

# NORTH COUNTRY NOTES

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CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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Shirley L. Koester, Editor

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## ***The Next Meeting***

Will be June 5, 2000 in the first floor meeting room at the Government Center, 137 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, at 7:30 PM. James Giroux, Facilities Committee Board Chairman, will present an update on the prospective move to the Saily-Warren property. Janet Null of Argus Architecture and Preservation, P.C., has been gathering pertinent data respective to the establishment of our museum in this location.

## ***Confiance Anchor***

For two years, the anchor from the British frigate, *Confiance* has been undergoing conservation treatment at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in Vermont. The anchor will be installed in City Hall in time for the Battle of Plattsburgh Weekend Celebration, September 8 through the 11. Several design firms have submitted proposals for the design of this display. This will be a momentous time for the community at large. We encourage all to watch for the announcement of the installation and share in the spirit of the commemoration of Clinton County's role in the destiny of our young nation. We also encourage you to send donations for the *Confiance Anchor Fund* to the association office. Your association has made this important event possible. A small contribution from every member and interested individuals added together will help with this project.

## ***Incidents Regarding Seth Griffith, Sr., Of Grand Isle, Vermont By Orrel Town Larkin***

I attended a Friends' Meeting in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1917. It was an evening meeting. The older Friends were not attending. The meeting was made up of young people fourteen to eighteen years of age and there were about thirty or more in attendance. The(re) was a leader or preacher in charge of the service.

It was a good-sized meeting. They had an organ and singing. After the service, I waited in the vestibule. The young people as they passed out were greeted by the young man, who was leader, in a very friendly and informal manner. I enjoyed the meeting. This, I suppose was the same Society of Friends that my grandfather, was connected with, for he came to Grand Isle from Poughkeepsie.

I was in Poughkeepsie again in 1930 and attended the morning service of this same Society. The building looked like a new structure or it was the old building entirely made over. It very much resembled the Baptist Church in Plattsburgh. In this there was no attempt at ornament, inside or out. The pews were like the pews in churches. They were painted ivory white, which color predominated throughout the building. The pulpit was like a pulpit in a church. On this particular morning there seemed to be a good attendance, about one hundred fifty people or more. Great interest is shown in the young people. They were having something special for the children. It was the end of a period of several months duration and those who had attended regularly for the period were being recognized by some emblem, names were called, one by one, and they would walk up to the table in front of the pulpit and the committee giving out the momentoe would make the awards. There were about thirty who were successful, receiving these awards.

After this the regular service began. There were several minutes of silence, which was certainly effective in producing a solemn feeling, in myself, at least. I couldn't see that any of the congregation were restless or in a hurry to have things begin. After about four minutes a man in the congregation on my right stood and gave an impromptu discourse. It might have been very helpful to the Friends but it seemed to me as if he might have done better, none of the other Friends had any words to say. During this period of silence the leader or minister sat in the pulpit with his head bowed, like the rest of us. Then he gave a good helpful discourse and after, the meeting closed I waited to meet some of the people. I inquired about my relatives who used to live in Poughkeepsie and in the Oblong. I inquired about Hoags, Moshers, Duells, Griffiths and Williams, but the ones that I was talking to knew nothing of these families. The only one of the relatives I saw was Lieut. Gildersleeve, which was the time of my first visit in 1917. He was a Plattsburgh Camp graduate and he was the son of Friend Gildersleeve, a merchant. In his younger days this

Mr. Gildersleeve used to come up this way and visit the Friends at the Island and Peru and other places, from what he said I should judge he was a good deal like the presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church or superintendent of some churches. He was not a relative but his wife was a Hoag, who had come from the Oblong, and consequently her son, Lieut. Glidersleeve, was one of my relatives.

You will please note that this Poughkeepsie Society, which has survived, gives much attention to the young people, and the children. Grandfather Griffith's father's name was Jonathan and his mother's name was Hannah Duell. When they were young people they became genuinely enamored of each other, which happy condition persisted even when they migrated to Grand Isle and continued through all of the pleasant days of the lives at that place. But there had to be a beginning to such a state, such runs this way: One seventh day afternoon the two of them sat on a bridge that crosses a stream at the Oblong, now called [?], Jonathan had considerable courage that day and took the opportunity to propose: "Hannah, let me take your hand", and he had a knife and with the point of it he made a notch on a finger nail, then he said, "Hannah, when this notch grows out to the end of your finger we'll be married."

One of the children of Jonathan and Hannah was Seth Griffith, who came to Grand Isle when twelve years old with his Uncle, Ephraim Duell, a surveyor. On one of the trips to Poughkeepsie Seth brought back in his saddle bag some fruit tree cuttings for grafting. He was a nursery man. Also he raised mulberry trees to feed the silk worms. The children hated to work on those worms, keeping them clean. Also he tried to raise Quince and Peach trees. In a corner of a field on the road east from the home place he planted a clump of seven kinds of trees, and they lived and grew up and were called the "Seven Nations".

It is a pitiful and sad story, about one time in spring, when a true friend, his favorite horse, died. Seth had been confined to the house with a cold, but insisted on seeing the horse properly buried. He did not recover from the relapse that took him when he got back to the house.

*Note: This article, courtesy of Addie L. Shields, Clinton County Historian.*

### **Museum Exhibit**

A selection of the museum's collection of hats is currently shown in a special exhibit. Included in the exhibit are fine Quaker or Society of Friends bonnets, the Keese (descended in the Mason family and Arnold families, members of "the Union" in Peru, New York.

### **The Museum Shop**

The Museum Shop has two new titles to offer you: *The Historical Review of the Town of Mooers, Bicentennial Edition 1776 - 1976 Revised Millenium Edition 1999* for \$10.00 plus \$0.70 tax and \$3.50 for shipping and handling and *A History of the Town of Chazy, Clinton County, New York* for \$30.00 plus \$2.10 tax and \$5.00 for shipping and handling.

This is a courtesy service that the CCHA is providing to the towns, so these two titles will not be discounted.

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