

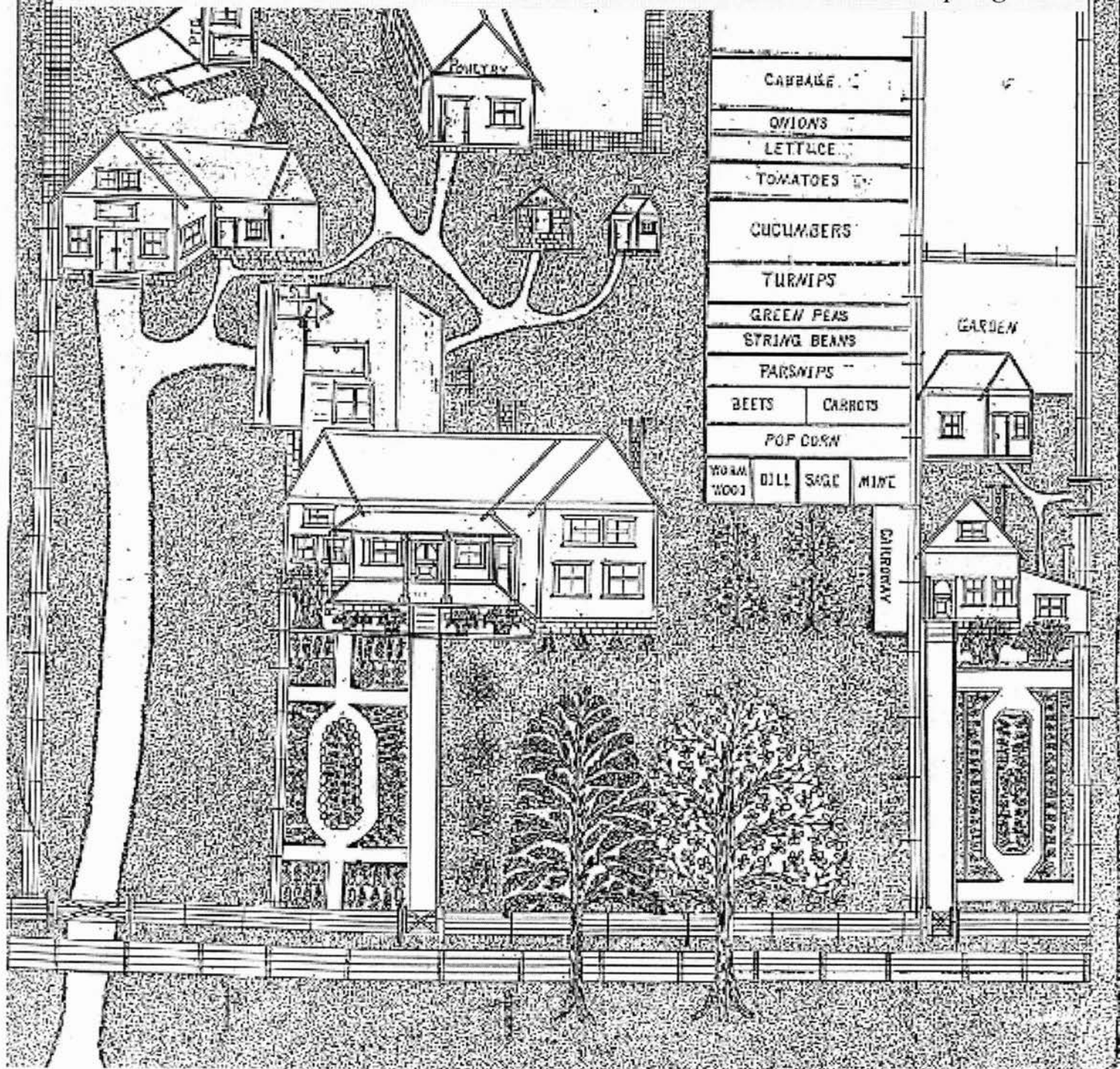
The St. Lawrence County Historical Association

# QUARTERLY

Volume XLVIII

Number 1-2

Winter/Spring 2003



# The St. Lawrence County Historical Association at the Silas Wright Museum

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 trustees.

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#### Our Mission

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.

#### SLCHA Membership

Membership in the St. Lawrence County Historical Association is open to all interested parties. Annual membership dues are: Individual \$30; Senior/Student \$25; Family \$40; Contributor \$55; Supporter, \$100; Patron \$250. Members receive the SLCHA Quarterly, the Historical Association's bi-monthly newsletter, and various discounts on publications, programs and events.

St. Lawrence County Historical Association  
at the Silas Wright House  
3 East Main Street, P. O. Box 8  
Canton, New York 13617  
(315) 386-8133  
fax (315) 386-8134  
e-mail: [slcha@northnet.org](mailto:slcha@northnet.org)  
[www.slcha.org](http://www.slcha.org)

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Additional copies may be obtained from the St. Lawrence County Historical Association, P.O. Box 8, Canton, NY 13617 at \$4.00 each (\$2.00 for members), plus \$2.00 for postage.

**Contributions:**

*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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### Issue Editors

John and Susan Omohundro

### On the Cover

*The Raymond family property on Main St. in Edwards as it appeared after construction in 1866, drawn from memory by Frank Raymond. Courtesy of LaVerne Freeman, Edwards Town and Village Historian.*

# From The County Historian

by Trent Trulock

This photograph of the Silas Wright House begins our double issue of *The Quarterly*, numbers 1 and 2 for 2003. It is fitting that a building originally built in 1832-33, and that houses the St. Lawrence County Historical Association, is being used to introduce *The Quarterly*. This Greek Revival house is filled with history and has seen a great many changes over the years, just like *The Quarterly*. The SLCHA's publications committee continues working on a new look for *The Quarterly* with this issue. This new look includes a new masthead on the cover, a new font, and a different layout. We are also adding a few features, such as the mystery photo and this page for the county historian.

A few notes of thanks regarding this issue. The Historical Association is indebted to the St. Lawrence County Planning Board for their permission to reprint the text of the article on the history of agriculture in St. Lawrence County. This text was originally written for the Planning Board as part of the *St. Lawrence County Agriculture Development Plan* of June 2001. Our thanks also go to LaVerne Freeman, Town and Village of Edwards Historian, for sending in the article by Frank Raymond on "Life in Edwards in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century As I Remember It." The article by Betsy Kepes on 19<sup>th</sup> century North Country schoolteachers and the article by Lee Van de Water on the homeless are the winning essays from the "Uncovering Our Hidden History" essay contest sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton. We are honored to publish these two winning entries.

The last issue of *The Quarterly*, which was a double issue finishing up the county's bicentennial year of 2002, generated many positive comments. But as with many human endeavors a few mistakes crept in. The Village of Hermon Historian Mary Smallman pointed out to me that the date of incorporation of the Village of Hermon on page 10 was incorrectly



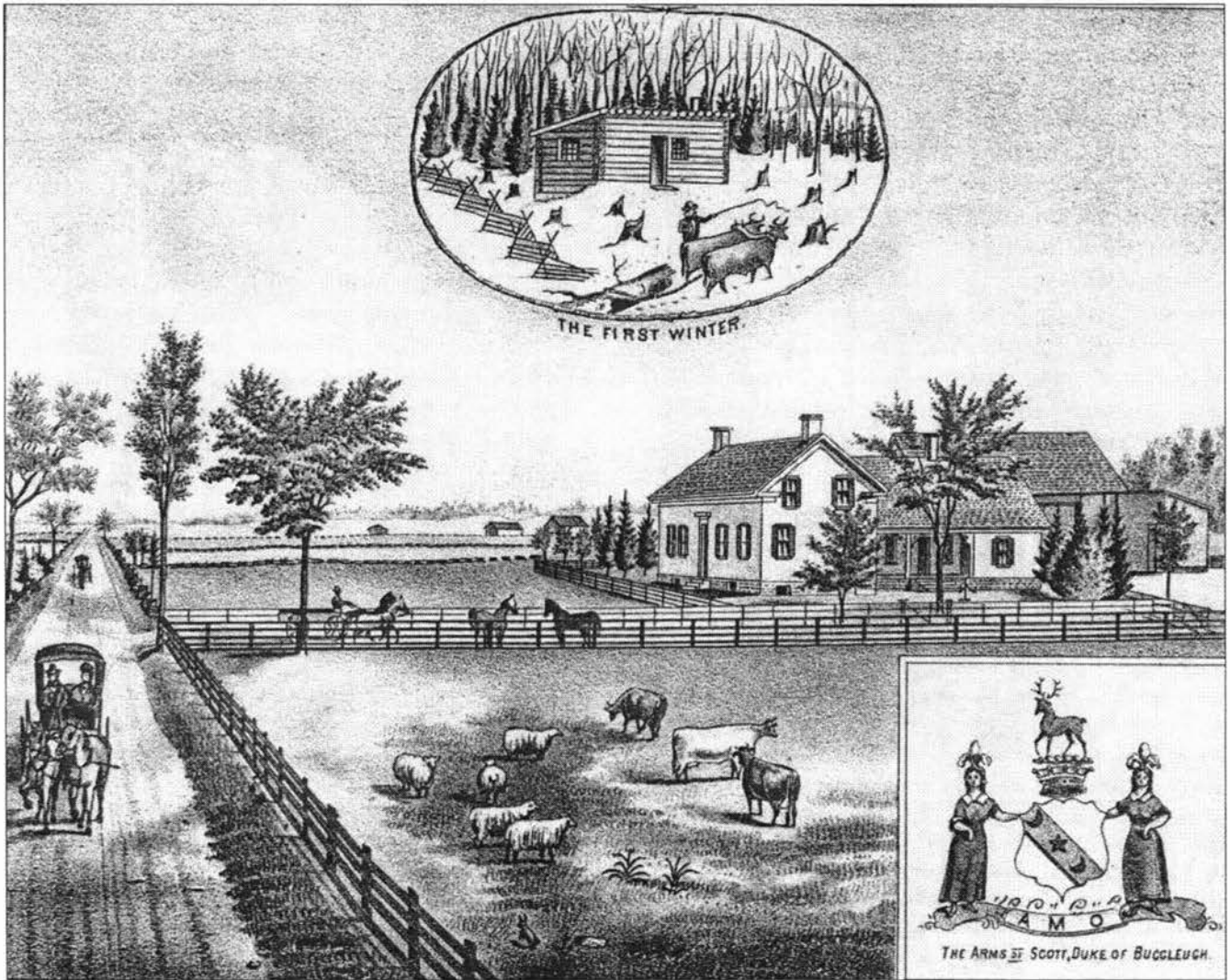
*The Silas Wright House, home of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association.*

printed as 1887 and should have been 1877. She is absolutely right about this date. The wrong date was printed in *Our County and Its People: A Memorial Record of St. Lawrence County New York*, edited by Gates Curtis, 1894. Mary Smallman also pointed out that the original name for the Town of Hermon, which was spelt as Depeau on page 9 of the last issue, was named after Francis DePau and should be spelt Depau. While both spellings for the town show up in the historical record Depau is the correct one. Leon Burnap, the Town of Norfolk Historian, informed me that the photo of Walter Sheets, Bill Mattison and Hollis Snyder on the bottom of page 21 was mislabeled as the Raymondville paper plant. The picture was actually taken in the Norfolk paper mill. And somehow we managed to misspell Susanne Longshore's name in the table of contents and on page 3. All of the editors will work hard to keep these types of mistakes to a minimum.

Enjoy this issue!

# An Overview of the History of Agriculture in St. Lawrence County

Trent Trulock  
St. Lawrence County Historian  
March 2001



*The residence of Adam Scott, Lisbon, in Everts' 1878 History of St. Lawrence County, New York. Scott's prosperous farm grew from rough beginnings, as the insert shows.*

The history of agriculture in St. Lawrence County is really the history of the settlement and development of the lands that became the county. Agriculture has been present in this region since Native Americans cultivated plants here and has changed over time as the types of settlers and settlements

have changed. Agriculture made it possible for Native Americans and the first European settlers to survive in the the area. Agriculture made it possible for those early European settlements to develop into the towns and villages that we know today. Agriculture also made it economically feasible for families to

settle the area we know today as St. Lawrence County.

Agriculture in the county can be divided into four broad eras: the ash era, the sheep era, the cheese factory era, and the milk marketing era.<sup>1</sup> The agriculture practiced during each of these time spans influenced who lived in the county, how they lived, and what their connection to the rest of the world was like. Each era of agriculture developed due to the climate and geography of the county, as well as economic influences both in the county and from farther abroad.

As European settlers entered the region that later became St. Lawrence County they were faced with what they considered a forested wilderness. The journey to this area for the first European settlers was difficult at best. The earliest European settlement was the French mission and fur trading post Fort La Presentation. This fort was built in 1749 by Abbé Francois Picquet at the mouth of the Oswegatchie River on the St. Lawrence

River.<sup>2</sup> Waterways were the transportation corridors at this time, used as we would use highways today, which is why the fort was built on the St. Lawrence River. Later the City of Ogdensburg grew up around the old site of the fort and took advantage of the St. Lawrence River for the transportation of people and products.

Father Picquet seems to have respected the traditional lifeways of the Native Americans who lived at Fort La Presentation, but he did teach them European methods of farming and raising livestock. Some of these skills in turn helped the Native Americans prepare for the harsh North Country winters.<sup>3</sup> According to the journal of the French army officer Bougainville, who visited Fort La Presentation in July 1756, "Near the fort is a village, inhabited by 100 fires of Iroquois Chiefs of the Five Nations, all warriors. Each of those chiefs cost the king about 100 crowns. They have made a clearing in the woods, they have cows, horses, hogs, and



*A log farmhouse on Elm Creek in the Town of Russell which belonged to the Bullock family. David Bullock is on the left, with his wife, Laura, his daughter, Daisy, and Laura's mother, Elizabeth Campbell. This was the family's first house, later replaced. No date.*



*A smokehouse in Morristown, photographed in 1965. Smoking was an important way of preserving meat and fish in the 19th century before refrigeration.*

chickens. They sow corn and last year sold 600 bushels of this produce.”<sup>4</sup>

It is important to remember that Native Americans did practice agriculture before European contact. Native Americans grew corn, pumpkins, beans, tobacco, and squash. In addition to these crops, the Native Americans survived by hunting, fishing, and collecting nuts, fruits, sunflower seeds, and berries.

While Native Americans did learn from Europeans about farming, the Europeans certainly learned about new world agriculture from the native people. “From the Indian, the whites learned to interplant with pumpkins and beans; to hoe and hill and keep down weeds; the scarecrow to keep away birds is an Indian device; the slatted crib set upon posts to permit air circulation is an Indian invention, and the Indian’s husking peg is still in use by the whites.”<sup>5</sup>

Everts’ *History of St. Lawrence County* states that the region which became St. Lawrence County was not continuously occupied by Native Americans for any length of time from the period of the earliest explorations by Europeans, with the coming of Champlain, to the time of permanent European settlements, with the coming of Father Picquet. The area was just considered as hunting and fishing ground.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, until the mid 18th century

there was no long-term agriculture in the region.

It was not until after the American Revolution that European/American settlement in this region increased measurably. The early settlers who came at the end of the 18th century could get to this region via three different routes: from New England via the Chateaugay Trail, from the Mohawk Valley and Black River Valley,<sup>7</sup> and from the St. Lawrence River. The first road through the forest, from Ogdensburg to Long Falls (Carthage), was completed in 1801 and was about 50 miles in length.<sup>8</sup> It was not until

1810 that the state legislature planned the construction of the St. Lawrence Turnpike, a toll road which ended up running from near Carthage in Jefferson County to Malone in Franklin County.<sup>9</sup>

As it was difficult for settlers to get to this region, it was also difficult for them to bring goods that they needed, or to ship products to other markets. This transportation difficulty and the forests that encompassed the county led to the first agricultural product in St. Lawrence County - potash.

### **The Ash Era**

Potash is the product of burning wood and boiling down the lye in the wood ash. Potash, also known as black and pearl-ash, is used for making fertilizer, soap and bleaching. Potash is made up of potassium, and until 1856 the best sources for potassium salts were the sea and the forests.<sup>10</sup> There was a great demand for potash, which was also easy to transport.

The settlers who came just prior to and after the American Revolution had plenty of trees and a market for potash in Montreal. In fact, the potash industry helped earlier settlers to move towards other forms of agriculture. Clearing the land of trees

to produce potash was a necessary first step in order to build homes and plant crops.

Ogdensburg was a potash center in St. Lawrence County, "although nearly every village in the region had its pearl ovens where the black salt was bought from the farmers and from which was made a better grade of pearl-ash than the farmer could make."<sup>11</sup> Pearl-ash could bring \$200-\$300 per ton in Montreal. In 1806 the northern region of New York State exported \$3,500 worth of ash, in 1807 \$6,000 worth of ash, and in 1808 \$9,000 worth of ash. The bottom fell out of the ash market in St. Lawrence County with the coming of the War of 1812 and the trade embargo with Canada that preceded the war. Potash makes a comeback after the war of 1812, with 45 asheries listed in the county by 1835 and 97 asheries by 1845 (see Appendix A, data compiled from the New York State Census).

Quebec was another market for potash from Ogdensburg, as well as other resources. According to Curtis' *Our County and Its People*, "Merchants in Ogdensburg erected pearling ovens, bought the salts and made pearlash, which article brought cash in Quebec. Lumber merchants also bought square timber and staves in winter, made them into rafts, and in the spring floated them down to Quebec where they also brought gold. The merchants paid the settlers for their timber and salts part cash and part in goods."<sup>12</sup> During the winter farmers engaged in lumbering, which brought them cash and cleared more land for agriculture.

Potash provided much-needed cash that settlers could use to pay for land, pay taxes, and purchase goods. Goods were also acquired using the barter system. And during the early days of the county whiskey was used many times in place of currency.



*A child feeds chickens in Hermon in a timeless (but undated) scene.*

During the early settlement period in St. Lawrence County crops were planted between stumps as trees fell for potash and to make fields. Farmers would plant corn and potatoes as their first crops, unless it was too late in the year when the land was cleared. In that case the farmers planted fall or winter wheat. The first settlers planted corn and potatoes by making a hole with the "bit" of an axe, dropping seeds in, and covering up the seeds with their foot. Wheat would be "broadcast" between stumps and raked in with a wooden tooth rake.<sup>13</sup>

According to Curtis, "Previous to the completion of Ford's grist mill at Oswegatchie the settlers had to procure what little flour they used from Montreal at great expense and trouble; therefore their food consisted largely of fresh and dried or 'jerked' venison, beech nuts, walnuts, butternuts, basswood buds, the inner coat of birch bark, and maple sugar, and occasionally a shortcake, when they were lucky enough to get the flour to make one."<sup>14</sup> The first year of settlement was very difficult for the early settlers. During their second year settlers normally raised small areas of corn, potatoes, and turnips. By their third year these early settlers usually had enough hay to winter a yoke of oxen and a few cows.<sup>15</sup>

Immigration to St. Lawrence County



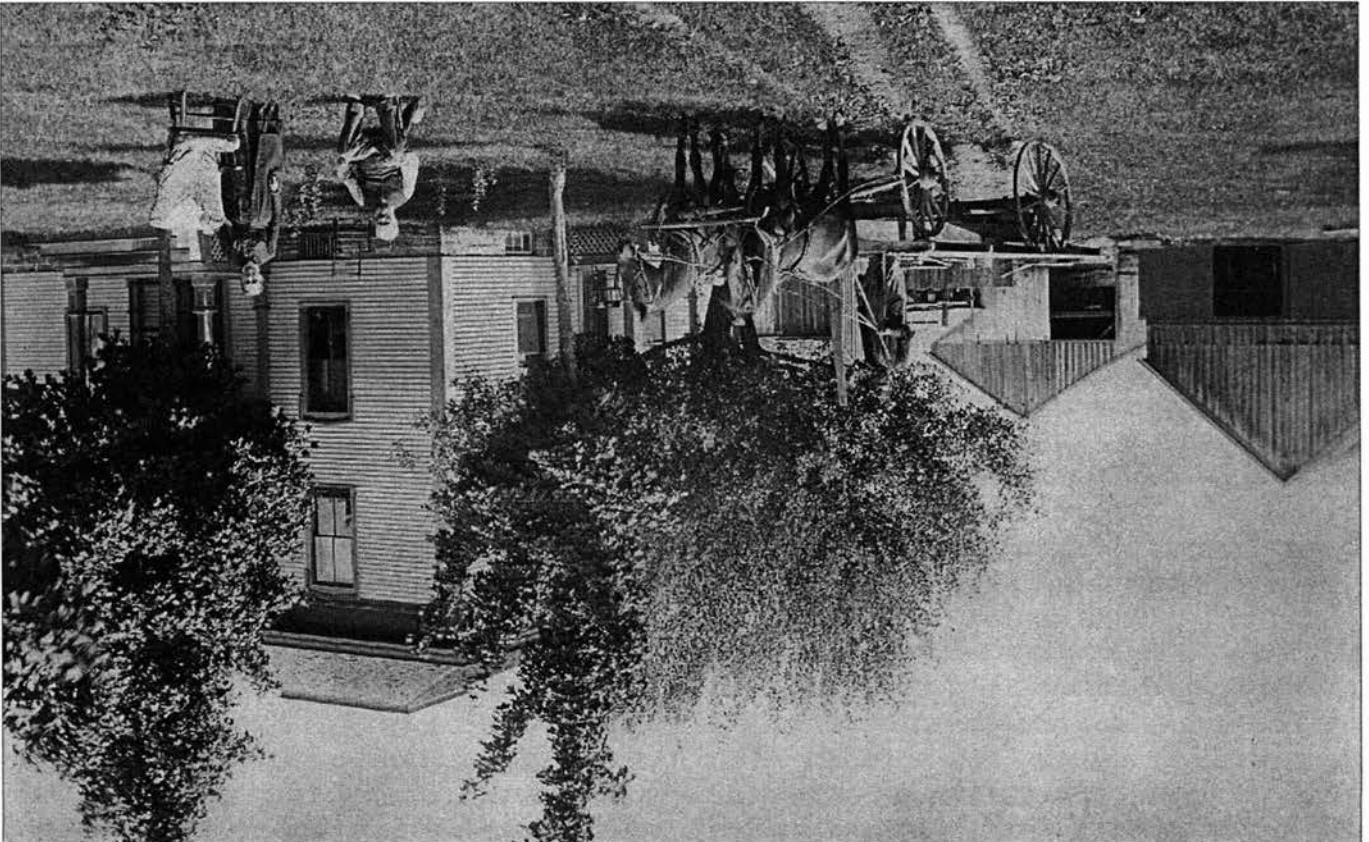
wheat, corn, Indian corn, rye, winter rye, oats, hops, apples (both for fruit and cider), maple sugar, maple molasses, honey, tobacco, neat cattle, cows, milk, butter, cheese, horses, sheep, wool, and swine (see Appendix A, data compiled from the New York State Census). The most noticeable shift in agricultural production in the early 19th century was the raising of sheep. Sheep were raised for their wool, which was sent to woolen mills. According to Webster's book, *St. Lawrence County: Past and Present*, sheep were the most common domestic animal when the county was founded in 1802. In 1820 in the Town of Potsdam there were 2,313 sheep, 1,217 oxen, 846 cows and 163 horses.<sup>17</sup> Heavy work was performed by oxen. Sheep in the county totaled 80,000 in 1830. Sheep numbers seem to have peaked in 1845, with 168,314 recorded in the New York State

Lawrence County, and as improvements to settlements continued to be made, the type of agriculture practiced began to change. Some of the agricultural products produced in St. Lawrence County from 1845 through 1865 included: barley, peas, beans, buckwheat, turnips, potatoes, flax, spring wheat, winter

### The Sheep Era

grew as roads were built. Soon oxen, cows, sheep, pigs, and poultry were appearing in settlements.<sup>16</sup> The wool from sheep and flax that was grown was made into yarn and cloth. As more land was cleared, and transportation to the county became marginally easier, the early settlers began to shift their focus in agriculture from potash to sheep.

*The Crane family and their well-established farm at Chamberlain Corners on the Madrid Road near the Madrid-Waddington town line. Orson Crane is seated, his wife, Elvira Chamberlain Crane, stands beside him, and their son, Walter, is on the wagon. No date.*



Census for that year (see Appendix A, data compiled from the New York State Census). While sheep increased during the first half of the 19th century, oxen began to decline. The number of oxen dropped from 17,000 in 1830 to almost none in 1880.<sup>18</sup> This decline may be due to improved transportation (both roads and railroad) and the fact that more land was already under cultivation.

Clearing the land of trees was beneficial for more than farming or potash, it also meant that bark could be peeled from trees to use in tanneries. The bark from the oak and hemlock tree was used in tanneries, where leather for boots and clothing was prepared. Tanneries, along with lumber mills and grist mills, developed in virtually every town in the county.

During the time period of 1835 to 1845 the population of the county increased from 42,047 to 62,354. As the population of the county increased, so did demand for industries to process the land's products.

The New York State Census reports 45 asheries, 25 tanneries, 41 grist mills, and 110 saw mills in the county by 1835. By the 1845 census these numbers had increased to 97 asheries, 44 tanneries, 45 grist mills, and 186 lumber mills (see Appendix A, data compiled from the New York State Census).

As transportation, markets and settled land changed, so did agriculture in St. Lawrence County. "As the west was opened up, better grazing lands were found, and the sheep started to decline. By 1890 sheep numbers were down to 30,000."<sup>19</sup> As sheep decline in the county they are replaced by an increase in another form of livestock, dairy cattle.

### **The Cheese Factory Era**

Around the time of the Civil War (1861-1865), many farmers began to raise dairy cattle in place of sheep. While butter



SLCHA Archives 1000-2285

*This cheese factory was photographed in 1912 at Pierces Corners in the Town of Macomb. St. Lawrence County once supported dozens of small cheese factories. Note the posters for the St. Lawrence County Fair and the Brockville Fair.*

and cheese had a long history of being made on farms, they had been made for use on the farm or locally. By the 1850's it was clear to farmers that if they pooled their milk, just as potash producers had pooled their resources 40 years before, they could make more butter and cheese. In 1851 Jesse Williams established the first cheese factory in the United States near Rome, New York. Soon, cheese and butter factories were built all over the county. The first cheese factory in St. Lawrence County was built in Richville in 1863. By 1870 cheese factories had sprung up in Fowler, Little Bow (near Gouverneur), and DeKalb. Other cheese factories were built in Hammond, Morristown, Brier Hill, Madrid, Potsdam, Massena, and Hopkinton.<sup>20</sup> According to the introduction to the 1865 New York State Census cheese factories may have proliferated during the Civil War because of the scarcity of labor.<sup>21</sup> It is interesting to note that 9 women and 6 men were employed in cheese factories in St.

Lawrence County in 1865.<sup>22</sup>

In 1877 the Madrid Creamery was making a ton of butter a day that was being shipped to Boston. DeKalb also was sending a large amount of butter and cheese to Boston. And thousands of pounds of butter and cheese from St. Lawrence County were being shipped to England and France.<sup>23</sup> By the 1880's several towns in the county had cheese and butter creameries (Table 1). According to the 1880 census 125,000 pounds of milk was sold to cheese factories.

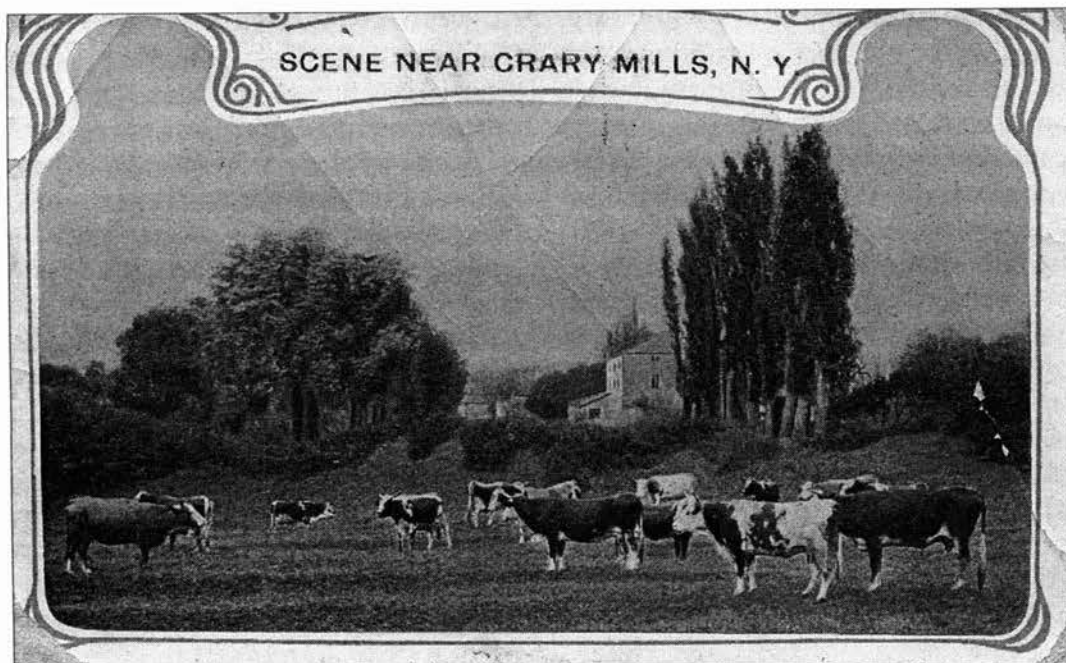
In 1900 there were 99 cheese factories, 67 butter factories and 20 factories with both butter and cheese. Most of the approximately 8,000 farms in St. Lawrence County in 1900 were involved in dairy farming.<sup>24</sup>

In 1875 the St. Lawrence Board of Trade was founded in Canton to assist in the sale of dairy products. In 1878 the Gouverneur Cheese Board was established and in 1880 the Ogdensburg Cheese Board was established. These last two boards

**Table 1**  
*Creameries in St. Lawrence County in the 1880's*

<b>Town</b>	<b>number of creameries</b>
Canton	16
DeKalb	12
Gouverneur	10
Hammond	7
Hermon	8
Madrid	6
Massena	6
Morristown	7
Potsdam	14
Waddington	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>

Source: Webster, Clarence, *St. Lawrence County: Past and Present*. 1945, p. 26



A postcard view of cows near Crary Mills, date unknown. The message reads, in part: "Dear Nellie, Thought you would like a pretty card . . . These are Uncle Leslie's cows . . ."

marketed dairy products to buyers all across the United States.<sup>25</sup> Dairy products had become the major product produced on the farm during the second half of the 19th century. By the beginning of the 20th century there began to be an emphasis in dairy on the production of fluid milk (drinking milk).

### The Milk Marketing Era

According to Webster's 1945 history, *St. Lawrence County: Past and Present*, fluid milk production began to replace cheese production around the turn of the 20th century. Webster writes, "Beginning in about 1910 this butter and cheese making gave way to the production of fluid milk for the New York market. This is the situation today [1945]. Right or wrong, the section turned wholly to the production of milk for sale in various forms. St. Lawrence County is the largest milk producing county in the state."<sup>26</sup> But the change to fluid milk production did not necessarily bring prosperity to all dairy

farmers.

Beginning in the 1930's milk prices declined. The price bottomed out in 1933, and western and central New York milk producers held a series of strikes to protest the low price. By the spring of 1936 the price of milk had improved and had reached \$2 per hundredweight, which had been the price in 1929. But then milk prices dropped drastically, by nearly 50%. Added to this price drop the cost of feed rose due to a late summer drought.<sup>27</sup>

During the Depression St. Lawrence County was at the middle of a statewide movement of dairy farmers struggling to increase the price they received for their milk. The Dairy Farmers Union (DFU) was formed in 1936 with Archie Wright, a Heuvelton farmer and labor organizer, as its leader.

Thomas Kriger, a Professor of Government who has researched farm activism and milk strikes in New York State, reports that the DFU used tactics that the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) employed. Members of the DFU "would



*The round barn was built by Charles Flanagan in Southville, Town of Stockholm, in 1906. He styled it after barns he'd seen in the West. It has two silos, one in the center of the barn and one on the outside. The farmer can drive into the barn and pack bales of hay around the inside of the silo.*

conduct sit-down strikes similar to those used by the CIO; bargain collectively with milk dealers as industrial unions did; have their dues 'checked off' (collected) at local milk plants; and seek alliances with organized labor across New York State."<sup>28</sup> The DFU held milk strikes in 1937 and 1939, and their motto was "Power Lies in Their Milk."<sup>29</sup>

Factors that contributed to the decline in milk prices during the Depression were:

- reduced demand because people could not afford to buy milk
- milk surplus from the flush (peak) season
- competition among the New York City milk dealers.<sup>30</sup>

New York State has two different milk markets, one for fluid milk and one for the manufacturing of milk products, such as cheese and butter. Fluid milk, which was used in the New York City market, carried a higher price than milk used for cheese and butter, which is still the case today. The majority of milk produced in St. Lawrence County is used today for the manufacturing of dairy products.

Independent farmers, many of whom milked under 20 cows, suffered greatly when

price and demand fell in the early 1930's and 1936.<sup>31</sup> These independent farmers operated cooperatively to make their livelihoods. Kriger states that this cooperative nature has changed over time, as production methods have changed. "At a time when few farmers owned their own balers and threshers, small dairy farmers cut hay and chopped corn cooperatively. They also delivered their own milk to town, where they were the mainstay of the local economy. Today, however, dairy farmers are fewer in number and socially isolated. The result is that the tightly-woven networks of rural life, which served as effective channels of solidarity and communication, are no longer in place."<sup>32</sup>

### **The Arrival of Bulk Tanks**

Some small dairy farmers also suffered in the 1950's and 1960's due to a change in technology, as milk plants began to mandate that milk arrive in bulk tanks and not in milk cans. The bulk tanks were more economical for the milk plants, but this change did force some small dairy farmers out of business.

On June 5, 2001 I spoke to Arthur Rankin from Chateaugay, who was a dairy products inspector for the state from 1962 through 1987. He said that some farmers were very enthusiastic about the switch to bulk tanks, because some of the milk plants would give the farmers the tanks and equipment or sell it to them at a low price.<sup>33</sup> But the smaller dairy farmers would have to buy their own equipment, which was not economically feasible for a farmer who was milking just a few cows.

Mr. Rankin stated that the switch to bulk tanks, which were smaller than today's tanks, began around 1956. As time went on, more and more milk plants switched to bulk tanks because it was more economical than accepting milk cans.

Mr. Rankin stated that when the push was on to switch to bulk tanks we lost a great number of farms. Little milk plants dried up and disappeared because of the



SLCHA Archives 1000-1994

*Cutting field corn on the William E. Corey farm in Hermon in 1912.*

economical advantage of plants that used bulk tanks. Over a 10-15 year period many of the small plants disappeared, which took small farmers with them.

According to Mr. Rankin the small farms were family operations. Many of them were run by older farmers who milked just a few cows, in some cases not more than two cows. Their children left the farm and the farmers had no money to invest in bulk tank equipment. The St. Lawrence Seaway project of the 1950's also affected the labor pool for agriculture. Laborers on the Seaway were not available to work on the farms. Also, some small farmers abandoned farming to take jobs on the construction of the Seaway, where they could make more money.<sup>34</sup>

Mr. Rankin stated that while some small milk plants and Amish plants which accept milk cans are still operating, the vast majority of milk plants switched to bulk tanks because it was less expensive to operate the plant. As he explained, "you've got to expand and to change," and "you need volume" in order to successfully operate a milk plant.<sup>35</sup>

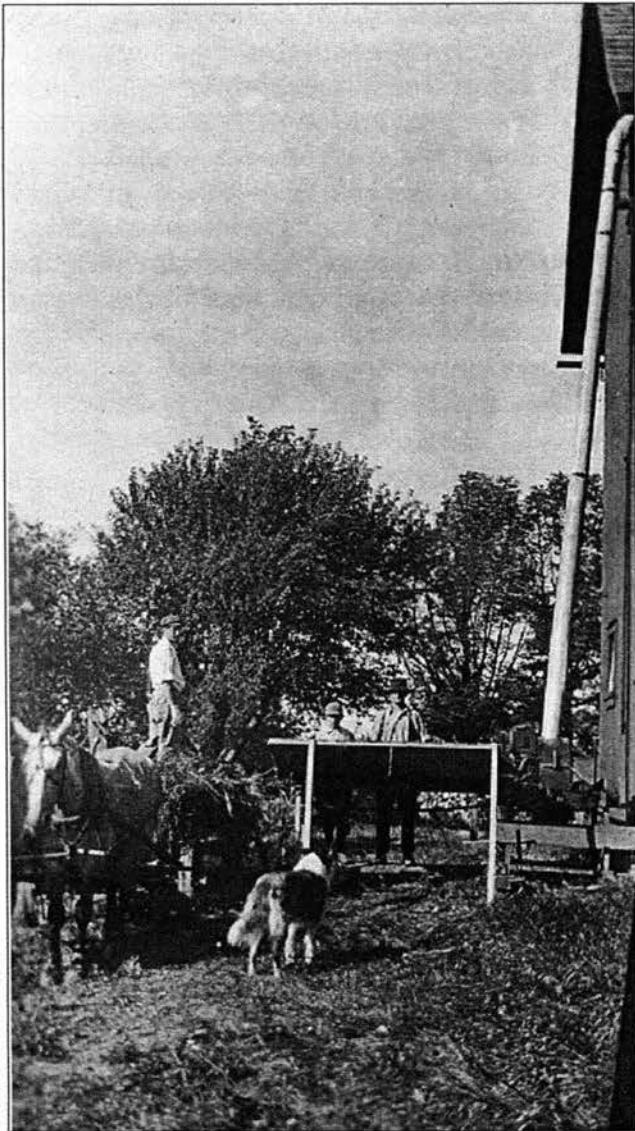
Herbert Judd, a retired small dairy farmer from Canton, believes that the mandated switch to bulk milk tanks was the last nail in the coffin for small dairy farmers,

including himself, who were already facing economic difficulties. Many small dairy farms were family operations that did not produce enough income to hire help on a steady basis and in many instances there was no one else in the family available or interested in carrying on the dairy operation. While it made sense for dairy farmers with herds of 30-40 cows to make the switch to bulk tanks, Mr. Judd believes that the cost was too great for many of the small dairy farmers, who had no more than 20 cows.<sup>36</sup>

Mr. Judd sold his dairy herd in 1969, not too long before the bulk milk tank rules came into effect. The milk plant had set a date after which milk cans would no longer be accepted. The milk plants that Mr. Judd dealt with in Canton were the Sheffield Plant, which made condensed milk, and the Canton Dairy Cooperative, which made powdered milk.

Mr. Judd said that there were other small farms in the same condition as his, where they had a small herd, did not produce enough income to hire help on a steady basis, and where there was not someone in the family who could or would take over the operation.

Mr. Judd also mentioned that the



Filling a silo on the William E. Corey farm in Hermon in 1912.

summer of 1969 was a bad summer for hay, which also caused stress for the small dairy farmer. The mandated switch from milk cans to bulk milk tanks could be seen as the last straw for small dairy farmers, who were already facing other economic difficulties.

Fluid milk prices and production costs are as important today as they were in the 1930's. In 2000 some dairy farmers dumped milk in protest for the prices they were receiving. According to an article in the *Watertown Daily Times*, dairy farmers were receiving the same price for milk in 2000 as

they received 20 years ago, while production costs had gone up 43%.<sup>37</sup>

Priority today is given to milk for drinking, which caused a shortage of milk for cheese manufacturers in January of 2001. Though it is not unusual for the amount of milk available for cheese to be down during the winter, due to the natural cycle of cows to give birth and produce milk in the spring, this decline was exacerbated by the fact that the amount of local milk being produced was down 1% in November 2000 compared to the previous year.<sup>38</sup>

### Agricultural Fairs

While fairs themselves are not necessary for agriculture to be successful, fairs have developed to showcase agricultural products, to educate, and to create a social event for farmers. Fairs were held in the fall to exhibit livestock and vegetables, and horse races were also a notable part of most early fairs. Fairs were also used to showcase new technology, both farm-related and other. An example of this other technology is the electric light, which was showcased at fairs during the 1880's.<sup>39</sup>

The first fair society in St. Lawrence County was initiated in 1822 in Canton. This fair society planned to rotate a fair between Canton, Madrid, and Potsdam. One fair was held in Canton and then this fair society was abandoned. In 1834 Ogdensburg attempted to have a fair but nothing was to come of it. In 1852 the St. Lawrence County Agricultural Society was formed in Canton to hold an annual fair, and in 1859 Gouverneur formed the Gouverneur Agricultural and Mechanical Society. In 1870 a fair was held in Potsdam, and in 1871 Ogdensburg held its first fair.<sup>40</sup> For many years the county fair was held in Canton, but it has since moved to Gouverneur and is held in conjunction with the Gouverneur Fair. The Gouverneur Fair is the oldest continuous fair held in St. Lawrence County. Today fairs in St. Lawrence County have dwindled and each town does



*Mrs. Roberts demonstrating Dr. Thatcher's butter color at the World's Fair, Chicago, 1893. Based in Potsdam, Dr. Thatcher was a prolific inventor of dairy-related items, including a sanitary glass milk bottle, but he eventually failed as a businessman.*

not hold its own fair.

### Grange

The first granges in St. Lawrence County were established in 1873 at Norwood and Massena, the same year the state grange was formed. Other granges were founded in 1874-1875 and were located in Potsdam, Crary Mills, and Gouverneur. Membership in St. Lawrence County granges was over 6,000 in 1945.<sup>41</sup>

Though the grange was considered a fraternal organization by most farmers, it did fight for the rights of farmers. In 1904 the National Master of the Grange, Aaron Jones, stated in a speech that some of the achievements of the grange included: creation of a Presidential cabinet post for agriculture, rural mail and parcel post delivery,

legislation to supervise and regulate the railroads, the development of agricultural educational classes and schools, and successful farm cooperatives.<sup>42</sup>

The grange is still active in St. Lawrence County and can be found in Hammond, Macomb, Kendrew Corners, Cedars, Canton, Massena, and Madrid.

### Timber and Farming

Timber has always played a role in the history of St. Lawrence County. In the 19th century both lumbermen and farmers would head to the woods and fell trees in the winter. These trees would then be floated down river in the spring to mills. The Canton Lumber Company was established in 1884 and was successful for 20 years. That mill cut as much as 10,000,000 feet of wood annually. Lumber was important in Gouverneur from 1870 to 1900,<sup>43</sup> and one of the most successful mills in New York State was established in Gouverneur. Webster notes in his book that, "The lumber mill which Newton Aldrich and Orison Dean established at Natural Dam cut as much as 17,000,000 feet of lumber annually— spruce, pine, hemlock from the Adirondack foothills. When the lumber industry faded, the mill shifted to paper making..."<sup>44</sup>

In Massena tall pines and hemlocks were sent to Montreal to be used as masts for sailing ships. From 1792 to 1808 "Amable Foucher cut the trees, some of them 100 feet in height, and fashioned them in his sawmill. Then they were shipped by barges down the St. Lawrence to Montreal."<sup>45</sup>

The lumber industry in St. Lawrence County began in the 19th century and continues today. In 1997 a tour for St. Lawrence County Legislators, environmentalists and timber industry



representatives was conducted by the St. Lawrence County Soil and Water District to show some of the county's 1,106,300 acres of timberland. The tour group was told by Dan Empie, a forester with Ethan Allen, Inc. in Colton that Ethan Allen "purchases about 5 million board feet of north country wood annually at a cost of nearly \$2 million." Mr. Empie also "estimated that logs purchased at the Colton operation directly contribute \$7 million to the local economy and indirectly contribute tens of thousands of dollars in job-related activities."<sup>46</sup>

While lumber manufacturing has changed in St. Lawrence County, there are still some Amish residents who continue to use traditional 19th century methods to produce lumber.

### **Transportation of Farm Goods**

Transportation is essential for agricultural products to reach market, whether they are local markets in the village or markets across the country and the world. Rivers have always been used for trade and transportation, and the St. Lawrence River is no exception. Because of its location Ogdensburg became the commercial center on the river for St. Lawrence County. Boats for use on the St. Lawrence River were built of local lumber. Prior to the development of roads and the railroad the biggest market for goods from St. Lawrence County was Montreal. Montreal is located 125 miles down river and was the destination for goods such as lumber, potash, grains, cattle, and whiskey. This produce "was the chief source of profit for the pioneers of the North."<sup>47</sup>

The earliest roads were turnpikes, plank roads and military roads. Plank roads were made of timber, and were built in regions where timber was abundant. These plank roads were replaced as populations increased and timber decreased.

In 1845 construction began on the Northern Railroad, which ran from Ogdensburg to Rouses Point and on to

Boston. The first trains began running in 1850. This railroad later became the Rutland Railroad. In 1862 Ogdensburg was connected with the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad by branches through Heuvelton to DeKalb Junction. This railroad later became part of New York Central. In 1874 a rail line from Philadelphia through Hammond and Morristown was connected to Ogdensburg.<sup>48</sup> Rail service connected to Ogdensburg because it was already a commercial center and because of the St. Lawrence River. Goods and people could travel from the interior of the county to the river and then to points beyond and vice versa.

Potsdam was a principal trading center for farming areas found in the central and eastern part of St. Lawrence County. It was also a major stop on the turnpike from Ogdensburg to Canton, Potsdam, Parishville, and Hopkinton.<sup>49</sup> The Northern Railroad ran through the northeast section of the Town of Potsdam, and in 1850 the Village of Potsdam had a 6 mile line built to connect the village to the Northern Railroad at what today is Norwood. That was the start of the Potsdam and Watertown Railroad, which later became part of the New York Central Railroad.<sup>50</sup>

### **Recent Trends in Farming**

In 1998 there were 1,625 farms in St. Lawrence County with a combined acreage of 423,400, which was 25% of the county's total acreage. According to the New York Agricultural Statistics Service the county ranked second in the state for the number of farms and first for the amount of land in farms. The leading agricultural products sold in 1997 were dairy products, cattle and calves, hay and silage, nursery and greenhouse plants, and corn for grain. The most significant agricultural sector was dairy products, which made up 83% of total agricultural sales. According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture, 60% of farm operators reported that farming was their principal occupation.<sup>51</sup>

While farming may be the principal occupation of many farm operators, it can be a difficult occupation to make a living from. But farming is certainly not the only occupation that is difficult to make a living from in St. Lawrence County. In 1989, 17.2% of people living in St. Lawrence county lived at or below the poverty level (this percentage is based on 17,414 people in the county at or below the poverty level from the 100,957 people surveyed). For the same year the poverty rate in New York State was 13% and the poverty rate in the United States was 12.9%.<sup>52</sup> In 1996 the US Department of Commerce reported that the average personal income for all wage earners in St. Lawrence County was \$15,994.<sup>53</sup>

In 1999 New York State ranked third nationwide for dairy production, and dairy products in the state amounted to 56.1% of all agricultural products sold. This amounted to \$1,737,000,000 in sales.<sup>54</sup> In 1999 St. Lawrence County ranked second statewide, behind Wyoming County, for milk production. During that year St. Lawrence County produced 648 million pounds of milk.<sup>55</sup>

The number of farms in St. Lawrence

County decreased by 68% from 1950 to 1998. During this same time period the acres of land in farms decreased by 52.3%. The number of milk cows from 1950 to 1998 declined by 46.1%, and declined 20% during the 20 year span from 1978 to 1998. While the number of milk cows goes down, the total production of milk goes up for the same time periods. Between 1978 and 1998 total milk production rose 19.3%. So fewer dairy cows are now producing more milk (see Appendix B, data compiled from St. Lawrence County Farm Statistics).

From 1950 to 1998 beef cows in St. Lawrence County increased 300.8%. Other increases during this 48-year time period include an increase of 3,364.3% in the production of grain corn, an increase of 245.3% in corn silage and an increase of 452% in alfalfa hay production. It should be noted that total hay production decreased by 25.8% during this time period (see Appendix B, data compiled from St. Lawrence County Farm Statistics).

While agricultural indicators may fluctuate up or down over several years or between decades, Table 2 illustrates a general trend over the 80-year time period



SLCHA Archives 1000-2086

*The caption reads: "Frank Squire, 4th generation farmer, cutting hay on the same farm which his great-grandfather, Achbel Squire, cleared in 1803. This job used to be done with a scythe. Place: Squire farm one mile west of Hopkinton on Hopkinton-Potsdam State road. July, 1950. Dorothy Squire, historian."*

from 1918 to 1998.

As can be seen from Table 2 the three indicators chosen have declined over 80 years. This decline in number of farms, land in farms, and number of milk cows has occurred while the population of the county has increased 15% from 98,900 in 1950 to 113,688 in 1998.

### The Future of Farming

While it is not possible to predict exactly where agriculture in St. Lawrence County is heading in the future, it is quite certain that agriculture will change in the future. The history of agriculture in the county has changed from potash, to sheep,

to cheese factories, to fluid milk. If recent trends continue into the future the number of farms and dairy cows will continue to decline.

Agriculture in the county has always been affected by its links to outside markets and market forces in the rest of the world. It is certain that the next changes in the county's agriculture will be influenced by these markets and the county's connection to them.

One question that comes to mind is whether a return to some agricultural product previously produced in the county would be beneficial to farmers? Or have agricultural practices and markets changed too much for a return to previous products to be feasible? Could a change in how agriculture

**Table 2**  
**Change in Farms and Farm Sizes in**  
**St. Lawrence County, 1918-1998**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Farms</b>	<b>Farm Acreage</b>	<b>Milk Cows</b>
1918*	8,224	1,061,516	100,537
1950**	5,091	1,886,855	73,258
1978	1,834	500,142	49,500
1998	1,625	423,400	39,500

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\* figures from *American Agriculturalist Farm Directory & Reference Book, St. Lawrence County New York 1918*, p. 28.

\*\* figures from New York State census.



*This line of willow trees along Kokomo Road in DePeyster supports a wire fence, thus combining beauty with practicality. Photographed by Betty Steele of Ogdensburg, date unknown.*

is practiced, i.e. organic vs. non-organic farming, help agriculture in St. Lawrence County? And is it worth considering that, as heritage tourism and agri-tourism become driving forces in the recreation industry, St. Lawrence County agriculture could become more involved in educating the public on both past and present farming practices?

Again, the only thing certain about the future of agriculture in St. Lawrence County is that it will change. It is left to the future to determine whether the next changes in agriculture will benefit the farmers in the county. ‡

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“All it takes to be a successful farmer these days is faith, hope, and parity.”

-Evan Esar, American humorist, born 1899.

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## Appendix A

Table 1  
Agricultural Production, St. Lawrence County, 1835-1875

	Year				
	1835	1845	1855	1865	1875
population	42,047	62,354	74,977	80,994	84,032
asheries	45	97			
grist mills	41	45		49	
saw (lumber) mills	110	186		97	
woolen factories	3	9			
paper mills	1	1			
tanneries	25	44		24	
breweries	1	1			
barley (bu)		48,100	28,187	153,562	208,310
peas (bu)		101,555	69,016	33,432	45,313
beans (bu)		5,496	5,131	9,838	5,064
buckwheat(bu)		47,014	12,912.5	23,233	38,938
turnips (bu)		56,577	7,896	17,286	
potatoes (bu)		1,592,723	604,023	821,015	1,653,496
flax (lbs)		40,508	1,206	25,384	
wheat		264,832			
spring wheat (bu)			295,464	193,688	186,538
winter wheat(bu)			24,780.5	1,571	11,058
corn (bu)		304,403	220,593		
Indian corn (bu)				176,903	192,215
rye (bu)		51,716	25,725		26,102
winter rye (bu)				11,667	
oats(bu)		646,556	437,041	728,447	1,779,264
hops(lb)			197,875	16,823	115,796
apples(bu)			90,497	85,516	161,152
apple cider (barrels)		719	587	1,334	

## Appendix A

Table 1, continued  
Agricultural Production, St. Lawrence County, 1835-1875

	Year				
	1835	1845	1855	1865	1875
maple sugar (lbs)			513,913	1,156,455	1,469,867
maple molasses (gals)				3,070	4,649
maple syrup (gals)					13,497
honey (lbs)			51,614	54,912	19,129
tobacco (lbs)				14,958	30
neat cattle		77,769			
milk cows		33,676	52,161	65,286	90,949
milk (gals)			16,052	109,187	70,515
butter (lbs)		2,529,741	4,268,809	5,417,779	8,546,746
cheese (lbs)		1,281,972	1,672,999	2,922,001	411,101
horses		13,470	20,261		
horses 2-yr-olds+			16,751	18,299	
sheep		168,314	86,454	94,464	41,405
wool (lbs)		356,713	246,683	364,187	186,697
swine		38,150	24,086	15,667	17,723

key: (bu)= bushels, (lbs)=pounds, (gals)=gallons

Data compiled from the Census of the State of New York. Data incomplete.

*The distinctive David Parish barn at Allens Falls near Parishville as it appeared in the 19th century. The date of construction, 1813, was placed on the gable end. Note the locally-produced brick nogging between the timbers. It was the largest barn for miles around, though Parish rarely visited his farm.*



SLCHA Archives 1000-1093

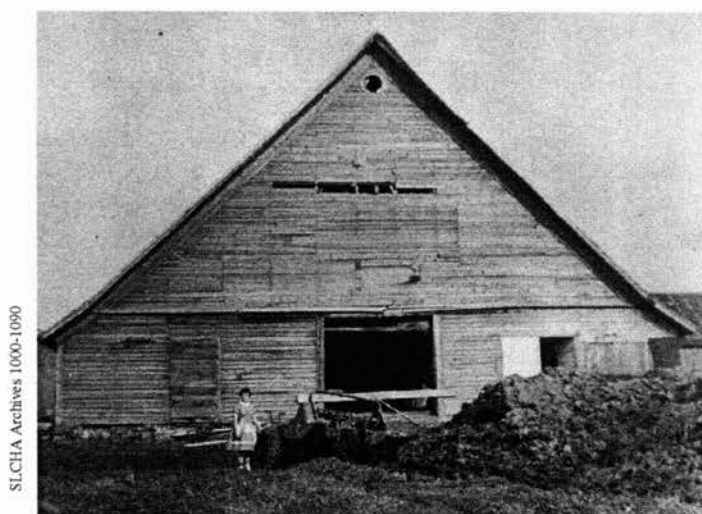
Appendix B  
Table 1  
Population of St. Lawrence County, 1950-1998

	Year						% Change
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1998	1950-1998
Population	98,900	111,200	112,300	114,300	112,000	113,688	+15%

Table 2  
Change in Number and Size of Farms and Farm Production, 1950-1998

	Year						% Change
	1950	1959	1969	1978	1992	1998	1950-1998
number of farms	5,091	3,426	2,190	1,834	1,610	1,625	-68%
land in farms (A.)	886,855	718,418	543,494	500,142	436,200	423,400	-52.3%
beef cows	998	1,223	5,414	2,700	2,500	4,000	+300.8%
milk cows	73,258	62,999	48,343	49,500	42,000	39,500	-46.1%
milk production (in million lbs)			509.8	606.8	608.3	-	
oats (bu)	597,538	1,135,100		108,100	127,500	52,400	-91.2%
corn (grain, bu)	18,427	18,293	113,400	303,400	501,500	638,000	+3,364.3%
corn (silage, tons)	147,301	130,050		401,250	499,300	508,700	+245.3%
hay (alfalfa, dry)	10,905	64,646		106,500	70,300	60,200	+452%
hay (other, dry)	263,877	270,345		225,800	139,000	143,700	-45.5%
hay (total, dry)	274,782	334,991	286,789	332,300	209,300	203,900	-25.8%

Data for both tables compiled from New York Agricultural Statistics Service, St. Lawrence County Farm Statistics, April 2000. p. 2



*The Parish barn as it appeared in 1956, with most of the distinctive architectural features obscured by clapboards. The barn was destroyed by fire in 1959.*

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Mark Thompson, "Agriculture in St. Lawrence County," *The Quarterly*, July 1967, p. 10.
- <sup>2</sup> James Reagen, *Warriors of La Presentation* (Oswegatchie Press, 1999) pp. 17-18.
- <sup>3</sup> Reagen, p. 25.
- <sup>4</sup> Reagen, p. 50.
- <sup>5</sup> Ulysses Prentiss Hedrick, *A History of Agriculture in the State of New York* (J.B. Lyon Co: Albany, NY, 1933) p. 34.
- <sup>6</sup> L. H. Everts and J. M. Holcomb, *History of St. Lawrence County New York* (L.H.Everts & Co: Philadelphia, PA, 1878) p. 22.
- <sup>7</sup> Clarence Webster, *St. Lawrence County: Past and Present* (1945) p. 19.
- <sup>8</sup> Webster, p. 19.
- <sup>9</sup> Webster, p. 20.
- <sup>10</sup> Hedrick p. 139.
- <sup>11</sup> Hedrick, p. 140.
- <sup>12</sup> Gates Curtis, *History of St. Lawrence County New York: Our County and its People: A Memorial Record of St. Lawrence County New York* (Higgison Book Co: Salem, MA, reprint of 1894) p. 105.
- <sup>13</sup> Curtis, p. 99.
- <sup>14</sup> Curtis, pp. 100-101.
- <sup>15</sup> Curtis, pp. 101-102.
- <sup>16</sup> Curtis, p. 102.
- <sup>17</sup> Webster, p. 21.
- <sup>18</sup> Webster, p. 26.
- <sup>19</sup> Thompson, p. 10.
- <sup>20</sup> Webster, p. 26.
- <sup>21</sup> New York State Secretary of State, *New York State Census, 1865*, p. cvi.
- <sup>22</sup> *Census, 1865*, p. 415.
- <sup>23</sup> Webster, p. 26.
- <sup>24</sup> Thompson, p. 10.
- <sup>25</sup> Webster, pp. 26-27.
- <sup>26</sup> Webster, p. 26.
- <sup>27</sup> Thomas J. Kriger, "Power Lies in Their Milk': The Story of Archie Wright and the Dairy Farmers Union," *The Quarterly*, volume XLI, #1, Winter 1996, p. 1.
- <sup>28</sup> Kriger, p. 3.
- <sup>29</sup> Kriger, p. 3.
- <sup>30</sup> Kriger, p. 4.
- <sup>31</sup> Kriger, p. 6.
- <sup>32</sup> Kriger, p. 27.
- <sup>33</sup> Arthur Rankin, retired dairy products inspector, Chateaugay, NY, Interview June 5, 2001.
- <sup>34</sup> Rankin, op. cit.
- <sup>35</sup> Rankin, op. cit.
- <sup>36</sup> Herbert Judd, retired dairy farmer, Canton, NY, Interview May 15, 2001.
- <sup>37</sup> Julie Berry, "Farmers Begin Dumping Their Milk in Price Protest," *The Watertown Daily Times*, September 5, 2000, p. 30, SLCHA Subject File, Agriculture, Dairying.
- <sup>38</sup> Heather McRea, "Makers of Cheese Lack Milk," *The Watertown Daily Times*, January 2, 2001, p. 28, SLCHA Subject File, Agriculture, Dairying.
- <sup>39</sup> Webster, p. 27.
- <sup>40</sup> Webster, p. 27.
- <sup>41</sup> Webster, p. 27.
- <sup>42</sup> L. Ray Alexander, *100 Year History of the New York State Grange* (1973) section 1, p. 22.
- <sup>43</sup> Webster, pp. 32-35.
- <sup>44</sup> Webster, p. 39.
- <sup>45</sup> Webster, p. 43.
- <sup>46</sup> "Timberland Explored in Six-hour Bus Tour, Lawmakers, Others See 'Fabric of Our Land'," *The Watertown Daily Times*, September 14, 1997, p. B3.
- <sup>47</sup> Webster, p. 46.
- <sup>48</sup> Webster, p. 46.
- <sup>49</sup> Webster, p. 53.
- <sup>50</sup> Webster, p. 58.
- <sup>51</sup> *St. Lawrence County Farm Statistics*, April 2000, New York Agricultural Statistics Service, [www.nass.usda.gov/ny](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ny), p.1-4.
- <sup>52</sup> *Economic & Demographic Characteristics of St. Lawrence County*, January 1998, Technical Assistance Center, p. 8.
- <sup>53</sup> *St. Lawrence County Farm Statistics*, April 2000, p.1.
- <sup>54</sup> *New York is an Agricultural State*, New York Agricultural Statistics Service, [www.nass.usda.gov/ny](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ny).
- <sup>55</sup> *Report 976-2-00, Milk*, New York Agricultural Statistics Service, [www.nass.usda.gov/ny](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ny), p. 1.



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SCLHA Archives 1000-2082

The caption on the back states: "Old shed built by Isaac R. Hopkins, son of Roswell Hopkins, the founder of Hopkinton. The bell was taken down recently because of its ghostly sound in the wind. Now owned by Edgar Wagner. Located on intersection of Potsdam and Parishville roads near Hopkinton village. Picture snapped Sept. 1951. Dorothy Squires, Historian." The intersection of Routes 11B and 72 has gained commercial development since 1951, and the shed is no longer there.

# Life in Edwards in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century As I Remember It

Frank L. Raymond  
April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1944

Originally Published October 2002 by the Edwards Historical Association

*The house referred to in Mr. Raymond's memoir stands at 193 Main St. in Edwards. Since 1960 the house has been home to the Rice family.*

*We thank his great-great-nephew, Clarke L. Kidder, of New Hampshire, for donating Mr. Raymond's pictorial maps and stories in 2002. Mr. Raymond's picture map of Edwards as he remembered it in 1894 was first published in Edwards History Center's "A Local Legacy" in 1976.*

*Frank Raymond's father, Chauncey Knox, or "C.K.", was a native of Edwards, a blacksmith and justice of the peace. Frank, born in 1866 in Edwards, was the third of four children (a fifth died in infancy): after Jennie and William, and before Clara. Frank married Roberta Stephenson of Russell in 1885; they had no children.*

*Frank was a self-made businessman most of his life, beginning with a hardware business in Edwards, which he sold in 1891. After a series of positions, he decided he liked the hotel business better than hardware, so first he leased, then owned, the Continental Hotel at Adams, NY from 1898 to c. 1908. He then leased the Marsden House in Alexandria Bay from 1908 to 1923. Last, he built the New Monticello Hotel in Alexandria Bay. This hotel was a great success until the Depression, which cost him his business and his life savings. Furthermore, his wife died in 1931. After that he retired, moved around a bit, remarried, took care of ailing relatives, and spent his last days with a nephew in Springfield, Mass.*

*We have published Mr. Raymond's text as he wrote it.*



Courtesy of LaVerne Freeman, Edwards Town Historian

*Frank Raymond standing in front of his Alexandria Bay hotel, the New Monticello, in the late 1920s.*

**T**he drawing accompanying this story [on the cover of this issue] was the home of Chauncey Knox Raymond and Catharine A. Smith Raymond at Edwards, St. Lawrence County, New York. The house on the corner was known as the "Little Red House" where my folks lived while building their home. This

home was built during the summer of 1866 where their son, Frank Leslie Raymond, was born on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1866.

I am that son and made this drawing and wrote the following story during my leisure moments in the winter and spring of 1944. Although I am past 77 years of age the early years of my life are very plain to me. Many changes have taken place, in life and death, in the way of living and in the cost of materials. Many improvements over the horse and buggy days have come about. The automobile, airplane, telephone, radio and electricity are all new.

When this home was built hemlock lumber was worth \$6.00 per 1000 feet, spruce and pine \$10 - \$12. The shingles used were hand shaved spruce at \$3.00 per thousand. The original roof is still in good condition. The large kitchen and woodshed are back of the wing. The woodshed bottom is down to the ground which is 3 feet below the level of the kitchen floor. It is open to the roof and provides storage for 75 to 80 cords of wood. Furnace or steam plants were not used; wood was the fuel for heating, and with stoves. Wood being our only fuel, Father would buy, during the winter, 75 to 100 cords of green maple, beech, and birch 20 inch stove wood delivered in our yard at \$1.00 per cord. Some was split fine, other in the slab, for the heating stove. This would remain in the yard during the spring to season, then it was my job to put it in the shed and pile it to the roof.

This house was considered a high class home although we were just an ordinary family. As was usual, the large front room was reserved for a parlor to be closed up and used on special occasions only. The parlor was finished in white enamel.

The living and dining room was in the wing section. This was finished with pine wainscoting 3 ½ feet high. The painting, as in most homes, was graining to imitate such woods as cherry, maple, oak or ash. I have seen Father point to the parlor door many times and say, "That door cost me \$18 to have it painted." That meant some time was

required with labor at \$1.50 per day of 10 or 12 hours.

The outside of the house was white with green blinds. The barn was built a few years later. The outside was spruce coping and sealed inside with pine to the eaves. At that time the Rice and Emery Tannery was operating at Edwards and the space between the studding of this barn was filled with hemlock tanbark which made it warm and vermin proof. A box stall was provided for our horse off the carriage room and we had one cow. The Ash and Poultry houses and Pigpen were added later.

This home is on a lot of ½ acre of rich black soil. The garden was fertilized each year with the manure of the horse and cow stable. In those days much planning had to be done for winter supply of vegetables and to see that nothing was wasted. The large cellar is six feet deep which makes a grand vegetable cellar. Our cellar was arranged on a systematic plan with a large potato bin built about one foot from the floor, boxes of sand provided to pack vegetables, and a platform 4 inches high by 2 feet wide built around the wall to place the pork, apple, soap, sauerkraut and pickle barrels, also for smaller crocks.

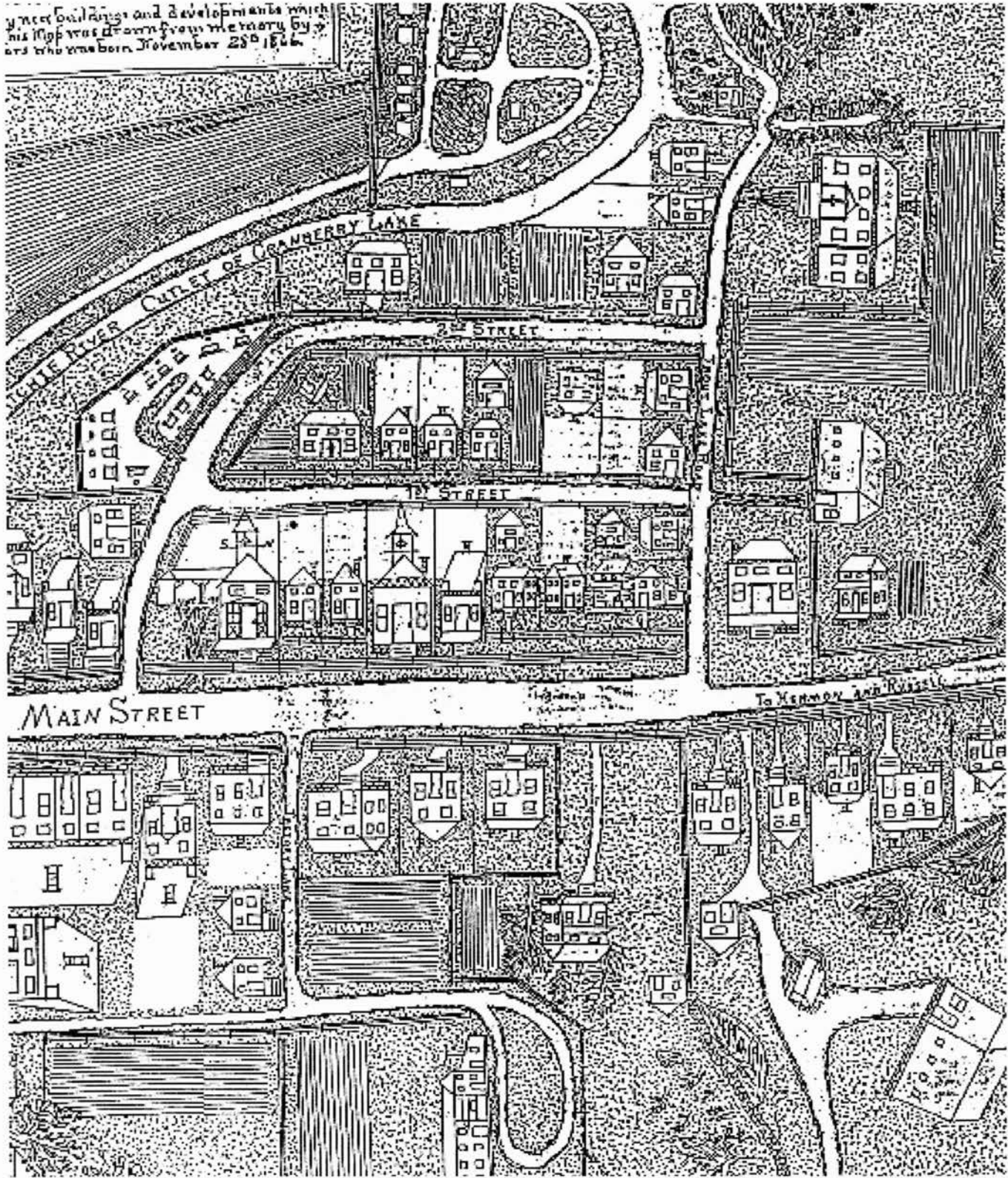
We always had 40 to 50 bushels of good sorted potatoes. They were worth 25 to 40 cents per bushel. The small ones were fed to the pig, first being cooked and mixed with corn meal.

We had several rows of sweet corn and when at its peak, the corn was cut from the cob and placed on tins or trays to dry for our winter use. The perfect ears of yellow corn were traced up to dry, later to be shelled for hen food. The cull ears were fed to the pig. We always raised enough popcorn for our use during those long winter evenings. After the corn was harvested, the stalks were cut and stored in the barn and later cut by machine for the cow.

The cabbages, after making a large crock of sauerkraut, were pulled up by the roots and hung from the ceiling of the cellar.

There was always a good supply of

...near buildings and developments which  
his life was drawn from memory by  
...and who was born November 25<sup>th</sup> 1866.



Courtesy of LaVern Freeman, Edwards Town Historian

A portion of the Village of Edwards as it appeared after the fire of 1894, drawn from memory by Frank Raymond.

cucumbers, and a full barrel of pickle size was packed in salt for sour pickles. Many were left to grow and ripen and these were made into sweet pickles.

Tomatoes were not raised as plentifully as today when they are considered our leading vegetable. Just a few ripe ones were used and the green ones made into sweet pickles.

Very few green peas, string beans or such were canned and we had to wait for next season for a fresh supply. And people could not run out to a grocery store during the winter and get a head of lettuce as of today.

Our bed of parsnips was left in the ground during the winter. They made a nice spring vegetable. In some corner of the garden we had several roots of horseradish that made a nice spring tonic.

Mother always looked after her bed of caraway to use in making sugar or butter cookies, seldom seen today. She also had her small bed of dill, sage and mint. We had four crabapple trees that furnished nice sauce and jellies.

Father's favorite liniment was wormwood and vinegar and he had a shrub of wormwood growing.

In those early days in small villages every family raised a pig for their supply of pork for the winter. There was much strife as to who would have the best pig. Ours was generally up with the top ones and would dress about 300 pounds. On the day of the slaughter, the family would feast on pig's liver. When the pig was ready to cut up, the leaf lard and other pieces of fat were rendered, even the scraps were saved, pressed dry, salted and laid away to lunch on. The sparerib was taken out with the whole rib and most of the lean meat (now called pork chop or loin) was left on the sparerib. These were used fresh for Christmas or New Year dinners and was preferred to turkey or chicken. The hocks and shanks were pickled and used for boiled dinners. The shoulders were ground into sausage, seasoned and packed into pans with a light covering of

lard and stored in the cold room. The hams were prepared and pickled, then smoked in the ash house with cobs saved from the corn shelled for the hens. The broadside pork was packed in salt in a 30 gallon crock, then enough water was added to make a brine to cover and a heavy weight placed on top. The head was skinned of meat that was made into head cheese.

For the beef supply, father would buy one fore and two hind quarters at 4 ½ cents and 5 ½ per pound. Minced meat was then made - about 100 pounds. This was stored in stone crocks. Mother was an artist in the making of minced meat. Next was the rump, brisket and chucks taken for corned beef. The leg, or ham of beef, was sliced into steak and packed in the cold room. The suet and fat were rendered and used for many purposes. The shank with many pounds of meat left on the bone was used for soup.

My father was a grand provider for man or beast, and milk was a large item of our living. He said a cow could not produce milk unless being well fed so ours had a pail full of corn and oats or bran made into a mash twice daily and she responded with a 12 quart pail of rich creamy milk twice a day for nearly the entire year. We used plenty of milk for cooking and on the table. Mother took care of the surplus, putting it in pans arranged on a rack in the pantry with orders for no one to disturb it. After about 48 hours it would sour and the cream was taken off and made into butter, which was also an item in our family. The sour milk that was not made into cottage cheese was divided with the hens and pig. The hens furnished a good supply of fresh eggs and a fowl for roasting when desired.

We had two sugar tubs made with covers and holding about 50 pounds each. These were sent out to a farmer in the spring and filled with soft maple sugar. This was used to sweeten Jonnycake and sweeten biscuits. We also bought 10 or 12 gallons of maple syrup at 75 cents to 90 cents per gallon.

Our breakfast in those days was a

regular meal and not a make believe one as of today. We had a stack of griddle cakes with syrup, hash brown potatoes and a large slab of sausage or ham with homemade bread and one or more cups of Old Government Java Coffee. Our cereal was not of 100 different kinds but instead was the old-fashioned whole kernel oatmeal cooked over night.

Father would buy a 60 pound full cream September cheese that cost 6 to 7 cents per pound. Meat markets, or butcher shops, as they were called, would only be open a couple days each week, or just after they had slaughtered a beef, hog, lamb, or veal. Most people considered that meat should be used as soon as possible. The ruling price was 10 cents per pound for round, sirloin or porter house steak, pork steak, lamb or chicken. Beef shanks with 4 or 5 pounds on was 25 cents. The liver, heart, and tongue were given away free to customers.

You might wonder about our entertainment or amusement as there were no moving pictures, radio, or electric lights. When night came on it was black dark on the streets and grownups and children did not roam the streets at all hours of the night as is done today. Our evenings were spent at home with the family, both grownups and children. Some evenings a large dishpan would be popped full of corn. Some liked this with milk and sliced apples, others enjoyed it with melted butter and salt. Another evening it would be a large pan of apples, on another a pan of cracked butternuts when all would

gather around the table and pick the meats out. Butternuts were very plentiful around Edwards. We would gather 10 or 12 bushels each year. These would be stored above the kitchen to dry. They never spoil, are just as good when 5 or 6 years old, and they cost nothing, only the gathering.

There were no rich people in those days, but many well to do, and all hard-working people. No one ever starved or went hungry; neither did they count their vitamins. I think the families and children were as happy and contented as of today. We were early to bed and early to rise. We slept on rope bedsteads with generously filled straw ticks on top, had plenty of wool blankets and flannel underwear. Money was not so easy to get, but more caution was used in spending.

Our family was large; six of our own, and Grandfather and Grandmother Raymond lived with us in their latter years. Also two of Father's employees, Myron Huntley and Oscar Allen, boarded with us and Mother had a hired girl part of the time, so there were 11 hungry people to feed at each meal. Father purchased a second-hand dining table from a Mr. Barbour for \$55. It was solid black walnut with 6 inch legs, had three 18 inch extra leaves and could seat 14 people. That table is still with the family relatives. ‡

# Gentle Schoolmarm or Ambitious Young Man?

## Mid-nineteenth Century Common School Teachers in Northern New York

Betsy Kepes

*Betsy was the winner in April, 2003 of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton's hidden history contest in the adult category.*

In Winslow Homer's bucolic "Country School," painted in 1872 in upstate New York, a beautiful young woman teaches studious children in a light and airy schoolhouse. In Almanzo Wilder's 1867 schoolhouse in Burke, near Malone, New York, marauding "big boys" beat up the man teacher so badly that he later died from his injuries. The next year's teacher defended himself with an ox-whip. In Irving Bacheller's fiction about late nineteenth century northern New York State, teachers are usually young and male and hoping to move on to bigger and better employment opportunities.

Was the nineteenth century one-room schoolhouse in northern New York a model of cozy feminine learning, an unpainted shack where older boys tormented the teacher, or a starting spot for ambitious young men?

I set out to find the facts behind the fiction, with my focus on the years after the Civil War. The 1865 *New Topographical Atlas of St. Lawrence County, New York* shows each township dotted with schools, with 19 in the small town of Pierrepont and 33 in neighboring Potsdam. These "common schools," owned in common by the community, were first built of logs. Later schools were of white clapboards and occasionally even brick or stone.

The nineteenth century school year was short, usually consisting of two terms, each term lasting from six to thirteen weeks.<sup>1</sup> Children went to school to learn Reading,

Writing and Arithmetic as well as Geography, History and Civil Government. Attendance at school was sporadic, with farm work more important than book learning. In Colton in 1872, five hundred and thirty two children attended school but "average attendance" was only two hundred and sixty four, an absentee rate of over 50%.<sup>2</sup>

School records from these nineteenth century North Country schools are scarce but some students and teachers left written reminiscences of their schoolhouse days. A. Barton Hepburn, a banker and philanthropist who grew up in Colton, remembered his childhood as one of "grim rigor and sad severity."<sup>3</sup> He recalled a vicious schoolmaster who forced him to cut green saplings to use as whips on a friend's backside. This schoolmaster was a farmer who taught the winter term, a way for him to earn money during the slack season on the farm. In 1861, the teenage Hepburn attended the St. Lawrence Academy.<sup>4</sup> While tuition and the use of textbooks was free to those who "pledge of themselves to teach for a reasonable length of time in the public schools of New York,"<sup>5</sup> Hepburn needed to earn money to pay for his room and board in Potsdam. He taught summer term during the Academy's vacation and also missed his Fall classes in Potsdam so he could earn money teaching winter term at the Wildwood School outside of Colton. The fifteen-year old Hepburn had his share of unruly "big boys" but seems to have been bothered even more by the "big girls" in his schoolhouse.<sup>6</sup>

Even a "free" Normal School education was out of reach of many local teenagers. They were expected to contribute

to the family's economy as farm hands and housekeepers. Leonora Marie Kearney grew up in Pierrepont a few miles from A. Barton Hepburn's home. Children in her community of Irish immigrant families attended district school #12. The Irish placed a high value on education, at least for boys, but education beyond common school was not affordable to these families.<sup>7</sup> When Leonora Kearney's mother died in 1864, fifteen-year-old Leonora took over all the household responsibilities. Then, "pining for a more complete education," she left home and in Colton asked for help from Miss Hepburn, A. Barton Hepburn's older sister.

The kind-hearted woman must have read the trouble in my face...for she said: 'Stay here with me and I will have you ready for school-teaching in six weeks.'<sup>8</sup>

Leonora studied hard and took the teachers' exams. Teacher training in the

mid-nineteenth century was minimal but New York State did require that potential teachers pass exams before they received a license.<sup>9</sup> The young Irish-American girl received her teacher's certificate in the spring of 1865, probably a provisional teaching license that needed to be renewed annually. (A successful two-year course of study at the Potsdam Normal School yielded a permanent New York State teaching license).<sup>10</sup> Just after her sixteenth birthday Leonora Kearney taught her first summer term.

Both A. Barton Hepburn and Leonora Kearney were the age of high school sophomores when they began their teaching careers. Each was the sole "adult" in a crowded schoolhouse of children ranging in age from five to nineteen. The teenage teachers had to devise a system of classroom management that worked for them. A. Barton Hepburn found help in a school trustee who was a champion wrestler.<sup>11</sup> Leonora Kearney played stick ball with her class and when



SLCHA Archives Group Photos File 659

*According to the caption on the back, this late 19th century class photograph from the Porter Hill school in the Town of Hermon was taught by a young woman named Gertrude Loop. Standing at the right rear, she differs little in appearance or deportment from her oldest female student.*



the school superintendent showed up on a surprise inspection her ball players excelled at their recitations. The superintendent remarked, "Schoolma'am, I wish all my schoolma'ams would play ball."<sup>12</sup>

After a few years both Hepburn and Kearney left their teaching jobs and the North Country and both gained national fame.<sup>13</sup> But what about the other teachers in all those North Country schoolhouses? Who were they?

I decided to consult the St. Lawrence County 1870 census. That census lists name, sex, race, age, occupation and country of birth. By scanning the occupation column of each page it would be possible to find all the school teachers in each town and a few of the details of their lives. I knew that nationally by 1870 two thirds of American teachers were women. Almost all were white, native born and young.<sup>14</sup> (Women could not teach after marriage and men who stayed in education were often promoted to administrative positions. Indeed, A. Barton Hepburn was appointed school commissioner at the age of twenty-six).<sup>15</sup>

Surprisingly, in the fourteen towns I surveyed, almost all the teachers were female. In 1870 Brasher, Colton, Hermon, Madrid, Norfolk, Parishville, Pierrepont, Pitcairn and Russell had *all* women teachers. Potsdam had sixty-three teachers and eleven of them were male (17%); probably many of the men taught at the Normal School or in other higher level schools in the village. Canton had three male teachers (10%) out of a total of twenty-nine teachers and two of those men are listed as deaf! Edwards had one man (10%) and nine women while Lisbon counted four men (18%) out of twenty-two teachers and Waddington's seven teachers included one man (17%).

Why so few men? Throughout much of American history teaching has not been a high status occupation.<sup>16</sup> In colonial America educated young men taught privately for a few years, then completed their studies to be ministers or lawyers. Most children received no public schooling at all. By the nineteenth

century, particularly in the Northeast, school reform led to common schools and improved standards of certification and instruction.<sup>17</sup> The population in the United States, and St. Lawrence County, soared in the mid-nineteenth century and communities needed more teachers. With longer school terms and the same low pay, fewer professional men took teaching jobs. Vacancies were filled by young women who could be hired for half the price of men, a benefit for districts trying to keep down the costs of running a school. Social mores had changed by the mid-nineteenth century so that it was acceptable for a young, middle-class woman to teach for a few years before marriage. At first women could only teach summer term when the "big boys" would be off farming and not in school. Women were thought to be unable to handle the discipline of older children, especially boys.<sup>18</sup> By the end of the Civil War women were teaching winter term also, initially because there were no men available to teach.

By 1870 public education had become woman's work, with accompanying low pay and high turnover as teachers sought better school districts or left teaching to get married. In St. Lawrence County, new teachers might earn \$15 a month.<sup>19</sup> Expenses were low as teachers 'boarded round'<sup>20</sup> with families in the district, but privacy and stability were at a minimum also. The few men who taught in common schools were often young students earning money for school or physically disabled men unable to do heavy farm work. The St. Lawrence County 1870 census is not a completely accurate source for numbers of male teachers in the county because farming men who taught winter term may have listed their occupation as "farmer," not school teacher.

Even so, it seems that when fifteen-year-old A. Barton Hepburn taught school in Colton in 1861 he was one of only a handful of men in the schoolhouses that winter. His youth, though, put him in the majority age group of St. Lawrence County teachers. Most female teachers in the 1870 census

ranged in age from sixteen to twenty-four. (The male teachers in Potsdam were, as a group, considerably older.) A few women teachers kept teaching into their thirties and forties. I found myself wondering about thirty-one-year-old Nellie Chase in Edwards and forty-year-old Emeline Kilbourn in Canton and thirty-six-year-old Sarah Perkins of Parishville. Did they choose to be single and independent or did they continue teaching year after year, waiting for an offer of marriage?

In 1865, when sixteen-year-old Leonora Kearney showed the school commissioner her teaching certificate, he stared in surprise. It couldn't have been her youth that shocked the man; I believe Leonora Kearney was the first child from the Pierrepont Irish community to become a teacher. Indeed, although almost every town in St. Lawrence County had an Irish Settlement by that time only four teachers of the two hundred and twenty six I surveyed were born in Ireland. A total of ten names, or 4%, on the list appear to be Irish Catholic, either born in New York or Ireland.<sup>21</sup>

These new Irish-Americans had not yet achieved the middle-class status needed to gain entrance into the world of higher education and their Catholicism bothered many of their Protestant Yankee neighbors. At the same time many Irish-Catholics objected to the schools' use of the Protestant Bible and the ethnic and religious slurs common in textbooks. (One statement warned that Irish immigration would make America "the common sewer of Ireland").<sup>22</sup> In urban areas this conflict resulted in a separate system of private Catholic schools but in rural St. Lawrence County there was no such option.

I believe the first Irish teachers in St. Lawrence County were given predominantly Irish school districts. Here was a way for the first generation of Irish-American schoolmarms to find work and for the delicate web of community tolerance to remain intact. School district boundaries seem to have been very fluid and if a Protestant family chose

not to attend a school taught by an Irish girl (often derisively called "a Bridget") there was another schoolhouse not far away. By the end of the nineteenth century it was more acceptable to have second or third generation Irish-American women teaching in country schools where both Protestant and Catholic children attended.<sup>23</sup>

So it seems Winslow Homer's view of the American schoolmarm is a more fitting icon for St. Lawrence County than Laura Ingalls Wilder's description of a whip-wielding male teacher. But one issue remains unexplored: was the schoolhouse comfortably filled with eight or ten children or did the teenage teacher find every square inch of her school crammed with children of all ages? Based on statistics presented in the *1873 St. Lawrence County Directory* the common schools were packed with children. In some towns the average number of students per school was over 50 and even with a high absentee rate, the teacher faced a room full of children.<sup>24</sup> The Winslow Homer schoolroom peace may indeed have been only a romantic image.

Here, then, is a realistic, composite drawing of the St. Lawrence County schoolteacher in 1870: An eighteen-year-old woman stands in front of a crowded classroom. She grew up on the prosperous farm a mile down the road and enjoys earning money, though she will leave teaching next year when she marries John, a farmer's son from the next village. The teaching is often tedious, recitation after recitation, surrounded by the constant hum of children writing on slates and whispering to each other. On days when she is most tired she lets the children stay outside for an extra long recess. On sunny days when there is haying, none of the older children come to school and she enjoys the break from their loud and large personalities. The younger ones need only the suggestion of a ruler on the knuckles to quiet them down. The older ones require more discipline. Soon it will be August and she'll begin preparing the class for the end-of-term program. By then she'll be boarding with the Whites and she'll have

her own room to retreat to at the end of the day. She can't wait to leave the Thompsons; their house is dark and cramped and she has to share a bed with the two littlest girls. The food is horrid, too. Next year she'll be away from this school, a married woman. Who will they hire next? She doesn't know of any girls old enough to take this job. Perhaps they'll hire a girl from up in the hills. Those girls will take any school; they need the money. It's none of her business though; she'll be done with teaching, ready to get on with her life.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> There seems to have been no standard length of term. Each school district had complete control of its school schedule. Summer term lasted eight to ten weeks when students from the Potsdam Normal School taught during their July and August vacation. Winter term may have been longer.

<sup>2</sup> *St. Lawrence County Directory 1873-74*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph B. Bishop, *A. Barton Hepburn* (New York: C. Scribner's Son, 1923), p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> The St. Lawrence Academy became Potsdam Normal School in 1868.

<sup>5</sup> *St. Lawrence County Directory 1873-74*.

<sup>6</sup> Bishop, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> P.J. Dowling, *The Hedge Schools of Ireland* (Cork, Ireland: The Mercier Press, 1935), p. 59.

<sup>8</sup> "Talks Temperance Among Catholics" unknown newspaper, 1912, column 2.

<sup>9</sup> I was unable to find a record of the New York State teachers' exams for 1864, but eighteen years later when a fourteen-year-old girl in Vermont wished to be a teacher her exams included Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, History, Civil Government, Physiology, and Theory of School Management. Nancy Hoffman, *Woman's True Profession* (Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, 1981), p. 29.

<sup>10</sup> *St. Lawrence County Directory 1873-74*.

<sup>11</sup> Bishop, p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> "Talks Temperance," column 3.

<sup>13</sup> Hepburn became a wealthy industrialist and Kearney, then Leonora Barry, worked as the General Investigator for Women and Children for the national labor union the Knights of Labor.

<sup>14</sup> Donald Warren, *American Teachers, Histories of a Profession at Work* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1989), p. 20.

<sup>15</sup> Bishop, p. 52.

<sup>16</sup> Warren, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> Warren, p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Bishop, p. 37.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Teachers roomed with families in the school district, moving as often as every two weeks. This was a common practice in the North Country even into the twentieth century.

<sup>21</sup> Thanks to Tish Holmes of Potsdam who grew up in Ireland and helped me analyze surnames for their Irish-Catholic or Anglo-Irish origin. Also thanks to Lily Pomainville, my research assistant, who looked up all the teachers' names in the 1870 census.

<sup>22</sup> Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), p. 163.

<sup>23</sup> Interviews with Mildred Remington and Charlotte Regan about early 20<sup>th</sup> century schools in Pierrepont, NY.

<sup>24</sup> *St. Lawrence County Directory 1873-74*.

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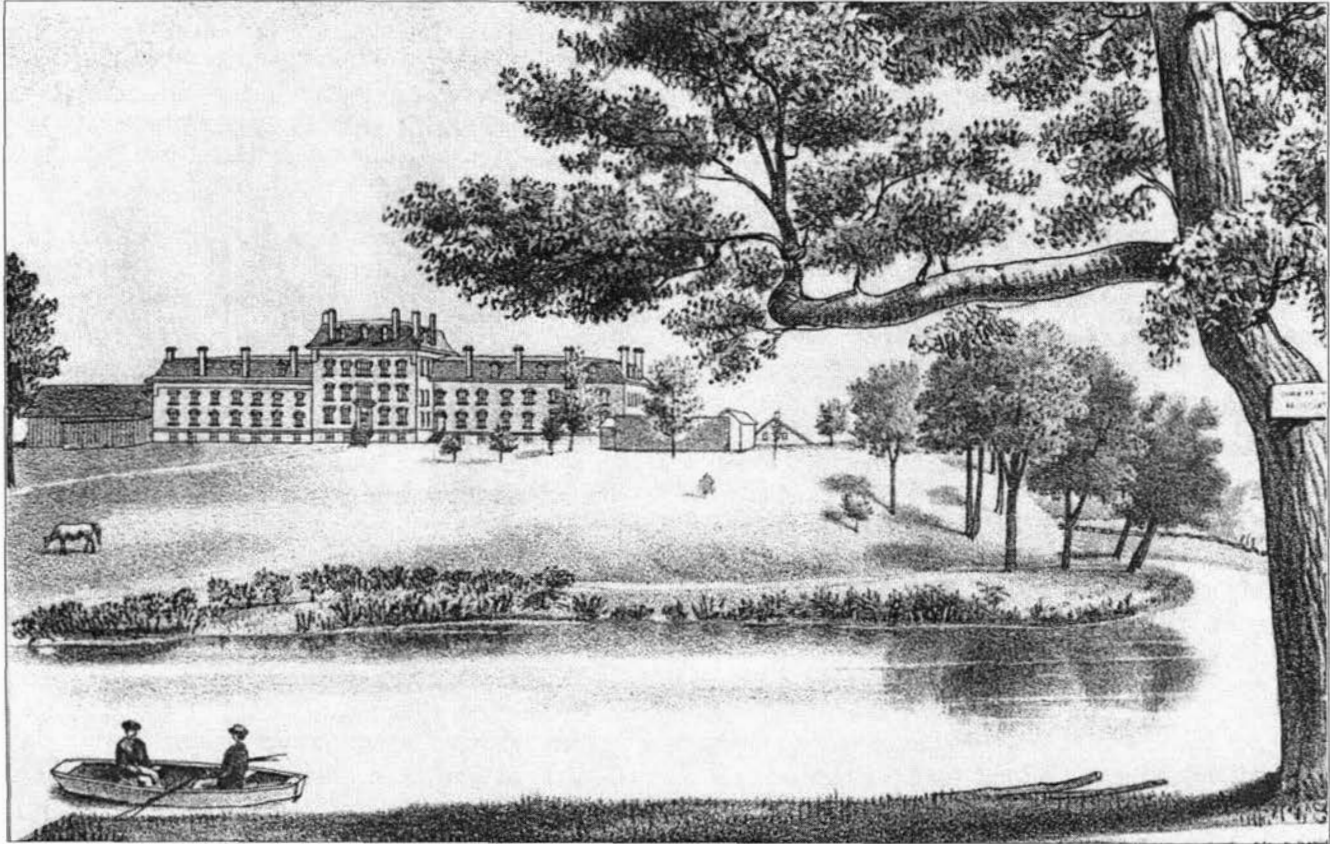
"Talks Temperance Among Catholics" unknown newspaper, article 1912, from the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College, Northampton, Mass.

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# The Hidden Homeless of the North Country

Lee Van de Water



*The County Home on the Grasse River, given a favorable pastoral depiction in a lithograph in H. L. Everts' 1878 History of St. Lawrence County, New York.*

*Lee was the winner in April, 2003 of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton's hidden history contest in the high school category. His essay has been abridged for publication.*

A hundred years ago the North Country homeless would have ended up in the "poorhouse" along with the mentally ill, children, criminals, and any of the "undesirables" who were to be found in St. Lawrence County. Today there are other ways of dealing with them: a night in a local motel; a Greyhound bus ticket; money to rent an apartment; the controversial single

room occupancies (or SRO's). The history of the homeless in St. Lawrence County is a long and varied story.

In 1824, New York State passed the County Poorhouse Act, which mandated a poorhouse in every county.<sup>1</sup> The first poorhouse was located on the Old Dekalb road, but had a limited amount of space, and was soon to be replaced. From 1869 until 1970, the "new" County Home on the banks of the Grasse River was the home of the county's poor, homeless, and insane.<sup>2</sup>

Many books, such as *Jip* by Katherine Patterson, or even *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, have documented the often atrocious

conditions of such county “poorhouses.” The “inmates” were kept in cells and food was slid to them through slits at the bottom. These seem to have been extreme examples, but be sure that life was no picnic. Families often sent mentally ill or unruly relatives to the County Home, where they lived for the rest of their lives. Some people never knew that they had relatives in the County Home.<sup>3</sup> Deceased residents of the county home were buried in a small paupers’ cemetery on the grounds. Unfortunately, the graveyard was located too close to the river, and as the river cut into the bank, many headstones and human remains were washed away.

On the other hand, the St. Lawrence County “poor farm” was a real farm where the inmates grew food for themselves and for the prisoners at the County Courthouse in Canton. No matter what people say about it, it provided a place for the “indigents,” or homeless, to live and work.

After 1892 when the Ogdensburg psychiatric center opened, many of the mentally ill patients were transferred there from the County Home.<sup>4</sup>

In 1969, there remained 28 residents in the County Home. Less than a year later, the County Home was shut down, and we can only speculate about what happened to those 28 people. For six more years, Social Services used the building as its base of operations, a fitting location for the “replacement” system that was to be the substitute for the services once offered there. In 1976, Social Services moved out, and a series of other ideas and renovations were proposed before the building was razed in 1978.<sup>5</sup> Some cheered the end of an era, while others wondered what was to happen to the remaining homeless, poor, and mentally ill.

The homeless in St. Lawrence County are a very different breed than those in the cities, and you could argue that they have a more difficult time. Unlike the homeless of the inner city there is no community of the under privileged, no vast army of public workers and volunteers reaching out to help, no wealthy businessmen to drop money in a

hat. As Sheri Wilcox, director of the Church and Community Program in Canton, told me in an interview, “This a very hostile place to be poor.”<sup>6</sup>

Many people feel that we now have a better system of dealing with the homeless than we did, say, a hundred years ago, when the poor were sent to the County Home. Although we might look at the Home as a harsh measure, the county was at least dealing with the issue. Today the St. Lawrence County Housing Policy acknowledges the importance of housing the homeless, but assigns the primary responsibility to not-for-profit organizations and assumes only a coordinating role.

Not-for-profit organizations found the task too much to take on. Wade Wheelock, co-minister of the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Canton, told me that the County had approached the churches and other non-profits, encouraging them to build, staff, and fund a homeless shelter. The churches were interested, but when they began to calculate the cost of such a project, they found it far out of their reach.<sup>7</sup> They were able to fund one Church and Community worker and various food pantries and thrift shops, but the prospect of funding several workers, paying rent, and supplying food and shelter for even a few homeless appeared impossible. Although the County Home may not have been the best solution, at least it offered some option for the homeless.

The homeless have a long history here, from “the crazy fiddler” in Irving Bacheller’s day to the County Home to Social Services today.<sup>8</sup> Some say that in the old days the homeless were segregated in the County Home and were discriminated against. That may be true, but they are not treated like equals today, either.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Amy Godine, “Hard Times Come Again No More,” in *Adirondack Life*, November/December 2000.

<sup>2</sup> County Home dates provided by the Canton Town Historian, Linda Casserly.

<sup>3</sup> “Citizens to Save the County Home,” pamphlet

in St. Lawrence County Historical Association archives.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Lois McAllester, retired St. Lawrence County employee, on March 13, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Canton Town Historian's timeline.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Sheri Wilcox, director of Church and Community Program, in Canton, on March 6, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Rev. Wade Wheelock, March 10, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> *Coming Up the Road*, Irving Bacheller's memories of his childhood in the North Country. The crazy fiddler (p. 222) was Nick Goodall, "a half demented, homeless wanderer and a mystery." Despite this he was "a great master of the violin."

## Mystery Photo



*Who? Where? A perhaps forgotten 19th century rural residence, with its livestock and people, captured in a photograph. Can you identify the place or people? Photograph courtesy of Potsdam Museum [P.2897].*

The answer to the mystery photo on p. 40 of the last issue of *The Quarterly*:

Paul and Julia Robert, of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, suggest the machine is an early steam shovel with the blurry figure of a man standing by the shovel. Here at *The Quarterly*, we'd speculated that the photo had something to do with paving the street, so, collectively, we must be on the right track. Paul and Julia also point out that the seated figure (the boss?) is wearing a suit, tie and fedora—not what a man would wear on the job these days.

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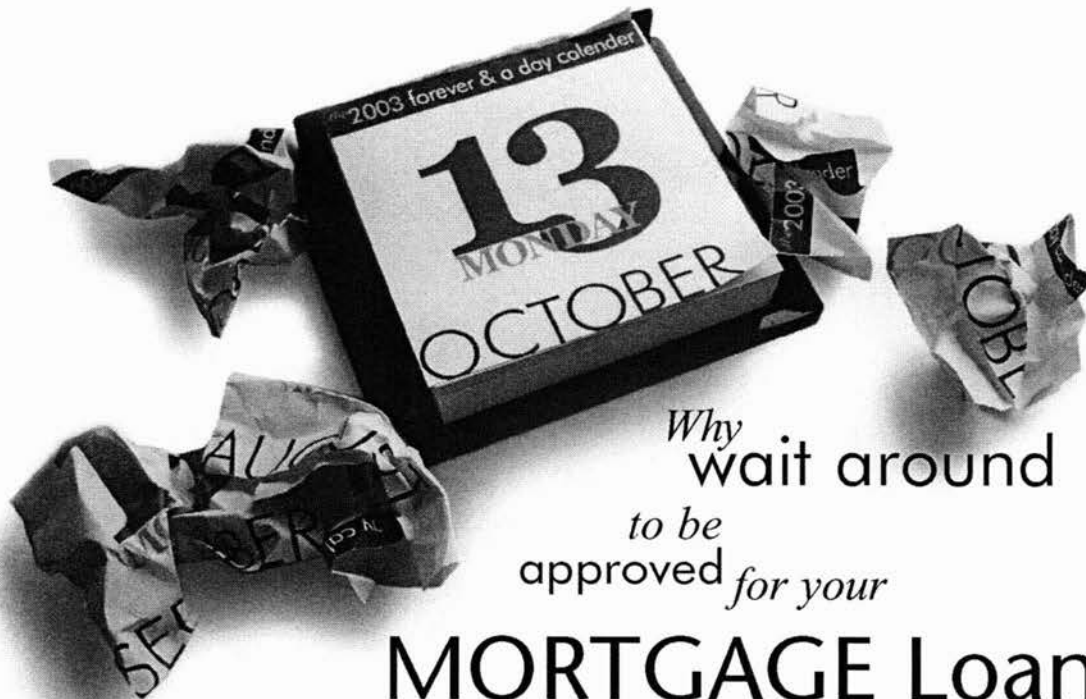
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