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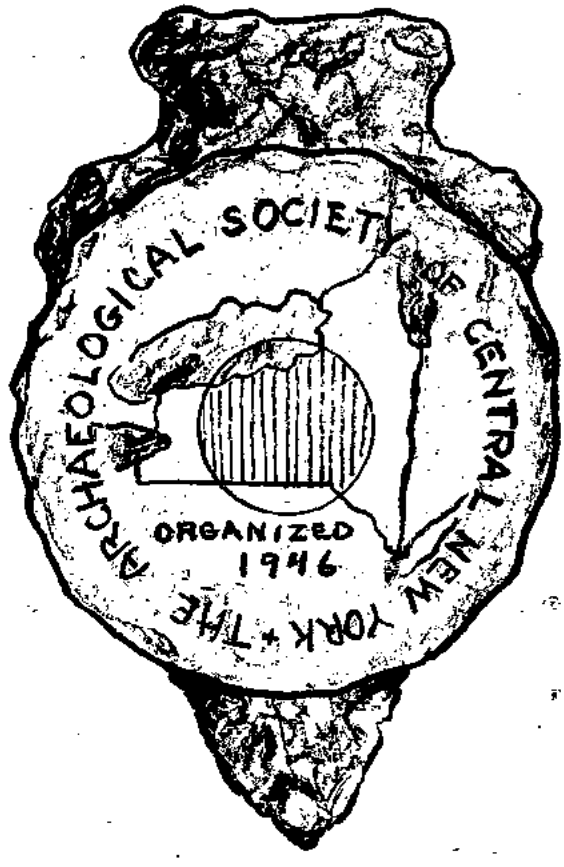
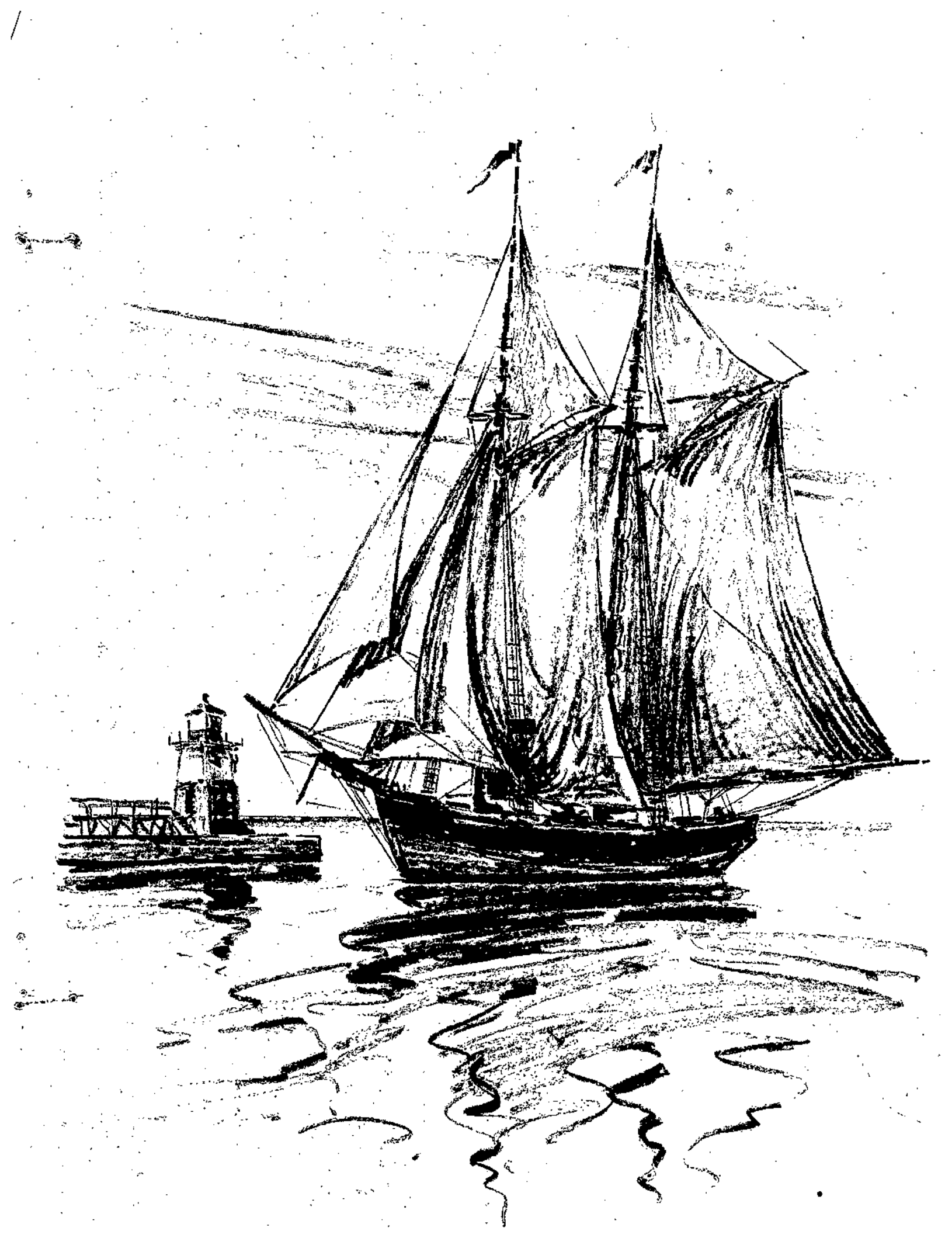
# Archaeological Society of Central New York

# BULLETIN

*Archaeology*
*History*




Cayuga Museum of History and Art
Auburn, N.Y.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CENTRAL NEW YORK
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# EARLY TRAVEL ON THE GREAT LAKES

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Hundreds of years before the coming of the white man the birch-bark canoe was used on the rivers and lakes of North America. Developed over the centuries by the Algonquian tribes of the Great Lakes region, the canoe was perhaps the greatest contribution of the Indian to American civilization. It was made entirely of forest products and it was light enough so that it could be easily carried over portages. Indeed, so ideally suited was this craft for lake and river travel that it was adopted by white explorers, missionaries, and fur traders on their journeys into the interior of North America.

In the history of transportation on the Great Lakes the year 1679 was an important one, for it marked the appearance of the GRIFFON, the first sailing vessel above the Niagara Falls. It was built on the east bank of the Niagara River by Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, the famous French explorer, to carry furs from the upper lakes to the portage near Niagara Falls. On its prow was a "griffon," a monster of ancient mythology--which was copied from the coat of arms of Count Frontenac, the Governor of Canada.

The tiny vessel set sail on August 7, 1679, crossed Lake Erie in three days, and anchored at the mouth of the Detroit River. It was from this spot that Father Louis Hennepin, the Recollect priest who accompanied La Salle, gave us the first written description of Detroit and its environs. As the ship sailed into the placid lake above Detroit, Father Hennepin named it Sainte Claire in honor of the Catholic Saint.

La Salle continued his journey up through the Straits of Mackinac and down into Green Bay. There the journey for La Salle ended. The GRIFFON was loaded with a fortune in furs and La Salle ordered the captain to sail to Niagara and return for him the next spring. The GRIFFON was never heard of after it left Green Bay. It may have been wrecked in a storm or captured and burned by hostile Indians. Although its actual fate may always be open to conjecture, its location has attracted the attention of marine historians for years.

On Manitoulin Island near Mississagi Lighthouse a hull and skeletons were discovered in 1890 and was for years accepted as the wreck of La Salle's historic ship. However, in 1955 a retired fisherman announced that he had located the vessel near Bruce Peninsula in Georgian Bay. Both discoveries have their supporters and a heated controversy is now raging..

On the upper lakes other sailing vessels followed the GRIFFON. The French naval officer, La Ronde, built a sailboat on Lake Superior in the 1730's and more of the ships were built after the British won North America. The first American boat on the lakes was the sloop, DETROIT, which flew the stars and stripes from 1796 until it sank in the summer of 1800. A few American

sailboats appeared during the first decade of the 19th Century, and during the War of 1812 several were hastily constructed to fight the British. It was with these ships that Oliver H. Perry won a resoundingvictory over the British fleet on Lake Erie. Even more important than this battle in the development of the Great Lakes were the agreements between Canada and the United States after the war. Under the terms of the peace treaty and the Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817, both countries agreed to limit the number of armed ships on the lakes. Thus, the subsequent history of lake transportation was one of international cooperation.

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MAN'S AGE IN AMERICA

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In what is now Alabama man is now known to have lived close to 9,000 years ago. This is the oldest radiocarbon date for material associated with man's tools in the eastern United States.

The date 7,950 plus or minus 200 years ago, is published in SCIENCE (Dec. 27, 1957) by Drs. W. S. Broecker and J. L. Kulp of the Lamont Geological Observatory, Columbia University, Palisades, N. Y.

The date was obtained from charcoal found 13 feet below ground level in Russel Cave, Jackson County.

The radiocarbon dates reported from Lamont Observatory also suggest that man occupied the west coast of North America much longer ago. Charred dwarf mammoth bones found 36 feet below the top of the alluvium were dated at 29,700 years ago plus or minus 3,000.

"This suggests," the scientists say, "that man occupied the west coast of North America before the major ice advance of the latter part of the Wisconsin glacial period."

A previously unknown Toltec colony has been discovered on the west coast of Mexico, representing the westward limit of expansion of this ancient civilization.

The site has been officially explored for the first time by archaeologists from the University of California at Los Angeles, under the direction of Dr. Clement Meighan. The expedition was sponsored by Phil Berg, a Los Angeles exwcutive.

The site lies along Mexico's new West Coast highway near the city of Tepic. Dr. Meighan estimates the colony reached its cultural peak about 1200 A.D.

Relics from the site represent a higher degree of cultural achievement than had previously been thought to exist in this region during this period, Dr. Meighan said.

They include excellent examples of pottery of six-color decor, figurines, bronze axe-heads, copper pins and tweezers and whistles with an authoritative tweet.

A STORY OF CAYUGA COUNTY
by Henry M. Allen
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Our county is named after the tribe or nation of the Iroquois League which once inhabited our state. The central part of this area is a pleasant land with hills and valleys, farms, woods, streams and lovely lakes. The county is mostly a rolling terrain and it is favored by a ploasant, temporate climate and fertile soil. No wonder that the veterans of the Revolution and other settlers, moving westward and lured by its advantages, were eager to make their homes here.

We may first mention briefly the geological past. Cayuga is situated in the so-called Erie-Ontario Plain and the South-West Plateau, being about equally divided between the two sections of the state. The northern part belongs to the rocky strata of the Silurian Age and the southern to the Devonian. After these long times the great ice sheets or glaciers overspread the whole state. It is supposed that those masses helped to carve out the long valleys to create the lakes and to form our soil. In addition they left many moraines or glacial deposits with plenty of sand and gravel. Some of these which extend from Syracuse to Rochester are the curious hills called drumlins, also formed by the glaciers. They resemble upturned boats with the northern end rounding off sharply and the southern ending sloping gradually. Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn is part of a terminal washout moraine, the other part reaching into Pomeroy Park. In at least one place in the county near Cayuga village formerly were glacial scratches cut by the rocks imbedded in the ice. The rock layers are of various kinds; in the northern part are red sandstone, shale and dolomite; in the central, limestone and shale; and in the southern, sandstone, limestone and shale. The soil was formed by glacial action and the weather; it is very fertile. In places the rocks abound in fossils, among them the tiny crablike trilobites; in other localities there are countless shells. Near Lake Ontario runs a long vein of hematite iron ore near the surface; it continues from Utica to Lockport. This ore has never been mined to any great extent, though it is of excellent quality. Vast beds of salt lie deep down, and once there were salt springs here. Near Aurelius gas was found some years ago but it has never been used. In some places sulphur springs have been found. All over the county is the debris of the glaciers, sand and gravel, with larger boulders. This soil contains bits of granite and sandstone carried from farther north. Along the lakes many gullies have been cut, some since the glaciers.

Brief note may be given on the terrain of the county. It is bounded on the north by Lake Ontario, on the east by Oswego and Onondaga counties, Skaneateles Lake and Cortland county, on the south by Tompkins county and on the west by Cayuga Lake, the Seneca River and Wayne county. Its length is some fifty-five miles from north to south; the width from about six to twenty-three, with an average of fourteen miles, the narrower part being near Lake Ontario. The elevation is 247 feet at the Ontario shore and the land gradually rises to the south, the highest point being 1790 feet in Sempronius. The ridges in the south rise from 600 to 800 feet above the valleys. Owasco Lake, eleven miles long, has an elevation of 705 feet. In the area there are several small lakes and near-

ly everywhere there are many streams which add to the beauty of the scenery. The woods in various places are of considerable extent, areas of the original forest which were not cleared when the country was settled. The beech trees in Fort Hill Cemetery, perhaps two or three hundred years old, alone remain from the "Forest Primeval." There is a great variety; besides the spruces and pines are maple, oak, hickory, willow, elm and chestnut. It has been said that there are over fifty different kinds of trees on South Street in Auburn, alone. The elevation at the Auburn Post Office is 705, just equal to Owasco Lake. The three Finger Lakes are Skaneateles, Owasco and Cayuga, all most attractive. Yachting on these has long been popular. At one Central New York regatta the fleet of 193 sail boats afforded a thrilling sight to sailors and landsmen alike.

This land of the Cayugas was once indeed a happy hunting ground. Here they lived in their bark houses; not too comfortable in winter time, there being over a half dozen villages along Cayuga Lake, with one or two not far from the water. They subsisted in part by hunting and fishing, there being fabulous supplies of game and fish close at hand. In addition they cultivated corn, vegetables and possessed fruit orchards.

Much of the time the Iroquois were at war with the other tribes and with the French to the north. The Iroquois, because of their compact organization and fierce fighting qualities, have been called the Romans of the North. The territory they controlled lay far beyond the area of our state. Because of a wanton attack by Champlain there was for many decades hostility and hatred of the French. From time to time the Indians raided Canada and once the Iroquois nearly ruined the French colony. In the wars between England and France the Iroquois sided with the English and the American colonies. In the early period, the Jesuits endeavored to convert the Indians. Though self-sacrificing, some suffered martyrdom, they were successful only to a limited degree. Some Jesuits worked among the Cayugas. In the Revolution the Iroquois, except for the Oneidas and the Tuscaroras, unwisely adhered to the English side. On account of the terrible raids by the English and Indians, especially in the Mohawk and Schoharie valleys, Washington sent an army of some 5,000 Continentals under Generals Sullivan and Clinton, which invaded the Iroquois country and crushed their league.

After the Revolution the whites gained possession of the territory beyond Utica, partly through session and partly by purchase. In time a few Indians crept back to their lands, some in our county. Later the Cayugas sold their reservations along Cayuga Lake and were moved to places in the western part of the state. New York State decided to give part of the new area as bounties to the veterans. This area, known as the Military Tract, comprised the counties of Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, Cortland and parts of Wayne, Oswego and Steuben. Each soldier received about a square mile, larger allotments going to the officers. The plan was carried out, and Colonel John L. Hardenbergh, who had served with Sullivan, helped make the surveys. The Auburn area comprised six lots in tiers of two each. The Colonel, attracted by the beauty of the locality and the possibilities of water power from the Owasco River, selected a lot here. The village, called Hardenbergh's Corners until 1805, grew rapidly.

(to be continued)

COLESVILLE'S GRAND OLD MAN
by Wilhelmina Christian Greenman
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In Harpersville, N. Y., at the end of a long avenue of maples called Maple St., one can see a peculiar looking old house set back from the street in a small park of decaying maple trees. As one regards it seriously for a moment, the past seems to come back momentarily, and seems somehow very near and real.

The old building gives the illusion, at first, of being one of those octagon-sided affairs seen occasionally here and there, but on second thought one realizes that it has only five sides as the back is built straight across and the front porch poses a puzzle. It certainly has a baffling style all its own.

The house is high, wood-colored, dignified and impressive; the eight rooms on each side of the huge, odd shaped hall are twelve feet high; there are no fireplaces, but the bannister that swirls upwards into the second story is graceful, beautiful and solid mahogany.

This is the old house of an ancient man, Johnny Weeks, age 95 years, who still holds down two part-time jobs, as he acts as tax collector of the Town of Colesville and truant officer of the large centralized school district. Until a few years ago he was secretary of the local Oddfellows and Sunday School Superintendent, as well. No moss grows under the slow feet of this old-timer. He is known, honored and respected for miles around, a Senior Citizen of outstanding proportions in every way.

We ask him for advice - he tells us he has no one to ask about things anymore, his friends and old neighbors are all gone now and he's alone with us of the three next generations to keep him company. It was his father, Solomon Weeks, who started a general store at Center Village in 1869, and acted as postmaster there also.

He tells us tales of days gone by i.e., how as a child of six he picked blackberries in Central Park when it was just a big old rocky, briary field! He recalls the incident of the fight at the Tunnel where Gould and Fisk's men slugged it out with the Albany and Susquehanna boys for supremacy of the railroads. At that time the Belden Hotel, a stately old inn just off Route 7 on the Albany side of Belden Hill was operated as a boarding house by Levi Manville, last of the river pilots. It had been built by Ephriam Norcutt in 1853 as a stage-coach stop. It is used as a dwelling now and one day when my boys were small I caught them racing and yelling through the empty rooms when it was vacant. But it is always tenanted by ghosts of memories of the days when people lived graciously, free from synthetics, free from nervous tensio in excess and with time to relax, think, and really live a little.

Across the street from Grandpa Weeks' home we see another strange appearing building. This is The Maples, where young men attended the old Academy classes. It was built in 1828 in connection with St. Luke's parish. Here

young Johnny attended classes along with Judge Harpur's grandson. The schoolmaster was kind, learned and extremely firm about discipline; the kids usually behaved because it was expected but if they did'nt he could resort to the hickory limb close by; and they did'nt laugh at him nor their parents either.

It was the Harpur family that actually put Harpursville on the map when in 1797 "Judge" Robert Harpur obtained a sizeable land grant and developed it in parts of what are now Broome and Chenango Counties. He had moved here from New York City where he had been Assistant Secretary of State, and a librarian at King's College. The Harpur family operated a sawmill, tannery and distillery. The old home just off route 7 outside of Harpursville near the railroad bridge has an underground tunnel large enough to accomodate a team of horses connecting the house with the barn. Judge Harpur was at first buried in a tiny family plot near the house but later removed to Harpursville cemetery in the rear of the Baptist church. It is for him that Harpur College is named. The last male Harpur, Charles, died recently and only a daughter, Mrs. Roberta Johnson, is left, residing at Afton, N. Y.

Colesville has another claim to historical fame, the site of "Onoguague," the very old Indian town near Windsor, N. Y. This was an Oneida village of 40 or 50 houses and a stronghold of Tories including Brandt and followers and was destroyed, 1788, along with Unadilla, by Colonel William Butler on an expedition down the Ouleont and Susquehanna. It was built, 1754, by Sir William Johnston at the request of the settlers and Indians there. The grove of the Indian interpreter, Rebecca Ashley, fondly called "WAUSANIA" by the Christian Indians (who attended the mission school there), was given an honorary marker by the D.A.R. The remains of the fort were seen by General Clinton's soldiers, 1789, as they passed there on their way to join Sullivan at Tioga Point. This site is located on Onaguaga, between Springsteen farm near W. Windsor on Onaguaga, between Windsor and Harpursville.

Grandpa Weeks tells us how he drove horses to Binghamton, a distance of 20 miles, for supplies for his store; he bought overalls for 58¢ and shoes for $1.50 a pair from the Lester Co. factory in their old building across from Christ Church in Binghamton. That was before Lester met George F. Johnson. One day, on Court Street, he paused to watch some men digging a hole near State Street, and much to their surprise they found an old foundation and decayed timber. As they could'nt imagine what it meant, Grandpa told them, "Why, it's the abutment to the old Canal Bridge."

They were putting in the first electric lights in 1883. Grandpa's most cherished possession is the old tin six-sided lantern his granddad used to carry in the streets of George Washington's New York. The light came from a candle, not kerosene.

His home, the staunch old house of pre-Civil War days, was built by Peter Dickinson, a noted lumberman of the 30's, 40's and 50's, who built Nineveh Hotel and the Dickinson block in Binghamton on the corner of Eldredge and Chenango Streets. The Brown family across the street made fine, sturdy hand-turned furniture, then, too. And the Hobb Brothers at Nineveh made carriages that were sold all over the United States and Canada.

When the railroads were built, the workers were Irish immigrants who used only picks, shovels and two-wheeled carts, for this was before the time of the Italian section-hands.

Colesville is the most northeast town of Broome County, bordering on Delaware and Chenango Counties. It was formed from Broome County in 1821. Broome was taken off from Tioga County in 1806. Tioga County was formerly part of a territory known as Montgomery County, after the name had been changed from Tryon. The part West of the Susquehanna River was known as Old England under the Massachusetts grant, and from this territory were formed the Boston Ten Towns, on a part of which Binghamton is located.

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THE SKY MAN
from Moccasin Tales, by C. E. Brown
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> Moccasin Tales are so named because of an Indian custom of beating with a moccasin any boys or girls who fall asleep while stories are being told by an older person in the wigwam on an autumn or winter night.

An Indian maiden married a fine-looking Indian who came to the village of her tribe. She did'nt know that he was a sky man. She was not happy because every evening he left his wigwam to do his work in the sky. She complained to him about his being so much away from her. She wept every day. She asked him to take her with him. He said that that would be impossible, but at last he consented. He built a wigwam for her among the clouds. In one place in this wigwam there was a large bundle wrapped with buckskin and tied with cords. She asked her husband to tell her what was in it but he would not do so. Every day she asked him. He would tell her nothing, and told her never to meddle with it. One day, while he was away at his work, she thought that she would take just one peep at its contents. Kneeling on the wigwam floor beside it she finally succeeded in untying the knotted cords at one end of the bundle.

When it was open a number of shining objects suddenly poured out upon the floor. She tried to grasp them and put them back. More and more fell out and they rose and flew in all directions. Many flew out of the door and the smoke-hole in the roof before she could close the bundle. They were stars. When her husband returned he was greatly displeased at her disobedience. He scolded her but the mischief was done. And that is why, say the Indians, there are not so many stars as there once were. (Winnebago-Fox.)

THE GEESE HOLD A COUNCIL
from Moccasin Tales, by C. E. Brown
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Away out in the middle of the lake the Wild Geese were holding a council. There were many of them and they were making quite a lot of noise. Wisaka sat on the lake shore. He was hungry and he wished to have some of them to

roast and eat. He thought of a good way to get them. He made some strong basswood cords and entered the water. He was afraid of scaring them so he swam under the water until he got out to where they were. He was a very good swimmer. They were all talking and did not notice him. Now he was under them. He tied the cord to the lef of a goose, and then to the leg of another. When all were tied he suddenly rose to the surface of the water. The frightened geese rose into the air and carried him along. They flew for the lake shore. There Wisaka killed those which he wanted to eat and let the rest of them go. To this day the Wild Geese are always watching out for him. That is why they are so hard to get. They fear that he may be hungry and wish to kill more of them. (Mascouten.)

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EVEN-TOED MAMMALS
by Horace Loftin
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Indians of the American West have been called the greatest natural horsemen that the world has ever known. Yet they never saw a horse until Spaniards brought them from the Old World for the conquest of the New.

In 1545, the great explorer Hernando De Soto died on the banks of the Mississippi which he had discovered. His companions built boats and sailed back to Mexico, abandoning their horses. It is generally believed that these represent the start of the great herds of wild horses, or mustangs, that came to lord over the western plains. Such as these came to furnish the cavalry of the Plains Indians.

Oddly enough, bringing horses to the New World represented something of a homecoming. Remains of one of the first horses--creatures about one foot high--have been found in North America dating from some 50 million years ago! Quite unlike modern horses, this little fellow, called Eohippus, had four complete toes on his forefeet and three (with a remnant of a fourth) on the hindfeet.

Later fossil remains disclose primitive horses whose feet began to approach the modern horse's one-toed condition. Some horses of about three million years ago were one-toed, but some still kept complete side toes. Then about one million years ago essentially modern horses were abundant throughout North and South America!

Something happened, we do not know what, but all the American horses became extinct. Our present horses descend from wild herds which roamed the great steppes of Asia. Who can say if the ancestors of the American Indians, coming to the New World by way of Siberia and the Bering Strait, did not feast on these fleet beasts of the Steppes! (We say "feast," because it was probably ages later before man learned to domesticate the horse. Wild horse flesh was a welcomed addition to primitive man's larder.)

The horses, with their typical single-toed feet, are members of the great order of odd-toed mammals, the Perissodactyla. Others of this group are the tapirs and rhinoceroses, and these too are represented by fossil remains in what is now the United States.

from Science News Letter.

JUDGE HARPUR RESIDENCE - BUILT ABOUT 1810