

The Quarterly JOURNAL

A Publication of the Greene County Historical Society, Inc.

U. S. Route 9-W

Coxsackie, N. Y. 12051

Issue 1

★

Spring, 1977

THE JOURNAL, A NEW PUBLICATION

The preservation of local history is a many faceted activity. The adaption of old buildings of architectural interest for commercial or residential use, the taping of oral history as recalled by older residents; the publication of books, pamphlets and special-issue newspapers; the delving into old records for genealogical purposes; as well as other related activities, all have one important thing in common; they are the outgrowth of individuals' interest in their area and its history.

This JOURNAL, a new endeavor by your officers and trustees, is another aspect of this local history preservation effort. It will be published quarterly and, at least for the first year, will be distributed without additional cost to the membership of this Society. It is hoped, however, many persons will take out the Sustaining Membership or higher categories to help meet the additional cost.

A publications committee, consisting of Thomas Blaisdell, Kenneth Mabey, Paul E. Ackerman and Raymond Beecher will shape JOURNAL policy.

Contributions are solicited which are based upon adequate research and which contribute to the goal for which the JOURNAL is established. The Editor, a volunteer, also will welcome constructive suggestions.

Readers will observe the punched holes in the left margin. These are designed to fit standard 3-ring notebooks and are a means of preserving the issues for future reference. As an added feature, an index will be published annually.



Catskill Teachers' Workshop at Bronck Museum

OLD HOMES TOUR SET FOR JUNE 4

As a "money raiser" to restore the recently acquired Pruyn portrait collection, nine homes of architectural and historical significance will be open to the public on June 4 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will be an unusual opportunity to study eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings adapted to modern living. Specialized collections of antiques will be featured in the various homes.

Tickets are priced at \$4; advanced purchases may be made by sending checks payable to the Society at R.D. Coxsackie, 12051. The return mail will bring descriptive brochures, maps and tickets. Tickets may also be purchased on June 4 at the various homes and at the Bronck Museum which will serve as tour headquarters. Luncheon food will be sold at the latter site. The museum is also open without additional charge to ticket purchasers.

The houses to be featured are among some of the most interesting in the towns of Athens, New Baltimore and Coxsackie. The list consists of the residences of Mr. and Mrs. James Warren, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Warren, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ackerman, Mr. Thomas Greene, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Hallenbeck, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Fay, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Peters and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Beecher.

A YOUNG COUPLE'S EFFORTS AT HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A number of people had long admired the Van Dyck Greek Revival house with its four tapered pillars in West Coxsackie but it took the courage of a younger man, Timothy Meier, to purchase the structure and to commence badly needed repairs. Tim made his purchase in 1972 while still a bachelor as a hobby "of sorts." Fortunately his wife, Geraldine, now shares his enthusiasm and is an equal partner in the house's restoration.

Tim did most of the work himself, which included jacking up sills, replacing support beams, installing new floors and other "heavy" work. Slowly but accurately,

(continued on page 6)

"SUMMERING IN PALENVILLE"

By David and Susan Erdmann

On February 26, 1973, the Winchelsea, once a fashionable boarding house in Palenville, was destroyed by fire. In June of that year the remaining parts of the structure were demolished and burned and one more page was turned in the history of the hamlet nestled at the foot of one of the Catskill Mountain region's most spectacular sites, the Kaaterskill Clove. Palenville has a history barely discernible in its present status.

Once a thriving manufacturing center known primarily for the tanning enterprises of Jonathan Palen, Brainard Shaler and John "Boss" Dederick, Palenville became in the period following the American Civil War a well-known and frequently visited summer resort area, not challenging but offering a less expensive alternative to the Hotel Kaaterskill, the Laurel House, and the Catskill Mountain House. The ledger books from one of its more prominent establishments, the Pine Grove House, record the names of visitors from as far south as Florida, as far west as California, and even from England and Saxony, all of whom were assured in the hotel's brochure "perfect quiet and rest," and offered the splendors of "the Kaaterskill Creek, abounding in picturesque gorges and wild scenery, which is the home of the brown and mountain brook speckled trout."

The growth of Palenville to what Van Loan in his 1878 *Catskill Mountain Guide* referred to as "this well-known summer resort" occurred almost overnight. In 1854, according to Beers's *History of Greene County*, it was shabby, and barely supported one store, two primitive wayside taverns, a Methodist Chapel, a school, a post office and a small woolen factory. In 1874, George Hall, an artist and the mentor of Jennie Bronscomb, was establishing a summer residence for himself on a spot near the Kaaterskill Creek. By 1878,

a number of comfortable boarding houses had been established, and Palenville had become a gathering place for landscape artists.

In 1875, Cornelius DuBois began to purchase tracts of land on the north side of the Kaaterskill Creek upon which he would soon begin to construct the Pine Grove House. An undated brochure describing it carefully cited that the total travel time from New York City to Palenville was a mere four and one half hours via the West Shore Railroad and Catskill Mountain Railroad connection to the Palenville station. The Catskill Line Steamers also brought many summer visitors to the area. On one Saturday in August, 1896, five coaches on the Catskill Mountain Railroad were needed to bring Palenville-bound travelers from the dock at Catskill. The Pine Grove House advertised "a grove of about 200 beautiful pines, well shading its spacious veranda," "well-ventilated rooms finely furnished," a "faultless cuisine, and an excellent laundry and livery," all for \$10.00 per week. It was only one of the many fine establishments in Palenville from which the summer visitors could choose. The Winchelsea, built by Theodore C. Teale in 1878, featured a cottage addition built "in a combination of Swiss and Gothic styles." Before venturing into the boarding house business, Teale had served in the infamous New York Customs House under President-to-be Chester A. Arthur. Eventually he gained the reputation of being "one of the ace cards" who "dictated politics for a number of years doing much for Palenville."

The pages of *The Palenville Zephyr*, a summer weekly published by George A. Dykeman, contained advertisements delicately designed to appeal to the city dweller or southern visitor seeking some brief respite from warmer, more humid climes. Thus the Chestnut Lawn House, operated by Will Goodwin, was "central to all points of interest" and offered a "fine grove of chestnut and pine trees close to the house." The Central House, where "much pain is taken for the comfort of the guests" was surrounded by "an exten-



Waiting for the Mail, Palenville



Pine Grove House, Palenville, N. Y.

sive lawn beautifully shaded by maple trees.” The rooms of the Arlington were “large and well-ventilated,” and there were “piazzas on all four sides of the house.” The Maple Grove House, built by Philo Peck in 1866, was one of the largest houses in Palenville, accommodating well over 100 guests.

In the *Catskill Mountain Guide* of 1878 the Maple Grove House was advertised as “a delightful summer resort” with “grounds well shaded.” And the *Greene County Directory* of 1882 referred to the Drummond Falls House as a “large and commodious farm house pleasantly situated 800 feet above sea level on a farm of 110 acres, supplying the table with fresh milk, eggs, vegetables and fruit.” Many of the boarding establishments advertised that liveries were either attached or within walking distance.

Of all the boarding houses in Palenville which were enjoying success at the turn of the century, one which deserves particular mention for its perseverance in the fact of repeated tragedy is the Palenville Hotel. While under the patronage of Peter J. Schroeder in 1894, the Palenville Hotel and Annex was referred to as “a quaint fashioned building, being built on the steep sides of the Clove, which are so narrow that the back windows of the upper floor of the little house are partially blocked by the hillside, which rises behind it.” Ideally situated directly at the mouth of the Kaaterskill Clove, the hotel was then known for its proximity to all the mountain resorts and attractions. Fred Apkes purchased it in 1895 and built an addition on the rear of the building. In 1899 the structure was completely destroyed by fire. By 1900, Apkes had rebuilt the New Palenville Hotel, and his advertisement in *The Zephyr* of that summer publicized the newly added Dewey acetylene gas lighting machine, first-class livery and a service for meeting guests at the trains or boat. In addition, the New Palenville Hotel was to be the only hotel in the locality open year around.

When Christian Intemann purchased the New Palenville Hotel in 1912, it had already been established as a fine summer house. In his brochure he

advertised an “excellent orchestra” rendering selections during dinner service and concerts performed every Sunday on the Hotel lawn. In addition he dammed up a spot on the Kaaterskill Creek and developed a natural swimming pool. Intemann shrewdly placed in his advertising brochure a scene of bathers frolicking in the cool waters of the Kaaterskill.

Yet Christian Intemann had no better fortune in securing the Palenville Hotel than had Apkes. In 1921 the structure was destroyed by fire and rebuilt for the reputed sum of \$85,000. In March, 1933, that structure, 196 feet long and 2½ stories high, with sixty rooms, a large dining room and a ballroom, all uninsured, burned to the ground together with all of its contents despite the efforts of four fire companies to save it from destruction.



The Watering Cart, Palenville

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

The authors, David and Susan Erdmann, reside in a stone house off White’s Road, Palenville; their daily view encompasses the Hudson Valley, a magnificent sight. Mr. Erdmann is Chairman of the History Department and Dean of Students at the Albany Academy; he is also the Chairman of the Board of the Mountain Top Historical Society. Mrs. Erdmann, whose roots are deep in Greene County, shares equally in the task of researching the growth and change in the Palenville region. The concluding section of their article will be printed in the Summer edition.

□ □ □

Family letters and other manuscripts relating to the Van Gelder’s of Catskill, a substantial collection, are now at the Vedder Library. The earliest letters were written between the years 1852 and 1865 and are the result of friendships made by James H. and William M. Van Gelder at the Ashland Collegiate Institute and elsewhere. The material supplements earlier donations of Pine—Van Gelder—Wardle—Fiero.

A MAN AHEAD OF HIS TIME— ABRAHAM VAN DYCK

As an independent thinker in a more conservative era, supporting efforts for church union and for the equal education of the sexes, Abraham Van Dyck outshadows many of his male contemporaries.

This Coxsackie lawyer, transplanted from the Kinderhook region of Columbia County, became a leading citizen in the newly established County of Greene. Born during the American Revolution in the year 1778, he was the sixth generation of his family in this country. The first, Hendrick Van Dyck, had left Utrecht, Holland, in 1645 to become one of the leaders of the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam under Peter Stuyvesant. In later years the family removed to Albany and eventually to Kinderhook.



Abraham Van Dyck

A. Gambino Photo

The attractiveness of Coxsackie for Abraham Van Dyck was enhanced by his marriage to Catharine Bronk (1784-1834), daughter of Judge Leonard Bronk. The law practice prospered, Abraham demonstrating talent in that profession. Additionally, he learned the fundamentals of surveying from Jonathan Wigam. Robert Van Bergen indicates that when John L. Bronk, a brother-in-law, joined the law firm, Abraham became the office lawyer and counselor while John L. Bronk, with superior forensic ability, was the advocate who appeared in court.

The Van Dyck residence on the street in Coxsackie named for that family, was originally the older part of the present William White house. There is a belief it was part of the Bronk land holdings. As the family grew in size and money became more plentiful, Abraham contracted to build the large federal period addition. Smith Delamater, a skilled carpenter, agreed to do the work for \$1,535. The contract is dated

1831 and gives interesting details relating to the construction and the furnishing. Invoices for carpets, chairs and other articles of furniture, as well as the building contract itself, are in the Bronck Museum archives.

The everyday needs of Abraham's large family, as well as their interest in books, newspapers, and in charitable and religious activities, are reflected in other surviving manuscripts from between 1800 and 1835. They identify many local craftsmen and merchants. Shipping invoices via Hudson River boats and captains indicate Abraham also purchased from the metropolitan area.

Six of the eleven Van Dyck children reached maturity. After receiving basic instruction from Carlo Greene and other teachers employed by the Bronks and Van Dycks, the children went on to institutions of higher learning. The four sons matriculated at Union College and completed degree work. The daughter Elsie was enrolled in Miss Sally Pierce's famous Litchfield Female Seminary and subsequently at the Troy Female Seminary operated by Emma Willard.

Throughout his lifetime Abraham Van Dyck supported a wide range of efforts for the betterment of his fellow beings. But his major concern was to work toward the union of the various religious denominations. In this he was encouraged by the Reverend David Abeel, formerly the pastor of the Athens Reformed Church and later missionary to Southeast Asia. Toward the end of his life, Abraham was urged to place his ideas for such union before the public. The printed volume *Christian Union; or, An Argument for the Abolition of Sects* was published by D. Appleton & Company in 1835, the year of the author's death. The volume was dedicated to the Reverend David Abeel; it was 227 pages in length. One of the few available copies is in the Vedder Memorial Library.

Abraham and Catharine Bronk Van Dyck's encouragement of their children toward higher education served the latter well. Maria married the Reverend Jacob Van Vechten, Doctor of Divinity in the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church; Leonard Bronk (1808-1877),



Abraham Van Dyck House

A. Gambino Photo

who married Lucy Van Bergen, became a minister at Osbornville (Windham) but returned after a few years to Cocksackie where he resided in a home opposite the First Reformed Church. Daughter Elsie (1809-1845) married lawyer Clinton DeWitt who was at first a law partner of Peter Silvester before the former removed to New York City where he established a short but important law practice. Stephen Van Dyck (1818-1846) married Mary DeWitt, sister of Clinton. His education was also in the law and he followed that profession in New York City for many years. John Bronk (1823-1900) became a doctor of medicine, practicing at Windham between 1846 and 1849, after which he returned to Cocksackie.

The remaining son, Jacob Cuyler Van Dyck (1821-1874), was also educated in the law but at the time of the reorganization of the Cocksackie bank in 1861, he became its president. His bride was Mary Frances Bogardus. Descendants from this branch of the Abraham Van Dyck family still maintain an interest in Cocksackie and particularly the Bronck Museum. Mrs. Florence H. V. Bucher and Mr. William Van Bergen Van Dyck are life members of this Society and make frequent visits to the area during the museum season. Their residence is in the historic Schenectady Stockade district.

Francis Cuyler Van Dyck (1844-1927), a grandson of Abraham and son of Jacob Cuyler Van Dyck, was graduated from Rutgers and for the major part of his lifetime was chairman of their Department of Physics. Here both Professor Van Dyck and his students became closely associated with Thomas A. Edison at the latter's Menlo Park laboratory. A Cocksackie girl, Rebecca Jane Van Bergen, was the bride of this grandson.

Mr. William Van Bergen Van Dyck, born in 1875, has become the patriarch of the Van Dycks. During Leonard Bronk Lampman's lifetime, a close friendship existed between the two. It was Mr. Van Dyck who alerted Mr. Lampman to the "Peace Treaty" painting, one of which was purchased by Mr. Lampman and now hangs at Bronck House. Both Mr. Van Dyck's and Mr. Lampman's first forebears in this country are depicted in that oil on canvas—Hendrick Van Dyck and Jonas Bronck.

Editor's Research

□ □ □

Mrs. Catherine Campbell of Boston, whose research on Benjamin Stone, Catskill artist, is to be published in the fall issue of the New York Historical Society's Journal, continues to supply the museum with new information relating to this man and his activities. The Society holds the largest collection of Benjamin Stone material, a memorial to Katherine Decker, the grandniece.

BLACK ROCK AT ATHENS— HISTORIC LANDMARK

Jutting out into the Hudson River at the southern end of the village, Black Rock has been a major landmark for the region in both prehistoric and historic times. Its history is closely allied with both the Indian culture and with the settlement by the Dutch Van Loons. To the Indians it was "Makawomic" (or Mackawamick), to the Dutch, "Vlucht Hoek" (Flying Corner), and to the later settlers it was the easier "Black Rock."

This geologic formation has undergone changes at the hands of man. The western edge was removed when the state road, Route 385, was relocated nearer the river's edge. The small island off its shore mentioned in the patents as situated "a few yards to the east" was removed at a much earlier date.

No scientific excavation of Black Rock site has been undertaken although in his writings, Andrew D. Peloubet did seek to cast some light on its Indian importance. In an area of between ten and twelve acres surrounding and including the rock itself, Mr. Peloubet found black soil to such a depth as to indicate it contained the ashes of many years' Indian campfires. Indian artifacts found on site were attributed to Mohawk manufacture.

The Black Rock became a very convenient permanent boundary point marking the division between the Catskill and the Loonenburg patents. This is well-illustrated in W. S. Pelletreau's map of 1884. It is Beers's *History of Greene County* which succinctly presents the various land agreements which transferred and confirmed title from the Indians to Jan Clute, Jan Hendrickson Bruyn and Jurian Teunise in 1665 when the region was called "Caniskek." Title was confirmed by Governor Richard Nicholls in 1667. The next sale from the original Dutch owners came in 1681 when they sold to Peter Bosie and Jan Van Loon; a transaction to which Governor Dongan issued a confirmation patent in 1688.

During the latter years of his life, Jan Van Loon decided to transfer all the land in his patent to the four sons, Jan, Albertus, Matthias and Nicholas. Jan and his wife Maria signed the agreement on April 9, 1720, but reserved life interest in 100 morgen (200 acres) at the "Vlucht Hoek" with the further understanding that this section of the Van Loon holdings would eventually revert to son Jan. It is this part of the patent which contains the Jan Van Loon house now designated by a NYS roadside marker, land still retained in the Van Loon (Loan) family.

Jan's grandson, Jan Matthias, was residing on this farm when he transferred title in the year 1800 to Isaac Northrup. The village grew rapidly from that date.

(continued on page 6)

As the nineteenth century progressed, the land holdings of Isaac Northrup were subdivided. At one time Sylvester Nichols had control of the Black Rock section. An interesting collection of deeds in the possession of Schuyler Van Loan, present owner of Black Rock farm, reflects these various land transactions. Herman Dernell, the Athens manufacturer of ice harvesting tools and equipment, purchased the property from the Nichols family. He conceived the idea of growing celery on the Vly lands south of the rock itself. By the construction of a long dike, flood gates and culverts along the river shore; the dredging of silt and much for the celery beds; and the installation of drainage ditches, the project became a reality. On the top of the rock itself, a cistern was constructed in the stone formation. Its remains may still be viewed today.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, in 1892, Herman F. Dernell and his wife sold this property to William Harman Brown. Several years after his purchase of the Haight-Gantly House, Thomas Van Loan, father of Schuyler, also completed negotiations with Lucretia T. Brown and her son Stewart, as Executors of William H. Brown, for the Black Rock farm at a cost of \$5,000. Thus in the year 1913, the Black Rock property had returned to the Van Loon family, although several generations removed and with a slight change in the spelling of the family name.

The Black Rock itself, east of Route 385, is preserved for posterity by the thoughtful action of Schuyler Van Loan who was the means by which it came under the control of a Hudson River Nature Conservancy organization.

Editor's Research

PIETER BRONCK TRADING POST SPECIALS

Bronck House Tile \$3.75, tax included

Letters from a Revolution (Bronck family manuscripts),
\$2.50 plus tax

Vedder's History of Greene County, \$8.50 plus tax

AR Bicentennial History of Greene County, \$6.00
plus 35¢ mailing charge; no tax

Beers's 1867 Atlas map reprints of townships in
Greene County (black and white) \$4.00 per map,
plus tax

□ □ □



The Timothy Meier House – A. Gambino Photo

the Meiers are conserving both the interior and exterior. The front and back parlors with their sliding doors, wall paneling for chair rails, federal woodwork framing doors and windows, and six over six window sashes have once again become attractive period rooms.

The *Old-House Journal* which provides a wide range of renovation and maintenance ideas for antique houses and the Timothy Meiers are in close harmony with restoration ideas, such as the retention of the 1896 late Victorian bay window. In that Journal's December 1976 issue, the editor writes: "We often get letters from readers who have houses with later additions and wonder what to do about them. These later additions are usually porches, porticos, bay windows, brackets and corbels at the roof line. They correctly spot these features as Victorian additions to an earlier house, and feel somewhat compelled to remove them even though they may actually like the "new" architectural features. We received such a letter this week and, in one of those rare coincidences, in the same mail another reader sent us a letter giving as good a philosophical statement as we have ever read for preserving the history of an old house by keeping tasteful additions."

Research into the history of the Timothy Meier house continues. It is believed to have been the residence of Abraham Van Dyck's son, Dr. Leonard Bronk Van Dyck (1808-1877) who married Lucy Van Bergen. Eventually the house came into the possession of their daughter Miss "Kitty" Van Dyck. Other owners, including Nurse Doyle, occupied the home in the middle years of this century.

The Greene County Historical Society commends Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Meier for their efforts in preserving one of Coxsackie's more historic buildings. It is a definite village asset and serves to illustrate what can be done when strength of purpose is present.

VEDDER MEMORIAL LIBRARY NOTES

The intent of this section of the JOURNAL is to inform the membership and the public of recent acquisitions of books, manuscripts, maps and other historical materials relating to the region's development. The Greene County Historical Society is a major repository of such items relating to Greene County, the Catskills and the mid-Hudson region.

Through the thoughtfulness of Mr. Albert Michaels, of Claverack, a member of the Board of Friends of Olana, the Tunis Cochran family papers are now at Bronck House Museum. This collection commences with the year 1812 and continues well into the 1850's. Tunis was a local carpenter at Coxsackie Landing; he and his men built the first combined school and religious building at the landing as well as the first Methodist Church. The manuscripts will be the subject of a subsequent article.

Augmenting an already extensive collection of local historical materials given in memory of his father, William S. Borthwick, Calvin S. Borthwick of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, has now added the Bushnell correspondence from the years 1797-1836. In an earlier generation three Bushnell sisters had married three Borthwick brothers, among whom was the great grandparent of the donor. A second gift in that series is a collection of Civil War letters from the Smith and Borthwick families, many letters having their original printed patriotic envelopes issued during the Civil War and very collectible today.

Thirty-seven letters, dating from the years between 1844 and 1865 comprise a gift from William Seifert, Jr., of West Albany. Addressed to Horace Briggs of West Kill, Greene County, who operated a general store in that community, the letters quote current market prices for flour, butter, yard goods, patent medicines and other merchandise likely to be bought by local residents. One manuscript deals with the need to raise \$1,000 from the stockholders of the Prattsville Manufacturing Company of which both Zadock Pratt and Horace Briggs were part owners and interested in its economic well-being. Other letters are from family relatives who migrated westward before the Civil War; the letters mention land speculation, crop prospects, as well as family activities. Mr. Seifert, the donor, has in past years contributed other useful material for local preservation and use.

Pictorial material relating to the Hudson River has come from Kenneth S. Pratt of Florida through the co-operation of Robert C. Sickles of Albany. The latter, in past years, donated three large framed photographs of Hudson River boats as a family memorial.

George Peters of Grapeville has mapped the Community Cemetery at Earlton and provided the Society with a list of all gravesite inscriptions.

GENEALOGY IN GREENE COUNTY

Mrs. Hester Blanchard, St. Petersburg, Florida, who has utilized the Vedder Library on previous trips north, writes that Pieter Cousje married Abigael de Piew (Parie, Perry); their child was baptized October 23, 1717, in New York. This is the same individual who as Pieter Fouser (Souser) married Abigael de Piew as recorded in the *History of Sleepy Hollow Church, Tarrytown, New York*, page 154. Other children from this marriage were also baptized there.

Dr. Leland H. Monson, Ogden, Utah, is seeking information about William Pollard Button, his brothers and sisters. William was born about 1823, William P. on May 20, 1824, Julietta born January 5, 1826, Abashaba born 1834 and Perry and Israel's date of birth unknown. He is also interested in Zebulon Button who was born April 1753.

Gershom and Phoebe Griffin, Their Ancestors and Descendants is the title of a new publication of interest to local genealogists. In the fourth generation, Gershom Griffin moved to Hunter, Greene County, from North Castle, between the years 1790 and 1800. Of the numerous offspring, some remained while others migrated to Ohio and further westward. The volume is the work of Mrs. Elaine Olney, 2063 Hunting Avenue, Manhattan, Kansas 66503. In hard cover, with numerous illustrations and index, it sells for \$8.50 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling.

The reprinting of Jonathan Pearson's *Contributions for the Genealogies of the First Settlers of the Ancient County of Albany from 1630 to 1800* will be of service to local researchers using the Vedder Memorial Library.

In sorting through a number of religious books from the Lampman Estate, we found and catalogued Moses Beach's *The Ely Ancestry*. With more than 639 pages of Ely and related families, it is an excellent reference volume. A picture of the Bronck Homestead as well as Bronck genealogy is included.

The Croswells, an important postrevolutionary family who settled at Catskill Landing, are the subject of a new book by Volney R. Crosswell. The family's roots are traced from the earliest New Englanders until relatively modern times.

Mrs. Georgia S. Murray of Fountain, Florida, has compiled an informative fan-shaped genealogical chart of Nettie Avery Hartwig, her maternal grandmother, born in Hunter in 1868. It was Mrs. Murray's uncle, Alfred Hartwig, who left the Vedder Memorial Library his extensive genealogical records, beautifully organized.

From all parts of the country, Overbags and Overbaughs, with related families, descended upon Catskill last October 16 and 17 to participate in a family reunion banquet and to take part in the rededication of the Kykuit (Lookout) by the On-Ti-Ora Chapter, NSDAR.

HISTORICAL GLEANINGS FROM HITHER AND YON

A local cabinetmaker has been identified from a letter in the Society's archives written by M. Alice Marston to Jessie Van Vechten Vedder in 1930. "My grandmother told me that Peter Curtis, Jr., was a cabinetmaker by trade. I have a little chest he made for his valuable papers. When his daughter Hannah was about two years old (1797) he joined a company of men who sailed from New York to Louisiana to buy land for speculation but the boat was lost or sunk by pirates."

The United Methodist Church of Greenville and Norton Hill has produced a 1977 calendar with significant historical appeal. Each month is illustrated with sketches of historic buildings and street scenes in the two villages. Our copy, received from Mrs. Leona Rundell, is already catalogued for the library permanent collection.

Miss Paige Ingalls of Greenville has completed a college course term paper centered around the unique Nathan Clark, Jr., stoneware wine cooler in the Bronck Museum. The paper analyzes the item both as an example of folk art and an object of family use. We commend her for her research efforts.

Greene County Historical Society
R.D.
COXSACKIE, NEW YORK 12051

And from the correspondent at Prattsville to the *Examiner* for November 23, 1872: "A monument weighing upwards of six tons is being erected in our village cemetery, in memory of the late Col. Z. Pratt."

The chair factory in Hunter owned by Ingersoll and Purdy and operated by J. Ingersoll & Company, had two disastrous fires between 1845 and 1848. On November 29, 1848, the chair factory and sawmill was again on fire and almost entirely destroyed. The damage was set at \$2,500 with insurance of \$1,700.

The *NYS Conservationist* for January-February, 1977, has an interesting article on Ice Boating. Mr. John Beals, the author, writes that it is difficult to say where the first iceboat was built in this country, it probably being of Dutch heritage. The *Examiner* of March 9, 1872, claims the birthplace to be at Athens. "The first regular iceboat of which there is any record was built in the Village of Athens in 1822 by Captain Watson Howland and John Burtis, and was owned by a company composed of captains sailing vessels from that place. In the winter of 1823, this boat made a trip to Albany, from Athens, in the almost unprecedented running time of thirty-five minutes, which fact was vouched for by those on board, and heralded all over the county as a remarkable record of speed and daring."

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U. S. POSTAGE PAID CATSKILL, N. Y. 12414 PERMIT NO. 91
