# The Historical Society

# Of the

# TOWN OF MINERVA

## Quarterly

April 1974

Volume IV - No. 1

## April Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at the Town Hall, Minerva, at 7:30 P- M. on April 30, 1974. At the business meeting, election of officers will be held and other matters discussed.

The program IB to be in charge of Clarence Jones, who win talk on "The Evolution of Time-Pieces." If you have an antique watch or clock which you would like to display, bring It with you and be ready to tell something about it.

## DUES

Dues of two dollars for the year should be paid at this meeting or before that time if you like. This amount covers your subscription to the Quarterly. We now have 115 members and would like to increase that number during the coming year. Many of these people are former residents of Minerva, or people whose ancestors lived here many years ago.

## INDEX

Our Quarterly has now been published for three years and we have failed to give an annual index. That deficiency is now being corrected by giving an index for all three years. The January 1974, Quarterly is included because our new year begins in April. This is due to the fact that our Society was organized in March, 1955* Bicentennial Quiz - Answers to January Questions

1. James Otis - a Bostonian. Samuel Adame heard the remark and seized upon it as the keynote of his opposition.

2. Patrick Henry, speaking In the Virginia House of Burgesses.

3. George Washington, speaking in the Virginia House of Burgesses

4. Benjamin Franklin.

5- Ethan Allen after he had been captured in an over-zealous attack on Montreal. When threatened with hanging he made this retort. He was a British prisoner during the remainder of the war.

Authority: "The Compact History of the Revolutionary War" by R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy.

## APRIL QUIZ

Who Said It?

1. "As between friends every affront is not worth a duel, between nations every injury is not worth a war, so between governed and the government, every mistake in government, every encroachment on rights, is not worth a rebellion."

2. "If America would save for three or four years the money she spends In fashions and fineries and fopperies of this country (England) she might buy the whole parliament, Minister and all."

3- Someone close to the British government said that England was ready to go on fighting for ten years to prevent independence. Who made this reply? ^America is ready to fight fifty years to win it, and the two countries would be better off politically separate and bound together only by peaceful equal trade."

4. "Judas sold only one man, Arnold 3t000,000. Judas got for his one man 30 pieces of silver, Arnold not a half-penny a head. A miserable bargain."

5- "The sovereignty of the crown I understand; the sovereignty of Britain I do not understand - we have the same king but not the same legislature."

## TODAY'S NEWS - TOMORROW'S HISTORY

At the January meeting of the Minerva Town Board, a Town physician was named, giving Minerva its first resident doctor since 1962. He is Dr. J. Y. Rudnick, who resides with his wife and son in the former Tallman home on the Roosevelt Marcy Memorial Highway.

Dr. Rudnick is a native of Glens Falls. He graduated from Albany Medical College and interned at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City.

## THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Warrensburg News -

**Doctor Located** - It is not often that a young doctor is so favored by fortune as was Dr. Burch of Olmsteadville recently, when he received an offer of $1,00o from the Town of Long Lake, Hamilton County, to locate in that place. The offer was accepted. There are no doubt many young physicians who would be pleased to accept similar offers.

**Rationing** - Most of you will remember the rationing that took place during World War II. Store-keepers had some interesting experiences during those days, even if rationing and OPA did make things much more difficult. Many women who did their own canning at home bought canned goods Juet to use up their stamps. One man said he was going to use up all his points if it broke him; he wasn't going to let Roosevelt put anything over on him.

PROFILE

DELIA MINOR WEST

Delia Minor West, widow of Clinton A. West, was born in Newcomb, N. Y., November 12, 1887. She was the daughter of George Minor, Sr., and Letitia West. Her mother was born in Minerva, the daughter of Orrin and Amanda Foster West. Letitia married first Henry Parker, of Newcomb, and after his death in itt80 she married George Minor, Sr., father-in-law of her daughter Ada, who was the mother of the late Gladys Persons.

Delia went to school in Newcomb and later worked for Augusta and Anna Bissell, who ran an inn. She then went to the R. C. Pruyn estate to work as a maid. Mr. Robert Pruyn was a wealthy man from Albany who bought a large estate in Newcomb and hired many people to work for him. One of his teamsters was Clinton A. West, and that is where Delia and Clinton had an opportunity to become well-acquainted. Even though they were third cousins, it is doubtful if they knew one another well before their days of working for R. C. Pruyn.

Clinton was the oldest son of Clinton and Etta Bennett West, of Minerva, and was born December 27, 1886. He and Delia Minor were married November 1, 1908. Both are descended from Nathan West, for whom we have the following Revolutionary War record from Washington, D.C.:

"Nathan West-W-19 596 Parents names not mentioned. Birth; In an application for pension dated September 26, 1520, veteran stated that he would be 58 in March 1821.

Family; Veteran married Martha Titus on July 16, 1787 in * Vershire, Orange Co., Vermont, and both were then residents of Vershire. In a document dated September 26, 1838, she stated that she was 68 years old and a resident of Minerva, N. Y. A daughter, Polly Jones, is mentioned in a document dated September 18, 1848, at which time she was 46 years old and living in Minerva, N. Y.

Residence: In 1820 Veteran was living in Minerva, N. Y. Veteran's residence at time of enlistment is riot mentioned.

Death: April 1, 1835 in Minerva, Essex County, N. Y.

Service; In an application for pension veteran stated that he enlisted In January or February, 1777, and served until 1783, as fifer and private in the Rhode Island Line under Captain William Allen and Colonel Jeremiah Olney.

Pension: Veteran was pensioned on Certificate 9 385f which was issued under the act of Karch 18, laid. The pension was paid at the N. Y. Agency. The widow was pensioned on Certificate i 384, which was Issued under the act of February 2, 1848. The pension was paid at the Albany office."

Arthur M. Leavitt
Veterans' Records Branch

After their marriage Clinton and Delia continued to work for a time for Sir. Pruyn. They later moved to the former Griffin (Bruneau) home in Minerva and still later to a house which stood near the present home of Lawrence West. The next move was to the present home of Lawrence and it was there that he was born. This house is interesting in that it stands half In Chester and half in Minerva. In such a case the location of the bedroom

decides where the occupant is to vote and, in this instance, it is in Minerva.

Clinton worked in the lumber camps and at various Jobs until 1927, when he began working for the State Conservation Department, from which he retired in 19^7- Hie story is told on page 193 In "Minerva 1617-1967."

During these years it was necessary for Clinton to be away from home for considerable periods of time, during which Delia and the children looked after things at home.

In later years they bought the former Lavery home, which is located in the Town of Chester, and that is where Clinton spent his last years. He died December 14 , 1953. Delia is still living there with her son Harold and a housekeeper.

The children of Clinton an‹3 Delia are; Alton, who is unmarried and lives in Wellsville, Ohio. Harold, who is unmarried and at home with his mother. Lester, who married Clara Byrne. They live in the former Wilfred Byrne home. Elma, who married Conroy Arnold, and lives In Minerva. Kellie, who married Robert Byrne, and lives in Pottersville. Lawrence, who married Christina Fish, and lives on West Road, Olmstedville.

Delia has 14 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren. It is Interesting to note that the descendants of Nathan West, the fifer, mentioned here, and many others, are unusually musical.

## Postage Stamps

The following information is taken from a little booklet called "U. S. Postage Stamps and Postal Stationery," put out by the U. S. Postal Service:

The use of adhesive stamps to show prepayment of postage on mail matter in Ib47 was a milestone in the Postal Service of the United States . These stamps, by law, were issued to postmasters for sale to the public to assure an accurate and automatic check on postage revenues.

Before the issuance of these stamps, letters could be sent collect, or, when prepaid, were marked "Paid" by means of pen and ink, or hand stamps of various designs, with the town postmark and date of mailing usually included. Some postmasters, between Ib45 and Io4?, provided special stamps or devices of local origin for use on letters to show prepayment of postage. These are known as Postmasters' Provisional^, and are generally quite rare.

Mailings without stamps affixed continued to be legal until prepayment of postage by stamps of governmental issue was made mandatory on January 1, It556.

The first issue of United States stamps in 1»47 consisted of 5-cent F tamps bearing the likeness of Benjamin Franklin and a lO-cent stamp bearing the portrait of George Washington. Stamp designs have since been revised many times, including subject material for the denominations needed to meet changing mailing requirements.

## Postal Cards

Regular type one- color Government postal cards, first issued Kay 1, 1«73» are now manufactured at the Government Printing Office in Washington, D. C., by means of four high speed rotary web presses with a capacity of 250,006 completed cards an hour per press,

## Stamped Envelopes

Stamped envelopes were first issued in June 1&53 and are, by law, manufactured for the Postal Service under private contract, let to the lowest bidder for a term of four years. Envelopes bearing the purchaser's printed return card were authorized by law in Ib65- #.&*«***#««

## NEWS OF lOO YEARS AGO

Several years ago, Helen Barnes and Mollie Magulre gave us a copy of a newspaper which is now lOO years old. It was the "Glens Falls Republican" for February 11, 1873„ and bears the name of P, Sullivan, who was their mother's father.

A reading of the paper brings to light a charge of political scandal lOO years ago. Here is a part of the article: "John J. Cisco, Charles P. Blake, son-in-law of Governor Dix, and the Governor himself, each made statements with regard to the connection of the latter with the Union Pacific Railroad, and the obtaining by him of $50,000 from the company. The charge is that the name of General Dix was sought as President of the Union Pacific Company, he being a gentleman of high character and extended influence. He was offered a recompense of $50,000 worth of stock ae a gratuity, besides a large annual salary, it was understood that Durant and Bushnell would do the work. General Dix, however, took the pay and was subsequently retired. He became Minister to France, while in that position, he sent back to his New York lawyer the $50,000 worth of stock, at that time quoted as being worth about one-third of its par value, and instructed him to see that it was brought back at a good round figure. General Dix's attorney then received. #50,000 in money for the stock which had been given him and for which he rendered practically no service. This money was paid over by the company, it is alleged, for fear General Dix would expose the secret transactions of the company, now seen to have been of the most disreputable character. His money, of course, came out of the Treasury of the United States, and was part of the spoils. A more complete statement is promised by the Governor and will be awaited with interest."

## IOO Years Ago

## Information from Minerva Town Records

March 3, 1874

At the annual Town Meeting of the Town of Minerva held at the Alpine Hall, the following votes were passed by a majority of the votes cast:

Supervisor - Thomas Powers
Town Clerk - John Mulhern
Collector - Ed. P. M. Lynch
Assessor- - John R. Wilson
Commissioner of Highways - James Lindsey

Overseer of the Poor - Henry T. Middleton
Inspectors of Election - Matthew Clifford, William Dunlap, Robert Dornburg.
Justice of the Peace - Thomas Q-. Shaw, Ed. P. M. Lynch, Garret Vandenburgh
Constables - Edward H. Talbot, James Moore
Game Constable - Elmer S. Dunlap
Sealer of Weights and Measures - Francis Hueselback.
Notice having been posted in regard to building the bridge called the "Tannery Bridge" voted by ballot on the question of building or not building said bridge. There were 161 votes cast, of which 153 were for building the bridge and 8 votes against the bridge.

John Mulhern, Clerk

The tannery bridge was no doubt the one near the present home of William McGinn.

## 150 Years Ago

Information from Minerva Town Records
Annual Meeting, 18244, held in school house in District #2.
Elected - Ithamar West, Moderator
Supervisor - Harlow Baker
Clerk - John Shaw Jun.
Assessors - Ithamar West, Samuel Baker and Kenry F. Babcock
Collector - Elijah Jones.
Overseers of the Poor - Richard Miller and William C. nest.
Commissioners of Highways - Alfred White, Lenox T. west, Elisha Biesell
School Commissioners - Elijah Jones, Collins Hewitt, Jr., Anson West.
Inspectors of Common Schools - David S. Pierce, A. P. Morse, John Shaw, Jr.,
Cromwell Calling, Harlow Baker, Joseph Chandler. '
Constables - Elijah Jones, James Jones, Lyman Baker.
Overseers of Highways - 1st beat, William Hill, 2nd beat, Edward Talbot, 3rd beat, Rufus Towsley fourth beat, fourth beat, Stephen Loveless, 6th beat William C. West, 7th beat, Giles Wickwire, 8th beat David_____ Voted the school commissioners and inspectors receive 75 cents a day for their services.

John Shaw, Jr., Clerk

## School Reports:

District #1 -- School kept 3 months. Money received and paid to teacher f 17,09. Pupils taught 34, children 5-15 Inclusive in diet. 26.

Trustees Edward Talbot, Kenry Babcock

District #2 - School kept 4 months 14 days with approved teacher. Money received and paid to teacher {24.15* Puplle taught 41. Children in district 5 to 15 inclusive 46. The commissioners reported to the state 3 school districts but only 2 held school- They received from this county $18.42 and from the town collector $26.84 There was a balance on hand after paying the teacher £2,62. Elijah; Jones, Collin Hewitt.

"Whereas application hath been made for a School District to be formed in that part of the town of Minerva called Pendleton, conformable to an act in that case made and provided, We the undersigned do set off and form that part of the town of Minerva called Pendleton into a school district #3 to include the 28th Township in Totten and Crossfield Purchase and south as far as the Vanderwarkers"
Done at Minerva. the 19th of June 1823.

William Rill Commissioners of
James Carey Co.mmon Schools

At the annual meeting in 1823 it was voted to raise double the sum of school money received from the state.
It was also voted that Fence Viewers receive one dollar per day for their services.
In 1823 there was a survey of a road leading from Gates Road near Esqr. Ithamar West to Catlin Farm in Pendleton (Newcomb). The Gater Road was probably the present North Woods Club Road.
When the Town of Newcomb was set off from Minerva in 1828, District #3 was no longer in Minerva and the same number was used for the school on Ridge Street.

## Proceedings of the Board of Supervisor^ of the County of Essex 1876

Items taken from a book loaned by the late Ruth Jackson.

Met in Elizabethtown, Tuesday,
The following taxes were to be levied on Minerva;
For Town audits _ _ _ __ _ _ $473.55
For roads and bridges_ _ _ _ $250.00
For E.F. _ _ _ __ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ $13.00
For road damage _ _ _ __ _ _ $165.00
For cancelled taxes _ _ _ __ $103.93
The committee on wolves, bears, panthers, lynx reported the following for Minerva;

Samuel Wilson, 1 bear "10
John Cclllins Slav 1 bear "10

The towns of Keene and Wilmington each reported one lynx.
Benjamin Tyrrel, Superintendent of the poor for the county reports that
It is estimated that an appropriation of $10,000 will be necessary for the support of the poor during the ensuing year. The whole number of paupers relieved or supported during the year is 1,130. The amount expended for relief outside the County Home is $2,069.83. There have been 282 poor persons provided for at the County House during the year and since the 11th day of November, 1875. The numbers discharged is 156. The number absconded is 1. The number of deaths is 10. The number of births is 4. Amount expended at home -- $5,281.64, making the amount $47.32 for each person, .13 cents a day. A list is given of the produce of the farm, butter, eggs, baby dresses, pillow cases, towels, fool's shirts and suits, mittens, etc.
Neither Newcomb or Minerva had at the home and they were not assessed anything.

## Mews from the Ticonderoga Sentinel of 1878 and 1879

Several years ago Mr. Alec Stowell of Chilson, loaned us a box of old papers, mostly the Ticonderoga Sentinel. The oldest was from 1877, the year that paper was founded by Mr. R. R. Stevenson, who was the principal of t'ie Ticonderoga Union School. One page of each paper was given over to educational matters, such as teachers' institutes, and lessons on the teaching of various subjects.

The Olmsteadville items tell us something of the teachers of that time*

May 23, 1879 -- Alfred Warren has gone to Minerva to keep school. He commenced his labors April 28th.

March 14, 1879 -- Miss Charlotte Kelso is engaged to teach the summer term In Pottersville.

School in District No. 2 closed Friday the 7th.

Miss Eunice Bull, the teacher, gave general satisfaction and, as she returns to her home in Connecticut, she leaves a bright record as a teacher. (She later became Mrs. Orson Morse and lived for many years in the present LaBar home.)

April 4, 1879 -- Anson B. Shaw is engaged to teach the summer term in District No. 7, Chester.

July I8, 1879 - School in Districts NO. 1 and 2 will close Friday, July 11th.

Miss Lucia Shaw, teacher in District No. 1 and Miss BeLle Doherty In District No. 2 gave general satisfaction. (Lucia Shaw married Edward Talbot and was the mother of Bessie Sullivan and Lillian Sumner.) (Belle Doherty is the teacher whose letter of 1940 to one of her first pupils appeared in our Quarterly for January 1970).

August 22, 1879 - A union picnic of five schools was held in the cedar grove at the foot of Schroon Lake on the 6th.

Teachers' Institutes were held In the spring and in the fall.

In May, 1879 » there was one held in Elizabethtown, and the Sentinel carried this announcement: "It is the absolute duty of everyone who wishes to teach school to attend the institute. The State Superintendent gives to all teachers who are teaching at the time of the institute, the right to attend and recover pay for the time in attendance, not to exceed three weeks."

November was the time for the fall institute that year and it was in Schroon Lake, Ticonderoga was best represented and Minerva was next, with a few from Crown Point, Moriah and Westport.

The Institute which was held in Moriah in July 1878 was attended by Fannie Doherty, Isabella Doherty and Anson B. Shaw.

Each copy of the Sentinel carried an ad for the Sherman Academy in Moriah. Its purpose was to prepare young people for college, business or teaching. The academy was well endowed and could offer very reasonable rates.

The following item from the Rochester Express was copied In the Sentinel in 1879? "The subject of salaries of teachers is at present being discussed in educational circles. A report on the subject, proposing to grade teachers according to merit and not rank, has caused considerable discussion by the public Journals. The policy, if adopted, would not fail to work a great deal of good. There is in the United States a very respectable number of teachers who are worthy of the name, but they have to compete on equal terms with such a horde of ignorant pedagogues whose only merit is cheapness, that they stand no show whatever."

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## Items from the Elizabethtown Post for April 8, 1896

This paper belonged to E. J. Sherman, but was given us by the late Dorothy Church. Subscription price for the paper was 11 a year, payable strictly in advance.

The Alpine Hotel Property in the Town of Minerva is for sale.

Patrick Sullivan, owner and proprietor, has bought the Union Hotel in Glens Falls.

It is reported that the Town Clerk's office in Minerva will be moved to what is called "the West side." Henry Callahan, the recently elected Supervisor of the Town of Minerva, is a resident of "the West side" and is the first man living in that particular locality who has been elected to the Supervisorship in a quarter of a century.

One of the many advertisements reads: "Coughing leads to consumption. Kemp's Balsam will stop the cough at once. Go to your druggist today and get a sample bottle free. Large bottles 50 cents and $1 Go at once, delays arc dangerous."

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## Spring Clean-up in May, 1915-

The Essex County News, punished at Keeseville May 14, 1915* contains an editorial very similar to what we might see in today's paper. Here is a portion of It: "There are some people who are absolutely careless as to the general appearance of their town.

Comparatively few persons, who have any sense of cleanliness at all, would litter up their own grounds by throwing refuse out of the windows. Yet the same people will scatter tin cans and rubbish about the streets and vacant lots of the town. Then they complain against the local officers if the place is not kept in neat condition.

The closing paragraph gives us a little side-light on the number of cars that might have been in operation in 1915: "Allowing public streets to remain in a disorderly condition must hurt the reputation of a town.

In these days of automobiles, a town receives visitors constantly from far and near. Residents of other places come in a critical spirit. They are quick to see evidences of public disorder and they bear away the news that this or that town is dirty.

Spring is the time for cleaning up. Let us all resolve to keep the streets neat this season."

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## Northern Mew Yorkers in Lusitania

This same copy of the Essex County News tells of the residents of upper New York State who lost their lives when the Lusitania was sunk. Here are some quotations from the article; "Among the passengers on the ill-fated Cunard Liner Lusitania which sailed from New York for Liverpool, and which was torpedoed by a German submarine off Kinsale Island in the Irish Sea near the coast of Ireland last Friday, were several residents of Northern New York. Some of them are numbered among the lost.

Albert Lloyd Hopkins, son of Sirs. S. DeForest Hopkins of Glens Falls and Rev. James A. Seattle of Amsterdam and his family, including Mrs. 3eattie, Mrs. Gt. S. Seattle and Allan Seattle are all believed lost. Dr. James T. Houghton, of Saratoga Springs, was rescued after being in the water for four hours.

Among the well-known Americans whose bodies have not been recovered and who consequently are believed to have perished are Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt, Charles Knein and playwright Justin M. Forman, and Lecturer and poet Elbert Hubbard with his wife, who at one time taught at the Potsdam Normal*

Many of the passengers did not believe the Lusitania would sink as quickly as she did. Consequently, they did not join in the rush for the life-boats, but evidently preferred to trust in their belief that the water-tight compartments of the vessel would keep her afloat until such time as help came out from the Irish shore, less than ten miles away.

It is estimated that there were about 190 Americans on board the Cunard liner. So far as can be ascertained at this time 73 Americans were saved. Consequently, the death list of Americans is about 117"

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