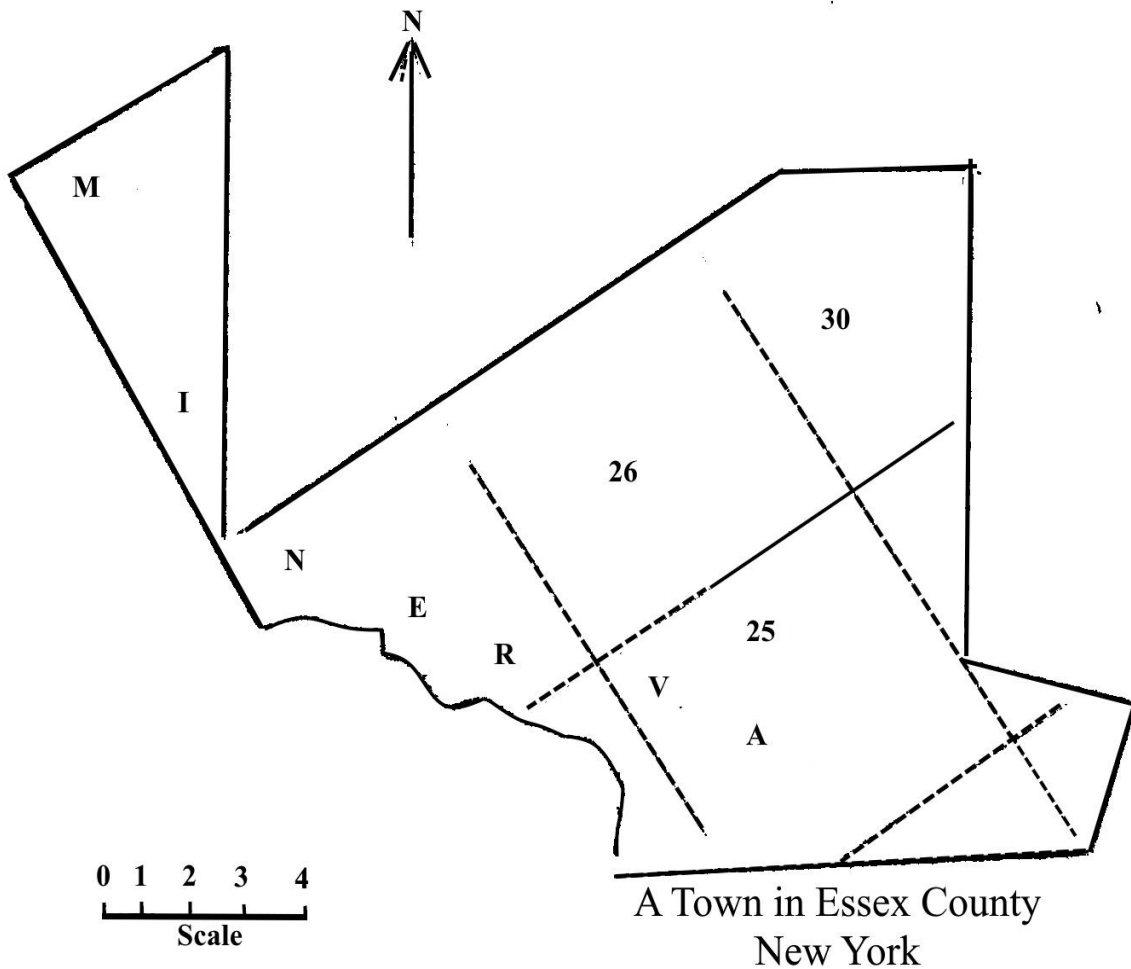


The
Historical Society
of the
Town of Minerva
Quarterly



OCTOBER MEETING

The Bicentennial Committee of the Town of Minerva Historical Society is planning the fall meeting with the objective of awakening an interest in the future celebration of the 200th birthday of our nation in 1976. On Tuesday, October 24, at 7:30 at the Minerva Central School two movies will be shown. One will be the story of Williamsburg and the other of Ticonderoga. The adult chorus will offer a group of traditional American songs. Preceding the program a short business meeting of the Society will be held in the cafeteria at 7:00 P.M.

TOUR OF HOMES

More than 200 visitors representing seven states participated in the Tour of Homes sponsored by the Historical Society on July 23 from 2:00 to 5:00. The enthusiasm of the guests was most rewarding to the hosts and hostesses involved. Co-Chairmen of the event were Susanne LaRocque and Shirley McNally.

The homes toured were those of May Donnelly, Charles LaBar, Clarence Carey, Edwin Shevlin, Doris Sullivan and William McGinn. St. Mary's Church in Irishtown was also a part of the tour and the Town Hall was the last stop where punch and cookies were served. The Hall had been transformed into a Victorian parlor with antique furniture and accessories loaned for the occasion. Hostesses there were Alice Switzer, Mollie Maguire and Elizabeth Sullivan.

COLONIAL DINNER

The "citizenry rallied to the support" of Minerva's first effort to celebrate the bicentennial of this nation's independence.

"The Plump Chicken Inn" — otherwise known as the Minerva Central School — served a colonial dinner to more than 350 on August 26, beginning at 5:00. Guests were beckoned by a large early American style sign and entered into the school hall where other wall decorations describing the services of the Inn were displayed.

In the hall, too, was a collection of old kitchen utensils, as well as the Senior Citizens' bazaar table. Guests received souvenir menus done in old English writing. At the tables decorated in colonial blue, were placards with colonial manners for children done in script typing. Carefully made "horn books" furnished a dessert menu for each table.

As the guests donned bibs with the plump chicken motif, they were served by waitresses in Martha Washington costumes. The success of the dinner itself was largely due to the efforts of the chief cook, Clare Roblee, who willingly spent many hours in preparing, serving, and seeing the meal through to its completion. An impressive accomplishment was performed by Dorothy Hammond who made more than 500 delicious biscuits for the affair. The gingerbread and apple pan dowdy for dessert were made by members of the Senior Citizens organization.

Strolling troubadours, Kathy Halloran, Nellie Mitchell and Mary Pat Savariet sang early American folk songs to the accompaniment of guitars. Jack Sullivan and Fred Morse furnished banjo and fiddle music. Town Crier Jim Brannon periodically announced items of local interest. Patty Hewitt, chairman of our Bicentennial Committee, was general chairman of the affair. The over-all decor was planned and executed by Suzanne LaRocque and Alice Switzer, who also acted as hostesses. In charge of tickets was Andrew Halloran arrayed in a colonial costume. Eleanor LaBar did a fine job on publicity.

The Plump Chicken Inn is closed for the season, but hopefully will reopen in 1973.

SUMMER VISITORS

Professor and Mrs. Donald K. Brundage of Toledo, Ohio, called in Minerva this summer and were in attendance at our Colonial dinner. Mr. Brundage was seeking the location of the old Berto home in Leonardsville and was delighted to learn that we have a picture of it.

He has bought three of our histories and plans to give one to the Genealogy-Local History Room of the Toledo Public Library and send one to the Public Library in Big Rapids, Michigan, where so many of the Bennetts, Bertos and Lincolns migrated. When he has completed the material about his ancestors, he has promised to send us a copy.

Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Kneip of Mt. Arlington, N.J. spent the last week in August at the LaBar camps and also attended our Colonial dinner. Betty is a descendant of the Evans family of Minerva.

1817–1967

Between 50 and 60 copies of our new printing of the history have been sold. Several have gone to people whose ancestors lived in Minerva.

IN MEMORIAM

**Francis Frederick Kellogg
1900–1972**

Frank Kellogg died August 23rd. He was born October 16, 1900 to Orson and Anna McGinn Kellogg, and spent most of his life in Minerva. He married Anna Callahan and they have three sons, the eldest of whom is the Rev. Bernard Kellogg who is serving the Parish of Lowville. The others are John and Leo, by whom they have eight grandchildren. Father Bernard said the Mass at his father's funeral, assisted by eleven other priests and the Knights of Columbus.

Anna has for many years been a member of our Historical Society, and when she happened to be away, Frank has been very helpful to those who came to the Town Clerk's office, seeking information about their ancestors. Frank was a successful plumber and was Water Commissioner of the town until a few months before his death.

**Vera Savoie Stanley
1904–1972**

Vera Savoie Stanley, writer of the articles in our July and October 1971 Quarterlies, called "*Some Memories of Balfour Lake*," died at the home of her daughter in Peekskill on August 25th.

She was born in Minerva on March 3, 1904 to Leonard and Pearl Foote Savoie who were then working at Balfour Lake. Vera spent her childhood there and in the village of Minerva. She later took training as a nurse in the Saratoga Hospital, but had to give this up for health reasons. She taught school for a time and then married Gurnsey Stanley of North Creek, which place was their home for a number of years. They later moved to Tahawus where they lived until Gurnsey's death in 1956.

Two daughters were born to them, Normalea who married Vernon Balch and Shirley who married James Armstrong. There are eleven grandchildren.

Vera was a very friendly person and will be missed by the people with whom she corresponded, as well as by her family.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Bobbed hair for school teachers is not approved in many schools and there are several cities in the state where young women with abbreviated tresses will not be employed. The adoption of this fad is evidently considered by some as evidence of a giddy disposition.

— *Warrensburgh News*, June 1, 1922

From "The Good Old Days" compiled by Kathleen Goodman

CONTEST ANNOUNCED

In order to encourage interest in the Bicentennial Celebration the committee involved is sponsoring an essay contest for Minerva Central School students (Grades 4 through 12). Suggestions for topics and specific rules have been formulated and will be announced to the students in the near future. The cooperation of the teachers involved has been secured and it is hoped a large number will participate. The members of the committee are willing to act in an advisory capacity to interested students. Prizes are to be awarded at the spring concert of the school music department.

VETERAN**Hiram Gilman Morse**

We have some further information about another young man who served in the Union army in the Civil War. This is Hiram Gilman Morse, son of Sanford and Louisa Palmer Morse, who was born in Minerva, May 14, 1846.

We have had some correspondence with one of his descendants, Mrs. Robert Dunn of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who tells us that Hiram enlisted when he was fifteen years old. When his age was discovered he was sent home and he again enlisted when he had reached the proper age. He was a private in Dennis Barnes' Company C, 93rd Regiment of N.Y. Volunteers. He was wounded at the battle of the Wilderness in which his Captain was killed. Hiram later received a pension under the number 28675.

He went to Chicago where he was a dealer in grain. In 1866, he married Jennie Ruth Ashwell who was born in London, England and they had two daughters and one son. Hiram died in Chicago in 1890 at the age of 44 and his body was brought to Minerva for burial. His gravestone bears no information but his name and age, and we are grateful to Mrs. Dunn for this further data.

The name Hiram Gilman came to him from a young man who came to Minerva about 1830, married Elisabeth Palmer and went West about 1841. Elizabeth was a sister of Louise Palmer Morse, mother of Hiram. The Sanford Morse family lived in a house which stood about where the present home of Florence and Philip Fitzsimons stands.

A whistling woman and a crowing hen are sure to come to some bad end.

Don't cut hair in the dark of the moon, or it might cause baldness.

Elizabeth Talbot Sullivan

Elizabeth Talbot was born January 23, 1887 to Edward M. and Lucia Shaw Talbot. She is descended from several very early settlers of Minerva — the Wests, Millers, Shaws and Talbots. Her father was a farmer and a meat peddler and Bessie, as she was called, sometimes went with him on his trips to Hewitt Lake and Aiden Lair in his horse-drawn meat cart.

Her grandparents, Edward and Amanda Miller Talbot, lived in the big house on the corner where the Olmstedville road turns toward Pottersville, and Bessie loved to visit there. Her grandmother was said by some to have been the prettiest girl in town, and Bessie was fortunate enough to inherit this and probably other traits from Amanda.

Bessie married John Sullivan of Olmstedville, son of Patrick and Margaret Mulhern Sullivan. John was a store keeper and is remembered by all for his fine singing voice, his ball playing and his sense of humor. He died in 1957.

For thirteen years, Bessie was clerk of the Olmstedville School Board and was postmaster from 1943 to 1958 when she retired. Since that time, she has spent a number of winters in Florida, first with her two sisters, Gertrude Montgomery and Lillian Sumner, and more recently with Lillian alone, as they are the only ones left of a family of four girls.

Bessie and John had four sons and two daughters, all of whom are still living. There are twenty-two grandchildren and thirty-three great grandchildren.

Bessie was a charter member of our Historical Society and has been and still is very helpful in supplying information and serving in other ways. She is loved by all for her thoughtfulness and kindness and her gentle spirit.

WOMEN'S LIB

There is much talk these days about women's lib, but it is not an entirely new subject. On September 25, 1824, the following vote was taken by the men of the Minerva Baptist Church: "Voted the Sisters have the same privilege of voting and making observations as the brethren have."

Elder Thomas Ravlin, first resident pastor of the church, had come from Shoreham, Vermont in July to serve the church and the clerk was Absalom P. Morse, first supervisor of the town.

HUMOR

Beaudry Brothers

Da(ve) and Joe

The Beaudry's lived on the North Woods Club Road. They came down to the store one time with a young pair of oxen. Now this pair had not been trained very intensively even at home, and when they got inveigled much, and coerced some, down to the streets of the metropolis (cross roads by Jennie Jones) they developed a severe attack of homesickness, Joe came in to do the "buying while Da(ve) stayed with the team. Joe was very uneasy about the situation and well he might "be, for a gust of wind stirred something near the oxen and they took off for the only refuge they knew - home. Joe was too late to help except to cheer: "Hur-ee, Da(ve),;" The brothers were musical. Joe conceded that Da(ve) excelled IF HE WAS ALL RIGHT, but this night Joe was furnishing music for the dance. As the evening wore into the small hours there may have been a feeling of monotony for someone suggested! "Give us Montreal, Joe "Sam tune bin play all nate". Tweek de tweek, etc..

Joe admittedly was not much of a dancer. After he brought home Lucy, things were brighter up at home., but still, he didn't contribute much to the entertainment. As he expressed it — "Lucie dance. I look at it."

One of the brothers was telling of his skill with the fiddle. Such a glowing description was sure to bring results. Unknown to Joe, there was a fiddle in the house and when it was produced with a request for proof he replied , "Some time when I feel LIKE it."

RADIO

Radio Station WGY5 Schenectady, is this year celebrating its 50th anniversary along with Davenport ? Iowa, and probably others, Davenport was one of the first stations to reach 500 Watts in 1922 and 5000 in 1924.

"The World Almanac" tells us that the first broadcasting station was WHA in Madison, Wisconsin, which as 9[^]-M began scheduled broadcasting in 1919. Detroit followed in August 1920? and Pittsburgh was going in time to announce the election of Pros. Harding in November 1920.

All of this made us wonder about early listening sets in Minerva. Bessie Sullivan tells us that they had a little set with earphones about 1921 or f22, and that one of their sons fixed up an apparatus which made it possible for more than one person to listen at a time. He made a hole through a rolling pin in which was inserted a funnel to carry the sound from the ear piece.

Clarence Jones remembers sitting up late to turn the dial and see how many stations he could get. One night when he got Davenport, Iowa, he was so excited that he woke up his parents to tell them about it. "Yes, We Have No Bananas" and "Ching-Chong", were two of the favorite songs played.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Katherine Brown

One of our new correspondents is Mrs, Katherine Brown of East Lansing, Michigan, who is related to several Minerva residents, although they did not formerly know of her existence. In 1855 9 Laura Amelia Barnes, daughter of Thompson and Jane Talbot Barnes, married Charles A. Hice of Schroon. Mrs. Brown would like to trace back the Rice family. Can you help? Mrs. Brown has sent us a copy of the information that she has gathered on the Barnes and related families. It: shows that Thompson Barnes got his first name from his grandmother who Typhena Thompson, also where he got the names for some of his children such as Samuel Cook and Benjamin Coe.

Mrs. Ethel Hill Robb

Another correspondent is Mrs. Ethel Hill Robb of Colorado Springs Colorado who is descended from Simon West of Minerva, son of Levi Gates West and Rhoda Hill Williams, Simon being born in 1842. He served in the 16th Regt., Co. K in the Civil War. Mrs. Robb tells us that he later went to Alexandria, Minn., and ran a mill of some kind. He got caught in the belt of a machine and was killed.

Mrs. Robb is also descended from the Hill family of the Chestertown area. Her father was G. W. Hill and her mother Eliza Fraser. The latter was related to one of the Frasers of the Fraser, Major and Fraser Company which at one time owned and operated the tanneries in Olmstedville and Pottersville. Mrs. Robb's parents separated and she was brought East and raised in the Ira Hill family of Warrensburg.

Any information about their families will be appreciated.

Norman A. Gates

Two letters have been received from Mr. Horman A, Gates of Chicago who is descended from the John Gates mentioned on page 60 in "Minerva 1817-1967". We now know that John was the oldest child of Jirah and Hannah Gates who came to Minerva- from' Hartford, KY, about 1826, Jirah being a brother of David Gates, Jr., mentioned on page 30.

John went to Chicago and we shall learn more about his descendants who live there today.

The fact that John was a son of Jirah is proved by a letter, a copy of which Mr. Noman Gates has sent to us. It was written from Minerva, Sept. 11, 1857* "by Aaron Gates to his brother John in Chicago. We already had proof that Aaron was a son of Jirah',

The letter gives us some interesting information about Aaron and his life in Minerva. He was living on what is now the North Woods Club Road and he and his wife were serving the lumbermen who worked in that area, no doubt sending logs down the Hudson. His letter says, "As for me and my folks, I am here, and I think I shall stay as long as there is so much business going on here. It is not so lonesome here as it was once. I think we shall have all we can do here this winter to wait on lumbermen when they get in, for there is no other place to stop now. Abel Gates is up to Russell's old place, but he won't fuss with the folks. But I can tell you that since the 22 of last Nov. till now, I have had \$272.52 of my own." Later on, the letter says, "You want I should write about all the folks. The Willis boys have sold out and gone to the western part of the state and gone to store keeping again. Conery and all his folks have gone West. They get along at the factory very well. Bark fetches a good price — \$3 a cord when drawn,

Father and Mother live here with us and have since July. I think Mother fails, but Father is smart for him."

Jirah had deeded his farm to Aaron who had redeemed the property of his brother Lyman after his death in 1856. As a result, Aaron wrote to John, "I have more land than I can work, so if you don't come back, I must sell it before next haying." (Letter edited for spelling and punctuation to make for easier reading.)

In 1861 Aaron sold his brother's farm to Hosanna Murphy of N.Y.C. for \$300 and in 1866 he sold the rest of his property to James Short of Newcomb for \$800. He then joined many other Minervaites in their trek to the West. We know that Jirah went with him and- his family as he is mentioned in a letter written in 1872 to Daniel Lynch of Minerva by Sheldon B, Hewitt of Nielsvills, Wisconsin.

OLD HOUSE TORN DOWN

The former Mason Plumley home on 14th Road is no more, as Don decided that the house was not worth repairing. If you will look at the 1858 and the 1876 maps folded in the back of your "Minerva 1817-1967" you will find that this house belonged to T. Miller. "The initial "T: stands for Townsend who was the son of Richard and Debora Pierce Miller, and was born in 1834. In 1853 he married Luena Rebecca Kellogg, daughter of Valentine and Huldah Phelps Kellogg. This family had moved to Minerva from Elizabethtown a year or so earlier, Townsend and Luena had one daughter, Ella,

In the Civil War, Townsend was in the 93rd Regt. and was wounded at Culpepper on August 1, 1863.

When the 1370 census was taken the Miller family consisted of Townsend and Luena, Ella who was 14, Mary McGee, the school teacher, 23, Polly Lewis, 16, listed as a servant, and Deborah Miller, Town's mother who was then 73. Before the 1875 census was taken Luene and Townsend had separated and he was living alone. Deborah had gone to Minnesota with her younger son, Norman.

In 1870, there was living in the North River section of Minerva a family by the name of Hunt. There were three in the family, all born in Canada — Robert 30, Alzina 27, and Christina 9. Alzina was a daughter of Ephraim and Mary Stone. Robert died before 1875, and Alzina later became the housekeeper for Town Miller. She must have taught school for a time as Clarence Jones remembers hearing Margaret Gallon say that Mrs. Hunt taught in the Mallon district.

Alzina's daughter Christina also became a teacher. She married Wallace Plumley of Long Lake and had a son Berlin born in 1882. Minerva town records show that Christina, or Tine as she was called, "was teaching in District 2 in 1885 for which she was paid \$16 and \$59. The next year she taught two terms in District 3, which was Ridge Street, and received \$88.94. She again taught in District 2 in 1891 and received \$52.99. In 1892, when the census was taken, Wallace Plumley was living in Minerva with his wife and son. We are told that they had rented a portion of the house where Badgley's now live, and it was there that another son, Mason, was born on March 19, 1893. Three weeks later on April 21 the mother died of consumption at the age of 32. Wallace Plumley returned to Long Lake to live, leaving the two children with Alzina Hunt, their grandmother.

Before Town Miller died on March 6, 1899 of pneumonia, he deeded and willed all of his property to Mrs. Hunt who had been his housekeeper for a number of years. When Berlin married he and his wife lived in a part of the former Miller house until the one now occupied by Arnold and Janet Olden was built, Mrs. Hunt died and the house became the Mason Plumley home,

OLD LETTERS

In tearing down the house in which he was raised, Don Plumley came upon a couple of old letters and some newspapers of 1930 which he was kind enough to pass on to the Historical Society.

One letter was written June 4, 1871 by Uriah and Milla Pierce to Townsend Miller of Minerva. Although the letter does not tell where the Pierces were living, it is probable that they were in St. Charles, Minnesota.

Townsend Miller was the son of Richard and Deborah Pierce Miller and it may be that Uriah Pierce was Deborah's brother as he writes, "I received a very few words from you in sister's letter." His letter began, "I have seated myself to write you a few lines" as is so often seen in old letters. Apparently, Uriah was getting old and feeble and concerned about death for he wrote, "We cannot see what is in the future for us. We are only here for a little while to get ready to die. We are reminded almost daily of our mortality. Townsend let us try to meet our change in peace."

The second letter was written from St. Charles, Minn., and dated Oct. 2, 1874. It is to "Dear Brother Town" from "Your Brother Norman". Townsend and Norman were the sons of Richard Miller by his second wife Deborah Pierce. Richard lived on the corner where Sturdevans now live and Mason Plumley used to tell us that that was the oldest house in town

The two brothers, Norman and Townsend, married sisters, daughters of Valentine Kellogg. Norman and his wife Eliza went to St. Charles, Minn. where Norman sold sewing machines. He may have had some other business as well for his letter says in part, "Mr. Pike has opened a livery stable, which makes things lively. I have to run to the train for Bummers. I don't like it very well. We have a very strong competition. Our machine trade has not been quite as good as last year, still we have sold a great many machines this year. I expect to go to Redwing next Monday to settle with the agent there."

Later in the letter Norman says, "Ashley and Clara live in Joe Prawn's house on the ridge. Ashley is working for Leander West and has worked for him all the time, I believe." The Ashley referred to was Ashley Tupper who married Clara Kellogg, another sister of Luena and Eliza. After living in Minn, for a time, the Tupperes returned to the East and eventually made their home in Ft. Ann. They had six children.

Of his mother, Norman wrote, "Mother is quite smart for her she has been over to Norm West's for about a week now,"

OLD NEWSPAPERS

The newspapers passed on to us by Don are portions of the Albany Times Union and a copy of the Warrensburgh News for March 13. All are for 1930. Here is an interesting excerpt from one of the Albany papers:

Canned Goods in Every Household

by Prudence Penny

I rise to take issue with a clever columnist who in no uncertain terms condemns canned goods of every variety. They are to blame, he sadly says, for much of the unhappiness of married life. And furthermore, he says, with grave shakes of a head brought low with unhappiness, women of today are rapidly approaching the stage where their entire kitchen equipment will consist of a telephone and a can opener!

Oh, fiddlesticks! Certainly, I hold no brief for the housewife who patronize the delicatessen to the absolute exclusion of the markets; but show me the kitchen where the emergency shelf isn't stacked high with canned goods of every known description and I'll show you a kitchen that isn't properly equipped.

Probably that vary writer who finds the housewives of today nothing "but amateurs at the culinary art is the very roan who will bring two or three totally unexpected guests' home to dinner when there are just enough lamb chops and French-fried potatoes and salad in the larder for two! He'll expect a triumph of a dinner, without a doubt; and he probably gets it, thanks to the canned goods on his wise wife's emergency shelf.

On the front page of the Warrensburgh News is this Minerva item:

New Boy Scout Troop

Minerva to Have Group — Organization Work Well Under Way.

Organization of a new troop of Boy Scouts, to be known as Troop 34, is under way in Minerva and indications point to a large enrollment as soon as the preliminary arrangements are completed. The troop committee is in process of formation and some twenty-two boys have signified their desire to enroll,

Scout Executive A. P, Newkirk, Scout Commissioner Hoy 7, Randall and Harry E. Smith, chairman of the health and sanitation committee of the Mohican Council, conferred with those sponsoring the movement recently. Tonight, Scout Executive Newkirk will be in Minerva to further the work.

Those who have filed applications for membership in the troop committee include Joseph C. Mitchell, the Kev« N. R. Peagles, Dennis Lynn, Clarence E. Jones and Charles V. LaBar. The committee has selected Edward Clarence Foote as Scoutmaster.

Ralph Mitchell, formerly a member of Troop 31 of Warrensburgh, is one of the boys planning to enroll in the new troop.

During the next two weeks the troop Will meet on Thursday evenings but the meeting night is expected to be changed to Monday evening. The boys gather in the school house.

THE PLUMLEY FAMILY

Joel Plumley (1792-1863) was one of the first settlers of Long Lake. According to George Shaw who wrote notes on the people of that place, Joel decided to move to Long Lake while living in Horicon, but he spent only summers there for a time, clearing land and getting a home built. In 1834, he moved his wife and three children in a wagon drawn by oxen, taking three days for the trip. Jeremiah and John are the only names of the children that we know.

John Plumley (1826-1900), son of Joel married Zobadea — --- — - --- , whose last name we do not know. They had a son Wallace who lived in Minerva for a short time. John was a well-known guide and hunter. It is said that if a deer was about to escape, he would bark like a dog, making the sound echo from the mountain side in such a way that the deer would turn and run back toward the hunter.

John served for many years as guide for William H. H. Murray who wrote "Adventures in the Wilderness". In this book is found the following tribute to John Plumley, * as he spelled the name: "Honest John PLumley, the prince of guides, patient as a hound, and as faithful — a man who knows the wilderness as a farmer knows his fields, whose instinct is never at fault. whose temper is never ruffled, whose paddle is silent as falling snow, whose eye is true along the sights, whose pancakes are the wonder of the woods — honest, patient, and modest John Plumley, may he live long beyond the limit so few of us attain, and depart at last full of peace as he is full of honors, God bless him!

John was the great grandfather of Don Plumley of Minerva and his sister Jean Dowitsch, also Beecher Plumley and Lorraine Morrison of Minerva.

PICTURE OP HOOPER MINE

Mr. Vernon Burns has been kind enough to loan us for copying a picture of the first Hooper mine which was located in Minerva. This is a fine addition to our collection of old pictures. It will be on display at our meeting on October 24th at the school.

SOME OLD CURES

Sumac leaves are good for hay fever and can cure asthma.

Golden seal roots are good for stomach trouble.

Dandelion root and May Apples are good for liver ailments.

Skunk oil is good for the croup.