

NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

ISSUED OCCASIONALLY BY THE

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

No. 2

Allan S. Everest and Charles W. McLellan, Editors

Jan. 1961

Monday, January 9th

is the date of the next meeting of our Historical Association—at eight o'clock in the evening, in the Association Rooms over the Plattsburgh Public Library. This is the annual business meeting, at which the election of officers will be held. The program consists of a talk by Mrs. Margaret Hayes, County Historian, on "HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TOWNS OF CLINTON COUNTY." The public is cordially invited.

A Temperance Bet -- 1823

The following papers were found in a bundle of legal documents in the old Whiteside Paper Mill in Champlain. (*McLellan Collection*)

Memorandum of an agreement made between Wentworth Pinney and Elisha Pangman the fourteenth day of January 1823 as follows—

The said Pinney & Pangman, have this day drawn each a note for Twenty-five dollars and deposited them with Thomas J. Whiteside & hereby agree, that the one who first drinks any distilled Spirits or wine shall forfeit the Note, and we hereby direct the said Whiteside to give up the Notes to the one who satisfactorily proves that the other first drank.

It is understood that the Notes are not to be given up as aforesaid in case deception should be practiced by any person to induce either to drink, & it is not to extend to liquor order^d by a Physician as a medicine; or to wine used in a re-

ligious way; but is to extend to all other cases of ordinary drinking—whether it proceeds to intoxication or not.

Wentworth Pinney
Elisha Pangman

Witness: Stephen Pangman

\$25.00 On demand I promise to pay Elisha Pangman or bearer Twenty-five dollars [with interest *erased*] for value received.

Champlain January 14th 1823.

Wentworth Pinney

An identical note, payable to Wentworth Pinney and signed by Elisha Pangman, was also enclosed—an indication that both men kept their pledges and remained teetotalers.

Wentworth Pinney died in 1843 at the age of 53, and is buried in the old Mooers Cemetery.

Neither Elisha nor Stephen Pangman have been fully identified, beyond the presumption that they were in Whiteside's employ. The names of Samuel and Luther Pangman appear in the 1802-1806 day-book of Dr. Benjamin Moore, of Champlain.

Concerning Slavery in Clinton County

The following are excerpts from the records of the Town of Plattsburgh, maintained in the office of the County Historian in manuscript form. The first is the formal registration and claim of ownership of a baby; the second is the legal assignment of ownership; the third and fourth are a manumission and a certificate of ability to support himself; the fifth is a manumission as a part of the settlement of an estate; the sixth shows the impact of the War of 1812 upon slave names; the seventh is a certificate of freedom for a negro born elsewhere.

1. This is to Certify that I Benjamin Mooers of the town of Plattsburgh am Entitled to the Service of a male Negro Child named Siah born on the Ninth day of August 1800.
Benjamin Mooers

2. This may Certify that Nath^l Platt is Intitled to the Servis of a female Child Born of a Slave the Childs name is Dine Born 29th January
Recorded May 17th 1805 by J. J. Green T C

3. I do hereby certify that I have and by these presents do Manumit and Discharge from all personal Service a certain Negro Man Named Brist and forever hereafter Relinquish all Claim to him as my Slave witness my hand and Seal this first day of April 1803
John Addoms

4. We Benjamin Mooers and Joshua Hilliard Overseers of the Poor of the Town of Plattsburgh in the County of Clinton Do Certify that Brist a negro man the Property of John Addoms of the town of Plattsburgh aforesaid appears to be under the age of fifty years and of Sufficient Ability to provide for himself given under our hands this first Day of April in the year one Thousand Eight hundred and Three
Benjamin Mooers over Seers of
Joshua Hillyard the Poor

5. I Jonas Platt acting Executor of the Estate of Zephaniah Platt Esquire deceased do hereby manumit and liberate Cato a negro Slave belonging to said Estate, aged about Twenty four years; in Pursuance of the Statute in such case made and provided. Witness my hand and Seal at Plattsburgh the sixth day of January in the year one thousand eight hundred and eight.
Jonas Platt

6. Maria a Negro Slave of Melancton Smith had a male child born about 28th december 1814 named Sir George Prevost
Recorded July 22d 1816 Melancton Smith

7. Gilliead Sperry of the town of Plattsburgh in the County of Clinton being duly sworn deposeseth and saith that he is acquainted with Martin Tankard a black or mulatto person and knows the family in Vermont and has no dout to say he was born free and is about 22 years of age—agreeable to the best of this deponents knowledge and belief—and resides in Plattsburgh in the County of Clinton for more than six months
Sworn this 25 day of April 1821
Caleb Nichols Judge
G. Sperry

Wolf-Hunting in Clinton County

(Drawn from Hurd's *History of Clinton and Franklin Counties*)

A number of persons residing in Mooers and Chateaugay in 1821 and 1822 formed a plan to defraud those towns of large sums of money by fraudulent wolf-bounty certificates. If the certificates were honestly and legally issued, there were two hundred and seventy-five full grown wolves killed in Clinton County in the two year period. The actual number killed was probably less than fifty.

To obtain the bounty the law required a person killing a wolf to take the skin and ears entire thereon to some justice of the peace in the county. The person took an oath that he had killed the wolf, and could be submitted to further examination by the justice if the justice desired to do so. A certificate containing the substance of the oath and examination was completed by the justice of the peace, who was required by law to cut off and burn the ears of the wolf to prevent the issuing of many certificates for one wolf.

The "wolf ring" sought a dishonest appli-

cant to swear to the killing and an equally dishonest magistrate who would grant the required certificate. The ring sent to Vermont and Canada for wolves that had been killed there. As much as twenty dollars was paid for a wolf's head, as they could well afford to do, as the state, county, and town bounties combined amounted to fifty dollars in Clinton County.

In 1821, when the Board of Supervisors of Clinton County met, claims were presented to the county for twelve hundred and fifty dollars. The town of Mooers received claims totaling two thousand and forty dollars. This amount of money probably exceeded the amount of damage that was done by the wolves in the entire county. Another year disclosed the wolf frauds and terminated the bounty on the wolves.

Submitted by
Carl Flood, Senior
College of Education

Bill of Sale - 1793

The only Negro slave known to have been owned in Champlain town was the one named in the following bill of sale to Judge Pliny Moore:

Know all Men by these presents that I Isaac Van Slyck of Kinderhook, County of Columbia & State of New York, have this day sold and Conveyed to Pliny Moor of Champlain Town Clinton County and to his heirs and Assigns a Negro girl five Years old named Phillis for the Consideration of 14 Pounds Lawfull Money of New York to me in hand paid before the ensembling & delivery hereof, the Receipt whereof is hereby Acknowledged, & hereby Warrant the said Negro girl to be my property free of any former sale & incumbrance whatever. As Witness my hand & Seal at Kinderhook this first day of March in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven hundred and Ninety three.

Sealed & delivered }
In presence of }
John J. Vanslyck

his
Isaac X Van Slyck
mark

A Slave's Grave

On Route 9, four miles north of Plattsburgh, in a pasture between the road and Treadwell's Bay, is a small enclosed burial plot, in which is an old gravestone which bears the following inscription:

PHYLLIS

*Old Phyllis the slave
was of African birth
and she died long ago, long
ago, and her sad last req-
uest ere she passed to her
rest, was Lay me at old
Massa's feet.*

Phyllis (not the same slave mentioned in the Bill of Sale) was buried actually across the foot of the grave of her owner, Hon. Thomas Tredwell (1742-1832). He was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1788, a Congressman, and Clinton County Surrogate.

School Days

From Mrs. Bertha Coats and Mrs. Beatrice Signor, the Peru twins, we learn something of school teaching in the 1890's.

They both attended the Normal School for a time and started teaching at the age of seventeen. They had to obtain special permits until they reached the legal teaching age of eighteen. Mrs. Signor taught at West Schuyler Falls for \$3 a week, from which she paid seventy-five cents for room and board.

Mrs. Coats lived at home and taught in Peasleeville for \$5 a week.

Their first purchases with their newly acquired wealth were double-faced gold watches to use in their clockless schoolrooms.

New Hat

From a letter dated May 1, 1840, written by Matilda Moore Nye, a bride of a few months, to her husband Bartlett Nye, away from his home in Champlain. (*McLellan Collection*)

You ask me if I will not have a new bonnet? I am much obliged for the kind offer, but I would by no means have one. I had a new one last summer, and an expensive one too which ought to last me for several summers yet, & which with a little remodeling *will answer certainly for this summer*. So my dear, *do not get me one*.

To rebuild its collection of material pertaining to the old Normal School at Plattsburgh, lost in the fire of 1929, the library of today's College of Education invites donations of old catalogues, yearbooks, textbooks, programs and pictures from the period before 1929.

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