

NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

ISSUED OCCASIONALLY BY THE

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

No. 36

Allan S. Everest and Charles W. McLellan, Editors

May 1967

The May Meeting

of the Association will be held on Monday, May 1, at 8 o'clock in the Association rooms over the Public Library. The program will be in charge of Dr. Carl Engelhart, Professor of English at the college, who will speak on "The Silver Screen: Plattsburgh." He will talk about movie-making in the North Country, when many well-known films were made in Clinton and Essex Counties.

Monday, June 5 - watch for further notice of the annual members' exhibit night, and start thinking about which historical objects you will display.

Riddle of the Month

The April riddle: The first marriage in Plattsburgh was that of Peter Saily and Marianne Grellier on June 8, 1789. The ceremony was performed by Theodorus Platt, J. P. It was Mr. Saily's second marriage.

New riddle: What prominent early settler lost his home and property after his business went bankrupt?

HIGHWAY REPAIRS

To Joseph Corbin Overseer of Highways in the Eleventh Highway District in the Town of Champlain.

You are hereby Commanded to Cause the persons Named in the within List Respectively to work on the Highways in your District the Number of Days annexed to Each of their Respective Names, the one half of the work you are to Cause to be Done soon after planting in the Spring and before wheat harvest the Other half after Harvest and before the first Day of November next for which this Shall be your Sufficient Warrant.

Of this fail not on your peril. Given under our Hands and Seals at Champlain this 3d Day of May 1800.

Willm Beaumont) Comms
Edward Thurber Jun) of
Nathl Douglass Jr) Highways

A List of the Inhabitants liable to work on the Highways in the Town of Champlain in the Eleventh District
April 30th 1800

	Days
Joseph Corbin Overseer	13
Baremore	3
Noel LaRush	2
Samuel Ashman	10
William Beaumont	8
Witt Lane	2
Gilbert Daily	7
James Daily	2
Darius Corbin	2

49

(McLellan Collections)

The Arnold Ore Bed

(An apparently unpublished essay of 1869

by W. C. Watson, Jr. McLellan Collections.)

McLenathan and Wells continued to raise during their term of ten years, from 1814 to 1824, at least 3,000 tons of ore per year, which was worth at the pit about \$4 per ton, one half of which belonged to the owners of the bed. At the expiration of this term the owners raised ore themselves for about two years, from 1824 to 1826, at the rate of about 3,000 tons per year worth at the pit about \$4 per ton.

In 1826 the owners leased the bed to the Peru Iron Company, the principal owner and manager of which was Francis Salters, for the term of ten years, from 1826 to 1836. This company was extensively engaged in the manufacture of nails and iron in its various forms at Clintonville, a small village in Clinton County on the Ausable River about three miles from the bed. They agreed to pay the owners \$1.80 per ton for every ton raised, and to raise at least 3,400 tons per annum. This company during its term must have raised at least 5,000 tons per year, which was worth at the pit \$4 per ton.

From 1836 to 1839 the owners themselves again raised ore from the bed, and during this period they raised about 3,500 tons per year, which was worth at the pit about \$4 per ton. From 1839 to 1849 the bed was rented to Caleb D. Barton, who agreed to pay the owners 30 cents on the dollar for every ton sold, but stipulating that the price should not exceed \$5 per ton on the bank and agreeing to raise at least 4,000 tons per annum. He raised each year about that quantity, which was worth at the pit about \$5 per ton. From 1849 to 1851 the bed was rented to Calvin Cook and during his term of two years he raised about 2,500 tons per year which was worth at the pit about \$4 per ton.

The owners in 1851 bought an additional 500 acres of timberland adjoining on which were a forge and separator located on the Little Ausable River. They paid \$9,200 to Calvin and William Cook, but the buildings and machinery were never conducted very profitably and were afterwards carried away by high water. From 1852 to 1857 the bed was rented to E. & J. D. Kingsland, together with the Cook property, for a rent per annum for the Cook property, and a percentage for the ore raised, amounting to about \$3,000 per annum for the whole. During their term of five years they raised about 2,500 tons per annum which was worth at the pit about \$5 per ton. A recapitulation will give an approximate idea of the amount of ore raised between 1814 and 1857 and the value at the pit after having been raised.

RECAPITULATION

Persons raising	Term	Time	No. tons per ann	Value per ton	Total ore Tons	Total val.
McLenathan & Wells	10 yrs.	1814-1824	3000	\$4	30,000	\$120,000
Owners of Bed	2 yrs.	1824-1826	3000	4	6,000	24,000
Peru Iron Co.	10 yrs.	1826-1836	5000	4	50,000	200,000
Owners of Bed	3 yrs.	1836-1839	3500	4	10,500	42,000
Caleb D Barton	10 yrs.	1839-1849	4000	5	40,000	200,000
Calvin Cook	2 yrs.	1849-1851	2500	4	5,000	20,000
Not worked	1 yr.	1851-1852				
E. & J. Kingsland	5 yrs.	1852-1857	2500	5	12,500	62,500
From 1814 to 1857	43				Tons 154,000	\$668,500

After the expiration of the Kingsland lease in 1857 but very little ore was raised for several years. The ore was inexhaustible in quantity and as perfect as ever in its quality, but the mines had been carelessly worked by the lessees. The pits had been sunk to a considerable depth, the deepest to perhaps 300 feet below the surface of the hill; the walls had given way and much of the debris had fallen or been thrown back into the pits, and a large expenditure was required to put the mines into good working order again.

The owners contemplated running a tunnel into the hill, intending to strike the most valuable of the veins at a point lower than it had yet been worked and so carrying off the accumulated water without pumping and at the same time relieving themselves of the expense of lifting the ore so far to get it to the

surface. They believed that the smaller veins which would be opened in the passage would to a great extent defray the expense of constructing the tunnel. For this purpose at a sheriff's sale in June 1857 they bid off for \$500 a small lot of about 35 acres called the "Thomas Lot", situated on lot 198 of Maule's Patent and adjoining their property, which they contemplated using as the entrance to the tunnel. But one of the owners, Mr. Southmayd, had died leaving his affairs much confused, having devised to a numerous and ever increasing army of grandchildren interest in the property which seemed difficult to determine and impossible to settle. Dr. Stickney, another of the owners, had also died, leaving a will of somewhat the same character as Southmayd as well as a similar brood of grandchildren.

Elisha Arnold, the other original owner, had also died, and intestate. His son Silas, who had been the agent and general manager of the property since 1837, found it necessary to bring an amicable petition suit; and on the 3d day of March 1864 the whole property was sold, a part at public auction and the balance at a private sale to Curtis G. Hussey and Thomas M. Howe, composing the firm of C. G. Hussey and Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The foregoing "Recapitulation" does not convey an exaggerated idea of the amount of ore raised between 1814 and 1857, but does give the impression that much more money was realized from the sales of the ore than was actually the case.

The bed was opened when there was but one forge in the whole region at all accessible from the mine. It was a rickety affair located on the Little Ausable and built entirely of wood whose terrific screechings and squeakings aroused the whole countryside whenever it was put in motion. The policy of the owners of the bed was to stimulate the erection of forges and the manufacture of their ore into iron, without any inquiry as to whether the parties purchasing the ore would ever be able to pay for it. As a consequence tens of thousands of tons of ore were sold that were never paid for and that the owners of the bed never expected would be paid for. But iron was made from their ore more easily and cheaply than from any other, which in toughness and strength exceeded all other iron. The reputation of the bed extended through the whole country. Numerous forges were erected on all the neighboring streams, and the demand for the ore grew from month to month and from year to year, and Mr. Arnold's quaint suggestion whenever urged to sell the mine that "it was not good policy to buy a calf and sell it before it became an ox" was verified. By this judicious management the ore bed in their hands became a very fair-sized ox indeed, in spite of the heavy losses that were sustained through an indiscriminate plan of selling ore to every man who could be induced to buy, without asking whether he was able or willing to pay.

Church Pews

Know all men by these presents that we, William Taylor, Horace Beach, Frank Lake, Richard Keese, Nathan Wardner & Rodman Brown, Trustees of the Keeseville Baptist Society, for and in consideration of the sum of forty dollars to us in hand paid, by Martin Pope & Samuel B. Ball, do hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said Martin & Samuel, or their heirs or assigns, the use and right to the use of a certain pew numbered thirty seven in the Baptist Meeting House erected by the Keeseville Baptist Society in this Village of Keeseville for religious purposes, together with all and singular the privileges and appertinances attached thereto, reserving to the Trustees aforesaid, or their successors in office, the direction and superintendence of the religious or other exercises to be conducted in said House, To have and to hold the right and privileges aforesaid to the said Martin & Samuel or their heirs or assigns forever.

In witness whereof, we the Trustees aforesaid have hereunto set our hands and affixed the seal of our Incorporation, this twentieth day of September in the year one thousand eight hundred & twenty six.

(seal) William Taylor
Horace Beach
Frank Lake

Richard Keese
Nathan Wardner
Rodman Brown

(from the Hewitt Papers in the
McLellan collections)

The Mexican War

to the Honorable Geo W Crawford
Secretary of War

Willsborough October 29th 1849

Sir I had a son David W Allen that enlisted at Burlington in Vermont during the Mexican War. he enlisted some time in the month of April 1847 an he with the other recruits started it was said for governors Island near the city of New York there to be drilled a while before going to Mexico. I received a letter from him soon after he enlisted and have heard nothing from him since. I have not been informed what Regiment he was attached to but if the war department would please to ascertain to what Regiment those Recruits above mentioned were attached and give me information wher he died or got killed or whether he lived to get his discharge it would much oblige his anxious and afflicted father. I wrote once before when Mr Marcy was secretary of War but Received no answer. if I have not taken the right Step you would do me a great favor to inform me from your Obedient servant

Abraham Allen

Please send the letter to Willsborough Essex County N Y

(Endorsed:) David Allen a private Compy I 3d Artillery
Enlisted 4 April 47 for the War at Burlington Vt. and
Died 10th Novr '47, at New Orleans La.
Adj. Genl's Office, Novr. 6, 1849.

L. Thomas, Adj. Gen.
(from the Hewitt Papers in the
McLellan collections)

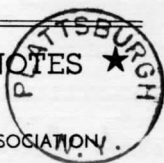
RECENT PUBLICATION

Volume two of "Articles on Local History by J. Warren Harkness and Others" has been put together by Mrs. Eleanor Spaulding, Miss Grace Arnold and Mrs. Cora Stafford. The first volume appeared in 1966.

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CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.



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