

THE
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Cover: Julia E. Crane in 1917. (*Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum*)

A History of The Crane School of Music

by Ralph Wakefield

Nineteen eighty-six is the centennial year of the Crane School of Music. To help commemorate that milestone, The Quarterly will feature a four-part series on the history of Crane by Ralph Wakefield, dean from 1967 to 1976.

Foreward

It seems to me that there are several approaches to covering the story of an institution and its development. One could stress anecdotes and personal recollections of those who have had close connections with a place. Another path would be to devote attention to the personalities who molded an institution. Calvin H. Plimpton, former President of Downstate Medical Center, in a convocation address made a statement which I admire: "An institution is only as good as its teachers. It is not really the lengthened shadow of a single man (person). In fact it is not the shadow of anything, but rather an incandescence of the quality of the teachers—and that spirit which their association with an institution arouses—which abolishes shadows."

In this historical survey of the Crane School there are no anecdotes and there is mention of but few personalities who devoted much of their professional lives to Crane. Appended to the final segment of this history will be a list of all persons who served as teachers of music at the Crane School. The writer hopes that any errors in the list will be brought to his attention.

Part I

One cannot deal with the history of music instruction in the State University College of Arts and Science at Potsdam without at least a glance at the forerunners of today's music programs. Julia Crane, whose name the school of music bears, did not emerge from a vacuum. She was a product of a rich cultural heritage in the North Country and a participant in important educational developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A settlement was first established at Potsdam in 1803. Benjamin Raymond, one of its founders, at first conducted worship services and taught children in his home. But in 1810, with the population reaching 982, Raymond proposed that a building be constructed on a lot (on the present Union Street) which he owned. When the state legislature authorized the organization of common schools in 1812, Raymond and his colleagues promptly applied for a charter and sold shares to raise funds. A petition for incorporation of a school or academy was presented in 1813 but no legislative action followed



The young Julia Crane. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)



F.E. Hawthorne taught music in Potsdam from about 1874 to 1928.
(Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)

because of the War of 1812 and the consequent confusion in Albany. But, finally, on September 30, 1816, an academy opened with an enrollment of forty-two students. Raymond had donated his school building as one-half of his subscription to the enterprise which was chartered as the St. Lawrence Academy. This institution was the direct forebear of the State Normal and Training School from which Potsdam College developed.

The first music teacher of the Academy, Catherine McIntyre of Canada, was hired in 1831. True, she was preceded by Helen Ray, also Canadian, who remained in Potsdam only a short time because of homesickness. Miss Ray's knowledge of music was reported to be superficial, being confined to about a half a dozen songs and as many marches and jigs. Miss McIntyre's duties, which she carried on until at least December 25, 1834, apparently consisted largely in giving instruction on the piano forte.²

The first listing of music as an academic subject of study appears in a report of January 18, 1841, of the Trustees of the St. Lawrence Academy to the Board of Regents; however, a Catalogue of the Academy for 1840 indicated that the music teacher, Willard Partridge, taught Piano-forte as well as "through-bass or Harmony."

From an examination of the roster of music teachers employed between 1831

and 1866 (the last year of the Academy) and from items such as a tuition receipt³ and printed programs of annual exhibitions presented by the Academy, one can conclude that the study and performance of music were important aspects of the Academy's program.

Music was also an important part of community life and culture of the nineteenth century North Country. Julius Hand conducted a singing school in the original academy. Singing schools were popular; often itinerant singing masters covered regular circuits meeting in homes as well as in schools and churches. Outstanding solo musicians were well-known in the area, and bands and fife and drum corps were active in many communities, including Potsdam. A local writer noted in an 1868 newspaper article that "there had been a Band in existence in the village for many years, made of clarinets, bassoon, a big unsightly 'Serpent' and a 'triangle'."⁴

Perhaps the activity that influenced Julia Crane more than any other was the Northern New York Musical Association, organized in 1861. The first of its twenty-six conventions was held in Potsdam. These conventions, which attracted between 250 and 300 participants, lasted usually for four days and included rehearsals and concerts. Guest artists were brought to the North Country from Boston, Chicago and

New York. It is reasonable to believe that Julia Crane participated in these festivals and that they had a strong influence upon her professional background. These festivals are a part of the heritage of today's concerts by the Crane Chorus and Orchestra.

The story of the establishment of a State Normal and Training School at Potsdam is another fascinating episode in the history of education. The act of the legislature which authorized the establishment of several normal schools was passed in 1866; a Local Board was appointed in August 1867. A contract for a new building was awarded late that Fall, and a new three-story State Normal and Training School opened in April 1869. Julia Crane enrolled in the Intermediate Department on that date.

A vocal music teacher was on the faculty of the Normal School from its beginning. (There were seven before Julia Crane). The position required only one period of class teaching per day, conducting the singing in Chapel, and preparing music for commencement and other school exhibitions.

Another department of the Normal School—the Normal Conservatory of Music—was also a forerunner of the Crane School. As early as 1875, F.E. Hawthorne, a native of New Haven, Vermont, and a graduate of the New England Conservatory, was listed as Director of the Normal Conservatory and teacher of instrumental music. For five years he was absent for post-graduate study with an internationally famed teacher, Theodor Leschetizky, and for service as Director of the Greenwich Musical Institute in Rhode Island. In 1886 Hawthorne returned to assume charge of the Conservatory at Potsdam; the Normal School catalog of 1887 named him as Director of Instrumental Music.⁵ Students who registered for the Conservatory could study voice, piano, organ, violin and music subjects such as harmony. Board and room was available and included laundry, fuel and lights. The date on which the Conservatory ceased to exist is like that of its founding, at present undetermined. By 1902 circulars published by the Normal School no longer referred to the Conservatory but to the Department of Instrumental Music.

At some time between 1902 and 1909 Hawthorne changed the spelling of his name to Hawthorne and established the Hawthorne Piano School. Circulars announcing the program of this school display below its name the words "The Department of Instrumental Music, State Normal and Training School." The 1914 graduation issue of a local newspaper reports the graduation festivities of the Normal School, including the graduating recital of the Hawthorne Piano School.⁶ Graduates of the piano

course are included with those of the teachers' courses of the Normal.

Sometime in the decade of the 1910s the Hawthorne School moved from its quarters in the Normal School building to the "professor's" residence at 70 Elm Street. An alumni magazine of the Normal School of January 1917 reports that "Professor Hawthorne is doing all the work of his school in his own home." One can guess that this move was necessitated by the razing of the 1869 Normal School building to allow the construction of the new building which is now Snell Hall of Clarkson University.

As of 1927 the Hawthorne School was advertised in the Normal School's newspaper as "the accredited department of piano of the Potsdam State Normal School." F.E. Hawthorne died on May 29, 1928, and a chapter of the development of music education at Potsdam College closed.

Another facet of the Normal School's music program established before Miss Crane's appointment to the faculty was an orchestra which began as early as 1879 under the leadership of Fred Harrington.⁷ Two instrumental en-

sembles existed by 1880, namely, a men's orchestra consisting of one violin, one bass viol, one flute and one brass and a women's orchestra of ten members led by Clem Pierce. A photograph of these ladies reveals that two sisters of Julia Crane, Jessie and Harriet, played violin and cornet respectively.⁸

Such was the institutional background for music instruction at the time of Julia E. Crane's appointment to the faculty of the Normal School in 1884.

Hewittville, New York, a tiny community near Potsdam, was the site of Julia E. Crane's birth on May 19, 1855. She grew up in the Potsdam area, and we can assume that she and her siblings were influenced by its musical environment. Julia began piano lessons as a youngster, and, at the age of 14, the day the first Potsdam Normal opened its doors to students, Julia entered the division of the Normal School which served as part of the village's public school system. Upon graduation from the Normal course in 1874 she taught in District Eight public school in Potsdam.

During the summers of 1875 and

1876, Miss Crane studied music education in Boston. Whether she formally studied voice during these years is not known; nevertheless, she had acquired a reputation as an unusually fine singer.

Between 1877 and 1880, Julia Crane taught music, mathematics and calisthenics at a normal school in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. In 1880 she returned to Potsdam and opened a vocal studio on Elm Street.⁹

In 1881, General Edwin A. Merritt of Potsdam was appointed American Consul-General in London. Desiring a companion for his wife, he asked Julia Crane to accompany them. Such a valuable experience for a young musician was not to be dismissed, and Miss Crane gladly accepted the opportunity for travel and study with Signor Manuel Garcia, the teacher of famed singer Jenny Lind.

When she returned to Potsdam, Miss Crane reopened her vocal studio and taught privately until 1884, the year she was asked to join the faculty of the normal school as vocal teacher to replace Phebe Haynes. We have in her own words an account of her appointment and of the establishment of a



The Potsdam Normal Orchestra, 1880. Julia Crane's sisters are in the front row; Harriet is second from the left, Jessie holds a violin at the right. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)



The Cornet Band, about 1880, Jerome Crane is in the center. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)

course of study especially designed for teaching music in the public schools:

I was finishing the day in my vocal studio when the President of the Normal School Board called. The teacher of music in the school had resigned and he came to ask me if I would take the position. I answered promptly, "Oh no, I am doing a piece of work which is very enjoyable, which leaves me quite free to go and come as I like, and every year my class increases." "But," said Mr. Watkins, "the Normal School position requires only one period of class teaching per day, conducting the singing in Chapel and preparing music for Commencement and other school exhibitions. You may have all the rest of the time to continue your voice work. We will furnish your studio and pianos for your own use and for the practice of your pupils." But I still insisted that I was better off without the responsibility of the school work, for I was free to accept concert engagements and my class of vocal pupils was

increasing so rapidly that I should soon have no time left for even one class per day.

To make a long story short, our discussion of the matter grew more interesting, and I finally told Mr. Watkins that one class period per day was not sufficient time in which to do the work in music that ought to be done in a Normal School, that the only thing that would tempt me to take the position would be the privilege of working out a plan which had been in my mind from the time I completed my Normal course. My Normal School instructors had made me very enthusiastic over *Methods of Teaching*, and I had realized that it ought to be thought possible to give similar instruction in Normal music classes. The thought had often been in my mind that with proper training, Normal graduates might be as well fitted to teach the music of the grades as they were to teach reading or history.

Mr. Watkins listened with great interest and finally said, "Miss

Crane, if you will take this position, I promise you that I will do everything in my power to make it possible for you to work out your ideals." The outcome of the matter was that I accepted the position at a salary of \$300.00 per year and began work in September 1884.

One of my first steps was to read the Course of Study laid down by the authorities in charge of the State Normal Schools. Here I found a statement that all Normal students should be prepared to teach the music of the grades. I immediately wrote to Judge Andrew S. Draper, who was then State Superintendent of Education, and told him what I had found, and asked him if that circular meant what it said. I was assured that the main aim of the music in Normal Schools was preparation for teaching the music of the grades. Then I wrote a letter, stating as clearly as I knew how to do, that for the accomplishment of the purpose, neither the time nor the money



The original Crane Institute building. The brick building is the old Stowell Annex. (Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)

for a morning song-singing period for each assembly of children, and a short period that was for teaching of music reading. He so arranged this second period that Normal students were free from all class recitations, so that they might observe or teach music when they were fitted to do so. The music program for the Normal students made it possible for any student who so desired, to study music throughout the four years' course.

Meanwhile, some of my voice pupils entered the Normal classes in Sight Singing and Music Methods with the idea of fitting themselves for teaching music in the public schools. This was the beginning of the course which has developed into a Training School for Music Supervisors. This phase of the work began in 1886 and in 1888 were graduated the first "Special Music Teachers" ever sent out from any Normal Training School in the United States.¹⁰

allotted by the state was adequate. I described the equipment necessary for a teacher to teach the music of the grades and the years of training necessary to acquire this preparation. Then I stated that I believed it was possible to so arrange a course of study in music that students entering with musical training might be fitted for teaching music, just as those who have studied reading and history learn in the Normal School the methods of teaching them. I then asked permission to do the work which I had outlined. The permission came and I started a piece of work, the results of which, as seen in the school today, I did not foresee even in my dreams.

Let me acknowledge with gratitude the help afforded by Dr. E.H. Cook who took his place as Principal of the school the year that I began my work. One of the happiest moments of my life was the day I met the new Principal when he said. "How are you going to prepare teachers of music for the public schools in one period per day for twenty weeks?" How gladly I acknowledged that I knew it could not be done and that it was only because of promises that I might work out a better arrangement that I had accepted the position. Dr. Cook went to work on the program, making it entirely new, arranging



The Crane Normal Institute of Music after porches were added. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)



Edith Austin was appointed to the Crane Normal Institute of Music in 1893 and stayed till 1922. (Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)

In 1886, the year the first Special Music Teachers' Curriculum was initiated, Julia Crane also incorporated the Crane Normal Institute of Music. This, therefore, is considered the founding date of the present Crane School of Music. Instruction in music subjects was offered through the Institute while other subjects of the curriculum were taught in the normal school.

Julia Crane pointed out the pioneering nature of the project she undertook at her appointment in 1884. Music instruction in the public schools, which began to become widespread after the Civil War, was taught by conservatory trained musicians or by people prepared by private studios. Julia Crane was in the forefront of educators who recognized that specialized training was needed by those who aimed to teach music in the public schools. The complete system of instruction in music from primary grades through the normal school as conceived by Julia Crane, was published in 1889 as *Music Teachers' Manual*. This book had eight editions; the last of them, in 1923, was completed by Marie Schuette, Julia Crane's successor.

During the early years of the Institute, Miss Crane had several assistants. Two

of these, Edith Austin, appointed 1893, and Harriet Crane Bryant, appointed 1895, remained on the staff for many years.

By 1896 the Board of Regents of New York State recognized the need for

specialized education when it granted certification for teachers of music. That same year, in response to a need for additional facilities for her program, Miss Crane bought a house on Main Street; it stood approximately where the parking lot of Clarkson's Congdon Hall is now. The building housed teaching studios as well as living quarters for Julia Crane and her sister Harriet Crane Bryant. This structure was one of five used between 1886 and the present to house the program of Crane School of Music.

Graduates of the Crane Institute between 1888 and 1899 numbered one hundred and thirty-four; the faculty numbered four in 1900 and five in 1903. One of the early graduates, Class of 1901, was Sara Merrick, who was to marry Bertrand Snell. Mrs. Snell was a generous benefactor of her alma mater and the present Sara M. Snell Music Theater is named in her honor. Helen Snell Cheel, daughter of Sara M. Snell, also a Crane graduate (1926), provided an endowment for the school's first and only graduate scholarship.

By 1905 the Local Board of the Normal School decided that the institution should profit more by Julia Crane's abilities and her salary was increased to twelve hundred dollars in return for teaching high school classes and Normal Department classes and supervising music instruction. As the public school music program was offered jointly by the Crane Institute and the Normal School, several of the music faculty held joint appointments in both institutions.

There is evidence from printed programs that as early as 1890 a choral club of fifteen singers and an orchestra of twelve were active. In 1894 Julia



Reception Hall, Crane Normal Institute of Music. (Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)



Julia Crane's studio at the Crane Normal Institute of Music. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)

Crane founded one of the School's best known and most distinguished choral groups, a women's chorus, the Phoenix Club. It lasted until 1974. In 1901, Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* was performed by a chorus of seventy-eight and an orchestra of fourteen.¹¹ By 1905 the musicians were proficient enough to perform Haydn's *Creation* and Handel's *Messiah*. Hence, the tradition of community festivals of the Northern New York Music Association was resumed and the groundwork was laid for the renowned Festival of the Arts which flourished five decades later.

During the same time, space for classes of the Institute was in short supply. Records of 1909 indicate that the local Board promised to provide

Miss Crane with better quarters. Minutes of the Board show that Miss Crane appeared before them to say that she was negotiating with Syracuse University for the sale of her Institute, but that she would consider remaining in Potsdam if she could have more space for instruction. She was given a suite of rooms in Stowell Annex (a structure razed in 1929) where classes continued for twenty years.

1908 saw the appointment to the Normal faculty of Richard Tunnicliffe, a graduate of 1902, who was hired primarily as a high school division music teacher, but who served also as a part-time instrumental teacher for the Institute. A photo of 1912 shows Tunnicliffe as conductor of a festival concert;

in 1915 his name appears on the Normal School payroll as orchestra leader. He earned national renown as the inventor of the trinal ladder, a graphic device that is used to this day for drill in the use of syllables for music reading. Tunnicliffe was an influential personality in Potsdam until 1920 when he left for a position at Bowling Green University in Ohio.

By 1913 Miss Crane saw the need to lighten her load so that she could devote more time to development of the curriculum; she brought to Potsdam another Institute graduate, Erva Skinner, who had been teaching in St. Albans, Vermont. To Julia Crane the need for specially trained secondary school teachers of both vocal and

instrumental music was apparent. But at the same time she felt the necessity of revitalizing her original goal which was to have music taught in the grades by classroom teachers completely prepared for this task. This was Miss Skinner's assignment. The course was offered in the Normal School and was known officially as the "Normal Course with Special Work in Music" but was generally referred to by the title "Special Music Teachers Course." Miss Skinner presided over this program for more than 20 years. The course ceased to exist in the 1940s. In contrast the course offered by the Crane Normal Institute of Music in conjunction with the Normal School was, by 1913, titled "Course for Supervisors of Music."

As the need for additional instruction in instrumental music grew, a specialist in violin and strings was sought; and in 1917 Miss Crane obtained the services of Franklin Bishop, a graduate of the Institute of Musical Art in New York City, the forerunner of the Juilliard School of Music. Mr. Bishop taught instrumental music, became the con-

ductor of the orchestra in 1920, and, after 1926, was known as head of the instrumental department of the Normal School. He served the institution until his death on July 28, 1940.

From the beginning of her association with higher education, Julia Crane was a vigorous participant in professional activities nationwide. She taught in prestigious summer schools, read papers at conventions of national associations and served on official bodies for the New York State Department of Education. Graduates of the Crane Institute were placed in almost every state of the nation thanks to her influence and renown.

A decision was made in 1917 to raze the 1869 Normal School and to replace it with a new three-story sandstone structure. This project, completed in 1919, opened with a new principal in charge, Dr. Randolph T. Congdon. With the building came a four manual pipe organ. The first concert was presented on it by Archer Gibson of New York City on April 15, 1920. The Institute's first staff organist was Frank

Merrill Cram, a graduate of Brown University and the Royal Academy of Music in London. Professor Cram remained in Potsdam until 1925 when he accepted a position at the Saint Lawrence University where he remained until 1932.

It is at this point that Helen Hosmer, who would eventually administer the Crane School for thirty-six years (1930-1966), enters its history. Helen Hosmer attended public school in Potsdam, and in 1918 graduated from both the music supervisors course and the normal course for classroom teachers. She had shown unusual musical talent in her youth, and by the time she was in fifth grade was being used as accompanist for a model teacher from the Crane Institute staff. She also served as an accompanist for guest artists who came to perform in Potsdam's Opera House. After her preparation as a teacher, Helen Hosmer accepted a position at Winsted, Connecticut, as supervisor of music. She returned to Potsdam in 1922 and immediately Miss Crane urged her to join the Normal School



Harriet Crane Bryant taught at the Crane Institute of Music starting in 1895. Here she is seated on the porch of the Crane Normal Institute of Music. (Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)



Harriet Crane Bryant's living room at the Crane Normal Institute. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)

faculty, which she did as a so-called critic and model teacher.

Financial support for the Institute had been an ever-present worry for Julia Crane and she more than once considered its sale. The last attempt to seek external funding occurred around 1920. Dr. Congdon, who became Principal in 1919, assisted Miss Crane in presenting a petition to the Juilliard Music Foundation from the Crane Normal Institute of Music. They sought \$750,000 to create "a free Institute in perpetuity," and proposed a name such as "Juilliard-Crane Institute of Music affiliated with the Potsdam State Normal School." The petition was unsuccessful, but it does provide an appraisal of the Crane Institute at the start of the 1920's.

Crane Institute owns and occupies a remodeled and enlarged dwelling valued at about \$10,000 and situated on a lot adjoining the Normal School grounds; it also possesses about \$10,000 worth of equipment . . . The institute is affiliated with the Normal School in three respects: (1) Miss Crane is head of the music department of the Normal School; (2) the Crane students take their work other than that of a techni-

cally musical character in the Normal School classes; (3) the model teaching and practice teaching included in the Crane Course are carried on in the model school, practice school, junior high school and senior high school departments of the Normal School. In addition to the principal there are six teachers in the Institute. Two teachers paid by the Normal School give instruction to classes in the Institute. The present enrollment is forty-six . . .

The combination of a Normal School having all departments from kindergarten through high school and a professional department, with a conservatory of music is not available in many places. The combination of literary and normal training with music instruction, and the fully developed plan for observation and practice teaching make the Crane Institute unique in the opportunities which it affords for the practical training of musicians to meet the needs of instruction in the public schools. The musician has often been a failure in teaching school music for lack of understand-

ing of the problems of the school room. These problems have been worked out in Potsdam . . .

There is open at present a tremendous field for usefulness. To render the service to the state which it might easily render, the Institute needs several teachers of the stringed instruments. It has only one. It needs teachers of woodwind and brasses, - it has none. It needs space to take the pupils who wish instruction in piano, violin, pipe organ, and all orchestral instruments. It needs rooms in which practice organs and practice instruments generally can be placed. It needs many instruments for the use of students for study and practice.

The Crane equipment for training teachers for the purely vocal work of the public schools, which is a foundation for all music study, is fairly adequate, as every class room in the Normal building and in the town schools is pressed into service for this kind of instruction at some time each day. A suite of five rooms and the entire Institute building are used all the day for this purpose . . . [I]t seems clear that the number



Members of the 1901 graduating class of the Crane Normal Institute of Music. Sara Merrick Snell is second from left, second row. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)



Richard Tunnicliffe is third from the left in the back row; Helen Hosmer is at the left in the back row. (Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)



Julia E. Crane, her brother and sisters on the steps of the Crane Normal Institute, prior to 1900. Clockwise, from top left, Harriet Crane Bryant, Jerome A. Crane, Jessie Crane Moore, Daisy Crane Sisson, Julia E. Crane. (Photograph courtesy of the Potsdam Public Museum)

of applicants would be very large should it become possible to give free tuition. Such a situation would permit the choice of student by competition so as to ensure the selection only of students who give promise of becoming good musicians and successful teachers. Within reasonable limits, the number of such teachers who could be graduated by the school, and the consequent possible usefulness of the school, seem limited only by the amount of money available

It was not until 1926 that Congdon's

desire to see the Institute incorporated as a department of the Normal School was satisfied.

In the Spring of 1923, Miss Crane, suffering from ill-health, was granted leave from the Normal School. She planned a limited amount of travel, rest at home, some writing, but also continued supervision of her Institute without teaching duties. They were to be assumed by Marie A. Schuette, who had just completed work for her Bachelor's degree at Teachers College, Columbia University. Miss Schuette was a 1914 graduate of the Crane Institute.

Helen Hosmer was with the group that accompanied Julia E. Crane to the 1923 Music Supervisors National Conference in Cleveland. According to Miss Hosmer, "To this day I can remember one event which startled me at the time. We were to take a street car to another part of the city and Miss Crane asked me if I would stay with her and let the rest of the group go along faster, for she did not feel she could keep up with them. Coming home from Cleveland, she complained of being tired, a most unusual thing for her to do. From that time on, she did less and less of her regular duties during the month of



The class of 1918. Julia E. Crane and Harriet Crane Bryant are in the window. Helen Hosmer is standing to the right of the window, next to Mrs. Bryant. (Photograph courtesy of Ralph Wakefield)

May. On June 9, a Saturday, occurred the annual Crane luncheon and as a surprise for us she had at each place a little folder containing her picture and expression of her regret that she was not able to be with us. Miss Crane's closing words in that message were, "I am sending all my dearest love and it seems queer to say "sending" because it does not have to go; it is right there with you."

On the following Monday, June 11, 1923 Julia Crane died at the home of her sister, Mrs. Jessie Moore, at 8 Lawrence Avenue. Thus closed a long life devoted to the improvement of music teaching all over the country. Her loss was not only local; it was national.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Calvin H. Plimpton, "Where the River Flows Both Ways," Convocation address, September 12, 1975.

² She was reimbursed \$9.48 for travel expenses from Montreal. Her starting salary, listed January 1, 1832, was \$300.

³ A framed receipt hangs on the wall of the Crumb Room in the Frederick W. Crumb Library on the Potsdam College Campus.

⁴ William Liberty Knowles.

⁵ F.E. Hathorne came to Potsdam in 1874 as organist of the First Methodist Church. During his absence from Potsdam, Julia Crane was Acting Director of the Normal Conservatory. In 1887, she was listed as vocal teacher.

⁶ *Potsdam Herald-Recorder*, June 26, 1914.

⁷ According to Dr. Carleton Clay of the State University College at Oneonta, as a collegiate ensemble, only the orchestra at Harvard University preceded the orchestra of the Potsdam Normal School.

⁸ Julia Crane served as Director of the Orchestra from 1908 to 1910.

⁹ Julia Crane's vocal studio was located in a structure which stood on property between the present Potsdam Post Office and the Super-Duper Market. By the 1880's the Crane family resided at 91 Main Street in Potsdam.

¹⁰ Interview with Julia Crane by the editor of the yearbook, date unknown.

¹¹ These groups were made up of students from the Institute and the Normal Department as well as from the high school, which was a division of the Normal School.

About the Author

Ralph Wakefield, class of 1942, is Dean Emeritus of the Crane School of Music.

CAN YOU HELP?

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association has received a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts to research and plan in 1985 an exhibit on the county's various agricultural expositions from about 1850 to about 1930. Fairs were held in Potsdam, Oswegatchie (Ogdensburg), Hammond, Gouverneur and Canton. The SLCHA is seeking to locate all kinds of materials relating to these fairs, including written records, to establish an accurate history of the agricultural expositions held in this county. If you have or know of any written records (for example, letters or diaries detailing visits to a fair as well as any official minute books or other records) or artifacts, including prize-winning items, connected with any of the fairs, please contact John Baule or Judith B. Ranlett at the SLCHA in Canton. Please help us!

Winter Work: Stark, New York, 1923

by Edward L. Malone

In early 1923, a young engineer worked in the area around Stark, New York, as part of a surveying team. Over sixty years later, his pictures and an account of his experiences found their way to Bill Smith of Colton, who presented them to the St. Lawrence County Historical Association. The text which follows is adapted from letters written to Mr. Smith and to the editor by Mr. Malone.



Members of the team in February, 1923. The author is third from the left; Frank "Be-We" Foster is second from the right and Bill McKizer at the extreme right.

Stark was a diversion project planned by Sanderson and Porter of New York City. They were foremost in the engineering field, with a good reputation, but they are out of business now. They were working with Adirondack Power and Light Company, now a part of the Niagara Mohawk system. The idea was to construct a dam at Stark Falls on the Raquette River and produce hydroelectric power there; from the tailrace a canal was to be dug for about a mile to a fertile valley that would accept the water. The valley had two ideal dam sites where dam and power plants would be built. Downstream from the second dam the waterway would join up with the Raquette River, somewhere in the vicinity of Potsdam. Another diversion canal was planned to be dug from Joe Indian Pond to the river to

increase the volume in the Raquette. Naturally, all this planning required considerable field surveying of the areas involved, and the decision to work in the dead of winter was because many locations were wet and swampy, sometimes due to beavers, and infested with insects. It would be impossible to do any surveying in the warm weather and much important data would have been missed.

The surveying crew lived in a lodge owned by Bill McKizer, who lived across the road from it. Housekeeping and cooking was furnished to us by local women. We hired local men—woodsmen—to work in the survey parties. Some of them were Celand Elliott, Frank Foster, and McCarthy (the son of a widow who had a small store down the road). Although Foster's

first name was Frank, no one used it. We called him "Be-We" because almost every morning he asked Mr. Osterhoudt, the party chief, "Be we going to the same area as yesterday or somewhere else?" Hence, we dubbed him "Be-We". Also, we had a clerk, McMath, who took care of payrolls, ordered necessities, and other details. There was a draftsman who drew plans and sketches from information obtained by the survey parties. He was an Indian from Delhi, and every morning, whatever the weather, he walked to the river edge at sunrise, knelt down and prayed.

As to the weather, Mr. Osterhoudt delegated me to read the big thermometer on the porch. One day I bundled up and ventured out for my daily reading. I could not believe my eyes; the reading was -44 degrees below!



Frank Foster was another local member of the team.



Celand Elliot was one of the local men who worked in the surveying party.



Edward Malone about to ascend the Catamount Mountain Fire Station, March, 1923.



Going to work in February, 1923.



Raquette River at Stark in March, 1923.



Raquette House in Stark.



The Little Red Schoolhouse in Stark.



Stark Falls in February.



Stanley McKizer.



Bog Mountain in February.



Breaking the jam.



Log drivers' camp at Stark, June, 1923.



Staying behind to inspect the core borings, Edward Malone observed the Spring, 1923, Raquette River Paper Company's log drive.



Drivers at rest.



Logjam at Stark Falls.

And I took a second look to be sure. I got inside quickly to report to Mr. Osterhoudt. He said I must be wrong and he wanted to see for himself. Coming back quickly, he said I was right—no outdoors for us that day.

We had a teamster, a local fellow with a well-worn, shaggy dogskin coat. He came every morning with his team and box sled, regardless of the weather. His name was Washington Laundré, but to us his nickname was Wash Laundry.

My arrival in Stark was in January, 1923. My recollection is that Mr. Smith and I left New York City by train in the morning and arrived in either Colton or South Colton at dusk. We walked across from the station to a small hotel, checked in, had dinner and went to bed. About 6 a.m. we had breakfast and greeted our transportation outside the door. There was Wash

Laundry with his sled. We piled in for the drive to Stark; we stood up all the way, pounding our feet.

Another character that we all liked was the faithful mail man. When he arrived—with sled and single horse—everybody was happy. He started at Tupper Lake, passed through Stark and ended at Potsdam. At each town he picked up mail and provisions. I think his trips were two or three days each way.

I was left behind in Stark when the surveying job was done and all the others departed. I was assigned the task of inspector on some twenty core borings in the outcrop at the site. The borings were made by Sprague-Henwood of Scranton, Pennsylvania, with three men.

About ten years ago my wife and I took a motor trip to Northern New York. I wanted her to see the place

where I worked during some pretty cold weather. When we arrived in the vicinity of Stark (according to my calculations), we were on a two-lane concrete road and nothing looked familiar to me. Back in the old days the only road was a dirt one, and the new concrete road was designed for the speedier cars of today. It was also an entirely different route. So I never found out if the dam or diversion canal had been built at Stark. The area was isolated, and no one was found to help us out. We figured the road we were on was remote from old Stark, and we gave up looking for it.

About the Author

After his winter and spring at Stark, Edward L. Malone worked for the J.G. White Engineering Corporation of New York City until his retirement in 1967.



The shared experience of winter's work: logging in the bush. (Photograph courtesy of the North American Indian Travelling College)

Akwesasne* Lumberjack Tales: Introduction

by Ateronhiatakon with Nadine N. Jennings

In my grandfather's generation, the whole of American society was talking about the Depression Era. The people here never went through that Depression because their economy was based on different things. But yet my grandfather would say "They had a hard time," and that's exactly how he would say it. He heard that they had had a hard time, harder than the people at home had it. It wasn't extra to have a hard time. It was just the way things were.

I'm going to tell these things the way I heard them. I heard them mostly at the kitchen table or in the garden working alongside or behind my grandfather and his brother, my uncle, and from others, but always in that kind of atmosphere. One thing about storytelling, *onkwehonwe* (original people) anyway, is that there's not a beginning

or an end: it's a continual thing. You might hear the first part eight or nine times, another part once or twice, and then the continuation. So tonight we're going to talk a little bit about when the men used to go to the bush as a means of employment.

Always when the men went the people had to prepare for certain things. They had to prepare for winter-time where they lived, meaning somebody had to stay behind and take care of the farm animals; somebody had to take care of grandma down the road; somebody had to take care of the nephew or the niece. So the women

who remained were in a sense brought together when the men prepared to leave.

This always was described by the men more as an adventure than going to work, going to a job. They would go up to the bush to log; that's what they were doing, but it was more to live a couple of months away from the family, so they prepared that way. There were basic things that the men had to have, and so they took care of their basic needs, their tools, their life cycle for the winter months.

These were the days described in the stories as the hard-working days: it

*Akwesasne (where the partridge drums), home of the *Kanienkehaka* (Mohawk), is bordered by St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

was hard work; it was long hours. They went to cut bush and be part of the elements up there, and they talked about hard work, but it was always the collective hard work. It wasn't like a man's getting ready to entertain a career or a job, going out of town and coming back. No, this was always three or four men getting together, and so they would make certain that one person would be sure to bring the green tea while another person would be sure he had the tools that would be needed. And so they would have a collective. The women would also have a collective, making sure about what needed to be done at home.

There would be a festival, a gathering to have a departing. The men would be walked out of the road, the driveway, and always there was the separation of the families. My grandfather talked about that a lot. There was no concern or worry, just that he would miss the normal everyday activities of the main home, but he was going to another home too.

And so the men would travel a long way. They would take their team of horses, and they would go to, for example, what is now known as Saranac Lake, but it was a few days journey to get there. They always went prepared for survival. Sometimes they would go up there and they would have to build or rebuild a log cabin; so they would live in a lean-to for the first couple of weeks, just kind of a camp, a lean-to or whatever the natural environment provided for them.

They worked hard. They also went prepared to do their extra work, their own hobbies, their own personal art or craft. A man would go there and plan to make several dozen ax handles while he was relaxing in the small cabins that were available to them. Also, if they were fortunate enough to find some lowlands, there might be a swamp where he could find black ash. To make splint, you pound the log and the layers of black ash come off. And so you could hear that thumping into the late evenings.

They went prepared to do these kinds of activities. Making medicine is also very important, but all the things were there. The men knew they would be there: the cedar boughs would be there, all the things one needs to make herbal preventative medicinal teas and healing medicines, they always had those things. They would pack very limited supplies of what would today be considered staples, but they would be sure to pack the right things.

The stories tell of animals coming and of being part of their family up there. That's their home up there, the bear, the deer, and other animals that live up there in the bush. So there are

all kinds of stories about coming to that type of a family. And my grandfather talked about, they talked about, the silence of winter, the different kinds of silences of winter; the animals would be hibernating, there might be some birds in the bush, but there is that silence, that silence of when it's really really cold in the bush, that silence, and it breaks with the crackling of the wood of the trees. When it gets really really cold and the tree moves, it crackles. All the visionary things they talk about in their stories.

It was always a happy time: the stories had a very happy tone to them. But in reality, when one thinks about it, it's lonely, it's long, it's hard work. My grandfather used to talk about when men would get hurt. People lost their lives up there; but again, all of this experience was a positive thing. They would cut wood by handblade and ax. The whole feeling of cutting a tree in the bush is of oneness. You don't just walk up to a tree and put a blade to it. You have to look at a tree, you have to determine how you're going to fell it, which side has heavy branches, which is the best avenue, and what will be most productive of the time, because it's time consuming to do things all by hand. And the thing that I think I remember the most is the way he understood and the way he explained the work of the horse. They didn't need to hold the reins or shout directions; the horse had a sense of what was going on, it was part of a team. The horse wasn't a tool or an apparatus: it was part of the living kind of partnership in the bush.

And so those are the kinds of things that are told in the stories.

My father as a young man went up to the bush himself for a few years, and he told stories about how they would sit down and they would sing songs. They would sing some real good songs about the happiness and joy of traveling. Their favorite was *ha ni ioni uah e ka na wa ken i tsi to we*, "Come on let's all go see our cousins at Kanawake." There are many songs like that. These aren't necessarily traditional songs in the sense of ancient, but they are songs that relate to that day's activities, songs that they would make up, songs that didn't get carried on. They're songs that maybe a group of men would have for that particular time. Something might have happened. Maybe they got an extra part of their work that they didn't expect. They would have a song about that. They would laugh and joke about the song, and they would add expressions to that song about what exactly happened and about their loved ones and sweethearts. The songs related to their environment, the bush, and the kind of seasonal

observations one would make in the bush. You can tell, even before snowfall, just about how much snow there's going to be; you can tell what kind of winter is coming if you know how to observe these things in the forest, the bush. The people knew about the weather conditions, the storm conditions, that were coming, and so they had ample time to prepare for them. These were in songs! They would talk about it and they would sing these songs.

The other thing one feels strongly about listening to these songs is that there's always a Creator or God evident in everything, that they were blessed to go up there, and that their journey was prepared. They were assured spiritually that they would have a good season, even to the bringing of the logs to the streams and then floating the logs to the log booms and the log transportation on the lakes and rivers.

And that's another whole story in the circle that my grandfather talked about. He talked about the skill, the skill of running on the wood and directing timber. I could just envision when he was telling me that story the quick swift water and the danger of that, and he would say many times, "We fell in very cold water." Then he would say, "and that's why I have this," and he would stroke his leg, meaning the arthritis and stiffness he had in his old age.

Then there was the other part of the stories, the seeing of the men coming home. They would come back with ax handles and baskets, just their craft that they did in their spare time. It's hard to imagine that they had any spare time because they worked long hours and long days. And of course there were the daily things that needed to be done too. The men had to do their own cooking; they had to do their own domestic types of things. So what spare time? But there was always the proof. There would be bundles of splint baskets of all different forms, and these were the heavier baskets, the type that the men made, not the sweet-grass baskets that are more common today; anything that one could fix or make in the bush. They would make frames for lacrosse sticks. And I could just imagine that, a bundle of frames that were all carved. The way he talked, the men would bring home presents. "I carved this for you. I carved this for you." So in one way it was production for sale, but also when the men were sitting there thinking about someone special they would do that. There was always something special about one particular piece, maybe a denotation telling who it was special for.

They did it year upon year. They would go. And then things changed, for

my grandfather anyway. I guess that the pulp industry changed, mechanization for one thing. My grandfather's stories abruptly end for that era. But in the closing of that he begins again. The story doesn't finish; it starts over again. "This year we would've gone to . . . and I'm sure we would've brought (this particular horse)." "At this time of year we would have to be doing . . . to get prepared for . . ." And that's the way the stories were told. We would be doing something in the fall, and he'd say: well, we'd be doing this to get ready for that, but we'd be doing it anyway.

What wasn't said, but was meant, was that it was work for the healthy strong person. They would take the younger boys along as chore boys to take care of the horses and take care of the things around the camps, so the young people had a chance to go with them even though they weren't part of



Scenes from the old lacrosse stick factory on Cornwall Island. (Photographs courtesy of the North American Indian Travelling College)

the workforce. I think that's what my father talked about a lot. That's where he started. And he talked about his own brother going for years to logging camps.

And when it changed, you know—according to the stories again—the stories changed. People started talking

more about agriculture after that. So the story is an event. The stories are the good times gone by. And the reason they are told is "May you have those good times to talk about too." There is always that underlying reason for the stories: May you have good times to tell also.

About the Authors:

The joy of giving these words comes from times before us and gives us direction for the future.

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