

Notes From The Farm

NEWSLETTER OF THE ADIRONDACK MENNONITE HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

Vol. 7, No. 1

Spring 1997

ROOTS OF TURMOIL, HARVEST OF BLESSING

— part two —

A Land of Plenty

Miles of fruiting vineyards, acres of orchards, hard surfaced roads carrying coaches throughout the region. Not a description most readers would recognize as Northern New York - but the image of the land as sold to prospective settlers from France and Germany.

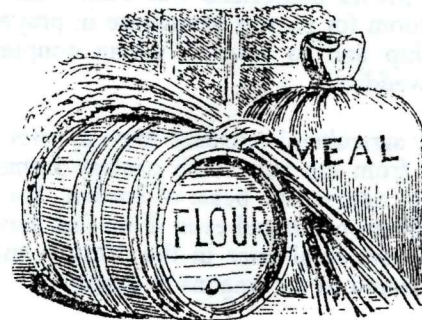
Vincent LeRay de Chaumont, holder of large land tracts in Jefferson and Lewis Counties believed the virgin territory could be converted to the same productivity as Alsace-Lorraine and other French provinces based on a shared latitude. Anyone having spent a winter in the area knows the difference. But land factors for Chaumont attracted settlers, particularly farmers, with the picture of a land ready for taming. That taming took a very long time.

The first Anabaptist settlers from Alsace-Lorraine were Mennonites and Amish from the cantons of Switzerland, the lowlands of Germany and the fertile lands of France. Their fame as farmers had protected them many times from the persecution suffered for their Christian beliefs, particularly their stand that they were answerable to their heavenly leader above any temporal authority.

Amish-Mennonite farming methods had transformed many parts of Europe into fertile, productive land. But the Napoleonic era had brought the beginnings of industrialism to France, cating up the land of the Alsace-Lorraine and forcing farm sons into the army thus robbing families of their labor force and compromising a basic tenet of the Anabaptist faith - non-resistance.

* 1997 CALENDAR *

Annual Meeting.....	April 22
Z-Fest.....	July 5
Work Day(tentative).....	May 10



The land available in the United States must have seemed very desirable. Some families came with much, prepared to build and settle immediately; others came with nothing more than the labor they could provide.

The crossing in those early years was difficult and uncomfortable. Large Sailing ships brought settlers from LeHavre, France to New York City. Most travellers had to bring their own food and bedding, cooking and eating on deck in all kinds of weather. And upon arrival they faced another journey of many miles to the North Country. The route was the one followed by most travellers between those two points even today - north along the Hudson River, west along the Mohawk River Valley to Utica. From that point most of the travel was by foot, ending in the wilderness area of northeastern Lewis County.

Arrival at their new home did not mean that the families could "move in" though. Virgin forest covered the land and massive boulders cropped up everywhere. A look at some areas recently cleared during the Microburst can give one an idea of what the early farmsteads looked like. Stumps protruded from the ground which would have been muddy in Spring and hardpan in Summer. It took many years of clearing to make the beautiful flat fields one finds around Croghan today.

Many early settlers lived in shelters made of brush and even unoccupied Indian hunting huts. There was no opportunity to raise the wool and linen needed for clothing so families wore what they had brought with them - often only the clothes on their backs - for at least the first year, sometimes longer.

But slowly land was cleared, crops raised, stock purchased and homes built. And as homes were built, the Amish-Mennonite community met in worship. Homes were constructed with the needs of meeting in mind, with large rooms rotating about a central point where the pastor stood to preach. The Moser homestead was built with a large upper room for pastors to prepare in prayer before worship and to counsel young couples before their weddings.

Early agricultural censuses show the stock and produce from the nineteenth century farms. Oxen were, of course, the beast of burden. They were a sensible strong animal even if not fast. Few farms had horses until later in the century and roads were cleared fit for wagons to travel.

Most Mennonite farmers continued to try growing their favorite German-Swiss grain - rye - though the crop did poorly in New York soils and climate. As one traces the Ag censuses, it becomes obvious that the rye eventually gives place to wheat and oats. Butter production was high on these farms. An 1845 census shows 600 pounds of butter churned on the Moser homestead, compared to a Denmark farm which produced about one-tenth of that in the same year.

As life became more settled in the area, schools and villages with stores sprang up closer to the homes. But the wilderness was not held far at bay. Many settler women told of hearing the howling of wild animals at night and in the 1940's a panther was shot and killed near Kirschnerville.

Next edition - Town and Farm

Pat Falton

Vintage

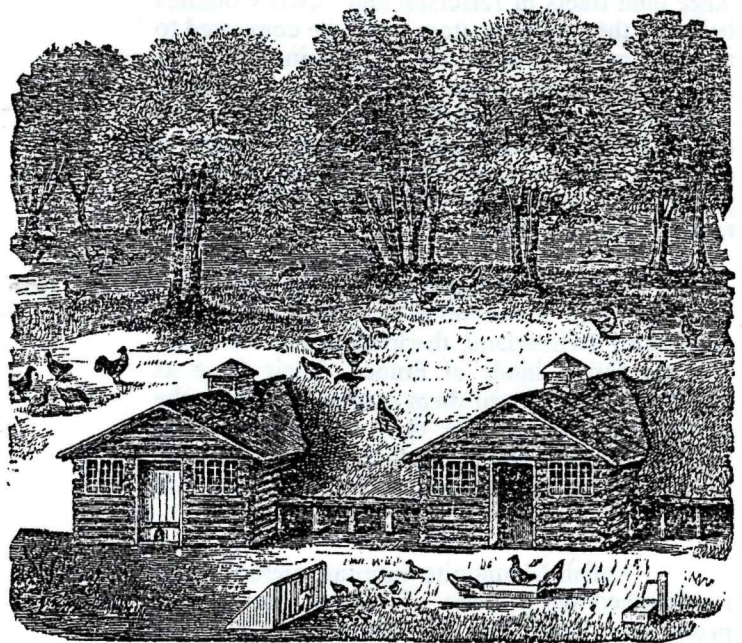


Recipes

GROUP REMEDY

Goose oil and wine equal quantities
Dose from a tablespoon of the mixture according to the age of the child. Repeat the dose every 15 min. if the first does not vomit in that time.

--- From a collection of folk medicine recipes by Luella R. Moshier.



STUDENT GRANT PROGRAM

Alumni of the traditional Mennonite colleges (EMU, Goshen, & Hesston) approached the AMHA Board with a recommendation of establishing financial support for area students seeking education at schools which present a Mennonite perspective in their curriculum.

Following general discussion the Board unanimously approved a motion to continue research with the mechanism to make this support available and to provide that mechanism on an ongoing basis through the AMHA. This would likely be in the form of a student grant program.

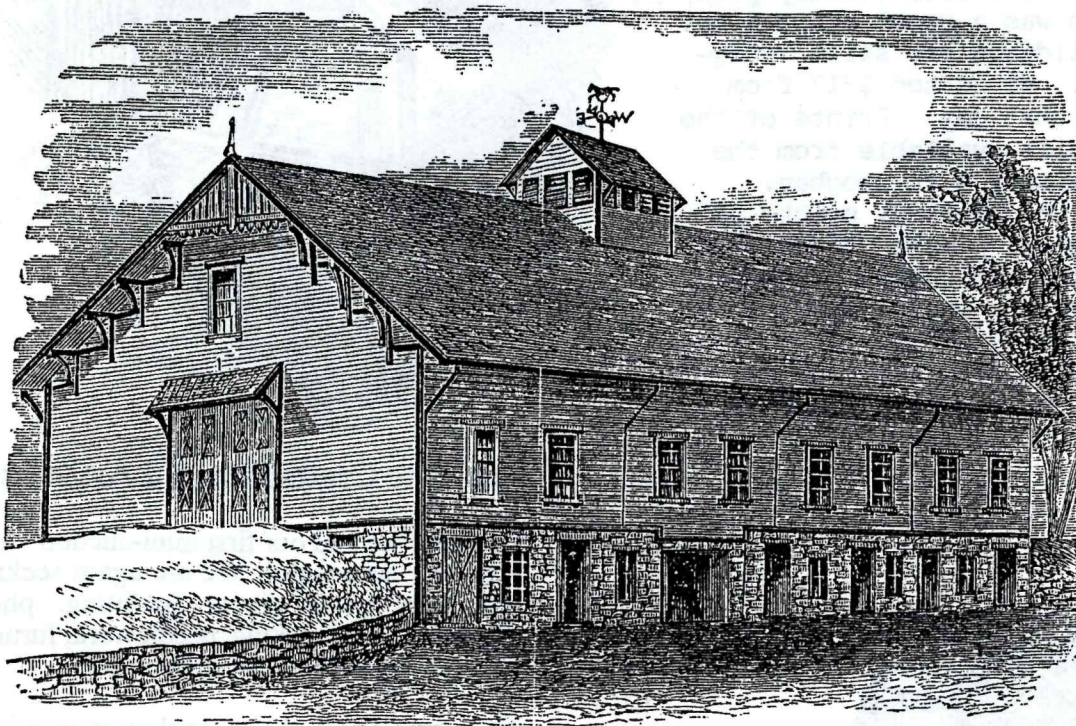
fUND RAISING EVENTS

During 1996 AMHA held a garage sale in May at Pearl Zehr's place at the same time the Village of Croghan had their annual sale.

Craft shows were held at the FFA Camp, Agape Fair at Lena and Gerald Yancey's place, Carthage Elementary School and Beaver River Central School.

A bake sale was held in December at Ames in Lowville.

Thanks to Pearl Zehr who organized all of these. Pat Falton, Ralph & LaVeda Taube, Joyce Moser, Gladys Nafziger, Eunice Roggie, Adonia Henry, and Carolyn Henry worked at these fundraisers. Our thanks to them and all who helped. Many thanks to those who donated items. A combined effort saw successful results.



Membership Items

GIFT * * *

Each year AMHA gives a gift from the proceeds of Z-Fest. This year(1996) \$100.00 was given to the Charlene Widrick family.

A reminder of last years notice that we be asking for annual membership dues beginning in 1997. You will receive notice by mail. Dues are: Adults-\$10, families with children \$10.

SIXTH ANNUAL Z-FEST

July 6, 1996 was the sixth annual Zwanzigstein Fest. More than five hundred people came even though it rained.

New this year was the mini auction. Articles having a value of more than \$25 were donated for the auction. They included woven rugs, quilts, a framed photograph, chairs, and diner for six. Joe Zehr auctioned them off after Pat Falton described them. Proceeds amounted to \$935. We were pleased and would like to do it again for 1997. If you care to make something and donate it, we would appreciate it.

Also new, was the chicken barbeque made by Daniel Miller's children. Everyone enjoyed this. Rosanna Moser and her helpers did a wonderful job with the meal.

The Turn of the 20th Century picture of Croghan was a great attraction. Many of the buildings are still recognizable today. We netted \$317 from this adventure that day. Prints of the original are still available from the Board or from Wishey's in Croghan.

Including the auction, prints of Croghan, bake sale, plants, books, ice cream, shortcake, lemonade, chicken barbeque, Agape shop sales, and hot dogs, we netted \$3292.10

It was a good day. Praise God. Plan to attend the 7th annual Z-Fest in July of 1997.



For Fine Craftsmen and Artisans!!

Last year we had our first mini-auction - and it was very successful! We are again seeking a few very good pieces (painting, photos, antiques, woodworking, needlework, furniture, quilting) to auction for at least \$25.

This year we ask that contributors provide an index card with information about their donation (medium - oil, water, acrylic; material - type of wood, fabric; hours required to produce the item and approximate value).

If you have a reserve price, also please state that. Contributions can be made to directors or can be brought to the Farm on Friday, July 4.



THE CROGHAN PRINT

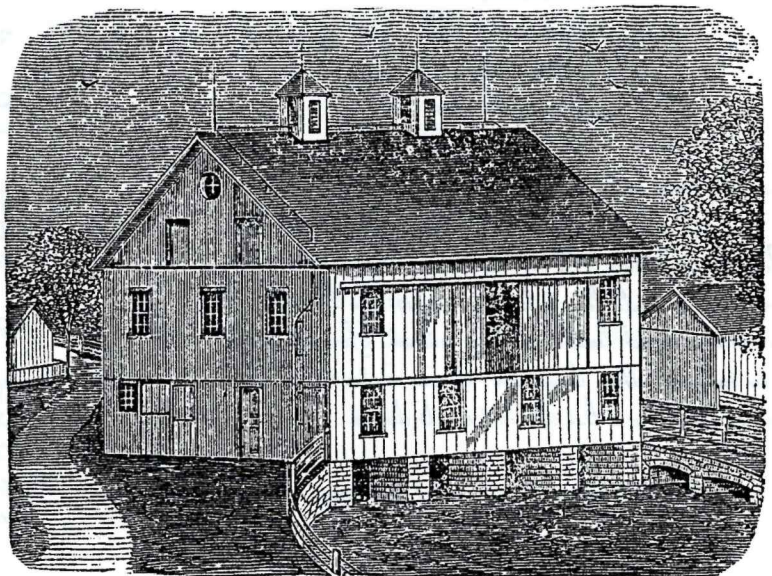
"Croghan, Turn of the Century"

The Town of Croghan was formed from the Towns of Watson and Diana, April 5, 1841. Croghan was named in honor of George Croghan (pronounced Craw-an, slightly different from the way the name of the village is pronounced today). The names of Tippecanoe and New Bremen had been proposed but the name of Croghan was substituted on the 3rd reading of a bill in the house as it passed. In 1848 the Town of New Bremen was formed from part of the Town of Croghan.

George Croghan was born Nov. 15, 1791, a native of Locust Grove, near the falls of Ohio. His father was Major William Croghan, an Irishman who served in the Revolution and his mother was a sister to William Clark who explored the Missouri area with Captain Lewis in 1805-7. In 1810 George Croghan graduated from William and Mary's College, studying law. Soon the war started and the battle of Tippecanoe, along with other sieges, won him approval of the Union. His rank was captain to inspector general. He received a gold medal from Congress in 1825 for his brilliant military service. He died January 8, 1849 at New Orleans.

PAINTING OF CROGHAN UNVEILED

The AMHA hosted a public reception May 28, 1996 at the Maple Museum in Croghan to unveil the painting, "Croghan- Turn of the Century", painted by folk artist Jim Parker of Ilion. About 25 people attended. Cookies and coffee were enjoyed following a presentation by Mr. Parker. Prints were available for sale. (Prints in a variety of price ranges continue to be available. Contact an AMHA Board member for info).



Dear Friends,

Life here at the Farm is beginning to settle into a more regular schedule now. No water problems this winter! Though there were times when I thought everything would be blown away.

Last summer saw animals at the Farm for the first time in about a dozen years. I bought three sheep - a mother ewe and her two lambs. All have survived the winter well and our little flock will expand again as a friend is giving me two more sheep this Spring. One is a breeding ewe, so we'll have lambs next Spring!

We're all looking forward to the Summer and the Zwanzigstein Fest. But don't forget the Farm is open for visitors on weekends all summer. It's a wonderful place to share with several generations of your family. Or just to have a quiet day. Bring along a picnic lunch. If you know you will have visitors coming, stop by to let me know (or call me at 782-7730 weekdays) and I'll arrange a time - this can be on any day.

Many gifts have come our way and every year we have more exhibits (be sure to see the quilts this year!). But there are always things we can use. Here's a list of some:

- Plants: Widrick lilies
Old-fashioned iris - not the big hybrids
Seed from any of the old plants
- House: flatirons
Kitchen utensils
Cotton-tufted mattress
Cheeseboxes
Hired man's bed
Sewing stand
rag and felt rugs

Can you help with any of these?

A clean-up day is planned for Saturday, May 10 and there will be lots to do. This is a day for everyone who would like to help - not just the Board. A soup-and-sandwich lunch will be provided. You can come up to help on other days, too, if you contact a Board member first, for a list of what needs doing.

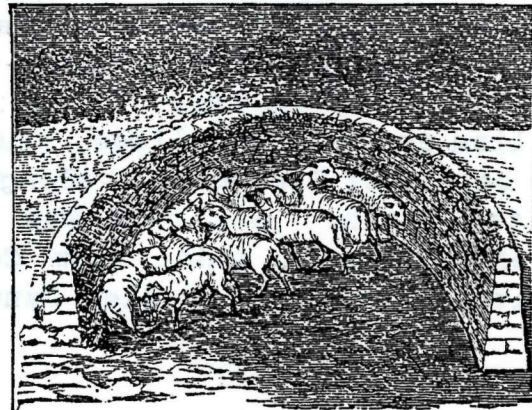
I look forward to your visit this year.

Love in Christ,
Pat Falton

**** ANNUAL MEETING 1996 ****

The annual meeting of the AMHA was held at Lowville Mennonite Church April 23. Following a brief business meeting, guest speaker Laura Sharer, presented the program for the evening. Ms. Sharer, an archivist from Jefferson County, spoke about the history and legacy of the LeRay family in Northern N.Y.

Sugar on snow and pickles were served for refreshments.



—SEMI-CIRCULAR SHEEP SHELTER.

What's It Answer: Judd writes. It is a mistake to have bird houses too showy and too exposed... all that is required in a bird house is, a hiding place, with an opening just large enough for the bird, and a water tight roof... an old hat with a hole for a door tacked by the rim against a shed, will be occupied by birds sooner than a showy bird house. Regarding the second answer Judd writes: The dog is frequently left to find shelter as best he can... he may have sufficient sagacity to know when he is well or ill treated, and he may very reasonably lose his self respect, and take to evil courses such as prowling abroad, marauding and sheep killing... when not provided with decent quarters at home.

ADIRONDACK MENNONITE HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

JANUARY 1, 1996 - DECEMBER 31, 1996

Balance January 1, 1996 \$ 11,962.91

Receipts:

Donations	\$ 5629.00	
Memberships	20.00	
Reunion	50.00	
Land Rent	350.00	
Garage Sale	323.25	
Craft Shows	1008.91	
Bake Sale	228.25	
Zwanzigstein Fest	5459.11	
Garden	45.00	
Pictures	522.00 *	
Reimbursement on utilities	493.30	
Interest	290.37	
		\$ 14,419.19
		<u>\$ 26,382.10</u>

Disbursements:

Mennonite Mutual Aid	\$ 3648.00	
Taxes	719.06	
Niagara Mohawk	712.36	
Insurance	121.98	
Repairs	3133.32	
Zwanzigstein Fest	2147.01	
Supplies	170.36	
James Parker	600.00	
Books	1875.00	
Pictures	872.06	
		<u>\$ 13,999.15</u>

Balance Dec. 31, 1996 \$ 12,382.95

Balance is as follows:

checking account	\$ 1852.65
savings account	\$ 8030.30
CD	\$ 2500.00

Indebtedness as of December 31, 1996 is \$15,095.92 at 8%.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn L. Henry
Carolyn L. Henry, Treas.

*plus \$317 included in the Z-Fest

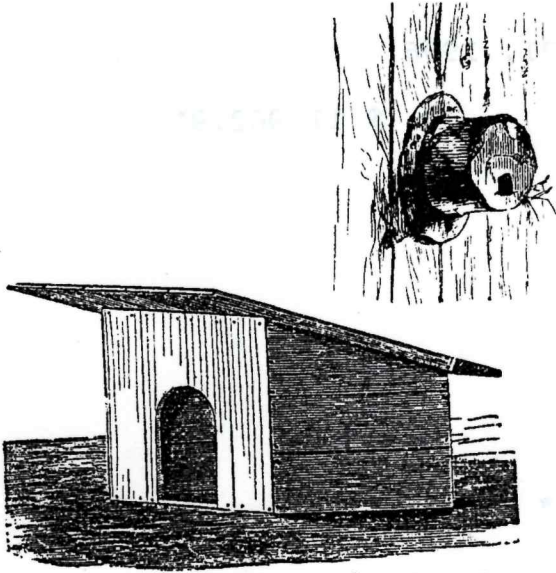
"What's It"

MISCELLANEOUS * * *

Remember, all charitable contributions to AMHA are tax deductible. If you plan to claim your gift please ask for a receipt.

*

Invitation: We encourage our readers to submit original research and essays relating to local Mennonite history (300-500 words). Mail to address on the back page of the newsletter or give to any Board member.



Orange Judd, agricultural correspondent to The New York Times and author, didn't miss much in his book *Barn Plans and Outbuildings* (published 1881). Can you identify the two What's It outbuildings illustrated here?

Answer: page 6



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MAIL TO: