

NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

ISSUED OCCASIONALLY BY THE

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

No. 33

Allan S. Everest and Charles W. McLellan, Editors

Feb. 1967

The February Meeting

of the Association will be held in the Association rooms over the Public Library on Monday evening, February 6, at 8 o'clock. The program will consist of a talk by Dr. John Myers on "The Anti-Slavery Agent in New York State". Dr. Myers is chairman of the department of history at State University College in Plattsburgh, and is engaged in long-term research into the anti-slavery movement.

Association Board Of Directors For 1967

(The four officers were elected at the annual meeting on January 9; committee chairmen and new directors were named at the meeting of the Board on January 16.)

Dr. Allan S. Everest, President
Dr. Robert Sechler, Vice President
Miss Saily Warren, Secretary
Mr. J. Bernard Stratton, Treasurer and Chairman of Finance Committee
Miss Emily McMasters, Curator and Chairman of Museum and Procurement
Dr. Hans E. Hirsch, Chairman of Publications Committee
Mrs. George Boolukos, 1967
Mr. Robert T. Booth, 1967-68
Mr. LeClair Smith, 1967-68
Mr. John Ross, 1967-68
Mrs. Elizabeth Beyer, 1967-69
Mr. David Martin, 1967-69
Mr. C. W. McLellan, 1967-69

SLAVERY IN PLATTSBURGH

(The following document, in the possession of Mrs. Fred and Miss Saily Warren of Plattsburgh, reflects one step in the termination of slavery locally.)

I Jonas Platt acting Executor of the Estate of Zephaniah Platt Esquire deceased do hereby manumit and liberate Jude a female slave belonging to said estate, aged about forty four years: in pursuance of the Statute in such Case made and provided. Witness my hand and Seal at Plattsburgh the day of in the year one thousand eight hundred and seven.

Jonas Platt

Sealed and delivered
in Presence of
Chas. Z. Platt
Robert Platt

Distinguished Son Of Clinton County

John P. Myers (1887-1966)

John Platt Myers, descendant of Plattsburgh's first settlers, played a distinguished role in the advancement of his beloved "North Country", where he spent his entire life. But he left a permanent mark on the banking, business, educational and civic life not only of his own area but of the entire state of New York.

Mr. Myers, product of the public school system of Plattsburgh, received his bachelor's degree from Princeton University in 1908. His interest in education started with membership on the Plattsburgh Board of Education and his subsequent presidency of the Board. He received numerous honorary degrees—Doctor of Science from Clarkson College; Doctor of Engineering from Stevens Institute of Technology; and Doctor of Laws from St. Lawrence University, Rutgers, Columbia and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

He was elected by the state legislature to successive terms on the Board of Regents. His fellow members appointed him Vice-Chancellor in 1947 and Chancellor in 1951, in which posts he presided with distinction until constitutional mandate necessitated his retirement in 1957. His imprint on the educational system, especially the innovations instituted during his membership on the Board of Regents, had a lasting impact even beyond the borders of the state.

He became active in his family's business of M. P. Myers Company shortly after his college career and in 1950 he became chairman of the board. He was dedicated to the highest business ethics, which for many years was the mark of his company. He played a prominent role in the financial and banking world for over half a century. He became president of the Plattsburgh National Bank and Trust Company when it was formed in 1937. When a merger created the National Commercial Bank and Trust Company in 1954, he served as chairman of the North Country Regional Board, and as Director of the bank. He served for a number of years on the Executive Council of the American Bankers' Association. His fellow bankers elected him President of the New York State Bankers' Association for the 1942-43 term. For many years he was a director of the American Bank Note Company.

John Myers pursued a multiplicity of interests in civic, philanthropic and charitable activities. His service on the Plattsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the American Red Cross, Community Chest, Champlain Valley Hospital, and a host of other worthwhile causes makes him remembered appreciatively as the North Country's Number One Citizen.

Riddle of the Month

Concerning the January riddle, Mr. Halsey Shields of Keeseville correctly writes: "Churubusco is the name of a suburb of Mexico City where Gen. Winfield Scott defeated the forces of Gen. de Santa Anna in the Mexican War. The hamlet was probably so named either because a veteran of the Mexican War settled there or the news of the American victory reached the ears of the first settlers in that vicinity." [It was known as Summit Station when the railroad first passed through in 1853; the name was subsequently changed. Ed.]

New riddle: What did the following early residents have in common and where did each live? Silas Goodrich, Benjamin J. Mooers, Nathan Carver, Ralph P. Allen and Oliver Davidson.

ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

Those Association publications which are still available are:

"British Objectives at the Battle of Plattsburgh" (Everest, 1960)—\$0.75

"History of Cumberland Head" (Langworthy, 1961)—\$0.50

"Recollections of Clinton County and the Battle of Plattsburgh"

(Everest, 1964)—\$2.50

"Pioneer Homes of Clinton County, 1790-1820" (Everest, 1966)—paper, \$3.75
hard, \$5.00

The latter two titles are available at local bookstores; all are available from the Secretary of the Association. The supply of the first two titles is nearly exhausted.

DESCRIPTION OF CHAMPLAIN IN 1798

(Extracts from a letter from Pliny Moore of Champlain to Joseph Scott of Philadelphia.)

Champlain 26th Febr'y 1798

Dear Sir

This Town of Champlain is one of the five which Compose the County of Clinton. Is bounded North on the province of Lower Canada, East by the Lake Champlain, South by Plattsburgh & West by the County of Herkimer. Is about twelve miles in breadth from North to South. The west line not being ascertained the length from East to West is uncertain though supposed to exceed forty miles.

There is no Mountain of any magnitude in the Town & the hills or ridges which universally lie North & South & comport with the Lake Shore Rise gradually to about thirty feet above the General surface.

The principal Rivers which water this Town are the Great Chazy River [and] the Little Chazy which Run a North Eastwardly direction & empty into Lake Champlain, the former about five & the latter about seven Miles from the province line. The River Curbo [Corbeau] is between the great & little Chazy & discharges into the former about two Miles from its mouth.

These Rivers the Largest of which admits Boats of several Tons Burthen Six or seven Miles & has Grist & Saw Mills erected are composed of Innumerable smaller streams which plentifully water the Country & afford many valuable & commodious Mill seats & a great abundance & variety of fish which come from a Never failing Source.

The Salmon are taken here in great abundance & a fish little inferior in flavour called Maskenonge from 20 lb to 30 lb W't.

The Land produces excellent Wheat Rye Indian Corn Oats Peas Flax & almost every kind of Vegitable which has been cultivated in Great perfection & abundance & is peculiarly suited to the production of Grass. Wheat from Twenty to forty five Bus'ls P acre Corn from Twenty to Sixty Eight Bushels P Acre Grass one & two Tons P acre.

The Number of Families are about one hundred & Twenty five.

The Western part of this Town which is now settling is watered by several branches of a Considerable River Called Chatuge [Chateaugay] which after forming a Junction Run northward & discharge into the River St. Lawrence above Montreal & is said to be Navigable for small boats with but trifling obstruction from Montreal into this town.

There are the Strongest reason for an opinion that the whole of this Country & Lower Canada have been at no very remote period covered by the Lake which by gradual wearing at some confine at or below Quebeck has drained & left the Country bare. The reason for this opinion is that Mussle shells & other Marine productions are found in the earth whenever dug from the surface to forty feet in depth in great plenty.

Religious houses none. Distance from N York 360 Miles.

Wishing you success in so laudable an undertaking

I am Respectfully

Sir Your Most Hm'ble Serv't

P. Moor
(McLellan Collection)

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

In 1967, rather than appoint a single individual as chairman of the Membership Committee, your President proposes to appoint every present member of the Association as a member of the Membership Committee. Your assignment is to bring in one new member this year. Our membership now is about 300. For the whole county it ought to be double that number. Will you do your part? Use the enclosed blank, and return it to the Treasurer, J. Bernard Stratton, 6 Stratton Place, Plattsburgh, or to the Secretary, whose address appears elsewhere in these "Notes".

The Dartmouth College Library requests information concerning letters by or to Daniel Webster, preparatory to the publication of his papers. Anyone having such information is requested to get in touch with Association officers, or to write direct to Mrs. Carol S. Moffatt, Baker Memorial Library, Hanover, New Hampshire.

BURIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Mrs. Hiram H. (Jennett Elmore) Everest of Peru at the age of 87 put on paper her burial instructions. She twice added to them, and lived another seven years, until 1908.

As I have a heart disease, enfeeble action and low vitality, I now write a few of the directions I wish done after my death.

I do **not** wish my body embalm, neither any physician to make any examination. I wish my whole body as our God gave it into my keeping to be carefully placed inside of my coffin. I wish my body to be kept in my house **four whole days and four whole nights**. If necessary, my body can be placed in my coffin and remain in my house during the four whole days and the four whole nights.

I do **not** wish any flowers, no, not on my coffin, neither about my body. I wish my coffin in which has carefully been placed my body inside carried into the First Congregational Church and the funeral services held in the church. But I do not wish my coffin opened in the church.

After the services I wish it carefully placed in my vault in "God's Acre", the key of the vault to be carefully kept. I think for a time Sophia Brelia will take careful care of the vault, keeping clean and for which my executors will pay her. Rev. Humphrey will preach the sermon and make prayer at the house.

Oct. 30, 1901

(Signed) Jennett E. Everest

If it is cool weather when I die, I wish my body kept five whole days and five whole nights and notice sent to Mrs. George Butterfield in Washington and Mrs. Dr. O. T. Chapman, who lives Minneapolis, giving them time to come as each of them wish to be present at my funeral if they are not at my death.

Carriages will be secured from Peru and Plattsburgh. Sophia Brelia will be given the seat as First Mourner. The Rev. Humphrey and the pastor that may be of the Methodist Church will officiate.

Jennett E. Everest

Mrs. George Bently will remain in my house awaiting the persons return from the funeral services.

(Feinberg Library, gift of Eleanor Spaulding)

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