

CLINTON



A BICENTENNIAL REVIEW

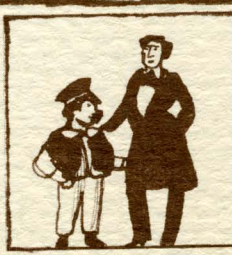


A. M. PROVENSEN

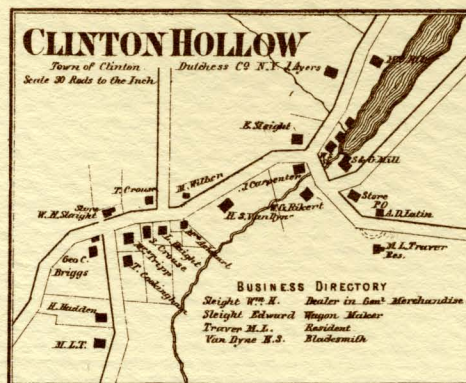
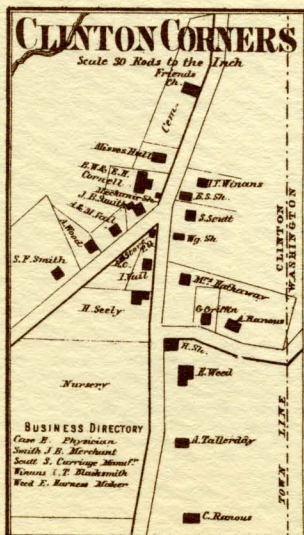
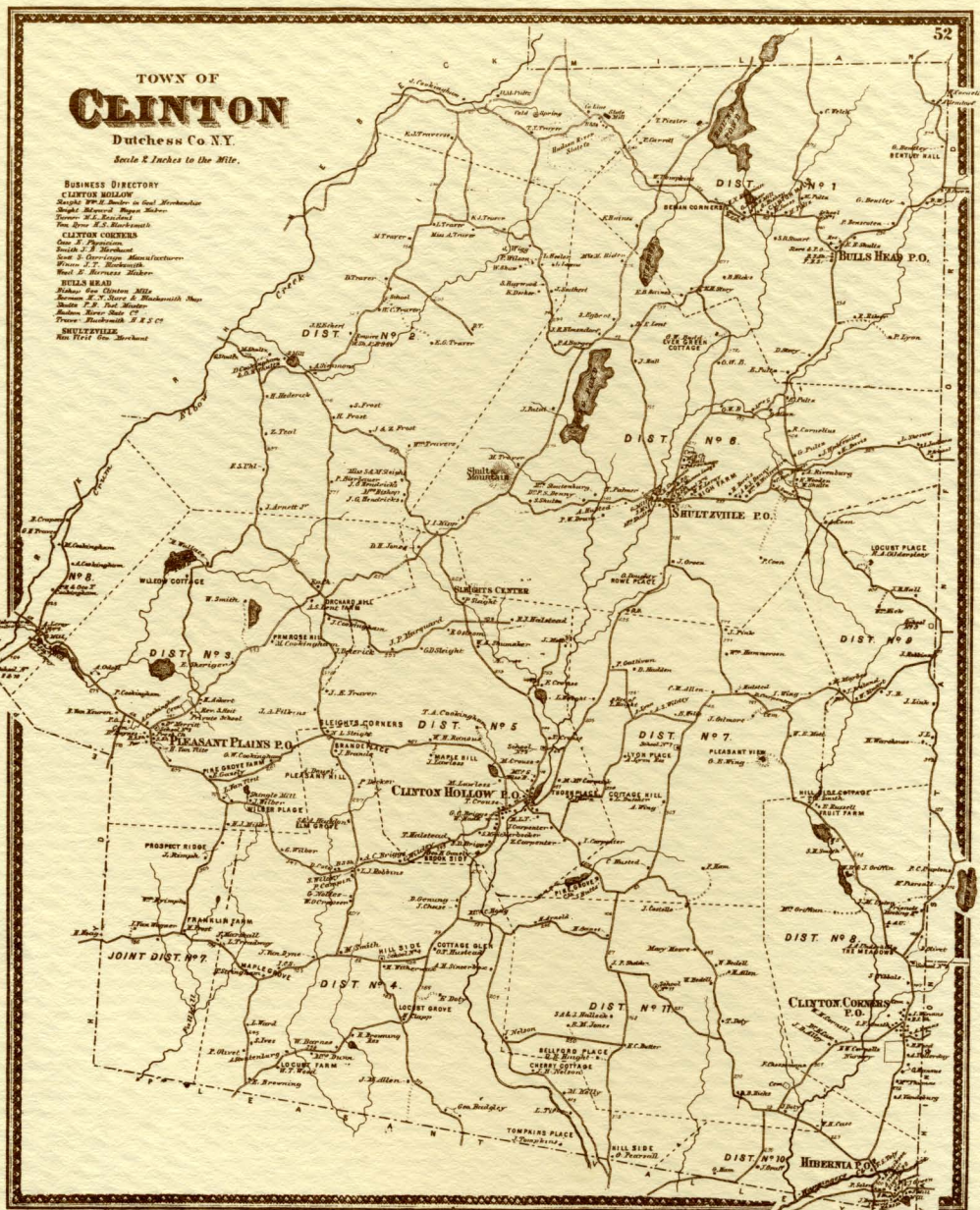
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This book would never have been possible without the cooperation and assistance of many residents and organizations of this town. Anyone who was asked gave of their time and talents. It is very dangerous to try and thank individuals, because it is inevitable that a grave omission will be made. However, we especially wish to thank the Upton Lake Grange, who gave permission to use their town history, published in 1959, as the inspiration and basis for this book.

The professional appearance of this publication is due to many hours given by many people skilled in publishing. Alice and Martin Provensen did the cover and the interior artwork. Shelagh Canning and Paul Schaefer edited and organized the hodge-podge of material given them. Ben Feder and Ralph Froelich contributed by designing and printing the finished product.

Many members of the Bicentennial Committee spent hours verifying dates and material and gathering pictures as well as writing articles. We wish to especially thank Marjorie Fountain, Betty Kinney, Rip Van Auken and Helena Van Vliet.

This was truly a town effort and we think Clinton should be proud of the spirit of "oneness" that still exists among its residents.

Kathleen M. Spross, Chairman
Clifford Barker
Emerson Burger
Marjorie Fountain
Ruth Hoyt
Mary Jo Nickerson

Betty Kinney
Rip Van Auken
Helena Van Vliet
Albert Vinck
Jean Webster
Herman Weiner

FOREWORD

In this Bicentennial Year we have looked back into the past and found it good to do so—for the past is the foundation of the present, and in the present we are laying the foundation of the future.

We marvel that the people in times past could do so much with so little. They inspire us to face the future with the same courage and integrity of purpose.

We thrill at the telling of great deeds and revere the leaders who are recorded with them. But what of the many others whose faith and labor made it all possible. Into the wilderness of central Dutchess they came from north, south, east and west. They came on horseback and with ox carts. With hand tools they cleared the land and built a log house. They cleared and planted more land. Almost all food required for their simple needs could be raised on their own land. Their sugar and molasses was gathered from the maple trees. Wool and flax of their own raising made their clothing. Their leather was in proportion to their own beef and mutton. Almost everyone could turn his hand to some trade, and tanners, cobblers, blacksmiths and millers were among the settlers.

As their cleared land became larger they built frame houses, and they gathered together to organize churches and began to give thought to their children's education.

During the last century, they became prosperous and the first frame house became an ell, summer kitchen or woodshed for the fine new farmhouses built during this period, the very houses we know today.

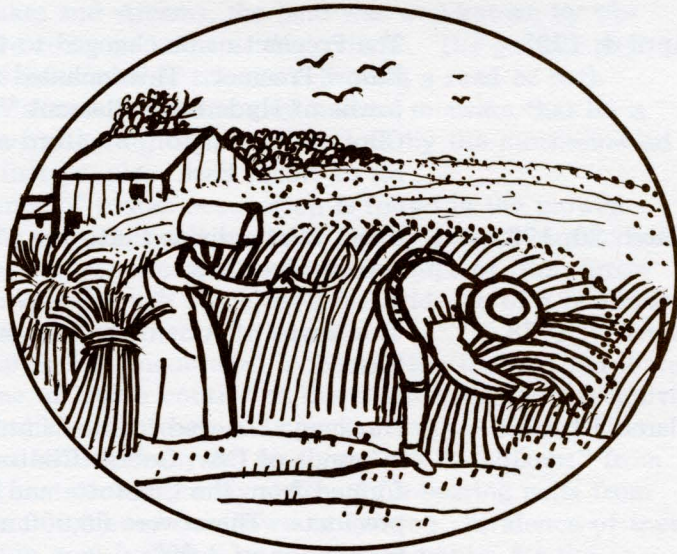
There is no trace of the first log houses, the hearthstones are covered again with earth, the last resting places of the builders have lost their markers, but their spirit will endure for all generations.

—MABEL K. BURHANS



PART ONE

History of the Town



HOW CLINTON WAS FORMED — CHRONOLOGY

November 1, 1683	Dutchess County organized.
May 27, 1697	Nine Partners Patent formed which included the present town.
1717-1718	Dutchess County divided into three wards: North, Middle and South. The boundary between North and Middle was just below Staatsburg and went east approximately on the present Stanford-Washington line.
December 16, 1737	Dutchess County divided into Precincts. Clinton is part of the Great Nine Partners Precinct.
April 4, 1738	The Precinct name changed to the Crum Elbow Precinct. This included the present towns of Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley, Clinton, Washington, Stanford and a little bit of North East.
March 20, 1762	Crum Elbow divided into the Charlotte and Amenia Precincts.
March 7, 1778	The towns of Amenia and Washington formed.
March 13, 1786	Our name changed to the Clinton Precinct in honor of Gov. George Clinton. We are formed from the Charlotte and Rhinebeck precincts. There were 66,000 acres and a population of 4,607.
April 4, 1786	The first precinct meeting held at the home of Dave Knapp.
March 7, 1788	Clinton Precinct becomes the Town of Clinton.
April 7, 1789	The first town meeting held at the home of Jonathan Owen.

- March 12, 1793 The Town of Stanford created out of a part of our town.
- January 26, 1821 Hyde Park and Pleasant Valley created as separate towns from part of our town. Our present boundaries were then established.

—CLIFFORD BUCK

INDIANS IN TOWN OF CLINTON

Long before the dawn of recorded history of this land of hills and valleys, lakes and streams, the land was well-known by the people we have come to know as the Indians. The present day traveler or the fisherman or trapper following a road or path bordering our lakes and streams may well be unaware that he is following a very old trail, first worn smooth by the moccasin-clad feet of these first people.

Much evidence of Indian occupation is found in the plowed fields bordering our lakes and streams. Small areas of burned and broken stones, fragments of bone and shell, chips of flint, arrow and spear points and rough stone tools are evidence of a one-time Indian hunting campsite.

Beaver trapping was encouraged by the Dutch traders, and it was during the time of Dutch control of the Hudson Valley that activity by the local Indians had reached its peak. We may be sure that the Wappingers Indians from the south and the "Mahikans" from the north and east took a goodly share of fur-bearing pelts from this region which included the Town of Clinton. Evidence of their early occupation now furnishes an interesting hobby for the amateur archeologist or arrowhead hunter.

The greatest evidence of an Indian camping site has been found at the point on Long Pond where the cottages are, and many Indian artifacts have been found on the Adelbert Cookingham farm. Arrowheads have been found along the Little Wappingers, particularly north of Schultzville, and in Milan Hollow near a point where there is now a beaver dam and along the Fallkill in the west part of the Town.

—ALMON B. BENEWAY

CLINTON OVER 200 YEARS – THE PEOPLE



The Town of Clinton is still the quiet little country township it was 200 years ago. None of our little hamlets, of which we have several, has grown to be a hustling, bustling city, or even an incorporated village. Some have expanded with a few more homes, and some small factories have come to replace the sawmills, gristmills and blacksmith shops which have long since gone.

Several of our hamlets are not even hamlets any more. Sodom Corners, Lent, Rowlands, Enterprise, Sleight's Corners and Beeman's Corners are just crossroads where once was a post office, a store or a tavern; the name not even known to some of the residents.

In 1697, the Nine Partners Patent was formed. The nine partners acquired the land for speculation, selling off large tracts to smaller speculators.

As soon as people began to move into the Town and cut down trees to build their houses and barns, and clear the land to grow crops, other people built mills to saw lumber and grind grain for flour and meal. When a mill started to operate it attracted people, so someone started a store nearby, then a blacksmith thought this was the place for a shop. The blacksmith needed a house, the storekeeper needed a house, the miller and the miller's helper needed houses, so a hamlet was started.

Clinton Corners, Clinton Hollow, Schultzville, Frost Mills, Pleasant Plains, Bull's Head and Hibernia were some of the bigger hamlets and, in 1881, each had a post office.

Before the R.F.D. system there was a post office in every little hamlet, usually in the corner of a general store or a private home. The mail was brought to these little post offices one or two times a week.

As Clinton grew, we needed schools, so the Town was divided up into school districts. Each school district had its own school board that collected taxes, hired a teacher, bought the books and

fuel, and looked to the upkeep of the school. In the early days, the teacher often lived with one of the farm families and received her room and board as part of her pay. One teacher who taught at Mountain View tells the story of living with a farm family that used no lamps or candles. They went to bed when it got dark and got up when it was light.

At one time we had eleven one-room schools in the town. There were schools at Clinton Corners, Clinton Hollow, Schultzville, Prospect Hill, Pleasant Plains, Frost Mills, Mountain View, Ruskey, Oak Grove and Bull's Head. All of these buildings are still standing; most are private homes, one is a Sunday school, one a post office and one is still as it was but abandoned.

In the beginning almost everyone was a farmer. Even if you were a doctor, lawyer or storekeeper, you had a horse to drive, a cow for milk, hens for eggs and a garden for vegetables.

Money was scarce, so often you traded what you had for what you needed. You might give the doctor a load of wood for delivering a baby or the lawyer some potatoes for writing a will or deed.

The town as it is now, 36 square miles, grew in population until in 1865 it had 1,900 people. Then as people left the farms to go to the cities, the population dropped. In 1940 there were 1,000 people. Now, because people are moving back to the country, we have 3,000 people in the Town of Clinton.

—RIP VAN AUKEN

CLINTON OVER 200 YEARS — THE LANDSCAPE



In the late 1600's when the Nine Partners came, the land in what is now Clinton was covered with heavy forest: oak, hickory, maple, chestnut, pine and hemlock.

Roads were cut through the woods to get from place to place. Where a family settled they made a small clearing and built a house of some kind, a log cabin or a stone hut.

As time went by, more and more people came, cleared more land, built more homes and farm buildings. Most of the early

houses and barns were built with timbers hewed out of logs by hand. We still have (in 1975) at least 100 barns in our town built with hand-hewed timbers, all pinned together with wooden pins.

By the middle of the 19th century most of the land was cleared, all tillable land was being farmed, all the fields were bound by neat stone walls with rails of split chestnut along the top.

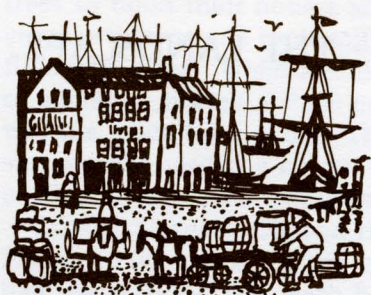
Very little land was allowed to grow up with bushes or trees except where the terrain was too steep or rocky for farming. These rough areas were kept for wood lots to harvest firewood. By the late 1800's, there were many lovely homes on prosperous farms.

Just imagine riding down an old country road in a horse-drawn buggy, past farm after farm with flocks of sheep, herds of cows, horses and oxen plowing the land or harvesting the crops. Then past a one-room schoolhouse with its woodshed and twin privies. Further down the road was a tiny village with a country store, blacksmith shop, and a little country church. Near the church were long sheds where the horses and wagons were sheltered from the sun, rain or snow during the services or church suppers.

After the turn of the century, people started to leave the farms. More and more land was left to grow up to bushes and later into woods. The stone walls were allowed to fall down, replaced by barbed wire where anyone still kept livestock.

Now in 1975 there are very few operating farms left in our town; much of the land has gone back to woods. People are clearing small plots of land and building new homes.

—RIP VAN AUKEN



WEST CLINTON—WHAT CAME FIRST AND WHAT FOLLOWED

Land was a commodity held for no purpose except to change hands and pick up money. To influence buyers, the large landowners used a touch of good will:



If we can give some land or sell it cheaply enough to lure a group of settlers to establish a community, we can sell more land. Sometimes natural assets were added to the bait such as water power, good timber, areas of good farming.

The west side of the Hudson River came earlier than the east side because of navigational assets, and Clinton came later than Hyde Park or Rhinebeck because of the good road (later the Post Road) and the river.

Around the 1700's, some of the young men of Kingston began to grow weary of city life and headed for the backwoods. Also, the High Dutchers came. They were the Palatine settlers who had come over as religious refugees from Germany: First to Holland, then to England and then to the Hudson Valley. Naturally addicted to farming, they began to seek land, and with large families they began to occupy more and more land. One family, the Travers, was descended from a single emigre, Sebastian Traver, who first set down roots around the 9-9G crossing. He began to take in land in West Clinton until almost all the land west of Fiddlers Bridge and Center roads and extending into Rhinebeck and Milan was owned by Traver.

The present Town of Clinton is separated from its neighbors, Hyde Park and Rhinebeck, on the west by the Crum Elbow stream. The natural resources of this stream valley were the motivation for early settlers to locate here. An eastern branch rises in two beautiful ponds: Fried's Pond and Brown's Pond. At the point where this eastern branch approaches its junction with the main stream, it drops more than 40 feet through a short narrow gorge and is an accessible, easily tamed source of water power. The hills were covered with timber that seemed fabulous even to the early comers who had seen too many trees. Oak, cherry, chestnut, maple, hemlock and black walnut were everywhere: a cabinet maker's and woodcrafter's paradise. Crops harvested from the new grounds, although far from equaling present day farming standards, so far excelled any that the farmers had known elsewhere that it seemed a veritable promised land.

West Clinton was from the beginning and even is now a melding of all nations, races and creeds. The Indian was welcomed at the table of the Dutch and would shoot a deer and share it with the white man. Religious intolerance was unheard of. The early

settlers of West Clinton were a mixed brew: Van Vliet, Van Kuern, Sleight—Dutch; Cookingham, Traver, Crapser, Schultz—German Palatine; Le Roy, DeWitt—French; Garrison—English; O'Dell—Irish.

During the Revolutionary period, there was much difference and division of opinion and even within family groups the war carried on. Jost Garrison was an officer in the Swarthout regiment operating with the Continental Army in the Mohawk Valley. His son-in-law, Carl Traver, was at home in Clinton stirring up the Tories. As an assist to the British, he had kidnapped a bunch of the local boys, holding them in a ravine to the west of Brown's Pond. He planned to turn them over to Admiral Vaughn when he came up the Hudson. These boys were released in a skirmish between the Tories and Minutemen, and Carl Traver was wounded. He was reluctant to go to a white doctor because of uncertainty of sympathies. He went to an Indian witch doctor who told him to split a white oak sapling and crawl through the cleft in both directions. If the tree lived, he would live. This he did, and both lived. The tree, which was called the Tory Tree, was located at the edge of the wooded hill below the home of Robert Fried. The tree was felled for lumber about 1900. Experienced lumbermen were felling it, and it dropped in a completely unpredicted direction trapping Elsworth Traver. He escaped being killed only due to the fact that a stone wall supported its fall. When the tree was being sawed in the mill, the wedge marks were visible in the heart of the tree. A sawer, a man by the name of Knickerbocker, was cut and died of blood poisoning from his wound.

The early families were in no way dependent on the supermarket or department store. Their gardens and fields and woods produced all that was needed. Horses, cows, sheep and pigs were nurtured and paid their way by furnishing transportation, food and clothing. The industries that produce the tools and transformed the local produce to a usable form became established on the spot.

There were DeWitts Mills for grinding grain for human and animal needs, and also for slicing logs into shapes suitable for building purposes. The wood lots on "Sammy's Mountain" were owned by many families to produce milling logs, and the toppings were used for fuel.

In Pleasant Plains, there was the blacksmith who not only shod horses, but transformed metal into any specified shape. There was also the shoemaker, the store, the church and the schoolhouse.

I would propose a guessing game which might be solved by putting a dozen heads together and digging through old attics. We know when the DeWitt grist mill was built, but when was the saw



mill built? This took a bit longer, for they needed a dam to harness the stream. Were hand-hewn beams in old buildings from choice or necessity? My own house has hand-hewn beams and it was the original Low Dutch Church which originally stood on the Pleasant Plains corner. This could not have been built before 1784, at which time the Land Broker gave the land to the Providence Society of Pleasant Plains.

The above quiz on "when and how" is only a beginning. There were grist and saw mills and shingle all over the place which have disappeared, and even in some places the water course that was their source of power has become buried in the swamps. Follow the Crum Elbow and its tributaries, the Fallkill and the Little Wappingers, and unless you know where they were, it is just a bridge or culvert on the highway. On Schultzhill Road, there was a mill near the falls and another near the junction of Fiddlers Bridge Road. Others were located on the lively crossroads at Schultzville, Bulls Head and at Clinton Hollow near the Buchele place.

In early days, the most needed professionals were surveyors and builders. The surveyor marked his course by line-marker trees, usually oaks, and stone piles and streams. The builder did his own designing and layout and evaluated the building site for all necessary facilities such as wells and roads. A surveyor of more than local repute, Capt. Ruben Spencer, who had accompanied George Washington on his exploration of the Ohio Territory and was a Revolutionary War officer, lived on Rymph Road and is buried in the family burying ground there. Of builders, Rowland, for whom the Hollow Road and Rymph Road corner was named, designed and built the Prescott house which is where the Clinton Lodge of Masons was founded.

Snoop around the ruins of old houses and visualize what was once there. Try to imagine the loose hay packed in the barns, and the herds of cows having the right of way on the roads. Forget the weekly trip to the supermarket.

—HELENA VAN VLIET





SCHULTZVILLE

In 1807, John F. Schultz purchased 220½ acres of land of David Johnston. This land was a well-watered, limestone tract situated somewhat north of the center of the town of Clinton. Shortly after 1807, Mr. Schultz erected a substantial farmhouse and a grist mill on the nearby stream. A dam was built making a good-sized pond which remained until the early 1900's. Sometime later the general store was built and houses sprang up, making a small village. There was a blacksmith shop which remained in operation for many years. At various times a harness shop, cigar-making shop and other small industries were in operation.

John F. Schultz had a son Daniel who, according to records, was a very enterprising businessman. He added extra acreage to the original farm. The general store, also run by the Schultz family, sold whiskey in addition to other staples, and rumor has it that some of the land was acquired in payment for the other farmers' thirsts.

Daniel Schultz was thrice married. When he married Louisa Conger, his third wife, he built the big house on the hill for his bride. The farmhouse across the way was then occupied by the farm manager. There was one son, Theodore Augustus, whose mother was either the first or second wife. Louisa bore him a son and two daughters. The son Daniel died at the age of ten, the same year that his father died. Theodore died at the age of 26. He bequeathed money for the erection of a church and a Masonic hall, Warren Lodge. Until that time the meeting had been at Lafayetteville. The two daughters were Susan, who married Timothy Palmer, and Ida who married James Tripp. Neither had children, and after the deaths of their husbands the sisters lived for many years in the big house on the hill with their maid and man of all work.

Land for the school was given by the Schultz family and was located on a hill east of the blacksmith shop. It was a fine hill for coasting, and in winter we would take our sleds to school, hurry through lunch and spend the rest of the noon hour riding down hill. By going up the road a bit, one could ride down past the store, and if you had a good sled, down the mill hill. I was forbidden to go that far as once a local boy had run into one of the bridges and broken his leg. Many times I heard about my

father and another young man helping my grandfather, the local doctor, set a leg on the kitchen table. There were three bridges at the foot of mill hill, and I remember lying in bed on a summer evening and hearing the planks rattle on all three as the local farmers went home after an evening visiting at the store. The years brought many changes, of course. I do not know who succeeded the Schultz's as owners of the store. My earliest remembrance is of William Henry Sleight who kept the store, and he always gave me a peppermint stick when I went shopping with Mother. He died when I was six and the store, was kept first by Melvin Sweet and then by Benjamin Bradley who operated it for many years. During the holiday season of 1933, the store and the adjoining house and garages burned. The store was rebuilt and was in operation until a few years ago.

Theodore Schultz's gifts to the community, the church and Masonic hall, are still serving their purposes well. The blacksmith shop is still standing and is used as a garage and the clang of the hammer shaping horse shoes is just a memory. In 1910, George Budd purchased the farm and operated it for many years. The old farm house is now empty and badly in need of restoration. Mrs. Palmer died in 1914, and shortly after Mrs. Tripp sold the big house on the hill and moved to Rhinebeck.

There are few descendents left of the old families, and most of them are scattered about the world. Such names as Waltermire, Green, Denny, Budd, Sheak, Sleight, Lyon and many more are remembered only by the old-timers.

Now and then a new house is added to the community. We have a hard road which is well-plowed in winter, and Poughkeepsie is a short drive. Most of our residents work there, and we have a far different life compared to the days of my girlhood. Daniel Schultz and Louise would be quite amazed were they to return. The old schoolhouse still stands and has been converted into living quarters. Time does not permit telling all the interesting history of our little hamlet, but I have tried to touch on the highlights as I remember them.

(Reprinted thru the courtesy of the Dutchess County Historical Society)

—RUTH M. HOYT

TOWN GOVERNMENT

Originally, the town council met yearly and was composed of the supervisor, two councilmen, town justice and a town clerk as well as assessors, the overseer of the poor, the overseer of the highway and the fence viewers. Today, we have retained the

supervisor, two councilmen, two town justices and a town clerk as well as the three assessors and the highway superintendent. However, there is now sufficient business for them to meet monthly. We also have a planning board and, since 1969, a zoning board.

Our police protection is provided by the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Troopers in Millbrook and Rhinebeck. Our fire protection is from three volunteer fire companies.

The first meeting of the West Clinton Fire Company was July 26, 1945, and the first district election was held in December 1945. In January of 1946, the commissioners obtained the old schoolhouse at Pleasant Plains for a firehouse. They put an addition on the back to house their fire truck, an Army surplus Chevy, which is still in use, and an extra water carrier converted from an old milk carrier. On February 6, 1946, the first company meeting was held. Philetus Burger was elected president and Albert Woodin, chief. In 1955, the present site was purchased and a new firehouse built. And in 1971, a firehouse was added in Schultsville. On April 1, 1975, this was formed into Company 2 of the West Clinton Fire Department.

In East Clinton, at first, people were summoned to fight a fire by a large gong located in the center of the village. Men from all over the village would pick up their fire buckets and rush to the fire. In 1932, the Clinton Volunteer Fire Company was organized and incorporated. The company had as its first truck, an old Model T Ford equipped with a chemical tank. In 1939, a fire district was organized which is known as the East Clinton Fire District and commissioners were appointed. The abandoned railroad station was purchased for a firehouse. The present firehouse was dedicated June 29, 1957.

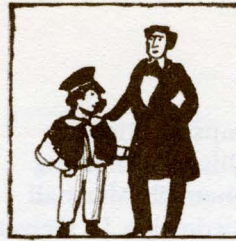
There are also two rescue squads in the town. East Clinton was formed in July 1969 and West Clinton in June of 1970.

All of these companies have continually raised funds to obtain the finest in equipment which they have today. And the members have spent many extra hours for professional training. All serve without pay. East and West Clinton have always functioned together as a team and have served the town well—not only in the matter of fire and emergency protection but in supporting civic matters as well.

—KATHLEEN SPROSS



EARLY TOWN GOVERNMENT



It is interesting to note that in early times our town officials met only once a year, usually in the home of the town clerk or supervisor. According to the earliest information available to us, these officials were "chosen" rather than elected. In 1800, there were three highway commissioners and 80 overseers of the highways. The overseers were the property owners and each was responsible for the maintenance of the roads bordering his property.

Our thanks to Kelsey P. Wirehouse for making these records available to us. At present, the Town of Clinton Historical Society has formed a committee to transcribe these records so they will be available to all for inspection. The minutes of the Town Meeting of 1800, the first presently available are as follows:

At an annual Town Meeting held at the House of Johnathan Owen in Clinton Town of Tuesday the first Day of April 1800 under the Inspection of Jacob Schryver and John W. Allen, Esqs. the following Officers were Chosen.

Jonathan Owen	Town Clerk
John DeWitt	Supervisor
Henry Ostrom Frederick Uhl Jacob Schryver Henry Vanderburgh Seaman Carpenter	Assessors
Simpson Slight	Collector
Rich. D. Cantillon Henry Slight	Surity
John W. Allen Abner Lee Hewlett Peters	Commissioners of Highways
Henry Ostrom John M. Thurston	Poor Masters

Simpson Slight
William T. Belding
Nehemiah Marshall
Bowdewine L. Gelveston
Jacob Ostrom

Constables

John T. Schryver
William T. Belding
Jonathan Owen
Jacobus Swartout

Pound Masters

William Johnston
Henry Slight
Seaman Carpenter
Walter Skidmore
William F. Belding
Hewlett Peters

Fence Viewers

Rich. D. Cantillon
Jacob Schryver
Henry Vanderburgh
Henry Ostrom
Issac Bloom

School Commissioners

VOTED:

That the Poor Masters may if they choose Rent a House for the
Accommodation of the Poor

250 Dollars to be raised for the Support of the Poor

Ram Law to remain as in 1794 page 222

Sheep Law to remain as in 1795 page 226

Hog Law to remain as in 1791 page 199

Town meeting to be held the Next Year at the House of Jonathan
Owen.

—BETTY KINNEY

PART TWO

Life Styles



CLINTON'S EARLY AGRICULTURE



It is with a great deal of humility that this writer attempts to give a short history of agriculture in the town of Clinton, because of the importance the subject deserves, the limited time to do proper research and the lack of accurate records pertaining to so interesting and important a subject. The information here given has been obtained from old diaries, the 1865 census and facts told this writer by his father, uncle and grandparents.

It is interesting that the first soil survey was made in 1734 and divided the township into five different strips of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in width, beginning on the north border of the township of Clinton (at the Hudson River) and running from west to east. The first strip was classified as indifferent, the second as bad, the third as indifferent, the fourth as indifferent and the fifth or south strip as good.

During the 18th century and continuing well into the 19th, the farming was simple and for subsistence. The few products that were sold were traded for staples and the then luxuries such as tea, cloth, utensils, etc. Since there were only a very few so-called roads in those early days, access to the Hudson River was limited except by foot or horseback. It is believed that there were only three landings on the Hudson River, at Rhinebeck, Staatsburg and Poughkeepsie, in the early 18th century. From these landings such products as were not traded locally were shipped by boat to what is now New York City.

As time marched on, each farmer planted a few apple trees which in due time produced fruit for the owner. According to the 1865 census, most of our forefathers stashed away from 1 to 25 barrels of cider. This amount of the juice of the apple, after the proper length of time elapsed, was converted by nature into cider and, what was left, vinegar. However, some of the cider was processed into the potent liquid of applejack; the latter product, it is understood, came in very handy when a large field of hay or grain was cut down with scythe or cradle.

As the population increased in the 19th century, more land was cleared, more roads built and more trading was done of farm products for necessities with the neighboring communities. The

village of Poughkeepsie became a city and provided a market for a portion of the produce. The semi-annual or annual trip to the city or the Hudson River landings was by no means a small event. The heavy hauling was done by oxen. It is recalled that the father of this writer told of loading the sled with pork, a beef carcass or two, and at 3 A.M. two oxen were yoked to the sled and a start made for the Rhinebeck Landing where the river was crossed on the ice, to Kingston where the produce was sold. The leather boots that the driver wore became so stiff with cold, that walking was necessary in order to prevent frozen feet. Usually the round trip took the better part of two days.

The farms produced beef cattle, sheep, butter, oats, corn, turnips, potatoes, barley, rye, wheat and some tobacco and hops. Wages paid in 1860 were around \$15 and board a month, which during the War between the States jumped to \$25 and keep. During this period, land values increased 25 percent. According to one census enumerator, "Morals became more lax." Another enumerator stated, "People were behaving themselves very well since most of the sinners were in the Army."

You can use your own judgement.

Prior to 1865 there is no record of cows being milked for market, although butter was made from the few milk cows, and what was not consumed at home was sent to market once or twice a year. (The butter must have been very well salted.)

Before the advent of the mowing machine and reaper in the latter part of the 19th century, hay was mowed with a scythe and grain with a cradle, but help was cheap, food and drink substantial, men were strong and the day was long.

One narrator stated that he could hardly remember a day when company was not coming, going or staying. Even though everyone worked hard, had no plumbing and few conveniences, they took the time to enjoy the better things of life socially—a visit to relatives or friends. In most households, there was Grandma or Auntie to help spin the flax or wool and rock the baby's cradle.

It is recorded that between 1880 and 1930 there was a 56 percent reduction in the number of farms and now there are few working farms left. Behold the old order changeth!

This writer was amused by the general remarks made by an 1865 census enumerator of the town of Clinton. He stated, "Not one farmer in ten keeps any account of their business transactions. They forget or cannot remember the number of acres they pasture or plow. They don't know the number of acres in their fields, or the amount of bushels of grain or the amount of money received."

Space does not permit further rambling on this subject, which

has been so superficially treated, but we can look back on "the good old days" and find a lot of good in them. At least our ancestors had and took time to love, and really live, and enjoy the good things of life that the good Lord gave them.

—DR. V. HENRY ALLEN



BUSINESS LIFE IN CLINTON

Today there are two stores in the whole town, J&L Market in Clinton Corners and Mei's General Store in Clinton Hollow, and only a few business establishments. You would think it would be safe to assume this has always been the case. Not so! Irma Wing Dykeman has left us a list of business establishments that used to be in our township and its variety is astounding.

For your clothing and personal needs there were the shops of a shoemaker, tailor, milliner and barber. For your food supplies you could go to a grocery, meat market, creamery, apple-packing shop or a grist mill. By the way, some grocery prices in 1900 were:

1 lb. coffee	19¢
25 lbs. flour	60¢
3 lbs. beefsteak	42¢
50 clams	50¢
1 lb. butter	24¢
1 loaf bread	10¢
1 lb. crackers	10¢
1 qt. oysters	25¢
3 lbs. rice	21¢
1 doz. eggs	18¢
1 doz. crullers	10¢
12 pies	48¢
2 doz. cream puffs	36¢



You could keep your horse at a livery stable, have the blacksmith shoe him and get his feed at the feed mill. You could even buy harness and a wagon for him to pull. Later, when you had a car, Clinton had a garage and a tire shop.

You could build a house in Clinton without going out of the town limits for anything. There was a contractor and builder, a carpenter, a tinsmith and a plumber. (In 1912, plumber Jerome Crowley of Clinton Corners charged \$10.50 for three days of labor.) For the materials, you had access to a saw mill, a lumber company, a hardware store, a paint store and a nursery. Other household needs could be met by the cooper shop and the grist mill and the coal company. (In 1900, one ton of coal was \$5.90.)

For entertainment you could go to the Upton Lake Amusement Park, Wing's Dance Hall or visit the old men at the Musician's Home.

And, of course, there were those establishments found in all communities: the railroad station, freight house, post offices and schools. All in all, Clinton bustled and wasn't the sleepy community it is today.

Irma Wing Dykeman was a life-long resident of Clinton Corners. She is also the descendent of many of Clinton's leading entrepreneurs. This information was taken from notes left in the Clinton Library.

—CHARLES G. SPROSS



THE TIRED BUSINESS MAN

by
Estelle Deering

From his head to his feet, he was weary and sore
As he closed for the day his grocery store.
His cares had been many,
His sales had been light,
So he went to bed dry and tired that night.
And as he dreamed of that awful hot summer,
He tried to think up some punishment fit for a drummer.

They had pestered him by day,
And he dreamed of them at night,
Until the face of a drummer,
Made him sneak out of sight.
It was candy and ice cream,
Canned goods and oil,
Drugs, coffee and tea,
Something new all the while.

Until his poor brain was ready to burst,
Than along came Goode's actors
With a terrible thirst.
Some wanted ice cream
And others a drink.
Another some postcards,
Another the ink.

So it ran on, day in and day out,
Until the poor man was ready to shout.
He begged all his friends who came in that hot summer
To think up some punishment fit for a drummer.

The author of this poem was a life-long resident of Clinton. This poem was found among many historical papers in the Clinton Library.



MILLS

To build a log house or a framed house, in the early days of the Township, a saw mill was needed, and to complement the cultivation of grain, grist mills were wanted. Mills were all-important to an agricultural region. The following mills, near good water power, were a vital part of the economy of the area.

Hibernia—grist mill erected in 1785 on the East Branch of the Wappingers Creek by David Arnold. Last known owner, in 1840, was Oliver Drew.

Schultzville—saw mill and grist mill erected in 1792 by John F. Schultz. He made \$100,000 from this and passed it on to his son, Daniel H. Schultz. In 1867, it was owned by John Fellers.

Clinton Hollow—saw mill and grist mill erected in 1797 by a man named Carpenter. LeGrand Graham was the last known owner.

Clinton Corners—two grist mills erected in 1797 on Upton Road by Daniel Beadle. One saw mill erected in 1797 at Upton Lake by Able Balsie. There was a grist mill at the site of the present Sinnott property that operated before 1800, and a saw mill at the present Miller place in 1860.

Pleasant Plains—saw mill with a dam was erected at the point where the east tributary stream enters the top of the gorge. This produced a mill pond which covered the entire present bushy marsh up to the point where the road turns sharply just below the present home of Clifford Barker. The logs were brought to mill in winter when farm work was slack and skidded off the sleds onto the ice and then floated into the mill at the time of the spring ice break-up. This mill was built in the early 1770's and torn down in the early 1920's. The grist mill was built by John DeWitt as a flour mill and predates the American Revolution. Flour was milled here for Washington's Army when it was stationed at Fishkill. Later when flour became available commercially, this mill was used for custom grinding of animal feed. The grist mill was a model of architectural ingenuity. It was three stories high, built against the hillside with water power delivered through a flume from the lower pond in the gorge. The farmer delivered his grain into the third floor peak, and from that point gravity and water power combined to deliver a finished product at a lower level. This mill

was torn down in 1948, and the large timbers were used in building the I.B.M. Country Club.

Other industrial activity included a shingle mill operated by water power from a small stream dam, one of the head-water tributaries of the Fallkill. This was located on Hollow Road at the present Buchele place. A saw mill was also operated on an east tributary of the Crum Elbow stream on the present Schultz Hill Road at a spot formerly called Clinton Falls.

There was a mill on the old road from Hollow Road to Oak Grove School, one at Bulls Head, another on the Little Wappingers about one mile north of Salt Point and probably several others on the smaller streams in the town.

—MRS. HOWARD WIGGERS AND HELENA VAN VLIET

A CONVERSATION WITH GREAT-GRANDFATHER ON SLATE QUARRY HILL



So this is Slate Quarry Hill! It is so different from the time when I was a boy, and the quarry was running. There were no hard roads then—every farmer sold hay. The company had cattle running loose, and when you went through with a load of hay on your way to the river, those cattle would come running and nearly pull the load off the wagon. Good job the teamsters of the quarry had hauling loads to Rhinecliff. There the slate was put on river barges.

What did they use it for? Oh, tiles and slate for roofing. They cut it at the quarry—used saws.

Did they do much business? Well, I should say so. There were three or four houses on the quarry then—maybe more. One was a boarding house. There was a force of 25 or 30 men working at the quarry. Lots of Irish.

One day they got into some kind of an argument with Sam who ran the boarding house. It got hotter and hotter until it finally broke out into a good, old-fashioned, free-for-all. One of the men ran into the house and cried to Sam's wife, "Hey, come quick. They're killing Sammy."

She took one look out the door, picked up a sock from her work basket and slipped into it a cobblestone as big as your fist.

Then she waded out among the men swinging that sock left and right. She saved Sammy all right.

They used to have lots of fights. They would get drunk down at the store at Bulls Head. Swartz ran the store. He had to have four or five men helping him—he had so much business. Didn't pay his help—just give 'em a drink of whiskey. They would come and go.

One day old man Swartz had some turkeys to dress, so he gave some fellows a bottle of whiskey to do the job. They finished the bottle before they began to work, and they made hash of those turkeys—tore off skin and feathers—just let it rip. The old man lost on that deal.

But usually Swartz was a shrewd, old covey. They said he would sit on a little bench beside a 40-gallon whiskey barrel on Saturday night and fill the glasses right from the barrel. (That was so the whiskey would go farther because there'd be more foam to fill the glass than if he drew it into a jug first.) They said he would sit there drawing off whiskey and have his helpers pass it out, and not get up from the bench until that 40-gallon barrel was empty.

Country sure has changed, and not all for the worse either, and yet human nature keeps about the same.

Where are we now? Almost home? Well, well, cars do cover the ground faster than even a good road horse, don't they?

—FARLEY RIKERT

HISTORY OF THE SLATE QUARRY

Extensive slate deposits in Schultz Mountain, a short distance west of Schultzville, have at different times afforded considerable industrial activity. In 1798, slate was quarried here for roofing the home of Mrs. Richard Montgomery in Rhinebeck. The Hudson River Slate Company was the first to operate the quarries which covered 293 acres. The manufactured slate was hauled by oxen to slate docks in Rhinecliff. In the beginning, this business was so successful that it was valued at \$1 million. There were many buildings on the property to house the workers. The gravestone of a child of one of the workers is still visible on the premises. By 1874, the good slate was exhausted, shipping costs became prohibitive, and the first company went out of business. Another company tried to reopen the quarries and also failed. Now, we have a town dump.

CHURCHES

In Clinton Corners, there are two churches. The Community Friends Church is a descendant of the Creek Meeting, established in 1776. (For further details, see the following article.) St. Joseph's Catholic Church was established in 1889. Prior to that time Mass was often celebrated in private homes. In 1919, this church became a mission of the Catholic Church in Bangall. Today, the pastor is Father Raymond Hyland.

The Schultzville Christian Church was organized in 1864. The church was built on land given by Theodore A. Schultz, who also donated the money to build the church. It continues to be active today, with the minister being Rev. James Van Scoy.

At Pleasant Plains, the Society of the Reformed Church of Holland was organized in 1784. The inhabitants built the one room church, jointly used as a school, and met informally for worship. However, they were unable to obtain recognition because of the requirements that the pastor go to Amsterdam, Holland for ordination. Formal acceptance did not come until 1815. In 1837, the congregation built the present church and reformed as the Pleasant Plains Presbyterian Church. This building has been enlarged twice and extended in scope by an addition of a Christian Education building. The present minister is the Rev. Carl R. Voth.

There was until as late as 1850 an Episcopal Church at the corner of Fiddlers Bridge Road and Deer Ridge Road where a road extended from this point to the Brown's Pond Road. No records of this church are available.

Schultzville Christian Church, 1906



Pleasant Plains Presbyterian Church, 1909





THE CLINTON CORNERS FRIENDS CHURCH

If you follow Jameson Hill Road to the top of the hill you will look down on a lovely valley through which a little stream meanders on its way to the Wappingers Creek.

Different families settling in this valley in 1771 "numbered five men and three women heads of families." A minute reads "Friends over the Creek desired a meeting which was granted by the parent meeting, Nine Partners." The name Creek was given to this meeting because the people from Nine Partners had to ford the Wappingers Creek to come here, calling it the meeting "over the creek." This meeting was held at the house of Jonathan Hoag.

Before the first house was built, the Quakers placed stones to mark the spot and would gather around to conduct worship. One record says that once they were joined by some rough looking men, however, since they behaved in a seemly manner, they were not questioned. In 1776, the meeting was moved to a little log house belonging to Paul and Phebe Upton. The meeting increased rapidly in numbers and was removed to Elijah Hoag's barn during the summer and to his dwelling house during the winter.

A committee was appointed in 1775 "to pitch upon a place" for a meeting house. Abel Peters gave the land for it and for the cemetery, although he was not a Quaker. "He was already established as a merchant and innkeeper, a successful man of integrity who did all the public business required by the people of those primitive times" (Smith's History of Dutchess County).

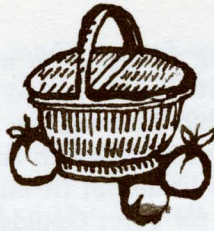
Meetings for worship were held regularly and were often attended by a number of raw, rustic looking people, most of whom were not Quakers. They would gather together near the Upton house before meeting time and engage in disputes about the war, sometimes with high words and angry looks, but when the appointed hour came, Phebe Upton would come to the door. All controversy would cease and the company sat down with apparent reverence to wait upon the Father of Mercies. This seems to be the first move toward community worship. There is good reason to believe some who were not yet members of our society afterward joined in religion's fellowship and became united in bearing Christian testimony against war by patiently suffering the spoilage of their goods. "Surely it is the Lord's doings and marvelous indeed."

The building of the stone meeting house was begun in 1777, but it was several years before it was finished. Because of their stand against war and violence, they became the target of persecution and harassment. Not only was their worship interrupted by scoffers and enemies of their faith, but bands of Tories and lawless gangs often attacked the builders, driving them away and destroying the work that they had done. Some of the builders left the area to avoid conscription, some were arrested and fined and one, Elijah Hoag, was imprisoned and banished to Esopus Island.

Mary Bedell Burkowske, whose home is in Clinton Corners, heard these tales from her grandfather whose grandfather told them to him. When Mr. Ben Haviland for whom Haviland Junior High School is named, visited Upton Lake Grange, he loved to tell of his great grandfather who severely injured his back lifting one of the large stones in the northwest corner of the building.

I am now quoting from Smith's History of 1876: "Thus in the midst of toils and dangers was the Church nourished and built up, and in the Churchyard cemetery lie the Church fathers, calmly resting from all their trials and persecutions. The walls of the building are as firm as when first built and, with a little care, will stand the storms of another century. With in its sacred enclosure the fervent prayers of godly and women have been offered up to the Giver of all good, for a century. Men have stood up in all the pride and glory of manhood, and passed away and their places have been taken by others until three generations have gone by, and yet the old house stands, a beacon on the ocean of time."

After the war new members moved into the area and other settlers became convinced Friends. The old stone house became well-filled with worshippers. Sometimes there were visiting ministers, sometimes silent meetings. All accounts agree to the



presence and power of the Spirit and the impress made on the neighborhood. Then in 1828 under the brilliant preaching of Elias Hicks, who decorates the family tree of several families in the area, dissension arose on points of doctrine. Religious dissension was not confined to Quakers but was a tendency of that period, occurring in other denominations and also in the Free Masons who were strong at the time.

Those who chose to follow Elias Hicks called themselves Hicksites. Those who held to the old doctrine were designated Orthodox.

Early minutes of Creek meeting were presumably lost by fire, but we find in the women's minutes of the 6th month, 10th, 1828: "After leaving the stone house that day, we concluded to move to the house of Cornelius Austin, which was kindly offered by him for our present accommodations. 7th month 28th, 1828: Asa Upton was appointed Clerk and it was concluded that Creek monthly meeting, Preparative meeting, and meeting for worship were to be held for the present at the home of Paul Upton."

This was a trying time for Friends. For some, leaving the old meeting house was too great a step and others were influenced in the decision by family ties, so that real members in the separation probably do not represent the exact difference in belief. The total membership at the time of division was the large number of 256. Of these 168 remained in the stone house and 88 removed, and the next year built the shingle meeting house on the site of the present Upton Lake Cemetery.

The members in the Orthodox branch number 22 men, 31 women and 32 minors.

Whatever the fundamental differences in doctrine, there was little difference in the manner in which they conducted their meetings. There was very little effort in either group to try to get new members. If a member married out of meeting they were promptly disowned. There was a rigid culling out of members not in harmony with the meeting.

The Hicksite branch dwindled to the point that they gave up holding meetings, and at the turn of the century they rented the stone building to Upton Lake Grange. The Grange purchased the property in 1927.

The Orthodox meeting struggled on with very small attendance.

One of the bright spots in this period was the work of our station of the underground for runaway slaves. A Friend tells me she well remembers how Elihu Griffin and others sheltered the slaves and helped Alfred Underhill fit out his carriage to start in the dusk of the evening for John Goulds' in Hudson, where there was another Quaker meeting to send them on to Canada.

The year 1876, one hundred years from the founding, a change was begun by the Orthodox Quakers. Until then there never had been a resident minister. Now Thomas and Mary Kimber came to us and ushered in the evangelistic period. The Gospel was preached with power, and these meetings resulted in a marked awakening of the membership and in several conversions of people in the neighborhood. From that time to now there has been a gradual increase in number and in the influence of our meeting in the community.

In the fall of 1877 Thomas H. Leggett, an elder, and Hannah H. Legget, a minister, moved to a farm near Salt Point with their family. They continued the evangelistic spirit.

The meetings were larger than before, but probably due to being outside the village, did not grow in numbers. Thomas Leggett agitated building in the village for some time. A small afternoon meeting of another church had been started in the hall of the village, if Quakers were to occupy the field, removal would be necessary. We were indeed community minded back in those years.

To the older members this seemed impossible of achievement but, 9th month, 1889, Thomas Leggett was authorized to solicit funds. William M. Birdsall was present at this meeting and recorded it. All eyes turned to Egbert S. Bedell to speak for the membership. He hesitatingly arose and stated that he did not see how it could be done, and that the meeting could not consent to going into debt. But if the money could be collected, he believed no opposition to removal would be made by the meeting. Upon this slender encouragement Thomas Leggett started out, traveling extensively for about a year and collecting money from all parts of the United States and even some from England. Charles Hicks gave the land on which to build and others gave as they could after it was found possible to build. In 1890, the building was completed as the meeting stipulated "free from debt."

The Leggetts served 17 years without pay. They were part of the meeting.

In the 1890's, it was decided that we should become a pastoral meeting. Some support was given, but as the neighborhood had not been used to giving regularly, the sum was not large. During

this time great progress was made toward our community church.

The meeting in the village hall that had continued was given up, and the members joined us. Sabbath morning offerings were taken and finances were put on a sounder basis.

An organ had been used in the Christian Endeavor Room before music became a regular part of the Church services.

Bloomvale Chapel, a branch of the Dutch Reformed Church of Millbrook, was laid down and members came to us. There was much community visitation by the members and organizations for all ages flourished.

More room was needed, and on 10th month, 1914, it was decided to build a new church across the front of the old. On June 4th, 1916, the new Church was dedicated to the service of the community. The old building was fitted for a gymnasium and church hall.

History shows the Quakers in this area had always had a sense of responsibility toward the community. In 1962, it became the Community Friends Church officially, based on this thought. The basis of Our Fellowship is an inward experience and the essentials of Unity among us are: The love of God and the love of man conceived and practiced in the Spirit of Christ.

The present minister is the Rev. James J. Kilpatrick.

(Reprinted thru the courtesy of the Dutchess County Historical Society)

—MABEL K. BURHANS



EDUCATION

The date the district schools began to function differed with the density of the population. The first schools were probably held in private homes and were often taught by the minister. The school records, in most cases, do not show an actual beginning but rather a gradual drifting into a formalized organization.

The beginning of the common school districts may be obscure, but at one time there were one-room schools at Clinton Corners, Prospect Hill, Schultzville, Bulls Head, Clinton Hollow, Oak Grove,



This one-room schoolhouse in Schultzville has been converted to a private home.

Pleasant Plains, Ruskey, Frost Mills and Mountain View. There was also a well-known private school in Pleasant Plains operated by the Rev. Hoyt, who was also the pastor of the church. There was a winter term for the older children and a summer term for the younger ones, with vacation between. The clerk's book of the Pleasant Plains School, covering 1813-1888, shows they were receiving aid from the county. Attendance varied from 30 to 60 depending on the size of the district and the size of the families therein. All of the schools covered only the elementary grades. If you wanted to go to High School you commuted by train or wagon to Poughkeepsie. The last school district in the town was Prospect Hill and the last school house used was in Clinton Corners (the present Post Office). Today, we use the school districts of the surrounding towns of Hyde Park, Millbrook, Rhinebeck and Pine Plains to educate all of our children.

Teachers could be licensed at a very young age and had only to pass an oral examination given by the commissioners. Mrs. Anna Tousey Allen started a private school in her home at 19, and Alice Tousey Cady was 14, when she was a summer supply teacher at the Clinton Corners School. Their duties were many and their salaries were low, but the quality of education was still high. In the 1870's, Ruth Ann Carrol taught botany, manners, rudiments of music, health, marching and morals through mottoes and the 3 R's.

Many of the original schoolhouses still stand and are today being used for residences. The small building used as a schoolhouse for the Jackson family is still standing on Nine Partners Road. The

Pleasant Plains School, built in 1852, is now the Sunday School for the church. The original public school in Clinton Corners was a small frame building which first stood on the site of the present Post Office. Then the building was used as a carpenter shop; then moved to a new site and converted to a house. It is now the ruin next to the store in Clinton Corners and is soon to be demolished.

We are familiar with the discomforts of these times. A great-uncle told Ruth Woodin of carrying a hot potato in his pocket on which to warm his hands on his long walk to school. The buildings were often neglected and in severe weather, all crowded around the big stove to thaw aching fingers and toes, while under the stove would be the lunch pails and ink bottles. But oh, the joys of pleasant weather! Getting water from the neighbor's well in the pail, and playing all sorts of games in a shady, grassy yard. Many are the people who acquired their early learning in a one-room school and found it good. They look back with pleasure to the days spent there.

—RUTH WOODIN AND HELENA VAN VLIET

SCHOOLS IN THE EARLY 1800'S

In the early days of schools, the parents furnished all the materials relevant to the needs of learning: a bench, any books needed, a slate and slate pencil. A ledge across the road from the Cookingham place was called Slate Pencil Hill—the best source around.

In my childhood, a part of our lawn furniture was a bench under a Norway spruce tree. The bench was a plank seat about 10 inches high, 10 inches wide and 5 feet long with a back approximately 15 inches high. This had been my grandfather's school bench. We asked him where he kept his papers and other trivia and his despair in communicating with the younger generation was very tangible, even equal to the elder's loss of touch with today's "long hairs." He would go into the house and return with a slate and a book. He then requested the child to be seated and placed the slate and book on the bench beside the child who was so lacking in imagination. There was no clutter, no mess, no overfilled waste basket—just a blackboard for the teacher and a slate for the kid.

This was the beginning of school experience for any child whose parents did not prefer to tutor them at home or send them to a private school. Many progressed to respected professional levels such as law, medicine or surveying.

The initial phase beyond the 3R's was an apprenticeship to someone who had already reached the professional level. A neophyte doctor rode the rounds with a local M.D. A budding lawyer did the written work for an established attorney. An aspiring surveyor did the leg work over swamps and rocks for the man who was giving him the basics of his profession.

Two with roots in the town of Clinton were:

Capt. Ruben Spencer who assisted George Washington in surveying what was then the Ohio Territory. The Spencer family burying ground is on Rymph Road southwest of the house recently occupied by J.G. Rymph (Long Jimmy). Another was my great uncle Farley Rikert who started as a farm boy on Shadblow Lane. Spurred by his fathers demands for a 16-hour day with no monetary reward, he decided to become a teacher. He went to Albany Normal School in the winter. The tuition was free and he earned his keep in various ways, plus working as a farm hand in summer. He followed this by teaching a year or two in New York State and then on to a national normal school in Lebanon, Ohio. After teaching in Ohio, he went on to Kansas where he taught and farmed. He returned to New York State and was principal of the school in Garrison from 1889 to 1901. Thereafter retiring, then back to farming in the town of Stanford. Farley Rikert lived to be 101 years old and died in 1954. When he returned to farming he was able to procure a hired hand for \$13 to \$15 per month.

The transition from local schools with local self-government to County control began with the Public School Act of 1795 and lasted through the 19th century. A detailed map of townships showing their divisions into school districts was published by Beers in 1867. The abandonment of local, one room schools began around 1930 and is now total.

In the town of Clinton only two one-room schools remain in more or less their original condition. Spooky Hollow, which is now a closed shell owned by Mrs. Clay, and Pleasant Plains District 3, which is used by the Church and various community organizations.

—HELENA VAN VLIET



SCHOOL DAYS

“Still sits the schoolhouse by the road,

A ragged beggar sunning . . .” but no more is it overrun by blackberry vines—so many of them have been converted into homes.

The Hibernia schoolhouse which I attended is so used. It is at the turn where Woodstock Road leaves Route 82, a half-mile from the hamlet of Hibernia. The beautiful meadow land that was known as Hibernia Plains stretches away from it.

The school must have been built about 1840, for my Grandma Knapp went there when she was a little girl. What must have been the original teacher’s desk was still in use when I started school. It was obviously handmade and painted a hideous pinkish brick color.

The districts were set up so the schoolhouse was the center of a rough circle about two miles in diameter. When Upton Lake Grange planned Community Day more than 50 years ago, eight school districts were invited to take part: Market, Prospect Hill, Schultzville, Clinton Corners, Oak Grove, Hibernia, Salt Point and Netherwood.

The interiors of the schools were very much alike. But the outside door of the Hibernia school opened into an entry so narrow and dark it could not be used for a coatroom. You went on into the schoolroom, hung your coat on one of the hooks along the wall and put your lunch box on the bench underneath.

The girls’ boxes were lined with a linen napkin, usually with fringed edges. The boys were not bothered with any niceties. They gathered in a group, stuffed their mouths to capacity, swallowed with all speed and dashed out to play.

The lunch boxes were man-sized and with good reason. We took at least three double sandwiches (six big slices of home-made bread), often a jar of something to eat with a spoon, a pickle, a couple of home-sized cookies and fruit in season—usually an apple. Half an orange or a banana was a very special treat. This food had to provide sustenance for morning and afternoon recess. The cookies and apple usually filled that need. And if you were wise, you kept half a sandwich to give you strength for the walk home.

To return to the classroom—there was the bench on which the water pail and wash basin sat. Over the pail hung the communal dipper. Some of the fastidious girls were proud possessors of the new-fashioned collapsible cups for their personal use. Above the basin was the roller with its roller towel which was used by all for at least a week. The teacher must have taken it to wash out occasionally.

There was no janitor service. Teacher or one of the children who might be feeling helpful would sweep out the schoolroom. The schools had no wells. Water had to be carried from a neighbor's. It would have been unthinkable to go for water at noon or recess, so there were always happy volunteers to fill the pail. Two boys would carry it between them, slopping the water most of the way.

In the middle of the room stood the tall potbellied stove, which fought a sometimes losing fight to keep the room warm on a cold and blustery day. Wood cut in chunks was piled along the building and there was coal in the coal box. And let us not forget the outhouses—one for the boys and one for the girls—with the wooden screens in front of the doors. Mostly they were placed on opposite sides of the lot.

The teacher's desk was at the end of the room facing the door. On the wall behind the desk was the blackboard. The seats and desks were arranged in two rows—one for boys and one for girls. The seats were graduated in height, with the lowest in front, the coveted highest in the back. All were screwed fast to the floor. On the teacher's desk reposed the all-important school bell.

Country schools averaged from 12 to 20 pupils. Village schools had a larger enrollment but, whatever the enrollment, there was only one teacher for eight grades. However, classes were small and there was usually time for each pupil to recite. The schedule allowed about 10 minutes for a recitation period. Whispering or turning around was taboo. Any noise or confusion was quelled immediately so there was little distraction of that kind. We could give our attention to the class sitting on the recitation bench. We learned a great deal by listening as the classes recited.

Today we hear of schools that are trying an ungraded system for the first three grades. Each child "does his own thing" at his own pace. My first reaction: "ridiculous!" Then I remembered that was how I did the first four grades.

I was seven when I started school the first week in April. In June I had had 10 weeks of school and my eighth birthday. In that time I had learned to sound the letters of the alphabet and some combinations of letters, such as *ing* and *ight*. I was delighted that I could sound and read words for myself.

When school opened again and I had mastered Ward's *First Reader* with its phonetically marked words, I was ready for anything. In one year, I covered four grades and was ready for fifth grade the following year. This was not unusual. Nothing held us back, we set our own pace and it seemed to give us an incentive to apply ourselves.

One room, one teacher. But when examination papers were received from Albany, we passed as well as pupils of more favored schools. Professor Wm. R. Anderson, who was principal of Millbrook High School for 40 years, remarked more than once that he liked to have students from district schools because they knew how to work.

"What is so rare as a day in June!" Even those who liked school were happy to join in the chant of "No more lessons, no more books, no more teacher's cranky looks."

Every season brought its own glory and adventure to the country child who walked to school. January was a wonderland, with the earth locked away by the deep snow and cold. Many mornings the cold was forgotten in the exhilaration of running over the smooth crust that topped the high snow-banks. There was hardly a school-house that didn't have a hill nearby for coasting—preferably in the main highway where the track was well packed. And there was bound to be a hollow with a "frog puddle" big enough for skating. If you had no skates, you could slide or some obliging skater would draw you on your sled.

Groups of children converged at the crossroads, each dragging a sled, some with skates hanging over their shoulders. Skis were unheard of. Sleds with wooden runners had become old fashioned in my day. It was the ambition of every child to have a Flexible Flyer No. 3.

In those days there were no organized activities for boys and girls, so we valued the companionship and exchange of ideas with our neighbor children, on our way home from school. Walking to school was a serious business but coming home we were relaxed. Not that we loitered along the way; that was frowned upon. We rarely stopped to play at each other's houses. That had to be pre-arranged with parents. There was a family schedule at each home and chores to be done.

Each of us had saved a bit of food to sustain us and we munched companionably as we strolled along. We might break into song, chant some jingle in unison or repeat a catch phrase over and over, with much giggling.

In the fall, we raced for some old apple tree if the fruit fell in our path. We were privileged to gather horse chestnuts in Heermans' dooryard. We made men and animals out of them.

When we came to the oak tree, we gathered a handful of acorns. Acorns are bitter and not intended for human consumption. If we had been required to swallow pills as bitter, we would have protested but acorns were placed in our path by our Creator so we dutifully munched on one or two.

Best of all was June when the wild strawberries ripened on certain blessed, gravelly banks along the road. Oh, the fragrance and the sweetness of the clusters, set among the daisies.

We walked with Nature. I can mention only a few of the many things we enjoyed, such as the muddy water in the wagon wheel ruts during thaws. We became engineers as we dredged canals and kicked up dams with the toes of our rubbers. Was there a woodsy spot or a swampy place that awakened to the first breath of spring? The first hepaticas, skunk cabbage sprouts, the call of the red-winged blackbirds perched on last year's cattails, the flash of the bluebirds' wings as they investigated nesting holes in the old fence rails—all these were so much a part of our joy of living.

“Let the million-dollared ride!

Barefoot, trudging at his side,

Thou hast more than he can buy,

In the reach of ear and eye . . .”

Whittier's “Barefoot Boy”

—MABEL BURHANS

IN YEARS GONE BY

Before the turn of the century when I was a young girl, I lived at the junction of Browning Road and Ruskey Lane. It was one and a half miles to the Ruskey School, going up Browning and Spooky Hollow Roads. Every morning I walked there, starting about eight o'clock and stopping along the way for my schoolmates.

Where the Kurtens live now, there was a young lady about fourteen. She seemed very grown up to me. In the house across from Frenz's, I watched Mrs. Galvin put up lunches. She took cake out of a tin box on a shelf in the front room. We had an hour at noon, and we ate hearty lunches, because school lasted from nine until four o'clock. We had morning and afternoon recesses, and we played hard outdoors. If it was rainy, we'd raise Cain in the schoolhouse.

I usually stopped by my grandfather's on Browning Road. He had a farm and raised sheep. His housekeeper, for Grandmother had died, would say to us, “I wouldn't advise you to go 'cross lots. There is a big ram in the pasture and I don't know how pleasant he would make your life.”

We would go on, picking up more children on the way—as many as sixteen sometimes. We children always stopped to watch any sort of work that was going on, such as sheep-shearing. One family

on Spooky Hollow lived so near the school, the children went home for lunch.

There were twenty-five to thirty children at Ruskey School. Sometimes the little ones would stop coming in the winter and older boys would come, since there was not so much farm work. I remember playing school at home and learning fractions. My father had been a schoolteacher before he became a farmer. He taught at Ruskey when I was a baby, riding horseback to get there. Once he was caught in a blizzard and had to walk the fence. One teacher I remember was a nice young woman from Poughkeepsie. She knew nothing whatever about country life and left after a year.

In January, when I was nine, we heard we were to have a new teacher. The morning he was to arrive, I left home even before my usual time. Much to my surprise, the other children had left without me. I was so excited, I ran 'cross lots. Crossing a cornfield, I fell into a woodchuck hole and scared myself! I wasn't hurt, though, and I hurried on to school. The young man had black, curly hair, a slender face and wore a light tan suit. He was a good teacher and a nice man. Later he became related to me by marrying my cousin.

Some of the special times I remember were Arbor Days, when we had programs for parents and planted little trees. And one wonderful day, an organ was delivered to the school. We were all so pleased to have real music for our singing.

I was about six when I started at Ruskey, and I stayed until I went to High School in Poughkeepsie. There I boarded but came home for weekends, sometimes on the train. The station in Salt Point was where the firehouse is now. The train also stopped at Pleasant Valley, and there was a flag station at Van Wagner's.

In those years, before World War I, my father made and packed butter. He delivered it to his customers in Poughkeepsie about every ten days. We loved to go along and shop for clothes and other things. There was not a large selection in Clinton Hollow. Father always wanted to go to the ice cream store before we came home. It took one and a half to two hours to drive to Poughkeepsie.

When I was a tot, the Friend's Meeting House on Quaker Lane was in operation but not so much after that. Now I have a brick from the chimney. It was built in 1785. Father was a Quaker, but he enjoyed the Pleasant Plains Church.

On our farm, Father gradually began to raise more fruit—peaches and grapes, especially. Our family numbered four—father and mother, my sister Mildred and myself. We were happy there, and we all felt the town of Clinton was a good place to live. It still is.

—EUNICE BROWNING as told to Peg Chart

SCHOOL AT CLINTON CORNERS

I used to go to school here;
Can remember it so well.
We went after water
From a neighbor's well.

The old man who lived there
Was very nice but shy.
His wife would yell out "Don't waste the water,
The well might just go dry."

We hurried back to the schoolhouse,
Taking a short-cut trail.
All drank out of the same tin dipper
And the same old rusty pail.

We liked our teacher and the school,
Though not so up-to-date.
Had a nice yard, an apple tree,
A fence and a swinging gate.

A new boy came to school
By the name of Francis Lee.
The teacher gave him a seat
Almost next to me.

He was always singing;
Knew songs of years-gone-by.
His favorite seemed to be,
"There's a rainbow in the sky."

Teacher said, "Francis I like to hear you sing,
But it seems to bother us all.
If you must continue will you please
Do it in the hall."

He left the room quietly
And must have gone on home,
For the rest of the day was quiet
As a Sunday afternoon in Rome.

The next day in history class,
We had questions to answer and a few to ask.
The first one was given to cute Mildred Plass.

"Now Millie, dear, tell me
The distance from London to Paris;
I mean just how far?"

Before she could answer
The door opened, and there stood Francis,
Playing his guitar.

He was playing an old tune
We all knew well.
We started to sing it but
Teacher pushed her desk bell.

And said, "I don't think it will be wrong
To let Francis entertain us,
With music and song."

The day was soon over
And school dismissed.
The teacher gave Francis
A big hug and kiss.

We gathered our lunch pails
And started for home.
Some took the long trail;
Some wanted to roam.

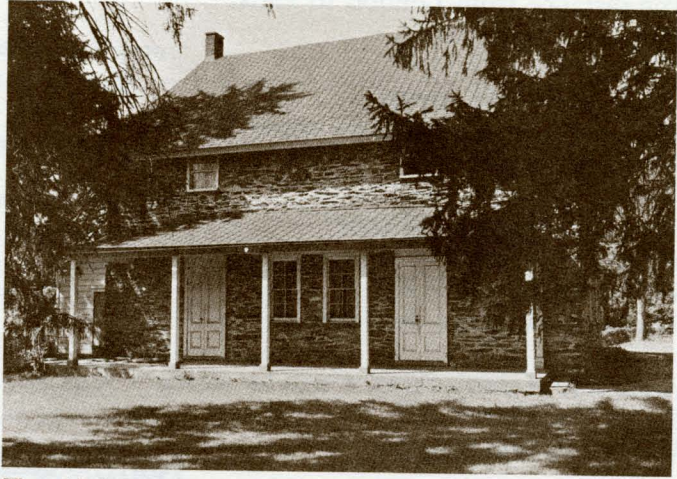


But most followed the road
Though the distance was far
We all took turns
Carrying Francis' guitar.

When we reached his home
We opened the gate.
And he thanked us politely
And said we were all great.

That God had given him
His talent to sing and play.
And we should trust Him
To lead us, always.

—ROY S. WING



The old Creek Meeting House became the Upton Lake Grange Hall around the turn of the century.

THE GRANGE

The Grange was founded in 1867 by Oliver Hudson Kelley. He believed a fraternal organization, dedicated to improving agriculture, would be a means of improving the condition of the farmer impoverished by the Civil War and, at the same time, help to heal the breach of bitterness the war had engendered.

As people progressed and life became easier, there was a need for more social and cultural activities. And these the Grange supplied. People of all faiths and political views could work together in the Grange. The founders included women in the membership, a new idea at the time. Thus, Grange membership could be made up of family units.

The lecturer's program balanced the agricultural programs. It offered opportunity to members to use and develop any talents they might have. In the days before radio and television, these programs were looked forward to and worked out with much thought and care.

To have a fine community, some point of common interest must be maintained to hold the community together. In this day of centralized schools and with the diverse and specialized interests of the people, this is hard to achieve.

A few of the many projects that have been sponsored by the Grange are Rural Free Delivery, The Farmers Institute, Farm Bureau, Grange 1 League Federation, National Grange Mutual Liability Co.,

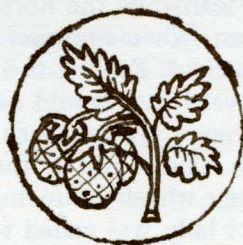
Dutchess and Columbia Patrons Fire Relief Association and the Rural Electrification Program.

Three granges were organized in the town of Clinton—Upton Lake, Silver Lake and Fallkill. These have made a great contribution as community centers.

The Upton Lake Grange was formed on Dec. 9, 1895, when a meeting was held at the Clinton Corners School House with 13 men present. The first regular meeting was called in January and met at the railroad station. Later meetings were held in Still's Hall. The first master was Smith Knapp. They are the founders of Clinton Community Day and continue to play an active role.

The Fallkill Grange was organized in 1899 with George Van Vliet as the first Master. The present Master is Mrs. Sally Benson. In 1974 this grange organized a junior grange. Fallkill is very active in the western part of our town. They keep the cemeteries in shape and are planning to hold a Bicentennial Day in 1976. The Fallkill Junior Grange has kept the roads around Clinton Hollow litter-free. They are also very active in the Dutchess County Fair and Community Day. The Grange Hall was destroyed by fire in 1974, but the present plans are for rebuilding.

The Silver Lake Grange was organized in 1904. It was abandoned about 1970 due to a fall-off in membership. The remaining members joined the two remaining granges.



AFTER THE MEETING

Around the first of March, when looking at the debris that appears from under melting snow, we have the urge to start spring cleaning. In the old days, it was the time for clipping the road horses.

A good driving horse was one of man's proudest possessions and received the best of care. After clipping, they were kept well blanketed and protected but to my childish mind it seemed cruel to remove their overcoats of thick warm hair when the temperature was still wintry. However, if you have ever ridden behind a horse who was shedding, you will remember removing a glove to pick horsehairs out of your mouth every time you opened it.

An event of my young life that I thought very exciting was the meeting of Upton Lake Grange, to which the newly-clipped horses were driven. They were tied under the long shed back of the Grange Hall. Of course they were well blanketed but after several hours, they were getting chilly and had one desire—to reach their warm stables and be buckled into their padded stable blankets.

The meeting over, the men put on their fur coats, caps with built-in earmuffs, fur mittens and arctics with buckles and went out to get the horses. The women had discarded hats for old-fashioned hoods and “fascinators.” A shawl or cape went over their coats. A small girl would be weighted down with a woman’s cape that reached to her heels, and a thick veil was tied over her face. They all gathered close to the door which stood ajar, so they would know when their rigs drove up. You didn’t keep a clipped horse waiting.

A lookout on the porch would sing out as a buggy came through the gate, “Here comes Mark!”—or Alvie, or Will, or Marshall—as the case might be. Then Mrs. Sitzler, Mrs. Lovelace, Mrs. Budd or Mrs. Knapp would dart through the door, holding her long skirt out of the way of her feet. With loud “whoas,” the driver stopped his horse and jumped down. He held the reins (which we called lines) tightly in his right hand as the lady mounted the horse block attached to the porch. With his left hand under her elbow to steady her and the lookout grasping her other arm, the lady half jumped and was half swung into the buggy.

Meanwhile the horse was making hobby horse humps up and down. When the man landed on the seat beside his wife, the horse crouched. Feeling the pressure on the reins ease, he gave a leap forward that would have done credit to a jackrabbit. The buggy careened on the sharp turn and horse and buggy shot through the gate. The sound of the horse’s hoofs and the rattly-bang of the buggy wheels bouncing from rut to rut came back clearly as the next lady was called to step into her conveyance.

—MABEL BURHANS

CLINTON CORNERS POST OFFICE

The Clinton Corners Post Office was established on October 7, 1850. The location of the first post office is not definitely known. However, there is speculation it may have been in Paul Upton’s residence since he was the first Clinton Corners Postmaster, and it was not unusual to have the postmaster use a portion of his home as a post office in earlier days. There are still many small post

offices throughout the U.S. continuing this practice. Paul Upton was one of the earliest settlers in this vicinity, and his residence is still standing near the intersection of Pumpkin Lane and Salt Point Turnpike.

Later, the post office was located in a portion of the general store, presently known as the J & L Market. The front left side of the store was partitioned off to allow customers to do their shopping in the store and, at the same time, avail themselves of the post office. For many years, Oakley Robinson was both postmaster and store proprietor. The post office was also housed for a long time in what was known as the Pearsall Store (now presently used by Detjen Corporation). In 1963, it was moved from this building to its present site, a structure used for many years as a school.

Mail was received in early years through the use of the railroad that passed through the southeast corner of the town, with a station at Clinton Corners. The railroad ceased to function in 1933, after which mail was brought to Clinton Corners by a truck, a practice continued to date.

First-class postage rates were governed many years ago by the distance the mail had to travel and the number of sheets in the letter. Not over 40 miles and a one-sheet letter—eight cents, two-sheet letter—sixteen cents, three-sheet letter—twenty-four cents, four-sheet letter—thirty-two cents. Since postage stamps did not come into use until 1847, postage was paid in cash and usually by the recipient of the letters.

At one time, there was a post office in familiar names such as Bulls Head, Clinton Hollow, Hibernia, Pleasant Plains and Schultsville.

—MRS. MARY H. BOWMAN



ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION IN CLINTON

Early methods of travel were by water. In 1722, there were only three roads in Dutchess County. By 1762, 50 to 75 roads had been laid out. Overseers of highways were appointed and each resident

had to contribute a certain amount of work to building and maintaining roads. The early roads were laid out along "marked trees."

The third road in Dutchess County and the first to pass through Clinton was the "Wassaic Road" which went from "Wissasiek" to "Rinebeek" Landing. This began in 1718. On Sept. 27, 1748, the commissioners for Rhinebeck Precinct and for Crum Elbow Precinct met at a bridge over the Crum Elbow Creek two hundred yards from Hendrick Kips house to consult about this road which had been "in use for thirty years."

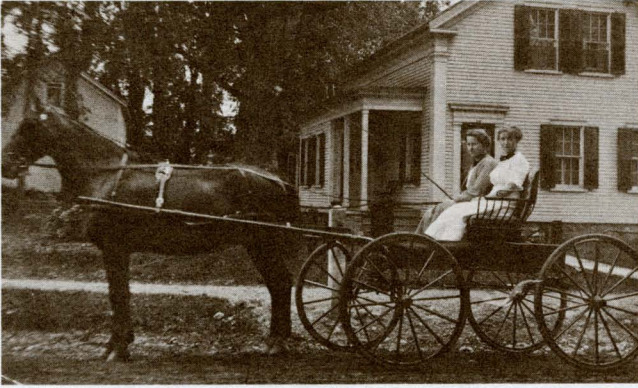
The commissioners from Rhinebeck Precinct (Colonel Henry Beekman and Andrias Heermans) approved a road that started from the bridge and ran "along the old wissasiek road, as the same has been used these thirty years past to the usewel Rinebeek Landing at Abraham Kip's" (Road Book p. 29).

At the same meeting, the commissioners for Crum Elbow Precinct (Mordecai Lester and Jacobus Stoutenburgh) approved a road that ran northwest and southeast across a part of the precinct. It is described: "Beginning at Henry Filkins (now Washington Hollow) by ye road that comes from Dover and Gose to Poughkepsen—thence north along ye old path to Isaac Filkins (now Bloomvale—Dr. Lloyd Kest) along said rood to ye whopingins kill—over the kill—up ye hill—a little westerd of Mordecai Lester Junrs house—north by marked trees to the Plains—east along under ye greet hill by marked trees to Mordecai Lesters—north along a path by marked trees to Aron Boyses—along the north side of his house to bridge over the kill—north along marked path and marked trees to a hill—north by marked trees to a Greet Pond—around the head of the pond to a path—along path and marked trees to Hendrick Kips—along east side of his house and along a path to a bridge that Gose over the Crumelbow Kill where it meets the rood that comes from Rinebeek" (Road Book B p. 22).

In 1750, another road crossed the southeast corner of the town being a road from the present East Park to John Gazeleys house (now Salt Point) "north to the west side of the Little Wappingers Creek by marked trees past Joseph Hicks house and Lesters house to the Great Wappingers Creek" (Dutchess County His. Soc. Year-book 1940 p. 63).

In 1754, a group of freeholders and inhabitants complained that a certain road "is exceedingly bad and can scarcely by used with any Team at any Times and expecially in Wet Weather" and they requested that a new road be laid out "so that they might with more ease Transport their produce to the Landing Places."

As the land was settled new roads were laid out until by the Revolution we had the roads very much as they are today; beautiful



winding roads through the hills and woods, much better adapted now to nature lovers and horseback riders than to speeding automobiles.

These were the roads farmers used to take their produce by oxen and later by horses to the landings at Rhinecliff, Staatsburgh, Hyde Park or Poughkeepsie; the roads they drove over on Sunday to get to church; and after 1812, the roads the children walked over to get to the district schools.

With the coming of the automobile, there began to be an improvement in roads and after 1920, many of the dirt roads were made passable the year around. The only State highway to touch our town is Route 9-G, which cuts thru the southwest corner of the town near Frost's Mills. Some of the earlier County roads with black top were the north end of Quaker Lane, Slate Quarry Road, the road from Salt Point north through Clinton Hollow, Schultzville to Milan and Route 199, and the extension of the Salt Point Turnpike through Clinton Corners to Stanfordville. For a long time County officials opposed an improved road through Clinton Corners and over the Salt Point Turnpike to Poughkeepsie stating that the "parallel" routes of 82A and 9-G answered our needs.

There were never any turnpikes or toll roads in the town.

On October 17, 1949, the Taconic Parkway was opened through the eastern part of the town and is a very beautiful parkway as well as utilitarian.

In 1870, the Poughkeepsie and Eastern Railroad Company began purchasing rights of way for a railroad which was opened in 1871 and continued until 1933. This passed thorough the southeast corner of the town with a station at Clinton Corners. This was a great boon to the farms as they now had a short distance to haul their produce and to bring home lime, fertilizer and grain. The farms located on

the level and near the railroad station then had a distinct advantage over the hill farms as the hill farmers were limited in size of loads teams could draw uphill.

Many high school children were now able to go to Poughkeepsie High School on the train instead of making the long drive by horse and wagon or sleigh to Millbrook. The train arrived at the Poughkeepsie Station at 8:45, the exact moment when school opened, but as it took nearly ten minutes to walk to the school, they were always late. Neither the railroad nor the school were ever able to change their schedule so that pupils could arrive on time.

During the summer the railroad ran special excursion trains to Upton Lake for picnickers and during the summer carloads of ice were taken to Poughkeepsie from the large icehouses at Upton Lake.

This railroad later became the Central New England and still later the New York, New Haven and Hartford. After its abandonment in 1933, most of the rights of way were sold back in the 1940's.

A competing railroad came out from Poughkeepsie parallel to the Poughkeepsie and Eastern. It crossed same on the William Vandewater farm at Salt Point and went through Hibernia, the very southeast corner of the town. This was the Poughkeepsie and Connecticut Railroad and they began to purchase rights of way in 1888. This later became the Philadelphia, Reading and New England Railroad and then the Central New England. This railroad stopped about 1909 and many pieces of rights of way were sold back to adjoining landowners from 1911 to 1914.

A railroad was planned north through Clinton Hollow and Schultsville but never materialized.

After the railroad stopped there was bus service. Haggerty operated for the longest time and the high school children went to Poughkeepsie on his bus.

After Poughkeepsie High School refused to take out-of-town children, there wasn't much business for a bus and finally all bus service stopped.

Now there is complete bus service for children of all ages to the central schools at Rhinebeck, Pine Plains, Millbrook and Roosevelt.

—CLIFFORD M. BUCK



UPTON LAKE

Although Upton Lake is very small and has no claim to fame, it has been a very beautiful little lake, and in times past when there were no automobiles to take people greater distances, it was well-known and popular. From very early days, it was used to supply ice for surrounding farmers. The day or days of ice harvest were quite an occasion—lasting from four A.M. when the ice had to be “marked out” with horse-drawn plough until dark—when, with luck, the ice house was full of large, thick cakes of clear ice, with saw-dust “chinked” in between. In the late 1800’s, the old Poughkeepsie and Eastern Railroad built two huge icehouses at the upper end of the lake, across from the south point of the “island.” And those icehouses supplied many Poughkeepsie iceboxes.

In summer time, the lake furnished a spot for boating and fishing and even swimming for a few hardy souls. But swimming wasn’t as popular as it is now, for a couple of drownings made folks wary and suspicious of “cold springs.”

The boarders at the Hoag House—a large and fine building just south of the Drake home—enjoyed the lake. There were many boats and some mild swimming. The Hoag House was torn down some years ago, but is pleasantly remembered by many of the older generation. Many of the farmers’ wives of Clinton Corners added to their family’s finances by “taking in boarders” and the Carroll family, who lived in what is now the apartment house, had several boarders with them each summer.

To me as a child, Upton Lake Park or “The Grove” as we usually called it, was a place of excitement and thrills and as I write a feeling of nostalgia for the old simple pleasures creeps over me.

Down at the south end of the lake, in the early 1900’s, there was a flourishing amusement park. It was owned by the railroad—the same old P & E—and various concessions “rented out.” The tracks have long since disappeared but one can easily trace their former location. For several years, the railroad ran five trains each way everyday between Poughkeepsie and Boston Corners (Columbia County), so that excursions and pinickers could come out from “town” to spend the day and early evening. The park offered many attractions. There was a fair-sized restaurant on the hill overlooking the water. There was an open-air dancing pavilion—it did have a roof—and there was a completely open-air amphitheatre in the depression to the right of the drive up into the grove. There were benches placed in a semicircle and a stage at the bottom of the depression where vaudeville acts and acrobatic stunts were performed. Surrounding the amphitheatre was a high, canvas fence to insure

that an entrance fee was collected at the "gate." There was also a merry-go-round and swings. And I well remember a Wild West Show on the level ground to the south of the grove. It boasted five calico ponies and half a dozen hell-raising cowboys who rode around the enclosure, constructed for the purpose, with wild whoops and very tricky horsemanship. One act they exhibited showed a horse thief plying his trade, then the capture, and swift retribution so vividly performed that my dreams were haunted for several nights thereafter. I was a rather small girl at the time.

There were many boats to rent at the grove; the large, heavy flat-bottomed variety, which were completely safe for the children of the many Sunday School and grange picnics which enjoyed the grove for years.

As cars became more popular and railroading less profitable, fewer trains were run, the crowds visiting the lake dwindled, the old Poughkeepsie and Eastern sold out to the Central New England Railroad. Few, if any, trains stopped at the grove, the old bridge rotted away and had to be dismantled. Some of the better buildings in the park were purchased—many by Poughkeepsie people—and converted into summer cottages, and other cottages were built. The grove is no longer a public picnic ground. The eastern side of the lake is still unspoiled and lovely to look at. The green fields and pastures at the north end still bring vivid memories of past days.

—EDITH ALLEN WEBSTER

A MEMOIR OF SMITH E. WING — DANCE HALL

Dad was not cut out to be a farmer. He wanted to be a businessman and have his own business, so he left the farm—the Wing Homestead which his grandfather had built (now the De Graff home)—in 1890 and moved to the village. He rented the house where Emma Nelson used to live. He secured a job delivering groceries, etc. for W. H. Pearsall, who ran the store in the village square. Always fond of horses, he evidently enjoyed riding about the countryside, but he was too restless to continue on with this kind of work so he went to Newark, N. J. Here friends got him a job as a motorman on a trolley.

In 1898 he was back in Clinton Corners. Mother had purchased the house opposite the cemetery which Mr. Cornell had built, and it was here that I was born in 1894. I remember Dad coming home from Newark bringing me a doll for my fourth birthday.

In Newark, Dad had picked up some rudiments of barbering so he decided to open a barber shop in an upstairs room of the barn. This room was later designated as "The Ladies Dressing Room" when the barn became a dance hall. He charged 10 cents for a shave and 25 cents for a haircut and shave, these prices staying the same for several years. Business picked up rapidly and the little room became too crowded, so he rented a portion of Mrs. Still's store where her husband, then deceased, had run a hardware store. Rent was \$1 per month. As business increased, he rented more of the old building including the icehouse in the rear for \$2 per month. He added groceries, tobacco and candy and, eventually, soda and ice cream. The latter was purchased from his uncle, Solomon Smith, who made ice cream in the barn of what is now the Jennie Vetter place. In 1901, he bought 506 quarts at a cost of 20 cents per quart. He continued buying this until 1910, when he purchased a machine and made his own.

Ice was drawn from Upton Lake and the Mill House Pond to fill the old icehouse. A ledger gives this data on drawing ice from the lake, Dec. 6, 1914, "Fourteen teams were there to load so we had to wait. Each cake measured 20" x 24" x 13" and weighed 200 lbs. 84 cakes to a layer on sleigh. John Anderson got 3 cents per cake and drew 11 loads totaling 178 cakes earning \$5.34. McKoshey drew 11 loads, Couse 10 loads, Charles Moore 18 loads, Nathaniel Cheeseman 6 loads making a total of 56 loads or 9.5 tons of ice. Paid Emmat Bedell \$15.00 to get ice out, \$7.00 for men in icehouse so total cost was \$50.47."

This procedure continued on through 1918. In 1919, evidently an open winter, 3 cars of ice were purchased from Pittsfield, Mass. Ninety tons cost \$189.00, freight \$82.18 and help to get it in the icehouse \$23.50. Total cost was \$294.68.

My brother Ed, who had been out West for some time and got married there, came home and went into partnership with Dad and Roy in April, 1908, thus making the firm Wing and Sons.

Previous to this date, Dad conceived the idea of turning the barn into a dance hall. Mother was much opposed to the idea and it took a great deal of persuasion on Dad's part to convince her that a dance hall was needed and would be a paying proposition. She finally gave in and work commenced April 15, 1907, much of the labor being done by David Younghanse.

How did Dad conceive this idea? It came about this way. In the summer of 1906, our cousin Percy Robson of Poughkeepsie, who was a good violinist spent several weeks with us. Dad, who was passionately fond of music though not a musician, encouraged Roy and Percy to spend all their spare time playing which, of course, they

MID-WINTER DANCE

At Wing's Hall

CLINTON CORNERS

Music by Four-Piece Orchestra

Come and Bring Your Friends

A GOOD TIME FOR ALL

TICKETS, - - (Plus War Tax) - - \$1.00 COUPLE

SPECTATORS FREE

Management ROY L. WING, EDW. YOUNGHANS

did. Dad thought, "Here I have the makings of a dance orchestra. Why not have a hall for them to play in?" And so Wing's Dancing Pavillion was born. The opening dance was held New Year's Eve in December, 1907. It was a huge success and continued thusly for many years.

The hall was enlarged several times until it measured 40' x 80'. Young people—oldsters too—came from miles around. Before autos became popular, they drove in buggies and hay-riggin's parking same in the old church shed across the way. Dances were held three times a week during the summer months in those early days, with often as many as six-hundred attending. Most of the farmers earned extra money by taking in summer boarders, and this accounted greatly for the huge crowds.

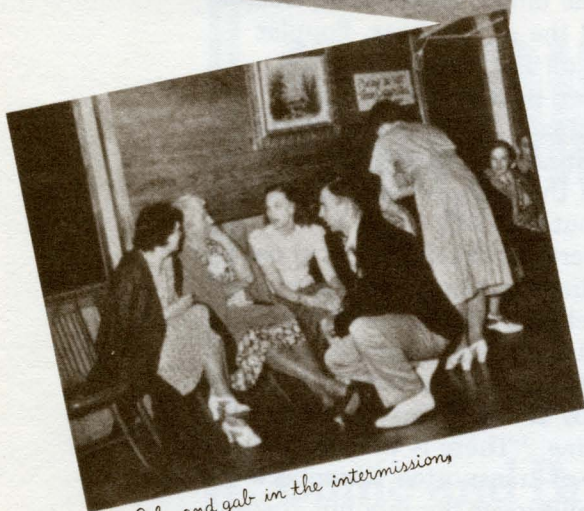
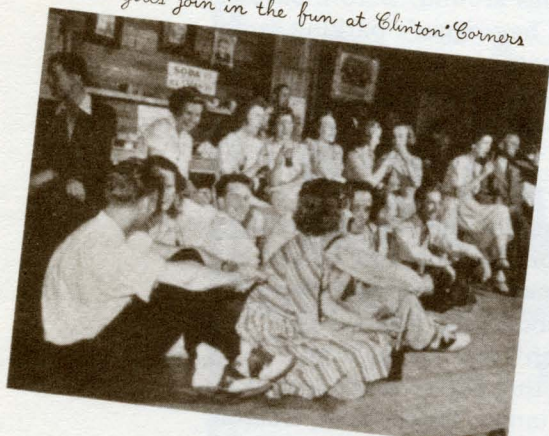
Dad was very strict about the conduct of the dancers. No gentleman was allowed on the floor unless he wore a collar and tie and a coat, no matter how hot the weather. If one did not comply to this ruling, Dad would walk up to the offender, tap him on the shoulder and say, "off the floor, young man" and off he'd go. Objectionable dances were taboo. Signs to that effect were posted about the hall. Those designated were the tango, turkey trot, Boston, one-step, Texas Tommy, bunny hug and the grizzly bear. Popular songs of those days were "By the Light of The Silvery Moon," "Cubanola Glide," "Rings On My Fingers, Bells On My Toes," "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," "Tammany," "My Wife's Gone Away," "Pony Boy," "Red Wing," "Waiting For The Robert E. Lee," "Love Me And The World is Mine," and the ever-popular "In The Good Old Summertime," which came out in 1902.

Masquerades and moonlight dances were much enjoyed in those early years, and, of course, square dancing was always in vogue, so much so, that Mrs. Allan Ryan of Rhinebeck, who had some connection with Harper's Bazaar magazine, had a photographer out one Saturday night to take pictures of couples doing this dance. A two-page spread of these pictures plus text by Lincoln Kirstein came out in the August, 1939 issue of this magazine. "There is the dance at Clinton Corners with its lively amalgam of transported Rhinebeck gentry, Vassar girls driven twenty-five miles over the moonlit roads from Poughkeepsie, and the local people who live winter and summer in Clinton Corners."

Other notables who often attended the dances besides the Ryans were Senator Bontecou and wife of Millbrook, Lanny Ross and wife of New York and Stanfordville, the Julius Byles of Millbrook, O'Malley Knott of New York, also Judge and Mrs. Morey of Pleasant Valley. Vassar girls came en masse. The Reginald Goode Theater group would entertain during intermission as did local talent including Floyd Younghanse, Patsy Patigular, George Dykeman, Dick

AMERICAN

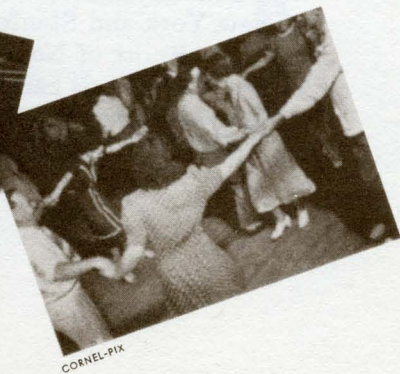
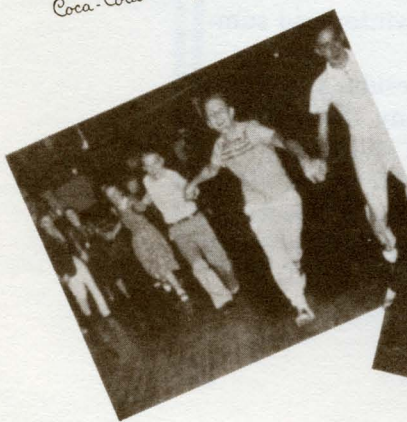
Vassar girls join in the fun at Clinton Corners



Coca-Cola and gab in the intermissions

All summer long, all across America, every Saturday night in old barns, in Grange halls, in lofts over corner drugstores, in the cleared dining rooms of summer hotels, in small-town armories, in college gymnasiums deserted for vacation, in the vestries of New England meeting houses, and in big ranchhouse parlors, happen the square dances. There is the dance at Clinton Corners with its lively amalgam of transported Rhinebeck gentry, Vassar girls driven twenty-five miles over the moonlit roads from Poughkeepsie, and the local people who live winter and summer in Clinton Corners. There are the weekly parties of the West Texas Square Dance Society, sometimes held in the pullman palm-green and gold marble ballroom of the Hotel El Paso del Norte and sometimes in remote prairie farms. Across the United States, from forest lodges at the top of Michigan to open-air socials in Baton Rouge, square dances are held. When their Britannic Majesties were entertained at the White House, Mrs. Roosevelt carefully saw to it that prize examples of Kentucky and Tennessee Mountain dance and song would demonstrate to her guests an expression of the farm and fireside folk life of the seventeenth-century English countryside still surviving as "old-fashioned" dancing in the heart of a country which the King and Queen of England must still think of as young.

If one had to choose a single symbol of lyric proportions to typify the spirit of those people who first cleared this continent, and then kept it free, the square dance might serve best. Its rough informality based on an underlying strong but simple pattern was very useful in a pioneer society. The haphazard arrangement of partners, the abrupt beginning and ending of dances, figures like Paul Jones and The Virginia Reel broke down shyness. It was hard for wallflowers to grow in the lamplit heat and stamping clatter of a barn dance. People who could play together in the nighttime could usually work together all day, and if need be, could probably defend themselves together, later.



CORNEL-PIX

SATURDAY NIGHT

by Lincoln Kirstein

How has the square dance survived at all? Was not dancing in grandfather's day considered a sin? Was not the use of the body in wanton play one of the Devil's Poms? To be sure, and yet even in a Puritan climate, it has always flourished. And it has flourished on the basis of its most profound element: as a source of fun. Dancing for fun was possible—indeed, it was necessary. It was a deep physical release from all the impositions laid by the deaconry to keep a frontier in order. But this dancing was *only* for fun. It was not for show. It was not spectacle. It took place in no theatre, nor was it tricked out in the flattery of abominations. The costumes were everyday costumes, made only a little gayer with a handkerchief or a ribbon, for the occasion. The steps were simple enough for everyone to learn without any obligation to compete with acrobatic display. And square dancing is the great leveler. City folks in the country can't stand out as aliens for long if they are whirled and snapped, and then themselves snap and whirl their country cousins for a couple of figures.

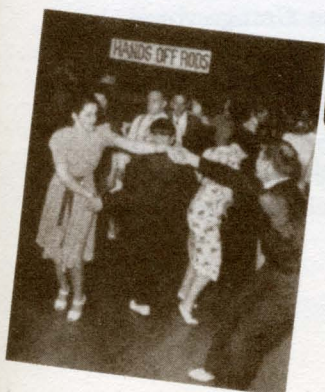
The underlying floor patterns of the square dance have an instinctive appeal for most of us. We find that in spite of the apparent difficulty of the figures as we watch them, leaning up against the wall, when we actually engage ourselves in dancing we recognize conjunctions, openings, reverses, and proper directions. It is like returning years later to a farm where we had once spent some happy vacations. Although the paths seem to be overgrown, we half sense, half remember the way from the barn, to the spring, to the old icehouse. So it is with our square dance, since even the most complex are based on such easy children's singing games, as "Farmer in the Dell" and "A-ticket a-tasket."

This, however, is by no means an intention to underestimate the particular and peculiar qualities and technique of the square dance.

The fiddler and caller is the local blacksmith



Mr and Mrs Allan A. Ryan Jr., doing the Oyster and the Crab



CORNEL-PIX



Talleur, Jackie Wells, Katherine Nelson, Judy Freer and others. On occasion Lanny Ross would favor us with songs, the two most popular being "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "South of the Border."

During the summer of 1909, I visited friends in Stamford, Conn. One member of the family was a cornetist. He taught me to play the scale. That fall, when Dad asked me if I intended to go back to high school in Poughkeepsie, I said, "No. I want to be a cornetist." Instantly, he said "O.K." He saw the chance of getting me in the dance orchestra. Mother objected to my quitting school but her objections were overruled, and that fall I started taking lessons from Professor Rutherford in Poughkeepsie at the cost of 75 cents per lesson. Carfare was then 56 cents for a round trip. I played my first dance on Decoration Day, 1910.

In October 1920, a Democratic Rally was held at the hall. The guest speaker was Franklin D. Roosevelt who shook hands with me and complimented me on my playing.

Musicians who played in Roy's orchestra over the years included George Finch, Louis Knauss, Roy Du Bois, Percy Robson, Harold Stambaugh and Jap Lake. Later on when Roy became too involved with business duties, he gave up the orchestra and hired the Jack Garrity Orchestra from Norfolk, Conn. which remained popular with the dancers for a number of years. The hall was in constant operation from its beginning in 1907 till 1950.

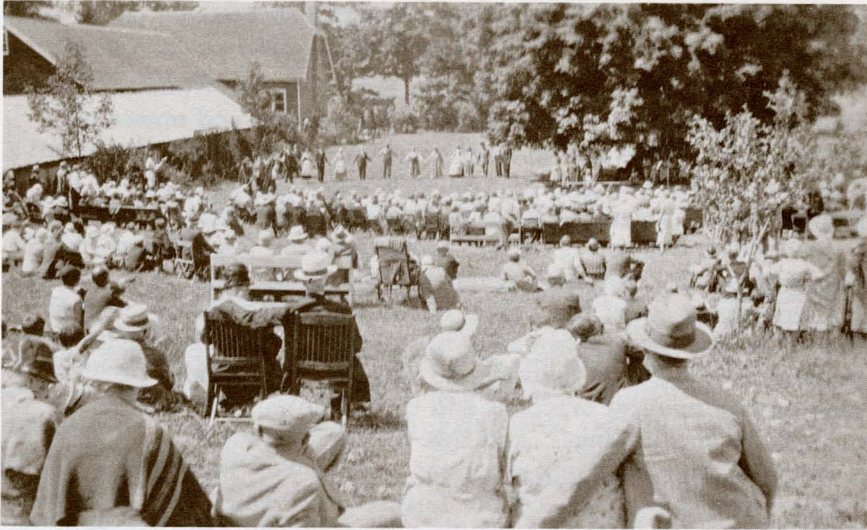
To get back to Dad, he purchased the store and the house north of it from Mrs. Still in 1910, renting the house to various parties, and later selling it to his son Ed. After 67 years of business activity, Dad died leaving Roy to carry on which he did until his death in 1962. The store burned in 1966.

—IRMA WING DYKEMAN

COMMUNITY DAY

Believing in the pride of one's accomplishments on his farm and his wife's in her home, members of the Upton Lake Grange voted at a meeting on April 2, 1917, to set aside October 2, 1917, as a Field Day or Community Day. Bert Budd, William Allen and Belle Sitzer were appointed as a committee to make arrangements for the day.

After varied discussions, planning meetings and the addition of other committees, the first Community Day was held as scheduled.



Crowds gathered to an early Community Day.

It was an exhibit of grains and grasses, fruits and vegetables from the farm and canned goods and baked goods from the home. Exhibitors were limited to Upton Lake Grange. The day was a success, concluding in the afternoon with a parade led by a band, a speaker and community singing. Alva Lovelace was Master of the Grange at the time and at the October 16th meeting was given a vote of thanks for raising funds to hire a Beacon band for the occasion.

On July 19, 1918, the same general committee, with the addition of Clara Drum, was appointed for another Community Day, but on Aug. 2, 1918, it was voted to discontinue the affair for that year. No reason is found in the minutes for the lapse of time but the second event apparently was not held until 1921. However, it has continued nearly every year since then.

In 1953, The Poughkeepsie Journal gave the attendance figures at over 2500. Attractions during this time included school exhibits, hobbies, pets, baking contests, commercial exhibits, flower shows and athletic contests. For several years a horse show was an attractive feature.

During the '60's, Community Day participation dwindled and it looked as if a long tradition would die. However, in 1971, a Lions Club Committee consisting of Hal Fountain, Len Kinney, Bill Carver and Paul Schwarze reactivated and reorganized the Day. Now held on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend, Community Day is strong and serves as a home-coming event for the entire community.

—EDWARD P. SITZER

THE CLINTON HEALTH COMMITTEE

After World War I, during the flu epidemic, the Women's Health Club of Clinton was formed to help the doctors and nurses care for the sick. There are no written records of the early years, but it is known that the club continued to meet regularly and to do good works of a varied nature throughout the town.

In 1950, the group re-organized and became the Clinton Health Committee. It's recruited members from all sections of the town. It's aim was to assist the public health nurse and thereby use to the fullest the services available to the town. The committee decided to confine its activities to assisting in programs of preventative medical practices and to remain current with procedures and findings. And this they have done.

Some of their on-going programs are the Well Baby Clinic, the Amblyopia Screenings and the Loan Closet, which lends medical equipment to those unable to purchase it. They have always been leaders in presenting new medical information to the public with programs such as: A Debate on Socialized Medicine (1950's), Glaucoma (1960), Closed Heart Massage (1965), Amblyopia (1966—first group in area trained for screening), Organic Foods (1972), and Hypertension (1975). They are also continually supportive and active in Community Day and the Hall of Health at the Dutchess County Fair.

—MRS. ANTHONY NUCCI

SENIOR CITIZENS

The Clinton Senior Citizens was formed in 1971 with six members. They have chosen not to affiliate with the county organization; and yet, remain strong today with a membership of over 30. Their weekly meetings are noted for their variety and include such activities as cards and bingo, speakers and crafts. They also take many trips and join together for dining out.

THE CRUM ELBOW GARDEN CLUB

The Crum Elbow Garden Club was organized August 29, 1942. It is very active in the western section of town and is responsible for much of the natural beauty found in that area. Some of their projects have been planting a Douglas fir at the mill site in Frost

Mills, pulling ragweed and roadside clean-up. They also have an on-going annual tradition of sending a boy to the De Bruce Conservation Camp.

THE FRIENDSHIP GARDENS CLUB

In 1959, Mabel Burhans and Jean Webster ran a very successful Hudson-Champlain Celebration. So many people had been involved in that undertaking and all had had such a good time, that it was felt they wanted to keep alive the community spirit thus engendered. And so was born the Friendship Garden Club. It first met in January, 1960.

While this club is best known for the Flower Show held in conjunction with Community Day, it has been very active in other town projects.

In 1966, with the aid of the Lions, the Club won a tri-state competition held by the Rosedale Nursery. Awarded for completing a project that "contributed to the natural beauty of the community," they helped renew the village of Clinton Corners and created the park next to the Grange. They have also made plantings at the Town Recreation Park. Their meetings feature speakers on conservation, gardening and flower arranging.

LIONS

The Clinton Lions Club was formed in 1960. Charter members who are still active include Tom Bernatti, Horace Kulp, Sonny Leggiere, Ash Lossee and Bill Tompkins. Although, perhaps they are best known for their active participation in Community Day, they have many projects. They have a yearly town Clean-Up Day. One year they concentrated on removing all of the town's junked cars and succeeded in getting rid of over 250.

They have worked on many beautification projects including replacing the dam in Clinton Hollow and putting in a dam at Frost's Mills. In 1966, in cooperation with the Friendship Gardens Club, they helped rejuvenate the village of Clinton Corners, which included painting four houses. They also sell a calendar listing birthdays and anniversaries of the towns' residents.

MASONIC LODGE

Warren Lodge No. 32 was organized June 10, 1807. It was named in honor of General Joseph Warren who fell in the Battle of Bunker Hill. Warren Lodge is the oldest lodge in Dutchess County and 28th in the State.

The first meetings convened at Pine Plains. Later the Lodge moved to Lafayetteville. Since 1865, it has been meeting in a temple of its own in Schultzville. The land and money for its erection were donated by Mr. Schultz.

It is one of the few remaining moon lodges. The meeting night is set on the Thursday night nearest the full moon. The second meeting is held on the third Saturday night following.

—ALLEN MEUSER

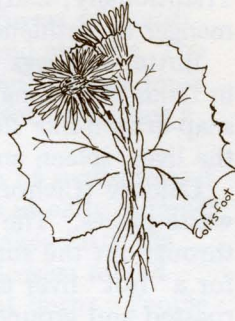
W.C.T.U.

In 1886, the Clinton Corners Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized with Mrs. Charles Goddard Tousey as president. In 1910, the Schultzville WCTU was organized with Mrs. Mary Pultz as president. In 1917, the Pleasant Plains WCTU was organized with Mrs. Robert Hadden as president. The latter two merged in 1933. The Young People's Branch was organized in 1910 in Schultzville and in 1930 in Pleasant Plains. It is now called the Y.T.L. (Youth Temperance League).

This organization has been active in working for total abstinence and for promoting scientific information about alcohol in the school and Sunday schools. They have also been involved with the armed services and hospitals—providing flowers, relief, clothing and magazines. They have held speech contests. A great deal of work is done for peace missions and on legislation.

—MRS. IVY CHAPEL FISH





PLANT LIFE—THEN AND NOW

Our town is beautiful with natural growth and to learn about our trees, shrubs and flowers is a rewarding experience. Such study also brings us closer in spirit to our forbears who were, of necessity, so dependent on nature. The raw materials of garden, field and forest were turned by them into food, medicine, clothing, shelter and utensils.

The early settlers brought seeds and roots of many plants to the New World from the Old. The daisies and buttercups, beloved by children, which decorate our fields in June are a legacy left us by the early Americans. Burdocks and thistles are also part of this legacy—one must take the bad with the good! Other common roadside and field flowers brought to these shores include the following:

Colts foot (*Tussilago farfara*) is a common sight in earliest spring along Center Road and Fiddlers Bridge Road. The yellow, many rayed flowers appear before the large leaves. The “powder puff” seed head resembles that of the dandelion. Colts foot was used to treat asthmatic conditions and coughs.

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) is everywhere because it provided greens to cook, a root to grind for a coffee-like drink and treatment for jaundice and bladder troubles.

Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*) is often found growing in old barnyards. It is a large plant with heart-shaped, grey-green leaves that are soft to the touch. Purplish flowers spikes appear in summer. Catnip made a soothing tea, beneficial for feverish colds. This plant is the cats’ favorite.

Ladys’ bedstraw (*Galium verum*) is a field plant with weak, reclining stems, encircled by narrow leaves. Delicate panicles of butter-yellow flowers appear in early summer. The root of Ladys’ bedstraw made a red dye, the leaves and stems were used to curdle milk for cheese and the flowers gave color to cheese and butter.





Dried, the whole plant makes a stuffing for pillows and mattresses. Traditionally, Ladys' bedstraw was one of the herbs present in the manger at Bethlehem.

Butter-and-eggs or toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*) is much in evidence in fields and along roadsides in the early summer. The yellow snap-dragon-like flowers and plant were used to treat ailments of the liver, spleen and bladder.

Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*) is a tall plant of roadsides and waste places. The fleeting, rayed flowers, of lively blue, bloom throughout the summer. Chicory was thought to be good medicine for a "hot" liver and helpful in treating jaundice. The roots, roasted and ground, can be used as a coffee substitute.

Bouncing bet or soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*) has clusters of five-petaled, pink flowers in mid-summer. Look for it along any roadside. The smooth leaves have a soap-like property and were used to clean pewter dishes. The leaves were also used to treat poison ivy rash. Soapwort is still used to clean and restore color to old tapestries without damage to the fabric.

Scarlet pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*) is a small plant, not over twelve inches, with ovate leaves and tiny scarlet star-like flowers. Look for it in mid-summer in sandy soil along roadsides, or it may appear in your garden. Scarlet pimpernel was used to draw out splinters, to treat toothache and to "clear the head." At harvest time, scarlet pimpernel was employed as a weather forecaster—if the flowers were closed, the next day would bring rain; if the flowers were open, the next day would be fair.

Throughout our town, pond edges and swamps are brilliant in late summer with the magenta of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), a tall plant with tapering spikes of flowers. Loosestrife was used to treat sore eyes, wounds and as a gargle. This plant, if put about the yoke, was said to calm the unruliness of oxen.

Taught by the Indians or led by similarities to plants known in their old homes, the colonists soon learned to make use of the abundant native growth at hand. The spring flowers that carpet our woodlands include many, such as bloodroot, hepatica, spring beauty, jack-in-the-pulpit and wild ginger that were used for food, seasoning, medicine and dye. Other useful native plants are among the following:

Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) bears clusters of tiny yellow flowers in earliest spring before the leaves unfold. Early autumn turns the leaves clear yellow and when the leaves drop the twigs are studded with clusters of bright red berries. Many spicebushes grow in the woods at the north end of Seelbach Lane. The whole shrub is strongly aromatic and the leaves and twigs made a medicinal tea.



The berries were dried and powdered for spice. Early surveyors believed spicebush to be an indicator of good agricultural land.

In early spring the bright yellow, five-petaled flowers of marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) bloom in our swamps and streams. The shiny green leaves are kidney shaped. The leaves and flower buds were eaten as salad—fresh greens must have been welcome after a long winter!

Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), a large shrub of roadside and hedgerow, has flat, dense clusters of white flowers in early summer, followed by juicy purple-black fruit. This fruit makes tasty pie and jelly and was also used to make wine. Elderflowers mixed with “hogs grease” made an ointment used to treat burns. People once thought the elder had magical power and provided protection against witches.

The brilliant orange flower clusters of butterfly-weed or pleurisy root (*Asclepias tuberosa*), a milk weed, appear in mid-summer in dry fields. The seed pods were cooked for food and the thick taproot was used in the treatment of chest ailments.

Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) grows in shady, wet places—sometimes right in streams. The tall slender spikes of vivid scarlet flowers bloom in late summer. Cardinal flower was used as a tobacco substitute and in the treatment of throat ailments.

New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus Americus*) is a low shrub of dry, open woodland. White flowers in dense heads bloom in mid-summer. A small group can be seen growing along the bank on Rynders’ Road. The dried leaves of New Jersey tea were used as a substitute for oriental tea, especially during the Revolutionary War.

Joe-Pye-weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*) is a tall, vigorous plant, common to swampy places. Large clusters of pinkish-purple, fuzzy flowers appear in late summer. Joe-Pye-weed is named after an Indian who went about treating various ills using this plant.

Witch hazel (*Hammamelis virginiana*), a large woodland shrub, offers the last flowers of the year. Autumn colors the leaves bright yellow. After the leaves drop come the blossoms, resembling clusters of rather straggly, yellow ribbons. An extract from the bark was, and is, used for myriad, minor problems from insect bites and sunburn to relief of muscular soreness. Branches of witch hazel were used as “divining rods” to locate underground water.

Many of our native trees were used for purposes other than fuel or building material. The walnut hulls and the bark of the black walnut made a widely used brown dye. A long-lasting, black ink was made from the bark of the red maple. And, of course, the



sugar maple provided a much relished sweet. Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) is a medium-sized tree that had many uses. The leaves come in three patterns, a "thumb and mitten," "three fingers," and a "smooth egg" shape. At the top of Sunset Trail, there is a good specimen by the stone wall. In the field across the way, many seedling sassafras are growing. Crushed leaves, twigs and bark have a spicy fragrance. A medicinal tea was made by boiling the outer bark of the roots; an extract of the bark was used to dye wool yellow, and the durable lumber was turned into barrels, buckets and posts.

These and many other trees, shrubs and flowers grow in the Town of Clinton today as they did when the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Sketches and article—MARGE VAN AUKEN



REMEDY FOR MUSCLE ACHE

"I find Ladys' Bedstraw celebrated for that purpose amongst Authors who say that the Decoction of the Herb and Flowers being yet warm, is of admirable use to bathe the feet of Travelers, and others who are surbated by long journeys in hot weather; not only weariness but stiffness in the Sinews and Joints, to both which this herb is so friendly, that it maketh them to become lissome as if they had never been abroad."

"Adam in Eden", by William Coles
Pub. London, 1657

TREATMENT FOR SUNBURN

"This is the mildest, blandest, and most cooling ointment, as the old women term it, which can be used, and is very suitable for anointing the face or neck when sun-burnt. It is made of fresh Elder-flowers stripped from the stalks, two pounds of which are simmered in an equal quantity of hogs lard till they become crisp, after which the ointment, whilst fluid, is strained through a course sieve."

"The Practical Housewife"
Pub. Philadelphia, 1860

RECIPE FOR DARK BROWN DYE

To make one of the oldest home dyes used in North America, gather the nuts of the Black Walnut while the hulls are still green. Remove hulls, cover with water and store away from light until wanted.

Soak 6 quarts of hulls overnight. Boil 2 hours and strain liquid into dye pot. Put in wet wool when dye bath is luke warm. Heat to boiling and simmer 1 hour. Rinse very well and dry in shade. Best used on coarse wool. No mordant, to fix color, is required.

TO MAKE TEA FROM NEW JERSEY TEA

Gather leaves on a sunny day. Strip leaves from stalks and put them on a raised screen in a dry, sun-free place. When leaves are dry, store in a tightly covered tin. It is best to gather leaves when plant is coming into bloom.

To brew, add one heaping teaspoon of the dried leaves to one cup of boiling water and steep about 10 minutes or to desired strength.

New Jersey tea, which contains no stimulants such as caffeine, makes a good tasting beverage resembling oriental tea.

—MARGE VAN AUKEN

DINNER AT NOON

How I would have enjoyed spending a few hours in my farm kitchen one hundred years ago. No cookbook, electric pans or blenders, but lots of family chatter and hearty cooking. Dinner would be at noon, and include anyone who was on the farm that cold January day helping us butcher the hogs. The men would come in at the dinner bell, stamping their feet and warming their hands before the crackling fire. Salt pork with cream gravy might be on the table, and corn pudding, squash, a chicken pie, potatoes, pickles, Moremom's bread, butter, jam, apple pudding and gingerbread. Perhaps there would be homemade beer or cider, depending on your religious persuasion. Talk would center around the impending snowstorm and the size of the hogs now slaughtered and hanging in the shed.

After dinner, as the dishes piled high, the house grew chilly and the storm clouds thickened, I would quietly wish myself back to my dishwasher kitchen of today.



Here is a bread recipe that has been in the family well over 100 years. Until now! It is as good now as it was then. Easy to make, it keeps well and makes wonderful toast. It is named after Moremom, a lady so loved by her family that mom was not enough, they called her more-mom. We make the bread in an old earthenware bowl and in the winter let it rise overnight in a cool room, then bake it first thing in the morning. Everyone is on time for breakfast!

Moremom's Bread: Put three cups of water on to boil. Put 2 cups of old-fashioned oatmeal (not instant) in a large bowl with 1/3 cup molasses, 1/2 cup honey, 3 teaspoons salt and 2 tablespoons butter. Pour the boiling water over all and stir well. Dissolve 1 package dry yeast in 1/4 cup warm water. When the mixture in the large bowl is just warm to the touch, add the yeast mixture. Now add 2 or 3 cups flour (preferably unbleached), then about 2 cups more flour, or until the dough is not too sticky and can be kneaded. Knead till smooth and elastic. Let rise in a warm place for one hour or until doubled in bulk; punch down and divide into three equal pieces. Place in three buttered (9-5/8 X 5-1/2 X 2-3/4) bread pans and let rise again. If you wish to let it rise overnight, put it in a cool place away from drafts. Bake at 350° for about 30 minutes.

Honey apple crisp is a superb dessert. There are many variations of it, and one hundred years ago it would have been a slum, pudding or cobbler. It should be served warm with a pitcher of heavy cream or homemade vanilla ice cream.

Honey Apple Crisp: Place six cups sliced peeled apples in a baking dish or 6-8 cup casserole. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup sugar, 2 tablespoons lemon juice and 1/2 cup honey. Combine 1/4 cup brown sugar, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/2 cup flour. Cut in 1/4 cup butter till crumbly, then add 1/4 cup chopped walnuts. Sprinkle this mixture over the top and bake at 375° for 40 minutes. Serves 8-10.

—DACIE M. KERSHAW





Working the Highway at Clinton Corners, N.Y. in 1910.

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