

History of the Dairy Products Industry in Gouverneur

By JULIUS R. BARTLETT

Examination of any history of the town of Gouverneur discloses that agriculture has always been the main spoke in the economic wheel, and that dairying has been the backbone of the farming industry throughout St. Lawrence county.

Walter W. Hall, a prominent cheesemaker of Gouverneur, in his story in the Gouverneur Centennial Book of 1905, writes, "Prior to 1851, cheese and butter making were confined to farm dairies. When cheese was made, the milk of the herd was made into one cheese regardless of the quantity or size of the herd. These cheeses were held in the farm dairy rooms, and if butter was made, it was kept in the farm home cellar. When the dairy season closed in the fall, the whole output was sold."

The size and quality of the homemade cheese varied according to the sanitary conditions of the barns, the equipment of that early date and the skill of the maker.

The cream which came to the surface of the milk was skimmed off and made into butter for the family use. If there was more than could be used at home, it was sold to country stores or possibly to some other type of buyer.

Mr. Hall wrote, "This skimming was believed to be an act of economy as they believed that if the cream was left in the milk, it would all pass off in the whey and be lost."

Some reasonably good cheese was made in dairies where conditions somewhat approximated those of modern control, but the home processing was expensive.

The Start of Milk Pooling

Jesse Williams in Oneida, in 1851, Mr. Hall stated, made the first step toward the Yankee cheese factory by pooling his farm milk with that of his sons living on separate farms. The father made the cheese, and each was paid according to the number of pounds delivered. From that time on cooperative dairying began to appear slowly in various areas.

English Market

Mr. Hall provided an interesting highlight in stating that, "No sooner had we won the good opinion of the English consumers, than some unscrupulous dairymen of our

state, thinking no one could tell the difference, continued the pernicious habit of removing more or less of the cream from the milk and making a light skim cheese and branding it as a full cream American cheese. Not being satisfied with this alone, the "wise ones" introduced a system of "filled" cheese, which was made from pure skimmed milk, with foreign fats added, mixed by force. This combination, when made into cheese, looked like full cream cheese. After the cheese reached British shores, the flavor, according to the English, was vile.

First Cheese Factories

The only milk factory shown on the 1865 atlas of the town of Gouverneur was a Dutch cheese factory in the Griffith school district No. 9, about one mile north of Griffith bridge. The Town of Fowler listed a cheese factory at what is now Fenners Corners in the West Fowler area.

Early Butter Making

Butter in the early days was made by the dash-churn method. It was later changed to the square churn or barrel-like churn methods. Both of these churns were hand operated by whirling the churns by means of the handles on the side. The writer of this article, whose father made butter, recalls that on some occasions the butter "would not come." This meant that the separation of the butter fat from the remainder of the milk was delayed. Today we would probably explain this as having been caused by improper care of the milk.

It was a pleasant sound to the writer to hear the noise of the milk inside turn to a bumping sound, when the butter did start to come. He also recalls on one occasion opening the churn when the butter would not come and wondering why it was so obstinate. The cover of the churn was carelessly screwed back and the whole mess dumped to the floor making quite a loss to my hard working parent.

Cooling Milk

The early method of cooling milk was the shallow pan method, with one pan containing milk set in a larger pan of cold water. The Bellows Falls separator, one in which cans were lowered into ice cold water to remain over night was in vogue a little later. But

around 1900 the centrifugal separator appeared. The separator process, of course, was for butter making farmers.

An early cooler for those hauling milk to factories was the ice cold water filled cone, which had a compartment above with strainer holes that permitted seepage from the upper compartment over the cold cone, and then into the old fashioned milk can. If a modern milk inspector could see a barn of the 1895 era and its operation as a dairy plant, he would be horrified.

First Cheese Factories

Abner Gillette in 1869 built the first cheese factory in Gouverneur village, if not in the town of Gouverneur. It was situated just south of the New York Central railroad tracks in the vicinity of the Maple Producers Cooperative association on Factory street. Other factories soon appeared in the town of Gouverneur, namely the Johnstown road factory, the Cream of the Valley factory, the Elmdale factory, the Scotch Settlement factory, the Little Bow factory, the North Gouverneur factory and the East Gouverneur factory.

Besides Mr. Gillette, cheese makers here were Jay F. Hodgkin, Thomas Dalton, Walter W. Hall and James Parker.

The Yankee cheese factory, as the factories of that period were known, cared for most of the milk during the period after the Civil War until the 1890 decade when the demand for fluid milk in growing cities made itself felt.

Cheese factories in almost all cases usually closed about the first of November and opened again in March.

Jay F. Hodgkin, owner of the Gouverneur cheese factory for many years, originated the first winter cheese factory operation in this area. He purchased milk from farmers outright and made butter instead of cheese. The milk curd remaining after the butterfat content had been removed was made into a skim milk cheese, which naturally commanded a low price and in fact was a by-product. He died in 1903 and some time previous to that sold the factory to James H. Parker. He was the father of Miss Blanche Hodgkin of 79 Barnes street.

Cheese Board

The Gouverneur Cheese Board of that era handled the products of about 40 factories and was the largest cheese board outside of Watertown in the northern area. As St. Lawrence county led in cheese-making, it was probably the largest board outside of Watertown. The Watertown board took care of the entire production of Jefferson county, while Canton also had a dairy board in St. Lawrence county. The Cheese Board ended its session about 20 years ago after about 50 years in existence.

The late William A. Freeman, 143 Park street, owner and operator of the East Gouverneur cheese factory from 1898 to 1923, received many cheese making awards in this country and a certificate award at the Paris International Exposition in 1900. He was also president of the Gouverneur Cheese board in about this same period. William T. Clark of Hailesboro was the secretary. The Gouverneur Cheese board, or Dairy board as it was also called, ended about 40 years of existence soon after 1930. It handled the product of about 40 factories at the top of its career.

Some other towns, such as Antwerp and Adams, had, by 1898, large milk plants including Baumerts at Antwerp and the Rosemary Creamery at Adams. In the late summer of 1905, the centennial date of Gouverneur town, men from Bainbridge and Cooperstown appeared here looking for milk from St. Lawrence county. The downstate men, Charles A. and Will W. Hovey of Cooperstown and Julien Scott of Bainbridge, had no difficulty in interesting local people and farmers in their project which would operate the year around.

In the fall of 1905, the southern part of the Dodge Grove was purchased and cleared of trees. This grove, situated between South Gordon street and Grove street, extended from what is now the Gouverneur post office to the New York Central railroad tracks, a main reason for locating at that point.

The first corporation was known as the St. Lawrence Farms. Associated with it besides the downstate men were three local men, Anson A. Potter, Benjamin F. Brown and James A. Mills. James Parker, who was operating the Gouverneur cheese factory was

taken into employment by the St. Lawrence Farms.

The St. Lawrence Farms opened for the receipt of milk on January 7, 1906, in what was an imposing building of brick which had all the latest devices for sanitary production. Mr. Parker weighed in the first delivery which came from the William D. VanBuren farm on the Outer Grove street road, with Sam Greer, tenant, bringing in the milk in a horse drawn vehicle. He was about the nearest patron of the plant. Mr. Parker served through several ownerships of the plant and after retiring in 1948, died in July, 1953.

The St. Lawrence Farms gave way in three months to a company formed in April, 1906, as the International Milk Products Co. This company, besides the Farms, included the Stoddard Manufacturing Co., of Rutland, Vermont; the H. K. Walmpole Co. of Philadelphia and the International Cheese Co. of Cooperstown. Herbert G. Aldrich, a wealthy local man, became part of the organization which included several other men from the towns in which the other plants were situated.

Westcott Express Co.

Earl E. Laidlaw has told this writer that a milk company, known as the Westcott Express Co. appeared here in 1904 looking after milk for New York. They did not bottle the milk, but cooled and shipped it in a very crude manner according to modern ideas. The Park Farm Dairies succeeded this company who operated in a small building on Depot street just north of the railroad tracks. The Borden Condensed Milk company, which appeared about 1908, had modern methods and shipped bottled milk.

Nestles Company

Returning to the International Milk Products Co., this company operated with the Hoveys in charge. Other managers later appearing were Walter G. Laidlaw of East Orange, N. J., and Ben P. Connolly of New York. Ice cream was the original product of the company but condensed milk was also produced. In August, 1918, Mr. Connolly announced that his company had disposed of its plants and holdings to the Nestles Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co., Cham, Switzerland. This company was generally referred to as the Nestles Food Co. and had offices

in New York as its predecessors had. The new owners embarked on an expansion and modernization program at a reported cost of \$125,000. The boiler capacity was increased from two 75 hp. to two 150 hp. and much concrete work was done.

The Nestles Co. had patron difficulties in 1920 when they announced that because of the heavy surplus of condensed milk, they would be obliged to shut down. Later an obstacle of reopening arose when the Nestles Co. and the Dairymens League failed to agree on bargaining rights. The members of the Borden plant at the railroad station were all members of the League. Difficulties were finally ironed out, and the Nestles plant reopened on April 1, 1921.

Harry Steel was the local manager of the Nestles Co. during this period and H. B. Rowe was their personal relations representative.

The Horton Company

In April, 1924, the J. M. Horton Ice Cream company of New York, which had a plant in Richville, purchased the Nestles Co. plant here. Albert E. Boughner, who was then located at Richville as division manager, and William H. Foster, superintendent, came to Gouverneur to operate the plant here in similar capacities. On January 1, 1928, announcement was made that the Borden company had purchased the Horton Co. and that the plant here would be operated as the Pioneer Ice Cream Division of the Borden Co. Mr. Boughner and Mr. Foster retain their positions after 31 years.

Important structural changes were made including a new brick smoke stack, replacing two metal smoke stacks, the installation of considerable new equipment and the construction of an "island" receiving station which permits unloading milk on both sides of the building with milk reaching the interior of the plant by underground passage. During the period of Horton-Borden operation since 1923, the Gouverneur plant has handled an estimated two billion pounds of milk from 500 dairies.

The Borden milk plant on Depot street was discontinued in 1935. Delbert H. Stafford was superintendent when the plant closed and had been in charge for many years.

The Gouverneur and St. Lawrence County Fairs

One of the oldest and most famous institutions of the Gouverneur territory is the annual Gouverneur Fair, held annually by the Gouverneur Agricultural and Mechanical Society, established in 1859.

Four years after the state legislature had passed an act in 1855 "to facilitate the forming of Agricultural and Horticultural Societies," a group of public spirited citizens of this section secured a charter and began to lay plans for what has become one of the greatest fairs in the state of New York.

For officers they elected in 1859, the following men: President, Henry H. Haile; vice-presidents, Milton Barney, George Rodgers, David Day, II, William B. Rich, Benjamin F. Skinner, Milton G. Norton; secretary, George Parker; treasurer, Augustus E. Norton; directors, David Hill, Edward Hartley, F. M. Beardsley, Stephen B. VanDuzee, John Pooler, Jr., George Lockie, Jr., superintendent Peleg Chamberlain.

Land Leased in 1859

With the officers installed, the new society proceeded to secure a site for the fair grounds on a then vacant piece of land included within the bounds of Main, Rock Island, Barnes and Park streets, which they are said to have leased without charge from Charles Anthony, Esq.

Moving rapidly, they constructed a race course, and with the co-operation of neighboring agriculturists, the first Gouverneur Fair was formally opened September 14, 1859, to continue for three days.

It is reported that "town and country flocked to witness the spectacle. . . Sleek cattle and carefully groomed horses vied with each other for popular attention. . . The products of farm and garden in profusion greeted the eyes of an enthusiastic throng. . . The side-show barker and fakir, patent medicine and whip men. . . all added gaiety to the scene."

During the course of this first event, 2,000 admission tickets were sold, in addition to 200 family memberships.

For seven successive years the fair was held on the original site, but in 1866 the present site was purchased from Benjamin H. Smith, and to acquire the site a

number of public spirited citizens contributed \$2,500. According to the old records, the price paid was \$125 per acre. At that time the grounds covered twenty acres.

With the development of the new site a grandstand, race course, judges' stand, floral hall, dairy hall and accommodations for 300 head of cattle were erected, and at the close of 1866, the fair showed net receipts for that year of \$2,363.

Additional buildings were added in 1872, and subsequently to improve the property or replace outmoded structures.

The main features of the early fairs appear to have been light harness racing, with many prominent Gouverneur figures active in the contest.

Plowing matches and sale days were also prominent attractions, and one of the main drawing cards in the eighties was the first electric light.

Electric Current Free

On this occasion, the electrical company operating in this section supplied the current free of charge, with the stipulation that the fair association would have to supply the poles and string the wire.

In 1881, Secretary George Winslow recommended abandonment of the fair, on grounds that it was badly encumbered and not self-sustaining. He pointed to the fact that the exposition had never shown receipts of more than \$3,000 since its beginning.

Amasa Corbin, Jr., became secretary in 1882, however, and with a borrowed sum of \$225 paid interest on the \$3,500 outstanding against the fair. At the close of the exposition that year, he reported receipts of over \$5,000 and the society was on the way back to solvency.

From 1882 its receipts continued to rise, until in the year 1887 the grand total for the season amounted to \$8,470.36. During the early history of the Fair, annual addresses by men of prominence constituted one of the principal attractions.

1934

In 1934, with the closing of the St. Lawrence County Fair in Canton, the latter was combined with the Gouverneur Fair to become one of the most successful fairs in the state of New York.

The first St. Lawrence County Fair President was George W. Sisson, Jr., 1934-1953, when Earl Laidlaw succeeded him.

Following the addition of the county fair, the Gouverneur exposition has continued to grow in every department. Added to the entertainment program in the late 30's were such events as the Lucky Teter Hell Driving show, Captain Fox and his rough riders, high-wire acts and such stunts as an Indian running against a horse.

The night show was started and the performer's music and voices were "broadcast" across the track to the grandstand audience by a public address system. A George A. Hamid Revue entertained on an open air stage with electrical effects embracing huge lamps and color spots illuminating the show.

The O. C. Buck Shows was booked as the midway attraction and has been coming to Gouverneur since 1937.

The first band day was held in 1938 with ten bands attending, and now the school band festival features 500 massed musicians in concert and parade.

In 1940, following the loss of the wooden grandstand by fire, a new steel \$25,000 grandstand was built and more than \$8,000 was received from contributors interested in the fair. In 1941, the fair purchased a part of the old McAlister estate, with a 125 foot frontage on Barney street and extending north to within a few feet of the new grandstand. Five years later 10½ acres were purchased from Henry Freeman and this land with the addition of 8 more adjoining acres in 1953, gives the fair a total of more than 43 acres.

Premiums

The backbone of the local fair has always been the agricultural, industrial and educational exhibits. In the late 30's, \$10,000 were offered in premiums, as compared to the \$25,000 offered a year ago.

Through the tireless efforts of such men as Bert Rogers, Spencer Merry and Clint Thompson the 4-H, horse shows and livestock contests have grown in size and stature. As in the early days, the cheese exhibit is still considered to be the best in the entire state.

The Junior Fair foundation was laid by the late Roy D. Gibbs, who for 30 years organized, developed

and inspired this part of the fair. Last year, under superintendent William Martin, \$5,000 was offered in premiums to 4-H Clubs and the Future Farmers of America.

Sports Events

Spotlighting the fair program yesterday and today were such sport events as harness horse racing and ball games.

The baseball playoffs at the fair have become a true championship series to determine the best semi-pro nine in three competing counties of the St. Lawrence Valley.

Bligh Dodds

Much credit for the over-all progress of the fair for the past 31 years must, however, go to the secretary and manager of the fair, Bligh A. Dodds.

Significant also were the accomplishments of the Fair under the guidance of such men as B. G. Parker, who was president between the years 1912 and 1927 and Byron J. Carpenter, who served as secretary from 1917 to 1923. George M. Dodds was superintendent from 1894 to 1927, a period of 33 years, and it was a natural sequence that with this kind of inherited interest that Bligh A. Dodds, his son, should follow with 31 years of service as secretary and manager. Harry H. Hodgkin served as general superintendent for 17 years, from 1934 to 1952.

Under this leadership, the Fair has increased five times in size and annually attracts 50,000 people. Today, the fair is rated as one of the best in the entire state.

Even as recently as two years ago, Mr. Dodds had the foresight to inaugurate a giant firemen's parade for the opening night of the fair. Nearly 700 firemen representing 30 member departments from Northern New York Volunteer associations participated in last year's second annual appearance.

Many notable advancements in the style of operation have been effected, principally that of expanding from a four day fair in 1924 to a five day fair in 1936, and in 1938, the addition of the night fair until in 1945, it became the present six day and six night fair.

Fair Boards

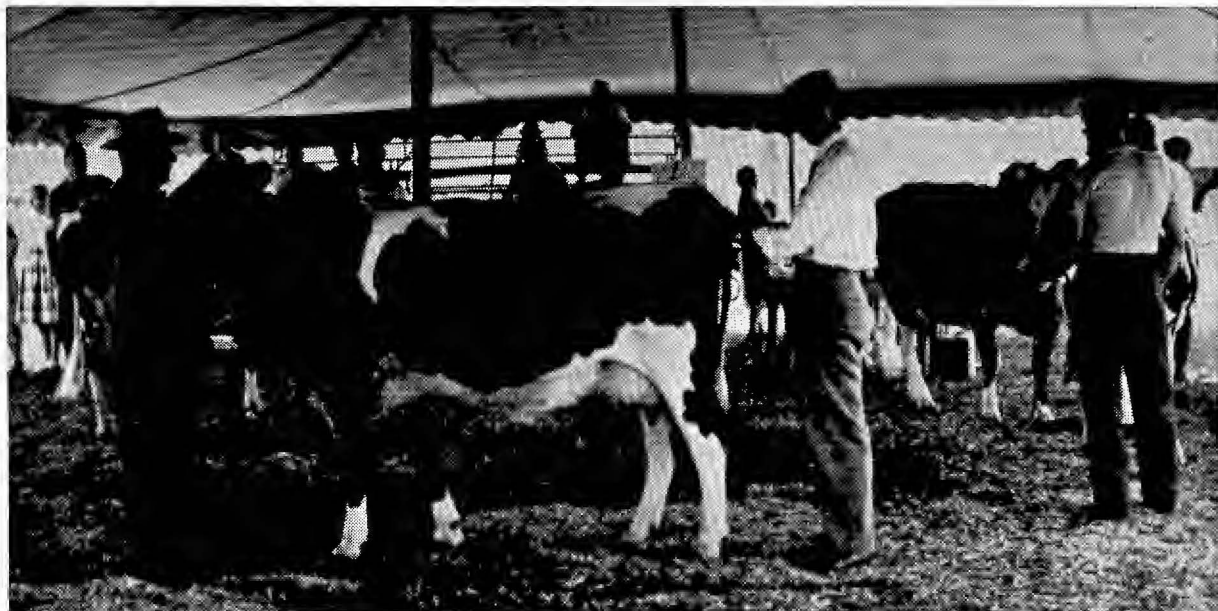
Many members of the present fair board have served for many years. Among them are George Lockie, a member for 22 years and president for 16 years; Earl E. Laidlaw, 42 years; G. Wilson Dodds, 40 years; and Harry Hodgkin, 42 years. In 1951, Harvey L. Gleason succeeded George Evans who had served as treasurer for 23 years, and Roy T. Allen, in 1949, was elected race secretary after the death of Gilbert Hutton who had served for 56 years.

Glenn Streeter and W. Howard Freeman, both succeeded their fathers who had also served as directors for many years.

More recent additions to the board are Mason R. Smith, 1939; Joseph F. McAllaster, 1940; Edwin P. Bond, 1941; Lester D. Overacker, 1949; Walter C. Best, 1950 and Glenn W. Miller, 1955. Mrs. Clara B. Magee has been assistant secretary-treasurer for 35 years.

A glance at the pages of the early Gouverneur Fair history shows that many of the present officers are descendants of the fair's pioneers. George Lockie, jr., Joseph E. McAllaster; E. P. Bond; Andrew Dodds, II, and J. F. Hodgkin were grandfathers of present members. Andrew Laidlaw was great uncle of Earl E. Laidlaw and George M. Gleason was a great uncle of Harvey L. Gleason.

The present officers are: President, George A. Lockie, jr; secretary, Bligh A. Dodds; treasurer, Harvey L. Gleason; assistant secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Clara B. Magee; directors are: Earl E. Laidlaw, Glenn S. Streeter, G. Wilson Dodds, Harry H. Hodgkin, Mason R. Smith, Roy T. Allen; vice-presidents are: Joseph F. McAllaster, Edwin P. Bond, Lester D. Overacker, W. Howard Freeman, Walter C. Best and Glenn W. Miller.



THE SHOWING AND JUDGING OF PUREBRED CATTLE has long been an outstanding feature of the Gouverneur Fair. In recent years increasing emphasis had been placed on the Junior Fair in which 4-H members and F.F.A. members show and judge their own animals, thus encouraging the development of superior dairy animals in the North Country.

Hotels and Taverns in Gouverneur

By **JULIUS R. BARTLETT**

Dr. Richard Townsend, who came here as the agent for Gouverneur Morris in the sale of the Morris land holdings, hailed originally from Washington County. He is credited with having built the first building on the McKean hill site and with using it for hotel purposes previous to its use as a hotel by Dr. John Spencer. But Mr. Townsend did not apparently have any urge to carry on a hotel business and the McKean hill hotel was his only effort along that line. Dr. John Spencer conducted the Inn from 1812 to 1822. Ernest Mason resides at present at this location.

In 1845, Henry Hudson, enlarged a building in the flat iron area of the West Main and Johnstown street intersection and began the operation of a hotel there. The dwelling he purchased belonged to Caleb Morgan. After a short hotel experience, Mr. Hudson sold to John P. Fosgate, who closed it in 1856.

Isreal Porter operated a tavern for a few years which is now approximately Nos. 49-59 West Main street. This was a crude log cabin building, later enlarged as a frame structure.

Spencer and Van Buren Hotels

In 1822 Dr. Spencer purchased a brick building from Bogert & Morrison, originally constructed

for use as a store at what is now 7-11 West Main street. Dr. Spencer sold it to Moses Rowley in 1824. It was sold on execution to James Averell who then sold it to Peter Van Buren, who began its operation as a hotel about 1830. It burned down in 1848 after which Mr. Van Buren built it using some of the walls left standing, but used it only for a residence. His daughter Miss Emmeline VanBuren resided in it until 1927, after which it was used for a rooming and boarding house until it was purchased by the Seaker-Graves Motor Co., whose garage was just across Wall street from the historic old building. The garage company razed the building in 1954.

Mr. Van Buren also started a hotel at what is now 51-53 East Main street, the present site of the Woolworth store. He died in 1870, but his son James W. Van Buren continued running the hotel. The building burned in 1881 and was rebuilt. It was burned a second time in 1893 which ended the Van Buren name in North Country hotel business.

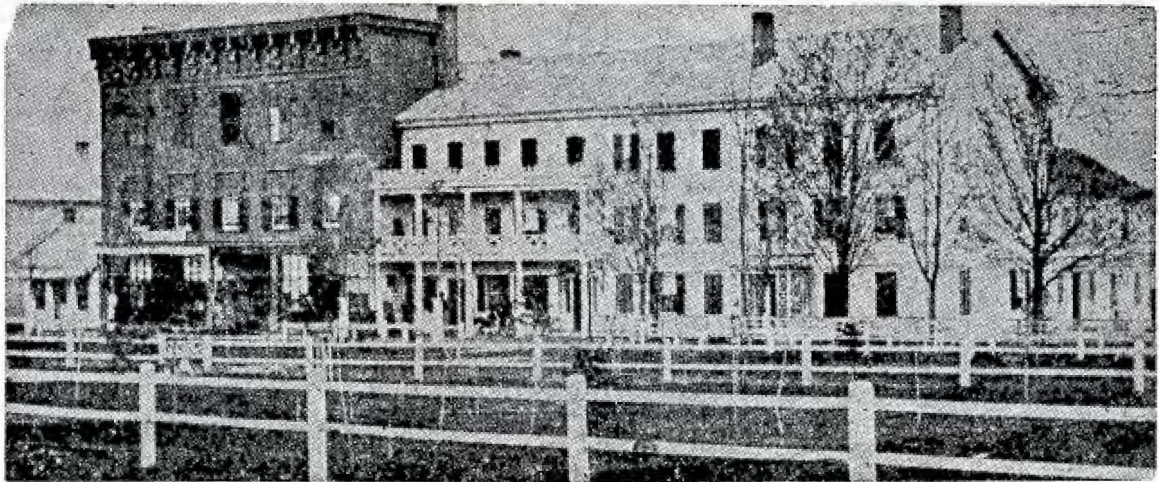
Dr. Spencer, after selling the West Main street property, built a hotel at East Main and Depot streets. His son, James M. Spencer, succeeded him and sold the hotel to Everett D. Pierce of

Macomb who was operating it when it burned on November 23, 1889. It was not rebuilt.

Peck House

The Daniel Peck house was built at 91 East Main street, presently the National Army store, the construction following a fire in 1875 that burned down many stores in Main street area. Mr. Peck, with his son, Everett, who became associated with him in his later years, ran this hostelry until 1900, when it was converted into a store property.

Charles M. Kinney in 1880 built a small hotel at the corner of Depot and Sterling street, listed as 34 Depot street. Mr. Kinney, a Civil War veteran, ran the hotel until his death in 1893, when his widow, Mrs. Lavira Kinney, continued the business until 1904 when Peter Lavasseur purchased it. Mr. Lavasseur did not complete his contract, and the hotel, now the Marble City, originally the Kinney house, was sold by Mrs. Kinney to Simonette and Cameron of Oxbow. They sold to Joseph Bigness in 1909 who ran it until he died in 1933. His adopted daughter, Mrs. Katherine Sterns, and her husband occupied and operated it for seven years. They sold it to Mrs. Nina Redmond Blowers in November, 1941 and Mrs. Blowers is the present operator.



THE FIRST PETER VAN BUREN HOTEL BUILT IN 1849 was situated on the site of the present Watertown Mattress store and the site of the former St. Lawrence Inn. The hotel burned in 1881 and was rebuilt that year as a brick building. The brick hotel was destroyed by fire in 1893 and shortly after the St. Lawrence Inn was erected on the site. The building shown next to the hotel was known as the Holcomb building. On the ground floor were two stores, one occupied by James Ormiston as a shoe store and the other by William Whitney as a drug store. In the foreground may be seen the village park at the time when the present elms were mere saplings set out and cared for by Peter Van Buren.

Clinton House

The Clinton House at 32-34 Clinton street was built in 1894 by Robert Webb, who ran it until 1896 when it was sold to J. Gillette who leased it to Wallace Kenyon. Mr. Kenyon with his sons ran it until 1901 when William Smith acquired it and ran it until 1904, when William Randolph and Mrs. Maggie Chase operated it as a partnership for one year. When the partnership ended, Mrs. Chase continued alone until 1906 when John Hyer bought the Clinton street hotel from Mrs. Chase. He, in turn, sold the hotel to William Randolph, the deal involving a trade for the Brooklyn hotel property on the West Side.

Mr. Randolph ran this hotel until 1920 when he leased it to Frank E. Smith of Massena. Joseph Scalzo became the operator of the hotel in January, 1922, followed by Everett Markwick in 1927. Mrs. Gertrude Kellough, daughter of Mr. Randolph, ran the hotel for a brief period and then leased it to William Jardine for about a year. Glen Smith of Lowville leased the hotel at this time and purchased it in 1937. He is now operating it as the Glen Smith hotel.

Canali's Hotel

John Wainwright in 1890 used the Augustus E. Norton residence at 108 West Main street as the nucleus of a hotel building which he conducted until his death in 1894. He called it the Grove hotel because of the many trees in its area. Mrs. Wainwright and her son, Tunis, operated the hotel until 1908 when Fred G. Scalzo operated it under the name of the Union Hotel for two years.

Tunis Wainwright was again the owner and operator in 1910, and on August 16, 1916, Sumner Rowley, Canandaigua, purchased the hotel from Mr. Wainwright. The Canandaigua man sold the hotel in 1917, to Abram Katzman and his son Samuel, operators of the Katzman & Son furniture store on Clinton street. The Katzmans leased the hotel in 1918 to the Aluminum Co. of America. The company at that time was improving the St. Lawrence power canal to their Massena plant and using heavy riprap stone from local marble quarries.

Gouverneur township had been voted dry at this time, and hotels were without a liquor license. William J. Murphy was listed in newspapers as the buyer of the

Grove hotel in 1919, and William P. Bigness was shown as the operator in 1921. The Grove hotel was not very active and was completely idle in 1926 and 1927.

Woodhurst

In 1928 Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Davis leased the property and changed the name to the Woodhurst and ran it five years when Emory Tyler bought it and ran it again as the Grove hotel. In 1927 William Barney bought the hotel and operated it until Joseph Canali bought it in 1950. Now in 1955 he is the owner and operator.

Brooklyn Hotel

A hotel known as the Brooklyn House was built at 99 West Main street in 1889. In the early days of Gouverneur, that section of West Main street was known as "Brooklin" street. This spelling of Brooklyn appears in the Stone & Stewart St. Lawrence County Atlas of 1865. Mr. Nash ran it 17 years, then leased it to William Randolph for two years. Mr. Randolph then bought the property. He made a trade in 1909 with John Hyer, owner of the Clinton hotel, who immediately disposed of the hotel to James Mazzo. This hotel was small and its uses as a hotel dwindled and it was sold in 1919 to Robert L. Kinney, who converted it into a store and flats. It later became a restaurant and at this time, 1955, is the Roma restaurant, owned by Michael De-Castro. Brooklin street was changed in 1885 to West Main street.

Richardson Hotel

The hotel at 17 Clinton street was built by William Rice in 1896, who ran it six years. It was then leased to Homer Kenyon, who carried on the business until 1908 when Charles R. Evans appeared as the manager. Rufus K. Richardson acquired the property about 1910. Mr. Richardson had not been running the hotel for some time previous to the December 29, 1917 fire that burned it and several other buildings on Clinton street. Myron A. Huntley was trying to install a boarding house when that fire took place. The garage of G. Wilson Dodds now occupies the site of the former Richardson hotel as well as some of the other places that were burned to the ground.

The St. Lawrence Inn

The St. Lawrence Inn was built in 1894, on the site of the second Van Buren House which burned in January, 1893. It was promoted

largely by Augustus L. McCrea and is the brick and marble structure, at 51-53 East Main street, now the F. W. Woolworth store. It has a frontage of 46 feet and is five stories in height. The burned building had a frontage about twice as wide. It was listed as a 50 room hotel with elevator service, and was a leading hotel in Northern New York for many years.

The Inn was opened by Robert Murphy as manager, July 1, 1895. He was hampered by a heavy mortgage and after one year, it was sold under foreclosure, with W. Pierpont White of Utica and the Utica Trust Co. the mortgage holders. Getman Brothers of Theresa assumed the management in 1896 and ran it until 1901, when Everett J. Peck, son of Daniel Peck, leased the property and operated it until January 24, 1917.

J. H. McLearn tried to overcome the heavy debt through the formation of a corporation, consisting of F. M. Pratt, C. R. Dewey and Mr. White, all of Utica, and Carl Mayhew of the Wayside Inn, Aurora was put in charge. He made extensive changes including more rooms with baths, telephone service in most rooms and other forms of modernization. Local people, however, failed to support the corporation and in about six months it had ended and Mr. Mayhew had departed. The first mortgage holders in 1918 were the Evan Wagonen estate, Mr. White and the Utica Trust Co.

Ford McCarney of Ogdensburg ran the Inn for about one year and then Mr. Peck bought the property in September, 1918, at a price reportedly considerably less than the \$30,000 mortgage. Barnard G. Parker was largely instrumental in the return of Mr. Peck. Mr. Peck sold the Inn to G. Murray Holmes in December, 1923, who ran it until September, 1924.

Mr. Holmes disposed of the hotel to Emmett A. Green in September, 1924, and Mr. Green operated it until his death in 1932. A corporation had been formed consisting of Mr. Green, his wife, Mrs. Bessie Lee Green, and H. Walter Lee, a brother of Mrs. Green. Wallace Foster of Rhinebeck became the manager of the Inn after the death of Mr. Green, running it for one year. Marsh Stratton conducted the Inn following Mr. Foster, until 1941, when Archie Wagar of Watertown, husband of Mrs. Jessie Lee Wagar, a

sister of Mrs. Green, managed the hotel.

Mrs. Green in 1945 decided to sell the hotel outright to any purchaser, regardless of whether it was wanted as a hotel or for some other business. The Watertown Mattress company purchased the five story structure in August, 1945, and closed the former well known hostelry on September 1. With the ending of the Inn, there also occurred the end of 97 years of a hotel existing on this site.

The Smith Hotel

Joseph E. McAllaster in 1896, built the four story building at 94 East Main street, now occupied by the Watertown Mattress company for hotel purposes. It is four stories high and has a yellow brick front. William E. Hinton was the first operator and ran it until June, 1905, when Fred C. Goutremont of Edwards bought the premises at \$12,500 and one year later reportedly sold it at a good profit to Frank H. Farmer and William E. Smith. Mr. Farmer sold to Mr. Smith after five years and Mr. Smith ran the business as the Smith hotel until February, 1923, when Anthony Gingras and Joseph H. Callahan bought the building and started a drug store and ice cream parlor.

This hotel was erected on part of the lot occupied by the second Van Buren house, prior to the fire that burned that structure in January, 1893.

Parkview Hotel

Samuel Roulston, a DeKalb native, in December, 1900, purchased the H. K. Spencer home at 118 East Main street, originally a residence well outside the business area, erected about the time of the Civil War. Mr. Roulston with his son Arthur, turned the spacious home into a sort of a farmers boarding house and established a feed and grain establishment and a farmers exchange. Stable and livery service was provided. In late 1915 the property was sold to Frank H. Farmer, a former partner of William E. Smith in the Hinton hotel at 49 East Main street. Mr. Farmer discontinued the feed and grain after a few months and leased the barn section to John Scozzafava of Chatueugay for a machine shop. The Spooner-Campbell Co., burned out of their Clinton street garage in 1916, leased the property for their business until late 1917. Mr. Farmer called the stand the Commercial Hotel.

Fred G. Scalzo leased the garage section and named the property the Central garage. Mr. Farmer continued the hotel business until May, 1930, when he sold both the hotel and garage properties to Mr. Scalzo, who in turn sold the entire property to Joseph Rotundo on October 20, 1920. Mr. Rotundo discontinued the hotel at first and leased it for other purposes. The garage, at the rear of the hotel, burned in 1924 and was immediately rebuilt. Frank Smith of Massena leased it in 1922 and ran it until his death in November, 1923.

William Frazer was the next don became the manager and remained there until August when Paige Priest assumed the management until 1932. Then William Saburn of Theresa leased the hotel until May, 1933, when Robert Cataldo, son-in-law of Mr. Rotundo, operated it for a few months.

Parkview Hotel, No. 2

With the return of liquor in 1933, Mr. Rotundo added another floor to his property, made the building wider and had two dining rooms which would seat over 200 persons. The spacious windows facing the west overlooked the village park. The property then became the Parkview Hotel. It had 23 rooms, several with baths. lessee who operated the hotel until March, 1925, when Burt Shel-

The Parkview was badly damaged by fire on May 1, 1948, and on April 19, 1950, fire again swept through it and the damage was so great that rebuilding was considered too costly. It was torn down and the space it had occupied was turned into use by the garage for displaying cars. This loss made the need of a hotel more acute and also ended a building which had around 100 years of varied existence.



THE ST. LAWRENCE INN, built in 1894 on the site of the second VanBuren House. Five stories high, the building had 50 rooms and elevator service and was considered one of the leading hotels in Northern New York for many years.



THIS IS THE GANG WHO, ALL WORKING TOGETHER, put out the biggest issue of a paper ever printed in Gouverneur—all in honor of the Sesqui-centennial observance of the town and village of Gouverneur. In the rear row are, left to right, Warner H. Miller, general manager; Dick Benjamin, pressman; Howard Pollard, operator; Mason R. Smith, editor and publisher; Sam Gamble, pressman; Doug Gamble, pressman; Ernest Cronk, apprentice. Second row, Mrs. Murray Rayburn, office manager; F. W. Rumke, adver-

tising manager; Paul Pete, operator; Charles Ferguson, assistant foreman; Gordon Butler, foreman; Mrs. Rodney Bradish, assistant news editor. Front row, Mrs. L. B. Cathers, news editor; Mrs. Darrell Hughes, circulation manager; Miss Betty Davis, assistant advertising manager and Miss Martha Willenbacher, assistant to Mrs. Rayburn. Paul J. Smith, circulation solicitor, was absent when the picture was taken. The staff recognizes the assistance of more than 40 correspondents.

The History of Journalism in Gouverneur

Journalism's first venture in Gouverneur offers a case in point.

Slavery was still prevalent in the South, the West still remained to be opened up and the California gold rush had scarcely begun when W. M. Goodrich and M. F. Wilson procured a hand press in Carthage and began publication of Gouverneur's first newspaper, the Northern New Yorker.

Tradition recalls that when the first issue was struck off the press on a Thursday afternoon in April, 1849, it was all the printers could do to complete their operations, for the room was packed with as many people as space would accommodate—plus a few more.

The printing office was located on the ground floor of a building then standing at the corner of Church and William streets and known as the "old church." It is on this site that modern Union Hall now stands.

The Laborer

But the effort was shortlived, for within the short space of two years Gouverneur's first journalistic effort went out of print. And it wasn't until, Tuesday, July 20, 1852 that Martin Mitchel of Fowler, self-styled "health and insurance agent," began publication of the Laborer.

This newspaper was somewhat smaller in size than its predecessor, but like the Northern New Yorker it gave most of its space to special articles of historic or literary value. In fact, the Laborer may well have been one of America's first tabloid newspapers—a modern-day tabloid in Gouverneur, for example, could be produced on a sheet just half the size of the present newspaper, approximately the dimensions of the Laborer.

That newspaper, too, was printed on a hand press in the so-called Conklin building at the corner of Church and William streets, apparently replacing the "old church."

Both of Gouverneur's first papers began a long tradition of community interest and their editorial pages were devoted often to fiery support of "abolition," temperance and many other great causes of the times.

There were writers, however, as

well as readers. For almost a full page of the first edition of the Laborer was devoted to letters from local people. One of these is of particular interest today. It reads, in part:

"That a railroad from Watertown to Potsdam, via Antwerp, Gouverneur and Canton, and finally to terminate at some point in the Northern Railroad, is seriously demanded by the increasing wants of the people along the line and its vicinity. * * *

"Not only is it demonstrated that the route is a feasible one—that the road may be constructed at a cheap rate and that the money thus invested will be well invested—will yield a dividend considerably above the legal rate of interest, but what is of far greater importance to the community, it is clearly shown that a new and steadier impetus will be given to the various business interests. * * *

R.R. Wanted for Farmers

"There is no class so much to be benefitted by the proposed road as the farmer. * * * It enables him to reach the market while his commodity is fresh and saleable."

But the Laborer was not long to survive as a newspaper masthead. For sometime later in the same year, the paper appeared under a new nameplate, this time as the St. Lawrence Free Press. A copy of Volume I, No. 47, dated Thursday, July 9, 1853 is now in possession of the Tribune-Press.

In the early part of 1853, Mr. Mitchel, who still remained as the proprietor, took as a partner, one Ira D. Brown, who remained as a member of the firm for only a few weeks.

Some time later a Mr. Mason became interested in the management of the paper, and it was enlarged to six columns with a greater interest in the abolition of slavery and intemperance. It is reported also that local news items began to occupy more space.

Sometime in 1853, Mr. Mitchel, the original owner, and A. M. Hurlbert, undertook continuation of the sheet and in 1854 the newspaper's title was changed to "St. Lawrence Free Press and Maine Law Advocate." In 1855, the office was moved to Ogdensburg, and Gouverneur was again without a newspaper, although the St.

Lawrence Free Press continued to circulate in town.

Gouverneur Times

The Civil War was drawing to a close when the Gouverneur Times in its first edition, August 19, 1864 expressed the wishes of the people in its lead editorial in these words: "We believe that in God's own time we shall be again united."

A practical printer and experienced newspaper publisher by the name of F. A. Merritt had moved his printing establishment to Gouverneur from Sandy Creek during the early part of the summer, and with the first edition of the Gouverneur Herald, he cast the first part of the mold which was later to become the Herald-Times. The Times was the first step in the formation of a newspaper unit which lasted into the years.

It was to be found in most weekly newspapers of the day, and space devoted to news of either national or local importance was small in comparison.

The Times, however, was among the first papers of its era to place a larger emphasis on news. During the first few months of its existence it carried dispatches from the war front filling several columns of each issue until peace was declared. A seven-column paper, it was for two years alone in its field.

Gouverneur Commercial

But the Times and its immediate successors were never long competitor was Miss M. M. Smith who, in October, 1866 produced the first edition of the Gouverneur Commercial, a six-column monthly paper largely devoted to local news and the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary at which Miss Smith was one of the instructors.

In its second year, however, the name of the paper was changed to "Northern Recorder" and the publication began to appear on a weekly basis. It continued under the same management until March, 1873, when again a local paper moved out of town, as the Recorder went to Rome.

B. G. Parker

Meanwhile, in 1869, Alonzo Van Duzee of Gouverneur had briefly published a newspaper in Watertown known as "The People's Friend," and in 1872, young Barnard G. Parker, who was to become one of the great figures in

North Country journalism, acquired the type from Mr. VanDuzee and began publication of a three-column monthly called "The Nutshell" here in Gouverneur.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Parker began publication of *The Nutshell* at the early age of 14 years, and the paper continued into its second year, to be succeeded by the "Temperance Visitor," first issue of which appeared May 1, 1874. Meanwhile, the semi-monthly "News," edited by Hurbie Clark and datelined at Halesboro over a four-month career was printed by B. G. Parker. The *Temperance Visitor* lapsed during the same summer.

Gouverneur Herald

James M. Holmes and Frank M. Redfield brought type and equipment from Watertown, set up shop on the second floor of a frame building at the corner of Main and Park streets and on May 3, 1873 published the first edition of the *Gouverneur Herald*—so that again the community was served by two papers.

Mr. Holmes remained only briefly with the paper, his interest soon being taken over by Horace G. Reynolds, who in turn bought out Redfield the following month. Jesse T. Reynolds then joined his younger half-brother, and assumed the editorial side of the business. Frank T. Cox later joined the firm.

Then came misfortune on January 13, 1875, when fire broke out in the wooden building and the *Herald* office was entirely consumed. Not a dollar of insurance was carried on the property, and when the smoke cleared away, the proprietors found themselves \$2,300 in debt.

With a supreme display of courage and responsibility, the *Herald* owners managed to get to Watertown and the publication of the paper was continued without missing a single issue, the *Herald* being printed in the office of the *Watertown Times*.

It is reported, in fact, that while the flames were yet smouldering, the *Herald* proprietors got their paper out from Watertown promptly on time to carry the news of the destruction to its readers.

In the cold of the winter, the partners set up a new headquarters in an old barn on Park street at the rear of what is now the Bank of Gouverneur. Publication of the *Herald* was continued

there until the owners built the block which comprises the western section of the present J. J. Newberry Co. store on Main street, for their permanent location.

Troubles at the Times

They proudly remarked at the time, that the building was constructed of Gouverneur marble.

Meanwhile the *Gouverneur Times* had gone through a series of changes in management. Continuing under the ownership of Mr. Merritt, the *Times* had changed from a seven-column folio to an eight-column paper, similar in size to modern newspapers.

On March 20, 1879, however, the business and good will passed to the new firm of Ireland & Rich. Successive changes in management followed for several months, and on April 1, 1880, the *Herald* purchased the business, consolidating the two papers to publish the *Herald-Times*.

"*Herald-Times*, 1884" still appears in the cornice of the Newberry building.

In 1885, celebrating the 13th year of successive publication of the *Times*, the editors commented that the *Herald* was "the only paper in Northern New York that had ever been approvingly quoted through the length and breadth of the United States."

They called attention to their new building, and with justifiable pride pointed to the long climb finally to win a measure of success. The *Herald-Times* was at the time, the only newspaper which had been able to survive for more than five or six years.

But in young Barnard G. Parker who established the *Gouverneur Free Press* in 1882, the *Herald-Times* found a rugged competitor. And two years later, in 1887, additional competition in the form of the *Northern Tribune*, published by M. R. Sackett and his associates, made the struggle for existence even more severe.

In spite of the fact that the *Herald-Times* claimed to have reached a circulation in excess of 10,000 copies each week, the owners finally sold out the business to Mr. Sackett of the *Northern Tribune* and Mr. Parker of the *Free Press*.

In the spring of 1892, the *Gouverneur Herald-Times*, the then oldest newspaper in the village, published its final edition. The

subscription list and good will was acquired by the *Northern Tribune*, and the presses and machinery were purchased by the *Gouverneur Free Press*.

In May, 1877, at the age of 19, B. G. Parker again started in business for himself, going to Norwood where he opened a job printing establishment. He had accumulated an outfit sufficient for all ordinary small pieces of work.

He stood within a fraction of an inch of six feet, and as the fashion then was for young men to wear "Burnsides," he entered the community as a business man—not a boy. There was an increasing demand for a weekly newspaper in Norwood. In 1878 a cylinder press was purchased, type sufficient, a "patent inside" or "outside" readily obtained, and preparations well under way for establishing a newspaper, when a tremendous acclaim came for a temperance organ to be published at Potsdam.

Hotfooted came the promoters of the temperance organ to purchase the young printer's outfit—cylinder press and everything necessary to get out a paper in a day or two. Mr. Parker took the weekend to think it over and consult his parents. Then he sold the printing outfit, and printed the first issue of the *St. Lawrence Herald* in Norwood. The outfit was moved to Potsdam and Mr. Parker was engaged as foreman.

Norwood held a lode star!

Not even large wages, however, kept the capable young foreman in the office at Potsdam. He resigned, and with the money received for the printing outfit he went into the markets and purchased everything new for publishing a newspaper, settled in Norwood, and started the *Norwood News*.

But in March of 1882, Mr. Parker sold the *Norwood News* and returned to Gouverneur.

On Tuesday, April 4, he published Vol. I, No. 1 of the *Gouverneur Free Press*, remarking editorially that "five years ago we left this village, the place of our nativity, to engage in the printing business at Norwood. . .

"During that five years we established the *Norwood News* and continued its publication up to the first of last month, when we sold it out to return to Gouverneur to commence publication of a newspaper.

"Our reasons for returning are many. Most of the prominent and long respected businessmen and