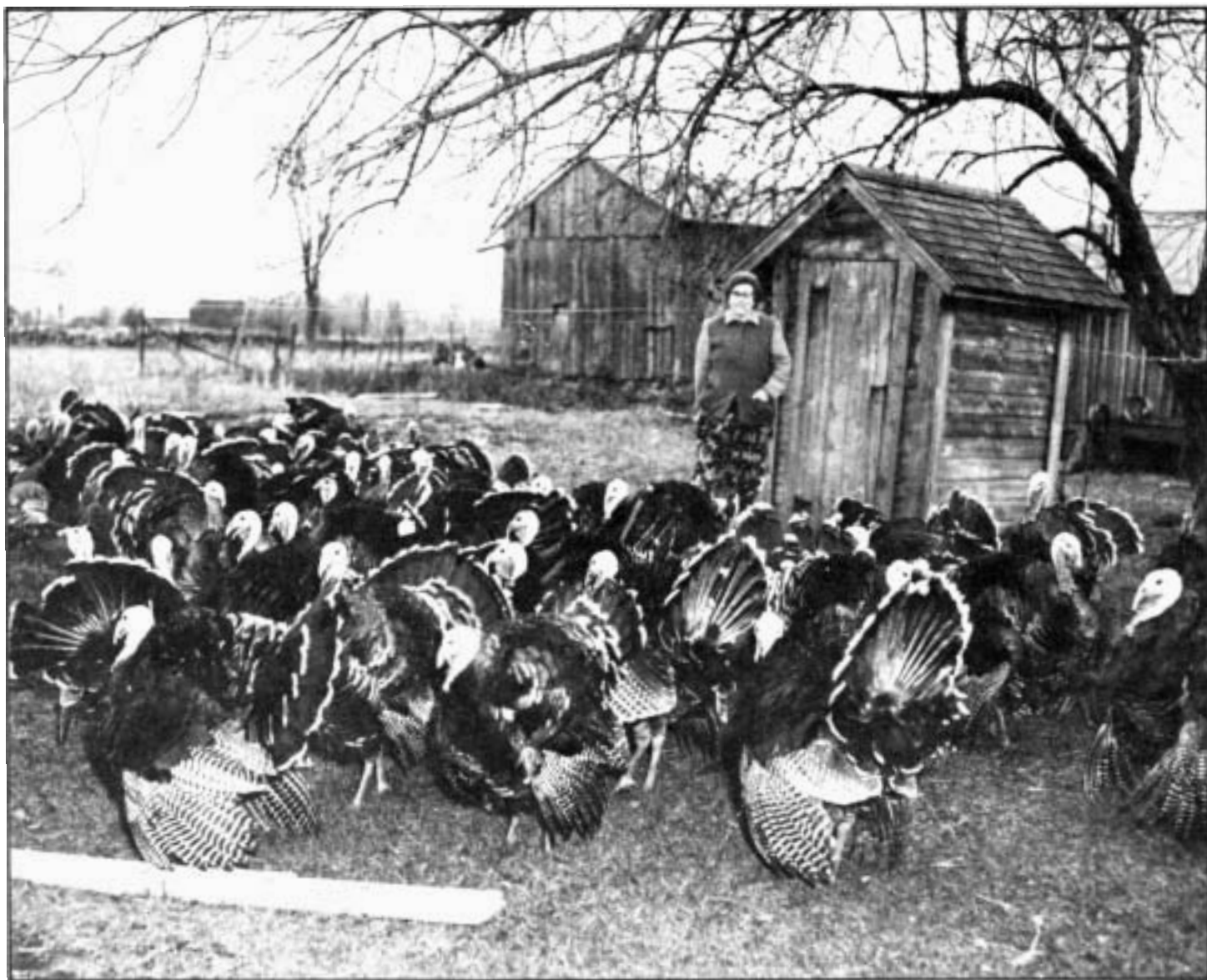


THE QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association

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A Salute to the County's Agricultural History

THE QUARTERLY

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Editor: Varick A. Chittenden

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Cover: Mrs. Ralph Mullen of the Five Mile Line in the Town of Lisbon, 1942, with some of her flock of turkeys. See Persis Boyesen's article on the turkey industry in Oswegatchie, Lisbon and neighboring towns, beginning on page 17. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Bixby, Town of Lisbon Historian)



Crowd gathered for the anniversary celebration at the Heaton farm in 1921. (Photo courtesy of Edward J. Blankman)

100 Years of an American Farm

by John L. Heaton

"To mark the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Purchase of the Heaton Farm by John Heaton, A.D. 1821, Lucia E. Heaton and John L. Heaton request your company at the Farm [in case of rain at the (St. Lawrence University) Gymnasium], Canton, N.Y., Wednesday, June 8, 1921, at 2:30 p.m. Please reply." Thus read the formal, printed invitation to a large celebration in honor of the founding of a family farm. To further commemorate the occasion, one descendant, a distinguished newspaperman who had grown up on that farm years before, published a small booklet, the contents of which we reprint here.

Following the Revolutionary War there came a time of bold speculation in "western" lands, to which an added impetus was given in 1787 by the calling of the Constitutional Convention, promising continuity of ordered government in the new country, and by the famous Ordinance of Northwest Territory, providing for its extension over the present States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and part of Minnesota. Indeed, land speculators had not a little to do with procuring the passage of the Ordinance of 1787.

In that year Alexander Macomb, a fur trader and speculator, bought of New York State what is now the town of Canton, and much land adjoining.

Canton passed in swift succession to William Edgar, to Alexander von Pfister, to Stephen van Rensselaer and Richard Harison, who parceled it out to settlers.

The town was organized in 1805, when there was but a cluster of houses about and near the sawmill in the present village. In 1810 it had 699 inhabitants. Its swift growth must have been checked by the war of 1812, when there were disturbances with the St. Regis Indians, and elsewhere upon the border, but in 1814 the tide was flowing strong again, and by 1820 the number of inhabitants had practically doubled, standing at 1,337.

On July 1, 1814, John Heaton, a young

man from Addison, Vt., entered into contract with Jeduthan and Chloe Farewell for the purchase of the "home seventy" acres of the present Heaton farm, to be paid for in instalments within the following five years, the price being \$5 an acre. Clearing was commenced upon the hill where the buildings now stand, and first a log house and later the middle portion of the larger farm house, about 17 feet wide and 40 feet deep, were erected; later still some rude log structures that had been put to use for stabling and shelter for farm animals gave place to framed barns, in building which blacksmith-made nails of local manufacture were used. The wings to left and right of the middle

portion of the main house were added later. In this house and the log cabin preceding it the seven children of the family were born.

The usual method of buying land upon contract now is to take a deed and sign a mortgage when part payment has been made. In this case the deed was not signed until payment was made in full of **principal and interest, in seven instalments**, the last on June 9, 1821; and until considerable work had been done upon the land. The deed was drawn and signed on July 4, 1821. It was written entirely by a young lawyer who two years before had come over from Vermont to grow up in the new country, Silas Wright, Jr. Mr. Wright also attested and filed it as Commissioner.

To this home farm other portions were added from time to time, generally at the same standard price of \$5 an acre. The new town was already cut up into fairly small parcels of land, so that the actual farm was composed of several portions, bought at different times. One reason for this early and minute subdivision, more creditable than the speculative movement, may have been the general thrifty desire of settlers to buy no more land at a time than could soon be paid for outright. No part of the Heaton farm, apparently, was "bought on mortgage." One plot that figures in the deeds was only six acres; it was a part of "Kansas," a field so-called because of its distance from the home. It lay south, beyond the Sanderson land back from the road, and was long ago sold for reasons of convenience. Even the present "upper lot" of some 50 acres was bought in three portions from T. Kingsbury. A field was obtained from Amos Smith; another from John Farewell; another from Jane Harison (the name so spelled in her signature)—12 acres and a fraction at \$5 an acre, as late as 1844; another from C.B. Richardson. In 1839 Henry Van Rensselaer and wife sold 25 acres to John Heaton, "expressly reserving all mines and minerals, and particularly all the Ore of Iron, Copper or Lead, with the privilege of searching and digging therefor on any and every part of said premises."

"Iron, Copper or Lead"—in those days are eagerly sought as spouting oil wells now, and with proportionally as many disappointments!

The "home seventy," when bought in 1821, lay between the land of Thomas H. Conkey and Ebenezer Sanderson. Other owners in the neighborhood then or a little later were T. and Ezra Kingsbury, Willard Sanderson and Jonathan Hail. And to the village came in those days Isaac Heaton, a cousin, and Elhanan Heaton, a brother of John; the latter left a family well remembered by village residents.

John Heaton was thrice married, and



Heaton Hill on the Pierrepoint Road south of Canton. (Photo courtesy of Edward J. Blankman)

seven children were born upon the farm. Many hands made work less heavy; clearing progressed rapidly; the 26 years of Mr. Heaton's ownership saw the farm develop into something resembling its present appearance, except that the swamp lots were then well covered with fine timber; of this a few tall white pine trees and some acres of mixed woods are now the lonely remnant.

In 1847 Mr. Heaton was ready to retire and turn over the active conduct of the farm to one of his boys, though he was but in what would now be called middle age. Of these sons the oldest, Ira Willmarth Heaton, had learned the land surveyor's art in the pine-knot and fire-light school and had in 1843 gone West to divide government lands in Wisconsin into townships. To him in Fond du Lac County, "Wisconsin Territory," there

came in 1843 a small packet, still carefully preserved. It contained a covering letter from Silas Wright, which formed also the envelope, in the fashion of the time, carefully explaining that a previous letter of similar nature had failed to reach Mr. Heaton; a bank draft for a small sum from the father; a certificate of character from "Jno. Leslie Russell, Treas. of St. Law. Co.; Benjamin Squire, Sheriff; Salmon Boynton, J.E. Clark and Nathaniel Hodgskin"; and from Lemuel Durfee of Macedon, Wayne County. Also this longer letter from Mr. Wright:

Canton, St. Lawrence County
New York, 26 June, 1843.

To whom it may concern: This certificate is given to Mr. Ira W. Heaton, the son of one of the most respectable farmers of this town, who has left the home of his

Father to seek his fortune in the west. I have known the father and family of Young Heaton from my earliest recollection, and have known Ira W., himself, from his earliest childhood. It affords me pleasure to be able to say that he has been a most worthy son of a worthy Father, steady in his habits, faithful to his duties, whether as a student, as a labourer upon the farm, trust-worthy, and capable. No young man can visit, alone and unfriended, the rapidly growing and widely extended west, who will be found more strongly to merit the favor and confidence of the strangers among whom they may fall than young Heaton, and if this humble testimonial of his worth can aid him in making friends in a strange country, I shall have derived a rich reward for the effort to serve as unassuming, honest and worthy young man.

Silas Wright, Jr.

Mr. Wright's penmanship on the Jeduthan Farewell deed in 1821 was no great matter; a young lawyer's swift transcribing, fairly large but well formed. The carefully written letter of recommendation of 1843, beautifully spaced upon the page, is a fine copper-plate penmanship, no doubt copied from a trial sheet for perfection of appearance. In these days such letters are dictated to stenographers, taking five minutes where Mr. Wright was willing to devote an hour to an old neighbor's son—for the letter would indicate that the families had been acquainted in Vermont when the writer was a child.

Ira W. Heaton returned from the West in four years, with his health somewhat impaired, though he was then but 27, by hardships of pioneering. His elder

sisters, Wealthy and Alma, had married Luther and Chauncey Phelps, brothers, and followed him to Wisconsin, where they stayed and prospered. John Wright Heaton, another son, went to St. Louis, after some border experiences in Indian-and-buffalo days as an express messenger; he remained unmarried. George Seeley Heaton followed the frontier from State to State until he reached the Pacific, where some of his family still reside, in Seattle. Andrew J. Heaton sought the Middle West; Corinna, the baby of the family, died in Canton in her youth. But at the time of Ira Heaton's return, John, George and Corinna were still children at home.

A land contract running until fully paid before a deed was delivered, for a farm on which improvements were rapidly appearing, spoke in 1814-1821 of a community which had little use for lawyers and great faith in neighbors. A legal paper was now drawn up whose terms seem to the Twentieth Century almost incredible. Such arrangements were common in those trustful days; and the fact that this deed was typical of many others must be the excuse for here referring to it, as possessing historic interest.

In this paper John Heaton and his wife Elizabeth gave to Ira W. Heaton all their property, of every kind, personal as well as land. In return, and in payment for the farm, Ira W. Heaton undertook certain financial obligations, and also covenanted to provide John and Elizabeth Heaton with "food, meat, drink, wearing apparel and lodging," including John's spending money, "suitable and adapted to his condition in life"; also to furnish John, George and Corinna, his younger half-brothers and half-sister,

"with meat, drink, wearing apparel and schooling" until they were twenty. The bargain even included certain provision for a daughter of Elizabeth Heaton by a former marriage.

Such a deed, with such conditions, might seem designed by Beelzebub himself especially to make trouble. Good faith, strong family feeling and simple honesty made the complicated arrangements workable. John Heaton lived twenty years after signing the deed, occupying the small farm house, which was built for him. He was a born gardener; while he lived the farm had not only apples and plums, but berries of many kinds, grapes and a profusion of vegetables. Yet he is best remembered not as digging about plants or grafting apple trees, but dressed in a blue swallow-tailed coat with brass buttons, tall, slender and explosive of speech, furiously arguing politics with his son or the neighbors; he was the only "Copperhead" Democrat in a considerable distance, and he needed all his eloquence. In earlier days his brand of politics had been more popular in Canton. In 1834-5 a man who had named a son after Andrew Jackson could be, and was, elected Supervisor.

However much father and son might dispute about the Civil War and Reconstruction, their bargain of 1847 was faithfully carried out until June 21, 1868, when John Heaton died; a year and a half longer his wife, Elizabeth Chapman Heaton, lived in the little house alone, stepmother to the scattered brood, but beloved and respected by them all, a lady of culture, refinement and strength of principle.

The farm which Ira W. Heaton, aged 27, thus acquired in 1847 was a pleasant



Part of the large crowd gathered for the celebration, including a tent erected for the festivities. (Photo courtesy of Edward J. Blankman)

place of residence, overlooking a wide view of the valley of the winding Little River. In the sale of its product it was disadvantaged by the semi-isolation which still separated all the North Country from markets and men. There was water transportation—the St. Lawrence River, the Erie, Black River and Champlain Canals; but the *Northern Railroad*, later a part of the *Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg*, was still several years in the future. Cattle and horses, which could be driven to market upon their own feet, and the less bulky farm products, such as butter and cheese, were the favored “money crops.” In wheat and flour St. Lawrence County strove with less success to compete with Western New York along the Canal. But in spite of the success of railways elsewhere and the certainty that they would eventually reach the region, the County was still feverishly building “plank roads.” Here and there the name lingers; the planks are gone.

The remoteness from markets that conditioned its crops made the farm self-sufficient to a degree recalling New England conditions of the previous century. The potash and pearlsh period of forest destruction was passing. But the farm had its ash leach and huge soft soap kettle. It had a smoke house built entirely of Potsdam sandstone, even to the thin slabs of the roof. It raised sheep, until dogs made that industry precarious. It had a bee-house that has since played many roles. The garden was prolific. Jerked veal displaced venison, but buckskin was still a staple for making mittens. Moccasins of local make were worn then and long afterward; probably up to 1870. Shingle bolts were cut from the swamp cedars; occasionally a tall pine was slaughtered for lumber, or for some special local purpose, as the roof timbers of the Presbyterian Church.

Ira W. Heaton was less the gardener than his father, but he was a handy man with tools, and of these a full provision was kept in the tool-house. Long after the Civil War the adze, the draw-shave, the bench and vise, jack-planes, augers of many sizes, bit-and-bitstock, and other tools were kept on hand and in condition. Sleds could be made or mended; wagons or pumps repaired; fence-caps laid away against need; sabbuckets patched up. The children's boat on the river was made in this tool-house, below which was the home of the farm pigs. Their sled for coasting was made there with solid beams undercut in the likeness of a grown-up ox-sled. An elephant could have stepped on it safely.

Upon the domestic side, until the death of Elizabeth Heaton in 1870, the farm was as well provided, though some of the older processes were falling into disuse. The spinning wheel still fur-

nished yarn for homespun stockings and mittens. The loom clacked its message of industry. The tailoress came to the house to fashion clothing. Flax brakes, hetchels, flax spinning wheel and other contrivances were in constant use up to the Civil War and proved useful during that conflict, but with the restoration of the cotton supply after the war, they passed into disuse. The best black silk dress could be bought at the village store, or from that wonderful traveling mart, “Fredenberg's” (Friedberger's)

peddler's cart, a treasure-van of wonders.

Ira W. Heaton remained the owner of the farm until his death, November 19, 1894, when it passed to its present owner, Dr. Lucia E. Heaton. Somewhat later in life than was usual in those days, because of his Western adventures, he married Lucinda Langdon of Langdon's Corners, daughter of Peter Langdon, whose family, partly English, partly Dutch, had come from the central part of the State. Brooklyn, Esopus and old



Cammie Pendleton Gaines (left) and Inez Jones, of Canton, dressed especially in the spirit of the occasion. (Photo courtesy of Edward J. Blankman)



Pair of work horses "dressed up" in fly nets and an early reaping machine, all part of the "historical activities" of the Heaton farm celebration. (Photo courtesy of Edward J. Blankman)

Hurley, of Indian massacre fame, had been some of the stopping places of the Langdon family on its way northward, further into the woods.

Together the Heaton's of the second generation resided upon the farm until 1875, when, partly on account of the failing health of Mrs. Heaton, partly to educate the children more conveniently, they moved to the house on Main Street, once the Baptist parsonage, which is now Lucia Heaton's home. There Mrs. Heaton died, November 23, 1885.

Mr. Heaton varied farming with surveying trips in the near vicinity, and after his removal to the village made more ambitious excursions into the heart of the North Woods—or South Woods, as Canton knows them—surveying timber tracts for various owners. In early and middle life he was for years Highway Commissioner, putting his surveying skill to occasional account in that work; his colleagues were Henry Hosley and until his untimely death, Bing Sykes. Descendants of both have stuck by the old town and aided in making it. Most of the neighboring farm families of fifty and a hundred years ago are still represented or well remembered in the vicinity—the Tracys, Jenisons, Judds, Knoxes, Conkeys, Sandersons, Cooks, Martins, Southworths, Farmers, Wallraths, Wilsons, Smiths, Hales, Butterfields. Indeed, all were neighbors who lived to the south of the town and used the same roads in their trips to market, like the Langdons, Howards, Roses, Leonards, Barrowses, Squires, Wellses; the Bachelors, from "Paradise Valley"; the Wallaces, Boydens, Cleflens, Crarys, Churches, Clarks; and when winter made all roads good there was always time to visit families at greater distance: the Perrys, the Clarks of North Russell; the Lockwoods of Madrid; the Fobeses of West

Potsdam; the Waldos of Potsdam; the Sykeses and Hosleys, north and east of the village. Then as now, neighboring was not a matter of miles. Many more names might here be set down, a honor roll of probity, industry, and public spirit.

Of Ira W. and Lucinda Heaton it is not necessary to speak further. Many in Canton remember them.

John Heaton had the farm under contract seven years, and owned it but twenty-seven years. Ira W. Heaton actively conducted it as its owner but 28 years. Tenant farmers have lived upon it almost half a century—forty-five years. It has suffered less in the process than critics of rural life would have their hearers believe must be the case. The tenants have all been native Americans; all, it is believed, natives of Northern New York. Brood after brood of children have flown from the old nest—probably no one now knows just how many in the hundred years of the main farmhouse, and the fifty years of changing occupancy of the smaller residence. Of the five children that play about the place now, Mr. and Mrs. Leon Brown are surely prouder than of any professional achievement in agriculture.

For a farm is not product, but people. It is a food factory, but it is first a home. Americans would not starve without the farm, because without it there would be no Americans.

There is no longer any West. New York City sends invalids and motion picture actors to California; but native Californians swarm in thousands back to New York City. Modern Greeleys in Nebraska, Georgia and Colorado say, "Go East, young man!" No longer do the young and adventurous set out for the once wild West prairies or gold placers. Neither money lure nor love of adventure tempts them to follow the sun.

They pour into the cities, vast reservoirs of humanity that unless the farm does its part must presently go hungry. There should be a return current. There is unemployment, and farms demand labor. It is an illogical situation.

Science for the farmer's guidance; cooperation for lightening his labors; justice in pricing his reward for toil that no machinery will ever render easy—these should arrest the depopulation of the soil.

In 1912, von Bulow wrote, from the militarist point of view that led Germany to its ruin: "Farms fight wars; cities pay for them." It was not true, even from the soldier's viewpoint. Cities pay for nothing whatever. All wealth comes from the land alone; for the fish of the sea feed directly or indirectly upon the product of the soil, and even the utilizable gases of the air come from the land. Beyond these there is no conceivable source of wealth, whether for war or peace. Mine and pit and quarry; forest and grazing beast and waving grain; fish of the sea and energizing gases born of the soil and returning to it for its enrichment—there is nothing else. From the soil are all beginnings; to it all endings.

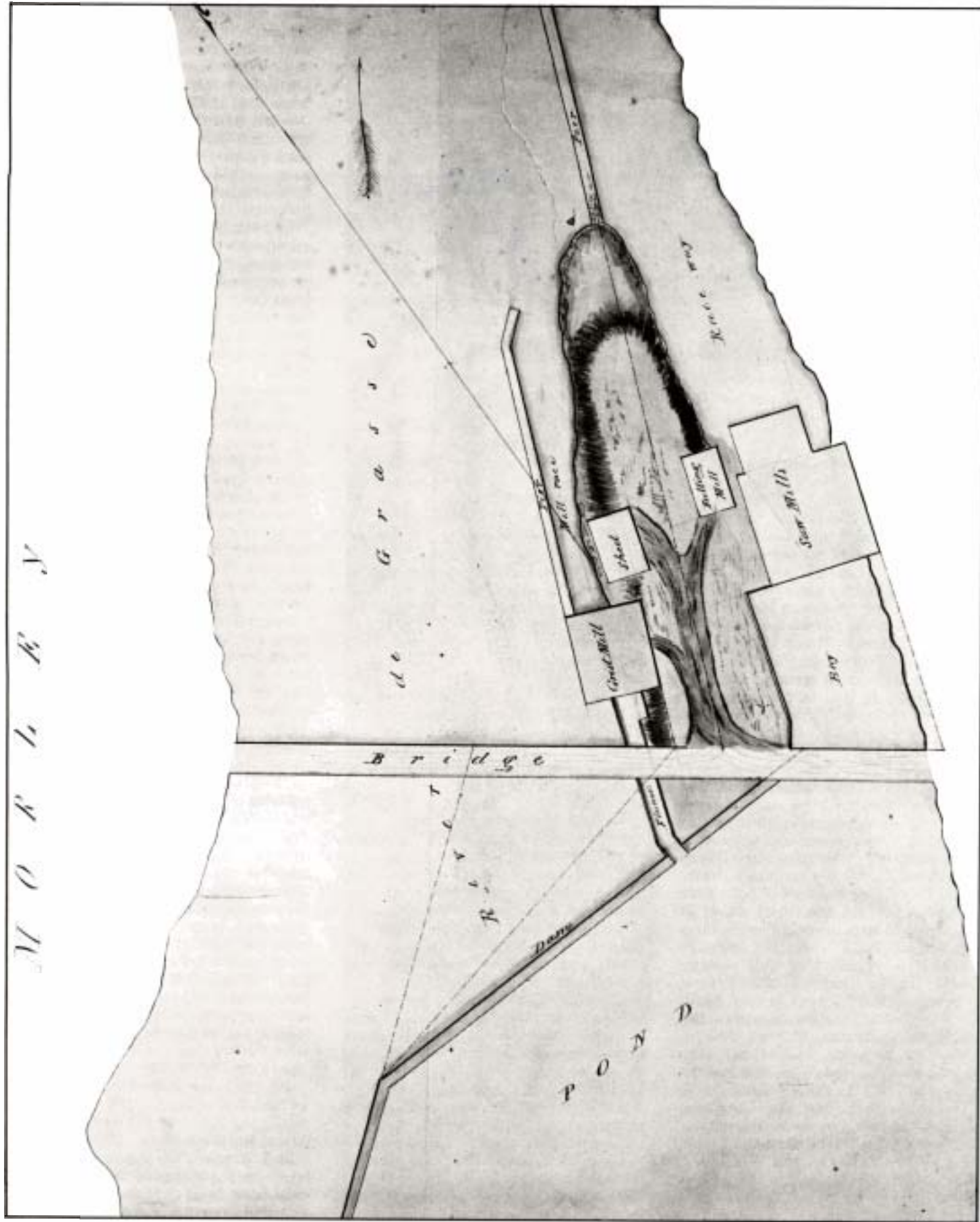
To picture the activities of this one farm for a hundred years would be to present a cross-section of American history. The rude beginnings; bridle-paths yielding to roads; first fruits of the forest for man in lumber and potash, of the bared soil in wool, wheat, potatoes, flax; the swift growth of the butter and cheese industry; the coming of the creamery, a welcome relief to farm women from heavy drudgery; the tremendous development of the demand for fluid milk and its derivatives; the modification of farm processes by scientific experimentation.

What interest there would be in a complete record of the varied produce that in a century and more has passed this gateway and down this long hill! And the eager soil still is silently urging with each recurrent springtime that man shall avail himself of its riches. What will be its story for the next hundred years? What will the farm do toward feeding the Nation? What kind of Nation in the year 2021 will it help to feed?

* * * * *

About the Author

John L. Heaton was raised on the Heaton farm on the Canton-Pierrepoint road, graduated from St. Lawrence University, and later became senior editor of the *New York World*. His sister, Dr. Lucia Heaton, lived and practiced medicine in Canton.



Early hand drawn map of Morley's mill pond and several mills, including a wool fulling mill.
 (Courtesy of the History Center Archives)

Of Merinos and Homespun—

A Brief History of the County's Woolen Industry

by John Sholl

An early important industry in New England which migrated along with early settling families was the raising of sheep and the processing of wool. In this rugged environment, "sheep would thrive where a cow might starve." Our author here describes the significance of early sheep and wool, explains the factors contributing to the fall of their popularity, and expresses hope for a revival of the industry as some small farmers find it practical to raise sheep for wool and meat in the years ahead. Mr. Sholl is the museum education assistant for SLCHA, now researching and preparing Traveling Shows, a series of portable exhibits on aspects of local history.

Managing the frontier settlement of Parishville, New York, and trying to turn a profit posed many problems for Daniel Hoard. His employer, David Parish of Philadelphia, was a few weeks away by post or stage. Parishville and Philadelphia were as much a contrast as one might envision in 1813.

Hoard had problems in creating the Parishville that Mr. Parish desired. There were, as yet, no roads leading to Parishville, but a textile manufacturing company was being formed which would require improvements. There was the constant problem of slow land sales. A war between the United States and Great Britain was being fought along the St. Lawrence in 1813. Settlers were timid to take up residence in a combat zone.

Then there was the problem of the sheep. Their noses were infested with maggots and the remedy was lost in transit somewhere in the wilderness between Albany and Parishville. If the sickness could be cleared up, if winter housing for the sheep could be constructed, and if enough hay could be purchased perhaps the sheep would survive. But then there was the problem of inadequate fencing and the threat of wolves. It was not unusual for Hoard to happen across the carcass of a stricken sheep.

All the settlements in St. Lawrence County were having problems with wolves. Eleven years earlier the pioneers paid their taxes in scalps. But, eleven years earlier wolves were killing common sheep and now Hoard had Mr. Parish's Merino sheep to worry about. It was possible during this time for a Merino ram to bring the unheard of price of one thousand dollars each at auction. Mr. Parish had recently sent Hoard two Merino rams, four Merino ewes and a Spanish sheep dog—a fortune in livestock!

As the Merinos bred with common sheep and if a stock of purebred Merino rams could be preserved, then Parish stood to make a good profit. There was the strongest market in memory for fine

wool in 1814. Some called it a craze. Merino wool was fetching two to four dollars a pound. There were neighbors anxious for the services of Mr. Parish's Merino rams so that their flocks' wool-clip would improve in fineness. Perhaps these Merinos were the first purebred sheep to enter St. Lawrence County.

It was in 1802 that one of the first flocks of common sheep entered the county, being driven along blazed trails from Vermont to Stockholm. Common sheep were coarse, long-legged animals that were remarkably hardy. It is

remembered that from this small flock of fifty sheep, the flocks in the neighboring towns were formed.

To the pioneers of St. Lawrence County the sheep was an animal that could survive on rough forage. Sheep would thrive where a cow might starve. Sheep could withstand cold winters in crude shelters. Many a winter traveler might be startled by a moving snow drift only to find a sheep awakening.

The pioneer farmer performed the back-breaking task of felling the forest, axing out small clearings for cultivation



A view of the back of the old Parish sheep barn near Parishville, taken in 1955. The barn was built in 1813 and burned in 1959. (Photo courtesy of History Center Archives)

and pasture. Fences were a luxury on these first farmsteads; thus it was common practice for neighbor's animals to intermix. To keep account of whose sheep were whose, a farmer cut a pattern of notches in his flock's ears. One of the functions of the first town clerks was to keep records of notched sheep ears. The town of Madrid is noted as once having very detailed and artistic renderings of this pioneer practice.

The sheep was an important part of the economic base of the pioneer farmstead. Lamb and mutton were part of the everyday diet. But, the most important product was its wool. Wool provided the pioneer not only warm and durable clothing but also a home industry. The home industry was the manufacture of woolen knitted and woven goods. The spinning wheel, loom and reel (wool-winder) were a part of most farmsteads. Wool was manufactured into a variety of homespun goods such as knitted hats, socks, stockings and cloth for jackets, shirts, blankets, pants, etc. The manufacture of woolen textile goods in the home was women's and child's work.

From our point of view in 1981 the pioneer is judged as being self-sufficient. This is true to a degree as the pioneer brought his grain to the grist mill, his logs to the sawmill, his wool to the carding machine and his homespun cloth to the fulling mill.

In 1801 Arthur Schofield of Long Island made an improvement on the carding machine. His improved machine was manufactured in western Massachusetts. Prior to Schofield's newly designed carding machine, wool was prepared for spinning by hand carding. Carding is a process of aligning wool fibers by combing so that they can be spun into yarn. Schofield's machine was very successful and quickly became common in all regions of the United States. The reason for its success was that it offered a labor saving alternative at a reasonable price. Like the grist and saw mill, the carding machine became a part of many settlements.

In 1810, there were approximately 9,000 people living in St. Lawrence County. In the same year there were two carding machines in operation which processed 10,500 pounds of wool. By 1845 there were 31 carding machines in full operation.

The diary of Phoebe Orvis (History Center Archives) offers an insight into the manufacture of homespun cloth. We learn that on October 9, 1821, Miss Orvis rode to the carding machine in Hopkinton for some roving. Roving was the end product of the carding process resembling a continuous snake of wool. Miss Orvis not only spun wool, she was also a weaver; in her words she "wove fleeces of wool." She appeared to have been an excellent weaver and was frequently



Hogeboom sisters of Ogdensburg at work on homespun. (Photo courtesy of SLCHA)

helping neighbors to "put in a web of woolen."

As important as the carding machine was the fulling mill. The fulling mill performed a finishing process for woolen cloth. Cloth was sent to the fulling mill to have any oily or greasy matter removed and to be partially felted or shrunk. The process involved scouring the cloth in troughs containing various mixtures of water, urine and Fuller's Earth (clay-like substance). The cloth would receive a pounding, mashing and pressing with heavy oaken mallets driven by water power or the cloth might be squeezed through long troughs. The cloth was then washed in soap and water while the pounding and squeezing was continued until the fulling was completed. The process would require 60 to 65 hours for a piece

of broadcloth causing the cloth to shrink from 54 to about 41 yards. The cloth was then teasled, that is, a nap was created by raising up loose filaments of yarn by scratching the cloth with the heads from the thistle plant.

In 1810 there were five fulling mills in operation through St. Lawrence County which processed 14,000 yards of woolen cloth. In that year there were 247 looms in homes which produced a total of 19,000 yards of cloth.

In 1814 William Downs erected a carding machine and fulling mill in Gouverneur. Downs' mill was the first use of waterpower from the Oswegatchie River in that town. Mills were also built along the Grass, Raquette and St. Regis rivers. By 1835 there were 27 fulling mills processing over 68,000 yards of woolen cloth.



Late nineteenth century view of mill and workers for the Potsdam Knitting Co., a woolen mill. (Photo courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)

The growth and emergence of the woolen industry in St. Lawrence County paralleled the growth of the industry in New York State and New England. In the aggregate, the woolen industry was of major agricultural and industrial importance to the United States. With advances in technology, new labor saving devices were introduced so that factory production eventually replaced the home manufacture of woolen goods.

Though factories curtailed the production of woolsens at home, they did not stop it. In 1875, decades after the first factories appeared in St. Lawrence County, one Potsdam group (25 families) knit 2,525 pairs of mittens and socks for sale and an extra 500 pair for family use. Mrs. Barret of Potsdam, over a five month period in 1875, spun and knit 84 pairs of mittens and socks in between household chores!

The woolen factory appeared in St. Lawrence County sometime prior to 1835 for in that year three were in existence. The factory used water power to run power looms; now one weaver could do the work of many. The woolen mill processed wool into finished textile goods by combining the processes of carding, spinning, weaving, fulling, cutting and sewing. By 1874 there were seven woolen mills in St. Lawrence

County: *Rich Stafford & Co.*, Brasher Falls; *S.H. Abbot Co.*, Fowler; *Mrs. L.L. Orvis*, Massena; *Johnson & Bennett*, Norfolk; *B.F. King*, Potsdam; *McInoosh & Wright*, Rossie; *West Stockholm Woolen Mills*, West Stockholm.

The sheep population in St. Lawrence County peaked in 1845 with approximately 168,000 sheep. After 1845 sheep were on the decline with the exception of the Civil War years when we find a brief resurgence in their numbers. The reasons for the decline in sheep had to do with competition from western wool producers and the low price of wool. This became a problem for St. Lawrence County in that wool had to be imported from Canada to support the local industry. Following the decline in sheep there was a decline in factories toward the end of the 19th century. The decline in locally manufactured woolen goods was also due to heavy competition from urban textile centers in New England.

Today there is little to remind us of a once important industry. Mittens made by Mrs. Crane in 1881, from wool off her Canton farm, are part of the collection of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association. Along with wool wheels and barnlooms still found in county homes, objects of homespun remind us of an industry that is largely forgotten. Today

New England and New York State are experiencing a new interest in sheep and the woolen textile trade.

There are enthusiasts in St. Lawrence County today forming sheep and wool cooperatives encouraging the comeback of this industry. They can be assured that St. Lawrence County once sustained and benefited from sheep and the woolen industry. Perhaps someday it shall again.

This research paper was prepared to compliment the loan exhibit "*Sheep and the Woolen Industry in St. Lawrence County.*" This exhibit may be borrowed by schools, libraries and community organizations. For information and reservations contact the St. Lawrence County Historical Association.

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From SOA to ATC—

75 Years of Agricultural (and Technical) Education

by Camille Howland

The growth and development of one of our County's institutions of higher education is here recalled at a time when it—now known as the State University of New York Agricultural and Technical College at Canton (or Canton ATC)—celebrates the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding. Beginning as the School of Agriculture at St. Lawrence University when state legislation was approved in 1906, it has grown to today's college with forty courses of study and diverse services to the community.

Being needed and being first have been the benchmarks of the State University of New York Agricultural and Technical College at Canton from its very conception.

It was needed. It would be first. That was in 1906, the year that Governor Higgins said, "I didn't know there were so many inhabitants in all the North Country."

The Governor's comment came at the signing of the bill, which he had not been in favor of earlier—not until people in the North Country banded together to write letters in support of the proposed State School of Agriculture.

Thus, on May 31, 1906, the State School of Agriculture was authorized as the first publicly-financed post-secondary, two-year school in the state.

It was Dr. Almon Gunnison, St. Lawrence University President, who suggested that an agricultural school be established at the university, and it was Dean Liberty Hyde Bailey of Cornell University who encouraged the addition. Assemblyman Edwin Merritt of Potsdam introduced the bill to the Legislature and received considerable support from Senator George R. Malby.

The SOA Mission

The first dean of the State School of Agriculture at St. Lawrence University was Kerry C. Davis, who served less than a year before leaving. He openly expressed the opinion that the agricultural school could not survive and that other such schools should not be established in the state.

However, the mission of the school, "The instruction of pupils attending such school in agriculture and all allied subjects," was popular in the area. Non-high school graduates, as well as graduates, could enroll in SOA, and the second freshman class was augmented by women entering home economics.

In those days a room cost a student \$2.50 and board was \$4.50 a week. The only other cost to a student who attended SOA was the price of a few books.

The second director, Herbert Ellis Cook, championed the cause of the State School of Agriculture. He believed that young people who wanted to become

farmers or housewives should have the benefit of studies that would help them do a better job of both, and that they should, at the same time, be more culturally rounded.

The following subjects were considered to be essential to the business of farming: animal husbandry, dairying, and farm crops, with a concentration in chemistry and manual training. English, arithmetic, bookkeeping, commercial law, political economy, civics, parliamentary law were also offered.

Following the first State School of Agriculture at Canton, five other such schools were established in the state: at Alfred, 1908; Cobleskill, 1911; Delhi, 1913; Farmingdale, 1912; and Morrisville, 1908. They are all Agricultural and Technical Colleges today.

The Rise and Fall of Enrollment

SOA grew rapidly for the first eight years. In 1907, the school enrolled five male students. In 1915, there were 187 students, 115 of them in agriculture. But in 1916, the enrollment began to drop with only 143 registered.

World War I had a disastrous effect on SOA in 1917, when only 34 were enrolled. Youths left the farms, some never to return. But, slowly, enrollment rose again and, in 1921, there were 76 in agricultural studies. Agriculture was then beginning to experience a depression and enrollment at SOA took on a roller-coaster pattern. In 1926, enrollment had dropped to 19 men.

Dr. James Milford Payson, whose journal is extensively quoted in the history of Canton ATC entitled *Seventy Years of Change*, wrote at that time: "May we have the patience and courage to work and wait for the sure coming of a better tomorrow for the farmer and the farm school. The discouragement from the decreasing number of boys in the school is somewhat relieved by the improvement in the farms. The farms are more prosperous than ever before. In appearance and productiveness, they are showing the effects of knowledge and careful oversight of the present director (Van C. Whittemore)."

While the rest of the country recovered from the post-war economic decline,

agriculture did not. In the period following the 1929 economic crash, the agricultural economy again suffered further decline, with agricultural prices and incomes falling to even lower levels.

Many farmers without management ability sold their properties; thus, the number of farms decreased but acreage was greater per farm. In 1959, there were half as many farms as existed in 1930. In New York State, nearly 40,000 farms disappeared in the 30-year period from 1910 to 1940.

With interest in agriculture waning, student enrollments at SOA had to be increased in some way.

Threat of Closing

By 1925, the Board of Regents decided that the School of Agriculture should begin to think of admitting only high school graduates and should raise the standard of education to that provided by technical colleges in some foreign countries.

Later, in the early 30's state support of the schools of agriculture was in jeopardy, since they were having difficulty attracting enough students. Regent Owen D. Young suggested that the Canton institution become a junior college of home economics and that the Cobleskill school become a junior college of agriculture.

The people of the North Country proved again that the agricultural college was wanted and stopped the Board of Regents from approving Mr. Young's plan. As Lottie Southworth, dean of women, wrote concerning the situation:

"During the year 1934-35, warning was received from A.K. Getman, Chief of Agricultural Education in New York State, that owing to the small enrollment of men, the Canton school might be permanently discontinued. Director Whittemore, with his characteristic zeal and optimism, aroused the whole North Country to protest such action. In November, a delegation of influential North Country men, representing many rural and civic organizations, met for a hearing before the Board of Regents. They asked that the school not only be continued but that sufficient additional appropriations be made to equip and



The "old school," a farmhouse on Park Street in Canton. (Photo courtesy of Canton College Archives)

maintain the school properly. As a result of this conference, the school was granted an additional appropriation of \$15,000."

Professor Emeritus Peter Nevaldine, who established the Engineering Technology Division at the college, said that Van Whittemore had told him there were so many businessmen going to Albany from this area that after it was agreed to continue the School of Agriculture, the Commissioner of Education told Whittemore that under no circumstances was he ever to take a delegation to Albany again, "or I'll have you fired."

Major Changes Resulted

Major curriculum changes at SOA resulted in 1937, the Board of Regents established technical and industrial

courses at Alfred, Canton, Delhi, and Morrisville. At Cobleskill, the courses were limited to agriculture and home economics, while at Farmingdale, they were solely agriculture. At the same time, agricultural and technical courses were being introduced into high school curriculums, coinciding with the final steps to making the ag and tech institutes truly post-secondary schools.

Thus, because of sociological and economic trends, the State Schools of Agriculture became State Agricultural and Technical Institutes in 1941. In 1948, the ag and techs became units of the State University of New York. In 1965, the current designation, State University of New York Agricultural and Technical College, was adopted.



The "new school," later known as Payson Hall on the St. Lawrence University campus, occupied by ATC until 1968. (Photo courtesy of Canton College Archives)

Other Milestones

In the late 1950's the fate of the Canton Agricultural college again was uncertain. The college was faced with the necessity of moving from the St. Lawrence University campus. Political maneuvering threatened to relocate the institution from Canton. Again, people in the North Country coalesced against the move. It was because Mr. and Mrs. Edson A. Martin donated land for a college campus in Canton that the State University Board of Trustees accepted the site for the new college campus.

Dr. Albert E. French, who became the director of the college in 1948, made the move with the college to the present campus in 1968. While on assignment in Pakistan, in 1961-62 and 1967-68, Dr. French assigned Vice-President Glenn E. Wright to oversee the major project of moving.

In his autobiographical sketch for *Seventy Years of Change*, Dr. French wrote: "I returned to Canton (from Pakistan) just before Christmas in 1962. Much of my time and effort for the next five years was devoted to planning and constructing the buildings on the new campus."

He noted that the "first design was based upon enrollment of 1,100 students. Before these buildings had been completed, the projection was raised to 2,750 students . . . The college still suffers from limited library, dormitory and activity space because of this error in judgment."

Now, the State School of Agriculture had grown and expanded to a new campus, a new name and a new outlook. Still needed, the State University of New York Agricultural and Technical College at Canton continued to add curriculums in the four divisions of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Arts and Science, Business and Public Service and Engineering Technology.

The First to Reach 75

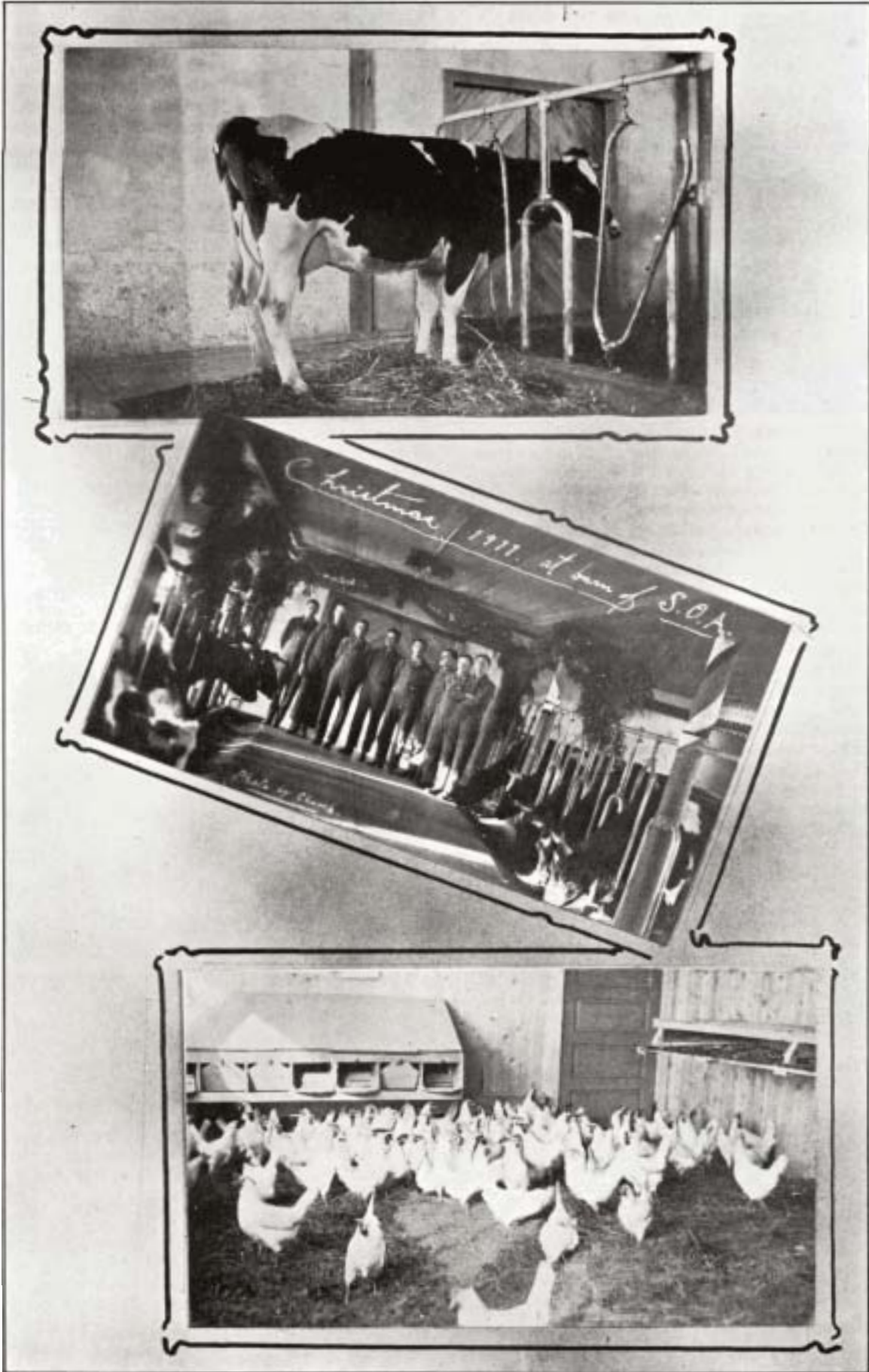
Canton ATC is the first agricultural and technical college to reach its 75th birthday.

Under Dr. Earl W. MacArthur (only the second "president"), the school now offers forty curricula and many services to the general community. It, perhaps more than any other college, has directly served and educated St. Lawrence County students to carry on agricultural and technical careers in the North Country.

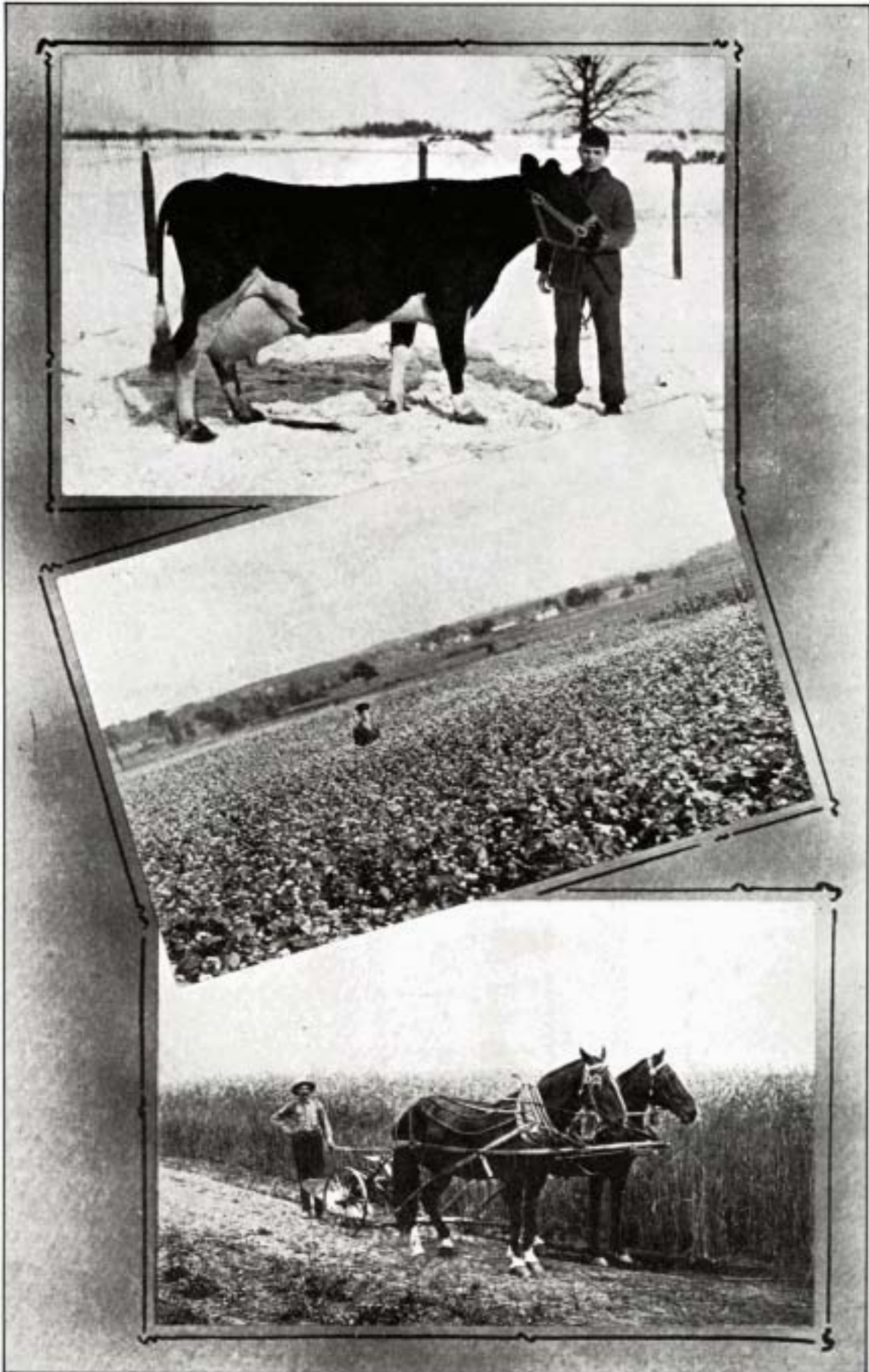
About the Author

Camille Howland is a native of the State of Maine, where she began her career in the world of newspapers. Just prior to becoming the assistant to the ATC president for community relations, a position she has held for several years, she was editor of the *St. Lawrence Plaindealer* in Canton.

Some Early Views of the School of Agriculture







These pages were reprinted in facsimile from The Agricola, the college annual published by "Students of the New York State School of Agriculture of St. Lawrence University," 1912. Courtesy of the Canton College Archives.



Turkey Day at Lisbon Center, from a souvenir collection of local scenes, published by the Ladies Aid Society of the Congregational Church of Lisbon. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Bixby, Town of Lisbon Historian)

'Tomorrow Here is Turkey Day'

by Persis Boyesen

Early in this century a specialized farm crop, turkeys, was big business for many families in the Heuvelton-Lisbon-Depeyster-Madrid area. Here some of the interesting details of those days in the County are recalled, emphasizing the special annual excitement of Turkey Day—not our national day of Thanksgiving, but the day the buyers came to town! Persis Boyesen, Town of Oswegatchie and Village of Heuvelton Historian and noted family history researcher, first wrote this for the Ogdensburg Advance-News, Sunday, November 14, 1980.

A news reporter in 1932 asked Newell S. Hutchinson of Heuvelton, "When and where did the turkey industry of St. Lawrence County come from?"

"Turkeys have been here since I was a little boy," said Mr. Hutchinson, "and I am past 30."

The turkey industry was the cash crop of St. Lawrence County and especially so to those living near the largest world market, Heuvelton. Many were the girls who had their way paid through Potsdam Normal with money that came from mother and her hard work of raising a flock of the most stupid, simple fowls that never had enough sense to take cover during a sudden thunder storm. It was clearly work for patient women for those birds in the early weeks of life required as much care as newborn babies. The money was used in other ways, to pay the taxes and the mortgage

or perhaps a new carriage, or a piano.

According to the 1930 census there were grown in St. Lawrence County during 1929, \$160,413 worth of turkeys. That represented about one-fourth of the output of the state. The value of the turkeys produced in New York during 1929 was \$682,524. Jefferson County produced \$134,474 worth of turkeys. So about one-half of the New York turkeys were grown in these two counties.

There was an old saying around Heuvelton and Depeyster, "Turkeys are legal tender." At that time the cash crop would pay for one-fourth of the St. Lawrence County budget, buy 275 Ford cars or 40,000 \$4 ladies' hats. The 1932 news item said, "In fact, since the passing of horses and the failure of the timothy hay market, turkeys are the only cash crop in the county."

Turkey days at Madrid, Lisbon and

Heuvelton were eventful days in the past. The principal buyers were Samuel Clements, William McAdam, Samuel Rodgers and Trueman Wilcox when the only conveyance to market was the old open democrat wagon. In those days, the farmer with his proud wife, who usually grew the turkeys, would start out before daylight to be on the market to receive the early bids of the buyers.

In the 1930s A.H. Weirs, Madrid, Byron Flack, Lisbon and Samuel McClelland, Heuvelton, were the buyers and they, as during the early years, would box and ship the turkeys to Boston.

Turkey sales were part of North Country history as far back as old timers in the 1930s could remember and the sales at Madrid, Lisbon and Heuvelton represented the largest turkey market in the entire world. In the 1920's metro-

politan newspapers carried colorful stories of the turkey sales and often dispatched photographers to take pictures. The price of turkeys at the three markets, with Heuvelton being the largest and usually the best, determined the price that all New England paid for its Thanksgiving dinner.

"Turkey Days" as they were called underwent many changes. Before the days of the railroad turkeys were gathered into flocks and driven on foot to the cities, the same method as used by the cattle drovers, often going as far as Albany. After the coming of the railroad farmers who lived within a radius of 10 miles had the turkey market all to themselves. Some farmers drove 25 miles by horse to be at the sale. As farmers acquired the gasoline powered vehicle for transportation the fowl became more plentiful and the price lower. In the old days of a sale carts and rigs hitched behind horses filled the village streets.

The top turkey prices per pound paid in Heuvelton from 1917 through 1935 were as follows: 40 cents, 1917; 55.5 cents, 1918; 53.5 cents, 1919; 56 cents, 1920; 60 cents, 1921; 68 cents, 1922; 50 cents, 1923; 50 cents, 1924; 63 cents, 1925; 58 cents, 1926; 50 cents, 1927; figures not available for 1928; 46 cents, 1929; 35 cents, 1930; 23 cents, 1931; 27 cents, 1932; 20 cents, 1933; 28 cents, 1934; 35 cents, 1935.

The local color of Turkey Day was expressed by Dan Giffin, reporter for the *Advance News* in his Heuvelton, November 27, 1900 release:

"I've wandered up and down the streets to learn what people have to say, but each to whom I spoke has said, 'Tomorrow here is Turkey Day.' Each merchant has a great broad smile, as if his thoughts were of the pay that he is sure to get for goods he's trusted out till Turkey Day. The landlords, too, were

feeling good, had dressed their bars and tables gay; 'What's up,' I asked, 'you look so fine?'" "Tomorrow, here is Turkey Day!" I met a man who'd owed me long, I gently asked of him to stay! "I cannot stop," he smiling said, "tomorrow here is Turkey Day." I asked a barber, "Shave me quick, I must make haste to get away." "I'm sorry, Sir, but can't you wait, tomorrow here is Turkey Day!" The town, I'm sure, is turkey mad, I see, of hope, no single ray, until it's rid of all the ghosts of turkeys slain for Turkey Day.

"The day has passed, the streets are still, the turkeys shipped to Boston Bay, the proceeds from the day's large sales foot up to thousands for the day. There's Will McCadam, Flack and Mayne, Ed Smithers, Martin and Thomas J., among them all were 15 tons all purchased here on Turkey Day. The ruling price was rather large, for first class lots they had to pay as high as 16 cents or more; the farmers smiled this Turkey Day. The country wives and maidens too, will now have rest until next May when they will set their turkey hens and raise new flocks for Turkey Day!"

His byline for November 1902 reported: "Heuvelton was very much alive Friday, the occasion being Turkey Day. The Main street was filled with teams from the bridge to the railroad while another crowd was across the bridge. About 14 tons were purchased and the prices ranged from 15 to 20 cents per pound. Good average lots bringing 18 cents. The farmers looked happy; some of them said they couldn't afford to eat them themselves. The extra price will add many a new gown to the household this winter."



Turkey buyers in Lisbon. (From 50th Anniversary Old Home Week souvenir book, 1980. Courtesy of Jennifer Bixby, Town of Lisbon Historian)

Some 'Turkey Notes'

The following are copies of letters sent to Eleanor Clark Merkley in the winter of 1937-38. Eleanor was then a small child living in Heuvelton. Her family did not raise turkeys but her neighbor, Sadie Walker, did and allowed Eleanor to place notes in the dressed turkeys, which were then shipped to Syracuse by truck to be sold. Eleanor now lives on the Canton-Ogdensburg Road and is a resident of the Town of Lisbon.



December 27, 1937

617 Park Street
Syracuse, N.Y.

Dear Eleanor,

Your little note was found Christmas Eve by my mother. It certainly was a grand turkey, very tender and tasty. Was this turkey a pet of yours? I imagine it was.

Do you live on a turkey farm?

We had a beautiful Christmas tree this year, and every one in the family was very lucky.

Did Santa bring you many things? I have two little nieces (one five and other three) who were very interested in your request.

This week is vacation time, and I bet you are having many parties, etc. I go to Powelson's Business School, but perhaps you are rather young to understand. We have a vacation, too.

If you have any older members in your family I would appreciate it if they wrote and told me about their Christmas.

This is the first letter I have written with my new fountain pen which was a gift.

Do you attend a school in your village? What grade are you in and how old are you? There, that gives you many things to write about, so I'll be looking for a letter from a very sweet little girl in Heuvelton.

Yours sincerely,
James M. Pearson

P.S. I'm 18.





Ruth Mullen's turkeys, Five Mile Road, Lisbon, 1942. (Photo courtesy of Jennifer Bixby, Town of Lisbon Historian)

December 27, 1937
(postmarked Syracuse, N.Y.)

Dear Eleanor,

This is just a little note in answer of your "turkey note." We certainly were surprised to find it in our Christmas turkey. The turkey went to the house of Paul J. Warner, 408 Wendell Terrace, Syracuse.

It certainly was a fine turkey, and everyone enjoyed it very much.

Wishing you a happy
New Year,
Paul Warner



December 29, 1937
(written on a Happy New Year card)

We received your note in the turkey we bought for Christmas. The turkey was very good—the nicest we've had in quite a while. We hope you had a very merry Christmas and that you will have a happy and blessed New Year.

Yours truly,
Mrs. J.J. Schloeder
1110 N. Townsend St.
Syracuse, N.Y.

January 15, 1938

709 Maryland Avenue
Syracuse, N.Y.

Dear Eleanor,

Dr. and Mrs. R.M. Farley bought your turkey and it was as fine a turkey as we ever ate.

What happened when he was killed? We found his wing and wish-bone broken.

Eleanor, I have guessed that your mother was a school teacher, now if you answer my letter, I shall tell you why I think so.

As soon as I finish my letter to you I am going to write a letter to my son who lives in Michigan, he is a surgeon and has a little girl nearly two years old.

I have a daughter called Ruth and a son called Frank. They are both going to school. Ruth finishes her school work this spring and Frank has five more years of college work as he is going to be a doctor. He will be twenty-four when his school work is over.

We have a camp at Panther Lake and if you ever come to the lake you must come and see me.

Yours truly,
Beulah Farley

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Bad Day on the Farm

by M.F. Bentley

In 1885 M.F. Bentley of Canton had his "little work" *Bad Day on the Farm* printed by Herald Printers of Potsdam. This long narrative poem—60 pages in a paperbound book—is full of rural humor and a sense of nostalgia for farm life at its "worst." To us it is an extended version of Murphy's Law: if anything can go wrong, it will. While he sought agents all over the United States to sell his work at fifty cents a copy, his scheme seems not to have worked, for copies are rather rare today. Herein we reprint excerpts from Bentley's one day on a farm, with original drawings, all courtesy of Edward J. Blankman.



It was in July and haying time
Just at the close of day,
I had fed the pigs and done the chores
And turned the cows away;
I says to wife, "Tomorrow morn
At precisely four by the clock,
I must make a break and not be late
For I have lots of hay in the cock."

I went to bed and how I dreamed
I dreamed in rhyme and prose,
I scarcely got any rest at all
For fear I would over doze;
It was the very longest night;
Would morning never come?
I laid on one side and said, "O, Dear!"
On the other and said, "I Vum!"

The alarm went off and up I sprung
All in the twinkle of an eye;
Put on my pants, my boots, my hat,
Went out and viewed the sky;
I whistled for my shepherd dog
But at my call he did not come,
So for the cows I scampered off
On a dog trot,—a farmer's run.

I found them all within the lot,
But scattered they were all over,
And bent on feeding to the last
As if they were in clover.
I ran around the whole outside
Like the Cow boys on the plains,
But ere I had started one a rod
She went to feeding again.

O how I hollered! how I yelled!
Until my throat was sore,
I thought of every-thing that's *bad*
(Forgive me if I swore.)
And when I had them in the barn
And all securely tied,
I found that one was missing still
So off for her I hied.

And at the very farthest end
O bless her peaceful soul,
A resting in the fullest content
She lay behind a knoll.
"Get up Old Brin! you lazy scamp!
I know you are somewhat lame,
But you must hustle to the barn
For I see it looks like rain."

Now when them cows they all were milked
And we our breakfast had ate,
I saw by glancing at the clock
That we were two hours late.
I said to Dan, my right hand man,
"Now catch them horses quick,
I saw them when I got the cows,
They are down there by the creek."

Now Dan spoke up and thus he said:
"I know I should have told,
I broke the wagon tongue last night
But was afraid that you would scold.
I will send right over to the Deacon's
And get his wagon if I can,
He's got two, he will lend us one;
For he is a very clever man."



"Get up, Old Brin, you lazy scamp."

Drive on the team and let them zip,
We can wait for no more sputtering,"
And as we flew, the wind it blew
The echo of his muttering.
The wind it blew a perfect gale
From the south it came direct,
You could scarcely land a forkfull
Without its being wrecked.

A spiteful gust it took my hat
I thought I would have to yield,
When next I saw that hat of mine
It was clear across the field.
It needed a School House full of boys
To hold that hay in place,
It needed the arm of Hercules
With Sampson's for a brace.

We finally got what we called a load
But what a horrid thing,
It looked like a March Day on a spree
The wildest day in Spring.
Would we ever land it in the barn?
Was no question for a jury,
But whether we had strength enough
To war against this fury.

For it hung all over on one side,
Like a wasp's nest on a tree,
And looked like a Hedgehog just returned
From a Hedgehog bum or spree.
"Now Dan I'll carefully drive the team,
You boost from the leeward side,
And we will do our level best
To homeward make it ride."

Slowly we moved and careful too,
I had the best of a team,
In the wind there was a gentle lull,
There was hope for us it seemed.
When all at once came a sudden jog,
And then a tremendous slide,
And that hay it lay upon the ground
And I lay by its side.



"And that hay it lay upon the ground, and I lay by its side."

I picked me up, I stared around,
But I saw no stalwart Dan,
Nor was he anywhere to be found
Around all that countraband.
I heard a low and moaning sound,
It came from near my feet,
And when I had my Dan dug out
He was as white as a sheet.

Just then my Wife came running out
Came running down the lane,
Cries she: "The cows they have all got out
They are tramping down the grain.
The wind has blown the fence all down
It is flat, as griddle cakes.
There is nothing to hinder their getting out."
Cries I, "Confound their Pates!"

"Dan, to the barn you take the team
And we them cows will chase"
Dan was muttering Nouns and Adjectives
All in the Objective Case.
The Adjectives were *Proper*
If used in a *proper* sense,
But the way that Dan combined them
There are some who'd take offence.

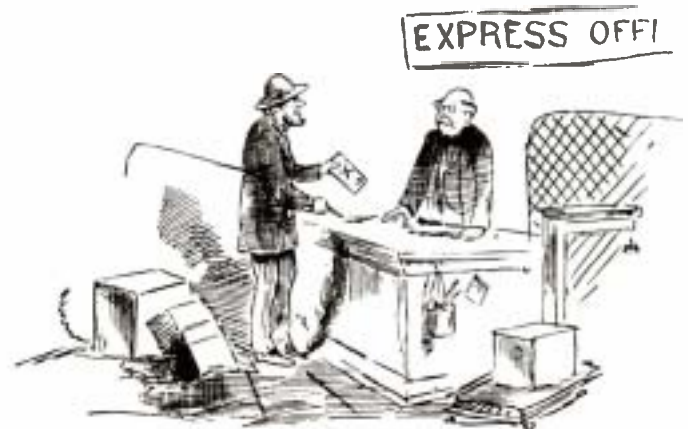
Last Winter I read a Paper
It was of a modern farming tone,
It advised the freer use of brains
To save our muscle and bone.
It told of a new born Oat
As yet, but little known to fame
It told of its egregious weight
And the prodigious yield of the same.

It gave the name of a "Party"
Who resided in a distant State,
That they invited correspondence
And for "orders" they did "wait."
It told the price we would have to pay
By the bushel it was a V,
And though at first it might seem large
That in the end we'd "see."

There would be money in the "project"
It would increase a thousand fold,
That "Nothing ventured, nothing gained"
Was an adage true, if old,
And when the "neighbors" saw them "Oats"
And how stout that they did grow
They would want them all for seed next "Spring"
They would "Buy them in the blow."

The argument was convincing
To me I do confess,
I wrote: "You may send to me a bushel
You may send it by 'Express'
I do not know your Company
Nor neither do you know me,
And for mutual good and surety
You may mark it C.O.D."

Now when that Bill I came to pay
You may bet I was perplexed,
For instead of little over V
It took most all an X.
I took my Chemistry from the shelf
And said, "Good Bye, to aches and pains.
Let others use their muscle and bone
But I will use my brains."



"For instead of little over a V, it took most all an X."

And on one pleasant afternoon
Quite early in the season,
I committed them oats to Mother Earth
And then commenced to reason.
I figured up manure and cash,
My labor with muscle and bone,
And then threw into the common sum
My brain work, 'twas my own.



"There stood those thirty murderers."

And I thought so then and I have from hence
And I do as I write these lines,
That instead of sowing common grain
I was scattering silver dimes,
But if they only bore their fruit
That lucre for which we strive,
Then I'd be glad, that I'd complied
With what was Advertised.

The clouds descended, the showers came
The sun gave down its light,
And with Nature's clements all combined
Them oats soon hove in sight.
When first I saw them peeping up
It was early in the morn,
I says to Wife when I went up
That my 'Pet Child' is born.

And day by day this "Baby" grew,
In figure I rocked it too and fro,
And when I had nothing else to do
I stood and watched it grow.
I thought so then and I think so now
As I this subject throttle,
If I am permitted the figure of speech
I brought it up on the "Bottle."

I hung around this sequestered spot
It was my soul's enchanter,
I showed it to my many guests
And with them all did banter.
I saw it last on yester's eve
And it was well appearing,
Tall and stout, with color good
Just putting on "Head-Gearing."

That *Child* it died—at 10 to-day
It was *Murder in the First Degree*,
Crushed to death, by the teeth and feet
Of thirty cows on a spree.
Yes, cruelly murdered, cut off from life
In the pride of Youth and Promise,
And when Dan and I arrived on the scene
I was both mad, and astonished.

With eye-balls glaring wild,
As if a gloating oe'r the wreck
Of this my own "Pet Child."
They passed through clover of inviting sweet
By grain of the common kind,
But never stopped until they reached
This enchanted "spot" of mine.

Yes there upon them "Eighty Rods"
Them thirty murderers stand,

But every spark of life has fled,
There is nothing left, but the land.
Now up and down that lot they fly
Those breakers of the law,
Pursued by men and dog in haste
Oh how they all did claw!



*"Then from his pocket drew his watch,
then to the sun did gaze."*

Now who is that a turning in,
A trotting up the drive?
It is Parson L., I'll bet my boots,
It is as I am alive.
The miserable V—why did he come?
When the weather is so fine,
His business could as well be done
If not so hurrying a time.

"Very glad to see you Parson L.,
Although I may be a sinner,
Just put your horse right in the barn
And stop with us to dinner."
"It can't be noon," the Parson said,
And his eyes they flashed amaze,
Then from his pocket drew his watch,
Then to the sun did gaze.

"Oh! Time flies fast in these lightning times,
In these fast living days,"
And the smiles danced on his pleasant face
Like the white caps on the waves.
"Yes I'll take you at your word
And to 'dinner' with you stay,
Just throw the horse a peck of oats
You need not mind the hay."

My Wife came out upon the stoop,
She said not a word I think,
But quicker than a flash of light
She caught my little "wink."
I kept the Parson from the house
I showed him the calves and pig,
While my Wife she shuffled into
A cleaner and better rig.

I showed him the fine points of my nags
Told the feats that they'd perform,
And the number of years that had fled by
Since them two nags were born.

While in the house the dishes flew
Old table-cloth and all,
These being replaced by better ones
In honor of this call.

I told him that near nag of mine,
In a race had been a winner,
And was interrupted in my tale
By a call of Wife to dinner.
When all were seated round the "board"
I gave the Parson a nod,
And he proceeded in a solemn tone
Returning thanks to God.



*"My pulse beat slow, my heart throbbed
low, as his form became unsteady."*

The lungs of Nature, which had heaved
The whole of the live-long day,
And which had raised particular fits
When we were at the hay,
Had quieted down to their "normal state"
And ceased to moan and fret,
And the "symptoms" they were very strong,
That Nature was about to "sweat."

For in the South a bank of clouds
As black as nether doom,
With lightning flash, and then a crash
Of thunder's fearful boom,
Proclaimed to me, as plain could be
Without a revelation,
That the clouds were about to empty out
On earth their "perspiration."

We had that jag re-loaded,
And we were ready to go;
The sky was as black as dooms-Day
Three Dooms-days in a row.
The drops came down with terrific force
From Heaven's Hydraulic Ram,
And it seemed by the roaring, hissing sound
They had broke away the "dam."

Each drop was a little winter,
As it struck our summer wear,
It made a snow-drift of our feelings,
An iceberg of each hair.
Into the barn we drove pell mell,
A yelling like two country bricks,
Ran through an old hen and chickens
And killed just three of them chicks.

Down came the rain in torrents
In drops both large and small,
It wet the hay and everything;
The eaves were a waterfall;
I sought my cot in the kitchen
With feelings any but grand,
And to ease my pain took the very first train
To dreamland's happy land.

Oh how I wish "my kicker" was milked!
I wish to the "Butcher" I'd sold her,
And you may bet I will, or call me a pill
Before I am very much older.
But sighing and wishing amounts to naught
In this world's busy strife.
So down to "my kicker" I immediately got
After saying "Good Bye" to Wife.

"What are you about?" I yelled quite loud
With thoughts nigh unto sinning
"What ails your pegs, keep still your legs,
Keep down your underpinning."
She stood in a trice, as still as mice,
And gently chewed her cud,
From me not a word, there was nothing stirred
Except the milk's dull thud.

When quicker than a flash, there came a crash,
Like the banging of a door,
The milk did fly and so did I,
All sprawled upon the floor.
I gathered my bones up in a heap
Placed them down on stable sill,
And could you have seen my face just then
You'd thought I was making my "Will."

And if that subject had been my theme
I give to you my vow,
That the man I hated the worst on earth
I'd willed to him that cow.
And the principal tenet of that "will"
And the sole condition on which made,
That he should milk her twice a day
While on this earth she stayed.



It was in July and Haying Time
Just at the close of day,
I had fed the pigs and done the chores
And turned the cows away,
The sun sank low in the distant west
To sleep in Morpheus' arm,
And with its last departing ray
Closed the *Bad Day On The Farm*.

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