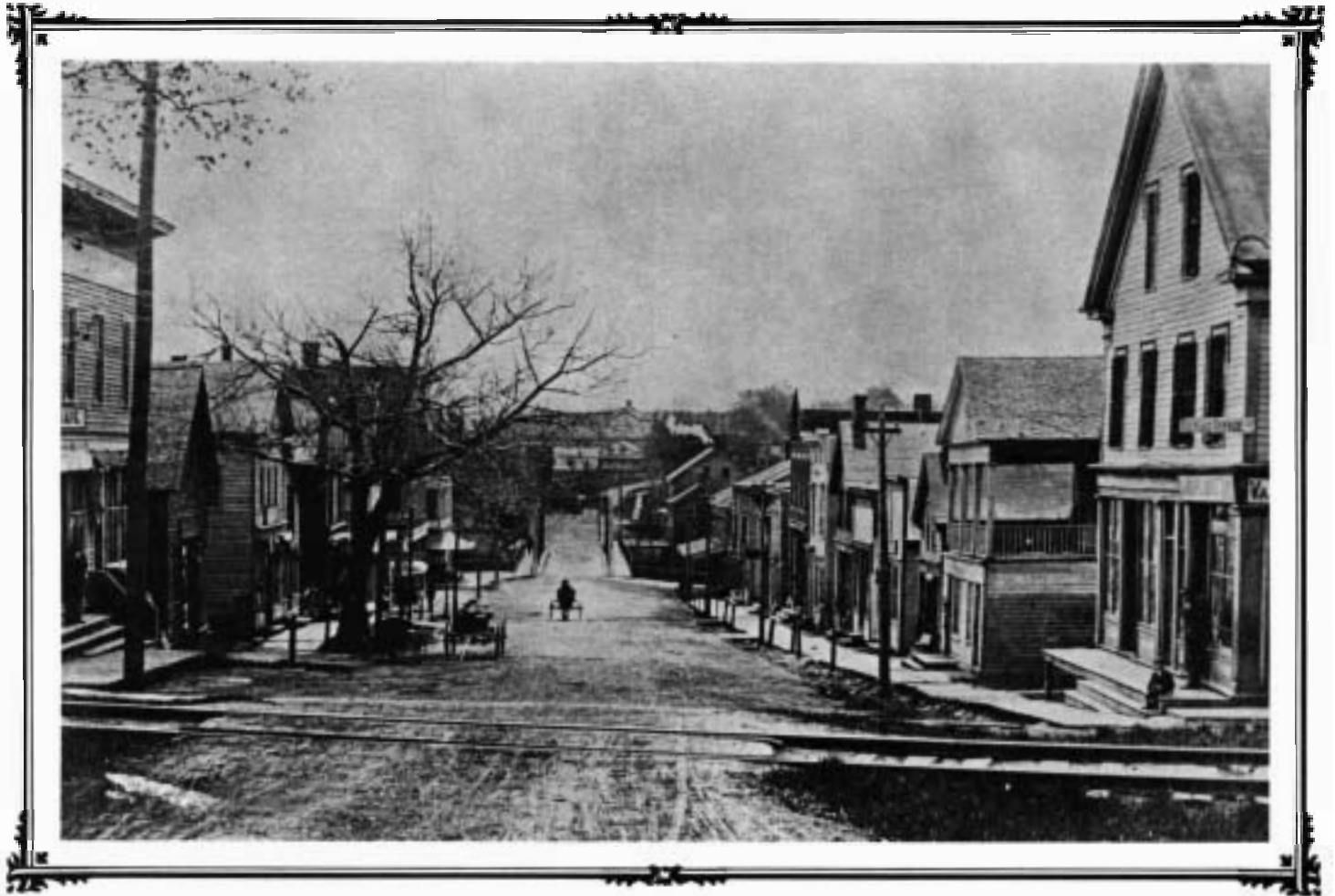


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Editor: Varick A. Chittenden

Cover: Business section of Heuvelton after 1905 and before 1916. (Note telephone lines and the electric light on the Van Heuvel House.) The left side of the street shows the building long owned by James R. Mayne. It was in this building in April 1901 that James Mayne installed air gas lights, the first in town. The right side of the street shows the building long known as the Van Heuvel House. In 1983 the photo is almost one of a vanishing era. However, in 1901 recollections of the business section by Dan Giffin, born in Heuvelton May 19, 1838, were also of a vanishing era. His father, N.F. Giffin, had a store where is located in this photo the stone feed mill of McFadden-Anderson at the northwest end of the bridge. One of the places between his store and the Van Heuvel House was owned by the Edgell family. They used to milk their cows in front of the house on the sidewalk. One dark night his father, going home from the store, fell over one of the cows camped down for the night. See page 13 for "A Photograph Album of Old Heuvelton". (Photo courtesy of Betty Steele Photography)



*Early etching of St. Regis Village, with church in background and sunken pier at left center.
(Photo courtesy of the Akwesasne Cultural Center)*

The Founding of St. Regis

by George L. Frear, Jr.

St. Regis is the oldest continuously occupied community in the North Country and is especially important to the present day as a vital part of the St. Regis Reservation or Akwesasne. Here the centuries-old culture of the Mohawk Indians has encountered people and traditions that are part of both the United States and Canada. The author has discovered much information in a variety of previously unused sources and has written a detailed, fascinating account of the religious and political life of this early village.

The oldest continuously occupied community in the North Country is the village of St. Regis. It is somewhat special in other ways also. For one thing, it is a Native American, basically a Mohawk, community, the village of the Mohawk reservation that adjoins the northeast corner of St. Lawrence County and that straddles the U.S.-Canadian border. This reservation is best known in English by the same name as the village, St. Regis, but its colorful Mohawk name is becoming familiar—Akwesasne, meaning, Where the Partridge Drums. Another special aspect of the village of St. Regis is that it is located in Canada although cut off from all the rest of that nation by water. It occupies the end of a point of land that juts out of the south shore of the St. Lawrence River just west of the mouth of the St. Regis River. The point

is attached to New York State but the end of it, where the village is situated, lies a little north of the 45th parallel and so on the Canadian side of the border. The village is within the boundaries of the Province of Quebec; one might call its site a detached fragment of Quebec's southwest corner.

Still, today as in the past St. Regis belongs with the rest of the North Country. Or perhaps it would be better to say that in it the centuries old culture of the Mohawks has encountered people and traditions that are part of both the United States and Canada.

How old is St. Regis? There is no doubt as to where many, if not most or even all, of the original settlers came from and as to approximately when they came. They came from Caughnawaga also spelled Kahnawake (many there today prefer the latter spelling

which is more in keeping with traditional Mohawk orthography and which has been accepted by Canadian postal authorities), a still existing Mohawk community located across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal. It was founded under Jesuit auspices as a village for converted Indians in 1669. While Indians from a variety of nations came to it, Mohawks early dominated. The old Mohawk homeland, or at least their location in the early seventeenth century when whites first made contact with them, was along the Mohawk River approximately between Amsterdam and Little Falls. They were the easternmost of the League of Five Nations, also called the Iroquois, whose villages stretched over much of what is now central New York State. Some Mohawks continued to live in the Mohawk valley up to the time of the

American Revolution. But many moved to Canada. Sometime around the middle of the eighteenth century some families from Kahnawake (Caughnawaga) moved up the St. Lawrence to establish the village and mission of St. Regis. But can the precise date be established? What were the circumstances? Did some Mohawks from the Mohawk valley also come to St. Regis at the outset?

These are the questions I wish to discuss here. I will first review what others have written on the matter and will indicate their sources. Second, I will present a significant document that seems so far to have been ignored.

Before beginning, however, I should point out that the question of when St. Regis was founded is quite different from the question of when Mohawks first dwelt for more or less extended periods around Akwesasne and when they first thought of the region as belonging to them. In the mid-nineteenth century remains could still be found in St. Lawrence and Franklin counties and adjacent parts of Canada and aboriginal villages. One of these sites was near Massena between the Grasse and Raquette Rivers and so not far from the present reservation. Also, nineteenth century authors, and people today too, speak of a mound on part of the reservation, St. Regis Island in the St. Lawrence, right opposite the village of St. Regis.¹

Whatever connection these archeological remains may have with Mohawks, it is certain that in the seventeenth century Mohawks and other Iroquois went up and down the St. Lawrence River, and it is likely they made use of the Grasse, Raquette, and St. Regis rivers that all empty into the St. Lawrence around Akwesasne. There is one bit of tantalizing documentary evidence. In the diaries of Count de Frontenac recounting the voyage he and his men took up the St. Lawrence in 1673 to found Fort Frontenac, the present Kingston, Ontario, he describes a pleasant area up from Lake St. Francis where he found the mouth of "the river by which people go to the Mohawks." Perhaps he meant the Raquette or perhaps the Grasse. In any case some Iroquois were found there who said there were three to five days of easy navigation on that river.² Ancient documents have a frustrating way of not answering the precise question we would like to ask. The diary does not say whether these Iroquois were living at this point or just camping or merely passing through. But we can gather that they were at home in the region. The Mohawks particularly, as the Iroquois nation living farthest east, probably thought of Akwesasne as part of their hunting ground.



Father Roupe of the Catholic Church at St. Regis, priest there from 1809-1813. (Photo courtesy of the Akwesasne Cultural Center)



Father Bourget, priest at St. Regis, 1895-1931. (Photo courtesy of the church and the Akwesasne Cultural Center)

To turn now to the date of the founding of St. Regis, a good place to begin inquiries is the Catholic Church there, since St. Regis either began as a mission or soon became one. I have visited the church's handsome stone rectory on several occasions and have always been cordially received. The current pastor, Father Thomas F. Egan, S.J., and the current associate pastor, Father Robert L. Fleig, S.J., both showed themselves to be interested in my research and helpful. The church's Sunday bulletins state that the mission was established in 1752. That date is also given on an assemblage of photographs of many of the early priests that hangs on a wall in the entrance hall of the rectory. Father Egan, who is a quite knowledgeable history buff, told me however that the date may not be exactly correct.

Still, someone must have come up with it. An authority for it, if not its originator, appears to be Father Joseph Pierre Bourget, who was priest at St. Regis from 1895 to 1937. Early in his ministry there he wrote a description of the founding of St. Regis that was printed in the French language *Almanach Iroquois* of 1900.³ According to the statement there St. Regis could be thought of as the daughter of Caughnawaga (Kahnawake), for in 1752 some thirty families from there as well as some Mohawks from the Mohawk valley established a new community up river from Lake St. Francis. The chief was Pierre Karekohe, the son of an Englishman named Tarbell who had been captured from Groton, Massachusetts. The priest who accompanied the settlers

was the assistant at Caughnawaga, Father Billiard. In 1758 the community moved farther up river to its present location. Because he will be mentioned often later, I note that this same source says that a Father Gordon became missionary at St. Regis in 1762.

We will return to Father Gordon and the "Englishman" (or English colonist) named Tarbell. For the moment let us look at Father Billiard. The facts on him are elusive, including his baptismal names. According to the *Dictionnaire du Clerge Canadien-Francais: Les Anciens*⁴ Pierre-Robert-Jean-Baptiste Billiard was born in France in 1723, entered the Jesuit order in 1743, was ordained in 1753, was royal geographer at Quebec in 1753-54, was assistant at Caughnawaga and missionary at St. Regis in 1754-57, and died at Caughnawaga in 1757. A footnote in the *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*⁵ says that Robert-Jean-Baptiste Billiard came to Canada in 1715 according to a "Liste Chronologique, No. 423," not otherwise available in the *Documents* (But could this be a misprint for 1745 or 1751?), was missionary at Caughnawaga in 1754-56 according to Mr. Shea's list, and is said to have died in 1760. The Shea referred to is probably John Gilmary Shea, an eminent nineteenth century historian of Catholic Indian missions. E.J. Devine in his *Historic Caughnawaga* published in 1922 says that Pierre Robert Billiard was born in France in 1723, came to Quebec for several years, returned to France for theological studies, came

back to Canada in 1753 after his ordination, and a year later was sent to Caughnawaga.⁶

Despite all their diversity regarding name and facts including a voyage to Canada some twelve years before he was born, all these sources agree in what is most important for us: that the beginning date of Billiard's presence at Caughnawaga was 1754. If he accompanied the first settlers, it is unlikely that they came in 1752.

To turn to an earlier source than Bourget, Franklin B. Hough before publishing his monumental *A History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties* in 1853 visited St. Regis and made inquiries there. He specifically mentions a visit in June of 1852 and talks with the priest of that time, Francis (Francois-Xavier) Marcoux.⁷ Marcoux was priest at St. Regis for a long time, from 1832 to 1883, and he is probably Hough's major source.

Regarding the founding of St. Regis Hough like Bourget mentions the name of Tarbell. He tells several variants of the legend of the capture by a raiding party of Caughnawaga Indians of a couple of boys of that name from Groton, Massachusetts in the early eighteenth century. The boys were adopted by their captors, but after they grew up there were quarrels between them and others at Caughnawaga. Hough, who is not without prejudice, attributes these quarrels to the boys' "superiority of intellect, and enterprise." At the priest's suggestion, he says, they left the village, and both of

them, or perhaps only one, settled with their own and several other families at what is now St. Regis, known by the Indians as "Ak-wis-sas-ne." Hough states that one of the boys had been renamed Ka-re-ko-wa; this is not very different from the Karekohe of Bourget.

Hough does not give a date for his seemingly small settlement, but he states that in 1760 a number of additional settlers from Caughnawaga—according to tradition "many canoe loads," perhaps 200 people—arrived under the leadership of Father Anthony Gordon. Gordon named the place St. Regis. Hough gives Gordon's motivation for moving his flock from Caughnawaga as "the corrupting influence of rum" in the vicinity of Montreal. The proof of the date of 1760, he says, is the fact that Gordon's party going upstream encountered the army of Lord Jeffrey Amherst going downstream in the campaign that led to the capture of Montreal and so the end of French colonial power in Canada. He says that Gordon remained with the mission until 1775 and died at Caughnawaga in 1777.⁸

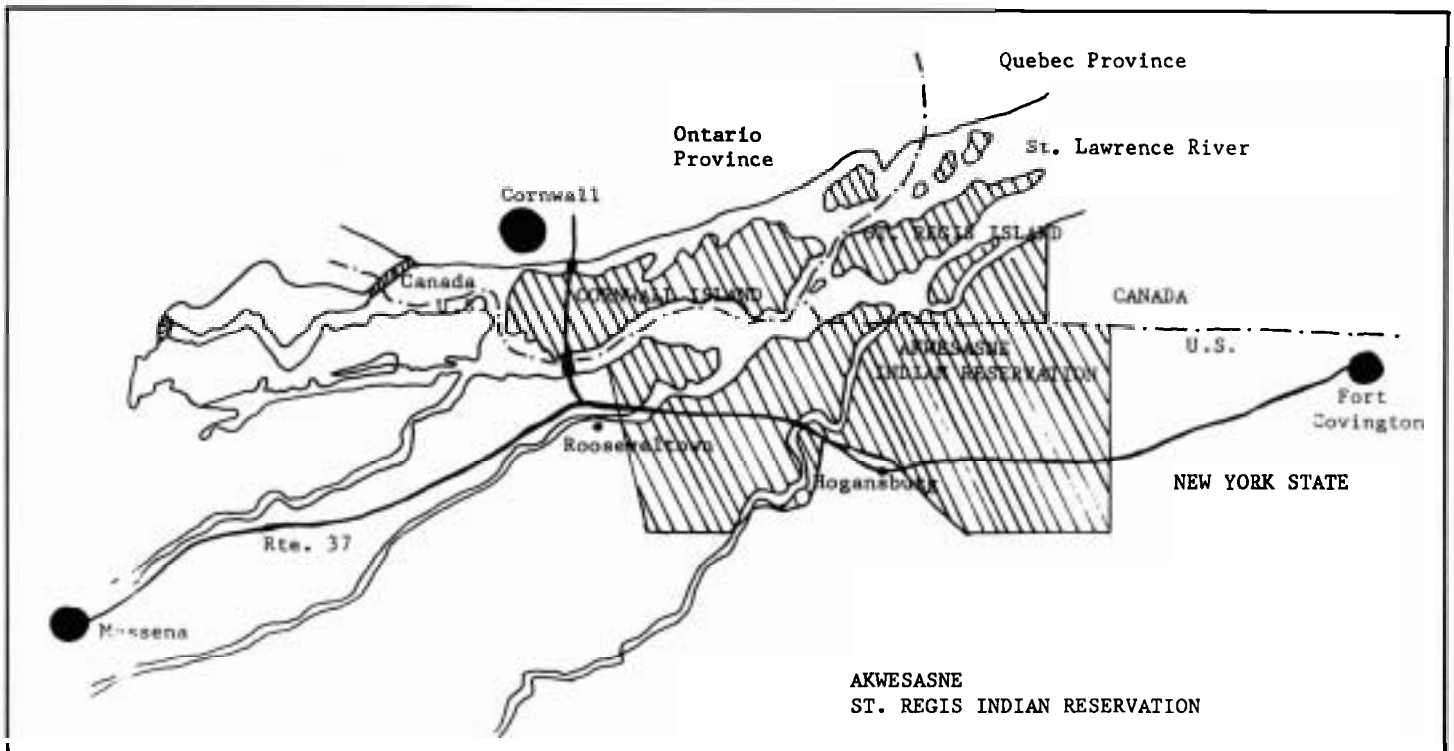
Thus, as Hough paints the picture, a few families under the leadership of one Tarbell or perhaps several settled at Akwesasne sometime in the mid-eighteenth century. This contrasts with Bourget's statement that it was a son of a Tarbell who settled with thirsty families downstream from Akwesasne in 1752. Hough further differs from Bourget in not mentioning Father Billiard or Mohawks from the Mohawk valley. The real establishment of St.

Regis according to Hough occurred under Father Gordon in 1760. Bourget has Gordon arrive in 1762.

Several other later authors who have plied the trade of local historian have substantially followed Hough. Frederick J. Seaver in his *Historical Sketches of Franklin County and Its Several Towns* of 1918 draws on Hough, puts the arrival of the Tarbells at about 1750, and suggests a precise date for Gordon's arrival in 1760, namely June 16, or St. Regis' day.⁹ Of course, Gordon could then have hardly encountered Amherst's army, which did not reach the area until early September, and Hough's basis for selecting 1760 in the first place would disappear. Herbert D.A. Donovan in his *Fort Covington and Her Neighbors: A History of Three Towns* of 1963 also repeats Hough's basic picture but changes Gordon's arrival from 1760 to "about 1760" and later says that he arrived on June 16, 1762 (the year agrees with Bourget), St. Regis' day, and so named the settlement for the saint.¹⁰

A word on St. Regis the man is appropriate at this point. Jean-Francois Regis, a member of the Jesuit order, lived his entire relatively brief life (1597-1640) in France but evinced a strong desire to labor as a missionary to Indians in America. He was canonized in 1737, and a considerable devotion to him arose among missionaries to Indians. Some of his relics were brought to this continent.¹¹

All the sources we have so far considered have mentioned the Tarbell

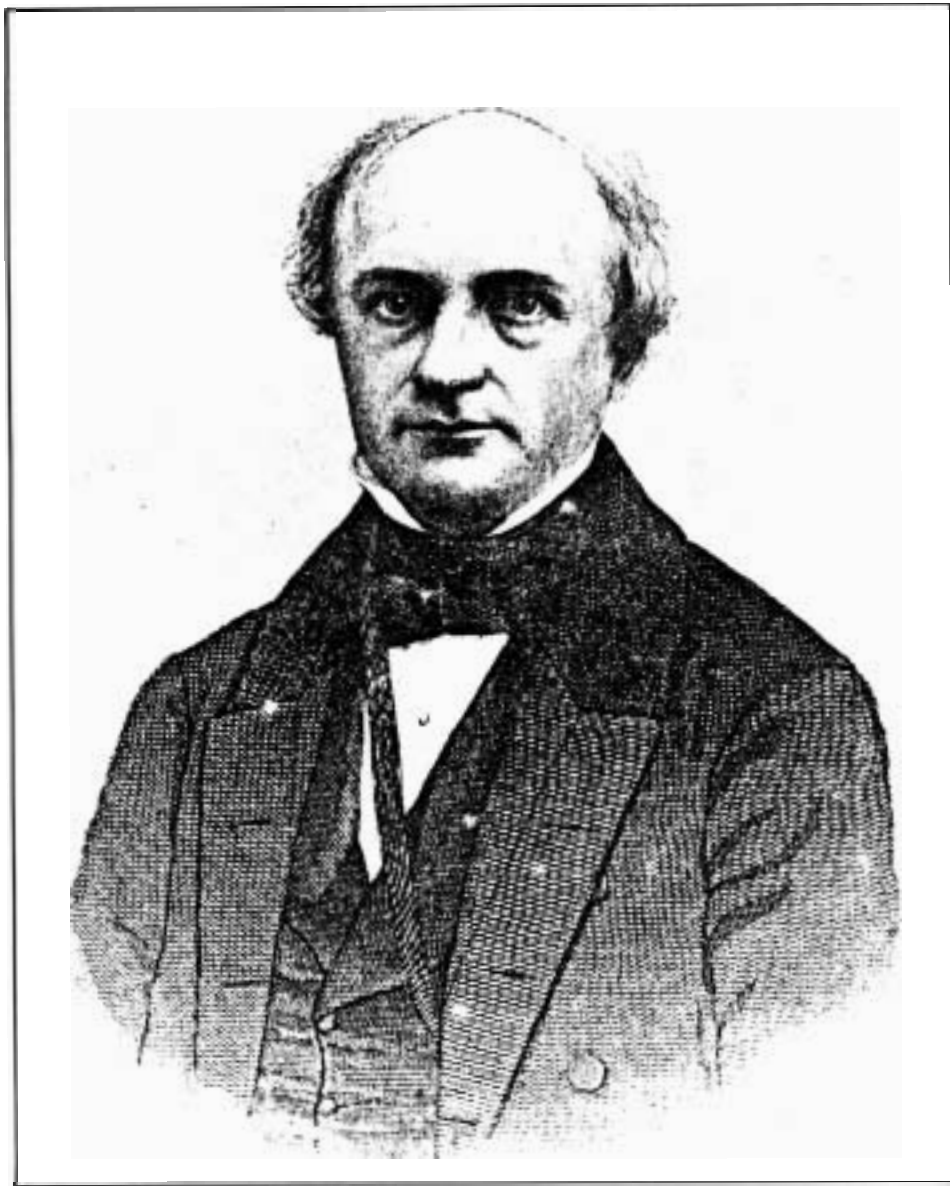


Map of present-day Akwesasne, St. Regis Indian Reservation. (Prepared by Salli Benedict, courtesy of the Akwesasne Cultural Center)

family and Father Gordon. There may well be substance to the legend that the Tarbells had a role in founding St. Regis. The capture of John and Zachariah Tarbell and their sister Sarah of Groton, Massachusetts by Caughnawaga Indians on June 20, 1707, is a well established fact. The boys were adopted by the Indians, and though they visited Groton later they refused entreaties to remain.¹² Hough's racial slurs are gratuitous. To Hough's observation in his day that their descendants still live at St. Regis¹³ we can add that the name Tarbell is common at Akwesasne today and not at all common at Kahnawake (Caughnawaga).¹⁴ If the boys were taken in 1707 and St. Regis was founded in the middle of the century, whether the original settler would more likely have been one of the brothers as Hough suggests, or the son of one of them as Bourget holds, may be left an open question.

As for Father Gordon, Hough's calling him Anthony Gordon makes him sound almost English. His name is better given as Antoine Gordon or Gordan. The entry on him in the *Dictionnaire Biographique du Clerge Canadien-Francais: Les Anciens* states that he was born in France in 1717, became a Jesuit in 1736 and was ordained in 1749. He taught at the College de Quebec (1749-51), was vicar at Caughnawaga (1752-55), priest there (1755-57), priest-founder of St. Regis (1762-75). After several other brief charges he retired to Montreal in 1776 and died there on June 30, 1779.¹⁵ By itself this notice would seem to date the founding of St. Regis in 1762, but we must remember that the same reference work put Billiard as missionary there in 1754-57. Gordon could have become involved with St. Regis any time after 1752 when he came to Kahnawake (Caughnawaga). The statement that his death occurred in 1779 rather than 1777 as Hough has it must be correct. There are letters of regret from British colonial officials of the time that confirm the date of June 30, 1779.¹⁶

Whatever the time of Gordon's involvement with the community, neither 1760 nor 1762 can be correct for the founding of a substantial settlement at Akwesasne nor for its receiving the name of St. Regis. Numerous references in primary sources from the Seven Years' War, or French and Indian War as it is also called, contradict such a date for the founding and the naming. British sources from the period call the community Akwesasne, in a variety of spellings. French sources at least from 1758 call it St. Regis. The mentions occur because warriors from there fought on both sides. Either they first supported the French and then changed to favor the British, or—which seems



Engraving of Franklin B. Hough, distinguished nineteenth century North Country historian. (Courtesy SLCHA Archives)

to me more likely—the community had divided sentiments from the outset. According to a French report of 1756 three warriors from the village fought for them that year.¹⁷ French Captain Pouchot's map of 1758 has St. Regis on it by that name and at the proper location.¹⁸ Two warriors from St. Regis spied for this same Pouchot in 1760. They observed Amherst's army as part of Pouchot's unsuccessful defense of Fort Levis.¹⁹ Fort Levis, which Amherst renamed Fort William Augustus after its capture, was located on Isle Royale in the St. Lawrence about three miles downstream from the location of Ogdensburg.²⁰ In September of 1760 Amherst reported that a British prisoner was held at Akwesasne.²¹

On the other hand, when the longtime and successful British Indian Agent, Sir William Johnson, who accompanied Amherst's army, met with chiefs of

Indian nations of Canada in 1760 at the site of present day Ogdensburg, representatives from Akwesasne were present. Johnson assured them that in return for their no longer supporting the French they would be secure in their lands and in their right to practice their religion.²² Johnson visited Akwesasne on September 1, 1760.²³ Earlier that same year some men from Akwesasne met Johnson at Oswego, and ten took part in the final assault on Montreal. For this they later received medals.²⁴ Johnson's papers do not mention a priest at Akwesasne in 1760, but they do seem to indicate a substantial community there interested in preserving its religious practice, i.e., its Catholic faith.

Thus, Bourget's 1752 appears to be too early, and Hough's and Seaver's 1760 and Donovan's 1762 appear to be too late. Is there a date in between that

is more likely? Among a number of authors there is now something like a consensus that the correct date is 1755. James Mooney, an ethnologist with the Smithsonian Institution around the turn of the twentieth century, gives the date of the establishment of Akwesasne as about 1755.²⁵ E.J. Devine, S.J., in his book on the history of Caughnawaga, says that St. Regis was apparently established in 1755. He adds, however, that it appears to have grown slowly since there is a tradition that the village was formed in 1759.²⁶ Jack Aaron Frisch in a doctoral dissertation of 1970 that shows considerable careful research proposes 1755 and makes the suggestion we have encountered already, June 16th or St. Regis' day. In Frisch's case it is June 16, 1755.²⁷

The Smithsonian Institution is currently bringing out a multi-volume *Handbook of North American Indians*. Volume 15, entitled *Northeast*, was published in 1978. The authors of the article "Mohawk" in it, William N. Fenton and Elizabeth Tooker, two distinguished anthropologists, mention two dates regarding the founding of St. Regis or Akwesasne. The first is 1747 when some families from Caughnawaga were reported to be settled upstream on the St. Lawrence at the mouth of the River Louis. The other date is 1755.²⁸

Also, currently at Kahnawake (Caughnawaga) there is an alternative school, the Kahnawake Survival School, which in developing its own curriculum published a history book in 1980 entitled *Seven Generations*. Its author, David Blanchard, not only consulted written sources but interviewed traditional Mohawks. He stresses the Mohawk desire at the time to inhabit land belonging to them. According to him the people from Kahnawake who established Akwesasne—he does not use the name St. Regis—were chiefly members of the bear clan. He states that some moved to Akwesasne in 1747 and by July of 1755 they were joined by thirty additional families.²⁹

All the above authors—Devine, Frisch, and Fenton and Tooker are explicit about it—base their view on what is undoubtedly the best published primary documentation on the founding of St. Regis, certain French colonial papers found in Parish and published in translation, unfortunately just after Hough had completed his work, in the fifteen volume *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*.³⁰ There we read in the "Journal of the Occurrences in Canada" for 1746-47 that in 1747 a group of Indians from Caughnawaga were found living at the mouth of the river St. Louis at the head of Lake St. Francis, "the place where the Mohawks pass when they are coming to attack our

settlements." Perhaps this means the site of Akwesasne or perhaps a bit downstream from it. Because French authorities were suspicious that these Caughnawagas were sympathetic to the Mohawks in the Mohawk valley and so to the British, they brought them back to Caughnawaga and even broke some of their canoes.³¹ Thus the particular settlement did not last, but its formation indicates the desire of at least some inhabitants of Kahnawake (Caughnawaga) to move elsewhere within general Mohawk lands and probably to keep in contact with the Mohawks in the Mohawk valley.

Most important are two letters from the governor of New France, Duquesne. In the first, dated October 31, 1754, addressed to de Machault, minister of the Marine and Colonies, he says that his negotiations to persuade some Mohawks from the Mohawk valley to come and live among Indians on the French side are going well but that they will not settle at Caughnawaga because of soil exhaustion. Therefore, thirty families from Caughnawaga accompanied by a priest are going to move up the St. Lawrence and settle twenty leagues above Montreal on the south shore. Mohawks from New York will join them there. The colony will cost the king only the money to build a sawmill for the Indians' cabins. If he had ordered the thirty families to stay at Caughnawaga he would have had to feed them. Furthermore, the new settlement will be a listening post to find out what the English are doing at Oswego; and together with other Indian villages under French control: La Presentation (the first at what is now Ogdensburg), Lake of Two Mountains (This reserve near the mouth of the Ottawa River still exists and is today usually called Oka.), and Caughnawaga, it will provide a barrier for Montreal against the English.³²

In the second letter, a memorandum to his successor Vaudreuil dated July 6, 1755, Duquesne says that Vaudreuil knows the motives that led him to allow the missionaries at Caughnawaga to establish a new mission on Lake St. Francis. He did not intend it for Caughnawaga but rather to attract Mohawks and other Iroquois from New York. These would not come to Caughnawaga because the lands were not fertile and because of the problem of drunkenness. Father Billiard asked for no more than 100 pistoles at most for a sawmill; that was the only cost of the mission for the government.³³

The most important fact that emerges from Duquesne's letters is that St. Regis seems to have become a reality between October 31, 1754, when he writes of it in prospect, and July 6, 1755, when he writes of it as a reality.

Duquesne does not mention any Indians already dwelling at or near the location in 1754. Of course, since he is on the defensive for permitting Caughnawagas to emigrate, he might be reluctant to mention any of them already there.

Duquesne had his own motivations at this time of danger from the British. He wanted to lure Mohawks and other Iroquois in central New York to the French side, and he sought a listening post and a barrier for Montreal. Other French officials seem to have been worried about costs and the advisability of letting Caughnawaga Mohawks, whose loyalty they perhaps mistrusted, move from the village.

As for the Native Americans, between the lines in Duquesne's letters and because of the earlier settlement in 1747 one can gather that they had their own reasons for desiring a new village. There was the problem of soil exhaustion, and there may well have been a drive to reclaim traditional territory and to unite with kinfolk from the Mohawk valley. Duquesne does not say whether many Mohawks from New York came to the new settlement, and one would suppose he would like to point out any great success in that regard. Perhaps not many came, at least not right away.³⁴

As for the missionaries, since Duquesne writes of allowing them to establish a new mission, one can gather that they desired it. They would of course be interested in possible converts from New York Mohawks. Furthermore, the Jesuits had long been concerned to protect their charges from the corrupting influence of the European colonists. Duquesne's mention of drunkenness at Caughnawaga jibes with the reason Hough gives for Father Gordon's wanting to remove families from there. It is significant that Duquesne writes of the missionaries in the plural. However, he mentions by name only one, Father Billiard.

To complete this survey of what others have written about the founding of St. Regis I return to where I started out, the Catholic church there. In 1951 and 1952 the priest of that time, Father Real Lalonde, corresponded with several archivists in trying to determine when to celebrate the mission's bicentennial. Copies of the correspondence have been preserved in the church. At various points in the foregoing discussion I gratefully acknowledge my debt to these archivists. One of them, A.E. St. Louis by name, went through the national archives in Ottawa and wrote several lengthy memoranda about his findings. He deals chiefly with the reserve's lands but he also presents a most important item from the Haldimand collection in Ottawa.³⁵

It is a memorandum of March 11, 1784 from Col. Daniel Claus, Indian Agent, to General Holdimand, then British Governor-in-Chief of Canada, entitled, "Memorandum of what I can recollect relative to the settlement of St. Regis by the Indians that emigrated from Sault St. Louis." Sault St. Louis is the French name for Kahnawake (Caughnawaga). Claus had known Father Gordon. He writes, "Pere Gordon of the Order of the Jesuits was the promoter of that settlement at the commencement of the war in 1755." Claus goes on to say that the problem that led Gordon to undertake this settlement was drunkenness at Caughnawaga. Gordon persuaded some families to follow him, and he "obtained Vaudreuil's consent and a promise of a grant of any spot or tract of land he might pitch upon" among unceded lands above Caughnawaga. Gordon "fixed upon the spot St. Regis village is now established."

It is well to remember that we are here dealing with a recollection. The priest mentioned is Gordon and not Billiard, but if Billiard died in 1757 or even 1760 British authorities would not have met him. The memorandum makes it sound as though the movement occurred after Vaudreuil gave his consent, but it is quite possible that Vaudreuil, who took over from Duquesne in June of 1755, simply confirmed to Gordon a decision Duquesne had already made.

This Claus memorandum confirms the date of 1755. A.E. St. Louis, however, gives it as his opinion that the Indians of St. Regis probably settled in 1752 eight to ten miles downstream from St. Regis at the same spot as the settlement of 1747, and then moved to St. Regis in 1755.³⁶

This completes the survey of published and some unpublished opinion about the founding of St. Regis. I come now to the introduction of a document that others must have seen before me but that to my knowledge has never been taken into account in discussions of the establishment of St. Regis. Yet it bears on the question.

At Saint-Jerome, Quebec, north of Montreal, in a splendid setting there is a Jesuit center named "Montserrat." There are housed the Archives of the Society of Jesus in French Canada. I was introduced to the place by Father Henri Bechard, a historian of Kahnawake, and I spent several days there in June, 1982. The genial archivist, Father Joseph Cossette, graciously provided assistance in finding and deciphering documents.

The oldest and most interesting document on St. Regis in these archives is a single somewhat frayed sheet of paper with handwriting in French on the



St. Regis Church, early twentieth century, with stone wall surrounding the cemetery. (Photo courtesy of the Akwesasne Cultural Center)

front and part of the back. The paper is not signed, but someone has written on the back, "Monsieur Roupe, Missionnaire, St. Regis." And it is clear from the contents that the author must indeed be Jean-Baptiste Roupe (1782-1854) who according to the *Dictionnaire Biographique du Clerge Canadien-Français: Les Anciens* was priest at St. Regis from 1809 to 1813.³⁷ We will see that Roupe says he came in November, 1807. The document must have been written at St. Regis, and so it dates from some time between 1807 and 1813. The addressee is not given, but it obvious that someone has asked Roupe about the founding and the boundaries of the mission.

The document looks something like a rough draft. The handwriting is not always clear. Words are crossed out, and words are inserted above the line. Some sentences seem to be incomplete, and there are a few misspellings, not only of proper names, of the kind easily made by native speakers of French.

Be all that as it may, it has fortunately been preserved. I present a translation of the full text interspersed with notes and comments. It begins:

It is a bit difficult to give you a certain knowledge concerning what you are asking, the first records having been burned with the second church of this mission. What I am going to report to you is the testimony of an elderly Canadian, a respectable and fairly well educated man: in 1754 in the month of November the reverend father Ant. Gordon and Father Biard whose baptismal name is not known, both Jesuits, drew from Sault Saint Louis a certain number of Indian families and came with them to dwell by a little river called by the Indians Where the partridge drums.

Between "river" and "called" Roupe inserted above the line, "which comes down from the states of America - -," the last words being illegible. "Where the partridge drums" of course is Akwesasne, and that is the name in Mohawk not only of the area but of the St. Regis River.³⁸ As previously indicated, Sault Saint Louis is the French name for Kahnawake (Caughnawaga).

The name "Biard" only seems like a problem. There is very little difference in French pronunciation between "Billiard" and "Biard," and Roupe's misspelling shows that he is passing on information he heard by word of mouth. We have already encountered variations in giving Billiard's baptismal names; it is not surprising that in this case they are not known at all. That Roupe's document agrees with Duquesne's letter, then resting in Paris and unavailable to Roupe, on Billiard and his association with the movement to found the mission in 1754, shows that his elderly Canadian had a good memory. The misspelling of Billiard vouches for the document as a trustworthy independent source. For the first time we find Gordon and Billiard linked together.

The document continues:

The following spring they passed to the nor[th] shore [of the] river and built there a little chapel of bark to which succeeded a chapel of wood which burned. After the burning of this second chapel according to the records (which seem to begin there) in 1762 a third chapel of wood was built. At this time there also existed in the village a little individual chapel devoted to St. Rock built by the devotion of an individual.

The material in brackets is conjectural since the document is torn at that point. At its mouth the St. Regis is flowing in about as much an easterly as



Interior of the St. Regis church (Indian Mission) during Father Bourget's years. (Photo courtesy of the Akwesasne Cultural Center)

a northerly direction, and so one could speak of crossing it from south to north. Immediately after the word "bark" Roupe inserted above the line "which like its successors was dedicated to St. -" The conclusion is illegible, partly torn away. What is left does not look like "Regis." But if the mission was known as St. Regis by 1758 or earlier, it must be "Regis." Perhaps Roupe wrote or abbreviated "Regis" and added something else. The little individual chapel was presumably dedicated to St. Roch.

Hough also tells of the burning of what he takes to be the first church and states that the church's records begin in 1762.³⁹ They have fortunately survived to the present. At that time Gordon was priest. Perhaps it is the beginning of the surviving records in 1762 that has led some to date Gordon's missionary activity at St. Regis from that time. Both the Claus memorandum and Roupe's statement show, however, that he was involved from the outset. Perhaps in the early years he went back and forth between St. Regis and Caughnawaga. It is conceivable—here we may follow Hough—that he and others were on such a journey in 1760 and encountered Amherst's army on its march against Montreal.

To continue with the document: *One cannot indicate the time when Biard left the mission. Father Gordon died on June 29, 1777. From his death to the month of December in 1785 when Monsieur Rodrigue Macdonelle arrived, the mission remained vacant. Monsieur McDonelle built the stone church which still exists. This missionary died on August 25, 1806 and was replaced by Monsieur Antoine Rinfret in the month of October of the same year. The latter after one year of mission was replaced*

by me the undersigned on Nov. 1, 1807.

We have already seen that Billiard died in 1757 or perhaps 1760. We have also seen that Gordon died in 1779, although Hough also gives the date as 1777. Perhaps there was some confusion between the times of his retirement and death. Roupe has a little trouble spelling the name of the Scot Roderick McDonnell.⁴⁰ The stone church which Roupe describes as still existing was devastated by a fire on Easter eve in 1866, but the side walls could be used for rebuilding and are part of the present structure.⁴¹ The church's records show Roupe's first pastoral act to be a baptism he performed on Nov. 1, 1807.

The conclusion of the document concerns the boundaries of the parish.

As to the boundaries of this mission on the north of the St. Lawrence River the whole first grant of Indian reserves in Upper Canada on the shore of the river belong to this mission. On the south of the river and going down river as far as Salmon River inclusively. Going up river as well as in the depths in the direction of America if you ask what in the diocese of Quebec, the boundaries of this mission do not go beyond half a league for before that space the provincial border is found. If you ask about the real jurisdiction, it has no boundary toward the depths and in going up river it goes up to across from Kingstown. But these two areas are not of the diocese and the powers that the missionary at St. Regis exercises in them are only in virtue of the grant that Msgr. of Carolle made to Msgr. of Quebec.

When Roupe says "Upper Canada," he means what today would be called the Province of Ontario, and by Kingstown he undoubtedly means Kingston. The Akwesasne reserve does not now in-

clude any lands on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, but earlier grants were made to it there. It does not now go all the way to Salmon River on the south shore of Quebec, but formerly its grants extended that far.⁴²

When Roupe speaks of his jurisdiction in the United States, he is not thinking of the boundaries of the reservation but of his parish work. North Country population was sparse in Roupe's day, and the Catholic Church had not yet spread. The situation has been explained to me by both Fathers Cossette and Egan. When John Carroll, the brother of the Charles Carroll of Carrollton who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was consecrated in 1790 as the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States, his diocese, centered in Baltimore, comprised the whole nation.⁴³ The only Roman Catholic bishop in Canada at that time was the bishop of Quebec. Father Egan tells me that an agreement was made in the 1790s between the two bishops allowing the priest as St. Regis, although under the bishop of Quebec, to minister within the adjacent United States territory. He says that probably the nearest priests to Roupe "toward the depths" were one in Albany and one on the shores of Lake Champlain. It is strange that Roupe appears to refer to "Carolle" as a place. Perhaps, as Father Egan suggests, he is confusing the man Carroll with the place Carrollton.

Such is the document I wished to present. It says nothing about the Tarbells, nothing about any families already residing at the site when the group with Billiard and Gordon first came, nothing about an earlier settlement farther downstream, nothing about additional Mohawks coming up from central New York. One should not argue from silence about any of these matters, particularly as Roupe's concern was to tell of the founding of the mission and not to give a total history.

What is most striking about the document is how neatly it dovetails with Duquesne's two lettres that date from the time. Duquesne writes on October 31, 1754 that some families are going to start out and Roupe says that they did so in November of that year. On July 6, 1755 Duquesne writes of the village as an accomplished fact, and Roupe says that in the spring of that year the settlers crossed the St. Regis river to found the village and the church. We might even follow others and speculate that the date of the founding was June 16, 1755, St. Regis' Day, but probably we should not push that too hard since devotion to St. Regis would be enough to explain the selection of his name for the new mission. What we can say with reasonable certainty is that a group of Mohawks with



Father Bourget in a Corpus Christi procession, a celebration when each clan made an altar where the priest would say a benediction and bless the people. (Photo courtesy of the Akwesasne Cultural Center)

fathers Billiard and Gordon as the priests who accompanied them moved from Kahnawake (Caughnawaga) in November of 1754 to the southeast shore of the river called Akwesasne, and now also St. Regis, and after wintering there passed over to the northeast shore in the spring of 1755 and began the community of St. Regis that is still with us.

NOTES

¹ Franklin B. Hough, *A History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, New York* (Albany: Little & Co., 1853. Reprinted in a facsimile edition by the St. Lawrence County Historical Association and the Franklin County Historical and Museum Society in Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 18-28. Major Joseph Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, eds. Robert McElroy & Thomas Riggs (Privately printed in New York, 1943), p. 141. Delafield, whose diary is here published, visited Akwesasne as part of a commission to survey the U.S.-Canadian border in 1817. He has given us some interesting notes, but when he attempted to find out about the origin of the place he received only garbled information that has the original settlers as a group under Col. Louis, p. 152. Col. Louis Cook did arrive with others in 1789, but this has nothing to do with the founding of the village. See Hough, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-198. Also Mr. Ernest Benedict and Mr. Michael Mitchell, personal communications.

² The diary is quoted in Hough, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34. It is also found in *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, ed. E.B. O'Callaghan (Albany: Weed, Parsons, and Company, 1853-57), vol. 9, p. 99. Hough tentatively identifies the river as the Raquette. The editors of the *Documents* opt for the "Grass."

³ Pp. 64-65. The *Almanach Iroquois* was not available to me. It is quoted with the above reference in a letter preserved in the Church at St. Regis from a Montreal archivist, Paul Desjardins, to Real Lalonde, priest at St. Regis, written in 1951. That the author is Bourget I learned from a memorandum in the church written by A.E. St. Louis, an archivist in Ottawa, on Feb. 6, 1952.

⁴ J.-B. A. Allaire (Montreal: Imprimerie de l'école Catholique des Sourds-Muets, 1910), p. 53.

⁵ Vol. 10, p. 301.

⁶ (Montreal: The Messenger Press), p. 252.

⁷ Publishing information in note 1 above. On his visits see pp. 113, 123, 125, 179.

⁸ Pp. 111-114, 124. See also p. 107.

⁹ (Albany: J.B. Lyon Co.), pp. 2-4, 578-579.

¹⁰ (New York: O'Hare Books), pp. 27-28.

¹¹ Hough, pp. 113-114. On the devotion to him see Reuben G. Thwaites, ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (Cleveland: Burrows, 1896-1901), vol. 60, p. 244; vol. 61, p. 85; vol. 65, p. 109; vol. 67, p. 323.

¹² Jack Aaron Frisch, *Revitalization, Nativism, and Tribalism among the St. Regis Mohawks* (Indiana University Unpublished Dissertation, 1970), p. 56.

¹³ P. 112.

¹⁴ Father Henri Bechard, personal communication.

¹⁵ P. 249.

¹⁶ There are quotations from the British colonial letters in a letter by Desjardin mentioned in note 3 above.

¹⁷ *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. 10, p. 405. Unfortunately the original document lists the place as "St. Bigin." There was no such place, and the editor of the *Documents* corrects the reference to "St. Regis."

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 10, facing p. 694.

¹⁹ Frisch, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

²⁰ James Sullivan (ed.) *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1921-65, 14 vols.), vol. 10, p. 177. The island was also called Oracontenon. The fort was not a permanent structure and gradually disintegrated. The island itself was largely destroyed when the St. Lawrence Seaway was built. A remnant of it, called Chimney Island, is visible from the Ogdensburg-Prescott bridge. Mrs. Persis Boyesen, personal communication.

²¹ *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, vol. 10, p. 178.

²² *Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 109-110.

²³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. xxvi.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 378; vol. 5, p. 635; vol. 10, pp. 183, 254. See on this whole period Frisch, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-64.

²⁵ He says this in two reference work articles. *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, Frederick W. Hodge, ed. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1971, 2 vols. A reprint of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, 1907-10), vol. 2, p. 412. *Handbook of Indians of Canada* (Ottawa: C.H. Parmelee, 1913), p. 405.

²⁶ *Historic Caughnawaga* (Montreal: The Messenger Press, 1922), p. 255.

²⁷ *Op. cit.* (See note 12), pp. 59, 61.

²⁸ Bruce G. Trigger, ed. (Washington: The Smithsonian Institution, 1978), p. 473.

²⁹ (Kahnawake: Kahnawake Survival School, 1980), p. 233. See also pp. 152-153.

³⁰ See note 2.

³¹ Vol. 10, p. 105.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 266-267.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

³⁴ Jack Aaron Frisch holds that it is likely that many came. "Tribalism among the St. Regis Mohawks: A Search for Self-Identity." *Anthropologica* N.S. 12 (2), 1970, p. 209.

³⁵ His reference is to the Haldimand Collection, Vol. B.114, p. 307.

³⁶ Letter to Mr. T.L. Bonnah, Superintendent, St. Regis Agency, 7th February, 1952. There is a copy of the letter at the St. Regis Catholic Church.

³⁷ P. 480 (See note 4.)

³⁸ Hough, *A History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, New York* (See note 1.), p. 180.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴⁰ This is the spelling in *ibid.*, p. 124. Materials in the church with a reference to *Clerge Canadien* by Tanguay, p. 147 give his name as Joachim-Roderic McDonnell.

⁴¹ Built in 1791-92 according to Hough, p. 124; in 1792-93 according to Bourget (See note 3.). Information on the fire is contained in papers at the church rectory.

⁴² There is an assemblage of references to the reserve's territory in the A.E. St. Louis memorandum of Dec. 7, 1951 in the St. Regis church. Also Mr. Ernest Benedict, personal communication.

⁴³ Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 141, 150.

About the Author

George L. Frear, Jr. is a member of the Department of Religious Studies and Classical Languages at St. Lawrence University and has taken a special interest in the religion of native American people.



The Massawepie Club Camp. (Photo from H.L. Ives' Reminiscences of the Adirondacks, courtesy of the editor)

An Adirondack Bear Hunt

by H.L. Ives

This fascinating narrative of a bear hunt at the Massawepie Club in the town of Piercefild was first printed in a collection of similar tales entitled Reminiscences of the Adirondacks in 1915. H.L. Ives was a native of Dickinson and lived most of his life in Potsdam, not far from the woods and streams he loved so much. He enjoyed the life of the hunting camps with his pals that his contemporary Frederic Remington called "men with the bark on."

The fall of 1890, in the month of October, we made up a little party of five, consisting of my brother, The Hon. M.V.B. Ives, Mr. J.H. Sanford, Mr. Allen Olmstead, and his brother, William, and myself, to go to The Massawepie Club hunting grounds for a short hunt.

We arrived at our camp without series incident, and made ourselves at home.

I think the second night after we arrived the two Olmsteads went out on the home pond and killed a deer, so we soon had meat in camp. The following day was cold and raw.

In the morning my brother said if I would loan him my old double barrel shotgun and some fine shot cartridges he would go out and get some partridges so we could have a nice potpie the next day. I did not look forward to the enjoyment of the potpie with any very marked anticipation, for the reason that partridges do not always come to the front when they are wanted for a pie. However, I loaned him the gun and when I handed him the fine shot cartridges I also gave him four loaded with buckshot for deer, and said to him: "Put them in your vest pocket, you might want to use them." He took

the outfit and started, saying that he would go over north on the hemlock ridge. Soon after my brother left the two Olmstead boys went off somewhere looking up some otter slides, and that left Mr. Sanford and myself alone in camp.

An hour or so later, more or less, I said to Mr. Sanford: "Horace, this is getting a little dull. I think I will take the old 45-90 Winchester and go over toward Dead Creek, and if you will go behind and walk very still you can go with me."

Hod was not much of a hunter, but he loved the woods and was ready for a

tramp.

Just as we were going down the hill after leaving camp, we heard a shot over on hemlock ridge and I said at once: "That is my shotgun, and he has fired one of the buckshot cartridges. He must have seen a deer."

I then suggested that we wait and listen for the second shot, as the second shot nearly always suggests that the first one had been more or less effective. Very soon we heard the second report and that too was a buckshot charge. I then remembered that Matt had probably killed a deer, and we better change our course and go over that way. Just then we heard the third report, and immediately after that the fourth.

I then said to my companion: "That was the last of his buckshot cartridges. Something must have gone wrong with him or he has run into a whole drove of deer."

We started on a brisk walk in the direction of the firing. Our course took us up an old lumber road. The road was somewhat grown up to underbrush and we could see objects in front only a short distance. We had not gone more than half a mile when we heard something in front of us coming down the road, puffing and blowing like a steam engine. Automobiles were not common in those days. If they had been I should have thought it was an automobile with the muffler open. I soon discovered, however, that the disturbance and cause of our alarm was my brother Mat, (his real name is Martin Van Buren, but we call him Mat, for short), tearing through the underbrush at a 240 gait dragging the old empty shotgun behind him by the muzzle, and speaking in automobile terms, his cylinders were all working and his muffler was wide open.

I said: "What's the matter Mat? What's the cause of this unusual haste?"

He said: "By Judas, I've shot a bear."

I said: "Is that so; tell us about it."

He then explained that he was hunting for partridges over on the "Hemlock Ridge" where the underbrush was quite thick and he just discovered the outlines of a bear going through the brush. His first thought was that his gun was loaded only with fine shot, and as he was not hunting for bear that day, he would compromise the thing with that bear and let him alone, if the bear would do the same by him. Just at that time he thought of the four buckshot cartridges in his vest pocket and it occurred to him that he had never had a shot at a bear and that if he ever expected to, this was his opportunity.

Accordingly he put two of the buckshot cartridges in his gun and started on a run after the bear. He had not



H.L. Ives of Potsdam. (Photo from *Reminiscences of the Adirondacks*, courtesy of the editor)

gone far before he discovered the bear was going up a large hemlock tree. There was a crotch in the tree about twenty feet up and the bear was just above the crotch. He took hasty aim and fired and the bear fell down and lodged in the crotch of the tree. He then went around on the opposite side of the tree to see if he could not hit the bear in the head and make him come to the ground, and when he had gotten on the opposite side he saw as he supposed that the bear had gotten out of his place in the crotch of the tree and had climbed above it and was still going up the tree, then he gave him, as he supposed, the second shot. The bear then came to the ground, turned over on his back and began to give the wounded bear scream. He then gave him the third shot and as this did not stop the scream, he gave him the fourth and last cartridge. Realizing that this was all the ammunition he had in stock suitable for that class of game and that the call of the bear might result in bringing more and larger bears to the rescue, he decided that discretion was the better part of valor, especially when one has nothing but No. 8 shot for protection, and the old soldier who stood the raking fire of the ambushed Rebel Soldiers at the Battle of Olusta, Fla., made a hasty retreat from a dead bear.

After becoming a little more com-

posed he said: "Now, what had we better do?"

"Do," I said, "why we will go back there and see what you have accomplished."

"Well," he said, "we may find an old bear or two there by this time ready to protect their wounded comrade."

I said: "We have this 45-90 Winchester rifle well loaded with cartridges and plenty more in my belt; we also have Horace here with us. He is getting old and not of much account; we will put him in the front rank and I guess with a few shots from 'Old Sployrns' I can protect the younger members of the party," so we started back. When we reached the spot where the shooting had been done, we found no live bears to dispute our progress and walked up to the hemlock tree, under which Mat's dead bear lay pretty well shot up. In explaining the shooting, he said: "When I shot him the first time he fell down and lodged in that crotch."

We then looked up the tree and Mat exclaimed: "By Judas, there is a bear up there yet," and sure enough there was another dead bear still lodged in the crotch of the tree.

The facts were that instead of treeing one bear he had treed two and when he shot the first one that lodged in the crotch of the tree, bear No. 2 was just above No. 1 on the opposite side and when he went around the tree to try and shoot No. 1 out of the crotch, he saw and shot No. 2 which came to the ground, and his time and attention was so much taken up with the bear on the ground he did not look again up the tree. He was more interested just at that period in live bears that might be in that vicinity.

The dead bear was securely lodged in the tree, and we were compelled to go back to camp, get an axe and cut the tree down to get the game. The bear story became quite famous at the time it occurred and was published, I think, in *The Forest and Stream* and later on, in fact only a short time since, I saw a sort of farce made of it as having occurred over in The Knob Country of Pennsylvania, and published in one of the prominent New York papers, but this is the true story, and all the parties who participated in the hunt are still living.

About the Author

H.L. Ives was born in 1842, one of the Ives family who became distinguished in business and politics. His brother, Martin Van Buren Ives, represented St. Lawrence County in the State Legislature.

A Photograph Album of Old Heuvelton

by Persis Boyesen and Betty Steele

How fortunate we are for photographs, for they have frozen moments, people, and places in time so that future generations can really see what the life that went before was like. As supplements, even sometimes as substitutes, to the written word, they can reveal a great deal about us and our way of life. The following is a rare collection of historical photographs accumulated by Betty Steele, native of Heuvelton, who is now herself a professional photographer in Ogdensburg. Comments are written by Persis Boyesen, Village of Heuvelton Historian, and a frequent contributor to The Quarterly.



"Spring of 1866" is a note by Osmer J. Best (1854-1933), a Heuvelton resident who had a great interest in local history. The building on the left, corner of State and Lisbon Streets, burned July 19, 1869. The sign indicates it was the Bellinger Hotel. Adam P. Bellinger was the hotel keeper.



The railroad car at the lower right was the photographer's studio. Since James Dow was the only known photographer in the area with such a traveling business it can be assumed that he took this picture. This picture is probably "twin" of the one titled "Spring 1866". It appears to be an early spring snow storm.



The Snyder House had a long history associated with Heuvelton. John Snyder served in the Civil War nearly four years. He was taken prisoner in front of Petersburg in 1864, and was held in Libby and other prisons for 9 months. He was a Lt. and Capt. in the 60th Reg. and also served in the 14th Cavalry and for his bravery with this unit was brevetted a Colonel. After his return from the War he purchased and operated the hotel which became known as the "Snyder House". It was famous for New Years' dances as it had in this area the only dance floor on springs. Col. Snyder died in July 1894. Other landlords have been Henry Woods and his daughter, Amanda McIntosh. The Snyder House burned August 2, 1923.



Union Free School built in 1874 on site deeded October 25, 1822 by Jacob Vanden Heuvel for a school. The stones from the old stone school building were used in the basement wall of the building constructed in 1874. The entrance contained the stairs leading to the upper floor. A trap door in the ceiling at the head of the stairs opened into the belfry. The first floor was divided into two rooms for the first six grades. The upper floor had a recitation room and a room for girls' coats etc. There were two long seats in front of the principal's desk in the large room.



The caption advertises "Hurlbut and Preston Boots and Shoes 1898". This building was built in 1858 by John Pickens, Sr. The stone came from the Ridge Hill quarry located between Heuvelton and Ogdensburg. It would seem that this is the first picture extant of turkey day in Heuvelton.



The history of the Van Heuvel House has not been completely documented. The Captain's walk of earlier pictures has been removed. Perhaps the house had been constructed by George Seaman, born in Rhode Island in 1796. The 1865 Atlas of St. Lawrence County shows William Prouse owning this property. In 1860 he was a merchant in Heuvelton. Sometime prior to 1900 the building was converted to a hotel and named Van Heuvel House. The last proprietor was LeRoy (Sandy) Manford. In 1959 the building was demolished and on the site a gasoline station was established.



A very early picture of the railroad crossing State Street at the intersection of Lisbon Street. This was before the construction of the railroad station on Lisbon Street. The first railroad station was located on the site today of the McCadam railroad siding. The Methodist Church built about 1870 burned Easter Sunday 1933. The house across the street was owned by K. Thurber. The house on the corner very near the tracks belonged to Dr. A.C. Taylor who resided in Heuvelton from 1850-1874.



It appears that this photograph was taken as a sequence to the previous one. The same gentleman that was on the wooden sidewalk is now in the middle of the street and the two others can be seen in different positions. This picture was probably taken after 1869 and before the building of the Banford Block. A fire destroyed the hotel of J.H. Morgan located at the corner of State and Lisbon Streets on July 21, 1869. The dwellings of Dr. Taylor and George Seaman and the dwelling and store of William Prouse (later Van Heuvel House) were saved by the hard work of the village volunteers.



N.Y.C. and H.R. depot with A.E. Ellsworth, agent. On left Harley Conklin, Robert Woodside, ??, Archie Ellsworth, agent from 1890 to his retirement in 1928. He died in 1934. (Two other pictures identify the third man as J.R. Humphrey, apple buyer, and also as William Martin, "section boss.")



This picture taken between 1870 and 1875. The last covered bridge at Heuvelton built to replace the one carried away by the flood waters April 18, 1862. On left side of street J.D. McBroom, carriage maker. The J. Best Store next to large three story store building built in 1858 by John Pickens, Sr.



Picture taken between 1905 and 1916. Telephone service was established in 1905 for 18 subscribers. Work commenced on the new cement bridge in 1916. The voters at the town meeting in February 1875 authorized the raising of a sum not to exceed \$10,000 for the construction of an iron bridge. The sign at the top of the bridge says: "Five Dollars Fine for riding or driving on the Bridge faster than a walk."



Nathan Ford Giffin erected in 1853 this stone building at the northwest end of the bridge on State Street. He was a dealer in boots, shoes, groceries, harnesses and also had a tannery. In 1887 George C. McFadden and his father-in-law, Charles P. Anderson formed a partnership and purchased the Giffin store, and established a grist mill and feed store. The business was operated until 1916 when the illness of Mr. McFadden forced him to sell the business to Henry G. Mayne and son. In 1943 the building was purchased by the present owners, Stanley and Alice Richardson. This picture taken after 1906, for that year electricity came to Hewelton. In upper left can be seen word "Boots" and on upper right "Flour, Feed, Groceries" advertising the business when owned by Giffin. The men are identified as John Crawford, Jr., Charles P. Anderson, Harlan Smithers and William Smith.



Nathan Ford Giffin, a resident of Hewelton since 1830, built in 1860 this stone building at the northwest corner of State and Union Streets for a grist mill. The building was later sold and converted into a butter and cheese factory. In 1874 it was known as the St. Lawrence Creamery or Butter Manufactory under the management of Captain John S. Snyder and in June of that year received about 10,000 pounds of milk each day and May butter sold for 31 cents a pound. In the 1880's James C. Birge purchased the building and continued operation until the fall of 1894 when he sold to William H. McCadam who then operated the plant until June 1896 when he sold to A.B. Hargrave. In 1903 Herman Mills and Jon Rankin purchased and the two men conducted the business for two or three years when Rankin sold his interests to Mills and it continued under his management until his death April 12, 1913. The building was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1921 and on the site today is a Chevron gasoline station.



Interior of a blacksmith shop in Heuvelton. In 1900 there were four blacksmith shops in Heuvelton.



Interior of McFadden and Anderson Feed Mill. Building was constructed in 1853 by N.F. Giffin. The young man standing is Otis Dewan. (Very good photograph as the dust that accumulates from such an operation can be seen on everything to which it could cling. Also, note the overhead light.)



An early "turkey day" in Heuvelton, the largest and usually the best market for local turkey farmers. A carload of knocked down boxes would arrive to be distributed to the different buyers. These boxes were large enough to hold eighteen medium sized turkeys in the first two tiers and four or five larger birds on their sides as "toppers."



The earliest picture extant of Heuvelton taken after 1862 for the railroad sign "Watch Out for the Cars" was erected in that year. The house on the left was the residence of the John Pickens family until the construction of their brick mansion prior to 1860. This is a parade of soldiers of the Union Army and evidently one of the group is a hero.



Christmas at Home

by Parepa Adams

Christmas, perhaps more than any other Christian holiday, is a time of family celebrations that especially involve children. The memories of those childhood Christmases are often among the most pleasant that one has, even though the family may not have much in material goods. Here the author recalls good times in her parents' home and in her own in the Parishville/Potsdam area.

Christmas time again and nostalgia is running rampant. I must try once again to find some red tissue paper to try to imitate my mother's red tissue roses which decorated our Christmas trees when I was a child. A few days before Christmas, Mom and I would sit at the dining table and put sets of petals together. I was allowed to try to curl each petal on each corner with a dull table knife. There were probably four layers of squares to be folded three times. Then the shapes of the petals were cut to finish the circular layers after curling. She would fasten a piece of the wadded tissue to the end of a stovepipe wire and stem wind it with a short petaled strip for the center; then she should place curled layers, (some green points) on the back to hold the layers of petals. The stems were wound with strips of green. Of course, there were numerous chains and Christmas candy from paper, but only one tinsel rope to decorate our tree. At school I had learned to cut Japanese lanterns, too. We did not have lights, but did fasten small candles to the branches.

Of course Santa never visited me at home, so I didn't have to be disillusioned later, but I did manage to try to go along with the idea at Sunday School. Each year the Church and school teachers produced, with the help of the pupils, a grand Christmas exercise, complete with a huge tree. Santa, Mr. Ernest Tucker and our Sunday School teachers produced presents and popcorn logs with some hard candy mixed in for each child. Because our Christmas at home was scarce, the gifts were kept to wonder about until Christmas day, but I could enjoy the bag of candy and popcorn.

Most of our presents were homemade. Mom would give me new doll clothes. One year my brother Scott caught and cured squirrel and chipmunk skins to make a muff for Minerva with a squirrel collar for her coat. Brother George, when I was about nine, made me a doll's table the height of a footstool. I don't know who it was given to, but I'd give a lot to have it now. Many happy years of doll's dinners with thimble size doll dishes were served on it.

Another cherished gift was in 1918 when I was recovering from the "flu." My aunt crocheted doll's slippers with oil cloth soles from blue silkateen with yellow lace trim and cord. Minerva, my lovely doll, had a painted face on tinhead with real hair, cloth body and beautiful underwear, paisley dress and others too. My uncle Lee Rexford, the cabinet maker, had made me a doll's cradle, which I kept until my own children were old enough to play with it and break it by getting into it. I also had a doll carriage, which lasted about as long. This was dark green with metal wheels and a cover like a carriage top made of oil cloth, which would fold down.

Christmas vacation was visitor signal. On Christmas day someone would usually visit my Aunt Maude, who lived about nine miles away; and when they returned, my cousins Alice Hawley and Theoda Parmerter would stay with us for a week or more. On one visit Alice taught me to crochet. I even learned to crochet mats and spiderweb lace edging. I'm sorry to say the tension got off a little and one end of the lace was wider by an inch than the other.

When I was about 14 or 16, my grandfather spent Christmas with us. By this time we had moved to Parishville and the barn was connected to the house by a long passage. Grandpa told me the story of the animals who always kneeled at midnight the year Christ was born and still do. I, of course, needed to prove this was true, so a midnight visit to the barn was necessary.

When my children were small, their father was enchanted with Christmas, too. He would wander around the house with the cowbell to prove it was time to go to bed as Santa was coming. When we lived on the Back Hannawa Road, he rang the bell in early evening, then called our son Pat to witness what Santa has left him, a new pitchfork all his own.

Edgar was always one for lavish presents, even when it meant paying after Christmas. In my first year of marriage, and we with no money at all, Edgar gave me Evening of Paris powder, perfume and the works. One year

it was a new blue tweed suit, which I wore for years. Daughters Carol and Mary's dolls had the rest of the suit made into coats and skirts years later.

Nothing would do unless the sling shot Edgar carved for Tom was duplicated for Carol, and Pat got a small saw horse for his carpenter work. During wartime, small wagons were wooden and held together with bolts. Our mechanic son, with screw driver and wrench, took it apart many times. He even had a box of stove bolts to play with and a wooden horse, with a wooden two-wheel wagon that hitched behind it held together by a long bolt pin.

The year he and his cousin Gary each got tricycles, they would maneuver them around, around, and around through the hall, kitchen, and living room. It was a lovely raceway, in spite of the cooks trying to provide Christmas dinner on time. Pat and I had several ducks to dress which young Pat had shot with a shotgun. Needless to say, buckshots were imbedded in the backside of the ducks, not the heads alone, the usual targets of skilled duck hunters. His intentions had been noble, however.

That was the year the Christmas tree was still in the woods the day before Christmas, Pat and I went over to Kingsley's pasture and cut a smallish spruce and coerced Beverly Barrett and Bea Crowley to help trim it. It was a Godsend to have someone help me prepare for the big dinner for relatives the next day, as I was pregnant and everything must have seemed like a big job.

Until my husband's death, the children had always had an exciting Christmas, but by that time Pat and Madeline and Tom were old enough to help play Santa. My Mom and brother and his wife always helped to make it a special day. How nice to have relatives around at Christmas.

About the Author

Parepa Cook Adams is a native of Parishville and enjoys writing stories about her childhood for her own children and grandchildren.

The St. Lawrence Valley Genealogical Society

The St. Lawrence Valley Genealogical Society, a recently formed organization designed to preserve genealogical and family history related information, is actively seeking new members and to increase genealogical interest in the area.

Originally organized as the Potsdam Genealogical Society, it soon became apparent that interest in such a group was county wide with membership standing at 50 individuals and families after only six months of operation. The society is currently preparing a written constitution and by-laws and formal election of officers and will take place at the annual meeting on January 26, 1984.

At society meetings, usually held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Potsdam Public Museum, self-help as well as informative programs are held, designed to share experience and open new areas of information. Field trips have also been held to the Crumb Memorial Library on the Potsdam College campus and to the St. Lawrence County Archives behind the Silas Wright House.

In addition to the monthly meetings, the society also publishes a newsletter which contains meeting information, queries, book and magazine reviews, notices of seminars and conferences of interest to genealogists and progress reports on the status of society projects and descriptions of acquisitions to our library. We recently featured a newsletter insert which listed all the current town, village and city historians in St. Lawrence County.

One project the society has undertaken is a comprehensive census of all the cemeteries in the vicinity of the Potsdam area. Copies of these lists will be available at the Potsdam Museum, our repository of society archives. We hope to complete the censuses for this area by this fall and move on to outlying townships next summer.

The interests and resources of the society extend well beyond the confines of the St. Lawrence Valley area. While we hope to offer local people and those with St. Lawrence County roots a primary source of family information and help, we have many members with other areas of genealogical interest as well. We have a particular strength in colonial New England resources with members with 17th and 18th century

roots.

We expect to increase our strengths in Europe and other areas as new members with these backgrounds affiliate with the society and lend us their expertise and resources. In addition, our proximity to Canada opens broad avenues of information exchange and we will be able to tap the rich sources of knowledge across the St. Lawrence.

Anyone desiring more information about the St. Lawrence Valley Genealogical Society is cordially invited to attend any meeting or to contact us. Our mailing address is c/o Potsdam Public Museum, Civil Center, Potsdam, N.Y. 13676.

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