

# NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

ISSUED OCCASIONALLY BY THE  
CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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No. 24

Allan S. Everest and Charles W. McLellan, Editors

Sept. 1965

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## *The Next Meeting*

of the Association will be held on Monday evening, Sept. 13, 1965, at 8 o'clock, in the Association Rooms over the Plattsburgh Public Library.

The topic will be "CLINTON COUNTY'S 150-YEAR BUILDINGS" by  
Dr. Allan S. Everest.

The public is cordially invited to attend.

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## *Coming*

October 4—"BY-WAYS IN ADIRONDACK HISTORY"  
Dr. Warder H. Cadbury

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## *Local History Conference*

A Local History Conference will be held in Plattsburgh on Sept. 22nd under the auspices of the State Historian's Office in Albany. Afternoon and evening sessions will be conducted by Mr. William G. Tyrrell.

Subjects for discussion will include such topics as "Every Man His Own Historian," "Museum Collections," and "Sources of Historical Information."

The sessions will be at 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. in the new college gymnasium on Rugar Street. All are invited to attend. A turkey dinner for \$1.75 will be served to those who wish it at 6:00 o'clock in the dining hall next to the gym. Reservations are not necessary for the meetings, but are for the dinner. They should be made with any officer of the Association by September 18th.

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## *The Republic of French Canada*

Montreal, Nov. 23—*La Veritie*, a French Canadian paper published here, says, in reference to a speech of Mr. Wilfred Laurier, leader of the Liberal party, in which he condemned the idea of a French republic on the banks of the St. Lawrence, that a distinct nation is the destiny of French Canadians, and adds:

"The movement which will result in this end will be carried out in spite of and notwithstanding Mr. Laurier. If he opposes the national movement it will crush him."

PLATTSBURGH REPUBLICAN, November 30, 1895

## The Battle of Beekmantown in 1814

A letter from General John E. Wool to Philip B. Roberts, Beekmantown, N. Y.  
Printed through the courtesy of Dr. Warder H. Cadbury.

Troy, January 6th, 1859.

Sir,

Your communication of the 1st instant, relating to the "Battle of Beekmantown", which occurred on the morning of the 6th of September 1814, was received on the 3rd.

In reply to your request I would remark that on the evening of the 5th of September, 1814, Major John E. Wool, having volunteered his services, was ordered by Major General A. Macomb with 250 regular infantry and Captain Leonard with two pieces of Artillery, to march early next morning, the 6th of September, on the Beekmantown road "to support the Militia and set them an example of firmness" by resisting the advance on Plattsburgh of the British column on that road commonly reported to be 4000 strong. The United States Militia under Major General Mooers, 700 strong, were encamped on that road about four or five miles from Plattsburgh.

Agreeably to the orders of Major General Macomb, Major Wool with 250 regular infantry afterwards joined by 30 Volunteer Militia, left Plattsburgh about twelve o'clock at night,—Captain Leonard refused to accompany him not having been as he said ordered to do so by General Macomb—and marched about seven miles when he met the advance of the British column under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Wellington of the 3rd Buffs. From this point the command of Major Wool disputed every foot of ground until it arrived on the right bank of the Saranac in the village of Plattsburgh. On his reaching Culiver's (*sic*) Hill the Major made a stand and compelled the British troops to fall back—when Lieutenant Colonel Wellington and a Lieutenant of the 3rd Buffs were killed—but the troops soon rallied and compelled the Major to retreat. On his arrival at the brook, some half a mile or more from Culivers Hill, he made a short stand and tore up the bridge erected over the brook. From this position disputing every inch of ground, he again made a stand at Halseys Corner, a half of a mile or more from Plattsburgh, where he was joined by Captain Leonard with two pieces of Artillery, which were well served and did great execution. Being driven from this position he again made a stand in front of Judge Bayly's House, and again at Gallows Hill in the village of Plattsburgh. From this position he crossed and formed his troops on the right bank of the Saranac. The Major ordered Captain Rochester with his company to tear up the bridge, which he promptly executed under a severe fire from the enemy. The British troops took possession of the stores and houses on the opposite bank, from which they were driven by Major Wool's Infantry and the well directed fire of four pieces of Artillery under Captain Leonard, and from the fire of two block-houses near by. The enemy retired in rear of the village, where the whole British force, 11,000 strong, concentrated, and where they remained until the 11th September, 1814. The result of that day is too well known to be here repeated.

From the British returns it would appear that their loss in the affair of the morning, the 6th of September, was nearly 200 killed and wounded. Major Wool had a number of his command killed and wounded, but how many is not now recollected. Near Culliver's Hill the Major had his horse shot under him. It may not however be improper to remark that Major Wool received no support or assistance from the Militia under the command of General Mooers, excepting about 30 men who volunteered and continued with his command, doing gallant service, from the time he met the enemy in Beekmantown until his arrival on the banks of the Saranac.

Very respectfully, Your obedient servant,

John E. Wool

## *Dewey's Tavern*

An old building which witnessed and made much history still stands, disconsolantly, in Clinton County. Dewey's Tavern, at what was long known as Dewey's Corners, at the intersection of route 286 and the Bostick Hill Road in the town of Champlain, was built in 1800 and figured largely in the War of 1812.

Elias Dewey came to the area in 1798 and acquired land for a farm. Since his property was on the main road to Canada, much traffic passed his way, and his tavern prospered. The building had fifteen rooms, and a unique arrangement for heating water—an iron firebox with a huge kettle attached and set in masonry with an arched opening on one side. The farm produced its own wool and flax, which were made into fabrics on the place. Mr. Dewey also operated an ashery for the making of potash, whose chief market was Montreal.

Numerous skirmishes took place in the neighborhood during 1813. General Wade Hampton and his army camped there on their retreat from defeat just over the border in Odelltown. Hampton, his staff and Negro servants stayed at the tavern. Numerous officers from both armies stayed there at various times. Fearful that they would have to abandon their property, the Deweys packed much of their goods for a quick flight. A young officer sought to discover a spy by running his sword through the barrels and boxes. Mrs. Dewey rode to Malone on horseback and bought some property to which the family could move should the need arise. She reported that her greatest fear on her trip was the howling of the many wolves and panthers. Although the Deweys did not leave their farm, their son settled on the Malone property after his marriage.

Probably the most important war conferences at the tavern were those of May and July 1814, when British Adjutant General Baynes negotiated with American officials two agreements for the exchange of prisoners of war.

Half of the British army camped on the farm on its march south to Plattsburgh in September 1814. While there a British soldier was punished with a cat-o'-nine-tails so that his back was laid open. To heal the wounds and prevent infection, two soldiers were sent to the tavern for beef brine, which was freely applied on the back of the suffering soldier.

On their retreat from Plattsburgh some of the British army also came this way. As many as possible of the wounded were brought into the tavern. Those who died were buried on the place. An officer left his dispatch box at the tavern, certain that he would not need it again, and it remained a keepsake in the family for many years.

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## *Baseball News*

In an old notebook, probably of 1890 vintage, was found the score-sheet of a game between two Champlain teams. The "Shop" team included George Lambert, Fred Harmon, Amos Lambert, Eddie Roberts and Israel Monnette; among the "School" players were Ralph Douglass, Charles Doolittle, Walter and Moss Graves. There were only two strike outs by the Schoolers, to six by the Shoppers. Although there were but nineteen hits in the game, the final score was: Shop 22; School 29. The 58 errors in the game might account for many of the runs.

In sharp contrast, the Champlain-Rouses Point game of Aug. 20, 1913, was very much of a pitchers' battle. On the Point team were Mero, Landry, Strong, Seguin, Tyndall, Brothers, Lattourelle, Hoag and Ryan. The Champlainers were Spelman, Dunn, Miller, Barber, Garand, Lafountain, Mellen, Coonan and Malcolm. Only four hits were allowed by each side. Ryan and Malcolm, the pitchers, went all the way; Ryan struck out 17 men and Malcolm fanned 23! The final score was 3 to 2 in favor of Rouses Point.

## *The Union Academy*

In 1812 a committee of Quakers living at The Union in Peru was formed to erect a schoolhouse. Until this time classes had been conducted in various homes. The school opened its doors in May 1812 and soon established a sound reputation for its instruction. In addition to local children the Academy attracted students from miles around.

Chauncey Stoddard was the first teacher, with Mary Rogers as assistant. Tuition was \$2 a quarter, and \$2.50 for the grammar course. Board could be had for \$1.25 a week with respectable families "where every attention will be paid to the health and morals of the pupils." The Academy stood across the road from the present farm of George Curtis. It was a two-story frame building, with girls' classrooms upstairs and boys' on the first floor. Pupils attended Thursday services in a body at the Meeting House nearby.

As The Union lost its residents the Academy was no longer needed, and it stood empty for several years. It gained a reputation for being haunted at night because of the strange lights and noises upstairs. The discovery was finally made that boys of the area used it as a headquarters for games and for raids upon nearby orchards and melon patches.

In 1836 the Osborne brothers took down the building and moved it some two miles to their farm on Hallock Hill. They cut the posts down to make it into a one and a half story dwelling in which John Osborne lived until his death in 1883. The property has been carefully maintained and is now the attractive home of Harold Perlee.

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*Membership in the CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION includes these Historical Notes and all other publications. All are cordially invited to membership—two dollars a year.*

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*David K. Martin, Secretary  
West Chazy, New York*