehrlicke's departure for Europe in the fall of 1881. Furthermore, is it by plan or coincidence that both Ehrlicke and Remington seemed to arrive in the North Country at approximately the same time for a number of summers beginning in 1889? Finally, if Ehrlicke and Remington were in fact friends, why is it that they only seemed to meet together in Canton and Cranberry Lake? It is somewhat perplexing that there seems to be no evidence of Ehrlicke having ever been at Remington's camp at Chippewa Bay on the St. Lawrence River or, for that matter, at his New Rochelle or Ridgefield homes.

The earliest year in which there is any circumstantial evidence of contact between these two men is the summer of 1889. At this time Remington had just been commissioned by Houghton Mifflin and Company to prepare a large number of drawings for an illustrated edition of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*. He travelled up to Canton from his home in New York City and worked on these drawings in

his makeshift studio in Horace Sackrider's barn on State Street before travelling down to Witch Bay on Cranberry Lake with his wife and the Lynde and Keeler families for some relaxation. In Bill Rasbeck's diary there are several references to Remington and Keeler going off on hunting and fishing excursions with the Rasbeck brothers in the early part of July. Later in the month Rasbeck noted that "Prof" Ehrlicke, Frank Scribner and a Mr. W.W. Beard were staying at the Rasbeck's Beach Ridge Camp. There is no mention of Remington in Rasbeck's entries from this part of the month but this does not preclude the possibility that the paths of these two men crossed this summer.

On the 28th of July Ehrlicke made a pen and ink sketch of the rustic camp where he and his friends had been living for the past several weeks. The attraction that he no doubt felt for this area was noted in an article which appeared in the *Plaindealer* the following November: "Cranberry Lake is truly a sportsman's paradise. Itself a noble sheet of water teeming with trout and receiving a plentiful supply of water from brooks abounding in speckled beauties. The forest for miles is in all its virgin beauty and within its shade is found the best hunting in the whole northern Adirondack wilderness." As a souvenir of the companionship Ehrlicke enjoyed at Beach Ridge Camp he also made a handsome sketch of his guide Bill Rasbeck seated with a pipe in his mouth and a rifle resting on his leg. He also drew at this time a pen and ink sketch of his good friend Frank "Scribby" Scribner. On the last day of July Bill Rasbeck noted in his diary that Ehrlicke had made a sketch of his home but this sketch cannot be found among his drawings. Shortly after this he and "Scribby" left Cranberry Lake and returned to Canton, where their arrival was noted in the *Plaindealer*.

Ehrlicke must have thoroughly enjoyed his sojourn in the North Country for he returned again the following summer around the end of July and took a room at the fine hotel on Main Street in Canton which was then owned by Mrs. C.E. Haven. This hotel boasted on its stationery that it was furnished with steam heat, a first class bar and livery, a free bus and that its location provided easy access to the Post Office and the Opera House. But certainly one of the most attractive features at the hotel was Mrs. Haven's sixteen year old daughter by her first marriage, Miss Mary Lawrence Cooke. There is no record of how and when Ehrlicke and Mrs. Haven's pretty daughter first met, but their friendship at this time can be documented by a charming small oval portrait that he painted of Miss Cooke in this year which is now owned by Karl Ehrlicke.

Whether Miss Cooke had an interest in the violin prior to Ehrlicke's first visit to the Haven Hotel, or whether this developed as a natural outgrowth of their friendship is lost to history, but in any event she became his pupil and in time came to offer violin classes in Canton. When Ehrlicke was in town she would join him in entertaining their Canton friends with occasional informal recitals.

Among the watercolors owned by the Brush Gallery are four works which were painted by Ehrlicke in Canton during the summer of 1890. These are the earliest Canton views in the Ehrlicke collection. One of them is a glowing canoeing scene on the Grass River which Ehrlicke painted shortly after his arrival in town that summer. He painted this quiet scene with a broad fluid brush, contrasting the dark olive green of the trees in the distance with the golden glow of a North Country sunset. As in the previous summer, Ehrlicke spent at least part of his holiday hunting and fishing in the Adirondacks, as is attested by his pencil sketch of Kimball's cottage at Cook's Pond in Franklin County which he made at the end of August. Some time after this date he returned to Canton, where he remained until the end of September before returning to Albany to resume what the *Plaindealer* described as his "musical labors for the winter."

PART TWO—January 1980

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About the Author

Paul D. Schweizer, with a specialization in American art history, was the director of the Brush Art Gallery at St. Lawrence University until the summer of 1980, when he became director of the Museum of Art of Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute in Utica. He has previously written on Elizabeth Campbell Miner for *The Quarterly*.

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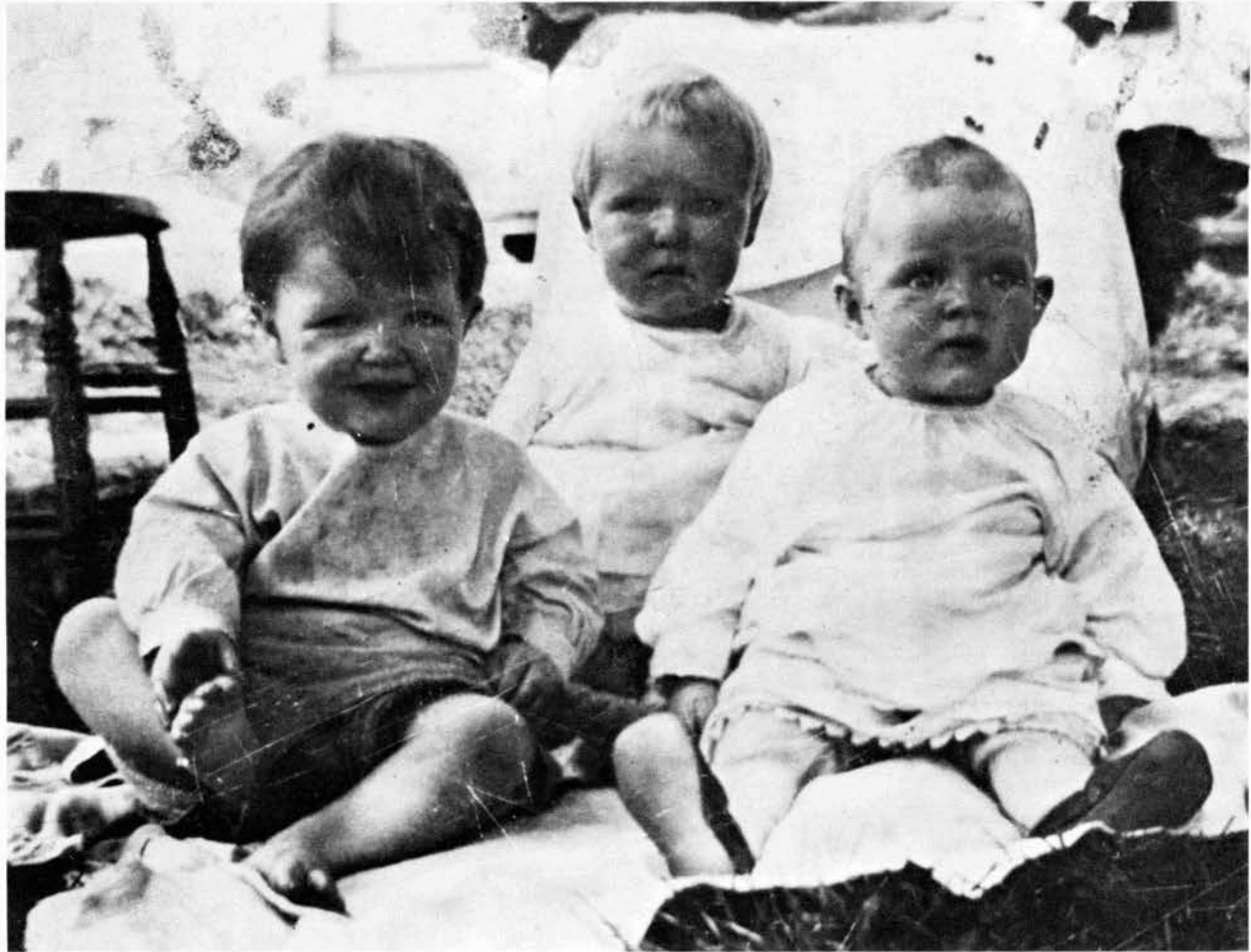
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SLCHA WRITING COMPETITION THIRD PLACE AWARD WINNER—ADULT CATEGORY



Ruth (Peters) Jones, Lillian Peters and the author on lawn of Aunt Minnie Davis home in Canton, summer, 1920. (Photo courtesy of the author)

To Cover My Nakedness: A Personal History of Clothing Styles

by Margaret P. Carvel

Clothing styles have changed often in the past century. This humorous account reflects those changes and the personal choices of the author in her own time.

This is my 60th year. I am not ancient or historical, but I have seen much history pass. Some things as ordinary as clothes have changed significantly in those 60 years, and I would like to share some memories of clothing I, myself, have worn over the years.

I have memories of my mother's version of the well-dressed baby. Besides an elaborate dress, embroidered and tucked, there were two petticoats, one of flannel and one of lace and ruffles, long stockings, and high shoes. Over all of

this were many items of outer wear—all long and heavy.

The first I remember was a gray flannel dress and underpants trimmed with pink fur, made in 1925. The dress was lined with white flannel, under which I wore an undershirt, long drawers, an underwaist to which garters were attached by pins to hold up my long white stockings, over which I wore high topped black patent leather shoes called "Mary Janes." Between this dress and all of the underwear was an elegant

cotton slip with ruffles and lace.

I was always "pleasantly plump" and after donning all this clothing, I could hardly move. A teacher once remarked, "I was slow, but very sure." The clothes did it.

I spent all my single life on a farm between Red Rock and East DeKalb, except the first eleven months and my first year of school. It is now Federal Highway 11. However, during the twenties and early thirties, it was mud covered. In 1930, a pack peddler came



Stuffed, monogrammed and tucked, November, 1920. (Photo courtesy of the author)

by selling used clothing. I became the proud owner of a grey tweed suit trimmed with red braid. It was short and heavy, but I wore it to shreds.

About this time Mother was selling Larkin Products from which I added a two-piece outfit. The blouse was sleeveless white dimity with a blue polka dot full skirt. Matching straps crossed over my shoulders. There was a question about needing a slip under the heavy skirt. As a result, I ended up wearing another sleeveless undershirt.

There came a time in the spring of 1931 when my mother said I needed "support." I hadn't noticed. She made me a straight long bra, with built up

straps. That night we went to a Neighbor Night Program in Rensselaer Falls. I wore my "support" that night for the first time, and can still feel the agony of not being able to properly breathe.

How my siblings and I liked to dress up. Out of an old long dress, I made an elegant tiered blue taffeta gown trimmed with white cuffs and collar, which I wore at home, feeling so grand as I waltzed around my home.

My step-grandmother, Mary Etta Owen Beard Peters (Owen) of Hermon gave us a few old articles of clothing. My brother, John Peters, and I would entertain relatives on Sunday by dressing in these discarded remnants.

In 1930, my father, Leon Peters, was drawing milk to Hermon from our farm. It was great fun to go with him and sometimes spend several days with our maternal grandparents, Felix and Belle Bovay.

On one of these days, a minstrel came to Hermon to put on a show. I went with a cousin, Thelma Bovay (Meacham), to try out for parts. Because I was the only one there large enough to fit the dress, I became the Old Fashioned Girl. The pantalets were missing. Mother made me short ones from above the knees to ruffles below from an old sheet. In two days, I learned and recited the poem "Rock Me to Sleep" written by Elizabeth Akers Allen. The first line is "Backward, Turn Backward, O, Time in Your Flight, Make me a Child Again Just for Tonight!"

Because of the financial disaster of the Depression and my not being satisfied with my parents' choices, I decided to fashion my own clothing. One of my first creations was a fur coat which to this day lies in the attic of Clark's house. It was never completed.

Out of second hand material, I made a flashy ice-blue and black dress of heavy sateen. In this frock, while standing by the old iron sink in our farm kitchen, I had my first peck on the cheek. We were in the process of getting a drink after dancing a set at one of our many home square dance parties.

Aunt Hazel Calnon, in 1936, gave me a black priest's robe. The material in these robes were indestructible as I was later to learn. With no pattern, I made a shirtwaist dress, long sleeves and snaps in the opening on the side. I put it together while pedaling the old treadle



In the yard of the family East DeKalb farm at age 11. (Photo courtesy of the author)



In her grandparents' cast offs, February 7, 1937. (Photo courtesy of the author)

sewing machine. I had little black thread and plenty of white. Black shoe polish covered the white stitches on my black dress.

For this plain dress, with fancy gold buttons down the front, I made about thirty sets of cuffs and collars, some with matching belts. At this time, I earned a little money and acquired two pairs of



Author wearing white seersucker with sash of Juvenile Grange of DeKalb, May, 1938. (Photo courtesy of the author)



Portrait of the author as a teenager, taken at the Harrington Hotel in Canton. (Photo courtesy of the author)

shoes, one black and red suede, the other green suede.

Until 1947, I wore this dress hundreds of times. My sister, Betty Peters (Hundley) of Clare, said she would never go to Europe because I gave this dress in a Catholic clothing drive for overseas relief. She could no longer tolerate the sight of this dress and was afraid she would see someone in the Old Country wearing my old favorite.

The first zippered-front dress I owned was white seersucker, sleeveless, with a large buckle belt. Because the wringer washer would break the buckle, I ripped it off and pinned it back on to be removed at laundry time. One day I forgot and when I went to wring it, I decided to do it by hand. The pin unfastened and pricked my right index finger, which later had to be lanced. To this day I still carry a scar. That year, I became Juvenile Matron of DeKalb Grange #1481. Many times I wore this white dress with my red and gold sash.

Swimming was one of many of my non-accomplishments. In August, 1941, two cousins (Virginia Peters and Thelma Bovay) and Naide Barss, a Hermon teacher, persuaded me to borrow a swimsuit and spend a weekend at Terrace Park on St. Lawrence River in a camp owned by Aunt Minnie Davis and Uncle Frank of Canton, New York. While there, I stubbed my toe on a spike on the dock. Eventually, I had surgery and was not able to get around for a while. While I was recuperating, I visited Uncle Floyd Bovay and Aunt Ruth, Potsdam, New York. That day I met the man, Jim Carvel, whom I later married. That is another "Cover" story!

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About the Author

Margaret Peters Carvel is a longtime member of the Association and a loyal supporter of its activities. This is her first writing effort for *The Quarterly*.

SLCHA WRITING COMPETITION SECOND PLACE AWARD WINNER—SCHOOL CATEGORY

Gouverneur Marble— From Great Buildings to Silent Quarries

by Alan Tuttle

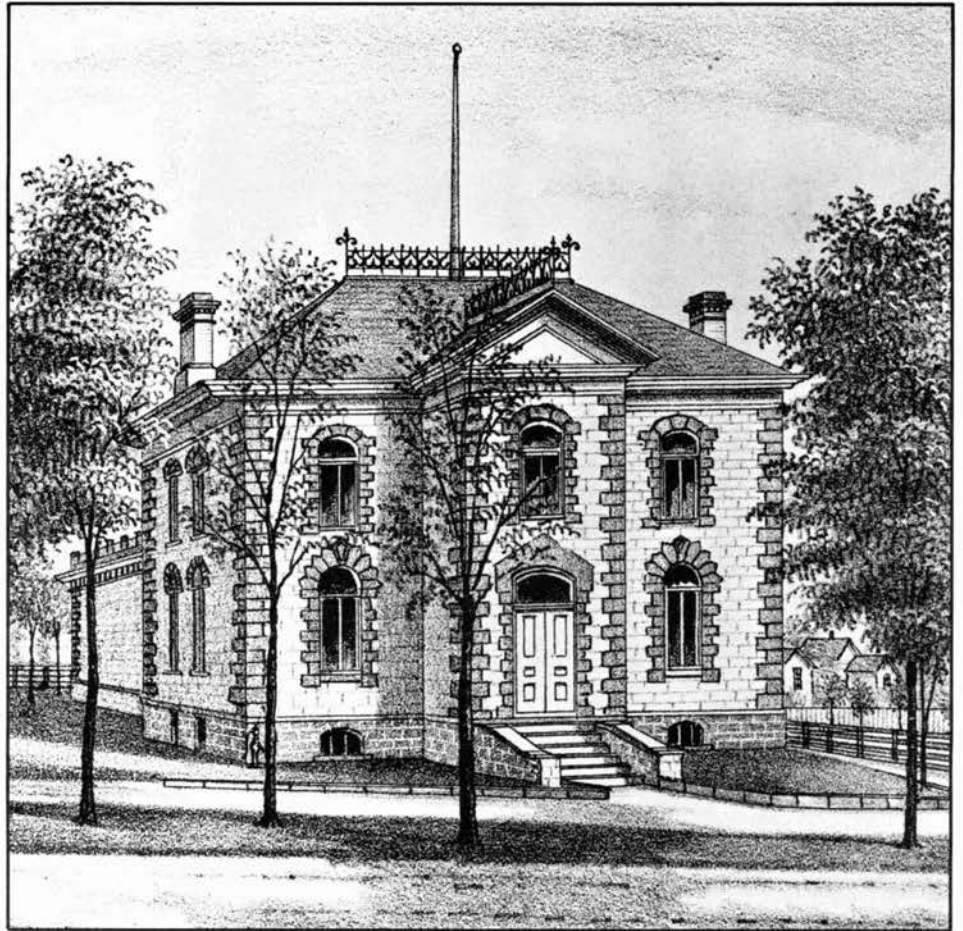
The rich geologic deposits with which St. Lawrence County has been blessed have produced, among other things, fine building materials like sandstone and marble. The Gouverneur marble industry is well documented here by this prize winning article and makes us appreciate better the buildings that we have constructed of that durable product.

The Town of Gouverneur is blessed with many natural resources, and one which stands near the head of the long list was variously known to the outside trade as "Gouverneur, St. Lawrence, or Whitney" marble.

From the opening of the first quarry to the closing of the last, Gouverneur was well known for its established trade in marble. Several public buildings, especially churches, were constructed from this fine material. The marble sidewalks and foundations of houses have long endured the harsh weather. In fact, many houses have been torn down and reconstructed on their original, solid bases.

The fame of Gouverneur's marble was brought about by many fine characteristics including color and hardness. The marble by request of a customer could be shaped into any form and of any size. Often special blocks were printed to mark the year a public building was erected. Name plates for doors were also often sought after. Each mark on such a piece of marble was done by hand and carefully planned out. The hand tooling that went into each marble block years ago can not be matched by the machines of today.

The number of people that remember the once great marble industry has greatly decreased over the years. The industry was so famous by the end of the nineteenth century that no one thought about writing down the history of events to preserve it for future generations. The uniqueness of Gouverneur marble was



Sketch of old County Clerk's office, on corner of Court and Judson Streets in Canton, as it appeared in Evert's 1878 history of the County. It was constructed of Gouverneur marble. (Courtesy of the History Center Archives)

known world wide, but since the companies ceased operations, few people in this area recognize this rock's true value.

The remains of the marble companies are most clearly represented by the water filled quarries that the young people of this village swim in today. A fortune is waiting in the marble business for anyone who has the capital to drain the quarries and buy the machinery.

The marble of Gouverneur had a reputation for both monumental and building work. The marble was hard and crystalline. It was of close and even texture, which was conducive to a high polish.

Most of the quarry marble was rich, dark, blue color, finely mottled and a small amount of the output was of a lighter shade, some almost white.

Because of its marked crystalline structure, it presented when finished, rock-faced, an unusually clean and sparkling appearance. Because of this peculiar structure, it does not absorb dirt or become streaked or stained, as

each recurring rain washes it fresh and clean. The closeness of its texture makes it impervious to moisture; hence, it is not affected by frost and does not disintegrate. Its crushing strength is very great, being over 12,500 pounds to the square inch, as determined by a U.S. government test.

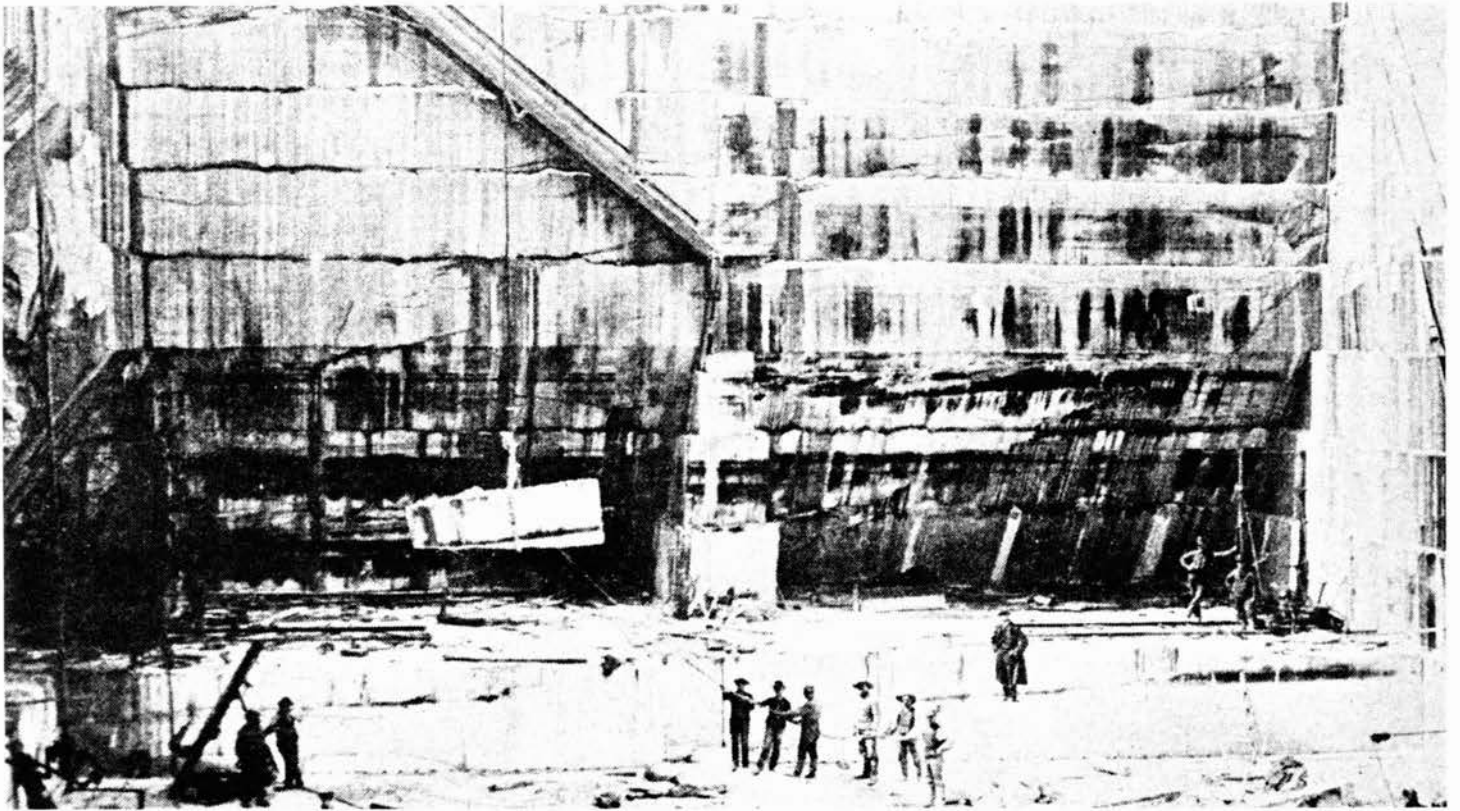
When the marble was finished either rock-faced, patent hammered, or polished, it so clearly resembled the finer grades of granite, that it was often mistaken for granite. The marble was worked with comparative ease, and by the hand of the skillful artisan, could have been wrought in any desired form.

The same qualities of beauty and endurance that made this marble so sought after for fine residences, made it adaptable for use in the construction of churches and other public buildings.

Commissioner I.G. Perry liked St. Lawrence marble so much that he wrote the following:

"To Whom it May Concern:

This is to certify, that I have examined the St. Lawrence marble, from the quarry of the St. Lawrence Marble Co.,



*The steep walls of a marble quarry. (From Jane A.W. Parker's *Gouverneur, A History 1805-1890*. (Photo courtesy of the Gouverneur Historical Association)*

at Gouv., N.Y., and find it to be an excellent marble, susceptible of fine finish and high polish, and am about using some for wainscoting in the new Capital. I find it to be of a close and even texture, capable of holding a great weight. Superior material for exterior and interior building purposes.*"

*John Benham, *St. Lawrence Marble* (The St. Lawrence Marble Company, Gouverneur, New York), p. 1.

This truly valuable marble, although existing in almost unlimited quantities and cropping out in innumerable places in this vicinity, was utilized only for ordinary rough wall purposes until the year 1825, when Jasper C. Clark, of Hailesboro, Town of Fowler, established a small mill at that place for sawing this material, which was then known as "gray lime-stone." This mill stood on Mill Creek, near the spot then occupied by the Agalite Fiber Company's first talc mill in Hailesboro. Mr. Clark was succeeded by Addison Giles in the marble-sawing business. This industry continued in a small way for several years, but lacking a demand which warranted its continuance, was abandoned in the year 1837.

About the year 1838, Hermon Rice, of Wegatchie, Town of Rossie, constructed a mill for sawing this marble in the village. This business continued with little success for about ten years and was then abandoned.

Early in 1874, the firm of Whitneys (D.J. and T.J.) & Honeycomb (John S.) was formed in Gouverneur for the purpose of doing the mason work for the erection of the Main Street Bridge across the Oswegatchie River in the village of Gouverneur. The company readily procured a sufficient amount of marble for their purpose from the J.C. Barney dwelling house lot on the Somerville Street. This was practically the initial step toward the revival of the marble industry, which had been abandoned many years before. This firm was dissolved in 1877, the Whitneys continuing the quarry in connection with their monument business.

Up to this time, the only marble ever quarried or sawed in this vicinity had been the cap rock, or light colored variety. In December, 1877, the Whitneys quarried a few blocks of the dark colored variety on the Barney Lot, the opening being made on the south side of the Somerville Road, nearly opposite the northeasterly end of the St. Lawrence Company's mill. In 1878 the first dark colored Gouverneur marble monument was finished by the Whitney Brothers and was subsequently erected on the Joseph E. McAllaster lot in the Riverside Cemetery, Gouverneur.

In the fall of 1878, the Whitney Brothers dissolved and the business was continued by Daniel J. Whitney, who, in 1879, sold and shipped small quantities of the dark colored and unfinished

marble to dealers in several states and to Canada. In the latter part of that year, he shipped several car loads of rough blocks to marble-sawing mills in Southerland Falls, Vermont, and Cleveland, Ohio, where they were prepared and sold to the trade for monument purposes. In the spring of 1880, the demand for this marble was largely in excess of Mr. Whitney's limited financial ability to produce. Because of legal complications between Mr. Barney and the Barney heirs, Mr. Whitney abandoned his quarry and moved his tools and machinery directly across the road to the Preston farm. He then opened what was the famous St. Lawrence Marble Company's quarry. At this time Joseph E. McAllaster of Gouverneur, having become financially and otherwise interested in the enterprise, secured a lease for about a nine acre triangular piece of the J.B. Preston farm, which comes to a point at the intersection of R.W. and O. Railroad with the Somerville Road, and July 1, 1880, under the name of the Whitney Granite and Gouverneur Marble Company, the marble business was begun on a scale more commensurate with the importance of this very promising industry. In the fall of the year the system of quarrying by cutting channels with hand drills was introduced. This method proved too slow for practical purposes and in March, 1882, a diamond-drill channeling machine, run by steam, was put into operation. A little later a



The cutting mill. (Photo courtesy of the Gouverneur Historical Association)

large derrick was erected and steam pumps were introduced to clear the quarry water. Thus equipped, the getting out of large blocks was vigorously pushed, and as fast as raised, were shipped by rail to Lyman Strong & Son, Cleveland, Ohio, where they were sawed, finished and sold to the trade. D.J. Whitney was interested in the business and continued as superintendent of this quarry and business until it changed hands.

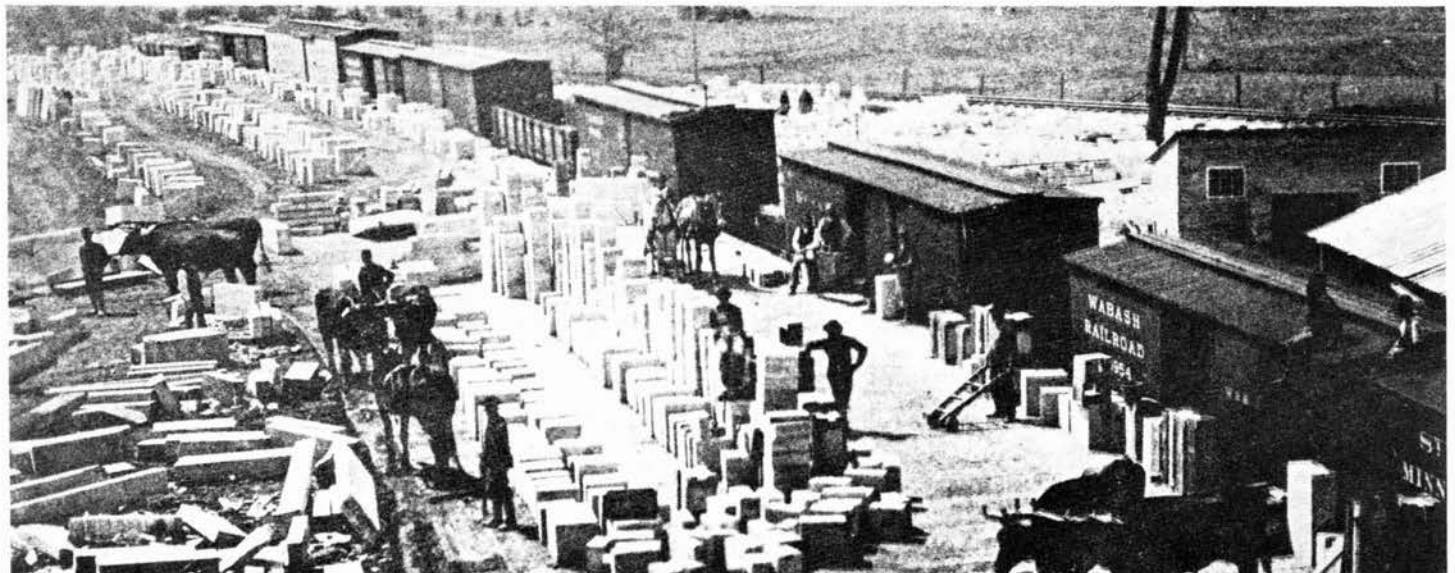
After extended negotiations, this plant was sold to capitalists of New York City, and in May, 1884, the St. Lawrence Marble Company was organized with a capital stock of \$250,000. The officers were: John Benham, president and treasurer; J.W. Griswold, first vice-president; M.M. Belding, Jr., second vice-president; John R. Emery, secretary; and T.J. Whitney, superintendent. A 16 gang mill was erected and sawing began the following November. The mill was one story high, 82 x 221 feet in area, and stood half a mile southwest of the corporate limits of the Gouverneur

village. The mill, which was substantially built, was equipped with rubbing beds, turning lathes and every other labor-saving device. A branch of the R.W. and O. Railroad ran into their stock yard alongside a wharf of the right height for convenience in loading cars. The motive power, which was steam, was generated by a battery of four boilers and ran a 150 horse-power Watertown Steam Engine, which drove the almost endless machinery of the mill, quarry, pumps and derricks. An artesian well, 450 feet deep, furnished abundant water for all desired purposes.

Quarry No. 1, which had a surface opening of 110 x 200 feet, reached a depth of 95 feet and yet huge blocks weighing 20 tons were readily raised to the surface by their mighty derricks. The stock list of this and all other companies here included building stone in all forms, rough, dressed, turned and polished, as well as "monumental material."

In November, 1881, the following citizens of Gouverneur, locally named "the Twelve Apostles," viz.; S.B. Van Duzee,

John S. Honeycomb, John W. Tracy, Daniel Peck, Henry E. Gates, George P. Ormiston, Abel Godard, T.J. Whitney, Austin Meyeur, Fred Haile, E.H. Neary and Lewis Eckman, purchased thirty acres of land from William McKean, near the southwest limits of the Gouverneur village, and January 3, 1882 organized the Whitney Marble Company with a capital stock of \$750,000. A quarry was at once opened, a four gang mill erected and equipped, and sawing begun the following fall. The business prospered until May 3, 1884, when the mill and machinery were wrecked by the explosion of a boiler, which killed the following persons: Joseph Oliver and Oliver Dashneau, boiler makers of Watertown (who were making repairs); W. Frank Newcomb, Eli Jackson, W.T. Miller and Charles Murrey, employees. The company's loss was \$20,000. The mill was at once rebuilt and business was continued until 1888, when, owing to financial complications, the company was placed in the hands of D.G. Wood as receiver. It continued operations until



The shipping yard, where oxen hauled the great blocks of marble. (Photo courtesy of the Gouverneur Historical Association)

the following fall, when matters were adjusted and the company was reorganized August 23, 1888, as the Gouverneur Marble Company.

The officers of the Gouverneur Marble Company were: Daniel Peck, president; A.Z. Turnbull, vice-president; Lewis Eckman, treasurer; and George P. Ormiston, secretary. The capital stock was \$75,000. They had four gang saws and employed upwards of twenty-five men. They had also purchased a few acres from the James Barney farm and the company was throwing out a fine quality of marble, with active sales that placed the owners on a solid business footing.

April, 1889, D.J. Whitney became general manager. Business prospered and the mill was enlarged to a capacity of nine gangs of saws, a rubbing bed was added and now the plant was complete and first-class in every particular. The regular force employed was fifty men, and the annual output of stock was about 50,000 cubic feet. The quarry was L shaped, being 100 x 100 feet and 100 x 60 feet.

The Davidson Marble Company was organized July 25, 1890, with Alexander Davidson, president; John A. Davidson, treasurer; Charles Stedman, secretary; A.C. Davis, superintendent of mill; and Erwin B. Hurlbut, superintendent of quarry. Capital stock was \$300,000.

In 1888, Messrs. Davidson & Son of Chicago, who were very extensive producers, manufacturers, and dealers of marble, having quarries and mills in several states, purchased from J.B. Preston, ten acres of land lying southwest of the St. Lawrence Marble Company's property, and at once opened a quarry under the supervision of E.B. Hurlbut. This quarry, which was known as No. 1, was successfully worked until July, 1893, when a superior quality was uncovered on the Milton Barney farm, during the grading of the Gouverneur and Oswegatchie Railroad. This deposit being convenient to the railroad, the company secured land, transferred their quarry machinery to, and opened quarry No. 2, from which they took material for sawing.

The leading members of this company believed that water power was preferable to steam, and a suitable building site and water power having been tendered them on satisfactory terms on the Black River, near the R.W. and O. Railroad, just east of the city of Watertown, a splendid 18-gang mill, with two rubbing beds, turning lathes and other finishing works, was erected there in 1889 and 1890. This company advertised its product as "New York Marble."

Joseph C. Callahan was the final owner of the No. 2 quarry and his estate now owns the site. The mill burned in

1911.

The deposit from which the Empire State Marble Company took its material was located on the Charles Overacker farm, a little over a mile southwest of the village of Gouverneur. In 1890 John W. Tracy of Gouverneur discovered an excellent quality of marble, which cropped out as a ledge, and after securing the right to prospect and the option for purchase, induced capitalists to join him in the marble business. The above named company was organized early in 1891, land was purchased, a quarry opened and a fine four-gang mill was erected the same year. The company officers were: John R. Wood, president; Gilbert Mollison, secretary; James Dowdle, treasurer; and J.M. Esser, superintendent. The directors were J.R. Wood of Appleton, Wisconsin, G. Mollison and J. Dowdle of Oswego, and J.W. Tracy of Gouverneur. The company employed twenty-five men and had a prosperous business.

The late D.G. Wood of Gouverneur was the active agent in organizing the Northern New York Marble Company in January, 1891. The officers were: Samuel H. Beach, president and treasurer; and Samuel F. Bagg, vice-president (both of Watertown); and John Webb, Jr., of Gouverneur, secretary.

A model eight gang mill, equipped with rubbing bed, turning lathes and all modern conveniences, was erected and put into operation the same year. The quarry and mill were located west of and adjoining the Empire State Marble Company's property on a plot of seventeen acres of land from the William Kitts farm. The company's works were connected with the R.W. and O. Railroad by a side track. This company employed a force of forty men under the supervision of Peter Finegan, and did a successful business.

Other companies tried to get into production but many of them were closed quickly due to financial need or they only worked on a very small basis.

The Extra Dark Marble Company, formed in 1897, ceased operating in 1908; a Mr. Callahan was the owner when it burned in 1910.

The Rylestone Company, opened in 1903 northwest of the village at the rear of the Somerville Road farm now owned by Merton Gollaher, had a difficult time financially. John J. Sullivan became the owner and ran it to get out church and public building stone at first, and rip rap rock in 1918 for the Aluminum Company's St. Lawrence River canal. Mr. Sullivan sold the quarry to the Onondaga Litholite company in 1922.

The White Crystal Marble Company, situated on the Seavey Road four miles north of Gouverneur, was opened by Syracuse men in 1901, due to a demand for its more-than-unusually white mar-

ble. This was another quarry which was later run by Mr. Sullivan.

On the Scotch Settlement Road three miles from Gouverneur, H.P. Bingham of New York started in 1897 what he intended to be a marble business, but never got into production. It was sold to the Corrigan-McKinney Company in 1905 and operated by their subsidiary, the Genesee Furnace Company, to produce fluxing material. It was closed in 1917 and the machinery dismantled. Fred J. Porter, then 89, had been the manager of this plant from 1908 to the time it was closed.

Except for a part of the vacant Gouverneur Marble Company mill, there is little left but open water-filled quarries of a business that once shipped building marble to many cities in the United States. The Balducci Crushed Stone Company on outer Parker Street, Gouverneur, is now the only reminder of the once great marble industry.

Of the many quarries that once existed just at the southeastern border of the village, the Gouverneur Marble Company, organized originally in 1884, ended its days as the Jones Cut Stone Company in 1941, the last quarry to produce. Richard Jones bought the Gouverneur Marble Company in 1936 to get out local marble to match previously constructed buildings. His purchase was made from the Hampton & Son Company, which had bought the business in 1930 from Morris Eckmann. In 1942, one year after the quarry ceased operations, the quarry and buildings were sold to Charles L. Ruderman, and were partly burned in 1953.

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About the Author

Alan Tuttle was a student at Gouverneur Senior High School at the time of the writing of this article.

Carl M. Witherbee's Reminiscences of the Village of Canton

by Neal S. Burdick

Carl Witherbee lived all of his life in the Canton area. As he neared the end of that life he decided to write—everything and anything he could remember—about his hometown. Here the author, himself the editor of the St. Lawrence Bulletin and a member of the university public relations staff, presents a review/essay of this significant book on North Country life.



An automobile parade on Main Street, Canton, ca. 1915. (Courtesy of the Town of Canton Historian's Collection)

Carl Witherbee wasn't provincial. But if the sun had risen over Evergreen Cemetery and set behind ATC, he wouldn't have been disappointed. Canton was Carl's world.

That world has been recreated in *Reminiscences of the Village of Canton*, Carl Witherbee's memoirs which were recently published by his widow, Grace, as a memorial to him. The book is available in area stores for \$6.95, or by mail from Harold Wilder, Canton Savings & Loan Association, Main Street, Canton, N.Y. 13617, for \$7.95 inclusive.

Witherbee lived all 91 years in or near Canton. Born on a farm near Woodbridge Corners (Routes 68 and 186), he soon moved with his family to a farm which he describes as "six miles from Canton in the Olin district on the Sykes Road, or the 'middle road' to Madrid." He began coming to school (on horseback) in Canton in 1900, and graduated from Canton High School in 1905. He spent the rest of his life in Canton, pursuing a variety of jobs before settling in as a partner at Witherbee & Whalen for 36 years.

He was never one to sit still, so about the time he turned 85 he began writing his recollections of Canton. He was blessed with an encyclopedic memory, and with the steel to pick the brains of old friends and associates to fill in the gaps. He had no formal training in research or writing, but the product of his final labor reveals a picture of Canton no professional historian could ever hope to render. Witherbee's work is the material from which a Thornton Wilder could construct another *Our Town*.

According to his longtime compatriot Atwood Manley, Witherbee originally

described the writing project as "recollections of all the folks who have adorned Main Street from the loan association down to the bridge, block by block, store by store, office by office, all the way back to the year I began working for the First National Bank in 1905." The core of the book is just such a recitation, but, as Manley pointed out in a review for the *St. Lawrence Plaindealer* just after the book was published last summer, "Not until page 74 does Carl reach the head of Canton's business section, north side." Before the reader gets there he or she has learned about Winnie Taylor's canoe livery by the Little River bridge, Pullman service direct to Grand Central Station, draymen, changing Fisk tires in the 1920's, feed stores, coal dealers, celluloid shirt collars, the American House, con men who worked the area "around 1910," the whole south side of Main Street (the Donihee & Baker Block, the Canton Club, the old town hall and opera house), various industries on the Grasse River island, how to harvest ice, why the village water wasn't always very good, Sumner Lasell's inability to stop his first car, how to redress a grindstone or mold an iron plow-point or change the carbon in a carbon arc street-light, day-to-day activity at the Canton Fair, how A. Barton Hepburn made his money, and how to break up a log jam. Among other things.

All that in the first four (of 14) chapters. Remember, this is "reminiscences," not history. The demand for organization is less. Carl Witherbee wrote it the way he remembered it, and in the order in which he remembered it. With all, there is a pattern, more or less decipherable. One can't help but think that if the book were more tightly structured it wouldn't be nearly as much fun.

Witherbee's writing style reflects both the man and his subject. (At least this reviewer, who never had the opportunity to know the gentleman, except through his book, thinks so.) The writing is utilitarian—packed with detail, but with minimal waste. It is plain, humble. It is not decorated with loud adjectives. Rarely does it wander in the heady world of metaphor. It makes no pretense at being objective in times of praise; it can be indignant when it discovers laziness,

lack of respect for people or civic institutions, or poor business sense. Occasionally it is spiced with a dash of mild humor, the kind that elicits not a great guffaw but a quiet chuckle: "This restaurant was not open very long when the operator left Canton without saying goodby to the many merchants he owed up and down the street."

Local history is the history of people, and Witherbee's book is filled with Cantonians. The index lists over 1000 individuals, and there are more to whom passing reference is made. They range from community leaders in business and politics to storekeepers and bankers to traveling salesmen, farmers, teachers, handymen, presidents of St. Lawrence University, housewives, stonemasons, soap-makers, horse trainers, lawyers, doctors, preachers, volunteer firemen and a popcorn maker. Carl knew them all, and he writes personally about them, where they lived, whom they married, what became of their children, which civic organizations they supported, and what their hobbies were.

Good social history is also anecdotes, and these crop up in the book every so often. "There was a conductor on one of the passenger trains who was born and raised in Morley, by the name of Roscoe Frauton, with the nickname 'Dode.' On this particular day Dode asked (drayman) David O'Brien if he could spare a chew of tobacco, to which Dave replied he could as he had just bought a new plug and had not used any of it. He handed the new plug to Dode. The train was just ready to pull out and as Mr. Frauton fondly looked over the plug, he asked Dave if he cared where he took the first bite, to which Dave replied, 'Hell, no.' Frauton stepped aboard the moving train with the reply that he would bite it in DeKalb Junction."

Carl Witherbee's *Reminiscences of the Village of Canton* will be a treasured possession for anyone wanting to recall the "old days," for younger residents curious about the past, or for students of life in a typical American rural county seat at almost any point in the last 75 years. If you belong in one of these categories, it might be time to drop a hint to your most reliable source of Christmas presents.

(Logging, continued from page 6)

served four or five meals a day which usually consisted of hash in the morning, pork and beans and bread and butter in the afternoon meals. Once in a while the cook would fish for dinner. Records tell of muskies four feet long and of twelve pound walleyed pike being caught.

The Grass River, like all rivers used for driving logs, contained the logs of many owners and it was necessary to sort them. At Cold Springs and Taylor Park, outside of Canton, there was a sorting boom. These were made in the winter by building log cribs on the ice and filling them with stones. Depending on how deep the water was, they were built so that the top of the crib would protrude four feet above the surface of the water. When the ice melted, the cribs sank in the water. Booms, or strings of chained logs, were attached from the cribs to shore. Between two cribs there was a space through which logs were poled through by men on the plankway which connected the two cribs. Attached to each crib was a floating dock on which men stood and poled the logs according to the log mark on the log to separate parts of the river. The river was divided into two or more sections, depending on the width of the river, by attaching booms to the sorting boom, which ran to the next sorting boom down the river. In the case of the Grass River, it was probably divided into two sections: Harmon and Rice and A.B. Hepburn's logs in one and Hodskins (later James Spears), Wright and Post of Bucks Bridge and the rest in the other section. The logs were further subdivided at other booms down the river. One of these was located at the present location of St. Lawrence University's Sand Banks. (See illustrations I and II.)

The drive was concluded after a period of two to four weeks depending on the amount of logs and the distance to the mill. The logs were driven into an inlet or "mill pond" next to the mill and then sawed into lumber.

When the drive was over, the men collected their wages and either rested or went on a drinking and spending binge. The French Canadians would go back to Canada and participate in the log drives there, which occurred after the Adirondack drives were over. Thus was the exciting life of lumbermen in the early days when timber was king.

FOOTNOTES

¹Harold K. Hochschild, *Lumberjacks and Rivermen in the Central Adirondacks, 1850-1950* (Adirondack Museum, 1962), p. 50.

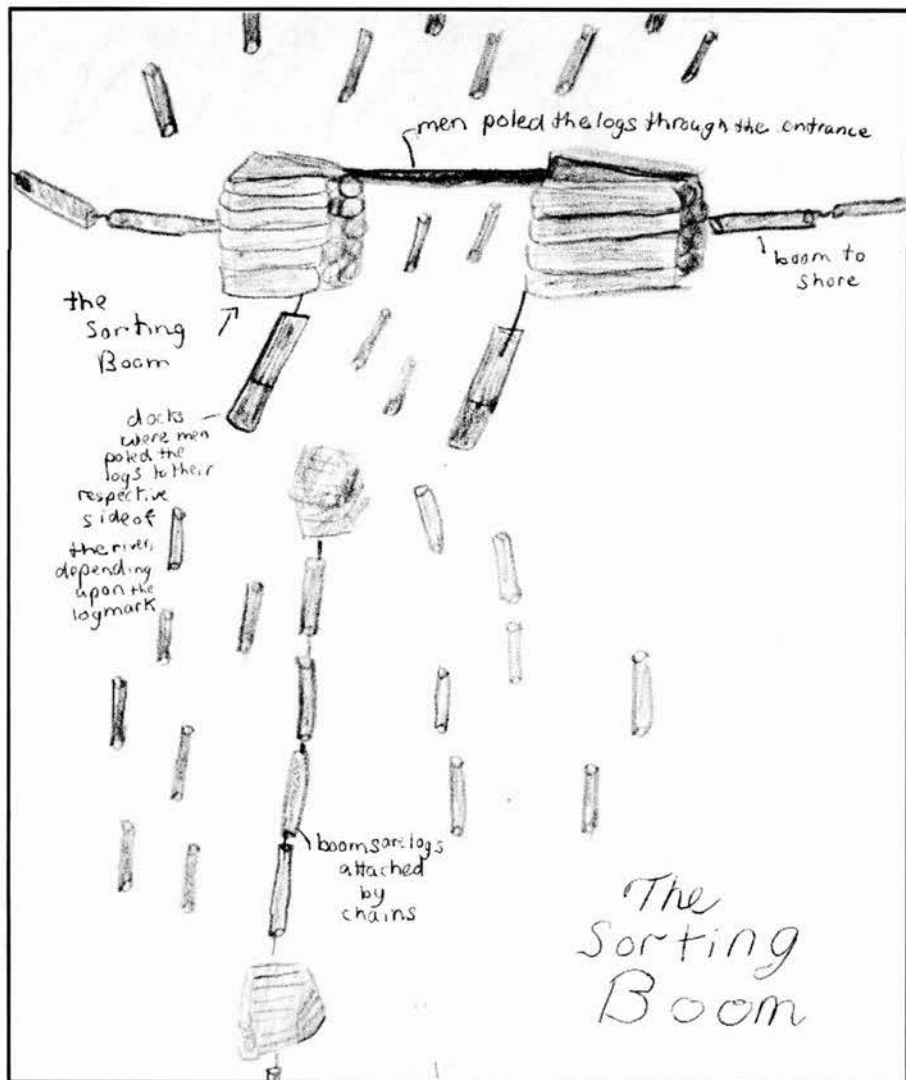
²William Fox, *History of the Lumber Industry in the State of N.Y.* (Harbor Hill Books, 1976), p. 57.

³Hochschild, p. 40.

⁴Hochschild, p. 62.

⁵Hochschild, pp. 29-32.

⁶Hochschild, pp. 29-32.



Sketch of the sorting boom. (Courtesy of the author)

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★

About the Author

Peter H. Vrooman is currently a freshman at Hugh C. Williams High School in Canton.



The Wright Corner

by Mary Ruth Beaman

[The following are from the account book of Silas Wright, Sr. of Weybridge, Vt., donated to the St. Lawrence County Historical Association by Mrs. Ovette Wright.]

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 17 March 1760 | Silas Wright was born |
| 13 Feb. 1762 | Eleanor Wright was born |
| 25 Feb. 1781 | Our Enfant daughter was born and died the same day—Sunday |
| 18 August 1785 | Samuel Wright was born |
| 19 March 1788 | Orenda Wright was born—Wednesday |
| 16 March 1790 | Creecy Wright was born—Tuesday |
| 22 Sept. 1792 | Ellin Wright was born—Saturday |
| 24 May 1795 | Silas Wright Jun. was born—Sunday |
| 20 Apr. 1799 | Daniel Leonard Wright was born—Sunday |
| 24 May 1803 | Pliny Wright was born Tuesday and died 18 May 1805 |
| 14 Dec. 1805 | Pliny Wright 2 was born—Saturday |

On the Lord's Day, 9th Nov. 1817, Silas Wright, Sr. wrote a resolution "entered into between my God and myself. May Divine grace enable me to perform the same faithfully to God and my own soul." He resolved not to drink spirits anymore and asked God by his grace to enable him to resist the temptation. He asked for the prayers of his wife and children for an "imperfect husband and father." He also suggested that any of the family having cause to do the same, to record it in that book and to be faithful to the vow. In 1820 Silas Sr. acknowledged that he had broken the resolution many times and again asked God to help him.

On the 11th July 1826 in Weybridge, Vt., Silas Wright, Sr. wrote in the back of his account book—"This is in place of my will that I intended to make when Silas Wright Jun. comes in August next—That is to say, the division of my property amongst Mother Eleanor Wright and our children—Samuel, Orenda, Creecy, Eleanor, Silas, Daniel, Leonard, Pliney."

"This is then thinking that I may drop away suddenly and you might be ignored of my wishes. Should it be the ease and this only left to gyde your conduct in regarding my judgement as stated above you will doo well—Lay all feelings aside till we meet beyond the curtain of time."

Silas Wright

The wedding of Silas Wright and Clarissa Moody took place 11 Sept. 1833 according to tradition in the large west parlor of the big Moody home at the corner of Main and Park Place.

As one looks at the desk in Governor Wright's study at the museum, one might wonder about the history of this lovely piece. In 1946 Frank Van Iderstyn, Jr., president of the St. Lawrence County Bank, on its behalf, presented the desk to Otto J. Hamele, county historian, for the museum. Clarence S. Cook remembered it as having been in the back of the bank when he entered as a boy of thirteen in 1877. The desk was given a coat of varnish and, as was the custom of the times, a new cloth was fastened in to cover the top as one became soiled or worn.

Perhaps the desk traveled with Mr. and Mrs. Wright as he fulfilled his political duties in Albany and Washington. After his death it probably remained in the house in Canton with Mrs. Wright until her death in 1870. Pliny, a younger brother of Silas Wright, purchased the house from the Wright heirs, married his nephew's widow Ann Bigelow and lived in the house until his death in 1890. (A gentleman in New York has written me that he owns a desk that belonged to Gov. Wright! It is quite possible that there was another desk.)

On the 7th March 1848 an agreement was drawn up between "The President and Fellows of Middlebury College" in the Town of Middlebury, County of Addison, State of Vermont, and the subscribers of an instrument of proposal to honor the memory of Silas Wright, an alumnus of that college. This was to be a new professorship in Moral and Political Philosophy, and in history, to be called "The Silas Wright Professorship." Also proposed was an extending portion of the library to be known as the "Silas

Wright Library."
(from material donated by Mrs. Ovette Wright of Weybridge, Vt.)
[Editor's note—Middlebury College has no record of the professorship ever having been established.]

Governor Wright's funeral was to be at 10 A.M. on that Aug. day in 1847. Canton was full of people. All were awaiting the delayed arrival of representatives from Albany who had to come through to Watertown by train and from there to Canton by relays of horses stationed every few miles. A brother-in-law, and member of the Governor's staff, Horace Moody, was one of those men. The Governor's body was carried out of the Presbyterian church on a large old fashioned bier. Eight men labored under this heavy load from the church to the cemetery, stopping every little way to have men in the crowd relieve them. Thus, General Edwin Merritt, then a young man, and his father went forward to lend their shoulders. Dick Bridge, who kept the American Hotel in Canton for some years, also assisted. (from an interview with Gen. Merritt, in *Courier Freeman*, 15 Sept. 1916)

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