

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association

QUARTERLY

Volume XLII - Numbers 1-4 - 1997



**A Ten Year
Retrospective
1956-1965**

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association at the Silas Wright House

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is a private, not-for-profit, membership organization based at the Silas Wright House in Canton, New York. Founded in 1947, the Association is governed by a constitution, by-laws, and Board of Trustees. The Historical Association's membership meets annually to elect its officers and trustees.

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The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is a not-for-profit membership organization and museum which serves as an educational resource for the use and benefit of the citizens of St. Lawrence County and others interested in the County's history and traditions. The Association collects and preserves archival material and artifacts pertinent to the County's history. In cooperation and collaboration with other local organizations, the Association promotes an understanding of and appreciation for the County's rich history through publications, exhibits, and programs. The St. Lawrence County Historical Association operates within museum standards established by the American Association of Museums.

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Membership in the St. Lawrence County Historical Association is open to all interested parties. Annual membership dues are: Individual, \$25; Senior/Student, \$20; Family, \$35; Contributor, \$50; Supporter, \$100; Patron, \$250; Businesses, \$50 to \$1,000. Members receive the *SLCHA Quarterly*, the Historical Association's bi-monthly newsletter, and various discounts on publications, programs and events.

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The SLCHA Quarterly welcomes contributions. To submit a manuscript, or for further information, please contact the editor through the St. Lawrence County Historical Association. Please address communications to: Managing Editor, *The SLCHA Quarterly*, P.O. Box 8, Canton, NY 13617.

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Quarterly

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From the Editors

The year 1997 is the fiftieth anniversary of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association. One of the Association's significant accomplishments is its publication of *The Quarterly*, first issued in 1956 and published continuously ever since. *The Quarterly*, like much of the Association's work, has always been a collaborative effort of much dedication, frequently relying on the volunteer work of many hands – some of which are not immediately visible. Its pages are rich with stories and historical details from around the county. It seemed fitting to celebrate the Association's fiftieth year and honor the volunteers of the past with a retrospective publication of selections from *The Quarterly's* first ten years. This special issue constitutes numbers one through four of volume forty-two for 1997.

The selections in this volume are arranged chronologically in the order in which they were originally published. Since it was not practical to reprint every article, we had to make choices. This was not always easy as there were so many interesting articles from which to choose. We looked for articles that represented various parts of the county and articles of different lengths in order to provide some variety.

We have reprinted the articles as they were written, though in modern type and with some punctuation changes. You will notice that there are not a lot of illustrations in this issue. The early issues themselves were not heavily illustrated. We have added illustrations when we could find pertinent ones that we felt we could print within the bounds of the current copyright law.

We know that members of long standing will remember reading these articles in their original form, but to many these will be new. We hope you enjoy them.

J. Rebecca Thompson

Trent Trulock

Eight Years -- Historically Speaking *Vol. 1, no. 2 (Apr. 1956)*

Some day an adequate history can be written about our St. Lawrence County Historical Association, possibly when it has advanced to a riper maturity and greater stature. But it is time that there should be a brief review of the intervening eight years. Our Association was formally organized, as many will recall, on October 18, 1947. Up until that time several local historical societies had existed, and all down through the years, such as Dr. Frederick B. Hough and others put their shoulders to the wheel and their pens to paper in the interest of historical endeavor.

The first real step toward a county-wide organization followed the naming of the first St. Lawrence County Historian by the Board of Supervisors. He was the late Otto Hamele, of Wanakena, supervisor of the Town of Clifton. Otto Hamele possessed a great penchant for two things. One was the conservation of our natural resources and protection of wild life; and the other was history. Under the laws of the state it had become possible for the Board of Supervisors to appoint a county Historian. Mr. Hamele was the choice.

Under the laws, it was also mandatory that each town should appoint its own town historian. Many towns in the county, most of them, complied.

Mr. Hamele recognized that neither his job, nor that of the town historians could render the

people of this county a thoroughly acceptable service without the help and support of many, many others—volunteers.

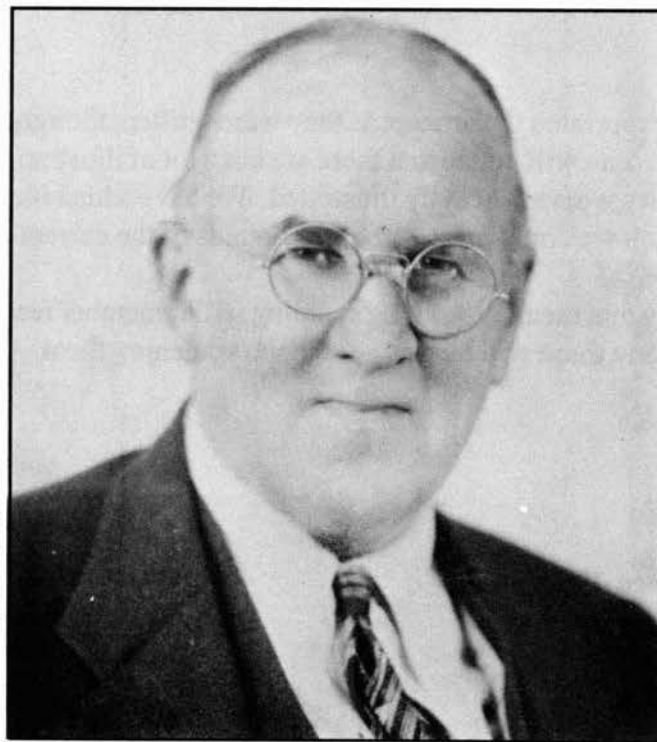
So it was that Mr. Hamele began talking with many about the need for a St. Lawrence County Historical Society. He was met by an eager and substantial response in the number of people who favored that very thing. Thus does this Association look upon Otto Hamele as its founder.

Among those whose advice and cooperation he enlisted was Howard Pittman of Canton. Another was Mrs. Herbert A. Bloch, also of Canton. Jointly these three were largely responsible for

drawing up the plan to organize such an association with the point in view of eventually obtaining a charter under the University of the State of New York. Before the organization meeting was held, October 18, 1947, however, Mr. Hamele died. The other two, with still kindred spirits, carried on. An organization was effected, endowed of course with a constitution and by-laws. In 1950 a temporary charter was sought and received. In 1955 the University of the State of New York granted the Association a permanent charter.

[The original article concludes with a listing of officers and directors from 1947-1956]

From the SLCHA collections



Otto Hamele

When Iron was King in Rossie

By Virgie Simons

Town Historian, Town of Rossie

Vol. 1, no. 2 (Apr. 1956)

In the fall of 1812 iron was discovered at what was later named the Caledonia iron mine, in the town of Rossie. It was about a mile from Somerville and near the present village of Spragueville. Samples were sent to Albany and the trial showed the ore to be of good quality for a superior grade of iron.

Thus in 1813, began the erection of a furnace at Rossie village, by David Parish the owner, under the direction of James Howard. Mr. Howard was a brother-in-law of D. W. Church, with whom he had worked in Ogdensburg. This furnace consisted of two stacks, but only one ever got into operation.

William Bembo, an Englishman of great experience, was made the manager and conducted the first blast in 1815. He had been an expert in England but was accustomed to English ore and this reddish Rossie product was unknown to him. His efforts ended in complete failure and the result was that no iron could be made. After spending large sums experimenting and building a costly mansion for a permanent residence, Mr. Bembo returned to England in 1819.

Mr. Parish then gave three months' free use of the furnace for experimental purposes to Messrs. Keith, Marvin, and Sykes of New England. They realized a large profit and got the iron business going. In 1816 a forge was built which subsequently burned. The supply of iron was

said to be inexhaustible and the encircling forest would furnish an abundance of charcoal as fuel for many years.

At this time the Parishes and their friends lived like royalty in Northern New York and were lavish entertainers. In 1817 President James Monroe was visiting this section and was a guest at the Parish mansion. He was on an inspection tour to ascertain the resources of the country, especially along the Canadian border. He came to Rossie to inspect the furnace and iron mine and was much impressed with this valuable industry. His visit was a great event in the lives of a few early inhabitants, all of whom turned out to see their leader.

After Keith, Marvin & Sykes, came S. Fuller & Co. who took over the management for three years. George Parish then leased the business for a long term to Robert Burr of New Jersey, who left Rossie in 1827 and for ten years no work was done. In 1837 Mr. Parish built a new stack and in other ways enlarged and improved the property so that on May 12th of that year the furnace was again blown in. This stood until 1844 when the final larger stack was put up by the second George Parish who had inherited everything from his uncles, David and George. This stack was forty feet square, forty-six feet high, nine feet in diameter within and capable of making eleven tons per day.

Ore for smelting was usually brought thirteen miles from the

mine to the furnace by the tenants of Mr. Parish. They received from one to three dollars per ton for hauling and many farmers paid for their land with this extra income. The work was invariably done in winter on sleighs and the ore was drawn up the hill and dumped into the top of the furnace. The Caledonia mine was most extensively used although some ore came from the Keene and Wicks mines on the edge of Jefferson County nearby and a small opening adjoining the Kearney mine. Early superintendents rode through the forest on horseback from forge to mine.

In 1815, the brick land office was built. This served in the capacity of bank and pay-master's office. In the cellar was a brick vault where the money reserve was kept and in the office there was a special cashier's window where cash was received and handed out by the Parish agents.

The stone foundry, which was the pioneer of the Northland, and the machine shop were built in 1848-49. The first business was the making of potash and cauldron kettles which were in great demand by the settlers. Then came the making of box stoves. They were of oblong shape with iron an inch thick, having a door at the end the whole size of the structure. This stove could burn a log forty or more inches long. As the production of iron increased, the foundry was enlarged to build mill machinery, plows and water wheels. The first castings for the Northern Railroad

were made in large numbers at the machine shop.

With all of the bustle in the iron mines and enlarging of buildings, etc., Rossie was becoming an industrial center, the "Pittsburgh of the North." This caused the laying out of new roads and the building of boats on the waterway from Rossie to Ogdensburg via Indian River, Black Lake, and the Oswegatchie River. The steamers, "Rossie" and "Indian Chieftain" were two such boats carrying ore. Mr. Parish built docks at Chippewa Bay on the St. Lawrence River and iron was shipped to foundries as far away as Oswego.

Small articles such as flatirons,

cast iron kettles, tea kettles, fireplace utensils, hinges, latches, and match boxes were made, some of which are still in the possession of local residents. The curtain on work at the foundry came down when shipments of ore stopped in 1887.

The iron industry furnished employment to many. From the close of the Civil War until the early 1870s, Rossie probably enjoyed the greatest boom. Sometimes it was difficult to get the four hundred workers needed at one time. Exploration of the West had attracted men, and at this time the farming industry was flourishing, so farmers remained at home. Laborers were brought in from Canada, lured by the delightful tales of the Parish agents and the

promise of high wages. However, they seldom stayed long. Other fields attracted the wanderers, this being especially true of the fishermen from the Newfoundland Banks. The sad part of it was that whisky was plenty and on Saturday nights the nearby taverns were filled to overflowing. Monday morning found many of the miners with nothing left but to start work all over again and wait for the next payday.

In 1864 the mine was purchased by a New York company with Mr. Charles P. Westbrook as manager. It was equipped with the most improved machinery, including engines, pumps, diamond and air drills. New buildings were erected and a branch railroad



Rossie Iron Works. Rossie, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y.

From History of St. Lawrence & Franklin Counties by Franklin B. Hough (1853)

track was built to the iron beds. Ownership of the Caledonia mine changed several times in the ensuing years and it was closed and reopened at intervals. In 1905 one hundred men were employed. After that the mine gradually became inactive. The supply of iron ore was still apparently inexhaustible and the quality of the product was good, but unforeseen events caused the final abandonment of the business. Chief among these causes was the enormous and cheap production of iron in other localities plus a local scarcity of fuel.

The history of this mine would furnish a good ground work for the financial history of our country. The periods of activity and of depression were almost the same periods of financial prosperity and gloom. Until the 1840's all of the ore mined, was hauled to Rossie. Between that time and the building of the railroads, other furnaces, including one at Wegatchie in the Town of Rossie were using Caledonia ore.

The last blast of the furnace ended October 14, 1867 and in the years that followed it remained idle and untouched, its stout stone walls falling to rubble. All traces were obliterated, except a small portion of a wall when in 1922 the Rossie-Brasie Corners county road took a path directly through the center of the old landmark.

Here in Rossie was achieved the first large scale production of iron in the North County. Perhaps the need for haste in the beginning was the fact that ammunition was desperately needed along the frontier and cannon balls were made from the Rossie iron. From these highly skilled workers came all kinds of iron

which early blacksmiths worked into useful forms. The iron kingdom built by the Parishes on the banks of the Indian River was a world's wonder to the new settlement of Rossie.

Examples of the skill of the early iron masters are difficult to find. Most of the tools and utensils produced were picked up very cheaply by collectors who had no appreciation of the value of their accumulations. The junk dealers' only interest was the scrap metal value of old iron. Most boys of the 1890's rummaged through barns, sheds, and attics in search of odd bits of discarded iron to sell; thus all sorts of ironmongery which today are treated as venerable antiques were hurried off to the scrap heap.

The well preserved land office, the picturesque ruins of the foundry, the crumbling walls of the machine shop, the homes of both Mr. Bembo and Mr. Parish and the stories which have been handed down as folklore and history are all that remain of the Rossie Iron Works. These echoes from the past are kept alive by the hundreds of tourists who visit the ruins each year and are deeply interested in the story behind them.

The "Island House" of the Ogdens

By Ethel C. Olds

Vol. 1, no. 3 (July 1956)

By the time this issue of *The Quarterly* reaches its readers the initial stages of the river project in the immediate vicinity of Waddington and Crapser Island will be in progress.

Little River, sometimes known as the South Channel, the existing waterway lying between the large island and the New York shore, will be closed by coffer dams at the head and foot of the island. When the river project reaches completion much of the original island will be submerged or rebuilt.

The present South Channel will be pumped dry during operations and excavated to a greater width and depth. When completed, shipping will be directed through this new channel. The whole operation on a large scale, will then be performed on the north side of the channel to prepare the future main channel.

When the river project reaches completion the water level in this section of the St. Lawrence River will be raised twenty feet. The original island will be submerged for the most part or rebuilt by dredging and excavating. The present site of the historic Island House will lie seventy five feet within the new channel.

Today the initial clearing of trees and brush is in progress on the island. By fall, probably, the square stone mansion which has stood on the island for 150 years will be demolished.

When the Island House is destroyed the North Country will lose one of its most important and interesting historical structures. Preservation is impossible; the construction of the mansion would not lend itself to being moved, and if preserved, restoration would involve very considerable funds.

The Island House is linked to some of the most vital figures who have played roles in the history of Northern New York. It is itself history. Its square form has been woven and interwoven into the folklore of the people who have looked across the Little River to the island. Like Constable Hall in Lewis County it has been through the years a symbol of those who ventured fortunes and the lives of their families in the vast wilderness north of the Mohawk.

The birth of the Island House was rooted in events which occurred years before its actual construction. On June 6, 1796 four men, inhabitants of New York City and northern New Jersey, purchased a ten-mile square listed as Madrid on the existing state maps. Madrid, bordering on the St. Lawrence River, was one of the Ten Towns first erected by legislative act in the wilderness. The price was \$60,000.

Abraham Ogden, a New Jersey Tory, together with his sons, David A. Ogden and Thomas Ludlow Ogden, and a nephew,

Josiah Ogden Hoffman, were the purchasers. By 1803 the two sons became sole owners. They then took as their third partner Joshua Waddington, their brother-in-law, a Tory brewer of New York.

These proprietors moved among New York City's leaders. They had attended King's College, now Columbia. They were prominent lawyers, associated with Alexander Hamilton, who returned to legal practice following his term as Secretary of the Treasury in Washington's cabinet.

With Hamilton's death in the famous duel with Adam Burr, the events leading to the birth of Island House gathered momentum. David Ogden, so prominent in New York circles, became a frequent visitor to the northern lands he owned. As agent for his family's vast holding he became more than an absentee owner interested only in speculation. Some charm of the untenanted land must have captured his imagination. In 1804 a wing dam was erected in the south channel of the St. Lawrence. Grist and saw mills were built and a new settlement crept into being on the south river bank. The Ogdens named this little community Hamilton as a tribute to the brothers' late partner.

In 1808 or 1809 David Ogden issued orders to have land cleared on the island. Here he planned to erect a mansion for his home. A causeway built above the power

dam provided access to the island. In 1811 Ogden became sole owner of the island, mills and water rights, as well as of the village.

How the mansion was constructed remains a matter of conjecture. Evidence exists indicating that stone for the two-foot walls came from a riverside quarry nearby. Mortar, too, was mixed from the limestone deposits on the land.

Actual construction was supposed to have begun in 1811. Possibly the war of 1812 caused temporary interruption. Tradition says that Judge Ogden met incoming vessels at Montreal to obtain skilled craftsmen coming to the New World from Scotland, England, and Ireland. Labor costs for the Island House were \$100 a day, the story goes, in a time when a first-rate carpenter received \$1.00 a day.

No one knows for sure how the Island House was furnished. It stands to reason, however, that a cultured gentleman of means like David Ogden brought to his wilderness home the pieces of the fine cabinet makers of New York. In those days much Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton furniture were imported from England by well-to-do people. The high-ceilinged rooms with their fine fireplaces and door lintels must have housed the best in furnishings. In Waddington homes today are found occasionally fine antique pieces that tradition says come from the Island House.

Transporting fine furniture in those days was a task of gigantic proportions. If brought from overseas, it came first to Montreal and then was reshipped up the St. Lawrence in smaller vessels. If it came overland from New York,

it jolted over rough roads through the forests on carts drawn by oxen.

In 1816 the Island House was supposed to have been completed. It rose fifty-four feet square, of the gray-yellow native stone, three stories in the air. At the basement windows were iron bars. Four great chimneys added to the height of the building for inside the house twelve fireplaces provided heat.

David Ogden's family came through the forests, over the rough roads to a home which provided a marked contrast with pioneer-like surroundings. Here Rebecca Edwards Ogden, his wife, a woman of southern upbringing, and his children lived during the warm months of the year.

The family's meals were prepared in the kitchens in the basement. Here also the household servants had their quarters. On the main floor of the house, some six or eight feet above ground, were the large center hall and its well-hole stairway. The four rooms on either side of the hall were spacious with wide marble fireplaces and twelve foot ceilings. The woodwork and old moldings marked the skill of those imported carpenters and witnessed to the formal style of life to which the Ogdens adhered. Under the spacious gallery which opened halfway up the stairs at the rear was the butler's pantry. Here the food prepared below was carried and from here it was served in the family dining room.

At the north end of the house underground were five great arched chambers. What they were used for in the early nineteenth century no one knows.

Up the large stairway from the entrance hall on the second floor was another center hall. From this led large bedrooms, each with a fireplace. Still more rooms were found on the third floor.

The Island House became known for its hospitality. These members of the New York aristocracy entertained lavishly for visitors. They entertained the great and near-great of that era who chanced to wander into the northern lands. Washington Irving is supposed to have been their guest. Ramee, the European architect who spent several months with the Parish family in Ogdensburg, is said to have been a visitor and to have laid out plans for landscaping the grounds of the Island house. President Monroe, who visited Waddington July 31, 1817 was probably a guest on the Island. The Ogdens entertained other leading families of the North Country: the Fords, Clarksons, Harisons, Morrisises, and Van Rensselaers.

The Ogden family grew to include eleven children. When at the Island House, the Ogden boys attended school in the village across the causeway.. The girls received instruction at home.

David Ogden, with his brother, became one of the patrons of the early settlers. He gave every assistance to those people who sought to establish themselves in the newly settled country. In 1814 he became a member of the Assembly and then went to Congress as a Representative from 1817 to 1821. He became a county judge in 1811 and served in that capacity for many years.

After Ogden's death in 1829 changes occurred in the Island

House itself and in the lives of its inhabitants. Soon thereafter, Mrs. Ogden, because of financial difficulties, was forced to give up residence on the island. With her family and servants she moved to the mainland.

A new family moved to the Island House. Isaac Ogden was a brother of David. He married his cousin, Sarah Ogden Meredith of Philadelphia, the year before his brother's death.

Perhaps it was at this time that the two wings to the east and west of the house were added. At this time also a large veranda was built. The east wing was divided to make two rooms. In the door of the east wing opening onto the veranda is still found the enormous lock and key which were the original hardware.

Life in the Island House maintained its reputation for hospital-

ity. All visiting clergymen were invited to stay in the "Bishop's Room" as the northeast bedroom was called. The mistress of the house moved about her duties accompanied by a maid who carried a small basket of keys which opened all the household cupboards. The Isaac Ogdens helped the inhabitants of Waddington as had their predecessors. (The name of the village had been changed in 1820 to honor David Ogden's brother-in-law one of the landholders with Ogden.) Mrs. Ogden's daughters were educated at home and the daughters of farmers and tenants were included in the lessons.

With the death of Isaac Ogden and his wife, the Island House left the hands of the Ogden family. Before the death of Mrs. Ogden, land on the island had been sold to make several farms. The house itself and 156 acres remained in the Ogden name until 1880. Of

the Ogden children only two survived their parents and both moved to other parts of the country. The house was vacant until purchased by Ebenezer S. Crapser, a businessman of Brasher, who served as a supervisor from the town of Stockholm for many years.

Although the Ogdens were gone from the North Country the Island House remained. Gradually it assumed a special place in the stories of Waddington residents even though it remained the summer home for the Crapser family. In time it became enhanced with an aura of folklore, those legends which so easily accrue to a place which has dominated the history of the community.

The house on Ogden Island even had a ghost, so the children of Ebenezer Crapser were led to believe. It was an active one, Miss Eunice Crapser relates, waiting on windy September nights. But that ghost never appeared although if any of the children dared to sleep in the northeast rooms they were sure it would.

The romantic tales of the Island House are legion. In the family cemetery is the grave of the twenty-nine year-old son of Isaac Ogden who fell in the Civil War in Tennessee. The legend persists that he was visiting in the South when war was declared and enlisted on the Confederate side with his southern cousins. On his grave is the inscription of his last letter to his mother: "I can not in the hour of peril turn my back upon friends of so many years." Near him in the family plot lies his sister, Gertrude; she married Walford Briggs in the Island House and died a year later to the day. According to the old



"Island House"

tale her untimely death was foretold when a bird flew in the open window of the library as she sat at the wedding feast.

Lost even deeper in the legend and the past is the true purpose of the curious arched chambers which extend underground from the north wall of the old mansion. Five in number, they are level with the basement of the old mansion. Yet no doorway connected the mysterious chambers to the main building when the Crapser family bought the property. The only entrance was to crawl down a ladderlike flight of steps from the east end of the veranda.

All sorts of conjecture have been made as to the original purpose of these rooms. One of the most practical is that they provided storage place for crops harvested on the Island. Others have claimed that they served as a kind

of dungeon for family slaves who had committed misdemeanors. Still another legend maintains that here were hidden slaves in the great underground railroad of the pre-Civil War days. Others claim that they were for protection from the British or Indians in the early days. Still another tale has it that the caverns were used in a smuggling operation. At one time pieces of Mexican silver were found during renovations and from this came the tale that here had operated once a great counterfeiting business.

The waters of the St. Lawrence will soon swirl over the walls of the Island House. Within a few years its very solid substance will become as mysterious and fraught with romance as are the tales which have grown out of its long life. Within another generation the Island House will itself be a legend and few paragraphs of written record. Yet

during its time the house has played a vital dramatic part in the story of Northern New York. Indirectly its own story has been linked with the greater history of the establishment of the whole nation. For the men who had the courage and the gambling instinct to buy the great tracts of wilderness which were once this whole North Country, were part and parcel of the coterie of men who evolved the foundation upon which the entire country grew. Among them were the great merchant princes of New York and the leading politicians and statesmen of the new country. Some attained lasting fame in the annals of the country. Others like David Ogden left their imprint upon a community or locale which they envisioned, fostered, and nourished during its early days.



The Island House about 1949.

How the Ten Towns Were Named

Vol. 1, no. 4 (Oct. 1956)

It may be of interest to many who are not intimately schooled in the history of St. Lawrence County to know how the original Ten Towns of the county were named. So, how were they named? Time and time again over the years the question has been asked. Again and again and again the answer becomes a "will o' the wisp". So it may prove helpful as well as interesting to make a factual and definitive reply to the question.

The Ten Towns, of course, came into being at the start in a quite fictional manner. The close of the American Revolution found the respective new states of the new nation heavily in debt. It was not easy to raise monies for current expenses by taxation from a war-impooverished people. The Chaumont family of France was pressing the United States for payments on extensive loans they had made to help finance the Revolution. So were individuals within the former thirteen colonies. From the governmental end, things were a bit scant financially.

New York City was in the midst of a rehabilitation period. The years of occupancy by Lord Howe and his British troops had left the city ravaged, in ruins and ashes. Many of the city's Tories had fled to Canada or England. The dispossessed Whigs were moving back. The "violent party" under the leadership of Governor George Clinton controlled the state legislature. On the wave of

passion and revenge, the state legislature thereupon undertook to disenfranchise all those who had stayed in neighborhoods occupied by the British, especially the Tories. Thus, the unfortunate unconstitutional Trespass Act of 1784 was enacted. Utter confusion followed. The common law and the law of nations that "the fruits of immovables belong to the captor as long as he remains in possession of them" was summarily ignored. More wrongs were created than old ones righted. The widow Rutgers sought damages under the act from the Tory brewer, Joshua Waddington, brother-in-law of David and Thomas Ludlow Ogden. Alexander Hamilton, law partner of the Ogden brothers, undertook the unpopular defense of Waddington. Hamilton, over the pseudonym of Mentor, crossed swords in the press with the Widow's Counsel, Isaac Ledyard, who wrote over the name of Phocion. The case was thus actually first tried in public print. Hamilton's clear, concise, persuasive logic was so devastating to the Widow's case as was Burr's bullet to Hamilton's life twenty years later. Public opinion switched to Waddington's side. The Widow lost. The Trespass Act was repealed. Civic order was restored.

This was the background of the time, when in 1785, the State Legislature cast about for means of finding ready cash. Its chief asset was the vast sweep of unappropriated lands, especially in

the northern tier of the yet-to-be surveyed part of the state. Forthwith the Legislature by act created a Board of Land Commissioners, of which Governor Clinton was head. It empowered this Commission to proceed to sell these lands. Thus was ushered in the greatest era of land speculation in this state's entire history.

But to sell several million acres of wilderness was no mean task. It required, at the least, some degree of salesmanship. Therefore, the Commissioners hit upon the idea of holding an auction at the Old Coffee House in the City of New York, then and there to sell a slice of these unappropriated lands, said slice abutting on a great river called St. Lawrence, located afar off at the northern most outskirts of the state's public domain.

It was sound procedure as was later proved. Purchasers must traverse the wilderness to reach their newly purchased property. This would in turn make the lands through which they traveled open to settlement and to sale. The gentlemen of the Commission were not nitwits.

Therefore under the date July 10, 1787, the slice of land far removed from any possible means of inspection went on the block. The Commissioners had by agreement divided this area into ten separate towns of as nearly ten miles square each as possible. Maps were supplied for inspection, maps of a country yet to be

surveyed, and almost wholly uninhabited except for a small missionary settlement at the mouth of a river called the Oswegatchie. The map, obviously, was a device of salesmanship. It provided small, specific items to put on the block to go to the highest bidder. One Alexander Macomb, by direct or indirect purchase, or through almost immediate private resale acquired nearly all of the entire ten towns. The going price was 12 pence per acre.

By a formal resolution passed

by the Land Commissioners as of September 10, 1787 (and it is highly important that this date be remembered) the Commissioners assigned names to each of the ten towns so sold. Thus there came into being the Ten Towns of St. Lawrence County. By number and by name they were:

1. Louisville
2. Stockholm
3. Potsdam
4. Madrid
5. Lisbon
6. Canton
7. DeKalb

8. Oswegatchie
9. Hague
10. Cambray

Cambray was later to be named Gouverneur, and Hague as Morristown. Depeyster, Macomb, Waddington, and Norfolk were in time to be partitioned off from among some of the ten towns. Potsdam, Canton, Lisbon, and Dekalb alone of the ten, were to retain their original ten mile square dimensions. Oswegatchie bore a native Indian name.



The Ten Towns

No documentary evidence has ever been presented to indicate who on the Board of Land Commissioners suggested any of the ten names. It is to be noted that Gouverneur Morris, who some have thought might have had a hand in suggesting the name of Cambray, was not a member of the Commission and it was yet two years before he would set sail for his period of residence in Paris and on the Continent (1789-1798). Festus Tracy, who some have been led to believe supplied the name of Canton, probably did not even know of the existence of the ten square miles which he and other members of Benjamin Wright's party were to survey thirteen years later, in 1799. The only plausible explanation of nine of the ten names is that at the time the Commission was engaged in proceeding with the contemplated sale, some of them and many of their New York City associates, were entering upon an era of mercantile trade with many foreign countries, in the Orient as well as on the Continent. Dekalb, of course, was named as a tribute to Aaron Dekalb, the Bavarian general who came to this country with the French to aid the colonies in the Revolutionary War. Other than Dekalb and Oswegatchie the names were of foreign capitals of large or small degree, Cambray being that of a French Province.

Thus it has come about that all historians dealing with St. Lawrence County invariably refer to the original Ten Towns. They were named by the Land Commission as set forth in a formal resolution in 1787.

Editor's note: Factual reference to the above information is available in Chapter IV, beginning with page 235, Hough's *History*

of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties; in Fiske's *The Critical Period of American History* beginning with page 123; [and in Jared] Spark's biography of Gouverneur Morris.

Black Lake Toll Bridge

By Malcolm Booth

Town Historian, Morristown

Vol. 1, no. 4 (Oct. 1956)

Twenty-five years ago this past summer, on August 17, 1931, Emmett R. Booth ran into his home on Booth's Island at Edwardsville on Black Lake sobbing, "No! No! They can't do that!" It was the evening when the old iron bridge spanning the lake at that point, and of which Mr. Booth as a director had helped construct in 1902-08, was dynamited in order to make way for the new state highway concrete span.

Agitation to construct a bridge across Black Lake at the narrows opposite Edwardsville began as far back as 1836. In 1841, the Town of Macomb was partitioned off from Morristown, a political division arising over the issue of having a bridge built, contribut-

ing largely to that action. In 1851, the first real step toward opening up traffic between the north and south sides of the lake at this point occurred. The State Legislature authorized the establishment of a ferry. The towns of Morristown and Macomb were each to receive an annual fee from this source in the munificent amount of \$22.50 to go toward the support of schools.

Recently a manuscript, written during the period of the building of the iron bridge has come to the attention of the Morristown Historian's Office, probably written by Dr. J. A. Phillips, a physician of Morristown from 1865 to 1869 and then from 1871 on. However, there is also the possibility that it may have been writ-

ten by Jessie Wallace, Historian from 1944 to 1952. Some of its footnotes were initialed "jw" by her, and some "mab" by the author who is the present Town Historian.

The article follows:

"A year ago in October there was organized and put into operation (This was probably 1902, as incorporation papers for the Black Lake Bridge Company were filed in Canton in October 1902. -mab) a work which interested the farmers in the towns of Morristown and Macomb in this county more than any other single enterprise that has been started there in recent years for the reason that it was to affect their convenience in travel and the acces-

From the SLCHA collections



Black Lake Toll Bridge

sibility of the territory that heretofore was obscure and distant.

“Ellery Colby of Owego and his brother were the principal owners of the stock controlling a company to build an iron bridge across Black Lake. These men were from the Owego Bridge Company of Owego, N.Y., since consolidated with the trust, and they were experts in bridge building. There was opposition, however, to the plan and for this reason the work proceeded slowly. The capital stock of the company was fixed at \$40,000 and \$30,000 was taken by the Colby brothers and the balance by the farmers in that vicinity.

‘It proved a most difficult work owing to the fact that the bottom of the lake was black muck, so deep and so soft as to make a foundation a very difficult matter, and the piles that supported the piers were driven forty-five feet down in the muck before they were considered secure enough to hold the weight. The water is seventeen feet deep at this point.

“But despite all difficulties, the work proceeded under the direct supervision of Fred Sixbury of Evans Mills who had under his charge during this time from ten to sixty men. There are three piers to the bridge and it is now completed. This bridge has the distinction of being the only toll bridge this side of Troy in the State of New York. It takes the place of a ferry which was established between the Edwardsville and Pope Mills side of the lake by Edward Perry fifty-two years ago (1851-mab) and that venerable landlord of the Pope Mills hotel now has the satisfaction of seeing the bridge erected over the lake and the special privilege of

being the first foot-passenger across the structure when it was completed. After Mr. Perry, Mort Smith was the ferryman for six years and after him H. Breckenridge had the position for twenty years. The old ferry is now discontinued. It consisted of a cable and an ordinary flat-bottomed barge upon which horses were driven from a dock on either side and the objection to the ferry was that in case of high wind it was dangerous and sometimes impossible to cross and there have been instances when travelers were held up by the windy lake for a period of a day or two rather than drive around the (Horn?) miles each way to reach Macomb or Edwardsville, as the case might be. The bridge will be a toll bridge and the rate of toll will be fixed by the board of supervisors of the county of St. Lawrence. The rates have not yet been settled upon, but the revenue of the bridge will be sufficient to pay the interest on the cost of the structure, a part of the principal each year, and the expenses and a small profit to the owners.”

Note: The only toll bridge this side of Troy is the one which has been constructed over Black Lake. (Difficult undertaking. -jw)

Note: The Black Lake Bridge was purchased by the State of New York in 1922, and tolls were discontinued at that time. It is said that on the first Sunday after tolls were discontinued, the neighbors drove back and forth across the bridge all that afternoon. In 1931 it was replaced by a modern concrete causeway. It was repaved with macadam during the summers of 1951, 1952, and 1955. During the winters people traveled across the ice rather than across the bridge. Mr. Booth told of one Pope's Mills grocer who

was always the first to cross the ice in the fall and last in the spring. On his last return trip on these spring afternoons he would invariably lose grocery stock in the lake to an amount which would have more than paid the entire winter's toll charges. -mab.

J. Henry Rushton - Famous Boat Builder

A Biographical Sketch by Atwood Manley

Vol. 3, no. 2 (Apr. 1958)

In certain respects 1869 was a year of significance to this North Country, especially in the life of the son of Peter and Martha Glines Rushton of Edwards, N.Y. This was the year in which a book, "*Adventures in the Wilderness - or Camping in the Adirondacks*," became a best seller and was credited with starting a stampede to the Adirondacks. Its author was a young Back Bay Congregational minister by the name of William Henry Harrison Murray. There is no evidence, at least of a documentary nature, to indicate what, if any, direct influence either Murray or the book may have had on J. Henry Rushton, the son of Peter and Martha. But indirectly Murray's "*Adventures*" played an important, if not almost controlling influence on the destiny of this son of a sawmill operator.

Born in 1843 in Edwards, J. Henry Rushton, as a youth was reared to the song of the saw. As a boy, a rod, a rifle, or paddle were in his hands a good share of the time. He was a puny, stunted youth, frail and ailing, much in contrast to his four sturdy brothers and three sisters. His father and uncles were in the lumber business there on the fringe of The South Woods as the Adirondacks were called locally. In 1864 when J. Henry cast his first ballot - for Lincoln - he weighed 98 pounds and stood a scant five feet. What he lacked in sinew he made up for in bustle and bounce, but physically he was

never fitted for the rough life of the lumber camp or sawmill.

Like Rev. William H.H. Murray, pastor of Boston's staid Park Street Church, known as the Brimstone Corner Church, young Rushton possessed a passionate fondness for field and stream. The call of the wild was in his blood. Fishing, hunting, and camping had been his boyhood pastimes.

As nearly as now can be determined, it was in the early summer of 1869 that young Rushton packed to Cranberry Lake to enjoy some trout fishing below the new State dam at the outlet. He knew the lake well. It was from there that much of the timber was floated down the Oswegatchie to the Rushton mills in Pitcairn and Edwards. At Bishop's Log Hotel at the foot of the lake he found two young Canton merchants, just fifteen years his senior. They were Joseph P. Ellsworth and Milton D. Packard, the shoeman and drygoodsman respectively. Like young Rushton, these two were disciples of the rod, the rifle, and the paddle. They, too, had come for the best of the trout fishing and speedily formed a friendship and liking for the young man from Edwards. It was a friendship which was to endure, and which was to play an important role in Rushton's future.

Rev. Murray's book, just published, became one of those unexpectedly popular pieces of fiction, something like "*Trader Horn*" or "*Gone With the Wind*."

It took the public by storm. Murray had made a few summer pilgrimages into the Adirondacks and had become so enamored of the mountains, ponds, lakes, and forests that he painted a too-glowing word-picture of the Mecca which he said was there awaiting the lame, the halt, the blind, and the healthy. People believed him. The Adirondack rush was on as the "*Adventures in the Wilderness*" surged from one printing to another and then another. The invading hosts failed to find what Murray had described in the way of hotels, prosaic guides, and the easy life. Soon many of them departed chanting "liar," "charlatan" toward the Back Bay divine. But they had become inoculated with the lure which the Adirondacks have ever since held for so many. Murray's book caused such controversy that it drove its author from the pulpit



From the SLCHA collections

J. Henry Rushton

and left him with the sobriquet of "Adirondack" Murray. But at least the gates to the Adirondacks were down. The health-giving balm of the pines, the hemlocks, and spruces which Murray so eloquently wrote about soon brought Trudeau and Robert Louis Stevenson and thousands there either seeking relief from burning consumptive coughs or in quest of woods life.

Of all this J. Henry Rushton and his two newly won Canton merchant friends knew nothing as they whipped the waters of the Outlet in those days in 1869. Before parting, J. B. Ellsworth suggested to the 26-year-old J. Henry that he move to Canton where he could find a job as a clerk in the Ellsworth Shoe Store waiting for him. Before the snow fell that fall, J. Henry was behind the counter in the store.

For four years he hustled business for the Ellsworths. This was during the period when "*Adventures in the Wilderness*" was being both damned and extolled; when Murray was being called both a saint and a sinner; and when the Adirondacks were receiving the greatest free promotional advertising any resort area on the continent ever enjoyed. Murray spun down into oblivion, but the Adirondacks ceased to be a "wilderness." The rush was on in full force.

It was either in the fall of 1872 or the spring of 1873 that young Rushton came to a difficult decision. His health, never robust, had deteriorated. There was a dry, hacking cough which showed a tubercular tendency. It worried J. Henry and also his employer and close friend. Whether Rushton had been reading Murray's book and all the claims

it made for the health-healing antidotes of the Adirondacks is not known. Nor is there any evidence that the paths of Murray and Rushton directly crossed although "Adirondack" Murray visited Cranberry Lake about this time. Beyond the preadventure of a doubt, the possibility of Murray's preaching and Rushton's health were coincidental. Whatever the circumstances may or may not have been, Rushton elected to do the very thing which Murray's book advised all sufferers of "lung fever" to do, take to the woods, the Adirondacks.

Thus it came about that J. Henry Rushton prepared to part with his friend and business benefactor, Joseph Ellsworth. That he received the blessings of his employer and God Speed seems certain. Fortuitously, however, Rushton never took his camping trip. Before packing into the woods, he announced that he first intended to build himself a canoe. If he was to take the new fresh-air cure, he preferred to do so in style. The old-fashioned dugouts so common to his boyhood held no lure for him. They were altogether too cranky, too clumsy, and too tippy. This canoe was to be of cedar, twenty feet over all, and weighing only twenty pounds. From Tom Leonard, the cabinet and boat builder in Morley, he obtained the necessary pattern from which to design this craft.

In an empty barn on Water Street, now called Riverside Drive, young J. Henry went to work that summer in 1873. Besides the tools he accumulated for the job, Rushton possessed an inherent knowledge of woods and woodworking. This was native to his upbringing and the Edwards sawmill environment. It was

something which always stood him in good stead.

His two intimates, Messrs. Ellsworth and Packard, soon became his most constant critics. These two knew a good canoe when they saw one. This was it. Not only did this canoe take graceful form, but with eagle eyes they watched the many novel methods of construction young Rushton was constantly incorporating in its building. There was skillful beveling and joining the cedar side strips, lap-streaking Rushton called it. Copper nails clinched easier and bound the strips to the ribs and keel more firmly than rivets or iron nails. Joe Ellsworth and Milt Packard soon became convinced that their young friend possessed a genius for this type of work. He built with the instinct of a designing artist and the craftsmanship of a veteran.

Both merchants began taking a personal interest in this canoe. They were an interesting pair. Ellsworth was a Democrat, Packard a Republican politician. They never agreed on much of anything, especially politics. Their verbal feuds were bitter and perpetual. As companions they were inseparable. They hunted, fished, and camped together. One year they journeyed to Florida just to see the Everglades. For a long life-time they were caustic cronies, and under a crusty exterior deeply affectionate, one of the other.

As their daily inspections of the canoe project continued, they directed their comments and criticisms candidly and without solicitation. They were always in disagreement on the fine points of the job. Cantankerously it seemed as though there was noth-

ing correct in the construction, but on the side they marveled at the deft, swift work of their protegee. Their personal feuding finally came to a crisis rather unexpectedly. Each man had nurtured a covetous liking for this trim craft. It was to be a beauty. Packard out-maneuvered Ellsworth at this point. He persuaded Rushton to sell him the canoe before the final coat of varnish had dried.

When Ellsworth learned of Packard's duplicity he was beside himself. Such dastardly, presumptuous conniving was beyond human endurance. So Joe Ellsworth did the only thing a man could do under the circumstances. He immediately commissioned Rushton to build a second canoe, for him, of course. All consideration of Rushton's health had long since become of secondary importance. Fortunately this was no longer serious matter. During the construction period Rushton's health had improved. He had become stronger and more robust. The cough had disappeared. Something about working over the cedar wood worked the miracle. Though stouter, he was no taller. He was still barely five feet. But what he lacked in height, he more than made up in hustle.

With Ellsworth's commission Rushton found himself definitely in the boat building business. From that point on the romance of the Rushton Boat Shop was under way. From the Water Street barn, J. Henry moved into a small stone building, called the Engine House. It is still standing and now used in part as a liquor store. Soon it was necessary to recruit labor to keep up with the new orders. The whole community had begun taking interest in the Rushton canoe. Others were

in the market as purchasers. People took a great liking for these all-cedar, "light as a feather" craft. They were exceedingly well constructed, sturdy, remarkably easy to handle. Their reputation spread rapidly.

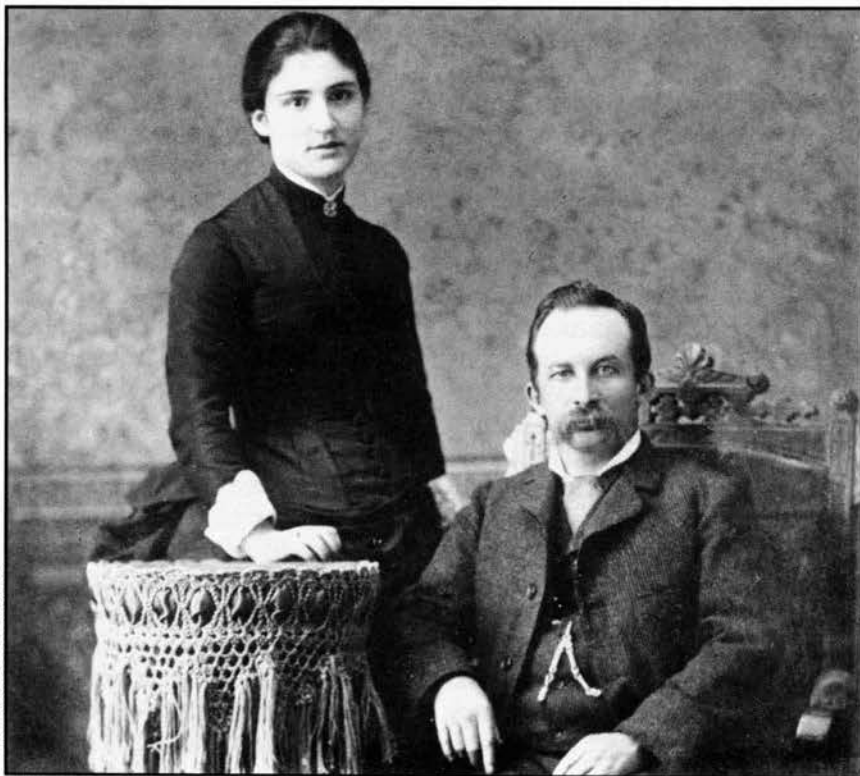
With the opening of the Adirondacks, thanks to "Adirondack" Murray, a new and growing market was close at hand. The woodsmen and guides found the Rushton canoe just what they wanted. Thus did the influence of Murray play directly into the hands of Rushton. Murray passed into oblivion. Rushton rode the crest of the wave to worldwide fame as a boat builder.

J. Henry Rushton constructed his first canoe in 1873. Three years later, when the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial opened, he had on display a line of his Rob Roy

canoes. They attracted much attention and soon orders from other states were in the mail. His business soon overflowed into nearby sheds, shops, and storage places. By 1881 the pressure was on. So J. Henry erected a large four-story frame shop, 150 feet long. It stood at the flatiron corner where Water and State Streets intersect.

Never was a man busier or happier. Rushton was riding the crest of the wave. He had married. Leah Pflaun was a dark-eyed beauty from Port Jervis, and became her husband's loyal helpmate. In the second floor back bedroom she cut out, sewed and stitched the lateen, leg o'mutton and Bailey rig sails for his cedar sailing canoes and skiffs.

In 1893, the Chicago Columbian World's Fair offered another not-to-be missed promo-



J. Henry and Leah Rushton

tional opportunity. A complete line of Rushton's now extensive line of canoes, skiff, and other craft models were displayed, both in full scale sizes and also in miniatures. In the face of top-flight competition, Rushton captured blue ribbons right down the line. He lost no time in capitalizing on these newly won laurels. Orders came from far and near, from Australia, New Zealand, Africa, England, and the Continent, as well as from all over America.

The secret of Rushton's success was two-pronged. Primarily, of course, it rested in the hustling, bustling personality of the diminutive, human dynamo. Then, there was the second factor, the period in which he lived. Hand in hand with the great surge of people into the Adirondacks came the popularity of the Thousand Islands. Millionaires were building palatial summer homes there. Mammoth Victorian resort hotels such as the Frontenac, the Thousand Island House, the Crossman were booked full from June to October. With a group of canoeing enthusiasts, J. Henry was a key figure in organizing the American Canoe Association which for years afterward held its annual gatherings at Eel Bay near Grindstone Island.

Rushton knew the value of showmanship. At the Association's encampments, J. Henry often teamed with Dr. Highway, The Cincinnati Giant. Highway was the superman, director of a Cincinnati gymnasium, the star athlete and champion in canoe tilting contests with the Canadians. By contrast, Rushton, five feet tall, and Highway, six feet six, made a conspicuous pair. They were frequently together. In fact, Highway made the Canton tent his headquarters. Rushton always

had a group of young Canton canoe enthusiasts with him to demonstrate his craft. Rushton, Highway, and the Canton crowd attracted wide attention. It was all good advertising.

Boat making was not all clear sailing. The Columbian Exposition promotion somewhat offset the inroads being made by the first flush of the bicycle fad of the '90s. As the automobile and the 20th century made their debut, Rushton came forward in 1901 with his canvas covered canoe, famous Indian Girl. This proved to be his outstanding achievement. In style the Indian Girl was the ultimate in graceful design. It handled easily, cost less, and became immediately the most popular canoe on the market. The Boat Shop's production curve soared. From 1901 the production mounted until 1906, the year in which J. Henry was stricken ill and died. That year his Boat Shop turned out 150 cedar and 750 Indian Girl canvas covered canoes. That was the record year.

Money was of secondary importance to this successful son of the Edwards sawmill operator. He never accumulated wealth, nor aspired to do so. His sole interest was in building better and better canoes. From his boyhood he took with him a native knowledge of wood and woodcraft, and a natural ability to use tools. Designing seemed instinctive. Although automation and assemblyline methods were years away he attained a practical degree of streamline efficiency in his shop.

The Michigan cedar was planed down and sawed to specified widths and lengths and steamed on the first floor. This then passed into the hands of the

skilled craftsmen on the second floor. Here the canoes, skiffs, and other craft took shape. On the third floor came the oiling and varnishing. In the loft were the drying racks and display rooms. Rushton never attempted mass production. He never had a large crew of workmen. Each and every craft that passed out of the shop door had been built to specifications under his own watchful eyes.

For the most part Rushton's boats were built to standard models and lengths as per his catalogues. But for J. Henry the greatest joy was an order for a custom built job. This presented a challenge both in design and construction. Profits were of secondary consideration. Be the craft of standard make or custom-built there was but one rule in the shop—only the best. Rushton was a perfectionist. He demanded it of his men. Men and master were a team. A special order, a job exceptionally well done, created enthusiasm throughout the entire force. Nothing shoddy, no hidden short cuts or imperfections, no cheap construction! Rushton's boats were built on honor. They were durable. That was the secret to Rushton's fame as a builder. This was so from the first cedar plank he ripped for Packard's canoe to the day he breathed his last.

It was possibly a blessing that J. Henry died when he did. The hex-sign was on business generally and the boat industry. A financial depression was in the making. Automobiles and airplanes were capturing public attention. The Hotel Frontenac and then the Thousand Island House burned to the ground and were not rebuilt. George Bolt stopped construction on his river "castle."

But happily the year of Rushton's death marked the peak of his shop's production. His passing was as though the spigot had been pulled from the barrel. The cider was soon drained away. After ten years of mounting costs and poor business conditions the family turned the key in the shop's door in 1916. His two sons sought fields of endeavor in other places.

In matter of construction, Rushton claimed that his boats and canoes were "unique." To follow his terminology they were of the "smooth-skin" and "lap-streak" design. Smooth-skin meant that instead of the usual "ship-lap" the outer surface was smooth, sanded down. This offered less resistance as the craft glided through water, and made for easier handling. Smooth-skin construction required that the cedar side or hull strips be beveled to a feather edge their whole length, tightly and securely joined. The joints were nailed from both sides, and light-weight copper tacks were clinched toward the thicker part of the timber. Tacking prevented curling of the feather edge. Rushton devised a special method for fitting the cedar strips, or boards, to the keel and the ribs. This removed strain from the shell and permitted a comparatively rigid unit. The ribs were first steamed, and then fitted into the shell before dry. When dry they became snug and firm. Rushton's methods produced a lighter than average craft, fully as sturdy and strong as any other on the market. He claimed a ten per cent to fifty per cent saving in weight. By lap-streaking Rushton craft were more immune to leakage in case of damage or wear. Rushton's methods utilized working with the grain of the wood. This lent added strength and durability. He

found the Michigan cedar best adapted to his type of construction, though rosewood and mahoganies were used for decking, as was cherry and most of the other fine-finishing woods were employed.

Incessantly J. Henry Rushton was improving on design, developing new models. His workmen were recruited largely from local craftsmen. Under his personal tutelage they were schooled in perfecting their art. The Boat Shop was, in effect, the personality of this tiny man. He was the chief executive in all its branches and departments, such as construction, bookkeeping, advertising, publicity, sales, promotion, design and research.

How many craft were turned out in the Canton Boat Shop is not known, but they ran in the several thousand during those forty-three years. Of Rushton's all-wood or cedar canoes, there were several models and each model in several sizes or lengths as well as grades. The Rob Roy was one of the first. Later catalogues list no such model. One finds the Arkansas Traveler, the Huron, Ugo and Igo, Vaux and Vaux Jr., and the featherweight twenty-two lb. ten and one-half foot Nessmuk. The other canoes ranged from fourteen to seventeen footers and up to seventy-two pounds. Of his sailing and paddling canoes Rushton concentrated on the Vesper and the Nomad, sixteen-footers for the most part. On order the Shop turned out a large racing canoe, to accommodate thirty-two paddlers, for an Englishman. There was a versatile range of skiffs, rowboats, and dinghies, all the way from the large sailing skiffs and the Saranac Laker or Adirondack Guide Boat down to the small Florida Row-

boat. Rushton also went in for cat-a-ma-rans and other special craft. He indulged in motorizing the Indian Girl and other canoes, but with no great success. There was even a small steam yacht, a thirty-two-footer on the drawing boards. Of all his products the Indian Girl and its other models, The American Beauty, and The Navahoe claimed the greatest popular appeal. These were the canvas covered canoes of those first years in the 20th century.

Today the name of Rushton still lingers where canoeists gather. The Smithsonian Institute has his Rob Roy on exhibit. One of the old two-sail Rushton skiffs rests on the racks of the new Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain. Here and there about this North Country one occasionally discovers the brass nameplate on the deck of a canoe or skiff. Rapidly a Rushton is becoming a collector's item. By modern standards the Rushton Boat Shop was small but it was of great merit. In looking back over the record of those forty-three years there was one positive conclusion to be made. Although the Shop turned out quite a variety of styles and models of various small craft, the name of Rushton has come down through the remaining years principally, if not entirely, because of the Rushton canoe. It was the boat J. Henry loved. It was the achievement into which went the best years of his life. There is no greater tribute to the man and what he did than the fact that the name of the Rushton canoe is still remembered and respected.

Dr. Harvey D. Thatcher, Inventor of the Glass Milk Bottle

By Dayton Dewey

Vol. 4, no. 3 (July 1959)

Editor's Note: The author was a high school student when he wrote this essay.

Dr. Harvey D. Thatcher came to Potsdam in 1860, at the age of twenty-five years, intent on "making good" at his drug store after being burned out earlier in Canton, New York. It was his destiny, however, not to be given fame as a druggist and doctor, but to give to the world an invention that revolutionized the milk industry and which saved thousands of lives — the milk bottle.

Harvey Dexter Thatcher was born in Newport, New Hampshire on December 28, 1835. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Thatcher. He attended the academies of Newport, New London, and Washington, N.H., and later in Potsdam and Ogdensburg schools.

When he was nineteen he went to the University of New Hampshire in Durham and became a school teacher. He taught in Potsdam and Walton, Kentucky. He went to New York City's Pharmaceutical School in 1856. Graduating in 1858, he became a Pharmacist at the Broadway Drug Store. He turned attentions, however, to medicine in 1858. Going to Ames College in Ames, Iowa and Eclectic College of Cincinnati, he graduated with a medical degree in 1859. Coming to Canton, New York, late that same year, he started his first drug store and doctor's office. The great Canton fire in 1860 caused much damage

and destroyed more than half the business section including Dr. Thatcher's store. With almost everything lost, he moved to Potsdam. Here he started his second drug store and doctor's office on Main Street. He later moved it to Market Street. In that same year he formulated the Orange Butter Coloring made from vegetable oil. Dr. Thatcher also established trade for it in every state and Canada.

Young Dr. Thatcher married Olivia Adelaide Barnhart of Barnhart's Island, St. Lawrence River, N.Y. on October 4, 1865. She later died of polio.

It wasn't until 1886 that Dr. Thatcher invented the milk bottle or the "milk jar" as he called it. He got the inspiration on a hot summer day in 1884. He was forty-eight years old and now a prominent druggist and physician. As he was walking along Market Street, he stopped to watch the milkman make a delivery. The lady of the house came out and handed the milkman a quart pitcher. He took it and filled it from the traditional forty quart dip can. While he was collecting his three cents for the quart, a little girl dropped her rag doll in the can. When the milkman returned, noticing the doll, he calmly fished it out. Then he continued on his route. Dr. Thatcher became very concerned after seeing this. In his home, at 100 Market Street, Potsdam, he turned out on his

lathe a crude shaped bottle of wood. He called it the "milk jar." It would be made out of glass and be able to carry milk to each person.

Because there was no company in the north country that could manufacture these bottles, he went to Whitall-Tataom Company in New York City; makers of ink bottles. Since there were no machines to make that shape at the time, the bottles were hand blown. The first bottle appeared odd to the unaccustomed eyes. It had this description: it was ten inches tall, and four inches wide at the opening. The bottle weighed thirty ounces and cost a little over ten cents a piece. It had a picture of Dr. Thatcher milking a cow into a special sanitary pail. On top was written "Absolutely Pure Milk" and on the bottom, "The Milk Protector."

Since Dr. Thatcher could not persuade a dairy in Potsdam to buy his bottle, he went to Ogdensburg. Three dealers there bought four hundred bottles each at fifteen dollars a gross or ten cents a piece, making a total of forty dollars. They also agreed to pay fifty dollars royalty, which together was ninety dollars. The total sum was two hundred seventy dollars for 1200 bottles in Ogdensburg. So the city of Ogdensburg became the first place in the world to have glass milk bottles. Dr. Thatcher received his patent in 1887 for the milk bottle.

Harvey Dexter Thatcher in 1889 formulated the Sugar of Milk Baking Powder. It was made of cream of tartar, sixty-seven parts; bicarbonate of soda, twenty-nine to thirty-one parts; and sweet milk, four parts. In 1893, he entered his baking powder and milk bottle in the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. He won an award of merit for the baking powder, which he advertised by baking 8,000 biscuits daily. Dr. Thatcher won another award of merit for his "Common Sense Milk Jar."

This is the recipe Dr. Thatcher used to make his biscuits to advertise his baking powder which sold for fifty cents a pound; one quart of flour, one-half teaspoon of salt, three even teaspoons baking powder. Mix well and sift. Add a piece of butter the size of an egg. Add sweet milk to soften for molding.

Roll and bake for twenty minutes in hot oven.

Dr. H.D. Thatcher's factory on Depot Street, which he had greatly expanded, burned to the ground. He was not fully insured and he suffered a \$100,000 loss from which he never recovered. In 1902 he accepted a post as trustee at Clarkson College. In 1917, the late Ira Kendall, Mr. Robert Burns, and Dr. Fred L. Dewey took over the factory on Raymond Street which made milk caps and butter and cheese colorings. Dr. Thatcher died in poverty at the home of a friend. It was on a Sunday afternoon, May 24, 1924 at the age of eighty-nine. Funeral expenses were paid by a collection taken among his friends. The funeral was held at Trinity Episcopal Church, Potsdam, with the Rev. William Hamilton officiating. He was interred at the Bayside

Cemetery, Potsdam. The *Ogdensburg Journal* said in its Saturday Aug. 4, 1949 edition, "Dr. Thatcher's milk bottle invention is greater and better than that of Pasteur." He had some fifty patents on various inventions.

I interviewed several people about Dr. Thatcher. This is how they remembered him...

Mrs. Adelaide Heath, longtime resident of Potsdam, recalls Dr. Thatcher when she was a young girl, as being "a small man, fast walker and who had a pointed gray beard. He seemed to be an intellectual."

Mr. Fred Hayes, retired New York State dairy inspector and personal friend of Dr. Thatcher, had this to say, "He was a small man of five feet seven inches and he weighed less than 100 pounds. He had snappy blue eyes and was a very neat dresser. He could start anything but could never finish anything."

From a disheartening start in Potsdam Dr. H. D. Thatcher's milk bottle became accepted throughout the world. The invention was not really scientific, but its effect in halting the spread of disease through milk for the past seventy-five years should not be forgotten. If it had not been for Dr. Thatcher inventing the milk bottle, would we still be getting our milk in forty quart dip cans?



Courtesy of Potsdam Museum

Dr. H. D. Thatcher

Hollywood, the Racquette River, and One of America's First Fifth Columnists

by Albert Jakobson
Vol. 5, no. 1 (Jan. 1960)

On or about 1938, the Niagara-Hudson Power Corporation, then known as the Central New York Power Corporation, set out to purchase the water rights, property titles, and easements if necessary to developing that stretch of the Racquette River from South Colton upstream toward Piercefield for the largest hydro-electric installation ever affected on any of the State's inland streams — the St. Lawrence and Niagara, of course being excluded as they are boundary streams. So far as the development itself is concerned that is now history, the thirty to forty million dollars, five-stage Racquette River Power Project beginning with the Cary [sic] Fall's Reservoir, having been but recently completed. To undertake this vast project, from which 100,000 kilowatts of electric energy is now being fed into the utility's state-wide system, it was first necessary for the Power Corporation to acquire the title to the bed of the Racquette, and the land back from its shoreline for at least 100 feet on each side. This involved an area extending from South Colton almost to Piercefield. That part of this property which today embraces the Cary [sic] Falls Reservoir, lies in what the original land maps designated as the southern half of the Town of Hollywood, now part of the Town of Colton. The Power Corporation opened negotiations with the Racquette River Paper Company, owned by the Sisson family of Potsdam, for this particular tract. Under the contract drawn to cover this sale, the

buyer, that is the Power Corporation, stipulated that the owner, the Paper Company, must furnish an opinion (legally speaking) showing good and marketable title thereto. I was retained by the attorney of record for the Paper Company to provide this opinion. That is where I found myself soon following a fascinating bit of American Colonial and Revolutionary history.

In examining the title-evidence submitted in the form of thirty abstracts, it was found that in the partition of Hollywood in the year 1856, the title was based on a deed from one Lorena Bacon Tomlinson, daughter of a Jabez Bacon, late of Woodbury, Connecticut. I examined the deed by which Jabez Bacon had acquired the entire southern half of Hollywood, approximately 15,154.5 acres. By his will, Bacon had then later bequeathed to his daughter Lorena, a 9/56th interest. The partition of 1856 in turn divided up the south half of Hollywood to the extent of 47/56th still being outstanding in the heirs of said Jabez Bacon. In other words, the title was "cloudy." Naturally, the Power Corporation would not accept the contract until this 47/56th outstanding interest was cleared, and thus provide a complete and acceptable title. By coincidence, the Racquette River Paper Company owned the adjoining lands, all of which stemmed from this same defective deed. So both parties, the Paper Company and the Power Corporation, "joined hands" in a friendly action to clear

the title, and I was assigned to do this.

It immediately became necessary to set up the genealogy of the family of the said Jabez Bacon in order to establish those 47/56th other interests. To do this, it was necessary to reconstruct the Bacon family tree down through seven generations. In doing so it was discovered that 135 surviving heirs were living, scattered all over the globe, in Ireland, Australia, the West Indies, as well as in ten of our states and the District of Columbia. To run down and ferret out all of the necessary data and records required eighteen months of intense research, hundreds of miles of travel, countless interviews and investigations, and quite a refresher course for me, personally, in certain aspects of American history. Fortunately, early in my search, I contacted Selden Bacon, an eighty-one year-old member of the New York law firm of Duer, White & Stronghead, who loaned me a Bacon family genealogy in which it was possible to trace the Bacons from the date of the death of Jabez in 1806, down to 1893. From there to 1938 it was necessary for me to fill in the remainder.

Although the surviving heirs were widely scattered, the main trail of this branch of the Bacon family led straight back to Connecticut where twenty-three members still resided in 1938. The original Connecticut Bacons had settled there prior to the

American Revolution. They were a group of staunch, blue-blooded Presbyterians for the most part, and by tradition loyal supporters of Yale University, it being said that up until 1930 there were always no less than five members of the family on Old Eli's contemporary faculty. My search brought to light not only the bare genealogical aspects of this line, but also much interesting Bacon family history and legends. This all became tremendously interesting as there was this direct connection with our own North Country background, as well as other relating information.

Jabez Bacon was a descendant of Sir Francis Bacon, 1561-1626, the celebrated English philosopher, jurist, and statesman, often incorrectly referred to as Lord Bacon, the arch-enemy of England's equally famous Sir Edward Coke. Shortly after the turn of the 17th century, Sir Francis was forced to aid in the trial and conviction of his former intimate, the Earl of Essex on a charge of treason. At the height of his career Sir Francis, himself, was tried, in 1621, on a charge of bribery, fined, and removed from his office as attorney-general. Others of this family are said to have suffered other indignities at the hand of royalty. Thus it came about that Nathaniel Bacon, the father of Jabez, was born in The Barbados, West Indies, where his branch of the family was living in exile. Nathaniel emigrated to America and located in Connecticut. Of Jabez Bacon the following is taken from Woodruff's biography of this family.

"Had Jabez Bacon lived a century later, he would have been famous as a Captain of Industry. As it was, he was merely a shrewd

Yankee trader, a poor boy, who at his death was considered 'the richest man in Connecticut.'

"Jabez was born in Middlefield, a parish of Middletown, Conn., July 16, 1731. He was the son of Nathaniel Bacon. Young Jabez was apprenticed to a tanner. Then he became a peddler, selling notions, pins, needles, tape, etc. He settled at Woodbury, Conn., and opened the Hollow Store, now converted into a residence. Lydia Hungerford and Jabez Bacon were married at Woodbury, June 28, 1760. They had five sons and four daughters.

"William Cothren in his book, "Ancient Woodbury" says of Jabez Bacon, 'By his indomitable perseverance and business ability, he became the very first man in business, mercantile credit, and wealth in this section of the state and died worth nearly half a million.'

"He built the beautiful old house in the 'Hollow' in Woodbury now owned by Mr. Edward Marvin, a descendant of Mathew Marvin, a pioneer settler of Hartford in 1636. The fireplaces in the Bacon house are made of tiles imported from France, even those on the third floor. The wall paper also came from overseas.

"Many are the stories of Jabez Bacon's shrewd bargaining. Cothren tells that he once went to New York with a fine stock of pork for sale. Two large cargoes of pork being expected from Maine he could not get the price he asked. Mr. Bacon took his horse, rode six miles up the East River shore to about Blackwell's Island, boarded the sloops as they came along and purchased their

cargoes, staking his entire fortune. This put the whole New York market in his hands and he is said to have cleared \$40,000.

"An attempt to corner the local salt market during the Revolution was less successful. Jabez Bacon was a Tory. Not too popular with his neighbors probably, in patriotic Woodbury, which sent over a thousand men to Washington's army. Mr. Bacon had salt for sale at the Hollow store, when other merchants lacked this needful commodity, and was charging an exorbitant price for it. The Selectmen of the town went to his store, seized the salt, and sold it at a reasonable price, turning the proceeds over to Mr. Bacon. An excellent method of dealing with profiteers.

"At the close of the Revolution, when the country was flooded with depreciated paper money, Jabez filled the saddlebags of his son, Jabez, Jr., with Continental currency and sent him off with the brief command, "Go and buy land." Young Jabez rode far. In the northern part of New York State, he purchased a tract of land in Gouverneur, St. Lawrence County, where a valuable deposit of talc was afterwards discovered. Another parcel of land was located in Greene County, N.Y. That state wanted the land for a State Park and paid to Jabez Bacon's heirs a small sum to obtain a clear title.

"Though he drove a hard bargain, Jabez Bacon was not mean or niggardly. He was most hospitable. Strangers coming to town were bidden to eat at his house. His servants had orders to keep a table always set and refreshments ready for such wayfarers.

He died September 10, 1806.”

Down through those early Bacon generations, a deep resentment was nourished against the British crown and what the family considered the rank injustice done their English ancestors. It was this same resentment, so the legend goes, which forms so pertinent a part of the narrative. The year 1776 found Jabez, wealthy, influential, a foremost citizen of Woodbury and the colony of Connecticut, looked upon as has been noted, by his neighbors and others as a Tory. Most men who were in the money in those times were considered Tories, correctly or incorrectly. However, this was a time in which men had to make momentous personal decisions as to which side they would support, the crown or the colonies. Lexington, Concord, Bunker Hill were already events of the past. Representatives of the colonies on July 4, 1776 signed the Great Declaration. George III had already strengthened his troops in America and was dispatching thousands more. Lord Howe sought to convince the colonists of their waywardness without success, and soon he and his fellow generals were mapping strategy to put these colonial rebels in their place with dispatch and finality. September found the British troops landing at Gravesend Bay, on the southwest shore of Long Island, the first step toward taking New York, and then the intended decapitation of New England from the colonial body to the south. That was the strategy of Lords Howe, Clinton, and Cornwallis. The Battle of Long Island was on, with the new Commander-in-Chief, General George Washington of the Colonial Army, finding himself in a precarious position at the very

outset. What followed is time-told history. Washington skillfully extricated his forces from one impossible position after another, Brooklyn Heights, 34th Street, Westchester, and then down through New Jersey into Pennsylvania.

Washington became the super-strategist of streams; the greater crosser of rivers: the East River, the Harlem, the Hudson, the Raritan, the Delaware. Battles, such as they were, were largely delaying actions: Long Island, Throgs Neck, White Plains. Then disaster followed disaster. Green's bungling procrastination and Lee's perfidy, losing for the colonies both Fort Lee and Fort Mifflin on the Hudson. Washington stood on the west bank of the Hudson and saw his helpless men run through by Hessian bayonets on the east bank—and wept. Washington extricated the remnants of his underfed, undernourished, unpaid, and underarmed troops from near catastrophe after near catastrophe and finally launched that historic Christmas night recrossing of the Delaware to recapture Trenton, route the Hessians, and turn the tide of war.

It was in connection with this war-drama that Jabez Bacon is said by family tradition to have played a vital role. This is the story as I received it. Jabez was content on the surface to pass as a Tory. This was a good cloak with which to conceal his true purpose. Jabez was in reality a staunch and loyal colonial supporter. This, however, was unknown to the many, including the rector across the street, and to Lords Howe and Clinton as well. It is said that the two British Lords found the hospitality and the comforts of the palatial Jabez

Bacon home in Woodbury much to their liking and comfort. The table was bountiful and the wines of ancient stock. What better could they ask. So there they settled themselves to map out their army strategy, mellowed as they were by fine viands—warming vintage and a crackling fire on the hearth. Diagonally across the way resided Reverend Samuel Seabury, the First Episcopal Bishop in the colonies, a tartar, a tyrant and a Tory. From his Woodbury pulpit he bedeviled and berated his parishioners. The Rector was an unhappy and bitter man, no lover of Connecticut Yankee yokels, disdainful of colonial crudeness and lack of culture, strict and strenuous in establishing an ecclesiastical yoke upon this benighted citizenry. He hated and was hated. So much so that Woodbury vigilantes warned his reverend never to set foot on the streets on other than Sundays, on that day only would they stack their muskets. Craving company, Samuel Seabury warmed to his so-called Tory neighbor, Bacon. Rather than risk his hide upon the street, Seabury burrowed a tunnel beneath it, and almost nightly crawled through it to dine and wine with Bacon and the British lordships, to join in plotting the British strategy. The British were determined to take Manhattan, then to drive up the Hudson and down from Quebec, thus severing the colonies at the most vital and vulnerable point. Their only obstacle was that frustrating Commander, Washington, “The Old Fox” as they called him.

Seated with his British guests and the Tory Rector, Jabez smiled, pinched snuff, and listened closely. Then under cover of night, so it is said, dispatched messengers to cross

into the Colonial lines bearing tidings of what was underfoot in the British camp, giving "Old Fox" time to plot and plan his historic maneuvers, make those river crossings, snatch his bedraggled troops from one pincer movement after another. In effect, Jabez Bacon, became a member of the that first American "underground" that first band of American "Fifth columnists." Seabury finally fled Woodbury, made his way into the British lines and volunteered as a guide to their forces.

The Colonial Army teetered, not only strategically in maneuver, but equally so for lack of money. Washington's troops had not been paid, munitions were running low, uniforms had turned to tatters, boots to bundles of rags. Washington pledged his personal fortune, as did others of his staff, to try and hold what was left of the army intact. The Continental Congress, in a panic, moved from Philadelphia to Baltimore and too often attempted to direct military strategy itself. The opposing armies began converging on Philadelphia. The cause of the Revolution hung in the balance. It was into this breach of necessity that Robert Morris threw himself, contacting others to join with him to support the cause, men with money, such as Haym Solomon, the rich broker of Philadelphia, and Jabez Bacon, the richest man in Connecticut. Thus did Morris secure the necessary funds with which to provision Washington's faltering army. Washington in turn issued the historic edict of New Jersey, either for the citizenry to be rebels or royalists. Families split on that one. Samuel Ogden, at Morristown, threw in his lot with Washington and turned his plants to making cannon, munitions, and muskets.

His brothers fled to Manhattan, and there with Joshua Waddington and others joined forces with the British Loyalists. Jabez Bacon, so the legend goes, advanced \$250,000 of his personal fortune, a huge sum in those days, to bolster the colonial cause. It was from this act, so it is said, that Jabez Bacon in later years was enabled to acquire title to large tracts of New York land. Whether this was done entirely with "saddle bags" filled with "depreciated paper money," in part or in whole, to repay him for his aid in the hour of need, is not clear. Whether purely by business dealing, or by government largesse, direct or indirect, Jabez Bacon's holdings brought into his strong box, title to four separate tracts of land located in New York State. One such tract was situated in Greene County, including what is now New York City's main source of water supply, the Ashoken Reservoir. Another such piece was located in the then Military tract, now part of our present Clinton County, the land now incorporated in today's Republic Steel's iron ore development at Lyon Mountain. The third tract included that portion of the valley of the Oswegatchie in St. Lawrence County on which the famous talc mines are now located. The fourth tract, that from which this interesting article grew, was the southern half of what was then Hollywood and is now that portion of the Colton section of the Niagara-Hudson hydro-electric development as previously noted.

Exactly how these tracts were actually acquired is not adequately delineated and offers opportunity for interesting research. Woodruff would have Jabez, Jr. sallying forth into

almost virgin wilderness directly after the Revolution, armed with cheap money to buy what later became exceedingly rich land holdings. Family tradition suggests that by some means Jabez Bacon may have received these lands in token of his valiant aid during the Revolution. The record proves, at least, that in 1804 Daniel McCormick, the financial sage living in the big blue-stoccoed house at No. One Wall Street, conveyed to Jabez Bacon one-half of the Town of Hollywood, St. Lawrence County. Daniel McCormick was one of that group of princely speculators who took The Great Gamble. In company with such moneyed plungers as Alexander Macomb as their front, the estimable William Constable, Gouverneur Morris, Robert H. Morris, Samuel Ogden, the Clarksons, Harisons and Van Rensselaers, about thirteen in number, were associates in the purchase of most of the Ten Towns, so-called, in St. Lawrence County, and the Six Great Tracts of "unappropriated and waste land" best known as "Macomb's Great Purchase."

Our attention, therefore, turns briefly to Daniel McCormick, the Scotch Presbyterian youth who came to this country from North Ireland in pre-Revolutionary days a poor boy and who wound up being a man of tremendous influence and immense wealth in New York City; a charter member of the Bank of New York; a shrewd financier; head of the famous St. Patrick's party; treasurer of the Masonic Grand Lodge; the bachelor entrepreneur who took up his residence on that famous Wall Street corner and stuck it out there to his last breath. Pink-cheeked, bewigged, ensconced on his front portico,

sconced on his front portico, garbed in cockade hat, velvet jacket and knee breeches, silk stockings and silver buckled shoes, puffing contentedly in his long-stalled pipe. Beatific, world-wise Daniel McCormick cut a notable figure in our early North Country land history. He, Constable, the Morrises and others emerged from that land buying spree of the 1790s with whole hides. Macomb did not. In 1804, so the deed reads, Daniel McCormick conveyed to Jabez Bacon, and later Bacon to his daughter Lorena, and those other heirs those 15,154.5 acres along the Racquette in the Town of Hollywood. The interesting question remains: Did Jabez purchase this property outright, with “depreciated” paper money, or did he come by it entire, or in part, as recompense for helping the colonies in their hour of direst need? Be it one or the other, this all makes an interesting chapter in our North Country lore. Obviously, the title was cleared, and the contract completed in 1939. This, it seems, is but one of countless other fascinating examples of how those early land title conveyances bring notable names into close association with our North Country beginnings.

Judge Jonah Sanford

By Mrs. Dorothy Squires
Hopkinton Town Historian
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Much has been written about Silas Wright, Canton resident, United States senator, and New York governor. But little or nothing has been written about the man who succeeded him as a member of the House of Representatives.

Wright resigned his seat in Congress in order to remain as New York State comptroller on March 9, 1830, and at a special election on November 3, 1830, Jonah Sanford of Hopkinton was elected to Wright's vacant seat. He took office on December 6, serving until March 3, 1831.

Jonah Sanford was born toward the end of 1790 in Cornwall, Vermont. In March 1811, he married Abigail Greene, a daughter of Rev. Henry Greene, and soon after in that same year he came to Hopkinton and selected a piece of forest for a farm, made a little clearing, and built a cabin for a future home, then went back to his bride in Vermont as so many other of our young pioneers did. He enlisted in the Army and served in the War of 1812, taking an active part in the Battle of Plattsburgh. After the war he brought his little family to Hopkinton to live, and soon after they arrived here both of the tiny children died, leaving Jonah and Abigail besides themselves in their bereavement. The townspeople recognized Jonah as a man of character and intelligence and he



Judge Jonah Sanford

was soon given an office. Every year thereafter during his entire lifetime, he continued to hold some town office. In 1818 he was appointed Justice of the Peace by Governor DeWitt Clinton and the Council of Appointment. He held this position nearly twenty-two consecutive years.

Seeing the need for a "law-giver" in the settlement of disputes, Jonah purchased a few law books and set to work to learn the fundamental principles of the profession, and was admitted to the

bar. From this modest beginning, self-educated, he steadily advanced until he became the ablest, hardest fighting, and most successful practitioner in the eastern part of St. Lawrence County. He was a born debater, logical in reasoning, combative, absolutely fearless, tireless, and indomitable. He was a large man, standing six feet tall, weighing fully two hundred and twenty-five pounds, erect and imposing, carrying the courage of his convictions, yet genial and sociable, and vastly interested in people.

Mr. Sanford was a member of the New York State Assembly for the years 1829 and 1830 after having served as supervisor of the town of Hopkinton from 1823 to 1826. In 1831 he was appointed a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, serving until 1837. In 1846 he had the distinguished honor of being a delegate to the state constitutional convention which revised the state's constitutional statutes.

During the earliest part of his life he was the close friend and associate of Governor Wright, Judge Fine, Judge Allen, and later of U.S. Senator, Preston King, Judge James, and other prominent men.

Judge Sanford, also known as Colonel Sanford, showed his talent for leadership in a military, as well as political, capacity. He took an active part in the state militia, and in 1827 was commissioned a captain of a volunteer company of cavalry. Later he rose to the rank of colonel, and in 1832 he was commissioned a brigadier general of the state militia as had Silas Wright before him. His troops encamped in a field southwest of Potsdam village. At the outbreak of the Civil War the Judge's enthusiasm for the Union cause knew no bounds. Although now an old man of seventy-one years, he set out with his horse and buggy and rode all over the eastern part of the county addressing war meetings and enlisting prominent men in the towns to help him raise a regiment. In December 1861, the Ninety-second Cavalry Regiment was formed. In two months, it was ready for battle, and on February 1, 1862 left Potsdam by train, with the valiant old judge as its leader. As the train pulled out of the station, the men's mothers,

wives and sweethearts were all calling out, "Colonel, take care of the boys."

Jonah Sanford accompanied his regiment as far as the James River in Virginia, and then his advanced age and ill health compelled him to abandon the field. He returned to his farm in Hopkinton, but kept up his zeal and work for the cause until the end of the war.

In private life, he was a devoted husband and father, a good farmer, so industrious that he seemed to know no such thing as weariness or fatigue. He buried his beloved Abigail back in 1842, and in 1845 married Harriet Barney. He had ten children by his first marriage and four by his second. One son, Jonah, Jr., continued to carry on the home farm. He married Elisha Risdon's daughter, Clarinda. It was their son, Carlton E., who wrote Sanford's *History of Hopkinton*. The diaries left by Elisha Risdon form one of the earliest, most authentic sources of information of pioneer days and settlement in this county. As one historian has said, "The old judge really cut quite a swathe in this North Country during his lifetime."

Judge Sanford was not the last of his family to sit in congress, for from 1915 to 1921, Rollin Brewster Sanford, his great-grandson, served in the House of Representatives from Albany County.

The Union Settlement

By V. Merrit Ingram, Jr.

Vol. 5, no. 2 (Apr. 1960)

Editor's Note: The author was a high school student when he wrote this essay.

On November 28, 1804, a Mr. William Bullard, of Vermont, and a group of associates took title to a tract of land containing 2,467 acres about three miles north of the Village of Potsdam. Sources disagree as to the amount paid for this land, some saying \$8,300 and others saying \$8,656. These men and their families began an experiment in communistic living.

The members of this colony were: William Bullard, John Burroughs, Manasseh Smith, Nathan Howe, Ammi Currier, Thomas H. Currier, William Currier, Isaac Ellis, Alba Durkee, John MacAllaster and their families. In April or May, 1807 "The Union" was formally organized.

Members at this time included the original ten families and some by the name of Smith who came from Tunbridge Vermont in the year 1806. They were relatives of Joseph Smith, founder of Mormonism. John Smith left the colony (The Union) in 1809 and later became the high priest of the Mormon settlement at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory in 1853. By this time there was a Union store, a Union schoolhouse, a Union blacksmith shop, and a Union Church.

The Union prospered fairly well. Bullard was appointed agent and manager and Burroughs became clerk. All problems were settled by majority vote. Families lived separately,

but property was common. A settlement was made each January, sharing according to the amount of labor invested during the preceding year. Tools and property remained under common ownership, but the crops were divided. No control was exercised over political beliefs.

Bullard was known as "the King of the Union." He was a shoemaker by trade, and continued this occupation part time after he became the head of the Union. He lived in a log cabin which served as the palace, a shoeshop, and school which he taught.

In 1810 the Union dissolved by mutual agreement. Bullard granted individual titles to the land. Most either remained on the land or sold it and moved West. One story is that the more energetic women objected that their indolent sisters were receiving the benefits of the common ownership policy.

Long after the Union was dissolved, the former members remained a class by themselves. The majority was inclined towards Unitarianism, but there were differences of opinion that led to many hot theological discussions. Some remnants of this Unitarian feeling still remain in the Potsdam area.

Union property eventually covered about five square miles,

stretching northward on the left of the Potsdam-Norwood Road from the present Unionville.

Many signs still remain of the Union. The names Union Road, Union Falls and Unionville have the Union as an origin. The Union schoolhouse is still being used. A short trek through grassy fields will take you to the Union graveyard. There you may find the graves of John Burroughs, Manasseh Smith, and Ammi Currier. Among the mossy grave stones you may find the final homes of the Shaws, the Morgans, and the McGills who joined in 1808, and the Washburns who were there all along, but never officially joined the Union.

The Union, no matter how small and short lived it was, played a notable part in the history of the Potsdam area and provided one of the few examples of communal living that the New World had ever known.

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Vestiges of Camp Wheeler Still Remain

By Rev. J. Karlton Dewey

Vol. 6, no. 2 (Apr. 1961)

Next time you drive the new Ogdensburg arterial highway and climb the over-pass which spans the Rutland Railroad, take a quick glance to the West. You will notice, at no great distance, a weather-beaten, dilapidated building of fair size. This landmark takes us back to the Civil War; it is the only remaining vestige of Camp Wheeler, 1861-1864.

Only 100 years ago, this area now filled with brush was teeming with men—marching, drilling, and maneuvering. Within a half mile of the new Ogdensburg-Prescott bridge, three regiments trained, and from here about three thousand men marched off to some of the bloodiest fighting of the war: Gettysburg, Look-Out Mountain, and Cold Harbor.

This very month the centennial of the fall of Ft. Sumpter will be noted. Since we like to start our wars on Sunday, it happened Sunday April 14, 1861. Had you lived in Ogdensburg at that time, the first news of the event would not have reached you until nearly twenty-four hours after it happened, but you would have lived through a most exciting Monday. The telegraph (the only one in the North) brought the news early in the day. As soon as you had heard it, you probably would have rushed downtown to form part of the crowd which collected in front of the *St. Lawrence Republican*. From time to time, the editor appeared on the steps to read the latest dispatches. Wednesday night you would have likely at-

tended a mass meeting and perhaps signed up in the "St. Lawrence Regiment" for a period of three months. Your enthusiasm might have cooled slightly, however, when a few days later, Governor Morgan's order came through. He called for volunteers for a State Militia—with three-year enlistment.

At any rate, early in May you would have been proud of our North Country, because we had recruited two honest-to-goodness companies in the Albany rendezvous—Co. A of the Sixteenth, and Co. K of the Eighteenth. But as Mr. Ogdensburg of 1861, you would have had your Pearl Harbor day July 22. On that date the telegraph and the *Republican's* editor told you that we had just suffered a stunning defeat at Bull Run. You would have spent an anxious week until our good old solicitous Congressman Sherman assured all the folks back home that not one of our boys was hurt. General Curtis and his Sixteenth had been on the sidelines and had not directly participated in the engagement.

Bull Run opened the eyes of all: from Lincoln down in Washington all the way North to the man in Ogdensburg. This was a real scrap; we needed soldiers and more soldiers—Lincoln asking New York State for 25,000 men, as a starter. Governor Morgan in Albany ordered a regiment to be formed at Ogdensburg and commissioned William B. Hayward, a "retread," former army officer—but now a New York business-

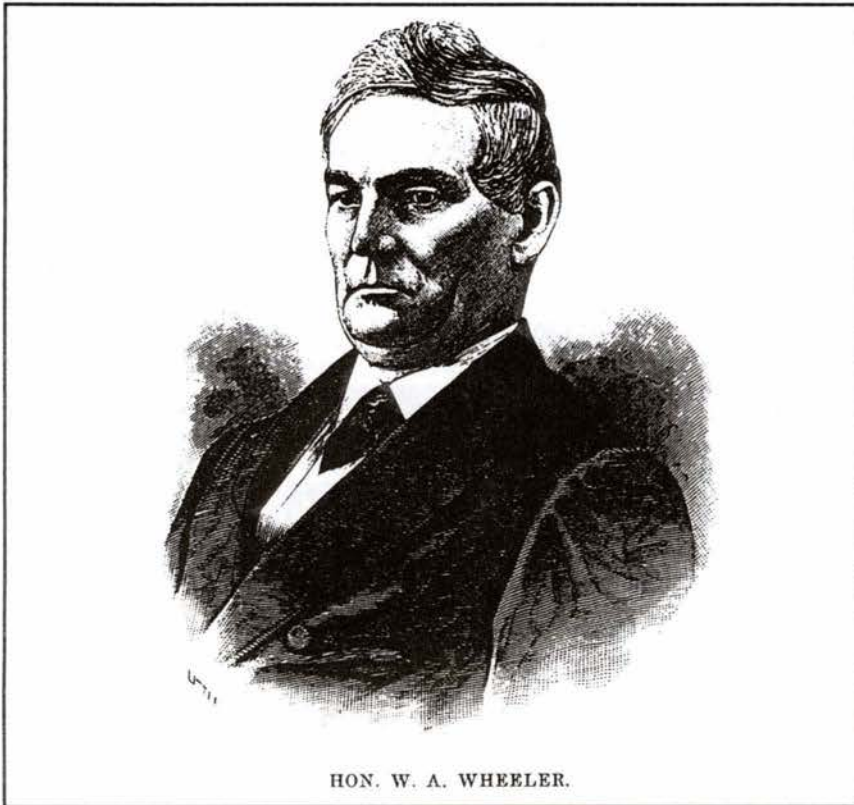
man, to go North and head up the body.

All fine so far; commissions, orders signed and delivered, but still no army or a place to put one. Thus the dilapidated building I mentioned at the outset.

The Northern Railroad had reached Ogdensburg from Rouses Point in 1850. About a mile east of the village of Ogdensburg, the company had set up shops for the manufacture and repair of their rolling stock. There was even a foundry, and I make a point of this because Donald Nelson of Lisbon tells me that his great-grandfather furnished charcoal for it from his ash and willow standings. Some seven or eight buildings in all were erected and one of this group was our old weather-beaten friend. In addition, several houses were put up towards Ford Street (now Proctor Avenue) as living quarters for the employees. This little hamlet was named "New Boston," no doubt to suggest the other terminus of the line.

Like many railroads of the day, the Northern soon found itself in financial difficulties. Between 1854 and 1856, the line re-organized and for some reason the shops were abandoned—perhaps for more permanent buildings at the foot of Patterson Street in Ogdensburg.

And what of this fairly good set of railroad shops? In 1861 Congressman William A. Wheeler thought the government could use



HON. W. A. WHEELER.

From History of Clinton and Franklin Counties by Duane Hurd (1890)

them. Through the 50s he was a rising young banker of Malone, and had been made trustee for holders of Northern Railroad stock. He became president of the line shortly and as such pulled a neat piece of magic by getting a bridge built over Lake Champlain so that his trains could roll uninterrupted all the way down to Boston. This was no mean achievement, because the metropolitan interests were shouting very loudly, "What's going to happen to New York City?" just as they did for fifty years before the Seaway finally was achieved. Meanwhile, on the side, Mr. Wheeler was trying his hand at politics, and doing not at all badly. In fact, his rise to recognition, even national notice, can be described only in the most glowing superlatives. Starting humbly as town official and thence ever rising through local positions, he

reached the State senate by 1857 and the Congress as representative only three years later, in 1860. Subsequently, though this isn't part of our story, he made it with Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876 to the second spot on the totem pole as Vice-President of the United States.

But back in 1861, when he was in Congress, the government needed a northern campsite quickly and Wheeler had one to offer. The federal government leased the buildings of the Northern Railroad and the new camp was named for the congressman. With this personal interest in the installation, he subsequently made several visits, presented a regimental flag, and gave free transportation over his lines to Camp Wheeler soldiers.

Camp Wheeler was roughly

triangular in shape; bounded by the railroad tracks, Proctor Avenue, and the Lisbon town line. The new arterial highway would lie approximately along its eastern boundary. Since some one thousand men were involved, however, the training area must have spread out into the adjoining countryside. According to Mrs. Annie Daniels in her *Reminiscences of Ogdensburg*, the buildings had ample room for a full regiment of one thousand ten men. The center building (this might well be the one mentioned earlier) contained the kitchen and dining rooms, the former with three cauldrons, a large stove, and a patent baker. A large force of cooks was required. The dining room, its tables set with tin cups and plates, could accommodate five hundred men at one sitting. The second floor contained another dining room (probably for the officers), the space also being used as an officers' drillroom. Chaplain Richard Eddy used it for services, but later moved to a shed behind the guardhouse, perhaps hoping for some salutary influence on its malcontents.

Another building mentioned by Reverend Eddy is the hospital where he and the surgeon, Dr. Chambers, shared quarters. Men in the ranks apparently didn't fare as well. Mrs. Daniels notes that "sleeping quarters were arranged in berths, four tiers high and furnished with straw." I believe the names given to the streets were interesting enough to deserve mention. There were "Curtis," honoring the General, "Hayward," in honor of the Sixtieth regiment, and "Warren," possibly named after the street in New York where Hayward was employed.

What was life like at camp?

Chaplain Eddy says they were all busy; reveille and roll call at sunrise, breakfast at 7:00, squad drills 8:00 to 10:00, non-coms' drill 11:00 to 12:00, dinner at 1:00, company drill at 2:00, dress parade at 4:00, and supper at 6:00, final roll call and taps at 9:00. Most of the day was spent in drill for officers as well as enlisted men, for this was a true citizens' army. Officers were elected by the men, and generally knew no more about military tactics than the others.

On the lighter side of life: there were fun and pageantry, dress parades, bands, presentations, and speeches. The Hon. William Wheeler and Judge John Fine presented flags and made long flowery speeches in some of the best oratory of the day. Then there were picnics—World War II soldiers never had it so good. Friends would drive in from Canton or Russell with everything necessary for an outing in their carriages. Various ladies' groups overloaded the men with knitted socks and blankets.

Bob Newhart has a skit on gripers in the Revolutionary War. Camp Wheeler had them too. Chaplain Eddy speaks about the dissatisfaction among some of the men over the food. They had their revenge; the chaplain reports that on the last night in camp, "they perpetrated foul outrages on the property of the contractors." (These would be Schyler F. Judd and J.B. Armstrong who supplied the table.) The matter of AWOLs must have added to the conversation; the Sixtieth was at camp less than ten days when two stalwart volunteers decided that since there were 24,999 others in this affair, they were not going to be needed after all.

As for the regiments trained at Camp Wheeler, the first was the Sixtieth, comprising men from Ogdensburg, Lisbon, Canton, Stockholm, Malone, Norfolk, Massena, and other localities. Capt. Hugh Smith, later instrumental in establishing the St. John Baptist Church in Madrid, was one of the first to arrive with a company. On the same day, Robert Nelson of Lisbon arrived at camp to find things rather disorganized; for example, vises and other equipment used by the railroad were still in place.

The first company of the Sixtieth arrived at camp on September 9, and other companies arrived daily through September 24. Colonel Hayward came north and took command on October 29, but he was resented as an outsider until at length he was forced to resign early in 1862. With about five thousand well-wishers on hand to see the boys off, the Sixtieth left Camp Wheeler November 1, for Washington via Rouses Point, Lake Champlain, and Whitehall, since at that time there were no direct rail connections south to New York.

They were assigned to guard duty on the Washington-Baltimore Railroad, and with no victories to win, their enthusiasm wore off. It was six months before the Sixtieth actually got into battle—all their casualties resulting from men not being nimble enough to leap out of the way of locomotives. But before it was all over, the Sixtieth had made up for its slow start by engaging in some bitter fighting at Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and Lookout Mountain (where, according to Robert Nelson, the hillside was slippery with blood).

The Sixtieth was mustered out of service after its three year hitch just before Christmas in 1863, and arrived back home in Ogdensburg on January 6, having had a train wreck near Antwerp. Of the 980 men who left Ogdensburg three years before, only about 300 marched up Ford Street that day. But all 300 took a furlough and re-enlisted as the Sixtieth Veteran Volunteers. This time they were with Sherman on his march to Savannah and they participated in the capture of Columbia, N.C.

In 1862 President Lincoln called for more volunteers—300,000 strong, and in July the appeal went out for another regiment to rendezvous at Ogdensburg. This outfit was made up of men almost exclusively from Ogdensburg. The camp at this time, according to Mrs. Daniels, was extensively improved. The regiment went together rapidly, and its stay at Camp Wheeler was short. The 106th left Ogdensburg on August 20. It was poorly equipped in terms of training, and it saw some rough going, especially at Cold Harbor, where it lost 126 men in this one engagement. The 106th also engaged Jubal Early at Monocacy and helped turn back his "Battle of the Bulge" thrust at the back door of Washington.

Regiments by now were forming at production line speed, the 106th was scarcely out of Ogdensburg when the 142nd was formed. This was county-wide in representation. After only thirty-five days of training, the 142nd left camp on October 6, 1862. Its departure brought crowds of five to six thousand people to Ogdensburg; some arrived at the village before daybreak. Although first headed up

by Colonel Judd, the next year, our own General Curtis took command of the outfit.

The days spent at Camp Wheeler by the 106th seem to have been its heyday. No more bodies of troops were formed at Ogdensburg. Perhaps the cream had been skimmed off; in thirteen months, three regiments—about three thousand men—had been taken from St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties. From the census figure of 1860, it would seem that about twenty-five percent of all males between eighteen and forty-five had been taken into service. But men still volunteered in the county; recruiting continued throughout the entire war, although the men rendezvoused down state.

Only additional mention of Camp Wheeler relates to the return of the Sixtieth Veteran Volunteers to service; they gathered at Camp Wheeler and marched from there to the railroad station in February 1864.

One might have expected some further use of the facilities. In the fall of 1864, there were a series of border scares, and invasion from Canada seemed imminent. The people of Ogdensburg demanded protection. A company of regulars from Massachusetts was sent from Massachusetts to be quartered in the Parish Stone Store, now the U.S. Customs building. Mrs. Daniels also mentions that two detachments of cavalry from Vermont and Massachusetts were quartered in Ogdensburg, but there is no mention of Camp Wheeler being used.

Camp Wheeler's day came and went, and now it is practically forgotten. There is only a

vestige left, the old weathered building, a last tangible connection back through 100 years to the brave young men who left there to suffer and even to die with the reckless heroism of youth thus expressed:

*Stand with your glasses steady,
Tis all we have to prize,
A toast to the dead already,
And hurrah for the last man who dies.*

Sources:

Mrs. Annie Daniels. *Reminiscences of Ogdensburg, 1749- 1907.*
Ogdensburg During the Civil War.
Richard Eddy. *History of the 60th Regiment - New York State Volunteers.*
Dowdey, Clifford. *The Land They Fought For.*
Donald Nelson, Lisbon, NY.

Chipman is an Idea

By Margaret Thompson
Madrid Historian
Vol. 6, no. 3 (July 1961)

Chipman seems to be an idea rather than a place. It centers around four corners with a radius of maybe four miles on all sides. It comprises people who have the same interests rather than the same location. These four corners are located on the very southern edge of Waddington and extend into both Waddington and Madrid territory. The two towns were one until 1859.

As a nucleus that explains Chipman, we could mention these things: a group of Scotch immigrants, a Scotch Presbyterian Church, a one time post office called Chipman, and a Champion Creamery.

Near the turn of the century in 1800, two Ogdens and a brother-in-law, Waddington got title from the Mohawks of this region and sold it out to settlers. The names Ogden and Waddington are still on many of our deeds.

As early as 1818, three young Scotchmen, John and Thomas Rutherford and Thomas Fife left Jedburgh, Scotland and came to clear land on what we now call the Buck Road. Two years later four Fisher brothers, John, Robert, James, and George, came to a place a little further south and settled on the present Madrid road. These seven were close neighbors. At first their houses were log cabins, but soon they built stone houses—stone, although they were burning tons of

trees in clearing the land. These houses, styled like the Scottish houses they had left in the “old country”, were well planned with arched doorways and deep windowsills. They had big fire places which served for cooking as well as heat.

One of the Rutherford houses and four Fisher houses are still in use—two occupied by Fisher descendants now.

On the Murray Fisher farm there are still remnants of an Indian long house in their woods. It is said that the first Fisher fam-

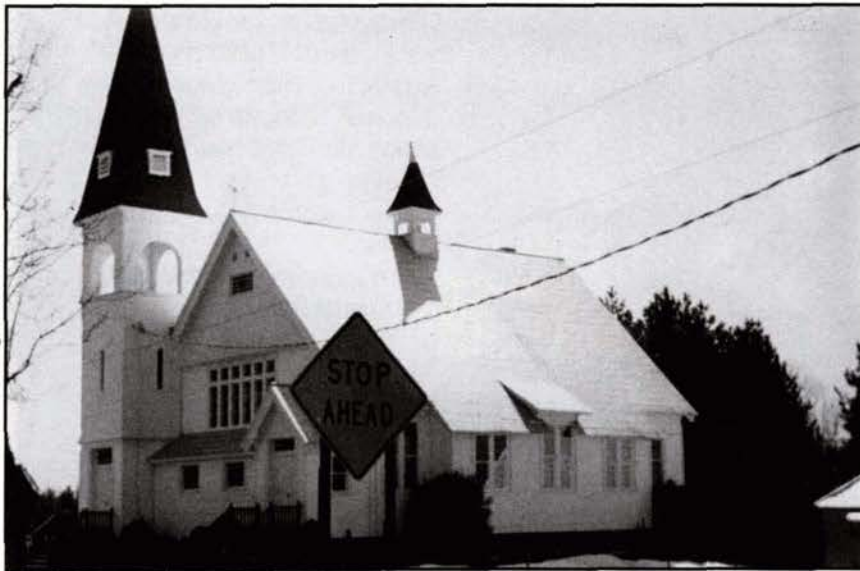
ily often woke up on very cold mornings to find Indian squaws and their papooses lying, feet first, beside their fireplace.

The name “Chipman”, although not applied till much later when the post office was established, came from the family of Samuel Chipman who, very early in the century (1801), cleared land and settled here. This farm is now owned by Arthur Thompson and son.

For years, the names Fisher and Rutherford predominated in the area. At present Rutherfords



One of the original stone houses.



Scotch Presbyterian Church in 1993

have lost out, but many Fisher families still operate farms.

These Scotch families were very thrifty. At the start, they had practically no money, operating as best they could from their own land. Sometimes a letter from home (Scotland) might lie in the post office for weeks before the unpaid postage could be spared from the family funds to claim it.

Almost from the first, the settlers began to keep cows and make butter. The milk was placed in big pans on the cellar floor. When the cream rose, the pans were skimmed and the cream was put into a churn. Butter was traded in at local stores for groceries, the rest sold for as little as eight cents a pound. Some money was raised from charcoal pits and lime kilns.

Very early these Scotsman organized a church. The first service was held in the Richard Rutherford barn at the corner where the Buck road meets the Ridge road, Sept. 17, 1819. There were thirty-six charter members. Rev. William Taylor, a missionary,

organized the church and became its first pastor, serving eighteen years.

Soon a frame church was built on this site, the membership growing to 370. Then in 1847, because of crowded conditions, a new church was built up near Chipman corners at the present site. Rev. Morrison, the next pastor, preached alternate Sundays in the two buildings. Members came from Louisville (then called Millerville), Daily Ridge, Sucker Brook, and Waddington, men, women, and children often walking with their shoes in their hands till they neared the church. They had two sermons with time between for a cold lunch.

As churches were built in these other towns, membership split off. A brick church replaced the frame church up at the four corners. However, a cyclone carried off the roof in 1888, and the present Scotch Presbyterian Church of Madrid was built in 1890. Mr. Morrison remained as pastor for forty-three years. He was followed by Rev. James Robertson, then by Rev. George

Harland, there being only four pastors in 130 years. Two short-time ministers came next, then Rev. Garrett Guertsen the present pastor.

We note the sternness and reverence which these pioneers exercised over Sabbath observance. No work was done, no meals cooked, no milk delivered. All this was done the day before. No boy could whistle. All newspapers were put away, the Sunday reading being the Bible and The Sabbath Reading.

Seeing the need of an outlet for milk, in 1882 Thomas F. Rutherford built what was known as Champion Creamery at the corner. This he kept up very carefully and scientifically and the whole region delivered milk there daily. In his weigh-room he had pigeon holes that held mail from the Madrid post office.

This handling of mail brought up the idea of a Chipman post office. So in 1897, Mrs. George F. Rutherford built a home at the corners and was appointed post-mistress. A stage route from Madrid to Waddington brought the mail daily to Chipman. Mrs. Rutherford also ran a store there.

When rural free delivery came in 1903, her post office went out but the store remained. Then came the telephone line in 1903 and the store housed the local central run by Mrs. Rutherford. We remember George F. Rutherford, sturdy white-haired statesman, sitting in his captain's chair on the veranda in the sun singing old Scotch songs or reciting from Robert Burns.

All these named improvements came to us through the influence of Thomas F. Rutherford.



Champion Creamery with members of Rutherford Family. Thomas F. Rutherford is 3rd from left. George F. Rutherford is on chair on veranda.

The next was the electric power line to the factory and from it lines extending along the seven roads to private homes. A little later tragedy struck. Mr. Rutherford's son, Lloyd, was killed by a high-tension wire above the plant. Champion Creamery closed in 1926, squeezed out by competition from big milk companies.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Rutherford was later bought by a young Englishman, Robert Grayson, who was highly trained in mechanics in England. He built, beside the house, a garage which has been a boon to Chipman farmers servicing their cars and farm machinery.

In dairying there has always been quite a proportion of Jersey herds. In 1882 two Rutherfords imported Jersey cows from Jersey Island. From these cows thoroughbred Jersey cows spread through the community. We have a St. Lawrence County Jersey Cattle Club and many families belong to the State Jersey Club.

In the Fife family—four generations down from the original Thomas Fife—James and Winnie Fife have a thriving Jersey herd. James won a 140 year Century Farm award from the New York State Agricultural Society.

In 1952 a skeleton was dug up

on the farm of William Walker, another farm of four generations in one family. The skeleton was sent to Albany and it was pronounced a young Indian male.

The 4-H Club established in 1924 has done much for the young people. James Fisher has been its untiring leader. The boys and girls have been encouraged to raise and show blooded cattle. The girls are early taught to take pride in cooking and sewing. The members exhibit each year at the County Fair, many go on to State Fair, and a few to the National Cattle Show.

The social life in early years

rotated around the church and the four country school houses. One of these school houses still stands across from the church. Socials, Christmas entertainments, conventions and similar affairs shaped up social groups.

A unique way of keeping roads passable was this: each spring the property owners were taxed so many days to work on the roads. After the winter damage, roads were scraped and dirt drawn in for repair. A man with a big property worked with a team so many more days than a small property owner.

In this community much effort has been put forth to educate the youth. A goodly proportion of the residents have had higher education and all walks of life have taken many to other fields, among them ministers and teachers.

Old memories like these, I suppose, are the reason why communities think of themselves as a unit. Just so, after 140 years, this community thinks of the area as Chipman.

Gouverneur's Village Park

By Julius Bartlett

Vol. 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1962)

When the Gouverneur Garden Club last October planted four Norway Maple trees in the Main Street village green here, known simply as "the park", a movement was initiated to restore the park as much as possible from the inroads made upon it by necessary highway widening and ravages of blight on its elm trees.

The Gouverneur village park—450 feet long—was originally about 100 feet wide at its upper end and tapered down to a lesser width at the west end. It came about, it seems sure, through a natural flow of travel. East Main Street was the DeKalb Road, and branching from it where Grove Street is now situated, and lead-

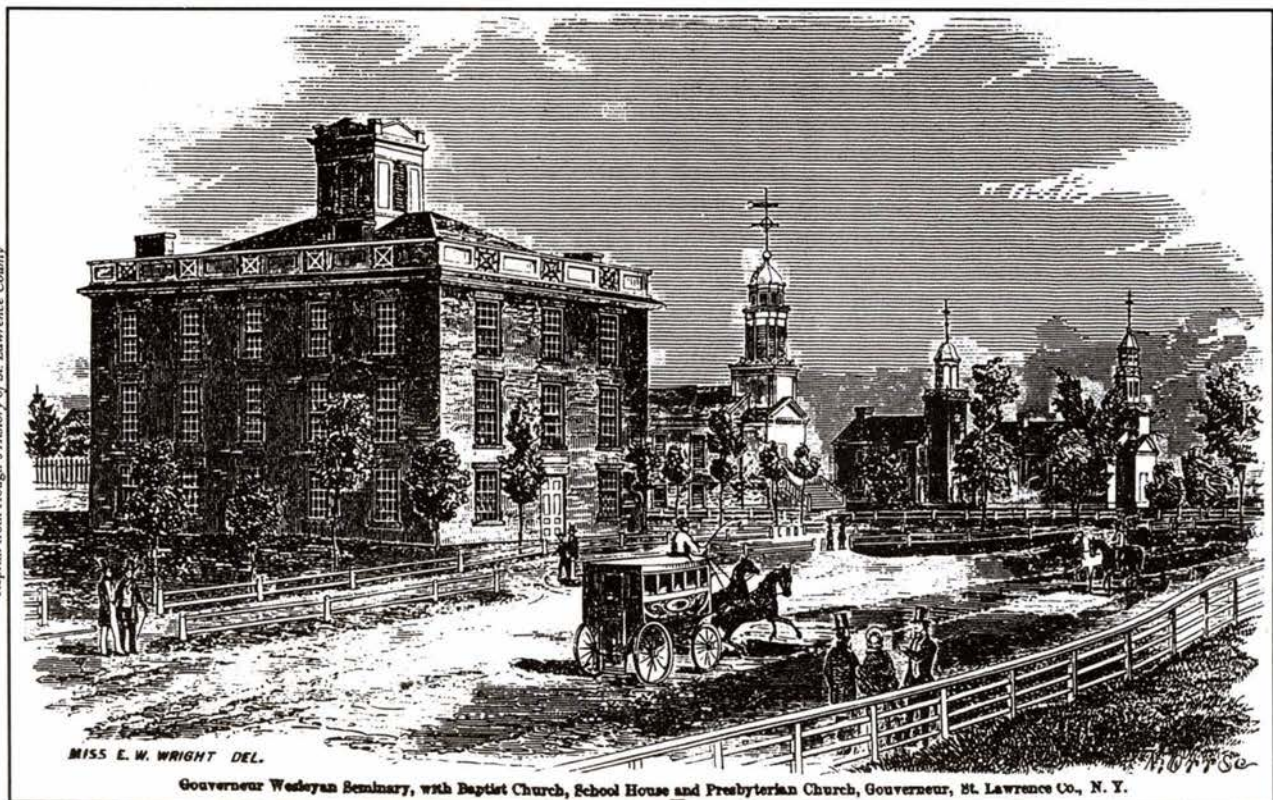
ing south into the town of Fowler, was the Fowler Road. It seems likely that horse and buggy drivers did not want to come all the way down to the DeKalb Road to go west, but made a shortcut where now exists Church Street. No bridge existed in Williams Street at first.

James Averell of Ogdensburg bought this entire park area as well as other acreage in Gouverneur with the intention to erect business places in the present park area. In 1830, Mr. Averell sold off a section at the east end of the plot, extending about 125 feet westward where the trustees of the high school erected a two story building, and

began high school operations. In 1837 the Methodist Church took charge, naming it the Wesleyan Seminary. This building burned on Jan. 1, 1839. The idea of developing a public park seems to have come up at this time.

The villagers supported their trustees and with a little state aid, erected a new building across the Fowler Road—the present Grove Street. Meanwhile, the Methodist Church continued its support for the Wesleyan Seminary, in terms of patronage and control only, since ownership was not involved. The Methodists ended their control in 1869.

Peter Van Buren, one of the



Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary, with Baptist Church, School House and Presbyterian Church, Gouverneur, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y.

best known innkeepers of the pioneer days, built a large hotel in 1849 at what is now 49-53 E. Main Street, the present Watertown Mattress Company store site. In the Civil War period and for some time thereafter, he planted trees in the park opposite the hotel, drawing water in barrels from the Oswegatchie River by mudboat and oxteam, to water the saplings in what was then a windblown sand area. These were mostly elms, but the park also included maples and basswood. But few of the more than forty trees still remain.

In 1873, the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminar trustees, who still owned the east end of the

park, suggested that they would deed their lot over to the village for exclusive use for park purposes, if William J. and James G. Averell, sons of James Averell, deceased, would do the same with their part of the park. The two men agreed, and it may now be noted that in case any litigation over title to the park should arise, former Governor Averell Harriman, would be an heir, as William J. Averell was his grandfather.

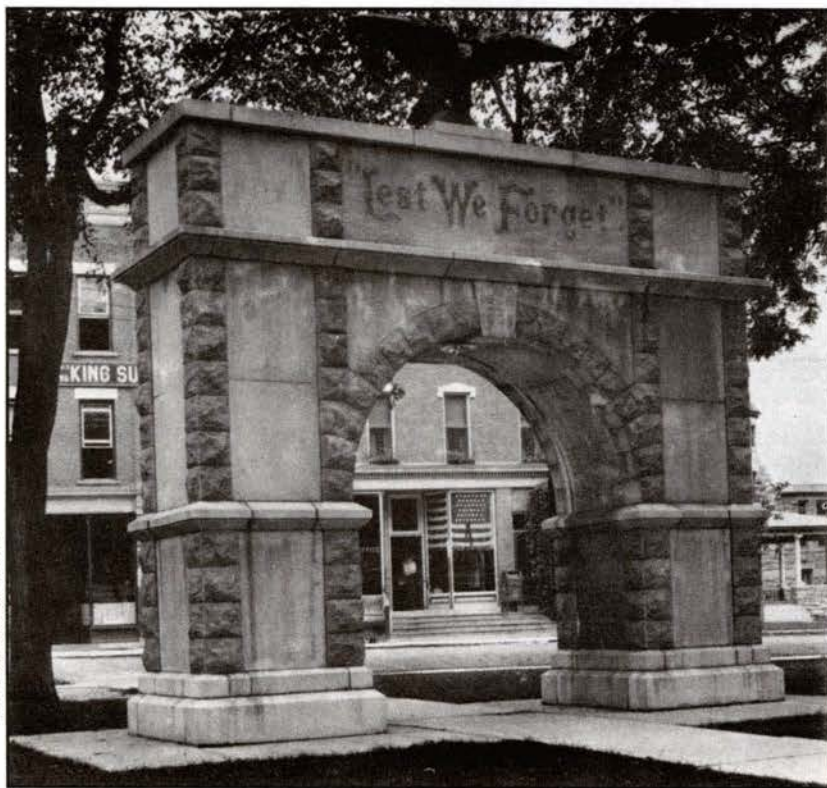
Gouverneur's familiar Memorial Arch, which stands at the center of the park, was dedicated in 1905, during the village's centennial and homecoming ceremonies. Originally erected to commemorate the pioneers who es-

tablished the village, as well as "Our Nation's Defenders", the Arch today carries bronze plaques in memory of the war dead of World Wars I and II. During the sesquicentennial ceremonies in 1955, the committee in charge installed a similar plaque in honor of the centennial committee of 1905.

In 1955, the sesquicentennial committee erected and dedicated the Memorial Clock which stands at the western end of the park, using funds remaining from the 1955 celebration.

The park was hard hit by circumstances as motor traffic in 1929 forced the stripping off of nine feet on both the East Main Street side next to the stores and the Church Street side as well. In 1955-1956 the building of the West Main street bridge necessitated the removal of about six feet more on the East Main Street side. The overall length remains the same. It has been suggested that the park should be turned into a parking lot, but the community would be unlikely to permit further changes in the park — especially since other parking facilities are available.

Christmas lights in strings are festooned around the ornamental lights from pole to pole in the Yule season and large illuminated evergreen trees from the woods are placed in the park each year.



From the SLCHA collections

Memorial Arch

Cigar Making in Ogdensburg

By Lawrence G. Bovard

Vol. 7, no. 2 (Apr. 1962)

In 1835, a nineteen year old boy named Chauncey P. Clark came to Ogdensburg from Connecticut to work as a carpenter on the four mills then under construction on the west bank of the Oswegatchie River. But Chauncey was more than just a carpenter.

Combining his skills in carpentry with his knowledge of tobacco he had gained as a youth on tobacco farms in Connecticut, he made some wooden moulds and began the manufacture of cigars. This was about eight years after he had first come to Ogdensburg, and his store and factory was located at 22 Ford Street. Chauncey's son Stanley followed him in the business of manufacturing and wholesaling tobacco.

Interestingly enough, it was from this first attempt at North Country cigar making that a flourishing local industry got its start. Many successful cigar makers learned the trade in the Clark shop and later opened their own shops in various locations throughout the city.

For instance, there was John Hannan. Born in Ireland June 24, 1844, he came to this country with his parents in the Fall of 1849. At a very young age, he started as a "stripper" (removing the backbone or spine from broad tobacco leaves), and later became a journeyman cigar roller. After a few years he established his own factory on State Street near Ford,

next to the American Express office. Mr. Hannan's two brothers, Patrick and Richard, also became cigar makers and together the trio established Hannan Bros. Shop in 1863 manufacturing fine cigars "LaRosa", "LaBurgo", "Yara" (named after the district of Cuba Mr. Hannan visited personally to select choice tobacco leaves), "Amos Judd", "Double Standard", "Our Favorite", "H.B.", and "Lone Jack" cigars. They used Havana broadleaf for the more expensive cigars and Connecticut wrappers and Pennsylvania fillers for the other grades.

John Landry opened another factory at 29 Ford Street making "Little Fidelity", which sold for five centers; "High Grade" and "Monterey" for ten cents. He later produced the "Knob" which became one of the most popular local cigars. In fact, the "Knob" is still manufactured in Ogdensburg by Charles Mulcahey and has a wide acceptance among those who like a robust broad-leaf cigar.

John Glennan, John Bradish, and John L. O'Connor had a cigar factory at the corner of Ford and Patterson Streets, making a cigar called "Three Jacks". Mr. O'Connor traveled through Northern New York selling their product. Later the Glennan, Bradish, O'Connor partnership dissolved and Mr. O'Connor hired the most efficient makers and established a business upstairs

in the Dennis Lynch building, now Bruyere's furniture store.

Stanley Clark continued his father's business, producing "Clark's Pet", and later sold out to the Ward Brothers, father and five cigar making sons, who were financed by Attorneys Wells and Donavin. When the operation closed, the stock of cigars on hand—several thousand—were sold to Allen Welt.

John H. McColl made the "Little Tycoon" at 90 Ford Street, while Lawrence A. Powers, at 139 Caroline Street, made a black, strong thick cigar nicknamed "Pig Tail Cheroot" which was a favorite of many.

The Ogdensburg Directory of 1905 lists the following cigar makers:

Eugene Bordine, 107 N.Y. Avenue
Charles E. Bradish, 5 ½ Hasbrouck St.
John Bradish, 5 ½ Hasbrouck St.
Stanley P. Clark, Manufacturer, 22 Ford Street
Duff Corrice, 8 Caroline Street
Eugene Cummisky, 123 Franklin St.
William Dineen, Comm. Travlr. 32 Know St.
Thos. J. Doyle, 7 Hamilton Street.
Eugene Dubrule, Mft. Winter, 226 Washington St.
Edward L. Emmert, 121 Morris Street
John Glennan, Windsor Hotel
John Hannan, Manufacturer, 92 Washington St.
Wm. Kernan, 146 S. Water St.
Prosper Lago, 11 Pero Lane

Arthur C. Landry, 237 State Street
 John C. Landry, Manufacturer, 29
 Ford Street
 Peter Landry, 237 State Street
 Joseph LaPointe, 23 Patterson St.
 Michael Lundy, 123 N.Y. Avenue
 Eugene Lupine, 45 Pickering St.
 John H. McColl, Manufacturer, 90
 Ford Street
 George McGlynn, 241 State Street
 Edward Monnette, 7 Mechanic St.
 Edward O'Connor, Comm. Travlr.,
 38 Patterson St.
 John L. O'Connor, Comm. Travlr.,
 6 Congress St.
 Fred Parker, Confectioner, 254 Ford
 Street
 Wm. B. Payne, 218 Ford Street
 John W. Quille, Comm Travlr., 38
 Albany Ave.
 W. Ritchie, 21 Grove St.
 Charles Ross, Confectionery, Ford
 & State St.

Cigar dealers, wholesale and retail, 1905 Directory:

Algie, R.B., Dealer, 76 Ford St.
 Briggs Bros., 89 Main Street.
 Bisons, George, 57 State Street
 Clark, Stanley P., Manufacturer, 22
 Ford St.
 Clutterbuck, W.H., Seymour House
 Hanna Brothers, Mfg. & Dealer 65
 State Street
 John P. Landry, Mfg & Dealer, 29
 Ford Street
 Lang, Patrick, Dealer, 87 State Street
 Markham, F. How., Dealer, 56 Ford
 Street
 McColl, John H., Manufactr, 90
 Ford Street
 Mitchell, Thomas, Dealer, 85 State
 Street
 Parker, Fred, Dealer, 254 Ford Street
 Powers, Law. A., Manufactr, 139
 Caroline St.
 Reuter, J.E., Dealer, 7 No. Water
 Street
 Rose, W.H., Dealer, 28 Ford Street
 Ross, Charles, Dealer, Ford & State
 Sts.
 Story, Bernard, Dealer, 8 Ford
 Street.

Patrick Kennedy was another cigar maker, his cigar the "P.K." This name annoyed the Picquet Cigar Company located at the corner of Ford and Isabella Streets, but the matter was amicably adjusted. Abe Kopita, father of the late Frank Kopita, came to Ogdensburg from New York and worked as a journeyman cigar maker in Hannan's. William Singleton of Watertown—who played the French horn in the Ogdensburg band—was another popular local cigar maker. The Ward Brothers firm consisted of John Ward, father, and sons "Bill", "By", "Freddie", "Eph" and "Ned".

Early cigar making required rather careful, complicated processing. The tobacco leaves arrived at the factory in boxes containing several "hands" of tobacco—a hand consisting of a three or four inch stack of selected leaves of same grade fastened together, sun cured and ready for processing. After being gently moistened under damp cloths, the hands were separated into individual leaves. The "stripper" carefully removed the main vein stem so as not to tear or otherwise damage the leaf. Then leaves were "bunched"—enough was gathered to form the inside of the cigar, using long or short pieces depending on the quality of the cigar. A handful of tobacco was approximately the required amount, and the skill of the buncher determined the quality of the burning—too much tobacco, while being more costly, is not better than too little, which makes a quick-burning cigar.

The cigar having been shaped to approximate size, it was placed in a mould to dry. Moulds were of wood, about two inches thick, a little longer than the length of

the cigar and about eighteen inches long. They came in pairs; each section completed the other. The bottom section had twelve pockets of the size and elongated cylinder shape of the cigar and half as deep as the thickness of the cigar. The top section had corresponding pockets similarly spaced, so that when the top section was placed on the bottom section, the moist tobacco leaves assumed the shape of the finished product. These moulds were filled and stacked and allowed to dry awaiting further action.

In oldtime or modern cigar manufacture, the next step—the application of the wrapper—is most important and requires considerable skill, for the wrapper must cover all the air spaces on the outside of the moulded center filler, to present an attractive, smooth, neat appearance. To accomplish this, the cigar roller takes a suitable leaf, free from holes, veins, and imperfections and lays it out on his table. With a deft cut of his knife, he shapes a tissue of tobacco leaf just the proper size to completely wrap the filler without wrinkles or breaks. The ability to get one or more binders from a leaf without waste is the pride of good cigar makers, for the final leaf is the most expensive. To insure that the wrapper retains its shape, the maker applies a small wipe of gum tragacanth (gum is from a shrub grown in Western Asia, odorless and tasteless). This additive insures that the cigar will not unwind.

The tobacco leaves have to be moistened to be shaped, moulded, and finally wrapped and boxed. An interval of four years often passes between the cutting of the tobacco plant and the dealers' showcase.

John Hannan made his own cigar boxes of cedar in the Tower Building on Riverside Avenue, now used by George Hall Corporation as accounting offices. He also spent considerable time and money trying to grow suitable cigar tobacco locally. On his farm on the Heuvelton road, now occupied by B.J. Leamy, he experimented with various seeds from Cuba. He was the first in this area to install drainage tile. He found that seeds that produced plants bearing ten to twelve inch tender leaves in the semi-tropical air of Cuba produced tall, long, wide, bitter-tasting leaves in St. Lawrence County. As a result he made annual trips to Havana to personally select the tobaccos that went into his "LaRosa" cigars. It has been said that his pet "LaRosa" cigar cost Hannan more to manufacture than he got for it in price.

About the time of World War I, machine-made cigars began to come onto the market—especially in the cheaper grades. Bunching machines were purchased from the Colwell Cigar Machine Corporation of Providence, Rhode Island. Robert Landry and Mr. Mullin went to Providence and purchased one each. Mr. Colwell came to Ogdensburg and trained operators, staying here a week. Machines could bunch 3,000 cigars a day, using twenty bunches to a mould. They could be and were operated by girls with little or no training. At one time, Mr. Hannan had twenty-two girls making cigars. They didn't know whether to wind the wrapper right or left hand, and in many cases didn't care.

Young men were reluctant to spend long years learning the tobacco business when machine-made cigars were as acceptable

to the average buyers as an expertly rolled, handmade one. Cigarettes increased in popularity and eventually local cigar factories disappeared one by one. Hannan Bros., with its sixteen high grade cigar rollers was eventually taken over by Frank McLean who learned his trade there. McLean made "LaRosa" and his own special "Black Diamond" cigar for years until his death a few years ago.

The wooden figure of "Punch" which once stood in front of Hannan's store was recently discovered by Arthur O'Neil, who had it repaired and repainted at considerably greater cost than the customary \$4 Edward Ruoff, a sign painter located at 17 ½ South Water Street, used to get until Mr. Hannan had apprentice Joe Mastine paint it. Joe was so proud of his work that he added a gold tooth, making it the only Cigar Store Indian with a gold tooth.

When the Landry cigar business dwindled, an employee, Charles Mulcahy, bought the moulds, buncher, and stock of tobacco and still continues to manufacture the "Knob" cigar to the delight of the many smokers who prefer this to any other cigar on the market. His shop is located on Water Street across from Hackett's hardware.

Times change for better or worse. Wonder what ever became of the sage who said: "A woman's a woman, but a good cigar is an excellent smoke".

Edwards Pioneers

By Leah Noble
Edwards Town Historian
Vol. 7, no. 2 (Apr. 1962)

Shortly after the Revolution there were rumors abroad in the Colonies, particularly in New York, that England was going to compel the colonists to become English subjects.

Because English troops had invaded northern New York previously by way of the St. Lawrence River, efforts were made to strengthen this section. One way was to encourage colonists to settle here and keep a watchful eye for uninvited strangers. Unrest in the New England colonies following the Revolution caused a westward trek, and among the pioneers were veterans coming into northern New York to claim land as payment for military services. The waterways in eastern New York afforded an easier method of travel to Lake Ontario and western New York.

Roads were very poor, or only trails through the woods, so a road was built, to expedite army materials from northern New York to the Lakes and Mohawk valley. This was the Russell Turnpike, a military road of logs and stones to connect Ogdensburg, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, and central New York.

It was over this road, that Asa Brayton, the first settler in Edwards, came with his wife, Eunice, here in January 1812. It is thought he was not only seeking a new home but was sight-seeing, too. Frozen streams were

more easily forded and less hazardous in the winter and often the straw-filled and buffalo-robe-covered sled was the bed for the night, if that was the mode of travel. Hemlock and pine groves gave shelter to the sled and occupants.

On and on, trudged Asa and his wife—crossing the Oswegatchie twice—through what is now called the village of Edwards, past very desirable waterfalls and farm land and about four miles westward to a smaller body of water—now called Pork Creek, where he stopped. On the southwest bank he carved out his destiny by clearing the land to erect a one room log cabin, and a leanto for the livestock. This is the farm now owned and operated by Warren McGill. Eventually Asa added a sawmill, housing a vertical saw.

This was to be his wilderness home for many years to come, and it is unfortunate that much of the dour Vermonter's early life in the Edwards community lies in forgotten mystery except for active participation in local affairs five or six years later.

Mrs. Brayton, it is said, often brought homemade bread to the soldiers who were passing through or were encamped in a nearby grove of beautiful pine trees. To meet and greet fellow Americans must have cheered, immeasurably, the couple, who,

no doubt, experienced many lonely and homesick hours that year. In the fall, little John's arrival brought great joy and comfort to the proud parents.

Meanwhile unrest in Europe spurred and urged people to leave England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. America offered them freedom and better living.

For several years two Indian families—Pete Philips and Fred Tarbell, lived here. Besides helping on the Jim Bullock farm, they made and sold baskets, and it was a very common sight to see a milk wagon load of baskets being sold to the housewives around here.

In the fall of 1812, young John Brayton was added to the Brayton family. Later that year, Joseph Bonner, Samuel Jones, Elijah, Guy Earl, and John Briton came to Edwards with their families and built a little hamlet of log cabins around the river, the nucleus of the future village of Edwards.

In 1813, Job Winslow migrated from the Mohawk Valley and built a log cabin. He returned to his former home to get his family and bring them to the new home, called Shawville, or, later South Edwards. The next year, in 1814, Orea Shead arrived, attracted by the potential power of the two falls located on our island. This enterprising

individual built a saw mill, preparing the way for other businesses which operated for nearly one hundred years. Later, Shead became the first postmaster in Sheads Corners or Edwards—about this time a few settlers made their homes a little farther south at Pond Settlement.

By this time, the enormous Macomb Purchase had been carved into the 10 Townships and the wilderness south of them was patented to various land agents. The sale of hundreds of acres of this land was entrusted to Daniel McCormick, who is responsible for the naming of the community “Edwards” after his brother, Edward. Later Pitcairn became the land agent, succeeded by George Allan. In 1819, Allan decided to make this place his home, so a beautiful three story brick mansion was built overlooking the vigorous and thriving village called Sheads Mills. The residence is now occupied by Floyd Brayton. For several years, the island was the heart of the village, consisting of a half dozen homes, a hotel, store and post office, blacksmith shop, sawmill, and tiny log school house.

Meanwhile in 1819, a large group of Scotch and Irish settlers, who had recently come from Scotland (crossing in the “Renown”—on the ocean 13 weeks), cleared the land in the northern part of the town, along the turnpike. Even today that section is known as “Scotland”. Those settlers were John Whitehead, James Green, Robert Watson, Alexander Noble, James Grieve, Robert Brown, Alexander Kerr, John Laidlaw and families.

Along with these settlers came single men—Thomas Cleland, James Wilson, and Williams An-

drew ready and willing to attach any job of clearing the land or building homes, or to hunt. Some of the farms originally established by these pioneers of 1819 are still owned and operated by their descendants.

These industrious early settlers worked out a substantial living off the fertile land, from the nearby streams, and surrounding forests. Each family was an independent unit being clothed, fed and cared for by the members of the group, mainly by the women folk. Heaps of ashes, accumulated from the burning of the excess trees, greatly added to the store of “real money” through the sale of black salts, pearl ash, or potashes to nearby Canada but this sale was abandoned when a high tariff was levied on it. Saddles of deer meat were hauled long distances to trade for other needed things.

Other settlers arrived from the Mohawk Valley way and made their homes about two miles west of Edwards, the hamlet to be-

come known as Freemansburgh after the Freeman family. In 1825, Elijah and Noah Shaw took up land near the Winslow homestead and became such successful farmers and businessmen that the community was named “Shawville” but after many years the name became South Edwards. Other settlers made a small settlement a few miles south and called it Pond Settlement. Constant Wells was one of the first to build there.

By this time it was thought advisable to form a township—Town of Edwards—incorporating these four villages. So on April 27, 1827, a group of men met in William Martine’s hotel and organized the first Town Board with these officers: Supervisor—Ora Shead; Town Clerk—John Hale; Assessors—J.C. Hale, Asa Brayton, Wm Teall; Highway Comm.—Roswell Lillie, Arba Collister, Peleg Haile; School Comm.—J.C. Haile, Asa Phelps, Wilkes Richardson; Overseers of Poor—Guy Earl, Warren



George Allan Residence

From the SLCHA collections.

Streeter; School Inspectors—J.C. Haile, George Allan, Wm. Teall.

The vast amount of virgin timber was a challenge to those interested in the cutting and disposition of the lumber. The Woodcock brothers employed large crews of lumberjacks on logging jobs around here and at Skate Creek. Besides this they operated a sawmill—now the Lumley mill—for many years. The demand for wooden wagons, yokes, sleds, and other farm implements, as well as household furniture was efficiently met by skilled craftsmen—Henry Rushton, William Grant, and Sam Padgett. The Rushton grist mill ground a fine flour called “The Oswegatchie Queen”. The other mills were situated on the east bank of the river.

From 1864 to 1872, a tannery operated by Gilbert and Carr converted the raw hides into leather, which in turn were made into harnesses and shoes by the Cook men. Only a few stones mark the place where the tannery once stood.

For about five years starch, derived from potatoes, was manufactured at South Edwards, until factories nearer the markets, in Central New York were established.

As dairy herds improved, surplus milk was greater than could be consumed at home in milk, cheese, or butter, so cheese factories were run for many years in South Edwards, Hungry Hollow, and in Edwards. Pigs flourished on the whey. For years farmers took turns in hauling the seasoned cheeses to DeKalb or Ogdensburg, from where they were shipped to England. A small limburger factory, on the bank of

the creek on the Hale farm, added a bit of variety to the menu. In the spring nearly every farmer made his year’s supply of maple sugar, soft sugar, and syrup—all of which were sometimes traded for the more coveted white sugar.

Greater city demands for milk, better prices and more convenient disposal of fluid milk marked the passing of the cheese factories. The Grant cheese factory eventually was converted into the Town Barn for road machinery. Most of the fluid milk is handled by the Queensboro Company, of New York City, which uses tank trucks instead now of the milk train of the past. A considerable amount of pasteurized milk is sold locally by the Sunnyside Dairy owned by the Randall Company.

A devastating fire laid in ruins almost the entire business section and left twenty-two families homeless on July 4, 1894, in Edwards. Likewise in South Edwards and Talcville, fire destroyed places of business and without the aid of insurance they never were rebuilt and workers were attracted to other sections. Almost before the ashes were cold, the Edwards villagers began rebuilding. The G. and O. branch of the New York Central railroad from Gouverneur helped in the recovery by bringing in workers and supplies. Little by little, we have had better fire protection and about five years ago an efficient fire company was organized, a new fire house built, and up-to-date fire apparatus purchased. Now we are part of the Mutual Aid Plan.

With the advent of the New York Central railroad in 1893, new life was brought to this busy community and up to the present this has been a popular avenue of

trade even though the passenger service was discontinued.

The first station agent was S.E. Bowler, who was succeeded by Mott Meldrim, station agent for sixty-four years, until his retirement some years ago. But the railroad did more by providing an avenue of closer contacts with other places as well as being much quicker than Old Dobbin. For forty years this fine public servant came to the village three times a day, carrying passengers, freight and mail to and from Gouverneur. The railroad greatly helped the hotel business—Henry Rushton House particularly—by bringing “drummers” who came to sell their wares at the village store or rented horses from the liveryies to make trips to neighboring places. Business boomed; mail came twice a day instead of once from Gouverneur by stage.

At the turn of the century a new industry sprang up to provide employment for many—talc mining, in Freemansburgh, or Talcville and zinc mining in Edwards and Balmat. Both mining projects provide jobs for a number of Edwards residents. In 1924, a very serious cave-in occurred at the Edwards mines, making it necessary to re-route the Trout Lake road.

Just about thirty-five years before the arrival of the “iron horse” prospecting had begun to take place. On the Freeman farm in Talcville were found rich deposits of talc. With the help of skilled miners from Rossi and other mining areas, Alfred Freeman sank shafts, hauled out the ore—by man and donkey power—and ran a furnace until a fire curtailed all of his operations. The first load of talc left Talcville June 8, 1893. Companies were formed and



Ore being drawn from mill to railroad

work was resumed, with more modern methods. The railroad carried the ore to Hailesboro, where, today, it is crushed into powder form and shipped away to be used in the making of paint, ceramics, papers, and many other products.

Further mining operations were begun outside the village of Edwards by the Northern Ore company, about 1900, for the mining and milling of zinc ore. Many laborers were imported to work in the mines and the Northern Inn was built nearby to house some of these men. The company suffered losses through fire and poor markets, and eventually the St. Joseph Lead Company became the owner. Machines replaced manpower, and consequently the foreign laborer had to look elsewhere for jobs and the hotel was razed. Other deposits of zinc were discovered at Balmat ten miles away and today, most of the mining is done there.

For many years, the zinc concentrates were carted to the railroad by teams, but now it comes across the river in an overhead car to the filter plant where it is loaded

onto specially built railroad cars to be shipped away and converted into metal, for galvanizing, batteries, brass, etc. With the appearance of the topless, windshieldless auto in 1900, a whole new pattern of travel was made and the passenger service on the railroad was destined to be concluded—in 1930. It is said Urb Webb had the first auto in the village, 1906—a one cylinder Cadillac. The high-wheeled bicycle as well as the horse and buggy were discarded for the speedier vehicle. The doctors—Taylor, Murray, Goodnough, and Drury were especially assisted in attending their patients, scattered over a large area. Muddy and stony roads made way for the modern cement and macadam roads of 1924. The fascinating blacksmith shops were replaced by the filling stations and garages. For quite awhile gasoline was shipped in five gallon, then 500 gallon barrels, for the few consumers. The widened roads in the village pushed back the wooden sidewalks for the present cement ones. By this time the streets were well lighted for in 1910, Urban Webb and sons, Harry and Grant, were generating electricity in the

little power house on the west side of the old grist mill on the island. The first indoor lights amazed the public when they illuminated the Cy Watson store, where the United Bank now stands. It wasn't long until the smelly kerosene lamps backed out for electricity. The Niagara-Mohawk Power corporation purchased the Webb franchise in 1952.

Way back in 1885, the news of Cleveland's election was sent from Gouverneur via telegraph. Twenty-five years later a telephone line was established, switch board installed and run by Charles Brown in his apartment over the present Pearl's Store. Later Ed. Sheffner went into partnership with Mr. Brown and other lines were laid out. When Don Todd purchased the Telephone Company, in 1922, many more lines were hung, and out-of-town hookups were installed. The switchboard was moved into a house where the dial office is presently located. When the dial system was installed, the offices were removed to the Campbell building. Dr. Campbell practiced dentistry in Edwards for over fifty-five years. A few years Dr. Merkeley also served as dentist in Edwards, about 1906. From 1907 to 1952, Dr. Charles Adams practiced medicine, first in the Robert Clark home, then later in the Rushton home, now occupied by Dr. Dodds, who became Dr. Adams' successor.

At first religious services were held in homes or school houses, but today we have the Methodist church (1880), Catholic (1920), and Assembly of God (1955). A Union church was established in 1850, used by the Universalists, but the pulpit has been unoccupied for several years.

The one-room, log school across from Dr. Alexander Dodds was replaced by the two-room, now six-room, frame school on the Assembly of God property. The Centralized school came into existence in 1948, including the elementary, high school, cafeteria, guidance, art, shop, music room, clinic and gymnasium, with twenty-eight teachers. In 1919, the A. Barton Hepburn library was presented to the village of Edwards.

Almost from the very beginning, the Edwards people were concerned about the education of their youth. Legend tells us that in 1814 Orra Shead taught in the one-room log school on or near the island. A larger stone school was built where the V.F.W. building stands, 1840. To meet the needs of the growing pupil population, twelve schools were constructed in the town from 1840 to 1880.

A fine frame school was built on the Royce Bullock property and in 1887 an addition was made, to make it a two-room school. A similar building was erected at South Edwards and Talcville and in 1897, the latter school was partitioned for two rooms.

Very soon the Edwards school was not adequate, and a three room building was constructed on what is now the Assembly of God property—costing \$2,429. Clyde Nesbeth was the first principal.

The Union Free School District was organized July 29, 1898. By this time there were students ready for high school and about 1910, a second story was added to the structure. In 1914, there were three graduates—Vivian Beach, Mildred Chapin,



Edwards Town Hall

Gretchen Todd, with Guy Hall as the professor.

To meet the demands for an extra-curricular and enriched program a 12-room brick school was erected on the Noble property in 1936. In 1948, the schools became centralized and most of the “country” schools were closed and even sold—Talcville alone remaining open. Once again, 1952, more room was needed and a new wing was added to take care of the elementary groups. The staff now consists of thirty-three teachers, five cafeteria helpers, three bus drivers, and two custodians. On Jan. 16, 1962, the American Field Service Chapter—a foreign exchange student plan—was organized. A. Barton Hepburn, a one time district school superintendent, gave the fine library to the Town in 1919, which is now affiliated with the State Regional libraries.

For many years the villagers found pleasure in spelling “bees” and singing classes held in little schoolhouses. More and more in-

terest in music was shown and the Edwards Citizen’s Band was formed. A bandstand was built in the heart of the village, where public concerts were held. When the Town Hall was built in 1895, many out-of-town shows as well as home talent were given. Graduation exercises were also held in the Town Hall.

With the arrival of the very first settlers came religious fervor. In 1819 there was no established church, so a circuit rider, Rev. Elijah Moran, made his rounds from Russell, holding meetings in homes, barns, and schoolhouses. The first class meetings were organized in the Creek (Barraford) School, with five members under Rev. Ezra Healey. Other active class meetings were held in Belleville and Trout Lake schools. When the minister’s salary was mentioned in the records, it was between \$300 and \$400 annually and “donations” for the minister were frequent. Elder Isaac Bannister organized a Methodist Society, with four members in South Edwards in 1827.

On land given by the Parmalee family, an edifice was built and used by the Good Templars. Rev. S. Schwartz and Elder Isaac Bannister were two of the first ministers there. At first this congregation was an independent group, but now it is a part of the Edwards charge. There was a need to unite the groups and have a church home, so in 1858 a frame church was built near the location of the fire house. Then in 1880, the so-called Union Church was enlarged. For a long time ministers came from away to preach to the Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Universalists. A Rev. Lee was a very frequent preacher for the latter group.

A desire to have their own church spurred the Methodists to build their own building Dec. 16, 1885, a bit farther east on Main Street. Rev. L. M. Smith was their first minister in the new church. The following year, the present Union Church was built, the marble coming from Gouverneur. A bell weighing 1,046 lbs. was hung in the belfry, and 200 "store chairs" costing \$250 were installed. During the last few years, membership in the Universalist Society declined and the Union Church was closed. It is rumored that the firemen are planning to use the building. In 1931, the Methodist [Church] was moved nearer to the street and a basement was put under the building, while Rev. Lewry was the pastor.

Because the miners of Talcville were predominately Catholic, the St. Edwards Mission was built in 1894, served by Fr. Laramie and dedicated by Bishop Gabriels. During the nearly twenty years, masses were read by priests from Fine and

Harrisville. Upon the appointment of Rev. Thomas Owen, the first resident pastor, 1920, Talcville became attached to the Edwards mission. Mass was said in the Town Hall and in private homes until Fr. Francis Maguire directed the building of the present Sacred Heart Church which was dedicated and blessed by Bishop Conroy of Ogdensburg in September 1928.

Through the years the citizens of Edwards—both young and old—have contributed honorably and faithfully in local and faraway interests in the professional and business world. Many of our youth answered Uncle Sam's call—and some gave the "supreme sacrifice". Others worked diligently selling and buying War bonds, assisting in the Red Cross and other drives. For several years, the late Ira Miles served as State Assemblyman from Edwards. His home is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Glen Poole.

Societies were organized, such as Masons, 1861; Eastern Star, IOOF, Rebekahs, and the Grange. Years ago, some found pleasure in horse racing and ice skating on nearby Trout Lake, foot races, steamboating on the river or the lake. Fine pleasure has been provided by an excellent bowling alley and lately roller skating in the hotel, has been enjoyed. The Lion's Club, formed in 1961, has provided a great deal of fun by maintaining an ice skating rink for the young at heart. For a long time money was a scarce article and was hidden in the barn or home. The First National Bank was built in the Town Hall, June 1914, later moved across the street, and more recently reorganized as the United Bank of Star Lake, Edwards, and

Harrisville.

Perhaps the most important addition to Edwards was the 300 ft. well in 1961. This provides an adequate supply of drinking water for the villages—in place of the questionable river water.

The Railroad Comes to Heuvelton

By Nina Smithers

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The founders of Heuvelton, some sixty years previous to the coming of the railroad, would have stood in awe as they saw the approach of that first train from the south on that warm September day of 1862. It came chugging along, its wood-burning engine hauling several cars. History has left no record of the day, but the folklore of the time relates that free rides were given to all persons joyously, the laws of 1850 having decreed that all locomotives be so equipped. We can well imagine that most of the 350 persons of the village were present to greet its arrival.

It was a great day for the village. For years there had been a dream of a railroad which would connect Ogdensburg and DeKalb

on the main line. The changes it wrought in the lives of the people warrants the telling of its story. A local railroad belongs to the people in a way that the big lines never do.

In August, 1862, a major job of grading had been completed. To get the gravel a temporary track was laid the length of Justina Street, the gravel being procured from the lot where the cemetery vault now stands.

Mr. Griffin, a prominent citizen of the village, gave the railroad rights in a ninety-nine year lease to a site which is now the location of the McCadam Cheese Company, Inc., for the erection of the depot. This was built in the usual style of that day and

painted the usual drab color.

Let's take a look at the village. Heuvelton was a live country town on the Oswegatchie River, its location having been determined by two factors. One was the excellent water power available and secondly the "State Road", financed by the state of New York and connecting Ogdensburg with Long Falls, now known as Carthage, had passed through the area. It was the first surveyed road.

No doubt the Pickens family were the most important people in business in Heuvelton. They had built in 1858 the present stone block now owned by the Ducett family. The business directory of 1862 lists them as dealing in butter and produce, hardware, books and stationery, general merchandise, ready made clothing, wines and liquors as well as operating a public hall. They also operated a saw mill, planing mill, shingle and lath mill, and a grist mill. Miss Bell Pickens was a music teacher. John Pickens came to Heuvelton in the employ of Van Heuvel.

The village had four blacksmiths, two boot and shoe stores, five carpenters and joiners, three carriage makers. There was a Methodist church whose pastor was Rev. F.F. Jewell, while Rev. R.W. McCormick served the Presbyterian church. Dan Spafford Giffin was the village lawyer. There were three dressmakers who made apparel for the ladies while Mrs. Corbin made



Van Heuvel House about 1910

From the SLCHA collections

hats. Two medical doctors, Lewis Sanborn, and A.C. Taylor, cared for the sick. There were at least two hotels. Nathan Giffin had, two years previous, built a stone grist mill by the bridge, which is now owned by the Richardsons and is the present laundromat.

Going farther back in the history of Heuvelton, to about 1805, the hamlet was called Fordsburgh, in honor of Nathan Ford. Later it was called East Branch, and with the coming of Jacob Van den Heuvel, the place was called Heuvel. In 1832 it was changed to Heuvelton.

Railroading really came into its own, state wide, in the early sixties. To be sure, it sounded the death knell of the stage coach time in our history. Heuvelton and the surrounding area of fine farms made use of the opportunity as farms were being increased in size.

In 1865 the first cheese factory in St. Lawrence County was in operation. Production increased and here were the railroads to transport the products of the farm.

Old scrapbooks have yielded much valuable information. There may have been early "Turkey Days" in Heuvelton but in 1902 a report indicates that fourteen tons of turkeys were shipped via the railroad. These were the days when most farms had a small flock of turkeys. Buyers from Boston and New York and their location representatives came to Heuvelton on appointed days just previous to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays and dealt directly with farmers and farmers' wives whose wagons and sleighs were along the sides of the streets. In 1902 prices ranged from fif-

teen to twenty cents per pound for dressed birds. That year other shipments from Heuvelton included 9,000 head of livestock, considerable lumber, and twelve tons of honey, also many pounds of cheese.

Saturday was known as "Calf Day" all around the countryside. For the accommodation of the cattle dealers, yards for cattle and sheep were built at the rear of the station. Buyers traveled the countryside, purchasing animals to be delivered late Friday evening or early Saturday morning at the railroad depot. Space became a controversial issue; at times it was the occasion for loud arguments among the several dealers, many of whom bore the same family name.

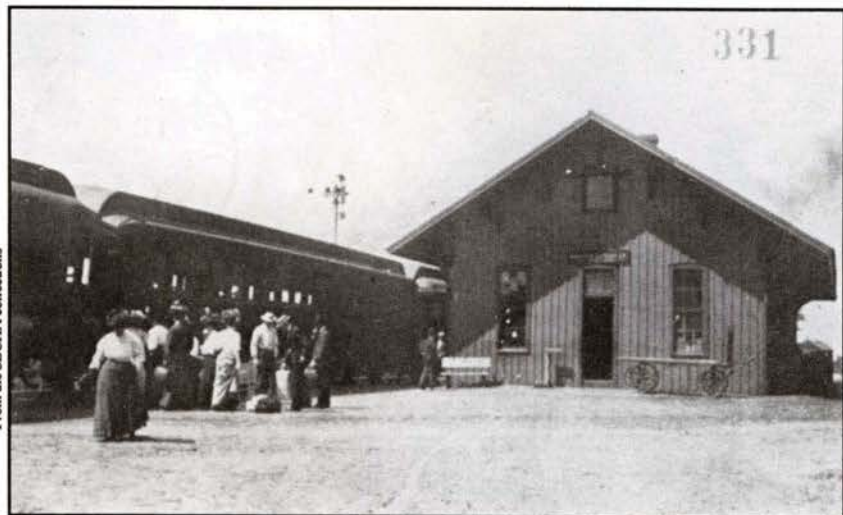
Monday was "Cheese Day". Deliveries were made to the box cars on the sidings by the farmer with his team of horses hitched to a farm wagon with a high box. Farmers took turns in each factory, and each delivered his share of the output to the factory. Life was much simpler in those days. It should be mentioned here that the buyers made arrangements for

the purchase of the cheese at the Saturday night meetings of the "Cheese Board" of the county.

Railroads were vital to the economy of the times and in turn the area did much for the prosperity of the railroads.

Interviews with several people brought forth conflicting ideas. That a new station was built on the present site in 1914 was conceded by some; others believed the old station was moved to the present site. Examination of the lonely premises would impress one that both sides of the story might be true as the structure appears to have been in two sections. The historian often has to resort to the quote, "I know not what the truth may be; I tell the tale as 'twas told to me". Certainly the new location had much in its favor.

The story of Heuvelton and the railroad could not be told without reference to the work of Archie Ellsworth who served as station master from 1890 to 1928 when he retired. He was a trusted employee of the New York Central and an honorable gentleman. He passed away in 1934. Harold



The Old Depot on Heuvelton about 1908

Lee served in like capacity during the period 1940-1951. Others who have served in Heuvelton include G.A. Seaman, Joseph Rasbeck, and Silvia Lavaghetta. Monroe Ritter was section foreman at one time and lived in Heuvelton.

Perhaps the most historic date in the history of Heuvelton and the railroad was August 17, 1940. Affairs of world importance were discussed that evening in the private car of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in that famous meeting with Prime Minister MacKenzie King.

It was a hot night in Ogdensburg. General Drum gave a dinner that evening in Ogdensburg at which the President was to have been a guest. However the President cancelled his appearance and invited the Prime Minister to his private car in Ogdensburg. In search of cooler air and more comfortable surroundings, the car was moved to Heuvelton for the night.

The railroad is part of our vanishing scene in the north country. Only a daily freight can be seen on this once popular line. The last few years of passenger service was provided by a gas train. "The Hootin' Annie" as she was sometimes called, has also made her last run which is reported to have been in 1956.

Scullin Mansion

By Madeleine M. Gray
Town of Brasher Historian
Vol. 8, no. 2 (Apr. 1963)

A mile above Helena, the St. Regis River's south bank forms a bend. At this point, the river drops from a series of rapids into a lovely, still sheet of water that extends from there to Helena. In this rather remote spot, one-quarter mile back from the Helena-Brasher Falls road and overlooking the river stands a twenty-five-room, three-story mansion. The stranger who does not know the story of John Scullin might be inclined to wonder why the builder

chose such an unlikely spot to erect an elaborate home.

John Scullin was born in the Town of Brasher, a son of Nicholas Scullin, a native of County Antrim, Ireland. Nicholas came to this country with his mother, brothers, and sisters at the age of nineteen. Mrs. Scullin decided to locate on a farm near Helena; this was in 1819, only two years after the first settlement of March 17, 1817 near the site of the

present village of Helena. The homestead was then part of a dense wilderness.

Mrs. Scullin, widowed some years previously while still living in Ireland, must have been endowed with typical pioneer spirit and fortitude. She managed to rear a family of eleven children while wresting a living from the farm in the wilderness. Eighty years later, her grandson, John Scullin, was to return to Helena and fulfill a lifelong dream of building a palatial summer estate on the old homestead where he was born in 1840. He left the old farm as a young man, believing that there was no future for him there, and drifted west to California. He later traveled back eastward and entered the railroad contracting business. Mr. Scullin subsequently obtained the controlling interest in a street railway company in St. Louis, Missouri and was at one time reputedly worth \$20,000,000.

Williams and Johnson, Ogdensburg Architects, were consulted by Mr. Scullin when he was ready to build his dream house. They drew up the plans for the large three-story frame structure. It contained twenty-five rooms of which fourteen were bedrooms. The third floor was occupied by the servants. The entire house was finished in hard pine with hardwood floors throughout. A complete water system brought water to all parts of the house; and the house, barn, and grounds were lighted by elec-



Captain John Scullin

Courtesy, Town of Brasher Historian

tricity, the generator being run by a gasoline engine in the same building with the pumping machinery located on the bank of the river. Fifty-six storage batteries furnished a reserve supply of current for use when the generator was not running. The house was completed in 1899 at an estimated cost of \$75,000, while the barn alone cost \$7,000.

Adjoining the house was a concrete tennis court and the grounds about the property were beautifully landscaped with cedar hedges, lilac bushes, pines, and other trees. Mr. Scullin had purchased the tract of land, then known as the Barlow Farm, across the river from the house. This farm contained 116 acres, nearly all timberland, including fifteen acres of pines, and was to provide hunting grounds. Mr. Scullin laid out beautiful drives through the woods and originally a bridge connected the hunting grounds with the main part of the property. The estate also included a tract of approximately 200 hard

maple trees and Mr. Scullin had provided a complete maple-sugaring outfit for the farm. It was his wish to operate the farm much as it had been in his youth.

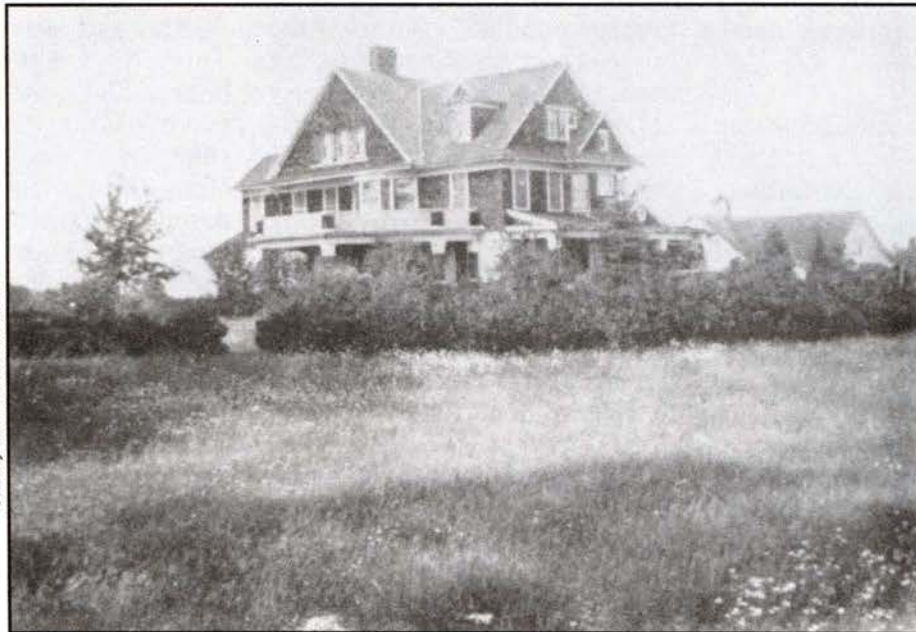
When the Scullin family came to Helena from St. Louis, they usually traveled north in a private Pullman car. Another car carried their horses and sometimes their automobiles. In one of the barns on the estate was stored a thirty-foot sailboat which carried gay parties on the St. Regis River in the summertime. Another barn contained one of the many rigs owned by the family, a two-wheeled Irish Jaunting Car, given to Mr. Scullin by a friend from the "Old Sod". Alongside it was a fancy rig from Paris which attracted great attention on the streets of St. Louis.

There were two daughters and three sons in Mr. Scullin's family. Older Helena residents like to reminisce about this fabulous family, relating rather fondly how they rode horseback through the

streets on spirited mounts or drove behind fast "steppers". The Scullin family entertained frequently and lavishly, their friends coming from all parts of the country.

After John Scullin's death in 1920, some years after his wife predeceased him, his children abandoned the beloved retreat and in 1922 sold it to Arthur Hammill of Massena. In 1927, the estate was considered for use as a farm school for St. Lawrence County's wayward boys, but these plans were later abandoned.

The mansion is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Leon Champine and is used as a year-round dwelling.



Courtesy Town of Brasher Historian

The Scullin Mansion

Grocery on Wheels

By Anna Payne Slye
Vol. 8, no. 3 (July 1963)

This is a story from my childhood in Spragueville when my father, William Payne, had a peddler's cart and drove around the countryside selling groceries. At first, he had been a clerk in Abner Johnson's store, but when Mr. Johnson retired and when Mr. Carpenter across the street went out of business, my father opened a grocery for himself in the latter's place. Well, it was more than a grocery. It was a general store, for he sold most of the things that were needed in a small village and in the farming community surrounding it. His chief source of revenue was the iron ore mines about a mile from town where he had an outlet for heavy work clothes and shoes for the miners and for groceries at the boarding houses. But in 1907 there was a panic, a depression of some kind of financial upheaval, and the mines closed, never to open again.

With his main trade gone, my father decided to buy a cart and deliver groceries to the farmers around Spragueville. Perhaps I should explain this was an age of peddlers. The first that I remember were pack peddlers. They were sometimes Syrians who came to town with heavy packs on their backs, selling laces. Others were of the Jewish race. Lawrence A. Johnson, in his book, "Over the Counter and on the Shelf" tells that Sears' and Roebuck's Julius Rosenwald, and Isaac Gimbel and David May began as pack peddlers.

Then, there were tin peddlers. Each had a cart, probably the forerunner of the panel truck. It had a door in back and a dejected horse hitched to the front. The peddler bought up papers and rags and paid for them in tinware, very cheap, thin tinware. But this was before the days of aluminum and stainless steel, and the housewives were always glad to add to their supply of tins. These peddlers were usually Jewish, and I think many of them went on to become owners of large stores. They flourished before the automobile when the people in the country could not get to nearby towns easily and quickly.

Then there were meat peddlers. In Spragueville there was no meat market, so a man came once or twice a week delivering meat. And then there were the grocery peddlers. Some of the big tea companies started out by sending men around the country selling tea and coffee. This method is still used by some companies such as Watkins Products, the Jewel Tea Company, Cook coffee, Fuller Brush, Beauty Counselor and Avon Products, but, of course, we would never think of calling their representatives peddlers. They are salesmen or saleswomen.

But, to get back to my story. Since the day of peddling carts is far in the past, I have written what I remember about my father's cart, and here it is.

The Cart – A Story of Old Spragueville

The cart is a symbol—a symbol of an era that is gone. With its passing, a way of life disappeared, and conditions were never quite the same in our small town. The coming of the automobile wrought the change; a change for the better, of course, for it meant that roads were improved and rural districts were no longer isolated.

I think in these troubled times of cold war and atom bombs and insecurity, it is well to tell about the cart, for, while to the young, it may seem very dull, yet to those of my generation, it may bring back a memory of days when life moved at a more leisurely pace than now.

The cart was horse drawn. Three days a week my father hitched Duke, the sleek bay, and, leaving Mother in charge of the store, set out on one of his routes along the dirt roads that meandered through the countryside around Spragueville. All day he rode slowly along, stopping at every farm house along the way, to sell groceries for cash, or credit, or in exchange for eggs.

There were three doors on the cart, one on each side and one in back. The back portion held dry goods, house dresses, men's straw hats, cotton stockings, heavy socks, overalls, samples of work shoes, boots and rubbers. The door on one side opened to

display canned goods, cereals, flour, granulated sugar in cloth bags, brown sugar tied up in paper sacks, and large three pound boxes of crackers.

But it was the other door that held enchantment for me, for behind that door were stored tea and coffee and the spices that my father sold. No chili, no curry, no unusual flavors for producing foreign dishes, but dozens of tiny packages of the old standbys: sage and thyme, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and cloves. As the cart jolted over the rough country roads, tiny particles of spices and herbs evidently sifted out, giving off an aroma of spices that I've never smelled since. Sometimes when I've opened my

spice cupboard quickly, I've caught a slight suggestion of that fragrance, gone almost before I could quite sense it, and then for an instant I have recaptured a moment from the past.

Several times during the summer, I rode on the cart with my father. These were idyllic days. I can't remember that we talked much. We just moved along the country roads with nature all around us, close to us, a part of us. Usually my father whistled and swung one foot at the side, tapping on the iron step, keeping time to his tune.

Sometimes the road went up steep little hills and the iron rims of the wheels clattered over the

stones. Sometimes the cart moved silently, and Duke's hoofs sank softly into the thick dust. The road wound around in more leisurely fashion, turning abrupt corners, winding back upon itself in hilly sections. Some days it lay along the quiet pools of placid Indian River. Some days it looked down on the big stones of Rockwell Creek, almost dry at this time of year.

The reins dangled loosely in my father's hand. No need to guide the horse. If, at a bend in the road, we met unexpectedly an oncoming wagon, there was no risk, for that driver would be progressing at as slow a pace as we.

My father and I would be a



The Grocery on Wheels—W. J. Payne and Duke

From the SLCHA collections

little strange with each other as we first started off, for it was not often that we were alone together, and my father was not a talkative man. But as we went along, he would begin pointing out things for me to see: a blue bird in a thorn apple tree, a chirping sparrow on the rail fence, the scare crow guarding a farmer's corn, the minnows in a brook beside the road, a sleepy mud turtle on a half submerged log. "Watch at the next house. You may see an old lady smoking a pipe."

Our approach to a farm house was a signal for great activity on the part of the children and the farm dog. Long before we came in sight, the dog would suddenly rouse himself, crawl out from under the steps where he had been napping in the shade, and trot down the drive, barking excitedly.

"I knew you were coming," the farmer's wife would say, "by the way the dog was acting."

As we turned in at the driveway, the dog would be in a frenzy. Around the cart he would dash, barking furiously. And no wonder. For my father would be teasing him with every means he knew. Such lunges with the whip, such stamping on the floor of the cart, such whistling, such hissing, such grimacing, such mewing like a cat. The horse must have had a most placid nature not to be upset by such goings on, but evidently from long association with my father, he thought this was the natural way of dogs and men.

With the dog still acting like a thing demented, we would stop at the door. Then, my father, after all his taunting, would swing lightly over the wheel and drop to the ground at the very jaws of

the barking dog. I never knew him to be bitten. I never knew him to be afraid of a dog. I never saw a dog he didn't love. As for the dogs, whatever breed or combination of breeds they might be, they seemed to sense that this was all a game which they were privileged once a week to play.

And the children, as soon as we drove in, came running from different directions, to converge on the hen house, from which they would each come out with an egg to be traded for a stick of striped candy. Then the farmer's wife would come from the kitchen with a pan of eggs to be exchanged for groceries. After the transaction and a bit of conversation, for my father had known these people all his life, we would be on our way. The children would stand shyly by, clutching their striped candy, the dog would give one final bark by way of farewell, and then we were on the dusty road again to ride quietly along, until the barking of a dog around the bend, told me we were nearing another farm house.

As noon approached, Duke would begin walking faster, his ears pricked forward in anticipation. Finally, at a level shady spot, he would suddenly turn off the road and stop. This would be the spot where they always stopped to eat. My father would jump down, remove the bit from the horse's mouth, and give him his oats. Then we would open one of the doors of the cart, reach far back and bring out our lunches, sandwiches, and homemade ginger cookies, a banana, and jars of milk, not refrigerated as it would have to be today to satisfy our palates, but fresh and rich and warm, and vastly satisfying.

At four o'clock we would be

back in our town again, Duke again quickening his pace as he looked forward to a handful of sugar or a piece of wintergreen candy.

Then my father would take the money from his pockets and put it into the cash register, and pull down the crates of eggs from the top of the cart to be sorted, the brown ones to go to Boston and the white ones to New York. He would replenish the groceries he had sold, so that the cart would be ready for the next trip over a different route another day.

Probably not much money had been taken in, but neither had the expenses been great. However, one thing we knew. It had been a good day. It was a good world. We were glad to be a part of it. Peace was of the essence of it. There had been wars, but never any more. People knew better now than to fight. They had learned a great lesson. Arbitrating was the answer. Surely, goodness and mercy would follow us all the days of our lives. Oh, halcyon days, the days of the cart!

The Whitney House

By Susan C. Lyman

Vol. 9, no. 3 (July 1964)

In 1852 Robert John McGill built a three storied, wooden hotel on the East side of the main street in Raquetville, a small hamlet a few miles north of the village of Potsdam. Mr. McGill was a prominent man in the area with the foresight to realize that the passing of the Northern Railroad through the farmland of B.G. Baldwin would mean the beginning of a new and busy town and so, in 1848, two years before the completion of the railroad, he contracted for the purchase of land on which he later built the "Raquetville House", destined to become a famous landmark.

Noted for cheer, courtesy, and good service, it was popular with commercial travelers and honeymooners. It was long a meeting point for men of positive opinions and distinction in St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties. In the days of old Ben Whitney, men met and discussed politics, war, and the Dred Scott Decision. Here, now and then, a stray abolitionist stopped overnight while performing the good office of steering escaped slaves into Canada although it is possible that there was not too much hospitality for anything savoring of the new party launched in 1856. The coming of the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad was an additional stimulus to business.

J.D. Tracy stopped here as did wealthy Giles J. Hall, the Jackson Democrat. Here it was that delegates came to Assembly, Senatorial, and County Conventions of the Democratic party. In

the old days came Supreme Court Justice William H. Sawyer, Hon. Daniel Magone and Dr. Thomas Spratt, the Whalens, Murphys from down country and Whitneys from the "farups" and a younger generation of fighters in which the Sullivans, McCarthys, and Kellys were prominent figures.

After a few years Mr. McGill sold the hotel to Benjamin Whitney who renamed it the Whitney House and in 1862 advertised that its tables were furnished with the delicacies of the season. A good livery was connected with the house and a carriage was in attendance at the depot to convey guests to the house without charge. Further, "a stage leaves the house daily for Massena Springs where guests may partake of the famous waters advertised as an unequal remedy for obstinate cutaneous eruptions, scrofula, salt rheum, and erysipelas as well as rheumatism, gravel and all affections of the kidneys and bladder". Eventually Mr. Whitney, a Democrat of the old school, retired and by 1865 Prey and Nightingale were the proprietors of the hotel.

Sidney R. Phelps, in 1866, purchased the hotel and became the most popular landlord in the North Country. "Sid", as chief of a large following of Democrats in the North Country, wielded his battleaxe of authority for a long period. He was a party delegate to conventions many times and went to the National Convention held in Chicago in 1892. He was often in hot dispute with a Bryan

Democrat or some Republican who had the temerity to remark that Grover Cleveland was not the best president since Andrew Jackson.

In 1884 or 1885, Mr. Phelps made extensive improvements to the building by erecting a new and modern addition to the south end which contained a tower and added much to the beauty of the premises.

Mr. Phelps prospered in the hotel business, becoming the owner of a profitable coal shed, and was instrumental in the development of the State Bank of Norwood and the founding of the Norwood Electric Light and Power Company. When failing health forced Mr. Phelps to retire and sell out to Herman Jacques, former operator of the Montgomery House at Rouses Point, he was one of the most influential men in the area and one of the last of the rugged individualists in the hotel business; there are no legends about his successors.

The next owners were the Flanagans of Malone who conducted the business for a short time, being succeeded by the Hosley Brothers of Tupper Lake. The Hosleys made improvements to the north end of the old hotel proper, fitting up extra rooms and adding twenty baths, making it the most modern hotel in the section at that time. It was at this time that it was given the name, "The New Whitney House".



From the SLCHA collections

Whitney Hotel during the stage coach era

According to the Potsdam Business Directory of 1907-1908, Roy C. Harris was proprietor for a time.

In 1910 William Gage, a dry goods merchant in Madrid, traded his store and other Madrid property for the Whitney House. During his ownership the house was again modernized and was more popular than ever becoming known for its good and generous board and did not depend on

“booze and bar” for business.

After eleven years in the hotel business, Mr. Gage sold out to Powell and Emery. Mr. Emery took over the entire business on December 1, 1921. There was a bad fire in 1924 after which renovations and modernizations were again made.

At 9 a.m. Sunday morning, January 18, 1925 Mrs. Lillian Starks was passing the Whitney

House and noticed fire in the third floor tower room. She immediately gave the cry “fire” and was heard by Mrs. A. J. Phillips who called the local central telephone operator. An alarm was given to the mill station of the local alarm system and to Mr. C. F. Vance, Chief of the Fire Department.

It was a small blaze at first, originating in the unoccupied tower room, and thought to be caused by overheated pipes since

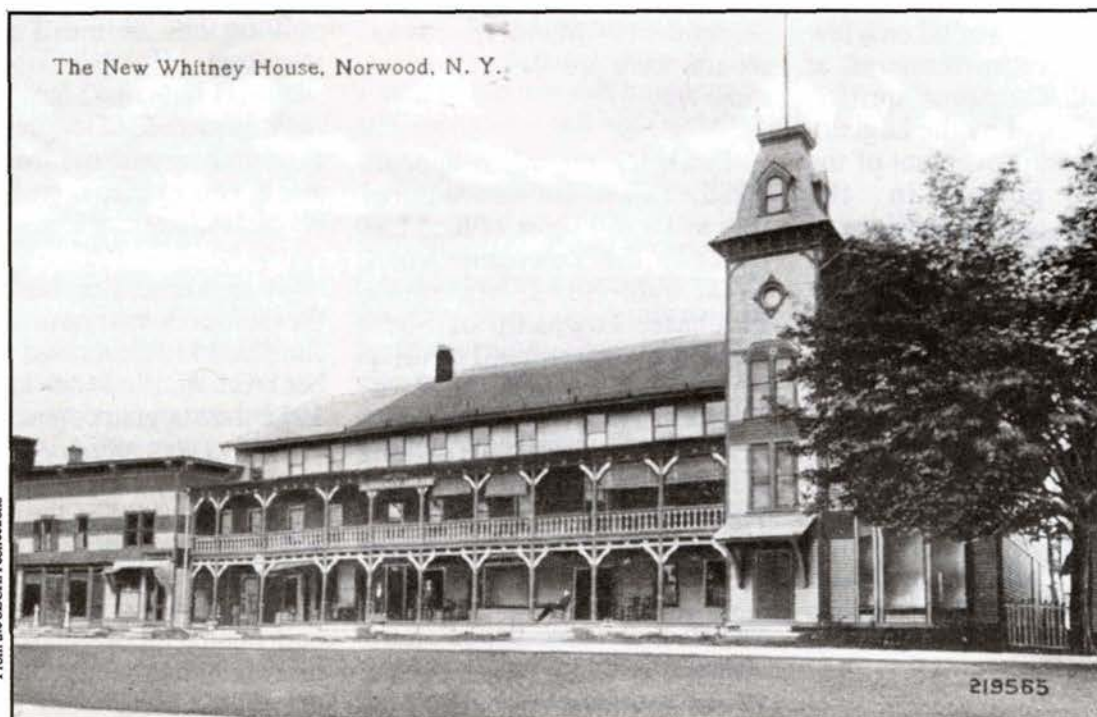
the thermometer stood at twenty below zero. However, a strong northeast wind was blowing and the fire worked its way through the building. In just one hour, at 10 a.m. the hotel roof fell in and sometime later the chimney fell into the roof of the house owned by Dr. Hakins on the south side of the hotel. The fire spread northward into the store owned by Mr. Raymo and into the F. R. Smith building which housed the Norwood Post Office. Since there had been sufficient warning Mr. Raymo had removed all the merchandise from his store and all of the mail and stamps were taken from the post office to a building on Mechanic Street which Postmaster A. R. Collins had hastily secured to serve as a temporary post office.

Eight lines of hose were laid with the help of firemen from Norfolk, Potsdam, and Unionville. Merchants of the village rallied round and set up a stand in the Music Hall to serve coffee, doughnuts, and sandwiches to the firefighters and even provided new dry caps, mittens, and overshoes to those needing them. The bitter cold and the strong wind added to the suffering of the firemen. When the fire was brought under control, the hotel had been totally destroyed, Dr. Hakin's house badly damaged by water and the falling chimney, and the two buildings to the north were badly damaged. The total damage was estimated to exceed \$50,000. Water was played on the ruins until Monday morning in order to prevent a possible further outbreak. A resident who

was a fireman at the time recalls that it took three men to carry each ice-encrusted length of fire hose back to the fire house.

In May 1925, Mr. Emery hired men to clear the debris of the old hotel in order to make way for the new Norwood Inn which was to be built on the same site.

The destruction of the Whitney House marks the passing of one of the most colorful of the old-time hostelries of the North Country familiar to hundreds.



New Whitney House from a 1915 postcard

Cranberry Lake Dam

By Clara McKenney
Clifton Town Historian
Vol. 10, no. 4 (Oct. 1965)

Although most know it today as one of the finest Adirondack lakes and fishing grounds, Cranberry Lake was actually developed, about 100 years ago, as a reservoir for commercial purposes.

The groundwork was laid in 1854 when the New York State Legislature passed "An Act declaring the Oswegatchie River a public highway and regulating the passage of logs and lumber down the same and for the improvement of said River".

The next step was taken a few days after Lee surrendered at Appomatox. The Act of April 21, 1865 was passed by the Legislature for the improvement of the hydraulic power in the Oswegatchie, and the checking of its freshets. To carry out these purposes, Chapter 505 of the Laws of 1865 provided for the organization of a number of owners of Mills and Manufacturing plants along the meandering 110 mile course of the river below Cranberry Lake through the towns of Clifton, Fine, Edwards, Fowler, Gouverneur, DeKalb, Canton, DePeyster and Oswegatchie before it empties into the St. Lawrence at Ogdensburg.

These users of water power were empowered by the statute to acquire, either by purchase or the exercise of the right of eminent domain, lands for the erection of a dam of such height as in

their discretion they deemed advisable. Executive authority was vested in three commissioners named in the act and giving the County Judge of St. Lawrence County the power of removal as well as the appointment of their successors.

All the expenses of maps, surveys, and construction together with the purchase price of the lands taken and the damages fixed were to be paid pro-rate by assessments levied upon the lands to be benefitted, with power to sell such lands for failure to pay assessments. Maintenance and repairs were provided for in the same way.

From the record, it appears that the Commissioners acquired title to 10,769 acres of land and water in the Township No. 1 Great tract No. 2, Macomb's Purchase, Township of Sherwood, and 400 acres in Township No. 2, Great tract No. 2, Township of Harewood, making 11,169 acres all in the Town of Clifton, St. Lawrence County. The land was paid for by the assessments provided, and deeds to these acres were taken in the names of the Commissioners.

The dam was built and the water let in during the spring of 1867. Hugh McConnell, one of the men who helped build the original dam, was the first dam-keeper. He was followed by Jessie Irish, Michael Dodds, and Sam Bancroft in 1890. In 1911

Herbert Dean took over and continued until his death.

The original regulating dam was a timber crib structure about fifteen feet high, having a spillway eighty feet long, a logway five feet wide by four feet deep. There were four outlet sluiceways, each about six feet nine inches wide, thirteen feet six inches deep. The sides of these sluiceways were provided with vertical grooves into which twelve inch stop-logs were placed. The discharge from the reservoir was controlled by dropping in or removing one or more of these stop-logs.

This method of regulation was extremely crude and inefficient, and the exact capacity of the reservoir is unknown.

A report on the dam sent to the Conservation commission on June 8, 1912 describes the timber cribs as filled with stone. In 1915 the superstructure was described as very rotted. A new dam was urgently needed, to avoid possible damage if the existing structure went out.

In 1916 a concrete dam was built behind the original log structure and it has been rebuilt twice since.

The present dam delivers water from 134 square miles drained by the Lake to hydro developments at Newton Falls, Flat Rock, Oswegatchie, Brown Falls, South



The original Cranberry Lake Dam

Edwards, Edwards, Emeryville, Hailesboro, Talcville, Gouverneur, Natural Dam, and Heuvelton. The city of Ogdensburg uses the water for sanitary purposes. As a reservoir the Lode serves 30,000 people below the dam.

The Commissioners who have maintained the dam since the beginning, try to keep a leeway of six inches in the Lake level to control flash floods when necessary by shutting the gate or greatly reducing the flow.

Before the dam was built the village at the outlet was called Harewood, but later changed to Cranberry Lake.

Years later, when Cranberry Lake had become a popular summer resort, cottage owners complained to the Commissioners about the water level which sometimes in the winter caused the ice to break up boathouses or lift

them off their foundations; while in the summer sometimes the water was so low that boathouses and docks were left high and dry.

The campers eventually joined forces, hired an attorney, and finally brought about a series of hearings before a special committee of the State Legislature named for the purpose. The controversy was resolved by joint efforts of cottage owners and the Commissioners, who now try to maintain a more or less constant level in the reservoir, to prevent damage to camp property.

Editor's Note: The original article concludes with a reprint from the Watertown Daily Times, March 13, 1947. This reprint, an anonymous letter to the editor, recounts the early history of Cranberry Lake and the dam with much nostalgia.

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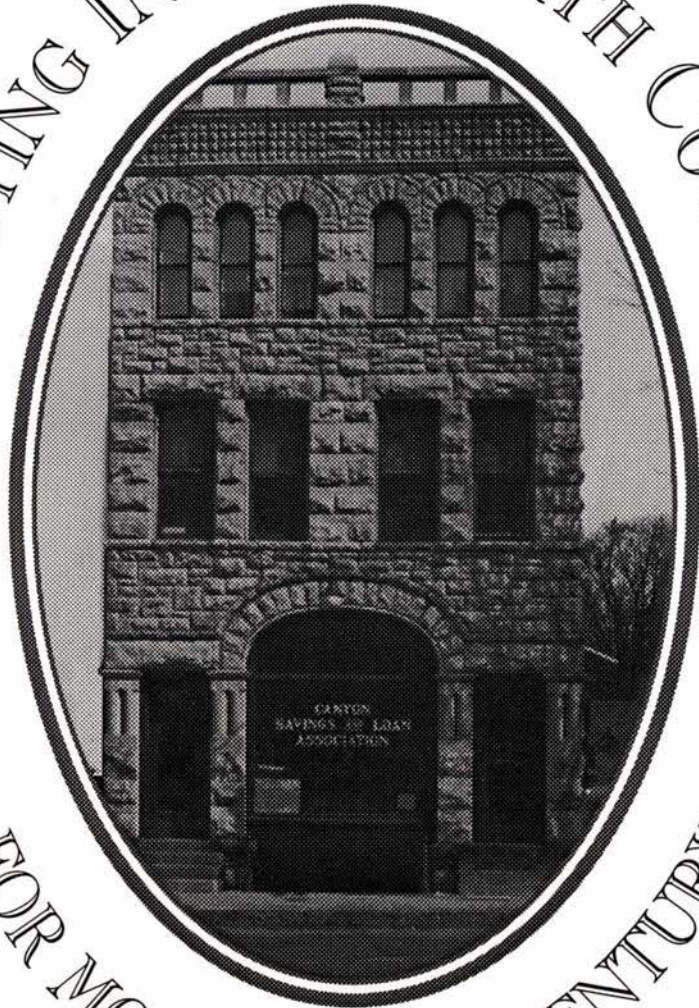
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