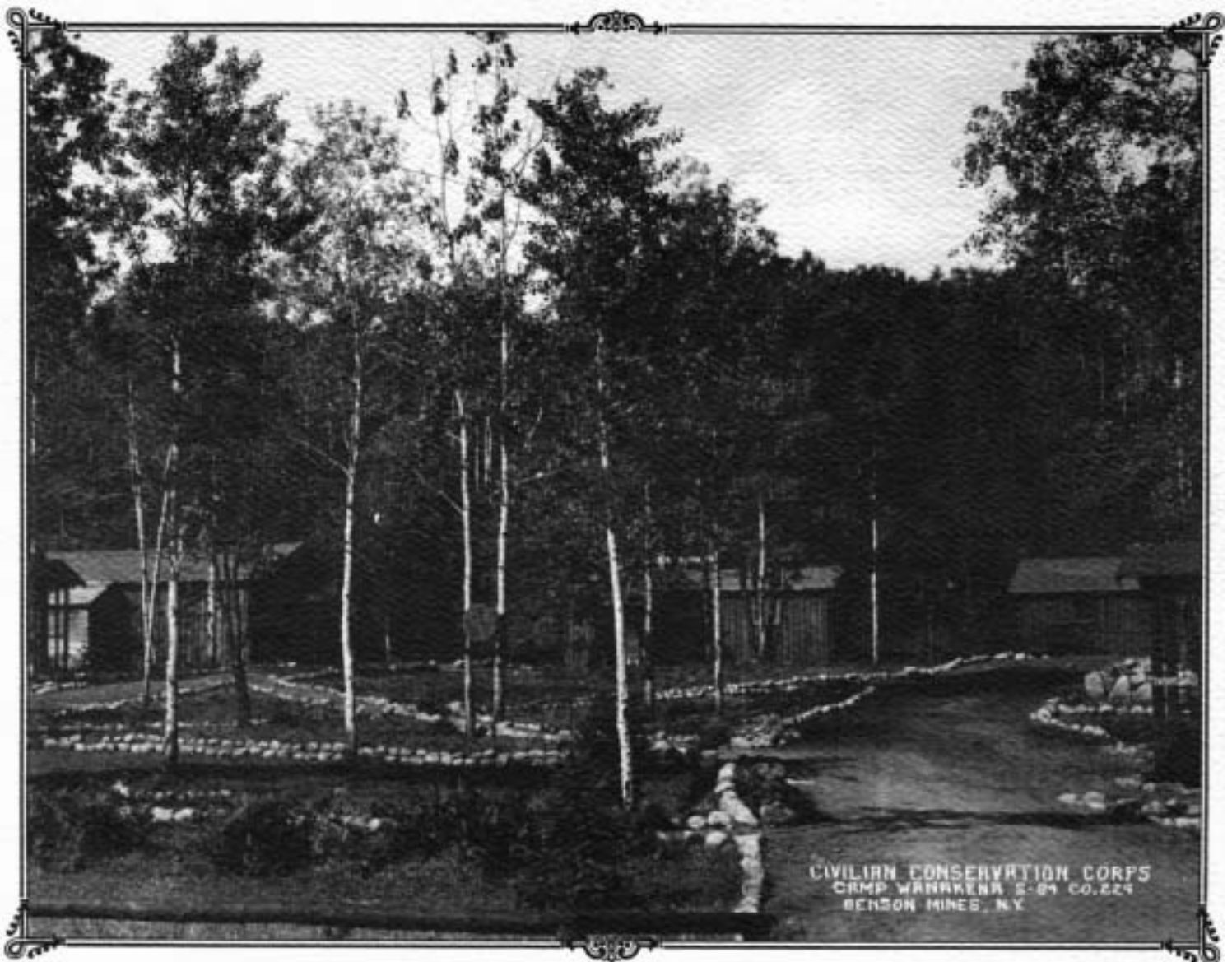


THE QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association

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Cover: Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Wanakena, Benson Mines, New York. (*SLCHA Archives*)

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The Everett Farm, Lawrence, NY

The Family

Part III

by Virginia Duffy McLoughlin

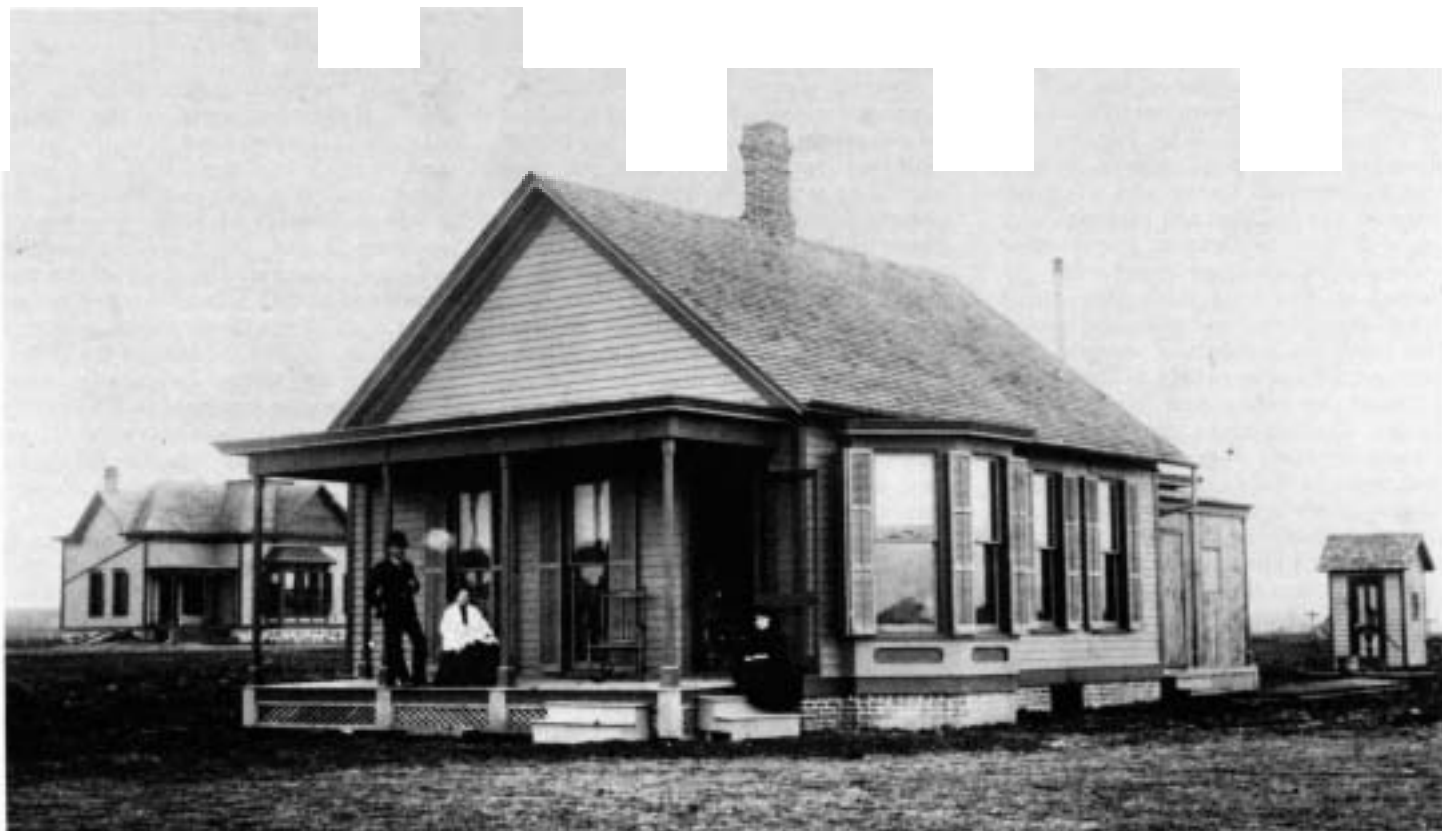
The Everetts never wanted to give up their family farm even though, as it turned out, none of them personally did the farming after Luther Everett's untimely death in 1890. On that date Luther's son Fred, 17, was enrolled at Potsdam Normal, and his son George, 14, was in school at Mooers Forks in Clinton County. They both were doing well in their studies, and the family did not want to interrupt their education. Their oldest sister, Abbie, who had married John K. Whitney, a merchant in Mooers Forks, had persuaded her parents to send Fred, and then George, to school there because of her enthusiasm for the new young teacher, Frederick E. Duffy. Mr. Duffy, born and raised in Parishville, graduated from Potsdam Normal in 1887 and commenced teaching at Mooers Forks that September. Within a few years his life became entwined more deeply with the Everetts—all because of a bowl of popcorn. One evening in Mooers Forks he had called on John and Abbie Whitney but found

they were not at home. Abbie's sister Elizabeth, who was visiting at the time, asked whether he would like to wait for their return and invited him to share some freshly made popcorn. Even though he said later that he'd never seen such a measly bowl of popcorn, the spark of romance burned bright. Elizabeth and Frederick E. Duffy were married and started their life together at Mooers, where he had by then become an English teacher and principal of the Mooers High School.

During this time there was a temporary exchange of children in the family, partially to share the burden but more to share the benefit. While Fred and George lived with Abbie in Mooers Forks and then with Elizabeth in Mooers, Abbie's younger son Lawrence came to the Everett Farm to keep his grandmother company and help out as best a 9-to-10-year old could. Also residing at the Everett Farm was Ella Everett, until her marriage December 30, 1891, to Dr. Daniel Finnimore, of Potsdam.

Ella's twin, Emma, however, was in far-off Elba, Nebraska.

The opening of the American West profoundly affected all Americans, and the experiences of several members of this Northern New York family are typical of the variety of roles individuals took in this historic phenomenon which bedazzled some with its possibilities, lured some with its mystery, and merely dragged others into unwanted adventure. When Martha Abram Everett's youngest sister went on the Oregon Trail in 1862, the dominant reason was love for the adventurer with whom she had eloped. Cynthia Abram, who had been a student and later a teacher for a brief time at the St. Lawrence Academy in Potsdam, became imbued with the missionary spirit during her year of study at Mary Lyon's Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. As a concession to her parents' worries, she had condescended to go to Iowa to teach rather than to a mission in foreign lands across the sea. No compromise could be reached,



Home of James and Emma Everett Bacon, Elba, Nebraska, 1887. (Courtesy of author)



Martha Abram Everett, daughter Elizabeth, daughter Ella at piano, granddaughter Annie Bacon seated on floor, Elizabeth's husband F.E. Duffy. Emma Everett Bacon's flower paintings on walls and on bowl and vase. 1907. (Courtesy of author)

however, on the matter of her love for another Parishville resident by the name of Cyrus Stafford. Why her parents disapproved of him is unknown. In Iowa Cynthia married Cyrus, and when her parents learned that she planned to go on with him to Oregon, her brother was quickly dispatched from Parishville, armed with gifts (which included a shawl and a dress) as bribes to dissuade her from the dangerous venture. But her brother had to return to Parishville without success—and without the bribes. Cynthia and Cyrus started for Oregon in early May, 1862, the shawl and dress in their trunk. Not having a wagon of their own, they were at the mercy of those who could provide transportation. Cynthia walked beside the wagons most of the way, and after each long day she had to cook for the wagon-train of twenty-one people. After 21 weeks and 3 days they reached their destination in the gold-mining town of Auburn, Oregon, on the Powder River in the heart of the Blue Mountains.¹⁰² Cynthia likened the physical surroundings to those of her own parental home at Allens Falls, Parishville, “where the hills and big pines—minus the maples

& beeches—grow on the St. Regis.” Cynthia immediately started a school for the pioneer children, but her health had been so weakened that she died within six months.¹⁰³ Her St. Lawrence County family received the news in a heartrending letter from Cyrus Stafford which took almost three months to arrive from Oregon. From that time on, her sister Martha Abram Everett referred to any place beyond the Mississippi as “the terrible West.”

Despite this tragic experience, several young people of the family were eager to try their luck with the West. It is said that Mary Abram Everett's hair turned white with worry when her daughter journeyed to California. Cynthia Everett taught school from 1883 to 1886 in Eureka, which she described for her cousin Ella: “. . . if you can conceive Fort Jackson as being laid out in squares and about thirty times as large as it is, you will have a pretty fair idea of my adopted home. The people dress elegantly but you can never tell whether it is the lady of thousands or the servant of tens.”

Several of Martha Everett's nieces and nephews of the Covey family, all

born in Parishville, settled in the St. Paul, Nebraska, area in the 1880's. Abram L. Covey went into the grain and milling business. Will H. Covey went into grain and cattle buying. He wrote on January 24, 1885, of his recent success: “I had Ten thousand bushels wheat on hand at the time of the advance and made Fifteen cents per bushel on it . . . Money is no object with me any more.” (After the turn of the century he and his brother Lyman, Jr., went into the mining business in Whitehorn and then Leadville, Colorado.) Their sister Carrie Covey was elected to be the Howard County, Nebraska, Superintendent of Schools in 1884.

Money from the East was necessary to the development of the West, and investments were encouraged by offers of generous return. Will Covey interested Luther Everett in school bonds in the St. Paul area. Perhaps Luther felt he was investing in a worthy cause as well, but his main concern seems to have been financial, as he was very cautious and asked the advice of several Nebraska bankers of acquaintance, including James Bacon, to be sure this was a wise investment. On November

9, 1884, Will Covey acknowledged receipt from Luther of \$235 balance due on Elba, Nebraska, school bonds.

Many of the Everett family visited the Covey's in Nebraska, but none with more significant results than Martha and Luther's daughter Emma; and when this Western experience of Emma's came to an abrupt and sad end, the entire Everett family became ever after affected. Emma's purpose in going West was her health, having suffered from asthma in St. Lawrence County. After finishing her studies at Claverack College, she went first to Pueblo, Colorado, (probably accompanied by her cousin, Cyrus Everett), but grew lonesome there, and then joined the Coveys for the summer, 1884, in St. Paul and nearby Elba, Nebraska. While there, she met James Bacon, her future husband. He and a number of friends from the Dorchester district of Boston, Massachusetts, had gone west about 1881 to seek their fortunes; James went into the banking business, an active and seemingly prosperous enterprise in the Nebraska of the 1880's. Emma and James were married in Fort Jackson, N.Y., June 16, 1886. The couple returned to Nebraska, where James was by then Cashier of the Bank of Elba.

It was a time of progress and optimism in Nebraska. The State's population more than doubled during the 1880's. Food production tripled, and railroad mileage greatly increased, connecting small towns (like Elba) to the main Union Pacific east-west line. Even the rain fell in relative abundance. But this rapid progress was built on borrowed money, and in the 1890's the combination of over-investment and over-expansion, the tyranny of the railroad monopolies, falling prices for agricultural products, and a widespread drought brought financial disaster to Nebraska. Emma and James Bacon were very much a part of the boom and the bust.

By October, 1886, the newlyweds were in their new clapboard house built in Elba on the wide, flat valley of the North Loup River. Their "Valley View Cottage" was comfortably furnished with new plush-cushioned chairs and lounge and a tall coal-stove for heat in the sitting room. The dining-room set was of black walnut, and outside on the porch were wicker rocking chairs to sit on and gaze as far as the eye could see, with no interference from trees except along the river banks. Behind the house was a well and pump, and perhaps a little too close behind the well was the outhouse.

Emma took delight in housekeeping and entertaining, though at first she had no knives or forks and had to borrow from cousins whenever she had dinner guests. Like most Easterners,

she immediately planted trees in the barren yard and vines to climb up the porch posts. In fact, her life in Elba was very much Easternized; she went to a Protestant church in the town, belonged to a women's club (probably like the literary clubs which had burgeoned in the East), and helped manage fund-raising bazaars at which the fare was the typical "cake & ice cream and lemonade." Most of the time Emma had a hired "girl," though one difference here was that the hired help were Danish, and Emma longed for "a good stout Irish girl."

Emma and James had three children: J. Everett (1887), Martha (1891), and Anne (1896); and Emma wrote, "Their Papa thinks they are the equal of any children that ever lived." Although it was often hard to find time, Emma kept up her art work. She did some pastel portraits of children, but mainly worked in oil, copying popular paintings and floral lithographs. This was the type of painting she had been trained in at Claverack College, where her ability had been well established.

From those letters which are still extant,¹⁰⁴ evidence is that James Bacon, after having served a few years as Cashier of the Bank of Elba (a position comparable to being its manager), proposed to two banking colleagues who were officers of the "1st National Bank of St. Paul" that they form a partnership to pay off the mortgage which was then on the Bank of Elba. Each was to contribute \$5000, and each then was to share equally in the profits of the bank. James was to continue to get his annual salary of \$1000, in addition, as Cashier. The partnership was formed in May, 1887, but in order to raise his \$5000, James had to borrow capital, some of it from friends and relatives in Lawrence, N.Y. A few years later James asked for and received extensions on some of these loans, and at that time Emma characterized the financial status of the bank as "hopeful." But by 1893 the Nebraska boom had started to reverse. She wrote on July 31, 1893, to the family at the Everett Farm, "I hope these hard times are not hitting you as they are us. James is not loaning a dollar [from the bank] even if they will put up two to one as security and not one bushel of grain is moving. The elevator companies will not even make a bid for grain at any price." By November 24, 1895, Emma's mother commented, "how different it turned out from what James expected."

Both James's family in Boston and Emma's family were urging them to return to the East, but instead of changing course, James decided to row harder. He took on extra work in Omaha, in conjunction with his banking position, for the Gale Manufacturing Company



George A. Everett in the Ithaca apartment, c. 1897. (Courtesy of author)

of Michigan, producers of agricultural implements. The company hired James to make collections on past sales and to check the advisability of extending credit to current customers who wanted to buy the ploughs and harrows. With this job James was unable to get home except once a month. In 1897, probably somewhere in his travels but possibly from his own well-water, James contracted typhoid fever. The seriousness of his illness was not realized at first, but three weeks after its onset, James Bacon died, September 24, 1897. This sudden tragedy inflicted wrenching change upon Emma and her children. As soon as Emma's telegram was received, her twin sister Ella left Potsdam on the train for Nebraska. All of Emma's furniture was auctioned off, the house was rented out, and the children were hustled onto a train with Emma and Ella, bound for New York State, all within a month's time. Never again did Emma and her three children live together as a single unit in a home of their own except for a brief period between 1910 and 1912. Emma had always feared becoming dependent on others, perhaps because of her weak health. At 19 at Amsterdam Academy she had written to assure her sister, "[I] shall be glad when I get home for a rest[;]



Martha Abram Everett, 1832-1923. (Courtesy of author)

by that dont think I am comming home to be a burden to the family, 'not so,' I intend to support myself." But now, of necessity, Emma and her children became significant and permanent members of the extended family, with all its comfort and support, with all its tangles and anxieties.

II.

It was not to the Everett farmhouse that Emma and the children returned; no one was there in November, 1897. All the Everett daughters had their own homes: Abbie and John Whitney with their two sons in Mooers Forks, N.Y.; Elizabeth and Fred Duffy with their son in Mooers; and Ella and Dr. Daniel Finnimore in Potsdam. Instead, Emma went to Ithaca to join her mother and two brothers who were in an apartment at the edge of the Cornell campus. Fred and George, having graduated from the Potsdam Normal in 1895, went on to Cornell the following fall. George had received a State Scholarship, and the family decided it would be an excellent opportunity for both boys to get

a college education. At that time there were no men's dormitories at Cornell, a purposeful omission due to the conviction of Cornell's first president, Andrew D. White, that dormitory life had a deleterious effect on students. Freshmen were to find living quarters in private houses near the campus, some of them by this time having been built by private citizens specifically as boarding and rooming houses for Cornell students. Fred Everett went down to Ithaca ahead of time and found a large "flat" to rent at 90 Eddy Street, near one of the entrances to the campus. Thus began a lifetime bond between the Everetts and Cornell.

The Everett homestead on Merchant Street was closed during the academic years between 1895 and 1899. Martha Everett accompanied her sons to Ithaca in order to provide continuity of home life for all concerned and to save much-needed money by avoiding the double expense of paying cash for the boys' board. The Cornell experience proved to be more than just an education for her sons; it also was something of a

rejuvenation for Martha. In her first letters from Ithaca she marveled at the natural beauties, the impressive mansions, the campus buildings, and the cultural activities at Cornell. She urged all other members of the family to take advantage of this opportunity to visit the "Athens of America." She tried to persuade her son-in-law Fred Duffy and her nephew Carl Whitney to enroll in Cornell and live at the apartment "where they need not pay one cent of rent."

Martha was an alert observer, receptive to all she felt was positive. On the other hand, she never lost her own standards of behavior or custom. The impersonality of life in Ithaca appalled her. In a letter urging her sister Eliza to visit, she wrote, "Now, *dont* get one new article [of clothing], for it is like all large *Cities*, unless you go to one church, no one knows, and no one cares for you, and we go up to the Chapel on the Campus as they have the best and smartest men who can be had . . . but with all the good sermons, there isn't the home feeling one has when they go to their own church, all the time, but you go up there and come back—no one speaks to you, and you dont want they should. Even sickness and death may be in the next house, and you not know if it . . . the real *stylish* ones doesent even care for *their own*, and no one cares for others."

Martha, Fred, and George particularly cared for others if they were "from home." North Country people are traditionally very county-conscious; and in Ithaca, where they were away from home, their county loyalty was stronger than ever. Anyone who hailed from St. Lawrence County received a warm welcome at the Everetts' flat. By their second year at Cornell, James Reynolds, son of Dr. Jesse Reynolds, of Potsdam, roomed and boarded with the Everetts. James had been a good friend of George Everett's at Potsdam Normal, and was now beginning his freshman year at Cornell. (He was of frail health at the time, but evidently overcame it, as there is record of his becoming a lawyer and living with his wife and children on Long Island.) By the third year, three other St. Lawrence County students took their meals with the Everetts, each paying \$3 a week: William Geer and Paul Mann, of Potsdam, and Giles Chase, of Massena.

Into this household where Martha Everett was preparing meals for the six college students each day, came Emma in November, 1897, with her 10-year-old son and her one-year-old daughter. Her middle child, 6-year-old Martha, whom Emma had always characterized as "happy-go-lucky," went to Potsdam to live with Ella and Dr. Finnimore, who were childless. Ella and



Croquet at Everett Farm c. 1905. Ella Everett Finnimore, George A. Everett, Martha A. Everett in chair, Fred Everett.
(Courtesy of author)

young Martha formed a loving bond which lasted their lifetimes, but whether young Martha's life with the Finnimore's was entirely happy is very doubtful. Both Ella and Dr. Finnimore looked upon the young child's coming into their lives as a godsend, and there is every indication that they both loved her. But as the years went on, some members of the Everett family came to detest Dr. Finnimore. For one thing, they felt he did not treat Ella well, and they could not comprehend Ella's continuing love for him; but whether there were additional reasons for their negative feeling toward him is unknown. However, none of Emma's three children stayed permanently in one place with one family; as children, each of them lived from time to time with other members of the extended family—in Connecticut, Massa-

chusetts, Washington, D.C., and New York State. Thus they became important threads in the fabric of extended family life, weaving in and out, forming new patterns battered in by mutual concern and effort, love and dissension, and sometimes testing the very fabric itself for stress and pull.

III.

Both Fred and George Everett went on to graduate school at Cornell, Fred in medicine, George in law. After Fred received his medical degree from Cornell in 1902 and finished his residency in New York City, he accepted a rather unusual assignment. Mrs. Henry K. Baker of Springfield, Massachusetts, hired him to take total responsibility for her son Kingsley, who had epilepsy. Fred brought Kingsley to the Everett

Farm to live during the summer and fall of 1903. Kingsley's brother Lester also came to the farm for three weeks that summer while George Everett tutored him in French, and in September Mrs. Baker and her daughter Corinne visited the farm. This may have been the first meeting between Fred and Corinne, who would be married later, in 1910. Members of the Everett family helped Fred in the care of Kingsley and learned the frightening aspects of this illness for which there were no modifying drugs in those days, only injections of morphine and nitroglycerine administered at the time the fits occurred. (A heartrending irony is that George was disturbingly affected when he assisted Fred during the seizures, only later to become all too familiar with this neurological disorder when

his own son developed it.) In October, on the night before Fred was to take Kingsley on the train to New York City, Kingsley suffered an unusually long series of convulsions. They proved fatal. Kingsley Baker died the next afternoon, October 29, 1903.

Fred had used the income he was making while caring for Kingsley to refurbish the farmhouse in that same summer of 1903. His earnings were not the amount Ella was dreaming of when she wrote to her mother in 1896, "When the boys make their fortune, they can fix up the old house with steam heat, gas, etc.;" but Mrs. Baker had paid Fred well, according to his brother George. During that summer, George informed his sister, "... we have had the chimneys all laid over and have painted inside and out and papered and plastered the walls and ceilings..." The woodwork in the dining room-kitchen area was painted red. (What wallpaper was chosen is not indicated.) The sitting room was done with white woodwork and a green wallpaper. The same paper was used for the walls of the den, and a buff-colored paper was applied to the ceiling. George, with

others helping, built a fireplace diagonally across the northeast corner of the den and wrote enthusiastically to his sister, "It is faced clear to the ceiling with natural, weathered, cobble stones, many of them with patches of moss or lichens on them. The mouth is a row of flat stones set in across the face above the fire box and the whole has delightfully rustic comfortable homelike effect." The mantel was put in by a man named Wilcox after George had to leave for his teaching job in New Jersey in the fall. Attention was also given to the barns, where Fred, George, and Everett (Emma's son) put on two large tar roofs.

All was not work that summer, however, for this same threesome also built a tennis court, which presumably they utilized to good advantage. Croquet remained the favorite outdoor game, however. One summer a few years later, George and Jim Driscoll, who worked on the farm that year, shingled the house, and George recalled, "... we both worked putting on the first course on the eaves. Then went down in the yard and played a game of croquet to see who would put on the next course. Then

another game for the next, and so on till we got to the ridge. That old croquet ground saw some pretty hot times."

Family life at the Everett Farm started to change after the turn of the century, as all of Martha Everett's children except Emma and Ella began to move away from Northern New York, though in at least one case very unwillingly. Her daughter Elizabeth was heartbroken to have to move to distant Connecticut. Her teacher-husband, Frederick Duffy, had decided to go into farming. He was intrigued by the possibilities inherent in the use of electricity. He established a modern dairy farm near a good market, on the outskirts of Hartford, his barns well lighted with electric lights and his pedigreed Jersey cattle milked by machine. Elizabeth, realizing that there would be no turning back, became a full and active partner in this successful enterprise.

Abbie and John Whitney, with their two sons, took up residence in Washington, D.C., where their older son Carl was a student at George Washington University. John Whitney was employed at the Treasury Department for about ten years.



Mrs. Olga Converse, mail-carrier on Merchant Street, Lawrence, NY 1904-1934, c. 1907. (Courtesy of author)

In 1904 Fred Everett established his medical practice in Springfield, Massachusetts, his office and equipment financed by Mrs. Baker. He married Corinne Baker on Sept. 24, 1910.

After George Everett had graduated from the Cornell Law School in 1901, he practiced law in Potsdam for a year, but he soon began to wonder whether he really wanted to be a lawyer, since most of his work that year was the unpleasant task of collecting from debtors. In the fall, 1902, he started what was to be his lifelong chosen profession of teaching English and elocution. His first position was at the Lawrenceville School for Boys in New Jersey. After two years he moved to Cornell, where he taught for the entire remainder of his career, excepting 1907-09 spent at the Flushing High School on Long Island. George was married on Thanksgiving Day, 1907, to Anna McEwen, daughter of Robert H. McEwen.

In a moment of confessing to loneliness, Martha Everett wrote in November, 1900, to her son Fred, ". . . it takes away so much of the pleasure of my life, when I think how my *once happy family*, are scattered and the nearest, and dearest, gone forever, but such is life and if we can only live so as to be reunited where partings never come it is *more* than all the world can ever offer—to any of us even if we could have *all* this worlds goods, and pleasures . . ."

These feelings were shared by her children, and the Everett farmhouse became more and more significant as a place of coming together—for those like Emma and her children, whose lives had been disrupted, and for all the others who always retained a homesickness for "the dear old home." St. Lawrence County pulled like a magnet, returning them to the place where their lives had been first and forever entwined. The summertimes at the Everett Farm were busy with comings and goings. Martha Everett believed "the more, the merrier." In 1900 a tradition, which was to be maintained into the 1950's, was begun with a big celebration of Martha Everett's birthday on August 10. Ella arranged a surprise-party at which 30 people came for dinner, 28 of them stayed for supper, and 18 stayed overnight, plus breakfast and dinner the next day. Martha thoroughly enjoyed the party, as did Ella, who was also an extravert; but Abbie declared the whole event "enough to kill a horse." In much later years these commemorative celebrations of August 10 were never just a matter of love and kisses and reminiscence; they were often the scenes of hot arguments on subjects ranging from the New Deal to the relative merits of bass-versus-trout fishing. Argument was an honored source of pleasure among the

Everetts.

Another summertime tradition was the get-together with the Crapsers family, long-time friends since the years before the Crapsers moved from Brasher in 1886. The gatherings were held alternately at the Everett Farm and at the Crapsers' stone "castle" on Ogden's Island (now engulfed by the waters of the St. Lawrence near Waddington). Here again, in later years, the proposed Seaway provided a grand subject for argument.

After 1900, as Martha Everett grew older, wintertimes at the farmhouse became more difficult. During the coldest months the farmhouse was sometimes closed while Martha and Emma and the children lived with various other members of the family, where there were central heating and running water, and additional help with the care of each child. In the early 1900's, however, when they did stay over the winters at the farm, Emma would often be away for one or two weeks at a time teaching china-painting. During these journeys to other Northern New York towns Emma would sometimes be boarded at the home of one woman, who would then have others come to her house for the lessons; or sometimes Emma would give an all-day lesson to an individual in one house and then move on to another house the next day. Emma's siblings began to think this situation left too much work and care on their mother, then in her 70's. Emma immediately went on the defensive. She claimed that her mother was living with her, not vice versa, and defied any of the family to make their mother happier, especially without Annie, who was a favorite. The siblings settled for simply making sure that their mother and Emma and her children made long winter visits to their more convenient, citified homes. They had to admit that their mother was probably happiest at the old homestead, no matter what the work. The Everett Farm was always Martha Everett's central place of residence—she would have it no other way. The New York State census of 1905 lists the residents of the Everett Farm: Head of Family, Martha, 73, House Wife; Daughter, Emma, 43, Artist, Decorates China; Granddaughters, Martha, 14, and Anne, 9.

Since letters were the important means of communication with her distant family members, Martha Everett rejoiced when Rural Free Delivery was established along Merchant Street in Lawrence in 1904. As the Fort Jackson correspondent for the Potsdam newspaper commented, ". . . now we remain at home by our warm firesides and every day punctually at the hour, the daily papers and other mail arrives at our doors delivered by our genial and

obliging carrier, Mrs. Converse, who seems to enjoy her part as much as we do ours."¹⁰⁵ Ola M. Converse continued to deliver the mail on this route for thirty years. A telephone was installed at the farmhouse in 1909. George described the arrangement to his sister in Connecticut, "We pay nine dollars a year, but we had to build a mile of the line, poles, wire, labor and all." A bill for brackets, insulators, etc., came from C.D. Babcock, General Merchandise, Nicholville, whose business stationery displayed the shield of the Independent Telephone. George continued, "The 'phone is his and so are the batteries and he has to keep the line in repair. . . . And Cordon Babcock is making a good thing out of the business. The Adirondack Home Company which is the largest independent concern around here, pays about 15 per cent net profit. The Bell line, which is also your New England Company, I suppose, has tried every means to drive out competition, even to placing phones in residences giving local and long distance privileges, (within certain restricted territory) absolutely free for an unlimited length of time, which would naturally be until the company has to knuckle down . . . They're a lot of robbers and grafters." With the advent of the telephone at the farm, Ella could now call from Potsdam to make sure someone would come with "Lady" and the old buck board to meet her at the train station in Winthrop or North Lawrence when she wanted to visit home. But any call of longer distance was made only in emergencies. From the farm one could ring one's own neighbors, who were on the party line, without operator assistance by turning the crank on the side of the wall-box the proper length and number of rings, for instance, two shorts and a long, etc.

Letters, however, remained the basic source of family news, and when World War I came, Martha received word that her son Fred, though 45 and with three young children, would join the Medical Corps. This brought the European conflict close to home, and Abbie wrote to her sister Elizabeth, "I do hope Fred & Geo. don't both leave Mother. I truly think it would nearly kill her. She is too old to have that trouble." Abbie felt that younger men or men without children should be the first to go into the Army. However, she was 100 per cent behind the war effort and felt that all young men without children should do their part in this "great work," the war to end all wars. (By the time the Second World War came along, her younger brother George proposed that all the "old codgers" should be the ones on the front line, not the young, who had so little to do with the mess the world had gotten itself into.)

Martha Everett received word in 1917 also that her grandson Ward Duffy would go into the Field Artillery. Family worry centered on Ward after he was sent to France in 1918. But the family loss was soon to come in another and unrelated way. Ward was one of the lucky ones, whose greatest suffering overseas was acute homesickness. (Perhaps, of the family, Annie Bacon was most personally affected by the war; in 1926 she married R. Langford Montgomery, whose heroism in the wartime Navy to save members of the crew of his torpedoed ship would affect his nerves throughout his lifetime.)

The family's tragic loss, however, came in January, 1919, when Abbie Everett Whitney lost her battle against "lung disease," as had her husband a few years earlier, in 1912. John Whitney had suffered from "lung disease" as early as the 1890's, when doctors advised a warmer climate away from the cold winters of Mooers Forks. In order to afford this, Abbie and John ran a guest house in Green Cove Springs, Florida, for a few years before moving to Washington, D.C. In 1912 Abbie and John built a house in West Hartford,

Connecticut, on North Main Street near Elizabeth and Fred Duffy; but John died later that same year. Abbie lived in West Hartford for several years, also spending much time at her son Carl's cottage on Rainbow Lake in the Adirondacks and at his home in White Plains. But by July, 1918, her health had deteriorated, and she wrote from Rainbow Lake that she had decided to sell the Connecticut house if possible, because "I don't believe I shall ever be able to keep house again . . . I am not able to do any work." This was a difficult decision for Abbie because she had always been a vigorous worker; her sisters and brothers always descried her as "a tower of strength" in every way. Abbie took vital interest in world affairs, and her interest in politics was increased by her move to Washington, D.C. But now Abbie knew that it would be best for her to be where she could adhere to a regimen of rest, walking, and Adirondack air, Dr. Trudeau's famous cure. She spent some time at the Rainbow Sanatorium at Rainbow Lake, but she found it difficult to abide by the many rules of the place, especially the restriction on any conversation between

patients and nurses; so in the summer of 1918 she continued "the cure" on her own, at her son Carl's cottage, with hired help, until the end of October. Then she boarded at the Chases' nearby. At Christmas she went to Carl's home in White Plains, though with some doubts as to the wisdom of the trip. She died there of "tubercular pneumonia" January 11, 1919.

If the Adirondack Mountain air and the balsam aroma were cures for tuberculosis, those qualities did not seem to waft beyond the Blue Line, for "consumption" or "lung disease" (old-fashioned names for tuberculosis) was the single most common ailment to afflict the family members, all living just outside the rim of the Adirondack Mountains. Particularly hard hit was the family of George and Mary Abram Everett. Family photograph albums reveal many pictures of one of their daughters as a young woman always lying on a couch; this was Minnie Everett Stewart, who died of consumption at the age of 38. Her brother Cyrus had died three years previously of the same disease. In 1919 their sister Cynthia Everett Brooks died of consumption at



Martha Abram Everett admiring her first great grandchild, Mary E. Whitney, held by her mother, Blanche R. Whitney, 1908. (Courtesy of author)

the age of 59. Her condition was often compared with that of Abbie since their illnesses occurred at the same time.

Nevertheless, the healthfulness of the Adirondack air is a conviction still firmly held by those members of the family who still breathe deeply of its charm at Lake Ozonia. About 14 miles south of the Everett Farm, this lake as early as the 1880's was a favorite spot for family picnics, overnight jaunts, and fishing expeditions. Frederick Heath, owner of virtually the entire lake-shore property, changed its name from "Trout Lake" to "Lake Ozonia" in 1892 to emphasize the clear, fresh air which his guests could enjoy at his hotel, Fernwood Hall. He advertised it as "one of the most beautiful and healthful resorts in America." George A. Everett (known locally as "the Professor") was the first of the Everett family to buy property at Lake Ozonia. His brother Fred ("the Doctor") soon followed. George leased the Rev. Dr. Streibert's camp for several years, starting at least as early as 1907, and then he bought it in 1912. The land on which the camp was built, however, did not become his until 1921 because of a peculiar arrangement initiated by Frederick Heath and continued by his son Julian whereby the cottagers could not buy the land on which they built. Finally in 1921 the Northern New York Trust Company sold the land to the cottagers and gave them deeds to their property.

In 1915 Mrs. Baker, Fred's mother-in-law, built a camp next to George's for herself, Fred and Corinne, and their children. Again, the land did not become theirs until 1921. Both Fred and George invited members of the extended family to make long visits at the lake. In 1937 their sister Elizabeth Everett Duffy, now with five grandchildren eager to go to the lake every summer, purchased the O'Neil camp, having rented it for a few years previously.

Another St. Lawrence County property was of great significance to George A. Everett. In 1905 he invested all the cash he could muster from his small teaching salary at the Lawrenceville School for Boys (he even gave up smoking his pipe), and he invested all his dreams of the future in becoming half-owner with his uncle George in a forest preserve at Kildare which included a small lake. This was his Shangrila. He loved hunting and fishing. But when his uncle died two years later, George, as owner of "an undivided one half part" of the 625 acres, could not prevent the property from being sold. This crushing disappointment made a permanent rift between George and his uncle's son Edward whom he held responsible. Lake Ozonia was a comparatively civilized tame place for leisurely living with families, and it could never make up

for the loss of a piece of Adirondack wilderness.

IV.

Over the years the ethnic origins of those in the neighborhood around the Everett Farm, Fort Jackson, and Hopkinton changed, and each group indulged in the proverbial pecking order. George Everett lamented the passing of the Yankee names (English and Scottish). He fondly remembered "the type of men that gathered in Hopkinton every Sunday in the old church—Brushes, Kents, Chittendens, Eastmans, Wrights, Ev-

eretts." Dennis Crowley, who was Irish, as were many Northern New Yorkers after 1850, resented the coming of the French to Merchant Street. Probably in the 1950's the French looked down on the Russian tenant at the Everett Farm. The political makeup of the neighborhood changed also. George Everett complained in 1950 that "there never used to be any Democrats on this street, but that is all there are now except Guy and Libbie Wilson."

The Everett farmhouse was refurbished again in 1921 with new wallpaper and paint, and an automobile



Fred and George Everett rigging a sail on the St. Lawrence skiff at Lake Ozonia, c. 1920. (Courtesy of author)

garage was built in the 1930's, with stucco exterior. Tin roofs replaced the shingled roofs on all buildings eventually, the specific dates unknown. Much painting and repair work were, of course, continued through the years, but whether a complete refurbishing was ever done again after 1921 is not known. It was important to all the family that the house remain the same after Martha Everett died in 1923, at the age of 91. The loss of their mother weighed heavily on all.

The entire family had been together at the Everett Farm for their mother's last birthday August 10, 1923; she died on August 27. The old home was unoccupied the next winter. In early April George returned for the first time since his mother's death. He went alone. On the train ride back to Cornell he wrote to his sister Elizabeth.

I did not know just how it would seem. I thought I might find all utterly changed and that I would never want to go there again. But it was not that way at all, & could stay there always. The little brook went roaring down through the pasture near the Beech nut woods. Despite the snow, the song sparrows and red wing blackbirds did their best to make their voices heard above the noise of the water. The robins 'turked', and hopped about in the maples looking for favorable nesting places. I tapped that tree near the dining room window and soon had a small pail full of sap.

I did not feel alone. Of course I did not go through it all dry-eyed. But none of us has the unconquerable courage that Mother had. She knew all the sorrows that are the common lot, and no one felt them more deeply, but she did not know the word 'surrender'. Whatever the blows of Fate, she took them standing up. Did you ever know a person so incomparably brave? I do not think she ever 'had the blues'. It would have been better for us if we had not relied so much upon her strength.

During that summer all the brothers and sisters returned to their old home, and they made their decision about its future. Ella and Emma stayed afterwards to close up the farmhouse for the winter. They spent their last night writing letters. Ella wrote to Elizabeth: "Just now we are sitting before a good fire in the Den, have the Rochester Lamp on the green table and in spite of the *vacant chairs* it is the dearest spot on earth. And I think we all have our vision clarified and realize that we want to keep it just as it is and all come every year."

George continued to manage the farm, with occasional financial help from the others, and the deed was eventually in his name. He saw to it that the house remained just the way it always was. Every summer the brothers and sisters could come whenever they wanted. And all their grandchildren and some of their great grandchildren still remember vividly the look of an old house unchanged, the slanted low ceilings in the bedrooms, the china chamber sets, the pump at the kitchen sink, the needed warmth of a wood stove—all novelties to a new generation.

But most of all, they remember their grandparents and great uncles and aunts who opened the old door and stepped into the past, warm memories coming round them gently, lovingly, protectively, like a soft shawl. The younger generations remember following from room to room. They remember the wistful smile as a sunset scene painted long ago is straightened where it hangs on the wall. They remember the lingering touch on the high back of an old wooden rocker. They remember the slow climb up the steep stairway, with one hand catching up the dress which used to go to the floor, up to the old familiar bed chambers. The view outside the low windows was almost the same as long ago, and they remember Ella's words, "I can see the same grass waving, the same heat waves quivering and smell the same sweet *honest* odors that I did so many years ago. What sermon can put us in such perfect harmony with the Divine and human!"

Martha Everett once advised her daughters on child-raising, "It isn't the *great things* that make lives pleasant, but the little kind words, and loving actions and to feel *free* and *know you are loved*." Martha's children knew they were loved. In ways it set them free, but in ways it locked them to the past. The old farmhouse represented it all—as Ella said, "a sweet atmosphere that blesses while it breaks your heart."

Epilogue

George Everett felt unfortunate to be the last of his siblings to die. His grave is in the Hopkinton-Fort Jackson cemetery by the Everett stone near his parents, his wife, and his children. As he himself wrote one day when this world looked gloomy, "There on the hill above the brook. So quiet a place to rest."

But there's a myth on Merchant Street that has a beautiful ring to it, too. A neighboring farmer's wife tells it. "The Professor loved that place! Oh, how he loved it." Her husband chimes in, "Well, he's still there, you know." She jumps

to agree, "Yes, after he died, we heard the airplane. It came down low and circled the house. He's still there. The Professor really loved that place!"

After 1958, the year George Everett died, there was no one left in the family to manage the farm. George Everett willed the farm to his sister Elizabeth's grandson, Douglas Duffy, who lived in Washington, D.C. Douglas sold the farm in 1960. The deed read, "That tract, piece or parcel of land situate in the Town of Lawrence . . . being the farm or premises well known in said community for more than half a century as the Luther Everett farm"—the farm which had been started by Luther's father and had been in the Everett family for one hundred and thirty-four years.

NOTES

¹⁰⁰ A short-lived mining town which no longer exists.

¹⁰³ Grateful acknowledgment is made here to Roger Brandt, who sent me copies of the few extant original letters from Cynthia Abram Stafford and her husband. He sent also his typed transcripts. Roger has placed the original letters in the alumnae archives in the Mount Holyoke College Library.

¹⁰⁴ Most of the original letters from Emma and James Bacon in Nebraska are in the Betsy Brandt Nahas Collection. I am very grateful to Betsy for letting me make copies.

¹⁰⁵ Clipping from the *Potsdam Courier and Freeman*, undated, pasted in scrapbook of Emma Everett Bacon; Betsy Brandt Nahas Collection.



October 12, 1989

To the Editor:

For readers who may be interested in the outcome of the Civil War service of Alonzo Fuller, whose letter of April 16, 1862, appeared in the July 1989 issue of the *Quarterly*, I have received some new information. Jean A. Young, another Civil War buff, and historian for the Town of Norfolk, has informed me that Alonzo survived the war although he was wounded and discharged from his regiment in 1863. There seems to be some evidence that he later lived in Malone. I'll be pursuing that lead as well as some leads Ms. Young provided about some of the friends of Alonzo from Potsdam who were mentioned in his letter.

Yours truly,
William G. McLoughlin

When Roosevelt Came to the North Country: The Ogdensburg Agreement

by Arthur L. Johnson

The Canadian-American border has not always been undefended but by 1940 it was and had been so for seventy years. The United States and Great Britain had moved from hostility to detente and finally to alliance of sorts in World War I. In 1931 Canada became officially independent of Britain though remaining within the voluntary association known as the British Commonwealth of Nations. Canadian-American defense cooperation began in a formal way in the quiet village of Heuvelton, New York, on a summer night in 1940 when some of us were children, some adults and some not yet born. Looking back, we can see 1940 as the end of an era of continental isolation. World War II would change the United States and Canada forever. The U.S. would become a world empire and Canada would move out of the British orbit and into the American. In both countries the insularity and economic hardship of the 1930's would give way to the affluence and military consciousness of the Cold War. We are only now emerging into a real peace time, the first many of us remember. But they didn't know that on August 17, 1940. Thousands of miles away the people in the old mother country were bracing for the next massive wave of German bombers. Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway and France lay at the feet of Nazi Germany, and their neighbors anxiously awaited Hitler's next move. The Soviet Union had signed a nonaggression pact with Hitler. England stood alone in Europe. But it was quiet in Heuvelton that night. A train sat steaming on the siding. In one of its cars two men sat at dinner and decided about the defense of the North American continent.

By way of background, Canada, in the summer of 1940, was at war with Germany along with Britain. France had surrendered and the British seemed woefully unprepared to face the onslaught of German air and land forces. German U-boats took a terrible toll of British shipping. There was the grim possibility that Hitler would conquer Britain. What then would become of Britain's allies and dependencies?

President Franklin D. Roosevelt worried about what would happen if the Nazis got the British fleet. American public opinion, disillusioned after World War I, seemed to be stuck at the "never again" position, although there was a lot of sympathy with Great Britain. Americans in general were willing to help with supplies but not formal alli-

ance and war. Charles Lindbergh and the America Firsters were still getting a hearing and they opposed American involvement in the European war. Not everyone saw British survival as essential to American security, but surely Canadian survival was. The third largest country in the world in area, Canada's population was about that of New York State. If England should fall and the Germans either take over or neutralize the Royal Navy, Canada would be vulnerable. It could not be allowed to fall. Thus the Ogdensburg Agreement. Defense must be continental, indeed hemispheric.

The immediate setting in August 1940 included the largest peacetime maneuvers the U.S. Army ever held. They were held in St. Lawrence County, mostly in the Canton, Ogdensburg, Norwood and Potsdam areas. Some 90,000 troops came to the area, mostly by train. Midway through the two-week war games, President Roosevelt came to view the maneuvers. Since they were so close to the Canadian capital, it made an excellent opportunity for him to confer with Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. (Everett Dona, "War Maneuvers of 1940" *The Quarterly*, April 1984, 28-37)

Unlike several of their predecessors and successors, King and Roosevelt were friends. Lawrence Martin, in his book, *The Presidents and the Prime Ministers* (Toronto, 1982) relates the following:

Prime Minister King was in his bed in Ottawa when the vision came to him. 'It seemed to me that late spring or early summer. I was sitting on the grass in the sunshine. President Roosevelt was seated almost immediately opposite to me. A lady was standing nearby talking to both of us. The President had in his hand a new straw hat. It had a narrow cord hanging from it and he played with it in his hands. There was no band on it. The style was closely woven straw.' The president threw his hat to the prime minister. 'I placed it on my head and, to my amazement, found that it fit me exactly. I said to the lady nearby that I had thought the President's head was much larger than mine. I was surprised to see his hat was a perfect fit.' What he had seen in Franklin Roosevelt was the good neighbour, maybe the best neighbour. He was a president

whose head was never too big for Canada . . . (p. 113)

To appreciate this, you need to know what great store King placed in dreams, just one of the many channels he believed he had with the spirit world. This was widely known about him only after his death and the publication of C.P. Stacey's *A Very Double Life* (Toronto, 1976).

Canadians had always feared that ties to the United States would weaken their ties to Britain, to whom they had always looked for protection and for their identity as British North Americans, not just Americans. Now that Britain seemed on the edge of defeat, those feelings had changed, as the U.S. ambassador to Ottawa noted in a letter to Roosevelt. (Martin, 133) And there was the personal relationship. King was a Harvard man, like the president. He had gotten his master's degree at Chicago and had worked for the Rockefeller interests in the States. Roosevelt knew Canada through his summers on Campobello, an island off New Brunswick. King had visited Washington in 1935 and had worked out with the president reciprocal trade agreements. Roosevelt returned the visit in 1936 and implied that the U.S. would guarantee Canadian security. Two years later he said it again.

In a speech at Queen's University, in Kingston, Ontario, in August 1938, Roosevelt remarked:

I give to you the assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire. (Martin, 127)

Tossed off at home as possibly a casual remark, it was anything but casual to the Canadians who saw it as the first time an American president had undertaken any defense responsibility to Canada. When Britain went to war on September 3, 1939 and Canada followed on the 10th, the remark took on new meaning. King was not the only leader who looked to Washington.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in 1940, feeling beleaguered, wanted desperately to get the U.S. into the war. To that end, in exchanges with Roosevelt, he emphasized, perhaps even exaggerated for effect, the peril to Britain. The headline of the *Ogdensburg Journal* of June 4, 1940 read:

**Churchill Hints Canada May Be
Used For Base If England
Is Conquered**

The North Country maneuvers in August 1940 were part of Roosevelt's preparedness effort. The *New York Times* reported extensively on the maneuvers and, for overall detail, is a better source than the local papers. The games revealed drastic shortages in men and materiel, and a generally poor state of training at a time when the Wehrmacht, Germany's army, dazzled the world with its seemingly invincible efficiency. The *Times* headline of August 14 read:

Nazi Air Fleet Pounds At Britain

The *Potsdam Courier & Freeman* of August 14 carried a picture of Lieutenant General Hugh Drum, commander of the First Army and director of the Maneuvers. The camp near Watertown now named for him was then called Pine Camp.

The president arrived in Norwood by train on Saturday, the 17th, accompanied by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, was greeted in Norwood by Governor Herbert Lehman and General Drum. They drove on a tour of the

eastern area of the maneuvers, including Potsdam, and arrived in Ogdensburg that evening to board the presidential train. The *Ogdensburg Journal* (8/17) greeted the president with a full page picture and the caption read:

**Welcome President Roosevelt To
St. Lawrence County
The 1940 Army Maneuvers
Greetings From The People
Of Ogdensburg**

Mackenzie King crossed the St. Lawrence River by ferry, and the two leaders board the presidential train which was then run out New York Central track to Heuvelton and side-tracked there for the night. They dined in the president's car, and in the morning they released the following statement to the press which became known as the Ogdensburg Agreement:

The Prime Minister and the President have discussed the mutual problems of defense in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States.

It has been agreed that a Per-

manent Joint Board on Defense shall be set up at once by the two countries.

This Permanent Joint Board on Defense shall commence immediate studies relating to sea, land, and air problems including personnel and materiel.

It will consider in the broad sense the defense of the north half of the Western Hemisphere.

The Permanent Joint Board on Defense will consist of four or five members from each country, most of them from the services. It will meet shortly.

There are two things to note about this. First, it was not a treaty. It was not even a signed agreement, just a joint press release of a verbal executive accord. And it was "an entirely personal venture. Neither the Canadian cabinet, the U.S. cabinet nor Congress, nor Winston Churchill were consulted about it." (Martin, 133) Roosevelt explained that it was "not just a response to a wartime emergency, but a lasting institution." Second, though we take for granted the Canadian-American



President Roosevelt visiting St. Lawrence County, August 1940, with Secretary of War Stimson to his right, then New York State Governor Lehmann, and at far right General Hugh Drum. (Courtesy of SLCHA Archives)



Troops Detraining in St. Lawrence County for First Army War Maneuvers in summer of 1940. (Courtesy of SLCHA Archives)

alliance today, it was remarkable at the time. The United States was, after all, a neutral country. Canada was at war. So it was a pretty strong statement. Martin calls it "an agreement signalling a changed destiny for Canada—from the cloak of the Empire to the cloak of the Continent." (Ibid)

The *Potsdam Courier & Freeman*, presumably a Republican paper, was dubious about the Permanent Joint Board: "We do not approve of military hierarchies in democratic republican nations." The editor cited the danger of military despotism, apparently believing the Board would be more than advisory. Roosevelt, said the editor, "owes it to the country to define in more accurate terms the nature of this agreement." (8/21/40)

Though not a reader of the *Potsdam* newspaper, Winston Churchill was also less than thrilled about the agreement. He had hoped to press Roosevelt into direct aid to Britain as soon as possible. The Ogdensburg Agreement seemed tailored for the contingency of a British defeat. He may also have disliked the idea of the United States replacing the United Kingdom as Canada's protector. The great war prime minister was also an ardent imperialist. "I have not," he once said, "become His Majesty's First

Minister to preside over the disolution of the British Empire." (For more on the Churchill reaction see Fred E. Pollock, "Roosevelt, the Ogdensburg Agreement and the British Fleet: All Done with Mirrors," *Diplomatic History*, Summer 1981.)

The principal significance of the agreement is as a recognition by both countries that security must be continental rather than national. Canada needed American protection. The United States' security, on the other hand, could not permit Canada to be in the hands of a hostile power. Not altruism but enlightened self-interest underlay it. Its significance lies less in the Permanent Joint Board on Defense than in the recognition of mutual dependence. Canada and the U.S. have deepened their ties as charter members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949) and the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) in 1953.

Now, after fifty years, the alliance seems to be loosening with the ending of the Cold War. Delegates of NATO met with their counterparts from the Warsaw Pact in Ottawa in February 1990 and negotiated mutual troop reductions in Europe. But other problems occupy the attentions of the Permanent Joint Board, including terrorism and

drug running. It still meets. The world is still full of dangers though their nature seems to be changing.

All this was off in the future as the troops cleaned up their areas in the heat of August and left Potsdam, Canton, Ogdensburg, Norwood and other North Country villages in peace and quiet. By August 23 the trains had rolled off and the importance of what had happened was yet to be realized. Alas, poor Heuvelton, the site of the agreement. Either because of its small size, or because of where the press release was delivered, the historic accord which was reached there, has ever after been known as the Ogdensburg Agreement.

Postscript:

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the *Courier-Observer* office in Potsdam who let me look at the 1940 issues of the *Courier & Freeman*, and the Ogdensburg Public Library with its microfilm of the *Ogdensburg Journal*. Especially helpful was Mrs. Persis Boyesen, archivist and Ogdensburg Historian, whose folder on the agreement held a number of useful items, including a piece she had written about it. This article began as a talk in connection with the Potsdam Museum's Fiftieth Anniversary celebration.

Roosevelt's Tree Army

The Civilian Conservation Corps

by Richard L. Rummel

On March 31, 1933, Congress passed what was to become one of the most popular and successful pieces of legislation of President Roosevelt's New Deal. The bill was known as the Reforestation and Relief Act, out of which was born the Civilian Conservation Corps. Roosevelt's sweeping restructuring of the federal government to deal with the disastrous effects of the worst economic depression in the country's history had plenty of opponents. After all, much of the New Deal stretched the limits of the Constitution to the breaking point. Still, the Civilian Conservation Corps caught everyone's fancy as nothing else could.

Roosevelt had made known his commitment to a national conservation program in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention in July, 1932. If a depression weren't enough, a severe drought in the midwest, coupled with years of neglect of forest lands, made conservation a serious issue that Roosevelt wasn't about to ignore. One of his first acts as President was to call an emergency session of Congress, where he promised, if granted emergency powers, to place 250,000 men in conservation camps around the country by July, 1933, only four months after his inauguration.¹ With unemployment running twenty-five percent or more in some places, long food lines snaking along city streets, and the shocking sight of the destitute thrown together in camps called "Hooversvilles" within view of city skylines, no one could mistake the situation but anything but desperate. Wasting natural resources was one thing, and wasting human resources was another. The Civilian Conservation Corps could alleviate both by employing hundreds of thousands of despairing and demoralized young men, who had virtually no hope of finding jobs in the private sector, in improving and enlarging forest lands, fighting fires and tree pests and diseases, building roads, parks and trails, and generally filling a host of other conservation needs. The bill, as expected, was overwhelmingly supported and sailed through Congress with barely a peep of opposition. By July, true to his word, Roosevelt had somehow miraculously managed to pull together all departments of government into one great big cooperative effort to open the first camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The legacy of the CCC in St. Lawrence County and other parts of the North Country is readily evident. One need

only drive Route 3 through the southern part of the county and take in the beauty of evergreen and hardwood forests, or visit the campsite and beach at Cranberry Lake, or stop at the roadside rest just a couple of miles west of the New York State Ranger School turn-off at Wanakena, and read the monument to the Benson Mines-Wanakena Camp, S-84, that sprawled over the site. It's hard to imagine that this area, now largely overgrown with trees and brush, was once a CCC campsite, with barracks, administration building, mess and recreation halls, infirmary, blacksmith shop, and latrine—but indeed it was. Looking straight back from the road one sees wooded terraces that the District Commander, in his search for a suitable site, must have noted as a "low hill, sloping gently toward the highway."² Shallow holes, with an occasional rusted stove pipe sticking out of the weeds, suggest foundations. Wayne Allen, a forest ranger stationed at the New York Ranger School, located what appeared to be a dump site containing broken dinnerware from Syracuse China, catsup bottles, and military issue medicine jars. Looking at all this evidence one couldn't help imagining the sights and smells associated with CCC Company 129—a contingent of 200 recruits, assorted rangers, and military officers.

What buildings stood where? Who were these men and what was it like in the CCC?

To understand the true nature of the CCC and what Roosevelt intended by it, and to understand how the government



Frank White in barracks at Harrisville CCC camp. (Courtesy of Frank White)



Lounge in Foresters' Quarters at Brasher Falls CCC Camp. (Courtesy of George Cook)

was able to make it work so successfully for so long, one needs to realize, first of all, that in every way it was a military-run program. CCC men were civilian soldiers (more soldier than civilian), and, except for length of enlistment and the military code of justice under which the armed forces exist, were subject to the ways of the US Army. Second, the intent of the CCC was to provide complete human rehabilitation and not simply jobs. In the government's manual on the CCC, *Once In A Lifetime: A Guide to The CCC*, Personal Relief is described as "Relief for young men, war veterans, and Indians, who are unemployed, broke, discouraged, drifting, and exposed to all the dangers of idleness. Relief in the case of the CCC takes the form of pay, food, shelter, clothing, medical care, work, campfire, and learning opportunities."³ Another official source declared: "Work in the forests and related conservation work was decided upon . . . because it offered unusual opportunities for men from all walks of life to take a fresh start in a healthful occupation in the open."⁴ The American ideal of clean, wholesome living in the outdoors, coupled with a relief plan whose objective was, as defined by the government, to provide "all primary and secondary needs of the individual" was a profound, enormously ambitious, and irresistible plan that could only be made to succeed

if it were put under the control of the Department of War to operate as it did its own branches of service.

The magnitude of the Army's job can be seen in the fact that at the height of recruitment, several hundred camps had to be built and administered and over 500,000 enrollees shipped to camps throughout the country. Overseeing the Civilian Conservation Corps was the largest peacetime military establishment up to that time, a fact that raised some concern among people who feared the military's involvement in civilian life. But a majority of the Army personnel were reserves, who saw the Conservation Corps as a means to be of service as they had not done since World War I. Every state had at least one CCC camp, requiring that the enrollees be sent from the east, where most of them lived, to the western states, where most of the conservation work was needed.

By virtue of its vast forest reserves in the Adirondacks, and also because of its size and population, New York became an exception; it had forty-eight camps in the Second Corps area alone, which include St. Lawrence County's three: The Benson Mines-Wanakona Camp, already mentioned; Camp S-134, Company 1298, on the Bower Powers farm (Powers Road) in Pierrepont; and Camp S-95, Company 3295, which was located at what is now the New York

Department of Environmental Conservation site near Brasher Falls. The Pierrepont camp (for some reason called the Canton camp in CCC literature) was the last to open, in 1936 or 1937, and seems to have closed first. Luckily, one can still find a CCC building or two at both the Pierrepont and Brasher Falls sites. Other camps close by included those at Brushton and Dickinson Center, Franklin County, and at Harrisville, Lewis County. Frank White of Canton, a former recruit who went to the Harrisville camp, recalls being picked up in an army truck at the old County Home (west of Canton on Route 68). "I signed up at the Canton post office," he says. "My mother didn't like the idea much. She thought it was welfare."

Recruiting, in fact, was done through the local relief offices, and in that sense the CCC was tied to welfare for those people receiving financial assistance from the government. The CCC presented an alternative for families "on the dole" who stood the chance of losing or having benefits cut if a son of eligible age refused a recruiter's offer. Cecil Graham of Gouverneur worked as a relief office recruiter responsible for visiting about half of the towns in St. Lawrence County for the purpose of signing up eligible boys. "I put on a lot of miles," Mr. Graham remembers. "I drove a six cylinder Willis and got three cents a mile travel allowance plus pay." He recalls with a laugh that he told them all the good things about the CCC and left out the bad.

Undoubtedly, the CCC was a good proposition for both the enrollee and his parents. A recruit received thirty dollars a month, twenty-five of which went to his parents. (Several St. Lawrence County recruits recall that their parents saved the money for them). That left a whopping five dollars for spending money at the camp canteen and for Saturday night forays into town. Pay, of course, varied, depending on job assignments and title. Leaders and Assistant Leaders, for example, were paid from five to fifteen dollars more than a regular recruit for such positions as mess and canteen steward, cook, storekeeper, medical assistant, truck driver, crew boss, and other jobs deemed skilled. Opportunities for advancement were available, allowing a regular recruit to work his way into positions of greater responsibility. Frank White became a truck driver, Frank White of Massena (Benson Mines and Idaho) was an ambulance driver, and Leon LaDuke of Ogdensburg (Brushton CCC) became a canteen steward.

The government set the age qualification for "junior" recruits between seventeen and twenty-four, which didn't



Winter Workday near Star Lake. (Courtesy of Frank White)

necessarily keep boys younger than seventeen out of the CCC. Len Sergeant, an Ogdensburg resident, a CCC and World War II veteran, went into the CCC at Benson Mines at age fifteen, and, although he recalls being on the small side, held his own until his secret was discovered, and he was unceremoniously retired from CCC life. The initial tour of duty was for six months, with a maximum of four enlistments, or two years service. A recruit who married during his initial enlistment, however, could not re-enlist. Whether the young enrollee remained in his home area or was sent to another region of the country often wasn't determined until he reached a local camp, where, not exactly true to military procedure, he was required to draw from a hat or box a slip of paper marked "go" or "stay." A "go" slip usually meant a long ride west, to places like Idaho, to fight forest fires.

A dramatic influx of new recruits occurred shortly after the CCC was implemented in 1933 when Roosevelt ordered the hiring of World War I veterans.⁵ The plight of veterans was an embarrassment and a disgrace at a time when the country's economy was booming in the 1920's. Unemployment and alcoholism were rampant, a situation that carried over to the depression and became tragically worse. In the summer of 1933, in what became known as the second "Bonus March," veterans descended on Washington to protest the government's denial of bonuses for veterans who did not happen to serve in Europe during the war. Roosevelt saw the serious veterans issue as a way to meet his quota of 250,000 men for the CCC and issued an order for 25,000 veterans to be enrolled in the CCC, a company of whom was sent to the Brasher Falls camp. Their misfortune was real, as alcoholism among these new conservation soldiers was readily apparent to the forest rangers who supervised them. Clarence Petty of Canton, a former camp superintendent, remembers that paydays were drinking days at war-veteran conservation camps. Nevertheless, many of these men, for the first time, learned a skill that ultimately improved their lives.

Camp life in the CCC was as one might expect, given the military regimen under which it operated. Upon arrival the recruit was given a uniform (at the beginning these were hand-me-down World War I issue), in khaki and wool, complete with insignia, stripes, Air Force style cap, boots, and winter coat. He was then assigned to a barracks—usually as one of forty men—and, true to military life, was subjected to a series of immunization shots and examinations. Camp doctors had notorious reputations, and were not always the most welcome and admired individ-



Clearing wilderness. (Courtesy of Wayne Allen)

uals in the CCC. For Leon LaDuke and other veterans, the camp doctor—a Mr. Stimentidus—took sadistic pleasure in examining for body lice and venereal disease, and had more skill at striking fear into the entire company than at curing ills. Al Snyder of Star Lake, a former logger who goes back to the days when tree cutting was done with an axe and the chain saw was unheard of, was hired on as a foreman at the Benson Mines camp. He vividly recalls the lack of respect the recruits had for the Wanakena doctor's competence. "Whenever he would come into camp, the recruits would say 'quack, quack, quack,' which would send the doctor off with a complaint to the captain. The captain told him: 'Doctor, if you can tell me which ones are quacking I'll punish them!'" The CCC boys made sure he couldn't.

The day for the CCC enrollee started at 6 a.m. with rollcall and breakfast, then out to the field by eight for an eight-hour work shift. Rollcall at Brushton had its colorful moments, like the announcement each morning by Sergeant Dufkin, a huge fellow, that he could lick any man in the company—and if he couldn't, he'd transfer him out). Work in the good weather months usually involved building roads, controlling disease (mostly "blister rust"), removing harmful vegetation, digging wells for firefighting (these stone lined water holes could be found for years throughout St. Lawrence County until they were filled in for safety reasons),

controlling beaver dam growth, building and improving campsite areas, and tree planting. Over a million trees were planted in just the area around High Rock near the New York State Ranger School. Forest stand improvement projects were completed throughout the Clifton area, specifically, Toboggan Hill, Cathedral Rock, around Nicks and Darning Needle Ponds, and throughout the region between Cranberry Lake and the county line. Trees mostly red and white spruce came primarily from large, government-subsidized nurseries, such as at Lowville, but some camps had their own nurseries. Elm seedlings were tended at the Brasher Falls camp from seed pods scooped up off the streets in Potsdam. A search of the woods behind the buildings at the DEC site will reveal to this day wooden frames that were used as seedling beds.

During the winter months a majority of conservation work was taken up by clear cutting, the wood from which was sold to local residents and hauled to camp for use in the barracks' woodstoves. Al Snyder recalls overseeing a clear cutting operation and selling the wood for a dollar a cord. Winter, however, often presented difficulties for the CCC recruit. Getting supplies into camp during heavy snow was one. Cold weather was another. Southerners, especially, suffered under the brutal North Country winters. A sixty below zero day at Wanakena promptly sent several men back to camp with frostbite, a chilling warning that caused the camp comman-



Clear cutting. (Courtesy of Wayne Allen)

der to order that no work would be done when the temperature fell below minus five degrees. On such days, when work was canceled, recruits stayed in barracks, themselves not the coziest of shelters. The government had begun the CCC program using tents until the Army could get barracks built, but even these wooden structures were inadequate to ward off the bone-chilling cold as they were long and drafty and heated only by woodstoves at each end. Surprisingly, barrack fires were uncommon, due probably to the “spark watch” duty (one of several forms of punishment) given recruits when roofs were free of snow.

Contrary to the usual opinion of military “chow,” food in the conservation corps drew few complaints. Breakfasts were substantial. Lunch, usually sandwiches, was taken by each recruit to the field in a bag. In winter a fire might be built to cook something brought along or gotten in the woods. Wild game frequently brightened the day’s fare.

Al Sergeant of Ogdensburg remembers killing a deer and frying venison in a skillet made from a large fruit can. While the government supplied camps with most of the food consumed, local farmers contracted to sell them eggs, milk, and cheese. One such dairyman, Walter Locke, who operated Springbrooke Dairy in Brasher, sold milk every day to the Brasher Falls camp.

Famished recruits returned by four

o’clock to camp for the evening meal. Camp cooks, according to former CCC veterans, got very good at making spaghetti. Bean sandwiches, recalls Ernie Krag of Canton College, were a puzzling surprise to recruits introduced to them for the first time. Evenings, as well as weekends, provided time for a pool game, a boxing match, or any number of recreational pursuits. Evenings were also a time for education classes for self-improvement and professional growth. If a recruit chose not to go home for the weekend there was always an excursion into town, or an evening at Spane’s—now gone, but which once stood just off Route 3 near the Benson Mines camp. Spane’s was a popular hangout that loggers found to their liking, but contrary to the image of the CCC fostered by the United States government. Of course, the CCC men found it irresistible. Former CCC men of the Benson Mines camp tell us that Spane’s had a legendary reputation for hi-jinks and forbidden behavior. If its owner were with us today, she would undoubtedly tell us tales, but none could have been more memorable to her than the time some CCC guys locked her up in the kitchen and had their gay old time.

No one could have imagined in 1933 that the experiment called the Civilian Conservation Corps would literally transform a generation and bequeath to the nation such valuable and lasting gifts. Believed to be temporary—or short term, at best—the CCC continued

until the Second World War effort made it impossible, and Congress let it die in 1942, over a year after America’s entry into the war. Pierrepont and Brasher Falls would serve the government in other ways—the former as a base for 1940 war maneuvers, and the latter as a prison camp for Italian POW’s. About the latter, Reginald Ramsdell of Winthrop remembers seeing POW’s in downtown Brasher Falls and says they were very polite. Benson Mines had no further glory as far as anyone knows and seems to have gone by way of the bulldozer shortly after it closed. The memory of that camp will, however, stay with us, thanks to a group of CCC veterans who, in 1964, dedicated the monument on the camp’s thirtieth anniversary. With care it will remain, while the odd bits of vague evidence one sees will surely disappear, and those of us who have come after can only imagine what it was really like in the CCC.

NOTES

¹ Fred E. Leake and Ray S. Carter, *Roosevelt’s Tree Army, A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps* (St. Louis: National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni) p. 1.

² *Official Manual, Schenectady District, Civilian Conservation Corps, Second Corps Area, 1937*, p. 33.

³ Ned H. Dearborn, *Once In A Lifetime, A Guide To The CCC Camp* (New York: Charles E. Merrill Company, 1935) p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵ Leake and Carter, p. 2.

SLCHA Annual Report 1989

by *Garrett Cook*

The historical association is a community, and like all communities resembles a living being and undergoes constant change. In January of 1989 Dwight Mayne died. Dwight had served as a trustee for many years and had been a central figure in the Endowing Yesterday's Future Campaign. The Association is but one of many St. Lawrence County communities to have felt this painful loss.

President Betty Coots, facing a series of medical problems and operations, remained in office and offered able leadership in spite of her personal difficulties through the spring of 1989, but finally found that she could not do the job to her satisfaction and resigned in July. She was succeeded by Harry Wheaton who had not craved the presidency—to put it mildly—but who rose to the occasion and led the Association, with a certain flair, through the remainder of the year.

Following the resignation of Mary Jane Watson at the end of 1988, Gary Canfield, a certified public accountant in Canton, agreed to serve as Association treasurer beginning in 1989. With some suggestions from the Board of Trustees he revised the financial reporting format, and he trained our new administrative assistant, Jill Breit, to be the Association bookkeeper. We were all very pleased and excited, and I think maybe that Jill was even a little surprised at the end of the year, when the ledger balanced out perfectly, a credit to the teacher and the student. Jill, a recent graduate from St. Lawrence University with a degree in French, began work in January. In addition to Jill, the Association hired another new employee, Lynda Porter, for a temporary part-time position as archival aide. Lynda, a recent graduate from Potsdam College with a history degree, offered friendly and expert assistance to hundreds of researchers and completed an index and encapsulation project on the History Center map collection during the spring and summer. She accepted a counselling position at Mater Dei College when the archival position's funding ran out in the fall.

After serving with Mickey Williams as volunteer registrar for several years, Dot Mackey of Potsdam retired at the end of the year. The staff was very sorry to see her go and very grateful for her years of service. She has been replaced by Virginia Christiansen of Canton. Mickey continues to work along diligently recording and processing our acquisitions.

Ann Townsend of Canton began work at the museum as a volunteer in the spring of 1989. During the summer she agreed to take on the role of volunteer coordinator. She so impressed the staff and trustees that the nominating committee asked her to accept nomination for the position of Association vice president for 1990. She was elected to that position at the Annual meeting in October.

I viewed 1989 as a plateau year, a period of consolidating and renewing community support at the end of the endowment campaign and of reviewing the past and present in preparation for the future. The current year, 1990, sees the staff and trustees engaged in long range planning. The museum will come up for re-accreditation by the American Association of Museums in 1992. Self study, planning, and new initiatives started in 1990 and '91 will set the course for the next four or five years.

In keeping with the plateau theme 1989 saw a continuation of the pattern of the past few years with only a few innovations and experiments, mostly in the programming and exhibits areas. There have been a few shifts in emphasis over the past couple of years. These are mainly that we are providing increasing services to county schools and children and that we have begun to include a major focus on the 20th century in our programs and exhibits. Historic preservation projects and concerns in the county are arising with increasing frequency, and some may require Association's attention and involvement. This is an important area to be addressed during the planning period—what role should the Historical Association play in the identification, protection or even rehabilitation of architectural treasures and historic sites in the county?

Exhibits, Programs, Museum Education and Publications

There were two major exhibitions presented at the museum in the main gallery in 1989. "J. Henry Rushton and the Great Outdoors" was on display through the spring. On June 2, "Canal to Company Town: Alcoa in Massena," a major exhibit curated by Rich Rummel and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts opened. The exhibit used an original survey map of the power canal corridor keyed to archival photos to convey a sense of the work and the workers in the turn-of-the-century canal project. Kiosks and panels surrounding the map table illustrated

life in Massena and at the plant between 1900 and 1950. The exhibit was accompanied by recorded voices, a World War II morale building newsreel produced at the Massena plant and a catalogue telling the Alcoa and Massena story in words and pictures. The exhibition remained on display through the end of 1989.

Smaller changing exhibits also were featured at the museum. The "Mechanical Marvels" exhibit on 19th century human powerful labor-saving devices ran in the orientation gallery from spring through the fall, and was very popular with school tours, especially since some of the simple machines could still be operated for demonstrations. It was replaced by the "Model Trains 1940-1960" exhibit which featured three working Lionel layouts from the 1950's and was on display in December during the open house. With the gallery lights turned low and all three layouts running, smoke puffing and lights flashing, children and their parents or grandparents had the opportunity to share a magical moment and anyone who ever had an electric train set was flooded with memories.

Additionally there were two small collection-based exhibits in the display case outside of the main gallery, one on 19th century photography and one on domestic china and glassware.

We also had a unique opportunity early in 1989. Dan Dullea, assistant director of the Educational Resource Center at Clarkson University, and several Clarkson students, produced a video tape at the museum featuring children enjoying the mechanical marvels exhibit and the newly opened children's discovery room. This program was shown on the Clarkson cable channel as part of the University's community service initiative.

Rich Rummel and I had been impressed by the Northern Identity series which had been hosted at the museum in 1988, and decided that it would be a good idea to continue some programming in 1989 which went forward on the theme of exploring the definition and the natural and cultural history of the North Country. In the late winter and spring Rich organized a lecture series including Bill Massey talking about life along the St. Lawrence, Joyce Moninger on local herbs and their uses, Bill Kirchgasser of Potsdam College on the ancient Champlain Sea and its beluga whales, including the fossil which had been discovered in Norfolk, Don Osterberg of Potsdam College on

Northern Pike and Muskellunge in the St. Lawrence and how Seaway and Power Authority development has affected them, Tom Greene of St. Lawrence University on the psychology of wilderness with applications to the Adirondacks, and Ken Crowell of St. Lawrence University on North Country Flora and Fauna. We felt that it was refreshing to expand our definition of history to include some local natural history topics, and the talks were well received, often with standing room only crowds.

Additional programs organized and scheduled by Rich in 1989 included "Threaded Memories" a program on quilts by Catherine Schwofferman of the Robeson Gallery, a presentation by Alan Draper's St. Lawrence University students on their Seaway project research, and a lecture on Hanukkah Tradition by Judy Glasser of Potsdam.

The Association also sponsored a New York State Council on the Arts funded folklore project in 1988 and '89. Folklorists Varick Chittenden of Canton Technical College, and Bob Bethke of the University of Delaware, and storyteller Bill Smith of Colton identified and interviewed a number of northern Adirondack raconteurs, and made collections of their stories. In February of 1989 a storytelling session sponsored by the Association and featuring Bill Smith and Bill Massey took place at the Sandstone Senior Citizens apartment building in Potsdam. In April a major storytelling festival featuring Bob Bethke, Bill Smith, Ham Ferry, Napoleon LaBarge, Margaret LaPorte, Fred Selleck and Harvey Carr was sponsored at the Crary Mills Community Center. This really entertaining and educational event was attended by over two hundred very enthusiastic people and we quickly ran out of cookies.

Our educator Andrea Shortreed Bellinger developed several special children's programs including an afternoon of croquet, a Victorian lawn party with appropriate costume, and ice cream and lemonade making. In the fall she initiated a fireplace cooking tour of the Wright house, where children on school tours where shown how to cook at a fireplace or bake in a brick oven, and sampled typical 19th century foods—Indian slapjacks or carroway cookies, that they had just seen prepared.

In the fall Rich organized two special programs for adults, a stencilling workshop taught by Nancy Collier and a local architecture tour, guided by Rich, both of which took place in October.

As has been the case for the past three years we published our two quarterly local history journals. *The Quarterly* is edited by George McFarland and Marvin Edwards and the *St. Lawrence Chronicler* is written by educator Bellinger and is distributed by BOCES to



The "Silas Wright" Pumper on Main Street, Canton, c. 1900. (SLCHA Archives, Blankman Photo Collection)

almost all of the fourth grade classes in St. Lawrence County. The October *Quarterly* was a special issue written by Bethke and Chittenden on the Storytelling project.

Collections and Collection Management

A list of all of the acquisitions for 1989 is not appropriate here, but I feel that a few important developments should be noted. Several pieces of furniture, and some utensils, all of good quality and in excellent condition, and all appropriate to the period of the Silas Wright house restoration came to us through the estate of the late Marguerite Sanford of Canton. We also received two interesting pieces of 19th century agricultural equipment, a horse-drawn hayrake donated by Wade and Ruby Moore of Oswegatchie and a folding spring harrow donated by Herbert Judd of Canton. These pieces will hopefully be on display as part of the agricultural exhibition set for the fall of 1990.

Larry Bush and Ann Townsend, working as volunteers, completed an inventory of the downstairs rear section of the History Center collection storage facility. Bev Oliver created a second set of catalogue cards for the collection, organized numerically by accession number rather than being organized by

functional category as in the case of the main catalogue. This allows us to quickly find donor or provenance information on any artifact from the collection, and by storing the two sets of cards in the two separate buildings we are assured that in the event of a disaster of some kind that we would retain one catalogue. During his inventory Larry Bush observed that the firearms were in need of cleaning and oiling and in need of an appropriate storage rack. By the end of the year he had cleaned and oiled most of the guns and constructed a rack. He has continued to work on the project and is in the process now of completing the care of the final four pieces.

Lynda Porter encapsulated the History Center map collection so that the historic maps can be handled by researchers with a minimum risk of damage. She also completed an index to the entire map collection.

Clark Gage, chair of the Building and Grounds committee, attended a workshop on climate control for museums in Albany in the spring and reported to the Board of Trustees. We were also notified in the spring that we had received a grant for a conservator's survey of the archives. The survey did not take place until early in 1990 and the staff is presently working on implementing the survey recommendations. These include removing

plumbing in the upstairs portion of the history center, rearranging storage in building, purchasing new file cabinets and storage boxes, and installing an air conditioner in the rear of the History Center in order to establish a temperature controlled zone in the building for storage of the most fragile archival material.

Historic Preservation

Outside of Ogdensburg there has been little public recognition in the county or state of the dramatic and significant 18th century political and military drama played out at the mouth of the Oswegatchie. In 1987 and 1988 I had been involved in an archaeological project to try to locate and define the site of the old French Fort de la Presentation in Ogdensburg, a project which was simultaneously extremely rewarding and incredibly frustrating. The issue of the location of the fort had come up in the mid 1970's when the State Department of Transportation constructed a new bridge and new pavement section for the Route 37 arterial in Ogdensburg. Some believed that the new road had crossed the site of the fort. Others, including many Ogdensburg natives, did not even think that the fort had been located on Lighthouse Point! In the fall of 1989 Potsdam College archaeologist Steve Marqusee and I completed a report of the research project for the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. We argued, persuasively I believe, that we had identified the fort's location and could define an archaeological zone on Lighthouse Point which needed to be protected from further disturbance or destruction. This report later served as the basis for the archaeological portion of the January 1990 *Quarterly*.

Historical Association staff also worked on several other historic preservation projects in 1989 including providing technical assistance to several people who wished to apply to have their properties listed on the State and National registers, research and photography on the Morley Chapel in the final phases of its nomination to the registers, worked with Colton Historian Lillian Cassel on her project to define and nominate an historic district in Colton, and several meetings with archaeologists surveying the St. Lawrence County portion of the Iroquois Gas Pipeline route. I am pleased to report that the Morley Chapel has since been listed on the State and National Registers.

Special Events

Our 1989 tours program got off to a delayed start. A spring trip to Charlotte, North Carolina, to visit historic houses and gardens, had to be cancelled

when we fell short of the number of travellers needed to cover the trip's expense. A hastily organized prospective early summer tour, planned to visit the Gloucester and Salem area in Massachusetts, including a whale watch, also failed to elicit the requisite number of tourists. Janet McFarland and Jill Breit, who jointly operate the tours program for our members, were feeling quite discouraged in May, having put in a lot of work on planning two trips that didn't go. We were all much heartened however when our planned tour to visit the 'Country Garden' set and take a Rideau canal boat trip filled up. We also successfully organized a fall Berkshires and Hudson Valley trip to see the Shaker country, the Roosevelt home and other historic sites around Hyde Park, and a theater trip to a performance of *Les Miserables* in Syracuse in October. We ended the year with a very positive feeling about our tours program and Janet and Jill began planning the 1990 season with a renewed feeling of confidence and with their usual sense of fun and adventure.

On August 26 we held the third annual Country Fair Day in the Canton Village Park. This event, co-sponsored by the Canton Chamber of Commerce, featured craft demonstrations, entertainment, old fashioned children's lawn games, and food and produce competitions. We were especially pleased to be able to offer performances by Bill Smith and by the North Country Fiddlers' Association. A large modern tractor lent for the day by Dragoons and parked next to the Historical Association display of antique farm equipment, was very popular with the kids. The day was sunny and hot, the sky a clear and unclouded blue. Between nine and four there were several hundred people in the park at almost any time—and boy did I grill a lot of hot dogs and sausage!

Our other major event of the year was Christmas open house. The house itself was beautifully decorated for the evening of December 1, with centerpieces made by the Canton Garden Club, and with mantel decorations by Carlton Stickney. There were two Victorian Christmas trees, a cheery blaze in the fireplace and candles everywhere. Three Lionel layouts were running in the orientation gallery upstairs to the delight of a constantly changing crowd of all ages. The Early Music Ensemble from St. Lawrence University performed in the parlor. As the Canton Festival of Lights wound down, throngs of people chilled by the sub-zero temperatures warmed their bodies and spirits in the Wright House. This event, more than any other, demonstrates the special meaning of the Wright House to the people of Canton, and its unique role in its home community.

On October 14 we held our second annual fall fundraiser, a silent auction and buffet organized by Cay Zabriski and Shirley McDonald of Ogdensburg. The absolutely wonderful buffet featured the most exquisite chilled scallops in sour cream sauce provided and served by Pat Tocatlan and Chris Coffin, also of Ogdensburg. The event was well attended and featured hundreds of donated pieces and services. I am pleased to report that it actually exceeded its fundraising goals, and that thanks to this event and to the very positive response to our annual appeal, that we finished the year in the black.

The annual meeting was held in Pierrepoint on the following weekend. Betty Newton hosted the meeting which included a tour of the little schoolhouse museum, a pot luck lunch held in the historical church building next to the museum, and a talk on the New York State historic preservation program by A. Rebecca Harrison, our regional field representative from the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Finances and Support

1989 saw a modest increase over 1988 in the costs of operating the Association. This increase in expenses was met by the enhanced income from an enlarged endowment, by small increases in State Council on the Arts and Federal Institute of Museum Services general operating support, by support for the *Chronicler* provided by an Alcoa Foundation grant, and by the membership's responding generously to our fall fundraiser and annual appeal at the end of the year.

The Endowing Yesterday's Future Campaign ended officially in 1989, although a few people have pledged on into 1990. The campaign involved a commitment to raise \$300,000 locally to meet a \$100,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. In July the challenge grant records were audited by Bob Gamble, Office of Management and the Budget accountant. To summarize a fairly long story about a sometimes intimidating process, Mr. Gamble ruled out some sources of income that we had claimed, but found that even so we had exceeded the \$300,000 match. The campaign then has been an unqualified success. The Association will need to respond realistically to foreseeable financial constraints, but is poised to begin a process of gradual and carefully planned expansion of services and improvement in the operations of the Museum and the History Center in the 1990's.



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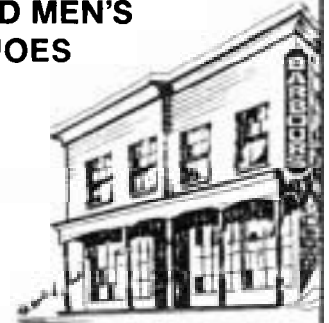
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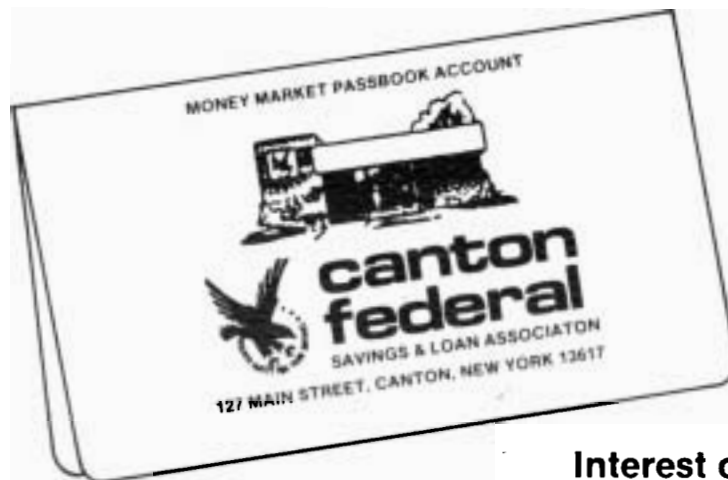
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