

# NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

ISSUED OCCASIONALLY BY THE

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

No. 55

Allan S. Everest and Charles W. McLellan, Editors

May, 1969

## *The May Meeting*

*of the Historical Association will be held Monday evening, May 5, at 8 o'clock in the auditorium of the Plattsburgh Public Library. A talk will be given by Miss Cornelia Pope, librarian at the Feinberg Library, on the topic "Ghost-Town Populations." For several years Miss Pope has been exploring, researching and photographing the sites of once-prosperous hamlets in the North Country, many of them connected with the mining or manufacturing of iron. The public is cordially invited.*

## LOCAL POLITICS IN 1873

To D. F. Dobie, Esq., Chairman of the Clinton County Republican Committee:

Sir: Upon looking over the county, I find that large numbers of Republicans seem disposed to support Mr. Weed upon questions of local interest—particularly the question of the Champlain Ship Canal, etc.,—and that they are so advised by Republicans and Republican journals outside of the County.

In view of this state of facts and of the advice of many members of the County Committee, and other leading Republicans whom I have consulted, I am led to do and do hereby decline the nomination for Member of Assembly tendered me by the late Republican County Convention. Very respectfully,

A. B. Wood

Amasa B. Wood, Jr., who penned this letter, was the first of six sons of Amasa B. Wood, Sr., a West Chazy businessman. The junior Wood was the founder of Wood's Falls, an abandoned village four miles west of the village of Mooers, in the Town of Mooers. He started the iron industry there, in addition to two sawmills, and shortly after this letter was written he sold his interest in the iron forge and rolling mill to his brother William Wallace Wood, and returned to West Chazy. He died in his home on Stetson Avenue, Plattsburgh.

Smith Weed was born in the Town of Belmont within sight of the location of the world's largest Catalan forge. He invested in the Chateaugay Iron Company, which provided the industrial base upon which the village of Popeville depended. He was a Plattsburgh lawyer and Democratic politician, representing Clinton County in the state Assembly for many years. He died in Plattsburgh in 1920.

(Submitted by Miss Cornelia Pope, the Association's speaker on May 5th. The letter comes from the PLATTSBURGH SENTINEL of October 24, 1873.)

## 4th of July, 1826: Celebration at Chazy

(Contributed by Mrs. Benjamin Sullivan and Mr. David Martin.)

Altho the morning was very showry & unpromising, our citizens turned out in great numbers and all appeared to be actuated by the spirit of the Jubilee they were to celebrate. The procession, formed at a few minutes past 12 o'clock at Mrs. Fillmore's, moved to the Congregational Church under the direction of Capt. Kinsley. The worship of the day was accompanied by martial music.

At the house of the Rev. Mr. Byington the procession was joined by a large procession of ladies, in front of which were a number of young ladies, representing the number of States, with garlands and wreaths of roses bound around their heads. These were followed by an equal number of little girls with their heads uncovered, their locks flowing, tastefully and elegantly dressed, their garments bound around with evergreen. These were followed by the mothers, matrons and maidens and all together formed an interesting collection. When the head of the procession arrived at the church door, opened to the right & left, the ladies first. The orator & clergy, the president & vice president of the day, the committee of arrangements, the Revolutionary soldiers, the civil authority & then the citizens, and the house was filled to overflowing.

The service in the church was introduced by a choir of singers under Mr. Hawley, accompanied by instrumental music. The Declaration of Independence was read by Luther N. Ransom. The prayer offered to the Throne of Grace by the Reverend J. Byington was appropriate, pertinent and impressive. An excellent oration well suited to the occasion was delivered by Bela Edgerton, Esquire and followed by the singing of appropriate odes.

Service at the church ended and the procession again formed in front of the church moved with martial music and the ringing of the church bell to the house of the Reverend Mr. Byington, where the ladies entered a delightful bowery and the gentlemen continued their march to Mrs. Fillmore's Inn, where they sat down to a most sumptuous dinner which over, and the cloth removed, the following toasts were drank, accompanied by the discharge of artillery:

- 1st. The day: Especially to be remembered by all Americans. May its celebration be
- 2nd. The President of the United States and the heads of departments.
- 3rd. The Governor of the State of New York.
- 4th. The memory of Washington: to whom was entrusted the helm of the then frail bark of independence. May he be revered as the political father and guardian genius of our country.
- 5th. Greece: The blood of thy martyrs in the fall of Missolonghi, like the blood of Abel, cries from the ground for vengeance of heaven on their murderers.
- 6th. The Constitution of the United States: May we transmit it to posterity untarnished, unimpaired.
- 7th. The Jubilee, a proud and happy day to all Americans: Fifty one years ago we were slaves; fifty years we have been freemen. May we keep in view the contrast.
- 8th. The Navy of the United States: Those floating bulwarks which have so effectually proved to all nations the valor and prowess of Americans.
- 9th. Our sister Republics: Peace to their countries, prosperity to their liberal institutions, confusion to their enemies, death to their traitors.
- 10th. The first five Presidents: Primary planets in our political horizons; may the sixth steer clear of an eclipse.
- 11th. The Youth of America: The same spirit that animated their fathers may they possess—love of country, love of liberty.
- 12th. The Holy Alliance and Holy Inquisition, two bantlings of tyranny: May they have Washingtons & Bolivars for nurses.
- 13th. While we sing of Columbia's sons, let us never forget her daughters. By Mrs. Graves: May their virtues be as lasting as their charms are inviting.

(These formal toasts were followed by many "volunteer" toasts, which helps to explain why the ceremony lasted all afternoon.)

## FARMING IN OLD PERU

*(Random selections from the farm diary of Elisha Stephen Arnold of Peru (1848-1939) reveal farm practices and prices of a former day. The diary is in the New York Collection of the Feinberg Library.)*

Dec. 16, 1884—Paid Ira Green 7.00 for putting on roof of horse barn, blown off.

Feb. 4, 1885—Jo Liberty drew 1½ c. wood to Plattsburgh & sold for \$3.50.

Apr. 7, 1885—Buregard McGee killed 8 of the fat sheep for W. E. Severance.

Live weights	Mutton		
100	46		
122	59	took 11 yds. burlap	
115	55	to cover — \$1.00	
110	46		
115	53	McGee for	
130	64	butchering — \$1.00	
89	39		
93	43		
874	405	@ 9c f. o. b.	\$36.45
		sold the 8 pelts	8.00

Dec. 3, 1886—Settled with Jo Liberty:

Plow in spring	4 days	\$4.00
Plow in fall	5¾	5.75
Harrow	4½	4.50
Sow grain	1¾	1.75
Highway labor	1¼	1.25

Dec. 31, 1886—Taxes for 1886 \$32.21

June 6 & 8, 1887—John Soulia sheared 81 sheep, 8½c \$6.88

Had 43 lambs—25 ewes & 18 bucks

Sold 81 fleeces, 432 lbs. \$109.31

## RIDDLE OF THE MONTH

Old riddle: Mrs. Virginia Burdick of Plattsburgh and Mr. Maurice Turner of Keeseville have identically-dated replies with information on the sequence of names for Clinton County. Albany County, formed in 1683, comprised everything north and west of the present Albany County and at one time the whole of Vermont. From it in 1772 was taken Charlotte County which included all of Clinton, Essex and Warren, parts of Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton and Washington and part of Vermont. The name of Charlotte was changed to Washington in 1774 and from it Clinton was created in 1788. Essex was taken from Clinton in 1799 and Franklin in 1808.

New riddle: What structures stood on the sites of the YMCA and of Mount Assumption Institute in Plattsburgh?

*(Letter to Gen. Benjamin Mooers from Archibald McIntyre, Nov. 4, 1812. McIntyre was State Comptroller and the source of the name for Mount McIntyre. From the Kent-Delord Collection at the Feinberg Library.)*

Dear Sir, You will receive inclosed the statement of monies drawn by you out of the State Treasury which you requested in your letter of the 27th instant, and also the Treasurer's receipt for \$135, the interest on your loan, which has been paid by drawing that amount in your favor on account of arrears of taxes due your County, as you requested.

I trust and hope that your Northern Army will not attempt an invasion, for with you I dread the consequences. We have here but a few hundred Cavalry, and if they should all go to the north, the augmentation would not be great.

The Legislature have not done anything yet. They will tomorrow probably choose Electors—and it is supposed they will be Clintonian.

The only news we have here just now is that the **Hornet** had captured a twenty gun ship after a severe contest—and that unfortunately a 64 came up and took both into Bermuda.

I am with great respect and esteem  
Your mo. ob. Serv.  
Arch McIntyre

## MAY 1st IN LOCAL HISTORY

- 1809—Work on the Arsenal (site of 53 Broad Street) begun. The building was finished August, 1810.
- 1834—Essex County Academy established in Westport with Asahel Lyon, Platt Rogers Halstead and Benajah P. Douglass as incorporators.
- 1836—At a meeting of the Catholic Congregation at their regular place of worship, the "red store" on Cumberland Avenue, the church was incorporated under the name of First Roman Catholic Church of the town of Plattsburgh.
- 1845—Completion of the stockading of twelve acres at Clinton Prison, begun in snow five feet deep under the direction of the first agent, Ransom Cook of Saratoga Springs.
- 1882—Bill introduced in Congress by Gen. John Hammond providing for moving Plattsburgh Barracks to Rouses Point. Exchange of the Northern New York Telephone Company in operation with 25 subscribers.
- 1898—At the battle of Manila Bay, Captain George B. Ransom, U. S. N. (son of Captain Harry Sawyer Ransom, severely wounded at Drury's Bluff in 1864) was Chief Engineer of the U. S. S. Concord and for his "eminent and conspicuous conduct" was given a medal by Congress .

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David K. Martin, Secretary  
West Chazy, New York

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