



THE SENTINEL

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The Newsletter of the New Scotland Historical Association

Spring 2017

TOWN OF NEW SCOTLAND EARLY IMMIGRATION AND THE COUGHTRY FAMILY

By Debbie Mahan

In the area that we now call the Town of New Scotland, a large immigration of Scottish, Irish and English settlers occurred between 1750 and 1775. These settlers were inspired to promote the well-being of each other and saw great progress in the development of the area. Several names associated with these early pioneers are Terwilliger, Sigsbee, Albright, Taylor, Reid, Wands, Allen, Moak, McCoughtry (*Coughtry*), Waine, Erwin and Pangburn.¹

One of the main reasons for the large Scottish emigration to America was “Black Monday,” June 12, 1772. The sudden failure of the London banking house of Neale, James, Fordyce and Downe brought financial disaster to thousands of Scottish citizens; among them were John and Mary McCoughtry and their older children. The McCoughtry family chose to leave their homeland and set sail on a dangerous ocean voyage, with the belief that North America was the best place to be.

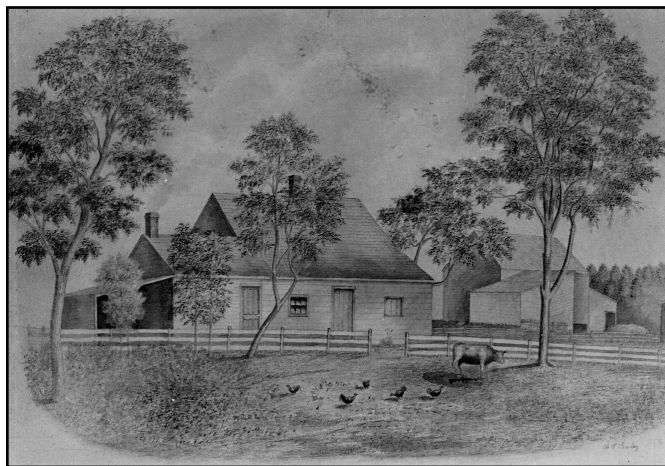
In May of 1774, the McCoughtrys, Ramsays and Bryces were some of the families who boarded the *Gale*, a merchantman that would carry a total of 209 passengers as human cargo in the lower deck, without light or air for the nine week trip to New York. Before leaving, they learned that on March 31, British Parliament had passed the Boston Port Bill, which called for closing the Massachusetts Bay Colony port on June 1, 1774. The port would stay closed until the tea dumped in Boston Harbor during the 1773 “Tea Party” was paid for! As they headed for New York, they wondered if the port there would also be closed.²

The *Gale* and her “cargo” arrived safely in New York on July 19, 1774, just one year before King George III of England declared the colonies to be in rebellion on August 23, 1775. King George III feared that emigrants would aid and support the rebels and declared emigration to America illegal.

In 1774, the McCoughtrys, Bryces and Ramsays were among new Scottish immigrants who boarded sloops at New York City for a trip up “Hudson’s River” to Albany. All three families settled near Albany, west of the Normanskill, in the Albany county district called the Manor of Rensselaerswijck.

The McCoughtry family, including John and Mary and their eight children, was considered an ideal pioneering family. They were urged to settle on 153 acres of leased land in the Van Bael patent in what we now call New Scotland. They worked tirelessly through the years of the war with England and improved the land considerably. Although there were no schools or churches yet, neighboring families socialized by helping each other during harvest time, barn or house raisings, mending fences or maintaining their “roads.” One of the first residents that would befriend the McCoughtry family was Jacob Moak from Switzerland.

(Continued on page 7)



An old sketch of the Coughtry homestead

From the New Scotland Historical Association photo collection

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SCOTLAND
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

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www.newscotlandhistoricalassociation.org
Email: newscotlandhistoricalassoc@gmail.com

President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

As usual at this time of year, we are looking forward to spring and warmer weather.

In a few weeks, we will receive the two new display cabinets that we were able to purchase with help from grant funds received from Albany County as well as generous donations from many friends and members of the NSHA.

We anticipate that the museum will close for a few weeks in late May/June, and re-open with a new exhibit and more of our collections on display.

Thank you again for support from our members, as well as our corporate sponsors.

Debbie Mahan, President

Mission Statement

The Town of New Scotland Historical Association preserves, protects and promotes history in the Town of New Scotland through the stewardship of material culture directly related to the town. The purpose is to promote an appreciation of local history, heritage and culture. through research, publications and educational programs.

MUSEUM CLOSED

Sunday, April 16, 2017 Easter Sunday
Sunday, May 14, 2017 Mothers' Day

If you would like to become a member,
please do so!

NSHA Membership Form

___ \$10 Individual

___ \$15 Family

___ \$25 Sustaining

___ \$100.00 Life (per person)

Name _____

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Make checks payable to NSHA.

Please send dues to:

Amy Heebner
NSHA Membership Chair
1403 Delaware Turnpike
Delmar, NY 12054

What a Nostalgic Sight!



Sledders flying over snow and ice with squeals of delight!!!

A scene of Tork Hill filled with dozens of kids as their parents were watching from the top.

For five days in the middle of February with two snow storms back to back, the view from my back windows on Altamont Road brought all the joy of my youth sledding either the Jablonowski hill, behind the hill on the right, or Tork's, as seen above. Thank you to the Village of Voorheesville for providing life-long memories for youth of today.

Sherry Burgoon, Editor

IN MEMORY OF

The New Scotland Historical Association was saddened to learn of the death of the following friends and members. We offer our condolences to their families.

Charles Carson (1923-2016) Charles Carson passed on December 28, 2016. He was the husband of Anne Buell Carson.

Richard A. Leach (1946-2017) Richard Leach passed on February 17, 2017. He was the husband of Karen Geller Leach.

Kathryn Jean Zelezniak (1938-2016) Kathryn Zelezniak passed on December 22, 2016 with her family at her side. She was the wife of Michael Zelezniak.

A Clock's Story

By Judy Kimes

Fans of programs such as *Antiques Road Show* and *American Pickers* are often reminded that knowing the back story of an item can add much to its interest and value.

This clock has hung in the sanctuary of the Union Dutch Reformed Church (Unionville) since 1892. In April, it will have been there 125 years. This is its story.

Agnes Slingerland writes in her diary of 1892:
(Feb.) Th. 11th Snowing all day. Willie to Unionville. They meet at Mrs. Hotaling's to try and start an exhibition. (Willie is Agnes' son, my great uncle. He was 19 at this time.)

W. 17th Cold. Willie went down to B. Mead's. They meet there to practice.
From then through March 8th Agnes records that the young people met to practice every few evenings at their various homes: Agnes', Van LaGrange's, Will Bradt's, etc.

(March) Th. 10th Rainy. Willie to help fix up the scaffold for the exhibition (This was at the Unionville Hotel, since in 1892 the Unionville Church had only the sanctuary.)

S. 12th A little snow flying. Willie to work at the stage.
For the next two weeks, the young people gathered to practice on the stage at the old hotel until March 24 when Agnes writes:

Th. 24th We all went down to see the drama, "Tempest Tossed."

F. 25th Eve Ann came and went with us tonight to see the drama again.

From Van LaGrange's diary:

Th. 24th To B. Mathias' to drama, "Tempest Tossed."

F. 25th At night to drama. They took in \$65.15, made clear \$50.

The next day, Willie is down to Unionville to "help take away the platform," and Van is "drawing planks home from Mathias'" (Apparently the wood for the stage was his.)

On April 13, 1892, Agnes writes, "Willie went to Albany with young people that had the entertainment to get a clock for the church."



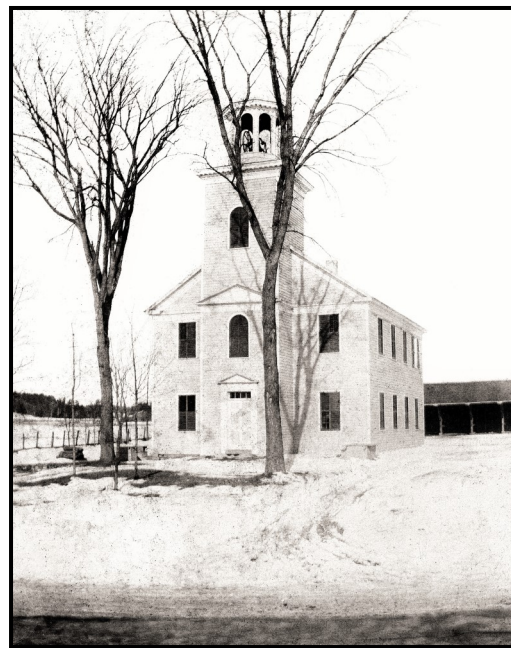
And that clock has been there ever since. The clock is a Seth Thomas Model No.3 Regulator. It is made of walnut and walnut veneer. In 1892, it would have cost about \$16.50. Probably the young people used the rest of their proceeds to help out with the needs of the church, quite possibly the minister's salary for which donations were often requested.

In my lifetime sometimes this clock has been running, and sometimes not. For the past several years, it has not. The late Charles Clark, congregant, antique dealer, and NSHA supporter, offered to get it up and running again. The pastor at Unionville, Rev. Thomas Kendall, politely declined, believing that one should be focusing on the message of the service, and not on the time. Instead, Pastor Kendall set the hands of the clock to 8:46, the exact moment the first plane hit the Twin Towers on 9/11/2001. And so it hangs today, a silent and meaningful memorial - for those who know the story.

Photos from the Collection of
Don Slingerland

Submitted by
Judy Kimes

Right: Union Dutch Reformed Church
(Unionville) as it stood in 1892.



Willie Slingerland at age 16



The Union Church Hotel that served as a stage stop and as a gathering place for community events.

SUNSHINE'S CORNER

By MaryBeth Gorke-Felice

Jan-Feb-Mar

February, that 90-day period between January and March. It always starts off with the groundhog forecasting 6 more weeks of winter, and he is rarely wrong. The landscape is gray-brown; “critters” are hibernating; we’re living in a “blah” season. The only things that cheers up the local school scene are school activities—and there aren’t many of those! Remember in the 1950’s the Voorheesville Central School was housed in one building, grades K-12. My senior class—one of the larger classes—was all of 33 students. Activities were basically school sports related – basketball, baseball, football. There weren’t many opportunities at all for girls, unless you were one of 6 on the cheer-leading squad. How different things are today.

One winter activity that we all enjoyed was ice skating. The parking lot below the school was flooded and on weekends we could clear the snow off the ice, create a small bonfire, and while the day away. The chill of the air on our faces, feeling warm in winter togs—lovely.

One promise of spring was the arrival of Easter. We would order Easter outfits from the Montgomery Ward Catalog and were unbelievably lucky that most things fit. Of course hats and gloves were part of the traditional ensemble.

My brother, Richard, and I would boil up eggs for the Easter celebration. (Well, I cooked. He was 6 years younger than me.) The kitchen table became our workspace for dipping and dyeing and sticking those little paper decals on the eggs. If we were lucky enough to have a snow free backyard, we hid eggs out there and conducted grand egg searches. Snow or miserable weather kept us inside, but the hunt was just as joyful.

So now we wait, wait for longer days; wait for the return of the geese announcing their presence. And, we dream of spring.



(Continued from Page 1)

The McCoughtry-Moak friendship was strengthened on May 5, 1788, when John and Mary's son William married Arianna Moak. William and Arianna had ten sons and one daughter, and many of their descendants still reside in the area.

John Coughtry, Jr., married Elizabeth Seaburg. Around 1785, he built a small frame house for his own family on his father's land. The house still stands today on Hilton Road and can be identified by the historic site marker that stands on the grounds.

The Coughtry family story will continue in the June *Sentinel*.



The Coughtry homestead, built by John Coughtry, Jr., around 1785

Written by Debbie Mahan with information used from the following sources:

1. "BICENTENNIAL HISTORY OF ALBANY, HISTORY OF THE COUNTY OF ALBANY, N.Y. FROM 1609 TO 1886", Howell and Tenney. W. W. Munsell & Co., Publishers
2. "COUGHTRY FAMILY HISTORY from the Middle Ages to 1900" by David E. Coughtry, 1999

DON'T MISS OUR UPCOMING PROGRAMS...

April 4, 2017 (7:30 pm) History of the Rapp Road Community - Beverly Bardequez, President of the Rapp Road Historical Association, will tell the story of this nationally recognized African American Great Migration community.

May 2, 2017 (7:30 pm) Mount Pleasant Cemetery, New Salem, NY; New Life for a Civil War Cemetery (est. 1864) – Herb Reilly, Mount Pleasant Cemetery President, will discuss the history and challenges of preserving one of the Town of New Scotland's most historic cemeteries.

PROGRAMS ARE FREE TO THE PUBLIC
All Programs will be held at the Wyman Osterhout Community Center

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Museum Hours

**The museum is
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on Sunday**

from

2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

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P. O. Box 541

Voorheesville, New York 12186