

NEWSLETTER



TOWN OF CLINTON
Historical Society
Clinton Center, New York



VOLUME III

NO. 3

DECEMBER 1977

ANNUAL MEETING - Tuesday 3/28/78

The membership voted to have the Annual Meeting this year at a nearby restaurant. The Country Tavern in Salt Point has been chosen.

This meeting should be especially enjoyable; for in addition to a fine dinner complete with dessert, a full program has been planned.

PROGRAM:

- 1) election & installation of officers
- 2) recognition awards
- 3) speaker: Hubert C. "Bud" Spross
film: "Old Poughkeepsie - 1912"

The 25 minute film about old Poughkeepsie is a reprint of an early film found recently in a Pawling barn. It is now in the National Archives. This reprint (a fine example of a method of preservation) is for showing by the Dutchess County Historical Society. It depicts Poughkeepsie of an earlier time. Mr. Spross has done a fine job of identifying people and places in the film. He also provides an interesting running commentary.

Because space is limited to 55 people reservations are necessary. Please call Louise Mc Dermott at Co 6-3819 before March 17, 1978.

Cocktails at 6:30 Dinner at 7:30

Choices at \$7.00 with dessert

- 1) Chicken breast over ham
- 2) Roast beef

Notes from the President

Thanks to Gustav Detjen for his fine talk on 11/18/77 about Postal History. Starting from Biblical times Mr. Detjen traced communication by mail to the early period in Clinton prior to the use of postage stamps. In fact the audience was treated to examples of local letters written & delivered prior to the first stamp in 1847.

The Society has received historical documents and records from members and friends to retain as preserved documents or to copy for our files. More about this below.

In September the Town Board was asked to give the Clinton Historical Society \$150. of the Federal Revenue Sharing funds for the purpose of preserving and duplicating, where feasible, 19th century town records. This request was on a matching fund basis, that is the Society agreed to use \$150. of its funds for the project. Our thanks to the Town Board for including this item in the 1978 Budget. This project is now in progress.

Thanks also to Julie Buglion, Louise Mc Dermott and Helena Van Vliet for accepting the assignment to a new committee whose function is to comb the entire Town of Clinton to identify and inventory houses and other structures built prior to 1900. Once identified they will proceed to the next step which will be to photograph those houses which do not appear in Helena's

cont'd on page 4

PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

One of the functions of a historical society is to preserve old documents and papers of historical significance. The Clinton Historical Society has seen this as one of its prime functions in the past 2 years. In cooperation with the town supervisor the following has been accomplished by a society committee:

1) all the 19th century town records were removed from the basement of the Town Hall, inventoried and shelved in the new vault in the basement of the new library. Our thanks to Al Meuser for his fine job of acquiring sturdy shelves and assembling them in the new vault.

2) the older or more valuable 19th century records were placed in the town safe.

Subsequent to this additional 19th century records and other documents have been received from members of the town. These are being acquired in several ways a) members and friends have been searching for such materials in their attics, etc. b) purchases have been made by individuals from antique dealers or booksellers who often acquire these kind of materials.

The Clinton Historical Society is now in a position to assure the safekeeping and preservation of documents and records of historical importance. An historical document is any of the following:

1) tax or assessments lists
2) minutes of meetings of any town organization such as the Masons, Temperance Union, Clinton Town meetings, etc.

3) ledgers or day books of storekeepers, blacksmiths, physicians, postmasters, harness makers, or any independent craftsman's records.

4) photographs, post cards, pen and ink drawings of houses, buildings, roads or any environmental features of the town.

5) art work of any kind by a Clinton resident of earlier times.

6) advertisements, handbills, broadsides, announcements, etc.

7) letters and diaries.

8) etc., etc., etc.

Any individual who has a 19th century or earlier document which is relevant to the history of Clinton may call upon the Society to aid in its preservation. This may be accomplished in several ways:

a) if the individual wishes to donate it to the Clinton Historical Society, its value will be appraised and a receipt will be issued.

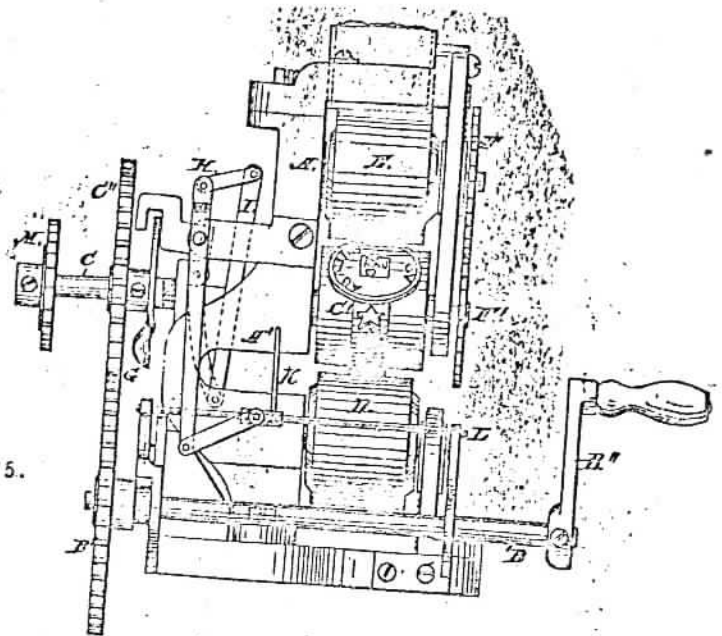
b) if the individual prefers to retain the original document preservation of the information can be assured by permitting the Society to copy the document either photographically or through typing its contents.

Perhaps you have overlooked some document of historical importance which would be valuable to our research of Clinton at an earlier time. Let us know of any help you may need. In the meantime please keep your eyes directed to the paper material we often overlook when we visit the various antique shops or auctions in the area. Things of real significance sometime turn up in the strangest places.

T. G. PALMER & H. F. CLARK.
Rotary Printing-Press for Dating Letters
and Canceling Stamps.

160 947.

Patented March 16, 1875.



IS THIS IN YOUR ATTIC?

"What is it?", you ask, It is a post marking machine used to cancel letters. However, this one is special to Clinton for it was invented in Schultzville in 1874. The patent for it was issued to Timothy G. Palmer on 3/16/1875. Search for the actual machine is active & extensive if the flow of correspondence between England, Maryland & New York is any indication. Why all the interest? Up to that time postage stamps were cancelled by hand. Machines for such purposes were new. The search for the first such machine has been an active interest of members of the U.S. Cancellation Club. It appears now that the machine illustrated above was the second machine to be accepted by the U.S. Post Office. On 3/30/1876 the Postmaster General authorized Timothy G. Palmer to construct 10 of these machines for use in the following cities: 2 each in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and one machine each in Albany, Washington, Hartford and Cleveland. Where or for how long it was used is not clear. Palmer & Clark, a Poughkeepsie dentist, received a patent for an improved machine 9/26/1876. This suggests some mechanical inefficiencies in the first machine.

Who was Timothy G. Palmer? Timothy first appears in Clinton sometime between 1860-1866. Shortly thereafter at age 31 or 32 he married Susan A. Schultz, daughter of Daniel H. Schultz well known merchant in Schultzville. By

1867 he had acquired a 279 acre farm and was living on what is now Long Pond Rd. across from the firehouse now occupied by David Traver. Two years later he was the postmaster, a post he held from 1869 to 1887. In 1878 he served one year as Town Supervisor the only office he ever held in town government.

An interesting fellow was Timothy. We know him as a farmer, postmaster & finally inventor of the second postage cancellation machine. But success came to him primarily from his inventions of various railway patents. At the time of his sudden death at 56 yrs. in 1890 (one week after he had come home to Clinton to vote) his automatic railway signal device was in use on several railways. In 1887 he went to New York City to live probably leaving his invalid wife Susan on the farm in the big house still known as the Schultz house in the village of Schultzville. He had been to N.Y. and also Washington on business before with his postal machine but these trips appear to have been business trips only. However in 1887 he established a business at 868 Broadway living in a furnished (?) house on Continental Ave. The following year he moved his office to 18 West 14th St. where his business was listed as "signals". His uptown residence then at 10th Ave. & West 156th St. suggests

MISS EUNICE BROWNING

Miss Eunice Browning, the oldest member of our community died Sunday 1/15/78. Born in Clinton 92 years ago she was an active member of the community. She graduated from the still existing one room school house at Spooky Hollow. After completing Poughkeepsie High School she went on to graduate from New Paltz Normal School as a schoolteacher. She taught for many years. She was an active member in several organizations among which were the AARP and Women's Christian Temperance Union. As a member of the Pleasant Plains Presbyterian Church her reminiscences appeared in the church bulletin. Her final reminiscence was published the day of her death. It reminded us of her combined interest in education and town history when she blended the two in her discussion of Dr. Hoyt's school in his home and the after school activities at Frost Mills Pond.

cont'd from page 1

file. Helena has been handling this sizeable task single handed for the past several years. Most of us have seen her photographing along the roads. This project will be followed by an inventory of houses and other structures for which we may wish to apply for Historical Recognition status through Dutchess County Landmarks.

cont'd from page 3

some success. However, his will suggested otherwise. It appears that like so many inventors his hard work and inventiveness needed healthy transfusions of money and the financial return on the invention may have been small. Perhaps had he lived longer he would have harvested all the benefits of his inventions.

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